



# Nature Notes

Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, May 2008, Vol. 80, No. 5  
First Issue November 1929

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Ann Earley

The 2008 WGNSS spring banquet held on May 14 at Eden Seminary provided a festive conclusion to our WGNSS program year. The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Jim Ziebol. This year's WGNSS scholarship recipients were introduced and honored. A silent auction was held, featuring items which belonged to Phoebe Snetsinger; we thank David Snetsinger for donating the auction items.

Our keynote banquet speaker, Dr. Alan Journet of Southeast Missouri State University, accompanied by his wife, Dr. Kathy Conway, spoke to attendees about "An Ecologist on Vacation: Wildlife in South Africa." The presentation featured some great photography of Krueger National Park and much interesting commentary about traveling in that area. In appreciation for their program and work promoting conservation and awareness of our natural world, WGNSS is making a contribution to KRCU Cape Girardeau, Southeast Public Radio, in honor of Alan and Kathy. Since 1981, Alan has hosted a weekly two-hour program on KRCU entitled "A Musical Meander."

Many thanks to Board Member-at-Large Anne McCormack, who volunteered to organize and coordinate our banquet this year. Thank you, Anne, for everything you did to make the evening very special! Other thanks go to: Nels Holmberg for recommending our speakers; the caterers at Designing Chefs; Paul Brockland and Randy Korotev for arranging for the beverage area; Rich Thoma for preparing slides with the evening's agenda; Jeannie Moe for donating plants from the Jim Ziebol Butterfly Garden to use as attendance prizes; Yvonne Homeyer and Dennis Bozzay for providing equipment used in the evening's program; Margy and Dan Terpstra for donating notecards; and to everyone else who helped to make the evening fun and memorable.

Outgoing First Vice President Jane Walker was honored for her service the past two years. As First Vice President, Jane planned and coordinated a great selection of general meeting program topics for WGNSS, and she also volunteered to serve as acting Secretary during the past few months. Thank you, Jane, for your service to WGNSS. We wish you all the best in the future.

At our April program meeting, our annual election of officers and Board members was held. Shawn Clubb will succeed Jane as First Vice President. George Yatskievych was elected as a Member-at-Large and will be succeeded as Botany Co-Chair by George Van Brunt. Layne Van Brunt was elected Secretary. We look forward to having Layne and George join the Board. Many thanks to all of those who have agreed to serve WGNSS as officers and Board members.

(Cont'd next page)

As summer draws near, *Nature Notes* and our monthly general program meetings will be on hiatus until fall. During this time, as you make your summer plans, please remember to renew your WGNSS membership for the coming year. And if you have any program ideas (topics or speakers) you would like to recommend for our fall schedule, please provide those to Shawn Clubb. Thank you for your support of WGNSS, and enjoy your summer!

## **TRIBUTE TO WGNSS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT JIM ZIEBOL – Ann Earley**

He is the current co-chair of the WGNSS Ornithology Group. He is the co-founder, current President, and butterfly count coordinator of the St. Louis Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association, or NABA. The butterfly garden at Busch Conservation Area, of which WGNSS is one of the sponsors, is named in his honor. Who is this accomplished person? He is Jim Ziebol, recipient of this year's WGNSS Lifetime Achievement Award.

Jim is a long-time member of WGNSS, and over the years, has participated in many WGNSS activities. Jim is now in his eleventh year of compiling the WGNSS bird report, a major project which involves compiling the most important sightings each month, then arranging them in taxonomic order. The report is a valuable reference for anyone monitoring things like early arriving and late departing birds, population trends of various species, and migration patterns.

Jim is always willing to present WGNSS programs, arrange speakers, recruit board members, make phone calls, and offer his time and talents in many other ways that contribute to the success of WGNSS. Probably everyone here has learned something from Jim about birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and other things that fly, as well as more terrestrial species. He is truly an expert at sight-identifying creatures in flight, and his generosity in sharing this knowledge with others has sharpened the observation skills of numerous nature enthusiasts.

Jim, your interest in nature and the environment, generosity with your time and talent in serving WGNSS and the community, and dedication to nature study personify the best qualities of WGNSS. And this obviously is not just my opinion; to continue our tribute to Jim, we will hear some special comments from WGNSS members who have known Jim for many years.

(At this time, Randy Korotev, Jack Harris, and Yvonne Homeyer each shared some remarks in honor of Jim and his service to WGNSS.)

Jim has very graciously and generously donated his original artwork to support WGNSS in various ways over the years, from book and brochure illustrations, to pieces donated for fundraising and to honor past Lifetime Achievement Award recipients. Each piece of Jim's art is unique, and special—just like Jim! We have all benefited from your many contributions to WGNSS, Jim, and I ask that you now come forward. I am pleased to present you with the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award, and a selection of notecards specially assembled for you by Margy and Dan Terpstra. I would also like to present to you a "gift certificate" to use in framing some of your artwork or for a related purchase of your choice. Congratulations!

