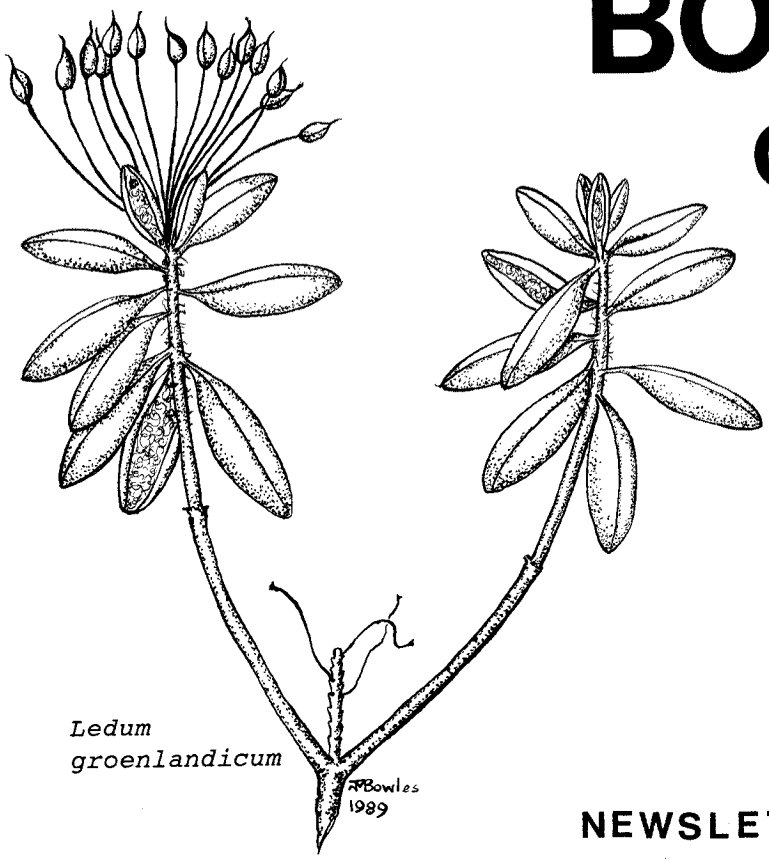
FIELD BOTANISTS OF ONTARIO



Ledum groenlandicum

NEWSLETTER

Fall 1989

CONTENTS:

Increase in Membership Dues 2
Results of the Membership Survey 3
Report of the Axe Lake Field Trip 4
More on the Grimsby Garden 4
Review of "Ferns and Fern Allies of Canada" 6
Call for Unpublished Checklists 7
Annual General Meeting 1990 7
A Name for the Newsletter? 8
A Patron Saint for Botanists 8

FIELD
BOTANISTS of
ONTARIO

NEWSLETTER
Published quarterly by the FBO.

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MEMBERSHIP DUES

At a recent meeting of the FBO Executive, it was decided to establish membership dues at $12.00 individual and $15.00 family. Family membership entitles each family member to attend FBO functions, but only one newsletter will be mailed to the household. The increase in dues arises partly from the higher production and mailing costs of our newsletter.

!!! REMINDER !!!

YOUR FBO MEMBERSHIP FOR 1990 FALLS DUE IN THE NEW YEAR.

PLEASE USE THE FORM INSIDE THE BACK COVER OF THIS NEWSLETTER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

RESULTS OF MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The objectives of the FBO define our reasons for joining together. These include opportunities for field botanists to meet and pursue their interests through field trips and meetings, access to educational resources for field botany, exchange of botanical information and provision of resources for local clubs and interest groups.

Our members share an interest in field botany and enjoy the fellowship which comes with sharing a concern about wild plants. A membership questionnaire was sent out with the 1989 renewal form in order to assess the degree of interest in present club activities and identify potential new direction. Of our 225 members, 181 received questionnaires and 143 responses were returned (a very high percentage).

Regarding their specific interest in botany, wide spectrum interests were expressed by 76% of members, general botany by 75% and photography by 60%. There was also significant interest in other activities including plant distributions, plant atlasing, plant collecting, checklists, inventories and life lists. Some members are particularly interested in certain habitats including wetlands (48%), alvars (27%), aquatic (21%) and other habitats, including grassland/prairies and woodlands (3%).

Plant groups of particular interest to members include 'any plants' (48%), orchids (43%), ferns (39%), rare plants (36%), trees (34%), shrubs (31%), sedges and grasses (20%), mosses (21%) and lichens (17%).

