

The Society for



ECONOMIC BOTANY, INC.

DEVOTED TO THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE USES OF PLANTS BY MAN

SUPPLEMENT TO VOLUME #43
NEWSLETTER VOLUME #43 APRIL 1989

The second newsletter has stimulated a lot of correspondence from the membership. I hope that the sharing of this information will further our goals as botanists and educators. Please keep sending items of interest to the Newsletter Editor at the address on the last page.

ECONOMIC BOTANY CLASSES

Thank for the eager responses I have received. The following is an updated listing.

Boulder Graduate School
Connecticut College
Miami University, Ohio
Middle Tennessee State University
New York Botanical Garden, Institute of Economic Botany
North Dakota State University
Northern Kentucky University
Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science
Self Heal Herbal Center, Canada
State University College, New York
Southern California College
Texas A&M University
University of Alberta, Canada
University of British Columbia, Canada
University of California, Los Angeles
Universidad Del Valle, Colombia
University of Florida
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Victoria, Canada
Washington University, St Louis
Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Design

SLIDE EXCHANGE

Visuals Unlimited, a collaborative operation for textbook authors, has an incredible selection of slides. If our exchange is supported by the membership, they may be interested in cooperating with us.

Chris Hobbs is interested in receiving slides of Polypore fungi, Chinese medicinal plants, and medicinal plants of the Eastern United States. If you have access to these please write the newsletter editor.

ETHNOBOTANEWS: The next section consists of news clippings submitted by our international membership. Since there are so many I have chosen to summarize them.

NEW YORK TIMES December 1988: FDA studies show that out of 82 plants surveyed, Hibiscus cannabinus L., kenaf, can be rendered into quality newspaper and many other products already made from trees. This project is a joint venture between Canadian International Paper of Montreal and Kenaf International of Bakersfield. A processing plant will be built in McAllen, Texas. This is an ecological coup; less ink will be needed, the ink does not rub off onto the reader, less forest destruction, fewer chemicals needed for the manufacture of the newsprint, greater yields at lower costs (harvest within 180 days), and no pesticides. In addition, kenaf can be grown in poor soil. Besides its use as newsprint, kenaf has many other uses as a resilient fiber. This plant has been in use in Central Africa by indigenous peoples since 4000 B.C. (See Econ. Bot. 18:80-91, 1964).

GREENPEACE and IN THESE TIMES January 1989: Daryl Posey, an ethnobotanist working with the Kayapo Indians in Brazil, spoke out against rainforest destruction in the Amazon at a lecture in Florida. When returning to Brazil, Posey and two Indian chiefs were arrested under the Brazilian Foreign Sedition Act. It is the first time that indigenous peoples are being tried as foreigners. Even worse, when they attempted to appear in court for the preliminary hearing, the Judge refused to allow the Kayapo Leaders in the court because they were not "acculturated"; they were in ceremonial dress. This is all a result of the Brazilian government wanting to silence opposition to the World Bank's \$500 million loan for the Altamira-Xingu dam. If you are interested in doing something, contact Amnesty International or Brent Berlin of University of California, Berkeley, Anthropology Department. Find out how your involvement can help.

Crop Genetics has created a new corn plant that grows its own corn borer toxins. Through genetic manipulation the toxin producing gene was isolated from Bacillus thuringensis and inserted in a Clavibacter xyli cynodontis bacterium which can survive within the corn plant. Crop Genetics is awaiting EPA approval for additional field trials.

WASHINGTON INSIGHT, December 15, 1988: Huperzia serrata=Lycopodium serratum has marked anticholinesterase activity. The plant has been in used in Chinese medicine and is being investigated for treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

NOTE: This publication is loaded with pertinent articles and lists of funding opportunities. It is published by Georgia Persinos, Ph.D., 11000 Waycroft Way, North Bethesda, MD 20852.

COLORADO DAILY and CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR December 1988: A review of Jack Weatherford's book, Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World was published. The book discusses many crops introduced by Indians but especially the potato.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA: John Rashford, SEB Board member, is instrumental in the relief programs organized for Jamaica after Hurricane Gilbert. The vegetation was devastated. Several groups are involved in the relief work including the Air Force, who has arranged to fly the collected materials to drop off points in Jamaica. John will be involved not only in aid to the people but also in recording the change in vegetation over a period of time. Contact John at The College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina.

LOS ANGELES TIMES, November 11, 1988: Ghilleen Prance, new director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, says the devastation of the rainforests is overwhelming but there may be hope if we can find a balance between the conservation of the ecosystems and rational sustainable utilization of the area. He also stated that botanists must not simply collect species in the affected areas, but must become engaged in economic botany. He believes the forest destruction may be slowing even if it is too late to save the species already lost or to reverse the effects on the world temperature.

