

# The Blazing Star



NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

## Native Plant to Know

# Wild Savory

*Calamintha arkansana*

by Charles Kinsley

The word *savory* evokes images of warm, steamy dishes, comforting thoughts of home and hearth. These associations are direct, unambiguous.

Ambiguity is a word easily applied to the plant wild savory, however. More than most of its savage peers, *Calamintha arkansana* has had a checkered career – at least with regards to our understanding of where it fits in.

### WILD SAVORY *aka*

Arkansas Mint  
Calamint  
Limestone Calamint  
Limestone Savory  
Low Calamint  
Niagara Thyme  
Ozark Calamint

Those of us with more than a passing interest in the natural world are used to a certain level of debate and uncertainty regarding taxonomic placement or nomenclature of plant and animal species. So *Hepatica americana* becomes *Anemone americana* even though it's still "commonly" a hepatica. *Felis concolor* (cougar, mountain lion) morphs into *Puma concolor* (or vice versa). To add confusion, different experts don't always agree on the



ILLUSTRATION BY BRIGITTE GRANTON

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Wild Savory (*Calamintha arkansana*)

## The *Blazing Star* is . . .

The *Blazing Star* is published quarterly (April, August, November, February) by the North American Native Plant Society (NANPS). Contact [editor@nanps.org](mailto:editor@nanps.org) for editorial deadlines and for advertising rates.

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of NANPS.

The North American Native Plant Society is dedicated to the study, conservation, cultivation and restoration of North America's native flora.

Winter 2003  
Volume 4, Issue 1

Editor: Irene Fedun  
Production: Bea Paterson

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North American Native Plant Society, formerly Canadian Wildflower Society, is a registered charitable society, no. 130720824. Donations to the society are tax deductible in Canada.

NANPS Membership: CAN\$10/year within Canada, US\$10 year outside Canada

Please make cheques and money orders payable to North American Native Plant Society and mail to P.O. Box 84, Station D, Etobicoke, Ontario M9A 4X1.  
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## From the Editor...

As the new editor of *The Blazing Star* I'm thrilled (perhaps foolishly, judging by the workload) with this great opportunity to learn and contribute. There are several people I would particularly like to thank: Lorraine Johnson for helping so generously to get me going on this first issue, Brigitte Granton for her gorgeous illustrations, Bea Paterson for pulling it all together, Doug Counter for continuing to offer his time and expertise despite

work and activist commitments, Trish Murphy for her deft handling of the Seed Exchange and Deb Dale for patiently shepherding me and the rest of the board through all the challenges a volunteer organization faces. To all the other directors, writers, illustrators, photographers and plant growers, past and present, thank you on behalf of native plant enthusiasts everywhere – you do an amazing job.

*Irene Fedun*

### A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

A belated but heartfelt thanks to Margaret Nodwell for her generous bequest of \$1000 to the North American Native Plant Society. We will miss you, Margaret.

## NANPS Notice Board

**CANADA BLOOMS** – Volunteers needed to help staff the NANPS booth at Canada Blooms from Wednesday, March 12 – Sunday, March 16, 2003 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Free admission to the show to those NANPS members who help out. Botanical knowledge not required – just a friendly smile!  
E-mail [nanps@nanps.org](mailto:nanps@nanps.org) or leave a voice mail message at 416-631-4438.



**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS** – Nominations for the Paul McGaw Memorial Conservation Award are now being accepted. Deadline: April 1st, 2003. The award will be presented at NANPS fall annual general meeting. See website [www.nanps.org](http://www.nanps.org) for details.

**CLEAR CREEK FOREST AND ORFORD RIDGES NATIVE PLANTS NURSERY TOUR** – This is exciting news for NANPS members! Plans are in the works for a field trip to the old growth forest of Clear Creek (notable for its Cucumber Magnolia trees!) followed by a visit to Orford Ridges Native Plants Nursery. Join us as we explore the majesty of 350-year-old oaks, beeches and maples that stretch 100 feet into the sky. Touch the soil, breathe the air, see the place these trees have called home for centuries. Experience a healthy forest ecosystem.

This trip is for NANPS members only. Seating will be limited. Watch our website [www.nanps.org](http://www.nanps.org) for complete details and ticket information, or e-mail your desire to participate to [nanps@nanps.org](mailto:nanps@nanps.org) or leave a voice mail message at 416-631-4438.

## NANPS Plant Sale

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2003, 10AM – 4PM  
Civic Garden Centre  
777 Lawrence Avenue East (at Leslie)  
Toronto, Ontario

### Visit NANPS highly anticipated annual plant sale!

- 🌱 thousands of native plants including perennials, shrubs, trees, ferns and grasses
- 🌱 hundreds of gardening books and magazines for beginners and experts
- 🌱 plants grouped by habitat for easy selection
- 🌱 NANPS team of experts on hand to answer questions and offer guidance

Book signing by noted Canadian environmental author Lorraine Johnson from 10:30 – 12:30. Advance ordering is available exclusively to NANPS members. See [www.nanps.org](http://www.nanps.org) for details.

