



Iris

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The Alberta Native Plant Council Newsletter

Adopt-a-Plant Alberta – Still Going Strong

By Nora Manners

Adopt-a-Plant Alberta (APA) is heading into its fourth field season. Founded in 2005 to address an ongoing need to gather more information about rare plants in Alberta, APA has now completed three successful field seasons and has trained dozens of volunteers who have spent hundreds of hours locating and documenting occurrences of rare plants, mosses, and lichens throughout the province.

Volunteers with the program generally “adopt” one or more rare plants and either search for new occurrences or monitor their adopted species at locations where it has been previously recorded. In 2006, 36 volunteers participated in the program and documented 14 occurrences of rare plants; in 2007, 41 volunteers contributed 32 records; and in 2008,

43 volunteers doubled the number of records submitted to ANHIC to 64. The program has grown from conducting surveys primarily in protected areas to including search areas on provincial Crown lands, Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) owned properties, and some private lands (by invitation only).

APA also organizes group field events throughout the summer where volunteers can spend time working in the field with knowledgeable leaders. Group events are often designed to assist resource management agencies, private stewardship organizations, or plant species-at-risk recovery programs with further rare plant inventories



Removing baby's breath in western spiderwort habitat.

Photo L. Matthias

and specific conservation or habitat stewardship initiatives. APA volunteers in 2007 carried out western spiderwort (*Tradescantia occidentalis*) surveys, and attended identification training in the field for small-flowered sand verbena (*Tripterocalyx micranthus*) and tiny cryptanthus (*Cryptantha minima*). In 2008, APA volunteers participated in several group field events focusing on provincially- and federally-listed



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species at risk including the following:

- A survey of western spiderwort and removal of escaped ornamental baby's breath in western spiderwort habitat on July 12 & 13, 2008.
- A survey and stewardship event focusing on tiny cryptanthus and small-flowered sand verbena on July 11, 2008 at the Drowning Ford Grazing Reserve outside of Medicine Hat. A survey of two sections of likely habitat was conducted – while no tiny cryptanthus or sand verbena were found during the survey, a rare species of milkvetch (*Astragalus* sp.) was noted.
- Participation in surveys of western blue flag (*Iris missouriensis*) populations in southwestern Alberta in cooperation with MultiSAR.
- An event cohosted with NCC on July 19, 2008 in the Crowsnest Pass focusing on limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*) and whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) and the pathogen, blister rust, which infects and destroys these trees. Volunteers were trained on how to identify the two pine species and the pathogen and how to conduct a standardized health assessment of these



APA volunteers at the Botany Alberta 2007 trip to Milk River Ridge

Photo E. Karpuk

species to determine infection by blister rust.

For the past two years, APA has also helped to organize and participate in Botany Alberta with the Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC) and NCC. In 2007 Botany Alberta was held June 8-10 in the Milk River Ridge area and several rare plants were recorded (see *Iris* No. 56 Jan. 2008). Last year, Botany Alberta was held on June 7 & 8, 2008 at the Coyote Lake Nature Sanctuary west of Edmonton. Observations were made of numerous rare species including

several sedges (*Carex* spp.) and grape ferns (*Botrychium* spp.). Plans for 2009 are underway, with Botany Alberta to be held June 13 & 14, 2009 on NCC properties in the Waterton area (see Botany Alberta advertisement in this issue).

The APA program has made tremendous

progress in its first three years. Not only has the program provided volunteers with the knowledge and skills required to collect data on rare plants, more importantly it has promoted an awareness of rare plants and related management issues. APA is beginning to be recognized as an organization that can be called upon to provide expertise, enthusiasm and support for stewardship of rare plants in our province.

The success that the APA program has achieved so far would not have been possible without the commitment of its volunteers. It is the volunteers out in the field documenting rare plants and completing stewardship activities that make the APA program work. But it is also supported by a host of other volunteers that play a vital role, volunteering their time to coach at workshops, lead field events, verify specimens, provide maps of rare plant search areas, maintain the APA website, and much more. All APA volunteers bring valuable experience, knowledge, and energy to the program.

