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# SAGE NOTES

IDAHO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



VOL. IX NO. 4

APRIL-MAY 1986

## PAHOVE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- April 5: Saturday field trip to the Snake River, north of Weiser. Meet at 8:30 at Perkins Restaurant, State St. and Glenwood for Boise carpooling. Contact Trip Leader Steve Caicco at 334-3402 (work) or 344-3148 (home) for more details.
- April 17: Caldwell meeting at 7:30 pm in the herbarium, Boone Science Hall, College of Idaho. Chris Davidson will discuss future plans for the new Idaho Botanical Gardens. The election of new officers will also be during this meeting.
- April 26: Saturday work day at the Idaho Botanical Gardens. Meet at 10:00 am above the old prison site with work clothes, lunch and handtools (shovel, rake, or tilling fork). Also bring plants that can be transplanted if you have them. Best entry is by way of Goodman Street off Warm Springs Ave. Call Chris Davidson at 343-8649 for more details. Note: This is a change in scheduling.
- May 3: Saturday field trip to an oolitic limestone site south of Bruneau. Meet at 8:30 am at Grant's Truck Stop on Hwy 180. Call Trip Leader Roger Rosentretter at 334-1734 (work) or 384-1244 (home) for more details.
- May 15: No regular meeting planned for this month. Meetings to resume in October.
- May 17: Saturday field trip to Wilderness Ranch in the Mores Creek area north of Boise. Meet at 8:30 am at the M&W Market on Warm Springs Ave. in Boise. For more details call Trip Leader Bob Parenti at 334-1806 (work) or 342-4880 (home).
- June 14: Saturday field trip to Craters of the Moon National Monument. Leave from Grants Truck Stop, Hwy 180 in Boise, at 8:30. Meet again at the Monument Visitor Center at noon. Or plan to camp with us Friday night at the Monument group campground, and join in a hike Saturday morning. RSVP to Trip Leader Steve Caicco at 334-3402 (work) or 344-3148 (home).
- June 28: Saturday field trip to Ponderosa State Park by McCall. A variety of vegetative types including wetlands, mature forests, and open sagebrush slopes makes this an exciting location, providing many interesting plants from aquatics to terrestrial orchids. Meet at the Perkins Restaurant on State Street and Glenwood at 8:30. RSVP Michelle Stevens at 334-9488 (work) or 344-3148 (home).
- July 26: Saturday field trip to Mt. Harrison in the Albion Range south of Burley, in search of *Castilleja christii*, *Cymopterus davisii* and *Machaeranthera laetevirens*. Bob Mosely plans to lead this trip. Details will be announced in the next newsletter.

NOTE: RSVP's are important as there may be a need to change or cancel a trip.

## FROM THE EDITOR

Personal commitments and schedules for the remainder of this year requires that this be my last issue as newsletter editor. Although a demanding and time-consuming job, it has indeed, been rewarding. I wish to thank the many who have contributed materials and support over the past several years, and hope that you will continue the excellent support for the Sage Notes in the future. Michelle Stevens has agreed to take over as editor starting with the June edition. You may see some changes in procedure and format in the coming months, however, please continue to use the regular INFS address for newsletter correspondence.

## IDAHO BOTANICAL GARDEN NEWS

Spring work is under way at the new Idaho Botanical Gardens. A 1200 sq. ft. building was recently moved on to its foundation to provide office space for the gardens. Refurbishing of the building will begin soon.

**NEW NATURE TRAIL.** One of the projects taking shape is the design of a nature trail which will lead into the foothills above the present garden area. Dotty Douglas is leading this project with the help of several volunteers: Jerry Cross has prepared the sign posts; Jeri Williams, a BSU student is working up the brochure; Jenifer Tripp, another BSU student is doing the art work; and Steve Briggs has helped in trail location. The trail guide will provide botanical, zoological and geological information about the area. Dotty hopes to have the first segment of the trail ready for use by early summer. This will be the primary project for Fahove's workday on April 26. Bring shovels and rakes for trail work.

**ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION.** What better place for an Arbor Day celebration than at the Botanical Gardens. Arbor Day is Friday April 25. The celebration starts at 1:00 pm with refreshments, tours and other events. Several local garden clubs will be participating. People can bring any plants they wish to donate.

**SPRING GARDEN TOUR.** The Botanical Gardens will sponsor a spring garden tour of the Warm Springs Area in East Boise on Sunday May 18. The tour will end up at the Botanical Gardens. A tour brochure is being prepared and will be available by calling Chris Davidson at 343-8649.

Be sure to take in at least one of these scheduled events.

## WILDFLOWERS OF IDAHO CLASS

As announced in our last newsletter, Dick Lingenfelter's wildflowers class for Boise Community Education Schools has been rescheduled to begin on April 7. The class will be held Monday evenings, 7 to 8:30 at Borah High. The class runs for 7 weeks and costs \$9.95. Call the Community Ed office at 338-3525 for signup information.

## MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY WORKDAYS

Come lend a hand at the College of Idaho's Museum of Natural History monthly workdays. Volunteers are needed for a variety of Museum tasks including rebuilding/refurbishing display cases. Workdays are on Saturdays, 7 am until evening. Scheduled workdays are May 10, May 17, June 7, and August 2. A benefit auction will also be held on May 17 (10 am). Phone 365-8605 (Bill Clark) or 459-5331 (Eric Yensen) for additional information.

## A NEW FIELD KEY TO CHRYSOTHAMNUS

Idaho botanists have long realized the need for a good field key to the species of *Chrysothamnus* south of the Snake River. Such a key was recently developed by Carol Prentice as she used material deposited in the College of Idaho Herbarium (CIC) and verified by Loran C. Anderson. Carol, who is a botanist and charter member of Pahove, undertook the project this past year at the request of Dr. Pat Packard.

The key is as follows:

1. Stems tomentose, hairs often densely compacted. Scratch stems with fingernail to remove densely compacted hairs.  
*Chrysothamnus nauseosus* (Pall.) Britt.
2. Green stems, involucre glabrous. (Two subspecies, not able to differentiate at this time.)
  - ssp. *consimilis* (Greene) Hall & Clem.  
 HERBARIUM NOTE: Spotty collections in Owyhee and Cassia Cos., and Elko Co., Nevada.
  - ssp. *graveolens* (Nutt.) Piper  
 HERBARIUM NOTE: One specimen on file with large flowering heads which may or may not be significant; leaves perhaps wider and longer, more robust than *consimilis*.
2. Gray stems (white).
  3. Involucre tomentulose to wooly.  
 ssp. *graveolens* (Nutt.) Piper
  3. Involucre glabrous.  
 ssp. *albicaulis* (Nutt.) Hall & Clem.  
 HERBARIUM NOTE: One hybrid specimen x *consimilis* from Meadow Creek Crossing, Owyhee Co.
1. Stems glabrous (no hairs on stems, no change in the color of the stems when scratched).
  4. Calyx glandular.  
*C. humilis* Greene  
 HERBARIUM NOTE: Our specimen from Reynolds Cr., Owyhee Co., appears to have glandular calyx but no overtopping leaves. Anderson's description reads that the head often overtopped by leaves; flowers 2-3(4) style branches included or barely surpassing corolla lobes, appendages long.
  4. Calyx not glandular.  
*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus* (Hook.) Nutt.
  5. Stems glabrous, leaves 1-10 mm wide with ciliate margins, otherwise glabrous.  
 ssp. *viscidiflorus*

5. Upper stems hairy, also frequently the leaves are hairy.
6. Leaves strongly twisted, stems and leaves finely puberulent, leaves 1-2(4) mm wide.  
     ssp. *puberulus* (D.C. Eaton) Hall & Clem.
6. Leaves not twisted, stems hispid near inflorescence (ie. with stiff rigid bristle-like hairs), leaves over 2 mm wide  
     ssp. *lanceolatus* (Nutt.) Hall. & Clem.

## A TRIBUTE TO THE AMATEUR IN BOTANY

If we define a professional botanist as a trained person employed in an educational or research institution, then there are several sorts of amateurs in botany. There are those whose background consists of formal training in botany but who are working in other fields, and there are those whose botanical knowledge is largely self-gathered. There are those of independent means who expand their energies in botanical research, and others who must work for a living and yet use all of their free time for botany. In both economic groups there are qualified people interested in occasional forays into the realm of botanical investigations.

All of these types of amateurs have provided significant contributions--contributions that sometimes have been overlooked in our society's orientation toward the value of affiliation with institutions, and the value of work that is compensated by money. We wish to encourage all amateurs to continue to initiate their work.

*This item was taken from the University of Washington Arboretum Bulletin (Fall 1982).*

## DESERT CONFERENCE VIII

The eighth annual Desert Conference will be held April 18-20 at Malheur Field Station south of Burns, Oregon. This is a three state conservation conference with themes that address the arid lands of Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon. The event has always been interorganizational, with various groups contributing resources and funding. The Conference blends field trips, educational and management programs and the annual Desert Conservation Strategy Session. In addition to Bureau of Land Management wilderness issues, this years session will address the National Wildlife Refuge system. The agenda is diverse and flexible. You can attend any combination of events during the three days.

The Malheur Field Station is located on the western edge of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge covers over 184,000 acres and includes one of the largest inland marshes in the nation. The area is noted for its remarkable diversity of habitat, with more than 840 species of vascular plants, 280 species of birds, and 50 species of mammals.

Board and room in dormitory facilities at the Station are available at very reasonable rates for the Conference. Reservations should be placed as soon as possible. Applications can be obtained by calling Don Tryon, Bend, OR 503-388-0089; Joe Duft at 208-375-8740 has a few applications left.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

H. D. & Janet Skirrow, Boise, ID

Jane Smith, Coeur D' Alene, ID

## IDAHO NATURAL AREAS by Bob Moseley

## Goodrich Creek

At the base of the Cuddy Mountains in Adams County, a small area along Goodrich Creek was spared from a century of livestock grazing, remaining today as an isolated tract of vegetation surrounded by heavily-grazed rangeland. Probably due to a combination of historical happenstance and physical characteristics, this small piece of BLM land remains as a valuable reference area to view natural vegetation that was once widespread.

