

NATIVE



Kate's Mountain Clover

NOTES

WEST Virginia NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volume 7, Number 3

December 2000

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Alas, keeping in step with those before, this issue comes to you about three weeks late. Hope it does not get permanently lost in all those Christmas cards. And, as before, we are featuring a potpourri of native plant interests and issues. The articles presented provide a roller coaster ride through a spectrum of scientific botanical observations, cultural and political ideas and points of view.

We have our usual menu - the benign natural history article by your editor, and the always informative and delightful, "Glicks Pick." Though, we are going to have to reign in our wonderful contributor Barry, to give us "natives only, please." We have a more condensed version of the field notes.

For the nature lover willing to scrutinize the challenges of fixing broken land and ecosystems, we have a comprehensive program for seeding disturbed areas submitted by Lawrence Beckerle. The WVNPS did not solicit or endorse his proposed seed mixes. However, Lawrence has attempted to generate some alternatives to the current mixes utilized by the State DEP, timbering and Mining Companies. The standard mixes are predominantly composed of two or three species of exotics including invasive species. It is time this Native Plant Society took a stand on the use of non-native and invasive species for reclaiming disturbed areas.

George Rosier submitted a surprising, tongue-in-cheek look at ecological restoration within city limits. Evidence of the nationwide movement to replant native vegetation in urban and suburban backyards appears rather scarce in West Virginia. In a state that is known as "Wild and Wonderful" about the only thing that moves on most lawns is the lawn mower - and the occasional stray deer.

Though our state is still heavily forested, highways, malls and housing developments have increasingly fragmented the forests. Our towns and highways planted in a cropped monoculture of exotic species make poor wildlife corridors. The occasional "wild yard" in every other town, or one in every 40 blocks

simply will not generate adequate wildlife habitat to provide the vanishing complex of plants, birds, butterflies and other insects with a place to live. We need solutions somewhere between ignoring city codes and slinging an A-K47. Let us continue to promote the establishment of neighborhood wildlife habitats, and challenge our neighbors to park their lawnmowers and *GROW NATIVE*.

Bill Grafton wrote an article on some unusual plants that he keyed out. These plants seem to have the ability to uptake high levels of salt and exude it through openings on the stems and leaves. I have looked at the surfaces of these plant species under a microscope and observed the microscopic salt crystals on the outer surface of the plant. New discoveries from the plant kingdom never cease to amaze.

There is a plug for the Native Plants in the Landscape Conference at Millersville, PA in June. The conference offers a host of learning opportunities related to planting native plants, propagating native plants, native plant conservation and related topics in plant ecology. The organizers provide a good mix of hands-on learning and lectures. Several sessions offer discussion groups. You will meet the most knowledgeable and talented landscape designers and landscape architects and home gardeners. Put this one on your calendar if you can. Maybe we can have a convoy from West Virginia this year.

Wishing you and yours a terrific holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the forests and fields in 2001!

Emily



OBOLARIA
virginica

BEACH-SIDE SAND DUNE VEGETATION HAS MOVED TO THE MOUNTAINS

By: Bill Grafton

Does the prospect of studying a beachfront ecosystem appeal to you? Well, you may have only to travel as far as your nearest interstate highway. Emily and I discovered some interesting plants while working on a highway invasive plant survey this summer. We were driving the WV Turnpike (I-77) on Flat Top Mountain when we spotted squirrel tail grass (*Hordeum jugbatum*). We pulled over to complete a survey form and Emily immediately spotted a short matted plant with pretty pink flowers. Before I could investigate the plant she was admiring, I realized I was standing on a sprawling little Chenopodium-like plant. We collected both and noted that they grew profusely in a dry, sun-baked site along the highway shoulder for about .2 mile.

As we drove north, we spotted more squirrel tail grass just north of the Tamarack Craft Center interchange. Lo and behold our two new plants were also present. Then we discovered a third new plant that was even more common. All three were spread along the shoulder and median.

A trip made to the WVU Herbarium revealed that we had found *Spergularia media*, (sand spurrey); *Atriplex patula* var. *hastata*, - Orach; *Suaeda linearis* (Sea-blite). All three are plants of the seashores and sand dunes along the Atlantic Coast. The sand spurrey was fascinating to look at with a microscope. Salt crystals covered the plant. Glands along the stem appeared to have exuded salt from the vascular system of the plant. The leaves of the Orach were covered with salt flakes on the undersides.