The program has also relied on the vision and dedicated support of the Steering Committee. The current Steering Committee consists of

- Dana Bush (professional botanist & ANPC Rare Plant Committee member),
- Ed Karpuk (Resource Inventory Specialist, Alberta Sustainable



Sand verbena

Photo C. D. Bush

Resources Development (ASRD) & ANPC Rare Plant Committee member),

- Lisa Matthias (Provincial Habitat Conservation Specialist, ASRD),
- Todd Kemper (Senior Botanist, Alberta Natural Heritage Information Centre (ANHIC)),
- Dr. Janet Marsh (independent lichenologist), and
- Robin Gutsell (Wildlife Status Biologist, ASRD).

Past Steering Committee members have included Dr. Joyce Gould (Science Coordinator, Parks Division, Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation), Dr. René Belland (Curator, Plant Herbarium/DataSystems Manager Devonian Botanic Garden), Roxy Hastings (Curator of Botany, Royal Alberta Museum), and Coral Grove (Volunteer Steward Coordinator, Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture). Note that there are currently two vacancies on the Steering Committee. Please contact Dana Bush (cdbush@telusplanet.net) if you are interested in becoming involved with the Steering Committee.



Kelley Kissner, outgoing APA Program Coordinator, has brought the APA a great distance forward over the past two years and will be missed. The APA also receives valuable logistical support from

professional botanists and resource managers, and from a wide variety of resource management agencies, conservation organizations and private land stewardship organizations. The work of the APA has been supported financially by the Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program, Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, ASRD, TD Friends of the Environment, Shell Canada, Alberta Ecotrust, Alberta Lottery Fund, Alberta Conservation Association, and others.

Right now the APA is preparing for another busy field season. Two training workshops were held, one at the end of April and another in mid-May. These one-day workshops provided an opportunity for volunteers to learn from professional botanists and resource managers. Volunteers studied rare plant identification, survey methods, standardized data collection methods, use of GPS units and topographic maps, collection/preservation of plant specimens, and field safety. Volunteers will be continuing this summer with rare plant searches across Alberta – the list of priority species for this year can be found on the APA website (www.ab.adoptaplant.ca).

A number of group field events will be held throughout the summer focusing on listed species including western spiderwort, western blue flag, small-flowered sand verbena, slender mouse-ear-cress (*Halimolobos virgata*), tiny cryptanthus, and soapweed (*Yucca glauca*). We also hope to obtain enough data on hare-footed locoweed (*Oxytropis lagopus*) that it can be re-evaluated at the provincial and federal levels (it is currently Special Concern federally and unlisted provincially). Important dates are highlighted to the right and details will be posted in the Events Calendar on the APA website (www.ab.adoptaplant.ca) as plans are finalized. Registered volunteers will also be sent regular updates throughout the summer.

As we enter our fourth field season, APA once again invites returning and new volunteers from across Alberta to help locate and record occurrences of rare plants and lichens and to take part in habitat stewardship activities throughout the province. If you would like to register to be an APA volunteer for 2009 or to find out more about the program, please contact Nora Manners, Program Coordinator, at manners@telus.net or at 403-627-1473. You can also visit the program website at www.ab.adoptaplant.ca. As the new

Adopt-a-Plant Alberta Field Events for 2009

May 29, 2009

Learn to conduct standardized surveys for small-flowered sand verbena and slender mouse-ear-cress near Medicine Hat; locate sites for future survey work.

June 13 & 14, 2009

Participate in Botany Alberta in the Waterton area (see advertisement in this issue).

July 4 & 5, 2009

Help to control escaped baby's breath in western spiderwort habitat and evaluate success of 2008 efforts.

TBA (June/July)

Assist with the 5-year provincial survey of western blue flag in southwestern Alberta.

TBA (July/Aug)

Resurvey a 1-ha tiny cryptanthus survey plot (est. in 2007) in Medicine Hat and possibly participate in control of invasive species.

TBA (July/September)

Help maintain and evaluate effectiveness of fencing and cages installed around the Pinhorn soapweed population, survey to record seed set and look for evidence of yucca moth (*Tegeticula yuccasella*).

TBA (July/August)

A field event focusing on rare plants in the Fort McMurray area is currently being planned.

