



Louisiana Native Plant Society News

Summer 1996

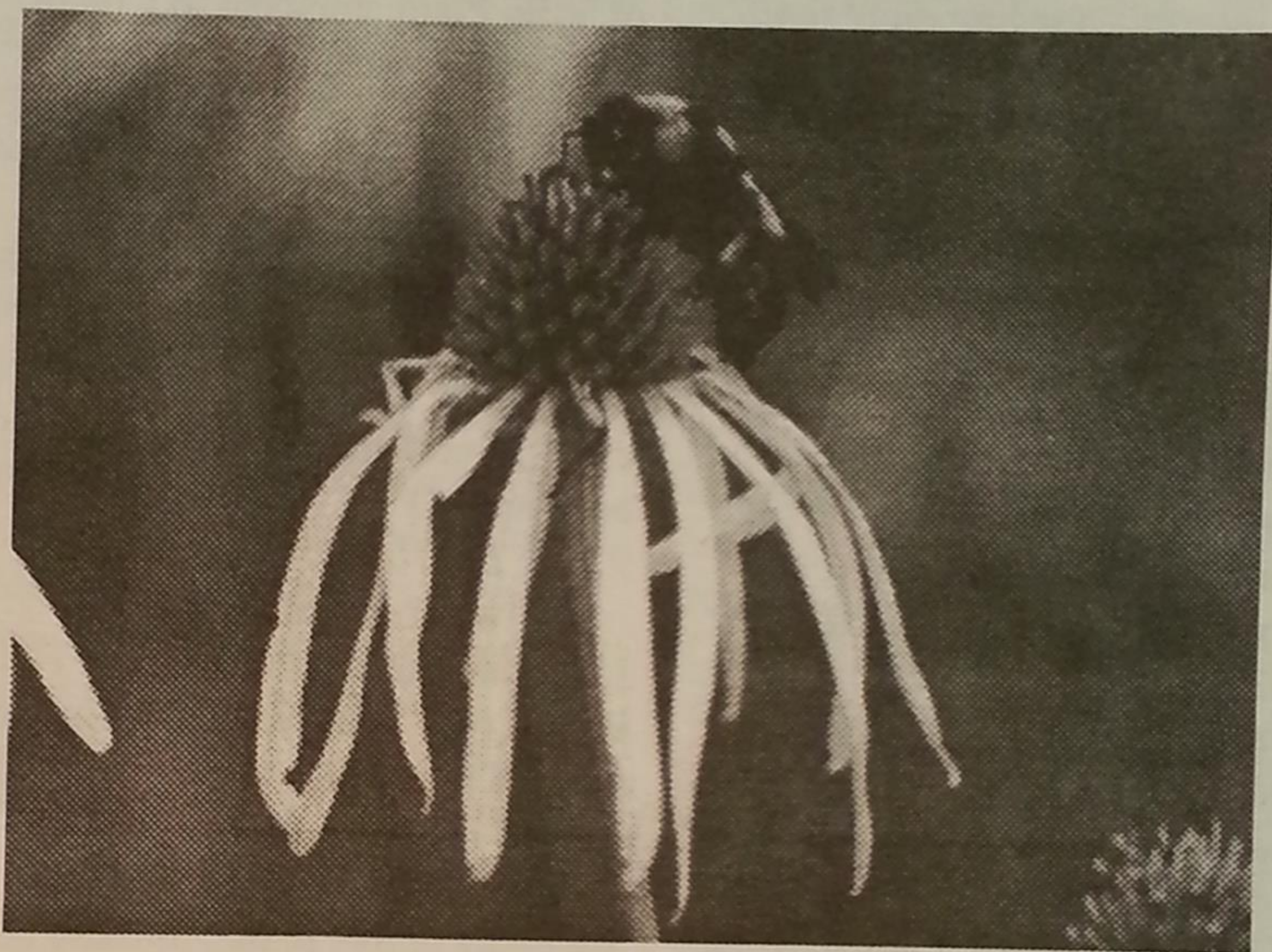
Volume 14 Issue 2



Celebration Wildflowers Is A Success

Kathleen Atkinson, District Ranger and Lynn Stacey, District Biologist, held the first annual Celebration Wildflowers on the Winn Ranger District of Kisatchie National Forest, June 1, 1996. Over 50 people attended the field day. Many native plant members were present. The habitats and flower names were provided by Richard & Jessie Johnson, B.R. and M.H. MacRoberts, Philip Hyatt (KNF Botanist), Carl Amason, R. Dale Thomas and others. The weather cooperated and a cool cloudy day was very enjoyable. Three distinct habitats were visited.

Milam Branch Prairie had a beautiful display of Wild petunia, *Ruellia humilis*, pale purple cone flower, *Echinacea pallida*, Poppy



Pale coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*, was blooming on Milam Branch Prairie during the Celebration Wildflowers field trip. photo by Rector Hopgood

Ft. Polk-Kisatchie Issue

There has apparently been no new significant information released on the proposed acquisition of National Forest Service lands by the U.S. Army. The issue continues to be a hot topic in the area. Sources close to the issue urge LNPS members to continue to write our U.S. congressional

delegation members to request information on the Army's plans for the area, proposed usage, and why they need the land in the first place. Out of state members and interested parties should also write their U.S. Congressmen and Senators, as this is an issue of national interest.

inside...

