



THE FRINGED GENTIAN

December
1992

Vol. 42 No. 4

Notes From Our Gardener, Cary George



Unseen by most visitors, November and December is always a time of difficult maintenance work. This year is no exception: fourteen elms were found to be infected with Dutch elm disease. They were cut, the brush was burned and the larger logs were trucked away by forestry crews to be later chipped. This prevents the overwintering of elm beetles and their subsequent emergence in the spring. Most of the diseased elms appear to be red elm (*Ulmus rubra*) and not American elm (*Ulmus americana*). With the majority lost in the 70's, less than a dozen elms remain in the Garden.

Two large white oaks (*Quercus alba*) that died in the drought years of '87-'89 were "topped" and their main trunks left for wildlife habitat. These trees had become dangerous, often sloughing branches on the trail in windstorms.

Several paper birches (*Betula papyrifera*) close to the main trail leading to the Crone Shelter were also removed for the same reason.



After many delays by the contractors, the Back Gate Project is nearly completed. A new path was designed and edged with treated timbers. It "dead-ends" at the outfall of the pool and I believe it will be seen by visitors as one of the most beautiful vistas in the Garden.

A new rough-cedar birdfeeder is being built by Park Board carpenters and the Audubon Society has agreed to continue their winter feeding program.

The pool area is having a new bench designed and tentatively an upgrading of the utilitarian back gate is in the works. I have planted many wildflowers and shrubs in the construction area and hopefully, much like the Front Gate Project, this new expansion will take on a 'patina' indistinguishable from the rest of the Garden.



No one typified the spirit of the Wildflower Garden more than Bob Sandell. So it is with much sadness that I note his death after a lengthy battle with Parkinson's disease. Few days went by without seeing Bob and his wife Mary walking through the Garden and Wirth Park. He exemplified the "connectedness" we all feel to the Garden. A gentleman in every sense of the word, his courage strengthened me and I will miss him.

Winter: More Heroic Than Summer

"He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for wonder and admiration in winter. In winter the stars seem to have rekindled their fires, the moon achieves a fuller triumph, and the heavens wear a look of more exalted simplicity. Summer is more wooing and seductive, more versatile and human; it appeals to the affections and the sentiments, and fosters inquiry and the art impulse. Winter is of a more heroic cast, and addresses the intellect. One imposes larger tasks upon himself, and is less tolerant of his own weaknesses."

- - John Burroughs, conservationist



I prefer the still joy:
The wasp drinking at the edge of my cup;
A snake lifting its head;
A snail's music.

Theodore Roethke
1908-1964

Getting Up Early

I am up early. The box-elder leaves have fallen.
The eastern sky is the color of March.
The sky has spread out over the world like water.
The bootlegger and his wife are still asleep.

I saw the light first from the barn well.
The cold water fell into the night-chilled buckets,
Deepening to the somber blue of the southern sky.
Over the new trees, there was a strange light in the east.

The light was dawn. Like a man who has come home
After seeing many dark rivers, and will soon go again,
The dawn stood there with a quiet gaze;
Our eyes met through the top leaves of the young ash.

Dawn has come. The clouds floating in the east have turned white.
The fence posts have stopped being a part of the darkness.
The depth has disappeared from the puddles on the ground.
I look up angrily at the light.

Robert Bly, Minnesota Poet



Naturalist Notebook for 1992

April - -

Do you recall your first walk in the Wildflower Garden last spring? Did you come early to see the skunk cabbage, snow trillium and miniature speckled trout lily leaves poke through the earth? Maybe you came the last week of April when it finally began to warm up and it seemed almost everything was blooming: Dutchman's breeches, trillium, Virginia bluebells, anemones and hepatica. Did you see the snoozing screech owl sleeping the day away in the white oak tree? I bet it was the lure of sighting a yellow-rumped warbler or ruby-crowned kinglet, or to hear the pure sweet song of the white-throated sparrow. It is comforting to know that the Garden will be here for all of us next spring to search for old familiars and to find new surprises. See you soon! - - *Sara Gallagher*

