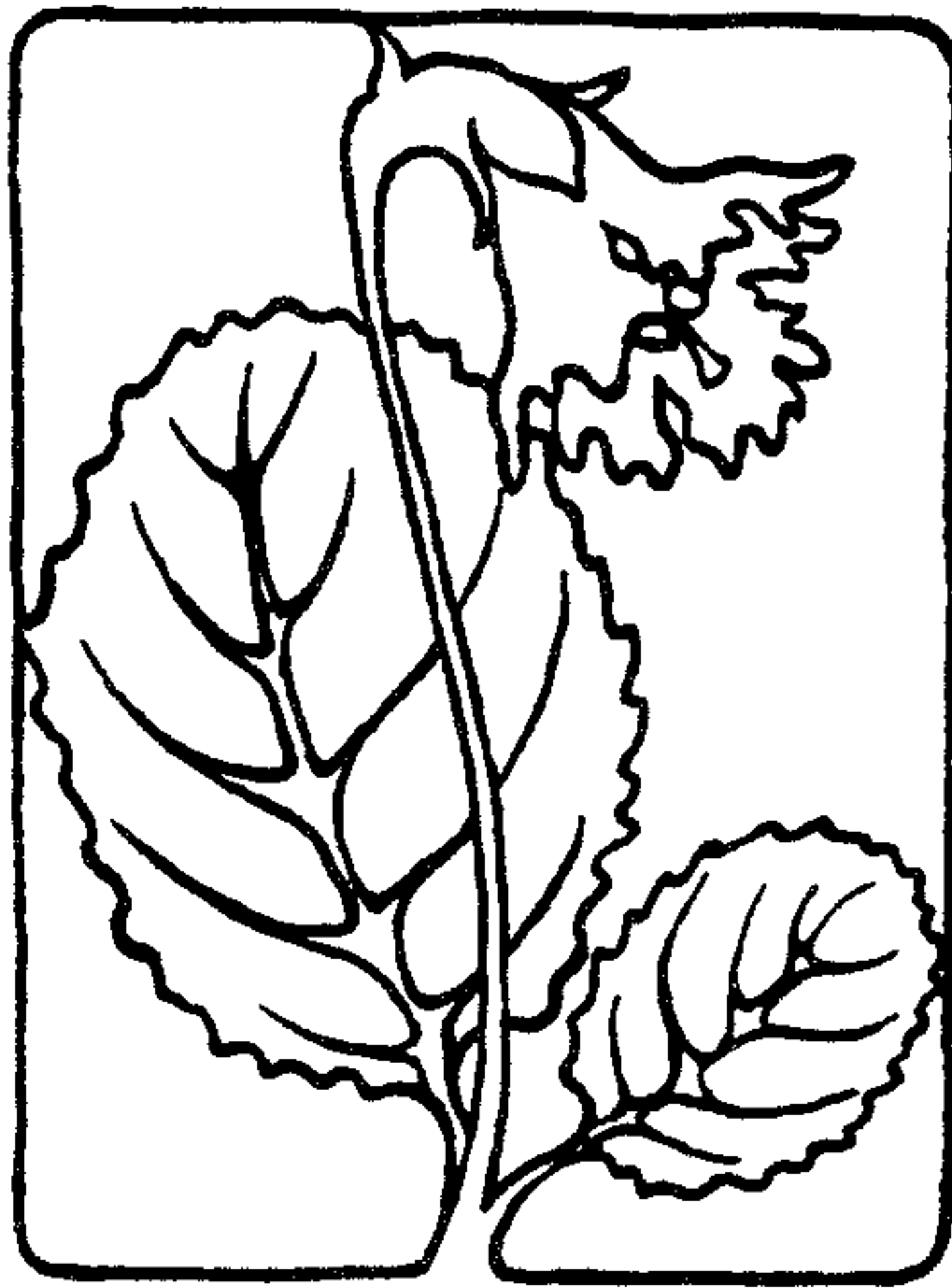


# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

AUTUMN 1993



ELTON and ALINE HANSENS  
Editors

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**WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB**

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT ..... Dorothy Rathmann**

Did you notice the new illustrations on the Schedule? Aline Hansens decided that the ones we'd been using were "worn out." So she provided something new. The sneezeweed is representative of all the summer and fall DYC's -- and was the design on placemats for the 20th Anniversary meeting last January. The Christmas fern represents all the evergreen plants which add so much to the beauty of the Western Carolina woods during the winter. Expect to see different illustrations on the Winter-Spring schedule. Thanks, Aline!

