

## From The Editor's Desk:

J. Dan Pittillo, Newsletter Editor

With this issue I hand over the organization and editing of topics in Chinquapin to the able hands of Scott Ranger. While I do try to sing in a local choir, I'm not especially adept at singing a swan song, so just look for my occasional contribution to future issues. I have learned a lot in the editing process over the past 15 years, both about how readers interact with an issue and what most interests readers, as well as some of the new ideas being developed about the plant world. The new DNA and plant chemistry research will continue to make inroads into our thinking about how plants operate. Older concepts of plant-animal interactions will not be left out of new discoveries, so we are in an exciting time for botanists as knowledge expands well into the future. I hope you will continue to send us your thoughts on what most interests you.

I believe you will be impressed as we have new "blood" in the editorship. Scott has sent me a draft copy of his first issue, volume 16(1). While I don't want to divulge all the new topics he has lined up and spoil the surprise, I believe you will welcome the addition of color, even if it is just a two-color printed copy (full-color printing is too expensive for our present budget). We are exploring the possibility of downloadable copies in full color, so this will make our newsletter more appealing to our computer-connected members. If you would like to welcome Scott, drop him an email, at [scottranger@comcast.net](mailto:scottranger@comcast.net) or write him at 1963 Ferry Drive, Marietta, GA 30066-6250.

I don't believe I have ever missed an opportunity to address the weather we have been experiencing for the past several years. As usual, we seem to be facing some strange patterns with climate change. In my last newsletter I commented that we have been having droughts throughout the region, and this has continued through October. In Cullowhee, we are still 15 inches below normal, and the severity is even greater in other places. Our governor has addressed the problem by canceling burning permits and posting water-use restrictions on many of the worst drought-stricken communities. But the good news is that we've been spared significant hurricane storms so far. We will likely, however, yet see a return of deluges and increased erosion of soils, as human activities have not declined in the southern Appalachians and developments continue to expand.

For over a decade I've been predicting the leaf color for news media and when I retired, the WCU administration wanted to keep the release originating from the university and thus my successor, Kathy Mathews, has been making the news releases. Kathy has been working closely with me for the past few years and is beginning to get a handle on this "slippery slope of prediction". There are so many factors that impact the quality of leaf color that no one is really going to hit the mark all the time. This year I thought we would have a "good color year" based on the fact we've had so much drought in our area. I believe it is working out pretty well but the lack of a final blast of frosty weather has not yielded the most spectacular year in my experience. However, the Plott Balsams north of Sylva are a bright red today (Nov. 3). And my usual prediction of "spotty" color seems to have been more accurate for the past several years. I've heard this seems to be the case throughout much of the Appalachians and perhaps into the Northwest plains as well. The Piedmont is yet to fully develop the color so far. Send your thoughts on the quality of color this year in your area and we'll print a note about them in the spring issue.

One thing we can all appreciate in this world of human impact and climate change: As long as we don't pollute the world too badly or pave over everything, plants will sustain our biosphere and provide us with the food and energy we all need to live. And you should stop and enjoy the beauty they provide for our enjoyment every chance you get. ❧

## Letters to Editor

Research forester David Loftis writes regarding my essay on the tulip tree:

1. I agree that harvesting of forests, particularly on sub-mesic and mesic sites, has resulted in much greater representation of yellow-poplar in our southern Appalachian forests. It does regenerate prolifically from new seedlings that become established after disturbance and yellow poplar stump-sprouts will outgrow anything. In places, we also have fairly substantial areas of "old-field" yellow poplar.

2. The species does seem to have fewer insect and disease problems than other Appalachian species, including gypsy moth.

3. We have developed silvicultural options that can successfully regenerate associated species on sites where yellow-poplar sometimes totally dominates. These options involve disturbances, prior to substantial overstory reductions, that over time create denser, larger, and more vigorous populations of advance reproduction of a variety of species. After substantial overstory reduction, yellow poplar is excluded, at least on a patch-wise basis, and these other species are able to compete successfully and attain canopy status. ❧

## SABS Officers and Editors

### Howard S. Neufeld, President

Department of Biology  
572 Rivers Street  
Appalachian State University  
Boone, NC 28608  
Phone: (828) 262-2683 / fax (828) 262-2137  
Email: [neufeldhs@app.state.edu](mailto:neufeldhs@app.state.edu)

### Conley McMullen, President Elect

Department of Biology, MSC 7801  
James Madison University  
Harrisonburg, VA 22807  
Phone: 540-568-3805  
E-mail: [mcmulck@jmu.edu](mailto:mcmulck@jmu.edu)

### Charles N. Horn, Treasurer

Newberry College, Biology Department  
2100 College Street  
Newberry, SC 29108  
Phone (803) 321-5257 / fax (803) 321-5232  
Email: [chorn@newberry.edu](mailto:chorn@newberry.edu)

