

THE FRINGED GENTIAN™

LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER

Flying Squirrels, Our Hidden Neighbors

By Colin Bartol



Minnesotans share our land with many extraordinary animals such as brilliantly colored wood ducks, carnivorous sundew plants, and brown bats that hibernate just above freezing. One incredible animal is often ignored because it is infrequently seen: the northern flying squirrel.

The only mammals which can truly fly are bats, but a few animals, like lemurs and flying squirrels, can glide. In North America the only gliding mammals are flying squirrels. Both the northern and southern flying squirrel's territory covers much of

Minnesota including the Twin Cities. Strictly nocturnal, flying squirrels are rarely spotted, and at only 10 to 15 inches long they are smaller than a red squirrel. Their diet consists mostly of fungi, insects, tree sap, and bird eggs, but they will eat carrion when available.

Gliding is what really separates them from other squirrels. Commonly they start with a running jump, and once in the air they spread out their arms and legs into an X shape and the fold of skin between their arms and legs forms a sail. Most flights are between 15 and 75 feet, but some have been observed to be 150 feet. As they come into land, they point all their limbs forward to create a parachute effect.

Recently it was discovered by professor John Martin in Wisconsin that under ultraviolet light their fur glows pink. In mammals fluorescence is only also known in American opossums. While it is not known what benefits that this might have for the squirrels, it is speculated it might help them locate each other.

Although the Garden would be the right habitat for flying squirrels, the naturalists have not observed them. This is likely due to the Garden having only daytime hours and the squirrel being nocturnal. Some people have success with putting common squirrel food in feeders late at night to lure them out.

If you are out for a walk late at night keep your eyes open and up in the trees. If you see something that looks like a bird, keep watching! You might get to see what few Minnesotans have seen: our wonderful flying squirrel. ❖

Colin Bartol is newsletter editor and a Friends Board Member

Photos: Squirrel on tree by Tony Campbell, Squirrel flying by Nature Smart Images. Top of page by Judy Remington. Bottom of page - the Friends.



"The Garden now is empty, yet beautiful in its wintery way" - MARTHA CRONE



President's Letter

By Kathy Connelly

My term as president of the Friends comes to a close at the end of this year, a bit later than planned due to the pandemic. When I started my 3 year commitment as president in

Spring 2017, our major focus was on supporting completion of Phase 2 of the Garden boardwalk. Over the past 3-½ years the Friends also expanded its social media presence, registered for state sales tax exemption, and began a diversity-equity-inclusion (DEI) effort among many other activities.



Retiring Friends President
Kathy Connelly

This difficult year has yielded some positive things for the Garden thanks to the efforts of the MPRB. Safe visiting practices for the Garden were implemented, tested, and received positively. The MPRB Garden naturalists pioneered outreach in informative and entertaining ways that have enriched our experience of the Garden, and MPRB Garden leadership has been prudent and laser-focused on providing a peaceful refuge from the unique challenges of 2020.

In October, the Friends held its first virtual annual members' meeting and elected its Board of Directors for the coming year. We were pleased to have the best member attendance in many years, and hope to expand member participation in coming years as well.

The Friends' 2020 annual board meeting was also held virtually. Among the officers elected is the new president, Jennifer Olson. I am delighted that her leadership skills and passionate interest in the natural world will guide the Friends into a bright future. Members will hear more directly from her after her term begins January 1.

At the annual board meeting, a revised mission statement was proposed by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee and adopted by the board. The revised mission statement underscores the Friends' commitment to strive to be anti-racist, including how we might amplify voices of marginalized communities. One small measure is that the Friends' descriptions of the Garden will include a land acknowledgment that the Garden is located on Dakota homelands, which made its first appearance in the Summer/Fall Greeting. The DEI effort is the work that was most important to me during my tenure, and I want to especially thank Lauren Husting for assuming leadership on this issue. I know that the Friends'

commitment to DEI is sincere and that it will continue into the future.

