



Sarracenia

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Roger Etcheberry, Leader of Summer Field Trip



July 1998

John Maunder, photographer

A Visit to France!

Summer Field Trip 1998

Howard Clase

This year's annual botanical excursion was our first trip to foreign parts. We were to spend five nights on the French islands of St Pierre and Miquelon and two more at the tip of the Burin Peninsula back in Newfoundland. Just after noon on July 17 the party began to gather on the dock at Fortune after the 3 hour drive from St John's, and by the time we had to board the ferry we were all present and correct, mainly thanks to the efforts of a Grand Bank mechanic who managed to replace the Innes's fan belt in record time. Luckily they were only a few metres from a garage and not half way down the Burin Peninsula road miles from anywhere when it gave out.

The ferry crossing was the first return run of the "new" jet boat and while this was quick we were confined to the ill ventilated cabin breathing in fuel fumes when most of us would have preferred to be out in the fresh air looking for shearwaters and jaegers. Luckily, as with all our ferry crossings on this trip, the sea was calm.

At St Pierre we left the boat long enough to go inside the immigration building by one door and to emerge shortly afterwards through another with stamps in our passports. On the way through we had picked up one important addition to our party, our leader for the week and naturaliste extraordinaire, Roger Etcheberry.

Miquelon

In little over an hour our luggage was re-stowed on the same boat and we were on our way to the small community of Miquelon. Small though it is it boasts a comfortable Motel with large house-keeping units, an excellent restaurant and a brasserie that puts the pub food available in St John's to shame. After we had settled in and eaten, there was just enough daylight left for us to walk down over the shingle to the sea and to observe

that, not surprisingly, most of the beach plants that grow in Newfoundland also grew there, e.g. Beach Pea *Lathyrus japonicus*, False Arnica *Senecio pseudo-arnica*, Oyster-leaf *Mertensia maritima*.

Since we didn't have our cars with us we had to rely on the local bus and its lady driver to transport us around. This bus makes a regular trip morning and evening to Langlade at the other end of the long sandy isthmus which joins the two near-islands to connect with another, shorter ferry to St Pierre. Next morning we were due to be picked up at 8.30 a.m., but luckily the schedule seemed to be fairly elastic and the driver didn't complain about waiting while a few missing packed lunches were prepared. By the time we were set down at the Miquelon end of the isthmus it was starting to rain, but undeterred, the party set out across the dunes and salt-marshes to the distant interpretation building. If this section of my report is a bit short on plant names it is because the weather wasn't conducive to list making! But I do remember *Platanthera psycodes* and large patches of the red flowered Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, and common ericaceous plants like Leather Leaf *Chamaedaphne calyculata*, Lambkill *Kalmia angustifolia* and Labrador Tea *Ledum groenlandicum*. When we reached the building a couple of hours later the rain eased off enough for us to be able to eat our bread and cheese at the picnic tables. (French bread and cheese, not cotton wool and rubber slices!)

We have a new name! See the president's message on page 29 to learn why we became *The Wildflower Society of Newfoundland & Labrador*.

One of the reasons for the building being where it is that it overlooks Grand Barachois, a large salt water lagoon which is the home of a group of seals. We did see them in the distance, but the mist came in soon afterwards. There were also a few

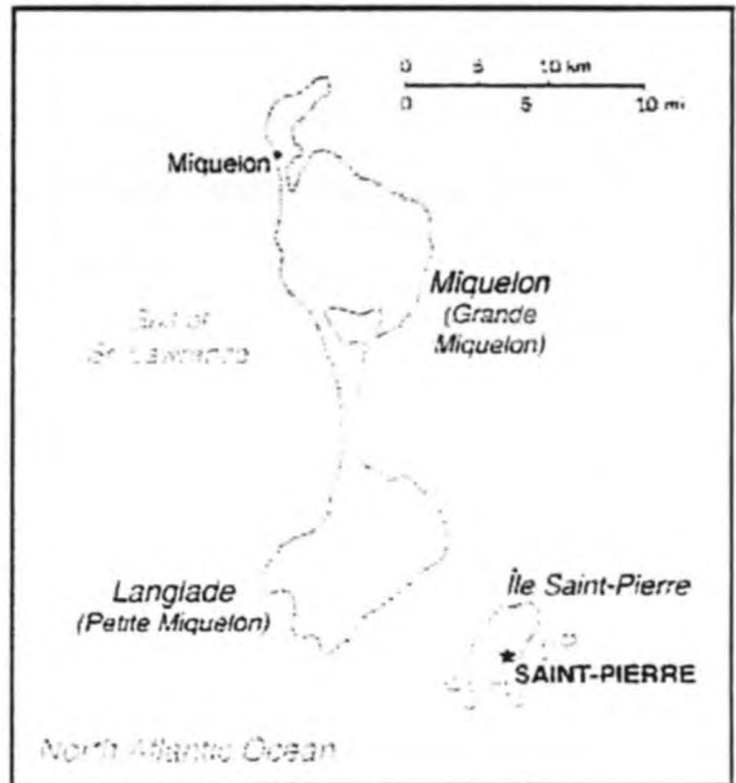
Whimbrels, *Numenius phaeopus*, but it was too early for other shore birds.

