

# Native Orchid News:

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Richard Reeves

## Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

117 Morier Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB  
R2M 0C8

### NOCI Website:

[www.nativeorchid.org](http://www.nativeorchid.org)

For more information contact

Doris Ames.

Phone: 231-1160

E-mail: [adames@mts.net](mailto:adames@mts.net)

### Members' Night

Friday, October 23, 2009

### Plant of the Month

Stemless Townsendia

(*Townsendia exscapa*)



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Pincushion Cactus



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Lauder Sand Hills

# President's Report

By Doris Ames

As I look back over “the summer that never was” and “the fall that didn't know when to quit”, it occurs to me that every year is unique and interesting in its own way. The rain and cold weather first delayed and then prolonged the blooming season for most plants and it made the drier areas in the province come alive.

We explored Steep Rock, Bird's Hill, Mt. Nebo and the Portage and Lauder Sandhill Complexes when the unusual flowers were at their best and bursting with colour. The sight of the cheerful, Stemless *Townsendia* and the glowing Golden Bean against the dry grass of the Lauder hills was unforgettable.

We also found time to visit the bogs and wetter areas in Hadashville, Woodridge and the Brokenhead Wetlands. The wetland plants were in their glory and we saw more beautiful Bloodroot and *Arethusa* in bloom than we have in years. I found *Calopogon* too in places where I have never seen it before. Likely there was even more “sex and murder” in the bog this year than is usual. If there was any downside it was that many of the lady's-slippers in southern Manitoba did not get pollinated because the bees were not able to fly in the heavy rains. However up north this was not the case and we found some wonderful seed capsules to send in to the national gene bank from the Cowan Bog up near Swan River and from Jackhead on the west side of Lake Winnipeg.

Members Night is coming up on October 23 (details elsewhere in this newsletter) and I am looking forward to Dr. Goldborough's presentation on the Netley/Libau Marsh, another beautiful wetland that needs our protection. All in all it should be an informative and fun evening and I hope to see many of you there.

## Plant of the Month

Stemless *Townsendia*  
(*Townsendia exscapa*)

By Doris Ames

This rare (S2) member of the Composite Family may be found growing on sunny slopes in the south and the southeastern part of Manitoba including the Carberry, Lauder and Routledge Sandhill Complexes.

The plant consists of a cluster of spatulate, greyish, and hairy basal leaves growing from a woody rootstock. A cluster of from one to twenty flowers grows from the centre of the basal leaves. It can be seen blooming in early May around the same time as Leafy Musineon and Golden Bean.

The showy flowers are creamy white to pinkish white with huge yellow centres. They are low to the ground, no more than four inches high, but when set against the dried grass of a hilly slope in early spring they are a spectacular sight.

This little plant, like its neighbour the Pincushion Cactus, has a very tenuous hold on the slope and is easily dislodged and uprooted. Please take special care when exploring the sandhills in order to protect these beautiful little plants.

## Members Night

**Mark your calendars: NOCI's ninth annual Members' Night is coming!**

We are pleased to have Dr. Gordon Goldsborough, a professor from the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Manitoba, and Director of the University's Delta Marsh Field Station on Lake Manitoba accept our invitation to speak to us. A water quality specialist on the impacts of humans on lakes and wetlands, Dr. Goldsborough will present on "The potential for rehabilitation of Netley-Libau Marsh, a degraded coastal wetland of Lake Winnipeg."

Also, you won't want to miss Doris and Eugene's presentation on "Sex and Murder in the Bog"!

Friends and family are welcome -- we are planning a great night with displays, door prizes, sale tables, and of course, refreshments. If you wish to book a table\* please call Peggy at 261-9179 or send an email to [bainardp@mts.net](mailto:bainardp@mts.net).

**Date:** Friday, October 23, 2009  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Dakota Lawn Bowling Club  
1212 Dakota Street  
Winnipeg

Hope to see you there!

\*No charge for table rental, but donations of door prizes or a portion of proceeds of sales are much appreciated.

Note: Sale items should reflect a theme of nature, conservation, etc. NOCI reserves the right to accept/refuse the types of items offered for sale.