

SARRACENIA

Newsletter of the Canadian
Wildflower Society,
Newfoundland Chapter.

Spring 1991.



SPRING MEETINGS

Please note change of date for April Meeting

Meetings are at 8.00p.m., in Room S3125A, Science Building, MUN.

April 30th.....Wetland Ecology: a talk by Doyle Wells

May 21st.....Sue's Spring Flowers Identification Workshop

The Annual General Meeting will also be on May 21st.

Goowiddy - News from the President.....Judith Quigley

Spring, that most elusive of seasons in Newfoundland, is officially here! The cold, foggy days belie that fact, but the sunny days hold a promise of things to come. I've seen Pussy Willows coming into bloom, and the warmth of the April sunshine wakens my winter-lazy body and mind to thoughts of gardening.

Spring also heralds an important event for our chapter of the C.W.S. The Annual General Meeting (May 21st) is a time for reorganisation and planning. All of us can play a part in keeping our chapter active and interesting, so please consider volunteering or nominating someone for the position of President, Secretary, Treasurer or Director. Anne Marie Madden (737 8590) has agreed to be our Nominating Officer and will be pleased to accept your nominations. Please come along to hear how we are doing, express your commitment to the wildflowers of this province, and enjoy Sue Meades's workshop on identifying spring flowers.

There is some wildflower conservation news of note -- as part of the Provincial Government's commitment to our natural heritage, a number of provisional and actual Ecological Reserves have recently been established.

In November of 1990, Watt's Point Calcareous Barrens Ecological Reserve was declared, ensuring the protection of this

Nothern Peninsula limestone site which is home to such wonderful plants as the Mountain Avens (Dryas integrifolia), Purple Mountain Saxifrage (Saxifraga oppositifolia), the Greenland Primrose (Primula egaliksensis), the Yellow Lady's Slipper (Cypripedium calceolus var. planipetalum).

In May of 1990, West Brook, an area with the largest stand complex of Red Pine (Pinus resinosa) in the Province was designated as a Provisional Ecological Reserve. Hawke Hills was finally established as Provisional Ecological Reserve in June of last year. Hawke Hills is the most easterly example of climatic arctic alpine vegetation in North America, and as those of you who attended the March meeting will know, it is home to such exciting plants as Diapensia (Diapensia lapponica).

We must express our approval of such designations, and in the case of provisional reserves, show our support for their designation as actual ecological reserves with adequate protection and enforcement.

As you get all enthused with spring and your garden, don't forget our April and May meetings, and prepare yourself for a great season of field trips. The committee would like to hear from members about possible locations of prospective field trips. Where do you go to see your favourite flowers bloom? Tell us at the next meeting or phone. (Janet Craske at 895-2071 will take all messages)

The Botany Column.....Peter J. Scott

The plants are in waiting and all admirers of wildflowers are eagerly awaiting the first flowers and first unfolding buds. Several people have commented to me about the largeness of some of the buds; for example, on the currants. I suspect that these are reflections of the past autumn rather than the present state of the climate. Last autumn was unusually (I use that word reluctantly - is there anything 'usual' about our weather?) warm and several of the plants which I observed were almost resuming growth. We will have to check carefully for damage in the spring. This may be a winter which eliminates plants that have strayed beyond their normal range. When the flora is analyzed, there are usually several species which are usually found to the south where the climate is more gentle and they are eliminated every so often when there is a more-severe-than-usual winter (or summer). They will usually return and are just an aspect of the dynamics of any flora.

