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# WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • June 1997

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## Next Meeting is June 9

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The next meeting for the year will be June 9, at 8:00 P.M., at Kresge Theater, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland). This will be the last meeting for the spring. Meetings will resume in September.

The speaker will be member Esther Allen, and she will present "Life in the Forest". Esther will share her slides and vast knowledge of plants and birds found in the forest.

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## Boyce Park/Mayview Wetlands

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USC Citizens for Land Stewardship encourage you to visit the Boyce Park/Mayview property and wetlands. This unique and biologically diverse natural area is located in Upper St. Clair.

Suggested access points are a) Boyce Road Gardens at the corner of Morton and Boyce Roads; and b) Boyce Road entrance by Ardolino's pizza shop (1.1 miles from intersection of Rte. 19 and Boyce Road. There is a paved turnoff to the right; park near the gate but not beyond the gate).

Large groups should call the Township Supervisor at 831-9000 prior to visiting the area.

If you wish to join the USC Citizens for Land Stewardship, an organization dedicated to the conservation and stewardship of natural open spaces remaining in Upper St. Clair, please call (412) 831-3289.

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## Farewell, But Not Good-bye

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In January 1980, I inaugurated WILDFLOWERS as the bulletin of the Botanical Society, and have now been putting it out every month for 17 1/2 years.

Some would say that it was a lot of work, but my definition of work is "anything that you don't want to be doing". I have enjoyed getting out every issue.

The time has come, though, when I can no longer deny that I am actuarially challenged. I want so much for WILDFLOWERS to continue even after I take on a full-time job propagating *Chrysanthemum leucanthemums*. So, with this issue I turn over WILDFLOWERS to Loree Speedy.

I am not leaving WILDFLOWERS. I have promised Loree that I will be her most prolific contributor. In fact, I will be writing more than ever. My philosophy was always "the less an editor writes personally, the better a job he is doing". I am no longer editor.

My thanks to all of you who have helped me with WILDFLOWERS over the years, and particularly to my wonderful wife, Anne, who has been my *PARTNER* in this as well as every aspect of my life.

*Robert F. Bahl*  
*Editor Emeritus*

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## Describing the Walking Fern

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The Reverend John Banister was an early botanist who was accidentally shot and killed while botanizing in 1692. He died before he published. His works have been compiled by Joseph and Nesta Ewan in *John Banister and His Natural History of Virginia 1678-1692* University of Illinois Press (1970). Below is an interesting account of a trip where Banister first describes the Walking Fern.

### 1685 or 1686

“In September last we occasionally took a journey towards, I might have said to the mountains, had not the Indians which were our guides been afraid as they pretended but I am apt to think it was policy not fear retarded them, and that they were unwilling to let us be acquainted with the recesses so far up in the country. ....our small path brought us to a vast rock...overspread with a swift fall of water... A little lower down this rivulet is received into a natural basin and from thence conveyed into a small vault of craggy rocks, where with its fall it makes a dead hollow sound, something like that of a kettle-drum, but more like an Indian one, which is a skin stretched over an earthen pot half full of water. .... where among other Capillaries grows this small but rare kind of Harts Tongue [*Walking Fern, Camptosorus rhizophyllus*]. This plant grows erect as other of the like kind till nature calls it down to propagate; and when its offsets are strong enough to draw in their own alignment it leaves them and grows up as before.”

*Scott Speedy*

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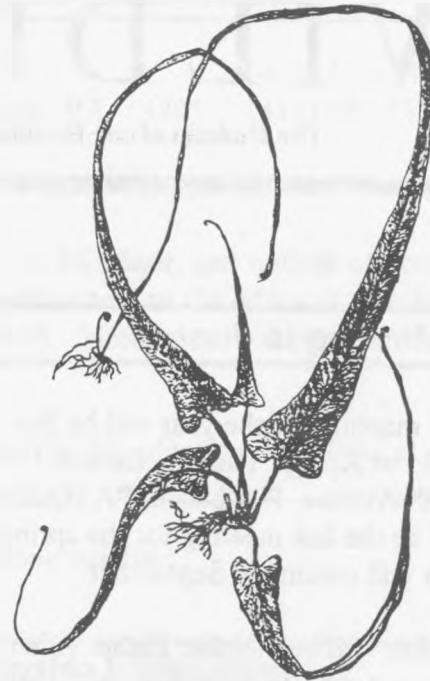
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## A Botanical Term to Learn

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**Indeterminate.** Describes an inflorescence in which the lower or outer flowers on a stalk bloom first, so the order of blossoming is from bottom to top. The stalk, never being stopped by a terminal flower, can continue to grow, producing flowers, one after another, for many weeks.



The Walking Fern - *Asplenium rhizophyllum* L.

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## Field Trip Report

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**Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve, May 17th.** Masses of Golden Ragwort *Senecio aureus* abutted by masses of white Spring Cress *Cardamine bulbosa* filled the flood plain next to Raccoon Creek.

