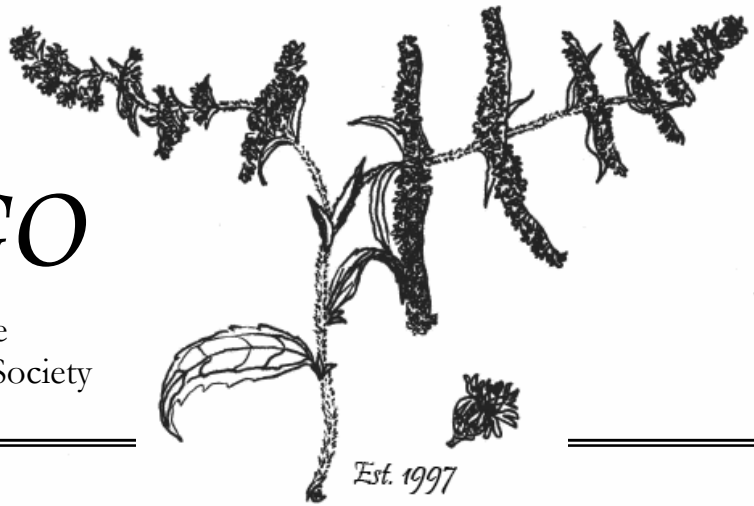


# SOLIDAGO

The Newsletter of the  
Finger Lakes Native Plant Society



Volume 11, No. 3 October 2010

## Finger Lakes Lichens

by Robert Dirig

Plant Pathology Herbarium, Cornell University

### Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield (*Flavopunctelia soledica*)

Finding a new lichen is like having a new toy: You want to play with it all the time until you are saturated with it. With lichens, that usually translates to developing a new “search image” after we once recognize it. And like everything else outdoors, when we know it, we keep finding it, and marvel that we never noticed it before.

This beautiful, small, subtle, yellow-green lichen is a case in point. Although seeming to be genuinely rare (these are the first records for New York), I’ve been noticing it in the Finger Lakes Region since 2003, most recently in Ithaca and near Dryden, Tompkins County, in March 2010.

I originally found it on my family’s homestead in the Catskills (near Hancock in Delaware County) in 1978 — an extensive growth on the sunlit trunk of a Bitternut Hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), growing in the middle of a hilltop field. Realizing it looked different than anything else I’d seen, I collected some. But I could only tentatively identify it as *Parmelia ulophyllodes*, using Mason Hale’s (1979) *How To Know the Lichens*, which was the best available reference at the time. I had no specimen with which to compare it for verification of this name. When I visited the Duke University Herbarium in Durham, North Carolina, in 1995, I showed it to William Louis Culberson, a venerable specialist on the Parmeliaceae, who agreed with my identification (and introduced me to its updated name, *Flavopunctelia soledica*).

Zoom ahead to 2003: While in Watkins Glen, Schuyler County, I noticed an unusual yellow-green lichen



**Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield** (*Flavopunctelia soledica*) at McGowan’s Woods, Ithaca, Tompkins County, N.Y., March 2010. Massed on Basswood (*Tilia americana*) trunk.

Photograph by Robert Dirig

growing on the trunk of a huge Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) on the south shore of Seneca Lake. Looking

*continued on page 4*

## Become A Member of FLNPS:

To become a member of FLNPS (suggested dues \$20 [\$10 students]) send your name, address, phone number, and email along with your dues to:

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society  
532 Cayuga Heights Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850

## Seeking Individuals to Assist with FLNPS Website

This can be a fun way to learn what goes on behind the scenes in website design and production.

Our first and only webmeister, Joe O'Rourke, is retiring from this position. Meena Haribel has kindly offered to step in, but she would prefer to work with a partner or a team, as she is learning website design herself. If you use the FLNPS website for keeping track of events, if you have background in HTML, if you have ideas for the website and how it could be more useful, or if you would consider acting as co-coordinator or backup, please let us know.

You do not need to know anything about website construction in order to help. We need help in many areas. Some areas to consider are:

- Writing- Some examples are: an article about personal experiences on outdoor walks; gardening with native plants; your favorite natural area, etc...
- Graphic Design- Help designing logos, font layout, etc... Also, edit, crop and caption digital photos.
- Photography- Help us locate pictures to go with web articles. You do not have to be a professional photographer although, if you want to submit your own pictures, a digital camera will be needed. These can be your own photographs, those of friends, or research and find some on the web...
- Editing- If you specialize in a field (even non-plant fields such as entomology, taxonomy, fungi, etc.) let us know. You can help us to keep our articles accurate.
- Computer skills- Help with incorporating any of the above into the website code.

