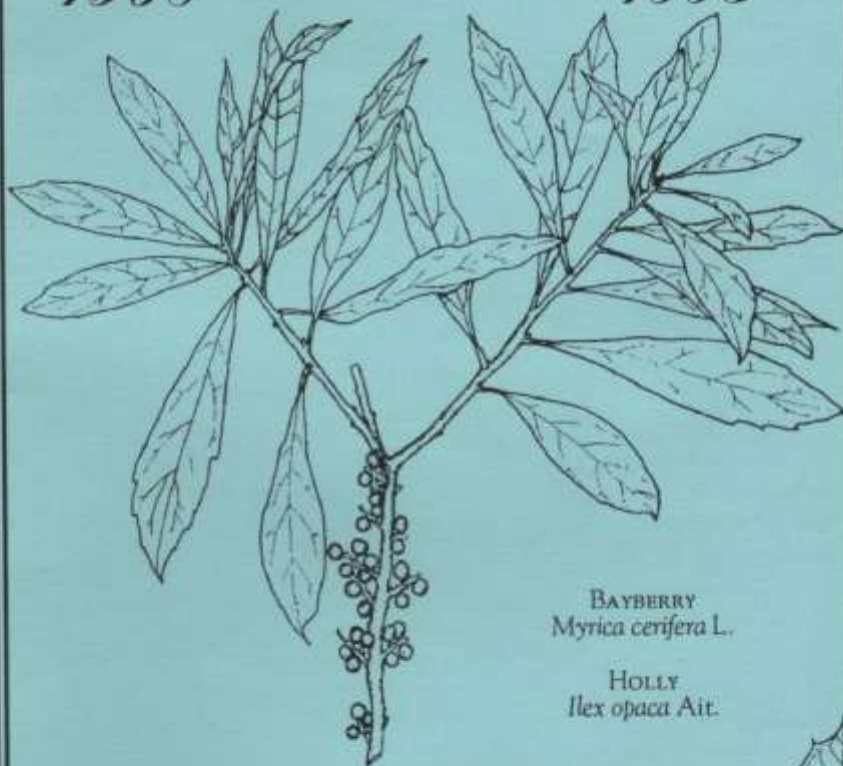


The Bulletin



1968

1993



25 Years



Volume 23, Numbers 2, 3, 4

December, 1993

25 YEAR HISTORY OF THE BOTANICAL CLUB OF WISCONSIN

Milwaukee Public Museum
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

The Botanical Club of Wisconsin grew out of a 13 person committee established by Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts and Letters President Dr. John Thomson, on February 7, 1968. There had been an increase in the number of botanical activities in Wisconsin, possibly due to the environmental movement. Since John Thomson had worked with the Torrey Botanical Club in New York, he felt that an organized program like theirs, especially one that included field programs, would be influential in encouraging people to appreciate botany. Ideally the northern Great Lakes region would eventually be involved, as Minnesota had no such organization. The Club was to be a section of the Wisconsin Academy.

On March 30, 1968, Dr. James Zimmerman, who had been appointed committee chairman by John Thomson, issued an invitation to discuss the new organization. His thoughts echoed those of Dr. Thomson. On April 6, the committee met at the Thomson home for the first meeting. There was lengthy conversation covering all aspects of the proposed organization. The possibilities were outlined in the 1968 issue of *The Academy Review*. These included field botany becoming as popular as bird study and a greater understanding of vegetation with professionals and lay people working together.

The Academy issued an invitation to all WASAL members to join the newly formed Botanical Club of Wisconsin. Membership would be free for Academy members and \$2.00 per year for non-Academy members. The Academy was to subsidize the expenses of the Club for the first year or so. A questionnaire accompanied the invitation to help determine the background and interests of the new members.

By February 7, 1969, over 120 members of the Academy had submitted applications for membership. Most of them expressed an interest in field trips. A 28 member board was established with Dr. Zimmerman as the chairman. Preparations were made to hold a meeting in conjunction with the Academy meetings that were to be held in Whitewater that year. Board members were asked to submit papers and to encourage others to participate.

Of the estimated 1650 invitations sent out, over 165 people had joined, including 16 non-academy members. The Board of Directors was increased to 37, with most of the state represented. Two local clubs were formed in the Green Bay-Marquette area and the Beloit-Janesville area. Southeast Wisconsin was possibly next, even though the University of

Wisconsin-Milwaukee had an existing Botany Club that was not in affiliation with WASAL.

