

Foreword

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ART KRUCKEBERG moved to the Pacific Northwest in 1950 to assume a faculty position in the Botany Department at the University of Washington. All his prior botanical experience was in California, so arriving in a new place meant learning a new flora. To introduce him to the flora of the Pacific Northwest, the department chair, C. Leo Hitchcock, invited Art to join him that summer to tour the region with his popular field botany class. “Hitchy,” as he was known to friends and colleagues, was in the middle of producing *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest*, which appeared in five volumes between 1955 and 1969 (followed by a one-volume condensed version, *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*, in 1973). Throughout that monumental work, Hitchcock often made note of plants in our region that he thought had horticultural potential for the Northwesterner interested in growing native plants in their garden.

In 1958 Art and his wife, Mareen, purchased four acres and an old farmhouse north of Seattle in what would become the city of Shoreline. Part woodlot, part horse pasture, the land evolved under Art and Mareen’s care into a botanist’s garden in which they grew an eclectic array of plants from around the world. Art was enamored of seed lists remembered from his childhood in Los Angeles, where his family’s printing company published such lists and plant catalogs. But the plants that intrigued them the most were the native species Hitchy had noted in *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest* and many more from California and Oregon’s Siskiyou Mountains.

Late-summer plant collecting trips always included gathering seeds to try in the garden. Art was the field botanist extraordinaire, and Mareen had the green thumb. Friends and colleagues often

were the beneficiaries of her bountiful success in propagating native plants. Before long, she started MsK Rare and Native Plant Nursery, which was open to the public one weekend a year, on Mother’s Day, to sell plants to the cognoscenti (Art loved to use what he called “25-cent words”) who heard about it by word of mouth.

Botanists are familiar with the “type concept,” which connects a plant species with a specimen that is deposited in a museum from a particular “type locality.” For gardeners, the Kruckebergs’ garden is the type locality for gardening with native plants of the Pacific Northwest. Today, the Kruckeberg Botanic Garden (www.kruckeberg.org) is a public plant collection owned by the City of Shoreline and run by the nonprofit, member-based Kruckeberg Botanic Garden Foundation. I encourage anyone reading this to plan a visit.

As a young faculty member, Art devoted much of his considerable energy to his scientific research on the effect of soils on the plants that grew on them, a subject he called “geobotany.” However, with tenure, he increasingly turned his attention to public outreach around the importance of conserving our native flora. Art lobbied to get the state to enact the Washington Natural Area Preserves Act (1972); he created the first list of threatened and endangered plants in Washington (1973); and he led the effort to found the Washington Native Plant Society (1976) and to spur the state to establish the Washington Natural Heritage Program within the Department of Natural Resources (1982), which is responsible for safeguarding endangered species in Washington.

In addition to environmental activism, Art began writing for a broader audience. His books *California Serpentes* (1984) and *Geology and Plant Life*



Arthur Kruckeberg at Rattlesnake Lake, Washington, 1990.
Photo by Mary Randlett. University of Washington Libraries,
Special Collections, Randlett 733C.5.

(2002) brought his scholarly interests to readers interested in natural history. *The Natural History of Puget Sound Country* (1991) introduced North-westerners to the complex interactions among the diverse ecosystems that many of us call home. But the book that has had the biggest impact on the most people is *Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest*. First published in 1982 and revised and expanded in 1996, this was one of the first such books in the United States and helped start a trend in sustainable gardening practices by using plants already adapted to local climates and soils.

It is fitting symmetry that the third edition of *Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest* and a completely revised and updated second edition of *Flora of the Pacific Northwest* are being published within a year of each other. The flora of our region has changed dramatically in the nearly half century since Hitchcock completed his five-volume treatise. Some new species have been discovered, others not previously thought to occur in our region have been found growing here, and many alien species from other parts of the world have now gained a foothold among our native flora. For gardeners who value the precision of scientific names, the most evident change is the updated nomenclature affecting over 40 percent of the names from the first edition in *Flora*—changes that have also been incorporated in this edition of *Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest*. Whether it's through gardening that people gain a greater appreciation for the natural world around them, or through love of the region's flora that people embrace gardening, the two interests are inextricably linked, two sides of the same coin—in this case a 25-cent piece, no doubt.