See *Adopt-a-Plant*, page 12

Botany Alberta 2009



Photo C. Cole

**Hosted by Alberta Native Plant Council
Nature Conservancy of Canada
Adopt-a-Plant Alberta**

Date: Saturday & Sunday, June 13-14, 2009

Meeting Time: Friday evening, June 13 at 5-7 p.m. for campers

Botany Sessions: begin at 8:30 a.m., Saturday & Sunday

Closest Towns: Waterton, Pincher Creek



Northern fringed gentian
(*Gentianopsis detonsa*)
Photo NCC

Botany Alberta, the annual botanical blitz organized by the Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC) in partnership with Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and Adopt-a-Plant Alberta (APA) is just around the corner!

This year Botany Alberta will occur in the Waterton area, concentrating on the NCC's eastern most properties that occur in the Foothills Fescue, Foothills Parkland and possibly the Montane natural subregions. Once the exact locations have been identified, a detailed itinerary will be sent to participants regarding accommodation opportunities, both rustic and more civilized, and a schedule of tours and events.

To register for Botany Alberta visit: www.conservationvolunteers.ca, click on Register Today, Alberta, Calendar of Events, and finally Botany Alberta. Complete the registration and health and waiver forms and you are done. Registration is limited to 40 participants so don't leave it until the last moment. Some eager botanists have already committed!

Updates will be posted, as details emerge, on the ANPC website (www.anpc.ab.ca), NCC website (www.conservationvolunteers.ca) and APA website (www.ab.adoptaplant.ca).

If you have any questions, please contact Ed Karpuk (ANPC) at (403) 340-7114; Robin McLeod (NCC) toll free at 1-877-262-1253 or direct at (403) 444-3547; or Nora Manners (APA) at (403) 627-1473.



Waterton Park Front Project – a bit of history

Since 1997 NCC has been working to conserve the privately owned lands bordering Waterton Lakes National Park. In 2007, a \$45 million donation from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation made an enormous difference to the Waterton Park Front Project (WPF). Including the Weston Foundation, other supporters and landowners, the WPF is the largest private conservation initiative in Canadian history, with 29,461 acres conserved, providing inspiration for other land conservation initiatives in Alberta and beyond.



Interns monitoring the WPF property Photo NCC

Waterton Diversity

The Waterton Park Front is a unique area where the prairie meets the mountains to create a landscape of exceptional physical, biological and cultural diversity. The wildlife is astounding, with a rich variety of species such as grizzly bears, trumpeter swans, greater sandhill cranes, the native blue camas (*Camassia quamash*), and six of Alberta's ten amphibian species.

Biodiversity highlights include

- One of the last refuges where grizzly bears can still be found on the prairies.
- 165 breeding bird species, the same number that are found on the Oak Ridges Moraine in Ontario, an area 15 times larger.
- 52 species of mammals – in comparison, Yellowstone National Park, an area 90 times larger, has 58 species and Algonquin Park in Ontario, an area 62 times larger, has 45 species.
- 199 provincially rare species of plants and animals, many more than are found in any comparable private land area in Alberta.

In addition, the WPF is a “Working Landscape” where local ranchers work in partnership with NCC to care for the land while continuing to ranch and maintain their way of life. Sustainable land management practices provide large blocks of natural habitat, allowing sensitive wildlife species, as identified above, to thrive.

At the time of the donation, Larry Simpson, Regional Vice-President of NCC in Alberta stated, “We are deeply grateful to the Weston family, local landowners and other partners for making the WPF happen, and for allowing everyone to enjoy this natural treasure.”

Certainly this will be the case at Botany Alberta 2009!

For more information contact Robin McLeod
Coordinator, Conservation Volunteers
robin.mcleod@natureconservancy.ca

The Nature Conservancy of Canada - Alberta Region
Tel: 403.444.3547 Fax: 403.515.6987 Cell: 403.809.2770

**The University of Calgary Herbarium
is now officially open full time!**

All plant enthusiasts are welcome.

