

Borealis

The Newsletter of the

Alaska Native Plant Society



PO Box 141613, Anchorage, Alaska

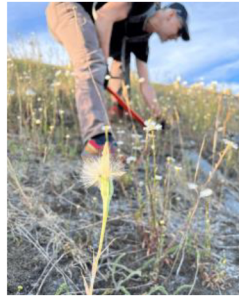
Summer 2023

Summer 2023 is almost upon us and the Alaska Native Plant Society has so many exciting opportunities for you!

Botanical Hikes



Work Parties



Information

- Alaska Native Plant Month
- Self-Guided Field Trips
- Alaska Bioblitz 2023
- Apps to Keep You Connected

IT'S HERE – Your ANPS SUMMER 2023 ACTIVITY CALENDER!

Keep it by your side and take advantage of all we have to offer while you get outdoors and enjoy summer in the land of the midnight sun!

Alaska Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 141613
Anchorage, AK 99514

2023 AKNPS Field Trip Calendar

Alaska Native Plant Society members lead a wide variety of field trips throughout Alaska each year—from urban plant walks to alpine ascents. Most hikes have a size limit to ensure a good experience for all participants. If you would like to join one or more of these hikes, we ask that you:

- RSVP in advance with the trip leader
- Sign the AKNPS liability waiver included with this newsletter and submit it to the trip leader
- Do not bring dogs without permission from the trip leader

Always plan for Alaska weather: Carry warm gear, snacks, water

PLEASE remember to ALWAYS contact trip leaders to let them know if you change your plans.

May 6, Saturday: “Jensen-Olson Arboretum”

Time and Location: 10 am - 12 pm, Jensen-Olson Arboretum, 23035 Glacier Hwy, Juneau, AK; parking lot holds 20 cars, with accessible parking down the driveway; additional parking is available at the Peterson Creek trailhead a short walk north of the arboretum.

Leaders: Ginger Hudson, ginger.hudson@juneau.gov, and Khalil English

Description: Native plant walk with a focus on *Ericaceae*. Visitors will also see other fruiting plants in addition to high-bush blueberry; red huckleberry, gray currant, trailing currant, salmonberry, and prickly currant. We'll also look at the native plants in the JOA cultivated areas.

RSVPs Encouraged: We'd like to be prepared with plant lists and anticipate parking. Call 907-789-0139 with any questions.

May 13, Saturday: “Windy Corner”

Time & Location: Roadside Parking at Milepost 106.6 of Seward Highway (12 miles from Anchorage).

Leaders: Marilyn Watts and Annie Ronsse, akronsse@gmail.com

Description: Early snowmelt on Turnagain Arm makes it one of the first places to find plant growth near Anchorage. Join Annie Ronsse and Marilyn Watts for a 2.5-hour, 2-mile hike on the Turnagain Arm Trail. Fairly level, but rocky in places.

RSVP Required: Contact Annie Ronsse (akronsse@gmail.com) to reserve a spot and check on possible updates to the plan. Non-members welcome, but due to the narrow trail this trip will be limited to 10 participants with priority given to AKNPS members

May 17-22: “Indianhouse Self-guided Hike”

Time & Location: Anytime May 17-22. This trail begins at mile 104.5 of the Seward Highway. There is a small unmarked pullout and path with room for only 4-5 cars.

Description: Small, numbered markers will be placed along the trail beside plants. Email Dennis Ronsse (dennis.ronsse@gmail.com) for a list of plant names corresponding to markers placed along the trail.

May 18, Thursday: “Sutton Paleobotany Hike

Time & Location: 9 am to 4 pm; meet at Muldoon Fred Meyer (east side of parking lot)

Leader: Curvin Metzler,

Description: Hike one mile with some mud and scree to collect various plant fossils, such as leaves, cones and stems, from trees and shrubs, deciduous and coniferous, including horsetails.

Travel Plan: The road is rough and rutted. Vehicles need adequate clearance and a skillful driver. The group will be limited to 7 persons, with priority for AKNPS members. **Contact the leader if you'd like to attend or have questions:** Curvin will be away from phone service fossil hunting until Wednesday evening and will respond to voice messages at that time.

May 20, Saturday: “Art to Explore Native Plants”

Time and Location: 10 am – 2 pm, Bird Ridge trailhead

Leader: Barbara Johnson,

Description: Join Barbara Johnson to explore the joy of sketching and painting plants in the outdoors. No experience necessary. Plan to hike the lower portion of the trail with sketching/painting for 30 minutes to an hour at various locations along the way, and use different techniques. Bring water, lunch, and warm garments.

