



George Landis Arboretum Newsletter

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A living museum, open free of charge for visitors from April to November, the Arboretum is a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental and horticultural education.

Lape Road, PO Box 186 • Esperance, NY 12066 • 518-875-6935

NEW SCOTLAND ARMORY SHOW

On March 23-25 we exhibited at the third annual Wildwood Flower Show at the New Scotland Armory. Our topic was 'Dwarf Conifers' showing people the origins of these plants. Our exhibition space was small so our exhibit was a test for brevity. Visitors, and there were almost twice the number of the previous two years, all seemed to enjoy our offering and we made many new friends. My thanks to Elizabeth Corning, Peter Rumora, John Abbuhl, Beverly Waite, Margaret and Richard Law, Bill Fairchild and Phyllis Rosenblum for helping to 'man' the exhibit. Special thanks to Anne Jaster whose calligraphic skills, once again, brought it all together.

Tea and Talk with Mr. Smith

Before we could all cool off came the spring benefit 'A Visit to White Flower Farm' with David J.A. Smith as our guest speaker. A slide lecture was followed by a tea in the courtyard (indoor) and the auction of choice plants and related items. Local nurserymen, landscapers and florists were contacted by Paul Blair (Arboretum Treasurer and Co-Chair of the event) and have been outstanding in their positive support (and generous donations) for the auction. Many thanks to all involved: Elizabeth Corning (President of the Board and Co-Chair of the event) for the idea and the speaker, Paul Blair for emceeding the event and for his efforts with donors, the Northeastern Nurserymen's Association for their tremendous help, Erastus Corning III and Peter Rumora for an outstanding job with the auction, Evelyn Sturdevan, Margaret Law, Lou Gravec, Richard Law and Amy Lent for keeping the paperwork under control. [Pamela Rowling and Amy Lent worked long, hard hours on the event, according to Paul Blair. --Ed.]

(continued on page 10)

EXTINCTION in our BACKYARDS

Don Falk, Executive Director and co-founder of the Center for Plant Conservation (CPC) will be the keynote speaker at the Arboretum's Earth Day/Arbor Day festivities on April 28. Mr. Falk will speak at 10:30 am and 3:00 pm on "Extinction in our backyards: The Disappearance of the North American Flora."

Mr. Falk took his MA in Environmental Policy at Tufts University and is a speaker of national and international reputation. Besides his work with the CPC, he is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy at Tufts, and an Associate of the Arnold Arboretum. Mr. Falk also serves as a member of the plant conservation committee of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA), and is an advisor to the US Department of Agriculture's National Germplasm System Operations Committee. He is on the Board of Directors of the Society for Ecological Restoration.

The CPC's goal is to create a systematic, comprehensive national program of plant conservation, research, and education within existing institutions. Their central resource is the US National Collection of Endangered Plants-- a living collection of all the endangered native flora of the US, maintained under permanent protective cultivation in the open air at 20 regional conservator gardens from Massachusetts to Hawaii.

MORE CONSTRUCTION !!

Things do happen in mysterious ways Two dear friends each gave \$500. toward the completion of our charming cement block office/library (otherwise known as The Cooler). As much as Pam and I would like to say it is solely for the improvement of our (continued on page 10)

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM

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At the Garden

- Pamela H. Rowling

Spring, albeit an exceptionally soggy one, has sprung (a leak I think!). Bulbs are showing and tree buds are swelling. Silver maple and Chinese witch hazel have already bloomed. This morning I noted a yellow haze across the field walking to our office. On this grey morning the yellow blooms of the Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) practically glowed over in the right hand corner of the *Spiraea* planting. A promise of things to come.

The Van Loveland Perennial Garden is coming to life and will be tended once more by a dedicated group of Cornell Co-operative Extension of Albany County Master Gardeners. They all deserve our thanks for making these gardens beautiful again.

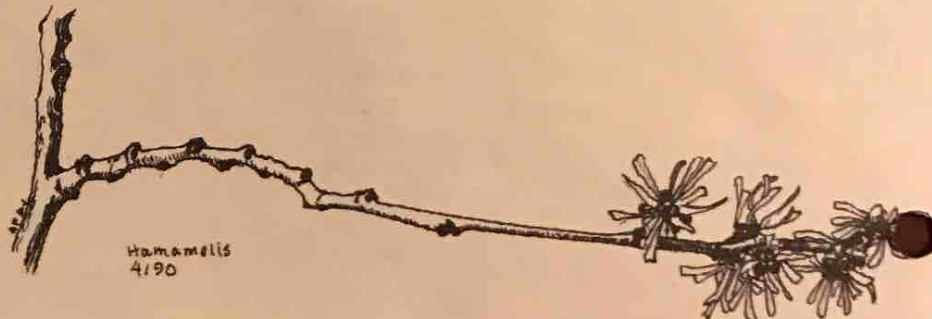
The greenhouse/workspace, although not fully finished, is already fully full of plants. Seed exchange materials from Japan, Norway, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Finland among others are being sown Share the excitement!

