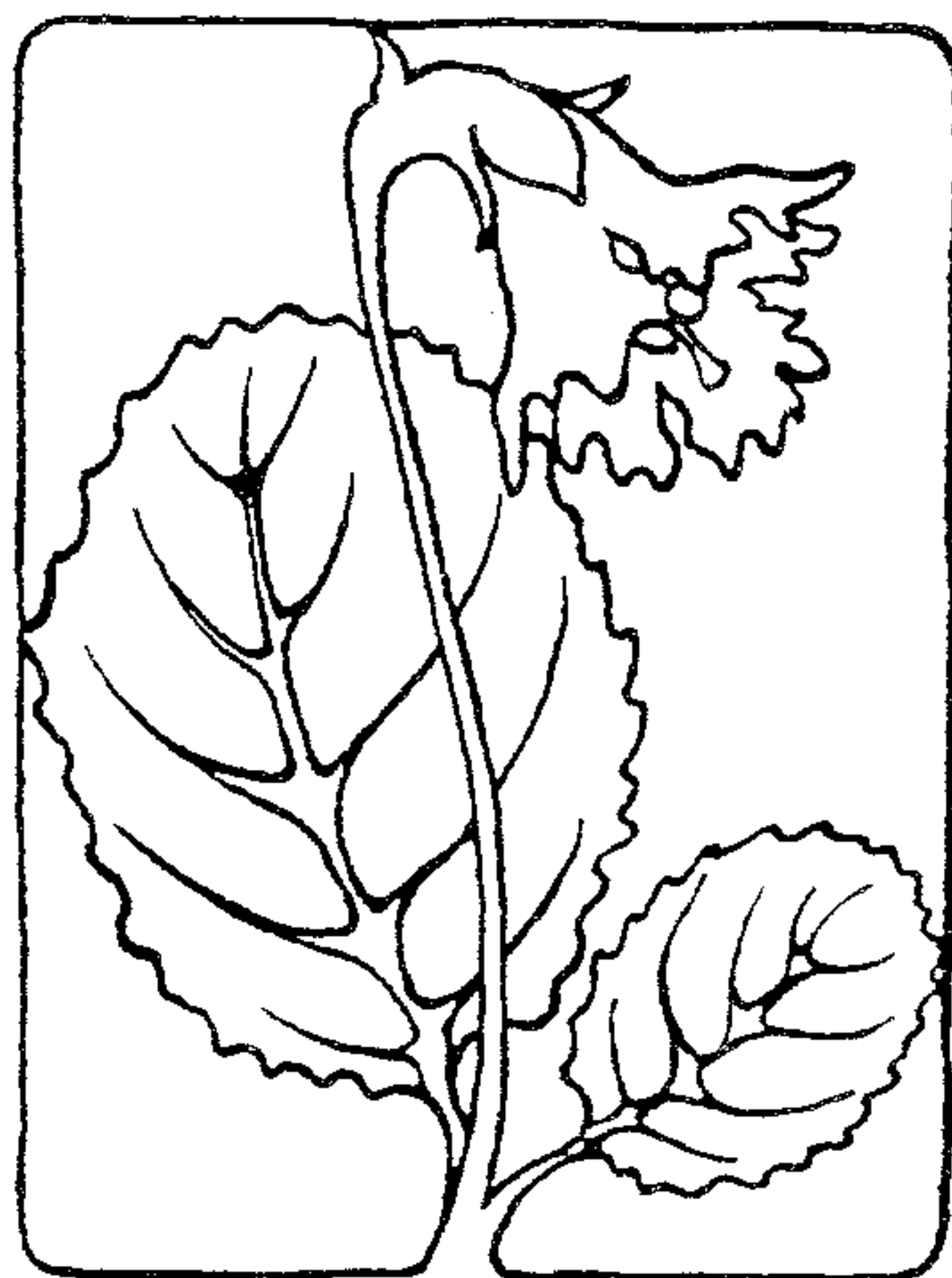


# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

SUMMER 1986



HELEN TURNER, Editor

OFFICERS

President: Elton Hansens Treasurer: Margaret Kuhn
Vice President: Millie Blaha Historian: Ann Ulinski
Secretary: Ruth Mack

NEWS NOTES .....

