Louisiana Native Plant Society **News**

Spring 1997 **Volume 15 Issue 1**

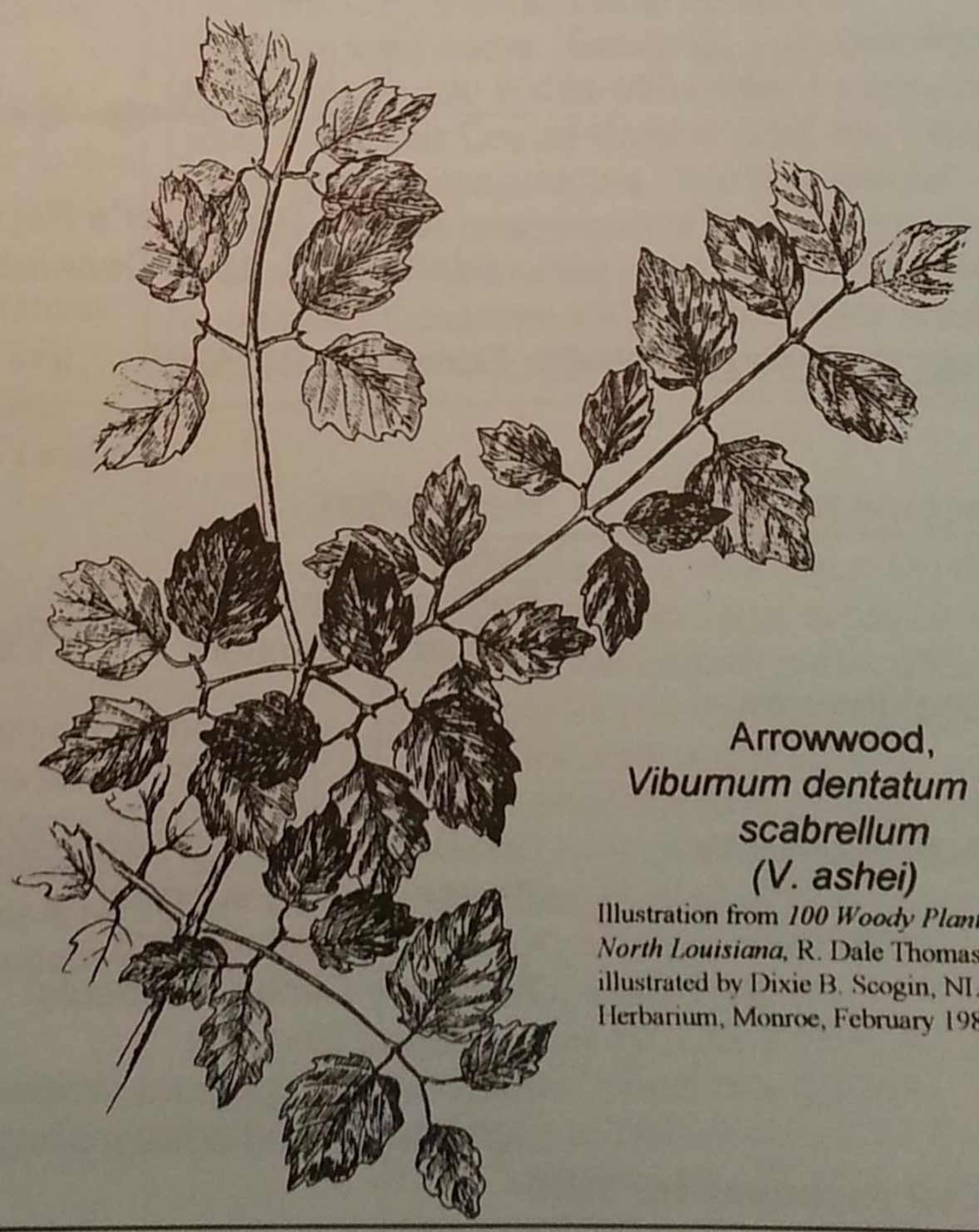
LNPS Winter Meeting Finds New Home

The LNPS held the annual winter meeting, January 25, 1997, at Camp Grant Walker near Pollock. Camp Grant Walker is owned and operated by LSU, primarily as a 4-H camp. The buildings are nestled among tall pine trees that created a great atmosphere for meeting and fellowship. LNPS members Bill Fontenot, John Mayronne, Margie Jenkins, Sandra Gibbs, and Linda Chance brought plants to sell. About seventy people registered at the meeting. Ken Wilson presented a beautiful slide show of Louisiana wildflowers the night before the meeting. Richard Johnson and Beth Erwin gave a joint presentation on the trials, tribulations, and joys of managing nature preserves. Dr. Fred Smeins spoke on habitat management in Louisiana. There were a number of exhibitors displaying and selling items.

The business meeting included chapter reports, the display garden report, and reports various activities going on around the state involving native plants. New officers were elected. They are Jim Foret, Jr. of New Iberia, president, Marion Drummond of Baton Rouge, vice-president, Jessie Johnson of Saline, treasurer, and Beth Erwin of Collinston, secretary. Elected to the board for three year terms are Ella Price of Blanchard, Margaret Osborn of Elizabeth, and Ken Wilson of Baton Rouge. Robert Murry was elected to fill the un-expired term of Marion Drummond.

Julia Larke, botanist for the Natural Heritage Program, presented a proposal in favor of the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative. After much discussion and many questions from the membership, the group voted unanimously to support the initiative. The proposal is a tax on items used for outdoor recreation dedicated to support non-game wildlife and their habitats.

Jim Foret announced that the fall field trip would be held at Weeks Island or Avery Island.



Arrowwood,
Viburnum dentatum var.
scabrellum
(V. ashei)

Illustration from *100 Woody Plants of North Louisiana*, R. Dale Thomas, illustrated by Dixie B. Scogin, NLU Herbarium, Monroe, February 1989, p. 51.

inside...

