

# MAINE'S FLORA



**By the Seventh Grade Students of Windsor House  
King Middle School  
Portland, Maine  
1998**

## Introduction

This field guide was written and illustrated by seventh grade students in Windsor House at King Middle School in Portland. It was part of an expedition called "A Park Grows in Portland." The guide is intended to help you identify some of Maine's flora. As a result, we hope you will pay more attention to the natural world around you.

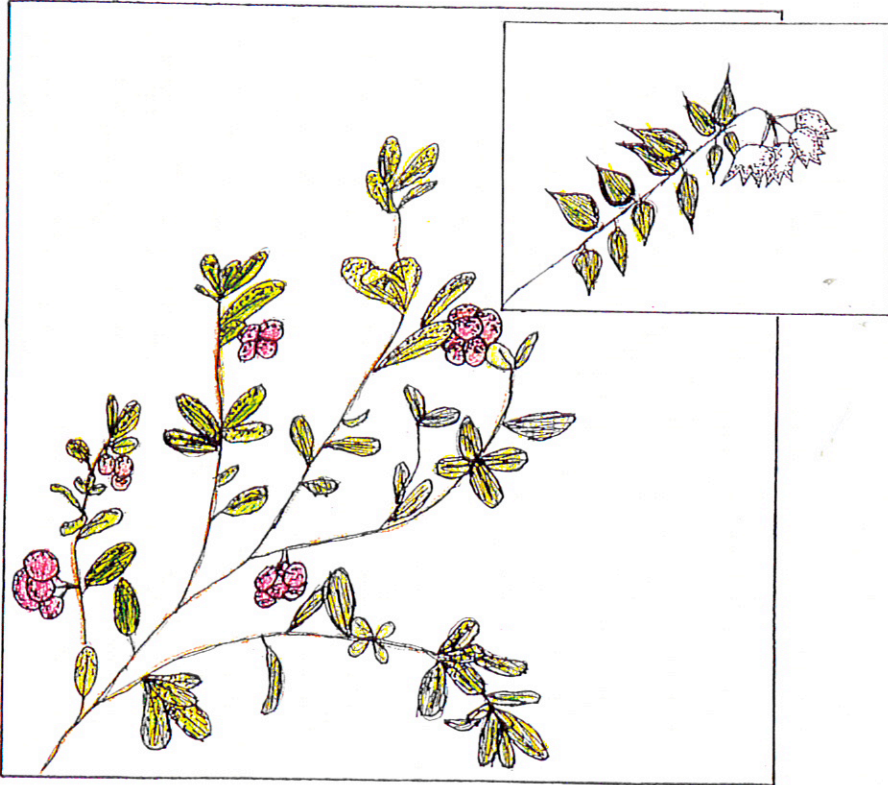
In writing this field guide, each student gathered research on a plant that grows in Maine. We worked with Jeff Tarling, the city arborist, reviewed plant and tree books, and searched the Internet for information about our plants. After all the research was completed, we typed the pages in the computer lab. This was a long process because of all the revising we had to do. The next step was to draw our plant. We practiced shading techniques so we could make our drawing realistic.

We would like to thank our expedition leaders, Mrs. MacDonald (language arts), Mrs. Norton (art), Mr. Dyer (math), Mrs. Griffin (social studies), and Mr. LeGage (science), whose direction made this field guide possible. We also thank Mr. Morgenstein for his patience in the computer lab, Mrs. Lunt who helped us with research, our intern, Mrs. Hewes, parent volunteers who helped cut and paste, and our principal, Mr. McCarthy, who encourages creative experiences such as this. We really enjoyed working on this guide, and we hope that you will enjoy using it.

-Amie Winchenbach

## Bearberry

*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*



**Description:** The Bearberry is a shrub. The fruit of this species is fleshy but inedible, with five hard nuts which contain the seeds. This shrub is hard to grow unless started from rooted cuttings in acid sand that contain peat.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Bearberry does not flower often in Maine because it grows in sandy or rocky places, and the temperature is too cold for it to bloom.

**Other Uses:** It grows in sandy or rocky places and is often used as a ground cover by highway departments. This plant is also used in gardens to cover rocky parts of the ground.

**Habitat:** This plant grows from Greenland to Alaska and southward to Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, New Mexico, and California. It also grows in Europe and Asia.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Bearberry (shrub) has paddle shaped evergreen leaves which form dense carpets several yards across and only a few inches tall. The waxy white flowers bloom and hang in clusters from the tips of the plant. The flowers are urn shaped with small lobed mouths that are often light pink in places of the flower. The fruit is a dull red berry that lasts through November.

-Maggie

## Black-eyed Susan

*Rudbeckia hirta*



**Description:** The Black-eyed Susan has irregularly divided spear-shaped leaves that are two to seven inches wide and seven to eight inches long. It has a hairy stem that grows to three feet high, and has a "black eye" at the center of the yellow flower. The Black-eyed Susan's rough stem has a series of fine grooves and prickly hairs running along it. Its yellow flower head is two to three inches wide. The fruit of the Black-eyed Susan is tiny, dry, seed-like, and has no

typical bristles (most plant seeds have miniature bristles). It is a biannual plant, which means it grows every two years.

**Flowering:** The Black-eyed Susan flowers between the months of June and October; primarily in late July and early August in Maine.

**Other Uses:** The Black-eyed Susan can treat mild skin infections. They also contain important antibodies.

**Habitat:** The Black-eyed Susan lives on prairies, dry fields, roadsides, open woods, and waste lands. They like bright sun and acidic soil. They mostly grow on the east coast, and sporadically throughout the west. When other plants are grazed out by cows and animals, the Black-eyed Susan will take over. They are very common.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Different names of the Black-eyed Susan: Ox-eyed Daisy, Yellow Daisy, and Tall Cone-flower. It is the state flower of Maryland. *Hirta* means hairy (stem). *Rudbeckia* is named after Olof Rudbeck the Younger. He taught at Uppsala University in Sweden.

-Aaron

## Blueberry

*Vaccinium corymbosus*



**Description:** A common blueberry is a small green bush-like shrub with small berries. They grow in bundles, and there is one bundle for every leaf. The flowers are small, white and decorative. They are small reddish twigs which are heavily interlinked.

**The leaves:** The green leaves are about one half to three inches long. And they have a hairy underside.

**The Flowers:** The flowers are small, white, and bloom in late August.

**The Habitat:** Blueberry plants like moist soil and the weather has to be sunny. Sometimes they grow around swamps.

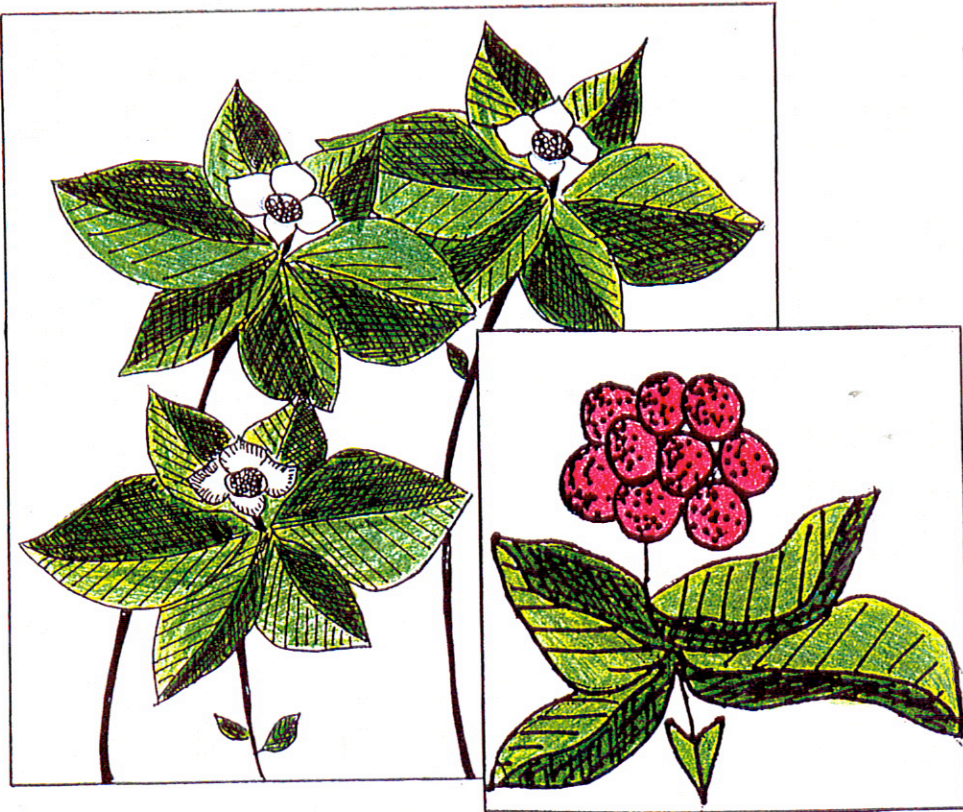
**Other uses:** Blueberries are popular to eat as food and they look good.

