

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1975

WHAT TO SEE – VINES

All plants that we see today are survivors from earlier times. They have survived by adapting themselves to the conditions existing where they evolved, and are still changing as conditions change. Some are more efficient survivors than others.

Vines are woody or herbaceous plants whose method of surviving in heavy shade is to move to a sunnier location by climbing larger plants. Each has its own method of climbing.

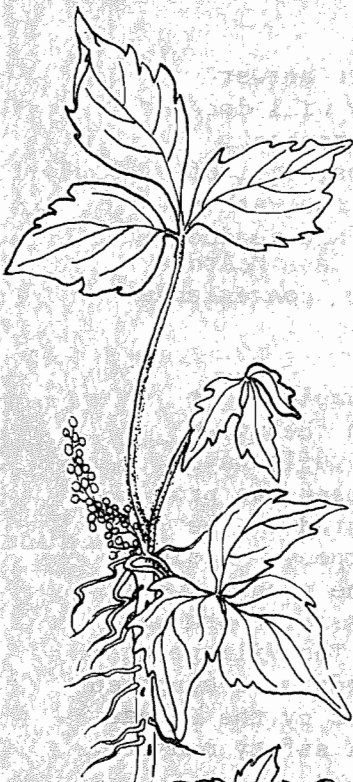
Some, such as **poison ivy** and **Virginia creeper**, have aerial roots that attach to the bark of trees and shrubs. These roots provide support only; the plants do not obtain nourishment from their supportive partner. The aerial roots are a way to distinguish poison ivy from Virginia creeper even in winter. The roots of Virginia creeper have suction disks on the ends; those of poison ivy do not.

Another method of climbing is the development of tendrils – stems that coil around support. This coiling is produced by the uneven growth of cells on opposite sides of the tendril due to different distribution of growth hormones within the cells. The **wild grapes** along the Path climb by this means.

Some vines, **moon seed** and the fall-fruiting **bittersweet**, have stems that wrap themselves around trees in a snake-like manner. As the trees supporting these vines grow, they are forced into a corkscrew growth pattern by the vine's binding climb which sometimes causes the tree to die.

Vines in their climb for sun can also kill their supportive tree or shrub by producing so much shade that the plant beneath is unable to manufacture enough food to survive.

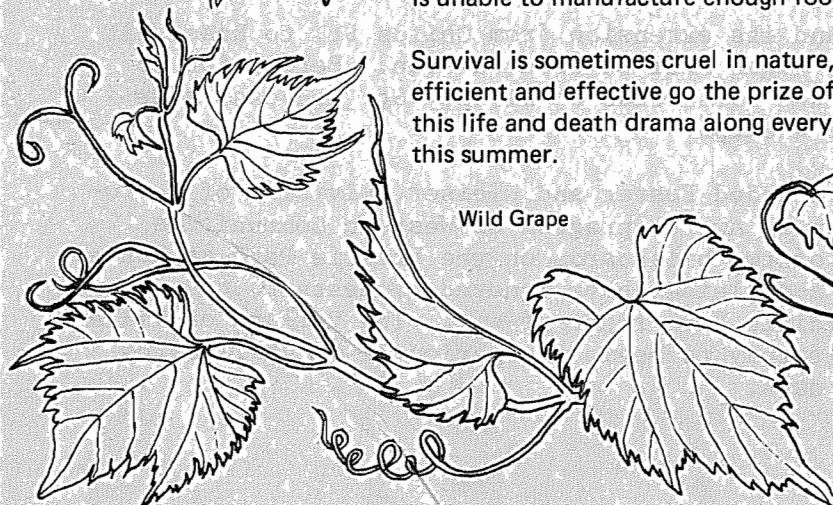
Survival is sometimes cruel in nature, and to the most efficient and effective go the prize of staying alive. See this life and death drama along every section of the Path this summer.



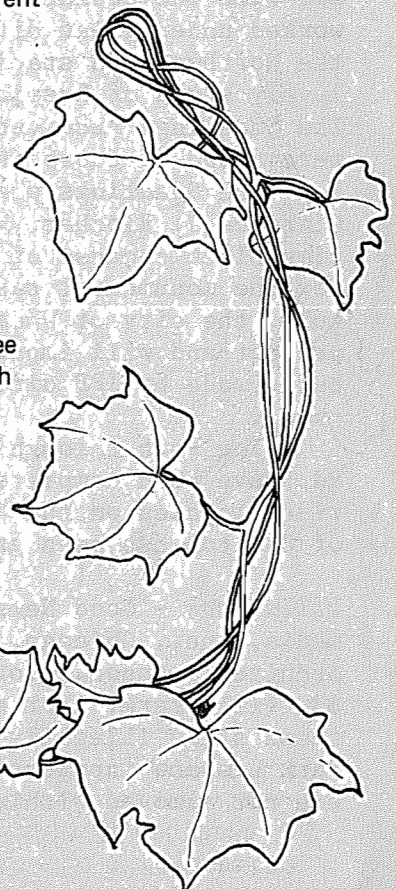
Poison Ivy



Virginia Creeper



Wild Grape



Moon Seed

PROJECTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The Path usage survey will continue through the fall. Long needed to answer questions asked by county, municipal and state officials, the survey will determine the number of Path users, type of usage (hiking, bicycle and horseback riders, etc.), age groups, frequency of use by individuals and groups, time of greatest usage, and distance travelled. Volunteers stationed along the Path are compiling records taken from 6 A.M. to dusk. Additional volunteers are needed. Please help!! The work is pleasant. Anyone interested please call Gene McArdle (834-9271) or Paul Mooring (469-4289). You will be scheduled at your convenience for as long or short an interval as desired.

