May 16, 1954

THE HANGING ROCK MEETING

BY Mrs. H. P. Smith

When the N. C. W. F. Society was organized about three and one-half years ago at Smithwin Farm there was a doubtful feeling with many of us. Would our organization go forward? You would have the answer to this question if you attended the Hanging Rock meeting. While the Society was organized in the interest of preserving wild flowers, the fellowship we have with one another just bubbles over and as each car arrived at the parking lot it was "Field Day" for everyone. Having a common interest just brings us closer together.

The picnic lunch is always a highlight and this one around the long park table was one of the best yet.

After lunch we held our regular business meeting, during which the following officers and committees were elected and appointed: Mrs. Paul R. Spencer, president; Mr. Lionel Melvin, 1st vice-pres; Mrs. Walter B. Braxton, 2nd vice-pres; Miss Barbara Brooks, corr. secretary; Mrs. H. P. Smith, treasurer; Mrs. Carl Pegg, recording secretary; Mrs. Robert F. Whittle, membership chairman; Mrs. Ada Neal, membership chairman; Mrs. H. R. Totten, By-laws chairman; Mrs. R. B. Moore, Publicity chairman; Dr. H. R. Totten, consultant; and Mr. Lionel Melvin, consultant.

The treasurer reported a balance of $78.70. The Society voted to make a donation of $10.00 to the National Wild Flower Preservation Society.

Mr Walter Braxton, on behalf of the society, honored the out-going president - Mr. J. A. Warren - with a speech of appreciation and a gift check.

The by-laws were amended and a copy is enclosed if you did not receive one at the meeting.

Our members were urged to subscribe to the National wild flower magazine, thus helping the National Society to carry on.

Mrs. Paul Spencer, our new president, made an excellent acceptance speech, and her enthusiasm makes us believe that she is going to carry on the good work and she will need our cooperation.

The members were most fortunate to have the park guides go with us on the trails.

ALONG THE TRAILS

By Erma Nance and Gladis Kivett

The Cascade Trail is steep and winding, but full of delightful surprised ateach turn. Starting on the trail we came almost suddenly on a large cluster of wild ginger. Scattered on each side of the trail was spotted Wintergreen, Christmas fern and Spleenwort fern.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member:

It is a pleasure to bring greetings to the North Carolina Wild Flower Society and to wish for you another year of successful work.

With this issue our Society begins the publication of a Newsletter, which will contain news of the activities and accomplishments of our group. I feel sure that our members will receive much help and inspiration from reading the Newsletter.

Mrs. Herbert P. Smith and Miss Rebecca Causey are the new editors of our publication. To them I wish to express my sincere appreciation for their services.

For myself I pledge my earnest support of all the activities of our group in order that we may carry forward those principles of our state association to which we are all dedicated.

Cordially yours,
Mrs. Paul R. Spencer, President

****

ALONG THE TRAILS - continued from page 1

As we began to descend more rapidly our eyes caught an unusual flower, new to most of the group, - Xerophyllum asphodeloides, commonly known as Turkey Beard. The flower was a cone-shaped cluster of small white flowers on a slender stem, rising 18 - 36 inches from a rosette of grass-like foliage. This lovely flower seems to like the sun and usually grows in open pine or oak woods in strongly acid, gravelly soil. It was not found on any of the other trails taken by the group that day. It has been found that it is difficult to cultivate and rarely blooms in the garden.

The going became more difficult, but we were rewarded by suddenly looking up to find beautiful clumps of Catawba Rhododendron in full bloom. No artist but the God of Nature could paint such clear beauty as the lovely rose-purple flowers clustered at the end of the branches backed by the lovely foliage. We moved a little further down to see lovely snow-white Rhododendron. We also found a beautiful clear pink one. This was new to most of the group.

At the end of the trail we suddenly came into a dense growth of Hemlock, Rhododendron and Laurel. Tumbling over century-old rocks was the falls. The water was clear and very cold. It made a rippling, soothing sound as it left the falls on its way down the mountainside.

The tedious climb back up the trail did not seem so tiresome after viewing the spot that Nature had worked out in all its rustic beauty. The trail to Hidden Falls was just as beautiful and rugged as the Cascade Trail, but the flowers were somewhat different. There were masses of Pink Ladyslippers, some as high as 18 inches, Royal fern, Cinnamon fern and clumps of Laurel and Rhododendron.

Bladen County, North Carolina

By Lionel Melvin

It was in June or July of 1933 or 1934 on a Sunday afternoon walk with friends that I happened upon a plant that I had never seen before. Although I had collected herbarium specimens in nearby areas, and I knew most of the woody vegetation of Bladen County, North Carolina, I did not know this shrub; however, I suspected its relationship to Sassafras.

