



NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Native Plant News

Vol. 16, No. 1

Spring 2011

PLAN NOW for the 2011 NPSS summer field tours! Details on Page 3.

Photo contest winners

The Wright stuff

See more photos
on Pages 6 to 10

Best Overall



PHOTO BY ROB WRIGHT

Stemless lady slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*).

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Native Plant News is a quarterly publication of the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan (NPSS) and is one of the benefits of membership. Members are invited to submit articles, news, views, photographs and comments. Views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the NPSS.

Deadlines:

	Submission	Publication
Winter Issue:	November 1	December 15
Spring Issue:	February 1	March 15
Summer Issue:	May 1	June 15
Fall Issue:	August 1	September 15

Membership Dues (Year End November 30th)

Individual \$30

Family \$45

Student \$15

Corporate \$200

Life \$500

Please contact the NPSS office for information about the lifetime membership instalment payment option.

Watching for spring's first blossoms

By DEANNA TROWSDALE-MUTAFOV

PlantWatch Saskatchewan Coordinator

Nature Saskatchewan

It's hard to believe, but spring is around the corner. That means PlantWatchers all over Saskatchewan will be getting outside soon to watch the flowers bloom!

To become a PlantWatcher is very simple – just phone or email the Nature Saskatchewan office to indicate your interest, and we will mail you a package of plantwatching

information. Then look for one or more of the 18 native plants or 2 non-native plants in your area. You'll watch the plants, record the first bloom and send those results in by mail or email.



Even one observation of one plant is a great contribution!

By signing up as a participant, you will receive two newsletters per year, including a datasheet to record data and you can request other PlantWatch materials – such as wall charts, posters, Canada in Bloom booklets and brochures. These materials are also available for download from the PlantWatch website (www.naturesask.ca) under Education and Monitoring.

I encourage individuals, school classrooms and nature groups to get involved in this program as it can be a fun project and is important climate change data.

There is also information on the other NatureWatch programs that may be of interest to youth and adults alike – FrogWatch, WormWatch and IceWatch. All of these monitoring programs can be found at www.naturewatch.ca. Be sure to check them out!

For more information on the program or how to become a PlantWatch participant please call 306-780-9273 in Regina – 1-800-667-4668 outside the city – or email the PlantWatch Coordinator at plantwatch@naturesask.ca.

If you know of a school, youth group or community group who would like a presentation on the program at no charge, please tell us about them. Happy PlantWatching!*



Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company is your Saskatchewan source for native wildflower seeds, wildflower plugs, wedding favours, Education Kits, Gift Packs and more. Order from our online store at GrowWildflowers.com or write to Blazing Star, Box 382, Aberdeen, SK. S0K 0A0 for your free catalogue. Call 306-253-4219.

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Contact the NPSS for rates at info@npss.sk.ca or visit www.npss.sk.ca to view our rate card.

Grow your business, plant the seeds of success here.

Seedy Saturday a success



PHOTO BY DAVID FREEMAN

Roughly 200 people, and 10 organizations and businesses, attended Regina's Seedy Saturday seed exchange and workshop on March 5. Jim Ternier from Prairie Garden Seeds gave a lecture on seed collection from garden vegetables. NPSS members Sarah James (left), Tara Sample, Kerry Hecker and David Freeman took turns at the society's booth providing literature, advice and promoting the organization. Saskatoon's Seedy Saturday event on March 12 was also attended by the NPSS and it too was a success. 🌱

Twice as much fun Two summer field tours planned

Are you already thinking of warmer days? If you aren't it might help to know that the NPSS has set the dates for its summer field tours.

To celebrate the International Year of Forests and Parks Canada's 100th Anniversary, we will be holding a two-day tour in the Prince Albert National Park area on **June 4 and 5**.

Day one will consist of salvaging native plants from an area soon to be redeveloped and day two will be spent exploring the unique habitats in the park.

Then, in celebration of Native Prairie Appreciation Week, we will be holding a tour of the Last Mountain Lake Na-

tional Wildlife Area on **June 25**.