As spring approaches, the first flowers are anticipated and in the past I have kept records of such dates. There are shortcomings in this and as a society quite serious about plants I would like to suggest that we become organized. Most people have their favourite haunts and visit these regularly. It would be extremely useful for our knowledge of the flora to have the blooming dates of the plants recorded so that they can be compared from year to year. My previous records were from all over and hard to compare. I propose that this year all those who

are interested should begin to keep records from their favourite walks. The information collected should include the species of plant (see me or send in a specimen if you are not sure), the date of the first flower (if a shrub like alder or willow look for pollen being shed. For the usual sort of flowers, they should be fully open), the last flower, reblooming late in the season, any other information which will reflect peculiarities in the weather, etc. An exact location is important. It would be really useful if people keeping records would place a copy in the Agnes Marion Ayre Herbarium (I am curator) as we are trying to collect all possible information about the flora. My mailing address is: Peter Scott, Department of Biology, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1B 3X9.

The first flower to watch for is Crowberry which often blooms early in March. This requires a close squint as the flowers are really small and the male and female flowers are on different shrubs. There is a rush of blooming after that as plants get going to make sure that the seeds will have enough time to mature and be dispersed.

Ready? Poised? Welcome, Spring!

Wildflowers through the lens.....by Lydia Snellen

By the time you read this you will have identified every winter-twig in your area, and you must be longing for some wildflowers to appear. Perhaps you will even want to capture them on film.

The first flower near St. John's I ever came upon and photographed in March 1984, was the Witch-hazel (Hamamelis sp., in Bowring Park, near the Caribou statue; not native), but it does not always bloom that early; it depends, of course, on our "spring" weather. Another early flower is the Coltsfoot (Tussilago farfara), which can be found and "shot" along roadsides, in April or early May. From then on new subjects will burst into bloom in rapid succession.

Wild flowers are photographed for different reasons. Most of us just want to record their beauty for a year-round enjoyment. Some of us may want to identify a specimen later on. And I know of one person, who shoots every plant in sight for his Wildflower Collection.

Whatever your reasons for wildflower photography, here are some things to consider.

1. CAMERA. You do not have to buy a Nikon! Nowadays most SLR 35mm cameras are excellent. The important thing is to know your camera (read the manual). Find out what it can and cannot do. Learn how you can control the "depth of field", by using different lens openings (f-stops) and shutter speeds.

2. LENS. A "normal", 50mm lens is sufficient for large subjects, like our Sarracenia. For smaller flowers you will need some sort of close-up equipment. There are several possibilities: Buy some

screw-on close-up lenses, or a few extension tubes, as additions to your 50mm lens; Or buy a special Macro-lens (50mm or 100mm), which is more expensive, but easier to use in the field.

3. TRIPOD. For close-ups you must avoid camera shake. One way to do this is to use faster film (200 or 400 ISO), which is grainier than the slower films (100, 64 or 50 ISO). The other way is to support your camera when you take a picture. Serious nature photographers are usually burdened with heavy, sophisticated tripods. But there are various lighter and smaller ("table-top") tripods, which can suffice. When you find yourself without a tripod, it is sometimes possible to steady your camera by placing it on a rock, a treestump or anything at hand.

4. KNEELING PAD. Wildflowers, like children, look best when photographed at their own level. This simply means you have to stoop, squat, kneel or lie down while taking their photograph. Personally I prefer kneeling, but my knees don't! Therefore I carry a piece of foam plastic with me. It fits in a plastic shopping bag. When not in use it dangles from a piece of string around my waist (now I can also sit on rocky ground without discomfort). If you plan to lie on your tummy in the morning dew, or in abog, it is wise to bring a large piece of plastic along as well.

5. SUBJECT. Always try to find a fresh looking specimen and look at it from different angles before you shoot it, considering the best background (see 7) and lighting (see 8). It is good to take a few different shots. Don't forget to include some leaves with a flower close-up if you want to identify the plant later.

6. GARDENING. Make sure there is no "clutter" between your subject and the camera lens. This does not mean pulling out all the other plants around it! Without any harm to the environment you can a) remove distracting dead twigs and leaves, b) press or tape down the unwanted plants obscuring your subject, c) cut off the grassblades in front of your lens. A little "gardening" can greatly improve your photograph.

