



SOLIDAGO

The Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Native Plant Society of Ithaca



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WILD LIVE-FOREVER

by Connie Krochmal

Among the fall-blooming natives, there are some beauties. The wild live-forever (*Sedum telephioides*) rivals its cultivated relative, 'Autumn Joy' (*Sedum telephium*). The specific epithet *telephioides* means telephium-like. Other common names for the wild live-forever include cliff orpine and Allegheny stonecrop.

This attractive perennial is native from southern Pennsylvania to western North Carolina with outliers in southern Indiana, southern Illinois, and western Kentucky. In the past there were some populations known from New York but there is doubt concerning their native status. It is found on cliffs, knobs, rocky outcrops, and in rocky woods.

Reaching about 1½ feet in height, this is the tallest of the native sedums. It is produced from a stout rootstock. The erect to slightly sprawling stems grow in a tuft. In most respects, it resembles a petite version of 'Autumn Joy.'

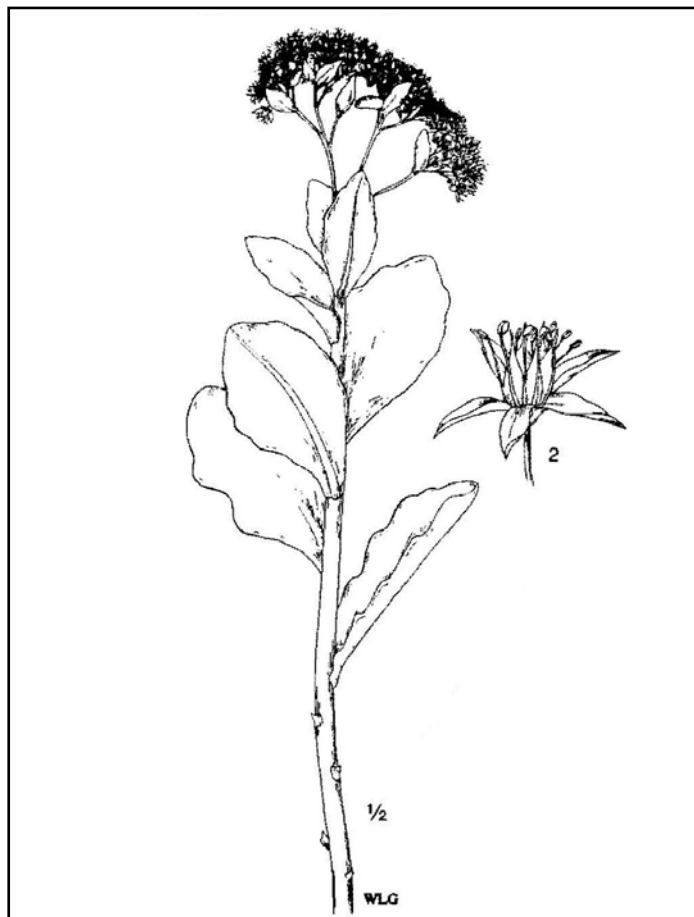
Relatively slender, wild live-forever features egg-shaped leaves. These are purple-tinged and several inches in length. They have a whitish bloom. Sometimes, the edges are remotely toothed. Normally

they will be alternate, but rarely they can be opposite. The lovely pale pink or white blooms appear from late summer through the fall. They open in rounded to flat-topped terminal clusters, 3 inches wide.

This plant is used medicinally for various purposes. It is now being marketed as a good choice for roof gardens. Wild love-forever is recommended for zones 5-8. Preferring full sun to light shade, it does well in an average, well-drained soil. Since it favors rocky places in the wild, this species should be very suitable for sunny rock gardens. Wild live-forever would be a great addition to mixed and perennial borders and beds devoted to native wildflowers.

Like most succulents, wild live-forever can be propagated from cuttings. These should be allowed to dry for perhaps 24 hours before sticking them in soil-less mix. Seeds may also be used. Assuming the growing conditions are ideal, they will even self-sow. For this to happen, we need to refrain from deadheading the plants when the blossoms begin to fade and dry.

When native plant enthusiasts are looking for fall-blooming, native flowers, wild live-forever is a perfect choice for upstate landscapes.



