

BOREALIS

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ALASKA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 141613, Anchorage, Alaska 99514

MEETING NEWS

The January meeting of the Anchorage Chapter will be held on Monday, January 2, 1989, at 7:30PM in the meeting room of the **Muldoon Library** at the west end of the Carr's Muldoon Shopping Center, corner of Northern Lights Blvd. and Muldoon Road. The entrance to the meeting room is at the rear of the library.

BOARD MEETING---The Board of Directors will meet at 6:45PM immediately preceding the general meeting.

PROGRAM---Information not available to Editor at presstime.

Please note the new meeting time which was started in December.

PLANT FAMILY---ANPS Member Dorothy Emmons will lead a discussion on the Amelanchier (Serviceberry) genus of the Rosaceae (Rose) family. This genus consists of shrubs with simple leaves. The fruit is a pome (a soft fleshy fruit) of the rose family derived from an inferior ovary. The genus is represented in Alaska by 2 species having oval leaves that are sharply toothed at the apex and have a distinct fold along the mid-vein.

MYSTERY PLANT

This hairy, somewhat sticky, branched plant grows in dry, sandy areas of eastern interior Alaska. It has small, pale blue 5-petaled salviiform flowers with yellow eyes that are borne in curved cymes. The narrow, sessile, hairy leaves arise from a rosette. Height varies from 8 to 15 inches.



The meeting was called to determine how funds should be divided and used in order to comply with IRS regulations concerning non-profit educational organizations. Expenditures for the printing of our limited-edition prints have, in prior years, exhausted our funds; but, now that we have excess funds, some decisions were needed.

DUES---It was decided that 30% of existing dues collected from Anchorage Area members would be transferred to the Anchorage Chapter for operating expenses. In the future this will be done quarterly per the ANPS state by-laws.

SANCTUARY TRAVEL---These funds are to be used for establishing, improving or signing trails (as per original agreement with Sanctuary Travel). Monies earned from travel arrangements of Anchorage Area members shall be set aside in an Anchorage fund for the cited purposes. All other income from Sanctuary Travel will be put in an ANPS State Fund for these purposes

SCHOLARSHIP/EDUCATIONAL FUND---(Sale of prints, etc.)---These monies shall be placed in an Educational Fund to be used to fund special speakers, scholarships or other educational purposes. Funds received (above wholesale costs) from sale of prints at chapter meetings will be retained by the chapter. All other funds will be deposited in the State Educational Fund.

Those of you who picked berries this past Fall in Southcentral Alaska know that we were blessed with a bumper crop. Most all commonly sought-after types were plentiful. My harvest alone netted about 14 gallons, mostly lowbush cranberries & blueberries.

The blueberries came from the exact same patch in Hatcher's Pass as last year. Interestingly, this was the second consecutive year of exceptionally high fruit production for them; so, so much for the popular claim of alternative berry-good, then berry-bad years.

With a relish for sporting a blue tongue, I began noticing the difference of taste in our seven different blueberry species of Alaska. The bountiful species at Hatcher's Pass keys fairly well to *Vaccinium ovalifolium*, but there are enough characteristics of *Vaccinium alaskensis* that I wouldn't bet my old-fashioned berry picking scoop on it. Both species are quite tall (over 3' say), with their leaves not serrated at the end, and they produce blue fruit. This last characteristic separates them from *Vaccinium parvifolium*, the red-fruited hucklebedrry which doesn't grow this far north. By the way, *Vaccinium ovalifolium* and, possibly, *Vaccinium alaskensis* are probably the notorious "huckleberries" you hear of around here.

The flavor of *Vaccinium ovalifolium* fruit is o.k. but nothing worth bragging
(cont'd next page)

about like that of lowbush blueberry, *Vaccinium uliginosum* or *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*, our common red-fruited blueberry (Editor's Note: probably more commonly known as Low-bush Cranberry or Mt. Cranberry). Besides, they were more mealy and dry. After packing out load after load, I wondered why I had collected so many. I guess seeing that amount of huge berries and easy pickings must have triggered an automatic reaction like a wolf going kill-frenzy in a sheep pen. I just could not pick enough, even though there was no way to eat them all! Still, I have no regrets for collecting so many.

A friend of mine, Randy Steen, also knew of the tastebud limitations of the species and, like me, was gluttonous concerning his berry cache. We began to experiment. Eventually, after several attempts at making syrups, pie-fillings, and sauces, we hit the success button-----mix low flavored berries with others that have punch such as lowbush cranberries. The ideal mix to date is a ratio of 4 to 1 for these two species.

Our experiments have produced the following recipe for pie-fillings and sauces. Maybe next year, Randy and I will vary our liqueur making to include this blend. As far as I know, it would be a first. If you wonder why I am fat as a fall bear, just imagine sourdough waffles smothered with blueberry sauce topped with several scoops of vanilla ice cream. Hey, you need calories to make it through the winter! Good eating....

Ingredients:

3 cups low flavored blueberries
1 cup low-bush cranberries
2 cups water
1 cup sugar
1-2 tbsp cornstarch

Add berries & sugar to water in large pan. Bring to boil. Then use egg beater to rupture fruit for releasing juices and pectin. Roll boil for about 5 minutes. Turn off heat and add cornstarch which has been dissolved in about 1/4 cup of cold water (to thicken mixture). Cool. Pour directly into baked pie shells or jars for storing.



From the Editor's Desk:



At presstime, with the exception of John Wenger's nice article, the Editor had NOT received:

- ANCH. CHAP. PRES. COLUMN
- JANUARY PROGRAM & SPEAKER
- FRIENDS OF CHUGACH PARK NEWS
- ALASKA STATE PARKS NEWS
- ARTICLES FROM ANPS MEMBERS
- LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
- RECIPES
- CARTOONS, JOKES
- X--ALL OF THE ABOVE**

Well, Happy New Year! It's really looking like the next newsletter will be on a postcard !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

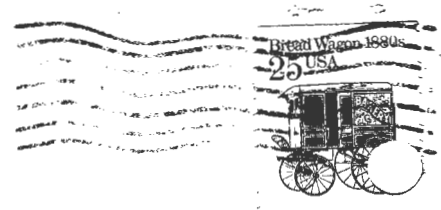
MYSTERY PLANT ANSWER

Lappula occidentalis / Stickweed

Alaska Native Plant Society

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