All of the above can be done remotely at your home if you have an internet connection. For instance, if we need a picture of a white pine tree and you indicated you can help out in photography, we will ask you to take or find a suitable picture and email us the attachment. If you indicated you can help out editing an article, we would similarly email you the article and you can email us back the edited version.

Regardless of your level of expertise you can help. If interested, please contact Meena at [redacted] or Rosemarie Parker at [redacted]

THANKS!!!

## THE FINGER LAKES NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

### Steering Committee Members

**Charlotte Acharya:** [redacted] at large  
**Krissy Faust:** [redacted] Projects (chair)  
**Meena Haribal:** interim webmeister [redacted]  
**Mark Inglis:** at large  
**David Keifer:** Treasurer  
**Rick Lightbody:** [redacted] at large  
**Susanne Lorbeer:** Outings and Education  
**Rosemarie Parker:** [redacted] Secretary and Assistant Newsletter Editor  
**Dan Segal:** [redacted] at large  
**Anna Stalter:** [redacted] President, Outings & Education (chair)  
**David Werier:** [redacted] Newsletter Editor  
**Bob Wesley:** Outings and Education

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**Send all correspondence regarding the newsletter to: David Werier, Editor, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] 14817 or email [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] nakita@lightlink.com**

### NAME THAT PLANT CONTEST

The photo from last issue's (Solidago 11(2)) name that plant contest was of the flower of the common pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) a well known and loved insectivorous plant of peatlands. Congratulations to the contest winners Betsy Darlington, Lenore Durkee, Vern Durkee, Bob Dirig, Bruce Gilman, John Gregoire, Sue Gregoire, David Keifer, Susanne Lorbeer, and Donald Specker.

This issue's plant contest is pictured below. Please submit your answers to David Werier (email and address in box above). Common and/or scientific names are acceptable. More than one guess is allowed. Hints and suggestions are often provided to contest participants who try. The photo was taken on May 22, 2010 in Tompkins County, NY.



## Thanks!!

As always, big thanks to all the people who volunteer their time to make FLNPS an inspiring, exciting, and important organization

Thanks to all of our walk, outing, and workshop leaders including: Joe McMahon (Big Trees), Susanne Lorbeer (Roy H. Park Preserve, Asters and Goldenrods 2009 and 2010, Hammond Hill, Spring Gorge Walk, Upper Fillmore Glen, Spring Wildflowers at Upper Buttermilk State Park, Early Spring Wildflowers at Lick Brook, Asters and Goldenrods at Monkey Run, Spring Wildflowers, Early Spring Wildflowers), Meena Haribal (Butterflies and Dragonflies, Birds and Butterflies in Robinson Hollow, Butterfly/Dragonfly Walk at Queen Catherine's Marsh), Norm Trigoboff (Bloomsday Moss Walk, Tree Walk, Urban Bryophyte and Ant Identification Walk, Urban Moss Walk), David Werier (Sedges and Grasses, Willows, Urban Lichen Walk, Lovely Lichens, Violet Walk, Lichen Walk, Lichen Outing), Robert Wesley (Wildflower Walk at Dorothy McIlroy Bird Sanctuary, Mother's Day Wildflower Walk), Anna Stalter (Urban Tree Walk, Tree Walk, Woodland Walk, Fall Tree Identification), Krissy Faust (Seed Planting, Annual Seed Collecting Walk), Rosemarie Parker (Seed Planting), FLNPS steering committee (Thatcher's Pinnacles), Tom Whitlow (canoe outing at Owasco Inlet), Nat Cleavitt (Mosses, Liverworts and Lichens), Bruce Gilman (Cayuta Lake Aquatic Plants (Canoe Trip!)), Bernie Carr (Grass and Sedges at Woodchuck Hill), David Griffin (Zoar Valley Day Trip), Carl Whittaker Jr. (May Mushrooming),

