
WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • May 1998

Next Meeting is May 11

The next meeting will be Monday, May 11, at 8:00 p.m., at the Kresge Theater at Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland).

Member **Phyllis Monk** will present "All Around Alaska". Phyllis visited Alaska in the spring of 1997. Her slide presentation will feature Alaskan wildflowers, especially alpine plants.

"Biological Assessment Volunteer Days" set for Botanical Garden Site

The Horticultural Society of Western PA is asking for volunteer participation to assist in a broad botanical survey of its 400 acre site for the proposed botanical garden at Settlers Cabin Park. We are scheduling three or four days between May and September for interested folks to participate in half day walkabouts throughout the site. Volunteers will identify and map major stands of trees, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation, and also note uncommon or rare species as well.

Survey dates for spring and early summer are **Sunday, May 3rd at 10:00 a.m.**, and **Sunday, June 28th at 10:00 a.m.**

Please call HSWP at (412) 361-8677 ASAP to confirm your attendance at either or both survey dates above so that we can plan for adequate refreshments, etc. Please leave your name and the date(s) which you plan to attend.

Wear good walking shoes, trousers and long sleeves, and a hat (rain gear if the weather calls

for it). This is primarily wooded area with poison ivy, multiflora rose and possibly some ticks. Bring tree, shrub, and/or wildflower guides if you have them. HSWP will provide refreshments and facilities.

Meet at Settlers Cabin Park at an unmarked gated entrance on Noblestown Road outside Oakdale. Take Parkway West to exit for 22-30 West (shortly after Campbells Run Road). From 22-30 West, take Oakdale exit and turn left off of exit ramp onto McKee Road. Take McKee Road into the village of Oakdale and bear left onto Noblestown Road. Site entrance will be approximately 1 mile further on your left across from a cement pipe factory.

Nursery-Propagated Native Plants will be sold at Beechwood

The Audubon Center for Native Plants will be selling plants for three Saturdays this spring, on **May 2, May 9, and May 16**, from 9:00 AM to 12 noon. Over 50 species of Western Pennsylvania native plants will be available, including Blue-Eyed Mary, Fire Pink, and Jacob's Ladder.

All of the plants have been nursery-propagated from local seed sources. In fact, several Botanical Society members have been instrumental in seed collecting. Jeanne Poremski and Esther Allen have introduced us to some great natives such as Blue Curls and Hairy Wood Rush.

The Center is located at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve, 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. For more information, call 963-6100.

Linda Kramer

Columbine

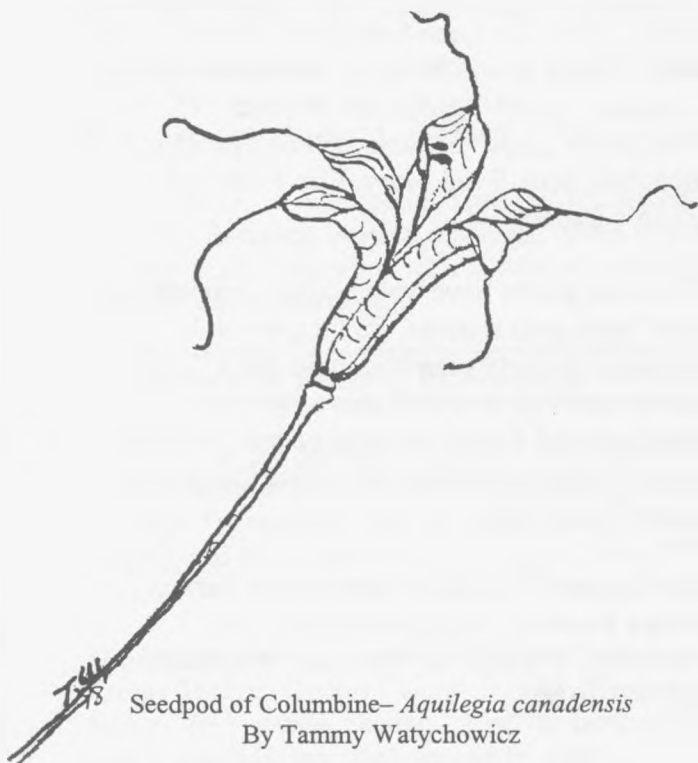
The flowers (colors – red and yellow) are made up of five long spurs on a very long slender stem. The stems grow to heights of one foot or more, and the flowers are often as much as two inches long. The whorled flowers hang down from these stems, and the spurs point upwards. The leaves are divided several times into segments of three lobed leaflets.

The genus name is from the Latin word for eagle; the spurs suggest an eagle's claw. The name columbine is also from the Latin and means "dove" – for some people think the spurs look like dove heads in a circle. Rock bells is another name given to it – because of the flower shape and its natural habitat.

Columbine is a very ancient medicinal herb plant and was used during the middle ages. In 1373 it was used with seven other herbs as a cure for the "pestilence".

An old legend said that lions ate Columbine in the spring to gain extra strength.