This is our new mission statement:

Mission Statement

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.

The purpose of the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden is to protect, preserve, and promote the interests of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary as a sanctuary for native flora and fauna of Minnesota, and to educate and inspire all people in relating to the natural world. We strive to be an inclusive organization of people of all backgrounds, abilities, ages and ethnicities. To accomplish this, we work with a variety of individuals and organizations with common interests and vision.

We believe that:

- *The Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary should be preserved for its historical significance and its value as an environmental resource for the study and appreciation of the flora and fauna of the Garden.*
- *It is necessary to maintain a natural buffer zone around the Garden to protect its ecological integrity and to preserve its value as a retreat for quiet contemplation and observation of nature.*
- *It is our role to support and encourage the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in maintaining and preserving the Garden.*
- *Promotion and utilization of the Garden should be compatible with protecting it as a sanctuary for flora and fauna and preserving the features of a unique natural environment.*
- *The Friends must be an organization that prioritizes, supports, and invests in diversity, inclusion and equity.*

Thank you to a very engaged and committed board. Each of you in your own way, have made my work a joy. Thank you for the opportunity to lead the Friends and support the Garden. ❖

Kathy Connelly



Phase II of the Garden boardwalk, completed in 2019. Photo by Bob Ambler.

An Eventful Garden Season

By Susan Wilkins, Garden Curator

The Garden gates closed to the public on October 31, bringing closure to another season of enchantment and beauty within these 15-acres of wild plant splendor. As we all know, this season was anything but typical. After a delayed opening in late May to give staff ample time to prepare the Garden to ensure the health and safety of visitors and staff, the Garden safely welcomed nearly 23,000 visitors during the remainder of the season all during the unsettling coronavirus pandemic and a tumultuous time in our society.



Although it was a shorter and quieter season, overall, at the Garden, it was a rich one. We received hundreds of comments about how much joy and enrichment people received from their visits and how comfortable they felt walking the trails with the social distancing measures in place. This was heartening. Also, a source of delight was the sheer beauty of the Garden itself. It was a special year where many years of hard, thoughtful work came to fruit. Mass plantings bloomed one after the other in a rainbow of colors, invasive plants noticeably were on the wane, young trees grew bigger, and the synergy of it all took hold. It felt good to walk the trails and see the vibrancy and vitality appear around each bend and witness the Garden's community of plants and animals thriving, together.

I'd like to take a few moments to share my thanks, on behalf of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB), to the *human* Garden community as well. First, to the visitors who stopped by this year, we

truly hope that your experience was nourishing and delightful and exactly what you came for. We appreciate the courtesy and grace that you shared while waiting in line and walking the trails. Your care and love of the Garden is palpable. Thank you.

I would also like to thank the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden for their continued support of the Garden, through substantial donations of funds for projects, like the extensive collections enhancement projects this season, as well as through coordinating volunteer programs like the Friends Invasive Plant Action Group (FIPAG). This year volunteers from FIPAG and the MPRB's Legacy Volunteer program continued to work in the forests around the Wildflower Garden, enhancing these areas primarily by removing invasive species. To the Friends and volunteers, you showed commitment and generosity. Thank you.

I would also like to whole-heartedly acknowledge and thank the 2020 MPRB staff of the Garden who worked day in and day out during a very trying year to welcome everyone who queued up to enter through those magical gates (have you ever noticed how you feel different, more at ease, after passing through them?) with a warm smile and a bright message of good cheer. Beyond the obvious draw of the Garden itself, I do presume that the depth of knowledge shared by and the shining faces of the staff are one of the other reasons people keep coming back to learn and explore more. Your courage and dedication this season are commendable. Thank you.

And the community at large, thank you as well. Perhaps you did not stop out this year to visit or have yet to come by for a first time ever. Please know, the Garden and the parks of Minneapolis are here for you.



