

Native Orchid News:

The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

Volume 12 Issue 2 April 2010

ISSN 1499-5468



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Field Trips

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Plant of the Month

White Mountain-Avens

(*Dryas integrifolia* Vahl)



Cathy Ko Heinrichs



Eugene Reimer



Plant of the Month

White Mountain-Avens

(*Dryas integrifolia* Vahl)

by Derrick Ko Heinrichs

If you take a trip to Churchill (and you should!), one of the many beautiful flowers you'll see is the White Mountain-Avens (*Dryas integrifolia* Vahl). When in bloom, the fields and patches of white flowers are a lovely sight, and thankfully this species is widespread and abundant in the Churchill region.

White Mountain-Avens is a mat-forming dwarf shrub in the Rose Family, with short-stalked small leaves (8-28 mm). The lanceolate (narrow, tapering to a point) leaves are leathery, green above and white-hairy below, often with margins that are rolled-under.

This diminutive shrub is in bloom from mid-June to early August, displaying a disproportionately large, single white flower on a leafless flowering stem. Flowers typically have 8 petals, and a yellow centre of stamens and pistils. As the fruiting head matures it first presents itself as a twisted conical tuft of hairs (the persistent styles), finishing as an unwound collection of long, delicate wind-bound feathers, each attached to a tiny dry achene.

In Manitoba, this species is found all along Hudson Bay, but does not venture too far inland. White Mountain-Avens is an important pioneer of open gravel areas and beach ridges, both stabilizing the substrate and facilitating colonization by other plants. As such, it has potential for remediation of disturbed sites. It can also be found among rocks and crevices, and moist soils, favouring calcareous soils in particular.

Order your wind jacket with NOCI Logo!

We're going to order some more jackets from 4imprint. If we put the order in by April 29, we can get the jackets at a reduced price of about \$30.00 plus tax and shipping if we order 12. The more we order the cheaper it gets. You can choose your own colour and size. The jackets are light enough to be tucked into a backpack. Check out the following link for more information:

<http://www.4imprint.ca/search/Techno%20Lite%20Jacket>

If you are interested please let me know right away. I need to know the gender, size, and colour(s) you would like. Jackets will have to be picked up in Winnipeg because the time and effort makes shipping prohibitive. Once we know the shipping date you will be notified by email of the date, time, and location for pick-up as well as the exact cost. Payment must be made at the time of pick-up. If you have any questions, or you don't have Internet access, but want to order a jacket, please give me a call at 261-9179. Otherwise, to order please contact me at bainardp@mts.net.

Peggy Bainard Acheson

NOCI Membership Secretary

President's Report

By Doris Ames

Spring came early this year after the warmest winter since 1948. I photographed crocus in bloom on March 31 and saw Three-flowered avens with bright pink buds a week before that. There was very little snow this winter and conditions are very dry in the bush. I hope this doesn't mean more forest fires this spring.

Our educational display at the Manitoba Orchid Show late in March got first prize and we had a wonderful time talking to people about our upcoming field trips and about orchid conservation. Many thanks to the members who volunteered to attend our display.

We have some interesting events coming up in May. On Saturday May 8 we will have a display at Gardening Saturday at Canadian Mennonite University, 500 Shaftesbury and we invite you to drop in and say hello and take part in some of their wonderful workshops and exhibitions. On Friday May 14 Bill Bremner will hold a Photo Clinic from 7-10pm at 499 Notre Dame. Registration fee is \$15.00. There are a few openings left, so phone Peggy at 261-9179 by May 7 if you wish to attend. On Saturday May 15 Peggy and I will be at the Community Booth in Polo Park Shopping Centre with our "Plant a Tree, Save an Orchid" event. We will be distributing seedling spruce trees and encouraging people to plant a tree to help the environment and give NOCI a donation to help conserve Manitoba's native orchids. We haven't had a display at Polo Park for some years and the memory of the last time comes back to me now. It was just before Easter and I was sitting very close to a huge mechanical Bugs Bunny. It boomed out "Happy Easter Kids" in a loud voice every few minutes. After 6 or 7 hours I felt like Elmer Fudd and wanted to shoot that wascally wabbit!

On May 22 we have our first field trip of the year to the wild and exciting Portage Sandhills. Hope to see you there.

