



WOODLANDS` ` 9SdWW

Close to Nature

Dr. Jim and Janis Gerdemann found the perfect area in the country to retire and create their dream garden: a 3.5-acre piece of property north of Yachats, Oregon, facing the Pacific Ocean and adjacent to the Siuslaw National Forest. Today, some twenty-five years later, the Gerdemann Garden is a woodland garden created in a coastal forest that retains as much as possible of the original vegetation and character of the forest. However, Yachats has become a high-end residential area, and the Gerdemann property could be subdivided into 5 or more residential lots, destroying the garden and its rare plants. The Gerdemanns (now in their 80s) and their friends, including View the Future (a non-profit conservation organization), want to establish an irrevocable easement to preserve access to the garden for the public's enjoyment and education. Future considerations also may include requesting donations and/or attracting a compatible nonprofit organization that might be able to help offset maintenance costs.

HISTORY

Jim Gerdemann is a retired botanist and Professor Emeritus of the University of Illinois, and Janice Gerdemann is a retired teacher: both have a life-long passion with gardening. In the 1970s they bought land near Yachats, OR, on the lower slope of Green Mountain where good cold air drainage help to provide a mild microclimate in which to raise and e i



the year. The site is home to a wide variety of wildlife. Black-tail deer, North American Elk, raccoon, black bear, cougar, coyotes and one bobcat have visited. The rare Giant Pacific Salamander (7 to 8 inch long) has been sighted three times. The property boasts a wide variety of birds, including wrens, hummingbirds, warblers (five species), kinglets, chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers (including the pileated), and raptors. The Gerdemann Garden is now twenty-five years old.

Although a few trees were removed to provide adequate sunlight, most of the trunks and limbs were left in place to decay and provide “nurse logs,” as in a natural forest. Invasive exotics such as blackberry, broom and English Ivy are not tolerated. All of the native flowers, such as Trillium, Iris, Viola, Columbine, Erythronium, Camas, Bleeding Heart, Western Lily and others are encouraged.

The original plantings were mainly Rhododendrons with a concentration on species and hybrids that are not commonly cultivated in Oregon . Many of these are borderline in hardiness, such as species of Maddenia, Arboria, Grandia, Falconera,