Materials: No materials necessary but if you want to make up your own kit, bring any of the following: watercolor booklet or sketchbook, pencil, fine tip black ink pen, colored pencils, eraser, watercolor brushes 2-3 sizes, watercolor set, small pencil sharpener, small container for water, paper towel or Kleenex. Optional extras: Hand lens, binoculars, camera

RSVP Required: Text Barbara () if you’d like to attend or get more information about the trip. This trip is limited to 12 participants/members of AKNPS. If you are not a current member, please join before the outing!



May 20 Saturday: Alaska Native Plant Month Walk

Time and Location: 2 pm, Eagle River Nature Center

Description: Master Naturalist Beth Baker will lead a 2-3 mile hike in search of flowers and other plants native to southcentral Alaska forests on this information-packed foray. Open to the public.

Registration Required: Participants must register at <https://www.ernc.org/public-programs.html>.

Contact: Beth Noris, ejnorris2142@gmail.com or (cell)

May 20, Saturday: Jensen-Olsen Arboretum

Time and Location: 10 am - 12 pm, Jensen-Olsen Arboretum, 23035 Glacier Hwy, Juneau, AK; parking lot holds 20 cars, with accessible parking down the driveway; additional parking is available at the Peterson Creek trailhead a short walk north of the arboretum.

Leader: Khalil English (contact ginger.hudson@juneau.gov)

Description: Native plant walk exploring the non-cultivated areas on and near the arboretum. Gravel and rustic trails. Spruce-Hemlock Pacific temperate rainforest habitat.

RSVPs Encouraged: We’d like to be prepared with plant lists and anticipate parking. Call 907-789-0139 with any questions.

May 25, Thursday: “Family Flower Hike”

Time & Location: 4:30 pm. Windy Corner trailhead (Milepost 106.6 Seward Highway)

Leader: Jeanne Osnas,

Description: A hike designed for kids. The trip will depart the trailhead promptly at 4:30, and everyone should pack a picnic for 5:30. Total distance is about two miles. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Maximum group size will be five families.

RSVP Required: Text Jeanne () to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.



May 25, Thursday: “Alaska Native Plant Month Walk”

Time & Location: 6:30 pm, Eagle River Nature Center

Description: Master Naturalist Beth Baker will lead a 2-3 mile hike in search of flowers and other plants native to southcentral Alaska forests on this information packed foray. Open to the public.

Registration Required: Participants must register at <https://www.ernc.org/public-programs.html>.

June 1, Thursday: Family Flower Hike

Time & Location: 4:30 pm, Rainbow trailhead (Milepost 108 Seward Highway)

Leader: Jeanne Osnas,

Description: A hike designed for kids. The trip will depart the trailhead promptly at 4:30, and everyone should pack a picnic for 5:30. Total distance is about two miles. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Maximum group size will be five families.

RSVP Required: Text Jeanne () to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.

June 8, Thursday: "Family Flower Hike"

Time & Location: Glen Alps trailhead (hike to Blueberry Knoll)

Leader: Jeanne Osnas,

Description: A hike designed for kids. The trip will depart the trailhead promptly at 4:30, and everyone should pack a picnic for 5:30. Total distance is about two miles. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Maximum group size will be five families.

RSVP Required: Text Jeanne () to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.

June 10, Saturday: Arctic Valley & Mt. Gordon Lyon

Time & Location: 8 am, Arctic Valley Ski Area (parking \$5/day)

Leaders: Dennis Ronsse, dennis.ronsse@gmail.com and Andrew Fisher

Description: Expect 5-6 Hrs, 5 miles, with 1763 feet ascent over Mt. Gordon Lyon in a loop route back to the parking lot. Bring a lunch.

Contact: Email dennis.ronsse@gmail.com for more information. Open to the public.

June 15 Thur: "Family Flower Hike"

Time & Location: 4:30 pm, Glen Alps trailhead (hike to O'Malley Gulch)

Leader: Jeanne Osnas,

Description: A hike designed for kids. The trip will depart the trailhead promptly at 4:30, and everyone should pack a picnic for 5:30. Total distance is about two miles. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Maximum group size will be five families.

RSVP Required: Text Jeanne () to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.

