
WILDFLOWERS

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

The Next Meeting is April 9th

The next meeting will be Monday, April 9, 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 **Esther Allen**. She will present "Insects: Friends and Foes". This program will demonstrate the relationships, good and bad, between insects and plants.

Best wishes to the Allegheny Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society for their 2001 Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh this month. Many members of the Botanical Society are leading field trips on April 26, 27, and 28. A few leaders are still needed for Raccoon Creek Wildflower Reserve. If you can help out, or you want more information on the Annual Meeting, please call Nancy Palmer at 366-5799.

Enjoy your Wildflowers: Spring Beauty

Where, where is Spring? I asked myself
While wand'ring through the wood that day.
Ah! Subtle fragrance beckoned me,
Spring Beauty gave itself away.

Spring Beauty likes moist habitats, in open sunny, deciduous woodlands. If shaded from hot sun, it will also grow along stream banks and in grassy areas. It can range from large, impressive colonies to small clumps. If the latter, its grass-like leaves and small, pink-veined white or pinkish (rarely yellow) flowers may blend in with the other vegetation.

These fragile flowers should not be picked. They wilt quickly. Enjoy them visually. Let the deer, elk, and sheep eat both flowers and leaves. Rodents eat the corms.

The flowers are in a loose raceme with the buds hanging until they are ready to expand. There are five separated petals but only two sepals. On cloudy and on rainy days and during the night the flowers remain closed. This saves energy and protects the nectar and pollen for the flowers' pollinators, which include bees and butterflies.

Native Americans and early settlers used the young leaves in salads and for a potherb. With effort they dug up the small, deep-rooted corms and cooked them. The corms resemble chestnuts and potatoes, the latter acknowledged in the common name, Fairy Spuds.

Another common name is Good-morning Spring alluding to the plant being one of the early spring bloomers. By the time the trees are in leaf the plants are gone.

Claytonia virginica is the Spring Beauty more common in the eastern United States, excluding the warmer coastal areas. *C. caroliniana*, with broader leaves, usually prefers higher, cooler elevations and has a narrower range.

Claytonia honors John Clayton (1694-1773), an early colonial collector of plant specimens. His specimens eventually reached Linnaeus in Sweden who named them and learned about American plants from them. Clayton's specimens are now at the Natural History Museum in London.

Anne S. Bahl

The Botanical Society will visit the Bruce Peninsula

Are you interested in visiting the Bruce Peninsula in Ontario, Canada from June 16th through June 23rd? Members of the Botanical Society again plan to visit this limestone peninsula between serene Lake Huron and the wild blue Georgian Bay. It guarantees many interesting wildflowers, birds, and beautiful natural areas.

Call George Bercik for information if you are interested in joining this wonderful trip. George has offered to make reservations at Red Bay Lodge for anyone interested. His number is (412) 655-4701.

Pittsburgh BioBlitz 2001 returns to Schenley Park

The Pittsburgh BioBlitz is a day of activities centered on biodiversity and conservation. It happens Friday and Saturday, June 15 and 16 in Schenley Park. Base camp is Flagstaff Hill, across from Phipps Conservatory.

Starting at 3 p.m. on Friday, June 15, biologists and naturalists will find and identify as many species of plants and animals as possible during a 24-hour period.

Naturalists with knowledge in any group of plants or animals are needed. If you are interested in Pittsburgh BioBlitz for any period of time, contact John Wible at (412) 622-3296.

Botany in Parks and Clubs!

- Nine Mile Run Native Plant Stewardship project continues each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings in April and May. Volunteers with backgrounds and an interest in native plants are needed to record plants and their locations. For information, please call David Jett at (412) 422 6538.

- Discover the world of trees at Boyce Park's Arbor Day and Tree Planting on Saturday April 21. Come plant a tree provided by the National Tree Trust. Also, daily through May 31, celebrate the Earth's vernal equinox by working with natural treasures such as trees, wildflowers, and seeds at Earth Week/Arbor Days. All ages, as well as groups, are welcome. For more information and to register, call (724) 733-4618.
- What's going on at the Wissahickon? April 7 - Upper St. Clair Wetlands by Tracey Buckman; April 21 - Patterns of Spring by Chuck Tague; May 5 - Wild Areas of Western Pennsylvania by John Doyle; and May 19 - Plants, the World Pioneers by Esther Allen. Call Susanne Varley at (412) 771-4737 for more information and directions to this fun nature club.
- Come to the Pittsburgh Earth Day Fair on Saturday, April 21, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Frick Park Environmental Center. Key environmental organizations will show you how to get involved! At 2 p.m., William Jordan, an expert on restoration ecology, will speak about the value of acting locally.

