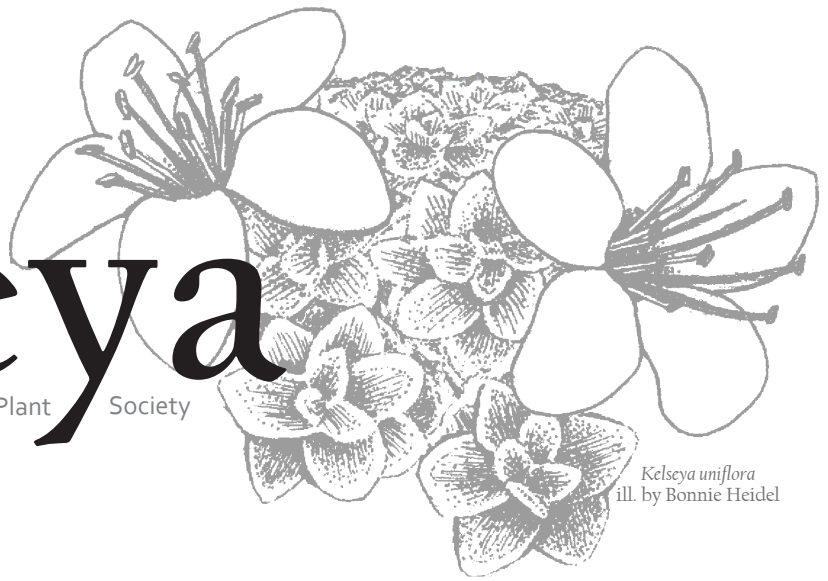


Kelseya

Newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society



Kelseya uniflora
ill. by Bonnie Heidel

How Lupines Talk to Bees

by Peter Lesica

Lupines are common and pretty much ubiquitous in Montana. However, it was only this year while photographing Wyeth's lupine (*Lupinus wyethii* = *L. polyphyllus burkei*) that I noticed how the flowers change as they mature. Most of our lupines have blue flowers, but the center of the reflexed banner petal is white; at least sometimes it's white. Lupine flowers are borne in long racemes with the lowest flowers blooming first. As the upper flowers open, the central banner spot of the older, lowest flowers turns from white to purple. Slowly flowers with banner spots that have turned purple are found higher and higher in the inflorescence as it matures. So what's that all about?

Several researchers have explored aspects of this question. Anthony Stead at the University of California working with white-leaved lupine (*L. albifrons*) found that the change in pigmentation from white to purple is not caused by simple withering because young, white-spotted flowers do not become purple-spotted if they are removed from the plant. Rather the pigmentation change is a response to ethylene produced by the pistil (female part of the flower) after it has been pollinated and is no longer receptive. On average, flowers with a purple banner spot have just 1-2% of the pollen as white-spotted flowers, and most of this is not viable. So the change to purple acts as a signal that the flower is done. Okay, so who cares?

Bumblebees care, and they are lupine's principal pollinators. Lupines provide lots of pollen but no nectar. Bumblebees collect the protein-rich lupine pollen to feed

continued on page 3



Wyeth's lupine (*Lupinus wyethii*). Photo by Peter Lesica

Potholes to Sugarbowls:
MNPS 25th Annual Meeting in
the "Prairie of the Knobs" June 29-July 1,
Lubrecht Experimental Forest, Greenough, MT
Watch for complete coverage of Field Trips,
Award Winners and more, coming in the Fall
issue of *Kelseya*.

Chapter Events

Calypso Chapter

Saturday, 7/17-7/18.

MNPS members are invited for a weekend of "Botany by Canoe" with Thomas J. Elpel, author of "Botany in a Day" and founder of the Jefferson River Canoe Trail (www.JeffersonRiver.org), a chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. JRCT is sponsoring a public canoe float on the Jefferson River on Saturday, July 17, followed by a potluck and optional overnight camp out. MNPS members can join or continue downriver with Tom on Sunday, July 18, for additional paddling, botanizing and foraging. Bring your own canoe if you can; if not, Tom may have extra canoes to loan out at no charge. Info and RSVP: Tom, thomasjelpel@gmail.com.

Saturday, 7/28, 9 am.

Sheila Thompson leads an all-day field trip to explore the Flint Creek mountains west of Deer Lodge. We'll look for summer wildflowers, including prairie smoke, lupine, larkspur, pussytoes and others, then head west and hopefully have time to hike a mile to beautiful Rock Creek Falls. This field trip requires a high-clearance vehicle. Meet at the I-90 gas station north of town. Bring lunch, water and the usual Montana field trip gear: field manuals, rain gear, bug spray, sunblock. Info: Sheila, 846-1855.

