

RECORDS OF *WOLFFIA COLUMBIANA* IN
MASSACHUSETTS.

B. L. ROBINSON.

IN his valuable paper upon the Lemnaceae of America Mr. C. H. Thompson states that he has examined specimens of *Wolffia columbiana*, Karst. from "Massachusetts, Robbins, 1870." There seems to be good reason to doubt the accuracy of this record, and as at least one manual of our flora has already extended the range of the species in question, apparently on the basis of Mr. Thompson's revision, it is worth while to inquire whether the Massachusetts record is not founded merely on a clerical error.

It is true that Dr. J. W. Robbins did collect *Wolffia columbiana* on three occasions, namely in 1829, 1867, and 1870, but in all these instances he obtained his material from Connecticut. The earliest collection is represented in the Gray Herbarium and bears Dr. Robbins's quaint and formal Latin label, which reads: PLANTAE NOVAE ANGLIAE ROBBINSIANAE. *Wolffia* n. sp. Legit Sept. 1829 e lacusculæ prope pagum New Milford, Con., cum tribus Lemnae speciebus, J. W. Robbins, M. D., Uxbridge, Mass." On the same sheet is a second collection by Robbins from Salisbury, Connecticut, the label bearing in Dr. Gray's hand the following amplification of the locality: "N. Canaan depot. In a large pool, a few rods (20-60) west of the bridge over the Housatonic, on the S. side of the road leading to Plumb's Pond—say a mile from the depot." These specimens were borrowed and examined by Mr. Thompson during his work on the Lemnaceae and on the sheet he has noted his identification of the specimens as *W. columbiana*. It will be noted that Mr. Thompson has cited in his monograph no specimens of this species from Connecticut, and that the date which he assigns to Robbins's collection was 1870. Inferring that he might have seen specimens of Robbins's collecting in some other herbarium also, I have written to Professor William Trelease, Professor N. L. Britton, and Dr. J. N. Rose, to learn if such specimens were to be found in the herbaria of the Missouri Botanical Garden, the New York Botanical Garden, or the National Museum respectively. None was found at St. Louis or at Washington, but in the Torrey Herbarium at New York, Dr. Britton found, and very kindly forwarded to me in

part, some specimens collected by Robbins at Dutcher's Bridge Salisbury, Connecticut, 13 August, 1870.

From the facts here presented, it must be inferred that in recording the stations for *Wolffia columbiana*, Mr. Thompson made that very natural clerical error of copying not the locality where Robbins obtained the plant but the personal address, Uxbridge, Massachusetts, which according to a practice once common and always likely to mislead, Robbins had had printed upon his labels. Connecticut is therefore the only New England state from which *Wolffia columbiana* has been secured with certainty. However, the northernmost station in Connecticut is so near the Massachusetts boundary that there is a considerable probability that the species extends over the line.

It seems a pity that Dr. Robbins, who not only discovered this our smallest New England flowering plant but had the rare discrimination to recognize its novelty and correct generic affinity, should never have recorded in print his observations concerning it. More than thirty-five years passed after the original discovery by Robbins before the species was characterized and named by Karsten in Germany upon the basis of type material from Colombia in South America.

GRAY HERBARIUM.

MATRICARIA DISCOIDEA IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.—While collecting New Hampshire plants with a party of botanists on June 14, 1903, I found by the roadside near the shore at Wallis' Sands in the town of Rye, a small colony of the Pine Apple Weed (*Matricaria discoidea*, DC.). The plants were of good size, but not many in number. At some distance, however, another much larger colony of smaller plants was found. From the observations I have made in Maine regarding the habits of this plant, I consider that in a very few years it will be abundant in this part of Rye. Mr. A. A. Eaton writes me that this *Matricaria*, so far as he knows, is not established in New Hampshire; and it does not appear in the Manchester List. It may be well, therefore, to record this station for a weed which has a most redeeming quality in its pleasant odor.—EDWARD L. RAND, Boston.



Robinson, B L. 1903. "RECORDS OF WOLFFIA COLUMBIANA IN MASSACHUSETTS." *Rhodora* 5, 287–288.

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