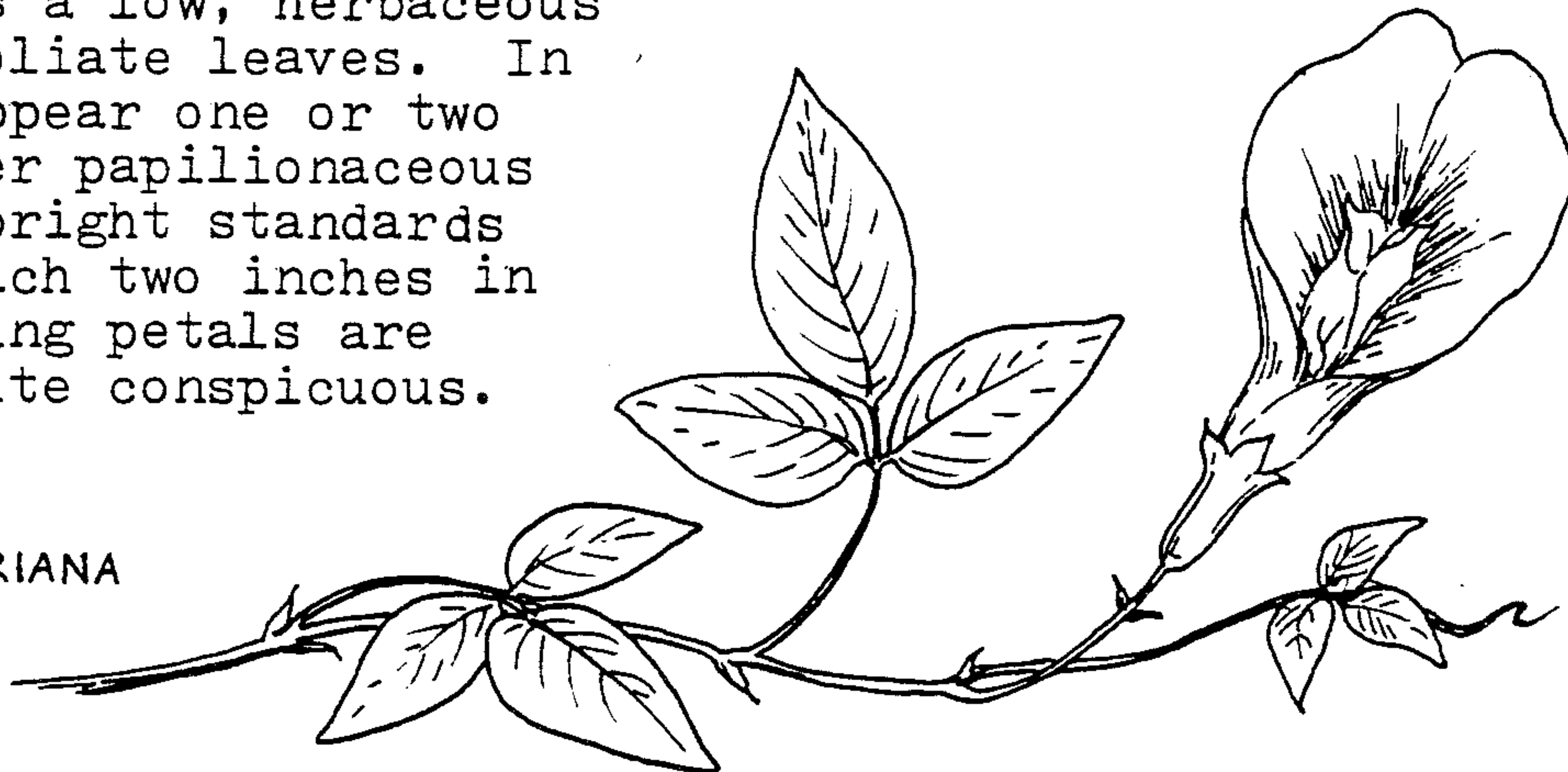


# LOOK AGAIN !

We tend to think of plants in the Bean Family (Fabaceae) as having smallish flowers aggregated into heads, spikes or racemes. A notable exception in our area is the Butterfly Pea (Clitoria mariana), which bears solitary (or very few) flowers of relatively large size.