It makes sense that these plants could live on our "mountain beaches," as they are thoroughly and repeatedly doused with salt for several months each winter. Questions as to whether the road shoulder was composed of sandstone or limestone remains to be investigated. Would this make a difference in survival and spreading of these plants?

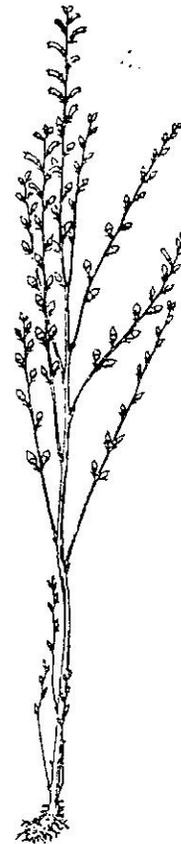
Another question, how did the seeds get here? Were they transported on the trucks and vehicles of wintertime beachfront travelers, or on cargo? Are these plants limited to the highways, or are they appearing in the nutrient poor disturbed soils around warehouses and manufacturing facilities?

BEECH DROPS

By: Emily Grafton

This past September while hiking in Blackwater Falls State Park, I introduced some friends to one of nature's anomalies – plants without chlorophyll. The curious little plants called beechdrops (*Epifagus virginiana*), elicited a different reaction from everyone. To Beverly, the dull-purple, spongy-textured oddities appeared like skeletal remnants of something that at one time had more "substance." The term beech drops brings to mind something edible, like candy, or possibly an herbal remedy. To Mary Ann, beechdrops looked more like a fungus, good only for recycling detritus. And Corey who was forever wandering off, actually came to take a peek.

Beechdrops is a herbaceous, annual plant that lives as a voracious parasite on the roots of beech trees. It will grow on a tree of any size and has been known to parasitize one-year-old seedlings. A growing plant inserts a root-like structure called a haustorium into a beech root, absorbing all the nutrients it needs. As the tuber of the parasite grows, its tissue may completely envelop the root it is deriving nourishment from. The genus, *Epifagus* is cross-cultural, being derived from the Greek word "epi" which means upon, and the Latin "fagus" meaning beech.



EPIFAGUS virginiana

Beechdrops range in height from about five inches to a foot and a half. Its skinny-tubular-branches bear small, scale-like leaves appressed to the stem. Tiny, irregular flowers occur singly or in spikes. The two-lipped, tubular corolla remains closed (cleistogamous) on the upper flowers, and produce many seeds. The lower, chasmogamous flowers usually remain sterile, though both upper and lower flowers produce nectar.

It is believed that raindrops disperse the seeds produced on the upper flowers and the seeds germinate in spring. Plant development moves slowly throughout the growing season. By July, the whole plant is still only a half-inch in height and appears on the surface of the ground as a white tubercle. Beechdrops does not appear fully mature until mid to late August. The best time to look for the adult stage is in September or October. By the end of November, the plant will become brittle, turning dark brown as it dies.

A pale-yellowish form (forma Pallida) occurs in West Virginia. H.A. Allard first described seeing this variety in Canaan Valley. See *Castanea*, 20:34. 1955. We know that it is scattered throughout the state in a few locations. Members of the WV Native Plant Society saw this form in Kanawha State Forest at the Annual Meeting in 1997. It has been found in Mingo County as well.

The Peterson Field Guide, *Eastern/Central Medicinal Plants* by Steven Foster and James Duke states that the species ranges from Ontario south to Florida, and as far west as Louisiana. They indicate that this plant was once used medicinally to treat diarrhea, dysentery, mouth sores and externally on cold sores. Native Americans steeped the whole plant in hot water for a tea. Beechdrops tea tastes bitter. Folks used to lessen the bitterness by drying the plant before use. However, the authors state that drying the plant lessens its effectiveness.

I once read that bear corn or cancer root, (*Conopholis americana*) was unsuccessfully tried as a cancer treatment. The above authors indicated that beechdrops was also used unsuccessfully as a cancer treatment. Cancer root, or bear corn resembles a yellowish pinecone growing out of the ground. This species also makes its living as a parasite on the roots of several species of trees. I was unable to locate my old references on the medicinal properties of bear corn.