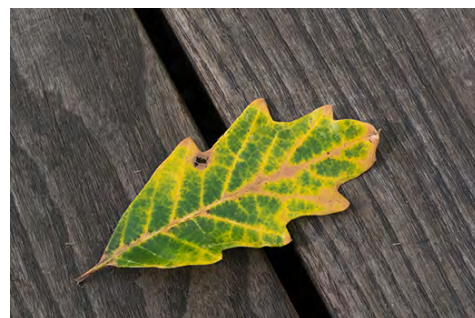
The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board is working diligently to assure that each and every person in every corner of our beautiful City and beyond feels welcome, safe, comfortable and engaged while visiting public park spaces in Minneapolis, including the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. There is work to do and one way to be a part of this work is to review and send your feedback about the new Comprehensive Plan that will be used as a guiding tool for shaping the priorities and policy direction of the MPRB for the next ten years. This draft was developed with significant community engagement and input gathered in a variety of ways over a year-long outreach process. Please take this opportunity to review what has been developed and provide feedback on the draft plan on or before January 18, 2021.

View the draft plan online at: bit.ly/MPRBCompPlan

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MPRBCompPlan>

I am wishing each and every one a healthy, safe and peaceful winter season. May the promise of spring bring us all a renewed sense of hope and joy. Until then!❖

This article appears courtesy of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. Susan Wilkins has been Curator since 2004.



Photos on this page by Bob Ambler

An Earlier Wild Botanic Garden

Imagine her surprise when Eloise Butler saw an article in The Boston Transcript in 1908 that described a “wild garden” in New Brunswick Canada that maintained more than 500 species of flowering plants and had been established years earlier. ⁽¹⁾ Until this time she believed her garden in Glenwood Park was original to the idea. So - what to do about it? You go there and check it out! She was already in the Boston area that Summer staying with her sister Cora Pease in Malden MA, so off they went, sourcing several plant specimens for the Minneapolis Garden in Nova Scotia while on the journey. ⁽²⁾

The New Brunswick garden belonged to George Upham Hay (1843-1913). He was a leading member of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick (NHSNB), which was founded in 1880. He founded the herbarium in the group’s museum and for the rest of his life he was chair of its’ committee on botany. ⁽³⁾

He was among the early advocates for forest and land conservation in the province, anticipating the emergence of a modern ethic that recognizes the inherent worth of natural areas and species.



George U. Hay, making field notes in a field book, seated by a campfire on the South Tobique Lakes region of north-western New Brunswick - July 1900. Photo by Mauran I. Furbish

their adaptations to their environment, to display in miniature the rich and varied flora of Minnesota.” ⁽⁵⁾

Hay’s garden was of two acres and located on his private summer estate at Ingleside, near Westfield NB. It was a private garden dedicated to study, not open to the public for general viewing of plants.

To the RSC he described it as an “*experiment in which year-to-year variation in flowering times and other phenomena would be examined in relation to variation in climate.*”

He stated that it “*presented the botanist the opportunity of studying problems analogous to those which a city presents to the sociologist - that is, the interactions of living organisms inhabiting the same locality, adapting themselves to different conditions, maintaining their ground against rival or yielding to unfavorable conditions.*” ⁽⁶⁾

On his trips to remote parts of the province he would collect plants for transplant to his garden. He also made a study of fungi of New Brunswick, many were mushrooms growing in or near his garden. This was the same type of procedure undertaken by Eloise Butler for her wild botanic garden. Eloise wrote of her visit that the garden was “*of vivid interest*” but her wild garden was “*superior*” as it was larger, open to the public, and did not get flooded out periodically by a small brook. ⁽⁷⁾

Dr. Hay’s wild garden became a venue for outings by the NHSNB and students from Victoria High School where he was principal. Beginning in 1899 he provided annual notes to the *Bulletin* of the NHSNB about what native plants were amenable to cultivation and on the seasonal changes in his garden. After 10 years he published a summary of the earliest, latest and average flowering dates for 24 species that he had followed in the same locations each year. ⁽⁸⁾

