

NATURE NOTES

The Bulletin of the Webster Groves Nature-Study Society

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FROM A HILLTOP AT ALLENTON

All expectations were exceeded at Allenton August 16, when the Astronomy Group assembled on top of Schnedelbach's "little mountain" to observe the stars. Many of the objects were observed by means of the two telescopes and several field glasses available.

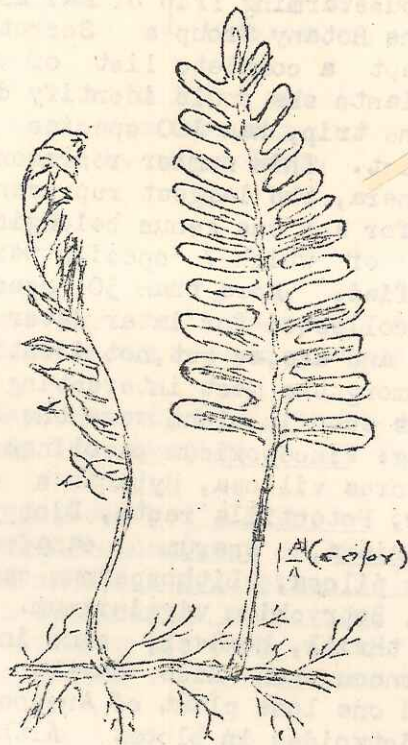
The early part of the evening was spent in getting what glimpses of stars they could between the troublesome clouds that kept coming and going. Later, the clouds cleared from overhead and seemed to skirt the horizon; blankets were spread upon the ground and seven enthusiasts lay down, their eyes turned skyward. There they exchanged thoughts and knowledge of the sky.

During the course of the evening everything from the moon, our nearest space-neighbor, to the great nebula in Andromeda, one of the most distant objects known, were observed along with a large number of meteors.

The star fields of the Galaxy are now and will be for a month or two, well placed for observation. Full advantage of this was taken, much to the delight of the group. Special attention was given to Scorpio, Sagittarius, Draco, Aquila, Cygnus and Lyra. The Pleiades were seen for the first time since they left us last spring. This popular little group of stars is always welcomed with enthusiasm this occasion being no exception.

The evening group broke up at a fairly late hour, two of the ladies leaving instructions to be awakened early enough to join the other members of the party who had planned to see Jupiter's moons and the early morning constellations. This was done as scheduled and the four members of this early morning observation party were rewarded well for the loss of sleep. Four of Jupiter's satellites were visible, all to the west of the planet. The larger telescope showed the most conspicuous belts across the planet's surface.

Mars was visible in Taurus, and other objects noted were the great nebula in Orion, the variable star Algol, Castor which is a beautiful binary system, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran, Pollux and the double stars Epsilon Lyrae and Nu Draconis.



A RESURRECTION FERN.

On a recent botanical expedition in the wilds of southern Missouri, Arkansas and Tennessee, the members of our group brought forth an interesting member of the fern family. It was the *Polypodium polypodioides*, or the Gray Polypody. This plant was located in the St. Francis River "bottoms" in Arkansas and at the Big Spring State Park.

This polypodium, one of the two species occurring in Missouri is found growing on the trunks and limbs of trees, often at a height of one hundred feet above the ground. Occasionally it may be found on rocks and logs that are floating in the water.

One of the interesting characteristics of this fern is the manner in which it withstands drought. In the dry summer months the blades shrivel and active growth ceases until a rain moistens them causing them to ~~expand~~ and resume growth, hence the name Resurrection fern.

The drawing illustrates the plant as it appears in the dry and moist seasons. Notice the rootstocks and rootlets that form a network over the bark of the trees thus anchoring the plant in its lofty habitat.

-Albert Heinze.

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BOTANY GROUP REPORTS

On Housewarming Trip of May 25.

The Botany Group's Secretary, who kept a complete list of all the plants she could identify during the trip, had 100 species on her list. This number represented 83 genera, the largest representation for any one genus belonging to Carex of which 7 species were identified. More than 30 species were collected for later determination and are, as yet, not identified.

Among the most interesting specimens seen in bloom were the following: Vincetoxicum carolinense, Dioscorea villosa, Hybanthus concolor, Potentilla recta, Diospyros virginiana, Asarum canadense, Phlox pilosa, Lithospermum canescens, Botrychium virginianum. The real thrill, however, came in the afternoon when Miss Martha Rau found one lone plant of Anemone thalictroides in bloom. Although Britton and Brown give the blooming time as March to June, none of the members present had seen the plant in blossom in this locality so late before.

Several times during the afternoon the Bird Group and the Botany Group got mixed, but each time the Botany Group saw interesting things. For instance, once Messrs Walter Palmer and Richard Pough caught a water snake which bit them after it was thoroughly angered. Another time we enjoyed watching several shy killedeers with the Bird Group.

-Dorothy Boyer
Secretary, Botany Group.

ON THAT TRIP TO ALLENTON.

While silent stars kept the 12 or more at the Schmedelbach cottage near Allenton awake most of the night of August 16th, they managed to arouse themselves next morning in time to join the 14 new arrivals Sunday morning on hunts over the hills for birds, flowers etc. The Rau family, 100% present, reported bees and wasps 100% satisfactory. The bird hunters found many birds, but the seldom seen tho often heard yellow billed cuckoo and the graceful, lazy gliding on motionless wing of a buzzard aroused special interest. Capt. Lange and Mr. Vogel, after brushing all trees to the river to get catocalae brought back - a handful of snails; while the lure of a spring fed concrete swimming pool hidden in the forest, caused a hurried hunt for bathing suits.