Life as an annual makes a lot of sense in terms of the long-term survival of the plant and its host. If

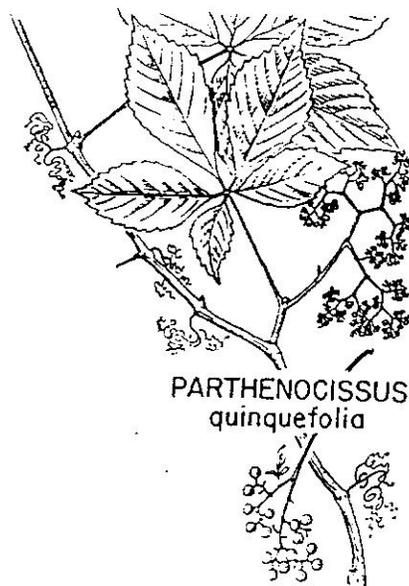
beechdrops were to exist as a perennial, it is quite possible that each individual could grow large enough to kill its host, especially younger trees. When you consider that the underground portion can grow until it constricts and encases the root it is parasitizing, unlimited growth would eventually lead to the end of beech trees and beech drops. As it exists, we can simply enjoy beechdrops as another pathway in the myriad labyrinth of nature's diversity.

BACK YARD PARADISE

By: George L. Rosier

Say, there! Yes, I'm addressing you. I want you to know I was just reading a couple of articles in the July 2000 issue of "Native Notes", the official newsletter of the WVNPS. Look in Volume 7, Number 2. The ever-informative Emily Grafton wrote the articles. The ones which particularly caught my eye and got me to thinking were entitled "Virginia Creeper in The Urban Landscape," to be found on the second page and the one on Native Shrubs about Sumac. Maybe you've already read them, too? Well, they reminded me of what is sometimes called The Urban Forest.

This concept is to the effect that all of the trees and understory plants seen growing in the yards of the city in which you or I live constitutes a very real ecosystem in each instance. Though it may be an ecosystem that requires a jump-start of some kind. You know this idea appeals to me and I really think we can improve and otherwise enhance such a "garden," if you will, as Emily suggests in the article on page two.



Let's look at it this way. When you decide to go native and just let wild flowers and other indigenous plants run rampant in your yard it might be well to check with the local regulations concerning lawn care in the community in which you reside. In my experience, there are what I consider rather severe city regulations requiring a property owner--or, maybe a tenant, for that matter--to mow the lawn and prune existing trees and shrubs. Alas, city fathers and city crews seem to take a dim view of such thing as what you and I undoubtedly consider to be beautiful wild flowers. I'll even go so far as to suggest they may think of them as weeds. Perish the thought!

They don't always seem to understand the stands of orchard and brome grasses, which voluntarily sprouted and grew in your yard, were intentionally left there just in case a wayward deer wandered into town. No, they seem to think such a thing is unsightly and undesirable. Too, they don't seem to want timothy grass growing several feet tall just to appease the appetite of some nomadic type creature of a different field and forest, which are sojourning in the city. They actually want you/me to cut these beautiful places so they conform to the next-door neighbor's lawn of blue grass or clover!

Another thing they seem to think is that something as really picturesque as Virginia creeper entwining itself up along your house walls or in your trees is an eyesore and should be removed. Poison Ivy, too, they seem to find obnoxious although in my own yard this latter species seems to keep small children and their parents at bay. Those self-same city officials may even use such four letter words as "can't, don't", et al. Too, they seem to like to threaten us with such three letter words as "cut" and "sue". Well, keep in my mind that brings us to the question "What might be done to thwart this menace to the understory of our very own "corner" of the Urban Forest?" Might I suggest the following?

Make friends with the operator of your local neighborhood's gun shop. He probably has "specialty tools" which may help you with your gardening. Some of these I could recommend quite highly to thwart such encroachment on your property. Things such as, but not limited to, AK-47s and M-16s. Also, seemingly quite popular with those who would encourage city crews to stay away from their property lines with what a certain song described as "...instruments o destruction," are such tools as twelve, sixteen and twenty gauge argumenters to say nothing of the ever popular .38 Specials and .357 Magnums. Why, just exhibiting these tools can

sometimes work wonders without ever having to actually discharge them at all.

