

# Native Orchid News:

The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

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Eugene Reimer

## Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

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### Annual General Meeting

Friday, February 15, 2008

### Plant of the Month

New Jersey Tea or Redroot

(*Ceanothus herbaceus*)



Eugene Reimer

This photo shows *Ceanothus herbaceus* in early September after the flowers and seeds have gone.

## Reminders

Please renew your membership if you have not already done so.

Mark your calendars for the Annual General Meeting on February 15, 2008.

Our Tenth Anniversary Calendar and our book "Orchids of Manitoba" are great gifts.

# Plant of the Month

New Jersey Tea or Redroot (*Ceanothus herbaceus*)

by Doris Ames

This uncommon (S3) member of the Buckthorn Family is found in upland, semi-open coniferous forests on sandy, light soil in southeastern Manitoba. I usually see it in Sandilands Provincial Forest where it enjoys hot, dry conditions.

The Genus name comes from the Greek word keanothus, a name that was used for a spiny plant, possibly with reference to the prominent, long-stalked flowers in this case, while herbaceus refers to the leafy branchlets.

It is a bushy shrub up to 1m high with alternate, lance-shaped and slightly serrated, deep-green leaves. The underside of the leaves is dull green and downy.

Crowded umbels of 5-petaled flowers on long-stalked, branched clusters bloom in early June. The flowers have one pistil and 5 prominent stamens.

The glossy, dark brown seeds enclosed in 3-lobed capsules are forcefully ejected when ripe usually in mid August. The empty umbrella-shaped capsules remain on the flower spikes throughout the winter.

New Jersey Tea is a useful plant in many ways and should be protected. Through its association with soil microorganisms it fixes nitrogen in root nodules, thus increasing the fertility of the soil and promoting growth of surrounding plants as well as itself. A tea made from the roots and bark, or from the leaves has long been used by First Nation people as a cough remedy. The flowers when crushed and mixed with water make an excellent sudsy body wash that leaves the skin soft and smelling of the scented flowers. In addition it has been used extensively for dyes; a green dye is made from the flowers, a cinnamon-coloured dye from the whole plant and a red dye from the dried roots.

New Jersey Tea is often mistaken for Labrador Tea or members of the Spirea family when flowering and is usually overlooked when not in bloom. Watch for it near Woodridge.

# President's Report

By Doris Ames

As the holiday season fast approaches and we experience the "dry cold" for which Winnipeg is famous, my thoughts are of next summer.

At our last board meeting, NOCI member Mike James spoke to us about the Woodlot Association of Manitoba's planned field day on May 31, 2008. We then discussed how our group might work with them that day to demonstrate the proper construction and use of interpretive trails in the woodlands and wetlands of Manitoba.

We also viewed the rough cut of "EKO", a dramatic new video about the Brokenhead Wetlands, produced by Debwendon Inc. Work is progressing very well on this project and we hope to be able to show you the new video as well as a new banner and brochure about the wetlands at our upcoming Annual General Meeting on February 15, 2008. It will be an extra-special AGM because it is also NOCI's tenth anniversary so please mark that date down on your 2008 calendar and plan to join us.

Speaking of calendars, there is still time to order the lovely NOCI Tenth Anniversary Calendar and have it delivered for Christmas. You may order it online at our website [www.nativeorchid.org](http://www.nativeorchid.org) or by phoning Huguette at 237-9325. This calendar, as well as featuring wonderful nature photographs taken in Manitoba, also mentions some of NOCI's successes in conserving rare plants and their environment over the past 10 years.

This is also the time of year when I like to remind our members to consider a donation to NOCI so that we can continue to be a successful and effective force for the conservation of native orchids and Manitoba's natural environment.

Thank you to our faithful donors and volunteers throughout the year, and Best Wishes to all of you for the Holiday Season.

## October 2007 Members' Night Report

By Peggy Bainard Acheson

The moon was full and the weather clear and crisp for NOCI's seventh annual Members' Night held on the last Friday before Hallowe'en. We were pleased to see approximately 43 members and guests out to enjoy our speakers, refreshments, door prizes, and the launch of our 10th Anniversary Calendar!

Doris Ames started off the evening by introducing the new calendar and thanking everyone on the calendar committee for their hard work, especially Heather Reeves who spent many volunteer hours putting it together for us. Doris encouraged everyone to buy one for themselves, or as a gift.

We had two fabulous presentations. Our member, Rose Kuzina gave a wonderful slide show on her two years in the Gambia while she was curator of archaeology in The Gambia National Museum. It was definitely an eye opener of life in Africa. Rose had many interesting slides and fascinating African articles for display.

Following a short break, our member, Lorne Heshka told us about "The Highs and Lows of Orchid Exploration" and subtitled, Searching for white-lipped Cypripediums in the Western Mountains of North America. Lorne's entertaining story was enhanced with a stunning picture journal of his and Joan's 2006 road trip to Oregon, and beyond. If you would like a copy of Lorne's itinerary, please contact me for his email or phone number.