See Note from the president for grant award winner
Bogs, Birds, Butterflies, & Bivalves Report
Carl Amason on *Thelypteris torresiana*
Book Reviews

page 2
pages 4-5
pages 6-7
pages 8-9

Note from the president...Dr. Charles Allen

The grant program seemed to be a success; there were six great proposals. In fact, each of the six received one first place vote and several board members expressed feelings of awarding more than one grant. There was also a diverse range of topics, none of the six overlapped. The board members had a hard time deciding but a majority of the first place votes were for Mary Cummings, who proposed to use the money for her Master of Science topic at Northeast Louisiana University. She is drawing and describing woody plants of Louisiana. She will be asked to display her work at our annual meeting in January. Thanks to all the applicants and especially the board members. If the Society decides to continue the grant program, I would offer one small change and that is to limit the size of the entire grant proposal to a fixed number of pages, perhaps one or two.

I am sure that the Gulf Coast Regional Native Plant Conference in Baton Rouge will be a great success and Marion Drummond and the Hilltop Arboretum deserve a large pat on the back. Many of our Society members are speakers and/or attenders and many others are working behind the scenes to make this a success. The Louisiana Regional Native Plant Conferences are very popular.

A new plant organization has sprouted. The "Friends of the Louisiana State Arboretum" was created on April 26, 1996 in

Evangeline Parish. The purpose and/or mission statement are being polished but will concentrate on supporting and promoting the Louisiana State Arboretum north of Ville Platte adjacent to Chicot State Park. A technical advisory board is contemplated and several of you (Society members) will be asked to serve on the advisory board. A newsletter is also planned. You may join this organization by mailing your \$10.00 dues payable to Friends of the Arboretum to P.O. Box 173; Ville Platte, LA 70586.

Nelwyn McInnis and Julia Larke are putting together the Fall Field Trip. Mark your calendars for Sept 28 and 29th. We will visit the eastern Florida parishes of Washington and St. Tammany. There are many native plants in these two parishes and we should have a great "botanical" time this fall. Look for more details in this newsletter and especially in the September newsletter.

I have been thinking a lot about and checking into our Winter 1997 meeting. I called the Holiday Inn on MacArthur Drive in Alexandria and obtained the following info. We can rent a large room (capacity

= 160) for Saturday from 8 AM to 3 PM for \$600.00 and a smaller room nearby for \$105.00. For each room that is rented at the motel by members of the Society, there will be \$10.00 discounted from the \$600.00 price. We can get a small room for 30-40 people for Friday night for \$125.00. As I indicated in the last newsletter, I would like to try for a Friday night get together and then go with our usual Saturday. This is an attempt to get more interaction between Society members. We might have to up the registration cost to \$5.00 or perhaps even \$10.00 to cover the cost. The schedule would include a slide show of wildflowers on Friday night at 7 or 8 PM and then registration starting at 8 AM on Saturday with our out of state speaker at 9 AM. Then have our business meeting at 11 AM and our in state speaker at 1:30 PM. Richard Bortnick is still trying to get us at LSU Alexandria for a reasonable price so that might still come through. Let me know your thoughts on this next Winter meeting.

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.

(Continued from page 1)

mallow, *Callirhoe papaver*, Purple prairie clover, *Dalea purpurea*, and yellow powderpuff, *Neptunia lutea*. Other prairie plants were evident including milkweeds, *Asclepias viridis*, *A. viridiflora*, White prairie clover, *Dalea candida*, and Snow-on-the-mountain, *Euphorbia bicolor*.

We next visited the famous sandy habitat beside La. Hwy. 156 and the railroad tracks on the east side of Saline Bayou east of Goldonna. There we saw Sand spikemoss, *Selaginella arenicola* spp. *riddellii*, Red beardtongue, *Penstemon murrayanus*, Twist-flower, *Streptopus hyacinthoides*, Long-leaf wild buckwheat, *Eriogonum longifolium*, Yellow evening primrose, *Oenothera heterophylla*, Viperina, *Zornia bracteata*, Jointweed, *Polygonella americana*, Flatsedge, *Cyperus grayioides*, and much prickly pear, *Opuntia humifusa*. We had an enjoyable lunch at the boat launch area beside Saline Lake. We then crossed Saline Bayou into Natchitoches Parish and visited the Strange Road Bog.

The Strange Road Bog had a good display of Grass pink orchid, *Calapogon tuberosus*. The burning of the bog area has greatly increased the display of the pitcher plants, *Sarracenia flava*. Participants also looked at several other plants in various stages of development including sundews,

Drosera annua, Club mosses, *Lycopodium appressum*, et. al., Blazing stars, *Liatris pycnostachya*, Barbara's Buttons, *Marshallia tenuifolia*, Poison sumac, *Rhus vernix*, Bog eryngo, *Eryngium integrifolium*, Colic root, *Aletris aurea*, etc. Hatpins, *Eriocaulon decangulare*, were in a beautiful display.

After a leisurely stroll through the bog, the group dispersed. Some of us saw a large display of the grass pinks just north of the bog on the roadside. Carl Amason and I took a ride through the longleaf pine woods on a logging road and then visited Cloud Crossing area. We were eventually rained out at the Winn Parish site of the rare and recently described *Rudbeckia scabrifolia*, a brown-eyed susan. We continued from there and were able to look at the wonderful wildflower site along Antwine Creek near Wyatt before being rained out of the woods again. The whole day was a wonderful success. The Winn Ranger District personnel are to be congratulated on hosting such a wonderful wildflower experience. All participants seemed to have had an enjoyable time. I hope that this will be an annual event with some meetings being in the fall so that we can show off our display of asters, sunflowers, blazing stars, and their relatives. R. Dale Thomas, Director of the Herbarium, NLU, Monroe, La., 71209.

Are Your Dues Due?

Check your mailing label. If Su95 is after your 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

Bogs, Birds, Butterflies, & Bivalves

by Joan Moncrief

The annual tour convened at 9 am on Saturday, March 23, 1996 at Little Cypress Recreation Area in the Kisatchie District of Kisatchie National Forest. Led by President Charles Allen and Karlene DeFatta Award recipient Robert Murry, we experienced a day of varied interests.

