

KELSEYA

Don't look now, but the first annual meeting of our Montana Native Plant Society is about to happen. I'm EXCITED! Hope to see you there!

March was a busy month for members. Three chapters of the Montana Native Plant Society have formed. Members of the Southwest Montana Chapter range from Big Timber west to Three Forks, and from Lakeview in the Centennial Valley south. Jan Nixon, 2620 Sawmill Road, Bozeman MT 59715, Ph. 586-6532, Steve Harvey and Renee Cook are chapter officers.

In the greater Missoula-Bitterroot Valley area a chapter has just formed with Roxa French, 186 Bass Cr. Rd., Stevensville MT 59870, work phone 721-4095, Willis Heron and Carol Morris as officers. Persons attending the April 14 MNPS meeting at U of M are asked to bring chapter name suggestions and there will be a vote.

Newest of all is the Flathead area chapter which encompasses the Flathead, Mission and Swan Valleys. Officers include Anne Morley, P.O. Box 147, Swan Lake MT 59911, ph. 886-2242, Pattie Brown and Kathy Ake.

A group of ten or more members of the MNPS may organize a chapter. A written request to the state board of directors will initiate the process. Kathy Ahlenslager, President.

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR APRIL 29-MAY 1, 1988-

Plans are shaping up for the 1st Annual Meeting of the Montana Native Plant Society. Our first all-state get-together will be hosted by the SW MT Chapter in Bozeman the last weekend in April. There is no registration fee, but donations will be accepted. In our fledgling state, we have many items of importance to discuss, as well as interesting speakers and field trips. To aid in planning, please indicate whether or not you will attend in the space provided elsewhere in this newsletter.

Schedule for 1st Annual Meeting of MNPS

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

Evening, 7:30. 2 slide programs: Steve Harvey, Eastern Montana Flora and Wayne Phillips on Edible Wild Plants. Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Bldg., MSU campus; vicinity 19th Ave.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30 - All events at "SOB" Barn, MSU campus, Garfield St.

8:30 a.m. Board of Directors (State Officers, Chapter Representatives) Meeting.

10-11:30 Keynote speaker: Dr. William Weber from the Univ. of Colorado.

11:30-1 Lunch on your own.

1-2 p.m. General meeting of the membership.

2-3 Interest groups:

Advocacy (Renee Cook, moderator)

Field trips/flora surveys/plant ID/collecting (Steve Shelly and Steve Harvey, moderators)

Landscaping/gardening/vegetation (Shelly Bruce, moderator)

3-4 Recommendations/resolutions from interest group meetings.

4-6 Free time: possible short walks to foothills near M picnic area, Kelseya site in Rocky Canyon, Plant Growth Center tours, "Show-n-Tell" slides by members, etc.

6-7 Potluck Supper: outside if weather permits. Bozeman members, please bring a hot dish. Out-of-town folks with last initial "A" to "L" please bring a salad; with initial "M" to "Z" bring a dessert.

7 p.m. Silent Auction: if you have any books, pictures, materials, etc., that might be useful to native plant enthusiasts, please contribute them to the auction.

7:30 Speaker: Jerry DeSanto on disjunct distribution patterns of species that occur north and south of Glacier/Waterton Nat. Parks.

SUNDAY, MAY 1

8 a.m.-1 p.m. Field Trips: meet at 9 a.m. at K-Mart parking lot, 1126 N 7th.

Choose Headwaters/Horseshoe Hills with Steve Harvey or Limestone Hills with Steve Shelly.

CALENDAR

APRIL 13, Wed. SW MT Chapter, in Bozeman. 7:30 p.m. Rm. 346, Leon Johnson Annex, MSU campus. Speaker: Steve Harvey who'll show us "A Slice of Montana through a Plant Ecologist's Eyes."

APRIL 14, Thurs. Missoula: MNPS meeting at 7:30 p.m. Rm. 307 of Botany Bldg., Univ. of Montana. Roxa French will command us to "Weed it and Reap." Vote on name for this area's chapter & meet the officers.

APRIL 29, 30, MAY 1 - First Annual Meeting of Montana Native Plant Society, in Bozeman. See schedule in this issue.

