

# THE FRINGED GENTIAN™

## 70 Years of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden - 1952-2022

The purpose of 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.

These photos represent a sampling of how the Friends, in partnership with the MPRB, have invested member and donor funds in the Garden.



The assistance of an organization like the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden is a great factor in sponsoring the growth and perpetuation of the Wild Flower Garden. It is earnestly needed in this day of native places disappearing.  
Martha Crone 1967



The sole purpose of this society is to assist our Park Board in creating and maintaining one of the finest wild flower gardens in America. Clinton Odell, 1952

I see it [the role of the Friends] as one of continuing protection of the area. Without it where would the Garden's voice come from.  
MPRB Superintendent Charles Spears, 1979.



### Timeline with major Garden events plus projects the Friends helped fund in partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

1952 - Founding of the Friends  
1958 - Clinton Odell dies  
1958 - Curator Martha Crone retires  
1959 - Ken Avery becomes Curator

1970 - Martha Crone Shelter completed  
1970 - Shelter volunteer program formed  
1971 - Martha Crone retires from board  
1976 - Friends Bi-centennial project

1990 - New Garden front entrance  
1992 - *The Wild Gardener* published  
1995 - New Garden back gate  
1997 - New iron fencing at Garden front

2015 - Maple Bowl work begins  
2015 - Boardwalk Phase I  
2019 - Boardwalk Phase II  
2020-21 Covid-19 restrictions

1961 - Fern Glen planting finished  
1963 - Expansion of the Garden area  
1966 - First annual meeting at Garden  
1968 - Martha Crone Shelter designed

1981 - Friends 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tree  
1981 - New Garden Guide and markers  
1986 - Ken Avery retires  
1987 - Cary George is Gardener

2002 - Friends 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration  
2003 - Cary George retires, Susan Wilkins - Curator  
2005 - Avery Birding Terrace; back gate fencing  
2007 - Garden 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; FIPAG founded

## President's Greeting

By Jennifer Olson



The Saturday Early Birders are back to their pre-Covid 2019 Saturday morning schedule!!!

It's been a bit chilly and sometimes rainy, but the migrating warblers were great: Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Black and White and lots of Tennessee warblers were seen. Three male Scarlet Tanagers had a territorial dispute at the Boardwalk and the Indigo Buntings have been in the Wetland and the Upland Garden.

In 1939, Martha Crone added Bird Sanctuary to the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden name and then it disappeared. In 1968 "and Bird Sanctuary" was officially added to the name. The designated term Bird Sanctuary is loose, no governmental or organizational requirements required; but it's expected to be a safe place for birds with a habitat supporting shelter, water and food.

Besides the Early Birders, there is now a Tuesday 4:30 afternoon birding walk through June and may be continued through the summer – look for announcements in the Shelter. From 1918 through 1923, Eloise maintained annual native plant exhibits at the Minneapolis Public Library. The Friends, Judy Remington, Marijane Tessman, and Maggie Tuff arranged a wonderful spring Garden display at Sumner Library on Hwy 55 with spring ephemeral flowers, Eloise Butler history and Judy's beautiful glass tiles. In June, the display will highlight the Showy Lady's Slipper.

As we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, I want to thank all the members for their ongoing support and love for this wonderful Garden.

Walk the trails, listen to the birds and be a Friend to nature. *Jennifer Olson* ❖

Again, we have nesting owls who provide us with months of observations. The Great Horn Owls courted and mated in late January. They nested in last year's Red-tailed Hawk's nest and produced 1 owlet. Rod Miller, our local owl expert, finally found the Barred Owl's nest in April when an adult flew into a snag. Three owlets fledged over a 10-day period in early May. I've been able to watch them being fed by mom, Rod has witnessed them bathing in an ephemeral pond, and my husband spotted the adults hunting one morning, about 70% effective with their swoops. Today all three owlets were cozied up on a high branch. For me, watching these owls is a more personal "birding" – one feels part of their family, witnessing their life cycle.

Both Eloise Butler and Martha Crone kept notes on bird sightings. Ken Avery, the third gardener/curator of the Garden wrote in 1975, "This is the third year in a row that we have been aware of the owl nesting in the area. I have no way of knowing if one nested there for the last 20 years" Dr. Thomas Roberts who wrote the 2 volume *Birds of Minnesota* (1932) was also a birder in the Garden.



