

NORTH  
CAROLINA

# wild flower

PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY, INC.



Monkshood  
*Aconitum uncinatum*

WINTER 1997  
Volume IX, Number II

**NORTH CAROLINA WILD FLOWER  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY, INC.**

**1996-98**

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**NEWSLETTER**  
of  
**North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society**

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COVER DRAWING: *Aconitum uncinatum* - Monkshood  
by Eric Hawkins

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## *President's Message . . .*

Those of you who attended the August meeting know that we saw a terrific variety of wildflowers! Craig, Eric, and Millie Blaha did a wonderful job of interpreting the flora. Please read Millie's colorful account of our trip to experience it vicariously if you were not able to attend. Millie's inclusion of mileposts will help those of you who would like to visit the area another time. Many thanks for a job well done.

We are pursuing the archiving and microfilming of our newsletters and archival material. Mary Ishaq, a librarian and volunteer at the NC Botanical Garden, is helping us by investigating costs of services on the UNC campus and cataloging the number of pages to be microfilmed. We hope to eventually make copies of our newsletters available to the botany libraries of universities that do not currently receive our newsletter. Interest has been expressed by a number of libraries and organizations. Mary has just informed me that the Historical Collections in Wilson Library on the UNC campus is very interested in having our archival material!

I attended the Native Plant Conference at Cullowhee in July where I learned about the Native Plant Conservation Initiative. The NPCI is a consortium of nine federal agencies and over 60 non-federal cooperators involved in working together to solve the problems of plant extinction and native habitat restoration. Native plant societies, garden clubs, botanical gardens, arboreta, landscape architects, and many conservation groups are involved in the project as cooperators. This public-private partnership provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, expertise, and information on a national level so that a more focused strategy of plant conservation can be accomplished without duplication of effort. A matching grant program, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, awards thousands of dollars a year for on-the-ground conservation and restoration projects. As a cooperator, an organization agrees to bring people together to share resources and talents to conserve native plants. Education to the general public, encouraging the scientific community to conduct research, coordinating databases, and ensuring the conservation of native plants and their communities through conservation projects are a few of the responsibilities of a cooperator. A cooperating organization can apply for grant money to fund a conservation project that meets the approval of the Consortium. With the support of the membership in attendance at the August meeting, I have entered our Society's name as a candidate for cooperator status.

Many of you may be aware that some Society members were quoted in a lengthy article in the News and Observer regarding the DOT's wildflower project. The article was fairly balanced to reflect DOT's views and the wildflower "purist" view, although there was a typically adversarial slant to the article. Ken Moore was largely the natives respondent in the article, although Ken Bridle, Benson Kirkman and Bob Tuggle were also quoted. The article has spawned a number of letters to the editor in several newspapers. Unfortunately, most of the letters are being written by people who love the DOT project and are essentially telling us "purists" to get a life! With considerable effort, Ken Moore was able to get the reporter to preserve a portion of the article dedicated to the importance of wildlife habitat and how native plants figure into the potential of our roadsides as precious habitat for native flora and fauna. Please make your views known to the local media regardless of your opinion, but especially if you would like to see more natives on the roadside! A motion was made at the business meeting for the Society to draft a position letter to be distributed to the press.

That's about it for now. Don't forget that we have an election coming soon. We will need the names of all you energetic members who would like to participate in Society business and other functions. Please read the article regarding a potential name change, since you might be asked to vote on a change. We are also looking for more suggestions for future meeting sites. See you all in May.

Charlotte

Charlotte Patterson



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*by Charlotte Patterson & Benson Kirkman*

"In the Fall of 1951 Mrs. C. A. Graham, Sr. of Ramseur, District Director of the N. C. State Garden Club, in Randolph County, met with Mrs. Herbert P. Smith at Smithwin Farm and called together the people whom they believed to be interested in preserving wild flowers. They felt that the time had come in defense of the road machines and fast going wood lands to act in some way."

This paragraph is an excerpt from Pattie Warren's 20th anniversary tribute to the NCWFPS published in the October 1971 Newsletter. Since that time we have grown in number and have tried to preserve the same spirit demonstrated in her statement. As we approach the end of the 46th year of our existence, we find ourselves asking some questions about how we might best continue to support the Society's mission in years to come. We want to continue to expand the grass roots efforts of our members regarding preservation of wild flowers and their habitats while at the same time attracting additional interest and involvement from professionals in the fields of plant ecology, horticulture, landscaping, plant propagation and other plant sciences. The help of these professionals is vital to our efforts to preserve wild stock, preserve habitat and promote the use of native plants in our increasingly urban landscape.