## Sowing the Seed

by Jo Nelson

Ten years ago when we moved into our vintage Toronto house our lawn was so tiny I couldn't see buying a lawnmower. The first year, to the chuckles of my neighbours, I cut the grass with scissors. The second year I decided to turn it into a herb and native plant garden.

The garden has evolved slowly, as I found the time, bringing butterflies and beneficial insects back to our street and – finally – smiles to the faces of my skeptical neighbours. The first couple of years involved lots of hands-on work digging up the grass, double-digging compost, composted manure and peat moss into the clay sub-soil, raising the beds and putting in a curved path.

In my sunny front yard I sowed herbs and native plant seeds obtained from the NANPS

when we bought the house but they've thrived and spread since. I've had little luck with native grasses so far but I keep trying.

The backyard has presented different challenges. It's shaded by a huge old oak (which conveniently provides fall mulch for the gardens). I designed a gently curving bed along the north side and built a flagstone pathway leading to a small patio. The prize specimen there is a red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) purchased from LEAF (an urban forestry group whose mandate is to restore Toronto's forest canopy and understorey by selling native trees and shrubs to homeowners at subsidized rates). Sweetgrass (*Hierochloa odorata*) continues to grow near the fence although it prefers more moisture than it gets and goes dormant in the hot dry days of July and August. Butterflyweed (*Asclepias*

A large moist, acidic planter with New York ferns (*Thelypteris noveboracensis*) and blue flag (*Iris versicolor*) stands in a sunnier location. I have the NANPS spring plant sale to thank for many of these wonderful plants.

One of my neighbours – another native plant enthusiast – has gradually transformed his backyard into a small forest. In 2000 both he and I received ecological garden awards from the Friends of the Don East. A distinct plus as I continue to promote native plant gardening to my less-enthusiastic neighbours. (I even hauled out one of Lorraine Johnson's books to reassure one worried passerby that goldenrod does not cause hayfever.) Still, they've gradually become more interested and make it a point to compliment the blooms, while I work hard to keep the plants from becoming too exuberant and taking over the sidewalk. Slowly, my garden and my enthusiasm are making an impact as the boring front lawns in my neighbourhood start to disappear.

The Blazing Star welcomes stories from members across the continent whose native gardening experiences have made a difference in their lives and the community at large. Send your articles to [editor@nanps.org](mailto:editor@nanps.org).



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY JO NELSON

*Echinacea purpurea*

Seed Exchange. Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) was one of the first and it's grown into a glorious stand. Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*) has also done well along with a host of herbs which, although alien, still bring out the butterflies. Later in the season come goldenrod (no doubt the ubiquitous *Solidago canadensis*) and deep purple New England asters (*Aster novae angliae*). They were there

*tuberosa*) blooms, though not profusely, in a less-than-ideal spot with three-four hours of sun and a couple more of dappled shade.

Nodding wild onion (*Allium cernuum*) gets early spring sun but is deeply shaded once the oak and raspberries leaf out. The blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium sp.*) fares a bit better with a couple of hours of sun and dappled shade for the rest of the day. Still, both produce flowers.

### In the News

Ontario wilderness faces a new threat under the proposed Recreation Reserve Act. If passed, this legislation will guarantee motorized access into the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site, one of the last vast tracts of wilderness in southern Ontario. While Kawartha is the initial site, the Ministry of Natural Resources appears poised to use the "recreation reserve" designation for other protected areas including the Algoma Highlands, the Spanish River Valley and Killarney Provincial Park. Allowing high-impact motorized recreation and associated commercial development in areas apparently protected under the Ontario Living Legacy program would result in species loss and ecosystem degradation.

To obtain further information or register your concerns visit <http://www.wildcanada.net/ontarioparks>.

# Winter Interest



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY DREW MONTHIE

*Cassia hebecarpa*, *Rudbeckia laciniata* and *Rudbeckia triloba* in a winter garden.

by Drew Monthie

Winter – the season when nothing grows and I spend much of my time watching birds and gazing out at my dormant garden - is undeniably long here in upstate New York. Whereas it used to be reliably cold and snowy, the weather has become unpredictable. In 2001 and 2002 the temperature was above average with little or no snow. This winter has been just the opposite, and it looks like the snow and cold have settled in for a long stay.

From my home in Queensbury, NY (USDA Zone 4), near the southern edge of Adirondack Park, as far south as Albany, the state capital, was once a vast lake, known to geologists as Lake Albany. The resulting soil – or rather beach sand – is obviously well-drained, but lacking in organic matter and nutrients. When we hear other gardeners complain about their soil a local gardening friend and I respond with our running joke: "Soil? You have soil!" Despite this shortcoming our region is one of incredible beauty.

My own property is comprised of a little over two acres. In the back is about one acre of mature hemlock forest and a large brook that runs year round. The front is open land that was once mostly (poor) turf grass. I have grad-

ually been reclaiming it for my garden and as habitat for birds. To sustain me through the long winter I depend upon the visual interest of stalks, seed pods, and berries. Some of the plants I grow are as stunning in winter as in summer.