Membership Fees in NOCI to Increase in 2011

As a small volunteer conservation organization we are amazed and grateful for the continued interest in and support for our mission and objectives. Without that underlying foundation we could not begin to accomplish our goals. As our President, Doris Ames, outlined in her President's report at the 2010 AGM, we have been working hard over the past year on many of those goals. In addition to the huge responsibility of running the organization, here are some of the highlights from last year that NOCI board members and volunteers have been busy with:

Public education:

Led and interpreted 11 field trips in which 141 people participated

Attended events such as Seedy Saturday, Gardening Saturday, Reel Green Film Festival, MB Orchid Show, etc. where our display boards attracted the public and we talked to hundreds about orchid conservation and biodiversity.

Presented PowerPoint slide shows to Selkirk Horticultural Society and Nature Manitoba

Numerous (>15) survey trips to scout for new orchid hotspots and collect seeds. Locations included Portage Sandhills, Lauder Sandhills, South Junction, Contour, Nopiming Provincial Park, Bird's Hill Park, Cowan Bog near Swan River, Jackhead and Fisher River, St. Vital Park.

Wrote and published 4-5 newsletters.

Presented a photo clinic (another one coming up in May. 2010)

Put on AGM, February 2010

Put on Members' Night, October 2009

Continued with Seedbank Project – collected and submitted orchid seeds from 18 species for the Plant Gene Lab in Saskatoon.

Attended Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference in Winnipeg in February 2010.

We apply for and receive grant money for survey projects; however, with current economic conditions these grants are increasingly harder to get. Because of the increasing costs of running the organization, and plus the fact that we have not raised our fees since our started twelve years ago, after much thought and discussion, we felt it was time to raise them. At the February 2010 Board Meeting it was unanimously agreed to raise individual membership fees.

To soften the blow we agreed to raise the fees \$5 in 2011 with a possible further increase of \$5 in a couple of years. Thus fees will increase from \$10 to \$15 in 2011 and possibly to \$20 per person in 2013. Despite a 50% increase, we still feel that these fees are incredibly low compared to other non-profit organizations.

Thank you all for your wonderful support over the past 12 years. Please know that we appreciate your confidence in us and we hope that you will show it by continuing to renew your memberships and donate generously.

Peggy Bainard Acheson
Membership Secretary

Action-Packed 2010 NOCI AGM!

By Peggy Bainard Acheson

We had an action-packed annual general meeting this year, held on Friday, February 19, 2010 at our usual meeting place. First we had our annual elections with John Neufeld, the Nominations Chair, ably presiding over the election. All those who let their name stand for election were elected by acclamation. We are pleased to introduce four brand-spanking new board members, plus two “old” members. They are Dustin Derksen, who recently completed a degree at the U of W in Environmental Studies - Issues In Sustainability, Derrick Ko Heinrichs, who has a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Ecology and a Master of Science degree in Botany both from the University of Manitoba, Loretta Humeniuk, who teaches K-8 Physical Education at Laidlaw School, Mike James, who is a former high school biology and horticulture teacher and, among other things operates a nature center in the boreal forest off Highway 59 just south of Grand Beach, Doris Ames, and Eugene Reimer, both of whom you probably know more about than you care to. I hope you will introduce yourselves to our newest board members at our upcoming field trips.

We were also very pleased to have Alan Mason present his fabulous slides on the Four Corners, USA. They were absolutely amazing – the geological formations, the plants and other wildlife were a delight to the eye and a testament to Alan’s talent with the camera. We received many complimentary comments following the presentation, so Alan, thank you again.

This year we dispensed with the silent auction and just had a raffle. Thanks to all who donated prizes - your donations were very much appreciated. Raffle prize winners were John Neufeld, Dawn Kitching, Angela Boznianin, Cory Anema, Mary Wiebe, Joan Heshka, and Anita Caldwell. Door prize winners were: Doris Ames, Bill Belcher, Sheila Bradford, Albert Cook, Derrick Ko Heinrichs, Marilyn Latta, Chris Neufeld, Iris Reimer, Eugene Reimer, and Mary Smith. We raised about \$230, which helped to offset the cost of the AGM. This does not include book and pin sales, or memberships.

