On The Fringe

Quarterly Newsletter of
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO



Founding Chapter of
THE OHIO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
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Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio
2nd Quarter 1999

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1999 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JUNE 13, SWINE CREEK VALLEY- 11:00 AM. As Swine Creek carves its way through over one hundred feet of glacial till, a rich flood plain forms along one side of the creek while a steep slope rises on the other. This diversity of habitat allows for an interesting assemblage of plants including some unusual species including Downy False Foxglove (*Gerardia virginica),* Lousewort *(Pedicularis canadensis),* Rose-shell Azalea *(Rhododendron nudiflorum),* Green Violet *(Hybanthus concolor)* among others. A plant survey was conducted 16 years ago by Jim Bissell for the Geauga Park District. We'll follow the creek and hike to the ridge to see how many species we can relocate. Pack a lunch to eat on the bluff with a fantastic view of the valley below. Judy Bradt-Barnhart will lead this trip. DIRECTIONS: Take State Route 87 east into Geauga County passing through downtown Middlefield. Cross over St. Rt. 528 and continue on Rt. 87 approximately 1 ½ miles to Hayes Road. Turn right and head south to Swine Creek Road. Turn left on Swine Creek Road for a few hundred feet. Park entrance will be on your right. Call Judy at work at (440) 286-9504 or at home at (440) 564-9151 to let her know if you are planning to attend.

SATURDAY, JULY 24, NORTH KINGSVILLE SAND BARRENS – 9:00 AM. Jim Bissell, Curator of Botany for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History will lead this trip as a joint program for the Native Plant Society and NEON (North East Ohio Naturalists). This

remnant beech ridge has a wonderful variety of plants, most notably Wild Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*) though it will be past bloom at this time. Others that will be blooming include Racemed Milkwort (*Polygala polygama*), Club-spurred Orchid (*Platanthera clavellata*), the endangers Southern Hairy Panic Grass (*Panicum laxiflorum)* many species of ferns and five species of club moss. While we are there, Jim wants us to keep a look out for Northern Green Orchid (*Platanthera hyperborea*) an extirpated plant that has a good possibility of being found there. DIRECTIONS: Take Rt. 90 east to Rt. 193 exit. Head north on Rt. 193 to Rt. 20. Follow Rt. 20 east to Poore Road. Travel north on Poore, crossing the railroad tracks. Parking will be just past the tracks on the left side of the road. No reservations are needed for this trip.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, LAKE PLAIN FORESTS OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY – 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM (OR MAYBE LATER) George Wilder, Professor of Biology at Cleveland State University, will lead this trip. Lake Plain Forest is rare in Cuyahoga County because of widespread development. In order to mentally reconstruct the scope and nature of this County's original Lake Plain flora, one must examine the relatively few remaining remnants of Lake Plain forest. We will visit two or three remnants, including lands in Euclid, Bay Village, and/or possibly Bratenahl. Remnants will include swamp forest (containing black maple, swamp white oak, bur oak, buttonwood, etc.) and mature, relatively dry oak forest (containing black oak, pignut, sugar maple, etc.). Telephone George Wilder before this trip to tell him you will

be coming (216-687-2395) or (216-932-3351). At that time he will tell you where to meet him.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 'DO FLOWERS REALLY NEED BEES?" - 7:30 PM – MEYER CENTER, BIG CREEK PARK. From Alaska to the Chinese Himalayans, Dr. Lazarus Walter Macior, Professor of Biology at Akron University, has traveled around the world studying the fascinating inter-relationship between plants and their pollinators. Using color slides, Dr. Macior will share his discoveries of how insects and flowers have adapted over time to guarantee the successful pollination of the plant (particularly in the challenging environment of the alpine tundra). This program is co-sponsored by the Society and the Geauga County Park District who will host the event. DIRECTIONS: This program will be presented at the Don Meyer Nature Center at the Big Creek Park. From I-90 and Route 44, take Route 44 south about 2 miles to Clark Road. Turn left (east) on the Clark Road and travel for about 2 miles to Robinson Road. Turn right (south) on Robinson Road and go about 2 miles to the entrance to Big Creek Park. Turn right (west) into the park and at the firs "Y" in the road, bear left. Then take the first right into the parking lot by the Don Meyer Center. No advanced reservations are required for the program.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, FIELD TRIP TO OBSERVE SPECIES OF FALL-BLOOMING COMPOSITAE (SUNFLOWER FAMILY) – 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM (OR MAYBE LATER). George Wilder, Professor of Biology at Cleveland State University, will lead this trip. Emphasized

