

THE FRINGED GENTIAN™

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

Dear Friends,

Spring is on the way, bringing another wonderful season of beauty and discovery at the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary. I believe you will agree that EVERY year is a fine one at the Garden, and we depend on this because whatever else may be troublesome in the world, we do have this sustaining place where we can experience some serenity and peace of mind.

This year is the Garden's 110th anniversary, and it has been 65 years since the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden was established. To commemorate these milestones we are launching Campaign 175 to help raise the funds needed to complete the Garden's Wetland Boardwalk. According to estimates, this project, which composes about two-thirds of the total boardwalk's length, will cost about \$175,000. The design is already covered, so these new funds will be used for materials and installation, including the cutting and heat-treating of wood from ash trees that will be used as surface boards.

As you may know, Phase I of the Wetland Boardwalk has been a complete success, garnering an award from the Minnesota Chapter of the American Association of Landscape Architects and positive feedback from Garden visitors. Phase II will extend the walking surface southward over the swampy area to higher ground where the path turns east. The new portion of the walkway includes an expanded gathering spot with benches where students, birders and others can take time to examine the wetland more closely.

In this issue of the Fringed Gentian, you will find an envelope with information on how to help make Phase II a reality by making a donation to Campaign 175. (Those who receive the Gentian by email can make donations on our website.) We must remember that the wetland is our most precious habitat, and it was treasured by Eloise Butler and all four of the Garden curators who have followed her.

If you have not yet experienced the new Boardwalk, please plan a visit to the Garden this spring where you can walk on the part

that has already been completed. I promise you it will be a delightful stroll, and you'll also see how important it is that we finish this project.

Our other big project for this season is a new and exciting event celebrating the blooming of the Showy Lady's Slippers. On June 10 and 11, we will have guided tours, a small bazaar outside the front gate with refreshments and Garden items, special membership offers and more. Details will be posted on our website (www.friendsofeloisebutler.org), and we hope you will plan to join us and bring along a person or two who are new to the Garden and the Friends.

Finally, I am very pleased that the Friends' Board of Directors has an excellent new presidential candidate preparing to take office as of our annual meeting in May. Her name is Kathy Connelly, and she is a longtime Garden supporter. Kathy will be a skillful leader, guiding us into the future with a strong vision and a deep understanding of our purpose.

As this will be my last letter as board president, I want to make mention of the special team of volunteers who bring us this beautiful newsletter. Thank you Meleah Maynard, our gifted editor, John Toren, our talented designer, and Donna Ahrens, our kind and eagle-eyed copyeditor. Lovely issue after lovely issue, the three of you have made us pleased and proud.

I am also most grateful to our Shelter and FIPAG volunteers, and their leaders, who give generously of their time to care for our Garden and its visitors. Thanks also to the wonderful Garden staff, who have taught me so much. I cannot say enough about the dedication of the Garden Curator, Susan Wilkins, who helps the Friends fulfill our goals in so many ways. I commend the board for their service and support. I especially want to thank my fellow officers, Melissa Hansen, Gary Bebeau and Candy Bartol, for their hard work and dedication. It has been an honor to live in synch with the Garden these past 10 years and to be graced by my connection to a very special group of Friends.

Most sincerely,

J Pam Weinek



Annual Membership Meeting

Please join us on Sunday, May 21, at 3 p.m. in the Community Room at the Kenwood Park Center, 2101 West Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, to hear the latest news about the Garden and enjoy light refreshments.

Meet the New Volunteer Coordinator

BY DONNA AHRENS

The 2017 season will be Jennifer Dunne's third as a volunteer and her first as volunteer coordinator for the Martha E. Crone Shelter at the heart of the Wildflower Garden. She assumed the role at the end of the 2016 season, when former coordinator Lauren Husting returned to doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota.

Asked about her history with the Garden, Jennifer explains, "I came here with both my grandmas—one lived in Uptown and the other, in Golden Valley—when I was growing up. Even though at times I rolled my eyes at the idea of looking at flowers, *again!*, those visits were a precious part of my childhood."

