

# ***Native Plants*** *of the* ***North Country***



## ***Coloring Book***

*of the* ***Western Great Lakes Region***

Northern Native Plants Project of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College

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The Northern Native Plants Project is a program of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College. The Northern Native Plants Project is working to help recapture our true north woods by restoring the native plant diversity through landscaping and gardening.

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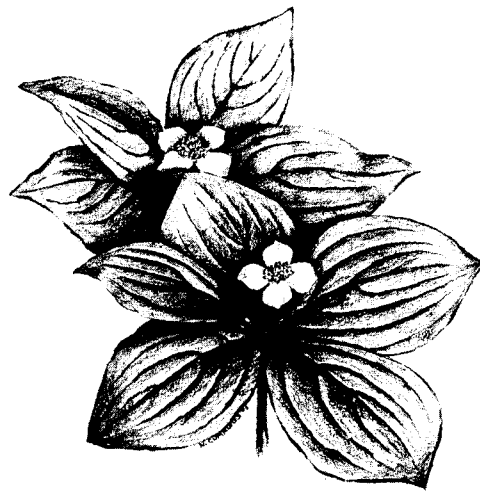
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The Northern Native Plants Project  
of the  
Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute  
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Cover illustration by Natalene Cummings

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Sigurd Olson  
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NORTHLAND COLLEGE



Explore the world of the North Country of the western Great Lakes region and learn about the many beautiful native plants that live there. Some North Country plants have showy flowers of white, red, yellow and even purple. Other plants have small flowers that you hardly notice. The description on each page tells you what colors to use. Learn interesting facts about each plant while you color.

## ***Where do northern native plants live?***

All plants need homes that provide for their special needs. Some plants need homes to keep their roots damp while some plants need open places where the sun can keep them dry. *Native Plants of the North Country Coloring Book* is organized according to these special homes called "habitats". Look for the habitat name in the upper corner on each page.

### **Barrens**

Barrens are very dry places because the soil is sandy. Rainwater moves through the sand so quickly that the ground stays dry. When you visit a barrens habitat, you will find several different kinds of grasses, some wildflowers and a few tree species. It is a perfect place to pick wild blueberries!

### **Forest**

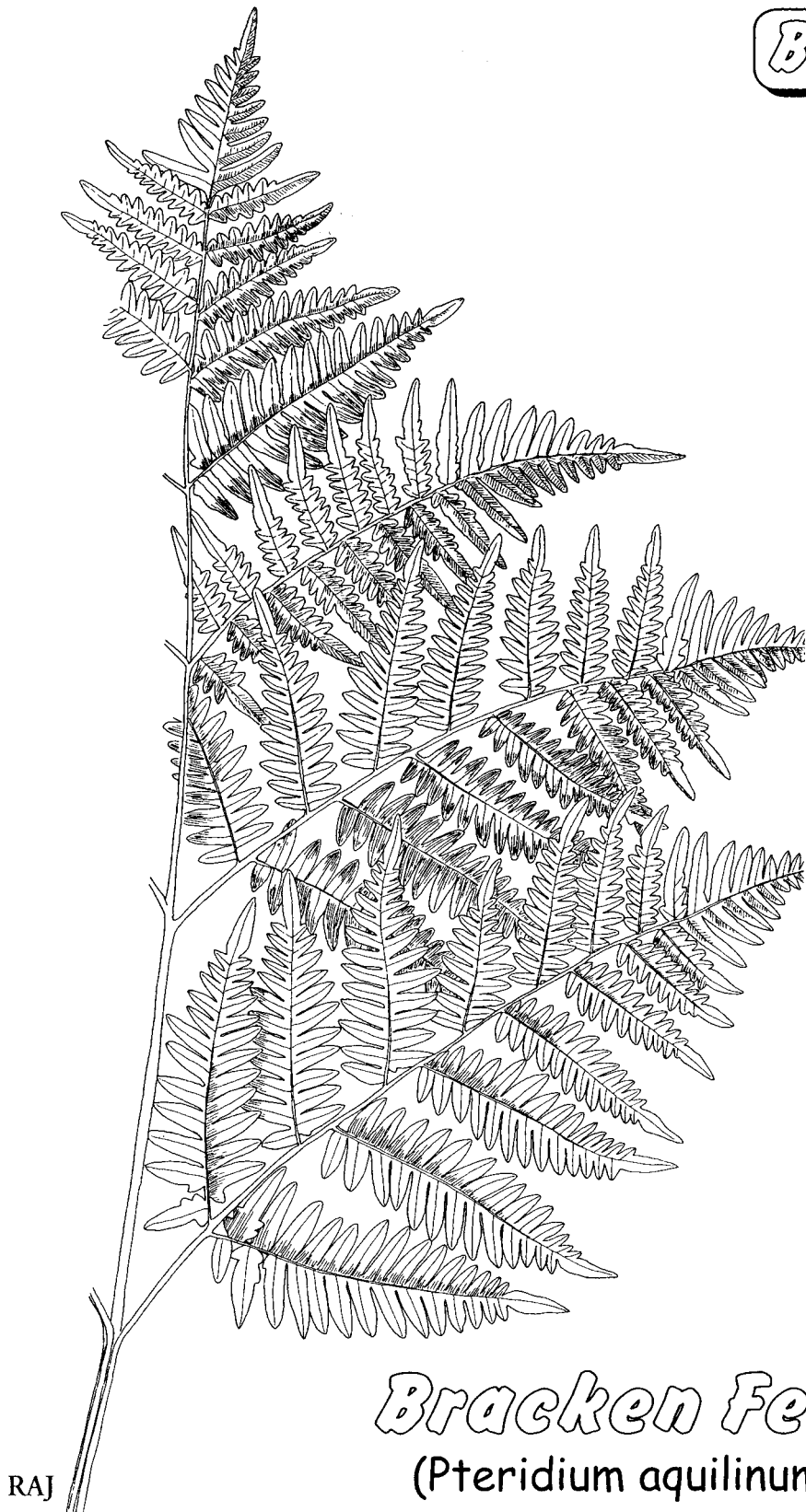
Although there are a number of different types of forest in the North Country, the one thing they all have in common is trees and lots of them! Because the trees block some of the sunlight from reaching the forest floor, plants growing in forests love shady homes.

### **Meadow**

Although meadows can be dry or moist, they are always open. This means that few trees grow there. Plants that have meadow homes love to get a sun tan!

### **Wetland**

If you are a plant that loves wet feet then a wetland is your home! The soil is so heavy that rainwater cannot drain well and the soil stays wet. In wetlands you will find sedges and wildflowers that like to keep their roots damp.



**Bracken Fern**  
(*Pteridium aquilinum*)

The fuzzy, light-green fronds of this fern first appear in May in the moist forests as well as in the dry barrens. If you are tired of eating broccoli for dinner, ask for bracken fern! This edible fern is best gathered in the early spring when it is still curled up tightly.



*Common  
Low Bush  
Blueberry*  
(*Vaccinium angustifolium*)

LEK

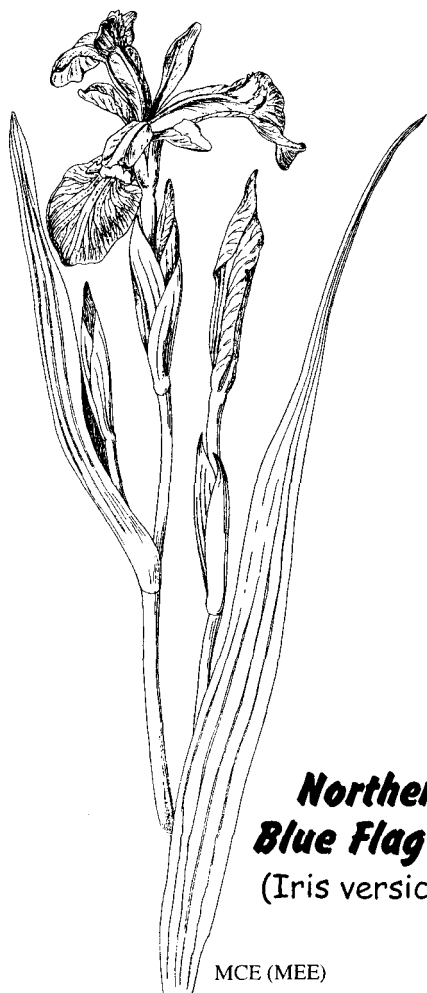
Don't let the name fool you. The tasty little berries on this plant are different from those you get at the store. Even though this small plant has blue berries, its flowers are white and can be seen in the early summer.

## The Name Game

On the coloring pages, you will notice that each plant has two names. The first name is a *common name*. This name is the one you will most likely use and remember. Sometimes a common name describes the plant color (Northern Blue Flag Iris). Sometimes it describes the habitat where the plant lives (Marsh Marigold).

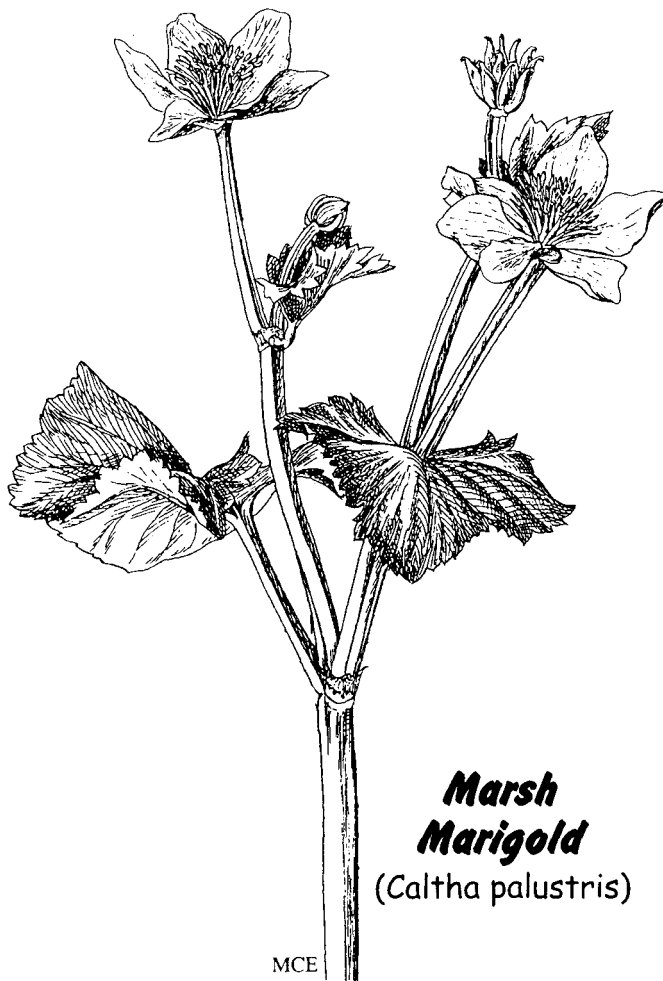
The second name is the *scientific name*. Each plant has its own scientific name with two parts. The first part is the "genus" name. A genus is a group of plants that are similar to each other. The second name is the species name. This name identifies a specific type of plant within the genus. *Iris versicolor* is the scientific name for Northern Blue Flag Iris. *Caltha palustris* is the scientific name for Marsh Marigold.

Become a botanist (plant scientist) and see if you can pronounce and remember the scientific name of at least one plant you color!



**Northern  
Blue Flag Iris**  
(*Iris versicolor*)

MCE (MEE)

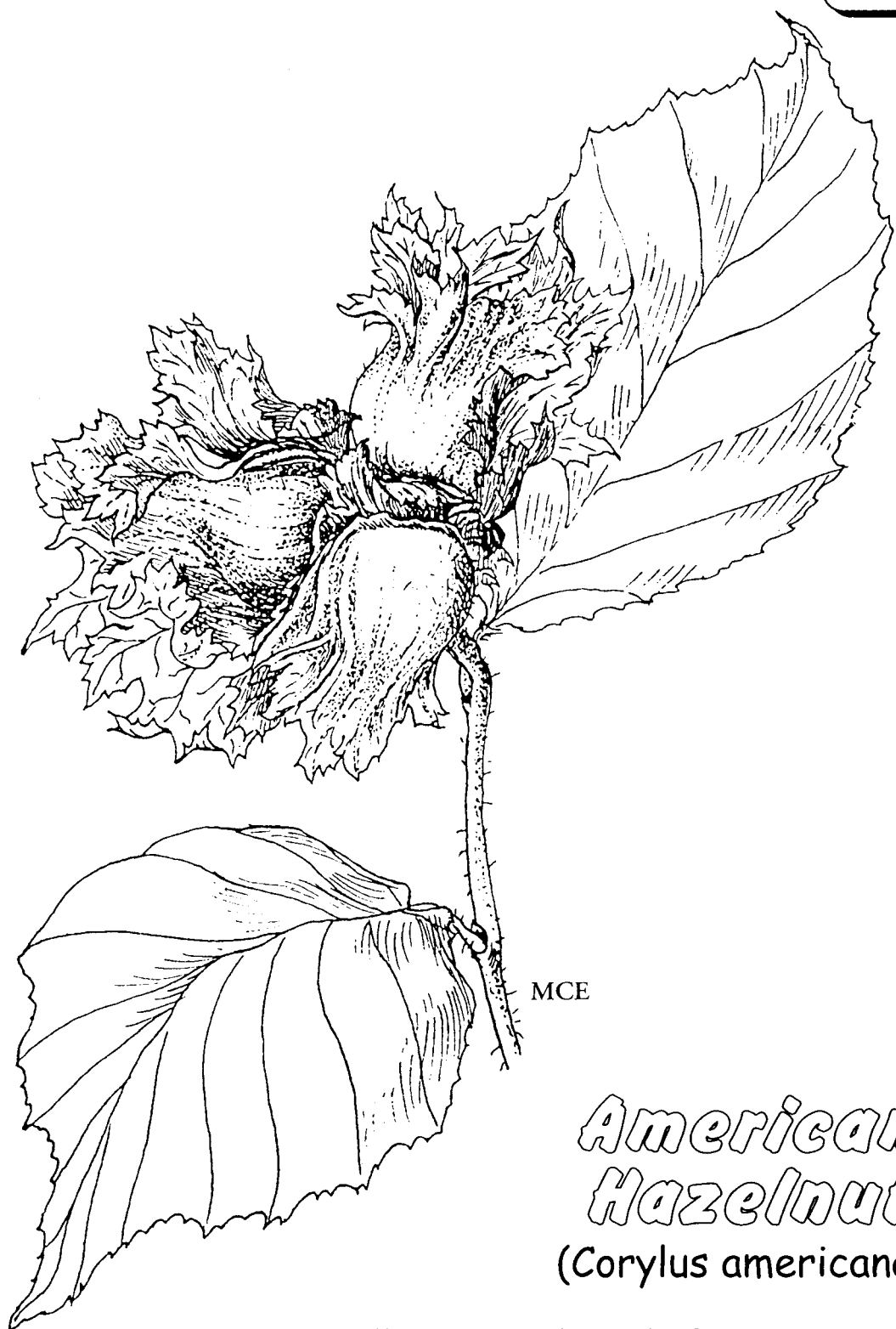


**Marsh  
Marigold**  
(*Caltha palustris*)

MCE







*American  
Hazelnut*  
(*Corylus americana*)

This small shrub grows well in dry soils and often survives fire by sprouting new branches from charred stumps—a useful adaptation in the fire-prone barrens. The tiny, brown flowers of American hazelnut are very close together on a structure called a “catkin.” In the fall, you can crack the shells of the hazelnuts and eat the nut inside.



*Bearberry*  
(*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)

If you walk through the barrens in late spring, you just might see the pale pink flowers of the plant. The rounded leaves are a dark, glossy green.