Those of you who have enjoyed WCBC visits at Tom and Barbara Hallowell's cabin -- and other Club members, too -- will be delighted to know that Barbara's book about their cabin project, CABIN: A MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE, is scheduled for release "sometime in June." "Seeing's believing!" says Barbara. The book is being published by Appalachian Consortium of Boone, NC, an organization dedicated to the presentation of Appalachian Mountain culture. The publisher hopes the book will help "imports" and mountain people understand each other more fully. We all look forward to the book's arrival!

This Spring another member of WCBC, Millie Blaha, was invited by Blue Ridge Tech to conduct a series of wildflower classes. Her four one-day sessions originated from the Transylvania Center in Brevard. Each class began with a slide presentation. The remainder of the day was spent outdoors.

Sudden death took two WCBC members recently: Ralph Applegate and Ken Foresman. Ralph had been in failing health and, so, not active in Club affairs. Ken, however, was well-known and, in fact, was walking with his wife and several Club members on a trail in Nantahala Forest near Snowbird Lodge, doing what he enjoyed right until the last moment. We extend our deepest sympathy to Esther Applegate and Louise Foresman and their families.

WELCOME -- NEW MEMBERS
Hendersonville unless otherwise stated

- Feil, Elizabeth, 10 Springside Park Asheville, NC 28803 ..... 684-8719
Fredericksen, Martha, PO Box 111 Davidson, NC 28036 ..... 892-7331
Skinner, Anna, 829 Toxaway Drive ..... 697-2496
Steinman, Carl & Stella, 208 Fernwood Drive .....

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:
Kuhn, John & Margaret, Carolina Village Box 281 ..... 692-0720

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Dear WCBC Members,

This will be my last issue as Editor of SHORTIA and I want to thank you all for your cooperation and contributions. I am delighted to know that Dorothy Rathmann has accepted the editorship.

Helen Turner

# LOOK AGAIN !

Every so often we find the job of "keying out" a plant species suddenly made easier by the fact that the specimen at hand possesses a character which it shares with very few--or sometimes none--of the other members of its genus. It may be a yellow Rhexia, for example, or a large-flowered Geranium, a Corallorhiza blooming in the spring, or a Maple with compound leaves.

Similarly accommodating are those few shrubby species of Hypericum which have four petals rather than five as do the ones we commonly call St. John's-worts, and which because of this distinction are sometimes placed in the genus Ascyrum.

Hypericum hypericoides, an erect shrub with pale yellow flowers, has been aptly named St. Andrew's Cross because its petals are arranged in a flattened "X". They are narrow, revealing a pair of large, ovate outer sepals; the inner two are minute or absent.

More prevalent in the southern mountains is H. stragalum, a decumbent plant forming low mats. Otherwise it is very similar to the above, with which it shares the name St. Andrew's Cross.



HYPERICUM STRAGALUM



HYPERICUM STANS

St. Peter's-wort, H. stans, has a growth habit similar to that of H. hypericoides, but there are many other differences. Its flowers are larger, with obliquely ovate petals set at right angles to each other. Again the outer sepals are large, but the inner pair, while shorter and narrowly lanceolate, are clearly visible. There are three or four styles instead of two, and the leaves are semi-cordate and somewhat clasping, rather than tapered, at the base.

Dick Smith



## MAGNOLIAS, OUR ANCIENT FLOWERING TREES

Magnolias, considered the oldest of flowering trees, probably evolved about 100 million years ago, soon after tree ferns, cycads, and conifers. Unlike their predecessors which relied on wind to disperse their pollen, magnolias were probably the first flowering trees to utilize primordial insects to spread their pollen. These primordial insects, small beetles of the family Nitidulidae, anteceded bees, butterflies and similar pollinating insects. They most commonly pollinate the receptive stigmas before the flower opens. Although bees and wasps can be seen collecting pollen after the flowers open, the beetles have already accomplished pollination.

Magnolias in modern times have a narrow distribution worldwide. This was not always true. The great ice sheets destroyed most of the family. Fossil remains are found within the Arctic Circle, Greenland, Europe and the central plains of the United States. However, none grow in these places today. By far the greatest number of surviving species remain in the tropics, especially from China southward to Java. Other species survive in the West Indies, Central America, Brazil, and the southeastern United States where glaciation was less destructive. Thus our Southeast is an important area for magnolias, especially temperate species.