We also enjoyed some wonderful refreshments – especially the lovely cheesecakes from Double D’s. Thanks again for coming out to support us, and a big thanks to everyone who helped with the set up and take down. I think all had a good time making this another enjoyable and successful AGM!



Richard Reeves
NOCI Board left to right: Derrick Ko Heinrichs, Dustin Derksen, John Neufeld, Doris Ames, Eugene Reimer, Peggy Bainard Acheson, John Dyck, Loretta Humeniuk, Mike James,

NOCI Field Trips 2010

1. Saturday May 22 - Portage Sandhills

Calling all psammophiles (sand-lovers) to join us on a trip to the amazing Portage Sandhills on the International Day of Biodiversity. Aspen-oak forest, mixed grass prairie and the dunes themselves provide habitat for the early violets, pygmy flower, and other spring flowers, which should just be coming into bloom. We may spot wild turkeys, grouse and white-tailed deer as well.

2. Saturday June 5 - Hadashville Ski Trails

Come walk with us in the lush riparian forest along the ski trails in Hadashville. See them in their summer dress with outstanding displays of bloodroot, wild ginger, ferns and maybe an early coral-root or two. NEW

3. Saturday June 12 - Mt. Nebo

This is a return trip to this wonderful hill at the base of the Manitoba Escarpment. We may see fragile prickly pear cactus, trillium, spring parsley, violets and several species of native orchids including Long-bracted orchid.

4. Saturday, June 26 - Brokenhead Wetlands

Calling on all our new members who haven't yet experienced this magical wetland. Walk through the rare calcareous fen and ethereal cedar forest. Learn about rare species that make this wetland their home.

5. Saturday July 10 - Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve

See the spectacular and endangered Western Prairie Fringed-Orchid. Manitoba has the largest population of these orchids in the world. This tall elegant orchid with its multiple shining white fringed blossoms is an unforgettable sight on the prairie and a photographer's dream. Many other beautiful tall grass prairie flowers will be in bloom at the same time so don't miss it. NEW

6. Saturday, July 17 - Wildflower Festival at Senkiw

Celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 by joining us for a midsummer hike in the Senkiw area with its many varied habitats: prairie, meadow and riparian. The area is known for its biodiversity and a huge number of wildflowers thrive here. The nature walk on the Towle property including a section of the Trans Canada Trail will be followed by a FREE lunch in the historic community hall. After lunch, tour its beautiful Ukrainian Orthodox church.

To register for a trip please contact our field trip coordinator John Dyck at (204) 222-7188 or Jwdyck1@mts.net. There is a charge of \$10.00 per adult or \$5.00 per child under 18, to cover costs and you will be required to sign a liability waiver. You must be a NOCI member to accompany us on these trips (becoming a member on the day of the trip is fine). Please dress suitably for the weather as we will go rain or shine. Hats, drinking water, a bag lunch, sunscreen and insect repellent are recommended. We will meet at a place in the city on a bus route before setting off on the trip. We encourage car-pooling for environmental reasons. If you decide to leave your car at the meeting place and ride with someone else please be prepared to pay a share of the expenses.

BOOK REVIEW

“Geographical Names of Manitoba”

Published by Manitoba Geographical Names Program

National Library of Canada

2001

Reviewed by

Doris Ames

Toponymy, the study of geographical place names is derived from the Greek words topos meaning “place” and onoma meaning “name”. Place names in Manitoba are especially interesting because they reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of its people. Our history, culture and the political and economic changes over time are revealed to us in the names that people gave to our lakes, rivers, towns and villages. We can see what was important to our citizens at different times in our history and the differences in values between the aboriginal people and immigrants to our shores.

The First Nations people because of their deep identification with nature chose names that revealed their intimate knowledge of the natural world and their reverence for it. We can see this starting with the name of our province “Manitoba” which is named for a strait in Lake Manitoba called “Manitobaw” or “the strait of the spirit or Manito”, Pisew Falls on the Grass River where “pisew” is the Cree word for “lynx”, Atikaki Provincial Park from a Cree name meaning “land of the caribou”, and Akudlik a community SE of Churchill which means “halfway” in the Inuit language because Akudlik is halfway between Churchill and Ft.Churchill.

We are reminded of the early explorers by names such as Button, Back, Kelsey and Hind. Fur traders come to mind when we hear names like Fort Garry and Bird’s Hill.

