



WORTHY GARDEN CLUB

What is the Worthy Garden Club?

We are a small non-profit working to inspire and educate our community in ways to protect and connect with our natural world. We strive to ultimately generate change in how we view our role in the world.

Our stated mission is to *connect people to the natural world and cultivate a community of environmental stewards working together to build a greener and healthier planet through advocacy, action, and education.* We achieve this mission by providing educational opportunities through programs at our farm and gardens, hosting a monthly speaker series, and supporting research in environmental health and biodiversity.

Our programs include a native plant garden & landscape, small-scale regenerative farm, and the “Hopservatory”, the only professional grade observatory open to the public within the city of Bend.

Check out more at worthgardenclub.com

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National Native Plant Appreciation Month!

April is National Native Plant Appreciation Month! Although natives should be appreciated year round, Spring is a good time to raise awareness of the benefits of native plants and how they can be used to create beautiful landscapes that support our local wildlife and pollinator populations, reduce water use, and provide a wonderful sense of place.

What are the benefits of using native plants in landscape and gardens? There’s a whole list. Natives are adapted to our local climate, support a diversity of native pollinators, maintain soil health, are resource efficient, and create habitat for a wide variety of species – maintaining biodiversity and storing carbon.

For more detailed information, check out Volume 2 of the Flora of Oregon, visit a local chapter of the Native Plant Society, or attend a workshop or lecture on gardening with native plants. There’s a whole world out there!

Happy Gardening!