## HISTORIAN'S CORNER – Jim Adams

### More About John Muir

Leaving from Brooklyn, New York, in August 1911, John Muir, at the age of seventy three and traveling alone, embarked on an eight-month, 40,000-mile voyage to South America and Africa. Muir's journal and notes for this journey were not published for nearly a century until the publication of the book, *John Muir's Last Journey*, Edited by Michael P. Branch, Island Press, 2001.

.Leaving from New York, Muir sailed to Montevideo and crossed South America to Chile. Recrossing South America, he journeyed to the Canary Islands and south to Cape Town in South Africa. From Cape Town he traveled north along the east coast of Africa, entered the Red Sea at Adan, and traveled north to the Mediterranean. Leaving the Mediterranean at Gibraltar, he returned to New York.

### MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

WGNSS Birders Jack Cowan, Julie Randle, and Shawn Clubb were pictured in an article in the April 23, 2008 issue of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Shawn was quoted in the picture caption as saying: "There's a sense of discovery...It's like opening a pack of baseball cards and finding a Babe Ruth. There's always a chance you could find something interesting."

### NOTICE OF JOINT MEETING – George Yatskievych

On July 23 at 7:30 PM at Powder Valley Nature Center, WGNSS and the Missouri Native Plant Society will co-sponsor a program by Theo Witsell, the State Natural Heritage Bonist of Arkansas. His program will highlight Saline County, Arkansas and its interesting flora. Saline County, in the central part of the state, has more species recorded than any other county in Arkansas. It has many scenic habitats and harbors a number of regional endemics and plants of conservation concern. Even more interestingly, Theo's studies resulted in the discovery of a species of rose gentian that was new to science.

### RARE FEEDBACK FROM TOWER GROVE PARK - A Park Resident

#### CHAIN OF COMMENTS MAY HAVE RUFFLED SOME FEATHERS

Dear Reader,

Recently my "eagle-eyed" spouse spotted a surprising comment regarding our residence in TGP. (See Bad News, Nature Notes, May, May 2008, Vol 80, No. 5) She thought the comment was something to crow about. She would screech, "They want us barred from our home!" She was so upset she would toss and tern and her stomach was in knots. Seems she was more into a ruff over the comment than I. She even demanded I contact our close friend, Rev. A. Sharpshinned to ask his opinion on potential prejudice and discrimination. He assured us this was not a hawk vs. dove issue.

After many discussions, some laughing, some mourning, I think she now understands that most members of WGNS are supportive of our decision. She is no longer bitter.

Please accept this letter as a request to be careful in future newsletters. What may seem a casual remark may be an accidental insult to others. We notice when we read the Botany and Entomology sections, they are more sensitive and do not rush to judge.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
A. c. Cooper  
The Big Sycamore Place  
[accipetercooperii@continental.nest](mailto:accipetercooperii@continental.nest)

### **BIG DAY REPORT – Jackie Chain**

We're grateful for this Big Day Report and suspect that additional WGNSS groups participated. Additional reports would be most welcome! (Remember the biblical injunction not to hide one's light under a "bushel".)

One Big Day Report St Louis Area 10 May 2008...

Birders: (In alphabetical order) Rose Ann Bodman, Jackie Chain, Richard Coles, Jean Cook, Darlene Eyster

Places visited: Lost Valley, Katy Trail Weldon Springs Boat Access, Road south or west of Mt Doom bisecting part of Hamburg Trail, Busch CA, Blue Grosbeak Trail, Tower Grove Park, Souldard Area, Horseshoe Lake 203 and 111 sides, Columbia Bottom, Riverlands and Lincoln Shields;

Total count of birds heard and/or seen: 138

Jackie Chain  
St Louis County

### **NEW MEMBERS - Paul Brockland**

Margaret Johnson, 7509 Gannon Ave., St. Louis, MO 63130 (314-863-2937)

Tom Harig , 7814 Greensfelder Lane, St. Louis, 63130 (314-863-6181)

Buback, Steve & Ariez, 6746 Nashville, Ave., St. Louis 63139 (314-645-4365)

Rossow, Beth , 9568 Park Lane, St. Louis 63124 (314-968-2094)

## NEW BOOK OF INTEREST

*Flower Hunters*, by Mary Gribbin and John Gribbin, Oxford, 332 pages, \$27.95

The book tells the stories of eleven intrepid plant collectors of the great plant collecting era from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, many of whom are relatively unrecognized but whose work laid the foundations of the modern science of botany. The book begins with John Ray (1627-1705) and ends with Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911). One of the most interesting chapters deals with Carl Linnaeus, who developed a revolutionary system for classifying plants now used by botanists around the world. The book makes no pretense of being encyclopedic but gives anecdotal reports on the accomplishments and activities of many early botanists, including Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, William Lobb, Clements Markham, David Douglas and the two John Tradescants (father and son). It ends with Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911)

### BOTANY GROUP REPORT – George Van Brunt

March 3, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Due to inclement winter weather, the botanists did not have a field trip.

