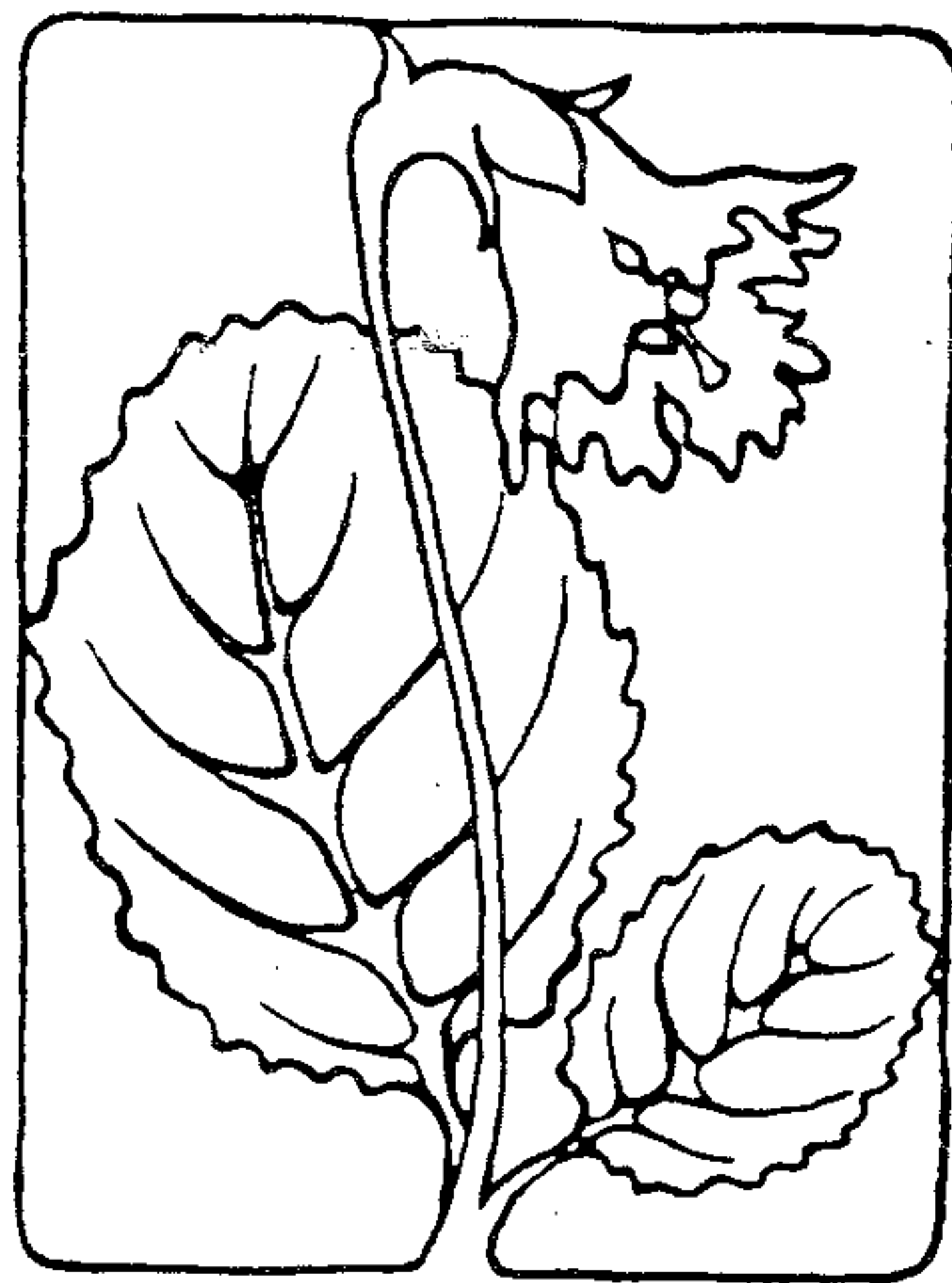


SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

SPRING 1997



ELTON and ALINE HANSENS
Editors

WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

President:	Don Herrman	Treasurer:	Rachel Conway
Vice-President:	Elaine Montgomery	Recorder:	Erika Parmi
Secretary:	Laverne Pearson	Historian:	Louise Foresman

FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN

Riding home from the annual meeting, I had a very good feeling. This had been a good meeting with good socializing and a good exchange of ideas. Even the ice, cold and snow could not dampen the spirit of the meeting.