On April 19, 1969, there was a meeting of 19 board members at Pinnacle Park, the home of Robert and Martha Hanson. The board accepted Vol. 1, No. 1 of *The Botanical Club of Wisconsin Newsletter*. The first BCW field trip led by John and Olive Thomson, which was a look at mosses, lichens and hybrid ferns at the farm. A more formal meeting, including the election of officers was planned at the WASAL meetings on May 3, 1969.

At the Academy morning breakfast meeting of the BCW, the group heard reports, increased the size of some committees and projected plans for 1969. Twenty six BCW members attended the paper session, which was held in conjunction with the Wisconsin Phenological Society. Nine papers were presented. Officers elected at the first official meeting of the BCW members were:

President: S. Galen Smith
Vice President: Martin Piehl
Recording Secretary: Lytton Musseiman
Treasurer and Membership Chairman: Martha Hanson

At a later meeting, it was decided to publish *The Botanical Club of Wisconsin Newsletter* four times annually with a rotating editorship. The first Newsletter explained the purpose of BCW and the Wisconsin Phenological Society. There was also a longer article on the spring flora in Wisconsin.

By June 15, 1969, the BCW had grown to a membership of 224 members, 204 of those being Academy members.

The Madison area chapter had its first meeting on The University of Wisconsin campus on August 5, 1969. The program, a lecture on arctic wildflowers was given by John Thomson. Seventeen people attended. They officially became "The Norman Fassett Chapter" on November 11, 1969, to pay homage to a great Wisconsin botanist. A formal set of organizational rules was drafted at that time.

By the end of 1969, membership had grown to 352 members. The Academy had contributed over \$500 to cover printing costs and postage.

The year 1970 was full of changes and activity for the Botanical Club. In January, dues were raised to \$3 for non-academy members and \$1 for Academy members. A family membership was included in the dues, with the entire family being able to join, but with one copy of any publication being sent to the family. John Thomson became the official BCW Representative to the Academy. By March, there were over 370 members. A state-wide field trip calendar with 31

events was sent to the membership. The nominating committee, chaired by Robert Hanson set up responsibilities for each office. A new office of Editor for the Newsletter was also established, as well as the position of rotating contributing editor. In August, the first Constitution and by-laws were approved. By the year's end, concern was expressed about the decline in membership growth.

During 1971, the membership had stabilized at 227, (116 Academy and 111 non-Academy). An effort to increase membership by contacting garden clubs and high school science teachers was initiated. On May 1, the Constitution was amended to create a separate Membership Chairman position and to allow the president to appoint an editor/corresponding editor rather than the Board. A decision was made to change the Newsletter to a 5 1/4" x 8" format.

On January 25, 1973, the Central Wisconsin Chapter of the Botanical Club of Wisconsin came into being. Dr. Robert Freckmann presided over the organizational meeting.

In July, 1973, amendments to the Constitution were proposed to correct contradictions. The addition of a Mailing Chairman as an appointed position was also proposed.

"Wixonomics" was partially blamed for printing price increases in late 1973. In December an increase was requested in the subsidy from the Academy or dues would have to be increased. At the end of the year, membership stood at 209, with 129 Academy members.

In January of 1975, WAGAL was no longer able to give financial assistance to the BCW. The club was held up as a successful example to the other Academy affiliates, as it was able to continue without additional financial support. All BCW dues were set at \$3 per year, whether an Academy member or not. This did include both husband and wife. The membership agreed with this action and many felt that it was still a bargain. There was even a small donation by Walter Scott to keep the Newsletter going until the Club could be totally self sufficient.

On October 24, 1975, Walter Scott proposed 'The Lapham 1836 Reprint Project' to the BCW officers. This was to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Increase Lapham's death. It was to be a limited facsimile copy of a 12 page pamphlet "A Catalogue of Plants and Shells, found in the Vicinity of Milwaukee on the West Side of Lake Michigan". This was considered to be the first scientific paper published in the Upper Midwest. The profits and additional gift income would be earmarked for the BCW. The Club lent Scott \$200 to begin the project, which was completed in February, 1976, with the printing of the pamphlet. The

commemoration was changed to the 165th Anniversary of Lapham's birth (March 7, 1811) and America's Bicentennial. Total printing costs were \$667, and other additional expenditures raised the total expenses to \$1050. The net profit that BCW realized was \$1217, with 135 remaining copies being turned over to WAGAL for sale. The project was considered to be a great success. What remained of the pamphlets were given to the Ridges Sanctuary to help them raise money for the purchase of the Voek Tract.

Martha Hanson proposed Constitutional changes that would help the Club become exempt from Federal Income Tax in April 1976. This was officially adopted May 8, 1976 at the annual meeting held in Madison. The IRS recognized BCW's non-profit status. Martha retired after being treasurer for 8 years, having realized her goal of obtaining the tax exempt status. For the first time since its inception, the Botanical Club spent more money than it took in, according to the May 1976 Treasurer's Report.

