

Native Orchid News:

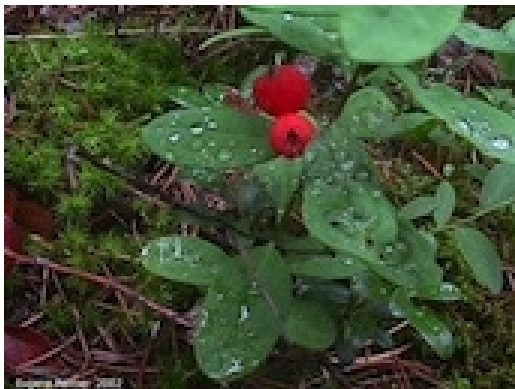
The Newsletter of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

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Richard Reeves

Teaberry



Eugene Reimer

Bearberry (for comparison)



John Dyck

MT. Nebo Field Trip

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Members' Night
Friday, October 25

Plant of the Month
Teaberry
(*Gaultheria procumbens*)

Members' Night

Friday, October 25, 2013
7:30 PM

Manitoba Lawn Bowling
Centre

1212 Dakota Street
St. Vital

See Page 4
for more information

Plant of the Month

Teaberry
(*Gaultheria procumbens*)

By Doris Ames

The genus “Gaultheria” was named by Peter Kalm for his guide in Canada, fellow botanist Jean-Francis Gaultier. The species name *procumbens* means “lying on the ground”, a reference to the plant’s prostrate habit. The common name “teaberry” comes from its use by the native people to make a medicinal tea. Another common name, wintergreen, refers to its aromatic, mint-tasting leaves and berries.

Teaberry is an uncommon aromatic, evergreen shrub and a member of the Heath Family. It is found in the coniferous forests of the southeastern boreal forest. It is seldom found west of Winnipeg.

The erect branched stems grow 10-20cm tall and the alternate leaves are thick, leathery and oval to elliptical in shape, with bristle-tipped teeth on their margins. The leaves are approx. 1.5-5cm long.

The flowers are 8-10mm long, white and barrel-shaped with 5-lobed corollas. The flowers are borne in the leaf axils. The plant blooms in July and August.

The fruit is a capsule surrounded by a fleshy calyx that makes it look like a berry. The fruit is 1cm across and resembles a little, shiny Red Delicious apple.

The leaves and fruit contain wintergreen oil and have a delicious wintergreen flavour. The plant also contains methyl salicylate, a close relative of Aspirin that relieves pain.

A tea made from the leaves was used to treat headaches and upset stomach. The plant was used externally and internally to treat rheumatism. A few berries were eaten or a poultice made from crushed leaves and applied to the site of the pain.

One has to be cautious when using teaberry for medicine, as wintergreen oil is considered highly toxic. It can be absorbed through the skin, can cause vomiting and will harm the liver and kidneys. The berries are also relished by ruffed grouse and deer but if uneaten will remain on the plant until the next time it flowers.

Teaberry is easily confused with Bearberry (write-up in the May 2013 issue of the newsletter). Be sure to check out the size of the plant, the shape of the leaves, the position of the flowers on the plant and note the different blooming times between the two. In addition Bearberry leaves and berries are almost tasteless while Teaberry is delightfully minty.

President's Report

by Doris Ames

What a strange summer we had! A cold and late spring followed by extreme heat and humidity part of May, all of June and part of July, followed by below normal temperatures until the middle of August and then more extreme heat and humidity. However it did make for one of the most productive berry years we have seen in a long time. Blueberries, raspberries, saskatoons, pincherries, chokecherries, cranberries, hawthorne and hazelnuts all in great abundance. I have been making jams and jellies the past week or so and it's fun. Most of the orchids flowered well and there are still some *Spiranthes* in bloom at time of writing. The showy lady's-slippers had still not fully dehisced by the middle of September. Of course that didn't prevent the municipalities from mowing all the ditches at least a month before that ☺. The deer fawns are fat and healthy as are the bears. Birding was pretty good but I was amazed not to see any evening grosbeaks at the feeder and I never see nighthawks or whip-poor-wills around my cottage anymore either. I saw only one Monarch butterfly this summer, lots of Polyphemous moths but no *Cecropia* moths. It seemed like a great year for frogs and turtles but I only saw one little toad. I wonder what the reason is for all those changes?

