

KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Spring 2019



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GET OUTSIDE



2 1ST CENTURY FIRE MANAGEMENT: BUILDING A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH FIRE **Saturday, March 23, 11am-4pm**

Join KS Wild and retired fire professional Richard Fairbanks for a full day of hiking and discussion regarding fire.

SPRING WILDFLOWER SERIES

KS Wild, Friends of the Cascade-Siskiyou, and the Native Plant Society team up on this series of three hikes chasing the wildflowers through the elevations in our backyard monument. Carpools from Ashland will be available.

More Than Morels: Saturday, April 6, 2019 9am-2pm

Bees and Blossoms: Saturday, May 4, 2019 9am-2pm

Flowers and Fire: Saturday June, 1, 2019 9am-2pm

PLANT APPRECIATION DAY AT LITTLE FALLS **Saturday, April 13, 10am-2pm**

Join KS Wild and the Native Plant Society of Oregon for a guided tour of the wildflowers (including a *Darlingtonia* aka "Cobra Lily" Fen) at Little Falls.

ROUGH & READY WILDFLOWER HIKE **Saturday, April 20, 10am-1pm**

Join KS Wild, the Cultural and Ecological Enhancement Network and partners for a wildflower walk with rare and unusual plants. An easy walk on relatively flat ground. Part of the hike is wheelchair accessible.

BALDFACE CREEK, SOUTH KALMIOPSIS **Sunday, June 23, 9:30am-7pm**

This is an all-day rugged hike into a wild remote area. We will follow a moderate to difficult trail into the Baldface Creek watershed.

Sign up online to receive more details, including carpooling locations and what to bring. www.kswild.org/events

A RARE PLANT PARADISE

A BOTANICAL SAMPLE FROM THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU

Roseburg



BAKER'S CYPRESS

Cupressus bakeri is restricted to small populations in northern California and southwest Oregon. Its small populations are threatened by climate change.

Medford



SISKIYOU MARIPOSA LILY

Calochortus persistens is a pink flowering plant near Ashland OR and Gunsight Peak, CA. Threats include Dyer's woad (*Isatis tinctoria*), an invasive species overtaking the lily's habitat.

Pacific
Ocean



CALIFORNIA GLOBEMALLOW

Iliamna latibracteata is a large perennial flowering plant endemic to the conifer forests of the Klamath-Siskiyou. Threats include cattle overgrazing and lack of natural fire cycles.

101

Redding



YREKA PHLOX

Phlox hirsuta is only known from the vicinity of Yreka, CA, growing in open areas on serpentine soil. Threats include the destruction of habitat from development.



THANK YOU GARY POWELL

Here at KS Wild we are mourning the loss of our long-time co-worker, cherished colleague and friend Gary Powell. Gary started working with KS Wild in 2004 and was the heart and soul of our public outreach. He was much more than a door canvasser - he was an avid mushroomer, an unrelenting community organizer, and one of the most generous souls you could ever meet.

Gary taught us so much. He taught us that if we are doing good work, for the betterment of our planet, there is always hope and joy. Even in dark times, Gary let us know that if we are doing our best to make the world a better place we are doing it.

Since Gary passed away in early February we have received an outpouring of well-wishes and good tidings. He touched so many lives it is impossible to measure the reach.

We miss you at our staff meetings. We miss your endless supply of wild caught mushrooms. We miss having cocktails on your rooftop. Most of all, we miss your smiling face and positive energy in our lives. Thank you Gary Powell for all the lessons on how to be an effective advocate, and how to truly love where we live, and defend what we love.

BREAKING NEWS: OREGON WILDLANDS PASSES

The U.S. Senate and House both passed a public lands bill that includes the Oregon Wildlands Act! KS Wild has worked with community allies for over ten years to secure these protections. The Act will safeguard 311 miles of rivers, including nearly 256 miles as Wild and Scenic Rivers. This includes tributaries to the Elk River on the southern Oregon Coast and Wild Rogue River downstream from Grants Pass. The bill will also permanently withdraw portions of the salmon-rich Chetco River, the drinking water source for the City of Brookings, from mining claims. While the Wild Rogue Wilderness expansion did not make it in this bill, KS Wild and local leaders are committed to completing protection for this world-class river.

STAND UP

FOR YOUR PUBLIC LANDS AND LEND A HAND!