After being rained out on five of the first six field trips, we enjoyed (?) hot dry weather which cut down on wildflower displays. Several leaders are experimenting with the formats of the plant list handed out at the start of each trip. Please let us know which you find most useful.

**FRANCIS BEIDLER FOREST ..... Bill Verduin**

Tired of tramping up and down these hills? Want something different -- entirely different? Come with us October 5 and 6 on a trip to the Francis Beidler Forest, known locally as the Four Holes Swamp.

This 5,000 acre tract near St. George, SC, "contains the largest remaining virgin stand of bald cypress and tupelo gum trees in the world." Many of these giants are believed to be more than 600 years old and tower over a hundred feet high.

The mile and a half boardwalk takes us deep into the swamp. The guidebook says that here we can "enjoy the quiet, solitude, and tranquility" of an area "uncluttered, spacious, and serene to the point of austerity." Well, maybe. But this will be my fifth trip into the swamp and I see more and enjoy the experience more fully every time I go. This is truly a unique place.

On the way down we will visit Edisto Gardens on the banks of the Edisto River in Orangeburg, SC. Two attractions here: one, a boardwalk through a younger stand of cypress and, the other, a large rose garden.

Tuesday night we will stay at a motel near St. George so we can be at the Swamp when they open at 9:00 AM. The swamp is owned jointly by the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy. There is a small admission charge (\$3).

Please make reservations with me before September 25 so we can reserve a block of motel rooms. Arrange carpooling with your friends. Come and enjoy a totally different experience!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU.....ALINE HANSENS

**Bellesheim, Erma:** Rt 1, Box 665, Sylva, NC 28779 (704) 456-8733; winter (Oct 24-May 15) 2342 Indigo Dr., Clearwater, FL 34623. Originally from Canada, Erma lived in a small scottish town near Ottawa where she grew up with a love of the woods and wildflowers. After many years in NY state she moved south and continues to enjoy nature in NC.



**Eckstein, Chris:** 106 Meadow Lane, H'ville, NC 28792 (704) 696-2458. After enjoying vacations here, Chris moved to this area about a year ago from Palm Beach, FL. Pursuing an avid interest in botany he happened on a book in the library donated by WCBC and consequently decided to join us.

**Farrar, Edmund and Carver:** 13 Dogwood Lane, Brevard, NC 28712 (704) 885-2456. Enjoyed vacations in this area since 1976 and recently moved here from Charleston, SC. In the process of restoring the Charleston property after Hurricane Hugo, they became interested in native plants. They learned of the WCBC through member Ruth Blanchard.

**Kesler, Sally:** 27 Carl Slagle Rd., Franklin, NC 28734. An artist with an avid interest in plants and nature, Sally enjoys and attends WCBC trips when possible.

**Byrd, Carl and Margaret:** 520 Oak Hill Ct., H'ville 28739 (704) 693-6314. Native North Carolinians with enthusiastic interest in plants, nature and the great outdoors. Learned of the WCBC thru member friends, Elton & Aline Hansens.

**Eadie, Jackie:** 950 Sunlight Ridge Drive, H'ville, NC 28792 (704) 696-1818. Moved from St. Louis area Jan. 1993. Jackie is a native of Kansas City, MO. She is a hiker and nature lover.

**Address Changes:**

**Barrows, Merton and Alice,** 600 Carolina Village Rd., No. 352.

**Johnstone, Margaret,** 600 Carolina Village Rd., No. 153, 28792 Tel. 697-4212.

**Lewis, Barbara:** Village Green #238. 310 West Meadowview Rd., Greensboro, NC 27406 Tel. (919) 272-0988.

**TELEPHONE CHANGE:**

**Kilgore, Rosalie** To: 693-8081.

Please make these changes on your Membership List.

## THE SEARCH.....BILL VERDUIN and ELTON HANSENS

The flower wasn't very pretty but there were thousands of plants on the hillside and they certainly called attention to themselves. Even as we drove by slowly, we could tell with some certainty that they were related to the common bladder campion, Silene cucubalus. Six somewhat similar species grow in this area, but no obvious choice came to mind. So we parked for a closer look. The petals were white, but not spread out and showy. They looked curled inward as though they might be old flowers or perhaps badly in need of water. Not very attractive, to say the least. Neither of us recalled ever having seen this campion before--so the search was on.

