
WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • January 2001

The Next Meeting is January 8th

The next meeting will be Monday, January 8, 8:00 p.m., at Kresge Theater, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland). Kresge Theater is on the top floor of the Grace Library and is accessed from the upper campus.

Our speaker will be **Robert Coxe**, botanist and ecologist for the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Robert will speak about the Fayette County Natural Heritage Inventory. This latest county inventory was completed in July 2000, and describes many interesting natural areas in one of the wildest counties in western Pennsylvania.

County inventories gather new information about plant and animal species and natural communities. This information is available to those making decisions about natural resources, as well as to the public.

If it appears that there will be hazardous driving conditions the night of the meeting, please call telephone number (412) 521-9425 after 5 p.m. for a recorded message indicating whether the meeting will be cancelled.

The Winner IS!

The drumroll sounded at the December holiday party (*you didn't hear it?*) as Billy Monk reached into the box of raffle tickets. The winner was Scott Shriver! Scott has been a member since 1984, and has served as program chairman and field trip chairman. We know he will enjoy the watercolor prints of all the orchids in his new copy of *Wild Flowers of Western Pennsylvania and the Upper Ohio Basin*.

Congratulations and thank you to Luc Berger for selling the most raffle tickets. President Haywood presented him with a new copy of the *Plants of Pennsylvania* by Rhoads and Block. Luc will be busy keying out plants this spring.

We thank President Mary Joy Haywood for her gracious donation of these books!

Dues reminder

The Botanical Society is now collecting annual dues; rates are \$10 individual and \$15 family. Students pay half-rate.

Renewals and dues should be sent to:

BSWP, Loree Speedy
5837 Nicholson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

The checks will be forwarded to our Treasurer Walt Gardill.

Inserts are enclosed in all newsletters (bulk mail rules). If you have already paid your dues for 2001, please ignore the insert!

Botanical Adventures - Twayblades

After I joined the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania in 1980, field botany became a passion. One of the first plants I encountered was Lily-leaved Twayblade (*Liparis lilifolia*). The generic name *Liparis* means "fat" or "shining", referring to the thick glossy leaves. One sunny afternoon in early June of 1984, I discovered several plants of the Lily-leaved Twayblade in the crabapple thicket behind my

house. This thicket had formerly been a cow pasture. Now, 15 or 20 years after the field had been used as pasture, I found this beautiful orchid. It was really special to find this orchid so close to home.

Crabapple thickets and rich woods are typical habitat for this species in western Pennsylvania. The Lily-leaved Twayblade has a many-flowered raceme of madder purple flowers. The flowers are about 1/2 to 1 inch across and the raceme is about 6 to 9 inches tall. The leaves are described as elliptic-ovate and are very shiny.

I wandered through other parts of this old field looking for more Lily-leaved Twayblade and other orchids such as the Rattlesnake Plantain for the next couple years. In mid-June of 1986, I stumbled across a large group (100 to 200) of Twayblade plants that looked different. I identified this different looking Twayblade as Loesel's Twayblade (*Liparis loeselii*). The Loesel's Twayblade was growing under a very dense stand of crabapples with a lot of grape vines growing through the tops. The aspect was a north-facing slope. As a result, the area was very shady and supported very little herbaceous growth except for many patches of moss. Most of the Loesel's Twayblade was growing in the patches of moss.

Various references indicate that habitat for this Twayblade is bogs, fens, wet meadows and shaded ravines, especially on calcareous soils. The flowers are about half the size of those of the Lily-leaved Twayblade and are green. The leaves are described as elliptic-lanceolate.

So that the identify of this rare orchid could be confirmed, I collected a voucher specimen. This specimen was given to the herbarium at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. I learned that this was the first record of Loesel's Twayblade in Westmoreland County.

During a particularly heavy snow two years later, a lot of the grapevine-laden crabapples were uprooted and knocked down. This permitted more sunlight to reach ground level

where the Loesel's Twayblade grew. As the moss disappeared and an influx of competing herbaceous plants invaded the area, the Loesel's Twayblade gradually disappeared.

