



# Long Island Botanical Society

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The Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2018

## Noteworthy plants reported from Long Island, New York 2016 and 2017

by Eric Lamont<sup>1</sup> and Stephen Young<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>President, Long Island Botanical Society, <sup>2</sup>Chief Botanist, NY Natural Heritage Program

Noteworthy plants include native and non-native vascular species. Examples include but are not limited to new records for Long Island, current status of globally or locally rare species, range extensions, extirpations, population fluctuations, and other interesting observations. Nomenclature follows Werier (2017).

*Amaranthus spinosus*, spiny amaranth (not native)  
Amaranthaceae, the Amaranth Family



Figure 1. *Amaranthus spinosus* (spiny amaranth) at Montauk. [All photos by S. Young, except where noted.]

In October 2016, Andrew Greller found several individuals of *A. spinosus* growing around horse dung heaps behind the stables at Caumsett State Historic Park, Lloyd Neck, Suffolk County. Victoria Bustamante also recently reported this species from Montauk, Suffolk County (Fig. 1). These reports are new county records (Weldy et al. 2018). Spiny amaranth was collected several times on Long Island during the 1870s from Kings County

and was not reported again from the Island until 2011 (LIBS Flora Committee 2012) when it was collected in Kings Co. (Midwood High School athletic field on Avenue L, Bennett 11362, BKL) and Nassau Co. (North Hempstead, along Northern State Pkwy, exit 27, Glenn 13524, BKL). While some species of *Amaranthus* can prove difficult to identify, the paired nodal spines (metamorphosed bracteoles) of *A. spinosus* make it one of the easiest to distinguish.

*Asclepias viridiflora*, green milkweed (native, S2)  
Apocynaceae, the Dogbane Family



Figure 2. *Asclepias viridiflora* (green milkweed) at Greentree Foundation grasslands.

A large population of *A. viridiflora* was reported in June 2016 by James Stevenson from the Greentree Foundation grasslands in Nassau County (Fig. 2). A survey was conducted by Steve Young on 5 July 2016 and again on 20 July 2017 when plants were flagged and counted. A total of 151 individuals were counted making it the largest population in the state. The next largest New York population is on Staten Island with

50 plants. There are six additional known populations on Long Island but they are all small. The population of 23 plants surveyed in 1997 at Old Westbury Gardens, Nassau County, was resurveyed in 2016 and no green milkweed was observed; the grassland where they were located had succeeded to dense grasses, herbs, and invasive species.

*Carex barrattii*, Barratt's sedge (native, S1)  
Cyperaceae, the Sedge Family

Hundreds of flowering culms of *C. barrattii* (Fig. 3) were found in 1986 by Bob Zaremba in Massapequa Lake Barrens along a stream in wet pine barrens that had been burned over. In

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## Long Island Botanical Society

Founded: 1986 • Incorporated: 1989

The Long Island Botanical Society is dedicated to the promotion of field botany and a greater understanding of the plants that grow wild on Long Island, New York.

Visit the Society's Web site  
[www.libotanical.org](http://www.libotanical.org)

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## Society News

**Blizzard shuts down LIBS meeting.** For the second year in a row the March meeting was cancelled because of a snowstorm. Nineteen inches of snow fell on portions of Long Island on March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Lois Lindberg's talk on "Shu Swamp Preserve and the Beaver Brook Watershed" has been rescheduled to 9 October 2018.

**New publication by Andrew M. Greller.** LIBS' vice-president recently published a book chapter entitled: "Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) in the Plant Communities of Long Island, New York, and Adjacent Locations, and Some Comparisons Across Eastern North America" [Chapter 10 in *Geographical Changes in Vegetation and Plant Functional Types, Geobotany Studies*, published by Springer International Publishing AG, part of Springer Nature 2018. A. M. Greller et al. (eds.)]

