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Alfonso Susanna in a watermelon pause during his 2009 summer campaign in Turkey.



Cindy Roché on Upper Rogue River Trail, Jackson County, Oregon. Photo by Robert Korfhage.

Alfonso Susanna is Director of the Botanic Institute of Barcelona, Spain. He and Dr. Núria Garcia-Jacas specialize in molecular systematics in Asteraceae. As visiting scientists at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, 1994-1995, they investigated *Centaurea* species. Dr. Susanna is also editor of the journal, *Collectanea Botanica*, published annually (like *Kalmiopsis*).

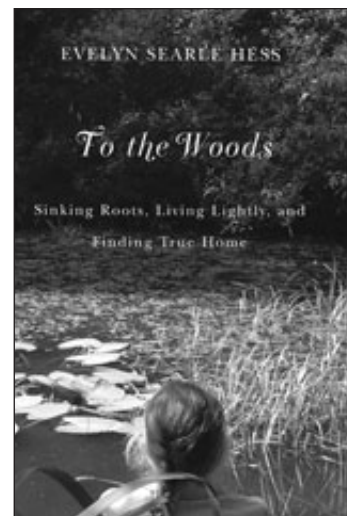
Cindy Roché, editor of *Kalmiopsis*, has a background in weed science, with an MS from Washington State University on the ecology of *Centaurea* species and a PhD from the University of Idaho on the developmental biology of two invasive species from the Mediterranean region, *Centaurea solstitialis* and *Crupina vulgaris*. Her post-doctoral research at the Botanic Institute in Barcelona focused on the origins of several introductions of *Crupina vulgaris*.

## Book Reviews

### *To the Woods: Sinking Roots, Living Lightly, and Finding True Home*

Hess, E.S. 2010. Corvallis (OR): Oregon State University Press. 175 pp. ISBN 978-087071-581-5. \$18.95 Paperback.

In 1992, Native Plant Society of Oregon member Evelyn Hess and her architect husband David, both in their mid-fifties and both formerly employed by the University of Oregon, "... left the toys and noise of urban society for the company of jumping mice, winter wrens, and dark nights full of stars and cricket song ..." to live on 21 logged-off acres in the Coast Range foothills south of Eugene. They would have "... no house, no electricity, (and) no indoor plumbing ..." in this new habitat where they developed a fledgling native plant nursery. *To the Woods* is Evelyn's personal account of their fifteen rewarding and challenging years in their new chosen habitat.



On a special shelf in my bedroom, Evelyn's book joins two others of the same genre: *We Took to the Woods* (1942), by Louise Dickinson Rich, and *Driftwood Valley* (1946) by Theodora Stanwell Fletcher (reissued by Oregon State University Press in 1999). All three books were written by women who, with their husbands, forsook the comforts of modern life to dwell close to nature and to write accounts of the joys and challenges of their relationship to the land. I strongly recommend all three to anyone who, like me, has ever dreamed of doing the same.

Evelyn divides her book into five parts. The first, "The Setting," describes the couple's work on their twenty-one acres of cut-over Coast Range hillside seventeen miles south of Eugene while still living in their home near the University of Oregon. Following that introduction, like *Driftwood Valley*, the book is arranged by seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. As Evelyn states in her Preface, "... each section records events and musings occurring in the specified season from any of the fifteen years 1992 to 2007."

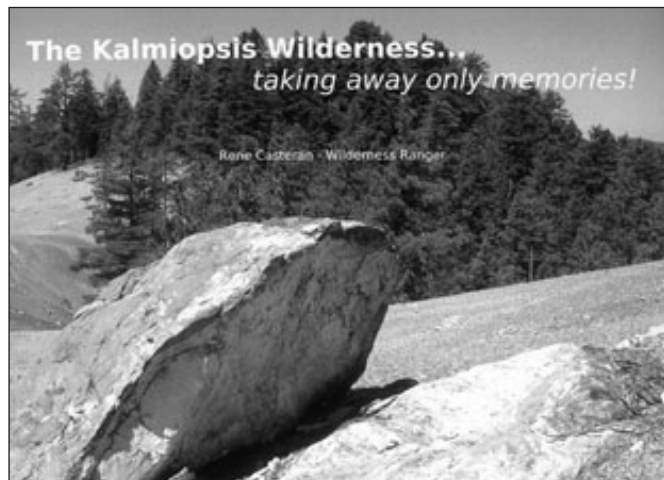
The reader of Evelyn's account of their lives in the woods will marvel at the tenacity of the couple as they developed a plant nursery in the raw clear-cut environment. Living in a travel trailer with two dogs and a cat but no electricity or indoor plumbing proved a challenge even in summer, yet Evelyn clearly remained enthusiastic and enchanted with their simple life. As the reader will note, she even used an outdoor garbage can as a bathtub.

