

## 6 August 2011

by Bill Harms on Saturday, August 6, 2011 at 8:38pm

Spent 7 hours on the Refuge today.



In the BGE powerline right-of-way area by the BW Parkway, spotted a large patch of **Man of the Earth** (*Ipomoea pandurata* (L.) G. Mey.) in full bloom. Luckily it was fairly cool and cloudy so the blooms were wide open. This member of the **Morning Glory Family**



(*Convolvulaceae*) is also called **Wild Potato Vine** or **Big-rooted Morning Glory**. It produces a large-sized root which is edible if properly cooked. It is said to taste like a sweet potato with a bitter



taste and usually it is boiled with several changes of water to remove the bitterness. The Man of the Earth is found throughout the Eastern USA and Ontario, and ranges as far west as Nebraska and Texas. It seems to favor roadsides and fence rows.



Back behind the Phillips Memorial, spotted some **Partridge Pea** (*Chamaecrista fasciculata* (Michx.) Greene var. *fasciculata*) blooming. This member of the **Legume Family** (*Fabaceae*), like the **Sensitive Plant**



(*Mimosa pudica* L.), folds up its leaves when touched, albeit at a slower rate. The specimen I collected from this clump was no exception. It had folded its leaves before I could get it into the plant press (see the picture here.) The Partridge Pea naturally

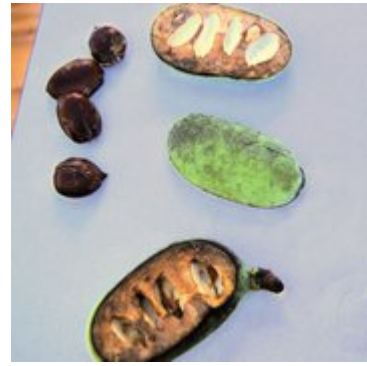


occurs in Eastern North America and prefers disturbed areas with little competition from other plants.

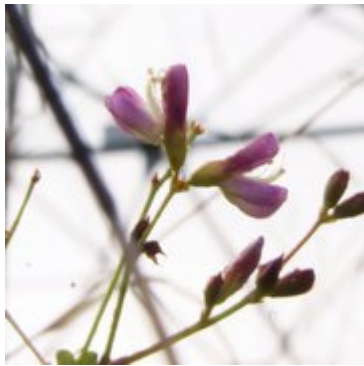
occurs in eastern North America and grows in disturbed areas that have competition from other plants. It is an ideal plant for newly disturbed areas such as burned over areas and newly logged areas. It will bloom from Early Summer to first frost if there is enough rainfall. On the North Tract, it can be found along side roads, and along the edge of woods as well as open fields.



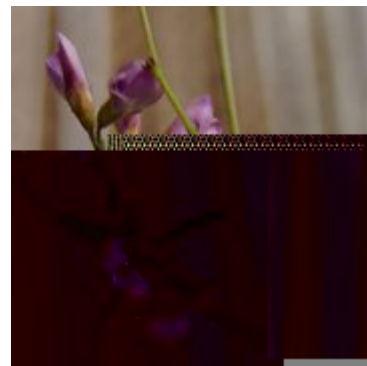
Drove around the Duvall Bridge Road Loop to see how a **Pawpaw** (*Asimina triloba* (L.) Dunal) patch there was doing. There were a lot of immature fruits on the plants. The **Pawpaw** is native to Eastern USA, west to Texas, Nebraska and Wisconsin. Except for a few isolated populations in Connecticut, it is absent from New England in the wild. In Canada, it is only found in the extreme southern part where the populations are closely monitored. It usually grows in



colonies and prefers moist but well-drained soils. The fleshy pulp of the fruit is edible and tastes like a banana. Several seeds are embedded in the fruits pulp. It is not hard to find the Pawpaw on the North Tract as there are countless colonies throughout.