These events helped me become more aware of how much change is a part of the dynamics of nature.

Mark Bowers

A Request from Nature Writer Evelyn Anderson

In October's newsletter, I printed a request for information from Evelyn Anderson, but failed to include a way to contact her!

Contact Evelyn at 963 Colony Drive, Erie, PA 16505. Telephone: (814) 454-8734

Here's a list of names of people who have collected plants at Presque Isle. I have been working on the history of that 3200 acre sandspit and want to include some facts and human interest stories, such as their professions, where they lived, their interests and accomplishments, and any little human interest gems.

They are: W. R. VanDersal, J. R. Farrell, D. H. Krouse, A. Stengel, C. K. Henlen, L. Roenpage, S. Fisherman, C. M. Boardman, G. McLaughlin, Gress, Williams, A. G. Shields, E. Siegel, R. Fulton, R. Little. Also: Otto and Grace Jennings, L. K. Henry, J. Bright, J. A. Shafer, W. E. Buker, H. Ammons, T. C. Porter and A. P. Garber.

Evelyn Anderson

Botanical Books, off the Shelf

A favorite book of mine when it comes to identifying trees, shrubs, and vines is *Keys to Woody Plants* by W.C. Muenscher. It is a compact book that is ideal for use in the field. It does not include any illustrations and is probably

best used in conjunction with an illustrated field guide.

There have been six editions of this book with the last one having been published in 1950. A new revised edition will be available from Cornell Univ. Press in 2001. The author was a professor of botany at the N.Y. State College of Agriculture at Cornell from 1916 to 1954.

Paul Brown

As you know, I've always relied on a myriad of field guides, e.g. Peterson's, Newcomb, Audubon, Stokes, Sibley's, etc. However, early in life I read a book that made a lasting impression. It was *The Great American Forest*, written by Rutherford Platt. It is a wonderful work on the uniqueness of the North American hardwood forest.

George Bercik

Tell us about your favorite books:

Editor, BSWP
5837 Nicholson Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
e-mail address: yoree@sgi.net

Field Trip Schedule

Registration is not required. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. For questions, call the trip leader or Loree at (412) 521-9425.

Saturday, January 13, 2001
Crooked Creek Lake Park, Armstrong County
Leader: Loree Speedy
Time: 1 p.m.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take Route 28 north to US 422 east into Kittanning. Pick up Route 66 south in Kittanning and travel south for about 8 miles. Turn left at Crooked Creek Lake entrance sign. Proceed ½ mile and turn right into the park, then turn right immediately into Park Office, where we will meet.

This trip could be cancelled due to bad driving conditions or unpleasant walking conditions. Call (412) 521-9425 the morning of the hike for a cancellation message.

Sunday, January 21, 2001
Gifts of Winter Exhibit at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
Time: 2 p.m.

Directions: From north, west and south of Pittsburgh, travel on Interstate 376 East (Parkway East) to Exit 5, Forbes Ave/Oakland. Continue on Forbes Ave 1.4 miles to Forbes and Morewood Ave. Continue past this intersection to a parking garage entrance on Forbes and Beeler St. to the right.

From east of Pittsburgh, take Interstate 376 to Edgewood/Swissvale, Exit 9. Turn right onto Braddock Ave and continue approximately one mile to the Forbes Ave intersection. Turn left onto Forbes Ave and follow it approximately 3 miles to the Carnegie Mellon campus. The parking garage entrance is at Forbes and Beeler St. to the left.

Hunt Institute is located on the campus of Carnegie Mellon University. The Institute is on the fifth floor of the Hunt Library, a 5-story aluminum and glass structure located on Frew St. (near Schenley Park) and facing the "Cut" (the large grassy field in the center of campus). We will meet in the entrance lobby of the Hunt Library on Sunday at 2 p.m.

Metered parking is also available on Frew St. and Schenley Park Drive; these streets are located behind the Hunt Library.

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania – January 2001

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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.

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 \$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>.