

Kate's mountain clover

Bill Grafton - Editor

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WEST VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**Volume 14:1****MAY 2006****HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

The board meeting was held at Sutton on March 18, 2006.

WVNPS will support legislation to add new plants to the West Virginia Noxious Weed List once the Invasive Plant Council (IPC) reaches agreement on which plants they think should be listed.

This will also provide strength for WVNPS's "worst of the worst" list. Several suggestions were to expand the list from 25 to 30 plants. Some suggestions were to add Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*). Discussions considered how to publicize our "worst of the worst" list and how to work with nurserymen and wholesale outlets such as garden centers.

Chad Kirschbaum reported on the series of botanical seminars held in Huntington during late winter and early spring.

Donna Ford-Werntz reported on her sabbatical leave project and the WVU Herbarium.

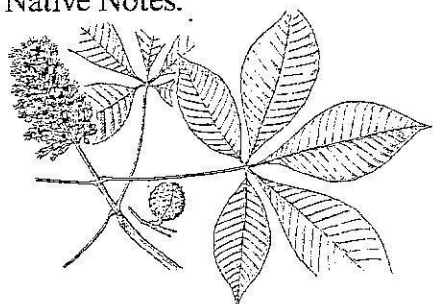
It was agreed that our next board meeting will be held on Friday evening (6:30 pm) on May 12th in Davis concurrently with the WV Wildflower Pilgrimage. WVNPS will have an exhibit on native plants and pass out our membership brochures and complimentary packets of Wild Lupine seeds (*Lupinus perennis*). Wild Lupine was chosen because it is one of our most beautiful wildflowers and is becoming very scarce in natural habitats. It also tolerates a wide range of light, soil conditions, and moisture, and is successfully grown throughout West Virginia.

The following resolution was passed, "WVNPS recommends that the Monongahela and George Washington-Jefferson National Forests use native plants and seeds for wildlife food plots, reclamation of log roads and landing areas, fire suppression areas, and reclamation of all disturbed areas. We are willing to accept the use of non-native plants and seeds that are proven not to be invasive, for a 2-5 year period while adequate supplies of native plant and seed sources are developed".

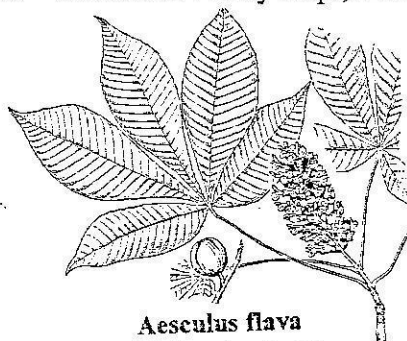
The treasurer's report showed a balance of approximately \$7500 in 2 checking accounts and 2 CD's.

Helen Gibbins will chair the Nominating Committee. The consensus was to have the Annual Membership Meeting in September near the Ohio River (Huntington, Point Pleasant, or Ripley).

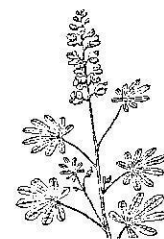
Present: Emily Grafton – President, Chad Kirshbaum – Vice President, Steve Mace – Corresponding Secretary, Helen Gibbins– Recording Secretary, Lois Kuhl – BOT, Jeff Patton – Tri-state Rep., Chris Gatens – Kanawha Valley Rep., and Bill Grafton –Editor Native Notes.



Aesculus glabra
Ohio buckeye



Aesculus flava
Yellow buckeye



Lupinus perennis
Wild lupine

TWO BUCKEYES ARE WORTH A STORY

West Virginia has two native buckeye trees and neither occurs in the Eastern Panhandle, except for a few yellow buckeyes near Keyser. Yellow buckeye is widely distributed from the high mountains to the Ohio River and is also sometimes called Sweet Buckeye. The second species is the Ohio buckeye (also called Fetid or Stinking buckeye).

