On the Fringe

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO

Founding Chapter of
THE OHIO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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ON THE FRINGE
Quarterly Newsletter of the
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO
2651 Kerwick Road
University Heights, OH 44118

FIRST CLASS

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1998 DUES NOW DUE

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SOCIETY LEADERSHIP SEARCH

by Brian D. Gilbert

It has been quite a few years since the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio has had an election for officers and members of the Board. Many of the current Board members have carried the leadership of the Society unaided since the founding of the Ohio Native Plant Society syphoned off a large part of the Society's leaders.

In order to bring fresh ideas and new energy to the Society, and to share the responsibility of leadership, the current Board has scheduled an election of officers and Board members for the Annual Dinner meeting of 1998. Toward that end the Board is requesting that anyone interested in serving on the Board, please make your desire know to any Board member. The Board typically meets 3 to 4 times a year for about 2 hours per meeting, not a lot of time. We are also looking for Society members who might also be interested in assuming leadership of a Board Committee. In the past these committees have included: education, fund raising, hospitality, membership, newsletter, program and field trips, and publicity. Not all committees are currently active or have a chairman.

The current officers are: President, Tom Sampliner, Vice President and Program Committee Chairman, Dr. George Wilder, and Treasurer, John Augustine. At-Large Board Members are: Judy Barnhart, Duane Ferris, Nate Finck, Brian Gilbert and Tom Yates. If you have any interest in Board membership or in volunteering for a committee, please contact any Board Member.

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1998 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

by Dr. George J. Wilder
Program Committee Chairman

It is advised that all participants bring a brown-bag lunch on all field trips and to all workshops. All please call the trip leader to let him or her know you will be coming. This is very important in case of any last minute changes which participants may need to know about. A trip leader and his/her phone number will be listed for each event. Please feel free to invite guests.

THURSDAY, **FEBRUARY 19,** 7:00 PM TO ABOUT 9:00 PM - MEMBERS' SLIDE SHOW AT THE CHAGRIN FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY. Members are invited to show color transparencies that they have prepared of plants or of other natural phenomena. Also, individual members are encouraged to attend, whether or not they are showing transparencies. Members planning to show slides should arrive with their transparencies correctly arranged within a carousel. If many members bring slides participants will be limited to showing not more than 20 slides. If few people attend there were be no limit to the number of slides shown. The Society will provide a a slide projector and remote-control changer. The library will provide a screen. There is no need to call in advance for this event, to make reservations. DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of I-271 and Chagrin Blvd., take Chagrin Blvd. (Route 87) east to its intersection with Lander Road (Lander Circle). Continue on Chagrin Blvd. east of Lander Circle (not Route 87) about 4.5 miles to Chagrin Falls

Village. (Chagrin Blvd. becomes Orange Street in the Village.) While staying on Orange St. cross Main Street (the first traffic light) and you will find the Chagrin Falls Pubic Library on the right about 1/4 east of the traffic light. The Chagrin Falls Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library is at 100 East Orange Street.

SUNDAY, **MARCH 22,** SNOW TRILLIUM OF KLONDIKE, OHIO, 9:30 AM TO ABOUT 5:00 PM. Visit the largest population of snow trilliums (*Trillium nivale*) in Ohio. The snow trillium is one of three endangered or threatened trilliums in Ohio. This site near Delaware is believed to be the largest single concentration of this species in Ohio. It is on private property and, therefore, reservations for this trip are a must. **Brian Gilbert** will lead this trip. Please call him by March 15 for reservations. His work number is (440) 729-9448 and his home number is (216) 486-8765.

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TRIFLING WITH TRIPHORA AND SILLY OTHER CILIARIS

by Tom Sampliner

Billowy cumulus clouds chased each other across a blue sky on Wednesday August 6th, 1997. It was was a perfect day for August, or any other month for that matter. Temperature was 70's with both gentle breezes and low humidity, a rare combination during our summers. In response to a last minute invite from fellow Native Orchid Alliance member Clete Smith of Pittsburgh, I was to drive there for

rendezvous and join an expedition to known sites for the Three Birds orchid (*Triphora trianthophora*) and the yellow fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliris*) with prospects for others.