Grasses are one of the most interesting plants in the winter landscape. Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) turns a beautiful russet in fall then golden brown in winter. The five-foot stalks sway above the snow (until it becomes too deep) showing off their seed heads for goldfinches to feast on. Another grass that I love is northern sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*). The fluttering seeds rustle in the wind and remind me that there is indeed a garden beneath my vast tundra. A note of caution to gardeners with real soil: *Chasmanthium* is invasive in nutrient-rich soil - obviously not a problem here.

I love composite flowers and have lots of *Rudbeckia* and *Helianthus* in my garden. Brown-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia triloba*) and cutleaf or green-headed coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) have wonderful seed heads that gently sway in the wind, also feeding the birds. Maximilian's sunflower (*Helianthus maximiliani*) is an impressive plant in my summer garden reaching a height of eight feet. Its stur-

dy stems arch slightly at this height, but I have never had to stake them, nor have they ever broken. Some years it blooms in late September, some years in October. A profusion of two-inch sunflowers appear along the uppermost sections of each stalk and then transform into food for birds. The stems rise high above the snow line and finches and chickadees cling to them as they pick at the seeds. Wild senna (*Cassia hebecarpa*) is another winter winner. Its beautiful compound leaves and yellow flowers so lush in summer are followed by wonderful brown seed pods that flutter and whisper in the harsh winter winds. Its sturdy stems seem to have nine lives as they withstand repeated efforts by wind and snow to flatten them, returning to an upright position time after time.

Trees and shrubs are the structure that tie the garden together; they are truly its "bones" in the mean season. Striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*) grows in profusion in my woods and I have helped it make the transition to the front garden. It is a wonderful small-scale tree whose green and white striped bark stands out in the winter.

Indian currant (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*) is a nondescript green shrub during the growing season, but shines in fall and winter. Usually in late October the reddish-pink berries begin to swell and mature. They cling tightly to the plants until hungry birds begin to cart them off in late winter.

My northern bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) is just beginning to mature. It finally bore beautiful bluish-white berries this year, but the fruit is buried beneath the snowline. Still the coarseness of this plant's stems in the winter landscape provides great visual interest. Its reddish scaled buds are a nice contrast to the white snowy ground. I planted this species to attract cedar waxwings to the garden. I have seen flocks of them feeding on specimens in the wild. Perhaps when the plants attain a little more height I will be rewarded by visits from these gregarious birds. *Myrica* is dioecious so plant two or three (male and female) to ensure fruit set. The plant is also very salt-tolerant, a useful attribute for plantings along winter roads.

All but ignored by the nursery trade (in favour of Asiatic species), the native spireas are wonderfully undemanding small-scale shrubs. Meadowsweet (*Spiraea latifolia*) has



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY DREW MONTHIE

pinkish-white flowers in midsummer, while Steeplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*) has medium pink blooms. With their dried inflorescences visible above the snowline the shrubs retain a subtle beauty through the winter.

I eagerly await the maturation of the many other natives I have added in the form of seedlings and cuttings. Shrubby St. John's-wort (*Hypericum prolificum*) and Kalm's St. John's-wort (*Hypericum kalmianum*) were installed during a summer drought, then experienced a second year of drought. Still, they have survived, happily retaining many of

their upper leaves through the winter. (Too bad they were covered by the last snowfall.)

I fantasize that the yellowroot (*Xanthoriza simplicissima*) I placed on a hillside under some black birch (*Betula lenta*) will one day reward me with the red/purple/bronze leaf displays I have seen in large colonies at Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA. Yellowroot's pinnate leaflets are subtle but highly effective as a tall groundcover (one–two feet high).

Two related natives I've planted specifically for fall and winter interest are strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*) and running straw-

berry bush (*Euonymus obovatus*). The prospect of their bright red seed capsules against my dark hemlock woods is a sight I anticipate with pleasure. Unfortunately most nurseries stock *Euonymus alatus*, the European burning bush, which has shown itself to be highly invasive.

I recently planted winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*) whose brilliant red fruits are sure to attract the robins and bluebirds that overwinter in this area. I hope the purplish plums of my new beach plum (*Prunus maritima*) will help sustain the birds in coming winters too. A seaside plant, *P. maritima* is well-suited to its roadside position in my garden.

Even though my garden is only five years old it presents a beautiful tableau in winter. In years to come the younger plants will surely begin to show off their winter attributes as well.

*Drew Monthie operates a consulting business specializing in native plant design. As the ecologist / plant historian for the Fort Edward Historical Association, he is designing and installing a series of gardens relating to the use and culture of native plants by both indigenous and colonial peoples.*

## Calendar of Events

February 26, 2003

TORONTO WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

Toronto, Ontario

Horticulturalist Henry Kock, Beaches

Recreation Centre, 7:30pm

Call 416-222-5736 or e-mail [cking@yorku.ca](mailto:cking@yorku.ca).

March 7-8, 2003

NATIVE GARDENING WORKSHOPS

Kingston, Ontario

The benefits of native gardens and how-to

workshops on native plant gardening at

Queen's University. Contact Kate Laird at

[lairdk@biology.queensu.ca](mailto:lairdk@biology.queensu.ca).