Four years ago, after raising their kids in southwest Minneapolis, Jennifer and her husband moved to the Bryn Mawr neighborhood, adjacent to Theodore Wirth Park. They enjoyed hiking in the park, and one day they chose to walk to the Wildflower Garden. Jennifer hadn't visited there for several decades, and she recalls that tears came to her eyes as they walked the trails. "I had these childhood memories of the Garden, I'd been a hiker on the outside [of it]—and here was this protected treasure on the *inside*." Soon after, she decided to volunteer, welcoming visitors at the shelter.

Jennifer admits that despite her love of the Garden, she's no expert on wildflowers. "I know perennials from working on my own garden," she says, "but I had no history with wildflowers" when she started volunteering. Now she's learning. "My goal this year is to go on all the naturalist-led walks [for shelter volunteers]," she declares, adding, "Those walks are one of the biggest benefits of volunteering."

Among the other benefits is the opportunity to learn not just from the naturalists but also from visitors to the Garden. "I've been surprised at how many international visitors we have, as well as people from all over the United States," she says.

The visitor shelter's schedule also offers volunteers considerable flexibility. "People can choose to work every afternoon on a certain day, once or twice a month, or on an as-needed basis," Jennifer says. She describes the volunteers as "interesting, interested, and smart. It's a great little fellowship of people who bring quality, talents, and respect" to the Garden's operations.

Jennifer notes that the Garden's volunteers have always played an important role in the organization—and continue to do so. "Last year, there were 392 shifts [from April through October], and we filled 367 of those! That's 94 percent, and we think we'll do even better this year." She's looking forward to welcoming volunteers old and new at the orientation session in April.

Asked if she has a favorite season or flower at the Garden, Jennifer demurs. "That's like asking someone to select their favorite child! I might start to say 'It's spring,' but then I'd think, 'No, midsummer,' and then, 'Oh, it's fall, when the Garden starts to go to sleep.' I can't pick a favorite."

Why is the Garden special to her? Jennifer pauses, then says, "It's such a nice place to feed our spirit. ... I feel like we have to guard against the negative input in our lives. To have

good output, we need to have quiet—a time when we can listen to the trees rustle, watch the birds flying around us, and focus on the natural environment."

And, just like her grandmothers, she plans to pass along the gift of the Garden to her grandchildren. Grandson Will is 18 months old, and another grandchild is on the way. She laughs. "When they get older, I plan to tell them that the shelter is my cabin."

—Donna Ahrens is copyeditor of the *Fringed Gentian*



Jennifer Dunne

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Garden Curator's Letter

By Susan Wilkins

It's that wonderful time of year again when after a deep pause from the pulsating growing season and just enough time to reflect, retool and prepare, the Wildflower Garden opens to welcome in another spring of beauty and renewal.

This is the Wildflower Garden's 110th season of being a wild botanic garden for all to enjoy. When Eloise Butler envisioned a public, native plant sanctuary so many years ago, she set out to create a space that would provide room for a wide variety of plants from all across the state and region and a place that would afford anyone with the interest and inclination an opportunity to learn about and enjoy the experience of native plants in a natural setting. Years later, her hope of what a wild botanic garden could provide for the community endures. It's heartwarming to recognize that we are still working to sustain Eloise's vision.

This season we are pleased to have two horticulture interns and one full-time seasonal gardener working out in the field. These critical staff members work day in and day out to physically care for the Wildflower Garden's plant collections through a variety of tasks that involve enormous amounts of weeding, invasive species removal and planting, not to mention trail maintenance. The 15-acre Wildflower Garden, although naturalistic in its style, is a garden like any other and requires thoughtful and thorough tending throughout the season.

We are excited this season to have the helpful guidance of local and national gardening and natural resources management authorities, including Claudia West, Rick Darke, Roy Diblik, Fred Rozumalski, Lee Frelich, Julia Bohnen and Dan Shaw as we work to improve the health and vitality of the Wildflower Garden. Through meetings, professional conference presentations and literature, these individuals have shared their knowledge and tips about how to work with some of the challenging issues that a garden like ours faces. To this end, look for the addition of several sedge species that will be planted as groundcovers in woodland garden areas this spring. Also, see if you can find a few of the creative ways that we are experimenting with erosion control and soil development in woodland and wetland garden areas this summer.