On the heels of our two March events we are now facing the cleaning up of the grounds for visitors and gearing up for a flurry of exciting events at April's end. The Schenectady Museum Flower Show will be held April 26, 27, and 28. We are participating with a display focusing on Landscaping with Natives, Landscaping for Wildlife. A co-operative venture we are being aided by Cornell Co-operative Extension of Schoharie County and SUNY Cobleskill Plant Science Department. Lots of help is needed. Please call the Arboretum to find out how you can help. (875-6935)

Our summer educational calendar is filled. Plan to attend some of these fine offerings. Lastly, I encourage all of you to attend Don Falk's sure-to-be-fascinating lecture on April 28 at the Arboretum. Concurrent with our Arbor Day Festivities, these lectures mark the end of 'Earth Week 1990'. Spaces for each of the two lectures are limited so plan to come a bit early to ensure yourself a seat.

I look forward to another fantastic year!

Make this your Newsletter; write us a few words on your favorite topic; why you joined the Arboretum; your favorite plant, tree; what you like most about spring, the garden year; what you like least. We all want to hear! Drop it off at the Arboretum next time you are there or send it to Kathie Lippitt, 6 Glen Terrace, Scotia, NY 12302. Notices are due 1st day of Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter to make that issue of the Newsletter. [There are those at the Arb who claim to have no idea when the above dates are. If you are one of those, too, due dates are 1st day of Jan., April, July, Oct.] Please send us an article!



The Rare Plant Sale will be May 5, 1990, at 11 o'clock, See page 10.

COURSES at the ARB

- by Amy Lent

A "brainstorming" session was held on March 7 at Union College to develop goals and priorities for educational programming at the Arboretum. Pamela and I knew we needed "pros" to guide us and invited various educators who had expressed interest. Present at the discussion were Anita Sanchez, Ruth Bonn, Lucinda Willemain, Anne Jaster, Mary Ann Finley, Arnold Gussin, Pamela and myself.

Regarding adult education the consensus seemed to be to add high level mini-courses as a complement to our successful one session/one topic programs on Saturdays. These new courses would be 3-5 days long, taught by top-level experts in their field and award a certificate of completion. Courses would take place after gardening season, at the Arboretum, either several Saturdays in a row or as a "long weekend", and class size will be kept small. It was suggested that we offer two courses each Fall and try to balance the topics between cultivated and wild, e.g. horticultural vs. environmental studies. We are open to suggestions of teachers with whom you would like to study and with quick work and good luck we hope to offer our inaugural courses this Fall.

Youth programming needs are divided into school year and summertime. The first order of business is to develop field trips that will have lesson plans and can be taught by volunteers. A simple plan for the same topic will be prepared for grades k-3 and 4-6, along with pre- and post- trip study materials. Teacher Ruth Bonn will help with the lesson plan and Five Rivers' Environmental Educator Anita Sanchez will help train the volunteers.

Volunteers are urgently needed to get this program going. We need at least five people who can commit themselves to one training session and can also be available on occasional weekdays in May, early June, late September; and October. You do not need to be an experienced teacher, only to like children and nature. We'll teach you how to take a small group (with their adult chaperone) through the Wonderful World of Trees! If you are interested in helping, or if you can recommend someone, please let us know right away.

For summer we'd like to develop family activity "lesson plans" that would be available at the Information Shed. An adult and a child could work their way through it and enhance their Arboretum experience with this specialized self-guided tour.

Still in the unconfirmed category, unfortunately, is the grant we applied for to fund youth and adult ecology programs this summer. If we hear good news in time to do it, we'll tell you all about it.

Our ability to produce programs from the great ideas generated at the meeting will depend greatly on volunteer assistance (field trip teachers, lesson planners) and member enthusiasm (adult program teachers, topics.) Please call me at the Arboretum (518-875-6935) if you have questions or ideas to share. Remember, time is of the essence.

WHOOPS!: The bird order was changed by the editor to group all birds with long names in same column. To a birder it was very confusing and wrong. Apologies to Beverly Waite who wrote a beautiful article. --Ed.

WISH GRANTED !!!

WE GOT IT!!!

A golf cart for elderly and handicapped visitors
kindly donated by

Keryakos Textiles of Cohoes.

THE ARBORETUM "WISH LIST"

GROUNDS EQUIPMENT

A brush chipper
Good hand mowers

FURNITURE

Meeting House folding chairs
Bookshelves, carpet, lighting
for the library
Pots and pans for the Meeting
House Kitchen

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Service for our (donated) Xerox
photocopier
Desk lamps
Miscellaneous office supplies

CONSTRUCTION

MATERIALS/LABOR

Winterization of the Meeting
House, woodsiding for
beautification of
library, repairs to barn

COLLECTIONS

Books to update the library
(per list generated by
horticultural librarian
Shirley Redington: see
Director)

GREENHOUSE

PARAPHERNALIA
(See Director)

LIVING COLLECTIONS

Potted divisions of your named
perennials for our first annual
perennial sale at the end of
July. (for other collections
see the Director)

MEMORABILIA: appropriate to
historical Arboretum display

HELP

to finish the office/library
project, specifically: plumber,
electrician & carpenter,
shelving materials, light
fixtures.