Of course, there is a slight drawback to this sort of reasoning. In the event you actually use one or more of these specialty tools you may have to make an unsightly strip of bare earth in the midst of your splendor of native plants. These strips might sometimes be as large as two and one-half feet by six feet but could be smaller if decapitation is utilized before burying the body, er I mean plant food, of course.

So, the choice is up to all of us who would encourage native plants to flourish and blossom in our yards. We can either check about city regulations or take a chance on wanting to purchase some of those specialty tools. Or, we can expect to take a really long vacation from our jobs as guests of whatever law enforcement agency exhumes, I mean aerates, the soil in our wild gardens.

GARDENING WITH PENSTEMONS

By: Barry Glick

The genus *Penstemon* makes its home in the Scrophulariaceae family. The same family of genera such as *Verbascum*, *Digitalis*, *Veronica*, and *Chelone* to name a few. *Penstemon* is a very diverse genus numbering over 250 species. They grow in almost every type of climate and condition. *Penstemon smallii* or "Small's Beardtongue" is a very easy plant to grow. In its native range, mainly the mountains of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee, it grows in light shade in well-drained woodlands.



In the garden *Penstemon smallii* enjoys full sun to part shade at the front of the perennial border or in the rock garden. The pink to deep magenta tubular flowers with purple-striped white throats bloom from May through June. Purple stems bear purple veined leaves up to 6 inches long, making it an unusual cut flower. Well-drained average to dry soil is the preference. *Penstemon smallii* can be considered a short-lived perennial, so allow it to self-seed. Ultimate height of this clump forming plant is 12" - 24". It also appears to be deer resistant, or at least the herds of deer that roam my farm haven't yet discovered it. Propagation is easy by cuttings or by seeds that are set in abundance.

American Indians are said to have chewed the roots of certain East Coast species of *Penstemon* and put the pulp into painful tooth cavities. They also used *Penstemon* roots to treat rattlesnake bites and to hasten the movement of the afterbirth from a woman who has delivered a child. Andi Wolf has put together an incredible site for Penstemaniacs at <http://www.biosci.ohio-state.edu/~awolfe/Penstemon/Penstemon.html>.

The American Penstemon Society is a great group of Penstemaniacs, and offers an extensive seed exchange in addition to a journal that is published twice a year. Membership in the American Penstemon Society is \$10 for US & Canada. Overseas membership is \$15, which includes 15 free selections from the Seed Exchange. Dues are payable in January of each year. Checks or money orders, in US funds, are payable to the American Penstemon Society and may be sent to: Ann Bartlett, 1569 S. Holland Ct., Lakewood, CO 80232, USA.

Penstemon 'Husker Red', a cultivar of *Penstemon digitalis*, was the 1996 Perennial Plant Association Plant of the Year. It was introduced by Dale Lindgren at the University of Nebraska. I've selected a much darker leaved, more floriferous form of *Penstemon digitalis* and named it Penstemon 'Ruby Tuesday'. If you can't wait until I choose it for a "Glick Pick of The Week", you can see it at my web site: <http://www.sunfarm.com/images/med/penstemonrubytuesday-m.jpg>

A complete set of back issues of "Glick Pick of the Week" is available for the asking. If you would like me to send them, or if you would like to first see the list, send me an email. Also, if you would like to unsubscribe, or sign up a friend, let me know.

