

Colorado Native Plant Society



NEWSLETTER

Volume III Number 1

January-February 1979

"DEDICATED TO THE APPRECIATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE COLORADO FLORA"

OFFICERS 1978/1979

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All correspondence and inquiries regarding activities of the Society should be addressed to Charles Olmsted, 1419 15th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631.

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND INFORMATION

Sue Martin, USDA Crops Research Lab, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

SCHEDULE OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

Life	\$250.00
Supporting	50.00
Society	25.00
Family	12.00
Individual	8.00
Student & Retired	4.00

The CONPS Newsletter is sent to all other Native Plant Societies in exchange for theirs. Nonmembers may subscribe to the Newsletter for \$4.00.

NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: Dieter H. Wilken, Dept. of Botany & Plant Pathology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

The editor seeks articles of interest to all aspects of Society activities. Such articles should not generally exceed 4 typewritten, double-spaced pages, although consideration will be given to longer articles if space permits.

Deadlines for the 6 bimonthly newsletters are the last day of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

FORT COLLINS CHAPTER MEETING

The first 1979 meeting of the Ft. Collins Chapter will feature a presentation by Bettie Willard, who will speak on the ALPINE FLORA: ECOLOGY and HABITAT. The meeting will begin at 7:30 PM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8 and will take place at the Poudre Valley R.E.A. Building, 4809 South College Avenue, which is just south of the intersection with Harmony Road. All members are encouraged to attend and guests are welcome.

KIMERY VORIES

Kim and his wife, Dawn, have left Colorado for Idaho where Kim has been employed by Morrison-Knudsen, Inc. of Boise. A number of us are aware of the fact that Kim was involved in the Society from its very beginnings in 1976 and has been involved in many activities, including the Board of Directors and the office of Treasurer. The Board of Directors, at its meeting on January 11, extended their sincere appreciation on behalf of the Society to Kim for his service. Kim and Dawn now become our first members in the State of Idaho! Walt Ruzzo of Ft. Collins was elected by the BOD to fill the position of Treasurer.

SPRING MEETING

Make a notation on your calendars now! The Spring meeting of the Society will be held SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1979 at the Denver Botanical Gardens, 1 - 4:30 PM. Workshops are being planned on the horticultural uses of native plants and other subjects. A popular guest speaker will also be featured. And don't forget to bring along a friend!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

A significant number of persons have not renewed their membership in the Society for 1979. If you have not renewed membership, your next issue of the NEWSLETTER will bear a "RED X" on the mailing label. Please renew your membership if you have not done so since the last Annual Meeting, October 21, 1978.

Please send all renewals and address changes to Sue Martin at the address on the front cover of the Newsletter. Please include your chapter affiliation, if applicable, and your zip code. The USPS has been returning Newsletters because of incorrect or absent zip codes!

THE FIRST FLOWER OF 1979

Spring is approaching, although one would never know it with the weather the Rocky Mountain region has been experiencing lately. As a stimulus to some early season outings, the NEWSLETTER will publish in forthcoming issues, notes from contributors regarding the first signs of the 1979 flowering season. Acknowledgements will be given to the first person with the earliest record of a native plant in bloom in 1979. The only documented record available to me is a collection by Harold Harrington in the CSU Herbarium of *Townsendia hookeri* (EASTER DAISY), made on January 26, 1947 in Thompson Canyon above Loveland. Please note that this "contest" is limited to native species. On January 1, 1979, I found a fully flowering specimen of *Malva neglecta* (CHEESEWEED) in a vacant lot on the CSU campus, a record for introduced species difficult to best. Please send all your observations to the address on the cover of the NEWSLETTER.

---Dieter Wilken

GRASSLANDS INSTITUTE - 1979

The 1979 Grasslands Institute will be sponsored by the Denver Audubon Society and the University of Northern Colorado. The Institute will be held from June 10 to 16, 1979.

The program of the 5th annual Grassland Institute familiarizes participants with the short-grass prairie ecosystem and heightens awareness of the subtle interactions of prairie communities. The Institute blends the arts, sciences and humanities to form the basis for viewing the prairie. Man's role and impacts are also assessed. Formal activities are given in more detail in the brochure. The prairie has its own unique character and web of interactions between its plant and animal life. Early summer is one of the best times to investigate and enjoy the prairie. Field trips, led by qualified instructors are scheduled each day. Evening programs relate historical, cultural and artistic views of the prairie as well as its natural history.

The Institute is open to 40 individuals at least 18 years of age and in good physical health. You do not need to be a member of the Audubon Society in order to participate. Since the program is conducted from a primitive campground participants must be willing to live under such conditions.

