

# Earth Day Colloquium Gallery Group 1

## Earth's Teachings



**Ashley James**



**Heidi Brown-Ordillas**



**Jennie Hymas**

# Jennie Hymas



**I am a student in Washington State, and I have devoted my life to learning, not only through academics, but through the quiet teachings of life, my surroundings, and the wider world. The Earth has a way of humbling me, reminding me how small I am and how much remains unknown. Every day it offers a new lesson, carried in its beauty, its unpredictability, its shifting rhythms.**

**I believe it is essential to never take any of it for granted, to let myself stay rooted, grounded, open. To listen. To appreciate the gifts the Earth places in my hands, whether they arrive as wonder, challenge, or change.**

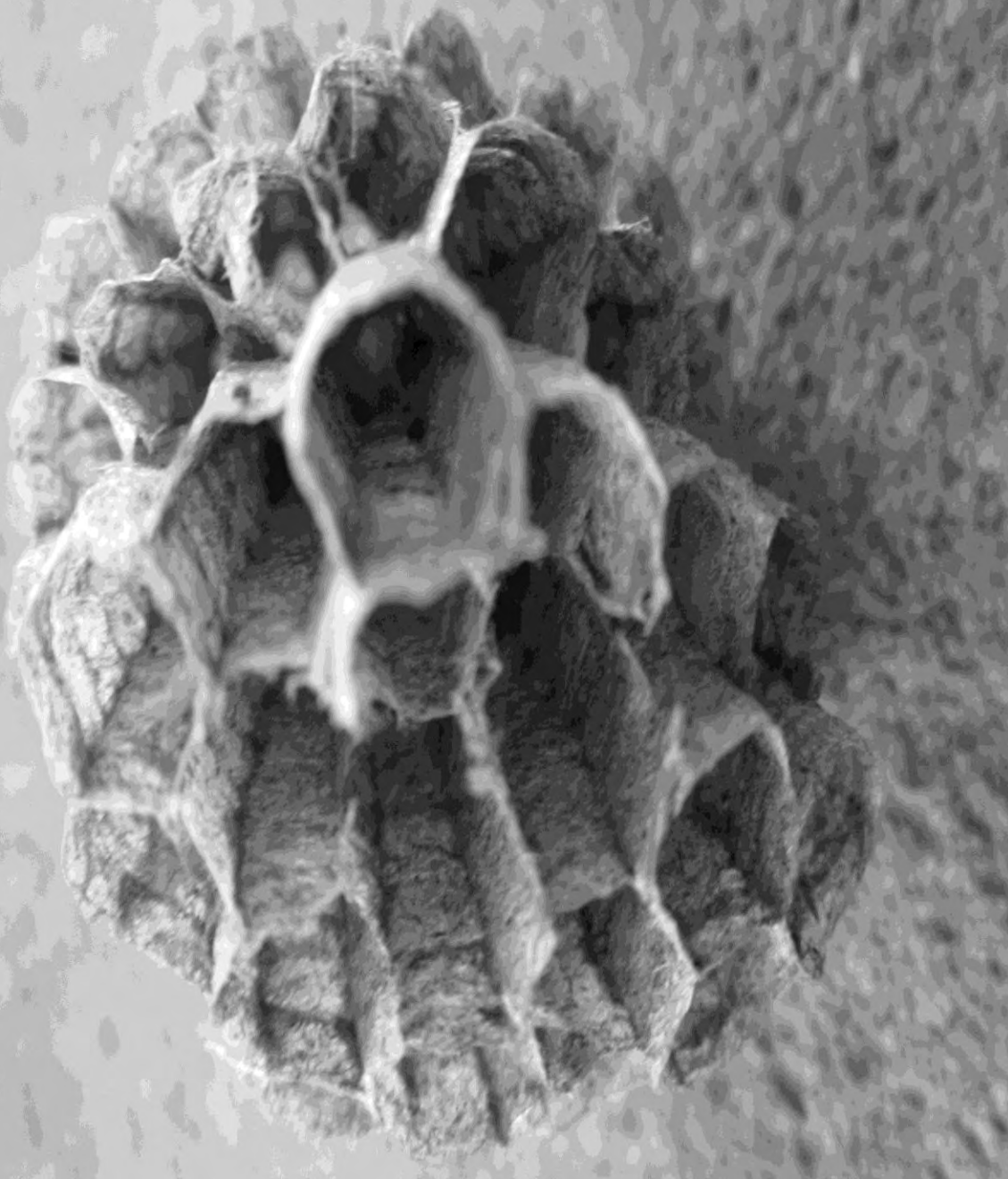


# Transformation

With the falling of the leaves comes transformation. Earth teaches us that each season brings change, reminding us that not everything is in our control. The leaves show us how to age and let go gracefully, floating down to the ground, becoming part of the soil, and nourishing something new.

