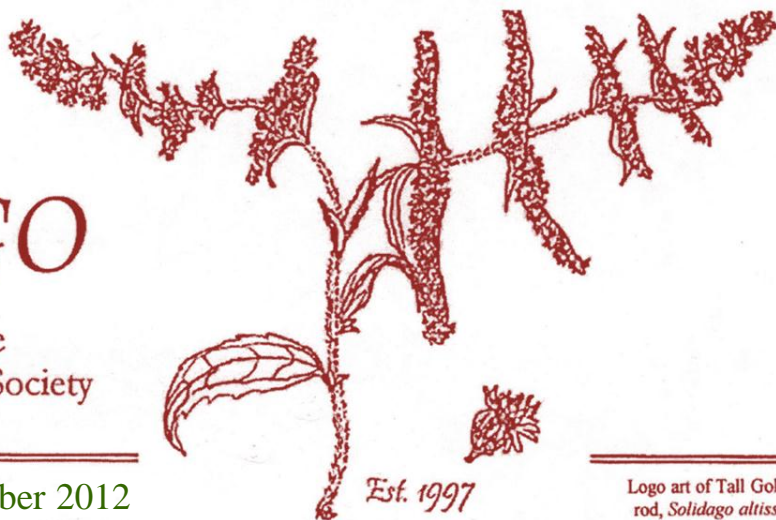


# SOLIDAGO

The Newsletter of the  
Finger Lakes Native Plant Society



Logo art of Tall Goldenrod, *Solidago altissima*,  
by Nat Cleavitt, 2006

Volume 13, No. 4



December 2012

## EDITORIAL

## Wintergreens and Reds



**S** AUTUMN'S BRIGHT LEAVES DROP, and herbaceous plants are withered by frost, the landscape takes on tones of brown and grey. Landforms that have been masked by foliage are suddenly exposed, revealing ridgelines, hollows, and all the subtle details of relief. And cloudy skies and cold winds may bring the first light snowfalls, icicles, and other hints of winter.

An outdoor revel with wild greenery and bright berries can dispel the gloom of these short December days! Those who look can find a surprising variety of verdure at this season, particularly in wetlands. Complementing these are dazzling red berries and crimson twigs that bring festive cheer to remote swamps and marshes.

A few conifers remain green all year — rugged Hemlocks\*, soft resinous White Pines, and occasional American Yews (still hiding in nooks where our resident ungulates cannot reach them). Broad-leaved evergreen shrubs like Great Laurel and Mountain Laurel spread in wonderful tangles, amid the bright twigs of Red Maple and Mountain Maple.

Mosses carpet the ground — including jade Pincushion Moss, the textured weave of Sphagnum, and several fern mosses, among them the elegant Knight's Plume. Fancy Ferns, Christmas Ferns, and Marginal Wood Ferns lend their special grace, while several club mosses add their own pretty forms and designs to the outdoor tapestry. Even the humble tussocks of Common Rush still glow greenly in their centers; while the tiny Sulphur Stubble Lichen spreads its chartreuse dust beneath an upturned tree. The lovely green leaves of Aromatic Wintergreen and Partridgeberry have their own red fruits, and Goldthread's glossy foliage spreads in masses. The brightest scarlet is seen on Winterberry, with a close second in American Bittersweet. And if we stray from the swamp, and are in a forgiving mood, even the Japanese Barberry earns its keep at this season, with cascades of crimson glory! These colorful plants are here, awaiting our greetings at this special season. Enjoy!

### Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*)

is an attractive "wintergreen" of the Finger Lakes Region. Drawn by F. Schuyler Mathews (2/3 life size), ca. 1912. Courtesy of the Bailey Hortorium Herbarium, Cornell University.



\*Please see page 3 for scientific names of plants mentioned.



# Solidago



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Volume 13, No. 4

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Please send *Solidago* contributions  
& correspondence to

Robert Dirig, Editor, P. O. Box 891, Ithaca, NY  
14851-0891, or by email to [red2@cornell.edu](mailto:red2@cornell.edu).

**Deadline for the March 2013  
issue is February 15th.**

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## THE FINGER LAKES NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY STEERING COMMITTEE

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## Please Contribute to *Solidago*

**WE WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS THAT FEATURE WILD PLANTS OF THE FINGER LAKES REGION OF N.Y.** We include cryptogams (bryophytes, lichens, fungi, and algae) as "flora," and recognize that green plants provide habitats and substrates for these and many animals, especially insects. We are interested in zoological associations as long as plants are an integral part of the story.

