

Volunteers, experts tracking down Oregon plants

A grass-roots collaboration of scientists, college students, and everyone from teenagers to senior citizens is working in Oregon to produce a modern, complete manual to identify all of the plants in the state.

Called the Oregon Flora Project, the effort is already six years old and may continue for another decade. It's no small task, considering that Oregon has the fourth largest plant species diversity of any state in the nation — 4,430 species, subspecies and varieties known and probably more yet to be discovered. This information is critical for studying everything from rare plants to the potential effects of climate changes or invasions of foreign species.

"The last manual of this type was produced in 1961 with data mostly from the 1950s and before," said Scott Sundberg, an OSU research assistant professor and coordinator of the project. "Since then, probably one-third of the plant names have been changed based on extensive botanical research. We really need this information, and almost anyone can

contribute if they are willing to volunteer their time."

So far, 230 volunteers around the state have helped in this project, many of them OSU faculty or members of the Native Plant Society of Oregon, a partner and financial supporter of this project. People interested in contributing to the project can do so in many ways, from providing lists of plant species for an area to entering information into databases.

The state has been divided into 174 "blocks" of 576 square miles each, Sundberg said, and volunteers can "adopt" a block to observe and list the plant species found there.

Eventually, the project hopes to produce a checklist that catalogues the plants growing throughout the state; an atlas that maps information about plant distribution on top of such data as precipitation or elevation; and a flora, which is a manual, in both printed and electronic form, for identifying plants.

"These books are as essential as a dictionary for identifying plants,"

said Linda Hardison, an OSU research associate. "With Oregon's rich and unique habitats, from coastal dunes to mountain and desert, the sheer volume of information can be overwhelming. But this is how people can identify the plants of the state and measure our biodiversity. It's difficult to study anything if you don't know what's out there."

Among other things, there is always the chance of discovering a new plant species that no one ever knew existed in Oregon. Large areas of the state have never been adequately explored, Sundberg said, especially some of the remote parts of Eastern and Southwestern Oregon.

From 1975 to 1994, 58 new species, subspecies or varieties of plants

were found in the state. One of the newest is *calochortus umpquaensis*, or the Umpqua mariposa lily. Or you can look for plants that may be extinct — *Clarkia heterandra*, the small fruited clarkia, hasn't been found in the state since 1888.

Sundberg says eventually the project may cost \$2 million and take up to 15 years. So far, it's been operated on a shoestring budget with free volunteer help, and even small donations are welcome.

It received one substantial boost when Kenton Chambers, professor emeritus at OSU and former director of the OSU Herbarium, started an endowment for the project by selling his 40-year stamp collection for \$28,000 and donating the proceeds.

OREGON FLORA PROJECT

VOLUNTEERS: Persons interested in volunteering for this project may contact Sundberg at Oregon Flora Project, OSU Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, 2082 Cordley Hall, Corvallis, OR 97331-2902.

MORE INFORMATION: www.orst.edu/dept/botany/herbarium.

A note from the Wellness Program:

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention

The number of teens drinking is on the rise despite all efforts to curb it.

- Many teens engage in binge drinking.
- Drinking may often lead to fights, violence, and most deadly of all car accidents.
- Excessive drinking should never be encouraged.
- More females are drinking now than ever before.
- Set limits so your teens know your expectations.
- Talk to them about drinking and driving and violence.
- If you think your child has a problem, talk with a drug abuse counselor or your doctor.
- Socialize safely. Encourage your teen to take responsibility for his or her friends.

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN CASINO UPCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH

BUY-IN SLOT TOURNAMENT

LET'S MAKE A DEAL!

Make a deal for your everyday items for cash and prizes, or trade for the prize in box one, two, or three. Guaranteed \$15,000 in prizes! Tournament begins at 6pm. \$125 buy-in; register at the Coyote Club desk.

MONDAY & TUESDAY, JUNE 12TH & 13TH

KENO TOURNAMENT

A POSSIBLE \$15,000 IN PRIZES

Register now at the Coyote Club desk. Tournament begins at 10am Monday and ends at 6pm Tuesday. Door prizes given away every hour! Awards banquet June 13th with three mystery payouts and great prizes.

THURSDAY, JUNE 15TH

BLACKJACK CAR GIVEAWAY

TWO CARS GIVEN AWAY—GUARANTEED!

Stop by the casino or check our website to see if your ticket is one of the lucky 400 drawn on June 1st. If so, join us June 15th at 7pm in the Rogue River room, where we'll give away two cars, guaranteed!

MONDAY, JULY 17TH

COLLIN RAYE

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

One show only at 7pm. Ticket prices are \$20 and \$30. Tickets are available in person at Spirit Mountain Casino, at all Fred Meyer Fastix Centers, or by phone at (800) 992-TIXX. Must be 21 or older.

1-800-760-7977 • 503-879-2350
Hwy 18, Grand Ronde, OR • www.spirit-mountain.com

Agency can assist local senior citizens get care and maintain their independence

The Mid-Willamette Valley Senior Services Agency's mission is to assist senior citizens in staying as independent as possible.

The agency serves older adults, age 60 and older, in Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties and assists them and their families in making choices related to care or services needed as part of the aging process. Since most senior citizens prefer receiving help in their own homes for as long as possible, and since this is the most cost effective way to provide care, their first contact with Mid-Willamette Valley Senior Services Agency is often to locate services to help in the home. These services could include home-delivered meals or help with household tasks and personal care activities like bathing, eating and grooming.

Agency staff helps older adults develop an individual plan of care based on their care needs and finances. This information is used to determine a senior's ability for agency programs funded by Medicaid or Oregon Project Independence (OPI). Services can be provided on a temporary basis, such as following an injury or illness, or can be part of a long-term care plan, such as when a senior has an on-going need for assistance because of chronic illness.

OPI is funded by the State of Oregon to help older adults in their homes. Services are provided by trained workers, many of who are screened and hired by in-home care agencies to help eligible seniors. For most seniors, this program provides help that is less expensive than if they had to move into a facility for care. Fees for OPI services are based on income and ability to pay.

For seniors that are eligible, for Medicaid services, generally have less than \$2000 in disposable assets and who meet monthly income guidelines. Medicaid might pay for physician services, hospital care, prescription drugs, durable medical equipment, medical supplies, medical transportation, home health care, personal care, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and oxygen.

Medicaid can also pay for care received in facilities such as licensed adult foster care homes, assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Agency staff helps seniors determine their eligibility for these Medicaid services by matching medical needs with the most appropriate level of care.

If staying at home is not the appropriate level of care, Mid-Willamette Valley Senior Services Agency's staff can help seniors or their family members locate adult foster homes. These are family-like settings, usually in private homes, with trained staff who can help seniors with their increased care needs including help with bathing, grooming, toileting, eating and taking medications.

Agency staff can also locate assisted living or nursing home facilities for those needing a higher level of care. Assisted living facilities offer an apartment-like setting where seniors receive help services such as meals, housecleaning, medications or bathing. Nursing homes offer 24-hour nursing care for seniors with serious medical problems.

For more information about Mid-Willamette Valley Senior Service Agency, visit the Dallas office at 182 SW Academy, Suite 102, or call (503) 623-2301. The agency's headquarters is located in Salem at 3410 Cherry Avenue NE, (503) 304-3400 or 1-800-469-8772. Information is also available on the Agency's Web page: <http://www.open.org/mwvssa>.