# Community

Wasps are skilled builders, creating intricate nests from the simplest materials. A colony begins with a single queen in Spring and quickly grows into a thriving community. Earth teaches us that building something strong often starts with an idea. With support from others it can become place for others to thrive. There is little we can do alone, but so much we can create together.



A Wasps Castle, Photo taken In UT, By Jennie Hymas



## Beauty In Unexpected Places

A small plant pushes its way through metal, showing that resilience and beauty can emerge in the most unexpected places. Earth teaches us that life finds a way, growing, adapting, and becoming, even in harsh or unlikely conditions.

## Heidi Brown-Ordillas



I am a student, a mother, and a lifelong learner rooted in the Pacific Northwest. The landscapes here, mountains, water, and quiet moments of light, have shaped how I see the world and my place within it. I chose these photographs because they capture what the Earth teaches me, that there is wisdom in stillness, healing in movement, and connection in every living thing. To me, the Earth is not just a place we live, but a teacher that reminds us to slow down, to listen, and to exist in balance with all that surrounds us.



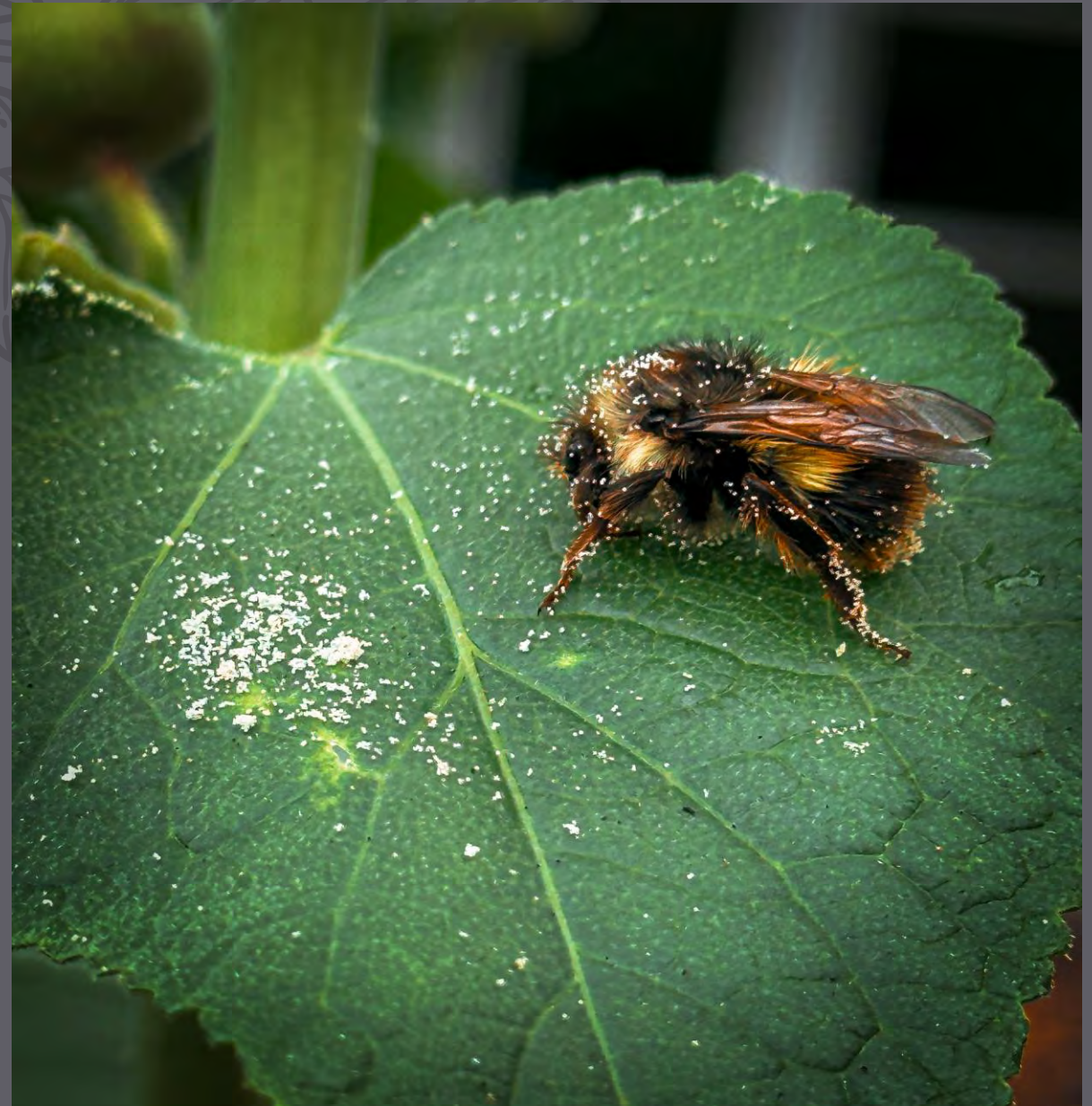
# Rhythm and Renewal

The Earth teaches us that even in stillness, everything is moving toward renewal. In this quiet moment between darkness and light, we are reminded that change does not have to be loud to be powerful. The horizon holds a kind of wisdom that asks us to trust the unfolding, the same way the world does each morning.

*"Where The Day Begins"* Heidi Brown-Ordillas, 2023, Foggy sunrise of Mount Adams and Mt. Saint Helens

# Interdependence and Connection

The bee moves softly across the Earth, carrying life from one place to another, reminding us that nothing grows alone. In its quiet, unseen work, it reveals a world built on connection, where each small act sustains something greater. The Earth teaches us through this rhythm that we are all intertwined, held together in a cycle of giving, receiving, and becoming.



*"Interwoven"* Heidi Brown-Ordillas , 2025, Olympia, WA



# Movement and Healing

The waterfall speaks in motion, teaching that life is not meant to be held, but carried forward.