### Patricia Cox, Membership Secretary

TVA Heritage Program  
400 W Summit Hill Dr  
WT 11C 407K  
Knoxville, TN 37901  
Phone (865) 632-1635  
E-mail: [pbcox@tnva.gov](mailto:pbcox@tnva.gov)

### Ruth Douglas, Recording Secretary

108 Wildflower Dr.  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
Phone (434) 293-6538  
Email: [ruthd@stone.net](mailto:ruthd@stone.net)

### J. Dan Pittillo, Newsletter Editor

675 Cane Creek Road  
Sylva, NC 28779  
Phone (828) 293-9661  
E-mail: [dpittillo@gmail.com](mailto:dpittillo@gmail.com)

### Audrey Mellichamp

Managing Editor of Castanea  
3036 Ventosa Dr  
Charlotte, NC 28205  
email: [lmellichamp@carolina.rr.com](mailto:lmellichamp@carolina.rr.com)

Let us know what botanical  
interest topic you'd like to  
read OR send us a short  
article for inclusion in a future  
issue. Photos illustrating the  
topic welcome.

## Will Southern Appalachian Forests Be Dominated by Tulip Trees in the Future?

We observe that coves and slopes of southern Appalachian forests have far more *Liriodendron tulipifera*, a.k.a., tulip tree or yellow poplar, in recent years. This trend has been taking place over the last century, and as long as forests are being harvested of timber, the prolific tulip tree continues to expand in the region. There are probably a number of factors involved in this process.



1) A young forest dominated by tulip trees is seen in the middle of this photo taken near the Wasilik Poplar on Runaway Knob, Macon County, NC. The large Wasilik Poplar (circled) is in this cut-over slope at 3500 feet elevation; it is now dead.

Tulip tree is especially fecund and produces abundant seed. The fruits produced each summer are formed in aggregates of samaras numbering perhaps 4-6 dozen, each well equipped with a wing that insures they drift slowly in the wind to new locations from autumn to late winter. The seeds will germinate on suitable sites the following year or as much as 10 years later when conditions become favorable. In natural ecosystems *Liriodendron* often occupies canopy gaps formed when larger trees topple along with others nearby or from the effects of trees downed in wind-storms.

The species grows rapidly and outstrips many other trees in suitable early successional sites. Suitable sites are those that have sunlight-exposed soil or forest litter. The tree is intolerant of shade, with younger trees growing for perhaps only a decade under shade. At maturity it can grow to 200 feet in height, but more commonly grows to about 150 feet. Trunk diameters can be 8-12 feet but more commonly 2-5 feet. It begins with excurrent growth and a straight single bole but at maturity becomes deliquescent as the upper branches spread and increase in girth. If the tree is cut down, it will sprout from stump buds and very quickly grow vigorous saplings (any visitor to Poplar Cove's "twin poplars" of Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest in western North Carolina has seen this type of vegetative development).

Tulip trees have relatively few diseases. While there have been 30 species of insects indicated as pathogens, only four of them are considered of economic impact. A few fungi also may be a problem, but these are usually confined to trees already suffering from low vigor.

Genetically the species is quite plastic. In the southern ecotypes young saplings respond to 18-hour sunlight positively, but such is not the case for northern ecotypes. Not only are the growth characteristics different but also the potential quality of the wood can vary considerably for domestic uses.

The clearing and logging of forests in the southern Appalachians has been the major influence in the increase of the tulip tree. The opportunistic yellow poplar quickly takes advantage of abandoned fields and tim-

bered lands in the region. Abandoned fields will grow up in tulip trees perhaps after 5-10 years but in cut-over forests with stumps of tulip trees present, the sprouts will be several feet tall by the second year, thus recovering more rapidly than agricultural lands. The Society of American Foresters list *Liriodendron* as a major component of four cover types: Yellow poplar, Yellow poplar-Eastern Hemlock, Yellow poplar-White oak-Northern red oak, and Sweetgum-Yellow poplar. It is also listed as a minor component of an additional 11 cover types.

The interplay between fire-tolerant species and intolerant ones may be of significance in this discussion. Tulip tree is not fire tolerant, especially the younger, thin-barked trees. The same is true for red maple (*Acer rubrum*). Our past control of fires may have contributed to the expansion of both tulip trees and red maples, among others, such as eastern hemlocks. Oaks, on the other hand, are more resistant to ground fires and this probably explains their dominance in the forests that the early European settlers frequently encountered, due to common practice of the natives of burning off leaves, often in the fall, to uncover chestnuts and acorns (cf. *Castanea* articles in the 1998 special volume on "Vegetation of the Blue Ridge Province").

Another factor in the expansion of tulip trees relates to soil moisture. In the past there has generally been more available ground water in the cleared forest lands, and the aggressive expansion of tulip trees into those areas may have taken advantage of higher soil moisture availability (cf. reports on the work done at Coweeta Hydrologic Lab). If climate change proceeds to provide drier climates in the southern Appalachians, then we are more likely to see a decline of tulip trees with an increase in oaks on the drier slopes.

