Restoration of Walnut Woods on Shady Lane

The Arboretum is blessed with this small (15 acre) remnant of the original woods that once covered the central Bluegrass. Observations, trials and experiments here have now spanned over three decades. But those of us involved in this work have not yet combined data into a general document of educational interest. In 2014, there will finally be some synthesis. Perhaps partnerships of interested people from the University and elsewhere will regroup around fundamental goals for conservation and associated science at this precious site.

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For more information, see also files posted at **bluegrasswoodland.com** and the following selected references.

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Botanical Potential of the University of Kentucky's Arboretum

The Arboretum, now over 20 years old, is popular within the community as an aesthetic and recreational amenity. Yet it has not still connected with a solid body of botanical work in Kentucky. This problem is largely due to the lack of coordinated effort by botanical people in general, and we lack clear goals for common interests at the Arboretum.

If it is to become a fully-fledged botanical resource, the Arboretum should enhance one of its central functions—to provide a focus for 'plants-people' of all types within Kentucky. Much would be gained, with relatively little effort, if people interested in the three major branches of botanical endeavor collaborated more across the state. (1) Academic botanists, especially herbarium workers. (2) Conservationists with an interest in flora or vegetation. (3) Horticulturalists with an interest in propagation of worthy native species.

From regular meetings at the Arboretum, or at carefully selected satellites around the state, we could then begin to agree on some central goals. (A) How to set up working groups in the several ecological regions of Kentucky, and appropriate parts of adjacent states. (B) How to improve understanding of our varied natural habitats, especially in relation to management of vegetation and recovery of selected native plants. (C) How to conserve our imperiled native floristic diversity, with special attention to the species that most deserve propagation and seed-production for long-term security.

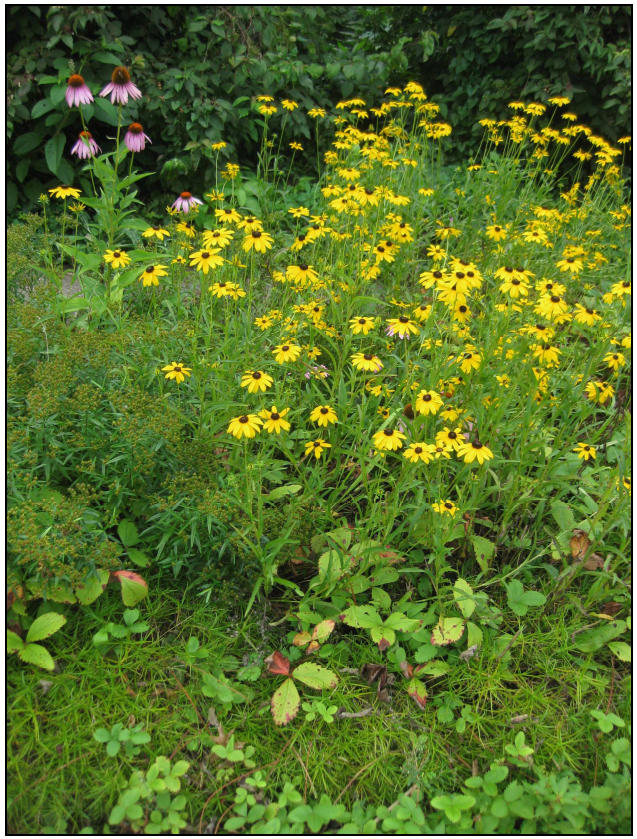
Inside: examples of neglected plants.

Monarda

Although well-known in horticulture, this genus still has undescribed species in eastern states, with two or three in Kentucky. These could be featured in the Arboretum, with potential interest for showy displays, research and education. **Above**: "*serotina*" (a provisional name) occurs along stream terraces in the Ohio Valley. It grows wild close to Lexington in southern Jessamine County, and does well in my yard. Appears to be *clinopodia–fistulosa* intermediate. **Below**: "*sororia*" (or close) occurs in south-central counties (with Mammoth Cave). Like Appalachian *clinopodia* but earlier, pure white.

Rudbeckia

Another famous genus in horticulture, this also contains much undescribed or misunderstood variation. I have recently worked on the *fulgida* complex, which contains at least 12 species that have been generally confused. Some of these are now uncommon to rare in the wild. They include *truncata* (see below along my driveway), which grows on dry calcareous sites from nw. Georgia to se. Kentucky. The popular "Goldsturm" cultivar is derived from *sullivantii*, which occurs in mid-western wetlands and is probably not native to Kentucky. The more sturdy *deamii* has also become popular in cultivation—including this Arboretum. But it is native to Indiana! Now with over 20 accessions, I have been working on this problem with people at universities in Ohio and Tennessee. Is anyone interested at U.K.?



Viburnum

http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/trees/photos/south_arrow1.jpg

The *dentatum* complex has been difficult to understand, and is not well represented at the Arboretum. Recent advances have been made by Dwayne Estes (Austin Peay, TN) and Bruce Sorrie (NC Natural Heritage). Most wild plants in Kentucky are probably *deamii* in the west (above) or *alabamense* in the east (below). Also, *rafinesquianum* occurs along the Kentucky River Palisades, and *molle* is rare in ravines there. Most plants in horticulture are *recognitum*—with more northern or eastern origin.