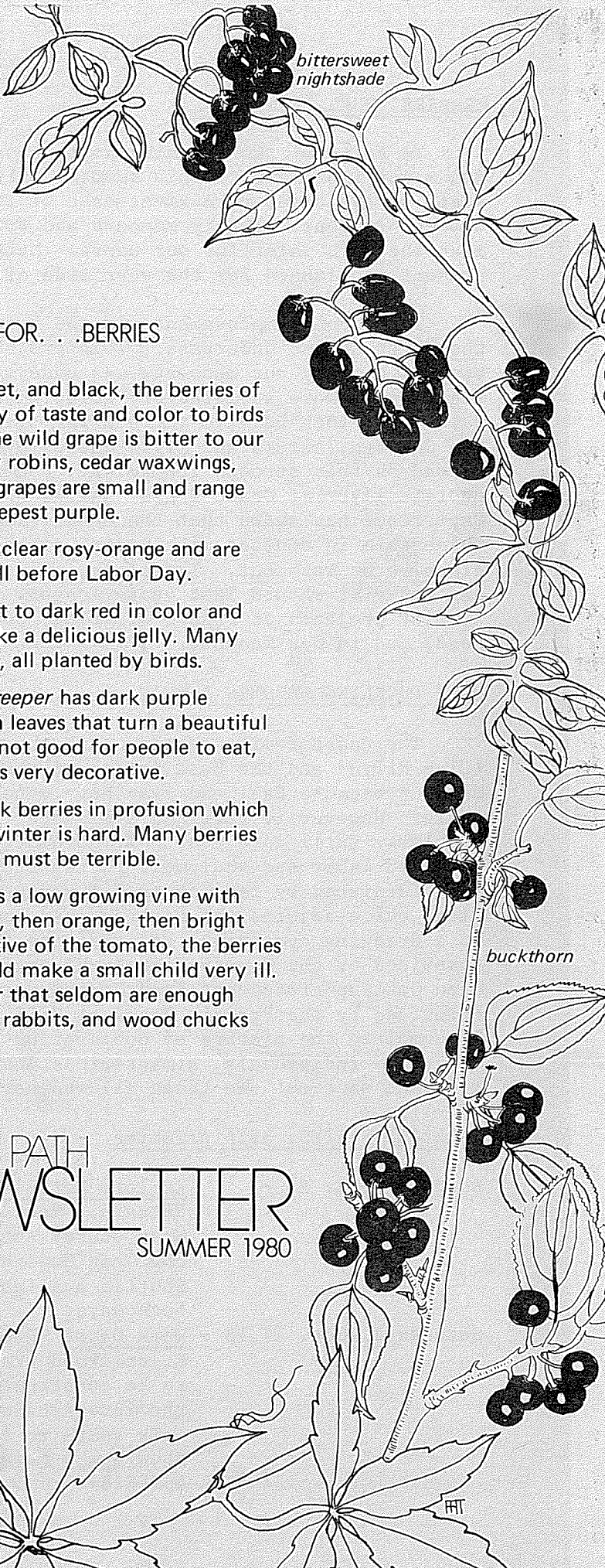




wild grape



bittersweet
nightshade

WHAT TO LOOK FOR. . . BERRIES

Purple, blue, red, green, scarlet, and black, the berries of the Prairie Path offer a variety of taste and color to birds and mammals. The fruit of the wild grape is bitter to our taste but eagerly devoured by robins, cedar waxwings, blue jays, and sparrows. The grapes are small and range in color from turquoise to deepest purple.

Honeysuckle berries are clear rosy-orange and are usually eaten by the birds well before Labor Day.

Choke cherries are bright to dark red in color and tart to taste, though they make a delicious jelly. Many choke cherries line the PATH, all planted by birds.

Wood vine or Virginia creeper has dark purple berries on crimson stalks with leaves that turn a beautiful wine-red in autumn. Though not good for people to eat, the wood vine with its color is very decorative.

Buckthorn has blue-black berries in profusion which are eaten by the birds when winter is hard. Many berries persist all winter, so the taste must be terrible.

Bittersweet nightshade is a low growing vine with purple flowers and first green, then orange, then bright scarlet berries. Though a relative of the tomato, the berries are to be avoided as they could make a small child very ill. Fortunately they are so bitter that seldom are enough eaten to cause trouble. Birds, rabbits, and wood chucks find them delicious.

buckthorn

choke
cherry

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1980



woodbine

MEMBERS' DUES AT WORK

In spite of the chronic shortage of funds, the Prairie Path Board has achieved two major improvements this summer. First was the installation of railroad tie steps on the steep embankment east of the E.J. and E. tracks in Wayne during the work weekend in June. Twenty members and friends of the Path donated their labor to make the Path safer for our users. Materials cost approximately \$320. A similar project is planned for the west side of the tracks this fall. See FALL ACTIVITIES.

