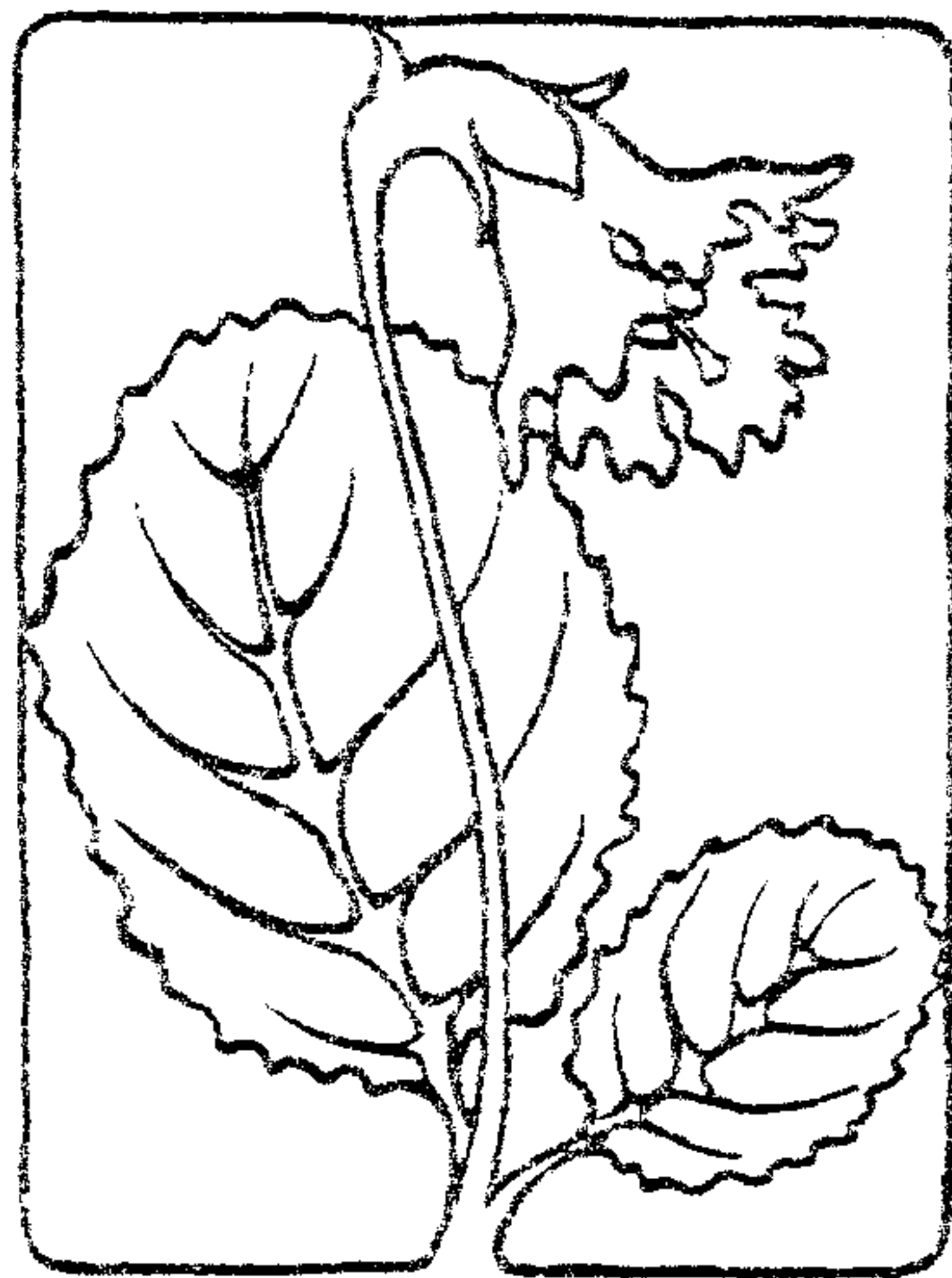


SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

SPRING 1985



HELEN TURNER, Editor

OFFICERS

President: Elton Hansens Treasurer: Margaret Kuhn
Vice President: Millie Blaha Historian: Louise Foresman
Secretary: Margaret Canfield

The ANNUAL MEETING (1/25/85), attended by 75 persons, was most successful this year. Millie Blaha, with the help of Jeanne Smith and a committee, was creative in taking us all forward toward spring with a valentine motif - the tables looked so festive! In the meeting Dick Smith, out-going president, presented a complete Report of the Board before relinquishing his position to Elton Hansens, our new president.