Participants will visit the on-site native plant nursery, native seed cleaning facility, native prairie restoration areas, recent prescribed burn sites and many natural plant and wildlife habitats.



Mark these dates on your calendar so you don't miss out!

Last year our tour had a record attendance and we expect at least as many this year. Non-members are also welcome so tell your friends!

Go the NPSS website for details. 🌱

Upcoming Events

April 2011

Fragments of the Rocky Mountains
Saturday, April 30
Lady Macdonald Community Hall,
Canmore, Alta.

This is the 24th workshop and AGM of the Alberta Native Plant Council and will explore the state of native plants in Alberta's Rocky Mountains. Go to the council's website for more details.
<http://www.anpc.ab.ca>

Earth Day

April 22

Think about putting the earth first through your conservation and recycling efforts. Want to know what's going on near you, go to the website – or hold your own Earth Day celebrations in honour of our planet.
www.earthday.ca

May 2011

Wings over Wascana Festival and Friends of Wascana Marsh fundraiser
May 10 to 14
Regina, Sask.

This annual festival coincides with International Migratory Bird Day and is preceded by a public fundraising dinner to raise money for interpretive components at the marsh.

<http://www.wascanamarsh.ca>

International Day for Biological Diversity – Forest Diversity
May 22

The IDBD was established to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. Find out what's happening near you and get involved.

<https://www.cbd.int/idb/>

June 2011

Nature Saskatchewan Spring Meet
June 3 to 5

Yorkton, Sask., and area
Explore a variety of prairie landscapes. You'll be able to visit provincial and regional parks, an ecological preserve and a Ducks Unlimited marsh. Visit the Nature Saskatchewan website for more details and to register.
<http://www.naturesask.ca>

To submit your native plant related event to our events list, send your information (including date, contact, phone number and location) to info@npss.sk.ca.

Gardening for pollinators

By *LEANNE HEISLER*
NPSS member

As a prairie enthusiast, I envision a piece of the prairies in my own backyard, not only the plants and flowers, but also the sights and sounds of bees, butterflies, birds and squirrels going about their daily business. Their visits to flowers are rewarded by the mutual partnerships that have evolved between them – flowers provide nutrition, while animals provide opportunities to complete the plant's life cycle by dispersing their seeds or pollinating other flowers of the same species (cross-pollination).

Before angiosperms (flowering plants) evolved, cross-pollination was an affair left to winds and chance. This left a lot to be desired, mostly because cross-pollination is less likely to occur the farther away individuals of the same species are from each other. Thus, plants of the same species had to grow in large monotonous stands, and because there was no evolutionary advantage to being colourful or aromatic, the world was blanketed in a sea of green plants.

However, once flowers evolved the race was on to develop these mutual partnerships between plants and animals, helping plant species disperse and mingle with each other, adding life and colour to the landscape.

Plants use a variety of reliable attractants to entice potential pollinators to visit their flowers. Bright colors and strong scents are used, while intricate patterns



PHOTO BY DAVID FREEMAN

A bee searches for nectar on a smooth aster (*Aster laevis*) flower.

direct pollinators to what they are looking for. Flowers also produce nectar, extra pollen or other nutritious tissues to feed pollinators and lure them into the flower.

Some plants use these tools to encourage visits from everything whizzing by the flower, or they may use one or a few specific techniques to lure in a certain species. When a flower has adapted to attract a specific species of pollinator, the pollinator will also evolve search images for that species's flower and other structures to aid in collecting whatever it retrieves from those flowers.

By knowing what bees, butterflies and birds are searching for, a gardener can actually use their flowers to lure pollinators into their backyard.

Using plants native to your surroundings is a good way to attract the local wildlife, as most of these species evolved together.

For instance, bees prefer blues and violets, but will visit white, yellow and pink flowers if they discover an abundance of delicious nectar there. Some plant species preferred by bees and native to the Canadian prairies include giant hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), purple prairie clover (*Dalea purpurea*) and northern hedysarum (*Hedysarum boreale*). Butterflies will visit a variety of flowers, like black-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), dotted blazingstar (*Liatriis punctata*), gaillardia (*Gaillardia aristata*), smooth aster (*Aster laevis*), prairie

In my garden right now it is high summer, the middle of July, and the place is so crowded with flowers, is so busy and multifarious, that it feels more like a city street than a quiet corner of the countryside.

