



PUBLICATION OF
FRIENDS OF THE
WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

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THE FRINGED GENTIAN

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is the first issue of our Wild Flower Garden Publication - begun in a small, inexpensive way. Let no one be misled by its size - good things frequently come in small packages.

Martha Crone, our editor, is a talented writer. One of our Minneapolis newspapers several years ago, ran a number of her contributions to "Museum Notes," on its editorial page. She has also been well received as a lecturer on wild flowers, having given over thirty talks, before various clubs and gatherings during the year just past, illustrated by beautiful kodachrome slides taken by her in the wild flower garden. In addition to telling you about wild flowers and how to raise

them, Mrs Crone will write about our birds visiting in the garden.

You will find nothing herein about business or politics, war or sports - so in your home, read it by your fireside and become relaxed for a few minutes, in an atmosphere of wild flowers, birds and Thoreausian natural beauty.

Clinton M. Odell, Pres.

THE FRINGED GENTIAN

The Fringed Gentian was chosen as the title for this publication because it is considered one of the choicest of American wild flowers. It was once proposed as our national flower.

This beautiful and very elusive gentian blooms during September and October, really an afterbloom of Autumn days - last yet loved the best. It will always be associated in one's mind with the charming lines written by the poet William Cullen Bryant -

"Thou waitest late and comest alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end."

The delicate violet-blue corolla, open only in sunshine is a vase-like tube with four rounded and spreading lobes finely fringed around the top. They close with a twisting gesture at night or on dull days.

It is fast disappearing due to the increased cultivation of wild land. As the population increases the wild flowers decrease.

Among other rare flowers the Fringed Gentian is being successfully grown in the Wild Flower Garden. With a thorough understanding of its habits and requirements it can be propagated. It requires low moist meadows or bogs.

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Reprint of the First Edition Published 50 Years Ago

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THE FRINGED GENTIAN Cont.

The seeds must be sown as soon as ripe which is two or three weeks after the blossoms have gone by. Preferably in sandy soil containing some peat and a small amount of lime. Fringed Gentians will not tolerate acid conditions. Leafmold from maple trees makes a good mulch.

If the seeds must be kept until spring, they should be kept moist in an airtight container.

The Fringed Gentian (*Gentiana crinita*) is a biennial, therefore blooms the second season and then dies after ripening its seeds.

STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM

Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) brings to a close the year's long floral procession, blooming long after the impressive pageant has passed.

When November woods are brown and bare, as if by magic it bursts into bloom. Long narrow petals that seem like yellow streamers, shine from a distance. They have a rare fragrance.

The ripened leaves drop when the flowers appear. The first frost splits the hard pods containing the ripened seeds formed from last years bloom, ejecting the shiny black seeds with great force sometimes a distance of twenty feet.

In the Wild Flower Garden the Witch Hazel came into bloom this year on October 21st and was still in lovely bloom the fore part of December, even after frost and heavy snow.

Its name is derived from the fact that in days of yore witches said or did things not conventional. The Witch Hazel having defied the ancient laws of the calendar, comes by its name honestly.

It was Witch Hazel that was used for divining rods to point to hidden springs when digging wells years ago.

DID YOU KNOW

That the Horse-Gentian is not a gentian? Its botanical name is *Triosteum perfoliatum* and it belongs to the Honeysuckle family. It has many common names locally applied such as - Feverwort, Wild Ipecac, Tinker's-weed, Wild Coffee, Horse Ginseng and White Gentian. It is well established in the Wild Flower Garden.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The first annual meeting of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc., will be held at its office, 2318 Chestnut Ave., Minneapolis, Minnesota, on Tuesday, January 6, 1953, at 2 p.m. (Our office is in the Burma Vita Plant).

The enclosed binder was designed for filing of issues of our publication for future reference.

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WINTER BROOK

A running brook in winter has a greater charm than at any other time. Such a brook can be encountered merrily gurgling through the Wild Flower Garden in Theodore Wirth Park.

Spring fed, the stream never freezes over, in spite of sub-zero weather, since spring water maintains a temperature of 40 to 45 degrees F. in winter as well as in summer.

Bordering this brooklet can be found masses of lush green watercress. This pungent mustard-flavored green is a great favorite for salads. Its trailing stems take root and readily produce new plants, soon taking possession of the brook.

The snowy background and the crisp "water-green" floating on the running water, present a picture of fresh winter beauty.

M. G.

VALUE OF THE GARDEN

Thousands of people have enjoyed the facilities of the Wild Flower Garden, either for pleasure or study.

Much remains to be done to fully develop the garden. It requires sufficient funds, help and material to do justice to such a unique garden, which is conducted for the preservation of herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees.

The value of the work being done in this Wild Flower Garden cannot be too strongly stressed, since the rapid advance of civilization, is causing most of the remaining wild land to disappear.

This natural heritage is worthy of perpetual preservation for the generations to follow.

Help us to grow and prosper by inviting an acquaintance who is interested in wild flowers to membership.

SPRING ISSUE

A number of early spring flowers will be discussed in the Spring Issue of this publication, especially the Snow Trillium, first flower to bloom in the woods garden. The Skunk Cabbage of the bog and Pasque-flower first in the prairie garden. Propagation information of various plants will also be included.

Suggestions will be cheerfully welcomed for future issues.

BIRD NOTES

The two bird feeders near the office are being maintained thru out the winter with sunflower seeds and various other bird food. Several suet bags are hung near-by. Birds frequenting these feeders are Cardinals, Slate-colored Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers. The pheasants gather the gleanings from the ground.

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ELOISE BUTLER

Eloise Butler for whom this garden was named would indeed be proud, were she alive today to witness the progress being made in her beloved garden.

Summer that seemed scarcely here is gone again until another year. Nature has now spread a carpet soft and white, and last years flowers now asleep beneath the snow, bring back memories sweet of the swiftly passing pagent of summers flowers.

WILD FLOWER SEEDS

Seed gathering time has been a delight, and many varieties of seeds are on hand to be distributed in the spring to our members for the asking.

"SNOW CRYSTALS"

From the Journal of Henry D. Thoreau

A divinity must have stirred within them before the crystals did thus float and set; wheels of the storm chariots. The same law that shapes the earth-star shapes the snow-star, and as surely as the petals of a flower are fixed, each of these snow-stars comes whirling to earth, pronouncing thus with emphasis the number six.

On the Saskatchewan, where no man of science is there to behold, still down they come, and not the less fulfill their destiny, perchance melt at once on some Indian's face. What a world we live in! Where myriads of these little discs, so beautiful to the most prying eye, are whirling down on every traveler's coat, the observant and the non-observant and on the restless squirrel's fur, and on the far-stretching fields or forest, the wooded dells and the mountain tops. Far, far away from haunts of man they roll down some little slope, fall over and come to their bearings, and melt or lose their beauty in the mass, ready anon to swell some little rill with their contribution, and so at last, the universal ocean from which they came. There they lie like the wrack of chariot-wheels after a battle in the skies. Meanwhile the meadow-mouse shoves them aside in his gallery, the school boy casts them in his snowball, or the woodman's sled glides smoothly over them, these glorious spangles, the sweeping of heaven's floor - and they all sing, melting as they sing, of the mysteries of the number six - six - six - six. He takes up the water of the sea in His hand, leaving the salt. He disperses it in mist through skies. He re-collects and sprinkles it like grain in six-rayed snowy stars over the earth, there to lie 'til He dissolves its bonds again.
