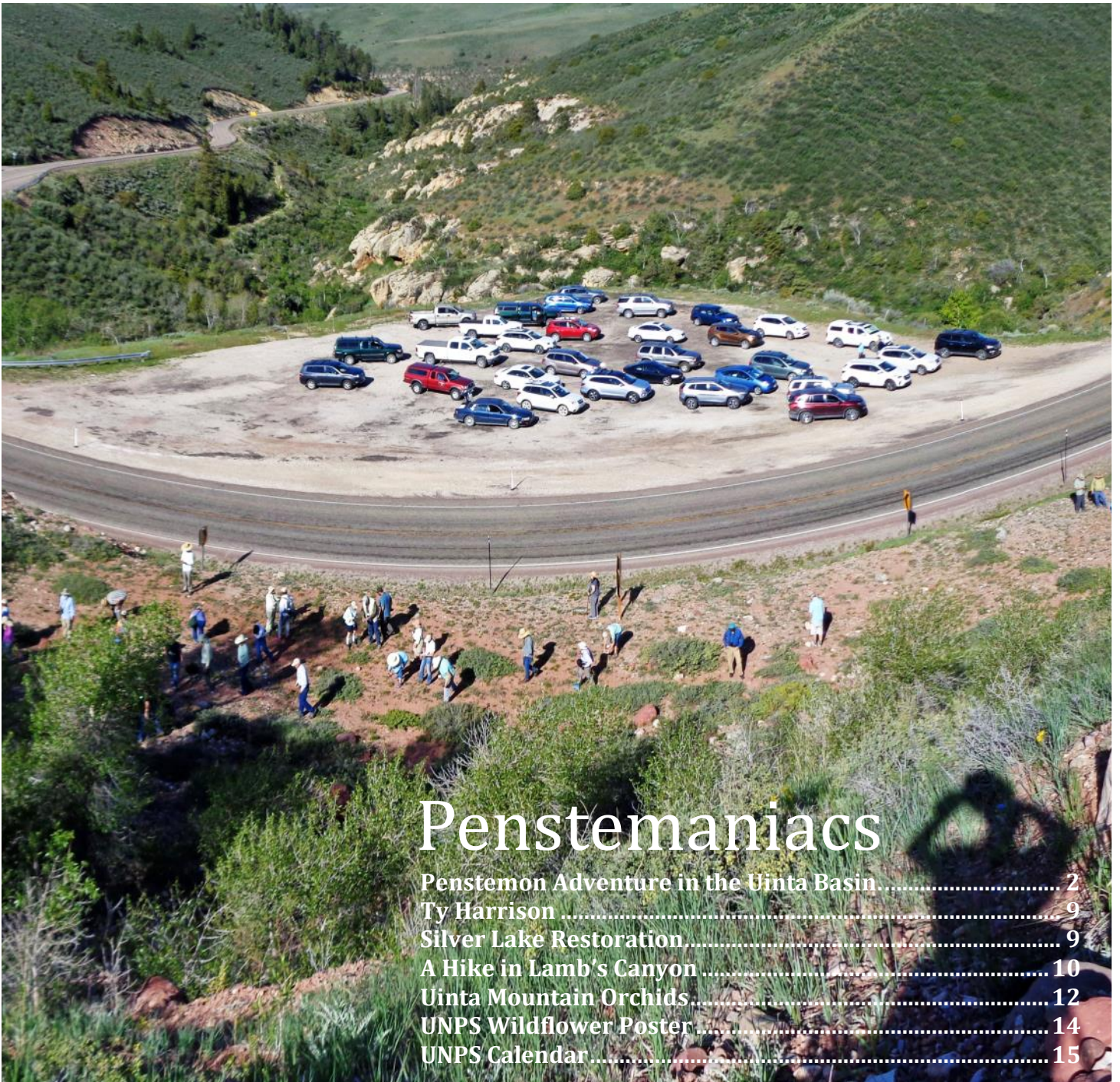




# Sego Lily

Newsletter of the Utah Native Plant Society

Summer 2017 Volume 40 Number 3



## Penstemaniacs

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# Penstemon Adventure in the Uinta Basin

by Catherine King

The American Penstemon Society (APS) has been hosting annual meetings for decades, where penstemon lovers, fondly known as “penstemaniacs,” gather together to see penstemons growing in their native habitats. This year’s meeting was in Vernal, Utah and I admit to being very excited about this meeting. As an amateur botanist, with an emphasis on amateur, I looked forward to spending time out in the field seeing a wide variety of fantastic penstemons that I have never seen before and spending time with a group of people who share my enthusiasm for what I consider to be one of the most beautiful of native plants. As a gardener, penstemons are a favorite genus, right up there with eriogonums and astragalus.