**We can use a wide spectrum of material in a variety of writing styles.** Our regular columns include the NAME THAT PLANT CONTEST (identifying a mystery plant from images), LOCAL FLORA (plant lists from special sites), OUTINGS (reports of FLNPS-sponsored excursions), PRESSING CONCERNS (news from regional herbaria), and PLANT PROFILES (on specific local plants). We also occasionally publish APPRECIATIONS (memorials to local botanists), CHARISMATIC PLANTS (stories about formative early encounters with flora), REVIEWS (of books, talks, workshops, nurseries), FEEDBACK (commentaries and letters to the editor), ESSAYS (on botanical themes), VERSE (haiku, sonnets, and poems of less formal structure), ART (botanical illustrations, plant designs, pencil sketches, decorations), and PHOTOGRAPHS (stand-alone images, photo essays, and full-page composite plates, or originals that can be scanned & returned). We also can always use FILLERS (very short notes, small images, cartoons) for the last few inches of a column.

**At present we operate in a black-and-white universe,** so contributors need to plan illustrations for this format.



# NAME THAT PLANT CONTEST

**Learning to know a flora** is challenging and fascinating. What weed stem is this, sticking out of the snow? Which shrub? Whose withered fruit?

**This time, our puzzle** (right) was found beneath oaks on a rock outcrop, just west of Sackett Bridge on the north-eastern corner of Beebe Lake (Cornell University campus). It is a delicate, 8- to 12-inch-high shrub with beautiful olive-green bark — another subtle “winter-green.” You might also find it growing on gorge rims, or in edge habitats under oaks and pines on South Hill. **Send entries** to the EDITOR (address in the box on the previous page).

❧



THANK YOU!

The photo from the last issue’s NAME THAT PLANT CONTEST [*Solidago* 13(3), page 3] was of **Grass-of-Parnassus** (*Parnassia glauca*). Susanne Lorbeer wrote: “I was fortunate enough to go to McLean Bogs with a group of Cornell Plantations volunteers led by Robert Wesley (about 12 years ago), and we visited the hillside fen and nearby stream, where we saw these lovely flowers in bloom.” Steve Young, Chief Botanist of the New York Natural Heritage Program, wrote from Albany to say “I love this plant!” John Gregoire called them “Bog Stars.” Thanks to all who entered the contest, and congratulations to the winners: **John Gregoire, Carolyn Klass, Susanne Lorbeer, Rosemarie Parker, Marie Terlizzi, and Steve Young.**

Thanks to **writers** (Rosemarie Parker & Norm Trigoboff), and **artists** as credited. **Snow crystals** (p. 2) were drawn from microphotographs in W. A. Bentley’s *Snow Crystals*. **Photos** on pp. 3, 5 (*two, top right*), 6, 9, & 10 by Robert Dirig; on p. 5 (*two, bottom left*) by Kent P. Loeffler, courtesy of the Plant Pathology Herbarium; of Bill Dress (p. 8, *top*, courtesy of the Bailey Hortorium Herbarium) and p. 8 (*bottom*) from a press photo; of A. LeRoy Andrews (p. 4) from his 1962 obituary. Ed Cobb provided a few details on Bill Dress’ graduate committee members. Torben Russo & Scott LaGreca offered feedback and support. Rosemarie organized calendar copy and Solstice Gathering details, and proofread the pages. Thanks to Gnomon Copy for printing, and Rosemarie & Susanne Lorbeer for mailing the issue.

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES

**SEEKING BOTANICAL LIMERICKS:** Help us celebrate the local flora with humor and whimsy! We’d love to use your botanical limerick in *Solidago*!

**NYFA EDITOR:** The New York Flora Association seeks a volunteer NEWSLETTER EDITOR. Duties include soliciting, receiving, and editing articles, laying out the pages, and organizing the distribution of paper and digital copies. The Editor is supported by and will interact with the NYFA Newsletter Committee. Candidates should be proficient with word processing programs, and ideally familiar with specialized editing/publishing software, but do not need a botanical degree. A passion for plants and a desire to help inform NYFA members and the public on botanical matters are essential. Please send a letter of interest and a resume to: Steve Young, Acting Editor, New York Flora Association, P. O. Box 122, Albany, NY 12201-0122; nisky912@gmail.com.

## EDITORIAL PLANTS (from page 1) SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF PLANTS MENTIONED

Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), American Yew (*Taxus canadensis*), Great Laurel (*Rhododendron maximum*), Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), Red Maple (*Ascer rubrum*), Mountain Maple (*A. spicatum*), Pincushion Moss (*Leucobryum glaucum*), Sphagnum (*Sphagnum* spp.), Knight’s Plume (*Ptilium crista-castresis*), Fancy Fern (*Dryopteris intermedia*), Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), Marginal Wood Fern (*D. marginalis*), club mosses (*Dendrolycopodium*, *Diphasiastrum*, *Lycopodium*, and *Huperzia* spp.), Common Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Sulphur Stubble Lichen (*Chaenotheca furfuracea*), Aromatic Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*), Goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*), Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), American Bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*), and Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*).