Most other wild flower societies in the United States have changed their names to include the term native plant. Native plant is an inclusive term that some people feel would more adequately describe our society and its goals. As an organization, we certainly are concerned about all native plants, including trees, shrubs, grasses, sedges, mushrooms, ferns, etc. With the focus of most groups today centering on all native plants and their habitat ecology, many feel that the term wild flower in our name limits us to only herbaceous flowering plants.

The term wild flower, as two words, is meant to convey native plant. Originally, most of the state societies included wild flower or wildflower in their name. "Wild flower" was intended to cover wild plants of all kinds, thus covering the flora currently included under native plant today.

At present, only two societies continue to use wild flower as two words in their name, The New England Wild Flower Society and our society. (The New England Wild Flower Society originally included preservation in their name as well.) The Virginia Native Plant Society includes two local chapters that continue to use wild flower as part of their name.

There are many advantages to preserving our name as it is, most notably continuing our name recognition and honoring the history of the Society. By using wild flower in our name, we continue to distinguish our society as the second oldest continuing wild plant society in the country. The oldest is the New England Wild Flower Society, and they apparently follow that logic.

The arguments for changing our name are also valid. The current name is long and cumbersome. We are frequently mistaken for a wildlife society because people fail to listen or read carefully when taking our messages or scheduling our meetings. Since most societies are now called native plant societies, our name seems somewhat antiquated. As we strive to promote the preservation and use of native plants we want our name to represent the breadth of our interest in terms that convey our mission clearly and succinctly.

Several possible names have been suggested. The most frequent choices have included native plant somewhere in the name. For example, The North Carolina Native Plant Society was suggested, but the inclusion of preservation was considered important to the title. The subscript - dedicated to the preservation and conservation of native plants - was suggested. Another option would be to shorten the current name by dropping preservation and placing it in a short subscript: The North Carolina Wild Flower Society - dedicated to the preservation of our native flora.

In a tangential but related context, The North Carolina Botanical Garden, which is our permanent mailing address, has become the home of the Eastern Native Plant Alliance (ENPA) as well. Perhaps keeping wild flower in our name will also serve the purpose of distinguishing us from ENPA and preserving our society identity.

Changing the Society's name is not an act to be taken casually. It could involve considerable paperwork. Please carefully consider the issues discussed in this article and make your own decision. If you have a suggestion or opinion that you would like to offer, send a note clearly stating the suggested name or opinion to Charlotte Patterson or Eric Hawkins and we will gladly consider it. This is a significant step for our society to take. Please help us to make the best decision for the Society's future. You may be asked to vote on this sometime in the near future.

# *CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

- April 23-25    Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage Co-sponsored by the University of Tennessee Botany Dept. Call 1-423-436-1290 for more Information.
- April 26        NCWFPS 1998 Spring Board Meeting at Charlotte Patterson's house (1pm).
- May 16-17      **PLEASE NOTE NEW DATES ! NCWFPS 1998 Spring Meeting** at Merchants Millpond, Gates County, NC.
- June 6         Craig Moretz is hosting a day in his garden. All persons and their guests are welcome. A map and further details will be included in your Spring Meeting Notice.
- June 20        **NCWFPS First Annual Summer Picnic and Wildflower Auction.** Hagan-Stone Park, Greensboro, NC. (See enclosed details!)
- July 22-25     1998 Cullowhee Conference - Landscaping with Native Plants. Western Carolina Univ. Call 1-704-227-7397 for more Information.
- Oct. 24-25     **NCWFPS 1998 Fall Meeting** at Bald Head Island and Carolina Beach State Park, Brunswick & New Hanover Counties, NC.
- April 24-25    NCWFPS 1999 Spring Meeting in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

## **ATTENTION READERS:**

Frederick W. Case Jr. and Roberta B. Case of Saginaw, Michigan have just written a book titled **Trilliums** which was published by Timber Press Inc. in 1997 and is available for \$29.95. Their photography is outstanding. This work of art is a must for any serious wildflower enthusiast whether novice or wizened master.