*Gray  
Goldenrod*  
(*Solidago nemoralis*)

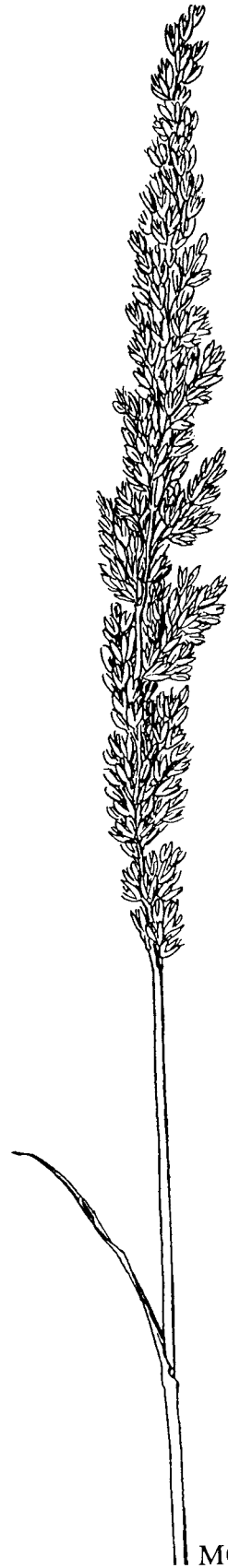


This plant is somewhat smaller than its cousins, but it has the same bright yellow flowers in late summer and fall. It is named for the ashy gray hue of its leaves.

*Harebell*  
(*Campanula rotundifolia*)



Don't be fooled by the silly sounding name of this upland plant. Its dainty blue flowers look like little blue bells sprinkled in summer fields.



*June Grass*  
(*Koeleria macrantha*)

MCE

This bluish-green grass grows in bunches in the barrens and open forests with narrow leaves at the base. It has silvery-green flower heads in early summer, and they later develop a purplish tinge.

*Little Bluestem*  
(*Schizachyrium scoparium*)

AR



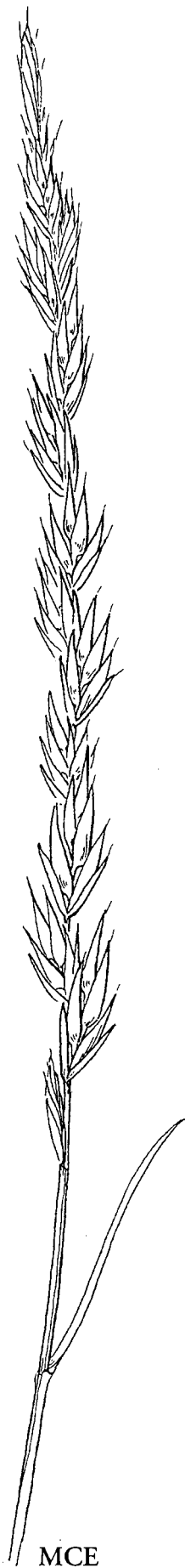
This short grass grows in the sandy barrens. The stem and tiny flowers are greenish-blue. At the end of the summer the leaves turn a beautiful golden orange, and the seeds fly away on the wind.



MCE

*Poverty  
Oat Grass*  
(*Danthonia spicata*)

This grass grows in very dry, sandy places, a perfect plant for the barrens. Its leaves and stem are green at first, but by the peak of summer they turn golden-brown. Finally, in autumn they turn reddish.



*Slender  
Wheat Grass*  
(*Elymus trachycaulus*)

MCE

This very tall grass grows up to five feet tall in sunny, open places.





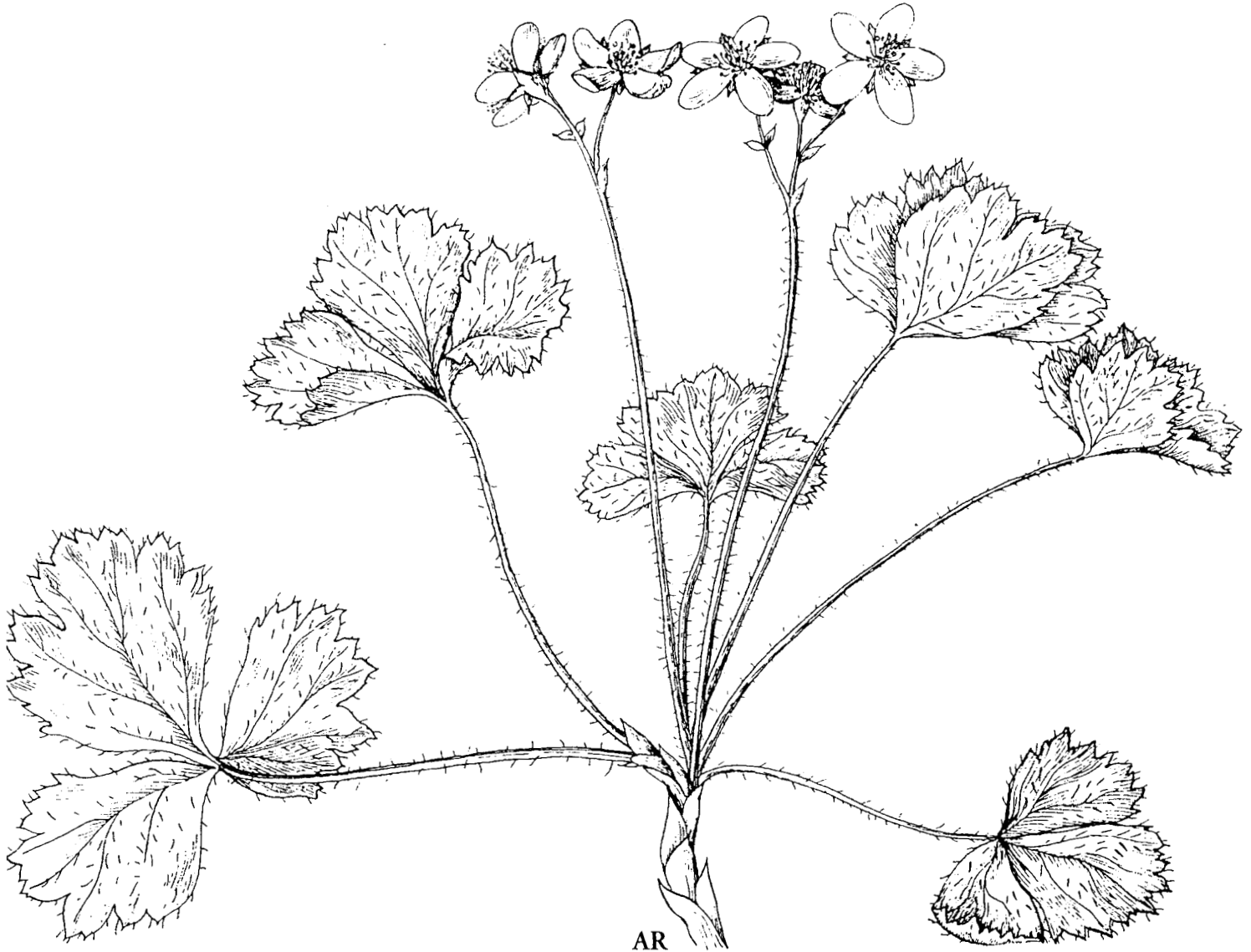
*Sweet Fern*  
(*Comptonia peregrina*)

You won't have any trouble finding this sturdy little plant when you visit the barrens. Sweet fern's white flowers and green leaves are pretty, but its smell is even sweeter—just follow your nose.



*Velvet-leaf  
Blueberry*  
(*Vaccinium myrtilloides*)

This low shrub grows best with plenty of sunlight. This plant has a cream-colored, bell-like flower. A tiny, tart blueberry replaces the flower by August, when the glossy green leaves begin to show a bit of autumn red here and there.



*Barren Strawberry*  
(*Waldsteinia fragarioides*)

This plant is in the same family as wild strawberry, but it does not produce the berries that we all know so well. The small yellow flowers of this plant bloom from April to May and can be found on the moist forest floor as well as in the sandy barrens.



***Beaked Hazelnut***  
(*Corylus cornuta*)

Found in dry forests, this shrub has brown catkins that appear in the spring and turn golden as they release their pollen. Scarlet-red flowers emerge from buds along the twig and ripen into the nut later in the year. The brown nuts grow in groups of two, and are enclosed in husks that end in a long, beak-like tube, hence the name Beaked Hazelnut.



*Big-Leaved  
Aster*  
(*Aster macrophyllus*)

AR

The large, soft leaves of this plant carpet the forest floor early in spring. By July, a small cluster of white flowers appears on its tall stalk.

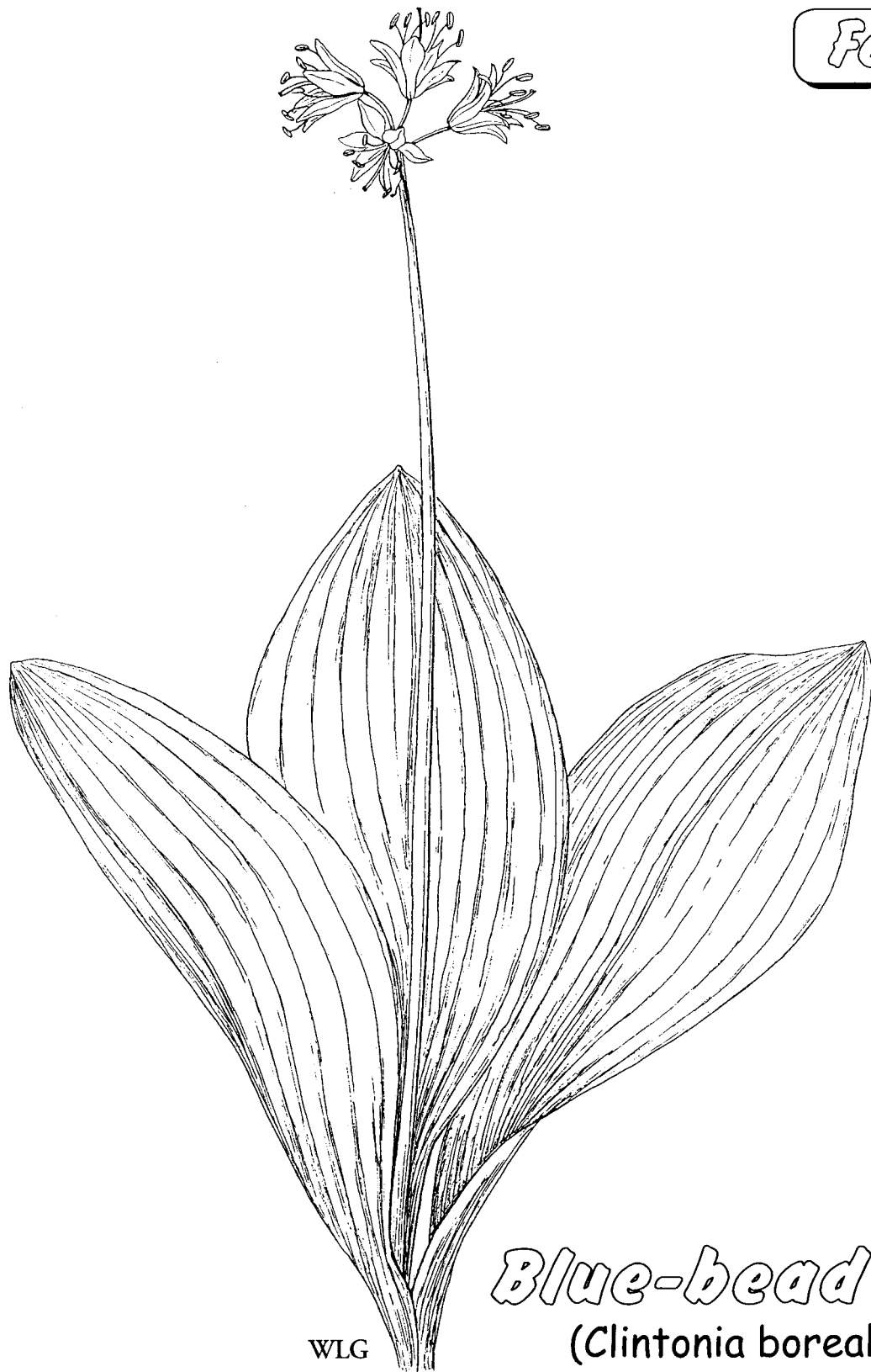


*Big White  
Trillium*

(*Trillium grandiflorum*)

Trillium is one of the first forest plants to bloom in the spring. At first the flowers are white, and then they turn pinkish just before they fade away.

The prefix "tri" means three. Trillium is aptly named—there are three leaves, three green sepals just below the flower petals, and three petals.



*Blue-bead Lily*  
(*Clintonia borealis*)

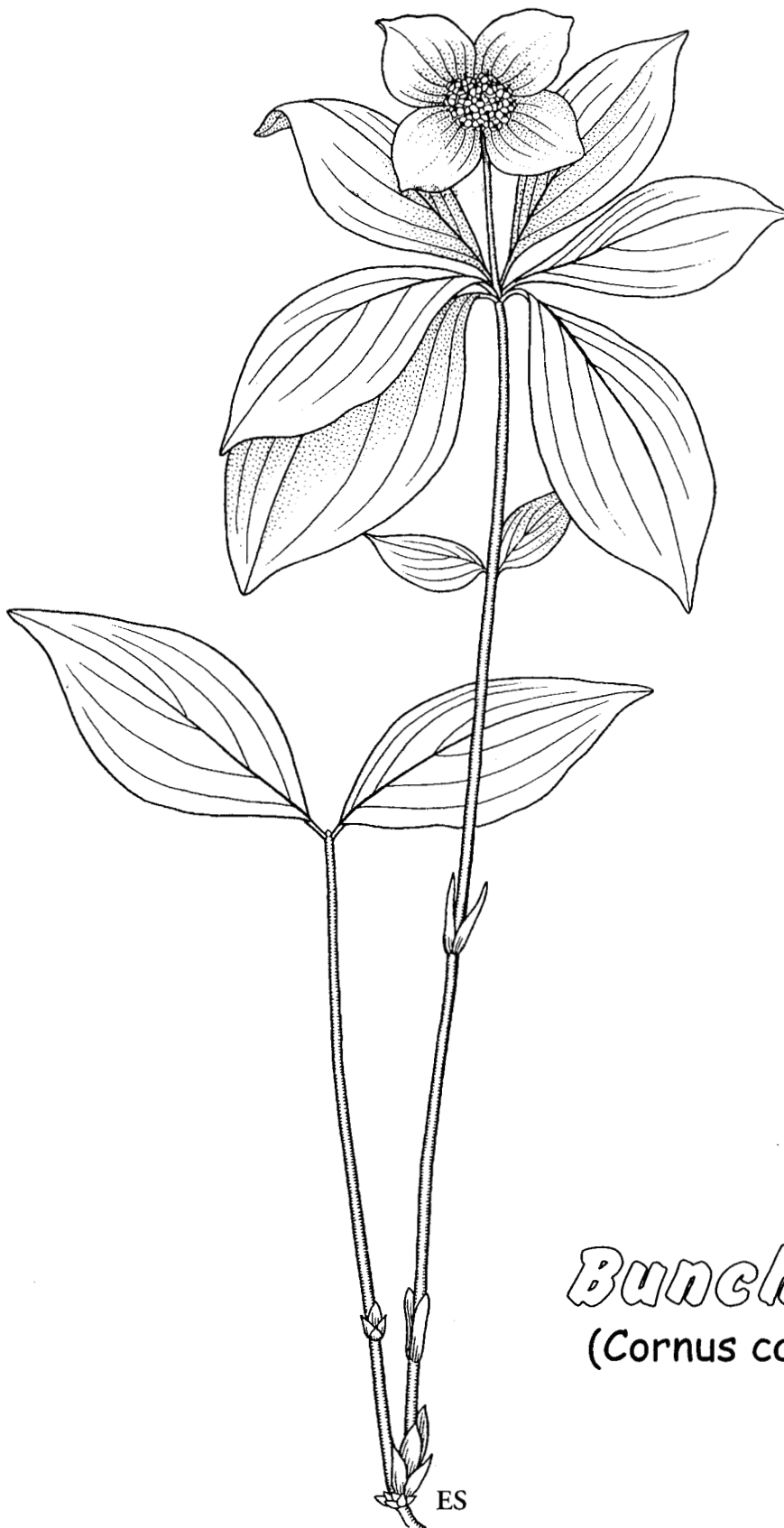
The dark, glossy green leaves of this plant can be found in shady forests. It produces nodding, yellow flowers in early spring, followed by shiny, dark blue fruits atop the stalk by June. Even though chipmunks and other small mammals eat the fruits, they are poisonous to humans.



