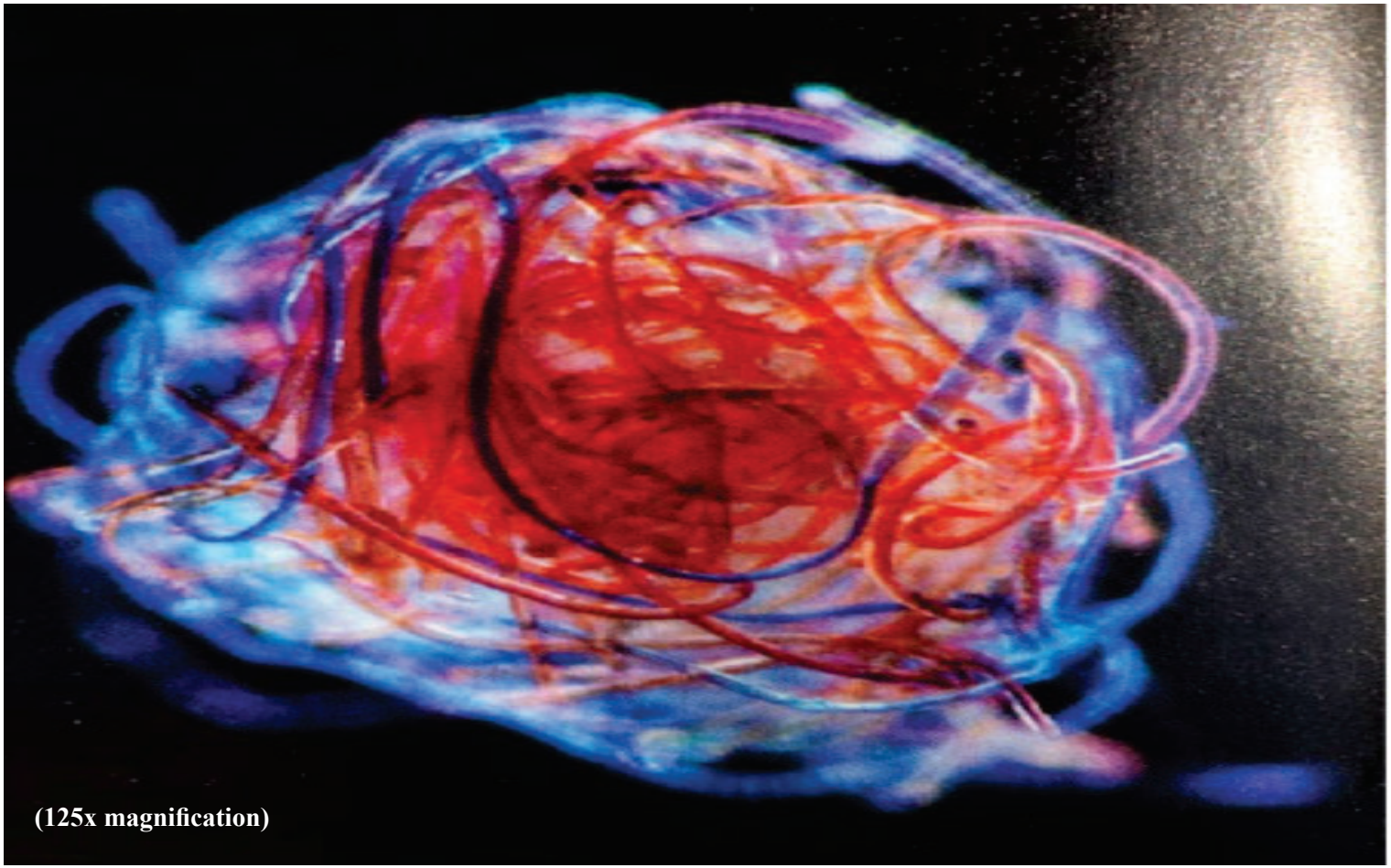
AN EXTINCTION EVENT?