March 11-13, 2003

WESTERN SOCIETY OF WEED SCIENCE

ANNUAL MEETING

Poipu Beach, Koloa, Hawaii

Contact Wanda Graves at 510-790-1252 or

[Wgraves431@aol.com](mailto:Wgraves431@aol.com).

March 18 and April 15, 2003

BOTANY NIGHTS: OWL-CLOVERS IN VICTORIA

AND BEACH PLANT COMMUNITIES OF THE

WEST COAST OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

Swan Lake Nature House, Victoria,

British Columbia

Contact [aceska@telus.net](mailto:aceska@telus.net) for more info.

March 26-29, 2003

ETHNOBIOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Seattle, Washington

Focusing on what can be learned from differ-

ent cultural knowledge, practices and eco-

nomic systems to address today's

sustainability challenges. Visit [www.ethnobi-](http://www.ethnobiology.org)

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April 13-16, 2003

INAUGURAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON COASTAL AND ESTUARINE HABITAT

RESTORATION

Baltimore, Maryland

See [www.estuaries.org](http://www.estuaries.org)

April 25-26, 2003

SYMPOSIUM ON THE ETHICAL AND SOCIAL

DIMENSIONS OF LANDSCAPE RESTORATION

University of Vermont, Vermont

Contact [rparadis@zoo.uvm.edu](mailto:rparadis@zoo.uvm.edu).

May 10, 2003

NANPS PLANT SALE

Civic Garden Center

Toronto, Ontario

May 29-30, 2003

RESTORATION OF NATIVE MEADOWS COURSE

Rutgers University, New Jersey

For registration info:

<http://cook.rutgers.edu/~ocpe>.

September 13-14, 2003

WILD ONES 2003 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Shaw Nature Reserve, St. Louis, Missouri

Visit [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org) or contact

[dilley.2@osu.edu](mailto:dilley.2@osu.edu) or 614-939-9273.

## NANPS Seed Exchange

The following native species are available to members through the NANPS Seed Exchange. (Members can order seeds without having donated seeds to the Seed Exchange.) See page 8 for ordering details and key to donors.

<i>species</i>	<i>common name</i>	<i>donor</i>	<i>location</i>
<b>Ferns</b>			
<i>Asplenium rhizophyllum</i>	walking fern	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i>	maidenhair spleenwort	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	sensitive fern	cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	common polypody	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<b>Annuals</b>			
<i>Echinocystis lobata</i>	wild cucumber	tm	Humber Valley, ON
<i>Echinocystis lobata</i>	wild cucumber	ba	garden
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	dotted horsemint	nm	garden
<b>Grasses &amp; Sedges</b>			
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	big bluestem	jaf	garden
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	side oats grama	tm	garden
<i>Carex albursina</i>	white bear sedge	tm	garden
<i>Carex greyii</i>	mace sedge	tm	garden
<i>Carex rosea</i>	stellate sedge	tm	garden
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	tm	garden
<i>Elymus riparia</i>	riverbank wild rye	tm	garden
<i>Glyceria striata</i>	fowl manna grass	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Panicum acuminatum</i>	hairy panic grass	tm	garden
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switch grass	jaf/tm	garden
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	little bluestem	jaf/tm	garden
<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	wool grass	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	prairie cord grass	tm	garden
<b>Perennial Flowers</b>			
<i>Actea pachypoda</i>	white baneberry	ba	Otter Lake, PQ
<i>Actea pachypoda</i>	white baneberry	rh	garden
<i>Actea rubra</i>	red baneberry	ba	Otter Lake, PQ
<i>Actea rubra</i>	red baneberry	rh	garden
<i>Allium canadense</i>	common wild onion	jh	garden
<i>Allium cernuum</i>	nodding wild onion	rh/tm	garden
<i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i>	blue-star amsonia	mp/tm	garden
<i>Antennaria plantaginifolia</i>	plantain-leaved pussytoes	tm	garden
<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	spikenard	ba	Deep River, ON
<i>Arisaema atrorubens</i>	Jack-in-the-pulpit	rh	garden
<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	swamp milkweed	mp/tm	garden
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	common milkweed	js	Fenelon Falls, ON
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	butterfly milkweed	bh/jaf/tm	garden
<i>Aster cordifolius</i>	heart-leaved aster	dm	garden
<i>Aster divaricatus</i>	white wood aster	dm	garden
<i>Aster lowrieanus</i>	Lowrie's aster	hm	Beaverton, ON
<i>Aster macrophyllus</i>	big-leaved aster	tm	garden
<i>Aster puniceus</i>	swamp aster	tm	garden
<i>Aster spectabilis</i>	showy aster	nm	garden
<i>Aster umbellatus</i>	flat-topped white aster	hm	Scarborough, ON
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	false indigo	tm	garden
<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	harebell	tm	garden
<i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>	blue cohosh	rh	garden
<i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i>	blue cohosh	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Cassia hebecarpa</i>	wild senna	tm	garden
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	turtlehead	nm	garden
<i>Coreopsis tripteris</i>	tall tickseed	jaf	garden
<i>Desmodium canadense</i>	showy tick-trefoil	tm	garden
<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Joe-Pye weed	ud/tm	garden
<i>Eupatorium rugosum</i>	white snakeroot	tm	Humber Valley, ON
<i>Filipendula rubra</i>	queen-of-the-prairie	ba	garden
<i>Gentiana andrewsii</i>	bottle gentian	dm	garden
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	sneezeweed	tm	garden

