

# Emily Caroline Driskill

Mars Hill, North Carolina  
(828)380-2768  
Emily@Blackbird-Landscapes.com

## Education

**Bachelors of Arts and Bachelors of Science:** June 2012. Foci on Botany, Ethnobotany, and Sustainable Agriculture. *The Evergreen State College*; Olympia, Washington.

Notable programs completed include the year-long Practice of Sustainable Agriculture on the campus Organic Farm, the year-long Botany: Plants and People, Field Plant Taxonomy, and a two-quarter Individual Learning Contract involving fieldwork in northern Thailand while studying Ethnobotany and Traditional Agriculture in the region.

## Experience

### **Tanager Plants LLC**

*Founder & Head Grower*

February 2021-present

As Head Grower & Manager of my own nursery operation, I grow and sell plants in containers and occasionally sell field-grown stock (B&B). My offerings include trees, shrubs, perennials, and vines. I focus on native plants and non-invasive exotics that offer practical uses to homesteaders and gardeners. I do my best to propagate my own stock using methods that maximize genetic biodiversity. In this position I manage all of the propagation and plant production protocols as well as the other aspects of the business including marketing, bookkeeping, client relations, and managing my part-time employees.

### **Blackbird Landscapes LLC**

*Member/ Owner*

February 2019-March 2024 (owner) - September 2025 (landscape designer)

Co-Owner and landscape designer of a small landscape firm offering services around high-quality horticultural care, planting and hardscape design & installation, turf management, Integrated Pest Management, and small carpentry projects. We focus on native plants and healthy habitat for birds, pollinators, and humans. Responsible for managing employees' time and payroll, consulting with clients, designing, bidding and scheduling jobs, procuring plants and materials, invoicing and managing payments, and taking care of accounting, insurance, and taxes. Before it became it's own endeavor, I also oversaw the new nursery side of the business as the head grower/ plant buyer.

### **Carolina Native Nursery: Burnsville, North Carolina**

*Nursery Manager*

March 2016-March 2019

Manager of a commercial wholesale nursery producing Southeastern native woody shrubs and perennials. Position entails supervision of all aspects of production including propagation (vegetative and from seed), order fulfillment/ quality control, pruning, IPM practices (scouting, pest identification, and pest management), pesticide use, fertilizer application, irrigation, grounds and infrastructure maintenance, budgeting, and ordering supplies. Responsible for organizing a crew of up to 9 in order to complete production tasks.

### **North Carolina Botanical Garden: Chapel Hill, North Carolina**

*Conservation and Land Management (CLM) Intern*

June 1, 2015- November 20, 2015

Internship administered by Chicago Botanic Garden with funding from the Bureau of Land Management. Part of a small crew working to identify, collect, and clean seeds of various native species on the Southeastern Atlantic Coastal Plain. Species collected were selected as being important to coastline restoration projects through the Hurricane Sandy Recovery Improvement Act. The CLM crew worked in the states of North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland in coastal habitats ranging from maritime forest to tidal marshes and dunes. Duties relied heavily on competent identification of plants to species, and ability to seek out robust populations suitable for seed collection. Other responsibilities included seed cleaning and storage, logistics planning for field work, obtaining permits, species research, and herbarium specimen preparation.

**Marble Mountain Ranch: Somes Bar, California**

*Farm caretaker/ Intern*

September 20, 2013- October 31, 2014

Worked as farm hand and caretaker on a small hobby farm in the Klamath Range of northern California. Chores included caring for chickens and ducks, pruning perennial fruit trees and ornamentals, planting perennial fruit shrubs, thinning grape vines in the vineyard, and planning, planting, and upkeep of an annual vegetable garden. Other work included general upkeep such as mowing and weed-whacking, some light construction, and maintaining irrigation systems.

**US Geological Survey: North Columbia Basin, Washington state**

*GS-06 Biological Science Technician and Crew Supervisor*

May 15, 2013- September 10, 2013

Field botanist and crew supervisor on a study of wildfire effect on Big Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) regeneration in the sagebrush steppe of the Northern Columbia Basin. Data collection duties included recording density and percent cover of plant species, identifying shrub, herb and grass species in various stages of life cycle, collecting and accurately cataloguing samples for growth-ring age analysis, and managing a plant species list specific to the project. Supervisor duties included planning 8-day trips into the field including food and camping arrangements, being in contact with my supervisor in Boise per work goals, progress, and protocol changes, being in contact with various landowners and agency representatives regarding access to sampling sites, safeguarding data sheets, and maintaining good communication and work ethic within the crew. The position also included daily use of gazetteer, GPS, and topographic maps for navigation, extensive driving both on- and off-road, and data entry into a computer database.