**Bottlebrush  
Grass**  
(*Elymus hystrix*)

The small fruits of bottlebrush grass each have a long, stiff hair attached. The fruits grow clustered together and resemble the bristles of a brush.





*Bunchberry*  
(*Cornus canadensis*)

This woodland plant stays close to the ground. Its white flower appears above a cluster of deeply veined, dark green leaves. A red berry can be seen late in the summer.



*Calico Aster*  
(*Aster lateriflorus*)

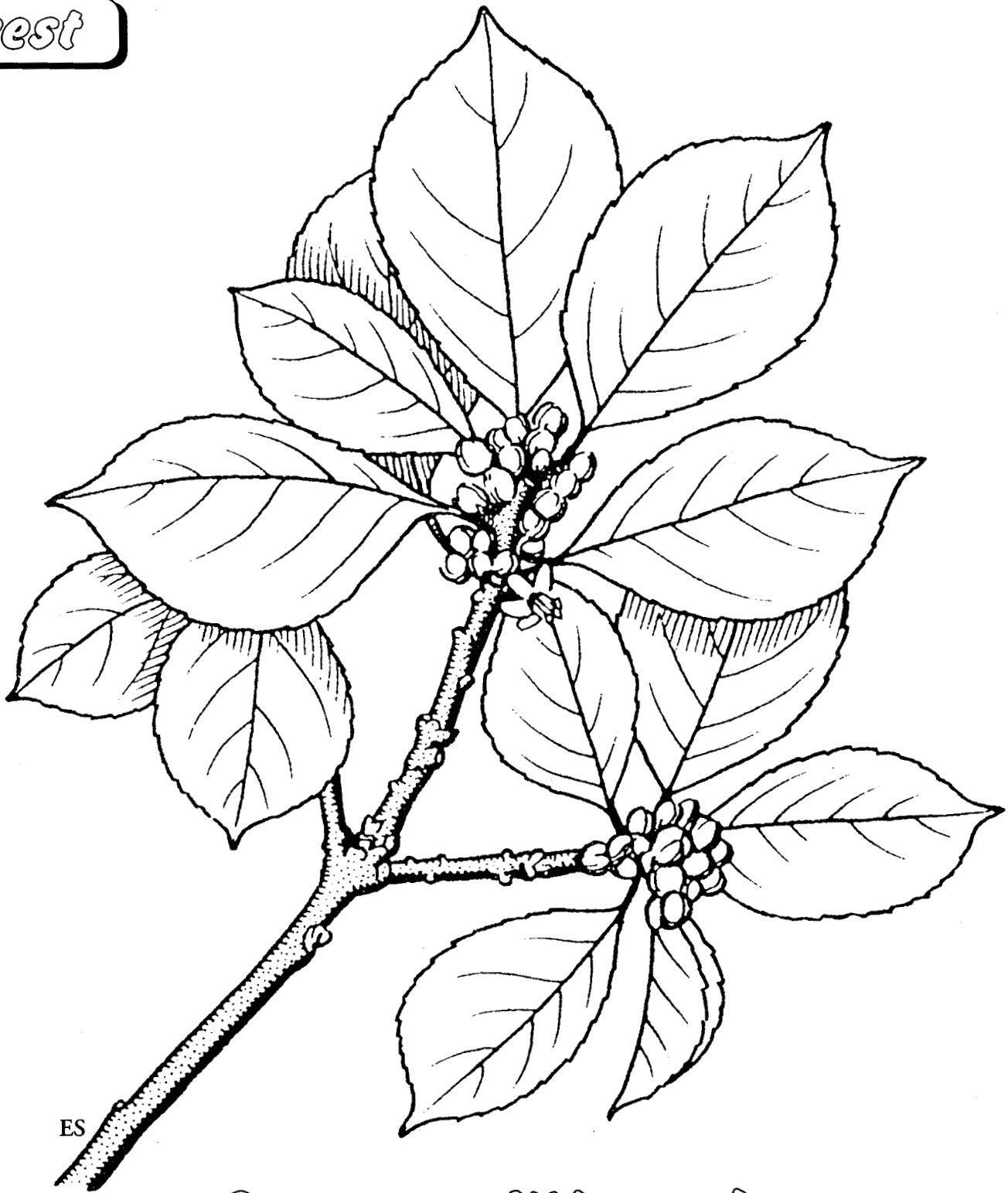
If you're walking on the edge of a forest in late summer, you might get the urge to bring home some of these white flowers in a bouquet for that special person. It is a better idea to take someone special to the forest with you, and leave the flowers for the butterflies.



*Canada  
Mayflower*  
(*Maianthemum canadense*)

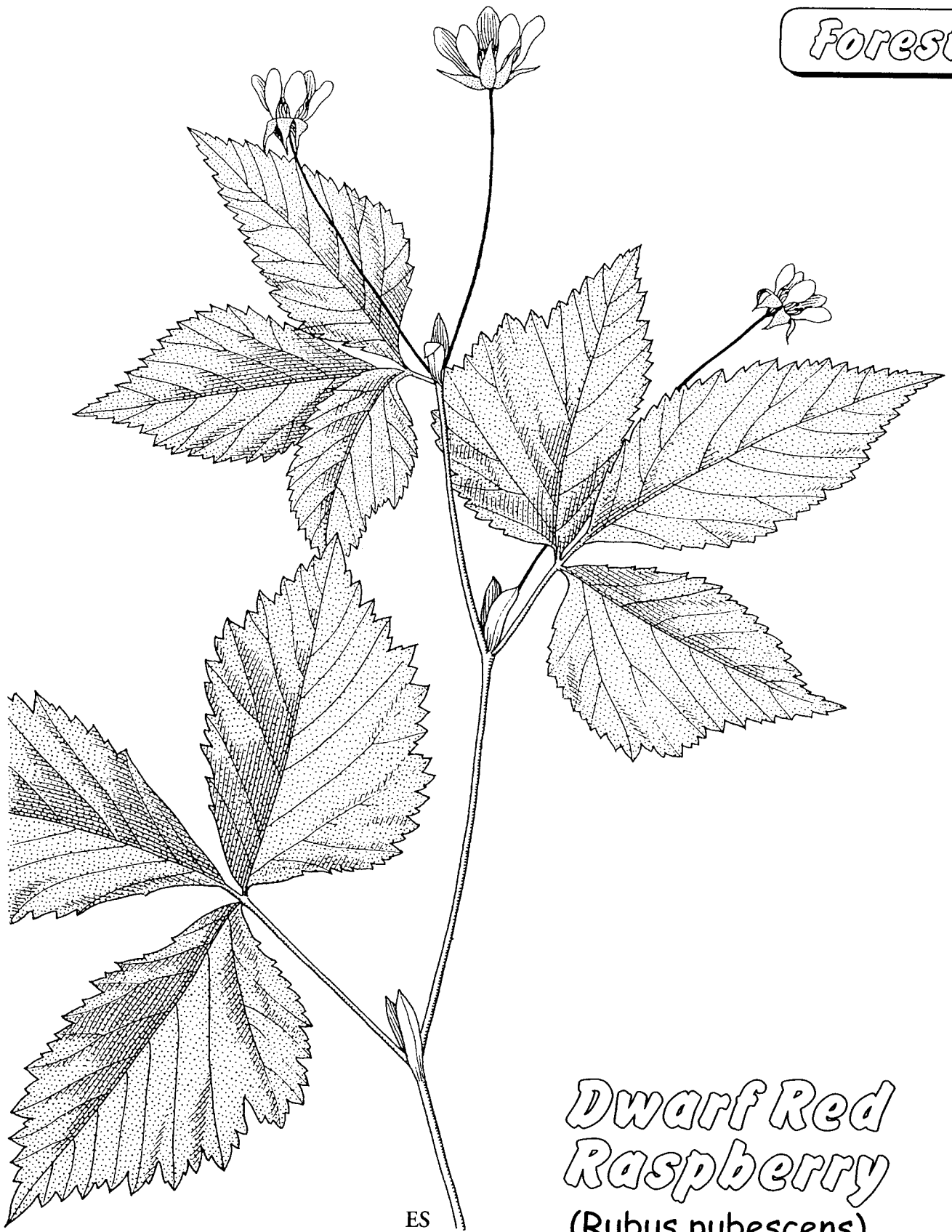
WLG

This shorty reaches only six inches in height! During the spring a cluster of white flowers tops the smooth, shiny green leaves. By July, pale red berries replace the flowers.



*Common Winterberry*  
(*Ilex verticillata*)

The crimson-colored berries of the common winterberry remain on the twig throughout the winter. The contrast between the bright red of the berries, the quiet hues of bare branches, and the white snow can be quite stunning.



*Dwarf Red  
Raspberry*  
(*Rubus pubescens*)

The red canes of the raspberry plant bear tiny thorns to protect their tasty fruits. A delicate white flower is replaced by the familiar red raspberry in early summer.

Forest



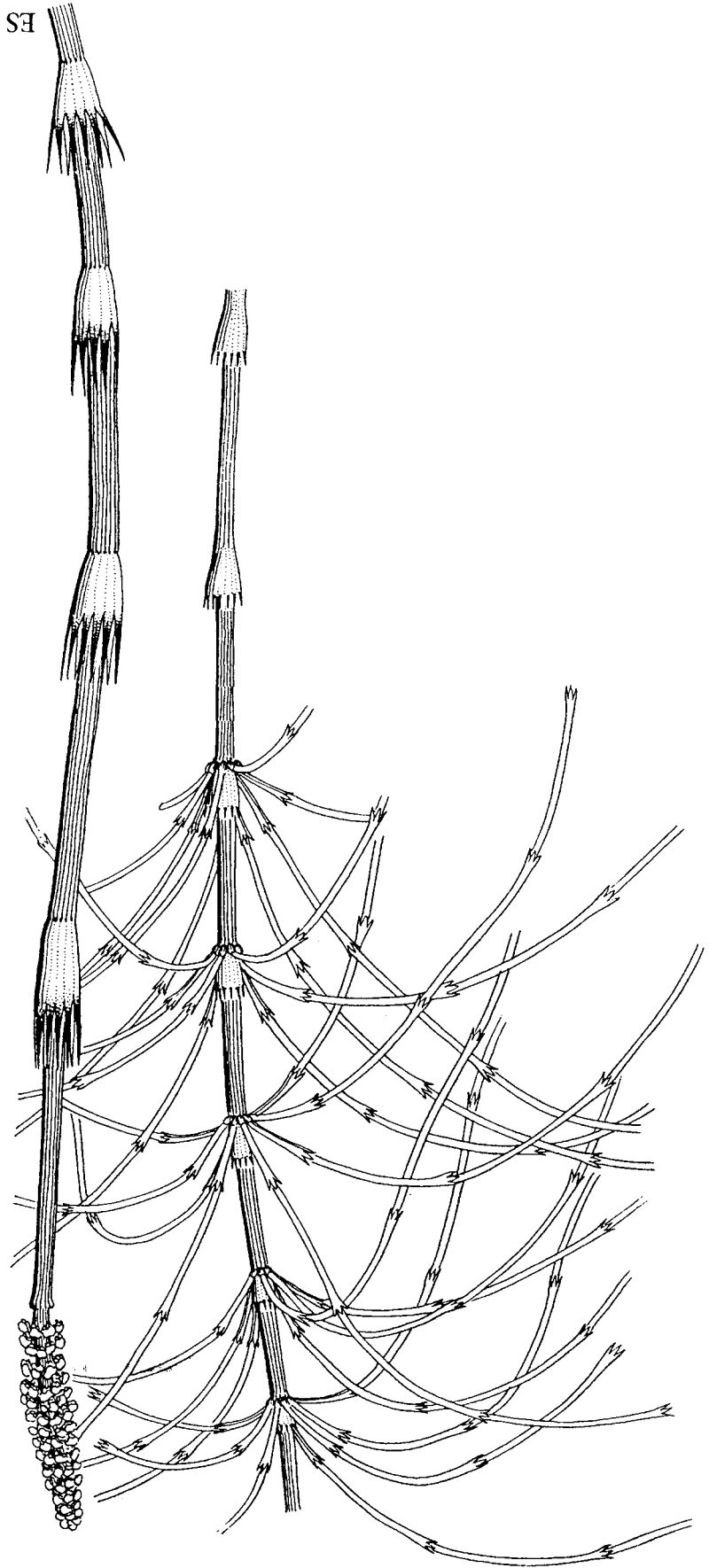
*False  
Solomon's  
Seal*

(*Smilacina racemosa*)

The leaves of this showy woodland plant are light green, with white flowers at the tip of the long, drooping stalk. It blooms from May to June, and the flowers are then replaced by bright red berries.

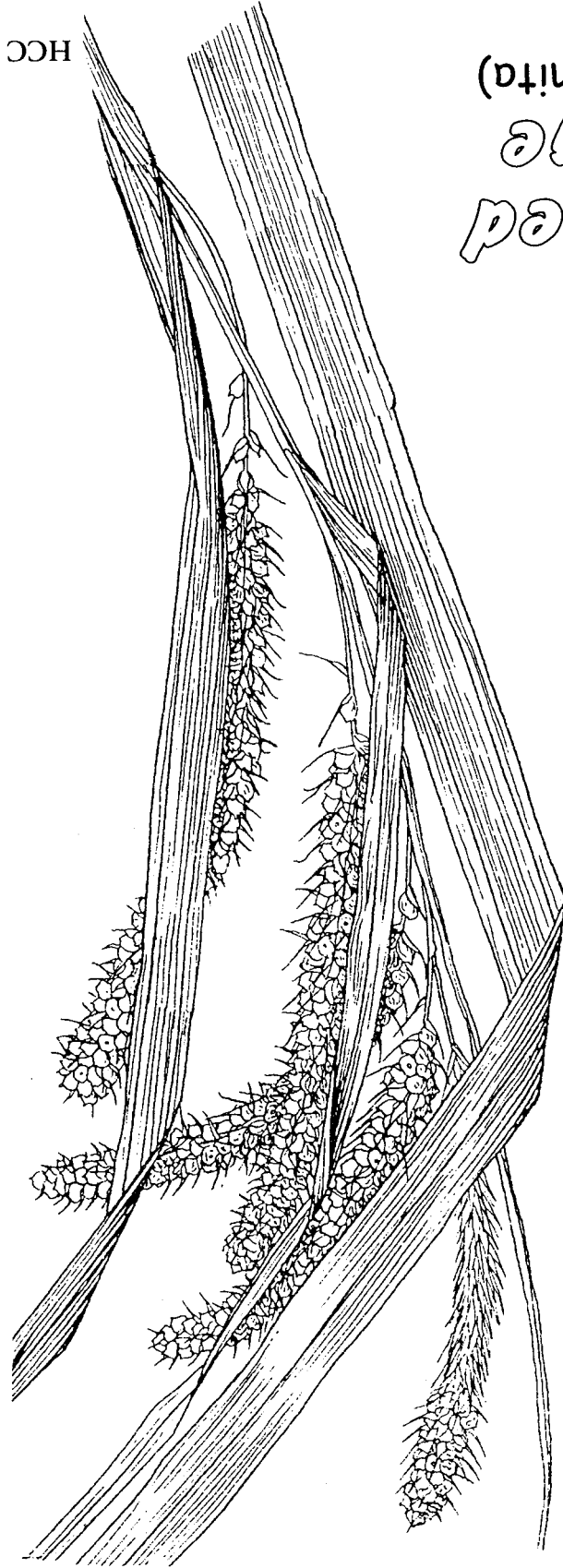
Field horsetail is an ancient plant that has been around since the days of the dinosaurs! Dark brown joints connect sections of green stems and leaves.

# Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)



Forest

If you look along a roadside in the spring, don't be surprised to see this graceful sedge. Its tiny, green flower-clusters look a bit like caterpillars drooping from its stem.