WILDLIFE SEED MIXES for DISTURBED LAND

By: Lawrence Beckerle

1. Lite mix for fills or forest edge to draw game within view of tourists
 - A. Turnips, 4-6 ounces/acre for quick cover and late fall frost resistant greens for bear, deer, turkey...
 - B. *Birdsfoot trefoil, 2-5 lbs/acre for brood habitat & Nitrogen fixation
 - C. Butterfly milkweed, 1 oz per 100 lbs. of Birdsfoot for added color and to aid monarch butterfly which evidence suggests are declining.
2. FINE LAWN and PARKLAND wildlife Mix
 - A. * Crimson clover, 10 to 15 lbs/acre for quick cover, N and spring color. – or use Browntop millet or an annual flower species for quick cover, when sowing in late spring.
 - B. * White Dutch clover, 2-5 lbs/acre for long-term brood habitat, N fixing and ability to spread by stolons into bare areas. Wild and tame strawberries will co-exist with 'White Dutch.'
 - a) Add butterfly milkweed at 1 oz per 100 lbs. of white cover seed.
 - b) Add Buffalograss at 3 lbs/acre for a fine lawn grass that can be left unmowed (maximum height is 6 to 10 inches) and creates a sod even on very hard, compacted soils. Or use Hairgrass for more height 12-32"
 - c) Add/or plant plugs of Pennsylvania sedge (max ht 4-6") on dry, acid soils, cut slopes in sun or medium shade.
3. Shade Mix
 - A. Virginia/Hairy Wildrye, 3-12 lbs/acre, or as costs decline: Beakgrass, Bearded shorthusk (dense shade), False melic, melic, millet grass, Mt. Rice, Black Oat-grass, Mt. Oatgrass, wood reed, bluejoint grasses.

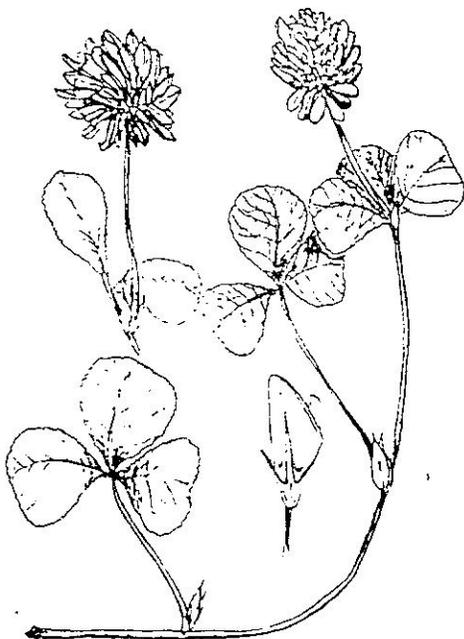
- B. Winter rye, 10 to 15 lbs/acre while temps are too cool for other quick cover seeds to germinate and prosper. Mix sedge(s) in with clover seed.
 - C. *Use Partridge pea Jan.- June, Am. Vetch in fall.
4. Quail & Turkey Mix
- A. Southern States Q-T mix after danger of frost is past, or,
 - a) *Partridge pea, 5 to 15 lbs/acre for quick cover, N fixation, ...
 - b) *Illinois Bundleflower, 3-5 lbs/acre N fix, high protein forage & seed Roundseed paspalu7m, 3-6 lbs/acre, or False melic, Mt. Rice... most soil. OR
 - c) Nutlike gobular dropseed, Yellow buckwheat, oatgrass on sterile soil.
 - d) *Korean or native lespedeza, 10-15 lbs/acre, or tick trefoil on very poor, dry, and/or acid soils. Add Butterfly milkweed, 1 oz/100 lbs. - Am. Beakgrain, Mannagrass, *Duck pea, Chufa (nut-like tubers) on wet soil. - Aronia, Black haw, Elderberry, *Bayberry, Huckleberry (2-5 yr burn sites) or *Silver buffaloberry for shrub cover and food.
5. Native Ornamental Grasses for wildlife and wildflower plantings
- A. Sideoats grama or Purpletop, 1-5 lbs per/acre to minimize competition
 - a) Or Melic, Millet grass... in medium to dense shade
 - b) Indian grass on sites with more fertility.
 - c) American Beakgrain, River Oats, Sea Oats on moist to wet soil
6. Winter Cover, Nesting Site grass

- A. 'Shelter' switchgrass, 2-10 lbs/acre, resists lodging from winter snow loads and retains upright nesting cover into the spring. In early spring sow with turnips, open canopy or short companion crops. 'Shelter' can be sown in a Crimson clover stand after peak flowering. Jobs with earth moved in early to mid-summer should have a mulch crop planted. Sow 'Shelter' into it between Oct. 1 and frost induced lodging. Spring oats are easy to sow. But late *trapper peas don't freeze until temperature reach 20 degrees, thus allowing more time for late fall sowing. These methods are handy for other non-debearded, fluffy, warm season grasses. If wanting to use fluffy seeded cool season grass, plant *soybeans instead. Just before 50 percent of soybean leaves fall, sow fall seed mix.

