

PUBLICATION OF FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN, INC.

MARTHA E. CRONE, EDITOR 9723 LYNDALE AVE. NO. MINNEAPOLIS 12, MINN.

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SPRING DAYS

Before the leaves are fully formed on the trees; before the shade is dense and all the birds have returned; before the sun is high and the heat of summer is here, is when our delicately colored and daintiest spring flowers are in bloom.

They are the low growing plants and depend greatly on the crawling insects to carry their pollen. These are the ones that are disappearing more rapidly than the others in the wilds, since their native haunts are being cleared rapidly for other purposes.

In late March or early April the furry Hepatica blooms. The Bloodroots and Trilliums wearing coats - the leaf clasping the budding flower - to protect it against the cold nights and late snowstorms.

In more open and sunnier spots the Dutchman's Breeches and Squirrel Corn, Baneberries, Ginger, Showy Orchis, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Geranium, Columbine, May Apple and many others.

This succession goes on for weeks until the trees have their full canopy of leaves. Then later in the sheltering shade will be found Clintonia, Bunchberry, Golden Seal, Bellwort and patches of Rattlesnake Plantain.

Thus the revival of vegetation under the spring sun is the signal for the waking of all plant life and the renewal of its energies, and its progress from leaf to flower, and then to fruit.

Perhaps we can now find new meaning in these lines by William Cullen Bryant-

"My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence round me—the perpetual work
Of Thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on Thy works I read
The lessons of Thy own eternity."

CONSERVATION

Wildflowers, ferns and trees growing in their native haunts rank high among the elements of natural beauty. Many of our attractive wildflowers have already been exterminated in the vicinity of cities and highways.

With the advance of civilization the complete destruction of vast areas of native vegetation is inevitable. That Minnesota may retain more of that primitive beauty, let us use our influence for conservation of native plant life wherever it is still found. It is our heritage. Let us preserve it as we have received it, and pass it on, unspoiled, for the enjoyment and inspiration of future generations.

BIRD NOTES

During the spring migration each day brings its own surprise and pleasure. The bare silent woods are now astir with flitting wings and ringing with glad music. How happy the trees must be to hear the songs of birds again in their branches after the long silence.

Altho the great chorus of feathered songsters will be still incomplete until May, you should get to know them all by sound as well as sight.

From the leafless but budding woods comes the rejoicing sweet song of the Song Sparrow, as well as the rich clear whistle of the Fox Sparrow, which is always a rare treat before they leave for their northern nesting home. The Fox Sparrow is considered the finest of all sparrows in both plumage and song.

Very characteristic of these early days of reviving nature, is the rol-

licking whistle of the Cardinal after a winter of silence.

The summer birds are steadily arriving and singing loudly out of pure delight of existence. The clear carol of the Orioles and of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The softer melody of the Thrushes and the plaintive note of the Bluebird.

DO YOU KNOW

Why Easter is so variable and what really determines the exact date? Each year the date is decided by the first Sunday following the first full moon after the first day of spring.

For example, the first day of spring this year is March 21st, the first full moon following is April 7th, therefore the first Sunday following, is Easter on April 11th. The same date re-occurs every eleventh year.

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ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Incorporated, was held Tuesday, January 4th, 1955, at its office 2318 Chestnut Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. at 2:30 p.m.

Officers who were re-elected are as follows- Clinton M. Odell. president; Donald C. Dayton, vice president; Mrs. Carroll Binder, vice president and Mrs. Martha Crone, Secretary-Treasurer.

Re-elected to the Board of Directors were Mrs. Elizabeth Carpenter. Mrs. Glarence Tolg, Mrs. Carroll Binder, Mrs. Martha Crone, Russell Bennett, Earle Brown, Donald C. Dayton, Clinton M. Odell, Leonard Ramberg and Carl Rawson.

Annual reports were given by the Secretary, also Treasurers report. The present membership is 200. \$500 was voted to the Board of Park Commissioners to assist in maintenance of the Wild Flower Garden.

During the past two years 42 illustrated talks were given by Mrs. Martha Grene, to School groups, Glubs and various other organizations. The Kodachrome slides accompanying these talks are of wild flowers and scenes taken in the garden and adjacent areas.

File this issue with the others in your "FRINGED GENTIAN" green cover.