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## 2012 Andrews Foray Report

by Norm Trigoboff

**THE A. LEROY ANDREWS FORAY** is a once-a-year week-end of camping, collecting, and talking shop (How do you pronounce *Lophozia*?) for amateurs and professionals who study bryophytes and lichens here in the Northeast. The forays often locate at beautiful yet little-publicized natural areas: rocky, swampy, and deep-woods sites, with many kinds of bryophytes (mosses, liverworts and hornworts) and lichens. In the evening after the first day of field trips, the mud-splattered, cheerful amateur and professional botanists settle in with their microscopes, beers, and thick technical manuals, and struggle to identify their finds.

This year's foray, the 37<sup>th</sup>, was based at the Chimney Corners YMCA in Berkshire County, western Massachusetts, from September 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. About 25 people came. (Some years as many as 60 attend.) We camped under primitive, rugged conditions on bunk beds in a large cabin without TV or radio. The "Y" provided the meals, including bag lunches for day trips.

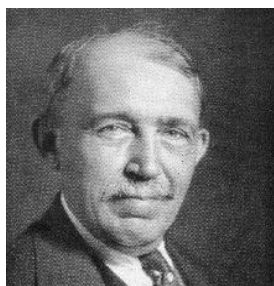
On Saturday, I went with the fen group to a floating *Sphagnum* mat at Halfway Pond in October Mountain State Forest. We later bounced to the Otis State Forest to slog through a tamarack swamp, and then on to a more user-friendly fen. We saw 16 species of *Sphagnum*. It rained, but mostly while we were driving between sites. Saturday night, I heard about reasonably priced hand lenses with very tiny yet powerful LED lamps with regular or UV light. On Sunday morning, I went with the rock people to Windsor Jams, in Windsor State Forest, a grand, Hemlock-shaded, jagged natural rock cut with towering grey schist walls and many species of bryophytes. On Sunday afternoon, the rock group stopped at the Tannery Falls area of the Savoy Mountain State Forest. As impressive as the first site was, the second was finer — two large waterfalls juxtaposed in a landscape of monstrous, tilted, vertigo-inducing rock walls and rushing water beyond anything a sane person could imagine — the kind of place that shows up years later in your nightmares. The spot met the criteria for a good field trip site: a bunch of unfamiliar bryophytes and not enough time for a thorough survey, even if you stayed for days.

If you're interested in lichens or bryophytes, or in a weekend vacation in September at a beautiful natural area in the Northeast, for only \$100 or so (everyone is welcome), you can google "Andrews Foray." More site details about the 2012 foray may be found at

<http://sites.google.com/site/andrewsdraft1/>.



**A. LeRoy Andrews** (1878-1961) was a linguistics professor of Germanic languages at Cornell University, but also a dedicated avocational bryologist and early authority on *Sphagnum*. After retiring from his Arts School faculty position in 1946, he was appointed Honorary Curator of Bryophytes at Cornell's Wiegand Herbarium, where he donated his personal collec-



tion of ca. 50,000 specimens! He published *The Bryophyte Flora of the Upper Cayuga Lake Basin, New York* (Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station Memoir No. 352) in 1957. The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual A. LeRoy Andrews Foray was held in his old collecting grounds around Ithaca, N.Y., in September 1981.

(—Ed.)

## Seneca Meadows Wetland Preserve

by Rosemarie Parker

**ON A LOVELY DAY IN AUGUST 2012**, a group of FLNPS members carpoled to Seneca Falls for a guided tour of SENECA MEADOWS WETLAND PRESERVE, the restoration project that we heard about in a wonderful talk by Andy Buss in fall 2011. Andy has returned to the Midwest, so Ben Zimmerman, the current project superintendent, met us instead.

Remember that Seneca Meadows is a constructed, or reconstructed, wetland next to the very large Seneca Meadows landfill. The restoration work was a replacement for wetlands taken as part of a landfill expansion. The site is on farmland, which had ironically been *drained* to make fields. There are woods, ponds, hills, and wet prairie in the preserve, some retained from prior use, much replanted. Applied Ecological Services, Inc. (AES), the contractor for the construction of the wetlands (and employer of both Andy and Ben), used locally collected seeds as much as possible in the re-plantings.

We first looked at the growing area for another AES project at their office near the preserve. Despite the hot, dry summer, most of the native trees and shrubs were fine. The unquestioned, but non-botanical, highlight was the amazing concentration of frogs and polliwogs in the toddler wading pools growing aquatic plants!

The trails are extensive and in excellent shape. We were able to see only a small fraction of the site on our 2-hour visit, and Ben recommends bringing a trail bike to see the whole preserve. There were birds everywhere, wonderful vistas of flowers and grass, and lots of interesting species. Prairie is not a very common habitat in New York State, but it does exist in patches, especially in oak openings. Some of the species are really more midwestern, but most are Finger Lakes natives.