Miami Mist *Phacelia purshii* and the Green Violet *Hybanthus concolor* were not yet in bloom. One Nodding Trillium *Trillium flexipes* was in bloom. Several other Trilliums stumped us with traits belonging to both Nodding and Drooping.

Discovered by a close look: Round-leaved Ragwort *Senecio obovatus*, Palmate-leaved Violet *Viola palmata* and Orange-fruited Horse Gentian *Triosteum aurantiacum*.

Whites sprinkled: Goldenseal *Hydrastis canadensis*, Lyre-leaved Rock-Cress *Arabis laevigata*, and Early Saxifrage *Saxifraga virginensis*.

Blues blooming: Wild Geranium *Geranium maculatum*, Greek Valerian *Polemonium reptans*, and Wild Blue Phlox *Phlox divaricata*.

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## Field Trip Schedule

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### Saturday

June 7, 1997 -

Titus Bog, Erie County  
Leader: Jeanne Poremski  
Time: 1:00

Directions: From Pgh., take I-79 north to Rt. 6N (Edinboro exit) head east on 6N through Union City. After taking the turn out of Union City, drive 5.7 miles to the intersection of Rte. 89 North and 6N, where we will meet at a Drive-in Theater on the left.

This is our own bog, jointly owned by the Botanical Society and the Presque Isle Audubon Society. Expect to see orchids (arethusa, rose pogonia), buckbean, pitcher plant, and sundew. Plan on getting wet and climbing over tree trunks.

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### Saturday

June 14, 1997 -

Independence Marsh  
Beaver County  
Leader: Esther Allen  
Time: 1:00

Directions: Take the Hopewell Exit off Rte 60. Go west (left) on Rte. 151. Shortly after you cross an iron bridge, you will see Columbia Gas on the corner. Turn right here onto Cowpath Road. Go about 1/2 mile to a sign for Independence Marsh and follow the driveway to parking area.

This will be the first opportunity for the Society to explore this wetland area.

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### Saturday

June 28, 1997 -

Todd Sanctuary,  
Leader: Vicki Nebes  
Time: 1:00

Directions: From Pgh., take Rt. 28 north to Exit 17 at Rte. 356. Travel 0.9 miles, and turn right (across from a cinema) onto Monroe Road. Travel 1.3 miles to a fork in the road; take the right fork, onto Kepple Road. Travel at least 1.8 miles - look for a wooden sign on the right indicating the entrance to Todd Sanctuary's gravel parking lot.

This 160-acre tract of forest, streams, and thickets in SE Butler County is owned by the Audubon Society of W. Pa. We will search for ferns, fern allies, and the Virginia Snakeroot.

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## Coming up in July!

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Esther Allen is leading a field trip to the Dolly Sods Area in Tucker and Randolph Counties, WV, for Saturday, July 19th, and Sunday, July 20th. Plan to attend the field trip for one day or both days. Directions and starting times will be in next month's newsletter.

Dolly Sods is approximately 140 miles from Pittsburgh. For information on accommodations in the Davis, WV, area, call 1-800-CALL WVA. Camping is available at Blackwater and Canaan Valley. Tell the receptionist that you wish to lodge or camp near Dolly Sods.

Tent camping (sites limited) is available at Red Creek Camp Ground, on Dolly Sods. Call (304) 636-1800.

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## **WILDFLOWERS - Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania**

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Editor: Loree Speedy, 5837 Nicholson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 (412) 521-9425

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

WILDFLOWERS is published monthly by the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

We welcome short articles of botanical interest, drawings, letters to the editor, and notices of botanical events and group activities. Articles, notices, drawings, etc. should be sent to the editor at the above address. Deadline for submissions is the 17th of the previous month. Material on computer diskette is welcome; call to discuss file format.

We especially welcome news about our members! Please call or write the editor, or Bob Bahl at 921-1797.

Changes of address - Notify the editor at the above address or phone number.

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### **The Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania - Membership Information**

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The object of the Society shall be to bring together those who are interested in Botany and to encourage the study of this science and a knowledge of plants. Our members include both amateurs and professionals.

Annual Dues: Individual: \$5.00 Family: \$8.00 Students: Half-rate

To join, mail your name, your address, and check payable to "Botanical Soc. of W PA" to Loree Speedy, 5837 Nicholson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15217. Your membership includes a subscription to the monthly bulletin WILDFLOWERS.

The Society meets the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 8 PM sharp, at Trinity Hall or Kresge Theater, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Oakland. All are welcome. The business meeting is followed by an informative program.

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### **The Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania - Field Trip Information**

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Everyone is welcome on field trips; amateurs, professionals, non-members, and anyone who is curious about the natural world.

- ◇ Trips are not canceled due to rain or cold.
- ◇ Dress for the weather. Comfortable shoes, water-proof boots, all-weather gear are suggested; water bottles, sunhats, and rainwear are strongly recommended.
- ◇ Trips usually last three, sometimes four, hours. You can depart earlier if you like.

Field trips are often at a leisurely pace, but may require some hiking and traveling through wet and muddy areas. If you have any questions about the nature of a trip, feel free to contact the trip leader or Loree Speedy at 521-9425.