Barred Owlets. Photo by Cheri Petro



(l to r) Maryjane Tessman, Maggie Tuff, Jennifer Olson, at the Sumner Library display. Library photos by J. Olson.

Magnolia Warbler at top of page - photo by David Brislance

# Garden Curator's Update

by Susan Wilkins



Summer is here and it is a spectacular time of year in the Wildflower Garden. The meadow is alight in the golden hues of golden Alexander and the bluish-purple wands of the false blue indigo plants.

Turn the bend and a hillside decorated with wild roses presents itself along with newly planted large-flowered beardtongue and prairie phlox. Tucked into the grasses and leaves close to the soil there are carpets of pearly everlasting and bastard toadflax. The horse gentian is also in bloom along with spiderwort and this is just the beginning of the season of blossoms in the upland meadow garden!

There is so much to know and understand about this special landscape. One can spend a lifetime here and still discover more. I think that is one of the many special gifts of the Garden. It is certainly one I am quite grateful for. The more insight I gain about the history of the development of the plant collection here, the more awe and appreciation emerges for what we have in this truly unique public, native plant-focused botanic garden. I find myself inspired every day by the legacies of Eloise Butler and Martha Crone.

The combined vision, dedication, advocacy efforts, and hard work carried out by each of these curators built the foundation upon which the Garden continues to grow and draw from.

The Garden is an evolving landscape and more goes on “behind the scenes” to curate and care for the plants here than meets the eye. Each season 1,500-3,500+ plants—trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, ferns, and sedges—are added to the collection to foster the natural beauty, biodiversity, and sensory depth of this space. As plants mature, conditions change, diseases & pests cycle through, additional plants are needed. In addition, plantings are being carried out to create more layers of vegetation to enhance the beauty of the Garden and to create more dynamic habitats.

It's hard to fathom—as the naturalistic style of the Garden belies the facts—but this space is highly managed. Plants are intentionally added each year to foster the goals mentioned above. They are thoughtfully placed and arranged to enhance the “primeval wilderness” design aesthetic that Eloise Butler laid out for the Garden. Management also includes the weeding out of what is not wanted.

A well-thought-out game of addition and subtraction, with some interesting twists and turns, is what a garden is all about and this one is no different!

As we care for this amazing public garden, it's striking to consider that over 50% of the plant species present today in the Garden were not indigenous to the site in the early 1900s. Rather, they were introduced as part of Eloise Butler's



Visitors in the Martha Crone Visitor Shelter are discovering new dimensions of nature exploration with a wonderful new tool, a video microscope called a Microeye. This tool allows people of all ages to look at natural materials up close with ease. It has been a popular new addition to the Shelter and is a nod to Eloise Butler and her passion for using microscopes to see the patterns and details of the natural world up close. Photo courtesy of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

original vision to create a remarkable display of the great diversity of wild plants native to Minnesota. She began in 1907 and here we are in 2022, all the richer for it.

Wishing all an engaging summer filled with many moments of learning about and enjoying plants. ❖

A microscope has long been a feature on the counter in the Crone Shelter for children to use. In 1994 Tim Nordquist built a new microscope for the Shelter, in honor of his brother Daniel, as part of a family memorial to Daniel that includes the Nordquist fountain on the center hill in the upland.