– MICHAEL POLLAN, *BOTANY OF DESIRE*

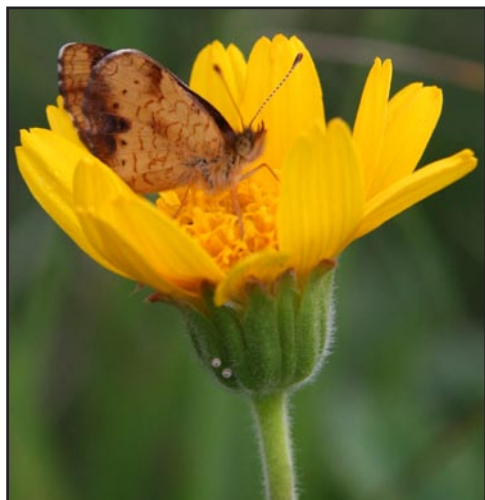


PHOTO BY DAVID FREEMAN

A pearl crescent (*Phyciodes tharos*) butterfly takes a break on a shining arnica (*Arnica fulgens*) flower.

coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*), stiff goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), wild blue flax (*Linum lewisii*) and yellow evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*). Birds will be attracted to shrubs that produce nutritious berries (strategy for seed dispersal, rather than cross-pollination), such as saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) or chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*).

The best way to ensure a wide variety of pollinators visit your garden is by planting an equally wide variety of native shrubs and flowers – from large to small, tubular to flat and broad, scentless to aromatic, as well as an assortment of colours – ensuring that an array of wildlife will be attracted to your yard. 🌱



PHOTO BY CHET NEUFELD

Roughly 100 people attended the 2011 NPSS AGM in Saskatoon in February.

AGM draws large crowds

By CHET NEUFELD
NPSS Executive Director

The NPSS held its annual general meeting and workshop at TCU Place in Saskatoon on Feb 11 and 12, and in celebration of the International Year of Forests, the society focused on forest-related topics.

The event began on Friday night with a screening of winning films from the International Forest Film Festival, which had premiered at the United Nations in New York only the week before. It was a prestigious honour to be one of the first venues in North America to screen these films outside of the premiere!

Keynote speaker John Murray shared with us the splendid ecological, cultural and social value that exist – to this day – in Saskatchewan's boreal forest. Through his words, photos and music (featuring Stanley the singing saw) he showed us how much impact forests and our treatment of forests can have on our well-being. We learned what it means for children to connect with nature for the first time and the heartbreak suffered when poor forestry practices change a traditional way of life forever.

Saturday's presentations were equally exciting.

Janna Lutz introduced us to eco-buffers, a new type of dense native planting developed by the AESB Agroforestry Centre. I'm sure you'll hear more about eco-buffers in the years to come.

Jeff Weir discussed the restoration

and maintenance of fescue grasslands in Prince Albert National Park. Hopefully we'll be able to experience this landscape first hand during our summer field tour there later this year (see Page 3 for details).

Digit Guedo spoke about the endemic plants of the unique Athabasca Sand Dunes. It was fascinating to learn about the 10 endemic species that call the dunes home, and the unique evolutionary characteristics they developed to survive in such a special ecosystem.

In the afternoon, Jill Johnstone spoke about how climate change impacts the boreal forest. As climate change becomes a more controversial topic it's interesting to consider how it will affect the vast tracts of Saskatchewan boreal forest in the future. Michael McLaughlan followed with a presentation on the new Field Guide to the Ecosites of Saskatchewan's Provincial Forests. Not only was it a very interesting talk, but everyone also received a free copy of the field guide – a \$35 value!