In 1899 he announced the existence of the wild garden in papers sent to the NHSNB and to the Royal Society of Canada (RSC). This was 10 years after he bought the property. To the NHSNB he noted that the garden would aim to “[show] *as far as the conditions would warrant, the peculiarities and extent of the flora of New Brunswick.*” ⁽⁴⁾ This is similar to the wording in the petition establishing the Minneapolis Garden: “*The aims of this garden would be to show plants as living things and*

The Garden of George Upham Hay

by Gary Bebeau

The seasonal bloom summary was just the type of record that was maintained at Glenwood Park. Years later Gardener Ken Avery would publish his list of earliest, latest and average flowering dates - for 25 species.

Hay had his trouble with plants as Eloise did. He decided to attempt to “secure a *modus vivendi*” there between native and non-native species “by assigning the weeds to a space in one corner.” but he noted the weeds showed “a perversity characteristic of their tribe . . . spurned such treatment and refused to grow.” (9)

Some years later Eloise would write:

“Mistress Mary, so contrary How does your garden grow?
Like Mistress, like garden is the reply. In quirks, in whimsies, and in
sheer contrariness a wild garden surpasses Mistress Mary. This is true
especially of the introduced species.” (10)

Dr. Hay made no provision for the long-term maintenance of his garden and after his death in 1913 it fell into disuse and there is now no trace of it. (11) The similarities in purpose and

thought in the establishment of these two “wild gardens” is remarkable. The public garden in Minneapolis, curated by Eloise Butler, had an advantage: There was the hope of continuance when the founding person left the scene, as it was part of a larger city park system and had public support.❖

Notes:

1. *The Wild Gardener*, Martha Hellander, 1992, North Star Press.
2. *Garden Log*, Eloise Butler, 1908. Butler was still teaching in the Minneapolis Public Schools and returned to the east coast for one or two months each Summer until 1911.
3. *History of Saint John*, City of Saint John, New Brunswick
4. *The Creative City of Saint John*, by Christi Verduyn. Chapter 2 *The Ingleside Wild Garden of George Upham Hay* by Stephen R. Clayden. Formac Publishing Company Ltd, Halifax, 2018.
5. Petition of citizens to the Board of Park Commissioners, 1907
6. see note 4
7. see note 1. Hellander’s research established that the garden in Minneapolis was the oldest public wildflower garden in the United States.
8. Stephen R. Clayden, “HAY, GEORGE UPHAM,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003
9. see note 4
10. Eloise Butler, *A Collection of Garden Experiences*, Letter to the Gray Memorial Botanical Chapter of the Agassiz Association, 1916
11. see note 4

Photos are provided courtesy Stephen R. Clayden and Formac Publishing Company, Halifax NS and appear in *The Creative City of Saint John*.

Gathering of women from the Ladies Auxiliary of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick at the summer property of George U. Hay at Ingleside, the location of his Wild Garden circa 1890. Hay is at the back of the group on the veranda.



A Walk in the Cold

By Diana Thottungal, Naturalist



It is finally done snowing and time for a walk. What's there to see besides a smooth covering of snow and bare trees? Well, you can practice your tracking skills and identify those mammals not clever enough to sleep through the winter. Here we go (1, 2, 3, 4 5, 6)!

1. From really far away you can tell that was a squirrel. Because the track starts and ends at a tree! That's all you need!



2. Another non-hibernator is the rabbit. If you toss some food out onto your lawn, there's a reasonable chance you won't even have to brave the cold to see these.

Rabbit sitting still



Rabbit running



3. One way to tell the difference between a dog track & a coyote track is that the outer toes on a coyote are larger than the center toes. On a dog they are smaller. Of course, an easier way to tell is if there are shoe prints with them.



4. On a totally different scale are these tiny bounding Deer Mouse tracks:

You can tell from the little tail marks that the mouse went two ways. Since mice don't hibernate, they are forced to search for dead insects, fallen seeds from nearby plants or, if they are lucky, from your birdfeeder. If they're even more lucky, they'll find enough to store some in their dens.