There are six species native to the Southeast: M. acuminata L., M. fraseri Walter, M. grandiflora L., M. macrophylla Michaux, M. tripetala L., and M. virginiana L. Some botanists have promoted three subspecies to the species level: M. ashei (M. macrophylla subsp. ashei), M. cordata (M. acuminata subsp. cordata), and M. pyridimata (M. fraseri subsp. pyridimata).

In the Carolina mountains the most common species is M. fraseri which has creamy white flowers in early May. Although readily found in this area, M. fraseri is a rare species in cultivation and is seldom seen even in most arboreta. M. acuminata which has small greenish yellow flowers is less commonly found in the woods here and when found are usually huge trees. Seldom does one find young seedlings. There is some concern that this species is threatened because the unripened seed pods are the favorite food of grackles. One magnolia expert has continually warned that the species could become endangered in the wild.

One other species sometimes seen in the North Carolina mountains is M. tripetala, commonly called the umbrella magnolia because of the umbrella-like growth of the leaves. I have never seen M. macrophylla growing in the wild. It is noted for fragrant white flowers that are up to 14 inches in diameter. Neither have I seen the highly fragrant, white flowered M. virginiana growing in the wild in this area, though it is common nearer the coast, as is M. grandiflora, the southern magnolia. It is probable that this latter species is the best known and best appreciated of all the American species. It is seen all over the world wherever it can be grown. Hardy selections of this species grow as far north as New Jersey, and there are efforts to develop ever-hardier clones by selection.

Subspecies M. cordata, which has bright yellow flowers, was first found in about 1790 by André Michaux near Augusta, Georgia. It was sent to France in 1803. It was not found again until 1910, 120 years later. Subspecies M. ashei is ideal for the home garden, flowering often when one foot high with 12 inch white flowers. It is in effect a dwarf form of M. macrophylla. M. pyramidata is a southern variant of M. fraseri and occurs in Florida and Texas. It likewise appears to be a miniature M. fraseri.

How many of our six native species do you know? Why not get to know all of them?  
Augie Kehr

#### HOLMES STATE FOREST PLANT STUDY

The Botany Club is conducting a second plant study at Holmes State Forest. Each week, plants in bloom along the first half of the long, steep Forest Demonstration Trail are being recorded by a committee composed of Millie Blaha, chairman, Charlotte Carman, Louise Foresman, Grace Rice and Ann Ulinski. Elton and Aline Hansens assist as time permits.

The only plants in bloom on March 5, 1986 when the new study began were the red maple and American hazelnut. As the spring season progressed, 74 different species of plants came into bloom during the first two months of the study.

This trail primarily encompasses a north-facing slope, the cool side of the mountain. Because of the cool, moist conditions, it is anticipated that there will be an abundance of plants with great variety during the growing season.

The woods in this study have nice stands of flame azalea, pinxter flower, Fraser magnolia, dogwood, black birch and tuliptrees, with cucumber magnolias scattered throughout. There are several very large northern red oaks along the trail. Buffalo nut shrubs, some unusually tall, are abundant and are not fussy about the trees with which they are associated.

In addition to plants, birds also attract attention. On one day the songs and calls of 17 different species were identified. Along the trail are large chips of wood, the tell-tale evidences that the pileated woodpecker is at home in these woods.

The trail starts near an outdoor amphitheater then, for a short distance, follows a logging road used to transport timber from the slopes selectively cut in 1969. The trail winds up the mountainside, rising several hundred feet. It is the same trail used by the CCC boys in 1939 to go back and forth to work.

The committee members look forward to their work day at Holmes State Forest each week for not only are they performing a community service in behalf of the Botany Club but they also are learning about plants and their habitats.

Millie Blaha



## BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Have you noticed some new signs in the Parkway Wildflower Display Area? A news release from the National Park Service states:

As you drive the Blue Ridge Parkway this year, you might notice areas along the road identified by "Wildflower Display Area" signs. At these sites, Parkway rangers and maintenance personnel are allowing natural succession of plants to take place.

Without mowing, grasses should give way to native perennials. This management practice should enhance floral displays, provide food, cover and habitat for birds and small animals, and preserve the natural scene of open spaces....

Parkway personnel will mow the vegetation between the "Wildflower Display Area" signs only once during the year, probably in October or November.