Prose from the president's pen...*Jim Foret, Jr.*

The winter meeting at Camp Grant Walker in Pollock was a hoot. This site pleased the more vocal of our group, the rest of you need to let us know how liked the accommodations since we are planning a repeat in '98. Why not a covered dish supper Friday night followed by a program? Saturday could include a program, meeting and a field trip. We could even spend the night Saturday and do another field trip on Sunday with a program Saturday night.

Be ready to go South for our fall Field trip, perhaps October at Avery Island or Weeks Island. Also, with a stop at Lake Martin and Cypress Island preserve, my stomping grounds.

How about those Mardi Gras Maples! That is what we call them down here. Our Swamp Red Maples are quiet fine this year. I think we should have Maple Trails like some have Azalea or Dogwood Trails.

Jim

Treasurer's Report
January 1, 1996-December 31, 1996

Balance brought forward: December 21, 1995			$5,142.03
Income for 1996:	Registration	$ 162.00	
	Dues	2,170.00	
	Ruston Chapter	233.21	
	Sale of Newsletters	2.00	
Total income		**$2,567.21**	$7,709.24
Disbursements:	Gail Barton(speaker expenses)	$ 250.00	
	Winter meeting supplies	17.00	
	Karlene DeFatta Award	54.25	
	The Copy Center(Handouts)	29.30	
	La. State Filing Fee	5.00	
	Mary Cummings(grant recipient)	500.00	
	LNPS News and other mailings	1,829.91	
Total expenses for 1996		**$2,770.91**	
Balance:	December 30, 1996		$4,948.33

Protecting the Kisatchie: the end is not in sight

Attempts to acquire portions of the Kisatchie National Forest by various military groups continue. The Baton Rouge *Advocate* reported in the January 30 issue[1] that Maj. General A.M. Stroud plans to ask the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to give 10,230 acres of the Catahoula District to the Guard. The Guard wants the land, which adjoins Camp Beauregard, for expanded training facilities. Mineral and timber rights would also go to the Guard if they are successful in their quest.

The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund is closely monitoring the situation. They are currently urging interested groups and organizations to write Governor Foster, asking him to halt the Guard's campaign to acquire ownership, and to direct the Guard to comply with the Master Agreement governing military uses of national forest lands. The Master Agreement directs the military to apply to the Forest Service for a "special use permit" to use national forest lands for training purposes. The LNPS is sending a letter to this effect.

On February 19th, State Representative John Smith, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources, held a public hearing at Fort Polk. Rep. Smith was quoted in the February 20th *Alexandria Daily Town Talk*[2] as saying, "Although we can't make the determination what happens here, we can familiarize ourselves on behalf of our constituents." The same article stated that about 20 people were present, most of whom were in favor of the land swap. Forest Service supervisor, Danny Britt said the Forest Service believes the Army should look at using nearby industrial-held lands before using the national forest.[2] The Forest Service and the Army are still working on an agreement for use of the Vernon District by Ft. Polk.

---

[1]Anderson, Bob, "Guard seeks congressional help in Kisatchie quest," *The Advocate*, Baton Rouge, January 30, 1997, p. 1B.

[2]Gregory, Melissa, "Rep. Smith changes his mind," *Alexandria Daily Town Talk*, February 20, 1997, p. 1D.

Letters to Gov. Foster should be sent to: The Hon. Mike Foster, Governor, P.O. Box 94004, Baton Rouge, LA, 70804-9004. Send a copy of your letter to his Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr. Terry Ryder at the same address. You can also let members of the congressional delegation know your feelings. Addresses and FAX numbers for Louisiana's Congressional Delegation are listed in a separate box on page 9 of this newsletter.

Are Your Dues Due?

Check your mailing label. If the number after your name is highlighted name, your dues are due with this issue. Please send your dues to the treasurer, Jessie Johnson, 216 Caroline Dormon Road, Saline, La. 71010. **Remember to send us your change of address**. The newsletter is sent bulk mail and will not be forwarded to you by the postal service.

Student or Sr. Citizen	$5
Individual	$10
Family	$15
Organization	$25
Sustaining	$50
Corporate	$100

The *Louisiana Native Plant Society News* is published four times per year. It is the official publication of the Louisiana Native Plant Society. The editor welcomes articles, notices of upcoming events, and book reviews of interest to native plant folks, as well as illustrations, poems, and prose. Deadlines for submissions are June 1st, September 1st, December 1st, and March 1st. Send any address changes to LNPS News, P.O. Box 126, Collinston, La., 71229.—*Terry Erwin, editor.*

Field Trips

Remnant Blackland Prairies of East Texas

On **Saturday, May 3**, Jim Eidson, land steward for the Texas Nature Conservancy, will lead us to three black-land prairies; Clymer, Matthews, and Spring Hill. Mr. Eidson is a former graduate student of Dr. Fred Smeins, Texas A & M, who spoke to us about the Clymer Prairie at our Winter Meeting.

Meet at 9 am at the McDonald's Restaurant at the junction of I-30 and US 69 in Greenville, TX. Greenville is about 50 miles northeast of Dallas. Motels available at or near the junction are as follows: Best Western Inn (903)454-1792, Holiday Inn, (903) 454-7000, Comfort Inn, (903)454-7700

There are tent and trailer camp sites and a few trailers for rent at Thousand Trails Park at Lake Tawakoni. The park is 16 miles south of Greenville on US 69 at Point, Texas. For information on the park facilities, call (903)598-3169.

If you are interested in going, contact Beth Erwin at 318-874-7777, P.O. Box 126, Collinston, 71229, or Joan Moncrief at 318-255-5971, 112 Llanfair, Ruston, 71270.

Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge

May 16 & 17. The annual field trip to see birds and wildflowers will be led by Ruth McDonald. RCW sightings are a sure thing. Other possible sightings will be prothonotary warblers and other songbirds, water and wading birds, and possibly wood ducks, Miss. kites, and wild turkeys. Wildflower enthusiasts will see among other things, mayhaws in fruit(picking and eating is allowed). The 2 days are repeat field trips. Participants bring their lunch and drinks. Lunch will be at the picnic area with restrooms and tables. Whichever is most convenient, you should be at Felsenthal NWR on US 82 west of Crossett by 8:15 AM. **OR** meet Carl Amason at the King's Inn Best Western Motel & Restaurant in El Dorado by 8 AM. The two groups will meet at the Shallow Lake Road off US 82 at 8:30 AM. The trips should be over by 4 PM. For more info, contact Ruth McDonald at Felsenthal NWR, P.O. Box 1157, Crossett, AR. 71635 or call during business hours (501)364-3168, OR Carl Amason, P.O. Box 164, Calion, Ar. 71724, (504)748-2362 after dark.

Bogs, Birds, Bivalves, and Butterflies Blast + Roots, Shoots, & Fruits Cuisine

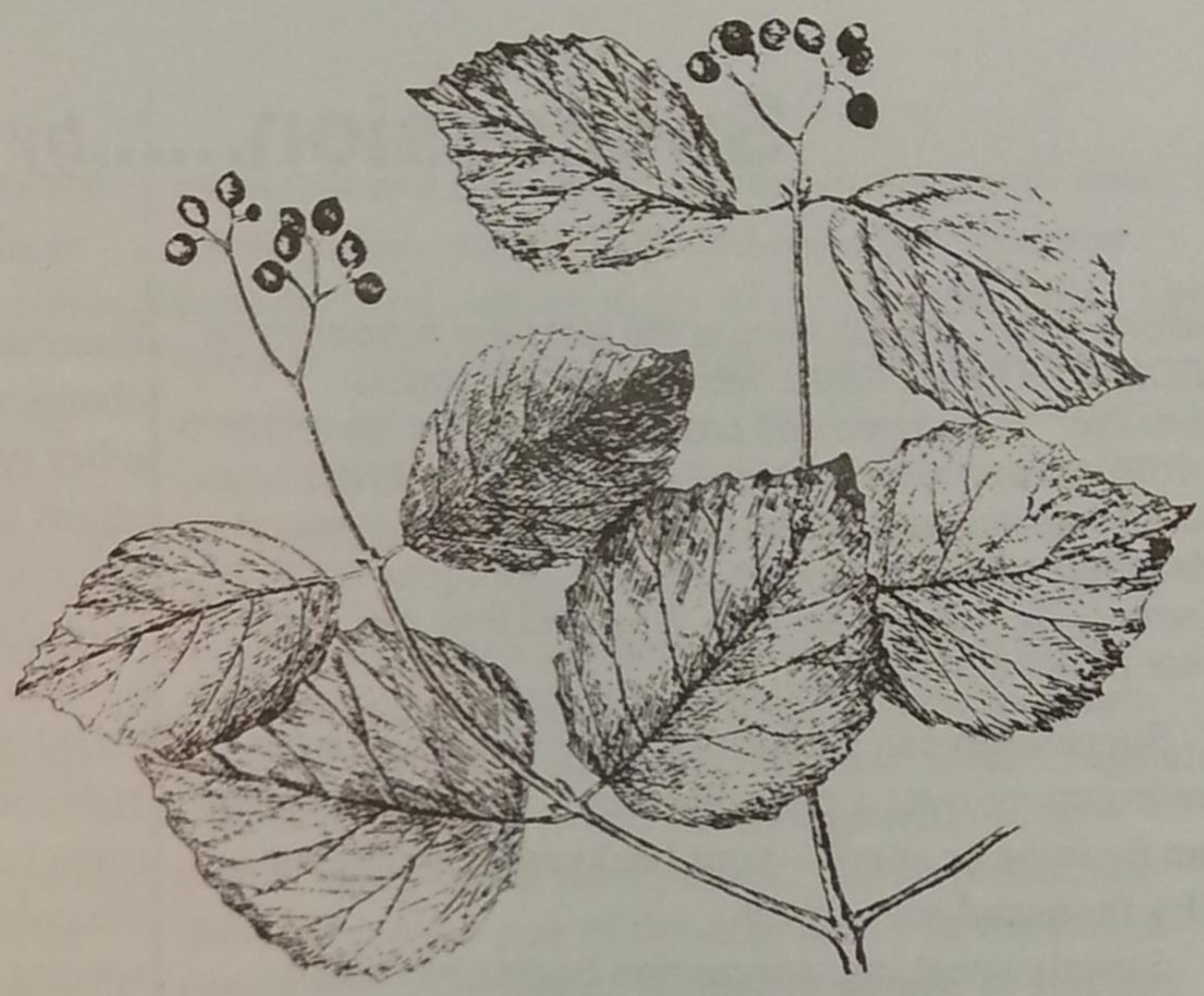
MAY 24-25, 1997—FT POLK AREA. Meet at Little Cypress Recreation Area at 9AM on Sat., May 24. Tours of pitcher plant bogs, upland areas, and other ecosystems. Orchids, pitcher plants, and other interesting plants should be seen. Several different kinds of birds including red-cockaded woodpecker, butterflies, and other animals might be encountered. Weather permitting, we will stop at a stream and look at the bivalves (mussels). Bring your own lunch and drinks. The bogs are wet so dress accordingly. A 2nd tour will begin at the Little Cypress RA at 1PM on Sat., May 24. A 3rd tour will begin at the Little Cypress RA at 9AM on Sun., May 25. This 3rd tour will probably be to the Ft Polk prairies and calcareous forests. The Roots, Shoots, & Fruits sampler will be fixed around 4PM at the Little Cypress RA. From the east, on La. 10, turn right onto Forest Service Road 400, about 9 miles west of Cravens. From the west, turn left on FS Road 400 off of La. 10 about 4 miles east of Ft. Polk or 9 miles east of Pickering and US 171. Pickering is about 8 miles south of Leesville on U.S. 171. After turning on FS Road 400, drive about ½ mile and turn left onto the 1st road, FS Road 471. Little Cypress RA will be on the left about 1 mile from the intersection of FS Roads 400 and 471. For more

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

information, contact Dr. Charles Allen, 318-342-1814.

