COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
FORESTRY AND HOME ECONOMICS
AND UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

EXTENSION SERVICE
COUNTY AGENT WORK
HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK
4-H CLUB WORK

Marlinton, West Virginia

April 17, 1959

Mr. Grote Reber
P. O. Box 2
Green Bank, West Virginia

Dear Mr. Reber:

The speciman of the vining material which was brought to my office by your secretary, Miss Irvine, was sent to our University for identification. I am enclosing the letter written to me by the Herbarium Assistant, Miss Elzabeth Ann Bartholomew, relative to this material. I'm also forwarding on to you two copies of the journal CASTANEA which contains articles written in regard to this vining plant by some of the outstanding Botanists of the country.

I hope this will give you the information you want relative to the plant, in question. If we can be of further service to you, do not hestitate to call on us.

Very truly yours,

Walter E. Jett

Walter E. Jett
County Agent

WEJ:pcv

Enclosures 3

West Virginia University
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
MORGANTOWN
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

April 13, 1959

Mr. Walter E. Jett, County Agent
Marlinton, West Virginia

Dear Mr. Jett:

The specimen you sent T. D. Gray has been handed me for identification. This is commonly called wild yam, Dioscorea villosa.

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of CASTANEA, Journal of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Club which includes an article on "Some Behaviors of the Yams (Dioscorea of the Family Dioscoreaceae" written by H. A. Allard who is a retired member of the U. S. D. A. staff. This will give you the information mentioned about the twining of the plant. He states that yams twine in both directions. He ends his article with the following statement: "The great naturalist, Charles Darwin, became interested in twining and climbing plants and wrote rather extensively on the subject. Had he known the behaviors of the yams as presented by Prain and Burkhill, he would not have written 'At present no instance is known of two species of the same genus twining in opposite directions; and this is a singular fact, because different individuals of Solanum dulcamara revolve and twine in both directions; this plant, however, is a most feeble twiner'."

Dr. Allard lives at 3000 Seventh Street, North
Arlington, Virginia

I want to extend to both you and the gentleman who brought you the specimen an invitation to become members of our Southern Appalachian Botanical Club.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew

Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew
Herbarium Assistant

cc: T. D. Gray

From EDIBLE WILD PLANTS OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA by Merritt Lyndon Fernald and Alfred Charles Kinsey. Idlewild Press, Cornwall-on-Hudson, N. Y. 1943.

YAM FAMILY (Dioscoreaceae)

Cinnamon-vine or Chinese Yam, Dioscorea opposita (D. batatas Decne.)

Use: root-vegetable.

The CINNAMON-VINE, so much cultivated as an ornamental in the South and northward as far as New England, climbs high by twining, and has attractive, strongly ribbed, rounded-triangular and long-pointed opposite leaves with small whitish bulb-like t tubers borne in the axils. As far north as Pennsylvania it escapes and in waste lots, as about Richmond, Virginia, is often very abundant. Its deep subterranean potato-like tubers are said to become 2 or 3 feet long. Cooked like potatoes they are reputed to be excellent. They are extensively cultivated in southeastern Asia and when they were first brought to Europe nearly a century ago Decaisne and other French botanists and agriculturalists, as quoted in The Gardners' Chronicle for July 22, 1854, commended the giant roots as "rich in nutritive matter, eatable when raw, easily cooked wither by boiling or roasting...in cooking... it acquires the taste and quality of a Potato, for which it might be mistaken." The vigorous new shoots should not be eaten; they are purgative.

From AN ILLUSTRATED FLORA OF THE NORTHERN UNITED STATES, CANADA AND THE BRITISH POSSESSIONS by Nathaniel Lord Britton and Hon Addison Brown. Vol. 1: 447. 1896.

"There are about 160 species, most numbeous in tropical regions, a few extending into the temperate zones. The large fleshy rootstocks of several tropical species furnish the yams of commerce."

One old recipe for cake icing is as follows: Cook one cup of berry juice and one cup of sugar in a double boiler until thick. Pour the syrup over one beaten egg white and beat until of spreading consistency.

Burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis* L.)

Swamps and low meadows in the mountains. July through October.

USES: As a salad ingredient in case of extreme need.

Wild Rose *(Rosa)* (6 species)

In thickets, along roadsides, old fields, rocky pastures, etc. June to August. (No illustrations.)