SHRUBS

-Kathie Lippitt

As a little girl growing up in the state of Colorado I could have told you with no difficulty the difference between a bush and a tree: Lilacs were the bushes, they were 4 1/2 feet tall like the ones we had in the yard at home. Trees were the elms that grew in everyone's "parking" (the area between the sidewalk and the street). Scrub oak grew in the mountains but my mother told me they weren't the oak trees that grew in England, which were "real" trees, very very tall.

As a young woman living in the east, I was amazed to see a lilac bush twelve feet tall on a single stem, maybe there were three or four stems, but nothing like the smaller 4 1/2 footers at home.

Similarly I grew up in "kinnickinnick" country, used to the 4" tall more or less, scrubby plant with the pretty pink flowers on it in spring, (first week of June there) and the bright red berries in fall, but foliage nothing at all like the lush deep green mounds of Bear berry that can appear in New York State where things are continually watered from heaven. Of course they were both the same plant.

Later, I put an ivy vine down in the dirt behind the children's sandpile for the summer, went out to bring it in, to find it nailed tightly to the ground by roots that had grown at the nodes along its length.

What is this thing called shrub? Is there a difference between it and tree and low, low woody plant and vine? Obviously there has to be.

The dictionary was a tremendous non-help: shrub: "The distinction between a tree and a shrub is difficult to make and breaks down in many commonly cultivated plants. Generally a shrub is a low, woody plant that has several stems instead of a single trunk as most trees have. But quite a few trees bear several trunks or branch rather low down and are shrub-like, while some shrubs tend to have only one main

stem and are then tree-like." (Taylor's Encyclopedia of gardening, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1961)

Sub-shrub- a partly woody plant, half shrubby as are some plants in Artemesia, Chrysanthemum, Pachysandra, Dwarf shrubs are "under three feet in height" for purposes of convenience for inclusion in Donald Wyman's Dwarf shrubs, (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1974.)

Again, the difference between dwarf or sub shrub and perennial such as Dianthus, is woodiness plus holding buds through winter. (I can't find the reference. Help? Please. One of you knowledgeable readers.)

As in many other things we learn that what is obvious as children is, perhaps, more comparative as adults. And, perhaps all the trees, shrubs and vines were not created for purposes of classification.

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My attention was just called to ECOS NEWS for March 1990, page three, an article VINES by Marguerite Wellborn. Such an interesting and authoritative article deserves everyone's attention. If you'd like a copy call ECOS 370-4125.

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(Continued from COURSES page 3)
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WHOOOPS!: In the last NEWSLETTER article *Birds*, by Beverly Waite, the bird order was changed by the editor to group all birds with long names in same column. To a birder it was very confusing and wrong. Apologies to Beverly Waite who wrote a beautiful article. --Ed.  
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WITCH HAZEL

Hamamelis

by Anne Jaster

My focus has recently been on two shrub/trees behind the information shed at the Arboretum. Beginning in January, I've visited them every week to see if they're blooming. Finally, a couple of weeks ago, the wait was over and I was rewarded with the loveliest of fragrances from little yellow and claret-colored flowers clustered on twigs at eye and nose level. These are the flowers of *Hamamelis mollis* (Chinese witch hazel) and/or *H. japonica* (Japanese witch hazel). Both plants are labelled *H. mollis*, but they are quite different in appearance. One is a small tree about 15' tall. It bears its four-petaled flowers on bare branches. The other came into bloom at the same time, but has retained its leaves, obscuring its smaller and less fragrant flowers. It is a shrub. Perhaps identification can be clarified by comparing the leaves, but that must wait until spring.

H. mollis and *H. japonica* both have the great attraction of winter bloom and wonderful fragrance. One wonders which insects are about to do the pollinating when it's still so cold! *H. mollis* was discovered for Western gardeners near the Yangtze-kiang River in central China by Maries in about 1880. That climate is doubtless warmer than ours at Esperance. According to Arboretum records, our plants have survived drought and nice, and have bloomed and set a little fruit every year since they were planted in 1968.

These Asiatic species like full sun or partial shade, with a moist but well drained, slightly acid soil. Consider their warmer origins when choosing a site for them; an evergreen barrier on their cold and windy side would offer both protection and a dark backdrop against which to enjoy the flowers. They grow slowly to 10'-15' tall, and perhaps equally broad, but can be pruned to encourage the central leader and thereby produce something of a tree. Several methods of propagation can be tried. 1) Seed may take two years to germinate but, according to one experimenter with Asiatic species, "you sow the seeds and may get anything." 2) Cuttings taken in June can be rooted. 3) Grafts onto the seedling understock of *H. virginiana* (our native species) can be made in late winter in the greenhouse. 4) All species can be increased by layering.