A fire in 1977 destroyed the home of Rudy Koch, also destroying the printing equipment that produced the Newsletter. The format was returned to 8 1/2" x 11" for a short time.

A group began meeting informally in the La Crosse area in 1977. They became an official part of the BCW in mid-1978 as The Alvin and Mae Peterson Chapter. The group was named after an amateur botanist and his wife, who shared a great interest in botany, especially field work. They enjoyed sharing what they saw and learned and were a great inspiration to many people.

An organizational meeting was held for the Southeast Chapter on April 26, 1979, at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Martyn Dibben, along with Drs. Peter Salamon, William Millington and Robert Costello were interested in forming a group where amateur and professional botanists could exchange ideas in a social setting.

Many subtle, but important changes occurred in 1979. The Botanical Club of Wisconsin Newsletter became The Bulletin. This was done because it was felt that the name Newsletter implied articles of short-term interest. The name Bulletin seemed more appropriate for the nature of the publication. The dues were raised to \$5, with \$2 of each membership going to the local chapters.

Things ran smoothly and uneventfully until 1987, when John Christy was elected president. He seemed to be a catalyst for change. Thomas Meyer designed a new logo for the Club. The Board showed its approval by authorizing \$200 for the production of a banner bearing this new logo to be used as

a backdrop at club functions and for publicity at a meeting in October, 1987. A bulk mailing permit was obtained to reduce postage expenses. There were also some proposed changes to the Constitution. The dues should be increased to \$7, with a \$5 rate for students and persons over 62. The chapters would receive \$1 per member instead of \$2. This would become effective May 1988. The Bulletin issues also be published at least twice a year, combining issues if necessary. The Newsletter was to be published as needed.

The first FLORA was published in April of 1988. Thomas Meyer was instrumental in its inception. Its purpose was for meeting and field trip announcements and short articles of interest. It would replace the Newsletter. The Bulletin would continue to publish longer articles and business information for the club.

The first annual Wildflower Show was held at the Milwaukee Public Museum on June 5, 1988. The show continues to be a popular annual event and continues to improve and grow each year. The BCM's Board of Director's has provided financial support over the past two years. The number of people assisting with the show has grown from a handful to over fifty.

The first Wildflower Photographic Competition was held in conjunction with the Wildflower Show. Participation has continued to grow, with money going to help defray Wildflower Show expenses.

Another first for the Club was the annual overnight field trip to the Nicolet National Forest in July, 1985. These field trips continue to be very well attended, and they give members the opportunity to have some of the finest leaders in the state share their knowledge and expertise with them. The two-day aspect allows for a more comprehensive visit to the area and time for socializing.

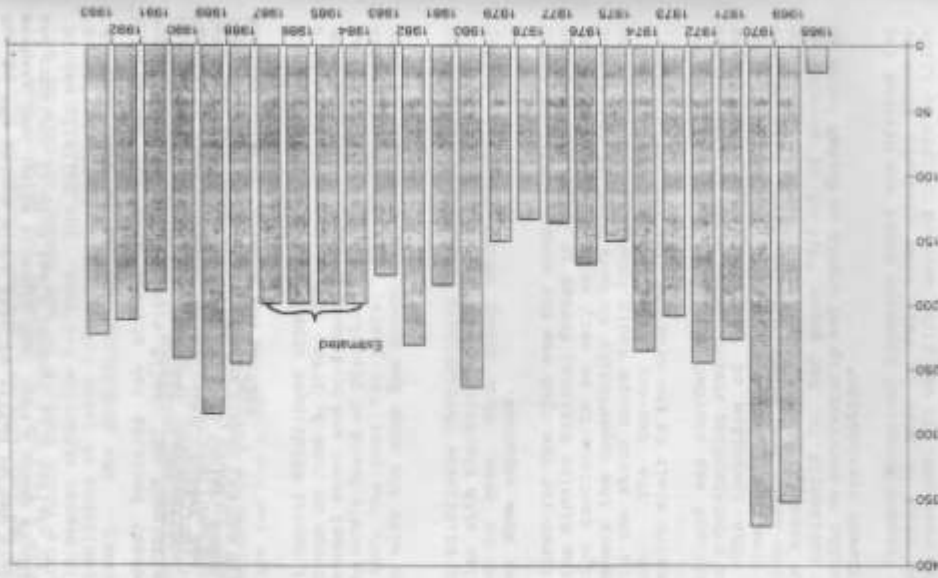
Steven Ritland was awarded the first Botanical Club of Wisconsin's Outstanding Student Paper Award in 1989 for his work on "The isolation of DNA clones for zinc finger proteins from plant genomic libraries". The Forest Stearns Recognition Award was given for the first time at the Wisconsin Academy meetings in 1991. It was given to Kathleen Zueladorff for her paper "Effect of phosphorus fertilization on survivorship and growth on forest herbs in a mesic forest restoration".

