

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SPRING 1974

WHAT TO SEE SPRING FLOWERS

*"The flowers that bloom in the spring Tra-La
Breathe promise of merry sunshine.
As we merrily dance and we sing Tra-la
We welcome the hope that they bring Tra-la
Of a summer of roses and wine."*

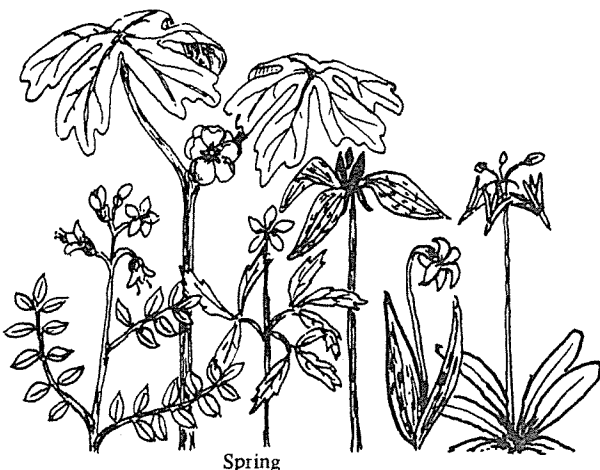
The Mikado – Act III
Gilbert and Sullivan

What part of our forty miles of Path will you choose, to look for the flowers that bloom in the spring? You may want to visit the swamps for a very early flower, the skunk cabbage; or perhaps you might choose the dwindling prairie remnants with star grass and blue-eyed grass. But, if you want to see a carpet of flowers that will make you want to dance, look for the edge of the forest. You can find such a choice community near Northwoods. Here grow red trillium, May apple, trout lily, wood anemone, Jacob's ladder, shooting star and many others.

These plants have many features in common. Since they must bloom before shade becomes dense, they need a ready food supply and are therefore all perennials, growing from bulbs or rootstocks. All are rather fragile. Some of them have only one flower and others have loose clusters but they do not have multitudes of individual flowers in dense communities. They are all native and were growing here delighting the first settlers just as they please us today.

When you walk the Path in midsummer you will not see them. The spring flowers will be gone. Some will have died down to the ground and some will be overgrown. An entirely new group of plants will have made their appearance, a very different assemblage. They are all immigrants. They came with the early settlers from Europe and, though some of them make choice bouquets, they are *weeds* to the farmer. Unlike the spring flowers of the woods which grow in rich soil, they tolerate harsh dry places and less fertile soil, forming a hedge along the edge of the Path. They would cover it completely if it were not used so much. Some of the widespread varieties are Queen Anne's Lace, chicory, sweet clover, mullein, and butter-and-eggs. In contrast with spring flowers, they produce many blossoms per plant, in close communities or spikes. Their abundant crops of seeds make them a bane to the farmers.

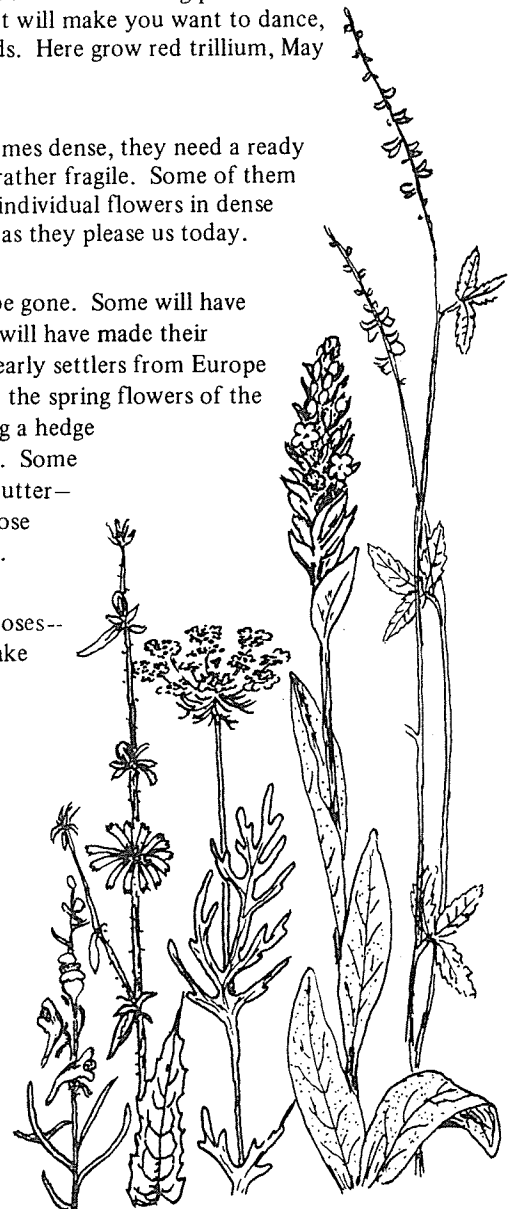
Will you find the "roses and wine" of summer? You can certainly find our native wild roses--and if you choose to make your own wine, there are thousands of wild grapes. They make delicious jelly, too.



