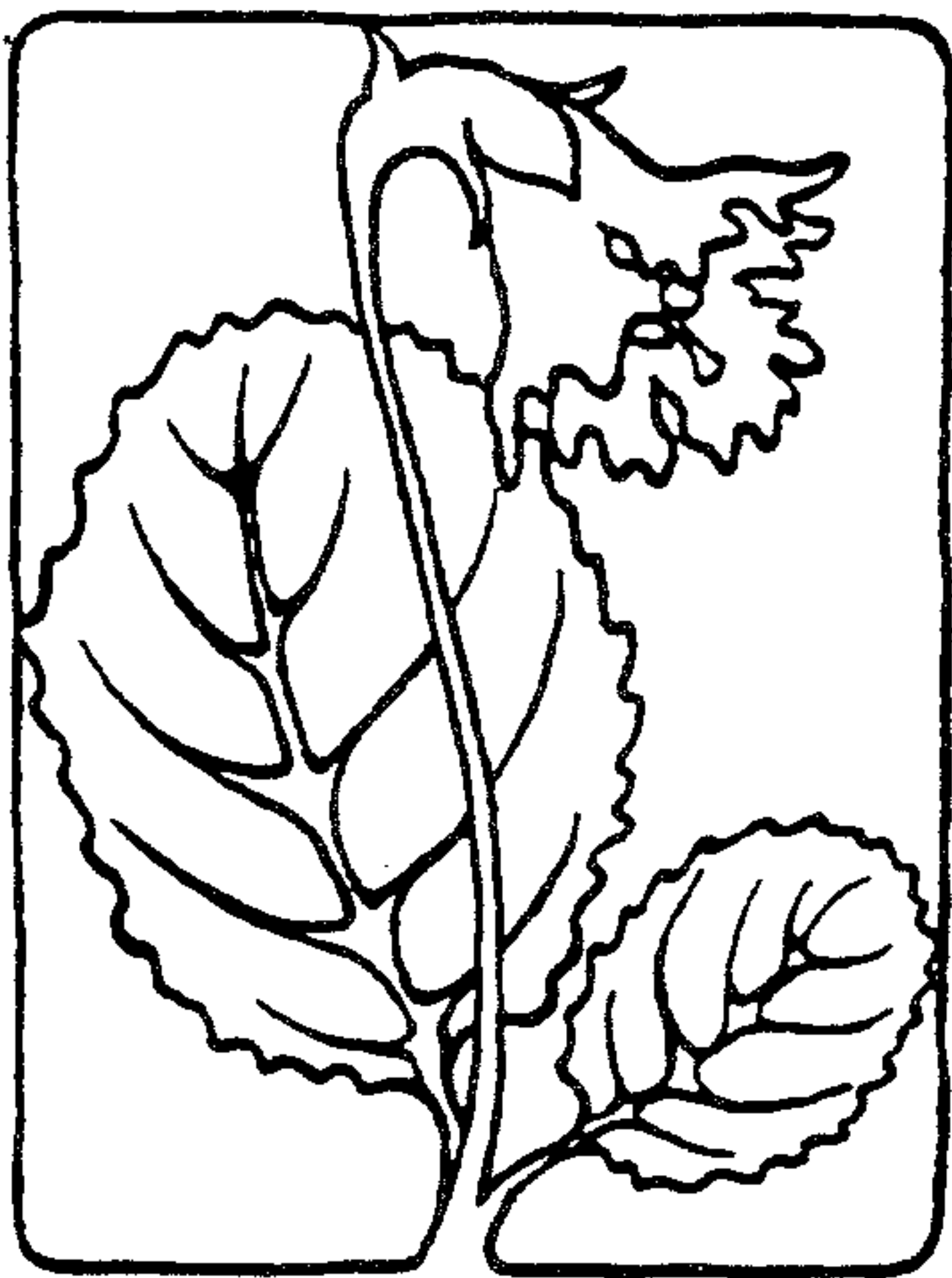


SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

SPRING 1996



ELTON and ALINE HANSENS
Editors

WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

President: Don Herrman Treasurer: Elaine Montgomery
Vice President: Dean Crawford Recorder: Erika Parmi
Secretary: Laverne Pearson Historian: Louise Foresman

FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN

Ah, the Storm of '96!! Our first program this year was postponed until our Annual Meeting. If you were able to attend the annual meeting you reaped the benefits of both meetings---good food and a fine program. At the annual meeting it was again demonstrated that the state of the WCBC is very good. This is due to the volunteerism of our own members. People like our Honorees, Anne Ulinski and Millie Pearson and other members contribute so much--THANK YOU one and all. But let's not forget our hospitality committee Margaret and Carl Byrd and Margaret and Frank Conger---what would we do without them! They were right there working out all the room and food arrangements. Another big thank you from all of us. As the snow melted, our program schedule for February/June 1996 was mailed. Thank you to those who planned, typed and distributed the new schedule. If you wish to help put together the next one, please let me know. When I was enjoying the snow, tubing down our hill, I would end up face down at our meadow. I wondered aloud--Will spring flowers possibly bloom here? In a couple months we will find out. Then we will be out on the trails discovering what a beautiful and rewarding area this is. To be prepared for spring please read and re-read the front page of our current schedule. It pretty well sums up what we need to do to get the most out of our meetings and field trips. Playing in the snow is fun---but so is botanizing with the club. Be seeing you!

WCBC TREASURER'S REPORT, 1995

Table with financial data: Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1995 \$482.85; Receipts (Dues 976.00, Donations 2,066.67, Interest 15.51) total \$3,541.03; Disbursements (Schedules 161.50, Shortia 248.74, Members List 20.99, Postage 173.26, Plant Lists 84.91, Contributions: N.C. Arboretum 40.00, UNCA Botanical Garden 40.00, Annual Meeting & Cookie Fest 28.19, Historian 5.43) total \$903.02; Balance on hand, Dec. 31, 1996 \$2,638.01. Elaine Montgomery, Treasurer

WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 19, 1996, St. John in the Wilderness Church

Attendance 48

The meeting began with the reading of the minutes of the 1995 Annual Meeting, which were accepted as read.

The treasurer's report was read by Elaine Montgomery, showing a year end balance of \$2638.01. Club president Don Herrman explained that this figure, so much larger than last year's balance of \$482.85, was due to a \$2000 bequest to the club from Harry Logan. Harry had specified that this money be used for "the bulletin", by which, it has been concluded, he meant Shortia and the schedule.

The recorder, Erika Parmi, informed the members that the details of her report would appear in the spring Shortia. She thanked everyone who had helped with recording during the year. Erika reminded us that several new field trips had been introduced during 1995, and were well received, and asked for suggestions for other new locations.

Elton Hansens, as co-editor of Shortia, indicated that no report, as such, was necessary, saying that Shortia stands for itself. He again encouraged all members to submit articles of interest to the club.

The Honors Committee, composed of Elton Hansens, Sam Childs and Dick Smith chose 2 members, Anne Ulinski and Millie Pearson, to be proposed for Life Membership. The vote in favor of this action was unanimous.

The Nominating Committee, having asked the incumbent officers to serve again in 1996, presented this slate to the members. All officers were elected unanimously for another year.

The president, in his report, remarked that he had noticed the members were taking more safety precautions on field trips; for example, more were using walking sticks. He also reminded us to be aware of each other, making sure everyone was accounted for before leaving a location.

Don asked for announcements. Elton Hansens and Louise Foresman informed members that Dorothy Rathmann, after her death in July 1995, had left botanical slides and books which were available to whomever would like to have them. Louise told us that at Carolina Village a plaque in Dorothy's memory had been installed in the garden that she had created. The death of Margaret Johnstone in October was reported.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, followed by the traditional potluck meal.

After lunch Anne Ulinski and Millie Blaha presented a program called "On Borrowed Time". This program had been cancelled the previous week because of bad weather.

LaVerne Pearson, Secretary.

RECORDER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1995.....ERIKA S. PARMIR

First of all, I would like to thank all the recorders for a job well done.

In the past year several new field trips were introduced. They were: South Pacolet River on April 3, Givens Estates on April 17, Sutton Ridge on May 1, Chandler Preserve on May 12, and Coon Branch Trail on Oct. 27 (which had to be cancelled). All of the others were enthusiastically received. Let's try to find more! If any of you know of some good spots, please tell me about them and we will investigate them.