Following the presentations and door prizes refreshments were served, and it seems everyone had a great time renewing acquaintances and reminiscing about the past summer's field trips. At the membership table 10 memberships were renewed and I am happy to report that we sold 34 calendars!

I would like to thank the board members and all the volunteers including family members Al Ames, Mary Wiebe, and Marie Ann Reeves, who helped to set up and take down the hall, and prepare refreshments. I would especially like to mention and thank Mike James who brought a couple of door prizes, Bill Belcher who donated a wooden bowl and lid, Doris Ames who donated a book for a speaker gift, the Southdale Village Family Restaurant for donating a gift certificate, and Marie Ann Reeves for all the wonderful dainties. We appreciate all of your efforts, large or small! Picture memories of the 2007 Members' Night are available on our website.

# Book Review

By Doris Ames

**Wild Orchids of the Prairies and Great Plains Regions of North America.** By Paul Martin Brown. Original Artwork by Stan Folsom, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. x + 342 pp. Photographs, maps, illustrations, appendixes, glossary, bibliography, index. \$85.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

There are orchidophiles that think big and the prolific author of this book is surely one of them! This book covers a vast geographical area and includes 73 species and varieties of wild orchids.

The book is well organized and divided into four sections. Part One includes an introduction to the prairies and Great Plains of North America, a brief introduction to orchid biology and an excellent key to the genera. Part Two includes the genus and species accounts. Part Three 'References and Resources' includes orchid checklists, statistics, updated information on the use of the Luer books along with this book, and more. Part Four 'Orchid Hunting' discusses the orchids that may be found in specific localities in the region. It is followed by the appendices, which include an orchid distribution chart, blooming times chart, glossary, bibliography and index.

Being an orchid fanatic I went straight to the genus and species accounts. Each consists of a genus account and species key followed by the individual species accounts for that genus. Each species account includes two pages. The first page contains the species description including a line drawing of the plant, range, habitat, flowering period and additional comments. On the facing page are several colour photos and a range map based on herbarium specimens. Many of the photographs show unusual forma but at the same time the author often does not include enough good close-up photographs or detailed line drawings to clearly illustrate the identifying characteristics of each species.

It is not really surprising, considering the tremendous geographical scope of the book that details about orchids are often incomplete. For instance, the species accounts do not include information about the seed capsules or the pollinators for each orchid. It would have been helpful if the author had included the names of regional field guides under all the different localities he mentions in the Orchid Hunting section because regional guides can provide orchid information that has been ground-truthed. They can also provide close-up photographs that show the colour and growth habits of orchid species found in that particular place.

Because of its large size and more generalized information this compendium has limited value as a field guide. However this book will make a useful contribution to the conservation of the North American grasslands and the orchids that live there. The prairies and the Great Plains are disappearing at an alarming rate and many species of plants and animals are on the verge of extinction. This pretty orchid book will help to make people aware of some of the beautiful species we will lose if we continue to abuse "our sea of grass".

# 2008 Membership Renewal/Donation Time!

Dear NOCI Members:

It is amazing to realize that we will be celebrating our tenth anniversary in 2008. We have accomplished a lot over the ten years and we couldn't have done it without your support. Please help us continue our efforts to protect rare plants and their habitat by renewing your membership for 2008. Our membership fees will remain at \$10 for individuals and \$25 for groups. Why not also consider a donation and send it along with your renewal. Donations can also be made in a secure manner through our website <http://www.nativeorchid.org>. A tax-deductible receipt will be issued in February 2008 for all donations of \$10 or more made prior to December 31, 2007.

**If you have already paid your 2008 renewal dues please ignore this message!** Also, please indicate any address or email changes. For further information about memberships, renewals or donations, please call me at 261-9179 or send an email to [bainardp@mts.net](mailto:bainardp@mts.net). Please fill out the form and return with your cheque to the following address:

Peggy Bainard Acheson, NOCI Membership Chair  
1307 – 90 Plaza Drive  
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K8

## Membership Renewal/Donation Form 2008

Yes! I wish to continue my membership in NOCI.

Individual \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Junior \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$0.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Group \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Membership Amount** \_\_\_\_\_

Yes! I wish to donate to help save endangered plants and habitat.

\_\_\_ \$10.00 \_\_\_ \$25.00 \_\_\_ \$50.00 \_\_\_ Other  
**Donation Amount** \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques out to Native Orchid Conservation Inc. and send to above address. A Receipt for donations will be issued in February 2008. Tax No. is 86816 7198 RR0001.

Name(s) (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If changed in the last year, please include:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to save trees by giving up paper newsletters; I have verified that I am receiving electronic notifications, and I'm willing to receive notice of meetings in only that way. \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ (Office use)