

Nature Trails

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Photo by W. Sullivan

“Exploring Oregon’s New Wilderness Areas”

Mr. William L. Sullivan, Author and Lecturer,
Eugene, Oregon

**Friday, 17 September 2010, 7:30pm, Room
100 Willamette Hall, UO Campus**

You may share with me a certain mixture of feelings as we look forward to our September meeting: On one hand, I'm eager to hear William Sullivan again and to see his marvelous wilderness photographs. On the other, I anticipate being frustrated: I'll be learning about places I maybe could have explored during the summer had I known about them.

Sullivan, well known to us as the author of the 5-book *100 Trails* series as well as his regular column in the Outdoors section of the Register-Guard, is a native of Oregon, as were a long string of his ancestors. He began hiking at age five and has been a hiker ever since. His exposure to writing as an occupation also began at an early age: his father was a newspaper editor in Salem.

When a junior in high school, Sullivan's PSAT scores attracted the attention of the Admissions Committee of Deep Springs College (an interesting school, well worth learning about if, like me, you've never heard of it). They promised him a full scholarship if he would enroll immediately, forgoing his senior year of high school. This sounded good to him; he took them up on the deal and so still has no high-school diploma. After two years at Deep Springs, out in the California desert, he went to Cornell University and graduated with a degree in English. He then went to Germany and spent a year-and-a-half at Heidelberg University studying linguistics. After Heidelberg he came to the University of Oregon where he earned his M.A. in German Literature. Not a bad academic career for a high-school dropout.

Sullivan was attracted to creative writing early on, but his exposure to journalism led him to steer clear of that field. It was while at Deep Springs College that he began to think he might be able to make a living as a free-lance writer. He has. His current total of books written stands at fourteen, but that number doesn't adequately reflect his literary output. For one thing, he writes in other formats – such as his monthly newspaper column. Also, each of his five *100 Hikes* books are updated every year or so, to keep them current, and each one of these new editions, besides requiring more hiking, takes new writing as well (One of the big reasons he self-publishes – note that the Navillus in Navillus Press is Sullivan spelled backwards – is that these books can be edited up until a few days before they appear on shelves in bookstores, meaning that the latest conditions are included in the descriptions. He pointed out to me that guide books that go through the traditional routine are at least a year out of date by the time they go on sale).

Not only is Sullivan good at writing and walking, his schedule of speaking engagements leads one to ponder how it might be possible for him to be in more than one place at a time. His schedule for September and October, to illustrate, calls for nine appearances. In August and early September he put in sixteen 12-hour days at Oregon Authors Tables at the Lane County Fair and the Oregon State Fair. And this is not his busy season! In the spring he sometimes does three appearances in a single day.

This apparently frenetic schedule has not adversely affected the quality of Sullivan's prose. He has been referred to in the New York Times as "an engaging and endearing writer." His *Listening for Coyote*, based on his solo-backpacking trek across our spectacular State, was recognized by the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission as one of the 100 most significant books in Oregon's history.

How does he write? For the *100 Hikes* series he carries notebook, space pen (it writes upside-down, underwater... never fails), pedometer, compass, GPS, and camera. So if you've ever wondered how he knows it is '0.4 mi. from the stream to where the trail turns sharply to the left', now you know: he measures it. All the photos are his. He has done most of the drawings, but some are by his wife or his daughter. Here's another indication of the level of his preparatory work: for his latest novel, *The Ship in the Hill*, he needed to be able to read runes. He made this feat sound not so hard: he is fluent in German, his wife's relations are Danish so he's picked up some Danish, from Danish it's not hard to learn Norwegian, from there to old Norse is just a small step, and then he could read the runes. Right. No problem.

When asked whether he had had any interesting animal encounters on his many hikes he was quite emphatic about how overblown are the suggestions that one might be placing oneself in danger by venturing into the Oregon wilderness. His next book, in fact, will deal with wild animals in Oregon, the central theme being how silly is the notion that walking in our wilds might be dangerous because of things like snakes, bears, and cougars. Both he and his wife Janell said they have had many more close calls driving to and from trailheads than on hikes. Sullivan also pointed out that wild animals don't hold you at gunpoint and threaten to kill you, as happened to him on his trans-Oregon adventure.

Among the many publicly accessible facts about Sullivan is that he likes to play the pipe organ. As I happen to be quite fond of organ music, I was poised to ask him how he got time on one, and which one or ones in town he plays. But when he ushered me into

his home these questions were immediately answered: there, centrally located just off the living room, is his very own six-stop, Tracker-action pipe organ! After I oohed and aahed he actually took off a side panel to show me some of the wooden pipes, square in cross-section, including the biggest one – eight feet long, bent twice so as to fit. After we had finished and I was on my way out I stopped again to gaze on this thing of beauty, and our speaker gave me a brief recital!

