

Wildflowers

OCTOBER 1992

THE BULLETIN OF THE
BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF W. PA.

OCTOBER MEETING

We meet again on Monday, October 12, 8 P.M., at Trinity Hall, Carlow college, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Oakland.

Paul Wiegman of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will give the program, "Endangered Plants".



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ADVENTURES IN MICRONESIA

Imagine swimming with hundreds of thousands of jellyfish that don't sting! These stingless jellyfish, genus *Mastigias*, live in Jellyfish Lake, a landlocked saltwater lake in Palau, Micronesia. Our main reason for going to Micronesia was the scuba diving. People interested in nature wander great distances to observe more and unusual flora and fauna species. I had yearned for a long time to see this unique form of jellyfish that exists nowhere else.

This lake is reached by an arduous trek up a 100 ft. jungled razor-backed ridge, then a 100 ft. descent down the other side. The so-called trail is littered with sharp limestone and slippery, decaying leaves. At the bottom of the ridge there is a narrow mangrove-lined channel. While swimming through the channel to the lake, the white limestone bottom was often interrupted by decaying vegetation and small white anemones with flowing tentacles could be seen in a maze of roots. We arrived at the 600 ft. wide lake and began passing through a living wall of pulsing caramel-colored, softball-sized jellyfish. Landlocked over geologic time, these animals have no need to sting as there are no predators in this environment. They ceased being hunters and are now farmers, having developed a symbiotic relationship with a tiny form of algae called zooxanthellae. During the day the jellyfish cultivate their algae by swimming in full sun near the surface. At night they dive to replenish their supply of nitrogen fertilizer for the algae.

Although we hiked through rain forests we saw no outstanding flowering plants; instead, the excitement was to be found in marine plants.

- Kathy Rankin



GOODBYE, PERIODONTIST!

Look for another additive in your toothpaste, sanguinarine. Sanguinarine blocks the enzyme that destroys gum tissue, because it interferes with the ability of bacteria to convert carbohydrates into a gum-eating acid. If you haven't guessed, sanguinarine is obtained from *Sanguinaria canadensis*, and is presently available in Pepsodent toothpaste.

- Anne Bahl



PUZZLER

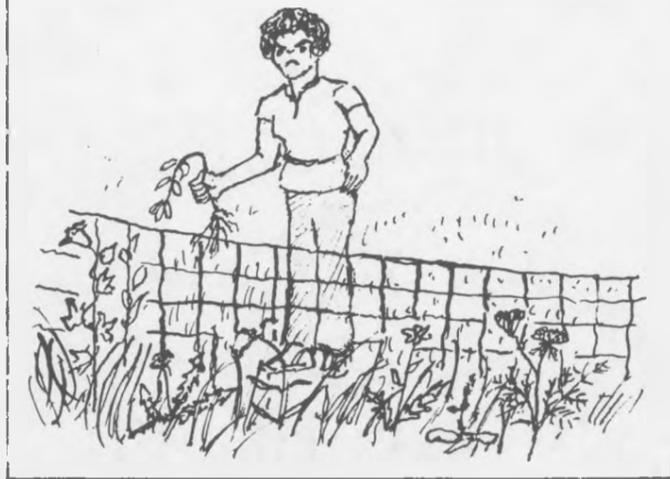
What do all of these members have in common?

JEANNE ASHOK
MRS. BILL KINNEY
DR. MARK KONRAD
BETTY McCURDY
CARL PASCARELLA
NANCY PRENTICE
THOMAS PRINZIE
MARY JANE SEIPLER
KEN SETTLEMEYER
BETTY SHEPLER
AL SHRIVER
DEBBIE THOMPSON
SUE THOMPSON
MARY ANN VESELY

Answer in next month's "Wildflowers"!

WEEDS

My neighbor despises weeds.
She attacks them violently,
And glares at mine fiercely
When they creep near her fence.
But I spare the Queen Anne's Lace
For my bouquets,
And Jim will not cut the grass
Where the Buttercups glow.
My neighbor needs her weeds
To vent her wrath against
The frustrations we all know.
But I'll find other ways,
And allow my choicest weeds to grow.



DAUCUS CAROTA

Both the poem and illustration are the work of Ann Welshman of Crafton. They are from her booklet of poems, "Sun-Dreaming".



PROUD GRANDPARENTS

Phyllis and Billy Monk are first-time grandparents. Tara Amanda Monk arrived on August 2.



VIRGINIA PHELPS

Virginia suffered a coronary while camping in the backwoods of Maine. The latest word we have is that she is in Intensive Care at the Down East Community Hospital, Machias, Maine 04654.



THOUSANDS OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Begin autumn with a stroll through Phipps Conservatory during the Fall Flower Show, which begins on Saturday, September 19th and continues through Sunday, October 11th.

The show "On the Horizon" includes a bonus, a display of plant material which was exchanged between the eastern and western hemispheres after Columbus's arrival. How many economically important ones do you know?

- Anne Bahl



THIS BUD (immature bloom) IS FOR YOU

The raison d'etre for "Wildflowers" is to provide a medium for members to express themselves - what you have done, where you have gone, what you have seen, how you feel. On a monthly basis, "Wildflowers" is a continuation of the Botanical Society's "Trillia" of yesteryears.

From April to September, much of the space in "Wildflowers" must be devoted to our field trips, and we can't always fit in everything that our members contribute. We promise you, though, that your piece will eventually be published.

In the fall and winter issues, we usually have space to spare, so send in your articles now. They do not have to be lengthy. Short items are just as good. We like to see a variety of members' names in "Wildflowers".

Illustrations are always welcome, especially from first-time artists. Again, we promise, we'll use at least one of your renderings.