The John Thomson Botanical Research Award was offered for the first time in 1990 to full time graduate students conducting research. It was first awarded in 1993 to Alice Thompson for "Ecotypic variation of *LARIX laricina* in Wisconsin Bogs and Fens".

The Botanical Club of Wisconsin has persevered, despite tremendous competition from other organizations. This is due to the unique niche that is filled by the club. The members feel quite strongly that such a group should exist and continue to give their support in a variety of ways.

Information for this article was obtained through the Botanical Club of Wisconsin files, The Newsletter, The Bulletin, The Flora, and personal conversations. Many thanks to John Thomson, Neil Luebke, Robert Lee, Kevin Lyman, Jerry Davis, Tom Meyer, W. Carl Taylor, Susan Brahm, John Christy, Ted Cochran, Martyn Dibben and the Wisconsin Academy of Arts, Science and Letters.

Botanical Club Membership 1968 - 1993



25 YEARS OF BOTANICAL CLUB OF WISCONSIN OFFICERS

- 1968 Chairman Board of Directors: James Zimmerman
- 1969 President: G. Galen Smith
 Vice President: Martin Piehl
 Secretary: Lytton Musselman
 Treasurer and Membership Chairman: Martha Hanson
- 1970 President: Elizabeth Souter
 Vice President: Roy Lukes
 Secretary: Rudy Koch
 Treasurer: Martha Hanson
- 1971 President: Roy Lukes
 Vice President: Robert C. Koeppen
 Secretary: Theodore Cochrane
 Treasurer: Martha Hanson
 Membership Chairman: Dorothy Josheff
- 1972-1973 President: Robert Freckmann
 Vice President: Robert C. Koeppen
 Secretary: Theodore Cochrane
 Treasurer: Martha Hanson
 Membership Chairman: Dorothy Josheff
- 1974-1975 President: Katherine D. Rill
 Vice President: Robert C. Koeppen
 Secretary: Theodore Cochrane
 Treasurer: Martha Hanson
 Membership Chairman: Dorothy Josheff
- 1976 President: Rudy Koch
 Vice President: Roy Saigo
 Secretary: Marlin Johnson
 Treasurer: Martha Hanson
 Membership Chairman: Dorothy Josheff
- 1977 President: Rudy Koch
 Vice President: Roy Saigo
 Secretary: Marlin Johnson
 Treasurer and Membership Chairman: Dorothy Josheff

1978

President: Roy Salgo
Vice President: Peter Salamun
Secretary: Marlin Johnson
Treasurer: Frank Bowers

1979

President: Peter Salamun
Vice President: Martyn Dibben
Secretary: Jan Phelps
Treasurer: Frank Bowers

1980

President: Peter Salamun
Vice President: Martyn Dibben
Secretary: James Perry
Treasurer: Frank Bowers

1981-1982

President: Martyn Dibben
Vice President: John Blum
Secretary: James Perry
Treasurer: Rudy Koch

1983

President: John Blum
Vice President: Jerry Davis
Secretary: John Madson
Treasurer: Rudy Koch

1984-1985

President: Jerry Davis
Vice President: James Hoefler
Secretary: John Madson
Treasurer: Rudy Koch

1986

President: Jan Phelps
Vice President: Richard Newcome
Secretary: Kurt Schulz
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1987

President: John Christy
Vice President: Thomas Meyer
Secretary: Kurt Schulz
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1988

President: John Christy
Vice President: Thomas Meyer
Secretary: Mary Griesbach
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1989

President: Frank Bowers
Vice President: Donald Les
Secretary: Mary Griesbach Cahow
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1990

President: Donald Les
Vice President: Susan Brahm
Secretary: Mary Griesbach Cahow
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1991

President: Donald Les
Vice President: Jeffrey Karron
Secretary: Susan Brahm
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1992

President: Donald Les until 9/92; Susan Brahm
Vice President: Jeffrey Karron
Co-Secretaries: Susanne Maris Brown/Sue Shapiro
Treasurer: Theodore Cochrane

1993

President: Susan Brahm
Vice President: Jeff Karron
Secretary: Sue Shapiro
Treasurer: Ed Glover