March 10, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Twelve botanists made the trek to Pea Ridge Conservation Area in Washington County on a sunny, cool day with the temperature in the upper 30's and lower 40's. As soon as we arrived, we walked the short distance from the parking area to Indian Creek to see a large stand of *Hamamelis vernalis* (Ozark witch hazel) bushes growing in the gravel next to the stream. As we approached the area, the distinctive scent of Ozark witch hazel flowers told us that these plants were blooming. The witch hazel odor has been variously described as "a sweet blend of floral and spice", "tangy citrus aroma with a faint sweet scent", and "medicine-like". Although all the witch hazel bushes were blooming, only some had a strong odor; the flowers probably had to be at just the right stage to emit their odor.

Following our visit to Indian Creek and the witch hazel, we headed uphill. Most plants we identified there were still in their winter dormancy. These included *Aesculus glabra* (Ohio buckeye), *Juglans nigra* (black walnut), *Cercis canadensis* (redbud), *Ulmus americana* (American elm), *Ulmus rubra* (slippery elm), *Morus rubra* (red mulberry), *Zanthoxylum americanum* (common pricklyash), *Diospyros virginiana* (persimmon), *Carpinus caroliniana* (ironwood), and *Ostrya virginiana* (hop hornbeam). Oaks included *Quercus imbricaria* (shingle), *Quercus muhlenbergii* (chinquapin), *Quercus shumardii* var. *schneckii* (Schneck's), *Quercus alba* (white), and *Quercus marilandica* (blackjack). We found a *Fraxinus americana* (white ash) with black buds. A *Hypericum prolificum* (shrubby St. John's wort) showed a very slight hint of green emerging from the leaf buds. The forested hills also supported scattered *Pinus echinata* (shortleaf pine), Missouri's only native pine.

Nels Holmberg located a moss, *Pleurochaete squarrosa* (square pleurochaete moss), that he first found here on Feb. 17, 2005. At the time it was a new Washington County record. This species is found on calcareous (calcium carbonate) substrate in the southern part of our country from Virginia to Arizona, and is common on glades and around cedar trees in south and southwest Missouri. Washington County is the northernmost part of its range in eastern Missouri. We also found a species of *Usnea* (Spanish moss lichen) and a species of *Thelia* moss.

### March 17, 2008 St. Patrick's Day Botany Field Trip

Five botanists met at Shaw Nature Reserve Visitor's Center in Franklin County during a thunderstorm. We were joined at there by the Reserve naturalist, James Trager. When the rain let up, we drove to the Trail House and started our walk on the Wildflower Trail. From the Wildflower Trail, we took a side trail to the River Trail, and finally finished our walk on the Overlook Trail. Along the way, we observed and discussed some of the restoration taking place in the Reserve. About 100 acres have already been burned this winter with plans to burn another 50. Last year, 500 to 600 acres were burned. James Trager noted that 18 *Clematis fremontii* (Fremont's leather flower) plants were introduced to the Reserve in the 1920's. Between that time and the early 1990's the population doubled. Since the early 1990's, when burning began, the population of this species has "exploded". On the River Trail, we noted extensive cutting of cedar and bush honeysuckle, opening up the area. It will be interesting to see the effect of the clearing on plant populations.

Today, appropriately, was a day to look for green. We found many spring herbs beginning to grow and a few in bloom. *Erigenia bulbosa* (harbinger of spring) was the most numerous of the plants in bloom. We also found one *Anemone acutiloba* (sharp-lobed hepatica), formerly called *Hepatica acutiloba*, with 5 or 6 flowers. A patch of *Corydalis flavula* (pale corydalis) had one flower, while an unidentified species of *Cardamine* had several small blooms. The flower buds of *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush) were close to blooming. Other spring plants we identified in leaf were *Potentilla simplex* (common cinquefoil), *Viola pedata* (bird's foot violet), *Phlox divaricata* (blue phlox), *Silene virginica* (firepink), *Aquilegia canadensis* (columbine), *Chaerophyllum procumbens* (wild chervil), *Phacelia purshii* (Miami mist), *Polemonium reptans* (Jacob's ladder), *Blephilia hirsuta* (pagoda plant), *Blephilia ciliata* (Ohio horsemint), *Delphinium tricorne* (dwarf larkspur), *Claytonia virginica* (spring beauty), *Stylophorum diphyllum* (Celandine poppy), *Packera obovata* (round-leaf ragwort), and *Enemion biternatum* (lowland rue anemone).