Our first site was a Longleaf Pine, *Pinus palustris*, association on a sandy slope. The slope and lower bog area were burned in late Fall, 1995 by forestry personnel. Appearing through the charred surface were the early leaves of Bracken, *Pteridium aquilinum*, which later will cover the slope. The walk down slope was a study of vegetative growth that presented a challenge to determine the identity of the plants, e.g., *Solidago odora*, *Physostegia* sp., *Habenaria* sp., *Baptisia bracteata*, and *Salvia azurea*. Adding color against the burnt background were blue *Sisyrinchium* sp., Yellow Star-grass, *Hypoxis* sp., and the tiny red basal rosettes of Sundew, *Drosera annua*.

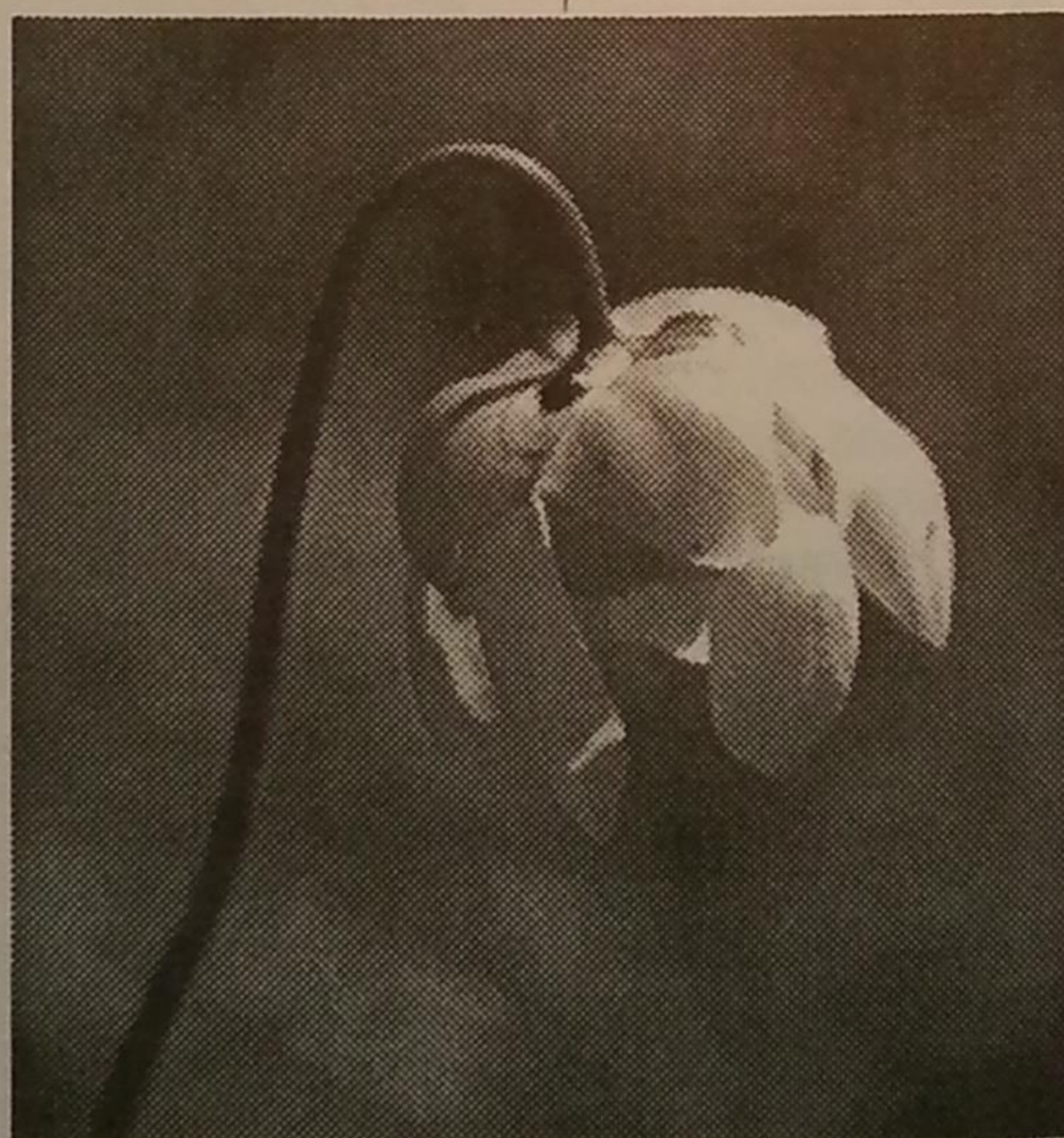
As elsewhere in Louisiana, the winter drought was apparent. Large areas of the clay bog soil were dried and cracked. Scattered throughout were the shrivelled tubular leaves of Yellow Pitcher-plant, *Sarracenia alata*, with only one eager plant in flower. Abundant in the bog were Sunbonnets, *Chaptalia tomentosa*, early Spring bloomers about to burst open, and Yellow

Sunny-bells, *Schoenolirion croceum*, with their racemes already in flower. One of the narrow leaves of the latter seemed able to slither away—a slender Green Snake, whose presence was not detected until it moved. A perfect example of nature's camouflage! In this lower slope area, two college students trapping small mammals (shrews, voles, and deer mice) for a class study have made a barely discernible path, but the Fall fire would not cross the slightly impacted vegetation. Foresters had to start another burn on the other side of the narrow trail.