It is safe to say that in the short term, as long as we have forest clearings in the southern Appalachians we will continue to have our forests dominated more and more by *Liriodendron*. We should anticipate human activity being part of the ecosystems that make up our region, and it will be associated with a much greater component of tulip trees than in our primeval forests that the Amerindians enjoyed. The one concern that might alter this would be if we were to have a significant disease spread through the populations. Could it be that *Liriodendron tulipifera* might

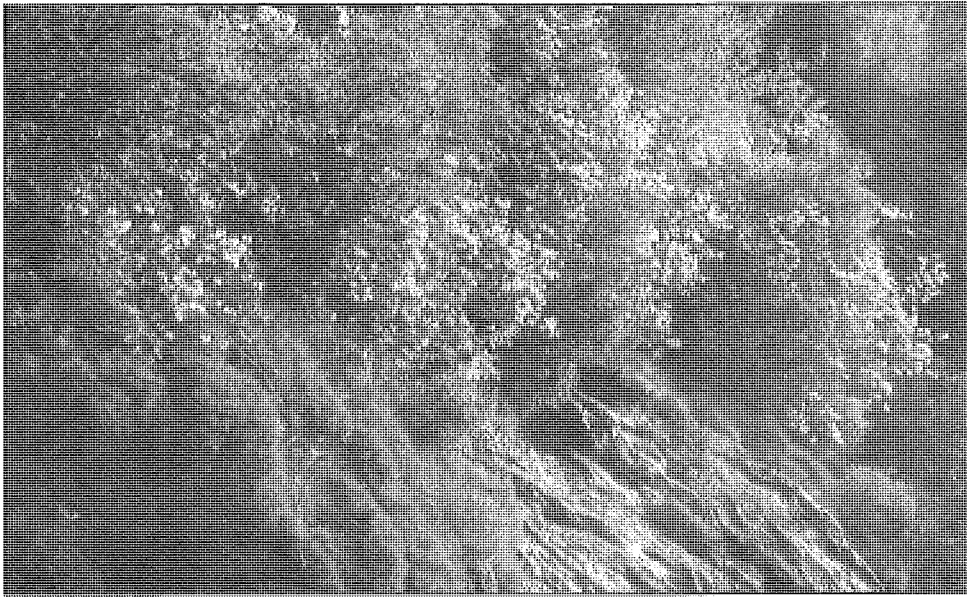


2) Wasilik Poplar with the late A. Rufus Morgan, photographed at the 9-foot base in 1972.]

decline, as it seems to have been the case with *Liriodendron chinensis*, if the trend toward monoculture increases its vulnerability to disease or climate changes? While we don't expect a monoculture of *Liriodendron*, the opportunity for disease spreading would be higher with higher tree density of this presently most vigorous southern Appalachian species.

(A good reference for additional information is found at: [http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics\\_manual/volume\\_2/liriodendron/tulipifera.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_2/liriodendron/tulipifera.htm))— J. Dan Pittillo ❧

## Photograph Location in Chinquapin 15(3)



On the back of the last newsletter was a photograph taken at the north end of the Courthouse Tunnel on the Blue Ridge Parkway. In it you could see light-colored *Rhododendron vaseyi* in bloom with cushion *Hypericum buckleyi* below and on the edge of the exposed rock cliff.

## New Members: Welcome!

You joined one of the more diverse regional botanical organizations in the country, and we hope we can share some interesting insights into the botanical world with each other.

Christopher Adams, Bristol, TN  
 Gregory Chandler, Wilmington, NC  
 Ben Gahagen, Harrisonburg, VA  
 Colin MacLachlan, Columbia, MD  
 Doug McPherson, Harrisonburg, VA ❄



*"Be nice—have you given your pitcher plant a bug today?"*

Larry Mellichamp, in jest, 1999.



## Look Again by the late Dick Smith

**Ed. note: This is the last installment of this fine column that Dick Smith wrote during his life for the Shortia newsletter. I was impressed by the simplicity and clarity with which he gave amateurs or others not yet familiar with certain species good advice on identifying plants. I trust you have been likewise appreciative.**

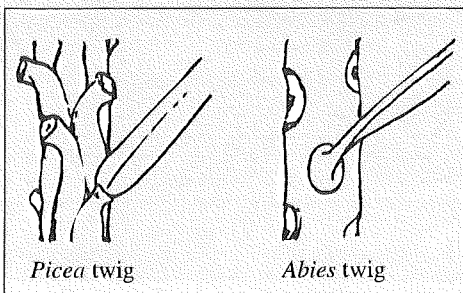
Reprinted with minor editing and with permission of *Shortia: Newsletter of the Western Carolina Botanical Club: Winter 1982-83.*

"He balsam" and "she balsam"—the names would seem to indicate a dioecious species, or at least very similar plants, but such is not the case at all. They differ from each other in many ways, and the wonder is that we can so easily be confused even when we see the two side by side.