Footnotes:

1. Turnips are sown around the 4th of July to maximize production. But those planted at the preferred time for Birdsfoot trefoil and most clovers (August 15th to Oct. 1) taste better than those grown in the hot sun. Turnips are an ideal nurse crop (shelter) for weak seedlings of Birdsfoot and some natives. Birdsfoot trefoil is often used where alfalfa won't persist.
2. Running Buffalo Clover is an ideal parkland plant as it tolerates up to 70 percent shade, compaction, and readily colonizes spots scalped by lawn mowers... But it is relished by deer and prefers high calcium soils. Plus commercial availability is hindered by its listing on the endangered species list. In the meantime, annual/biennial Buffalo clover (10-20") is not as hard to obtain. Less frequent mowing of parkways and lawns encourages natives like Paspalum. Warm season grasses that require mowings to be kept above six inches are better used in meadows, rough or set aside areas.
3. Wood reed grass refers to the highly palatable Cinna genus. Bluejoint Reedgrass is in the *Calamagrostis* genus, used to feed horses. (*C. porteri* occurs on dry, rocky soil.) Black Oatgrass (Blackseed needlegrass) (*Stipa*) is closely related to Mt. Rice (*Oryzopsis*). Mt. Oatgrass is in the same genus (*Danthonia*) as Moonshine grass. False melic (*Schizachne*) seed is larger than melic (*Melica*) and millet grass. Many native nitrogen fixers tolerate shade, but relatively few are produced for commercial use.

4. Best time to sow lespedezas and partridge Pea is in March. Will produce seed even when sown as late as the first of August, but it's much more practice to switch to Buckwheat, turnips, trapper peas, milo, millets with the first of July. Both can be sown on ground broken in January, provided one follows the practice of sowing while the ground is still fresh (before rain puddles and/or drying hardens the surface).
5. Rye, wheat and several others will make significant growth even beneath 4 inches of snow. Even dormant seed when covered by nature will grow faster than seed covered by mulch and sown when temperatures are more favorable for growth. Understanding this and other principles allows for seeding techniques that are more compatible with year round operations.
6. Plumegrass and the wedgegrasses are used ornamentally, but have small seeds.
7. Sowing a grass with a small grain is classical nurse cropping. Sowing red clover in a wheat field in February is both an example of frost seeding and using fall sown wheat as a nurse crop. Sowing in a standing crop (soybeans near harvest time) is relay cropping. So relay cropping can involve the succession of more than two crops. When the same crops used for nurse cropping and/or relay cropping are mainly used to increase organic matter, particularly if they are plowed down prior to the next crop, they are referred to as green manure crops. A cover crop is anything that helps hold the soil between other uses.



T. stoloniferum

A NOTE FROM THE TRI-STATE CHAPTER

By: Romie Hughart

On September 24, members of the Tri-State Chapter attended a mycology outing. The outing took place at the home of Dr. Ron Gain, a professor of mycology and microbiology at Marshall University. Dr. Gain presented a brief lecture with slides representing the different classes of fungi. An interesting discussion of the edible and non-edible species followed the lecture. The group went outdoors for a field trip around Dr. Gains' home.

A point that Dr. Gain shared with us that I found to be of particular interest has to do with mold on food. It seems that if you find mold growing on jelly, do not worry about it being poisonous. Jelly molds are safe enough to spread on your bread right along with the jelly.

One of the people in attendance was Galena Fet. She grew up in the back woods of Russia. She explained how the Russian people grow up learning what fungi are safe for consumption. Everyone found her experiences in her homeland to be of great interest.

A neighbor of Dr. Gains' brought in some plants of interest that he gathered on the hillside that morning. Included in the collection were ginseng and yellow root. After this last presentation, refreshments were served. Among the hors d'oeuvres were stuffed mushrooms. I found them to be very good. No, we did not eat any of the mushrooms found in the woods that afternoon.

Attendance was good. There were approximately 16 members present. The weather was decent and everyone seemed to enjoy him or herself. I believe everyone picked up some new knowledge about mushrooms.

