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Peninsula Wilderness Club Events

April 1995

Peninsula Wilderness Club meets on the second Monday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Kitsap Unitarian Fellowship Church on Perry Avenue in East Bremerton. The public is cordially invited.

Meeting April 10th

Chilkoot Pass

Ann Marshall will be presenting a slide program of her adventures on the trail from Dyce over Chilkoot Pass to Lake Bennett. The trail is located in the Alaska Panhandle and Northern part of British Columbia, and is the route followed during the Klondike Gold Rush. Ann will discuss her experience, as well as, some history of the Gold Rush, which is approaching its centennial, and how to plan your trip over Chilkoot Pass.

Upcoming Events

Sinclair Inlet Clean-Up

SATURDAY, APRIL 22nd; Join Becky Wiles with Leadership Kitsap and South Kitsap Senior High Students as they clean Sinclair Inlet in honor of Earth Day. Call Becky at 876-5718 for details.

Foulweather Bluff Preserve

SATURDAY APRIL 8th; Teresa Miller will explore the Foulweather Bluff Preserve in the Hansville area. This pleasant getaway is nearby and provides 8 miles of easy strolling and discovery. A clear day will afford views of the Olympics, Port Gamble and Hood Canal Bridge, as well as, the possibility of waterfowl and sea lions. Contact Teresa at 373-6781.

Ellinor Ice Axe Arrest

SATURDAY, APRIL 15th; Doug Savage is organizing his annual outing on Mt. Ellinor for ice axe arrest practice. If you've never handled an ice axe before, this is an excellent opportunity to benefit from instructions by experienced club members. All climbers are welcome for what is typically a great glissade down Ellinor's chute. Call Doug at 698-9774. NOTE: If you are planning on attending Doug's annual climb of Mt. St. Helens (May 20th), and have no previous ice axe experience, plan on getting basic instructions during this Ellinor outing.

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Mt. Townsend

SUNDAY, APRIL 23rd; Brian Schladetzky is climbing Mt. Townsend. This is about 5 miles with 3500 feet of elevation. Continued weather patterns should mean little to no snow on the trail. On a clear day, the view of Puget Sound from Mt. Townsend is glorious. Contact Brian for more information at 405-0103.

Climbing at Deception Crag



SATURDAY, APRIL 29th; Bill Boileau is organizing rock climbing at Deception Crag near North Bend. The area provides climbing opportunities for recreationists of all skill levels. Contact Bill at 613-5263 for more details.

PWC Slumber Party

SATURDAY, April 29th; PWC Slumber Party. Join us for a night of games, giggling and goofing off. Bring your Therm-A-Rest and sleeping bag. Potluck dinner. Men welcome at their own risk! Contact Becky Wiles at 876-5718 or Cheryl Gudger at 876-3035.

Ski Ascent of Mt. Baker

WEEKEND of MAY 6th and 7th; Doug Savage will ski the Easton Glacier to the Summit of Mt. Baker. This trip requires expert mountaineering skills and a night of camping on the glacier. Contact Doug at 698-9774 for more information.

Kayaking and Camping on Blake Island

MAY 13th & 14th; Bert and Diana Cripe are kayaking to Blake Island for an overnight stay. Contact Bert or Diana at 895-4299 for more details on this enjoyable weekend getaway.

Climbing Mt. Stuart

MAY 20th & 21st; Barry Johnson and Ted Wiles are climbing Mt. Stuart near Cle Elum via the Cascadian Couloir. This is a 6000 foot, class 3 climb and requires ice axes, ropes and crampons. For more information contact Barry at 373-5334 or Ted at 876-5718.



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Mt. St. Helens

SATURDAY, MAY 20th; Doug Savage is organizing his annual climb of Mt. St. Helens. This trip includes about 3 miles of low elevation hiking to the base of the mountain, with 4 additional miles on the slopes of the volcano. Climbers must have some previous ice axe experience. If you need instruction on use of an ice axe, plan on preparing for Mt. St. Helens by attending Doug's ice axe arrest class on April 15th. Contact Doug at 698-9774.