Eugene's memorial bench will be installed in Birds Hill Provincial Park sometime in October. We hope to have a bit of a dedication ceremony afterwards along with some refreshments, weather permitting. Please watch our website for a date and time and let Mike know at mkjames@mts.net or 204-663-0408 if you would like to join us. If it turns too cold we will do it in the spring.

I hope to see most of you out for Members Night on Friday October 25. See Peggy's write-up elsewhere in the newsletter. We will have a few tables for rent and a raffle. Please let Peggy know at bainardp@mymts.net if you have an item to donate for the raffle or would like to rent a table.

Correction

In the February 2013 issue of *Native Orchid News* an error appeared in the review of **Flora of Saskatchewan, Fascicle 2. Lilies, Irises & Orchids.**

The sentence "This fascicle covers 26 species, including twelve orchids - most of which are also found in Manitoba." should read "This fascicle covers 51 species, including 26 orchids - most of which are also found in Manitoba."

Sorry for the mistake. Thank you to Glen Lee of Regina for pointing it out.

Members' Night

by Peggy Bainard Acheson

SAVE THE DATE! Members' Night is Friday, October 25!

I don't know how we do it, but again we've got a fabulous Members' Night planned for you. It seems that those lazy, hazy days of summer are far away, but we don't intend to let them go just yet!

You may have noticed that there haven't been many Monarch butterflies around this year – well, Cathy Shaluk from the Nature Conservancy is coming out to tell us about this amazing animal and perhaps some theories as to what is happening.

As mentioned in our May newsletter we have some student volunteers (Heather Miltenburg and Jon Boisvert) working on an orchid application for Android users and they have agreed to give us an update on their project so far.

We will be having a raffle and donations of items for the raffle are always welcome. Please let me know at bainardp@mymts.net or 261-9179). NOCI will be able to provide tax receipts for items worth \$50 or more. And, if anyone is interested in renting a sale table they will be available for nature-oriented “stuff” for \$5.00. Please book your table by October 20 as space is limited. NOCI will provide a tax receipt for any cash donations made from the sales.

Feel free (and we encourage you) to bring your friends and family out – there will be displays, door prizes, and as always, fabulous refreshments.

Date: Friday, October 25
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Dakota Lawn Bowling Club
1212 Dakota Street, Winnipeg

See you there!

Field Trip Report

By John Dyck

The 2013 Field Trip season started rather ominously. The weather had been very cold and wet to start the season and our first survey trip to plan a new theme to an old venue was proving difficult. At first it looked like there would be little to show our field trippers, as many of the tried and true places did not look very promising. The massive damage to the forest from a late fall snow storm that devastated large areas in the Sandilands forest was sad to see; places like Mary's Bog and the Old Garbage Dump site were almost unrecognizable with all the trees down. We did manage to find the odd plant in bud but nothing really in bloom. Doris was confident that her old neighbourhood would not disappoint. May 11th started out even colder and more blustery than our survey trip had the week before but we had 19 warm hearted souls come out to the East Braintree field trip. We started off with a history lesson on the workings of the Shoal Lake Aqueduct and GWWD Railway. We checked out the dumpsite again with some plants starting to show some eagerness to bloom. We checked out the bog along 308 and the Old Dawson Trail and found some Alders with catkins. The group traveled back to the old Mid Winter School/Museum for a wonderful tour of the facility, a definite highlight of the trip.

Our next destination was the MFA Sandilands Discovery near Hadashville and lunch. The day was getting more pleasant weather wise as it went along and when we went for a walk through the site we started to see Crocuses in bloom. One bunch in particular ended up in everyone's camera, as it was a real beauty. As we walked river trail loop a 40-foot tree broke off at the base and fell between the 2 groups of hikers. Just a reminder how fragile the forest had become. The sharp eyes of our field trippers found the first Bloodroot in bloom. Our group came away with feeling that even on days that start out a little blustery the day can quickly change and we came away with a positive feeling of a day well spent.

