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# WILDFLOWERS

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

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## Next Meeting is October 13

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The next meeting will be Monday, October 13, at 8:00 P.M., at the Kresge Theater, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland).

The speakers will be members Joe and Bonnie Isaac. Both professional botanists, Joe works for the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and Bonnie for the Carnegie Museum. They will present "Pennsylvania's Rare and Unusual".

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## We wish Mary Joy Well

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The members of the Botanical Society wish a quick recovery to our president, Dr. Mary Joy Haywood, who is recovering from back surgery this summer. Get well soon!

You can send Sister Mary Joy a personal note to 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

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## They stop for Wildflowers on Quigley Ridge, Alaska

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This past spring Bill and I took a three-week trip to Alaska. Our trip included a cruise with stops at Juneau, Sitka, and Glacier Bay, visits to Anchorage, Kotzebue, Nome, and Fairbanks, and an RV tour to the area near Eagle Summit. Early June weather proved to be much better than expected with cloudless views of Denali, "the High One". We identified and photographed over 100 different species of plants in bloom; most of which we had never seen before.

Fortunately I had purchased two color-photograph field guides so I had a grasp of what we were seeing in the field. The books were written by Verna Pratt and her husband Frank. We had the good fortune of meeting them while we were in Denali Park. Verna told us that when she and Frank moved to Alaska over 30 years ago there were no illustrated guides to wild plants. After years of exploring and photographing they had the necessary material to produce three beautiful and helpful guides that are considered by many to be the best sources for amateur botanists.

We stayed several days deep in Denali Park at Kantishna. This is an old mining district and a lodge for tourists who are willing to endure the six-hour, bone-jarring, cliff-hugging ride on an unpaved road along a caribou migration route. Most people are mainly interested in the abundant wild animals, and our driver stopped often so we could see and photograph grizzly sows and their cubs, caribou, Dall sheep, moose, beavers, ptarmigans, swans, fox, arctic ground squirrels, and even a wolverine. He didn't stop for wildflowers.

At the lodge our Ranger/Naturalist, Eric Rock, took several of us on a hike up to Quigley Ridge, and this proved to be one of the most memorable days of the trip. It was a wildflower wonderland, and almost every plant was in bloom! The steep trail began as an old mining road, then a narrow path, and finally a trackless expanse of tundra plants. It was impossible to move without stepping on alpine azalea, lapland diapensia, lapland rosebay, mountain avens, bell heather, narrow-leaved labrador tea, and too many others to list here. In a single afternoon I saw 47 blooming plants and more than 20 others

that would bloom later. Not since my early days of botanizing with Betty Brown had I seen so many new and beautiful plants.

We saw many amazing and inspiring sights while we were in Alaska, but the afternoon on Quigley Ridge will remain a vivid and magical memory we wish everyone could share.

*Phyllis Monk*

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## Enjoy your wildflowers: Jerusalem Artichoke

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A fairly common late summer/early fall wildflower of damp roadsides and thickets is Jerusalem Artichoke. It is a native plant with yellow, daisy-like flowers.

It has no connection with the Israeli city of that name. The English can be credited...or blamed...for the appellation "Jerusalem". The plant reached Europe early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as "Canadian Potato". It was very popular. In Italy it was called Girasole, meaning "turning to the sun", to acknowledge this attribute of the flowers. In England, Girasole was pronounced like Jerusalem, and the name stuck.

The other half of the name, "artichoke", has a longer history. It seems to have evolved from Arabian and Persian words for the vegetable artichoke, native to southern Mediterranean. (This artichoke is the immature flower head of a thistle-like plant.) When the vegetable artichoke was introduced into European countries, the original name was modified by various spellings and pronunciations. In France it was "artichaut". Supposedly the English wittily pronounced it "artichoke", because of the effect on the throat if the center part of the vegetable were eaten.

When the similarity in taste of the vegetable artichoke and the "Canadian Potato" was noticed, our native plant was given the second half of the name we still use, Jerusalem Artichoke.

