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# WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • June and July 2000

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## Next Meeting is June 12th

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The next meeting will be Monday, June 12, 8:00 p.m., at the Kresge Theater at Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland).

**Dr. Walter Carson**, professor of ecology at the University of Pittsburgh, will discuss his research on the causes of failed oak regeneration in eastern deciduous forests. Oak forests are converting to forests dominated by non-masting species; browsing by white tail deer is proving to be a major factor.

Research on failed oak regeneration is especially pressing because eastern deciduous forests have lost or are losing other key masting species like chestnut and beech.

There will be no meetings in July and August. Monthly meetings will resume in September 2000.

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## Why You Should Go Peat Free

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“Almost all the peat from Ireland used in gardening, horticulture and landscaping comes from raised bogs and less than 6% of these bogs remain in a natural state. Time is running out for their survival. Plants and animals unique to bogs and wetlands are threatened with extinction as their habitats are depleted. The Irish Peatland Conservation Council is working hard to prevent this.

You can help in a practical way — go peat free in the garden. Remember, bog animals and plants need peat — those in your garden do not.”

The above paragraph came from the website of the Irish Peatland Conservation Council (<http://indigo.ie/~ipcc/>). Their website goes on to urge gardeners to utilize alternatives to peat products, such as compost and mushroom manure. The peatlands of the United States and Canada, like those of Ireland, are a finite resource and need to be protected from excessive exploitation.

*Paul Brown*

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## Esther Allen Receives the W. E. Clyde Todd Award

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Member Esther Alien has been awarded the W. E. Clyde Todd Award by the Board of Trustees of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP). This award honors an individual who has made a significant contribution to environmental conservation. Esther was recognized for teaching others about the natural landscape and being a “long-time champion of native plants in our area.”

Upon receiving the award at the ASWP Banquet on May 31, Esther said “If going out and just having a ball in the outdoors, sharing all that fun and learning with your friends makes one eligible for an award, then I must be eligible. But so many others are.”

Those who have been on field trips with Esther or who have attended her programs know how deserving she is of this honor. She has influenced us through her teaching and love of nature, and enlightened us to the beauty and wonder of western Pennsylvania.

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## Converse, Confer or Consider the Bruce

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- It is not too late to join the Botanical Society for their trip to the Bruce Peninsula in Ontario, Canada. So far, sixteen members have signed up for a week of botanical, nature and scenic field trips, interspersed with relaxing fellowship. We arrive on June 17 and leave on June 24. Call George Bercik at (412) 655-4701.
- Dr. Scott Shalaway informs us that the author of last month's piece called "Breaking the Lawn" (the conversation between the Almighty and St. Francis), was Lee Straton. It was first published in the Columbus Dispatch on November 11, 1995.
- Millersville University holds a Native Plants in the Landscape Conference on June 8, 9, 10. Topics discussed include native plant horticulture, botany, conservation, and habitat restoration. For information, call (717) 872-3030.
- Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry (BOF) is holding public meetings throughout the state to seek public input about management policies for the 2.1 million-acre state forest system. The input from these meetings will be used to revise the BOF's draft fifteen-year management plan. Conservation organizations and concerned citizens can attend these meetings and voice their concerns. The BOF, by special request from the Sierra Club, has added a public meeting in Pittsburgh, scheduled for June 27, from 7 to 9:30 p.m., at the Ramada Inn, 699 Rodi Road. Take the Rodi Road exit of the Parkway East I-376.

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## Field Trip Schedule

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Registration is not required. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. Trips are not cancelled due to rain. For questions, call the trip leader of Loree at (412) 521-9425.

**Sunday, June 11, 2000**

**Jennings Wildflower Reserve, Butler County**

**Leader: Loree Speedy (412) 521-9425**

**Time: 2 p.m.**

**Directions:** From Pittsburgh, take I-79 North to Exit 29. Drive east on Route 422 roughly 5.8 miles to the Prospect Exit, and turn left (north) onto Rte. 528. Continue on Rte. 528 for about 7 miles. We will meet in the Jennings Env. Ed. Center parking lot on the left (west) side of the road.

Member Virginia Phelps visited the site of American Columbo (*Swertia caroliniensis*) in May. This will be a big blooming year for the plants, many of which were 18 inches tall in mid-May. Dress carefully for the sun and bring water.