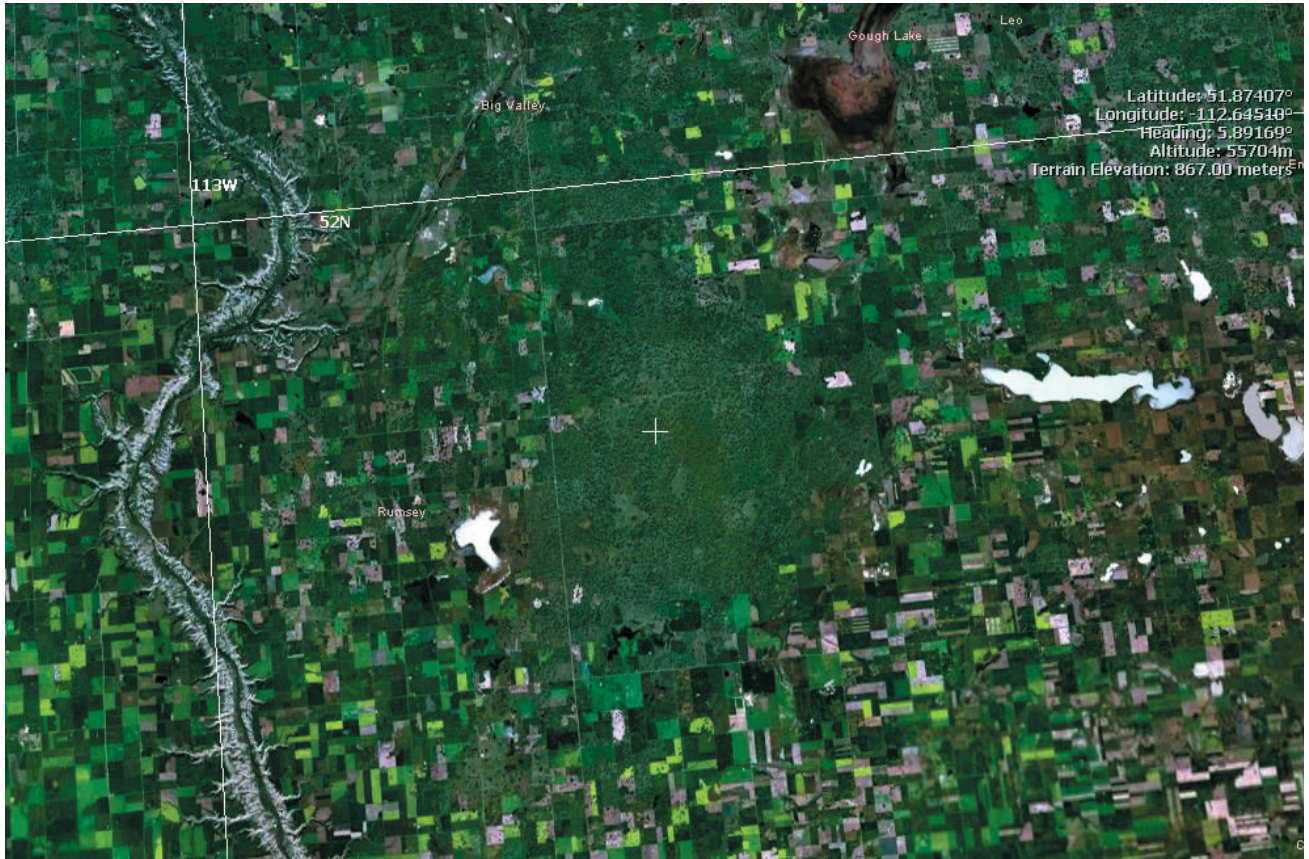
**Herbarium hours are from 8:30 a.m.
to 4:30 p.m. on Monday to Friday.**

**If you would like to use the
herbarium please call ahead. Contact**

Bonnie Smith (herbarium technician)
smib@ucalgary.ca

OR

Dr. C. C. Chinnappa
ccchinna@ucalgary.ca



This satellite image of the Rumsey Ecological Reserve and Natural Area demonstrates that it is an island of native parkland in a sea of cultivation. At 185 km² the block is one-quarter the size of Calgary or Edmonton. A key research question is the following: What is the potential for the replacement of native plains rough fescue plant communities by invasive species and noxious weeds from the edges of the block and from cumulative effects of land uses such as oil and gas development, livestock grazing and motorized recreation?

