

2 June 2011 - These Boots Are Made For Slogging

by Bill Harms on Thursday, June 2, 2011 at 4:48pm



Spent 2 hours on the refuge today. Got to try out my boots at the Bur-reed Swamp.

First went to Bur-reed Swamp. And guess what? The American Bur-reed (*Sparganium americanum* Nutt.) was in full bloom. It was easy slogging around the mud and muck to find some

plants to photograph and collect for specimens. This species has taken over virtually the whole swamp. Usually this plant is found along shores and in smaller colonies. No doubt it likes it there.

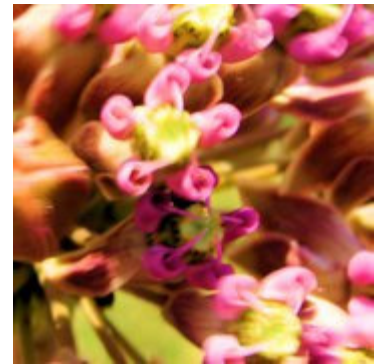


American Bur-reed
(*Sparganium americanum* Nutt.)



Clasping Milkweed
(*Asclepias amplexicaulis* Sm.)
In habit

Nearby, spotted some Clasping Milkweed (*Asclepias amplexicaulis* Sm.) growing on a drained slope. Like most other Milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) It produces a milky sap and contains a poison dangerous to humans and livestock. Special care must be taken when using this plant. The plant prefers open woods and fields with dry soils.



Clasping Milkweed
(*Asclepias amplexicaulis* Sm.)
Close-up of flowers in head



Bird's-foot Trefoil
(*Lotus corniculatus* L.)

On the road next to the swamp spotted some Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus* L.) growing in middle of the vehicle tracks where it was dry. This member of the Legume (Fabaceae) Family was introduced from grasslands in Southern Europe and Northern Africa. The flowers are very striking when in full bloom. Later it produces a long pod, called a legume.

Off to the side of the road and a little east of the swamp, spotted some American Chinquapin (*Castanea pumila* Mill.) in full

bloom. Both male and female flowers were clearly visible. This smaller relative of the American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata* (Marsh.) Borkh.) is sometimes called the Dwarf Chestnut or Allegheny Chinquapin. Chinquapin is purportedly the Powhatan name for this tree. By autumn, it will produce an edible fruit in the form of a nut. Although less susceptible to the chestnut blight fungus than its larger relative, American Chestnut, individual Chinquapin trees have succumbed to this disease.



American Chinquapin
(*Castanea pumila* Mill.)

Recently, many of the unique trees have succumbed to the disease.



Cultivated Rose
(Rosa sp.)

Next to the parking area by the old Clay Pigeon Shooting Range, spotted a cultivated variety of Rose (*Rosa* sp.) which had established itself. I assume that someone plant this rose here many years ago and it now it has persisted and spread somewhat. Most of the plants in this colony had flowers that were double-petaled and pink-colored. I think I spotted a plant or two with some white flowers on it. It might be a heritage rose of some kind and that should make pinning down its exact name easy.

Good day. Temps in the mid-80's, dry but windy. Collected five new specimens. Can't complain.