

# LONG ISLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March - April 1993 Vol. 3, No. 2

## In This Issue

The Long Island Botanical Society now has a new Logo. After a vote by the membership the logo at the right was accepted.

This marks the second issue with **articles** about Roy **Latham**. As we did not have room for Bob Dirig's extensive biography in the last issue, it is included in here. We also have included an article about Roy Latham by Lance T. **Biechele**. Eric Lamont was kind enough to send a copy of Roy Latham's Letterhead which we have included. This letterhead obviously made an impression as several authors mentioned it.

There are a few corrections to Eric Lamont's listing of Roy Latham's botanical publications.

- Latham, R. A. 1948. *Cetraria islandica* (L.) Ach. on Long Island. N.Y.-IV. Bryologist 51: 50-51 [not 50: 269-2701  
\_\_\_\_\_. 1949. *Cladonia alpestris* (L.) Rabenh. on Long Island. N.Y. Bryologist 52: 146-148 [not 51: 50-51]  
\_\_\_\_\_. 1978 [not 1972]. Common purslane, *Portulacca oleracea* at Orient, Long Island. The Pitch Pine Naturalist 4: 2-3

Next Issue: Costa Rica Field Trip.

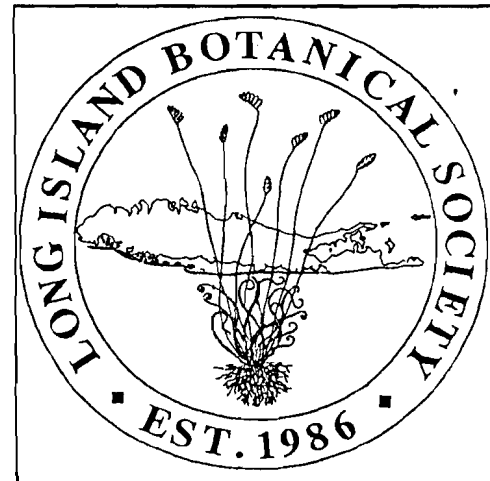
## PROGRAMS

9 Mar. 1993 - 7:30 pm, Moreno & Dorothy Tagliapietra- Cherbavez, "Orchids of L. I. and northeastern U.S.," Uplands Farm Nature Center, Cold Spring Harbor.

13 Apr. 1992 - 7:30 pm, Paul Teese, "Evolution of Photosynthetic Pathways," Museum of L.I. Natural Sciences, E.S.S. Bldg., SUNY at Stony Brook.

\*Refreshments start at 7:30 p.m., the program starts about 8:00 p.m.

## New LIBS Logo



LIBS Logo

The membership voted on a logo from among 9 choices. The first logo proposed by Eric Lamont was selected. It depicts *Schizaea pusilla* Pursh (Curly Grass) over a Long Island map in the background.

*Schizaea pusilla* was first collected on Long Island in 1927 by Roy Latham. It was re-located in the 1970's and a second location nearby was discovered.

*Schizaea* is a genus of about 30 species found predominantly in the tropics. One species, *Schizaea pusilla* Pursh (Curly Grass), is found in temperate North America. It occurs on sandy flats usually under *Chamaecyparis* trees. Its distribution is Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, Long Island, southern New Jersey and the Bruce Peninsula, Ontario.

During one of the first field trips of the Long Island Botanical Society, the area it was known from was visited and its presence at one of the two known sites was confirmed.

I will try to work the logo into the masthead of the newsletter in future issues. If anyone would like a copy of the logo please contact Eric Lamont.--Steven Clemants

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**THE BOTANICAL AND  
LICHENOLOGICAL WORK OF ROY  
LATHAM, LEGENDARY LONG ISLAND  
NATURALIST**

**Introduction**

It was mid-November 1979, and Frederick C. Schlauch had just relayed news that saddened me: Roy Latham, a living legend, had passed away at Orient, Long Island, at the age of 98.

I slowly made my way back to the Rare Plant Workshop I was attending at the New York State Museum in Albany, convened by State Botanist Richard Mitchell to examine the status of our endangered and threatened plants. After I had regretfully shared the news, we held a moment of silence in Roy's honor; for he had been the state's most versatile field naturalist, a walking encyclopedia of natural history--and a highly respected botanist.

Because his knowledge was so comprehensive, I cannot write about Latham's botanical work without making frequent references to related areas of natural history. The following notes on his life, compiled from several sources (Schlauch 1971, Zawyrucha 1977, Anon. 1979, Pechuman 1979; F. C. Schlauch, verbal comm.; C. J. Sheviak, verbal comm.), will indicate the context in which his botanical work was done.