The rain didn't hold off for long, in fact it made up for the respite with a couple of torrential downpours as we walked back, but by then we were too soaked to care - at least it wasn't cold! Our return route skirted some small ponds, where we came across broods of American Wigeon, *Mareca americana* and Shovelers, *Spatula clypeata*. The tiny ducklings of the latter were already showing the heavy bills that make this species easy to identify in silhouette, and Roger said that this was the first proof of the species breeding in any of the islands. By mid-afternoon with the rain still pouring down we finally decided that we had had enough and returned to the road hoping to catch the bus on its way out and use it as a mobile shelter. While we were waiting by the roadside we explored some roadside pools and it was here that we saw the two plants that I remember best for the day. One pool contained a large colony of Amphibious Bistort *Polygonum amphibium*, in full flower. We met this again a few days later on the Burin: it is a very attractive plant that would grace a garden pool as well as any waterlily. (I had first seen the species earlier in the year growing in the Kennet and Avon canal in Berkshire, England.) The other was growing at the marshy edge of the same pool and was quite new to me, although it was one I had been hoping to see. In Newfoundland the Lance-leaved Violet *Viola lanceolata*, is only known from a couple of rivers at the top of the Burin Peninsula and has, I hear, recently been discovered in Terra Nova Park. It has small white flowers and long, narrow, pointed leaves as its name implies. I must confess I was a little disappointed, it is more curious than attractive.

After waiting for the bus for over half an hour at the soggy roadside we began to see the other side of flexible schedules! Eventually, Roger flagged down a couple of pick-up trucks which kindly gave us a lift back to the motel. For many of us I suspect that this breezy ride in the back of a truck was the most memorable event of the day. Then it was hot showers and drying out of clothes, boots, field guides etc. (the question of the waterproofness of

my rucksac was finally resolved - in the negative!) before another visit to the brasserie.

Sunday lived up to its name, it was sunscreen rather than raingear that was in demand for the rest of the trip. We spent the day exploring the cliff-top trails on Cape Miquelon at the northern tip of the island. The area was, not surprisingly, much like exposed capes in Newfoundland, with cliff-top meadows, barrens, tuckamore, and a few decent-sized trees in sheltered valleys and by and



large the vegetation was similar too. But our walk also passed alongside bogs, through woods and ended up along a shingle beach, so it covered pretty well all the habitats you can think of - except mudflats and sandy beaches. This gave us quite a long and varied list of plants; I will just pick out the most notable.

Our first stop was just beyond the quarantine complex (which was full of llamas - but that's another story!) at a small orchid filled bog, mostly Grass Pinks *Calopogon tuberosus*, and Rose

Pogonia Pogonia ophioglossoides, and one of the most photograph able groups of One-leaved Adders Mouths *Malaxis unifolia*, we have ever seen - as long as you didn't mind kneeling in 6 inches of water to take the picture. All the usual bog and water plants like Pitcher Plant *Sarracenia purpurea*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, and Bakeapple *Rubus chamaemorus* were present too.

The exposed clifftops were the home for alpines such as Moss Campion *Silene acaulis*, and Alpine Azalea *Loiseleuria procumbens*. Here we also found the Alpine Bistort *Polygonum viviparum*, whose flower spikes have attractive sterile flowers at the top and bulbils or even tiny plantlets at the bottom. While fairly widespread on the western side of Newfoundland it has only been found in a few exposed headlands and offshore islands in the south east. One thing we noticed here and throughout our trip was that the Red Crowberry *Empetrum eamsii*, was pretty well as common as the Black *E. nigrum* and just about as tasteless.

