

Claytonia



NEWSLETTER OF THE ARKANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
FALL 1991

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK: SUE CLARK

All of us probably expect the everyday experiences in our lives to continue in a fairly customary and usual manner. Yet misfortune, frequently unexpected, always unwelcome, can happen.

Recently, while I was in Pennsylvania on a visit, I learned of an event that started my thinking. It became necessary to destroy a great many of the shade tree elms that were dying. It is a cruel but indisputable fact that a disease without a host must itself face extinction. The epidemic was stopped, but my thoughts raced on and I envisioned a situation where all plant life was extinguished and oxygen no longer was available to those whose existence depends on it.

I know that I am one of the members of that most dangerous species of living beings, and I began to reflect on ways to make myself less threatening. Here is what I came up with:

1. Recycle.
2. Set out and cultivate plants -- trees especially.
3. Use less energy.
4. Discourage and resist economic gain that causes depletion of natural resources.
5. Encourage education that would make people aware of the hazards we and our planet are faced with.

The members of the Arkansas Native Plant Society are truly a superior group. I believe it was Abraham Lincoln who stated, "Your strength is in your unity." I am grateful to all of you for allowing me to serve you. My tenure was easy for me because of the help from you all. We are a smattering of different levels of occupations, education, age, physical ability, intellect, and living standards, brought together by a common interest. We give life to plants and maintain them. We try to protect them and we try to understand more about them. As I leave office, I thank all of you for making it a special experience.

FALL ANNUAL MEETING

When: September 27-29
Where: Batesville, Arkansas
Headquarters: Ramada Inn, Highway 167 North

Accommodations:

Ramada Inn 698-1800
$37 single, $43 double +
Registration deadline for these rates is Sept. 24
Scenic Motor Inn (Best Western) 698-1855
American Motor Inn 793-5751

Schedule:

Fri., Sept. 27:	
5 to 7 p.m.	Registration at Ramada Inn. Dinner on your own.
7:30 p.m.	1st meeting, Smith Science Bldg., Arkansas College (maps available at Registration)
Sat., Sept. 28:	Field trips (Detailed information will be given at Registration.)
6:00 p.m.	Banquet Buffet, Ramada Inn, $10.00 Followed by General Meeting and Annual Auction

FIELD TRIPS & OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

There will be a joint field trip with the Arkansas Nature Conservancy the beginning of spring in Union County on Friday, 27 March 1992. We will meet at the King's Inn in El Dorado, on the 167 By-pass on the southeast of town. Between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. a reception will be hosted by some local members of the Nature Conservancy, featuring coffee, biscuits, and homemade mayhaw jelly and high bush huckleberry jams. These are two native wild fruits eagerly sought for their culinary properties. The field trip will begin at 9:30 a.m., as a caravan, to see several special places that are typical of the Coastal Plains. Everyone is to bring a lunch and drink and wear clothing and shoes appropriate for gentle hiking. The redbuds should be finishing their bloom period and the dogwoods should be beginning. There will be a lot to see, hear (spring bird migration should be active), and learn. Spring comes earlier to south Arkansas than it does to central and northern Arkansas with its uplands and different soil types. The field trip will be led by Carl Amason.

Fall Field Trip - October 5

Susan Hook's (USFS) spring field trip was rained out and she has volunteered to lead a fall trip to see some seeps and glades in the Ouachita National Forest. Meet at the Charleston Campgrounds, west of Crystal Springs on Highway 270 at 10:00 a.m. It's about 20 miles from Hot Springs. Phone Susan at 321-5323 (O) or 623-9845 (H).

Special Invitation

The ANPS has been invited to attend the Oklahoma Native Plant Society Fall Outing and Annual Meeting October 26-27, 1991, to be held at the Robert S. Kerr Conference Center and Museum, Poteau, Oklahoma. Pre-registration is requested for the field trips and banquet, but registrations that weekend will be accepted. Registration forms will be available from: Oklahoma Native Plant Society, c/o Tulsa Garden Center, 2435 South Peoria, Tulsa, OK 74114; or from Linda Watson, OKNPS president (405-325-5357 - days or 405-360-3895 - eves) or Teresa Maurer, OKNPS board member in Poteau (918-647-9123 - days or 918-655-3180 - eves).