May 18th saw us at the Portage Sand Hills. This is area just south of Portage la Prairie is rarely visited by wildflower enthusiasts and it is just an hour away from Winnipeg. The sand dunes are a smaller version of Spruce woods with many interesting plants. We looked for the Prickly Pear cactuses. After I suggested that we would quickly find them if we took off our shoes someone spotted one and then another one and soon they became visible. They still had not started to plump up from being buried in the winter snow. Flowering plants were still hard to find but there were some to be found.

June 8th saw us hiking the Bittersweet Ski Trails on Don and Ardyth McMaster's property. The weather was warming up substantially from our last outing and the flowering fruit trees were wonderful to see. Saskatoon and Chokecherry were in full bloom as well as many trees with their flowering buds. The bottom trails along the Assiniboine were just carpeted with Bloodroot plants, some still in bloom. This is one of the largest concentrations of Bloodroot plants I have come across in Manitoba. We even had a Green Bog Orchid stand proud along the trail to give our group their first Orchid sighting of the year. We had lunch at the ski centre where Ardyth served tea, coffee and cookies while Don entertained us with some of the colourful history of the area. This will definitely be on our field trip list for years to come.

June 15 saw us scaling Mt Nebo. The weather was wonderful and many more plants in full bloom. The view from on top of Mt Nebo is always so spectacular. This area had some torrential rain and flooding just a week before our field trip and the Spotted coralroot and long-bracted orchids were not showing themselves. We had lunch at the Miami Town Park. Most of the group went on to see Bruce the mosasaur at the Morden Marine Museum. Some of us hunted for Orchids just south of Carmen. We found the *C. candidum* south of Carman. We did a stem count and found over 100 blooms in a 600-yard area. These were duly catalogued for Doris to send in to the CDC.

Continued on Page 6

June 22 saw us at Brokenhead and the new section of interpretive trail. We had a large group of 30 people out. We had 8 people on their first NOCI field trip and with a high humidex this would prove to be a challenge for many people. We split the group in 2 with half doing the parking lot with some interesting plants like Strawberry Blite. The rest of the group did the new trail. This area never disappoints and always puts on a show for us with over 16 species of Orchids on display.

People seem to think a walk in the bog is similar to a walk in the park. We instructed everyone to keep hydrated and drink all the water they are carrying and to pace themselves. We had one person on our trip that ran into heat exhaustion while still a kilometre away from the parking lot. With some ingenuity a stretcher was improvised by Denny Smith and the lady was stretchered out and taken to the Selkirk hospital where she was rehydrated and recovered. I would like to thank everyone who assisted in helping bring this serious situation to a positive end. I think everyone came away with a new respect for being in the field in high humidex situations.

August 24 was our last field trip of the season. We toured the trails along the Roseau River at Jim and Marcella Towel's. The day was again a high humidity day and because of the experience we had at Brokenhead we made sure everyone was staying well hydrated and kept an eye on everyone to make sure nobody was in trouble. The lower river trail was full of many flowering plants like Meadow Blazing Star, asters of all kinds and even Beggars Tick, a very uncommon plant. The upper driveway area had many uncommon plants like Indian Breadroot and Prairie sage. Flodman's Thistle was also in full bloom. We stopped at an old historic concrete bridge over the Jordan Creek and found many Jewelweed and wild cucumber plants in bloom. After stopping to look at the sacred Wounded Warrior Rock we went for lunch at Roseau River Park. Just another glorious day in paradise.

In 2013 we traveled 3500 km on 6 field trips and 6 survey trips. We had 131 people attend our field trips, 10 of these became new members. Over 260 plants were identified and enjoyed by our participants. Many had not seen some of these plants in the wild before. We generated \$1705 with an end profit of \$700.

I would like to thank the field trip leaders Doris Ames, Richard Reeves, Peggy Acheson Bainard, Rose Kuzina, David Toop and Derrick Ko Heinrichs for volunteering their time to making these events special and very educational. Doris and Rose put together the field trip handouts, which gave everyone something to relive their experience with. And last and most important thanks to our participants for making these events so much fun.