Glen Ellyn - An important safety improvement of the Path has been completed at the Taylor Avenue intersection. The old steps have been removed and the steep slope to street level has been graded to a 10% pitch. Rustic guard rails have been put up along Taylor Ave. and the Path resurfaced. The improvement was proposed by the Glen Ellyn Environmental Protection Commission and adopted by the Glen Ellyn Village board who used revenue sharing funds for this purpose. Ecology classes from Glenbard West High School have additionally improved the graded portions of the right-of-way with plantings of prairie flowers and grasses. Work was done under the direction of Mr. Richard Billings, biology teacher. The Village of Glen Ellyn furnished the necessary equipment and black soil, and seeds were supplied by the E.P.C. Regretfully, previous plantings made with great effort by the DuPage County Camp Fire Girls of Glen Ellyn were sacrificed for this needed safety measure.

Wheaton A donation of \$500 to be used for further development of the Demonstration Block in Wheaton has been turned over to the Prairie Path by the Seedlings Conservation and Garden Club. For many years the Seedlings worked to develop this section which was originally bare of any vegetation. They raised funds for plant material and with the assistance of their families supplied the labor. Unfortunately they worked under great difficulty and had many reverses. The greatest blow came when the Northwestern station was relocated and a CNW crew, mistakenly, bulldozed a lovely stand of Russian Olives in preparation to extending the station platform. The Seedlings received \$1000 from the railroad in restitution. New trees and shrubs were added to those that had escaped disaster.

The Seedlings plan to set out about 100 Day Lily bulbs this fall (a gift from Clarence J. Blocher, Wheaton) but are relinquishing responsibility for the Demonstration Block because of labor and problems involved. We owe the Seedlings many thanks for the monumental task of bringing the Demonstration Block this far. For the future, the city of Wheaton will contribute black dirt for the Seedlings' planting project and will improve the surface of the Path through the area. Plans also are being made by IPP directors for continuing development in this important sector.

The Path through Wheaton Center and its extension from Childs St. to Roosevelt Rd. have been completed. Prairie Path signs will be erected soon. Permission to ride bicycles on the "sidewalk" along the south side of Liberty St. and east side of Carlton has been granted by City of Wheaton.

Villa Park - Good News: An Onion was awarded Foster and Kleiser, Division of Metro-media, Inc., Chicago, by the Environmental Awards program of Western Communities Architects Assoc., for their erection of two billboards on the Prairie Path at Route 83, Villa Park. For some time Foster and Kleiser have ignored requests to remove these signs illegally occupying the Prairie Path right-of-way. The Village of Villa Park has now instructed the Village Attorney to begin litigation if the billboards are not removed within the allotted 30 days.

PROJECTS AND IMPROVEMENTS (continued)

Kane County - Improvement of the Path from Dunham Rd., Wayne, west to route 25 has been completed by the Kane County Forest Preserve. Clearing and grading northwest of route 25 is underway and plans are to complete surfacing to Kenyon Rd. this summer. There is a break between Kenyon and Raymond sts. but beyond Raymond the Path is walkable to Riverside Drive parking deck. Surfacing of this area is planned for the near future.

Special Trails - The Charlotte Marous Nature Trail (Wheaton) is suffering with this year's rampant, lush growth of poison ivy, as is the Raymond Watts Memorial Trail (Warrenville). The latter also continues to be victimized by vandals -- our signs destroyed and a section of fence cut through near the entrance stile. Nevertheless, determined Path volunteers, among them Naperville Boy Scouts, will continue to develop some of the special features planned in that segment for the blind. Commonwealth Edison will provide additional wood-chips, to be spread by the Scouts; a permanent special sign will be mounted; when new guide ropes are stretched in place, tours will be offered for small groups - by appointment only.

WARNING: This is a big year for poison ivy. Learn to identify this noxious weed and beware. See picture on first page. It is a glossy, three leaflet compound leaf with notched edges and an alternate leaf arrangement. It can appear as a viney ground cover, a large vine climbing over trees and other plants or as a multi-stemmed woody shrub. Small greenish white flower clusters later becoming greenish white berries appear at the juncture of leaf stem and main stem. In the fall it turns red. A huge clump, along the Path in the Arrowhead section near Wheaton, was recently sprayed by the City of Wheaton Forestry Department. Note: Herbicides may not be used on the Path except under authorized and controlled conditions because of possible damage to desirable plants.

Notables Visit Path: A visit to the Path, conducted by naturalist Bobbie Lively, was made by a group from the Field Museum of Natural History as part of a series of tours of the Ray A. Kroe Environmental Program. These tours depict various land uses in the Chicago area and their ecological significance. The group responded enthusiastically to the Path and their guide. Several notes of appreciation have been received together with requests for memberships.

A Second Edition of THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH - A Guide by Helen Turner, will soon be available. Due to increased costs of paper, ink and stapling the price is now \$1.25. The book contains the geology and history of the Path area, with many illustrations to assist with identification of trees, flowers, birds, and animal tracks.

Patches: To coin a phrase - "If you've hiked it, flaunt it!" Attractive green and white Prairie Path patches are available for \$1.00 each.

For either of the above, send check with your order to:

Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, Illinois 60187

(NEWSLETTER illustrated by Bobbie Lively, editor)