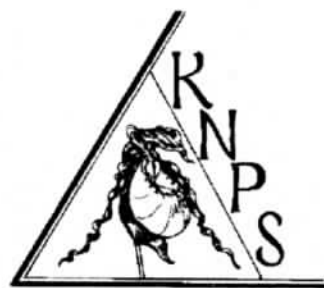


Kentucky Native Plant Society

Newsletter



Volume 9, Number 4

NOVEMBER, 1994

Name our Newsletter Contest

by Landon McKinney, KNPS President

Our board members have agreed that our newsletter needs a name. To find a name, we will have a contest for our general membership. The name of course needs to be botanical. Perhaps the common name of a plant or even part of its scientific name. Be creative. Please submit your entry by February 28, 1995. A name will be chosen during our spring board meeting and the winner will be announced during our annual spring meeting at Natural Bridge State Resort Park.

This contest is open only to our general membership and not to our board members or their families. Please submit one name per member to me at the following address: Landon E. McKinney, KNPS President, 1031 Tamworth Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Oops! I bet everyone is wondering what the prize will be. Well, right now the suggested prize is a new copy each of the Wildflowers of Kentucky and the Trees of Kentucky. There are still copies available of the former and the latter is in the process of being reprinted and should be available by the end of this contest. However, in the event that the prizes change, the prize value will be approximate to the above books. Either way, it will be well worth your time to think seriously about this contest and submit your suggestion as soon as possible. In the event that the winning choice was submitted by two members, the full prize will go to both. In the bizarre event that more than two submit the winning name, a drawing will be held to pick the winner of the main prize and consolation prizes will be given to those who were not picked in the drawing. I look forward to your entries.

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Message from the President

There are several things that need to be brought to everyone's attention. The joint fall meeting between the Kentucky and Tennessee Native Plant Societies was a success. Total attendance for

the meeting was between 45 and 50 people. We were represented by 12 enthusiastic members. The evening programs were informative, the field trips were great, and the accommodations were excellent. All who missed this opportunity to share our common interests in native plants missed quite an experience.

In 1995, we reciprocate by holding a joint meeting in Kentucky. Mark your calendars now because our joint meeting will be held at Natural Bridge State Resort Park starting on Friday evening, the 8th of September and will continue through Sunday morning the 10th of September. We are planning this to be similar to our annual spring meeting with informative evening programs and a great variety of hikes. For all of us who are familiar with the area's spring flora, this will be a great opportunity to experience the park and surrounding area during a different season of the year. More details will be forthcoming as they are ironed out.

Wilson Francis, the park naturalist, will be quite instrumental in putting this effort together. He has reserved a block of rooms especially for this meeting. Anyone wishing to make their reservations early will need to mention their participation in the fall meeting of the Society or you will likely be told that there are no rooms available for that weekend.

A number of the Tennessee Native Plant Society members expressed a sincere desire to attend our joint meeting next year. Please plan now to attend and share this experience as it will truly be a unique one.

Moving on to other business, our second workday planned for our "Adopt a Prairie Program" had to be cancelled. Personal items came up that prevented me from leading this effort. However, I only received one phone call from a member wishing to participate so there would not have been much accomplished anyway. If anyone showed up at the designated meeting place, I am sorry for your in-

convenience. However, please keep in mind the importance of calling in advance when asked to do so.

Our special fall meeting held at Natural Bridge State Resort Park on the 8th of October, while not considered a success, did accomplish our goal of adopting the needed amendments to our By-Laws.

Reporting a Rare Plant

by Charlie Lapham

I recently was involved in the verification of a new location for a plant species listed as endangered by the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC). The procedures used by professional botanists were fascinating to me. I haven't seen anything that tells one what to do when a rare plant discovery seems possible so I thought the story of the discovery (and how to do it the right way as well) might make interesting reading for the membership.

I found a blue curls on a roadside about a mile from home two years ago which I identified by the picture in Wharton and Barbour with minimal excitement. Last year I pressed a sample as practice for Dr. Jones' botany course in the KNPS certification series. Over the winter I keyed it in Cronquist to *Trichostema setaceum* and had Landon McKinney check it with a whole bunch of my relatively boring herbarium specimens.