Newcomb first. He shows 4 species but not the one we are looking at. Good old Radford et al. to the rescue. But this time they let us down. The key seemed to be straightforward, but either was poorly worded or both of us were misinterpreting it--the key did not solve the problem; nor did the technical descriptions. Since there were so many plants we cut one stem and tucked it in a cooler.

Each to our own library. Nothing in Peterson's Guide; Britton and Brown yielded clues enough to be encouraging. Then to Gray's Manual, 7th Edition, where the key settled the matter without a doubt. Our plant was Silene dichotoma, forking catchfly! And Rickett had a color photograph that could have been taken of the very plant we had before us. The mystery was solved.

Question: Was this a night blooming species? Only Wofford's recent book indicated clearly that this was a day-blooming plant. We placed the plant in water and soon the sorry-looking, rolled-up petals flattened out and we had a bouquet of pretty white flowers. Thus we must conclude that only the drought was to blame; water quickly restored the natural beauty of the catchfly. **If you see a strange flower, accept the challenge--look it up!**

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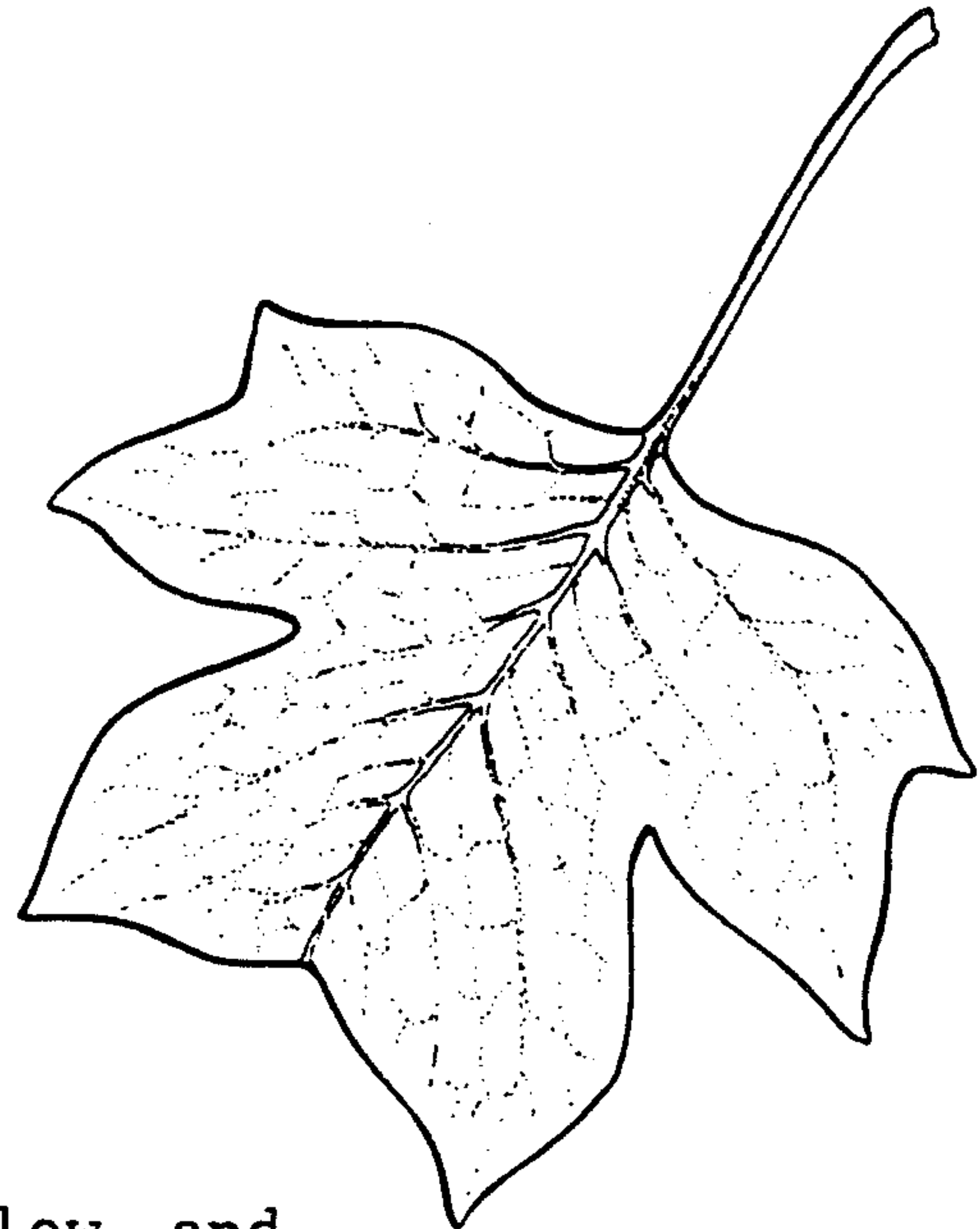
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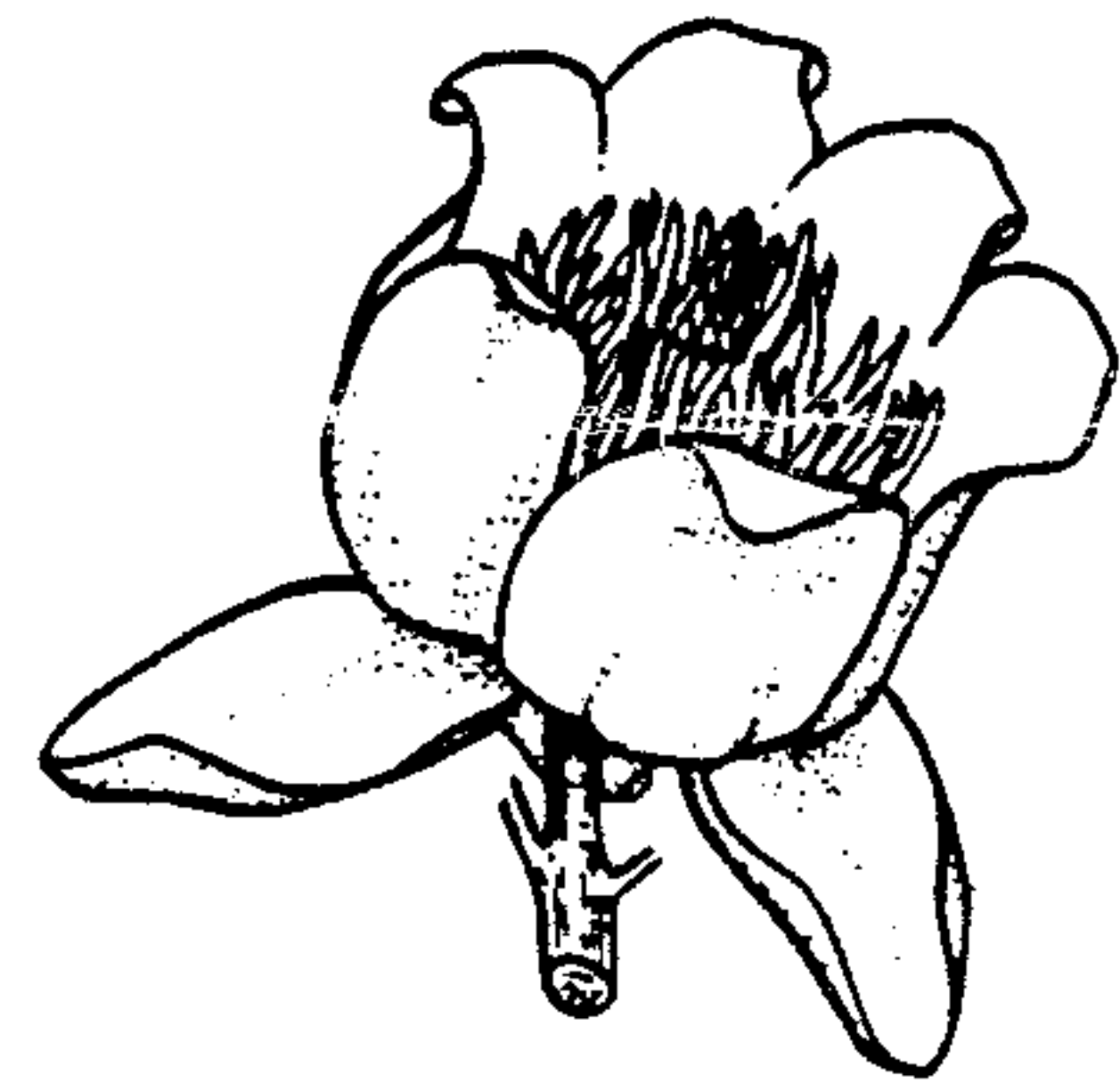
# FOREST TREES.....ALINE HANSENS