Under the BGE powerline about one mile northwest of the Duvall Bridge Road, happened upon a healthy bunch of **Trailing Lespedeza** (*Lespedeza procumbens* Michx.) sprawling on the ground. This member of the **Legume Family** (*Fabaceae*) is found throughout much of the Eastern USA from Florida to New Hampshire and from Texas to Wisconsin. The easiest way to distinguish this species from the similar **Creeping Lespedeza** (*Lespedeza repens* (L.)



W. Bartram) by the form of the pubescence on the stems and petioles. (Look at the photo to the left to see the spreading



pubescence.) The **Trailing Lespedeza** has spreading pubescence while the **Creeping Lespedeza** has pubescence which lays flat to the stem. Both species are found on the North Tract, usually in open areas. The **Trailing Lespedeza** will form large mats if left alone.



Took a look at the **Slender Lespedeza** (*Lespedeza virginica* (L.) Britton) population under the BGE Powerlines along Wildlife Loop and discovered it already in bloom. It is native to Eastern North America from New Hampshire to Florida and from Texas to Ontario. This species generally grows in upright stems and produces clusters of flowers in the leaf axils. The lower flowers are cleistogamous, meaning they can produce seed without being fertilized. The upper flowers, which



are capable of being fertilized, have the typical pea-flower shape. It prefers mesic (moist, but not soggy) soil but can tolerate drier soils as well. The Slender Lespedeza has been spotted in several locations on the refuge.



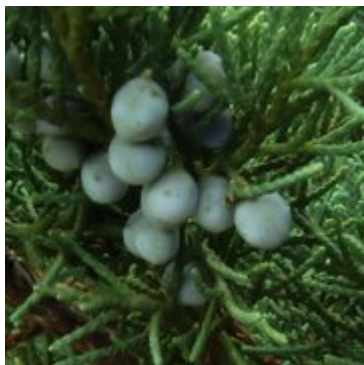
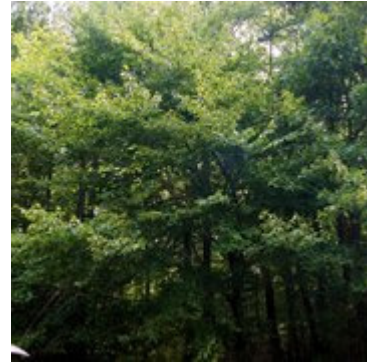
Drove on to South Road Range to check things out. There is a vernal pool in the middle of the field about 750 feet from Wildlife Loop. Discovered population of a **Flatsedge** (*Cyperus* sp.) in full display in that pool, now dried up. Not sure which species it is. Collected a specimen and took some pictures for later study.





With all the previous human activity on the North Tract, there just had to be some **European Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica* L.) trees. Found one next to Wild Turkey Way near the entrance to Blue Heron Pond field. It was a fairly good sized tree and was producing nuts. This will be a new record for the refuge. I am sure more can be found if someone spent the time looking. The European Beech is native from southern Sweden (with some isolated locations in southern Norway) to central Italy, west to

France, southern England, northern Portugal, and central Spain, and east to northwest Turkey. There are several cultivated varieties and has been planted throughout North America.



Someone planted a cultivated form of a **Juniper** (*Juniperus* sp.) at the Phillips Memorial. I have no idea which species or form it is. If I cannot somehow figure out which Juniper it is, the specimen I collected will likely be used to identify it later. I

have some contacts at the National Arboretum who said they might be able to help with identifying cultivated forms of trees. This one has a small trunk with branches that spread horizontally. The volunteers have kept this one well-trimmed over the years.



Under the BGE powerlines next to MD 32, discovered a large patch of **Giant Foxtail** (*Setaria faberi* Herm.) doing well. This species is native to East Asia and was introduced to North America as a contaminant in shipments. This impressive looking





grass is considered to be invasive and has become a serious pest to corn crops, reducing yields by up to 15 percent. On the refuge, it is usually found in disturbed areas along roads or in fields that were previously cultivated



with corn. It is also called **Japanese Bristlegrass**, **Chinese Foxtail**, **Chinese Millet**, **Giant Bristlegrass**, or **Nodding Foxtail**.