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge trip, planned for in April, was discussed. Elton also mentioned a meeting which he and Dick attended recently to discuss, with the National Park Service personnel, the establishment of a one-mile nature trail on which plants are to be labelled. Dick will be in charge and the NPS will provide the materials (markers, etc.).

The covered dish luncheon food was varied and delicious, as always, and the comradery was enjoyed by all.

* * *

The Western Carolina Botanical Club was organized 12 years ago. This is a report of that first meeting.

The first meeting of the Western Carolina Botanical Club was held on March 27, 1973, with Joe Schatz presiding as acting president.

The purpose of the club was suggested as follows:

1. For the study, enjoyment, and appreciation of the plants of western North Carolina in their natural environment.
2. For the collection and compilation of information and data on the plants of WNC and the dissemination of this to other interested persons.
3. For the education of interested persons in the enjoyment and appreciation of wildflowers and other plants.

The club's first officers were elected at that meeting:

President	Lincoln Highton
Vice President	Gordon Tooley
Secretary-Treasurer	Barbara Hallowell

Harry Logan was the first Chairman of the Field Trip Committee.

* * *

WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

(Hendersonville, unless otherwise indicated)

Arbuckele, William L. and Yvonne, R.R. #1, Box 71,
Robbinsville, N. C. 28771 Phone 479-6065