As Evelyn writes, she and her husband "... said good-bye to telephones, television, and electrical appliances ... We would make do." Early on they dug a pond for irrigation. The book's

cover features Evelyn herself sitting beside the pond. After moving from Eugene to their acreage, their earliest plantings were twelve hundred blueberries of six varieties, followed by beds of lavender, rosemary, and various sages. At one point they spread “topsoil” and were rewarded with thousands of Canada thistles! Philosophically Evelyn writes, “We were frustrated by all our ignorance and missteps, but undaunted.”

I was delighted by Evelyn’s story of living, working and developing a viable native plant nursery on the cut-over Oregon land, and I recommend *To the Woods* to any reader with a sense of adventure and a love of nature, gardening, and good writing.

–Rhoda Love, *Emerald Chapter*



***The Kalmiopsis Wilderness... taking away only memories!***

Casteran, R. 2010. Blurb.com Publishing ISBN 978-1-4507-3528-5. Available in the Southern Oregon University library and Jackson and Josephine county libraries.

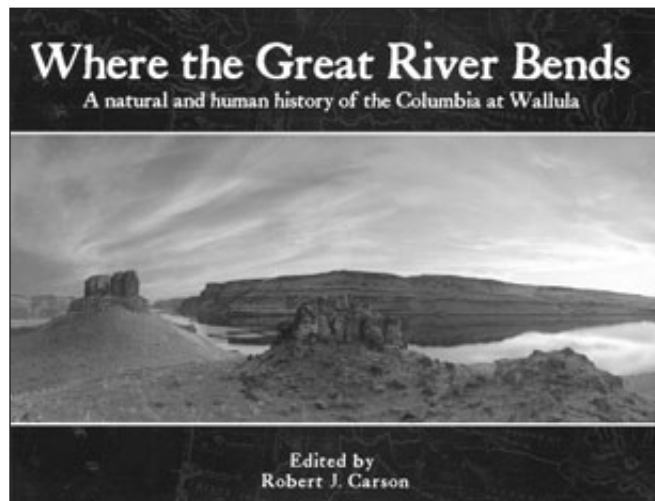
*The Kalmiopsis Wilderness...taking away only memories!* is a privately published hardcover book by Rene Casteran, who was a Wilderness Ranger for the Siskiyou National Forest from 1986 to 2008. Starting with a background in botany and ecology, Casteran gained an unparalleled knowledge of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness during the 23 years he served as its primary steward.

The 218-page book is a personal memoir presented as series of color photographs, line drawings and cartoons, interspersed with scanned images of his (mostly legible) field notes. Photos are digitized images, mostly from 35 mm color film.

The book is organized around a series of themes: Wilderness Rangers, Botany, Geology, Heritage Resources, the Navy Monument, Wildfire (including the Biscuit and Madstone fires), Plant Diseases, Water Monitoring, Encounters with Miners and Environmental Advocates, Trail Crews, Mining (historic and modern), Lou Gold on Bald Mountain, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Unusual Float Trips. The book ends with a section on The Endless Diary and a list of “tales not told.”

There is no Table of Contents, Index, List of Figures, or numbered pages. Reading it is a Wilderness adventure with a surprise at every turn (of the page, not trail). Finally, the reader

must remember that Casteran never intended his book to be widely published or sold for profit. That said, his personal memoir is a great introduction to one of the Nation’s most rugged wild places, a must read if you have never been there, a must read if you have. –Frank Lang, *Siskiyou Chapter*



***Where the Great River Bends: A Natural and Human History of the Columbia River at Wallula***

Carson, R.J., M.E. Denny, C.E. Dickson, L.L. Dodd, and G. T. Edwards. 2008. ISBN 978-1-879628-32-8. 220 pp. Keokee Books, Sandpoint, Idaho. www.KeokeeBooks.com; \$35 paper.

This book explores a fascinating natural feature in our neighbor state to the north (Washington): a place called Wallula, where the Columbia River turns around to flow west. Shortly afterwards it forms the northern boundary of Oregon. With its relatively barren landscape, impounded water and paper mill, most of us probably zoom right by without a second thought when we happen to be traveling through this area. However, as Kareen pointed out in her article, the more we know, the more we see. If you plan to drive State Route 12 from Tri-cities to Walla Walla or Highway 730 north from Hermiston, Oregon, I highly recommend that you read this book first. Stop and see the Twin Sisters and marvel over the basalt flows, hike up Juniper Canyon, and follow the mile-by-mile interpretative route on Wallula Gap Road from Sand Station, Oregon, to Wallula Cemetery, Washington. The book features sections on geography, geology, biology, pre-history, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century history, and lists of flora and fauna found in the area. Eat a picnic lunch at Madam Dorion Park, named for a Native American woman who, under incredibly difficult circumstances, traveled from Missouri to Wallula in 1811-12 with the Wilson Price Hunt Party of the Pacific Fur Company.

The book is amply illustrated with beautiful photographs of places you’ll want to see firsthand. If you get the book, you may go out of your way to visit Wallula, which means, among other things, “a small stream running into a larger one,” that is, where the Walla Walla River merges into the Columbia River.

–Cindy Roché, *Siskiyou Chapter*