



Wildflower Meditations

A Gift for the Spirit

by Patty Hankins

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Wildflower Meditations: A Gift for the Spirit

Patty Hankins

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For my husband, Bill



Wildflower Meditations: A Gift for the Spirit

Welcome to *Wildflower Meditations: A Gift for the Spirit*. I wrote and compiled this book because I want you the reader to be happy. I want you to feel the same way I get to feel when I'm out photographing wildflowers.

In many ways, this book is a reflection of both my personal journey as a photographer and my search for my life purpose. I've been photographing flowers almost exclusively for three years. Photographing flowers brings me so much joy. Their beauty is incredible – the bold colors, intricate shapes and unique textures fascinate me. When I head out for a hike, I never know what I'm going to discover, so it's always a journey into the unknown.

Wildflowers not only bring amazing beauty to the world, they also play a vital role in the circle of life. Many bloom for such a short time that you need to be in just the right place at the right time or you'll miss them for the year. They grow in specific locations that meet their needs and are part of a precise eco-system that provides everything the plant needs to grow and thrive. At the same time, the beautiful colors and complex structures of the wildflowers serve the purpose of attracting just the right pollinator to the flowers to ensure the future of the species.

As I spend more time in nature photographing, I have realized I am much happier and more relaxed than I've ever been in my life. While I was focusing my photography on flowers, I was doing a lot of internal work on figuring out who I was and what I wanted to do with my life. I'd spent many years as a grassroots activist for feminist issues. I realized that while I was good at what I was doing, I wasn't very happy – and I was really frazzled a lot of the time.

And then it dawned on me: I felt most at peace when I was hiking looking for wildflowers – or when I was sitting on the ground with my tripod looking at an amazing wildflower through my camera. So not only did it quiet the noise in my head, but it provided a connection to the greater natural world I'd never experienced before. It was as if all of a sudden my eyes and other senses had been opened to a new and magical realm that I'd never imagined existed.

When I shared this experience with a few friends, they just looked at me and said, “well, of course,” and revealed that they often felt the same magical connection and sense of tranquility when they looked at my photographs! It had never occurred to me that people could share what I felt in the field photographing just by looking. But I sure liked the idea of bringing a sense of calm and an appreciation of the natural world to people. Hence, this book.

It is my hope that as you look at my photographs, and consider the inspirational words of women and men across the ages, you too will experience a connection to the greater natural world – be that Mother Nature, God, the Divine, the Goddess, the Universe or even the Flying Spaghetti Monster – and a sense of peace and greater appreciation for the miraculous beauty of nature.

How to Use This Book

Every now and then – as a recovering Type-A person – I feel like I need instructions on how to use things. So for anyone who, like me, could use a little guidance on what to do with this book, here are a few suggestions. And remember these are just suggestions – not instructions.

Suggestion One: Read all the way through the book from start to finish – looking at the photographs and reading the quotations.

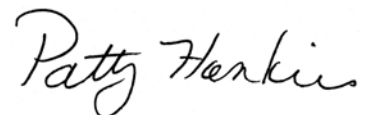
Suggestion Two: Spend a season with the book. Each day enjoy a photograph and consider the quotation and how it relates to you and your life.

Suggestion Three: Pick up the book when you need a bit of inspiration – open to any page at random and consider the photograph and the quotation.

Suggestion Four: Use it however brings you joy.

I'd love to hear how my wildflower photographs and the selected quotes have inspired you.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patty Hankins". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the start of the first name.

Patty Hankins

Patty@BeautifulFlowerPictures.com



Beauty is everywhere a welcome guest.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Texas Blanketflower



In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends.

Kazuko Okakura

Orange Paintbrush



Flowers preach to us if we will hear.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

Celestine Poppies



Each flower is a soul blossoming out to nature.

Gérard de Nerval

Arrowleaf Balsamroot



What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hemlock



*There is nothing that makes its way more
clearly into the soul than beauty.*

Joseph Addison

Yellow Salsify



*We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors.
We borrow it from our children.*

Haida Indian saying

Yellow Fringed Orchid



There are always flowers for those who want to see them.

Henri Matisse

Turk's Cap Lily



Wisdom begins in wonder.

Socrates

Canada Goldenrod



*It's not what you look at that matters —
it's what you see.*

Henry David Thoreau

Speckled Wood Lily



*We hear voices in solitude we never hear in
the hurry and turmoil of life; receive counsels
and comforts we get under no other condition.*

Amelia Barr

Catesby's Trillium



To become human, one must make room in oneself for the wonders of the universe.

South American Indian saying

Texas Butterfly Weed



*Never yet was a springtime, when the buds
forgot to bloom.*

Margaret Elizabeth Sangster

Black Eyed Susans



It's time to start living the life you've imagined.

Henry James

Dutchman's Breeches



*There is material enough in a single flower for
the ornament of a score of cathedrals.*