Religious names like Ste.Anne des Chenes, St.Vital, Abbeville and Evans Point remind us of the two founding languages and faiths and the many religious figures who worked hard to bring comfort to our citizens long ago.

Our military heritage is reflected in the many lakes named for WWII casualties (especially airmen), the Korean conflict and United Nations Peacekeeping efforts as well as in names like Mafeking, Baden and Rhodes associated with the Boer War. Dozens of towns and geographical features are named for area pioneers and even some naturalists such as Albert Hole Goose Sanctuary and Alice Lake in memory of Alice Chambers. The different waves of immigration are shown in names like Arbakka, Altberghthal, Bender, Bruxelles and Komarno, which is Ukrainian for “too many mosquitoes”.

Changes in place names over the years reflect the changing mix of ethnic groups in our province. For instance we see that Fort de la Freniere was changed to Ash House, and we also see that Berens River was formerly called Pigeon River, and before that O’Memeesib which also means “pigeon river”. The Boyne River named for a river in Ireland was formerly called “Riviere aux Islettes de Bois” by the Metis.

But some of these changes were clearly a reflection of Ottawa’s bias, as for instance in 1889 when the residents requested the name “Lamontagne” for their settlement northwest of Neepawa and Ottawa in its wisdom assigned the name “Clanwilliam” instead! Some name assignments were just laughable, for instance Rounthwaite a community southeast of Brandon was named after its first postmaster, Mr. Rounthwaite. He had just come from Ireland in 1881 and the head postmaster asked him to suggest a native name for the post office. He replied that, “he didn’t know any Indians”. Postal authorities replied that, “Rounthwaite was Indian enough for them!”

Manitoba place names also remind us of early surveyors, miners, railway speculators, entrepreneurs, plants and animals and geographical features. But even while living a hard life our early pioneers still found time to give their settlements whimsical names derived from classical myths and literary references such as Baldur and Bifrost from Nordic myths and Ponemah and Clandeboyne from the writings of Longfellow and Scott respectively.

Transportation by water is represented by the many names that contain the word “portage” as in Portage la Prairie or the names of early steamboats like Princess Harbour. Aviation and especially bush pilots are reflected in names like Roybrown Lake.

I was surprised to see that biblical names briefly became popular from about the late 1800’s to about 1911 and they occurred most often in southwestern Manitoba. A handful of names like Mt. Nebo, Jordan and Sharon as well as Ophir, Mars Hill and others were popular during this short period of time. The fact that they used those kinds of names show us that the average pioneer then was much more familiar with the bible than most of us are today. Likely the bible was the book most commonly found in pioneer homes and in many cases it may have been the only book. Most of the biblical names that they chose were the loveliest images they could imagine. For instance the name Sharon, a former school district southwest of Carman founded in 1881, refers to the Plains of Sharon on the western coast of Israel. This lovely name is mentioned in Isaiah 35:2 as follows:

“It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given onto it, the Excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the Excellence of our God”.

But Manitobans then as today also had a good sense of humour and this is revealed in place names like Coca Cola Falls, Billy’s Hole Island, Decimal (originally called Dot), Blank Lake, Soab Lake and the many names like Moose Nose Hill, Moose Arm Pit and Moose Head Lake which clearly reveal our continuing love affair with that ungainly ungulate.

Botanists and other flower lovers can rejoice in Banksian River, Betula Lake, Amaranth, Pansy and Blumenort and the many names with Rose or Rosen in them like Rosenort and Rosewood. Birders will have to be content with the many reincarnations of Gull Lake, Swan River, and Clangula Lake southeast of Manigotagan, which pays homage to the Golden-eye Duck (*Glaucionetta clangula*). This lake was formerly called Owepeche Lake the Saulteaux name for this species. Manigotagan by the way is Cree for “bad-throat” and I will leave you to discover for yourself why they called it that.

All these facts and many, many more can be found in the wonderful publication called “Geographical Names of Manitoba” published by the Manitoba Geographical Names Program to celebrate the Millennium in 2001. It is available at Manitoba Conservation’s Mapping Branch at 2007 Saulteaux Street. There are close to 12,000 entries in the book, including railway points and ghost towns and I promise that you will spend many an entertaining evening perusing this book and that you will gain a new appreciation of this wonderful province we call home.