

NOTES ON SOME UNUSUAL FLORA FOUND IN ATHENS COUNTY, OHIO

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... Athens County, Ohio, has a rich and varied flora. Here we find plants which are more common farther north, such as *Symplocarpus foetidus* (L.) Nutt., and *Ilex verticillata* (L.) Gray: Appalachian plants, such as *Lygodium palmatum* (Bernh.) SW; and southern plants, in the case of *Corallorhiza Wisteriana* Conrad, *Phlox stolonifera* Sims, and *Chionanthus virginicus* L.; Prairie species include *Filipendula rubra* (Hill) Robins, (Queen of the Prairie) and *Echinacea purpurea* (L.) Moench. (Purple Cone Flower). Much of the collecting has been done with the help of Mr. P. S. Wamsley of Athens High School, who also collaborated in the identification.

This paper does not include either the orchids of Athens County, which were reported in the Ohio Journal of Science for May, 1953, or the grasses or sedges which have not been worked over. This record of the plants of Athens County may be valuable as historical data. Some of the stations have been lost due to the building of homes, roads, industries, and businesses. Any land in this area which will yield a thin strip of low-grade coal is rapidly being turned into a desert fit only for planting locust and sweet clover, and much of the original flora will disappear.

Most of the collecting has been done in the northern townships of Trimble, York, Dover, Ames, Bern, Waterloo, Athens, Canaan, and Rome. The southern townships of Lee, Alexander, Lodi, Carthage, and Troy have not been worked over as thoroughly as the others.

Waterloo Township falls into three areas: 1. The Enderlin Forest or York Forest on former Carbondale Coal Co. land, a pine forest planted between 1906 and 1926, at the rate of 12,000 annually by Col. Richard Enderlin and Melvin Doolittle; 2. The Waterloo State Forest planted in 1915; 3. The Izaak Walton League farm, a large part of which has been preserved in its natural state.

The prairie patch—"Buffalo Beat"—in south-western Trimble Township is like a small prairie with many species found abundantly farther west. Remnants of the Hocking Canal at Armitage, Ohio, in Athens Township, is still worthy of study for the aquatic vegetation. The plains and the Beaumont areas in Section 24, Athens Township, and Section 19, Dover Township, have some boggy places which are not common in this area.

The Enderlin Forest at Carbondale, Ohio, which is in Section 36, Waterloo Township, has some interesting remnants. Scattered patches of Sphagnum moss may be found occasionally. In this area is found many species of ferns including *Ophioglossum vulgatum* L. (Adders Tongue Fern) and *Lygodium palmatum* (Bernh.) SW (Climbing Fern). *L. Palmatum* is very rare in Ohio. This station was the first reported for the state to The Ohio State University Herbarium by Prof. A. W. Boetticher of Ohio University. *Echinacea purpurea* (L.) Moench. (Purple Cone Flower) was found on the western edge of this section. *Lobelia elongata* Small and *Scrophularia lanceolata* Pursh are found here. *Meehania cordata* (Nutt.) Pursh is found near Carbondale, Ohio.

The Waterloo State Forest area, which is in the corners of Sections 25-26-31-32, Waterloo Township, consists of pine planting and some hardwood forest in its original condition. *Phlox stolonifera* Sims. grows in the hardwood forest. A few specimens of *Solidago squarrosa* Muhl., rare in Athens County, were found near the Ranger's Station. It shows no sign of spreading. Near the Ranger's Station,

white pine is showing signs of seeding among hardwoods near by. Several young trees, four and five feet high, were observed on the H. C. Bobo property south-east of the forest. There is not much evidence of white pine developing beyond the seedling stages here. White pine has done well in this area.

The Izaak Walton League farm in sections 25-31 of Waterloo Township has been preserved in its natural state with planting only on the barren fringes of the area. A lake has been made in the principal hollow inundating some interesting flora. There is a station for *Lygodium palmatum* L. on the farm. *Asplenium pinnatifidum* Nutt. (Pinnatifid Spleenwort) was found on the sandstone here. It disappeared from this location in 1953-54 when no specimens were found. In 1955, it appeared on the same place stronger than before. Small patches of Sphagnum moss are found in wet places. *Epigaea repens* L. (Trailing Arbutus) and *Kalmia latifolia* L. (Mountain Laurel) are still holding their own here. One large hillside is covered with *Lycopodium complanatum* L. (Trailing Club Moss). *L. complanatum* lingers on eroded hillsides where there is moisture. On a cut bank along U. S. Rt. 50 south of Athens, it is spreading over the new cut.

