

THE FRINGED GENTIAN™

A PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

Social media campaigns highlight Black scientists and nature enthusiasts

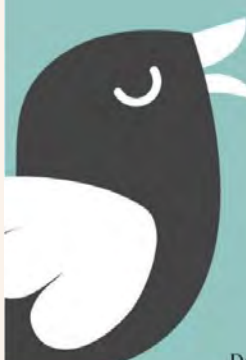
By Lauren Husting

More so than in any other year in recent memory, countless people are flocking to outdoor pursuits to stay social, active, and entertained in the midst of a global pandemic. Recent events, however, have reminded us that the outdoors are not always a welcoming place for everyone. On the morning of May 25th, the same day George Floyd would die in police custody in Minneapolis, Christian Cooper took to Central Park's The Ramble to birdwatch. The video of what happened next would go instantly viral: after he asked Amy Cooper, a white woman, to leash her dog while in the sensitive habitat, she escalated by calling the NYPD to claim an African American man was threatening her life. Her actions were all too familiar to the Black nature community and underscored the inequities Black naturalists face in both research and recreation.

In response to the Central Park incident, social media movement @BlackAFinSTEM created the inaugural #BlackBirdersWeek, a campaign to increase visibility for the multitude of ways Black people interact with the natural world. From May 31st to June 5th, each day was dedicated to showcasing a different facet of life for Black naturalists. People across platforms shared personal histories, incidents of bias and racism, and the scope of their work. Other STEM areas quickly followed with weeklong programs of their own. These campaigns sought to build a community for Black people working in the natural sciences, and to introduce the broader population to the multitude of diverse voices that work in nature and value outdoor experiences.

The week was so resonant that a secondary hashtag, #BecauseofBlackBirdersWeek, developed to showcase the positive effects of the movement. Topic's popular 2019 YouTube show, *Birds of North America*, hosted by Jason Ward, saw a renewed viewership. Sheridan Alford, a Masters student at the University of Georgia and co-founder of Black Birders Week, has a new segment on PBS called "Birding 101". The GoFundMe campaign "Free Binoculars for Black Birders", offering new Black birders their first pair of the often prohibitively expensive equipment, topped out at \$35,000 in donations and has started distributing binoculars to applicants. The National Wildlife Federation announced new internship programs to help young Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) launch conservation careers.

One of the questions most asked by white nature lovers during the week was "What can we do to help?" Organizers and participants largely responded with a call to diversify viewpoints and amplify the voices of BIPOC in all fields. Following social media campaigns is just one start; promoting the work of BIPOC scientists and naturalists and encouraging nature organizations, outfitters, and publications to reflect inclusive, antiracist values is another. Those with financial means can donate to causes that support nature education, outreach, and experiences for BIPOC. On a civic, national, and global level, we must challenge the environmental racism that puts community health and ecosystems at risk. 2020 has been a year of overwhelming reckoning for the world, but times of change hold great promise for a more just and joyful future.



#BlackBirdersWeek

- May 31 #BlackInNature**
Celebrating Black nature enthusiasts everywhere
- June 1 #PostABird Challenge**
Post any bird you find or a bird fact with the hashtag
- June 2 #AskABlackBirder**
2-hr Q&A with Black Birders on Twitter 7pm - 9pm EST
- June 4 #BirdingWhileBlack**
Livestream Discussion
tinyurl.com/BlackBirders
7pm - 830pm EST
moderated by @annagiftyo
- June 5 #BlackWomenWhoBird**
Follow all the amazing #BlackWomenWhoBird

Design by: @bellzisbirding and @beaniejean_

Post promoting the first annual #BlackBirdersWeek on the @BlackAFinSTEM Instagram account.

