NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO
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ON THE FRINGE

Volume 1 November, 1983 No. 9

NOVEMBER 17: This will be our Annual Meeting. At this time, we will hold the election of officers and members-at-large for the coming year. It is very important to cast your vote. If it is impossible for you to attend the meeting, please return the absentee ballot enclosed in this newsletter before November 15th so that your vote may be counted.
Upon adjournment of the business portion of the meeting, Mr. David K. Younkman, Director of Field Office of the Ohio Chapter of the Nature Conservancy will present an overview of the Nature Conservancy's policies and philosophies regarding land acquisition, land management and how they are working to preserve our natural heritage in Ohio. His lecture is entitled "The Nature Conservancy - We Are Building an Ark". Meet at the Corning Building of the Holden Arboretum at 7:30 p.m.

In October, the newsletter notified the membership of the possible constitutional changes that the Board of Directors had considered. A vote was taken at the October meeting, and all changes to the Constitution were approved by the members in attendance.

AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN

Fall, the end of a growing season brought on by killing frosts, marks the end of the bloom in the perennial border and the harvest from the vegetable garden. Unfortunately, fall does not mark the end of the work to be done in a garden. The work that is done in the fall will pay off next spring.

What work is to be done this fall? One of the most obvious and time consuming chores is the raking of those once dazzling leaves which now cover your yard. While this work can take on Herculean proportions in a heavily wooded neighborhood, if you think of these leaves as black gold for your garden, then perhaps, this task may become less thankless.

In northeastern Ohio, with its bountiful forests and maple trees, there is a vertitable gold mine of organic material waiting to be claimed. Unfortunately, most people year after year, neatly preen their yards removing every leaf in sight, putting them into plastic garbage bags and leaving them to be disposed of by the city. What a waste!

While the raking of leaves from your yard is necessary in order to have a respectable lawn, it is not necessary to send them off to the local leaf dump. A more sensible approach for the gardener is to compost your leaves. If stored in a snow fence bin in the back corner of your yard, the leaves you compost will turn slowly into the magic ingredient referred to as leaf mold.

Composting or recycling your leaves each year will supply you with a constant source of leaf mold in the coming years. Leaf mold is a very usable and functional organic material which can be used in a variety of ways to improve your garden, be it vegetables, annuals or wildflowers that you grow, leaf mold can be used in soil mixes, dug directly into the soil or used as a mulch.

Organic material is a very necessary element for good soil. Organic materials help to provide the necessary nutrients plants require. They

help to hold moisture in the soil during dry spells and to break up the heavy clay soils so common in northeastern Ohio.

Good soils should have a mixed particle size. This means instead of just having very even flat particles laying on top of each other as in clay soils, that there is diversity of both particle size and shape in your soil. Turning into your soils a mixture of sand, gravel and leaf mold is one way to improve heavy clay soils.

Organic matter does not last forever in your soil as it decomposes relatively quickly. One good way to insure a constant supply of organic material in your soil is to mulch each fall with composted leaves, or with a mixture of wood chips, leaf mold and sand. Mulches do not only serve to return organic matter to your soil, but they help to keep your soils at a more constant temperature throughout the year, help to retain moisture during dry spells and make weeds easier to pull away from your plants.

If you weed the garden well each fall and then apply a layer of mulch, you will have plenty of room to store the next crop of leaves. If this is repeated over a period of years, this work will certainly reward you in the coming springs.

While fall is the end of one year's garden, it is not too early to plan for next year's garden. Spring blooming bulbs and plants can be planted when mulched well to reduce the chance of the frost heaving them from the soil. Dormant perennials can also be lifted and divided to spread more color throughout the garden in the fall.

