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## Changes for Shady Areas in Munsinger Gardens

by Joan Andersen

Nia Primus, Gardens Supervisor, has high standards for plants chosen for the Gardens. Of course, they must be attractive with showy flowers or colorful leaves. Another major plus is that they do not need deadheading (removal of dead flowers), especially if there is a large number of that variety. Hybridizers are really working on this issue—the saying in the trade is that plants “bury their dead,” usually by growing more foliage and flowers to cover the spent blooms. Another important thing is disease resistance. New plants are carefully evaluated for performance at our Gardens and are not reused if they have problems. There is also interest in using new cultivars of old favorites. This helps in annual garden redesign and makes things interesting for the public and the garden staff. When you visit the Gardens, be sure to ask the staff for the names of the plants you want to try at home.

Munsinger Gardens once relied on *impatiens walleriana* for color in the shade. Impatiens are one of the most popular shade-bedding plants grown in the U.S. for home gardens and public spaces. It is hard to find other plants that grow as well, are as easy to care for, and come in such a wide array of colors to brighten up shady areas. But in 2012 and 2013 *impatiens walleriana* were killed by downy mildew (plasmopara obducens) in many areas of the U.S. This disease is still such a problem that no *impatiens walleriana* will be used in the Gardens in 2014. Nia and the Gardens staff continue to look for replacement plants, and in 2014 they will plant many New Guinea impatiens, wax begonias, tuberous begonias, and torenia in the areas where *impatiens walleriana* used to grow.

The Divine Series of New Guinea impatiens (*impatiens hawkeri*) are resistant to downy mildew. They come in a wide range of colors, and a few varieties have bronze foliage. They will be the backbone of Munsinger Gardens where there is dappled shade. New Guinea impatiens are similar in size to traditional impatiens. They are propagated



from seed instead of cuttings, which makes them an affordable choice for the Gardens.

Look for wax begonias in the ‘Cocktail’ and ‘Bada Bing’ series used as bedding plants in Munsinger. These are reliable plants that take sun or shade and don’t need deadheading. ‘Dragon Wing’ begonias in pink and white are also being planted in Munsinger. With elongated leaves and graceful arching flowers, ‘Dragon Wing’ looks good in beds and containers. Another begonia with a different look is the ‘Go Go’ series of tuberous begonias. These are easily

distinguished from the other begonias I have mentioned because they have the large bright flowers that many of us love in begonias.

Torenia, also known as wishbone flower, is another substitute for *impatiens walleriana* in Munsinger Gardens. They have tubular, trumpet-shaped, up-facing flowers with cultivars available in violet, burgundy, pink, rose, lavender, and white, plus bicolors. When these were used last year, careful observation compared the performance of each cultivar and helped Nia and the Gardens staff choose the best performing plants for 2014. I counted over 4000 torenia plants on the list for 2014, so you should not have any trouble finding them.

Plants grown for foliage instead of flowers also add interest to Munsinger. Coleus in the ‘Kong,’ ‘Wizard,’ and ‘Carefree’ series have showy leaves in a wide variety of colors, leaf patterns, sizes, and leaf shapes. Even without flowers, they brighten up shady areas.

As you can see, a visit to Munsinger Gardens on a warm summer day will give you and the shade-loving plants the perfect environment. Remember, our summer concert series “Music in the Gardens” is held in this area of the Gardens, so you can check out the flowers before or after the concert.

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### Great news!

The Star Tribune has recognized Munsinger and Clemens Gardens in its “Best of Minnesota” section on Sunday May 18 as “Best Getaway for Gardeners.” The article says, “Look for inspiration at two distinct gardens spanning several city blocks across the Mississippi River from St. Cloud State University;” “The piece goes on to acknowledge Clemens with “hundreds of rosebushes and themed sections” similar to European gardens, and Munsinger as “lush and shady...with the river as its backdrop.” Our thanks for this recognition go to the Star Tribune, to our Gardens staff for keeping the Gardens so lovely, to the city of Saint Cloud, and to each of you our members of Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society for your support.

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MCBS newsletter is published four times a year. The next issue will be in August. Articles, comments, suggestions, or address corrections are welcomed.

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## A Neophyte Gardener Moves North

by Anne Przybilla

I grew up in a farming community in southwestern Minnesota. The soil there was deep and fertile. All you had to do was throw your seeds in the ground, water them if rain was scarce, fertilize once a year, and you had a plentiful garden. Imagine my surprise when I moved to northern Minnesota as a newlywed and learned the truth behind my blissfully ignorant assumptions.

