



1984

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

MAY MEETING-----8 PM at the Pub in the Sports Center Complex of the ACC-UAA Campus-----May 7th, the first Monday.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING--7 PM, one hour prior to General Meeting.

MEETING INFO

The speaker this month will be Society member, Sandra Cozentino, who worked with the National Park Service on an inter-agency research study of the Kobuk River area. Her topic will be: "Some Flowers of the Kobuk River Area."

The Araceae (arum or philodendron) family will be examined this month, with Jeanne Schaaf leading the discussion. The Yellow Skunk Cabbage (*Lysichitum americanum*), one of the earliest blooming plants in Alaska, is a member of this family. Araceae are perennial herbs with alternate, petiolate leaves. The inflorescence is a spadix (fleshy spike) often subtended by a spathe (showy bract). Flower parts and arrangements vary, but most commonly flowers are bisexual with six stamens, a gynoeceium of two or three united carpels with one to many locules, and superior ovary. Placentation is variable and the fruit is a berry.

PORTAGE FIELD TRIP

The trip planned for March 24 was re-scheduled because of weather conditions and will be held on Sat. April 28th. Jim Mitchell will lead the group. Meet at the S.W. corner of parking lot west of Bldg. K on the ACC Campus at 10AM. Plan on about 5 or 6 hours. Dress warmly and bring a lunch.

PLANT QUIZ

With a field trip to Whittier scheduled in the near future, we chose a plant that enjoys the moist woodlands so typical there. It is a medium to tall shrub with alternate leaves that are oblanceolate (longer than broad and tapering toward the base), obtuse (rounded tip) and nearly sessile (stemless), thin and light green. The flowers have 5 sepals, 5 coppery petals, 10 stamens and a curved style. The fruit is a dry capsule.

Quiz drawing and answer elsewhere in this newsletter.

NEW BOOK

A complementary copy of an excellent new book titled "Wildflowers of the Yukon and Northwestern Canada including adjacent Alaska" by John G. Trelawny, has been received by the Society. It has an abundance of color photos and most are Alaskan plants. Contact Verna if you would like to see the book. We highly recommend it. It is not available in stores in Alaska, but can be obtained from: \$16.95

Duthie Books Ltd.
919 Robson Street
Vancouver, B.C. V621A4
or
Eaton's
701 Grandville Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B4E5

1983-84 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS ARE:

President-----Verna Pratt-----
 Vice-President-----John Wenger-----
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 PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS

John Wenger will present a class on Wildflower Photography at Central Junior High School (15th & E St.) from 6:30 to 9:45 PM April 23rd. For those who bring a 35mm camera with them, John will conduct a workshop following the class.

SUMMER CLASSES

JOHN WENGER

The Anchorage Community College will again sponsor several natural history courses this Summer for naturalist and wildlife biologist John Wenger. Contact Community Campus (786-1121) for details. Six weekend hiking classes provide intensive field instruction and experience in learning The Wildflowers of Alaska. The many practical uses of plants are emphasized. Included is a train trip and an overnight alpine trip. 25 student limit.

There are two classes this year to study The Flora and Fauna of Denali National Park. Emphasis is on learning the bird, mammal and flowering plant species. You caravan up, camp at Teklanika group campground, and take daily backcountry hikes to study and photograph. 15 student limit.

If you want a more wilderness experience, take the train on the Denali State Park Wilderness Expedition. Two classes, a 5-day and a 6-day backpacking trip to study the natural history of the park. 11 students only.

Classes are geared to those wanting to learn but not perform for credit. They are designed to be a very enjoyable outdoor learning experience. For those who need credits, John is offering The Natural History of Denali National Park through Alaska Pacific University. A 3-credit class that includes an eight day field trip at the park.

FRANK BOGARDUS

Will present Herbology and Plants of Alaska through the Nunaka Community School, Mondays April 16th thru May 30th at 7PM. Indoor and outdoor sessions. Cost is \$5.00

VERNA PRATT

Will present Easy Identification of Alaska Wildflowers through the Tudor Community School, Tuesdays May 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd from 7 to 9:45 PM, plus 2 or 3 short field trips. Cost is \$8.00

QUIZ ANSWER

Copper flower (Cladanthus pyrolaeiflorus)

WILDFLOWER SEEDS

Doug Tryck and Cathy Wright have packaged the wildflowers seeds that our members provided. They will be on sale at the May meeting for 30 cents a pack. Some, as indicated, are native to areas other than Alaska. The following are available:

- Antennaria pulcherrima
- Aquilegia brevistyla
- Bupleurum triradiatum
- Chenopodium capitatum
- Epilobium angustifolium (pink)
- Epilobium angustifolium (white)
- Epilobium luteum
- Geum Rossii
- Papaver alaskanum
- Papaver Macounii
- Pulsatilla patens
- Saussurea angustifolia
- Taraxacum carneocoloratum
- Clematis tangutica (China)
- Primula glorioides (Tibet)
- Centaurea macrocarpa (Europe)
- Dodecatheum sp. (S. central AK)
- Iris setosa (white, blue or lavender)

QUIZ DRAWING



LOTIONS, NOTIONS AND POTIONS—by Old Doc

Well, last month I promised you a list of plants to avoid during our ventures into the outdoors this Summer. Here it is, not necessarily complete, but covering the most dangerous or offensive plants.