First of all, the name "he balsam" is simply a local one given to red spruce (*Picea rubens*) that happens to be growing in the southern highlands instead of, say, the Adirondacks or Ontario. "She balsam" probably has a little more legitimacy, since the tree it applies to is found only in the southern Appalachians; technically it is a Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*).

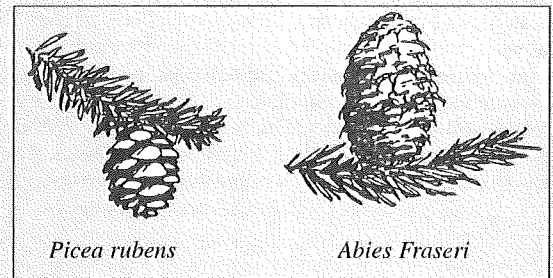
Both trees are conifers, and that alerts us to the basic difference: On spruces the cones are pendulous and on firs they are upright. Also, the cones of spruces fall from the tree intact, but those of firs usually disintegrate, dropping their scales one by one.

So far so good, but often the cones are high on the trees and out of view. So let's look at the needles. Spruce needles are square in cross-section and can be twirled between thumb and forefinger, while fir needles are distinctly flat. Just remember "s" = square = spruce, "f" = flat = fir. Also look at their attachment to the twigs. Spruce needles are mounted on short, stubby projections, which remain after needles are removed. Fir needles, on the other hand, are attached directly to the twigs and leave only smooth, flat, circular scars.



*Picea* twig

*Abies* twig



*Picea rubens*

*Abies Fraseri*

The name "balsam" does not belong to any genus, but it has been freely used in vernacular names not only for firs and spruces but also for balsam poplar, the old-fashioned garden Impatiens, and other plants. The word also refers to resinous secretions of certain trees and shrubs, notably "Canada balsam", which is obtained from balsam fir and is used in preparing microscopic slides. Such a substance is produced copiously by Fraser fir and collects in blisters beneath the thin outer bark. It is this characteristic, with its suggestion of "a tree that gives milk", that is thought to provide an explanation for the colloquial term "she balsam",

**Ed. note: Coker & Totten's 1916 book, *The Trees of North Carolina*, is where I first came across the source of these Appalachian names. I had heard my uncle use the same terms because the "balsam" resin was what he gathered from the trees by squeezing the pustules on the Fraser firs. Of course the spruce does not have such pustules and hence is dubbed the "he balsam" because they often occur together in the spruce-fir forest. He used it as a diuretic by placing a few drops in sugar and the turpentine of the resin would result in the desired effect. ❄**

## Collectors Chronicles II: Mordecai E. Hyams (1819–1891)

The following article originally appeared in the May-June 2007 issue of the North Carolina Botanical Garden's bimonthly Newsletter. Reprinted with permission from *The Garden*, 35: 9 (May-June 2007)

by Carol Ann McCormick, University of North Carolina Herbarium

The UNC Herbarium has several dozen specimens collected in the 1880s by Mordecai E. Hyams of Statesville (Iredell County, NC). Born in Charleston, SC, Hyams first taught school in Magnolia, Florida, then joined the 2nd Florida Infantry of the Confederate Army. Because of his botanical knowledge, he was sent to North Carolina, where the Confederates stockpiled roots, herbs, and barks to be processed into drugs. "These articles were concentrated at the Charlotte Military Institute, and were there put up in packages, and many manufactured into solid and fluid extracts, tinctures, pills, powders, ointments, etc., for the use of the army which as deemed an essential substitute for foreign drugs which were difficult to obtain, only through blockade runners."<sup>1</sup> Hyams never returned to Florida, and he permanently changed his career to botany.

"After the war and its afflictions had subsided," Hyams went into the crude drug business. At that time, all drugs were derived from plants: tinctures from barks, ointments from roots, teas from berries. By 1871 Hyams was the botanist and manager of Wallace Brothers' "botanic depot," a three-story 44,000-square-foot warehouse on South Meeting Street in

Statesville. Hyams established a vast network of mountain people who collected in the forests and bartered the herbs to local shopkeepers, who, in turn, shipped the plants to Statesville in return for wholesale goods such as salt and kerosene from Wallace Brothers' other business ventures. Hyams was crucial in this operation: he went on extensive expeditions to identify plants and to instruct gatherers and shopkeepers on how to preserve, prepare, and ship them to Statesville.<sup>2,3</sup> In time, the Wallace Brothers' catalog listed 300 plants for sale, including Adam and Eve orchid root (*Aplectrum hyemale*), haircap moss (*Polypodium* sp.), wild ginger root (*Hexastylis* sp.), Solomon's seal root (*Polygonum biflorum*), and of course, ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*).<sup>4</sup> Consider the quantities of plants that were harvested: 22,000 kg of mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) in one month, and a single order of *Hepatica* for 13 metric tons!!<sup>5</sup>