Relax. He's going to talk to us about hiking in Oregon wilderness areas, not about organ music.

A Beauty or a Beast? by Reida Kimmel

It's a hot sunny day today and I am in the midst of doing laundries. There isn't really room on the clothesline for three washes, but in our dry atmosphere, the first load of washing will be dry before I hang out the third. My clothesline is earth friendly in more than one way. Up on the little hill in the back yard, hanging clothes, I never think of all the energy I'm saving. While some part of my consciousness deals with hanging the wash in an orderly fashion, and economizing on clothespins, I am free to admire the little madrone tree, its tattered strips of cinnamon colored bark parting to reveal the soft apple green new bark. I see sunlight filtering through the shrubs by the dry creek, and think hostile thoughts about those beastly blackberries. Up until a decade ago, the clothesline hung at the end of civilization, overlooking a tangled mess of native and feral blackberry vines. Now with yearly hacking and digging, the vines are subdued, and only native blackberries survive on the creek banks. The view is beautiful, too steep and fragile for strolling, but a pleasure to contemplate. Off into the woods on my right, it's another story. The walking trail is choked with the summer's rampant growth of both Armenian and evergreen blackberry vines. It's too shady for these useless vines to fruit and they have to be beaten and cut back every other week if the trails are to stay open.

I surely would like to be rid of those blackberries. I'd like to stroll up the hill through a ground cover of salal, Oregon grape and sword ferns. I picture the shrubs, ocean spray, nine bark and filbert, denser than they are now, sheltering flocks of quail and grouse. All this would be possible if only the invasive species of naturalized blackberries would magically disappear. Herbicides would not do the trick. Not only would they kill indiscriminately, native and alien species alike, they would kill invertebrates and many species of vertebrates, and pollute the creek.

You've read his columns, at least some of his books, hiked on some of the hundreds of trails he has explored and described for us, maybe even heard him speak at a different venue. So you know we have a fantastic evening in store. Please join us on Friday, 17 September 2010, at 7:30pm in Room 100 Willamette Hall on the U of O campus to hear Mr. William Sullivan's presentation "Exploring Oregon's New Wilderness Areas," based on his book *Atlas of Oregon Wilderness*. If you want a seat you probably should get there early. John Carter

But hope is on the horizon. *Phragmidium violaceum*, blackberry leaf fungus, was discovered in Oregon in 2005. This plant disease occurs naturally in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. It has been used to control blackberries for decades in Australia, New Zealand and Chile. The disease attacks Evergreen blackberries (*Rubus laciniatus*) and Himalaya blackberries (now called Armenian, *Rubus armeniacus*) but does not harm native *Rubus* species. At present, though I have never observed it, this moisture-loving disease has spread to all but Josephine and Jackson Counties, the two driest of Western Oregon's counties. The effects of blackberry leaf fungus are seen on the leaves. The disease primarily attacks the young cane tips but can also damage buds and unripe fruit. The weakened or dead cane tips are not capable of tip rooting, impairing a vital reproductive strategy of the blackberry plant. Uredineospores, yellow "summer spores", are powdery pustules on the leaves' undersides. A heavy infection of these will defoliate the plant. Black teliospores or "winter spores" serve a reproductive function. They can stay on the undersides of leaves all winter, or fall to the earth where they can live to infect other plants the next spring. Another aspect of this fungal disease is that infected evergreen blackberry plants, which normally retain their leaves all winter, now lose their leaves. With more sunlight reaching the earth, other plants can sprout and live.

It takes repeated heavy attacks of rust fungus to kill a blackberry plant, but the effects of the disease may well be to reduce the spread and size of blackberry infestations in abandoned fields and in the thousands of acres opened by clear-cut logging. As often happens with introduced species, the initial rampant spread of the plant is tamed by a predator, establishing a new natural balance. Remember, if you can, the fields of tansy ragwort, more gold than green, in the 1970s. The introduction of cinnabar moths controlled that invasion, and luckily, the moths

did not themselves become a plague. They have not so far developed a taste for any native vegetation. Let us hope that this new and accidentally introduced blackberry disease will also be self-limiting, and will merely curb, but not destroy invasive blackberries in the Pacific Northwest. Escaped cultivars of blackberries have been with us for a century. Our wildlife, from birds to bears, has become dependant on this rich and reliable food source. We love the

berries too. Who does not relish picking berries beside the road or on the trail? What can be better than a fresh blackberry pie or just picked berries on breakfast cereal? Come to think of it, I'm going to head out into the pasture after I hang up the next load of wash. Looking for *Phragmidium violaceum*, of course, but maybe I'll just take a bucket along with me.

