



P.O. Box 8-737 Anchorage, Alaska 99508

NEWSLETTER, MAY 1983

MAY 2 -- The May program meeting will begin at 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 2, at The Pub, in the Campus Center part of the Anchorage Community College/UAA Physical Education Facility off Providence Drive. The public is always welcome.
Program: Phyllis Kepton will present a program on Alaska's mushrooms. Mrs. Kepton has extensive research experience in mushroom identification and has taught courses in identifying Alaska's colorful mushrooms, drawing upon an extensive collection of fine color slides to illustrate them.
Plant Family of the Month will be *Orchidaceae* -- the Orchid Family (see below).
Executive Board Meeting: 7:15 p.m. at The Pub, will precede the regular program meeting.

BOARD MEETING BRIEFS -- A delegation from Fairbanks attended the meeting to discuss chapter status for the group forming there. They are interested in coordinating field trips, adding Fairbanks news to the Society's newsletter or producing their own, and ways of sharing income and expenses between chapters so they can undertake local projects, such as starting a wildflower garden. The Society's By-Laws do not presently address these questions and will require revision to grant chapter status to the Anchorage and Fairbanks groups, as well as others that may be formed later.

EDUCATIONAL DISPLAY WORKSHOP: A workshop to prepare and mount specimens for display will be held from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4, at Plaster Valley School. (This is for a display requested by the Alaska Center for the Environment for use during the tourist season.)

COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASSES -- Wildflowers of Alaska is a non-credit "fun course" suitable for anyone, regardless of plant identification experience. It consists of leisurely weekend hikes in nearby wilderness areas with instruction on identifying wildflowers in their natural environment. Naturalist John Wenger teaches a scientific approach to identification with information on wild edible and poisonous plants, fruit and berry identification, wildfood dishes and recipes, plant folklore, survival uses of plants and flower photography. Special features of the course include hiking on a different and exciting trail in the Chugach Mountains, attending three additional days of the alternate class section, limited guest privileges, overnight remote camping with guests, and a potluck party with a nature/flower slide presentation. Each section is limited to 25 students. Fee is \$60. Complete itinerary may be obtained at registration. For more information call Anchorage Community College, 263-1121.

Saturday Class: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 11 & 25, July 9 & 23, August 6.

Sunday Class: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 12 & 26, July 10 & 24, August 7.

SPRING AND SUMMER FIELD TRIPS -- See supplement for additions and changes. To avoid unnecessary confusion, please throw away the schedule you received with last month's newsletter and use the new one. Watch for another supplement in mid-summer announcing changes and additional field trips. If you're interested in leading a field trip, please call Field Trip Chairman Joanne Sedgwick. To receive or confirm field trip information, call the trip leader.

NOME FIELD TRIP could be combined with a short course on Arctic Plants and their Environment. See Field Trip Schedule. If you want housing arranged in Nome, Verna Pratt wants to hear from you by June 1 (and the sooner, the better).

SOME PHONE NUMBERS if you need information or want to help out:	Verna Pratt, President.....
Jerrienne Lowther, Newsletter.....	Joanne Sedgwick, Field Trips.....
Peggy Pletcher, Membership.....	Marianne See, Education.....

SEEN ANY ORCHIDS LATELY? Please contact Verna Pratt if you know of any nice patches of Yellow-Spotted Orchids (*Cypripedium guttatum*) or Fairy Slipper Orchids (*Calypso bulbosa*) growing wild in Anchorage. Society members are interested in evaluating such areas with an eye to preserving a plot of each in town, if suitable sites still exist.

Purple Mountain Saxifrage, *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, (some call this charming harbinger of spring French Knot Moss) could burst into bloom this week at the wildflower garden outside the Russian Jack Springs municipal greenhouse.

PLANT FAMILY OF THE MONTH -- *Orchidaceae*, the Orchid Family has 500 genera and 15,000 species, worldwide, but only nine genera and 26 species in Alaska. All of ours are perennial herbs, though orchids elsewhere are often epiphytes that live on other plants but don't harm them. The three-merous (three-parted) flowers are zygomorphic (symmetrical in only one plane), often spurred, with petaloid perianths. The one or two stamens plus style and stigma are fused into a column. Seeds are minute and numerous, produced in three carpels with parietal placentation. The fruit is a capsule.

MYSTERY PLANT OF THE MONTH -- I am a small, woody plant, sometimes called a sub-shrub. My stems are prostrate (lying on the ground) and root at the nodes (the points of attachment of the leaves). My leaves are simple and directly opposite each other. I produce my flowers in pairs on erect stems and each flower hangs down. My flowers are light pink and my corolla (of five fused petals) is shaped like a funnel. (The botanical term for this shape is funneliform.) I am a common understory (low, ground dwelling) plant in the spruce and birch forest and also form mats on open, dry slopes. Hint: you carry my picture around with you on your membership card. (For answer, see back of this page.)



FAIRBANKS GROUP NEWS, MAY 1983

FAIRBANKS GROUP FORMS ²⁰ Approximately 25 people met to form a group in Fairbanks March 9. Deborah Brown, who joined the Alaska Native Plant Society last year in Anchorage and is doing graduate work in horticulture at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, organized the meeting. (She also gave a slide show on dwarf dogwood after the business session.) Those who attended included professional botanists, wildlife biologists, botany and forestry students, plant propagators, mushroom hunters, teachers, and gardeners.

Almost everyone present liked the idea of field trips and opportunities to learn more about native plants. They also expressed interest in establishing a wildflower garden at the University Museum so tourists could see Alaska's wildflowers.

On April 13, the Fairbanks group elected officers: President Deborah Brown (see above); Vice President Ray Morgan (an agent for the Cooperative Extension Service); Secretary Ginger Gauss (active in gardening beautification, nature trails); Treasurer Pat Wagner (works in horticulture at the Experimental Farm in Fairbanks); Newsletter editor/coordinator Sheila Polson (holds a master's degree in forestry); Field Trip Coordinator Mary M. (works for Institute of Northern Forestry).

May meeting for the Fairbanks Group will be at _____ p.m. Wednesday, May 11 at Ryan Junior High School. Larry Knappaan, vegetation specialist for the Bureau of Land Management will discuss Firebreaks and Revegetation.

The Fairbanks Group is planning a pasqueflower field trip, but the schedule wasn't known by the newsletter deadline.

Temporary mailbox and telephone contact for the Fairbanks group will be: Alaska Native Plant Society, c/o Ray Morgan, Cooperative Extension Service, Room 303, 1514 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701. Telephone:

Answer to Mystery Plant of the Month: Twinflower, *Linnaea borealis* -- the plant illustrated on the Alaska Native Plant Society letterhead, logo, and membership cards. It's named for Carl Linnae, the Swedish naturalist and classifier who devised the binomial system of categorizing plants by genera and species, grouping them into families and orders, and giving them Latin names. He even gave himself a Latin binomial, *Carolus Linnaeus*, but he didn't Latinize the Twinflower, at least not correctly. He found the Twinflower on a botanical exploration of Lapland in 1732 and called it *Campanula serpyllifolia*, but when it turned out not to be a *Campanula* at all, the Dutch botanist Gronovius renamed it *Linnaea borealis* in his honor. It's a member of the Honeysuckle family, *Caprifoliaceae*, along with the Elderberry, the Snowberry, and the High Bush Cranberry (which isn't a cranberry at all). But that's another story.