Heinzerling, Ruth E., 1035 Greenwood Dr., Apt. 2 Phone 693-0030

Lucas, Milton and Dorothy, 1020 Carousel Lane Phone 293-4001

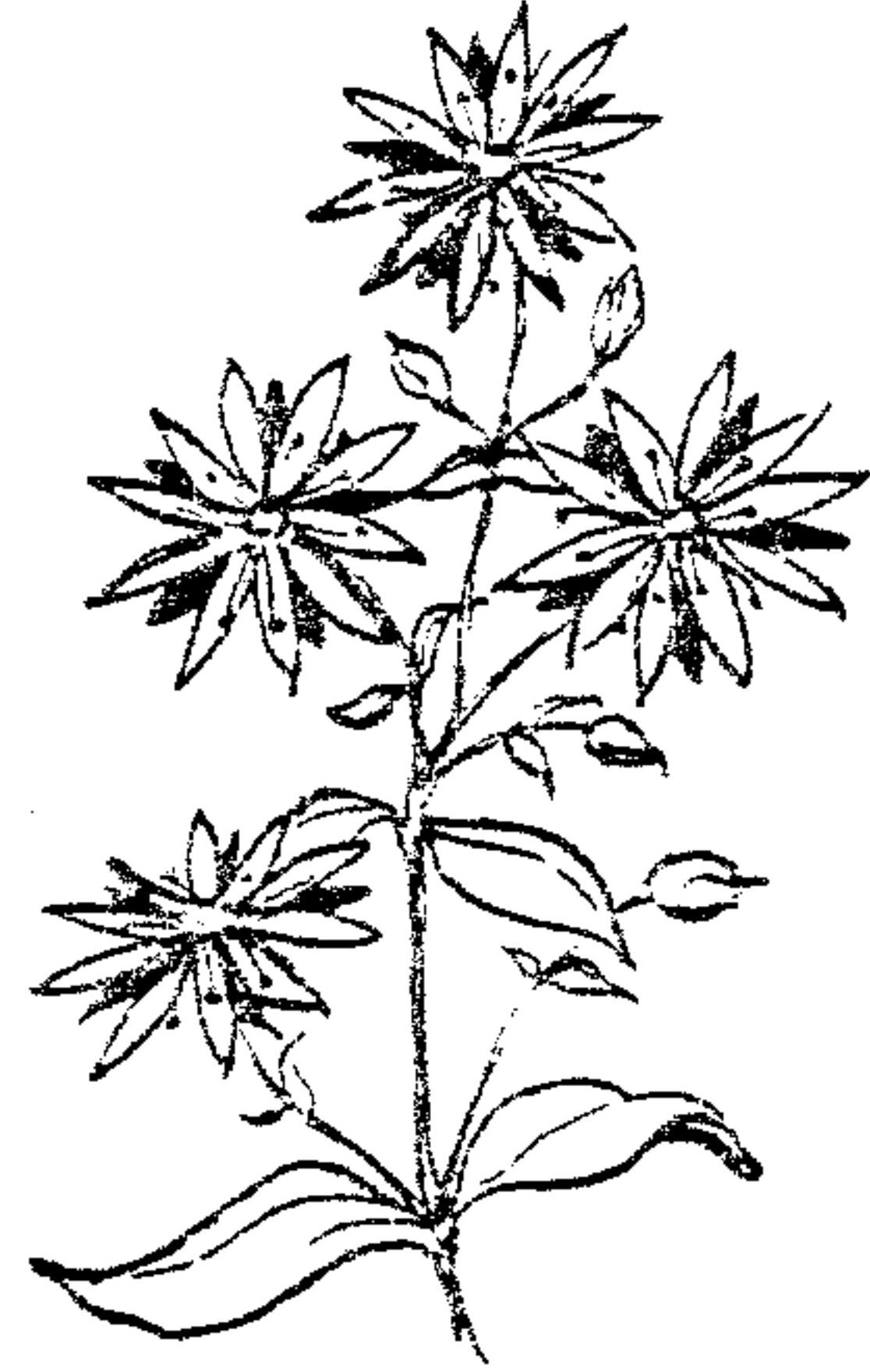
Nelson, Wharton, 131 Briarwood Lane Phone 692-2290

Thornton, Merle and Phyllis, 3110 Cardinal Lane Phone 692-8728

LOOK AGAIN!

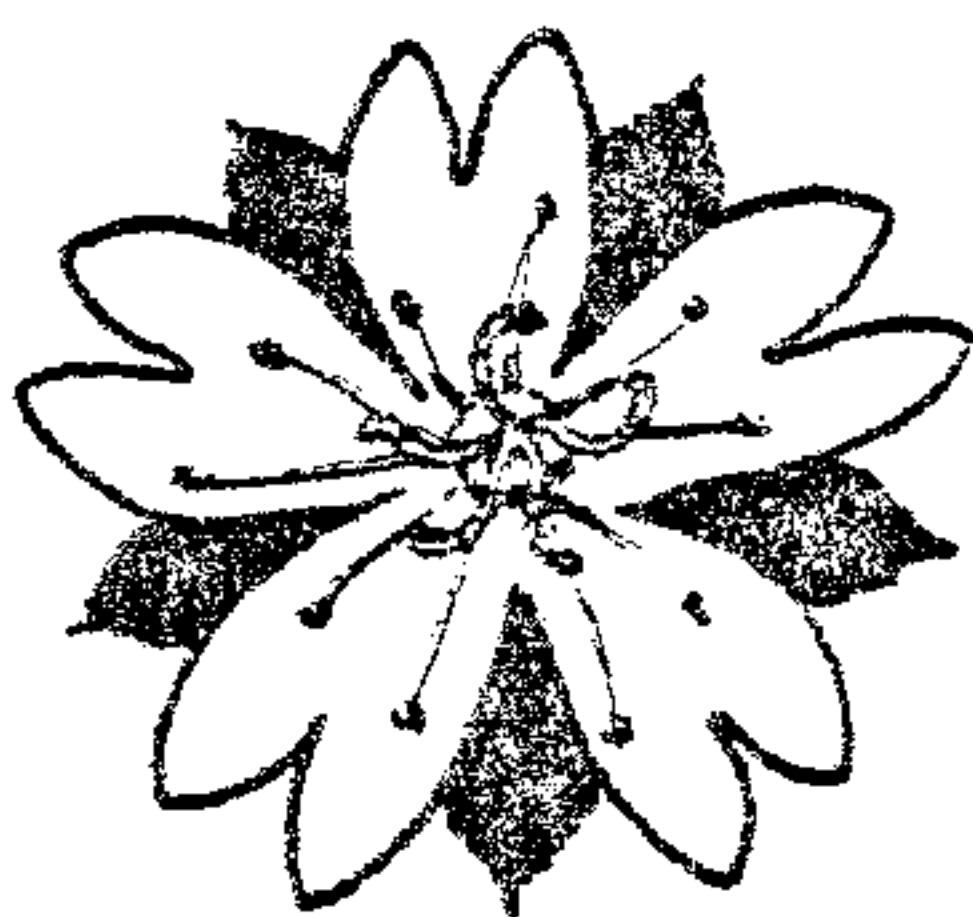
Many springtime visitors, having heard of the southern mountain wildflowers, express surprise when they are told that one of the prettiest is a chickweed.

