FIRST SIGNS OF SPRING

Long before winter relaxes its grasp, we note the change in the appearance of the woods. A brightening of color in twigs in groves and swamps, especially of the Red-osier Dogwood and the Willows.

In a short while the ruddy hue of the Maple trees is seen. The blossoms appear long before the leaves, as do the blossoms of the Aspen. Here the bees find their earliest spring feast. In early spring the Hazel is covered with its minute bright and exquisite flowers.

The atmosphere of promise is the most interesting time of the year. The hopes of a new garden mount with the warming sun and soon a lavish profusion of bloom.

Then it is spring into summer, motion so swiftly, we know not that we move. By June the first rapture of the new green has passed. Yet the lovely orchid the Showy Lady's-Slipper gives splendor to the month of June.

Lines by Blake can appropriately be applied here --

"Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?"

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EXPANSION OF THE GARDEN

It is the most gratifying to realize that the garden is growing. It's very necessary to meet the demands of our expanding population.

Perhaps this is the most far reaching accomplishment. Nothing has ever been achieved without enthusiasm.

Wildflower sanctuaries established at this time will greatly benefit future generations. This native area has been added just in time while it was still in its native state.

It is hoped that it will remain so and that future generations may be able to point to the wisdom of today in setting aside this bit of wilderness.

Since this is an ideal bird study area as well, all bird lovers are urged to support this project through their memberships, memorials, gifts and other bequests.

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NOW IS AN IDEAL TIME TO INVITE A FRIEND TO BECOME A MEMBER OF FRIENDS OF THE WILD FLOWER GARDEN.

THEY WILL FIND IT A PLEASURE TO TAKE PART IN BUILDING SOMETHING TANGIBLE FOR THE FUTURE.

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

In recent years the use of herbs and spices has greatly increased. Only a few varieties were commonly used and today as many as 50 kinds are obtainable at stores. Many exotic recipes require them, therefore the demand has increased.

Spices should be purchased in small amounts because they start losing flavor. Exposure to heat, moisture or air should be avoided. They should be used sparingly to add distinction to ordinary cooking.

To mention a few commonly used -- Thyme, Sage, Marjoram, Savory, Basil, Saffron, Bay Leaves, Oregano, Tarragon, Turmeric, Ginger, Allspice, Sesame, Anise, Mace, Caraway, Cardamom, Coriander, Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Black Pepper and Red Pepper.

Oregano rarely heard of is now used extensively. It can be easily grown and makes an attractive ground cover. The clusters of purplish-pink flowers make a lovely addition to any garden. It is a perennial or annual in colder climates. The gray-green leaves are pungent like marjoram and can be used freshly minced or dried, and used sparingly.

Black Pepper, the most universally used spice is the dried ripe berry of a climbing vine.

Red Pepper is not related to Black Pepper or White Pepper.

MUSHROOM NOTES

TRUFFLE

The Truffle (Tuber cibarium) is a subterranean black fungi, ranging in size from an acorn to a good sized potato.

Since early times truffles have been known and esteemed as a table delicacy. Since they mature underground, they must be hunted by dogs and pigs trained for that purpose. Pigs will scent a truffle at a distance of at least 20 feet. It grows under various trees especially oak trees and from 12 to 38 inches under the ground, mostly in Central and Southern Europe. However the cultivation of truffles is being carried on in France.

Edible species have not been found in this country. They are obtainable canned. Due to its agreeable flavor it is used in the preparation of many dishes.

DOUGLAS FIR

(Pseudotsuga taxifolia)

Altho this beautiful evergreen tree is a native of the Pacific Northwest, it thrives very well in this area. Some fine specimens are to be found here that were planted years ago. More should be used in landscaping.

It doesn't have its needles in clusters like a pine, nor does it resemble a true fir because the cones hang down instead of being held upright. These cones have three-lobed bracts between the scales thereby differing from a spruce.
The Annual Meeting of Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Incorporated, was held Monday, March 8th, 1965, at 7:30 p.m. at the Minneapolis Public Library, 300 Nicollet Avenue, 2nd floor, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Elected to the Board of Directors were: Mr. Kenneth Avery, Mr. Russell Bennett, Miss Marion Cross, Mrs. Elizabeth Carpenter, Mrs. Martha Crone, Mr. Whitney Eastman, Mr. Lloyd Hale, Mrs. George Ludcke, Mr. Walter Lehnert, Mrs. Alice Martin, Mr. Leonard Odell, Mrs. Elizabeth Reed, Mr. Leonard Ramberg, Mr. Carl Rawson, Mrs. Clarence Tolg and Mr. Alvin Witt.