Roy Latham was born at Orient on 23 May 1881, a descendant of Jonathan Fish Latham who settled there before 1800. Roy's parents were Fred and Fanny Latham. Christened Angelo Roy Latham, the "little angel" soon dropped the Angelo, perhaps retaining it as a rarely used middle name [his Southold and Gardiner's Island flora (Burnham & Latham 1914-1925) was signed "Roy A. Latham"; see also Chaudhri et al. 1972]. He attended the one-room school in Orient for two or three months each winter over several years, but was largely self-educated avidly pursuing studies that interested him for the rest of his life. Roy and his father and brothers were active commercial fishermen early in this century, their business peaking between 1915 and 1920; but his main money-making occupation was growing potatoes at his farm ("The Osprey's Nest" on Private Road in Orient), which he pursued until his retirement in 1963 at age 82. After that he leased his land to other Orient farmers, while continuing his intense, lifelong labor of love: studying the natural history of eastern Long Island.

Roy's fascination with the natural world began at age three, and continued throughout his life. It spanned the gamut of natural history disciplines, including ornithology, mammology, herpetology, ichthyology, botany, lichenology, mycology, bryology, phycology, entomology, and archaeology. A highly organized

person who kept labelled specimens of everything he found, he amassed huge collections of inestimable scientific value in all areas of interest. The value of Roy's collections is enhanced by their temporal span and regional focus. The scope of his knowledge and experience was evident in whatever he wrote. It was difficult for him to communicate about any organism without mentioning others that were ecologically or locally associated, often in great detail. Roy's innate brilliance and self-direction, in combination with his extraordinary memory and long life, fostered his eminence among amateur North American naturalists. Although a private person, he confidently approached the greatest authorities on subjects that interested him, gaining their respect and cooperation by the intelligence of his questions and through the specimens and first-hand knowledge he offered. He was repeatedly credited as a major source in references dealing with the natural history of Long Island (Bull 1975: 15, Brodo 1968, and Connor 1978, to mention a few).

It was always exciting to receive a letter from Roy Latham. These were written with an ancient typewriter (an Oliver No. 7, purchased in 1912--Latham letter to me, 4 October 1977) on stationery featuring an Osprey's nest atop an abandoned windmill on his farm. He provided exceptionally clear and detailed summaries of his natural history experiences in response to specific queries, interpreted in an environmental and historical context that covered nearly a whole century. When other naturalists wrote with a question, Roy would modestly declare he was too old, or his eyesight was too poor, to look up his records or write much of an answer, and then would deliver a wealth of information that astounded. His comments were often tinged with wistfulness, as if recollections of the former abundance of plants and animals were painful. This is understandable—he had watched the flora and especially the fauna disappear in his lifetime, in response to increasing human pressures.

As an example, in 1974 I wrote to ask Roy about the Royal Walnut Moth (*Citheronia regalis*) on eastern Long Island. This very large moth has almost completely disappeared from the Northeast in recent decades, and I wanted to have his perspective. Roy's reply (letters, 20 & 27 August 1974) gave a goldmine of information: adult flight dates, specific larval foodplant records from encounters with wild caterpillars, specimen records, nocturnal and diurnal observations of adults, notes on human interactions (including the disappearance of this moth after aerial insecticide spraying), and predation notes on a Northern Black Racer (*Coluber constrictor constrictor*) eating one of the very large caterpillars. Few people could muster such information so easily or present it so beautifully and generously.

During the **last few years** of his **life**, despite **failing** eyesight, Roy collected **aphids** on his **farm**, making major contributions to the New York State list of these specialized insects (Leonard 1971, 1975). He collected and prepared 6,000 moth specimens in 1969, and remained active through age 98. Roy died at his home on 13 November 1979, and was buried in the Orient Central Cemetery.

Roy Latham possessed an innate genius for documenting what he saw; and the responsibility and good sense to deposit his specimens in museums and to communicate about them in arenas accessible to other naturalists. He published extensively in scientific journals over seven decades. Frederick C. Schlauch, the foremost authority on his publications, estimates that there may be over 300 papers scattered through the literature of the diverse disciplines that interested him (Schlauch, verbal comm.). Between 1968 and 1978, more than 100 papers and notes by Latham were published in *Engelhardtia* and *The Pitch Pine Naturalist*, journals of the Northeastern Field Naturalists' Society [formerly Long Island Herpetological Society]. Schlauch had founded this group in 1965, and edited its publications. A voluminous correspondence from 1967 to 1979 between Schlauch and Latham strongly bonded these two naturalists, resulting in an unsurpassed contribution to the literature of Long Island natural history (Schlauch, verbal comm.).