**Brentwood Library exhibit highlights LIBS.** In April, the Brentwood Public Library hosted a display about LIBS and botany on Long Island, curated by Donald House, LIBS webmaster. The centerpiece of the display was a set of herbarium sheets of ferns that Carol Johnston prepared while at Planting Fields Arboretum. There was a display case devoted to publications by LIBS and LIBS members and another two highlighting a selection of books useful for exploring botany on Long Island.



**Plum Island update.** LIBS is a charter member of the Preserve Plum Island Coalition. John Turner, co-chair of the LIBS Conservation Committee, recently reported: "Over the past several years, members of the Steering Committee of the Preserve Plum Island Coalition have been meeting with multiple New York state agencies in order to gain support and set the stage for making an ask of Governor Cuomo to use his powers to protect Plum Island. This has been our backup strategy should Congress fail to pass meaningful legislation to prevent the sale of the entirety of Plum Island. Unfortunately, the two Plum Island protection bills in Congress today are stagnating in the Senate due to resistance by certain mid-western senators. We believe it is now time to engage Governor Cuomo's help." Towards this end, on 2 May 2018, a letter was sent to the governor with LIBS as a co-signer.

(Noteworthy Plants, continued from cover)



Figure 3. *Carex barrattii* (Barratt's sedge).

his sketch of the site Zaremba showed some *Phragmites* to the west of the *Carex* population. In the summer of 2016 Steve Young searched for the sedge but found only a large monoculture of *Phragmites* growing in the area outlined by Bob. A complete bushwhacking survey was not conducted in 2016 and the sedge may be hiding in the interior of the *Phragmites* stand. In the future if a fire burns the site or if the *Phragmites* is controlled

some other way, Barratt's sedge may return. This population was the only known extant occurrence of this species in Nassau County. There are two historical occurrences in the county at Lynbrook and Woodmere, but they are considered extirpated because the habitat has been developed. There are only two other extant localities for this sedge in the state, both from the vicinity of Connetquot River State Park Preserve; both populations appeared healthy and vigorous in 2016.

*Carex mesochorea*, midland sedge (native, S2)  
Cyperaceae, the Sedge Family



Figure 4. *Carex mesochorea* (midland sedge).

While surveying the Hempstead Plains at Mitchel Field in May 1985, Bob Zaremba collected a *Carex* which was later identified as the state-threatened *C. mesochorea* (Fig. 4) but the specific locality was not noted at the time. In May 2017, the species was relocated by Steve Young during a Natural Heritage Program survey of the Plains and confirmed again in the field the following July and again at a new locality in early September when the plants and fruits were more mature.

*Chondrilla juncea*, skeleton-weed (not native)  
Asteraceae, the Aster Family



Figure 5. *Chondrilla juncea* (skeleton-weed), Jones Beach.

On 23 August 2017, Andrew Greller located a population of approximately 100 individuals of *C. juncea* (Fig. 5) at Jones Beach, Nassau County, and only after his find did Rich Kelly report he had observed the

species there in 2008. The Kelly and Greller reports represent the first record of *C. juncea* for Nassau County; it is also known from Kings and Suffolk counties. The Jones Beach population occurs in fine, windblown beach sand along the border of West End 2 parking lot (immediately south of the bathroom facilities and extending eastward for about 50 yards); scattered individuals also were found in some sandy cracks of the concrete parking lot and in a natural sandy swale adjacent to the parking lot. Along the coastal plain of eastern United States *C. juncea* (native of Eurasia) is well established in northern Virginia with widely scattered occurrences in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York; south of Virginia, it is known only from one county in Georgia (USDA Plants Database 2018).

*Cuscuta obtusiflora* subsp. *glandulosa*, southern dodder (native, S1)  
Convolvulaceae, the Morning-glory Family



Figure 6. *Cuscuta obtusiflora* subsp. *glandulosa* (southern dodder).