May - -

Even though we had the coldest Memorial Day on record at 34°, May entered in a fever of 87° and the Garden bustled with spring activity. The woodland was laced with trillium, golden seal, wild geranium, Canada anemone, shooting star and, for the brave nose, carrion flower. By mid-month, visitors were greeted at the front gate by the graceful yellow lady's slipper. Down in the wetland greenery was emerging and spilling over, while the wild calla and foamflower sprang up their white faces. Up on the prairie, the uncommon kittentail stretched up straight while the wild indigo began to open its vivid blue pea blossoms. In the Fern Glen, raccoons chose a cozy cavity of an upright dead tree to nest while the fiddleheads of ferns opened up below.

In the air was a cacophony of courting songs by avian life. Birds in their breathtaking springtime plumage included indigo bunting, rose-breasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, great crested flycatcher, and a host of warblers such as blackburnian, golden-winged, Tennessee, etc. - - *Sarah Christiansen*

June - -

June began with the showy lady's slipper bursting into bloom on the 2nd, and by May 9 all four clumps were in brilliant bloom. There was a delightful lack of mosquitoes until near the end of the month. Both the Bog and the Upland Prairie had much flowering activity including: horse gentian, wild indigo, chickweed, scarlet lychnis, blue flag, sweet flag, cow parsnip and more. A few non-flowering plants including: horsetail (*Equisetum*) and royal fern sent forth their fertile spore-bearing parts. During June many young tiny toads were seen hopping about. Some interesting insects were: fireflies, dogbane beetle, and tortoise beetle larva. Also observed were: tiger swallowtail, red-spotted purple, painted lady butterflies, and mourning cloak and hawk moths.

Birding was a family affair as many pairs of species were observed including: our resident indigo buntings, kingbirds, great crested flycatchers, olive-sided flycatcher and gray catbirds. Newly fledged "fluffy" chickadees, baby mallards and raucous pileated woodpeckers were seen. Also noted was a scarlet tanager and a pair of peregrine falcons which could be those nesting on the Colonnade Building near highways 394 and 100. - - *Chris Garty*

July - -

What a pleasant July! 1992 was the second coldest summer in recorded history of the Twin Cities; temperatures during July only reached into the 80's four times. Many of the visitors to the Garden had read Martha Hellander's biography of Eloise Butler, gaining both insight into the root beginnings of the Wildflower Garden and a greater knowledge of Minnesota native plants. In addition, our guided tours educated visitors not only about the birds and wildflowers, but also on ferns, insects, nocturnal life, natural teas and the bog. - - *Nancy Niggley*

Naturalist Notebook - Continued

August - -

The month began at the Wildflower Garden with several rather unnatural events. On August 2 we invited the public for a special stamp cancellation event where the Crone Shelter was turned into a post office for the day. Martha Hellander signed copies of her book *The Wild Gardener*, we served birthday cake, and harp and guitar music performed on the front porch. All of this was done to celebrate Eloise Butler's birthday, and everyone attending had a good time.

On the 3rd dredging began for the new pond and the fence was moved to expand the Garden boundary. The second weekend of the month was the hottest weather of the summer, even the squirrels were seen sprawled out and panting. During August we discovered the home of a short tailed shrew just in front of the Crone Shelter; the den was located directly under the safflower birdfeeder so when the birds spill, the seeds land at the shrew's front doorstep or down one of its holes. This shrew is one of just two venomous mammals found in North America and is considered important for its ability to limit populations of both insects and rodents. - - *Stephanie Torbert*

September - -

The September phenology highlights consisted primarily of fall bird migration and some early, but spectacular fall colors. A September 3 birding hike to Wirth Lake provided a last look at a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds. Green-backed herons and juvenile wood ducks decorated the slough, while black-crowned night herons and belted kingfishers perched above the big lake. We also observed as a cormorant jousted with a bullhead that it took from the depths.