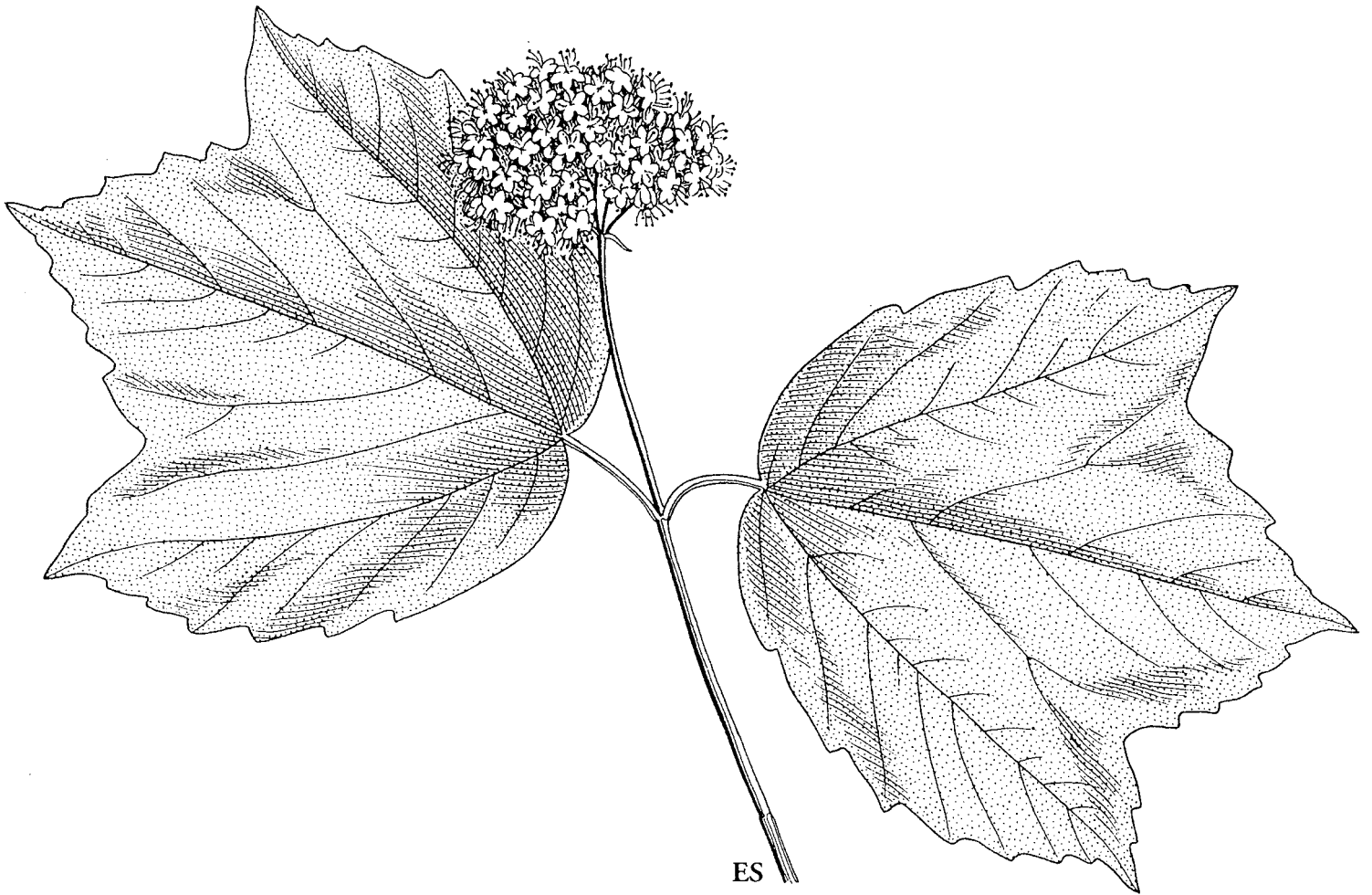
Fringed  
Sedge  
(*Carex crinita*)





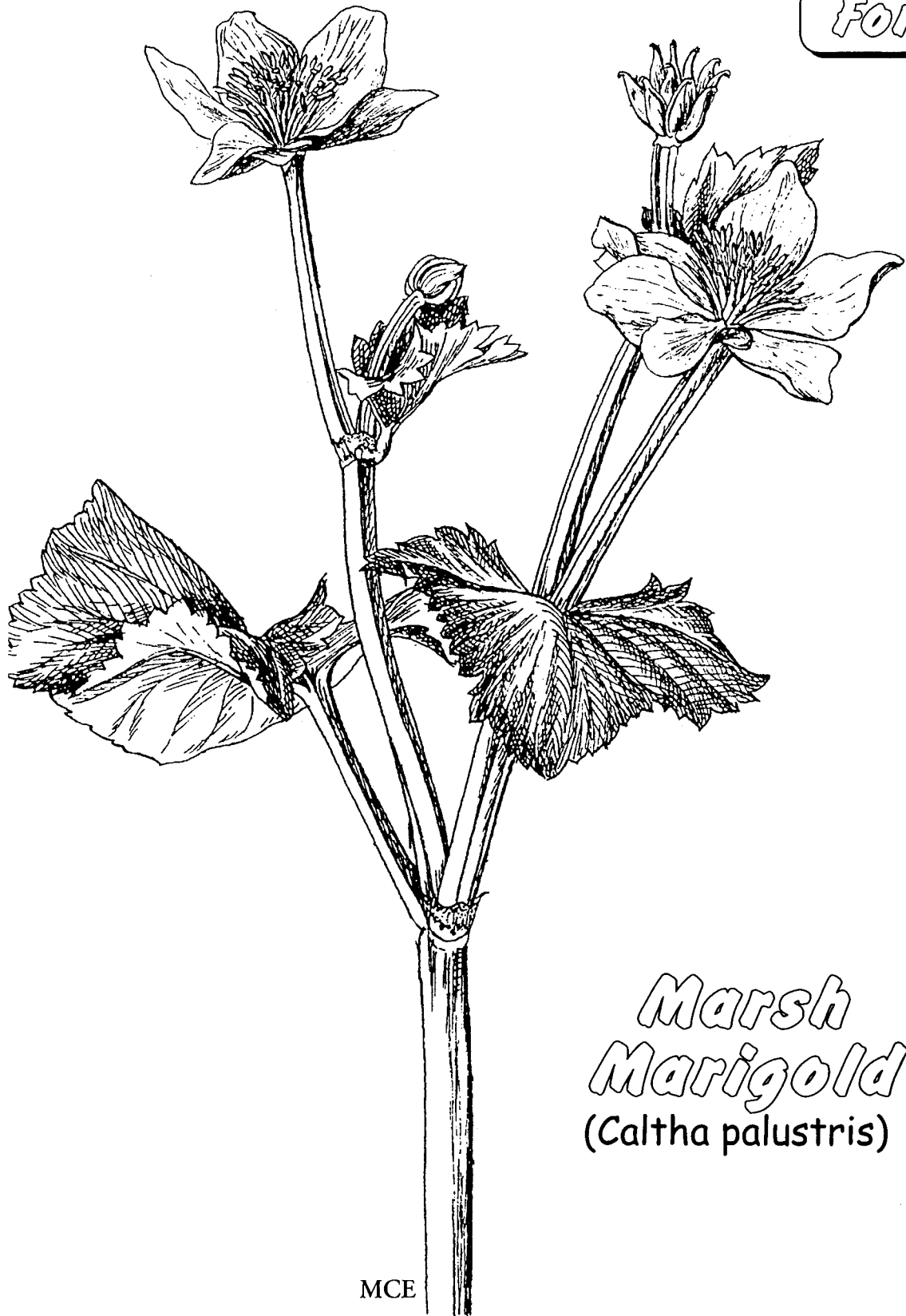
*Leatherwood*  
(*Dirca palustris*)

True to its name, this small shrub's twigs are limber and smooth.  
You will see its yellow blossoms in May,  
just as the leaves of the trees are beginning to unfold.



*Maple-leaf Viburnum*  
(*Viburnum acerifolium*)

This shrub grows mainly in the forest. The bright green leaves are similar in shape to those of a maple tree for which it is named. It bears white flowers in June that are later replaced by small fruits. The unripe fruits are red, until they ripen to dark purple.



*Marsh  
Marigold*  
(*Caltha palustris*)

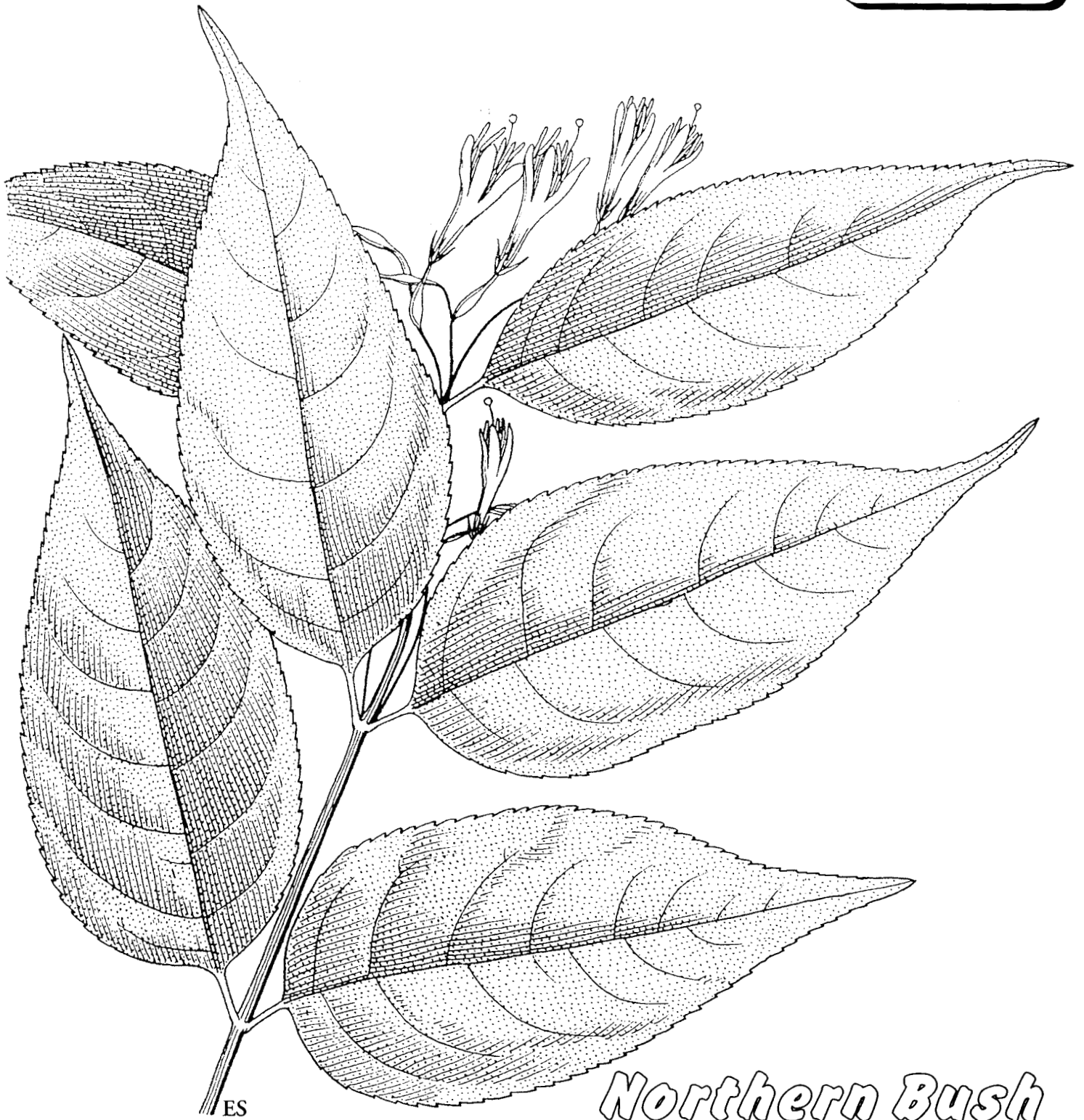
The brilliant yellow flowers of this plant are among the first to bloom in the springtime. Look for them along stream banks in May, but watch out for the mud!



*Narrow-leaved  
Cow Wheat*  
(*Melampyrum lineare*)

LEK

This flower is found in dry forest soils, where it lives by taking nutrients from the trees around it. Because of this, it is called a "root parasite." It has many slender, green leaves and white flowers with yellow at the tip.



*Northern Bush  
Honeysuckle*  
(*Diervilla lonicera*)

This shrub has red stems and green leaves with red around the edges.  
Yellow flowers bloom at the end of each twig through mid-summer.



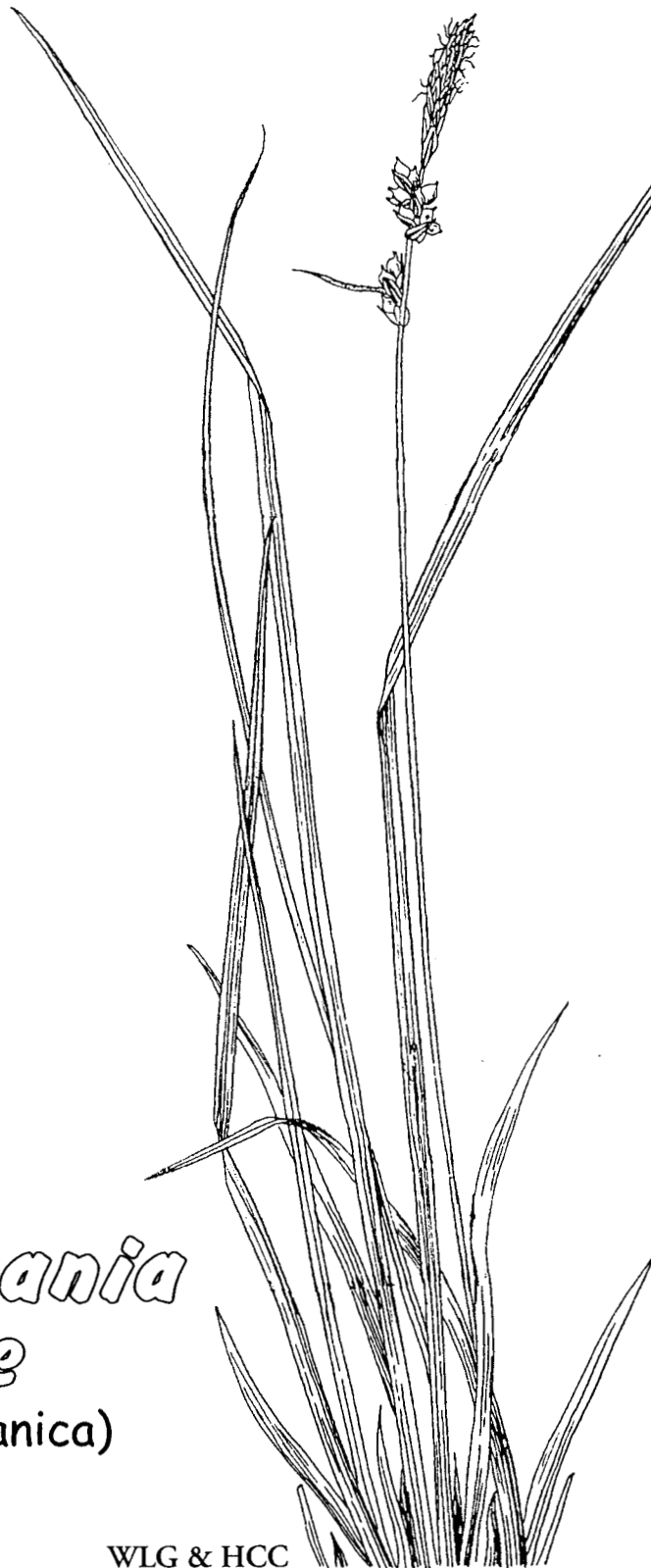
*Northern  
Heart-leaved  
Aster*  
(*Aster ciliolatus*)

Asters are named for the star-like appearance of their flower heads.  
The flowers of this aster are blue or purplish.



*Partridgeberry*  
(*Mitchella repens*)

This creeping plant has very dark-green, white-veined leaves, and a petite white flower. By midsummer, the flower is replaced by a shiny red berry.



