*Native Orchid News:*
The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

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Field trip Schedule
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Plant of the Month
Wild Mint
*(Mentha arvensis)*

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GARAGE SALE
45 Skowron Cr., (off Grassie Blvd.)
Saturday, May 10
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
ALL PROCEEDS TO NATIVE ORCHID CONSERVATION INC.
AND DEBWENDON INC.
To donate items for the sale contact
Peggy at 204-261-9179 or by email
at bainardp@mymts.net

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Doris Ames and David Toop with painting

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Brokenhead Wetlands Boardwalk
Wild Mint (\textit{Mentha arvensis})

By Doris Ames

The genus name “Mentha” comes from Latin which was derived from the Greek “Minthe” meaning ‘mint’ and “arvensis” meaning ‘of the field’.

Wild mint is a common, aromatic perennial belonging to the Lamiaceae (Mint) Family. This large cosmopolitan family contains 150 genera and over 3,500 species worldwide with 19 genera and 34 species found in Manitoba. The three prominent characteristics of this family are square stems, opposite pairs of leaves and the plants are usually aromatic.

\textit{Mentha arvensis} grows from 10 to 60 cm tall from underground stolons and is often found in moist soil in partial shade, sometimes in grassy sloughs and sometimes along streams in the southern half of the province.

It has four-sided, leafy stems covered with downward-pointing hairs. The rough leaves are opposite in pairs, short-stalked and with saw-toothed margins. They are usually dotted with minute glands. The whole plant smells heavily of mint.

The tiny, irregular flowers are found in clusters along the stem and are usually pale lilac. The petals are fused into a 4-5 lobed tube. The upper lip is notched into two parts and the lower lip has three lobes. Four long stamens stick out from the centre of the flower. A single style arises from the navel at the base of the ovary. The fruits are four small egg-shaped nutlets. Each contains a single seed. Mint blooms from July through September.

Wild mint was used heavily by both native peoples and pioneers. The active medicinal ingredient, menthol, has been found to expel gas from and relieve spasms of the digestive tract. The young leaves may be eaten raw, dried, or cooked as a vegetable. The Cree used to use mint leaves in tea to soothe an upset stomach. Others used leaves mixed with beaver castor to mask the human scent on red fox bait.

You will easily recognize wild mint if you step on it because of its cool, aromatic fragrance.

Mint leaves can be easily dried for future use. Harvest them on a warm, sunny morning when the flowers are wide-open. Spread the leaves out in a warm, ventilated place indoors for several days until crisp. I often dry them in a paper lunch bag hung up with a clothespin on a line in my cottage kitchen. When thoroughly dried they can be stored in a small glass jar with a tight lid and will keep very well. Apparently they can also be freeze-dried.

There are two other naturalized European mint species that grow in Canada; spearmint (\textit{M. spicata}) and peppermint (\textit{M.x piperita}). These species can be distinguished from the Wild Mint by their flowers that are found in tight, elongated clusters at the tips of the stems rather than along the stem in the leaf axils. Spearmint has sessile (unstalked) leaves and prefers drier habitat. Peppermint has leaves that are stalked and their leaves taste very “hot” when chewed. The two naturalized species are rather invasive and there is some hybridization between all three species of mint in Canada. All of them can be used to make mint tea or mint jelly. However wild mint and spearmint contain significant amounts of pulegone which can damage the liver and stimulate the uterus so they should not be used during pregnancy or during heavy menstruation.

\textbf{Mint Tea}

The basic preparation of mint tea is the same no matter what species is used. Put 2 tbsps. of fresh, bruised leaves or 2 tsps. of dried leaves for each cup of boiling water in a warm teapot and allow to steep for 10 minutes. Serve with a few drops of lemon and some honey, but taste it first because you might find you like it better plain. Mint tea is excellent for the treatment of indigestion, colic and colds but as with all medicinal plants it should be used in moderation.
President’s Report

By Peggy Bainard Acheson

It is with some trepidation that I write my first report as President of Native Orchid Conservation. As you know Doris stepped down from the Board and as President of NOCI at our AGM on February 28 and I am acutely aware of the big boots I have to try and fill! Thank goodness I have a great group of people on the board to work with and I fully expect that we will be able to carry on with the business and mandate of NOCI as seamlessly as possible. Doris accomplished an incredible body of work during her 14-year tenure and we can never thank her enough for all that she has done for this organization. At the AGM I attempted to thank her by honouring her with a tribute speech (included elsewhere in this newsletter) and a PowerPoint presentation with a list of most of her achievements. Denny Smith also arranged for a plaque bestowing the title of President Emeritus on Doris that provides her with lifelong membership and field trips. The presentation and a video of Doris can be found on our website. She built a strong foundation for us to continue and her legacy will be felt for many years to come.

I have put some thought into what I would like us to accomplish as I take over the reins. I have been noticing that our membership has been falling the last few years and I hope to increase it through the use of social media (Facebook), as well as through advertisement of our new Manitoba orchid applications. Fortunately we now have Heather Miltenburg on our board to help make this happen and Heather has already mucked in with the development of the orchid apps for both Android and IoS (Apple) platforms. We will also try to have a few more public displays and hopefully we can get some new blood into the organization. Lots of new members may provide us with a source of new board members and volunteers, too. At the moment we have one board vacancy and John Neufeld and Florence McCoy are on 1-year appointments. Don’t forget to invite your friends, family, co-workers, and acquaintances to come out to our field trips as this is a great way to introduce people to the wonderful world of native orchids in Manitoba. If you have any ideas for increasing membership or anything else, please let me know. And of course, you’re always welcome to volunteer at any of our events. Just give me a call if you’d like to help out at a display.

At the AGM we elected new and old members to the Board and so the board now looks like this:

- **President:** Peggy Bainard Acheson
- **Vice-president:** David Toop
- **Treasurer:** Denny Smith
- **Secretary and Field Trip Coordinator:** Rose Kuzina
- **Membership Chair:** Florence McCoy
- **Member-at-Large:**
  - Mike James
  - John Neufeld
  - Heather Miltenburg
  - Vacant

I would like to thank all the wonderful volunteers that helped at our display at the Manitoba Orchid Show at the Conservatory at the end of March including Doris Ames, Katherine Bergbusch, Leon and Carol Clegg, John Dyck, Will Milne, Richard Reeves, and all the rest of the board members. I had a lot of fun at the Show as I believe many of you did as well. We sold over $700 worth of pins, books, and DVDs; we also distributed tons of brochures and handouts including the proposed list of field trips this year. Please see the final list and dates elsewhere in the newsletter.
Doris and I took a NOCI and a Debwendon display to AECOM’s offices on Earth Day, April 22. We gave out our field trip list, brochures and other hand-outs. AECOM is an environmental and engineering consulting firm with over 200 employees in a large, new office off Kenaston Blvd. (near IKEA). We met some interesting people and we hope to get some new members.

NOCI has acquired an Air Miles Card to help us accumulate points that we can use to buy items for our raffles. I hope you will help us with this initiative – it is easy and painless – and will allow us to get some interesting raffle items with no cost to us. See the notice elsewhere in the newsletter. Of course, if you still want to donate raffle items, all donations are gratefully accepted!

Some upcoming events are noted below. I just want to especially promote the upcoming garage sale. When I took over as President apparently I inherited 4 car/truck loads of stuff and so we decided to sort through it and have a Garage Sale for things that we are not using any more, but which are still in good, useable condition. The items vary from camping equipment, books, display items and a whole host of weird and wonderful stuff! All proceeds will go to NOCI and Debwendon. If you would like to donate any items to help bulk up the tables, please phone me to drop off items before May 10 at 204-261-9179.

We are now on Facebook! Check it out and leave a comment at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Native-Orchid-Conservation-Inc/642374452483045

Upcoming events:

GARAGE SALE: May 10, 9-4 with proceeds to NOCI and Debwendon at 45 Skowron Crescent in Harbour View South (off Grassie Blvd). Call Peggy at 204-261-9179 to donate items.

Eugene Reimer Memorial Bench Dedication, Saturday, May 31, 12:00 noon, South Drive (after field trip)

FIELD TRIPS! (See list and dates on Page 8.)

Opening of Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Trail (date to be determined, see article on Page 7).

Reminder
Don’t forget to download our free App for Android devices! The full version of the App will be available as well as a free and full version for Apple devices by the end of May!
Watch for notices to your email, on our website, and on our new Facebook page.

