

# Marj Yung



May 1, 1935 – October 26, 2016

Marj Yung, 81, the first woman elected to the Thurston County Commission in 1974 and long-time member of the League of Women Voters, died October 26, 2016, in Olympia, Washington.

Marj was a dynamic, bright, witty woman who touched the lives of her friends, her family, and the community.

## Marj as a County Commissioner



### Governmental structure

Marj led the board of county commissioners in modernizing Thurston County government, overseeing the commission's hiring of its first county administrator. Charlie Earl, the county's first county administrator, described changes in the county as follows:

The county adopted a single countywide road district, replacing three separate road districts each under direction a commissioner, which took much of the politics out of decisions on bridge and road project priorities. The board also created a central administrative structure providing professional human resources such as labor relations, affirmative action, personnel, and compensation practices; budget development; risk management; data processing; and accountability management.

During this period, the board built and relocated most county departments to a new courthouse and jail. In addition to providing more capacity for the courts and other county departments, it co-located the permit processes of Planning, Environmental Health, Building Permits, and Public Works.

Marj also led the board's decision to organize the county's management of Public Health, Human and Social Services, and Employment and Training departments under a single office to gain efficiencies and coordinated decision making over the primary "people services" for which the county government was responsible.

### Intergovernmental services

In addition, Marj was very active in all the intergovernmental services of the day, including regional planning; Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Thurston County Waste Treatment or LOTT; public transportation; air pollution control; Medic 1; Central Communications; and many others. She was a huge advocate for coordination among the jurisdictions and quality land use planning.

### 911 Services

Marj also was the key sparkplug for establishing the 911 central dispatch system. The many police and fire agencies needed a lot of pressure and cajoling to come together and replace their individual dispatch procedures with a coordinated, centralized one that citizens could reach with one easy-to-remember phone number.

### Planning

Marj was a constant advocate of comprehensive planning and zoning for the county, said Linda Hoffman, who worked for the county as a planner, director, and county administrator. In the early and mid-1970s, the county had no comprehensive land use plan and had only an Interim Zoning Ordinance, the legal name for one prepared without the benefit of an authentic planning effort, to guide land use decisions during a time when the county was undergoing heavy growth pressures.



Linda Hoffman

With Marj's support and leadership, the county developed and adopted detailed land use plans for its various subareas, with the extensive involvement of county citizens. Marj championed the development and adoption of the county's first Shoreline Master Program, working with a citizens' committee. She also proposed and advocated for the formation of a County Agriculture Committee.

"I feel fortunate to have worked with Marj in her years as county commissioner, and I appreciate her many contributions to the community and to county governance," Linda said.

Another planner, Pete Swensson, said land use planning was under attack when Marj was a commissioner. Property rights advocates hotly contested subarea plans and environmental regulations such as the first local State Environmental Policy Act rules. It was a sign of her assertiveness and determination that she never backed away from the effort, he said.

Marj accomplished all this at a time when women were not well accepted in positions of authority, he said, but that never daunted her. "I will always remember her, and be grateful for her contributions to our community," Pete said.

Art O'Neal, director of the Thurston County Regional Planning Council, said Marj always acted with integrity and a sense of humor without thought of with whom she was dealing – the public, the staff, or her fellow commissioners. She was a positive problem solver, he added.

## Marj Enjoyed Being a County Commissioner and Accomplished Much

Marj accomplished a great deal in the four-year term she served as county commissioner, said Charlie Earl, the first county administrator hired in Thurston County.

Marj enjoyed being a county commissioner. She thought the office had a tremendous amount of authority. She liked being in a position where there was a great diversification of responsibility, Marj was quoted as saying in the report "Washington Women in Politics," by Phyllis Hackett, Mary Lou Krumland, and Judy Winsor, May 16, 1977.



Charlie Earl

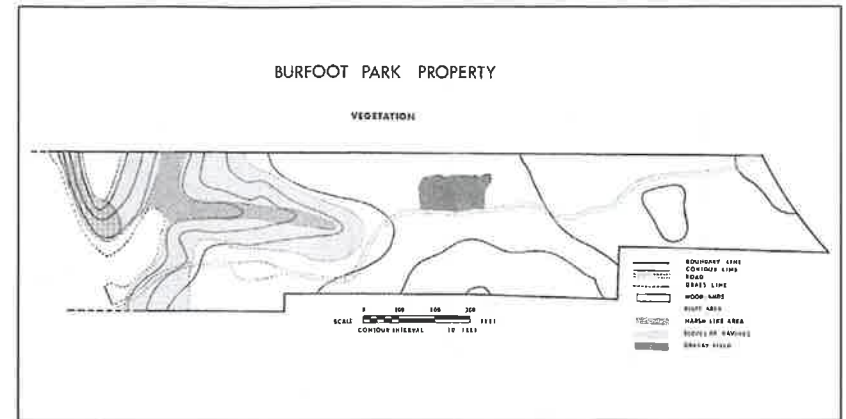
## Marj as an Evergreen Student



Burfoot Park on Budd Inlet near Boston Harbor.

Marj graduated from The Evergreen State College in 1974. She was a student of Russ Fox's in his first quarter of teaching at Evergreen, 1972-73, the college's second year of classes. The program was called Advanced Urban Planning Group Contract, and the students spent winter and spring quarters working on several community planning projects. Marj was involved in two of them: the relocation of North Bonneville, because of the construction of the second powerhouse at Bonneville Dam; and an environmental assessment and proposed site plan for

With the North Bonneville project, Marj had a strong interest in the history of both the Native American and subsequent white settlements in the Columbia Gorge region. She had lived in small towns in northern part of Eastern Oregon when growing up, so she already had an interest and connection with that area.



On the Burfoot Park planning study, she was part of a team of four students who completed a baseline study of the natural environment and alternative proposals for facilities and activity areas on the parcel acquired by the county.

Both projects included final reports that were used in eventually building the new town of North Bonneville and developing a new park in Thurston County.

## Marj as a Member of the League of Women Voters and Other Community Activities

### League of Women Voters

After moving to Olympia in 1969, Marj joined the Thurston County League of Women Voters. She was a board member from 1971 to 1974 and served as its president for part of 1973 and 1974. She worked on planning, parks, and shoreline management issues, serving as chair of the Land Use Committee. Marj also was the coordinator of local signature gathering for Initiative 276, the public disclosure law. Due to her interest in parks, she worked for the establishment of the county's Burfoot Park.

When people asked Marj about the power that got her elected, she had a photo enlarged to poster size showing some of her League friends in a skit pretending to be senior citizens establishing a retirement home called the Leagal Arms, another example of Marj's humor.



*League of Women Voters Group*

Marj joined other League members when the county commissioners read a proclamation to mark the 50th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of Thurston County in 2011.



*From Left, Marj; Marie Cameron; Thurston County Commissioners Karen Valenzuela, Cathy Wolfe and Sandra Romero; Barbara Gooding; Barb Theiss*

In the League, Marj made many long-time friends. They describe Marj as follows:

#### **Sue Lean**

Marj Yung was a good friend and she had a wonderful way with words. At League of Women Voters' meetings, we listened for her observations on the issues we studied, as they were always astute. Her winning campaign for Thurston County Commissioner was very exciting. And, she soon improved the organization of the county, a lasting legacy.



*Marj and Sue Lean*

Marj was a keen observer of nature with a love of plants, especially ferns and grasses. She and Vance were fortunate to live where they could see birds and even deer.

Marj had a way with words. You never knew what she might say next, but it was sure to be perceptive. She once said that on a long trip by car, it just cheers you up when you see a yellow bird. We shall miss her wit and her warmth.

#### **June Hansen**



*June Hansen and Marj*



Marj was exceptional. Her mind was brilliant, and I was not surprised to learn she was a member of Mensa. She had a sharp wit and was quick to express humor.

Marj had a great love of nature and especially birds, and her homes were always in settings that abounded in them. She also loved dogs, had several different breeds at different times, and had great success rescuing and restoring her last one, which had been badly abused.



She had many interests. Painting was one of her hobbies, and she was good. In earlier days, she often sent cards with her pictures to friends for birthdays and other occasions.

Unfortunately, Marj's later years were marked by advancing physical incapacity, and many activities she had enjoyed she could no longer do. But she certainly left her mark on those who knew her.

#### Rita R. Robison

It was exciting to watch Marj emerge as a community leader. She, like me and others, learned in the League how government operates from Marie Cameron. Marie was on the state League board when I moved to Olympia and later became the Thurston League president. Like Marie and me, Marj loved land use planning.



*From Left, Marj, Marie Cameron, and Betty Sholund*

After several years working on community issues, Marj decided that in addition to being involved in governmental issues as a citizen, it also is important that government have high quality elected officials. I'd come to the same realization, so when she invited me to her home on Sunset Beach Drive and made me borscht for lunch, I agreed to work on her campaign. I received the assignment of scheduler. We started early in 1974 on her campaign. I organized 69 coffee hours for her, a fact she mentioned often when we talked about the "old days." Marj said she would go to the library to hide from me because I was continually finding things for her to do.

#### Other Community Activities

Marj served on Thurston County Planning Commission from 1972 to 1973. She also was a board member of the Cooper Point Association and a member of the Thurston Action Committee and the Committee of the 1970s. Marj was the co-chair of a Washington State Board of Health committee that developed proposed regulations for septic tanks.

### Marj as an Artist and a Lover of Plants

Marj loved plants. As artist, in addition to paintings, she sketched the plants and birds of the area. She wrote booklets, including "Native Plants of Lakemoor," which included information about the plants of Ken Lake, where she and Vance lived for a time.

In a booklet on the McLane Nature Trail, Marj wrote:



"In January, McLane Nature Trail's plants are busy planning their year's activities. Much of this goes on underground and so is not immediately visible, but some preparations have moved forward nicely already, and of course some have never been secret at all, since some plants never go into hiding through their annual cycles. Skunk cabbage is creeping up from the water, soft, green, excited.

"The evergreen trees are more noticeable now as accent points. They'll recede into the background later. Now is when the lichens and mosses are obvious too, this is the time to take a magnifying glass on the walk to scrutinize those things that progress in the moist cool atmosphere. Bits of pink and orange among the lichens.

"January is when to view structures of shrubs and trees, when they can be outlined without the confusion of the vegetative affluence of their companions – the time when they reflect on the water in serene announcements. An occasional newt will be on the trail, courageous and slow. Lady newts, I understand."

The McLane Nature Trail report includes lists of observations of trees, shrubs, ferns, flowers, birds, and other animals. Dozens of ink drawings also add interest to the report.



Marj wrote that other members of the party include Marj Montgomery, Sue Wallbridge, Hanna Spielholz, herself, with others joining them from time to time.

Marj also wrote lengthy reports on sailing with Vance. She called herself a non-sailor and wrote humorously of her dislike of sailing, although she accompanied Vance on many journeys. In one report, she wrote:

Although I accept the fact that I was born with a special talent for non-sailing, I have not neglected this gift. Rather, I have exploited it to the fullest and have taken advantage of every opportunity to make non-sailing available to me. Unlike the run-of-the-mill non-sailor who remains on land out of the sight of water and boats, I have non-sailed in three Western states with long salt-water coastlines and numerous rivers and lakes. I have non-sailed, too, aboard numerous sailboats, three of which I have actually co-owned.

Some of us arrive at non-sailing by heredity, some of us develop the skill through experience. I have done both.

Marj also made notebooks of their trips throughout the country. Some were illustrated with photos and sketches.

Poetry was another interest of Marj's. She wrote lengthy poems about a possum, non-sailing, and additional topics.

Other reports include "A Gentlemen's Guide to Vegetables" and "Enjoying Arthritis."



## Marj as a Family Member

Marj was by loved her nieces and nephews. They offer their remembrances of her:

Deborah Allen-Rauch Flint, niece

Marj was a very brilliant, loving, caring person. She saw the beauty in life and shared it. May she rest in peace as we adjust to her passing. She will forever live in our memories.

Jeremy B. Rauch, great nephew

Marj Yung had no children, but she had a heart of gold. She loved all of her family and friends as if they were her own. Aunt Marj will truly be missed by one and all.

Karl Rauch, nephew

I drove up to their upper Mud Bay home in Olympia, and I had a heart-to-heart talk with her. I was very shy, but I decided I want to tell her that I was gay. And when I told her that I was gay she looked at me and said thank God, Karl, I thought you're going to tell me you were a Republican. I will always remember that and her laugh.

She had such a way. I loved her bird collection of drawings, and her drawing them on a card. Whenever we got holiday cards or greetings or her birthday cards, she always would draw a sketch of a beautiful bird and sign her name and what type of bird it was with a long with a letter. I have kept so many of them.

Ted Rauch, nephew

Marj was the elegant definition of a lady and very graceful.

## Marj as a Child and Young Woman

Marjorie Anne Pierson was born on May 1, 1935, to Ted and Ethelyn Pierson. She grew up on farms and in rural communities in Eastern Oregon. Marj was the youngest of three daughters. Her older sisters were Pat and Rose Pierson.



Marj began working at the age of 8. She could be seen scurrying down the streets of her small Oregon town delivering telegrams for Western Union, according to the report "Washington Women in Politics."

Marj graduated from Condon High School in Condon, Oregon in 1953. In 1955, she married Karl Gabler, a pilot in the U.S. Air Force. Karl was killed in an airplane accident that same year.



In 1957, Marj graduated from Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing in Portland, Oregon. She also attended classes at Lewis and Clark College and the University of Oregon.



