

THE FRINGED GENTIAN

(9)

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THE GLORY OF SUMMER DAYS

Altho the spring was slow in arriving, summer rushed in hurriedly as tho afraid of being left behind.

Many of the earlier flowers bloomed in a day and perished in a night. Scores of the midsummer flowers have a longer period of bloom. Since looking at blooming things we are reminded of a quotation by James Oppenheim-

A blossom against the sky-
And heaven opened out
In one small flower-face.

The softness in the air seems half summer and half spring. The warblers songs in every wood remain but a memory.

The feathery clouds, the woodland breezes, the meadow-lark in belated song and the lazy drone of the wandering bee. These are the joys of midsummer.

The sun is at its highest, the days the longest, enjoy the summer for soon it vanishes like a passing fragrance, but memories will outlast the autumn and winter.

AN INTERESTING VOLUME FOR SUMMER READING

"JOURNEY INTO SUMMER"

By Edwin Way Teale.

A 19,000 mile journey into summer, what could be more delightful than to start on a long leisurely journey into the natural history of summer. Visiting 26 states, meandering from the White and Green Mountains of the East to the Rockies of the West. Going from one wild place to another, seeing a great deal that without the author, you probably never would see.

Minnesota is covered in the 16th Chapter, "Farthest North".

To read the account of this journey is to accompany an excellent guide and enjoy outdoor America. Edwin Way Teale is one of our greatest naturalists and writers.

: This volume can be purchased at book stores at \$5.95 or obtained at most Libraries.

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



(10)

CULTIVATION OF THE MINNESOTA STATE FLOWER

By popular request the propagation of the Minnesota State Flower, the Showy Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*) is being repeated.

Often this orchid is confused with the Stemless Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*). The Showy is the largest of all our native orchids and is considered the Queen Orchid of America. The pure white sepals and petals and the white rose-striped lip, spotted with purple on the inside, makes this orchid just as exquisite as those of its tropical relative.

The seeds of this orchid are the smallest seeds known, dustlike or microscopic in size. They contain no endosperm. This lack of concentrated food for the use of the germinating seedlings makes seed germination extremely difficult. Orchid seeds will not germinate and grow into seedlings unless the fungi mycorrhiza is present in the humus. This explains the rarity of most species.

Obtain plants from Wild Flower Nurseries. A list of the Nurseries can be obtained by writing to your editor.

Plant them as near as possible to natural conditions. If not possible to reproduce their native habitat, it is wasteful to even attempt transplanting them.

Recommended culture from the editors own experience-- Dig out the soil in an area large enough to comfortably accommodate the plants to a depth of about twelve inches, then replace with a mixture of peat, rich woods soil and peat moss. If the roots are long, spread them out flat and set the plants with the new buds just below the surface. Surround the plants with a cover of peat moss, this to be replenished each year. It is essential that they have plenty of sunshine, yet their roots must be kept cool. They require shade part of the day. Keep them moderately moist yet well drained and never allow water to stand over their crowns.

If planted near a building, it should be not closer than 10 feet. Allow low growing plants such as violets to mingle with them giving them root protection.

LAKE SUPERIOR CIRCLE DRIVE

Many vacations this summer include plans to take the Lake Superior Circle Tour. It is now possible to drive completely around Lake Superior thru a new frontier in Canada. This scenic drive of approximately 1200 miles goes thru miles of wilderness area along many virgin lakes. This New Highway was completed last Fall after many years of difficult work.

While on this tour be sure to stop at Grand Portage, just 6 miles off Highway 61 and visit the newly declared Historic Site National Monument. Here you will see many relics of historic value and a fine collection of hand made Diamond Willow furniture.

Another must from here is the 6 mile drive on the new highway thru the most magnificent scenery. At present the road dead-ends at the Pigeon River, however the new bridge will be complete in the fall. This will then become Highway 61 into Canada.

DID YOU KNOW

That the Soy Bean is a native of Asia where it has been grown for over 5000 years. It is very high in protein and often makes up the deficiency of proteins when consumed in large quantities.