Mouse tunnels in the snow. Note the zigzag. When they run along the surface of the snow, searching for tidbits of food, they run in a straight line as in the photo above.



5. There's another tiny rodent that gets called either a Meadow Mouse or a Meadow Vole (Latin: *Microtus pennsylvanicus*) that also doesn't hibernate and leaves a nifty tiny zigzag trail. But no, or very tiny tail marks on the trail.



6. And, finally, there are deer tracks and trails. A single print is pretty anonymous and, since we don't have many hoofed mammals running around loose, even the trail's best distinguishing feature is just that it doesn't look like anything else.



If there's a patch where the snow melted and you see this print in the mud, it's deer.

And, if it's getting on towards spring and you see this on a tree, it's not just deer, it's a buck rubbing his antlers.



All photos by Diana Thottungal

Membership - Memorials - Donations

Memorials and donations to the Friends are tax deductible and are an important part of keeping the Garden a special place for generations of people to enjoy. In 2021 donations will be used to fund the Student Transportation Grant Program and plant purchases for the Garden. Project information is on our website. An acknowledgment of donation will be provided to all donors.

Donations Received September to December 2020

Anonymous	Elizabeth Kreibich
Candyce Bartol	Janet and Paul Mayer
Ann Beane	Charitable Trust
Alan Brandhagen	Michael Mack
Sharon Bunnell	Vanessa McGuire
Joy Davis	Mark Rask
Maria Eggemeyer	Maryellen Skan &
EricksonSolomonson	Peter Thiel
DAF Fund	Kathryn Sedo qcd/Scott
Greg & Sara Feinberg	Beers
Ellen Ferrari	Judith Sheldon
Katharine and Richard	Ronald Spinosa
Fournier	

Memorials Received September to December 2020

for Bennett Lowry Busselman from Nancy and Gary Busselman.

for Vivian Mason from Pam Weiner.

for Harriet Betzold from Pam Weiner.

In Honor Of

for Pam Weiner from Deborah Boehm.

DUO/FAMILY:

Janet I. Anderson; Tom Anderson & Nancy Conger; Anne & Charles Baynton; Liz & Bill Blood; Monica Coulter; Kriste & Kermit Ericsson; Mary & Scott Lagaard

SUSTAINING: Ann Beane

LIFE: Kathleen Johnson

New Members:

Member Notes

We sadly report on the passing in recent months of four of our members.

Harriet Betzold, a member since 1989, was a director for 19 years, 1990-2008, Vice-president for three years 1994-1996 and served three years a President 1994-1996. She then stepped in as volunteer coordinator from 1999-2006, sometimes by herself, sometimes with Shirley Schultz, in addition to helping with the arrangements for the annual volunteer luncheon.

Annette Dreier, a sponsor member since 2016, she was an avid birder and a well known worker at the Wedge Community Co-op in Minneapolis.

Vivian Mason, a Life member, was a director for 10 years, 2006-2015, Vice-President for 8 terms 2007-2014, and a MPRB Commissioner.

Marilyn Rohlfing, a member for 48 years, originally joined with a gift membership from her parents Bruce and Jane Hooper, who were active on the Friends Board in the 1970's.

A WORD OF THANKS

We want to thank all of our members who have continued to support The Friends during this year of pandemic and economic adversity. In June 2021 we begin the 70th year of our mission to support and protect the Garden and education the public about our natural world. Without your continuing membership we could not continue to do this.

Membership - Donation - Memorial Form

Membership, donation and memorial payments can be placed online at www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org or mailed with a check payable to:

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

If a membership payment is for a gift, list that persons name and address. The recipient of your gift will receive a letter of welcome from the Friends. For a memorial or an in-honor-of donation please give us the name and address of the family or person to be notified.