When Marj completed her nurse training, she was given the assignment to be in charge of an Emergency Room for the evening shift. Uncertain that she had the skills to do the job, she contacted the doctor on call – Vance Yung. They visited during the shift, which produced no patients, and when the shift ended, he asked her for a date. They were married in 1958.

Marj worked as a registered nurse for 12 years. Her assignments included general duty, patient instruction, charge nurse in emergency departments, and manager of a general practitioner's office.

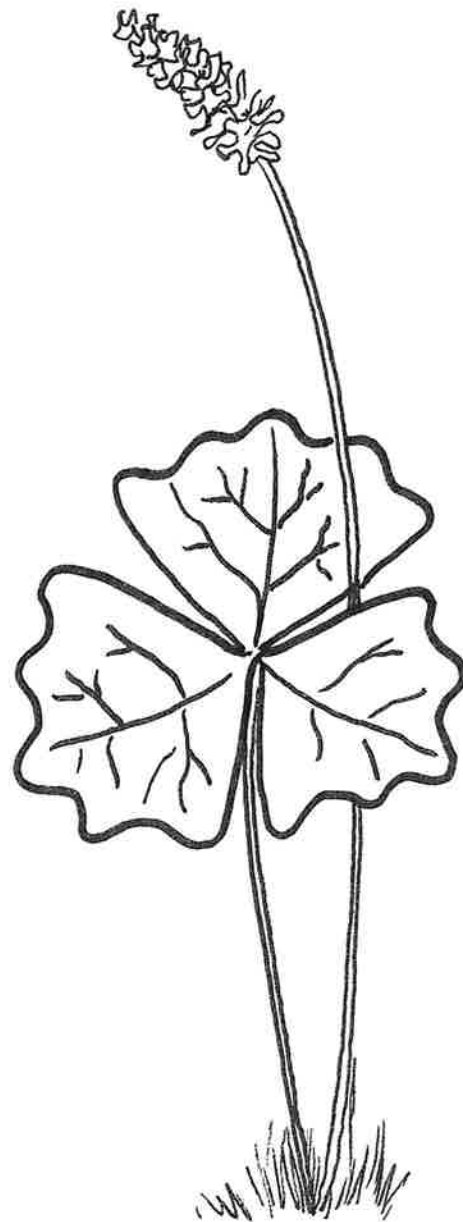


## Final Thoughts about Marj

We are fortunate to have had Marj in our lives. Although she left us too soon, for we had much more time, ideas, and projects we wanted to share with her, we will remember her always with love, affection, and admiration.



NATIVE PLANTS OF LAKEMOOR





Lakemoor Development's setting has the attributes of a park. The luxuriant growth of trees, shrubs and herbs attracted me at first sight, and during the time we've made our home here, have been a source of increasing pleasure. The plants are enjoyable in themselves and because they provide a habitat for other living things. In these surroundings, it has been possible to become acquainted with the daily routines of douglas squirrels, chipmunks and the little emerald-green tree frogs. Glimpses of mountain beavers, otters, rabbits and—even now—occasional deer enrich the days. As seasons progress migrant birds come to harvest the native crops in seemingly endless variety, while a number of birds remain year-round in our community.

Even as the area becomes more populous, much of the wilderness charm remains, because many residents have left portions of their yards in native state. The use of natives in landscaping has many advantages, not the least of which is the delightful economy of this approach. Native plants are free, require no expensive equipment for their upkeep, and free the homeowner from the necessity of buying insecticides and fertilizers. Perfectly adapted to the existing conditions, they grow healthy and happy with the least amount of human interference. This yard approach is economical of time as well as dollars. Tedious mowing and sprinkling programs are not needed during the dry summers, no special precautions are required during unusually cold periods.

The land in this vicinity is catalogued by the U.S. Soil Conservation District in the soil survey of Thurston County as suited for growth of Douglas-Fir (although this was hardly news to the trees that have been growing here for centuries, it tidies things up nicely to have the stamp of government approval on the activity). Plant identification manuals describe the other plants that grow here as ones adapted to life in Douglas-Fir forests. Our native plants are well suited to conditions here, but these conditions are enormously frustrating to the gardener who aspires to a conventional yard. There are drainage problems from hardpan, vast quantities of rock, highly acid, iron-poor soil and—in many lots—difficult slopes. As landscaping for individual lots is planned, the impact this will have on the surrounding area deserves consideration too. In our neighborhood, the small lake ultimately receives much of the fertilizer and insecticide that is applied to lawns and shrubbery, since storm sewers drain into the lake. By this same channel, the lake receives silt that rain washes from areas denuded in construction.

A rich variety of suitable natives is available to the homeowner in our area. There follows a discussion of some that have become familiar to me. Although it is far from a complete list, it is hoped that it will stimulate appreciation of our wildwood setting.

## SOME TREES.....

The most obvious and abundant tree here is, of course, the Douglas-Fir, which also happens to be one of the region's biggest exports. Although they seem rather large to me, by Douglas-Fir standards, our local trees are mere teenagers with the potential of reaching two hundred feet in height with trunk diameters of three or four feet. In shaded areas such as ours, the trees habitually lose their lower limbs, thus supplying households with fireplace kindling on a regular basis. In bygone days, local Indians chewed fir pitch for gum, brewed tonic tea from its needles and burned its cones in religious ceremonies. Today the tree continues to find a place in ceremonies—for it is the most widely used Christmas tree.

Western Hemlock, another native evergreen, is also widely harvested in Washington for lumber and for paper pulp. Perhaps this paper on which the word Hemlock is printed is, itself, Hemlock. In maturity, this tree can achieve the height of one hundred and sixty feet. The miniature cones of the Hemlock are found in great numbers along its gracefully drooping boughs until midwinter, when they fall to the ground.

We have some Western Yews here. They look to me like Hemlocks in need of a haircut, since they have a disorderly habit of sending out twigs all up the central trunk. However, it is a simple matter to sort them out from Hemlock by identifying the tiny sharp prong on the tip of each needle, and noticing that Yews produce berries instead of cones. Yew wood is famous for its strength, and Indians made extensive use of it in the construction of bows, fishing net frames and canoes.

Western Red Cedars, also found here, have been extensively harvested commercially. Stumps of the huge ones which once grew here are apparent throughout the area, many small ones remain. Their graceful growing habit and enchanting fragrance make them very welcome.

The startling red-orange trunk and branches of the Madrona make it a standout on the scene, and it is also very noticable in winter, since it is the only leafed tree that retains its foliage here. The glossiness of the leaves prevents water from remaining on them, and thus protects them from ice damage during freezing weather. The presence of this tree indicates rock or hard subsoil lies not far beneath the surface.

Largest of the local deciduous trees is the Big Leaf Maple. In the open, it will grow to eighty feet tall, and is often seen with numerous branches growing into upright stems along the trunk. The foliage makes a brilliant fall display, later

it is excellent composte. The rough bark of the maple is the perfect growing site for exquisite mosses and tiny ferns which spread beyond, protected by the heavy shade and moisture-holding mulch of fallen leaves. Seeds from the tree waft to the ground on little wings, in early spring blankets of tiny maples appear, but most of these little trees are doomed to die in summer drouth.

Stands of Alder grow in the low moist areas. These little trees form dense thickets, they are both hardy and prolithic. Alder wood is widely used in fireplaces, to a more limited extent as lumber. In wintertime, the startling pattern of the neighborhood Alder groves in snow is a treasure of a sight, as is the occasion of their leafing out in early spring.

Probably the most revered deciduous tree in our area is the Dogwood. When May arrives, it is a celebration of flowering Dogwoods! Do we have a thousand Dogwoods in Lakemoor? There can never be too many! If you are blessed with one, protect the vegetation around the tree's base, for little Dogwoods insist upon insulated beds and will rebel by refusing to bloom or even by dying if their surroundings are tampered with excessively. Dogwoods make their decision to bloom based upon hours of daylight and air temperature, so will occasionally have minor displays in fall too.

Cascara trees are so self-effacing that they are nearly invisible. Tucked away near other trees or shrubs, they send up a long narrow trunk, and, well above the normal line of sight, send out a few shy branches with a few twigs carrying a few leaves. Such a quiet and modest tree is no trouble, and there is a sort of whimsy to having a laxative growing in the yard.

#### SOME SHRUBS.....

Hazels choose the same general areas as Dogwood, perhaps preferring a bit more sunshine. They habitually spread out, shoot by shoot, from an already crowded base, so when in leaf, form a rounded shrub that grows to twenty feet high. They are at their finest, I think, during those empty February days when their delicate tips are decorated with long yellow catkins. And if you maintain a resident Hazel, you probably have a resident squirrel for a bonus.

Oceanspray—or Arrow-wood or Ironwood, as it is also known—must be our most widely distributed shrub here. Straight narrow stalks grow out from a central base. In late spring, great clumps of creamy white blooms drape from new growth. The supple shrub moves gracefully in the slightest breeze, and when they are in bloom are the easiest thing around to look upon. If one restrains from removing the brown seed cluster that follows the bloom, these will be harvested by migrant

bushtits, who will arrive in a great flock one day in early autumn, and whose actrobatics will provide you with one of the most astonishing circuslike entertainments you'll ever witness. Ocean Spray leafs out early in spring, and after the barren winter, it is enormously satisfying to watch the rapidity with which the leaves grow. This shrub was used by Indians as a cooking skewer, since the hard wood doesn't burn readily, and for digging tools, spears and arrows. Ocean Spray is a wonderful plant, and very well adapted to the growing conditions here. A bare plot of land near our house, bulldozed during the building process, was totally covered with Ocean Spray two feet high in two years.

Berries, berries, berries! We have red and blue huckleberry, and both are highly prized by a variety of birds. Although the red huckleberry loses its leaves in winter, the tiny red berries stay on for bright spots during much of the winter. The growth pattern of Huckleberry reminds me of Japanese bonsai trees, and I find it pleasant to have the result without the work and unlimited patience required in that art. Huckleberries, of course, are edible, but the red ones are rather bland. We have Snowberry, whose white berries also remain on the bare twigs for winter pattern; We have Salmonberry for early spring bloom and we have--oh yes! indeed we have--Blackberry! Creeping across the ground, invading the tiniest recess, we have impossibly hardy Blackberry! If you have a wild patch that you only need visit once a year, then you can be assured of these succulent treats. Probably, no matter what you do, you will have Blackberry in your yard. We also have, in random open places, the less overwhelming Blackcap, which is a black Raspberry, and they are very delicious in flavor and without the pithy core of the Blackberry. Thimbleberry grows here and is readily recognized by its great maple-like leaves and its large white blooms. Service-Berry is also native to our area. Although many of these berries are less than gourmet eating to humans, they are worth preserving for their value to the birds.

Secretive Honeysuckle is usually first noticed when it is accidentally pulled up in a foray with Blackberry vines. The plant has sparse oval leaves appearing early in the season, followed in May by clusters of fragrant orange-red flowers. In September, orange berries appear on the vine.

Red Berry Elder springs up readily in cleared areas and achieves respectable size in a short period of time. Even as a young plant it will display clusters of white blossoms in April or May, follow that later in summer with red berries. The plant has no commercial use, is less than spectacular in leaf or bloom, but I rather respect it for making do and achieving respectable size in areas at which other plants turn up their roots. A five foot tall two year old Elder grows in a rock pile at my house!



Scotch Broom is becoming more widespread here each year. It is not a Northwest native, but was introduced in Vancouver B.C. by a British Settler and has made itself very much at home. May is the month when it is found in spectacular golden flower, and May is the month when it achieves a nasty reputation among people prone to allergies.

The growing of roses is a heavy responsibility, for they are known to be both capricious and demanding. The gardener thinks twice before taking on the burden of their care. He considers mildew and aphids, the dusting and pruning and feeding routine. Last year I had more roses in bloom than the most dedicated horticulturist. I didn't water, mulch, spend a cent, or even an hour on their care. True, my blooms were somewhat more modest—about the size of a dime—but I had real roses, most likely one of the ancestors from which all those great bloated roses sprung—and my roses were fragrant and pretty, and they brought pleasure during their long period of bloom. There are several varieties of wild roses in Washington, my roses and I have never agreed on just who they are.

Oregon Grape is high on the neighborhood-favorite-shrub list. We have two varieties here, one larger than the other. The holly-like leaves, just for the joy of it, it seems, occasionally turn red to become accent pieces in the yard. There is brilliant yellow flower in summer and tart purple fruit in early fall. Rumors constantly circulate that this fruit is poison. It is not, for I have eaten it with no ill effects other than a nasty taste in my mouth from its unpleasant flavor. I tend to agree with the Makah Indians who considered it to be Raven food, but reputedly, the flavor improves after being touched by frost. The root of Oregon Grape was the basis for yellow dye in Indian days.

Salal thrives beneath our Douglas-Firs, covering the ground with an evergreen blanket, providing food and shelter for Oregon Juncoes and Rufous-sided Towhees—two of the year-round birds. The bloom of salal, although inconspicuous, is very nicely engineered. It is a cluster of pink-white bells. These are followed by purple berries, which are nearly as delicious as Oregon Grape.

Twin-flower is a delicate little shrub with light green leaves that is often seen growing around the base of trees or larger shrubs. In June and July numerous pink twin bells, sweetly scented, are to be found.

#### SOME HERBS.....

It has been said that a weed is a plant nobody has found a use for. I suppose that when our society was agricultural, there was reason to irradiate Tansy from the fields, and that only a softhead would share the cabbage patch with dandelions.

