

Borealis

the newsletter of the



PO Box 141613, Anchorage, Alaska

APRIL 1997

JOIN US AT OUR APRIL MEETING

Monday, April 7th 7:30 p.m.
at the Campbell Creek Center
off 68th and Lake Otis
(See Map on Back)

MAIN PROGRAM

"ALASKA'S RARE PLANTS"

A look at some general patterns in the distribution of Alaska's rare plants with emphasis on recent discoveries, and a closer look at the rare plants of the National Petroleum Reserve, Alaska.

Presented by
ROB LIPKIN, Director
Alaska Natural Heritage Program

PLANT RESCUE

Volunteers are desperately needed to help us rescue native plants before the planned construction work at McHugh Creek Park this summer. This rescue must be completed in May. Volunteers will dig plants and line them in flats that will be stored at the Alaska Botanical Garden until permanent locations are made for them. No equipment is necessary but flats would be welcome. Sign up at the meeting or call Verna Pratt at

PLANT FAMILY STUDY

Potentilla vs. Ranunculus

At the April meeting there will be more discussion on those confusing yellow flowers. Ginny Moran will help clear up some of the confusion surrounding these two genera. Of course potentillas are in the Rose (Rosaceae) family so most species probably have stipules, where-as Ranunculus, or Buttercups, are in the Cowfoot (Ranunculaceae) family which does not have stipules.

This, however, is not what most people notice right away. They see a common flower with five bright petals, five sepals, and many stamens. To further confuse them, the stamens of potentillas usually are loosely arranged, whereas buttercups are usually in a tight "cushion". That's a usually, folks, not always.

Fortunately, there are other easily noticed characteristics that aid in the quick ID which most people want.

- Buttercups have shiny petals; potentilla petals are usually soft and velvety looking.
- Potentilla petals are often notched or indented.
- Because buttercups usually grow in wet areas, their stems and leaves are usually smooth and hairless. Potentillas, on the other hand, usually grow in dry areas and some are literally covered with hairs. These flowers really are easy to tell apart even at a quick glance by merely noticing something other than color or number of petals. Ginny will concentrate on the most common and confusing members of South Central Alaska as there are numerous species of both genera.

FROM WHAT WE GATHER

BOTANY CLASSES AVAILABLE

- **Extension Home & Garden Week classes, April 7-12 Registration \$3/class or \$25/9 classes; Preregister at Alaska Cooperative Extension 279-5582; Many classes available; highlights include:**
 - * **Wildflower Seed Mixes - April 10, 10:45am - 12:15 pm; Dr. Pat Holloway, UAF Dept of Horticulture**
Dr. Pat Holloway will discuss annual and perennial species, the effects of irrigation, and different planting methods.
 - * **Propagating Native Plants From Seeds - April 10 1:30-3:00 pm; Dr. Pat Holloway, UAF Dept of Horticulture;**
Native plants often have complicated dormancy mechanisms. Through her research at UAF, Dr. Holloway has unlocked the key and overcome the germination problems of many of our native species.
- **University of Alaska Anchorage- Register at UAA**
 - * **Local Flora (Biol 075)- Verna Pratt; May 7-28 with field trips all day May 29 and June 7;**
Study of wildflowers and plants in the surrounding local with emphasis on use and identity.
Two sessions: Wed: 9:30 am - 1:00 pm or 6:00 pm - 9:30 pm. Field Trips all day May 29 and June 7
For more information contact Verna Pratt: ; 1 credit
 - * **Biota of Alaska: Recreational Botany (INTI A304C) - Marilyn Barker: May 14-June 14 6-10pm;**
Identification of Native plants in the field using popular guides; derivation of plant names; food and medicinal uses of plants; includes two Saturday field trips: June 7 and June 14; 1-2 credits
 - * **Flora of Alaska and Yukon Territory (BIOLA124Q) - Marilyn Barker: July 12-20;**
Canada Field Study Tour focusing on Native plants in Alaska and Yukon Territory, emphasizing field identification and uses of the Native flora; 1 credit.

NEWS FROM THE UAF HERBARIUM

Carl Roland and Mary Beth Cook are working on an inventory of Wrangell/St. Elias National Park flora and are rapidly filling in Hulten's "Wrangell Void" and occasionally adding species to the State flora..... We have just received several thousand specimens from the collection of Christine Heller, author of "Wild, Edible and Poisonous Plants of Alaska", from the 50s and 60s. This is an important historical collection by one of our first resident botanists.... Carolyn Parker, Elena Conti, and Jason Grant are collecting information on the role of women botanists in the early exploration of the Alaskan flora.

See their Internet web page: www.rams-file.com/opportunity.htm

FROM THE ALBERTA NATIVE PLANT COUNCIL

On April 16th, 7-8pm MST, the Alberta Native Plant Council will host a discussion on native plant gardening on the Internet. Everyone is welcome to attend, ask questions, or just meet other native plant gardeners from around North America. There is no charge for registering. To register, go to the Internet address: <http://webchat6.wbs.net/> Choose "New Users". This is also the site for participating. Choose "Home and Living"; from that menu choose "gardening". It is best to try the system a few times to get used to it. Anyone having problems can contact Adrien Corbiere at wrihl@hg.uleth.ca

ALASKA NATURAL HISTORY EXPEDITIONS

Discover Alaska's amazing natural history through the 1997 wilderness expeditions led by naturalist/wildlife biologist, John Wenger, an instructor at the University of Alaska. Emphasis is on learning bird, mammal, and flowering plant species. Participants provide their own food and personal camping gear. For details contact leader John Wenger, Anchorage, AK 99507 or call 7-9 am Tues and 3-5 pm Fri.; or E-mail: gowild@alaska.net.

