

NPSO FELLOWS AWARDS

Lisa Blackburn

Lisa Blackburn was born and raised in southern California. As a child, she enjoyed numerous camping vacations with her family all over the western United States. These trips and her mother's interest in gardening sparked her interest in botany and geology. When Lisa attended the University of California, Davis, her broad interests led her to enroll in a variety of environmental science classes. She graduated in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science in Renewable Natural Resources.

Lisa found herself interested in soils and botany, recognizing that soils are key to the vegetation they support. She took classes in soils, botany, and range management, completing an MS in Range Management from UC Davis in 1975. This qualified her for federal government positions in range conservation and soil science. Lisa started her career as a Range Conservationist in the Plumas National Forest in Milford, California. In 1976, she moved to Burns, Oregon, to work with the Bureau of Land Management. As a Range Conservationist in California and Oregon, she monitored vegetation conditions and trends by measuring and photographing trend plots, developed grazing rotation plans, and participated in plant association surveys and mapping projects. She did wild horse counts from helicopters and airplanes. Her work took her to the BLM office in Portland in 1978, where she became an Environmental Protection Specialist, serving on a team that wrote the Environmental Impact Statements for grazing management plans in eastern Oregon. She was responsible for the vegetation, soils, water, climate, and wild horse sections. For the next 25 years, Lisa continued to work in the BLM state office in Portland as a computer specialist and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act records specialist, providing program leadership, policy guidance, technical assistance, program monitoring, and training. After her retirement in 2007, she continued to work on contract in BLM offices in Oregon, California, and Arizona.

In 2009 Lisa joined the Native Plant Society of Oregon (Cheahmill Chapter, McMinnville). She immediately assumed a leadership role in the chapter serving, first, as the Secretary (2009-2011), then as Chapter President for the next two years (2012-2014). She served for another two years as Vice President for Programs, identifying speakers

who could engage both Chapter members and the public in learning more about native plants. In 2016 Lisa started another two-year term as President and is, once again, in 2020, serving as President for the Chapter. She served on the planning committee and assumed responsibility for registration at the State Annual Meeting sponsored by the Cheahmill Chapter in Cannon Beach in 2014. She served on the planning committee for the 2020 Annual Meeting (cancelled due to Covid-19). Lisa has given presentations to the Newberg and McMinnville garden clubs, with a

focus on gardening with native plants and has staffed NPSO tables at various businesses for workplace funding campaigns. Lisa has helped coordinate and manage the annual Cheahmill Chapter wildflower show since 2010 and has helped maintain the native plant garden around the McMinnville Library, pruning and weeding with the monthly garden work parties.

At the state level, Lisa served as the NPSO EarthShare Oregon liaison for two years. She started as a director-at-large on the State Board from 2010-2011, then served as Secretary for three years, vice president for a year, and president until 2020, adding a third year to her tenure when no one responded to the call for nominations for president in 2019. During her term

as president, she supported a number of transitions relating to electronic communications, including development of a NPSO Facebook page, updating the NPSO website, replacing the print Bulletin with an email version, amending the bylaws to facilitate electronic voting, and offering membership renewal by PayPal. The significant conservation issue of her term was the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Native Plant Conservation Program for listing the status of plant species that are considered threatened or endangered, for which she advocated for financial support of the program during the 2019 Legislative session.

Lisa lives in Newberg and spends time with her son, her daughter, and five grandchildren. She has traveled extensively since her retirement from BLM, but continues volunteering with NPSO, the Newberg Food Bank, and activities to support the disadvantaged in her hometown.

Although Lisa joined the Society relatively recently, her dedication and leadership in support of the Native Plant Society of Oregon has been unflagging. She has committed much of her retirement to efforts in sharing the NPSO mission and values to the broader public.—
Michal Wert, Cheahmill Chapter.



David H. Wagner

As the son of missionary parents, David Wagner spent his childhood in Landour, India, in the foothills of the Himalayas. There David attended Woodstock School, exploring the mountains and collecting specimens of all kinds, including beetles, butterflies, birds, mammals, and snakes. About the age of eleven, he became particularly curious about ferns that, along with bryophytes, became a central theme throughout his life. Mosses appealed to him because they are small, often overlooked, and very much worth studying. After leaving India in 1963, David studied biology, chemistry, and geology at University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. He earned his MS and PhD in botany at Washington State University in Pullman; his doctoral dissertation focused on the genus *Polystichum* (swordferns) of western North America.