But since our yards today are kept for solace and pleasure and are not planted to stave off starvation, perhaps it is time to cast off this word weed, so that we may look upon these little oxygen producers with an unprejudiced eye.

Which plants are weeds, anyway? Chickweed? That sounds obvious enough. If you had Star of Bethlehem growing in your yard, could you bear to pull up something with such a delightful title? Star of Bethlehem is another name for Chickweed. Dandelion is often considered a weed, but is, in fact, an edible food, more nutritious than most of the commercially sold greens. It happens that most of those little buttons of gold called dandelions growing here are not dandelions at all, although they do have a feline name; Hariy Cat's Ear or Smooth Cat's Ear! Tansy Ragwort, I've known for many years, is a noxious weed, but I didn't know until two weeks ago that it is also the intricate little stalks tipped with tiny discs that has been decoration in a vase here all winter.

One plant frequently identified as a weed, because of its widespread growth is Yarrow. Yet Sunset Garden Book recognizes this everyday plant with several mentions. It is suggested as accent plantings mixed with spire-like growing plants, it is a recommended ground cover and it reported as a favorite of flower arrangers because of the everlasting quality of the tiny white flowers. Yarrow has a place in history in many cultures. The I Ching is a philosophical work which has been continuously consulted in China for the past twenty-seven hundred years. Part of the ritual of using the oracle requires the use of fifty dried Yarrow stalks. The botanical name of Yarrow is Achillea, which it received because Achilles is reputed to have treated his soldiers wounds with it at the battle of Troy. In Sweden, Yarrow often replaces Hops in beer production. European folklore relating to this plant describes such uses as potent love charm, provider of courage for the timid, and remedy for toothache and nosebleed. Snohomish, Chehalis and Squaxin languages have names for Yarrow which mean "little squirrel tail"--good description for the lacey foliage. Indians used this herb in treatment of eye conditions, childbirth, tuberculosis, stomach ailments, diarrhea, skin rash and rheumatism. Its medicinal use has a sound basis, for the herb contains large quantities of tannic acid. How could a yard get along without an abundance of this versitile plant?

Of course, many of the plants here have never been considered weeds. Indeed, a number of them, far removed from their native habitat, are carefully nurtured specimen plants in yards in Los Angeles, London or Rome. Yellow Violets, Bleeding Heart and Colombine, all long prized in yards, grow wild here. We have such delicious sounding treats as Vanilla Leaf, Ginger Root and Licorice Fern.

In many areas, ferns can only be enjoyed as houseplants, but in addition to Licorice Fern, we have Bracken (which can become a six-footer), Sword Fern and Lady Fern.

Wildflowers are plentiful. The earliest bloom in my yard is on a Coltsfoot, which breaks into flower even before it unfolds its great leaves in March. April is when the beloved Trilliums appear and these flowers are accompanied by Star of Bethlehem, Siberian Miner's Lettuce, Buttercup and Yellow Violets. Nettles, Many-leaved Pea, Many-leaved Lupin, Star Flower, Vanilla Leaf, Bleeding Heart, Colombine, and Oregon Fairy Bells appear in bloom in May, and as the weather continues to warm, Wild Strawberries, Twin Flower, Pearly Everlasting, Wild Rose, St. Johnswort, and the majestic Fireweed add color in abundance to the local scene. There must be dozens more flowers here that have so far eluded my scrutiny.

#### LITTLE GROWING THINGS.....

In spring of 1972, I happened upon a Liverwort colony which had appeared to fill a low spot beside my house. I borrowed a section to bring inside for a few days, so that the formation of the fruiting stalks could be followed under a magnifying glass, and searched the house for reading material that would tell me what was happening. It was never quite clear, but I did learn that I was looking at what might very well be a replica of one of the very first land plants, and so I carried this bit of history back out into the yard where it looks very well for a thing of such vast age.

Mosses, Lichens and Mushrooms are other plants that abound in the region. I have identified the lush deep carpet of rather coarse moss as Spagnum, and can also recognize Hairy Cap moss, but since reading that twenty-three thousand species have been described by botanists, with a further division into subclasses, I have decided that to me, moss is moss. Little has been written about gardening with mosses, but the ones I've dealt with have been very cooperative. They seem quite willing to thrive wherever the conditions are reasonably similar to those where they were collected.

Within my own yard, I've seen five edible mushrooms: Orange Fairy Cup, Russula, Boletus, Common Laccaria and Morel. There are many others around, appearing in both Spring and Fall. Something interesting is taking place on every inch of land!

Not all the plants grow on land. Some grow on other plants. The lichen that covers the branches of the Douglas-Fir is, I surmise, the Wrinkled Shield Lichen. Like all lichens, it is actually a commune of two separate organisms—fungii and algae. The fungus contributes moisture-holding properties to the partnership, the alga does photosynthesis for them both. Although lichens have been repeatedly accused of causing death of trees on which they grow, this accusation would never hold up in

court. There is simply no firm evidence. Because one of their components carries out photosynthesis, the lichen is not a parasite. In fact, all sorts of lichens exist quite happily on stone.

The largest plant in our area is the Douglas-Fir, but I have no idea what plant is the smallest. Perhaps it is an alga growing in the lake. It is reasonable to speculate that there are innumerable plants surrounding us, not visible to the naked eye. What can be seen—the plants that range in size from moss blooms best enjoyed with aid of a hand lens, to the lofty Douglas-Fir—can provide hours of pleasure. Some of the books that have enhanced my appreciation of our native plants are: Trees, Shrubs and Flowers to Know in Washington by C. P. Lyons, Wild Flowers of the Pacific Coast by Leslie Haskin, Ferns of the Northwest by Theodore Frye, Ethnobotany of Western Washington by Erna Gunther, Forests of Lilliput, The Realm of Mosses and Lichens by John Bland, The Savory Wild Mushroom by Margaret McKenny, a Brooklyn Botanic Garden handbook called Gardening with Native Plants—which turned out to have an article about Northwest Natives written by Olympian Margaret McKenny, and, finally, The Herbalist by Joseph Meyer. Many of these publications were written some years ago, but all are still in print and all are comprehensible to even the most botanically ignorant lay person. Each of them has something interesting to say about what is going on right here in our own backyards.





# **Observing McLane Nature Trail**

## **Narrative and Pen-and-Ink Drawings**

by Marj Yung  
1979

### OBSERVING McLANE NATURE TRAIL

McLane Nature Trail, developed and maintained by Washington State Department of Natural Resources after an initial grant from the Inter-agency for Outdoor Recreation, provides dry-footed viewing of marsh and bog plants without disruption of setting. Although miniature in scale--the longer of the two alternative pathways being only 1.1 mile--the site is rich in variety, and the development design encourages scrutiny of small things. It requires leisurely strolling, so two hours should be allowed for the short distance.

The Trail is located off McLane-Delphi Road, which intersects with Old 99 about 2 miles from Olympia City Limits. An easily noticed sign identifies the turn-off for the trail three miles south of the intersection with Old 99. The scenic walk is not suited for cycling, and indeed barricades on the trail preclude it. There are no picnicking or camping facilities, there is no running water, but the site does provide rest-room facilities, as well as adequate parking for cars and busses.

Unhurried regular walks on this trail have unfolded some of its infinite variety to me. Obviously, I recommend

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the McLane Nature trail, and suggest that the guides following are merely a beginning.

I further recommend that you choose companions carefully, for this lovely place is deserving of quality. My regular companions nature observations did not start and stop with "Isn't that pretty?"

They had inquiring contemplative minds, they had no impulse to hurry, they brought detail to my attention. I share our views of the trail with you, but I jealously keep my companions to myself!

--Marj Yung

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### MARCH ON McLANE

The earliest days of March offer the first promises of spring with the buds of Indian Plum, and the unfolding of the glorious Skunk Cabbage. This is the time when lichens and mosses are particularly interesting to view and so a hand lens is worth carrying.

Before the month is ended, Mountain Toothwort, Trillium, Bleeding Heart and Yellow Violet will join the Indian Plum and Skunk Cabbage in bloom, and the beaten down grassy areas will begin to promise a change from ecru to green. Garter snakes come creeping out, and already newts are abundant in the waters of the pond. Without the distractions of numerous flowers in bloom, it is a good time to give attention to the Douglas-fir, Cedar and to look for a Yew which ought to be around here somewhere.

The moisture of March accentuates the rusty color of decaying wood, contrasts it against the arising new green foliage. So patterns are terrific. And patterns are everywhere: Hanging mosses, sculptured roots, the skeleton of a leaf on the trail.

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## McLANE APRIL

The mysterious leaves of March provide final clues in April, and fascinating views pepper the trail. But also, new plants creep out of the soil promising special surprises for the future.

The newts in the pond are re-creating themselves. Ducks have arrived. Ferns catch the eye, ferns in various stages of their careers. It is now necessary to look under leaves for blossoms, since that's what the Ginger does here.

Foliage is the main thing early in April, but blossoms start to dominate toward the end of the month. It is hard to remember to look up as well as down, but worthwhile, since trees are at the apex of activity too, and some are subtle indeed about their blossoms.

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### McLANE'S MONTH OF MAY

If you can only visit McLane Nature Trail once or twice and want to identify things in variety, then May is your month, since new things come into bloom and many of March and April offerings continue.

Even now, though, the trail is subtle. Striding through at a hiker's pace will provide little to remember, since eyes must focus on such elusive things as Inside-out Flower and secretive Honeysuckle. The Foam Flower is especially shy, blooming only briefly. Vanilla Leaf requires the most vigorous seeking out.

Now, too, there is a lot of competition for attention, and if you walk the trail regularly, you'll see new things if you reverse direction.

And, if you walk the trail regularly, you'll observe the changes in the pond are as dynamic as the changes on land. It goes from clear to cloudy, from a flat liquid surface to a mere base for a multitude of plants, plants that threaten to cover the reflective surface. Is it still fluid?

Yes. Newts and otters swim.

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### JUNE AT McLANE

The main tourist season is past--the school bus loads of children are gone--the main blossom display is finished.

Now it is time to settle down to fruit and seed, for many plants. But not all. Still there are fresh blossoms, and some of the old friends from April and May continue to create flowers.

### JULY AND AUGUST'S McLANE

Plants gone to seed attract new birdlife, and even now new blossoms appear. Berries are into fruit, Red fruits dot the trail from a variety of sources. And there is the earliest, tenderest beginning of leaf fall--the preparations for another cycle. And the grasses, once flat and ecru, now are at the peak of their display. They rise over the head and waft and rustle and are magnificent.

And it rains, and the lichens look as they did in spring and little brown mushrooms leap from the earth.

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OBSERVATIONS ON McLANE NATURE TRAIL 1979: FIRST BLOSSOMS

MARCH

Bleeding Heart  
Indian Plum  
Mountain Toothwort  
Skunk Cabbage  
Trillium  
Yellow Violet

APRIL

Bittercress  
Bitter Cherry  
Broad-leafed Maple  
Bongards Buttercup  
Blackberry  
Coltsfoot  
Dandelion  
Forget-me-not  
Oregon Grape  
Redberry Elder  
Salmonberry  
Serviceberry  
Siberian Miner's Lettuce  
Starflowered Solomon;s Seal  
Stink Currant  
Thimbleberry  
Wild Ginger  
Youth-on-Age

MAY

Baldhead Waterleaf  
Bittersweet Nightshade  
Cascara  
Cattail  
Corydalis  
Devil's Club  
Fairy Bells  
False Hellebore  
False Solomon's Seal  
Foam Flower  
Foxglove  
Goats Beard  
Inside-Out Flower  
Lily-of-the-Valley  
Mitrewort  
Monkey Flower  
Nettle  
Orange Honeysuckle

Pond Lily  
Red Huckleberry  
Salal  
Star Flower  
Strawberry  
Twisted Stalk  
Veronica  
Vanilla Leaf  
Wild Rose  
Yerba Buena

JUNE

Alumroot  
Bedstraw  
Clover  
Daisy  
Fireweed  
Large Leaf Avens  
Snowberry  
Tansy Ragwort

JULY

Ajuga  
Goldenrod  
Water Parsnip

AUGUST

Aster  
Pearly Everlasting  
Yarrow

OTHER PLANTS NOT NOTED IN BLOSSOM

Douglas-fir  
Cedar  
Mosses  
Lichens  
Duckweed  
Grasses  
Reeds  
Sedges  
Shelf Fungus  
Algae  
Mushrooms

OTHER SIGHTINGS

Otter  
Rough-skinned Newt  
Douglas Squirrel  
Garter Snake  
Water Snake  
Slug  
Snail

Towhee  
Swallow  
Heron  
Mallard  
Shoveler  
Kingfisher  
Waxwing  
Pheasant  
Wren

#### 1st Month

In January, McLane Nature Trail's plants are busy planning their year's activities. Much of this goes on underground and so is not immediately visible, but some preparations have moved forward nicely already, and of course some have never been secret at all, since some plants never go into hiding through their annual cycles. Skunk Cabbage is creeping up from the water, soft green, excited.

The evergreen trees are more noticable now as accent points. They'll recede into the background later. Now is when the lichens and mosses are obvious too, this is the time to take a magnifying glass on the walk to scrutinize those things that progress in the moist cool atmosphere. Bits of pink and orange among the lichens.

January is when to view structures of shrubs and trees, when they can be outlined without the confusion of the vegetative affluence of their companions--the time when they reflect on the water in serene announcements. An occasional newt will be on the trail, courageous and slow. Lady newts, I understand.