If you would like to take part in the Botanical Society's table at the Earth Day Fair, please call Phyllis Monk at (412) 831-2724.

Enlow Fork Valley Spring Wildflower & Bird & Stream Extravaganza

The Wheeling Creek Watershed Conservancy is sponsoring a Spring Wildflower & Stream & Bird Extravaganza, on Saturday, May 5, 2001, rain or shine, in Enlow Fork Natural Area. All are welcome. Dress for a day outdoors (blaze orange is recommended) and bring a bag lunch.

The day will begin at 7:30 a.m. with guided bird walks (birders meet in the Richhill Firehall parking lot in Wind Ridge). Wildflower tours will begin around 10 a.m. in the Enlow Fork Natural Area, led by members of the Botanical

Society of Western Pennsylvania and the Kalisz Lab from the University of Pittsburgh. At 1 p.m., Professor Ben Stout will conduct a stream study, demonstrating how and why to do chemical analyses of streams.

To get to Enlow Fork Natural Area (SGL 302) from I-79, take Exit 3, then follow Rte. 21 west through Waynesburg to Wind Ridge. At the eastern edge of Wind Ridge, turn north to follow Nebo Ridge Road for about three miles. Make a right onto Walker Hill Road then left onto Smokey Row, the dirt road that leads to the game lands parking lot. The route will be clearly marked from Nebo Ridge Road on.

For more information, please call Kathee at (724) 627-7817 or email greenlan@cobweb.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, April 7, 2001
Crouse Run, Allegheny County
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Leader: Loree Speedy (412) 521-9425

Note that tours to the Rachel Carson Homestead advertised earlier are cancelled until the Homestead is remodeled.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take Rte. 28 to Rte. 8 North. Travel 6.6 miles to make a left on Craighead Road. (This left turn is about 0.7 miles after Harts Run Road). Travel Craighead Road 0.2 miles, then make a left at the North Hills Church of Nazarene. After 0.4 miles, make a right onto Sample Road. Travel 0.7 miles to a highway bridge over Crouse Run and park on left just before Royal View Road. If you cross a second highway bridge over Willow Creek you've gone too far.

Prepare for a stream crossing. Trail is rugged in some areas.

Saturday, April 21, 2001
Ringland Homestead, Washington County
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Leader: Brad Owens

Biologist Brad Owens will show us spring ephemerals in his 300 wooded acres.

Directions: Travel I-79 south from Pittsburgh through to Exit 6 – Lone Pine/Amity (There are restrooms at this exit). Turn right and continue 3 miles to Amity. A little less than 1 mile south of Amity, turn right at Hackney Road toward Prosperity. Travel 1.8 miles with the creek at your left. Make a left turn into the B. Owens property (mailbox is 228 Plumsock Rd) and cross the creek. Continue up the farm lane and park along the lane that bears to the left. (If you reach the scout camp Anawanna on the right, you have gone too far.)

Saturday, May 5, 2001
Roaring Run, Armstrong County
Time: 1:00 p.m.

This trip with the Roaring Run Watershed Association commemorates a field trip made by the Botanical Society in May 1915!

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take Rte. 22 east from Monroeville to Rte. 286 (Golden Mile Highway), which eventually becomes Rte. 380 after the commercial development. Stay north on Rte. 380 to Rte. 66. Follow Rte. 66 north (right) to Apollo. Cross the bridge into Apollo. After the bridge you will see a traffic light. Turn right at the first stoplight onto Kiskiminetas Ave. Follow this road through town to Cherry Lane. About 1 mile from the stoplight take the right fork onto Canal Road instead of going up a hill. The road dead-ends in the trailhead parking lot 1.3 miles from the traffic light in Apollo.

These trips are scheduled for May – Look for more May trips and information in next month's newsletter!

Saturday, May 12 – Esther Allen's choice!
Saturday, May 19 – Friendship Hill with Robert Coxe
Sunday, May 20 – Photography workshop in Frick Park with Clifton McGill

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania – April 2001
5837 Nicholson Street
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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>.