Steve Young and Eric Lamont were surveying the shoreline of one of the Calverton coastal plain ponds in Suffolk County on 21 September 2016 and found a colony of southern dodder (Fig. 6) growing on pond shore vegetation. This occurrence is only the third time this state-endangered plant has been recorded for Long Island. Its flowers are almost identical to *Cuscuta gronovii* var. *latiflora*, another New York species mainly

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restricted to Long Island, but can be distinguished from it by the shape of the fruits which are wider than high with a depressed beak.

***Fraxinus nigra***, black ash (native)

Oleaceae, the Ash Family

Black ash, a rare tree on Long Island, was located in a swamp forest at Shu Swamp Preserve, Mill Neck, Nassau County, by Daniel Atha on 3 June 2017. The tree was about 5 m (16.4 ft) tall with a diameter (dbh) of about 10 cm (4 in). Voucher specimens were collected and deposited at The New York Botanical Garden (NY). George Peters (1973) in "The Trees of Long Island" described *F. nigra* as "a rare tree of wet ground with only a few herbarium specimens (NY) from West Hempstead and Mill Neck, and observations (NYSM) from Glen Cove and Jamaica."

***Herniaria hirsuta* subsp. *cinerea***, hairy rupturewort

(not native)

Caryophyllaceae, the Pink Family



Figure 7. ***Herniaria hirsuta* subsp. *cinerea*** (hairy rupturewort).

While searching for rare plants on Plum Island, Suffolk County, on 13 August 2015, Steve Young and Eric Lamont found a low, mat-forming plant they were not familiar with (Fig. 7). More than 60 individuals were located on low dunes, swales, and sandy/gravelly disturbed sites on the western end of the island. They puzzled over the identity for a few days, thinking it might be a species in the Chenopodiaceae, but

finally identified it as *Herniaria hirsuta* subsp. *cinerea* (Young 2896 NYS). No wonder they didn't recognize it, the last time the species was collected in New York was in 1898 at the Yonkers Wool Mill, Westchester County by E. P. Bicknell (he first collected it on 8 July 1894 at the same locality; vouchers at NY). On 8 October 2015, Young found an additional individual in gravel at the edge of the Plum Island ferry parking lot in Orient so it is also growing on Long Island (Young 2898 NYS). It is common in gravel areas around the ferry slip on Plum Island and seeds many have been transferred between the islands. A search for it along the beach to the tip of Orient

Point did not turn up any new plants. This species is native to southern Europe, North Africa, and southwestern Asia. In North America it is fairly common in California and Arizona but has only been collected a few times east of the Mississippi River, including the Boston and Philadelphia areas.

Almost exactly a year later, on 10 August 2016, Lamont found hairy rupturewort growing in sidewalk cracks in New Haven, Connecticut; apparently, a new state record (Haines 2011, USDA Plants Database 2018). Additional visits to New Haven in 2017 and 2018 revealed 100+ individuals growing in disturbed sites along State Street and Bishop Street. Voucher specimens were collected and are in Lamont's personal herbarium. The original group of individuals found in New Haven was eradicated by herbicides in 2017 but the species appears to be well established in the area.

***Hydrocotyle sibthorpioides***, lawn marsh pennywort

(not native)

Araliaceae, the Ginseng Family

The earliest collection of *H. sibthorpioides* from Long Island is from 1934 (Suffolk Co., Cold Spring Harbor, in lawn, 20 Sep 1934, *K.E. Maxwell 18598*, BH). In 2013 it was reported from Queens County by Nick Wagerik (Atha 2017) and in 2014 was collected in Kings County (14 Oct 2014, *Atha 14936*, NY). In 2017 Eric Lamont collected *H. sibthorpioides* from a lawn in Old Bethpage, Nassau County, representing a new county record (*Lamont s.n.*, pers. herb.) This species is native to eastern Asia and according to Atha (2017) shows potential to be an "aggressive invader in southeastern New York particularly in wetlands." Thus far, all known populations on Long Island are restricted to lawns.