In 1995, 41 field trips (this includes the 2 picnics at the Herrman's) and 2 overnights were scheduled. Of these the October picnic and 5 field trips were cancelled due to rain or threatening weather. The Grandfather Mountain overnight was cancelled due to lack of interest.

The participation rate was almost the same as last year. We had a total attendance of 688 for the 36 field trips that were held. The average attendance was 19 people. Last year's statistics were 689 and 19. The 3 most popular trips were March 24 to Pearsons Falls with 45 in attendance, Herrman's picnic on June 23 with 35 and Charlie Moore's on April 14 with 32.

For this year's statistics I counted only those species in bloom even though we saw and identified other plants of interest. On 7 trips we found more than 50 species in bloom---they were April 14 - Charlie Moore's, April 19/21 - Snowbird Lodge, May 9 - Tanbark Tunnel, May 17 - Sugarloaf Mountain, June 9 - Heintooga, June 30 - Grassy Ridge and Sept. 15 - Frying Pan Gap. Half the trips provided us with at least 30 species in bloom.

Now at the mid-point of one of our snowiest and coldest winters; the welcome signs of spring are all around us. Yes, they really are! The many buds on rhododendron and dogwood promise a good year of bloom.. The varied calls of the Carolina wren and the cheerful whistles and chatter of the chickadees and titmice anticipate the warmer weather. Some of the eager gray squirrels already are engaged in their late winter chases. And, last but not least, my instincts tell me it's going to be a great spring for wild flowers! I'm looking forward to it! I hope you are!

HONORS COMMITTEE REPORT, 1995

This Honoree joined the Western Carolina Botanical Club with a special interest in flowering plants but also with many other interests. Moving to North Carolina proved to be a good idea, fueling a love for the world of nature as well as learning about nature in this new area. Many other interests also occupied the time of this quiet but intense individual.

In 1985 this member joined a team in Holmes Educational State Forest collecting data along the principal trails of the species and numbers of plants in bloom each week from earliest spring through late autumn. For two additional seasons other trails were studied and an impressive amount of seasonal data on plant blooming periods was accumulated. This person introduced a small battery operated tape recorder for recording plant names and significant field notes. Our honoree owned a computer and could compile lists and preserve them easily.

Thus our friend learned more and more flowers and prepared more and more lists which she generously shared. Serving as the WCBC Recorder, lists of plants were supplied to the Program Committee which enabled wiser scheduling of trips for maximum variety and numbers of flowers. Meanwhile knowledge and proficiency in identification increased throughout the Club.

The person whom we honor set aside one day each week to concentrate on studying special habitats. During a period of ten years observations were made at five different sites. This person's efforts were important in the development of Jackson Park Wetlands and the Mud Creek Wetlands and their being placed on the North Carolina Registry of Natural Areas. At the Carl Sandburg National Historic Monument a list was compiled of the flora along the Big Glassy Trail.

This conservationist is deeply involved in the recently organized Natural Heritage Trust of Henderson County and exemplifies how one's association with the Western Carolina Botanical Club not only enriches ones life but also has a ripple effect, stimulating others to use their talents and efforts toward conserving natural areas.

We could go on and tell of other facets of her life and service but by now you must recognize that this Honoree is Anne Ulinski.

We take great pleasure in awarding you **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** in the Western Carolina Botanical Club. to **ANNE ULINSKI** .

This Honoree joined the Western Carolina Botanical Club a long time ago---I don't have the date. Soon after meeting this individual I recognized a person who had a gift for seeing the obscure flower, bird or mammal and attaching a name to it---sometimes a descriptive name used by the local people. Such a love for nature often starts in childhood, in this case taught by a loving father.

The family lived for many years in a beautiful woodland area that our club knows very well. Here in April and May spring flowers are outstanding every year--violets and spring beauties, trilliums and trout lilies, and many, many more.

After high school graduation in 1948 this person moved out into the world and worked for a sister who was a CPA in Washington, DC. Our honoree returned home to North Carolina in 1956 when the father died, to reside with the mother for the next ten years. Upon leaving Washington, a job transfer to the US Air Force Weather Service in Asheville was arranged and employment continued until retirement in the late 1970's.