On a field trip planned by the Salt Lake Chapter of the Utah Native Plant Society (UNPS) and led by Leila Shultz to Tony Grove in the summer of 2016, Bill and I ran into Pat and Noel Holmgren, who had joined in on the fun. Along the way, they mentioned that they were planning the American Penstemon Society Meeting to be held in the Uinta Basin on June 2-5 of 2017 and asked if UNPS would like to be co-sponsors. We took the idea back to the next meeting of the UNPS Board of Directors, which agreed we would be happy to be co-sponsors. APS had already done most of the work organizing the meeting, and you can be sure, it is *a lot* of work to organize a meeting like that.

UNPS was, however, able to provide some support for the meeting, with several very skilled field guides, including Bill Gray, Wayne Padgett, and the previously mentioned Leila Shultz, along with some assistance to APS’s capable Mary Mastin at the registration desk and created a nice hat design to commemorate the meeting. We also promoted the meeting among UNPS members at every opportunity; at the UNPS Annual Meeting, through UNPS chapter meetings, and this newsletter. And of course, as a co-sponsor of the meeting, we were also equally liable for any problems that might arise.

The APS organizing committee, led by the Holmgrens, attracted an impressive group of experts for this meeting, as speakers, field guides, and attendees. Among these were botanists from Utah State University, Brigham Young University, Ohio State University, US Bureau of Land Management, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, US Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and The Nature Conservancy. The social hours in the evenings almost felt like a family reunion of sorts, as so many people knew each other and enjoyed catching up on old times. And new people were easily pulled into conversations because the universal language of plants was being spoken. Any questions on the field trips were easily answered by any number of people, creating an exceptionally enjoyable learning experience.



Four botanists extraordinaire. Robert Johnson and Mikel Stevens, field guides. Photo by Cathy King. Pat and Noel Holmgren, organizers. Two photos by Wayne Padgett. Cover photo by Andrey Zarkikh.

Of the more than 100 attendees at the meeting, well over a third were UNPS members, many of whom also belong to the [American Penstemon Society](#), which has been in existence even longer than UNPS. Since Utah is considered the epicenter for penstemons, there was much enthusiasm for this meeting, which was further augmented by the fact that one of the world's experts on the genus, Noel Holmgren, was involved.

The venue for the meeting was the Uintah Conference Center in Vernal, a capacious and modern facility that met every need for the conference. The banquets on both Friday and Saturday nights were catered by a local Dutch oven operation, Smoke'n Pots, which offered up the regional flavor and character of the Uinta Basin.

Sherel Goodrich, who literally wrote the book on the Uinta Basin, *Uinta Basin Flora*, co-authored in 1986 with Elizabeth Neese and updated in 2016 with Allen Huber, was the speaker on the opening night of the meeting with a presentation on "Uinta Basin Endemics." And therein lies so much of the appeal of the Uinta Basin; beyond its stunning scenery and geological formations, are the mind-boggling numbers of endemics that grow in the area, not limited to just penstemons.

Sherel's presentation was clever, suggesting that he had learned all of his geology from the information signs posted by the BLM along the roadsides explaining the various geological formations. This may or may not be the case, but it certainly tuned us into the signage as we drove along and made us even more aware of the changes in rocks, from shale to limestone to sandstone, all of which would clearly influence the plant material growing from it.

The speaker for Saturday night was Dr. Robert Johnson, Collections Manager at the Stanley L. Welsh Herbarium at Brigham Young University. Robert gave a personal and entertaining talk about his relationship to the plant world, a message that needs to be shared with many other non-plant people. It was light-hearted and enjoyed by all.

There were three different days of field trips, heading north, south and west of Vernal, (elevation 5328'). The groups rotated between the south and west trips and attendees that stayed on for the last day participated in the final field trip to the north. There were a lot of cars for each of the field trips, which is a difficult thing to manage, but the well-organized field trip leaders had scouted out the best places to park and carefully managed the caravans as they moved from one venue to another.