Our destination was Norton, West Virginia with another Alliance member, Dr. Doug Jolly, to join us at Weston. These areas are some that time has gently passed by, keeping changes to modest proportions. Seeing as how Clete was working one-half day, I was thankful the muse of sleep had been kind and generous the night before this trip. I knew full well my companions would use every second of available light in the field. Specifically, that would mean dinner at 8-9 PM locally followed by the drive back to Pittsburgh where I would retrieve my car. That would leave me at midnight or later to commence my lonely ride home. Bet I surprised my three cats with an arrival at 2:30 AM. Are we orchid hunters nuts or what?

Back to the pleasant descriptive portion of this article. A drive south of Pittsburgh into West Virginia is scenic anytime. Rounded rolling hills fill your field of vision. Mists and low clouds seem to play a constant game of tag with the mountains. Those puffy white clouds bouncing along provide fascinating contrasts with the bands of green vegetation and purple of the mountains. You wish you could stop to enjoy and photograph so many passing scenes. Time, however, on a journey such as this permits no such luxury.

At Weston, we bid adieu to I-79 and headed east along Rt. 33 to reach the Norton area. It was there I was to make my first acquaintance with the habitat and the plant, Three Birds orchid. The habitat was mixed woods generously

strewn with boulders of all different sizes, each liberally covered with ferns, mosses and mushrooms. E.T. could have appeared at any moment. The forest was second growth; however, a curious local informed us that tree rustlers were a problem. Apparently our professed interest in wildflowers rather than trees satisfied the concerned inquiry.

Perhaps the most common ground cover was the low growth of violets in fruit. Also frequent were the multiple-tiered fruiting stalks of Indian cucumber root (*Medeola virginica*). Rhododendrons told of great beauty earlier in the season. The most prolific groups of *Triphora* were adjacent to the dirt road. One may conclude that disturbance is helpful to this species. According to the historical perspective supplied by my knowledgeable companions, blooming for this species has proven notoriously fickle. Unfortunately, our visit was to prove about 4-5 days premature to catch these orchids in bloom. All we were to see this date were still in rather tight bud. Too bad; we saw clusters of 15-25 which would have made impressive pictures.

We all agreed that once you actually see the habitat for a species it becomes far easier to pick out growing plants no matter what stage of growth they are at. It was striking how each of the several sites we visited could have passed as mirror images of each other. I should add that in addition to the boulders, there were penetrations of various rock formations extending as ledges. Walking around can be quite an adventure.

Each site did have liberal doses of the rattlesnake-plantain orchid (*Goodyera*

pubescens). A number were in full bloom. The reticulated leaves make an attractive ground cover. Ferns and mushrooms were everywhere.

On our way to our last hope for Three Birds in bloom this day, we passed a roadside open area laden with blueberries and many of your old field favorites. Now I don't know about you, but I wouldn't normally equate species like Queen Ann's lace (*Daucus carota*), Purple clover (*Trifolium pratense*), common St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and dewberries (*Rubus flagellris*) with orchids. I am more apt to believe when some less common species such as: spotted wintergreen (*Chimiphila maculata*), Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*) and that attractive tree member of the Ericaceae, Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*) add their presence to the site. I better believe as this was not only my first view of yellow fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*) in bloom, but in generous quantity and clearly in peak bloom. Many were at least 12" high and of so bright an orange that they literally jump out of the road sides at you. As we walked among them, Doug was the first to spot yellow bartonia (*Bartonia virginica*) exhibiting small yellow racemes very stiff and erect and opposite leaves. The orchid grew from the sandy openings into the woodland. At one spot the ground rapidly descended into what obviously was a coal scrape. Even down there the *ciliaris* had penetrated. I concluded that disturbance was agreeable to this species. The orange green color combination is striking; even more so is the image obtained when you isolate a floret filling the frame through a macro lens. This site reminds me of many portions of our Oak

Openings. Curiously enough, that is northern Ohio's only current site for this orchid. Perhaps, this harkens back to the thought that a mental image of the type habitat is quite important for use as a homing beacon when exploring for your target of the day.

Our last site for the day was on private property; folks known to my companions who were generous in their playing host to orchid hunters such as our motley crew. An upland woods provided the now familiar habitat. However, once again we were only to see orchids in tight bud and not nearly in the quantity my companions expected from prior year visits. Today the woods only showed off *Goodyera*. However, the lady of the house didn't want us to leave disappointed so she directed us to walk down along a creek where after several years absence, a purple fringeless orchid (*Platanthera paramoena*) decided it was time to reappear. Due to the relentless attack by deer, it was necessary to protect the valued specimen with wire cage enclosure. In the field was a pleasant and plentiful supply of Ragged fringed orchid (*Platanthera lacera*), many still in fine condition.

