

*The purpose of the ONPS is to encourage the study, protection, propagation, appreciation and use of Oklahoma native plants.*

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Volume 10 Number 1  
Spring 1995

**COPY AND ART DEADLINE  
FOR NEXT ISSUE IS  
15 MAY 1994.**

# Gaillardia

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society Newsletter

## CALENDAR

**Ed. note: to make the calendar a better reference, I have put either the page number for a more detailed explanation, or the name of the person to contact for more information. The green pull-out sheet enclosed in the winter, 1994 edition contains addresses and phone numbers for contact.**

- 15 March 1995: Deadline for photography contest. Do it today!!
- 23 March: Deadline for registration for Spring Outing (see page 9)
- 27 March, 7:30: Central Chapter meets at the Horticulture Center. Program by Pat Folley on the spring wildflowers of Central Oklahoma.
- 1-2 April: **Spring outing at Dwight Mission (page 9) & short board meeting that Saturday before dinner. Must have 20+ registered.**
- 21-23 April: Spring Field Meeting of Oklahoma Academy of Science at Beaver's Bend State Park. Contact President Connie Taylor.
- 6 May: Wildwomen Wildflower Festival, Eufaula: (918)689-5481
- 6 May: Wildflower Walks at Wichita Wildlife Refuge: (405)429-3222
- 13 May: Field trip to Pontotoc Ridge. Register with Pat Folley.
- 14 May: Give your mother a native tree for Mother's Day.
- 15 May 1995 Summer Gaillardia deadline for copy submittal.**
- 20 May: Wildflower Festival, Quartz Mountain State Park (405)563-2424
- 27 May: Central chapter field trip to a Payne Co. prairie. See page 11
- 3-4 June: Backyard Habitat Home tours, Tulsa. See page 11
- 9-10 June: Wildflower Workshop, Boise City. Brochures will be mailed to all ONPS members. **More on page 2**
- 17 June: Alternate date for Payne Co Prairie Tour.
- 24 June: Central Chapter visit to the Oklahoma Gardening facility in Stillwater. Tour starts at 10 a.m. Register with Ruth Boyd **by June 1** and ask for directions to the site. Everyone welcome and the tour is free.
- 1 July (tentative): One-day field trip to Blue River. Connie Taylor or Jeff Burkhardt.
- 21-22 October: 1995 Annual Meeting at Quartz Mountain State Park. Ann Randle, 2300 Fairway Dr., Duncan OK 73553-3212, phone (405) -255-7438

### MEMORIAL FUND DONORS

Harriet Barclay Memorial Fund:

A donation by Dr. Paul Buck in memory of Jeff Black.

## GARDENING ON THE WILD SIDE

by Wayne Chambers

## MIGHT AS WELL GROW SUMACS

For gardeners frustrated by wimpy exotic plants that can't cut it in our climate, here's a solution: Sumacs. (*Rhus* spp.) They are virtually pest-free, drought tolerant, cold-hardy and grow in a variety of soil types and light exposures. They have varying leaf shapes. Growth habits range from low shrubs to small trees. Fall color ranges from good to breath-taking. Birds feed on the fuzzy red berries in winter. A type of lemonade can even be made from the berries -- but I doubt if the Minute Maid corporation is feeling the competition.

Here's a brief discussion of those sumacs growing at our home.:

*Rhus typhina* (Staghorn Sumac). Native to the north-eastern U.S. This is the easiest variety to find in local nurseries. Most usually the cutleaf form is offered. Grows 10 ft. or more in height. Suckers freely. We didn't know just how freely until we planted one for a customer. Within a year it had gone bonkers and sent up suckers all over the bed in which it was planted. Fortunately for us, it pulled out easily. It is now planted at our place -- a long way from any flower beds. Fall color is a traffic-slowng orange.

*Rhus copallina* (winged sumac). Native to eastern 2/3 of Oklahoma. Grows 8-10 feet tall, sends up suckers and can make thickets. I'm unsure of a commercial source -- but that may not be necessary. One thicket of ours is a volunteer. The other I began by digging roots and suckers out of a vacant lot. Fall color is mostly red. In dry summers they turn red early and sometimes begin to drop leaves before autumn.

*Rhus glabra* (smooth sumac). Native to eastern 2/3 of Oklahoma. Similar to winged sumac, but maybe more treelike with fewer suckers -- at least that's the way ours is behaving. Ours volunteered at the eastern edge of an oak grove. Fall color is red to reddish-purple.

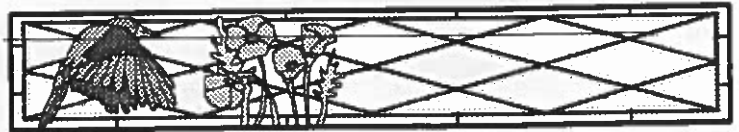
*Rhus aromatica*, (fragrant sumac). Wild type native to all parts of Oklahoma. Although native, I had to order plants out of Tennessee several years ago. These plants are nearly 6 ft. tall. Taller and narrower than those I've seen in Oklahoma. They've never set fruit. Fall color is a clear orange-yellow. Suckering hasn't occurred and the plants are 7 years old. Leaves are small, lobed and blunt.

*Rhus aromatica* "gro-low" is a named selection of fragrant sumac. I purchased two of these plants from Sunshine Nursery in Clinton a few years ago and boy, did I get my money's worth! "Gro-low" could more properly be named "gro-wide". Although it doesn't

sucker it sort of lays over and creeps up on stuff. Or more properly, it is a shrub to 2 ft. tall with a prostrate growth habit. Width is determined only by pruners. The leaves are smaller and blunter than *R. typhina*, *copallina* or *glabra*. Fall color is yellow to orange. Fruits are in small roundish clusters.

*Rhus microphylla* (littleleaf sumac) Native to SW Oklahoma. Very similar to *R. copallina* -- except that it is miniature in every detail. Leaflets are no bigger than the head of a match. I bought this at Sunshine Nursery less than a year ago, so I can only speculate about how it may perform. So far it has made it through last summer and this winter.

