



Newsletter of the Idaho Native Plant Society • Promoting Interest in Idaho's Native Flora

High Altitude Plant Party: A Brief Look at an Idaho Peaks Project Botanical Inventory

Article and Photo by Elle Kramer, Idaho Peaks Project Coordinator and Botanist, Boise National Forest

I never seem to get to camp before dark. Yet again I am the last to arrive, and pull onto the spur road where a group of tents is already waiting. We do a quick round of introductions but I'm the odd one out, these guys are all friends. I had spent the past year bouncing Peaks Project ideas off one of my professional contacts in Salmon, Idaho, hoping to entice her into joining the project. Far from our major urban hubs, the tall mountains surrounding Salmon—the Salmon River Mountains, Beaverhead Mountains, Bighorn Crags, Tango Peaks, and Bitterroot Mountains—are underrepresented in our Peaks Project data. And it worked. She signed on, and she recruited nearly an entire Salmon-based team to inventory The General, a 10,329 ft peak in the Salmon River Mountains. Success!

We're up at dawn the next morning, distributing collection bags, delegating tasks and reviewing

the protocol while we wait for our last team member to drive up from Stanley. The day would be long but the weather was perfect. It was about a four mile hike to the summit of The General. I pocketed a few tufts of mountain goat fur along the final mile-long ridgeline approach to show my kids at home. We regrouped on the saddle south of the peak to discuss our survey strategy. Collection bags and digging tools were brought out of packs. I started picking up rocks to take back to the geologist who reviews and identifies parent material for the project. The team photographer started snapping photos as the group dispersed across the mountain face, shouting back and forth as we coordinated what's already been collected and what still needs to be bagged and tagged. The upside of having a full team (maximum six people) is you get great coverage of the mountain with all those eyes. The downside is, for the team lead and notetaker, it's a lot. Chaotic, but joyful. The pictures are all smiles.

It's 7:00 pm before we make it back to camp. "So...now we press?" someone asks. "I'm not pressing tonight" I reply. But the joke was on me as we were, indeed, pressing that night. Due to team members' time constraints we had no choice, so we worked until dark unbagging plants, pressing plants, labeling, creating tissue samples, and touching up notes. The next morning we relocated to some picnic tables down the road and pressed for another two hours. After the team disbanded, it would take me another two days of keying with the help of fellow Forest Service botanists, and two more days at the Snake River Plains (SRP) Herbarium, plus all the cataloging, photo organizing and

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Letter from the President

A core group of botanists and other plant enthusiasts established the Idaho Native Plant Society in 1977. Karl Holte and Bob Steele were part of this founding cadre. Both recently passed away, and this issue of *Sage Notes* contains remembrances for both men. I was sad to hear the news about my friends Bob and Karl, but also knew both lived full lives that touched many people.

Both Bob and Karl had a passion for plants, which were central and essential parts of their professional careers, and also their curiosity, enjoyment, even personality. Plants made them happy, something all INPS members have in common.

One place Bob and Karl's life's intersected was as members of the Rare and Endangered Plants Technical Committee of the Idaho Natural Areas Council. Starting in the late 1970s, this group of botanists/ecologists did the research and made the initial conservation evaluations for Idaho's rare flora. This work laid the foundation for future rare plant species conservation efforts in Idaho, including what would eventually evolve into the Idaho Rare Plant List. The INPS-sponsored Idaho Rare Plant Conference is now the forum that evaluates the Idaho Rare Plant List to ensure it remains accurate and up-to-date. The legacy of those earliest contributors continues nearly 50 years later.

The daily, incremental increase in daylight length this time of year is a sure reminder that spring season awaits. Those first buttercups, prairie stars, and yellow bells will always be a welcome sight. Before we know it, the time will soon be here to get outdoors more and visit favorite wildflower spots or explore to find new ones. To share and learn more about Idaho's flora, I encourage you to mark your calendar and take advantage of some field trip-based botanical opportunities, including local walks sponsored by your INPS Chapter, the annual Idaho Botanical Foray, and of course this summer's INPS Annual Meeting at Mt. Harrison, near Pomerelle Ski Area in Cassia County. I hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

Michael Mancuso



A late season composite under a Ponderosa pine at the edge of burned trees from the 2024 Wapiti fire in Grandjean, Idaho. Original watercolor by Cynthia L. Coulter ©2025. Used with permission.

Idaho Native Plant Society

Annual Meeting 2026

July 10–12 • Thompson Flats Campground • Mt. Harrison, Idaho

Join us for a spectacular weekend of botanical discovery high in the mountains of south-central Idaho! This year's annual meeting takes us to **Thompson Flats Campground on Mt. Harrison**, located near Pomerelle Ski Resort, just north of the stunning City of Rocks National Reserve. At 8,400 feet, you'll be among some of Idaho's most remarkable subalpine flora—and maybe a little short of breath! Bring your hiking lungs and your field guides.

Botanical Highlights

Mt. Harrison is home to rare treasures that make this meeting truly special. Two plants in particular are not to be missed:

Christ's Paintbrush

Found only atop the summit of Mt. Harrison, this striking wildflower is a highlight of every visit to this peak.

Davis' Wavewing

An extraordinary endemic found only in the Albion Mountains. A true must-see for any botanist.

Weekend Schedule

Friday, July 10 — Welcome & Kickoff

- **Check-in:** 12:00 – 5:00 PM at the campground
- **Evening:** Potluck dinner — bring your favorite dish to share!
- **Guest Speaker:** Kick off the weekend with an evening presentation

Saturday, July 11 — The Main Event

Saturday is packed with adventure! Choose from **five guided field trips** led by experienced botanists. Trips explore both sides of Highway 77, showcasing dramatically different geology and plant communities.

- **Catered Dinner at Pomerelle Ski Resort** — a memorable evening in a mountain setting
- **Keynote Speaker: Steve Love**
- **Annual Business Meeting** following dinner

Sunday, July 12 — More Exploration

Two guided field trips are offered—one on each side of Highway 77—repeating Saturday's most popular routes so you can experience the contrasting landscapes you may have missed.

Monday Bonus — Independence Lake Hike

Not ready to head home? Join a group hike to scenic **Independence Lake**—approximately 8 miles round trip. A perfect way to cap off an unforgettable weekend!

Camping & Logistics

Important note: The Forest Service is not allowing reserved camping during our meeting week. However, they have graciously blocked out **Group Sites A & B at Thompson Flats** for our exclusive use.

Because the group sites alone won't accommodate everyone, we've arranged a simple solution: a flat fee of **\$10 per person** covers your campsite at Thompson Flats for Friday and Saturday nights. The Society will use these funds to pay for the group sites and cover fees for open sites. Anyone wishing to stay Sunday night at Thompson Flats, or camp in a different campground, will be responsible for their own fees.