In 1976 David moved to Oregon to become curator of the University of Oregon herbarium in Eugene. In 1979 he was promoted to Director, a position he held until 1993, when the herbarium was merged with the herbarium at Oregon State University in Corvallis. As both a member of the university faculty and Director of the herbarium, David engaged with students and the general public, taught systematic botany and bryology, wrote professional publications and mentored graduate students, including NPSO members Linda Vorobik and Jennifer Lippert.

When the herbarium merger left him without employment, he established Northwest Botanical Institute, a consulting and research business with special focus on ferns and bryophytes. He conducted surveys for rare species, developed keys and study guides, and offered workshops for federal employees and contractors. Today he is a recognized expert on the bryophyte flora of our state, identifying and cataloging species from diverse habitats, ranging from Cascade fens and the deep waters of Waldo lake to Coos Bay and the Elkhorn Mountains, and to locations beyond the borders of Oregon in the Pacific Northwest. In his hometown of Eugene, he inventoried the bryophytes and lichens of Spencer Butte Park. As an active participant in rare bryophyte conservation, David described new species and created numerous guides and checklists that are used by local, state and federal agencies, NPSO, and the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC)

as references in their work to protect and conserve rare Oregon bryophytes and their habitats.

David joined the Native Plant Society of Oregon soon after his move to Eugene (1976), so he has been contributing to the Society for over four decades. Although NPSO was founded in 1961, the process of establishing local chapters throughout the state was still underway at that time. When David helped found the Emerald



Chapter it became the sixth chapter. He served as the first Emerald Chapter president (1979-1981), then as State president (1981-1982). David also served twice on annual meeting committees (1982 and 1991), coordinating logistics and soliciting speakers. He has been a frequent speaker over the years at Emerald and other NPSO chapters as well as at the Eugene Natural History Society. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Eugene Natural History Society, he brought excellent speakers to the University of Oregon for public education on topics ranging from bats to volcanoes. David has volunteered at the NPSO-sponsored Mt. Pisgah Arboretum Wildflower Festival since 1980, collecting plants, setting up the show, and staffing the botanist's table to

identify plants. David published two articles in *Kalmiopsis: History of the University of Oregon Herbarium* in 1994 and *Shepherd's Desert Parsley (*Lomatium pastorale*)* in 2013. He reviewed books for *Kalmiopsis* on topics ranging from pitcher plants to climate change.

David advocated for conservation of rare native plants and their habitats as an appointee (1978-1985) to the Natural Areas Preserves Advisory Committee (NAPAC). With Jean Siddall from Portland Rare Plant Project and Ken Chambers at OSU, they used NAPAC as a vehicle to publish *Rare, Threatened and Endangered Plants of Oregon* in 1979. This established the basic groundwork for subsequent rare plant work in Oregon. NAPAC subsequently became the Natural Heritage Advisory Council that continues to protect representative ecosystems for research and education. David has represented NPSO on community committees to advocate for native plant conservation and volunteered for conservation projects such as rare plant surveys. He was a member of the Lane County Rare Plant Committee and Checklist Group (1995, 1998-2002), which became a valuable resource for both the Oregon Flora Project and for the second edition of the *Flora of the Pacific Northwest*.

David wrote and reviewed treatments and provided species lists for the Oregon Flora Project. He served on the Board of Directors for the *Flora of North America* (2009-2018) and wrote the treatment for *Polystichum* (Volume 2) and several genera of liverworts (Volume 29). He is an exceptional artist and has developed techniques for stunning microphotographs of diagnostic features in ferns and bryophytes. David maintains an enlightening website called “fernzenmosses,” which reflects both the spiritual and aesthetic components of his appreciation for these plants and natural history. Each year he creates the Oregon Nature Calendar, which includes information on plants, animals, phases of the moon, photoperiod, soils and various aspects of natural history, illustrated with his original pen and ink drawings.

David has written numerous popular articles about the natural history of the Willamette Valley, particularly on Oregon native plants and habitats, including for the Mount Pisgah Arboretum and Eugene Natural History Society newsletters and a monthly article (It’s About Time) for the *Eugene Weekly*. For 17 years (1977-1993), he led weekly spring walks in Alton Baker Park in Eugene, recording flowering phenology, which has been added to the database for a future publication on the effects of Pacific decadal oscillations and climate change on plant phenology.

The OSU Herbarium houses thousands of David’s vascular plant collections, and even more nonvascular (bryophyte) collections, the latter not yet cataloged in the Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria. Through his contributions to botanical knowledge in the Pacific Northwest and his life-time commitment to NPSO, David embodies the society’s mission: dedicated to the enjoyment, conservation, and study of Oregon’s native plants and habitats.—*Gail A. Baker and Jennifer Lippert, Emerald Chapter.*