Their doubts vanish, though at the first sight of Stellaria pubera, or Giant Chickweed, an attractive perennial common in rich woods except at the higher elevations. The white flowers are nearly one-half inch across and have five petals which, as in others of the genus, are so deeply cleft that there often appear to be ten. Radiating from the center are ten long stamens each tipped with a brick-red anther. A similar species known as S. corei, or sometimes as S. silvatica, differs mainly in having longer, acuminate sepals, and is more prevalent west of the Appalachians.



STELLARIA PUBERA

These are our only native Stellarias. One of the alien species is, of course, the ubiquitous Common Chickweed (S. media), a weed which has spread from Europe over much of the world and may be found blooming almost any time of the year. As nearly everyone knows, it is a weak, tufted annual with little ovate leaves and tiny flowers. Another is S. graminea, or Lesser Stitchwort. This is diffusely branched with slender four-angled stems, narrow linear leaves, and flowers that are slightly smaller than those of S. pubera.



CERASTIUM
VULGATUM

The name "chickweed" has been borrowed for some species of Cerastium, a genus whose flowers have petals notched only to about the middle, and five styles (Stellarias have three except for S. aquatica, which has a more northern distribution and is rare in North Carolina). A familiar example is C. vulgatum, which takes part of its common name Mouse-ear Chickweed from the shape and hairiness of its leaves.

Dick Smith

GREETINGS FROM THE BOTANICAL GARDENS AT ASHEVILLE

When Helen Turner approached us about contributing to SHORTIA, our answer was predestined. We were honored, of course; however, we were also most happy to reciprocate in a small way to the dedication which Western Carolina Botanical Club members have shown to our (and your) Botanical Gardens. We hope that this new dialogue will cement further our pleasant association.

This is a year of anniversary and achievement. Twenty-five years ago a group of public-spirited individuals conceived the idea of a botanical garden on a ten-acre tract of land set aside by Asheville-Biltmore College. The arrangement was continued when the college became University of North Carolina at Asheville, and because of their proximity to the campus, the Gardens were named University Botanical Gardens at Asheville, Inc. Since then, volunteers have staffed the organization. There is no administrative connection with, nor financial aid from, the University. Similarly, we are independent of City, County, State and Federal jurisdiction, and are free to carry out the terms of our Charter--to preserve and display the native flora of North Carolina. How well this has been done is evident in the natural beauty and diversity of the Gardens.

For the past two years, a concrete illustration of the work of our volunteers has been emerging, and on February 17th we are holding the first Corporate meeting in the new Botany Center. You are familiar with this wonderful and useful building, which is the culmination of volunteer efforts raising a total of nearly \$300,000. As an associated Garden or Botanical Club, and as contributors and workers, you are free to use the facilities of the Botany Center at any time. While there, be sure to inspect the two beautiful wildflower volumes which you donated to the Library, as well as the fabulous Mary Millender collection of pressed flowers, which Dick Smith has kindly indexed. That collection, and its history, will be discussed in another issue of these "Greetings".