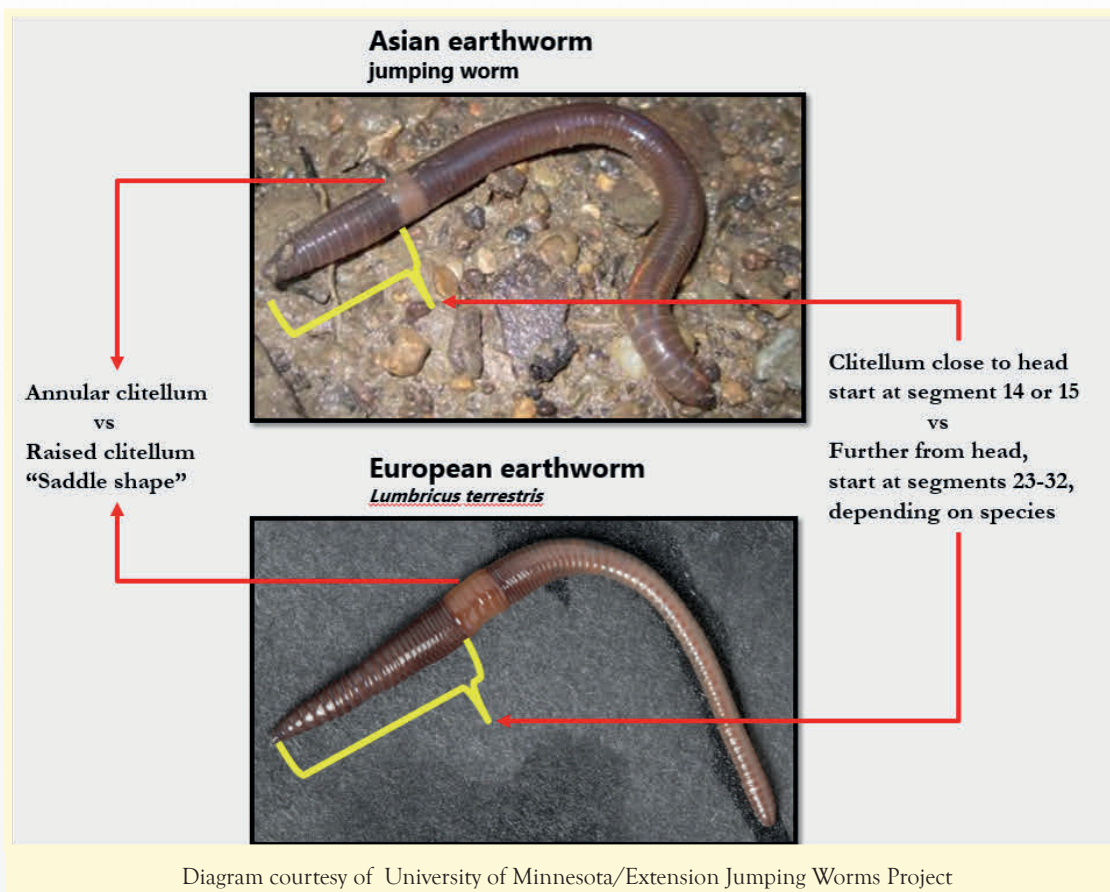
# Asiatic Jumping Worms by Colin Bartol



After being mentioned in our newsletter *Twigs and Branches* our readers have wanted to know more about Asiatic jumping worms.

Readers want to know more about what they look like, where they are from, how they got here, why they are a threat, and what we can do about them. This article will

of the Gentian, most earthworms arrived from Europe in pots of plants and have spread because of use as fish bait. Although most of us have grown up with earthworms, our forests did not, so they are changing the ecosystem. The jumping worms have come from Asia and have spread in the same way through potting soil and fishing bait.



The effects of both worms include changing soil by breaking down the leaf litter much faster than North American forests are used to, disrupting the typical plant communities and soil organisms. These changes can prevent younger plants from growing, making the forest unable to sustain the same plants and animal species. Jumping worms in particular strip vital nutrients from the topsoil. Homeowners may see garden plants killed, making growing healthy plants more difficult.

Here are a few ways to prevent jumping worms from spreading. When purchasing worms for composting, try to get Red

"dig" into answering these questions and more.

Jumping worms look very similar to European nightcrawlers, but the large ring or clitellum on adults appears closer than on night crawlers. The setae or the tiny hairs the worms use to move are evenly spaced around the entirety of each segment, as opposed to being in pairs or concentrated on the top or bottom. These differences in appearance are quite small, so it may be easier to watch the behaviors. Jumping worms leave behind waste which has the appearance of coffee grounds. They are much more active though and move more like snakes. When disturbed, they excrete a yellow mucus and may break off a tail.

No worms are actually native to Minnesota. All have come from elsewhere. As we discussed in the Summer 2020 issue

Wigglers. Unfortunately, some sellers consider jumping worms Red Wigglers, so you must be specific and look for the species name of *Eisenia foetida*. Do not transport leaves, mulch, or soil from one location to another unless there are no earthworms or their cocoons present. Anglers should always dispose of unwanted worms in the trash and do not release them. Gardeners should buy compost that follows the "process for further reducing pathogens" in their composting method.