*Pennsylvania  
Sedge*  
(*Carex pensylvanica*)

WLG & HCC

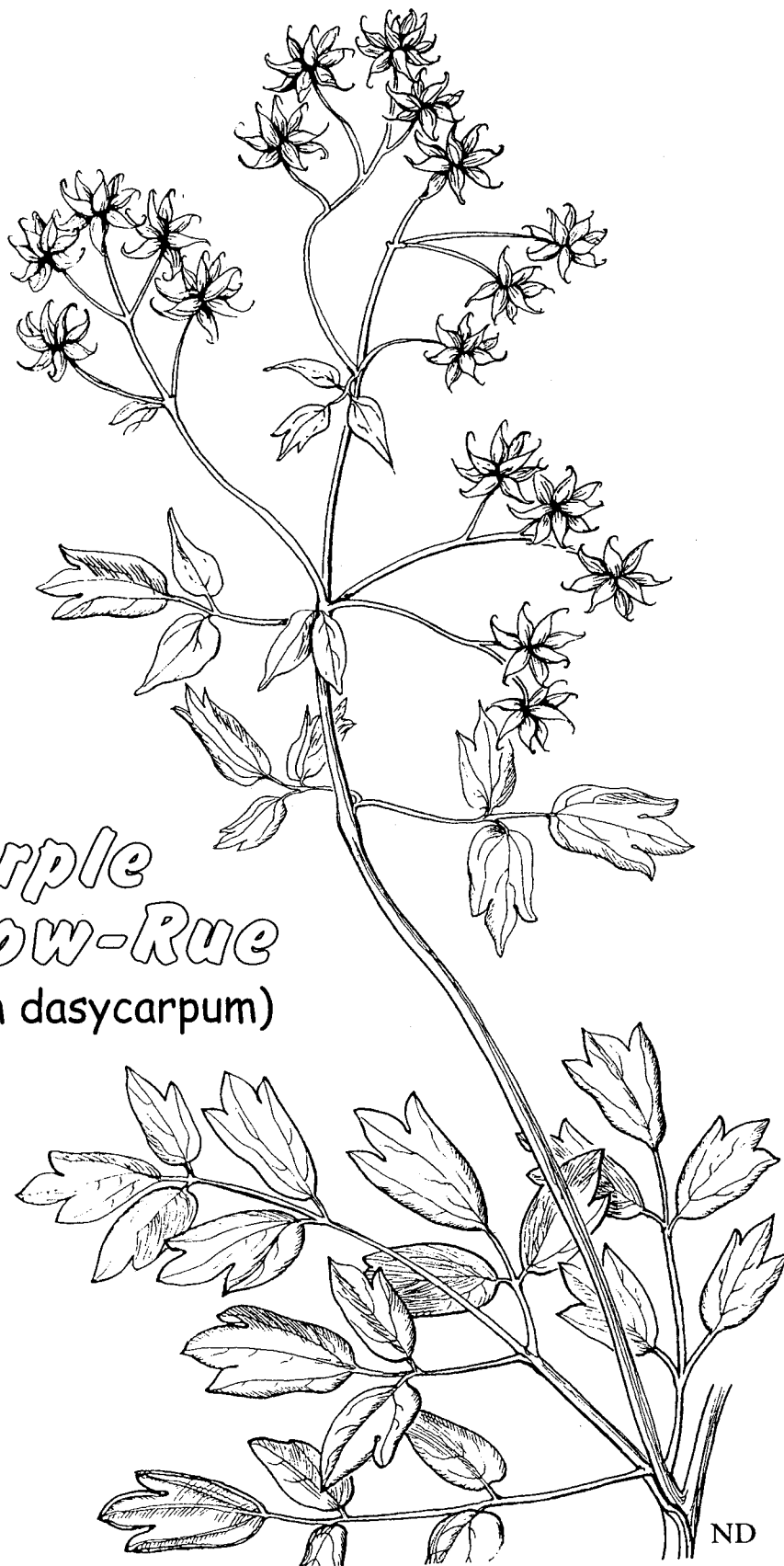
Pennsylvania sedge is often found carpeting the forest floor with its soft, green leaves. This species looks like it might have been planted, as it gives the forest a tidy, park-like appearance. The seeds ripen in the beginning of summer, earlier than most other sedges.





*Pipsissewa*  
(*Chimaphila umbellata*)

This plant can grow in the shady pine forest as well as on sand dunes. The dark green, glossy leaves are serrate—meaning they have edges with tiny, tooth-like points. Its white flowers bloom from July to August.



*Purple  
Meadow-Rue*  
(*Thalictrum dasycarpum*)

This is a tall plant with very small flowers that are so delicate they fall apart if you touch them. Purple Meadow-Rue prefers rich soils near a river or in the moist forest.



*Purple-stem  
Aster*  
(*Aster puniceus*)

This reddish-stemmed plant is usually between two and four feet tall. The blue-violet flowers brighten the fall landscape. If you look closely you may see it while waiting for the school bus in September.



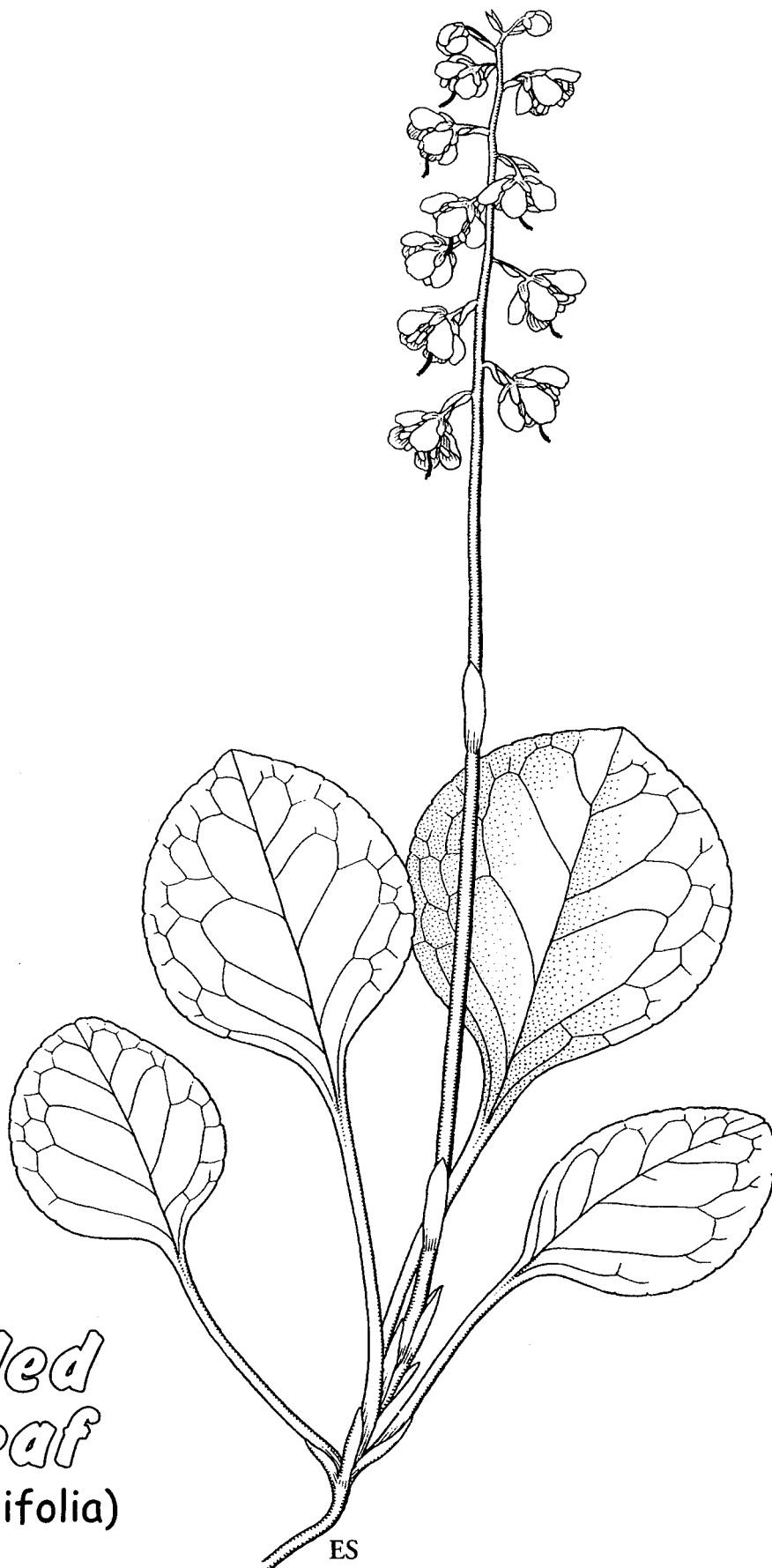
*Red Baneberry*  
(*Actaea rubra*)

In the cool shade of the woods in spring, you will notice this plant's fuzzy, white flower on top of delicate stalks. By late summer, the flowers are replaced by shiny, dark red berries.



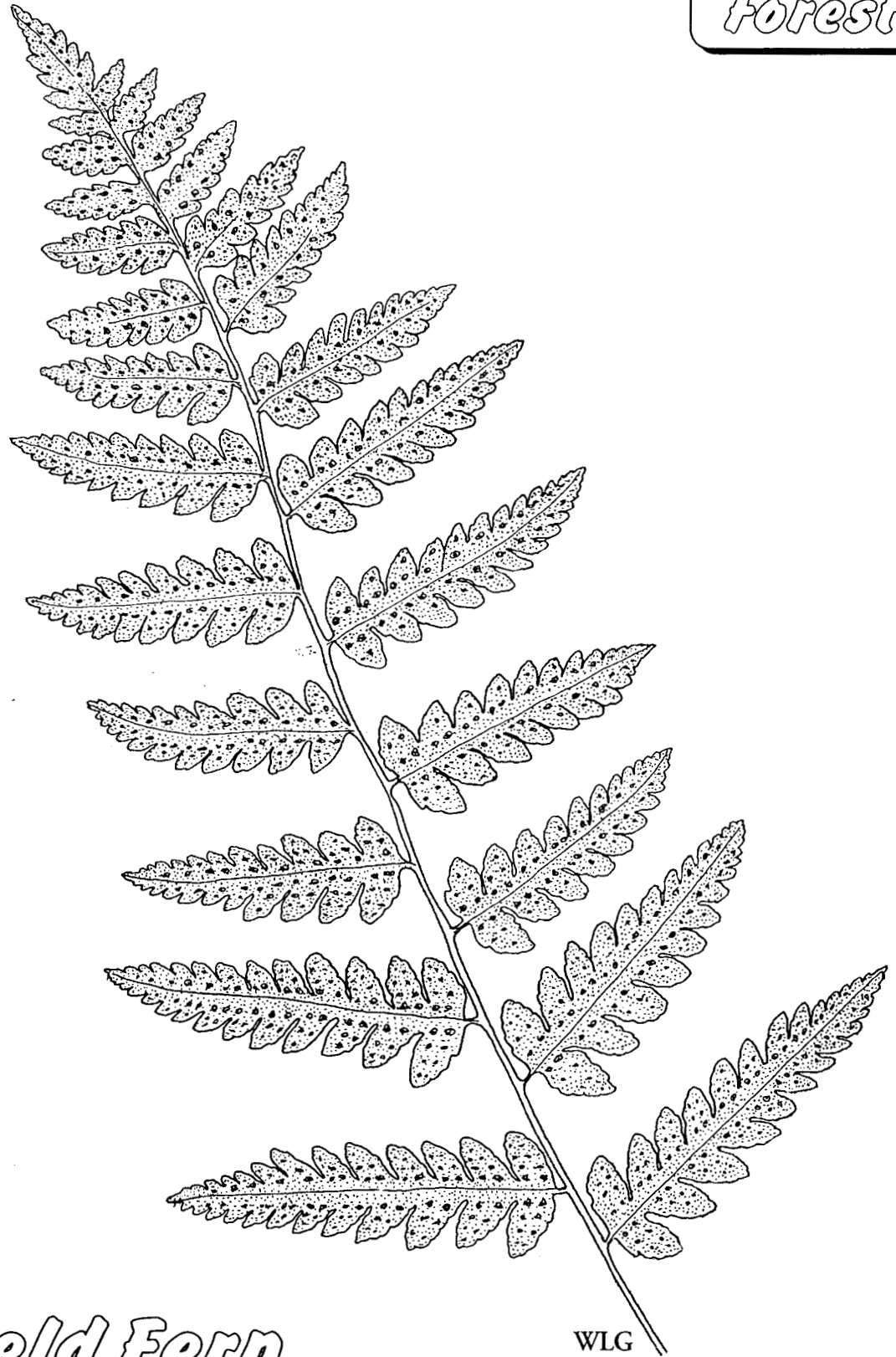
*Rosy  
Twisted-Stalk*  
(*Streptopus roseus*)

This delicate woodland species grows no taller than three feet. Small pink flowers dangle, hidden beneath its green leaves. By July, red fruits replace the flowers.



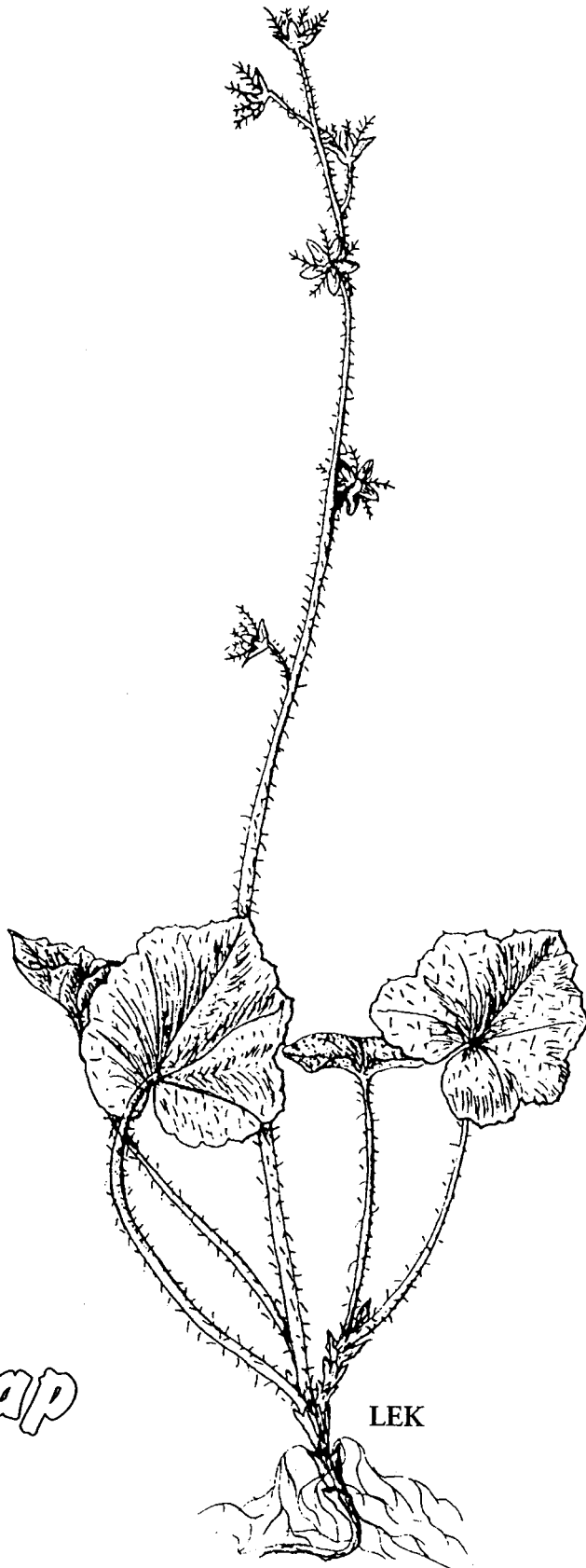
*Rounded  
Shinleaf*  
(*Pyrola rotundifolia*)

This small plant's waxy leaves are shiny and nearly round. The white flowers can be seen in forests and bogs in the summer.