Our next public affair, always the principal one of the year, will be the "Day in the Gardens". We will continue the custom started last year of having two "Days", on Friday and Saturday, May 3rd and 4th. The first day will be mainly plant sales and tours, and on Saturday art, food, refreshments, music and other attractions will be added. We guarantee that our world-famous wildflowers will be in bloom on the first weekend in May, and we trust that the weatherman will cooperate. As usual, the Days in the Gardens will be coordinated with the three-day Spring Wildflower and Bird Pilgrimage, sponsored by UNC-A, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the Gardens.

Many of you have volunteered in the Gardens, but there may be some who do not feel physically able to do so. Now they also can contribute. From March to December volunteer hosts and hostesses have kept the Botany Center open from 9 to 4, working 3½-hour shifts. They have found that greeting thousands of visitors from all over the world, and associating with friends in botany, has been a most rewarding experience. Last year Eleanor Main was one of several who came to the Center and said "I like this place; I want to volunteer". Now she is in charge of volunteers and will be glad to hear from you at 684-4634, or you may leave word at the Botany Center, 252-5190.

I hope Dick Smith and others will not be perturbed because of my having used no Latin names in this initial venture. I will rectify that in the next issue, when I tell you of my results, good and bad, in starting wildflowers for the Gardens from seed supplied by the American Rock Garden Society, the North Carolina Wildflower Preservation Society and the American Horticultural Society.



Hal Schail

HYDRILLA, A SERIOUS AQUATIC WEED

Hydrilla, (*Hydrilla verticillata*), is one of the most noxious weeds of the aquatic environment ever introduced into the United States and has the potential of being an important problem in North Carolina. In a very short period it may render a body of water useless by forming dense mats on the surface, frequently covering the entire water area.

Hydrilla, a plant native to East Africa, was brought into this country around 1959 for use in aquaria and was sold as "star-vine" or "oxygen plant". Probably carelessness introduced it into south Florida canals. Most of the water sheds in Florida are now infested and hydrilla has been found in the coastal states northward to Delaware. It is also present in Louisiana, Iowa, Texas, and California.

In North Carolina hydrilla was first positively identified in 1980 from three lakes in Umstead Park in Raleigh. In 1981 a survey in a 25-mile radius from Umstead conducted by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture revealed the weed at thirteen sites. Thus, hydrilla is definitely established in North Carolina and the potential exists for wide-spread infestations.

Hydrilla belongs to the family Hydrocharitaceae and is closely related to other noxious aquatic plants. Hydrilla resembles Brazilian Elodea, also introduced into the United States. Leaves of hydrilla are dark green and 8 to 18 mm. long and 4 mm. wide, arranged in whorls of 3 to 5. Leaves have sharply toothed margins and spines along the midrib. Flowers are inconspicuous. The plant grows profusely, often in water over 15 meters deep. Only one whorl of leaves is necessary on a stem to produce a new plant. Tubers formed on the rhizomes are another means of reproduction.

D. J. DeMont, Extension Fisheries Specialist, warns "Hydrilla is a perfect weed. It can regenerate a new plant from most of its parts; it has "winter buds" which survive the cold; and it has tubers in the soil which do not die when chemicals are applied."

Control of hydrilla is being attempted by removal of plants, by use of herbicides to kill plants, by planting grass carp which feed on the plants, and by introducing insects which are specific pests of hydrilla. The aim is to keep hydrilla within bounds by use of a combination of these methods. Removal and herbicide spraying result in a large volume of decaying residue which must be managed. The use of the grass carp, more properly called the white amur, to consume the weed, and of insect pests is still experimental.

Prevention of spread to new waters is important and can be accomplished with education and care. Since hydrilla is not easily recognized by the lay public, all plant fragments on boats, motors, trailers and other aquatic gear should be removed and destroyed when moving from a lake or stream and no aquatic plants of any kind should be discarded into natural waters. These measures will at least decrease the spread of the weed to new areas.