**Other Interesting facts:** Blueberries are used for both ornamental and decorative purposes. And they are also used in landscaping, because of their unique green leaves and small blue-colored berries.

-John

## Bunchberry

*Cornus canadensis*



**Description:** The Bunchberry usually has 6 leaves in a single whorl. In the middle there are bright red berries. The green flower is one inch wide and has four large, white petal-like bracts surrounding it. The leaves are egg-shaped and pointed. The plant is three to eight inches high.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Bunchberry flowers in late spring and early summer. The berry appears in late summer or during the fall.

**Habitat:** You will find the Bunchberry in cool woods with rich soil. Places to look for them are Canada, Maine, West Virginia, and California.

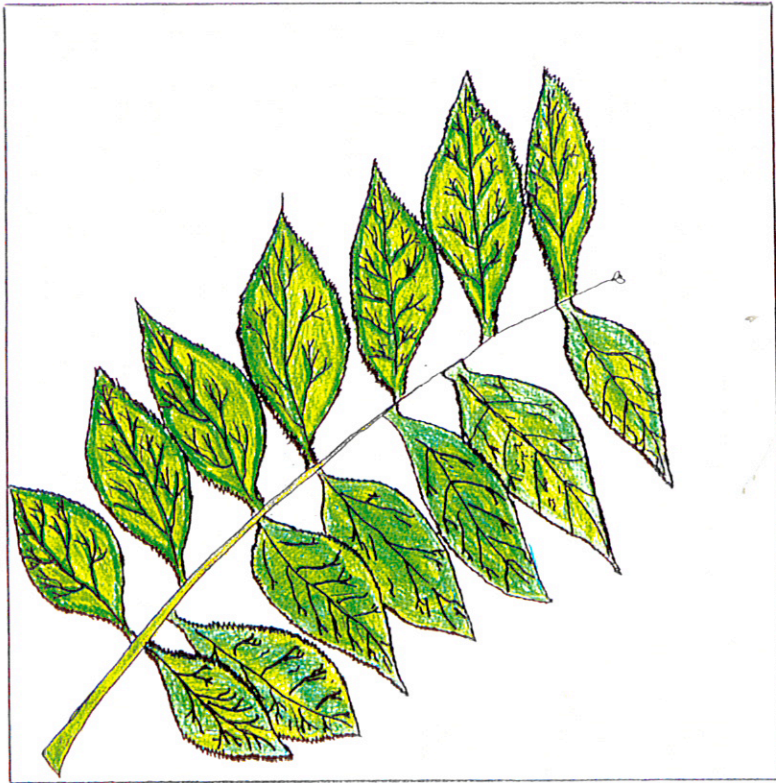
**Other Uses:** The Bunchberry produces raw fruit. They can be emergency food for hikers. They can be cooked in muffins, pancakes, and other foods.

**Other Interesting Facts:** When you first look at the Bunchberry it looks like it has a single white blossom, but the flower is really green, and it has white petal-like bracts around it. The Bunchberry is related to the Dogwood. In Scotland the Bunchberry is known as "the plant of gluttony" because it is supposed to increase your appetite. The Bunchberry grows less than 12 inches each year. It grows best in acid and needs shade.

-Mandke

## Button Bush

*Cephalanthus occidentals*



**Description:** The Button Bush's bark is gray or brown. It is rough, and it has scaly ridges. The plant's bitter bark has been used in home remedies, but its value has been questioned by many people. The leaves on the Button Bush are a shiny green on the top and on the bottom they are dark and hairy. The leaves on the Button Bush are very poisonous. The flowers are two to six inches long. They are white and leak out white creamy liquid. They look like pin cushions. These flowers are fragrant. The size of the Button Bush can be

about 10 to 15 feet tall and 6 feet wide.

**Flowering (Maine):** This bush flowers in August.

**Habitat:** A Button Bush will grow in wet soil. You can find the Button Bush in the United States, Eastern Asia, Cuba, Mexico, and also on edges of lakes and streams that slant.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Button Bush blooms in August. Some birds eat the seeds. Other names for the Button Bush are Honey-Balls and Globe Flowers. The leaves are poisonous.

-Nicole

## Canada Lily

*Lilium canadense*



**Description:** The Canada Lily is part of the lily family. The Canada Lily has many common names such as the Canada Lily, the Meadow Lily and the Wild Yellow Lily. This lily has many common names but has only one scientific name. It is called *Lilium canadense*. The flowers on the Canada Lily are about 2 to 3 inches long. Three petals and 3 petal-like sepals arch outward but not backward. The lily has 6 stamens with brown stems. The colors can vary from yellow to dark red. The stems are reddish-green. The leaves are about 6 inches long. The veins are on the bottom of the leaf.

**The Fruit:** The fruit of the flower looks like a capsule. The Canada Lily can only grow 1 to 2 seed pods. Altogether, the total height of this Canada Lily is 2 to 5 feet or 60 to 150 cm.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Canada Lily blooms from June to August. The places it blooms are in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, south to New England, eastern Maryland, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Florida, west of Alabama, and Southern Indiana.

**Habitat:** The Canada Lily lives in moist meadows, bogs, openings, woodlands, and borders.

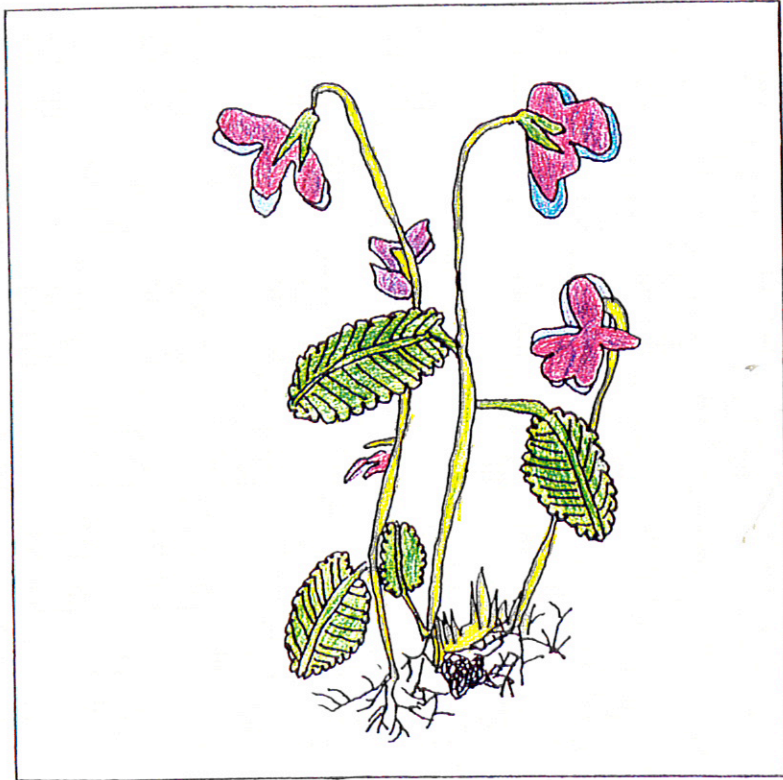
**Other Interesting Facts:** The flowers, bud, and roots were gathered and eaten by some Indians.

-Lauryn



## Common Blue Violet

*Viola papilionacea*



**Description:** This purple, white and blue flower is 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch wide and has five petals. The lower one is longer and has a sharp point. The leaves are up to 5 inches wide and are heart-shaped. The height of this flower is 3 to 8 inches.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Common Blue Violet blooms in the spring.

