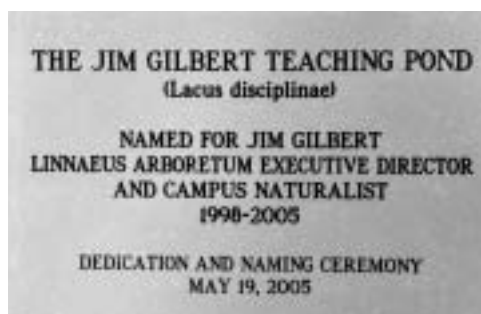


# Twinflower

Volume 16:2 Spring 2005

Newsletter of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum



## The Teaching Pond by Don Gustafson



**Right:** The Jim Gilbert Teaching Pond is part of the nearly ten acres of the Loreli Steuer Wetlands Preserve. Jim served as co-chair of the wetlands preserve committee. **Below:** Jim Gilbert, executive director of Linnaeus Arboretum, thanks the crowd of well-wishers for helping him celebrate his teaching legacy with the naming of the Jim Gilbert Teaching Pond in the formal area of Linnaeus Arboretum. **Inset:** Student John Michaletz enrolled in two of Jim Gilbert's "interpreting the landscape" classes.



photo credits: Goldie Johnson

### ***In this issue ...***

Spring into Summer 2

Flower Clock 3

Spotting Fireflies 4

Arbor Day 2005 4

Events Review 5

The 19th of May was a great day. The Arb was at its best; the lilacs were stupendous. Bright sunshine was moderated by drifting clouds and breezy gusts of wind. NO MOSQUITOES. And dozens of Arboretum supporters were congregating at the pond nearest the Interpretive Center. It was exactly the right kind of day for celebrating the fellow who for the past seven years has increasingly become "Mr Arboretum." That fellow, of course, is Jim Gilbert.

A proper assortment of Gustavus officialdom then proceeded to declare that this bit of water was now "The Jim Gilbert Teaching Pond." (Jim made it clear by citing state regulations that it was indeed a pond and not a lake). There were healthy applause and smiles all over.

Many of those smiles came from Jim's students who were part of the crowd, and one presented a splendid tribute, parts of which follow. All in all the happening was a real splash.



This was not a retirement ritual – Jim might then have gotten the customary watch instead of a pond! He will continue his role as prime teacher, interpreter, and promoter of our Linnaeus Arboretum but will no longer wear the hat of director. Thanks, Jim!

Sophomore John Michaletz shared comments from the students' perspective:

*The Gustavus Mission statement describes the goals of this institution in great detail. These goals include "encouraging respect for others and sensitivity to community" as well as "developing a capacity and passion for*

*Teaching Pond* continued on page 2






# Spring Sets the Stage for Summer

by Jim Gilbert

Since Minnesota is in the temperate climatic zone, spring includes the months of March, April, and May. But there is a distinct difference between the usual snowy, blustery landscape of early March and the lush green woods and lawns of late May.

Some people like to divide spring into two parts. First is the brief season between early March and mid-April when the scents of the moist earth begin, the maple trees are tapped, and the change in the quality of the sunlight draws people outside to feel the warm rays on their faces and arms. The second part of spring is the time of lawn mowing, corn planting, the return of the hummingbird, lilac blossoms, and cutting rhubarb. There are so many changes in spring that at times it seems as though each day is a season in itself.

And then comes summer. There is a rush of life that goes on in June and July and to some extent in August. It seems that all living things in our temperate zone, as if conscious of the limitations of the growing season, are forcing themselves to grow and renew. Summer is the season for repairing the human perspective, for discovering once again that there are forces and rhythms at work to make life possible.

Nature's calendar of summer events includes such happenings as turtles laying eggs, strawberry fruit ripening, catalpa and basswood trees flowering, lake water becoming warm, aquatic and prairie wildflowers blooming, cicadas buzzing, baskets of cucumbers and ripe garden tomatoes being picked, corn growing tall, butternuts and bur oak acorns falling, the monarch butterfly fall migration beginning, and wild grapes ripening. The season begins to slide toward autumn in July, though most of us are reluctant to admit it. Once we have passed the solstice on June 21, daylight begins to shorten, and we are on the pathway that leads to falling leaves and ice on the birdbath. 



