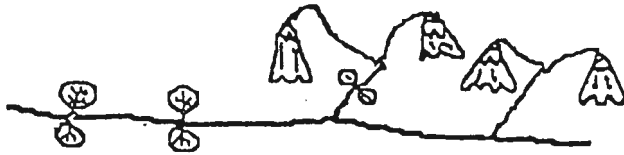


BOREALIS

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ALASKA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 141613, Anchorage, Alaska 99514

December 1991

ANPS STATE OFFICERS ARE:

- President Forrest Baldwin
- Vice-President Jean Poor
- Secretary Jean Tam
- Treasurer Yasu Thiru
- Newsletter (appointed) Frank Pratt

Note: Ram Srinivasan has resigned as ANPS State Treasurer. Yasu Thiru has been appointed to fill the remainder of his term.

ANCHORAGE CHAPTER MEETING NEWS:

The December meeting of the Anchorage Chapter will be held on Monday, December 2nd, at 7:30PM in the meeting room of the Muldoon Library in the Carr's Shopping Mall on the corner of Muldoon Road and Northern Lights Blvd. The Library will be closed, so enter by the door at the rear of the building

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors will meet at 6:45PM just prior to the general membership meeting. Board members are:

- President Gary Davies
- Past-President John Wenger
- Vice-President vacant
- Secretary Carol Hoblitzell
- Treasurer Ram Srinivasan
- Rep. to State Board ... Frank Bogardus
- General Programs Marilyn Barker
- Field Trips Frank Bogardus
- Newsletter Frank Pratt

Board members please take note and mark your calendars. Continued absence from Board meetings can be grounds for removal from the Board.

PROGRAM: Speaker will be Dan Birch, who has worked with U of A in Southeast Alaska on Survival Plants. No other information available at presstime.

ANCH CHAPTER ELECTION:

The election of officers will be held at the December meeting. The Nominating Committee has submitted the following slate of officers for 1992:

- President-----Gary Davies
- Vice-President-----Charles (Chuck) Adsit
- Secretary-----Carol Hoblitzell
Andrea Woods
- Treasurer-----Ram Srinivasan

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor prior to the voting.

PLANT FAMILY:

This month we will continue studying the Parsley or Apiaceae family. With Bupleurum and its simple leaves already done, we will continue with members with compound leaves. The following genera will be discussed by Marilyn Barker: The genus Osmorhiza being different by having fruit with a long beak. The Cicuta and Sium genera having the end segment of leaflets being long (about 1") and narrow and having roundish fruit. And, lastly of the plants with end segments of leaves broader and leaves with hairs, the genera Ghlenia, Pastinaea, and Heracleum.

KACHEMAK CHAPTER NEWS

The Kachemak Chapter of the Alaska Native Plant Society met on Oct. 21 to elect new officers and to sharesummer experiences. New (and old) officers are: JoAnne Popham, President; Stacy Staley, Vice-President; Nancy Levinson, Secretary and Jane Middleton, Treasurer. We had asked that the vice president take responsibility for programs. Daily Lee Bitter agreed to help Stacy with this responsibility. Anne Wieland, who lives in both Homer and Anchorage will be our state representative.

At this fall meeting, slide presentations were given by Norma Dudiak and Nancy Levinson. Norma shared her outer coast scenics and Nancy gave us some comparisons between wildflowers in Nome and the near-

tropical botany of Kachemak Bay. Josie Bills showed some aerial photographs of a fly-in excursion to Kinnikinnick Lake across the Bay. Other members of that late July field trip, including Beth Cumming, passed photographs of this camping trip where alpine beauties, including pink poppies were barely emerging from the snow and the ice barely parted for landing and departure. Toby Tyler shared snapshots of the moving of his 8' x 10' studio from its Pioneer Ave. location to a new home a little farther out, on East Road. Toby in his retirement, has donated the building to the Kachemak Heritage Lant Trust for their office.

Our next meeting will be in January. We would welcome Anchorage participation for joining or leading field trips or giving programs.

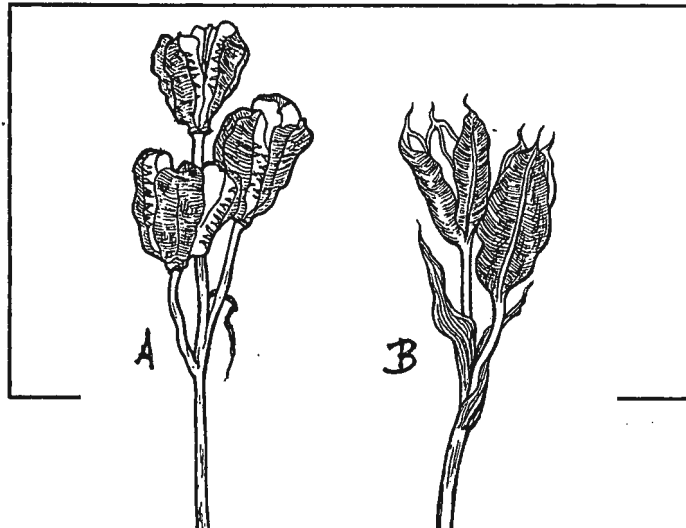
We are pleased that "our" Toby Tyler will be drawing and describing the mystery plant. Watch out. He has a few tricks up his sleeve.

