

PUBLICATION OF  
FRIENDS OF THE  
WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

Lynn & Patricia Deweese, editors  
3332 Emerson Ave. S.  
Mpls, Mn, 55408

# THE FRINGED GENTIAN



Vol. 29

Autumn 1979

No. 4

The Eloise Butler Wildflower and Bird Sanctuary has now ended its 1979 season. Winter will soon blanket it in snow.

CURATOR'S COMMENTS: October 22, a most cold, wet, miserable day this fall, I was sitting in the tool house when I happened to notice the Burgess Fluidic Oscillating Sprinkler that I bought, or to be more accurate, you bought for me, a few years ago and I realized that I had not used it once this year. I believe that this is the first year in all of the years I have worked at the Garden that we have not had to water once. I suspect that the weather statistics will contradict me, but I think that this is the wettest year we have ever had. The bog has been saturated all year. The path has remained spongy wet all summer and we even had to raise one section of it to make it passable.

I have to confess that this wetness is not just the result of excess rain. The pools and channel have silted up to the point where it does not drain the way it used to. I'm sure very few of you can remember, but prior to about 1960 there were three separate pools which were not connected in any way, and a hose lay down the middle of the path. We would put the hose in one pool until it was full and then into another pool, etc., etc., I didn't like the looks of this so Ed Bruckelmyer (who helped me from 1959 to 1970) and I dug out the pools -- they had silted in until they were more mud pools than water pools. We then dug a channel between them so we only have to fill the first one and the water runs into the others. They continually silt up so every year or two we have to dredge them out and put the "spoils" back on the land so it can seep in again.

This year (after only 20 years) the little channel was plugged so we had to clean it out too. If you could see me doing it you would wonder if you had slipped back into a past century. You would see me waist deep in water and mud (I do wear waders) dipping the gook out with a 5 gallon paint pail which has been bored full of holes. -- It looks like something out of the digging of the Erie Canal. It's hard work. I don't think you could hire a man to do it today, but it seems to me to be the only way to do the job that won't produce more scars than it heals. It keeps me young -- or whatever I am.

Kenneth E. Avery  
Curator



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: My wife and I are reading SIFTINGS - a book written by Jens Jensen in 1939. Jensen, often called the Thoreau of the 20th Century, never knew our beautiful Eloise Butler Garden, but many of his inspirational words from SIFTINGS seem to describe our own wild Eloise Butler Garden:

"What a difference between the atmosphere of this hidden retreat and the sophisticated gardens . . . Here you might come and go as you pleased, throw yourself on the grass, or sit down under overarching trees, centuries old, a remnant of a great forest that once covered this region. Many native flowers found a home here, and in a thorn thicket close by a thrush would sing at eventide, unharmed and unconcerned. Here was most precious freedom."

"I have a deep love for the deciduous forests and woodlands. One wonders at the close relationship - let us call it friendship - of the lovely hepatica growing close to the roots of a century-old maple or oak, protected by the friendly arms of the sturdy giant which offers it shelter and warmth in the winter and cooling shade in the summer. One marvels at the unity and harmony of such companionship and the fitness of these plants in relationship to each other."

Eloise Butler Wild Flower Garden is truly a marvel of unity and harmony - Treasure it - It's yours.

John Murtfeldt  
President

VOLUNTEERS: Again we are most grateful to the loyal volunteers who helped keep the Martha Crone Shelter open this year. Their contributions in time are invaluable. Volunteers this year were:

Miss Elizabeth Abbott	Miss Kathy Kelso	Mr. David Peterson
Mrs. Donald E. Bridgman	Mrs. Robert Kessen	Mrs. Robert Price
Mrs. Clark Chamberlain	Mrs. Ronald R. Larson	Mr. & Mrs. Wm. S. Quam
Mrs. Kathleen Darley	Mrs. Russell Larson	Mr. Gary Saxton
Mrs. Max W. Demler	Miss Mary Marohnie	Mr. & Mrs. E. F. Skarnes
Ms. Chris Dietrich	Mrs. G. L. Olson	Ms. Lynne Holman
Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Flannagan	Mrs. Mildred B. Olson	Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Deweese
	Dr. Marian Grimes	Mr. & Mrs. R. Bruce Hooper

Dr. Grimes' loyalty in coordinating these volunteer hours is greatly appreciated. If you, or someone you know, can help her next year, please volunteer. This year we most needed additional people on the very busy weekends.

PARKS AND RECREATION NEWS: One hundred and twenty-two years ago, Edward A. Murphy donated the first parcel of land to the City of Minneapolis for use as a park - now known as Murphy Square. This summer a memorial boulder marking this gift was placed in Murphy Square by his last surviving granddaughter Mrs. Donald L. Sterling of Portland, Oregon.

Eight new cross-country ski trails are planned by the Park Board for this winter - Theodore Wirth, Shingle Creek, Lake Calhoun, Minnehaha Creek, Hiawatha Golf Course, Matthews, Northeast, and Columbia.