\$ Registration & Fees

Item	Cost
Camping at Thompson Flats (Fri & Sat nights)	\$10 / person
Meeting Registration + Saturday Catered Dinner	\$45 / person

We can't wait to see you on the mountain!

Questions? Contact the Idaho Native Plant Society for details.

~ Contributed by Bill Bridges, Loasa Chapter, Revised by Vicki Henderson

Mt. Harrison Flora Photos by Lynn Kinter



Christ's paintbrush (*Castilleja christii*) and silvery lupine (*Lupinus argenteus*)



Christ's paintbrush (*Castilleja christii*) with caterpillars



Simpson's wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum microthecum* var. *simpsonii*)



Rocky Mountain goldenrod (*Solidago multiradiata*)



Pygmy bitterroot (*Lewisia pygmaea*)



Sulphur penstemon (*Penstemon attenuatus*)



Davis' wavewing (*Cymopterus davisii*)

labeling tasks, until those plants were processed and the data set was complete.

The summer of 2025 was the fourth year of the Idaho Peaks Project, which far surpassed its original goal of inventorying 25 alpine summits in Idaho. Michael Mancuso stepped down from his role as the Idaho Peaks Project coordinator at the end of 2024, but he continues to carry the project in other ways, blowing us all out of the water by leading five of the ten peaks visited in 2025. Enthusiasm for the work has not diminished as the project continues to find new occurrences of rare plants, document uncommon species and reveal species range extensions, all supported by tissue samples available for genetic analysis. As I write this in mid-February, I'm relieved "my" plants are all safe at the SRP Herbarium. But behind me sits a box of tissue samples from all the 2025 peaks, still needing to be packaged with the field forms and shipped to Dr. Hannah Marx's plant systematics lab at Cornell University. The original peaks project, the Washington



Team members Hannah Alverson (left) and Bri Mitri- one (right) collecting plant specimens on the east face of The General, July 2025.

50 Peaks Project on which the Idaho project is based, has snowballed into a multi-state, even international project with the inclusion of British Columbia. Our Idaho point data is without a doubt important for Idaho, but as I gain knowledge on how these data are used to examine past evolutionary events and peek into the future of climate change, I feel incredibly privileged to contribute.

As a final note, I'm happy to report that the Salmon team is discussing plans for another inventory in 2026. Special thanks to The General team members Katie Bau- mann, Hannah Alverson, Tempe Regan, and Bri Mitri- one; to Jessica Irwin, Kristin Williams, Daniel Kennedy, Don Mansfield, and Barbara Ertter for assistance with plant ID; and to Jim Smith and the SRP Herbarium for mounting, cataloging and housing specimens.

The Idaho Peaks Project is an all-volunteer effort. Participants interested in leading a peak inventory are first asked to attend a peak inventory as a team member. You do not need to be a professional botanist to partici- pate—students, photographers, and native plant enthusi- asts are encouraged. Peak leaders select peaks in the spring and then open spots are made available to a wider audience through the mailing list. This project is finan- cially supported by the Idaho Native Plant Society, which provides funds to reimburse volunteers for vehicle fuel for travel to and from project locations. If you would like to join the mailing list, are interested in the annual re- port, or have other data or project inquiries, please email IdahoPeaksProject@gmail.com. •

Announcement

April is National Native Plant Appreciation Month!

On March 27, 2026, Senate Resolution 665 was approved with unanimous bipartisan consent designating April 2026 as National Native Plant Month! (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-resolution/665>) Please help to spread the word! Plan activities in your community to make a real difference by planting native plants, removing invasive plants, and teaching others about the importance of native plants as a source of food and habitat for wildlife. (<https://nationalnativeplantmonth.org/>) •

S. RES. 665 Designating April 2026 as "National Native Plant Month".

Whereas native plants are indigenous species that have evolved alongside native wildlife and occur naturally in a particular geographic region, ecosystem, and habitat; **Whereas** there are more than 17,000 native plant species in the United States, which include large shade trees, understory trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, grasses, and wildflowers; **Whereas** native plants are essential for healthy, diverse, and sustainable ecosystems and are critical for cleaning air, filtering water, and stabilizing soils; **Whereas** native plants are well-adapted to specific soils, temperatures, precipitation, and environmental conditions, making them the best option for conserving and protecting our environment, and adapting to its changes; **Whereas** native plants provide shelter, as well as nectar, pollen, seeds, and foliage that serve as food for native butterflies, caterpillars, birds, bees, and other wildlife in ways that non-native plants cannot; **Whereas** more than 200 of the native plant species in the United States are estimated to have been lost since the early 19th century; **Whereas** habitat loss and degradation, extreme weather events, and invasive species have contributed to the decline of native plants in the United States; and **Whereas** native plants are essential components of resilient ecosystems and our natural heritage: Now, therefore, be it **Resolved**, That the Senate—(1) designates April 2026 as "National Native Plant Month"; and (2) recognizes the benefits of native plants to the environment and economy of the United States.

INPS 2025 Financial Summary

Idaho Native Plant Society - Year in Review

By Bill Sonnenburg

Bottom Line

TOTAL INCOME

\$25,049

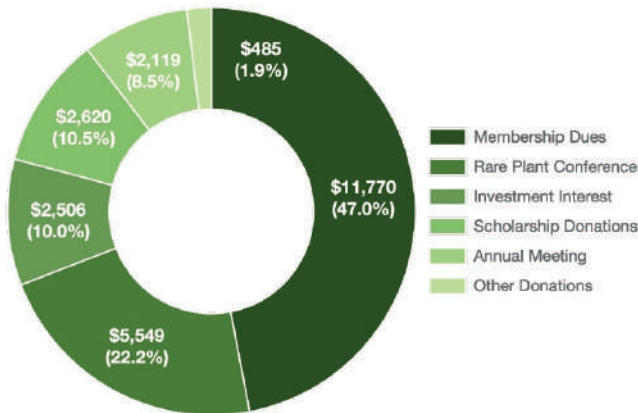
TOTAL EXPENSES

\$26,825

NET RESULT

-\$1,776

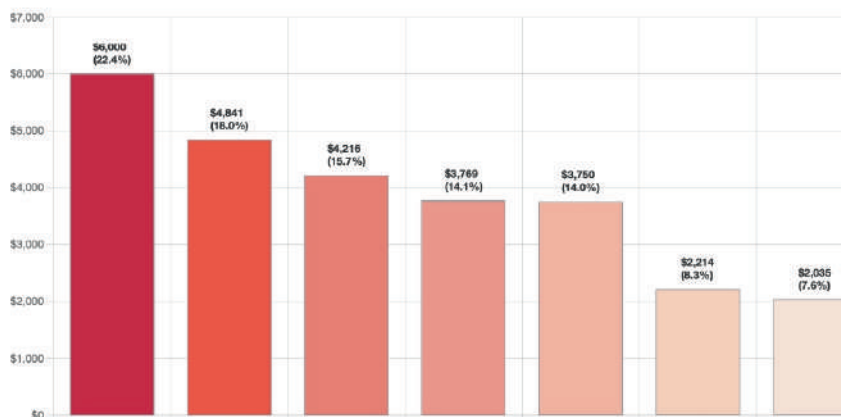
Where the Money Came From (Income: \$25,049)