Mordecai Hyams was not interested in just the business of plants. He belonged to the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society, corresponded with learned botanists of the day, and sent specimens to herbaria at Harvard and UNC. While most collectors are careful to note the location where a plant is collected, most of

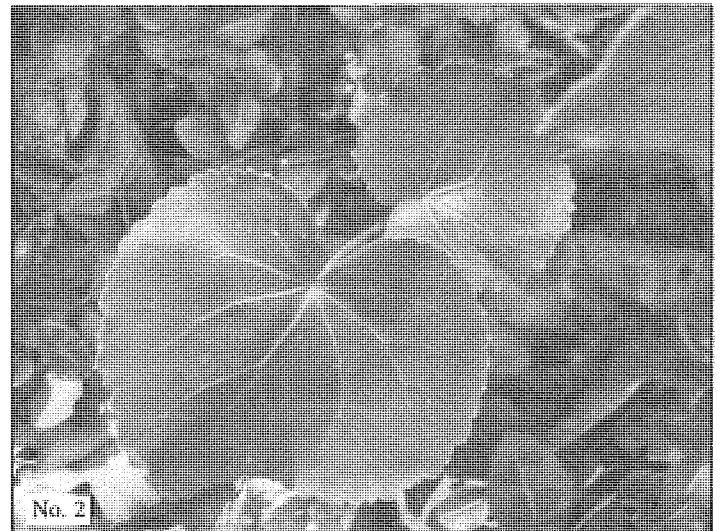
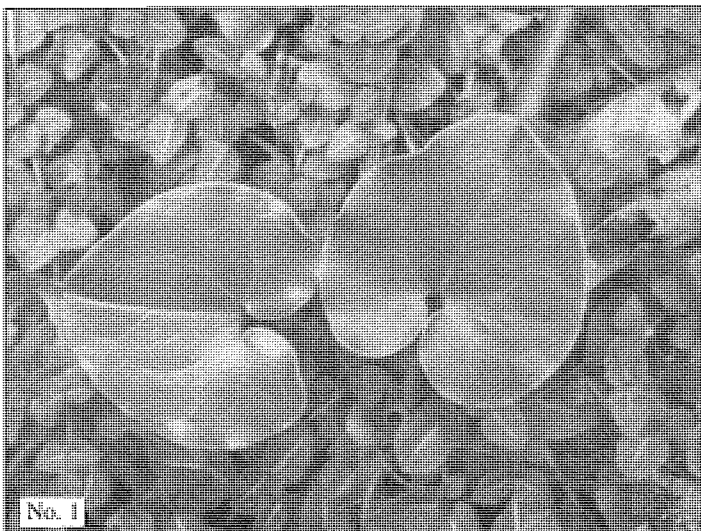
Hyams's specimens read simply "Statesville." Herbarium staff annotate these specimens with the caveat: "Mordecai E. Hyams was based in Statesville, NC, and collected widely in North Carolina. The 'Statesville' on the label should not be taken as a collecting locality. Plants so labeled are probably from North Carolina, but no more definite locality can be determined."

Hyams retired from Wallace Brothers in the late 1880s. The Panic of 1893, a serious economic decline precipitated by a run on the gold supply, hit North Carolina hard, and Wallace Brothers went bankrupt in 1895.<sup>6</sup> With the advent of chemical synthesis of drugs (Aspirin was patented in 1899), the demand for botanicals lessened, though the lively trade in ginseng continues to this day.

Mordecai Hyams and his son, George Hyams (1861–1932), are most famous for discovering *Shortia galacifolia* along the Catawba River (McDowell County, NC) in 1877. *Shortia* was originally found in the mountains of the Carolinas in 1788 by French botanist André Michaux. Many botanists searched in vain for the plant for 90 years. "We were passing along the road and my attention was called to an elevated hillside that I could not ascend as being at the time rather exhausted, being [almost] sixty years old" said Mordecai Hyams, "so I requested [George] to ascend and bring whatever was in flower." He did not recognize the plant, so sent it to Joseph

Continued on page 30

## MYSTERY PLANTS



Last time (*Chinquapin* 15[3]) all three of the illustrated leaves were of the genus *Prenanthes*. Alan Weakley quite properly points out that for the vegetative state of this genus the specific epithet is not determinable. This time Brian Connolly, Yolande Gottfried, Tracy Root, Mark Rose, Robert Ryba, Greg Schmidt, Allen & Susan Sweetster, and David Taylor all correctly identified the genus,

This pair of leaves were photographed within sight of one another. No. 1 is a somewhat restricted species of WV and VA south to nw. GA and AL (USDA website adds NY) and No. 2 overlaps the same area but is naturalized north to New England according to Fernald.