The Institute is held in Northern Colorado at the Crow Creek Campground on the Pawnee National Grasslands. The campground is located near Briggsdale along Colorado Highway 14. It is shaded with cottonwood trees and has picnic tables and restrooms. A solar shower is available. The site can accommodate personal mobile

camping units and tents. Participants are expected to bring their own sleeping and camping gear. A limited number of tents will be available for those unable to provide their own. All eating utensils will be provided by the Institute.

Participants may apply for three quarter hours of University Credit (Bio. 480) through the University of Northern Colorado. The fee for three credit hours is \$30 payable on the first day of the Institute. Individuals interested in additional information about University credit may contact Dr. James Fitzgerald, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado 80639.

If you need further information, please write or call:

For registration or Institute program,
Mr. Ed Butterfield
17410 E. Nichols Place
Parker, CO 80134
(303) 690-5019

For other Audubon business:
Denver Audubon Society
1325 Delaware Street
Denver, CO 80204

HOUSE BILL 1177

The bill discussed in the last CoNPS Newsletter is now designated H. B. 1177, "A Bill for an Act Concerning Nongame and Threatened or Endangered Species". This bill will place responsibility for research, management and protection of threatened or endangered plant species on the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The first hearing is now scheduled for FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2 at 8 AM before the House Game, Fish and Parks Committee. If you can lend your support to the bill by attending this hearing and/or speaking in favor of the bill, please contact Libby Goodwin (449-6227 in Boulder before 7 AM or after 7 PM) because the time and place of the hearing may change. Also, if any member of the Committee is from your district, you could phone or write in support of the bill. Members of the House Game, Fish and Parks Committee are: Winkler (Chairman), Hinman (Vice Chairman), Boley, Burns, Jones, Larson, Lucero, Randall, Shoemaker, Witherspoon and Younglund. Excerpts pertinent to native plants include:

33-1-101. Legislative declaration. (1) It is the policy of the state of Colorado that the wildlife and their environment, THE PLANTS, and the natural, scenic, scientific, and outdoor recreation areas of this state are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and visitors to this state. It is

further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program of outdoor recreation in order to offer the greatest possible variety of outdoor recreation opportunity to the people of this state and its visitors and that to carry out such program and policy there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition, and development of outdoor recreation lands, waters, and facilities.

(24.5) "Plants" means native species or subspecies of plants indigenous to the state.

(39.5) "Threatened or endangered plants" means those plants which the commission has determined to be threatened or endangered and has placed on the list of threatened or endangered plants pursuant to article 8 of title 33.

33-8-103. Definitions. (4) "Endangered species" means any species or subspecies of wildlife OR PLANT whose prospects of survival or recruitment within this state are in jeopardy as determined by the commission.

(4.5) "Extirpated species" means any species or subspecies which no longer occurs in a natural or free roaming condition within the state.

(5) "Management" means the collection and application of biological AND BOTANICAL information for the purposes of increasing the number of individuals within species and populations of wildlife AND PLANTS up to the optimum carrying capacity of their habitat and maintaining such levels. The term includes the entire range of activities that constitute a modern, scientific resource program including, but not limited to, research, census, law enforcement, habitat acquisition and improvement, and education. Also included within the term, when and where appropriate, is the periodic or total protection of species or populations.

(8) "Threatened species" means any species or subspecies of wildlife OR PLANT which is not in immediate jeopardy of extinction but is vulnerable because it exists in such small numbers or is so extremely restricted throughout all or a significant portion of its range that it may become endangered.

33-8-105. Endangered or threatened species. (1) On the basis of investigations of nongame wildlife AND PLANTS provided for in section 33-8-104 and other available scientific and commercial data and after consultation with other state wildlife agencies, appropriate federal agencies, and other interested persons and organizations, the commission shall by regulation establish a list of those species and, where necessary, subspecies of wildlife AND PLANTS indigenous to this state which are determined to be endangered or threatened within this state, giving their common and scientific names by species and, where necessary, by subspecies.

MARSHELDER - IVA XANTHIFOLIA

The following article is an excerpt from "WEEDS, A GUIDE FOR DYERS AND HERBALISTS" by Anne Bliss and Juniper House, Boulder.

Marshelders love wet feet in the spring and early summer. For this reason they are often found growing alongside the shoreline of irrigation reservoirs and on ditchbanks. The Giant Marshelder (*Iva xanthifolia*) has large sunflower-like leaves; they are usually serrated on the edge, hairy, and ovate. These plants have taproots and woody stems which are stiff and widely branched. Flowers of the Marshelder strongly resemble those of the Ragweeds to whose family they belong in the order of the Compositae. Marshelder flowers are tiny, light yellow-green, have no petals, and grow in spikelets toward the top of the tall (to 8 feet) stalk.

These plants are not much favored by livestock or humans. Their pollen is irritating to some people; they use a lot of valuable water intended for irrigation purposes; and, while one might seek shade beneath them, they are not particularly handsome. The average gardener would not want a Marshelder growing in the flower bed.