Both species have poisonous nuts that have led to folklore stories that half of the nut is good to eat and the other half is poisonous.

Squirrels will often eat a part of the nut but will leave the rest. The truth is that squirrels feel the effects of the toxin in the nut that is called aesculin. After eating "so much" (about half), the squirrels know when it is time to stop eating.

Farmers wage war against both buckeyes because domestic stock (cattle, horses, sheep, etc.) will eat too many nuts and become ill.

Both species break bud early and get an early start with their fan shaped leaves composed of 5 finger-like leaflets. Soon after the leaves open, the large clumps of light yellow flowers appear.

Ohio buckeye is often only a large shrub or small tree and in West Virginia only occurs naturally along the Ohio River in Pleasants, Tyler, Wetzel, Marshall, Ohio, and Brooke Counties.

In past times the light-weight wood which is hard to split was used for artificial arms and legs. Also, carrying a buckeye in your pocket was supposed to ward off rheumatism. Water troughs and baby cradles were often made from short logs because the soft wood was easy to shave out.

Ohioans have always been given a hard time about the Buckeye name. This was especially true because the Ohio or Stinking buckeye has a nauseating smell from the husks around the nut and from the bark. The very positive sides of the tree are its flowers and useful wood.

The yellow buckeye can grow into a large tree of 120 feet tall and 40 inches in diameter. Neither the husks nor the bark have a nasty odor. The wood was once prized for draftsman's tables of architects, engineers, and geographers. Otherwise the trees were of little use for lumber.

Both trees got the buckeye name from the nuts that are shiny dark brown except for the lighter spot where they are attached inside the husk. This is very similar to the eye of a buck deer.

A rare horticultural variety of yellow buckeye with rose-red or purple flowers was discovered near the mouth of the Cheat River in West Virginia by none other than George Washington in 1784. He collected seeds and some of these were planted at Mount Vernon and were noted by Donald Culross Peattie in his classic book "A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America".

4 ASH TREES AND THEIR QUESTIONABLE FUTURE

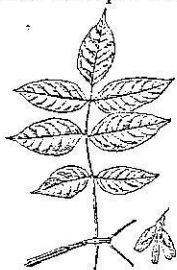
West Virginia has 4 species of ash trees. White ash (*Fraxinus americana*) and red ash (*F. pensylvanica*) can be very difficult to tell apart. White ash normally has a smooth margin on the leaflets while red ash normally has teeth on the margins. The samaras are the best identifying characteristic.

Hairs can also be used. White ash is often whitened below and without any hairs but a variety called the Biltmore ash is very hairy beneath on the leaflets. Red ash is normally hairy below but also has a variety called the green ash that has no hairs on the undersides of the leaflets. **Is that confusing or what???**

White and Biltmore ash are common throughout West Virginia but Red and green ash are mostly restricted to riverbanks and floodplains. White ash ball bats have hit the home runs of many young men and women, as well as, Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron. Ames Tool Co. of Parkersburg has used ash for handles for hoes, rakes, hammers, and shovels for over a century. Most of the bent wooden parts of furniture are made from ash that is steamed. Once steamed it can be bent and will remain in that shape as it dries.

The third ash is black ash. It has sessile (stalkless) leaflets and is limited to alkaline wetlands in our higher mountains and the ridge and valley province of the Eastern

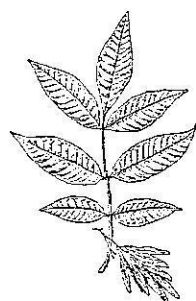
Panhandle. Black ash is often called Hoop or Basket ash. George Washington noted "hoop ash" on the borders of his deeds in the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers, yet no black ash have been recorded here in recent decades. Were they all cut for farm clearings or the did the swamps where they grew all get drained??