MAY 12, Thurs. Missoula: Native Plant Gardens - meet in Rm. 307 Botany Bldg. on U. of M. campus at 7 P.M. to carpool for trips to several gardens (nice to have long evenings!) This activity is yet to be confirmed. Watch the Missoulian's "Around Missoula" column.

MAY 14, Sat. SW MT Chapter, in Bozeman. 9 a.m. Plant Growth Center, 11th Av. south of Cleveland, MSU campus. "Plant Identification Made Easy." Morning session in the lab will introduce you to the parts of plants, how to dissect a flower under a microscope and some basic terminology; afternoon session starting at 1 p.m. will head out to a nearby area to put your new knowledge to work. This is one session you must sign up for in advance: call

Steve Harvey (587-0197) or Jan Nixon (586-6532), to reserve a place in the class.

MAY 22, Sun. SW MT Chapter, 9 a.m. Our last "evening" meeting of the year will be a "brunch" Eggs, pancakes, sausage or bacon and coffee or cocoa will be served for \$2.50 a head. Kids welcome, too -- cost the same. Bring plates & utensils. Reservations required so call Jan Nixon or Steve Harvey, or drop a note to P.O. Box 992, Bozeman MT 59771. After breakfast, small groups will visit various nearby habitats.

We'll resume evening programs in Sept.; summer activities are listed in FIELD TRIPS in this issue.

JUNE 9, Thurs. Missoula: a Potluck is planned with alternative in case of inclement weather. Again, watch the paper or call one of the officers.

"Ballot" page-- YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED

During March officers and interested members of Montana Native Plant Society discussed the funding of chapters and of the state organization. The original intent of the state officers was to establish a state-wide society. In turn for dues paid to the state organization, members would receive a newsletter with articles of interest and a calendar of events.

With the establishing of chapters, members are questioning the funding structure of the society. We need input from you, the members, as to how you would like funding handled. Please circle your preferred choice below and return to Jan Nixon, P.O. Box 992, Bozeman MT by April 29th, so we can discuss this issue at the Apr. 30-May 1 annual meeting.

- #1. In addition to the \$8.00 state membership fee, a yet-to-be-determined amount per member will be sent to the chapter the member wants to be affiliated with. The amount of the "kick-back" will be set by the board of directors.
- #2. Aside from the \$8.00 state membership, chapter membership is optional. If a person wants to be a member of a chapter, an additional fee must be paid to the chapter. This chapter fee will be set by the state organization and will be uniform between all chapters.
- #3. Aside from the \$8.00 state membership, chapter membership is optional. Individual chapters will decide whether or not they want to assess a chapter membership fee. If a chapter membership fee is assessed, each chapter will set the size of that fee.

(On the back of above "ballot" place the following questionnaire:)

ASSIST IN PLANNING THE ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 29 to MAY 1, 1988

- You can greatly assist by ticking off which of the following activities you will be attending:
- ___ April 29, Fri. even. slide programs
 - ___ April 30, Sat. meetings and speakers
 - ___ April 30, Sat. supper potluck
 - ___ April 30 Can you bring something for a silent auction?
 - ___ May 1, one or other of 1/2 day field trip.

FIELD TRIPS

April 27, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Come and brush up on your plant identification skills. We will use dichotomous keys to identify plants. You need not have experience with keys. Call Kathy Ahlenslager, 243-4743.

May 1, Sunday, half-day each, in conjunction with MNPS Annual Meeting: "Limestone Hills west of Townsend" - Leader Steve Shelly; or "Headwaters/Horseshoe Hills areas" - Leader Steve Harvey. Carpool at K-Mart parking lot, 1126 N 7th, Bozeman, at 9 a.m.

May 7, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. John Pierce will lead a wildflower trip up Waterworks Hill. We're hoping for a good display of Missoula phlox (Phlox kelseyi var. missoulensis), a plant that occurs only in western Montana and was first discovered on Waterworks Hill. Cutleaf daisy, rockcress, shooting stars, fuzzy-tongue penstemon and many other plants should also be putting on a show. Max Kummerow, leader of a grass roots effort to save the hill from weed encroachment, will be along and hoping for a crowd to help him eliminate some of the knapweed and leafy spurge from the phlox gardens. Meet at the Greenough Park Parking Lot (Monroe & Locust). For more information call Max (549-7149, Missoula).