For more information about jumping worms go to the [DNR website](#). If we can educate ourselves and make some small changes, we can slow down their spread and help our native plants and animals thrive. ❖



## Meet Steve

Interview by Candyce Bartol

**S**tephen Benson is a longtime Board Member of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden. He

developed an interest in flowers as a youngster because of his mother's influence. He is also an advocate of life long learning, who is worth getting to know better.

◆**Tell us some highlights about your background.**

Since I was boy I have been enthralled with nature beginning growing up three blocks from Lake Harriet with fishing, visits to the rose and flower gardens and exploring the Roberts Bird Sanctuary. My family had summer cottages in Northern Minnesota and a long-time cabin on the St Croix. My mother was an avid wildflower enthusiast and carefully recorded all the wild flowers she encountered! I remember visiting the Garden as a very small boy.

I have lived about six years in Europe including four years in Sweden where nature awareness is bred in the bone! I have also visited on numerous occasions the home and gardens of Linnaeus in Uppsala, Sweden. I particularly enjoyed the hunt in Sweden with friends for seasonal mushrooms! A couple of decades ago I became a member of the Minnesota Mycological Society. I have a few secret mushroom sites I visit and of course there are always flowers, trees, and plants in the environs. Years were spent in England, Portugal and travel throughout Europe, Scandinavia, and Maya country in Mexico and Central America offered countless opportunities to visit gardens and natural preserves.

On returning to the States in 1971, I became a producer/host on the then NPR station KUOM for 18 years. Through those years I did interviews and series with numerous naturalists, authors, and researchers. It was during that period that I became an avid biker and one of my favorite rides took me around the lakes and to Eloise Butler! I got to know naturalists, volunteers, enthusiasts and many years ago was asked to join the Board. And what a rewarding experience it has been!

In 1993 The U decided to end its NPR affiliation and terminate the professional staff. Without a job, the U asked me to consider some kind of adult learning program. In 1995 I offered to found a lifelong learning program, the Elderlearning

Institute, and several years later we were invited to join the nationwide Osher Lifelong Learning network. I retired (refocused my life) after 18 years and have continued to lead courses and series for OLLI as an avid lifelong learner and volunteer.

As Director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the U of M I was instrumental in beginning OLLI courses at the Garden itself and an ongoing series with the Minneapolis Park and Rec Board of Naturalist-led courses visiting local parks such as Minnehaha Falls and the Milling District.



◆**Which season really grabs your attention at the Garden?**

Of course, I love spring and the unfolding of the new year ephemerals, but my enduring passion is the time of prairie. In the Garden of course that means the restored prairie, and seeking out the small parcels of undisturbed prairie from the rocky goat prairie in southeastern Minnesota to remnants of tall and short grass prairies in the Dakotas, Illinois, and the western states. There is nothing like the rustle of the wind through majestic grasses

and striking wild flowers. Seeking the hint of seemingly endless herds of buffalo coursing through that vast inland sea of grass! I have even delighted in maintaining a semblance of a prairie boulevard for over 40 years in front of my house in South Minneapolis where butterfly milkweed, prairie smoke and penstemon nestle amidst Big Bluestem and Switchgrass to early consternation by neighbors who cherished their neatly clipped Kentucky Bluegrass plots.

◆**What do you see as the value of volunteering at the Garden?**

What to tell a person about volunteering in the garden? You will join the community of those who find personal delight in the every day unfolding rhythm of the flowers, trees, plants, birds and elusive scurrying creatures, and you can take pride in knowing that you are doing your part in revealing this extraordinary place to the public.

◆**Imagine which the future holds for the Garden.**

The Garden will continue to be a quiet jewel in the heart of the city and will also be a living laboratory for the march of climate change. ❖

Candyce Bartol is a Friends Board member.  
Steve Benson photo by Colin Bartol



## Wingspan - review by Lauren Husting

Wingspan debuted in 2019 and has been a huge hit.