The second improvement was the surfacing of a Path section 1000 feet long, at the North Avenue underpass. This project, which cost approximately \$4000, contributed as dues by our members, was undertaken by the Board to demonstrate what we regard as a more satisfactory solution to our perennial drainage problems: restoration of a rock base to replace the original railroad ballast, which was sold when the Chicago, Aurora and Elgin ceased operations. More than 500 tons of stone were spread on this stretch in one day, consisting of 3-inch rock for the base, an intermediate layer of Grade 8 (#14) stone and a top dressing of limestone screenings. Experience has shown that the unbuffered limestone screening surface is extremely vulnerable in contact with water, either standing or running, which causes it to dissolve or wash out. Therefore, when raised above the water, the limestone screening material should last years longer. As funds become available, the Board plans similar projects at Prince Crossing, County Farm Road, Pleasant Hill Road, Jewell Road, and in Oak Meadows.

UGLY DUCKLING BECOMES A SWAN

The quarter-mile section of Path in the unincorporated area between Hill Avenue (Glen Ellyn) and the East Branch of the DuPage River is known as the Mooring Family Section because Paul and Jean have done their best to maintain it for the last ten years. However it remained a disaster area, plagued with severe flooding among other problems--until last year. In November the DuPage County Forest Preserve District provided labor and equipment to resurface the entire section with limestone screenings furnished by the County Highway Department. This spring the Glen Oak Country Club, which adjoins the Path and had been allowed to use the Path as an access road to a dredging operation, returned the favor by installing a twenty-foot culvert (provided by the County Highway Department) to improve the storm water drainage. Glen Oak Superintendent Fred Opperman and his crew also installed a steel drop post (provided by the Prairie Path) at Hill Avenue to keep out unauthorized motor vehicles. To complete the picture of cooperation among government agencies and private organizations and individuals, a mysterious unknown benefactor recently donated a trash barrel for that section! We thank all who have helped with this remarkable transformation.

FALL ACTIVITIES, Rain or Shine

- Sunday, Sept. 28 - Explore Batavia Spur. A 4- or 8-mile hike to Fox River in Batavia. Meet at 10:00 A.M. at Bilster Road and the Path. Wear sturdy shoes and bring lunch and drink. Leaders: Paul and Jean Mooring, 469-4289, and Eldon Frydendall, 879-1405. Shuttle available at river for those who do not wish to walk both ways.
- Saturdays, Oct. 11, 18 - Work Days. Finish improvement of crossing over the E.J. and E. railroad tracks near Wayne, west embankment. Steps are to be constructed of railroad ties. Meet at 9:00 A.M. at the intersection of the Prairie Path and Army Trail Road; walk south to tracks. Bring work gloves, shovel, lunch and beverage. Leaders: Dick Wilson, 299-7882, and Paul Mooring, 469-4289.

- Sunday, Oct. 26 - Annual Fall Hike. A 5-mile round trip to Elgin. Meet at 10:00 A.M. at the model railroad museum on Kenyon Road, 1 mile west of Rte. 25. Wear sturdy shoes and bring lunch and drink. Leaders: Paul Mooring, Dick Wilson, and Gunnar Anderson, 741-0106.
- Sunday, Nov. 2 - Annual Meeting. 2:00 P.M., Thornhill Building, Morton Arboretum. Members and friends meet to elect new Board and review an eventful year. Homemade cider, cake and cookies!

THE SOUNDING BOARD

At the request of Lil Lasch, Chairman of the Board, who serves as head of the Membership Committee, the Board sends a heartfelt thankyou to the numerous members who have increased their memberships or added contributions to their checks. This loyalty makes the Path the success it is today.

Donna Albue, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, invites members and friends who have a deep interest in the Path and would like to serve on the Board to let her know. Please send to the Nominating Committee, Illinois Prairie Path, 616 Delles Road, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, your name, address, phone number, and field of interest regarding the Path. The Board meets the first Tuesday of each month in Wheaton. Each member is expected to serve on at least one committee and some serve as officers.

Dick Wilson and Larry Nilles, co-chairing the current Usage Survey, remind leaders of Scouts and other civic groups that this is an excellent service project, valuable for us and fun for them. Accurate usage information helps the Path obtain Foundation grants for improvements. Fall is a fine time for this project. Call Dick, 299-7882, or Larry, 653-0067.

CORRECTION

Reader Phyliss Buegel of Brookfield points out that the plant identified as wild garlic in the Spring NEWSLETTER is more properly known as garlic mustard. The true wild garlic is a member of the lily family with a typical onion-like bulb and grasslike leaves and is native to the Midwest, while garlic mustard is an alien weed. A close relative of wild garlic, the lovely nodding wild onion, is likely to be seen along the Prairie Path, especially in rural West Chicago. Some say that the name Chicago is from the Indian word checagou, meaning wild onion.

NEW BOARD MEMBER

James Migley of Wayne has replaced Will Collins of Winfield on the Board of Directors. Will's schedule as an airline pilot conflicts with Board meetings. He will, however, continue to work for the Path as a member of the Projects and Maintenance Committee.

PRAIRIE RESTORATION PROJECT

An attempt is being made to identify and preserve areas along the Prairie Path that contain native prairie plants. After an area has been identified, an ongoing effort will be made to keep it clear of woody growth. Agencies which control, border or use these prairie areas will be asked to cooperate in their preservation. If you wish to assist in this effort, call Larry Sheaffer, 665-4408. There is a particular need for people with chain saws.



P.O. Box 1086
616 Delles Road
Wheaton, Illinois
60187

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Wayne, Ill. -60184
Permit No. 7

LOP

DATED MATERIAL
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED