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White campion, first, for being ubiquitous and fetching, its puffy calyces like the thoraxes of bees, plump, pendant.

And another pale one—wood anemone with its opposite leaves, deeply palmate, above which the flowers look creamy, shy.

Field clover, red, and the white sweet one, too. Does the metalmark find it by scent?

Fading now, almost finished for the season, the elegant reclusive stalks of dame’s rocket in three colors—pink, white, lavender. The last has lasted longest, color of the dusky hours, the hours of sorrow and reflection, of missing someone dear, of words said that cannot be taken back.

A purple twining one, relative to the sweet pea, which is called crown vetch. It adds nitrogen to the soil and makes a stunning companion along the roadside. Daily you fill in one more name on the family tree, daily a new one blooms. Soothing, idle purposes, oh summer.

About the Author
Patricia Clark, an associate professor in the Writing Department at Grand Valley State University, is the author of North of Wondering (poems, 1999). Other poems have appeared recently in The Atlantic Monthly, Poetry, & Slate.