Shortly thereafter I found I had committed a major botanical sin! It seems there are two blue curls in Kentucky. One is infrequent and the other is endangered! (This was also when I found that endangered species are sometimes in the guidebooks which I didn't expect since the books never seem to have what I need at the time I'm using them.) I had inadvertently collected the endangered species which is in enough trouble already without students taking specimens to practice on. Luckily it was good

enough to serve as an herbarium specimen which is part of the scientific documentation process. What I should have done was keyed it from the live plant, checked the identification against the KSNPC rare species list and then called the Commission at 502-573-2886.

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission is the official keeper of rare plant data in Kentucky. They will want to know exactly where the plant is. I prepared a written description of the location, marked the location on a topographic map, and calculated latitude and longitude to seconds (Editors note: calculating latitude and longitude is not absolutely necessary). If you give them less they will do the detail work when they visit the site.

During the site visit they will press an herbarium sample (if the population is large enough) to verify the identification. Strangely, we need a dead sample in an herbarium to prove the live population exists. Dr. Bill Martin first pointed this out to me.

The Commission botanist will also take a picture of the plant and probably another one of the site. The plant population needs to be counted. These particular plants are tiny, seldom over 8 inches tall and not very bushy. The site was 15 x 45 feet so I made a 45 square grid and counted, as best I could, the plants in each square. The total was almost 3,000 plants which makes it a significant site for this species.

A check with the assessor's office allowed us to determine the owner. The owner was contacted and he asked us to flag the site so he wouldn't accidentally damage the plants. Since this site is on a roadside, the county has been notified to avoid spraying or mowing at the wrong time. There are lots of flags for the mowers in hopes they will see at least one of them.

The soil and light conditions as well as the flowering period were also part of the data collected. I made several visits to the site and discovered that

the flowers are open in the morning and half curled up by noon. They look like buds by nightfall. Morning is definitely the time to go looking for *Trichostema setaceum*.

Hopefully by now President McKinney has entered the data into the KSNPC database (see the article on page 5) and all who use the database can access the new information. Note the close relationship between KSNPC and the Native Plant Society. We amateurs in the KNPS owe these botanists a great deal.

What's in a Name?

by Landon McKinney

I am sure that each of us has wondered from time to time just where a particular common name for a plant came from. The origin of many common names are rather apparent, such as cardinal flower (red colored), Queen Anne's lace (lacy cluster of flowers), or perhaps buffalo clover (favored by buffalo as forage).

This, the first in a series of articles, will explore some common names that are not quite as obvious. Let's start with alfalfa. No, this plant was not named after that lovable character from the "Little Rascals". The name was actually derived from Arabic meaning "best fodder". The plant was introduced from Arabia to Spain, England, and eventually the United States.

How about pipsissewa? The origin here is from the Cree Indians and means "juice breaks stone in bladder into small pieces". Needless to say, the Cree believed this plant to aid in the treatment of gall or kidney stones.

Now there's smartweed. Assuming the obvious, I tried eating this stuff but it just didn't seem to work. Actually, the name refers to the fact that the plant burns (smarts) the tongue when tasted.

Some common names reflect the generic name such as portulaca. This name comes from the latin word for "little gate" which refers to the lid of the seed capsule which opens like a gate.

I always wondered about ironweed, which merely refers to the hardiness and stiffness of the stem. Goldenseal, which has long been valued for its medicinal properties, has a name that actually stems from the use of this plant as a source of dye. We have curly dock and bitter dock and numerous other docks. Dock refers to the long thick taproot which resembles the solid portion of an animal's tail. If used as a verb, the word dock commonly refers to the removal of said tail from sheep or certain breeds of dogs.

In closing, let me leave you with a few questions to ponder. Does the royal catchfly catch flies? Does the trout lily in some way resemble a fish and who is Joe-Pye, anyway?

Endangered Species Legislation

The Kentucky Audubon Council and the Kentucky Conservation Committee (KCC) held their annual meetings on October 15, 1994 in Frankfort. A major item of discussion was setting legislative priorities for the 1996 General Assembly. The Audubon Council made the passage of a state endangered species act their top priority; they will work to form a coalition beginning in January. The Native Plant Society is one of the groups the Audubon Council will contact.