The Brothers



WEEKDAY in MAY; Doug Savage is taking a day off sometime near the middle of May to do a day climb of the Brothers. Doug will be

pinpointing the exact date, depending on the weather. To find out more about this challenging adventure, call Doug at 698-9774.

Barnes Creek Clean-Up

MAY 27th through 30th; Doug Savage is organizing the club's on-going effort of restoring and maintaining Barnes Creek Trail. Join him for one or more days of chain sawing and brushing. Contact Doug at 698-9774.

Ski-to-Sea Teams

MEMORIAL WEEKEND, MAY 27th thru 29th; Gail Dionne and Tom Banks have organized three teams to participate in the annual Ski-to-Sea relay race from Mt. Baker to Bellingham Bay. Team members participate in downhill and cross-country skiing, mountain and touring bicycling, running, kayaking and canoeing. This weekend is great, competitive fun.

Teams are full except for a female kayaker to complete the women's team. Gail and Tom are also seeking names for an alternates list, in case of last minute cancellations. Contact Gail at 692-4471 or Tom at 297-2367 for more information.

Ozette Loop

WEEKEND of JUNE 3rd & 4th; Cheryl Gudger and Ted Wiles are organizing a hike on the beaches of Ozette. The trip begins at Lake Ozette Ranger Station and is a 3.3 mile planked trail to Cape Alava on the Pacific Ocean. At Cape Alava the trail heads south for 3.1 miles along the ocean beach to Sandpoint, where the group will camp for the night. The remainder of the loop is a 3 mile planked trail from Sandpoint back to the ranger station. The planked trails are fairly level. At Wedding Rock, on the beach 1.5 miles north of Sandpoint, hikers can view petroglyphs of killer whales, dance masks, etc. Contact Ted Wiles at 876-5718 or Cheryl Gudger at 876-3035.

This and That

Interested Members Meeting

THURSDAY, APRIL 13th; April's interested members meeting will be held at the home of Dan and Pat Kirschbaum. Join fellow members in discussing and planning future club activities and business in a smaller, sociable atmosphere. Contact Dan or Pat at 698-3684 for directions.

April Potluck

The April Friday night potluck will be held at the home of Cheryl Gudger in Port Orchard. Join in good food, conversation and fun. This is a great opportunity for new members to introduce themselves. To RSVP and get directions, call Cheryl at 876-3035.

New Members

The PWC welcomes new members for the month of March: Mike Benefiel, Jennifer Cahalan, Brad Gleeson, Don Hill, Jon Kabelac, Karl Masters and Ken and Sue Pruett.

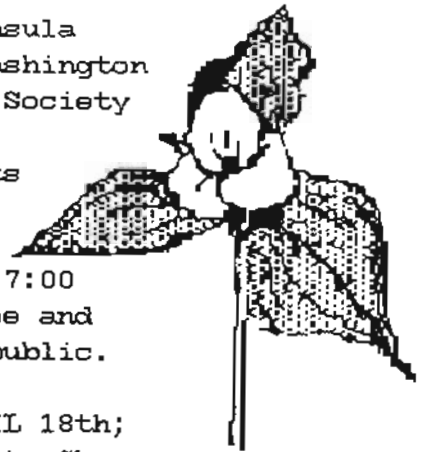
Door Prize Winner

Congratulations to Al Chan who won March's door prize, a Silva Mountaineering Compass. Thanks to Judd at Mt. Constance Mountain Shoppe for donating the monthly door prize.

WA Native Plant Society

Olympic Peninsula
Chapter of Washington
Native Plant Society
has one more
program on its
winter
schedule.

It starts at 7:00
pm and is free and
open to the public.



TUESDAY, APRIL 18th;
"Global Climate Change
Reflected in Trees of the
Subalpine Zone". 7:00 pm at the
Tri-Area Community Center in
Chimacum. Dr. Andrea Woodward,
Research Biologist with the
Cooperative Park Studies Unit,
School of Forestry at the
University of Washington, will
discuss her research into the
effects of global climate change
on trees in the subalpine zone.