Noel Holmgren prepared a *Penstemon* Key specifically for the Uinta Basin and vicinity that was inserted into each meeting packet, so those who were more scientifically inclined could determine which penstemon they were viewing. However, as mentioned, there were many experts at hand who willingly offered their expertise, so one could default to that expeditious method of identification, or to the photographic

"cheat sheet" prepared by Ginny Maffitt, editor of the APS newsletter.

## Field Trip South of Vernal



The field trip to the south of Vernal promised the opportunity to see two of the most rare and endangered penstemons, *Penstemon albifluvis* and *Penstemon grahamii*. We were especially fortunate to have as our field trip leaders Mike Stevens and Robert Johnson, both from BYU, who, in conjunction with Andrea Wolfe of Ohio State University (who joined us, along with a group of her graduate students), have been conducting genetic research on *P. albifluvis*, the White River Penstemon, an endemic that grows on shale slopes close to the river of the same name. At our first stop, we saw a small population of this pretty penstemon in full and glorious bloom, one of the best sightings of the trip. The other



*Penstemon grahamii*, Graham penstemon.  
Pre-conference scouting photo by Richard Jonas.





*Penstemon albifluvis*, syn. *P. scariosus* var. *albifluvis* (White River penstemon) South of Vernal. Closeup photo by Richard Jonas. Whole plant photo by Andrey Zarkikh.

endemic was *Penstemon grahamii*, which also lives on shale in difficult growing conditions, but was, unfortunately, past peak bloom. We were lucky to find one plant with three perfect flowers, but what a lovely plant it was. The next day, the other group found more plants with new blooms.

A non-penstemon endemic on this field trip, was *Aquilegia barnebyi*, a columbine of delicate flower and leaf that belied the harsh conditions from which it emerged. We found it to be charming and the shale itself to be most attractive.

Other plants of interest: *Eremogone (Arenaria) hookerii*,



*Aquilegia barnebyi*, shale columbine. Pre-conference photo by Susan Sims.

*Chamaechaenactis scaposa*, *Gilia stenothyrsa*, *Tetranneuris acaulis*, *Asclepias cryptoceras*, *Abronia elliptica (fragrans)*

## Field Trip West of Vernal



On the field trip venturing to the west of Vernal, our expectations included *Penstemon flowersii*, *P. duchesnensis*, *P. goodrichii*, and *P. angustifolius* var. *vernalensis*, and we were not to be disappointed. It must be realized that these penstemons are few and far between in the arid Uinta Basin and that a dedicated penstemaniac is more than willing to drive miles and miles to see them.

Jim Spencer, who led this trip on Saturday and made arrangements to visit these private properties, was not available on Sunday, so Noel and Pat Holmgren led the trip for us instead. We were especially grateful to the private landowners who gave permission to our conference to allow access to their land. One of the ranch owners was there to greet us as we arrived and we were able to thank him





*Penstemon flowersii*, Flowers penstemon. Pre-conference photo by William Gray.



Curious Christopher. Photo by Catherine King.



*Penstemon duchesnensis*, Duchesne penstemon. Photo by Wayne Padgett.

personally. As Noel said, “this is a biggie” that we were able to see *Penstemon flowersii* on his property.

Not all penstemons can be expected to be blooming at the same time and *P. flowersii* was past bloom, although it was still possible to see some of its characteristic pink flowers drying up on the stalks where fruits were starting to form. Emerging from hard-baked clay, cracked from drought, *P. flowersii* did not appear to be flourishing, but was somehow surviving. It is such a beautiful penstemon, it should be in cultivation, as is true of so many of these species.

*Other plants of interest: Astragalus asclepioides, Chaenactis douglasii var. douglasii, Stephanomeria runcinata*

The next location was also private land and although we didn't meet the owner, we did meet his son Christopher, who was quite curious about what this large group of people could possibly be checking out so intently on the ground. Pat and Noel gave him a brief Penstemon 101 and, who knows, we may have a budding botanist coming up through the ranks.

Here one could see dozens of tiny *Penstemon duchesnensis*, but again they were mostly past flowering. Another one of the beautiful blue penstemons, we have been lucky enough to see it in its spectacular full bloom before and it is a true beauty. But it is always helpful to be able to see its habitat and the indicator plants for future plant photo hunting expeditions.