As we left the farm in that golden glow of late day light, we would revisit the *ciliaris* site now that the wind had completely ceased for the day. Photography is at it's finest when those final golden rays at the end of the day bathe everything in dramatic light. As we retraced our steps to the *P. ciliaris* we saw a most curious sight, a herd of deer were grazing. Several first year animals were romping along the inside perimeter of the fence while the adults concentrated on the important business of grazing. The youngsters were fast

losing the remnants of their white spots now almost completely able to blend in with their herdmates. These fawns seemed impressed with our passing and were stimulated to put on a performance without request of cavorting up and down the fenceline perimeter. Aside from looking up to assure were were no threat, the adults merely continued with business.

I sure wished I had time to photograph the sourwood trees. I had to be content with the last views of the orchids. My flash equipped companions were able to persevere longer than I. However, I was quite content to slowly pack up my gear and contemplate the many wonderful things seen this day. Stars were starting to appear. As we hit the main highway and become concerned with such mundane matters as dinner,I was seeing star formations that I could only dream about in the light polluted confines of home. At dinner, I was famished; I hadn't eaten since just prior to rendezvous with Clete in Pittsburgh. I realized the ordeal ahead of me. It would be midnight before retrieving my car and then commencing my 2 1/2 hour journey home alone. Guess what dominates the highways that time of night? Trucks. My wondrous day journey would drift far into the night. To echo a refrain from country greats, The Kendalls, "Thank God for the radio"; that's what got me home.

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A REVIEW
"The Sex Life of Flowers"
by Bastiaan Meeuse and Sean Morris
Facts on File, 1984
by Tom Sampliner

The above title by Bastiaan Meeuse and Sean Morris is based upon a PBS nature program that was call "Sexual Encounters of the Floral Kind". Sure sounds like a title I would come up with. Outstanding photographs are liberally distributed throughout the book, courtesy of Oxford Scientific Films Ltd.

As a logical progression, the book takes the reader from the earliest known forms of reproductive plant devices and strategies up through what seems to be current trends. Throughout the work, the authors do not shy away from using botanical nomenclature for plant parts and processes. They define and explain terms as the book progresses. If that isn't enough, there is a glossary as one of the appendices.

Certainly, pollination has evolved a variety of schemes. The most obvious airbourne to water and animal carried are well covered. Those are the expected: what is not yet all the more intriguing are such esoteric schemes such as flower animal mimicry, deceitful promises of food and drink, symbiotic relationships of the most intricate methods between flower, pollinators and even herbivores.

It was interesting to read of reproduction among the earliest plants prior to the evolution of sexual methods. Trends and probable theories and explanations for the arising and failure of various schemes should keep you fascinated.

Just a couple of factual tidbits may entice you to read more. For example, the pigment carotene causes the bright orange color in the well know South African plant call Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia*). The same pigment in

our spring crocus flowers (*Crocus sativus*) gives the stigmas that orange color. These have been commercially dried and marketed as a coloring and flavoring agent, Saffron. Grass of parnassus (*Parnassia glauca*) features nectar guides we see as dark green venation leading toward central nectar glands that attract certain species of fly. In addition, a second attraction consists of 5 three pronged staminodes (sterile stamen) tipped with glistening drop-like false nectaries.

If disclosures like this fascinate you as they do me, then proceed to you nearest library where you can locate and take out this very enjoyable book.

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BLOSSOMS ON THE BRINK:
OHIO'S FEDERALLY ENDANGERED PLANTS

by Judy Bradt-Barnhart

On a cold and blustery December evening, 15 people braved a Chardon blizzard to come and hear Buddy B. Fazio, and Endangered Species Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, talk about the six federally endangered or threatened species that occur in Ohio. Rumor has it several others attempted to venture into the heart of Ohio's snowbelt to Geauga Park District's Big Creek Park but turned around enroute, unable to see in the blinding snow. One hearty sole didn't let the 180 degree spin almost into a ditch deter him from coming. Those that made it safely enjoyed a delightful program.

Mr. Fazio began his presentation with an overview of the Endangered Species Act itself.