On the margin of a pond that was dry at this season, I found one lone clump 20 or 30 inches in height, bearing fruit, with handsome light green foliage. I took a rooted sprout of it for the purpose of having it identified be the botany department of the University of North Carolina; nevertheless, I forgot about it and left it "heeled in" in a damp spot at the end of a water trough never returning to get it. It was not until the Fall or Winter of 1938 that I gave this plant any further thought, and it came about having dinner one evening in the home of the late Dr. W. C. Coker. After we were settled in his living room, the conversation turned to plants and he inquired of my observations of those in the costal regions. Upon my mention and description of this forgotten plant found four or five years earlier, Dr. Coker surmised that I had found Lindera melissaefolium which the botany department of the University had searched for in vain over a period of many years. He asked me to bring living specimens of it when I returned to the University after the Christmas holidays, which I promised to do if I could find the location again.

The leaves were gone and the large pines around the pond had been cut away changing the entire appearance of the locality, but I finally found the clump and brought back three living specimens which were planted in the Coker Arboretum for observation. They turned out to be Lindera melissaefolium as Dr. Coker suspected. I returned to the location again on the 2nd day of July, 1939, and collected some very good leaf and fruit specimens forthe herbarium and at thesame time collected specimens of Litsea aestivalis (L.) Fern. which I had seen growing there when I first found the Lindera but did not at that time consider of any importance or interest.

In the Winter following, I visited for the fourth time this location for the purpose of securing plants of both Lindera and Litsea for propagation purposes and was alarmed to learn that the Lindera had suffered from frost. The upper and more tender portions of the plants were dead. The cutting away of thetimber left the plants unprotected. My efforts of propagating were interrupted by World War II. When I returned from service, not a living specimen of those I had transplant could be found.

In 1949 or 1950 my aunt, Mrs. R. F. Whittle, of R.F. D. #5, Fayetteville N. C. became interested in the propagation of Lindera, and we succeeded in relocating it, but we collected very sparingly in finding the plants in such plight: there were less of them and they looked sickly. They were dwarfish and the tops were killed back almost to the ground. Since my aunt's attempt at propagation failed, I became more concerned and wrote Dr. H. R. Totten of the botany department of the University of of North Carolina about the condition of the plants in the arboretum that I had brought up in January of 1939 had died in about 1948 ,

Dr. Totten replied saying that the last of the plants that I had brought up in January of 1939 had died in about 1948, and that Dr. A. E. Radford, curator of the herbarium, with a class of students had already made an effort to relocate Litsea and Lindera without sucess. He would like very much to make contact with Lindera again and would meet me in Bladen Easter day, April 5, 1953, and have me take him to the location. Plants were fewer but healthier on this visit. The preceeding winters had not been quite so severe as others.

I returned again last summer to see whether or not the Lindera had suffered from the drought and found them holding up fairly well, although many of the plants of Litsea had died. On this trip, I found another clump of Lindera on the opposite end of the pond with plants ranging in height form 10 to 20 inches.

My last visit was this past winter and I found the Lindera again suffering from winter-kill.

This season's efforts by Mrs. Whittle in Bladen County, Mrs. H. R. Totten in Chapel Hill, N. C. and myself in Guilford County promise to be successful. It seems that a loose, loamy, moist andacid soil is needed to asuure its growth. Fertilizers used in azalea culture are satisfactory. We are not certain that we can produce fertile seed, but it is reproducing by stolons. No other location of this rare plant is known in Nofth Carolina, andefforts to find it elsewhere to find it elsewhere, so far, have failed.

Editor's note: This paper was presented by Mr. Melvin at the North Carolina Academy of Science this spring.

News Items

Have you observed the Penstemon (Beard Tongue) on the roadsides this summer? The National magazine gave 22 pages in this issue to the Penstemon. If you wish to receive this helpful bulletin, send your subscription to: The National Wild Flower Preservation Society
3740 Oliver St. N. W. Washington, D. C.

The 1954 dues to the local society should have been paid in May. If you have not already paid, send them to : Mrs. H. P. Smith Route 2, Liberty.

Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Carroll, of Hobby Acres, were recent host and hostess to about 25 Girl Scouts and their counselors from Pittsboro. The "preserve" they have established is a real treat for training young people to care for our wild flora.

The 35 Liberty Girl Scouts spent two days of their day-camp week doing nature study work in the wild flower garden and on the woodland trails.

Scatter seeds from your Wild Flower garden on all your trips this summer and fall.

The editors would appreciate your comments on the newsletter to help determine what to include in the next issue.