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

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President’s Report

By Peggy Bainard Acheson

We had a lot of fun at the Annual General Meeting on March 6. And it turned out to be a lot more fun than we had anticipated! Unfortunately our planned speaker was ill and couldn’t make it at the last minute. Thanks to David Toop for stepping up to the plate and giving a wonderful presentation on Wagner Bog, which is located just outside Edmonton, and is beset by a number of problems mainly due to its proximity to a large city. Elections were held and four people were elected by acclamation: Denny Smith, Peter Klassen, Donna Krawetz, and I. Welcome to the new members of the board – and I look forward to working with you on our many projects and activities. See a full list of board members and their positions below.

Debwendon has now set a tentative official opening date for the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail of Friday, June 26. Please check the NOCI (nativeorchid.org) or Debwendon (debwendon.org) websites for confirmation of the official opening celebrations in a couple of weeks. Debwendon is planning a lunch at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (BON) as well as an opening ceremony at the trail along with other festivities including free guided tours. We are getting very close to completing all the elements of the project including the interpretation signage, the trailhead structure, highway sign and other site amenities. The washrooms were completed by the Province over the winter. I encourage you to check the websites frequently for more details of the official opening later in May or early June.

The book committee has been working diligently over the last few months and we are on track to have the update to the second edition of “Orchids of Manitoba” ready for publishing and release by October. We are pleased to announce that Dennis Fast has agreed to help us choose our pictures. We encourage NOCI members to help us by providing digital pictures based on a list we have compiled. Details of the book picture project are provided on page 4.

You may have picked up our tentative field trip list at the Manitoba Orchid Show in March, or seen it on our website. We have a fine slate of trips that we think you will enjoy and the finalized list is attached to this newsletter. All trips are the same except that the dates of the Tall Grass Prairie and Lewis Bog trips have been switched. The Tall Grass Prairie trip will be on July 4 and the Lewis Bog trip will be on July 11. As previously mentioned, the date of the official opening of the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail is tentatively Friday, June 26, 2015. The date will be confirmed on the NOCI and Debwendon websites later in May or early June. Everyone is invited to come out and help us celebrate this major accomplishment.

Come out and see us at some upcoming events around Winnipeg (see page 3)!

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**Board of Directors of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.**

*as of March 6 2015*

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<th>Position</th>
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<td>President</td>
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<td>Vice-president</td>
<td>David Toop</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Peter Klassen</td>
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<td>Secretary, Field trip co-ordinator</td>
<td>Rose Kuzina</td>
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<td>Membership chair</td>
<td>Heather Miltenburg</td>
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Plant of the Month

Buffalobur (*Solanum rostratum*)
By Doris Ames

The genus name *Solanum* may stem from the Latin word *sol* for “sun” meaning plant of the sun or possibly from the Latin root *solare* meaning “to soothe or comfort” referring to the soothing effect when ingested of some other plants in this genus. The species name *rostratum* means “beaked” referring to a characteristic of the pollen-bearing anther. Buffalobur was first described in 1813 by Michael Duval, a French professor of Botany. The common name Buffalobur comes from an early observation from the American southwest that these bristly seeds stuck to the coats of bison when they rolled on the ground.

This interesting member of the Solanaceae (Nightshade) Family is listed as globally common (G5) but it is only occasionally found here on the Prairies as a straggler from farther south. All Nightshade Family members have flowers borne in cymes (clusters of flowers in which the central flowers open first), a 5-lobed tubular calyx, a 5-lobed tubular corolla, 5 stamens and one pistil with a 2-chambered ovary. The fruit is a berry or capsule. The family includes economically important plants like potato, tomato, peppers and tobacco. Many are noxious weeds and some contain deadly toxins.

Buffalobur (*Solanum rostratum*) is an annual, herbaceous plant that grows to 30cm tall from a thick taproot. It is found in moist soil in pastures and waste places. The alternate leaves are deeply divided into round lobes and are covered with very fine bristles on the veins on the underside. There are bristles on the stems and very large bristles on the nutlets.

Buffalobur blooms May to September in our area. The 4cm wide yellow flowers have showy, rotate (wheel-shaped) petals. They contain 5 stamens (4 yellow infertile stamens and 1 large purplish-yellow fertile stamen) and one pistil.

The fruit is a green, many-seeded berry covered with long bristles. In the very late fall in open pastures the plant breaks off, rolls and spreads its seeds like a tumbleweed.

The whole plant is prickly, nasty and mildly toxic. It was the original host of the Colorado potato beetle which jumped from it to the domestic potato (*Solanum domesticus*). Needless to say this plant is not welcomed by farmers.

I had never seen this plant before and was amazed to see it turn up in my back yard in early September. But Buffalobur is an interesting plant because it has two different kinds of anthers on its stamens. These anthers have different structures and contrasting functions within the same flower, a trait known as heteranthery. This trait is relatively uncommon and the reasons for it are not well understood.

If you are interested in learning more about heteranthery you can find some articles on-line.

Upcoming Events

We will have NOCI and Debwendon displays at the following upcoming events in Winnipeg:

**Saturday, May 9, 2015**: Wildbirds Unlimited, 11 Reenders Drive, 12:00 – 2:00 pm.

**Sunday, May 10, 2015**: Mother’s Day Plant Sale, Canadian Mennonite University North Campus, 500 Shaftesbury, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm.

**Friday May 15 and Saturday May 16**: The Living Prairie Museum, 2795 Ness Ave. Hours: Fri.: 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Sat.: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. If you wish to volunteer at the NOCI display for this event, please call Peggy at 204-223-8209.