May 28, Saturday, half-day. "A visit to the Yellow Springbeauty (Claytonia lanceolata var. flava) site near W. Yellowstone" - Leader Jan Nixon, 586-6532. Meet at city park in W. Yellowstone where US 20 turns west to Idaho at 1 p.m.

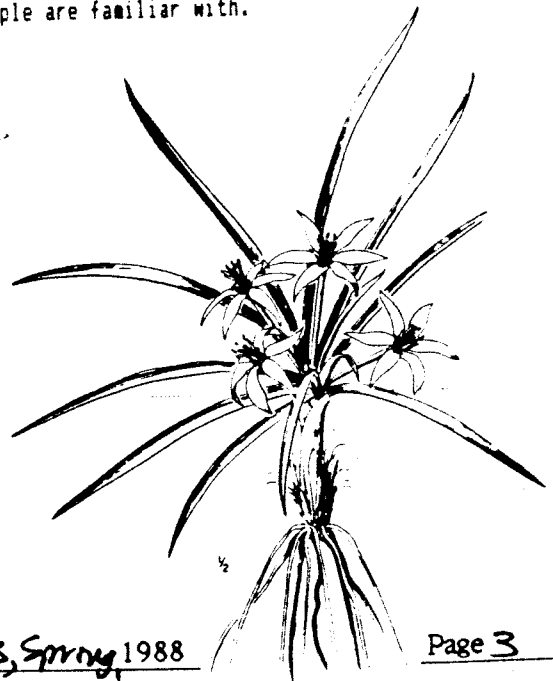
May 28, Saturday, 10:30 a.m. We'll take a hike in the Bitterroot Wildflower Area in the foothills west of Hamilton. Klaus Lackschewitz will be along to help identify plants. We should see paintbrush, puccoon, rockcress, shooting stars. This is one of the few good places in the state to see small bluebells (Mertensia longiflora). Bring a lunch. Meet in the Safeway parking lot in Hamilton. If you need a ride or more information, call Jean Pfeifer (549-0570, Missoula).

June 4, Saturday, 11:00 a.m. Before Europeans introduced cattle and exotic weeds into western Montana, Palouse prairie was one of the predominant vegetation types. Most of what we see today on the hills around us has been drastically altered from presettlement condition, but there are a few places where the grasslands remain pretty much undisturbed. One of these is the Difani Ranch in the Valley View Hills, south of Polson. The Nature Conservancy is currently in the process of working with the Difanis to protect this area. Bernie Hall, a former range conservationist for the Bureau of Land Management and now the land steward for The Nature Conservancy, will lead a walk through the hills and discuss management practices and the preservation of grasslands. The hills should be in full bloom, and the rough fescue will knock your socks off. Bring a lunch and meet in the Safeway parking lot in Polson. If you need a ride or would like more information, call Bernie (443-4089, Helena) or Alice (542-2591, Missoula).

June 18, Saturday, full day. "Centennial Valley and Red Rocks NWR" - leader to be announced. Plan to drive the evening before. Meet at Up. Red Rocks Lake Icampground, 9 a.m. Info. from SW Montana chapter.

JULY 9, SW MT Chapter, full day: plan on driving to the area the evening before. "The Plant Material Center at Bridger, MT" - leader, Pat Plantenberg. We'll visit the Center from 9 a.m. to around noon, then check out some of the interesting nearby areas.

AUG. 6-7 Overnight backpack. SW MT Chapter. Drive Friday evening to an area recovering from forest fire in the Little Belt Mtns. with Wayne Phillips, leader. This is an amazingly diverse area not many people are familiar with.



