

# Native Orchid News:

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Field Trips  
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Plant of the Month  
Indian Breadroot  
(*Psoralea esculenta*)

## Upcoming Events

The Manitoba Orchid Society  
holds its Orchid Show at  
Assiniboine Park Conservatory  
March 23-25.

NOCI presentation to the  
Friends of Birds Hill Park,  
Wednesday, March 31 at 7pm  
at River Community Centre,  
293 Murray Avenue at Main.

# Plant of the Month

Indian Breadroot (*Psoralea esculenta*)

By Doris Ames

Indian Breadroot is also known as Prairie Turnip and both these common names refer to its edible root. The botanical name “psoralea” indicates a plant that is covered with glandular dots and “esculenta” means it is edible.

This perennial member of the Legume Family is usually found in the dry prairies of southern Manitoba and sometimes also in open woodlands and sandy banks. The plant is covered with long, whitish hairs and its dense stems arise from a large, parsnip-shaped taproot. The alternate, bright green leaves are compound-palmate with three leaflets and the underside is thickly covered with hairs.

The plant blooms in late June and July with ½ inch long bluish-purple flowers with 5 petals and 5 sepals. The flowers grow in dense 1-2 inch spikes. The fruit is a long beaked pod filled with hard, shiny brown seeds. After the pods form the plant dries up and breaks off from the root and blows away. It rolls along the ground like a tumbleweed scattering its seeds as it rolls. Although Indian Breadroot is fairly common it is really only easy to spot when it is in bloom and therefore is often overlooked.

In years gone by the plant was a valuable food source for First Nations people and early pioneers because the roots could be dried and stored for winter. The root can be eaten raw or cooked or dried and ground into flour. Care must be taken because the plant may trigger photosensitivity in some people due to the presence of furanocoumarins.

## President's Report

by Doris Ames

Here it is, March 17<sup>th</sup> and 20°C. I can't believe it! John, Will and I saw robins, blue jays, a hawk and some kind of long-legged shore birds along with the geese on an outing to Birds Hill this week. Tiny green leaves of 3-flowered avens were showing already at the Sunnyside Cemetery. The geese were honking loudly and it looks like spring but I wonder if there is still some winter in store for us.

Conditions are extremely dry.

These strange conditions make it even more difficult to set the field trip dates for the summer but John and I did our best for now and I know you will understand if we have to change some dates later on. Please see the proposed schedule elsewhere in this newsletter. Please sign up for a trip or two and learn more about Manitoba's native orchid species and their habitat. The Field Day on June 22 should be great fun for the whole family. Mike always knows how to arrange these kinds of things so well.

Come and visit our display at the Manitoba Orchid Society Orchid Show at Assiniboine Park Conservatory March 23-25.

Richard Reeves and I will be giving a presentation to the Friends of Birds Hill Park, on the park, its orchids and implications for their conservation on Wed. March 31 at 7pm at River Community Centre 293 Murray Avenue @ North Main, Winnipeg. See poster

<http://www.nativeorchid.org/FoBHPorchidsposter05-Mar12.pdf> You are very welcome to attend.

Seating is limited so call Shannon at 783-4249 to register. The presentation will be followed by one by the Nature Conservancy's Kathy Shaluk on conserving Monarch butterflies. It should be a fun evening.

Hope to see you soon.

## Proposed 2012 Field Trip Schedule

(trips subject to change depending on weather and availability of field trip leaders)

Sat April 21- Arden - Crocus Capital of the World possibly followed by hike along Whitemud River, view of Indian burial mound - this date may change depending when crocus bloom. The weather is especially weird this year. **NEW**

Sat May 26 - Bird's Hill Prov. Park - walk on Pine Ridge trail with historic Kudlowich Homestead-spring flowers and 3 flowered avens **NEW**

Sat June 2 - Marchand/Woodridge area - Moccasin flowers and other orchids in very lush habitat, other spring flowers, coltsfoot, marigolds and rare New Jersey tea **NEW**

Sat June 9 - Pumpkin Creek Ski Trails - coralroots, yellow lady's-slippers, old brickworks etc. **NEW**

Sat June 16 – Senkiw - Spectacular showy lady's-slippers, suspension bridge trail, other flowers along Trans Canada Trail

Fri June 22 - **Special Field Day** at Libau with speakers, refreshments and walk on Brokenhead Trail-white cedar forest, wetlands, calcareous fen and bog, carnivorous plants, orchids other rare plants.

Sun June 24 - Camp Morton, showys, yellows, other orchids on private property and a visit to historic Camp Morton Prov. Park **NEW**

To register for a trip please contact our fieldtrip-coordinator John Dyck at 204-222-7188 or email [jwdyck.dyck@gmail.com](mailto:jwdyck.dyck@gmail.com). Please register early because we take a limited number of participants in order to minimize damage to some of the sensitive habitats. Note the cut off date for registering for the trips will be on Wednesday the week of the field trip. There is a charge of \$15.00 per adult or \$5.00 per child under 18 to help to cover costs and you will be required to sign a liability waiver. You must be a NOCI member to join us on these trips (becoming a member on the day of the trip is fine). 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 place in the city that is on a bus route before setting off on the field trip. We encourage car-pooling for environmental reasons. If you wish to leave your car at the meeting place and ride with another participant, please be prepared to pay a share of the expenses. We reserve the right to cancel or reschedule trips due to weather conditions or insufficient volunteers to lead trips.