Spring

Left to right:

Jacob's ladder
May apple
Wood anemone
Red trillium
Trout lily
Shooting star
Butter and eggs
Chicory
Queen Anne's lace
Mullein
Clover

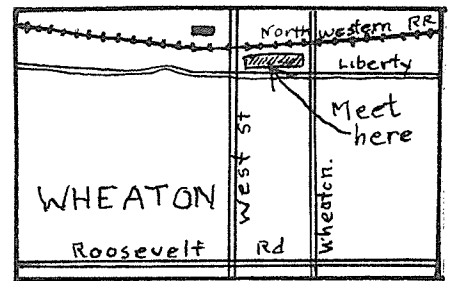


Summer

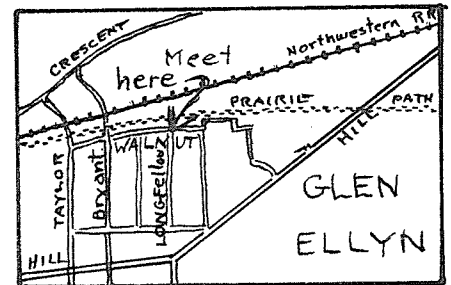
MEMBER'S WALKS. . .Spring 1974

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8:43 wheaton

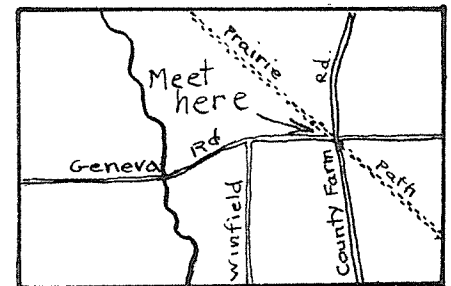
April 21 A long hike, 10 or 11 miles, from the Northwestern RR station in Wheaton to the station in Elmhurst. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Demonstration block in Wheaton. Leader Charles Peterson



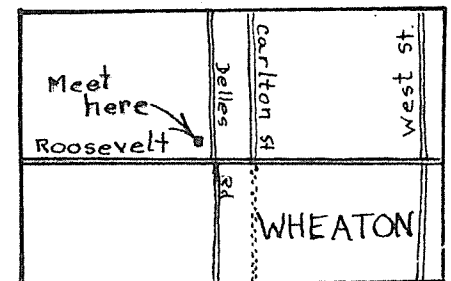
May 11 Spring flower study. Leader - Bobbie Lively. Meet at Longfellow and Walnut Sts. in Glen Ellyn at 10 a.m.



May 18 Bird walk. Leader - Paul Mooring. Meet at the intersection of Geneva Rd. and County Farm Rd. at 10 a.m. Bring binoculars and Peterson's guide. No dogs or radios, please.



June 2 Bicycle ramble. Leader - Dick Wilson. Meet at the Member's Room, 616 Delles Rd., Wheaton, at 10 a.m. About 20 mile round trip ride.



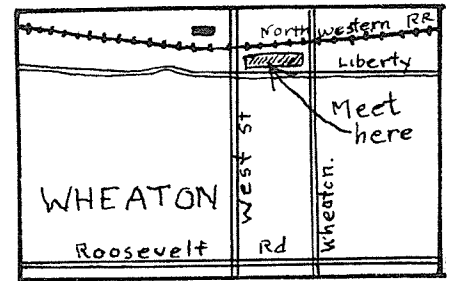
For all of these walks, wear sturdy shoes and bring a sack lunch. Though we welcome all interested individuals, we do not recommend the May walks (bird and flower study) for troops of scouts. The pace is slow with frequent stops, and emphasis is on close examination.

May we remind you, too, that there is now a self-guiding Nature Trail for which work sheets are available. It is one mile long, starting at Weisbrook Rd. (near the new Wheaton-Warrenville high school and about 1/2 mile north of Butterfield Rd.). For work sheets write (no phone calls, please) to the Illinois Prairie Path, Box 1086, Wheaton 60187. The Girl Scout Headquarters on Park Blvd. in Glen Ellyn also has work sheets.

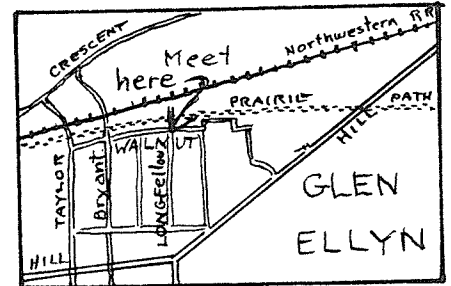
- Winter inactivity on the path is over. Spring cleanup and outings have begun. -

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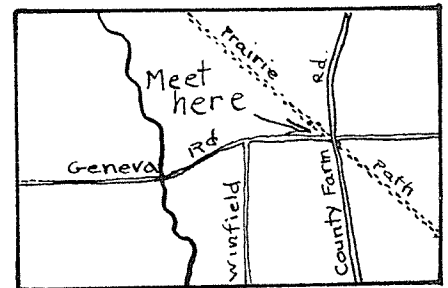
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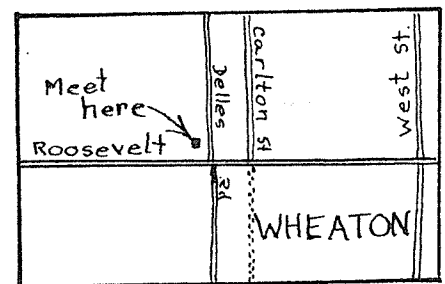
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