There are several motels in Leesville and very primitive camping in the National Forest. Note: No camping on Ft Polk. A camp-ground with running water and toilets is at Fullerton Lake. Charles Allen will check on using the Wildlife and Fisheries Bunkhouse on Ft Polk. He and members of the NLU Biology Club will stay at the bunkhouse or camp at Fullerton on Friday night, May 23rd, and Sat. night, May 24th. He will probably spend Friday, May 23rd, morning and afternoon, scouting for wildflowers. If interested, contact Charles at the number above.



Arrowwood, *V. dentatum* var. *dentatum*

Illustration from *100 Woody Plants of North Louisiana*, R. Dale Thomas, illustrated by Dixie B. Scogin, NLU Herbarium, Monroe, February 1989 p. 49.

In Memorium: The LNPS extendeds sympathy to Carl Hunter on the loss of his wife, Mary Ann, in early February. Carl spoke at our winter meeting in 1995. He is the author of *Wildflowers of Arkansas, Trees, Shrubs and Vines of Arkansas, & Autumn Leaves & Winter Berries in Arkansas.*

Coming Events

Friends of the NLU Herbarium Plant Sale

April 4 & 5, 11 & 12, and 18 & 19. 8 AM - 5 PM. NLU Greenhouses, Bonaire Drive, NLU Campus, Monroe. Over 100 species of native woodies, perennials and ferns as well as selected cultivated species. Gallon pots—$2.00 each, Four inch pots—$1.00 each. All proceeds go to support the NLU Herbarium. *Contact person: Dr. R. Dale Thomas, 318-342-1812.*

Wildlife Garden Symposium & Plant Sale

May 24, 1997, 10 AM - 5 PM. Louisiana Nature Center, Joe Brown Memorial Park(Read Blvd. Exit on I-10), New Orleans. Workshops:

Dr. Gary Ross, "World of Butterflies" 10:30 - 11:30
Charlotte Seidenburg, "How to Make a Wildlife Garden" 12:00 - 1:00
Nancy Newfield, "Hummingbird Gardens" 1:30 - 2:30
Dan Gill, "How to Plant & Grow Plants for Attracting Butterflies & Hummingbirds" 3:00 - 4:00

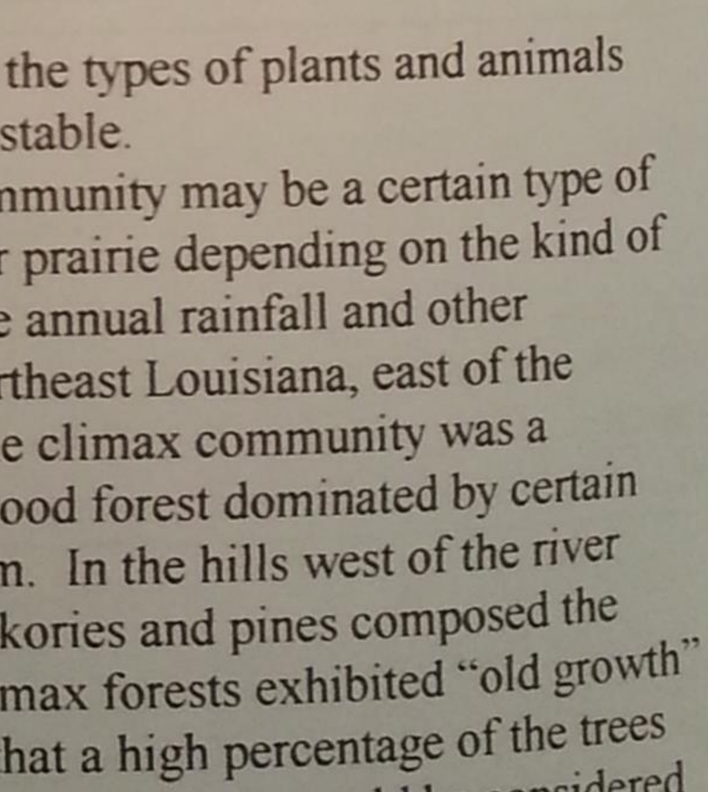
Plant Sale, Crafts for children, Exhibits, Gift Shop.
Symposium and Plant Sale are Free with General Admission to the Nature Center:
$4-adults, $2-child, Members free.
Contact person: Mike Boley, Education Curator, LNC, (504)246-5672

Succession.....*by Kelby Ouchley*

Editor's note: The following is the text from a program on KEDM 90.3 Public Radio, Monroe, called "Bayou Diversity." It is written and presented each Friday at 12:10 & 7:05 pm by Kelby Ouchley. Kelby is on our LNPS Board. He is employed as manager of the La. Wetland Management District by the USFWS, Darbonne NWR, at Farmerville. He and his wife, Amy, and their two sons live near Rocky Branch, La.

Succession can be defined as the changes in an environment over a period of time. The environment can be large or small—your backyard, a marsh, or a fifty thousand-acre forest.

Strictly speaking, succession begins with bare ground and progresses though a variety of plant and animal communities until what is referred to as a climax community is reached. Seral or early succession plants are the first to colonize bare ground. They are usually short-lived annuals that thrive in bright sunlight and disperse their seeds far and wide. These first plants change the environment by adding nutrients to the soil from decaying leaves and roots. They alter the amount of sunlight reaching the ground and modify the moisture content of the soil.



Annual morning glory, *Ipomoea* sp.