THE MARLBOROUGH EXPRESS, New Zealand, January 11, 1989: Grant Cavaney is determining whether the Maori use of flax root extract, (Phormium tenax, LIL), is efficacious in medicinal soaps. He hopes to manufacture the indigenous soap after 200 case studies proves its effectiveness to soothe and whiten, reddened, chapped or inflamed skin.

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, February 12, 1989: Francisco "Chico" Mendes was murdered in his home a few days before Christmas. Mendes spent most of his life defending the rainforests and the rights of the rubber tappers. It is assumed that his murderers were those that did not share his conservation beliefs. Of the 89 murders of people involved in rubber tappers industry that have occurred in rural Brazil, none have been brought to justice.

In the same issue, an article, "Strange Starches", listed several grains, how to cook them, and their costs. Among the grains included were amaranth, quinoa, and teff.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Institute of Economic Botany at the New York Botanical Garden has published a brochure on its activities and goals. To obtain a copy contact Mike Balick, Institute of Economic Botany, New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx, New York, 10458.

The monograph series, Advances in Economic Botany, published by the New York Botanical Garden, has published six volumes to date. The latest is The Palm--Tree of Life, edited by Mike Balick, is the proceedings of the 1986 SEB annual meeting symposium on the Biology, Conservation and Utilization of Palms. Please note that Advances is open to all economic botanists who might like to submit monograph length manuscripts for consideration for publication. Direct queries to Dr. Christine Padoch, Editor, Advances in Economic Botany, Institute of Economic Botany, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York, 10458.

Natural Product Medicine by Ara Der Marderosian and Lawrence Liberti, is available from George Stickley Company, 210 West Washington Square, Philadelphia, PA 19106, \$39.00. This book is an authoritative account of the importance of natural products. It includes clinical evaluations, pharmacological effects, and safe applications of natural products.

Professors R.E. Schultes and R.F. Raffauf have submitted for publication their book The Healing Forest: Medicinal and Toxic Plants of the Indians of Northwest Amazon. It discusses 1700 species including their ethnobotany, native names, uses, and chemistry (when known). It will appear in fall, 1989, from Dioscorides Press.

A Festschrift in honor of the late Dr. Gordon Wasson, famous ethnomycologist and former President of the Society for Economic Botany, will be published by Dioscorides Press in the summer of 1989. It is edited by Thomas Riedlinger and contains contributions from more than 20 specialists and friends.

An excerpt from Gary Nabhan's book, Enduring Seeds: Preserving Wildness, was published in the January/February issue of Harrowsmith. The article, "Gift of the Monitok" is a piece about the ethnobotany of the Ojibway Indians with emphasis on harvesting of the native rice fields, Zizania palustris.

MEETINGS

The 37th Annual Congress of the Society For Medicinal Plant Research will be held in Germany on September 5-9, 1989. Contact Professor Dr. T. Hartmann, Institut Fur Pharmazeutische Biologie, der Technischen Universitat, Mendelssohnstrabe 1, D-3300 Braunschweig (FRG)

NEWS

Information for the International Register of Specialists and Current Research In Plant Systematics, Edition 2 is now being collected. Photocopies of the form are available from the Economic Botany Newsletter Editor or from Hunt Institute, Attn: Register, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890, USA

People to People Youth Science Exchange, an exchange system between China, Russia, and the United States is seeking assistance.

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SEB Council Members have decided to co-sponsor the September 1989 symposium on "Plant Chemicals Useful to Man" (this title may change) in Miami Beach together with Agricultural Chemistry Subdivision of the American Chemical Society. The symposium will include topics such as "Plants used by Indigenous peoples," "Pharmacognosy," "Herbicidal Compounds in Plants," "Fungicidal Compounds in Plants," "Insecticidal Compounds in Plants," and "Toxicology of Natural Products." It is planned that the symposium will be published.

In the last issue of the newsletter I printed a list of the SEB Council. I would like to clarify who the voting members of the Council are: the President, the past President, the President elect, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, The Journal Editor, and six members at large.

Please note that in the last issue of the newsletter an application form was sent to encourage members to solicit new members. Some eager members have resubscribed. These additional funds will be applied to their '90 subscriptions.

I close on a sad note. Dr. Timothy Plowman, Curator at the Department of Botany Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, died on January 7, 1989. The Timothy Plowman fund for South American Research and Travel has been established at the Field Museum of Natural History, Department of Botany at Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois. An obituary and remembrance of Tim will be published in the Society's journal, Economic Botany, in the near future.

So what are you doing June 11th? Don't forget to reserve this time for a few warm days in Knoxville. The following is a list of some planned activities: the board meeting will be at 2:00 Saturday June 10th, a field trip to the Oak Ridge Arboretum on the 11th, registration and reception June 11th, papers will be given from the 12-14th and a field trip to the Smokey Mountains on the afternoon of the 14th.

If you are interested in finding out more details about any of the material mentioned in the SEB newsletter write the Editor, Trish Flaster, 2115 Orchard Ave., Boulder, Colorado, 80304.