The Blue Ridge Parkway paid tribute to the Western Carolina Botanical Club for its contributions to the "Volunteers-in-Parks" program at a luncheon in Asheville on April 23rd. In addition to our organization - which was represented by Dick Smith - the Carolina Mountain Club and 12 individuals from the Swannanoa and Balsam Gap Districts were honored.

Superintendent Gary Everhardt reported that during last year a total of 471 "VIP's" donated 30,790 hours of service to the Parkway and to Parkway visitors, valued at an estimated \$190,000.

## NORTH CAROLINA NATURE CONSERVANCY

The North Carolina Nature Conservancy is enhancing our program by leading trips at Bat Cave (already enjoyed by 31 hikers) and Green Swamp and the Carolina Bays on June 12 and 13 with different leaders each day. Also, we used a Nature Conservancy film for one of our winter programs. For many years our Club has supported North Carolina Nature Conservancy with small yearly donations. This is a good time to suggest that WCBC members, as individuals, join or contribute to NC Nature Conservancy. The address is NCNC, PO Box 805, Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
Elton Hansens

## HENDERSONVILLE LIBRARY EXHIBIT

"It's Time" was the theme of the April WCBC exhibit at the Henderson County Public Library. The message -- The Western Carolina Botanical Club Says, "In April, it's time to observe, to visit, to study, to record, and to create." Bessie Sinish and Aline Hansens, with the help of Ken and Elton, developed a beautiful and informative display which attracted much attention.

## GROW WILDFLOWERS FROM SEEDS

The best way to establish or enlarge your wildflower garden is to grow plants from seed or to buy plants from a reputable nursery.

One source of seeds is the Seed Distribution Program of the  
North Carolina Botanical Garden  
NCBG Seed Request  
Totten Center 457-A/ UNC-CH  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

There are a number of nurseries in NC which are sources of native plants and seeds. Highly recommended because it does its own propagating is:

The Montrose Nursery  
PO Box 957  
Hillsborough, NC 27278 (Catalog \$1.00)

Other sources are:

Anthony Lake Nursery, Inc.  
PO Box 9  
Pineola, NC 28662

Griffey's Nursery  
Route 3, Box 28  
Marshall, NC 28753

Bryan-Campbell Beachgrass  
Route 2, Box 5  
Garner, NC 27529

Melvin's Nursery  
PO Box 313  
Pleasant Garden, NC 27313

Holbrook Farm & Nursery  
Route 2, Box 223B  
Fletcher, NC 28732

Passiflora Nursery  
Route 1, Box 190A  
Germanton, NC 27019

Gardens of the Blue Ridge  
PO Box 10  
Pineola, NC 28662

Spake's Nursery  
Box 69  
Manteo, NC 27954

Gilmore Plant & Bulb Co., Inc.  
PO Box 8  
Julian, NC 27283

We-Du Nurseries  
Route 5, Box 724  
Marion, NC 28752

Millie Blaha

## SUGGESTED READING

Ken Morrison. MOUNTAIN LAKE ALMANAC: AROUND THE YEAR WITH A NATURALIST. Pineapple Press; Englewood, FL.; 1984

A collection of short nature and environmental essays -- easy reading, thought-provoking. The essays are divided into four sections: Florida, North Carolina, Maine, and Interrelations. For 25 years, Morrison was director of Bok Tower. He spent vacation time in North Carolina and Maine. Some essays move the reader to action; others simply portray the author's delight in nature. Recommended for nature lovers and environmentalists. Larry Kenyon



## HISTORIAN'S REPORT

Our indoor meetings in February and March began with a slide show by Dr. Dan Pitillo of Western Carolina University which compared our plants in Western North Carolina with those of China. The following week we saw a Nature Conservancy film and a program on the Horsepasture River. Later in the month over 70 people crowded into the meeting room at First Federal Savings & Loan to see the Blahas very special two-screen presentation of the nature world of our area, and finally Tom and Barbara Hallowell shared with us their trip to Newfoundland.

Thirteen "hardy souls" braved a lightly falling snow to hike part of the Black Mt. Trail in Pisgah Forest. We were rewarded with the sight of the first blooms of trailing arbutus.

Spring was practically rainless which meant fewer flowers in good bloom on our hikes, but no trips rained out. There was one weather exception--Calloway Gardens. We weren't rained out but it was cold and wet. However, Fred Galley, chief horticulturist at Calloway for many years, made it all worthwhile by spending most of two days with our group taking us on the trails and through the working greenhouses and indoor displays.