The familiar witch hazel which forms the understory of our northeastern forests is *H. virginiana*. It blooms from September to November, can become 30' tall, and typically has several crooked, spreading branches forming an irregular open crown. Gangly is a good adjective for its habit, and its large ovate leaves could be called coarse; but the smooth gray bark, gorgeous yellow fall foliage and its flowers and fragrance in the cool autumn air, make it a choice landscape

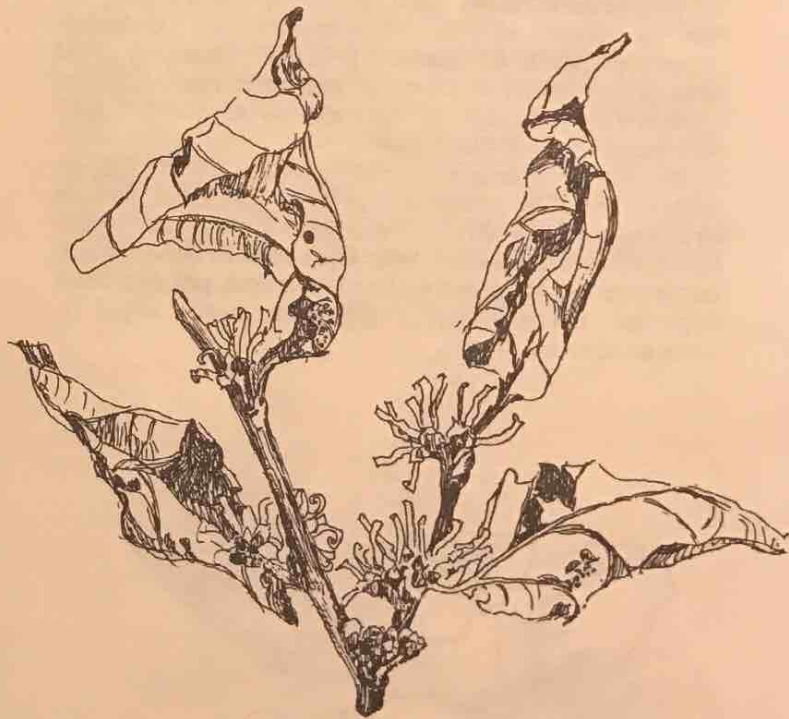
tree.

The woody, nut-like fruit takes up to a year to ripen, and then provides a little excitement by explosively discharging two glossy seeds. The leaves of *H. virginiana* are alternate and closely resemble those of the hazel tree native to England (not a *Hamamelis* whose wood was used for divining rods. This resemblance led the American settlers to use forked branches of *H. virginiana* to aid them in their searches for water (and minerals), a practice carried on to this day and from which the name "witch" hazel comes.

A decoction brewed from the roots and bark of young stems is used to relieve skin irritations.

In our local woods *H. virginiana* grows happily on heavy, poorly drained clay soils. Provided sun or partial shade and moisture-retaining soil, its needs should be satisfied. Handle transplants in ball and burlap or containers. Propagation is by seed or by cuttings.

H. vernalis is a native of our southeastern states, and *H. x intermedia* combines the best of *H. mollis* and *H. japonica*. Others of the *Hamamelidaceae* are *Fothergilla* and *Liquidambar* (sweet gum tree).



TRAILING ARBUTUS

Epigaea repens

Anyone who remembers the delicate fragrance and beauty of trailing arbutus considers it his favorite wildflower. Look for it in late April or early May under last year's brown leaves.

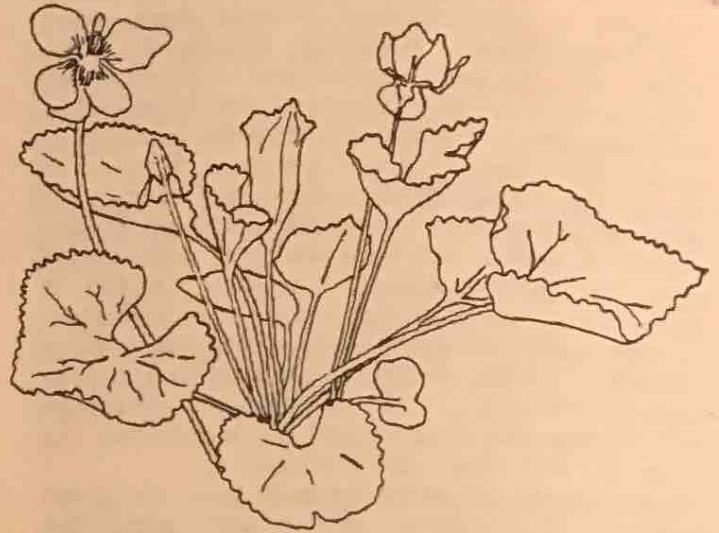
Sometimes known as Mayflower, probably because of the month in which it flowers, this perennial member of the Heath family, *Ericaceae*, is native to eastern North America from Newfoundland south to Florida. A second species, *E. asiatica* is native to Japan.

Semi-evergreen leather oval leaves grow on alternate sides of the trailing branches. Delicate clusters of pink and white flowers appear at the ends of branches and in leaf axils. One-half inch long, each flower has 5 petals joined at their bases and is pollinated by bumblebees seeking nectar and pollen. The resulting fruit is a bristly capsule that splits into 5 sections exposing a white fleshy interior with many seeds.