KS Wild's **Stewardship Program** is essential to our mission. Protecting the best, and restoring the rest takes help from all of you! Get out and enjoy the rugged beauty of our backyard public lands by signing up for one of our annual spring events! Whether it's protecting botanical meadows or monitoring impacts from illegal uses, you can make a difference. Upcoming stewardship events include:

- 1) **Smith River National Recreation Area Wildflower Monitoring:** Learn about the endangered *Lewisia oppositifolia* and help efforts to maintain a viable population.
- 2) **Eight Dollar Mountain Botanical Area Restoration:** We are monitoring a botanical area above the Wild & Scenic Illinois River has been abused by illegal ORVs.
- 3) **Star Thistle Pull at Mariposa Lily Preserve:** Join us for our 5th year as we continue to remove invasive Star thistle from the Mariposa Lily Preserve in the CSNM.
- 4) **Alex Hole Meadow Fencing:** This wet meadow has been abused by trespass cattle. Help put up or take down the fence that protects this beloved Siskiyou Crest spot.



SPEAK UP

FOR YOUR PUBLIC LANDS BECOME AN AMBASSADOR!

KS Wild's **Ambassador Program** offers volunteers a chance to connect with the community about environmental issues. Join us in working with other community members to share the work we are doing. Whether you are an expert in your field, a hike enthusiast, or you just want to meet new people, we have a place for you.

- 1) **Join our Tableing Team:** Attend community events on behalf of KS Wild. Don't worry, we'll train you!
- 2) **Lead a hike:** Do you have a particular skill or field of interest you've become an expert on? - Share that with the community and co-host a hike with us!
- 3) **Host a house party, a letter writing party, or a lecture:** Do you have a group of people who would like to take action but are unsure where to begin? Host a living room discussion and we'll join you for a campaign update.
- 4) **Volunteer** at our annual events: Siskiyou Film Festival and KS Wild Dinner.

Want to plug in? Sign up to become a KS Wild Volunteer: www.kswild.org/volunteer



NOTES FROM THE TRAILHEAD

A BOTANICAL WONDERLAND

Every spring I fall in love all over again with wildflowers. What's not to love? The rich fragrance. The brilliant colors. The gorgeous shapes. It's like these flowers are showing off just to get our attention. Oh, wait - they are!

In the pages of KS Wild News you can learn more about the botanical wonderland that is the Klamath-Siskiyou region (KS), just in time for spring wildflower season. We cover what makes this area so important for rare plants, how fire shapes the region, and what some of the most pressing issues are for our botanical friends. We will let you know how you can help ensure these rare plants are not pushed further toward extinction.

Here in the KS region of southern Oregon and northern California we are blessed with a rich bounty of botanical wonders - the region is known the world over for its vast array of rare and unusual flowering plants. Nearly 3,500 plant species – and thousands of other mushroom, lichen and moss species – are found in the KS.

In addition to the sheer number of plants found here, what makes this region so important is that we have flora found nowhere else on earth. These are known as “endemic” species. All told there are at least 280 endemic plants in the KS! Rare plants include the extremely local Mt. Ashland lupine and Green's Mariposa lily.

The botanical wonders of this region have some accolades. The region is designated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as one of only seven Areas of Global Biological Significance on the continent of North America and the KS has been proposed as both a World Heritage Site and a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

It is also our trees! The KS supports an unbelievable 36 different species of conifers, more than any other temperate forest in the world. In fact, several of our local trees species grow nowhere else on the planet. These include the lacy Port-Orford cedar, Baker's cypress and the Brewer's spruce. A trip out to the field to find these trees is a real treat.

Why is this region home to so much botanical diversity? One reason is that this region largely remained free from glaciers during the last Ice Age, when most of the continent was under a sheet of ice. During that time the KS acted as a rare refuge for plants otherwise displaced across North America. The region's history with fire has also contributed to a rich landscape that changes at most every mountain fold and canyon. Also, our unique geology gave rise to unique plants - especially the region's serpentine landscapes.

In our 20 year history, KS Wild has been a key advocate of this rare plant paradise. We have been part of listing highly at-risk species such a Gentner's Fritillary and Yreka phlox under the Endangered Species Act to ensure they were not driven to extinction. We have advocated for conservation status for plants such as the rare Siskiyou Mariposa Lily. Today we continue defending botanical hotspots against threats like logging, illegal off road vehicles, and overgrazing by cattle.

If you have hiked through the KS, you are well familiar with the rich variety of life in the region. As you explore the mountains you find deep woods, open savannas, and alpine environments. It is these varied habitats that give rise the wonderful diversity of life in this region. It is this diversity that KS Wild and our partners work to protect every day. We hope you enjoy learning about and exploring the botanical wonders of the Klamath-Siskiyou.