### March 24, 2008 Botany Field Trip

After the heavy rain of the past week, the WGNSS botanists traveled north, away from the Meramec River flood plain. We met Bruce Schuette, park naturalist, at the Cuivre River State Park Visitor's Center and drove to the Prairie Trail Parking Lot. We then explored the nearby forest and prairie habitats. About 1000 acres of the 6394 acre park have been burned since November 2007. We observed that burned areas had more green growth than unburned areas. Bruce explained that recently burned areas are thought to support earlier plant growth because removal of the insulating layer of organic litter allows the ground to warm earlier. This promotes the growth of soil bacteria, fungi, and seeds.

In the recently burned forest, we identified the fern-like green leaves of *Achillea millefolium* (common yarrow), previously considered an introduced plant and now thought to be a native species. Green-stemmed *Sassafras albidum* was identified by its alternate branching; green-stemmed *Acer negundo* has opposite branches. Most of the trees we saw were oaks including *Quercus velutina* (black), *Quercus alba* (white), *Quercus stellata* (post), *Quercus imbricaria* (shingle) and *Quercus marilandica* (blackjack). We observed that many of the shingle oaks were heavily infested with galls. Each of these swollen areas is caused by a stingless wasp which lays an egg in a cut in the bark of a twig. The wasp larva produces chemical stimuli which cause abnormal growth of the twig, causing a large tumor-like structure. The larva lives and matures within the gall, emerging as an adult. Large numbers of such galls can cause branch die-back and be detrimental to the health of the tree.

As the forest began to give way to prairie, we found *Rhus copallinum* (winged sumac), *Rhus*

*glabra* (smooth sumac), and *Rhus aromatica* (aromatic sumac). On the prairie, last year's growth included *Pycnanthemum tenuifolium* (slender mountain mint), *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), *Agalinis auriculata* (auriculate false foxglove), *Helianthus mollis* (ashy sunflower), *Lespedeza capitata* (round-headed bush clover), *Coreopsis tripteris* (tall tickseed), and *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indian grass). We found several areas, a few feet in diameter, that appeared as though they had burned, but they were areas where last year's *Helianthus mollis* had fallen over and lay on the ground. The common name, ashy sunflower, is an appropriate name.

We stopped at a small pond where *Acorus calamus* was beginning to grow in the water. This monocot was once considered to be a native plant, but is now known to have originated in Central Asia and been introduced to North America for its medicinal uses by European settlers. The species is a sterile triploid, propagates easily by rhizomes, and has spread across large parts of North America.

### March 31, 2008 Botany Field Trip

The botany group met at the Missouri Botanical Garden to see early spring flowers, and we were richly rewarded with daffodils, crocuses, magnolias, and witch hazels. During our tour, we spent quite a bit of time examining a cluster of *Leitneria floridana* (corkwood). This small, bushy tree was named for German born physician-botanist Edward Frederik Leitner, 1812-1838, who botanized in southern Florida and was killed in the Second Seminole War. *Leitneria floridana* is the only species in its family, Leitneriaceae, with no apparent close relatives. It is native to 5 states, Florida, Georgia, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri. In Missouri, this species of conservation concern is found only in three southeastern counties, Ripley, Butler, and Dunklin. Corkwood favors swamps and marshes although it has been successfully cultivated in drier conditions as far north as Rochester, NY. The species is dioecious, having separate male and female plants. The group of small trees at the Botanical Garden were in flower and some of the male flowers were beginning to shed pollen; the pollen is produced in copious amounts and is carried by the wind (anemophilous pollen). *Leitneria floridana*, however, reproduces primarily vegetatively forming large clones. The wood is extremely light, a fact that we demonstrated by gently moving a trunk back and forth and noting its low inertial mass. The density of the wood is 0.21 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, lower than that of cork (0.24 g/cm<sup>3</sup>), oak (0.6-0.9 g/cm<sup>3</sup>), and water (1.00 g/cm<sup>3</sup>). The wood formerly was used as floats for fishnets and for bottle stoppers. One source states that recent DNA research indicates that *Leitneria floridana* belongs in the Simaroubaceae, the same family as *Ailanthus altissima* (tree of heaven).