#### 2nd Month

Now the grasses are coming up green through the yellow turf of last year. Buds appear on shrubs and trees. The Skunk Cabbage proves serious about its effort and all the early things worry about changes in the weather. Leaves of early flowering plants rush forward.

#### 3rd Month

The production really begins. While several plants bloom many others begin preparations, and begin to jostle for space. All ground is covered by lively green vegetation as access to sunlight is compromised by leafing of trees above. Catching of sunlight becomes a major priority, so plants leafing out have bigger leaves or more starts. The pressures mount.

#### 4th Month

Warmer atmosphere increases the metabolism of the plants, and those plants competing against each other in the early sunlight rush into bloom. The area has enormous variety and delightful promise for the next month, and produces several really nice blossoms.

#### 5th Month

The big event for blooming. More than a dozen large and small blossoms develop this month while efforts of plants coming into blossom earlier continue.

#### 6th Month

#### 6th Month

New blossoms are diminished in numbers, but the trail is more interesting because of the ongoing blossoming of the plants that began efforts earlier and because of the rich foliage that has developed for this peak time.

#### 7th Month.

A few new blossoms, berries and seeds developing from known plants, the beginning of retirement noticed for others.

#### 8th Month

Still new blossoms from those plants who chose to compete for sunlight with fall's short terms. These plants have blooms with staying power, seeds that will carry over on the stem.

#### 9th Month

Three plants choose to start blooming even this late. They like last month's plants, are crisp and rigid and will put their seeds into hard little shells for birds or time to plant, keeping them on the stalk meanwhile so that they won't rot in the moist cool ground of the winter.

#### 10th Month -12th Month

All is closed and quiet for plants on the surface.

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In the early 1970's, the voters of Washington State approved a series of bond issues collectively known as the Washington Futures Package. Among them was an issue for the acquisition and development of public parks and open spaces, which was administered by the Inter-agency for Outdoor Recreation under guidelines supplied by the Legislature.

The Department of Natural Resources applied for, and obtained this funding to develop what was named McLane Nature Trail on property already under the jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources, property that had no apparent economic future. It was a small piece of land distinguished by marshes and beaver ponds, and, with the grant provided by the public, the Department designed and constructed a nature appreciation pathway just over a mile long and bisected in its center. The Department arranged bridges over streams and boggy areas, cleared a connecting trail, put up a few identifying markers, installed seating areas for viewing, barricades against motor vehicles, and created some wooden viewing areas outcropping over the water. The Department maintains the facility within its ongoing budget. The Washington Futures participation was limited to creation, but the recipient agency committed itself to ongoing maintenance in the contract.

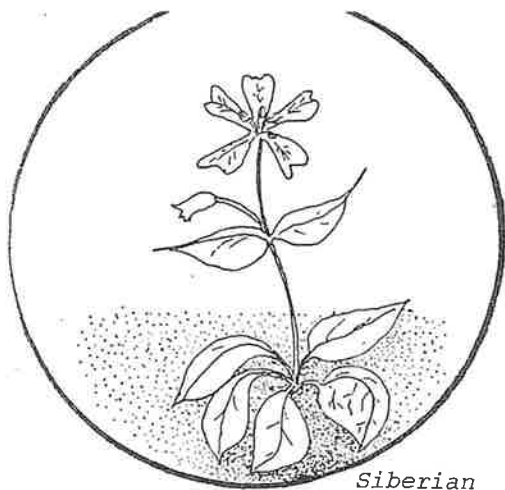
This has become a hefty obligation. Accesses for people, constructed in an area that accumulates runoff from storms, have been washed out by storms. A facility in an isolated area has been subject to vandalism. The little site is vulnerable to destruction by development on adjacent lands, for it enjoys no buffer area of public ownership on its entire borders, shares its vital water with lands in private ownership.

So, perhaps McLane Nature Trail will exist for appreciation of nature for only a few moments of time.

It has been my good fortune to experience the natural offerings of McLane Nature Trail on a regular basis. The variety and mystery of the delights I attribute to nature, but the access--my personal enjoyment--I attribute to the government system. While natural processes go on without my observation--flowers bloom, ferns frond, cattails form and ducklings move out of downy into iridescent feathers--yet I am a more magnificent creature if I can observe and applaud. The dew-struck snails, the fiery-bellied newts, the little skiens of garter snakes of the spring and the closely scrutinized blooms of lichens along the nature walk restore me. There is something very profound in the spiral unwinding of a fern frond from the rich humus, a special suspense, ancient mystery. The shape of overhead views, changing as trees leaf out. A place special and departed from ordinary matters is offered me here. Bird calls, bird shadows--that ultimate tranquilizer: the sound of moving water against pebbles, and the view of ripples telling how water moves from sky to earth to sea with relentless ecstatic purpose.

What a window! The following sketches are glimpses through the glass.