Eventually the changes allow other types of plants and their associated animals to become established. Newcomers often replace the colonizing species because they are better adapted to the changed site. If succession is not interrupted, a climax community eventually develops in which the types of plants and animals become relatively stable.

The climax community may be a certain type of forest, savannah or prairie depending on the kind of soil in the area, the annual rainfall and other conditions. In Northeast Louisiana, east of the Ouachita River, the climax community was a bottomland hardwood forest dominated by certain oaks and sweetgum. In the hills west of the river different oaks, hickories and pines composed the climax forest. Climax forests exhibited "old growth" characteristics in that a high percentage of the trees were very old and large. Some would be considered giants by today's standards. Gaps were common in the forest where the huge trees crashed to the forest floor during wind storms, often uprooting several of their neighbors in the process. Climax forests with old-growth characteristics are extremely rare in our area and exist at best only on very small isolated tracts.

Hackberry, *Celtis laevigata*

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

As an example, the following scenario depicts the likely stages of succession in an abandoned soybean field in Richland Parish: The first colonizers to follow the plow are the annual weeds and grasses that plagued the farmer. Cocklebur, morning-glory and barnyard grass are common. Harvest mice and voles are hunted by barn owls and red-tailed hawks. In just a few years the first woody plants begin their invasion. Those whose seeds are light enough to be carried by the wind or transported by animals are in the vanguard. Saltbush, cottonwood, ash, willow in the wet spots arrive on spring thermals. In their droppings, raccoons plant hawthorns and persimmons. The vegetation is now thick enough to provide food and escape cover for deer and coyotes. Dickcissels and red-winged blackbirds nest in the low shrubs. Over a period of time hackberry and elms become established and with ash, begin to shade out the sun-loving grasses and weeds. Fox squirrels set up shop; wood rats replace the field mice and voles. Red-shouldered hawks now out-compete red-tailed hawks. Ever so slowly oaks begin to appear. Their acorns are heavy and must be carried from distant seed trees and planted by squirrels. Most acorns that germinate never grow into a tree. Their seedlings are shade intolerant and only those planted in a gap will make it. Through time though, oak and sweetgum become dominant and replace many of the other species. The forest is now mature. Acorn loving red-headed woodpeckers abound. If the forest is large enough, Louisiana black bears and turkeys can survive. Barred owls supplant the open field barn owls and many species of songbirds thrive in the different layers of the canopy. Years continue to pass and the forest begins to exhibit old-growth traits. Some trees are huge, with gnarled and twisted trunks. Dead snags are common and once would have supported the now extinct ivory-billed woodpecker. Acorn production declines and the size of the deer herd that the forest can support is reduced. A relative degree of stability is reached.

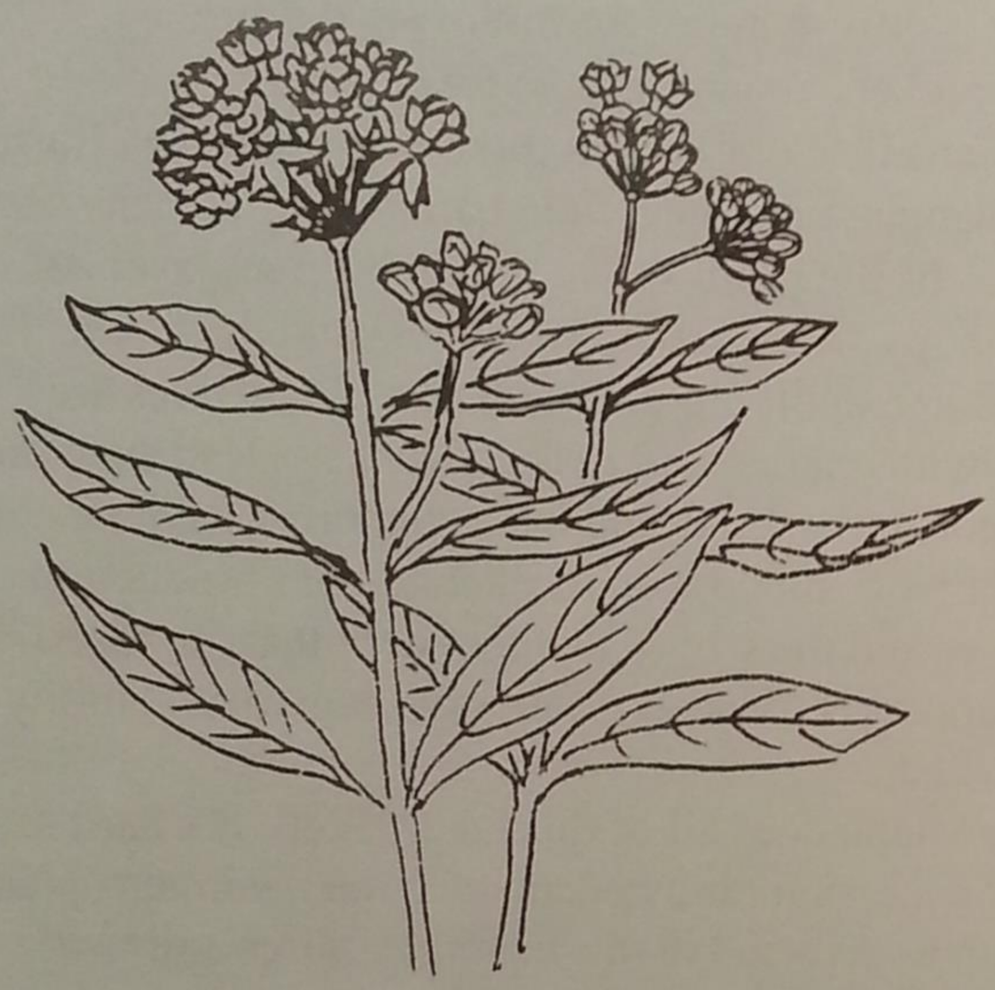
How long does all of this take? Well, it's hard to say. Succession rarely occurs in a neat, uninterrupted fashion as depicted in this example. Fires and windstorms, floods and droughts can set back succession several times before the climax forest is established. At best we're talking hundreds of years. So—what's the hurry to mow that front lawn anyway?