***Limonium* sp.**, sea lavender (not native)

Plumbaginaceae, the Leadwort Family



Figure 8. ***Limonium* sp.** (sea lavender). [Photo by V. Bustamante]

Hundreds of flowering individuals of a yet-to-be determined species of *Limonium* (Figs. 8, 9) were found in the spring of 2017 by Lisa D'Andrea growing in the upper salt marsh of Three Mile Harbor, Suffolk County. The population came from plantings on an adjacent property; among the plantings were landscaping tags labeled

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Figure 9. *Limonium* sp. (sea lavender) rosettes. [Photo by V. Bustamante]

*Limonium latifolium*. Daniel Atha at NYBG studied a collection by Victoria Bustamante and noted: “The *Limonium* specimen (Bustamante 1073) may be *Limonium binervosum*. The habit, leaves and inflorescences look reasonable, but there are so many species, it’s hard to be sure.” Efforts to eradicate the population began in 2017. This species needs to be identified and monitored at Three Mile Harbor.

*Mercurialis perennis*, dog’s mercury (not native)  
Euphorbiaceae, the Spurge Family

A small colony of this hairy, herbaceous perennial was observed by Lois Lindberg in the spring of 2016 along the border of a lawn and woodland at Coffin Woods Preserve (a unit of the North Shore Wildlife Sanctuary), Locust Valley, Nassau County. In 2017, the size of the colony increased to more than 50 individuals. The inconspicuous flowers appeared to be female only. A specimen was collected by Lindberg and photographs were sent to several botanists including Gerry Moore who identified it as *M. perennis*. David Werier (pers. comm., 13 Sept 2017) noted: “I am including this species in the upcoming list of plants for New York (see attached image of the specimen that I am basing my inclusion in the flora on). I consider this species not naturalized in New York and simply persisting or spreading slightly from where it was first introduced. ... Perhaps this species is starting to naturalize?” The voucher cited by Werier includes the following label data: [Nassau Co.], Westbury, “Westbury Gardens” ... abundantly established, apparently undisturbed for many years in lighted woodland, now made into a “woodland garden,” 1963, B. Blackburn s.n., BH.

*Pellaea atropurpurea*, purple cliffbrake (native)  
Pteridaceae, the Cliff Brake Family



Figure 10. *Pellaea atropurpurea* (purple cliffbrake). [Photo by A. Greller]

On a field trip (15 October 2016) to Fort Totten, Queens County, John Turner and Andrew Greller found a cliffbrake fern (Fig. 10) growing in the mortar of the old fort. Photographs were taken and sent to Michael Sundue who noted: “The dark green plant in the photo is *Pellaea atropurpurea*. Most of it is juvenile and sterile so the pinnae are more broad and rounded than they are on mature plants. Around New York City, *P. atropurpurea* can form large populations on masonry when it gets established. If you walk the eastern perimeter of Central Park for example, it is established along large stretches of the wall.” The Turner and Greller report is the first record of *P. atropurpurea* from Long Island (Weldy et al. 2018). *Woodsia obtusa* and *Asplenium platyneuron* also grow on the walls of the old fort (Greller and Locke 1983).

*Persicaria longiseta* f. *albiflora*, low smartweed (not native)  
Polygonaceae, the Buckwheat Family

A white flowered smartweed was collected by Rich Kelly from Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, Nassau County, on 17 October 2016. The specimen was identified by Daniel Atha as a white color form of *P. longiseta*, native to Japan and rare in North America.