Marshelders are considered native to west-central North America, and they have been found in the Northeastern United States and Canada as well. One plant (stems, leaves, flowers) will more than fill the dye pot and give these colors.

Alum: light gold	Tin: yellow
Chrome: tan	Iron: soft grey-green
Copper: olive	No Mordant: blah beige
Lightfastness: very slight fading	

---copyright Anne Bliss 1978

MARSHELDER - A WEED AND A NATIVE PLANT

To most members the Colorado Native Plant Society calls to mind the rare and the beautiful in the plant life of Colorado. Weeds would not be, generally speaking, part of the group. Plants thought of as weeds enjoy little time and attention unless it's negative and hateful. They are too commonplace, possess little beauty, and are labeled pests.

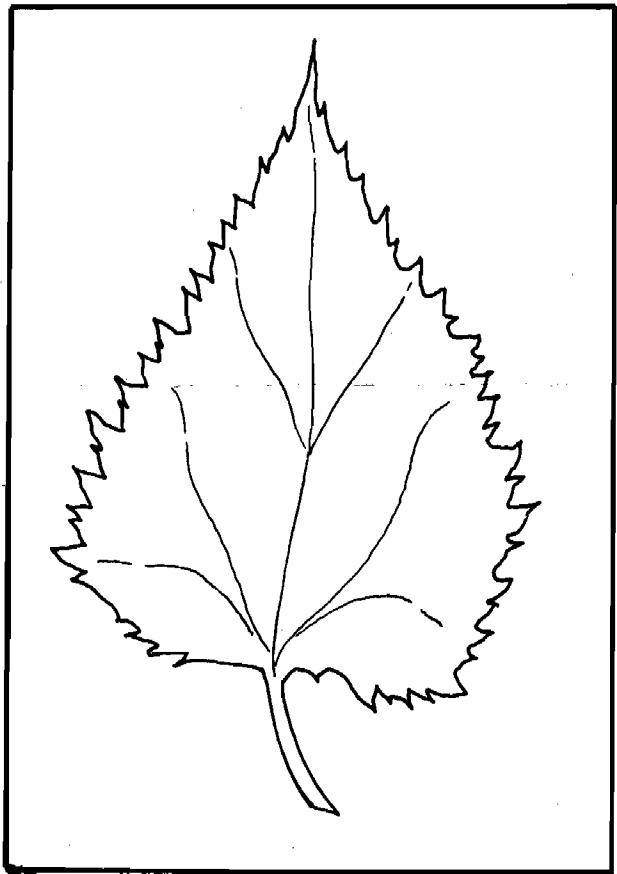
A Colorado native plant with a high "weed image rating" is tall MARSH-ELDER (*Iva xanthifolia* Nutt). Bearing evidence of its weed image are its several common names--GIANT POVERTY-WEED, GIANT FALSE RAGWEED, CARELESS WEED and, where some of us came from, it was HORSEWEED. Other coarse, stout plants are called HORSEWEEDS but these grow tall enough to hide horses. Several floras and weed handbooks describe the plant as growing up to 7 feet high. Nebraska Weeds gives its height to 8 feet! Thanks to fertile bottom-