The purpose of the law is to identify plants and animals that are in trouble and to protect these plants and animals and their habitats. Over 950 species are federally listed in the United States. He discussed the criteria for a species to become federally listed and the two categories they can be classified as:

*an *endangered species* is in danger of extinction throughout the area in which they are usually found

*a *threatened species* is one that could become endangered in the near future.

As an Endangered Species Biologist for 8 years, Buddy Fazio is involved with protecting all listed species in Region 3 which covers Ohio as well as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. Overall, Ohio has twenty two species on the federal list; one mammal, three birds, six mussels, one fish, three insects, two reptiles and six plants.

Using beautiful color slides, Mr. Fazio then proceeded to briefly summarize each of the six plant species and how the Endangered Species Act applies to them.

The threatened **Virginia spiraea** (*Spiraea virginiana*) occurs only in Scioto County near the extreme tip of Ohio. It has glabrous oblanceolate leaves and white flowers that bloom in June. As the greater concentration of these plants occurs further east, the lead management is handled through the New England office.

The threatened **small whorled pogonia** (*Isotria medeoloides*) is also found only in Scioto County and handled through the New England office. The sepals on the greenish yellow flower are much shorter then the more

common whorled pogonia and the whorled leaved droop down.

The **running buffalo clover** (*Trifolium stoloniferum*), the only federally endangered species, is found in southwestern Ohio usually in disturbed habitats such as old logging road. It is very similar to the non-native white clover but the flower stems are axillary on the buffalo clover and arise from the creeping stem on the weedy species.

The threatened **Eastern prairie fringed orchid** (*Platanthera leucophaea*) is found in five locations around the state. The beautiful white flower with three-parted fringed lip and long spur occurs on moist, grassy, marly areas.

The threatened **Lakeside daisy** (*Hymenoxys herbacea*) with its solitary, yellow daisy-like flower occurs naturally on Marblehead Peninsula growing on open calcareous soil. In order to preserve the genetic diversity of the species it has been introduced on Kelley's Island and appears to be doing well.

Closer to home, the threatened **northern monkshood** (*Aconitum noveboracense*) occurs in 3 locations in Summit County and one in Hocking County. The distinct blue hood-shaped flowers and pubescent stem help distinguish it from Southern Monkshood (*A. uncinatum*). This plant is typically found growing on shaded sandstone cliffs or in cool ravines. One population in Summit County is in trouble due to salt leaching down from the road above. Steps are being taken to try and alleviate this problem.

After a plant has been federally listed, populations are then monitored, the habitat is protected and a recovery plan is devised that describes actions needed to help the plant survive. Being an employee of the federal

government stationed in Ohio, Buddy Fazio works quite closely with botanists of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to protect rare plant species. Keep in mind, Ohio has it own list of rare native plants classified as endangered, threatened , potentially threatened or presumed extirpated in our state alone. The 1996-97 list contains 654 plants, each one on the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves Natural Heritage Database.

After the program, endangered species posters and handouts were available for everyone before making their way back out into the winter wonderland.

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MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING IN THE STATE OF OHIO

by Tom Sampliner

They're at it again. The enemies of nature have obtained from the State Division of Wildlife a liberal migratory game bird hunting season for 1997-98 that should shock, outrage and anger into action any friend to our feathered wildlife. It was only by chance that I came upon a stack of pamphlets written by the Division which sets for the species, seasons and bag limits. The pamphlets were on a table at a post office branch I frequently use; though I have since looked elsewhere for more and can not find any.

While this may not be a botanical topic, any threat to nature should be met by all groups involved in any phase of study, research or pure enjoyment of.

That which is written in the state brochure, Publication number 298, should be

enough to convince you of the gravity of the scenario. The first listing is for rails, limited to Virginia and Sora. Their open season occupies the time from September 1st through November 9th and permits daily bag limit of 25 with possession limit after the first day of 25. May I first ask the state why rail hunting is even permitted let alone why the excessive numbers to be taken? Do these macho hunters take pleasure in felling such uncommon birds? Is it because they like to secret themselves in tall wetland grasses that they become a challenge? Does anyone actually eat then and if so why? Anyone knowledgeable regarding birds that I can find to talk to concurs this is an outrageous harvest and rails are not numerous enough to sustain this. Hold on folks, that's just the first example. YOu won't like any better the limits regarding teal, snipe, moorhen and couple others.