On Saturday afternoon, we concluded with a workshop on how to create wildlife habitat in your yard using native plants. Participants learned about what species to use as well as some techniques to improve wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

Overall, the workshop was a great success. All of the speakers were excellent, the film festival was a hit and I received dozens of comments saying that this was the best annual general

meeting in a long time (some said it was the best ever). It was also one of the best attended in years, with nearly 100 people attending. AGM presentations can be downloaded from our website, www.npss.sk.ca.

The interest in the member slide show was spectacular. The stage was literally flooded with people wanting to share their photos. We had so many photos that we went right through lunch and even showed photos during the second coffee break! It was really good to see so many enthusiastic members and truly enjoyable to live vicariously through all your plant adventures.

But the AGM isn't just about learning and discussing interesting topics and having a good time. There was business to attend to as well.

Nora Stewart was presented with the society's Volunteer of the Year Award for hosting a native seed collection workshop last fall and Rob Wright was presented with the award for the NPSS Photo Contest (see Page 1, 6 and 7) – a Canada Post stamp with his photo of a stemless lady slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*). The stamps are for sale on our website, www.npss.sk.ca.

Of course, this event could not even happen without the generous support of our sponsors: Environment Canada sponsored the workshop component; SaskEnergy was the carbon neutral sponsor; Nature Saskatchewan provided overall sponsorship; and the Meewasin Valley Authority and Margaret Put each sponsored a coffee break. ☘

2011 NPSS Photo Contest



PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE

The underside of a gaillardia (*Gaillardia aristata*) on a summer day.

About the contest

Leanne Heisler, Rik Anaka, and Don Fontaine chose the finalists and passed them on to professional Canadian nature photographer John E. Marriott to choose the Best Overall photo for 2010.

The Best Overall photo came down to two by Rob Wright: the sphagnum and feather moss you see on the right and the Stemless lady slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*). Ultimately, the lady slipper photo was chosen.

The winning photo (front cover) was printed on a Canada Post postage stamp that is now available for purchase on the NPSS website.

Thanks to the judges for all their hard work and for making some very tough decisions. Enjoy the winning photos and some of the best of the bunch on the following pages. 🌿

For more on photographer John E. Marriott, visit his website, www.wildernessprints.com.



Sphagnum and feather moss.

PHOTO BY ROB WRIGHT

Best overall



PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE

Lance-leaved stonecrop (*Sedum lanceolatum*).



PHOTO BY GLEN LONGPRE

English sundew (*Drosera anglica*).



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK

Striped coralroot (*Corallorhiza striata*).



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK

A yellow ambush bug (*Phymata* sp.) sits in wait of prey on goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.).

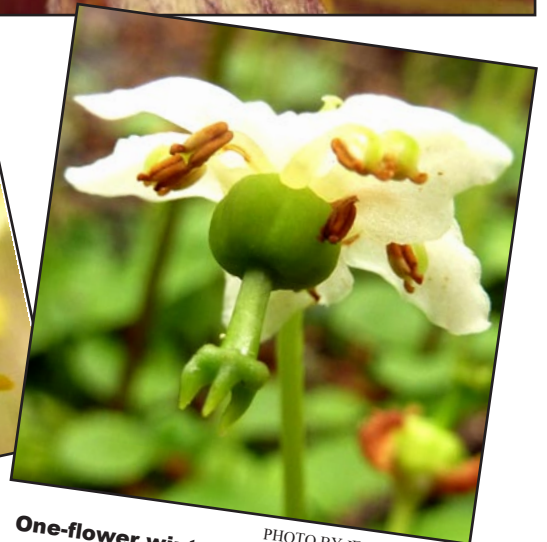


PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK

One-flower wintergreen (*Moneses uniflora*).



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK

A prairie sunset over Jackfish Lake.

