

# THE FRINGED GENTIAN

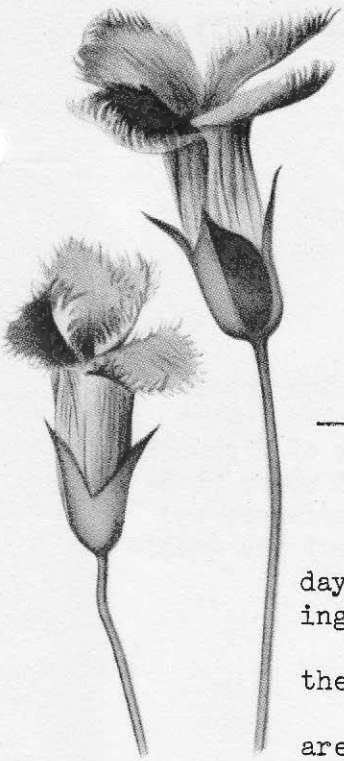
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## IDEAL OCTOBER DAYS



With just enough frost in the air to give it zest, while the days are sunny and warm. These are just the right days for outings to find what is left of interest in the plant world.

The maples, oaks, and birches are a riot of color, especially the sugar or hard maples with their brilliant bronze and gold.

The feathery garlands of the Virgin's Bower or Wild Clematis are an attractive sight climbing over bushes and trees. It is as lovely now as the white sprays of bloom in early summer. The Clematis climbs by hooking its leaf-stalks around any convenient twig, while grape vines and others twine their tendrils around anything within reach. The fragrant white blossoms have long since passed and soon these feathery festoons will break up and each seed sail away.

In marshy areas may be found the bright red berries of Northern Holly (*Ilex verticillata*). The leaves have dropped but the berries remain until the birds carry them away when deep snows bury other food.

There are garlands of beautiful clusters of bittersweet berries (*Celastrus scandens*). After frost each orange capsule splits wide open, displaying the brilliant red globe within. These vines sometimes climb to the tops of trees, coiling their young stems around any object they meet, always twining to the left or counter clockwise.

A close relative of Bittersweet grows on the edge of the lower pool, it is Trailing Strawberry Bush (*Euonymus obovatus*). This species has a long, spreading vine that trails close to the ground. This slender vine remains bright green until snow covers it. The roots, like those of the Bittersweet are bright yellow.

The fruit is a rough warty pink pod nearly round. When ripe it splits open like the Bittersweet berries showing a crimson ball in the center.

A few of the twenty-five varieties of Asters still remain in bloom. They bloom from August until October. Altho the fifteen varieties of Golden-rods are thru blooming, their golden plumes are now replaced by panicles of feathery fluff-tipped seeds.

Perhaps the following lines of -Bliss Carman, will remind us of more treasures to be found-

"The deep red cones of the sumach  
And the woodbine's crimson sprays  
Have bannered the common roadsides  
For the pageant of passing days."

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File this issue with the others in your "Fringed Gentian" green cover.

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NEW BOOK JUST OUT"TREES AND SHRUBS OF THE UPPER MIDWEST"

By Carl O. Rosendahl

This new volume provides a guide for the identification of the species of trees and shrubs, both native and cultivated, to be found in the region that roughly extends south from Manitoba through Minnesota, most of Wisconsin, the eastern half of the Dakotas, and parts of Iowa, Illinois and upper Michigan. It is nicely illustrated and of particular interest to gardeners and home landscape planners considering the information he gives about the qualities, uses and adaptability of the various species.

This volume can now be obtained at any book counter.

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GINSENG FAMILY

Altho the Ginseng Family includes five hundred species of herbs, shrubs and trees common to temperate and tropical regions, only a few are native to the United States. They are Wild Sarsaparilla, Bristly Sarsaparilla, Wild Spikenard, Ginseng, Dwarf Ginseng, Hercules' Club and Devil's Club. English Ivy also belongs to this family but it is an introduced species.

The only native tree in the family is Hercules' Club or Spikenard Tree, (*Arailia spinosa*). It has club-like branches, leaves a yard long and a flower cluster two feet high.

The prickly stems and branches bear leathery leaves and large clusters of greenish-white flowers. The fruit is a purplish-black berry. The bark of the roots and the berries have some medicinal value. The great abundance of berries on this tree is excellent for bird attraction, the birds being very fond of them.

The English Ivy (*Hedera*) is an excellent climber, covering buildings with glossy green. This vigorous woody vine is provided with aerial roots which cling tenaciously to wood or stone surfaces. The leaves are three-to seven-lobed and the flowers, appearing in autumn are borne in small greenish clusters, the berry-like fruit maturing the following spring.