Photo C. Bradley

ANPC Focus on Fescue

By Cheryl Bradley, ANPC Southern Director

As Southern Director for the Alberta Native Plant Council, I have found my volunteer activities focused on rough fescue grasslands. When it comes to rough fescue, our provincial grass, there is no shortage of challenges in accomplishing ANPC's mission to promote knowledge of plant species and to preserve the natural communities and habitats in which they occur. There are times when I am hopeful about a secure future for rough fescue grasslands in Alberta and there are times when I am not.

The conservation challenge is at the broad landscape level. The two species of rough fescue in southern Alberta – plains rough fescue (*Festuca hallii*) and foothills rough fescue (*Festuca campestris*) – dominate fourteen ecological communities on the provincial tracking list. Communities on the list are rare or special and considered of high priority for conservation consideration. Not just communities, but whole natural subregions are named after rough fescue – the Northern Fescue Natural Subregion (referring to plains rough fescue, not northern rough fescue) and

the Foothills Fescue Natural Subregion. Plains rough fescue grasslands are, or were, also characteristic of the Central Parkland Natural Subregion, and foothills rough fescue grasslands of the Foothills Parkland and Montane natural subregions.

Since Alberta has the largest tracts of plains and foothills rough fescue grasslands remaining, the responsibility falls to Albertans to preserve this important component of global biodiversity.

I despair in the face of facts such as the following:

- Less than two percent of the province (11,000 km²) is occupied by native rough fescue plant communities. Plains rough fescue grasslands occupy less than 15 percent of their estimated pre-settlement extent in central Alberta. The extent of foothills rough fescue grasslands remaining in southwest Alberta is unknown; what is known is that the large majority are on private lands.
- Only 12 percent of 1,686 patches of uncultivated grasslands identified from air photos in the Central Parkland Natural Subregion have plains rough fescue communities. Of these, 42 percent are experiencing invasion by non-native species such as smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and sweet clover (*Melilotus* spp.).
- The frequency of four agronomic grasses and five noxious and nuisance weeds in 6,947 range and vegetation survey plots within southern Alberta shows that native vegetation of the Foothills Fescue, Foothills Parkland and Montane natural subregions is at particular risk of conversion to non-native vegetation. Seventy-five percent of plots in the Foothills Parkland are invaded by timothy (*Phleum pratense*) and Kentucky bluegrass.
- Success so far in restoring rough fescue plant communities is restricted to pipeline sites where construction occurred outside the growing season, narrow trench-only stripping was used and natural recovery was allowed in the absence of non-native invasive species.

I have hope when working with others who share my concern for the future of



Rough fescue was designated Alberta's provincial grass emblem in 2003 through a private member's bill sponsored by MLA Don Tannas. This lightly grazed foothills rough fescue grassland at Agriculture Canada's Stavely Research Substation, on the eastern edge of the Porcupine Hills, is resistant to invasion by non-native species because it is in healthy condition and on a relatively dry site.

Photo C. Bradley

rough fescue grasslands. For example, I represent ANPC on the Rumsey Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that also includes representatives from government, industry and research institutions. Since spring 2006, the Rumsey TAC has been guiding research on plains rough fescue grasslands that will inform future management of the Rumsey Natural Area and Ecological Reserve. Several projects are underway to address questions about restoration of rough fescue plant communities, invasion by non-native species, grazing effects, and cumulative effects of oil and gas development relative to reclamation practices. Results of the initial studies are just starting to roll in and new research projects are beginning. The TAC is seeking additional resources to help support the research.

I also represent ANPC on the Technical Advisory Committee of the Foothills Restoration Forum (FRF TAC) with Laurie Hamilton as my alternate. The FRF was initiated in fall 2007 as a venue for government, industry, researchers and many other stakeholders to come

together to promote the science and practice of restoration in foothills landscapes. Initial focus is on foothills fescue grasslands. There have been two public meetings of the FRF to present research findings to date and a summer field trip with stops at a variety of reclamation sites. All events have been well attended. Two issues of *The Hard Grass Advocate* have been produced, edited by reclamation expert Marilyn Neville. These can be found at www.sasci.ca. The FRF TAC has defined key research questions and will soon be forwarding these questions to potential researchers and funders.