Visit the Seneca Meadows website for a neat video (with both Ben and Andy!), summarizing the entire project and showing some of what you will see if you go. By the way, Ben strongly recommends a fall visit for the foliage and waving grass. Visit our website for a list of the plant species we saw.

Many thanks to Ben and Andy for helping to increase our member's awareness of this interesting area. Links: Seneca Meadows Preserve: <http://www.senecameadows.com/wetlands.php>; FLNPS report & plant list: <http://flnps.org/activities/336/seneca-meadows-flnps-walk>.



## Additional Lichens at McLean Bogs Preserve

by Robert Dirig

IN 2002, I had the privilege of working with HEATHER T. ROOT, a Summer Intern at Cornell Plantations (**Fig. 1**), in surveying the lichens of Cornell's McLean Bogs Preserve in northeastern Tompkins County, N.Y. We spent a year searching all habitats in this 100-acre tract, finding 66 species of *macrolichens* (fruticose and foliose species) and a few crusts (Dirig & Root 2003). In the meantime, I have continued regular field work at McLean, and have remained aware of lichens while focusing on plants, butterflies, and other aspects of natural history. This note reports three new lichens and an additional form of a fourth at the Preserve, two of which Heather and I had sought but did not find there before 2003.

Named localities in the Preserve were mapped and described in Dirig & Root (2003: 331-334), and voucher specimens have been deposited in the Plant Pathology Herbarium at Cornell University (CUP).

### Recently Discovered Lichens

The first discovery was the "shade form" of the **FORKED SHRUBLET LICHEN** (*Cladonia furcata*, **Fig. 2**). We found a number of specimens of this common and familiar species during our 2002 study, but all of the "sun form," which has few podetial squamules, usually a brown color, dense erect growth habit, and sunny early-successional habitat. We had looked for the shade form, which is quite different — jade green, with abundant squamules, growing in sprawling, cushion-like, tangled mats in semi-shaded acidic microhabitats. TORBEN RUSSO (who also worked with me as a Cornell Plantations Summer Intern on a survey of McLean's vascular plants in 2006) and I found it on the east edge of the Beaver Pond, on a dry hummock among mounds of Pincushion Moss (*Leucobryum glaucum*), growing in the dappled shade of a Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) grove, on 8 Sept. 2006 (L-7779).



**1.** Heather Root taking advantage of a tree platform to examine tree trunks for lichens, Beaver Pond, 16 July 2002.



**2.** Shade form of Forked Shrublet Lichen (depauperate), east of Beaver Pond, photographed 22 August 2012.

The next new lichen was very exciting: the **BOREAL CLUB-MUSHROOM LICHEN** (*Muticlavula mucida*), a local *basidiolichen*, with a basidiomycete as its fungal partner! (Almost all lichens are *ascolichens*, with an ascomycete as the mycobiont.) It grew in the same area on the east side of the Beaver Pond, covering a fallen, soggy, rotten, decorticated log of Big-toothed Aspen (*Populus grandidentata*). A bright green algal base (*Coccomyxa* sp.), the photobiont of this lichen, covered the log, with erect, curved, ivory, sometimes branched fungal basidiocarps about 1/4 inch high, arranged in a spaced rhythmic on this substrate. Torben and I found it on 21 October 2006 (L-7718). **Figs. 3-4** show the massed habit and unidirectional curvature of the basidiocarps.



**3-4.** Boreal Club-Mushroom Lichen, showing massed rhythmic growth on a dead log (3), and enlarged basidiocarps (4). Lab photos by Kent P. Loeffler.



I previously reported local records of **POWDER-EDGED SPECKLED GREENSHIELD** (*Flavopunctelia soredica*) in the Finger Lakes Region (Dirig 2010). After becoming aware of its presence in the local flora, I re-examined our 2002 McLean specimens of the similar but larger **SPECKLED GREENSHIELD** (*F. flaventior*), to be sure we had not overlooked *soredica* (there were none). On 18 March 2011, I found *P. soredica* on the northwestern corner of the Bog B basin, growing on a piece of birch bark (*Betula* sp.) that was lying on the ground, having fallen over the winter (L-8417). Evidently it grew high up on a tree trunk or branch, as I have not seen this lichen growing near the ground in the Preserve, or anywhere in the Bog B basin during a thorough search in August 2012.

The final new species belongs to a genus Heather and I actively sought but did not see in 2002. It is the **PEPPERED DOG LICHEN** (*Peltigera evansiana*, Fig. 5), which grew in a 6-inch-diameter rosette on the trunk of a large, fallen Balm-of-Gilead (*Populus* × *jackii*) tree, lying in the streambed of Lost Brook where it enters the Mud Pond Basin on its southeastern edge, on 23 July 2012 (L-8425). The top of the thallus is covered with abundant fine, dark isidia. In this region, Balm-of-Gilead is usually seen as a cultivated ornamental. Dudley (1886: 92) report-

ed “thirty or more” of these trees from the “Round Marshes” (an older name for McLean): “From their relative position it is altogether probable that they were planted next to an old ditch made many years since. But this is only evident after close inspection, as considerable undergrowth at present surrounds them. The trees are all pistillate. Young trees near, have probably sprung up from windfall twigs.” Many of these trees have toppled in the last few decades, but I found about 20 of them still standing there in August 2012. It is an odd substrate for a scarce lichen in such a wild place.