## **SPRING ELECTIONS**

In May, we will elect new officers and three new trustees. Members of the nominating committee are: Ken Bridle, Eric Hawkins, Craig Moretz, Charlotte Patterson, and Bob Tuggle. Addresses and phone numbers for these members can be located on the inside front cover of your newsletter. If you have nominations for the offices of President, Vice President (responsible for trips), Recording Secretary (takes minutes at board meetings), Treasurer (oversees finances and membership), or Trustee (voting member), please drop a note to any one on the committee or give them a call.

## **ABOUT NCWFPS BOARD MEETINGS**

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend Board Meetings! Each of you have valued opinions and ideas that we would like to hear. Even if you are shy and have nothing to say, you might find the meetings enlightening as well as enjoyable since it is a good opportunity to visit with some of your fellow members. The Board Meeting dates are listed in the Calendar of Events in each Newsletter. If you have any questions about how to find Meeting locations, etc. please contact Charlotte Patterson (address & phone number in the inside front cover of your Newsletter).

# FALL 1997 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING REPORT

by Millie Blaha

The morning of Saturday, August 2, 1997 broke clear and cool as the sun touched the mountain slopes seen from the porches and balconies of the Pisgah Inn (elevation 4,925 ft.), which accommodated members who attended the Fall 1997 meeting of the North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society. Local day-trippers joined the group at 8:30 a.m. for a perfect weather-wise and beautiful floral-display day.

Nature, the master gardener, presented a magnificent display of wildflowers along the Blue Ridge Parkway, some common, some rare, and some only infrequently occurring in the mountains. This display put to shame the DOT's plantings along North Carolina's highways.

At least 75 species of plants were observed by those who stopped at overlooks and walked along the roadsides, by those who hiked the trail to Devil's Courthouse, the trail to Graveyard Fields, to John Rock, and the Buck Springs Trail.

Vistas such as one where the geologic formation of Looking Glass Rock, a massive granite slope which, when wet with water or ice, glistens like a mirror, or the gap in the mountains where Monarch butterflies pass through on their journey to their winter home in the mountains of Mexico, or other stops with breathtaking views of the many distant mountain ranges were seen all along our route.

The entire 469 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway, despite being 62 years old, carries well its age and heavy load of over 25 million visitors each year. The road does not fight the mountains it traverses but rather follows every twist and turn. Every ascent and descent presents a floral display which varies with the height of the rocky slopes, their dryness or seeping wetness, elevation, and exposure.

In the approximately 32 miles of the Parkway traversed south and southwest of the Inn, Turk's cap lilies (*Lilium superbum*) were the attention-getters, sometimes growing singly and sometimes in patches, towering above all other vegetation. Members of the Mint family, from the white of Basil balm (*Monarda clinopodia*) to the pink of Wild bergamot (*M. fistulosa*), to the bright red of Bee-balm (*M. didyma*) stood out along the sunny slopes. Fiery, as the name implies, were grouping of Fire pink (*Silene virginica*).



Where the hillsides were gently sloping, there were spectacular displays of phlox (*Phlox carolina*), sometimes interspersed with the white of Ox-eye daisies (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), the white of yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and the orange of Brown-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*).

Here and there were patches of Dodder (*Cuscuta sp.*) resembling tangled strands of orange thread.

In a meadow-like area, Millie Blaha pointed out pretty patches of Pink Earth (*Baeomyces roseus*) resembling British soldiers except that they had pink rather than red knobs. They were immediately dubbed "Millie's pink stuff".

At one stop along the parkway, while others were attracted to colorful blooms along the roadside, the sharp eyes of Emily Allen detected one Green adder's mouth orchid (*Malaxis unifolia*), only about 4 inches tall, in the mowed grass.

In the time between early morning breakfast and lunch, blueberry bushes, with ripened fruit, provided natural taste treats for everyone.

Two stops along the Parkway were memorable. On one side of the road, at the overlook for the View of Wolf Mountain (milepost 424.8 at 5,550 ft. elevation), were very high, seeping rocks which provided a wet habitat for plants which tolerate such conditions. Growing here were 4 plants RARE in the mountains - Sticky bog asphodel (*Tofieldia racemosa var. glutinosa*), Round-leaf sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), Canada burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis*) and a Southern Appalachian endemic, Mountain St. John's-wort (*Hypericum buckleyi*). In addition to the Mountain St.