**B**irders who love board games and board game fans who love birds, rejoice! Welcome to the world of Wingspan, a competitive, engine-building, card-driven board game.

Designed by Elizabeth Hargave produced by Stonemaier Games  
1-5 Players, 14+, 40-70 minutes

First edition released 2019;  
European expansion 2019;  
Oceania expansion 2020

It is a triumph of both art and gameplay, on top of being a fascinating educational resource for those who want to learn more about our avian neighbors and their place in the ecosystem.

Your goal in Wingspan is to attract birds to your network of wildlife preserves, enticing them with food and encouraging them to lay eggs and activate their special skills to increase your point total enough to win a game of four rounds. Basically, you are building an 'engine' of actions through your particular birds and biomes that will help you out-score your opponents.

Sumptuously designed, the game includes 170 bird cards with hand drawn illustrations and facts about each particular bird, food tokens, colorful eggs, custom wooden dice, and so much more. Most of the actual gameplay elements feel sturdy and well-crafted, although there is a market for upgrades. There are now two expansions that increase the ranges of the birds included as well as add additional tokens and powers, and plans for more in the works.

The board itself is an initially confusing element; it gets the job done but could use more clarity on turns and actions. Once a round or two is played it becomes much clearer, and there are sample action cards that can be a great help at the beginning of your Wingspan journey. The rulebook needs a bit of tidying up as well, but the added Appendix is a nice touch. As with many European-style games, Youtube proves a good resource for sample gameplay and instruction.

The game can be played with up to 5 players. Two players was the most enjoyable to me; with plenty of time to develop your board and rapidly



The game components are solidly crafted and pleasantly designed. Pictured: wooden dice, the dice rolling bird house, food tokens, bird cards, eggs, and an example of round goals

moving rounds, it felt easiest to explore all the elements of the design. Four and five players in the game was fun, but a little slow at times and required more strategy to keep up with the rounds and the end goal.

Many Stonemaier games also have an Automa, or artificial opponent, designed to help you play the game solo. You play the game as you would in a multi-player setting, but the Automa comes up with actions to either stifle your progress or gain points for itself. While I preferred playing against real opponents, I can foresee using the Automa version to practice my skills for multiplayer games. Stonemaier has also released a mobile app version of the game and there is a companion app called "Wingsong" which allows you to hold your device over a particular bird card and hear its calls.

If you like complex strategy games and delight in exploring the natural world, this could very well be the game for you. Wingspan is one of several in a new trend of game design that focus on nature, natural themes, and ecological education. I also recommend the food-web building card game Ecologies, which can be found on Etsy. The influx of ecological education games boosts hope for a future in which we more deeply value our place in a healthy, thriving natural world. ♦

[Photos by Lauren Husting]



An example of game set-up for solo player and the Automa

## Members Page

70<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
Issue

### In Past Years:

- 20 members served as newsletter editor
- 22 members served as president
- 118 names are on the shelter memorial board
- 137 members served on the Board of Directors
- 250 *Fringed Gentian*<sup>TM</sup> newsletters were created
- 5,446 Children visited with our Transportation Grant
- \$47,000 was provided for Garden plants
- \$98,000 was provided for our educational program
- \$335,000 was invested in other Garden support.

### Sign up for Twigs and Branches

A monthly email update from the Friends containing news from the Garden and relevant MPRB projects, as well as access to website content featuring short articles from our Board and membership. These articles are written to highlight connections of the plants, history and lore of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden with different time frames or outside events. The sign-up form is on the [website homepage](#).

### The Past 20 Years

Four members have guided the Friends as president since our 50 anniversary in 2002. During their tenure the Friends have carried out our mission by funding numerous plant purchases for the Garden, instituting the Student Transportation Grant Program, forming the Friends Invasive Plant Action Group, helping the MPRB fund restoration of habitat and a bee survey, providing a custom screen door, desk and rain gutters for the shelter and 294 feet of wrought iron fencing for the back of the Garden, funding numerous small projects plus the Ken Avery Birding Terrace and providing half the funding for phase I and II of the wetland boardwalk. Many thanks to our 3 past-presidents and to our current president - Jennifer Olson. Well done to all who provided support for this work!