This newsletter is published two times during the academic year by the Office of Public Relations, Gustavus Adolphus College, under the supervision of Dean Wahlund, director of special events and executive secretary of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, and Don Gustafson, newsletter editor. For further information about Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum membership and activities, contact Dean Wahlund (phone: 507/933-7520; e-mail: publicrelations@gustavus.edu). Unless credited otherwise, all photos in this issue were taken by Friends' photographer Goldie Johnson.

*Teaching Pond* continued from page 1

*life-long learning." Through his teaching, Jim Gilbert illustrates this necessity of care for the natural environment and the idea that you can never stop learning.*

*I was recently lucky enough to enroll in Jim's "Interpreting the Winter Landscape" J-Term course, along with his fall course. For those of you who do not know what this winter course entails, it is a young child's dream come true. Along with identifying the flora and fauna around Gustavus, we frequently played in the snow, built and flew kites, and rode on sleds across the ice. While talking to jealous fellow students after J-Term had ended, I realized that I had learned much more during my time with Jim than anyone else I knew. His hands-on teaching forces his students to make his course material part of their lives. For example, you will never know exactly how much effect lake-effect has on the surrounding land until you are inching your way through five feet of it, or how friendly birds can be until they are feeding out of your hands or on top of your head.*

*Teaching Pond* continued on page 3

*Teaching Pond* continued from page 2

*Jim demonstrates great compassion for nature and encourages everyone to do the same. During the J-Term course, we spent several days at Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center along the shores of Lake Superior. One night, as we were fast asleep after an exhausting day, Jim woke every student up in the wee hours of the morning to trek across camp to view the northern lights. This demonstrated not only his strong interest in the natural world, but also his enthusiasm for others to witness one of nature's most spectacular displays. Jim has taken what is merely a pastime for many people and turned it into a career focused on observation, preservation, and teaching.*

*Take a second to look around. Jim does not teach out of textbooks. This is his classroom. This is his course material. He does not rely on proofs, theories, or laws ... just observations. Students leave his class with a whole new perspective of the natural world. One of beauty, serenity, and a passion for preservation. We start 'seeing' things for the first time, even though we've witnessed them our whole lives. In a world filled with vast new technology and material goods, Jim encourages all of us to take a step back and appreciate what has been here all along. So whether it is sharing stories of bird tracking trips in Central America or enlightening First Term Seminar classes with the life of Carl Linnaeus, Jim is always focused on the ultimate goal of this institution: to provide a strong education and care for community.*

*On behalf of myself and the rest of your students, Jim, thank you. 🍀*

# The Flower Clock Concerto

by Dean Wahlund



**The Gustavus Symphony Orchestra performing Jean Francaix's oboe concerto *The Linnaeus Flower Clock* during the Arbor Day 2005 Chapel service.**

When Gustavus Adolphus College celebrates Arbor Day on campus, the day usually begins with a specially designed chapel service. This year, was no exception. The Gustavus music department had invited Joe Robinson, principal oboist for the New York Philharmonic, to be this year's artist-in-residence in April. It so happened that his visit would coincide with Arbor Day. Warren Friesen, conductor of the Gustavus Symphony Orchestra, immediately began to prepare his orchestra for French composer Jean Francaix's *L'horloge de flore* (Flower Clock)

with Robinson as soloist. The sixteen-minute oboe concerto is based on a flower clock idea that Swedish botanist Linnaeus conceived, which had flower groupings in the shape of a clock that bloom at different times of the day. This unique idea proved not to be very practical; however, the mini-symphony proved enjoyable! Here are the titles and blooming times...

- 3 a.m. Galant de jour  
(poisonberry)
- 5 a.m. Cupidone bleue  
(blue catananche)
- 10 a.m. Cierge à grandes fleurs  
(torch thistle)
- 12 noon Nyctanthe du Malabar  
(Malabar jasmine)
- 5 p.m. Belle-de-nuit  
(deadly nightshade)
- 7 p.m. Geranium triste  
(mourning geranium)
- 9 p.m. Silene noctiflore  
(night-flowering catchfly)



**Guest artist/oboist Joe Robinson and Warren Friesen, conductor, Gustavus Symphony Orchestra.**



# Spotting Fireflies

by Jim Gilbert

In daylight, fireflies – also known as lightning bugs – are drab little creatures that are seldom noticed. But when they perform their amazing act of lighting up, they give a special magic to warm summer nights.