Recommended field guides:

*Orchids of Manitoba* by Ames, BainardAcheson, Heshka, Joyce, Neufeld, Reeves, Reimer, Ward;  
*Plants of the Western Boreal Forest & Aspen Parkland* by Johnson, Kershaw, MacKinnon, Pojar;  
*Wildflowers Across the Prairies* by Vance, Jowsey, McLean, Switzer

# Meet our new Board Members

by Peggy Bainard Acheson

We had a wonderful clear evening for the 41 members and guests who attended our fourteenth Annual General Meeting on February 17 2012. Six people were elected by acclamation during the business meeting; some new, some old: Doris Ames, Mike James, Derrick Ko-Heinrichs, Rose Kuzina, Florence McCoy and David Toop. Here are the bios of the “new” ones who you might not know:

Rose Kuzina is an explorer, environmentalist, and traveler, who claims she is allergic to the indoors. Rose has a diploma in communications from Red River College, and a B.A. Honours in Anthropology from the University of Winnipeg. Her interests include history, photography, archaeology, Africa, and outdoor adventures. She is presently working for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. She has lived in Africa for a total of three years, working in Gambia and Botswana at their national museums. We are pleased to have Rose as our Secretary.

Florence McCoy has been a member of NOCI since 2006. She recently retired from a career in nursing and has served on the Board of Cancer Care. Florence was happy to discover NOCI and learn of its mandate. She has always had a curiosity, love and respect for our natural surroundings and is pleased that it has passed on to her children. She considers herself fortunate to live in a rural area and is thrilled to have discovered orchids on her property. For the past few years, she has been part of a committee that has opposed quarries in her area. She enjoys photography, hiking, and reading. Florence will be taking on the Membership Secretary role.

David Toop has been involved with NOCI since 2009 participating in many of the field trips. He has worked for Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship since 2008 in the area of groundwater management, including groundwater dependent ecosystems. Ben Rostron, a former NOCI member introduced David to the world of orchids. David was involved with Wagner Bog, a well-known orchid hotspot near Edmonton, helping with a groundwater monitoring installation. He is the Conservation contact for groundwater studies to protect the Western Fringed Orchid at Nature Conservancy site near Stuartburn and is currently doing wetland studies in the Sandilands Forest. Last year David made a survey and GIS map of orchid distribution in the Sandilands areas around Marchand, Sandilands and Woodridge. His other hobbies include music (organ and piano) and painting. David is looking forward to leading some of the upcoming field trips. Welcome all to the NOCI Board!

After the business meeting the meeting moved on to the less serious part. First we were very pleased to have Chris Friesen, Project Botanist from the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre (CDC), present a wonderful PowerPoint presentation on “Rare Species: Causes and Conservation”. Chris explained briefly the definition of a rare species, why species are rare, how to conserve species as well as information about the CDC. No surprise human activity has contributed to species rarity through habitat loss, invasion of exotic species, pollution, people, and over-exploitation (HIPPO). Chris mentioned that volunteers are welcome at the Data Centre as long as they are willing to be trained and commit to volunteering for a worthwhile length of time. Chris also made a point of filling out a membership application – thanks for a wonderful presentation, Chris (and for joining).

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Following the presentation, Derrick Ko-Heinrichs with the help of Peggy and Mike, led the silent auction, raffle and door prize give-away. A huge thank you bouquet to everyone who donated items. We raised \$212 from the raffle and silent auction which helps to pay for the hall and refreshments.

**Raffle, Silent Auction and Door Prize Donors were:** Bill Acheson, Adrian Ames, Doris Ames, Peggy Bainard Acheson, Dianne Beaven, Bill Belcher, Karen Burrridge, Carol Clegg, John Dyck, Loretta Humeniuk, Lorne Heshka, Keith and Aileen Huss-Seidel, Peggy Kasuba, Derrick Ko Heinrichs, Rose Kuzina, Will Milne, Nora Reid, Iris/Eugene Reimer.

**Silent Auction Winners were:** John Neufeld, Loretta Hebert, Loretta Humeniuk, Carol Martin, Mary Smith, Kevin Duerksen, Carol Clegg, Dianne Beaven, Peggy Bainard Acheson, John Perry, and Florence McCoy.

**Raffle Winners were:** Loretta Hebert, Peggy Bainard Acheson, Doris Ames, Carol Martin, Carol Clegg, John Neufeld, Loretta Humeniuk, Donna Danyluk, Nicole Bruce, and Jim Roy.

**Door Prize winners were:** Karen Burrridge, Peggy Kasuba, Rose Kuzina, Birnie Reid, Doris Ames, Loretta Humeniuk, Chris Neufeld.

At the Membership Table we had 16 renewals and one new membership. I was pleased to report that we had 126 members in 2011 and have 82 individuals already for 2012. If you haven't renewed for 2012, please use the Renewal Form attached to this newsletter. (If you're not sure, send Florence an email and she can look it up for you: [petermccoy@gmail.com](mailto:petermccoy@gmail.com).)

**2012 AGM Summary of Income and Expenses**

Income		
Silver Collection	\$ 5.00	
Raffle	212.00	
Total income	<u>\$ 217.00</u>	<b>\$ 217.00</b>
Expenses		
Hall Rental	\$100.00	
Groceries	50.46	
Subtotal	<u>\$150.46</u>	<b>\$ 150.46</b>
Difference		<b>\$ 66.54</b>
<b>Other:</b> 17 memberships and donations:	\$300.00	

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Board members, friends and family (including Will Milne, John Neufeld, and Nicole Bruce) for all your help setting up and tearing down, help with the silent auction and raffle, and also to everyone who came out, for making the meeting fun and memorable! It's been a great winter, but a long one – not too long now before the field season will be starting!