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U-M Checks Plants in 7 Counties

ANN ARBOR—Seven counties in the Detroit metropolitan area are being surveyed by a University of Michigan botanical research team to learn how plants grow there and how they're related to other organisms.

Included are Macomb, Wayne, Washtenaw, St. Clair, Livingston, Oakland and Monroe counties. This is the first such inventory

of the plant communities that make up the vegetation in this area and it is patterned after a European method devised by French plant ecologist J. Braun-Blanquet.

The three-year "phytosociological" survey, as it's called, is directed by associate professor William E. Benninghoff with support by a \$25,500 grant awarded by the National Science Foundation. It continues through June 1961.

Southeastern Michigan was se-

lected for the survey for many reasons: It's close to U-M research facilities, many other kinds of ecological investigations have been made in this area by eminent plant ecologists, it's the center of population in Michigan and therefore the effects of intensive human use can be studied, and much of the area is related to recreation, thus providing the researchers with a comparison between "well-managed" and "natural" vegetation.

BENNINGHOFF's research is a pilot study to determine whether or not the J. Braun-Blanquet method—sometimes called the "Zurich-Montpellier" school—is applicable for surveying Michigan vegetation. If it can, Prof. Benninghoff hopes to influence other North American scientists to adopt the method and thus create uniformity in reporting the nation's vegetative resources.

According to the professor, uniformity is the greatest advantage of the Zurich-Montpellier method. In addition it's rapidly compiled, lists all plants in a given study plot, and provides for noting the manner of occurrence of each species, including abundance and "gregariousness."

In all, the U-M botanists will survey 2,000 plots, ranging in size from 16 to 400 square meters. So far they have examined 500 plots containing hundreds of species, including mosses and lichens. Underwater and floating plants will not be included in the study.

The most valuable aspect of the European system, says Benninghoff, is the species with which "plant indicators" can be located.

THESE INDICATORS, such as the presence of jewel-weed or touch-me-not in a given area, help plant ecologists determine soil properties and stability, flood levels, the nature of pre-existing forests, and other valuable information.

Upon completion, the study may also help reconstruct vegetation history in Michigan from the ice age to the present and provide clues as to how present-day vegetation got the way it is, says Prof. Benninghoff.

In addition, the research will also provide a basis for comparison for future sampling of the vegetation, as with the radiation monitoring which is now beginning in connection with nuclear reactors in this area, for example.

Meanwhile, if the European approach proves to be suitable, Benninghoff will compare his results with those of European scientists who have achieved notable success and then advocate adoption of the method in the United States.

"WE SERIOUSLY need a uniform inventory of vegetative resources in this country," he says.

Talks to Club On Workshop
Beverly Hills garden club will meet today, Thursday, Sept. 11, at the home of Mrs. Edward Crona, 32050 Sheridan, at 8 p.m.

Mrs. King Rulmer, the conservation chairman, will speak on the conservation workshop at Higgins lake. She spent a week there this past summer.

ASSISTANT hostesses are Mrs. Russell Riley, Mrs. Leo Rutter and Mrs. Arthur Neckman.

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NY Times Art Critic Slated to Address Friends of Library

New York Times art critic Mrs. Eero Saarinen will be guest speaker of the Friends of the Baldwin library at the organization's first 1958-59 meeting Oct. 20, it was announced recently.

Now conducting its fall membership drive, the group will sponsor four or five guest lectures during the year, according to membership chairman Miss Sylvia Parker.

Organized in 1950, the friends' aims are to focus public attention on library service, stimulate gifts of books and endowments and foster interest in books and libraries.

Further information on joining the organization is available thru Baldwin library or Miss Parker.

Student

go to college to study economics, or languages.

I HAVE two brothers, Alberto 18, goes to classic school. He studies Greek, Latin, philosophy and other hard subjects. He can go to all kinds of colleges. The other brother is only five. And this year he is going to the elementary school first grade. He learned to swim and to write this summer and I am sorry not to be able to see his progress.

I like American method of studying. I think it's not very hard but first grade. He learned to swim and to write this summer and I am sorry not to be able to see his progress.

Now it's a little difficult for me

to follow the lessons. But I hope by Christmas to be able to study in English easily as an American girl. And I want to work for this end.

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