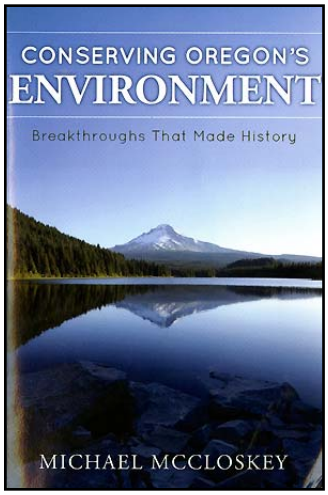
Conserving Oregon's Environment: Breakthroughs That Made History

Michael McCloskey. 2013. ISBN 13-987-1-59299-937-8. 248 pp. Inkwater Press, Portland, Oregon. $15.95 paper.

In *Conserving Oregon's Environment* Michael McCloskey tells the stories of the most significant milestones of conservation in Oregon. The author, who worked for the Sierra Club for 40 years and became their CEO, is eminently qualified to tell this story[1]; he now lives in Portland, Oregon. A visit to Redwood National Park inspired McCloskey to write this book. At the visitor center he was curious about how the Park Service was going to tell its story; but, "To my amazement, I found almost nothing said about how the national park came to be. … [A]s I looked around in the visitor centers for other national parks, I learned that this silence was the rule. Those who had worked their hearts out to bring about these achievements were rarely even acknowledged, let alone thanked." This book corrects this oversight by recounting the stories of those who led the way and acknowledges their contributions. As the author states, "Someone, or some entity, always seems to step forward and lead when the times call for it. … Once engaged, they just do not give up. They find ways to arouse or rally the public."



The eleven chapters focus on themes: Federal reserves, state parks, rivers, wilderness, Oregon's environmental laws, environmental turning points, new reserves, wildlife, and federal initiatives affecting Oregon. Each chapter is organized chronologically. McCloskey provides a basic overview of each topic, emphasizing the efforts made by individuals and groups to preserve the places. At the end of each chapter is a list of references that provide more in-depth information about each topic. The three appendices are entitled Timeline of Conservation Accomplishments, Map of Places Mentioned in the Text, and List of Organizations That Made Conservation History in Oregon. The pivotal role of politicians in getting the legislation passed for establishment of wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, wildlife refuges, etc. is described throughout the book.

Many of the stories exemplify Oregon's leadership as a "wellspring of innovation in broader public policy …[in] the field of conservation and the environment." For example, Oregon was one of the earliest states to protect waterfowl in refuges, to shape laws to guarantee public access to beaches, and to protect forest scenery along highways. Chapter 5 discusses many of these innovations, including the Oregon Beach Bill, Bottle Bill, state land-use legislation, and the aerosol spray ban.

1 http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/entry/view/mccloskey_michael_1934_/

Efforts to preserve rare plant habitats are mentioned several times, primarily in Chapter 7. Steens Mountain, recognized as "an area of exceptional botanical diversity" by a collaboration among ranchers, conservationists and staff from Oregon's congressional delegation, was protected in 2000 as the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protective Area. The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument was established in 2000 as an "ecological wonder" containing endemic plants such as Greene's Mariposa lily (*Calochortus greenei*) and Gentner's fritillary (*Fritillaria gentneri*). The Zumwalt Prairie Preserve in Wallowa County, one of the largest unplowed bunchgrass prairies on the continent, was established by the Nature Conservancy in 2000. Protection of the West Eugene Wetlands (Chapter 6) involved lengthy collaboration, from the 1970s until 1992, when the city of Eugene adopted the West Eugene Wetlands Plan.

NPSO is mentioned twice in the book: in Chapter 5, in the discussion of state efforts to protect endangered species ("At the behest of the Native Plant Society of Oregon, the legislature in 1987 enacted the Oregon Endangered Species Act"); and in Appendix C in the list of Organizations That Made Conservation History. NPSO member Dr. Stuart Garrett is recognized in Chapter 7 as one of the primary leaders in the establishment of Newberry National Volcanic Monument through development of a consensus process in which "compromises were sought that would still allow everyone to support the final plan." Dr. Garrett was recognized for his effort by both Senator Mark Hatfield and Representative Robert Smith.

