

ly pilose. Some of the varieties occasionally bear stolons above ground, but this is never the case with the New York form, although, as already remarked, subterranean suckers are common. With the exception of the white-tomentose under surface, my specimens would perhaps fall more nearly under the section *fallax*, but in the absence of this character I am disposed to refer them to some of the original varieties of De Candolle, although this is somewhat difficult. The variety *hispidulum* of Froelich is much the nearest, this having the base of the scape and also the leaves pilose-hispid. In our plant there are frequently, but not always, strong and very long white hairs on both surfaces of the leaves as well as along their margins, but those on the scape are very few and mostly near the base; they are also quite short. The whole plant, except the dark glandular hairy involucre and pedicels, is light green or glaucescent. There are usually two small leaves on the stem, the upper of which, however, subtends the lowest branch, and the other branches are provided with smaller bracts. A minute black ring or speck encircles the base of each hair, and many such occur where the hairs are no longer present.

In the investigation of this plant and the numerous interesting questions arising from its singular advent and diffusion in that section of northern New York, I have been greatly aided by Mr. William Comstock, without whose coöperation I could have accomplished little or nothing, and also by Messrs. Henry L. Lawton and J. P. Steinhilber,<sup>2</sup> who gave me much practical information, and I desire, in closing, to acknowledge the services of these gentlemen.

*National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

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#### BRIEFER ARTICLES.

**Another death from eating *Cicuta maculata*.**—Hon. Eugene Secor, of Forest City, this state, a member of the board of trustees of the Iowa Agricultural College, brought me to-day a fleshy root of a plant of the Water Hemlock (*Cicuta maculata* L.). The circumstances which brought it to his notice were as follows: A neighbor of his, by the name of Mr. Oleson,

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<sup>2</sup>Mr. Steinhilber brought me two other plants which he said were becoming quite troublesome. The one was *Potentilla argentea* L., which I had seen abundant in the fields. The other was *Poterium Sanguisorba* L., which I had not seen, but which must have been introduced quite extensively into this country, as I found it in 1883 at Odenton, Md., and it has been found at Baltimore and at several points in New York state. I also have it from Mr. Martindale as a Philadelphia ballast plant,

a farmer about fifty years of age, while dragging some potato ground upon bottom land, about two weeks ago, discovered one of the fleshy roots of this plant, and supposing it to be an artichoke, ate of it and gave a portion to each of his two sons. He soon began to feel queer, or "funny," as he expressed it, and went to the house, where he was taken with a spasm, followed by two or three others, when he became unconscious, and within an hour, before a physician could be summoned from the village, two miles distant, he was dead. The children had probably eaten less of the root, and, being given an emetic, recovered. The plant is very common in the state, and the roots are so pleasant to the taste as to make it particularly dangerous. I may add that I ate a piece of the root of the size of a filbert with little or no unpleasant effect.—A. A. CROZIER, Ames, Iowa.

**Floral eccentricities.**—The artificial conditions which attend the growth of many cultivated plants sometimes induce very erratic development, especially in the organs of reproduction. These irregularities often persist in certain species and varieties, and may be regarded as vegetable vices which no human management can overcome. As an example, we may take the well-known habit of one of our common but beautiful June roses of sending out a cluster of buds from the center of its blossoms, and in rare cases to repeat the malformation in the secondary series.

Among the floral peculiarities that attracted my attention during the past summer was the branching of the scape of a double white tulip. This forked about midway between the bulb and flower, and each branch bore an unusually large and symmetrically double blossom.

Another oddity was to be seen in an adjoining bulb bed. A plant of Crown Imperial (*Fritillaria*) had been transplanted late the previous autumn, and had evidently not yet recovered from the effects of removal. The root leaves developed finely, and the flower stalk grew about twelve inches and sent out the usual terminal cluster of leaves, beneath which the blossoms were represented solely by a dense fringe of cream white stamens without floral envelopes of any sort, or any organs resembling pistils or ovaries. The anthers were unusually large and full of pollen, and the plant was for many days a unique object and excited much interest.

A rather singular case of doubling in the common *Portulaca grandiflora* also came to my notice. Only the self-sown, single varieties were growing in the garden, and the blossom in question was on a plant which, aside from this specimen, bore only normal blossoms. This one, however, had in its center a monopetalous corolla like growth, the peculiarity of which lay in the fact that it was the pistil which was thus transformed, while the full complement of stamens encircled it.

I should like to inquire if it is not rather rare to find *Cuscuta glomerata* parasitic on plants outside of the Compositæ? During the past year I have for the first time observed it on the poke-weed. The latter was in each instance apparently much reduced in size and vigor by its unusual attendant, but the dodder seemed to find in its new host all the conditions for luxuriant growth.—MARY E. MURTFELDT, Kirkwood, Mo.



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Crozier, A. A. 1889. "Another Death from Eating *Cicuta maculata*." *Botanical gazette* 14(1), 17–18. <https://doi.org/10.1086/326369>.

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