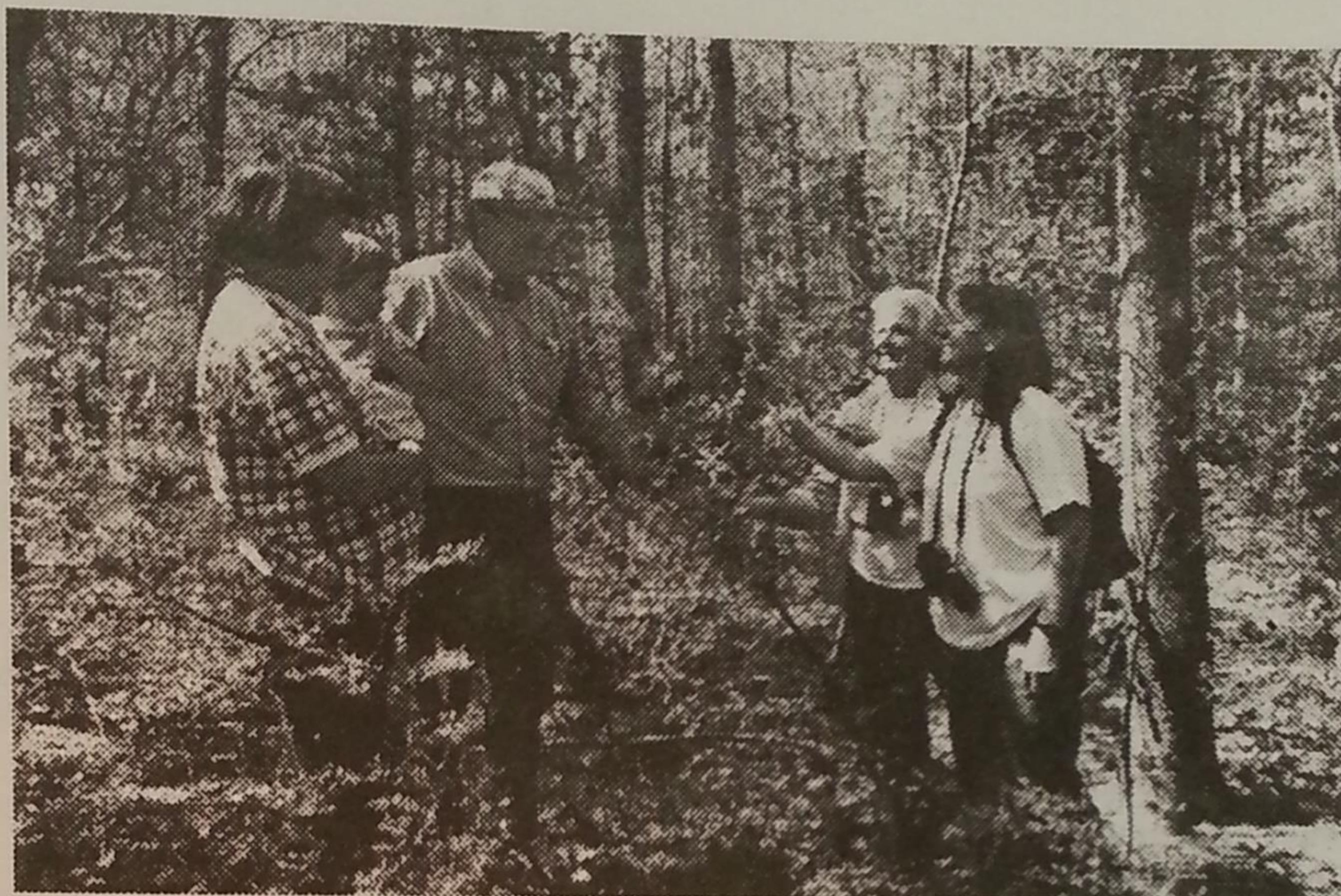
From the bog, a walk through woods of Sweet Bay, *Magnolia virginiana*, and Bay-gall, *Ilex coriacea*, brought us to a creek bank with scattered patches of Yellow Root, *Xanthorhiza*

simplicissima. The plant is aptly named, because the long roots are a deep lemon yellow color. I have wondered if the roots were used by Native Americans or early settlers as a dye. The sides of the creek were covered with Sphagnum Moss and Liverwort and along the banks were Royal Fern, *Osmunda regalis*, and Southern Lady-fern, *Athyrium filix-femina*.

Our next site was Drake's Creek, home to at least five genera of mussels. A highlight here was Wild Azalea, *Rhododendron canescens*, in full flower with dozens of young Spicebush Swallowtail Butterflies sipping nectar from the flowers. To quote Dr. Allen, "It was the only grocery store in the area that was open." Nearby was a clump of Cinnamon Fern, *Osmunda cin-*



One Yellow pitcherplant, *Sarracenia alata*, was blooming in the bog visited during the Bogs, Birds, etc. trip in late March. photo by Rector Hopgood



A group of participants admire the *Rhododendron canescens* in bloom at Drake's Creek. The Spicebush Swallowtail Butterflies were swarming over the blooms on nearby bushes. photo by Rector Hopgood

namomea, with their rusty "wool" fiddleheads in various stages of unfolding. The fiddleheads were excellent examples of circinate vernation that is unique to ferns.

Two energetic youths collected several mussels from the creek bottom. One was pried open to reveal the gills and foot. The specialized digging foot enables the mollusk to burrow in the soft sediment. Bivalves are filter feeders. Two siphons are extended up into the water. Water flows through one siphon, over the gills which extract particulate matter and oxygen, and out the other siphon.

Our after-lunch site was a Beech-Maple association along a small creek. Several Parsley Hawthorn, *Crataegus marshalii*,

and Buckeye, *Aesculus pavia*, were flowering. Pushing through the humus were the whorled lower stem leaves of Carolina Lily, *Lilium michauxii*, Twoflower Melicgrass, *Melica mutica*, Wild Yam, *Dioscorea villosa*, and *Trillium* sp. The eagerly awaited Yellow Lady's-slipper, *Cypripedium calceolus*, exhibited only their prominently ribbed leaves. One plant had a closed yellow flower peeping out from the leaves, giving a hint of future beauty. In this orchid species, one petal inflates into a moccasin-like lip, hence its Latin epithet *calceolus*, "a little shoe." The species is circum boreal, occurring in Europe and Asia; our North American plants are var. *pubescens*.