7. BACKGROUND. Try to keep the background simple! This will give your subject more impact. With the use of string or tape, distracting stems and branches behind the subject can often, temporarily, be pulled out of sight. When your flower is "sidelit" by the sun it is sometimes possible to keep the background in the shade, thus making it almost black. (Ask a partner to throw his or her shadow on the area behind the flower.)

On dull days you can try to "throw the background out of focus", by using a wide lens opening (small f-stop). This technique works only when there is a fair distance between subject and background (the greater the better).

8. LIGHTING. Wrong lighting can ruin an otherwise perfect picture! Professional photographers use either early morning

light (with the bonus of fresh dew drops), or they work with diffused daylight, as on slightly overcast days, thus avoiding the harsh shadows and ugly glare spots, caused by bright sunlight.

Here are some tips for a sunny day:

- a) Don't press the shutter until the sun is at least partly behind a cloud.
- b) Don't shoot with the sun straight behind you. This so called "frontlighting" gives very flat results.
- c) Try to use "sidelighting", which brings out texture in leaves and petals.
- d) Use "backlighting" (sun behind the subject). This can give great effects, and dark backgrounds. Make sure that the sun does not hit your lens! A lenshood alone is not enough. A hand or a hat held above the lens can usually do the trick.

Notes with c and d: In both cases you will get some dark areas on your subject, which you can brighten up by casting extra light on them. This can be done with a reflector (a simple piece of white cardboard will do, or a piece of crumpled aluminium foil), or with a "fill-flash", your flashlight set on low.

9. BOOKS. Most photography handbooks can give you information on "depth of field" and close-up techniques in general. According to our local bookstores there is no special book about wildflower photography. Freeman Patterson's book: "Photography of Natural Things" gives lots of helpful hints for nature-shots of all kinds, and it explains several techniques that are very useful for wildflower shots. There is also a booklet called: "Photographing Wildflowers with Natural Light", by Bernard Jackson. You can buy it at the Field Centre of the MUN Botanical Garden for 25 cents!

10. WIND. The only real handicap in Newfoundland wildflower photography is the wind. I can give three tips for windy days:

- a) Try to find a specimen in a sheltered spot, behind some rocks or shrubs.
- b) Stick to low-growing, sturdy subjects that day.
- c) Forget about your tripod, use fast film, wait for a lull in the wind, shoot and pray for the best!

Seed Collecting.....Canadian Wildflower Society Seed Exchange

(Note from Editor. I received an especial plea for seeds from Gail Rhynard of the CWS Seed Exchange. No-one from Newfoundland donates seeds and as we are an 'exotic locality' any seed from our native plants would be much appreciated. The Guidelines for using such seed means that there would be no damage to the native flora of the recipients. The following notes on seed collecting will be useful to anyone collecting seed, but if any person would be willing to collect a little extra seed for our parent organization please send it to Gail Rhynard, CWS Seed Exchange, 125, Golfview Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2K6.)

Early in the season, choose those plants to be used as a seed source later when the seed ripens, by watching plants as they grow and blossom, and identifying them with a good field guide. Choose plants within each species with vigorous growth habits and large blossoms as those should produce seeds which will grow into equally vigorous plants.

Mark well those plants intended to be used as a seed source, either with a brightly coloured string tied to the main stem of the plant, or a stake or other readily identifiable marker placed at the base of the plant, to enable it to be located later in the season, as plants in seed don't always resemble the same plant in bloom.

Ripened seed can be found approximately a month to six weeks after a plant has bloomed -- several trips may be necessary to get seed at the right stage.

Experience will tell you when the seed is ripe -- seed pods should be dry, berries soft to the touch, seeds of composites (asters, sunflowers etc.) should separate easily from the seed head. Ripe seed is usually black or tan in colour, not green, and in most cases is hard to bite, and there is a fullness, or plumpness about it.