will be the identification of asters and goldenrods. Participants will travel by automobile to various locations to observe diverse species of Compositae Telephone George Wilder before this trip to tell him you will be coming (216-687-2395) or (216-932-3351). At that time he will tell you where to meet him.

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A BOOK REVIEW OF: "THE PRIVATE LIFE OF PLANTS" by SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

Review by: Tom Sampliner

Sir David Attenborough is no stranger to American audiences. He has narrated several immensely popular BBC/PBS television special series including such as: "The Living Planet" and "Life on Earth." His credentials are too numerous to mention in a short review. His books accompanying each series became best sellers. This effort is no exception.

The author does a magnificent job of bringing to laypeople the fascinating scenarios that take place in the world of plants. He draws upon his travels around the globe to tell the true stories that often seem more like science fiction than science. I paraphrase a few examples to whet your appetite and demonstrate the flavor of this book.

One example in a chapter dealing with seed dispersal and methods of travel, was the case of a plant in our California desert called the bird cage plant. In the harsh dunes with fantastic disparity of temperature day versus night, the plant has evolved a strategy of growing in the partial shade of dunes offering some protection from wind and desiccation. Long roots delve deep for water. Cold evenings make dew at morning. However, dunes shift in the ever-present wind. Therefore, a spherical latticework of dried tough stems creates a land rover of the plant with seeds in the driver seat. Dispersal can take place far from the parent. Those that acquire a new home in the shade can do well.

Complex interrelationships are explained without scientific jargon and a boatload of statistics. Most of us know fire is a prerequisite for healthy grasslands. In Africa, for example, vast herds of animals exist; why? In the dry season, periodic fire sweeps away accumulated debris. However, long taproots and horizontal stems near but protected by the earth are shielded and quickly regenerate lush vegetation. The same occurs on our Great Plains. However, some interesting special cases are explained for Africa. Another layer of complexity exits. Fire controls seedlings of trees like the thorn acacia bushes. Once the dry season fires have exhausted the fuel and if fire does not restart for a few seasons, the trees have their chance. Especially when the herds have moved away due to lack of graze. Plantations of uniform trees develop. Thorns discourage many tall grazers. However, elephants are strong enough to knock down and either eat or simply destroy trees. This becomes the control for tree plantations; As Sir David so aptly puts it, the ele-

phants have become gardeners opening up the grass land again. Thus, the cycle is primed for repetition.

All the tricks employed by plants such as orchids that mimic insects to attract a pollinator expecting to mate with the female impersonating flower are delightfully told. Anyone who enjoys plants, wants to know more of their relationships with their habitats or just enjoys some fascinating scenarios well told by a master storyteller will want to read this work.

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5 VIGOROUS VINES FOR CONTAINERS

Excerpted from Flowering Vines © 1999 by Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11225, (718) 623-7200.

Containers not only allow those without garden space a chance to enjoy the beauty of vines, they also permit gardeners in cold regions to cultivate frost-tender species.

If your vine will live in a container, be sure to choose a planter that is large and sturdy enough, especially if you're growing a perennial species. Install a support at the same time you plant in the container. If the support is anchored in the soil, be sure the container is heavy enough that it won't capsize when the vine climbs.

Container-grown vines should be watched carefully, as they can become dehydrated quickly on hot, sunny days. Keep the soil moist but not soggy. Container-grown vines also need to be fed regularly; use a liquid organic fertilizer at half strength. Finally, vines in containers require regular pruning and should be repotted every three or four years.