KCC voted to make a state endangered species act as the fifth and last priority on which they would work. If Native Plant Society members want the passage of a state endangered species act, they need to join KCC and attend their October, 1995 annual meeting. At this meeting, all members will vote to confirm their 1996 General Assembly priorities. A strong showing by the Native Plant Society is needed to prevent other issues from bumping

the endangered species act from the KCC list of priorities.

Contact the Kentucky Conservation Committee, Box 1152, Frankfort, KY 40602.

T-Shirt Sales

We have a number of t-shirts left over from this year's spring meeting. Sizes include medium, large, and extra large. These shirts are beige with forest-green writing. The artwork is the yellow trout-lily amidst a bed of grass, acorns, and pine cones (black outlines only, no color). For those arts and craft members, the right colors of fabric paint can make this design colorful and quite unique. As well, for those of you with children, they make great nightshirts.

Please take advantage of this opportunity by ordering t-shirts at \$8.00 per shirt plus \$1.00 for shipping. Please send your ordering information (size and number of shirts) and a check or money order made out to **The Kentucky Native Plant Society** to: Landon E. McKinney, KNPS President, 1031 Tamworth Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Please help us out and order a t-shirt today.

Welcome to the New KNPS Lifetime Members!

Dana Sandlin - Individual
 Alan O. Bryant - Individual
 Dell & Clara Rodriguez - Family
 Stuart Garrett, M.D. - Individual
 Nancy Bishop - Individual
 Judith McCandless - Individual
 Walter & Delores Nelson - Family

Thanks for your support!

Kentucky Natural Heritage Program

by Tom Bloom

Imagine that you were given the task of identifying and protecting representative examples of Kentucky's natural heritage. How could it be done? The year was 1976 and the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC) had just been created and given that task by the legislature. Faced with the problem of selecting the best natural areas remaining in Kentucky's 25 million acres, KSNPC turned to the Natural Heritage Program methodology.

By adopting natural heritage program methodology, KSNPC was able to systematically gather and analyze information on the rare and sensitive plants, animals, natural communities, natural areas, and managed areas of Kentucky. Kentucky Natural Heritage Program data are used to identify areas of ecological significance and plan protection strategies. The dynamic nature of this system allows new information to be assimilated, thus improving our ability to identify, evaluate, and protect Kentucky's natural heritage.

The Kentucky Natural Heritage Program is similar to programs found in all 50 states, several Canadian provinces, and numerous Latin America and Caribbean countries. A central database is maintained which permits natural heritage programs to share biological information such as a plant's taxonomy, an animal's habitat requirements or a species' state, federal and international protection statuses.

Methodology

The Kentucky Natural Heritage Program assembles and manages information using the procedure standard to all state and national natural heritage programs. The methodology identifies "elements" of natural diversity--natural communities, plants, and animals--that are exemplary, rare or en-

dangered at the state or national level. KSNPC biologists rank these elements according to their rarity and degree of endangerment. Information about site-specific occurrences of these elements is then gathered and processed.

Data are assembled from many sources, including field inventory, scientific literature, knowledgeable individuals, and museum collections. KSNPC botanists and zoologists conduct and coordinate several types of field inventories to confirm and augment element occurrence data. By continually adding new information and updating and refining old information, Natural Heritage Program staff create an ever-evolving and increasingly definitive "atlas" of biodiversity.

Natural Heritage Program personnel use a personal computer-based system to process data--The Biological and Conservation Data System (BCD). BCD manages information in more than 30 related computer databases that are supported by the Natural Heritage Program's extensive map and manual files and library. Natural Heritage Program staff interpret the data for conservation and natural resource management, but early on it became apparent that data uses extended beyond KSNPC conservation goals.

Applications

Because the data are centralized and continuously updated, Kentucky has one place where natural heritage information can be accessed by both public and private sectors for development planning and environmental impact assessments, including:

* Compliance with Endangered Species Laws & Regulations. Since the databases track specific locations of protected species, Natural Heritage Pro-

gram data are frequently consulted to review permit applications required by endangered species, wetlands, waste disposal, mining or clean water legislation.

* Prevention of disputes over development. By using Natural Heritage Program data during planning stages, development projects can avoid exemplary natural areas and imperiled species, thereby precluding disputes over possible environmental impact.

* Conservation planning. Critical areas can be identified and protected, and conservation priorities established, on a regional, national, or global basis.