Sedum divergens
Santiam Pass, 2021

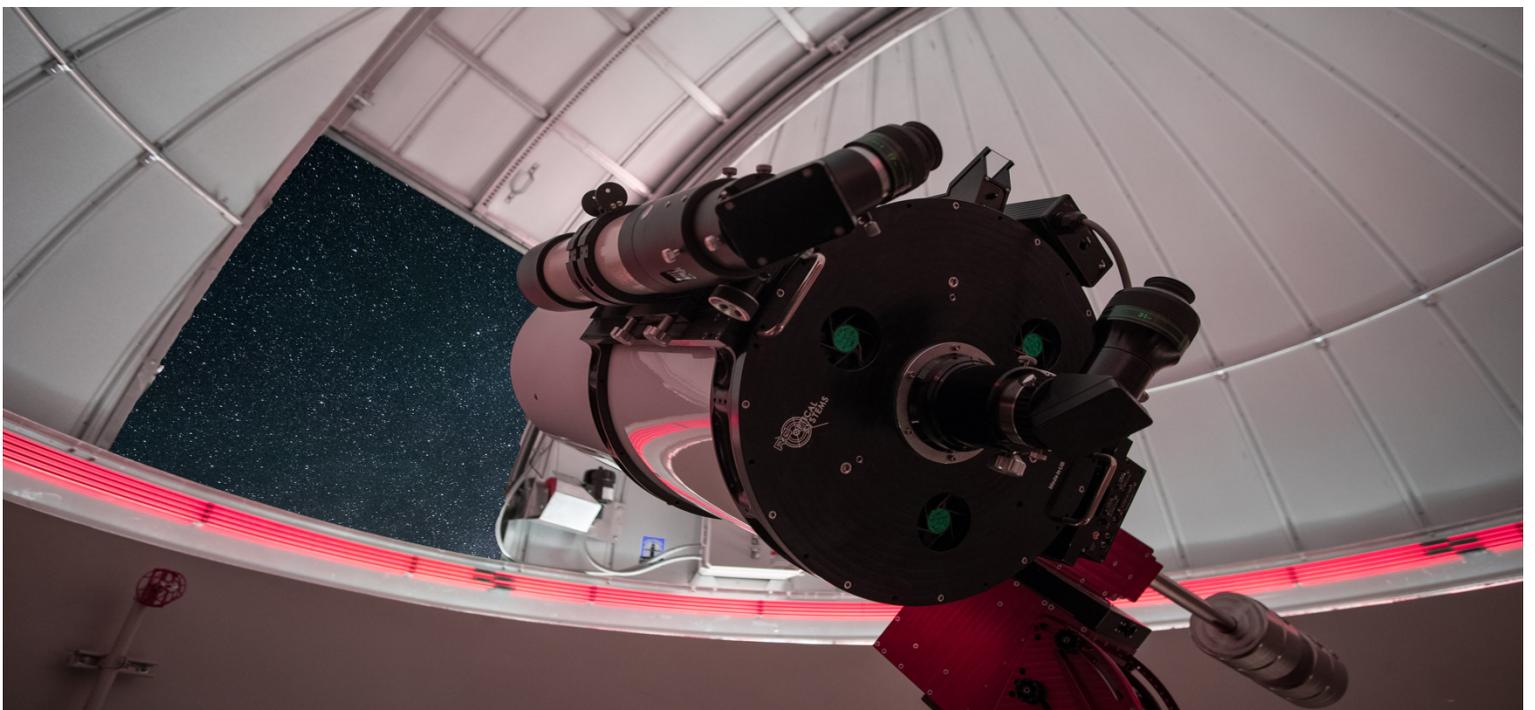




HOPSERVATORY UPDATE *by Grant Tandy* *Official Sky-Guy of the Worthy Garden Club*

If you joined us on some of the clear nights during December, January or February you probably saw the incredible views of Winter objects like the Orion Nebula or the Pleiades Open Star Cluster. March marks the end of the cold winter months here in central Oregon and the beginning of Spring. This time of year is famously known as “Galaxy Season” because of the abundance of bright galaxies and galaxy groups. Although more faint and difficult to see, galaxies are the largest recognizable structures in the universe and encompass all of the objects we view through a telescope.

Spring is one of our favorite times of the year. Galaxies fill the Spring sky, globular clusters are rising in the east, and soon we will be greeted by the summer Milky Way along with bright planets like Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars. There’s a lot to look forward to this season at the Hopservatory! Come by for a visit Wednesday through Saturday at dusk (weather dependent). Remember to plan your visit around the new moon for awesome views of deep-sky targets. Our telescope can track almost any object in the night sky, so don’t be shy about special requests!





Spring is here, and greens are breaking through the soil at the Worthy Organic Farm despite the recent cold temperatures. This week we are gearing up for our first harvest of radish and arugula that will head to the kitchen. You may have noticed the sea of white over our plants. These row coverings are what we use to protect our plants in the early spring. They keep temperatures warmer and help to retain moisture in the soil, giving our plants some extra love and care to face the elements. In a few weeks, we'll remove the covering and be pleasantly surprised by the food grown beneath.

As we celebrate Earth Day this week let's challenge ourselves to reflect on the food we eat, the soil it's grown in, and the journey it takes to end up on our plates and in our cupboards. Almost all of the food we consume comes from the soil, either directly through plant-based foods or indirectly from livestock fed by grain or grass. The importance of soil health is a truth that farmers have known for generations. Yet, over the past 100 years, industrial agriculture practices have overlooked soil health in favor of higher yields and cheaper production costs.