One of the objectives of the FBO, to provide educational resources in field botany, is achieved partly through workshops. Forty two percent of responding members expressed interest in attending workshops. Suggestions for future workshops included assistance in plant identification, general botany and plant ecology, mounting specimens, photography and sketching. Some members also asked for help selecting the best field guides and learning how to use them.

Field trips provide the best way of exchanging botanical information in the field and 66% of members expressed interest in attending field trips, 17% in helping and 8% in leading them.

Members were also polled on their degree of interest in electronic data exchange. There was moderate interest (11-34%) in areas that would be enhanced by computer technology including plant distribution records, plant atlasing, record keeping, checklists, inventories and life lists. About 46% of members appear to have access to personal computers, but not everyone is interested in data exchange.

Anyone wanting to pursue their interest in data exchange, or attend a possible workshop on the topic next year should contact:

Stephen Gray
Data Base/Membership Chairman

(613)-687-4739

ATLANTIC COASTAL PLAIN SPECIES AT AXE LAKE

On the sunny morning of August 20, 1989 eighteen FBO members set out in canoes on Axe Lake, about 25 Km. north of Huntsville. Our goal was to seek out Atlantic coastal plain species growing on the sandy shoreline.

The leader was Paul Keddy, Associate Professor of Botany at the University of Ottawa, who has worked at Axe Lake for many years.

After several minutes of paddling we were treated to the beautiful sight of meadow-beauty (*Rhexia virginica*) in full bloom. We also saw yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris caroliniana*), horned bladderwort (*Utricularia cornuta*) and one-flowered dropseed (*Muhlenbergia uniflora*) among others.

Spatulate-leaved sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) was scattered liberally along the shorelines and at one site bright green bog clubmoss (*Lycopodium inundatum*) snaked its way along the ground in a spreading network among the other vegetation.

For those interested in further reading about Atlantic coastal plain plants and learning more about what they missed, the following articles are good introductions.

Keddy P.A. 1981. Vegetation with Atlantic coastal plain affinities in Axe Lake, near Georgian Bay, Ontario. Canadian Field Naturalists **95(3)**: 241-248.

Reid, R. 1987. A Little Bit of Atlantic. Seasons **27(4)**: 20-23.

Judy Hernandez

MORE ON THE GRIMSBY GARDEN

In a previous Newsletter (Spring, 1989) we discussed some of the unusual weeds encountered by George Meyers in his native plant garden. As promised, we now review some of the surprises and successes which George has had.

There are probably three major components to the success of this garden. First and foremost, George is a Quercophile - an oak lover - and he has over 25 species and varieties to prove this. George has been interested in oaks at least since 1958. That was when he transplanted a seedling of Shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), from St. Phillip's-by-the-Lake Anglican Church, because of its brilliant red fall colour. At that time he thought it was a pin oak (*Q. palustris*), but was disappointed when the acorns were wrong. He then decided it must be a hybrid between red and pin oak (*Q. rubra* X *palustris*). Of course it was not until years later that the discovery was made of Shumard oaks growing in Ontario.

George also has a number of southern oaks which are doing very well at the latitude of Grimsby. For fear of winter kill he places his live oak (*O. virginiana*) in the garage over winter, but his laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*) thrives outside all year and now forms a hedge. One laurel oak is fifteen years old with a 8-10 cm. trunk and a growth rate of about 45-60 cm a year.

Most of the oaks were started as acorns and another southern specialty, scrub oak (*Q. ilicifolia*), from Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, has a trunk diameter of about 7.5 cm. and is as tall as a house. As this species normally grows as a shrub, George wonders if his might make the scrub oak Honour Roll!

Pride of place goes to the Georgia oak (*Q. georgiana*), a gorgeous little tree which very few people know because of its restricted range. The Grimsby garden contains a dozen specimens of this oak which is on the US Endangered Species list.

Other oaks of interest include chinquapin oak (*Q. muehlenbergii*), which George says has the best tasting fruit of any oak, and the deceitful oak (*Q.* X *fallax*) which is a fairly common hybrid between bur oak (*Q. macrocarpa*) and chinquapin oak.

A second feature of the garden is the succession of blooms throughout the year. From winter jasmine (*Jasminum officinale*) and common chickweed (*Stellaria media*), both of which can flower in January, to the late fall composites there is a continuous change of colour and texture. There are not a lot of showy flowers, nor do many flowers bloom together, but there is always some flowering activity.

In spring the six species of trillium are notable. Of these Huger's trillium (*T. cuneatum*) from North Carolina is the prize. George states that this magnificent plant emerges in late March and flowers each April 12!