**Thanks** to Scott LaGreca, Heather Root, and Torben Russo for reading a draft of this note, to Torben for our shared field explorations that facilitated two of these discoveries, to Kathie T. Hodge for helping identify *Multi-clavula mucida*, and to Kent P. Loeffler for Figs. 3-4.

### Literature Cited

Dirig, R. 2010, October. Finger Lakes Lichens, Powder-edged Speckled Greenshield (*Flavopunctelia soredica*). *Solidago* 11(3): 1, 4-5.

Dirig, R., & H. T. Root. 2003. Lichens of the McLean Bogs Basin near Ithaca, New York. *Mycotaxon* 87: 329-350.

Dudley, W. R. 1886. *The Cayuga Flora. Part I: A Catalogue of the Phaenogamia Growing Without Cultivation in the Cayuga Lake Basin*. Bulletin of the Cornell University. (Science.) Vol. II, Ithaca, N.Y.: Andrus & Church, xxxii + 133 + v pp.

### APPRECIATIONS



**BILL DRESS PASSED AWAY NEARLY A YEAR AGO**, on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2011, at age 93. He was one of the earliest members of the FLNPS, who attended our first meetings in autumn 1997, and provided suggestions and guidance over many years. The following notes are a compilation of information from Bill’s obituary in the *Ithaca Journal* (January 5<sup>th</sup> 2012), a brief statement by Rosemarie Parker from September 2012, notes from an interview he gave on December 4<sup>th</sup> 1996 (in which he discussed his Cornell career), and an appreciation by Robert Dirig written in January 2012.

Rosemarie summarized Bill’s early involvement with the FLNPS, noting that “he helped to identify anything and everything [from the cultivated and wild flora] that people brought to meetings or the May plant sales after we had a FLNPS table there. He was initially looking for garden-worthy forms or cultivars of native species. He and Elizabeth Mulholland were interested in *Geranium maculatum* variations. We still give new FLNPS members the *Checklist of the Vascular Plants of the Six Mile Creek Ravine* that was compiled by Bill and Elizabeth for the Six Mile Creek Advisory Committee in 1989. Bill was always asking us ‘Native to where?’ or even ‘Where in the Finger Lakes?’ He thus helped to define the FLNPS’s interpretation of local native plants.”

Bill was born in Buffalo, N.Y., on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1918. He graduated from South Park High School, and later attended the University of Buffalo (SUNY



**5. Peppered Dog Lichen**, Lost Brook, photographed 22 August 2012. The black “peppering” (arrows) is caused by *isidia* (vegetative propagules).

Buffalo), graduating with an A.B. degree in classical languages in 1931. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in Louisiana, England, North Africa, and Italy from 1942-1945.

**BILL ARRIVED AT CORNELL IN MARCH 1946**, after World War II, supported by the G. I. Bill. He lived at the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity. He was interested in horticulture, and entered Cornell's Floriculture Dept. with no science background. To remedy this, he took courses in genetics, chemistry, plant physiology, and basic botany for the first 1½ years. He then was accepted into the Cornell Graduate School, where he switched to the Field of Botany after taking a course in "Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants" that was taught by **George H. M. Lawrence**. Lawrence became his botanical mentor, and chaired his doctoral committee, which also included **Dr. Lowell Fitz Randolph** in cytology and **Dr. Harold H. Smith** in genetics (Plant Breeding). Bill's research project was a revision of the eastern North American species of *Chrysopsis* (Golden Asters, a group of yellow-flowered, daisy-like herbs). While a graduate student, Bill also collected and pressed plant material for the Floriculture teaching collection. His Ph.D. was awarded in 1953.

After graduating, Bill took over teaching the Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants course from Lawrence (he had already been teaching the labs in graduate school). His office was at the old **Sage Place headquarters of The Liberty Hyde Bailey Hortorium**, between East Seneca and East State Streets in Ithaca. He worked as a professor for this unit of Cornell University throughout his career.

At that time, the Hortorium's space was in the original carriage house for the Sage Mansion. Bailey first used the carriage house for his horses and carriages, and built an attached house and garage toward East State Street. After cars were acquired, he converted the carriage space into a palm herbarium.