Thanks to all of our presenters for our monthly evening presentations including D. Andrew Saunders (Going Nuts: Interpreting the Natural History of the Black Walnut), Rob Naczi (Systematics of Western Hemisphere Pitcher Plants), Charlie Smith (Carolus Linnaeus and the Origins of Organized Natural History Studies), Camille Doucet (Botanical Illustration/Painting), Jerry Davis (Grass Taxonomy), Andy Zepp, Todd Bittner, Lynn Schnurr, Charlie Smith, Kris Gilbert (Panel Discussion: The Status and Prioritization of Habitat, Land and Species Preservation in NY), Lindsey Milbrath and Jeromy Biazzo (Biological Control of Swallow-wort), Art Bloom (Finger Lakes Geology), Tony Eallonardo (Inland Salt Marsh Ecology and Restoration), Robert Raguso (Smelly Red Flowers), Michael Nadeau (Finding [Invasive Plants] Achilles Heel w/o Synthetic Herbicides), Charlotte Acharya (Controlling Forest Invasive Plants), Tim Fahey (The Role of Forests in Local Carbon Budget), John F. Gyer (The Private Life of Trillium), Kristine M. Averill (Invasive Swallow-worts), David Barclay (Ice Ages in the Finger Lakes), Dr. Robert Jacobson, DVM (Native Plants in Patent & Herbal Remedies), David Griffin (The Nature Conservancy's Deer Lick Preserve in Zoar Valley), Dan Segal (Comparison of Finger Lakes and New Jersey

Coastal Plain Communities), and David Weinstein (Project Budbreak, a local phenology project).

## Steering Committee Changes

As announced in the last newsletter Sara McNaul and Joe O'Rourke have stepped down from the steering committee. Since that time Nat Cleavitt has also stepped down since she is moving out of town. All three of these former steering committee members have been with us for many years and have contributed an immense amount to FLNPS. We sincerely thank them for their hard work and dedication. We also wish Nat good luck in her new home in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

## NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Please send items for the newsletter to David Werier, editor (email noted in box on opposite page). The deadline for the next newsletter is **Friday November 12<sup>th</sup>**. As always, we need your pieces to help make this newsletter lively, interesting, and informative. Items to send can include articles, stories, trip reports, drawings, photos, information on relevant upcoming events, letters to the editor, and more. Thanks again for your help in making this newsletter possible.

## FLNPS Financial Statement

### Fiscal Year Sept. 1, 2009 to Aug. 31, 2010

Report presented by Nat Cleavitt, past Treasurer

#### Expenses:

Postage	\$620.68
Copying	\$501.17
Office supplies	\$18.29
Speaker stipends	\$589.32
Other (includes snacks)	\$143.16
Donations	\$164.00
Room Rental	\$230.00
Website	\$195.33
Events (total)	\$1,674.48
Artshow	\$1,511.59
Plant Sale	\$46.52
Solstice	\$116.37
Scholarship	\$0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,136.43</b>

#### Income:

Member Dues	\$1,998.00
Donations (total)	\$1,279.25
Plant Sale	\$1,022.25
Other	\$257.00
Dividends	\$13.70
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$3,290.95</b>

#### Net (Total Income – Total Expenses) - \$845.48

Balance Forward	\$9,169.28
<b>Total at End of Fiscal Year</b>	<b>\$8,283.68</b>

## **Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield**

*continued from page 1*

more closely, I had a vague flashback to my Catskill experience with *F. soledica*, 25 years before. I kept a piece of bark with the lichen on it, and compared it when I got home. It keyed to *F. soledica* in Brodo and the Sharnoffs' color-illustrated *Lichens of North America* (2001), and I was excited to find another place where it grew. I sent an email to Dick Harris, veteran lichenologist at the New York Botanical Garden, asking him how frequent it was in the State. He replied, "I have no records for *Flavopunctelia soledica* in New York. Your timing is off by a month. I just published a very preliminary New York [lichen] checklist in a new journal [founded and edited] by James Lendemer, *Opuscula Philolichenum*" [vol. 1, pp. 55-74]. I was delighted to hear that this was a new lichen record for the State — and that Dick had finally published his lichen list, which many people had been urging him to do for years. I got a copy, and was surprised to see that we have more than 800 species of lichens known in New York, most of them crusts. In 2004, I collected a better specimen at Watkins Glen, and revisited the Catskill site, where the lichen was still thriving on the hickories.