Collective efforts through the Rumsey Technical Advisory Committee and the Foothills Restoration Forum provide me hope that we can successfully address some of the hard challenges regarding conservation and restoration of rough fescue grasslands. If you want further information about these initiatives or want to participate in some way, please don't hesitate to contact me at cebradley@shaw.ca.

Thanks to . . .

Lorna Allen

Lorna has stepped down after many years as ANPC's incomparable secretary. She has, however, agreed to still be involved in the training, maintaining, and growth of the ANPC as she is needed.

There are really no words that can summarize Lorna's role in the ANPC – many come to mind, but none quite fit – or how grateful the new secretary is, personally, that Lorna was put on this planet.

Lorna is a mentor to a LOT of people and has shown that one can have a sense of humour and still get serious things accomplished.



Lorna Allen and family out enjoying a day on the lake.
Photo E. Beaubien

Pat McIsaac

Pat has been the Northern Director since 1998, and has decided to step down from this role. ANPC thanks Pat for her many years of volunteer work on ANPC's Board.

Pat wishes she could have participated in many more of the ANPC's central and southern Alberta events, but enjoyed being a board member in the background.

Additionally, Pat joined the newsletter committee in 2004 and has worked hard where she was needed, helping to edit and lay out the *Iris* newsletter. Pat has agreed to continue with the *Iris* newsletter team, which ANPC is grateful for as she adds a great touch of professionalism to the publication.



Pat McIsaac (middle row, far left) at the Botany Alberta 2007 trip to the Milk River Ridge
Photo L. Hamilton

NEW ANPC Publications Now Available!

The Alberta Native Plant Council has been busy this past year. We have published two important documents:

- ***Recommendations for Botanical Surveys in Areas of Proposed Developments***, which is designed to assist land managers/planners, industry representatives, regulators and consultants in properly identifying the scope of work required to assess sensitive botanical resources in an area of proposed development.
- ***Guidelines on Plant Rescues*** identifies considerations when planning plant rescues, such as adverse effects and ethical decisions.

Please visit our website at www.anpc.ab.ca.
Go to the Publications webpage and look under the Guidelines heading.

Thanks to Lochan Bakshi, teacher & friend

by Sylvia Glass & Eileen Ford

For how many students and ANPC members has Lochan opened up the wonder and beauty of our botanical world? He has enriched the lives of many, as he did for those of us who were lucky enough to take part in one of his Wild Flowers (Biology 321) courses through Athabasca University.

Lochan had patience for those of us without former experience in the mysteries of the botanical world. He opened our eyes to the intricacies of plants and the miracle of their reproduction and survival techniques in this harsh world. He showed us how the entire earth depends on the plants that grow here. Lochan taught us how



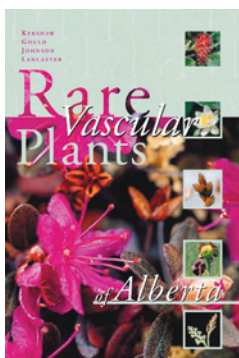
Lochan Bakshi in the herbarium, now named after him, at Athabasca University

Photo Athabasca University

to understand the processes that govern plant life and he opened up a new world via the wonders of the microscope. Always he was kind and encouraging. In the field Lochan would warn us to step lightly so as not to injure the plants. "Be careful," he would say. "Don't hurt the flowers – they have a job to do."

Once our classes and field explorations were finished, Lochan did not forget us. A phone call or card often arrives on our birthdays. He keeps in touch with our lives and is always available to provide an answer to our questions. In spite of illness Lochan carries on with various interests such as reading and discussing books, and writing letters to the newspapers.

Because of this remarkable professor there are many of us who will never again look at a wildflower without thinking of Lochan. Although he has several degrees, is Professor Emeritus at Athabasca University and was a major founder of their distance learning program, and has won other honours, to us he is Lochan, our dear friend and friend of the wildflowers.



Addenda for the Rare Vascular Plants of Alberta are now available!

For information, drawings and range maps of rare vascular plant species of Alberta not found in the *Rare Vascular Plants of Alberta* (Kershaw et al. 2001) please visit the Alberta Native Plant Council's website at www.anpc.ab.ca under Publications. This is an ongoing project with plant species added as the pages are completed.

