



THE BULLETIN OF THE

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

October & November Meetings

Meetings are held on Mondays at 7:15 p.m. at Kresge Theater, Carlow University, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland). Kresge Theater is on the top floor of the Grace Library and is accessed from the upper campus. Place a note on your dashboard saying "Botanical Society Meeting," or use your parking permit.

OCTOBER 13. Mark Tebbitt, PhD, is a botanist who specializes in plant systematics, with a focus on *Begonia*, and horticultural plants. He is a native of Cambridge, England, and has a PhD in plant systematics from the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Mark is a keen field botanist, and splits his research time equally between herbarium-based and molecular-based projects. He is also a gardener and has a particular interest in alpinines and North American and Asian woodland plants. When Mark is not working, or gardening, he enjoys fly-fishing.

Since Fall 2007, Mark has held the position of Assistant Professor of Botany in the Biology Department at California University of PA. His teaching commitments include: General Botany, Evolution, Plant Taxonomy, and Entomology. Once settled in, he also plans to conduct student-based research, with a focus on local plant taxonomy.

From spring 1998 to summer 2007, Mark was the head of the Horticultural Taxonomy Department at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Before moving to the States he worked at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh on the European Garden Flora project.

NOVEMBER 10. *Through the Lens of My Camera* will be presented by Mindy McNaugher. Her love of photography began as a young girl — she was lucky enough to have a Dad who was a terrific photographer. He taught Mindy all about f-stops and how to use her first 35mm camera. Years later, she would graduate from Carnegie Mellon University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, specializing in Photography. At that time, much of her emphasis was on fine art photography, particularly black and white photography, and good old darkroom work!

With a 23-year career at Carnegie Museum of Natural History as the Staff Photographer, Mindy has had the opportunity to utilize her photography skills in many different settings. Whether traveling to Kenya and photographing landscapes to be used as 30-foot exhibit murals, to photographing close-ups of acacia thorns for reproduction in a diorama, each experience has taught her the importance of truly observing closely that which is around us.

Mindy's passion for photography does not take a backseat in her private life either. With the love of both photography and

Continued on back cover

Continued on back cover

OCTOBER &
NOVEMBER
2008



Wildflowers,

Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania, is published bimonthly by the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania. We welcome short articles of botanical interest, drawings, and notices of botanical events and group activities. Send to the editor at the address below. Deadline for submissions is the 16th of the previous month. **Wildflowers** is printed on recycled paper.

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The Society meets the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 7:15 p.m. sharp, at Kresge Theater, Carlow University, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Oakland. All are welcome to the informative program and business meeting.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual dues are \$10 for individual and \$15 for family. Students can join at half-rate. To join, mail your name, your address, and check payable to "Botanical Society of W PA" to Loree Speedy, 279 Orr Road, West Newton, PA 15089. Your membership includes a subscription to the bimonthly bulletin *Wildflowers*.



The Botanical Society was founded in 1886.

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.

October Field Trip

Registration for Botanical Society field trips is not required. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. Wear shoes that can get wet or muddy, and sun protection. Trips last 3 to 4 hours but one can leave at any time.

For questions, call the field trip leader or Loree Speedy at 724-872-5232. If you would like to lead a field trip, contact Loree.

Saturday, October 11, 1 p.m.

Harrison Hills Park Northeastern Allegheny County

Leader: Tammy Watychowicz, Friends of Harrison Hills Park
Contact Info: (724) 224-4102
friendsofharrisonhills@comcast.net

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take PA Route 28 north to Exit 16, Freeport/Millerstown. At the end of the ramp, turn right, then turn right onto Freeport Rd. Travel 0.6 miles to the park entrance. Follow signs to the Environmental Learning Center, where we will meet.

Notes: We will join Tammy and the Friends for a fall foliage hike (www.friendsofharrisonhills.org). Expect to see a 53" dbh White Ash and a 46" dbh Scarlet Oak. A combination of old growth woodlands and open meadows will provide an enjoyable autumn experience.

DEC. 15 HOLIDAY PARTY & BOOK AUCTION!