My first attempt at gardening in northern climes was hybrid tea roses. (What was I thinking!) This was a long time ago and I'm not sure the "Minnesota Tip" had even been invented then. I certainly wasn't aware of this labor-intensive method of coaxing roses to winter over. When I saw those cylindrical plastic bags of hybrid tea roses at the big box store, I had glorious visions of the lush roses from florists' bouquets growing in my very own garden. Naive as I was, I took home six of those root-filled bags and the adventures began.

The first task was to plant them. The challenge was the red clay soil, evidence of the rich iron ore deposits in the northeastern part of the state. It took me two days to dig the six planting holes, and my hands looked rusty for weeks. That red clay also seemed to hold rain water forever, but the roses apparently ignored the adverse growing conditions. Not only did they survive their first winter with just a bit of mulch, they grew and thrived, and I felt so accomplished when neighbors complimented me on the beautiful blooms they produced.

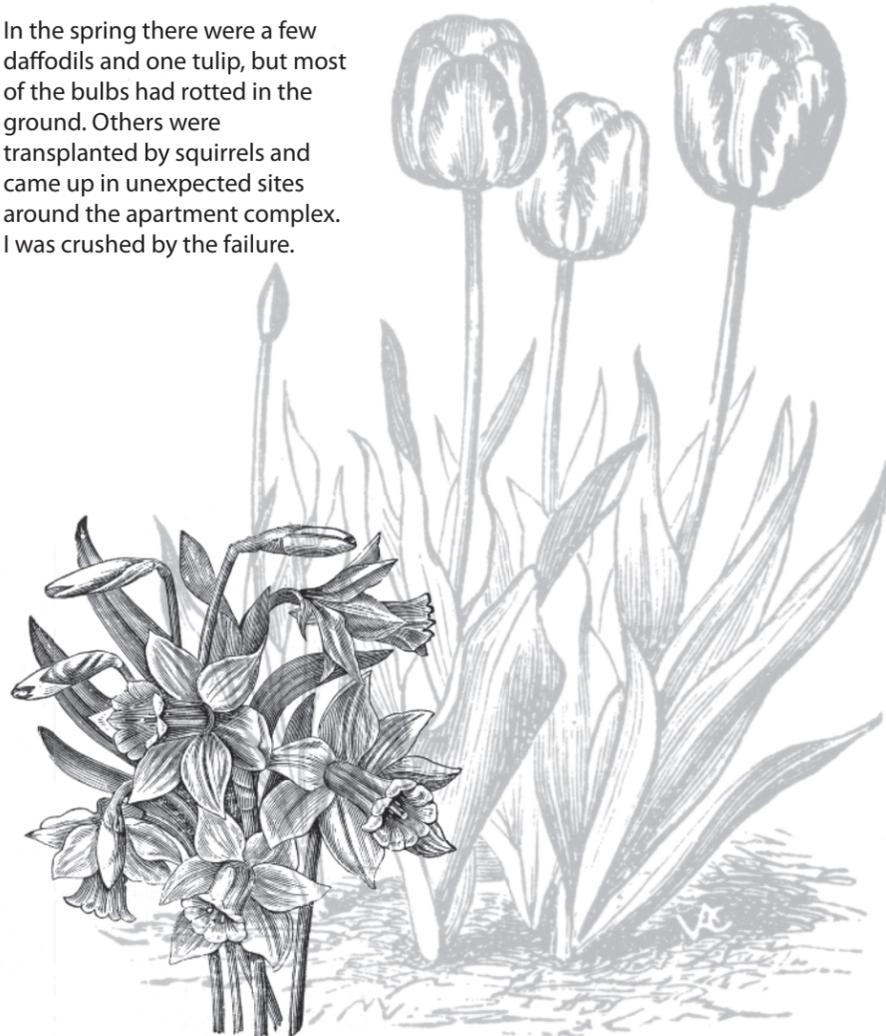
I now know that this success had nothing to do with my gardening prowess and everything to do with the fact that the roses had been planted in a sheltered location on the sunny south side of a big brick wall. The warmth of the "lake effect" from Lake Superior didn't hurt either. I had not chosen that ideal spot. It had come to me by default. The roses were planted there because it was the only space available in the apartment complex where we lived.