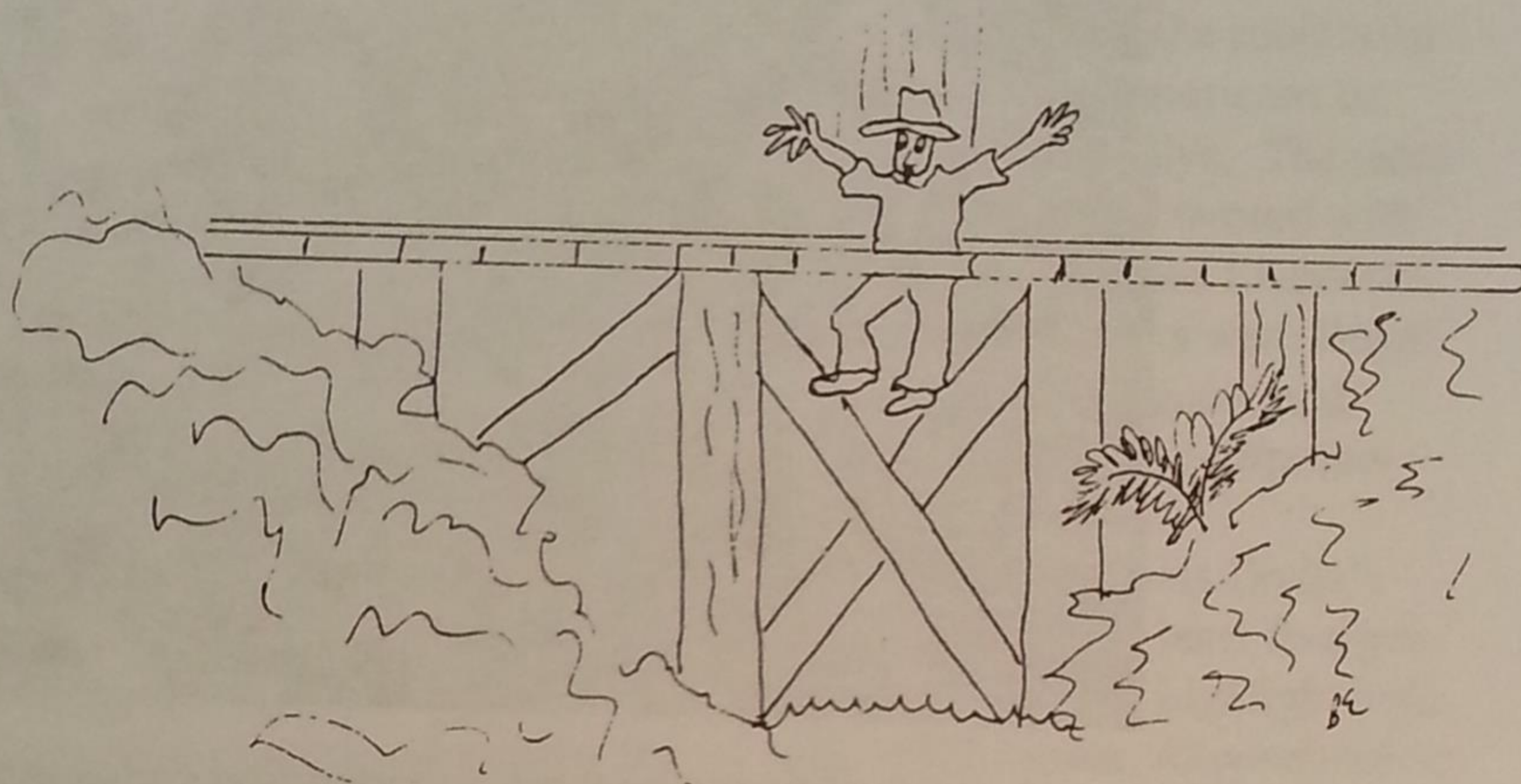
The day ended with a repast

of native cuisine prepared by Chef Allen. Those partaking ate boiled Groundnuts, *Apios americana*, spiced with salt, pepper, and Tony Chachere's, and raw Cajun artichoke, *Stachys floridana*, tuber. Two choices of tea were offered; *Sassafras albidum*, and Sweet Goldenrod, *Solidago odora*.—Joan Moncrief, of Ruston, serves on the LNPS Board of Directors and is an avid and knowledgeable student of nature.

Thelypteris torresiana by Carl Amason

There is a fern that has appeared, out of the blue so to speak, within this century. I dare predict that it will occur in every Louisiana parish by the end of the century. This fern is, of course, *Thelypteris torresiana*. It has been found in most of the counties of Arkansas in the Western Gulf Coastal Plain to the outskirts of Little Rock.

The older fern guides do not mention it. In doing a bit of research for this article, [I found] Dr. John W. Thieret's, **Louisiana Fern and Fern Allies** says that it was found in 1967 in Louisiana. The specific epithet is *torresiana* from Luis de Torres. He uses the common name "Torres' Fern" instead of "Mariana Fern." It was first described from the Mariana Islands in the tropical South Pacific. It is much hardier than an origin such as the Mariana Islands would suggest. In this country, it was first found in Florida in 1906. Since then, it has become a firmly entrenched species in the Southeastern Flora. Hopefully, it won't become as weedy in Louisiana as the Japanese climbing fern, *Lygodium japonicum*, which is found in every parish in Louisiana. In spite of its weediness, it is so unique and desirable it is widely cultivated. Thieret lists *T. torresiana* as growing naturally in nineteen parishes. His book was published in 1980. Dr. Dale Thomas



in his Volume I of **Atlas of the Vascular Flora of Louisiana** (with Dr. Charles M. Allen) enlarges the range to 24 parishes. This was published in 1993. The fern is spreading its range.

