

Native Orchid News:

The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

Volume 10 Issue 3 October 2008

ISSN 1499-5468



Richard Staniforth

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

Members' Night

Friday, October 24, 2008

Plant of the Month

Prairie Moonwort

(*Botrychium campestre*)



Richard Reeves

June 7 Belair Forest



Eugene Reimer

May 17 Steep Rock



Eugene Reimer

Sept. 6 Nature Conservancy Survey, Rat River



Eugene Reimer

Aug. 23 Senkiw

The above four photos are from 2008 field trips

Plant of the Month

Prairie Moonwort (*Botrychium campestre*)

By Richard Staniforth

Moonworts, grape-ferns and adder's tongues form a strange offshoot of the fern lineage. The aerial part of each plant is a single leaf that is produced each year and has two parts to it; a variously dissected foliage part or trophophore, and the reproductive part or sporangiophore. There are several moonworts and grapeferns in our province but all except the Rattlesnake fern (*Botrychium virginianum*) and the Common moonwort (*B. lunaria*) are very rare. Moonworts and grape ferns are related to the Northern adder's-tongue (*Ophioglossum pusillum*) described for the first time by Laura Reeves in the Native Orchid News as 'The Rare Plant of the Month' for the April, 2004 issue.

A 1 cm tall immature moonwort was discovered in a gravelly path edge near the West Beach at Birds Hill Provincial Park in late May, 2005. Too small for identification, we watched it almost daily for two weeks, fully expecting a mower to make short work of it, but it survived to grow into a 5 cm Prairie moonwort. After three weeks, it had shed its spores and was clearly finished for the year and decay had set in. Three or four weeks of growth then dormancy for 48 weeks! Even so, it has reappeared each spring since 2005, but regrettably it has not yet multiplied. Its known range appears to be in all adjacent provinces and states, so its discovery is overdue in our province.

As far as we know, this is the only individual of this species to have been recorded in Manitoba. This is as rare as a species can be! Distribution maps by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture show that other moonwort species have been reported for districts next to Manitoba but not yet in it, so perhaps there are other species waiting to be discovered.

Selected bibliography that includes moonworts:

Bruce-Grey Plant Committee. 1999. Ferns of Grey and Bruce Counties. Owen Sound Field Naturalists. 119 p. ISBN 0-9680279-2-X. (soft cover).

Cobb, B., E. J. Farnsworth, and C. Lowe. 2005. Peterson field guide to the ferns of northeastern and central North America. Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston, Massachusetts. 417 p. ISBN 0-618-39406-0 (soft cover).

Cody, W.J. and D. M. Britton 1989. Ferns and fern allies of Canada. Research Branch, Agriculture Canada. 430 p. ISBN 0-660-12102-1 (soft cover).

Flora of North America – on line.

http://www.efloras.org/flora_page.aspx?flora_id=1

Then click "Volume 2", click "Ophioglossaceae", scroll down and click "Botrychium".

Williston, P. 2001. The Botrychiaceae of Alberta. Alberta Environment, Edmonton. 57 p. ISBN 0-9688690-0-9 (soft cover).

President's Report

By Doris Ames

What a wonderful fall we are having this year! The leaves are still clinging to the trees, many flowers both wild and tame are still blooming and the woods are full of mushrooms.

This year as you know was Native Orchid Conservation's tenth anniversary and we celebrated by publishing a lovely calendar and by having more field trips than usual. The seven trips included jaunts to Steep Rock, Carrick and Senkiw among others. A planned trip to Mt. Nebo near Miami had to be cancelled due to heavy rains. The two wildflower festivals in Carrick and Senkiw were particularly enjoyable. The area around Carrick and Woodridge has so many beautiful roses, violets and other flowers and the hotdogs were super good! The fall flower festival in Senkiw featured wildflower walks on the Towle property and on the Franklin section of the Crow Wing Trail where we saw two endangered species, the Western Silvery Aster and Culver's Root. The fresh corn and watermelon we shared later were delicious!

This summer Eugene, Peggy and I drove to Inuvik and that rather longish field trip included many an adventure. We hope to share some of the pictures we took along the way on Members Night to be held on Friday, October 24.

This summer we started a new timber sales project sponsored by the Manitoba Model Forest to look for rare plant species in the licence areas belonging to Tembec and Louisiana Pacific. We also took part in surveys of the Rat River Swamp conducted by the Nature Conservancy.

We are continuing to fundraise for the boardwalks and just recently made a presentation to the students at St. John's Ravenscourt.

Please come out to Members Night and enjoy the slide shows of the Western Arctic and share your summer adventures with us.

NOCI Eighth Annual Members' Night

Make plans now to attend our annual Members' Night on Friday, October 24! In honour of International Polar Year we look forward to entertaining you with two presentations by members on their experiences in the North. Bill Blight will present picture slides from his time in the Yukon and NWT about 50 years ago. Then, Doris Ames, Eugene Reimer, and Peggy Bainard Acheson will present their impressions from their trip to the same area this summer.

Bring friends and family -- we are planning a great night with displays, door prizes, refreshments, and a raffle for "The Birds of Manitoba".

Date: Friday, October 24th
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Dakota Lawn Bowling Club
1212 Dakota Street, Winnipeg



Doris Ames

Lake Muncho, Northern BC



Doris, Peggy and Eugene at the Arctic Circle