Directions to Robert S. Kerr Conference Center:

From Poteau: Take 271/59 south of town. Bear left on 59 towards Heavener and look for sign on right about 1/4 mile on 59. Just over railroad tracks, turn right (near bowling alley). Stay on this road until you see Taylor's Inn and turn left. Follow road straight for about 1-1/2 miles--it will lead straight to conference center. OR

From Heavener: Take 59 north approximately 11 miles. Look for bowling alley on left--turn left there. (If you get to 271/59 junction you've gone too far.) Stay on road until Taylor's

Inn and turn left. Follow road straight for about 1-1/2 miles--it will lead straight to conference center.

Mid-South Native Plant Conference

The Mid-South Native Plant Conference will be held October 18-20, at Agriculture International, Memphis, TN. This conference is organized by an ad hoc committee of volunteers who are interested in native plants, their use, and preservation. Seventeen different speakers include landscapers, nurserymen, herbists, horticulturists, and other native plant enthusiasts. Registration fees ($60) paid by October 11, include a T-shirt, dinner on Friday, and lunch Saturday. For further information write: MSNPC, Memphis Botanic Garden, 750 Cherry Road, Memphis, TN 38117-4699.

IN MEMORIAL

Edsel Kiser, 1924-1991

The Arkansas Native Plant Society lost one of its faithful members in the passing of Edsel Kiser of Big Fork, Arkansas. A retired biology teacher, he was a native of Montgomery County and a long-time member of the Mena Nature Club. While he was interested in all nature activities, native wildflowers were his passion. He enjoyed teaching anyone who would listen about native plants. He was also interested in birds.

Kiser lived on the family home place. Though never married, he was a student of genealogy and widely known for helping families in the area trace their roots. He also participated in anthropology digs in Central Arkansas. --Don Peach

Hilary Hanna

The Arkansas Native Plant Society lost one of its most loyal supporters when Dr. Hilary Hanna passed away March 5th. He was in his late eighties. His farm, the Hanna Farm, was well known by the Native Plant Society and local Audubon groups as he hosted several outings, field trips, and mid-afternoon snack groups at "The Farm." Dr. Hanna, a prominent dentist, was a fancier of camellias and had been the State Director for Arkansas for the American Camellia Society for years. He and Mrs. Hanna attended most of the early meetings of the Native Plant Society before health began to fail for both of them. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and one son. Mrs. Hanna's health is poor, but she has been a very loyal wife to Dr. Hanna and a loyal member of the Arkansas Native Plant Society. --Carl Amason

MINUTES OF THE SPRING MEETING OF THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP, HICKORY HOUSE RESTAURANT, BEAVER LAKE, MAY 18, 1991

The spring meeting of the General Membership of the ANPS was called to order by Dick Speairs, Vice-President, in the absence of Sue Clark, President. Betty Speairs, Secretary, read the minutes of the Spring Meeting held at the Narrows Inn, Greers Ferry, Arkansas, on Saturday, October 20, 1990. A motion was made and seconded that the minutes be approved as read. The motion passed.

Bruce Ewing, ANPS representative to OWL (Ouachita Watch League), gave a report of the objectives and activities of the organization and the legislative and administrative rulings to date.

Members were asked to submit nominations for the Carl Amason Conservation Award to any of the officers or to any member of the Conservation Committee. The Committee consists of Bill Shepherd, Carl Amason, and another member to be named in the future.

Names of the recipients of the scholarship and research grants for 1991 were announced. Margaret Post of UCA received $500.00 for the study of Reproductive Biology of *Lindera melissafolia*. Stephen A. Walker of ATU received $300.00 for the study of Ecology of the Ozark Chinkapin. Brian R. Speer of Hardy, Arkansas, received $250.00 for the Study of

Ferns of White County. Charla R. Polumbo of ASU received $100.00 for support of her botanical studies. Funds for these awards came from the Aileen McWilliams Scholarship Fund and the Delzie Demaree Research Award Fund.

Ellen Neaville, a high school biology teacher from Rogers and a member of the Arkansas Parks System Commission, made a presentation concerning the Ozark Natural Science Center. It is an independent, non-profit educational corporation for nature education in the center of the Madison County Wildlife Management Area. She told the story of the development of the center, which will hold its first non-residential programs in summer of 1991. There will be full-scale residential programs in place by winter of 1992.

