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NATURE NOW

Naturalist's Days too Short

By LYDIA KING FRESHHE
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

The naturalist is fortunate in his vacation as in all things. He never has time on his hands and therefore he is never bored. Instead, every day has too few hours in which to follow the ways of sun and sky, of woods and waters.

So it is that on my study table in its place under the window framed with lacy cedar, there is always an assortment of specimens awaiting the scrutiny of the lens and the verdict of the printed page: a dish of moss, a tray of fungus plants, a new seed pod, an empty larval case, a fossil. Our only hope of "a change up" is a rainy day.



Mrs. Freshhe

Always, too, there is the accumulation of books, papers and magazines to be read this summer when we have "lots of time" or "nothing to do."

AND FINALLY, there is the ever present writing schedule which, like a baby, is always with us and must be sandwiched between housekeeping chores, guests, family obligations and joys.

But one thing we insist upon, a part of each day must be spent exploring.

This morning there was time only for a walk up and over the familiar ridge. However, no matter how often we go we see something new or else something familiar which we view with "new eyes" because we have changed since we last saw it.

THE RIDGE supports the most mature of our beech-maple forest which, in this area, is our climax plant association. It is old and undisturbed. For some 15 years it has been free from man's tampering hand. This results in a natural area

which is a naturalist's delight. This association is called a "beech-maple climax" because these two trees dominate the vegetation. Among our own hardwoods they are the most fully leaved and limbed, thereby casting a shade so dense that it excludes most plants except the seedlings of these same trees. Thus the beech and maple actually select and dominate the area, although there are intrusions of such trees as hemlock, white pine and black birch.

The ridge is crossed by a deep ravine, remnant of a once powerful stream which flowed into Wallon Lake.

IN ITS DEPTHS, encouraged by the rich soil and less competition from trees, grow the graceful circles of the narrow-leaved sycamore. I look down upon this lush display with particular satisfaction.



ELEANOR HARRIS

Eleanor Harris' Betrothal Is Told

Announcement has been made of the engagement of Eleanor Helen Harris, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Harris of Humphrey road, to Glen T. Greenleaf of Clawson. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Morris Greenleaf, who lived in Birmingham before moving to Clawson.

Both young people were graduated from Birmingham high school. They plan a fall wedding.

25th annual "Whiff" leaves and greenish-white instead of rose-pink flowers. In our own state the wild leek is of interest chiefly to the botanist and the dairyman. The former distinguishes it from our several species of wild onion by its broad, flat leaves and greenish-white instead of rose-pink flowers. To the latter it is a hazard, for cows pasturing thereon produce strongly flavored milk unfit for use.

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