July 1 Sat: "Near Point with Glenn Brown"

Time & Location: 10 am, Prospect Heights trailhead

Leader: Glenn Brown, gbrown@aknps.org

Description: Expect 6+ hours; total distance is about 8 miles with 2250 feet of ascent. The hike will include some alternate trails on the ascent as well as a short side trip to a bog on the descent, so expect to see a wide variety of ecological niches and plants. Portions of the trail are easy walking, but others, including the climb to the summit, are moderately difficult. Also, the trails are quite muddy in places, so expect to have muddy, wet boots by the end. Bring a lunch and warm garments as weather can change quickly above tree line.

RSVP Required: Contact Glenn (gbrown@aknps.org) a few days before to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.

July 22 Sat: Pepper Peak & Eklutna Fen

Time & Location: 8 am, Eklutna Lake

Leader: Dennis Ronsse, dennis.ronsse@gmail.com

Description: Hike 10 miles / climb 4500 feet (8-10 hours); bring a lunch, water, windbreaker and warm garments.

RSVP Required: Participants must contact dennis.ronsse@gmail.com a couple days in advance to confirm space and get an update about possible changes to the plan.

2023 AKNPS Summer Volunteer Calendar

Campbell Creek Science Center Garden Work Parties

Meeting Location: The Campbell Creek Science Center, located in the Campbell Tract at 5600 Science Center Drive in Anchorage

Description: Join Alaska Native Plant Society volunteers who are maintaining the Campbell Creek Science Center's wildflower gardens. Gardening equipment is provided. This volunteer work is a mutually-beneficial arrangement that enables the Alaska Native Plant Society to use the center's indoor space for in-person educational meetings. *Make sure to log your time on the CCSC log sheet!*

You can sign up [here](#) or e-mail our leaders at ccsc_gardening@aknps.org

Dates/Time:

- Saturday, May 20, 9-12, (Leader: Elizabeth Bluemink)
- Wednesday, June 7, 9-12 (Leader: Ginger May)
- Friday, June 23, 9-12 (Leader: Lili Naves)
- Wednesday, July 12, 9-12 (Leader: Mel Langdon)
- Sunday, July 30, 10-12:30 (Leader: Melanie Hess)
- Wednesday, Aug. 9, 9-12 (Leader: TBD)
- Saturday, Aug. 26, 9-12 (Leader: Elizabeth Bluemink)
- Thursday, Sept. 7, 9-12 (Leader: Ginger May)
- Saturday, Sept. 23 (National Public Lands Day) - Time TBD

Tragopogon Removal along Turnagain Arm

Meeting Location: Potter Section House Parking Area (Seward Hwy just past Potter Marsh)

Description: Western salsify (*Tragopogon dubius*) is a persistent invasive weed along Turnagain Arm. Due to AKNPS efforts, it is nearly eradicated but more work is needed to finish the job. Bring dandelion digger type tools, gloves, and garbage bags. No dogs or children allowed. Volunteers should avoid venturing into any steep terrain unless they are experienced and have discussed this in advance with the trip leader. RSVP for one or more work sessions using our [Tragopogon volunteer signup sheet](#) and contact the trip leader in advance if you plan to participate.

Dates/Time:

- Tuesday, June 6, 6:30-8:30 pm, led by Diane Toebe, diannetoebe@gmail.com or
- Tuesday, June 13, 6:30-8:30 pm, led by Gino Graziano, gagraziano@alaska.edu
- Tuesday, June 20, 6:30-8:30 pm, led by TBD
- Tuesday, June 27, 6:30-8:30 pm, led by Gino Graziano, gagraziano@alaska.edu and Diane Toebe, diannetoebe@gmail.com or



***Tragopogon dubius* reproduces only by seed**

Liability Waiver

Starting with the summer 2016 outings each field trip participant has been required to sign a liability waiver. The club has been fortunate in not having serious injuries occur and botany is not usually viewed as a high risk endeavor. That being said the unexpected can occur. This waiver is the participant's acknowledgement of risk and that he/she will not hold the society or its leadership responsible for injuries should they occur. The leader of each trip will be responsible for having all participants sign before the start of each outing and will return the form to the club president. We include a copy of the form here so that everyone will have a chance to read it and realize that it will be a part of the start of every hike, with signatures required for all participants.

LIABILITY WAIVER FOR THE ALASKA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY'S HIKES AND OUTINGS

I acknowledge that any trip has risks. The same elements that help create the unique character of this activity may cause loss or damage to my equipment, accidental injury, illness, or in extreme cases permanent trauma, disability, or death. I understand that the ANPS officers, board, members, and the trip leader/coordinator do not want to reduce my enthusiasm for the activity but think that it is important for me to be informed in advance about the activities' inherent risks.