The Hortorium's main room had two long tables. An illustrator sat at one end, **George Lawrence** and **Hal Moore** (an internationally known palm specialist) at a perpendicular table, and the world-famous horticulturist and botanist **L. H. Bailey** and Bill on the other end. **Ethel Zoe Bailey**, Liberty's younger daughter, who worked as the Hortorium's Curator, also had her desk there. Bill entered this vibrant horticultural unit a few months before Liberty died, and remained associated with it until he retired in June 1982, and afterwards as Professor Emeritus.

When Mann Library opened on the Cornell University campus, the Hortorium moved from Sage Place to the fourth floor of this new building, where it has remained, except for a temporary vacancy during Mann's renovation between 2003-2008.

Bill had some input into L. H. Bailey's widely-used *Manual of Cultivated Plants*, which was prepared chiefly by Ethel, Hal, and Bill. George Lawrence founded the

horticultural journal *Baileya* to celebrate the centenary of Bailey's birth in 1958. Bill edited this from its inception to his retirement. He was also heavily involved in editing and producing *Hortus Third*, a 1300-page encyclopedia of American cultivated plants. (See below for more details on these publications.)



*I knew Bill Dress from 1980 to his passing in 2011, and worked at the Hortorium for 28 years, where he and I were regularly associated. These notes add more details, and summarize and interpret his accomplishments.*

**FROM HIS GRADUATE STUDENT YEARS INTO RETIREMENT**, Bill played a major role in the activities of the Bailey Hortorium. He taught several courses, edited horticultural periodicals and books, assisted with fundraising and public service, contributed thousands of specimens to the Herbarium, regularly donated books to the Hortorium's Library, and directed the research projects of graduate students.

In addition, he served as Cornell's **scholar of scientific Latin**, rooted in his undergraduate training in classical languages. This role was very important, as all new plant species were described in Latin (or latinized Greek), so botanists needed to know this ancient language well enough to read and write descriptions. I had the good fortune to take Bill's course in Botanical Latin the last time it was offered (spring 1982). He organized it on the theory that written descriptions are mostly nouns and modifiers of nouns (adjectives, prepositional phrases, etc.), so he taught these aspects of the language, and just enough grammar to have it all make sense. Another emphasis was not mixing Latin and Greek roots when coining new scientific names. (For example, if you wanted to write "greenish-white," you could not use a Greek root for green and a Latin word for white in the same new name; each part had to come from one language.) To facilitate this, he provided a long chart with English words down the middle and their Latin and Greek equivalents on either side. One week we had an exercise to practice this. We also practiced translating English phrases, sentences, and paragraphs into Latin, and vice-versa. It was all very practical. I had studied Latin for three years in high school, and had used scientific names of plants and animals for many years, so his course was a nice review for me, and I was very impressed by Bill's intelligent and insightful approach in making it perfectly understandable and useful for people without a Latin background.

Bill had a passion for **gardening**, and each year grew new flowers and other plants that entered the horticultural trade, and kept **specimens** for the Herbarium. After decades of practice, he was a superlative collector (see photo). His specimens were always beautifully pre-





**William J. Dress** pressing plants (*Aeonium*, *Kalmia*) at the Bailey Hortorium in Mann Library, on 1 June 1956.  
[Photo by Sol Goldberg, courtesy of the Bailey Hortorium Herbarium, Cornell University.]

public. He also labeled some of Dr. Randolph's pressed iris specimens during his retirement.

Bill frequently **took people into the field** to show them rare local plants. Sheila McKay-Kuja, a graduate student with Paul Catling in Ontario, came in May 1981-1982 to look for Sand Cherry (*Prunus pumila susquehannae*) at South Hill Swamp (now Clausen Swamp). Bill showed up in a summer suit, tie, and dress shoes to slog through the pools and mud of this special preserve; he was of an era when professors dressed that way, and it would not have been proper to appear otherwise. I had seen this rare shrub at the Albany Pine Bush, but never in Ithaca, so it was a treat to find it locally. Bill also took me to Jam Pond Bog near German, Chenango Co., N.Y., for the first time in 1986, a place I had long wanted to visit. On the way he

pared, among the best we received; always with excellent documentation, and sometimes with notes for the person who would glue the plants on sheets as to how to orient the pieces to show everything to the best advantage. He donated thousands of specimens to the Hortorium's Herbarium.

Bill was an excellent, meticulous **editor**. During his career, he edited most of *Hortus Third*, a massive encyclopedia of American cultivated plants that was prepared by Hortorium staff and other specialists; and thirty years' issues of *Baileya* (1955-1985), a quarterly journal of horticultural taxonomy that was published by the Hortorium. In Bill's last issue, David Young, who was Director of the Hortorium at the time, wrote: "This issue of *Baileya* is the final number of Volume 22 and also marks the end of an era; this is the last issue of *Baileya* to be edited by William Dress.... We all owe Bill our deepest gratitude for his devotion to the Hortorium and its programs, and especially for the many hours he has spent editing manuscripts for publication in *Baileya*."

