

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

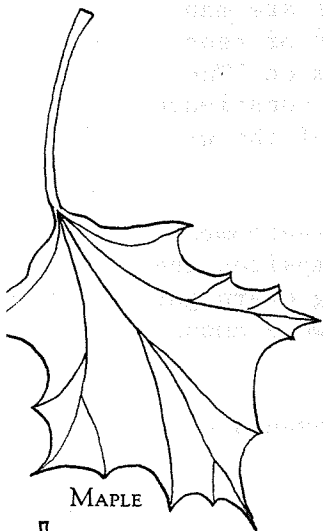
FALL 1979

Fall--what to look for--Jack Frost? Does he really exist? Is he responsible for painting our brightly colored falling leaves? Or is it the spirits of Injuns sitting on them and leaving traces of war paint?

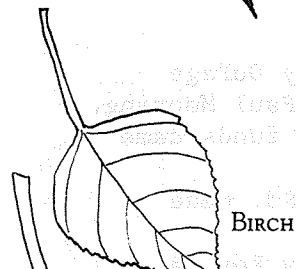
Romantic as these ideas are, the true story is almost as fascinating. As summer days grow shorter, a ring of cork cells forms where the stem of each leaf meets the branch in deciduous trees and shrubs. By early October, the vein system of the leaf is closed off. Without water, the leaf stops making food, the green chlorophyll disappears, and the weakened stem breaks loose in the brisk fall winds.

But in the days between the disappearance of the chlorophyll and the autumn winds, the leaves show chemical color that was always there but had been covered up by the green chlorophyll. *Birch*, *tulip tree*, and *elm* turn yellow with xanthophyll. *Sugar maples* turn orange and red with carotene. *Oak*, *sassafras*, *dogwood*, and *sumac* turn deep red or purplish with anthocyanin.

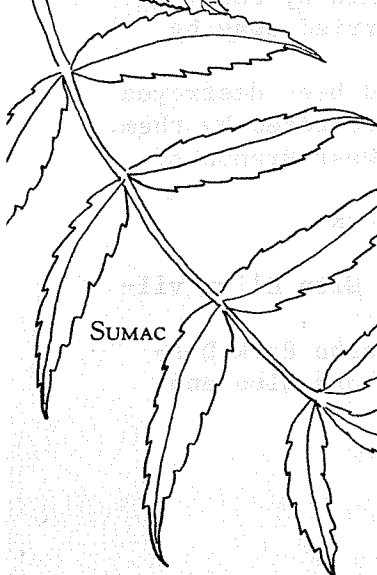
Now is the time to walk the Path to see the late fall asters, the geese flying south overhead, the return of our winter birds--the juncos--and the lovely colored trees of fall.



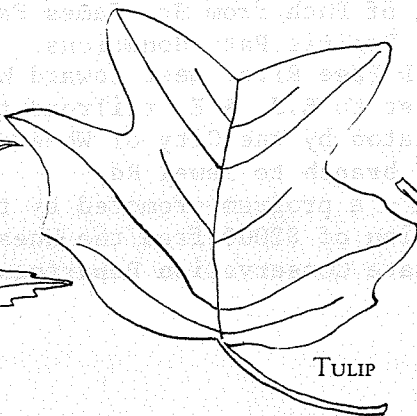
MAPLE



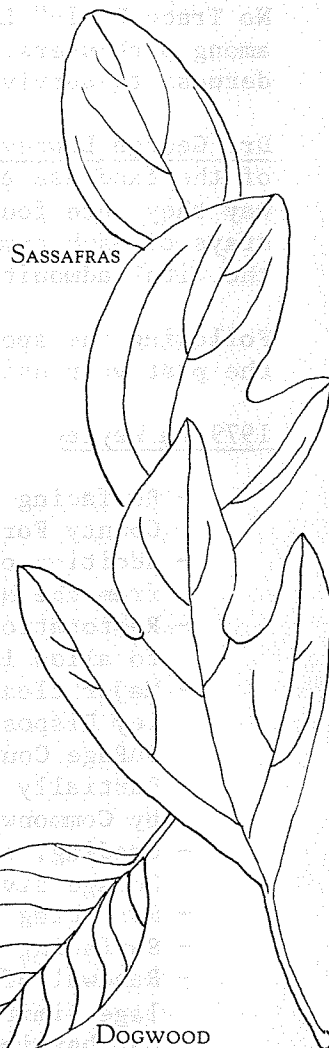
BIRCH



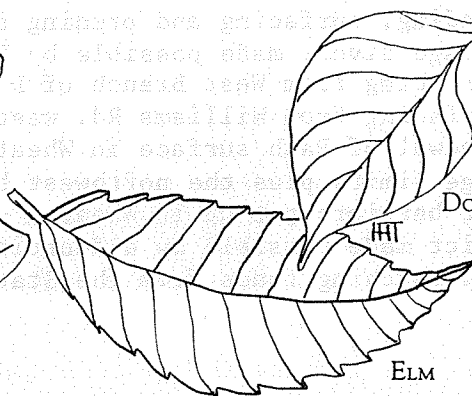
SUMAC



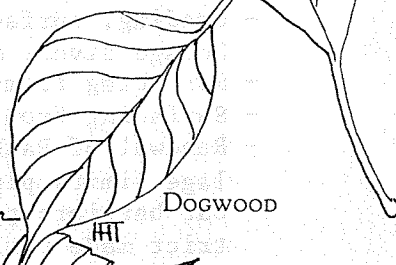
TULIP



SASSAFRAS



ELM



DOGWOOD

ANNUAL MEETING

The 13th Annual meeting of the Illinois Prairie Path was held November fourth in the Thornhill building of the Morton Arboretum. There were three guest speakers:

Mr. Phil Elstrom, Chairman of the Kane County Board of Supervisors, commented on the importance of developing trails for recreation from available sites. He said there are many trail potentials and pointed out such examples as sections existing along the Fox River considered for development and the newly developed Great Western Trail between St. Charles and Sycamore (the later not to be confused with the Great Western Nature Trail abandoned by Ill. Department of Conservation. See Winter Newsletter 1979). Elstrom spoke of problems of trail development especially the need to fight negative attitudes stimulated by vandalism.