Our friend moved to a house she built beside a mountain stream. Gradually gardens were added. Now a veritable managerie shares the property---dogs and cats, rabbits, chickens, ducks, "banty" chickens, and guinea fowl. The wild flowers and rugged trails are special.

This self-taught botanist has led many trips on her property and near-by Pearson's Falls as well as many other locations. Whatever hike she attends she is busy helping others learn more. By now you must recognize that this Honoree is Millie Pearson.

Your knowledge of and closeness to nature have grown through the years, Millie. We insist that whenever you are present a field trip is enriched.

We take great pleasure in awarding **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** in the Western Carolina Botanical Club to **MILLIE PEARSON**.

SNOWBIRD MOUNTAIN LODGE, APRIL 23-25, Tues. - Thurs.
MAKE RESERVATIONS SOON : ACCOMODATIONS ARE LIMITED.

Several beautiful trails in the area vary from easy to strenuous. We should see upwards of 50 species of wildflowers blooming. Games, reading and relaxation are available in the Lodge. Evening programs. Drive (round trip) 200+ miles. Make your reservations and deposit directly with Snowbird Mountain Lodge, 275 Santeetlah Road, Robbinsville, NC. (709) 479-3433. Make your travel plans to arrive by 10:00-10:30 a.m. of the first day and carry a lunch for that day.

"SOME THOUGHTS".....Bill Verduin

So you have heard this silly story going around about trees talking to each other -- but you don't really believe a word of it. Perhaps that is because they speak a foreign language. But when trees are attacked by a batch of leaf eating caterpillars, they not only activate their own defenses but they ALSO notify their neighbors that there is danger lurking in the neighborhood. Read this interesting excerpt taken from Pastorale by Jake Page.

"Some Dartmouth biologists raised poplar and sugar maple seedlings under controlled conditions in the laboratory. Then they tore the leaves of some of the seedlings, a trauma similar to that inflicted by leaf-nibbling pests. The damaged trees promptly produced large quantities of phenols, chemicals that, like tanins, foul up digestive enzymes of insect pests. The poplar seedlings more than doubled the normal level of phenols in fifty-two hours -- not at all surprising. But the undamaged poplars that were not in contact with their afflicted brethren by either root or leaf raised their phenol content by more than fifty percent in the same time period! Whatever the signal is, and it is suspected to be a hormone called ethylene, it must be borne in the air. Ethylene is produced by damaged plant tissues and seems to play a role in the synthesis of phenols -- perhaps the vegetable world's Paul Revere".

Do you suppose that when trees hear the Botanical Club coming down the trail they . . . , no they wouldn't say that -- but what would they say??

*Upon this herbless rock a small gray lichen
Did fix her home. She came with meek intent,
To bless her stern and sterile place of rest:
And presently her gentle sisters followed,
Some vested white, and some in robes of brown,
And some in yellow vestures, laboring all
At the same work, with tiny cups held out
To catch the raindrops, and with mattocks small
To pierce the rock. And well did they effect
Their destined purpose.*

Unknown

A NOTE FROM SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA.....TOM and BARBARA HALLOWELL

Frozen lawn, bare limbs, and an icy puddle reveal the season--mid-winter--but sun beams through the glass of our enclosed, "unheated" patio. We sit comfortably in sweaters. Good ol' solar heating! Immediately outside grows a clump of young sassafras, planted on our lawn last spring. Did you ever try to find sassafras in a nursery? It's like trying to find a potted dandelion! "Weed tree" they said, nursery after nursery. But I did find one that has charmed us and the neighbors with brilliant fall color.

Between us and a neighboring patio stands an old dogwood, loved and handsome in all seasons but doomed by blight. Beyond it is a clump of river birch (a sentimental tie to our yard in Hendersonville) and a sturdy young red maple. Not a mountain scene but we enjoy it!

Uphill a bit a 25 year old silverbell shows fine twigs against today's blue. In spring it turned white with tiny bells, another touch of the mountains, and in autumn I piled leaves from it onto my ferns. We moved 30 species of native ferns from our Hendersonville garden. Mostly propagated from spores, they are "my babies" and have accepted and settled into their new home as we have.