John's-wort, there were 4 other Hypericums growing in this area - Canada (*H. canadense*), Dense-flowered (*H. densiflorum*), Shrubby (*H. prolificum*), and Large-flowered (*H. graveolens*).

Other attention-getters growing in the wet ditches and in the crevices of the rocky slopes were the bright yellow, dandelion-like flowers of Mountain cynthia (*Krigia montana*), the lacy panicles of Michaux's saxifrage (*Saxifraga michauxii*) arising from a basal rosette of red and green leaves, the Small green wood-orchid (*Habenaria clavellata*) on 4 to 6-inch tall stems. Almost going unnoticed were the tiny flowers of the Thread-leaf gerardia (*Gerardia setacea*). In bud were the rare Grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia asarifolia*) and the closed gentian (*Gentiana decora*).

On the grassy, opposite side of the road there were patches of Long-leaf Houstonia (*Houstonia longifolia*) which occur INFREQUENTLY in the mountains.

The other stop which was botanically rewarding was the View of Waynesville (milepost 440.9, elevation 4,110 ft.). Marching up the slope from the roadside to the rich wooded slopes above was a spectacular display of American bellflower (*Campanula americana*) with inch-sized, lavender-blue flowers on towering stalks. Masses of purple-flowering raspberries (*Rubus odoratus*) with large raspberry-colored flowers arched over shorter vegetation. There were nice stands of Ox-eyes (*Heliopsis helianthoides*) with large, yellow, sunflower-like blooms, bright red Bee-balm (*Monarda didyma*), Yellow jewelweed (*Impatiens pallida*), the pure white flowers of Virgin's bower (*Clematis virginiana*), towering Black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), and the RARE Stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*). More than two dozen other species of plants could be seen in this area the length of less than a city block.

Other plants worthy of mention seen on this day were Fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*) in a moist ditch, and Featherbells (*Stenanthium gramineum*) with its narrow panicle of racemes of small, starry, white flowers growing in a thin woods.

In places along the sides of the road where the mountains sloped steeply downward toward the valleys below were Forked catchfly (*Silene dichotoma*) with a hairy-ribbed calyx tube, Nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*) characterized by flat leaves, the INFREQUENTLY occurring in the mountains Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) with tiers of tiny white flowers encircling the stem above pairs of green leaves, and the tall Figwort (*Scrophularia marilandica*) with its panicle of tiny green-maroon flowers.

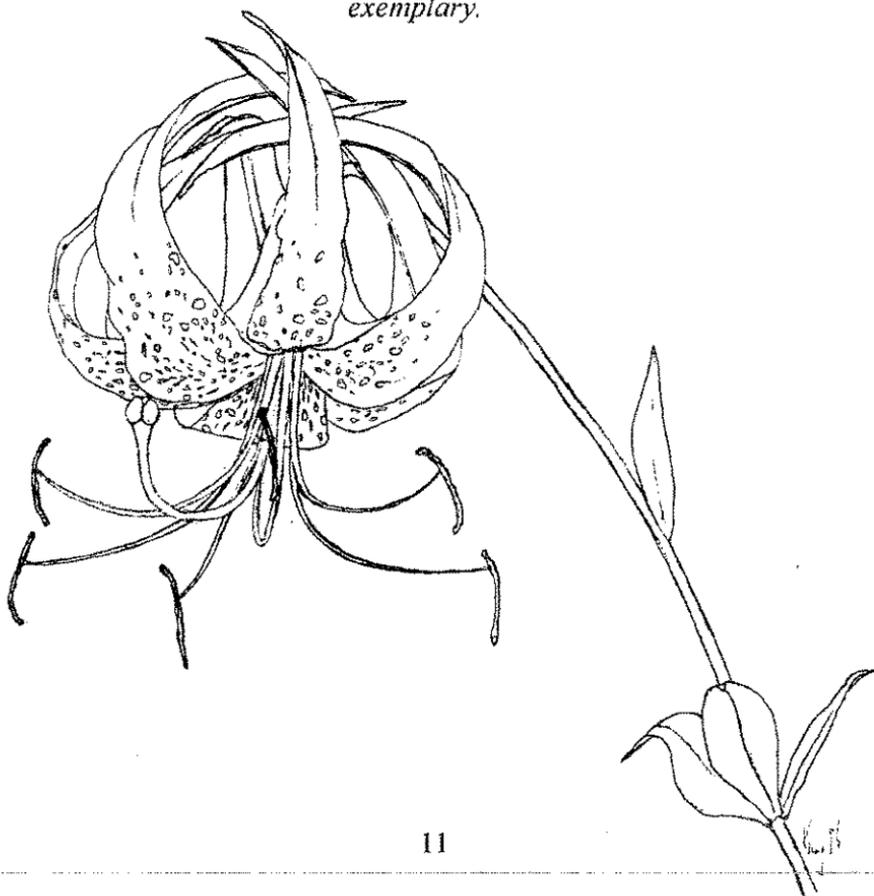
On Sunday, August 3, the plant on the Buck Spring Trail beyond the Lodge which excited everyone was the Purple fringed-orchid (*Habenaria psycodes*).