June and July are the peak months to see fireflies in Minnesota. Linnaeus Arboretum is one of those special places to see them. Sometimes an entire field, lawn or forest edge will be twinkling with hundreds of these little “lanterns.” The darkness comes alive with the mellow light from these soft-bodied beetles; far into the night, the moving specks of life are seen.

The firefly’s light does not help it to see where it is going, as it carries the lantern near its posterior. So, why does a firefly light up? Simply because the flashing is a recognition signal enabling the sexes to find each other. Each firefly species has a characteristic flashing rhythm.

Fireflies have segments near the ends of their abdomens that enable them to produce light. It is produced by the oxidation of a substance called luciferin, which is manufactured in the cells of the light-producing organ.

Since fireflies can take in air through tiny openings in their abdomens, they control their blinking, yellowish lights by controlling their air supply. When air is admitted, luciferin in the presence of an enzyme called luciferinase is almost instantly oxidized, releasing the energy as light. 🍃

Arbor Day 2005

## The Celebration of Spring



**Left: Bob Moline, Friends’ board member, organized (with the help of his wife Kay) a wonderful Gustavus Arbor Day event on April 29, 2005. The day began with an oboe concerto of composer Jean Francaix’s *The Linnaeus Flower Clock* in Christ Chapel (see story on page 3) followed by a reception and luncheon of salmon roulade on rice pilaf at Alumni Hall.**



**Center: Dr. Susy Zeigler, assistant professor in the University of Minnesota department of geography presented a narrative of her research and slide show on “telling time with tree rings.” Susy grew up in Boston only a few hundred miles from the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York. So, this home of towering white pines, aspens, and sugar maples was the perfect setting to capture a young girl’s interest in becoming a biogeographer.**



**Below: Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum presented the City of St. Peter a healthy bur oak for Gault Park on Arbor Day 2005. This was the ninth bur oak to be planted in one of St. Peter’s city parks. The fourth grade classes of North Intermediate School helped celebrate the event by singing *America the Beautiful* and planting the tree with shovels in hand.**

BUR OAK *Quercus macrocarpa*  
Native Minnesota Oak  
A GIFT GIVEN TO  
THE COMMUNITY OF ST. PETER  
BY  
FRIENDS OF LINNAEUS ARBORETUM  
APRIL 29, 2005  
GAULT PARK

photo credits: Goldie Johnson

## Autumn Warmer

The Autumn Warmer and 2005 Membership Kick-off event in late October featured our local nature photographer, Anders Bjorling, who captivated the audience with a wonderful slide presentation titled "Linnaeus Arboretum through the Seasons." Since the *Twinflower* is not printed in color, the Friends welcome you stop by the Melva Lind Interpretive Center to view some of Anders' best work on display.



Photo of Paul Granlund's *Linnaeus*, by Anders Bjorling

In late February, the Melva Lind Interpretive Center was filled with hearty souls sipping wassail and dining on a bountiful soup-and-sandwich buffet. The winter Heart Warmer event welcomed Science Museum of Minnesota's staff scientist, Dr. Mark Edlund, to the podium. Mark shared insights about his algae research and a cultural history lesson about Mongolia and its people in what he called "A (Micro) Botanical Foray across the Mongolian Steppe." Friends' board member Mary Rehwaldt hosted the event and was thrilled that "her nephew" gave a most interesting presentation!

## Heart Warmer



photo credit: Mary Rehwaldt

## MEET THE AUTHOR

Susan Leaf '75, author of the book *Potato City*, shared insights, personal observations, and stories of nature, history, and community in the age of urban sprawl with "friends" of Linnaeus Arboretum and Gustavus Library Associates at a "Meet the Author" dinner and continuing education event in mid-April. Pictured at a book-signing event with Sue is Friends board member Goldie Johnson.



*Potato City*