Leucocrium montanum

RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANT PROFILE

by Steve Shelly (Montana Natural Heritage Program, Helena)
and Jan Nixon (Bozeman)

Clautonia lanceolata Pursh var. flava (A. Nels.) C. L. Hitchcock
Common name: Yellow springbeauty
Family: Portulacaceae
Habitat: Moist mountain meadows
Location: Southwestern Montana
Status: "Critically imperiled globally"
(Nature Conservancy)

The Yellow springbeauty, Clautonia lanceolata var. flava, is a dainty perennial forb in the Portulacaceae (Purslane family). This variety is a yellow-flowered variety lanceolata. Plants of this species have somewhat fleshy, entire leaves, and flowers with five petals. The stems arise from thick, round corms which persist from one to three inches below the soil surface.

The Yellow springbeauty was first found in 1899 by Aven Nelson, then curator of the Rocky Mountain Herbarium at the University of Wyoming, while he was botanizing near Henry's Lake in eastern Idaho. He initially published the scientific name for these plants as Clautonia aurea, in 1900. Later, in 1926, he changed the name to Clautonia flava, since the name C. aurea had been published in the past. Most recently, it was changed to a variety of the white-flowered species by C. Leo Hitchcock, in the Flora of the Pacific Northwest. These changes reflect the varying opinions which have been held regarding the taxonomic status of the Yellow springbeauty.

The range of the white-flowered variety is very

large, occurring throughout the mountains of western North America from British Columbia south to southern California, and east to Alberta and New Mexico; however, the range of the Yellow springbeauty is much smaller. It has only been found in Fremont County, Idaho (where it was recently rediscovered near Henry's Lake by Diane Atwood), Fremont County, Wyoming, and Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, and Gallatin Counties in Montana. Recent searches for the 1982 Beaverhead County record (located by Ken Scow), and two historical records in Deer Lodge County, have been unsuccessful. Thus, the Yellow springbeauty has only been seen twice in Montana since 1986.

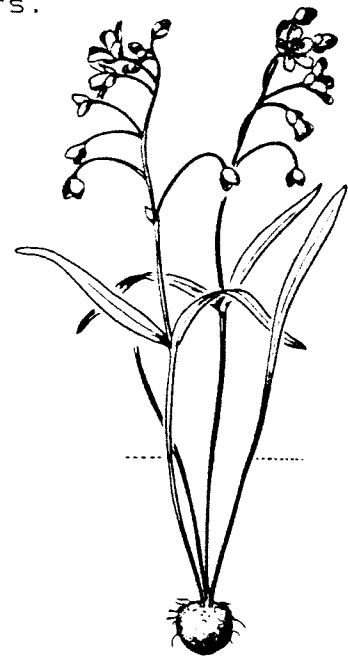
A population was located in May of 1987 by Peter Lesica and Lisa Campbell, along the road between Aracorda and the Big Hole River. Where the plants were not abundant. The largest known Montana population has been found by one of the authors, Jan Nixon, near Hebgen Lake in Gallatin County. In June of 1986, while checking what was blooming in the area, she stumbled upon a small cluster of five or six plants. However, a tremendous approach-

ing rainstorm thwarted a detailed study of the site. The following weekend, she returned, but in the meantime some hailstorms had badly shredded the vegetation. Except for the original clump, no other springbeauties were visible, their petals having been lost in the storms. So, there was not much to do but take a few more photos and plan a return at some future time. As Jan reports, "I started checking the site in mid-May of 1987, and- typical of springbeauties' more common white variety- it was the first thing up and blooming after snowmelt. And it was immediately obvious the population was much larger than those few I'd spotted in 1986. Four more visits during its blooming season (until about the third week in June) confirmed the extent of the population - around five or six acres - and I came up with an estimated total of 1500-2000 individual plants." Thus, this is the largest known population in Montana.

As mentioned, the Yellow springbeauty appears early in the growing season. At higher elevations it may persist into early July. It is most often found in moist mountain meadows and swales, at moderate to fairly high elevations. Associated plant species include poles-ears (Wuethia helianthoides), camas (Camassia quamash), cinquefoil (Potentilla spp.), shooting-star (Dodecatheon sp.), and American bistort (Polygonum bistortoides). In addition, the white-flowered variety Claytonia lanceolata lanceolata occurs with the Yellow springbeauty at all locations except the Hebgen Lake site described

above.