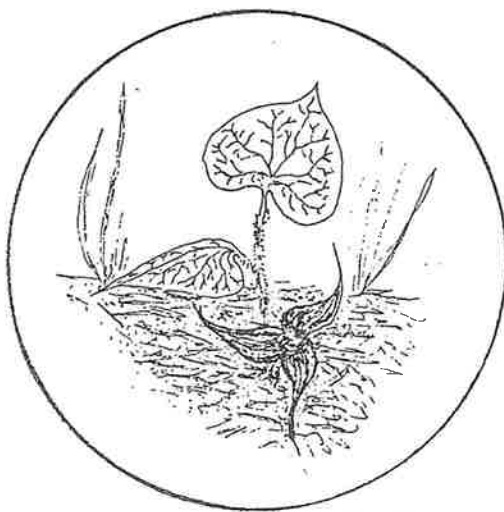
APRIL FLOWERS



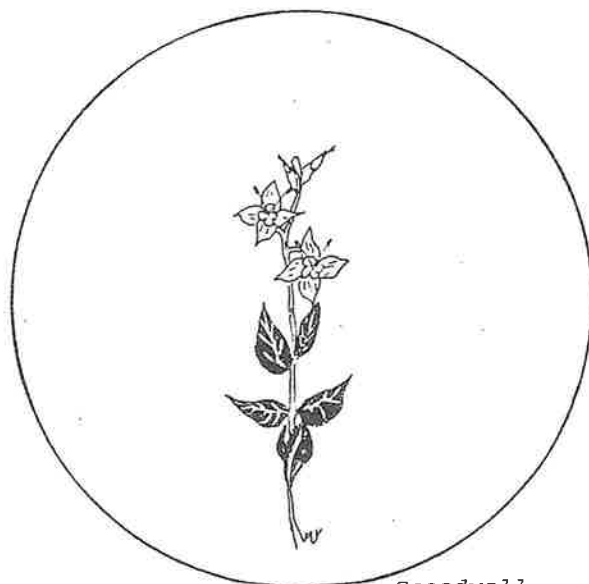
*Siberian  
Miner's Lettuce*



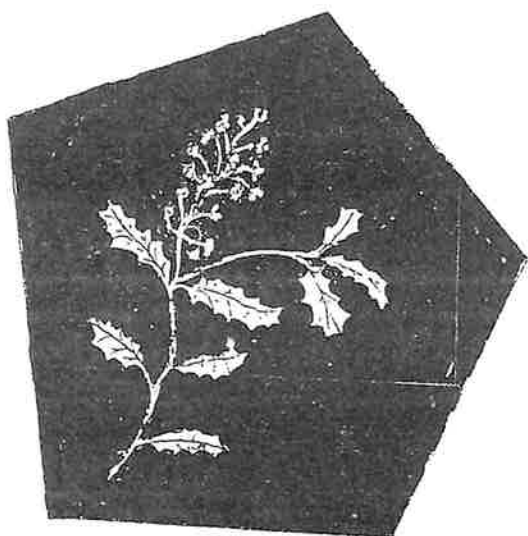
*Star-flowered  
Solomon's Seal*



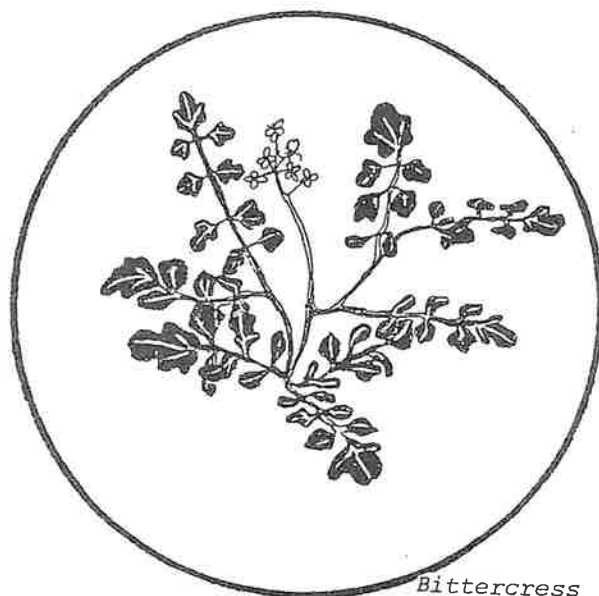
*Wild Ginger*



*Speedwell*

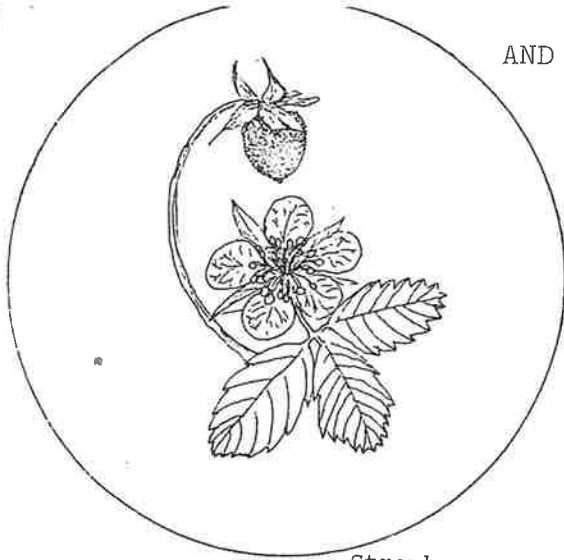


*Oregon Grape*

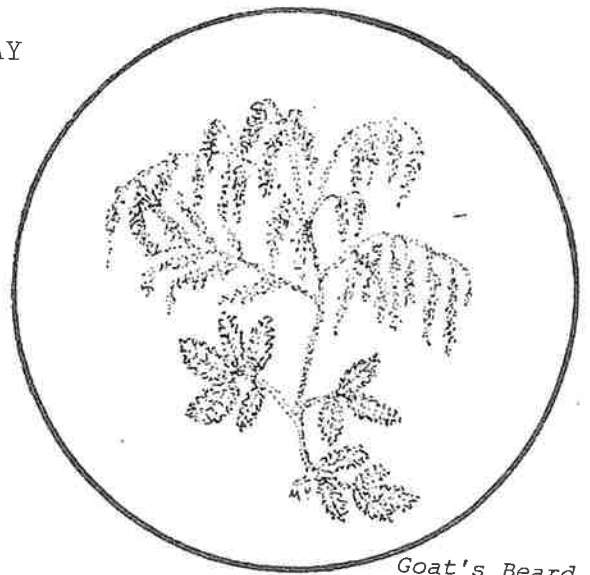


*Bittercress*

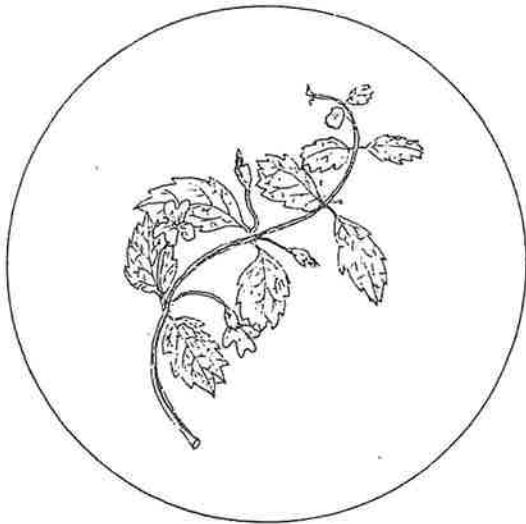
AND YET STILL MORE MAY  
BLOOMS



*Strawberry*



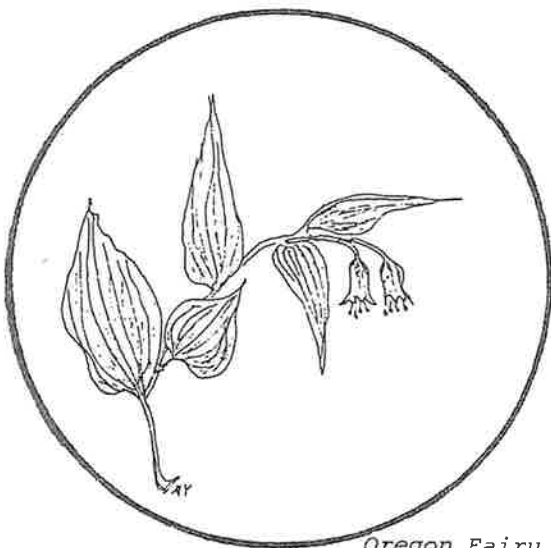
*Goat's Beard*



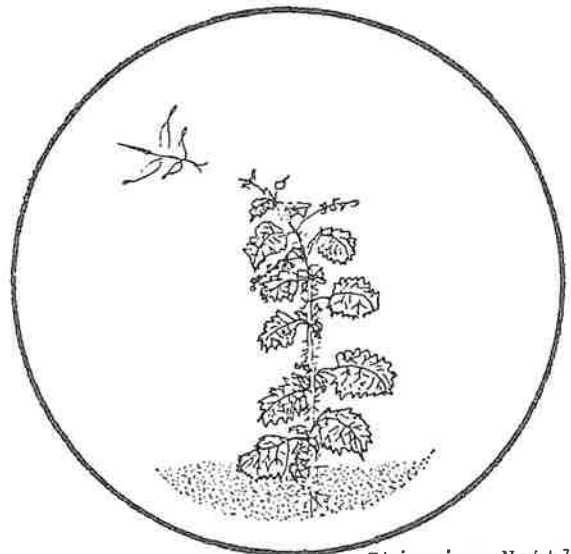
*Yerba Buena*



*False Solomon's Seal*

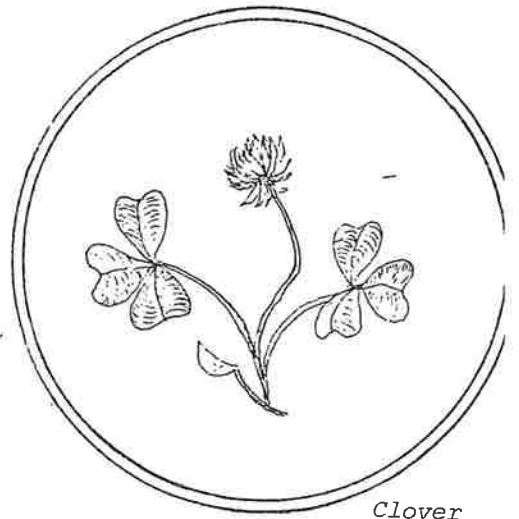


*Oregon Fairy Bells*



*Stinging Nettle*

JUNE BLOOMS



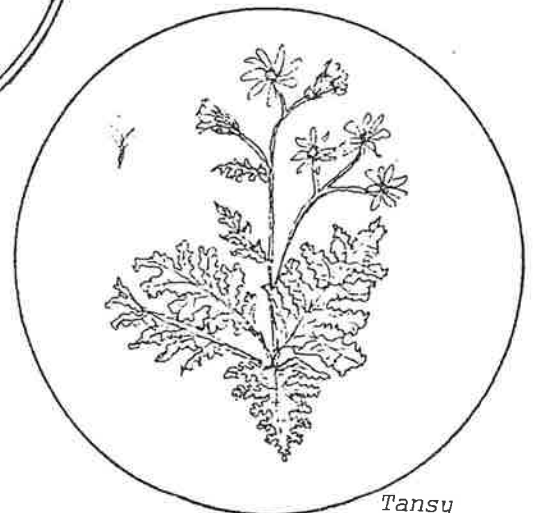
*Clover*



*Large Leaf Avens*

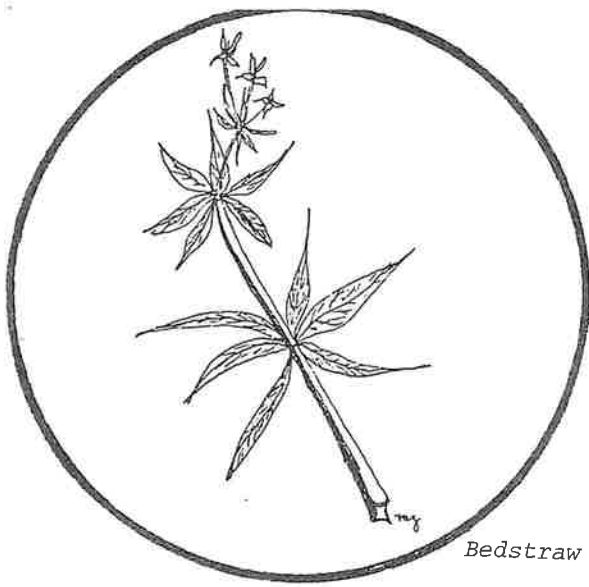


*Snowberry*

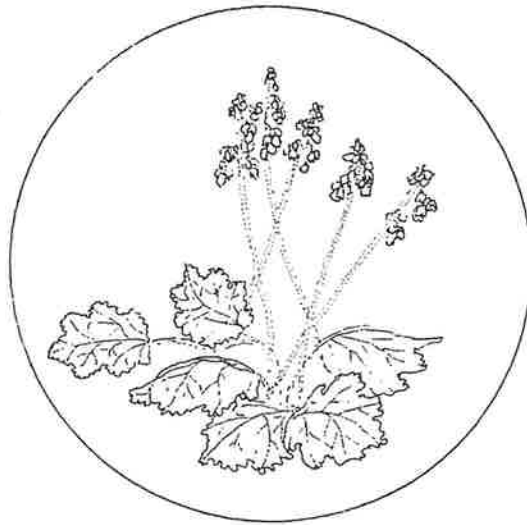


*Tansy  
Ragwort*

MORE JUNE BLOOMS



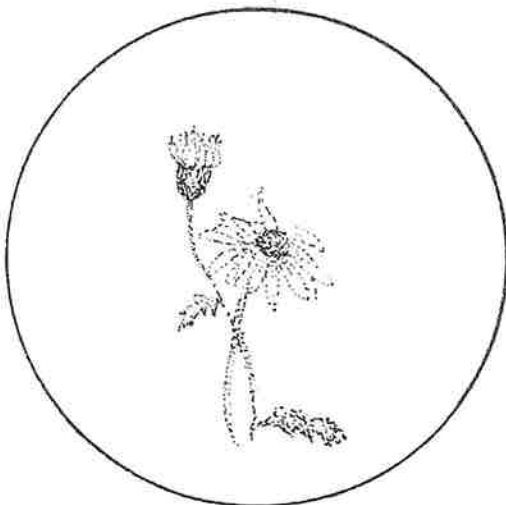
*Bedstraw*



*Alumroot*

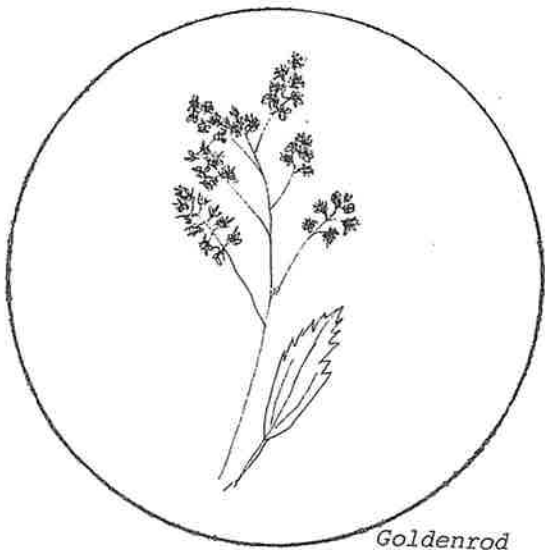


*Fireweed*

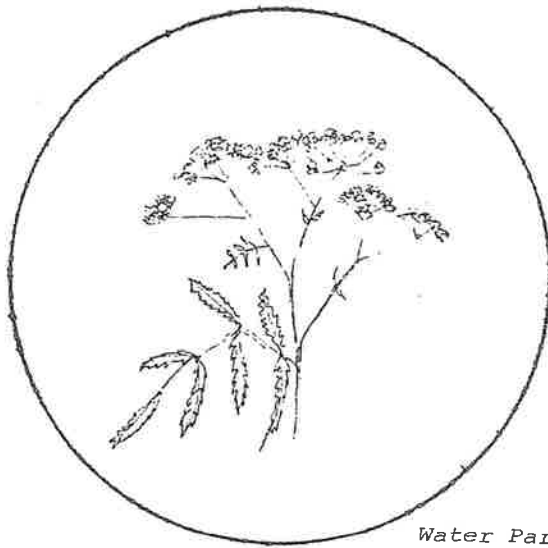


*Daisy*

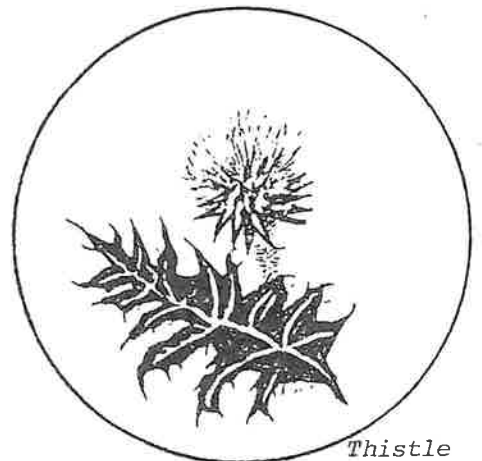
JULY BLOOMS



*Goldenrod*



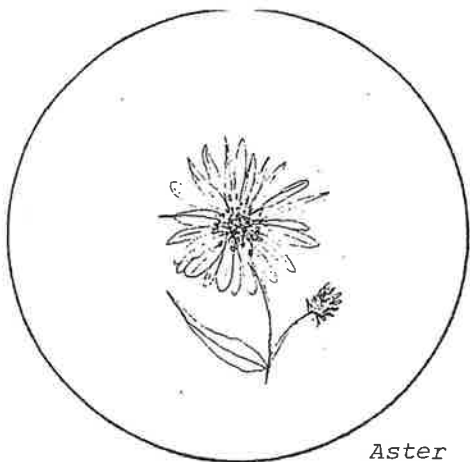
*Water Parsnip*



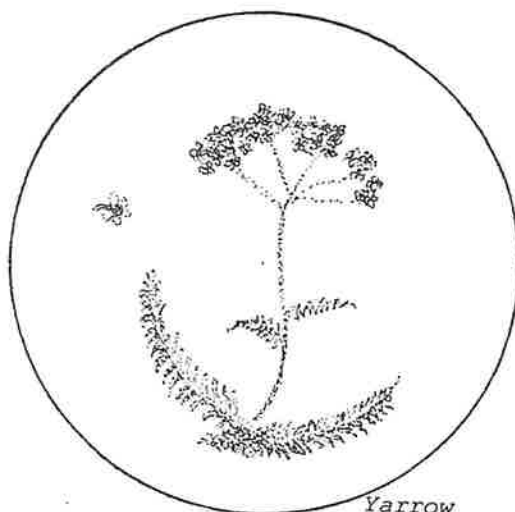
*Thistle*



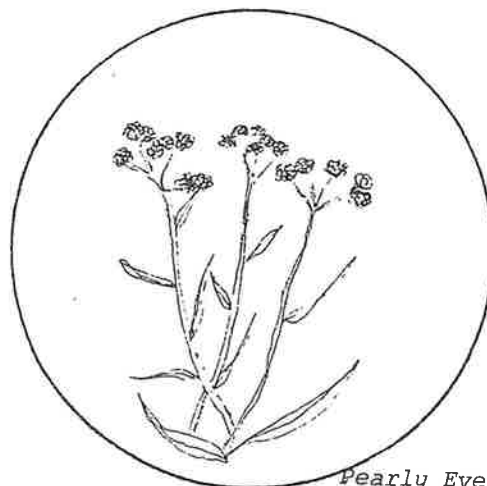
AUGUST BLOOMS



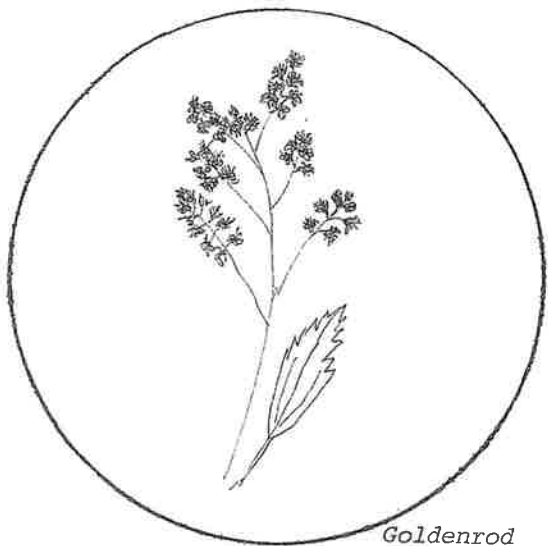
*Aster*



*Yarrow*

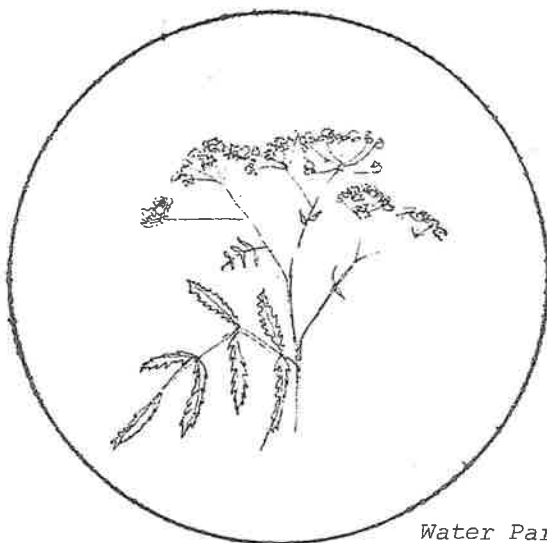


*Pearly Everlasting*



*Goldenrod*

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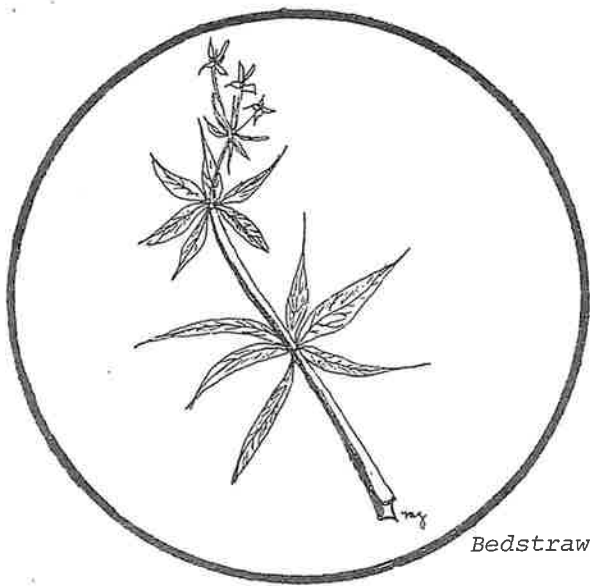
*Water Parsnip*

