



Garden Curator's Letter

By Susan Wilkins

Spring is upon us once again and the gates of the Wildflower Garden have opened (or will shortly!) for another season of beauty, exploration and delight. This is a time of great anticipation and preparation as Garden staff work wholeheartedly to get ready for a new season of splendor and the enjoyment and learning that ensues. We know that you, and all of the other Wildflower Garden enthusiasts out there, are just as excited to get back out there this year. It's simply a wonderful time of year here for all lovers of wild plants and wild gardens.

This season, I am pleased that a new seasonal gardener position has been created at the Wildflower Garden funded by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's general operations budget. The new staff member is expected to start in early April and will work full time from April to November each year, assisting me with the complex, delicate and time-intensive work of physically caring for this 15-acre, native plant-focused botanical garden. We are thrilled to have the additional support of a seasonal gardener. Along with the horticulture internship program that brings college-age students out into the Wildflower Garden to learn all about caring for our plant collections, this new position will significantly enhance our ongoing efforts to manage invasive plants and their weedy sidekicks. It will also help us continue to build and care for the Garden's dynamic and diverse collections of plants.

Also, we are also pleased to announce that Kirsten Grohovsky was hired as the Wildflower Garden Program Coordinator late last season. Kirsten is returning this year in that role to coordinate the Garden's special tours and youth programs, which have grown exponentially over the past eight years. She will also be assisting with a variety of administrative tasks.

Another exciting development at the Wildflower Garden this year is that staff naturalists will be leading nature-focused programs in the regional parks of Minneapolis from April to October. Wildflower Garden staff naturalists have the knowledge and passion to inspire and inform park patrons system-wide, and this season they'll have a chance to share these gifts with even more people in different parts of the city. Look for information

about the Minneapolis Regional Park tours coming up in the seasonal Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden program booklet. Booklets are available in the spring, summer and fall in the Garden at the Shelter and online at www.minneapolisparcs.org/ebwg. Registration information for the tours, and all Wildflower Garden programs, is also available at the Shelter and online.

And, of course, all of the great offerings we have at the Wildflower Garden will be available this season as well, including a wide array of free public tours offered on weekends throughout the day and on weekday evenings; special programs like the full moon walks, new moon walks, and nature tots classes; and new natural history displays, touch-and-see items and children's crafts in the Shelter each month. As always, you'll also find naturalists and volunteers on duty in the Shelter and on the trails to answer questions and share in your explorations of this urban jewel of a garden.

We are looking forward to seeing you and yours out and about at the Wildflower Garden this season. Enjoy every step along the way!



Dutchman's breeches

