

Wildflowers

THE BULLETIN OF THE
BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF W. PA.

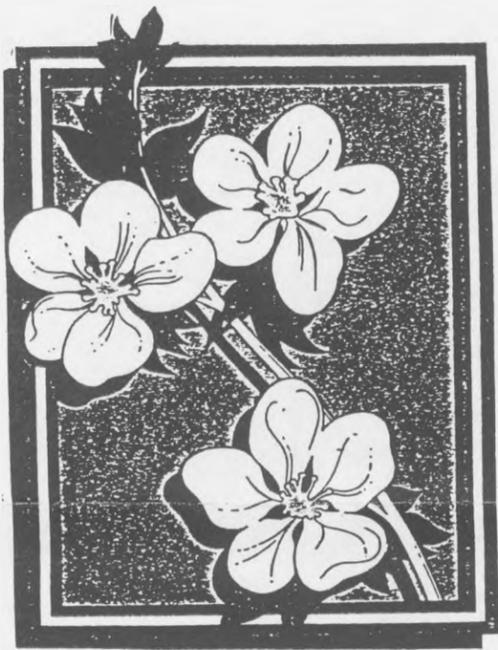
FEBRUARY MEETING

Our next meeting - Monday, February 13, 8 P.M. - at Trinity Hall, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Ave., Oakland. The program - "Flowers of the Desert" by Charles and Marian Hissem.

WILDFLOWER COURSE AT C.C.A.C.

A non-credit course, "Wildflowers of Spring", is being offered by Allegheny County Community College. There will be 5 sessions, Saturdays from 9 A.M. to noon, beginning April 15.

The course will consist of an introductory classroom session - at Vincentian High School - to acquaint students with field guides and their use, plant characteristics to look for in field identification, habitats, etc. Following the introductory session there will be field trips to such natural areas as North Park, Trillium Trail, Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve, and others.



The fee for Allegheny County residents is \$20, payable to -

Office of Continuing Education
College Center-North
1130 Perry Highway
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Now, we have saved the best for last. The instructor for this course is our own Esther Allen!

ED VASILCIK MOVES ON

Ed Vasilcik, horticulturist at Phipps Conservatory for eighteen years, has resigned.

His new position is with a private estate near Charlottesville, Virginia. He has a staff of forty-one people, including six foremen.

It is a marvelous opportunity for a very talented man. Our best wishes go with him, even though we will miss him in Pittsburgh.

- Anne Bahl

ILEX BLOOMING IN JANUARY

It is the middle of January, and the holly branches that we brought in to deck the halls at Christmas have burst into flower.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Pasduzia procrastinata

Not exactly rare, but certainly endangered, is the Botanical Society member who keeps putting off the annual dues remittal. S/he is in danger of being dropped from our mailing list if s/he doesn't get the 1989 dues payment in to Walt Gardill pronto. It was due on January 1. It's \$5 for a single membership and \$8 for a family membership.

(How do you like the use of the catch-all "s/he"? It is not original with me. I picked it up from a magazine.)

Robert F. Bahl, Sec.
401 Clearview Ave.
Pittsburgh, Pa., 15205
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FEBRUARY 1989

Our 103rd Year

CAREX GRAYII

The sketch of Asa Gray's Sedge was made by our member, Phyllis Monk. Locale - Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST

On Wed. Nov. 23, Stacey & I were headed south on I 70 on our way to Laredo. After driving about 150 miles - we decided to stop at a wayside rest, eat a sandwich, stretch our legs & relax for awhile. As we pulled in I noticed a woman with a camera up on a bank by a picnic table. I said to Stacey "That looks like Esther"! She said "It can't be Esther". She turned around & it was Esther. She and Dave were on their way to visit relatives in Ohio for the holidays. It just goes to show that Botanical members really get around! A botanical note - two apple-type trees were espaliered to a rustic wooden fence - probably flowering crabs. This type of horticulture is not seen too often.

Farther south we noticed many red or orangish-red fruits on small trees or shrubs. I thought they were probably dogwood or hawthorne. Cedars are spreading on the banks along the highway. The outer branches on maples were red & on ash twigs were green - almost like spring.

Memphis & its environs was different from any other large city that we have ever seen. Just outside of the city were large fields of cotton (not harvested yet) & large fields of soybeans (just being harvested), all within a mile or so of the city. The large skyscrapers seemed to be towering over the fields.

On Thanksgiving Day we saw many hawks perched on the low fence (about 3 ft. high) along the highway, probably red-tailed. Some were loners but many were in groups of threes.

The roadside ditches & woods along the road were flooded. This could be the explanation for the abundance of hawks as it might have made prey easier to see and catch. I asked at a service station if they had had big storms recently & he replied that it could have been caused by Hurricane Gilbert.

For miles we drove past bicycler racers on a side road that paralleled the main highway - this was near Pearsall, Texas. They had flagmen directing traffic at the intersections - all of the racers had numbers on their shirts. Most of the Texas highways were 2 or 3 lanes wide in each direction. And there was also a parallel double laned road to the side of the super-highway. Just an example that everything in Texas is bigger than anywhere else!

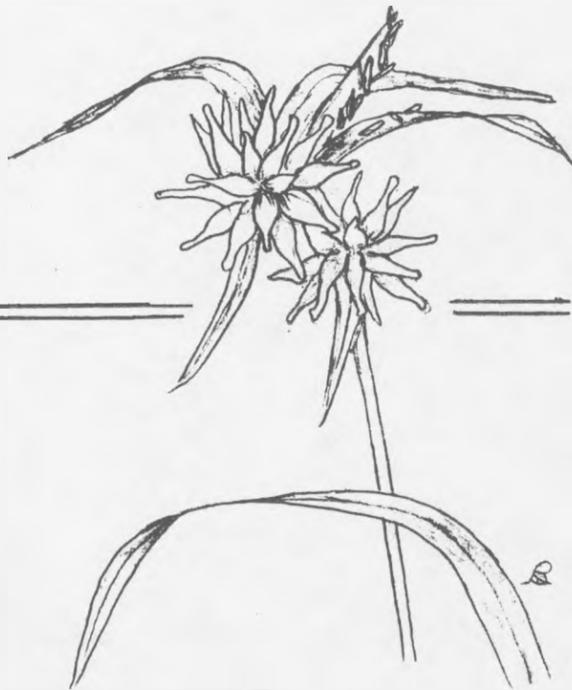
In the section of Texas that we saw - the dominant weed in the fields was the prickly pear cactus. It must be a pretty sight in March & April but I bet the farmers & ranchers hated it.

Farther south were many palm trees, willows & agave.

The fields were huge - many of hundreds of acres in each. The fence posts seemed to be mostly willows or some other type branches with 2 strands of barbed wire.

Texas is an interesting state even in the winter. Down by the border the skies were blue - the sun was shining & the T was in the low 70's.

- Ede Mock



Carex Grayii
Asa Gray's Sedge