*Other plants of interest: Linum puberulum, Yucca harrimaniae, Phacelia crenata, Eriogonum shockleyi*

The third stop of the day took us to the red clay slopes where *Penstemon goodrichii* grows, so entirely different from the previous two locations. A rare endemic to a small area around LaPoint, Utah, it is a penstemon of smaller stature, about 8"-10", with blue-lavender flowers.

*Other plants of interest: Phacelia demissa, Mentzelia multicaulis, Cymopterus duchesnensis, Pediomelum megalanthum var. megalanthum*

At the final stop of the day on the trip west of Vernal, the sun blazing hot and the no-see-ums ravenously hungry, we stepped out of our car to find plants of *Astragalus ceramicus* in full pod, such a pretty sight. Not many steps further were fine examples of *Penstemon angustifolius var. vernalensis*, flowering but wilted in the heat. The brilliant blue flowers, reminiscent of the blue of *P. arenicola*, are gorgeous, set upon the delicate linear leaves of this elegant penstemon.

*Other plants of interest: Cordylanthus kingii ssp. densiflorus, Eriogonum shockleyi var. longilobum, Delphinium nuttallianum, Townsendia incana*

## Field Trip North of Vernal



The field trip to the north of Vernal was an optional choice for





*Penstemon goodrichii*, Goodrich penstemon. Photo by Andrey Zarkikh.



*Astragalus ceramicus*, the painted milkvetch. Photo by Richard Jonas.

conference attendees so a good number headed home on Sunday afternoon or Monday morning. Nevertheless, there was still a large group that gathered that morning at the Uintah Conference Center for the final field trip, led by Pat and Noel Holmgren, that would end a few miles north of Manila, about 68 miles away.

The field trip notes admonished us to have a full tank of gas in our vehicles as-- "there are no gas stations between Vernal and Manila." That is when you know you are going to have a good time.

The first stop was about 20 miles north and 3,000 feet higher than Vernal and the cool morning air was literally a breath of

fresh air. As you can see by the overview photo taken by Andrey Zarkikh of the hillside and the parking lot (cover photo), we were a big group.

Here we took turns prostrating ourselves to the miniscule *Penstemon caespitosus* var. *caespitosus*, cameras of all varieties contorted in various positions. The perfect definition of a "belly plant," it is just about as fine a rock garden plant as one would ever want to grow, with fine needle-like leaves and blue-violet flowers emerging directly from the mat. How many pennies have been posed next to those plants for scale, one would wonder. The same hillside also hosted *Penstemon humilis*.



*Penstemon angustifolius* var. *vernalensis*, narrowleaf penstemon. Photo by Wayne Padgett.



*Penstemon caespitosus* var. *caespitosus*, mat penstemon. Photo by Andrey Zarkikh.



*Other plants of interest: Astragalus spatulatus (A. simplicifolius), Purshia tridentata, Hymenoxys (Tetraneuris) acaulis*

As mentioned previously, these field trips were so perfectly organized and choreographed, that as we pulled into the Moose Pond Nature Trail for a toilet stop, we found staff from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources just finishing cleaning the restrooms. Talk about attention to detail, Pat Holmgren has been known to be one not to miss a thing.

Not too far down the road, our next stop was to see *Penstemon scariosus* var. *garrettii*. Part of the *P. scariosus* complex that grows throughout the Uinta Basin, *P. scariosus* var. *garrettii*, another Uinta Basin endemic, is of moderate size, with brilliant blue secund flowers on stems rising from a woody crown.

*Other plants of interest: Pediocactus simpsonii, Astragalus argophyllus, Ipomopsis aggregata, Sedum lanceolatum, Antennaria microphylla, Phlox multiflora ssp. depressa*

Descending back down to the valley, catching glimpses of sweeping views of Flaming Gorge Reservoir at every switchback, we made our way to the final stop of the day and of the meeting, traveling just over the Utah border into Sweetwater County, Wyoming.

Perhaps saving the best for last (but of course, that is debatable), Pat and Noel led us to see *Penstemon acaulis*, *P. mucronatus* and “one lone *P. cleburnei* (in flower).” The temperatures had soared back into the 90’s and the area was extremely dry.

A steep slope on one side of the road gave way to a more gentle grade on the other side that was cut by a deep gulch, most likely created by flash floods over the years. The steep

slope was the location for *Penstemon acaulis*, the stemless penstemon, one of the true gems of the genus. A narrow endemic, it is only found in a small area in Sweetwater County, Wyoming and Daggett County, Utah. Forming tight cushions with needle-like leaves, the stemless blue, yellow-bearded flowers rise directly from the leaves. Also found here was *Penstemon pachyphyllus* var. *mucronatus*.