In addition to his Hortorium duties, Bill was active in **regional botanical and horticultural efforts**. In addition to helping with FLNPS, Bill was involved with the local orchid society and rock garden group, and conducted field trips to choice natural areas throughout the region for the Cornell Plantations, to show people rare and interesting wild plants. He made an inventory of all the plants of the Six Mile Creek gorge and bottomlands for the City, and donated 10 forested acres on West Hill in Ithaca for a preserve, now known as Dress Woods. Throughout his career he cheerfully identified plants of the aster family and cultivated flora for colleagues and as a service to the

pointed out Blue Buttons (*Knautia arvensis*), a recently naturalizing European wildflower that had spread along the roadside. Every time I have driven by this spot on the way to Jam Pond, I remember his guidance on that trip.

**BILL WAS AN HONEST, GENTLE, FRIENDLY MAN**, very good with people, and a wonderfully kind person — always professional, helpful, and nice to everyone. For years he voluntarily drove buses for FISH to help people get to appointments and supermarkets. He also regularly helped take care of retired colleagues from the Hortorium (including **Ethel Bailey**, and **Mitsu Nakayama**, the Hortorium's botanical illustrator from the 1950s-1980). Bill loved books, opera, and art, collected pre-Columbian native sculptures from Latin America, and avidly read *The New Yorker* to keep abreast of the arts and cultural happenings. His conversations often began with a joke he had recently heard, and it was always a delight to speak with him.



In recent years, as walking became more difficult, he lived at Kendal at Ithaca, a large retirement community. It was with sadness that I heard of the passing of this world-famous Hortorium icon, very fine person, and friend to many, Bill Dress.

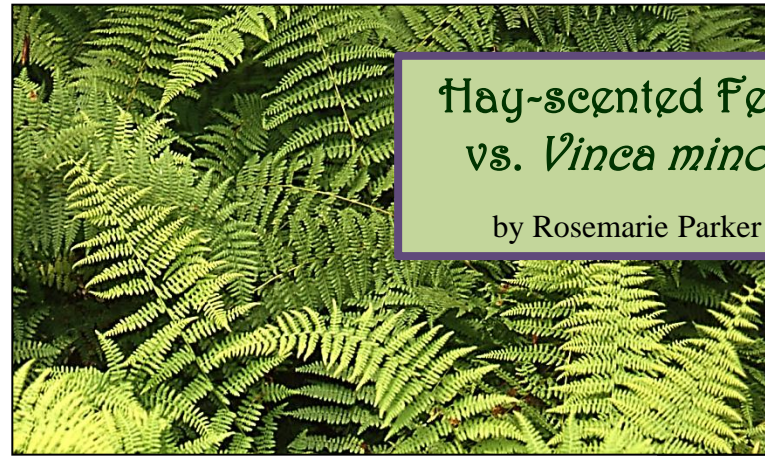
— *Robert Dirig*

A JOKE BILL WOULD HAVE LIKED:  
"Brrrr!" said the Burdock, shivering in the cold wind. "I need something warm and fuzzy to latch onto!"



## Hay-scented Fern vs. *Vinca minor*

by Rosemarie Parker



**AND THE WINNER IS...THE VINCA!** Since I started this quest on the FLNPS listserve, I thought I should report the results, sad as they are.

Several years ago I started looking for **HAY-SCENTED FERN** (*Dennstaedtia punctilobula*), an aggressive New York native. I had read a glowing report of its use as groundcover in a then newly published book by William Cullina, where he mentioned it could stand rather tough conditions, and was wonderful when backlit. I have eliminated some of the **PERIWINKLE** (*VINCA MINOR*) that infested my woods in the years prior to my arrival. But a rather large area across my intermittent stream, and thus outside of my deer fence, has just seemed too extensive, too difficult to work, and not worth much investment in replanting.

In 2009, FLNPS members worked with the New York State Department of Transportation and Cornell Plantations to rescue many plants scheduled to be destroyed as part of the completion of Interstate 86 through the Parkville area in the Catskills. There were many Hay-scented Ferns there, and I took a few. I obtained more as bits and pieces were removed from more desirable rescued plants. (Most people don't rescue Hay-scented Fern due to its strong spreading habit.)

As an experiment, I hand-weeded two areas (approximately 3 ft. × 3 ft.) in my *Vinca* swath, with differing shade and moisture, and plopped in the ferns. The entire area is shaded and dry, but some spots more so than others. The ferns were lovely the first year, and the deer were totally uninterested in them. By the second year, there were fewer ferns, but still a good number, though none had spread to the cleared area around the planting. I was hoping that I could expand the fern area slowly by removing the *Vinca* as the aggressive fern did its thing.

