

Alaska Native Plant Society

P.O. BOX 141613

ANCHORAGE ALASKA 99514

MEETING NEWS

The October meeting of the Anchorage Chapter will be the Annual Potluck on Monday, October 6, 1986, at 6:30pm, in the basement of the Grandview Gardens Library, 1325 Primrose. This is just South of DeBarr and one block West of Bragaw. Bring your family and/or friends, and a dish to feed 3 times the number of people in your group.

BOARD MEETING---There will be no Board of Directors meeting for October, because of the early meeting time.

SLIDE SHOW---Bring up to 10 color slides of interest to the group; interesting plants seen during the Summer, field trips, or even just a nice place to visit.

1985-86 STATE OFFICERS ARE:

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

1986 ANCHORAGE CHAPTER AND BOARD MEMBERS ARE:

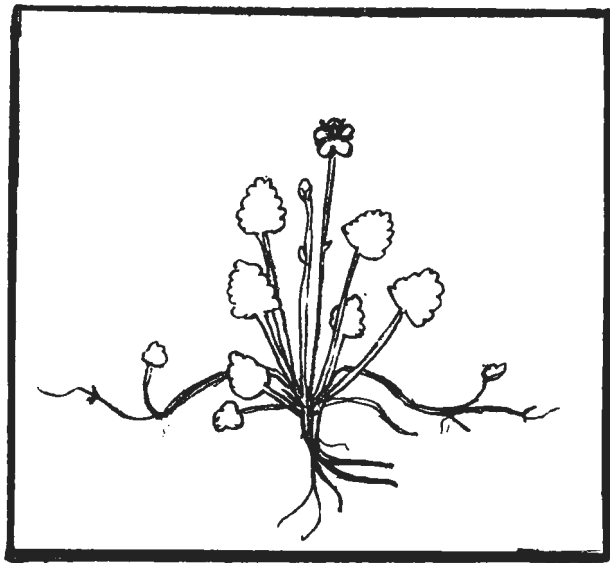
President-----Lynn Catlin-----
 Vice-President-----Doug Tryck-----
 Secretary-----Peggy Pletcher-----
 Treasurer-----Larry Haller-----
 Representative to State Board-----Frank Bogardus-----
 General Program Chairperson-----Debbie Brown-----
 Educational Programming-----Debbie Brown-----
 Field Trips-----Frank Bogardus-----

FIELD TRIP

Fall Moss Field Trip---Friday, October 10th, 10AM, about 2-3 hours. Meet at West end of parking lot beyond Service High School on the North side of Abbott Road, just before the Hillside Ski area. Leader---Dr. Marilyn Barker--- . you will NEED A HAND LENS,

MYSTERY PLANT

A small perennial plant with small, somewhat spade-shaped leaves with rounded teeth. It sends off runners that easily produce new plants that root readily. This glabrous plant grows in moist places, and usually has 5 sepals and 5 yellow petals. It is generally found in coastal areas or near brackish water inland.



STATE PARK PROGRAMS

The Alaska Div. of Parks and Outdoor Recreation announces the following programs presented by the Alaska Natural History Association:

BEARS---Fattened up with berries and salmon, the bears of Chugach are preparing for their winter sleep. Do they really hibernate? Discover some bear facts. Oct. 19, Sunday, 1PM, Eagle River Visitor Center.

FEEDING OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS---What's that bird at my feeder? Find out and visit the "Bird Buffet" to learn what's on their menu. Feeder blueprints available. Nov. 8, Saturday, 1PM, Eagle River Visitor Center.

OVERVIEW OF THE SUMMER---Verna Pratt

Most field trips were very well attended, especially early in the season. Unfortunately, we did not find Douglasia laebeulsis on the Crescent Lake trip. We will probably plan another trip there next year (around the 15th of June), now that we are more familiar with the area and better able to find the exact reported location. Thanks to all of you who braved a very rainy, cold, and tiring day. Carter Lake still had a lot of snow around it.

The Tolsona Mud Volcanoes Trip was exceptionally worthwhile and interesting---Thank you, Scott Christy. Two plants were found there that prefer the saline soil at the base of the volcanoes. They were Ranunculus cymbalaria and Primula stricta (the latter being new to all of us). A lesson in caution was learned when a child ventured too close to the center of one of the mud volcanoes and started to sink. After retrieving him, his father required the assistance of two rugged male adults to rescue both him and his boots from the oosing mud.

The Field Trip to Kodiak, with 16 attending, was a huge success. Thanks to member Judy Brighton of Kodiak. We temporarily lost a few people due to the mix-up with the van reservations (not our fault); and the weather was quite rainy, but the plants and scenery were fantastic.