There is another Sumac I've seen that I want to try. It is *R. aromatica* "Konza". I suppose it is from the Konza prairie in Kansas. That will give me something to write about in a future article. ☺



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I got a really-truly letter! You'd have to be a newsletter editor to know how rare such treasures are. This is from Bob Jennings, Director of Oxley Nature Center in Tulsa, in response to Rebecca Troth's article on Virginia creeper:

"I was interested to read the article on Virginia creeper in the last Botanist's Corner by Rebecca Troth. Of special interest was her comment that the rumor that V.C. can cause skin irritation is based on a misunderstanding. As a naturalist by profession, I have frequently answered questions about the differences between this plant and poison ivy, and the confusion that often occurs. We knew that if you broke out, you had gotten into P.I. and not V.C. I, of course, was above the whole dilemma because I appear to be one of the lucky ones who do not react to P. I. (yet), and have been known to pull it up (or down) with my bare hands when doing trail work.

However, last year a colleague and I were doing some maintenance in an area where a thick, tangled growth of V. C. had recently been brush-hogged. Our efforts included lying on the ground amidst the freshly cut V. C. while trying to plug an inconvenient muskrat tunnel. To my surprise, within a few days I had broken out in small red and white pustules that itched like crazy. At first I figured I had finally lost my immunity to P. I., but I have handled P. I. since then with no rash. Since this time, I have noticed that some of the college kids who work for us in the summer have acquired similar rashes when working with recently cut V. C. ....

.....continued on page 8

## CONSERVATION CORNER

by Mike Palmer

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL RESERVES

In the past two decades, the science of conservation biology has flourished. The discipline was launched by asking the simple question, "how large should a nature reserve be?". Conservation biology is now answering many important questions concerning the genetics of rare species, the control of exotic species, and the nature of natural disturbance.

Despite tremendous progress in the field, the central question remains unanswered. The attempts to answer the question are now universally known as the SLOSS debate, after "Single Large or Several Small". Recently, there has been a tendency for scientists to favor large reserves. This is for three primary reasons: 1) Large reserves support healthy populations of large mammals (it is assumed that other animals and plants will be protected under the "umbrella" of large mammals), 2) natural disturbance will not destroy an entire large reserve, and 3) large reserves have a smaller portion of their area near an "edge". In certain cases, edges encourage exotic or other destructive species to invade.

Given these advantages of large reserves, is it worthwhile to even consider saving lands in small reserves? Craig Shafer, an ecologist for the National Park Service, answers an emphatic yes in the February 1995 issue of *Bioscience*. Shafer reviews the literature on small reserves, and finds that there are compelling reasons to save them. Some of these are listed below:

- > Small reserves often preserve unique, localized habitats such as rock outcrops or springs.
- > Many species do not require large areas.
- > Small reserves are better than no reserves in areas with high human population density.
- > Small reserves are easier to manage.
- > Small reserves are easy to maintain.
- > Small reserves often contain the last remaining examples of certain plants, animals, or ecosystems.

Further support for small reserves comes from recent developments in "metapopulation theory". All populations have a certain possibility of going extinct. Likewise, any area which does not currently contain any

populations of a given species has a certain possibility of having that species immigrate. What "metapopulation" theory states is that we consider a group of many populations to be a "metapopulation". It is acceptable in conservation for some of the local populations to go extinct, as long as they are balanced by immigration. The metapopulation may remain stable. For many species, the way to keep a metapopulation stable is to have many, widely scattered preserves.

Shafer does not say we should abandon attempts to save large reserves. Indeed, saving small reserves often helps conservation in large reserves. Small reserves can serve as "stepping stones" for organisms to migrate between reserves. Also, many small reserves established in the past have gradually expanded until they are no longer small. Shafer also mentions some computer simulations which demonstrate that a combination of small and large reserves can be very healthy for a metapopulation's genetic diversity. In many ways, the SLOSS debate has been resolved: we need both large and small reserves.

Nevertheless, Shafer's article leaves some issues unresolved. For example, it is clear that most of the past research has been biased towards vertebrates. However, plants are a much more diverse, abundant, and (as many ONPS members will agree) more interesting group than vertebrates. Plants are quite different from animals in that they cannot move once they are established. It is not obvious how many of the scientific results which have been determined for animals can be successfully applied toward plants.

Another unresolved issue involves the conservation of species outside of reserves. Here in Oklahoma, we are blessed with a large amount of natural and semi-natural lands, yet only a small portion of the land lies in preserves. The conservation of diversity is quite compatible with many kinds of land use. We are likely to make serious mistakes if we consider reserves as our only conservation strategy.

We have moved far beyond the idea that setting aside large amounts of land is enough to conserve biodiversity. While useful generalizations are hard to come by, I think the following generalization will withstand the test of time: **A diversity of approaches to conservation encourages a diversity of species.** ☺

Ed. note: see also the book review on page 10.



## BOTANY BAY

by Clark Ovrebo

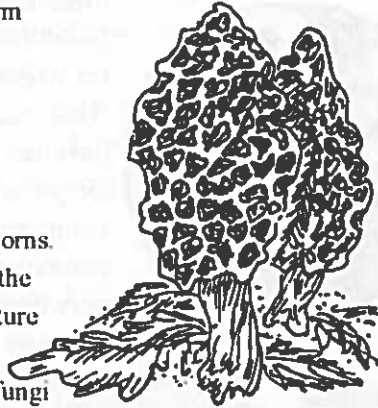
## SPRING IN OKLAHOMA: MOREL SEASON

We soon will be leaving the winter season and looking forward to the rejuvenation of our native vegetation from dormancy. Along with the early flowering plants like Redbud, Flowering Dogwood and Spring Beauty, a few fungi also make an early spring appearance. These are the morels, false morels and other fungi that have cup-shaped fruiting structures.

Morels are examples of mushrooms. The term "mushroom" is a non-scientific term for a fruiting structure produced by certain groups of fungi. The fructifications release spores, the propagules by which fungi reproduce. In addition to morels and gilled mushrooms, other types of fructifications included bracket fungi, puffballs and stinkhorns. The vegetative body of the fungus is called the 'mycelium' which is generally unseen in nature and is found in soil, logs, leaf litter, etc.

Morels, false morels and cup fungi belong to the subdivision Ascomycotina. The group gets its name from microscopic structures called "asci" which are sacs that contain spores. The asci line the external surface of the morels and false morels and the concave surface of the cup fungi. Morels belong to the genus *Morchella* in the family Morchellaceae. The false morels or lorchels belong to the Helvellaceae. *Gyromitra* is one of several genera in this family and will be the only one discussed here.