The generic name *epigaea* is derived from two Greek words meaning "upon the earth"; the species name *repens* is Latin meaning "creeping". Arbutus may have been derived from an Old English word for Strawberry tree which has the same type of fruit and is botanically a very distant relative of our lovely northeastern trailing arbutus.

Native Americans used the plant medicinally and for a time it was listed in the Canadian Pharmacopoeia. As late as 1930 the flowering plant was gathered and sold on the streets of nearby towns (including Albany). It is now listed on the NYS Protected Native Plant List.

Requiring a dry acid soil with a pH of 5.0 or lower, trailing arbutus has a mycorrhizal fungus growing on its roots. This causes many short root hairs to develop which help the plant in absorption. Some success in growing the plant in a pot has been reported, using either cuttings or seeds sown in June as soon as ripe.



Common Blue Violet

Viola papilionacea

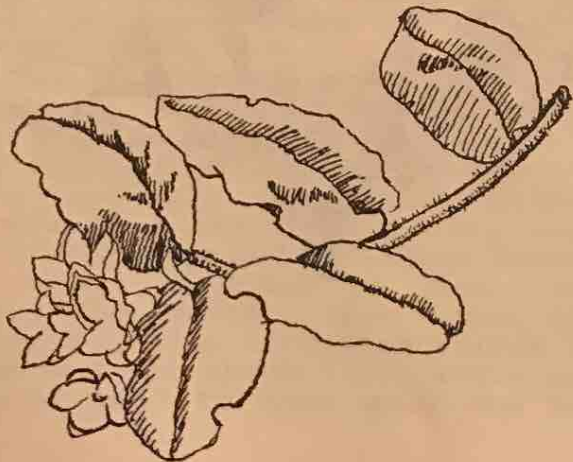
In April and May, these deep blue blossoms seem to be everywhere- in gardens, meadows, and woods. There are 80 species native to North America and about 300 species worldwide, all growing in the temperate zones.

The leaves and flowers grow on separate stems from a sturdy rootstock. The tightly curled leaves emerge in April growing until they are slightly higher than the flower. The leaves are heart shaped and have toothed edges.

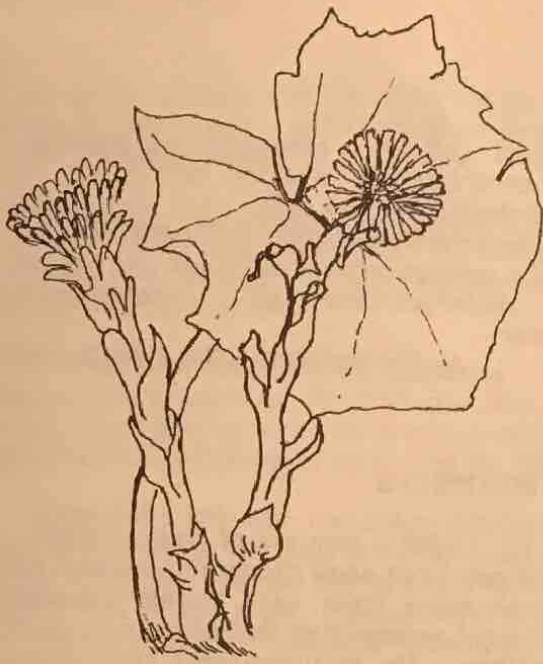
Of the family *Violaceae* violets produce two types of flower: in spring a showy flower with 5 blue petals. *Papilionacea* means butterfly-like and refers to the petal arrangement. In summer, small petalless flowers called cleistogens develop. Self-pollinated, the latter produce many seeds. In both cases the resulting fruit is a capsule that splits open along 3 edges and ejects the seeds away from the plant.

Viola is Latin for violet. A European species is *V. odorata*, sweet violet, which has been naturalized in the lawn area at the Arboretum. Look for it in early April and enjoy its deep purple color and fragrance.

Common blue violet is a robust perennial; it prefers moist light shade but will adapt to full sun and dry conditions. It is often grown in gardens where it soon becomes a groundcover.



Articles are written by Arboretum member Peg Brown; Drawings by Anne Coggeshall, Mary Ann Finley, Anne Jaster.



COLTSFOOT

Tussilago farfara

Coltsfoot blooms in early March; its yellow button-like blossoms add a bright note to an otherwise drab world. The blossoms, one inch across, appear before the leaves; each is a flathead of ray and disk flowers at the top of a scaly scape. They are pollinated by bees and insects.

As the flowers wither, the large leaves rise from horizontal root stalks. Velvety green and wooly underneath, they are shaped something like a horse's hoof and give the plant its common name.

The fluffy white seedheads are attractive. Each fruit, or achene, has a tuft of silky hairs which serves as a parachute to carry it away in the wind.

