

THE FRINGED GENTIAN

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JOYS OF SPRING

With sweet spring here we think no more of winter, when the first warm breezes blow, and the golden sun awakens the world with warmth.

The restful sleep of winter is over, the emptied snow clouds rolled away, there comes then a faint thrill of quickening life.

The early flowers soothe the tired eye wearied by winters sombre tones. Soft spring colors in the woodlands, a flush of green on the boughs, the freshness of a bright spring day, then all nature wakes to sing.

Mere words cannot describe the fragrance of the very breath of spring - a mingling of rainsoaked soil just warming in the sun, and the early spring flowers.

Commencing with the dainty little snow trillium, followed by countless others in swift procession. These early flowers are the most delicate and the most admired for their beauty.

"It is the wild garden alone which leads us into the clouds".

- Gibson

BIRD NOTES

March is most unpredictable with its temperamental outbursts, in this latitude of four well-marked seasons. It may bring snow or rain or wind. Yet the first suggestion of spring brings the advance guard of migrating birds.

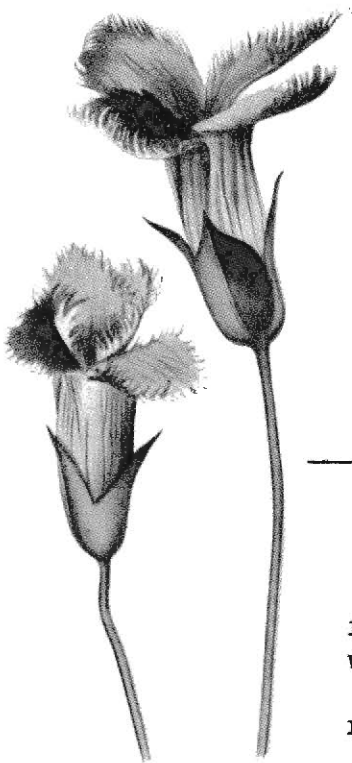
Before the end of April the winter bird visitors have departed for their northern homes and some of the summer visitors and year-round residents have already started to nest. Then the music of many blended notes is heard from the tree tops.

The faithful phoebe returns year after year to the same nesting shelf. The robins nest will soon be veiled from view by the tender unfolding leaves.

By May the northward migration is at its height. The song birds represent the sweetness and melody of bird life.

The bluebird is one of the most delightful harbingers of spring. Henry Thoreau said - The bluebird carries the sky on his back.

File this issue with the others in your "Fringed Gentian" green cover.



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SEEDING TIME

With seeding time here again it would be interesting to try planting a few varieties that are readily grown. Planting of some wild flower seed is very disappointing since it takes many years for germination, and sometimes they are lost entirely.

Seeds easily grown are Virginia Bluebell (*Mertensia*). Plant in a small seed bed, then transplant the small seedlings to their permanent place.

Red Carninal (*Lobelia cardinalis*) is another that can be handled as the previous one. However both like a little more moisture than most plants.

Lupine should be planted where it is to remain, it germinates very quickly and soon becomes deep-rooted. Give the same treatment to Blazing Star, Indian Pink (Puccoon), Butterfly-flower and Blue and White Indigo, as well as Blue Phlox, Columbine and Violets. There are many others to choose from.

Seeds of Large-flowered Trillium and several other trilliums take two to three years to germinate and then several additional years before they bloom. If not in a hurry they are worth while trying.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Bloodroot and Dutchman's Breeches generally require two years for germination.

Golden Seal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) and Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium*) require 20 months for germination. They should be planted in the fall soon after ripening and will come up the second spring.

Dependable seeds can be obtained from Rex D. Pearce, Moorestown, N.J., or Claude A. Barr, Smithwick, So. Dak. Send for their catalogs.

"I trust to Nature for the stable laws
Of beauty and utility. Spring shall plant
And Autumn garner to the end of time".

- Robert Browning

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations are extended to one of our charter members, Mrs. Edith Schussler in the publication of her volume "Doctors, Dynamite and Dogs".

In this her first book, Mrs. Schussler vividly portrays the Taft, Montana region of which she writes, recounting incidents and anecdotes of her rich experiences of those wild days she shared with "Doctors, Dynamite, and Dogs".