Fall warbler migration peaked in early September. Their fall plumage made identification a challenge, as their distinctive oranges and yellows gave way to subtle washes of gray, olive and yellow. Some species seen the first week were magnolia, Canada, Wilson's, Nashville, chestnut-sided and an American redstart. Other bird notes were the arrival of the white-throated sparrow and the intensifying coloration of the juvenile male rose-breasted grosbeak.

Some early glimpses of fall color were apparent in the red maples and tamaracks. A reflection of summer's brilliance, the red turtlehead proudly bloomed by the pond in the Woodland Garden.

- - *Peter Gravett*

October - -

Our first really chilly days in October came mid-month with temperatures below 30 degrees. We had plenty of bright, clear days, too. The fireplace in the Crone Shelter was a good place to warm up before heading out for a walk through the Garden. Near the end of the month we recapped the season with a slide presentation held at the Shelter; photos of favorite blooms during the year were shown and fond memories were shared.

A resident woodchuck was seen on a couple of occasions, moving slowly and looking chubby. In October we began to get ready for closing up for the winter, knowing that the next time we see old woodchuck will be in the spring when the skunk cabbage and hepatica will be peeping through. Have a good winter and we'll see you next year! - - *Tom Savre*



Recipes For Your Birdfeeding Station

Once you begin feeding the birds, don't forget to keep up your birdfeeding station through the winter months as birds are creatures of habit and soon become dependent on you. The site for your feeding station should be protected from the wind and easy for the birds to get to when there is snow on the ground. A pile of brush on either side of the feeder will provide a place to perch and preen in the winter sun.

Popcorn, raisins, cheese cubes, peanuts in the shell, donuts and dried fruit are easy to string for hanging in trees near your feeder. Below are two recipes of Irene Cosgrove, author of *My Recipes are for the Birds*:

Granola Treat

Mix: 1 C. Peanut Hearts
1 C. White Millet
1 C. Wheat Germ
1 C. Crushed Dog Biscuits
1 C. Raisins
1 C. Sunflower Seeds

Heat separately $\frac{1}{2}$ C. honey and $\frac{1}{2}$ C. corn oil. Add these to above mixture, mix well and bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Refrigerate. Granola can be fed as is or combined with suet.

Nuthatch Nibble

Combine: 1 C. Popcorn
2 C. Bread Crumbs
1 C. Sunflower Seeds

Prepare Raw Beef Suet: Put suet through meat grinder, melt it down over low heat, allow to harden slightly and then reheat. While in liquid form pour $1\frac{1}{2}$ C. over dry ingredients. Sprinkle with 1 tsp. of sand. Stir mixture until well coated. Turn out onto wax paper and bring paper up around suet, pressing to form a ball. Refrigerate until firm and then place in netted suet bag.



A pinecone stuffed with peanut butter makes a nourishing winter treat for birds like this tufted titmouse.

1993 Roster for the Friends' Board of Directors

Beginning in January 1993, the Nominations Committee of the Friends will begin their annual search for members who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors. The obligations are minimal, but the contribution of time, energy and talents will be felt for years to come. This is the time for members to step forward to serve on the Board. This fall each member received a Directory complete with phone numbers, call one of the officers to offer your help in a more direct way.

Thank You Volunteers!

This year the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden provided 1,050 volunteer hours greeting visitors to the Garden. Shirley Schultz served as coordinator of this undertaking again this year. Shirley is recovering from major surgery and has asked that in lieu of her sending personal thank you notes to each of the 46 volunteers, that this issue of the newsletter include a special thank you to all the volunteers who enjoyed sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with others.

