

Wildflowers

THE BULLETIN OF THE
BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF W. PA.

MAY MEETING

At our next meeting - 8:00 P.M., Monday, May 13 at Carlow College's Trinity Hall, our president, Dr. Mary Joy Haywood, will present the program -

"Life on the Prairie Biome"

Prairies appear bleak and barren and flat. Hopefully, this presentation will prove all three of the above to be incorrect.



**MAY
1991**

Robert F. Bahl, Sec.
401 Clearview Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15205
(412) 921-1797

Tim Lyons
9211 Palmer Rd.
North East, PA 16428-5533

3-27-91

Dear flower enthusiasts,

I don't get to as many of the Botanical Society's field trips as I would if we were located closer to each other, so in case my name doesn't ring a bell, I was the leader of the Kalm's lobelia trip in Erie last fall. Your last newsletter mentioned that you are running low on new and exciting locations to explore, and I may be able to help.

I grew up on the edge of a woods too big to hike across and spent most of my youth playing in the creeks that pass through it. One of my favorite places there still remains unspoiled, in spite of having Interstate 90 cut through the middle and being recently declared a park. There was a rumor a few years ago that a ski slope might be constructed there, but nothing came of it. The area is unmarked and just inaccessible enough to remain unknown and untrampled.

I make a point of visiting my favorite *Mertensia* patch each May and would enjoy sharing it with any of your members. I've only encountered *Mertensia* rarely in my travels and have never seen a display to match this one. There are three areas about thirty feet wide, and the first one is over a hundred feet long. It's a sight to behold!

Although there aren't any rare plants, the expected varieties are plentiful. Along the way you'll see banks covered with wild ginger and white and red Trilliums. Between the *Mertensia* patches are Violets, Squirrel Corn, Toothwort, Leeks, False Solomon's Seal, Solomon's Seal, Jack in the Pulpit, May Apple, wild Lilly of the Valley, Early Meadow Rue, and Wood Sorrel. Less common are Twisted Stalk, Uvularia, Dwarf Ginseng and Wood Anemone. You could see a greater variety by popping over to Raccoon Creek State Park, but their *Mertensia* display can't hold a candle to mine, and the walk through the woods and back along the creek is very scenic. The banks of six-mile creek are over 150 feet high near the *Mertensia* patch.

This isn't a trip for everyone, because of the time and effort required to reach the site. I traditionally take a leisurely 45 minute walk through the woods on the way down and half an hour in Mitchell Run creek for the return trip. I can get down and back in half an hour, but the scenery is a blur, and the walk through the woods is half the reason for going. The other obvious access points are owned by people who won't allow anyone to cross their land, and the 150 cliffs of six-mile creek rule out climbing down the bank at the site.

There are four creeks to cross and some banks to climb, mostly along logging roads or deer trails with gentle inclines. You'll need boots, but the water shouldn't be more than a foot deep at the worst crossing point. I don't think of it as a strenuous outing, but Jean Stull and Evelyn Anderson thought that once was enough. They both raved about the sights along the way, and Jean tried to find an organization interested in buying the spot to preserve it.

If anyone is interested in being given a tour, I'm available nearly any day, since I work night shift and don't sleep much. The hike starts from my parent's house 1/4 mile east of the Interstate 90 and the Route 430 interchange (that's south and east of Erie) and ends where six-mile creek crosses Interstate 90 (a mile east of the exit). The *Mertensia* is at its peak around Mother's Day. Call or write to arrange a time and meeting place.