Liriodendron tulipifera is a name that rolls easily off the tongue. Liriodendron is from two Greek words describing a tree with lily-like flowers; tulipifera refers to its tulip-like blossoms. This tall, stately tree has many common names. Though not in the poplar family, perhaps you know it as yellow poplar, white poplar or tulip poplar, names which relate to its light, easily worked soft wood highly prized by industry for veneer and lumber. The Onondago Indians of central New York state called it Ko-yen-ta-ka-ah-tas or white wood, useful to them for making dugout canoes. It is also known as the saddle-leaf tree, a name derived from its distinctive truncate leaves.

## TULIPTREE

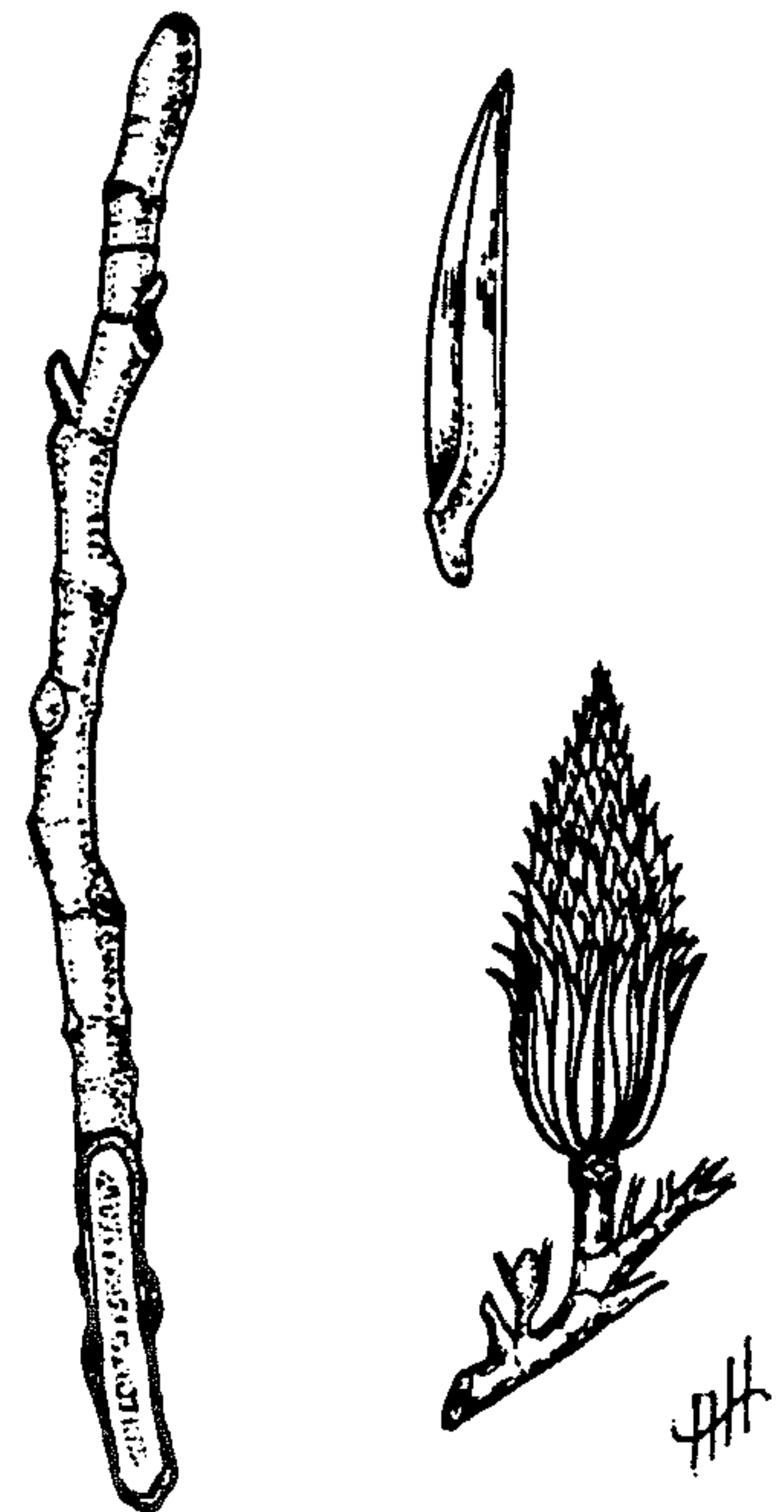


Its crowning glory, the greenish-yellow and orange flowers that adorn it during the month of May, brings to mind the name tulip tree. Equally beautiful in the fall, this tree decorates the hillsides with its clear yellow foliage. The 2½ to 3 inch cone-like fruit matures at this time, releasing its cargo of winged seeds and continuing to cling upright to the twigs after the leaves fall, looking much like a small candle. In winter one notes alternate reddish-brown buds, the terminal bud distinctively flat and blunt-tipped.



The tulip tree is a member of the small family Magnoliaceae. Three genera occur in the United States, but only two are arborescent, Magnolia and Liriodendron, the latter being the most common.

In this country the tulip tree ranges from southern New England to Wisconsin, southward to Louisiana and across to northern Florida. This tall, fast growing tree reaches its prime in the rich soil of the Ohio valley and the sheltered coves of the southern Appalachians. On the Wasilik Poplar Trail in North Carolina stands, what is said to be, the second largest tulip tree in the United States. This giant has a girth of 25 ft. and is 135 ft. high. It is located near Standing Indian Campground west of Franklin, N.C. and can be reached by taking US 64 west to Rock Gap; park here and follow the trail signs. It's well worth a visit.



WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT ROADSIDE PLANTINGS.....Barbara Hallowell

Have you traveled Western North Carolina highways and enjoyed extensive beds of bright oriental and California poppies, cannas, and toadflax? The NC Department of Transportation deserves credit for this highly successful beautification program.