The trip may include hiking over uneven, rocky terrain and along ridges. Hiking up hills with significant elevation gain may occur. Travel may be over rough unpredictable terrain. Downed trees, steep slopes, slippery rocks and moving water may be encountered. Hikes may occur in wetland areas, along rivers, or along the ocean. Muddy terrain may be slippery. Associated risks include but are not limited to slipping, falling, being hit by objects, or striking objects. Risks of hiking include but are not limited to cuts, blisters, diarrhea, falling timber or rocks, falls causing soft tissue injury, fractures, concussions, drowning, hypothermia, heat exhaustion/heat stroke, dehydration, sunburn, and death. Environmental risks include but are limited to rapidly changing weather, insect bites and their transmitted diseases, rolling and shifting rock, earthquakes, lightning, tsunamis, and wild or domestic animals.

The trip may require vehicular travel. This activity has risks which include but are not limited to vehicular accidents and collision with vehicles or animals and malfunction which may result in injury, disability, and death. Vehicle malfunction may result in altering the itinerary.

Society activities may occur in remote places in a significant time and distance away from medical facilities or definitive care. The difficulty of communication and transportation may delay evacuation and transport to a medical facility. I declare that I am in good physical fitness to participate in this activity without causing harm to myself or another. If I have medical concerns related to the activity, I have verified with my physician that I am physically and psychologically able to participate in the experience. I authorize that if I suffer injury or illness the trip leader/coordinator is entitled to arrange medical treatment and emergency evacuation services as deemed essential for my safety. I understand that I am responsible for all of these transportation and medical costs involved in this care. I release any person who renders medical services for me from any and all liability which may arise out of or be attributable to performance of such services. I am aware that environmental conditions or health/safety issues may require a change in the itinerary. This may require a change in the participant's travel plans. Any costs as a result of unexpected itinerary changes for any reason are the sole responsibility of the participant.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Alaska Native Plant Society officers, board, members, and the trip leader/coordinator against any and all claims, suits, or actions of any kind whatsoever for liability, damages, compensation, or otherwise brought by me or anyone on my behalf, including attorney's fees and any related costs, if litigation arises pursuant to any claims made by me or by anyone else acting on my behalf. If the Alaska Native Plant Society officers, boards, members, or the trip leader/coordinator incurs any of these types of expenses I agree to reimburse them according for incurred costs.

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older. If not I am having an adult 18 or over sign this on my behalf. I (or my adult signer) have read, understood, and accepted the terms and conditions stated herein and acknowledge that this agreement shall be effective and binding upon myself, my heirs, assigned personal representative or estate and all of my family members. I assume and accept full responsibility for myself and for death or any injury or loss of personal property. I will pay the expenses suffered by me or on my behalf as a result of any of the items listed anywhere above in this document.

Signature: _____ Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Steffi Ickert-Bond is 2023 recipient of Emil Usibelli Award!



UAF photo by Eric Engman

The University of Alaska Fairbanks has announced the winners of the 2023 Emil Usibelli Distinguished Teaching, Research and Service Awards. Steffi Ickert-Bond is the recipient of the Emil Usibelli Distinguished Research Award. Ickert-Bond joined the UAF Department of Biology and Wildlife faculty and became herbarium curator at the UA Museum of the North in 2006.

Steffi has earned an international reputation for her research on plant systematics, biogeography and floristics using museum collections. Her work offers a comprehensive view of Alaska plants: their classification, distribution, ancient migration history and evolutionary relationships.

Ickert-Bond has also been at the forefront of digitizing plant data and images. The result is a massive collaborative [online database](#), offering scientists, policymakers and members of the public a wide variety of detailed information about 300,000 plant specimens from Alaska and the Russian Far East. In addition, she was an early innovator in online instruction, and university teachers across the nation used her course materials extensively during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

ALASKA BOTANY BIOBLITZ 2023 – It's Coming Soon!

Get ready for Alaska Botany Bioblitz 2023! A bioblitz is a communal citizen-science effort to record as many species within a designated location and time period as possible. In Alaska we'll be recording observations during the first 2 weeks of July 2023. To contribute, all you have to do is join the project and upload to iNaturalist plant photos from anywhere in Alaska taken between July 1-15. Learn more at: <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/alaska-botany-bioblitz-2023>.

Bioblitzes are great ways to engage the public to connect to their environment while generating useful data for science and conservation. They are also an excuse for naturalists, scientists, and curious members of the public to meet in person in the great outdoors and are a lot of fun!