* Management of parks and protected areas. Information provided by the Natural Heritage Program on parks, forests, and wild areas, and on the management requirements of their species and natural communities, helps to improve management practices on public and private lands.

* Research and education. Natural Heritage Program inventories initiate and guide scientific research. The biological databases provide a foundation for long-term environmental monitoring.

KSNPC Natural Heritage Program staff currently monitor the statuses of almost 600 elements of Kentucky's natural diversity that are considered rare or endangered. Data on 295 plants, 236 animals, and 54 natural communities are stored in manual, map, and computer files. Powerful computer retrieval capabilities allow a nearly infinite number of data subsets to be assembled. Data can be organized and retrieved by county, quadrangle, latitude, longitude, watershed, physiographic province, managed area, and any combination of these attributes. Detailed information about each element occurrence is also available, including the data source, date(s) of observation, and descriptions of the element and its habitat. Taxonomic, biological, and legal information about each element and many former or possible new elements, including their habitat, reason for rarity, and federal status, are continually updated. Staff computer programmers can tailor data access and reporting to fit the needs of most agencies, institutions, and individuals. Cur-

rently, there are over 8200 records in the Element Occurrence database.

The Managed Areas Database contains biological, management, legal, and locational information on over 350 areas in Kentucky. These areas include lands managed for conservation purposes by federal, state, and local governments, private individuals, foundations, and corporations, and other large tracts of publicly managed land. Data from the Element Occurrence and Natural Heritage Sites databases are linked to the Managed Areas database.

KSNPC land protection priorities are guided by the Natural Heritage Sites database. A Natural Heritage Site is an area with a significant example of Kentucky's natural heritage, such as an exemplary natural community or an important rare species occurrence or cluster. The biological, locational, and protection information data in the Natural Heritage Sites database are supported with data from the Element Occurrences database. Over 400 Sites are tracked by the Commission. With the recent legislation providing a source of money for the Heritage Land Conservation Fund, permanent protection of many of these best examples of Kentucky's natural heritage will become a reality.

KSNPC biologists continually gather data on new and existing elements of natural diversity during their field work and from contacts with other biologists in Kentucky. Because of this constant effort, the Kentucky Natural Heritage Program is the most complete and current biodiversity database available to the citizens of the Commonwealth. For more information on Natural Heritage Program data services, contact Tom Bloom, KSNPC Information Systems Manager, at (502) 573-2886.

Field Trip Reports

North Fork Kentucky River

by Steven F. Sensenig

If you were not among the 25 plus hale and hearty men, women, children, and dogs that met Sunday April 17, 1994, then it was another fine walk that you missed. These 'botanophiles' either met at Kim's or were met by Kim in Campton and guided to her acreage (west of Campton off of Flat-Mary Road in Wolfe County). Kim Feeman, our hostess and guide, and Fred Ostrem, Kim's other half, opened their home to all and made all in attendance most welcome.

Kim is a participant in the Plant Naturalist Certification Program, as well as a student taking "real courses" in the Department of Biological Sciences at Eastern Kentucky University. A "real course" is one, Kim says, where the tests are hard and they count for a grade.

We began along the plateau above the North Fork of the Kentucky River, wending our way along a tractor path through redcedars (really a juniper), poplars, and other pioneering species until we reached the "going down place." We descended the precarious slope down to the bottomland of the North Fork, where we were greeted by a plethora of spring wildflowers. As we strolled this bottomland between the river and its palisades, we saw Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Trillium (*Trillium erectum*), Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), Grape Fern (*Botrychium obliquum*), and Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*).

While a number of the adults were engaged in this erudite pursuit, the children, some of the wiser adults, and the dogs gambolled through the bot-

tom, skipped stones in the river, and waded in the highwater ponds left isolated when the flood waters receded. Continuing to walk this bottom, Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra canadensis*), Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), Yellow Mandarin (*Disporum lanuginosum*), and Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) were in evidence. Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) was rampant along the talus debris at the base of the palisades leading to Cow Hoof Falls.

The Falls, under and behind which one could walk, cascade 75 feet to a channel lined with rhododendron - a beautiful sight to see in July, I am sure. Under and around the falls we rested and regrouped, then headed up and out of the bottomland into the pastureland atop the palisades. We ambled through the cattle along another tractor path to the vehicles which we boarded for the short jaunt back to Kim's place.