USES: For salad, candy, jelly and eaten raw.

The petals can be eaten raw, used in salads, or candied in heavy syrup.

Some of the small fruits can be used in jelly making.

Plums *(Prunus)*(Several species)

Scattered throughout the thickets and woodlands of the state. The fruit ripens during August and September.

USES: Fruit, sauces, pies, jams, jellies, etc.

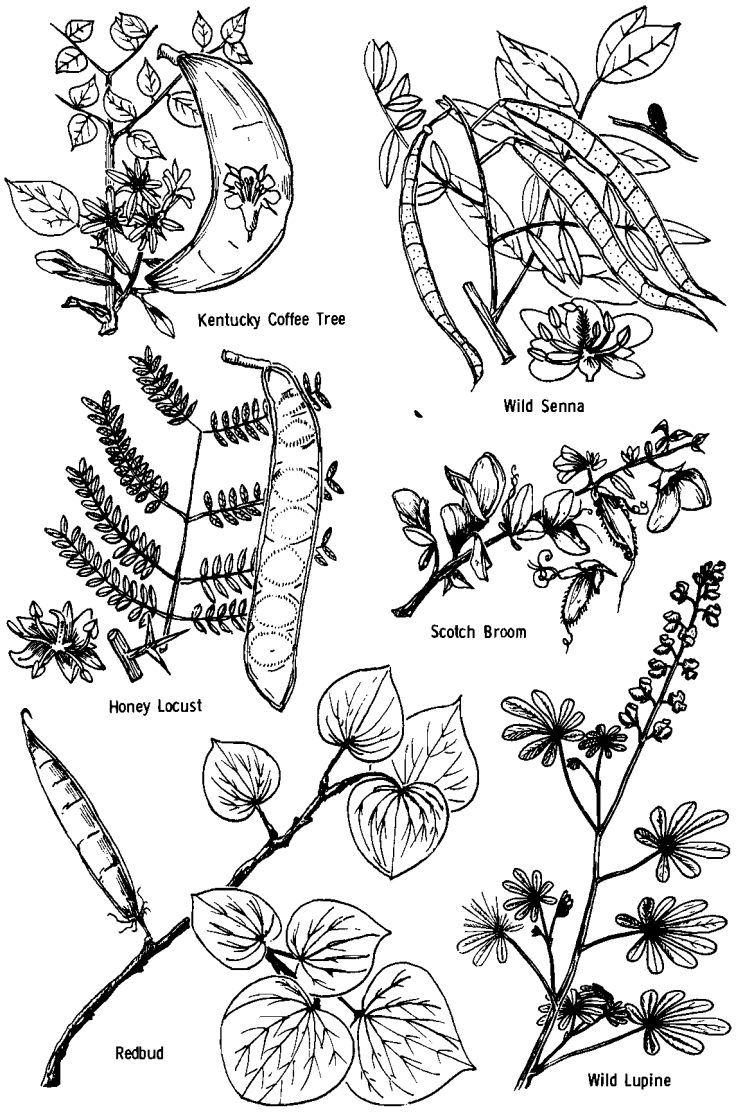
Any of the wild species can be used, but they must be carefully checked for fungi and insects.

Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina* Ehrh.)

Very common in the better woodland. The fruit ripens during September and October.

USES: For a jelly and as a raw fruit.

The pulp is mixed with sour apple juice and made into jelly, but many of the cherries are infested with insects.



Edible Wild Plants of West Virginia

William H. Gillespie University of West Virginia.

The author has prepared this compilation of wild plants with the objective of sharing the pleasurable experience of seeking and eating wild plants. Adequate descriptive material is provided and the book is profusely illustrated. The author not only guides us to wild plants in the field, he instructs us in the best methods of their preparation for the table. Of course, the list is composed of plants within the author's experience in the State of West Virginia, but the great majority are species common at least throughout the area covered by Gray's Manual.

