

Lynn & Patricia Deweese, editors

PUBLICATION OF  
FRIENDS OF THE  
WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

2001 Bryant Av. S. #314  
Minneapolis, MN. 55405

# THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Vol. 29

Spring 1979

No. 1

Snowday Mushday Twobelowday Windsday Thawsday Freezeday Sleeturday

Thanks to Dr. Marian Grimes for this recital of days in a delayed Minnesota Spring. Let's hope these are all behind us for another year.

CURATOR'S COMMENTS : Few would accuse me of making extravagant statements if I wrote that this is the latest spring that I can remember. All of my emotions direct me towards saying this, but - - - I do remember a year, just a few years ago, that was just as bad - - - maybe worse. My memory says that 1975 was just as bad; my records imply that it was worse. In 1975 we had a blizzard during the first week of April. The Skunk Cabbage didn't bloom until April 18th. And Sam wasn't sent in to help me until the 22nd that year.

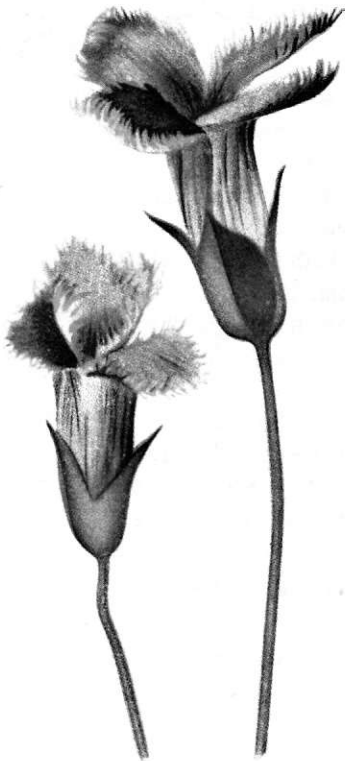
The date that the Skunk Cabbage bloomed is one indication that 1975 was the later year. This year it bloomed on April 6th. The Snow Trillium has been in bud since the 8th waiting for an encouraging day on which to open; the Hepatica started showing their flower buds on the 11th. I'm sure that one reason for the difference is that there is virtually no frost in the ground this year. That is the reason that I made that rash prediction in the last Gentian that the Skunk Cabbage would bloom early this year. The average blooming date for Skunk Cabbage in the Garden for the last 21 years has been April 5. This year's April 6th was not really late, but not really early either.

A few facts about our Skunk Cabbage. The earliest it has ever bloomed was March 13th in 1973; the latest was April 19th in 1964. (I have kept records since 1958.) The average opening date is April 5th. It has opened on April 18th twice - once in 1965 and once in 1975. In spite of our late spring, it has bloomed later than this in seven years and on the same date in two years.

On April 11th I finally began to see the first spring birds. First the Hermit Thrush, and on the 12th fox sparrows and a Woodcock. This is the second time I've seen the Woodcock in the Garden in the last 25 years.

For those of you who are waiting breathlessly for news of the Garden spring. It is flowing stronger than it has for at least 10 years.

Ken Avery, curator



PRESIDENTIAL THOUGHTS : Yesterday in late afternoon, I saw a wedge of about 25 Canada geese flying a hundred feet above Highway 62 in Edina. Last year, I saw a mallard hen sitting on her nest of eleven speckled eggs under a Russian olive tree in the planter in front of an office entrance 200 feet from highway 494 in Bloomington (I counted them when the mother was away). And today, I saw gray squirrels in Loring Park, descendants of the inhabitants of the Big Woods a hundred years ago. Last winter, I watched a family of raccoons raid my suet feeder several times, and use my flower boxes as pit stops! You have all seen many examples of wildlings which have adapted to life in man's society.

You also realize that there are many which cannot adapt - and not adapting they are lost - unless set-asides or sanctuaries or preserves are established for them. Such a shelter is the short grass prairie patch fenced in near Fort Snelling; and such a shelter is the Eloise Butler Wild Flower Garden in Minneapolis.

Alex Dean, president

\*\*\*\*\*

#### TO LOOK AT ANY THING

To look at any thing  
 If you would know that thing,  
 You must look at it long :  
 To look at this green and say  
 'I have seen spring in these woods' will not do -  
 You must be the thing you see:  
 You must be the dark snakes of stems and ferny plumes of leaves  
 You must enter in to the small silences between the leaves  
 You must take your time  
 And touch the very peace they issue from.

John Moffitt

\*\*\*\*\*

#### THE GARDEN HOSE

In the gray evening  
 I see a long green serpent  
 With its tail in the dahlias.

It lies in loops across the grass  
 And drinks softly at the faucet.

I can hear it swallow. Beatrice Janasco

\*\*\*\*\*

**VOLUNTEERS :** Now as the Garden opens for another season; we wish to acknowledge the great help our returning volunteers at the Martha Crone Shelter are to the enjoyment of the Eloise Butler Wild Flower and Bird Sanctuary.