Blue ash
Fraxinus quadrangulata



Black ash
Fraxinus nigra



Red or green ash
Fraxinus pennsylvanica



White ash
Fraxinus americana

Thin strips of black ash could be separated along the line between the spring and summer wood layers and made it very useful for musical instruments or baskets. Curly ash made from burls on the trunks of black ash are especially prized by furniture makers.

The fourth ash is blue ash. It is easy to identify by its square-like twigs that are winged. It prefers to grow on limestone bluffs and is known only from Cabell and Mason Counties. Blue ash was used by early pioneers to make a blue dye from the bark.

All ash trees are under attack by the Emerald Ash borer. It was introduced into Canada and the United States near Detroit, Michigan. It had soon spread to Indiana and Ohio. Small nursery saplings shipped from Michigan spread the borer to Virginia and Maryland and the Columbus, Ohio area. Agricultural pest officials are not confident the Emerald ash borer can be stopped after millions of ash trees have died or have been cut, chipped or burned.

What a loss it would be to loose our 4 species of ashes!!!

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They really would like to hear from you!!!!

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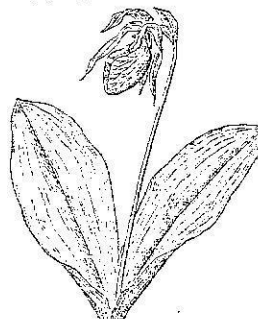
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Queen lady's slipper
Cypripedium reginae



Yellow lady's slipper
Cypripedium pubescens



Pink lady's slipper
Cypripedium acaule



Beard-flower
Pogonia ophioglossoides

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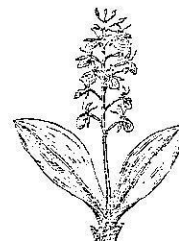
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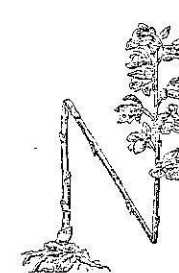
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Lily-leaved twayblade
Liparis liliifolia



Loesel's twayblade
Liparis loeselii



Crested coralroot
Hexalectris spicata



Crane fly orchid
Tipularia discolor



Grass pink
Calopogon tuberosus

PLANT IDENTIFICATION OF THE FUTURE

WVU HERBARIUM (WVA): 2005 Annual Report
 Donna Ford-Werntz, Curator, dford2@wvu.edu
 Biology Dept., Life Sciences Building

Dr. Ford-Werntz returned from her 12 month professional development program (sabbatical) in July.

Dr. Ford-Werntz's sabbatical project was to produce a computer software identification key for non-cultivated West Virginia plants (2345 species). It was done in collaboration with Bruce Barnes (Pendleton, Oregon) using the XID System database application program. Her tasks involved included compiling plant character information, producing species descriptions, constructing data entries, and obtaining images. Most of Barnes' original work, covering about 75% of the West Virginia flora, was also reviewed and revised to achieve more consistent format and uniform content. To date, 1680 species (1220 updated, 460 new to XID) are completed, including the thirteen largest West Virginia plant families. Of the 2207 slides sent for scanning, almost half have been digitized.

Two factors enlarged the scope and size of the WV-XID project, slowing overall progress: 1) unanticipated editing of previously created material, including providing species descriptions when absent and 2) expansion to cover the complete WV Flora Checklist (in press), adding species not confirmed as naturalized and others only reported for the state (lacking a herbarium voucher specimen).

The final stage, activation and testing, is ongoing with continuing work to complete the project. The first trial was during Fall 2005 by six students in Biol 450 (Plant Systematics), and their response was very enthusiastic. They easily used the system, and the program performed beyond expectations, despite being unfinished. After devoting concentrated effort to this exciting and novel project, Dr. Ford-Werntz is pleased that the product has already demonstrated utility for identifying unknown plants.