Everyone at the meeting said they had received the new schedule. It is a good one. Look it over, the field trips and meetings are diversified and interesting. There is something there for everyone. "Macho", my big white male cat is helping me write this. He would like to point out that even though there is not as much botanizing in the ice and snow, the waterfalls and the meadow have a distinct beauty of their own.

Standing here looking at the meadow, it is hard to realize what is going to happen in a few months. The crunch of the ice leaves you with the impression that nothing will grow. But come spring we know it will.

By then our field trips will be in full swing. Read and reread the schedule. Pick out the trips that appeal to you. Contact the leaders. They know what they are doing---come out and enjoy as many as you can.

When talking with different individuals at the annual meeting, I was struck by the many different and interesting experiences I was hearing. The Editors of SHORTIA would be more than happy to receive your stories---so, send them in. Thanking you very much!

WCBC TREASURER'S REPORT, 1996

Balance on Hand, Jan. 1, 1996		\$2,638.01
Receipts		
Members dues	\$680.00	
Donations	12.00	
Interest	28.50	
Total Receipts		<u>720.50</u>
		\$3,358.51
Disbursements		
2 schedules (incl. postage)	\$182.30	
4 SHORTIA (incl. postage)	429.96	
Plant lists	65.18	
Address list	35.00	
Annual Meeting '96	79.90	
Prepaid Rent, Annual Mtg. '97	75.00	
Treasurer's Expenses	28.17	
Secretary, Misc.	52.95	
Total Disbursements		<u>948.26</u>
Balance on Hand, Dec. 31, 1996		\$2,410.25

Elaine Montgomery, Treasurer

WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 17, 1997, St. John in the Wilderness Church

Attendance 31

The meeting began with the reading of the minutes from last year's meeting, followed by the treasurer's report. Both were accepted as read.

Elton Hansens informed the members of the exciting news that the New York Botanical Gardens wishes to acquire a complete set of SHORTIA. A staff member at NYBG and friend of Dan Patillo (WCU) contacted Elton about this. The UNCA Botanical Garden and WCU also intend to catalog SHORTIA into their systems. Dan Patillo has offered to help implement this plan. At this point, the cost factor is unknown. Elton reminded the members that SHORTIA is always in need of material, and encouraged all to contribute.

Dick Smith gave us some interesting sidelights about other connections between WCBC and NYBG, where, incidentally, he gave his first lecture. Harry Logan, a co-founder of WCBC, and Harvey Krouse, an early member, were both members of the Torrey Botanical Club, which was a highly scientific group related to the NYBG. Both of these organizations were affiliated with Columbia University. Dick sees many similarities between the Torrey Club and WCBC, probably because of the influence of Harry Logan's membership in the Torrey Club.

Dean Crawford raised the issue of the future of WCBC. Many of the original, knowledgeable members have passed on or have moved away. How do we keep it going and vital? We need to attract more people who will provide leadership, planning and responsibility. Dean offered suggestions: 1) The officers should prepare a brochure or welcoming letter to be included in the materials that Welcome Wagon brings to new arrivals to our area. This letter/brochure would plug the joys of the outdoors, and include an application to join WCBC with the bonus of free membership for the remainder of the year. 2) Newspaper listings of our field trips in the weekly calendar of events in the Times-News and in the Tryon newspaper. It was suggested that the field trips could be placed in the Sunday sports section with the hiking schedules.

Jeanne Smith mentioned the Wildflower Weekend in Asheville and the teachers at Blue Ridge Community College as other vehicles for getting our message out.