Good luck on this quiz. Send your answers to me, email preferably, [dpittillo@gmail.com](mailto:dpittillo@gmail.com) or mail it to 675 Cane Creek Road, Sylva, NC 28779. ❧

# BOTANICAL EXCURSIONS

## TONK! -- Ash Trees & Baseball Bats

By George Ellison

Some essays get to their point or points right away. Others are discursive, beating around the bush before getting there. Or they may not, in fact, have a discernable point. This one, I suspect, will fall somewhere between the latter two categories.

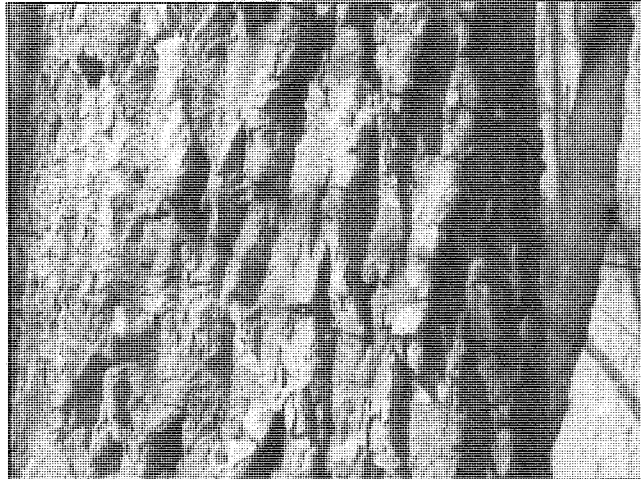
As I write, it's the morning of Monday, October 29, 2007. The official Major League Baseball season closed last night with the Boston Red Sox sweeping the Colorado Rockies in four games to win the World Series. Being an Atlanta Braves fan, I didn't have a dog in that fight since the Braves didn't even make the playoffs. But there's always next year.

My team was the Brooklyn Dodgers throughout the 1950s until they moved to Los Angeles in 1958. During the early 1960s, I didn't root for any particular team, but I began following the Braves in 1966, when the franchise was moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta. There were a lot of lean years, really lean years, but, of course, the Braves have been on a roll of late, winning 14 straight National League East Division championships before slipping up in 2006 and again this year.

I generally prefer to listen to baseball games on the radio. But it helps to see a few games on TV or, better yet, in person, so as to sharpen my mental images of the new players, coaches, and the setting at Turner Field in Atlanta.

I like to go to ball games by myself. And I insist on arriving early enough to watch both teams take pre-game batting practice. That's one of my favorite rituals. I like watching the individual swings of each player, and I love the rich sound created when a baseball collides with the sweet spot of a wooden bat. Note I specified "a wooden bat." The puny hollow pinging sound made when an aluminum bat strikes a baseball is an atrocity, a perversion of reality.

That's the prime reason I don't often attend



1) White ash (*Fraxinus americana*) trunk of a young tree. White bark blotches become a helpful in identifying the young trees during winter.

college or high school baseball games. Their use of aluminum bats is driven by justifiable economic concerns, of course. Wooden bats, which break or are cracked with frequency, are expensive. Aluminum bats, for all I know, last forever. But they just don't sound right.

Hang on. We're starting to get to the point of this botanical excursion, maybe. Most experts are agreed that the baseball bats that generate the most satisfying sounds are those made from white ash. Furthermore, much of the white ash harvested for use as bats, espe-



2) White ash twig. Ron Lance points out the deep notch in the top of the leaf scar is characteristic of the species.

cially during the first half of the twentieth century, originated in the eastern mountains.

When Babe Ruth of the New York Yankees hit his 60th home run in 1927 to set the single-season record, he did it with a bat made from white ash. Ditto Roger Maris, another Yankee, when he hit his asterisk-marked 61st homer in 1961. Double-ditto the Braves' Hank Aaron when he pole-axed 755 homers to set the all-time record. Barry Bonds surpassed Aaron's all-time record this season. Since I don't care much for Bonds as a player or as a person, I'm pleased to note that he wasn't using a bat crafted from white ash but "a certain species of Canadian maple."

OK, having made my point in such a roundabout manner I need some sort of a conclusion. Let's do it this way.

In his superb book *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern & Central North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1950), Donald Culross Peattie penned this tribute to the white ash:

"Every American boy knows a great deal about white ash wood. He knows the color of its yellowish white sapwood and the pale brown grain of the annual growth layers in it. He knows the weight of white ash not in terms of pounds per cubic foot but by the more immediate and unforgettable sensation of having lifted and swung a piece of it, of standard size. He knows even its precise resonance and pitch, the ringing 'tonk' of it when struck. For it is of white ash, and of white ash only, that good baseball bats are made. Ash is the commonest wood for the frames of tennis racquets, for swing seats, for hockey sticks, for polo mallets, and playground equipment. The reasons why it is the favorite wood for sporting goods are found in its fundamental properties; it is tough, too tough to break under much strain, but pliant, and just pliant enough, not too much so. It can be bent into desired shapes and worked with comparative ease, yet it is

hard. Despite its great strength, ash is comparatively light."