NOCI Air Miles Fundraiser

NOCI has acquired its own Air Miles card as a raffle fundraiser for upcoming members' nights. You should have found a card ready to go for your wallet with this issue.

Examples of stores where you can use this card include Safeway, Safeway Pharmacy, Sobey’s, Shell, Rona, Manitoba Liquor Marts, Michael’s, Old Navy, Staples, Fountain Tire, Global Pet Food stores and many more!
2014 AGM Report

by Peggy Bainard Acheson

Last year in my AGM report I talked about the “very late cold spring we have experienced”, but as Randy Bachman likes to say, “You ain’t seen nothin’ yet”! This year the weather the day of the AGM was more like January than late February! This winter seemed to enjoy an unprecedented persistence – the other day I heard someone on the radio saying, “Winter – GO HOME! You’re drunk!” Nevertheless, I would like to thank the 39 faithful members and guests who ventured out to our sixteenth Annual General Meeting. No doubt the main draw was to congratulate and acknowledge the commitment and legacy of long-time President and member Doris Ames, who stepped down from the Board of Directors. Please see my tribute to Doris’ legacy elsewhere in this newsletter and a copy of the tribute presentation and video may be found on our website.

The business meeting included reports from Rose Kuzina (Secretary), Doris Ames (President), Denny Smith (Treasurer), and Florence McCoy (Membership). After that the Nominations and Election Chair, John Neufeld proceeded with the election. Mike James, Rose Kuzina, David Toop, and Heather Miltenburg were elected by acclamation.

If you haven’t already met her, Heather has been a NOCI member for two years and has already done some great work helping us get our orchid applications up and running. A student at the University of Manitoba (graduating this year in Environmental Science), Heather has many interests including ecology, botany, research and data interpretation. Always up for a challenge Heather has offered to assist Florence by updating and inputting data on our membership database. Welcome Heather!

After the business meeting Derrick Ko Henrichs, Heather Miltenburg, and Casey Forsythe presented an update on our orchid applications. Our free version of the Android app came out on January 31, and the full version should be out by the end of May. Free and full versions on the iOS (Apple) platform will also be out this spring. Watch for a notice on our website.

For our enjoyment and entertainment, John Neufeld, who many of you know well, presented a trip he and Chris went on last year, entitled, “African Safari by Train”. Wow, that was a blockbuster – and although going a little long, I think we were all on the edge of our seats to the end of that one! Thanks, John!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our raffle and prize donors:

- David Toop
- Dawn Kitching
- Denny & Mary Smith
- Doris Ames
- Florence McCoy
- Heather Miltenburg
- John Dyck
- Rose Kuzina
- Keith & Aileen Huss-Seidel
- Lorne Heshka
- Nora Reid
- Peggy Bainard Acheson

**Raffle Winners:** Nora Reid, Margo James, Brigitte Parachnowitsch, Huguette Calvez, Bep Vanderwoude, Chris Neufeld, Doris Ames, Derrick Ko Heinrichs, David Toop.

**Door Prize winners:** John Neufeld, Wilma Sotas, Lorne Heshka, Doris Ames, Bernie Reid, Chris Neufeld, Bill Bremner, Loretta Humeniuk, Sheila Bradford, Richard Reeves, Les Pelletier.

Finally I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to all the volunteers for helping to set up and tear down, taking photographs, selling tickets and otherwise helping and donating to the raffle, and also to everyone who came out and made this AGM a memorable time! We look forward to seeing you all during the upcoming field trip season.
Tribute to Doris Ames, President of NOCI

Delivered by Peggy Bainard Acheson at AGM, February 28, 2014

Doris,
This is a bittersweet day for NOCI. However, we knew that this day was going to come eventually, but still it seems that it has come all too soon. I cannot possibly list all your achievements and accomplishments, and this short list does not do justice to the many long hours of work you have put into this organization. I’m sure it is missing a few things, probably lots of things, but I think people will appreciate the commitment that you made to NOCI and its mission of conserving native orchids in Manitoba, and to public awareness of their existence and the fragile environments they inhabit.