Clark Fork Chapter

Members have planned a feast of field trips and more for MNPS' 25th Annual Meeting. Join us June 28-July 1 on the grounds of Lubrecht Experimental Forest in the glorious Blackfoot Valley. Go to www.mtnativeplants.org for details.

To Chapter members who are frequent (or even infrequent) Facebook-ers: be sure to "Like" us, invite friends, and maybe post some native plant pictures or let us know what is going on in your corner of the native plant world. Go to www.facebook.com/MNPSClarkForkChapter. Ken Stolz will be using Facebook to post events, but also will continue to send e-mails to the 225 good folks on his list.

Saturday, 7/7, 9:00 am.

Check out Surprise Draw and bushwhack up to Grouse Lake in the Kootenai National Forest on this day-long field trip led by Peter Lesica. This will be a good trip to refresh or expand your knowledge of moist forest wildflowers and wetland plants, some of which are found nowhere else in Montana. Be prepared to get your feet wet as well as to tramp through forested understory. Bring all the usual food, water, bug dope, etc. that you might need for several hours in the woods. Meet at the Rest Area at the junction of US Highway 2 and MT Hwy 56 (Bull River/ Lake

highway) about three miles southeast of Troy. From there we will carpool to Keeler Creek and work our way towards the Idaho border. Info: Peter at 728-8740.

Thursday, 10/11, 7:30 pm. Digital Macro Photography Demystified. Digital cameras have made photography a lot easier, but closeups of wildflowers are still a challenge. Clare Beelman and Ken Stolz, two of our most dedicated photographers, will give us important tips and some hands-on help. Bring your camera and the instruction book that came with it and join us. Rm Log, Gallagher Business Bldg, UM Campus.

Flathead Chapter

Tuesday, 7/17, 10 am. Glacier National Park Weed Blitz. Join other helpful citizens in removing invasive plants from priority sites in Glacier National Park. Park biologist, Dawn LaFleur, will train participants on identification and effective hand-pulling techniques for targeted weed species. Meet at the West Glacier Community Building. Space is limited. Info and sign up: 888-7864.

Thursday, 7/26, 10 am. Sprunger-Whitney Nature Trail. Join botanist Anne Morley to learn about the plants, birds and wildlife habitats along this gentle, two-mile trail that meanders through low-elevation old growth forest in the Swan Valley with botanist/naturalist Anne Morley. Meet at the trailhead. Bring water, lunch and appropriate clothing for unpredictable weather. Info and directions: Anne at 886-2242.

Saturday, 9/8, time TBA.

Mission Mountain Wildflower Hike. Maria Mantas, botanist/ecologist for The Nature Conservancy, will lead a high-elevation hike featuring alpine and subalpine wildflowers. The exact location to be decided later this summer. Info: Maria at 837-0066, mmantas@TNC.ORG.

Kelsey Chapter

Kelsey Chapter member Jeff Van Tine leads a series of Montana Wilderness Association walks on the Rocky Mountain Front that will emphasize Species of Concern (SOCs), the Natural Resources Information Service (NRIS) Database, and an attempt to gather SOC information on the Rocky Mountain Front. These trips are designed for people who would like to know how to identify rare or threatened species. Leaders will give tips on how to identify species of concern and how to report a sighting. Please bring food, water and a camera if you'd like. These hikes are not appropriate for young children. Reservations required;



see details in the MWA summer field trip guide or online in the spring issue of *Kelseya*, www.mtnativeplants.org. For specific information about dates, hike locations and goals, contact Jeff Van Tine 640-4301, jeff@jeffvantine.com.

Saturday, 7/14. Rare Plants and Animals on the Front near Bynum. Join us for exploring west of Bynum on this easy, fun and informative walk. Reservations by July 7. Info: see above.

Sunday, 7/29. Rare Plants and Animals on the Front near Dupuyer. Join us for exploring west of Dupuyer on this easy, fun and informative walk. Reservations by July 16. Info: see above.

Maka Flora Chapter

Saturday, 8/18, 10 am. Brush Lake State Park.

