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For Immediate Release

NEW WEB SITE FOR NEW JERSEY NATIVE PLANT ENTHUSIASTS

A rapidly evolving record and guide to our wild flora

Lovers of New Jersey's native plants have a new web site to find accurate and up-to-date names and their county locations for their favorite species. The Flora of New Jersey Project, Inc., a tax-exempt NJ non-profit organization, announces the release of the new web site at www.njflora.org that is intended for public use. This new site will provide an interactive series of web pages dedicated to the study and distribution of plants found growing wild within the State's boundaries. Designed for the professional and amateur alike, the new site will have a blog format allowing users to correspond with the Project's core investigators, allowing an up to the minute exchange of information not currently available. The site became fully interactive February 1st when the site was launched into the multitude of search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing. We spent our time between February and May perfecting the layout that is now our standard source of information.

The new site, designed and supported by *Solvit*, a web design consortium lead by Bobbie Hall and Sandy Pikulski (www.wesolvit.com), uses easy-to-use blogger software, allowing an interchange between users, acting as "wiki" source for the plants known to exist in New Jersey. The site will have monthly and quarterly features, keeping the site fresh and provide bits of interesting information not always available to the general public. Our first feature was the ***Plant of the Month***, highlighting a special New Jersey plant that corresponds to the month and its holidays. Each month we will highlight a different NJ plant that will honor a special day or season. The first plant, "Wild Bleeding Hearts", is a beautiful yet rare plant selected in honor of Valentine's Day. Since then, we highlighted skunk cabbage, blue violet and the rare swamp pink. The site also has ***Guess that Plant***, tempting knowledgeable plant enthusiasts to test their identification skills. A quarterly occasional paper written by one of the founding members, Dr. Stevens Heckscher, will add "***Ecological Rambles***". This will provide viewpoints on a specific plant or interesting natural habitats characteristic of New Jersey. The Project anticipates this will generate much interest and hopefully would start a dialog between the diverse citizens of New Jersey with the professional and amateur botanists in their midst.

Plant lovers are encouraged to visit the site regularly, as the work of identifying and cataloging our state flora is an evolving process. Everyone is encouraged to visit the site to learn more about the project and its participants.

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If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Joe Arsenault or one of the committee chairs, please call Joe at 856-697-6044 or email at njplants@aol.com.