The most common orchids were the Small Purple-fringed *Platanthera psycodes*, the Northern Green *P. hyperborea*, (which is absent from the Avalon and Burin Peninsula) and the Ragged, *P. lacera*, in a greenish-white, more ragged form than the one found on the Avalon.

Most of the typical woodland plants found around St John's were present under the trees, which were mainly Balsam Fir *Abies balsamifera*, such as Corn Lily *Clintonia borealis*, Starflower *Trientalis borealis*, and Twinflower *Linnaea borealis*.

Walking back along the beach we added two more seaside plants to the first night's tally, Mexican Dock *Rumex mexicanus*, and Beach Wormwood or Hoary Mugwort *Artemisia stelleriana*, which, despite its names is quite an attractive plant with grey green divided leaves. A native of n.e. Asia it was a popular garden plant last century, and became naturalized on beaches on both sides of the Atlantic. It has recently spread from St Pierre and Miquelon to parts of the nearby Burin Peninsula. It is now seeing a revival as a garden plant too.

The group broke up into several small parties during the afternoon and the more adventurous did manage to see some of the introduced White-tailed Deer. Since this was our last evening in Miquelon most of us got together for a wonderful meal in the restaurant attached to the Motel, but we did wish that the service and ventilation were as good as the food.

Langlade.

Next morning it was back in the bus at 8.00 a.m. for the far end of the isthmus. Most of us left the bus a few km short of the village while Roger and a couple of helpers went on to put the luggage into a safe place for a few hours. The habitat where we alighted was sand dunes with relatively sparse vegetation and here we found Adder's-Tongues *Ophioglossum vulgatum* var. *pseudopodium*, growing quite abundantly. This tiny plant, barely 10 cm high, has a single oval leaf clasping a stalk with a double row of fruiting bodies at its tip, and obviously reminded someone of a snake's tongue. It is a rare fern relative, unknown from Newfoundland, which Roger discovered a few years ago; the nearest site in Gray is PEI. In the same location was Sea Arrowgrass *Triglochin maritima*, and many more Northern Green and Small Purple-fringed Orchids *Platanthera hyperborea* & *P. psycodes*, growing together and lots of Star-flowered Solomon's Seal *Smilacena stellata*, in fruit with very attractive green and brown striped "berries". As we moved towards the community we found some naturalized rose bushes *Rosa rugosa*, and the dunes changed to meadows where we eventually found another of Miquelon's specialities, Bluets *Houstonia caerulea*, whose tiny pale blue flowers were just past their best and quite difficult to find amongst the grasses.

The village of Langlade is very small, but does sport a sandy beach, where some of the party settled for lunch, others pressed on in the hope of finding some ice cream, but all the small "cafe" could provide was cold beer and soft drinks. After lunch we still had a couple of hours to wait for the ferry so we broke up into small groups and explored the woods beyond the village where we found all the expected woodland plants plus a few

specimens of a small single leaved orchid with greenish-white flowers, which Roger, who happened to be passing, identified as the Blunt-leaved Orchid *Platanthera obtusata*. Unlike most of the genus which favour open sites this species grows in the undergrowth of moist woods.

A small river runs into the sea at Langlade between steep banks and at the top of one of these is a colony of Alpine Lady's Mantle *Alchemilla alpina*. It is found in Europe, Iceland and Greenland, but the only North American sites for this species are here at Langlade and from near Francois on the south coast of Newfoundland. There is some uncertainty as to whether it is a rare native or an introduced species. Here also grew a small clump of Club-spurred Orchids *Platanthera clavellata*, common enough in bogs, but not often found in such a photograph able location. However, all my attempts failed since one of the ponies that were wandering around smelled an apple in my rucksac which I had put down while I was trying to take the picture and managed to get a bite out of it. After that it just wouldn't leave me alone, even though I gave it the rest of the apple!

We were taken out to the ferry by rubber dingy and this time we were able to spend the time out on deck and watch the seabirds. Most surprising was the large number of Manx Shearwaters, *Puffinus puffinus*, which have recently colonised this side of the Atlantic and are probably nesting on Grand Colombier, the large steep island just to the north of St Pierre. As we sailed by we also had a good view of a Rough-legged Hawk, *Buteo lagopus*, which also nests there.

St Pierre.