That fall, again with enticement from the big box store, my gardening repertoire was expanded to include flowering bulbs. I knew that they bloomed early in the spring. I knew nothing about growing them, but the directions on the packages were simple and sounded easy enough, and surely they'd provide a colorful border in my little garden until the roses bloomed. It was the end of October and we'd already had our first snowfall, which is probably why all those bulbs were on clearance, but I find it hard to pass up a bargain and I'd forgotten the difficulties presented by the native red clay. I knew little at the time about the importance of soil preparation. It was a wet fall and I slipped and slid as I dug the bulbs into the soggy red soil.

In the spring there were a few daffodils and one tulip, but most of the bulbs had rotted in the ground. Others were transplanted by squirrels and came up in unexpected sites around the apartment complex. I was crushed by the failure.

It was six years before I attempted bulbs again. By that time we had purchased our own home and I had space to expand my horticulture endeavors. I had also done some research and learned the importance of beginning any gardening project with good soil as well as healthy plant stock.

Once the soil had been improved and amended, I ordered quality bulbs from Holland chosen for their extended bloom time. The whole neighborhood was rewarded the following spring as the crocuses began peeping through the snow, brightening the cold and dreary days as they gave way to the joyful colors of the tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths that signaled promise of the warm weather yet to come.



## Photography in the Gardens

January 1— November 7th, 2014

### > Prizes

**\$50** 1st place **Adult** winner in each category  
**\$20** 2nd place **Adult** winner in each category  
**\$10** 3rd place **Adult** winners in each category  
**\$50** 1st place **Youth-18** winner in each category  
**\$20** 2nd place **Youth-18** winner in each category  
**\$10** 3rd place **Youth-18** winners in each category  
*All winners will receive Award Certificates.*

### > Categories

**Landscapes** (garden scenery)  
**Hardscapes** (decorative features in the Gardens)

*1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners will be chosen from both age groups and each category.*

*Any visitor to the Gardens is eligible to enter.*

### > Submission Fee

**\$10** for adults per photo  
**\$5** for youth-18 per photo

*Maximum of 3 entries per photographer.*

### > Rules

- Tripods may be used.
- Photos will be returned to photographer.
- Photographer retains copyright of photo.
- Use of the photo is granted to MCBS and credit will be given to photographer.

### > Entries Due

**November 7, 2014** from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.  
**November 8, 2014** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 at the **Lake George Municipal Complex**  
 1101 7th Street South, St. Cloud, MN

*Winners will be notified November 12-14, 2014.*

### > Awards

**November 16, 2014** 3:00 p.m. a Public Reception will be held at **Lake George Municipal Complex** to present awards.

*Winning photos will be on display for the following year and then returned. Other photos may be picked up at the awards ceremony or at Lake George Municipal Complex November 17-21, 2014.*

Download the entry form from our website  
[www.munsingerclemens.com](http://www.munsingerclemens.com)

## The New Evening in the Gardens Spanferkel Under Glass

by Anne Przybilla

The Evening in the Gardens event sponsored by MCBS to raise funds in support of the Gardens has gradually changed over the years. Originally a fairly formal event with live music and dainty refreshments and wine served under the shade of classic garden tents, it has now morphed into a more casual affair. There are several reasons for the changes.

Weather was always the biggest factor in determining the success or failure of this event, and Mother Nature was not always cooperative. The construction of the new greenhouse changed all that. Our ability to hold the event there meant that weather was no longer a big issue. It also gave attendees a chance to see the real heart of the operations at Munsinger Clemens Gardens. With the move to a new, more casual location, it was also decided to try a new cuisine. Recognizing the heritage of the original settlers of this area, we opted on a German theme, complete with a roast pig and all the ethnic fixings to go with it. A cash bar was added as well. Thinking that a descriptive, traditional name also seemed in order, we chose "Spanferkel Under Glass," a name that describes both the German menu and the new location.

This year's *Spanferkel Under Glass* is open to the public and will be held from 5:30 to 8:00 pm on Tuesday August 19. Featured musicians will be Cristina Seaborn and Gerry Brider. A cash bar will be available. Advance sale tickets are \$20, and a limited number of tickets will be for sale at the door for \$25. MCBS members will receive invitations and ticket information by mail. Information may also be found at [munsingerclemens.com](http://munsingerclemens.com) and our Facebook page, Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society. Get your tickets early and take advantage of this great opportunity to support the Gardens while enjoying good music and fabulous food.