Native Americans had long cultivated Jerusalem Artichoke. They ground the seeds for meal, extracted oil from them, and used them for dyes. The fleshy tubers supplied carbohydrate. The tuber can be dug and used any time after frost.

Another name, sometimes used in produce markets, is "Sunchokes". The white pulp of the tubers is crisp and sweet, healthful and delicious. It can be prepared like potatoes, also eaten either raw or pickled. People who are invalids especially may enjoy them, because this food is easily digested. Its carbohydrate is inulin, not starch, an advantage in low starch diets.

The botanical name of Jerusalem Artichoke is *Helianthus tuberosus*. *Helianthus* is Greek for sunflower. *Tuberosus* is Latin for producing tubers, which the plant does. Both Jerusalem Artichoke and the vegetable artichoke are in the composite family.

*Anne Bahl*



Jerusalem Artichoke – *Helianthus tuberosus*

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## Field Trip Schedule

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### Saturday

**October 4, 1997-** Moraine State Park,  
Butler County  
Leader: Esther Allen  
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: Take I-79 North to Exit 28 (PA 488, Portersville). Go west (left) 0.6 miles to US19. Turn north (right) on US19, go 0.5 mile, and turn right on SR4007 (West Park Rd). Follow signs for "North Shore Moraine State Park". Go 2.8 miles on SR4007, crossing I79, US422, and Muddy Creek. Just after crossing the creek, turn right and follow signs 0.8 mile to the bicycle rental area, where we will meet.

Expectations: Meadow Beauty (*Rhexia spp.*), Bulb-bearing Water Hemlock, and Ladies Tresses.

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### Saturday

**October 18, 1997 -** Core Arboretum  
Morgantown, WV  
Leader: Mark Bowers  
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From Interstate 79, take Exit 155 (about 5 miles south of the PA state line). Turn left at the stop sign at the end of the off ramp. Proceed another 0.7 miles to WV 7 and US 19. Turn right onto US 19 South and WV 7 East. Go straight through two traffic lights, passing the WVU Coliseum (a large basketball arena with a scalloped dome roof) on the right. Turn right into the Core Arboretum gravel parking lot 0.1 miles after the second traffic light and immediately before a third traffic light. A blue sign on US 19 and WV 7 identifies the Core Arboretum. Meet near the Arboretum parking lot.

Expectations: Fall colors of trees and shrubs native to the Appalachian area, plus some noteworthy exotics.

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## Hunt Institute Presents Botanical Art by Georg Dionysius Ehret

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The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation of Carnegie Mellon University will display "Botanical Art by Georg Dionysius Ehret (1708-1770)" from October 9, 1997 through February 27, 1998.

These watercolors on paper and vellum have been selected from the Institute's extensive collection of paintings by this artist.

Ehret is known as one of the most prominent botanical artists. He moved to England to illustrate some of the 18<sup>th</sup> century's most sumptuous botanical color-plate works.

The Institute is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Telephone (412) 268 2434 for additional information.

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## Write to preserve Blackwater Canyon

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The Blackwater Canyon in Tucker County, West Virginia, is one of the most spectacular tracts of upland forest in the East. Some of the plants and animals found there are at or near their northernmost or southernmost limits.

Much of it is held in private hands, and the owner has announced plans to log a vast tract. The cutting is scheduled to begin any day now.

The West Virginia Land Trust asks that concerned citizens write or call the owner and request that this land be sold to the Forest Service or the state park so it can have some measure of protection. Write to: Mr. John Crites, Allegheny Wood Products, PO Box 867, Petersburg, WV 26847. (304) 257-1082.

The West Virginia Land Trust is heading this effort to preserve the Blackwater Canyon. You can send them donations, or write for further information, at PO Box 734, Morgantown, WV 26507-0734.

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

Editor: Loree Speedy, 5837 Nicholson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 (412) 521-9425  
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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 are: Individual - \$5.00, and Family - \$8.00. 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.

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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.