NORTH CAROLINA WILD FLOWER

PRESERVATION SOCIETY, INCORPORATED

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am looking forward to the next two years as president of this Society. Each member is so very helpful and generous that it is a pleasure to work with you.

We are all, I am sure, anticipating with pleasure hearing Dr. Richie Bell of the University faculty at our meeting this fall. Dr. Bell is a botanist by profession and is a specialist on the flora of the Carolinas. It will indeed be a privilege to have him meet with our group and share with us some part of his vast knowledge of our plant life.

Eleanor Pegg

FALL MEETING

Our fall meeting is scheduled for October 5, 1958 at TANGLEWOOD PARK near Winston-Salem, N. C. There will be the usual business session at 11:00 o'clock at which a Board of Trustees will also be elected; a picnic lunch, which is always a high spot in our meeting, will follow.

At 1:00 P.M. Dr. C. Ritchie Bell has consented to talk to us about "PITCHER PLANTS". Dr. Bell is Assistant Professor of Botany at U.N.C. and has a vast store of knowledge on this subject. He is one of the five chosen to compile the book THE FLORA OF THE CAROLINAS, which is being done by the Botany Department of U.N.C. We feel sure that everyone present will learn and benefit by his part in the program.

To reach Tanglewood Park take Highway 158 through Winston-Salem West. Go through Clemmons which is some twelve miles west of Winston-Salem; the park is just east of the Yadkin River. The park and entrance are on the south side and are well marked. The meeting will be at the PICNIC SHELTER AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER. There are Nature Trails, deer and other animals, an arboretum, a real train engine, also a jeep train tour to be had at twenty-five cents per person. Let's make this the biggest and best meeting yet.

Walter B. Braxton
Program Chairman

NOTES ON THE SPRING MEETING AT CLIFFS OF NEUSE

The spring meeting of the N.C.W.F.P. Society was held on May 18, 1958 at the Cliffs of Neuse. Twenty-eight members and three visitors were present. The following officers were elected:

President -- Mrs. Carl H. Pegg, 403 Laurel Hill Rd., Chapel Hill
First Vice-President - Mr. Walter B. Braxton, Braxton Lane, Greensboro
Second Vice-President - Mr. Lionel Melvin, Pleasant Garden
Corresponding Secretary - Mrs. J. A. Kirkman, Pleasant Garden
The treasurer reported a balance of $69.

It was announced that plans for the acquisition by the Society of the Pixie plant property for a preserve had failed; however, Dr. H. R. Totten reported that a considerable plot of the plant has been found near the McCain Sanatorium and that it is also plentiful near the Fort Bragg section.

Mr. H. P. Smith showed plants of arbutus and Shortia, both of which he had grown from seed.

Dr. Totten distributed a list of "Guides and Manuals for the Identification of Native Plants" for those who had not previously received a copy.

After the usual bountiful picnic lunch, the group was conducted by Dr. Totten along the trails to and from the Falls of the Neuse. He identified and commented on the various trees and shrubs found in the park and paid particular attention to the oaks pointing out the features by which the white oak group could be distinguished from the red oak group. Other trees noted included pines, ashes, cedars, and maples. Of interest was the Spanish moss on the live oak trees and the swamp huckleberry. Everyone enjoyed this instructive and interesting talk by Dr. Totten.

RAISING OUR NATIVE LILIES FROM SEED

Seeds of our native lilies ripen quite late in the fall and should be gathered at that time. Lilium Grayi is usually ready in middle September, but the other species are not ripe until October. If one delays too long, one will find the seed capsules empty since lily seeds are a favorite food of the birds. We usually locate a stand of lilies during their blooming period and carefully describe the place in a notebook so we can return to the exact location in the fall. It is surprising how hard it is to locate the plants when one has only a bare stem and a few seed pods to guide one.