A quote from the Native Orchid Newsletter of October 2001 that you wrote yourself perhaps captures the job you have done very nicely, and I quote:

“Many thanks to our board members. They are a very special kind of member with a great deal of commitment. Serving on the volunteer board of a non-profit organization, while rewarding, is also hard work. Decisions are often difficult, money is always tight and the pay is non-existent. I think what makes people stay and work together even when it is difficult, renew their membership when money is tight, attend our displays and volunteer to serve when they are busy, is that they have a shared purpose. In our case, it's our love of the natural world and our desire to protect it.”

This description certainly fits you and you have set the example for those to come after you. You had the vision, the energy and the drive to deal with and solve the day-to-day problems, large or small, and carry this organization to the many successes that it has enjoyed under your leadership. This is no easy task and, I would like to say that you have certain qualities and modeled certain behaviours that we all would benefit from taking note.

First and foremost, you are kind. You are kind to strangers you meet out in the public, and you are kind to new board members nervous about what to expect while serving on the board.

Second, you are generous and thoughtful. Always remembering to bring treats for board meetings to make us feel welcome and refreshed. Making sure to bring extra water in a cooler for hot, weary field trip participants.

Third, your ready wit and stories have entertained and brought us together over many a good laugh. Your sense of humour is infectious; it breaks the ice and makes people feel at ease. This is essential for making the hard work and long hours not a chore, but a lot of fun. And it leads to lots of adventures and great, great memories.

Doris, you are a unique individual and we are going to miss you terribly. I dare to speak for not only the board members, but all the members, when I say that filling your shoes will be very difficult indeed. We hope that you will stay around to encourage and help us when we falter, but we also congratulate you on your many achievements and accomplishments, and wish you a well-deserved retirement and many happy days at the cottage.

Greetings from some old friends and board members came from:
Bob Joyce (former board member), Matthew McBurney (former board member), Marilyn Light (North American Regional Orchid Specialist Group), Greg Selinger, Premier of Manitoba, Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Conservation

In honour of your long-time service as President of Native Orchid we would like to present to you a plaque that bestows upon you the designation of President Emeritus. To award President Emeritus status to you is to grant you the highest acknowledgement of excellence in public service that NOCI can award, and it extends to you the privileges of continuing in any and all NOCI functions without further payment to the organization. Please accept this token of our appreciation with our many thanks.

We would also like to present to you some other gifts in memory of your time on the board: Gift certificate and card, journal, painting (by David Toop).
If you are an avid hiker, naturalist, or just enjoy discovering new places to visit in Manitoba, you may be interested to know that the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail is close to completion. The story of the planning, design and construction of this exceptional trail is nothing short of a saga, but at long last the dreams of Carl Smith and his father, elder Lawrence Smith of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (BON), are coming to fruition. The trail, located just north of the BON along Highway 59 near Scanterbury, is expected to open this summer.

This wheelchair accessible trail features over one kilometre of cedar boardwalk, using floating dock billets to suspend the walkway over the existing ground, allowing water to pass underneath and minimizing the impact on the sensitive ecosystems below. Numerous rest points with benches are featured along the route, allowing opportunities for interpretation through both signage and personal reflection on the surrounding environment. An octagonal forest plaza awaits at the southern conclusion of the route, providing an opportunity for a picnic lunch or outdoor classroom learning before making your way back to the trailhead. The development also includes a parking lot for up to 24 cars, bus turnaround and parking, and an accessible, non-modern washroom.

In 2007 a group of dedicated volunteers made up representatives from two non-profit organizations, the Manitoba Model Forest (MMF) and Native Orchid Conservation Inc. (NOCI), along with the BON, formed a new organization, Debwendon Inc. (meaning Trust in Ojibway). The partnership now also includes the Eastside Aboriginal Sustainable Tourism Inc. (E.A.S.T. Inc.). The purpose of Debwendon is “to promote and preserve the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve, raise public awareness of the historic cultural connection between the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and the Brokenhead Wetland, construct and maintain over the long term a boardwalk and interpretive trail adjacent to the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve, and raise funds toward those ends.” (Debwendon website) After a few years of false starts the project was finally able to go forward due to the exceptional generosity of the late Eugene Reimer, a long-time naturalist and board member of Native Orchid Conservation. A donation of $600,000, known as the Eugene Reimer Environment Fund, was invested in an endowment fund through the Winnipeg Foundation, and will provide funding in perpetuity for the repair and maintenance of the trail. With this stable support, the Province of Manitoba committed $1 million in funding for the capital cost of the construction of the trail, which was announced in October 2011.