Our walk encompassed about 2 1/4 miles and mostly traversed the bottomlands and meadows of a portion of the Kerrick property. Many, many thanks to the Kerrick family for permitting us to hike this tract, with a special thanks to Will Kerrick for joining us and for providing guide services, as well as giving an excellent synoptic history of the area. To Kim Feeman, our guide and hostess, are sent our warmest thanks for arranging, guiding, and botanically enlightening the group.

KNPS--TNPS Fall Meeting

By Steven F. Sensenig

The first ever joint meeting of the Kentucky and Tennessee Native Plant Societies was hosted by the TNPS at the Arnold Research Center just outside Manchester, Tennessee and was a great suc-

cess. Twelve Kentucky members were cordially welcomed on Friday the 23rd by 34 Tennessee members, fed a delicious meal, and informed by an interesting evening program. The evening program, presented by Dennis Horn, was a show of the slides submitted (to date) for inclusion in the proposed Tennessee Native Plant Handbook. The slides were excellent representative shots of plant species of Tennessee. After the presentation and with great anticipation of what tomorrow could bring, we adjourned to our lavishly appointed rooms in the Forest Inn.

Bright and early Saturday morning we reconvened at the facility for breakfast and made ready for our trips. One trip went to May Prairie (see the next article) and the other, which I attended, involved two sites. The first site was about 45 minutes from the Arnold Research Center and situated in the confines of a former government seismic reservation. On this site, many species of orchids have been recorded, including the Autumn Coral Root (*Corallorhiza odontorhiza*) which we viewed in full bloom. At the base of the drain in which we saw the Autumn Coral Root Orchid was a "bog" with a 'herd' (many) of Grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia asarifolia*) in full bloom--a spectacular array! Also, several lilies which had gone to seed were in evidence, as well as Poison Sumac (*Rhus vernix*), Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), Small Whorled Pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*), and Large Whorled Pogonia (*Isotria verticillata*)--the last two were not in bloom, unfortunately. The TNPS is making every effort to see that this floristically rich site is protected by the owners.

Leaving this site we headed for our meeting with Dr. Margaret Rhinehart, who was to be our guide for the second part of our trip. After the jolts, bumps, and fish tailing of a four-wheel drive ride into the site, we were rewarded with the unique privilege of seeing 100 Shadow Witch Orchids (*Ponthieva racemosa*) in full regal splendor. Even with the rough ride and the wet feet--the orchids were on the edge of a natural spring--all agreed that

the Shadow Witch Orchid was well worth the trip. Further up the slope, several Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes ovalis*) were found in bloom. We then caravanned to a nearby site in hopes of locating a unique Primrose (*Oenothera grandiflora*). Upon arrival, however, no sign of them was found, and so it was we bid farewell with gracious thanks to Dr. Rhinehart and headed back to the Arnold Research Center. We arrived back in time for a relaxing libation and a refreshing shower before supper and the evening program.

The evening's speaker was Landon McKinney (KNPS President). Landon gave an excellent presentation on the "Rare Plants of Kentucky", after which next year's (1995) joint meeting was discussed. Many TNPS members indicated a desire to attend this joint meeting which will be held at Natural Bridge State Park from September 8 through September 10, 1995--please make plans to attend. By 10 p.m. most all were abed with visions of wildflowers dancing in their heads.

Obviously, I have only mentioned a small portion of the plants we saw on this trip and neither does space in this newsletter permit nor does my mind permit me to recall them all. However, Susan Sweetser of the TNPS, has graciously sent me a copy of her copious list of plants encountered on our forays to May Prairie and the Shadow Witch site. Anyone wishing a copy of this list, please send me (Steven Sensenig, 1694 Fairview Road, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342) a self addressed stamped envelope with your request and I will be more than happy to forward Susan's list to you.

I will close this rambling diatribe by suggesting that if you are in the neighborhood of Manchester, Tennessee during the months of June through October, stop and walk through May Prairie; Dennis Horn says something is always blooming and you will not be disappointed!

