

# Native Orchid News:

The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

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Annual General Meeting  
Friday, March 1, 2013

Plant of the Month  
Tall Lungwort  
(*Mertensia paniculata*)



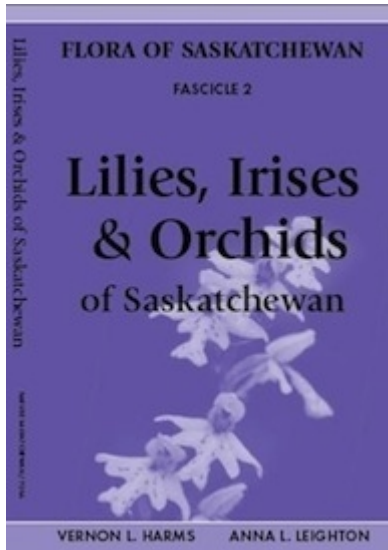
Eugene Reimer

**Annual General Meeting**  
Friday, March 1, 2013 at 7:30 pm  
Manitoba Lawn Bowling Centre  
1212 Dakota Street in St. Vital  
See Page 4



John Dyck

Peggy Bainard Acheson, Marilyn Light,  
David Toop, Doris Ames (See Page 3)



See Book Review on Page 5

# Plant of the Month

Tall Lungwort (*Mertensia paniculata*)

By Doris Ames

The genus was named after Karl Mertens, a German botanist. The species name refers to the panicle-like flower cluster. The common name refers to its resemblance to the European Lungwort. It is sometimes called Tall Bluebells or Northern Bluebells.

This member of the Borage Family is a 30-70cm tall multi-stemmed perennial that grows in shady, damp woods, wet meadows and clearings, and stream banks. The stems arise from one long woody root. Tall lungwort is often found in extensive clumps and is native to much of the northern half of North America.

The alternate, lanceolate leaves are rough and hairy with prominent veins. The lower leaves are long-petioled with an ovate-elliptical blade and the upper are lanceolate, shorter and sessile.

Tall lungwort blooms June-July. The 10-15mm deep-blue to purplish-blue flowers are shaped like drooping trumpets each with stamens and a prominent style and are found in clusters at the end of the stems. Flowers are branched on one side, forming a curved, spiral-shaped inflorescence, otherwise known as a scorpioid-cyme. The buds are pink and turn blue when they open. An explanation for this colour change is found in **Plants of the Western Boreal Forest and Aspen Parkland by Johnson, Kershaw et al.** as follows, "*The buds are pink and turn blue when they open. This is because the buds contain anthocyanin a pink pigment. When they develop and open the sap becomes more alkaline, the red pigment is masked and the petals turn blue. After the flower is pollinated and the fruit starts to develop they gradually turn pink again. The colour change is thought to be an adaptive strategy to attract pollinators to receptive flowers. Most northern insects cannot see red.*"

The only known pollinators are bees. The wrinkled fruit (one to a flower) contains 4 nutlets and appears in late summer to early fall. However the plant spreads vegetatively for the most part. It grows well after a fire.

Dried Tall Lungwort leaves were used in herbal tea mixtures to stimulate the respiratory system. Externally the leaves have been used as poultices on cuts and wounds.

# President's Report

by Doris Ames

The next NOCI **Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, March 1, 2013** at the Manitoba Lawn Bowling Centre 1212 Dakota Street. At that time we will have a business meeting followed by elections to the board of directors. **We need to elect three members to the board.** The biographies of those members who have kindly allowed their names to stand for election to the board will be included in this issue.

We welcome nominations from the floor. We have lots of interesting projects (e.g. working on the membership database, bookkeeping, social networking, field trips, GIS mapping, fund raising) that we would like to undertake if we had more help from volunteers. If you can help us in any way please let us know. If you want more information about the election please email our nominating chair John Neufeld at [hans007@shaw.ca](mailto:hans007@shaw.ca). You must be a member in good standing to vote so please renew your NOCI membership if you have not done so already.

The business meeting and elections will be followed by a review of work done by our organization over the past year and future plans, entertaining speakers; a raffle, door prizes and yummy refreshments. See Peggy's write-up elsewhere in this issue. If you can donate an item (\$50 value or more) to our raffle please contact Peggy at 261-9179 or email [bainardp@mymts.net](mailto:bainardp@mymts.net). We issue tax receipts for donations of \$10.00 or more.

## Upcoming Events:

Proposed Winter Field trip in the boreal forest - Saturday, February 23, 2013.  
Manitoba Orchid Society's Orchid Show - March 22-24, 2013 - Assiniboine Park Conservatory.

## Marilyn Light's Presentation on Herbivory in Native Orchids

By Doris Ames

Well-known orchid specialist and long-time orchid researcher Marilyn Light gave a presentation to the Manitoba Orchid Society and others on January 20, 2013 entitled "Herbivory in Native Orchids". Quite a few members of NOCI were in attendance at the lecture on that cold day. Marilyn is studying the kinds of insects, fungi, viruses etc. that affect our Canadian native orchids in the wild (her research area is in Gatineau Park in Quebec) and she has discovered quite a few insect species that eat various parts of these plants. If you have such a photo or if you see chewed up native orchids please take a close-up picture and send it along to her telling her where you found it and when at [milight@distributed.net](mailto:milight@distributed.net). If the insect is present try to get a photo of that too but she can often still tell what it is by looking closely at the picture of the damaged orchid.

I sent her a photo of a *Cypripedium* that Will Milne took in the Brokenhead Wetlands a couple of years ago and from that photo she was able to identify the insect that was doing the damage. See it on Will's wonderful website <http://www.watersidemb.ca/reginsct2.html>.