134 pages / 5½ x 8½
plastic bound / card covers
profusely and beautifully illustrated
two dollars and fifty cents

Checklist of

Scholar's Library books in Biology:

Biometrics

Hayes, F. Ronald and D. Pelluet. Work Notes on Common Statistical Procedures. $2.30

Thomas, H. L. Introduction to Applied Statistics. $2.75

Botany

*Brown, H. D. Scientific Botany—A Guide. $3.75
*Core, Earl L. Plant Life of West Virginia. paper $6.00, hardbound $7.50

Gillespie, William H. Edible Wild Plants. $2.50

Hungate, R. E. Laboratory Manual of General Bacteriology. $3.00

Zoology

Ford, Peter. Advanced Histological Technique. $2.75
Hoar, William S. Environmental Physiology of Animals. $2.75

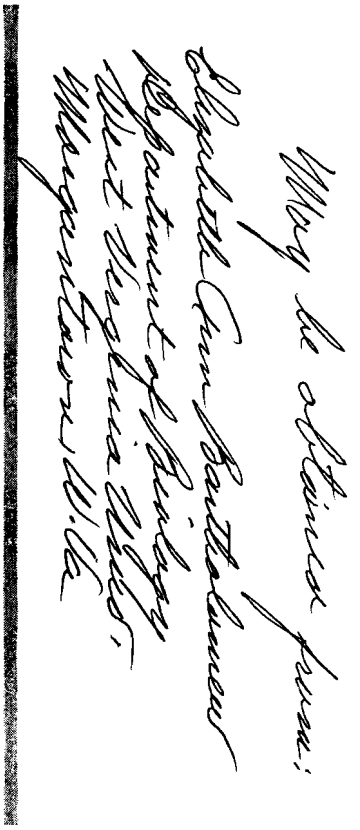
Kaplan, Harold M. The Rabbit in Experimental Physiology. $2.75

Martin, C. P. and S. M. Banfill. A Workbook of Anatomy. $4.25

Strickland, E. H., B. Hocking, and G. E. Ball. Laboratory Manual for Insect Morphology. $3.50

Walker, A. J. The Diagnosis of Malaria. $1.25

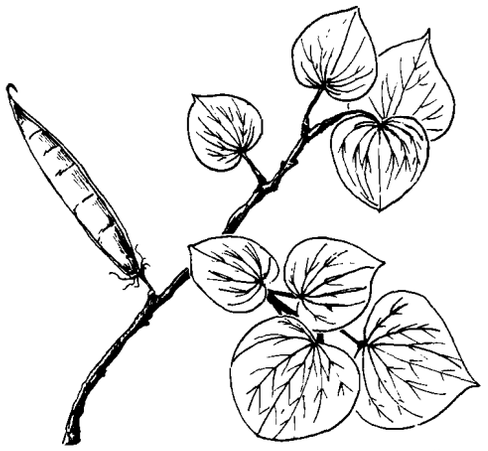
* *In the press*



SCHOLAR'S LIBRARY

P.O. Box 60, Gracie Station, New York 28

now ready!



practical

reliable

fascinating

guide to

EDIBLE WILD PLANTS

specimen pages centerleaf

SCHOLAR'S LIBRARY · PUBLISHERS

One old recipe for cake icing is as follows: Cook one cup of berry juice and one cup of sugar in a double boiler until thick. Pour the syrup over one beaten egg white and beat until of spreading consistency.

Burnet (*Sanguisorba canadensis* L.)

Swamps and low meadows in the mountains. July through October.

USES: As a salad ingredient in case of extreme need.

Wild Rose *(Rosa)* (6 species)

In thickets, along roadsides, old fields, rocky pastures, etc. June to August. (No illustrations.)

USES: For salad, candy, jelly and eaten raw.

The petals can be eaten raw, used in salads, or candied in heavy syrup.

Some of the small fruits can be used in jelly making.

Plums *(Prunus)* (Several species)

Scattered throughout the thickets and woodlands of the state. The fruit ripens during August and September.

USES: Fruit, sauces, pies, jams, jellies, etc.