Welcome to new members Dan and Nancy Levinson and Walter Johnson.

Submitted by JoAnne Popham

MYSTERY PLANT:

This month we will try a different approach. As plants die down for winter and are covered with snow, the seed pods are most obvious, and these stand stiff and erect. Each plant has heavy stiff stems. Each pod has its own petiole. These pods are excellent for flower arrangements. Plant-A has papery upright pods, divided into 3 sections that split down the sides and have a distinct ridge around the base. The pods are rounded at the tips and contain 6 rows of seeds. Plant-B has rigid upright pods, divided into 3 sections that split down the sided and taper slowly and smoothly from the base to the stem. The pods are pointed at the tips and also contain 6 rows of seeds. These plants are quite common and easily recognized by drawings and descriptions, but do you recognize the seed pods?



*** LOST FLOWER ***

Anchorage resident and ANPS member, Lewis E. Boyd, succumbed last month to an unfortunate accident, the horror of all auto mechanics working under a jacked up vehicle. Lewis lived in Anchorage for 18 years and had been a member of ANPS for 4 years. He is survived by a brother in Anchorage, and his mother, 1 sister and 1 brother in Johnson City, Tenn.

COLLECTORS WANTED:

MONTANA RESEARCHER SEEKS SPECIMEN OF MYSTERY ASTRAGALUS: To western ranchers, *Astragalus* is a noxious weed that causes locoism in horses, cattle, and sheep. The afflicted animal loses muscular control and appetite, and dies.

To the Chinese, *Astragalus* is a highly revered, and expensive, medicinal herb. According to Montana researcher Robyn Klein, chromatography studies on *Astragalus americanus* indicate, but do not prove, that *americanus*, is very similar to the medicinal *A. membranaceous*.

The mystery *Astragalus*, however is *A. umbellatus*, an Old World species that probably came across the Bering strait long ago. This is suspected to be a medicinal Chinese relative, and perhaps one of the five species of *Astragalus* that is used in the traditional "*Astragalus* medicine." Robyn seeks help to discover how common or rare *A. umbellatus* and *americanus* are in Alaska. She would like a pressed voucher specimen of the root, flowers and seed to verify its identity. And she would like to include the root of *umbellatus* in a chemical and DNA comparison with the other *Astragalus*.

In addition, Robyn wants help to "head people off at the pass " if these plants are rare, as she feels that collectors will eventually head to Alaska to wildcraft these plants for commercial purposes. Robyn has already been approached by buyers seeking *A. americanus* root from Montana. "I have refused them on the grounds that this plant should never be wildcrafted, says Robyn. "It is much too rare." Robyn in also concerned that foragers may mistakenly gather other species, some of which are quite toxic. "Knowing that people will search for it (*americanus*), even though there is no (definitive) proof of the plant's usefulness or toxicity, I have collected seed. I have several growers who will be attempting cultivation

of this plant next year."

If you can collect a specimen of *A. umbellatus* for laboratory analysis, or have information on the abundance of *umbellatus* and *americanus*, please write to Robyn Klein, _____, Bozeman, Montana 59715.

Submitted by Janice Schofield

MYSTERY PLANT ANSWER:

Plant-A is Chocolate Lily or Camchatka Fritillaria,, *Fritillaria camschatcensis*. This plant is also known as 1) Indian Rice Lily, as the rice-like bulbs may be eaten as a rice or potato substitute. 2) Outhouse Lily, Skunk Lily and Dirty Diaper Lily because of its strong, offensive aroma. The drooping to upright, bell-shaped flowers have 3 sepals and 3 petals that look alike and can be green to brown (very variable). This plant grows in damp, coastal areas and in alpine meadows. It has a superior ovary. The distinctive parallel-veined leaves are in whorls around the stems that arise from a bulb.



Chocolate Lily

Plant-B is Wild Iris or Flag, *Iris setosa*. This showy plant has 3 large, drooping, colorful purple to blue (and occasionally white) "falls" and 3 smaller upright paler petals, and an inferior ovary. It grows in coastal areas, bogs and wet meadows. It has parallel-veined leaves that are long, broad and sword-like, arising from a heavy horizontal rhizome.



Wild Iris

Thanks Toby!

EDITOR WANTED:

Although it has been quite educational and a lot of fun putting this newsletter together monthly for several years, the lack of input from all but a very few (Bless You) individuals has relegated your newsletter to what I now consider a second-class publication.

I now feel that, because of the extreme stress of my regular occupation and my desire to spend my spare time in pursuit of some of my other interests, I must hand over the editorship to some person who has the time and inclination to actively pursue the project. I would like to turn over the job to somebody else just as soon as possible.

Frank