If you want to know more about Marilyn and her activities see the website of IUCN (International Union For Conservation of Nature) at <http://www.iucn.org/orchid>.

# Annual General Meeting 2013

By Peggy Bainard Acheson

Native Orchid Conservation Inc will be holding its fifteenth Annual General Meeting on Friday, March 1, 2013 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 look forward to two presentations by members.

John Dyck will take us on a review of last year's field trips – the highs, the lows – and everything in between.

And Lorne Heshka has kindly agreed to give us his presentation on “The Wildflowers of Churchill”. Whether you've been there for the polar bears or beluga whales, or not, I'm sure Lorne will give us a different perspective on the Town and its many points of interest.

We will not be having a silent auction this year, but if anyone has larger items (minimum \$50) that they would like to donate to a raffle, or a door prize, please contact Peggy Bainard Acheson at 204-261-9179 (evenings) or [bainardp@mymts.net](mailto:bainardp@mymts.net)

All are welcome to attend, but only members in good standing may vote in the election. In addition, we will have door prizes, and wonderful refreshments! Hope to see you all there!

## Information on Candidates

**Peggy Bainard Acheson**, a graduate of the Environmental Science program at the University of Manitoba, has been a longtime director of NOCI and was its Membership Chair for thirteen years. She has organized the annual Members' Night and AGM, arranging for speakers, as well as advertising and promotion. As a field-trip leader, she enjoys sharing her love of the outdoors while helping to conserve habitat for native orchids. Peggy works full time in the environmental industry. Her other interests include cross-country skiing, hiking, the arts, and reading.

**John W. Dyck** grew up on a farm in the Municipality of Franklin in southern Manitoba where he spent much time enjoying the beautiful Roseau River. He served on the executive of the Manitoba Fly Fishers Association from 1982 to 2000 including six years as president. While with the MFFA he was involved in some stream rehabilitation work on the Lonesands Project and Whiteshell River Project. In 2004 John joined the Franklin Crow Wing Trail committee on which he still serves. Having discovered NOCI and its work in protecting native plants and flowers, John attended a meeting and joined NOCI in 2006. He enjoys meeting new people and learning new things on NOCI field trips, and especially likes the NOCI mandate to identify, inventory and protect the special habitats that plants like the native orchids need to survive.

**Denny Smith** - Denny and his wife Mary have been enthusiastic members of NOCI for eleven years. He is a retired prosthodontist with excellent organizational, analytical, and people skills. His hobbies include hiking, nature photography and travelling.

# Book Review

By Laura Reeves

**Flora of Saskatchewan, Fascicle 2. *Lilies, Irises & Orchids*.** Vernon L. Harms and Anna L. Leighton. Published jointly by Flora of Saskatchewan Association and Nature Saskatchewan. 184 pp. ISBN: 978-0-921104-28-5.

A monumental task is underway in the province of Saskatchewan: the creation of the first comprehensive taxonomic compilation of the native and naturalized vascular plants in the province. The *Flora of Saskatchewan: A Manual of the Province's Vascular Plants* is a joint publication of the Flora of Saskatchewan Association (FOSA) and Nature Saskatchewan. Because of the immense scope of the project, fascicles covering plant groups or families are being published until the entire *Flora* is completed.

Members of NOCI will be particularly interested in the second fascicle, *Lilies, Irises & Orchids*. This fascicle covers 26 species, including twelve orchids - most of which are also found in Manitoba. 21 species are ranked rare to endangered by the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre. The highly technical and academic nature of floras is usually enough to intimidate even the most avid plant enthusiasts. Fortunately, the FOSA has recognized the importance of making this information accessible to both amateur and professional audiences. This *Flora of Saskatchewan* combines all of the typical features of a flora (descriptions and keys of families, genera and species; distribution and habitat information; and comprehensive synonymy) with those of a field guide (colour-coded sections; distribution maps; high quality photos and sketches of each species; and detailed taxonomic and morphological descriptions). The individual fascicles have been printed with a water-resistant cover.

As NOCI members already know, orchid flowers are among the most complex in the plant world. The section "Understanding the Orchid Flower" is a fascinating and enjoyable read, as are the individual species accounts. The text can easily be read without constantly flipping back and forth between text and glossary.

Though this book has many excellent features, it isn't without its shortcomings. Most of the larger photos lack captions. Instead, a number in the corner indicates the need to flip to the back pages of the book for a description of the photo. Also, the text makes many morphological comparisons of species which are not always illustrated in the photos or sketches of both species. These annoyances may be fixed before the final publication of the all-inclusive *Flora*, however, as the authors are inviting feedback on each of the fascicles. Readers are also being invited to contribute new records, locations and flowering dates for any of the species.

## Winter Field Trip

If there is sufficient interest we would like to schedule a winter field trip for our members this year. Board member Mike James suggests snowshoeing in the boreal woods at his Nature Centre (near the intersection of PTH 59 and Road 100N) on **Saturday, February 23, 2013**. Cost per participant based on 20-25 people would be \$12.00. BYOS (Bring Your Own Snowshoes). See Mike's proposed schedule below. Activities may vary subject to the weather. If you would like to attend please email our field trip coordinator John Dyck as soon as possible at [jwdyck.dyck@gmail.com](mailto:jwdyck.dyck@gmail.com)

### Winter Walk Schedule Saturday, February 23, 2013

10:00 am Arrive at Boreal Woods Nature Center... Refreshments

10:15 am Presentation by Mike... powerpoint ... Boreal Woods In Winter... half hour

11:00 am Walk On Trail to Observe Winter Features... identify plants in winter... observe tracks etc.

12:00 noon Lunch at Campfire... Share information

1:00 pm Show n' Tell in centre... group contribution... or activity outside?

2:00 pm Depart