The Nominating Committee, which included Lois McDaniel and Erika Parmi, and was headed by Don Bender, presented the slate of officers for 1997 as follows: Pres., Don Herrman; VP, Elaine Montgomery; Treas., Rachel Conway; Secy., LaVerne Pearson. All were elected unanimously.

Ruth Hoerich reported Challice Weiss had a stroke and was currently recovering at Thoms Rehabilitation Center.

President Don Herrman spoke encouragingly about the club's activities, saying that some of those who cannot attend field trips do attend the indoor winter meetings. He also thanked those who so efficiently produce and mail our schedules and SHORTIA. He reminded members that dues are due NOW. The meeting was adjourned, after which the group enjoyed a potluck lunch.

NOTE: Former members George and Opal LeMieux, friends of the Smiths, brought some of their magnificent enlargements of wild flowers for our enjoyment and/or purchase. They were much appreciated by everyone present.

LaVerne Pearson, Secretary

RECORDER'S REPORT THE YEAR 1996.....ERIKA S. PARMİ

Each season has its own beauty. As I write this the trees are covered with ice and snow outlining the branches with dazzling light against vivid blue sky. It is a fairyland! The many uprooted trees and broken limbs will change some familiar views. Nature, however, will soon conceal these wounds under a cover of green leaves. In a few years the dead wood will be recycled into the soil enabling plants and flowers to grow where they may not have grown before. "Mother Nature" may have some surprises for us this spring with changed vistas and altered plant locations!

In the year 1996, 41 field trips and two picnics were scheduled. Of these, seven were cancelled and for three no Recorder's reports were made. Thus, this years statistics are based on 33 reports. There were 566 participants, down by about 100, with an average of 17 people per trip. Last year the average was 19 per trip. The Givens Estates trip on April 12, Grassy Ridge on June 28 and the Sandburg mushroom walk on Aug. 16 each attracted 30 or more participants. Ten field trips had 20 or more participants, and 18 trips attracted 10 or more participants. There were only 4 trips with less than 10 participants.

In 1996 we had 3 trips on which we saw more than 60 species in bloom or in bud. They were the Snowbird overnight trip on April 23-25. Douglas Falls/Coleman Boundry Rd. on May 10 and Pinnacle Mt. on Aug. 23. There were 8 trips on which we found from 40 to 54 species in bloom. On 15 trips 20 to 38 species were in bloom or in bud. Only 4 trips had less than 20 species in bloom. These statistics were formulated from the 30 trips for which I received plant lists. As during the 1994 and 1995 seasons approximately half the trips provided us with at least 30 species in bloom.

This spring it will be interesting to see how the extremely warm weather in December followed by January's snow, ice and cold will effect the spring flowering season. Whatever we see, I am looking forward to it.

April 21,21,23 THE SMOKIES
(Mon, Tues, Wed)

(Erika Parmi 883-8021)

(Elton Hansens 227-7486)

Two nights at the Talley-Ho Inn in Townsend, TN on the lush side of the Smokies! Rates will be \$39 plus tax for two beds and \$29 for a single. We will have a mixture of walks and stop and go viewing of an amazing array of spring flowers, revisiting some old favorites plus some new walks and roads. Walks will be from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles in length with shorter options available for the longer hikes. Reservations required. Please call Erika by April 11. MEETING PLACE: Ingles North TIME: 8:30 AM Join others at Mills River Restaurant TIME: 8:45 DRIVING DISTANCE: 400 miles COST: \$7.00.

NEW MEMBERS

Walls, Kenneth W. & Harriet H.: 132 Frazier Road, Brevard, NC 28712-9743.

THE COLOR PURPLE.....Dick Smith

Don Herrman's query as to whether *Aster puniceus* should not be called "Red-stemmed" instead of "Purple-stemmed" Aster reminds us that there is widespread perplexity about the meaning of the word "purple" as it is used in botany.

Clearly, Linnaeus knew what he was doing when he assigned the epithet *puniceus* to this species. To him, the suffused color on the stems resembled that seen in the pulp of Pomegranate fruit. This was a tree he had named *Punica granatum*, so *puniceus* must have seemed an appropriate choice.