Morels have a cap that resembles a sponge and both the cap and stem are hollow. The species most common in Oklahoma is *M. esculenta* and has a blackish cap at maturity. It is referred to as the "black morel". Avid morel hunters inform me that the common morel is the more common of the two in Oklahoma. It has been my experience elsewhere in the country that the black morel is earlier than the common morel but I am not sure if that holds for Oklahoma. A third species occasionally seen in Oklahoma is *M. semilibra*, the "half-free morel". In *M. esculenta* and *M. angusticeps*, the base of the cap is attached to the stem. In *M. semilibra* the cap is attached about half-way up the stem, leaving a skirt of free tissue. Another taxon of the Morchellaceae that has occasionally been seen in northeastern Oklahoma is *Verpa conica* (bell morel). In *Verpa*, the cap is thimble-shaped, and is attached at the stem apex only. Its appearance is somewhat like that of a bell on the stem.



The only springtime *Gyromitra* that has been confirmed to date in Oklahoma is *G. caroliniana*. The cap is solid, the surface is ridged, lobed and convoluted, and is red to reddish brown. The stalk is solid and rigid. This can be a massive fungus: I have seen specimens that were 8-9 inches tall. One other fungus to be mentioned that is likely to be encountered during morel time or even a little earlier is the cup fungus *Urnula craterium*. It is deeply cup (urn) shaped with a tapering stalk and is blackish-brown.

Morels and certain species of false morels for reasons that still remain a mystery fruit early in the spring at about the same time that trees are beginning to leaf out. In Oklahoma this is usually late March to mid- or late-April depending on the location in the state. This period may vary depending upon whether it is an early or late spring for temperature. Microclimate is also important. Morels may be out on a south-facing slope, but will appear later on the north slope. Since morels and false morels are about 90% water, spring rains are needed as well to assure a good crop. Even with all the conditions seemingly perfect, some years they just are not abundant.

Where do you find morels? Well, just about anywhere. Look for them under elms, cottonwoods, eastern red cedar, along creek beds, disturbed areas, and even in your back yard. In Michigan old apple orchards were particularly good for morels. Burned areas have been fruitful in some parts of the country. The year after the Mt. St. Helens eruption there was a massive fruiting of morels in the devastated areas.

What do you do with them after collecting? Eating them while fresh is one option, of course. They can also be preserved by drying, freezing, or canning. Experiment to see which works best. For many people morels rank among the best of edible wild mushrooms. I wish I had a favorite recipe to share. You can find recipes in many field guides and there are books devoted exclusively to mushroom cookery as well. Not only are they delicious, but after a brief introduction just about anyone can be confident in their ability to recognize them. It is wise, however, if you are going after them for the first time to consult with someone knowledgeable before eating. Use common sense as you would with any fruit or vegetable: eat only young ones or those at the peak of maturity.

I have not eaten the bell morel, but field guides report it not to be as good as the other two (a related species, *V. bohemica* has caused poisoning in some individuals). I am not aware that *Urnula* is poisonous but its leathery texture does not make it appealing. A word of caution regarding the false morels is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

SUMMARY OF ONPS BOARD MEETING, 3 December 1994  
by Darlene Michael, Secretary

The ONPS Board consists of elected officers and co-chairmen of committees. Board members are expected to attend the board meetings, but all members are invited to attend as their time and interests dictate. The Board met at St. Stevens United Methodist Church in Norman on 3 December, 1994. The usual minutes and financial reports were made. Items of other business include these:

New membership brochures were distributed. These are printed on a soft green paper that can be reproduced and are very attractive. Karen Haworth did a fine job on the design and is to be commended. We have 33 new memberships since the last report.

After several years and two or three changes of Treasurer's office, the funds for the Anne Long and Harriet Barclay awards have finally been allocated to the proper account. The Board voted to prorate accumulated interest to each account by its percent of the total. (For the first 7 years of ONPS, the funds were not maintained separately, though they have different goals.)

Also, the life-membership funds left behind when a life member dies will be retained in that account until a sufficient amount has been saved to apply to some special effort.

At the request of several members, Darlene Michael has agreed to allow ONPS to publish and distribute her masters' thesis on native Oklahoma Woody Plants. Copies of the thesis matrix were distributed to boardmembers for study.

Announcements included Ruth Boyd's summary of the sale of *Oklahoma Today* calendars. Two-thirds of them had been sold at that time. Ruth Boyd is also representing the ONPS as a member of the Recreation and Public Access committee for the Oklahoma Biodiversity Program.

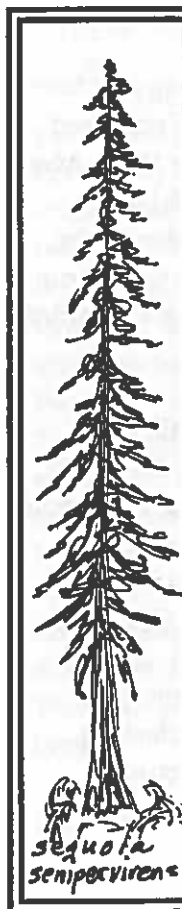
Date of the next Board meeting was set at 1 April 1995, while we are gathered at Dwight Mission for the Spring Field Trip.

REDWOOD

by Wayne Chambers

The old empty house on the corner is gone now. Bull-dozed into a pile and pushed into a hole. It had the misfortune of occupying land that had been rezoned for commercial business. The land-owners salvaged what they could in the short time given them by the city, but time was short. Progress marched on.

Beneath the soil lies broken cabinets, pieces of oak tongue-and-groove flooring and shattered redwood boards. Redwood that took centuries to grow now lies under two feet of soil after only decades of use. It had been selected because redwood is beautiful and lasts a long time.



In a few years, after the convenience store built on the spot goes out of business and the building houses a liquor store, then a karate studio, then a thrift shop before finally sitting vacant for longer than it was occupied, the whole mess will be bulldozed down and pushed into a hole. Probably the same hole with the old house. The guy operating the bulldozer may find those scraps of redwood and proudly take them home -- because the last redwood tree had been felled just after the turn of the century and the lumber just can't be bought any more. Occasionally it can be found in old land fills and construction sites. Because redwood resists decay better than most other woods it can still be recognized, salvaged, and sold for a high price to collectors who value it for its beauty and durability. Like I said, redwood lasts a long time. ☺

HELP WANTED

Myriad Gardens (the Crystal Bridge in Oklahoma City) is finally implementing the long-planned native wildflower garden that past-ONPS president Mike Bush promised years ago. Volunteer coordinator Cynthia Plemons needs help from knowledgeable ONPS members for all phases of the work.