FIELD NOTES

East Lynn Floristic Study - By: Romie Hughart

Romie and Richard continue their floristic study of East Lynn Lake with Mike Smith. Below are listed a few of the plants they identified.

March 25, 2000

Sanguinaria canadense, *Claytonia caroliniana*, *Anemone quinquefolia*, *Anemonella thalictroides*, *Dentaria diphylla*, *Dentaria heterophylla*, *Hepatica americana*, *Vicia caroliniana* and *Viola kitaebeliana*

April 14, 2000

Silene virginica, *Claytonia virginica*, *Viola blanda*, *Tiarella cordifolia*, *Trillium grandiflorum*, *Trillium*

erectum, Viola striata, Viola rostrata, Asarum canadense and Caulophyllum thalictroides

April 30, 2000

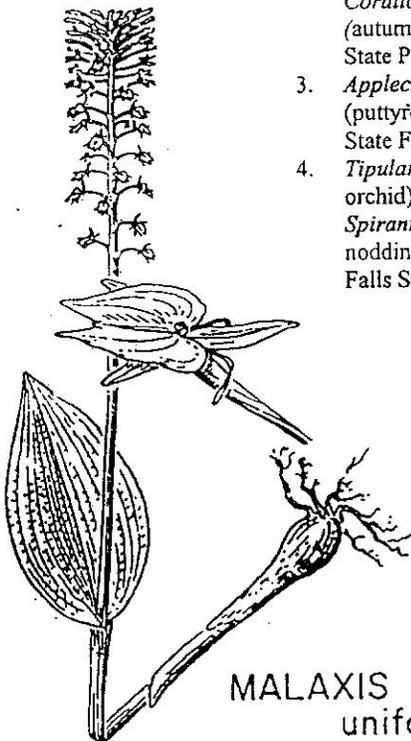
Sedum ternatum, Geranium maculatum, Podophyllum peltatum, Smilacina racemosa, Cypripedium calceolus, Iris cristata (including var. alba), Polemonium reptans and Krigia biflora

Invasive Plants Found Along WV Highways – By: Bill Grafton

1. *Sorghum bicolor* (broom cane), road shoulder I-79 near West Fork River Bridge; near Roanoke in Lewis County and near Big Otter interchange in Clay County
2. Fragrant honeysuckle at junction of US 19 and Pea Ridge Road in South Oak Hill, Fayette Co.
3. *Acer ginnala* (Amur maple) north of Ripley, Jackson County
4. *Pyrus calleyana* (Bradford pear) Lakeview Country Club, Cheat Lake and north of Jane Lew Interchange on I-79, Lewis County
5. *Leptochloa fascicularis* (Sprangletop grass) Goldtown interchange, Jackson County. Note: Allison Cusick (Ohio DNR) had previously collected this grass at two WV locations.

A Field Trip With Scott Shriver and Clete Smith

1. *Malaxis unifolia* (Adders mouth orchid), *Spiranthes ochroleuca* and *Spiranthes cernua* at Big Ditch Lake (Webster County)
2. *Cypripedium pubescens* (large yellow slipper's) and *Corallorhiza odontorhiza* (autumn coralroot) at Babcock State Park
3. *Aplectrum hyemale* (puttyroot), Camp Creek State Forest (Mercer County)
4. *Tipularia discolor* (crane-fly orchid), *Aplectrum hyemale*, *Spiranthes ochroleuca* and nodding ladies tresses, Twin Falls State Park



MALAXIS
unifolia

BOOK REVIEW

By: Emily Grafton

The New England Wildflower Society Guide to Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada. By William Cullina, 2000, Houghton Mifflin.

The following quote from William Cullinas' exhaustive guidebook for propagating native wild flowers sums up an important modern dilemma for plant conservation"

"There is value in preserving wilderness, but there is equal value in restoring the suburbs and cities where most of us live, to something closer to balance – for our children's sake and the sake of all other species around us. Growing wildflowers is not only fun and easy, it fosters a genuine connection with the region you live in."



I. cristata

Some would argue that wildflowers belong only "out in the wild," but I ask you, where is the wild? So much of our landscape has been altered by human hands that there is very little of the wild in most of our woodlands and fields. So, I believe that one very necessary means to preserving wild things is to bring them into our own little corner of the world. To places, they once owned. By planting native wild flowers in our yards and parks we can learn of their beauty, incredible diversity and intricate roles in the fabric of our shrinking ecosystems.