Tim Lyons
(814) 725-5764

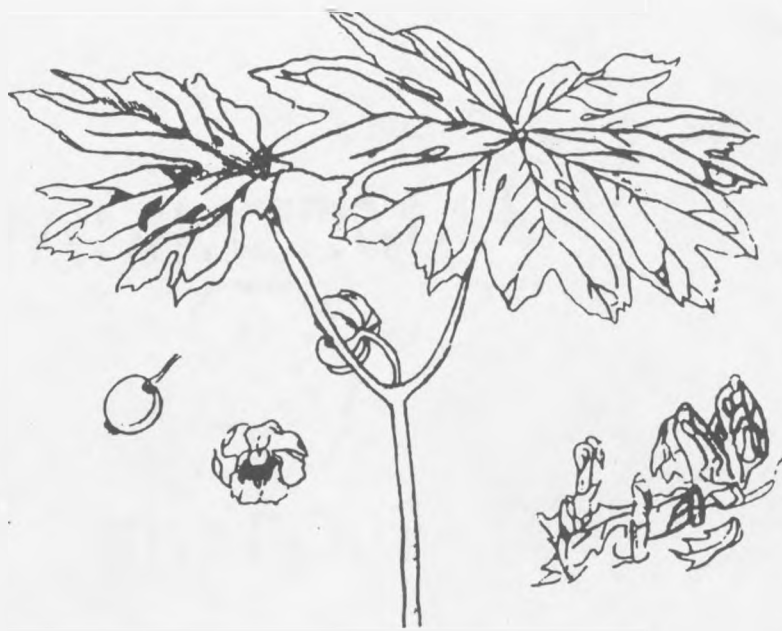
AN INVITATION

Anne and I will be giving the program at Wissahickon Nature Club on Saturday, May 4. Entitled "North by Northwest", it is a botanical journey to Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska. Members of the Botanical Society are welcome.

Wissahickon meetings are held at the Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon, Woodland & Dickson Aves., Ben Avon. Program time is 7:30 P.M.

(Bob Bahl)

Wissahickon Nature Club



1990 ~ 1991

PODOPHYLLUM PELTATUM

Our member, Virginia Craig, did the May-Apple illustration for Wissahickon's program. It's in "Dry Dot".

Dry Dot is a process of scratching the image on a plastic surface. Ink is then rubbed over the indentation for multiple impressions.

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FIELD TRIPS

May 4 - ENLOW FORK NATURAL AREA, GREENE COUNTY, PA.

Leader: Bob Morgan

Refer to April issue of "Wildflowers".

May 11 - SHALE BARRENS AND FORT HILL RESERVE, MINERAL COUNTY, WV and ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD.

Leaders: Clete and Doug Smith

Refer to April issue of "Wildflowers".

May 18 - SIX-MILE CREEK, ERIE COUNTY, PA.

Leader: Tim Lyons

Start Time: 12:00 Noon

Directions: Take I-79 North into Erie County and I-90

East. Exit I-90 at Route 430 (the 4th exit) and meet in the N. E. corner of the "Country Fair" store.

Expectations: (As per Tim Lyons letter of 3-27). Expect to see Virginia Bluebells, Solomon's Seal, Canada Mayflower, Twisted Stalk, Dwarf Ginseng, Wood Sorrel, and Wood Anemone. Members should be prepared for a mildly strenuous hike with at least 4 creek crossings and some banks to climb. Wear sturdy boots.

May 25 - JENNINGS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER, BUTLER COUNTY, PA.

Leader: Virginia Phelps

Start Time: 1:30 P.M.

Directions: Take I-79 North, Route 422 East, and Route 528 North to Jennings. Meet in the Nature Center parking area on the right.

Expectations: Virginia will lead us through a Jennings that few of us know - a Jennings of springtime. We will stroll through the woodland trails in search of Wild Geranium, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Wild Oats, Violets, and White Clintonia. Then we'll move out into the prairie area to view the emergence of the summer flora. Virginia will also show us her American Columbo research site.

June 1 - No hike scheduled.

June 8 - TITUS BOG, HELL'S 1/2-ACRE BOG, AND TOPLOVICH BOG, ERIE AND WARREN COUNTIES, PA.

Leader: Esther Allen

Start Time: 12:00 Noon

Directions: Take I-79 North and Route 6 East. We will meet at the Route 6 rest stop (although it is officially closed) just east of the Route 89 junction between Union City and Corry.

Expectations: Esther will take us on a whirlwind tour of bog country. Expect to see orchids - *Arethusa*, *Rose Pogonia*, and *Southern Twayblade*. We will also see *Buckbean* (it should be blooming), *Three-leaved Solomon's Seal*, *Pitcher Plant*, *Sundew*, and many other interesting plants. Plan to get wet feet.

June 15 - No hike scheduled.

(Scott Shriver 412-741-9249)