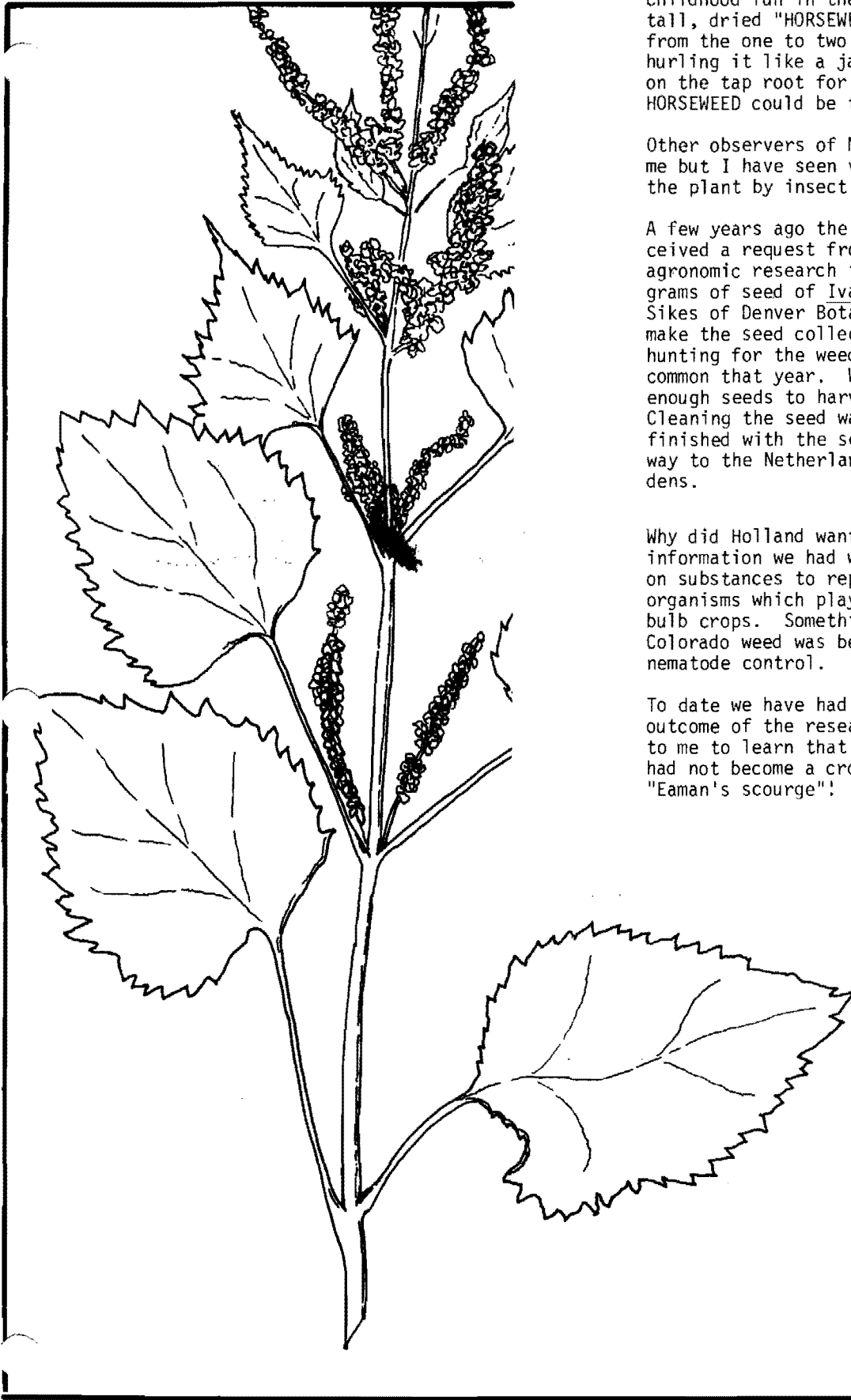
land soils when or where there is extra moisture, TALL MARSH-ELDERS, with a good start in the spring, can grow 7 feet high in less than 120 days.

The Nutt. after the scientific name suggests something about the early distribution of *Iva xanthifolia*. Thomas Nuttall in the early 1800's collected and described the plant, which is a fairly good indication that it grew deep in the interior of the nation and was not a part of the colonial American landscape. If it were an Eastern American plant, it would, very likely, have had a capital L. for Linnaeus. The National List of Scientific Plant Names by the Soil Conservation Service, 1971, notes the distribution as in all regions of the United States except the Northeast and Southeast.

Like other weeds of the wind pollinated ragweed subtribe of Asteraceae, TALL MARSH-ELDERS are notorious for hay fever sufferers. These weeds flower at the same time as goldenrods. The more showy goldenrods get the blame for hay fever but their heavy, oily pollen is transported by insects while ragweed pollen goes with the wind.

The name *xanthifolia* signifies the similarity of the leaves to the COCKLE-BUR (*Xanthium*) but the large, coarsely toothed, blue-green leaves more nearly resemble those of the KANSAS SUNFLOWER.





Childhood fun in the fall included pulling up a tall, dried "HORSEWEED", stripping the leaves from the one to two inch diameter stalk and hurling it like a javelin. With some soil held on the tap root for weight, a good, straight HORSEWEED could be thrown 40 to 50 yards.

Other observers of MARSH-ELDERS may differ with me but I have seen very little consumption of the plant by insect, mammal or whatever.

A few years ago the Denver Botanic Garden received a request from a plant scientist, doing agronomic research in Holland, who wanted 50 grams of seed of *Iva xanthifolia*. Margaret Sikes of Denver Botanic Gardens asked if I could make the seed collection. So our family started hunting for the weed and found them not all too common that year. With persistence we found enough seeds to harvest the amount wanted. Cleaning the seed was a pretty sneezy job but we finished with the seed in a container and on its way to the Netherlands via Denver Botanic Gardens.

Why did Holland want the seed of this weed? The information we had was that it was for research on substances to repel or arrest soil nematodes--organisms which play havoc with Holland's famous bulb crops. Something produced by our native Colorado weed was believed to be effective in nematode control.

To date we have had no news, pro or con, on the outcome of the research. It would be a relief to me to learn that it had behaved itself and had not become a crop pest known over there as "Eaman's scourge".

---Tom Eaman