When one arrives on the Blue Ridge Parkway, one leaves behind a man-made world and enters a world created by nature. The vegetation here tells a story of climate and how changes in elevation, temperature, and moisture can sustain forests that exist nowhere else in the South, where northern plants are in their southernmost limit, and where southern plants are in their northernmost limit.

Members who live within driving distance of the Blue Ridge Parkway can attest that there is no one best time of the year to visit this section of the Parkway because all seasons offer much to wonder at and to enjoy.

Craig Moretz and Eric Hawkins not only planned this memorable week-end in the mountains, but also were responsible for the excellent Saturday night program about native orchids. THANKS, THANKS, and THANKS to them and President Charlotte Patterson for a wonderful 1997 Fall meeting.

*Fellow member Millie Blaha resides in Cedar Mountain, NC. Her knowledge of our native flora as well as her photography of same are exemplary.*



## **NCDOT WILDFLOWER PROGRAM - Let Your Opinions Be Heard!**

The NCWFPS Board of Trustees has adopted an official position on the NCDOT's Wildflower Program. The following letter to the editor was sent in response to the article in the News and Observer that appeared in July. Copies of the letter were also sent to The Asheville Citizen-Times, The Chapel Hill Herald, The Charlotte Observer, The Fayetteville Observer-Times, The Greensboro News and Record, The Daily Reflector (Greenville, NC), and The Wilmington Star. When you see this letter in your regional paper, please respond by writing your own opinions in a letter to the editor. Plenty of letters are written to NCDOT and to newspapers praising the current display of mostly non-native plants. You can help to provide more balance to the issue by sending in your letters, whether you totally endorse our official position or not.

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Letters to the Editor  
The News and Observer  
215 S. McDowell Street  
PO Box 191  
Raleigh, NC 27601

January 30, 1998

Dear Editor,

The North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society (NCWFPS) read with interest the News and Observer's July 20, 1997 article on the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Wildflower Program. The article discussed the pros and cons of NCDOT's approach to wildflower plantings. The positive attributes of the Wildflower Program could be summarized as including the bursts of color that are appreciated by residents and tourists alike, the variety of having native and non-native species planted, and the economics of using cheaper, non-native seed. The drawbacks included, in part, the concerns that the natural beauty of NC flora is not represented, that harmful chemicals are used in the process, and that non-native species displace the less competitive native species, producing less suitable wildlife habitat.

The object of the NCWFPS is to bring together people interested in conserving the native flora of North Carolina through education, protection, and propagation. Since our Society was referenced in the margins of this article, we felt it necessary to state our position on the issues discussed in the article. The NCWFPS appreciates the work of the NCDOT Roadway Environmental Unit, which has been a delight to so

many. NCDOT has truly become a leader in the area of roadside beautification. Their interest in increasing the number of natives in the roadside plantings and their efforts in this regard are much appreciated. In keeping with the stated purpose of our Society, we have adopted the position of the Roadside Vegetation Management Work Group, which is working with NCDOT on a compromise. Their recommendations read, in part:

“Favor native vegetation whenever reasonable. Native vegetation is adapted to the climate and soils of the region and will often establish itself without planting. Native vegetation is inherently more disease and insect resistant than exotic planting. Native vegetation requires less soil disturbance and hence will generate less erosion than the establishment of beds of poppies and other exotics, which require intense bed preparation and frequent replanting. Even when planting is necessary, native vegetation should be favored.”

In addition, we support the following practices:

- Minimize the use of chemicals.
- Use mowing schedules that allow natural reseeding of native plants.
- Create diverse flower displays instead of beds of one or two species.
- Allow for the controlled succession of native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs that provide food and shelter for regional birds, butterflies and other insects, and small animals. This goal could be realized if North Carolina's Roadside Wildlife Habitat Program, cosponsored by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and NCDOT, were more effectively implemented.