When collecting seed, take along pen or pencil, and a supply of paper or plastic bags (when using plastic, remove the seed immediately upon arriving home as seed freshly picked contains moisture and may mould if left in plastic for even a few days).

Pick no more than 10% of the seed, leaving the rest for natural dispersal and for the birds and small mammals which rely on seed as a food source.

Once the seed is collected and placed in the bag, mark on the bag the name of the plant and its location; it also helps to record growing conditions (rich, humousy soil, full shade; rocky pasture, full sun, sandy soil) for future use, and the date the seed was gathered, as a reference to use in subsequent years when collecting seed from the same species.

Once home, remove seed from bags and dry it thoroughly (for 10 days to 2 weeks) in the open air in shallow containers (saucers, foil pie plates, etc.). Clean seed with a pulpy coating (solomon's seal, jack-in-the-pulpit, etc.) before drying; once dried, separate other seeds from hulls and seed pods.

Seed should be placed in envelopes or plastic bags (pill bottles, film containers work well) with the original information (name, location, date collected) recorded on each seed package, and stored in the refrigerator in an air-tight container such as a glass jar. Seed stored this way at a low temperature and low humidity will remain viable for two to three years.

Publication Notice.....From Peter J. Scott

Rare Vascular Plants in Canada - Our Natural Heritage, by George W. Argus and Kathleen M. Fryer. Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa. 191 pp + maps. (1990). This publication on the status of

rare vascular plants in Canada is the culmination of 17 years of research supported and encouraged by the Rare and Endangered Plants Project of the Canadian Museum of Nature. It is based largely on previously published rare plants lists, but additions and deletions have been made. This annotated list treats 1010 rare Canadian species, comprising 25-30% of the Canadian flora. Documentation for treating each species as rare in Canada is given. In addition, each species is placed into an international context by its Nature Conservancy rank, given at global, national and sub-national levels, and its Canadian conservation priority. A range map for each species, plotted at the province, territory and state level, indicates its general North American range. As well as the main annotated list there are sub-lists arranged by family, province and territory, and priority class, and a list of rare Canadian endemics.

This publication is available, in English or in French from: The Museum Boutique, Canadian Museum of Nature, P.O. Box 3443, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6P4. The price is \$16.96 including postage, handling and GST.

The Multiflora Rose and Other Roses of Western Newfoundland

.....by Henry Mann

Numerous plants have been introduced to the Island since Europeans first settled our shores. Many of these were domesticated species whose survival depended upon continuous cultivation and care, but others like the weeds, forage grasses and clovers became established and spread wherever suitable habitat could be found. Roses have always had a special association with humans so it is not unexpected that a number of species and varieties of the hardy shrub type of rose can be found throughout the province in villages and around abandoned homesteads. A few of these have even escaped cultivation and are showing themselves capable of reproduction away from the sites of original introduction. One such introduced species capable of spreading on its own is the Multiflora Rose (Rosa multiflora Thunb.). On July 22, 1982, a number of plants in the early stages of flowering were observed on a raised exposed grassy bank of the Grand Conroy River in the vicinity of the Grand Conroy Provincial Park. Most of these shrubs were less than a metre tall but their size did not appear to be directly related to their age as broken and dead canes gave evidence of winter kill. The location and exposure was such that that these plants would experience the full blast of westerly winds which can be a considerable problem for exposed species in the Valley. A small shoot was dug from one of the plants and transplanted to my former garden at 12 Wells Dale, Pasadena, where it is still flourishing in the sheltered back yard. Here it has grown to a bushy vigorous shrub with arching canes in excess of two metres and each year provides a showy bloom in July. The Codroy plants do not appear to have been planted in their observed location so they probably have been disseminated from garden plantings by birds who feed on the numerous small fruits (hips). Whether it is more widespread in

the Valley than this one location is unknown at present.