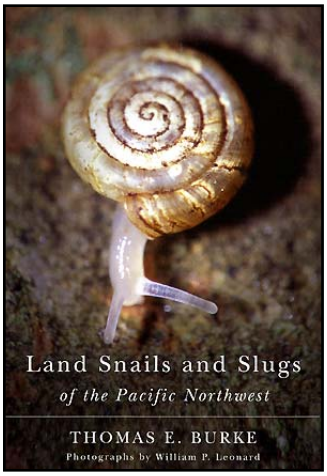
I've lived and worked as a BLM employee in Oregon since the late 1970s, so many of the topics were familiar to me. But I was also surprised by some of the stories. For example, I was not familiar with how Forest Reserves, the predecessors of National Forests, were established in the late 1800s. I also remember wigwam burners from my travels on family vacations in my youth; learning how and when they were all closed (Chapter 5) answered one of my long-standing questions.

There is much more to these and other stories that will enrich your appreciation of our predecessors' hard work. If you are at all interested in conservation efforts in Oregon and why things are way they are, then McCloskey's *Conserving Oregon's Environment* is well worth the price. As the author suggests, readers can either read the book straight through or use it as a reference. —*Lisa Blackburn, Cheahmill Chapter.*

Land Snails and Slugs of the Pacific Northwest

Thomas E. Burke with William P. Leonard, photographer. 2013. ISBN 978-0-87071-685-0. 344 pages. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis. $35.00.

This is the only comprehensive guide to the 245 described taxa of land mollusks in the greater Pacific Northwest. Burke became interested in terrestrial slugs and snails while an undergraduate at Washington State University. He honed his skills as a malacologist while working as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Forest Service. Leonard is an experienced photographer and author of two field



guides to Pacific Northwest reptiles and amphibians.

The guide's contents include acknowledgements that indicate the broad array of malacologists and others the author consulted in the guide's development. An introduction that follows covers slug and snail ecology, natural history and taxonomy. Topics include mollusk diversity, conservation, reproduction, dispersal, habitat preferences, environmental hazards, collection, preparation, and preservation for scientific purposes, how to use the book, and the nomenclature of shell characteristics used in identification illustrated with Leonard's fine color photographs.

Following the introduction is a taxonomic list of scientific and common names arranged in the usual taxonomic hierarchy (family, genus, species) including authors and a notation indicating whether the taxon is native or not.

Next are *Keys to the Families and Genera*, but the keys are not in a form familiar to users of dichotomous botanical keys, *i.e.*, instead of two options, sometimes there appear to be three or four choices. Fortunately, there are instructions for the use of the keys, so be sure to read them before launching into them. This discussion also includes hints and comments on where difficulties in identification might be encountered; for example, maturity affects shell size and development of some characters, like number of whorls. Characters used in the key are based on mature specimens. Upon arriving at identification of the specimen, the page number refers the reader to a *Species Accounts* section where each taxon has a written description, a discussion of similar species, and a section on distribution, which often provides more geographic detail than the maps; ecological habitat information, such as whether the species is found under logs, in vegetation, the open, in forested or riparian areas; and indicates if the mollusk is native or not.

Leonard's excellent photographs illustrate most species' shells from the front showing details of the opening (aperture) and both sides of the shell sides. Slug habit photos include color variants when appropriate.

Maps of the known ranges of most species show no indication of geographic features other than state lines. These maps quickly reveal the taxon's known distribution across the landscape; some have wide distributions and some are narrow endemics. Other taxa are scattered, known from only a few individual gardens; these are usually alien species, but sometimes this distribution pattern is found for a native species.

The glossary, which is particularly critical for botanists who need to learn an entirely new vocabulary for mollusk identification, seems complete enough, but lacks illustrations. The glossary would be greatly improved by referencing each term to one of the fine photographs that could illustrate the term.

There is an extensive references and literature cited section that will lead one to most but not all of the published material on our slugs and snails. One notable missing citation is The Western Society of Malacologists' *Field Guide to the Slug*, by David George Gordon, a booklet published in 1994 by Sasquatch Press, Seattle.