John Ruskin

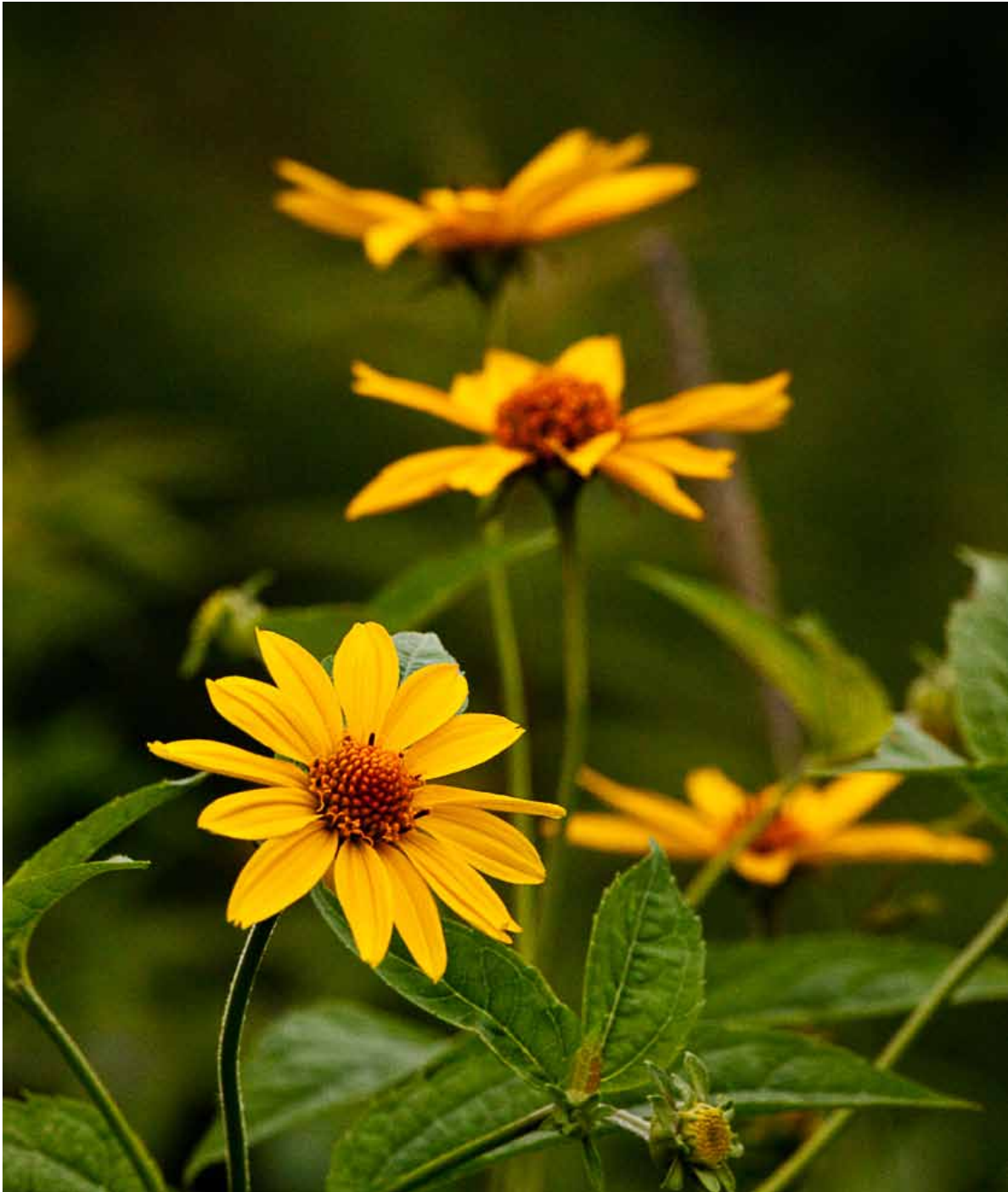
Yellow Trout Lily



All Nature wears one universal grin.

Henry Fielding

Bird's Foot Trefoil



Tread softly! All the earth is sacred ground.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

Maryland Golden Asters



*Live your beliefs and you can turn the world
around.*

Henry David Thoreau

Blue Stemmed Goldenrod



*Your work is to discover your world and then
with all your heart give yourself to it.*

The Buddha

Mexican Hats



To create a little flower is the labor of ages.

William Blake

Flame Azalea



Dwell in possibility.

Emily Dickinson

Butterfly Weed



*Each moment of the year has its own beauty,
a picture which was never before and shall
never be seen again.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

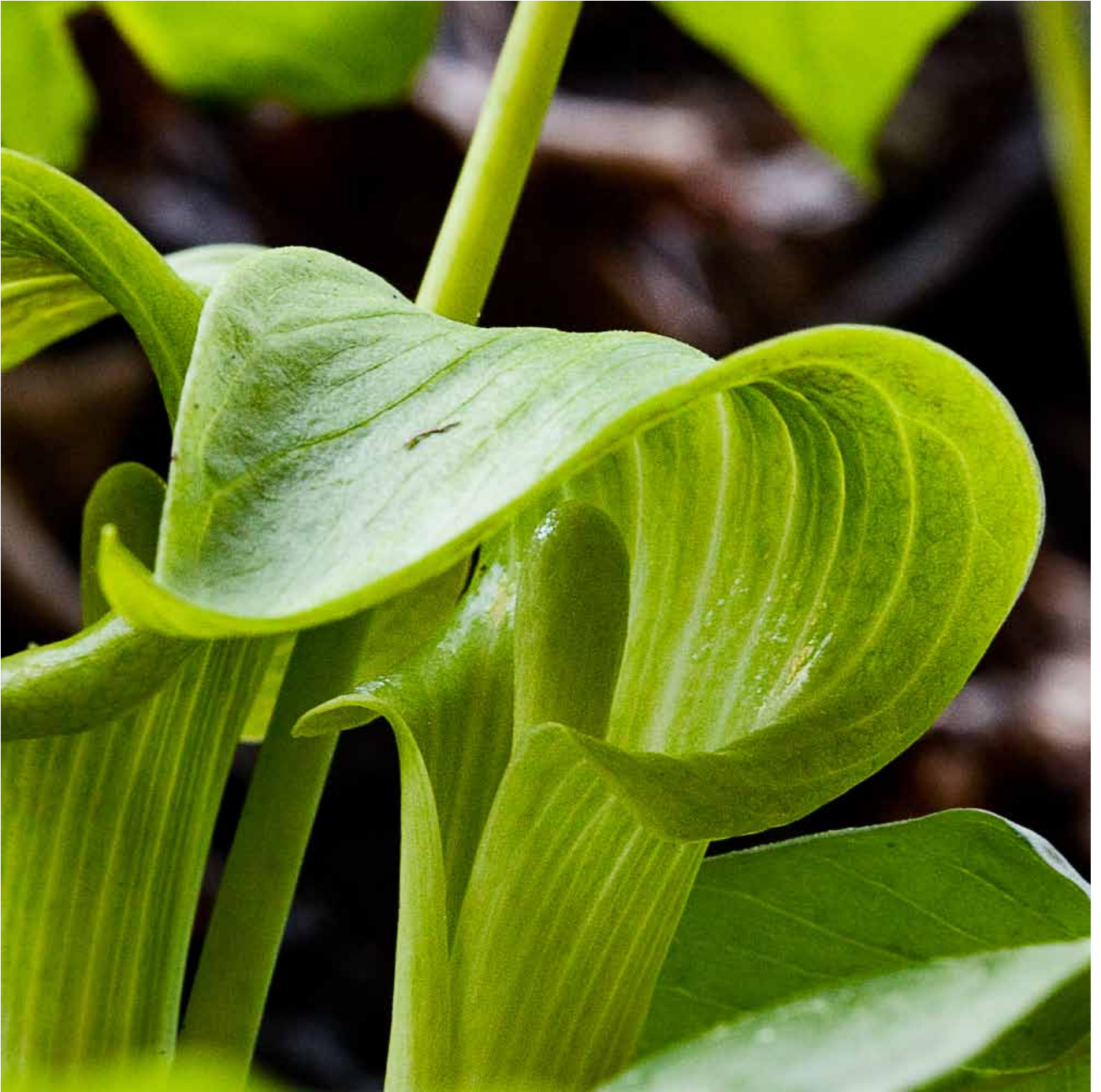
Yellow Lady's Slipper



These stars of earth, these golden flowers.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

