



for unique wildflowers, like so many do for our native orchids, this is the time of the year to search for fall flowering members of the gentian family, those that usually have beautiful blue flowers. When you think of the rarity of the native orchids found in Kentucky, approximately 80% are listed as rare, special concern, threatened or endangered. Of the fall gentians, 80% fall in those same categories. So if looking for rare plants is your reason, then the fall gentians are an excellent group to focus on. I hope to share with you some information about gentians in general and then which species can be found in Kentucky.

The fall flowering gentians all belong to the genus *Gentiana* and there are six species: *G. puberula* (purple clew), *G. densa* (Appalachian or showy), *G. andersonii* (Closed or border), *G. spicata* (Scuppernon), *G. florida* (Pale), and *G. villosa* (Striped). The Pale gentian occurs in the form of the genus in

*G. densa* by Tom Barnes