The trees provide perches for birds feasting on winter feeders--lots of juncos and white throats, regular chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches, downy and red-bellied woodpeckers, brazen crows and bright cardinals, jays, and finches--the usual feeder gang. We enjoy their comings and goings to feeders at apartments either side of us so don't have to feed them ourselves. Economical!

A couple hundred feet from us is a mature beech woods with trails leading to a stream, to an oak-hickory-maple woods and to fields. Unfortunately deer over population is causing many problems.

We continue to give slide programs on nature and adventure travel subjects. I had the pleasure of giving two at adjacent Longwood Gardens and a fern program/workshop/walk for guides at Mount Cuba, an extensive and magnificent woodland garden of native Piedmont flora. Visits now are only by appointment. It eventually will be opened to the general public and it is superb!

So, WCBC friends, the Hallowells continue blessed with outdoor pursuits and the good health to enjoy them. Note: our address has changed from 207 Kendal at Longwood to 207 Kendal Drive, Kennett Square, PA 19248. Proximity to Longwood Gardens confused too many. Have fun botanizing in '96!

NOTES FROM WHITE SQUIRREL.....CHARLES R. GUNN

We watched a volunteer plant grow along our driveway with pleasure. It was Croton punctatus (Euphorbiaceae), an annual to short-lived perennial that is found along the coast of the Carolinas. November frost killed the plant before its seeds matured. This and the Christmas season bring to mind the spurge family (Euphorbiaceae). The family is large, diverse and has a typical tripartite capsule opening ventrally to release the seeds. Many species have a milky or colored juice (latex). The family has about 300 genera and 7500 species world-wide, except for the Arctic.

Euphorbia, a cosmopolitan genus, has about 1,500 species, making it the second largest angiosperm genus. They range from roadside weeds to wildflowers of our deciduous forests to the African species that are spiny and nearly leafless and ecologically comparable to the New World Cactaceae (Cactus Family). To separate the cactus-like euphorbias from true cacti, note that euphorbias have colored juice and paired spines. Some important members of the family are para rubber (Hevea brasiliensis), castor-oil (Ricinus communis), and manihot (Manihot esculentus) a staple food of the tropics.

The poinsettia (Euphorbia pulcherrima) has become extremely popular for Christmas decoration. Actually, the flowers of the plant are small and typical of the Euphorbiaceae. Large brilliant red bracts surround the flowers and function to attract pollinators to the flowers. Now horticulturists have developed a variety of colors and forms of poinsettias for the Christmas trade.

Other euphorbias include snow-on-the-mountain, (Euphorbia marginata) flowering spurge (E. corollata), Carolina ipecacac (E. ipecacuanhae), and crown-of-thorns (E. bojeri). Here in the mountains our weedy euphorbias in the subgenus Chamaesyce are best identified using Wofford's GUIDE rather than Radford's MANUAL.

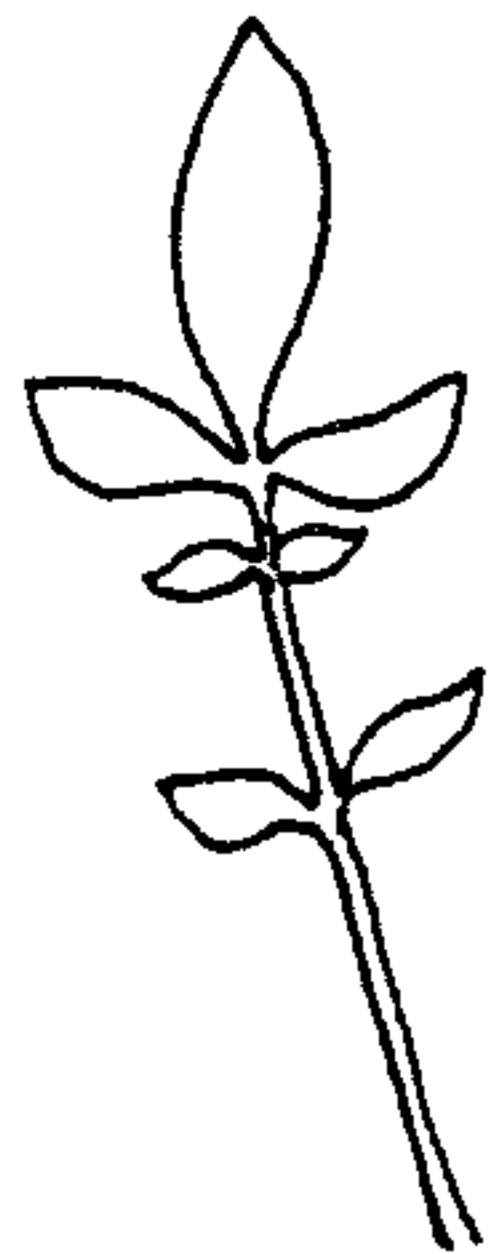
Sorry to note that the ancient mountain maple (Acer spicatum) at the Brevard McDonald's has died and been removed. It would be nice to learn about the history of this tree and the history of Brevard that swirled around it.

