
MISSISSIPPI NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
AUGUST 1987



GREEN-FLY ORCHID

(Epidendrum conopseum)

NOTES FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

The summer is slipping by fast. Things are very hot and dry here in Northeast Mississippi. No final plans have been made for our annual fall meeting, which will also include election of all officers.

Ten Mississippians attended the Landscaping With Native Plants Conference in Cullowhee, N. C. recently. Those attending were: Felder Rushing, Ed and Elizabeth Narrow, Halla Jo Ellis- from Jackson; Travis Salley- Cleveland; Mary Jo Wedgeworth- Laurel; Glenn and Sherrie Wiygul, Ed Martin, and yours truly- Starkville. This conference is growing by leaps and bounds. In fact this year a vote was taken to consider expanding the number that could be enrolled or if everyone would like to keep it at the current 400 registrants. Some of the workshops covered this year were:

- Natural Communities as Inspiration for our Gardens
- Natural Populations as a Source of Garden Cultivars
- Promoting Natives for Public Plantings
- Finding Cultivars We Like, That Like our Gardens
- Exploring the Iron Weeds-Their Identities, Distribution, and Landscape Potential
- Bringing Natives into the Mainstream of North American Gardens
- Selecting, Propagating, and Growing Ilex decidua (Deciduous Holly)
- A Beginners Guide to Plant Identification Using Keys and Plants of Promise

(to mention only a few of the sessions.)

I heard good reports from the field trip to Flora at Bobbie Greaves' place. About 25 enthusiastic MNPS members had a very good time and saw plants bigger and better than they had ever seen those varieties before. We appreciate Bobbie making her place available.

Remember, our annual fall business meeting will be held sometime around the middle of October, hopefully it will be somewhat cooler. You will be getting a special mailing on this. If you would like to serve as an officer, please let me know so I can pass this information along to the nominating committee. Or if you want to serve on the nominating committee, please let me know. Remember, you have to be 1987 PAID in order to be on the nominating committee, and also PAID in order to serve as an officer. Faye Swan

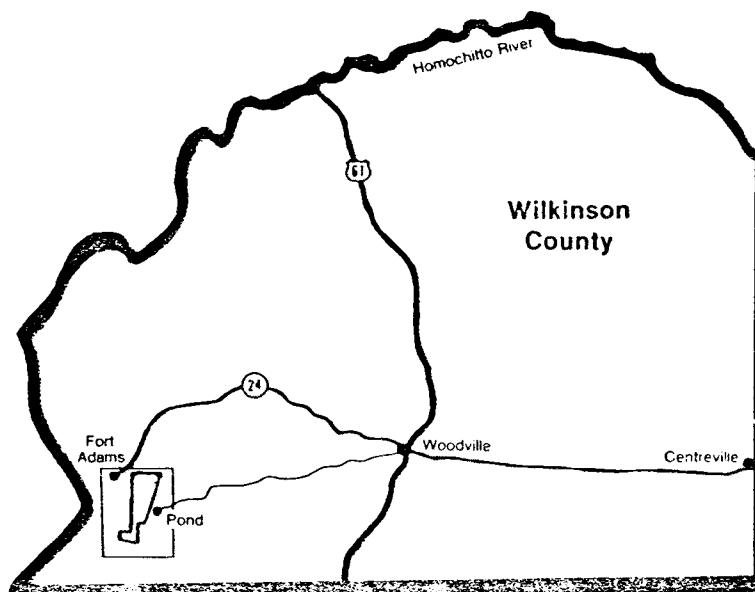
HOW FAR NORTH?

One of the few epiphytes in Mississippi, Epidendrum conopseum-green-fly orchid (illustrated on the cover of this issue), is known from a scattering of locations across extreme southern Mississippi. As exploration of the deeper swamps and bottomlands has continued, this species has been noted to be even locally abundant. We have records from the coastal counties and Pearl River County. The furthest north it is known at present is in the Old River area west of Henleyfield. Has anyone seen it further north? SM