### Roy Latham, The Botanist

Although Roy Latham witnessed the development of the automobile as a familiar mode of transportation, he travelled extensively by horse and wagon, bicycle, (Schlauch 1971), and on foot. He mentioned crawling on hands and knees over every inch of certain tracts, (letter to me, 4 October 1977), which he must have done to obtain the records his specimens prove. This slow pace allowed close observation, and is undoubtedly responsible for his outstanding success in locating natural history treasures throughout eastern Long Island.

Among Latham's botanical writings, "The Flora of the Town of Southold, Long Island and Gardiner's Island," co-authored with Stewart H. Burnham, with its five supplementary lists (Burnham & Latham 1914-1925), was his monumental achievement, representing many years of field work and study of collected specimens. Observations for this flora began before 1900 (Latham 1957).

It is fortunate that Roy became acquainted with Stewart Henry Burnham, himself an extraordinarily thorough natural history collector and record-keeper interested in vascular plants, cryptogams, and ornithology. Burnham was born at Vaughns (near

Hudson Falls) in Washington County, New York, on 6 October 1870. After studying in local schools, he attended Stanford University from 1893-1895; then finished his undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, graduating with a B.S. on 22 June 1899. Further studies were undertaken at Cornell University in 1904-1905. His concentration was botany. Burnham's professional credits are impressive: Museum Aid at the New York Botanical Garden (1901-1903), Assistant in Botany at Cornell (1904-1905), Assistant State Botanist of New York with Charles H. Peck (1905-1913), Assistant in Botany at Cornell (1920-1922), and Assistant Curator of the Cornell University Herbarium (1922 until ca. 1940). Burnham died at Hudson Falls, New York, on 25 September 1943 (Cattell & Cattell 1927; Barnhart 1965).

In the introduction to their flora (Burnham & Latham 1914), Burnham wrote: "Roy A. Latham of Orient, from May 25, 1909, until the present time [probably 1913], collected the following plants: and many of the specimens passed through my hands while in the State Botanist's office at Albany, New York... [T]he... specimens are preserved in the New York State Herbarium..." This well illustrates Latham's method of communicating with appropriate professionals to their mutual benefit, and indicates that he began serious floristic work in his late twenties. A large cache of correspondence between Burnham and Latham from this period is preserved at the New York State Museum Herbarium (NYS), with the records of Charles H. Peck (John H. Haines, verbal comm.). Unfortunately, no letters to or from Roy are in Burnham's correspondence at the Cornell University Archives, where the extremely meticulous journals and many other artifacts of this idiosyncratic Victorian botanist are also housed.

The flora these two men produced is outstanding in its scope, covering insect galls, algae, fungi, lichens, bryophytes, and vascular plants. Burnham had the professional connections and scientific society affiliations (Cattell & Cattell 1927) to facilitate identifications by specialists, which greatly added to the quality of their catalogue. They updated it five times over the next ten years. It remains a model from the period, and is a baseline of information about this region's entire flora, as well as an important historical document concerning the biota of the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain.

Voucher specimens for this flora were deposited (as they were sent for identification) at NYS (also at some specialists' institutions, as indicated); but Burnham kept many significant Latham specimens for his enormous personal herbarium (75,000 specimens, Lanjouw & Stafleu 1954), which now forms an important nucleus of eastern New York material in the Cornell University herbaria (BH-CU, and CUP). Roy's personal botanical,

lichenological, and mycological herbarium of several thousand specimens was given to NYS in 1969 (Zawyrucha 1977).

Roy's "Flora of the State Park, Orient, Long Island, N.Y." (Latham 1934b) is another very important paper, with its notes on vegetation and abundance of individual species. He treated the vascular flora "only," but characteristically could not write about the beach without brief mention of important breeding birds, fungi, lichens, and marine algae. This paper provided the historical foundation for a recent floristic re-survey of the same tract conducted by Lamont & Stalter (1991).

Long Island orchids received special attention from Latham, and his publications on these plants (Latham 1927, 1940, 1971b) furnished an historical perspective for Lamont, Beitel, & Zaremba (1988) in their update.

Many rare plants and other organisms were found by Latham on eastern Long Island. For example, Roy's letter to me of 8 December 1976 contained this information on the Curlygrass Fern (*Schizaea pusilla* Pursh), a widely disjunct species of eastern North America, and one of the rarest Long Island plants: "I did find the curly grass in two places on Montauk, one patch south of the highway and the other in the far western end, near the bay." Additional work on ferns was summarized in "The Ferns of Eastern Long Island" (Latham 1972a).