At that time, a Latin or Latinized binomial was considered sufficient to identify a species, and Linnaeus doubtless expected we would leave it that, but inevitably there arose the need for a colloquial name which English-speaking peoples could use when referring to this plant. In response, someone came up with "Purple-stemmed Aster," which was just as descriptive as the scientific name conferred upon it by Linnaeus, and was a perfectly suitable equivalent--although today we seem to have our doubts.

We need to realize that the English language had many words for denoting hues that were blends of red and blue, and that originally these were carefully divided between the "purples," which were near the red end of the spectrum, and the "violets," which were closer to blue. "Purple" was an inclusive term, encompassing and not always differentiated from similar colors such as maroon, garnet, and magenta. The word was used to describe such flowers as we see in our Northern Pitcher Plant, *Sarracenia purpurea*; Purple Trillium, *Trillium erectum*; Leather Flower, *Clematis viorna*; and Meadow Beauty, *Rhexia virginica*. As to the second category, "Violet" really has no synonym, and the term as it was applied to flower color can best be visualized from examples like Zigzag Spiderwort, *Tradescantia subaspera*; Self Heal, *Prunella vulgaris*; and of course many Violets, *Viola* spp.

If the sharp distinction between these two color groups had been consistently maintained we would be less confused today, but that would have been too much to expect. One reason is that the difference between them has been blurred by the discovery that there are many "borderline" flower hues between red and blue--more than anywhere else in the spectrum--especially when it comes to the lighter tints. Also, taxonomists have sometimes leaned over backwards to extend epithets like *purpurea* to flowers that are decidedly bluish; possibly they were reluctant to use *violacea* because it would translate into English as "violet," a noun already too widely applied to well-known flowers as a common name for us to welcome it as an adjective for others.

Finally, think about this: Isn't it true that most of us have gradually slipped into the careless habit of using the words "purple" and "violet" interchangeably in our speech and writing? If so, all we need to do is adjust our conceptions of color to conform to traditional standards. We have nothing to lose, except possibly part of our reputation for imprecision in the use of language.

California Fuchsia

by

Kathryn K. McNeil

I am a fellow member of yours who lives in San Francisco in the winter and the Smokies in the summer. After spending the lush, wet months of June, July and August in my home on a mountain top near Waynesville, it is always a shock to return to parched California where no rain has fallen since May. The rainless months stretch to November and turn much of California into a true Mediterranean ecosystem.

There is a survivor of such conditions, a charming wildflower, which often begins to bloom in mid summer and continues through weeks of high temperatures until December when the rains return again. It is affectionately called "California Fuchsia," though it is a member of the Evening Primrose family, because it looks like a fuchsia with its tubular shaped flower head, its petals slightly recurved, and protruding stamens and stigma. For over a century it has been known botanically as *Zauchneria* until California flora was lately re-classified. Now it is called *Epilobium canum* and grouped with the Fireweeds. The mountaineer of this genus is *E. canum* ssp. *latifolium* and is found at 10,000 feet in the Sierras.

California Fuchsia likes the stoniest, most inhospitable of soils where it perches in rocky crevasses and on dry, flinty hillsides, dazzling the eye with its scarlet bugles in a monotone world of burnt grasses and parched chapparal. The flowers have a habit of blooming horizontally on their woody stems, deliciously appealing to hummingbirds, offering flaming miniature trumpets one to two inches long. Their growth habits vary depending on their location, rising from rhizomes into straggly clumps of grey green lance-shaped leaves, variable in size, and often covered with white hairs. The bark is shreddy as one would expect, surviving as the fuchsia does on hot dry slopes with no rain for four to five months.

Over the years many horticultural hybrids have been developed from *Zauchneria californica*, some with pink trumpets, some with white. It is well to remember, however, their true nature is to die back after flowering, so their winter appearance in a garden setting is not admirable.

To hikers, finding California Fuchsias blooming on the dusty trails is reward enough. They gladden the eye and quicken the heart and reaffirm the resilience of Nature.



