

Brokenhead Wetlands Interpretive Trail Field Trip
Native Orchid Conservation Inc. - June 28, 2014

The brand new Brokenhead Wetlands Interpretive Trail is a 1.5 km self-guiding nature trail located on a 100 m strip of Crown Land just adjacent to the 1240 ha Brokenhead Wetlands Ecological Reserve near Scantebury, Manitoba. These wetlands are home to 28 of Manitoba's 37 native orchid species (including the globally rare Ram's-head lady's-slipper [*Cypripedium arietinum*]), ten species of carnivorous plants and 23 other rare plants, with a high proportion of sedges. Thanks to Riverside Gravel Inc. who kindly gave up their gravel rights so the trail could be built. In 1998 NOCI nominated the wetlands for protection through the Protected Areas Initiative and the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation also lobbied the provincial government for their protection. The Ecological Reserve was declared in 2005. Debwendon Inc., a non-profit corporation made up of three partners - Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Manitoba Model Forest and Native Orchid Conservation Inc. - got together in 2007 to develop an interpretive trail. When NOCI board member, the late Eugene Reimer, contributed an endowment of \$600,000 through the Winnipeg Foundation for maintenance of the trail the Province of Manitoba contributed \$1 million to its construction which is just now being completed.

The Brokenhead Wetlands are a topographically confined raised bog, with some central ponds and marginal wet troughs (flarks) and a marginal fen. A fen is a kind of peatland characterized by a high water table with slow internal drainage by seepage down very gradual slopes. Brokenhead is a calcareous fen, considered rare in North America, with an estimated 500 calcareous fens on earth. This slow-moving groundwater is enriched by nutrients from upslope materials and thus fens are more mineral rich and less acidic than bogs. The Brokenhead Ojibway Nation has been using it for approximately 300 years and they continue to regard it as a place of great cultural importance and for collecting medicinal plants, tea berries and cedar.

Plant Species List

Small Yellow Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*)*
Spotted Coralroot (*Corallorhiza maculata*)*
Dragon's-mouth (*Arethusa bulbosa*)*
Large Yellow Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*)*
Showy Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*)*
Ram's Head Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*)*
Small Round-leaved Orchid (*Amerorchis rotundifolia*)*
Early Coralroot (*Corallorhiza trifida*)*
Bog orchid (*Platanthera aquilonis or huronensis*)*
Fringed Milkwort, Gaywings (*Polygala paucifolia*)
Bastard Toadflax, Pale Commandra (*Commandra umbellata*)
Golden Corydalis (*Corydalis aurea*)
Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria* sp.)
Northern Starflower (*Trientalis borealis*)
Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*)
Greenland Primrose (*Primula egaliksensis*)
Coltsfoot (*Petesites* spp.)
Goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*) Plant
Bishop's Cap (*Mitella nuda*)
Bog Violet (*Viola nephrophylla*)
Buck Bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*)

Labrador Tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*)
 Common Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)
 Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*)
 Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*)
 Climbing bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*)
 Indian Hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*)
 Bicknell's Geranium (*Geranium bicknellii*)
 Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
 Red-osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
 High Bush-cranberry (*Viburnum opulus*)
 Downy Arrowwood (*Viburnum rafanesquianum*)
 Philadelphia Fleabane (*Erigeron philadelphicus*)
 Creamy Peavine (*Lathyrus ochroleucus*)
 Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*)
 Seaside Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*)
 Wild Lily of the Valley (*Maianthemum canadense*)
 Large white Ground-cherry (*Physalis grandiflora*)
 Twisted stalk (*Streptopus amplexifolius*)
 Bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*)
 Blue bead lily (*Clintonia borealis*)
 Oak fern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*)
 Strawberry blight (*Chenopodium capitatum*)
 Small bog cranberry (*Oxycoccus microcarpus*)
 Spreading dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*)
 Common Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*)
 Dewberry (*Rubus pubescens*)
 Wild Sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*)
 Northern Bedstraw (*Galium boreale*)
 Wild Rose (*Rosa* sp.)
 Sundew (*Drosera* spp.)
 Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)
 Cotton-grass (*Eriophorum* spp.)
 Green Wintergreen (*Pyrola virens*)
 Bog birch (*Betula grandulosa*)
 Boletus spp. mushroom
 Snakeroot (*Sanicula marilandica*)
 Twin flower (*Linnaea borealis*)
 Coral fungus (*Clavariaceae* spp.)
 Bladder campion (*Silene cucubalus*)
 Mountain maple (*Acer spicatum*)
 Poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*)
 Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
 Rock cress (*Arabis* spp.)
 Bluebur (*Lappula squarrosa*)

*Native orchid species