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Puzzling Pairs: Trifid-leaved fleabane or simply compound?

By C. Dana Bush

I find puzzling out some of the more subtle differences between species to be difficult – especially perched on the edge of a windy, rainy subalpine outcrop with my battered, out-of-date copy of *Flora of Alberta* and a hand lens. (I usually leave my 12-volume *Flora of North America* at home as it's not a very good field guide and is heavy to boot.) But, it means I sometimes end up identifying species in a herbarium or worse yet from photos. So here is a summary to add to your *Flora of Alberta*.

Trifid-leaved fleabane (*Erigeron trifidus*) looks very similar to the three-leaved variety of compound-leaved fleabane (*Erigeron compositus* var. *discoideus*). They are found in similar habitats (dry, open areas in the subalpine and alpine), are similar sizes, and both have three-parted leaves. The most obvious characteristics of the rare trifid-leaved fleabane are the wider leaves (≥ 1 mm) that widen at the top, the slender caudex (as opposed to the short and stout stem base on compound-leaved fleabane) and more of the long soft hairs (villose) on the bracts surrounding the flower (involucre), rather than short coarse spreading hairs (hirsute).

New research has shown that trifid-leaved fleabane is indeed a hybrid between compound-leaved and woolly fleabane (*E. lanatus*). There are different genetic populations of trifid-leaved fleabane, with the population in Waterton shown to be a different hybrid from the rest of the occurrences in Alberta.

See *Puzzling Pairs*, page 12

	<i>Erigeron compositus</i> var. <i>discoideus</i>	<i>Erigeron trifidus</i>
Common Name	Compound-leaved (three-leaved) fleabane	Trifid-leaved fleabane
ANHIC Rank	S5	S1S2
Leaves	Leaves trifid (Moss 1983)	Leaves trifid (Moss 1983)
Leaf segments	Leaf segments less than 1 mm wide, the basal segment not obviously dilated apically (Moss 1983)	Leaf segments more than 1 mm wide, the basal segment obviously dilated apically (stalks wider at the top) (Moss 1983)
Involucre	Involucre hirsute (coarse spreading hairs) but not densely villose (Moss 1983); Hirsute and minutely glandular (Nesom 2006)	Involucre densely villose (long soft hairs) (Moss 1983); Hirsute to villose-hirsute, glandular (Nesom 2006)
Caudex	Caudex branches usually relatively thick and short (Nesom 2006)	Caudex branches are thinner and not covered with persistent leaf bases (Nesom 2006)
Notes	<i>E. trifidus</i> is a hybrid between <i>E. compositus</i> and <i>E. lanatus</i> (Burke and Baine 2008)	
Location	Trifid-leaved fleabane only occurs in Alberta and B.C. (Nesom 2006). Trifid-leaved fleabane occurs in Willmore Wilderness, the Cardinal Divide (including Prospect and Cheviot Mountains), and Jasper National Park. Populations previously documented at Ram Mountain are a variety of <i>E. compositus</i> , and the population at Waterton Lakes is probably a different hybrid species (Burke and Bain 2008).	



Leaf of trifid-leaved fleabane
Photo C.D. Bush

Trifid-leaved
fleabane
Photo C.D.
Bush



The Regina Native Plant Demonstration Garden

By Malin Hansen

The Regina Native Plant Demonstration Garden is the result of several years of planning, dreaming, and searching for a suitable site. When the garden was established in the summer of 2007 it felt like we had finally found a perfect home. The garden is located at the First Nations University of Canada where it is part of a larger native prairie restoration and demonstration initiative. This location allows the garden to be used as a tool in both formal and informal education.



Educational signs at the demonstration garden

Photo M. Hansen

The objectives of the garden are

- 1) to demonstrate how plants that are native to Saskatchewan can be used to landscape parks, schoolyards and private yards,
- 2) to facilitate education on plant identification, and
- 3) to increase awareness of the native prairie ecosystem in general.