**Saturday, June 24, 2000**

**Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve, Beaver**

**Leader: Esther Allen (412) 366-0786**

**Time: 1 p.m.**

**Directions:** From Pittsburgh, take I-279 south/US 22-30 (Parkway West). After about 7.5 miles, exit this highway to continue west on U.S. 22-30. After 3.9 miles, exit this highway to continue on U.S. 30 (Imperial exit). 9.5 miles from this exit, watch for the entrance for the Wildflower Reserve, on the right, just over the hill. Meet in the parking lot.

**Saturday, July 8, 2000**

**Allen's Arboretum, Allegheny County**

**Leader: Esther Allen (412) 366-0786**

**Time: 1 p.m.**

**Directions:** Travel I-279 north through the city of Pittsburgh to Exit 19 (Route 19/Perry Hwy). Turn right at the end of exit ramp and get in the left lane. At stoplight, proceed straight through onto Cemetery Lane. Travel Cemetery Lane to Babcock Boulevard. Turn left onto Babcock and travel to the second stoplight at Siebert Road. Turn right onto Siebert, then immediately make a left onto Evergreen Road. Continue to a stop sign at the intersection with Idaway Drive. Turn right. Esther's house is the

third house on the left on Idaway Drive. There is ample parking along the street.

Esther's backyard arboretum is an excellent example of native plant gardening.

**Sunday, July 16, 2000**  
**Hunter's Lane, Westmoreland County**  
**Leader: Loree Speedy (412) 521-9425**  
**Time: 2 p.m.**

**Directions:** Travel the PA Turnpike to Exit 11 – Donegal. Follow Route 31 east for 3 miles and turn left onto Route 381. Proceed about 1.3 miles and turn left onto a township road called Hunter's Lane (marked by a small sign). Follow this road for about 200 yards, and park on the left edge of the road just before the bridge.

We will follow an abandoned railroad grade through floodplain and wet meadow.

**Saturday, July 22, 2000**  
**Columbus Bog, Warren County**  
**Time: 1:00 p.m.**  
**Leader: Ted Grisez**

**Directions:** Travel I-79 north to Exit 38 – Rte. 6N - Edinboro. Travel east on 6N through Union City and Corry, then to the town of Columbus. We will meet at the intersection of Route 6 and Route 957 (Pike Road) in Columbus, on the south side of Route 6.

Prepare for walking through boggy conditions. Wear shoes that can get wet and muddy.

**Saturday, July 29, 2000**  
**Outdoor Gardens of Phipps Conservatory,**  
**City of Pittsburgh (Oakland)**  
**Time: 10:00 a.m.**  
**Leader: Jeff Polonoli**

**Directions:** From north, south and west of Pittsburgh, travel east on I-376/Parkway East. Take Exit 5/Oakland and follow Forbes Ave. Turn right onto Schenley Drive. Turn left at the stop sign. Continue to follow Schenley Drive into Schenley Park. Phipps is on the right.

From the east, take the PA Turnpike to Exit 6 - Pittsburgh. Take I-376 West to Exit 7-A/Oakland, which places you on Bates Street. Turn left onto Bouquet Street. Turn right onto Forbes Ave. Turn right onto Schenley Drive. Turn left at the stop sign. Continue to follow Schenley Drive into Schenley Park. Phipps is on the right.

Jeff will provide a special "insiders" tour of the Outdoor Gardens. Afterward, members may wish to visit the indoor gardens and Butterfly Forest.

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## Back to Back to Basics

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*We have been discussing the four whorls of a flower. The third of four whorls is called the **androecium** and its parts are called **stamens**. It contains the reproductive cells that produce pollen (sperm).*

The stamens (androecium) are comprised of three main parts useful for plant identification. First, notice the stalk-like structure called a **filament**. The filament usually bears terminal sac-like structures called **anthers**. Thirdly, the tissue between the anthers is called the **connective**.

Sometimes stamens do not produce pollen and look nothing like a typical stamen. These are called **staminodes**. Staminodes can be flattened and petaloid, or even be minute nectar-secreting structures among the stamens. The only sure way to recognize staminodes is to pinpoint the exact whorl in which the structure is present.

Connate (two like parts of the same whorl fused together) stamens fused by their filaments and forming a ring around the gynoecium (carpel) are called **monadelphous** stamens. This condition can be seen in the Violet family. Stamens can also be adnate (parts of different whorls fused together) to petals, a condition called **epipetalous**. This is seen easily in Galium species.

*Jeff Polonoli*

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania – June and July 2000  
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## **WILDFLOWERS - Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania**

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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. Send to the editor at the above address. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of the previous month.

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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 are \$10.00 for individual and \$15.00 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 p.m. 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://home.kiski.net/~speedy/b1.html>.