### April 7, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Five botanists took a leisurely walk along the Katy Trail at Weldon Spring. The skies were sunny and the temperature rose quickly into the 60's; it was a perfect day for observing early spring plants in bloom. Mustards, members of the family Brassicaceae, produce very tiny flowers; we found *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (shepherd's purse), *Sibara virginica* (Virginia rock cress), *Microthlaspi perfoliatum* (claspleaf penny cress), and *Erysimum repandum* (treacle mustard) in bloom. Two members of the mint family, Lamiaceae, *Lamium purpureum* (deadnettle) and *Lamium amplexicaule* (henbit) were blooming. Also flowering were *Acer negundo* (box elder), *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush), *Veronica polita* (speedwell), *Stellaria media* (common chickweed), and *Corydalis flavula* (pale corydalis). *Cercis canadensis* (redbud) had red buds that will form pink flowers. The highlight of our walk was the profusion of *Sanguinaria canadensis* (bloodroot) in bloom. The flowers of this native member of the poppy

family, Papaveraceae, open during the day, close at night, and last only a day or two. Each flower is about 2 inches wide and has 8 to 10 white petals and numerous yellow stamens. Each flower peduncle arises from a rhizome and is accompanied by single leaf. Although the flowers are ephemeral, the leaves persist throughout the growing season. All parts of the plant have a bright reddish-orange sap which looks like blood. Native Americans used the sap as a dye. We arrived at exactly the right time, hillsides were covered with fresh blooms. Father Sullivan, who has been leading botany walks for 41 years, said "this is the most spectacular I've ever seen".

#### April 14, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Six botanists took another leisurely walk on the Katy Trail. This week, we started at Augusta and walked east on a sunny, but chilly morning. Many of the plants blooming last week were still flowering, but other species were blooming this week. Flowering were *Buglossoides arvensis* (corn gromwell), *Thlaspi arvense* (pennycress), *Draba verna* (spring draba), *Corydalis flavula* (pale corydalis), *Viola bicolor* (Johnny-jump-up), *Claytonia virginica* (spring beauty), *Phlox divaricata* (wild sweet William), *Acer negundo* (box elder), and *Populus deltoides* (eastern cottonwood). Unfortunately, we found large numbers of *Alliaria petiolata* (garlic mustard) in bloom. It is an attractive plant, but an introduced invasive that is one of the worst.

During our walk we came across an unfamiliar plant growing as monospecific carpets in some low wet areas next to the trail. Father Sullivan took some specimens home and identified the species as *Ranunculus ficaria* (fig buttercup, lesser celandine). It is a very short plant, an inch or two tall, with stems erect or growing along the ground with tips upright. The leaves are about an inch in diameter and are basically round, but can be quite variable in shape. The flowers have 3 or 4 sepals, about 7 or 8 yellow petals and many yellow stamens, typical of the buttercup family. The roots have tiny tubers. This perennial species was introduced from Europe, has escaped cultivation, and is rapidly expanding its range in the United States and Canada. Currently, it can be found in the northeastern and northwestern parts of North America. In the northwest, it is present in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. In the northeast, it is present from Missouri eastward and Tennessee northward into northern Canada. This is an ecologically invasive plant and should be eradicated where possible.

#### April 21, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Spring has arrived! Eleven botanists met on a mild, sunny day at Rockwoods Reservation and walked both upland and lowland parts of the Lime Kiln Loop Trail. Blooming plants included *Draba cuneifolia* (wedgeleaf draba), *Descurainia pinnata* (tansy mustard), *Trillium viride* (green trillium), *Alliaria petiolata* ⊕ (garlic mustard), *Viola sororia* (common violet), *Chaerophyllum procumbens* (wild chervil), *Viola bicolor* (Johnny-jump-up), *Trillium recurvatum* (purple trillium), *Ranunculus micranthus* (small-flowered buttercup), *Claytonia virginica* (spring beauty), *Phlox divaricata* (wild sweet William), *Ranunculus abortivus* (small-flowered crowfoot), *Microthlaspi perfoliatum* (claspleaf pennycress), *Nothoscordum bivalve* (false garlic), *Glandularia canadensis* (rose verbena), *Oxalis violacea* (violet wood sorrel), *Rhus aromatica* (fragrant sumac), *Thalictrum thalictroides* (rue anemone), *Cercis canadensis* (redbud), *Cardamine concatenata* (toothwort), *Corydalis flavula* (pale corydalis), *Stellaria media* (common chickweed), *Enemion biternatum* (lowland rue anemone), *Dicentra cucullaria* (Dutchman's breeches), *Ranunculus hispidus* (hispid buttercup), *Geranium maculatum* (wild geranium), *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* (water cress), and *Antennaria parlinii* (Parlin's pussytoes). Parlin's pussytoes, an herbaceous plant, is unusual on two counts. Firstly, it is a



member of the Aster family and most members of this family in Missouri bloom in the late spring through the fall. Secondly, this species is dioecious, having separate male and female plants. Less than 5% of flowering plants worldwide are dioecious, and the majority of those are woody plants, trees, shrubs, and vines. The two plants we found blooming were both males.

