Consider the yellow warbler that nests here. It leaves early in the day, flies far south as Panama to far north as Alaska. This beautiful bright lemon-yellow bird will arrive at the southern border of the United States in early April (if the weather is mild and our hardwoods and berries are ready to establish territories. In El Paso County, the male yellow warblers arrive in early May, and by early June pairs are nesting.

Do birds migrate to the same location? Many birds return to the same nesting areas while others fly to different regions. For years, we observed a pair of broad-tailed hummingbirds nesting in the same scrub oak. We always assumed that it was the same family but we had no way of knowing. Bird banding programs have made it possible to track the movement of specific birds and have indicated that some birds do return to the same location. Banding, along with other methods, indicate that many birds alike use these apps and report findings. Information is a hallmark of our land and recorded daily. They already have enhanced our knowledge of bird movement.

Sixty years ago (ponderosa live up to 800 years) with a great love in mind for those who would follow as descendants and their future, too. They are a memorial of the ancestors who walked these forests, enjoyed the trees, flowers and vistas, the sights and smells and sounds of the forests just as we do now. We walk amid our ancient history when we walk through our forests, just as they did, friends and family together.

Art Hop and other exhibits

In addition to the historic art forms of the trees and rock formations, we have some contemporary art to enjoy, and it’s all over town, especially starting in May with our annual Art Hop season. The Art Hop starts May 18. Each summer for over a decade, local merchants from the towns of Palmer Lake and Monument host for us the local art and artists at their venues with refreshments and live music. Join the fun, support the art and buy sculpture, paintings, jewelry, pottery and more. The Art Hop runs from 5 to 8 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, May through October.

In June, the upcoming 2017-18 Tri-Lakes Views outdoor art exhibitions will be on view. Many thanks to the efforts of the Tri-Lakes Views group and to the artists who made the sculptures for our enjoyment. A map of the exhibit locations is forthcoming this summer.

The ancient legacies of art in Tri-Lakes

By Janet Sellers

High Altitude Nature and Gardens (HANG)

Forest wisdom: a gardening guide for what to plant and when

By Janet Sellers

In Tri-Lakes, we live in forest habitat—why is that we came here. Our local ponderosa forests have more than an abundance of life and all our existence, and their substance all living harmoniously within them. Native peoples enjoyed this abundance of gourmet foods, each food having its time and place as the sun moved the seasons along. Below I will list notable trees and shrubs for us to enjoy, but also how the forest and Mother Nature advise us about what and when to plant other common stuff we are used to having for food.

Microclimates on the Front Range

Here’s the reason we pay attention to what is already here and thriving in place. Our microclimates along the Front Range are bountiful with resources all year-round, with their unique and multiple microclimates and seasons of emergence, friction, and the ever-important decay preparation cycles. Each microclimate from the same home garden or down the street or down the mountain—has its warm, cold, or dry air flow, often changing hour to hour. The forest has adapted to this clime with vigor, creating its own health and habitat of tree canopy and forest floor with symbiotic relationships.

As the decay cycle prepares the soil for the coming year, and that is done in the winter when most of us think the Earth is sleeping or dead. The truth is, it is a vital year, and that is done in the winter when most of us think the Earth is sleeping or dead. Here’s the reason we pay attention to what is already here and thriving in place. We walk amid our ancient history when we walk through our forests, just as they did, friends and family together.

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