**Habitat:** You will find it in damp woods, moist meadows and roadsides.

**Range:** These flowers are found throughout the United States.

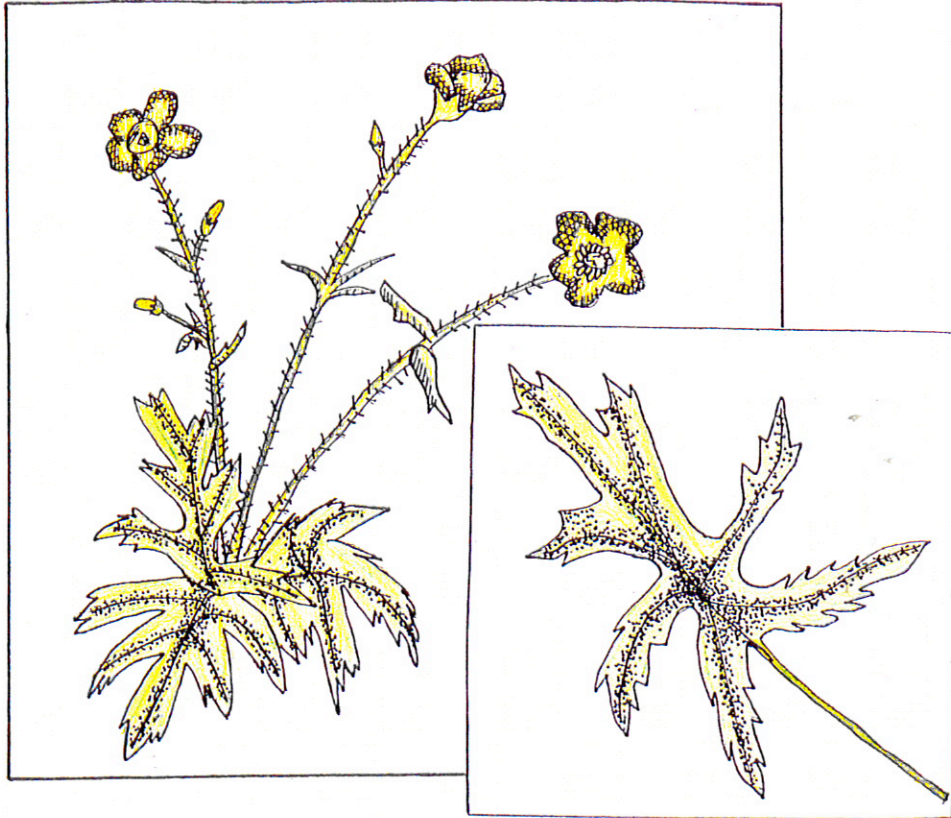
**Uses:** Violet leaves can be used in salads and cooked as greens. They contain a high amount of vitamins A and C. The flowers are used in candies and jellies. You can find recipes for sugar violets so you can preserve them and eat them. The purple color is used to tint bath water and cologne. Its wonderful fragrance is used in perfumes.

**Interesting Facts:** This flower is famous for its fragrance which is both sweet and delicate. Violets have been grown for 2,000 years in Europe. They are also associated with the power of love.

-Hyle

## Common Buttercup

*Ranunculus*



**Description:** The Common Buttercup is a hairy plant. It has shiny, golden yellow flowers. The leaves are three lobed, and they are 1 to 4 inches wide. The height is 1 to 2 inches and the flower is 3 to 4 inches wide, with five broad petals. There are five or more pistils on the flower head.

**Flowering in Maine:** The Common Buttercup blooms from May through September.

**Habitat:** The Buttercup grows in fields, along road sides, gardens, and marshy areas.

**Other Uses:** There is a theory that if you hold a buttercup under your chin and it shines yellow, then you love butter.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Buttercup seeds and young plants are poisonous if eaten in large quantities. The leaves on the Common Buttercup may cause a skin irritation for some people. The buttercup came from Europe. There are about 60 species of buttercups in the U.S. They are common from Alaska, to Newfoundland, and the north half of the United States. Its name comes from *rununculus*, that means "little frog." It is named this because it grows where frogs live. They also call it "crow foot" because of all the sharp lobes of the leaves, which look like crows' feet. The buttercup families love sunshine.

-Chilo

## Common Milkweed

*Asclepias syriaca*



**Description:** The Common Milkweed grows from two to six feet tall. The flowers are red to pink, lilac, and cream to white color. The flowers are 1/4 of an inch wide. They grow in groups. The seeds sail in the wind, and this is how the plant reseeds itself. The Common Milkweed has broad leaves that are a light to dark green. It is woolly beneath the leaf. The leaves are 4 to 10 inches long, and 2 to 4 inches wide. They grow in pairs. All the parts of the plant contain a milky juice called latex.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Common Milkweed flowers from the spring to late fall.

**Habitat:** The Common Milkweed grows in old fields, meadows, marshes, and moist roadsides.

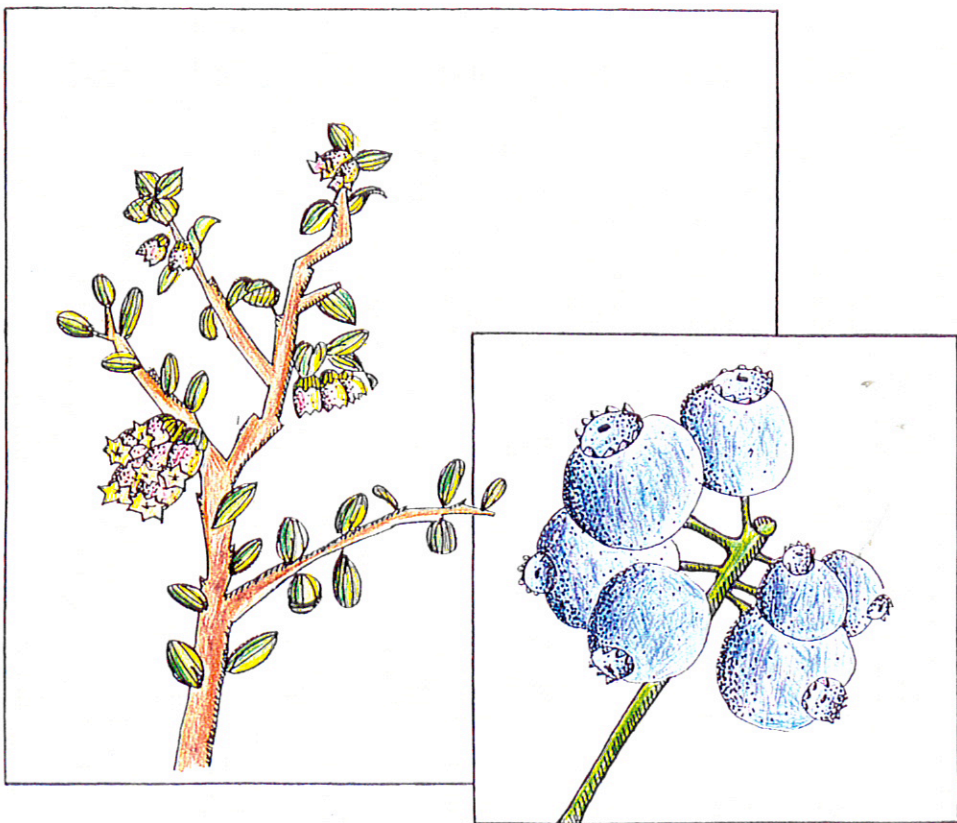
**Uses:** The silky hairs of the seed-pods have been used for stuffing of pillows and mattresses. It can also be mixed with flax or wool and woven together. Paper has been made from the stout stalks.

**Interesting Facts:** The Common Milkweed got its name from the milky substance inside the plant. The Monarch Butterflies feed on Milkweed and often make their cocoons on them. The people in Virginia call it "Virginia Silke." The Common Milkweed is also referred to as Silkweed. The seeds in the pods make excellent wicks for candles. They burn easier and clearer than cotton wicks. They also give more light than the others. The outside of the Common Milkweed was used for clothes in the 1760's. The fibers were used for making things like netting, bags, and thread. It has been used for medicinal purposes in cases of asthma, dyspepsia and scrofulous diseases.

-Maria

## Huckleberry

*Gaylussacia dumosa*



**Description:** The Huckleberry plant doesn't grow over 4 feet. It can be as low as 6 inches. The leaf base is often wedge shaped. It has many crooked branchlets that are often fuzzy. The leaves are oar shaped, blunt tipped, and have little bristles at the end. This bush flowers in the spring, with clusters of white and pinkish bell-shaped flowers. These little flowers are only a fourth of an inch long. The berries develop after the flowers. They ripen from June to early fall. They are slightly hairy, but perfectly edible. One characteristic that

distinguishes them from blueberries is a crown at the base of the berry. They resemble a circle with five sharp points.

**Flowering (Maine):** Buds appear in the spring. Berries start from mid to late summer.

**Habitat:** This is a very adaptable bush. It can survive in sandy soil, moist soil, woods, or even roadsides.

**Other Uses:** The berries are consumed directly off the bush widely by wildlife, but humans need to cook them, even though the berries of the Tall Huckleberry are fairly sweet. They are used in muffins, pies, jams and jellies. They can be easily frozen or canned.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Berries of the Huckleberry contain ten large seeds instead of many little seeds like the blueberry. It also contains many important vitamins such as A, C, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, and some B vitamins. The leaves are toothless and have no thorns. It is a perennial plant, which means it comes up every year. One type, the Box Huckleberry, is listed as a threatened species. Hybrids with blueberries are often found in the wild.