**The University of Washington: Seattle, Washington**

*Field Research Assistant; GS-5 level*

July 2, 2012- October 1, 2012

Worked as botanist on a field research crew investigating tree regeneration after wildfire in the alpine parkland ecotone of the north Cascade and western Rocky Mountain ranges. Job sites were almost exclusively in the backcountry and work included not only field data collection, but hiking at high elevation, camping, and extensive outdoors skills. Field skills included plant identification, preservation and labeling of plant specimens, navigation using GPS and compass-and-map, accurate data recording, keeping data intact under harsh conditions, and assessing ecological clues to determine the severity of past wildfires. Ability to work well together as a team under challenging and variable conditions was essential to our success as a research crew.

**USDA Forest Service: Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest**

*GS-4 Biological Science Technician- Plants*

June 13- September 8, 2011

Held a position on a field crew that identified plants and recorded data for vegetation studies to help determine the long-term effects of cattle grazing on the Forest. Data was taken using Daubenmire frames and included recording nested frequency and percent coverage of plant species. Work included driving to and from survey sites, plant identification using the Hitchcock and Cronquist dichotomous key, specimen collection, and compass navigation. Also participated in surveys for rare species on various sites across the Forest. Was trained in defensive driving, first aid, and CPR during the season.

**The Evergreen State College Teaching Gardens: Olympia, Washington**

*Longhouse Ethnobotanical Garden Caretaker*

August 2009- March 2011

Maintained this garden both independently, and through hosting workshops with students as well as volunteers. Duties consisted of all types of maintenance including watering, planting, transplanting, pruning, weeding, mulching and sheet-mulching, trail-building and maintenance, composting, plant identification and signage, and tool maintenance. Have also been involved in sourcing and salvaging supplies such as mulch and river rock for use in the garden.

*Teaching Gardens Intern*

January 2011- June 2012

Collaborated with two other employees to plan and host a weekly gardening workshop focused on the Evergreen Teaching Gardens. Topics included weeding, pruning, sheet-mulching, propagation, and planting. I was also responsible for planting and maintenance of the various Teaching Gardens sites on campus.

## **Washington Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps): Olympia, Washington**

*Assistant Crew Supervisor/ Acting Crew Lead*

November 2007- September 2008

Served on a crew doing spike-style trail work and environmental restoration projects. Duties included trail building and maintenance, control of invasive plant species through manual removal and spraying, identifying, planting and propagating native Pacific Northwest species, nursery maintenance, planning community service projects, falling and bucking trees, and puncheon and foot bridge construction. As acting Crew Supervisor for several months, was responsible for logistics planning, being a communication liaison, and watching over the safety of my crew of 5 young adults. Served as a role model as far as work ethic, enthusiasm, and good character. In addition, the crew was involved in two disaster relief deployments in Washington state and Louisiana. As acting crew leader during our month-long hurricane relief project in Louisiana, it was imperative that I learned and used many valuable skills including project planning and organization, controlling stress in chaotic situations, team-building, and communication methods.

## **Publications**

Bowcutt, F. and S. Hamman (eds.). 2016. *Vascular Plants of the South Sound Prairies*. The Evergreen State College Press. Olympia, WA. (Botanical Illustrator).

I had 10 of my botanical illustrations chosen to be published in this local field guide published by my Alma Mater.

## **Skills**

Leadership: experience working within and leading a crew, strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to prioritize and multi-task. Proficient communicator, using either electronic or analog methods.

Software: Microsoft Office suite and Access, Google Drive, Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, Procreate, various social media platforms including Instagram and Facebook; confident using either PC or Mac. Basic experience in GIS.

Horticulture: planting and restoration techniques, seed collection and cleaning, propagation methods from seed and vegetative methods; grafting, pruning, weed control, fertility and pest management; experience working in conservation and commercial nurseries.

Field Skills: comfortable working outdoors on uneven terrain and in adverse weather. 4X4 driving experience on unpaved roads and trails. Proficient with GPS (Garmin and Trimble) and compass-and-map navigation. Years of experience with garden and landscape maintenance.

Botanical skills: sight-identification of a wide range of native and exotic plants in North America, proficient with using a dichotomous key to identify unknown plants, collection of field specimens and their preservation, including mounting and herbarium curation.

Tools: well-versed in the use and maintenance of various hand and power tools including string trimmers, brush cutters, and chainsaws. Experience with driving and using tractors and Bobcats, and big trucks on and off-road.

Customer Service: years of experience in service-related work including telephone, email, and in-person communication, handling payments, and ensuring client satisfaction.

Epistemology: well-honed observation skills, understanding of scientific method, quick learner, and intellectually invested in work.

Certifications: NCDPA Private Pesticide Applicator

## References

<b>Johnny Randall</b>	<i>Director of Conservation, North Carolina Botanical Garden at UNC Chapel Hill</i> Office: 919-962-2380
<b>Susan McIlroy</b>	<i>Ecologist, US Geological Survey</i> Office: (208) 426-5218
<b>Frederica Bowcutt</b>	<i>Faculty, The Evergreen State College</i> Office: (360) 867-6744
<b>Alina Cansler</b>	<i>PhD, School of Environmental and Forest Science; The University of Washington</i> Office: (206) 794-1630
<b>Joseph Smith</b>	Owner, Blackbird Landscapes LLC Office: (828)680-1322