



Welcome New NYFA Members

New York Flora Association
of the New York State Museum Institute

Richard S. Mitchell, Corresponding Secretary

Welcome New Members of the New York Flora Association.

About NYFA --

by Richard Mitchell

This type of coalition of field biologists is certainly not a new idea. Let me quote from a 1913 letter, written by the famous botanist and horticulturist, Liberty Hyde Bailey, to the New York State Botanist's office at that time: *"I have long had it in mind that there ought to be an organized and progressive movement in New York State to stimulate the making of local floras and local faunas, to the end that eventually we should have a complete survey of the plant and animal life of the State."* In answer to Bailey, Homer House (then Assistant State Botanist) wrote: *"Your letter suggests a state wide organization for the furtherance of the study of local floras and faunas. The letter interests me greatly. I think New York is far behind some of her neighboring states in that respect, and yet probably no other one state possesses so many people interested in just that work, either professionally or as amateurs."* Sound familiar?

In 1988, I called for a meeting of friends of the State Flora Committee that many of you attended. I asked for advice about the direction that the state flora project should take, and it was almost unanimously recommended that our monographic-style flora series be continued in its current format, rather than reduced to a less ambitious project. Together we decided to form a support organization for mutual benefit and information exchange. It took a while to get it organized, but in 1990, the group was officially begun, and we were pleased that it drew over 300 members from across the state. This development gave us great encouragement, so that now we hope to help involve most people who are interested in New York's wild plants in some common projects that will lead both to enjoyment and a better understanding of green plants.

Some Things You Should Know

About the Organization:

For the first year and a half of NYFA's operation, Robert Zaremba and I (Dick Mitchell) appointed ourselves co-directors, representing the state and private sectors, and jointly guided the organization through its early development. In March, 1991, a council of 12 persons nominated by the membership

was voted in as the governing body of the association. The council then invited into its ranks the two former co-directors. The current NYFA Council of 14 members meets at least once a year to make decisions on future expenditures, involving reprinting of the atlas and the support of field and herbarium projects by our members through small grants. We may also choose to subsidize certain publications written by members. Decisions on the use of NYFA funds for such projects will be made by the Council, but polls of the membership will be taken whenever matters of serious financial, political and/or ecological importance arise.

-- We produce a newsletter, at least twice, but usually three times year, featuring botanical articles written by NYFA members and space for comments and suggestions the members. The results of membership polls are also published in the newsletter, along with news, editorials, field trip announcements and other pertinent information.

-- NYFA money is handled through an account with **The New York State Museum Institute**, a private, non-profit organization that works closely with the New York State Museum on many projects involving the public. We have in place a mechanism to account for all expenditures from funds raised through dues, donations and grants over any given period of time. The money has been used initially for production of the atlas and newsletter.

-- Bob Zaremba organizes most field trips and arrangements. His number, if you have questions about field trips: (518) 463-6133.

-- Newsletter information, submission of articles, letters and questions about the organization: contact Richard Mitchell: (518) 486-2027.

Our Address: New York Flora Association, c/o New York State Biological Survey, New York State Museum, 3132 CEC, Albany, NY 12230.