Twin Peaks was another downpour, but Ludean Marvin led us on an excellent trek up to see the Pink Dandelions in the saddle between the peaks.

Summit Lake was a scorcher in the alpine, and a few sunburns appeared after that trip.

We picked a great day for Mt. Alyeska's chairlift to the top and a visit to the glacier before hiking down through Milk Creek Valley and the patches of ripe Salmonberries.

We climaxed the year with 2 mushroom trips; one to Ben Guild's property in Peters Creek, and the other to the woods in the area of Service High School. Both were excellent and we thank Ben Guild, Phyllis Kempton, and Dr. Baxter for sharing their expertise.

THE WILDFLOWER PAINTING CONTEST IS ABOUT TO
CLOSE---ANY MORE ENTRIES?

WORKSHOPS

We need to have a workshop to package prints for sale. Anyone interested in helping should call Verna at . Workshops will be held on Monday, October 20th from 10 to 12AM and from 7 to 9PM.

Rusty Meyers called to say that Christine Heller's Botanical Collection (all 27 boxes of it) has been donated to the Science Dept. of Alaska Pacific University. Anyone wishing to help with this project please give Verna a call. We will set aside Monday afternoons and slowly weed through the materials to condense and properly utilize them. Meanwhile, APU will store them for us. Thanks, Rusty, for letting us know about the gold-mine of information that might otherwise have just gathered dust.

LOTIONS, NOTIONS and POTIONS---by Old Doc

Old Doc would like to bring to the attention of all our readers a very interesting new book, Foraging in Alaska---For Fun and Profit, by Charles Walsh, with illustrations by Sandra Fongemie.

The purpose of this book, according to the author, is to "promote the development of a commercially valuable, renewable Alaskan resource which is available in all parts of the state, is accessible to everyone in the state, is relatively easy to produce and is readily marketable". It appears that it could be a whole lot of fun, too.

The book outlines over 50 species of wild plants that can be foraged for food and income. It indicates that companies buy these crops for such uses as: dyes, foods, herbal teas, pharmaceuticals, florals, etc. It gives brief descriptions of plants; with habitat, uses, commercial potential, and special harvest or processing requirements indicated. It has sections covering harvesting and field handling, drying, packaging and storage, and selling your harvest; as well as, information on public and private land use, berry ranching, and field production of aromatics.

Whether you are interested in foraging on a commercial basis, for your own uses, or just for fun this book should be in your library. It is available at the Book Cache.

PLANT QUIZ ANSWER

Ranunculus cymbalaria

BERRIES AS
WILD LIFE
FOOD - - - Lynn
Catlin

Last Summer's flowers provided food of nectar & pollen to pollenating insects. Now the fruits of their labor becomes food for the animals.

Mountain Ash (*Sorbus*) berries are an important winter food for Bohemian Waxwings. Rosehips (*Rosa*) are winter food for Pine Grosbeaks, Squirrels & other mammals. High in vitamin C, rose hips are an important vitamin source for wildlife throughout the winter. Highbush and lowbush cranberries (*Viburnum edule*) and (*Vaccinium vitus-idea*), like rose hips, often remain on the bush all winter providing berries for hungry birds after a snowfall.

Just as human berry-pickers feast upon berries during August & September, wildlife fatten up on raspberries (*Rubus ideaus*), salmonberries (*Rubus spectabilis*), cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*) and trailing raspberries (*Rubus pedatus*) in Fall. Berries of the *Rubus* genus do not last into the winter, so they are enjoyed soon after they become ripe. Many migrating birds, such as Juncos, make use of the berry crop in August, building up fat layers necessary for their journey south. Those tough raspberry seeds that get stuck between your teeth are no accident. Most seeds are covered by a hard coat, an adaptation enabling seeds to pass unharmed through an animal's digestive tract. In the process, seeds are dispersed and even deposited in their own packet of fertilizer.

Champion blueberry pickers are the bears, who fatten up for their long winter sleep eating vast quantities of blueberries (*Vaccinium* sp.), crowberries (*Empetrum nigrum*), and soapberries (*Shepherdia canadensis*). Crowberries are also a main food of the Whimbrel, a tundra nesting shorebird.

Berries which humans do not eat are used by wildlife. Elderberries (*Sambucus racemosa*) are favorites of birds, such as thrushes. Squirrels will eat baneberries, which can poison us. Tasty berries with high sugar and probably other nutrient values are the first to go and less nutritious or bad tasting berries will remain in good berry years.

Next time you're berry picking for fun, remember all the feathered and furred Alaskans who pick for a living each Fall, and leave a few berries for them.

BOTANY BONER (overheard at Eagle River Visitor Center)---"The only wildlife I saw was a squirrel eating an acorn that fell off a pine tree."!!!

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