As might be expected of someone making observations in one place over so many years, Roy documented the establishment or spread of several plants on eastern Long Island. These included Purple Loosestrife [*Lythrum salicaria* L.] (Latham 1938); Common Reed [*Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.] (Latham 1957); Santa Maria [*Parthenium hysterophorus* L.] (Latham 1972b); Common Purslane [*Portulaca oleracea* L.] (Latham 1978a); Yucca [*Yucca flaccida* Haw] and Pyxie [*Pyxidantha barbulata* Michx.] (Latham 1978b); and Tall Blue Lettuce [*Lactuca biennis* (Moench) Fern.], which came up in debris deposited by the 1938 hurricane, but had not been previously reported (Latham 1955). Zawyrucha (1977) quoted a Latham letter to him concerning Mexican Husk-Tomato (*Physalis ixocarpa* Brot. ex Hornem.) at Orient. These publications well illustrate the historical value of Latham's sustained botanical efforts.

Roy's work with cryptogams is well documented in the Southold and Gardiner's Island flora (Burnham & Latham 1914-1925). Further notes on cryptogams appeared separately. In his "Nature Notes from Orient" (Latham 1954, 1956), Roy mentioned specific mosses used by the Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*) as nest linings. In other papers he reported moss hosts of the muscicolous fungus *Cyphella muscigena* Fr. (Latham 1920), and described the "Habitat of *Cephalozia francisci* on Long Island" (Latham 1917). Specific

basidiomycetes and galls eaten by the Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) were listed in herpetological publications (Latham 1916, 1968, 1969a).

Additional "purely botanical" papers included detailed accounts of Star-flowered False Solomon's-Seal [*Smilacina stellata* (L.) Desf.], Fox Grape (*Vitis labrusca* L.), and Sundews (*Drosera* spp.) on Long Island (Latham 1930, 1971a, 1972c, respectively), and general notes on Long Island flora (Latham 1934a).

Further examples indicate the necessity of scrutinizing Latham's entire literature (even though the titles may not mention plants) for important botanical tidbits that do not appear elsewhere: The destruction of Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis* L.) swamps at Orient is mentioned in a paper on turtles (Latham 1969b), while the existence of an Atlantic White Cedar [*Chamaecyparis thyoides* (L.) BSP.] swamp on Plum Island is documented in an article on Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) (Latham 1969c). Roy's report of White Oak (*Quercus alba* L.) on western Long Beach, at Orient Beach State Park, in "The Black-crowned Night Heron at Orient, Long Island" (Latham 1972d), would seem of little significance to the uninformed; but its value increases when one realizes that the historic or contemporary presence of *Q. alba* was not mentioned by Latham (1934b) or Lamont & Stalter (1991) in their floristic accounts of the Park. Close study of all of Latham's publications would require many months. I have not checked numerous zoological and archaeological papers which, because of Latham's attention to detail, will undoubtedly contain incidental but significant references to plants.

#### Roy Latham, The Lichenologist

Roy Latham noticed and collected Long Island lichens throughout much of his life: "My observations of lichens started in 1910 and continued with regularity until 1930 and intermittently thereafter" (Latham 1945). This is fortunate, as many of these organisms are highly specialized and sensitive to human disturbance. A number of Long Island records are known only from Roy's collections (Brodo 1968: 276-277).

The Southold and Gardiner's Island flora (Burnham & Latham 1914-1925) contained an extensive list of lichens, and included a few new combinations (with Burnham).

Latham continued to collect lichens, later becoming intrigued with "Iceland Moss" [*Cetraria islandica* (L.) Ach.], now known as *Cetraria arenaria* Kärnef., which he carefully documented on eastern Long Island (Latham 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948). Of this species, he wrote (letter, 8 December 1976): "By early 1950 I considered it so general that it could be seen wherever looked for from Montauk west." Personal field work on

Long Island after 1974 has shown *Cetraria arenaria* still to be widespread on the East End, but it has disappeared from the Hempstead Plains since Brodo's field work in the 1960's.

Another lichen of special interest was Alpine Reindeer Lichen ["*Cladonia alpestris* (L.) Rabenh.," now called *Cladina stellaris* (Opiz) Brodo], which Roy first mentioned in the Orient State Park flora (Latham 1934b) and treated in detail in later papers (Latham 1947, 1949). Latham (letter, 8 December 1976) remarked that this lichen "seems to be a disappearing species on Long Island. I noticed that thirty years ago. I believe it can still be found in the Montauk-Napeague region. Look under the margins of bushes, rather than in the open spaces." I have seen depauperate *Cladina stellaris* at Napeague in 1984 (Dirig L-1615 in NY). Harris et al. (1987) also found it there in 1986.

Brodo (1968) did not consider the well known, ivory-colored Reindeer Lichen [*Cladina rangiferina* (L.) Nyl.] to be at all common on Long Island, and neither do I. Latham collected 25 specimens in earlier years (Brodo 1968: 201), and wrote (letter to me, 8 December 1976): "*Cladonia rangiferina* [a synonym] was much more common than *alpestris*. I never considered it as rare as Brodo did. In my old collecting years, I thought it locally common throughout."