The Multiflora Rose can readily be distinguished from our native species and from other escaped introduced species. Its flowers are small (2-4 cm across), mostly white or very faint pink, and are borne in large clusters (panicles) as illustrated in Figure 1. Fruits are small (about 0.8 cm diameter) and almost spherical, bright red, without sepals, and often lasting throughout the winter. The leaves are typically rose-like of 7 or 9 leaflets, but the stipules at the petiole base are distinct with their fringe of long narrow segments. In sheltered rich locations the Multiflora can grow in excess of two metres, but because it produces long, thin, flexible canes like that of a climber, its branches often arch and droop forming bushy dense thickets with neighbouring plants. Its stems are beset with scattered stiff thorns which make thickets impenetrable to large predators. For this reason it has been planted as a refuge for birds and small mammals.

~~Rosa multiflora~~ was originally introduced from eastern Asia, especially from Japan, resulting in one of its common names "Japanese Rose". However, several other roses also share the name Japanese Rose. At present it is distributed throughout most of the U.S. and southern Canada except in the dry central plains, the desert regions, and the sub-tropics. Because it easily spreads by seed, it is even considered a weed in parts of the U.S where climate and soils allow for a more vigorous growth. Facilitating its spread throughout North America was (and still is) the extensive use of its hardy rootstocks upon which to graft less vigorous ornamental roses.

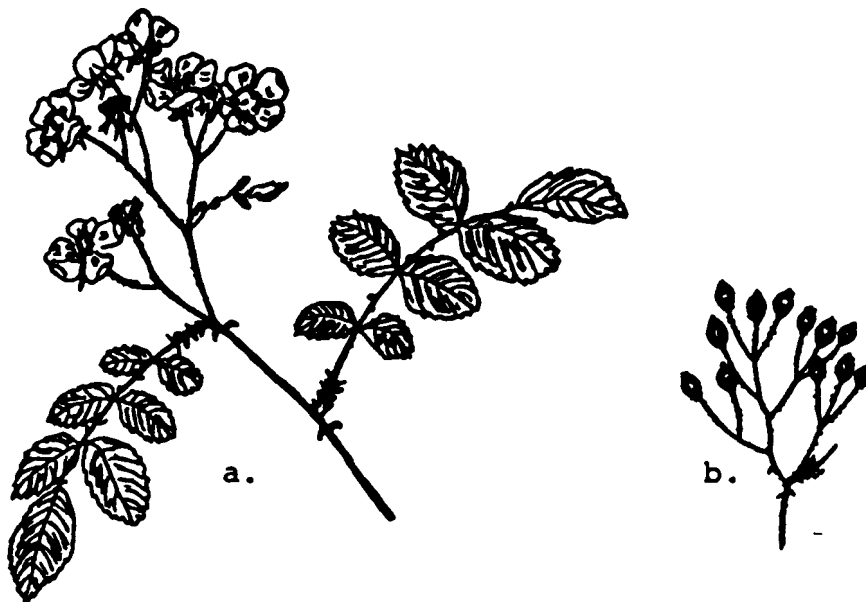


Figure 1. Rosa multiflora Thunb.

a. Flowering branch. b. Cluster of fruits.
(Redrawn from Common Weeds of the United States,
USDA)

In 1989 I started two plants from seed here in my present location 2-Fourth Avenue, Pasadena. The young shrubs are flourishing in the sheltered backyard and should attain a mature stature in two or three more years. Since arriving in Pasadena in 1975, I have been observing a Multiflora hedge located on Fifth Avenue only a metre or so from the road edge. It suffers mechanical damage from the heavy snow and ice load deposited by snowploughs each winter. However, each year it vigorously rebounds and again produces its annual show of blossoms in summer. Perhaps this rose should be considered as a worthy addition by more homeowners for hedging, fencing, and as food, shelter, and nesting sites for small birds and mammals. It certainly provides an impressive display without requiring much care and effort.