This species is similar to the closely related and more common Speckled Greenshield (*Flavopunctelia flaventior*), but is smaller, with few or no white pores (*pseudocyphellae*) on top; upward-arching, marginal, whitish powdery *soredia* (vegetative propagules that contain a few algal cells covered with fungal hyphae) that may extend beneath the lower surface in a *labriform* configuration; and a black, brown-edged lower cortex. Its main range is west of us. Jim & Pat Hinds (2007), in their *Macrolichens of New England*, reported it from one site each in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut. Brodo *et al.* (2001) also mapped a few eastern outliers in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. It is thus not unexpected in New York, but apparently quite sparse. It is probably more widely distributed, but still undiscovered, at other places in the State.



**Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield** (*Flavopunctelia soledica*) at McGowan's Woods, Ithaca, Tompkins County, N.Y., March 2010. Closeup of thallus showing white marginal soredia.

Photograph by Robert Dirig

Similar sorediate foliose species of this color that grow on trees include the Yellow-green Ribbon Lichen (*Allocetraria oakesiana*), which inhabits boreal swamps and bogs, has a beautiful beige undersurface, and is about the same size. The Speckled Greenshield and very abundant Common Greenshield (*Flavoparmelia caperata*) are much larger yellow-green species that have masses of soredia on the surface of the thallus as well as along the margins. These two species are so obvious and abundant

that it is easy to overlook *F. soredica* when it grows on the same tree.

Despite having seen *F. soredica* in only a few places, I can offer some preliminary insights about its habitat and dispersal. It grows on tree bark or lignum, often in extensive patches, in windswept humid edge habitats that are exposed to full sun during part of the day. Examples include lakeshores, open hilltops, bog mats, and the fringes of woodlands. *F. soredica* spreads by its abundant *soredia*, which may be carried by wind, rain, or animal agents (insects and arboreal birds and mammals). Its massed growth likely results from a constant soredial shower from the lobe tips, which are raised above the thallus surface, thus exposing the soredia to the action of wind and runoff from rain, snowmelt, or dew that carry them away to form new thalli. This dispersal strategy recalls that of the tiny Oyster Lichen (*Hypocenomyce scalaris*), which has heavily sorediate squamules that constantly shed soredia in much the same way, over time producing a large mass on the tree trunk where it grows.

In March, I told David Werier that I'd found the Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield in Ithaca (Tompkins County). He came over that afternoon to see it, and was impressed by its beauty and novelty. With a search image, he found it on a willow (*Salix* sp.) at the tip of Salt Point in Cayuga County a few days later; and I found it again on hickory bark (*Carya* sp.) in an open oak-heath barrens in Chemung Co. soon after.

I hope to encounter *F. soredica* more frequently, now that I know it — but expect that my "saturation level" with this beautiful Finger Lakes denizen will come at a much later date.

### **Chicory with White Flowers?**

by Tom Kozlowski

I was jogging along Brooks St. in Spencer one day. Brooks St. is on the northern border of the village and parts of it are included in an agricultural zone. Since I didn't have my glasses on, when I spotted a white flower along the edge of the road, I thought someone had discarded a plastic white flower. I stopped anyway and discovered it was chicory, *Cichorium intybus*, with white instead of blue flowers. I picked up the pace, ran home, put on my glasses and read that sometimes it can be white or pink. Well, maybe it wasn't a rare find but it was exciting none the less.

### **Pokeweed by Gin Mistry**

Two years ago we put a deer fence around our yard and started noticing the difference in vegetation almost immediately. There was an increase in many plants I had not seen in years.

Common chokecherry, oak seedlings, grey dogwood, and several kinds of viburnums are springing up everywhere. There has been a huge increase in field wildflowers such as turtlehead and New England aster, and in shady species such as jewelweed.

There was one huge "weed" that I had never seen before: about eight feet tall with reddish stems, large leaves, greenish flowers, then later in the summer drooping purple berries. I had to look it up in the field guide to find it was common pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*). It is a hardy native perennial in the south and eastern United States.

I was interested in this plant (the first summer there was only one). It is also known as poke, pigeonberry, soko, and inkberry. I learned that it was known to Native Americans, and was cultivated by early settlers, and brought back to Europe and England. Soldiers in the Civil War used the berries to make ink. The root of pokeweed is used in folk

medicine to treat mastitis in cows.