The Wildflower Garden is an urban ecosystem like no other, and that includes the dedicated people who care for and about it. Volunteers are always welcome to join the volunteer program managed by the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden to assist in the Visitor Shelter and out in the field. In addition, people can help out with special projects, like the completion of the boardwalk through the wetland, by donating to the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden. Keep up to date with current programs and plants in bloom by visiting www.minneapolisparks.org/ebwg. We look forward to seeing you out in the Wildflower Garden this season. Enjoy the beauty of nature today and every day!



Photo: John Toren

The Fern Glen

By Gary Bebeau

In late 1955, while Martha Crone was Garden Curator, the Garden received a \$750 gift from the Minnetonka Garden Club, along with a gift of \$25 from The Little Minnetonka Garden Club. The money was used to establish Fern Hill, which was at that time was an undeveloped portion of the Garden.

Today that area is known as the Fern Glen. Located at the far northeastern section of the upland addition, it is naturally separated from the rest of the upland garden by a ridge. Large trees, many of which were likely already there, help shade the ferns in the summer. Martha Crone wrote this about the creation of Fern Hill: "The making of such a garden will be a most delightful experience. An intensive program has been planned to establish many varieties of ferns, including some of the more elusive ones, which so often grow where no eyes can see them. The area consists of a gentle slope and some low land, being splendidly adapted to accommodate many varieties of ferns."

In all, 2,161 ferns were planted in the new fern garden. Martha kept a log that listed each of them and where they had come from. She added more ferns over time, and when Ken Avery became Curator in 1960, he carried on her commitment to the Fern Hill. With few exceptions, all of the ferns in this area of the Garden are native to Minnesota. Two of the most long-lived and hardy are the interrupted fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*) and lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*).

—Gary Bebeau is a Friends board member, treasurer and website coordinator



Above: It's easy to see the "interrupted" part of these interrupted ferns, halfway up the stalk.

Left: Lady ferns

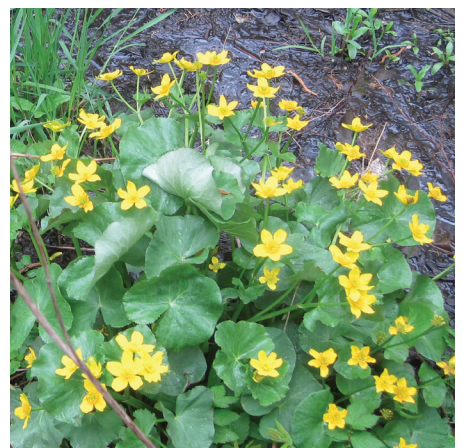
Spring (and early summer) Blooms



Golden Alexander



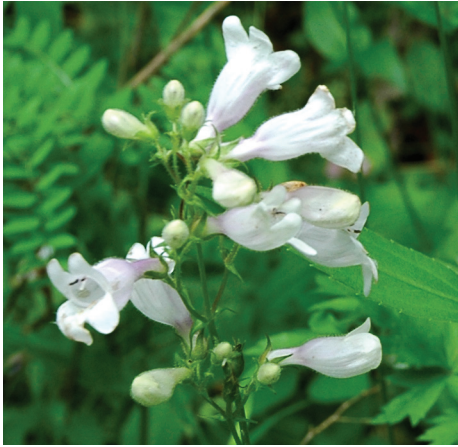
Bindweed



Marsh marigold

Try as we might to make the most of winter, the return of flowering plants is a joyous event that never gets old. If the spring ephemerals take pride of place, it's simply because they come first, before the canopy has begun to fill out overhead.

Come May and June, there's always something new to discover on a walk through the Garden's open prairie, wooded hills and marshy bottomlands. The plant species highlighted below are just a few of the many that bloom in the Garden in springtime and early summer.



