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PUBLICATION OF  
FRIENDS OF THE  
WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

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# THE FRINGED GENTIAN

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"THE TIME OF THE SINGING BIRDS HAS COME"

As I sit to write this report I have already spent one week in the Garden; the Skunk Cabbage has been in bloom for over a week; I have seen one Fox Sparrow; the Cardinals have been singing like it is Spring; the Juncos have been singing like I have never heard them sing before; the Snow Trillium and Hepatica are in bud and today, March 26, I saw a female Purple Finch carrying nesting material into a Pine tree. I think it is Spring.

This is the earliest spring that I can remember.

As I mentioned in the first sentence, the Skunk Cabbage is blooming and has been since the 17th of March. This plant is reputed to be the earliest bloomer in this region, but it is seldom seen in the Garden and sometimes it does not bloom there until the middle of April. I believe that it normally grows in areas where spring flood waters help warm the soil and thereby speed its growth. This does not happen in the Garden, but we have had so little frost this year that it duplicated this situation here. Usually the Snow Trillium is the first flower to bloom in the Garden--blooming about the end of the first week in April. About once every five years, however, the spring is warm enough that it threatens to bloom in March and about once every ten years it actually does. This is one of the years it will. By the first of April I expect the Snow Trillium, the Hepatica, and the Bloodroot all to be blooming. If I'm right in this expectation, it will be the first time that this has happened since I have worked in the Garden -- (about eighteen years.)

I'm afraid that this will be my last word on the spring which I have mentioned in my past reports. It remained dry all winter this year. I left town for a week and when I returned on March 17, I noticed that someone had capped the spring. On my first day back in the Garden, (the 19th) I removed the cap and about one cup of water rushed out and then it was over; and I'm afraid it is over forever. Our spring has gone the way of the Passenger Pigeon and for somewhat the same reason.

Respectfully,

Kenneth E. Avery

Curator

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NOT TO BE TAKEN  
FROM THIS ROOM

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEPT.

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

The Annual Meeting of members of the Friends of the Wildflower Garden, Inc. will be held on Saturday, May 12, 1973 at 10 a.m. in the Martha Crone Shelter. I urge as many of you as can to attend and to present your ideas for the Garden. If you know young people who have shown a latent interest in the Garden, invite them to come.

At this time, the Nominating Committee composed of Mrs. Reginald Faragher, Mrs. Donald Bridgman and Mrs. Preston Haglin will present their nominations for members of the 1973-1974 Board of Directors. Other nominations may be made from the floor.

## SOMETHING OF INTEREST : PRESS RELEASE TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Mrs. Donald Bridgman, who, I trust, will not sink me in some deep cranberry bog for calling her the Poet Laureate of the Eloise Butler Garden, has brought me the following addressed to the Friends.

A Nature Trail in Wisconsin, inspired by our own Garden, has come into being twenty-four miles north east of Taylors Falls, between Balsam Lake and Cumberland.

Betty Bridgman, an early member of the Board of Directors of the Friends, has helped to develop this trail as a means of coaxing people to walk through the woods and see the variety of plants that grow wild at this latitude. Kenneth Avery has helped with some identification.

This trail is on the land of Hunky Dory Farms Resort. Alfred Nielsen, the owner, farms 600 acres, most in woods.

From the Hunky Dory mailbox on the road the Libby Brown Nature Trail circles for a mile through the woods and along the river.

This year the hosts, Mr. & Mrs. Nielsen, invite all lovers of spring flowers to walk the Libby Brown Trail. When the ladyslippers are out in June, they will serve chicken dinner (\$2.50) by reservation on Saturday and Sunday, June 2 and 3 and June 9 and 10. Their phone: area 715-857-5211. There is no charge for a guided tour.

Driving directions: exactly 16 miles east of Taylors Falls interstate bridge, on U.S. 8, turn north on County E - six miles on E, then turn on G for one mile and turn north at Flake School. The resort is one mile north of the school. Signs for Hunky Dory are at all turns after you leave U.S. 8.

Robert J. Dassett, Jr.

A BIT OF HISTORY \* CONTINUED FROM JANUARY

The ups and downs of the garden have been many. The cyclones of 1926 and 1927 left great destruction. It was during these storms that the majestic white oak, often estimated to be 700 years old, was destroyed, and most of the tamaracks were uprooted.

Note: Per Eloise Butlers essay on "Trees in the Wild Garden" the big storm was in 1925 and monarch was only damaged.

During the unprecedented drought of 1934 and 1935, a large percentage of the plants disappeared, so that in the years following a complete re-establishment of much of the flora was necessary.

The original plan of the garden has been greatly changed. When it was established in 1907, the population of Minneapolis was only 300,000. Large attendance was not encouraged, since only two narrow footpaths led through the garden, which could accommodate very few -- and it has always been deemed inadvisable for visitors to roam at will. Now that the city's population has increased so remarkably, it has been found necessary to widen the trails and extend the walks to all parts of the garden, winding gracefully through the glen, the bog, and over the hills.

In 1917 a huge boulder was hauled into the garden and the top chiseled out on four levels for a bird bath, and here great numbers of birds congregate.

In 1926 the garden area was surrounded by a fence to give better protection against vandalism. This fence was replaced by a more permanent installation in 1939.

Note: The fence was erected in 1924, not 1926. The permanent fence was erected in 1938 by a WPA crew

The small building now located near the rear entrance was Miss Butler's original office which was then located at the site of the paved area in front of the Martha Crone Shelter. It served Miss Butler, Mrs. Crone, and Mr. Avery until 1971 when it was replaced by the present shelter. This new shelter was built and donated to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board by the Friends of the Wildflower Garden, Inc. and was named the Martha Crone Shelter in recognition of the many years of devoted service Mrs. Crone gave to the garden.

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 \*The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Wildflower Garden, Inc. will\*  
 \*  
 \*meet at the Martha Crone Shelter on May 12, 1973 at 10 a.m. to hear\*  
 \*  
 \*reports, elect a Board of Directors and transact any new business.\*  
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 \*Any member of the Friends is eligible to attend.\*  
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MEMORIAL GIFTS

A memorial gift has been received from Mrs. D. H. Sullwold of St. Paul for her husband who passed away November 5, 1972.

Mr. & Mrs. W. H. Tusler have made gifts for Nona Fitzgerald who died in January 1973, and Harry G. Sierk in February, 1973.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will soon be needed to serve in the Martha Crone Shelter, to greet visitors, show slides and answer the telephone, or to answer questions visitors may have.

Dr. Marian Grimes will be happy to have you call her at 377-0583 at which time she will explain your duties and assign you to a time schedule.

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"All Things by immortal power

Near or far

Hiddenly

To each other linked are,

That thou canst not stir a flower

Without troubling a star."

Quoted by Donald Culross Peattie in  
An Almanac For Moderns