Income Breakdown

- **Membership Dues (\$11,770 - 47%)**: Nearly half of all income came from members across six chapters, with Pahove Chapter contributing the most (\$4,680)
- **Rare Plant Conference (\$5,549 - 22%)**: The conference brought in significant revenue
- **Investment Interest (\$2,506 - 10%)**: Earnings from savings accounts
- **Scholarship Donations (\$2,620 - 10%)**: Generous contributions for student scholarships
- **Annual Meeting (\$2,119 - 8%)**: Registration and related income
- **Other Donations (\$485 - 2%)**: General donations plus ERIG contributions

Where the Money Went (Expenses: \$26,825)



Expense Breakdown

- **Scholarship Awards (\$6,000 - 22%)**: Direct support for students studying native plants
- **Sage Notes Printing (\$4,841 - 18%)**: Publication costs for the organization's journal
- **Rare Plant Conference (\$4,216 - 16%)**: Costs to host the conference (generated \$5,549, net positive \$1,333)
- **ERIG Expenditures (\$3,769 - 14%)**: Education, Research, and Information Grants program spending
- **Sage Notes Editing (\$3,750 - 14%)**: Professional editing services for publications
- **Chapter Dues Distribution (\$2,214 - 8%)**: Sharing 25% of membership dues with local chapters
- **Accounting & Administrative (\$2,034 - 8%)**: Includes accounting fees (\$578), PayPal fees (\$515), bank fees (\$176), PO Box rental (\$264), website hosting (\$95), postage (\$73), special projects (\$133), and other costs (\$200)

Plant Conference Announcements

2026 American Penstemon Society Meeting

Flagstaff, Arizona, will be the site of the 2026 joint meeting of the Arizona Native Plant Society (AZNPS) and the American Penstemon Society (APS). The dates are June 12-15. A planning committee made up of members of both organizations is in the process of developing the meeting itinerary. Meeting format will be a hybrid of traditional styles for the two organizations. More details will be forthcoming soon.

Botanical habitats around the Flagstaff area are isolated from other similar western regions. The result is an abundance of unique species, many of them with remarkable beauty. This is destined to be an outstanding meeting.

The meeting committee has been making arrangements with the AZNPS and more details will be provided later, but here are some highlights:

- Friday night—APS business meeting and gathering
- Saturday will be together with AZNPS—half-day field trip(s) in the morning and educational meetings in the afternoon at the Lowell Observatory
- Saturday afternoon/evening—social hour followed by a dinner with a speaker
- Sunday—field trips
- Monday—optional field trips

Hope to see you there! For more information, visit: <https://penstemons.org/index.php/annual-meetings> •

2026 Eriogonum Society Meeting

The 2026 meeting of the Eriogonum Society will be held in the botanically rich Siskiyou-Klamath area of southwestern Oregon and northwestern California, July 9–12. From our base near Selma, we will visit local botanical areas, traveling as far as Crescent City and Mount Ashland. Lodging and camping are available at our base camp at Whisper Canyon Ranch or in the towns of Cave Junction or Grants Pass.

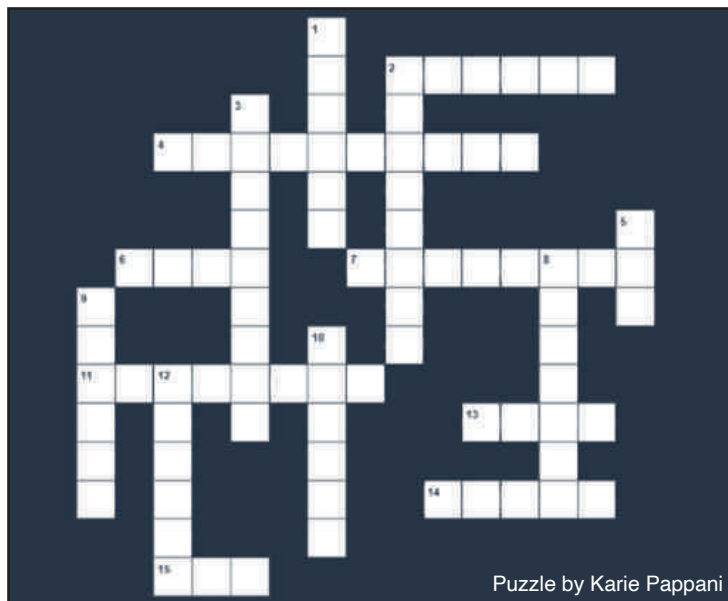


The Klamath Mountains are home to several endemic *Eriogonum* species, including Waldo, Siskiyou, Trinity, Congdon's, Jaynes Canyon, and Klamath Mountain buckwheats. The Rough & Ready and Eight Dollar Mountain Botanical Areas also feature a variety of locally endemic plants. We will take a break from the mountains at the Tolowa Dunes in Crescent City to see seaside buckwheat.

Eriogonum Society Meetings include a half-day workshop on *Eriogonum* identification, field trips to buckwheat hotspots, dinners with local speakers, and the chance to meet lots of buckwheat enthusiasts. Extend your trip with a visit to the Oregon Caves or a few days among the redwoods and Darlingtonia Bogs.

Register now at <https://erigonum.community> •

Botanical Puzzle



Puzzle by Karie Pappani

Across

2. Plant that is sensitive to the touch
4. Has large pads that float on top of the water (two words w/ a space between)
6. A "hip" plant
7. A delicate evening flower
11. An old, southern plant with a cone-like receptacle
13. Stands out in a desert oasis
14. A nutty family
15. Cork is made from the bark of this tree

Down

1. Contains a latex, which can be made into rubber, but is also a poisonous invader
2. A tree with milky sap, a few of its members are a fig, jackfruit, and bodhi (to enlighten you)
3. A succulent in Idaho
5. Has a banner, wings, and a keel
8. This vegetation may be found in an aquarium, not Ophelia's tragic, watery death, but close
9. Common ingredient in salads that has deadly relatives
10. Aspirin is derived from this shrub
12. A living fossil from China

Answers on Page 7

Announcement

2026 Idaho Botanical Foray

By Don Mansfield, Pahove Chapter

Greetings botanists and botanist "wannabe's"! The College of Idaho will host the annual Idaho Botanical Foray in Summer 2026. Details will come later, but here is what to do to save the date and prepare:

When: June 4–8

Where: North Fork Campground on the Mud Flat Road in Owyhee Co. (1 hour south of Jordan Valley, OR or 2.5 hours SE of Grandview, ID).