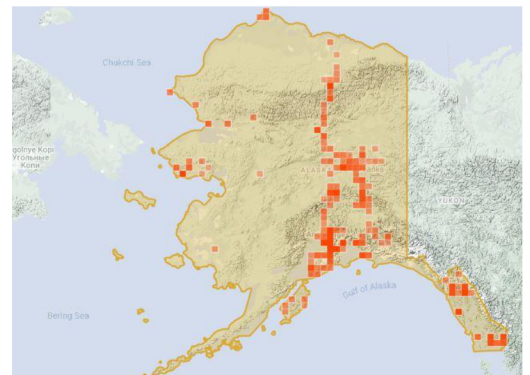
During Alaska's Bioblitz 2022, 11,089 observations were made, and 970 species were identified by 344 identifiers.

Alaska Bioblitz 2023 timeline:

- June 30: Virtual kickoff, 7:00-8:00 pm ADST (stay tuned for details)
- July 1-30: Record your observations anywhere in Alaska!
- July 15: Original deadline to record observations, and observations after this date will not qualify for prizes
- August 1: Deadline to upload your observations to this project
- August 15: Deadline for identifications.
- August 18: Virtual Finale, 7:00-8:00 pm ADST

Prizes will be awarded to those individuals with the 1) most species observed, 2) most identifications, and 3) best research grade photo. To be eligible for prizes you must join the project in iNaturalist. To join the project go to the project page, click on "Join this Project" in the top righthand corner, and follow the steps as prompted. Once you have joined the project, it will show up under "Projects" on the top navigation bar whenever you are logged in.

This bioblitz is organized by the Alaska Native Plant Society.



Bioblitz 2022 observations were made all over the state. Where will you be this July? Join the project and record your observations! And win prizes!

Alaska Native Plant Month - May 2023

IT IS OFFICIAL! So, let's celebrate Alaska's first-ever Native Plant Month in May 2023!

Why It Happened: Native plants need to be celebrated! They are indigenous species that have evolved alongside native wildlife and occur naturally in a particular geographic region, ecosystem, and habitat. They are SO important to our ways of life, our economy, and the health and sustainability of Alaska's ecosystems.

How It Happened: On Jan. 1, 2023, seven organizations, including The Alaska Native Plant Society, Alaska Botanical Garden, Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska, Alaska Master Gardeners of Anchorage, Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District, Alaska Invasive Species Partnership, and The Garden Club of North America, submitted a proclamation request to Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy, asking him to establish May 2023 as Alaska Native Plant Month. Governor Dunleavy approved the proclamation and issued it on May 1, 2023. Subsequently, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Alaska Forestry Community Council, Alaska Chapter of the Society of Landscape Architects, Bird Treatment and Learning Center, and Jensen-Olson Arboretum, also submitted requests to Governor Dunleavy to establish Alaska Native Plant Month.



May 1, 2023 proclamation

"... I, Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim May 2023 as Alaska Native Plant Month in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans to observe the month of May as Alaska Native Plant Month by planting native trees, shrubs, and flowers in their yards, removing non-native invasive plants, and educating themselves about the many benefits of native plants."

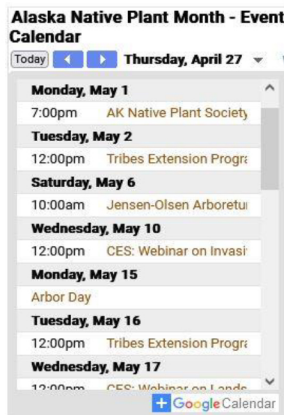
There is a Celebration website! - <https://sites.google.com/aknps.org/alaska-native-plant-month/home> - that has a **calendar of events**, **self-guided plant walks**, a **curriculum guide** for teachers, and many other great **resources**. You can even share your own activities and information with the hashtag #AKNativePlantMonth.

Self-Guided Field Trips: Are you bummed out that your summer calendar is so full that you can't take advantage of some of the guided field trips you see offered in this newsletter? Well, we can't provide a live plant expert at any time, day or night, but we can help you check out native plants in numerous spots where you can create your own field trips. There is an app for that, too! <https://aknps.org/field-guides>.

The Alaska Native Plant Society offers field guides and checklists for native plants observed along a number of trails and in backcountry areas around Alaska. Thanks to ANPS member and past President Dennis Ronsse for producing these field guides which include stunning photos and specific identifying information. They are formatted to fit on a phone and assist with field identification for numerous plants in a designated area. **Intro** documents provide information to help plan a visit. So, gather some friends and family and head for the trails!



Windy Corner, Turnagain Arm
Photo by Susanne Kruse



Field Guide Locations