As Corina Newsome, a biologist studying Seaside Sparrows in Georgia and one of the progenitors of #BlackBirdersWeek, writes in Audubon Magazine's Summer 2020 issue, "We are at the cusp of a turning point that embraces human diversity as joyfully as the diversity of feathered creatures. To get there, White people must value Black lives and hear our voices - and lean into uncomfortable conversations about racism and privilege that follow. The birding community must show that it is not neutral. Neutrality is dangerous, and this is our protest."❖

Lauren Husting is associate editor and Friends Board Member

President's Letter

By Kathy Connelly

During this time of unrest, I have been thankful for the Garden, and enjoyed visiting there. I am immensely grateful for the leadership of the Garden Curator, Susan Wilkins and to others on the Park Board, who designed a way to open the Garden safely. And also for the Garden staff who bravely staff the areas where they encounter members of the public, possibly exposing themselves to the virus. I have been delighted by the Garden's robust social media presence that has expanded by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on Facebook and Instagram during this time.

This feeling contrasts with our community's response to George Floyd's killing on Memorial Day. This one act of terror has opened up awareness about the daily dangers and barriers faced by Black people in the United States. We are all learning more about the issues, and what it means to be anti-racist. As an organization the Friends are examining our relationships, our board function, and our membership and asking how can we better share those spaces with people of color? By the time this newsletter comes out, the board of the Friends will have met to continue those discussions. With more resources now available than in the past, and a more informed perspective, I believe we can take more concrete measures, including decisions on newsletter content. You may notice for example, on the Gentian's back cover, we now acknowledge that the Garden is located on Dakota homelands, and this issue of the Gentian features an article by Friends' board member Lauren Husting on Black Birders Week and another by board member Gary Bebeau on



Blooms of mid-summer: Culver's Root (left). Photo by Bob Ambler.
Gray-Headed Coneflower (right). Photo by G D Bebeau.

Native American ethnobotany. Part of the culture shift that needs to happen for everyone to thrive, is for people of privilege to make space for Black voices to speak on topics that regularly appear in the Friends' publications. So, in addition to welcoming writers of color to contact the editor with story ideas, I'm also recommending a great piece by Duluth resident Dudley Edmonson, "This Land is Your Land? Insights from an African American Conservationist" on Nature.org. Also highly recommended is an *outstandingly* comprehensive July 26, 2019 article by Kim Marie Walker on LitHub.com called "Finding My Climate-Conscious Tribe: Black Nature Lovers and Writers." Her list of works by Black writers spans every genre, and includes "Black Nature," edited by Camille T. Dungy (which was reviewed in the spring 2019 Gentian). Reading about a beloved topic from a different perspective can make that subject come alive again, and enrich our experience, but these writings also have universal appeal and I found that these works truly resonated for me, a person of European descent.

Finally, we are trying something new with this issue, and welcome Lauren Husting as associate editor with Colin Bartol. Lauren has been the content creator for the email communications many Friends supporters receive. Her creativity and fresh perspective pair well with Colin's leadership and skillful content development. Thank you both for this excellent issue!❖

Kathy Connelly

Save the Date: Annual Members Meeting
October 18 1-3PM on Zoom

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions on larger gatherings, we will be having our Annual Member Meeting this fall via Zoom video conferencing. If you can join us, please download and make sure your Zoom application is up-to-date.
Meeting ID: 406 195 8513 Passcode: 991400



An indigo bunting takes a brief pause in the prairie on a clear July day. Photo by Bob Ambler

The Summer Garden

By Susan Wilkins
Garden Curator

To the delight of many, the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden opened on May 19th with a modified approach to trail use to allow for social distancing and to provide for the safety of visitors and staff. Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board leadership and staff spent significant time adapting to the changing conditions during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring months to optimize access to park spaces, like the Garden, while ensuring that visitors and staff could consistently follow public health guidelines during this challenging time.