Who: Everyone is welcome to come for as long as they can during that time period. Tell folks that you don't have to be a botanist (or even a wannabe) to join the Foray.

Relevant Maps: BLM Map of Triangle (and likely also BLM Map of Riddle)

Campground Services: Few. Pit toilet, last I checked. Not much shade but some if you're lucky! A few picnic tables (I think). NO water. Bring your own. NOTE: This is a few miles east of the Oregon border and the only place in which to explore the deep Owyhee plateau and canyon country from a campground with a pit toilet!

Please feel free to share this announcement. For more information, contact Don Mansfield at 208-871-8170 or DMansfield@collegeofidaho.edu. •

INPS Membership Report

Chapter	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Calypso	23	42	40	33	37	28	21
Loasa	17	21	15	13	12	13	4
Pahove	173	194	257	214	273	245	123
Sawabi	35	48	62	64	39	57	35
White Pine	108	119	122	170	174	171	104
Wood River	41	52	65	72	73	73	44
At Large	12	11	16	9	29	29	23
Total Members	409	498	577	575	637	616	354

By Vicki Henderson

*Through February

Botanical Puzzle Answer Key (Page 6)

15. oak	12. gingko
14. sumac	10. willow
13. palm	9. tomato
11. magnolia	8. otella
7. primrose	5. pea
6. rose	3. stonecrop
4. water lily	2. mulberry
2. mimosa	1. spurge
Across	Down

Scientific Research

Informative New Journal Article Published on Slickspot Peppergrass

By Karie Pappani with information from Gillian Wigglesworth, Pahove Chapter

There is an informative new journal article that was published very recently on slickspot peppergrass, *Lepidium papilliferum*, a Threatened plant that occurs in southwestern Idaho. "Genomics and phylogenetics inform a species recovery plan for a threatened allopolyploid plant" is a technical genetic study. However, the overall summary explains that understanding the group origins and present day status of these plants provides another layer of information that can help in conservation efforts for slickspot peppergrass. More information on listed plant species in Idaho can be found in our 2023 December 50th Anniversary Edition of the Endangered Species Act, Special Issue of *Sage Notes*. •

Buerki S, Geisler M, Martinez P, Beck J, Robertson I. 2026. **Genomics and phylogenetics inform a species recovery plan for a threatened allopolyploid plant.** *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/botlinnean/boaf116>

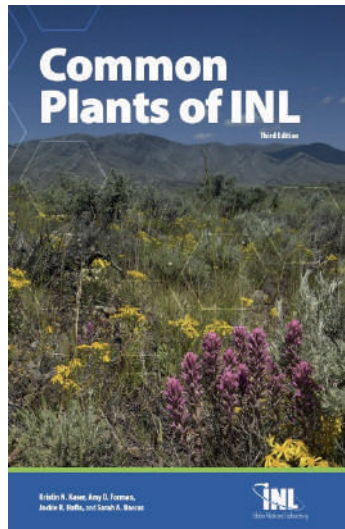
Abstract. In the USA, 944 plant taxa are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Brassicaceae is the fourth most threatened family with 41 listed species. This study focuses on slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*), a threatened Brassicaceae endemic to south-western Idaho that is experiencing significant population decline and reduced fecundity. Our goal is to support the establishment of a breeding and genetic rescue programme to restore populations of this species by addressing the following objectives: (i) confirm its genomic origin, (ii) investigate the importance of ancestral hybridization on its origin, (iii) propose a phylogeographic hypothesis to inform its restoration, and (iv) offer conservation and restoration guidelines. We sampled 44 *L. papilliferum* individuals from 27 element occurrences (populations) across three landscape management regions, as well as 16 individuals from closely related species. Using Illumina sequencing, we assessed genome size and heterozygosity, and conducted phylogenetic and genetic clustering analyses on nuclear and plastome data. Results showed that *L. papilliferum* has an allopolyploid origin, with genome size variation and genotype frequencies supporting segmental allopolyploidization. Genomic discordance suggested the occurrence of ancestral hybridization events. Nuclear phylogenetic analysis confirmed the species' monophyly, possibly because of genetic isolation driven by ecological speciation. We used genetic groups to redefine landscape management regions for the species, offering new boundaries for a forthcoming species recovery plan. This research provides essential genetic insights to inform the restoration of slickspot peppergrass populations and guide conservation efforts.

Common Plants of INL, 3rd Edition

Article and Photos by Kristin Kaser

Botany has a particular gift for humbling its admirers—whether you are a curious naturalist on a weekend hike or a field professional racing against a shrinking field season. There is a particular kind of frustration that every field professional knows: the unfamiliar plant that stops you cold mid-survey when the field season will not wait. You are on your knees, miniscule plant in one hand and hand lens in the other, squinting at hair structures and hoping you are not confusing two *Draba* species, wishing you could recall what you had been told months ago, because now you need to teach this season's technicians. These moments were the seeds from which the first edition of *Common Plants of INL* grew, and they are what continue to shape the guide through its newly released third edition.

The Idaho National Laboratory (INL) site sits on the eastern edge of the Snake River Plain, just south of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and is comparable in size to many national parks. The Department of Energy-Idaho (DOE-Idaho) manages over a half million acres there, where more than 600 plant species have been documented and new species are observed nearly every field season. Ecological monitoring at INL has deep roots. The cold shrub desert—lands with over 13,000 years of human history—entered the modern era during World War II, before the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) pivoted their use toward nuclear energy research and development. As nuclear research expanded across the country in the 1950s, many national laboratories established ecological monitoring programs to assess environmental conditions on and around their sites—programs that, in many cases, continue to this day. These efforts helped give ecology some of its first sustained, long-term field programs, and the AEC—now the DOE—has maintained that stewardship role at INL ever since. It is worth noting the INL landscape is remarkable, one of the most intact stretches of sagebrush shrub-steppe remaining in the region, preserved almost accidentally by the security perimeter inherent in the field of nuclear energy development.



For the field professionals tasked with documenting that landscape via vegetation monitoring, learning the plants was no small undertaking. Species identification was typically gained through intensive workshops led by trained botanists, or through partnerships with university professors who could assist with difficult identifications in the field. Having a botanist on staff was rarely an option. Over time, as those professional relationships shifted and access to botanical expertise became less reliable, field professionals leaned on what they already knew. They could interpret species descriptions well enough, but teaching that knowledge to the next wave of technicians proved far more difficult as they often lacked a background in botany. A site-specific guide began to feel necessary—one that would ensure everyone was calling the same plants by the same names.