Reprinted from N. H. Holmgren, The Illustrated Companion to Gleason and Cronquist's Manual, p. 208, copyright 1998, The New York Botanical Garden

Allegheny Stonecrop - *Sedum telephioides*

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**Send all correspondence regarding the newsletter
to: David Werier, Editor, ()
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Newsletter contributions

In order to keep this newsletter lively, interesting, and informative we need your words, drawings, and photographs. Letters and questions to the editor are always accepted. Please send your articles, stories, drawings, photos, trip reports, information on relevant upcoming events, etc. to the David Werier, editor (email and address noted in box above). The deadline for the next newsletter is Friday November 19th, 2004. Thanks for your help in making this newsletter possible.

Thanks!!

Thanks to all of the people who have given evening presentation lately including Bob Wesley (Spring Wildflowers - Identification and Ecology), David Fischer (Fungi), and Bernd Blossey (Impact of Invasive Plants on Native Species).

Thank also to all the people who have led walks, outings, and other educational programs including Susanne Lorbeer (Mundy Wildflower Garden, Lick Brook, Lower Treman, and Lime Hollow Nature Center), 7Song (Medicinal Plants, Native and Non-

native), Anna Stalter (Upper Buttermilk State Park), Betsy Darlington (Garlic Mustard Pull), Carl Whittaker (May Mushrooming Returns), Robert Wesley (Rock Cabin Rd, Bear Swamp, and Asters and Goldenrods), and David Werier (Sedges and Grasses part I and part II).

Fall Backyard Notes

by Barbara Barol

Last year I reported in Solidago (4(3): 3) about an especially wide (about 3') and tall (about 6' including panicle) wildflower growing under hemlocks in my backyard near Collegetown. Susanne Lorbeer inspected the plant, tentatively identifying it as common black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*). Rosemarie Parker thought it might possibly be a similar looking species in the Ranunculaceae (buttercup family), mountain black-cohosh (*Cimicifuga americana*). Since the 3' high panicle broke off in a storm, positive identification had to wait for a new season.

After four years residence in the shade between bloodroot and wild geranium, two mystery plants with large, beautiful, three-parted feathery leaves came up this year. Their long panicles, bearing many tiny flowers survived. One of the characteristics of the flowers quite efficiently distinguishes the two species: common black cohosh smells bad!

At a Cornell Plantations celebration this summer, I received a set of strictly medicinal herb seed company's papers about Native American medicinal plants. Common black cohosh is highlighted among them. Here is some further scoop on this subject from that source: the scientific name of common black cohosh has recently been reclassified as *Actaea racemosa*. I think this might be a step up from *Cimicifuga racemosa*. Lawrence Palmer in *Fieldbook of Natural History* says cimex in Latin means bedbug and that common black cohosh was believed to keep bedbugs away.

The description in the seed company's paper adds that common black cohosh is a perennial native to the eastern United States hardwood forest biome. Its best known medicinal use is in helping to control the "hot flashes" of menopause. Also, a tincture of the fresh root is an antidepressant, pain reliever, "peripheral vaso-dilator, antispasmodic, and anti-inflammatory."

Another common name for this useful wildflower is black snakeroot

FLNPS Aster & Goldenrod Walk Report

by Susanne Lorbeer

On Sunday, Sept.12, Bob Wesley led 22 people on a walk to see goldenrods and asters at Monkey Run. We entered from Hanshaw Rd. and walked in the woods and fields where he identified 8 species of goldenrods and 10 of asters as well as several other fall flowers. A list of the aster and goldenrod species seen is provided below. The weather was great and everyone had a good time. One of the participants, Tim Carr, identified the insects that live on goldenrods, an added bonus. We also surprised an immature snake, possibly an Eastern Ring Neck.