Here are five spectacular species that adapt well to life in pots and tubs:

1. Black-eyed Susan vine *(Thunbergia alata)* : A fast-growing tender perennial, black-eyed Susan vine is often described as "daisies on a vine." It is superb not only in containers, but also covering trellises, arches, and picket fences.

2. Bougainvilleas *(Bougainvillea* species): Bougainvillea is a popular, shrubby, tropical vine whose glory is its pealike flower. The colors white, apricot, salmon, pink, red, purple, and oranges are nothing short of dazzling. Bougainvilleas are unsurpassed as canopies for patios, decks, and other outdoor spaces.

3. Hyacinth bean *(Lablab purpureus)*: A tender perennial herb, hyacinth bean is typically grown as an annual in U.S. gardens. The vine, which can grow 10 to 20 feet in one season, has purple-green leaves and spikes of dark purple, sweet-pealike flowers, followed by highly ornamental, shiny, red seed pods. All parts of the plant--young leaves, flowers, pods, and seeds--are edible.

4. Moonflower *(Ipomoea alba)*: Moonflower, the nighttime version of the morning glory, bears large, pure white flowers that are magnets for nocturnal moths. By day the heart-shaped leaves create a handsome screen.

Moonflower is traditionally grown on porches, where its sweet fragrance and beauty can be enjoyed on summer evenings.

5. Blue passion flower *(Passiflora caerulea)* : Blue passion flower is a semi-ever-green vine with complex, otherworldly flowers and yellow-orange egglike fruits. It should be grown against a trellis or wire screen, so its flowers are accessible to insect, avian, and human admirers.



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BOOK ON INVASIVE PLANTS AVAILABLE

At the last meeting of the Board for the Native Plant Society, the question was asked whether a good source was available which named "invasive" plants. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden recently conducted a study based on two comprehensive natural-area weed lists. One was the Nature Conservancy of problem plants on their preserves and the other by the National Association of Exotic Pest Plant Councils. The 112-page book (with 82 invasive plants) is available by mail for $7.95 plus $3.75 for postage and handling from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225. The book may also be ordered via credit card by calling BBG at (718) 622-4433, ext. 274. Website: www.bbg.org or www.gardenweb.com

LILIES

By Tom Sampliner

In this season of renewal, lilies are prominently featured in connection with several holidays. Frankly, it's no mystery as they present an impressive array of colors, varieties and growth habits.

Perhaps many don't realize lilies also possess an extensive history. Their cultivation traces back to the ancient Egyptians who thought so highly of lilies placed bulbs in tombs to be used as food in the afterlife. A Chinese medical text dating back to prior to 200 AD mentions various lilies as remedies for such conditions as chronic cough, certain blood disorders and even neurosis. Even today lily bulbs are still used as both food and medicine.

One species, *Lilium longiflorum*, became associated with the Virgin Mary and thereafter, became known as the Easter Lily. At this time of year they are ever so popular.

Worldwide, lilies mostly prefer a temperate climate. This explains distribution primarily in Europe, Asia, Northern Africa and North America. As a genus, Lilium has 87 members broken down to 49 in Asia, 24 N. America, 12 in Europe and 2 in both Asia and Europe. In eastern N. America expect 9 species with three being found with various frequencies in Ohio. Our natives are *Lilium: philadelphicum*, the wood lily, *canadense*, the Canada lily, and *superbum*, the Turk's cap. The all too common problem for many native plants these days is decreasing numbers due to habitat destruction, over-collection and other dangers. It should be no surprise to learn two of the three mentioned Ohio species

are on the state rare plant list. Wood lily is threatened and Turk's cap is potentially so.

Lilies as a family carry surprising diversity. Wild garlic's and onions are members. So too are trilliums. Many are hard pressed to see the relationship for plants like twisted stalk and Solomon's Seal, yet they are lilies. Unfortunately, many of these are also on the rare plant list. Rare plant status is not unique to Ohio either.

Among those species that lay folks recognize as lilies, the large showy flowers are distinguished by several obvious traits. The recurvature of the petals toward the stem is one. How drastic the curvature should be readily visible. The dark speckles on the petals in another trait. How much of the petal is so affected is what to look for. What we have referred to as petals are actually three sepals and three petals; as in all well behaved monocots, odd numbers of flower parts are the rule with the parts of lilies being in threes (including stamen, pistil and leafy bracts).