(Knowledge of the operating style of a trowel included). You can call Cynthia at (405)297-3624. This is a break for Central Oklahoma members -- 'cause we won't have to do it all by ourselves! ☺

MORELS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

in order. One species, *Gyromitra esculenta*, is poisonous and has caused deaths across the country. It could occur in Oklahoma and you could confuse it with *G. caroliniana*. I have known people who have eaten the latter but I still advise against it.

This has only been an introduction to spring mushrooms. You can find more information and illustrations on morels and false morels in all mushroom field guides. The best book devoted exclusively to these fungi is *A Morel Hunter's Companion*, by Nancy Smith Weber, from Two Peninsula Press, Lansing MI. 1988. It is loaded with information and is profusely illustrated. Happy hunting! ☺

SYMPATHY CARD

*The ONPS extends our sincerest sympathy to the friends and families of Dr. Jeff Black and Ruth Richardson Magrath (mother of Larry Magrath).*

 WILDFLOWER WORKSHOP ANNOUNCED


The 18th Annual Wildflower Workshop will have a historical twist this year when it is held on Friday and Saturday, June 9 and 10 in Boise City and the Black Mesa area. The Workshop is sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the State Garden Clubs, and the Oklahoma Native Plant Society. The Cimmaron County Historical Society and Northwest District Garden Clubs are the local sponsors.

The Friday workshop session will include a talk on altitude's effect on wildflowers by Paul Buck, Emeritus professor of Botany at the University of Tulsa; Panhandle and Santa Fe Trail History by Associate Judge Ron Kincannon, Boise City; Rangeland Grasses and Burning, by Terry Bidwell, Department of Agronomy, Oklahoma State University; the story of Department of Transportation's Roadside Wildflower Program; plus others to be announced in the Workshop brochure in March. Displays will include an extensive cactus collection, other live wildflowers and plants, T-shirts, books and more.

Workshop sessions will end shortly after lunch, and there will be a tour of some Santa Fe Trail sites including wildflowers, tepee rings, Lookout Mountain, remnants of wheel ruts, etc. The Friday night dinner will be a real Chuck-Wagon barbecue (with salad and dessert too, for us city types) plus entertainment!

On Saturday, a field trip to the Black Mesa area will include stops at Autograph Rock and dinosaur tracks. Those desiring to climb Black Mesa may stay and do so, but one bus will return to Boise City on an earlier schedule for those not doing the climb. This will be a special opportunity as the Santa Fe Trail tours will be discontinued after this trip until the Trail Centennial celebrations in 1997.

As accommodations are limited in the Boise City area, early reservations are advised. Tenting and RV facilities are available. A detailed list will be published in the Workshop brochure which will be mailed in mid-March. by Joanne Orr, ODOT. Phone (405)521-4037

 ONPS readers are welcome to recycle our articles to other newsletters if desired. Some are just too good to use only once!

We'd appreciate our authors getting credit for their work, though!

**NEED A FEW EXTRA COPIES? JUST ASK!**

Many of us belong to other organizations with similar interests. If you know you will need some extra copies of the *Gaillardia* for distribution as promotion of the ONPS, just write Patricia Folley or Ruth Boyd by the regular cutoff date, so we can order enough..

*WOODNOTES*

*And such I knew. a forest seer.  
A minstrel of the natural year.  
Foreteller of the vernal tides.  
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides.  
A lover true. who knew by heart  
Each joy the mountain dales impart:  
It seemed that Nature could not raise  
A plant in any secret place.  
In quaking bog. on snowy hill.  
Beneath the grass that shades the rill.  
Under the snow. between the rocks.  
In damp fields known to bird and fox.  
But he would come in the very hour  
It opened in its virgin bower.  
As if a sunbeam showed the place.  
and tell its long-descended race.  
It seemed as if the breezes brought him.  
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him:  
As if by secret sight he knew  
Where. in far fields. the orchids grew.  
Many haps fall in the field  
Seldom seen by wishful eyes.  
But all her shows did Nature yield.  
To please and win this pilgrim wise.  
He saw the partridge drum in the woods:  
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn:  
He found the tawny thrushes' broods:  
And the shy hawk did wait for him:  
What others did at distance hear.  
And guessed within the thicker's gloom.  
Was shown to this philosopher.  
And at his bidding seemed to come.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson. describing Henry David Thoreau*

## INDOOR OUTING '95

by Judy Jordan

The ONPS' 1995 Indoor Outing was held February 4 at the OSU Horticulture Center in Oklahoma City. Susan and Wayne Chambers arranged the all-day, indoor outing, which included an excellent lunch catered by Tom Bergey of the Golden Trowel Herb Farm. The morning seminar speakers included Sally and Andy Wasowski, co-authors of *Requiem for a Lawnmower*, Steve Bieberich, tree-farm horticulturist and owner of the Sunshine Nursery in Clinton; and Darlene Michael, Landscape Designer and partner in Great Plains Design of Oklahoma city. All three speakers had color slides to illustrate their presentations. All discussed the advantages of landscaping with native plants. Wasowski emphasized the importance of getting seeds and stock native to the local area, to ensure that newly set-out plants are adapted to the climate and amount of rainfall here. Bieberich showed pictures of many trees and shrubs native to western Oklahoma or which are suitable for planting here. Michael showed maps illustrating the underlying geology and soils of Oklahoma, as well as the distribution of rainfall from east to west.

She also discussed basic principles of landscape design.

There were three afternoon workshops, each presented three times and running concurrently. Karen Lehr, Asst. Professor of Architecture at the University of Oklahoma, discussed various elements of design, including form, color, line, texture and harmony. Jesse Rohde, Greenhouse Specialist at the Crystal Bridge at Myriad Gardens in Oklahoma City, shared ideas on how to acquire and transplant native plants in the field. Toby Goodale, Horticulturist with the Valley Tree Farm, spoke on propagation of native plants from seed and cuttings, and demonstrated how to layer acorns and other nuts in damp peat moss in plastic zip-lock bags until planting time.