Joseph Vaile is KS Wild's Executive Director





Ten years ago, KS Wild staff member Lesley Adams saw a niche for aquatic advocacy in the Rogue Basin. From suction dredge gold mining to stormwater pollution to dam removal, the Rogue deserved more advocacy, specifically the protections afforded by the Clean Water Act. After consulting with local partners and KS Wild leadership, Lesley applied to become a “Riverkeeper” for the Rogue through the Waterkeeper Alliance, an international organization of water warriors working to protect clean water across the globe. A “riverkeeper” program for the Rogue would establish and grow a grassroots focus for the protection and restoration of clean water for the river, its fish and its communities. Rogue Riverkeeper was born in 2009 to do just that.

Thanks to strategic thinking, foresight and the help of many who love the Rogue, we have become a force for aquatic advocacy in the Rogue Basin, acting as watchdog and steward for our clean water resources. We could not do this without you!

Rogue Riverkeeper has seen many successes over the years including the removal of Gold Ray Dam, building a base of members and supporters of over 3,500 people, and getting legislation passed to prohibit suction dredge mining in rivers across Oregon. We’ve had a lot of challenges, but we keep going every day because we believe that everyone has a right to clean, drinkable, swimmable, fishable waters. Without clean water, we risk our health, our livelihoods, and our quality of life. That is why Rogue Riverkeeper is dedicated to protecting the Rogue and its tributaries from:

- A giant fracked gas pipeline
- Stormwater pollution
- Clear cut logging on private lands
- Pollution (e.g. agricultural runoff, mining)
- Overuse
- Climate Change

We are proud to be your local Riverkeeper and hope you will join us in protecting clean water for another ten years. For the Rogue,

Robyn Janssen, Director Rogue Riverkeeper



THE ROGUE'S UNDERWATER MUSHROOM

Psathyrella aquatica is a special species of fungi that has only been found in one place, the Upper Rogue River. Discovered in 2005 by Adjunct Hydrology Professor Robert Coffan, and SOU Biology Professors Darlene Southworth and Jonathan Frank, the "Rogue Mushroom" is a gilled mushroom that lives in gravels and on submerged logs underwater in the cold, clear waters of the Upper Rogue.



The mushroom is only visible for a few weeks in late summer and grows in the shallows where there is ample current. The cap is about the size of a dime with white/beige coloring and a pink brown stem averaging about 3 inches in height. The mushroom develops small gas bubbles underneath its cap so as to stabilize itself in the moving waters.

SPRING EVENTS!

BEAR CREEK SPRING CLEAN UP!

April 20: EarthDay! 9am-12pm

2215 OR Hwy 99, Ashland

(ODOT Weigh Station Near Valley View exit)

Spend your EarthDay by giving back to Bear

Creek! Be a part of the effort to clean up and restore this important waterway. We will be hosting the check in booth and will have registration forms, clean up supplies including bags and gloves and snacks and beverages for volunteers. Let's make this clean up event the biggest yet and take care of this local waterway.



SPEAKER SERIES: STORMWATER POLLUTION & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE April 24, 5:30-7:30pm in Talent (exact location TBA)

Learn all about the effects of stormwater pollution on our local streams and rivers and the importance of green infrastructure in development. Jennie Morgan, Stormwater Program Manager with Rogue Valley Sewer Services will lead the group on a walking tour of Talent to see examples of good, and not so good, stormwater pollution control. The tour will be followed by a happy hour at the Pump House Restaurant. This event is a walking tour of Talent so please plan on appropriate clothing and footwear for the outing.

Please be sure to check our website or Facebook page to RSVP, and for details on dates, times, and locations for events. Join us! www.rogueiverkeeper.org

FEATURED HIKE

COOK AND GREEN PASS: HEART OF THE SISKIYOU CREST

There is no other place in the world quite like Cook and Green Pass. This botanical hotspot boasts over 300 species of native plants and serves as a transition zone between the drier eastern Siskiyou and the wetter western Siskiyou ecosystems. The Pass also provides access to the stunning peaks of the Red Buttes Wilderness and the intact old-growth forests of the vast Kangaroo Mountain Roadless Area.



The hiking options from Cook and Green Pass are some of the best in the region. Trails and routes branch out to wonderful wildlands in all directions. Hikers can head east on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) to the summit of Copper Butte and enjoy sweeping 360° vistas, or head west on the PCT towards the iconic Red Buttes. Possible side trips include Echo Lake, Lily Pad Lake, Echo Canyon as well as Cook and Green Creek. Especially noteworthy is the blazed route down through the Baker Cypress Botanical Area which offers adventure and beauty to those crave rugged mountains and wild places.

For decades Cook and Green Pass has been the jumping off point for botanists, hikers, birders, backpackers and sightseers seeking the best of the Siskiyou Crest Mountains. Few remote trailheads are as beloved as Cook and Green.