Please mark your calendars for the Holiday Wild Foods Party and meeting on Monday, December 15. Please note that, for the month of December only, the meeting date will be the **third** Monday evening in December. This will allow us to meet at the beautiful Atrium of the A. J. Palumbo Hall at the lower campus of Carlow along Fifth Avenue.

Members and guests bring an assortment of foods made from something found in the wild. A slide projector and a digital video projector will be available so that members can share 12 slides or photos of their best botanical sightings.

This year we will have an additional special event: a silent auction of botanical books donated to BSWP by the late Virginia Phelps.

Details of this event and the silent auction, including more information on the books, will appear in the next newsletter.

PHIPPS NATIVE PLANT AND SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

The annual native plant conference, which will address everything from aesthetic to environmental gardening issues, is taking place on Saturday, October 25 at the Phipps Garden Center in Shadyside.

From 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., beginning with a continental breakfast and a lunch included in the fee, four speakers will offer presentations on a variety of topics:

The Authentic Garden and Successful Native Groundcovers — Claire Sawyers, Director of the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College

The Dynamic Landscape Explored — Patrick Cullina, Vice President of Horticulture and Science Research at Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York City

The Influence of Plant Biodiversity on Landscape Pest Management — Paula Shrewsbury, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, ornamental and turf integrated pest management, Department of Entomology, University of Maryland

Good Bug, Bad Bug — Jessica Walliser, local horticulturist and co-host of The Organic Gardener radio show on KDKA

Phipps Garden Center is located at 1059 Shady Avenue in Mellon Park, near Fifth Avenue and the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. For more information on this event, go to <http://www.phipps.conservatory.org/adult.htm> to download the *Education News* catalog, or call Phipps Garden Center at 412.441.4442.

PA's Lakes Brimming with Aquatic Blooms

Sugar Lake hardly looks like the site of an alien invasion. It's a small body of water in Crawford County surrounded by a few rolling hills, forests, wetlands near its inlet and outlet, and a handful of houses, mostly weekend cottages.

Yet the quiet lake suffers from its own form of distress. As Steve Grund pulled underwater plants from the water, he found Eurasian watermilfoil and curly pondweed, both nonnative species. One of them, Eurasian watermilfoil, is highly invasive, meaning it can rapidly spread throughout a lake.

"That gives you an idea of the problems of this lake, the first two plants we see", said Grund, a botanist with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Grund and a team of volunteers were mapping the aquatic plants of Sugar Lake. Every few yards, their canoes would stop as the crews checked for vegetation in a 3-meter radius. Some plants could be floating, others growing along the edge of the lake, and still others growing underwater.

The crews had five-gallon buckets with clear plastic bottoms to peer into the water. But the water was murky, mostly from algae, which suggested that despite its peaceful setting, the lake's upstream watershed was disturbed and was spilling nutrients downstream.

For the rest of this story, please go to <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/wrcf/wildnotes/lakes.html>. If you do not have home access to the internet, consider asking a fellow member to print the story for you. This was reprinted from the Fall 2005 issue of Keystone WILD! Notes, the official publication of the Pennsylvania Wild Resource Conservation Fund. To learn more about WRCF and its programs, please contact WRCF, PO Box 8764, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/wrcf.

PNPS ANNUAL MEETING

The Pennsylvania Native Plant Society invites you to join them on Saturday, November 1, at noon at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, near State College. Speakers include Steve Saffier from Audubon Pennsylvania. There will be a walk at 4 p.m., led by Eric Burkhart. Many books from member Robert Gruver's collection will be on sale. Everyone is welcome!

Please go to www.pawildflower.org for more details to come. For directions to Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, go to <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/shaverscreek/index-hours-directions.html>.

Emerald Ash Borer Found in Mercer County

Adult Emerald Ash Borers, invasive beetles that destroy ash trees, were identified in West Middlesex, Mercer County, Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff recently announced.

The beetle was detected for the first time in Pennsylvania last summer and the commonwealth imposed a quarantine for Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence counties to help slow the spread of the beetle. That quarantine will be expanded to include Mercer County.

“Our survey crews are assessing the extent of the infestation in Mercer County and surrounding areas,” said Wolff.

Survey crews have been hanging purple panel sticky traps in 35 counties across the commonwealth since the end of May. The traps are designed to attract the adult beetles and help surveyors determine the spread of the invasive beetle.