### Eighth Annual "ART FAIR IN THE GARDENS" Thursday July 17, 2014

Free Public Event

*Sponsored by Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society*

Celebrate summer with art, flowers, food & beverages, and music at the annual "Art Fair in the Gardens" at Saint Cloud's Munsinger and Clemens Gardens, Kilian Boulevard & 13th St. SE, on Thursday July 17 from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Artwork is for sale from regional artists skilled in garden art, pottery, photography, oil painting, watercolor painting, jewelry, stained glass, sculpture, woodworking, and weaving. The Gardens will be at their summer best in mid-July and will provide the perfect setting for you to browse and purchase some wonderful art to take home. There will be free music throughout the day from Paul Imholte, Scott & Lou, and Adam Hammer & Dave Coffell. Food and beverages will be for sale on site from Good Earth Food Co-op, Erbert & Gerbert's, and West Side Liquors.

Munsinger Clemens Gardens are part of the City of Saint Cloud Parks Department and are the premier visitor attraction in Central Minnesota. Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society (MCBS) is a nonprofit group that organizes events and raises money to support the Gardens. For more information on all events see our website at [munsingerclemens.com](http://munsingerclemens.com) or find us on Facebook at Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society.

—Joan Andersen

## Music in the Gardens

2014 Schedule

"Music in the Gardens" is a Sunday afternoon concert series in Saint Cloud's Munsinger Gardens, Riverside Drive SE & 13th St. SE. All concerts start at 3:00 pm. Bring a lawn chair and meet at the gazebo down by the Mississippi River to enjoy live music by favorite local musical groups.

- June 8 .....Imagine Haggis
- June 22 .....Curtis and Loretta
- July 13.....Ring of Kerry
- July 27..... Peggy Doerrie and Kevin Carlson
- August 10.....Harper's Chord
- August 24.....Monday Night Jazz

Root-beer floats are sold for \$1.00. Concerts are arranged by Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society. Check the MCBS website at [munsingerclemens.com](http://munsingerclemens.com) or our Facebook page, Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society, for directions and other information about this event or the Gardens.



Visit our website: [munsingerclemens.com](http://munsingerclemens.com)

 Check out our Facebook page at [Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society](https://www.facebook.com/munsingerclemens).

## Quick & Easy Tips to Make Your Outdoor Space a Gourmet Haven for Bees and Butterflies



*by Diane Blazek at the National Garden Bureau, October 2013*

### You can make a difference!

Since 2006 we have heard about the unfortunate loss of honey bee colonies in North America and elsewhere. The decline in the number of bees is both shocking and frightening and blamed on a number of causes. We at National Garden Bureau are not here to duplicate the information that a broad range of researchers and media sources have presented as causes, but instead we want to emphasize that every single reader of this newsletter can make a difference. Even if you plant just one more container of flowers than you have in previous years, you can help!

Additionally, as of late we've seen a lot of Facebook and Twitter chatter about the lack of Monarch butterflies this past summer. Anyone can implement a few minor changes to make their outdoor spaces more welcoming for both bees and butterflies. Even using just one of these ideas can be beneficial so don't be intimidated thinking you can't do all we've listed. As is often said, one small step can make a difference.

### Ways you can help the bees:

- Plant flowers with open petals and upright stamens for easy access by our pollen-loving friends (cosmos, coneflowers).
- Choose flowers that are heavy pollen producers (penstemon, salvia).
- Some herbs provide food for insects as well as humans so add them to your garden also (oregano).
- Limit or eliminate pesticide usage.
- Plant cover crops and use compost rather than relying on synthetic fertilizers.
- Make sure your garden blooms from very early spring (crocus) to late fall (asters) to provide food as long as possible.
- If you have open spaces like fields, road sides, etc., plant with native wildflower mixes.

- Provide shelter from the elements such as standing grasses, flower stalks, shrubs, etc.
- For bees, provide nesting spots, for example open ground without mulch for ground nesters.
- Not all weeds need to be eradicated; see if the bees and butterflies are enjoying the buffet they offer, and if they are leave them be!

### Ways you can help the butterflies:

- Provide host plants such as milkweed for emerging Monarch caterpillars.
- And host plants WILL be munched on so don't be alarmed when you see nibbled leaves!
- Butterflies love butterfly weed, buddleia, coneflower (Echinacea), aster, and marigold.
- Choose flowers that have easy access points for nectar sipping (phlox, gaillardia, pentas).