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TRILLIUMS

The propagation of wild flowers is a worthwhile service to the community as well as an interesting undertaking.

In addition to other plants why not plant some trilliums this spring. There are few other flowers more satisfying than the trilliums. The bulbs can be purchased from wild flower nurseries. Planting seeds of trilliums prove somewhat disappointing. They require two or three years to germinate and then at least three more years before they get large enough to blossom.

Altho there are eleven varieties of trilliums well established in the wild flower garden, it would be futile to try growing them all under ordinary conditions.

The large-flowered Trillium (Trillium grandiflorum) is the most satisfying and delights in wooded areas or under shrubs and tree and will last indefinite—ly.

The Nodding Trillium (T. cernuum) does well with the same requirements althour is not as showy.

Among the purple trilliums, the Erect Purple Trillium (T. erectum) is the most attractive and easily grown. The little Snow Trillium (T. nivale) is a miniature of the Large-flowered Trillium and requires well drained woods areas. It is the first flower to bloom in the spring.

Other trilliums growing in the garden are Sessile-flowered (T. sessile) and Prairie Trillium (T. recurvatum) of the purple group. Of the white group, the Dropping Trillium and Montana Trillium. As well as the Yellow Trillium (T. luteum); Rose Trillium (T. stylosum) and Painted Trillium (T. undulatum)

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STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM

The value of the citrus fruit, the Kumquat (Fortunella) has not been realized. A dwarf evergreen citrus tree having been grown as an ornamental for many years. Shrubby in habit it may reach a height of 15 feet. The flowers are white and have a sweet scent. The orange-colored fruits are small, oval or round-shaped and look like tiny oranges.

Originally from China and Japan, it is now grown in the citrus regions of this country and even somewhat farther north, it being the hardiest of the citrus fruits.

The well-ripened fruits are eaten raw, peel and all. Also are delicious made into marmalades and jelly, or candied.

WILD FLOWERS

Wild flowers add greatly to the beauty of a landscape, and it is easy to understand why widespread efforts are being made to conserve them. The pleasure of seeing them grow in their native haunts is much greater than that of picking them.

Woodland flowers are valuable in the garden where there are some trees, or in the shelter of buildings. Violets, Hepaticas, Trilliums, Mertensia, Solomon's Seal, Jack-in-the-Pulpit and hardy ferns combine beautifully with spring-blooming bulbs. Planting bulbs between ferns permits their foliage to ripen without being unsightly. Prairie flowers are suitable for sunny spots in the border.

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BIG YEAR AHEAD

With more seeds and wild flowering plants on order, than ever before and with two experienced men to help our Curator in the garden, we are confident that the 1955 season will be the best the garden has ever had. More than 100 new aluminum labels will be added to the many already marking plants.

C. M. Odell, President.

REGAL LILY

It has often been said- "That all flowers are wild flowers somewhere in the world".

The well known Regal Lily had its start under cultivation here when a famous explorer, Ernest Henry Wilson (1876-1930) made a special trip of 1800 miles up the Yangtze River in China, and 250 miles farther north on the Min River, thru the most difficult country to gather just one plant of the Regal Lily. It has been propagated since then and grown here extensively by thousands of American gardeners. It has not proven entirely hardy in the local climate, where it frequently winter kills.

PESTS OF THE GARDEN

The wild flower garden has many natural enemies such as insects, mice and mainly larger animals as rabbits, muskrats, squirrels, woodchucks and pocket gophers.

Pocket gophers for many years have been a great menace. They quickly exterminate plants with large or bulbous roots. One rabbit can destroy the shrubs and new shoots in an entire area in a short time. Then when this is multiplied several times the distruction is tremendous.

Muskrats can completely clear a pool of water lilies, lotus lilies, arrow-head, pickerel-weed and cardinal-flower in no time. Squirrels dig up wood-land bulbs such as Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Dutchman's breeches and many orchids.

It has been a real challenge to keep these pests under control. Eternal vigilance is necessary to successfully grow wild flowers, under natural conditions.

MANY THANKS

Appreciation is extended to the members of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden for their kind contributions of Nature Magazines and other publications for use in the garden office. They have been enjoyed by visitors to the garden and more will be welcome.

Official publication of "The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden", issued quarterly.