Just across the road, poised on the edge of the gully was *Penstemon eriantherus* var. *cleburnei* (*P. cleburnei*), a single plant in flower and the grand finale of the APS/UNPS Meeting. Known as the Green River penstemon, it was so diminutive growing in these dry, sandy soils, with its rather wide basal leaves and dainty upward-facing lavender flowers that it could easily have been overlooked. Somehow the cattle had managed to miss eating it, probably because it was too hard to get to. We all paid homage with our cameras and then gathered together on the flat surface above to bid our farewells and thank our many field guides for all the knowledge that had been shared with us over the past few days.

Many of us headed home, but it was clear that some of the group intended to take advantage of the opportunity to still do more botanizing while they were in the area. Lucky for those of us who live in Utah and can make the trip more easily, even if it is a three hour drive from Salt Lake City, which is certainly much closer than Oregon, Montana, or Colorado.

*Other plants of interest: Townsendia incana, Eremogone hookeri, Eriogonum alatum* var. *alatum, Orobanche fasciculata, Astragalus simplicifolius, Astragalus adsurgens, Erigeron pumilus* var. *condensata*

Those of us that attended this meeting were the beneficiaries of many hours of planning by the Holmgrens and the APS



*Penstemon scariosus* var. *garrettii*. Photo by Andrey Zarkikh



*Penstemon acaulis*, stemless penstemon. Photo by Andrey Zarkikh.





*Penstemon pachyphyllus* var. *mucronatus*, thickleaf penstemon, showing leaf tip. Photo by William Gray.



*Penstemon eriantherus* var. *cleburnei*, fuzzy-tongue penstemon. Photo by Wayne Padgett.



*Penstemon pachyphyllus* var. *mucronatus*, closeup. Photo by Richard Jonas

and we learned a lot about the plants and their habitats. And best of all, it was fun to hang out with a bunch of people who liked them as much as we did.



*Aquilegia barnebyi*. Photo by Richard Jonas. The three creative field trip title images also by Richard Jonas.

Board. But we also benefited from the days of reconnaissance just prior to the meeting, so that we could be led directly to so many varieties of penstemons. Our own Bill Gray spent the week previous to the meeting doing just that with the Holmgrens and others, and most likely loved every minute of it. Perhaps this will give you an idea of what a Penstemon Meeting is like and you might want to attend one in the future. Next year's meeting is scheduled to be in Las Vegas in April, check it out on the APS website.

But for all the descriptions and lists of plants, it is really hard to describe how downright wonderful this meeting was. We had a great time. How could you miss? The penstemons were spectacular, growing in places one might not otherwise visit,

Beth Corbin, APS Membership Secretary, compiled a [list of all the plants](#) (link to PDF on unps.org) that were seen on each of the field trips and gathered from a group of participants at the meeting.



# Ty Harrison



The Utah Native Plant Society lost a magnificent pillar of its organization when Ty Harrison passed away in June. A long standing member of the UNPS Board of Directors, his loss is sorely felt, not only on a professional level but particularly as a friend.

Ty was involved in so many community education and conservation efforts, it is impossible to list them all. However, Tony Frates from our UNPS Conservation Committee, who worked with him closely on these projects over the years, is in the process of compiling many of his accomplishments. His commemorative article will be published in the November issue of the *Sego Lily*.

*From his obituary in the Salt Lake Tribune:*

## **Alton Tyrone Harrison** **1/15/1942 - 6/3/2017**

*Alton Tyrone (Ty) Harrison, born to Alton LeRoy (Babe) & LaRose (Smith) Harrison, passed away peacefully Saturday, June 3rd, 2017, after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife, Judy (Gunderson) Harrison, sister Marjean (Richard) Nielson, sons Todd (Susan), Greg*

*(Nicole) & Brandon (Amanda), step-sons Juan (Candi) Arce-Larreta & Jorge (Ginger) Arce-Larreta, nephew Marc LeRoy Halliday, niece Andrea (Halliday) Doman & 16 grandchildren.*