I believe that I saw a Gentiana quinquefolia (Gentianaceae), along one of the trails at the Cradle of Forestry. I saved two maypops plants (Passiflora incarnata (Passifloraceae) when the main road for the Meadows was graded. I rescued the plants and replanted them in a safe place. This makes 25 species that I have moved to safety.

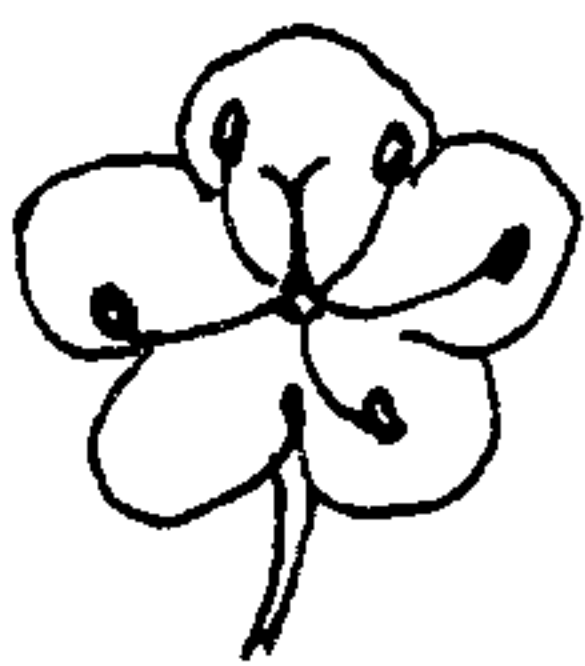
LOOK AGAIN !

Of all the spectacular displays of spring wildflowers in the southern mountains, perhaps none is as breathtaking as the immense snow-white carpet laid down on the woodland floor by masses of White Fringed Phacelia.

This sprawling little plant--Phacelia fimbriata to botanists-- achieves the effect with countless delicate campanulate flowers that are only one-half inch across. Up close the name becomes apparent, for the corolla lobes are finely but conspicuously fringed.