*Quercus phellos*, willow oak (native, S1)  
Fagaceae, the Beech Family

While hiking on the Long Island Greenbelt Trail in Smithtown, Suffolk County, John Turner found a large individual of willow oak with a diameter (dbh) of 3 ft 2 in which he reported “has to be several hundred years old.” Turner first observed and photographed the tree on 23 August 2017 along the north side of the Greenbelt Trail (on land owned by New York State) a little north of Jericho Turnpike just before Summerset Drive. Willow oak is a southern species whose northern range barely extends into southeastern New York. House (1924) reported *Q. phellos* as “Infrequent on Staten Island and rare on Long Island south of the moraine.” Torrey (1843) reported *Q. phellos* from

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New York and only listed it from Suffolk County; Miller and Young (1874), Jelliffe (1899), and Taylor (1915) also reported it from Suffolk County without a specific locality. The label data on a herbarium collection at the New York State Museum in Albany (NYS) reveals that in 1914 Roy Latham documented willow oak from Suffolk County “from a specimen brought to me from Smithtown.” It is possible that Turner found the same tree documented by Latham 100 years ago.

***Saururus cernuus***, lizard’s tail (native)  
Saururaceae, the Lizard’s Tail Family

On a field trip (7 September 2017) to Hempstead Lake State Park, Nassau County, Andrew Greller and Rich Kelly located a population of lizard’s tail consisting of approximately 100 individuals in shallow water along the southwestern edge of Hempstead Lake. This species is very rare on Long Island and has only been reported three times before (LIBS Flora Committee 2012). The last known report of lizard’s tail from Nassau County is from 1880, based on a collection from Shu Swamp Preserve, Mill Neck (*Coles s.n.* BKL).

***Utricularia striata***, striped bladderwort (native, S2)  
Lentibulariaceae, the Bladderwort Family



Figure 11. ***Utricularia striata*** (striped bladderwort)  
Sandpit Ponds, Calverton.

During a survey of one of the coastal plain ponds in Calverton, Suffolk County, a new population of *U. striata* (Fig. 11) was found by Steve Young and Matthew Kaelin on 7 July 2016. It is the ninth known population of this species in New York, all of them from coastal plain ponds in Suffolk County.

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## FIELD TRIPS

July – October 2018

### July 14, 2018 (Saturday) 10 AM

*Shore Road Sanctuary and Wawapek,*

*Cold Spring Harbor, Suffolk Co.*

*An introduction to two land trust acquisitions*

Trip Leaders: Jane Jackson and Amanda Furcall,  
North Shore Land Alliance

Shore Road Sanctuary, formerly owned by ExxonMobil, was a fuel oils terminal for decades prior to its remediation and transfer to the Land Alliance. Undergoing a habitat restoration plan, it is now a thriving grassland with pockets of maritime shrubland and wet meadow communities in progress, alongside a shoreline punctuated with tidal marsh species. Wawapek, a former estate once slated for conversion to 13 house lots, contains remnants of a formal garden alongside dense hardwood forest that slopes dramatically down to the Harbor. We will stroll along (and off!) trails through both preserves as we explore the past, present and future of these special parcels.

We will begin at 95 Shore Road, then drive from there up Snake Hill Road to Wawapek. Dress for the weather; waterproof footwear may be useful. Camera and binoculars recommended. Bring a liquid and snack or sandwich, as desired.

**Directions:** From the LIE to 95 Shore Road, Cold Spring Harbor: Take the LIE to Exit 44 to Route 135 North. At end of 135 North turn right onto Route 25/Jericho Turnpike going east toward Woodbury. Travel approximately 0.6 mile, then turn left/north onto Southwoods Road. At the end of Southwoods Road bear right onto Cold Spring (or Cold Spring Harbor or Cold Spring Harbor–Syosset!) Road. At the end of Cold Spring Road (there are a light and a stop sign here) turn right onto Route 25A. Travel east approximately 1.7 miles along Route 25A to Shore Road in Cold Spring Harbor (at light near fire station on the right at western end of the Village). Turn left onto Shore Road. Travel approximately 0.6 of a mile north on Shore Road to the preserve. *The parking area is very small; you may park on the lawn at either side of it.*

### September 8, 2018 (Saturday) 10 AM

*Hempstead Plains Preserve, Garden City, Nassau Co.*

*Hempstead Plains Flora*

Joint trip with the New York Flora Association

Trip Leaders: Steve Young and Greg Edinger

The Hempstead Plains Preserve is the last remaining grassland that was part of a huge expanse of grassland in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Fourteen rare plants have been documented there and three of them are the largest occurrences in the state. Steve Young, chief botanist of the New York Natural Heritage Program and Greg Edinger, chief ecologist, completed a survey of the plains and the adjacent Purcell Preserve in 2017. Join them for a look at the plants and communities of both preserves and how the area has changed over the years from extensive grasslands to airfields to the remaining green space we see today. The trip will end around 3 pm.