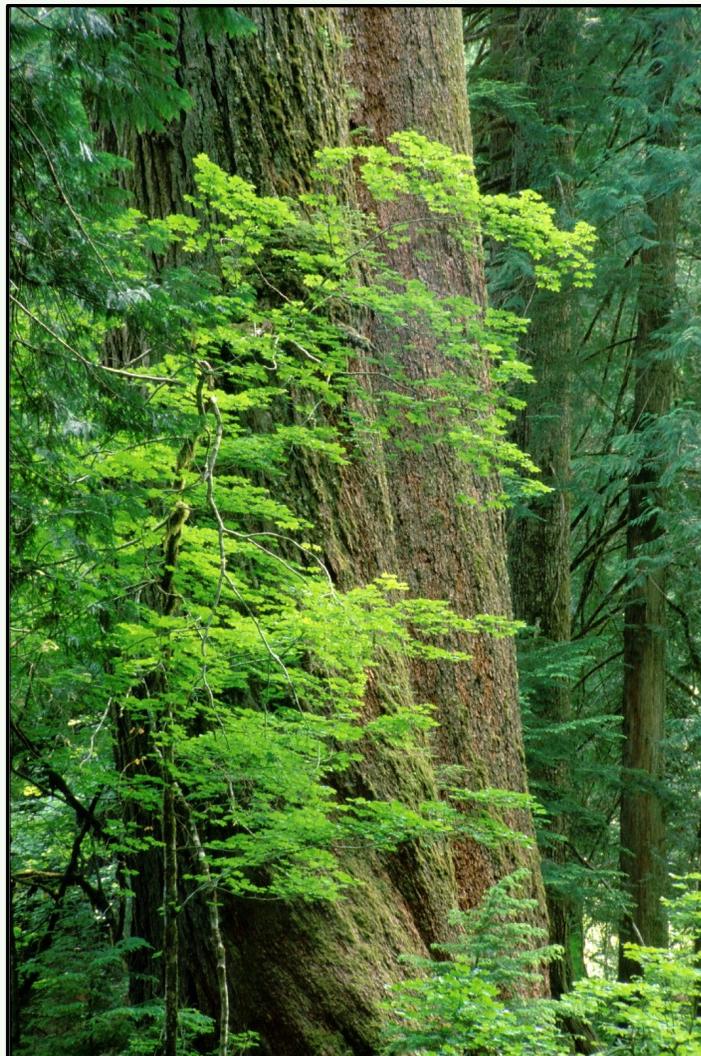
Worthy Organic Farm is excited to use regenerative farming practices to grow food for our community that honors and restores the soil. We believe healthy soil is just as vital to the environment as reducing waste and cutting emissions. Regenerative Agriculture is a way of farming that uses techniques that build soil organic matter and support soil biodiversity. These practices include cover cropping, crop rotations, no-till practices, and no herbicide, pesticide, or fertilizer use.

When food is grown regeneratively, the soil has the power to draw down and store carbon that could otherwise add to carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It also can store water, improving our ability to conserve resources and withstand droughts. Let's continue to transform our relationship with our food by bringing soil health to the forefront of the conversation.



A Message from our Executive Director

When I came into this position in January, I had very little idea of the complexity of the Worthy Garden Club. For the past few years, the gardens, landscape, and “hopservatory” have been the foundation of the WGC. But this year has brought significant change to the non-profit. Maddie Steen, the manager of our small-scale regenerative farm has created an amazing space producing food for the restaurant and providing opportunities for education and community involvement in the location that was previously filled with hops. This new farm complements the existing programs perfectly and expands the public outreach of the Garden Club. We’re excited to have Maddie as part of the team!



In addition to providing educational opportunities in sustainability, regenerative agriculture, and our place in the universe, we are now actively engaged in climate change research and environmental advocacy. Since the beginning of the year, we have made significant donations to researchers and scientists at Oregon State University and the University of Oregon to complete work on carbon capture and storage, biodiversity, and forest management issues that affects all residents of the state, region, and world. We are also continuing our efforts to help plant one million trees under Operation Appleseed; a program that was initiated well before my time as Executive Director. Much of this work was put on hold because of COVID, but we’re resurrecting our partnerships to keep getting plants in the ground.

We’re not stopping there. The WGC is moving into active conservation by developing an on-the-ground restoration program offering training and education in native plant propagation and environmental restoration. The goal is to produce the next generation of conservation practitioners. There is a very real need for restoring the diversity of life that sustains us all, and that need is increasingly important with a rapidly changing climate. The Worthy Garden Club has the opportunity and the capacity to move in this critically important direction.

A bit about me. My background is in plant physiology, ecology, and archaeology. For the past 20+ years I managed WinterCreek Restoration, a landscape design and construction company working exclusively with native plants of central and eastern Oregon. I still co-own WinterCreek Nursery, the largest native plant nursery in central Oregon, and I find that the mission of WinterCreek and the mission of the Worthy Garden Club are very similar – both organizations are working to create a better world through education, advocacy, and example.

I'm excited to be working with the WGC, and proud to be part of the efforts of this unique organization! I look forward to further develop the existing programs and to expand the work of the Worthy Garden Club. If you have questions, suggestions, or want to be involved in our efforts, please feel free to contact me directly at Rick@worthygardenclub.com or 541-639-4776 x221. And remember, *Earth First, Beer Second!*

Rick

*Richard Martinson, PhD
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