Tom Bergey's lunch included a delicious vegetarian lasagna accompanied by a tossed salad, both seasoned delectably with herbs from the herb farm. Tom also provided mini-muffins for the morning coffee break.

The Indoor Outing was well attended and all participants seemed well-pleased with the activities, as

...continued on page 8

**ANNE W. LONG AWARD NOMINATION**

Once again, ONPS will recognize outstanding contributions to the purposes of the Society via this award named for one of the ONPS' founders. Individuals, groups of individuals, scout troops, church groups, science or environmental clubs, businesses or similar organizations who have contributed to the purposes of ONPS are eligible for the award. Nominees need not be members of ONPS, but members are eligible when they qualify. Recognition and presentation of the award will be made at the Annual Meeting of ONPS in October. Remember that current ONPS board members are not eligible for this award.

**The deadline for nominations is September 1, 1995.**

Nominations are to be made on this form (you may make a Xerox copy), and submitted directly to the chair of the Awards Committee: Dr. Rahmona Thompson, East Central University, Department of Biology, Ada, OK 74820. All nominating letters will be kept strictly confidential.

NOMINEE \_\_\_\_\_ NOMINATION BY \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Please use separate sheets to provide detailed information supporting the nomination. Such material is necessary for the Awards Committee to make final decisions. Nominations may be submitted any time prior to the 1st September deadline.**

continued from page 7 INDOOR OUTING

well as the chance to buy books, herbs, and plants from several vendors on hand. There were a total of 77 lunches served, and 86 persons registered for the outing. These were in addition to the speakers and vendors. Two items were raffled-- a Seaside Alder tree donated by Steve Bieberich, and a book, *Sunflowers*, by Charles Heiser, donated by Ruth Boyd. The raffle earned us \$40.00. Thanks to Susan and Wayne for a delightful, well-organized 1995 Indoor Outing, and to Steve and Ruth and the other Central Chapter members who helped in many ways. ☺

Ed. note: Cindy Harnett called from Tulsa after attending the Indoor Outing, with a request for recipes of the food served by Tom Bergey. Incredibly, Tom agreed. Some of the recipes follow, but I haven't space for more. If you want the rest, send a long, addressed envelope with 55 cents postage to: Pat Folley, 15100 Etowah Rd, Noble OK 73068.

#### POTPOURRI SALAD

This is simply a salad made with whatever greens, salad herbs and edible flowers I have on hand. Usually, I use several varieties of lettuce, such as butter bread, Romaine & red and green leaf lettuce. Most all culinary herbs are good in fresh salads. The "salad herbs" I use most are salad burnet, sorrel, basil (all varieties), parsley, and nasturtium leaves. Mustard greens and spinach are also added. The flowers in the salad will depend on what is in bloom. My favorites are nasturtium, daylily, gem marigolds and pineapple sage. Toss all together and serve with your favorite dressing.

#### ZESTY VINAIGRETTE

Combine the following:

4 tablespoons white wine herb vinegar  
 2 tablespoons red wine herb vinegar  
 2 cloves minced garlic      1/2 teaspoon brown sugar  
 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard    1 teaspoon honey  
 1/2 teaspoon paprika      1/2 cup olive oil  
 .Mix or shake well before serving.

Tom also sent a list of the plants he has for sale (none of them native to Oklahoma), and a 1995 bulleting & plant list, both of which also contain recipes. You'd probably better contact him for copies of those. Address Tom Bergey, c/o Golden Trowel Herb Farm, Newalla OK4857. Ph. (405)391-GROW. And after all

that, he wants to thank us for giving him such a good day! ☺

.. VIRGINIA CREEPER...continued from page 2

So, to my mind, there exists a very real possibility that the sap of Virginia Creeper may cause a dermatitis, at least in some people. It would take a designed experiment to be certain, and none of the Nature Center staff seems eager to volunteer to participate, but perhaps someone else would like to try it.

If anyone else has had a similar experience, I'd like to know about it, and perhaps we can build enough anecdotal evidence to answer some questions. At least for now, I would have to hold open the possibility that V. C. can truly cause a rash, and that all such reports may not be due to inadvertent exposure to Poison Ivy.

Ed. note: As a constant victim of poison-ivy (*Toxicodendron*) poisoning, I can add this personal experience: I hand-pull virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) from our trees several times a week, year-round, and have never had a reaction. Maybe Bob is doing penance for having the blessed immunity to P.I. Let's hear from our readers about this! ☺

"...and, of course, a garden is simply a little wilderness brought close to home" ...from *Remembering Indiana* by Ann Zwinger, contributed by Ruth Boyd.

P.S.: Ruth has more copies of the membership brochure available on request. Her address is on p. 10.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

ONPS members and friends are encouraged to contribute to the *Gaillardia*, published quarterly. Many of our articles are written by professionals, and may be submitted on disks (without columns or tabs, please).

As editor, I welcome all sorts of input, from the high-tech to the scratch pad. You may send clear black-and-white drawings to illustrate your material, or describe the illustration you wish and I will insert one for you.

Of course, as a non-profit organization trying to keep our membership rates as low as possible, we cannot pay in real money. You will have to work for love -- every author who contributed to this and all other of our newsletters does the same. ....*Patricia Folley*

SEE ADDRESS ON BACK PAGE, IN THE MASTHEAD BOX



## SPRING STATEWIDE OUTING ANNOUNCED

by Jim Norman, Field Trip Co-Chair

**Spring Wildflower Trip Now a Two-Day Event!** No foolin', April 1 and 2 have been chosen for the spring outing in the fabulous northeastern Oklahoma area. Dwight Mission, a Presbyterian camp and conference center located near Sallisaw, will be the site of the ONPS spring field outing. Situated on beautiful Sallisaw Creek amid the wooded hills of eastern Oklahoma, this area offers a grand assortment of botanical delights. Here's hoping they'll be in bloom by April 1!