Ninety one ice rinks will again be maintained - down from last years 116.

A CONVERSATION WITH CHARLES SPEARS -MPLS PARKS SUPERINTENDENT 7/13/79 continued from summer 1979 FRINGED GENTIAN.

What sorts of projects do you see the FRIENDS being involved in?

I would see them helping to better interpret what is there - the educational end of the GARDEN. So people do know what they are seeing and the worth of it. They should come away from there with a better feeling of why it is there in the first place. There are possibilities for good self-guided touring - well signed, etc.

I would like to see some evening programs in the GARDEN. A naturalist might give a night life program one night a week during the season. In some cases that could be on a volunteer basis with members of the group doing that. They've got expertise - but what they need to do is share it.

Wouldn't it be nice if some of the FRIENDS could relate experiences and knowledge to youth groups, and others?

For instance, this year we've changed our day camp program considerably. Instead of taking them out to Hennepin County Park Reserve District and putting them through the programs there - we can't afford the busing, we can't afford the cost - so this year we decided to do it in Minneapolis. This year we're taking them to the Diamond Lake Area on nature hikes, taking them down the Minnehaha Creek on canoe trips. We think they need to develop an appreciation of what we have in the city.

I would like to see some of our recreation center staff go through some training that would be involved in some of these things. They would go out to places like the Wild Flower Garden (I'm talking about our staff people here) and be given some background about what it is and what it does. That is the sort of leadership training we are going into.

We are starting that at Diamond Lake with guided tours -- this has not made use of volunteers there - rather our own staff, our horticulturist - Mary Maguire Lerman and our environmentalist - Mike Ryan.

This year we acquired a new environmentalist - Mike Ryan -. He is working on several projects. His main project will be on lake pollution control and the lake level study. Now he's doing the Diamond Lake thing because of the considerable silting caused by the interstate into that area. A number of people want us to just go in there and dredge it out. That may or may not be the answer there. It depends what sort of wild life you want there. And so the people agreed that he should have an opportunity to look at that and explain to them their alternatives before we do anything. You may go in there and destroy more habitat by taking something out than you want to destroy. It depends what sort of habitat you want and what you want a place to do. Those are the sort of things he is going to be doing.

(We will continue this CONVERSATION in the next issue.)

GARDEN TOUR GUIDE BROCHURES - Mike Ryan, Park Board Environmentalist attended the October Board of Directors meeting and discussed the present draft of our long awaited self-guided brochures which Mary Maguire Lerman, Park Horticulturist, Lynne Holman, Board Representative and others have been working on. We are now confident it will be printed and ready for distribution when the GARDEN opens in April.

Here are some sample stations from the proposed brochure:

Station 5: A relatively unknown shrub to most Minnesotans is Leatherwood (*Dirca palustris*) which is covered with tubular yellow blooms in early spring. Both the bark and wood of this shrub is good for construction purposes. Native Americans would use the bark when making thongs. Beneath the Leatherwood, a ground cover of Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) holds its umbrella leaves upward in anticipation of rain.

Station 7: Lookout on the dying birch trees and examine the trunks closely. Do you see the conks (mushroom-like growths) attached to the trunks? Whenever you see these on trees, they are an indication the tree is dead or dying from heart rot or another wood rot. See how many trees in the sanctuary you can find with conks.

Station 9: Trout lilies flower in early spring before the Kentucky Coffee Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) spreads its shade over the area. The seeds from the lima bean shaped pods of this tree provide a beverage source as one would guess from its name. In summer, an assortment of ferns, wild geranium and purple trillium cover the ground.

Station 11: Ostrich Fern (*Onoclea struthiopteris*) displays its pompous fronds in this, its preferred moist, sunny spot. The Ostrich Fern gets its name because the fertile fronds which remain upright over winter resemble ostrich plumes. Near the walk, the Striped Maple (*Acer pennsylvanicum*) displays its namesake in the bark.

Station 20: The American Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) guards our entrance to the bog. Notice the abundance of Skunk Cabbage, Marsh Marigold, Duckweed and Jewelweed as you cross the footbridge and enter the bog.

\*\*\*\*\*

GREEN THEMES: 12:15 p.m., room 216, Mpls Public Library, 300 Nicollet Mall. FREE  
A series of gardening talks offered every Wednesday by Horticulturist, Mary Lerman.  
Nov. 21; JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (Vegetable Legends)  
Dec. 12; A POINSETTIA PARABLE (Legends of Holiday Plants)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### FRIENDS OF THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN, INC.

##### membership categories:

active \$5.00  
sustainer \$10.00  
sponsor \$25.00  
builder \$100.00  
benefactor \$200.00

##### make all remittances to:

Mrs. Caroline R. Price  
350 Margaret Circle  
Wayzata, Minnesota, 55391

all dues are tax deductible - all classifications carry equal privileges