<u>Scientific names (as presented)</u>	<u>Current scientific names (if different)</u>	<u>Common names</u>
<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>		Narrow-leaved g.
<i>Solidago altissima</i>		Tall goldenrod
<i>S. caesia</i>		Wreath or blue-stemmed g.
<i>S. canadensis</i>		Canada g.
<i>S. gigantea</i>		Smooth g.
<i>S. juncea</i>		Early g.
<i>S. nemoralis</i>		Gray or old-field g.
<i>S. rugosa</i>		Tall hairy g.
<i>Aster divaricatus</i>	<i>Eurybia divaricata</i>	White wood aster
<i>A. laevis</i>	<i>Symphyotrichum laeve</i>	Smooth blue aster
<i>A. lanceolatus (syn. A. simplex)</i>	<i>S. lanceolatum</i>	Tall white a.
<i>A. lateriflorus</i>	<i>S. lateriflorum</i>	Calico aster
<i>A. lowrieanus</i>	<i>S. lowrieianum</i>	Lowrie's a.
<i>A. novae-angliae</i>	<i>S. novae-angliae</i>	New England aster
<i>A. pilosus</i>	<i>S. pilosum</i>	Frostweed a.
<i>A. prenanthoides</i>	<i>S. prenanthoides</i>	Zig-zag aster
<i>A. puniceus</i>	<i>S. puniceum</i>	Purple-stemmed or swamp aster
<i>A. sagittifolius</i>	<i>S. urophyllum</i>	Arrow-leaved aster

Reprinted from page 65 of Semple, J.C., G.S. Ringius, and J.J. Zhang. 1999. The Goldenrods of Ontario: *Solidago* L. and *Euthamia* Nutt. 3rd Edition. Univ. of Waterloo Biol. Ser. 39: 1-90.

***Solidago altissima* - Tall Goldenrod**

**Carex backii (Back's sedge) a new native species
for the southern Finger Lakes Region of New
York**

by David Werier

This past field season while I was showing an out of town guest some of the incredible ravines and gorges of the Ithaca area I came across a population of *Carex backii* (Back's sedge) (Tompkins Co., Town of Ithaca, June 23, 2004 DW 2336 (BH)). This interesting sedge with very wide pistillate scales has not previously been documented from south central NY.

Carex backii is a member of section *Phyllostachyae* (Crins et al. 2002) and is listed as threatened and as a S2 (generally 6-20 sites) in New York (Young and Weldy 2004). *Phyllostachyae* is a well defined monophyletic group (Saarela and Ford 2001) and is characterized by culms and peduncles which are dilated distally, androgynous spikes, and large leaf-like scales (Naczi et al. 1998). Section *Phyllostachyae* also lacks bracts that subtend the spikes (Crins et al. 2002). Two other members of this section, *C. willdenowii* and *C. jamesii*, are also known from NY as well as Tompkins Co (Werier 2003, Young and Weldy 2004). In fact, *C. willdenowii* was growing nearby the *C. backii* at the Tompkins County site. *Carex backii* can be distinguished from *C. willdenowii* and *C. jamesii* by the lowest pistillate scales being wider than the perigynia they subtend.

The *Carex backii* site in Tompkins County is on the rim of a gorge and the soils are very thin over bedrock. The site is characterized by an open forest with canopy trees consisting of *Tsuga canadensis* (hemlock), *Juniperus virginiana* (red cedar), *Quercus rubra* (red oak), *Q. alba* (white oak), and *Carya glabra* (pignut hickory). The herb and shrub layer is not dense. Species present include *Solidago arguta* (cut-leaf goldenrod), *S. bicolor* (silver rod), *Poa compressa* (Canada bluegrass), *Polygonatum pubescens* (Solomon's seal), *Saxifraga virginiana* (early saxifrage), *Vaccinium pallidum* (low blueberry), *Amelanchier sp.* (shadbush), and *Boechera laevigata* (smooth rock-cress). Only four cespitose plants were seen but an extensive search of the area was not conducted and there are likely more plants near by. Range wide the species has a varied habitat preference being most often found in mesic deciduous forests near rivers and streams. It is also found in open prairies. Population size varies from small to hundreds of individuals (Saarela and Ford 2001). From my observations of the species in the northeastern US, it often grows in association with rock outcrops or on thin

soils over bedrock. It seems to do really well in terms of population size over the limestone pavements east of Lake Ontario but also occurs in areas of lower pH.

Saarela and Ford (2001) present a distribution map of *C. backii* based on voucher specimens (figure 1). On this map there is one dot representing a locale in Pennsylvania and another representing a locale in New Jersey. The Pennsylvania record represents the only know population from that state and is believed to be extirpated (Rhoads and Klein 1993). The record from New Jersey represents the one population know from that state and this population has not been seen recently (Snyder 2001). In New York, the species is known mostly from the northern and eastern parts of the state (Albany, Clinton, Dutchess, Essex, Hamilton, Jefferson, Schoharie, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington Counties) but there is also one recent collection made in 1996 from Onondaga County (Weldy and Werier in prep.). The species was first found in Massachusetts in 1997 (Bertin et al. 2002) and in Connecticut in 1988 (Merhoff 1995). It was rediscovered in Maine in 1987 after a 58 year period (Dibble 1993). The Tompkins County population is right on the edge of the species range.

