



P.O. BOX 141613

ANCHORAGE ALASKA 99514

JANUARY, 1987

MEETING NEWS

The January meeting of the Anchorage Chapter will be on Monday, January 5, 1987, at 8PM in the basement meeting room of the Grandview Gardens Library, 1325 Primrose (just south of DeBarr and 1 block west of Bragaw). Entrance is on the west side, facing Primrose.

BOARD MEETING---7:15PM immediately preceeding the general meeting.

SPEAKER---This will be a narration and slide presentation by Virginia "Ginny" Van den Noort, who spent over 3 years teaching on various islands in the Aleutian Chain for Chapman College and Rural Univ. of Alaska while working for Allied Bendix on Shemya. While there, she conducted weekly nature walks and identified over 90 different wildflowers. Ginny is currently teaching mathematics at ACC and Descriptive Astronomy at Chapman College on Elmendorf Air Force Base.

PLANT FAMILY---The plant family to be discussed this month is the Hydrophyllaceae or Waterleaf family. The flowers have 5 united petals, 5 united sepals, 5 stamens and a superior ovary with 2 united carpels. This family is represented in Alaska most commonly by the *Romanzoffia* genus which is nearly glabrous and has small white rotate flowers on a small plant that looks very much like *Saxifraga punctata*. It grows in wet rocky areas in southeastern and south-central Alaska and the Aleutian Chain. *Phacelia* (Scorpionweed) genus is a hairy erect plant with deeply-toothed to pinnate leaves and white, violet or lavender tubular to rotate flowers. It prefers sandy soil in interior Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The *Nemophila* "Baby Blue Eyes" genus is seen along roadways, usually has large blue flowers with a white center and pinnate leaves. White or lavender flowers have also been seen. This plant has escaped from civilization or been introduced by highway construction.

MINI-BOTANY---Member Dodie Nelson, who is also a basket-weaver by trade, will present the mini-botany discussion on Willow. For the information of those not attending the meeting, Dodie came to Alaska from Oregon about 2 years ago and is only starting to use native Alaskan materials in her work. She submitted the following information:

"The Willow that was collected by my basket-weaving students last Spring showed greater variety than I had imagined. There was good color showing in the roadside shrubbery adjacent to Knik river bridge on the Glenn Hiway. Chartreuse, gold, orange, red (probably cornus), brown, black and lots of mottled bark were all sampled. Variation in color must have been caused by environmental damage and insects. Disease must have accounted for some color variation as well as different levels of flexibility that we encountered. We went out so early that we never saw the leaves of flowers making identification impossible. We at least know, or are fairly sure what is Willow and what is not. Some students cut any and every likely looking branch. The result was that some of it turned out to be very flexible; and, some, like cottonwood were of no value, just got our fingers sticky, even after it dried. All the material was dried and sorted, then wet to test for flexibility. I am still working on identification of some of the branches. Our primary interest was in collecting long thin colorful branches. We cut most of them as long as possible; we had to cut to the level of the ice, in some cases below the level of the melt water. We wanted to cut before the buds burst on our first trip, as the bark was the most important feature. In later trips, we collected Willow as the buds were just breaking and this made it east to peel off the bark. There were some catkins out at that time but still hard to identify. One collector had distinctly red branches that were used for spokes and some very small black stuff (a weaver's term for material); woven around the red stuff it was quite attractive. (I'll bring some baskets and some samples to the January meeting). All in all we collected some nice Willow and the baskets turned out well. I am looking forward to continuing this, with correct identification in the future.

PLEASE HELP ! ! !

The new president of the Anchorage Chapter will be calling on members for help in filling vacancies on committees. Please help the Society. (See the fast-breaking news item elsewhere in this newsletter!!!)

ELECTION RESULTS

The results of the election for state officers, held at the December meeting, resulted in the election of the officers shown below.

1987-88 STATE OFFICERS ARE:

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

1987 ANCHORAGE CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS ARE:

President-----Lynn Catlin
Vice-President-----John Wenger
Secretary-----Peggy Pletcher
Treasurer-----Larry Haller
Representative to State Board-----Frank Bogardus
General Program Chairperson-----
Educational Programming-----
Field Trips-----Frank Pratt

MYSTERY PLANT

The mystery plant for this month is a somewhat fleshy plant of coastal areas with small white flowers with 4 petals. Basal leaves have long stems and are rounded to reniform and soon wither. Stem leaves are nearly sessile, mostly oval with some indistinct shallow teeth. The silicles are long and fairly broad. This plant was highly prized by sailors for use as food, and medicinally as a preventative for scurvy.



CONTEST

Entries for the "Name the Newsletter" contest announced in the December newsletter are listed below. Voting on the entries will be held at the January meeting and an appropriate certificate awarded to the winner.

CALYPSO

BOREALIS

ALASCHENSIS

RECIPE

CRANBERRY NUT COOKIES

1-1/2 cup sugar (can be half brown)	2-1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup shortening	1/2 tsp salt
1/2 cup butter or margarine	1/2 cup chopped pecans/walnuts
2 eggs	1 cup chopped cranberries
1 tsp vanilla	(leave whole if Alaska cranberries)
1 tsp soda	

Cream shortening, sugar and butter well. Add eggs, one at a time, creaming well after each.

Add dry ingredients, vanilla, then nuts and cranberries. Chill dough. Drop by teaspoonsful on a cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes.

---by Doris E. Simpson, Palmer. Reprinted from Anchorage Daily News.