Recently prairie species have taken a larger share of the garden. They require no maintenance or watering and are at the right latitude and temperature. As well there is a profusion of blooms in August and September. Seeds for a wide variety of native prairie species are available from the various seed exchanges. In mid-August the garden features turk's-cap lily (*Lilium michiganense*), butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), grey headed coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), lance-leaved coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*, foxglove beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*) and three or four species of ground-cherry (*Physalis* spp.) all in their glory.

By November it is mainly the sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.) and their relatives such as leaf-cups (*Polymnia* spp.) and compass-plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) which continue to hold their flowers.

The third feature of the garden is the variety of berries and fruits available. George points out that the beauty of native fruits is that you do not have to spray them because the plants are seldom bothered by pests. Of his hawthorns (*Crataegus* spp.) George has determined that soft hawthorn (*C. mollis*) is preferred for its sweet mellow flesh. It seems that Allegheny Juneberry (*Amelanchier alleghensis*) is the superior Juneberry. The fruits can provide a real feast in August. For anyone who has a penchant for dolmathes, the Greek delicacy wrapped by a grape leaf, George has determined that riverbank grape (*Vitis riparia*) is best.

Perhaps the most satisfying native fruit is pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) which has to be harvested at just precisely the moment of ripeness. Fruits have to be gathered as they fall to the ground, before the ants and slugs have attacked them. A very nice desert can be made by removing the skins and whipping up the flesh into a custard.

Over the years various naturalist groups have visited this famous garden, perhaps attracted as much by the enthusiasm of the proprietor as by the wealth of botanical exhibits. The Niagara Peninsula has much to offer the botanist and it is clear from the richness of this garden that a lot of pleasure can be derived from cultivating native plants.

George Bryant

FERNS OF CANADA

Cody, William J. and Donald M. Britton 1989. Ferns and Fern Allies of Canada. Agriculture Canada, Research Branch. pp. 430.

The publication of this long-awaited book will fill a huge gap in the library of any Canadian field botanist. Written by two distinguished professionals, the final product has justified the many years of preparation.

In their introduction the authors note that their objectives were to bring together for the first time all the ferns and fern allies of Canada, to provide references to the literature and to supply keys, descriptions and illustrations for all species.

The book includes 160 full page line drawings by V. Fulford. The detail of some of these drawings is quite fine and they add immeasurably to the enjoyment of the text. The 159 dot maps are produced together after the species descriptions. Unfortunately the page number for species descriptions is not given on these maps.

The maps show all of Canada and part of Alaska and Greenland. This allows some interesting comparisons of distributions. For instance, the most widespread pteridophyte seems to be field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) which appears to be present at every site studied in Canada in addition to thirty three in Greenland. Other species are limited to only a few locations. Examples include the two species of mosquito fern (*Azolla* spp.). One species has been recorded from Hamilton, Ontario and the other from Salmon Arm, B.C.. We note, by the way that the maps for these two species are reversed.

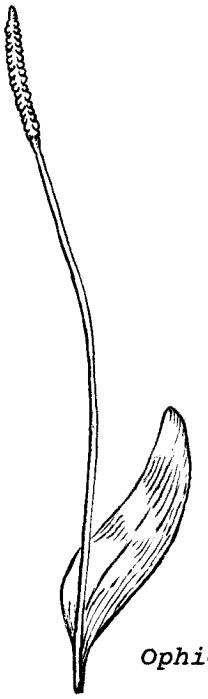
Disjunct populations revealed by the maps are also fascinating. The crag holly fern (*Polystichum scopulinum*) and Indian's dream (*Aspidotis densa*) are both recorded in British Columbia and again on the other side of the continent in eastern Quebec, but not between.

A glossary, which is thorough, but surprisingly easy to understand, is given. One other feature of the book which makes it a joy to read is the large size of the print. One hopes this trend will continue. There a not many books about which it can be said that no Canadian Naturalist should be without, but this is one of them.

The book costs $38.50 and copies can be obtained by writing to:

Canadian Govt. Publishing Centre
Supply and Services Canada
OTTAWA, K1A 0S9
Canada