Join Chapter members for a day of clean-up around the lake, plant walks, swimming and boating. Bring garbage bags and gloves, something for a potluck picnic lunch, canoes or

other water craft if you want (can be helpful in picking up lake trash). The lake has a sandy beach and good swimming; camping is allowed. Look online at <http://stateparks.mt.gov/parks/visit/brushLake/> for more information about the park and directions. Info: Doug Smith at 483-5431 or Libby Knotts at 774-3778.

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Since last fall, the chapter has held monthly programs on such diverse topics as identifying native plants, prairie mushrooms, Native American botany, how to use a new herbaria database (www.pnwherbaria.org), prairie plant conservation issues, pollinators, and an annual Knapweed Pull.

Saturday, 7/14, 9 am. Spanish Peaks Field Trip.

Gretchen Rupp will show us natives that grow at higher elevations. The Spanish Peaks Foothill Trail is moderately difficult. Bring lunch, water, raingear, etc. Meet at the old Safeway Parking lot, Main and 10th, to carpool.

Info: Joanne at 586-9585.

Lupines, cont'd

their young. Barbara Schaal studied Texas lupine (*L. texensis*) and found that bumblebees can and do use the color of the banner spot to guide them to the flowers with the biggest reward, so they visit flowers with a white-spotted banner and avoid those with purple spots. This arrangement helps the bees because they don't waste their time visiting empty flowers. It also helps the lupines because bees will be more likely to visit and pollinate flowers with receptive pistils. But if a lupine plant "wants" to keep bees from visiting already-pollinated flowers, why not just drop the petals instead of evolving this color signaling system?

David Gori at the University of Washington answered this question by observing bees visiting silvery lupine (*L. argenteus*). He found that lupine inflorescences with more flowers attract more bees from afar, regardless of whether the flowers have a white or purple banner spot. But once a bee arrives at the inflorescence she preferentially visits the flowers with white-spotted banners. The fact that larger inflorescences attract more insects has been observed for many species of plants, and lupines are taking advantage of bee behavior by maintaining corollas of already-pollinated flowers but making them identifiable at close range. What all of this tells me is that lupines invented stoplights; only they use white instead of green to tell their clients to go.

Further reading

Gori, D. F. 1989. "Floral color change in *Lupinus argenteus* (*Fabaceae*): Why should plants advertise the location of unrewarding flowers to pollinators?" *Evolution* 43: 870-881.

Schaal, B. A. and W. T. Leverich. 1980. "Pollination and banner markings in *Lupinus texensis* (*Leguminosae*)." *Southwestern Naturalist* 25:280-282.

Stead, A. D. and M. S. Reid. 1990. "The effect of pollination and ethylene on the colour change of the banner spot of *Lupinus albifrons* Bentham flowers." *Annals of Botany* 66: 655-663.



News & Notes

2012 Backyard Bioblitz Results

The second Missoula Backyard Bioblitz was held on a rainy evening the last day of May. Ten Native Plant Society botanists plus a free-lance photographer inventoried the naturalized plants of Peter Lesica's 50 by 150-foot yard. The crew identified 43 vascular species and three mosses. This was a 26% increase over the 2002 total, so Pete's yard is becoming more diverse! There were six native species: yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), daisy fleabane (*Erigeron divergens*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), ballhead waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum capitatum*), desert parsley (*Lomatium dissectum*) and pineapple weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*). The other 37 species were exotic, including three species of speedwell (*Veronica arvensis*, *V. persica*, *V. serpyllifolia*). After we were all well hydrated, we adjourned to the kitchen for pie and cheesecake. Just like 10 years ago, Kelly had two pieces—some things never change.

Clark Fork Chapter Native Plant Sale

On a cold and breezy Saturday morning at the end of May, the Clark Fork chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society held its annual fundraising plant sale at the Missoula Farmers' Market. More than 40 species and 900 individual plants were raised from seed and cuttings for the sale. Despite the cold weather that caused fewer shoppers at the Market, the Clark Fork volunteers raised nearly \$1,800 for the Chapter. Seedlings are growing and fresh seed is being collected in preparation for next year's sale.

Hot Off the Press

"Manual of Montana Vascular Plants," by Peter Lesica with contributions from M. Lavin and P.F. Stickney, (779 pp., 2000 + maps + 128 plates.).

The vegetation of Montana is diverse, due primarily to the size of the state and its great topographic relief that provide strong variation in environmental factors. Montana has a relatively large flora for a northern continental region as a result of being at the intersection of the Cordilleran, Great Plains and Boreal floristic provinces. This book is a comprehensive field guide to the more than 2,500 species of Montana's vascular plants, containing descriptions as well as habitat and distribution information based on specimens housed at the state's two major herbaria. Portraits or illustrations of diagnostic structures by Debbie McNeil, Rich Adams and Claire Emery are provided for nearly one-third of the species.