SHORT TAKES

Fall Wildflower Weekend to be held @ Oglebay's Terra Alta Camp
September 15-17

"Introduction to Asters and goldenrods" by Allison Cusick

Volunteer Stewardship Work Day @ Ice Mountain Preserve – Hampshire County
Saturday, May 20th Contact: TNC Office 304 637-0160
Purpose is to control garlic mustard

The 6th Conference of International Carnivorous Plant Society @Frostburg State Univ.
Website: www.frostburg.edu/6thICPS/

A new plant for the US

This does not happen very often. John Pelton a retired Alcoa mechanic and amateur botanist had observed a showy fluorescent pink flower on rocky outcrops in and around the Quachita Mountains of central Arkansas for many years. The areas have been mined for bauxite (ore for aluminum). John knew it was a rose-gentian but could find nothing in any of his books to further identify the wildflower. An expert from Canada did identify the plant as new and named it Pelton's rose-gentian.

Peter Heus owns Enchanter's Garden near Hinton and propagates native plants and has a thriving business of selling and landscaping using these native plants. Peter did not make the newspaper but a nice color photo of the landscaping at the New River National Park Service facility at Sandstone made the front page of section D in the March 3, 2006 Charleston Gazette. Congratulations Peter!!

Emily Grafton bought some nice plants from Ron Boyer & Liz McDowell owners of Elk ridge Nature Works near Grantsville, Maryland for the native plant "Butterfly Garden" in Morgantown. Let's support our native plant nurseries as much as possible!!!!!!

LYME DISEASE AND BOTANIZING

It is time to be out in the fields and forests to check on your favorite wildflowers or to rid the areas of invasive exotics. Please take time to protect yourself from Lyme Disease. The following fact sheet was prepared by the WV Dept. of Health and Human Services.

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Information for the Public: Lyme Disease

What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. These bacteria are transmitted to humans by the bite of infected deer ticks (*Ixodes scapularis*, *I. pacificus*) and cause more than 16,000 infections in the United States each year. Most infections occur primarily during the spring and summer when tick populations are at their peak, but infection can occur at any time of the year.

What are the symptoms of Lyme disease?

The first symptom of Lyme disease is usually a characteristic "bull's-eye" rash (Erythema migrans or EM rash) at the site of the tick bite. This rash starts out small then slowly expands. Other symptoms include general tiredness, headache, fever, stiff neck, muscle aches, joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes. In late disease, chronic arthritis, and heart and nervous complications may occur.

How is Lyme disease spread?

People get infected through the bite of an infected tick. Lyme disease is not spread from person to person.

Who is most at risk for Lyme disease?

People are at the most risk for Lyme disease if they visit, work in, or live near wooded, brushy, or grassy areas where infected ticks are common.

How can I protect myself?

- Whenever possible, avoid areas that are likely to be infested with ticks, particularly in the spring and summer.
- If you go into tick-infested areas, wear light colored clothing so that ticks can be spotted on your clothes more easily.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants and tuck your pants into your socks.
- Ticks are usually located close to the ground, so wearing high rubber boots may provide additional protection.
- Apply insect repellents containing DEET to skin. Apply permethrin to clothing. Follow label instructions carefully, especially when applying repellents onto children.
- Perform a tick check all over your body. Remove attached ticks with a pair of fine tipped tweezers. DO NOT use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish or other products. DO NOT squeeze the tick. With fine tipped tweezers, grasp the tick firmly and as closely to the skin as possible. With a steady motion, pull the tick's body away from the skin. Cleanse the area with soap and water.
- Remove leaf litter, brush, and woodpiles around houses and the edges of yards.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION: Please sign me up as a WVNPS member!!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (Home) _____ Work _____

Email _____

Membership dues: Calendar year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31)

_____ Regular membership \$12 (includes all members of a household)

_____ Student membership \$ 8 (any student college age or below)

_____ Life membership \$ 200

Chapter membership is optional

_____ \$6 Tri-State (Huntington)

_____ \$6 Kanawha Valley (Charleston area)

****You must be a member of the state WV-NPS organization in order to join chapters.**

Mail all dues to : Steve Mace

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