Native to the temperate zone of Europe and Asia, coltsfoot was used to treat asthma and coughs by the ancient Greeks and Romans 2000 years ago. In the same family *Compositae* with the sunflower, the generic name *Tussilago* means "cough dispeller". Colonists brought the plant with them to the New World. *Farfara* is an old name for the white poplar tree; its leaves resemble those of coltsfoot.

A hardy perennial weed, this plant spreads by means of windblown seeds and creeping underground rootstocks. It is the second wildflower to bloom in spring. Look for it along the road to the Arboretum. Although the leaves make a satisfactory ground cover when the plant is grown in partial shade, coltsfoot is rarely grown in gardens.

Fringed Polygala

Polygala paucifolia

A colony of these blossoms resembles a flock of bright magenta butterflies alighting on the forest floor.

From a creeping underground rootstock, this plant sends up several stems which produce oval leaves in clusters at the top. In late May or early June, 1-3 reddish purple flowers appear in these leaf axils.

The flower's calyx is made up of 5 sepals, the inner two match the petals in color and stick like a pair of wings. Another common name is gaywings. The flower corolla consists of 3 petals united at their bases; the lowest petal, called the keel, is beautifully fringed.

A bee, seeking nectar, lights on the keel. His weight causes it to drop down and allows him to enter. In the process, the flower is pollinated. The resulting fruit is a two-celled capsule, each cell contains one small hairy seed.

In summer the rootstock sends up another type of flower. Small and inconspicuous, it never opens but is able to pollinate itself, producing several fertile seeds.

Classified in the milkwort family, *Polygalaceae*, this plant is a hardy perennial. *Polygala* is Greek meaning "much milk" from a former belief that this plant stimulated the flow of milk. *Paucifolia* means "small foliage" in Latin. A few Native American tribes used this plant as medicine.

Fringed polygala is native from eastern Canada to the mountains of Georgia and west to Minnesota. It requires an acid soil having a pH of 4.5 or 5.6 and shade during the summer. It should do well along the Arboretum wildflower trail. Not on the NYS Protected Native Plant List, this plant is becoming scarce because its habitat is disappearing.



BOOK REVIEW

Arboriculture

by Richard Harris, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1983.
In 1983, Dr. Alex Shigo was one of the lecturers for our Master Gardener volunteer training sessions. We were fortunate indeed to have heard a man who has done so much to revolutionize and controversialize the subject of tree care in this country and throughout the world. After his talk, I asked him whether there were any good books to confirm and expand on the points he had made. He said: "Yes, *Arboriculture*, by Richard Harris."

The complete title of the book is *Arboriculture: care of trees, shrubs, and vines in the landscape*. Now this is not an easy quick reference manual. It is a college textbook, summarizing the best research on tree care in the twenty years preceding publication. The text is profusely dotted with references to researchers' names and dates of findings in each case.

Some of you may have heard me say that I own most of the standard pruning manuals in print. Why?-- because there is no single good one. Harris' chapter on pruning is the exception.

One time when giving a talk on tree care to a local garden club, I started by giving the following True or False pre-test to my audience.

1. When planting a tree in heavy clay soil, be sure to add lots of compost or peat moss to the original soil in the hole.
2. When pruning a tree, prune flush with the trunk and don't leave a stub.
3. After planting a tree or shrub, prune back the top to compensate for root loss.
4. If you stake a newly planted tree, do it tight so the wind doesn't work the roots loose.
5. When planting a container grown shrub, be careful not to disturb the roots.
6. Plant at the same level as grown in the nursery.

As you may have guessed, answers to the above questions are more false than true if *Arboriculture* has been your textbook guide.

Visiting Longwood Gardens, college campuses, and arboreta recently, I observed the newly planted trees had been set high and knew that the resident curators have been students of THE book.

One caution. Because the research has been so widespread with so many scientists cited on the

same subject you will encounter an occasional confusing contradiction. Another caution. If you should be untaught like me, you might have to read and reread several times before parts of it sink in. If you are a serious grower of trees and shrubs, consider *Arboriculture* your indispensable self-educator.

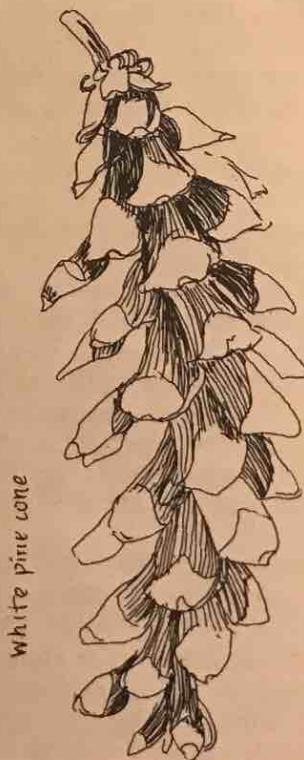
- by Shirley Redington, March 1990

WINTER WHIMSEYS

December 13, 1989: A high sky of cirrus clouds ... diamonds of powdered snow flung onto a one-inch crust ... crab apple trees with bottom branches browsed straight across, five feet above a circle of deer tramlings ... the tortured beech conspicuous against the winter landscape ... fires and the cheerful voices of the Summit group.

