

Twinflower

Volume 18:1 Spring 2007

Newsletter of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum



Photo credit: Anders Björling

The twinflower, *Linnaea borealis* L.

In Search Of Linnaea...

by Roland Thorstensson

Last fall I wrote an article for *Twinflower* about Carl Linnaeus (Karl von Linné; 1707–1778) and the events commemorating the tercentenary of his birth. This is how the article ended: “In August, Anders [Björling] and Roland will follow the trail Linnaeus took in 1732 when he traveled from Uppsala to Lapland and across the mountains into Norway, documenting what he saw and experienced in his journal, *Iter Lapponicum*. Anders’ camera will be busy, as will Roland’s writing gear.” This article is a sequel. What did Anders’ camera see? How busy was Roland’s writing gear? And who is Linnaea? Did the two ever meet her?

Linnaea, also known as the twinflower, was the name of Linnaeus’ favorite flower. Finding it in bloom, anywhere, was always special for Linnaeus. Was it special to him only because of its botanical and esthetic qualities? Did it perhaps also evoke memories of his ancestral home?

Linnaeus set out from Uppsala on his Lapland journey in late May 1732, when “spring cloth[ed] the fields and deck[ed] the flowery grove, and all creation glow[ed] with life and love.” He returned to Uppsala in early October. In his journal he recorded what he had seen of “God’s creation” and reflected on the new worlds that were opening before his eyes. He also described vividly his meeting with the “mysterious” indigenous people of the North, the Sami. Sometimes in a tone of exhilaration, sometimes with self-pity, he commented on his adventures on ground previously untrodden by “southerners” like himself. A few times he even got ahead of himself, inventing fantastic side trips he never took, but most of the time he let nature speak through him; he saw, he recorded, he ordered, he named, as if ordained by God to do so. “No one,” he later wrote of himself, “has so totally reformed an entire science.”

One of Linnaeus’ contemporaries, disliking his self-adulation, complained that he fancied himself as “a second Adam.” Lisbet Koerner, in a recent scholarly study of Linnaeus and his achievements, maintains that Linnaeus viewed himself as an enlightened despot, a man who “wanted to transform botany from an ungovernable living language with a multitude of provincial dialects, into a legislated code administered from a single center.”

A Linnaeus detractor might be flippant and say that Linnaeus saw himself as that “single center” from which he administered a legislated code. Looking more objectively at Linnaeus and his achievements as a botanist

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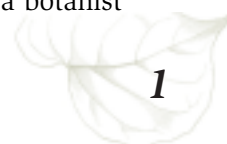
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This newsletter is published two times during the academic year by the Office of College Relations, Gustavus Adolphus College, under the supervision of Dean Wahlund, director of special events and executive secretary of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, 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: collegerelations@gustavus.edu).

Linnaeus@300

The Linnaeus tercentenary will be commemorated in several countries and in multifarious ways. The University of Uppsala, Sweden, Linnaeus' academic home for more than four decades, will have an entire Linnaeus year of celebrations. And Gustavus, whose arboretum carries his name and whose *Twinflower* (the Arboretum newsletter) reflects his spirit, will have several events this spring to honor the man best known internationally for his naming of plants and animals. All are open to the public. For more information call the Linnaeus Arboretum (507/933-6181).

- **Spring semester** – Roland Thorstensson will teach a full-semester course on Linnaeus and his world.
- **February 16** – Linnaeus Arboretum Fireside Chat with Roland Thorstensson: “Will the Real Linnaeus Please Stand Up.”
- **March 26** – St. Peter Continuing Education: Roland Thorstensson will talk about Linnaeus, “the one and the many,” and Cindy Johnson-Groh, associate professor of biology and executive director of Linnaeus Arboretum, will examine Linnaeus' scientific contributions;
- **April 11** – Anders Björling's exhibition of nature photography taken during his Linnaeus trek will open at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center (a similar exhibition is also mounted at the Arts Center of Saint Peter);
- **April 24** – “From Skåne To Lappland – Travels through Sweden with Carl Linnaeus,” a multimedia presentation by Anders Björling and Roland Thorstensson;
- **April 25** – Linnaeus Symposium. There will be Linnaeus events all day on campus and several speakers, including ethnobotanists Paul Alan Cox and Mark Plotkin; writer Paula Robbins, a Pehr Kalm historian; and Hans Odöo, a Swedish journalist-naturalist who is also a Linnaeus impersonator;
- **May 23** – Linnaeus was born in 1707, “...between the month of growing and the month of flowering, when the cuckoo was announcing the imminence of summer, when the trees were in leaf but before the season of blossom...”