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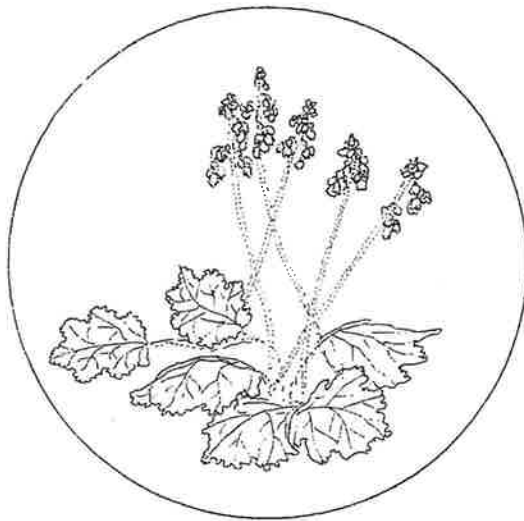
*Thistle*

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*Bedstraw*

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*Alumroot*

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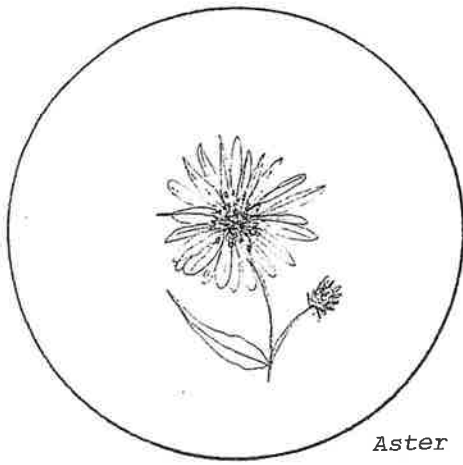
*Fireweed*

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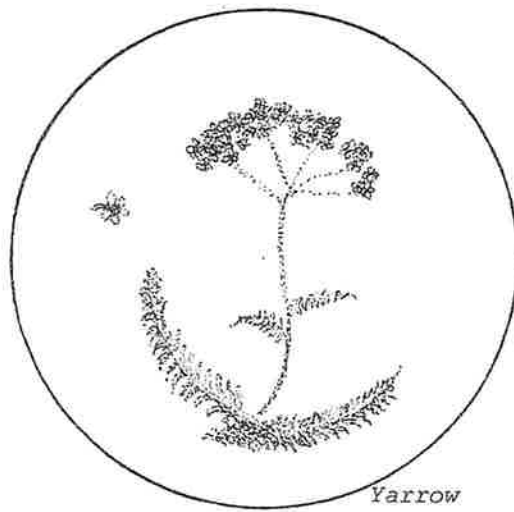
*Daisy*

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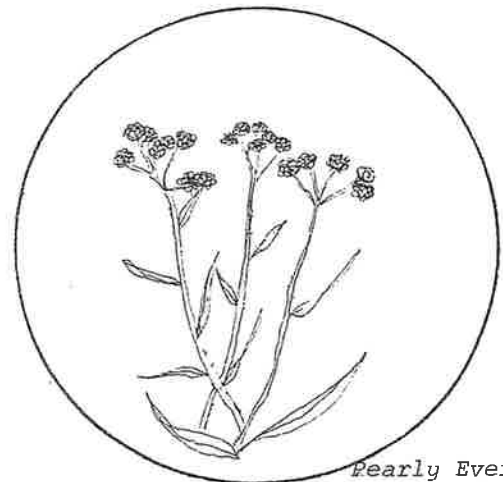
*Aster*

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*Yarrow*

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*Pearly Everlasting*

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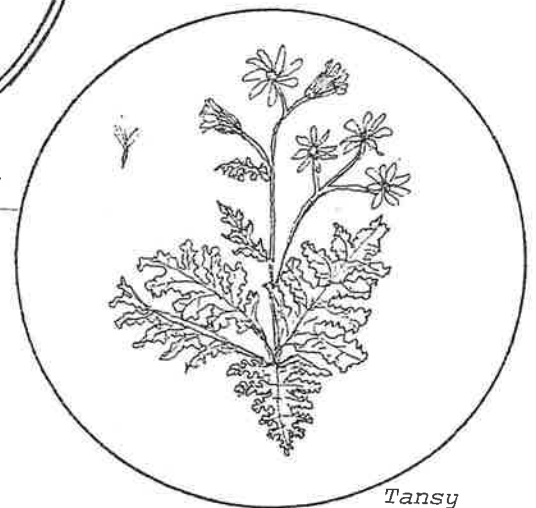
Clover