Scenery

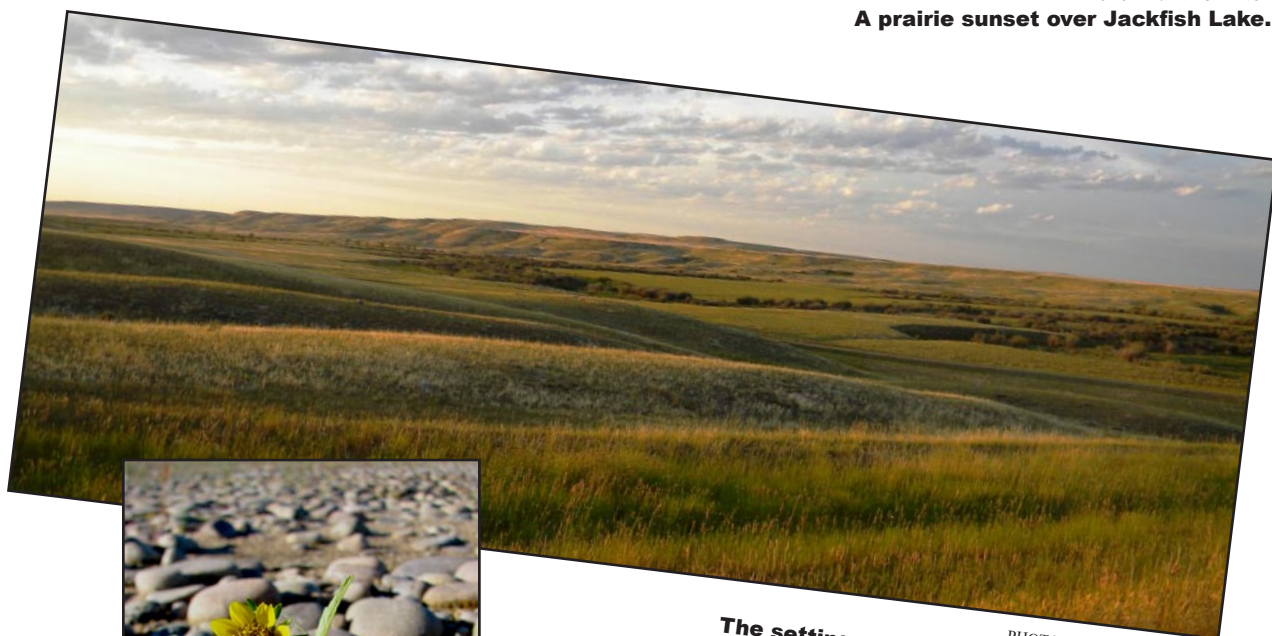


PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK

The setting sun gives this prairie river valley a beautiful golden glow.



PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE

(Left) A lone sunflower (*Helianthus* sp.) rises from the wet sand along a shoreline.

Close-ups



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK
Long-fruited anemone (*Anemone cylindrica*).



PHOTO BY GLEN LONGPRE
Shaggy mane mushrooms (*Coprinus comatus*) huddle together on the forest floor.



PHOTO BY ROB WRIGHT
**(Left)
Cranberry (*Viburnum* sp.).**



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK
Showy sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*).