MNPS will have a limited supply of books available to MNPS members at a 20% discount. Get yours at the Annual Meeting at Lubrecht, or contact your chapter president if you'd like to obtain a copy.

"Mammals of Montana," by Kerry Foresman. This is a comprehensive guide to our wild mammals by University of Montana Professor Kerry Foresman. The book has 440 pages, 500 color photographs, 55 illustrations, 115 maps, checklist, glossary and references.

Smart Flora

Steve Hegji of the Utah Native Plant Society recently announced the availability of a new application for iPhone (or other smartphone or tablet), developed with High Country Apps. Called Rocky Mountain Wildflowers, it more broadly contains info on flowers, trees, shrubs, grasses and ferns of the Wasatch Mountains, building on his wildflower book of a few years ago. The full app costs \$7.99, and a smaller free version is available through Google, Amazon, Apple iPad, Apple iPhone. Google Play has it up already (search for "wasatch flora"). Apple and Amazon should soon follow. Hegji says the first version of the full app contains 350 species of plants and will be updated regularly over the next year with additional species. The free app is a demo that contains 30 species.

You can learn more about how it functions and sample the free demo at www.highcountryapp.com. Apps for Yellowstone and the Colorado Rockies are also available, and one for Glacier is coming soon.

Purchasing Information:

Manual of Montana Vascular Plants

by Peter Lesica

(ISBN-13: 978-1-889878-39-3, pbk.).

<http://www.brit.org/brit-press/books/montana>, orders@brit.org. \$50.00.

MNPS members see info at left.

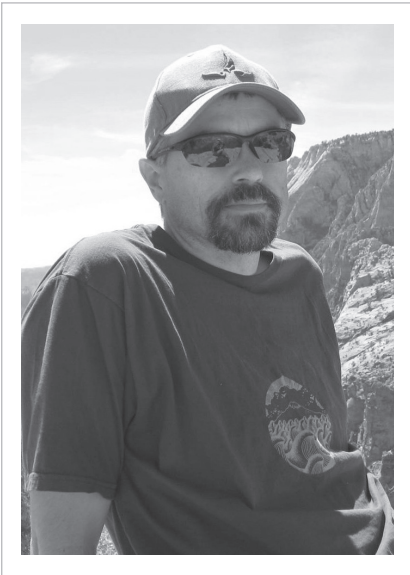
Mammals of Montana

by Kerry Foresman (scheduled publication late July)

Go to www.montanamammals.com to learn more about the book and to reserve one at the discount price. \$24 until 7/15; \$32 thereafter.



President's Platform



Our native plants provide the foundation for many creatures' lives. Sometimes we think about this in a fairly general way—grasslands provide habitat for birds, forests provide shelter and forage for big game, wetlands host insects and their predators. But beyond these generalities, there are many individual plants and places that are recognized by animals for their special value. You've seen many of these yourself: a particular tree that provides a cavity nest for bluebirds every year; a small piece of prairie just different enough to serve as traditional dancing ground for sharp-tailed grouse; a single tree along a trail that bears come to rub on; a stand of cottonwoods where great blue herons always roost; a limb over a river that makes the best kingfisher perch; a slightly elevated patch of sedges in the wetland where sandhill cranes always build a nest.

These unique features are sometimes what best connect us to the natural world. It's good to admire the forest—but don't forget about the trees! This summer look for those special plants and places—maybe you even know of one that is special just for you.

~ Dave Hanna

Clarkia Party & Farm Tour at Native Ideals Seed Company

The 5th Annual Clarkia Party and Farm Tour of the Native Ideals Seed Company was held June 3, a beautiful late spring day. Several Clark Fork chapter members joined more than 25 volunteers to soak up sun and pull weeds from rows of cultivated *Clarkia pulchella* plants. A main goal was to remove weeds whose seeds are difficult to clean from harvested Clarkia seeds. After getting weeds out of the way, Bryce Christiaens and Rebecca Shoemaker of Native Ideals provided some great grub and beverages before leading a tour of their farm and seed-harvesting operations. A highlight of the tour was seeing the tractor-mounted vacuum seed harvester, which Bryce used later that day to harvest *Erigeron compositus* seeds.



Photo by Ken Stolz

© 2012 Ken Stolz - MT Images

Welcome New Members!