Recently in the northeast, the lily leaf beetle, *Lilioceris lilii*, has become the unwelcome new menace to both wild and cultivated lilies. The ¼ "adult has a scarlet body and black head, legs and underbody. Insecticides are available.

When traveling around the country, whether to botanic gardens or out into nature, look for other members of the Lily family. They include: *Erythronium*, *Clintonia*, *Calochortus*, *Fritillaria*, *Convallaria* and *Lloydia*. See how many you can find and enjoy.

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KEYING OUT A RED MITSUBISHI
Or the Trials, Travails, Tears of an Orchid Hunter
By Tom Sampliner

Ah, yes, escaping the Cleveland cold for four days of field trips and two of lecture; in Florida no less ,and upon one of my most favorite topics--native orchids.

Despite the initial shock of waiting in line at Alamo for over an hour just to get my rental, events really went rather smoothly for the first two days of field trips in northern Florida. Granted conditions were unusually dry to the point we were not seeing all we hoped for. In fact the state was under alert and National Guard troops were being called out to assist in fire fighting efforts. Still we were seeing new to many of us species and enjoying the warmth and scenery of the state.

Saturday arrived before we knew it and the first of two days of lecture presentations at the U. of South Florida. Featured were well known experts both within Florida and from the national scene.

At lunch break Saturday, I decided to employ my usual procedure of obtaining take out from the nearest grocery and picnicking at one of the several metal grillwork style tables and benches sprinkled through the campus. I recall laying all my conference notes, packet, maps and other material upon the table. Cute, precocious gray squirrels were everywhere. So tame were they, not to mention hopeful for a handout, that they literally shared both bench and table. We entertained each other thoroughly. They did not however, seem interested in my Neptune salad; so much for

their taste. Anyway, upon finishing, I folded up the trash and took it to the nearest container to make my deposit. I had time to return to the car, a red Mitsubishi Eclipse, shift some belongings, and maybe even take some photographs on the attractive campus.

Upon reaching the car, I reached into my pocket to retrieve the key—no key. I searched and researched each pocket. I look into the car but see no key visible. Next I return to the picnic table and search the tabletop, the ground beneath and surrounding paths I had to have taken. No key. I go over to the waist high garbage container, reach in and retrieve the remnants from lunch; no key. I remove the garbage can lid and remove by hand all contents from the can but still find no key.

This is not looking good. I return to the lecture hall and search all around the registration desk and the seat I occupied during the morning as well as rows up and downward in the theatre-style lecture hall. I am beginning to get a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach and it was not from lunch.

The only thing to do was to call Alamo; I was about to discover they were well named, for it was fast becoming my last stand. When you call a big company these days you first go through the menu and only then begin the mandatory stay on hold for an eternity until something semi-human comes on line. That accomplished, I explained my plight to the gentleman. He said if they had to come out it would take quite a while and I would be charged for their having to duplicate a key. He suggested that if I was a AAA member, I should call for emergency road assistance and that they

would probably be here even faster than Alamo could and that I would not be charged anything. It sounded reasonable so I hung up and called AAA. As you already know, menu, stay on hold, etc. until you get a human. It being very hot early in their spring, 90's, they were very busy but would be out in around 45 minutes. Be by the car.

As promised, the independent contractor, who is also a locksmith, arrived and opened the car. We searched all over but found no key inside. I was informed that car keys, especially rentals, can not just be duplicated by anyone. You need a key's code from which the cuts in the metal can be guided. Is this anything like a dichotomous key? Probably not. Anyway, I was told I must recall Alamo and get the code then I could have AAA come back to make a new key. It sounded very logical. Of course, even though I timed the making of my calls to coincide with an afternoon break, I was beginning to miss some lectures I wanted to hear.

I called Alamo, menu, mandatory hold time, then human. I explained the scenario; no, customers cannot have a key code. Becoming frustrated and thinking, "Yeah, it was a dichotomous key after all," I asked if they would give it to AAA if they were to call, Alamo said yes.