-Kate

## Labrador Tea

*Ledum groenlandicum*



**Description :** Labrador Tea is a low, evergreen shrub with dense hairy twigs and rounded clusters of white flowers. The flowers are 1/3 to 1/2 of an inch wide. The shrub grows to a height of 3 to 6 feet . Some distinguishing features of this plant are the rolled back leaves and the brown-orange woolly underside. The flowers on the top have five white petals and from 5 to 7 stamen.

**Flowering ( Maine ):** The flowers of the Labrador Tea bloom in June to August.

**Habitat:** They are found in peaty soils, especially bogs across Canada, New England, New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

**Other Uses :** Labrador Tea is a very good tasting, strong, herbal tea that is rich in vitamin C. It can be used as a regular table tea. It is useful in folk medicines.

**Other Interesting Facts:** This plant is used externally for skin disease and internally for stimulating the nerves and the stomach. It is also used as a flu and cough treatment. It was used for this purpose during the American Revolution. In northern Canada, this plant is known as Hudson's Bay Tea. This plant is also known as Marsh Tea and James Tea.

-Meghan

## Mountain Laurel

*Kalmia latifolia*



**Description:** The Mountain Laurel is a multi-branched evergreen with rosy or pale pink flowers. It is one of Maine's most uncommon shrubs. The height is 3 to 15 feet.

**Habitat:** The Mountain Laurel is a member of the Heath family. The Mountain Laurel grows near other Heath species such as Blueberry, Huckleberry, Sheep Laurel, and Teaberry. Mountain Laurel grows on acidic, rocky, or sandy soils. It thrives in red clay, and soil of the Atlantic seashore. Just like other laurels, the Mountain Laurel grows well as an understory species.

**The Leaf:** The leaves are evergreen. The Mountain Laurel's leaf usually remains green throughout the winter. Harsh conditions may cause it to shed its leaves. The leaf is 2 to 4 feet long.

**The Flower:** The color of the flower is white or pale pink. The flower is 2 to 2.5 cm wide.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Mountain Laurel grows in the eastern United States from southern Maine to northern Florida. Its range extends westward to central Tennessee and Kentucky.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Temperature is a critical factor affecting the survival of the Mountain Laurel. Today, Mountain Laurel shrubs in Maine must withstand extreme temperatures. Deep winter snow is protective. It helps insulate the shrubs from winter winds which dry out the leaves.

-Chiom

## New England Aster

*Novae-angliae*



**Description:** The New England Aster is a large, stout, hairy leafy plant with blue or purple ray flowers and yellow disk flowers in the center. The flower heads can grow up to two inches wide. The leaves are green and range from one and a half inches long to five inches long. The New England Aster can grow up to seven feet tall.

**Flowering (Maine):** August to October.

**Habitat:** The aster grows in wet thickets, meadows and swamps.

**Range:** The New England Aster is found in eastern meadows from Newfoundland to Georgia. It also grows westward to Wyoming and New Mexico.

**Other Uses:** The aster is grown commercially.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Blooming so late in the year, the asters were sometimes called Christmas daisies. The aster got its name from the Latin word for star. In France the aster is called "Eye of Christ" and in Germany it is known as Starworts. Asters were often burned to keep away evil spirits.

-John

## Nodding Trillium

*Trillium cernuum*



**Description:** The Nodding Trillium grows to a height of six to twenty-four inches. It has a white flower with a short stalk which causes the flower to hang beneath the wavy leaves. The flower is about one and a half inches wide. It has three white stamens with pink anthers. The Nodding Trillium has three diamond-shaped leaves which are twisted together. They are two and a half to four inches long. The Nodding Trillium also has a reddish-purple berry.

**Flowering (Maine):** Nodding Trilliums flower in June.

**Habitat:** Nodding Trilliums are common in rich forests, swamps and thickets, and woods with acid soil.

**Other Uses:** Native Americans used trilliums as an effective eye medicine. They used two methods: squeezing the juice directly onto the eye, and using it to make an eye wash. Native Americans also used trillium root to lessen the pain of childbirth. This was a very common practice (so common in fact that one species, *T. ovatum*, was called "Birth Root").

Women frequently used trillium as a love potion. They would boil trillium root and then drop it into the food of the man they desired. There is even an old Native American story about a beautiful young girl who wanted the chief's son for a husband. So, she boiled the root of a trillium and carried it over to his food where she would dispose of it, but on the way over she tripped! As she did, the root flew out of her hands and into the food of an old, ugly man who quickly ate it. He followed the poor girl around for months, begging for her hand in marriage!

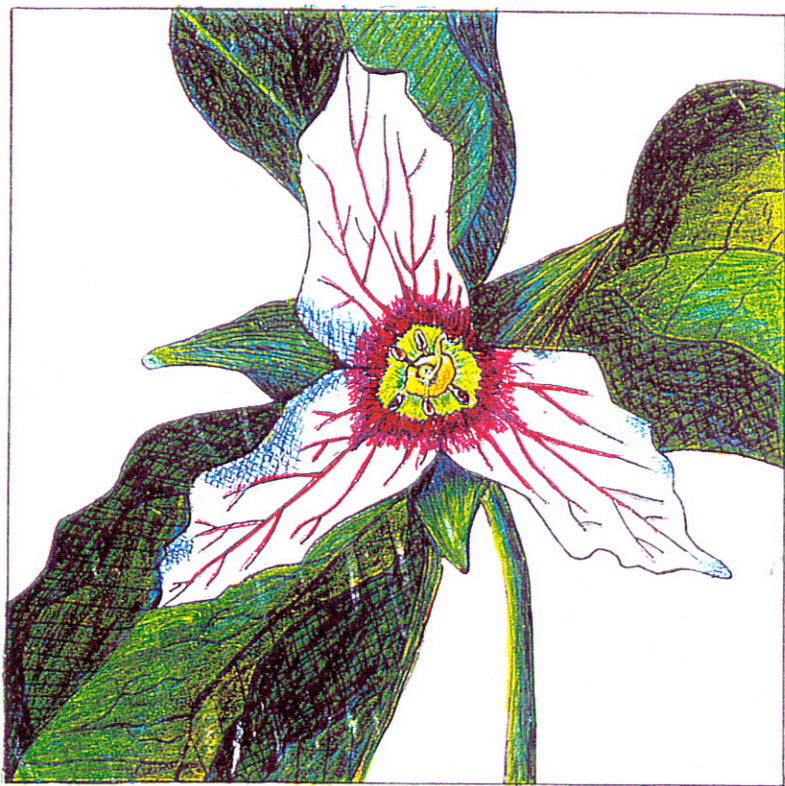
**Other Interesting Facts:** This species' name comes from the Latin word, "cernuus," meaning "drooping" or "nodding," because of its dangling flowers. Trillium is a symbol of modest beauty. Trilliums are perennials (which means they appear at the same time every year).

-Lindsay



## Painted Trillium

*Trillium undulatum*



**Description:** The Painted Trillium is an upright, stalked flower. It has an inverted pink "V" at the base of each of its white, waxy-edged petals. The Painted Trillium's flower is two and a half inches wide. It has three green sepals, three white and pink petals, and six pink-tipped stamens. The Painted Trillium has three bluish-green, waxy leaves which are twisted together and gradually decrease to a point. Its leaves are two and a half to five inches long. The Painted Trillium also has a shiny red berry. The splash of pink in

each white flower's center makes it easily recognizable.

**Flowering:** Painted Trilliums flower in late June. They are late to appear and they bloom when other trillium species in the same district are rapidly fading or long finished.

**Habitat:** Painted Trilliums are common in rich woods, thickets, swamps, New England mountain forests, and are essentially in northeastern North America. In fact, they grow nearly to the timberline. Painted Trilliums are restricted to cool and rather intensely acid soil. No other trillium species is more closely associated with deeply shaded woodland or mountain faster than the Painted Trillium.

**Other Uses:** The young shoots of the Painted Trillium are sometimes eaten in salads. An old mountain superstition says that if you pick a trillium, you will cause it to rain.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Painted Trillium is one of the most attractive woodland trilliums. The Painted Trillium is named for its distinct V-shaped red blotch and stripes near the base of each petal. These markings most likely serve as guidelines to insect pollinators, as well as add interest and highlights to the beauty of the blossom. It is a protected plant in numerous states, as it should be. It is locally rare, hard to cultivate, short-lived under garden conditions, and out of all the trilliums, the most dependent upon undisturbed, primary forest conditions. It should be indulged only in the wild.