<i>species</i>	<i>common name</i>	<i>donor</i>	<i>location</i>
<b>Perennial Flowers, <i>continued</i></b>			
<i>Helianthus giganteus</i>	tall sunflower	nm	garden
<i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	Maximilian's sunflower	lb	garden
<i>Helianthus strumosus</i>	pale-leaved wood sunflower	ud	
<i>Hepatica acutiloba</i>	sharp-lobed hepatica	rh	garden
<i>Hibiscus palustris</i>	swamp rose mallow	hm	Kingsville, ON
<i>Hypericum ascyron</i>	great St. John's-wort	tm	garden
<i>Iris versicolor</i>	blue flag iris	mp/tm	garden
<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	prairie blazing star	nm	garden
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower	vb	Manitoulin Island, ON
<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	great blue lobelia	rh	garden
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	wild bergamot	tm	garden
<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	evening primrose	js	Fenelon Falls, ON
<i>Parnassia glauca</i>	grass of Parnassus	vb	Manitoulin Island, ON
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	foxglove beardtongue	jaf/tm/ud	garden
<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>	hairy beardtongue	tm	garden
<i>Phyrma leptostachya</i>	lopseed	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	American poke	mp/tm	garden
<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	Virginia mountain mint	lb	garden
<i>Pyrola sp.</i>	shinleaf	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	black-eyed Susan	ud	
<i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i>	green-headed coneflower	tm	garden
<i>Rudbeckia triloba</i>	thin-leaved coneflower	tm	garden
<i>Senecio aureus</i>	golden ragwort	tm	garden
<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	compass plant	jaf	garden
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	cup-plant	mp/ud	garden
<i>Silphium terebinthinaceum</i>	prairie dock	mp/jaf	garden
<i>Smilacena racemosa</i>	false Solomon's seal	rh	garden
<i>Smilacena stellata</i>	star-flowered Solomon's seal	rh	garden
<i>Smilax herbacea</i>	carrion flower	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	blue-stemmed goldenrod	tm/cc	Crawford Lake, ON
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	blue-stemmed goldenrod	dm	garden
<i>Solidago flexicaulis</i>	zigzag goldenrod	tm/cc	Crawford Lake, ON
<i>Solidago flexicaulis</i>	zigzag goldenrod	tm	Humber valley, ON
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	stiff-leaved goldenrod	nm	garden
<i>Sparganium eurycarpum</i>	broad-fruited bur-reed	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Thermopsis caroliniana</i>	Carolina lupin	tm	garden
<i>Trillium erectum</i>	red trillium	ba	garden
<i>Verbena hastata</i>	blue vervain	bh/nm	garden
<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i>	wingstem	tm	garden
<i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i>	ironweed	jaf	Stoney Lake. ON
<i>Vernonia sp.</i>	ironweed	dm/tm	garden
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Virginia Culver's-root	dm/tm	garden
<b>Woody</b>			
<i>Andromeda glaucophylla</i>	bog rosemary	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Aralia hispida</i>	bristly sarsaparilla	ba	Deep River, ON
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	black chokeberry	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>	Carolina allspice	tm	garden
<i>Elaeagnus commutata</i>	silverberry	jh	Calgary, AB
<i>Euonymus obovata</i>	running strawberry-bush	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	common juniper	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Nemopanthus mucronatus</i>	mountain holly	tm	Muskoka County, ON
<i>Rubus odoratus</i>	flowering raspberry	ba	Otter Lake, PQ
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	elderberry	ba	Otter Lake, PQ
<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>	bladdernut	tm/cc	Crawford Lake Conservation Area, ON
<i>Viburnum alnifolium</i>	hobblebush	ba	Deep River, ON
<b>Trees</b>			
<i>Acer spicatum</i>	mountain maple	ba	Otter Lake, PQ
<i>Annona muricata</i>	soursop	jh	Dominica, Lesser Antilles, West Indies
<i>Betula nigra</i>	river birch	tm	garden
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	redbud	tm	garden
<i>Cornus florida</i>	flowering dogwood	rw	garden
<i>Pinus strobus</i>	white pine	ba	Petawa, ON

See next page for details on ordering seeds from the NANPS Seed Exchange.

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## Ordering from the NANPS Seed Exchange

Please include the following information with your request for seeds: your name and mailing address, the species you'd like (in alphabetical order by botanical name please – this saves us an immense amount of time) and any substitutes you'd like, in case we are out of a particular species. List substitutes in order of preference and remember, the more you list, the more opportunity we have to be generous. If you'd prefer seed from a specific source, please note that with your order. We'll endeavour to accommodate your request, though in some cases our supply of a particular batch of seed is limited.