*Shield Fern*  
(*Dryopteris cristata*)

This small fern can grow right on a rock at the edge of a cliff.  
The dark-green fronds have tiny spores on their undersides.



*Small  
Bishop's Cap*  
(*Mitella nuda*)

The dainty white flowers of this plant can be seen in May. If you look close enough, they might resemble a tiny hat with a brim made of snowflakes. The broad leaves are dark, glossy green.





WLG &amp; HCC

*Soft-leaf  
Sedge*  
(*Carex disperma*)

A sedge is different from a grass in many ways. One way to tell them apart is that most sedges have edges. When the stem is rolled between the fingers, it feels bumpy rather than round. This sedge has green leaves and fat, shiny green fruits at the top of each stem.



*Starflower*  
(*Trientalis borealis*)

This white, star-shaped flower is one of the first to appear in the spring. The stem of this plant has five to ten light-green leaves grouped together around the stem.



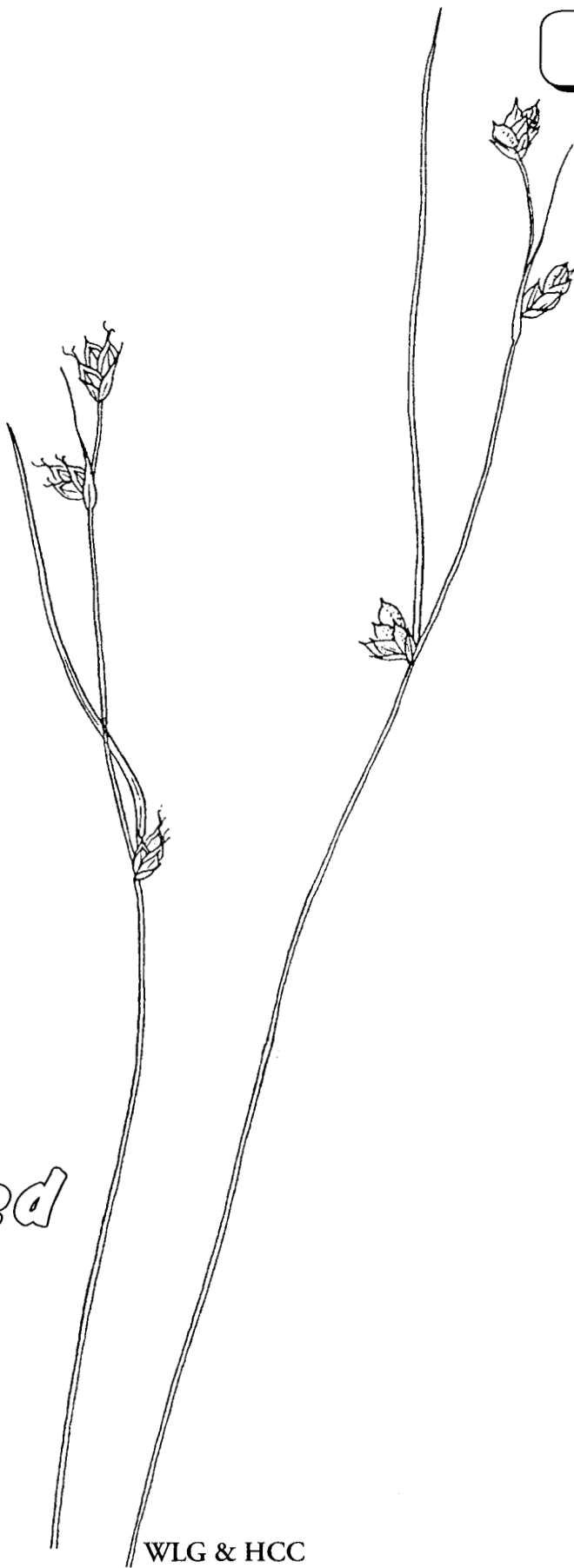
*Thimbleberry*  
(*Rubus parviflorus*)

This plant is recognizable by its large, velvety, goose-foot shaped leaves. During June, this plant will have a large, white flower, soon replaced by an edible red thimbleberry, called so because it closely resembles a thimble worn on the finger of a seamstress.



*Three-leaved  
Goldthread*  
(*Coptis trifolia*)

This plant got its name from its roots, which look like gold threads. Its flower is arranged in a star, and the shiny leaves stay green all winter long. You will find this plant growing close to the ground in a cool, shady forest.



*Three-seeded  
Sedge*  
(*Carex trisperma*)

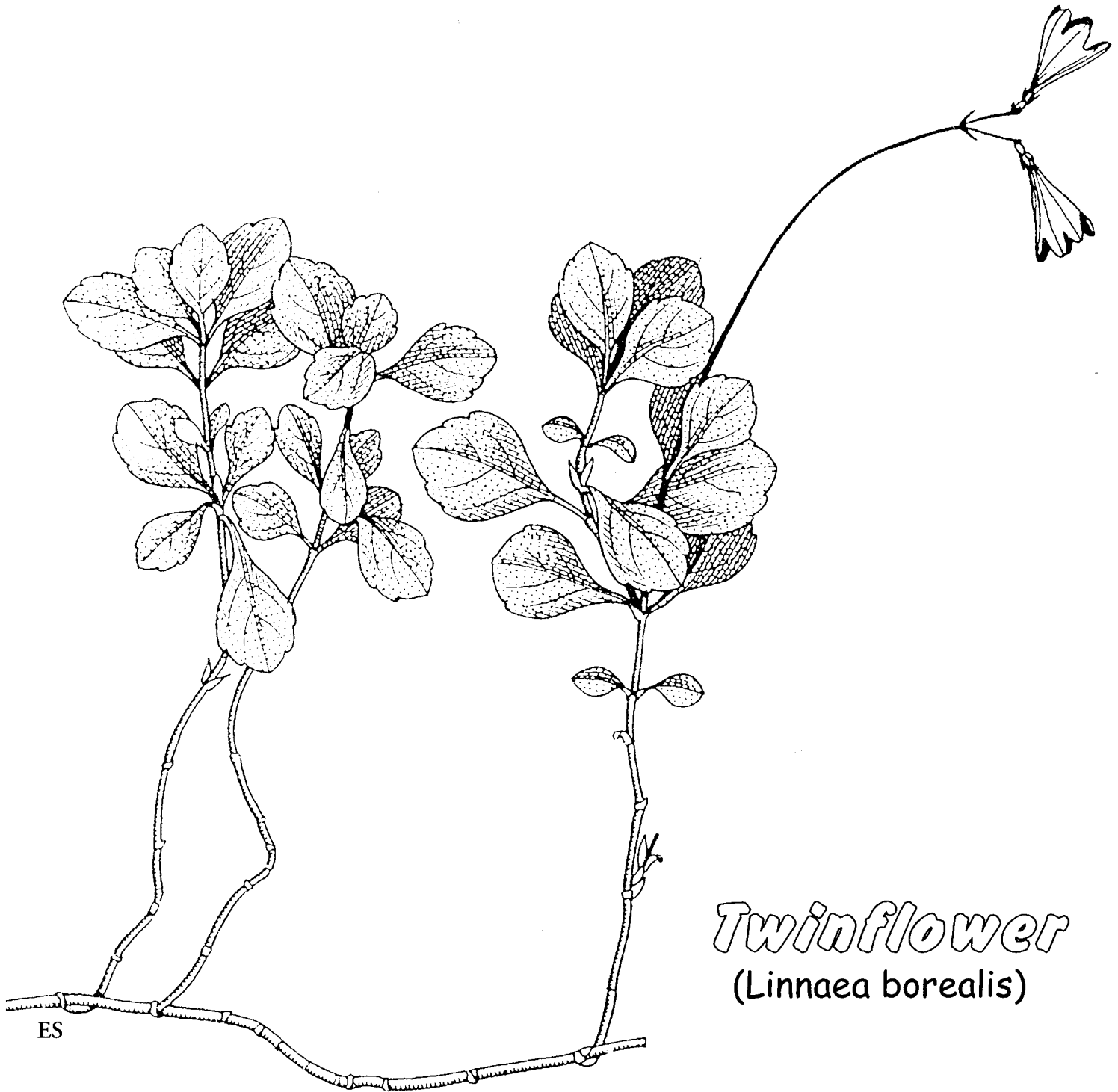
WLG & HCC

This sedge has large fruits found in clusters of three on a green stem. The green leaves and husks turn brown as they ripen.



*Trailing  
Arbutus*  
(*Epigaea repens*)

This plant trails along the ground with a hairy, woody stem and leathery, grayish-green leaves. Its fragrant flowers are white and pink but they are so well hidden that you sometimes have to get down on the ground to find them under the leaves.



*Twinflower*  
(*Linnaea borealis*)

A delight of the forest, this plant's nodding pink flowers look like tiny, paired bells. This plant was the favorite wildflower of Carl Linnaeus, the man who developed the plant classification system, so it was named after him.



*Wild  
Columbine*  
(*Aquilegia canadensis*)

The showy, red and yellow flowers of Wild Columbine hang on glossy red stems from May to July. The flower is composed of five points that reach toward the sky.





*Wild Ginger*  
(*Asarum canadense*)

Wild ginger is a secretive little plant, found very close to the ground in moist, shady forests. The unusual flower—a reddish-purple cup—hides beneath two hairy, dark-green leaves.



*Wild Leek*  
(*Allium tricoccum*)

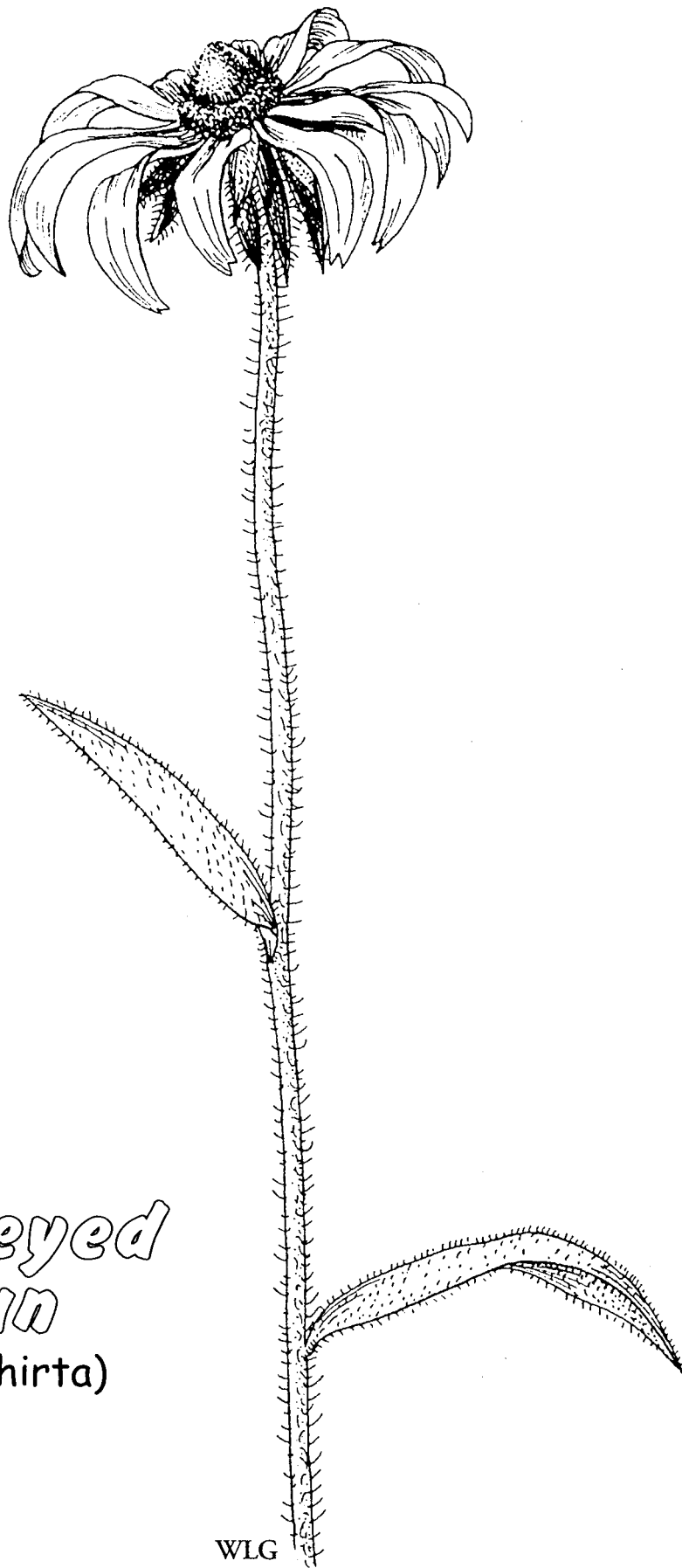
If you are walking through the forest and notice the smell of onion, chances are you have been walking on wild leeks. The round cluster of small white flowers will be at the top of a foot-tall stalk. In the fall, large black seeds replace the flowers, and remain throughout the winter.



*Wild  
Sarsaparilla*  
(*Aralia nudicaulis*)

This woodland plant is usually knee-high, and the greenish-white flowers appear in June, resembling small fireworks.

Meadow



*Black-eyed  
Susan*  
(*Rudbeckia hirta*)

It is easy to see where this plant gets its name. The petals of this flower are bright yellow, and the center is all black—like a dark eye.



*Blue-joint Grass*  
(*Calamagrostis canadensis*)

The tall blue-joint grass grows in wet meadows. Its green stem has reddish-purple joints, like straws attached end to end. Tiny reddish-purple flowers grow at the top.



*Canada  
Anemone*  
(*Anemone canadensis*)

WLG

The cheerful, white flower of Canada anemone can be seen in wet meadows in early summer. It takes a sharp eye to spot the fuzzy green leaves after the flowers have wilted.

This large shrub grows in sandy soils along roadsides and forest edges. In the spring, look for dark-green leaves and white flowers. The dark-red chokecherries that ripen in midsummer are edible, but their tartness will make your mouth pucker!

## Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)

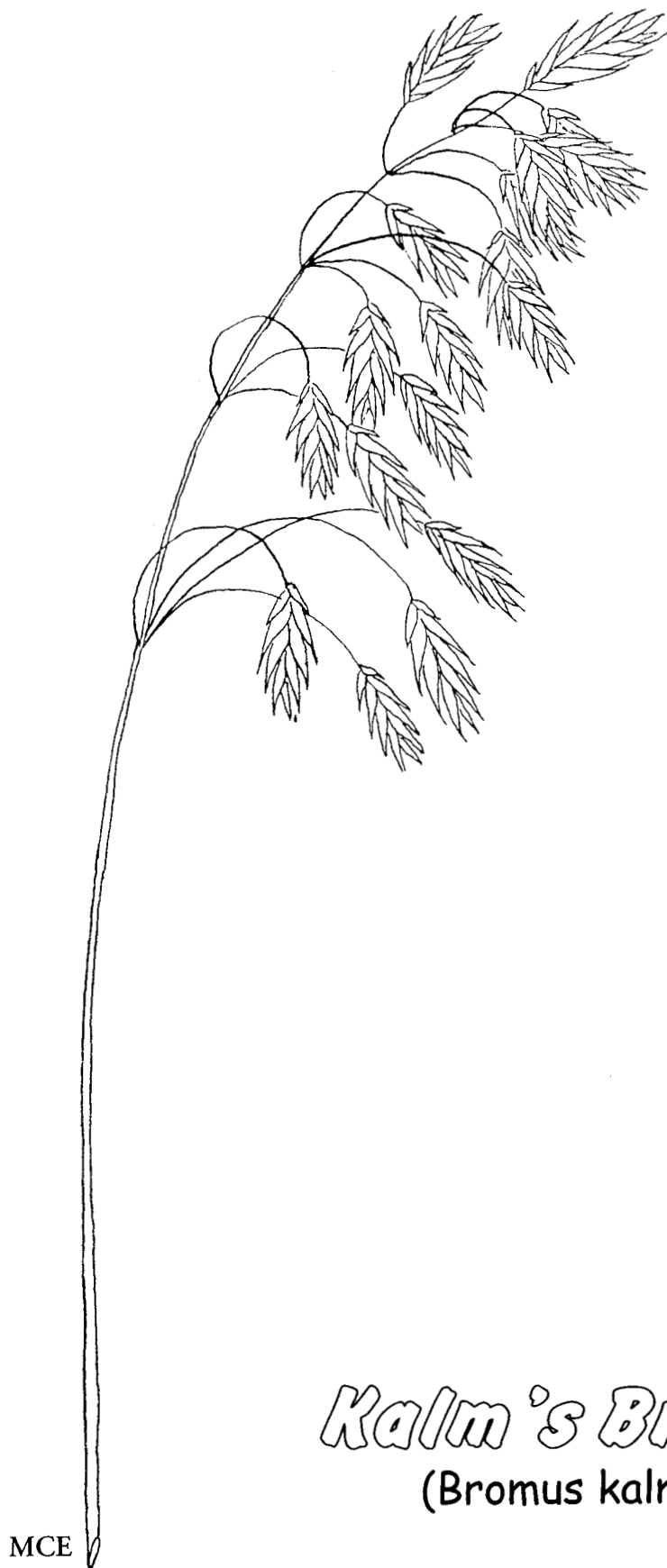




*Fireweed*  
(*Epilobium angustifolium*)

If you walk through a meadow or take a country drive toward the end of summer, it will be hard to miss this plant. It can grow up to six feet tall and has hot pink flowers.