The correct taxonomic status of the Yellow springbeauty is still not fully understood. Morphological observations of the Wyoming populations did not reveal any other striking differences between the yellow and white plants (Hollis Marriott, Laramie, WY). And, since the two types are often found together, with yellow individuals usually being much less common, it has been suggested that the yellow-flowered plants may only be the result of one or a few genetic differences. Detailed studies are planned for this summer, and hopefully the relationships amongst these varieties will become clearer. The Hebgen Lake population will be very important in this study, since it is a very large one, and because it is the only one observed in recent years which consists solely of the yellow variety. In the meantime, the Yellow springbeauty remains one of our most beautiful and elusive wildflowers.



THERE'S ALWAYS MORE TO LEARN!

Perhaps the various field trips and outings being planned by MNPS and its chapters have whetted your appetite for learning about Montana's plants in a more concentrated way. Here's a list of classes offered this summer in settings ranging from 'recreational' and informal to those for people with a previous botany background and familiarity with terminology and identification techniques.

GLACIER INSTITUTE "Alpine Wildflowers" - July 16-17, \$85. The alpine country of Glacier National Park offers some of the most diverse and spectacular displays of alpine flora in the Rocky Mountains. The course focuses on wildflower identification, species distribution, and adaptations to the rugged alpine environment. Teacher: Kathy Ahlenslager; 1 credit through Flathead Valley Community College.

YELLOWSTONE INSTITUTE "Wildflowers of the Bechler Meadows" - July 9-10, \$65. A close look at meadow and forest communities in the upper subalpine zone of the seldom-visited southwest corner of Yellowstone National Park. Focusing on the contrasts between the wildflowers, shrubs and trees in these two habitats, the class will include a brief review of field identification.

"Alpine Wildflowers" - July 12-13, \$65. Day trips to the alpine tundra of the nearby Beartooth Plateau will familiarize participants with plants to be found in various habitats above timberline - krummholz, boulder fell-fields, lush meadows and late-lying snowbanks.

"Wildflowers of the High Lake Country" - July 14-16, \$225. A backcountry trip to the Beartooth Plateau, with llamas toting the gear and a camp-tender to prepare meals. Wildflowers along the edges of the many lakes, streams, snowbanks and glaciers will be featured, from the alpine tundra to open subalpine forest.

Teacher for all three of these classes: Wayne Phillips; 2 credits available if either of the first two are taken in conjunction with the High Lake Country Class. Credit available through MSU, UM, U of Idaho, Brigham Young U. or Ricks College.

CARROLL COLLEGE "Identification of Wildflowers, Trees and Shrubs" - June 12-24. Students collect plants on their own and take them to lab, where they learn the basics of plant identification and taxonomy, and the use of a floral key in making determinations. No prerequisites. Teacher: John Cristenson, 3 credits.

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA "Field Botany" - June 20-Aug 13, variable credits will determine cost. An ecology-oriented course featuring field characteristics of fifty families of seed plants, and emphasizing regional flora, principles of plant classification and evolution. Sessions include both lab and field work, including collecting technique. Prerequisite is an introductory college-level botany course. Teacher: Dieter Wilken; up to 8 credits available.