Although the berries, leaves, and the huge roots are poisonous, the young shoots (up to eight inches in length) are edible. (This is what the deer know). We now have a forest of pokeweed along our new fence and have enjoyed several spring meals of pokeweed shoots. To prepare: cut the shoots when they are six to eight inches tall, in May and June, peel, and simmer like asparagus. Delicious!

We were also happy to learn that the birds love the berries; they are food for mourning doves, robins, jays, cardinals, rose breasted grosbeaks, yellow bellied



Pokeweed Fruits  
photo by Andy Nelson

sapsuckers, and cedar waxwings - (and pigeons?)

Pokeweed - who knew?

# **FINGER LAKES NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

## **UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS FALL 2010 – WINTER 2011**

**October 21<sup>st</sup> – Thursday – 7 pm - Invasive Insects Attacking Native Trees - A film and discussion by Rick Hoebeke, Tom Gerow, & Mark Whitmore.** Both the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer are invasive insects that have been spotted nearby and that aggressively attack native ashes and maples. Come see the Ithaca premier of the documentary film, *Bugged* (24 min.), about the Asian Longhorned Beetle and efforts to control it. Rick Hoebeke, from Cornell's Entomology Dept. (and featured in this film), will follow the film with a discussion on both the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer. He will bring examples of these insects and what their damage looks like. We may also discuss progress on methods of control. On the practical side, Tom Gerow, a local forester from Newfield, will talk about the potential impact on our local woodlots and urban trees. Mark Whitmore, from Cornell's Natural Resources Dept., who has been involved in control of invasive insects that damage native trees of the east, will also be part of the discussion.

**November 18<sup>th</sup> – Thursday – 7 pm – Pathogens in Paradise: Fungi and Wildflowers by Dr. Kathie T. Hodge, Professor in the Plant Pathology Department, Cornell University and Director of the Cornell Plant Pathology Herbarium.** Wildflowers and love may be found in the most unlikely places, but wildflowers aren't unlikely places to find fungi. In fact, there are whole tribes of fungi that focus their malevolent attentions on wildflowers. You've probably seen them without much noticing them. We'll take a photographic tour of some of these familiar but unfamiliar pathogens, and talk about their life histories and impacts on plant populations.

**December 16<sup>th</sup> – Thursday – 7 pm – FLNPS Annual Solstice Celebration** - Our annual solstice celebration of native plants and native plant lovers. There will be a wild foods potluck, native plant seed exchange, members night slide show, plant quiz, live music, and much, much more. Start planning for this event.

**January 19<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday – 7 pm – Bird friendly gardening – the Lazy Way ! by Marie Read, Wildlife Photographer.** Want to entice more birds to your garden? It's easy! Join renowned wildlife photographer Marie Read as she shares her beautiful bird photos and many simple ways to enhance backyards to attract colorful, melodious songbirds.

**February 16<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday – 7 pm – Origins of American Ethnobotanical Medicine: Native Plants from the Aztec Empire to Ithaca – by Eloy Rodriguez**

*All presentations are from 7-8:30 pm at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Building, 615 Willow Ave. and are free and open to the public.*

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## **WALKS, OUTINGS, AND PROGRAMS FALL 2010**

**October 16<sup>th</sup>\* or 23<sup>rd</sup>\* -Saturday - or 17<sup>th</sup>\* or 24<sup>th</sup>\* -Sunday – 1 pm Annual Seed Collecting Outing\***. Led by Krissy Faust. Learn how to collect seeds of late-flowering native plants while supporting the propagation efforts of Cornell Plantations Wildflower Garden and the FLNPS seed exchange. Collecting equipment will be provided and you can take home some seed to try yourself. Location TBA. Meet at CCE at 1 pm to carpool.

**\*Because this walk will depend on both weather and seed maturity, please “register” in advance so you will be advised of final plans at gardener.parker@gmail.com or contact Krissy [REDACTED] for more information.**

**November 14 – Sunday – 1 pm – Fall Tree Identification – Led by Anna Stalter.**

Bring field guides and a 10x hand lens, if you have them! Location TBA. Meet at CCE at 1 pm to carpool.

*Unless otherwise noted, trips begin and end in the parking lot at Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), located just off Willow Ave. in Ithaca. Field trips are free and open to the public. Participants are encouraged to join FLNPS. Participants are also asked to stay on trails and not to pick any plants without the trip leader's consent. **For more information** call the trip leader at the number provided, Anna Stalter at [REDACTED], or Susanne Lorbeer at [REDACTED].*