Much of our time in the capital city we were just ordinary tourists. We stayed in the Hotel/Motel Robert and made good use of the various boulangeries and patisseries for our lunches. The first evening we had to make do with delicious galettes - buckwheat pancakes with a vast range of fillings to choose from - in a "fast food" restaurant. (Macgalettes anyone?) On our last evening we had another wonderful group meal in a typical little French restaurant (L'Outremer). In between we did

find time for a little botanising, though.

One plant which most of us had never seen was Golden Heather *Hudsonia ericoides*, which grows only in a few isolated spots around the coast of Newfoundland. Roger knew that it grew on the barrens up above the town and so after lunch on Tuesday we set out find it. On our way we stopped at a spot by a grotto to see a couple of interesting aliens - probably introduced with ship's ballast in the past. One was a European umbellifer, the Great Pignut *Bunium bulbocastanum*, which has a black, edible tuber, and the other was a St John's Wort, which Roger had thought was *H. perforatum*, the Perforated St John's Wort, which is so common on roadsides around St John's. However, as soon as we saw it we realised it was something different - the flowers were smaller and too orange, the buds were red, not yellow and the bright orange anthers were especially distinctive. Later, back in the hotel, with access to a European flora, we were able to identify it as the Elegant St. John's Wort *H. pulchrum*. As far as we know this is the only location in North America for either of these species.



Malaxis uniflora

On the wet hillside above the grotto was a wonderful display of the red flowers of the Black Huckleberry *Gaylussacia baccata*, which had impressed us last year on the West Coast trip. And here we again found Wintergreen *Gaultheria procumbens*, which is rare in Newfoundland, but oddly quite common in all parts of the French islands. It is a close relative of the Creeping Snowberry *G. hispidula*, but has red berries.

At the top of the hill the habitat became typical barrens, and we followed one of the well marked hiking trails across the top of the island. Before long we came across what we were looking for growing across a rock right in the middle of the trail. *Hudsonia ericoides* is a small, heather-like plant with tiny narrow leaves that overlap along the creeping stems looking somewhat like a clubmoss. It was covered with yellow buds, but because of the overcast day there were few open flowers. The small, five-petaled flowers open out fully and are quite unlike the bell-shaped flowers of heathers. It is not a heather at all, but is a member of the Rock Rose Family (Cistaceae). It seems to prefer growing in gravelly soil without much competition from other plants and, although it is not a beach plant, it is usually fairly close to the coast. Before we had gone much further it was a very familiar plant. Apart from the *Hudsonia* we might have been walking across the Hawk Hills: Alpine Azalea *Loiseleuria procumbens*, was found again here and *Diapensia lapponica*, which we hadn't seen before, was both common and in full flower. On our way back we had another example of Roger's seeming familiarity with every plant on the islands, he led us to a grassy bank to see a few tufts of *Nardus stricta* or Mat Grass. This is an introduction from Europe that prefers poor, acid soils and is distinguished by having its blackish spikelets only on one side of its inflorescence. It is also found on the Avalon and Burin Peninsulas.

This was the end of our organised botanising in the French islands. The next day we returned to the Burin Peninsula, but I'll save that for the next issue of Sarracenia.

The Figwort Family in Newfoundland

Scrophulariaceae

Todd Boland

The Figwort Family, sometimes called the Foxglove or Snapdragon Family, is botanically referred to as the Scrophulariaceae. This is an important family of plants with about 175 genera worldwide. Most are herbaceous plants, but there are a few shrubs and trees (none of these are hardy in Newfoundland). Many contain bitter-tasting juices or even narcotic-poisonous compounds!

Members of the figwort family are generally easily recognizable. Most of our local species have leaves produced in pairs and flowers produced in a spike or raceme. Individual flower have 5 petals which are often fused into a tube-like arrangement. The petals are often fused in such a manner that the flowers appear 2-lipped (botanists refer to these bilateral-symmetry flowers as zygomorphic). The genus *Verbascum* and *Veronica* are notable exceptions in having round, open flowers (radial-symmetry flowers are referred to as being actinomorphic). There are usually 2 or 4 stamens (*Verbascum* have 5). If 4 stamens, they are arranged as two pairs, one pair having short filaments (stalks), the other longer filaments. The stamens are always attached to the inside of the petals, so when the blooms fall, they take the stamens with them. Each flower has a single style and the stigma is either entire (appearing as a single unit) or 2-lobed. The fruit is a two-chambered capsule.

