

NATURE NOW By Lydia King Frehe
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Papaw is Strange Tree With a Curious Fruit

One of the rare and curious trees of the southern portion of our lower peninsula is the papaw. The Spanish explorer DeSoto, pushing his way northward into the Mississippi valley, first chronicled its presence in the Carolinas in the year 1541.

It was autumn time in the rich river flats. The band of hungry men, never far from starvation's threat, could not fail to see the ripened fruits hanging dark on the branches while the large yellow leaves curled and dropped to the ground.

Thereafter two centuries passed while the papaw was shared only by hungry animals and not men. We hear no more of it until 1743 when the English naturalist, Mark Catesby, after a collecting trip to Virginia and Carolina described it in his "Natural History of Carolina."

WE FIRST tasted the fruit of the papaw in the Ozark hill country where it grew in dense thickets along the flats of the Merrimac river. Together with the persimmon it is much relished by the opossum, grey squirrel and raccoon.

The hill folk, ever dependent on the bounty of the wild, make both a pudding and a kind of preserve from these odd fruits.

Now as then, the river flats of

the Mississippi are the chosen home of the papaw. It reaches into the eastern and northern states only as an understorey tree where it is forced into the shade by its competitors.

MOST OFTEN it attains only shrub-like proportions forming dense thickets along river bottoms and streams.

However on a recent field trip to Bloomer State Park No. 8, we found an unusual grove of the papaw which harbors trees 20 feet high and some six to eight inches in diameter.

We came away with one of the fruits which is shaped like a stubby banana. This we are ripening (for old time's sake) on the ledge of the back porch.

When picked it was green, but now it is soft to the touch and yellowing. When it reaches a wrinkled brown, it will be palatable for one who is accustomed to its odd flavor. The flesh will then be custard-like and interspersed with shiny seeds, flat and brown, somewhat resembling thick, watermelon seeds but larger and more oblong in shape.

THE PAPA (Aristida triloba) is a member of the only genus of the great custard-apple family to be found outside the tropics. Several species (which are small shrubs) are found in the southern parts of North America.

The entire tree has an exotic look borrowed from its tropical relatives. Its flowers — first green, then brown and finally a dark pink

(See PAW PAW, 7-D)



THE NORTHERN and eastern Lake Superior shoreline is a vast area of rugged, unspoiled beaches, little changed from generations ago. Much of its wild beauty is

Try Canadian Highway, Says Our Angus McKellar

By ANGUS MCKELLAR

Editors note: The writer is a member of the display advertising staff of The Birmingham Eccentric and the author of "Behind the Store Fronts," which appears each week in Section E of this paper.

Is it a touch of fall wanderlust that you might be having? Are you seeking new vistas, new experiences and all within a reasonable distance?

Then the new Trans Canada Highway 17 may be the answer for a vacation in the fall season. Route 17 is scenery enough any time of the year, but with the brilliant autumn hues, it could well surpass any color tour you have previously enjoyed.

When we made the tour a couple of weeks ago, only a few maples had started to turn but the fantastic beauty of the highway views gave poignant promise of even more to come with the first frosts. Then the poplar, birch and other deciduous trees clothe themselves in flashing autumn shades to contrast vividly with the somber greens of the conifers.

SUPERBLY ENGINEERED, the highway (in many places) was blasted through solid rocks which stand like portals to countless, unfolding panoramas of unspoiled lakes, streams and forests.

Attesting to the road's popularity are the traffic figures: about 5,000 cars were on the road each day this summer. Of course, traffic is much less since Labor Day.

Many sportsmen will soon be traveling the highway for big game and partridge hunting, and for fishing also. Pike and walleyes, bass and lake trout can be legally fished until Oct. 14. One can hunt moose along highway 17 as early

now available for all to see with the completion around Lake Superior last fall of Trans Canada Highway No. 17.

as Oct. 1 and the partridge season begins on the same day.

WE DID NOT see any moose but, from reports, they are quite plentiful. Deer are not as numerous in this section of Ontario as they are in Michigan. Residents blame wolves for decimating the deer herds.

For those not interested in hunting, except with a camera, officers of the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests warn those without firearms: "Just mind your own business, and no animal will bother you."

There is no record of anyone ever being attacked by a wolf in Ontario, contrary to many reports.

IF YOU PLAN to take a dog into Canada, you will not be allowed through customs unless you can produce a certificate from a veterinarian certifying that the dog has received vaccination against rabies within the past 12 months. And the United States custom officials are just as particular about that certificate when you return.

We found accommodations plentiful, except for one evening when we drove into Terrace Bay rather late, but we were directed to a house which offered tourist rooms. There are numerous tourist rest areas along the highway, most of them in beautiful rustic settings. Camp and trailer sites are ample. It is a good idea to fill up your gas tank when it gets down to the halfway mark, for extra safety.