Cottonwood, *Populus deltoides*

Free Wildflower or Other Plant Identifications

If at any time you would like to know the name of a plant, break off a piece of plant including leaves and stem and flowers or fruit (if present at the time) and place it in a plastic reclosable zipper bag. Mail it directly to the NLU Herbarium. It will stay alive for at least a week in the bag and can be put in an envelope without other packaging without damage to the plant. This service is FREE and is guaranteed to be faster than most other sources. Send plant to Dr. R. Dale Thomas, Director of the Herbarium, Department of Biology, Northeast Louisiana University, Monroe, LA 71209-0502. Phone is 318-343-1518. No approval is necessary before sending plant. Include your name and address.

Some Notes on *Asclepias perennis* by Carl Amason



Asclepias perennis

According to the **Atlas of the Vascular Flora of Louisiana, Vol. II**[1], there are twenty species of native wild milkweeds in Louisiana. Some are very rare, with only five or fewer specimens scattered or concentrated in different parishes over the state. Some are common and appear in nearly every parish. One common and easily cultivated species is *Asclepias perennis*. It is found in wet ditches and along sunny, wooded edges of swamps. It is a plant for moist areas and it lives a long time when happily situated.

The plants are easily grown from seeds and just as easily transplanted as the roots are fibrous. I have found it growing mostly where the moisture loving hibiscus and beardless irises grow. It doesn't grow tall; almost all the ones that I have seen were hardly over twelve inches tall. The plants are "bunchy"; that is, with several leafy stems with terminal clusters of pinky-white or whitey-pink milkweed flowers. The terminal clusters are about one inch in diameter. I have seen as few as five clusters to as many as ten clusters in bloom at once, usually in mid-June to mid-July. The leaves are smooth, long and narrow, up to four inches long and ooze milky sap when broken. It is a plant to view up close, and I have it prospering among some planted Louisiana irises.

It resembles the flower cluster of *Asclepias incarnata*, but that species grows tall, about 30 to 36 inches, with only a few clusters of blooms in the top of the plant. The leaves are much shorter than *Asclepias longifolia*, and it is much easier to grow than that species. It doesn't grow on dry, sandy roadsides as *Asclepias tuberosa* nor does it have the bright colors of that species. Look for it in wet ditches of the Delta and in other such places. It is common in the flood plains of large and small streams. It makes a pleasing addition to any garden where moisture isn't a problem before the flowering season. In some of the river bottom lands where I have seen it growing, I'm sure the soil becomes not only dry but almost cement-like. It likes full sun. It is a plant to enjoy in the wild because there is often little else in bloom at the same time. In ordinary garden soil with spring moisture, it is a true gem to grow. This is a plant that is gently elegant in a pleasing manner. Yet, when I looked in four books, **Wildflowers of Louisiana**[2], **Wildflowers of Mississippi**[3], **Wildflowers of Arkansas**[4], I did not find it, even in the indexes. Even Caroline Dormon, who had so much to say about all worthy wildflowers in Louisiana does not have a word to say about it. It isn't in the index to her **Flowers Native to the Deep South**.[5] I seldom, if ever, see it listed for sale from nurseries that specialize in southern wildflowers, but I don't get many of their price lists and catalogues. I am at a loss about what little horticultural writings on this wonderful wildflower.

I know of no medical usages of this plant, but it is a superb plant for bees and butterflies, especially monarch butterflies that use milkweeds in their life cycles. I don't recall ever seeing ruby-throated

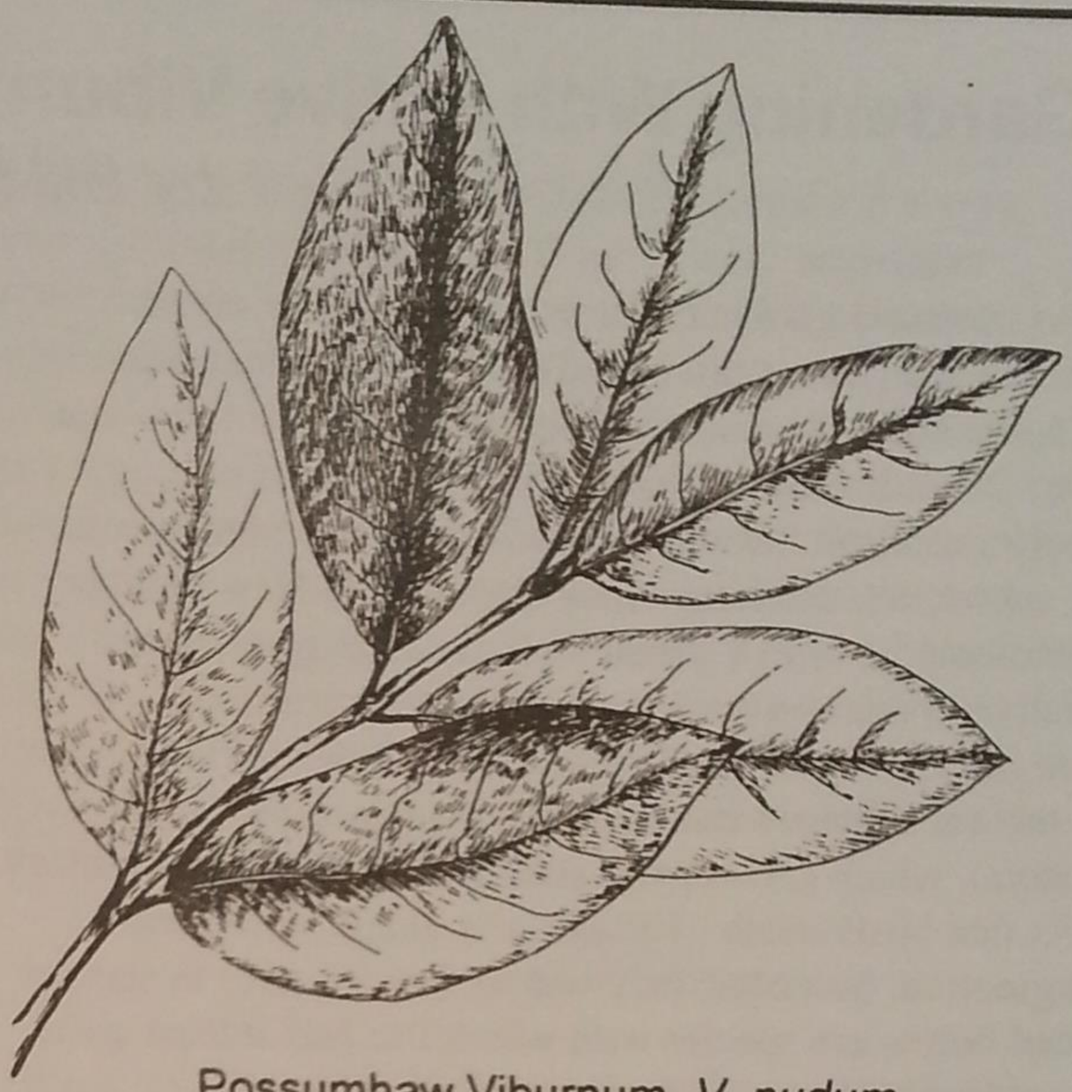
(Continued on page 9)