February 8, 1990: Mud deltas in the thawing road ... a red squirrel's flashes along a stonewall ... the mouse nest Tasha noses out from a snowdrift ... a chickadee's shadow.

-- Beverly Waite



white pine cone

STARS

- by Beverly Waite

No one ever said this was the right way to study stars. It just seemed to snowball. Curious about stars since childhood, late in life I felt there must be a way to learn sky patterns without getting embroiled in material beyond my intelligence.

On January 24, 1925, I drew from observation a series of waning orange crescents against black circles. They were backwards and labeled "The Aklipes," but I have the paper yet. About that time, my more knowledgeable brother pointed out Orion. Although I didn't grasp "constellation," I never forgot the configuration of that one.

My first total eclipse of the moon was in the mid-1930's, its wonder overshadowed by the romance of being on a camping canoe trip. In 1937, our family drove to Maine to find a total eclipse of the sun. I remember tiny crescents of light thrown onto sheeting after someone had poked nail holes in a piece of tin. And Bailey's Beads. And the crickets that tuned up during the false dark.

Somewhere between these two experiences I picked up the Big Dipper, the Pleiades, and Venus, Jupiter, and Mars. A hiatus of many years followed, broken only by an occasional nod at the three planets and the moon, and Orion. Then I learned how to watch spring bird migration zip across the face of the full moon. Another time, suffering a windy night, I paced from window to window, a Golden Guide Stars in hand, easing anxiety by picking out constellations. After that it was another twenty-five years-- and what I had learned that sleepless night almost lost-- before it hit me that since the stars were there, they might better be enjoyed.

My son replaced my brother in having a little heavenly information. We began to work on stars by long-distance phone, sharing news of conjunctions or sky calendars or charts. When I wrote him, frustrated beyond endurance over missing spectacular sightings because of bad weather, by return mail he sent a Sky Lab tear sheet which read in part: "Don't be upset at clouds for covering your view... If you don't succeed the first time you look for something...try again. And again. The universe is patient and you should be, too."

Derriere astronomy is catching. Near closing time I called to a shopkeeper to come look at a stunning Venus-Teapot-Saturn combination. Her last customer came too, and said "Dh! I have to go home to show this to my boys." A stranger ran out of gas in front of my house one morning. After I rescued him, one thing led to another and now he drops off star magazines and clippings, or calls to alert me to the Aurora. I sent him out for Jupiter's moons.

Help is everywhere. The Old Farmer's Almanac is easy to pick up. I find an indispensable star wheel in the shop on top of Maine's Cadillac Mountain. Dudley Observatory has a Skywatch Line (518-382-7584, after 5 pm). Newspapers print weekly maps and NASA updates. Albany has an astronomy club. H.A. Rey's *The Stars* has all the information a tyro can handle. Last October some members of the George Landis Arboretum, praying for a clear night, held an owl and star watch. (The stars cooperated, the owls did not.)

Binoculars are an embellishment to stargazing but not a necessity, for while they enhance the likes of Lyra or Coma Berenices, the extra stars they bring in can be confusing. The naked eye is all that is needed for hours of excitement and pleasure. Sky action is endless, ever changing.

To my friend who is mad at the planets, or to anyone trying to find his way around the sky, I'd say start with the Big Dipper, and from that go to the North Star, the only stable one. Learn the zodiac. Learn the other constellations (in Latin or English) and some major stars. You'll find your own level of interest after that.

"Normal" gazing hours are about 9--11 pm, earlier in the winter; any time is good if you are following progression. If you are lucky enough to have a restless cat, you'll be awake for 4 or 5 am skies. The fresh perspective from a morning's Blue Twilight will set you up for the whole day.

A rare black sky is a joy to explore. On such a night in late November last fall I found a difficult *Lacerta* and *Camelopardalis* as a pair of great horned owls hooted from the Helderberg slope...

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## A SAMPLING, THE TEASER for the RARE PLANT SALE

by Margaret Law

The Rare Plant Sale will be May 5, 1990, at 11 o'clock. Food will be available. Plants for sale are most welcome, preferably brought the day before. As usual there will be lots of goodies, Margaret Law is making her list.

We again offer a selection of choice plants; some on our list in limited quantities are:

- Acer griseum, "Paperbark maple" we all admire at the Arboretum.
- Acer palmatum atropurpureum, dwarf Japanese red maple
- Aesculus hippocastanum baumanni, double flowering horse chestnut
- Amelanchior 'Robin Hill Pink', pink shadblow
- Bignonia 'Yellow Trumpet'
- Calycanthus floridus, sweet shrub
- Cladrastus lutea, yellow wood, with long panicles of yellow flowers perfuming the air.
- Hamamelis mollis, Chinese witch hazel fragrant yellow flowers late winter.
- Ilex opaca, both male and female hollies.
- Metasequoia glyptostroboides, Dawn Redwood, a beautiful deciduous conifer

This is only a sampling. We have many other plants ordered and there will be someone there to answer questions about those you don't recognize. Lunch will be available, sandwiches or hot foods, beverages and dessert.

