



The Katharine Ordway
Natural History Study Area

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MACALESTER
COLLEGE

located at 9550 Inver Grove Trail (Dakota County Road 77), Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

SOME EXOTICS at ORDWAY.

One result of man's intrusion upon the natural scene is manifest along the railroad tracks and right-of-way. A casual summer walk along the tracks reveals living evidence of this intrusion in some of the plant-life which has resulted from the activities of man. One cannot help observing plants which 'just don't belong there'. These exotics have come in a variety of ways but principally they have been seeded from the contents of freight-cars carrying grains and other commodities. We have found plants of every one of the cereal grains, including maize. In addition, mustard and flax and hemp occur occasionally. All of these have been spawned by the grain leakage from grain-cars.

Along the foot-path which leads down toward the River are some signs of the intrusion of non-indigenous plants caused by man's activities. This footpath follows generally along the trace of an old field-road used by previous owners to take their farming equipment into the fields. Since this equipment was once horse-drawn there now persist some local areas in which Timothy Grass grows, introduced by the droppings of hay-eating horses. Similarly one finds small clumps of "escaped" plants such as alfalfa and alsike and red clover which are vestiges of the time when the land here was tilled. It is interesting occasionally to encounter such indications of the past influences and remnants - something like a smudge of powdered sugar from a doughnut indicates what we have been doing in the not-too-distant past.

R J CHRISTMAN,
Naturalist

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