As water yields to stone yet reshapes it over time, it reveals that healing is both gentle and powerful, unfolding through surrender.

In its endless flow, the Earth reminds us that to let go is not to lose ourselves, but to return to something whole.

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# Ashley James

I am a student at Evergreen State College, a proud parent, and so much more. My heart is filled with love for the incredible state of Washington where I call home for the past 30 years. I am endlessly captivated by its breathtaking beauty of majestic trees that seem to touch the sky, vibrant blooms that burst with life, and shimmering waters that hold endless wonder—that fill my soul with gratitude. This place is more than just a location; it's a source of inspiration and a rhythm of life I cherish dearly.

The trees, the flowers, the water — these images stir something deep within my soul. I choose them because nothing fills my heart with joy quite like being outdoors, wandering beneath mighty, awe-inspiring trees or feeling the gentle breeze along the ocean's edge. Our beautiful Earth has so much to teach us if we only take the time to truly listen.





# Resilience

- I find such profound joy in walking beneath the towering trees. They serve as a deeply moving reminder to breathe deeply and embrace life at a gentle, unhurried pace. Without these magnificent giants, we wouldn't have the air that sustains us—it's a vital gift they silently offer. When I'm among them, I feel an invigorating surge of energy and an undeniable sense of connection to the Earth itself. These majestic beings whisper lessons of stillness and unity, reminding me that we are all intertwined in this vast, beautiful web of life. They teach us patience, to stand firm and rooted in community, even when life's storms threaten us. Through them, I learn resilience—how to bend without breaking, and to trust that, no matter what, we are never alone.





# Patience

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- Mountains symbolize patience, reminding us that true progress is rarely a straight path. Often, we must take tiny, persistent steps, trusting that each one brings us closer to our dreams. It's essential to cherish the small victories along the way, for they are the real milestones worth celebrating, not just the final summit. Stay present in every moment, embrace the power of patience, and believe in the journey itself.