It was announced that the Mid South Native Plant Conference will be held in Memphis on October 19 and 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. for a program of wildflower slides by Dr. Carl Slaughter of Petit Jean Mountain. --Betty Speairs, Secretary

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIELD TRIP IN UNION COUNTY, 8 JUNE 1991

The morning began somewhat cooler than normally for early June in the Coastal Plain of south Arkansas and the early arrivals came on schedule as they had met at Carl Amason's place before. For most, it wasn't a big deal to get lost in Calion under most circumstances. Almost all arrived within a few minutes of each other. First were Albert and Tomeline Higginbottom of Kirby and directly behind them was Jim Shires, all the way from Beckville, Texas. Jim was one of the newcomers, but the Higginbottoms were old veterans. Archalie Harmon not only brought her pound cake, she brought Leona Spence. Dave and Ernie Wallis brought Bud and Pud McDade, and Ernie, who knew where the pinewoods lilies were in bloom, went directly to photographing them. Immediately after, came Carl and Barbara Slaughter from Petit Jean Mountain. There were no orchids in bloom at the time but he was satisfied with the orchid-like blooms of the pinewood lilies. During all the photographing, hand shaking and friendly hugging, a total of twenty eager and enthusiastic folks were eager to stroll over the place where they could see the trees of Crataegus opaca and Vaccinium elliotii shrubs on the place, both of which had bloomed and ripened their fruits. The Vaccinium elliottii is the high bush huckleberry of the Coastal Plain. It is actually a blueberry, and a few lingering fruit was hanging here and there. When the field trippers began tasting the fruit, so did Carl's mixed breed dog--a real "huckleberry hound." Cindy Ross, from Little Rock, was an eager student of all the comments made and Nancy Pfister, of Camden, was busily taking notes, as she is a newspaper reporter and was doing her field work. Judy Lacefield, of El Dorado, was very enthusiastic and as bright-eyed as any one. Burks and Penny Robbins were delighted at the woody materials at hand--the big loblolly pines and southern red oaks and, of course, the big sweet gum trees that grew up in the past decades outside of the cultivated fields. It is somewhat difficult for most visitors to understand or comprehend that the woodlands where they stand were cultivated cotton lands 50 or 60 years ago. I don't know when John and Francis Pelton of Benton joined the crowd, but from the very beginning they were asking intelligent questions and making worthy comments. One of the most eager participants was Anne Beale from White Oak Lake, northwest of Camden. It seems she is making a wildflower display area and has many unique plants, as she hails from the distinct Chidester sand hills area. There were many comments in the discussion of the Chidester sand hills, the Fall Lines Divide of the Benton and Malvern area, and the rocky areas of Petit Jean Mountain. Bill and Martha Davies had a lot to say about their Benton area and apparently they have found some choice areas to photograph. The field trip went into a disaster area on Carl's place where three big oak trees had been blown down among his plantings. The largest Magnolia macrophylla was down, flat on the ground. There are a number of seedlings that are coming up in the immediate sunny area. And it is reassuring to see how quickly nature heals her wounds. So many plants are prospering from the large

sunny opening in the woods, and the big-leaf magnolia is now making all sorts of adventive (?) water sprouts from one end to the other. Quickly the morning passed to noon time and everyone had worked up a hearty appetite and back to the house with its lunches, restrooms, chairs, and porches. Sometimes it seems that wildflower lovers and birdwatchers work hard at their activities just to permit them to eat with abandon things they ordinarily would not be eating. Lunch period was soon over, and some of the morning field trippers had to leave, while the all-day field trippers took off to some special spots.

