
WILDFLOWERS

The Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania • January 2006

Next Meeting is January 9

The next meeting will be Monday, January 9, **7:15 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. Place a note on your dashboard saying "Botanical Society Meeting," or use your parking permit.

John Paul, a doctoral candidate at the University of Pittsburgh, will present "**Understanding Rarity.**" Why are some species of plants rare, while other seemingly similar plants are common?

John Paul will describe his research into this issue using a diverse group of tropical forest understory shrubs, *Psychotria*. The basic natural history of these plants will be described, and inferences regarding the evolutionary history of these species will be made using biogeographic and genetic data. Finally, the impacts of the evolutionary history on the present abundance and distribution of this genus will be discussed.

John Paul attended college in the Pacific Northwest, managed a research program for a year in Uganda, received a Master's in Zoology from the University of Florida, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Dr. Stephen Tonsor's lab in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh.

And the Next Meeting is February 13

The next meeting will be Monday, February 13, **7:15 p.m.**, at **Kresge Theater**, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland).

Shane Miller will present "**Hide and Seek: Finding Invasive Species at Raccoon Creek State Park Wildflower Reserve.**" Shane is currently working with invasive species at the Wildflower Reserve.

Shane Miller is a plant ecologist and assists Raccoon Creek State Park, Carnegie Museum of Natural History Section of Botany, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy on a variety of botanical projects. Mr. Miller obtained a M. S. in Biology at the University of Akron. He has done research in molecular botany, invasive species movement, pollination biology, plant reproductive biology, and tripartite associations.

December Elections for the Botanical Society

On December 12, members of the Botanical Society elected the following as officers:

Bonnie Isaac will serve as President. Bonnie is the Collection Manager at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History Section of Botany. She received her M. S. in Biological Sciences from Youngstown State University. Her research interests include herbarium techniques and the ecology and phytogeography of rare plants.

Phyllis Monk will continue as Vice President. Phyllis retired from teaching high school biology and chemistry to enjoy wildflower photography and botanizing.

Kim Metheny will continue as Treasurer, which she has been steadfastly performing since 2002. Kim is a research assistant when she is not skiing, climbing, or botanizing.

Barbara Schomer will take on the position of Recording Secretary. Barbara retired from teaching English and is now pursuing an interest in wildflowers, ferns and lichens.

Loree Speedy will continue to serve as Corresponding Secretary and editor of the Society's bulletin.

Earlier this season, **Christopher Tracey** volunteered to serve as Program Chairperson. Chris is an ecologist with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and Chatham College.

We wish to sincerely thank **Dr. Mary Joy Haywood** for her outstanding service as President since 1985. Mary Joy has graciously volunteered to maintain the records and financials for the Wildflowers of Pennsylvania.

Members also voted to donate a gift of \$5000 to the Carlow University. Carlow has served as a meeting place for many years and assisted the Society in the production of the book.

Botany In Action presents "From the Field" on January 7

Botany in Action is a scholarship program which supports graduate students studying botany and ethnobotany in natural areas around the world. Program participants strive to preserve biodiversity and foster plant conservation. Students have worked all over the world including Brazil, Cameroon, India, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Once a year students share their newfound knowledge at Phipps and in local schools.

This year's Botany In Action presentations will be on Saturday, January 7, 2006, in Botany Hall at Phipps Conservatory from 11:00 am to noon (free to the public, but please call (412) 441-4442 to register). Presentations include "Learning from Thai Healers" and "Understanding Rarity in Tropical Forest Plants." On the same day, in the Conservatory

from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, you can meet and talk to botanists who are working in the field. Visit their "discovery tables" entitled Understanding Why Some Species are Rare, American Ginseng, Thai Ethnobotany, and Sandalwood Across the Pacific.

For more information, call Phipps at (412) 441-4442 or access www.phipps.conservatory.org.

Adirondacks Adventure

Dr. Tom Lord at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania would like to invite members of the Botanical Society to the Adirondack Teacher's Institute. The Institute offers participants an opportunity to learn about and enhance their knowledge in the area of outdoor learning. These activities will take place on the 700-acre campus of the Silver Bay Association YMCA in Silver Bay, New York. Participants immerse themselves in workshops such as environmental physics, geology of the Adirondacks, ornithology, studying nature through the arts, pisces studies in Lake George and much, much more! Of interest to native plant enthusiasts are classes in mycology, woody plants, lower vascular plants and wildflowers.