Address for:
U.S. Sen. John Breaux
U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
FAX, Breaux: (202) 228-2577
FAX, Landrieu (202) 224-9735

Address for U.S. Congressmen:
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

FAX Numbers for House members are:
Bob Livingston (202) 225-0739
Bill Jefferson (202)225-1988
Billy Tauzin (202)225-0563
Jim McCrery (202)225-8039
Richard Baker (202)225-7313
John Cooksey (202)225-5639
Chris John (202)225-5724



Possumhaw Viburnum, *V. nudum*

Illustration from *100 Woody Plants of North Louisiana*, R. Dale Thomas, illustrated by Dixie B. Scogin, NLU Herbarium, Monroe, February 1989. p. 53.

(Continued from page 8)

hummingbirds partaking of the nectar of this plant. It may have only a good supply of pollen for the bees and other pollinaters. The mechanics of the pollination of milkweeds are highly specialized works of nature. Reading the literature of this process makes the growing of milkweeds even more interesting. When enjoying the beauty of the flowering plant, you may think of the intricacies of its pollination and then appreciate even more the life cycles of plants and insects. You will observe that usually a single flower out of a cluster of twenty blossoms gets pollinated and bears seed. Such things carry one beyond the realm of just growing pretty wildflowers, and into conservation and the preservation of plants and their pollinaters. The more one knows, the little he realizes that he knows, and the more he grows, the more he realizes that nature does a better job. Enjoy Nature!

Carl Amason is a superior plantsman who gardens near Calion, Arkansas.

---

[1]Thomas, R. Dale & Allen, Charles M., July 1996, **Atlas of the Vascular Flora of Louisiana, Vol. II**, LDWF Natural Heritage Program, Baton Rouge, La.

[2]Brown, Clair A., 1972, **Wildflowers of Louisiana and Adjoining States**, LSU Press, Baton Rouge, La.

[3]Timmee, S. Lee, **Wildflowers of Mississippi**, University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, Miss., 1989.

[4]Hunter, Carl G., 1992, **Wildflowers of Arkansas**, 3rd ed., Ozark Society Foundation, Little Rock, Ark.

[5]Dormon, Caroline, 1958, **Flowers Native to the Deep South**, Claitor's Book Store, Baton Rouge, La.

Gardening With Native Viburnums on the Gulf Coastal Plain

by Bill Fontenot

As potential garden candidates, native Viburnums present a fairly convenient and quite dependable source of spring/summer blooming interest and excellent fall/winter color. Worldwide, approximately 130 species of Viburnums exist. They are limited primarily to temperate and subtropical habitats within the Old and New World. Here along the Gulf Coastal Plain, several species exist which lend themselves well to cultivated situations. All these possess small, perfect, white to off-white flowers that are mostly arranged into cymes(flat-topped, terminal clusters), which give way to attractive clusters of blue/black fruits that birds relish. Foliage size, shape, color, and margination, however, vary widely from species to species. Listed below are species with which I've had at least some personal experience in garden settings.

I'll dispense with *Viburnum nudum*, Possumhaw Viburnum*(illus. p.9)*, first. I've had the least amount of experience(and success) with it. Still, this should not deter those of you who garden in more acidic, seasonally damp soils. This fairly large, 7-10 foot, rangy shrub features multiple stems and larger, elliptic to elliptic-oblanceolate, coarse textured leaves. The leaves turn pleasing shades of red during the fall and winter months. It inhabits the damp, sandy, acidic soils of bogs and low creek banks, often in association with the native pink/white azalea, *Rhododendron canescens*. In my experience, this plant has not done well in the more circumneutral, alluvial loams that many of us garden in.