Costs include all transportation in Alaska for the expedition. Credit, if desired, is provided for some expeditions, by the University of Alaska. See John's website: www.alaska.net/~gowild for more information.

Wrangell-St Elias National Park: June 5-15 \$685

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: June 19-July 2 \$985

Denali Parks of Alaska (Biology 124) July 8-19 \$1185

Denali and Wrangell-St-Elias National Parks (Biology 124) July 25-August 5 \$1185

Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve: August 10-24 \$1085

ANCHORAGE MUSHROOM CLUB - Tuesday, April 22 at 7:30 pm "Morels: True and False"

Meetings are held in the conference room at the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, 2221 E. Northern Lights. Contact Phyllis Kempton () or Blanche Tinius ().

* ANCHORAGE HERB STUDY GROUP - March 27, 7:30 pm : "Basil"

Meetings are on the 4th Thursday each month. A new herb is studied each month. Meetings are held in the conference room at the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, 2221 E. Northern Lights. Call Julie Riley at for more information

MYSTERY PLANT

by Verna Pratt

Thumbing through Hultén's "*Flora of Alaska*", as I've done so many times, I use to think to myself, "Gee, I'd love to see that plant." The drawing and name were just so inviting.



As its botanical name might imply, this plant has many fine, narrow ray flowers that are over 1/2" wide that make the flower head probably 1 1/2" across. Being an alpine, and only 3-5" tall, this makes it a quite impressive flower. The ray flowers can be variable in color; pinkish to mauve. The ones I saw in mid-June were all very impressive. I saw some in Denali Park (Don't look in the book!) the year after we produced "*Wildflowers of Denali Park*". Undoubtedly the leaves looked much like a dwarfed Siberian Aster, *Aster sibiricus*, when the plant was not in bloom. The leaves have fairly long stiff hairs on them.

This plant grows in dry places on the tundra and in the mountains, but it is not especially common. It is endemic to interior Alaska, eastern Alaska, Yukon Territory, northern British Columbia, and the Arctic Slope of the Northwest Territories.

Alaska Native Plant Society State Officers

President	Marilyn Barker
Vice President	Ginny Moran
Secretary	Jean Poor
Treasurer	Yaso Thiro

Anchorage Chapter Board Members

President	Marlena Mooring
Vice President	Nancy Krieger
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Treasurer	Unison Hubbard

Anchorage Chapter Program Coordinators

Main Program	Ginny Moran
Plant Family	Verna Pratt
Mini-Botany	Verna Pratt
Field Trips	Kathy Burke

Newsletter ("*Borealis*")

Editor	Ginny Moore
Circulation	Martha Hatch

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Articles may be sent to Ginny Moore,
Anchorage, AK 99516. Phone or FAX:

Alaska Native Plant Society HAPPENINGS

SEARS MALL GARDEN SHOW

April is National Garden Month and the Mall at Sears is planning its Annual Garden Show on April 26. This year's theme is "Secrets of the Garden". ANPS will once again staff a booth, provide information and sell seeds and plants. PLEASE help us by volunteering to spend some time at the booth, or contribute samples of plant materials. Call Verna Pratt at

FIRST SPRING FIELD TRIP!!

McHugh Creek Park: Sunday April 27
Meet at the northeast corner of the Sears Parking Lot on the corner of Northern Lights and Seward Highway at 1 PM. Regroup at McHugh Creek Park at about 1:20. If the gate is open drive up to the first parking lot on the hill. We will follow the Old Johnson Trail south and experience spring and look for the first flowers. The first part of the trail is easy, but places may be wet. Hardy souls may want to proceed up the steeper trail. Allow 2-3 hours.

FIELD TRIP LEADERS NEEDED

We can't have field trips without leaders - so where have you been that is fun and flowery? Surely you want to share it with the rest of us! Where have we been that was so good we just have to go back again? Call Kathy Burke () and sign up to lead a field trip, or just suggest a great area to visit.

ANSWER TO MYSTERY PLANT:

ASTER/ASTERACEAE Family

Erigeron grandiflorus
subs. *grandiflorus*

Alaska Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 141613
Anchorage, AK 99514



Don't Miss Out - It's Time To Renew!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

The Alaska Native Plant Society was organized in 1982 by an enthusiastic group of amateur and professional botanists. It is a non-profit educational organization with the goal of uniting all persons interested in the flora of Alaska. Membership is open to any interested individual or organization. If you wish to join us, please indicate the category of membership you desire, fill in the form below and mail it with the appropriate remittance to:

**Alaska Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 141613,
 Anchorage, AK 99514**

- STATUS** **New** **RENEWAL**
- CATEGORY**
- Full-time Student** **\$ 5**
 - Senior Citizen** **\$10**
 - Individual** **\$12**
 - Family** **\$18**
 - Organization** **\$30**

Name _____
 Address _____
 City: _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Membership is on a calendar year basis.