- Lindsay

## Pussy Willow

*Salix discolor*



**Description:** The leaves of the Pussy Willow are 3 to 5 inches long and 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide. They have spaced margin teeth and a yellow midrib. The leaves are light green above and are somewhat silvery underneath. They are often hairy. The Pussy Willow might be a bush or a small tree that is 25 feet tall and 6 inches in diameter. The bush is multi-stemmed.

**Flowering (Maine):** The flowers blossom in April. The female flower is called a pistil and the male is a catkin.

Catkins are fuzzy, hairy, and silvery.

**Other Uses:** The Pussy Willow is often cut and used for decorations.

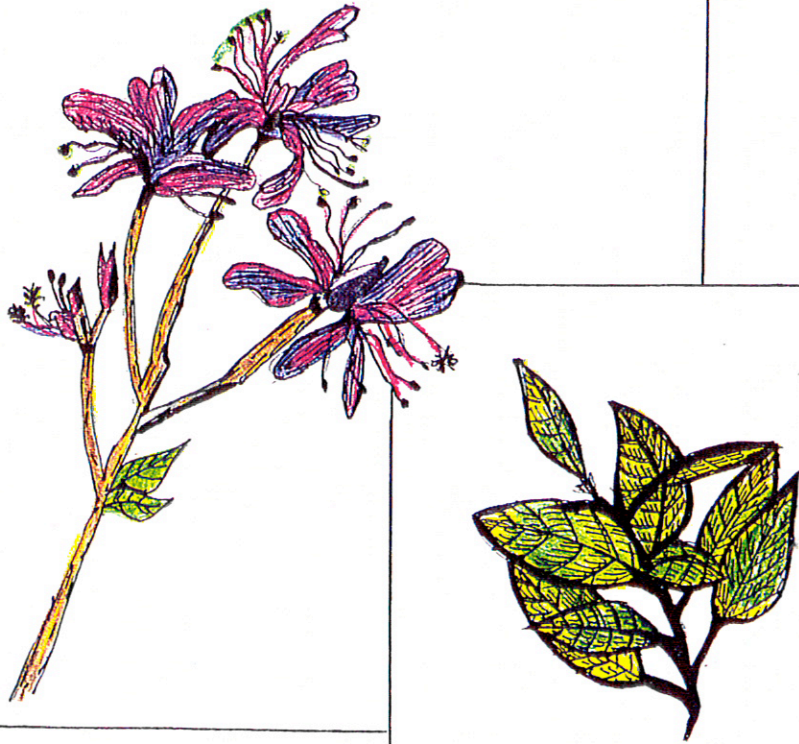
**Habitat:** They are usually found in damp thickets or swamps and along stream banks. The tree needs a wet area with lots of sun. However, these areas are full of diseases that affect the tree.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The male and female are borne on different branches of the tree or bush. In spring, the males develop pollen which is blown in the wind or carried by birds or bees. It is then gathered by the females and kept in a capsule until mature. Then it gets spit out from the capsule, carried by the wind, and it descends to the ground. If it is lucky, it lands in soft and wet soil, for if it does not it will die.

-Zudrahullah

## Rhodora

*Rhododendron canadense*



**Description:** The Rhodora is a deciduous shrub with a few clusters of lavender flowers. The flowers are long. The colors are pink with a brown stem and green leaves. The plant is 3 feet tall. The leaves are rounded and the base is broadly pointed at the tip, which would mean that the leaves are oblong. The pale flowers are purplish-pink. The oblong leaves are fairly hairy on the underside.

**Flowering (Maine):** They bloom in March, May, June, July, in all ranges of New England, and mostly in New Hampshire.

**Leaves:** The leaves are round and pointed. They are green, waxy, and hairy.

**Flowers:** The flowers are red, pink, and dark red. They are usually light pink.

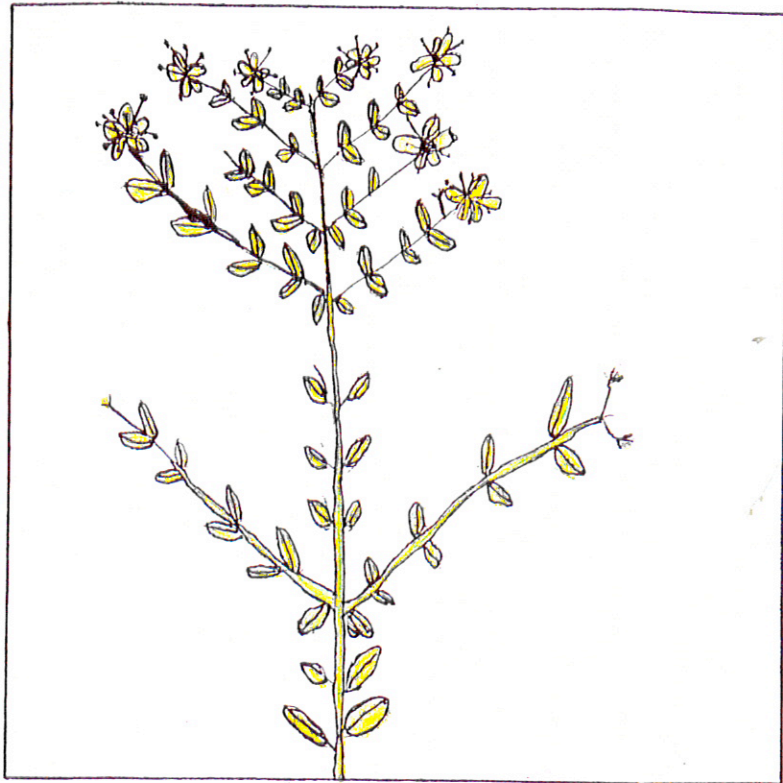
**Habitat:** It grows in bogs, wet slopes, rocky streams, acid bogs, rocky places, and ledges.

**Interesting Facts:** This small northern shrub has a very showy flower that opens before or with its leaves. They range from eastern Quebec to New Foundland to Nova Scotia, south through New England to northern New York, New Jersey, and northern Pennsylvania. As you can see, these are fairly common. The Rhodora grows well in peat bogs and occasionally on rocky ledges and cliffs. It attracts butterflies. They also grow in wet woods. In New Hampshire, the Rhodora is called the Election Pink because it blooms at the old election time.

-Ashlea

## St. John's Wort

*Hypericum perforatum*



**Description:** The St. John's Wort is a bright yellow flower. It can grow from 1 to 3 feet tall. The erect stem can branch very near the top, and the leaves that form on the stem grow opposite each other.

**Flowering:** It blooms around the time of the summer solstice, which is the longest day of the year. It blooms along roadsides and open fields.

**Habitat :** You can find this plant in California, Montana, Colorado, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina. It is originally from Europe. It is now found in Newfoundland.

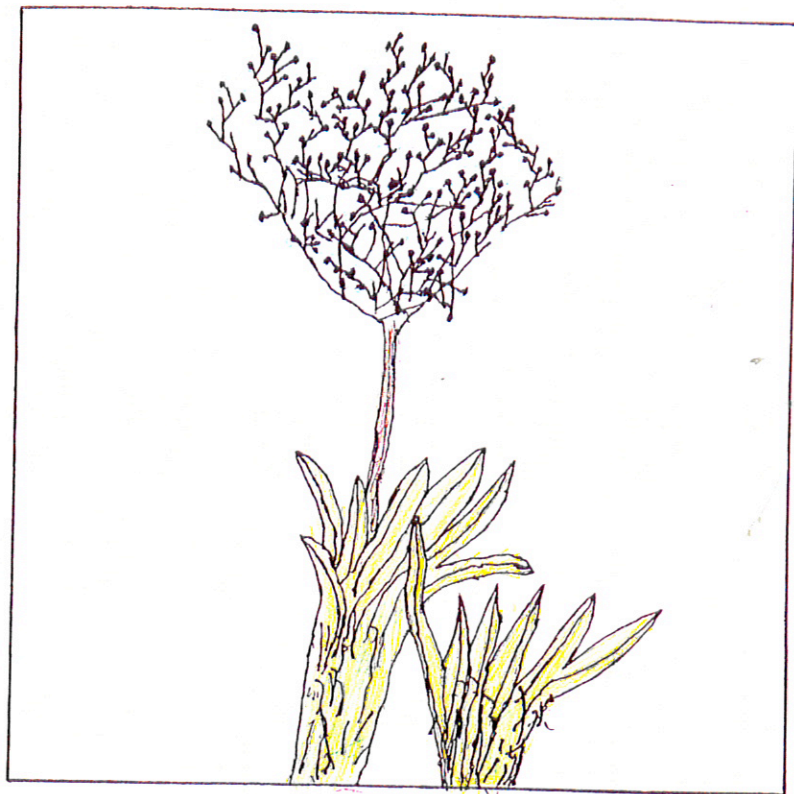
**Other Uses:** When the flower is crushed into an herb it is used as a medicine to help fight depression, anxiety, and neuralgia. Neuralgia is a nerve disorder. It has helped over a million people worldwide.