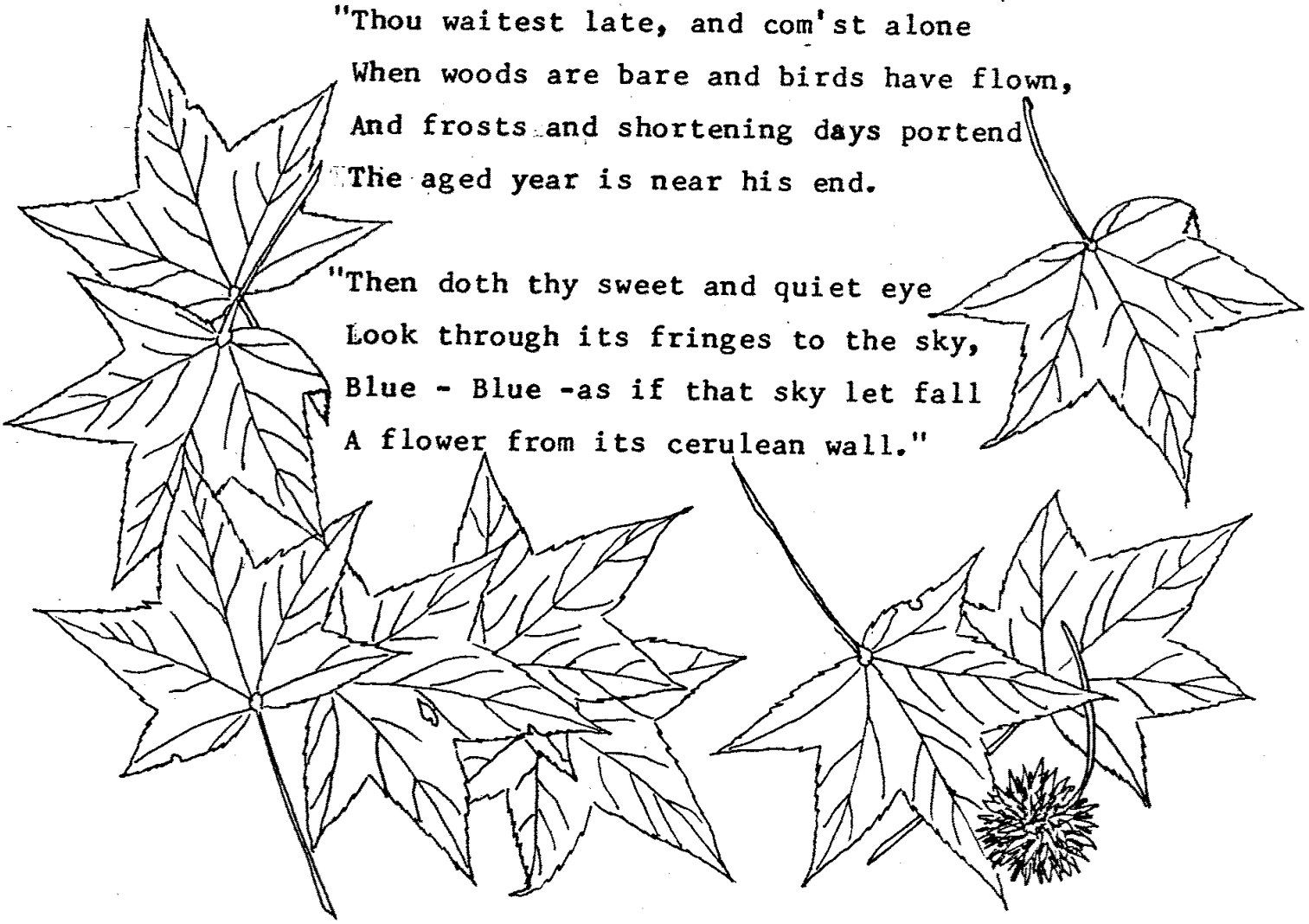
Fall is also a good time of year to plant new trees and shrubs in your yard. Look for plants that have an interesting winter habit or form, or hold their fruit to extend the season of color in your garden and perhaps, provide food for the birds in the long winter months. Entire landscapes can be planned to provide birds the food they require throughout the year and will attract them to your yard as effectively as with bird feeders.