Go Braves!

(This is the revised version of an essay that appeared earlier this year as one of George Ellison's "Back Then" columns in *Smoky Mountain News*, a newsmagazine published weekly in western North Carolina. Those wishing to contact George or find out about recent or upcoming publications can do so at [www.georgeellison.com](http://www.georgeellison.com).)

**Ed note: Just wondering: would the best tree to make these bats be from a young or mature one? ❧**

# Smoky Mountain English

By J. Dan Pittillo

Michael B. Montgomery and the late Joseph S. Hall have done us a tremendous service by pulling together some of the folk lore and information gained from interviews, literature, and other sources of common names used by the pioneers of the isolated valleys in the Great Smoky Mountains area (2004, Dictionary of Smoky Mountain English). I thought perhaps you would like to see how well you could match the common names (including the binomials) many of us use.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| ___1 squawberry         | A. Indian pink ( <i>Spigelia marilandica</i> )        |
| ___2 squaw-weed         | B. <i>Aletris farinosa</i>                            |
| ___3 squirrel corn      | C. Deerberry ( <i>Vaccinium stamineum</i> )           |
| ___4 staghorn           | D. <i>Trillium erectum</i>                            |
| ___5 star-bloom         | E. Hearts-a-bustin' ( <i>Euonymus americanus</i> )    |
| ___6 star grass         | F. <i>Acer saccharum</i>                              |
| ___7 stickerweed        | G. <i>Dicentra canadensis</i>                         |
| ___8 stinking willie    | H. Rabbit tobacco ( <i>Pseudognaphalium helleri</i> ) |
| ___9 strangle-weed      | I. <i>Rhus typhina</i>                                |
| ___10 strawberry bush   | J. <i>Pseudognaphalium helleri</i>                    |
| ___11 sugar tree        | K. <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>                     |
| ___12 swamp dogwood     | L. Golden ragwort ( <i>Packera aurea</i> )            |
| ___13 sweet balsam      | M. Bubby ( <i>Calycanthus floridus</i> )              |
| ___14 sweet everlasting | N. Beggar lice ( <i>Desmodium</i> spp.)               |
| ___15 sweet flag        | O. <i>Platanus occidentalis</i>                       |
| ___16 sweetgum          | P. <i>Quercus montana</i>                             |
| ___17 sweetshrub        | Q. Dodder ( <i>Cuscuta</i> spp.)                      |
| ___18 sycamore          | R. Buffalo nut  |
| ___19 tallow nut        | S. <i>Acorus calamus</i>                              |
| ___20 tan oak           | T. Swamp willow ( <i>Euonymus americanus</i> )        |

For the fall issue (15.3), the answers are:  
1C, 2L, 3G, 4I, 5A, 6B, 7N, 8D, 9Q, 10E or T, 11F, 12E or T, 13H or J, 14H or J, 15S, 16K, 17M, 18O, 19R, 20P

Thus far, Eva Compton, Yolande Gottfried and Susan Sweetster are our masterhands and Loree Speedy rates as a fully qualified hillbilly.

This year I'm continuing to offer a choice of some extra books I have. I need to depend upon your integrity to not check the names out in Montgomery & Hall before you do the matching. I'll need to receive your answers (as above, **in a string on one or 2 lines for easy checking against my list**), preferably by email (dpittillo@gmail.com), before the next issue (Nov. 28, 2007) is published with the answers given.

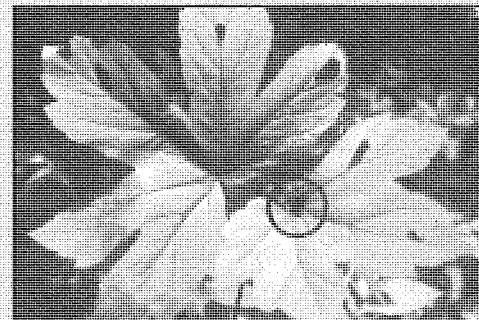
If you are a bit shy to share your matching answers, you can wait until the next issue and see how you rate with:

- 18 or more correct- Masterhand\*
- 13-17 correct- Hillbilly\*
- 8-12 correct- Side-hill Gouger\*
- <8 correct- Flatlander\*

\*Defined by Montgomery & Hall, respectively, as "a skillful person, expert," "native of the mountains," "one who digs into the hillside for some purpose" (my definition), and "one from the lowlands, one insensitive to or unaware of mountain ways" ❧

## Book Corner

Some readers might like to expand their reading during the coming chilly, hopefully rainy, days this winter. One book that might have gotten overlooked is the late Dirk Frankenberg's edited Exploring North Carolina's Natural Areas (2000, UNC Press, ISBN 0-8078-2547-6 or 0-8078-4851-4 in pbk., 409 p.). The design was to provide maps that visitors could follow to experience the coast, coastal plain,



*Hydrastis* (Goldenseal) in fruit (circled). Pittillo photo.

and mountains of the state. Authors familiar with each of the regions contributed to the description of what one would see when traveling through the areas.