Herbarium searching and personal field work in Long Island bogs disclosed several unreported specimens of a beautiful bluish grey, foliose lichen, *Platismatia tuckermanii* (Oakes) W. Culb. & C. Culb. Noting how rarely this had been previously recorded on Long Island (Brodo 1968: 239-240), I wrote to Roy for his thoughts. His richly detailed answers are revealing. In his letter of 10 April 1977, Roy wrote: "I congratulate you on finding *Cetraria tuckermanii* [a synonym] near Flanders [at Owl Pond, Dirig L-279, in my herbarium].... I thought I had *tuckermanii* from a number of places, Napeague, near Montauk, Sag Harbor, Flanders, Riverhead, and North Sea; Brodo evidently discarded all but the North Sea record. I well recall that habitat because there was a group of the rare little Adder's-tongue fern, *Ophioglossum vulgatum* L., nearby, my third station on Long Island.... This *tuckermanii* was on the low branches of *Chamaecyparis* in a boggy depression which contained the largest [Atlantic] white cedar I had a record of on Long Island.... There are several stands of white cedars in the Flanders area. The collection I had was more than a mile from Owl Pond. There are several good stands of swamp cedars in the Riverhead area and three stands in the North Sea region. All I thought were *tuckermanii* were on low branches of the white cedar, except the one at Napeague, which was on beach plum [*Prunus maritima* Marsh.] shrubs in a wet sandy gully.... I doubt if *tuckermanii* is as rare as Brodo thinks on Long

Island."

A later letter (4 October 1977) gave more details: "Northwest is a big region, and not too far from Northsea [sic, probably the same as "North Sea" of the previous letter]. It was a prime region for me between Sag Harbor and the Hamptons. There were ... acres of white pine, *Pinus strobus* [L.], that [were] lumber cut years ago. A few large trees still remain. It is wet ground with many small swamps scattered throughout. The woods border on salt marshes. I found many rare plants, aside from lichens, at Northwest, some new to L. I. The *Cetraria*, as I remember, was on twigs and small branches of various kinds near the ground in the wet woods all through the region.... At Northsea [sic] there were white cedar swamps, some large old trees; no white cedars at Northwest, just white pines and mixed other growth. I ... crawled over the region ... on my hands and knees. I have not been there in years, and some of Northwest may now be summer homes. When I was there in the 1940's and before, there was not a sign of human life all day at Northwest." Harris et al. (1987) later reported an additional record of *Platismatia tuckermanii* from Long Island (Buck 13926 in NY).

Of his specimens Roy wrote (letter, 8 December 1976): "My lichens, as named by Brodo, are in the New York State Museum in Albany.... The number is around 2,000...." He continued (letter, 12 September 1977): "All the lichens I sent to Cornell were through Burnham. As I remember now, Stewart Burnham was a close friend before 1910, when he was in botany with Dr. Peck at Albany.... I sent him thousands of plants, including many lichens, for the State collection, as they had very little from eastern Long Island. Later, when he moved to Ithaca [after 1920], I sent him a few specimens. I do know that he retained part of the lichen material that I sent to him at his home for his own collection. He may have given most of that to Cornell... Burnham and I had a steady correspondence for many years about birds, plants, botany in general, and home life. I sent him, among other [things]. ... marine algae, [with] which he was delighted ..., as he said it gave him 'a whiff of the sea.'"

I have seen some of Roy's original packets, with labels or information typed with the same typewriter as his letters. His collection title was "Flora of Long Island." Roy "did not use Suffolk County much, if any" as a tide (letter, 12 September 1977). Most of Roy's cryptogam specimens have been repackaged by herbarium curators, and in many cases, new labels prepared. The original packet was unusual. Many cryptogam collectors fold a rectangular piece of paper in thirds, like a business letter, then fold the ends under. Roy folded the paper in thirds, longways, with the top and bottom folded under, producing a roomier enclosure for specimens. Further details on his lichen collection

were given to me in letters dated 12 September 1977 and 4 October 1977.

Roy's work provided the baseline knowledge of eastern Long Island lichens for all future workers, as Brodo (1968) stated. Harris *et al.* (1987) published an updated list of Long Island lichens, adding five new species. Harris (1987) summarized additional Long Island lichen records. Imshaug & Brodo (1966: 24) even named a lichen subspecies for Roy: *Lecanora caesiorubella* Ach., ssp. *lathamii* Imsh. & Brodo.