The map shows how to reach the mission but best and least stressful is to take the Dwight Mission exit from I - 40 (about 5 miles east of US 59 at Sallisaw) and travel northeast about 9 miles to the camp gate on the right. Upon entering the impressive grounds, you will find signs to direct you to a registration table. **Since you will have already sent me a check by March 23**, you will be assigned a dorm room -- men in Washburn hall, women in Sage hall -- and be presented with a meal ticket. **BRING YOUR OWN BEDDING AND TOWEL.**

A total charge of \$23 covers your dorm fee for Saturday night and three meals: Saturday lunch and dinner, and breakfast on Sunday. Campers are welcome: camping cost is \$18 including campsite and all meals. No single-meal reservations will be taken.

### SCHEDULE:

Saturday, April 1: 9-10 a.m. Registration  
10:00 a.m., field trips on foot in vicinity of camp and along Sallisaw Creek.

12:00 noon, lunch in the dining hall.

1:30-5:00 p.m., field trip.

6:00 p.m., dinner, followed by an illustrated presentation by Dr. Ron Tyrl of Oklahoma State University on "Botanizing in China".

Sunday, April 2:

6:00 a.m. birding with Jim Norman.

8:00, breakfast in the dining hall

9:30, field trip by carpool, possibly to Short Mountain, near Kerr Dam. We may be able to find the rare Yellowwood tree (*Cladrastis kentukea*) and the downy arrow-wood (*Viburnum rafinesquianum*).

**Registrations with your check for \$23 or \$18 must be in Jeff Burkhart's hands by March 23. See you there!**



### DIRECTIONS TO DWIGHT MISSION

Dwight Mission telephones are: (918)775-2018 or (918)775-2144

### >NOTICE

> **Preregistration is now required for all field trips.**

>Field trip announcements will contain the name, address, and telephone number of the leader. If you have doubts about terrain, difficulty, etc., ask.

>Field trips take place rain or shine. Proper dress and shoes, hat, etc., are essential. **Bring water and lunch.**

>Participation is at your own risk

>All ONPS field trips are open to the public at no charge, unless charges per member are specified in the announcement. Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.

>Chapter-initiated field trips are also open to all ONPS members who may be able to attend. Please register.

> Next state-wide event will be the Dwight Mission spring outing on April 1 & 2. Details at left. To register, just notify Dr. Jeff Burkhart at (405)233-7639 (home) or (405)237-4433 (work) or 2502 E. Elm, Enid, OK 73701.

>To register for other events, notify the person listed on the notice. Names, address and phone are listed. It is never too late or too early for planning.

### PONTOTOC RIDGE PRESERVE

Central Chapter planned this one, but everyone in ONPS is invited. One-day tour of the Nature Conservancy's newest preserve, southern Pontotoc Co. Meet at the Holiday Inn north of Ada on SH 99 (Richardson Loop) at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 13. Bring lunch, etc. Easy to moderate terrain. Register with Pat Folley, (405)872-8361 or at 15100 Etowah Rd., Noble OK 73068. No charge.

## CHAPTER NOTES

**NORTHEAST CHAPTER** by Betty Kemm

The NE Chapter plans an evening program on Monday, March 13, 7:30 p.m. at the Tulsa Garden Center: 2435 S. Peoria. Dates will be set for the local spring field trips. Nora Jones will give a program on the ecosystems in Oklahoma protected by the Nature Conservancy.

Members plan to donate plants and to volunteer for the Garden Center's Garden Market to be held April 14 and 15.

The Chapter has been invited to hold its May meeting at the University Center at Tulsa as part of its grand opening of its new area of campus.

ED note: the *Gaillardia* may not reach all readers by the announced date. If you missed the meeting because of the late notice, call Betty Kemm to be put on the post-card notification list.

**CENTRAL CHAPTER REPORT** by Patricia Folley

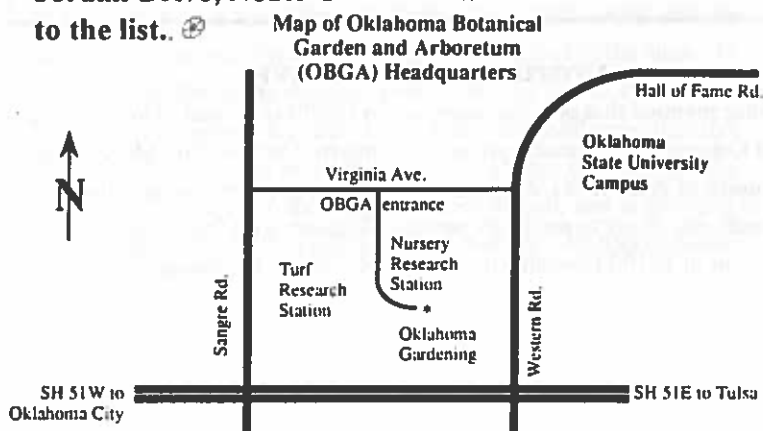
1) The Indoor Outing, our big project for this season, was an unqualified success, according to those lucky folks who got to go. (I was sick in bed, darn it!) Our undying gratitude to Susan and Wayne Chambers, who made it work, and to Sheila Strawn, Hal Howard, Ruth Boyd, and many others.

2) Remaining evening programs are planned for Feb. 27 and Mar. 27 at the Horticulture Center. After that, it's just party, party--er -- field trips and more field trips.

(3) One of the two dates saved for "Payne Co. Prairie" may be used for an overnight to Horsethief Canyon.

The June 1 cutoff for registration to tour Oklahoma Gardening in Stillwater is firm. Register with Ruth Boyd. See map below.

Central Oklahoma ONPS members who are not getting postcard notices of chapter meetings or outings may call Ruth Boyd at (405)872-9652, mail to 812 Jordan Drive, Noble OK 73068 and ask to be added to the list. ☺



*Faith in a Seed, subt. The Dispersion of Seeds*, by Henry David Thoreau. Ed. by Bradley P. Dean; publ. by Island Press / Shearwater Books, Washington, D.C. and Covelo, California. Illustrations (nice, appropriate pencil drawings) by Abigail Rorer

It is a bit of a shock to learn that Thoreau was trying to refute the then-popular notion that at least some plants and animals could spring from appropriate cultures without benefit of seed or egg -- spontaneous generation, they called it. But there are enough mentions of that idea in this beautiful book to make it clear that for Thoreau's contemporaries, at least, it was a lively issue. Otherwise, there is little in this new book that is outdated after 125 years. Thoreau didn't use any bar-graph diagrams to make his observations look more "scientific". They were, and they are. But they were observations made of living plants in a state of nature, and they have the taste of Henry David Thoreau in every line.