The Garden has been busy in these past few months since opening. Some days staff see 50-60 people coming through the Garden gates in the first hour of operations. With staggered entry times, there can be a bit of a wait on busy days, and visitors' patience is rewarded once inside the Garden on the one-way trails set up for this season. For at least the first part of each group's walk, they have the trail, for as far as the eye can see, all to themselves. Staff have heard from many a visitor that the sense of peace and solitude the 2020 trail experience affords, by default of keeping groups well-spaced, has been a true gift: a silver lining and a

great accolade to the healing balm of being in nature-centric spaces, especially during this trying year.

Another gift of the Garden this year comes thanks to the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden. Staff have been busy, all season long, planting a variety of plant species in all corners of the Garden. The Friends funded plantings along the entry way trail, Trillium Trail, and adjacent hillsides are adding to the richness and beauty of the Garden experience and to the health of the Garden's woodland plant collection. This project will continue into September with at least 25 species of wildflowers, ferns, sedges and grasses represented and over 2,000 plants being added by the time the project is completed. Year by year and plant by plant, the complexity and beauty of the Garden's plant collections grow with a little help from the Friends. Thank you to all of the members who have contributed to these efforts.

If you have not had a chance to stop by, or if you have been by frequently this season, be sure to make it out before the last wildflowers bloom and autumn's parade of color concludes. The Garden is waiting for you!

You can also stay connected to the Garden by visiting the Garden on



Black-eyed Susans grace the prairie's summer trails. Photo by Bob Ambler

Facebook and Instagram @EBWGMPLS. Staff are leading twice weekly virtual programs at 9am on Thursdays and Fridays through the end of September and posting updates and Garden highlights frequently.❖

This article appears courtesy of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board



Turkey tail mushrooms are a common sight on fallen logs around the Garden Photo by Bob Ambler.

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Native American Ethnobotany - Historical Minnesota Research

By Gary Bebeau

The Native American peoples of Minnesota were very knowledgeable about the uses of our native plants. For the preservation of that knowledge we owe a debt to Frances Densmore of Red Wing, Minnesota. When her work was ultimately published in 1927 under the title of *Uses of Plants by the Chippewa Indians*, it spread over 122 pages of text with 33 plates in Volume 44 of the *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* published by the Smithsonian.

Nearly 200 plants are listed in the study with their uses separated into categories of food, medicines, charms, natural dyes and decorative arts. For three decades Frances gathered plant information from both men and women, although women were more inclined to talk to her, at White Earth, Red Lake, Cass Lake, Mille Lacs and a few out-of-state locations.

The general effectiveness of certain plants for medicinal uses in native culture is at least partially substantiated by the later inclusion of a number of species in the *U. S. Pharmacopoeia* and *National Formulary*, in some instances, up to as late as the 1950s.

These species included Black Bugbane, Swamp Milkweed, Prickly Ash, Pasque Flower, Highbush Cranberry and Wild Sarsaparilla. Some specific examples are: The Chippewa were well aware that Spreading Dogbane, *Apocynum androsaemifolium*, could be used for heart palpitations. It was later determined to contain the most powerful cardiac stimulant of any plant in Minnesota, baring only Prairie Dogbane, *Apocynum cannabinum*. For stomach cramps and dysentery the inner bark of Chokecherry, *Prunus*

virginiana, was cut into small pieces and boiled in water until they produced a strong black solution with an astringent bitter taste which was then consumed a pint at a time. William Clark wrote on June 11, 1805 while in what is now Northern Montana that Meriwether Lewis who was suffering severely, took that treatment and recovered the next morning.

Would you believe that the dainty blue harebell root, *Campanula rotundiflora*, can be prepared to create a treatment for earache. Convulsions were treated with a decoction from the root of Wild Pea, *Lathyrus venosus*, which they had learned was so strong that it had to be mixed with Spreading Dogbane.



Harebell. Photo by G B Bebeau.

To color yarn, the inner bark of speckled alder, *Alnus incana*, makes a yellow dye and Gold Thread, *Coptis trifolia*, makes a bright yellow dye. Mahogany is obtained from Red Cedar bark, *Juniperus virginiana*.