KNPS--TNPS Field Trip to May Prairie, Rutledge Falls, and Short Springs

by Clara Wieland

It was enough to make you believe that our counterparts in Tennessee had some pull with the gods. The day was clear, blue-skied, and cool--certainly a change from the drizzly, grey day before. Del and Martha Robinson, Joyce Porter and I rode in the van of Harold and Ruth Eversmeyer--an all-Kentucky group in an all-blue van, mind you. The group was pretty large but Milo Pyne, with the Tennessee Natural Heritage Program, and Jack Carman, field botanist, along with some quite knowledgeable Native Plant Society members were able to withstand the eager questions of the rest of us.

Along a road across from an industrial park we stopped and identified several prairie and other plants: a sunflower (*Helianthus angustifolius*), a milkwort (*Polygala curtissii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and two gerardias (*Agalinis fasciculata* and *Agalinis purpurea*). We saw some familiar fall bloomers such as an unidentified goldenrod, two lobelias (*L. cardinalis* and *L. puberula*, the red and the blue) and false foxglove (*Aureolaria flava*). Kay Jones, TNPS, tells us we have not seen anything yet and we need to hurry along to the May Prairie.

One day in 1947, Dr. A.J. Sharp, University of Tennessee botanist of renown, and one of his companions, Ed Clebsch, now Dr. Clebsch, were tired and hungry in their search for native plants and ecosystems. They stopped on tree- and farmland-bordered Highway 40 in east central Tennessee. The cafe sported a sign that said The Prairie Cafe. Curious, they asked the owner "Why is your cafe called The Prairie Cafe?" He replied (you guessed it) "Why? 'Cause there's a prairie back there."

We parked next to the highway, crossed a

ditch, and proceeded to a tree line. We immediately discovered water primrose (*Ludwigia* sp.), a coastal plain plant, in the ditch. In the tree line was a new dogwood tree for me, *Cornus racemosa*, with a pyramidal inflorescence. Brushing through trees and shrubs, suddenly we were in head tall grasses, yellow, purple, and white flowers, and blue sky. Plume grass (*Erianthus* sp.) and switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) were added to the grass list. I almost stepped on an orchid, *Spiranthes cernua*, and a gentian, *Gentiana clausa*. There was an understory plant with a small coral capsule--meadow beauty, *Rhexia virginica*. The purple obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) and the yellow sneezeweed (*Helenium nudiflorum*) were common and showy. Two goldenrods I remember were the southern bog goldenrod (*Solidago gracillima*) and the flat top goldenrod (*Euthamia* sp.). Near the ground were some large clover-like drumheads of another milkwort, *Polygala cruciata*. We saw another coastal plan species, the false asphodel (*Tofieldia glutinosa*), in fruit. The plant that I liked had round, flat heads that are sometimes blue--an *Eryngium* species, kin to rattlesnake master. Even the prairie dock was special--a southern variety of *Silphium terebinthinaceum*. Swamp lousewort (*Pedicularis lanceolata*), Sampson Snakeroot, and the bicolor gentian (*Gentiana villosa*) were other special sightings. Of course there were many other species in bloom, but the sun was warming and we needed food.

After lunch the group visited Rutledge Falls. This is on private land but is open to the public. At once we were in my habitat with familiar herbs and trees of our woodlands. The falls were a series of cascades, running full due to the previous day's rain. We trailed along the creek and woods that edge the creek looking for the Grass of Parnassus, *Parnassia asarifolia*. Where of course did we find this plant? Across the creek on a seeping rock ledge! The hardy and well prepared waded the creek very carefully and strained their necks to see the plant. Some of us less hardy trekkers merely used our binoculars. Our last stop was Short Springs where we traipsed

down the slope through woods to see a monkshood flower, *Aconitum uncinatum*. The rich woods were full of orchids, and eight different kinds of ferns, including the royal, cinnamon, sensitive, christmas, maidenhair, lady, and walking. As we got to the car we saw of beautiful patch of blazing star (*Liatris scariosa*), a perfect ending.

A Flower-Power Manifesto

by Jim Conrad

A specter is haunting this land, the specter of a renaissance of natural wisdom, natural feeling and action in defense of natural diversity and interconnectedness.