She writes of the exciting days when the Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pudget Sound Railroad was extending its line westward, from St. Regis, Montana, to St. Joe, Idaho, on its way to the Pacific coast in 1907 to 1909.

Mrs. Schussler's husband the late Dr. Otto F. Schussler had the hospital contract for the district.

This most interesting volume is now available.

Bill

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIRD HOUSES

There is still time to build several bird houses, ready to put up before the first spring arrivals.

The best material to use is sawmill waste of pine, redwood or cypress. All too often plywood is used that doesn't weather and will warp and curl up inside. Perhaps this was the reason that houses didn't attract birds.

Roofs should have sufficient pitch to shed water readily, they should overhang several inches to protect the entrance hole. A strip of metal or roofing paper helps to keep the ridge of the roof from leaking.

A few small holes should be bored in the bottom to drain water that might get inside the box. Also a few holes thru the walls near the top of the box will give needed circulation of air without producing drafts.

Owing to the rather large, low placed holes of Martin Houses, the ventilating holes are not necessary.

DIMENSIONS FOR VARIOUS HOUSES

Martin House	6x6 - 6 inches high, entrance 1 in. above floor - Hole $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches
Bluebird House	5x5 - 8 inches high, entrance 6 in. above floor - Hole $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches
Wren House	4x4 - 6-8 in. high, entrance 1-6 in. above floor - Hole 1 inch

DID YOU KNOW

That Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*) makes a splendid ground cover, remaining green all summer. The bell-shaped, brown flowers lie close to the ground growing at the base of two heart-shaped leaves. It belongs to the Birthwort Family and its creeping rootstocks are very gingery to the taste.

APPRECIATION

The magnificent expression of the generosity of loyal and public-spirited citizens, who are so kindly helping to preserve some of our most precious National Resources, has been greatly appreciated. Friends of the Wild Flower Garden have made our progress possible, for which we are deeply grateful. It is a challenge and an opportunity.

We find the beauties of nature regarded as one of the great pleasures of life.

STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM

Trees do not grow in height by the gradual lengthening of the entire trunk and limbs. There is no upward growth in the trunk of a tree other than that which occurs thru the annual extension of the terminal buds. Trees put on height growth only from the top.

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ORCHIDS

May and June are the favorite months for the blooming of many of our native orchids. It is at this time that six species of Lady's-slippers (*Cypripedium*) bloom, as well as the Showy Orchis (*Orchis spectabilis*).

Others are Arethusa (*Arethusa bulbosa*), Grass Pink (*Calopogon pulcherrimus*), Calypso (*Calypso bulbosa*), Coral Root (*Corallorrhiza trifida*), Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*), Adam-and-Eve (*Aplectrum hyemale*), Twayblade (*Liparis Loeselii*) and various fringed Orchis (*Habenaria*).

These two months pass all too quickly and with them the hundreds of varieties of other spring flowers.

EDIBLE WILD PLANTS

The list of edible wild plants is amazingly long. Many however have ornamental value.

Tea has been made from Anise-Hyssop and tea was made by the pioneers in Revolutionary days from New Jersey Tea.

Drinks somewhat like lemonade has been made from the berries of Sumac.

The Prairie Turnip (*Psoralea esculenta*) was extensively used by the Indians.

The Groundnut (*Apios tuberosa*) has strings of tubers which were commonly used by the Indians and early colonists of New England.

The Trailing Wild Bean (*Stropostyles umbellata*) is a perennial vine with attractive pink flowers and makes a fine climber. The long slender beans are delicious when prepared like any other beans.

Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*) a sunflower-like plant growing as tall as 6 feet is being cultivated in some areas for its nutritious tubers.

Water cress and various greens including Marsh Marigold are well known.

PURPOSE OF THE GARDEN

One of the primary purposes of the garden is to help awaken an interest in the out-of-doors, among those who may not yet fully appreciate it.

In the garden in a short time, first hand knowledge of wild flowers can be obtained in a relatively small area.

Set in a picturesque wooded area, flowers are growing in as nearly a natural environment as can be created. A sufficiently simple method of determining plants will be found.

Special emphasis is put on their requirements, particularly needs as to light, soil, moisture and drainage.

With a confidence and assurance born of past experiences most plants are being successfully grown.

The information presented here carries with it an understanding of how plants can be established.

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Martha E. Crone -- Editor