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BY
GEORGE T. HASTINGS



John Torrey, 1796-1873

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FIELD TRIPS OF THE CLUB

EXCURSIONS TO MONTAUK POINT

Because of the unusual botanical and geological interest of Montauk Point, and the low excursion rate of \$1.50 for the trip of 200 miles out and back now offered by the Long Island Railroad, the chairman of the field committee scheduled four excursions this season to that locality and all of them were well attended and enjoyed. In early June, club members joined with the Reptile Study Society in exploring the eastern tip, near the lighthouse and the bluffs; on July 30, the western end, in the Hither Hills State Park, was examined; and other parts were covered in trips in mid-August and early September.

On the July 30 trip, led by the writer, 28 members and guests were present. The best way to save time and reach interesting regions for botanical study, is to get bus transportation from the railroad station, a few miles east or west and walk back to the station for the return train. On this trip, we took a bus six miles west to the low part of the point, at Napeague Beach, and rambled eastward, through the oak and pine woods of the Hither Hills, out to the beach of the north shore, on Block Island Sound, and along the beach back to Montauk village.

On the inner slope of the backbeach dune, besides the usual marine flowering plants, among which *Chrysopsis mariana* was most common and brilliant at the time, were found some interesting lichens, rather surprising so close to the sea. There were large mats composed of *Cladonia sylvatica* and *Boryi*, and among them was found a large colony of the Iceland Moss lichen, *Cetraria islandica*, var. *crispa*, which is generally thought of as a northern species. Beach plums and Bayberry bore small but well fruited plants of *Usnea barbata*, also reminiscent of the North Woods. Small colonies of *Cladonia cristatella*, f. *vestita*, covered the dead bases of Beach Grass.

The party then struck north, across the railroad track and among the moraine hills, veneered with dune sand, blown from Napeague Beach and Harbor, and covered with a dense, gnarled growth of white, red and black oak, with occasional holly. Our course brought us to the south side of a kettle-hole pond, Nom-

monuck or Fresh Pond, the eastern end of which is still open, but the western half is filling up with sand blowing from Napeague Harbor, which has shallowed the kettle so that swamp vegetation is filling it up, leaving a few small open pools here and there.

The blowing dune is reached at the west end of the kettle area, where its southern limb is moving into the depression. The dune is roughly crescentic, and most active on its south and north limbs, where trees 30 to 50 feet high are being rapidly covered and killed. There was a brisk westerly wind and grains of sand were blowing down the front of the dune, in copious quantities, visibly covering the leaves on the forest floor as we watched. On days of strong wind, the toe of the dune must advance some inches, and some of the trees had obviously been covered several feet deep around their bases during the present season.

In the center of the crescentic dune, the advance seems to be slowed up a bit and there is a little island of pitch pine and bearberry, and patches of *Cladonia Boryi* and *sylvatica*, and bits of probable kettle remains, with sour gum, holly, and green-briar, which seems to have escaped burying by the blowing sand.

After an exhilarating swim, in the warm, calm water, on the North shore, we moved along eastward, at the foot of the moraine bluffs. Large, healthy looking colonies of *Ammodenia peploides* grew thickly on this strand. An interesting exotic was the Chinese rose, *Rosa rugosa*, which has been established in many places on Montauk Point, possibly by the floating of its large hips from some cultivated stand of the species on the Connecticut or Rhode Island shore. Its large handsome flowers and immense hips, as big as small tomatoes, make it a striking plant.

Boulders of New England granite, on the top of the bluffs, proved to have an interesting flora of crustose lichens, including *Rinodina oreina*, which is an inhabitant of hilltops in the Highlands of the Hudson, and seemed odd a few feet above sea level; *Lecanora melanaspis* and *cinerea*, and *Biatorella clavus*. Some of us had a pleasant visit with Mr. Edward Vail, a fisherman, and his wife, who were pleased at our interest in the lichens on their big boulder. They are friends of Roy Latham, of Orient, who wrote an account of the Flora of the Town of Southold, L. I., which appeared in *Torreyia* about 15 years ago.

A handsome colony of *Solanum virginianum*, with large lavender blue flowers, and spiny stems, was found, in the lane back to the station.

RAYMOND H. TORREY

The South Jersey Trip, August 27, was a big success botanically though there was somewhat to be desired as to members. There were found three species of *Habenaria*,—*integra*, *ciliaris*, and *blephariglottis*. We were too late for *H. cristata*. A fine stand of *Coreopsis rosea* was observed near Waretown. As all had seen *Lygodium* we did not go in to see that although we were near one of the finest stands in New Jersey. *Euphorbia polygonifolia* was abundant while *E. corollata* was rather rare and past its prime. Only three specimens of *Eryngium virginianum* were found. Freshly collected specimens of *Eryngium yuccaefolium* and *Nymphoides Nymphaeoides* were shown but not the stands. *Schizaea* was observed in Mr. Frazee's pet stand, which he claims to be the farthest north in New Jersey. The promised *Gratiola aurea* did not materialize as the location was completely flooded. A well matured fruit of *Citrullus Citrullus* was found and enjoyed by all.

V. L. FRAZEE