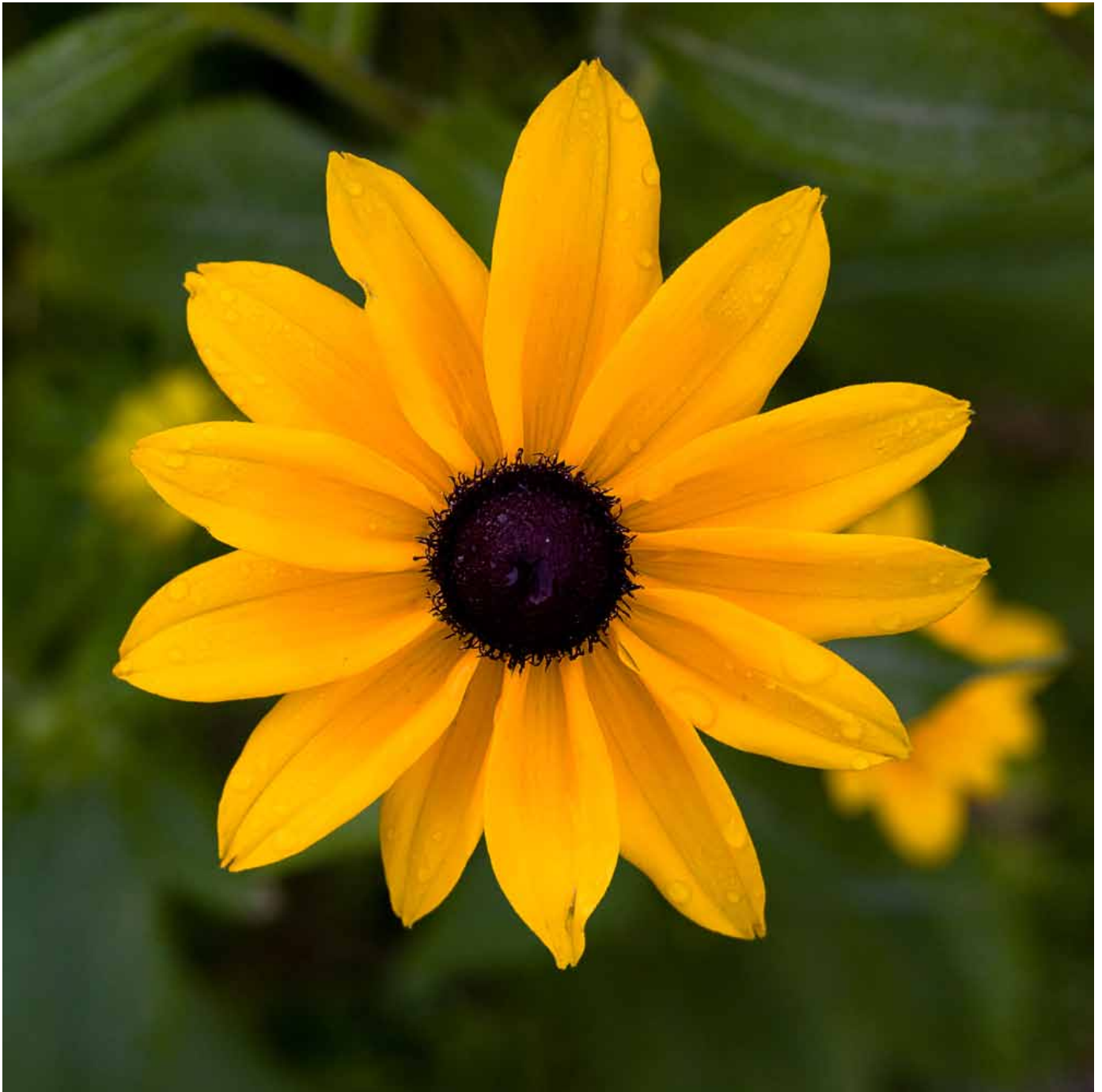
Yellow Trillium



*He is happiest who hath power to gather
wisdom from a flower.*

Mary Howitt

Jack in the Pulpit



*The earth does not belong to man, man
belongs to the earth.*

Chief Seattle

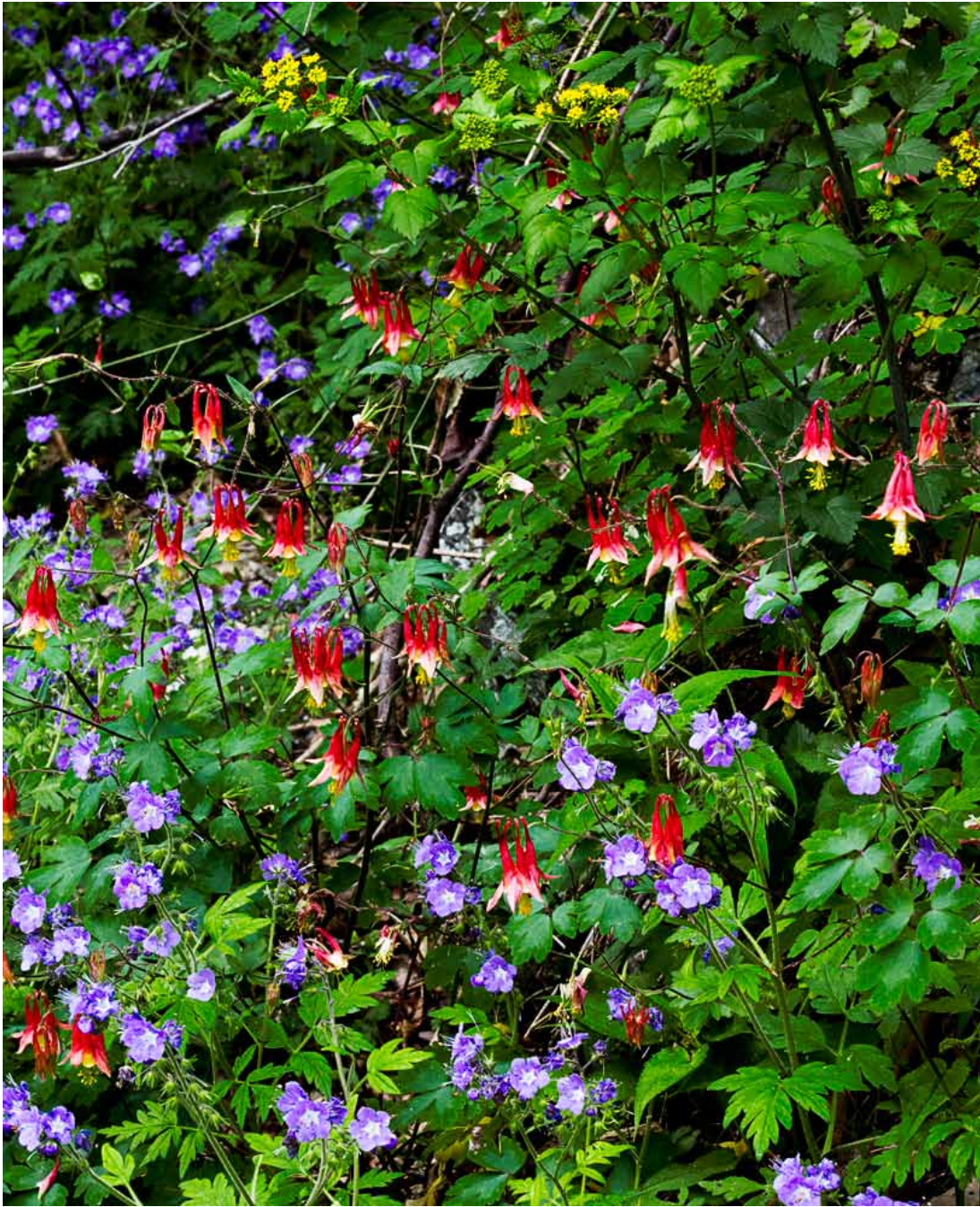
Yellow Coneflower



*The future belongs to those who believe in the
beauty of their dreams.*

Eleanor Roosevelt

Gray's Lily



*We do not see nature with our eyes, but with
our understandings and our hearts.*

William Hazlitt

Columbine & Purple Phacelia



The past, the present, and the future are really one: they are today.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Texas Paintbrush



*Take care of the earth and she will take care