**Other Interesting Facts:** At one time people thought this flower had magical powers. The flower petals are yellow but when crushed they turn different colors. Once a cow ate large amounts of this flower, and its milk turned pink. It can heal burns with its oils and that make this flower so unique.

-Waller

## Sea Lavender

*Limonium nashii*



**Description:** The leaves are lance shaped with a narrow base, and they have one vein right up the middle. The Sea Lavender grows from 6-24 inches high. Tiny purple flowers appear at the end of the summer.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Sea Lavender blooms in August. The Sea Lavender blooms in coastal salt marshes.

**Habitat:** The Sea Lavender lives in marshy or swampy areas.

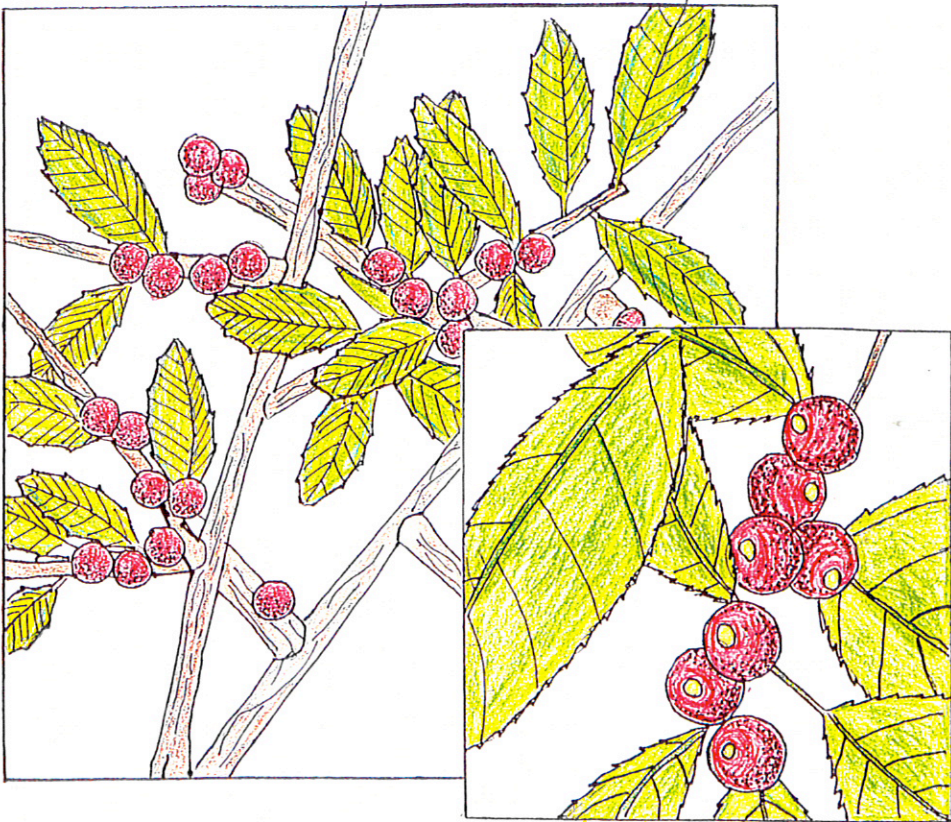
**Other Uses:** Many people use the Sea Lavender to make decorative wreaths. It is also used in floral arrangements.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Sea Lavender has a hairy calyx. When the Sea Lavender blooms, in August, the tiny blossoms color the marsh a pale misty lavender color.

*Richard*

## Smooth Winterberry

*Ilex verticillata*



**Description:** The Winterberry is a bush. The leaves are 2 and a half to 4 inches long and half an inch wide. They are long and smooth with veins spreading throughout the plant. They are also thin. The leaves are a light shade of dark green with pointed tips, but not sharp ones, and are round at the base. The Smooth Winterberry has thin, small branches. There is also a small, trunk-like branch in the middle, almost like a tree.

**The Flowers:** The Winterberry has small but beautiful

flowers. They have a yellow flower center surrounded by round white petals. Those are found at the fork between the tiny branches. They bloom in early summer or late spring.

**The Fruit:** This plant produces a small red berry a little bigger than the craser on a pencil. They are somewhat like the Japanese Yew's berries. They are not edible for humans, but insects and animals find them appetizing.

**Size:** A Smooth Winterberry grows to be a height of 4 to 10 feet high, with a 4 to 10 foot spread.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Smooth Winterberry blooms in early summer and late spring.

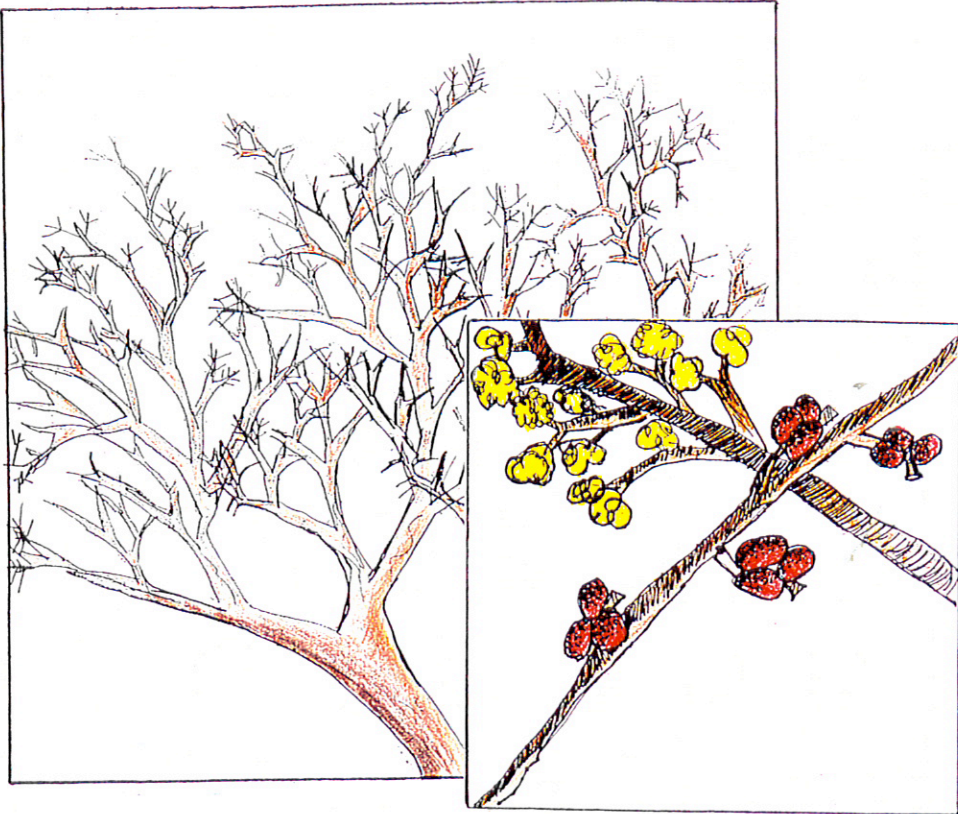
**Habitat:** This bush is found in Maine and New York. They need a habitat that provides sandy loam or clay, but most of all, moist soil. They can also be found in swamps and damp thickets. The Winterberry tolerates a wide range of soil types, but prefers moist acid soils. It responds well to pruning. For increased fruiting, prune in early spring and to increase branching, do the same. It needs warm weather, sun, rain, partial shade and a wet to moist base. It also attracts wildlife such as squirrels, raccoons, and birds.

**Other Uses:** It provides berries for animals and insects.

-Robert. P.

## Spice Bush

*Lindra benzoin*



**Description:** The Spice Bush has tiny yellow flowers that bloom in early spring (March-May). The Spice Bush also has shiny red berries that are only appealing to animals such as the white-tailed deer and many birds. The berries are 1/2 to 1/3 inches long. This pleasant plant also has leaves that turn yellow during the fall months. The leaves of a Spice Bush are long, smooth, and dark green when not in bloom. It can grow anywhere from six to twelve feet tall. The Spice Bush got its name because of the wonderfully spicy-sweet aroma from its

twigs, berries, and leaves. Its name also came from the berries that can be used for spices.

**Flowering:** The Spice Bush has small greenish-yellowish flowers that bloom in early spring. When not in bloom, the Spice Bush has greenish flowers that stay until the middle of fall.