THE ROCKY structure of the land makes it ideal "rock hound" country. We met one couple who were particularly pleased with their discoveries in the White River areas.

An interesting side trip was a tour through the St. Lawrence Paper Co. plant at Nipigon. A trip through such a plant is an example of one of the grandest things of life we take for granted. Between the time the logs go into the slashers and are turned into finished, rolled newspaper stock, a multiplicity of processes takes place. But once through such a plant is enough, I would say. The sulphuric and other chemical odors in some departments is not pleasant.

NIPIGON, 37 1/2 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., is located on the largest lake in northern Ontario. It is my personal opinion that the scenery west of Nipigon on 17 is not worth the additional driving—unless one has plenty of time and is interested in seeing the western Lake Superior cities of Port Austin and Fort Williams, and, of course, Duluth, Minn.

Continuing around, the motorist has an opportunity to visit the high points of upper Michigan and scenic areas along the south shore of Lake Superior, such as Lake of the Clouds, Pictured Rocks, Brookway Mt. Drive in the Keweenaw Peninsula and Tahquamenon Falls. From Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, to Duluth, Minn., it is 666 miles and from Duluth to St. Ignace, 434 miles. The "circle" distance from the Mackinac Bridge is 1253 miles and round trip distance from the bridge to Nipigon is 858 miles.

THE AMERICAN traveler gets a break financially as the Canadian dollar is discounted about 7 per cent now. The actual amount varies somewhat as to location, although the rate at banks is standard, of course.

THE CANADIANS are a friendly lot, and will do their utmost to make your stay pleasant.

The theft of our clothes from the car one night did provide a good laugh later. We reported the theft to the provincial police, wrote out an inventory and went on our way. A few miles out of town, a police



Mrs. Frehe

The Birmingham Eccentric Features

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

'Fluorescent Garden' Lends Light to Winter Months

It is within the possibility of every house plant enthusiast to possess a "fluorescent greenhouse." You will not be dependent upon outside light but you can use 40 watt fluorescent tubes to provide the light factor. Gro-lux is a new tube for this purpose.

It is important to use the correct fluorescent tube because it possesses the proper ratio of red to blue radiation which delivers over twice as much total light energy as the warm white fluorescent lamp when using a few years ago when I had my basement green.

FOR AN indoor fluorescent greenhouse the best results will be achieved by selecting plants which flourish in one-half shade. Such things as African violets, gloxinias, ivy varieties, filix plants, ferns, impatiens, coleus and orchids, will provide the grower with constant splendor.

Pachysandra, which is a ground cover well known for its use in deep shade, makes an excellent indoor plant accent. Bring it indoors trim its roots and (for best results) place it in a glass container. Pachysandra prefers a dark glass container.

Just think of all the plants you can have for your garden next spring if you make many other cuttings, too, and follow the same procedure.

MANY OF you have azaleas you have been nursing along since last Christmas. Remember that these plants like acid soil, so mix one-half cup of vinegar to one quart of water as your watering mixture every three or four weeks.

Also give these plants a chance to form buds by keeping them in a dark night location from 5 p.m. until morning for the next two months away from all electricity.

Now you know why everybody's home isn't filled with azaleas. If you have white worms in your houseplant soil you may get rid of them by treating the pot with one teaspoon of household ammonia to a quart of water.

ARE YOU aware that all kinds of trees have a way of telling you when they are thirsty? The sugar maple's leaves brown where they get the most sun. Norway maples will shed their leaves while still green. Elms will yellow all over and discard all but their tip leaves. Oaks keep all at their troubles to themselves and you have to guess if they are thirsty.

Recently a group of local volunteers in horticultural therapy took a busload of male patients to the M. M. Schimpke and D. A. Shardlow gardens. One of the men on the trip had not been off the institution grounds for forty years. You and I have a challenge ahead in the program of rehabilitation.

5 from Area Teach Classes At U of D

The University of Detroit Institute for Business Services, began the fall semester with more than seventy courses, featuring classes taught by five area residents.

These courses were designed for adults interested in improving their business skills.

Four of the courses are being taught by Dr. and Mrs. Roy Arthur Klages of 4121 Meadow Way, Birmingham.

Mrs. Klages, an associate professor of management at U of D, is teaching "Practical Advertising for Small Business" and "New Product Development and Industrial Marketing."

Mrs. Klages, an instructor in economics at U of D, is teaching "Review of English Fundamentals" and "Effective Business Writing."

JOHN KOLAR, automotive representative for American Emblen, is conducting a "Seminar for Manufacturers Agents" and a course in "Techniques for Managing Manufacturers Agents." Kolar resides at 4211 Wimbeldon, Birmingham.

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