President's Corner

Ready or Not

by Tom Titus

Summer is over. The season ended in mid-August with a string of overcast mornings, temperatures in the 40s, and wish-I'd-worn-my-gloves rides to work; mornings masquerading as September. I hoped this was a fluke. Then I awoke to the sound of rain; real rain falling out of a still dark sky, drenching brown grass, slithering off my driveway in wet sheets that washed away the accumulated dust of this extremely foreshortened summer, a watery exclamation point to the reality of the change in season. Surely I'm not the only one staring out the window at dripping green tomatoes and half-ripe winter squash, feeling as though just one more string of 90-degree days would finish ripening everything and steam the final bit of last winter's accumulated moisture from my bones. Give me a few more weeks of dry grass and desiccation. Then I'd be ready for mushrooms, fall Chinook, and the colorful clowns of vine maple. My anthropocentric view of this year's weather is, well, self-centered. But I'm stuck with being human and not really in a mood to get over it, despite the best attempts and intentions of outfits like the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement.

The larger cycles of the world are oblivious to my needs, and to think otherwise would be unwise and unhealthy. When September 1 showed up and it was time to change the monthly pages in my planner, I was struck by the arbitrariness of my To Do List. My September agenda wasn't based on wishful thinking; it was a product of past experience that more often than not included a warm June and dry September.

Apparently this year we will have neither. So I whined, shrugged, and adapted: prep the house for painting (the crew is behind schedule), install a new wood stove (cool nights are already here), can tomatoes (if there are any), pick blackberries (better hurry before they mold), and wander in the forest for white chanterelles (sooner than later). Ready or not, calendar be damned, it's time to get on with my favorite season.

Nothing could be more arbitrary or rigid than 7:30 pm on the third Friday of every month. Yet this is the keystone of our educational mission for the Eugene Natural History Society, the evening when one of nine high-quality speakers illuminates for us some aspect of the natural world. We begin this week with a program by Eugene wanderer and writer Bill Sullivan, followed by talks on truffles and tropical birds, salamanders and snakes, wolves and the wolf at our door (climate change), wrapping up in May with a presentation and field trip by poet/essayist/lepidopterist Robert Michael Pyle (see our 2010-2011 list of speakers and topics on the ENHS website at <http://biology.uoregon.edu/enhs/calendar/default.html>.) Their accumulated expertise is remarkable. I hope that each of our guests will broaden our perspective and help us to develop an ever more inclusive view of our place in the world. I trust that they will add *value*; because we cannot value what we do not know, and we will not keep what we do not value.

Hearing Fall Arrive

by Whitey Leuck

I had spent the night in one of my favorite stands of grand old Douglas-firs and western red-cedars that I call The Cathedral. And when I awoke at first light and lay there inside my tent anticipating another fine day alone in the woods, what should I hear? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Not even the sound of my own

breathing – which I'd stopped briefly, to concentrate on trying to hear something. Anything!

Most of the year, nearby Two Trout Creek boisterously makes its way through the middle of The Cathedral on its way down to the McKenzie River about a mile away. But in late summer, Two Trout is dry in many places, and not more than a trickle where it is still flowing aboveground.

After a little while, even though it was still barely light, I heard a small woodpecker (probably a sapsucker) looking for its breakfast of insects in a dead tree trunk: Tap-tap-tap... tap-tap-peck-peck. And then it was still again. A few minutes later, the cheerful song – but not yet full-volume – of a winter wren punctuated the quiet. Eventually, once it was daylight, I heard the raucous call of a Steller’s jay in the distance, and the brief chatter of a chickaree – a small squirrel that is common in the forests of Oregon’s West Cascades. Then it was quiet again.

Although by then I was fully awake, I had no inclination yet to get out from under my down comforter and get dressed. It was such a treat to lie in bed, just smiling at my good fortune to be able to experience what I call total tranquility.

(Back in Eugene – where I live most of the time – mornings in my neighborhood can also be wonderfully quiet, at least for an urban area. Still, there is the sound of the refrigerator downstairs; a neighbor’s car-door as she leaves for work; the first commuter traffic on 30th Avenue just 2 ½ blocks away. And occasionally louder sounds such as a police siren, or the infernal blasts of a train’s horn. Such unwanted sounds, as well as the lack of people who make the sounds, are the principal reason I come to The Woods in the first place.)