Tammy and Janet Watychowicz



Seedpod of Columbine– *Aquilegia canadensis*
By Tammy Watychowicz

Pittsburgh BioBlitz `98

The Pittsburgh Bioblitz is a day of free family activities centered around biodiversity and conservation. It happens **Saturday, May 16**, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Frick Environmental Center. This event is designed to create awareness of the multitude of plants and animals in Frick Park.

There will be activities for all ages, including tours of Nine Mile Run, nature printing, leaf composting, watching scientists identify species. Throughout the day, a BioBlitz Web site will be under construction with up-to-the-minute species counts and photographs of the event.

Starting at 3 p.m. on **Friday, May 15**, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH) biologists and other area naturalists will find and identify as many species of plants and animals as possible in Pittsburgh's Frick Park during a 24-hour period.

Biologists and naturalists with knowledge in all groups of organisms are needed. We especially need people with expertise in fungi, algae, lichens, mosses, bacteria, protozoa, copepods, earthworms, and spiders. If you are interested in Pittsburgh BioBlitz `98 for any period of time, contact the following people at CMNH:

Amphibians/Reptiles: Ellen Censky (412) 622-3258
censky@clpgh.org - Birds: Robin Panza 622-3255
panzar@clpgh.org - Insects/Spiders: Bob Davidson
688-8667 davidsonr@clpgh.org - Mammals: Sue
McLaren 665-2615 mclarens@clpgh.org - Plants & all
other groups: Sue Thompson 622-3295 thompsons
@clpgh.org

Field Trip Schedule

Everyone is welcome on field trips, including non-members. Trips are not canceled due to rain or cold. Wear shoes that can get wet. For questions, call the trip leader or Loree at 521-9425.

Saturday Plaingrove Bog,
May 2, 1998- Lawrence County
Leader: Jeanne Poremski
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take I-79 north to the Slippery Rock exit. Drive west on Rte. 108 toward Harlansburg; at the first crossroad, turn right toward Plain Grove. Meet at the new church across from the cemetery.

Saturday State Game Lands 203,
May 9, 1998- Wexford, Allegheny County
Leader: Luc Berger
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take I-79 North to Wexford (Exit 22). At the exit, turn right and go 0.2 mile on Rte. 910 East. Turn left onto Mingo Raod. After 0.8 mile, go through an underpass and turn left onto the State Game Land Road. Proceed for 1 mile to the parking lot of the Shooting Range (look for the wooden sign), where we will meet.

Saturday McConnell's Mill State Park,
May 16, 1998- Lawrence County
Leader: Jeanne Poremski
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, follow I-79 North for 40 miles north to Exit 29. Exit onto U.S. Rte 422. Continue 1.8 miles west on Rte. 422. Turn left at sign for McConnell's Mill State Park. Park and meet at the lot for the playfield and picnic grounds.

Saturday Lee's Cabin on Stony Creek
May 23, 1998- Lake, Somerset County
Leader: Lee Tosh
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take the Turnpike east to the Somerset Exit. Follow Rte. 31 est

about three miles to a Y where you will bear left to Shanksville. At the first stop sign in Shanksville, make a left. As soon as you cross the bridge over Stony Creek, make a right. After you pass Shanksville High School on your left, proceed about 100 yards and turn left onto Lake Shore Road. Proceed downhill past the dam. Proceed about another 1/2 mile to Lee's cabin, which will be well-marked for us.

Expect to see Painted Trillium and Hobblebush.

Note: Member Rose Mary Drescher has invited members to stop over on the way to Somerset to see whether the Lady's Slippers are blooming near her cabin on the top of Laurel Mountain. (Stop there before 11 a.m. because Rose Mary will be leaving for the Somerset field trip at 11 a.m.)

Directions: Exit the turnpike at Donegal and turn right onto Rte. 31. Go 4 miles west to the top of the mountain ("three-mile hill"). Turn right onto Mt. Circle Road (it is a dirt road). Turn right and go about 1/4 mile. Go around a bend; Rose Mary's cabin is on the right. If travelling Rte. 31 instead of the turnpike, go through Mt. Pleasant, past Lenox, and up "three-mile hill". At the very top, turn left onto Mt. Circle Road.

Saturday Blue Run Trail,
May 30, 1998- Allegheny County
Leader: Dorothy Fornof
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, follow Rte. 28 to the Etna Bypass, following Rte. 8 north for approximately 1.5 miles. Turn right onto Saxonburg Boulevard (at the Eat 'n Park). Follow Saxonburg Boulevard for 5.3 miles into Dorseyville. Turn right at the Dorseyville Middle School and Hartwood Elementary (watch for the sign). Park in the right section of the lot near the Blue Run trail-head. Prepare for wet feet.

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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.

The Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania - Membership Information

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 are \$5.00 for individual and \$8.00 for family. Students can join at 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. An informative program follows the business meeting. Visit the Botanical Society Homepage at <http://ansel.his.duq.edu/~speedy/b1.html>.