There is no limit to the number of attendees but **please register by contacting Steve** with your name and contact phone number at 518-588-8360 or nyflora1@gmail.com. Steve will send out directions and information as the date approaches.

### October 20, 2018 (Saturday) 10 AM

*Hallock State Park Preserve, Riverhead Township,*  
*Suffolk Co.*

*Botany and Geology*

Trip Leaders: Eric Lamont and Gil Hanson

We will meet at the visitor's center for an introduction to the land-use history of the park and then take a leisurely hike to the dunes and bluffs overlooking Long Island Sound, looking at autumn wildflowers and interesting geological features including hoodoos, locally called "The Pinnacles." The land was acquired in the 1960s for use as a sand mining operation by the Levon Corp. and, in the 1970s, by the Long Island Lighting Co. as the site for a proposed nuclear power plant. New York State purchased the property in 2002 and opened it to the public in 2017.

Please register by contacting Eric (elamont@optonline.net) with your name and contact phone number. Bring a liquid and snack or sandwich, as desired.

**Directions:** Take the Long Island Expressway (I-495) east to exit 73, continue east on County Road 58 (aka Old Country Road) to Northville Turnpike, continue north to Sound Avenue and turn east for 3.4 miles to the park's entrance (the visitor's center is located off Sound Ave.). The address is: 6062 Sound Avenue, Jamesport.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**September 11, 2018\*                      Tuesday, 7:30 PM**

**Dave Taft: “With a Little Help from My Friends—The Parasites, Carnivores, Saprophytes and Heterotrophs Among Us.”** Plants are far more than just pretty green things. In fact, some are downright Machiavellian, opportunistic, or just plain strange. Learn about the wily means through which certain resourceful plants obtain energy in this survey of the “only-sometimes-green” world of heterotrophic local plants. Dave Taft is currently the coordinator of the Jamaica Bay Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area in Brooklyn and Queens (...the other Long Island!). Though a self-described orchid addict, he can often be observed skulking through local woodlands searching for unfortunate natural subjects to photograph, write about, or draw.

Location: Bill Paterson Nature Center  
Muttontown Preserve, East Norwich

**October 9, 2018\*                              Tuesday, 7:30 PM**

**Lois Lindberg: “Shu Swamp Preserve and the Beaver Brook Watershed.”** Shu Swamp Preserve, officially the Charles T. Church Nature Sanctuary in Mill

Neck, is a 60-acre jewel of the North Shore Wildlife Sanctuary system of preserves and is one component of the larger Beaver Brook Watershed. Acquisitions by Nassau County and the North Shore Land Alliance have added critical parcels that create a natural corridor to protect this valuable ecosystem. This program will explore the area’s beauty and biodiversity, especially highlighting the wildflowers and other flora of this special place. Lois has been involved in nature, ecology, and outdoor education and interpretation for many years. She has a degree in Biology from Hofstra University, and is a past Curator of Natural Science for Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation & Museums, having worked at Muttontown, Welwyn, Sands Point, Garvies Point, and Tackapausha Preserves. She is currently the Membership Chair for the Long Island Botanical Society, and volunteers at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in Oyster Bay as a naturalist/field trip leader.

Location: Bill Paterson Nature Center,  
Muttontown Preserve, East Norwich

\* Refreshments and informal talk begin at 7:30 p.m.  
Formal meeting starts at 8:00 p.m.  
Directions to Muttontown or Stony Brook: 516-354-6506