(11)

BIRD NOTES

FROM THE APRIL ISSUE OF "ALASKA SPORTSMAN" PUBLISHED AT JUNEAU, ALASKA.

A total of 2243 birds of 16 species were recorded by 18 members of the newly formed Alaska Ornithological Society, in a midwinter bird count near Anchorage. Most numerous species observed was the common redpoll, of which 1461 were counted. The most unexpected species was the white-crowned sparrow, which is usually in California at that time of year. 18 were counted. Other species tabulated included ravens, woodpeckers, jays, glaucous-winged gulls, black-billed magpies, black-capped chickadees and boreal chickadees, a brown creeper, dippers, Bohemian waxwings, northern shrikes and pine grosbeaks.

REPORT OF THE CONDUCTED TOUR

The Conducted Tour and Open House of the Wild Flower Garden at Theodore Wirth Park, held May 20th, was well attended and much enjoyed. Members and friends coming from great distances. The weather was ideal and the spring flowers at their best.

Altho the beautiful display of Hepaticas had passed, the Trilliums, Virginia Bluebells, Spring Beauty, Columbine, Crested Iris, Anemone, Jacob's Ladder, various Violets and many others were in lovely bloom. The many varieties of ferns were just developing.

The Yellow Lady's-slippers were in fine bloom but the Minnesota State Flower, the Showy Lady's-slipper was just poking thru the ground. However it develops very quickly and can be enjoyed in full bloom the middle of June.

STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEMPUFF ADDER

The American Spreading Adder has many common names, including Hog-nosed snake, Blowing Viper and Sand Viper. It resembles the Rattlesnake in shape and general color, altho it has no rattles on its tail.

When disturbed, it puffs up its neck to twice the normal size, takes a deep breath and then expels the air with a hissing noise that sounds like a steam engine.

Many people believe that venom is mixed with the expelled air and that the snake's breath is deadly poisonous. Altho the Blowing Puff Adder is a fearsome sight to people who do not know its habits, it is really one of the most harmless snakes in the United States.

Not only is the Puff Adder non-venomous but it cannot be persuaded to bite. Its show is purely bluff and if this bluff does not frighten its attacker away, it starts to play dead.

These comical and highly entertaining snakes frequently make excellent pets.

They are at home in sandy woods, where they feed upon gophers. They very quickly rid an area of pocket gophers. They should be protected and encouraged to increase.

(12)

BOOK RECOMMENDED

Many requests are received in reference to books on Identification and growing of Wild Flowers. There are many containing various information. Some are out of print at this time. Several will be described here from time to time -

"Wild Flowers and How to Grow Them"
By Edwin F. Steffek
100 illustrations, 50 in full color

This practical book on the cultivation of wild flowers and how to identify and transplant them should be of some help for those starting a garden. It tells about soils, seasons, water, light, drainage and plant enemies.

This volume was published in 1954 and sold for \$3.95 at that time. Look for it in book stores or at your Library.

Crown Publisher, Inc.
419 4th Ave.
New York City 16, N.Y.

PLANTING AZALEAS AND RHODODENDRONS

If planning to experiment with the planting of Azaleas and Rhododendrons, it is well to remember that they do not tolerate heat, wind, dust or smoke.

None of them will stand a drought even of short duration, therefore to conserve moisture and as well as to protect the shallow roots from cold, there should always be a mulch of 6 to 8 inches of oak leaves covering an extensive area around them. Let this mulch remain all year and add a new supply each fall. Also give them partial shade.

The best proven method of planting is to dig out existing soil to a depth of about 18 inches and replace with a mixture of equal parts of loam, sand and acid peat.

Plant them where they are protected from the north wind and direct sun in winter.

Those in the Wild Flower Garden have thrived over 15 years under such conditions.

GROUND COVER

Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrina*)

A native American shrub rather low growing, it is especially fine on poor sandy soil or dry banks in full sun. Its excellent to keep soil from washing.

It has a woody-stem and is fern-like. The fragrance of its leaves is most pleasing when crushed.

Since it is acid soil loving it would not do well in lime soil. When once established it spreads rapidly.

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