The first edition of *Common Plants of INL* was published in 2005, featuring the most frequently encountered species across the sagebrush shrublands of the INL Site. It was purpose-built for ecological data collection—a teaching aid for early-career professionals and a quality assurance tool for maintaining consistency across datasets. Perhaps the most telling feature of the guide's original intent is the "Not to be Mistaken For" section accompanying every featured species—a direct acknowledgment, present since the first edition, that identification is as much about ruling species out as ruling them in. For a guide designed from the start as both a teaching tool and a quality assurance resource, that feature is often the first thing new users notice. INL's original photographs were captured on an early digital camera that saved images to a floppy disk—cutting-edge at the time, and now a fond reminder of how far the technology has come. A second edition followed in 2009, and both became valued references for field professionals working on the INL Site.

With the third edition, the goal was to make the guide more versatile and truly user-friendly for a broader audience. Rather than simply refreshing photographs or adding species, the entire structure was reconsidered. Every photograph was retaken on the INL Site itself, making each image a site-specific reference rather than a generalized stand-in, new line drawings were added while originals were enhanced, and 15 new species were included—bringing the total to 115. The three indices reflect how differently this guide thinks about its users—one organized by INL plant code, one by family, and one by common name—acknowledging that different profession-

als arrive at identification from entirely different starting points. Section dividers open with wildlife interacting with the plant functional group sections, quietly reinforcing the ecological relationships. Most significantly, the original identifying characteristic descriptions were reworked to actively teach botanical terminology rather than assume user mastery.

These identifying characteristic descriptions were restructured to function as teaching tools. Each botanical term is first defined, then immediately applied in context so users can review a definition while observing an example in front of them without needing the glossary. What makes this approach distinctive is the commitment to reintroducing and redefining terms every time they appear across featured species. It may sound repetitive, but



2023 SGHM habitat monitoring 1 – Jessica Day (front), Austin Housley (middle), and Azzayah Wall (back).

anyone who has taught field identification knows that repeated exposure to vocabulary in context is precisely how it sticks. This iterative approach serves both technical users who want

precision and early-career professionals who are still building their botanical vocabulary. Corner tags flag nativity and noxious status at a glance, a bee symbol identifies important pollinator species, and every featured species closes with a fun fact—a small but deliberate reminder that the plants being documented are worth knowing beyond their codes.

The release of the third edition feels especially timely as digital and AI-based identification tools become more common in ecological fieldwork. These tools can be genuinely useful—I even used AI tools to help review this article for grammatical clarity—but they are only as reliable as the person interpreting their output. A field professional without grounding in botanical terminology is poorly equipped to question a misidentification or recognize when a suggested result does not quite fit. The third edition of *Common Plants of INL* aims to cultivate that foundational knowledge—equipping the next generation of field professionals to use both traditional references and modern tools with confidence and healthy skepticism.

The guide is intended to remain fully functional for anyone curious about the regional flora of the eastern Snake River Plain, from seasoned botanists to first-year technicians. But the deeper hope is that it offers a transferable template—a model for how site-specific field

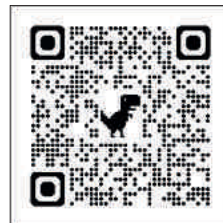
guides elsewhere might bridge the gap between technical botanical language and people who most need to use it.

This project began in 2020 with what I naively imagined would be a two-to-three month effort. Five years later, I can say with certainty that whatever value this guide holds belongs as much to my co-authors as to me. They sharpened my writing, conceived the iterative terminology approach that defines this edition, and kept the project moving through its many twists and turns. I am genuinely grateful.



2023 SGHM habitat monitoring 8 – Austin Housley (left) and Nina Keck (right)

The third edition is freely available as a downloadable resource. Hard copies were produced in limited quantities and may not always be available upon request. However, the electronic version's bonus is its flexibility to be downloaded onto field electronics or even a technician's phone and it is fully searchable using the "Find" function (CTRL + F) when all one can remember is a partial name or wants to locate all the species bearing siliques. It is accessible at the link below or by scanning the QR code.
https://inl.gov/content/uploads/2024/11/22-50913_CommonPlants_R4-Quick-Load.pdf. Also find it at ResearchGate https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396776325_Common_Plants_of_the_INL_Third_Edition •



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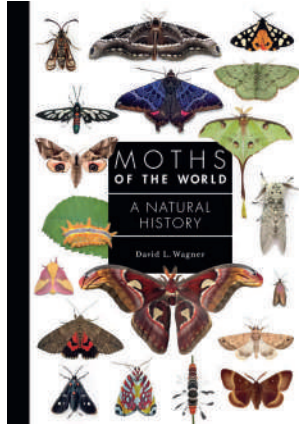
NorthIdahoHerbalFestival.com

Book Announcements

Moths of the World: A Natural History By David L. Wagner

A marvelously illustrated guide to the world's moths.

With more than 160,000 named species, moths are a familiar sight to most of us, flickering around lights, pollinating wildflowers about meadows and gardens, and as unwelcome visitors to our woolens. They come in a variety of colors, from earthy greens and browns to gorgeous patterns of infinite variety, and range in size from enormous atlas moths to tiny leafmining moths. *Moths of the World* is an essential guide to this astonishing group of insects, highlighting their remarkable diversity, miraculous metamorphoses, marvelous caterpillars, and much more.



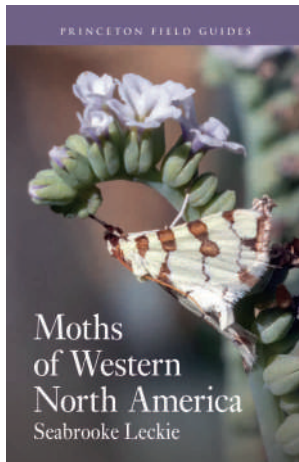
- Features hundreds of breathtaking color photos of moths from around the world
- Covers anatomy, evolution, life cycle, behavior, ecology, and conservation
- Profiles species from every major family, showcasing their endless variety of sizes, colors, shapes, and fascinating life histories
- Discusses habitats, distribution, and hostplant associations
- Written by a world-renowned expert

For more information: https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691248288/moths-of-the-world?srltid=AfmBOor2YQryvjeNFmvIz2gQjXDmT_ZK4-cY5XiDyufHts77vET1toAN

Moths of Western North America By Seabrooke Leckie

The first photographic field guide to present the moths of western North America as they are found in nature, making it easy to use for novices and experts alike.

Western North America is home to a surprising array of moth species that come in a variety of colors and sizes. This richly illustrated field guide covers 1,900 of the most commonly occurring species in the region, from the United States–Mexico border north to Edmonton, Alberta, and central British Columbia. Images on the full-color plates are marked with arrows to help users quickly know the most important features to look for, while facing-page species accounts highlight these features and, when applicable, how they differ from those of similar species. Whether you are a beginning moth



enthusiast or a seasoned observer in the field, *Moths of Western North America* is the ultimate photographic guide to these marvelous insects.