Have you traveled Western North Carolina byways and enjoyed extensive beds of ragworts and black-eyed Susans, goldenrod and asters, chickory and native grasses? Nature does a fine job, too!

But--do you feel uncomfortable about all this? Why is NC DOT using exotic species when a wide diversity of native species puts on a fine display, too?

According to Ken Moore, Assistant Director of the NC Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, one difficulty for NC DOT is "that truly native NC species are perennials generally requiring two, sometimes three to five years to reach blooming size. Taxpayers seem unable to wait, demanding instant color. So we have colorful beds of flowers from other parts of the world." Another difficulty, now easing, has been the availability of seeds of native plants.

Mr. Moore notes that exotics may be appropriate in city areas, but along rural NC roadsides they seem out of place. NC DOT is finally recognizing this & has started a recent grasslands/brushlands program of less managed roadsides. But Moore wishes DOT would take greater care locating signs for these, "Roadside Wildlife Habitat." "By not placing signs in the more attractive natural areas, the public may be discouraged from supporting this very sensible program & inadvertantly encouraged to call for closer mowing of wild plants in favor of a neater horticultural appearance."

Xeroxed copies of NC DOT's brochure, "Roadside Wildlife Habitat in North Carolina," describing the program, can be had FREE by sending your request with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Wildlife Habitat, c/o N. C. Botanical Garden, U. of N. C., CB #3375, Totten Center, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375.

Important! NC DOT needs your opinion, your support for this commendable program. They are receiving "impressive numbers of calls and letters from NC citizens and travelers who think beds of exotic annuals are a fantastic accomplishment. The voices of native plant enthusiasts who prefer to see a more regionally natural appearance accomplished through a creative, reduced mowing program are not being expressed in sufficient numbers.

To voice your opinion, write: Sam Hunt, Secretary of Transportation, NC DOT, P.O. Box 25201, Raleigh, NC 27611. Encourage less mowing, more grassland/brushland communities, & more native flora--a more environmentally and regionally appropriate roadside management program. Let yourself be heard! NC DOT will listen! --Exerpted from "In Praise of Native Plants," by Ken Moore, in the North Carolina Botanical Garden Newsletter, J-A '93.

