

The New Jersey Botanist

Newsletter of the Flora of New Jersey Project

Special points of interest:

- > Web Page Up and Running
- > Manual and Atlas Protocols Established
- > Members Record Additions to State's Flora

Newsletter to Share Information on New Jersey's Flora



FNJ Members at the February 2008 General Meeting: Back row: Wayne Ferren, Jr., Russell Juelg, Matt Palmer, Bill Olson and Bill Standaert; Front Row: Robin Jess, Ted Gordon, Joe Arsenault, David Fairbrothers, Janet Novak, Eleanor Standaert and Walt Bien.

Welcome! This is the first issue of the Flora of New Jersey Project's newsletter. Our newsletter's name reflects who we are. Our task is to distribute information on the plants growing wild in the Garden State, which includes up-to-date nomenclature.

Our flora is a dynamic natural resource that is influenced by many factors including changes in habitat and the addition or loss of species. Because of this varia-

tion, and changing nature of scientific knowledge, our project goals and protocols are dynamic.

Our position between New York and Philadelphia has made New Jersey a frequent stage for botanical research, including what species are and where they grow. Our landscape has been documented by many plant collections, including Nathaniel Lord Britton, Witmer Stone, Bayard Long and many others but so little has been written specifically for New Jersey. Our scholars have contributed to many regional texts that define the flora of our region, but few distilled their information specifically for the plants growing within our boundaries.

The Project tries to

tap this historic knowledge to standardize the names and document the locations for all plants within our State. This effort is being made by knowledgeable persons driven to decipher the complexities of taxonomy and nomenclature as well as the distribution influences of geology, climate and land use.

Standardization is the hallmark of good science, and the Flora of New Jersey Project strives to be consistent, repeatable, and accurate. Our various committees and peer review process will provide a system for check and balance system to assure those who eventually will use the FNJ products that the work was done with insight, forethought, and was executed in a professional manner.

Flora of New Jersey Project Reaches Its Fourth Year!

It's hard to believe, but four years have passed since our first meeting. Twenty plus botanists met at the work office of Bill Olson and Wayne Ferren, Jr.—Maser Consulting. That meeting set the stage for this long term project that has taken on the task to provide a modern record of New Jersey's flora.

The Project's accomplishments during the last four years are modest. Anyone who truly knows this group of botanists knows we are a persistent bunch. Get a few of us together in the same room and you have the workings of a debate! Initially the meetings were held to discuss what to

do, how to do it, and who would be responsible for the many tasks. Recently, we have been concentrating on providing species lists and distribution information through an online *Atlas* and writing formal treatments and keys for a published *Manual*.

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A Message from the Chairman

As FNJ's spokesperson, I am pleased to introduce a new service for our growing list of members. Our newsletter will be a periodic publication to inform and spread the word about our project and its current progress. I'll be doing much of the editing and writing, so please be patient with my manner of writing.

I'll try to keep a core set of topics, such as the atlas and manual updates, taxa assignments and species presentations that have been com-

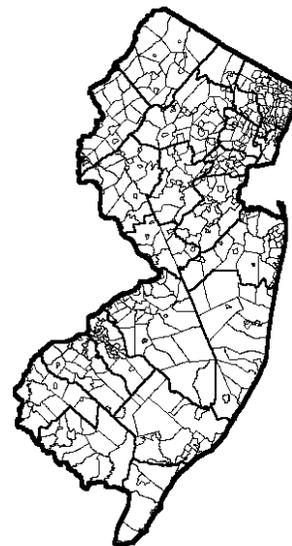
pleted. I'll also try and spice up the newsletter with bits and pieces of interesting plant gossip, such as NJ range extensions, new species and county records.

I'll also keep everyone abreast of our quest for non-profit status, funding news and important comings and goings associated with our association with Rutgers University Chrysler Herbarium.

We will have committee chairpersons provide updates on nomenclature, species

assignments and more.

Hopefully this will be informative to our members and with any luck, our members will have things to say as well. Anyone with news and notes on our process or our plants can send their comments directly to me at the address on the last page of the newsletter. Together, we can bring information on New Jersey's plants into the 21st Century!



New Honeysuckle Makes SNJ Debut

We can now add *Lonicera fragrantissima* Lindl. & Paxt. to our list of New Jersey shrubs. An early flowering species, this was first found in 1995 in Malaga, Gloucester Co. Its now known to grow in southern Gloucester and Northern Cumberland Counties. Its native to eastern China, first introduced in the USA in 1845. It probably is an escape from the local



"Breath of Spring", *Lonicera fragrantissima* can be found as a roadside invasive shrub around Malaga and Vineland (photo credit USDA Plants Database).

Atlas, Manual and Nomenclature Committees Set the Rules!

Wayne Ferren, Jr. and Matthew Palmer have announced the publication of the Project's **Guidelines for Contributors to the FNJ Manual and Atlas Projects**. This document, available on the Project website, will guide contributors on style and the level of detail required to be included in either document. The *Atlas* is a web-based resource that will provide species list and distribution maps for each species.

Additional information, including photographs and natural history information, will be provided as it becomes available. Being digital, we'll be able to update and add to the data as the project matures.

The *Manual* will be a printed document that will provide dichotomous keys and details on each species habitats and up to date taxonomy. Both *Atlas* and *Manual* are supported by Bill Olson's No-

menclature Committee. Bill and crew are responsible for providing contributors taxonomic critiques. This will allow consistency throughout the documents and keep our plant names current.

