



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

A witch's broom looks like a bad-hair day in hop hornbeam.

FLORA

FROM PAGE 1

If the witch's broom produces cones, then another possibility is to grow a dwarf tree from a seed collected from that abnormal growth. One such oddity is a dwarf loblolly pine growing along the

north walk in the Coker Arboretum. That one is a dwarf seedling from a magnificent witch's broom high up in one of the arboretum's big pines. Sadly, that tree was killed by lightning two years ago. On your next walk through the arboretum, look for curator Margo McIntyre

or one of her assistants to help you find that dwarf loblolly.

These rare curiosities are most frequently spotted in pine trees, though I did find one in a red cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*, several years ago.

More commonly spotted are the witch's brooms in hop hornbeams, *Ostrya virginiana*, easily observed in winter months, when the messy looking, dense, leafless twig structures can be quite numerous on a tree, giving it a truly "bad-hair day" look. There are lots of them along the trail encircling Big Oak Woods at Mason Farm Biological Reserve.

Folklore is filled with stories of witches and their flying about on coarse twiggy brooms. I like the story of witches flying over trees to make brooms grow in them. I enjoy thinking about that story when walking beneath all those witch's brooms in the Mason Farm hop hornbeams.

It's fun to look up into trees; never know what you may find there!



A Little Good News

PHOTO BY DONNA BARNES

Celebrating the opening of their new newsroom and their first print edition, some of the staffers of the *Northeast Central Durham Community VOICE* pose for a group shot outside Building 4 at the Golden Belt campus, where space has been donated by Scientific Properties of Durham. The *VOICE*, which mentors Durham urban youth, is a collaboration between the journalism programs at UNC and NCCU, with printing donated by *The Daily Tar Heel*. *VOICE* staffers from Durham, UNC and NCCU pictured here include (front to back, left to right), Corliss Pauling, Catherine Rieron, Katy Millberg, Teen Editor Zenzele Barnes and Teen Coordinator Carly Brantmeyer; second row, UNC co-adviser Jock Lauterer; NCCU co-adviser Lisa Paulin, Latisha Catchatoorian, Elizabeth Jensen, Chavaria Williams and Nakia Jones; back row, Briana Aguilar, Sarah Rankin, NCCU co-adviser Bruce "DP" dePyssler, Ashley Griffin, Lindsay Ruebens, Allie McCoy, Ashley Rogue and Phil Landingham. Check out the *VOICE* at durhamvoice.org and let the kids know what you think of their work at thedurhamvoice@gmail.com



A THOUSAND WORDS

BY JOCK LAUTERER

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