Only one other family is likely to be confused with the figwort family, and that is the mint family. They too, have zygomorphic flowers appearing 2-lipped. However, they usually have aromatic foliage, square stems and never produce a capsule (their fruit consists of 4 nutlets).

There are 15 genera from the figwort family represented in Newfoundland. About half are

native, the other half introduced. Among our natives are *Chelone* (1 species), *Gratiola* (1 species), *Veronica* (4 species), *Castilleja* (1 species), *Limosella* (1 species), *Melampyrum* (1 species), *Euphrasia* (probably 6 species), *Bartsia* (1 species), *Rhinanthus* (2 species), *Pedicularis* (1 species) and *Mimulus* (1 species; not all botanist agree that this one is native). The introduced genera include *Verbascum* (1 species), *Linaria* (4 species), *Scrophularia* (1 species), *Digitalis* (1 species), *Veronica* (6 species), *Odontites* (1 species) and *Pedicularis* (2 species).

Describing all the species would be impractical, but a few of them are easily recognizable by the average wildflower enthusiasts. *Euphrasia* are commonly called the eye-brights. They are small, upright plants with opposite, deeply toothed leaves. The flowers are small, with purplish lines and a central yellow blotch. The flowers are held in spikes and usually bloom after mid-summer. The most common species is *E. americana* which is incidentally the tallest. They are found in open fields, roadsides and peaty headlands.

Rhinanthus is the yellow-rattle. It is an annual species with stiffly upright stems and opposite, toothed leaves. The yellow tubular flowers sprout out of a rounded, yet flattened calyx. When the seed capsules are ripe, the seeds often 'rattle' within the calyx, hence the common name. They are fairly common plants, especially in open barren areas, but also in fields and even roadsides.

Those of us who attended the Newfoundland Wildflower Society's field trip to the Great Northern Peninsula may recall the Velvetbells *Bartsia alpina* which we found near Cook's Harbour. This species has distinctive maroon-purple tubular flowers and sticky purplish-green leaves. Its rare on the island being restricted to the northernmost limestone barrens of the Northern Peninsula. Also restricted to the limestone areas of northern Newfoundland is the Northern Paintbrush *Castilleja septentrionalis*. Western Canada has many species, most which have bright yellow, orange or red bracts, but our species is more subdued with whitish-green bracts. On our field trips we found this species on the Point Riche

Peninsula.

The speedwells or *Veronica* is our largest genus from the figwort family. Some species are native while others are introduced. The introduced species are common as lawn weeds or along fields and roadsides. The native species are generally more specific as to their preferred habitats. Most of the speedwells are creeping in nature. All produce either violet, blue or white, blue-striped flowers. The flowers are flat and open (unlike most members of the family) and always have 2 stamens. Flowers appear to have 4 petals, but the largest petal is in fact, two fused petals. The flowers are produced either in the upper leaf axils or as a terminal spike. The leaves are often, but not always, paired. Finally, the seed capsule is usually flattened and somewhat heart-shaped.

Monkey-Flower *Mimulus* is a popular annual in our gardens. Our species, *M. guttatus* is relatively rare and usually restricted to wet ditches. It has yellow, funnel-like flowers and sticky foliage. Botanists debate whether it is native to the island or introduced.



Verbascum thapsus

Turtlehead *Chelone glabra* is a well distributed plants of wet ditches, streams and pond margins. The plants are stiffly upright and may reach a meter in height. The narrow, toothed leaves are produced in pairs and the swollen, snapdragon-like flowers are set in a tight cluster at the tip of the stems. They are creamy-white and pleasantly fragrant

Scrophularia nodosa commonly called figwort or pigweed, is a rank, roadside weed which is becoming increasingly more common along the east side of the Avalon Peninsula. The tall, upright plants again produce toothed leaves in pairs. The small flowers are tubular and greenish-brown (very unique colour) and unpleasant smelling. Plants produce their flowers in an open panicle rather than the spike-like arrangement which is more typical of the family. This weed is a confirmed lime-lover so is most common in disturbed areas where concrete is buried, such as the southside hills in St. John's. They are also common in western Newfoundland where the natural bedrock is limestone.

Finally, we come to *Linaria*. All of our *Linaria* are introduced. The Striped Toadflax *L. repens*, Butter and Eggs *L. vulgaris* and their natural hybrid, *L. X sepium*, are quite common roadside weeds in St. John's. They have very snapdragon-like flowers on upright stems. Their leaves are narrow and numerous. A more recent introduction is *L. canadensis* or old-field toadflax. It is very small and wiry, with pale blue flowers shaped somewhat like lobelia. It has been introduced from mainland Canada and is currently mostly confined to near plant nurseries.