"J"

A RECORD BUTTERFLY YEAR

That the severity of the weather has not had adverse effects upon our insect population is attested to by the great abundance of butterflies haunting the fields and woods all summer. This abundance has been noticeable, not only in the number of individuals, but also in the unusual number of strange and unfamiliar species that have obtruded themselves upon our notice. A list of the interesting rarities that have come under my observation follows.

1. Polygonia progne. A female was captured by me near the summit of the hill just south of the Entomological Club cabin on March 9th. This is a northern species and I had never seen it here before.

2. Mitoura gryneus, (better known by its former name, Thecla danon). Usually scarce and uncertain in appearance, this species fairly swarmed this year, wherever red cedar grows, and was taken by several collectors. My records are, May 1st for the typical form gryneus, from the neighborhood of the red cedar trees along the High Ridge road southward from the cabin, and June 22nd for the summer form patersonia, from Imperial Mo. Besides many specimens of these forms, Dr. Meiners reports a few of the form discoidalis.

3. Catopsilia philea. This is a tropical butterfly, of which a male was caught in Webster Groves on July 11th by Jack Neavles. I have never seen it here.

4. Strymon n-album. A pair of this rare southern "hair-streak" were taken by me near Barrett's Station on July 18th, being my first observation of it since 1925.

5. Hemiargus isola. A female was discovered by Miss Daisy Boyer and captured by me near Imperial on August 10th. This is a southwestern species, abundant in western Kansas, but seldom seen in Missouri.

6. Calephelis borealis. The only record known to me for this year is a specimen caught by Jack Neavles near the Meramec River on August 22nd. This is another uncertain species, whose life history is entirely unknown.

Of the six, only Mitoura gryneus is definitely known to breed here, its larvae having been observed on red cedars by Dr. Meiners. The others, with the exception of Catopsilia philea, which is undoubtedly a migrant, probably breed in this part of the country, but I know of no observations to prove it. Whether the larvae of Hemiargus isola enjoys simbiotic relations with ants is another unsolved problem.

-Harold I. O'Byrne

Webster Groves Nature-Study Society

A BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN NATURE-STUDY SOCIETY

(Organized in 1920)

Webster Groves, Mo.

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Editor

NATURE NOTES

GENERAL MEETING.

Friday Evening, September 5, 8 PM, at the Laboratory, 527
Ivanhoe Place, Webster Groves.

"The Camera Says Its True!!" Dr. Meiners and Mr. Vogel
will bring the evidence of their vacation experiences in
the form of motion pictures made by themselves.

GROUP MEETINGS:

Photography: Tuesday evening, September 2, 8 PM, at the
Laboratory. Mr. William Persons, vice-president of the
Master Photo Finishers Association, will show "How to make
Better Kodak Pictures" Come to this meeting, - and pick
up a few points.

Ichthyology: Monday evening, September 8, 8 PM, at the
Laboratory. "Native Fish in the Aquarium." Mr. Hubricht,
chairman.

Geology: Thursday evening, September 11, 8 PM, at the home
of Mr. Buren Holmes, 7744 Dale Avenue (west of Big Bend Road
near where the wide concrete ends). Mr. Holmes will exhibit
his collection of geological specimens.

Microscopy: Friday evening, September 12, 8 PM, at the Labora-
tory. "The Microscopy of the Cell". Bring your micros-
copes.

Botany: Monday evening, September 15, 8 PM, at the Labora-
tory. "Identification of Trees through Leaf Characteristics",
Mr. Bradley. Also papers by Miss Boyer and Mr. Pinkus, titles
unannounced.

Astronomy: Saturday evening, September 20, 8 PM, at the Mueller
Audience, 12 Armin Avenue, Glendale Heights. Bring telescopes
and field glasses, as part of the evening will be spent outdoors,
weather permitting.

Ornithology: Monday evening, September 22, 8 PM, at the Laboratory.
"Moulting, - and Fall Migrations of Birds of this Vicinity".
Mr. Palmer, chairman.

Entomology: Friday evening, September 26, 8 PM, at the Laboratory.
"Problems of Instinct", by the chairman, Mr. O'Byrne.

Nature-Melody: Monday evening, September 29, 8 PM, at the Labora-
tory. "The Long-horn Grasshoppers and the Migratory Birds".
Mrs. Satterthwait, chairman.

Juniors: Will make blue-prints of leaves and flowers at an after-
noon meeting, date to be announced by Mrs. Pickens.

FIELD TRIPS:

Sunday, September 14th, to Onondaga Cave. This will be an all
day trip to Onondaga Cave to see its wonderful, fascinating
"Lily Lake", its mystic "Lost River", its glistening stalactite
and stalagmite formations and other underground marvels. A
trip too good to be missed.
Those wishing to make this trip are requested to notify Dr.
Brandhorst, 160 Gore Ave., Webster Groves, (phone WEBster 2378)
There will be a charge of \$1.00 per person at the cave, and it
will be necessary for Dr. Brandhorst to know just how many are
going by Sept. 12, so as to make arrangements for guides.

Sunday, September 21, to Miss Nellie Matlack's cottage at Meinke,
near Crescent, Mo. If going by train, take the Frisco local
leaving Union Station at 8.58; Webster Groves 9.26; Kirkwood 9.31
arriving at Crescent at 9.59. Those going by Auto, take the
Clayton Road, Ballas Road, Manchester Road route to Ellisville,
thence south on Old State Road to Eureka, and back on Antire Road
to the Deicke-Crescent Road running north from the Antire Road,
to Crescent, assembling at Crescent Frisco R.R. Station at train
time, (9.59 AM). Miss Matlack will meet us there and ~~take~~ lead
the way to the cottage. Bring lunch.

Anne A. Jones, Secretary