All of our native lilies, with the possible exception of L. Catesbaei, are hypogeal germinating, which means that they require a fairly long period before the first leaf appears above ground. In addition they must have a period of low temperature to break the dormancy of the seed. For this reason it is best to plant the seeds in the fall, soon after collecting. If one cannot plant the same year as the seed is collected, then it should be stored in a closed container in the refrigerator, as lily seed rapidly loses viability in our warm and humid atmosphere.

Lily seeds are thin and wafer-like. If one places the seed on a sheet of thin paper and holds this over a light, one can see the tiny curved embryo. Seeds without embryos will not germinate and can be discarded. Some growers light-test all lily seeds in this manner before planting, but with freshly gathered seed of species it is probably not worth the effort.

One can plant lily seed in any porous friable soil. However, I have long used a mixture of peat moss and sand, about 1 to 1, with a small amount of powdered sheep manure added as fertilizer. This mixture drains so well and yet retains moisture that I much prefer it to any soil for germinating lily seeds. I also usually disinfect the seeds before planting by shaking them in an envelope with a small amount of seed disinfectant such as Semesan or Arasan. I do not know if this is necessary or not, but I seldom have failures with seed germination. The seeds are planted in flats of about six or eight inches depth, or clay pots may be used if only a few seeds are being planted. The seeds are scattered on the surface of the potting mixture and covered with a thin layer of the same mixture. They should then be kept moist and not allowed to dry out until the leaves have appeared above ground. This may occur the first spring, but with our American lilies often does not take place until the second spring. After the leaves have appeared no special attention is required other than that used for any other perennial plant. The seedlings should be sprayed with a good fungicide and an insecticide at two week intervals to protect against botrytis and aphids. It is a good idea to add a soluble fertilizer at this point. I use a mixture of 2 tablespoons of Captan, 1 tablespoon of Rapid-Gro, and 1.5 tablespoons of Malathion per gallon of water. I spray the lily seedlings every two weeks during the growing season, wetting the underside of the leaves, and spraying in the morning when the stomata are more open.

Our native lilies grow quite slowly and one should not expect any flowers for about four years. They may be grown on in the flats until they reach flowering size when they may be transplanted to their permanent place in the garden. Transplant only late in the fall or during the winter when the foliage has died down. Moving during the heat of the summer is invariably fatal here in the south.

There is another method of handling hypogeal germinating lily seeds which speeds up the results but requires more care. In a jar with a tight lid place enough vermiculite to fill the jar half full or more, add the lily seeds which have been disinfected with Arasan or Semesan, and shake well. Then moisten the vermiculite with water so that it is damp but not wet; that is, no water should run out when the jar is inverted. Put the cap on the jar and keep it in a warm place (about 70° F.) for three months. Then place the jar in the refrigerator for several more months. If one then examines the jar, one will see <u>tiny</u> bulbs with roots attached. These should be carefully picked out and planted in soil and the jar returned to the refrigerator for more seeds to germinate. This method works very well unless the seeds germinate during the heat of the summer. I have invariably failed under these circumstances here in Chapel Hill, as the tiny bulbs cannot stand the extreme temperature after removing from the refrigerator. However, it may be an excellent method to use in the western part of North Carolina.

G. O. Doak

There has been one response to the editors' suggestion for a "Have and Want Seeds" column; it is from Miss Monimia F. MacRae, 18 Cedarcliff Rd., Biltmore Forest, Asheville, N. C. She writes in part as follows: "I'd love some wild flower seed of this area--lady slipper, arbutus, orchid, violets of all sorts, etc. How can I get some? I deplore people digging plants from their native habitat to take home to perhaps die. If 1000 people did this near a town, how bare nature would be left. I have a tiny balanced woods. I cut only enough trees to place my house and drive. The edge of my drive will be native flowering trees and shrubs. (Maybe I am robbing other woods through my landscape man!)"

Those who failed to pay their dues of one dollar at the meeting last spring may pay them to Miss Bessie Pope at the fall meeting or mail them to her at Box 1264, High Point, N. C. You are asked to print your name and address so that you may receive copies of the Newsletter.

Mrs. G. O. Doak
Editor

Mrs. Phil Wicker
Associate Editor