Perhaps an hour after I first awoke, I heard a new sound: plink! A conifer needle falling from the forest’s upper canopy onto my tent’s fly. Less than a minute later: plink-plink. Two conifer needles! How odd, though, that I heard none before then, and now

three in rapid succession. Hmm. A few moments later, another plink. Only then did I realize what I was in fact hearing: raindrops! I had to laugh out loud!

Every year, there is a single day – in Whitey’s World, at any rate – on which summer “officially” ends and fall begins. That is the day when the first raindrops falling from Heaven kiss my cheeks once again and summer can be considered over. Most years there will be plenty of warm and even hot, sunny days before the real rain arrives in late October or early November, but the long summer drought has for me ended with those first raindrops and will not return until the following June.

During any given summer, between mid-June and late August, it’s possible to have a little rain once or twice or even (rarely) a half-dozen times. But the only rain that can truly herald the arrival of fall is one that comes later than August 15th. By that time, daylength is already noticeably shorter, and even when summer does “return” after the brief rain, I know it cannot last for more than a few additional weeks.

I’m delighted every year when fall arrives, but more often than not I am anticipating it due to a weather forecast, or dark clouds I can see myself on the western horizon. This year, however, its arrival was completely unexpected. I’d gone to bed after yet another sunny, dry summer day, and I presumed the following day, September 5th [2009], would be similar. What a pleasure to be surprised, instead, by the first raindrops of fall!

Out and About

“Out & about” is a periodical encouragement to Eugene Natural History Society members to get out and experience our magnificent Oregon

Waldo Lake



Don’t miss one of the three purest lakes in the world! By now, the mosquitoes and crowds have all disappeared. Take the Jim Weaver Trail from the Shadow Bay boat ramp around the south end of the lake for this stunning view of South Sister. Or, climb the trail to the Twins for a panoramic view of the lake itself. Want more information about this location? Contact Dave Stone at 541 683 6127.

Events of Interest in the Community

Lane County Audubon Society

Tuesday, 28 September, 7:30pm. “Birding in Colombia.” Christopher Calonje, Colombian native, Klamath Falls resident, and President of Colombian Bird Watch, will present a photographic tour of Colombian birds as well as information on Colombian geography, food, culture, and people. Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St.

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

34901 Frank Parrish Rd., Eugene, 97405. Located off I-5 Exit 189, 15 minutes southeast of Eugene. Call Peg Douthit-Jackson at 541-747-1504 or email mtpisgjp@efn.org for more information or to sign up for any of the following Arboretum activities.

Sunday, 12 September, 10am-noon. Family Walk: Animals and Plants are Preparing for Winter.

Rain or Shine. Meet at the MPA Visitors Center. Fee: \$5 (MPA members/donation).

Saturday, 18 September, 10am-4pm. Finding and Identifying Mushrooms. Join mushroom enthusiast Josiah Legler for a short lecture and a hike to observe mushrooms in their native habitat. Meet at MPA and carpool to a nearby site about 30 minutes away for the hike. Dress for a walk in the woods; bring a lunch, water, and a field guide if you have one. Registration required. Rain or shine. Fee: \$25 (MPA members/\$20).

Saturday, 25 September, 9am-4pm (Workshop 1), and Saturday, 6 November, 9am-4pm (Workshop 2): Back to Basics – Enhancing your Nature Sketchbook. Join us for one or both workshops with natural-science illustrators Kris Kirkeby and Katura Reynolds. Each workshop will include a morning of learning basic drawing techniques and an afternoon of field sketching. Both instructors will be available for the full day. Registration required. Rain or shine. Meet at the MPA Visitors Center. Fee: \$30 (MPA members/\$25).

Workshop 1: Kris will explore working with line and line qualities in a sketch, and improving your observational skills. Katura will build off this information in an afternoon session starting with group sketching followed by free time to sketch, with guidance as needed. We’ll come back together at the end of the day to share our results.

Workshop 2: This workshop will include the same field-sketching experiences, again practicing the morning’s lessons – this time studying how to show light and shading and using composition principles in sketchbooks.

Saturday, 2 October, 10am-Noon. Autumn Herbal Walk. Join Sue Sierralupe, on a walk along our scenic trails to identify the medicinal wonders and tasty wild edibles that surround us. Bark and Roots are the focus of this season’s hike. Rain or shine. Meet at the MPA Visitors Center. Fee: \$5 (MPA members/donation).

Saturday, 16 October, 10am-4pm. Finding and Identifying Mushrooms. Join mushroom enthusiast Josiah Legler for a short lecture and a hike to observe mushrooms in their native habitat. We will discuss mushroom biology and ecology, edible and medicinal mushrooms, terminology and identification, and more. We will meet at MPA and carpool to a nearby site about 30 minutes away for the hike. Dress for a walk in the woods; bring a lunch, water, and a field guide if you have one. Registration required. Rain or shine. Meet at the MPA Visitors Center. Fee: \$25 (MPA members/\$20). Call (541) 747-1504 to sign up or for more information.