Address Changes



If you need to change
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Jim Luddon at the following
address: 165 NW Alta Drive;
Bremerton, WA 98310. You can
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Please do NOT call the newsletter
editor to report changes of
address; this creates extra work
steps for our volunteer staff,
and may delay updating of the
database and your newsletter
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Big Bend National Park in the Chisos Mountains: An Island in the Desert

By Clint Porter (Clint is a PWC member, formerly of Bremerton, now living in Amarillo, Texas.)

Big Bend National Park in Texas is a long way from just about everywhere, including most parts of Texas. Even from Amarillo the driving distance to the park headquarters is 480 miles, a full day's drive in itself. It was late when I reached the park so I found a place off the road to sleep for the night, out under the stars beside the car. Other than being awakened about 10:00 pm by a border patrolman with a flashlight, it was a pleasant night. There was no problem; he was just checking to see if I was all right.

The next morning I drove on to the park headquarters to get oriented on available hiking and camping opportunities. The ranger recommended the Chisos Mountains, a high citadel of peaks immediately behind the park headquarters. The center for activities within the mountains is found in the Chisos Basin at the center of the mountains.

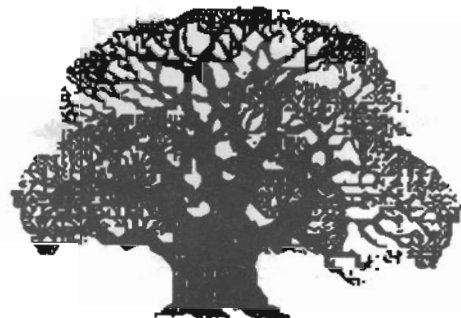
The Chisos Mountains are not a vast area. They are actually a collection of large land masses rising up above the desert floor in almost perpendicular walls, with more level or somewhat rolling terrain on top.

The first hike of the day was the Lost Mine Trail, a 4.8 mile round trip which takes hikers up from

Panther Pass (the entrance into the basin) to part of the Crown Mountain Ridge. From there one can enjoy a very breathtaking view of Casa Grande Peak. In pursuit of better views I got off the trail a bit.

For the afternoon I did the Window View Trail, a 5.2 mile round trip. The trail starts at the Basin Ranger Station and follows Oak Canyon down to where the largely dry water course empties into the desert below. There is water toward the end. I saw a gray fox and then a small herd of javelina (deer that look more gray than brown) who were not particularly frightened by me. As the trail follows the water course it takes a number of somewhat confusing twists and turns until one reaches "The Window" which I did not find all that impressive.

Next, I went to the ranger station to get my back country permit. The young lady at the counter read through a lengthy list of rules which I promised to comply with to the letter. This was followed by a stern warning that, should I fail in any detail, the wrath of the National Park Service and Ranger Bob would fall upon my head.



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I spent the night in a developed campground, which is where I really see the wildlife. The campground is regularly visited by javelina, gray foxes, and several skunks. The skunks I had to shoo away while I tried to sleep.



The next morning, after an epicurean breakfast of chopped onions boiled with Ramen Noodles, I set off into the heart of the Chisos Mountains toward what appeared to be a high rock face. The path, however, is well constructed and not too difficult. It is still a stiff climb from the ranger station at 5300 feet to the rim at 7000 feet.

Although the Chisos Mountains look barren and foreboding from the outside, within and above their walls one finds a remarkable variety of trees, some still green and others with their leaves turning yellow. Species included oaks, pinion pine and what appeared to be a close relative of our madrona. The terrain above the rim seemed more like rolling hills and long slopes, rather than being flat on top as one might expect. I remember hearing places like this being described in one of the PBS Nature programs as "Islands in the Desert". Even so, water up here is scarce. Boot Spring is the only real source at the top of the mountains.

Still, there is wildlife on top including panthers and a number of bears. These particular bears are believed to be recent immigrants from Mexico. Although there are plenty of trees suitable for hanging food, the Park Service is taking no chances with their new arrivals developing the bad habits of their native-born brethren. All campsites have heavy iron "bear boxes" for storing food when the camper is away.

I noted two distinct species of birds. One was shaped like a tiny cardinal with a gray body and a black face. The other was the shape and size of a Northwest Camp Robber, but with a grayish blue head and back.