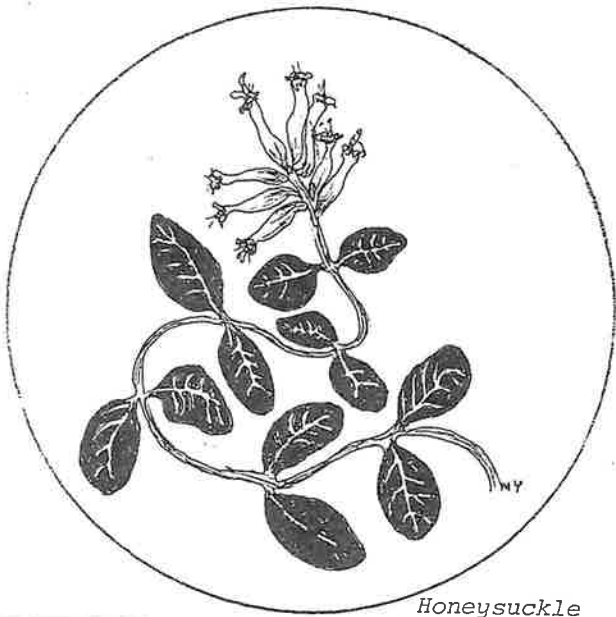
Large Leaf Avens



Snowberry



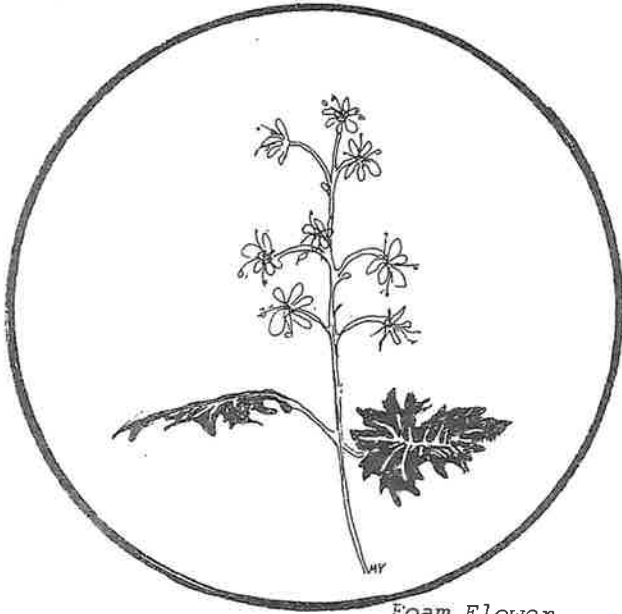
Tansy  
Ragwort



Honeysuckle



Salal



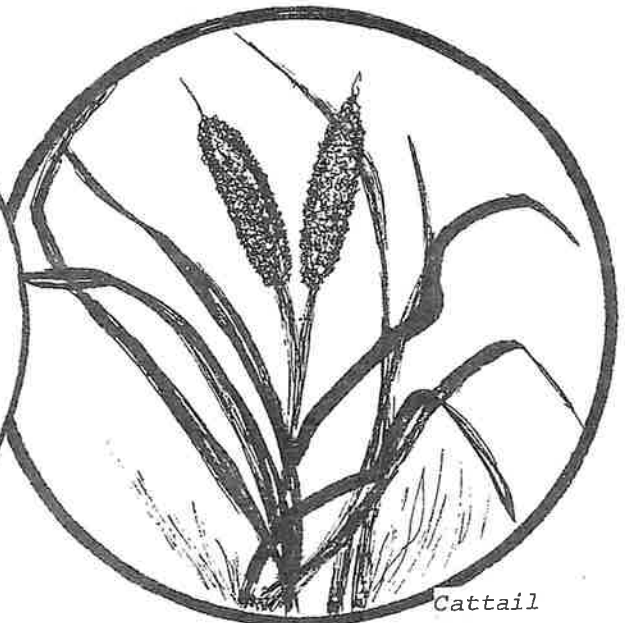
Foam Flower



Lily-of-the-Valley



Corydalis

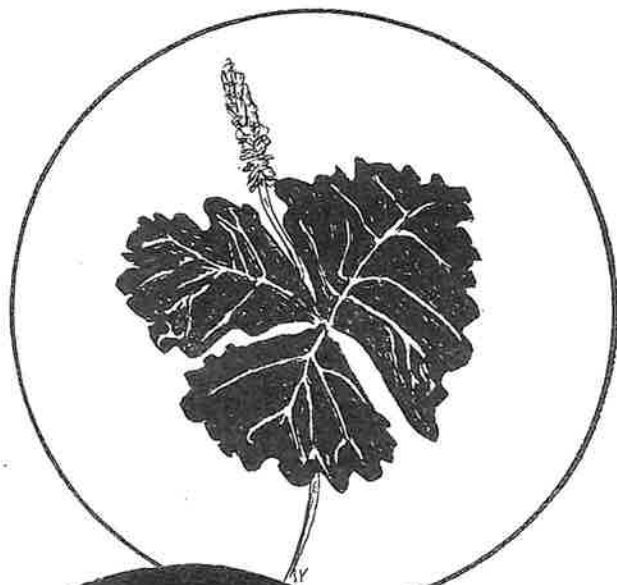


Cattail

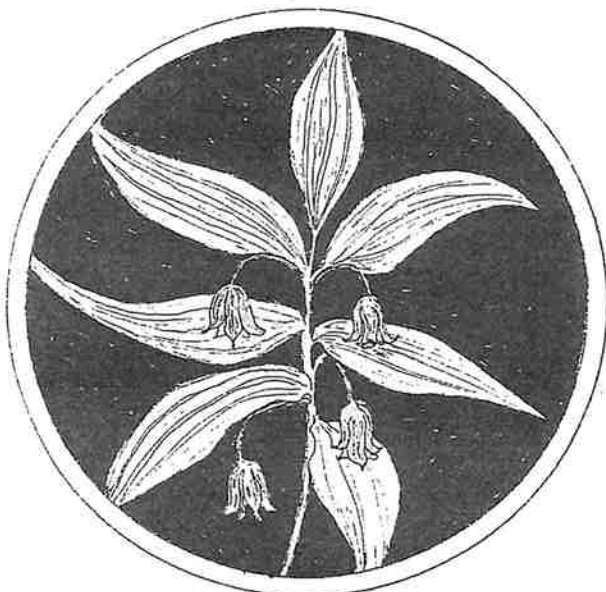




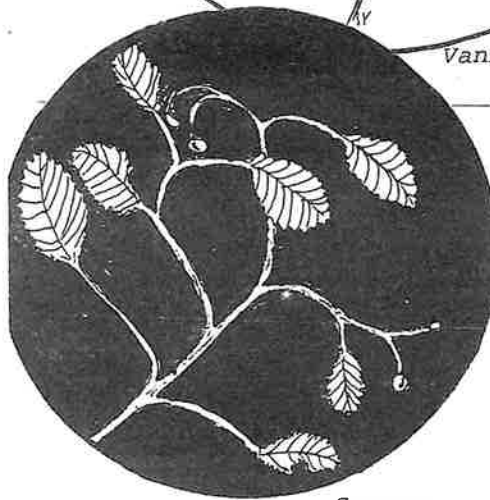
*Bittersweet  
Nighshade*



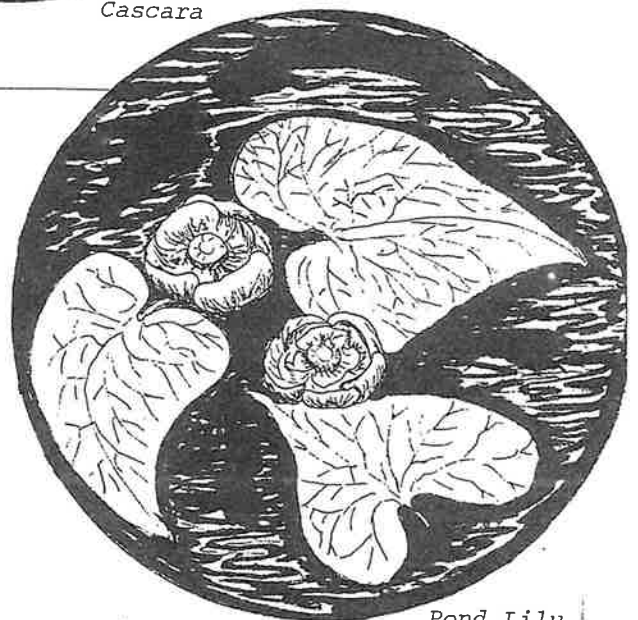
*Vanilla Leaf*



*Twisted Stalk*



*Cascara*



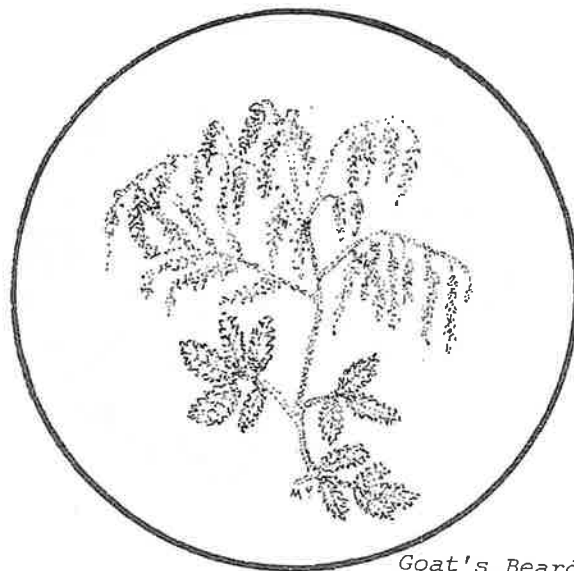
*Pond Lily*



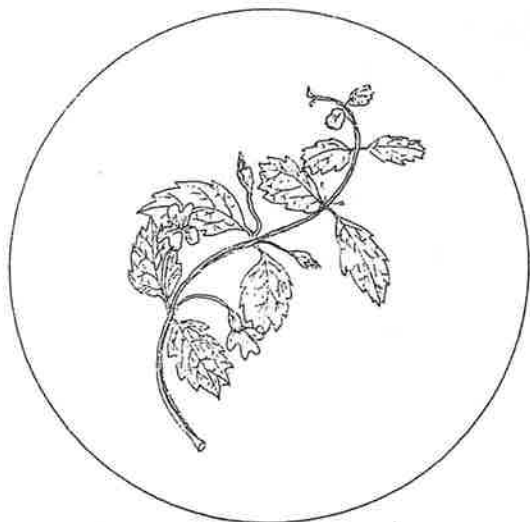
*Inside-out Flower*



*Strawberry*



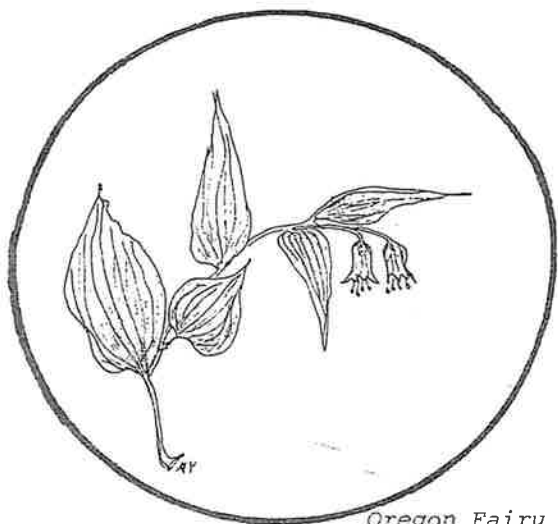
*Goat's Beard*



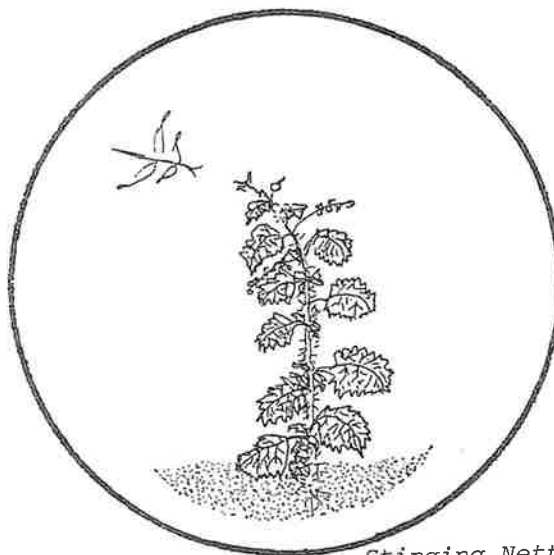
*Yerba Buena*



*False Solomon's Seal*



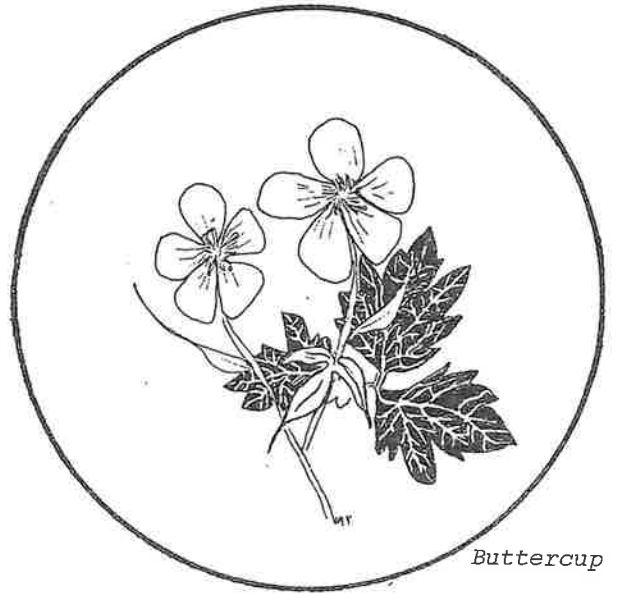
*Oregon Fairy Bells*



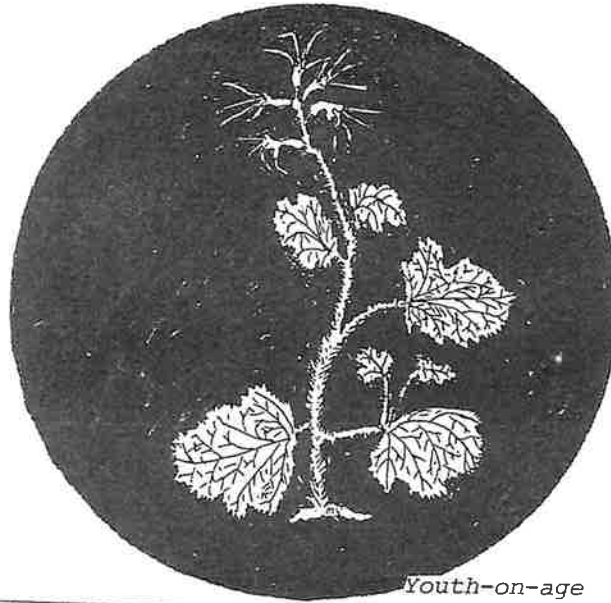
*Stinging Nettle*



*Dandelion*



*Buttercup*



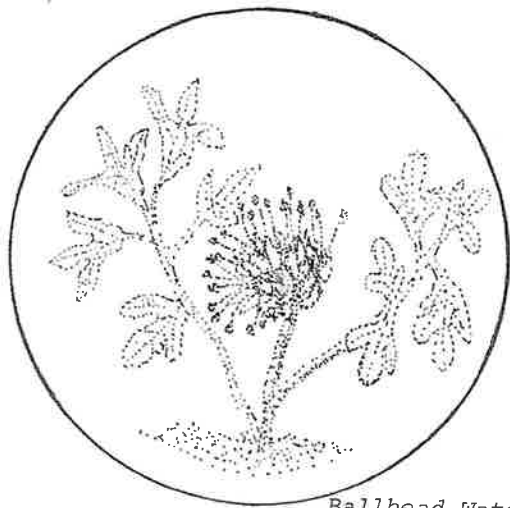
*Youth-on-age*



*Coltsfoot*

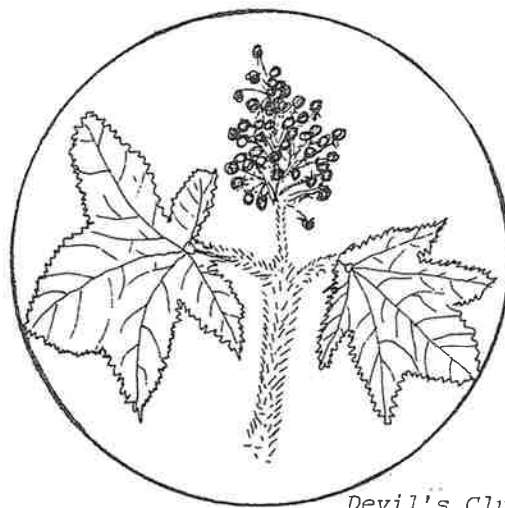


*Blackberry*



*Ballhead Waterleaf*

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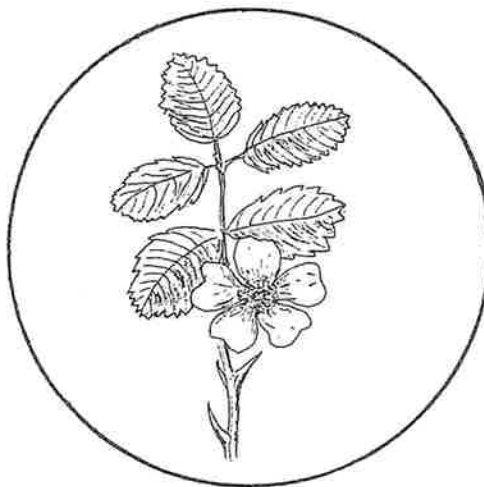
*Devil's Clute*

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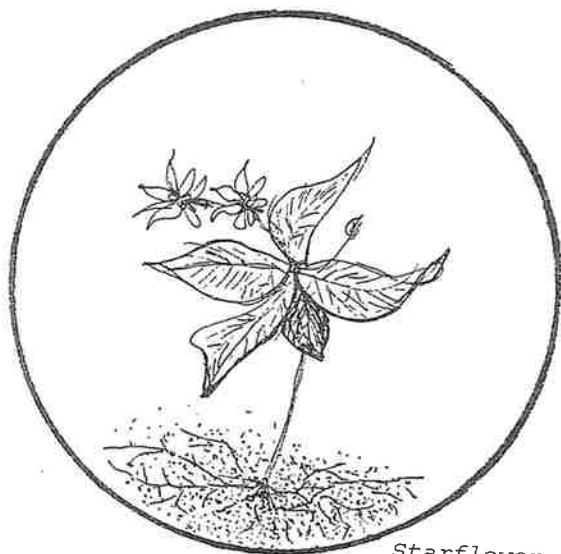
*False Hellebore*

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*Rose*

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*Starflower*

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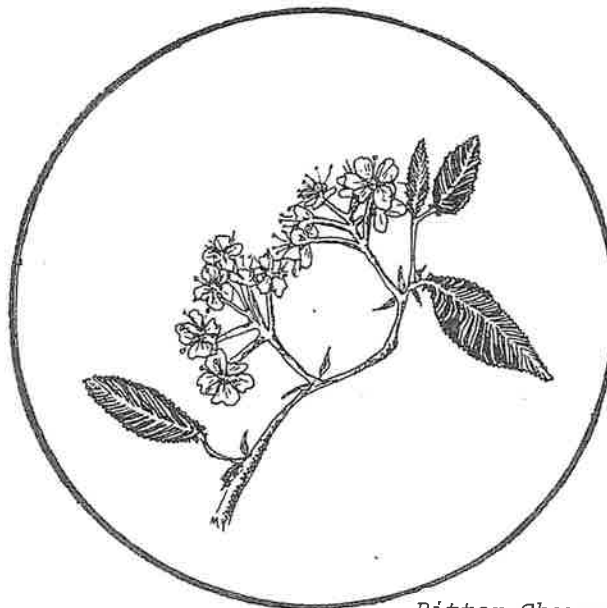


*Red Huckleberry*

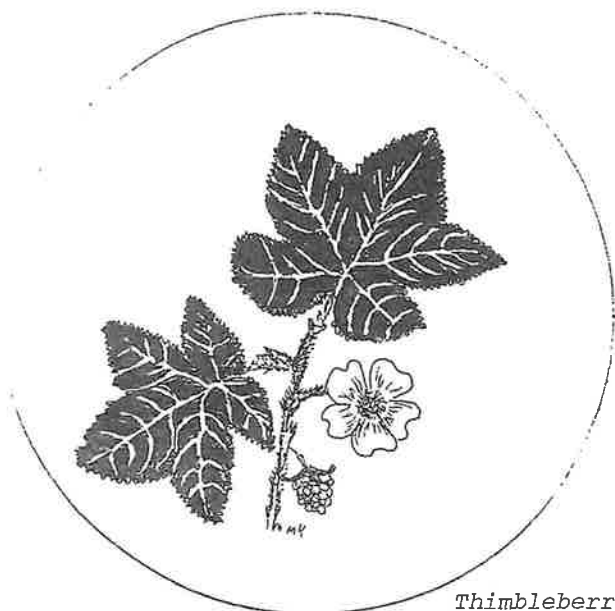
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*Red Elderberry*