*Ty was born in Murray, Utah and raised in the community formerly known as Crescent, Utah. Growing up on the family farm, his grandmother, Sarah Lovina Harrison, instilled in him a love of plants and nature. This propelled him to a long and distinguished career, teaching in colleges & universities around the country, most recently as professor and professor emeritus at Westminster College of Salt Lake City, Utah. Ty graduated from Jordan High School and went on to earn a B.S. in Botany at the University of Utah, an M.S. in Botany at UCLA, and a Ph.D. in Biology at Stanford University. Although mechanically & technologically challenged at times, his love of learning was infectious, and there are many who recall immersive learning experiences with him, in the classrooms of academia, the wild, & the urban.*

*Many communities are reaping the benefits of Ty's foresight and efforts, to preserve and restore natural habitat and open space nearby, and within their borders. They will continue to benefit for generations to come.*

*Ty loved music, art & irises, but above all, he blessed us by imparting his insight into the sanctity, majesty, grandeur, and wonder of life on our planet, and the beauty that is worth our while to defend.*

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## **Silver Lake Restoration**

*by Timothy Remkes, Botanist, Cottonwood Canyons Foundation*

*"We are a non-profit organization with a mission to continuously improve the environment of Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons through stewardship and education programs." – Cottonwood Canyons Foundation's mission.*

This year the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation led a native plant restoration project at the Silver Lake Boardwalk in Big Cottonwood Canyon. This was part of an on-going effort to help maintain the natural ecosystem. Silver Lake is visited by hundreds of people daily which puts high pressure on the environment in this area. We created this project to invite the public to join us in restoring the habitat and contributing to protecting natural wetland.

Through collaboration with Dryland Horticulture and Alta Ski Area we were able to collect native seed from Big and Little Cottonwood canyon, and grow 500 plants that were planted in this year's restoration project. With the help of (20) volunteers, we successfully planted all 500 seedlings as well as re-located logs and rocks in an effort to naturalize the surrounding over walked hiking trails. This project improved



the environment of Silver Lake through stewardship and taught our volunteers and other members of the public what the cost of recreation is, and what needs to be done to keep our public lands beautiful and healthy. More information on future projects and education programs lead by the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation can be found at [cottonwoodcanyons.org/](http://cottonwoodcanyons.org/)



## A Delightful Hike in Lamb's Canyon

by Catherine King

The Salt Lake Chapter of UNPS enjoyed a delightful hike in Lamb's Canyon on Sunday, July 16th. The hike was organized by Wayne Padgett, the SL Chapter field trip coordinator, led by Kipp Lee, and hosted by Bill Stockdale, UNPS Treasurer and president of the Lamb's Canyon cabin owner's association, who was able to give us access to the top of the canyon. The hike was well attended by about 35 people which included UNPS members, residents of Lamb's Canyon, friends of Bill Stockdale and also by someone who had heard about the hike on meetup.org.

The temperatures in the Salt Lake Valley topped out at 99 degrees again that day, another hot one in a string of sizzlers,



Beautiful *Corydalis caseana* ssp. *brachycarpa*. Photo by Catherine King



Bill Stockdale and many other eager explorers. Photo by Catherine King

so a pleasant hike at 8,200 foot elevation held special appeal. The trail followed along the edge of Salamander Lake and the area was very wet, just having melted out from the snow about three weeks earlier. The flowers were pretty much at peak bloom.

The most impressive and outstanding species that we saw was *Corydalis caseana* ssp. *brachycarpa* (Fitweed), a narrow endemic subspecies that occurs only in Wasatch, Salt Lake, and Utah counties. The plants we saw were over three feet tall, growing right next to a mountain stream, feet right down in the water. It was an incredible stand of corydalis. Growing alongside were other water lovers, *Heracleum lanatum* (Cow's Parsnip), *Platanthera dilatata* (bog orchid), *Mimulus guttatus* (Monkeyflower), *Saxifraga odontoloma* (Brook Saxifrage), *Veratrum californicum* (Skunk Cabbage), and *Aconitum*





Wet soil and shade describe the habitat of *Corydalis caseana* ssp. *brachycarpa*. Photo by Catherine King

*columbianum* (Western Monkshood). As we paused on the trail, Andrey Zarkikh commented to me on the lethal grouping of plants in front of us - veratrum, aconite and heracleum. We discussed the potential for the three as the plot for an Agatha Christie murder mystery.

