
WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • December 2003

The Holiday Party is December 8

Our annual Christmas Party will be Monday, December 8, at 7:15 p.m., at **the Atrium of the A. J. Palumbo Hall** at Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland). As you approach the campus on Fifth Avenue (heading toward downtown Pittsburgh), do not turn right into the Carlow Campus entrance. Instead, pass the entrance, stay in the right lane, and make the immediate right into the parking area. Park here and cross the street. Place a note on your dashboard saying "Botanical Society Meeting," or use your parking permit.

This is the Wild Foods Holiday Party. Members and guests bring an assortment of foods made from something found in the wild. Appetizers, cookies, candies, fruits, and berries: a challenge for the most daring and the most creative. So bring a wild edibles and your wild self. Don't dare stay away if you have nothing to bring, for there will be plenty!

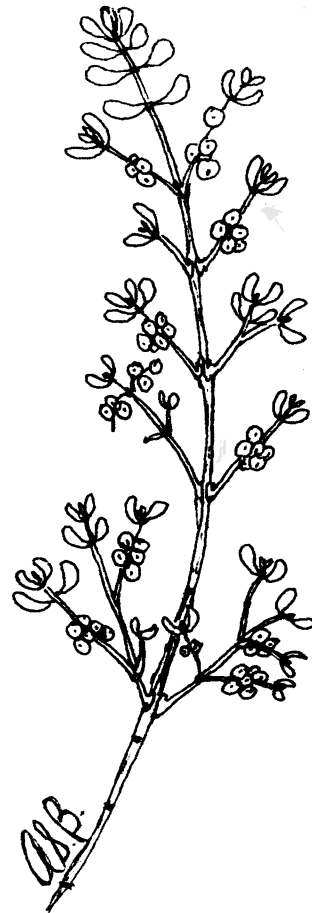
This is also Member's Night where we share our great plant sightings over the year. A member can bring up to twelve botanical slides.

Enjoy Your Wildflowers: Mistletoe

The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry men go,
To gather in the mistletoe;...

These lines are from Sir Walter Scott's "Marmion" written in 1808. About two millennia before this, the Druids, ancient Celtic priests, were gathering Mistletoe from Oak trees. For them, the two plants were sacred.

They did not know Mistletoe's source or how it grew. They had a special ritual for harvesting and brewing a potion from it. They drank the potion to insure good health. They hung Mistletoe in their houses for protection from witchcraft. The Mistletoe they used is the Eurasian, *Viscum album*. It is True Mistletoe, and is semi-parasitic on deciduous and evergreen trees.



American Mistletoe, *Phoradendron leucarpum* by
Anne S. Bahl

It is the Mistletoe of European herbal and homeopathic medicine, of legends, and of literature. Romans knew the plant. Vergil, the first century B.C. Roman naturalist, referred to Mistletoe as the “golden bough” in his “Aeneid”. Roman law eventually ended the religious practices of the Druids, but the therapeutic uses were continued by the early Britons. They called the plant All-heal. Culpepper included it in *The Complete Herbal* in 1649. The Swedes had it in their pharmacopoeia until 1757.

The most common Mistletoe in our country, collected from the wild and sold for Christmas, is American Mistletoe. It is *Phoradendron leucarpum*, Greek, *phor*, thief with *dendron*, tree, for its semi-parasitic habit and *leu* white, with *carpum*, fruit, for its fruit color. Other species names used are *flavescens* and *serotinum*. American Mistletoe has green, jointed, smooth, stems; leathery, spoon-shaped leaves up to 2½”, no petals, pistillate (female) and staminate (male) flowers on separate plants. It grows on deciduous trees only, usually in moist land in sunny, river-bottoms. The last collection in Pennsylvania was in 1924 near Philadelphia. Who will find it again?

The family is *Viscaceae*, Latin, *viscum*, Mistletoe. Another family name is *Loranthaceae*, Greek, *loron*, thong with *anthos*, flower. The family has mostly shrubby, semi-parasitic plants in warmer areas.

Oklahoma in 1893 was the first state to choose a plant symbol. It chose American Mistletoe.

Anne S. Bahl

Notes

- A long-time member of the Botanical Society died at the age of 78 this fall. Paul P. Ribar, of Sewickley, taught biology and chemistry at Sewickley Academy. He enjoyed being with young people and would often take his students on field trips to collect leaves. Paul had been a member of

the Botanical Society since 1950. Our sympathy to his family.

