



Native Plant News

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Spring 2018

A Prairie Patchwork Finds a Common Thread at NPSS Annual General Meeting



PHOTO BY BRANIMIR GJETVAJ

On January 27-28, 2018, NPSS members gathered at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina, SK for another great annual general meeting. This year's theme was "A Prairie Patchwork: Selected Topics on Native Prairie".

Saturday began with the business portion of the AGM over breakfast, followed by presentations on NPSS projects and programs by Chet Neufeld

and Natasha Mackintosh. After the morning coffee break, the crowd was treated to two exceptional presentations. The first dealt with a very successful project involving Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) control in Prince Albert, presented by the Saskatchewan Polytechnic student team of Cole Tomlinson, Daryl Gareau and Jeremy Toon. Since their presentation at

the AGM, their project has had further success as the City of Prince Albert has fully endorsed their efforts and intends to implement their management plan long-term. The second presentation was an impassioned presentation by Jared Clarke on climate change and its implications and solutions for

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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.

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What's Blooming?

Do you want to know what's blooming before you go out for a hike, or are you trying to find a certain native plant to photograph at its best?

Look no further than the NPSS website! We keep an updated list of all the native plants currently flowering, compiled from reports we receive from our members across the province.

The list can be found on our homepage, or by visiting the following link:

<https://www.npss.sk.ca/news-and-events/255>

Are there species that we've missed?

Tell us and we'll add them.
We will continue to update the list until the end of September.

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Saskatchewan and beyond. Jared has recently attended Climate Reality Leadership Corps training, lead by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore.

After lunch the crowd was treated to the keynote presentation lead by naturalist and award-winning author Trevor Herriot and biologist and internationally published photographer Bраниmir Gjetvaj. The two talked about their new book, *Islands of Grass*, and the challenges faced in the effort to conserve our remaining native prairie.

After a short break, the audience was treated to two more presentations; the first was by Dr. Jon Bennett, who spoke about plant-fungal interactions and their role in plant communities as well as some of the potential projects he may initiate in the near future. Dr. Bennett was recently hired to replace Dr. Jim Romo's position at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture and Bioresources, and his research program spans many interesting topics. The second speaker of the set was Sarah Vinge-Mazer, who is hardly a new face to anyone whose been involved with the NPSS. Sarah has served on the NPSS board, has given presentations and collaborated on various initiatives, and is a regular contributor to the Native Plant News. She is the botanist with the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre, and she updated the crowd with a presentation on the recent reassessment and current status of Plains Rough Fescue (*Festuca hallii*) in Saskatchewan, and why it was given a rank of S3 (rare/tracked).

Sarah's talk served as a primer for the last presentation of the day by Renny Grilz, Resource Management Officer with the Meewasin Valley Authority. Renny is also no stranger to the NPSS, having served as a board member for many years and collaborating on many projects. He discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with managing multiple prairie areas, including fescue prairie, in an urban context and with multiple management goals. In particular, Renny talked about Saskatoon's recent expansion into natural areas, using prescribed burning and conservation grazing to promote biodiversity, and how Meewasin is adapting its integrated resource

management program to ensure success.

In addition to the presentations, we ended the day with a screening of the film *Grasslands*. The film examines the unique natural habitat of the mixed-grass prairie through four seasons from the perspectives of the ranchers, conservationists, and aboriginal people who understand it best and live by preserving it. It is guided by a powerful metaphor: The re-discovered wallows of the re-introduced bison.

Throughout the day, a silent auction was held featuring the book collection of Dr. Vernon Harms. Many great deals were had by bidders who were rewarded with hard-to-find books. Between merchandise sales and the silent auction, we raised over a thousand dollars! Thanks to all who participated!

Day two featured our newest learning module of the Saskatchewan Master Naturalist program: Prairie Ecosystems. Topics included how prairie ecosystems work, challenges facing native prairie and opportunities to engage with prairie conservation. Several prairie experts lent their talents to developing and delivering course materials, including Natasha Mackintosh (NPSS), Kerry Hecker (Canadian Wildlife Service), Renny Grilz (Meewasin Valley Authority), Janet McVittie (University of Saskatchewan) and Chet Neufeld (NPSS). The course also included hands-on activities, and a case study that groups had to work through. Indigenous worldviews were incorporated throughout the course, and we were fortunate to have Cree Elder Joseph Naytowhow give the group a glimpse through his eyes as he told stories and lead the group in song, dance and smudging. We were also given an assignment: as small groups, we chose a native plant and were taught the Cree name, then instructed to observe the species throughout the upcoming growing season.