The figwort family is generally recognizable, with its 2-lipped flowers and mostly opposite, toothed leaves. They are quite common in old fields, roadsides and even lawns, yet may be encountered in more pristine coastal headlands, streamsides and even limestone barrens. In essence, there are few areas of the Island where you wouldn't see a member of this family (however, dense forest might be one area). And remember, look for them mostly after mid-July since few of them are spring or early summer bloomers.

Parson of a Bygone Era

The Rev. William Grey (1819-1872)

Patricia Leader

Despite being an English missionary to Newfoundland under the S.P.G. and working for the Bishop Feild during the mid 1880s, Grey is known chiefly for his sketches as well as his architectural achievements in the Colony. These sketches were published in England in the 1858 as Sketches of Newfoundland & Labrador. A copy of this book has been on display this summer, in the Colonial Building, St. John's as part of the exhibition, "Through Their Lives: Reflections on Labrador".

Grey, however, was also a keen naturalist who combined his love of sketching and walking with observations of nature. His comments in his diaries, although brief and to the point frequently contained information on the weather, plants and wildlife and his various walks. Of the latter, Grey, like many clergymen of his day, would walk great distances in the course of carrying out his parish work. Grey recorded many walks from St. John's to Petty Harbour or Torbay to take the Sunday services. When he served in the parish of Portugal Cove he walked into town to have a 7:30 am breakfast at Queen's College where he was Principal for a year. Then, when he came home to the Cove he would go for an evening walk! On occasions Grey carried a barometer to the various high points in order to estimate the height above sea level. The sketches that he made during these excursions would often be accompanied by descriptions of the geological formation or some note, now of historical significance. Grey's description of approaching the Narrows talks of "lofty cliffs of slate" and the South Side hills as a "range of hills covered with forests, consisting of different species of spruces and pines. With a slight sprinkling of birch, mountain ash, and alder; before you the slopes of the valley are covered with cultivation." It seemed that the idea of pine clad hills in the provincial anthem was indeed justified, at least in the nineteenth century. Similar

descriptions of nature were also seen in his correspondence home to his father. As one example, Grey wrote on 29 July 1850:

Every walk shows me some new wild flowers, you would scarcely believe what is the fact, that there is a much greater variety of these, and far more beautiful too than yours in England. About a month ago the hills were all glowing with the red blossoms of the chalmia (bog laurel) and azalia; now with another species of chalmia, with the willow-weed and red rose. This latter is very dark red, and has so delicious a scent, that a nosegay of them is too much for an ordinary size room. Then all the margins of the lakes are studded with a very beautiful blue iris, and an immense variety of small flowers, such as white & blue violets grow in between the rocks. But the most beautiful flowers perhaps grow in the marshes, of which by far the most curious is the Indian cup, so called from its leaf, which is a sort of long pocket, (something like the flower of the foxglove in shape) with a sort of lip to catch the rain which accumulates in the pocket or cup. This is of a rich green colour veined with red; and the flower is a dark red & round form on a long stalk. The flower is as curious as the leaf- the stamens are numerous, forming a large yellow centre, which is covered by the pistil, which expands into a small rolled leaf, looking altogether like an umbrella spread put over the stamens. Besides this plant, there are several sorts of orchids- white, pink, & pink spotted with yellow. And the mosses & lichens are equally beautiful & various.

It is interesting to note Grey's description of the marsh plant, the Indian Cup that is now commonly referred to as the Pitcher Plant.

William Grey was descended from the Lady Jane Grey and the Earle of Stanford but his wife, Harriet was descended from the famous English naturalist, Gilbert White (1720-1793). White was the curate of Selbourne who wrote, The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne. It was a series of letters, simply written and describing the local natural history. Although published in 1880, the book has some 200 editions to date and is thought to be the fourth most frequently published book in the English language. White, and perhaps Grey, were the archtypal country parsons of a bygone era. Grey flourished in Portugal Cove where he designed an English styled country parsonage complete with honeysuckle.

Newfoundland remains indebted to the people like William Grey who recorded, and in this case sketched, various aspects of its natural environment- an environment that is ours to enjoy and preserve for future generations.

Anthyllis vulneraria L.