Native Plant Society of Oregon, Emerald Chapter

For more information call 541-746-9478. Contact ngap@emerald.npsoregon.org with questions.

Monday, 20 September, 7:30pm. Rare and Endangered Plants of the McKenzie River Watershed.

What is a rare plant and why are some plants rare? Charlene Simpson, Emerald Chapter R & E Co-Chair, explores these questions and discusses plants found in the McKenzie River watershed that are of conservation concern with few known populations or whose survival is threatened by natural or human caused events. Charlene draws from her 30-year slide archive to illustrate her program. EWEB Training Room at 500 E. 4th Ave., Eugene.

WREN

For more on these activities call 541-683-6483 or email info@wewetlands.org.

Tuesday, 14 September, 9-10am. Wetland Wander. At Golden Gardens Park, a 146-acre natural area located in Eugene’s Bethel neighborhood, at the intersection of Golden Gardens St. and Jessen Dr., north of Barger Dr. The park was formerly a gravel pit, which provided material used in the construction of Belt Line Road and its overpasses. WREN will provide binoculars.

Saturday, 18 September, 3-7pm. Family Exploration Day. Discover the Tsanchiifin Trail! WREN staff and volunteers will supply bug nets, field guides, and binoculars to promote unstructured exploration. Families are

encouraged to bring a picnic and experience the joy of independent discovery. The Tsanchiifin Trail is located at 751 S. Danebo Ave., north of W. 11th Ave. This program is funded by a Take It Outside grant from the BLM.

Nearby Nature

Call 541-687-9699, email info@nearbynature.org, or go to <http://www.nearbynature.org/programs/registration-forms>.

Saturday, 25 September, 10 am-noon. Hooting in the Hollows. Learn all about owls on this family-paced walk through the woods. Meet our costumed Kinder Critter, Olivia the Owl! Meet at the Alton Baker Park Host Residence (between the dog run and community gardens). FREE for members, \$2/person or \$5/family for non-members. Pre-registration suggested.

North American Butterfly Association

Monday, 4 October, 7pm refreshments 7:30pm presentation. Saving the Silverspot Butterfly. EWEB Training Center 500 East 4th. Anne Walker, Wildlife Biologist from the Newport office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, will speak on efforts to restore and protect this endangered butterfly. Join us to hear about and celebrate some successful efforts in Silverspot recovery. Free, and open to all.

We welcome new members! To join ENHS, fill out the form below. You will receive *Nature Trails* through December of next year. Membership payments allow us to give modest honoraria to our speakers, as well as to pay for the publication and mailing of *Nature Trails*.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Eugene Natural History Society
P.O. Box 3082, Eugene OR 97403
<http://biology.uoregon.edu/enhs/>

Name _____
Address _____
E-mail (if you want to receive announcements) _____ Phone _____
City _____ State & Zip _____

ANNUAL DUES:	Contributing	20.00
	Family	15.00
	Individual	10.00
	Life Membership	300.00
	Contribution	_____

Annual dues for renewing members are payable in September. Memberships run from Sept. to Sept. Generosity is encouraged and appreciated.

Make checks payable to: The Eugene Natural History Society

The following information is voluntary, but appreciated:

Would you like to: lead field trips teach informal classes work on committees?

What would you like to hear a talk on? _____

Do you have special experience in natural history: _____

INTERESTS

Archaeology Astronomy Bird Study Botany Conservation Geology History of Science
 Herpetology Meteorology Mosses & Lichens Mushrooms Nature Walks Wildflowers Zoology
 Other _____

Eugene Natural History Society
P.O. Box 3082
Eugene, Oregon 97403

ENHS Schedule of Speakers and Topics 2010-2011

17 Sept 2010 – Bill Sullivan – Exploring Oregon’s New Wilderness Areas
15 Oct 2010 – Jim Trappe – Trees, Truffles and Beasts: How Forests Function.
19 Nov 2010 – Bill Ripple – Yellowstone Wolves
10 Dec 2010 – Doug Robinson – Bird Ecology in Panama
21 Jan 2011 – Dennis Jenkins – Paisley Caves
18 Feb 2011 – Lynn Houck – Salamander Courtship
18 Mar 2011 – Scott Bridgham – Climate Change/Terrestrial Ecosystems
15 Apr 2011 – Al St. John – Great Basin Reptiles
20 May 2011 – Robert Pyle – Butterflies

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