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P.O. BOX 141613, Anchorage, Ak. 99514

ANCHORAGE CHAPTER

**MEMO
JANUARY
MEETING**

The January meeting will be on Mon. 6th in Room 103, Wendler Junior High School, corner of Lake Otis and Northern Lights at 8PM. Board of Directors will meet at 7:15PM!

SPEAKER: Kevin O'Sullivan will present "Placement of Trails". Kevin's project for his Masters Degree was a study on proper placement of tracts with regard to topography and plant life.

DISCUSSION: The plant family to be discussed is the Cornaceae (Dogwood). All Alaska members are perennials. All have very small flowers. Some are surrounded by large showy whitish bracts. Flowers (having 4 sepals, 4 petals, 4 stamens, and 1 pistil) are in flat-topped clusters. Fruit is a drupe (a soft pulpy fruit encasing a single seed). The plants spread by underground rhizomes. The leaves are simple, ovate, have a fairly acute tip and arcuate veins (moderately curved like a bow). This family is present throughout most of Alaska, but is very rare north of the Brooks Range.

DUES ARE DUE: For those members who have not already paid, this is a reminder that 1986 membership dues are now due. Fees are: \$5 for student, \$10 for non-student individual, \$15 for family (2 persons over age 18). If your mailing address has changed, please let us know.

LIMITED EDITION PRINT: Advance sales of our Dogwood Print will be accepted with the receipt of your check (\$10 members, \$15 non-members). Please specify print number desired.

MYSTERY PLANT:

The mystery plant for this month is found in very moist alpine meadows and bogs or along or in alpine streams. It has thick dark-colored glabrous (no hairs) stems arising from a thick fibrous root. The flowers are 1-2 on a stem, have many stamens and 6-12 white sepals that are bluish at the base and purplish on the under side. The dark green, rather heart-shaped leaves are dentate (toothed) along the margin. It grows along the Aleutian chain, Southcentral Alaska, Southeast Alaska, and into British Columbia. Its seed capsule has a straight beak. It blooms right after the snow melts and can be seen sparingly in the Chugach Mts. and abundantly at Hatcher Pass.



1985-86 STATE OFFICERS ARE:

President-----Verna Pratt-----
 Vice-President--Marilyn Barker----
 Secretary-----Charlu Choate-----
 Treasurer-----Larry Haller-----



Newsletter---Frank Pratt-----

ANCHORAGE CHAPTER OFFICERS:

The following are the Anchorage Chapter officers for 1986, elected at the November 1985 meeting. They take office on 1 January 1986.

President-----Lynn Catlin
 Vice-President--Doug Tryck
 Secretary-----Peggy Fletcher
 Treasurer-----Larry Haller
 Chapter Rep.---Frank Bogardus

MYSTERY PLANT ANSWER:

Caltha Leptosepala (Mountain Marigold, Heart-leaved Marigold)



This being the Holiday Season and all, Old Doc has been as busy as the rest of our members, so he just reached into his bag of goodies and came up with---Cattail.

That's right, Cattail. *Typha latifolia*. Your plain old everyday Cattail. So what, you say, so he pulled Cattail out of the bag of goodies, now what's he going to do with it. Well, just hang in there for a paragraph or two and we'll see.

Cattail is a native, perennial plant that reproduces by seed and rhizomes. It is found throughout most of North America.

Don't you remember calling the stalks "punks" (not to be confused with a type of modern musician), and after drying them in the sun, lighting them and savoring their odor?

Cattail comes in wide-leaved and narrow-leaved varieties, which are basically similar, except the wide-leaved form is larger.

They grow abundantly in marshes and like to have their roots under water. From the rhizomes, the stalks rise from one to nine feet in height.

The "punk" is a spike of mature fruits and hairs, which was, before fertilization, the spike of female flowers.

The green spikes have been cooked with salty water to make a tasty vegetable. The pollen mixed with wheat flour can be used in making pancakes. Russians in the Don River area cook the young sprouts and eat them much as we do asparagus, or eat them raw.

The rootstalks contain an edible starch, and the leaves have been used to make chair seats. Even the fuzz from the mature fruits can be used as a substitute for kapok.

Not a very medicinal discussion; but, Old Doc found it interesting. Did you?

STATE PARK NEWS

NEWS RELEASE:

Winter is spectacular in Chugach State Park. Join us at the Eagle River Visitor Center on

January 4th as we reveal some of the secrets of the season. Rangers will discuss various winter recreation opportunities. Everything from skiing to snowmachining will be covered along with where to go and how to insure a safe and enjoyable time. The program begins at 1 PM next to the wood stove, Eagle River Visitor Center, Mile 12 Eagle River Road.



HELP !!!

Yes, Virginia, there is a Newsletter Editor!

This is a picture of how he feels each month just before presstime.

Won't some of you dear members help out with articles of any kind. If we don't get SOME input from the membership very soon, the newsletter will get smaller and smaller and finally disappear!

The following is a key to winter plants submitted by Lynn Catlin. It may help you to identify some plants while walking or skiing this winter.