The Brokenhead Ecological Reserve was designated in 2005 under the Province of Manitoba's Protected Areas Initiative, “a government program dedicated to working together with others to build a network of protected land, freshwater, and marine areas that contains the tremendous biological diversity and unique features found in Manitoba's varied landscapes.” The Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail is located adjacent to the ecological reserve within a 100 meter-wide buffer that follows the eastern edge of the ecological reserve for about 1.2 km. Riverside Gravel supported the trail development by relinquishing a portion of their quarry lease to accommodate the trail. The trail route was mapped out by members of Debwendon in 2010 and winds through various habitat types found in the area including a gravel moraine, jackpine forest, cedar wetland, and fen. The trail will highlight specific plants such as orchids, pitcher plants and other features such as glacial erratics. A key objective is to maximize the experience for users so they grasp the importance of the ecological balance that needs to be maintained in the wetland.

The special relationship that the BON has with the wetland will also be a focus of the interpretation. Debwendon intends to offer live interpretive programming to be provided by members from the BON during the summer months to share information about the many features along the Trail. The BON has been using the wetland for approximately 300 years and it continues to be considered by the band as a place of great cultural importance and a place for collecting medicinal plants, tea, berries and cedar.

The Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail and Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve will also be a very valuable tool for educating the general public about wetlands. Southern Manitoba has lost approximately 70% of its wetlands since 1900 and public education is critical in order to save the little that remains for future generations.

For more information please visit our website, www.debwendon.org. Information on the official opening will be posted there later this summer.
Native Orchid Conservation Inc.
2014 Events and Field Trips

Saturday, May 10 – NOCI Garage Sale – 45 Skowron Cres., Harbour View South (off Grassie) - 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. For information on how to donate items, email bainardp@mymts.net or phone 204-261-9179.

Saturday, May 31 – Birds Hill Provincial Park – Official commemoration of the memorial bench to Eugene Reimer, former NOCI board member, with a morning hike along the historic Pine Ridge Trail. Three-flowered avens and spring flowers. Dedication at 12:00 noon (at bench along South Drive). BBQ after at picnic shelter on North Drive.

Saturday, June 7 – Marble Ridge, Interlake Forest Centre – Eight species of native orchids including large and small yellow lady’s slipper, small round-leaved orchid, Showy lady’s-slipper, long-bracted orchid, striped coral root, ram's-head lady’s-slipper and Calypso in this special and rare alvar area.

Saturday, June 14 – Holland, Bruxelles and St. Alphonse area – Art gallery, Trappist monastery, villages on top of hills, historic churches, lake recreation area and flowers throughout the Tiger Hills area.

Saturday, June 21 – Amaranth and Alonsa area – Showy lady’s-slipper, yellow lady’s-slipper and other rare species, including butterflies, rare Red-headed woodpecker nesting site and ancient aboriginal sundance site.

Saturday, June 28 - Brokenhead Wetlands – Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail. Yellow lady's-slipper, Showy lady's-slipper, pitcher plants, carnivorous sundew and other wetland plants in this coniferous bog.

Saturday, July 5 – Falcon Creek Trail & West Hawk Lake area – Includes a tour of the park’s fish hatchery. Lichen, club moss, rare Hooker orchid, moccasin flower, large erratic, pillow basalt, glacial striations, chattermarks and other geological marvels.

Registration for these field trips commence after May 1, 2014 by emailing nocifieldtrips@gmail.com or phoning 204-223-8209. Cut-off date for registering will be on the Wednesday prior to that weekend’s trip. A limited number of participants are allowed due to the sensitive environmental areas. Fees are $15 per adult and $5 per child under 18 to help to cover costs. You must be a NOCI member (or a group member) to join these trips (becoming a member on the day of the trip is fine, membership fee is $15 per calendar year) and you must sign a liability waiver. Dress suitably for the weather as we go rain or shine. Hats, drinking water, a bag lunch, sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended. Meeting up will be at a location on a bus route, and car-pooling is encouraged for environmental reasons, so please be prepared to pay a share of the gas expenses.

NOCI reserves the right to cancel or reschedule trips due to weather conditions, changes in events or insufficient volunteers to lead trips. Check the NOCI website www.nativeorchid.org for updates and further details.