

Kareen Sturgeon

Kareen Sturgeon richly deserves the Fellows Award for 33 years of contributions to the Native Plant Society of Oregon. NPSO was the first organization that Kareen joined when she arrived in Oregon in 1980, and she immediately met many like-minded plant-lovers who remain friends to this day. Despite the length of her service, she is not slowing down at all. But there is no need to delay the award, as she is not one to rest on her laurels. She has already begun organizing the 2014 NPSO Annual Meeting which will be hosted by the Cheahmill Chapter in Cannon Beach. She is well qualified for the task, as she also chaired the committee that organized the 2006 Annual Meeting in McMinnville.

Kareen's childhood was surrounded by beautiful plants. When she grew up in West Los Angeles, lemon and avocado groves were still prevalent on the hillsides of the Santa Monica Mountains, deer ate her father's roses, and cougars frightened the neighbor's horses at night. The Santa Monica Mountains were protected from development and their chaparral-covered slopes were the playground for her and her two siblings. Each weekend, she and her brother and sister were required to contribute several hours of yard work; among the many exotic, enticing plants in this Mediterranean garden were bird-of-paradise, ginger, aloe, hibiscus, papyrus, apricot, banana, avocado, ginkgo, and eucalyptus. She recalls her teenage amazement when she first realized that leaves had veins and that seeds could fly (a maple samara)! Family vacations were always outdoors and nature-oriented; they visited all the National Parks in the West and spent their days watching wildlife, swimming and hiking.

She was in her mid-20s by the time she realized that she could build a career around her love of nature, plants in particular. After earning a degree in Public Health (UCLA) and working in that field for several years, she went back to school and studied coevolution between insects and their host trees (MS, California State University East Bay, 1976; PhD, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1980). Her research took her throughout the scenic rugged mountain ranges of the West (Sierra Nevada, Cascades, Rockies). After completing a post-doctoral project in forest genetics at Oregon State University (1980), she began teaching biology at Linfield College in 1981.

Kareen helped found the Cheahmill Chapter in 1997. At the first meeting to assess support for having an NPSO chapter in McMinnville, over 50 people attended. She served as the first President of the new chapter and has been actively involved on the Board ever since. With her numerous professional contacts in botany, she has helped the chapter find interesting speakers and she has given several presentations herself, including all-day workshops on plant identification. In 1991 she organized the first McMinnville NPSO Wildflower Show, which is now an annual chapter activity.

Other chapters, as well as the State NPSO, have also benefited from Kareen's dedication. She has made numerous presentations to chapters (Portland, Mid-Columbia, Emerald and Corvallis) on the botany of the Malheur and Steens Mountain area, Siskiyou



Mountains, Arctic Alaska, and Switzerland. She has served as Director-at-Large on the State Board for many years, and has served on the Editorial Board of *Kalmiopsis* for two years. For several years (2002-2005), Kareen served on the Strategic Planning Committee that developed a Strategic Plan for the organization, revised the Mission Statement, and compiled information for, and wrote, the NPSO Handbook.

In my opinion however, Kareen's greatest contribution to NPSO is not everything that she has done and is still doing for the organization (which might be considered preaching to the choir). Her greatest contribution has been recruiting the next generation of informed and passionate citizens to "enjoy, conserve, and study native plants and habitats."

Kareen retired in 2008, after a 27-year career as Professor of Biology at Linfield College

in McMinnville. She taught Systematics of Flowering Plants; Plant Ecology & Diversity; Plants & Society; Evolution; the botany and evolution sections of Principles of Biology; Environmental Science and honors courses, such as Environmental Literature, Ecology, Economics & the Environment, and Science & Gender. She and her students conducted research in plant ecology and systematics in Arctic Alaska, in mountainous regions of the northwest, and in the Willamette Valley (Kareen lists 26 student research presentations at professional meetings since 1993). Kareen led numerous field trips for botany students to such places as the Malheur/Steens Mountain area, the Siskiyou, and the Columbia River Gorge. She taught month-long classes abroad in Switzerland (systematic botany) and Costa Rica (tropical biology). She established an online database of what is now over 4,000 plants in the Linfield Herbarium, which has specimens dating back to the late 1800s. At the end of each spring semester, herbarium label information from student collections was entered into an electronic database that was sent to the Oregon Flora Project at OSU; thus, their collections became part of the statewide effort to prepare a flora for the State.

Students from Linfield College regularly attend Cheahmill Chapter meetings. Chapter members were often invited to participate in Linfield trips that Kareen led for students, including to the Columbia Gorge and Mt. Hebo. Beginning in 1995, Kareen led summer hiking and wildflower tours to the Swiss Alps. The tours were sponsored by the Linfield College Alumni Association, and many of the participants (including my husband and myself) were members of NPSO.