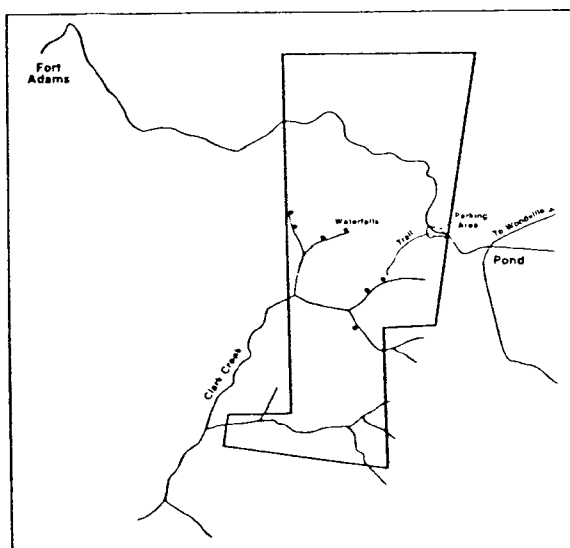
FIELD TRIP TO CLARK CREEK

On August 15 the MNPS and the Crosby Arboretum are co-sponsoring a trip to Clark Creek Natural Area in Wilkinson County. If you are interested, plan to meet at the parking area at 10:30 am on that date. The natural area is about two and one-half hours by car from either Jackson or the Gulf Coast. Go to Woodville, take MS 24 west, turn left at the Clark Creek sign and go to Pond. The parking area is around 300 yards beyond the Pond General Store. See map below.

The area, in the Loess Bluffs, is rather rugged. Also remember that this is August and it could be quite hot. It is highly recommended that clothing and shoes suitable for such conditions be worn. Also bring lots of water and a lunch. There are no facilities.



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FINDING UNCOMMON PLANTS

Common appearance may belie uncommon species. In early July while hiking in a water oak flat in central Scott County, I noticed a Phlox-appearing lavender-flowered plant at a distance of roughly 50 feet. Nothing about it invited immediate closer scrutiny. It was growing in dense shade with much leaf litter and with numerous clumps of the moss Climacium americanum about. Something though seemed odd about it. On returning, closer examination revealed it to be an orchid with a spike of some 10 flowers! Thinking it to be a county record I collected it and presented it to Dr. Sidney McDaniel for inclusion in the IBE herbarium. He identified it as Habenaria peramoena (purple fringless orchid), a species until this year never before collected that far south and mostly known in Mississippi from a few northern counties. Its primary distribution is further north. Clearly while every common-looking plant at 50 feet cannot be examined more closely, many unusual species may be overlooked due to too casual field examination. In the current circumstances the habitat did not seem right for Phlox, after some mental reflection. It is likely that greater attention to "common" species, especially in seemingly unusual places, will turn up more "uncommon" species. Lloyd W. Bennett

PLANTS NEW TO MISSISSIPPI

Two plants species have recently been recorded for the first time in Mississippi. The new discoveries are Lythrum salicaria and Luisierella barbula.

Lythrum salicaria (also known as purple loosestrife) was reported from Attala County as part of a "Special Problems" course taken by me in botany at Mississippi State University. This Lythrum is a common species in Europe and is believed to be a relatively recent introduction to the Western Hemisphere. It appears that its range has increased markedly in recent years. Its discovery in Attala County is significant in that Attala is very centrally located in the state. It is therefore likely to be found elsewhere in Mississippi. The habitat of this plant in Attala County is a very low, moist, open area along an intermittent stream.

Luisierella barbula is a diminutive moss that is undoubtedly much rarer than the above species. Although it has a wider range, from the southern United States to Brazil, it appears to have been reported rather infrequently. This may be due in part to its unobtrusive appearance. It is much smaller than most mosses and has an unusually dark, almost black, color. It appears like a larger species that has become dessicated. This species was discovered during a bryology class field trip on a rock shelf in northern Tishomingo County. Judging from other reports, rock (especially limestone) appears to be the typical substrate for this species. Randy Winstead

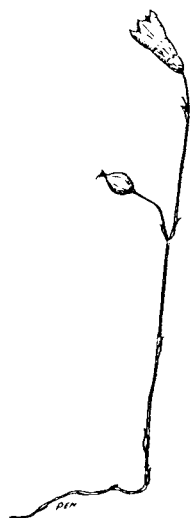
NATURAL AREA MONITORS STILL NEEDED

Although response has been good, monitors are still needed for a number of outstanding natural areas which are in the Mississippi Natural Areas Registry. Those for which monitors are still needed are given below.

For more information, contact Chris Fichtel, Natural Areas Registry, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, 111 N. Jefferson St., Jackson, MS 39202 or call 354-7304.

<u>Site</u>	<u>County</u>
Cottonmouth Savanna	Jackson
Mouvella Bog	George
Thompson Bog	George
Savannah Branch Bog	Wayne
Allen Creek Bluff Forest	Lauderdale
Bobcat Bluff Forest	Smith
Plum Creek Bluff Forest	Noxubee
Rock Hill Mesic Forest & Chalk Barrens	<u>Oktibbeha</u>
Chickasaw Co. Limestone Outcrops (rare plants)	Chickasaw
Coonewah Creek Bluffs	Lee

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NODDING NIXIE-APTERIA APHYLLA



YELLOW-POPLAR, TULIPTREE
LIRIODENDRON TULIPIFERA



POISON SUMAC - RHUS VERNIX