

# Springtime in the Wild Flower Garden

By **MARTHA CRONE**, Curator

You would scarcely believe that within view of the towering buildings of a busy metropolis there lies a bit of wilderness, the wild flower garden at Theodore Wirth park. It is sheltered by surrounding hills and heavy growths of conifers and forest trees, protected on the north by a fine growth of hemlocks which break the fury of the north wind in winter.

## NATURE BEGAN THIS GARDEN.

Following her master-touch, human hands impelled by a purpose have evolved its shaping, adding thousands of plants each year.



**Martha Crone** ties that arise.

The narrow trails have been widened into graveled paths that wind gracefully through the glen, swamp and hills. Follow-



**WILD GINGER (DEVIL'S CAP)**

ing the trails one might see within a short time plants brought from all parts of the state.

## IT IS SPRINGTIME IN THE GARDEN, WHEN NEW LIFE ARISES AGAIN.

The Snow or Dwarf Trillium, the harbinger of spring, appears on sunny slopes while patches of snow still remain in sheltered places. White, blue and pink Hepaticas, pushing through last year's leaves, soon join the glad procession.

In the moist shady places are

Trout lilies and Spring Beauty, while clusters of March-mari-golds dot the meadows. The Columbines are budded, Jack-in-the-Pulpit has just broken through the ground.

The Swamp Maples are flushed with red, the birches softly gleaming with only their tassels expanded. The group of hemlocks on the north border sway gracefully in the breeze.

The wool-wrapped fronds of Clayton's fern are unfolding. The humming birds and some warblers line their nests with the fleece. The Cinnamon ferns with their fronds of rusty spores frequent the wet places.

## AT LEAST 50 SPECIES OF FERNS CAN BE FOUND IN THE GARDEN.

A store of blooming violets of many hues runs riot along the path reserved for them.

The solemn hush is broken only by songsters arriving daily, some passing through after a brief stay, others to remain for nesting. Flocks of birds stop to drink at the pool where it is fed by a ceaseless spring. The warblers love the area for the shelter and the food it supplies them.

This stretch of wilderness, where the beauty of nature's touch is everywhere, is well worth visiting.