RECORDERS REPORT - MAY THROUGH JULY.....ERIKA S. PARMİ

As I sit on my deck I am aware of the sights and sounds around me. The scraping of a few katydids and the call of a distant pileated woodpecker blend with the chatter of titmice, chickadees and goldfinches to form the background chorus to the nearby whirl of hummingbird wings. As I watch the hummingbirds fight for sole possession of the nectar feeder, I also notice many items of botanical interest---especially the many fruits on my Fraser magnolias. A few have already turned to the brilliant scarlet of late summer. The dogwood berries are still too green to interest the squirrels. The last blossoms on the sourwood and sweet pepperbush are visible. Below them heal-all, Joe-Pye-weed, black-eyed Susan and Jerusalem artichoke are bright splashes of color in a sea of green. A tiger swallowtail butterfly alights on daisy fleabane as I watch. All this is a reminder to me of how much we can find in our own backyards, if we take the time to look and see. Of course, this doesn't mean that I am advocating sitting in our backyards and abolishing field trips! However, more adventure exists on the other side of the fence!

Although the summer season (June/July) brought us heat and drought as opposed to the cold, rainy spring, we all managed to keep cool on our field trips. Most of them were held on or just off the Parkway. The first week in August we returned to a more normal weather pattern which resulted in the first cancellation for the summer season--Frying Pan Gap on August 6 because of rain.

June brought us Barbara Hallowell's always illuminating fern workshop and the annual picnic at Holmes State Forest which was attended by 28 members and guests.

The Buck Spring Nature Trail presented us with an abundance of lilies-of-the-valley (Convallaria majalica montana) on the May 28 trip and on the July 16 trip to the same area leather flower (Clematis viorna) was impressive. Some species which had been seen in bud or in bloom on the earlier trip were now in fruit e.g. highbush blueberry, (Vaccinium corymbosum), carrion flower (Smilax herbacea) and black chokeberry (Sorbus melanocarpa).

The Roan Mt. trip on July 9 attracted 9 people, 5 of whom left early. The 4 remaining reached their car before a thunderstorm on the mountain and cut the Gardens part from the day's schedule. The effects of the drought were seen in the scarcity, small size, and somewhat shrivelled appearance of Gray's lilies. The valiant 4 enjoyed milkshakes at Bonnie and Clyde's Cafe in Loafer's Glory! Thus fortified they made a wrong turn (on purpose) and were rewarded with a very scenic, but longer, trip home.

On the Haywood Gap trip July 23, we were happy to see bunchflower (Melanthium virginicum) and feather fleece (Stenanthium gramineum). We missed them last year. The fly poison (Amianthemum muscaetoxicum) slope was a beautiful sight, but most of the blossoms had turned green. Perhaps we should try this trip earlier in July to see fly poison at its peak. Bee Tree Gap meadow on July 30 put on its usual colorful show. As the summer season comes to a close let's all come out to experience the beauty of the fall season.

INTERESTING EVENTS AND PLACES.....THE EDITORS

**31st ANNUAL ROAN MOUNTAIN NATURALISTS' RALLY**

Sept. 10-12, 1993 featuring Marty Silver on "Raptors" and Mack S. Pritchard presents "America the Beautiful-The Wild Idea" in the evening programs. Fourteen field trips on a wide variety of subjects are available Saturday. For additional information call Gary Barrigar (615) 543-7576.

**26th ANNUAL NATURE WONDER WILD FOODS WEEKEND**

North Bend State Park, Cairo WV, Sept. 17-19, 1993. Speakers, entertainment, wild food foraging parties and contests. Formal program Friday evening "The Taming of Wild Companions". For additional information call Maxine Scarbro (304) 558-3370 or Edelene Wood (304) 428-9590.

The Editors have folders on these 2 events. In future issues of Shortia we plan to list programs and field trips of botanical interest in NC and surrounding states. Please let us know if you like this idea.