Beardstongue



Spiderwort



Salsify



Virginia bluebells



Yellow bellwort



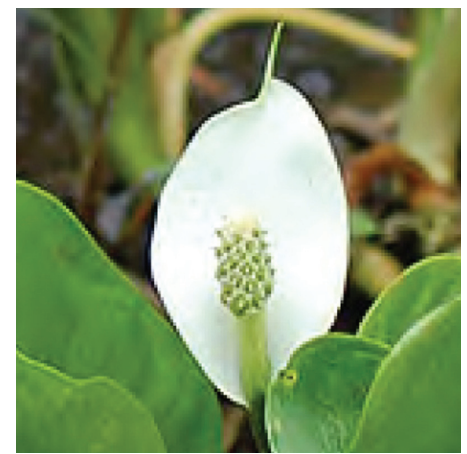
Dame's rocket



Showy Lady's-slipper



Marsh buttercup



Calla Lily

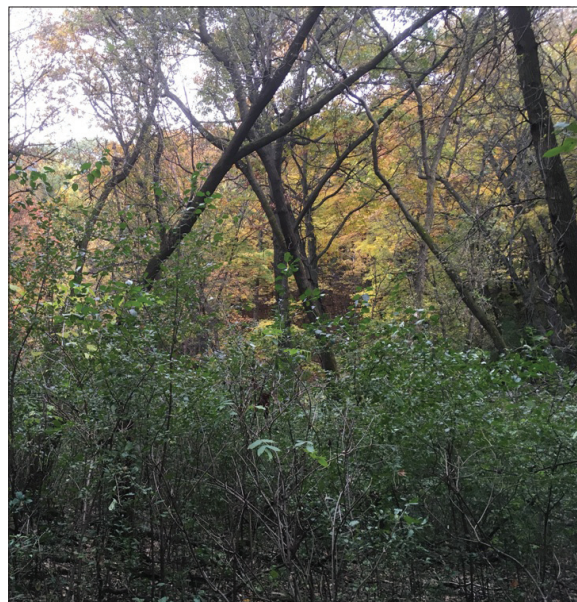
Friends Invasive Plant Action Group

Last fall, the Friends Invasive Plant Action Group (FIPAG) volunteers freed part of the maple glen from buckthorn. A maple-studded ravine just to the southeast of the Garden's main parking lot, the maple glen is a lovely remnant of the Big Woods that once extended from St. Cloud to Faribault in Minnesota's early history. The buckthorn removal work done by the volunteers on the rim of the ravine revealed maple, cherry and dogwood trees in all of their glorious fall color. The view was a very satisfying reward for a day's hard work.

Garlic mustard season will soon be upon us. With this unseasonably warm weather, we imagine that the garlic mustard is already shrugging its shoulders, shaking off the duff and readying to stretch toward the sun. You have to respect the garlic mustard. It is one of the first plants to emerge in the spring—an opportunist that elbows out other woodland plants, growing swiftly to heights as tall as 4 feet, and then triumphantly spreads thousands of seeds far and wide so that it is ready to outcompete the woodland plants the next season. Those plucky plants will be eyeing the sunlit clearings in the Garden, the edges of paths and the recently cleared spaces in the maple glen. Legacy volunteers have been doing a tremendous job of keeping the immediate buffer zone around the Garden clear of invasives. Last spring, due to their efforts, and those of an eager team of volunteers, we found we had time to pull a big patch of garlic mustard out of the maple glen.

We hope you'll volunteer to help pull garlic mustard this spring at the Garden. [See dates below.] You may spot a bird's nest fungus, hear the call of a sandhill crane or see a young buck trot down the trails. Come for as long or as short of a time as you like. We have a jolly good time, and we take a break for refreshments and conversation halfway through the garlic mustard pull. Follow the signs from the Garden gate to the pull site. For parking and more details, see the handouts in the Martha E. Crone Shelter, as well as the volunteering section of the Friends of Eloise Butler website (<http://www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org/pages/volunteer.html>). Or sign up to be notified of upcoming events by contacting invasives@friendsofeloisebutler.org. We look forward to seeing you this year!