**Habitat:** The Spice Bush adapts to its habitat. It can grow in many four season habitats, such as Maine and Ontario. It can also grow in temperate climates (places that have the same climate all year) like Texas and Florida. It grows well in swamps and wet woods, but it can grow just about anywhere.

**Other Uses:** The berries of a Spice Bush can be crushed into a fine powder and used as a spice. The leaves and twigs of this plant can be used for tea.

**Other Interesting Facts:** Sometimes the Spice Bush has yellow berries, but the most common berries are red. The berries are only found on female plants. The Spice Bush can cover four to nine feet when fully grown.

-Shannon

## Sugar Maple

*Acer saccharum*



**Location in the Oaks:** You can find Sugar Maples on the walkway facing Park Avenue.

**The Bark:** The bark on young trees and large branches is smooth and slightly bumpy. On old trees, it is deeply cracked and light gray in color.

**The Leaves:** The leaves are opposite. They have 3 to 5 lobes.

They are long, and are dark green above and pale green below. Sides of the lobe are parallel or divergent, and notches between lobes are rounded. In autumn, leaves turn various shades of red, orange or yellow.

**The Flowers:** Flowers hang loosely in clusters on long, slender, hairy stalks. They are greenish yellow and appear with the leaves.

**The Wood:** The wood is heavy, strong, and hard. It is used for furniture, flooring, tool handles, veneer, railroad ties, bowling, pins, novelties, dowels, wooden ware, canoe paddles, pulp and charcoal. "Birds-eye" wood from the Sugar Maple is used in the furniture industry. Maple sugar and syrup are made mainly from the sap of this tree, although sugar is present in the sap of all maples.

**The Fruit:** The fruit is paired and has a baseball-shaped body with wings about one inch long.

**The Twigs:** The twigs grow 8 to 10 feet up the tree.

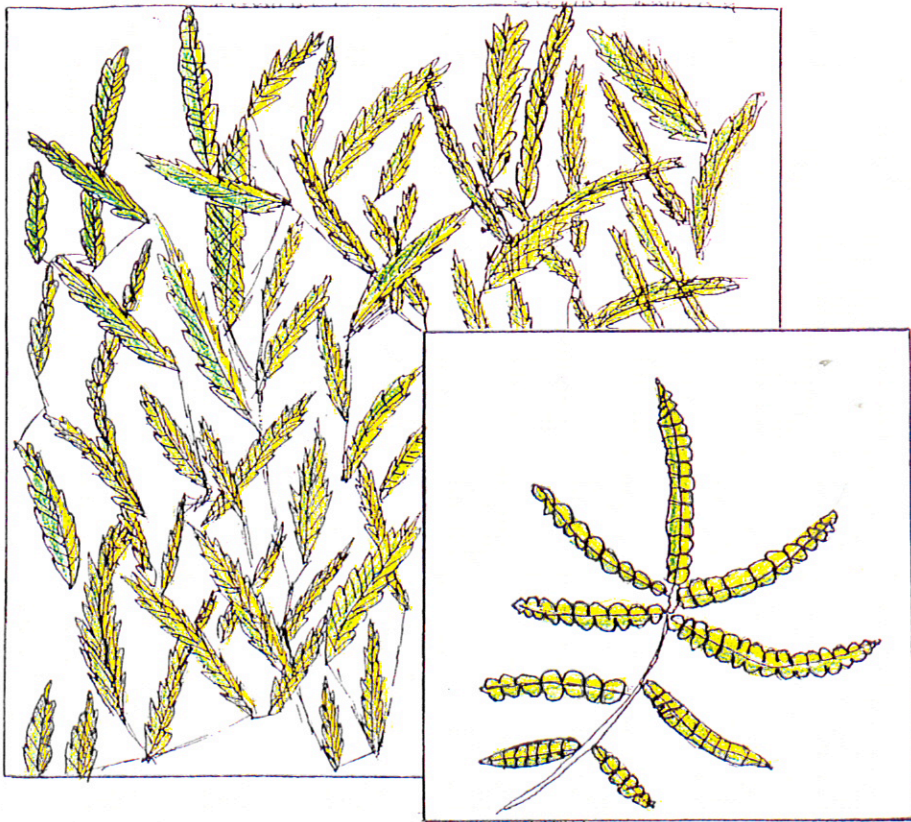
**Size:** In the forest, Sugar Maples grow from 60 to 70 feet, and have a diameter of 20 to 30 inches.

*-B. Baker*



## Sweetfern

*Comptonia peregrina*



**Description:** It is an aromatic bushy plant, with reddish stems and green foliage. The blooms look a lot like spiny sea urchins. The Sweetfern has single seeded leaves.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Sweetfern blooms in the spring producing little nuts. The flower of the Sweetfern is not very attractive. The flowers on the shrubs are small and greenish in color.

**Habitat:** It likes to grow in sandy, acid soil. The Sweetfern prefers sun and light shade. It grows in northeastern North America. You will find them in dry wood edges, clearings, waste places, and cleared or burned fields.

**Other Uses:** The leaves have been used in folk medicines and seasonings. You have to grind the leaves up to make barbecue sauce and gravy.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The shrub can be used for tea. The leaves help to identify it as a fern. Nutlets appear in the fall.

*-Jessica*

## Trout Lily

*Erythronium americanum*



**Description:** The Trout Lily is a perennial. Another name for the Trout Lily is the Adder's Tongue, because its leaves look like the tongue of an Adder (a type of snake) when it sprouts. The lily has two straight grayish-green leaves that are mottled with brown. The flower is bell-shaped with faint brown veins running through the outside of its light yellow petals. The Trout Lily is a pretty flower with a faint fragrance.

**Flowering (Maine):** This plant flowers in late spring or early summer during trout season.

**Habitat:** The attractive spring wild flower is located in the Eastern United States and Canada. It thrives in sandy soils such as the banks of brooks, and rich woods. Trout Lilies usually come through the ground early and enjoy the sunshine before leaves begin to appear on the trees and darken the ground. The flower is found in shady areas.

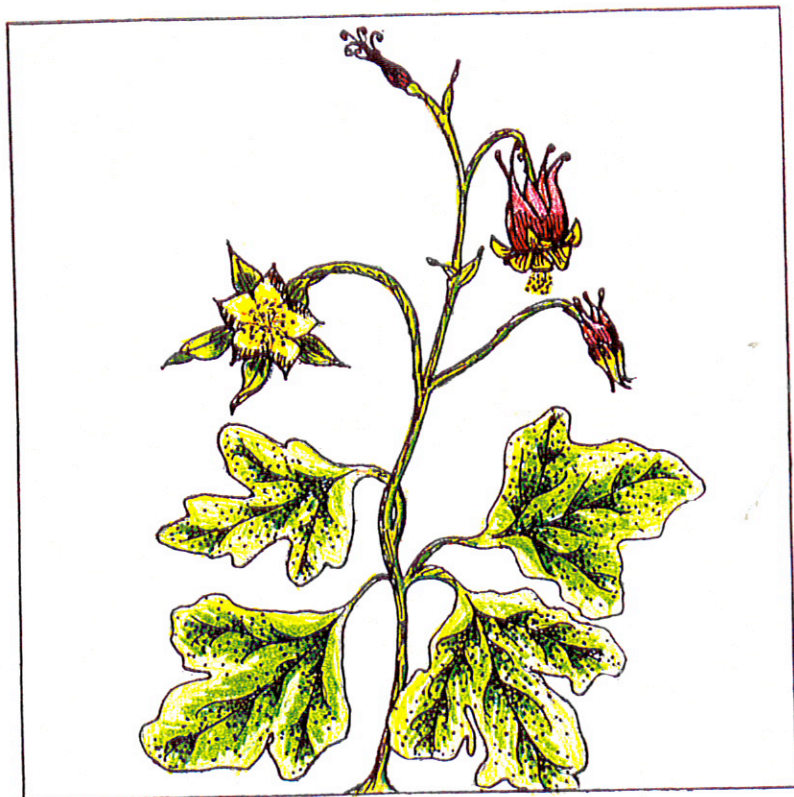
**Other Uses:** The Trout Lily has an edible flower. Its leaves are great in salads, especially when the leaves are just uncurling. For medicinal purposes, the leaves and roots are useful for ulcers, tumors, and swellings. It can be used as a poultice (liquid) to help hiccups. It can be made into tea. Roman soldiers used to grow the Trout Lily near their camps and used it to heal foot sores and corns (overgrown skin). This helped the soldiers regain strength for the long days ahead.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Trout Lily is called by many names. It is sometimes called the Fawn Lily because of its two leaves that stand up straight like the ears of a fawn. Another name is the Dogtooth Violet. The lily, in general, is the Christian symbol of purity, innocence, resurrection, and Easter. The Trout Lily is the sacred flower of motherhood. It also symbolizes the two goddesses, Hera and Juno. Hera is the goddess in charge of a woman's marriage and childbirth, and the Roman goddess Juno is responsible for the lives of women.