We have all felt it, but been too bashful to speak of it, and too untrusting of our own senses to honor it with acceptance. But, it is here, and for a long time its name has been flower-power. Therefore, from here in the Western Kentucky Coalfields, enmeshed in IGA, K-Mart, soybean stubble, fire hydrants painted like Snoopy along moribund Main Street, achy-breaky heart, let me say it plainly:

Entranced, hypnotized, lulled, stupefied, sleeping, we humans now proceed spewing, leaking, emanating, over-breeding, lead-footedly stumbling toward lethargy, mediocrity, and a nest heaped high with our own garbage and excreta. But the perfume of dog-tooth violets can set us free.

For flowers say this:

The idea is to be born, struggle to robustly harmonize with what's around, procreate, nurture, then withdraw gracefully, in a final gesture magnanimously merging with the local humus.

Since God has given the go-ahead for flowers to evolve gorgeous forms, dazzling colors, kinky pollination strategies, and heady perfumes--even though all flowers could as well have mainly

evolved along the dog-turd line, so as to be pollinated by specialized races of dung beetles -- it's clear that music, poetry, laughter, and the lusty, coy dances between sexes are OK.

Since most of the world's species that have ever evolved now are extinct, right now Homo sapiens must laugh at its ancient, narcotic beliefs, and hustle to save itself. Because, after all, we humans are beautiful wildflowers, too. Surely the most disorienting opiates of our time are nationalisms and institutionalized religions, especially those evolved in deserts, for the earth is no desert.

Saying that "flowers say this" implies the belief that blossoms and the ecological systems they represent constitute a paradigm, and that that paradigm is valid. That is exactly true.

This year we who visit the Kentucky flora must do so with the kind of paradigm-searching, missionary zeal reserved for those glimpsing at last the truth of things, the fountain from which all love, youth and vigor spring.

Thinking, feeling flower-sniffers of all Kentucky counties, this spring flood the fields and woods with yourselves, become resensitized to flower-power insights, rejoice in diversity, groove with all interconnections and harmonies uniting man-animal with flower-perfume, and in spirit, if not also on fieldtrips and at KNPS meetings, unite!

Watch for a list of 1995

KNPS activities in the

February, 1995 Newsletter!

**Please check your mailing label
to see when your membership expires.**

**If your mailing label indicates
an expiration date of 1994 or earlier,
please submit your renewal form
and check to the address listed below.**

Kentucky Native Plant Society Membership Form

All memberships run for the calendar year (January through December). Dues received after November 1 are put toward the following year. Members are paid up through the year indicated on their newsletter label.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ KY County _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Work Phone (____) _____

_____ Check here if you want your name, address, and phone number omitted from any membership lists the Native Plant Society publishes in the newsletter.

Please check one:

_____ Annual Individual Membership (\$5)

_____ Lifetime Individual Membership (\$100)

_____ Annual Family Membership (\$7)

_____ Lifetime Family Membership (\$140)

Please check one: _____ Renewal _____ New Membership

ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS! Please check one:

_____ Send all back issues of the current calendar year.

_____ Start my membership at the beginning of the next calendar year.

Total Amount Enclosed: _____ Make checks payable to Kentucky Native Plant Society. KNPS is a non-profit organization and gifts are tax-deductible. Return this form to: KNPS Membership, c/o Dept. of Biological Sciences, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY 40475.

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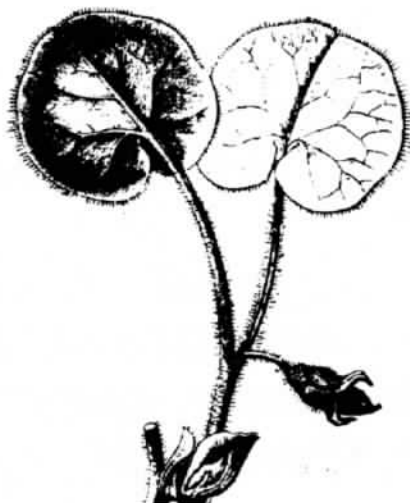
*Deadline for the February Newsletter is January
15. Please be prompt!*

The Kentucky Native Plant Society, Inc. was founded in 1986 as a botanical organization for all persons interested in the native flora and vegetation of Kentucky. The goals of KNPS are to serve as a medium of information exchange, to promote native plant conservation, public education in botany, and botanical research in Kentucky. Annual dues of \$5.00 (Family \$7.00) may be sent to KNPS Membership, c/o Dept. of Biological Sciences, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY 40475.

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