BOTANICALLY SPEAKING

*No tiny seed nor noxious weed  
Escapes our close attention  
From Allium to Zizia  
Or dandelion to gentian.  
We poke and pry and scrutinize  
And peer in mossy crannies  
And when a slopes too slippery  
We slide down on our fannies  
We photograph and carry books  
For solemn consultation  
On species new as we pursue  
Our botany education.*

*Helen Tullar  
(former WCBC member)  
from SHORTIA Vol. 2., No. 1.*

BOOK REPORT.....BESS SINISH

**THE PRACTICAL BOTANIST** by RICK IMES A Fireside Book, Simon & Schuster Inc. Publisher, 1990 \$24.95.

Have you been looking for a book which explains in simple easy terms the fascinating world of botany? The Practical Botanist by Rick Imes in about 150 pages does just that with explanations of the divisions of the Plant Kingdom, the nature of plants, their life cycles and various habitats. In simplified terms one learns about photosynthesis and other chemical reactions in plants. Discussions of liverworts, mosses, club mosses and ferns are included as well as practical suggestions for preservinc flowers, cultivating a wild flower garden, sketching and photography. The 235 full-color illustrations add to the enjoyment of the book.

While this book may not appeal to experienced botanists, it would be helpful to many of our members. I highly recommend this book. It can be found in the Henderson County Library.



# LOOK AGAIN !

Lobelia is an extensive genus that is well represented in the tropics, where some species attain enormous stature. Ours are of modest size, however, and the two largest species (and perhaps the most familiar) have individual flowers less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long. They are Great Blue Lobelia (L. siphilitica), with prominently striped dark blue corollas, and the brilliant scarlet Cardinal Flower (L. cardinalis).



LOBELIA      PUBERULA

Of the others, one of the loveliest is Downy Lobelia (L. puberula), a widespread species characterized by numerous light blue flowers  $\frac{1}{2}$ " to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long arranged in a distinctively one-sided (secund) raceme. According to the literature, it typically is invested with minute erect, soft hairs (as the names would indicate), and has a calyx with lanceolate lobes.

Some plants found in our area fail to conform in all respects, but display some of the features that usually are ascribed to L. amoena. In this the stem is more likely to be glabrous, and the sepals are narrower--even linear--and sometimes bear callous-tipped teeth. In addition, plants are often seen with flowers of a deeper shade of blue than that which we customarily associate with L. puberula.

Since L. amoena has a much more restricted distribution, it is always gratifying to find a specimen that keys out with relative certainty. Unfortunately, though, the two species tend to intergrade, and then the distinctions between them become less clear. But even when our attempts at positive identification are frustrated, we can take satisfaction from the fact that the exercise itself has added just a little more to our intimate knowledge of the wildflowers around us.

*Dick Smith*

S H O R T I A

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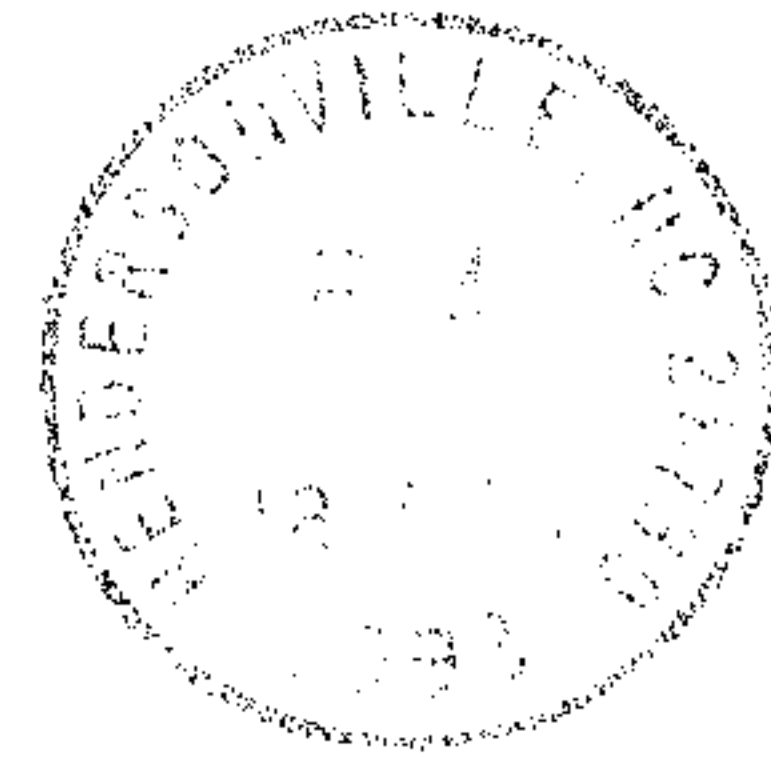
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Please submit contributions (articles, Letters to the Editor, notes, etc.)  
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