LOTIONS, NOTIONS and POTIONS

by Old Doc

This month we'll consider one of the most common and spectacular plants in Alaska, the Willow Herbs. There are several Willow Herbs native to Alaska. They are members of the Evening Primrose (Onagraceae) family and are related to Enchanter's Nightshade. The very tall Epilobium angustifolium or Common Fireweed is found along roadways throughout most of Alaska. It is one of the first plants to revegetate burn areas. It has been used as a substitute for tea in England and Russia (where it was known as Kaporie Tea). It is probably the most visible plant seen in photographs of war-torn London in the nineteen-forties.

Medicinally, the root and leaves are demulcent, tonic, astringent and antispasmodic, and were used to treat whooping-cough, asthma and hiccoughs. The American names Wickopy and Wicopy probably allude to the latter ailment.

ACC will offer two classes on plant identification .
spring semester 1087

ALASKA WILDFLOWERS: BIOLOGY 075

Are you interested in plants but have no background in biology?
Have you ever identified a plant and wondered if you were right?
Here is a course designed for you!

- one college credit
- three field trips: a bog, an alpine meadow, a south facing ridge
- four illustrated lectures

PLANT TAXONOMY: BIOLOGY 230

Are you interested in increasing your knowledge about plant
identificaion?
Have you wondered how plants are related?
Do you need to boost your keying skills?
Take Plant Taxonomy.

- 3 college credits
- field trips: a bog, a marsh, a woodland, a south facing ridge
- Winter identification of local flora
- emphasis on Alaska plant families

For more details on either course call Marilyn Barker
or Nancy Pierson

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY RANGE EXTENSION
by Lynn Catlin

The Native Plant Society has quite a few members who live out of state, and it is with very mixed emotions that I must tell you that I will all too soon be one of them! As many of you know, I was laid off from my job as Interpretive Ranger at Eagle River Visitor Center. Since that day in September, my position has been completely eliminated due to the sorry condition of the state budget. Reluctantly, I started casually looking for work at nature centers out of state, figuring that in this very competitive field it would take over a year to find a job. Surprise! I was offered a job as naturalist at a very nice nature center in Pennsylvania. It was a difficult decision, but the opportunity was just too good to pass up.

Therefore, with considerable lumps in my throat, I would like to say "so long" to the Native Plant Society. Even before I arrived in Anchorage, I had read about ANPS in the Milepost. When I got here Verna was the very first person I called. Her friendliness and enthusiasm made me feel immediately welcome, and soon thereafter other ANPS members made me feel the same. I've enjoyed the field trips, meetings and friendships made through the Plant Society more than I can ever tell you. Thank you for letting me serve as the Anchorage chapter president. I'm sorry that I have to leave before my term is up, but I leave you in the most competent hands of John Wenger and the helpful entourage of Peggy Pletcher, Larry Haller, Frank, and of course Verna Pratt. I'm doubly sorry that I can not be at the January meeting to give you this news in person, but I start my new job on January 5 th.

I will be working at Schuylkill Valley Nature Center in Philadelphia, where I will be teaching and giving nature programs to a wide variety of folks from pre-schoolers to college students, and families. An exciting prospect is that I plan to lead natural history tours for SVNC to Alaska in the summers. So with a little luck I may sneak in some ANPS field trips on my visits north.

If any of you are planning trips to the Pennsylvania tropics, drop me a line and we'll arrange some flower hunting. My address is: Schuylkill Valley Nature Center
8480 Hagy's Mill Road
Philadelphia, PA 19128

Thank you for your friendships, for sharing your knowledge, and for fond memories of field trips in the rain and sun. I will think of you and Alaska's flowers often, and come May, I will be wistfully dreaming of sweet scented Calypsos.

QUIZ ANSWER

Cochlearia officinalis subs. arctica, Scurvy Grass

THANKS !

Our thanks to the following members who contributed items for this newsletter. Come on gang, keep those cards and letters coming in.

Marilyn Barker

Dodie Nelson

Janice Schofield

WORKSHOP

We will make another attempt at a Print Packaging workshop on Monday, January 12th from 10AM to 12Noon and from 7PM to 9PM at the Pratt's home at Avenue. Please help if you can.

PLANT CLASSES AND SEMINARS:

BAHA HERBAL ADVENTURE

February 14 to February 22, 1987. A plant study adventure is being sponsored by the California School of Herbal Studies. Talks on Mexican flora are interspersed with relaxing in hot tubs, whale watching at Scammons Lagoon, and swimming in beautiful Baha waters. Cost is \$600, which includes transportation from San Diego, meals, and activities. For more information, write CSHS, P.O. Box 39, Forestville, Ca. 956436 or call 707-887-7457.

ARE YOU STRESSED FROM THE CHRISTMAS RUSH?

It's so easy to hurry and overdo during the holiday season. When you feel yourself getting too stressed from the crowds, traffic jams, and endless list of things to do, it's time for a relaxing herbal soak in a hot tub.

Just wrap a generous handful of pineapple weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*), valerian (*valeriana* species) and wormwood (*Artemisia Tilesii*) in a piece of muslin. Tie it to the faucet so that the steamy water penetrates the herbs. When your tub is full, add the herbal packet to the water, along with your tired body. Use the herb packet to rub any tense or aching areas.

If you don't have any Alaskan herbs on hand, you can buy German chamomile, valerian, and wormwood or mugwort at a natural foods store. The *Artemisia* soothes away aches and pains, while the *Matricaria* and *Valeriana* promote relaxation. It's a great bath for insomniacs!

contributed by
Janice Schofield