

## MISCELLANEOUS

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A TEN-YEAR CUMULATIVE INDEX? Thus far only three readers have responded to the request for opinions on this subject. All three were strongly in favor, but three out of almost 2000 members does not constitute a representative group. Unless there is a definite desire for the index, the labor necessary to compile it will not be justified.

If you think the project worth while, be sure to write the editor about it in the near future, because plans for the index if there is to be one, must be laid soon. To be of greatest value the index should appear immediately after the close of the tenth volume, which ends with the *December 1948* issue.

## An Introduction to the Identification of Plants

VERNA M. WEEMAN

Senior High School, Albany, Oregon

### Objectives:

1. To learn to identify some of the plants in the immediate surroundings.
2. To learn about landscape design by observing the school yard.
3. To learn the uses of certain trees and shrubs.
4. To practice landscape design on a small scale.

*Time:* Approximately one week.

### Concepts:

1. Everyone needs to learn to identify certain plants and certain animals. Ask the students to try and think of a person who does not need this knowledge. Even the city dweller must be able to recognize dogs, cats, mice, and certain vegetables and fruits with which he comes in contact, just as the other extreme, a savage or hermit who lives closer to nature does.

2. In order for plants and animals to be identified they must be organized into groups with similar characteristics. Ask the students to name some of the animal groups—fish, snakes, protozoa, insects. Ask them to name plant groups—trees, shrubs, vines, bacteria.
3. Each plant and animal has one scientific or Latin name and may have several English or common names.
4. Latin is used for scientific naming because:
  - (a) It is a finished language and therefore the words do not change in meaning. Ask the students to think of examples of words whose meanings are changing with use today.
  - (b) It is a universal language used for all scientific naming all over the world and therefore scientists need to learn only one other language (Latin) besides their own.



A group of students identifying English Laurel.

*Activities:*

Divide the class into groups of four people (one unit). Each unit should choose a recorder to write down the unit's findings. Allow the units to go outside and find out how well they really know the surrounding plants. Ask them to make a list of the names of all the plants they know growing within the four side walks surrounding the school building. The unit who lists the largest number of correct names (either common or scientific) will be the winner. Give two points instead of one for the scientific names. The units should return to the room shortly before the end of the class time and leave their lists to be checked by the instructor.

After you have announced the winning unit, explain that it is not too surprising that the students did not write down more plants. Most young people aren't as aware of their surroundings as older people. However they will learn more about these plants as they continue their class work. It is not expected that they will become landscape architects but most of them do have yards around their homes and someday may plan a yard of their own. It can

be very interesting and also save money if they know how to do it correctly. It takes careful observation to discover the tricks. Discuss with the students places in the community where studies may be made. Plan to study the school landscaping.

With the aid of the students draw a diagram of the school block on the blackboard. Students should make a similar "rough draft" of their own. When it is understood how the building and grounds are arranged the students are ready to learn about the plants. Large classes may have some difficulty but ours (32 members) worked out successfully although it was felt that a little talk at the beginning of the trip was necessary to have everyone get in and work.

Take the class outside again and tell them the names of the plants along with as many associations as you can give for each. Students should write down the names on a list, giving each new name a number and drawing circles on the rough sketch with the number of the plant in the center of the circle. This will avoid repetition of name writing and give the student more time to get acquainted with the plants.



Upper: Boys trying to determine which species of cedar they have.

Lower: Students beginning on their final drawings.

Our school landscaping worked out well because it is symmetrical and many of the plantings are the same. It gave a good opportunity for review as we went along. We had thirty different kinds of plants.

It may take two lessons to get around the school yard. When these trips are completed it is time to make the formal drawing. Write the directions on the blackboard giving measurements, scale, numbers and correct spellings for plant names etc. Students should have their drawings checked before inking them. Use india ink and print the key and labels. Stress neatness. When this is turned in the project is complete.

#### *Extra Credit Projects:*

1. Plot your own or a neighbor's yard. Devise and describe two landscaping improvements. Make a key for the plants. Label clearly.
2. Plan and plot landscaping for an ideal yard you might like to have.

Provide key. Include necessary features such as garbage can and clotheslines.

3. Plan a continuous blooming flower garden. Plot and make a key.
4. Make a chart showing the different trees, shrubs, flowers etc. and their possible uses. Include sketches or pictures of important features such as blooming period, special care, height, etc.

Encourage students to use magazines, seed catalogs, and such local sources as are available, florists, nurserymen, etc.

#### *Evaluation:*

Final chart

Extra credit projects

Test over the Plants (samples may be brought into the room and numbered for students to identify or colored slides may be shown for identification).

MR. M. C. LICHTENWALTER of Lane Technical High School, Chicago, former president of THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BIOLOGY TEACHERS and now a member of the advisory staff of *The American Biology Teacher*, has undertaken the task of assembling from time to time brief items dealing with laboratory aids and the like. This column (we hope it may become "page" or "pages") is an extension of the former *By Thy Way*, which will now be broadened in scope. The tentative title for the feature is *Biology Laboratories*. It will be started in the October issue and appear as often and as extensive as the number of available items dictates. Like its predecessor, this column must come from the readers to be successful. Any brief items are welcome. If you have a snapshot or drawing to illustrate the point, so much the better. Send the items to M. C. Lichtenwalter, 5061 N. St. Louis Ave., Chicago 25, Illinois.