

(*Spirodela*); very common; N. Y.; fertile, Staten Is., vid. Vol I. No. 8, § 61, & seqq.

WOLFFIA, Horkel, Schleiden.—W. *Columbiana*, Karsted; Closter, rare, also Orange Co., *Austin*.

Sl. *Apocynum*, No. 1.—One of the most charming of our native plants is the *Apocynum androsaemifolium*, L., notwithstanding its long name. The beautiful clusters of rosy bells, with their pink bars and delicate fragrance, claim for it a place in the garden, where, however, we do not meet with it, but on open banks and by the side of roads or cultivated fields. It is well approved, too, by the insect tribe, who are in general much more appreciative judges of color and odor than we are. In Europe, where it is not native, it is cultivated in gardens, and according to Lamarck (*Encyc. Article, Apocynum*) is called *gobe-mouche*, which may be rendered *fly-trap*. I translate what he has to say on this subject. "The name *gobe-mouche* has been given to it, because the flies, in their greed of the honeyed juice which is found at the bottom of its flowers, insinuate their trunks by the narrow passage which is found between the small bodies which surround the ovaries, and the ovaries themselves, and when these insects would withdraw their bill, it is found to be held the faster, the more efforts they make to withdraw it. Thus these insects, half buried in the flowers, are caught as in a trap, and perish there without power to escape." Smith, in Rees' *Encyc.*, says more generally and, as we propose to show, more accurately: "If flies alight on this plant they are frequently entangled by the glutinous matter and destroyed. Hence the plant has been called '*Herb a la puce*.'" The author of the "*Journal of a Naturalist*," London, 3d Ed. p. 78, says: "Allured by the honey on the nectary of the expanded blossom, the instant the trunk is protruded to feed on it, the filaments close, and catching the fly by the extremity of its proboscis, detain the poor prisoner writhing in protracted struggles till released by death, a death apparently occasioned by exhaustion alone; the filaments then relax and the body falls to the ground. The plant will at times be dusky from the numbers of imprisoned wretches." The figure this author gives of the anthers is certainly inaccurate, and he represents the anthers as standing apart at the top, a position which they cannot assume. His use of the term *filaments*, too, implies that he had no correct notion of the case. Last summer, while sojourning among the Catskill Mts., I spent hours in watching this plant, but was never so fortunate as to see an insect caught, though there were many traces of them to be found in the shape of lost members, &c. It would seem, therefore, that our native insects are not so readily entrapped.

These are all the authorities I have been able to find on the fertilization of *Apocynaceæ*, excepting always C. K. Sprengel, to whom I may have occasion to refer hereafter. If any of my readers can indicate any other writings elucidating the *modus operandi*, the information would be very gratefully received.

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