- Covers 1,900 of the most common species in western North America
- Features more than 2,000 spectacular color photos of live specimens, at rest, including examples of variations and sexual dimorphism where present
- Species accounts describe key identification features and include information on caterpillar host plants, the time of year in which adults may be found, and the probability of encountering each species
- Includes a range map for each species
- Provides invaluable tips for newcomers on how to get started observing moths

For more information: <https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691232881/moths-of-western-north-america?srltid=AfmBOopcg4skH5OOdGbqAujcXFjILbwLiugOi1jgya2Xi4G2jW1sX86R>

Moth Monitoring Projects

Butterflies and Moths of North America (BAMONA) is an ambitious effort to collect, store, and share species information and occurrence data. You can participate by taking and submitting photographs of butterflies, moths, and caterpillars.

<https://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/>

The Montana Moth Project seeks to document the diversity, distribution, abundance, and ecology of moths in Montana through scientific research, education, and citizen science. Moths comprise a significant part of global biodiversity and serve ubiquitous roles in terrestrial ecosystems as herbivores, pollinators, and prey. <https://www.montanamothproject.org/>

Pacific Northwest Moths is a comprehensive source of information about more than 1,200 species of moths.

<https://pnwmoths.biol.wvu.edu/>

Robert "Bob" Steele (1941-2025) A Tribute to Founding Member of INPS Pahove Chapter

By Craig Steele

Robert Wilmer Steele, 84, of Boise, Idaho passed away peacefully on the evening of September 23, 2025. He was passionate about the great outdoors, the study of forest health, and the propagation of conifers.

Bob was born on February 26, 1941 in Norristown, Pennsylvania, to Robert Harvey Steele and Naomi (Marple) Steele. He grew up in the rural community of Worchester, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Norristown High School in 1959. After graduation he immediately began pursuing his love of horticulture by completing a certificate of horticulture from Penn State University and working at local nurseries.

He first moved out west in 1962 to join a US Forest Service Hotshot Crew for firefighting based in John Day, Oregon. He would spend his days patrolling rugged and remote terrain and fondly recalled that when visiting town, he could still receive silver dollars in his pocket change. These early experiences undoubtedly helped solidify his love and nostalgia for the west.

In 1963, he enlisted with the US Army, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He expected to be sent to fight in Vietnam but was stationed in Bad Tölz, Germany, where he spent three years training as a paratrooper and as a radioman specializing in Morse code.

After being honorably discharged, he used the GI Bill to complete a B.S. in Forestry (1969) and M.S. in Forest Ecology (1971) at the University of Idaho. This launched his career as a research forester with the US Forest Service at the Intermountain Research Station in Boise,



Idaho, where he focused on habitat type classifications of plant communities in the Intermountain West. He went on to publish dozens of articles and technical reports on forest ecology and plant communities.

Bob was an accomplished woodsman capable of producing a stringer of trout from almost any mountain stream and he regularly harvested elk and deer with his bow and rifle. Unfortunately, he was also known to produce dubious batches of jerky from the leftover meat of his big game.

His graduate research took him to the North Fork of the Clearwater River just after construction of Dworshak Dam was completed, which resulted in him racing ahead of the rising water levels of the reservoir to document plant communities before they were inundated.

His passion for native plants led him to become a charter member of the Idaho Native Plant Society (INPS) and he served as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the inauguration of the Pahove (Boise) Chapter of the INPS in 1978.

After "retiring" from the USFS, he opened the Conifer Corner Tree Farm in Eagle, Idaho. He specialized in propagating species and varieties of conifers that would grow well in the climate of the Treasure Valley. Many of his trees were used in landscaping during the construction boom during the 2010s.

He finally closed his business and retired a few years ago after a decline in health due to Parkinson's disease. Bob's passion for native plants was inherited by his grandson, Alan, who has attended several INPS field trips and forays, helping to keep the passion of Idaho's native plants alive.

Bob is survived by his younger brother Dave, his son Craig, daughter-in-law Maria, and grandson Alan. •

Karl Holte (1931-2025)

Rememberances of a True Naturalist, Environmentalist, and Mentor

By Janet and Ed Bala, with Ardys Holte, Sawabi Chapter; Photos by Dick Anderson

On December 5, 2025, the scientific community at large, and especially Idaho botanists, lost a true advocate, partner and friend in Karl Holte. Dr. Holte was a Professor of Botany and Curator of the Ray J. Davis Herbarium at Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho, for 34



years, followed by another 11 years as Emeritus Curator and volunteer botany instructor.

Karl was born on a small farm in Northwest Iowa near Graettinger to immigrant Norwegian parents Karl J. Holte and Petra K. Hansen Holte.

His education included Waldorf Junior College, Forest City, Iowa; Augustana University, Sioux Falls, South Dakota (BS, History, Biology); Northern State University of Iowa, Cedar Falls (MS, Biology); University of Iowa, Iowa City (PhD, Systematic Botany). His Iowa summers were spent at Lakeside Laboratory in Wahpeton. He served two years in the United States Army, stationed in Hanau, Germany.

Karl was one of the original members of the Idaho Native Plant Society and was instrumental in re-vitalizing the Sawabi Chapter in the early 2000's. Karl and his wife, Ardys, always hosted a spring walk and potluck dinner at their house as soon as the buttercups bloomed. They also hosted a Christmas potluck dinner. The Holtes were great hosts and always had plenty of room in their hearts and at their table for everyone.

Karl was always more than willing to lead field trips, and he enjoyed them immensely. Naturally, Karl never met a plant he wasn't interested in, so the field trips occasionally took considerable time exiting trailhead parking lots. In addition to organizing, hosting, and leading field trips Karl made the long winters more interesting by conducting monthly chapter meetings featuring travelogues, slides, and other interesting discussions.

Dr. Holte began teaching at Idaho State University in Pocatello in the fall of 1965. He taught both undergraduate and graduate courses, including Plant Systematics, Dendrology, Agrostology, Spring and Fall Flora, as well as general ecology and biology courses. In addition, Karl succeeded Ray J. Davis as curator of the herbarium named in his honor. Many of his graduate students con-

ducted research for their theses on floristic studies of various regions, including one in Ecuador. For 21 summers he taught field botany courses at Malheur Field Station in southeastern Oregon.

In addition to his regular class load, Karl taught a Natural History of the Southwest Deserts class for over 20 years. It was offered as a special topics class so students could take it more than once. It was a class that brought together students, community members, several tribal members and several professors from disciplines such as geology and art. Karl was a great believer that everyone should know something about geology as well as

the native animals and plants around us. The class met weekly during the semester and culminated in a 10-day desert camping trip over the spring break. Each student shared a subject

they had researched, including plants, animals, geology, Native American history, cooking, conservation, engineering and so many other subjects. Guided by Karl's enthusiasm for learning about such a wide range of topics and for the people who found these things interesting, every voice was elevated and valued. Many of these students became long-time INPS members and often talked about all they learned and the lifelong friendships they made from these trips.