The information here reported has been taken from a number of articles supplied to me by K. A. Langeland, Crop Science Extension Specialist, N. C. State University, Raleigh.

Elton J. Hansens

RAMBLINGS - PEOPLE, PLANTS AND PLACES

The JONES GAP TRAIL, the next to last hike of the year (11/16/84) was a lovely, deep forest trail along a rushing creek. Nine of us enjoyed a beautiful "fall" day; only long-spurred violets were blooming. HENRY CREEK FALLS, a new area to many of us, was enjoyed by 18 persons. Again, a lovely forest trail crossing numerous streams to high, twin waterfalls within sight of which we ate our lunches. This was an especially prolific area for mosses and lichens. VAN WINGERDEN'S GREEN-HOUSES, the trip attended by 40 persons to enjoy the sight of acres of poinsettias, chrysanthemums, colorful cacti, and african violets, is always a favorite outing. LAND OF GINGER THOMAS was a presentation of slides of two trips to little St. John in the U. S. Virgin Islands, with commentary by Dick Smith. A most interesting program was enjoyed by 58 persons.

The new year 1985 started auspiciously with slides of the Hansens' trip to ALASKA last summer; beautiful photography and informative commentary was enjoyed by 65 persons. Keeping the new year to a high standard indeed were the Hallowells in presenting a program on their trip to the GRAND CANYON, also last summer; experiences and observations while hiking and river-rafting in the area. Again, beautiful photography and colorful comments to embellish the slides. We are so fortunate to have not only the expertise of Dick Smith, the Hansens, and the Hallowells in our midst, but their willingness to share it all with us.

The PROPAGATION OF NATIVE PLANTS turned out to be a very informative meeting since the speaker, Dr. Richard E. Bir, was most interesting. 35 persons attended. The LEARN AND SHARE session is mentioned below. The PARKWAY SNOW WALK was enjoyed by 9 persons who braved the grey, cold day. There was no snow, but the rime frost cover made the shrubs and trees lacey-looking in the glistening sun, which had come out briefly. One interesting note - water melting off the rock faces looked so much like "tadpoles" swimming down. WHERE HAVE ALL THE BLUEBIRDS GONE? brought out 52 persons, to whom Jim Boozer presented slides and commentary. He has worked for so long in helping to bring back the eastern bluebird, one felt privileged to listen to his expertise.

So, another three-month's events have slipped by, keeping us busy and coming for more. Soon we'll be "immersed" in the prolific spring wildflower season. See you then!

Louise Foresman, Historian

* * *

The LEARN AND SHARE session at Hallowells on Feb. 1st convinced all participants that LEARN AND SHARE should be an annual event. Fourteen people presented topics, and questions and discussion flowed freely, resulting in an exciting and fascinating exchange of information. What a range of topics! - - -

- - - The evolution of seeds and consequent variations in seed dispersal; an introduction to mosses; wild flower species USA and England have in common; insect pheromones; spirals in nature; communication among trees; food for thought about water use; how birds keep feet from freezing; how plants respond to gravity; hollies compared with plants that look like hollies; edible plants in the lily and rose families; orchid cacti; adaptive radiation in plants; and one intriguing tropical plant's behavioral responses to its internal needs, an amazing tale.

Barbara Hallowell

WANTED: COLOR SLIDES

The March 15th program "WHAT IS IT?" will be a botanical "clinic". Bring in all those slides of flowers, trees, ferns, fungi, etc. that you haven't been able to identify, and let the experts in the audience try to tell you what they are. Nothing matters but the subject; photographic quality, whether it is good or bad, will be ignored. Be prepared to tell as much as you can remember about where and when the slides were taken. And bring lots - the more the better!

In addition, let's see some other slides of any subject you may consider unusual or especially interesting (whether identified or not). These needn't be limited to botany - any aspect of natural history is all right.