The Montana Native Plant Society welcomes the following new members:

Calypso Chapter

Rich and Brenda Day, Lorna McIntyre and Sandra Salisbury

Clark Fork Chapter

Ingrid Ernest, Fred Hansen, Carol Anderson, Viktoria Wagner, Steve McCluskey, Clarice Pina, Robin Taylor and Native Ideals Seed Farm

Flathead Chapter

Dave and Genevieve Shea

Kelsey Chapter

Jennifer Hamilton, Winston Greely and Bill Fitzgerald

Valley of Flowers Chapter

Jeanne Blank and Larissa Jackiw

State-At-Large

Kim Proctor, Andrienne Palmanis, Holly Milstead, Brian Schrage and Christopher Mahony



As Pollinators for a Native Plant Garden, Honey Bees Suck

By David Schmetterling, posted on the blog Garden Rant, March 8, 2012

That's right, they suck. Someone had to say it.

If you want honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) for say, I don't know, honey—that is great. No problem. If you have converted a heterogeneous, beautiful landscape of native plants and wildlife into a monoculture for crop production, and every plant requires pollination in the same, narrow, discrete window, honey bees are for you.

However, if you are interested in any of the following: biodiversity, bee conservation, pollinator conservation and diversity, wildlife gardening, native plant landscaping, getting your native plant garden pollinated, or just plain learning about the really cool insects in your garden, then yes, honey bees suck.

Somewhere along the way of promoting awareness of pollinators and their role in plant, wildlife and bee conservation, people wove in honey bees. This is really unfortunate, so I am trying to set the record straight.

In our garden, I have collected over 150 species of bees and "pollinators" and one of those species is honey bee. In fact, honey bees in our garden are pretty uncommon, especially outside a narrow time of day and time of year. The diverse species of native pollinators provide so much more than pollination to our garden. Just as a small example, the larvae of the flower fly (*Spilomaya* spp.), a yellow jacket mimic, are effective predators of aphids in the garden (including our vegetable garden).

I venture that honey bees are pretty ineffectual pollinators of most things—especially native species. As far as colony collapse disorder, although academically interesting, don't be fooled: it is not a conservation issue.

Honey bees are native to Eurasia (where most of our noxious weeds coincidentally are from), and share no evolutionary history with plants in the U.S., and in particular with plants of the intermountain west of Montana. Consequently, they are not effective pollinators of the diverse native plants we have here. They will only pollinate over a narrow range of dates and temperatures, and can only exploit certain sizes and shapes of plants. Again, too narrow a range to be effective.

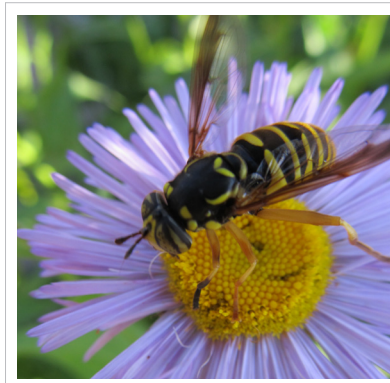
For example, in the Missoula valley, and in my garden, spring arrives with sagebrush buttercups (*Ranunculus glaberrimus*) that flower in late February or early March. They often arrive when snow still covers the ground and most days are barely above freezing, and the blooms can be rapid. This time of the year, nary a honey bee is in sight or even able to survive – these blooms predate the hives trucked in from the south. Native flowers come and go, blooming

across different days (and some only at night) from snowy spring until late October, long after the honey bees head back down south or hunker down trying to survive.

Even as temperatures become more appealing to honey bees, morning and evening can be too cool for them to do much of anything beyond surviving. Sure, on a warm July afternoon, honey bees will be out in force pollinating some things, but they don't do much. Our native pollinators, including moths, butterflies, bees, flies, beetles, ants, and others are so diverse in terms of habitats they occupy, body sizes and morphology, that they can pollinate and exploit a diversity of native plants that no truckload of honey bee hives consisting of identically sized and shaped honey bees could even imagine.

So, yes, honey bees are great for producing honey. They are great for pollinating commercial crops (though their value is probably grossly overstated), but they have little place in conservation and little room in my garden.

David Schmetterling is a state fisheries biologist in his day job, master gardner the rest of the time. He recently gave a talk about native bees, wasps and their mimics for the Montana Natural History Center at the Native Plant Garden at Fort Missoula. Follow his blog at <http://montanawildlifegardener.blogspot.com>



Flower fly (*Spilomaya*) stops for a visit.
Photo by David Schmetterling



Scarab beetle (*Trichiotinus assimilis*) pollinates Showy Fleabane (*Erigeron speciosus*).
Photo by David Schmetterling.