Thank you for helping to sustain the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary. All gifts are tax-deductible and are used to support our program. Thank you notes will be sent for all gifts and your name will be listed in our next newsletter.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Membership Information

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

Newsletter by ☐ E-mail OR ☐ Postal

This is a gift membership from _____

Donations Amount: \$ _____

Memorials and Gifts In Honor \$ _____

This is a ☐ memorial for: ☐ a gift in honor of:

Name: _____

Please notify: _____

About Us

The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc. is a 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:

Membership Coordinator

Christi Bystedt at:

membership@friendsofeloisebutler.org

or mail to:

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.

Membership

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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

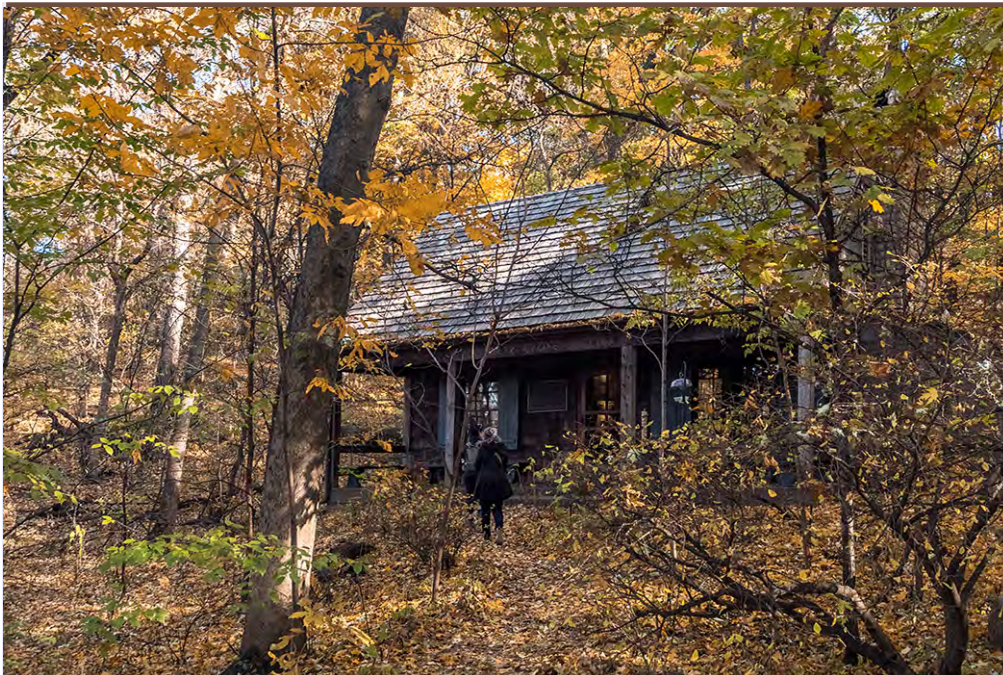
1907. The 15 acre site is located within the city of Minneapolis on traditional Dakota homelands and is owned and operated by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. The Garden is open from April 1 through October 15 from 7:30 A.M. to one hour before sunset. Weekends only October 15 to October 31.

The Fringed Gentian™ Staff

Colin Bartol, editor

Lauren Husting, assistant editor

Bob Ambler, staff photographer



"We look forward to seeing you next year"! Photo by Bob Ambler.

Alternative Gift Suggestion

Consider introducing someone to the Wildflower Garden by giving a gift membership in the Friends! We will send them an introductory packet about ourselves and the Garden and your donation will add to our support of the Garden.

Use the form on page 7 or contribute via the Friends website.

Our new directors elected at the annual meeting on Oct. 18, 2020, along with a list of committee assignments and additional volunteer staff. Presidential transition is on Jan. 1, 2021.

Melissa Hansen retires as director after 13 years of service on our Board. Thank you!

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Board Members

PRESIDENT Kathy Connelly	PAST PRESIDENT J. Pam Weiner
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