“We remind consumers to heed the quarantine when traveling and camping this summer in western Pennsylvania to prevent any further spread of the beetle,” Wolff said.

State and federal Emerald Ash Borer quarantines restrict the movement from the quarantine area of ash nursery stock, green lumber and any other ash material, including logs, stumps, roots and branches, and all wood chips.

Due to the difficulty in distinguishing between species of hardwood firewood, all hardwood firewood— including ash, oak, maple and hickory— are considered quarantined.

Since many species of wood-boring insects, including the Emerald Ash Borer, can be spread through transport of infested firewood and logs, campers and homeowners are encouraged to use only locally harvested firewood, burn all of the firewood on-site, and not carry it to new locations.

Emerald Ash Borer is a wood-boring beetle native to China and eastern Asia. The pest likely arrived in North America hidden in wood packing materials commonly used to ship consumer and other goods. It was first detected in July 2002 in southeastern Michigan and neighboring Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The beetle has since been blamed for the death and decline of more than 20 million ash trees in Ohio, Indiana, Maryland, Virginia and Illinois.

Typically, Emerald Ash Borer will kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green, one-half inch

URBAN ECOSTEWARD NATIVE SEED COLLECTION

Saturday, October 18, 9 a.m. to Noon
Frick Environmental Center
Frick Park

Join native plant specialist and fellow BSWP member Kathy McGregor to learn how to collect and store native seeds. Space is limited so please register with Jeff by October 15 at jeff@ninemilerun.org or by calling 412- 371-8779 ext. 14. For more information about the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, sponsor of the event, go to http://www.ninemilerun.org/get_involved/events/index.htm.

in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

There is no known practical control for this wood-boring pest other than destroying infested trees.

People who suspect they have seen Emerald Ash Borer should call the PA Agriculture Department's toll-free pest hotline at 1-866-253-7189. For more information, visit http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/fpm_invasives_EAB.aspx.

This article is reprinted with permission from the July 2, 2008 issue of Resource, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources newsletter, found online at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/news/resource/index.aspx>.

Enjoy Your Wildflowers

CLEARWEED by Anne S. Bahl

Clearweed is an appropriate name for a plant whose stems are so full of a watery sap that it is possible to see through them, and sometimes to even read through them. Clearweed prefers a cool, moist, shady area under a shrub, beside a wall or wherever it may be easily overlooked or ignored. It grows throughout Pennsylvania. Its only close relative in the state, Lesser Clearweed, is known in only a few locations and those are in swamps and along wet shores.

Clearweed grows to two feet, and has branches. Its thin, smooth, translucent, coarsely-toothed, opposite leaves, up to six inches long, may have petioles as long as the leaf blade. The blades have three nerves and some scattered, fine, hairs that do not sting.

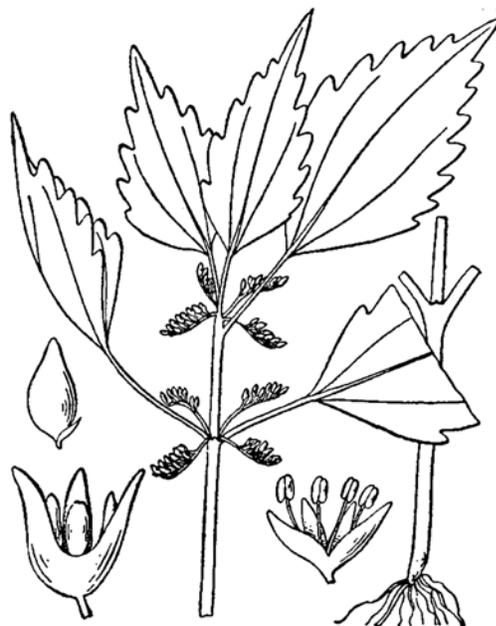
The flowers bloom from mid-July into Autumn. They are greenish, about 1/8", in short, elongated clusters in the leaf axils. They may be monoecious, having only male, stamen, or female, pistil, reproductive structures; or dioecious, having both. Male flowers have a calyx of four sepals and four to five stamens. The stamens are curved out and under. When ripe, they explode out and up, scattering their pollen. Female flowers have three sepals, the largest of which forms a scale, resembling a cap, over the seed.