Epilobium canum (*Zauchneria californica*)

Illustration by William Pierson---
used with permission of artist
& FREMONTIA (Calif. Native Plant Soc.)

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

My avowed intention has been to write about regional plants and plant families. However, this column will report on other matters.

First - A new genus has been officially named for me: Bobgunnia. This is an unusual African genus whose species were previously assigned to a South American genus. The paper is being published by the New York Botanical Garden. But more about this later.

Second - In November I was in Mission Memorial Hospital, Asheville and a pacemaker was installed. I am feeling a lot better and I am also walking again. This little "vacation" caused me to miss the first meeting of tropical drift seed collectors held in Cocoa Beach, FL on December 4 and 5.

In 1966, Robert Mossman of West Palm Beach sent seeds that he had collected to the Smithsonian Institution for identification. Because I identified seeds for the Smithsonian, these seeds were sent to me. My response to Bob and the resulting correspondence with him and Corinne E. Edwards of Coconut Grove resulted in my first tropical drift seed paper in the March/April 1968 Garden Journal of the New York Botanical Garden. Seeds and fruits found on the beaches are produced by tropical plants, and float in sea water. They are transported from the tropics via sea currents to beaches in the temperate zone.

Cathie Katz (in Florida) and I (in Brevard) started The Drifting Seed, a semiannual newsletter. Our newsletter will be printed and distributed from Florida. At least I can still write for it! My obscure avocation, started in 1968, now has become a worldwide organization.

CRACK WILLOW---A NEW WAY TO GET AROUND.....BILL VERDUIN

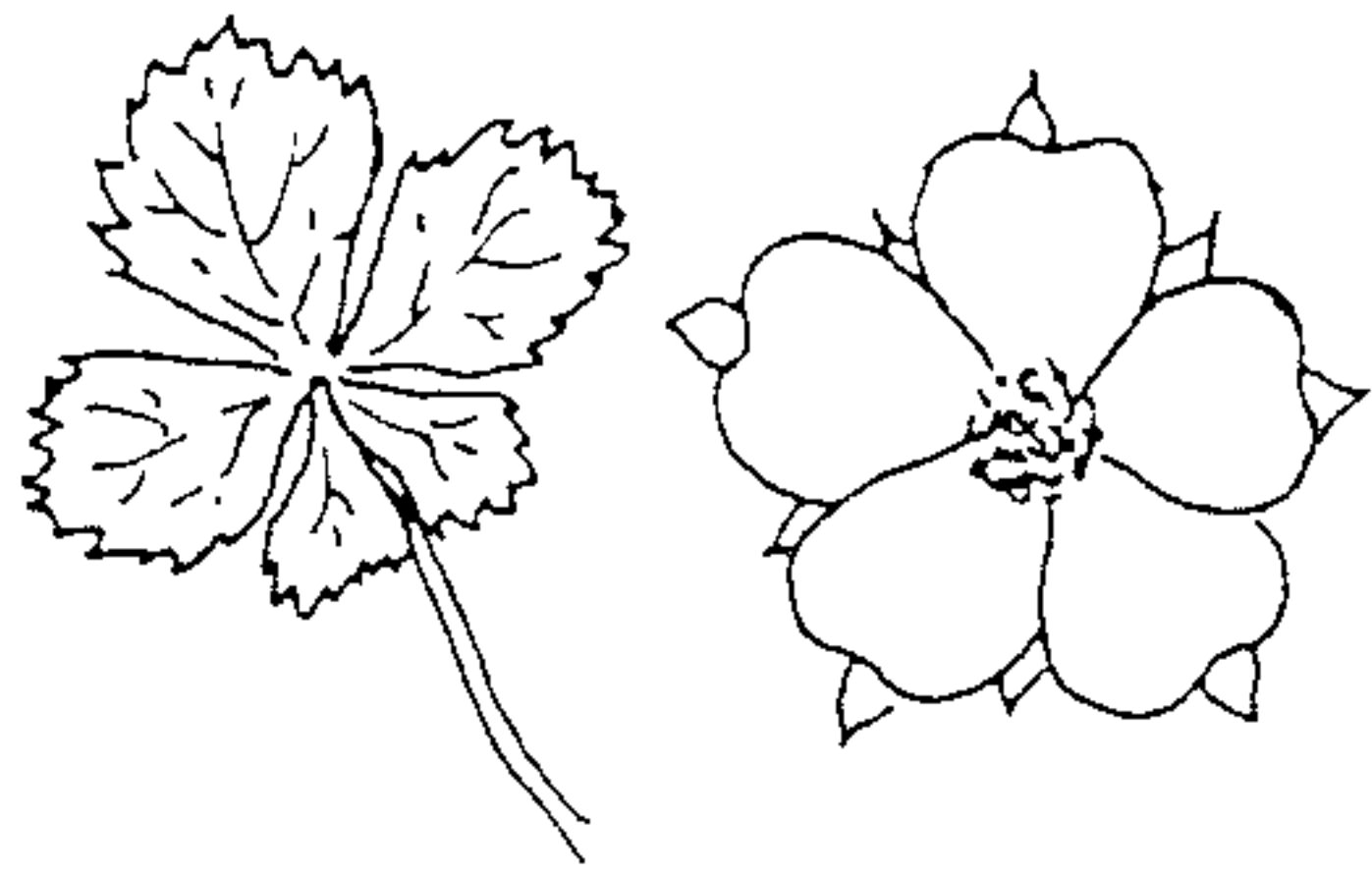
Seeds, stump sprouts, sprouts from shallow roots, low hanging branches that root where they touch the ground, twigs cut by man and rooted in the nursery--