MNPS Chapters & the Areas They Serve

CALYPSO CHAPTER - Beaverhead, Madison, Deer Lodge, and Silver Bow Counties; southwestern Montana
 CLARK FORK CHAPTER - Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, and Ravalli Counties
 FLATHEAD CHAPTER - Flathead and Lake Counties plus Glacier National Park
 KELSEY CHAPTER - Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, and Broadwater Counties
 MAKA FLORA CHAPTER - Richland, Roosevelt, McCone, Sheridan, and Daniels Counties
 VALLEY OF FLOWERS CHAPTER - Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass Counties plus Yellowstone National Park

All MNPS chapters welcome members from areas other than those indicated. We've listed counties just to give you some idea of what part of the state is served by each chapter. Watch for meeting announcements in your local newspaper. Ten paid members are required for a chapter to be eligible for acceptance in MNPS.

Your mailing label tells you the following:

CHAPTER AFFILIATION: CAL=Calyпсо; CF=Clark Fork; F=Flathead; K=Kelsey; MF= Maka Flora; VOF=Valley of Flowers

YEAR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES: Memberships expire in February of the year listed on your mailing label.

Use this form to join MNPS only if you are a first-time member! To renew a membership, please wait for your yellow renewal card in the mail. **Moving? Please notify us promptly of address changes at mtnativeplantmembership@gmail.com.**

Membership in Montana Native Plant Society is on a calendar-year basis, March 1 through the end of February of the following year. New-member applications processed before the end of October each year will expire the following February; those processed after November 1 will expire in February of the year after. Membership renewal notices are mailed to each member in January. Please renew your membership before the summer issue of *Kelsey* so your name is not dropped from our mailing list. Your continued support is crucial to the conservation of native plants in Montana. THANK YOU!

MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Name (please print) _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Chapter Affiliation (optional) _____

Delivery preference _____ paper copy by mail _____ digital copy by email

You will receive membership acknowledgement by email, as well as a pdf of the most recent Kelsey. Future newsletter issues will arrive according to your preference indicated above.

**JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE at
www.mtnativeplants.org**

or by mail at
 Montana Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 8783
 Missoula, MT 59807-8783

| Membership Level | Dues w/affiliation | Dues w/o affiliation |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Individual | \$20 | \$15 |
| Family | \$25 | \$20 |
| Business/Organization | \$40 | \$35 |
| Living Lightly | \$15 | \$15 |
| Lifetime (one-time pymt) | \$300 per household | ----- |

Canadian subscribers please add \$4.00 to cover mailing costs. Additional donations may be specified for a particular project or the general fund.



About Montana Native Plant Society

The Montana Native Plant Society (MNPS) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation chartered for the purpose of preserving, conserving, and studying the native plants and plant communities of Montana, and educating the public about the value of our native flora. Contributions to MNPS are tax deductible, and may be designated for a specific project or chapter, for the Small Grants fund, or the general operating fund.

Your yearly membership fee includes a subscription to *Kelsey*, the quarterly newsletter of MNPS. We welcome your articles, field trip reports, book review, or anything that relates to native plants or the Society. Please include a line or two of "bio" information with each article. Drawings should be in black ink or a good quality photocopy. All items should be typed, saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf), and sent electronically to: carokurtz@gmail.com or mailed to Kelsey Editor, 645 Beverly Avenue, Missoula, MT, 59801.

Changes of address, inquiries about membership, and general correspondence should be sent to MNPS Membership, 398 Jeffers Road, Ennis, MT 59729. Advertising space is available in each issue at \$5/column inch. Ads must be camera-ready and must meet the guidelines set by the Board of Directors for suitable subject matter; that is, be related in some way to native plants or the interests of MNPS members.

The deadline for each issue is Fall–September 10; Winter–December 10; Spring–March 10; Field Trip Guide–April 10; Summer–June 10. Please send web items to our webmaster concurrent with these dates.

If you want extra copies of *Kelsey* for friends or family, call the Newsletter Editor or email: carokurtz@gmail.com. No part of this publication may be reprinted without the consent of MNPS. Reprint requests should be directed to the Newsletter Editor.

Visit our website at: www.mtnativeplants.org or contact our webmaster Bob Person at: thepersons@mcn.net

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Montana Native Plant Society

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