The Prairie Ecosystems module was fully subscribed, but we intend to host more soon in order to give everyone a chance to partake, as well as develop new learning modules.

Many thanks to all of the participants, speakers and to our Platinum Sponsor and long-time partner Saskatchewan Polytechnic. 🌱

Upcoming Events

Nature Conservancy of Canada - Conservation Volunteer Event - Dundurn Bioblitz

June 2, 2018

Dundurn, SK

<https://events.natureconservancy.ca/al-event/dundurn-bioblitz/>

Nature Saskatchewan Spring Meet

June 8-10, 2018

Coronach, SK

<http://www.naturesask.ca/get-involved/spring-meet>

Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association 105th Annual General Meeting

June 10-12, 2018

Kinetic Park, Swift Current, SK

<http://skstockgrowers.com/event/ssga-105th-agm-convention/>

Saskatchewan Native Prairie Appreciation Week

June 17-23, 2018

<http://www.pcap-sk.org/native-prairie-appreciation-week>

Society for Range Management NPAW Tour

June 21-22, 2018

Beechy, SK

http://www.pcap-sk.org/rsu_docs/documents/poster_-npaw-2018.pdf

Nature Conservancy of Canada - Conservation Volunteer Event - Pasqua Lake Bioblitz

June 22, 2018

Pasqua Lake, SK

<https://events.natureconservancy.ca/al-event/pasqua-lake-bioblitz/>

Forages in the Field Workshop

June 26, 2018

SK Landing Provincial Park
office@saskforage.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.



NATURECITY FESTIVAL 2018

An Evening with HARVEY LOCKE



FRIDAY MAY 25, 7PM

CASTLE THEATRE, SASKATOON

WWW.WILDABOUTSASKATOON.ORG

NatureCity
Festival



Wild about Saskatoon is delighted to announce that Dr. Harvey Locke will be the keynote speaker at this year's NatureCity Festival, May 22-27, 2018.

Harvey Locke is one of Canada's and the world's most respected voices for the protection of wildness. And he is coming to Saskatoon, as chair of the Nature Needs Half movement, to deliver an urgent message.

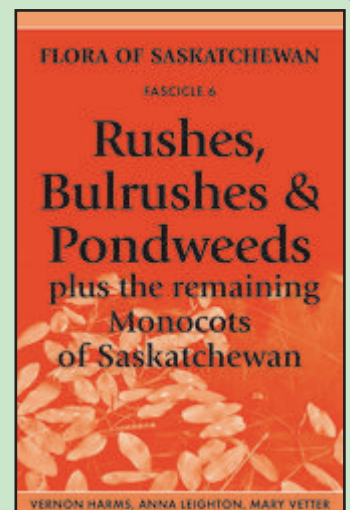
The Nature Needs Half movement begins with the recognition that nature needs sufficient space to function properly for the benefit of all life on our planet. In most ecosystems, science demonstrates that at least half of the region must be protected to ensure the Earth's resilience in the face of environmental change. We only have to look around us or listen to the news to know that conservation efforts to date have not been sufficient to sustain life on Earth.

What does the knowledge mean for those of us who live along the banks of the South Saskatchewan River? How do we transform the bold vision of Nature Needs Half into an achievable strategy?

Harvey Locke will be addressing these questions at a public event at the Castle Theatre in Aden Bowman Collegiate from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the evening of May 25. We hope that you will be able to join us. 🌱

The **Flora of Saskatchewan Association** is excited to announce that its sixth fascicle "***Rushes, Bulrushes & Pondweeds plus the remaining Monocots of Saskatchewan***" will be available for purchase this summer! This fascicle will cover many of the aquatic and semi-aquatic species of Saskatchewan and in conjunction with Fascicles 1 through 5 represents the entire catalog of monocot species in our province. Books will be available for purchase on-line through **Nature Saskatchewan** at <http://www.naturesask.ca/store/en/publications>.

After selling all our copies from our first print of the Grasses of Saskatchewan, we are also excited to announce that a reprint will be completed, and copies will be available through Nature Saskatchewan once again!





2018 NatureCity Festival • May 22 - 27, 2018, Saskatoon, SK
Āniskopicikēwin: Things Are Linked Together.

We invite everyone to explore the vital role of nature in a prairie city and life.