PHACELIA DUBIA

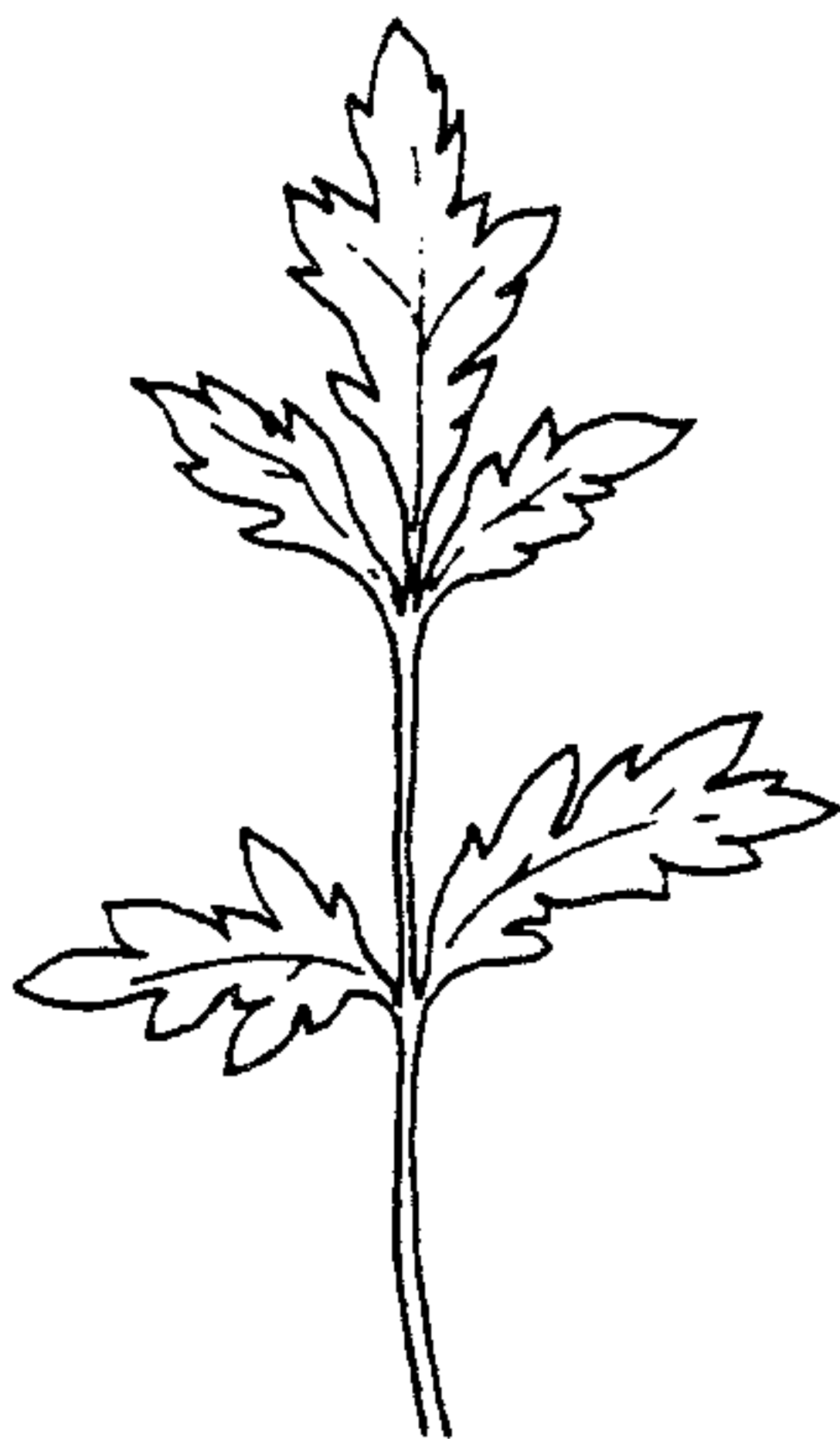


P. FIMBRIATA



Another fringed species, rarer in these mountains but with a wider overall range, is P. purshii, popularly known as Miami Mist. Its flowers are pale blue to almost white; in case of doubt, a diagnostic clue can be found in the hairs of the inflorescence and stems, which are short and incurved rather than spreading as in P. fimbriata.

Also light blue, but with unfringed corollas, is Small-flowered Phacelia (P. dubia). It too has a habit of bursting into bloom over extensive areas.



P. BIPINNATIFIDA

Our last species, Fern-leaved Phacelia (P. bipinnatifida), differs from the others in a number of ways: Its flowers are larger and flatter, with violet-blue unfringed corollas, and each lobe has a pair of narrow appendages near the base; the pubescence in the inflorescence is glandular; the segments of the larger leaves are pinnately divided into coarsely toothed segments; and the upper as well as the lower leaves are stalked.

Dick Smith

S H O R T I A

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Please submit articles, letters, notes, etc. for the next issue by May 10, 1996 to Aline Hansens, 125 Far Horizons Lane, Asheville, Nc 28803. (704) 277-7486.

REMINDER: 1996 CLUB DUES OF \$8.00 are welcomed by the treasurer, Elaine Montgomery, 1636 O'Hara Cir., H'ville, NC 28739.

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FIRST CLASS
