

# Wilson Leads Wildflower Walk

By Jonathan Eppley

Pat Wilson of Hessel loves nature. When she was a child, she would spend hours walking in the woods with her mother, learning about the different wildflowers and plants they passed. It was then that her passion for nature, particularly plant life, took root.

Since then, she has attended seminars and participated in nature walks with professional botanists, broadening her knowledge of wild plants indigenous to the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Now, she shares that knowledge with others on walks through Les Cheneaux area nature preserves, pointing out native plant species as they go.

"I've been doing it since I was six years old," she said. "My mother loved to walk. I would learn some things at her feet and I would just teach it to others as I got older."

Her guided walks are organized through the Les Cheneaux Islands Association and are conducted twice a year, in early and late summer. Her second walk of the season took place Thursday, August 27, when she guided 13 people through the Albany Creek Nature Preserve on M-134.

When Mrs. Wilson leads a group

into the wilderness, she likes to point out species that are specific to the region as well as poisonous plants and carnivorous plants.

"One of the things I try to point out to [walkers] are the carnivorous plants," she said. "There's quite a variety out there. It's just fun to get out and look."

Five carnivorous plants are indigenous to the area, including sundews, butterworts, pitcher plants, bladderwort, and yellow water lilies. The plants trap and ingest insects for nitrogen to survive.

Several poisonous plants also grow in the area, including poison hemlock, poison sumac, and zigadenus (more commonly referred to as a dune lily). These poisonous plants are known to cause skin irritation if contacted with bare skin. They also can be fatal if ingested by humans and animals.

Poison hemlock can be identified by its red and green-spotted stem, triangular-arranged leaves, and white flowers. Poison sumac looks like a small tree standing about six feet high, with seven to 13 oval shaped leaves on each stem. It typically grows in swampy areas and grows white berries in the fall. The zigadenus plant has a white, lily-like

blossom with a green center and grows in shady areas with clay ground.

Benign wildflowers highlighted on the walking tours include fringed gentian, wild cranberries, lady slippers, and pitcher's thistle.

Pitcher's thistle, which only grows on the shorelines and sand dunes around the Great Lakes, can be found along the shore between Cedarville and DeTour. According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan has more locations of the white-flowered thistle than any other state. Pitcher's thistle can be identified by its silvery, woolly hairs and bluish-green leaves and stems. The plant stands about three-and-a-half-feet tall with roots that can penetrate up to six feet deep in the sand. The plant can also be found along the sand dunes west of St. Ignace along US-2.

"They're just very beautiful plants," Mrs. Wilson said.

She began conducting the walks for the Islands Association two years ago, but had been giving informal walks in the area for several years before that, she said. She has given tours in the Birge Nature Preserve at Mismar Bay and



Pat Wilson with the group she led through the Albany Creek Nature Preserve on a wildflower walking tour sponsored by the Les Cheneaux Islands Association. Pictured are (from left) Joyce Moore (back), Annegret Goehring, Barbara Landen, Pat Landen, Joan Krempel, Joanie McDonald, Sarah Dunn (back), Pat Wilson, Mickey Ford (back), Fred Moore, Angie O'Dowd (back), and Mary Layher. Joey Ryan is standing in front of Mrs. Wilson. Everett Landen, who is not pictured, also participated in the walk August 28. (Photograph by Everett Landen)

Gerstacker Nature Preserve at Dudley Bay. She also used to give similar walks around the Sault Ste. Marie area when she lived there several years ago.

Hessel residents Annegret Goehring, Sarah Dunn, Mickey Ford, Angie ODowd, Mary Layher, and Joey Ryan, as well as Cedarville res-

idents Joyce and Fred Moore, Janie McDonald, Joan Krempel, Everett and Barbara Landen, and Pat Landen participated in last month's walk. The group met to carpool to the walking site between Cedarville and DeTour, and returned about two hours later. The free walks are open to anyone who wants to participate.

Next summer's walks have yet to be scheduled.

"I keep them very short because some of the people on the walks are older. I try to pick places that are not too difficult for people to get around," she said. "There's a lot to see around here, and that's just the plants."

## St. Ignace Recreation Department Explores Travel Soccer Idea



At left: The first St. Ignace travel soccer team poses during a visit to Escanaba, where they played games against Gladstone and Marquette. Pictured are (back row from left) Assistant Coach Scott Marshall, Alex France, Austin Marshall, Hunter Frazier, Toby Ferguson, Coach John Styes; (front row) David LaVake, Dylan Marshall, Jack Styes, Kody Rickley, and Autumn Orm. The trip to Escanaba was a first attempt to establish a travel soccer program for St. Ignace youth. (St. Ignace Recreation Department photographs)

Youth from St. Ignace played for the first time as a traveling soccer team Saturday, August 22, against Gladstone and Marquette in Escanaba.

The game was a first try to form or join a traveling league, Recreation Director Scott Marshall said.

Marquette won the first game against St. Ignace 4-2 after a 1-1 tie for most of the game. Gladstone won St. Ignace's second game of the day, 6-1. Mr. Marshall said having only one substitute player and a long double-header made for a difficult second game. Hunter Frazier had one goal in the first game and 1 in the second, and Austin Marshall had one goal in the first. The team, comprised of St. Ignace youth ages 10 to 12, was coached by John Styes.

Mr. Marshall said the teams from Gladstone and Marquette, comprised mostly of 12-year-olds, were preparing for an upcoming tournament they were both attending.

The St. Ignace Recreation Department has been exploring the idea of establishing a traveling team, he said, and the coaching availability of Mr. Styes for the date in Escanaba seemed like a good trial for the idea.

Any other coaches or parents interested in helping to organize and coach travel teams next year are asked to discuss it with Mr. Marshall. This summer's youth soccer program ended in St. Ignace in mid-August.

Travel leagues in both Petoskey and Cheboygan have expressed interest in joining with St. Ignace for traveling youth soccer, and the game in Escanaba gave Mr. Marshall the opportunity to propose the idea to Gladstone coaches, as well. Gladstone offered to form a travel league with St. Ignace, he said, and would give St. Ignace all home games except two, when the teams would meet in Manistique.


"I think it's going to grow to

be something really good," Mr. Marshall said.

No travel teams have yet been

formed, but it's a possibility the Recreation Department will look into for next year, he said.

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The next meeting for the Organ Transplant Support Group of Northern Michigan will be Thursday, October 8, at 6 p.m. in the Professional Building Conference Room in the rear of Otsego Memorial Hospital in Gaylord.

The guest speaker will be Laura

Cornell, recipient of three donor organs. Anyone interested may attend.

For more information, contact Beverly Cherwinski at (989) 983-4188.

The hospital is at 829 South Center/US-27 North in Gaylord.



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