On our walk, we saw many *Aesculus glabra* (Ohio buckeye) with fresh young leaves. Some of these leaves had suffered considerable damage, being riddled with holes. The culprit was *Derocrepis aesculi* (the flea beetle) an obligate herbivore on Ohio buckeye. This tiny beetle eats young buckeye leaves before they mature and become poisonous. When the leaves mature the beetles disappear until the following spring. Another pest on Ohio buckeye is *Corythucha aesculi* (a lacebug) which was not responsible for the holes in the leaves, but which we did see sucking sap from the underside of a leaf. Following are the notes that Father James Sullivan made in 1991 when doing research on *Derocrepis aesculi*.

#### Buckeye Flea Beetle

*Derocrepis aesculi* Coleoptera : Chrysomelidae : Alticinae

Look for these beetles on leaves of the Ohio Buckeye Tree (*Aesculus glabra*) in the very early spring. The insects are small, dark amber and shining, and jump powerfully when alarmed. They eat tiny shot-holes in the newest Buckeye leaves.

Life for these beetles is a race to be early. Buckeye trees contain the toxic alkaloid aesculin in all of their parts. But their leaves are likely to be less chemically potent in their tender beginning stages. It is no accident that the beetles appear in time for the opening of the buds, and feeding and breeding ensue immediately.

But the Buckeyes can be early too. Their leaves are among the first of the woody species to become evident in our springtime woods. There may be selective pressure here. The leaves may sustain less feeding damage if they emerge while the beetles are slowed down by cold temperatures. The trees do on occasion get nipped by late freezes, but in the long run they probably come out ahead by "cooling off" their unwelcome guests.

The beetles are sometimes found in large numbers between the tightly packed leaves of the Buckeye buds which have expanded only to the point of shedding their bud scales. Here they are out of the cold and are able to feed on the tenderest tissues. This a favored sheltering situation until all of the expanding buds are fully open.

Because of the race to be early, the occurrence of the adult beetles is largely confined to March and April. The larvae are probably subterranean, feeding on the roots of the Buckeyes.

#### April 28, 2008 Botany Field Trip

Eight botanists met at Washington State Park on a partly cloudy to cloudy, chilly morning with intermittent showers. First we explored a glade, and later walked part of the 1000 Steps Trail. We were rained on a few times, but it was worth the trip as we found many interesting plants in bloom.

Glade plants in bloom included *Minuartia michauxii* (rock sandwort), *Sisyrinchium campestre* (blue-eyed grass), *Clematis fremontii* (Fremont's leather flower), *Hypoxis hirsuta* (yellow star grass), *Lithospermum canescens* (orange puccoon), *Packera plattensis* (prairie ragwort), *Dodecatheon meadia* (shooting star), *Glandularia canadensis* (rose verbena), and *Aquilegia canadensis* (columbine). We also found many *Viola pedata* (bird's-foot-violet) plants in bloom. The common name refers to the leaves which are divided and remind one of a bird's foot. Each flower has 5 petals, the lowest petal having a spur. We found *Viola pedata* variety *lineariloba* forma *lineariloba* which has all deep purple petals and *Viola pedata* var. *pedata* which has two

dark violet upper petals and three lavender lower petals; Father Sullivan calls this one the rooster. A third color form, *Viola pedata* var. *lineariloba* f. *alba*, has white petals and is rare in Missouri. Another interesting glade plant that we found in bloom was *Comandra umbellata* (bastard toadflax). Several native subspecies of *Comandra umbellata* are spread widely over almost all parts of North America. Bastard toadflax is the only member of the sandalwood family, Santalaceae, in Missouri. This species is a hemiparasite, a species that is photosynthetic and also obtains part of its nutrients from host plants; *Comandra umbellata* roots tap into the roots of trees and shrubs and get some nutrients from them. The fruits of this species were eaten by Native Americans; the seeds are sweet and oily. The name toadflax refers to the spotted and flax-like appearance of yellow toadflax, *Linaria vulgaris*, a member of the snapdragon family, Scrophulariaceae. The adjective bastard means that *Comandra umbellata* is not really toadflax, but that it closely resembles it. The name *Comandra* comes from the Greek words κομη (hair of the head) and ανδρος (a man), and refers to the numerous hairs that extend from the nearest petal and attach to the upper part of each stamen. The species epithet, *umbellata*, refers to the arrangement of the flowers in an umbel, the flower stalks all arising from the same place on the stem.

