

Native Orchid News:

The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

Volume 12 Issue 1 February 2010

ISSN 1499-5468



Eugene Reimer

Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

117 Morier Avenue
Winnipeg, MB
R2M 0C8

NOCI Website:

www.nativeorchid.org

For more information contact

Doris Ames.

Phone: 231-1160

E-mail: adames@mts.net

AGM Reminder

Friday, February 19, 2010

Plant of the Month

Baneberry
(*Actea rubra*)



Eugene Reimer



Eugene Reimer

Annual General Meeting

Native Orchid Conservation Inc is holding its twelfth Annual General Meeting on Friday, February 19, 2010 at 7:30 pm at the Manitoba Lawn Bowling Centre, 1212 Dakota Street in St.Vital.

In addition to the annual board-of-directors election and business meeting, we are pleased to have our member Alan Mason give us a presentation on the Four Corners, USA. In addition, we will have a raffle, door prizes, and wonderful refreshments!

All welcome but only members in good standing may vote in the election. For more information contact Peggy at 261-9179 (leave message) or email bainardp@mts.net. We look forward to seeing you there!

Plant of the Month

Baneberry

(*Actea rubra*)

by Doris Ames

This attractive 30-100cm tall member of the Buttercup or Crowfoot Family is called Baneberry because of its poisonous berries. It can be found in shady, moist woodlands in the southern three-quarters of the Province.

The large, compound leaves are alternate, 2-3 times divided into threes, and have hairy veins on the underside. The leaflets are sharp-toothed and ovate.

The flowers are found in long-stalked and dense racemes. Flowers are small and white with numerous petals and conspicuous white stamens, and sepals that fall off as soon as the flower opens. The plant blooms here from May to July.

The fruits which appear in August are 6-10mm berries either glossy red or glossy white with a black dot in the centre which is the remains of the stigma. The white-berried version is often called Doll's-eyes for that reason. Some authorities consider the white-berried version to be a separate species or sub-species while others consider it merely a forma. Experts concentrate on differences in the colour of the berries and the size of their "dot", on the different pollinators and on light levels in different locations. It is interesting to consider why both colour forms of fruit (dimorphism) would be maintained on different plants when they seem to be otherwise genetically similar but I don't think any real agreement among authorities has been reached as yet.

We do know that the berries of both versions are poisonous to humans and cause stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea and eventual circulatory failure. It's interesting to note that in spite of this some aboriginal groups used a decoction made from the roots of Baneberry as medicine to slow excessive blood flow during menstruation and as a purgative tea. However the plant is considered far too toxic for such purposes because as little as 6 berries have been known to cause severe symptoms. Elk and deer feed on the leaves, and birds and some rodents eat the berries, but our children should be cautioned to avoid the plant.

President's Report

By Doris Ames

The next NOCI Annual General Meeting is planned for Friday, February 19, 2010. At that time we will have a business meeting and elections to our board of directors.

NOCI board member Huguette Calvez, our current Secretary and person in charge of Online Sales, will not be running for re-election this year. Thanks Huguette for your help both at board meetings and at special events. We hope to see you out to field trips this summer just the same in spite of all your other commitments.

There are six vacancies to be filled on the board (we increased the size of our board to 9 last year) and the newsletter contains the biographies of the people who have let their names stand for election. Nominations from the floor are encouraged and members in good standing are eligible to vote. Please renew your membership if you have not already done so. If you want more information you may contact John Neufeld, the nomination chair, at (204) 326-2357.

We decided to try something different this year. The meeting and elections will be followed by some great entertainment. Alan Mason will present his slide show entitled "Images of the Four Corners" and we will also have a raffle of selected items as well as displays and door prizes. Refreshment will consist of cheesecake, coffee and tea as well as some alternate items for those on special diets. There will be plenty of time for socializing and sharing of our outdoor experiences.

I am looking forward to seeing members old and new at the meeting. Bring a friend as well if you like. There is no admission charge but a silver collection will be an option for those who want to help with expenses.

Information on Candidates

Doris Ames

Doris has been an enthusiastic member of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.(NOCI) since 1998 and president since November 2002. She is also in charge of project management and a large portion of the Brokenhead Wetlands finally received Ecological Reserve Status in 2005 during her tenure. She has continued to work to protect wetlands and is Vice Chair of Debwendon Inc, a non-profit corporation set up by the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, NOCI, and the Manitoba Model Forest to promote and preserve the Brokenhead Wetland Ecological Reserve. Most recently she has been working with other members on a project to collect seeds from native orchid species for long-term storage in the National Gene Bank in Saskatoon. She enjoys educating others about native orchids and their environment, leading field trips, and conducting rare plant surveys. Known for her quirky sense of humour, she enjoys spending time with others "out in the bush".

Continued on next page...

Loretta Humeniuk

Loretta teaches K-8 Physical Education at Laidlaw School near Assiniboine Park. She has travelled to England and Australia on exchange programs and has travelled extensively during her summer holidays. She loves photography but admits that she is still learning all about the digital era of cameras and computers. She believes her old slides are now obsolete so she loves watching great photography and that's what lured her to NOCI. She joined to see the beautiful pictures.

Mike James

Mike James was born in Saskatchewan and grew up in The Pas, Manitoba. He is married and has 3 adult children. Mike taught high school biology and horticulture at St James Collegiate for 35 years after spending 4 years teaching science at McCauley and Crystal City, Manitoba. Although retired from full time teaching, he continues to teach Biology and Environmental Sciences over the TV to a number of Hutterite Colony schools once a week. Mike also operates a nature center for schools and other groups in the boreal forest off Highway 59 just south of Grand Beach, and he also teaches a fossil program at a quarry near Stony Mountain. He is on the Board of the Manitoba Model Forest (serving as Chair of the Education Committee), on the Advisory Group of the Winnipeg River Learning Center (serving on the Program Committee). Mike is Past President of the Woodlot Association of Manitoba. He has been a member of the Native Orchid Conservation group for the past few years and has a strong interest in the Ecological Bog project at Brokenhead.

Richard Reeves

Richard has been a member of NOCI since 1998. He is currently treasurer and editor of the newsletter. He is an excellent photographer and educator with computer skills, and did the layout for "Orchids of Manitoba". He has been an amateur naturalist and environmentalist for as long as he can remember and is an outstanding field trip leader. His extensive knowledge of the Brokenhead Wetlands is a great asset to NOCI and the Brokenhead Wetland Committee. Richard is very knowledgeable about native orchids as well as other plant species in the Prairie Provinces and has a quiet sense of humour.

Eugene Reimer

Eugene grew up on a farm near Giroux, Manitoba. He is a life-long naturalist, and an excellent photographer with a special interest in orchids and insects. Eugene has been a member of our organization since 2000, has served as treasurer for many years, and is currently our webmaster. He did the technical editing on our field guide. He has served on the Brokenhead Wetland Committee (now Debwendon) since its inception, his logical mind, engineering knowledge and computer skills helped the committee develop plans for the Brokenhead Wetlands Ecological Reserve, and he is currently a director of Debwendon Inc. Those of us who work with Eugene know he works best after 3:00pm and it's best not to phone him before that!