Steve Pundt, 19<sup>th</sup>  
president, 1999-2006



Pam Weiner, 20<sup>th</sup>  
president, 2007-2016



Kathy Connelly, 21<sup>st</sup>  
president, 2017-2020



Jennifer Olson, 22<sup>nd</sup>  
president, 2021-2022

### A New Friends History

*Seventy Years of the Friends* is a new book that documents the activities of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden and the events happening in the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden from the founding of the Friends in 1952 until 2022. [Details on the website](#). Available in pdf format and a limited number of printed copies.

Memberships, memorials and donations to the Friends are tax deductible and are the funds we use for our mission 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 so that the Garden remains a special place for generations of people to enjoy. [Details on website](#).

### New Annual Members & Life Members

Brenda Daly, Susan Makela – Basic;  
Barbara Broker, George Lawton – Sponsor;  
J. S. Fitcher, Genevieve Johnson – Life.

### Long-time Friends

43 members have supported us for 20 years or more  
25 of the 43 have been members for 30 years or more,  
6 of the 25 for 40 years or more,  
3 of the 6 for 50 years or more.

### Donations Received

Bob Ambler, Anonymous, David Bjork, Deborah Boehm, Gerald Brownrigg, Gail Fox, Drew Hamre, Susan Makela, Mendon Schutt Family Fund, Edith Miller, Joan Thompson.

### Memorials/In-Honor-Of

for George Anderson from Steve Benson.

for Steve Hanson from Steve Benson.

for Mary McDill from Mark Huber.

for Barbara Larsen McIntyre from Julie Larsen.

I.H.O Carolyn Brunelle from Christopher Brunelle.

### Support form

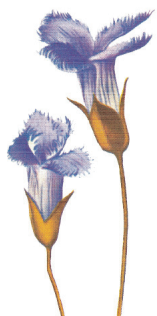
Go online at [www.friendsofeloisebutler.org](http://www.friendsofeloisebutler.org)  
or mail with a check payable to:  
Friends of the Wild Flower Garden  
P. O. Box 3793  
Minneapolis MN 55403

R e q u i r e d	Name	_____
	Address	_____ _____ _____
	E-mail	_____

### Support the Friends:

Annual Levels: ☐ Basic \$25 ☐ Sponsor \$100  
☐ Benefactor \$250 OR ☐ Life \$1,000

<b>Donation of:</b>	Amount: \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Memorial <input type="checkbox"/> Gift in-honor <input type="checkbox"/> Other donation	
Memorial for:	_____
Gift in-honor for:	_____
Occasion:	_____
Please notify:	_____
Address:	_____ _____ _____



## The Fringed Gentian™

is published for members and supporters of the Friends.

### Staff:

Colin Bartol, editor  
Lauren Husting, assistant editor  
Bob Ambler, staff photographer.

[www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org](http://www.friendsofthewildflowergarden.org).

[www.friendsofeloisebutler.org](http://www.friendsofeloisebutler.org).

Interested in writing for the Gentian? Send an email to [colin\\_bartol@hotmail.com](mailto:colin_bartol@hotmail.com)

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 15 through October 15, weekends only October 15 to October 31.

Current hours: Tuesday - Sunday 7:30 AM to 6 PM; Thursdays - 7:30 AM to 8 PM; Mondays - closed.

Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc

P.O. Box 3793

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Barred Owls enjoying the water, Photo by Cheri Petro

### Can you identify this wildflower?



The flowers in summer are 1" wide on long stalks. The answer is on page 79 of the Plant Identification Book, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.; page 58 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, On website home page or in the Upland Garden.

### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

#### Board Members

PRESIDENT Jennifer Olson	PAST PRESIDENT Kathy Connelly
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NEWSLETTER EDITOR Colin Bartol	MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS Lauren Husting
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	GARDEN CURATOR EX OFFICIO Susan Wilkins

#### Additional Staff

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR Christi Bystedt	INVASIVE PLANT COORDINATOR Kari Christianson
SHELTER DOCENTS COORDINATOR Melissa Hansen	

membership email: [membership@friendsofeloisebutler.org](mailto:membership@friendsofeloisebutler.org)



*The Wildflower Garden is more than a remnant of what Wirth Park used to be. It is different geographically. It also has a transcendental spirit.*  
Cary George, 2001