The "Prairie Patch" or "Buffalo Beat" at Buchtel, and the neighboring country, was shown to us by Mr. Leonard Stephenson, who first reported it to The Ohio State University Herbarium. Mr. Stephenson also identified the plants. Several prairie grasses, such as *Andropogon Gerardi* Vitman (Big Blue Stem), *A. scoparium* Michx. (Little Blue Stem), and *Sorghastrum nutans* (L.) Nash (Indian Grass), still grow here. Three species of *Liatris*¹ (Blazing Star), *L. cylindracea* Michx., *L. scariosa* (L.) Willd., and *L. spicata* (L.) Willd., are becoming scarce due to picking and digging. *Ernygium yuccifolium* Michx. (Rattlesnakemaster) and *Gentiana flavida* Gray (Yellow Gentian) are disappearing. A species of Baptisia grows here, possibly *B. Australis* (L.) R. Br. (Blue False Indigo) which may not be reported. Our specimen is not in flower.

This little patch of prairie has resisted the encroachment of the forest for a long time. It is possible that these plants may be crowded out by sweet clover, *Melilotus* (L.) Lam. *Melilotus* was reported for this station in 1929 by Prof. A. W. Boetticher. It is my opinion that it has made great headway during the last six years. This plant seems to do well under drought conditions.

The remnants of the Hocking Canal at Armitage, Ohio, which consists of three ponds between the C&O and NYC R. R. tracks, still yield interesting aquatic flora including *Potamogeton filliformis* Pers. (Pondweed) (not formerly reported by us), *P. nodosus* Poir. (Knotty Pondweed), *Utricularia gibba* L. (Humped Bladderwort), and *Heteranthera dubia* (Jacq.) Mac M. (Water Star Grass). *Cacalia suaveolens* L. (Sweet Scented Indian Plantain) was found in swampy ground between the first and second ponds. Nearby mine reservoirs yield others including *P. diversifolius* Raf.

The plains, Ohio, area in northern Athens Township and southern Dover township shows a boggy condition around the edge of the plain. On this springy ground may be found *Symplocarpus foetidus* (L.) Nutt. (Skunk Cabbage), *Filipendula rubra* (Hill) Rob. (Queen of the Prairie), *Ilex verticillata* (L.) Gr. (Winterberry) and *Nasturtium officinale* R. Br. (True Water-cress) which is not common in Athens County. *Potamogeton diversifolius* Raf. (Rafinesque's Pondweed) grows in a nearby Hocking mine reservoir. On a dry hillside on Vore Ridge, *Grindelia lanceolata* Nutt. (Lance-leaved Gumweed) is spread over a considerable area. Near the site of the Athens City dump, *Galium verum* L. (Yellow Bedstraw) was found by Mr. C. L. Colmer.

On the sandstone cliffs or caves in the woods where enough moisture is present, the Walking Fern, *Camptosorus rhizophyllus* (L.) Link. still holds its own near Athens, Ohio. The same areas are rich in moss flora, also some liverworts. There

¹Species of *Liatris* as found in Gray's Manual of Botany, 8th edition.

are two stations for *Pellea atropurpurea* (L.) Link. (Purple Cliff-Brake) on sandstone known for Athens County.

The railroad tracks, particularly the B&O, have given us *Viola Kitaibeliana* var. *Rafinesquii* (Greene). This is also found in Alexander Township. In the railroad yards at Athens, *Onoethera lacinata* Hill is fairly well established, but not abundant.

Sagina procumbens (Procumbent Speedwell—Birdseye) is found generally at Athens, Ohio, growing between the bricks on the side streets and walks at Ohio University. This plant blooms and produces seed every month of the year with the exception of a few seasons of prolonged cold weather.

Dirca palustris L. (Leatherwood) seems to be disappearing. Twenty years ago it was plentiful in the hills near Athens, Ohio. One station at the Girl Scouts Camp in Athens Township is still intact. Another was recently reported along Shade Creek in Lodi Township and another along U. S. Rt. 33 about three miles north of Athens, Ohio.

In the herbarium at Athens High School, we have many specimens of composites, grasses, and sedges which may be examined by anyone interested.