And then there is Salix fragilis, crack willow, which has its own unique (as far as I know) way of reproduction. We all know how easily willows of all kinds root if a twig is stuck into wet soil. Crack willow takes full advantage of this ability. It deliberately produces a weak spot in the lateral twigs just an eighth of an inch or so beyond the point of connection with the main branch. Comes a winter wind brushing branch against branch and -- voila -- twigs here and there crack off and are carried by the wind. The lucky few dropped on wet soil promptly take root and we have a new crack willow tree.

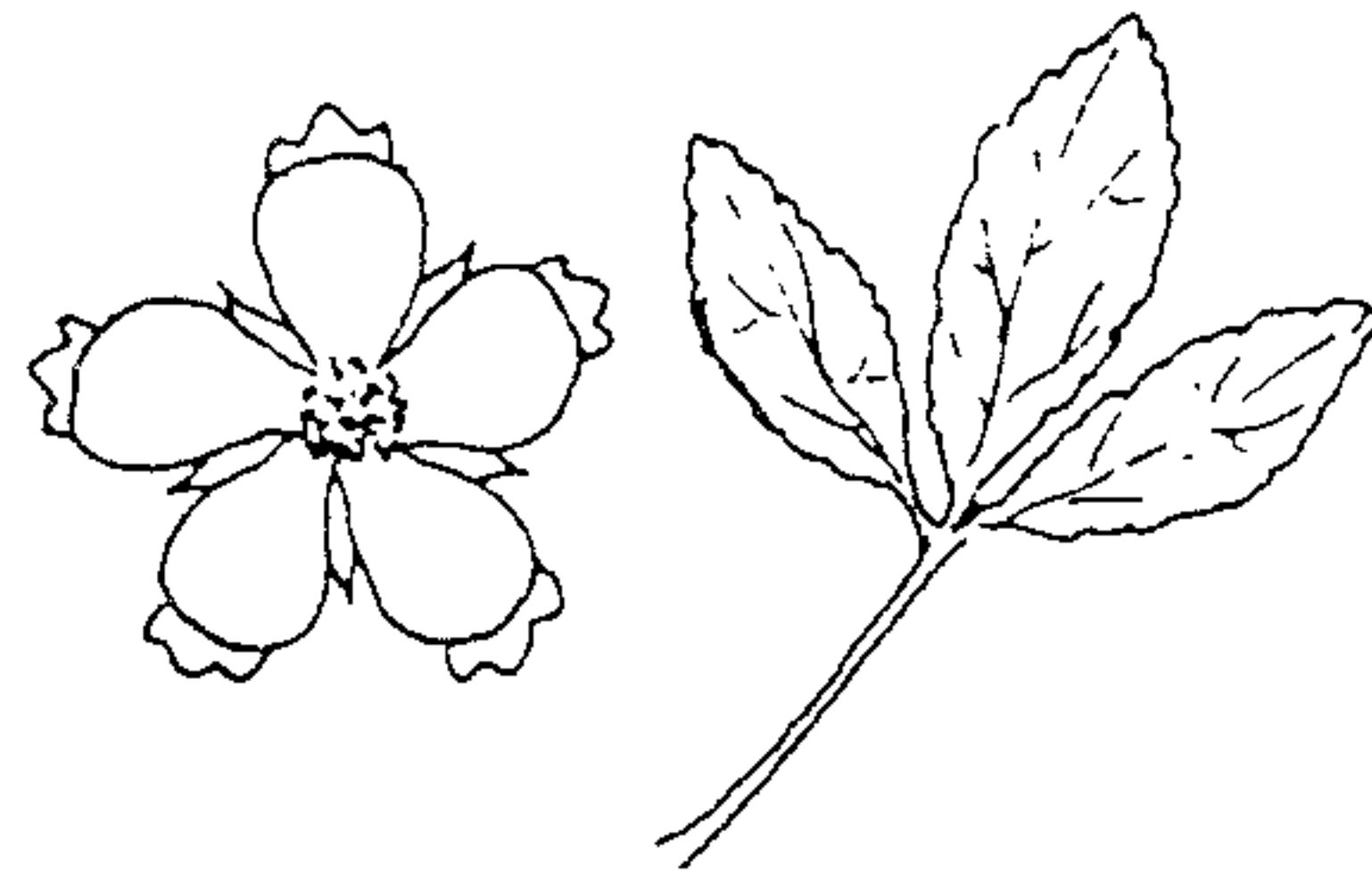
This willow is a native of Europe and was introduced into this country in early colonial times. It escaped from farmyards and pastures and is common in the eastern states. It occurs at the Kanuga Conference Center near Hendersonville, NC.

LOOK AGAIN !

Amateur botanists--and not just beginners either--are often baffled when coming across what they perceive to be "strawberry plants with yellow blossoms." Usually they are already well enough acquainted with the Cinquefoils to have dismissed most species on the basis of their having more than 3 leaflets, and the one that does have trifoliate leaves for having undersized flowers.