*Kalm's Brome*  
(*Bromus kalmii*)

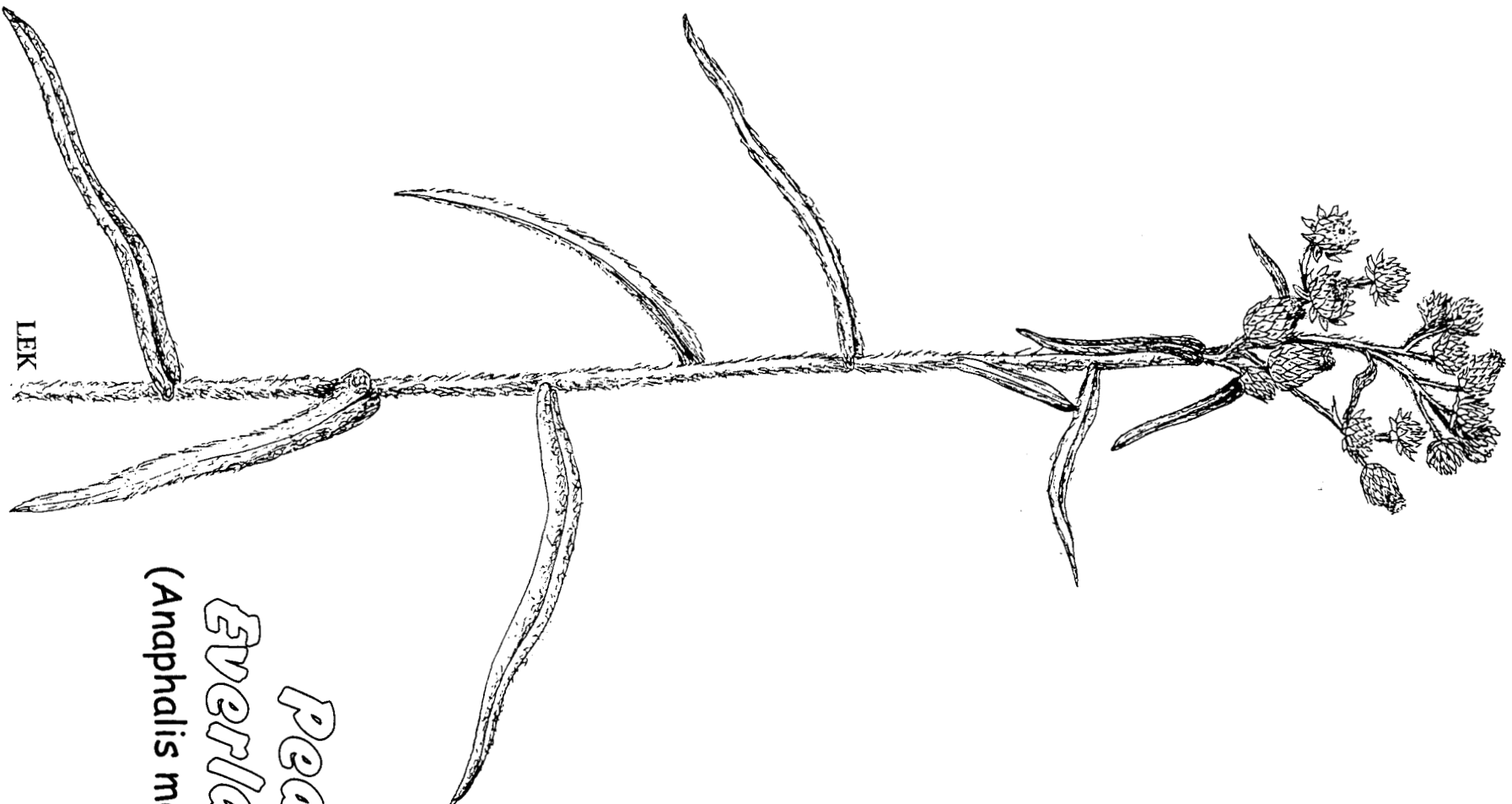
Although this tall grass looks much like any other grass, its seed clusters look like tiny brooms. This is a good clue to help identify this plant.

This bushy little plant has many small, white flower heads sprinkled all over. In late autumn, its seeds ripen and blow away on the wind using tiny parachutes made of short, silky hairs.



WLG

Panicled Aster  
(Aster lanceolatus)



*Pearly  
Everlasting*  
(*Anaphalis margaritacea*)

You can identify this plant by its woolly white leaves and stem. Its midsummer flowers are white with a tuft of yellow in the center.



*Smooth  
Aster*  
(*Aster laevis*)

You might want to put this plant in your garden because of its lovely lavender flowers. These showy flowers begin blooming at the end of summer, after most other flowers have wilted. What a delightful surprise to find this colorful flower along the brushy roadside!



*Wild  
Bergamot*  
(*Monarda fistulosa*)

The unusual pink flowers are not the only nice thing about this wildflower. The plant also has a strong minty smell that is hard to miss.

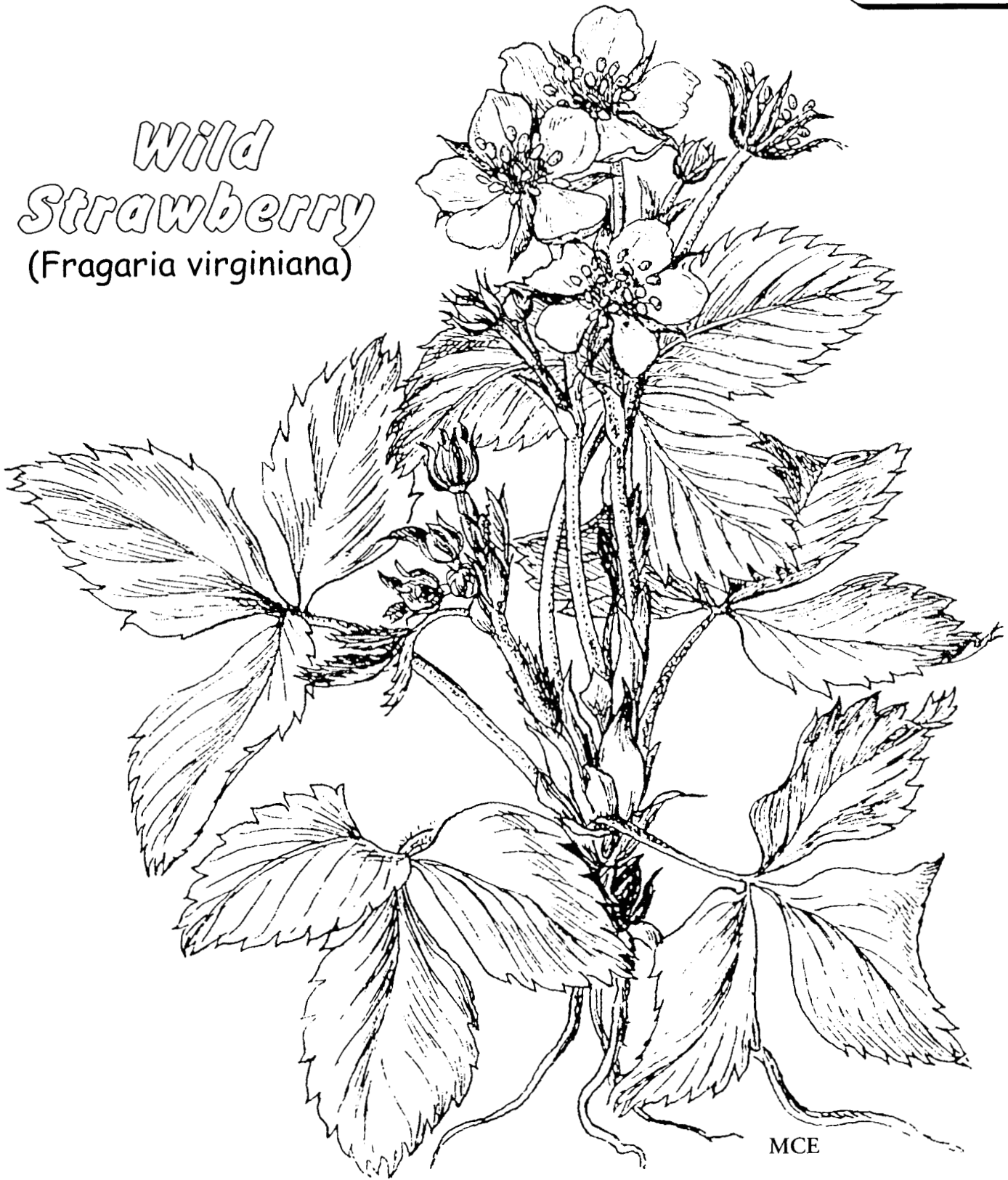


*Wild Lupine*  
(*Lupinus perennis*)

WLG

Wild lupine adds a splash of deep blue to the meadows in the southern range of the north country region. Don't confuse this wild plant with the "domesticated" lupine found in gardens and along roadsides!

*Wild  
Strawberry*  
(*Fragaria virginiana*)



You will know this plant when you see it. Tiny, sweet strawberries take the place of its delicate white flowers.



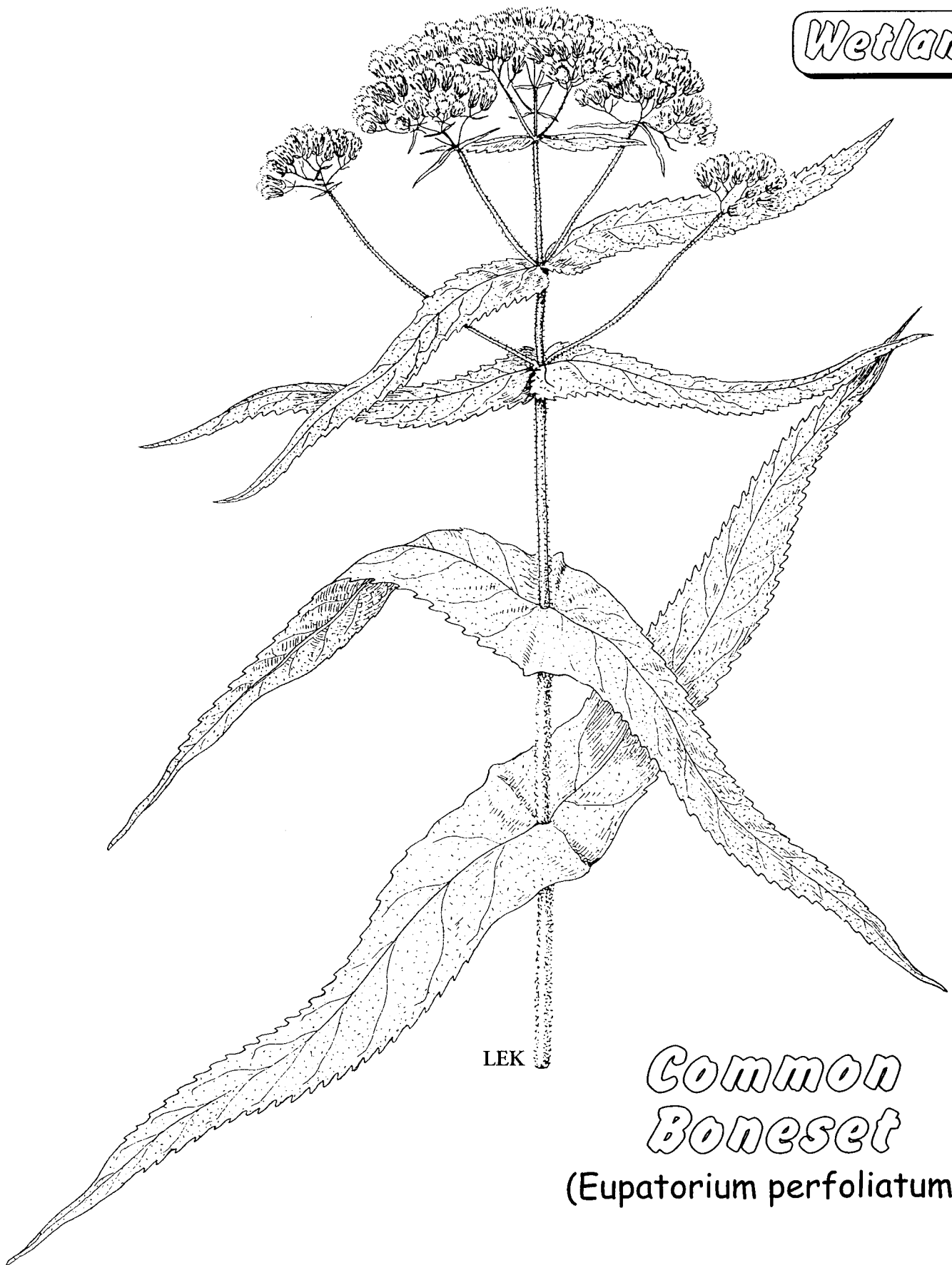
## *Blue Vervain*

(*Verbena hastata*)

This plant has leaves that look prickly but are soft to the touch. The delicate spikes of blue flowers appear from July through September. You might see it growing beside a river or lake.

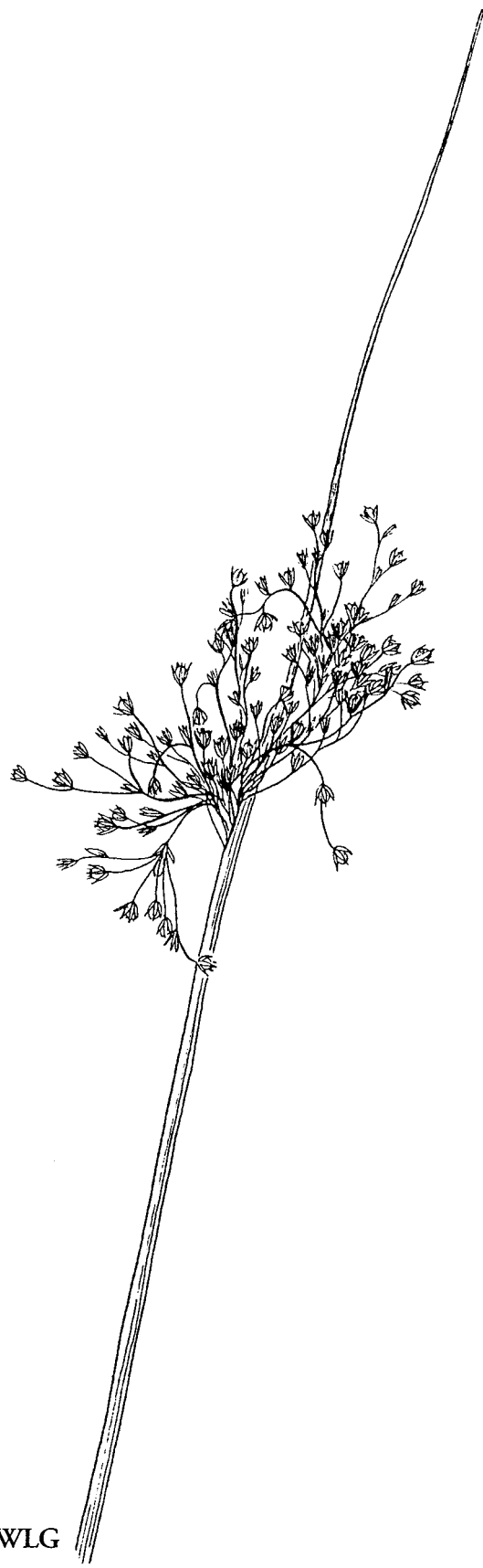


Wetland



*Common  
Boneset*  
(*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)

It will be hard to miss this water-loving plant if you visit a wetland in late summer. It is usually about three feet tall, and has a cluster of small white flowers crowded at the very top of the stem.