of you.*

Anonymous

Red Trillium



*I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and
to have my senses put in order.*

John Burroughs

Pink Lady's Slipper



*Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
help to make earth happy, like heaven above.*

Julia Fletcher Carney

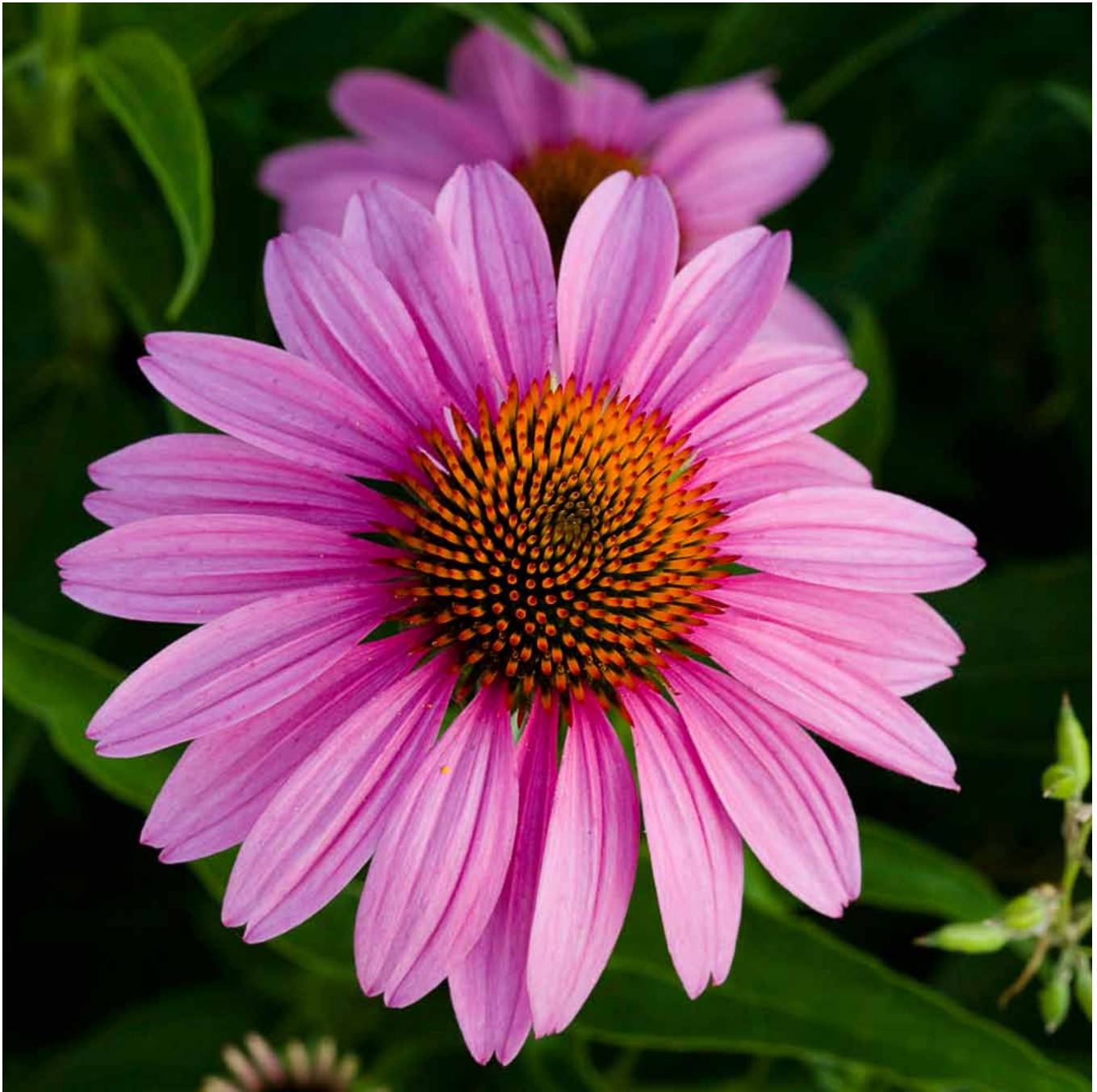
Showy Primrose



*You are a child of the universe, no less than
the trees and the stars; you have a right to be
here.*

Max Ehrmann

Prairie Smoke



*The subtlest beauties in our life are unseen
and unheard.*

Khalil Gibran

Purple Coneflower



Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.

Mathatma Gandhi

Wild Bleeding Hearts



Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.