Anyone interested in contributing to either project should contact Bill, Wayne or Matt to discuss their contribution. (Bolson@MaserConsulting.Com, WFerren@MaserConsulting.Com; mp2434@Columbia.edu).

FNJ Project Makes Chrysler Herbarium Home

It's unanimous, the Flora of New Jersey Project has made the Chrysler Herbarium home! A discussion at the Spring 2007 meeting elaborated on the need for a set meeting space for the FNJ. After a round table conversation, a suggestion was made to adopt the Chrysler Herbarium as our base of operations.

It is New Jersey's unof-

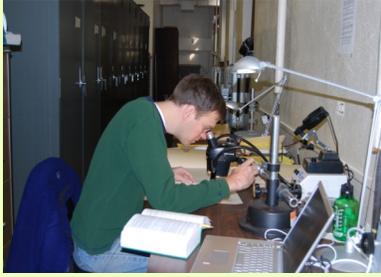
ficial repository for voucher specimens, its centrally located and many of the participants are alumni or contributors.

"It was a logical choice", said chairman Joe Arsenault. "we've been meeting regularly at the herbarium for well over two years and we are comfortable in this location". A motion was made and carried unanimously by the members of

the project present at the April meeting. Dr. Lena Struwe, Chrysler Herbarium's director (<http://aesop.rutgers.edu/~herbarium/>), was delighted with the motion, adding it would contribute to the growing importance placed on the Rutgers plant specimen collection. The herbarium has ~ 120,000 plant, algal, moss & lichen specimens.

Committee Reports

Atlas Report



Example Atlas pages for the genus *Equisetum* and the Viscaceae are online now. By the end of the spring, we expect to have lists and some species pages available for the Amaranthaceae (including the Chenopodiaceae), the Ranunculaceae, the genus *Panicum*, sections of the Asteraceae and Cyper-

aceae, and several other small families. With the release of the *Guidelines for Contributors*, we hope that the rate of contributions will increase.

Although there is only a tiny fraction of the state Flora covered in the Atlas currently, we hope that, as it develops, it will become a useful resource to botanists throughout the state and beyond. We welcome contributions from all interested parties as a way of adding content to the site. Experienced botanists are invited to adopt a taxon and prepare species lists (including synonymy), distribution maps, and natural history information for publication in the Atlas. We also welcome contributions of photographs,

new distribution records, or volunteer time during our monthly herbarium work days. Further information on how to help is available in the *Guidelines for Contributors*.

Botanists with the Flora Project are currently preparing submissions on over 40 families. A list of "adopted" families is available on the website. If you are interested in adopting one of the other families, or assisting a Project botanist with their treatments, please contact the Atlas Committee chairman, Matt Palmer, at mp2434@columbia.edu.

Manual Report

Now that the rules are set for the manual layout and available on the web, there's no excuse not to submit your group for review. Committee chair Wayne Ferren is ready to receive the keys and text as we finish researching each taxa.

To date, only the Families Amaranthaceae and Viscaceae have been available for review. Wayne provided his FNA-

work on Chenopods and Amaranths as the examples in the *Manual* protocols. Viscaceae was a two species family and provided a quick start to add substance to the process.

For the readers information, the *Manual* will be a set of descriptive dichotomous keys and individual species description of general habit, habitat, rarity and distribution. All impor-

tant metrics will be found in the key and will be excluded from the species description. Together with the *Atlas*, the *Manual* will provide a valuable set of distribution and identification tools for botanists interested in New Jersey's plants.

Large Buttonweed in Ocean County!

Botanical survey work completed in the summer of 2007 found *Diodia virginiana* L. on Rt. 70's roadside. This southern plant apparently hitched a ride north and is now well established in a roadside ditch. It's height is somewhat compromised by mowing, but the plants are none the worse. Fertile flowers and mature achenes will provide basis for a new county record!

FNJ's Web Page: A Work in Progress

The Flora Project Web page (NJFlora.Rutgers.edu) is now up and running! Janet Novak, the Project's Web Master, has provided a great product to display our progress. Currently, we have our home page, contact page and information and links for contributors.

The Web now supports a up to date list of New Jersey's representatives of the Genus

Equisetum as well and the complete treatment for the Viscaceae, the Mistletoe Family. Atlas pages are available for the mistletoes as well as two members of the horsetails.

A recent submission, the Genus *Panicum*, marks the beginning of a slow yet continuous addition to this internet-based information system.



Contact Information

Flora of New Jersey

Chairman: Joe Arsenault
 Vice-Chairman: Stevens Heckscher

Committees:

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 Manual: Wayne Ferren, Jr.
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2008 Flora of New Jersey Memberships are Now Available!

Many people who are interested in New Jersey's flora are not experts but are seriously concerned about it and its future. To make sure the Project is accessible to everyone interested in New Jersey's flora, a yearly membership is available for a nominal annual dues. Membership in the Flora Project provides an option to keep abreast of new developments, to learn about botany-related events throughout the State, and to show support (financial and otherwise) for this endeavor. The yearly dues are used for administration costs, outreach and correspondence. The 2008 membership categories are:

**Student (\$10), Individual (\$20), Contributor (\$50)
 Institutional (\$100).**

Download your 2008 membership form at
www.NJFlora.Rutgers.edu today!

**Check Us Out
 on the Web @
www.NJFlora.Rutgers.edu**

Upcoming Meeting Dates

General Meeting are held 4 times a year at the Chrysler Herbarium, Douglas College. All meetings start promptly at 10Am and follow a set agenda. The next meeting dates for the 2008 are:

**April 26
 July 12
 October 18**

Spring Herbarium Work Dates:

**March 22
 April 12
 May 10**