Sandy Point in Flat Bay was once a thriving settlement, but now is completely abandoned except for horses and cattle that are pastured there each year. It is essentially a raised vegetated sand bar with active dunes along its western margin. Native and introduced roses still abound in graveyards and abandoned fields and yards throughout the Point. One rose that has escaped its original graveyard planting and is now expanding its territory along the dunes and sandy thickets is the Rugosa Rose (Rosa rugosa Thunb.), also known as the "Japanese Rose".

The Rugosa Rose typically has dark green veined and wrinkled leaflets and deep rose coloured flowers 7 to 12 centimetres across. A white flowering form "Alba" is also available from some nurseries. Rugosa's hips are the largest of any of our roses, being up to 3 centimetres in diameter. They have a high vitamin C content and are especially good for rose hip wine and jellies. I grow a large hipped variety obtained from McConnells Nursery which is billed in their catalogue as "The Vitamin C Rose". The petals are also very fragrant and good for sachets, rosewater and other uses. This is another rose that is extremely hardy and commonly planted in villages throughout western Newfoundland. Being very tolerant of salt spray, it readily escapes into coastal dunes. Its large orange to red hips and its coastal hardiness have earned it the common name "Sea Tomato" in some parts of North America.

Other introduced roses also occur on Sandy Point including a bright yellow flowering shrub of approximately one metre in height, and a short pink rose of one half metre with numerous tightly packed petals like those of the cabbage roses. It would probably require a rose specialist to identify these varieties as well as some of the other horticultural types encountered in villages and abandoned places elsewhere. These two have survived unattended in their island home for perhaps thirty years now, but most horticultural varieties cannot reproduce successfully or compete with the native vegetation indefinitely.

Throughout western Newfoundland a vigorous, robust, double white rose flourishes in villages and sometimes along roadsides and in fields. It appears to be a standard heritage rose in our area, passed from family to family and village to village. This bushy shrub grows to about 1.5 metres high and spreads quickly by underground stems. Marie Iams of Pynns Brook cultivates this

variety and suggests that it is probably Blanc Double De Coubert, a hardy *Rugosa* hybrid that became available to gardeners in 1892. One of the maritime growers that still has this variety available is the Corn Hill Nursery in New Brunswick. Its 1991 catalogue describes the rose as follows:

"BLANC DOUBLE DE COUBERT (2b) Cochet-Cochet, France, 1892 (*R. rugosa* x '*Sombreuill*') A vigorous open shrub growing to 2m. Deep green healthy foliage. Ironclad hardy. Flowers are fully double and pure white. Intoxicatingly fragrant (FR-5). One of the finest hardy roses grown. Very popular and highly recommended"

Woody Point on Bonne Bay features an especially lovely and showy golden yellow rose. Obviously this rose proved to be hardy and handsome and so it found its way from household to household throughout the village. I'm sure gardening enthusiasts across Newfoundland would be eager to acquire this beautiful rose if they saw it in bloom.

One should not overlook our two common native roses, the Northeastern Rose or Shining Rose (*Rosa nitida*) and the Virginian Rose (*Rosa virginiana*). Like many of our other shrubs, they can produce especially handsome plantings when grown in uncrowded conditions and in good rich soil. Additionally, they are vigorous, healthy and usually less susceptible to disease and insect damage, ideally suited to our climate. Their smaller single blossoms may at first not seem as appealing as the highly bred horticultural types, but they will soon make their presence appreciated by their colour, fragrance, and abundance.

Not being particularly knowledgeable about roses, especially horticultural varieties, I simply pass the above observations on to readers. It seems, though, that searching out and identifying surviving and flourishing introduced roses would make a very interesting project for some individual or group. An even greater service to Newfoundland would be the collection and propagation of these varieties to determine their relative hardiness and then making them available to gardeners of the province. This is an area where perhaps the Provincial Department of Agriculture should become more active, not only in the promotion, testing and development of ornamentals, but also with fruit trees, nut trees, and vegetables specially selected and bred for climate conditions. It is time to put aside the totally erroneous, but still widely held attitude that little of beauty or economic value can be grown in our climatic conditions and soils.