Also along the trail were great bursts of coral pink flowers put on by *Castilleja rhexifolia* (Indian Paintbrush), which was blooming like crazy. Interspersed were *Aquilegia coerulea* (the Colorado Blue Columbine which almost always translates to white in Utah), *Geranium viscosissimum* (Sticky Geranium) and *G. richardsonii* (Richardson's Geranium), *Lathyrus pauciflorus* (Utah Sweetpea), *Vicia americana* (American vetch), and *Eriogonum heracleoides* (Whorled Buckwheat). It was really a pretty show.

Bill Stockdale invited the group to break for lunch at his cabin half a mile down the road, where we got out sack lunches and made ourselves comfortable in his cozy cabin. A talented photographer, Bill had some wonderful images hanging on the walls that he had taken in the canyon. After lunch, a much smaller group took a short hike on a dry ridgeline a little further down the road.

This exposed ridgeline had already dried out and was well past peak bloom. The first plant we spied, however, getting out of our vehicles was *Astragalus kentrophyta* (Spiny Milkvetch), which was not flowering, but is still a fabulously diminutive species in *Fabaceae*. Bill Stockdale had seen a good patch of *Calochortus nuttallii* (Sego Lily) blooming about two weeks earlier, but it had already finished. We did find a few still in flower, though, in the shade of the oak brush. Also of interest still flowering was *Orthocarpus tolmei* (Tolmei's Owl Clover), an annual herb with yellow flowers. There was a fine patch of *Castilleja applegatei* (Indian paintbrush) in both the yellow and orange forms.

The hike ended here, but on the drive back down the canyon, dropping in elevation, one couldn't help but be impressed by the huge swathes of *Epilobium angustifolium* (syn. *Chamerion angustifolium*, Fireweed), it was about the best we have ever seen. Also, in prime bloom was *Iliamnus rivularis* (Stream Bank Wild Hollyhock), with its pretty pastel pink flowers.

Many thanks to Bill Stockdale for making this hike possible, it was a great day!



Paintbrush and pea. *Castilleja rhexifolia* and *Lathyrus pauciflorus*. Photo by Catherine King



# Uinta Mountain Orchids

## Or at least a few of them...

Story and photos by Wayne Padgett, *The Retired Ecologist*

Many people are surprised when they hear Utah and orchids in the same sentence... like “*Boy are there some beautiful orchids in Utah!*” But, on Saturday, June 24 at precisely noon, we met with **Marv Poulson, *Botanist Extraordinaire***, at the East Park Campground on the Ashley National Forest north of Vernal, Utah, and did he have some orchids to show us! And right there in campsite #19, was a beautiful display of two tiny-flowered coralroot orchids. We did have to walk about *10 feet* to see them, but we were up to the task! It was, after all, a beautiful summer day with hardly a cloud in the sky and temperatures in the high 70’s to low 80’s at about 9,000 ft elevation. And we had plenty of food and water to take us the distance.

The Uinta Mountains of northeastern Utah are home to eight different genera and about 21 species of orchids depending on how you draw the boundaries of the range. They range in habitats from hanging gardens (*Epipactis gigantea*) and wet meadows (*Spiranthes* and some *Platanthera* [AKA *Habenaria*] and *Listera*), to conifer forests (*Calypso*, *Corallorhiza*, *Cypripedium*, *Goodyera*, and other *Platanthera* and *Listera*). While we didn’t see 21 species of orchid, what we saw in a few short hours from two locations less than 2 miles apart was

incredible.

So, what *did* we actually see? Well, to start with, we saw Northern or Early Coralroots (*Corallorhiza trifida*) and Spring Coralroots (*Corallorhiza wisteriana*) at the campground. Northern Coralroot (Figure 1 & 2) has yellow to greenish-yellow stems with whitish lips (the lower petal) and greenish sepals and lateral petals. It is distributed sporadically throughout many of the western and northern states as well as Canada, and absent from the southern and central states. In contrast, Spring Coralroot (Figure 3), has the reddish stems more common to other species of Utah coralroots orchids. It has a wider distribution in the States, but is much less common, at least in Utah. It has a white lip and dark wine-colored sepals and lateral petals. Up close, both these orchids have quite beautiful flowers.

As Marv took us from our cars to our highly-anticipated calypso orchid site, we came across a few unexpected beauties. First, was scentbottle (*Platanthera dilatata*) growing in a wet area next to a small stream. Next, we saw the non-orchid, bracted lousewort (*Pedicularis bractosa*) and the always beautiful Colorado columbine (*Aquilegia coerulea*). Then, to go along with the Northern and Spring Coralroot orchids, we saw a beautiful grouping of Spotted Coralroots (Figures 4 & 5). Like the Spring Coralroot, this one has reddish stems and flowers, but is aptly named and easily distinguished from the others by the spots on their lips. Look closely at these small flowers and their beauty is undeniable.