On the Champagnolle Road, near El Dorado, close by a fork in the road are two Astragalus species that make for easy study and comparison: A. canadensis, which grows tall (18 to 30 inches) and A. soxmaniorum, which blooms early (March) and stays under six inches in height. About the only things in common are clusters of greenish-yellowish white flowers, a pod of legume seeds, and a "peony" foliage. A. soxmanorium is quite rare in Union County. Then we stopped at a wet ditch to look upon Lycopodium adpressum, another Coastal Plains feature. Finally, away to the last stop on the field trip--an area under a major cross-country electrical transmission line. On the woodland edges were several magnificent Erythrina herbacea in full bloom. The field trippers were ecstatic. Here is perhaps one of the most showy plants of the area and in full bloom. The English-speaking people call it Indian Bean or Cherokee Bean, but the French-speaking people of Louisiana call it Manou. So when in Louisiana, say "Manou" and you will be understood. Also along the woodland edge were many more pinewoods lilies. As it was getting to be beyond mid-afternoon, the flowers were beginning to collapse and fold for the day, but it spite of this situation it was evident that there were several shades of purple in the colors of the individual flowers. In the sunny right-of-way of the transmission lines were several Asclepias tuberosa in bloom, from orange to almost red. In sunny areas, this plant, also known as butterfly weed, is one of the best, asking only for sunny, well-drained soil. Close by were several other Asclepias species, probably A. amplexicaulis in green fruit, four and five capsules arranged on each erect stem like green candles on a candleabrum. Under the power lines the few late Dephinium carolinianum plants were showing their truly blue flowers. The participants from the Ouachita Mountain area weren't particularly impressed by their display as masses of them are quite common on their hillsides, but the folks from the Coastal Plains, some of whom didn't know the flowers at all, were very excited. But that is what field trips are all about--studying wildflowers where they naturally grow. All the while, one by one, couples began to leave the caravan leaving the Higginbottoms, Jim Shires, and Carl Amason the remaining residue of the trippers. We returned to Carl's place and had a round of interesting comments. Carl really doesn't know when Albert and Tomeline left for Kirby, nor when Jim left for Texas. It was a wonderful field trip.

--Carl Amason

ARALIA SPINOSA OR THE DEVIL'S WALKING STICK

There is one species among the woody plants of Arkansas that is unique in several respects and that is Aralia spinosa or the devil's walking stick. It is the only native woody species in the state that is in the Ginseng Family (Araliaceae) and it occurs, probably in every county in the state. Furthermore the leaves are thrice pinnate, meaning they have leaflets that are removed one more time from the mid-stem of the leaf than hickories, ashes, pecans, black locusts, and some other common and uncommon woody plants in the state. Furthermore, it is perhaps the last of the common woodland species to bloom and its large clusters of white flowers are most attractive at a time when there are very few other plants in bloom. Later the blossoms develop into rather attractive clusters of bright shiny black berries on dark red stems which are relished by the birds. It is very popular with the songbirds of late summer and to resident birds as well. It grows well in rich, well-drained woodlands and is most often found in roadside situations.

Its common name of devil's walking stick is a natural! The main stems are about the diameter of a walking stick with well-developed arrangements of spines, hence the consideration of the devil occurs. However, the canes are rather weak-wooded with a pithy center, hardly suitable for the devil to use as a walking stick, nor in response to its other common name, Hercules' Club, a club for Hercules. I have never heard in common usage the name Hercules' Club, but it is always listed in the literature. The plant begins to bloom when it is over six feet tall. For later years in good growing sites, the single stem may fork into two or three upper stems, each capable of eventually having a flower cluster. Ultimate height appears to be about 20 to 25 feet tall. In my observation, the individual plants are short-lived but in its lifetime, it can be striking. Dr. Edwin Smith, in his ATLAS, makes the following comments: "The species is dimorphic in respect to the ultimate leaflets, exhibiting juvenile and adult forms and the adult form is almost entirely lacking in prickles."

For those who would want to grow Aralia spinosa in their garden, it can be done with determination. It is easily grown from seeds or transplanted when small, say about one foot tall. It is not suitable for foundation planting, but in an azalea-type of island bed in lightly shaded area, it is at home. For larger properties and larger wildflower gardens or plantings, it prospers in woodland edges and woodlands in well-drained soils. Superficially, the flowers and fruits somewhat resemble elderberry which blooms and fruits much earlier in the season. Elderberry flowers are in flat clusters and are pleasantly scented, while the devil's walking stick has never impressed me with fragrance. Nor am I aware of any food use of the devil's walking stick's fruits for human consumption. The Aralia spinosa is much easier to manage than elderberry. Aralia seems to root sucker plants to the extent that a colony is soon formed. Where it is garden grown or as a wild plant, it is a striking plant in most seasons even if it doesn't give color in the fall. --Carl Amason

SPECIAL THANKS

The ANPS would like to thank Mark Clippinger, director of Hobbs Estate Management Area for allowing us to tramp through the area during our spring meeting. Mark has a big job and is to be commended for his desire to preserve native species and habitats within the strictures placed on him because of his position. Hopefully the plant inventory our members helped with will be of benefit in formulating plans to manage the estate for the benefit of all Arkansans.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thanks again to all those who have submitted articles for this edition. Please send any future articles to:

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We will include as many as we can.

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