# Flow and Adapt

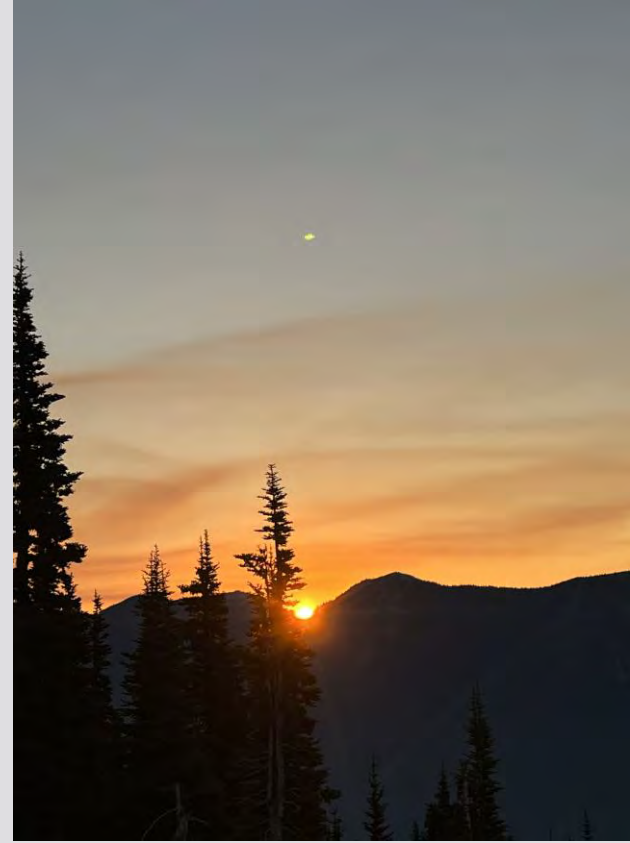
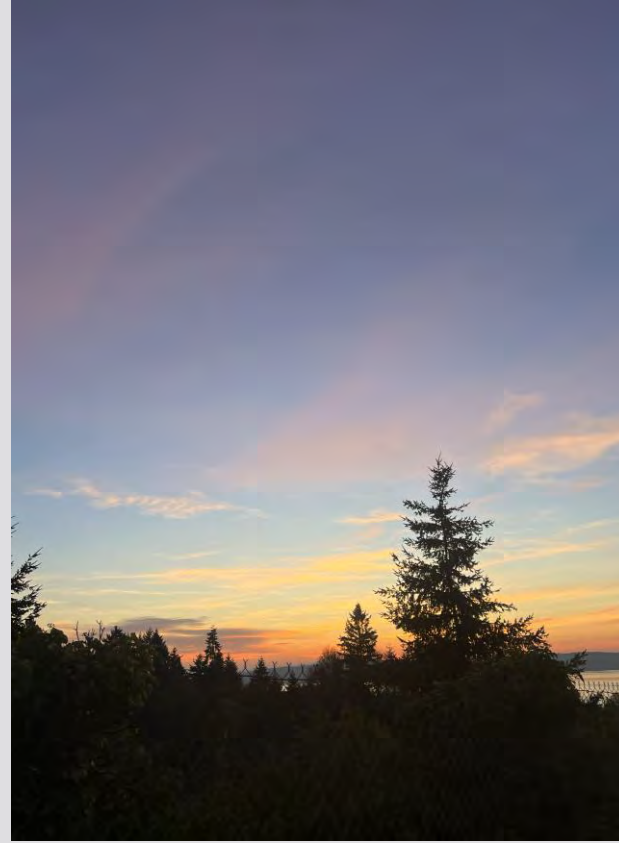
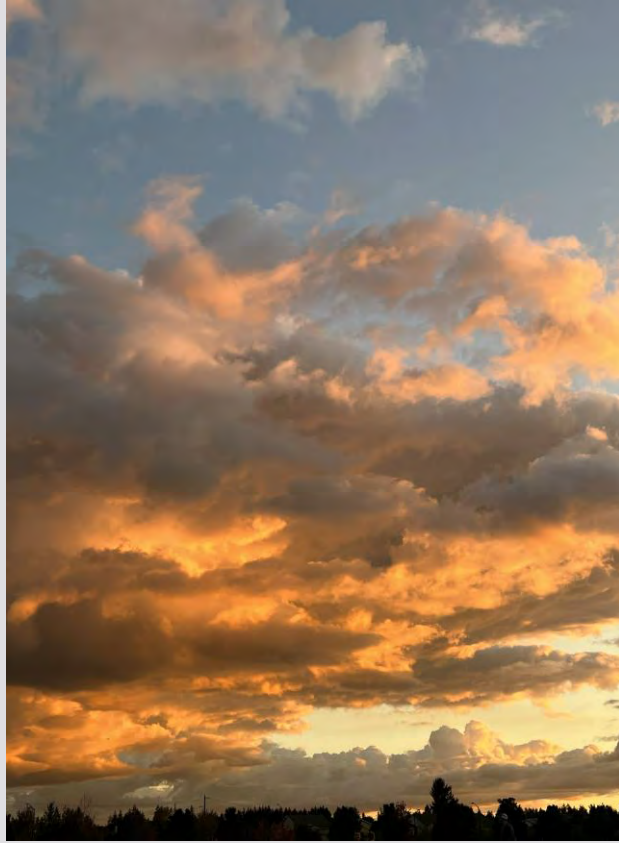
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Waterfalls remind us that life is a never-ending journey—powerful, relentless, and ever-changing. They inspire us to embrace the flow, to accept life's twists and turns with an open heart rather than resisting them. In this constant dance of change and renewal, we find strength. Obstacles—like rocks in the river—aren't just barriers; they are opportunities to flow around or over, transforming challenges into something breathtakingly beautiful.