Since her retirement, Kareen has continued to inspire native plant lovers with her volunteer work. For three years, she has taught the botany and plant identification sections of the Yamhill County Master Gardener training course. She has donated hundreds of her own plant photos to the Oregon Flora Project. All of these activities, inside and outside of NPSO, contribute to keeping NPSO an active, interesting and enjoyable organization that attracts new members to our cause.

—Susan Aldrich-Markham, Cheahmill Chapter.

Paul Slichter

A computer search for photos of Pacific Northwest plants, using a scientific or common name, often finds Paul Slichter's treasure trove of plant photos and information called Flora and Fauna Northwest (<http://science.halleyhosting.com>). Over the years, Paul developed this website that offers plant lists for a variety of popular locations in Oregon and Washington, plant images, user-friendly keys, and many other excellent and useful features such as an especially nice section on birds. Paul started the website about 1994 as an aid to teaching Gresham High School biology students the 40 wildflowers they were required to know. Because they also needed to make a wildflower collection, he began adding Gorge wildflowers, then added leaves and trees and shrubs to assist their efforts. The rest of the website was an expansion from the botanical section. He tagged many of his photos with both scientific and common names, greatly facilitating computer searches.

Paul was reared near Spokane, and he has a special fondness for the drier climate of eastern Oregon and Washington. He completed an undergraduate degree in biology, chemistry, and education at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, followed by graduate work at Portland State. His first plant collections were from Klickitat County in 1978 for his first plant taxonomy class. During the summer of 1974 he worked on a road crew for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This is when he began photographing wildflowers during hikes on Mt. Adams and exploring the Dark Divide Roadless Area between Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens.

He joined the Native Plant Society of Oregon in 1986 after he began attending spring wildflower shows held by the Portland Chapter at the Western Forestry Center to become more familiar with the local flora, information that he could use teaching his biology classes. Russ Jolley presented slides from the Gorge at one of those flower shows, which inspired Paul to take more of his own wildflower photos and develop a collection of wildflower slides for his students. He found Russ, Jerry Igo, Barbara Robinson, Lois Kemp and Jan & Dave Dobak to be great field trip leaders and inspiring teachers, and he used Jolley's book, *Wildflowers of the Columbia Gorge*, to become proficient at searching for new species. Before long Paul was leading field trips himself, and then served as field trip organizer for the Portland Chapter for two years. In 2003, when the Portland Chapter hosted the annual meeting in John Day, Paul organized the field trips, which involved driving 250 miles to explore trails, learn the flora, and recruit hike leaders in the John Day area.

Paul retired from teaching in 2008. In 2011, he volunteered to organize field trips when the Portland Chapter hosted the Annual Meeting in Logan Valley south of the Strawberry



Mountains, which required a great deal of travel for scouting and becoming familiar with plant phenology. In addition to the traditional Saturday outings, he offered two field trips on Friday and one on Sunday. These extra trips, two of which he led, were very well attended and gave members the opportunity to learn from three field trips at the Annual Meeting.

In August 2004 he began assisting David Biek and Susan McDougall, co-authors of *The Flora of Mount Adams, Washington*. He visited between 30 and 50 sites around Mount Adams each season through the fall of 2007, when the manuscript went to print. He explored not just the high country, but all the lower slopes of Mt. Adams (excluding the Yakama Reservation) as well, listing the plant species in those areas and contributing greatly to the botanical knowledge of the region.

In 2009, he began doing plant surveys for the University of Washington's Rare Care project, performing two to three listed monitoring projects in the Gorge each year. He found enough new rare plant locations to send in about a dozen or so new sighting reports each season. Among the rare plants he located was a population of more than 1,500 Western ladies' tresses orchid (*Spiranthes porrifolia*) in the Catherine Creek area, which is more than had previously been found in Washington. His surveys helped convince the Forest Service that the Catherine Creek area merited special management for disturbance activities (*e.g.*, trail building, horseback recreation), and may bolster future preservation efforts. In summer 2011 on Friends of the Gorge Land Trust land, he discovered *Orobanche californica* ssp. *grayana*, which was thought to have been extirpated from Washington State because it had not been seen since 1882. He plans to continue with Rare Care this year, as well as monitor at least one species for the NPSO Citizens Rare Plant Monitoring Project.

In short, since retiring Paul has taken on a second career as a field botanist. This self-described "Nature Bum" is finding great pleasure in exploring new places, photographing plants, surveying, keying, and making species lists, and going to workshops. He has been leading NPSO hikes for at least a dozen years, which he feels is a way to give back to NPSO for all the help previous leaders had given him. He has also given at least a dozen presentations to NPSO chapters, including the Cheahmill, mid-Columbia, Portland, and Willamette Valley chapters. In the fall of 2011, he joined the Advisory Board for the Oregon Flora Project. His constant joy in discovery and his pleasure in sharing his knowledge with others serve as his most important contributions to NPSO and the botanical community.

—Barbara Robinson, Mid-Columbia Chapter.