Nearby was the relatively large-flowered (especially when



Figure 1. Early coralroot (*Corallorhiza trifida*) in the East Park Campground, Ashley National Forest.



Figure 2. Early coralroot (*Corallorhiza trifida*) flower.





Figure 3. Spring coralroot (*Corallorhiza wisteriana*) also in the East Park Campground.



Figure 4. *Corallorhiza maculata*.



Figure 5. Spotted coralroot (*Corallorhiza maculata*).



Figure 6. Brownie lady's slipper (*Cypripedium fasciculatum*)





Figures 7 and 8. Calypso Orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*)

But then we came upon the pièce de résistance of our incredible day! With much anticipation, anxiety (Would it be in flower? Would those flowers be at their peak? Would our cameras be able to capture their beauty?) we came across the prize of the day. The Calypso Orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*)! There it was! We were in our happy place! Marv had done his homework and found what turned out to be a needle in a haystack on a forested slope with only a few scattered plants! And they were in perfect shape! Yes!! This little beauty (Figures 7 & 8), while occurring through the Rocky Mountains and portions of the Pacific Northwest, as well as a few northern states and Canada, is rarely abundant and is a real treasure to see.

Between Marv and I, we took a few thousand photos hoping for one good shot of this pink beauty. And, while I'm sure Marv has some great shots (he's much more patient than I am), I'm sharing a couple that are at least okay. With a beautiful subject, how can you go wrong! The field trip, with only a few of us present, was a complete success! Thank you Marv Poulson for your hard work, your patience, and your fun-filled day in the Uinta Mountains.

compared to the coralroot orchids) brownie lady's slipper orchid (*Cypripedium fasciculatum*). These plants (Figure 6) are rare throughout their range in eight western states. In northern Utah, we have seen it scattered about in the Uinta Mountains, as well as one population that occurs along the Red Pine Trail in Little Cottonwood Canyon that was located only in the past 20 years.



### The "New" UNPS Wildflower Poster

You may wish to give one as a gift, to enjoy for its artistic qualities, or to replace an old faded copy. At 22 inches wide and 34 inches tall, it fits nicely in a standard 2'x3' poster frame. It's a bargain, too. The UNPS member cost is \$10, the same as the original member price. Contact a UNPS Board Member or Chapter Officer if you want a copy, or get it online at [www.unps.org](http://www.unps.org) (select the "store" option). You also may be able to find one for sale in a visitor center or museum.





## Your UNPS Salt Lake Chapter Calendar *William Gray*

We have started to plan our Salt Lake Chapter programs for the coming year. I shall be out of town until almost the end of August, and this will not allow time to organize the annual UFO Night by September 6th. Instead, we will arrange a potluck picnic supper in one of the local canyons, and hold UFO night as our October meeting. So mark your calendars:

### Wednesday, September 6th, 5:30 - 8:00 pm; place to be arranged

Join us for a potluck picnic at a venue to be announced, and enjoy an evening of food and socializing with other plant lovers. We'll begin snacking on appetizers around 5:30 pm and proceed to more substantial items in due course. Our intent is to reserve a site where we can spread out and relax in a nice outdoor setting, perhaps with a few flowers or Fall colors to enrich the atmosphere. Stay tuned for more details as we explore possibilities.

### Wednesday, October 4th, 7:00 pm; UFO Night, hopefully at our usual REI location

It's time for you to dig through this year's crop of photos, and submit some of them for our annual festival of **Unidentified Flowering Objects**. It's actually a slight misnomer because the objects don't have to be unidentified, nor is it essential that they be flowering. I am after photos that facilitate little stories about our native plants, that bring out hidden connections among plants, and that may range from the gorgeous to the grotesque. So much the better if you don't know what they are and we can do some detective work. More detailed instructions will come at the end of August: **please hold off from sending photos until then, or my inbox may get swamped**. But please, get down to the pleasure of going through your digital memories.



## Utah Native Plant Society

Utah Native Plant Society  
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Salt Lake City, UT, 84152-0041.

To contact an officer or committee chair write to Webmaster: [unps@unps.org](mailto:unps@unps.org)

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UNPS Chapter Map



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