The Kidney-Vetch of Western
Newfoundland

Henry Mann

Kidney-Vetch first became known in Newfoundland from a photograph in Bill and June Titford's book A Traveller's Guide to Wildflowers in Newfoundland, Canada. The photo was taken in Stephenville where the plants "were growing in profusion between the road to Indian Head Park and the Stephenville Airport in mid-July". Unfortunately the picture was labelled Cow Wheat *Melampyrum lineare*. The following

summer (August 7, 1996) biologists and students collected blooming specimens which are now housed in the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College Herbarium. Numerous plants in full bloom were also observed on the Canadian Wildflower Society field trip of July 20, 1997 along the old airport runways in the same general location as the Titfords' photograph. On this date Birdfoot Trefoil was also in full bloom with plants about the same size and with a similar golden-yellow flower color. From a distance the two species seemed to blend into one. Although the two are in the same plant family (Fabaceae or Leguminosae), up close they are readily distinguishable.

Our variety of *Anthyllis vulneraria* is an upright perennial plant up to 60 centimeters tall (figure 1). Stems are green, and both they and the leaves are covered with long white appressed hairs that can readily be seen with a 10X hand lens. The root system is composed of a central tap root with numerous branches and sub-branches. Like our other legumes, roots have nodules on their finer branches which contain bacteria that help to enrich the soil with nitrogen.

Leaves are compound, each made up of a number of smaller leaflets. They are arranged alternately on the stem. Three types of leaves can usually be recognized. Some plants exhibit basal "rosette" leaves which may be composed of just a single large terminal leaflet or also a few small lateral leaflets (figure 1a). Lower stem leaves have more and better developed leaflets (often 5-7), but the terminal leaflet still tends to be much larger than the laterals (figure 1b). Upper stem leaves have about 9-11 leaflets, all of approximately the same size (figure 1c).

Figure 1d shows a plant with two flowering heads (inflorescences), but in our variety the stem may be elongated with up to five such compact heads. Branches may also arise from the axils of the upper stem leaves, each often bearing several such inflorescences. Beneath every head occur two greenish bracts divided into a number of "fingers" (figure 2). The shape of these bracts is important for detailed identification of the subspecies (varieties).



Figure 1: *Anthyllis vulneraria* L. a. basal leaf b. lower stem leaf c. upper stem leaf d. inflorescence head e. individual flower f. young seed pod (legume)



Figure 2: Variation of bracts beneath the inflorescence. Actual size.

Each of the small flowers that make up the cluster (head) is about 1.5 centimeters long from the tip of its golden-yellow petals to the base of the whitish, hairy calyx (figure 1e). The calyx appears somewhat inflated into a tubular sac and terminates below the exposed petals in five small teeth; two above, one below, and one on each side of the flower. Long white silky hairs point forward towards the petals. Petals are arranged in typical pea-flower fashion with the upper large "standard" petal reflexed at the tip, and the two side "wing" petals enclosing the paired "keel" petals which are fused at their tips. Within the keel petals are enclosed the stamens and the pistil style. As the petals age and wither they turn an orange-brown while the calyx tends to become more inflated as the seed pod enlarges within. Sometimes, but not always, the white calyx has a red-purple blotch near its tip. Each pod or "legume" has only one seed.

Kidney-Vetch is not a native of North America. Its centre of origin is the Mediterranean region, but it is now found throughout Europe, North Africa and Southwest Asia. The species is quite variable with at least 35 subspecies described throughout its range. It has extensively been utilized as a forage plant especially for sheep and goats, and this no doubt accounts for its widespread distribution in the temperate regions of the old world. In North America, Fernald (1950) lists it "in clover fields and waste ground, widely distributed but local..." from Quebec to North Dakota and south to Pennsylvania and Missouri. In Canada's Maritime provinces it is only mentioned by Hinds (1986) from Northumberland County in New Brunswick. To date I am not aware of records from Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island.

Anthyllis is a species which appears to thrive in disturbed or semi-disturbed well drained sites similar to those preferred by our clovers. Opportunistic plants of this kind are often considered "roadside weeds", but from a different perspective they may also be considered "roadside wildflowers" which add to the beauty of our meadows, pastures, and roadsides, helping to stabilize and enrich the soil. It is important that we recognize newcomers to our flora and that we

monitor these on a regular basis. How rapidly will they spread? To what habitats will they spread? How will they interact with our native flora? Will they become "nasty weeds" and threaten the integrity of some unique habitats and rare species? These and other questions need to be remembered as we watch what *Anthyllis* does in the future. At present the only known population on the Island occurs around the Stephenville Airport. Will this still be so ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred years from now? Some spread is inevitable, but I suspect it will occur slowly along roadsides, assuming no purposeful human intervention. It seems unlikely that this species will invade our native forest or wetland habitats, but dry limestone screes, barrens, alpine meadows, and sand deposits may be more to its liking. "We" shall see.