Marcel Proust

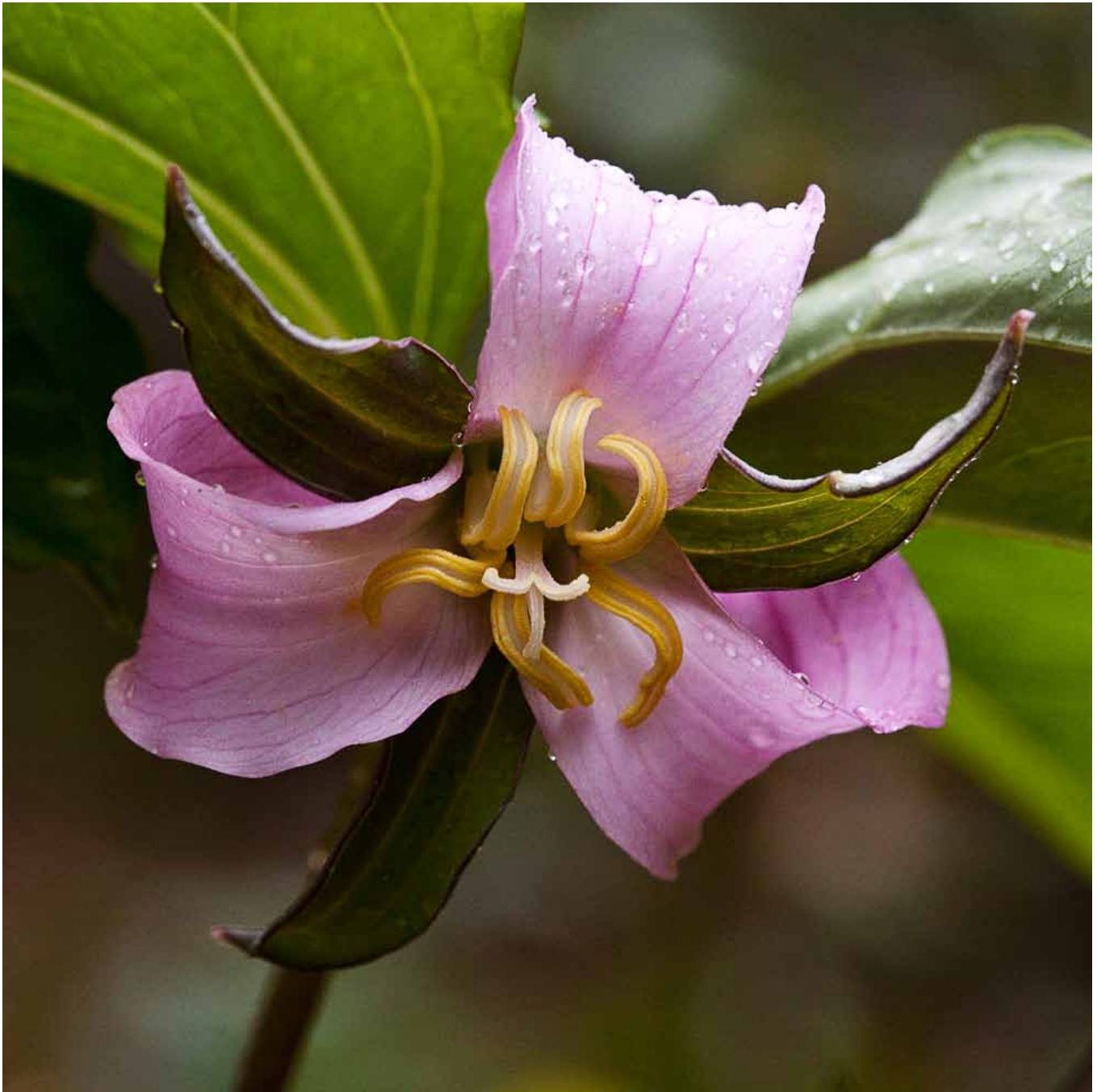
Red Canada Lily



*Act as if what you do makes a difference.
It does.*

William James

Purple Prairie Clover



*Dwell on the beauty of life. Watch the stars,
and see yourself running with them.*

Marcus Aurelius

Catesby's Trillium



*There are more possibilities available in each
moment that we realize.*

Emily Dickinson

Marsh Pink



If you truly love Nature, you will find beauty everywhere.

Vincent Van Gogh

Sweet White Trillium



You yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.

The Buddha

New York Ironweed



Lose yourself in nature and find peace.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Small Purple Fringed Orchids



Who would have thought it possible that a tiny little flower could preoccupy a person so completely that there simply wasn't room for any other thought.

Sophie Scholl

Scarlet Guara



*You must be the change you wish to see in
the world.*

Mahatma Gandhi

Red Columbine



Where flowers bloom so does hope.

Lady Bird Johnson

*Engelmann's Salvia
and Blanketflowers*



The earth is not ours, it is a treasure we hold in trust for future generations.