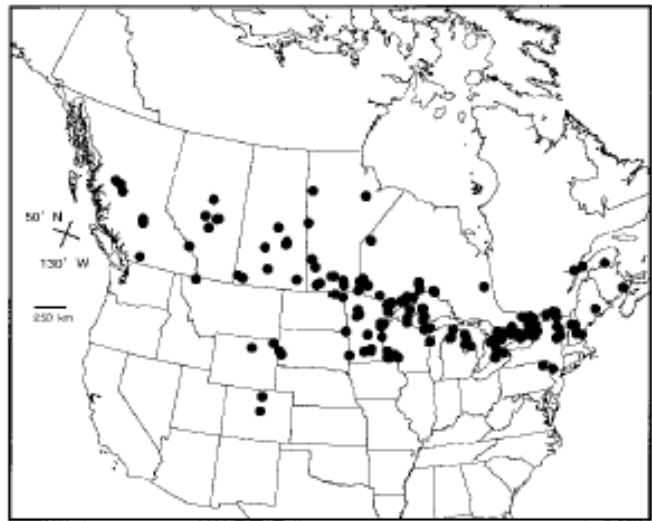


Figure 1 *Carex backii* distribution from Saarela and Ford (2001).

Tompkins County is an area that has been heavily botanized as indicated by the various floras and checklists that cover the county and surrounding areas dating back to 1886 (Clausen 1949, Dudley 1886, Wesley 2001, and Wiegand and Eames 1926). The discovery of *C. backii* growing in Tompkins Co. appears to follow the trend of this plant being discovered only recently in well botanized area (Bertin et al. 2002, Merhoff 1995). It has been asserted that this is because *C. backii* is easily overlooked (Bertin et al. 2002, Dibble 1993, Saarela and Ford 2001). At the

same time, *C. backii* is a very distinctive species and anyone with some knowledge of *Carex* would immediately spot it as distinct. Perhaps the issue is more about a lack of people interested and knowledgeable about sedges.



Illustration by Harry Charles Creutzburg

Reprinted from Mackenzie, K.K. 1940. *North American Cariceae*. New York Botanical Garden, NY.

***Carex backii* - Back's sedge**

Over the past decade the number of species recognized in section *Phyllostachyae* has doubled and a tremendous amount has been learned about this section (Crins et al. 2002). There is even a newly described distinctive species, *C. juniperorum* (Catling et al. 1993), which is known from just outside of New York. Further interest and study in *Carex* will clearly lead to more sites being discovered for *C. backii* in central New York and adjacent areas. It could also lead to the discovery of *C. juniperorum* within NY.

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WALKS AND OUTINGS

October 10, Sunday, 12:00 pm Fern Walk. Led by Bernie Carr. Clark Reservation State Park is the site of an ancient glacial waterfall. The park is incised by meltwater channels and has many other features from the last ice age. Situated on the Onondaga limestone, it contains the largest diversity of ferns from any locale in NYS. There is a good possibility of seeing Hart's Tongue Fern, which is listed on the Federal endangered species list. Clark Reservation also includes over 150 species of bryophytes. Note: Because of the long drive, please meet at CCE at 12:00 pm to carpool. Contact Anna Stalter () if you would like to meet up with us there (a few miles S of Syracuse) and need directions.

October 16, Saturday, 1:00 pm The Annual FLNPS Seed Collecting Walk. RAIN DATE: October 17, Sunday. Led by Krissy Faust. Ever wonder where we get all those native plant seedlings for the plant sale in May? Join our intrepid and devoted seed collectors as they seek out the best seed for our seed starting and plant selling needs! Location to be determined. Meet at CCE to carpool. Note rain date.

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 () or Susanne Lorbeer at ()

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

October 13, Wednesday, 7 PM. Tanglewood Nature Center and Museum. By Elaine Spacher

November 10. No Program. We encourage you to attend the Plantations lecture on Hunting for Medicinal Plants

December 8. Early Solstice Celebration.

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

**Enjoy the last of the
flowers!!**

Gentianopsis crinita
Fringed gentian
by David Werier