Some quotes: "Who could believe in prophecies that the world would end this summer, while one milkweed with faith matured its seeds?" (page 93) "We cultivate imported shrubs in our front yards for the beauty of their berries, while at least equally beautiful berries grow unregarded by us in the surrounding fields". (page 180) "Of course, it is the spirit in which you do a thing which makes it interesting, whether it is sweeping a room or pulling turnips." "You cannot raise one kind of wood alone in a country, unless you are willing to plant it yourself....Better have your wood of different kinds in narrow lots of fifty acres, and not one kind covering a township."

Darwin's *Origin of Species* had just been published, and it is evident that Thoreau had absorbed it, integrated it into his own relationship with nature, and found no reason to feel a strain. The fit is seamless. Thoreau mainly addresses the *succession* of plants in disturbed habitats, as for example the reason why pines succeed oaks in clearings, and oaks eventually succeed those same pines.



There is not much that is surprising to any well-read modern in *Faith in a Seed*, except the fact that Thoreau reached so reliable a conclusion in so natural a way. Nothing here must be dismissed with a "well, for that day and age", for it is also well for this day and age. Publication methods and standards have changed, probably because the number of charlatans in science, now that it is a way to make a living instead of a way to make a life, has contributed to our need to "show our work" when presenting the results of an investigation. Thoreau, who had every intention of publishing this work, did not need to "show his work" -- it carries its own burden, and easily and well. ☺

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Several members have called in to ask about information on service activities and opportunities. Frankly, I don't know. But here is a plea for information that could become a regular part of the Gaillardia if enough content can be found: So tell us.....

Are you reporting wildflower/plant events to your local newspaper, OSU extension center, or library?

Anyone you know collecting seeds of native plants along the roadside or on your own property for sharing with others?

Do you provide educational material, programs, or help in identification to others in your community? Do you know someone who does?

Could you use our wildflower posters, color slides, or library to do a little native-plant "consciousness raising" in your area?

For example, your editor has advised a local school on use of their outdoor classroom; given slide-lectures to a garden club, a church group, and an Extension Homemakers' Club. Also loaned prepared slide programs to two other members for use in their related-interest organizations, and did my regular volunteer job in the Bebb Herbarium, University of Oklahoma. Dr. Paul Buck is doing similar work in the Tulsa area, though slowed by a recent knee surgery. Ruth Boyd, Wayne & Susan Chambers and others spend countless hours on the phone answering questions about gardening with wild plants.

How about sending your news? Instructions for submitting information to the Gaillardia are on page 8. ☺



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We are located in Peggs, OK, but for now, our mail comes out of Hulbert, OK. Our greenhouse will be open by April 1, by appointment only. This is a listing of some of the Gardening Events where we will be selling Native Plants:

APRIL 14-15 Garden Market, Tulsa Garden Center, (918)746-5125

APRIL 22 Herbal Affair, Sand Springs, (918)224-5558

MAY 6 Central OK Herbfest, Oklahoma City OK (405)524-1000

1995 plant list available at address above

HOW ABOUT THAT? WE DO ADS NOW! THIS SIZE JUST \$20/ISSUE, IF ONPS-RELATED

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**Oklahoma Native Plant Society / 2435 South Peoria / Tulsa, OK 74114**

\$15.00 Family     \$10.00 Individual     Gift from \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$5.00 Student     \$200.00 Lifetime Individual  
 \$300.00 Lifetime Family     Renewal     New Membership  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution for \_\_\_\_\_ (All contributions are tax deductible)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS PH. \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**RENEWAL TIME!**

**Please look down at your mailing label ☞ If the top line has a date entry of 12-94 or before in the third "word" position, your renewal for 1995 is due. (The first "word" is your membership group: IM for individuals, FM for families, SM for students. The second "word" indicates the time you joined ONPS.) ☞**

**ONPS WELCOMES THESE NEW MEMBERS**

Robert Basterache, Idabel      Janie Bell, Broken Arrow  
Jamie Cook, Claremore      Marjorie Greer, Norman  
Kay G. Jackson, Sapulpa      Ralph Lindgren, Joplin, MO  
Shirley D. Lusk, Gainesville, TX  
Kent & Sheila Myers, Norman  
Holder's Herbs & Gifts, Choctaw

Chris Frisbee, Hot Springs, AR  
Jeanette Sciara, Stillwater  
Charlene Miller, Norman

Helen E. Jordan, Stillwater, OK  
Martin D. Zocher, Owasso  
Dick & Jan Woolheater, Durant

Paul E. Olson, Oklahoma City  
Don & Sharon McCain, Mustang

Know any of these fine folks? Why not give them a call, welcome them to the organization, invite them to go along on a field trip, get acquainted. We need them!

*The Gaillardia*

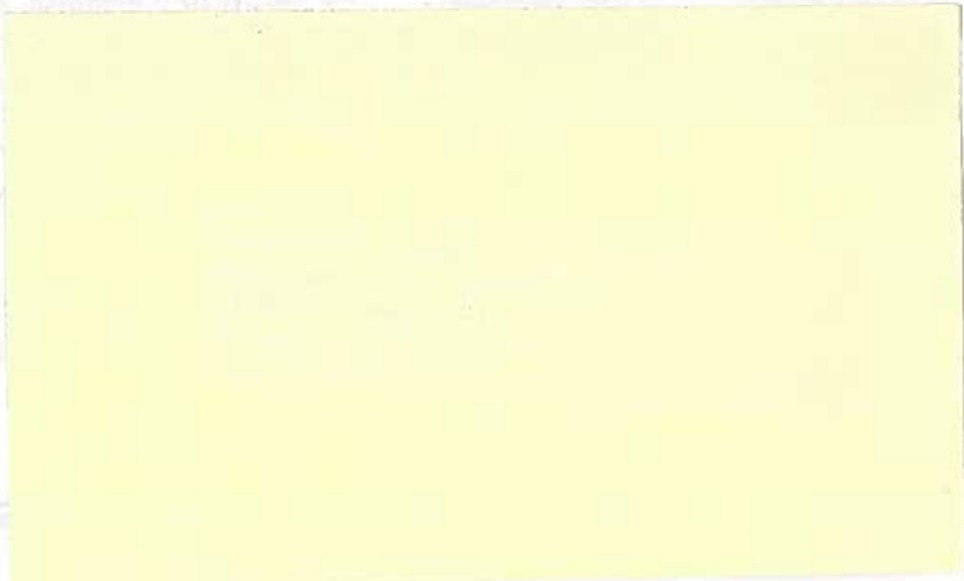
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Tulsa, Oklahoma 74114

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## BOTANY BAY

by Clark Ovrebo

## SPRING IN OKLAHOMA: MOREL SEASON

We soon will be leaving the winter season and looking forward to the rejuvenation of our native vegetation from dormancy. Along with the early flowering plants like Redbud, Flowering Dogwood and Spring Beauty, a few fungi also make an early spring appearance. These are the morels, false morels and other fungi that have cup-shaped fruiting structures.

