N E W S L E T T E R

NORTH CAROLINA WILD FLOWER PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have been so helpful to me during the two years I served as your president; it has been a joy to work with you and come to know you all better. I am sure you will give my successor the same wholehearted support which you have accorded me.

Eleanor Pegg

SPRING MEETING

Your committee has selected Lake Waccamaw, N. C. for the place of our spring meeting and the date will be May 22, 1960. It can be easily reached off U. S. highways #74 and #76, 11 miles east of Whiteville, N.C. Turn off main highway on to N. C. highway #214 to the north shore and look for Smith's Anchorage. There you will find the picnic grounds. It is well marked.

The business session will be at 10:30 A.M. followed by our usual good picnic lunch.

We are indeed fortunate to have as our speaker Dr. Francis Harper who will have as his topic "William Bartram's Life in North Carolina and his Contributions to the Flora of the State". Dr. Harper is presently living in Chapel Hill and is a grantee of the National Science Foundation; he is a researcher in zoology and historical biology. He received his Ph.D. degree in vertebrate zoology from Cornell University. The list of his activities in the biological sciences as given in American Men of Science is long and impressive, and his travels have taken him to many places, including far northern Canada. His particular interests include the vertebrate fauna of the southeastern United States, extinct and vanishing mammals, and early American natural history. To this last category belong the research and publications on the journals and travels of John Bartram and William Bartram. He recently edited a new Naturalist's Edition of Travels of William Bartram; this edition was published by the Yale University Press in 1958. He is currently working on a long biography of William Bartram. Since Lake Waccamaw was the site of some of the Bartrams' work, it is very fitting that we should have our meeting at this place to hear of the life and contributions of the early naturalist.

Hope to see all of you on May 22, 1960.

Walter B. Braxton
Program Chairman

NOTES ON THE '59 FALL MEETING

The fall meeting in Chapel Hill was attended by well over thirty members despite the threatening weather. Several items of business were thoroughly discussed at the business meeting including the part our organization would play in the development of the Daniel Boone Native Gardens. The Secretary was instructed to write the sponsoring organization and suggest that when the site is ready for developing, we will have a meeting there and then decide what we will and can do. It was also voted to continue our

yearly contribution of ten dollars to the Elizabethan Gardens. After considerable discussion a show of hands placed the columbine first in the selection of a national flower, the trillium second and the violet third.

After lunch the group repaired to Howell Hall on the campus where Mrs. H. R. Totten, with the aid of many beautiful slides, recounted her trip to the British Isles in the summer of 1958. She attended the flower show in Chelsea Gardens--seven acres of exhibits under a tent--and visited many public and private gardens open for the tour. The rhododendrons and azaleas were in bloom at the time in the Kew and Wisley Gardens; many of this group of plants originally came from North America and they have been further improved and hybridized and in many cases returned to the United States. Some rhododendrons grew to a height of forty feet. The English use lots of evergreen background, but Mrs. Totten did not see as much boxwood as she had expected. There were slides showing Cedars of Lebanon, Scotch broom in various colors, native hawthorn (in yellow, white, and pink), Enkianthus, gardens on the roofs of department stores, scree gardens, heather, and many others.

The meeting was concluded by a leisurely tour through the Arboretum under the guidance of Dr. H. R. Totten and Mr. Lionel Melvin. It was an excellent opportunity to see our native trees and shrubs in fruit, particularly the hollies.

OUR NATIVE AMELANCHIERS
by Lionel Melvin

Shadbush, Shadblow, June-berry, May-cherry, Service-berry, Sarvice-berry, Sugar-plum, Sugar-pear -- these are some of the common names acquired by the various species, varieties and forms of the genus Amelanchier, represented by one or many species in the temperate regions of North America, Europe and Asia. In eastern North America there are perhaps 20-25 species, but they are so confusing to the botanists that a thorough classification will never be accomplished. In North Carolina we have perhaps six or more distinct species and many hybrids, all of which are useful and ornamental horticultural subjects. Relatives of such important fruit-bearing plants as apple, pear, peach and plum and such ornamentals as the rose and spirea, they are among the first of these to burst forth in spring with racemes of white and pink flowers, usually with the unfolding of the first leaves. Their berry-like, edible fruits are also among the first to ripen, offering valuable food to birds. Most of our species are usually medium or large shrubs but are subject to developing into small trees. This should be borne in mind when introducing them to our grounds. They are of easy culture and not too particular as to types of soil.

In my garden are growing plants of this genus collected from the mountains to the sea; the classification of these is difficult, but certain plants among them conform to the descriptions in botany manuals of species types.

In spite of variability, typical plants of Amelanchier canadensis from the Coastal Plain are recognized. This one is very common in acid soil around the margins of swamps and bays, usually forming clumps of many upright trunks. This characteristic is maintained when transplanted to the Piedmont. The flowers and racemes are smaller than those of the other two species listed below. The petals are usually oblong-obovate. Here flowering occurs the last week in March through the first week or two in April.

From the western margin of the Sandhills to the middle Piedmont the plants are extremely confusing, perhaps intergrading forms of A. canadensis and the next species,

A. arborea, which conforms more to type in northwestern Randolph, Guilford and Rockingham Counties. Its specific name, meaning tree-like, helps to distinguish it from its coastal relative, but above all, it differs most in the size of its flowers, which are half again to twice as large. The petals are more waxy in appearance and linear or narrowly oblong, whereas those of the above species are broadly oblong-obovate. Racemes are larger and more nodding. The leaves are more pointed at the apex and are usually cordate (heart-shaped) at the base, whereas, those of A. canadensis are usually rounded at the apex and base. In the wild state A. arborea is generally a shrub or small tree of one trunk, but it may be made to clump by cutting it back near the ground.

From the mountains and as far east as Stokes County is found a tree-like species resembling somewhat, and often confused with, the one immediately above, but careful study will clearly reveal many differences. In growth habit it compares favorably, but in the leaves it differs in the more regularly opposite secondary veins and the rounded base as opposed to the heart shape of the former. The flower petals are broader and usually larger, but with the same waxy appearance. The flowering period is latest of all the plants in my collection, usually two to three weeks later than A. canadensis and A. arborea. No other type that I have seen has over-wintering buds nearly so long and pointed. In our other species they are usually short and obtuse. Another characteristic of these buds is their tendency to form a semi-spiral around the twigs, which is not observed in any others in my collection.

Since the two plants of this description that I have came from points as remote as Jackson and Stokes Counties, I would assume that they represent a distinct species, and basing my conclusions on the description in Gray's Manual of Botany, I am inclined to assign these to A. laevis, fully aware of the fact that the ranges of A. laevis and A. arborea are given by some botanists as just the opposite of that given here.

After seven years of study of the genus only three species in the state can be recognized with any certainty, yet I feel confident that in my collection there are two or three more, but regardless of what species are available in your areas, any of them make desirable ornamental additions to your home grounds. I recommend these along with many other native shrubs and trees, in spite of the fact that, in my business, most of the plants used are exotic.

DUES TIME AGAIN — Please send dues of $1 to Miss Bessie Pope, P. O. Box 1264, High Point, N. C.; our year runs from June 1 through May 31.

Mrs. G. O. Doak
Editor

Mrs. Phil Wicker
Associate Editor