In addition to collecting specimens, Roy's knowledge of lichen natural history was unique. Who but Roy Latham would have observed the lichen species used for nest ornamentation by the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) (Latham 1954)? Or documented the disappearance of specific lichens at Orient Beach State Park, after the great hurricanes of 1938 and 1944 (Latham 1945, Brodo 1968: 276)? Natural history and life history observations of lichens are rare in the literature because lichenology is still a developing field, when compared to ornithology, for example. Relatively few people know the names of lichens, yet anything about their natural history. But this modest Long Island farmer did know a great deal about them.

#### The Latham Legacy

A number of circumstances and personal characteristics combined to produce this natural history genius. Roy lived for nearly a century on a beautiful island filled with many biological measures. Self-employment in outdoor occupations provided frequent opportunities to observe and collect natural history specimens, or to take the time to investigate something that interested him. The isolation of his environment, combined with his intelligence, curiosity, attention to detail, love and respect for other organisms, and observational skills, led to natural history study as an entertaining pastime. An intense focus and self-direction, unusual record-keeping instincts, and a vacant building on his farm resulted in large collections in all groups. His knack for acquiring proper references and studying anything he wanted to learn allowed him to identify collected specimens, or find authorities to whom he could apply for assistance. And an inborn talent for remarkably clear, direct writing enabled him to publish his findings. Roy was a brilliant person who might have been a college professor or museum curator, but he chose the simplicity and beauty of a rural existence, and his life story teaches valuable lessons in disciplined work, happiness, and longevity.

The biological and archaeological specimens Roy Latham collected throughout his life have been deposited as follows (Schlauch 1971, Bull 1975,

Zawyrucha 1977, Connor 1978, Anon. 1979. Pechuman 1979): ca. 100,000 botanical and mycological specimens (vascular plants, fungi, lichens, and algae) and 10,000 zoological specimens (birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fishes, and mollusks)-were given to the New York State Museum at Albany in 1969. An estimated 100,000 insects were donated to the Cornell University Insect Collection in 1968; and hundreds of botanical, lichenological, and mycological vouchers were deposited in the Cornell herbaria via Burnham, as well. Roy's 30,000 aboriginal artifacts, including specimens from the "Orient Phase" culture of ca. 1300-1000 B.C., which he discovered (Pechuman 1979), now belong to the Long Island Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association, at the Southold Museum, Main Bayview Avenue, Southold. What an eloquent and enduring testimony to an industrious life!

One of Roy's most significant accomplishments was his careful documentation of the effects of the great hurricanes of 1938 and 1944 on the biota of eastern Long Island. This is evident in many of his later papers (Latham 1945, 1955, and many of his papers in *Engelhardtia*); and his letters on the topic have been extensively quoted (Brodo 1968, Bull 1975, Schlauch 1971, Zawyrucha 1977).

Roy Latham was among the great general field naturalists of the Northeast, ranking with James Eights (Miller & Goldsmith 1980, Miller 1980), William T. Davis (Schlauch, verbal comm.), and Daniel Smiley (Winerip 1986, Huyghe 1991), yet holding a unique position, similar to that of Gilbert White in England (Massingham 1983), from having thoroughly studied and recorded his region over a entire century.

Gifted naturalists of this calibre are rare, and appear to be born that way. All have an instinctive grasp of a primary field principle: Knowledge of natural history comes from time spent in the field, but many encounters, especially with animals, occur by coincidence; thus knowledge is only slowly acquired, and it becomes intensely interesting, and often challenging, to collect and organize experiences to produce ever-increasing levels of refinement and understanding. Few codes of life could be more absorbing than to be always watchful for an organism you never before have seen—flying before you, swimming around the bend in the stream, hidden under the next leaf, or living between the grains of sand at your feet. How fortunate we are that Roy Latham followed this code so thoroughly and so well!

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--Robert Dirig, Bailey Hortorium Herbarium & Plant Pathology Herbarium, Cornell Univ.

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**Roy Latham**  
**and the Liverworts of Long Island**

Liverworts are bryophytes that range morphologically from flat, thallus forms to those having bilateral leaves reaching several centimeters long. Generally confined to living prostrate on the substratum to avoid desiccation, they are often overlooked by the casual observer.

Such was not the case with Roy Latham. In his constant searching for lichens. "[they are] my first interest" (in a letter from Latham to Biechele, 1975), Roy added an impressive collection of sixty-three liverwort taxa from eastern Long Island. These specimens are now deposited in the Bryophyte Herbarium of the New York State Museum in Albany.