Another possibility is the reader that might like to try to develop a garden of medicinal herbs. W. Scott Persons and Janine M. Davis combine their experiences of Growing and Marketing Ginseng, Goldenseal, and other Woodland Medicinals (2005, Bright Mountain Books, Inc., Fairview, NC, ISBN 0-914875-42-6 pbk., 466 p.). Both background history and methods for marketing production are given in this informative volume. Whether or not amateur growers grow enough to counter the losses by poachers of these wild woodland species, at least the populations in the region will not totally disappear if we have our wild-flower gardens populated with these plants.—J. Dan Pittillo ❧



*Panax* (Ginseng) in fruit. Pittillo photo.

## Chronicles II

Continued from page 28

Congden in Rhode Island, who in turn sent it to Asa Gray at Harvard, who recognized it as the long-sought *Shortia*. Gray visited Statesville in 1879, toured the Wallace Brothers herb depot, and accompanied Hyams to George's *Shortia* patch.<sup>3</sup> The UNC Herbarium has several specimens of *Shortia* collected by Mordecai Hyams in April 1879 from this location.

### References:

- Hyams, M.E. 1877. The botanic business of western North Carolina, read before the N.C. State Agricultural Society. The Charlotte Democrat, Friday Nov. 23, 1877. 26(1306): [1].
- Troyer, James R. 2001. The Hyams family, father and sons, contributors to North Carolina botany. J. Elisha Mitchell Sci. Soc. 117(4): 240-48.
- Freeze, Gary R. 1995. Roots, barks, berries, and Jews: the herb trade in Gilded-Age North Carolina. Essays in Econ. & Bus. Hist. 13: 107-27.
- Anderson, T. E. 1934. When Statesville was nation's "yarb" center. Southern Med. & Surg. 96: 594.

# Food Plant Questions

Continuing with Miller & Miller's book of wildlife uses of forest plants (see "Book Corner", *Chinquapin* 14[1]), it might be instructive to see which animals make use of the following plants. If you have seen animals foraging on any of these, let's share with readers in the next issue. Do you know which of these are invasive in your area if not native?

*Phytolacca americana* (Pokeberry)

*Passiflora* spp. (Passion flowers)

*Oxalis* spp. (Wood sorrels)

*Oenothera* spp. (Evening primroses)

*Lobelia* spp. (Lobelias)

Mark Johns continues to provide his personal information on the listings for the last issue:

Regarding your food plant questions from the fall 2007 newsletter:

**Goldenrods:** A great "bug" plant. Always seem to find tons of insects and spiders on these plants. I have seen American goldfinches picking at seeds in late fall. I'd expect that herbivores like deer and rabbits would eat foliage, esp. in late fall and winter.

**Nightshades:** Can't say I've seen anything eating these. I have seen reports of seeds being eaten by gamebirds like quail and turkey.

**Sorrels:** I've seen field sparrows and song sparrows picking at the seeds in summer. Widely reported to be eaten (seeds) by gamebirds like quail.

**Coneflowers:** Often see American goldfinches eating seeds in late summer and early fall of green-headed coneflower and black-eyed susan. Butterflies commonly take nectar from them as well.

**Additional Notes:** Millers note goldenrods' rosettes occasionally are consumed by deer, rabbits & grouse in winter; nightshade fruit and seeds are consumed by many birds, and deer occasionally browse them, especially *Solanum americanum* after fruits ripen; sorrels' foliage is occasionally consumed by rabbits; coneflowers provide some late winter deer forage from basal leaves; and pulseys' foliage is highly favored by deer and rabbits. ❄



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Depicted in this Henderson County, NC, June, 1975 photo with G. W. McDowell is a stand of a federally Endangered plant in full bloom. The population is now declining after the termination of cattle grazing during that time. What is the species? Pittillo photo.

❦

*"Hence,' Darwin advised, 'a traveler should be a botanist, for in all views plants form the chief embellishment. Group masses of naked rock, even in the wildest forms, for a time they may afford a sublime spectacle, but they will soon grow monotonous; paint them with bright & varied colors, they will become fantastic; clothe them with vegetation, they must form at least a decent, if not beautiful picture.'"* Allan, Mea. Darwin and his Flowers. New York, Taplinger Pub. Co., p. 116.



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