If some sections of your garden looked a little sick this year, then fall is a good time to test your soil for deficiencies. You can do soil

tests at home with inexpensive kits or send soil samples through extension agents to the state to be analyzed. If a pH or nutrient correction must be made, fall is a good time to amend your garden as it gives the months of winter time to blend and correct your soils, and gives you one less thing to do in the spring.

So, while fall is the end of the growing season, think of it as a beginning. Begin to compost your leaves for the years ahead. Begin to think about how you can improve your garden, improve your soil, add new plants or plan whole new landscapes. Before you know it seed and plant catalogues will be coming to your door and you can begin to look and hope for the signs of spring.

Brian Parsons



"Thou waitest late, and com'st alone
When woods are bare and birds have flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

"Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue - Blue -as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall."

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

On September 30, 1982, nine people convened at Holden to form the Native Plant Society. With the writing of this newsletter, we are completing our first year, and what a year it has been!! As of October 30, 1983, we have 81 active, 31 family, 12 sustaining, 15 patron and 3 honorary lifetime members for a total of 142 memberships, or approximately 190 members. In addition, we interact with 20 other organizations in Ohio, Michigan and West Virginia. We have co-sponsored two extensive enterprises: the highly successful Second Annual Native Plant Symposium; and the Prairie Weekend, which raised approximately $ 1500.00 for the expansion of the Wildflower Garden. Our personal part of that sum was $ 575.00 from the Harm print raffle. We have published nine newsletters containing some outstanding articles by our professional members. We have had speakers from all over Ohio, who have spoken to us on every aspect of the botanical world. It seems that they have had as much fun being with us as we have had listening to them, because most of them want to come back again. We have taken thirteen field trips to highly interesting areas, some of which we could not have seen otherwise.

A full year, a busy year, certainly a year of accomplishment, learning and enjoyment. One of the bonuses was getting to know so many fine people with knowledge in areas many of us had never explored. I would particularly like to acknowledge the contributions of our members who have led field trips: Brian Parsons, Tom Yates, Nate Finck, Jack Selby, Jay Beswick, Emliss Ricks, Bob Bartolotta, Barb Andreas, Jim Bissell and Kent Scott. All of these people gave of their time and expertise for our benefit and pleasure. In addition, many of our programs and lectures were given by members and their generosity has made it possible for us to end the year on a sound financial note. The monetary contributions of Gretta and Hugh Pallister, Ruth and Laurence Schwartz, Maureen Bartel, Tod Hull, Kevin Mattingly and Donald Dean kept us

going through the year.

And last, but certainly not least, my undying gratitude to those of you who served so diligently on the Executive Board. No one person can do it alone, and you have made the NPS the success it is today. I'm not going to list all of the names--you know who you are and the people who care about our Society know who you are. I think we are in an excellent position to start the new year in January and aggressively work toward our goals. Great plans are afoot for some stimulating programs and activities. Be sure you get your membership renewal in early!