I would invite readers to comment on my rose observations and hopefully add to them. Keep an eye out for the hardy shrub roses, those not requiring special pampering in our climate. Often people growing them will be able to supply some information about their hardiness, variety status and possible origin. Much of the botanical history and associated folklore of the Island is still unwritten, the roses alone could probably add an interesting chapter.

Report from the Botanical Garden.....Anne Marie Madden

Many people assume that winter is a rather quiet and inactive time at a Botanical Garden. Certainly there are no flowers in bloom, and our trails are devoid of visitors. But indoors, the staff of the Botanical Garden are very busy planning, organizing, and preparing for the upcoming season. And this season promises to be a very special one.

Among the many upcoming events at the Garden, perhaps of special interest to wildflower members are two courses co-sponsored by the Newfoundland Chapter of the Wildflower Society and the Botanical Garden. During the weekend of June 22 and 23, Sue Meades will be holding a workshop entitled "Basic Plant Identification". This practical workshop in keying and identifying wild plants will involve both basic plant identification principles and hands-on experience. The fee for wildflower members and students is \$15.00. For more information, please contact the Botanical Garden at 737-8590.

Sue will also be teaching a "Winter Botany" workshop at the Botanical Garden on Thursday evening, April 4. Participants will learn to key and identify winter twigs. The fee is just \$5.00.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of Memorial University Botanical Garden. On May 15, 1971, the University undertook to create a botanical garden in an area that has grown from approximately three acres, to its present size of 44 hectares (110 acres). In conjunction with our anniversary, we hope to open an alpine house, which is a green house used to exhibit unusual and often difficult to grow alpine and saxatile plants. And for those interested in rock gardening, work will continue on both the extension of our rock garden and the planting of the newly created limestone garden.

This summer will also see the creation of a wildlife garden. This is a special project of our volunteers, the Friends of the Garden. So if you're interested in providing your energy, expertise, or enthusiasm in our new garden, please contact Gerry Yetman, Technical Coordinator for the Garden.

Some new publications will also be made available this season. A second edition of the ever popular Growing Herbaceous Perennials in Newfoundland by Bernard Jackson, (Curator of the Garden), will be offered this season. As mentioned in the last issue of this newsletter, a booklet on the wildflowers of the Garden will also be made available.

Every season, the interpretive program at the Garden is greatly enhanced by the efforts of the Friends of the Garden, and this year is no exception. The very popular Sunday Morning Birdwatch, led by Howard Clase, will continue this year, as will the guided tours, the Wildflower Walks (thanks to Todd Boland), the Dried Flower Workshop, and many other events. And hopefully, shows will once again be presented by the Newfoundland Orchid Society and the Floral Art Group of the Newfoundland Horticultural Society. One date to note is the weekend of May 25 - 26. The Newfoundland Horticultural Society will be having their Spring Flower Show. This show is always an excellent way to shake away the winter doldrums and enjoy all the sights and

smells of spring.

Our list of activities certainly does not stop there. So this spring, drop by or call the Botanical Garden for a complete listing of our calendar of events. We open to the public Wednesday, May 1 and our hours will be 10:00 - 5:30, Wednesday-Sunday, until the end of November. And if you, or a group wish to book the Garden for a special event or tour, please let us know as soon as possible. We look forward to hearing from you!

Thoughts from the editor.....Janet Craske

Many thanks to all contributors. Without you the pages would be blank! As our thoughts turn to the summer please share with us all, the many walks that you take to look at wildflowers. In the winter newsletter Pat Leader wrote about the Gallows Cove walk. One walk I thought I knew, but I learnt that it was possible to go north along the coast from the Gallows Cove track. So please help us all to enjoy your favourite locations.