African proverb

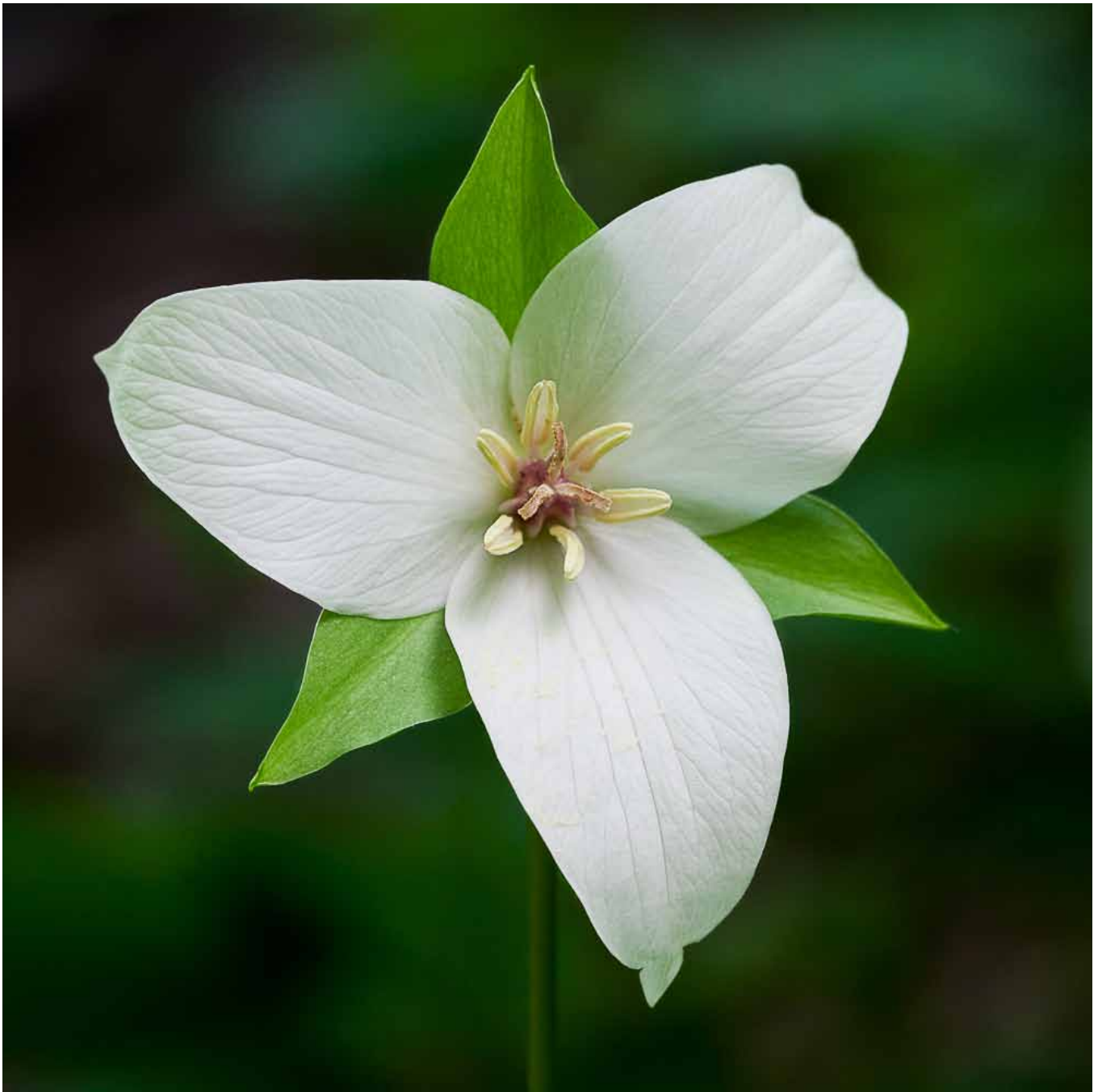
Fireweed



*Let there be many windows to your soul, that
all the glory of the world may beautify it.*

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

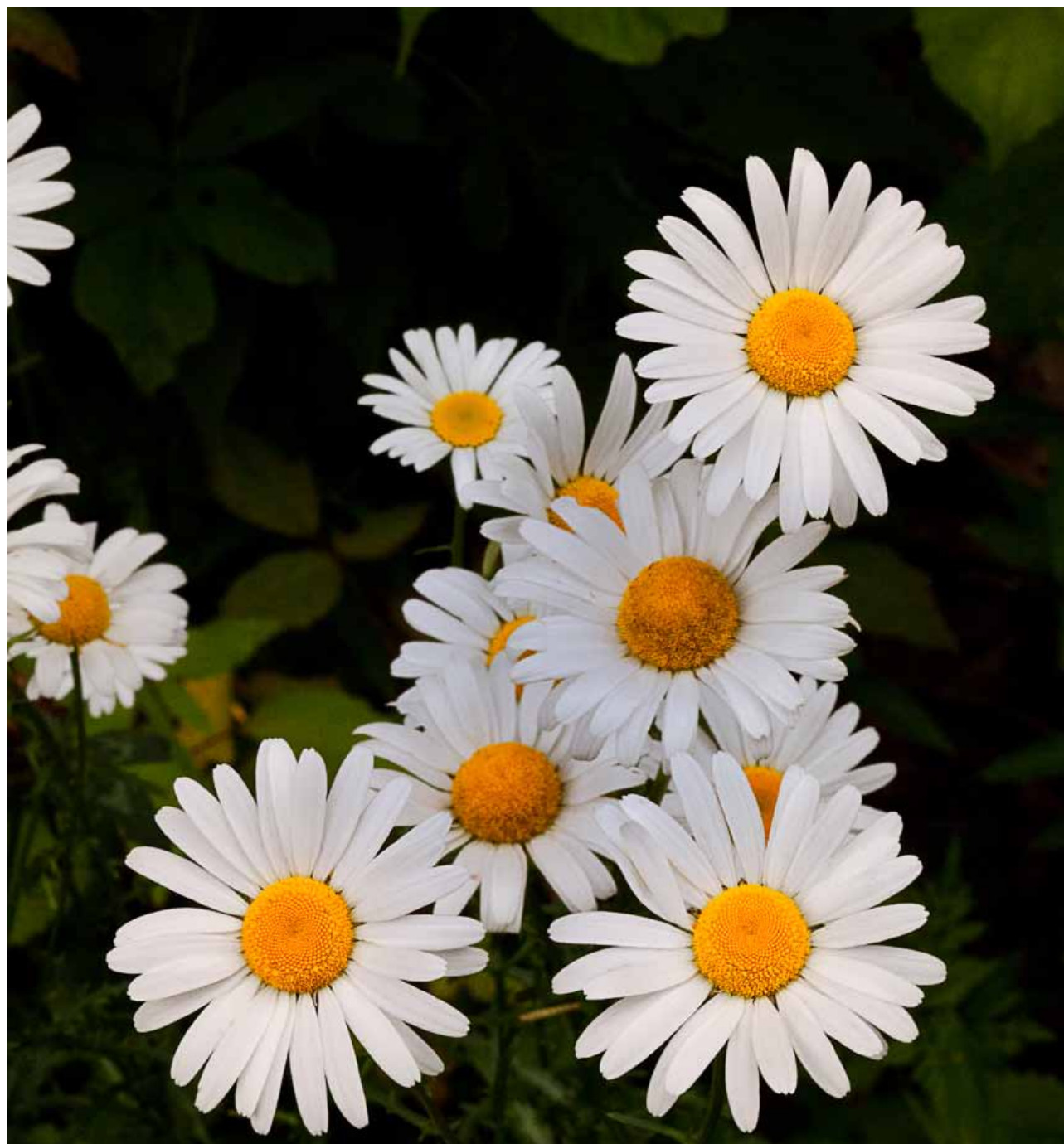
Rosy Paintbrush



Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.

Lao Tzu

Bent Trillium



*The only person you are destined to become
is the person you decide to be.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ox-Eye Daisies



Believe you can and you're halfway there.

Theodore Roosevelt

May Apple



*Come forth into the light of things, let Nature
be your teacher.*

William Wordsworth

Foam Flower



*Flowers seem intended for the solace of
ordinary humanity.*

John Ruskin

American Dogwood



*Beauty is simply reality seen with the eyes
of love.*

Evelyn Underhill

Solomon's Plume



Every moment of light and dark is a miracle.

Walt Whitman

Pearly Everlasting



*What a desolate place would be a world
without a flower! It would be a face without
a smile, a feast without a welcome. Are not
flowers the stars of the earth, and are not our
stars the flowers of heaven?*

Clara Balfour

Alligator Lily



I've always thought my flowers had souls.

Myrtle Reed

False Bugbane



*Do not go where the path may lead, go
instead where there is no path and leave a
trail.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Painted Trillium



*Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Live the life you have imagined.*

Henry David Thoreau

Queen Anne's Lace



*Green is the prime color of the world, and that
from which its loveliness arises.*

Pedro Calderón de la Barca

Star Chickweed



Be like the flower, turn your faces to the sun.

Khalil Gibran

White Trout Lily



At the center of your being you have the answer; you know who you are and you know what you want.