- Same as for bees, herbs provide food for butterflies so add them to your garden also (fennel, parsley).
- Plant a variety of sun-loving annuals, perennials, wildflowers, and shrubs, as butterflies prefer sunny spots.
- In that same vein, include a wide range of flower colors as well.
- Provide sheltered resting spaces such as a flat rock in a sunny spot.
- Butterflies sip water, so provide a shallow tray with damp sand and rocks to land on.
- Did we mention planting host plants such as milkweed?
- Encourage neighbors and your community to plant open spaces with low-maintenance native wildflowers and perennials.

*Founded in 1920, the National Garden Bureau is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to disseminate basic instructions for backyard gardeners and those who want to garden, that will inspire them to spend more time outdoors, enjoying all nature has to offer.*



To give additional support to Music, ArtFair, or the Gardens, complete the form below and mail to:

MCBS, PO Box 7594, St Cloud MN 56302

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Event supported \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Or visit our website to give at [www.munsingerclemens.com](http://www.munsingerclemens.com)

## Book Review

***The Brother Gardeners: A Generation of Gentlemen Naturalists and the Birth of an Obsession*, by Andrea Wulf: Vintage, 2010**

by Idella Moberg

Andrea Wulf introduces us to the gentlemen gardeners of the eighteenth century who transformed the English garden. Phillip Miller, head gardener of the Chelsea Physic Garden, published the *Gardeners Dictionary* in 1731. In it were listed all known plants in cultivation in England at the time. In thousands of entries Miller gave each plant's country of origin, the year of introduction, and advice on cultivation. Miller's dictionary shows that he was part of a much larger plant-collection and botanical network that extended throughout the globe.

Wulf shows us how the English landscape garden emerged out of a business arrangement between the wealthy English merchant Peter Collinson and the American farmer John Bartram. Bartram gathered and sent boxes of seeds and plants from Philadelphia to wealthy subscribers in London. Collinson, in turn, transformed British parkland into a "Natural" landscape. Eventually American trees and shrubs flourished throughout Britain, and gardening became an obsession of ordinary people as well.

An international community was fostered by Enlightenment men such as Carl Linnaeus, Hans Sloane, Benjamin Franklin, and Joseph Banks. These men exchanged plants and ideas across vast distances. Benjamin Franklin, for example, enabled and promoted plant expeditions and plant commerce between America and England, and Hans Sloane, president of the Royal Society, owned England's largest collection of herbaria. Linnaeus classified and named thousands of plants collected all over the known world and sent his assistant, Daniel Solander, to England to see for himself what English botanists and gardeners were planting. Wulf also tells us about Solander's desertion of Linnaeus in favor

of achieving prominence and position in England. Solander boarded the *Endeavour* to sail with a group of botanists and the wealthy gentleman Joseph Banks, who financed their passage to Tahiti. There they searched for breadfruit and other plants and seeds to bring back to England, lingering to enjoy not only the exotic fauna but also the beautiful Tahitian women.

The fascination of these and countless other men with botany turned Britain into the world's foremost center of botanical learning. Plants shaped Britain's empire economy and society for the next century. The Brits went crazy for plants. Plants permeated their daily life. Dresses were printed with floral ornaments. Ladies' huge wigs were fashioned into gardens. Women arranged and painted flowers. Parlor games were infused with floral references. Carriage drivers pinned flowers to their coats. Garden obsession filtered into interior design. England today has become a nation of gardeners because of the achievements of the brother gardeners of the eighteenth century.

*The Brother Gardeners* combines elements that make it a book hard to set down: an interesting topic, painstaking and careful historical scholarship, and a rollicking good story. *The Brother Gardeners* broadens my perspective about our gardening world today. It inspires me to keep in mind while I'm digging in my own backyard garden, planting yet another hybrid hosta under my oak and ash trees, that I am part of a vast and venerable network which has worked long and hard to put that plant at my feet. So, reader, chop, chop. Get to it. Plant that baby. Then pull up a lawn chair alongside it, settle in, and read a fine book like *The Brother Gardeners*.

Author Andrea Wulf was born in India and moved to Germany as a child. She trained as a design historian at the Royal College of Art in London. Now she's a historian and a writer, having authored four books and

written for various newspapers and other publications. Ms. Wulf also writes book reviews for *New York Times Sunday Book Review*. She is a popular public speaker.