*Common  
Rush*  
(*Juncus effusus*)

WLG

Although similar in some ways to a grass, rushes have solid stems without obvious leaves, and distinct types of flowers. This plant grows in open marshes and wet meadows.



*Dark-green  
Bulrush*  
(*Scirpus atrovirens*)

This tall, dark-green plant grows right in the water at the edge of ponds and lakes. The miniature brown flowers are near, but not quite at, the top of the stem.

*Few-seeded  
Sedge*  
(*Carex oligosperma*)



HCC

You can find this sedge growing in a bog. The round, green fruits are clustered together on the green stem.



*Flat-Top  
Aster*  
(*Aster umbellatus*)

AR

The cluster of creamy white flowers on separate stems looks just like the spokes of an umbrella. This plant grows most often in wet areas—you might see it right alongside common boneset, which is another plant with white flowers.



*Lake Sedge*  
(*Carex lacustris*)

LV

This sedge grows right in the water along the edge of lakes. The green leaves and green fruits can be seen all summer.



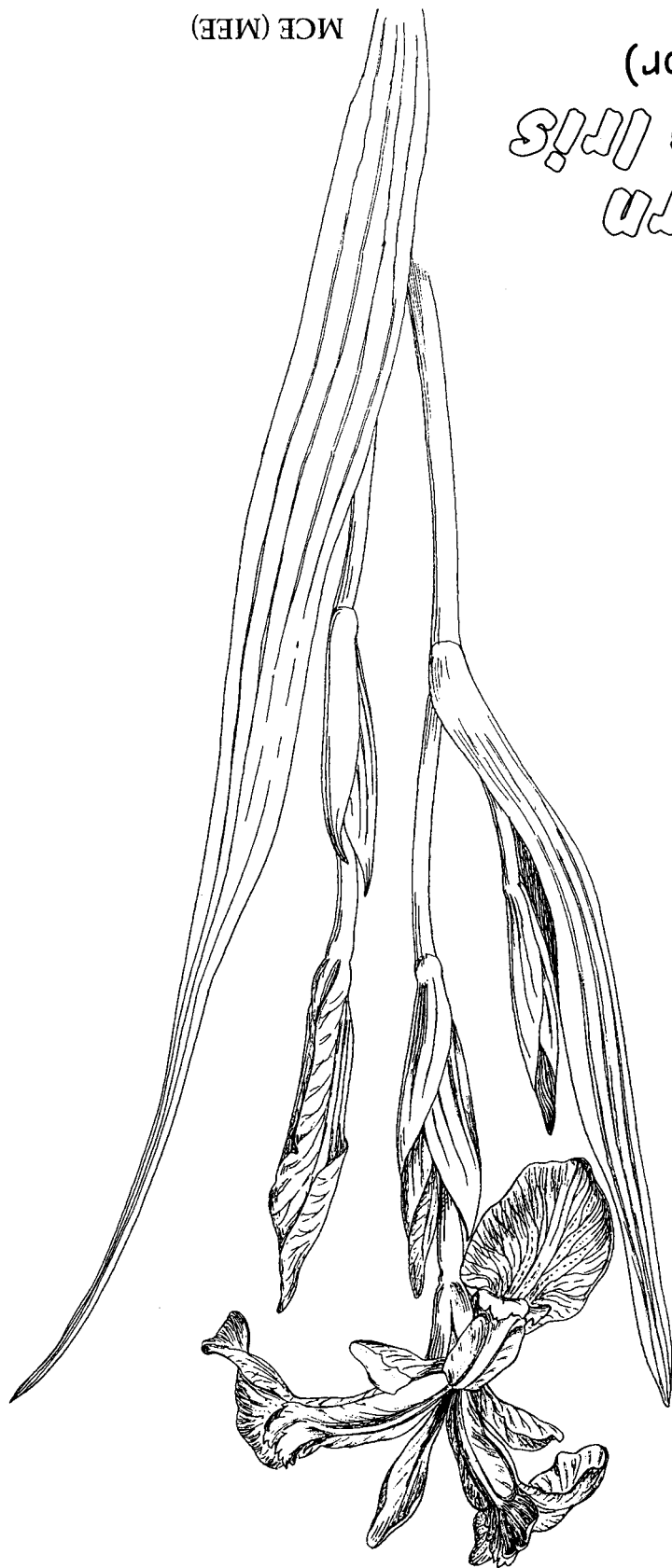
*Monkeyflower*  
(*Mimulus ringens*)

This plant grows in open, wet places. Its blue flowers are easy to spot. If you gently squeeze the base of the flower, it seems to smile at you.

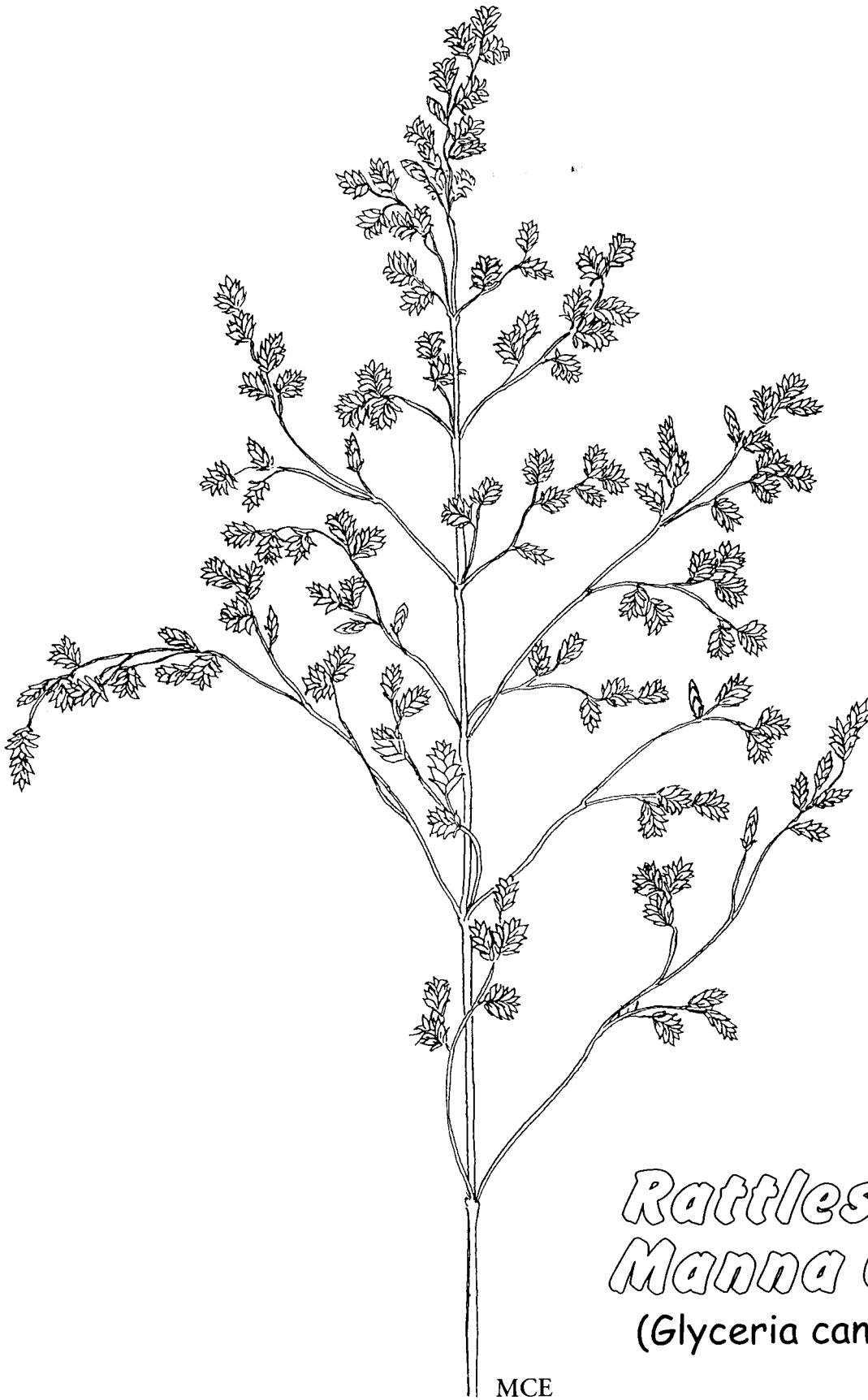
This showy flower is found in rain gardens, roadsides, and wetlands. The leaves are cool, powdery green, and the flowers are bright blue with a hint of yellow.

# Northern Blue-flag Iris (Iris versicolor)

MCE (MEE)







*Rattlesnake  
Manna Grass*  
(*Glyceria canadensis*)

Rattlesnake manna grass is found in sunny, slightly wet places. Its green fruits and leaves of summer turn brown and dry later in the season. When shaken, the dry fruits sound like an angry rattlesnake.



*Red Osier  
Dogwood*  
(*Cornus stolonifera*)

This plant is a shrub often seen along roads. It grows in distinctive clumps with shared roots. The bright red twigs become particularly visible after the leaves have fallen in autumn.



*Spotted  
Joe-Pye  
Weed*  
(*Eupatorium maculatum*)

The large, purple flower clusters of this plant can be seen in wetlands from the middle of summer all the way until autumn! The seeds have parachutes to help them blow with the wind to a new home in the fall.



*Steeplebush*  
(*Spiraea tomentosa*)

This tall, tough-stemmed plant is often found in meadows as well as in wet places. The rose-pink flowers are formed in a steeple-like cluster on the very top of the stalk.



*Swamp  
Milkweed*  
(*Asclepias incarnata*)

This tall plant is only found close to water. It produces showy pink or rose-purple flowers that persist all summer long. Later in the fall you can see large pods filled with downy seeds. When the pods open, the wind catches the down and blows the seeds to faraway places.



*Tussock  
Sedge*  
(*Carex stricta*)

WLG & HCC

This plant is easy to spot at a distance because it grows in tight, green clumps in wet places such as the edge of a river or pond.

These plants with their cloud-like clusters of tiny, white flowers are seen in meadows, swamps and bogs from June through September.

# White Meadowweet (Spiraea alba)





*White  
Turtlehead*  
(*Chelone glabra*)

This plant, with its cream-colored flowers all on a spike will be found blooming along lakeshores and other wet places from July to September. It grows to be two to three feet tall.





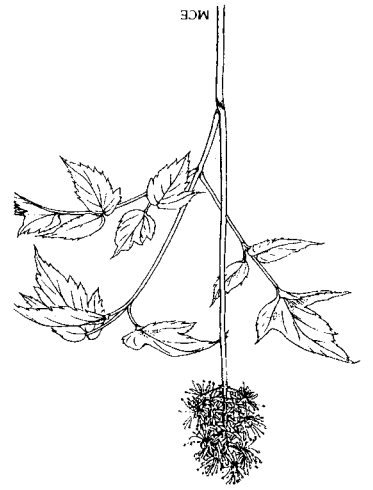
WLG

*Wool-grass*  
(*Scirpus cyperinus*)

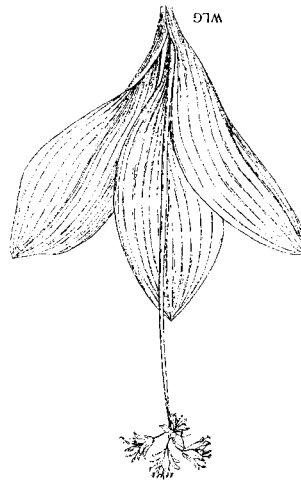
This plant grows in marshy places such as a roadside ditch. You can see the drooping tuft of brown, woolly down covering the tiny seeds.

- 1) Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) 2) Big-Leaved Aster (*Aster macrophyllus*) 3) Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)  
4) Red Baneberry (*Actaea rubra*) 5) Blue-bead Lily (*Clintonia borealis*) 6) Monkeyflower (*Mimulus ringens*)

4)



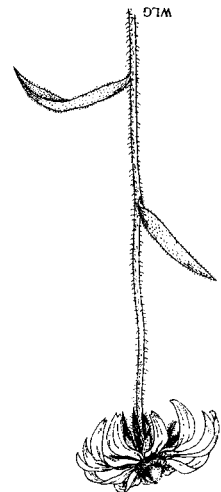
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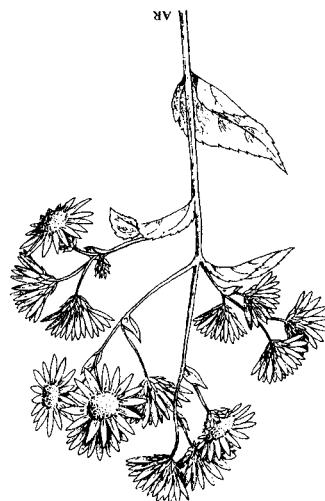
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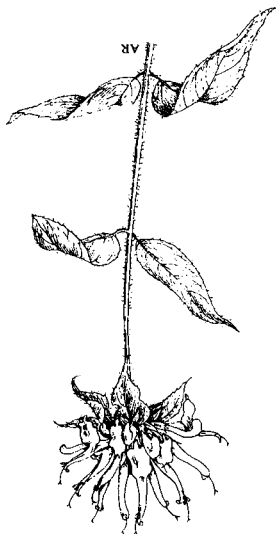
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Who Am I?



## Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute

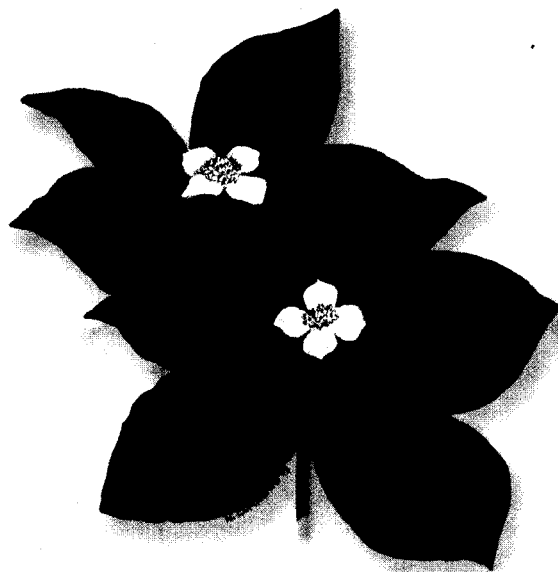
NORTHLAND COLLEGE

The Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute is the outreach department of Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. The Institute's namesake, Sigurd F. Olson (1899 - 1982) is one of America's most beloved nature writers and influential conservationist of the twentieth century.

Since its founding in 1972, the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College has worked with citizens to build environmental awareness, encourage responsible action, and forge lasting solutions to environmental challenges in the Lake Superior region. The Institute promotes protection and restoration of natural systems and processes; works with citizens to develop sustainable communities that are socially and environmentally healthy; interprets, preserves and promotes the legacy of Sigurd F. Olson and infuses his environmental, liberal arts educational philosophy in all Institute programs.

Northland College is a private environmental/liberal arts college with a commitment to the liberal arts and the natural world. The College adopted its environmental focus in 1971, and, with this in mind, has been enhancing its curriculum and facilities ever since.





***Native Plants of the the North Country  
Coloring Book***

***Northern Native Plants Project of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College***