

## GRAB BAG

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## UNCORKED RAMBLINGS

## Urban wineries bring a new vibe to the wine scene

By STEVE SINKLER  
FOR EO MEDIA GROUP

Steve Sinkler

Suddenly, Portland has become one of the hottest wine regions in Oregon.

While Portland is technically inside the Willamette Valley, the wineries located there don't have their tasting room surrounded by acres of beautifully manicured vineyards to add to the experience. Instead, these urban wineries typically work out of cinder-block buildings with roll-up garage doors opening to their industrial-looking tasting room.

Two of my favorite urban wineries, Angel Vine and D'Anu, make their precious beverages at Urban Crush, located in Portland at 2025 SE Seventh Ave. Winemakers Ed Fus (Angel Vine) and Joe Williams (D'Anu) have worked together for years to make wines that complement each other.

Angel Vine is the only Pacific Northwest winery focusing on zinfandel. Fus sources his fruit from some of the most well-known vineyards in the Columbia Valley, including Stonetree and LeCollines vineyards. I really enjoy Angel Vine's red blend The Hellion, which is a delicious blend of primitivo, petit sirah and zinfandel.

Named after one of his daughters, The Hellion is big, bold and unapologetic. If you're grilling a ribeye, you might find The Hellion is a wonderful companion.

The D'Anu lineup offers more classic Oregon selections, such as pinot gris, chardonnay and pinot noir, with wines that hail more from Washington, such as sangiovese and cabernet sauvignon. D'Anu's 2014 chardonnay earned double gold medal recognition from judges at the Savor Northwest 2016 wine competition, held here in Cannon Beach. This food-friendly chardonnay delivers tropical fruit flavors with a soft mouthfeel and would be a wonderful paired with Dungeness crab.

Another of the hottest Portland urban wineries is the Teutonic Wine Company, located at 3303 20th Ave. SE. Teutonic is known for its crisp Mosel-style white wines, but the winery also offers a selection of Burgundian-influenced pinots. My current favorite is Teutonic's Battle of the Cracken pinot noir, which is a delicate fruit-forward pinot. This wine would be a perfect companion with grilled salmon or portobello.



TEUTONIC WINE COMPANY  
Teutonic's Battle of the Cracken pinot noir is a delicate fruit-forward pinot.

If you haven't visited an urban winery yet, you should definitely do so. I've had people tell me it's not the same as going to a winery with vineyards. While that is true, don't hold that against urban wineries. If you're a beer drinker, when was the last time you went to a brewery surrounded by acres of hops? For those of you who drink gin, rum or tequila, does your favorite distillery have sugar cane or agave growing out back? Probably not. So, don't hold urban wineries to a different standard. These downtown producers of liquid nirvana just might knock your socks off.

Steve Sinkler is the owner of Puffin Wines and The Wine Shack in Cannon Beach. He writes a monthly column about wine in the Cannon Beach Gazette.

# Wild SIDE

## Genus: *Salix*

### Pussy willow

By LYNETTE RAE  
McADAMS

Prolific in all temperate and cold regions of the Northern Hemisphere, with more than 300 species worldwide, willows grow alongside streams and creek beds and throughout wetland areas — basically anywhere the soil stays moist. Here on the coast, where rain is frequent and water ubiquitous, multiple species within this large family all feel right at home.

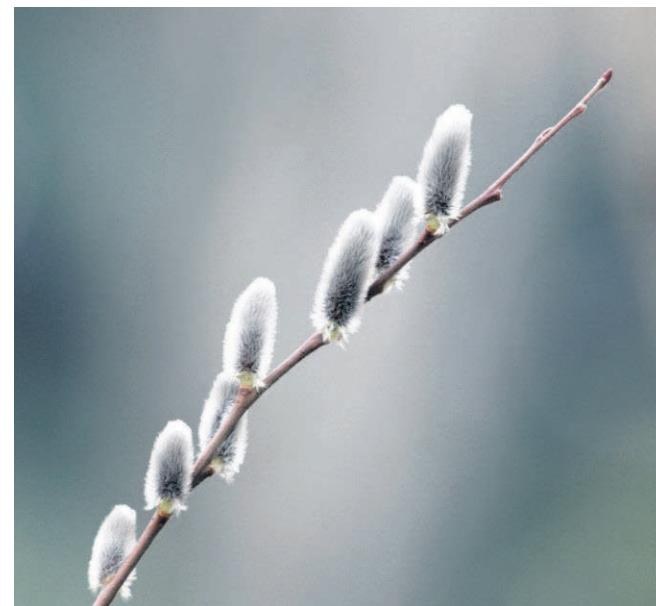
Although only one species, *Salix discolor*, can technically claim the common name "pussy willow," most scientific discussions, including this one, use the term to refer not to a specific tree or shrub, but rather, to the life stage of flowering that occurs for almost all willows. In this phase, every branch of the plant forms multiple budlike structures, called catkins, which are actually tightly packed arrangements of individual blossoms. Each blossom is accompanied by its own set of soft, silvery hairs; when pressed together, they create a kind of velvety overlay, which helps blanket and protect sensitive reproductive parts as they develop underneath.

As catkins mature, they open to reveal either pollen-covered anthers (male plants), or sticky stigmas (female plants), and are reliant upon insects for



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This maturing catkin reveals pollen-covered anthers (male plants).



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A sure sign that spring is on the way, pussy willows, which are members of the genus *Salix*, can be found in abundance throughout the Columbia-Pacific region.

pollination. Lacking brightly colored flowers, which would act as attractors, they secrete a strong, pungent nectar instead, and this viscous liquid becomes a literal lifesaver for hungry bees that awaken in late winter, when food is scarce.

Willows grow quickly and are easy to propagate; historically, they have been used by many cultures. In early times, the strong yet pliable branches were woven into baskets and furniture and also fashioned into nets for fishing. In ancient Greece and Egypt, the leaves were steeped in hot water and taken to break a fever. Native Americans

chewed on the stalks and stems of young plants to relieve pain. In 1828, the active compound in willow bark, salicylic acid, was isolated in its crystalline form by a French pharmacist; almost 60 years later, it was developed into the drug we know today as aspirin.

A true harbinger of spring, pussy willows start blooming locally in late February and make a wonderful uplifting bouquet. Whether you plan to source them from the florist or your own backyard, take note: The time will soon be right to get out there and grab 'em by the catkins.