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SPIDER-FLOWER

Spider-flower (*Cleome spinosa*) an annual, which has become very popular in recent years belongs to the same family as Capers, which are used in Caper sauce.

The bottled Capers are the peppery flower buds of an oriental plant. The seed pods of the Spider-flower have the same taste as Capers, as well as the buds of our well known Marsh Marigold which can be used in place of Capers. Spider-flower covers great areas in Colorado and adjacent territory. It is adventive from tropical America.

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BIRD NOTES

During September and October the southward migration of the birds is at its height. The daylight hours are given over to resting and feeding, since their flights are made mostly in the dark hours. The swallows, swifts, night-hawks and certain others that obtain their food on the wing do not do this, but proceed wholly by daylight, foraging as they fly. So they drift by us thru the bright Autumnal weather, slowly by day, hurried by night, wave after wave, following the turning of the leaves till they come to more tropical lands.

The Black-capped Chickadee is represented in the garden during summer by only a small fraction of those present in winter. They mostly migrate further north to nest. The few remaining here are perhaps encouraged by the supply of sunflower seeds at the feeder the entire year.

The Eastern Goldfinch so often called "Wild Canary" increases in numbers at the feeder in the garden during fall and early spring, greatly reducing during the summer and winter.

Many remain here as permanent residents and during the winter their bright yellow color changes to a dull-color and then they are little noticed.

In addition to the well known notes of -per-chic-o-ree-, it sings many sweet melodious songs, somewhat like the domestic canary. Many syllables noted were similar to the canary yet not as extended and trilling perhaps, due to the extensive training that canaries have had. Little wonder that they are frequently called "Wild Canary".

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird left the garden September 8th this year, about a week earlier than average, just ahead of a cold spell.

Their favorite flowers are Columbine, Honeysuckle, Paint Brush, Jewel-week, Trumpet Creeper, Oswego Tea, Gladiolas, Canna, Nasturtium, Salvia and particularly Cardinal Flower. It seems that these flowers and hummingbirds are interdependent.

In the last issue of "Fringed Gentian" a list of the birds nesting in the garden omitted the Eastern Green Heron and the Wood Duck. They have both nested here several years.

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ESTABLISHING WILD FLOWER GARDENS

Any group or society that has for its object the preservation of native plants deserves great encouragement.

Everyone should use their influence to help protect our remaining Wild Flowers before it is forever too late to preserve for posterity some of our natural heritage.

Wild flower plantings will restore the original charm to neglected woodlands and meadows. Rough, barren and infertile areas can be transformed into attractive beauty spots.

In transplanting, some plants must have a duplication of their accustomed surroundings and natural conditions, while others readily adapt themselves to new environments.

Belligerent weeds must be kept in hand. Some varieties are extremely aggressive and if not restrained will soon crowd out more desirable plants.

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SUMMER'S RETREAT

With dew and morning mists followed by sunny hours, when days are becoming briefer, a pensive silence fills the woods broken only by the occasional note of a few remaining song birds.

Summer is gone when crickets chant their drowsy monotone, the most characteristic sound of autumn.

As soon as summer days begin to wane, the Golden-rods, Sunflowers and Asters lavish their color upon the land. These members of the Composite Family, the largest family in the floral world, perhaps have the widest circle of acquaintance. The stigma has been removed from the Golden-rod, that it caused hayfever thru scientific research.

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STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM

Exceptionally hard winters, summers of drouth and heat are among the ways of nature of getting rid of the least efficient plants and thereby raising the general average of hardiness.

The long extended hot and dry spell of this past season really has been a challenge for many plants. Altho extensive watering has been carried on, during the summer, only a limited area of the garden can be taken care of. Watering is of little merit in contrast to normal rain falls.

The more one comes to know individuals in the plant world, the more one is surprised that so many can exist under varying conditions. Their ability to derive food from air, water and sunshine. Their age span and their size span.

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MILKWEED FAMILY

The Milkweed Family is composed of some very interesting members, most of which belong to the genus *Asclepias*, named for the Greek God of medicine, which shows that the ancients regarded it as a drug source. The hourglass-shaped flowers are delicately fragrant.

Most members of this family have a milky juice which could be a source of rubber. Its stem fibers are stronger than hemp and they would make good binder twine.

The seed pods split open, liberating the seeds, each attached to a silky parachute. If they land in water each seed has a corky edge which acts as a boat.

Native here are a number of species, the Common Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Poke Milkweed, Blunt-leaved Milkweed, Whorled Milkweed, etc. One member the Butterfly-weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) has a better sounding botanical name than common name. It has no milky juice and its vivid orange color is most striking. It is extensively collected by florists for decorating purposes.

The cultivated Wax-plant (*Hoya carnosa*) of this family is a very slow growing vine-like plant with fragrant star-like pink blossoms.

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