In the garden, it is a beautiful fern. I have heard it said that "it is the most beautiful" to "one of the finest." At this time, everyone agrees that it is garden worthy. In response to all inquiries about, no one has lost their garden plants due to last summer's drought or the severe winter blasts.

It was a bit late in coming into foliage in the spring. It has 3-pinnate fronds that are constantly growing from unfurling fiddleheads all during the growing season. The fronds are a bright light yellowish-green. The structure of the entire plant

calls to my mind as a miniature tree fern. Heights can vary from at least 24 inches to 30 inches tall and almost as wide. It is tall and airy in its grace. This fern grows well in acidic sandy soils in just ordinary loam, especially in disturbed areas.

That brings up my first encounter with the fern. On a field trip in southern Ashley County, Arkansas about 10 years ago, I was taken to see if I could identify a "rare" fern. The plants were growing in a moist area at the edge of the bridge abutment. It was perhaps six feet below the bridge, on the lower side of a blackberry patch. To get a better view, I walked on the bridge and stepped off the central runners that ran the length of the bridge. When I did, the rotten boards of

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

the bridge flooring fell under my weight, leaving me dangling by the armpits. Fortunately, no one was hurt; the bridge remained passable, and everyone had a good laugh. The sight of the fern left a lingering image. Somewhere I had seen that fern.

Later, I found out where. When my brothers and I settled up the estate, some log haulers hauled out some logs and in so doing, a small area was badly disturbed. Some fern sporelings that I could not identify came up in the area. These were *Thelypteris torresiana* plants coming into size large enough to be identified. Some plants remain in the area to this day. The area is a bit drier than where Royal Fern and Cinnamon Fern would grow.

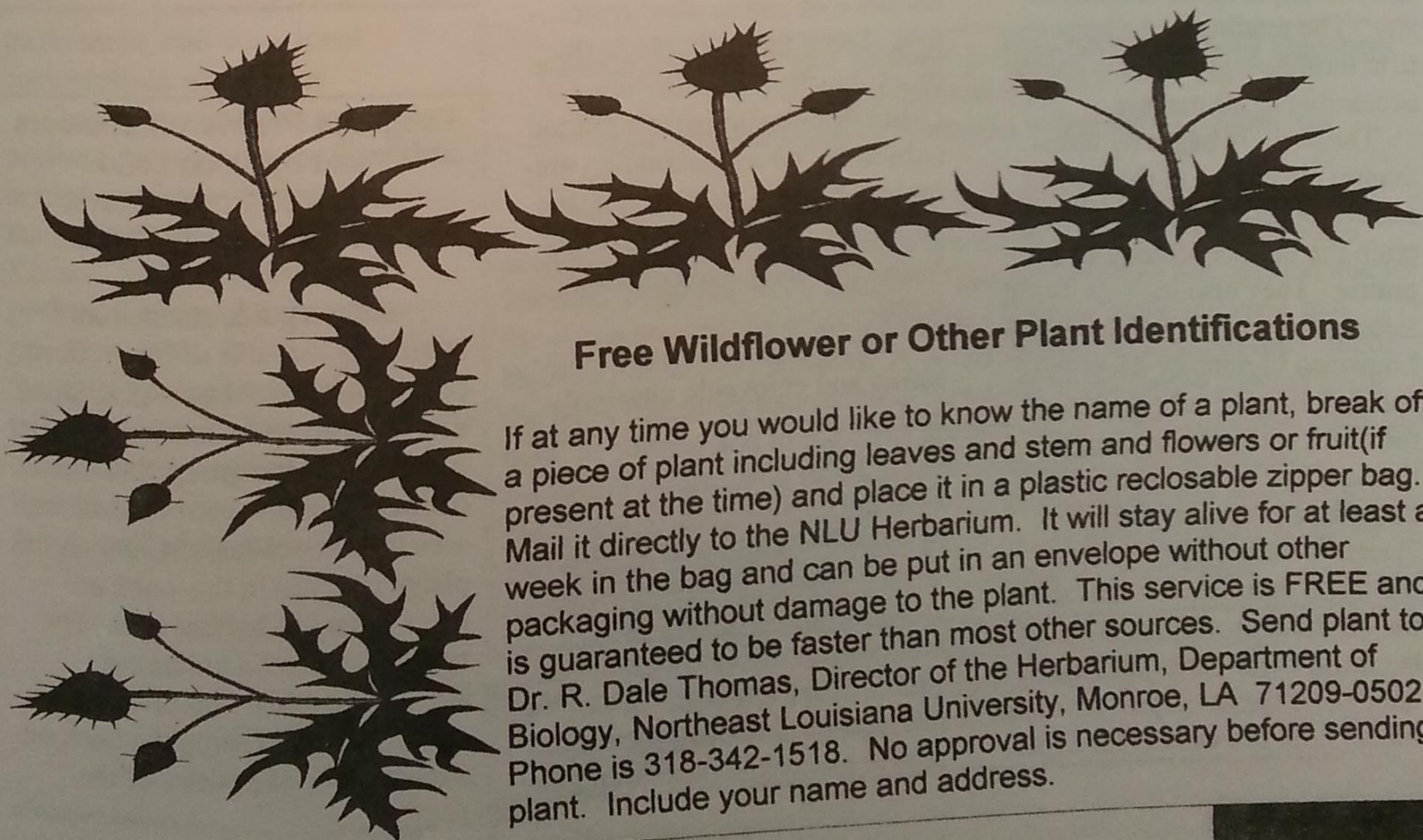
There is no greater thrill than finding a new plant and especially so when it is on your property. I have found it to be easily transplanted and I have shared many plants to interested friends. It remains lovely until the above-ground parts are killed by frosts. It is not an evergreen fern, but I rate it as a leading fern for the garden.