Morels are examples of mushrooms. The term "mushroom" is a non-scientific term for a fruiting structure produced by certain groups of fungi. The fructifications release spores, the propagules by which fungi reproduce. In addition to morels and gilled mushrooms, other types of fructifications included bracket fungi, puffballs and stinkhorns. The vegetative body of the fungus is called the 'mycelium' which is generally unseen in nature and is found in soil, logs, leaf litter, etc.

Morels, false morels and cup fungi belong to the subdivision Ascomycotina. The group gets its name from microscopic structures called "asci" which are sacs that contain spores. The asci line the external surface of the morels and false morels and the concave surface of the cup fungi. Morels belong to the genus *Morchella* in the family Morchellaceae. The false morels or lorchels belong to the Helvellaceae. *Gyromitra* is one of several genera in this family and will be the only one discussed here.

Morels have a cap that resembles a sponge and both the cap and stem are hollow. The species most common in Oklahoma is *M. esculenta*, the "common morel". It has a tan to grayish tan cap. A second species is *M. angusticeps*. It is smaller in stature than *M. esculenta* and has a blackish cap at maturity. It is referred to as the "black morel". Avid morel hunters inform me that the common morel is the more common of the two in Oklahoma. It has been my experience elsewhere in the country that the black morel is earlier than the common morel but I am not sure if that holds for Oklahoma. A third species occasionally seen in Oklahoma is *M. semilibra*, the "half-free morel". In *M. esculenta* and *M. angusticeps*, the base of the cap is attached to the stem. In *M. semilibra* the cap is attached about half-way up the stem, leaving a skirt of free tissue. Another taxon of the Morchellaceae that has occasionally been seen in northeastern Oklahoma is *Verpa conica* (bell morel). In *Verpa*, the cap is thimble-shaped, and is attached at the stem apex only. Its appearance is somewhat like that of a bell on the stem.

The only springtime *Gyromitra* that has been confirmed to date in Oklahoma is *G. caroliniana*. The cap is solid, the surface is ridged, lobed and convoluted, and is red to reddish brown. The stalk is solid and ridged. This can be a massive fungus: I have seen specimens that were 8-9 inches tall. One other fungus to be mentioned that is likely to be encountered during morel time or even a little earlier is the cup fungus *Urmula craterium*. It is deeply cup (urn) shaped with a tapering stalk and is blackish-brown.

Morels and certain species of false morels for reasons that still remain a mystery fruit early in the spring at about the same time that trees are beginning to leaf out. In Oklahoma this is usually late March to mid- or late-April depending on the location in the state. This period may vary depending upon whether it is an early or late spring for temperature. Microclimate is also important. Morels may be out on a south-facing slope, but will appear later on the north slope. Since morels and false morels are about 90% water, spring rains are needed as well to assure a good crop. Even with all the conditions seemingly perfect, some years they just are not abundant.

Where do you find morels? Well, just about anywhere. Look for them under elms, cottonwoods, eastern red cedar, along creek beds, disturbed areas, and even in your back yard. In Michigan old apple orchards were particularly good for morels. Burned areas have been fruitful in some parts of the country. The year after the Mt. St. Helens eruption there was a massive fruiting of morels in the devastated areas.

What do you do with them after collecting? Eating them while fresh is one option, of course. They can also be preserved by drying, freezing, or canning. Experiment to see which works best. For many people morels rank among the best of edible wild mushrooms. I wish I had a favorite recipe to share. You can find recipes in many field guides and there are books devoted exclusively to mushroom cookery as well. Not only are they delicious, but after a brief introduction just about anyone can be confident in their ability to recognize them. It is wise, however, if you are going after them for the first time to consult with someone knowledgeable before eating. Use common sense as you would with any fruit or vegetable: eat only young ones or those at the peak of maturity.

I have not eaten the bell morel, but field guides report it not to be as good as the other two (a related species, *V. bohemica* has caused poisoning in some individuals). I am not aware that *Urmula* is poisonous but its leathery texture does not make it appealing. A word of caution regarding the

.....continued on back of page

....continued from page 4, over.

☠ false morels is in order. One species, Gyromitra esculenta, is ☠ poisonous and has caused deaths across the country. It could occur in Oklahoma and you could confuse it with G. caroliniana. I have known people who have eaten the latter but I still advise against it.

This has only been an introduction to spring mushrooms. You can find more information and illustrations on morels and false morels in all mushroom field guides. The best book devoted exclusively to these fungi is A Morel Hunter's Companion, by Nancy Smith Weber, from Two Peninsula Press, Lansing MI. 1988. It is loaded with information and is profusely illustrated. Happy hunting! ☺

*A word of explanation to our members:  
In the Gaillardia issue which you just received,  
a sentence was omitted from Dr. Ourebo's essay  
on the Morel mushrooms, changing the meaning  
and possibly misleading to the reader. Please  
staple this revised edition over the original in  
your copy.*

*And an apology to Clark Ourebo, who*

*wrote an excellent article and certainly did not  
deserve to have it misquoted. Next time, Clark.  
I'll send the originals with the draft newsletter.  
for Dr. Milby and Ruth Boyd to check! jaf*

.....  
John Muir, writing of the fundamentalist view that the Earth and all that is in it was made for man to use as he will: "now it never seems to occur to these far-seeing teachers that Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be first of all the happiness of each one of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one." from A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf".  
.....

"I think he went down to Walden to pry into the arts of Nature and get something that wasn't open to the public" Edward Emerson, writing about H. D. Thoreau  
.....

"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except learning how to grow in rows."  
.....

..... Doug Larson

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