Ms Elizabeth Abbott	Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Flannagan	Mrs. Mildred Olson
Mrs. D. E. Bridgman	Mrs. Robert Kessner	Mr. D. A. Peterson
Mrs. Clark Chamberlain	Mrs. Ronald W. Larson	Mrs. Robert Price
Mrs. Kathleen Darley	Mrs. Russell Larson	Mr. & Mrs. W. S. Quam
Mrs. Max W. Demler	Mrs. Genevieve Lyman	Mr. Gary Sexton

These former volunteers have already agreed to help us again this year. If others - either previous or brand new volunteers can also assist, please send your name, address, phone, and available hours to Dr. Marian Grimes, 1105 Washburn Av. S., Mpls., MN 55405.

Our Shelter volunteers are interesting (and interested) people. Merna Quam has led several tours for the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis - taking hundreds of birders around this country as well as to the Caribbean and Europe. Bill Quam also is active in the Audubon Chapter and was one of the incorporators of the Northwoods Audubon Center. Our volunteers have included all ages - teens through retirees - and many professions - medicine, education, insurance, wholesale, retail, manufacturing, homemaking, etc.

**MEMORIAL :** The FRIENDS gratefully acknowledge receipt of a memorial for Mrs. R. T. (Gertrude) Lint from Mrs. Jerome J. Gresser. This gift will be enjoyed by the many Garden visitors who find a moment of natural quiet in our small urban retreat.

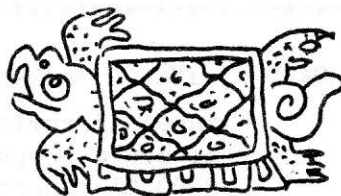
**ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS :** We continue to be appreciative of the many clubs who share , through memberships and gifts, in the support of the Garden. So far this year gifts have been received from :

Lake Minnetonka Garden Club  
Sunset Garden Club of Minneapolis  
Upper Hiawatha Valley Audubon Society  
Webber Park Garden Club

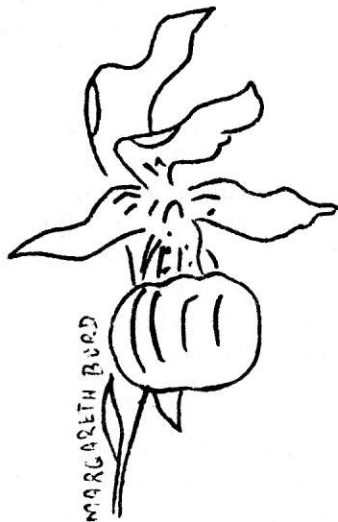
A complete list of these supporting groups will be included in the Autumn issue of the Fringed Gentian.

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNUAL MEETING :** The annual meeting of the FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN will be held next month. Notices will be sent soon to all current members. Join your fellow FRIENDS and see the GARDEN in its brilliant May bloom.



MAYAN TORTUGA



SHOWY LADY'S -  
SLIPPER

LADY'S-SLIPPER : a name given to the European varieties by medieval botanists in honor of the Virgin. The original Latin for lady's Slipper was Calceolus marianus - "the shoe of Mary". The old French names were sabot de la Vierge and soulier de Notre Dame - the "Virgin's sabot" and "Our Lady's shoe".

The medieval association with the Virgin was eventually put aside - perhaps because of the Reformation - and Venus became the lady so honored. Linnaeus devised the scientific designation of Cypripedium from the Greek Kypris, Venus, and podion, slipper or little foot. In French it became the sabot de Venus. Until recently the common American and English nickname was Venus' - slipper.

Nicknames for this family of flowers are many - squirrel shoe, Noah's ark, old goose, camel's foot, silver slipper, ram's head, moccasin flower, and whip-poor-will shoe.

WHO NAMED THE DAISY ? Mary Durant  
WHO NAMED THE ROSE ?

OTHER GARDENS : This February your editors visited SUNKEN GARDENS in St. Petersburg, Florida. A very intensive display of flowering plants and trees packed along a trail in a former lake bed. Though this intensive cultivation could hardly be called a "wild" garden, FRIENDS visiting Florida would certainly enjoy a stroll along this well marked trail. (admission)

GREEN THEMES : These weekly talks by Mary Lerman, horticulturist, continue weekly at 12:15 in room 216 of the main Minneapolis Library. No charge. Of special interest to FRIENDS would be :

June 6 - A Recent Release From ...

(Growing the new azaleas) (The GARDEN's azalea, though hardly native, continues to amaze visitors.)

June 13 - PRAIRIE PLANT COMPANION AND THE MILKWEED SEED POD

(Minnesota Prairie Plants)

June 27 - DON'T INTERRUPT ME !

(Native Minnesota Ferns)

GARDEN PLOTS : The Park Board will again make family garden plots available to Minneapolis residents. They are located at the old nursery in Theodore Wirth Park and will be allocated there on a first come - first served basis the morning of May 5th.

\*\*\*\*\* (\*\*\*\*\* ) \*\*\*\*\*

FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC. membership categories :

active \$ 5.00

sustainer \$ 10.00

sponsor \$ 25.00

builder \$ 100.00

benefactor \$ 200.00

all dues are tax deductible - classifications carry equal privileges

make all remittances to :

R. Bruce Hooper, treasurer

2600 Glenhurst Av.

Mpls., MN 55416