You may request up to 15 packets, 30 if you donated seed or spores to the Seed Exchange this year. Include \$1 for the first packet and 50 cents for each additional packet – Canadian funds in Canada, U.S. funds for U.S. requests to cover higher postage costs. If you are using the seed for a naturalization project or for educational or scientific purposes, we'd love

to hear about it.

Send your request to NANPS Seed Exchange, P.O. Box 84, Station D, Etobicoke, Ontario M9A 4X1. Inquiries can also be made by e-mail: seeds@nanps.org.

**Note:** We list the seeds the way they were described to us by donors. Chances are, most are accurately described, but mistakes happen. If no details on the source were provided by donors we have listed the seed as sourced from a garden rather than from the wild.

Please send in your requests for seed before May 1, 2003. Due to the vastly increased scale of the seed exchange we will be streamlining our operation. Details (including dates) will be announced in the next *Blazing Star* along with a list of late-arriving and spring-collected seeds. Please keep those seeds coming!



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# Coming soon to a museum near you

by Lorraine Brown

Green Legacy is a travelling exhibit on Canada's native plants, sponsored by the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, Ontario and the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) in Burlington/Hamilton, Ontario. The exhibit will tour Canada for three years before settling at its permanent RBG venue in 2005.

A family-oriented bilingual exhibit, Green Legacy explores the beauty, diversity and vulnerability of Canada's native plants and addresses concerns over endangered species and the survival and recovery of threatened plants. It generates awareness of the natural and man-made causes of rarity among wild plants and the loss of biodiversity. By profiling

how plants move both as individuals (through excellent time-lapse footage purchased from the BBC) and as communities.

In the third theme native plants work for us – as foods, medicines, building materials and other useful items. As parts of complex ecosystems they offer many services to humans including filtering our air and water.

Interactive exhibits in theme four demonstrate the perils faced by our native plants. And the final theme looks at how we are safeguarding our green legacy. This section showcases individuals all across Canada who are working to preserve native plants and their habitats and foster their spread.

The Green Legacy exhibit itinerary still has some time slots available. If you'd like to learn



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY LORRAINE BROWN

efforts to protect and recover species at risk, it encourages visitors to take responsibility for the fate of our native plantscapes.

The 1,500-square-foot exhibit has five themes. The first explores the role of native plants in creating our sense of place. It features a Hall of Fame for Canada's native plants, ranging from our oldest living tree, the eastern white cedar, to the world's smallest flowering plant, watermeal.

The second theme deals with how plant communities change over time. It looks at

more visit [www.rbg.ca/greenlegacy](http://www.rbg.ca/greenlegacy) or check out the Canadian Museum of Nature's site at [www.nature.ca/exhibits/trvgrnlgy\\_e.cfm](http://www.nature.ca/exhibits/trvgrnlgy_e.cfm) to find out about leasing the exhibit.

*Lorraine Brown is a museum exhibit planner who runs her business, *Apropos Planning*, from a farmhouse north of Owen Sound, Ontario where she and her husband are developing a tallgrass prairie. Lorraine was the interpretive planner for the *Green Legacy* exhibit.*

## New & Noted

*An Eclectic Guide to Trees East of the Rockies*  
By Glen Blouin (Erin, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, 2001. 280 pages, p.b., \$19.95 US, \$29.95 CDN, ISBN 1-55046-351-9)

Eclectic is right—this is a tree guide full of personality. You can use it just for identification purposes, with its multiple photographs for each species and its useful descriptions, but the real treasure of the book is in its "relevant digressions" sections. For almost 50 major tree species east of the Rocky Mountains, the author writes spirited accounts of each tree's history, use and significance in the broad cultural and natural context. Ethnobotanical information, recommendations for planting and care, details on insects and diseases, sections on range, habitat and interspecies interaction are all woven together with a highly readable style. Just one example: "To plant a white oak, one requires three things—selflessness, lots of space, and an acorn."

Review by Lorraine Johnson

## Green Legacy Itinerary

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE  
Ottawa, ON  
May – Sept 2, 2002

MAISON D'ARBRE  
Montréal, PQ  
Nov 15, 2002– Mar 9, 2003

MONCTON MUSEUM  
Moncton, NB  
April 5, 2003 – July 1, 2003

PARKS CANADA  
PEI  
July – Oct 2003

Trois-Rivières, PQ  
Dec 15, 2003 – May 23, 2004

WOODSTOCK MUSEUM  
Woodstock, ON  
June – Aug 2004

WESTERN FAIR  
London, ON  
Sept 2004

# Drawing Spring Blossoms

at Carlsbad Caverns National Park

by Donald Davidson

Tourists, locals and out-of-towners alike flock to Carlsbad Caverns National Park (CAVE) in New Mexico year-round to see the awesome beauty of the caves. Scientists frequently come for several days at a time to study the many minuscule organisms that grow in the cold, dark, wet spaces underground. Bat lovers and birders come during the warmer months to experience the crazed bursts of flight that occur at both dawn and dusk. What few visitors spend time on, let alone know, is that the 46,000+ acres of CAVE above ground serves as a vital habitat for some 1,000 species of flowering plants.