Spotlight on the Arboretum Naturalist:

Emily Hoefs

Emily Beatty Hoefs graduated from Gustavus in January 2006, and we are pleased to have her join the Gustavus community as the arboretum naturalist. As a biology major, Emily took classes such as Conservation Biology, Entomology, and Plant Systematics and worked in the biology greenhouse as a student worker, all of which equipped her for the job as naturalist. Off campus she has worked with the University of Minnesota Extension Service and at Gertens Commercial Sales.

Emily's passion lies in education, and she loves the interaction with young people in the Arboretum. Emily has tackled several projects, including mounting interpretive displays in the Melva Lind Interpretive Center, redesigning Arboretum brochures, developing outdoor curriculum, and leading arboretum tours for St. Peter youth. She assists with the details of the Linnaeus Symposium, Friends events, and continuing education. Emily and her husband, Jason, are enjoying married life (newlyweds!) in their rural home near Montgomery, Minn., along with a new Springer Spaniel puppy.



Photo credit: Jonathan Kraatz

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In the Footsteps of Linnaeus:
**Summer in the Gardens
of Sweden**

In 2007, gardens in Sweden will be capturing international attention in celebration of the 300th anniversary of the birth of the great botanist, Carl Linnaeus. This program takes you from southern and central Sweden to Stockholm where you will visit a variety of sites from formal palace gardens to contemporary municipal gardens to allotment gardens.

For more information: www.scandinavianseminar.org

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and taxonomist, one would find an interesting dichotomy: While he sometimes looked upon himself as chosen by God to reveal the laws of the nature, Linnaeus created a simpler naming system that was useful and practical for the scholar and more readily understood by the lay person.

There are many portraits of Linnaeus. In several of them he has a *Linnaea*—a twinflower (*Linnaea borealis* in the naming system he devised)—in his hand. It was a flower he loved but, ironically, one that he did not name himself. In *Critica Botanica* (1737), Linnaeus writes, “*Linnaea* was named by the celebrated Gronovius [Dutch botanist Johan Frederick Gronovius] and is a plant of Lapland, lowly, insignificant, disregarded, flowering but for a brief space.” He continues, in mock modesty, “...named [for] Linnaeus who resembles it.” Linnaeus added *borealis* to the plant’s Latin name to denote its northern geography.


Why did Linnaeus like the twinflower so much? Why did he identify with it? It is a beautiful plant and therefore easy for anyone to like, of course, but its given name may also have connected the internationally famous scientist with his ancestral home. His father, originally named Nils Ingemarsson, took the name Linnaeus to celebrate a linden tree (*linn* in the local dialect) growing next to the family farm in southern Småland. The feminine form of Linnaeus is *Linnaea*. His mother, Christina, whom he loved very much, was hence Christina *Linnaea*. The common name in Sweden for the twinflower connected Linnaeus with different parts of his own country—particularly Lapland, where it grows in abundance, and, more significantly, his childhood home.



Photo credit: Anders Björling

**Roland Thorstensson and Anders Björling
atop Valevarre during their quest for
Linnaea borealis L.**

Anders and I had to travel many miles before we could commune with a *Linnaea*. Not until we had come north of the Arctic Circle did we find them in full bloom. I knew Anders is a perfectionist as a photographer, and perfectionism takes time. In Lapland I also got to witness Anders’ stubborn side. My people, the *smålänningar*, are often described as inordinately stubborn, but they pale next to Anders. He *had* to find his twinflowers, even if it meant prolonging our stay in Sweden. We found some, but not the “right ones.” We looked for more,

“better ones.” In Saltoluokta, which Linnaeus never visited, a naturalist told us that he and his companions had seen “lots of them.” We were given a map. Poor map-reader and over-eager nature hopper that I am, I missed the spot “by a mile.” Anders was then nowhere to be seen. When I finally found him, he was lying on his stomach on the ground. Mosquitoes were buzzing around his head, halo-like. Ants were crawling up his pants legs, his back. Anders’ camera was busy. It stayed busy for a long time. Anders, too, had found his *Linnaea*. 

Glimpses of 2006

It was a hot and muggy day in mid-July for the annual Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum Twin Cities garden tour...remember? A convivial group of about fifty people met and wandered in the splendid formal Japanese Garden at Normandale Community College. Then it was off to Elizabeth Hamilton's sloping backyard where dozens of lilies, delphinium, roses, astilbe, and a lot else were abloom. We wondered how there could be so much in such a small space.

The environs of the home of Ted Bair and Harvey Filister on Humboldt Avenue proved to be equally awesome...and how we appreciated the shade! Clearly the highlight was the serendipitous opening of the American Lotus, reigning above a pool on its six-foot stem (a step ladder was necessary for photos). That flower was featured on a 39-cent stamp in the recent "Wonders of America" series. Our tour concluded with a leisurely and sump-



Above: Normandale Community College's Japanese Garden, "over-flowing with Japanese garden elements: a gated entrance, multiple bridges, stone lanterns, shelters, symbolic islands, rocks, streams and waterfalls." At left are the Bentendo, a hexagon shaped building, and the Taiko-bashi, a drum-shaped bridge, arching over a stream leading to the Garden lagoon.