The author provides very detailed information on the growth habits including seed germination and techniques for propagating 200 genera and 1,000 species of native plants. William Cullina makes his living as a nursery manager and propagator for the New England Wild flower Society. He works at the Garden in the Woods in Framingham, Massachusetts. The gardens include naturalistic displays of native plants organized by habitat including woodland, bog, meadow, pine barren, western/alpine and pond side plantings.

I am not advocating the establishment of habitats anywhere outside of their natural area of origin. I believe that we can propagate local ecotypes of woodland and field wildflowers into our lawns and parklands for our own benefit and to the benefit of wildlife. For winter reading, viewing the photographs and charts in this book will effervesce into pleasant dreams of spring. And come spring and summer, the technical information will provide a step-by-step primer for propagating and establishing a native plant garden. This book is definitely on my Christmas list.

2000 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By: Bill Grafton

The year 2000 annual meeting convened in the beautiful setting of the Greenbrier Youth Camp near Blue Bend in Greenbrier County, September 9 – 11. Friday evening featured a short field trip along the Greenbrier River Rail Trail. Some of the interesting plants that were seen include small flowered heuchera, Schreber's aster, small white aster, giant sunflower, prairie cordgrass and royal fern.

The main field trip on Saturday was to a well-known shale barren called Whites Draft. The plants seen on this trip included yellow buckwheat, Kate's mountain clover, ovate leaved skullcap, late purple aster, slender knotweed and Alleheny sloe. From the shale barren we made a stop at the Blue Bend recreational area in the Monongahela National Forest where we saw autumn coralroot. From Blue Bend, we made a quick stop on Hopkins Knob Road where we saw stiff aster, yellow clintonia, nondo and five-flowered gentian.

Old Business: Chris Gatens reported on the Charleston Chapter's *highway native plant plot* project. He reported that the native plants became well established. However, invasive plants have already become a problem. Romie Hughart reported that several people showed up to help rake, seed and place straw on the site. It was suggested that in the future Roundup should be applied to the site before seeding.

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Native Shrubs

...in wildlife landscaping



Published by

West Virginia Native Plant Society
West Virginia Nongame Wildlife Program

AMERICAN YEW

American (Canada) Yew - Taxus canadensis

Form: Low straggling shrub often having widespread horizontal limbs, to 5 feet tall.

Leaves: Evergreen, needles are green above and below, about 1 inch long, sharp pointed and stalked with a base that continues down the side of the smooth twig.

Fruit: The berrylike fruit is an aril which is a juicy, scarlet red fleshy cuplike dish surrounding a single seed which is poisonous.

WV RANGE:

Scattered in northern and high mountain counties of Fayette, Greenbrier, Hancock, Marion, Mercer, Mineral, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, Summers, Taylor, Tucker and Wetzel.

NATURAL HABITAT:

Cool, shady woods at high elevations or low elevations in deep cold ravines.

WILDLIFE USES:

Deer will browse yew to the point of destroying the shrubs. Rabbits also browse yew. The fruits are eaten by grouse, cedar waxwings, robins, bluejays and squirrels. The dense evergreen foliage provides excellent shelter and nest sites for rodents, chipmunks, and ground dwelling songbirds.

HORTICULTURE:

Uses: Foundation plantings or ground cover for northern exposures, shady moist ravines or wet areas. **Light:** Heavy to partial shade. **Soil Moisture:** Wet to moist loamy soils. **Soil pH:** Slightly acid to slightly alkaline. **Problems:** Seeds and wilted foliage poisonous to livestock. Red fruits contain poisonous seeds and are attractive to children.

COMPILED BY: WILLIAM N. GRAFTON, naturalist, botanist and wildlife specialist West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia

Written by West Virginia Native Plant Society members and jointly published with the WV Nongame Program.

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LYGODIUM palmatum



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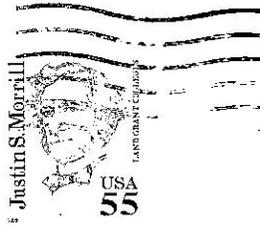
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