With so many native plants, I was rewarded with ample opportunities to study wildflowers in bloom during a two-week artist residency last April at CAVE, despite the general drought conditions of early 2002. In fact many incredible wildflowers could be found right along the roadside that lead into and out of the park.

On day one, before I'd even checked in, I discovered impressive stands of the large yellow-flowered cactus *Echinocereus pectinatus* var. *neo-mexicanus* (Texas rainbow) amid the dry rock rubble across from the Walnut Canyon Desert Drive exit. There was also the some of the small crimson-flowered *E. viridiflorus* var. *viridiflorus* (pitaya or green-flowered rainbow cactus). I immediately got out my watercolors.

At the Visitor Center, *Calyophus lavandulifolia* (lavender evening primrose) appears along the edges of the parking lot as does the *Argemone pleiacantha* (Arizona prickly poppy). The Nature Trail leading away from the east end of the lot has clumps of *Echinocereus triglochidatus* (claret-cup), some right in the middle of the path.

*Fourquieria splendens* or ocotillo is everywhere at CAVE, as it is throughout the Chihuahuan Desert. I spent three hours with one of the shorter specimens in Slaughter Canyon so that I might witness its florets go from bud to full flower. This exciting experience, something which would have required even greater patience had I not been engaged in drawing, allowed me to depict the ocotillo at

all its stages of flowering in a single illustration.

All along the upper reaches of Walnut Canyon Desert Drive the red trilobed *Castilleja lanata* is found. With such hairy leaves it should be no surprise that is commonly known as woolly paintbrush. Even from a moving vehicle it is easy to spot the low-growing *Phlox mesoleuca* (threadleaf or white-eyed phlox).

Further along, in the dry stream bed behind Marker Post #14, the pale blue-violet-flowered *Sophora secundifolia* (mescal-bean, Texas mountain laurel) *Melampodium leucanthum* (arnica, blackfoot), *Fendlera rupicola* (white-blossomed saxifrage, cliff fendler-bush) and *Lonicera albiflora* (western honeysuckle) all thrive. This proved to be the spot that I would



Torrey yucca, *Yucca treculeana* AGAVACEAE, Guadalupe Mtns.

ILLUSTRATION BY DONALD DAVIDSON © 2002

most often visit during the remainder of my stay.

It was also there that I first spied a community of the rare *Salvia summa* (pink-flowered or supreme sage) up along a steep, rock-walled bank. This was the same species I would encounter growing out of a crevice along the trail to Slaughter Canyon Cave. Finding *and keeping* just the right perch so that I could draw a specimen up close - without tumbling off the cliff-like bank - was a wearying challenge.

When I began to draw *S. summa*, I focused on my eye-to-hand coordination. But, what to draw first? When no answer seemed obvious, I started from as far down its slightly hairy stem as I could still fit on the page and then worked up and out. Much as the plant would form itself. My eyes traced from where each section emerged and then to what it evolved into. Each section should not stand out on its own so much as demarcate the important growth events of the whole. Drawing the contours of each plant, delineating its volume, its presence was much like carefully running my fingers along the edges while testing the suppleness in between.

It still amazes me how sitting down and drawing desert blooms brings the thrill of adventure and a certain peace of mind at the same time. Under the piercing sun, in quiet and solitude, the spring wind tossing my

subjects about reminded me of art school days when our models often refused to keep completely still in their poses. Could it be that *those* adventurers wished to dance like flowers in a breeze?

If you want a "road less traveled" experience while visiting Carlsbad Caverns National Park or just some quality time with native plants, grab a camera, a sketch pad or a notebook (*don't forget your hat, lots of water and sunscreen*) and pick a trail. Any trail.

(*This article was reprinted with permission from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico Newsletter, JAN/FEB/MARCH 2003 EDITION.*)

*Donald Davidson is the program coordinator for Using the Arts for Native Plant Stewardship Skill Development in the Chihuahuan Desert.*

*Donald contributes botanical illustrations to Celebrating Wildflowers*

*(www.nps.gov/plants/cw/watercolor/index.htm).*

*The Centennial Museum at the University of Texas in El Paso is holding a solo exhibition of his work until May 17, 2003.*

## Chihuahuan Wildflower Stewardship Project

For the entire month of April the Carlsbad Caverns/Guadalupe Mountains Association will be sponsoring an interdisciplinary public outreach program to help preserve our native flora. Each weekend experts in the arts and sciences will facilitate trail-side workshops in botanical drawing, journaling, plant identification, wildflower photography and desert biodiversity at Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks in the Chihuahuan Desert of New Mexico and Texas. Carlsbad Caverns harbours a stunning array of native flowering plants for a desert site. The Guadalupe Mountains park offers some of the best hiking opportunities in the American Southwest. Catclaw, walking stick cholla and more than one variety of claret-cup cacti can be seen in abundance.

All events are free, but space is limited, so advance registration is recommended.

For more information and to register, please contact Paula Bauer, Park Ranger, (505) 785-3131, Paula\_Bauer@nps.gov .

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Continued from page 1

current name, let alone the species genetic history and taxonomic affiliations.