Right: Ted Bair and Harvey Filister in their garden on Humboldt Avenue. As the *StarTribune* reported in a March 2006 article, "Bair has created a welcoming, plant-packed yard that moves seamlessly from a formal English garden to an Italian fountain to a Japanese-inspired koi pond."



All photos by Friends' photographer Goldie Johnson

by Don Gustafson, newsletter editor and board member

tuous lunch at the home of board member Bryon Hanson and his partner, Bob Wichmann.

In August the Friends board met in the grand facilities at Como Park, wandered in the Japanese Garden and the Conservatory, and were amazed by the spectacular exhibit of bonsai.

And then came October in Linnaeus Arboretum and another effort at creating what we hope will be a blazing carpet of spring daffodils in a setting not far from the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. What was anticipated to be an all-day project went so expeditiously that the 2,000 daffodil bulbs had been planted by noon. It was the infectious enthusiasm of our Board president, David Johnson, that spurred on the twenty-some Gustavus students, board members, friends, and parents who dug, fertilized, and planted. It was a great day! 🌿



Above top: The back garden at the Byron Hanson and Bob Wichmann home.

Above middle: Friends executive secretary Dean Wahlund, 2006 Arboretum naturalist Britt Forsberg, and Dana Lamb, administrative assistant in the Gustavus College Relations office, enjoy the Hanson-Wichmann urban landscape after their sumptuous buffet lunch.



Left: A diligent crew on the countdown to 2,000 newly planted daffodil bulbs. **Right to left:** Herb Chilstrom, David Johnson, Don Gustafson (back to camera), Bev Gustafson, Dean Wahlund, Cindy Johnson-Groh, and Bob Isenberg.

February and March Happenings

Phenology of late winter and early spring

by Jim Gilbert, naturalist

What the Falcon Said

by Linda Hasselstrom

*Flat on his back, feathers bloody,
surrounded by drooling cats,
the young falcon hissed,
clacked his beak, clawed air.
His feathers were bloody;
one cat licked a bleeding ear.
Falcon's yellow eyes didn't blink
when I picked him up
like a handful of springs,
like a grenade with the pin pulled.
None of the blood was his.*

*I put him high in a cedar tree.
He clutched the branch and panted,
glared at me,
then shot straight up like a bullet.
Next day, on my horse, I saw
a redwing blackbird whistling on a post
explode in the middle of a fluid run of song.
The falcon shot away, clutching the corpse.
He screeched once but I heard what he said:*

*Don't expect lies from me.
I know my job.
You saved me from the cats
so I could live.
I kill to eat.
So do the cats.*

So do you.

Reprinted with permission of Fulcrum Publishing and the author. This poem first appeared in *Nebraska Territory* in 1991 and in Hasselstrom's book of essays and poems, *Land Circle: Writings Collected from the Land* (Golden, Colo.: Fulcrum Publishing, 1991). Professor emeritus Bob Moline reports that Linda lives part of the year in Cheyenne, Wyo., and part on her ranch in western South Dakota, where she pays attention to the physical and cultural landscapes of the Great Plains and also conducts writing retreats for woman writers. "I work to bring my life into a circle," she says, "writing things I can respect, laboring at riding, branding, gardening, taking care of the land, and doing it with an awareness of how all these things fit together. More and more, as I grow older, I feel that it is important to keep my roots in this arid soil, to learn from it all I can, in order to continue to grow as a writer and as a human being." Want more of her essays and poems? Try *Over East: Reflections of a Woman Rancher* (1987), *Dakota Bones: Collected Poems* (1993), *Feels Like Far: A Rancher's Life on the Great Plains* (1999), or *Between Grass and Sky: Where I Live and Work* (2002).

February is normally the most pleasant month of winter, the season of frozen beauty and survival. The first half of the month usually remains cold and cloudy, but warmth and sunshine often appear by mid-month and continue on into March.

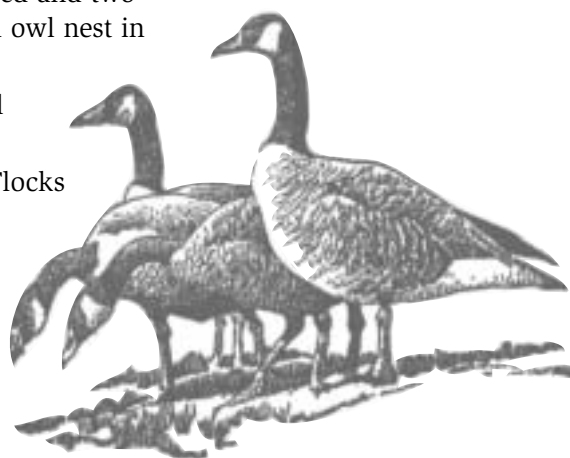
According to meteorologists, spring in the Upper Midwest begins each year on March 1. Astronomers tell us that spring begins on the vernal equinox—this year at 7:07 p.m. on March 20. March could be the peak of the snow season, but it's also our first month of real spring, the awakening season. By the end of the month, storms more often bring rain than snow.