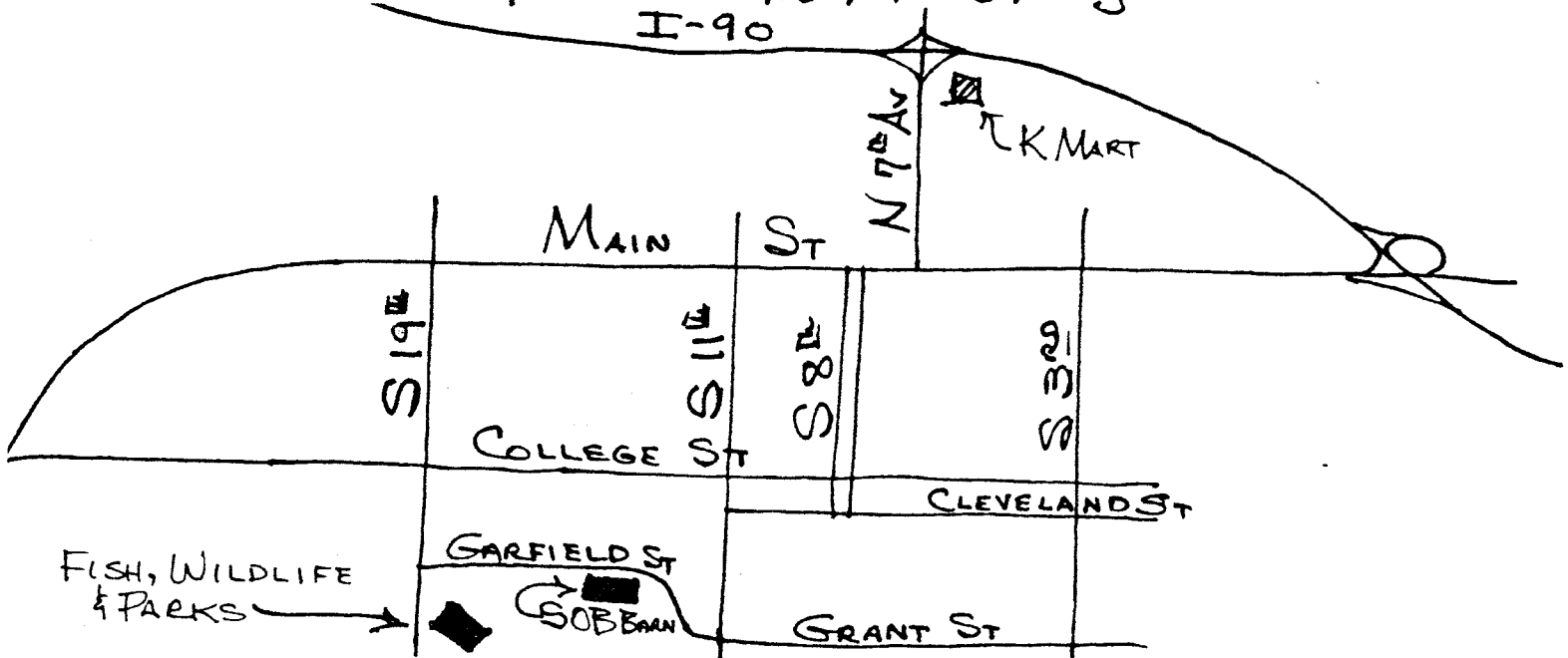
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY "Field Botany" - June 20-July 15.
 Designed for those with no prior background in botany, this class will cover the basics of plant identification/plant communities in a variety of habitats - meadow, foothills, riparian, mountains - with field trips to representative areas for hands-on experience. Teacher: Sharon Eversman; 3 credits.

Many of these classes have limited enrollment and fill up early if you're interested in one, you should send for details right away. For information on registration requirements (the state universities require filing an 'intent to register' if you're not currently a student), as well as lodging and meal availability, write:

Office of the Registrar, Carroll College, Helena, MT 59725
 The Glacier Institute, P.O. Box 1457A, Kalispell, MT 59903
 Yellowstone Institute, P.O. Box 117, YNP, WY 82190
 Office of the Registrar, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717
 Flathead Lake Biological Station, U of M, Polson, MT 59860

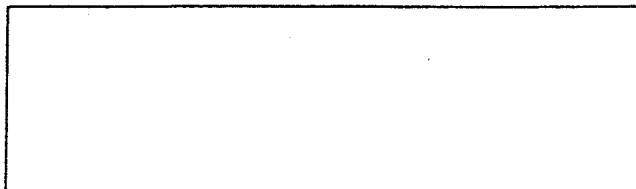
In addition, each of these institutions offers classes in related areas and they'll be happy to send you their summer session catalog on request. My particular recommendation is MSU's "Alpine Ecology" class, offered July 18-Aug 12, which includes a terrific four-day field trip on the Beartooth Plateau. This will give you a good understanding of the ways that wind, water and topography interact to form alpine habitats, and of the plants and animals that occupy those habitats. Teacher is Bob Moore, 3 credits.

→ Map to Bozeman Meeting
 I-90



KELSEYA

Montana Native Plant Society
Botany Department
University of Montana
Missoula MT 59812



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University of Montana
Botany Department
Missoula MT 59812

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