Runners-Up

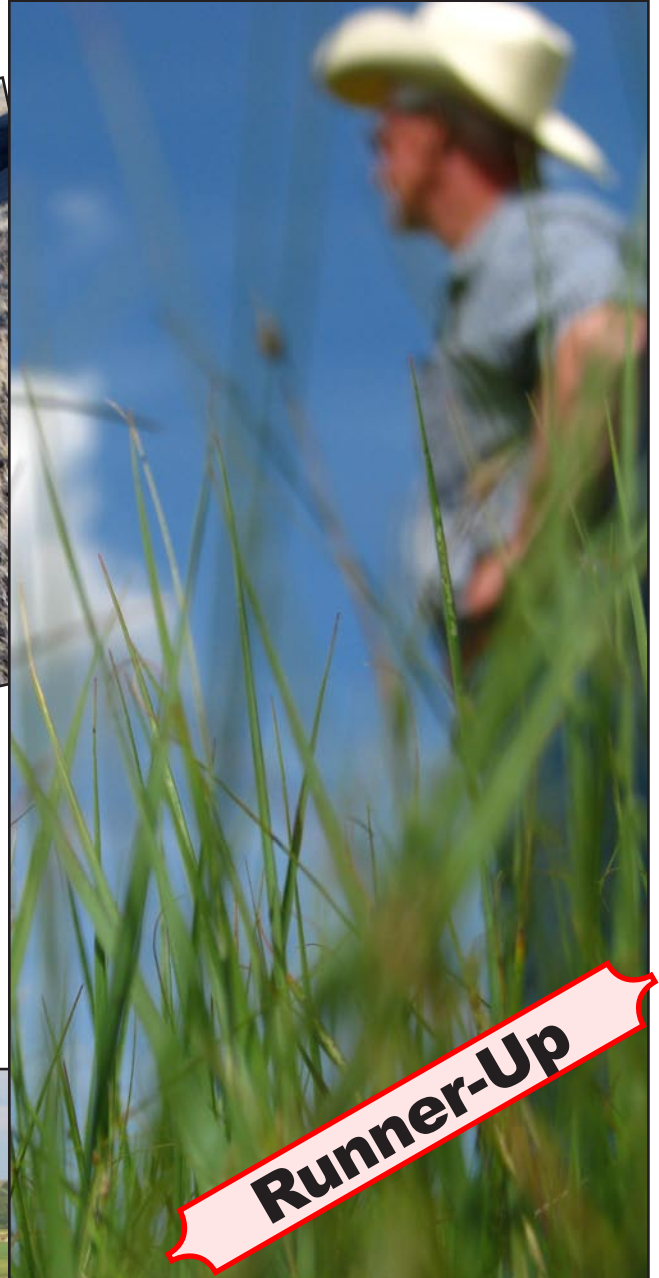


PHOTO BY CLAUDIA DIEDRICH
Plains prickly-pear (*Opuntia polyacantha*).

People and Plants



PHOTO BY LISA GRILZ
A cool family stroll in the rolling hills of a prairie grassland.



Runner-Up

PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE

(Above) A snake's-eye view of a rancher through tall prairie grasses.



PHOTO BY ROB WRIGHT

(Left) Taking in the scenery around Cherry Lake while sitting amongst downy indian-paintbrush (*Castilleja sessiliflora*).

Plants

PHOTO BY GLEN LONGPRE
A lesser yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*).



PHOTO BY SARAH VINCE
Prairie Coneflower (*Ratibida columnifera*).



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK
(Above) The male flower of arrowhead (*Sagittaria* sp.).



PHOTO BY FIDJI GENDRON
(Left) Purple prairie-clover (*Dalea purpurea*).



PHOTO BY JEN RUMANCIK
Cut-leaf anemone (*Anemone multifida*).



PHOTO BY FIDJI GENDRON
(Above) Rosy pussytoes (*Antennaria rosea*) reaching for the sky.

PHOTO BY ROB WRIGHT
(Right) The happy, yellow face of a marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*).



Monarch butterfly workshop planned



PHOTO BY DAVID FREEMAN

A monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*).

The Winnipeg Chapter of the Monarch Teaching Network is planning to host a workshop in Regina on July 19 and 20. Learn how to use the journey of the monarch butterfly to enhance your success in the classroom.

The Monarch Teacher Network is a group of teachers and educators in North America that use the monarch butterflies as a teaching and learning tool in their classrooms. The epic journey of the monarch butterfly can help in teaching science, art, math and more – in a fun way that engages children to learn.

Teachers wishing to participate should come forward before the end of June.

Please note that there is an early registration discount! For more information visit www.monarchteachernetwork-westerncanada.com. *

Spot the crocus contest is back!

I know that there's still a lot of snow around and it doesn't really feel much like spring, but it won't be long before the prairie crocuses (*Pulsatilla patens*) start popping up. Sometimes they will even force their way through a thin layer of snow if conditions are right.

That's where you come in. Keep your eyes peeled and when you spot the first crocus of the season, let us know about it. You can even include a picture of it.

The winner will receive bragging rights for the year and a mention in our newsletter. All submissions will also be sent along to PlantWatch, a program which helps to monitor climate change.*

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