Taking my time. I made the 4.5 mile trip up the Pinnacles Trail from the ranger station to the designated campsite near Boot Spring in three and a half hours. After setting up camp and reconnoitering the area, I made the four mile round trip to Emory Peak, the highest point in the park (7825 feet). Most of these rolling plateaus rise to about 7400 feet.

In November, night comes early and lasts late. That night the temperature fell below the 32 degree mark. I noticed a skim of ice on the stagnant puddles of Boot Canyon the next morning as I set out on my tour of the South Rim. The South Rim, which has the best views, is closed off from February to July so the Peregrine Falcons can breed in privacy.

- Chisos Mountains continued from page 6 -

As the day warmed up, I found myself quite comfortable with just a light shirt. Although the round trip starting from my camp is only about 6.8 miles I made a day of it, stopping where it suited me to read and to enjoy the panorama of the vast barren deserts below. While making the tour, I encountered the young lady who had registered me and another volunteer. They were making the rounds of all the campsites.

I arrived back at camp about 3:00 pm. Not feeling too well, I decided to head down rather than stay another night. I packed up and broke camp by 4:00 pm after a light supper. I did the 5.1 miles down the Laguna Meadow Trail in 2 1/2 hours and arrived back at the ranger station at 6:30 pm, just as darkness fell. I found the Laguna Meadows Trail a bit more of an even grade than the Pinnacles Trail.

Generally, the weather was very pleasant. It was cool to moderately warm during the days and rather cold at night. But, I actually found it warmer than my September trip to the Mt. Wheeler, New Mexico area 500 miles to the north. That area is now covered by between 30 and 60 inches of snow. The largest influx of visitors to Big Bend arrive during Thanksgiving and Christmas. The summers in this part of the world are terribly hot.

Other points of interest in the general vicinity include the Fort Davis National Monument, a remarkably well preserved frontier army post at Fort Davis, Texas; the McDonald Observatory, just north of Fort Davis; the Guadalupe Peak National Park, an area similar to the Chisos Mountains; and, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, which also includes above ground hiking trails.



Spartina Threatens Flora and Fauna of Washington Beaches

Adopt a Beach and Washington Water Trails are organizing efforts to stop the spread of Spartina along Puget Sound's beaches. Spartina is a non-native grass, introduced to the area approximately 25 years ago. It crowds out native plants and destroys critical migratory waterfowl and shorebird feeding areas, commercial shellfish beds and juvenile salmon habitats. It also increases the rate of siltation, raising ground levels and encouraging flooding up stream. Spartina transforms intertidal mudflats and gravel beaches into grassy meadows.

In Kitsap County Spartina is being battled in Kingston Slough and Doe-Kag-Wats Slough, and is suspected at Murden Cove. Community members and kayakers are asked to assist in the campaign against this threat to Puget Sound's precious beaches. To find out how you can help reduce the spread of Spartina, contact Adopt a Beach at (206)624-6013.

Newsletter Contributions

Articles, trip reports, interviews, announcements; etc for the PENWICKLE can be sent to: Teresa Miller, P.O. Box 3163, Bremerton, WA 98310; Or, phone 373-6781. The deadline for inclusion in next month's publication is the 20th of each month. The earlier material is submitted, the better. Please include your name and telephone number with your submittals.



Tulip Pedal



SATURDAY, APRIL 15th; Paul Mertel is organizing a bicycle trip through the tulip fields of Mt. Vernon, Washington. This annual event consists of 10 and 20 mile rides at your own pace. Pack a picnic and join Mert for an afternoon of fun and socializing. You can reach Paul at 297-7715.

Club Officers

President.....Dan Kirschbaum.....698-3684
Vice Pres.....Harry Wilson.....479-1322
Secretary.....Pat Kirschbaum.....698-3684
Treasurer.....Kevin Kilbridge.....874-2537

Miscellaneous Staff

Editor.....Teresa Miller.....373-6781
Assemblers...Kimmel....Guttormson/Grunigen
Entertainment....Joe Weigel.....871-0291
Refreshments.... Tony Abruzzo.....871-5754

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