

## New England Botanical Club – Minutes of the 1028<sup>th</sup> Meeting 1 June 2007

Robert Bertin, Recording Secretary

The 801<sup>st</sup> meeting of the New England Botanical Club, being the 1028<sup>th</sup> since its original organization, was held on Friday, June 1 through Sunday, June 3, 2007, at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and at Stump Sprouts Guest Lodge in Hawley, Massachusetts.

The weekend began with a Friday afternoon workshop on the genus *Viola* hosted by Karen Searcy at the University of Massachusetts. The workshop was conducted by Arthur Haines, well known to New England botanists. He is co-author of the *Flora of Maine* and is currently working on a flora of New England funded by the New England Wild Flower Society. Arthur gave a lucid presentation on the major features used to distinguish the New England violets, convincing his audience that species in this group can usually be keyed as easily in the fruiting or cleistogamous condition as when they have flowers. He then provided his key to the genus and numerous herbarium specimens so workshop attendees could apply their newfound knowledge. Beginners and experienced botanists alike left the workshop with new insights.

After the workshop, 23 club members and guests adjourned to Stump Sprouts, a lodge in the hills of Hawley, Massachusetts, where they were welcomed by hosts Lloyd and Suzanne. The high elevation and cold drinks provided welcome relief from the warm afternoon temperatures. After dinner, Dr. Julie Richburg, Berkshire/Pioneer Valley Regional Ecologist of the Trustees for Reservations presented “*A preview of Notchview Reservation: History, natural communities and special species.*” The 3100-acre property, a favored spot for cross-country skiing, abuts the Windsor State Forest and the Moran State Wildlife Management Area, making it part of a large contiguous area of protected land. Vegetation includes extensive areas of northern hardwoods with red spruce and balsam fir, spruce plantations, rich mesic forest, cultivated grasslands, vegetated wetlands ranging from seeps and marshes to swamps, as well as streams and vernal pools. The land averages about 2000 feet in elevation and much is gently rolling. In the northern part of the property are extensive marshes and shrub swamps associated with Drowned Lands Brook. On the east are steep slopes and several permanent or temporary streams cutting ravines eastward towards the Westfield River.

On Saturday morning, one group visited the “Drowned Lands” near the north end of Notchview and a second group visited rich woodlands near the southern end. Over 170 species of vascular plants were recorded. The drowned lands yielded various sedge species, shrubs and forbs, including *Rhamnus alnifolia* and robust specimens of *Equisetum fluviatile*. The rich forest group turned up *Matteuccia struthiopteris*, *Streptopus roseus* and *Platanthera orbiculata*. During the afternoon, Pam Weatherbee led a trip to Bear Swamp in Ashfield, a Trustees of Reservations parcel that featured rich mesic forest containing *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, *Dryopteris goldiana*, *Diplazium pycnocarpon*, *Mitella diphylla* and *Galearis spectabilis*. Sunday morning we bid Stump Sprouts adieu and made a final stop at Hawley Bog, where a 700-foot boardwalk makes for easy access. *Platanthera orbiculata* graced the woodland trail to the bog. The bog itself is a classic kettlehole with a distinctive bog flora, the high point of which was *Carex pauciflora*, a rare species in Massachusetts and new to most of those in attendance.