

# Oregon Botanical Artists - notes from July, 2013

## Saturday, July 13th - Sketchbooks meeting at PNCA, room 128.

Attending: Members Aislinn Adams, Catherine Alexander, Denise Cedar, Rene Eisenbart, Laurie Griff, Dawn Hummell, Mary McCarty, Janet Parker, Janene Walkky, and Sabina Wohlfeiler. And guests visiting from Salem: Debbie Robinson, Lindy Rutherford, Leslie Whitaker, and Deanna White.



Janene giving a presentation on sketching at our July 13th meeting at PNCA

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Janene Walkky gave a great presentation on all things sketching and sketchbooks. Starting with setting goals for finding more time to draw, and offering tips and tricks for achieving them, Janene covered a lot of territory in sharing her enthusiasm for a life of drawing as much as humanly possible. Her talking points are so well organized, useful, and thorough I'm including them in the meeting notes for easy reference. (See the last 2 pages of these notes.) She shared several great books, including Danny Gregory's "An Illustrated Life", (Gregory started a sketching movement that's still growing today); Edith Holden's "The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady"; and Mary Ann Scott's "Botanical Sketchbook" from the SBA distance learning course.

It was a treat to see Janene's SBA sketchbook. She compiled the various sketches and color studies for her assignments in the manner of a scrapbook, so that the process for each assignment is documented from discovery to (almost) finish. Trial paintings are included, where both color and composition details are being worked out. There are some breath-taking examples of drawing and painting - places where you can feel her getting lost in the subject. Bliss! Scans of two examples can be found on the next page.

Many of us brought sketchbooks of our own to share with the group, making for a terrific, well-rounded meeting. The only thing we missed was spending time sketching - we just ran out of time for it.

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**Catherine Alexander** attended Saturday's meeting and gave us updated information on the David Douglas 2014 exhibition. Please see the 4-page Call For Artists, which includes instructions for preparing and framing artwork, an application form and an abbreviated plant list. A pdf of the Call-for-artists is posted on the website where it can be downloaded and printed.





A spread from Janene's diploma portfolio sketchbook, including a tipped-in practice sheet for her "mixed study" project.

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**A change in our meetings.** On August 7th, 2013 we'll begin our new meeting time, which will be the first Wednesday morning of each month, starting at 9:30am and ending by 12:30pm. Jane Levy Campbell has again generously offered to host these meetings. Members and their invited guests are welcome. Please email or call Jane at least a few days in advance to let her know you'll be coming. Meetings are generally for gathering to draw and paint together and to give and get feedback on ongoing projects. We bring our own subjects (unless you choose inspiration from Jane's garden, weather-permitting), and our own tools and supplies.

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**Last month, Jane** caught a missed May deadline for submissions for the Audubon Society's annual Wild Arts Festival and contacted someone affiliated with the festival to inquire whether OBA might still find a way into the event. The good news is there's a chance we'll be given a table to offer information, possibly some demonstrations, and card sales. More information to come. The other good news is that Jane has offered to help us keep track of exhibition opportunities by keeping an ongoing calendar of upcoming shows and deadlines. Thanks Jane!

## Janene Walkky's presentation on sketching, July 13, 2013

1. Why sketch?
  - a. Drawing is like playing an instrument—the more you do it, the better you will be at it.
  - b. With sketching, the pressure is off. If it doesn't turn out—well it was just a sketch!
  - c. It's a great way to become more comfortable with watercolor—just add a few dabs of color to your graphite or ink drawing.
  - d. By keeping a sketchbook you can record your drawing progress
  - e. Somehow sketching things burns the moment into one's memory
  
2. Overcoming sketching resistance--Find ways to incorporate it into your life. Be intentional
  - a. The 10-minute sketch—set the timer and go for it. Try to do one a day.
  - b. The Waiting sketchbook—waiting for the show or concert to begin, dr offices, traffic jams, standing in line...capture those otherwise lost minutes.
  - c. Make small do-able sketching goals
  - d. Blog/Flickr
  - e. Online sketching groups
  - f. Local drawing/sketching groups
    - i. Urban sketchers/Portland urban sketchers
    - ii. OBA—we plan to make drawing/sketching more a part of our monthly meetings
  
3. Botanical Sketchbook—part of the SBA course was a requirement to keep a sketchbook. I found it very helpful so wanted to share about it.
  - a. Repository for preliminary sketches, color testing
  - b. Record your painting/drawing process
  - c. Jot down/sketch ideas for subjects & compositions
  - d. Record plant details for future reference—sketching & measurements
  - e. Color charts to record accurate colors
  - f. Practice painting
  
4. Sketching or painting in the field
  - a. Tools
    - i. Sketchbook
      1. Smooth paper that can take light washes (pen & ink sketchbooks)
      2. Large format is better for botanical
      3. Spiral bound is handy but mainly important to open flat
      4. Aquabee sketchbook (inexpensive, 93 lb, 14x17)
      5. Stonehenge sketchbook (90 lb, 14x18)
      6. Home-made
    - ii. Pencil or pen, optional small water color set, water brushes
    - iii. Color charts
    - iv. Small ruler & divider
    - v. Hand lens
    - vi. Camera
    - vii. Satchel or backpack, water bottle, chair, stool or seat pad, hat
    - viii. Know how to ID poison oak (leaves of three, let it be)

- b. Things to note as you sketch
- c. Date, weather
- d. Location & short description of habitat
- e. Color matching
- f. Measurements
- g. Leaves opposite, alternate or whorled, leaf edges/shape, stem shape, number of petals, etc.