Natalie & Stan Adler
Lyla & Alfred Anderegg
Jeanelle Arch
Kenneth Avery
Cathie Baldwin
Connie Bartz-Lavoie
Geri Benavides
Jean Bengstron
Harriet Betzold
Jill Boughner
Bonnie Bray
Betty Bridgman
John Bridgman
Betty Bryan
Elaine Christenson
Marie Demler

Kim Freeman
Dr. Irving Greenfield
Lynn Grossman
Ann Hall
Maureen Henderson
Carol Howard
Dale Johnson
Judy Jones
Pat Kennedy
Ann Kessen
Lois Lanz
Bernice Larson
Linda Lee
Cammille LeSevre
Gloria Miller
Maria Brink Mueller

Mark Nemeth
Robbie Olsen
Kaye Rudberg
Bob & Mary Sandell
Teresa Schillo
Shirley Schultz
Jennie Singsaa
Joyce Smeby
Laurie Snively
Kathryn Stennes
Lila Turner
Carol Weber
Milissa Winn
Kathleen Wolgamett



Park Board Volunteer Banquet: Scott Neiman, President; Naomi Loper, Commissioner; and Elaine Christenson, Volunteer Honoree

In September, Friends' Board Member, Elaine Christenson received special volunteer recognition at a banquet sponsored by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Elaine has been a regular Monday afternoon volunteer at the Wildflower Garden for the past eight years.

SLIDE PRESENTATION

Should your organization be interested this winter in a discussion and slide presentation on native plants found at the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden, contact Ann Kessen of the Friends. Miss Butler and her beloved Garden come to life in a colorful slide show, and a speaker will be available for questions. Ann Kessen may be reached at 529-3793. This is a free service provided by the Friends.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Yes, the Garden has closed, but memories of its beauty in each season are plentiful and sustain us through the winter. In this season consider gift memberships for special friends. Have you thought about your colleagues at work? Address a membership to "Employees' Lounge" or "Reception Office."

Did you know that complimentary copies of the *Gentian* are sent to libraries, schools, neighborhoods and youth organizations? Pass on names and addresses of organizations you think would be interested in receiving a complimentary copy of the newsletter.

GIFTS TO THE FRIENDS

In Memory of
John F. Killoran III
Mr. & Mrs. John Haldeman

In Memory of
Catherine Running
Mrs. Edward H. Woehrl
Elizabeth G. Roddy
Marie L. Nelson
Lucile E. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Wiste
Maybelle E. Johnson
Dr. & Mrs. Norman A. Sterrie
Ruth Angell
Doris Blakely
Louise Malmberg
Norma Hall & Olive Lund
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph G. Mayo
Pearl Rye
Margaret Charlson
Mrs. Kathleen Knauth
Mary F. Knapp
Adel D. Will
Grace M. Seed
Mrs. Thomas P. Patterson
Mrs. Maynard Burns

HELP THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN - JOIN THE FRIENDS!

To join the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden complete the membership form below and send the completed form and membership dues to: Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Betty Bryan, Membership Chair, 1076 Cedar View Drive, Minneapolis, MN 55405.

MEMBERSHIP FORM - *Friends of the Wild Flower Garden*

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

___ Sponsoring Member \$ 25.00
___ Family Membership \$ 15.00
___ Individual Member \$ 10.00
___ Limited Income \$ 8.00
___ Sustaining Member \$100.00
___ Benefactor \$200.00
___ Life Member \$500.00



**HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS
from the
FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN**

The perfect holiday gift for your favorite Nature Lover....and for the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden.

Postcards of Eloise Butler, founder of the
Wildflower Garden \$.80 each

Envelope Cachets imprinted with silhouette of
Miss Butler \$.80 each

Eloise Butler Biography, *The Wild Gardener* \$ 17.95 plus tax and postage

Profits from the sale of the items listed above will go to support the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary. Allow 2 weeks delivery, order your gifts now.



Friends of the
Wild Flower Garden
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

Cheri D. May, Mpls.....Susan Vos, Mpls.....Daniel Nordquist, Mpls....Valentine O'Malley, St. Paul.....Ida & John Davies, Roseville....Elizabeth Drake, Mpls...Kaye Rudberg, Golden Valley...Carol M. Rustad, Lincoln NE....Eleanor G. Lamb, Minnetonka.....Steven, Chrisine & Amelia Watkins, Minnetonka...M. Michael Menzel, Edina