Karl officially retired as a full-time professor at the end of the 1997-98 academic year. As Emeritus Professor, Dr. Holte continued to teach Spring and Fall Flora classes for several more years. Karl was known for comprehensive testing, often taking a full evening. He made things much better for the students by providing waffles and



coffee, which he made in the classroom. He also taught an informal Friday morning class (fondly called the Friday Key Class) on methods of identifying plants. This class continues to this day with enthusiastic volunteers continuing to key out plants and help the herbarium with current collections. Karl frequently taught Elderhostel classes



(now known as Road Scholar classes), New Knowledge Adventures classes and various workshops. In addition, he did consulting work on plant communities and led many Idaho Native Plant Society field trips.

A staunch environmentalist, Karl served as member and often president of numerous environmental groups, including the Idaho Wildlife Association, Citizens Environmental Council, Idaho Orchid Society, Southeastern Idaho Rod and Gun Club, and the Malheur Field Station Consortium. He has also served on the boards of directors of these organizations, as well as the Idaho Museum of Natural History and Idaho Academy of Science.

Karl published numerous botanical studies, including some with other researchers. Notable was a revision and update of Dr. Ray J. Davis's 1934 *Botany of Idaho*. Co-authors were Emeritus Professor Bruce Ronald and Karl's former graduate student and long-time friend, James M. Glennon. He also completed requested studies on areas that were being changed to determine the impact on the vegetation.

If you knew Karl, you knew he had an infectious sense of humor. He always had a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye. Karl's love of humor and its ability to encourage interest in the subject being discussed provoked a number of quirky words: 'bigger-maker' for a magnifying lens; 'louder-maker' for a megaphone; defining the



protrusions from douglas fir cones as 'mouse feet'; stating that evening primrose flowers blushed pink in the morning because they 'had had sex' during the night. Anything in the plant world that related to or resembled the human world would prompt his comments. His students came to expect such oddities and watched for them in discussions. He used anything he could to prompt their interest in the subject at hand. In addition to teaching aids, Karl also had a lot of humorous sayings that made being around him a joy: (To one's neighbor) 'Fine display of *Taraxcum officinale* you have there!' As the best way to learn the Latin for Mountain Lover (*Paxistima myrsinites*) 'Pa kissed Ma, mercy in the nighties' and 'Here, taste this' for antelope bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*); "Obviously,

that plant didn't read the book" referring to unusual findings; 'Mad Honeys have alternate leaves,' referring to specific genera.

Janet: I was lucky enough to know Karl as a teacher, mentor, friend and colleague. Ed and I took his Spring Flora class together in 2000 and got to be part of a family of learners. That is how he treated us, as a family. We made many friends going on field trips and taking tests and just learning so much about our local flora. He always introduced his students to the Native Plant Society and many of us joined and are now long-time members. My introduction to the Sawabi Chapter was their annual meeting where they needed to have a re-spark of leadership. That evening Wendy Velman was voted as president, Cathy Frishmann as vice president, Jenae Dixon as secretary, and I was voted in as Treasurer. We were a bunch of newbies and with the help of the long-time members, we got our chapter back on track.

After I finished my degree in botany, I started a master's in biology. Karl offered me a research assistantship at the herbarium and that's where I knew my dream job would be. As luck would have it, my master's advisor, Charles 'Rick' Williams, took over from Karl as Curator of Life Sciences collections and after a few years a job opened in the herbarium for a full-time collections manager. I continued to see Karl every Friday for key class. I took over teaching Spring and Fall Flora after Karl retired, and I spent many hours with Karl hiking all the trails surrounding Pocatello in preparation for teaching those classes. Karl at age 80 could always out-hike me, talking all the way, and looking at plants with our 'bigger makers.'

Karl is survived by his wife of 68 years, Ardys Holte, and their three daughters, Amber Anderson (John, Pocatello), Heather Hoffman (Jeremy, Salt Lake City), and Kara McGee (Kraig II, Boise); plus six grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Karl's birthday, April 25, 2026, in the Idaho State University Alumni Building on campus.

Ed and I thank Ardys Holte, Paul Allen, Jan O'Neil, and the Idaho Museum of Natural History archives, for contributing 'Karlisms', thoughts, memories, and history. All photos were taken by the late Dick Anderson. •



Chapter News

CALYPSO CHAPTER

The public is invited to all chapter activities. Chapter activities are subject to change—watch chapter emails for updates. Contact Derek Antonelli to be added to our email list.

When: Chapter meetings are held the first Wednesday evenings of March, April, May*, and October at 7:00 pm. Summer plant walks are held monthly, April–August.

Where: Meetings will be held in the IDFG Hunter Education Building, 2885 W Kathleen Ave, Coeur d'Alene.

Contact: For more information about Calypso Chapter activities, contact Derek Antonelli at (208) 691-1070, ds.ca.antonelli@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

April 1: The presentation topic for this meeting has not been determined yet. Please submit topic suggestions.

April 18: Earth Day Celebration, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, Coeur d'Alene Library. Our chapter will have a booth at the event. You can help assist at the booth or simply stop by to take in the event and participate in the short plant walk on Tubbs Hill.

April 26: April Plant Walk/Bioblitz. We will explore the Idaho Fish and Game property on the south end of Lake Cololla. Those who want can document the plants and animals we see on iNaturalist as a part of the worldwide City Nature Challenge BioBlitz. We will carpool from the northeast corner of Hayden Walmart at 12:30 and plan to arrive at the site at 1:00 pm.

May 13: Calypso Chapter meeting. The presentation topic for this meeting has not been determined yet. *Note this is not the first Wednesday of May.

May 13: Hayden Arbor Day. Our chapter will support this massive school event with a booth. You can help us out by taking a shift in the booth.

May Plant Walk: Date, times, and locations have not been determined yet.

June Plant Walk: Date, times, and locations have not been determined yet.

LOASA CHAPTER

When: Regular meetings are paused currently.

Contact: For more information about Loasa Chapter activities, please contact Bill Bridges, (208) 293-2426, bridgesbill34@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Events

March 19, April 16, May 21: The chapter will meet at Orton Botanical Garden on third Thursdays at 6:00 pm.

PAHOVE CHAPTER

When: Chapter meetings and presentations are now the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm.

Where: Meetings are held at our new meeting location, Idaho Fish & Game Headquarters (IDFG HQ), 600 S. Walnut St. (no longer at the MK Nature Center) and via Zoom for those who can't make it in-person. If you have to miss the presentation entirely, they are also usually uploaded to the INPS youtube channel (@idahonativeplantsociety3927).

This is a treasure trove for anyone who wants to go back and revisit some of their favorite presentations of the past. Current information and more details on presentations and other chapter activities will be sent to members via email, and also posted on the Pahove Chapter webpage.