Listed below are a few 2006 observations from the Linnaeus Arboretum and Lake Waconia area, and beyond when indicated. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming February/March happenings and will help to compare this year with last.

February 2006

- 1 More raccoons are out of their winter dens. They are not true hibernators, although they den up, remain inactive, and live off their fat for several weeks each winter. Only about 2 inches of snow covers the Twin Cities and area landscape, where January ended up being the warmest in more than a century.
- 10 The first spring migrants, the horned larks, are spotted.
- 11 Fred Struck notes that once again this was the date when plants in the greenhouses at Traverse des Sioux Garden Center in St. Peter began to come out of dormancy and to grow. The awakening in greenhouses on or close to February 11 each year in this area happens because of the sun's higher position in the sky.
- 16 Gray squirrels use wood duck nesting boxes for sleeping—as many as four in one box.
- 20 Lake Waconia ice is 17 to 20 inches thick. Sunfish, crappies, north-erns, and walleyes are biting.
- 22 Honey bees out on cleansing flights. High temperature of 37 degrees. Gustavus campus only about half snow-covered.
- 25 During a road trip between Hastings and Winona, along the Mississippi River, 138 bald eagles are counted and two eagles spotted on nests. Screech owl nest in Brooklyn Park has six eggs.
- 27 First eastern chipmunk out and about.
- 28 First migrating Canada geese. Flocks seen heading west and north. High temperature of 39 degrees.

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Tapping the sugar maples on the Minnesota River bluffs.

Phenology continued from page 6

March 2006

- 1 Landscape about 50 percent snow-free.
- 2 First pairs of Canada geese standing on ice in wetlands, honking and declaring nesting territories. Tapped maple trees run. First wintering-over mourning dove heard cooing.
- 7 First migrant American robin returns.
- 8 First red-winged blackbirds and wood ducks arrive.
- 10 First eastern bluebirds and killdeer.
- 13 Close to a foot of snow falls.
- 17 Sunny and high of 36 degrees. Good maple sap run. First great blue heron. American robins and red-winged blackbirds are vocal.
- 19 We have gained 3 hours and 19 minutes of daylight since the winter solstice last Dec. 21. First brown-headed cowbird.
- 21 First woodchuck observed above ground. The 2006 shipping season begins on the Mississippi River at St. Paul.
- 22 The Minnesota River is wide open at LeSueur and St. Peter. About 4 inches of snow covers the Gustavus campus. High of 43 degrees. Song sparrows singing and maple sap is flowing.
- 25 First tundra swans.
- 30 First tree swallows return and first thunderstorm. High of 55 and low of 43 degrees. Tapped sugar maples stop running—too warm overnight.
- 31 Only patches and traces of snow left. First western chorus frogs heard. 🍀

Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum

welcome you to a

February Warmer

Sunday, February 18, 2007 • 11:30 a.m.
Jackson Campus Center Banquet Rooms
Gustavus Adolphus College

The Last Ice Age in Minnesota:

Stories from the Dirt and Lakes, and Perspectives on Global Climates of the Past and Present

by Assistant Professor of Geology
Ben Laabs



Cost: \$8 (includes soup, breads, dessert, & beverages)
Reservations to the Office of College Relations/Special Events
933-7520
RSVP by Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007

Membership Gifts Do Count!

For nearly 20 years, the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum have provided significant financial support for the care and programming needs of the arboretum through membership giving. The 2007 membership drive began in mid-November and in just two months gifts have exceeded \$9,500 from nearly 100 “friends” of the arboretum. A very special thank you to all who have answered the membership call in recent weeks!

Members receive announcements and invitations to all planned events of the Friends, a membership directory, and the *Twinflower* newsletter. We hope that you will consider membership and plan to join us this spring for two special events—the “blooming of the daffodils” and the Linnaeus Symposium during Arbor Week, April 23–27. This summer, the annual Garden Tour will showcase garden landscapes in the greater St. Peter/Mankato area, with a Scandinavian buffet planned at Linnaeus Arboretum.

Annual memberships are for the calendar year (January 1–December 31). A membership application may be found on the back page of this *Twinflower* publication. Even though we have a few more days of winter, spring is just around the corner...as is your visit to Linnaeus Arboretum! 🍀

My Annual Membership Gift to **Linnaeus Arboretum**

2007 Membership Categories:

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Please return this form with your contribution to:

Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum

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