As a footnote to my experiences with *Thelypteris torresiana*, we must all adapt to changes in scientific names. David L. Jones' book, *Encyclopaedia of Ferns*, printed in Australia, where Jones lives and works, uses the name *Macrothelypteris torresiana* for this fern. Never a dull moment in the study of botany! *Carl Amason is a superior plantsman who gardens near Calion, Ark.*

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.



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 318-342-1518. No approval is necessary before sending plant. Include your name and address.

Book Reviews

A Cajun Prairie Restoration Journal: 1988-1995

by

Malcolm F. Vidrine

Charles M. Allen

William R. Fontenot

This new publication represents a unique work on habitat restoration. It contains all the data relative to the Cajun Prairie Restoration Project of Eunice, Louisiana, since its beginning in 1988. The authors give an accurate description of all the different phases of the project to the present time. Beyond a compilation of data and chronological events, this publication provides valuable information for educating the general public to appreciate the value of natural habitats and the importance of biodiversity. The reading includes scientific terminology, but it is easily accessible to all readers.

The authors begin by introducing the reader to the Eunice site restoration project and explain the unique ecology of a prairie. They also include useful information on the Southwestern Louisiana biomes by describing and defining the topography of the State with effective vegetation and soil maps. The book contains a history of the Cajun Prairie with a description of the floral families that characterize this habitat. With the use of beautiful color plates and tabulated data, the book provides the reader with the wonderful experi-

ence of the blooming and seasonal changes that occur in a Cajun Prairie from the restored site in Eunice.

The book also describes the reintroduction of native plant species at the Eunice prairie. The reader is given some useful hints on plant identification, and how to propagate them success-

A Cajun Prairie Restoration Journal: 1988-1995, 1995, 184pp., library bound, US \$120. ISBN 0-9637304-1-x Available from Gail Q. Vidrine Collectibles, Route 2, Box 489-J, Eunice, La., 70535.

fully in a home garden or in pots. Historical notes and discussions are also included on the importance of native plant restoration. More than a home to the many dazzling wildflowers, the Cajun Prairie furnishes a unique habitat for many fascinating animals. From the Eunice site, the authors describe many invertebrates that have been encountered.

The authors include an interesting and enjoyable question and answer section. This portion of the book states the most common questions asked by visitors to the prairie, and easy to understand answers. In this section, many more interesting themes are developed. These include soil fertility, soil erosion, and the interactions that occur between prairie plants and other living or-

ganisms that inhabit this ecosystem. The bibliography is copious. It reflects mastery of the subject and the profound competence of the matter.

This book will be of sure interest to the scholar. One may find in it priceless clues to continue an investigation of prairies or to initiate new research efforts. The wildflower hobbyist can benefit from this book as well. Whether it is to satisfy the curious mind or to inform those concerned with habitat preservation, this book delivers wealth of information. For many enthusiasts, **A Cajun Prairie Restoration Journal: 1988-1995** will be a must. *by Bruno Borsari & Avery Williams*

Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers

text by Doug Ladd

photos by Frank Oberle

A Falcon Field Guide

This field guide states from the beginning that it is different from conventional field guides. I found this to be an understatement. Instead of being grouped to areas defined by man-made boundaries, which plants cheerfully ignore, the plants covered in this book are from a general habitat area. The species presented are native tallgrass species—no invasive exotics here. In using the book on a recent tour of prairies of the

