

TORREYA

A BI-MONTHLY JOURNAL OF BOTANICAL NOTES AND NEWS

EDITED FOR
THE TORREY BOTANICAL CLUB
BY
GEORGE T. HASTINGS



John Torrey, 1796-1873

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PUBLISHED FOR THE CLUB
BY THE GEORGE BANTA PUBLISHING COMPANY
450-454 AHNAP STREET, MENASHA, WISCONSIN

Entered as second class matter at the post office at Menasha, Wisconsin,
under the Act of March 3, 1879

Fire weeds

RAYMOND H. TORREY

Commenting on the writer's note on *Marchantia polymorpha*, after forest fires, Dr. G. E. Nichols, President of the Ecological Society of America, Osborn Botanical Laboratory, Yale University, New Haven, Conn., writes:

"The condition which you describe in your Torreya article is a common one in northern Michigan, where I have conducted a course on bryophytes at the University of Michigan Biological Station for the past dozen summers. Except in dry sandy situations *Marchantia* is a common and abundant pioneer after forest fires. It frequently comes in on beds of matted down charcoal on sites of former camp-fires. In fact, I commonly refer to *Marchantia* and *Funaria* as 'fire weeds,' among the bryophytes."

Funaria hygrometrica was also plentiful in the burned area on Kittatinny Mountain, where I found the extensive *Marchantia* colonies, and now that Dr. Nichols includes it among bryophyte "fireweeds," I recall I have often seen it in spots that had been burned, including places along railroads where old ties had been burned. It would be interesting to list such pioneers after fires, among all classes of plants. In our hardwood forests, after a severe burning, a common one is *Lechea intermedia*; and on the Kittatinny location, *Acnida tuberculata* was very dense the first year after the blaze and, now, in the second year, *Pycnanthemum incanum* is common. There is some of the common Fireweed, *Epilobium angustifolium*, but it is not as dense as often happens after burns in the North Woods. It seems to me that lichens, especially these growing on earth, come back rather slowly after burnings; although the crustose ones on ledges and boulders, such as *Rinodina oreina*, Lecideas, Lecanoras and Rhizocarpons survive pretty well. The Rock Tripes, Gyrophoras and Umbilicarias, with their large foliose thalli, burn up when caught in the fire belts, and are slow to reappear in such places.