Lao Tzu

Shooting Stars



*Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine
flows into trees.*

John Muir

Rue Anemone



Some of nature's most exquisite handiwork is on a miniature scale, as anyone knows who has applied a magnifying glass to a snowflake.

Rachel Carson

Beargrass



*The sun does not shine for a few trees and
flowers, but for the wide world's joy.*

Henry Ward Beecher

*Yellow Trillium and
Purple Phacelia*



*Bread feeds the body, indeed, but flowers
feed also the soul.*

The Koran

Western Blue Flax



In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks.

John Muir

Dwarf Larkspur



An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.

Henry David Thoreau

Thyme-Leaved Bluets



*Let us remember that within us there is a place
of immense magnificence.*

Teresa of Avila

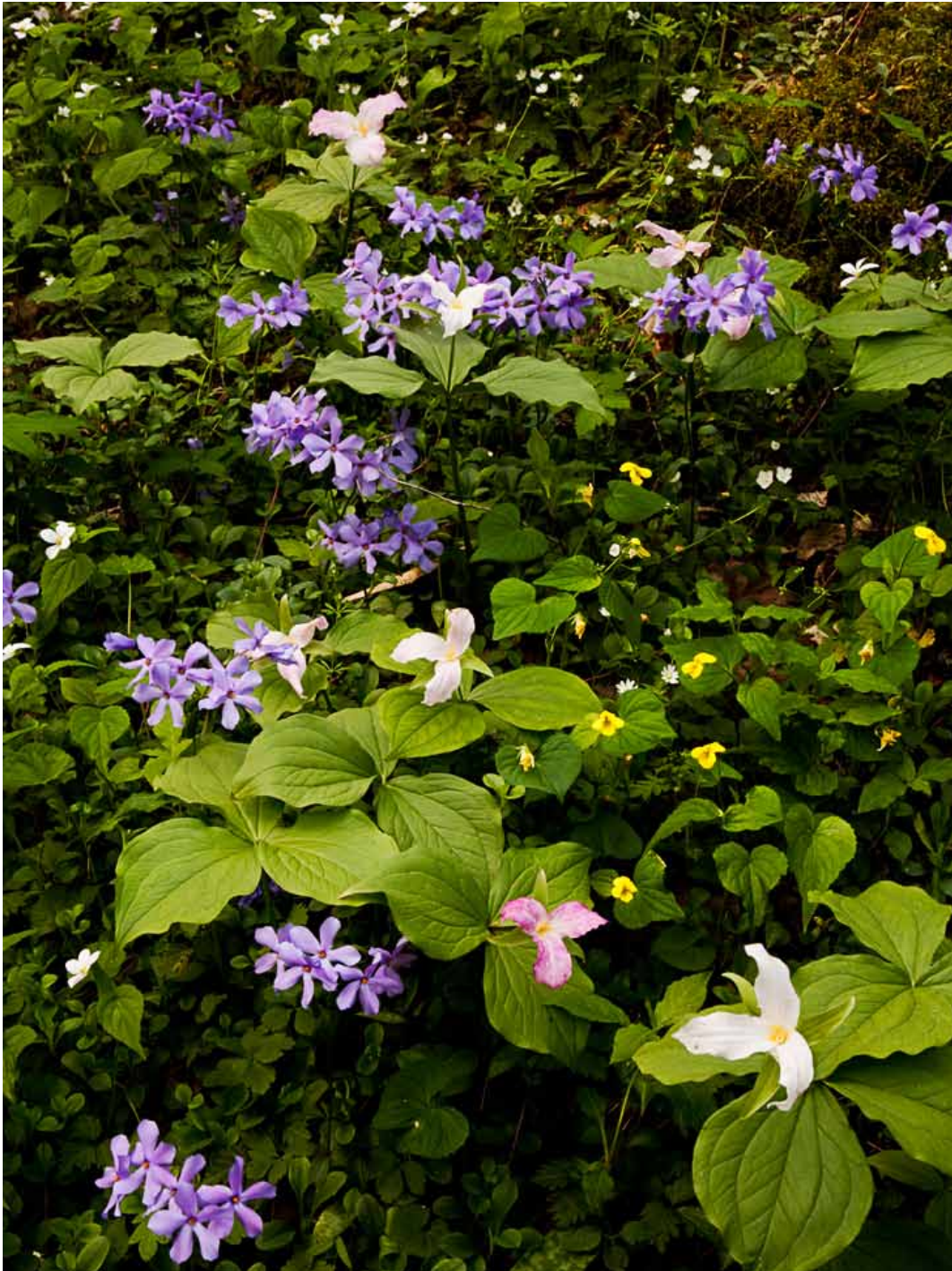
Field Thistle



Be humble, for you are made of earth. Be noble, for you are made of stars.

Serbian proverb

Rocky Mountain Iris



Earth laughs in flowers.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

White Trillium and Blue Phlox



*Look deep into nature, and then you will
understand everything better.*

Albert Einstein

Blue-Eyed Grass



Peace is always beautiful.

Walt Whitman

Blue-Eyed Mary



Flowers are love's truest language.