The cap is the source of Clearweed's botanical genus name, *Pilea*, Latin, *pileus*, the felt cap of the Romans. Its species name is *pumila*, Latin, small. Lesser Clearweed is *Pilea fontana*, Latin, relating to a spring or fountain. Two other common names for Clearweed are Coolwort and Richweed.

The botanical family name is *Urticaceae*, Latin, *uro*, to burn, for the stinging hairs. The family is represented in most of the temperate and tropical world. There are the Laportea trees with stinging hairs. The Crecopia trees' light-weight wood is used for making floats. The Great Nettle, stinging, is used in herbal medicine. It yields a dye and a strong, high-quality, silky, very durable fiber. Its shoots are considered a desirable food. Some genera have attractive and colorful-leaved, creeping and climbing plants that are used horticulturally.

What causes the stinging pain? A fluid in the globular base and in the stem of the hair does. When the tip of the hair is touched, it breaks off and the fluid inside, similar to that from bees, is injected into the flesh. It causes intense burning and itching. For relief, try crushed stems of Jewelweed or Dock, or the crushed leaves of Plantain.

Illustration courtesy of USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions. Vol. 1: 637.



Pilea pumila

ENVIRONMENTAL BOOK CLUB MEETINGS

The Environmental Book Club meets at Borders Book Store on McKnight Road in North Hills on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. We usually hang out in the comfy chairs near the science section behind the music. It is not compulsory to have read the book or bought the book here. The discussion is informal and often fun. Borders also makes these books available to us at 20% discount (you might need to remind them to input the 20% off — it doesn't happen automatically).

Upcoming meetings and books:

Monday, Oct. 6 — *A Plague of Frogs*, by William Souder, a true story of mutant frogs in 1995 Minnesota

Monday, Nov. 3 — *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: a year of food life*, by Barbara Kingsolver

Preregistration is not required but if you have questions you can contact Kim Metheny: kmetheny@hotmail.com.

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

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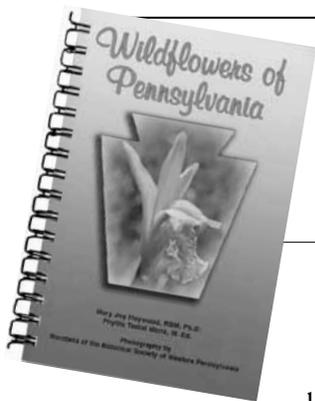
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Wildflowers of Pennsylvania (400 pages, 612 color photos) can be purchased for \$20 (plus \$1.40 sales tax for PA residents). Add \$2 postage and handling for one book, \$3/two, \$4/three, \$4.50/four. Forward your check, made payable

to Botanical Society of Western PA, and your request to Dr. Mary Joy Haywood, RSM, PhD, 3333 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3165; (412) 578-6175; haywoodmj@carlow.edu

October 13 Meeting, continued from front cover

During the course of his career, Mark has conducted botanical fieldwork in China, Vietnam, North America (including tropical Mexico), Hawaii, United Kingdom and the Pyrenees; much of this in search of begonias or alpine plants. He is currently setting his sights on South America.

Mark has given numerous talks and published over 75 papers on aspects of horticultural taxonomy, plant conservation genetics, and plant systematics. In recent years he has written two books, both of which were published by Timber Press:

Begonias: Cultivation, Identification and Natural History in 2005, and *Bleeding Hearts, Corydalis, and Their Relatives*, which he co-authored with M. Lidén and H. Zetterlund in 2008.

The latter book is the subject of the talk that Mark will give.

November 10 Meeting, continued from front cover

travel, she has photographed around much of the United States, Greece, Italy, the Caribbean, Scotland and England. Each adventure is an opportunity to explore the natural world and capture its beauty. Whether photographing a macro shot of a bumblebee landing on a flower or a wide-angle shot of Havasu Falls cascading down in a remote area of the Grand Canyon, the thrill and excitement of what is seen through the lens of the camera never ends! Mindy would like to share that excitement with you in a combined slide and PowerPoint show at the November 10 Botanical Society program.