I recalled AAA and once through, the representative conferred with a supervisor and they agreed to try to get the code for me. Their wait time was now estimated to be over one hour-by now that meant bye-bye dinner for me.

The same jovial guy drove back up about 1¼ to 1½ hours later. Home base had not obtained any code nor informed him. However, he rapidly employed his cell phone and home base called Alamo and began to argue on my be-

half. We knew it was a dispute because after some 15 minutes of back and forth we were told the code would be given if we supplied the car's VIN number from inside the vehicle. That done we were given the code, wrong the first time naturally, and then correct. It took a couple manufacturing attempts before a workable key was made. Meanwhile, some friends attending the conference brought me back a sandwich for dinner.

AAA could not have been more understanding throughout. The driver explained that in Florida, expect this kind of treatment from all the rental agencies; it's a seller's market. Before we were sure we were getting the code, we joked about telling Alamo to just come take their rental back.

Thinking back to my hour-plus wait in line just to get the car, I was a little envious of those who upon seeing the line as they got off the courtesy van and learned of the wait time, simply went back to the airport to rent from one of the non-discount companies at a higher price.

With all the uninsured people renting these days, I understand and even sympathize with tough policies of mandatory deductible insurance in Florida as well as caution on giving out key codes. Immigrants and temporary visitors of all kinds might be uncollectable if anything happens. Not trusting is prudent.

Settled into a motel for the evening I reexamined the events of the day over and over. The only explanation that I can come up with, especially in light of my thorough search and retrace of all steps made prior to lunch time, would go like this. Remember those cute little squirrels entertaining

me at lunch. I seem to remember laying my car key down on the table along with my other belongings. I was only away long enough to dump my garbage and no one else was around. I believe, well, you've guessed it, one of those little devils took it for a shiny new ornament for the nest.

So this, dear readers, is how one keys out a red Mitsubishi. Next time, think I'll come equipped with peanuts. They key out so much easier.

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We look forward to including your ideas, articles or opinions in every issue! Let us hear from you.

Contact Jean Roche
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E-mail: rochej@gojo.com or bjroche@aol.com

FREE NATURAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER
by Brian Gilbert

The Division of Natural Areas and Preserves, a unit of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, publishes a quarterly newsletter which is mailed free to any Ohio resident who requests it. Each issue of their "Newsletter" is filled with information about Ohio's natural history. Their most recent issue includes a detailed article on Sheldon Marsh State Nature Preserve near Cedar Point, a lengthy listing of walks and workshops at state nature preserves, an article on Kelley's Island State Park, a feature article on flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), and article on the danger of ticks, to mention only a few. It has come to my attention that some members of the Society are unaware of this excellent newsletter. I hope this brief note corrects this situation. To get on the list to receive this newsletter, send your name and mailing address to:

Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Fountain Square
Columbus, OH 43224

If you would like additional information, you can call DNAP at (614) 265-6453. Those connect to the world wide web can find DNAP at *http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/odnr/dnap/dnap.html*

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NEW MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES
by Brian Gilbert

The Board of Directors of the Society has authorized two changes in our membership practices. They affect students and faculty members.

STUDENT members will now be required, annually, to certify that they are still students and that they wish to receive the newsletter. Students will be sent a special membership renewal form that must be completed in order to continue receiving the newsletter at no cost. If you are a student, you should have the form inserted into this newsletter. Please complete it and return to the membership chairman. Students who fail to return the completed form will be dropped from membership.

FACULTY members will be required to formally join the Society in order to receive the newsletter. We have good support and paid membership by faculty members from many of the universities in our area and the Board believes that all non-student Society members should pay the same dues ($10.00 per year) to receive the newsletter. All faculty members who have not paid dues will be receiving a special membership form in this newsletter. Please complete and return it with your dues payment. We need your support and hope you will join us.

Please send your membership form and checks to: Brian Gilbert, Membership Chair, Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio, 18212 Landseer Road, Cleveland, OH 44119-1745

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