The 1000 Steps Trail begins in Meramec River bottomland and follows a forested route at the edge of a field. Later the trail turns up to a ridge top. This is surely one of the most beautiful spring wildflower walks in Missouri and we were not disappointed. We encountered a profusion of *Collinsia verna* (blue-eyed Mary) with its blue and white flowers. Large numbers of *Mertensia virginica* (bluebells) most with blue flowers, but some with pink and some with white flowers were growing along the trail. Blue-flowered *Phlox divaricata* (wild sweet William) and yellow-flowered *Stylophorum diphyllum* (Celandine poppy) were also abundant. Adding to the color were *Viola pubescens* (yellow violet), *Trillium recurvatum* (purple trillium), and *Thalictrum thalictroides* (rue anemone). We also saw flowers of *Staphylea trifolia* (bladdernut), *Aesculus glabra* (Ohio buckeye), and *Asarum canadense* (wild ginger).

#### APRIL BIRD REPORT (Partial) – Jim Ziebol and Yvonne Homeyer

##### Early Arrival Dates:

Sharp-shinned Hawk	4/20	Weldon Spring CA	CA
Swainson's Hawk	4/11	Tyson	NB
Broad-winged Hawk	4/17	Kirkwood	A Mc
Mississippi Kite	4/14	Olivette	DF
White-tailed Kite	5/3	Columbia Bottoms	DC
Sora	4/25	Little Creve Coeur	P&BJ
Black-necked Stilt	4/25	Columbia Bottoms	CA
	4/25	Kaskaskia Island	JM, JE, PL
Semipalmated Plover	5/4	Horseshoe Lake	FH, JZ
Solitary Sandpiper	4/12	Lincoln County	PL
	4/12	Horseshoe Lake	DB
Willet	4/26	Columbia Bottoms	DB
Western Sandpiper	5/4	Columbia Bottoms	D Rogles
Least Sandpiper	4/7	Hwy. 79	D Rogles, TB
White-rumped Sandpiper	5/3	Voelkerding Slough	DH
Baird's Sandpiper	5/5	Voelkerding Slough	YH, JZ

Dunlin	5/4	Columbia Bottoms	D Rogles
Stilt Sandpiper	5/4	Columbia Bottoms	D Rogles
Upland Sandpiper	4/17	Keeteman Road	D Rogles
Hudsonian Godwit	4/26	Columbia Bottoms	DB
Wilson's Phalarope	4/26	Columbia Bottoms	B Rudden, MM
Laughing Gull	5/1	Frank Holten S.P.	J Chain, LJ
Common Tern	5/5	Horseshoe Lake	FH, JZ
Black-billed Cuckoo	5/3	Blackburn Park	SG
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	4/26	Busch C.A.	CA, CK
Common Nighthawk	4/30	Horseshoe Lake	FH
Chuck-will's-widow	5/1	St. Louis County	MB
Whip-poor-will	4/18	Chubb Trail	MB
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	4/26	Kirkwood	M Terpstra
Olive-sided Flycatcher	4/30	TGP	BB, LV
E. Wood-pewee	4/15	FP	CF
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	5/3	TGP	JZ, NB
Acadian Flycatcher	4/23	Lost Valley Trail	P&BJ
Least Flycatcher	4/25	TGP	JZ
Great-crested Flycatcher	4/18	West County	DP
Western Kingbird	5/6	River's Edge	FH
Bank Swallow	4/20	Horseshoe Lake	FH
Cliff Swallow	4/13	Riverlands	JU
House Wren	4/19	Des Peres	Margie R
	4/19	Kirkwood	M Terpstra
Veery	4/26	Blackburn Park	NB
Gray-cheeked Thrush	4/19	TGP	J Chain
Swainson's Thrush	4/13	TGP	DF
Wood Thrush	4/12	Weldon Springs CA	D Rogles, TB
Gray Catbird	4/22	TGP	Mick R
Bell's Vireo	5/3	Weldon Springs CA	CM
Blue-headed Vireo	4/17	TGP	MJV
Yellow-throated Vireo	4/11	Emmenegger Park	Margie R
Warbling Vireo	4/20	Horseshoe Lake	FH, JZ
Philadelphia Vireo	5/3	Babler	J&CM
Red-eyed Vireo	4/19	Castlewood	MB
	4/19	Shaw Nature Reserve	CA
Blue-winged Warbler	4/21	Lost Valley Trail	MM
Tennessee Warbler	4/20	Horseshoe Lake	JZ
Orange-crowned Warbler	4/13	TGP	M Thelen
Yellow Warbler	4/12	Love Park	Margie R
Chestnut-sided Warbler	4/24	Powder Valley	TW
Magnolia Warbler	4/26	Busch C.A.	B&NP
Cape May Warbler	4/27	FP	BB
Blackburnian Warbler	4/24	Shaw Nature Reserv	DH
Prairie Warbler	4/17	near Busch C.A.	CM
Bay-breasted Warbler	4/26	Busch C.A.	JZ, YH
	4/26	Busch C.A.	D Rogles, TB