The workshop is designed for teachers but all will benefit from the learning experiences. For information, call Silver Bay at (518) 543-8833, x 216 or www.silverbay.org/adirondackteachers/

Botanical Books, off the Shelf

The Rose's Kiss: A Natural History of Flowers by Peter Bernhardt (1999).

Botanist Peter Bernhardt rekindles our sense of wonder at the plant life all around us. He presents a fascinating look at the natural history of flowers—their forms and functions as well as their hidden interactions with other living organisms. Bernhardt writes in a very readable style and conveniently uses both common and

scientific names. You will learn such fascinating tidbits as:

Botanists have given up pressing *Rafflesia arnoldii* flowers since they can be up to two and a half feet in diameter and weigh more than twelve pounds. An alternative is to "pickle" the plant as if it were a frog or snake specimen.

To get the three or four quarts of sap to distill tequila, someone must cut down a whole Agave just as it is getting ready to bloom after 10 to 20 years of growth. Think of that with your next tequila sunrise.

Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium viscosum*) can either smell either like honey to attract bumble bees in the sun, or it can smell "skunky" to attract flies in the shade. And the chapter entitled Self-made Marriages and Virgin Births is truly amazing. The book's annotated bibliography and index is greatly appreciated.

Kim Metheny

Dues reminder

The Botanical Society is now collecting annual dues; rates are \$10 individual and \$15 family. Students pay half-rate. Make your check payable to BSWP and send it to: BSWP, Loree Speedy Bowers, 279 Orr Road, West Newton, PA 15089. The checks will be forwarded to our Treasurer Kim Metheny.

Field Trip Schedule

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

Saturday, January 28, 2005
Beechwood Park, Monroeville, Allegheny County
Leader: Loree Speedy (724) 872-5232
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Directions: From downtown Pittsburgh, take the Parkway East (I-376) towards Monroeville and the Turnpike to Exit 14A – Route 48S - Monroeville. At the end of the ramp, continue straight on Route 48 south through 4 traffic lights. At the 5th traffic light near Gateway High School, turn left onto Haymaker Road. Pass the Hospital and go straight through the first light onto Haymaker Road. Proceed approximately one mile to a second light and make a left onto Ramsey Road. Go straight through the first stop sign. Proceed approximately 1/4 mile and make a left into Ramsey Elementary parking lot, where we will meet.

Beechwood Park is an 85-acre, largely undeveloped, scenic and secluded park in suburbia.

This winter trip could be cancelled due to bad driving or unpleasant walking conditions. Call (724) 872-5232 the morning of the trip for a cancellation message.

Saturday, February 11, 2006
Frick Park, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
Winter Tree Identification Walk sponsored by the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The Nine Mile Run Watershed Association has invited us to attend this popular winter walk through Frick Park. Learn from local experts and naturalists how to identify common trees by observing their bark and buds. Bring binoculars if you have them for long distance botanizing!

Directions: From downtown Pittsburgh, take the Parkway East (I-376) to Exit 7- Edgewood/Swissvale. On the ramp, take the left fork to Edgewood (ignore directions to Edgewood Towne Center). Turn right onto South Braddock Avenue, and continue about 1/2 mile on South Braddock to the Biddle Avenue Parking Lot of Frick Park on the left. Meet in the parking lot.

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania – January 2006

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WILDFLOWERS - Bulletin of the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania

Editor: Loree Speedy, 279 Orr Road, West Newton, PA 15089, (724) 872-5232; E-mail: mousemapper@verizon.net.
President: Bonnie Isaac; E-mail: isaacb@CarnegieMuseums.org **Vice-President:** Phyllis Monk, (412) 831-2724 E-mail: uscmonk@ieee.org; **Treasurer:** Kimberly Metheny; **Recording Secretary:** Barbara Schomer; **Program Chairperson:** Christopher Tracey; 412-362-6750; E-mail: ctracey@ecologytechniques.org

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. WILDFLOWERS is printed on recycled paper.

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