

NATURE RAMBLINGS

By Frank Thone



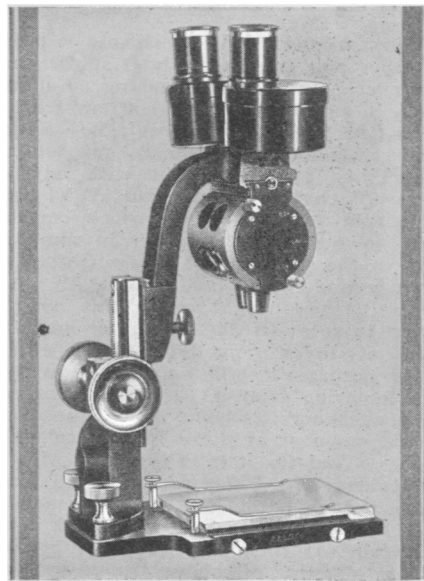
*Flowering Dogwood*

If someone were to start a straw vote to find out what flowering bush is most popular in this country, it is highly likely that the flowering dogwood would score very high. It might easily capture first place, but for the regrettable fact that it is unknown in the prairie and plains regions of the West. In the East and South, however, where it grows abundantly, it is immensely popular, and on the Pacific coast, where there is a different but similar-appearing species, it is again a favorite.

If anything, the flowering dogwood is too much of a favorite. We all of us have the weakness of desiring to possess whatever pleases us greatly, and thousands of motorists yearly raid the dogwood thickets within reach of the road, stripping them of flowering branches and effectively ruining the shrubs. In many communities persons who are interested in keeping our native flora alive put on annual spring drives to "Spare the dogwood!" They are usually effective, too; for the sin that besets most of us is just thoughtlessness rather than greed or lack of consideration, and we are ready to respond if properly appealed to. So there is a fair hope that if the good work is kept up, the flowering dogwood will survive even along the roadsides.

Where the dogwood got its name is more or less of a riddle. There is nothing about it suggesting a dog. However, it is conjectured that it is a variant of an archaic word, "dagwood"; a "dag" being a skewer of hard wood used in dressing meat in the kitchen. Europe has no flowering dogwood, but less showy members of the genus are widespread, and the dogwood got its name long before our beautiful shrub was known to white men.

*Science News-Letter, April 19, 1930*



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