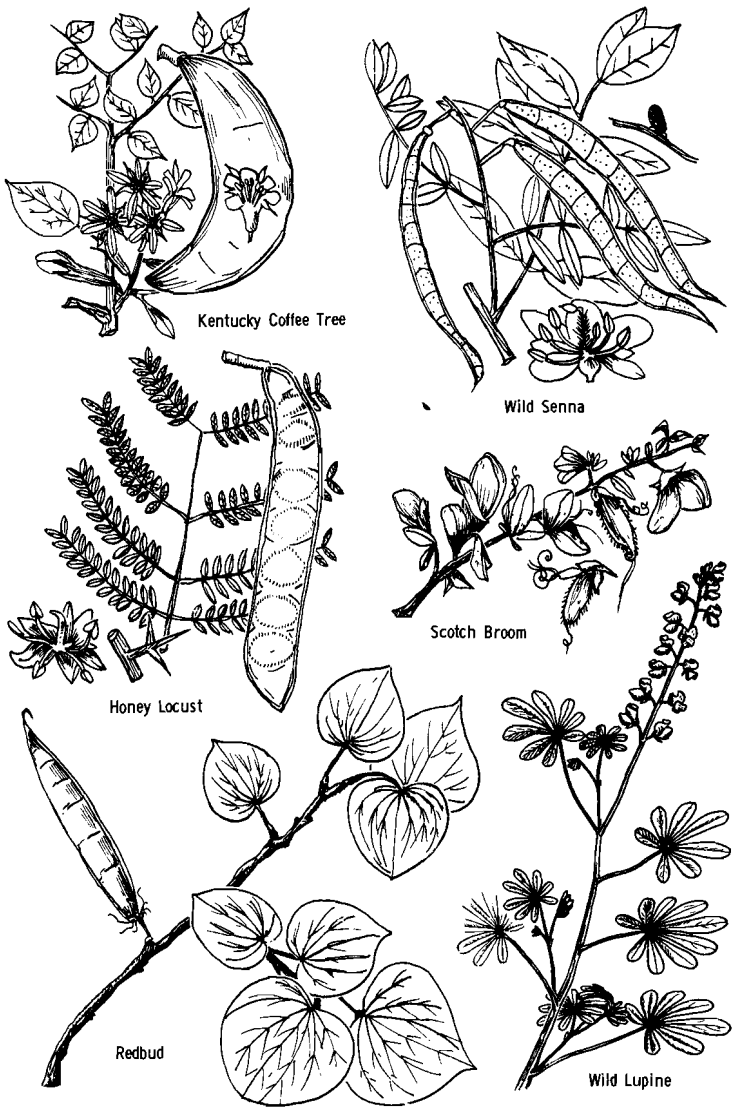
Any of the wild species can be used, but they must be carefully checked for fungi and insects.

Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina* Ehrh.)

Very common in the better woodland. The fruit ripens during September and October.

USES: For a jelly and as a raw fruit.

The pulp is mixed with sour apple juice and made into jelly, but many of the cherries are infested with insects.



Edible Wild Plants of West Virginia

William H. Gillespie University of West Virginia.

The author has prepared this compilation of wild plants with the objective of sharing the pleasurable experience of seeking and eating wild plants. Adequate descriptive material is provided and the book is profusely illustrated. The author not only guides us to wild plants in the field, he instructs us in the best methods of their preparation for the table. Of course, the list is composed of plants within the author's experience in the State of West Virginia, but the great majority are species common at least throughout the area covered by Gray's Manual.

134 pages / 5½ x 8½
plastic bound / card covers
profusely and beautifully illustrated
two dollars and fifty cents

Checklist of

Scholar's Library books in Biology:

Biometrics

Hayes, F. Ronald and D. Pelluet. Work Notes on Common Statistical Procedures. $2.30

Thomas, H. L. Introduction to Applied Statistics. $2.75

Botany

*Brown, H. D. Scientific Botany—A Guide. $3.75
*Core, Earl L. Plant Life of West Virginia. paper $6.00, hardbound $7.50

Gillespie, William H. Edible Wild Plants. $2.50

Hungate, R. E. Laboratory Manual of General Bacteriology. $3.00

Zoology

Ford, Peter. Advanced Histological Technique. $2.75
Hoar, William S. Environmental Physiology of Animals. $2.75

Kaplan, Harold M. The Rabbit in Experimental Physiology. $2.75

Martin, C. P. and S. M. Banfill. A Workbook of Anatomy. $4.25

Strickland, E. H., B. Hocking, and G. E. Ball. Laboratory Manual for Insect Morphology. $3.50

Walker, A. J. The Diagnosis of Malaria. $1.25

* *In the press*

Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew
Dept. Biology, W. V. U.
Morgantown, West Virginia

May we add your name?

SCHOLAR'S LIBRARY

P.O. Box 60, Gracie Station, New York 28