16 new members were added to the membership during the year.

The annual $500.00 was voted to the Park Board to be used toward a Sprayer.

The Board Meeting followed this meeting at which time the following officers were elected: Mrs. Robert Stange, President; Mrs. Clarence Tolg, Vice-President, and Mrs. Martha Crone, Secretary-Treasurer.

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WILDFLOWER CORNER

Do not neglect the possibility of a wildflower corner. It gives endless delight. Just as the woodlands are greening, we should think of developing this wildflower corner no matter how small it may be.

Dig in rich soil, cover with some leaf mould and peat. Not too close to a building or directly under trees. In transplanting wild flowers, it is necessary to try to duplicate the natural setting of the plants, sun, shade and terrain.

Establish a few varieties of ferns such as Lady Fern, Evergreen Wood Fern, Maidenhair Fern and Ostrich Fern.

Also some Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Red and White Baneberry, Blue Wood Phlox, Mertensia, Jacob's-ladder, Columbine and various Trilliums.

A number of lilies should be included, such as Wood Lily and Canada Lily. As well as several plants of the Showy Lady's-Slipper which are worth while the effort to establish. These can add immeasurably to a wild garden.

The flair for Wild Flowers is noted more and more in gardens.

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THE POSSIBILITIES OF HOUSE PLANTS

House culture of plants is very interesting, the possibilities are tremendous. There are many varieties to choose from. They can be incorporated in a decorative scheme or enjoyed as individuals. The thrill of accomplishment is eminently satisfying. One gets closer to plants grown indoors to enjoy their beauty.

There are a few plants which can exist for periods in dim corners, but most plants require a well lighted situation, and others must have abundant sunshine. Not all plants can adapt themselves to house conditions. It's well to decide which plants are desirable and determine what they require.

Grape Ivy (Cissus rhombifolia) is a very satisfying indoor vine. The glossy notched leaflets appear in groups of three, the young tendrils are red and fur-lined. Grape Ivy will hang downward or climb and will survive heat and dry house air. It likes plenty of light, partial sun and not too much water.

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BIRD NOTES

The coming back from the south of our birds to again sing their songs. Who so thrills to hear the first song and perhaps record that unusual bird. The sight of a strange bird or a new song invariably arouses curiosity in an area where never before seen. An ardent birder will not pass up such an opportunity of identifying the bird.

A time of excitement is when the first notes of song birds are heard. Even with the lengthening days one cannot do full justice to each spring. It goes by all too quickly.

The Horned Larks were noted about 50 miles south of the Metropolitan area the latter part of February. What is their urge to advance so early even into the face of a snowstorm?

The Goldfinches are again feathered in their summer costume of bright yellow and black after a winter of drab color. It is interesting to follow some of the birds to their nesting sites in various parts of the north.

In one locality last July near the North Shore of Lake Superior at Castle Danger, 42 varieties were noted. Some of them are:

- Parula Warbler
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Mourning Warbler
- Canada Warbler
- Black and White Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Myrtle Warbler
- Pine Sisken
- White-throated Sparrow
- Chipping Sparrow
- Song Sparrow
- Vesper Sparrow
- Savannah Sparrow
- Clay-colored Sparrow

GARDEN SLUGS

Altho garden slugs are not insects they certainly cause serious damage in the garden. They are most numerous in damp and shaded gardens.

One method of reducing them is by placing boards wherever possible and destroying the slugs found under them in the morning. The slugs work only at night and seek shelter during the daytime.

To permanently remove them, sprinkle 10 per cent Chlordan and wash it in thoroughly. Dusting with Sulfur is also recommended.

A THANK YOU

The help and encouragement received during the years have made the garden what it is today. We are most grateful to those who have given of their time and skill to insure a successful garden.

The popularity of wild gardens, on both a large and small scale is growing every year.

The glory of the growing year is here again and we note Nature's handiwork in the bursting of buds on trees and flowers.

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

Martha E. Crone -- Editor