Unfortunately, while most people cherish these amazing wildlands, timber planners on the Klamath National Forest hope to extensively log the surrounding old-growth forests. Ancient forests in the designated Cook and Green Botanical Area, along the Pacific Crest Trail and within the Kangaroo Inventoried Roadless Area are all currently slated for logging. Please see page xx.

So the time to visit Cook and Green Pass is now. Should the Klamath National Forest's post-fire logging plans come to fruition this wild place will never be the same.

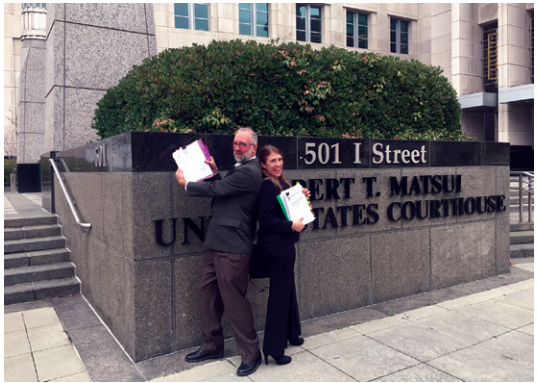
Getting There: If coming from Oregon, go to the south end of the Applegate Reservoir and take Forest Service road 1060 to FS 1055 and follow it all the way to the top of the Siskiyou Crest. A Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District Map is a must. If coming from California, take highway 96 to the town of Seiad Valley and follow FS 48N20 to the top of the Siskiyou Crest. A full tank of gas and extra water are essential for this backcountry adventure.

RESTORATION SHUT DOWN WHILE LOGGING CONTINUED

The timber planners on the Klamath National Forest (KNF) are nothing if not single-minded. During the government shut down this winter campgrounds were closed and roads and trails were not being maintained. Watershed restoration projects were halted and fuels reduction and community protection projects had ground to a standstill. Yet, illegal clearcutting of post-fire old-growth forests deep in the backcountry of the KNF continued without pause.



The KNF did everything possible to avoid a meaningful review of the clearcutting in protected old-growth reserves targeted by the “Seiad-Horse” project. Believe it or not, lawyers for the Forest Service argued that a court hearing to determine whether or not to halt the ongoing logging should be canceled due to the government shutdown. That’s right, while the government was shutdown clearcutting continued. Fortunately, the judge wanted no part of the Forest Service’s “lawless logging” agenda and denied their attempt to place themselves above the law.



Prior to the court hearing, KS Wild visited the logging site and photo-documented extensive illegal logging within the project area high on the Siskiyou Crest, near the Red Buttes Wilderness Area. We photographed extensive soil damage, harm to streams, and destruction of wildlife habitat. We submitted the photographs to the court as evidence of the ongoing harm occurring from the Siead-Horse timber sale.

The Forest Service responded by attempting to block the judge from seeing or considering photographs of their salvage logging operations. They strongly prefer that the effects of their public lands salvage logging remain secret.

While the KNF may have abandoned its “multiple use” mission to provide recreation, wildlife habitat and clean water on our public lands, they are busy doubling down on their commitment to the timber industry. Sitting literally arm in arm with big shot attorneys from the timber industry, the Forest Service continues to attempt to push through illegal clearcutting during the government shut down. We at KS Wild are pleased to report that we obtained a legal injunction halting the worst of the KNF’s backcountry clearcutting.

THE LIFE OF FIRE-LOVING PLANTS

Fire and disturbance have always been a natural component of the earth's ecosystems. As natural as wind and rain, fire helps create a patchwork of habitat that is appealing to a variety of lifeforms.

Native tribes have used low severity fire for thousands of years to manage the land for culturally significant plant species. Through repeated fire cycles, our forests have become fire-dependant. Fire is essential to ecosystem health. The seeds of the wildflowers that you see after a fire event have been hiding in the soil since the last wildfire.



Fires also clear the forest of underbrush leaving the forest floor open to sunlight. As a result, grasses, herbs, and shrubs respond and become food for many wild species.

Fire events can also provide a layer of ash over the soil that is rich in nitrogen. This ash layer is a gift to the ecosystem. Where there has been an accumulation of fallen branches, leaves, and needles, a low severity fire will reduce this material and provide nutrients to the soil. This not only gives life to a diversity of species, it also aids next fire cycle in being of a lower severity because of the work the previous fire did to reduce the understory fuels.