KEY TO SOME COMMON ANCHORAGE AREA PLANTS IN WINTER

- A. Evergreensgo to Bs
- A'. Deciduous (leaves fall off in autumn) go to Os
- B. Needlesgo to Cs
- B'. Not needles, but broad leaves (may be narrow "broad leaves"). . . . go to Js
- C. Shrub, spreading, may be 2 ft. high, but does not have the excurrent branching pattern of a young spruce. .go to Ds
- C'. Treego to Fs
- D. Plants contain sticky resin, needles smell like "Christmas trees" when crushed; blue, berry-like cones smell like gin when crushed. . . . go to Es
- D'. Plants do not contain resin, black berries do not smell like gin. . . . Crowberry *Empetrum nigrum*
- E. Needles awl shaped and sharp pointed. You don't want to grasp these branches!. . . . Common Juniper *Juniperus communis*
- E'. Needles mostly scale-like; a very low prostrate (creeping) shrub. . . . Creeping Juniper *Juniperus horizontalis*
- F. Needles 4 sided and angular; you can roll them between your fingers. . . . go to Gs
- F'. Needles flat or half-round; you can't roll them between your fingers. . . . go to Hs
- G. Twigs are hairy; needles are mostly less than 1/2" long; mature cones remain on the tree, cones are almost round to egg shaped and less than 1" long; Scrawny trees of bogs. . . . Black Spruce *Picea mariana*
- G'. Twigs are hairless; needles are longer than 1/2", needles sometimes smell skunk-like when crushed; mature cones fall off the tree, cones are 1 1/4-2 1/2" long; Tall trees of more upland habitats. Tree looks more blue-green than does Black Spruce. . . . White Spruce *Picea glauca*
- H. Needles sharp and stiff. . . Sitka Spruce *Picea sitchensis*
- H'. Needles blunt and soft. . . go to Is
- I. Needles flat, in 2 rows, shiny dark green above with 2 white bands on the underside; large tree found on the Kenai Peninsula and Southeast. . . Western Hemlock *Isuga heterophylla*
- I'. Needles half-round or keeled (like the bottom or keel of a boat); crowded all over the twig, needles blue-green with white lines on both sides. Small trees of alpine areas, or larger trees on the Kenai Peninsula and Southeast. . . . Mountain Hemlock *Isuga mertensiana*
- J. Leaves tightly rolled, or with rolled-in edges, amber colored wooly hairs on underside of leaf . . . go to Ks
- J'. Leaves not rolled . . . go to Ls

- K. Entire leaf tightly rolled, looking almost needle-like; leaves 1/32-1/16" wideNarrow-leaf Labrador Tea
Ledum decumbens
- K'. Edges of leaf rolled under, leaves 3/16-1/2" wide
Labrador Tea *Ledum groenlandicum*
- L. Shrubs are small and creeping, leaves shiny and bright green. . . go to Ms
- L'. Shrubs are large and upright, leaves with dull silvery surface caused by scurfy scales. . . . Leatherleaf
Chamaedaphne calyculata
- M. Leaves not toothed on the edges, but smooth edged (or entire). . . go to Ns
- M'. Leaves with tiny teeth or serrations. . . .
Twinflower *Linnaea borealis*
- N. Leaves oval or egg shaped, 3/8- 3/4" long by 1/4-3/8" wide . . . Lingonberry or Lowbush Cranberry
Vaccinium vitis-idaea
- N'. Leaves lance shaped 1/32-1/8" wide by 1/8-3/8" long. . . . Bog Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos*
- O. Buds covered by a single bud scale. . . . Willows *Salix* species.
- O'. Buds covered by 2 or more bud scales. . . . go to Ps
- P. Buds alternate or single. . . . go to Qs
- P'. Buds opposite or pairedgo to Ys
- Q. Buds very sticky and resinous Balsam Poplar
Populus balsamifera and Black Cottonwood *Populus trichocarpa*
- Q'. Buds not very sticky or only slightly so . . . go to Rs
- R. Plants without spines or thorns . . . go to Ss
- R'. Plants with spines or thorns . . . go to Vs
- S. Plants with old catkins, and/or expanded buds of next year's catkins go to Ts
- S'. No catkins present . . . go to Us
- T. Last year's cone-like female catkins on the tree or shrub; growth is shrub-like; buds are slightly stalked; bark smooth gray with horizontal lines Alders *Alnus* species
- T'. No cone-like catkins, but papery catkins with winged nutlets present; tree; buds are not stalked; bark is white and peeling (on young trees bark will be bronze color) . . . Paper Birch *Betula papyrifera*
- U. Bud scales are hairless, reddish-brown, buds are cone shaped and pointed, 1/4" long; bark of older trees is greenish-gray with curved scars and black knots; grows 20-40ft. tall
Quaking Aspen *Populus tremuloides*
- U'. Bud scales are densely hairy, rusty brown, buds are oblong 1/4" long; bark is gray and smooth; grows to 20ft. . . . Mountain Ash *Sorbus sitchensis*

- V. Twigs very fat and densely covered by spines .
 . . . Devil's Club *Oplopanax hircoides*
- V'. Twigs slender with scattered spines or thorns
 go to Ws
- W. Twigs red, or reddish brown with white waxy
 coating go to Xs
- W'. Twigs not red or reddish, with many spines .
 Swamp Gooseberry *Ribes lacustre*
- X. Twigs brownish-red with white waxy coating;
 bark shreddy Raspberries,
 Salmonberries *Eubus species*
- X'. Twigs red, bark not shreddy Rose
 Rosa species
- Y. Twigs stout, buds larger than 3/8", covered by more
 than 2 bud scales, large pith Elderberry
 Sambucus callicarpa
- Y'. Twigs slender, buds bright red, 1/8-1/2", covered by
 only 2 bright red scales Highbush Cranberry
 Viburnum edule

For those of you looking for some of the earliest blooms in the Anchorage area we recommend the McHugh Creek Wayside area along the Seward Hy. In early May the south facing slopes become free of snow and the heat of the rocks and protected pockets force plants into bloom before other areas near town. Any pull off in the nearby areas are a joy to explore. Lists of plants found in these areas in past years are available from the society: just send a stamped, self addressed envelope, and specify list wanted. As time and space permits, we will print other areas that are especially nice for flower looking. We look forward to seeing you all in the field.

ALASKA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
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