To fulfill its first purpose, we planted about 30 different native plants. Most of the seeds had been collected from a local native seeds nursery in May of 2007. The seedlings were grown in a local greenhouse and planted by volunteers. We selected species that are easy to grow and attractive, for example, gaillardia (*Gaillardia* sp.), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), western wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), dotted blazing star (*Liatris punctata*), prairie sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), hairy golden aster (*Heterotheca villosa*), blue wild flax (*Linum lewisii*) and three-flowered avens (*Geum triflorum*).

To fulfill its second goal, we designed the garden with pathways and interpretation signs to facilitate workshops and self-guided tours. The garden attracts many visitors from mid-April when the prairie crocus flowers until mid-October when the asters and goldenrods are still in bloom. The demonstration garden is used as an education tool in university classes at the First Nations University of Canada and in several public native plant workshops throughout the year.

To promote the demonstration garden and to keep people inspired after leaving workshops and classrooms, we put together a book on how to grow native plants. The book explains what makes a species native to a certain region, the benefits of growing native species, how to plan and design a native plant garden, how to plant seeds and seedlings, and how to maintain them.



Demonstration garden at the First Nations University of Canada

Photo M. Hansen

The book also includes descriptions, planting instructions and photos of over forty native plants and shrubs, as well as photos and descriptions of several common weeds. In addition, with the permission of the Alberta Native Plant Council, we were able to include an extensive list of seed and plant suppliers. The list has made the book a great resource since obtaining native seeds and seedlings still tends to be the largest obstacle for many native plant gardeners in Saskatchewan.

In 2008, the second season of the demonstration garden, the garden was already fully established. Most species have done extremely well. Even species such as dotted blazing star and purple prairie clover (*Petalostemon purpurea*), which were slow to establish and badly

See Garden, page 12



Whitehorse Creek/Drummond Creek area
Photo A. Falk

WANTED URGENTLY!

We need botanists, nature lovers and enthusiasts that care about our wildlands.

Become involved as **stewards** or with **Friends of the Whitehorse Wildland Park**.

This is a great opportunity to learn more about alpine ecology, land management and one of the most beautiful places in Alberta.

For more information, please contact Alison Dinwoodie at adinwoodie@shaw.ca

ANPC Objectives

The Alberta Native Plant Council strives to:

- Promote knowledge of Alberta's native plants.
- Conserve Alberta's native plant species and their habitats.
- Preserve plant species and habitat for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Council's specific objectives are:

- To educate individuals, industry, and government about native plants.
- To promote awareness of native plant issues through a newsletter, an annual workshop, and in the media.
- To co-ordinate information and activities concerning Alberta's native plants.
 - o To develop briefs or position papers for special projects.
 - o To organize field trips, plant studies and May Species Counts.
 - o To update lists of current research and conservation projects.
- To preserve natural habitats and plant communities.
 - o To support legislation that protects native plants.
 - o To take action to establish, preserve and manage protected areas.
 - o To undertake Alberta projects jointly with like-minded groups.
- To encourage appropriate use of Alberta's native plants.
 - o To produce information on the use of native plants in land reclamation.
- To develop and distribute collection, salvage and management guidelines.
 - o To update a list of native seed sources and suppliers for horticulture and reclamation.

Adopt-a-Plant, from page 3

coordinator, I look forward to my first field season with APA and am excited to learn more about Alberta's rare plants and to meet the people who are making this program work – from one end of the province to the other!

For more information or to register as an APA volunteer please contact

Nora Manners, Program Coordinator

Adopt-a-Plant Alberta

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Puzzling Pairs, from page 10

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Iris is published three times a year by ANPC. The Council aims to increase knowledge of Alberta's wild flora and to preserve this diverse resource for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

If you have an announcement, article or other item, you are invited to submit it to the editor for publication. Items concerning native plants will be given highest priority.

The editors reserve the right to edit submissions, but will review changes with the authors whenever possible. Disputes will be resolved in favour of the audience.

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Submission deadline for the next issue:

October 1, 2009

A subscription to *Iris* is included with membership in the ANPC. To join, contact the secretary, or check our website, www.anpc.ab.ca.

Garden, from page 11

eaten by rabbits in the fall of 2007, flourished during the second season. We are now looking forward to another exciting season and if you are ever in Regina and have a few minutes to spare, do not hesitate to stop by the demonstration garden for a relaxing break. For further information, contact malin.hansen@uregina.ca.