*Calamintha arkansana* (I use the currently accepted binomial adopted in Ontario by the *Ontario Plant List*) puts the above two examples to shame with its rich history of names. There are no less than 12 synonyms for the Latin name *C. arkansana* and at least eight common-name possibilities in North America (see table).

Wild savory is eight - 18 cm tall with two modes of growth. It produces ground-hugging stolons with thick oval leaves that vary from blue-green to deep green. This allows the plant to grow mat-like over the rocky terrain of its natural homes. It also sends up flowering leafy shoots with linear opposite leaves, bearing axillary flowers ranging from white to mid-purple. It shares several characteristics with its complex multitudinous mint family: bilabiate flowers, obscurely four-angled stems, opposite leaves and exceptional aromatic oils.

The strong scent may be a clue to its multiplicity of names. Or it could be that since it's a small and seemingly insignificant plant the European botanists who discovered it at different periods in history did not bother to check with their peers before assigning a family, genus or species to it. Linnaeus had no name for the plant.

For many years it was included in *Satureja*, the genus of two cultivated herbs with which it shares some morphological characteristics: *Satureja hortensis* (summer savory) and *S. montana* (winter savory). These two European plants have similar low-growing habits to wild savory – so the original association through genus is understandable. *Satureja* (also at one time *Satureia*) means savory although it's been linked with everything from Saturn to satyrs.

In the United States the presently accepted botanical name is *Clinopodium arkansanum*. This seems a bit of a mystery, as *Clinopodiums* are usually much larger with whorled axillary flowers, although both *Clinopodiums* and *Calaminthas* were once lumped together under *Satureja*.

It seems more plausible to classify it under *Hedeoma*, and wild savory is known in some circles as *H. glabra* or *H. arkansana*. Certainly its cousin *Hedeoma hispida* is sometimes confused with *C. arkansana* in plant collections although it has a more weedy habit with smaller flowers.

Neither *Clinopodiums* nor *Hedeomas* produce a scent like wild savory. *Calamintha arkansana* has a fragrance that easily rivals the

potency of its cultivated *Satureja* relatives, but it's less peppery with more of a true mint sense. The strength is astonishing in such a delicate plant. A well-watered grouping of wild savory growing in full sun can easily be detected by scent 10 feet away. To walk through it is to be showered by its perfume. Mints in general have the reputation of producing oils more plentifully with dry treatment. Here, Calamint goes against type. Watering well will enhance its scent. Take care, however, not to drench it so that rot sets in.

In addition to sun and average to slightly better-than-average moisture wild savory requires a pH between 7.0 and 8.0. About this we must be scrupulous. After all, the plant has a coefficient of conservatism of 10 making it a very special find in wild places (*Lupinus perennis* also comes to mind).

Like all conservative plants it craves a narrow range of habitats. In the wild *Calamintha arkansana* occurs only in the following communities or habitats: lakeside alvars/limestone pavement lakeshores, treed alvars, limestone glades, damp interdunal hollows and calcareous seeps. In Ontario by far the most common sightings occur on the lakeshore pavements. Just go to the Bruce Peninsula, Manitoulin Island or Lake Erie (this last has precious few) and look for it there. I have also seen it growing quite abundantly on Georgian Bay with *Panicum lindheimeri* on a limey open beach composed of sand and large cobble.

For the gardener this conservatism demands strict adherence to a set of cultural/biological conditions. The key point is alkalinity. Most limestone/dolostone areas sport a pH from 6.8 to 8.0. If you don't have a suitably alkaline spot you can always haul out the dolomitic lime or even limestone screening to amend with. Here's a tip – combine the amended soil with flat limestone rocks and small gravel to create a path

bordered with this wonderful-smelling herb. The roots will creep under rocks where the soil would be damp. Keep in mind that with very sandy soil the watering regime will be more rigorous, as the relatively shallow root system cannot bear to dry out.

Of course given the perfect conditions *C. arkansana* – like all other conservative plants – can be as prolific as dandelions on a lawn. But the scent alone is worth the effort of creating a special habitat for wild savory, and its free flowering over most of the summer is a distinct bonus for a wild plant. Wild savory usually grows more by stolons early in the year, sets up erect stems in early June, and starts to flower by mid to late June. The peak is usually late July, but some flowers will appear well into September with the right treatment.

One final cultural point to consider is the climate. The natural range of *C. arkansana* is Ontario to Minnesota and then south through Texas to (barely) New Mexico. In the northern limit of its range it is almost exclusively a lakeshore plant where the proximity of the water has a moderating influence on the temperature. Try to plant it where it gets some protection from extremes.

Unfortunately, wild savory can no longer be found in much of its original range. It has been extirpated from both Kansas and New York. It is considered endangered in Indiana, rare in Virginia, threatened in Ohio and a species of concern in Wisconsin. Luckily, it is ranked as demonstrably secure in Ontario. It can remain that way with good conservation and good gardening practices.

*Charles Kinsley is the owner of Ontario Native Plants Inc. Formerly a terrestrial biologist with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority he has also worked as an independent ecological/landscape consultant.*

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