Ultimately, it's in surrendering to the natural course of life that we discover its true beauty and vitality.

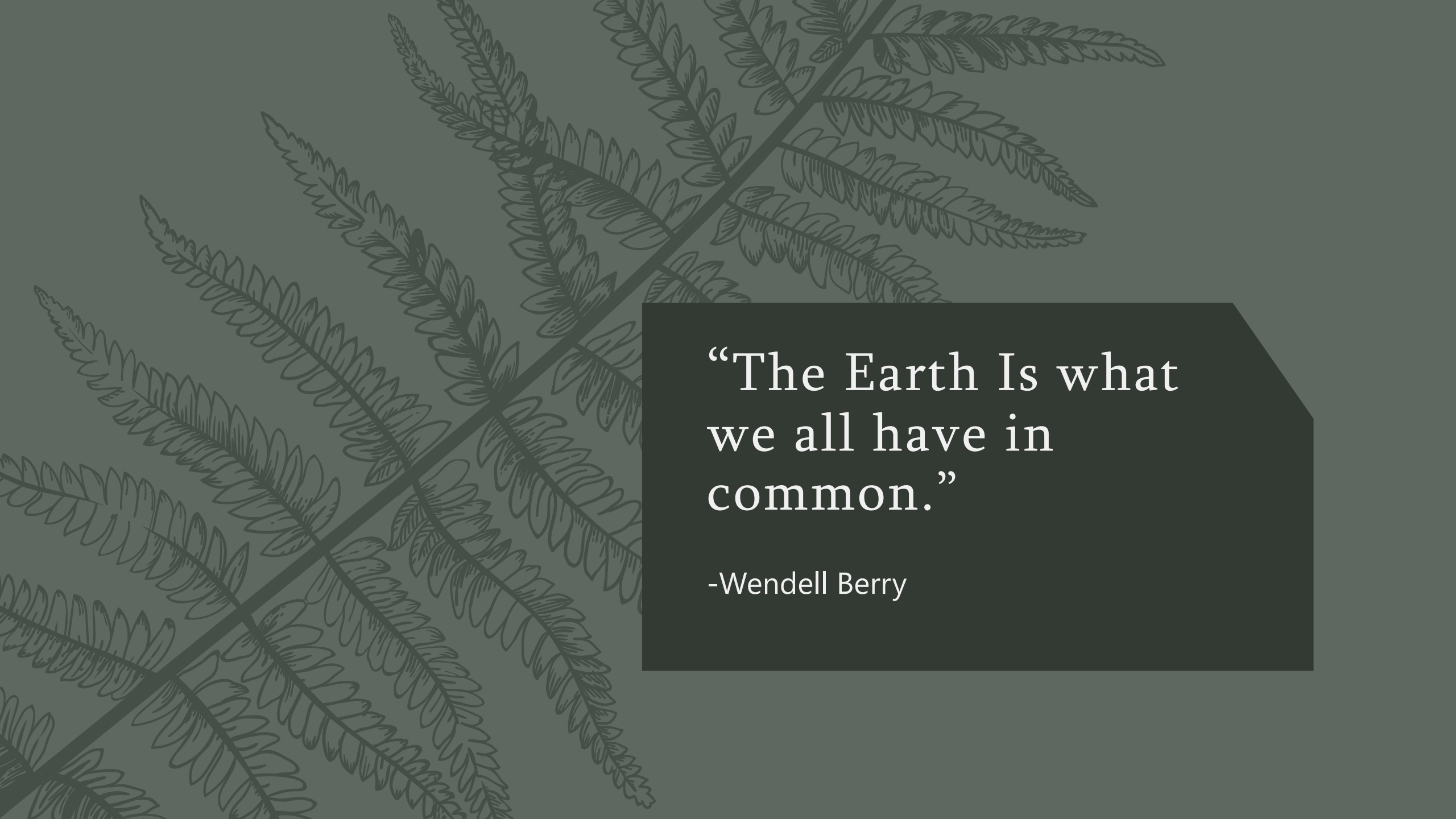
Photo taken in Washington State by Ashley James





## Renewal

The sunset passionately reminds us that endings, though bittersweet, are undeniably beautiful. It's a powerful call to cherish the fleeting moments of now, for they are temporary and precious. As the sky blazes with fiery colors, it invites us to slow down, to pause and truly feel the essence of change. In those moments of letting go, we discover a profound peace—trusting that every ending, much like the setting sun, paves the way for a brand-new beginning, filling us with hope and renewal.



“The Earth Is what  
we all have in  
common.”

-Wendell Berry