Unfortunately, as many had foretold, the pattern of the second year repeated again and again — fewer ferns, not more, and no spreading. Once again my yard stretches the definitions of “dry shade” and “well-drained”! At this point, I have two mostly empty spots with no Hay-scented Fern. But there were some interesting gleanings ~9~

from the experiment:

(1) **Deer just don't like ferns.** I planted some **TALL THIMBLEWEED** (*Anemone virginiana*) adjacent to one of the plots, and it was eaten quickly and thoroughly. Although there were still many ferns within a nose-width, they were untouched. (The *Anemone* persists, but never gets more than a basal rosette before being munched.)

(2) **Even the first year after clearing, the number of toothworts (*Cardamine* sp.) in the plots was greatly increased** over the surrounding *Vinca*-covered ground. By the second year, the density of **CUT-LEAVED TOOTHWORT** (*C. concatenata*) was amazing—an island of white flowers surrounded by green *Vinca* with white sprinkles. I had not realized the toothwort density in this area matched that across the stream, where steeper slopes provide breaks in the *Vinca*. If I could ever remove the *Vinca*, I would at least have a nice spring view. I would add that the *Vinca* seems to “hold back” the *Cardamine* as much as, maybe more than, the compacting of soil on the footpaths across the stream.

(3) **Marginal Wood Fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*) is still my hero.** A wee bit must have been mixed in with that Hay-scented Fern, as there is one clump, and it is still hanging on. It survives fine inside the fence, where I occasionally water. But to survive where even the *Vinca* is slow to return — that is worth praise!



Marginal Wood Fern

# Finger Lakes Native Plant Society

## 2012 Solstice Celebration

Wed., December 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. *ff.*



Ken Post Classroom  
in the Horton Lab on the  
Cornell University Campus  
(same place as last year)†

### PLEASE HELP MAKE IT FUN

**ONCE AGAIN IT IS TIME** for the annual FLNPS celebration of native plants and native plant lovers. **You are key** to making this event fun. *Please help with the following:*

**FOOD:** We hope everyone will bring a dish having a native or naturalized plant ingredient. The ingredient need not be foraged; supermarket berries or nuts are fine. But we will highlight creative uses of local native flora, and there will be a “people’s choice” prize. If you have questions, please contact *Rosemarie\**.

**DOOR PRIZES:** Do you have something plant-related to offer as a door prize? Please contact *Rosemarie\** so we know how many to expect.

**SLIDE SHOW:** This is your chance to show a few slides of your favorite plant, natural area, or especially great shots. Please contact *David Werier\** so we will have the proper equipment, and because the total number of slides shown will be limited.

**SEEDS:** If you have collected regionally native seeds, please bring some for distribution. If possible, please let *Krissy\** know ahead of time, so we can include photos. Label your seeds by species and include collection location and whether garden- or wild-collected.

**SET UP:** Help is needed in setting up and cleaning up. If you could come a bit early or stay late, please contact *Rosemarie\**.

†Unless you came last year, **it all starts with a map-reading adventure to find the room. Be sure to look at the map on the reverse side of the meeting announcement!**

**\*CONTACTS:** ROSEMARIE PARKER [redacted] DAVID WERIER [redacted]  
[redacted] and please put “FLNPS slide show” in subject), & KRISSEY BOYS [redacted]  
[redacted]

*This celebration is always enjoyable. We hope to see you there!*

## UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS, EARLY WINTER 2012-2013

**January 16<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday):** **FLORISTIC HIGHLIGHTS OF CORTLAND AND ONONDAGA COUNTIES, N.Y.,** a talk by Michael Hough of SUNY-Cortland, **7:00 p.m.**, at the **Unitarian Church Annex**, E. Buffalo St., Ithaca.

**February 20<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday):** **THE EPIC SAGA OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT**, a talk by **Akiva Silver**, **7:00 p.m.**, at the **Unitarian Church Annex**.

This talk presents the story of one of the world's greatest trees. The American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) once dominated the forests of the East. It was the pinnacle of a wildlife tree, tremendously useful to humankind, a supreme native species that was almost wiped out by a devastating blight a century ago. People of the era watched in horror as whole hillsides died. Today there are small surviving American Chestnuts scattered throughout the woods. Very rarely someone finds a "big" one. Groups and inspired individuals keep the restoration of this tree a living dream through planting, breeding, and other mysterious methods.

[Not FLNPS: **March 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> (Friday & Saturday):** **DESIGN WITH NATIVE PLANTS SYMPOSIUM**, conducted by **Dan Segal & Rick Manning**, all day at **Cinemapolis** in downtown Ithaca. Visit The Plantsmen ([www.plantsmen.com](http://www.plantsmen.com)) for complete details.]

**All FLNPS presentations** are from 7:00-8:30 p.m., and are free and open to the public. They are held at the Unitarian Church Annex (corner of East Buffalo & North Aurora Streets in Ithaca, N.Y.). Please enter at the side door of the Annex on Buffalo St. and go upstairs. (An elevator is also available.)