MARSH MARIGOLD (*Caltha palustris*)—Poison is broken down by boiling.

ALL ANEMONES (*Anemone* species)—All contain poisonous anemonin. No reason to eat.

BUTTERCUP (*Ranunculus* species)—Poison breaks down by boiling.

BANE BERRY (*Actaea rubra*)—Both red and white-berried plants very poisonous.

MONKSHOOD (*Aconitum* species)—All parts poisonous.

LARKSPUR (*Delphinium* species)—Poisonous like Monkshood, but not quite as active.

FALSE HELLEBORE (*Veratrum* species)—Very poisonous. Extremely bitter. No reason to eat. Death from asphyxia.

DEATH CAMAS (*Zygadenus elegans*)—same as above.

BLUE FLAG (*Iris setosa*)—Irritant substance in leaves. Non-flowering plant mistaken for cattail. Rhizome poisonous. Powdered rhizome "Orris Root" formerly used in cosmetics; it is EXTREMELY allergenic!

WILD SWEET PEA (*Hedysarum Mackenzii*)—Not edible.

LUPINE (*Lupinus* species)—Leaves and seeds poisonous.

BUTTER AND EGGS (*Linaria vulgaris*)—All parts poisonous.

WATER HEMLOCK (*Cicuta Mackenzieana* & *Cicuta Douglasii*)—Considered by many authorities to be the most virulent poisonous plant on the North Temperate Zone. Death has been known to occur in 20 minutes following ingestion.

ELDERBERRY (*Sambucus racemosa*)—All parts poisonous. The pulp of berries is the least toxic part of plant. Uncooked berries may produce nausea if too many are eaten. Cooking should break down toxin.

LABRADOR TEA (*Ledum palustre*)—Reports of cathartic effect if too much tea is consumed. The robustly aromatic leaves make it one of the most famous teas of the North Country.

FALSE LILY OF THE VALLEY (*Maianthemum dilatatum*)—Contains cardiac glycosides (alkaloids). Remember last month's discussion?

FIR CLUB MOSS (*Lycopodium selago*)—Contains a poisonous alkaloid causing pain in mouth, vomiting and diarrhea.

CALLA LILY (*Calla palustris*)—Entire plant especially berries contain poisonous acids and burning saponin-like substances, neutralized by drying or boiling.

DEVILS CLUB (*Echinopanax horridum*)—Berries contain a toxin and are considered inedible.

BOG ROSEMARY (*Andromeda polifolia*)—Contains Andromedotoxin—causes lowered blood pressure, difficult breathing, vomiting, diarrhea and cramps.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Remember, it takes less poison to be fatal to a small child than for an adult.

It's your responsibility to know the names of the poisonous plants in your yard and neighborhood. The time saved in identification could be important.

Impress upon family and friends never to eat any unknown garden or wild plant, herb, shrub or tree.

In case of poisoning, call physician and be prepared to tell him the name of the plant involved. Better to be safe, even if embarrassed, than dead. Save evidence which might help identify the plant.

ONE FINAL RULE FROM OLD DOC. IT'S MIGHTY HARD TO CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN WHEN YOU ARE 20 MILES OUT IN THE BACKCOUNTRY. SO PLEASE RE-READ ALL OF THE ABOVE AND BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ALL THE INFORMATION.

Educational Wildflower Programs for Schools:

The school district, at present, has a collection of Wildflower slides that can be utilized by the teachers to educate the children. However, after re-organizing them after they accidentally got dropped and mixed up, it was decided that a better selection needs to be organized. At present there are about 225 slides with the botanical name on them and a corresponding list with common names. The board suggested that we form a committee to organize several programs. Each should consist of about 15 slides with a text to aid any teacher, regardless of prior knowledge, in presenting it to the children. Each group will be of a specific habitat, and we will concentrate on the Anchorage area. Anyone interested in helping in any capacity is urged to contact Verna. We will be needing slides to make copies of, some pressed samples, seed pods, cones, woody stems, etc. We will also need people to write and proof-read simple texts, and others to simply advise. Let's make this a worthwhile project for many years of use. Probably the summer will be utilized gathering materials. Please come forward and help. Many hands make light work!