

Proposed Cooperative Botanical Exploration of Nova Scotia.
1920.

For several years, as you know, I have been working on the geographic relations of the flora of Newfoundland and the region about the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This work has brought out emphatically the tremendous influence of the now submerged continental shelf as a highway to Newfoundland, Sable Island, the Magdalen Islands etc. for plants of our southern Coastal Plain. Southeastern Newfoundland, Cape Breton and the Magdalen Islands also have in their known flora approximately forty (40) conspicuous cases of identity with the flora of southwestern Europe and the Atlantic Islands (western France, Portugal, the Canary Islands, the Azores, etc.), species not known elsewhere on the western side of the Atlantic.

It had been hoped that the coming summer could be devoted to intensive studies in unexplored sections of Newfoundland and some who will receive this communication have already been asked to cooperate in the Newfoundland work. It now appears, however, that the tremendous advance in mileage-charge on the Reid Newfoundland Railroad and the Reid coastwise steamers makes this an unfortunate time to attempt Newfoundland exploration. The fare from Boston to St. John's has trebled since the beginning of the war and local rates have gone up in proportion, consequently it is now proposed to devote the summer of 1920 to an intensive study of the vascular flora of Nova Scotia, a Province in which exceedingly little critical floristic work has been done. From the somewhat desultory collections already made in Nova Scotia we know the Coastal Plain element to be represented there by several species which obviously reached Nova Scotia by a route far outside Long Island and Cape Cod, since the species are confined to more southern

regions with us, but are now well known from Nova Scotia and the adjacent Provinces. These plants include Schizaea pusilla; Lophiola, recently discovered by an untrained collector in a bog near Digby; Centunculus, now known from both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island but with us not found north of Chesapeake Bay; Ceratiola, known from an indefinite station in Nova Scotia, otherwise not found north of the Pine Barrens from North Carolina to Alabama; while Newfoundland has received some of these plants as well as Juncus setaceus otherwise unknown north of Cape May. Similarly, incidental collecting has brought to light in Nova Scotia Atlantic-European species such as Calluna vulgaris (indigenous in Nova Scotia and southeastern Newfoundland), Potentilla procumbens (indigenous in Nova Scotia and southeastern Newfoundland), Juncus bulbosus (ditto), Potamogeton polygonifolius (ditto) and several others. In 1914 Dr. St. John and I stopped off the train for half a day on the Bras d'Or Lakes to recuperate from the effects of crossing Cabot Strait from Newfoundland. In a stroll along the beach we picked up Polygonum Raii (known only from the strands about the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the British Isles and the English Channel), Polygonum acadiense, a new species which has subsequently proved to be common (and heretofore confused with P. Raii) on the strands of the Baltic Sea, and Agropyron acadiense, a new species as yet known only from the original station. This was merely an incidental bit of collecting, but it is suggestive of what is to be expected by an intensive summer's work in Nova Scotia.

The proposition I wish to make is as follows:- the Gray Herbarium will equip a work-shop, probably at Yarmouth or Digby, with abundant presses, driers, press-paper, and artificial heat in order to insure against fog. I am planning to start the summer's

work during the latter part of June, to continue into early September and I am asking a number of active amateurs to cooperate if they care to do so by joining me for such portion of the summer as they feel inclined, in the exploration and collecting. Parties of two or three will be made up for trips of two or three days to selected areas and each party will be asked to collect an extra set of specimens which the Gray Herbarium may have in return for the facilities supplied and in return for determinations and labels so far as these are wished. The region from Digby and Yarmouth around the southern side of Nova Scotia nearly to Cape Canso consists of a peculiar siliceous rock which is classified by the geologists as the Avalonian formation, the peculiar rock formation which is otherwise known only in southeastern Newfoundland, the region where so many strange affinities have been found in that colony. Examination of the detailed geological maps shows this section to contain at least five thousand (5000) ponds and nearly as many if not more bogs and barrens, the habitats where these isolated plants chiefly occur, and to have plenty of carriage roads and several railroads, so that a summer spent there should be most productive and one of comparative simple botanizing. I sincerely hope that all who receive this announcement will feel like cooperating for the whole or part of the summer in the enterprise. The steamboat fare from Boston to Yarmouth is \$8.64. Those who prefer rail travel can go to St. John, New Brunswick and cross by ferry to Digby. Fords or other light cars would be very useful.

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Gray Herbarium,

Cambridge, Mass.

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Fernald, Merritt Lyndon. 1920. "Fernald, Merritt Lyndon Mar. 1920 [botanizing trip proposal]." *Merritt Lyndon Fernald correspondence*

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