Contact: For more information, visit our chapter's website: <https://idahonativeplants.org/pahove/>, or email: Karie Pappani at pahove.chapter.president@gmail.com

Chapter News

Pahove thanks the 128 members who have joined/renewed through February. They make our efforts possible, including \$4,000 recently donated to our state's four major herbaria. We also awarded a \$1000 education and enrichment grant to a lucky person to attend a botanically related conference or webinar via our Education and Enrichment award.

Snake River Plains Herbarium Work Days

Local botanists and friends can attend regular group work days every other Monday at 10:00 am at the Snake River Plains Herbarium (SRP), located in the Raptor Research Center on Royal Blvd in Boise. The idea is that a regular set time will allow us to combine work in the herbarium, whether on individual research projects or volunteer curation, with the opportunity for socializing among ourselves; it will hopefully also provide an access point into herbarium research and curation by people who otherwise aren't sure where to start. For more information, email Pahove.chapter@gmail.com and we will put you in touch with Barbara Ertter who coordinates the SRP work days.

Upcoming Events

April 8: Crista O'Conner will present "What Does a Forest Service Botanist Do?"

April 11: Education Table at Franz Witte Open House.

April 18: Pahove will participate in the City of Boise Earth Day Celebration at the WaterShed.

April 24-25: The INPS Pahove Annual Plant Sale will be held once again at MK Nature Center.

Past Events

January 8: Nate Collins and Josie Meyer spoke on "Environmental Education and Stewardship at Bogus Basin."

December 10: Rachel Newton presented "The Flora of the Southern Tip of South America."

February 11: Speaker Bethany Muffley talked about "Ada County's Noxious Weed Program."

March 11: Barbara Ertter and Carol Prentice presented "A Botanical Web of Historical Women in Idaho and Beyond."

SAWABI CHAPTER

We welcome the public to our chapter's informative spring programs and warm weather plant walks.

When: All plant walks and spring programs are no longer prescheduled but will be announced via email.

Where: Programs are presented in Pond Student Union Building classrooms, ISU Campus, Pocatello.

Contact: For more information contact Paul Allen at pokyallen@hotmail.com.

WHITE PINE CHAPTER

When: Meetings are typically held the second Tuesday of the month, September through April. Current information is posted on our chapter webpage:

<https://www.whitepineinps.org/WPSchedule.html>

Where: Meetings are held in-person in the 1912 Center Lecompte Auditorium (2nd floor) in Moscow and on Zoom. Video recordings of meetings are made available on our YouTube channel a few days after each meeting.

Contact: For more information about White Pine Chapter activities, write us at INPS, White Pine Chapter, PO Box 8481, Moscow, ID 83843 or email us at whitepine.chapter@gmail.com. Visit the chapter website (<https://www.whitepineinps.org/>) for upcoming event information and visit our YouTube Channel for video recordings of past talks (@whitepinechapterinps9555).

Past Events

March 17: Nancy Miller, INPS board member, presented on "Plants and Birds of Iceland."

Upcoming Events

April 21: Presentation by Nathan Blackburn, Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation and University of Idaho faculty members Chris Zajchowski and Mary Engels: "Conservation and Development at McCroskey State Park". 7:00 pm.

WOOD RIVER CHAPTER

The Wood River Chapter includes all of Blaine County.

When: We love to get out on trails throughout the year but generally focus on speaker presentations in the cold months and field trips in the warm(er) months. Most of our events are open to all...please join us! Besides scheduled events, we offer pop-up events at the last minute, which we announce via our email newsletter.

Where: Please see our website or email newsletter for detailed information on all of our upcoming events.

Contact: For more information about chapter activities, visit our webpage, <https://idahonativeplants.org/wood-river/>. You can also contact us and subscribe to our newsletter: woodriver@idahonativeplants.org

Past Events

December 13: The Wood River Chapter started off this year with... a party to celebrate our active 2025 season! As we have done in the past, we invited all our chapter members and friends to an end-of-year potluck and Annual Members Meeting. In addition to voting in a slate of officers for the new year, we shared a delicious potluck dinner and played a great game of "Botany Bingo," and gave plant-themed prizes to everyone who filled their bingo cards. About 20 members attended, in addition to our 10-member board of directors.

January: Miranda Reinson, a habitat specialist with Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game (IDFG) in Jerome, gave a presentation to the public at Hailey Town Center West. She described how IDFG is managing lands to help them recover from wildfires and other disturbances. She talked about planting sagebrush and other species and using newly developed herbicides such as Rejuvra, which are specially formulated to control invasive annual grasses and weedy forbs and allow native grasses and forbs to regenerate after wildfire.

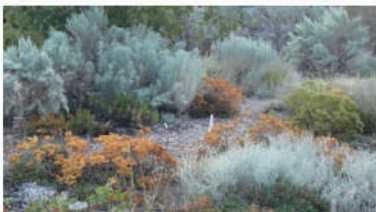
February 11: Long-time native plant gardener and horticulturist Mindy Ryder gave a talk about landscaping with native plants. Her talk focused on supporting native pollinators and she shared her experience with different local species with which she has had success with. Mindy has given this presentation in the past for the Wood River Chapter, and it is always well attended and well received.

February 14: Our chapter secretary, Ted Stout, led a hike at Craters of the Moon National Monument. The hike initially was to be a snowshoe adventure in the park, but an almost complete lack of snow turned it into a normal hike with regular boots. This made it possible to identify shrubs that would normally be covered with snow, and even native forbs which, although low to the ground, were identifiable.

Upcoming Events

July 10-12: This year's Annual Meeting (and campout) will be hosted by the Loasa Chapter, with assistance from our chapter. Please refer to the official announcement on Page 3 of this issue of *Sage Notes*. •

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Idaho Native Plant Society Membership Form

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- ☐ Calypso (Coeur d'Alene)
- ☐ Loasa (Twin Falls)
- ☐ Pahove (Boise)
- ☐ Sawabi (Pocatello)
- ☐ Upper Snake (Idaho Falls) - *Inactive*
- ☐ White Pine (Moscow)
- ☐ Wood River (Ketchum/Sun Valley)
- ☐ No Chapter

Membership Level:

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- ☐ Senior \$15
- ☐ Individual \$20
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- ☐ Patron \$100+

Please indicate if your membership is: ☐ New ☐ Renewal
I would prefer to receive **Sage Notes**: ☐ Print ☐ Electronic ☐ Both

Send completed form and full remittance to:

Idaho Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 9451, Boise, ID 83707

Memberships run calendar year. New memberships enrolled after June 1 include the following year. **Renew or join online:** <https://idahonativeplants.org/membership/>

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Advertising: Advertisements help reach environmentally-minded, native plant-loving customers and help support IN-PS. Prices: 1/8 page = \$5, 1/4 page = \$8, 1/2 page = \$15. Submit ads electronically to the editor (JPG, TIFF, PSD or PDF files). Send payment to: Sage Notes Ads, P.O. Box 9451, Boise ID 83707.

Past Issues: Available online.
<https://idahonativeplants.org/sage-notes/>