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

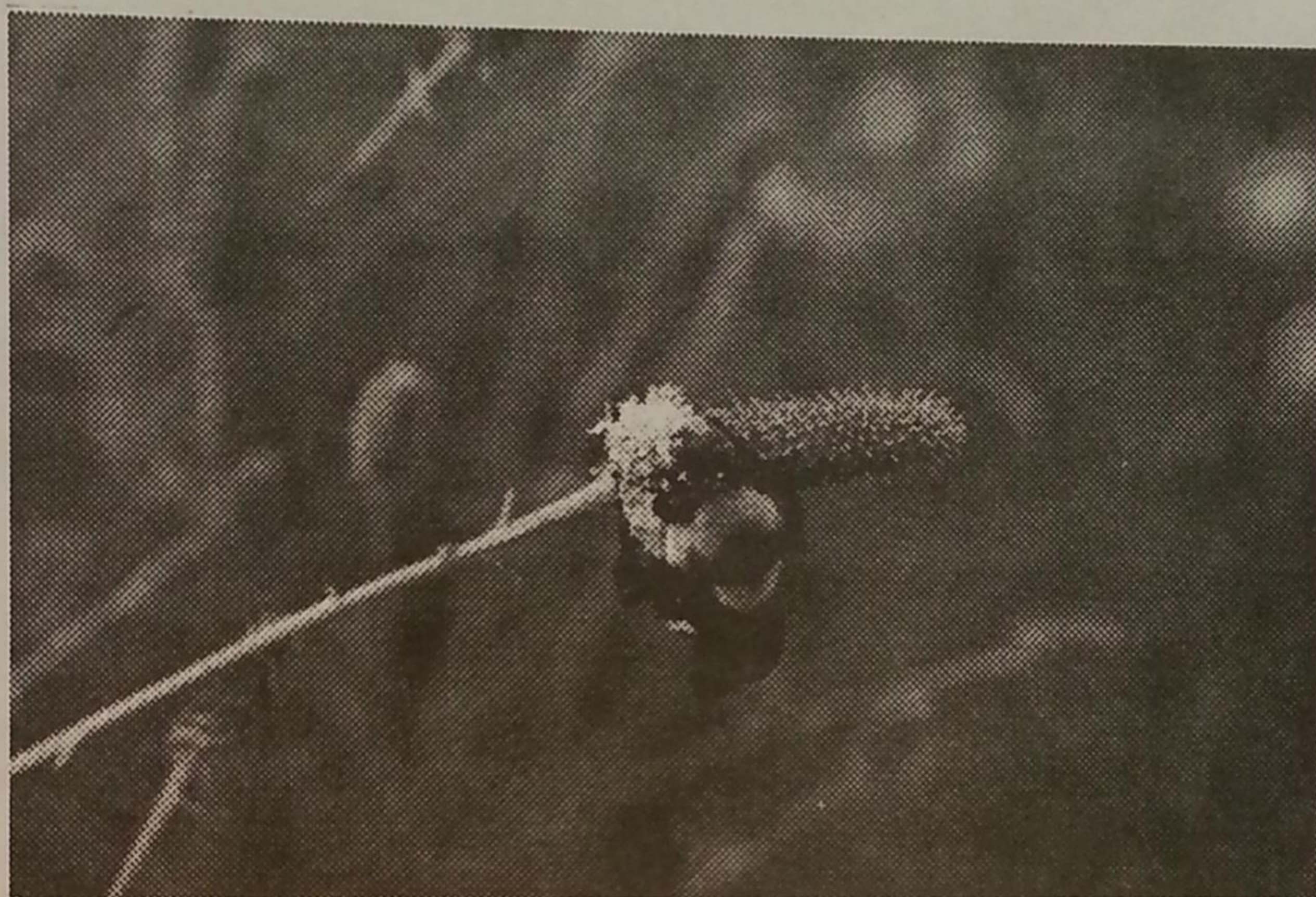
Midwest, I found that if a plant was very common to a site, and it wasn't in the book, it was an exotic species. The authors state from the beginning that these are the plants of the prairie, not the meadow, overgrown pasture, or roadside.

The plants are grouped by flower color. Oberle's photography is outstanding, making it worthwhile for the pictures, alone. The text gives an easily understood description, a habitat/range statement, including soil

Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers, 1995, 200pp, softcover, \$19.95, Falcon Press Publishing Co., Inc. P.O. Box 1718, Helena, MT, 59624. 1-800-582-2665, ISBN 1-56044-299-9. "A Nature Conservancy Book."

preferences, and occasional comments on the species.

The book covers the area from northern Arkansas to the Canadian border and from western Ohio to the eastern Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas. Most of the species profiled occur on Louisiana's prairies as well. It is a necessary tool for anyone interested in tallgrass prairies. There is a prairie directory at the end of the book that lists those areas open to the public for visitation. *by Beth Erwin*



White prairie clover, *Dalea candida*, was blooming at Milam Branch Prairie. It is very popular with bumblebees. *photo by Rector Hopgood*

Prairie Plants of the Midwest: Identification and Ecology
by Russell R. Kirt
Illus. by Henrietta H. Tweedie & Roberta L. Simonds

Even though there are no color illustrations in this field guide, the ecological notes on each species are worth noting. The 110 species featured are arranged by families. The author chose this method due to the dominance of the grass (*Poaceae*), sunflower (*Asteraceae*), and legume (*Fabiaceae*) families. A handy chart is included in the front of the book that gives approximate flowering times for the species in the book in comparison to the other species listed. The ecological notes give important information on each species ability to handle grazing, disturbance, and competition from Eurasian species and how it behaves under those conditions. This is a very handy little reference book for anyone studying the tallgrass prairie habitat. *by Beth Erwin*

Prairie Plants of the Midwest: Identification and Ecology, 1995, 137pp., softcover, \$13.95, Stipes Publishing L.L.C., 10-12 Chester Street, Champaign, IL, 61820. ISBN 0-87563-573-3.

Eastern Florida Parishes Fall 1996 Extravaganza!!!

September 28, 1996. Meet in downtown Franklinton at Dad's Donuts at 9:00 A.M. From there, spend the morning at a variety of natural communities in the vicinity of Lee Forest including upland sandy habitats with *Calamintha georgiana*, riparian forest with big-leaf magnolia and mountain laurel, and possible floodplain forest along the Pearl River. Spend the afternoon at The Nature Conservancy's newest preserve, Abita Creek Flatwoods near Abita Springs. This is a premier site featuring old growth bayhead forest, and pitcher plant savannahs and seepage bogs. Special plants include bog flame flower, *Macranthera flammea*, pond cypress, *Taxodium ascendens*, parrot pitcher plant, *Sarracenia psittacina*, and dozens more! End day one in the beautiful, historic town of Abita Springs for an optional visit to hear live bluegrass music at the Piney Woods Opry, or consume exceptional food and beverages at the Abita Brew Pub and Restaurant.

September 29, 1996. Meet in Lacombe (site yet to be determined) and caravan to Big Branch National Wildlife refuge to see natural slash pine-wiregrass community that grades into marsh habitat along Lake Pontchartrain. A beautiful part of the state! Visit other sites if time permits.

Camping/Lodging. Camping is available at Fountainsbleau State Park in Mandeville. Call the St. Tammany Parish Chamber of Commerce at 504-892-3216 or Tourist Information at 504-892-0520.

More information will be provided in the fall newsletter.

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



Dr. & Mrs. Charles Allen 96
NLU Dept. of Biology
Monroe, LA. 71209-0502

inside...

See Note from the president for grant award winner
Bogs, Birds, Butterflies, & Bivalves Report
Carl Amason on *Thelypteris torresiana*
Book Reviews

page 2
pages 4-5
pages 6-7
pages 8-9