Some plants cannot germinate without fire. "Serotinous" plants are those that require wildfire heat in order to disperse their seed. Trees such as the knobcone and lodgepole pines are serotinous; their pinecones are coated in a wax that must melt before they can open and release their seeds. But for fire, these unique pines would not have evolved.



Fireweed is beautiful purple-flowering perennial that can be seriously resistant to fire. Even in shallow soils, this relative of the primrose is a prolific disperser of seed, making it one of the first species to establish in newly opened burn sites.

Another hardy native bulb camassia, is an early summer staple across the West. This edible perennial thrives in areas burned by fire. In fact, Native Americans reportedly set fires to optimize production of this vital food source.

TAKE A TRIP INTO THE REDROCK RAINFOREST

You know it when you have entered the land of serpentine. While many serpentine areas receive ample rainfall, these landscapes are stark. They are the lands of extremes with sparse savannas, rock gardens, and unique wetlands known as fens. You might think it is a harsh place at first glance, but you have entered the land of wonderment and extreme botanical beauty.

What is Serpentine?

Serpentine gets its name because the rocks resemble a serpent's skin. Serpentine is rich in iron and magnesium and is also known as "ultramafic" rock. It is formed deep in the mantle of the earth and surfaces along oceanic ridges where ocean crust is formed. Through the process of plate tectonics, the seafloor spreads and collides with the continental plate. This rock in the Klamath-Siskiyou originated 200-400 million years ago as ancient seafloor accreted onto the North American continent. The rocks here today were repeatedly uplifted, folded, and mixed with the ancient seafloor bedrock.



Nate Wilson

What are the Serpentine Plants?

Because serpentine is so rich in certain minerals and lacks others that plants need, certain plants have evolved to live in these environments. Over time, isolated serpentine environments exert strong selective pressures on a plant leading to new species. As a result, these environments are known for their plant diversity, endemism, and rarity.

You can explore serpentine landscapes, including information on hiking, conservation, and rare plants here: www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/beauty/serpentes/

Kalmiopsis leachiana, a plant discovered in 1930 by Lilla Leech, is a relic of the pre-ice age. The *Kalmiopsis* Wilderness was named after this unique shrub.

"I was in the lead where I usually walk...when suddenly I beheld a small patch of beautiful low-growing deep rose colored plants and because of its beauty I started running toward it and dropped to my knees...I had never seen anything so beautiful before."



— Lilla Leach, a pioneering botanist on her discovery in 1930 of the endemic *Kalmiopsis leachiana*, the oldest living member of the azalea and rhododendron family.

WELCOME BRANDY MACDONALD

This winter KS Wild welcomed Brandy MacDonald to our team as our Outreach Director. While new to our staff, Brandy has been an active supporter of KS Wild since she first moved to Southern Oregon in 2002. Brandy has dove right into her role helping our community find more ways to connect with and protect the wild places in our backyard. You are likely to see her on one of our many hikes planned for this spring. In addition to outreach and volunteer coordination, if you are lucky, you may see Brandy at your front door. She is looking forward to building personal relationships with our members and carrying on with the important work that Gary Powell held with such pride for so long.

If you are interested in getting more involved check out these volunteer opportunities.

www.kswild.org/volunteer



MAY 2019: ROGUE RIVER TRAIL ADVENTURE



Join KS Wild & ARTA for a 5 day 4 night raft-supported
Rogue River Trail Adventure!

M-F May 20-24, 2019

ARTA's friendly rafting guides will ferry your camping gear, food, and water, and provide us with 3 delicious, fresh meals a day. KS Wild staff will accompany you on the trail and can point out special features along the way.

Space is limited, for more info and to register go to www.arta.org/specials/hike.htm





THANK YOU

to all who made this year's 17th Annual
Siskiyou FilmFest the wildest yet!

A royal thank you goes out to all of our sponsors.
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and Jefferson State Financial Group.**

A special thanks to our community showcase friends, conservation allies and supporters for joining us in the lobby and to our honored guests for the evening Chip Boggs, Amber Sun Feather, Stephen Most, and Richard Eisner aka 'Ziggy'! Also, very warm thank you to Elizabeth Azzuz and Margo Robbins of the Yurok Tribe for their participation in the fire panel.

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KS WILD MISSION

KS Wild's mission is to protect and restore wild nature in the Klamath-Siskiyou region of southwest Oregon and northwest California. We promote science-based land and water conservation through policy and community action.

KSWILD.ORG

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Save the Date!
Saturday, October 5th, 2019
KS Wild's Annual Dinner
@ the Ashland Hills Hotel



www.kswild.org

www.rogueriverkeeper.org

Cover: Cobra lily and western azaleas in the Illinois Valley by Paula Fong Illustrations: www.prfong.com