Elizabeth Feil was our Nature Conservancy guide at Bat Cave. The day was fine, and despite the dry woods, we saw and identified many plants. Fragile fern, bloodroot, hepatica and purple phacelia were especially appreciated. Some members climbed to the cave and had lunch on a rock ledge nearby.

Peggy Camenzind took us to Lake Jocassee and environs on our annual search for shortia and field pansies. Neither plant was at its peak this year but stopping at several places along the road we saw many species of violets (bird-foot, primrose-leaved, long-spurred, three-lobed, confederate and common blue). Sassafras was in full bloom along the roadsides, and at final stops we saw good displays of trillium discolor and blue toadflax.

On a warm day in April we drove to Millie Pearson's and walked her bog and mountain trails to see displays of trillium, bloodroot, anemone, crested iris and many more spring blooms. We found Canada violet and creamy violet side by side, and nearby blue star and yellow mandarin.

Chet and Helen Wright took us to a new area--Paris Mt. State Park in S. C. Charlie Moore invited us to his preserve, Frank and Calla Bell to Green Cove Woods, and Lowell Orbison to a tour of the University Botanical Gardens at Asheville. Some of the more unusual plants we saw were shortia, pyxie moss, flowering spurge, Paulownia tree, dwarf pawpaw, round-leaved hepatica, red buckeye, golden seal and showy orchis.

And finally, at Snowbird Lodge we had good weather, walked several trails and saw a variety of plants. Some of the special ones were creeping phlox, dwarf ginseng, Macloskey's violet, one-flowered cancer root, and large-flowered, sessile, nodding and painted trilliums.

Ann Ulinski



WCBC COMMITTEES - 1986

PROGRAM

Elton Hansens, Chr.  
Millie Blaha  
Charlotte Carman  
Louise Foresman  
Barbara Hallowell  
John Kuhn  
Ivan Kuster  
Bruce Leech  
Harry Logan  
Nan Morrow  
Lowell Orbison  
Don Prentice  
Pete Sawyer  
Dick Smith  
Bill Verduin  
Ben Tullar  
Ann Ulinski

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Larry Kenyon, Chr.  
Millie Blaha  
Charles Gadd  
Grace Rice  
Ken Sinish  
Bill Verduin

NOMINATIONS

Jeanne Smith, Chr.  
Margaret Canfield  
Franklin Mack

ANNUAL MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Lois & Bob Winter, Co-Chr.  
Aline Hansens  
Louise Foresman  
Beth & Fred Woodlock

HONORS

Bessie Sinish, Chr.  
Josephine McDonald  
Bob Winter

NORTH CAROLINA WILDFLOWER PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The NC Wild Flower Preservation Society met in Asheville for its Spring meeting May 2 to 4. The Saturday evening program honored Tom and Bruce Shinn. Short talks were given by a number of their friends. The featured speaker that evening was our own Dick Smith who present his illustrated lecture, "Mountains of Flowers."

Our Club made an important contribution to the week-end program by acting as guides at the Shinn Gardens both Saturday and Sunday afternoons. These were, on Saturday, John Kuhn, Bessie Sinish, Charlotte Carman, Ben Tullar, Grace Rice, Elton Hansens, Charles Moore and, on Sunday, Ann Ulinski, Elton Hansens, Erika Parmi, Millie Blaha, Lowell Orbison, Ivan Kuster, Charles Moore. This has been a WCBC activity for many years as part of the Spring Wildflower and Bird Pilgrimages sponsored by UNC-A, Blue Ridge Parkway, and the University Botanical Gardens at Asheville. Mr. Shinn's son said that Saturday was the second largest number of visitors ever. The Rock Garden Society's fiftieth anniversary being the largest.

SERVICE PROJECTS

The trails and road at Homes State Forest, the trail at Millie Pearson's woods, and the trails at Charley Moore's preserved received attention from WCBC work teams. At Holmes 8 persons showed up on a dreary rainy day and worked for 2½ hours each; at Millie Pearson's 9 individuals worked a total of 18 hours; and at Charley Moore's 2 people spent 10 hours. Hearty appreciation was expressed at all three locations for our help in making trails more usable and beautiful.

S H O R T I A

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Please submit contributions for the next issue by August 15, 1986  
to Dorothy Rathmann, Carolina Village Box 23, Hendersonville, NC 28739

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