Mr. Fred Littleman, Recreation Specialist for the Forestry Service under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, praised the Prairie Path as the single best example of the U.S. Trail System Plan and invited the Board to offer ideas and suggestions for development of future trails. The National Forestry System Preserve's aims are management of public lands for the greatest good and for the greatest number of people. Important is public understanding of proper land use. By means of a film on "The No Trace Ethic" Littleman demonstrated the need to promote an ecological conscience among park users. Wilderness survival has now come to mean the ability of the wilderness to survive man.

Dr. George Lowrey, Jr., Education Resource Specialist, expanded on the development of the land use ethic in a film about "The Boundary Waters". Leaving campsites the way they were found, prevention of overcrowding of some areas by limiting overnight stays of each campsite to one night, respecting trails to avoid eroding were among the vital admonitions to public park users.

Following the speakers, Paul Mooring, I.P.P. President, reported on the events of the past year using slides to show improvements and problems:

1979 in Review

- Surfacing of the Path west of the East Branch of the DuPage river by DuPage County Forest Preserve. Previously ditched and graded by Jean and Paul Mooring.
- Addition of 65 shrubs to Prairie Path Founder's Park, Wheaton. The funds came from the Mae Theilgaard Watts memorial fund.
- Restoration of Deep cut on southwest branch of Path near Wiesbrook Rd. made to allow laying of sewer line.
- Major clean-up at Eola Rd. and west. Filled huge dumpster loaned by Fox Valley Disposal Co. plus five additional truck loads of refuse carried away by DuPage County Highway Department.
- Partially restored section at Eola Rd. An improved section had been destroyed by Commonwealth Edison Co. while making installations and was restored by them.
- Grading, surfacing and pruning of Path from St. James Farm to West Branch of DuPage river, made possible by Prairie Path donations.
- Surfacing from West Branch of DuPage River west toward Williams Rd.
- Surfacing from Williams Rd. west to E.J. & E. railroad tracks.
- Renewal of Path surface in Wheaton by the City of Wheaton from Glen Ellyn village limits plus the northwest branch to Jewel Rd.
- Car barriers put up in Wheaton - a program promoted by the Wheaton Park District made possible by a donation of \$2000 from the Wheaton Rotary Club and 80% matching funds from the State Conservation Department.

1979 in Review continued

- Steps over the railroad tracks west of Prince Crossing on northwest branch of Path repaired by Prairie Path volunteers.
- Cut across Path to allow installation of 90 inch storm sewer in Lombard now repaired.
- Northwest Branch of Path from Prince Crossing east pruned and mowed by DuPage County Highway Department.
- Finley Rd. bridge now near completion.
- Mounted police patrolled the Path in Wayne Township. A pilot program that has successfully discouraged motorcyclists and other Path abusers.

The nominating committee presented its slate and five Board Members were re-elected to serve another term: Mr. Gunnar Anderson, Dundee; Mrs. Joan Hamill, Wayne; Mr. F. Paul Mooring, Glen Ellyn; Mr. Richard Wilson, DesPlaines; and Mr. W.H. Collins, Winfield.

Following the meeting there was a social hour with refreshments provided by Vi Kolze and other members of the Warrenville Friends of the Path.

FAP 431 IS AGAIN THREATENING THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH.

Proposed to extend from Army Trail rd. to Butterfield Rd. (county planners want it extended to I 55) this multi-million dollar, 6-lane highway will parallel Route 53 crossing the Path in Lombard just east of 53 and knocking out a large section of the Path for an extended period of time or perhaps permanently. The recent decision of Mayor Byrne, Chicago, to abandon the cross-town highway has released \$120 million for use on the FAP 431 highway. As of now all of the land north of Butterfield Rd. has been acquired and there is nothing to prevent immediate construction except possible federal red tape delays. Funds available must be spent within the next six years. This project is managed by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Several years ago the necessity of building this highway was questioned. Your protests may again raise this question. But at the very least the Prairie Path should be assured some access over or under the highway to preserve its continuity during and after construction of FAP 431. Write to your State Representatives, Mrs. Giddy Dyer and Mr. Glen Schneider and to your State Senator, Mr. Jack Bowers, State Capitol Building, Springfield, Ill. 62700. Also write to Pollution Control Director, Michael P. Mauzy, Environmental Protection Agency, 4500 6th St., Springfield, Ill. 62706.

PRAIRIE PATH TEE SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE

- Good quality white cotton, short sleeved, knit shirts. Green trim on neck and sleeves. Prairie Path logo on left front. Sizes: Children - medium and large; Adults - small, medium and large. Extra Large special order. Each \$5 plus \$1 for handling and postage. Please send check and order to Hillside Cyclery, 4049 Washington St., Hillside, Ill. 60162.

- Prairie Path Patches \$1 each.

- The Illinois Prairie Path - a guide by Helen Turner. Gives history, geology of Path. Many illustrations of wild flowers, trees, animal tracks seen on the Path. Each \$1.25. For quantities of 10 to 20 \$1 each; 20 or more \$.75 each. For Patches and Book please send order to Illinois Prairie Path, Box 1086, Wheaton, Ill. 60187.