

# LOOK AGAIN !

With the foliage of the trees overhead blocking out much of the sunshine, summer woodland flowers are relatively few, and the sight and fragrance of Pipsissewa in bloom are especially welcome.

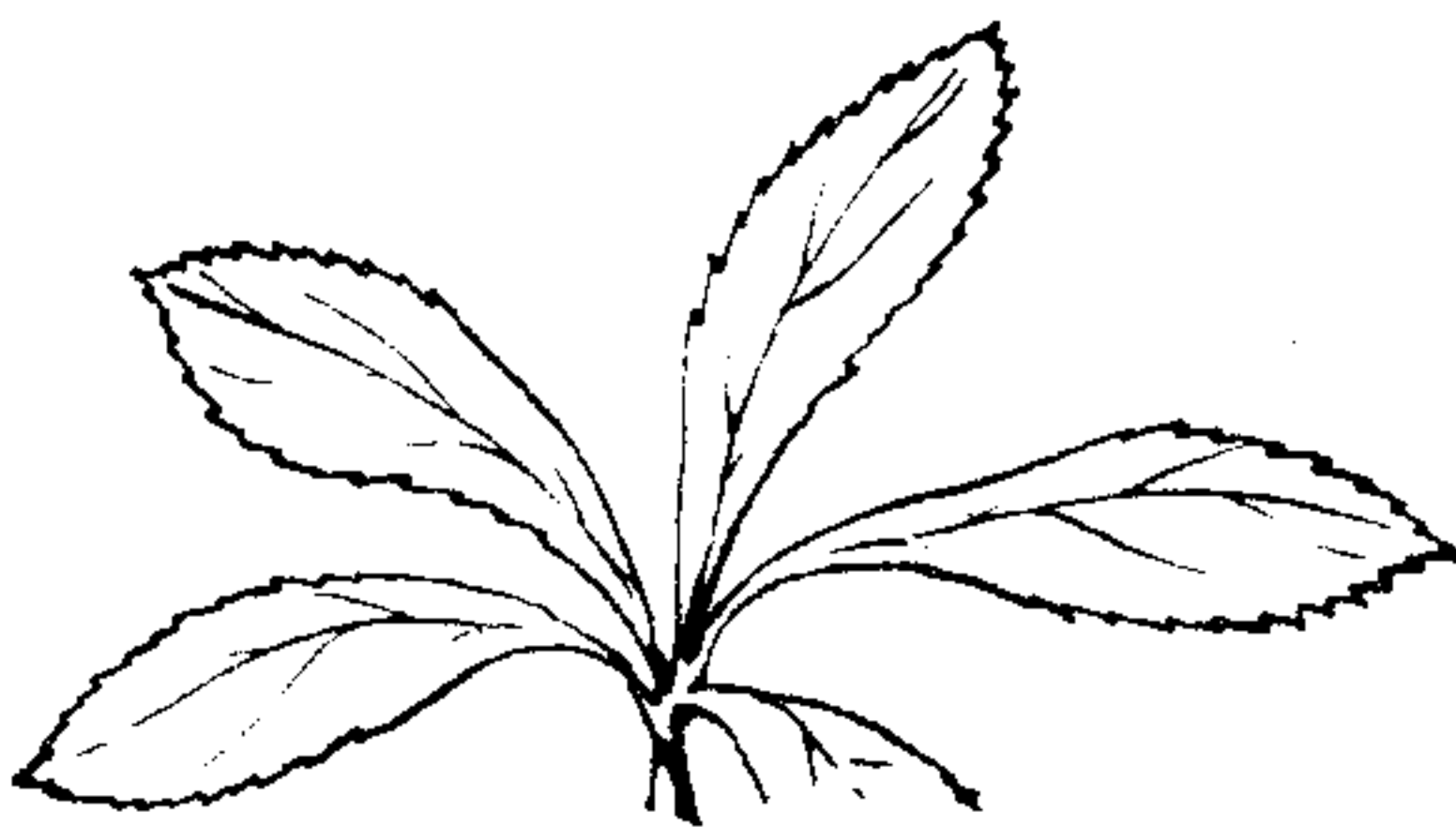
The Indian name "Pipsissewa" is an attractive one, and its very sound - somewhat like a birdcall - makes it one of those words which we enjoy enunciating. Maybe the temptation is too great, for we often apply it without favoritism to two quite different plants.

For those who like to keep these things straight, the two are known technically as Chimaphila maculata and C. umbellata, but those supposedly descriptive scientific names can cause as much confusion as the indiscriminate use of "Pipsissewa" or, as we shall see, some of their other common names.

In each species, the nodding waxy flowers are in a loose corymbose cluster; not only are they not arranged in umbels, but the one that more nearly approaches that form is not C. umbellata, as you might expect, but C. maculata. Moving on to the latter, the specific epithet maculata means "spotted" and refers to the white markings on the dark green leaves, but they are not spots at all but broad stripes that follow the midrib and the secondary veins.



*Chimaphila maculata*



*C. umbellata*

We can resort to colloquial names, and yet avoid the "Pipsissewa" problem altogether, by calling C. maculata by its other nickname, "Spotted Wintergreen". Ignoring the first part, the term "wintergreen" is entirely acceptable as being descriptive of the persistent, ever-green foliage. Provided, of course, we don't forget that the true Wintergreen is another heath, Gaultheria procumbens! Chimaphila umbellata also has another name, "Prince's Pine", but whether it is thought to be scientifically irresponsible or merely whimsical, one seldom hears it used.

Ironically, the plants themselves present less cause for confusion than do their names. In addition to the characteristics already noted, C. umbellata has bright green unvariegated leaves with serrate margins, and petals tending more toward pink, while the leaves of C. maculata have widely spaced teeth and its flowers, if not white, are only slightly roseate.

*Dick Smith*