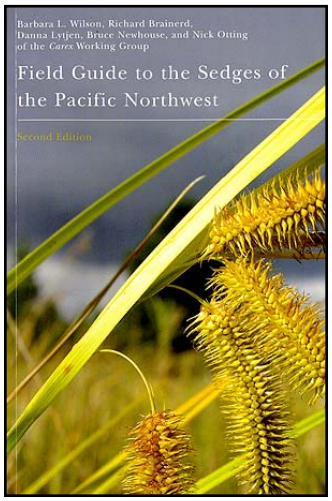
Is *Land Snails and Slugs of the Pacific Northwest*, as the publishers claim, "an essential reference for biologists, horticulturists, …, and anyone wishing to identify species in the field?" Yes, from the standpoint that its keys are based on characters visible using a hand lens (or alternatively, a headband magnifier or reading glasses, which give a wider view than a hand lens). Attributes of the book itself, including size (7x10") and weight (ca. 2.4 lbs), its binding, cover and glossy paper, limit its usefulness in the field, being slightly cumbersome and highly vulnerable to damage under wet conditions.

Why should an NPSO member like you buy and use Burke's book? What do these mollusks usually eat? "Native plants in the field or plants in your garden" is the answer. You should know if your draconian control measures aimed at the creatures that raise havoc in your vegetable or domestic flower garden include rare, narrow endemic natives, common widespread natives or introduced alien pests.

As with all objects of creation, knowing the organism's name is the key to accessing what we know about it. This richly illustrated volume with its identification keys will accomplish that for you. If you interested in the biota of the region, then this is the book for you. *—Frank Lang, Siskiyou Chapter.*

Field Guide to the Sedges of the Pacific Northwest, Second Edition

By Barbara L. Wilson, Richard Brainerd, Danna Lytjen, Bruce Newhouse and Nick Otting. 2014. 432 pages, photographs, line illustrations, distributions map, glossary, index. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis. ISBN 978-0-87071-728-4, $35.00, paper.



Taxonomically, sedges (comprising *Carex* and *Kobresia*) are not only one of the most diverse plant groups, but also (and perhaps because of that vast diversity) a group that is often avoided by even ardent plant enthusiasts. Here in Oregon and Washington, however, we have been given a resource, in the form of *Field Guide to the Sedges of the Pacific Northwest,* that I believe will help alleviate "sedge anxiety."

First published in 2008 by members of the Carex Working Group (Barbara L. Wilson, Richard Brainerd, Danna Lytjen, Bruce Newhouse and Nick Otting), an updated version of this book was released in early 2014. The updated guide contains newly discovered and newly described sedge taxa to our area, increasing the number of species included from 153 to 162 (including subspecies and varieties, 163 to 169 respectively).

Field Guide to Sedges begins with short introductory chapters describing sedge ecology and morphology. These are not merely filler chapters one might read while stuck in the car during a rainstorm

on a botanical outing. I particularly encourage readers to study the morphology chapter before using the guide; it makes subsequent keying a much easier task.

Next are 32 pages of keys to the individual taxa of sedges. This key has been updated, adding new taxa and incorporating comments to improve it from users of the first edition. And while the key may seem daunting at first, I have found that, with some practice, the key is highly functional and reliable.

Once readers have successfully keyed a specimen, they are presented with two full page descriptions of each sedge taxon. The first page gives common names, synonyms, a full description with key features, habitat, distribution and a range map (the latter based mainly on herbarium collections, but thoroughly checked by the CWG). In addition, included with every taxon's description is a comments section. This material includes a variety of topics including ecology, genetics, ethnobotany, conservation, and information on rarity and known hybridization. I found this lends a pleasant, conversational flavor to the guide.

The second description page contains color photographs of each taxon, usually with close-ups of key features, general habitat and the inflorescence. Usually there are additional photos of the entire plant and/or line drawings that aid in identification. As with the keys, many of these descriptions and photographs have been updated from the first edition, improving both the esthetics and usability of the guide.

Thoreau wrote in Walden, "We need the tonic of wildness…to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest…." I highly encourage those who have avoided sedges in the past to arm themselves with this excellent guide and explore this underappreciated, fascinating group of plants.