George Bryant



Ophioglossum pusillum

CALL FOR UNPUBLISHED CHECKLISTS

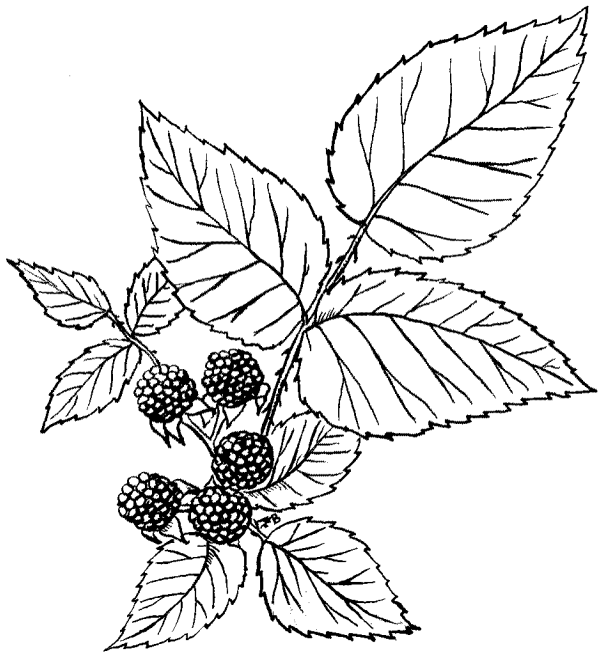
In 1979 the Systematics and Phytogeography Section of the Canadian Botanical Association initiated the preparation of a list of plant checklists of Canadian localities. The list covers primarily vascular plants, but also some algae, lichens and mosses. Entries are checklists available at the National Herbarium of the National Museum of Natural Sciences to May 1989.

The 147 entries are arranged alphabetically by author and grouped geographically by province and territory. No attempt has previously been made to solicit checklists so it is not an exhaustive compilation. Free copies of the list are available from the National Museum of Natural Sciences. One copy of each entry is on file at the National Herbarium and a photocopy can be obtained if it is not too lengthy.

FBO members who have compiled checklists for local or regional areas of interest (parks, conservation areas, townships, counties etc.) are encouraged to submit their material for inclusion in the computer listing maintained for the CBA. If voucher specimens have been collected to document the presence of critical species, the location of the specimens should be given.

Anyone who feels confident identifying plants should seriously consider making their lists available so that wider use can be made of the information. Please send copies of checklists to the following address.

Erich Haber
Botany Division
Ntnl. Mus. of Natural Sciences
P.O. Box 3443, Station D
OTTAWA, K1P 6P4



Rubus occidentalis

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1990

Our next AGM will be held around the second or third weekend in June somewhere in the Kingston-Ottawa area. The committee responsible for making this weekend its usual resounding success is currently scouting out accommodation and facilities in the area.

This will be the first AGM to be held in eastern Ontario and already there have been a number of suggestions for outings and leaders to some very interesting and little known botanical hot spots.

More details will be provided in a later newsletter, but we suggest you plan now to attend for an interesting, educational and entertaining weekend.

A NAME FOR THE NEWSLETTER?

The name of the newsletter is ... to be announced. To the chagrin of the executive, a name for the newsletter has not yet been chosen. This, however, is not because of any lack of suggestions. In fact membership response to our request for ideas was very gratifying. Twenty three members submitted over seventy names.

Some of the favourite titles included generic plant names such as "Trillium", "Calypso", "Cypripedium", "Hepatica" and "Arbutus". Others included plays on names, words or ideas for example "Polypodium", "Botarion", "Goldthread", "Pressings", "Tendrils", "Phytogram", "Cattales", "Broadcast", "Goosefoot & Duckweed", "Grassroots", "Sempervirens" and "Campestris". On the other hand "Field Botanist", "Flora of Ontario" and "Ontario Plants" have straightforward appeal.

With such a selection, one might suppose that the executive would have no difficulty in picking a winner, so what was the problem? One difficulty was that with so many good names to choose from it was a pity to reject any.

Another strong feeling was that the new name should be so distinctive that it should stand out among the other and lead to a unanimous choice. This did not happen, and it was felt that, rather than make do with a name that left some executive members uncomfortable, the subject should be put in abeyance until a concensus could be reached.

A thought held by several executive members was that the best title would be a plant name such as "Rhodora" or "Clintonia" which are used in the US. The objection to "Trillium" was that the name is too closely tied to the provincial government, whereas some people felt that "Calypso" might make the FBO sound like an orchid society and "Polypodium" may be too ferny.

So the jury is still out and the debate will no doubt continue. Meanwhile we have a no-name newsletter. For the present we will maintain the present format for the front cover with a different sketch each issue. We hope you like it!



A PATRON SAINT FOR BOTANISTS

According to Michel Labrecque, writing in "**Quatre-temps**", October 5th is the feast of botanists. Four well known botanists, Merrit L. Fernald (1873-1950), Jaques Rousseau (1905-1962), Piere Dansereau (1911) and Gisele Lamoureux (1942) share the same birthday. It so happens that October 5th is also the feast day of St. Fleur, patron saint of those named after flowers. St. Fleur, cannonised in 1347, worked all her life in a hospital for poor travellers and plague victims of Beaulieu in Quercy, France.