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A Message from the President.

A Few Notes

Howard Clase

The Society's Name.

The most important news is that the Society has a new name. This was first discussed at the October meeting and at the November meeting it was unanimously agreed that we should officially become "The Wildflower Society of Newfoundland and Labrador" commonly known as "The Wildflower Society". The word "wildflower" is to be interpreted in its widest sense - at least as far as anything included in Gray's Flora or Rouleau's Checklist. I had already been wondering about finding a less cumbersome name than "The Canadian Wildflower Society (Newfoundland Chapter)", particularly since we seem to have had very little to do with the central organisation over the years, but it was forced on us anyway since the Canadian Wildflower Society itself is changing its name. Extracts from the correspondence that lead to this will be found elsewhere in this issue of *Sarracenia*. In addition it was agreed at the meeting that the question of whether or not we should affiliate with the "North American Native

Plant Society" should be left open until we find out what is entailed.

The Constitution.

While trying to find out the proper procedure for changing our name I went through our file of *Sarracenia*s and made a couple of interesting discoveries. Firstly, we do not actually have a written constitution, only a rough draft by our first president, Judith Quigley, which was published in an early issue. In this case I believe that we should simply follow established practise but it is something that ought to be put right, and I will try to bring a constitution to the AGM next May. Secondly, according to the draft, the annual subscription is due on September 30 and was originally \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family membership. After a couple of years the subscription in renewal notices was simply given as a flat \$10 and that has been what was collected ever since. Since the finances of the Wildflower Society are in good shape a motion was passed at the November meeting to keep the membership at a flat \$10. (I hope you have all paid up.)

1998

We have had a fairly successful summer of field trips. As well as the week long visit to the Burin Peninsula and the nearby French Islands we made regular visits to Mundy Pond within the city boundary and an interesting trip to the Trepassy area in September. The "Orchid Bog" trip was rained off as was the last of our Mundy Pond walks. I hope that reports on the successful trips will appear in future issues of *Sarracenia*. The fall indoor season has begun with two interesting illustrated talks about the Seychelles (Dennis Minty) and the Okanagan (Todd Boland). Our final meeting of 1998, on December 2nd, will be the members' slides and scoff pre-Christmas party. Please bring contributions to both.

1999

During the winter we plan to have talks on mushrooms and mangrove swamps and panel discussions or workshops on plant photography and

the cultivation of native plants. Details of the actual program will appear in the next Sarracenia, but the dates should be: February 3, March 3, April 7 and May 5. The time and place will, of course, be 8.00 p.m. at the MUN Botanical Garden.

The big question for next year is where to go for our week long field trip. There are two suggestions so far, the Bay d'Espoir, Harbour Breton, English Harbour West area and a return trip to the tip of the Northern Peninsula to have a good look at Burnt Cape and explore the Roddickton area which we have not visited before. The first would be more or less a follow-up to this summer's trip since it has been explored by Roger Etcheberry, the second was inspired by Sue Meades' talk about Burnt Cape in September. If we take our past trips as forming a pattern it is the west coast's turn again. We will discuss this too at the December meeting; please let me have your views if you cannot attend. Suggestions for more local, one day, field trips would also be welcome.



Hypericum perforatum

Howard



Where do we go next year?

Summer Field Trip 1998

**The Wildflower Society of
 Newfoundland & Labrador meets
 on the first Wednesday of every
 month at 8:00 pm from October to
 May at MUN Botanical Garden,
 Field House, Mount Scio Road, St.**

If you have not paid the membership dues for this year please mail in the following form or deliver to our treasurer, Carmel Conway, at our December meeting. Mail to:

**The Wildflower Society of Newfoundland & Labrador
 P.O. Box 23012
 Churchill Square Postal Outlet
 St. John's, NF
 A1B 4J9**

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Please find enclosed \$10.00 for my membership fee for September 1998 - August 1999.

Name

Address

.....

.....

Phone Number (Home &/or Work)

E-Mail