– Jim Proctor, Liz Anderson, and Kari Christianson
Invasive Plant Action Group co-chairs



Maple Glen, before and after

Dates for the 2017 Garlic Mustard Pulls

Sunday, May 7,
2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 13,
10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 20,
2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 3,
2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Shelter Volunteer Update

We all know that winter will not last forever: Soon those green sprouts will emerge at the Crone Shelter at the Garden.

In my opinion, being a Shelter docent is one of the best volunteer gigs in Minneapolis. Some of us secretly think of the Shelter as our cabin, just a short commute from our homes. I'd like to thank all of our current volunteers, and also let you know that we could use a few new volunteers this year. Shelter volunteers greet visitors, assist in identifying plants and help explain the various ways to navigate the Garden.

Guides and other resources are on hand in the Shelter, so you don't need to be a naturalist or have a lot of gardening knowledge to volunteer. Returning volunteers and new volunteers are invited to our 2017 orientation on Tuesday, April 11 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Shelter. If you are interested in joining us or would like more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact me at (612) 920-5511 or ebwgsheltervolunteers@gmail.com.

—Jennifer Dunne

Memorials and Donations ~ october 2016 / january 2017

GIFTS RECEIVED In support of our programs from:

Anonymous
Colin Bartol
Joy Davis
Linda Engberg
Elaine Eschenbacher
Lake Minnetonka Garden Club
Suzanne and Tim Lauer
Dan and Vi LaBelle
Ernest and Sarah Lehmann Family
Fund of the St. Paul Foundation

John Munger
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Jeremy Nicols
Mary Jane Pappas
Judy Remington and Julia Classen
Amazon Smile
Cloyce Spradling
David Stack
Liz Stanley
Anthony Waldera

Memorials and gifts to the Friends are much appreciated and constitute an important part of keeping the Garden a special place for generations of people to enjoy. In 2017, undesignated gifts will be used for phase II of the wetland boardwalk. Project update information is on the Friends website.

Note: Memorials and gifts are tax-deductible. When sending a memorial, please give the name and address of the person or family being honored so that we can acknowledge that a memorial has been received. An acknowledgment will be provided to all donors. Memorials and gifts should be sent to: Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, P. O. Box 3793, Minneapolis, MN 55403. Make checks payable to: Friends of the Wild Flower Garden or donate on our website: www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org

MEMORIALS RECEIVED

For Bennett Lowry Busselman from Nancy and Gary Busselman
In honor of Carolyn Brunelle from Albert and Judith Zabin
In honor of Ann Lebens from Mary Abbott

— New Members —

Chelsea Bowen, Minneapolis
Annette Dreier, Minneapolis
Rita Megan Miller, Minneapolis
John Peterson, Jacksonville, Florida
David Stack, Minneapolis

Membership Form

☐ Individual \$15 ☐ Family \$25 ☐ Sponsor \$100 ☐ Life \$500 ☐ Other \$ _____

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

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.
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.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

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.

Donation Form

Donations of gifts or memorials may be made
at www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org
or mailed with a check payable to:

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

*Thank you for helping to sustain the Eloise Butler
Wild Flower Garden and Bird Sanctuary.*

All gifts are tax-deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

This is a gift from: _____

In Honor / Memory of: _____

THE FRINGED GENTIAN

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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 materials can be found. It is the oldest public wildflower garden in the United States. The 15-acre site is located within the city of Minneapolis and is owned and operated by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Garden is open from April 1 through October 15 from 7:30 A.M. to a half hour before sunset.



Photo: John Toren

Maple seeds in April.

The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Minnesota nonprofit corporation, formed in 1952. Its purpose is to educate by enhancing Garden visitors' appreciation and understanding of Minnesota's native plants and natural environments and to offer assistance for the Garden in the form of funding and other support.

The Fringed Gentian is published for members and supporters of the Friends.

For changes to your mailing address, please write Membership Coordinator Jayne Funk at: members@friendsofeloisebutler.org or Membership, Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, P.O. Box 3793, Mpls., MN 55403.

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