In her lifetime Frances Densmore also recorded the songs and music of a number of native groups, most importantly the

Chippewa and the Teton Sioux. She published 14 monographs on those topics alone. Then there were the customs and languages which also reached publication. For 50 years, from 1907 until her death in 1957, she was associated with the Bureau of Ethnology.

Frances was born and died in Red Wing where her family maintained a home. Even today, the house at West 3rd and Fulton is known as the Densmore House.

Her monograph as originally published by the Smithsonian is available from Dover Books, but with a slightly different title - *How the Indians Use Wild Plants for Food, Medicine & Crafts*.

Densmore's material has been included in many of the specific plant information sheets on the Friends website.❖



Frances Densmore, ca.1900 at a Chippewa encampment. Photo courtesy MHS.

Gary Bebeau is a Friends' Board Member

An Interview with Pam Weiner

By Candy Bartol

What made Pam Weiner such an enthusiastic supporter of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden?

The purchase of a home very close to the Garden led to her discovery of the Garden while on a walk and resulted in a path toward decades of devotion. Observing that the garden received few visitors, she met with then curator Cary George. She could see Cary's obvious devotion to the Garden and that made a lasting impression on her. As a home gardener touring the Garden, the visits became her first introduction to native wildflowers. She was amazed by the fragile spring ephemerals as well as summer's towering cup plants. In 2000 she decided to become a volunteer at the Martha Crone Shelter in the Garden. This was only the beginning of her involvement.

Why did you choose to get so involved in supporting the Garden?

I began to understand the critical role of the Friends. I listened to Cary talk about his concerns for the Garden's health in the future and realized the need for me to get involved. I knew a few people on the Friend's Board and decided to explore that avenue of supportive engagement. I was mentored and guided by Steve Pundt, Lisa Locken, Harriet Betzold, Joy Davis, and Gary Bebeau. We were all inspired by the Garden itself, but also by the hard work of Martha Crone, Ken Avery, and Cary as well as by the vision and generosity of Clinton Odell and other early Friends. We also believed that the Garden was an important place for the preservation of native plants for study and appreciation.



Pam enjoying the sun. Photo by Deborah Boehm.

How do you think your vocation in psychology aided in your successful experiences with the Friends of the Garden?

I was an instructor, researcher, and community outreach person at several University of Minnesota departments before I was a clinician. I think teaching is the basis of a tremendous amount of meaningful activity in life. The love of learning and application of knowledge to enhance human experience drives so many of us in our work lives and beyond. The opportunity to share this wonderful Garden with people of all ages for their edification has always been inspiring. And it is not a one-way process. I have learned SO MUCH from my experiences with the Garden and the Friends. It has been totally rewarding for me.

For you, what is the perfect visit to the Garden?

In the last few years I have had two kinds of perfect Garden visits. One is a volunteer shift in the Shelter, greeting visitors, and helping them with information and guidance in connection with their Garden exploration. This can mean finding a mysterious plant in a guidebook, having access to the wonderful naturalists and their expertise, feeding the fire, washing the bird baths, and doing whatever else is needed. The second perfect Garden visit is my own walkabout through all three habitats, observing plants, birds, and insects before ending up at the Avery Bird Terrace, where, if it is quiet, I like to do my Tai Chi practice while looking down at the northern edge of the Wetland.

What do you see in the future for the Garden?

The Garden is in good hands with Garden Curator Susan Wilkins at the helm and strong backing from the Friends. My hope is that upgrades involving the entrance, shelter, and bathrooms the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has decided on will enhance the visitor experience and make staff work and storage spaces more generous and efficient. A wish I have is that the essential work of protectively caring for the Volunteer Stewardship Area around the Garden and nearby by continued invasive removal and planting seed will be sustained into the future. There are serious unknowns ahead regarding climate change and how the Garden will be affected. My hope is that the Garden can endure and evolve through these conditions. Finally, the dream we have had about welcoming ALL our citizens into the Garden remains a heartfelt one.❖

Candy Bartol is a Friends' Board Member

An excerpt from "A Wild Botanic Garden" by W. P. Kirkwood, 1913.