- Botanical Society members are invited to join the Environmental Book Discussion group which meets at Borders Book and Music in Northway Mall, McKnight Road, the first Monday of each month at 7:30 pm. Borders gives a 20% discount on the books they choose to discuss. For more information, contact Chriss O’Lare at (412) 369-4574

Botanical Books, off the Shelf

The U.S. Forest Service recently published a *Field Guide to Native Oak Species of Eastern North America*, by John Stein, Denise Binion and Robert Acciavetti.

This field guide provides species descriptions for the fifty native oaks found to occur east of the 100th meridian in North America north of Mexico. Other features include county-level distribution maps, distribution according to ecoregion, leaf keys, indices of common and scientific names, a glossary, species summary tables including synonymous species, and a fold-out leaf identification chart.

This publication is printed entirely on synthetic paper, making it a tear-proof, weather resistant tool for field work.

To request a free copy, write or e-mail:
USDA Forest Service – FHTET
180 Canfield St., Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 285-1563; Email: lcress@fs.fed.us

Friends of Botany call for volunteers and donation

From the Carnegie Museum Section of Botany:

“We are currently organizing The Friends of Botany (CM) to increase the awareness of Carnegie Museum Section of Botany and its resources. Since we are open five days a week,

we need to get the word out that CM has the best representative collections of Western Pennsylvania vascular flora. One way we are increasing our role in this process is by guest speaking to others interested in knowing more about what we do. If you are interested in a tour or lecture for a group, please contact us.

The Friends is a way in which we can also generate interest for a volunteer program and for raising funds to help manage and improve the Section. By joining The Friends you will help us achieve these goals.

If you decide to support the herbarium by joining The Friends, just print out the membership form included below and send it in with your pledge to the address given.

Currently we have volunteer opportunities available. Help is needed in mounting dried plant specimens, typing specimen labels, filing, entering information into our database system, and maintaining and creating material for our web page. Individuals with basic computer skills and/or an interest in botany would be most welcome. The experience gained would be helpful for careers in resource management, botany, conservation, museum science and natural history.”

If you would like to know of other ways you could support the herbarium, or just want more information, contact:

Cynthia M. Morton, Associate Curator, or
Bonnie Isaac, Collection Manager at:
mortonc@carnegiemuseums.org
isaacb@carnegiemuseums.org
Phone: (412) 622-3253; Fax: (412) 688-8670

If you would like to join the Friends of Botany, please fill out and send in the form below to the Curator at:

Section of Botany
Carnegie Museum of Natural History
4400 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-4080

FRIENDS OF BOTANY

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Friends of Botany (CM)! Enclosed please find my membership fee of: (Please make check to: CMNH - Section of Botany)

_____ \$25/year Regular Membership

_____ \$40/year Family Membership

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

_____ I would like to make an additional donation to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History Section of Botany in the amount of: _____

Field Trip Schedule

Registration is not required. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. For questions, call the trip leader or Loree at (724) 872-5232.

Saturday, December 13, 2003
Crooked Creek Lake Park, Armstrong Co.
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 (724) 872-5232** the morning of the hike for a cancellation message.

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania – December 2003

279 Orr Road
West Newton, PA 15089

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 716

WILDFLOWERS - Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

Editor: Loree Speedy, 279 Orr Road, West Newton, PA 15089 Telephone: (724) 872-5232; E-mail: yoree@sgi.net.

President: Dr. Mary Joy Haywood, (412) 578-6175, E-mail mjhaywood@carlow.edu; **Vice-President:** Phyllis Monk, (412) 831-2724 E-mail: uscmonk@ieeee.org; **Treasurer:** Kimberly Metheny

WILDFLOWERS is published monthly 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 above address. Deadline for submissions is the 23th of the previous month.

The Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania - Membership Information

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. 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, 279 Orr Road, West Newton, PA 15089. Your membership includes a subscription to the monthly bulletin WILDFLOWERS.

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

Wildflowers of Pennsylvania – Ordering Information – 400 pages of text and 612 color photographs

Wildflowers of Pennsylvania can be purchased for \$20.00 (plus \$1.40 sales tax for PA residents). Forward your check, made payable to Botanical Society of Western PA, to Dr. Haywood at the address below. If you order by mail, add \$2 postage and handling for one book, \$3.00 for two, \$4.00 for three, \$4.50 for four. Send your request to Dr. Mary Joy Haywood, RSM, Ph.D., 3333 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3165 (412) 578-6175; mjhaywood@carlow.edu