Blackpoll	4/24	Busch C.A.	ML
	4/24	Shaw Nature Reserve	DH
Cerulean Warbler	4/13	Unger County Park	D Rabenau
	4/13	Emmenegger Park	M Thelen
Black-throated Blue Warbler	5/2	TGP	SC et al.
Redstart	4/26	Busch C.A.	JZ
	4/26	Shaw Nature Reserve	P&BJ
Prothonotary Warbler	4/12	Weldon Spring CA	D Rogles, TB
Ovenbird	4/17	TGP	MJV
	4/17	Tyson	NB
Kentucky Warbler	4/17	Castlewood	ML
Mourning Warbler	5/6	TGP	J Cowan
Common Yellowthroat	4/14	FP	MM
Wilson's Warbler	4/22	TGP	Mick R
Yellow-breasted Chat	4/25	Little Creve Coeur	P&BJ
Summer Tanager	4/18	Castlewood	MB
Scarlet Tanager	4/18	Castlewood	MB
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4/23	Mo. Bot. Garden	Mick R
Black-headed Grosbeak	5/10	Hillsboro	SV
Blue Grosbeak	4/20	Horseshoe Lake	FH, JZ
Indigo Bunting	4/13	Ferguson	JU
Dickcissel	4/30	Busch C.A.	ML
Chipping Sparrow	4/6	Busch C.A.	M Thelen
Clay-colored Sparrow	4/25	North County	MP (home)
Grasshopper Sparrow	4/25	Columbia Bottoms	J&CM
Henslow's Sparrow	4/6	Shaw Nature Reserve	WG
Lark Sparrow	4/16	Blackburn Park	NB
Bobolink	4/25	Blue Grosbeak Trail	T Berger
Orchard Oriole	4/23	Lost Valley Trail	P&BJ
Baltimore Oriole	4/19	Busch C.A.	DB

(To be completed in next month's issue of *Nature Notes*)

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Abbreviations: BCA, Busch Conservation Area; CC, Clarence Cannon NWR; CL, Carlyle Lake; CSP, Castlewood State Park; CB, Columbia Bottoms; FP, Forest Park; HL, Horseshoe Lake; LP, Lafayette Park; LCCL, Little Creve Coeur Lake; MBG, Missouri Botanical Garden; MTC, Marais Temps Clair; RMBS, Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary; SNR, Shaw Nature Reserve; TGP, Tower Grove Park.

Webster Groves Nature Study Society  
Founded 1920

**GROUP ACTIVITY WALKS/SCHEDULES**

Most organized group activities are canceled during the summer months. For information about possible exceptions, contact the group leaders.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (Cont'd)

### Making Nature Notes Useful

Nature Notes, the Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, has long been published because of its utility in furthering the work of the Society. Its most important function is bringing the monthly program of the Society to the members - Stuart O'Byrne, June 1948 issue.

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Jim Ziebol - Bird Report Compiler  
Jim Ziebol - Busch WA Breeding Bird Survey  
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### Call The Nature Line!

This line (314) 935-8432 should no longer be used to report bird sightings, but Sherry McCowan will check the line for messages and will relay them to the appropriate person. Call individual Group leaders if you have questions about walk/activity schedules.

### Nature Notes Deadline and Mailing Info.

The mailing party meets at the Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes, Kirkwood at time noted to prepare N.N. mailings. We could use your help! Call Marjorie Richardson (314) 965-8974 to volunteer. Deadline and mailing party dates for future months are below

NN Deadline	Mailing Party
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### Next Board Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2008, 7 PM, Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold, 63122, Tel. 314-301-1500. Near I-44/I-270 intersection, enter from Geyer Road. Visitors are welcome. Come see your Board in action!  
(If snowy or icy conditions prevail, call ahead to find if the meeting has been canceled.)

### Publication Policy

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The objectives of the Society are: to stimulate interest in nature study on the part of adults and children; to cooperate with other organizations in nature study; to encourage amateur research in the natural sciences; to promote conservation of wildlife and natural beauty. Open to all with an interest in nature.

NN Deadline	Mailing Party
-------------	---------------

Mon. Aug. 11	Aug. 18, 10-1 AM
Mon. Sep. 8	Sep. 15, 1-4 PM
Mon. Oct. 13	Oct. 20, 10-1, A/P
Mon. Nov. 10	Nov. 17, 10-1 A/P
Mon. Dec. 8	Dec. 15, 10-1, A/P

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