

THE FRINGED GENTIAN


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A BUSY SUMMER AT THE GARDEN



In my Spring Report I stated that the Garden was doing well and that the flowers were many and large. This situation has continued through the summer and even now the autumn flowers are blooming abundantly throughout both the upper and lower gardens. This may seem strange considering the drought which we had this summer--which even the rains of the last week or two have not completely remedied--; but I remind you that the weather, including rainfall, until July was almost ideal. This apparently provided the plants with the necessities to put in the store of food that was necessary for a bumper crop of flowers and fruit.

The tall blue Bellflower, which almost disappeared last year, made an excellent comeback and some other plants have done exceptionally well also. This year, for example, the wild Poinsettia is blooming in greater numbers than I can remember its ever doing before; the Rattlesnake-root seems to be everywhere; and just today the Downy Gentian started blooming. In the bog, the Cardinal-flower seems to have exploded. They have been increasing steadily over the last few years but for the last two years, the bog seems to have belonged to the Cardinal-flower.

Fruits have also been most plentiful in the Garden this year and the Black Walnut located just behind the opening left by the removal of the old office has produced a sizeable crop of nuts this year for the first time.

This Spring I also reported on the fantastic attendance which we were experiencing. The attendance has remained good, but it is now at, what I consider, a little more reasonable level. I believe that we were overattended this Spring, and I have reason to believe that some of our potential patrons who would have appreciated the unique potential of the Garden did not come then because of the large crowds. I'm afraid that at times we unfortunately were overrun by people who were simply going somewhere for free entertainment.--Popularity can be a problem!

Finally, some of you might be interested in knowing that the spring (located in the bog just behind the Garden) has dried up just as it did last year. It had done this before but only after prolonged drought periods. Last year it dried up after a short dry spell and this year it did so before the drought started. I'm afraid our spring is gone.

Kenneth Avery

Curator at the Garden

GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

It seems an appropriate time to surface, to greet you all as the new (since May) President of the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden before the Garden becomes dormant again and the Shelter is closed up for the last time this season. And so, greetings from one who has known and loved this precious plot of ground since a spring day back in 1930 when he discovered it quite by accident while birding.

I'll switch to the first person now because the Garden has been so much a part of me these last forty years. Memories -- Miss Butler standing near the old shelter; my first Cardinal, April 1932; a walk down the east path with Dr. Crone to see my first Barred Owl; drowsy August days talking with Martha Crone in the coolness of the old shelter; Mr. Whitney Eastman on a Memorial Day getting in an hour of birding between a morning and afternoon double-header at Nicollet Park; fighting a grass fire with Mr. Clinton Odell in the upper garden when it was still very new; and finally the rather feverish, hectic, but rewarding activity of the past several years when, under the leadership of the human dynamo, Cay Faragher, the new Martha Crone Shelter was planned, built and opened.

I went out to the Garden a few days ago. It has always had a special charm for me at this time of year with its Asters, Purple Coneflowers and Goldenrod. Why don't each of you come out to the Garden this fall to spend a quiet hour or so, and to inspect the new additions at the Shelter?

The beautiful new drinking fountain, given as a memorial to Mrs. Alvin Witt by Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, is now in place and operating. Work in front of the Shelter to repair the disturbance caused by construction is going forward. Our faithful hosts and hostesses are still on duty.

This is a beautiful time at the Garden, come and enjoy it.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Dassett, Jr.

President

CONTINUED ENTHUSIASM
FROM CAY FARAGHER, PAST PRESIDENT

The captivating photo of Lotus lilies which hangs in the Martha E. Crone Shelter raises the question of why this treasure disappeared from Birch Pond and refused to be re-established. They still flourish in Halsteads Bay at Lake Minnetonka as attested to by Mr. Alvin Witt who was taken to see them by Mrs. Arthur Erdall -- with the party was Dr. Leon Snyder who was equally enthusiastic. The conjecture is that the fishermen who invaded Birch Pond and who were using gold fish as bait in those days, lost some of their bait which grew to carp which destroyed the Lotus. We have tried, in the past, why not try to, once more, establish the Lotus in our bog pool where the Wild Calla flourishes so profusely.

A mystery this summer has been a clump of Purple Bergamot (vivid American Beauty color) not to be confused with the pale lavender Wild Bergamot or red Oswego Tea. Mr. Avery says he doesn't know where it came from. It just appeared.

We have Edelweiss growing in our Garden established from seed which Mr. Witt received from Europe. Once growing in the Prairie Garden these will prove to be hardy as testified to by Mr. Clarence Kuntz who has had a lovely clump in his garden for years.

Cheers to the Oconee Bell which Martha Crone planted and which drew such attention last spring. You can order them from "Orchid Gardens" - Shortia Galacifolia.

We must not forget, in August, to look for that tiny miniature of our Christmas plant, the wild poinsettia. Next August look across the path from the Odell bench in the upper garden.

Your Editor has just returned from Duluth where she was able to enjoy a few hours watching the hawk migration. It is quite a thrill to see a kettle of Broad-winged hawks overhead. There were many Sharp-shinned and Red-Tails, even a "V" of geese. The Duluth Bird Club provides counters for each day. Watch the papers for their final count. Birders come from as far away as Kansas.

NEW MEMBERS

Greetings to the new members who have joined us this summer:

Mrs. George L. Peterson	Wayzata, Minn.
Mrs. Jean G. Chamberlain	Minneapolis
Miss Elizabeth Bond	Minneapolis
Mrs. Sandra Nunemaker	Minneapolis
Mrs. Richard Kain	St. Paul
Mrs. C. O. Holten	Minneapolis
Miss Lucy M. Rolland	Minneapolis
Mrs. Evelyn N. Lafferty	Brooklyn Center

In June, 1971, AROUND THE CLOCK, a monthly newsletter for Employees of the City of Minneapolis, featured a fine article entitled "City Boasts Unique Wild Flower Garden!" On the front page was a picture of the Martha Crone Shelter, and on the second page one of our Curator, Kenneth Avery. AROUND THE CLOCK is published by the Minneapolis Civil Service Commission, Editor Fred H. Kobler.

After a visit by Girl Scout Troop 856, the membership took up a collection of \$7.00 which was sent to the Park Board and by them sent to the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden because they specifically mentioned the tapes of the bird calls and songs. Since it was a rainy day they assembled in the Shelter and enjoyed a fire in our beautiful fireplace. Thank you Scouts!

The Visitors Registration Book in the Shelter was given by Dr. Marian Grimes who has been chairman of the Volunteers this summer. It is interesting to find a variety of comments from many states throughout the country and from foreign lands.

From Essex, England "Peaceful"
 From Mariehamn, Finland: "Very different from Finland but I am able to recognize some of the plants."
 From Ohio "Near Chardon we have a preserve of a similar nature begun only a few years ago. Our preserve is larger in acreage, but you have such a variety of plants. Your history should be put in writing."
 From Texas "How fortunate the people of Minneapolis are to have a place of this kind so easily and quickly accessible."
 From Nebraska "How quiet and peaceful, and still only a few minutes drive from the heart of the city."
 From New York "Your Wild Flower Garden says what Ecology, a much publicized word these days, is all about."