The discovery of *Cladodiella francisci* (Hook.) Joerg., the first record from New York State, came about while searching the cranberry bogs around Great Pond near Southold (Latham, 1917). In his letter to me (1975) Roy continues, "[around 1910] I used to spend a lot of time around the dunes ... leaving home before dawn and tramping the dunes till dark. One night I found my bike broken and walked away from the dunes to Orient after dark"

With the completion of the FLORA OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHOLD, LONG ISLAND (Burnham & Latham, 1925), Latham had described 40 species of liverworts from the region. (Unfortunately, two taxa, *Calyptogeia sphagnicola* (Am. et Perss.) Warnst. et Loeske and *Pellia fabroniana* Raddi (now a synonym of *P. endiviifolia* (Dicks.) Dum.) were initially incorrectly annotated). Many of Latham's collections were determined by Andrews, Conklin, Evans and Fulford and some duplicate material was sent to the Sullivant Moss Society now located in the ABSH at Southern Illinois University.

No longer restricted to the geography of his manuscript, Latham was able to explore the fascinating flora of the sandy pine barrens and beach dunes along the south fork of the island. Along with more frequent trips to Gardiner's Island, Roy added such rarities as *Barbilophozia barbata* (Schmid. ex Schreb.) Loeske; *Geocalyx graveolens* (Schrad.) Nees; *Marsupella sphacelata* (Gieske) Dum. and *Trichocolea tomentella* (Ehrh.) Dum. all associated with a more northern, mountainous topography. Here, then, were possible relics of the last glacial epoch that found refuge in the hepatic communities of eastern Suffolk County.

In 1974, when he was 93 years old, Roy was very interested in my collection of the NY rarity *Jubula pennsylvanica* (Steph.) Evans (determined by Mulford Martin at the New York Botanical Garden) near Trout Pond in Noyac. In a letter on December 7th of that year, he writes: "Thank you for the fine specimen of the

rare *Jubula pennsylvanica*. So far as I know now, it is the First for Long Island under this name. It is the first for the east end."

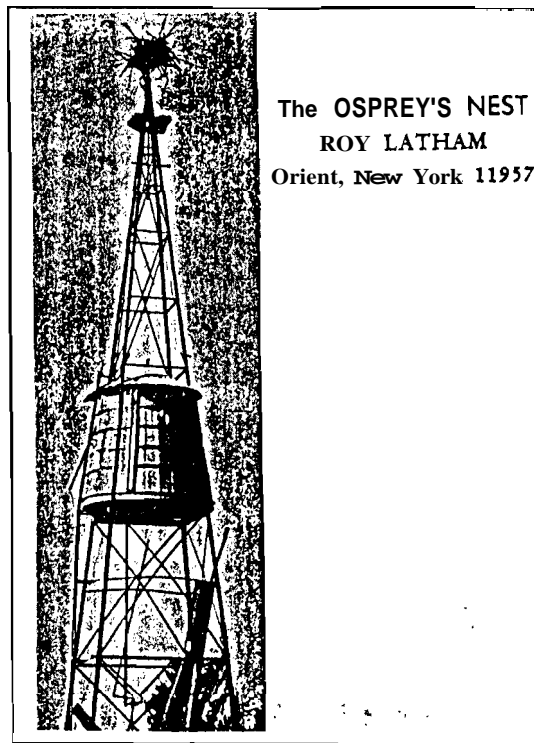
Roy Latham had an amazing ability to instantly recognize a new or different species when there were, in those days, few, references and field guides. He was truly a naturalist of the 'old school' who always seemed to find time to answer almost any question and would generously contribute his knowledge of the subject. His legacy is forever forged within the natural history of Long Island.--Lance T. Biechele, Princess Anne, Maryland

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**Roy Latham Letterhead**



Above is a copy of the famous Roy Latham Letterhead depicting an Osprey nest in a windmill.



# Society News

Caleb Smith State Park to inventory the flora together with the Flora Committee.

## January meeting

The January **meeting** was held at the Planting Fields Arboretum. It was a rather informal affair with tours of the greenhouses including the desert-cactus house, two orchid houses, palm house, and begonia house. Carol Johnston gave a slide show about Shu Swamp.

## February meeting

Tropical Night was hosted by Margaret **Conover**. Speakers were Lois **Lindberg** and Skip Blanchard who each showed slides from the LIBS trip to Costa Rica in January, Charles Jansen who presented slides of his studies on Monkeys in Argentina and Steve **Clemants** who presented slides from **several** trips to South American and Mexico. Margaret purchased various tropical **fruits** for all to partake.

It was announced at this meeting that Steve Young at the New York **Natural** Heritage Program is no longer being funded by New York State. For the **time** being he is being funded by **grants**.

The Nominating Committee is being chaired by Betty Lotowycz. If you want to nominate someone please contact Betty.