Park Benjamin

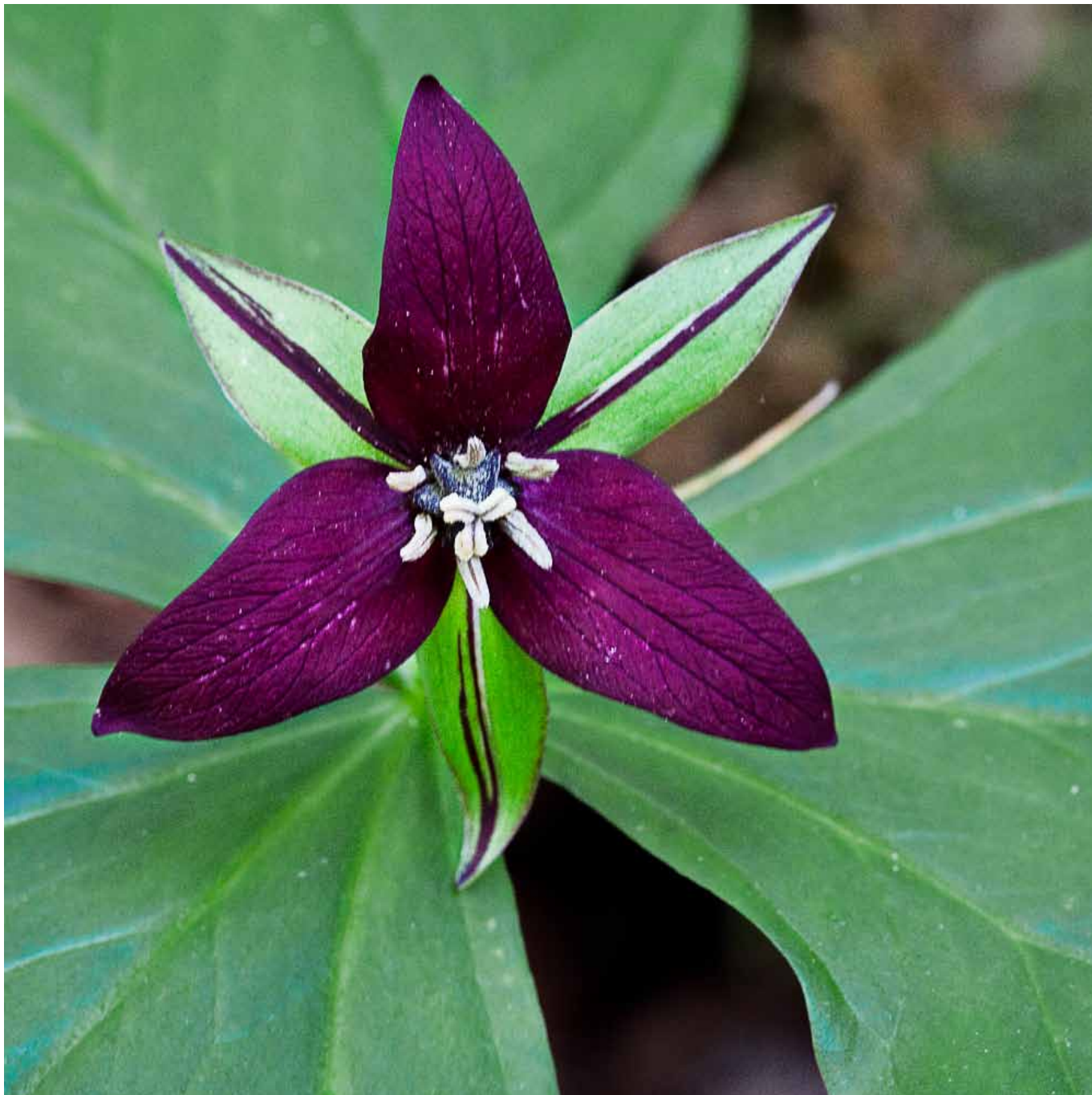
Engelmann's Salvia



*If we could see the miracle of a single flower
clearly, our whole life would change.*

The Buddha

Blue Flag Iris



*Flowers ... are a proud assertion that a ray of
beauty out-values all the utilities of the world.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Wake Robin Trillium



*Flowers are beautiful hieroglyphics of nature,
with which she indicates how much she loves
us.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Spring Beauty



Some people, like flowers, give pleasure, just by being.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Wild Geraniums



In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.

Aristotle

*Colorado Blue Columbine
and Silvery Lupine*



Nature is the art of God.

Dante Alighieri

*Crested Dwarf Iris and
Star Chickweed*



*God has sown his name on the heavens in
glittering stars; but on earth he planteth his
name by tender flowers.*

Jean Paul Richter

Nightshade



*It is a wholesome and necessary thing
for us to turn again to the earth and in the
contemplation of her beauties to know of
wonder and humility.*

Rachel Carson

Southern Blue Flag Iris



Dare to live the life you have dreamed for yourself. Go forward and make your dreams come true.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Showy Orchis



*A thing of beauty is a joy forever: its loveliness
increases; it will never pass into nothingness.*

John Keats

Crested Dwarf Iris



*When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he
finds it attached to the rest of the world.*

John Muir

Virginia Bluebells



Beauty awakens the soul to act.

Dante Alighieri

Eastern Blue Star



*Find ecstasy in life; the mere sense of living is
joy enough.*

Emily Dickinson

Case's Fitweed



*All things are artificial, for nature is the art of
God.*

Thomas Browne

*Few-Flowered
Shooting Stars*



A man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life.

James Allen

Low Larkspur



*All the wide world is beautiful, and it matters
but little where we go.... The spot where we
chance to be always seems the best.*

John Muir

Mountain Forget-Me-Not



*One touch of nature makes the whole world
kin.*

William Shakespeare

Colorado Blue Columbine



All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.

Indian proverb

Erect Dayflower

Acknowledgements

While my name may be on the cover, this book would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of an entire team of amazing people. I am so grateful to have all of them in my life.

I'd particularly like to thank and acknowledge

Steven Waxman, who helped me turn a pile of images and quotes into the beautiful book you are holding in your hands

Laura Cornell and Lynn Kruse, my accountability partners, who always encourage me and help keep me on schedule

The members of my two Mastermind Groups – Anne Hanaoka, Cheri Valentine, Helga Blondeel, Janet Wiszowaty, Jasmine Sky, Jeremy Seegar, Jim Otis, Juliette Willoughby, Laura Cornell, Meg Sullivan, Sandra Scott, Sheri Fink, Tricia Guerra and Trisha Jacobson – who always encourage me to pursue my dreams, and give me the necessary kicks in the butt when I start stalling on projects

Rose Solari and Jimmy Patterson, who provided me with the information, contacts and editing help that made this

book more than a dream – to say nothing of lots of wine and encouragement when I needed it

Pamela Bruner, my coach, who is helping me build the life and business of my dreams

Dan Williams, who always encourages and inspires me to take the best photos that I can

And my husband Bill Lawrence, who loves me unconditionally and has put up with an awful lot as I've created this book and my photography business.

What people are saying about *Wildflower Meditations: A Gift for the Spirit*

“A masterpiece of beauty and serenity.”

— Sheri Fink, best-selling author of *The Little Rose*

“Opening any page of Patty’s beautiful book is like a meditation. I feel calm, peaceful, and centered, and it’s easier to tap into appreciation and gratitude. I love it!”

— Pamela Bruner, co-author with Jack Canfield of *Tapping Into Ultimate Success: How to Overcome Any Obstacle and Skyrocket Your Results*

“Patty Hankins is one of those rare individuals who clearly has a passion and love for photography. Her photographs bring the world of flowers to all of us, and her dedication to the promotion of environmental issues is just another step into her life’s journey of making the world a better place for everyone. This wonderful book brings the beauty of flowers into our homes, and the selections of thought-provoking quotes found within its’ pages cause all of us to stop for a moment and think about the world around us.”

— Dan Williams, photographer

“Patty Hankins’ flower photos work on the psyche like good lyric poems. By capturing and communicating moments of pure beauty, they teach us how to better see such moments for ourselves. I love beginning my day with a meditation on one of these photos and its accompanying quote, but this profound volume is a powerful resource for anyone who, at any time, is hungry for a dose of wonder.”

— Rose Solari, poet and novelist