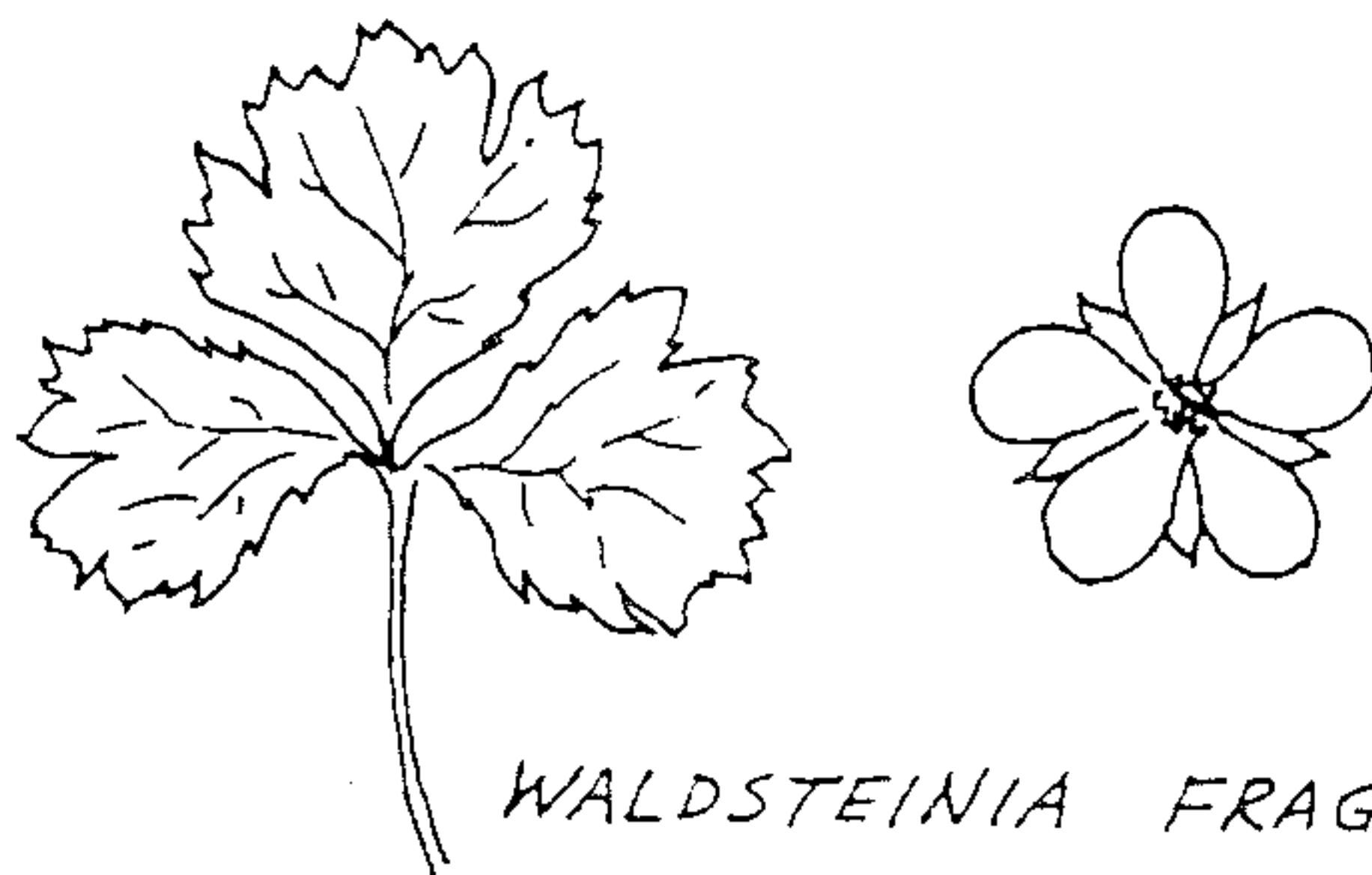


POTENTILLA CANADENSIS



DUCHESNEA INDICA

Along the way they would have observed that in both Strawberries (Fragaria) and Cinquefoils (Potentilla) the 5 sepals alternate with 5 similar but smaller bracts. If, however, the plant in question has bracts that are larger than the sepals and have 3 or more distinct teeth, it can be put down as Indian Strawberry, Duchesnea indica, an immigrant from Asia that produces a red but dry fruit resembling a Strawberry.



WALDSTEINIA FRAGARIOIDES

On the other hand, if there are no bracts at all interspersed with the sepals, the plant is another impostor (although a native one), Waldsteinia fragarioides, known as Barren Strawberry.

Dick Smith

S H O R T I A

VOL. XIX, No. 1

SPRING 1997

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

Editors; Elton J and Aline Hansens Distribution: Ruth Hoerich

Please submit contributions (articles, Letters to the Editors, notes, etc. for the next issue by April 20 to Aline Hansens, 125 Far Horizons Lane, Asheville, NC 28803.

1997 WCBC Membership Dues are \$8.00. If you have not paid, send your check to: Western Carolina Botanical Club, Rachel M. Conway, Treas., 211 Aldersgate Circle, Asheville, NC 28803.

SHORTIA
c/o Ruth Hoerich
215 Newport Road
Hendersonville, NC 28739

FIRST CLASS