Who influenced and ADVISED THE DIVISION? Damage done, it is up to each of you to write, phone, etc. the state and your legislators. You'll get a chuckle out of this. Only nontoxic shot may be used take: waterfowl, rails, snipe, and gallinules; however, both doves and woodcock may be taken with lead shot. After all, the Division doesn't want any stray lead out there.

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A REVIEW:
"A Guide to the Orchids of Bruce and Grey Counties, Ontario"
by the Bruce-Grey Plant Committee
of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists, 1997

by Tom Sampliner

Orchid enthusiasts will immediately recognize these Ontario counties by name as the portals to the Bruce Peninsula. This orchid rich land is part of the the Niagra escarpment protruding into Lake Huron on the west and Georgian Bay on the east. This has long been a mandatory pilgrimage for plant lovers, especially the orchidophile.

The book started as a local field guide and list that had begun as early as 1978. This recent expansion into fully annotated work is a nice addition to the literature. It includes such features as a GLOSSARY, A KEY, CLIMATE CHART, FLOWERING TIME CHART AND AN INTRODUCTION that starts with the basics of orchid morphology to make a very lay-reader friendly book.

Each annotation provides easy to read description of the floral parts and dimensions, significance and derivation of the botanical nomenclature, habitat information and some line drawings. This is also one section containing high quality photographic plates for all of the species. This obviously is helpful to the novice as well as aesthetically pleasing.

It is comforting to see that conservation and protection for orchids and their habitats has been included. Plight of many species must be set forth to the public. The book does list those species of concern to all of Canada.

The book is a result of cooperative funding and support by numerous groups. Among them, you should recognize the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Bruce-Grey Plant Committee of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists. Among the persons given contribution credit, many of our members should recognize the name

of Canadian botanist and guide, Joe Johnson.

This book makes a nice field checklist and guide for trips to the Bruce. It can be ordered from the Bruce-Grey Plant Committee, c/o Owen Sound Field Naturalists, Box 401, Owen Sound, Ontario, N4K 5P7. The cost is $12.50 US and includes postage. "A Checklist of Vascular Plants for Bruce and Grey Counties Ontario" is also available from the Committee for $4.50 US. Make checks payable to the Bruce-Grey Plant Committee.

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TWO REVIEWS:
"Trilliums" by Fred & Roberta Case
Timber Press, 1997
"American Treasurers" by Don Jacobs
Eco-Gardens, 1997
by Brian D. Gilbert

While most people think that trillium are easy to identify in the field (three petals, three sepals, three leaves), they can be, in fact, one of the more difficult plants to identify correctly. Traditional field guides have been woefully inadequate at least partly because the genus has been rife with misinformation. The only quality monograph on trillium, "Trillium Genus Illustrated" by Samejima and Samejima was published only ten years ago. But for field work it had two weakness. First was that about 30 pages were only printed in Japanese. Second was that the book is large, expensive and too beautiful to risk taking into the field.

This year two books on trilliums were released by experts in wildflower gardening. Their availability will be greatly appreciated

by anyone struggling to understand this often confusing genus. While both are good reference works, they are both small enough to be be useful in the field. Both books represent the knowledge from two plantsmen with life-long interest in trillium. Both works build heavily on the work of Samejima and Samejima but also on the work of John D. Freeman of Auburn University. Dr. Freeman was primarily responsible for reducing the confusion among the sessile (stemless) trillium. His death this Easter has removed a consummate botanist and kind and generous human being from us. He will be missed greatly.

"Trilliums" by Frederick W. Case, Jr. and Roberta B. Case (285p. $29.95, Timber Press, 1997) is the better of the two books in my opinion. The Cases have included a through species list including: forms, varieties and hybrids; a good, though incomplete glossary; excellent photographs; a good bibliography; a functional index; a good listing of synonyms and a greatly appreciated key to the species with **illustrations**.

"American Treasures: Trilliums in Woodland and Garden by Don L. Jacobs and Rob L. Jacobs (152p., $30.00, Eco-Gardens, 1997) is a little stronger than the Cases' book in gardening information on trillium. The Jacobs' book includes a nice list of expected bloom times for the species, the unusual use of trillium rhizomes in field identification, and a great chapter on evolution of trillium. I was disappointed with a few of what I felt were flaws: no glossary, no bibliography, and an abundance of typographical errors.

However, if you're a confirmed "trillophile" you will want both books.

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