Wildness is the aim of the garden's supervisors, however, and the aim is fully justified by the beauty and charm of the result, whether considered in massed effects or in detail. From the first spring sproutings of skunk cabbage, Jack-in-the-pulpit, or hepatica, through the climactic splendors of summer and fall, to the day when snow decks the trees and covers the brown stalks of the annuals, the garden is a place which invites body and mind and spirit to play.

A History of Closures of the Garden

By Colin Bartol

As we live our lives, we often believe we are in unprecedented times. In truth much of what is happening today has happened before, just that we do not have enough knowledge about the past to recognize it. By doing research about the past it helps us to normalize our current situation and help remind us of solutions which we can apply today. This can reduce the anxiety in our lives and help us plan how to deal with the situation. The closure for COVID 19 this spring was an unusual event, but it is not the first time the Garden has closed.

Many of us remember the May 22, 2011 tornado when there were significant number of trees down over the entrance road as well as branches to clear from the Garden trails. The park was closed for two weeks during that period. The damage to the Garden and Wirth Park was extensive, but now most of it has recovered.

From 1911 to 1958 the Garden did close one day a week for the curator's day off. The first curator Eloise Butler had Saturdays off from 1907 to 1933. Eloise also spent the summer months from 1907 to 1910 on the East coast. The second curator Martha Crone had Wednesdays off from 1933 to 1958. The curator being gone often did not deter visitors though.

Prior to 1938 there were some fences up, but the entire Garden was not enclosed until that year, thus people always had access to it even if the curator was out. Now we are accustomed to having

the gate keep the deer and other wildlife from eating the flowers or causing other damage. Without the gates there was no way to secure the Garden and it was available all year long.

There are no notes from Eloise Butler from 1918 about any closure due to the Spanish flu pandemic. During that time close to 12,000 people died in Minneapolis, but the Garden, like the surrounding Glenwood Park did not close.

There were many late opening due to Winter weather prolonging its stay, most notably in 2018 when the opening date was May 1 but looking back through the archives the closure this spring was the longest on record. With it being over we can celebrate being able to enjoy the Garden. We were able to make it through as we have done other closures in the past, as we will future closures.❖

Colin Bartol is Editor of *The Fringed Gentian*™



Trees down on the Garden entrance road from the tornado of May 22, 2011. Photo by Judy Remington.



Garden staff await visitors at the front gate. When the Garden opened in June, signs and staff inform visitors of new procedures to follow when entering and experiencing the Garden. Photo by G D Bebeau.

Membership - Memorials - Donations

50 Year Club

Memorials and donations to the Friends are tax deductible and constitute an important part of keeping the Garden a special place for generations of people to enjoy. In 2020 undesignated donations will be used to fund the Student Transportation Grant Program. Project update information is on The Friends website. An acknowledgment of donation will be provided to all donors. Note on memorials: Please give a name and address for the person honored, or their family, so that we can notify them that a memorial or honorarium has been received.

The Friends are grateful for all supporters. This is a special anniversary notice about three sets of patrons who have been with the Friends for at least 50 years!

Karol Gresser joined the Friends in 1967. "There is no other place around the Twin Cities where the seasonal changes are so enjoyable and visible, or where one feels safe walking the paths, as in our special Garden. It has been a place of peace and quiet to enjoy our native plants and birds, and to recharge my spirit."

Jerry and Lee Shannon also joined in 1967. They particularly like visiting the Garden – "from April, when the snow trillium is blooming, until mid-June, when the showy lady's slipper is standing tall in all her resplendent beauty. This span of each year brings back the ephemerals of the woodland garden, each exhibiting its own seasonal splendor."

