Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio

9500 Sperry Road Mentor, Ohio 44060

(216) 338-6622

ON THE FRINGE

Volume I March, 1983 No.1

MARCH PROGRAMS & EVENTS:

MARCH 24th: Emliss Ricks, the manager of Eagle Creek Preserve will present an illustrated talk " The Plants of Eagle Creek" at The Holden Arboretum, Corning Bldg., at 7:30 p.m.

BLOOMING DATES: The unseasonably warm weather that we have been enjoying, will naturally effect blooming seasons this spring. Look for these in March: skunk cabbage, coltfoot*,harbinger of spring and hepatica.

FUTURE FUN: April 2nd, 9:00 a.m., Rocky River field trip. April 14th, Dr. Warren P. Stoutamire will be speaking on orchids of N.E. Ohio. Dr. Stoutamire is a leading authority on N. American terrestrial orchids.

Plans are being made for the Northeastern Ohio Wildflower Symposium on May 20th-22nd at The Holden Arboretum, Sperry Road. A wonderful program of speakers, workshops and field trips is being planned. We'll supply more details in the next issue.

PATTING OURSELVES ON THE BACK

The tremendous success of the first meeting of the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio was a thrill for us all. The great turnout indicated the extent of the need and interest in such a society.

The eloquent opening statement of our president, Ann Malmquist, clearly defined the goals and ideals of our society.

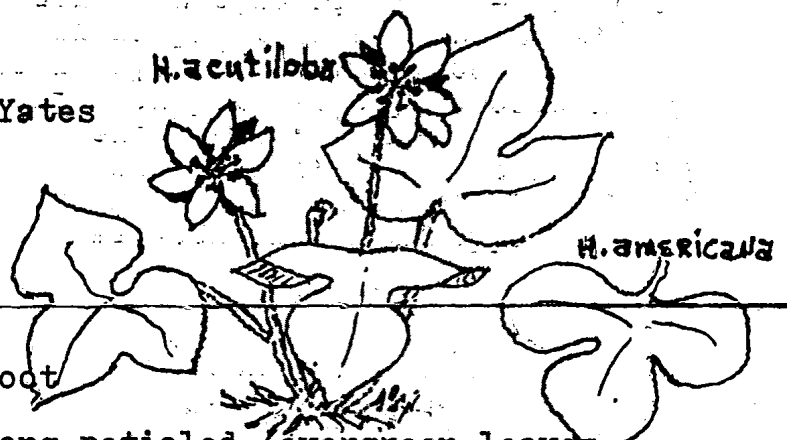
The beautiful " trek through the Bruce " as seen through the skillful eyes of Jack.Selby, provided an aesthetic, as well as an educational view of a richly unique floral habitat.

The refreshment table, crowned by Florence Selby's unbelievable cake, was almost as delightful as the stimulating conversation found around it. We thank everyone who contributed.

The efforts of the charter members were really appreciated by everyone. It was a rewarding evening.

HEPATICA

By Tom Yates



Hepatica acutiloba DC.
Sharp-lobed Hepatica or Liverleaf

Hepatica americana (DC.) Ker
~~Round-lobed Hepatica or Liverleaf~~

Family: Ranunculaceae, Buttercup, Crowfoot

Hepatica is a perennial herb whose long petioled, evergreen leaves are all basal and whose flowers are born singly on scapes. The three lobed (occasionally additional lobing can occur), thick leaves are often

mottled. The flower (2cm average) is showy with 6 to 10 petal-like sepals in colors of white, pink, lavender and near-blue. Below the sepals are three green bracts which resemble a calyx. Numerous stamens surround the central cluster of many carples. The fruit is an aggregate of short-beaked, hairy achenes. The plant grows in tufts from a fiberous root system.

As enthusiastic pursuers of wildflowers, the unsettled weather of early spring should not keep us from observing and enjoying this joyful spring-bringer. There are a few native plants who bloom earlier, but none which start the season with so much color and beauty. When the hepatica bloom, we know the rush of spring wildflowers is beginning.

A woodland dweller of slopes and hollows, the hepatica's evergreen leaves are often darkened and pressed onto forest litter during winter. From the crown of the plant arise buds on lengthening scapes. The bud and stem are covered with silken hairs adding a silver sheen to their profile. A few sporatic blooms keep pace with the fickle weather of late winter but a warm bright day, soon after snow-melt, will bring them on in force.

*Non-Native

Many plants bloom with metered regularity, opening one or a few flowers each day and have a succession of buds awaiting their turn. The hepatica follows a less conservative tactic, throwing almost all buds into bloom at once. This presents a super-sized cluster target for its fly and bee pollinators. The warm and sunny day that allows the insects to fly can quickly change, but the delicate blossoms have surprising longevity and hardiness.

The bloom and subsequent seed development coincide with the best quality sunlight of the year. The period of high energy demand for the seed is completed as the tree leaves expand into their energy intercepting canopy. The mature seed, green in color, falls or is often stripped from the plant by heavy, late spring rainfall. After a summer, fall and winter under the forest litter, the seed will germinate during spring.

How exciting among the usual pastels, to find a deep colored individual on a slope, with a cascade of similar seedlings flowing downhill from its parent.

New leaves develop as flowering is finishing. Hairy at first, they quickly expand into three lobed blades born on long petioles. The leaf shape, resembling a mammalian liver, dictates both scientific and common names. The liver shaped " signature " told herbal doctors that it could be used to cure liver aliments.

The chief difference in our two native hepatica species is the more sharply pointed lobes found on H. acutiloba vs. the rounded lobes found on H.americana. H. americana tends to occupy slightly drier slopes and somewhat more acid soil conditions though they often grow side by side. Hybrids with intermediate leaf forms have been reported.

Don't miss the hepatica bloom, one of the best shows of spring.

NEWS FROM BEYOND THE FRINGE: Ann Malmquist has contacted the following organizations to open channels of communication with other persons and groups with similar interests: Aullwood Nature Center, Dawes Arboretum, Cincinnati Wildflower Society and Toledo Metro Parks.

BORED? We could really use some help. Would you like to help choose the direction that this society follow? Your talents and input can make the difference. Contact Brian Parsons for field trips and programs, 255-3000 (home) 946-4400 (work); Kent Scott for education, 428-5072 (home) 256-1404 (work); Phyllis Leonetti for membership, 247-8247; Larry Giblock, for the newsletter, 272-5852.

THANK YOU:
- ... to Paul Spector and The Holden Arboretum for their support,
- ... to Brian Parsons and Tom Yates for conceiving the whole idea.
- ... to Kent Scott, Lake County Metro Parks and Nate Finck, Geauga County Metro Parks.
- ... Dick Evans and Irma Bartell, who have given their tremendous support and/or free services, are now honorary members.
- ... a special thanks to Greta and Hugh Pallister, Jr.
- ... and, to Ann Malmquist and all the charter members for their time and effort in getting our society off the ground and to the general membership for their interest and support.