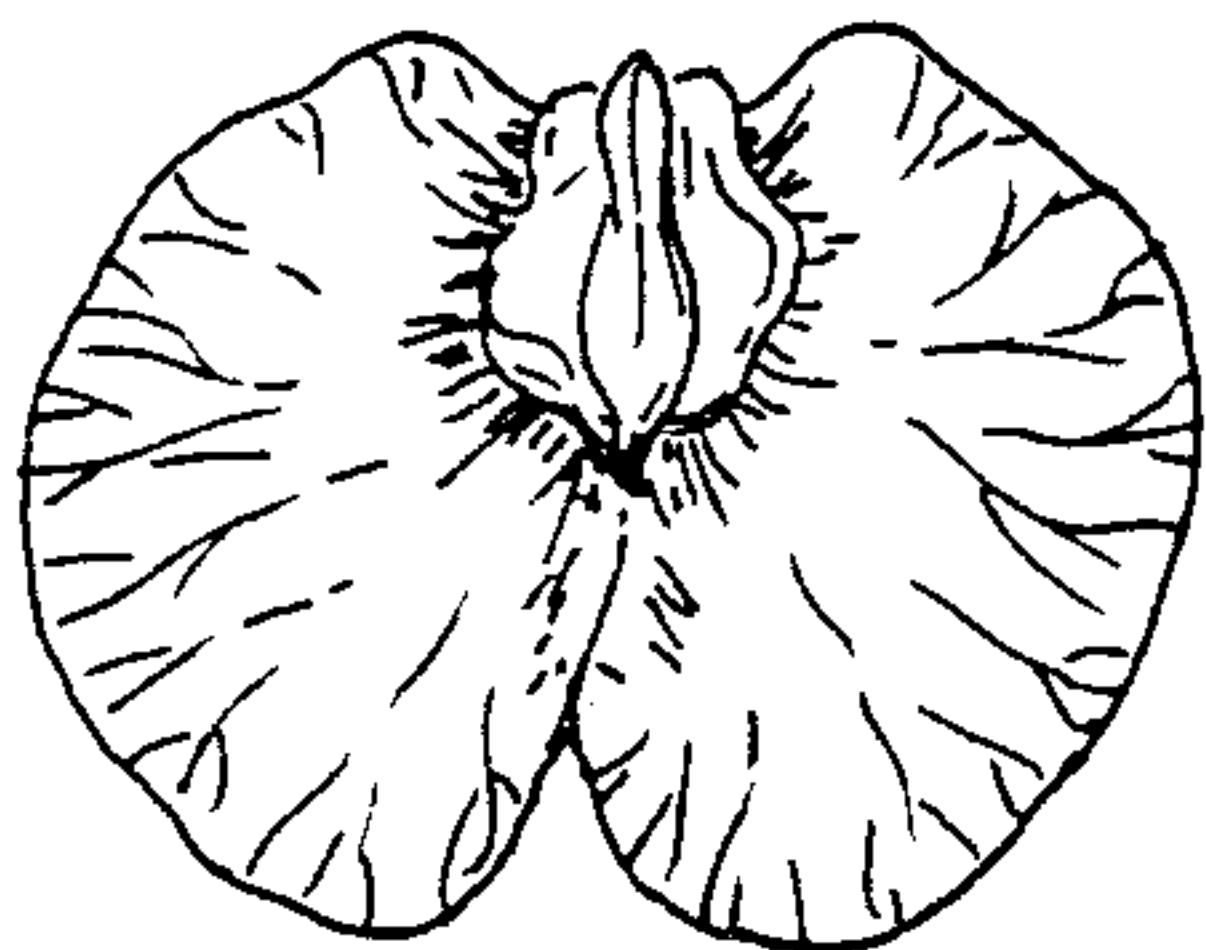
It is a low, herbaceous vine with trifoliate leaves. In summer there appear one or two pinkish lavender papilionaceous flowers with upright standards that may approach two inches in height. The wing petals are smaller but quite conspicuous.

CLITORIA MARIANA



Sometimes confused with this is the closely related Centrosema virginianum, which is known as Spurred Butterfly Pea. This is also a vine, sometimes climbing as well as trailing.

The flowers are flatter, more circular, and only about an inch long. It owes its common name to the presence of a small spur at the base of the standard, but certainly more evident is the fact that the flowers appear upside-down, with the keel and wings uppermost. Also, the calyx (which is partially hidden by bractlets) has a short tube and longer lobes, whereas the reverse is true in Clitoria.



CENTROSEMA VIRGINIANUM

Butterfly Pea is fairly common in some of our mountains; Spurred Butterfly Pea is more likely to be found as we explore farther into the adjacent piedmont.

*Dick Smith*