## L.I. Naturalists Meeting

**Glenn Richard** announced at the Feb. meeting that there will be a **meeting of the L.I. Naturalists** on Tuesday, **March 16, 9 am**, at The Environmental Centers of **Setauket-Smithtown (ECSS)**.

The L.I. Naturalists is a loosely **organized group** of people who are involved in natural science education. They meet twice a year at various locations and share information with each other. There is no official **membership** or leadership of the group. If you are interested contact Glenn Richard at 516-632-8230 (w).

## New Field Trip Charman

Glenn Richard is the new LIBS field trip chairman. Glenn is Director of Education at the Museum of L.I. **Natural** Sciences, SUNY at Stony Brook. Anyone interested in leading a field trip during the 1993 season, please call Glenn at 516-632-8230 (w).

## Spring Field Trip'

Tentative events include a joint photographic workshop with the Sierra Club in May, and trips to

## Orchid Talk

LIBS member and photographer Sherman **Wolfson** will present a program on "Local Wild Orchids" on Saturday, March 27, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm, for the South Fork Natural History Society, at an East Hampton location. For more information call Carol **Crasson** at 516-267-7944.

## Programs

9 March 1993 - **Moreno** and Dorothy **Tagliapietra-Cherbavaz** will present a slide show titled "The orchids of L.I. and northeastern U.S.", at the Uplands Farm Nature Center, Cold Spring Harbor. The speakers have published their photos in a number of places, and the photos have won awards at orchid shows. They are active in the Greater New York Orchid Society, and are planning a book on the Orchids of New York State.

13 April 1993 - Paul Teese will present a *talk* on the "Evolution of a Photosynthetic Pathway". This talk will be about his research on the evolution of a **C3-C4** intermediate photosynthetic pathway in a tropical Asteraceae. The talk will be at the Museum of L.I. Natural Sciences, E.S.S. Bldg., SUNY at Stony Brook.

11 May 1993 - Barbara **Bentley** will present a talk on the Ecology of Lupine. This will be held at the Museum of L.I. Natural Sciences, E.S.S. Bldg., SUNY at Stony Brook.

June - Skip Blanchard has tentatively agreed to *talk* on Costa Rica.

## Treasurer's Report

Carol Johnston has submitted a treasurer's report form 1992. An abbreviated version follows. Anyone interested in more info should contact Carol.

Long Island Botanical Society, Inc.

Treasurer's Report  
December 31, 1992

Opening balance	\$1,877.43
Income total	\$1,980.00
Expenses total	\$1,050.14
Net gain	\$ 929.86
Liabilities (outstanding bills)	- 0 -
Ending balance	\$2,807.29

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**LONG ISLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY**

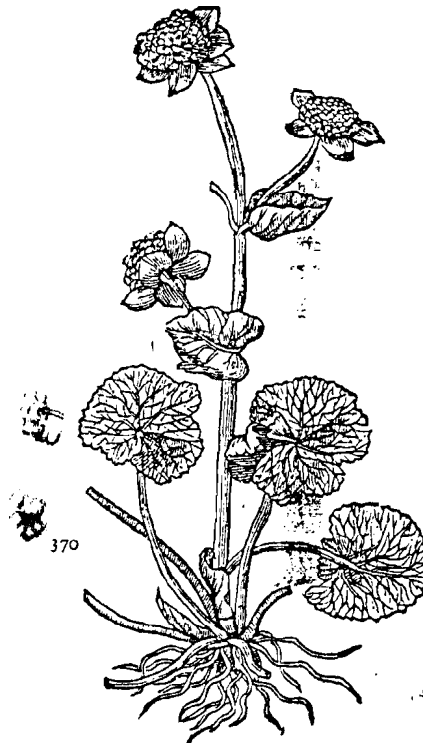
**Founded: 1986; Incorporated: 1989.**

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 Inland. New York.

<b>President</b>	<b>Eric Lamont</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Chris Mangels</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Carol Johnston</b>
<b>Recrd Sec'y</b>	<b>Barbara Conolly</b>
<b>Cor'sp Sec'y</b>	<b>Jane Blanchard</b>
<b>Local Flora</b>	<b>Skip Blanchard</b>
<b>Field Trip</b>	<b>Glenn Richard</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Lois Lindberg</b>
<b>Conservation</b>	<b>Louise Harrison</b>
	<b>John Turner</b>
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<b>Program</b>	<b>Eric Lamont</b>
<b>Editor</b>	<b>Steven Clemants 7</b>

**Membership**

**Membership is open to all**, and we welcome new members. **Annual dues are \$10**. For membership, make your check payable to **LONG ISLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY** and mail to: **Lou Lindberg, Membership Chairperson**, 45 Sandy Hill Rd., Oyster Bay, NY 11771-3111



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