Plastics

Mass use of plastics began after 1950. Look in any grocery store. Plastic's chemical structure makes degrading slow with some bottles lasting a million years; 9% are recycled and 12% incinerated. Much of the rest finds its way into rivers and is taken down to the sea where it breaks down into small microbeads (see below), structures that trap toxins. Small sea life eats these structures as food and the bottom of the food chain starves to death. Ninety percent of sea life today contains plastic debris. Ocean plastic is taken by the currents and accumulates in large vortexes known as ocean gyres. The majority of the gyres become pollution dumps, the Pacific Ocean's southern gyre being the size of Texas. This is a problem not created by our ancestors.



Legends & Lessons

In the Summer of 2019, the U of W's Rachel Carson reported finding small plastic "micro-beads" at all 53 monitoring sites within Puget Sound. 8 million tons enter the ocean each year. That said, the 10 rivers contributing 95% of river-based microbead and other pollution are the:

None of these rivers are in the Americas or Europe. This is an international problem (as are all 5 other extinction challenges). People can disagree on anything and everything, but destroying one's own nest should not be debatable. Chief Seattle said it long ago, "*you treat the Earth as if it were your enemy.*" The solution is so simple. Stop dumping!

Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant "starts" from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

American Dunegrass (42) Baldhip Rose (78) Beach Strawberry (32) Bitter Cherry (66) Bitter Root (41) Black Crowberry (30) Blackcap Raspberry (80) Blue Elderberry (86) Bracken Fern (69) Brittle Prickly Pear (52) Broad-Leaved Shooting Star (28) Buffalo Berry (90) Cascara (71) Cattail (95) Chokecherry (67) Clarksia (40) Coastal Black Gooseberry (74) Common Juniper (38) Cow-Parsnip (36) Douglas Fir (68) Douglas' Hawthorn (27) Englemann Spruce (58) Evergreen Huckleberry (96) False Lily-of-the-Valley (47) Feathery False Lily-of-the-Valley (48) Gardner's Yampah (56) Giant Vetch (99) Golden Currant (72) Great Camas (19) Hairy Manzanita (12) Harsh Indian Paintbrush (21) Highbush Cranberry (98) Indian Celery (45) Indian Plum (51) Indian Thistle (23) Kinnikinnick (13) Lady Fern (14) Lewis' Mock-Orange (57) Lichen (44) Licorice Fern (63) Low Oregon Grape (17) Madrona (11) Nootka Rose (79) Oregon Boxleaf (55) Oregon White Oak (70) Oxalis (54) Pacific Crabapple (9) Pacific Hazelnut (26) Pacific Yew (92) Paper Birch (18) Pearly Everlasting (09) Pioneer Gooseberry (76) Plantain (62) Ponderosa Pine (61) Puget Balsamroot (15) Quaking Aspen (65) Red Alder (87) Red Elderberry (87) Red Flowering Currant (77) Red Huckleberry (97) Red Stem Ceanothus (22) Red-Osier Dogwood (25) Salal (35) Salmonberry (82) Saskatoon Serviceberry (08) Scouring Rush (31) Shore Pine (60) Siberian Springbeauty (24) Sitka Spruce (59) Small Camas (20) Snowberry (91) Soft Rush (37) Spreading Stonecrop (89) Swamp Currant (75) Sweet Cicely (53) Sword Fern (64) Tall Oregon Grape (16) Thimbleberry (81) Toothed Wood Fern (29) Trailing Blackberry (83) Tule (88) Twinflower (43) Vanilla Leaf (03) Vine Maple (01) Wax Currant (73) Western Columbine (10) Western Dock (84) Western Hemlock (94) Western Honeysuckle (46) Western Larch (39) Western Maidenhair (04) Western Red Cedar (93) Western Strawberry (33) Wild Chives (06) Wild Onion (05) Willow (over 30 species) (85) Yarrow (02) Yellowbells (34) Yellow Pond Lily (50)