**October 23, 2015**: Tentative date of Members’ Night
Opportunity for NOCI members to submit photos for *Orchids of Manitoba*

We would like to invite NOCI members to submit photos for the second edition of our book, *Orchids of Manitoba*. Although most of the pictures in the book will remain, a few photos are required. We know we have many excellent photographers and we thought you might like the opportunity to share your best pictures. We are pleased to announce that Dennis Fast, a world-renowned Manitoba photographer has generously volunteered to adjudicate and choose the best pictures for the new book. Credit will be given for pictures that are chosen to appear in the book, but no payment will be made for any pictures.

This is how it will work. Pictures must be submitted to NOCIpresident@gmail.com by 5:00 pm August 4. The pictures must be digital with a minimum resolution of 1200 X 1600 pixels. As timelines are short (and we don’t want to overwhelm the photo adjudicator), the maximum number of pictures allowed for submission is two per type request. For example only two pictures of an alvar formation, two close-up pictures of *Epipactis helleborine*, two pictures of it in bud, etc. The photos will be organized into appropriate folders and sent to Dennis Fast to review and make his choices. Photographers will be notified if their picture is chosen for the book prior to publication and we will announce their names in the October newsletter.

The pictures that we are considering are listed below; however, NOCI reserves the right to determine which of the picture types will be used as there may not be room to include the complete list and these decisions will be made at the time of layout. All pictures must be from Manitoba.

Suggested pictures required:

**Species pictures:**

*Epipactis helleborine:*
- Genus page: Habitat: (E.g. full shot of orchid plant showing some habitat), close up of inflorescence
- Species account: 3 – 4 pictures – full plant, habitat, close-ups, plant at various stages including bud stage and seed pod

**Habitat pictures:**
- Alvar formation: E.g. Marble Ridge, Grand Rapids
- Brokenhead: cedar swamp, fen, hummocks, boardwalk and trail, trailhead structure, highway sign, Balsam fir, aerial shot of fen showing strings and flarks
- Churchill (or northern Manitoba): Taiga, tundra, marine (e.g. Cape Merry)
- Disturbed areas: E.g. ditches, waste areas, old borrow pits, etc.
- Forest: coniferous, deciduous, mixed-wood
- Prairie: Mixed-grass, tall-grass
- Wetlands: bogs, fens, sedge meadows, swamps, marshes

Habitat pictures may or may not contain orchids, but should at least be places where orchids are known to grow.

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NATIVE ORCHID CONSERVATION INC.
2015 Field Trip Schedule

(Depending on the weather, there is no guarantee which orchids or other plants may be seen. Trips subject to change depending on weather and availability of field trip leaders.)

**Saturday, May 30 - Camp Morton Provincial Park:** The Park’s improved ski trail network north of Gimli includes ram's-head lady's slippers and other lady's-sippers along with the historic camp buildings and lakeshore scenery.

**Saturday, June 6 - Argyle and Grosse Isle area:** Along the Interlake Pioneer Trail (formerly the Prime Meridian Trail) are intact tracts of native prairie melding into the Interlake's aspen parkland with more than 240 species of flowers, including small white lady's-sippers and prairie wildflowers.

**Saturday, June 13 - Bittersweet Ski Trails:** Coming via the east entrance, the trails overlook the Assiniboine Valley, pass "Archie's Swamp", and include the rare Bloodroot plant and bog orchids.

**Friday, June 26 - Anticipated official opening** of the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail. This fen/bog is home to 23 species of rare and uncommon plants, and 28 of Manitoba's 38 native orchid species. Please check our website [www.nativeorchid.org](http://www.nativeorchid.org) in June for news about the official opening of the Brokenhead Trail. Guided tours available for free following the opening in the afternoon.

**Saturday, July 4 - Tall Grass Prairie Preserve:** The Agassiz trail of the TGPP is the only place in Canada to see the globally rare western prairie fringed-orchid, while other tracts of TGPP land include yellow lady's-sippers, twayblade and ladies’-tresses.

**Saturday, July 11 - Lewis Bog Ecological Reserve:** The Manitoba government is proposing to expand this ecological reserve as it supports a diversity of habitat sites, including the only known remaining location of the very rare ragged fringed orchid, rose pogonia and three types of lady's-sippers.

**Saturday, August 29 - Stuartburn area of the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve:** largest intact blocks of tall grass prairie in Canada occur in the TGPP, including the late summer hooded ladies'-tresses and Great Plains ladies'-tresses orchids. Possible tour of the Weston Family Tall Grass Prairie Interpretive Centre. (This western area of the TGPP provides completely different plants throughout summer so it is not a repeat of the previous trip.)

To register for a field trip, email NOCI at nocifieldtrips@gmail.com or phone 204-223-8209 after May 1, 2015. Please include a phone number for contact purposes on the trip day. Registration is sometimes limited to a small group of participants to minimize damage to the more sensitive habitats. The cut-off date for registering will be the Wednesday just prior to the particular trip.

There is a charge of $15 per adult or $5 per child under 18 to help cover costs. You must sign the liability waiver and be a NOCI member to join these trips. (You may become a member on the day of the trip - annual membership fee is $15). Please dress suitably for the weather as we go rain or shine. Hats, drinking water, a bag lunch, sunscreen and insect repellent are recommended. We will meet at a location in Winnipeg that is on a bus route. Car-pooling is done for efficiency and environmental reasons, so be prepared to pay a share of the gas expenses. NOCI reserves the right to cancel or reschedule trips due to weather conditions or insufficient volunteers to lead trips.