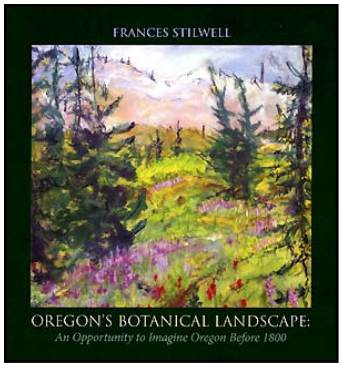
This guide is appropriately dedicated to one of the authors, Danna Lytjen, who died before the publication of the first edition. —*Stephen Meyers, Oregon Flora Project.*

Oregon's Botanical Landscape: An Opportunity to Imagine Oregon Before 1800

Frances Stilwell. 2014. 208 pages. 100 color plates of the author's original pastels. ISBN 978-1-4951-0024-6. Running Cat Press, Corvallis, Oregon. $39.99 at Amazon.

Oregon's Botanical Landscape: An Opportunity to Imagine Oregon Before 1800 is Frances Stilwell's compilation of her wildflower paintings in native settings. She came to Oregon from Ohio in 1961 and eventually began to use painting as a way of learning about her new home. She painted *en plein air* using chiefly pastels or pastels with watercolor, sometimes oils and rarely acrylics. Painting required stopping and looking closely, to see the distinguishing features of the geography and the plants. It was a way of educating herself and served "to communicate a sense of the neighborhood." The comments (she calls them "grace notes") that accompany each painting provide reflections and context, something noteworthy about the plants or their location.

The paintings are organized by the eight Oregon ecoregions, with each section introduced by a map and brief commentaries on the geography and botany of that region, followed by the paintings, each with a facing page of "grace notes." The focus of the paintings ranges from long views of landscapes such as "Mount Washington: South-Side," in which particular species are hard to discern, and middle views of habitats with a suggestion of species such as *Gaillardia aristata* and *Artemisia tridentata* in "Under the Rimrock," to close views of habits with clearly recognizable taxa such as *Castilleja miniata* at Crater Lake National Park in "Along a Garden Wall." These scenes, both near and far, are familiar ways that we commonly see "botanical landscapes." They are not scientific illustrations.



The subtitle, *An Opportunity to Imagine Oregon Before 1800*, refers to the absence of human-made structures: no cars, barns, houses, or towns, only one fence ruin, and the absence of direct human influence: no cows, dogs, fields, or gardens, but one very distant runner. The paintings could have been done before 1800.

We can learn from this book how to educate ourselves about our natural world, to slow down and stop, to consider colors, shapes, and shadows, to place plants in the landscape, and to add words that reflect our interests and observations. —*Darlene Southworth, Siskiyou Chapter*.

With 82 gorgeous watercolor and pastel paintings, Frances Stillwell reveals in the results of 25 years of hard work the nature of many of Oregon's loveliest and more interesting plants in their native habitats. The dreamlike quality of the paintings truly brings us to appreciate the plants as they are, as they would have appeared to an impressionist painter perhaps, and reminds us that the scenes shown here have existed in the State for thousands of years – and are still there for us to enjoy, study, and conserve. Very few human-made structures are shown, so that the settings and their plants are timeless and, indeed, refreshingly natural. In them, one can almost feel the coolness of the coastal fog, the breezes on mountain meadows, the dryness and heat of the deserts of this incredibly varied state.

Solid technically, the book is divided into eight ecoregions, each introduced with sensitive and instructive notes by Glenn Griffith on what the region is like from a geographic point of view, and then by Victoria Tenbrink on what it is like botanically. They are beautifully written and lead one surely to appreciate the varied regions that make up the rich and varied fabric of the state. Equally instructive and pleasant to read are the artist's notes accompanying each painting, which do indeed give us a sense of being in that place enjoying its unique qualities in many dimensions. This is not a book about how to identify plants, it is a book about how to enjoy them, to take time to look at them and come to know them for what they are and for their place in nature.

This book would make a wonderful gift for an Oregon resident or visitor, a fine place to study and get in touch with the varied beauties of the region. It could be used to teach an appreciation of art and nature, and how they comprise a seamless whole. It is beautifully produced, very well bound, and well worth having and savoring repeatedly. —*Peter H. Raven, President Emeritus, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, MO.*