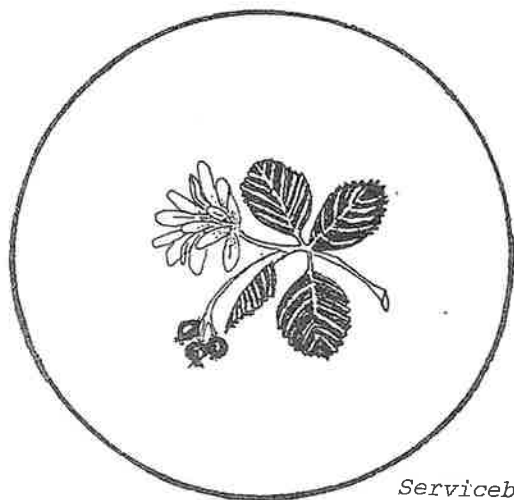
*Bitter Cherry*



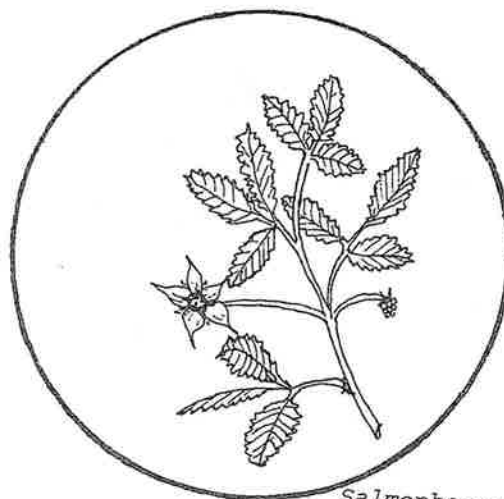
*Thimbleberry*



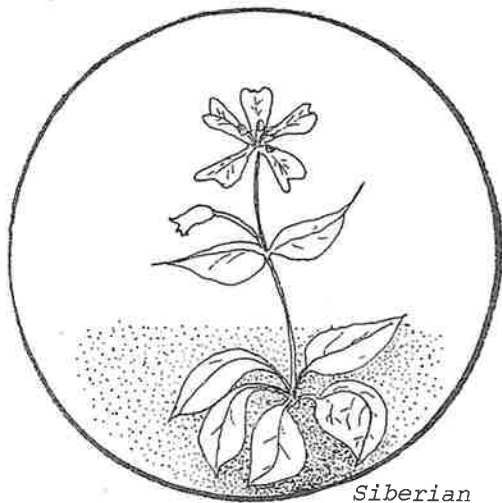
*Stink Currant*



*Serviceberry*



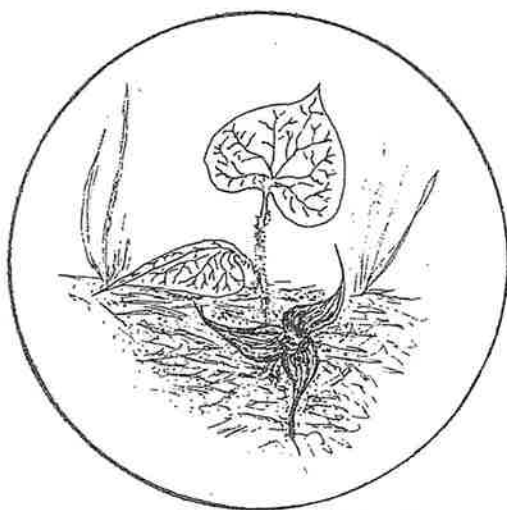
*Salmonberry*



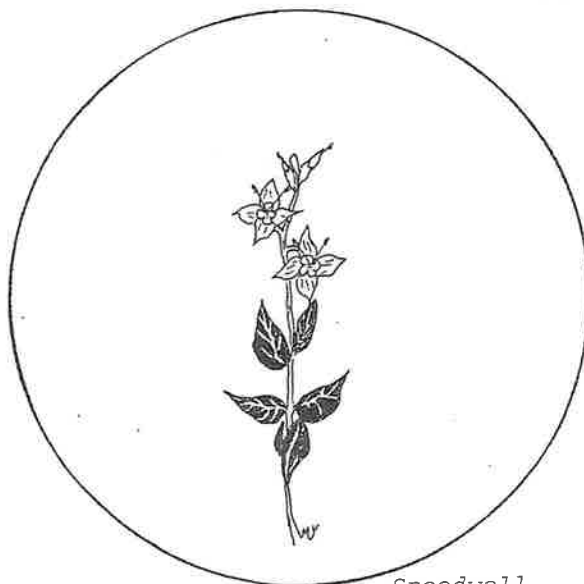
*Siberian  
Miner's Lettuce*



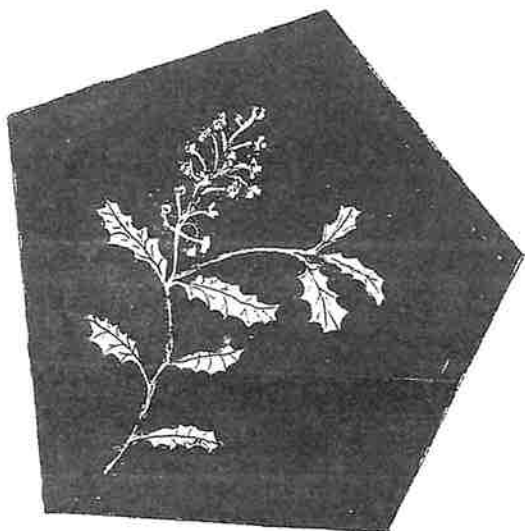
*Star-flowered  
Solomon's Seal*



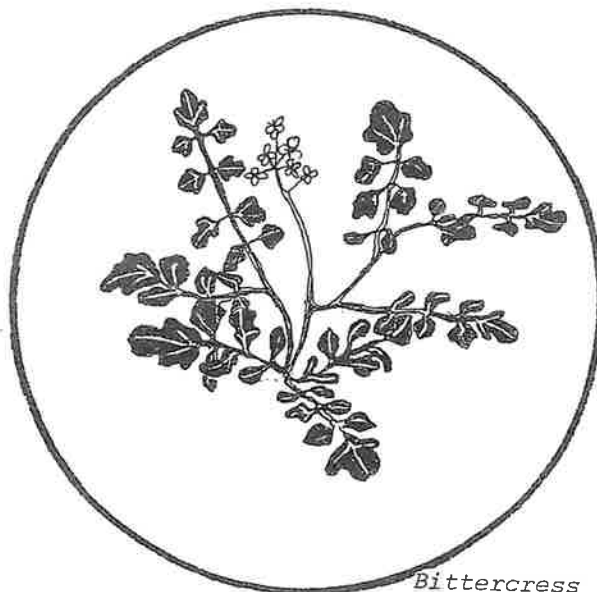
*Wild Ginger*



*Speedwell*

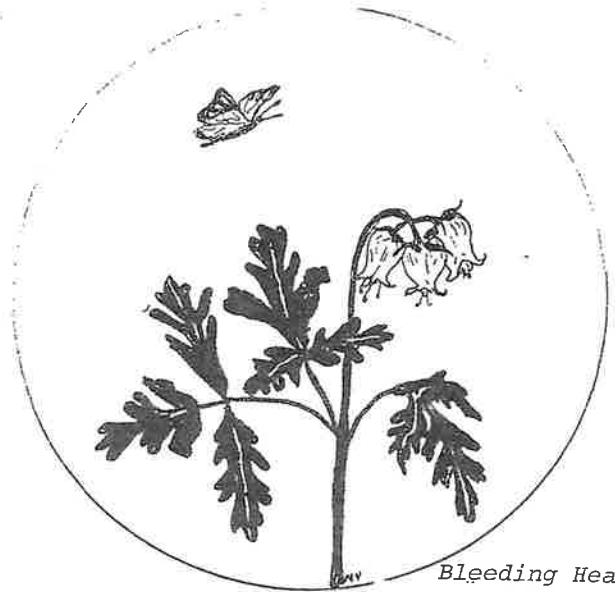


*Oregon Grape*

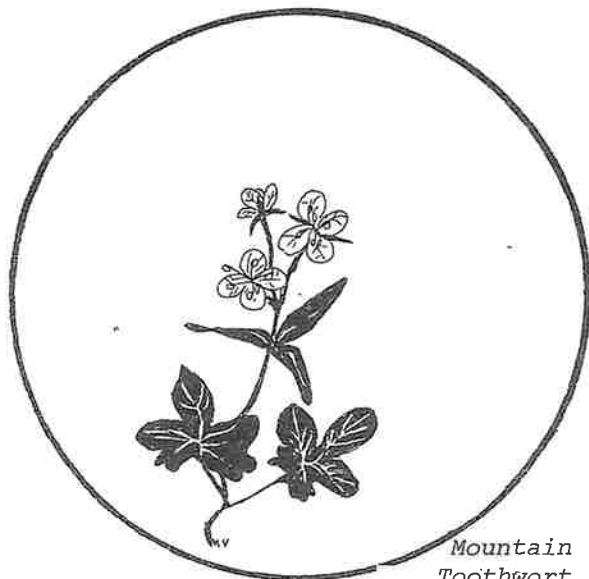


*Bittercress*

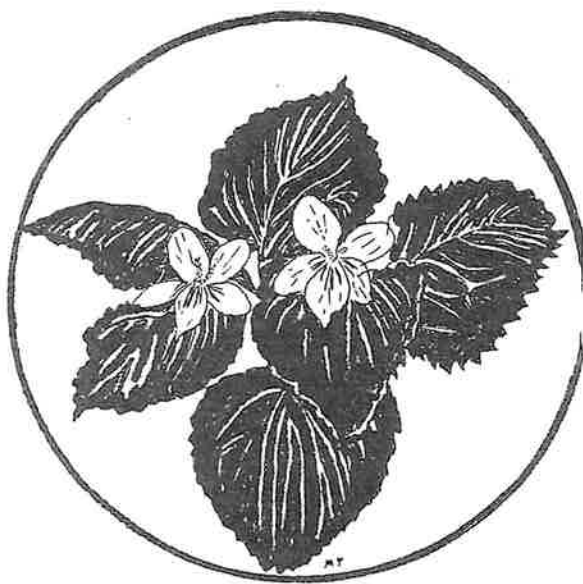




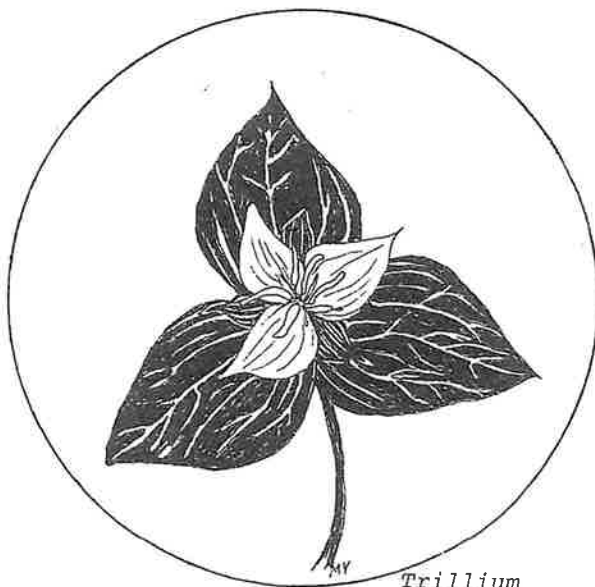
Bleeding Heart



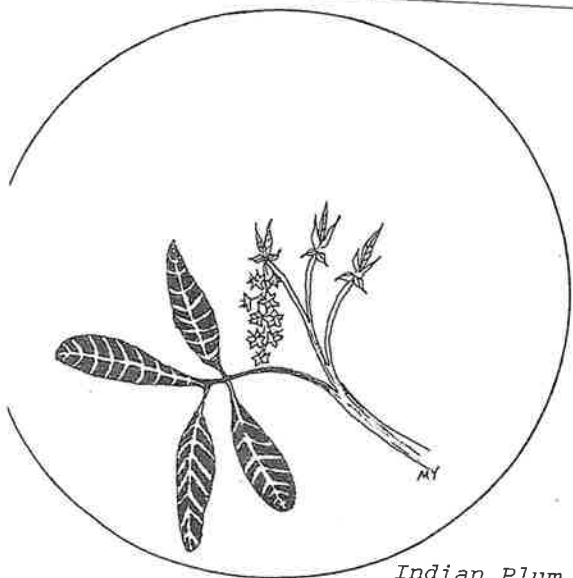
Mountain  
Toothwort



Violet



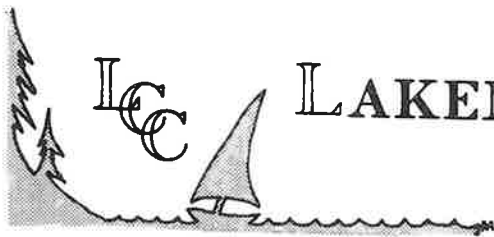
Trillium



Indian Plum



Skunk Cabbage



# LAKEMOOR COMMUNITY CLUB INC.

OLYMPIA , WASHINGTON

July 18, 1972

Dear Marj:

On behalf of the Lakemoor Community Club Board of Trustees I would like to thank you very much for your willingness to write and make available to our members "Native Plants of Lakemoor". We feel it is especially appropriate and useful since so many new residents are not only new to Lakemoor but also new to Olympia and Washington.

Again, our most sincere thanks.

Very truly yours,

LAKEMOOR COMMUNITY CLUB

*Millie Fisher*

Millie Fisher  
Secretary