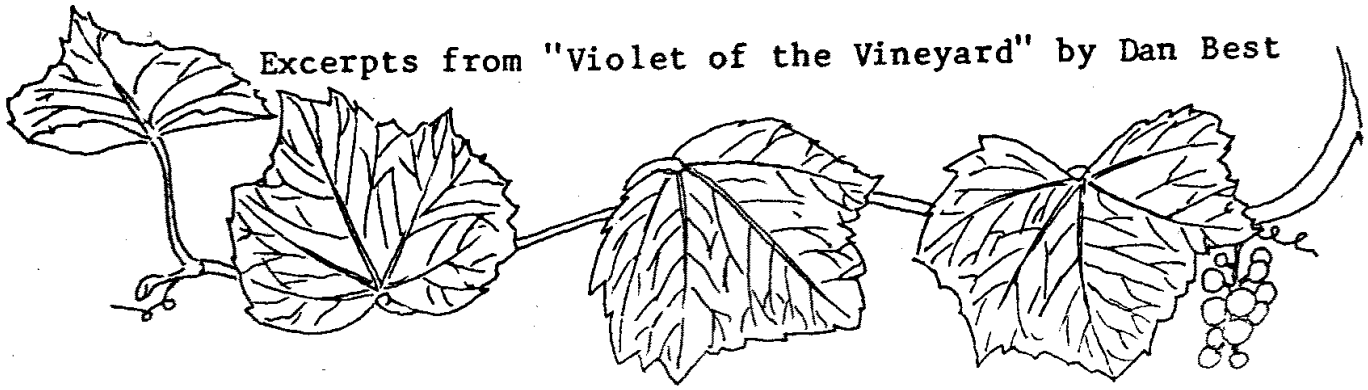
Ann Malmquist

Nature reclaims what man has forsaken;
by many a wild plant has the advantage been taken.
Homesteaders arrived from swamp, bog and prairie...
pin oak and sphagnum, blazing star and blueberry.
Old grapevines, all gnarled and knotted,
hosted many a lichen as they rotted.

Among those that rooted in this sour wet clay
was a hardy little violet that blooms in May...
a snowy blossom flanked by long slender leaves
that seem to be stretching for sunlight they need.
Shunning the shade, it borders paths kept clear
by shortcuts to school and the travels of deer.

But, Viola lanceolata, your name's on the list
of the state's endangered that soon may be missed.
Here you are many, but such haven is rare;
it's in these soggy, boggy meadows that you fare.
And I'm sorry to say, your beauty may be banished
when the old vineyards finally vanish.

Excerpts from "Violet of the Vineyard" by Dan Best



The American Indian relied heavily on many of our indigenous trees as sources of medicines. Preparations were made of either the bark, leaves or roots. Each one was designed through trial and error to act in a specific manner, whether it be a diuretic, cathartic, bitter tonic, nervine, emetic, antiemetic or rheumatic, used as an ointment or plaster for drawing.

Bark was gathered either in the fall or spring from young trees. The rough, or outside bark was shaved, dryed in the shade and stored from the elements.

Leaves were collected about the time of flowering, as they are then at their greatest potency. Drying in the shade was a must for preserving the volatile oils.

Roots intended for medicinal purposes were washed clean and not kept long in the water, as this would diminish their effectiveness. After being washed clean, they were spread in the sun a short time to dry the water off. They were then spread in the shade until perfectly dry.

Butternut (Inglans Cineria) was used as a purgative. The virtues being confined to the bark and root. The manner of extraction was to boil for several hours until it became the consistency of molasses.

Pine (Pinus) ranked among the most useful. The buds, bark, rosin and roots were all used. The bark, when prepared acted as a laxative. The buds and inside bark steeped in water was used for coughs and the rosin was used for everything from rheumatism and backache to maladies known only to women.

Dogwood (Cornus-Florida) provided a tonic, stimulant, antiseptic and astringent to the local tribes. The bark of the root was the strongest, but the flowers and berries were also used.

Wild Cherry (Prunus Cerasus) bark was a good tonic for intermittent fevers, as well as a valuable treatment for jaundice.

Sweet-Gum tree (Liquidambar styraciflua). The inner bark was boiled

and taken to relieve diarrhea, while the gum or rosin was an excellent ingredient in salve for wounds, sores and ulcers.

Beech tree (Fagus grandifolia). The principal use was in the form of poultices, made by thickening a strong decoction of the bark or leaves with corn meal and applying to the inflamed wound.

These are but a few of the trees used by early American Indians, who understood and loved their environment, and respected and appreciated the gifts of nature that gave them spiritual and physical support.

The tremendous knowledge of the American Indian on the use of the natural resources for medical purposes has benefited all mankind.

This knowledge is still being used by Indian doctors and even modern medicine.