**Bottle Gentian**  
*Gentiana andrewsii*

1-2’ rounded clump, with non-branching stems. If left undisturbed (the plant has a taproot), the clumps can become large.

CT native, found in moist woods, seeps, thickets, meadows, near streams and ponds.

Showy tight clusters of 1-1.5” deep blue flowers that have 5 overlapped petals in the shape of an inflated cylinder that never opens. The cluster are held erect between the top leaves, though at times the stems bend over with the weight of the developing flower. At the tip of each petal is a fine fringe: that fringe area is forced open by bumblebees, which then enter inside for pollen and nectar. Blooms for about a month in September to October.

4” long leaves are stalkless, elliptical, and glossy, with parallel veins. The lower leaves are opposite, the upper are larger and in whorls.

The fused petals become a papery wrapping for a 1” capsule with many seeds, each in a papery wing, dispersed by the wind.

Part shade with a few hours of sun is ideal. Prefers moist, cool, humusy, mildly acidic well-drained soils. Must be kept watered the first summer. Don’t disturb the roots.

Use for intense color in the fall. Naturalize in moist wildflower gardens, open meadows, woodland/shade gardens, along streams. Use in shady areas of the borders or rock gardens, scattered, massed, or as edging.

Streamside buffers.

Attracts Bumblebees and other large bees strong enough to get in the flowers.

Photos 1, 2, 7, 8: K. Chayka  
minnesotawildflowers.info/flower/bottle-gentian
Photos 3, 5: Joshua Mayer  
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