Goodrich Creek natural area is a knoll underlain by basalt, which resulted in a step-like arrangement of flat benches alternating with steep slopes. This physiography has greatly affected the soil depth, which in turn created a complex mosaic of plant communities. A diversity of plant communities has made for a rich flora in a relatively small area.

Flat benches, with very shallow soil, are dominated by bicolor biscuit-root (*Lomatium leptocarpum* - one of at least four species of *Lomatium* present in the area). The long, thick taproot of this plant extends deep into cracks in the basalt. A rock buckwheat (*Eriogonum sphaerocephalum* var. *halimiodes*) community occurs on sites with slightly deeper soil. Individuals of this short, compact shrub are widely spaced, surrounded by large areas of bare soil. A close look at these bare areas reveals the presence of several diminutive plants including bitterroot, stolonous everlasting (*Antennaria flagellaris*), and scalepod (*Idahoia scapigera*). All of these species are seen only in the spring, as these shallow soils dry rapidly.

Small areas dominated by stiff sagebrush (*Artemisia rigida*) also occur on these flat benches. At Goodrich Creek, stiff sagebrush is near the southern limits of its range. A shrubby penstemon, *Penstemon gairdneri* var. *oreganus*, occurs with stiff sagebrush and also reaches the edge of its distribution in this part of Idaho.

Several sites on the summit of the knoll have deep soil and are dominated by mountain big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana*). These patches of deep soil, isolated from each other and surrounded by areas of shallow soil, probably resulted from a differential sorting of soil particles during the last ice age. This resulted in what is commonly referred to as "patterned ground."

Moist basins on the knoll are dominated by numerous tall shrub species including chokecherry, serviceberry, shiny-leaf ceanothus, bittercherry, Rocky Mountain maple, syringa, and golden currant. In the spring, dutchman's breeches is the major groundcover beneath the shrubs while a plethora of songbird species abound in the canopy.

While the diverse plant communities mentioned above make Goodrich Creek a botanically rich natural area, perhaps the single most significant feature is a hillside of the bitterbrush-bluebunch wheatgrass community in excellent condition. Large bitterbrush plants are scattered throughout a dense stand of waist-high bluebunch wheatgrass. In early spring, balsamroot lights up the hillside with its large yellow flowers. Ecologists who have studied this community in the northern Rockies have found it to be highly susceptible to both fire and grazing. One of these researchers, upon visiting Goodrich Creek, was impressed with development of both the bitterbrush and grass cover, indicating to him that this area has been little disturbed in

the recent past. Because this undisturbed situation is rare, Goodrich Creek is invaluable for scientific education and research and would make an excellent addition to the Idaho natural area system.

The Boise District BLM is currently considering a proposal made by the Idaho Natural Areas Committee and The Nature Conservancy to set aside Goodrich Creek as a research natural area. The best time to visit Goodrich Creek is during May. To get there, take the road from Cambridge to the old town of Goodrich. Bear left at the abandoned schoolhouse and travel up Goodrich Creek for approximately 2.5 miles. The natural area lies above the road just before crossing the bridge.

## POISONOUS PLANT LECTURES

As in past years, Pahove members have again received requests from local groups to present programs on poisonous plants. During the month of March, Carol Prentice presented two programs, one for the St. Alphonsus Poison Control Center and one to the Master Gardeners Group at the County Extension Service. The slide lectures cover about 50 species of greatest concern in Idaho. The program was originally prepared by Dr. Pat Packard and Lynda Smithman, who is recovering from recent surgery.

A PERSONAL AD - I am conducting research on North American species of the genus *Allium* (onions), and search for information, seeds, and/or bulbs of Idaho native *Allium* species. In particular, I am searching for the following species: *A. nevadense*, *bisceptrum*, *douglasii*, *lemonii*, *parvum*, *madidum*, *brandegei*, forms of *cernuum*, color forms of *textile*, white form of *acuminatum*, *fibrillum*, *simillimum*, *aseae*, *tolmiei*, *tolmiei* var. *platyphyllum*, and *tolmiei* var. *persimile*. Your help with any of these species would be appreciated.

Mark McDonough, 4725 119th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98006.

## ABOUT OUR IDAHO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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Newsletter Editor Joe Duft  
Technical Editor Bob Steele

Sage Notes is published bimonthly by the Idaho Native Plant Society, incorporated since 1977 under the laws of the State of Idaho.

Membership in the Society is open to all interested in our native flora. Dues are \$6.00 per year on an anniversary month/year basis. Send dues and all correspondence to I.N.P.S., Box 9451, Boise, ID 83707.

Red dots beside dues dates indicate that your dues have expired. You will receive only two issues after expiration.

DUE DATE FOR COPY MATERIALS FOR NEXT (JUNE) NEWSLETTER IS MAY 20.



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