

Wildflowers

THE BULLETIN OF THE
BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF W. PA.



Rose Pogonia
Pogonia ophioglossoides

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Press Photo by Edwin Morgan

FEBRUARY MEETING

Our speaker for February will be Dr. David Boufford of Carnegie Institute's Museum of Natural History.

Dr. Boufford will talk on his recent plant-collecting expedition to China. He was one of five Americans who were part of the first joint botanical expedition with Chinese colleagues since the Communists came to power in 1949.

The expedition was sponsored by the Botanical Society of America and the Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Scientists in Beijing (Peking).

Our meeting will be Monday, February 9, at the Mellon Bank Auditorium, Fifth and Craig, Oakland. Meetings start promptly at 8:00 P.M.

ANSWERING LAST MONTH'S QUESTION

What botanist was named for a tree? It was the greatest of them all, Linnaeus or Carl von Linne.

Linnaeus (or von Linné) was born in 1707 in Smaland, a south-eastern province of Sweden. The people of the province have long had a reputation for resourcefulness, tenacity and thrift. His father, Nils Ingemarsson, a clergyman, had coined the surname Linnaeus for himself in commemoration of a huge linden tree (Tilia cordata), known in the Smaland dialect as a 'linn'.

WILLIAM E. HIBBS

We have lost a beloved member. Bill Hibbs died on January 8. All of us extend our sympathy to Claire.

RAMBLING WITH RANGER TIM

A New Yorker had three wives. One died of gastro-intestinal problems. Another was poisoned. The third wife died from a blow on the head. She wouldn't eat the mushrooms.

(Tim Manka)

PRESIDENTIAL HORTICULTURE

This being a Presidential year, it will be of interest to learn how our early Presidents loved horticulture. While away during the war, Washington gave very particular instructions to his superintendent about the planting of trees and vines, and his writings reveal an unbelievable amount of knowledge about them. It is believed that about fifteen trees and shrubs at Mt. Vernon are survivals of his planting.

Jefferson's love of plant life is well known. The mulberry trees he planted in the hope of establishing a silk industry in America are still alive at Monticello.

The hickory and magnolia trees Jackson planted for his beloved Rachel at the Hermitage still stand. At Montpelier the cedar-of-lebanon planted by James Madison can still be seen when Mrs. du Pont Scott, the present owner of the estate, permits. They are considered among the noblest of this species in the nation. Ash Lawn, Monroe's home, is noted for its ash trees as well as for its majestic boxwood. At Wheatland, the James Buchanan home near Lancaster, stands one of the grandest beeches in the nation, said to be more than 300 years old. And one could go on.

One can only add that if today's politicians had as part of their nature a love of plant life only approximating what the Founding Fathers had, there would not be the doubts about their integrity and dedication that we hear expressed so much today.

(Maxim E. Armbruster)

Max, you didn't mention Jimmy Carter's arachis hypogaea.

RONALD REAGAN

And, how about our new president, Ronald Reagan? Let's just print a few sentences from a write-up in TIME magazine -

From time to time Reagan gazed into the groves of live oaks looking for Duke. He pointed to the bushes he admires, the toyon, a California holly with bright red berries, and the brownish manzanita. He saw some clumps of greasewood and got worked up talking about its dry, grasping nature and how it burns fiercely when set afire by lightning.

He prefers the natural growth and has little interest in raising vegetables. "I like the wildness of this place," he said, speaking eagerly of the numerous wildflowers and their fragrance after a rainfall. He has done a little planting of his own; Eastern lilacs just behind the house, some willows and live oaks, now climbing strongly. He once took a seed from a pine cone, started it in a coffee can and nurtured it into a tree.

From Bald Mountain, the highest point on Reagan's land, you can see 40 miles down the California coast and, in the spectacular distance, five of the Channel Islands. At the other end of the ranch, you look down on the Santa Ynez Valley and gaze over heavy, rolling hills that plunge toward the sea.

Reagan knows the history of his ranch, and as he drew closer to the house he pointed to a distant hill and told how a hundred years ago, a young bandit had been ambushed there. He told of a hanging tree and stagecoach holdups. On the wide hillside across the valley, where the dogs are buried, the Spaniards had cultivated vineyards, long since gone. One day Reagan brushed against

the native buckthorn bush, and its berries rubbed off on him. Later, when he washed at home, the juice made a lather and he figured out that the Spaniards had used the buckthorn berries as soap.

POGONIA OPHIOGLOSSOIDES

The illustration of the rose pogonia is once again the work of our talented member, Phyllis Monk.