- Cecily

## Wild Columbine

*Aquilegia canadensis*



**Description:** The flowers on the Wild Columbine range from 1-2 inches long. These red/orange flowers have five spurs that point upward. The Wild Columbine's very long, slender, greenish-brown stem make this flower 1-3 feet in height. The fairly large, green leaves of the *Aquilegia Canadensis* (Columbine) are 4-6 inches wide.

**Flowering (Maine):** The Wild Columbine's exquisite flowers

bloom and become alive with color from early April to late July.

**Habitat:** If you were looking to find the Wild Columbine, you would have to explore a rocky, wooded, or open-sloped landscape. They can be found from Ontario to Quebec; south throughout most to all of New England to Georgia; and the farthest west that the Wild Columbine reaches is to Tennessee and Wisconsin. These flowers are very picky and most prefer dry and open environments.

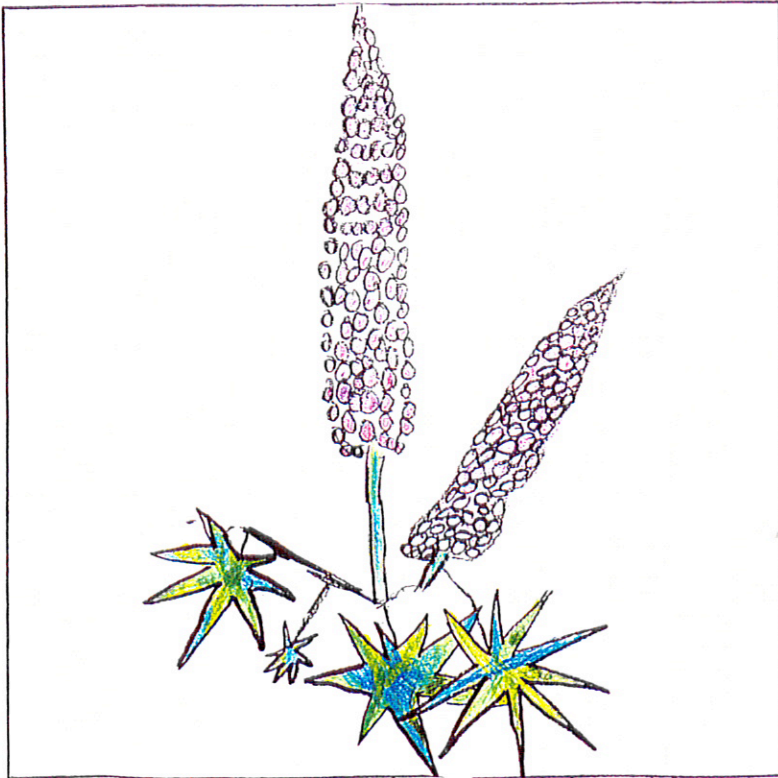
**Other Uses:** A long time ago, the Wild Columbine was used by ancient herbalists for many medicinal purposes. The juice from this flower was once used to cure jaundice or abdominal pains. It was also used to calm swelling of the liver. Around the medieval period, the columbine was supposedly used as a cure for measles and small pox.

**Other Interesting facts:** The Wild Columbine's nickname is the "Granny's Bonnet" because its flower shape reminds people of little old women... nodding and talking in the wind. Another picture that comes to mind from its name is "Columba," Latin for "Columbine," meaning Dove. Looking at the flower head held upside down, this flower appears as a ring of doves. The Columbine has been used in many cases as a symbol of peace and the holy spirit. In other beliefs, the Columbine is a symbol of the deserted love. Giving a lady a flower such as this, is considered a large insult; a Columbine given to a man brings him really bad luck.

-Elizabeth

## Wild Lupine

*Lupines perennis*



**Description:** The Wild Lupine has pea-like flowers that can bloom in many colors. It grows to be 8 to 10 inches tall.

**Flowering (Maine):** This plant blooms from late April to late July.

**Habitat:** It grows in open woods and open dry fields. The plant prefers full sun but can take some shade.

Lupine prefers moist, well-drained soil, and acid soil.

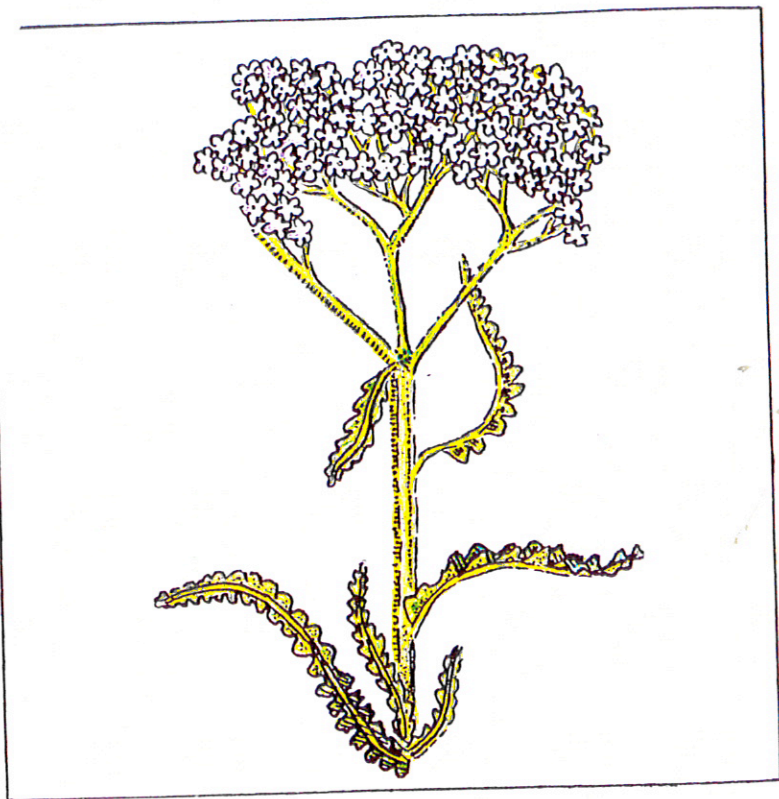
**Other Uses:** It was once used as an herbal remedy. Lupines were grown by the ancient Egyptians as food.

**Other Interesting Facts:** It gets its name from a Latin word, lupinus, meaning wolf. These flowers were thought to destroy the land, when actually they were good for it. Its other names are Old Maid's Bonnet, Sun Dial and Monkey Faces. It is also a member of the pea family. These plants do not do well during hot summer weather. They like cool summer nights. These plants are perennials, which means they come back year after year.

-Brent

## Yarrow

*Achillea*



**Description:** Yarrow has a grayish green stem which is sometimes found to be woolly, topped with a flat head of small dull white or very pale purple flowers. They have linear, pointed, saw-toothed leaves which look very fern-like. These leaves are 1-3 inches long.

**Flowering (Maine):** Yarrow blossoms in Maine from early August to mid October.

**Habitat:** It is found off the road side or in fields and in

meadows. The Yarrow flower is a European perennial which was brought to America with the first settlers to use in medicine. Not only was it used by them, but by the Native Indians as well. Now it has become very common to America and is found nearly all over the country.

**Other Uses:** Once this flower was used to help colds. The Yarrow was mostly used to slow bleeding. In France and Ireland, it was burned on the Eve of St. John's Day to ward off evil. It was brewed in beer by settlers, and to this day it is found in tonic water.

**Other Interesting Facts:** The Yarrow plant has many other names, like Milfoil, but most of its names like "bloodwort," "stenchgrass," "sanguinary," and "woundwort" were used centuries ago. The scientific name, *Achillea*, came from the story that Achilles used it to heal the wounded soldiers. The name Yarrow comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *gearwe*, which is believed to come from *gierwan* meaning to "be ready" or "to prepare."

-Chris

## Glossary

**bracts**- a modified leaf on or at the base of a leaf

**branchlets**- small branches

**catkin**- a long flower cluster found in willows, birches, and oaks

**deciduous**- leaves fall off or shed at a specific season or stage

**habitat**-the place or environment where a plant or animal naturally occurs

**margins**- the edge of a leaf

**perennial**- to live from year to year

**pistil**- the female reproductive organ of a flower

**stamens**- an organ of a flower that produces pollen

**understory**-the vegetative layer between the top layer of the forest and the ground

**vein**- carries nutrients to the rest of the leaf

**whorl**- something that whirls or coils around a center

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