There's only one rule: PLEASE spot each slide by marking the mount with a dot in the lower left-hand corner on the side away from the screen. After all, we do want to see them right-side up.

* * *

DID YOU KNOW (And aren't we proud?) . . .

- . . . that Tom and Barbara Hallowell are writing a column "Nature Notes", published in the Hendersonville Times News every Saturday.
- . . . that Millie Blaha is starting on her 11th year as a columnist for the Transylvania Times, a Brevard newspaper. Her column, Nature Notebook, appears every week.
- . . . that Harvey Krouse has 14 members in a Botany class he is teaching in Newton.
- . . . that Dick Smith spoke at the annual meeting of the Asheville Botanical Club.

* * *

From THE BEST OF PETER MARSHALL, p 139-140

"By and by, they came to a fork in the road.
The old man directed the ox to the right.
'The left is the shorter way,' said the boy.

'I know it,' said the old man, 'but this way is prettier.'
'Have you no respect for time?' asked the impatient young man.

'I respect it very much,' said the old fellow.
'That is why I like to use it for looking at pretty things.'
The right-hand path led through woodland and wild flowers.
The young man was so busy watching the sun sink he didn't notice how lovely the sunset was."

Contributed by Larry Kenyon

* * *

"We do not make friends as we build houses,
But as arbutus, find them under the leaves of our lives,
Concealed in our experiences."

Author unknown

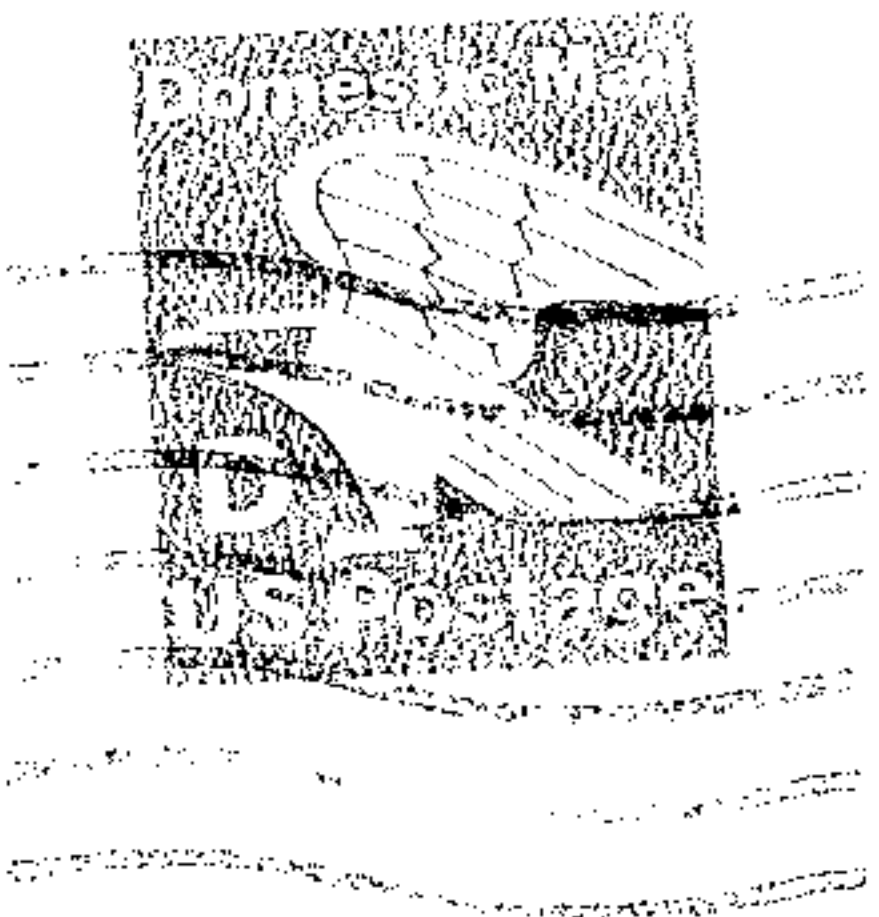
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