To learn more about these and other environmentally conscious programs, join us at one of our semi-annual wildflower excursions. A schedule of events can be obtained by writing: NCWFPS, c/o NC Botanical Garden, CB# 3375, Totten Center, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375. Copies of the Report of the Roadside Vegetative Management Work Group can be obtained by writing Mr. Bill Johnson, Roadside Environmental Unit, NCDOT, PO Box 25201, Raleigh, NC 27611.

Sincerely,  
Charlotte Patterson  
President

# Loblolly Bay, A Spectacular Native Shrub

By Dot Wilbur-Brooks  
NC Botanical Garden

From late August well into September, one of our most spectacular native shrubs, loblolly bay, or *Gordonia lasianthus*, is in bloom.

This member of the tea family, to which camellias and tea plants also belong, has five beautiful cupped white petals surrounding many yellow stamens that present one of the prettiest of our late summer blooms.

Late summer humidity and heat enhance the flower's fragrance, similar to that of bullbay magnolia flowers. The oval to elliptic leaves are a dark luscious green, evergreen throughout the year. This shrub, or small tree, which grows in the plant families collection here at the N.C. Botanical Garden, has been spectacular this year.

After a description like this, you are sure to ask why everyone doesn't have a gordonia. I often see a wonderful plant in someone's yard and immediately make plans to acquire one of my own. But as a precaution, we need to research plants to find out as much as possible before putting money into their purchase. In this case, the gordonia does have limitations.

Piedmont North Carolina is the northern edge of the loblolly bay's range. Farther south and east you could expect a gordonia to thrive. It will perform best in moist fertile soil in full sun, but will not do well in a drought or with too much fertilizer.

Probably the most important condition to meet is moist but not soggy soil. It is unusual, but while gordonias are found naturally in moist, acidic soils, they need a well-drained site when cultivated. This peculiarity is explained by seasonal water level fluctuations, which assure that the plant is never constantly in high water. The roots cannot deal with a perpetually damp site. To maximize flower production, gordonias need to be planted in full sun; otherwise, you will have a nice evergreen shrub.

I have looked in several catalogs to see how available *Gordonia lasianthus* plants are from local sources, but my search was not exhaustive. Our library resources list several mail-order sources. If you can't locate a plant, call me at 962-0522 and I'll get these sources to you.

*Dot Wilbur-Brooks is program coordinator of the N.C. Botanical Garden. This article first appeared in the September 17, 1997 edition of The Chapel Hill Herald.*

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**NORTH CAROLINA WILD FLOWER PRESERVATION SOCIETY,  
INC.**

**Aims & Objectives**

The North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society was formed in 1951 by a group of individuals appreciative of native plants throughout the state and region. The purpose of the Society is to promote enjoyment and conservation of native plants and their habitats through education, protection, and propagation.

Spring and Fall meetings are held at "natural gardens" across the state. Members exchange seeds and propagated plants at these meetings. Other excursions are organized on a local basis throughout the year.

The Society Newsletter is issued twice a year with articles and illustrations by professional and amateur contributors.

The Society publishes the "N.C. Native Plant Propagation Handbook."

The Shinn Scholarship/Grant Fund sponsors research on native plants by undergraduate and graduate students. The fund is supported by member contributions and by gifts and memorials. Applications are made to the Scholarship/Grant Fund Committee for awards in May of each year.

The Society is a nonprofit organization under North Carolina and Internal Revenue Service regulations. Donations are tax deductible.

Correspondence concerning the Society and its programs should be addressed to: North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society, Inc., c/o North Carolina Botanical Garden, Totten Center 3375, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375.

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**ANNUAL DUES:**

Individual or Family: \$15.00  
Sustaining: \$25.00  
Lifetime Membership: \$180.00

Scholarship Fund Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Please send this and all address  
corrections to:  
North Carolina Wild Flower  
Preservation Society, Inc.  
Ms. Nancy C. Julian  
1933 Gaston Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27103-3733*

*Please include your added four  
digit zip number for your address  
in your dues payment.*

New                       Renewal

# NOTES



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Dr. Benson Kirkman .....	1988-94
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*The above are permanent advisors and members of the board of directors.*

## NCWFPS NEWSLETTER

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