By contrast, *V. dentatum*, Arrowwood Viburnum *(illus. p.5)*, is probably the most adaptable of the group, flourishing in a wide variety of soils and exposures. It produces bright-white, late spring/early summer blooms, and outstanding fall/winter colors that range from rather dull maroon to very bright orange-red. This depends, I believe, on a combination of soil type, sun exposure, and genetic strain. Foliage is ovate in shape, with distinctly dentate margins. Houston-based garden designer and plantsman, Will Flemming, suggests that there are two probable "varieties" of this species; a larger-leaved(with coarser dentations), upright, 9-12 foot "tree type," and a smaller-leaved, spreading, multi-stemmed "shrub-type," which he separates as such in his nursery. Fruit color ranges from a rich, dark indigo-blue to blackish. I've used this species in many soils, from mildly acidic loams to circum-neutral clays(it will work in more acidic, sand-based soils as well), and in many exposures, from full sun to deep shade. I was first introduced to *V. ashei*, a very similar species with smaller, shinier, more finely dentate leaves, by

Rusty Blackhaw, *V. rufidulum*

southeastern Louisiana designer/plantsman, John Mayronne, about ten years ago. This uncommon shrub grows to about 6-7 feet, is multi-stemmed, and provides a more refined texture in the garden. It, too, seems as adaptable as *V. dentatum*. *Ed. note: V. ashei is AKA V. dentatum var. cabrellum, illus. p.1.*

Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum, *V. rufidulum(illus. above)*, is a tree-type species possessing wonderful, finely serrated, elliptic-obovate leaves that are leathery and exceedingly lustrous in appearance. Within its natural habitat range of dryish, silt to sand-loam, tertiary soils, it grows to a small(12 foot) tree. It will have a rather dense, umbrella-shaped crown, somewhat mimicking that of a downsized flowering dogwood, and would go well with this species in planted landscapes. Both appreciate the same conditions (protected exposures, well-drained soils). As you would guess from its common name, fall/winter color on this species is an eye-popping rusty-red, often mixed with tinges of yellow-orange. In less mellow, alluvial-based soils, this species is much slower growing, and most often takes on a shrubbier appearance, but is a nice addition, none the less.

The real sleeper of the group, *V. obovatum*, called Walter's or Little-leaf Viburnum. It is a rare inhabitant of wetter, alluvial woodlands(very occasionally, open sandier uplands) in limited parts of coastal South Carolina, Georgia, northern Florida, and extreme southeastern

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

Alabama. I was first introduced to this uncommon species at the Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve in Saline, LA. Two fine old specimens exist there, gifts from Dr. W. Ashe(*fide* Briarwood curator, Richard Johnson, refers to this plant by an old common name, "the Florida snowball viburnum") and planted back in the 1940's by Miss Dormon, herself. On the dry, low, sand ridge where they were planted, one of them exists as a small tree with a dense, umbrella-type crown; the other, a 10 foot columnar shrub. In early spring, both are absolutely jam-packed with pure-white, rounded bloom clusters, which look even more prominent against the background of small, dark-green, oblanceolate to obovate leaves. Will Flemming, and his mentor, Lynn Lowrey, have been quietly using this little-known plant in landscapes between Beaumont and Corpus Christi for some time now. The genetic strain that Lowrey introduced into propagation years ago is definitely superior to the one which is currently produced by eastern Gulf Coast growers. Its leaves, while still quite small, are somewhat larger and deeper green than the latter strain. Down in lower zone eight and zone nine gardens, it is mostly evergreen, except in harsher winters when many leaves will turn pleasing hues of yellow and red. The fruits, while not dependably produced on a year-in, year-out basis in most Texas landscapes, are black and "patent leather" shiny. In essence, the small-leaved, refined look, combined with the multiplicity of brilliant white, early spring bloom clusters produced by this plant, place it at the very top of the heap. I am of the opinion that it can be sheared to whatever shape and size desired, and can take its place among the best shrubs currently used in formal landscapes such as boxwood, dwarf yaupon, and oriental azaleas. Too, this species seems to exhibit almost unlimited adaptability through a wide range of gardening soils and exposures. Flemming seems convinced that it will happily grow in periodic standing water. I have recently planted a couple in such situations on my own property, straight into yucky, black, circumneutral clay, to evaluate his claim.

Lastly, I should mention Maple-leaf Viburnum, *V. acerfolium*(*illus. at right)*. It is a small(18-24 inches), stoloniferous, understory species that forms loose, sometimes extensive, colonies in dry to mesic upland woods throughout much of eastern Canada and the U.S. Here in Louisiana, I've most often seen it associated with white oak, flowering dogwood, sassafras, horse sugar and sometimes other, like sourwood and deciduous magnolias, along acidic slopes in the central part of the state. Its prominent, spring-green, maple-shaped(like *Acer rubrum*, trident red maple) leaves, white bloom clusters; shiny, dark fruit clusters, and bright, "Merthiolate-orange" fall color render it a very showy denizen of the forest floor. Under the proper conditions, which are lightly shaded acidic soils, this species possesses the capability to form a nice, loose groundcover that should be quite attractive in all seasons but winter. At this point, I've not used it anywhere except for a small, well-drained, shady site on my property, where it has more or less sulked(but hasn't given up the ghost!) for the past three years. *Bill Fontenot is a past president of the LNPS. He is curator of the Acadiana Park Nature Station in Lafayette, a popular speaker, & author of* Native Gardening in the South. *He and his wife, Lydia, own Prairie Basse Nursery in Carencro.*

Where to find Viburnums

Viburnum obovatum, V. dentatum, and occasionally *V. rufidulum* are available from Prairie Basse Nursery, 217 St. Fidelis, Carencro, LA, 70520. Natives Nursery(John Mayronne), P.O. Box 2355, Covington, La, 70434, 504-892-5424, also carries a good selection of native viburnums, including *V. nudum.*

Mapleleaf Viburnum, *V. acerifolium*

The Louisiana Native Plant Society was founded in 1983 as a state-wide, non-profit organization. Its purposes are:

- to preserve and study native plants and their habitats.
- to educate people on the value of native plants and the need to preserve and protect rare and endangered species.
- to promote the propagation and use of native plants in the landscape
- to educate people on the relationship between our native flora and wildlife.

LNPS News
P.O. Box 126
Collinston, LA. 71229-0126

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Collinston LA
71229
Permit No. 2

Dr. & Mrs. Charles Allen 97
NLU Dept. of Biology
Monroe, LA. 71209-0502

inside...