



# Conservation

... with Marie Mellinger

## **Have You Thanked a Green Plant Today?**

Among the many educational offerings of Ecos, the ecology organization at Chapel Hill, N.C., are a wide selection of bumper strips. Most provocative is "have you thanked a green plant today?". The ecologists tell us that plants, especially trees, are the best air filtering devices, necessary to control air pollution. Plants are vitally important in preserving our water sheds and preventing water run-off. Plants moderate temperatures. All this besides the great value of trees and plants for food, clothing, medicine, building, paper, and countless other uses. But the most basic value of green plants is often overlooked. Without green plants there would be no other life on this planet, for only plants are capable of synthesizing sun energy into the vital carbohydrates necessary for life. Directly or indirectly plants are the basis of every food chain. Without them we could not exist. Have You Thanked a Green Plant Today?

## **Wild Flower Pilgrimages**

The increasing popularity of wild flower pilgrimages is encouraging. More and more people are learning to admire our native plants in their natural surroundings and work for their preservation and protection in the natural areas containing rare and endemic species. Many of our young people are attending these wild flower pilgrimages and taking an active part. The great success of the recent wild flower weekend in Rabun County, Georgia, and Macon County, North Carolina, was largely due to the help and enthusiasm of young leaders.

### **Perimeter Road Preferred**

New and timely is the proposed phasing out of Highway 441 from Cherokee to Gatlinburg, through the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. A perimeter road, circling the park with 11 visitor centers is the suggested alternate. A copy of the preliminary report, written by George B. Hartzog, director of the National Park Service, is available from the National Park Service Information Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20270.

### **Hawk and Owl Protection**

The South Carolina Senate tentatively approved a bill previously passed by the General Assembly protecting birds of prey. The Senate went a step further and eliminated the part of the act permitting land owners to kill hawks and owls in the act of destroying poultry.

### **Battle for Standing Indian Lost**

Logging has already begun in the Standing Indian area of North Carolina, despite efforts of the Girl Scouts and conservationists to save the area. The power saws sound the death knell for an ecosystem it took nature hundreds of years to bring to perfection.

### **Ban on Clear Cutting Proposed**

Senator Gale McGee of Wyoming has introduced a bill into the US Senate, asking for a 2-year ban on clear cutting on all National Forest Lands so that a study could be made of the overall effects of clear cutting. Please write to your Senators and ask them to support this bill.

### **Quotable Quotes**

"We have got to stop thinking of ourselves as being in the growth stage of civilization and realize that we are now in the mature stage. Up to now we have been a consumptive, destructive civilization. We must learn now to recycle and reuse." — Dr. Eugene Odum

"Man is neither good nor bad, but his own bungling self. That is why he is a blind actor on the environmental front." — Prof. Scott Gree

"Earth Week-E stands for Earth, Environment, and Ecological thinking. The key is still another E, Education." — adapted from *Southern Exposure*

"There are those who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth the cost in things natural, wild and free. For us in the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque flower is as right and inalienable as free speech." — Aldo Leopold, in *Sand County Almanac*