Lots of goodies! Margaret Law has made her list. Make yours starting with the above in limited supply and come in time to find these and all the other trees, shrubs, flowers.

### **MORE CONSTRUCTION !!** (continued from page 1)

working conditions, there is another beneficiary. The books, for whom this building was built, have suffered terribly. Cement, unfortunately, is not waterproof, and many of the books which were shelved against the block walls are quite mildewed. This current project to insulate and drywall (and paint and illuminate) will make conditions better for both books and humans. And for this we thank two special folks whom we shall keep anonymous but in a special place in our hearts.

We encourage members to show a special thank you to the suppliers of our wonderful auction by taking a moment to thank them when you visit their nurseries or see them in your day's routine.

Blair's of Loudonville

Jay Carnevale Landscape & Flower Design

Cascade Landscaping

Chris' Florist and Nursery

Colonial Acres Nursery

Faddegon's

Jim Girard Landscape Maintenance Corp.

Thomas P. Grogan Flowers, Inc.

Helderledge

Peter Rumora

J.L. Schworm Nursery

Story's Nursery, Inc.

White Flower Farm

Yunck's

**Tea and Talk with Mr. Smith** continued from page 1) Now all of you are, no doubt, interested (to put it mildly) in the net result of this effort. Balancing income vs. expenses we show an income from the event of \$5,132.00! This is EXCELLENT - we are headed in the right direction! This money will be used for needed salary support and will also help support the educational programs which you will read about on page 3 of this issue.

All members should feel very positive about the outcome of this benefit. We thank you heartily for your support.

- Pamela H. Rowling



## Members-- we need `em, we love `em!

- by Amy Lent

Even while we were hibernating this winter, people sought out the Arboretum and joined us as members. Now that we can see green again (and thanks to "Wildwood" and "A Visit to White Flower Farm") even more folks are interested in the Arboretum Herewith, then, the nice people who have become members since the first of the year: Patricia Borden, Marilyn MacBride, Lawrence and Beverly Hoehn, Scott Barton, Robert Eaton (Bob's Trees), Black Sheep Antiques, John Patanian (Village Ice Cream Parlor), Gertrude Spindler, W. Ramsey Christian, Chuck Fredrickson, Dennis Drenzek, Catharine Tobin, Thomas P. Grogan and Margaret Foster. WELCOME!

Other membership news: In February Pam and Amy wrote to all the inactive members from years past to say "We miss you!" The response was wonderful, so far 26 have renewed their memberships, some from as far back as 1986! WELCOME BACK!

May we suggest Arboretum memberships as gifts for your friends? It would be a nice way to do something for the friend and the Arboretum at the same time. And we do need members...members support us in many ways and besides they're fun to have around!

Did you know that your membership in the Arboretum will bring you dividends? Plant dividends, that is. In the next newsletter there will be a list of plants for you to choose from. Pamela, in her favorite role as "mother of millions", will propagate them in our super new greenhouse and *voila*, plant dividends for each and every member. We plan to have them ready for distribution at the Rare Plant Sale in Spring 1991.

## WE WANT YOU! VOLUNTEER TODAY!

I didn't even know I could volunteer!

Yes, I can volunteer!

Oh, I do volunteer!

Check which type of work:

- field trip teachers \*\*\* Urgently needed
- host for a Saturday program (pick one you want to attend anyhow!)
- weeding, gardening, tree or brush remover, etc.
- serving on a committee (e.g. education, reporter for newsletter, etc)
- bridge building, plumbing.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \* DAY \_\_\_\_\_

EVENING/WEEKEND \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to Amy Lent at the George Landis Arboretum P.O. Box 186, Esperance, NY 12066

Friend \$15-25

Sponsor \$25-50

Supporting \$50-100

Patron \$100+

GEORGE

LANDIS

ARBORETUM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Work\weekend \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New Member Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM Lape Road, P.O. Box 186, Esperance, N.Y. 12066 telephone 518-875-6935  
A living museum, open free of charge for visitors from April to November, the Arboretum is a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental and horticultural education.



**FINLEY FUN with**

**Mary Ann Finley**

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| — ARBOR DAY   | — TREE        |
| — SHADE       | — LUMBER      |
| — PAPER       | — TURPENTINE  |
| — ORNAMENTALS | — GYMNOSPERMS |
| — ABIES       | — PINUS       |
| — PICEA       | — THUJA       |
| — CONIFER     | — CONES       |
| — NEEDLES     | — BALSAM      |
| — CEDAR       | — CYCAD       |
| — FIR         | — GINKO       |
| — HEMLOCK     | — JUNIPERS    |
| — LARCH       | — PINE        |
| — SPRUCE      | — YEW         |

T S H A D E W E Y L S E  
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N A B I E S C Y C A D G  
E O R N A M E N T A L S

Think of the worm. Here he is all the way in the middle of the big apple, it's his birthplace, his home, his work place, his bread and butter, and all he has to say about it is "Munch, munch, munch."

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Lape Road  
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