Mr. J. S. Futcher rounds out our threesome. He joined in 1970 and was a member of the Minneapolis Bird Club. He remembers becoming acquainted with the Garden and Martha Crone when he was in the eighth or ninth grades. Mr. Futcher has been able to provide us some important and elusive Garden history details of the natural springs and of birding events in those earlier years.

Donations Received

April to August 2020

Frances Abbott
Donna Ahrens
Amazon Smile
Robert Ambler
Ferrand Anderson
Janet Anderson
Mary Kay Arthur
Zachary Baker
Colin Bartol
Marit Berg
Cecily Brown

Susan and Jeff Dean
Mary Dolan
Donald & Susanne Nevin
People for Parks
Ann Rubin & Sandy
Almquist
Amy Ryan
Schwarzkopf, John
Spencer, Dean
Paul West

for Douglas Murray. from Marcia Marshall.

for David Waugh from Kathy Connelly.

for Harriet Betzold from Victor Betzold, Kathy Connelly, Joy Davis, Cary & Janet George, Ann and Tracy Godfrey, Sheila Leiter, Janice & Eric Nelson, Mary Steinbicker, Linda Tom & Bret Taylor, Ines Trebesch.

For: Betty Kay Elson from Lars & Melissa Hansen.

Correction to last issue:

for M. A. Mortenson Jr. from John & Joan Haldeman.

Memorials Received

April to August 2020

New Members:

INDIVIDUAL

Celeste Birkeland
Anthony Fantin
Roberta Scholer

DUO/FAMILY

Margaret Serich & mark Laub

Membership is open to any interested person or organization that wishes to support the Garden. Our Student Transportation Grant Program pays for bus transportation of eligible Minneapolis Public School students to the Garden for educational programs. The Friends provide funding to support the Garden plant community and infrastructure.

Membership Form

☐ Individual \$15 ☐ Duo/Family \$25 ☐ Sponsor \$100 ☐ Sustaining \$200 ☐ Life \$500

Memberships can be placed online at www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org or mailed with a check payable to:

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden
Membership
P. O.Box 3793
Minneapolis, MN 55403-0793

Please specify if the membership is a gift. Each membership is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Member name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Newsletter by ☐ E-mail OR ☐ Postal

This is a gift membership from _____

The recipient of your gift will receive a letter of welcome from the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden

Donations and Memorials

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Friends of the Wild Flower Garden
Treasurer
P. O.Box 3793
Minneapolis, MN 55403-0793

Thank you for helping to sustain the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary. All gifts are tax-deductible.

Name _____ Amount \$ _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Memorials Amount: \$ _____

This is a ☐ memorial for - or a ☐ gift in-honor-of _____

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The Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary comprises cultivated but naturalistic woodland, wetland and prairie environments, 2/3 mile of mulch covered pathways and a rustic shelter where educational programming and guide materials can be found. It is the oldest public wildflower garden in

the United States, established in 1907. The 15 acre site is located within the city of Minneapolis on Dakota homelands and is owned and operated by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. The Garden is open from April 1 through October 15 from 7:30 A.M. to one hour before sunset. Weekends only October 15 to October 31.



A sea of brilliant pink, Queen of the Prairie is one of the summer wetland's brightest stars. Photo by Bob Ambler.

As summer merges into autumn, the last flowers of the season are hurriedly blooming, as tho fearful of impending frost. The landscape is glorious during August and September with the white and purple of the asters, countless as the stars for which they were named. The golden-rods are gilding the roadsides and meadows. The many varieties of golden-rods and blue, purple and white asters are a real harmony of contrasting colors, making the hillsides glow with loveliness. *Martha Crone*

The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc. is an non-profit organization of private citizens whose purpose is to protect, preserve, and promote the interests of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary for its unique beauty and as a sanctuary for native flora and fauna of Minnesota, and to educate and inspire people of all ages in relating to the natural world.

The Fringed Gentian™ is published for members and supporters of the Friends. For changes to your mailing address or email address, please email

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Christi Bystedt at:

membership@friendsofeloisebutler.org or
mail to:

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