Books by Andrea Wulf are available in English: *Founding Gardeners: How the Revolutionary Generation Created an American Eden*; *This Other Eden: Seven Great Gardens and 300 Years of English History*; and *Chasing Venus: The Race to Measure the Heavens*. *The Brother Gardeners* won the American Horticultural Society 2010 Book Award, and the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, in February 2010, declared *Brother Gardeners* "Best New Book."

Formats: Kindle edition, hardcover, paperback (368 pages). Special features of the book include a glossary of plants, an extensive bibliography, end notes, color plates, and illustrations.

## New Employee at the Gardens

by Joan Andersen

Kurt Binnie joined the Gardens staff in April. He is in charge of maintenance, which includes keeping the fountains and irrigation systems working and doing other tasks as needed in the greenhouse and Gardens.

Kurt has a long history on the east side of Saint Cloud working in businesses owned by his family. His grandparents and parents operated Binnie's Nursery on 5th Ave. SE from the 1930s to about 1990. The family then operated a flower shop and a landscaping business. For the past ten years, Kurt worked in sales at Central Landscaping, where he was the "designated pond person."

**Welcome to  
Munsinger Clemens Gardens, Kurt!**

## News Flash – Garden Season Delayed by Cold Wet Weather!

by Joan Andersen

I hate to talk about the weather again, but unseasonable cold seems to be in charge of the schedule this year. We had our last heavy snow on April 16. By that time, staff and volunteers had transplanted all the plugs (tiny young plants) to larger containers for continued growing in the greenhouse. They also potted over 200 new bare-root rose plants that will be added to the rose gardens this season. The roses will stay in the greenhouse until the weather warms and they are moved outside to get acclimated to sun and wind before planting.

Finally the snow melted, but we then had a week of cold rain and wind which further delayed outside work. On drier days, garden staff worked to clean out the beds to get them ready for planting and for spring bulbs and other perennials to emerge. The rain "wakes them up," but perennials don't grow much until they sense it is really spring.

On April 22 the Rose Garden was uncovered by removing the construction blankets. The timing is critical, because the plants have broken

their protective-cover dormancy and some plants have tender new foliage that can be harmed by freezing temperatures. The weather has been cold but temps have not gone below freezing. The rose plants are still covered by a layer of compost that will be removed when the weather is reliably warm. The next big job will be pruning the roses as they start to leaf out. Pruning and deadheading roses is done all season. To volunteer for rose pruning and deadheading, call the greenhouse at 320-650-3138 or email [deb.keiser@ci.stcloud.mn.us](mailto:deb.keiser@ci.stcloud.mn.us) to set up a time.

By the time you read this, it will be spring. Perennials will be up and the trees will have leaves. Tulips, daffodils, peonies, and other spring flowers will be blooming all through the Gardens. In mid-May, staff begins planting containers and urns. Finally, in late May when night temperatures can be



expected to stay above 50°, the crew starts planting all the tender annual plants that provide so much color in summer and fall.



## Bird Walk

by Donna Gorrell

Descending the steps at the north end of Munsinger Gardens one morning in May, I am greeted by the call of the red-bellied woodpecker. There was a little rain earlier, but the sun is shining now as I walk the path along the river. Early morning is a good time to hear birds in Munsinger—though not necessarily to see them in the leafed-out trees. So it was with the red-bellied.

As I approach the little cove, a lone goose tells me I should be careful, not get too close. The mallards are there too, paying me no mind, and from out on the river comes the call of a loon. Then I hear my favorite morning sound: the song

sparrow's melody. This tiny bird nests every year in a small tree alongside the Mississippi, and it may be my imagination but I think it directs its friendly greeting to me as I walk by.

Suddenly I am startled by a whoosh of two crows flying out the top of a tree, and I watch them chasing an eagle, all three birds loudly vocalizing their displeasure. On towards the gazebo I see a chipping sparrow pecking the ground along the path and hear a red-eyed vireo as it hops among the branches. Other bird sounds begin to appear: the cardinal, the robin, a noisy blue jay, a white-breasted nuthatch, a brown thrasher, and the chickadee of course.

As I turn toward home, an osprey watches the river from its perch, and a flock of large black birds flies south. They look like cormorants, unexpected here at the river. I spot a phoebe and then hear the red-bellied again.