NatureCity Festival is a de-centralized festival, consisting of 50+ nature-inspired events spread across Saskatoon held over a week-long period, hosted in collaboration with countless individuals and community organizations.

NatureCity Festival is your opportunity to explore the vitality of urban nature through experiential events, workshops, dynamic speakers, guided tours, citizen science projects, music, art, performance and more!

We want to show off the wild side of the Saskatoon: the magnificent river valley, parks, conservation areas, gardens and urban forests, together with the fascinating creatures and native plants that surround us.

Celebrate the assets and diversity of nature in Saskatoon and deepen your understanding, appreciation and access to urban nature through experience, exploration and education.

Saskatoon is a living network of rivers and streets, trees and office towers, prairies and yards.

It is a city of contrasts unified by the natural networks that hold our ecosystem together.

NatureCity Festival 2018 uses the Cree concept **Āniskopicikēwin** (pronounced ahnsko-pich'-kewin) to describe these vital connections.

Join us on the trails, the rivers, the sidewalks, and the flyways to celebrate Saskatoon's wild side.

NatureCity Festival 2018 explores the natural networks of our ecosystems.

Visit www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org for a full calendar of events.

"To halt the decline of an ecosystem, it is necessary to think like an ecosystem." — Douglas P. Wheeler

May 27 - Spring Wildflower Walk



PHOTO BY CHET NEUFELD

South Saskatchewan River near Cranberry Flats.

Take a walk on the wild side and discover nearby nature! On Sunday, May 27, join the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan on a spring wildflower walk at Cranberry Flats. The event is part of Wild About Saskatoon's NatureCity Festival and is for all ages and experience levels. Cranberry Flats is located just outside the City of Saskatoon and is a scenic area with large sandy beaches and a wheelchair accessible trail leading to a valley lookout. This is a popular spot for families. Dogs are allowed but must be on leash. We will see many early season wildflowers like purple Crocuses and Violets, pink Avens, yellow Golden Bean, white Phlox and the electric blue Beardtongues. Bird life will also be very active. The event will proceed rain or shine. Meet at the Cranberry Flats parking lot. For directions to the parking lot, go to: <https://meewasin.com/visitors/cranberry-flats-conservation-area>

Explore With Us! Native Prairie Appreciation Week – June 17-23, 2018

In celebration of Saskatchewan's prairie places, the NPSS is offering a series of joint field tours to Nature Conservancy of Canada properties during Native Prairie Appreciation Week.

June 16 - Reed Lake Property - meet at Morse, SK Esso station at 8:45 am. The tour will end around lunchtime. Jacquie Bolton is the NPSS tour leader.

Reed Lake is typical of the larger saline wetlands in the Missouri Coteau. It is a large (13 km long by 3 km wide; 4,100 ha), saline, shallow open water wetland, that periodically goes dry under drought conditions. Reed Lake is recognized as one of five wetlands in Saskatchewan of major importance for the endangered Piping Plover and is designated a Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network along with Old Wives and Chaplin Lake. The results of the international survey indicated the presence of eight pairs and five individuals in 2006 and three pairs of Piping Plovers on the lake in 2011. The east half of the Reed Lake Complex Property is identified as Critical Habitat for Piping Plover. The land is gently rolling, sloping towards the lake. The complex consists of 2,329 acres (942 ha) of lake bottom, permanent and seasonal wetlands, tame forage, and modified native uplands.

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June 23 - Dundurn Property - meet at the grain elevator in the Saskatoon Western Development Museum parking lot at 8 am. The tour will end at 1 pm. Chet Neufeld is the NPSS tour leader.

The Dundurn Property is located in the Moist Mixed Prairie Ecoregion within the Moose Wood Sand Hills ecodistrict of the Saskatoon Prairie Natural Area. It consists of a total of 120 acres (48.5 ha) of rolling stabilized sand dunes covered by 53 acres (21.4 ha) of hardwood forest, 13 acres (5.3 ha) of shrubs and wet meadows, and the remaining 54 acres (21.8 ha) is native prairie. Dundurn has high conservation value due to the pristine nature of the habitat and its connectivity to surrounding native habitat and consists of a variety of other habitats including rolling stabilized sand dunes, forest and meadows. There are several species listed under the Species at Risk



PHOTO BY CLAUDE ECKINGER

Grasslands near Dundurn property.



Qu'Appelle Valley near Fairy Hill Property.

PHOTO BY DALE GROSS

Act that are known to occur in the area including Hairy Prairie Clover (*Dalea villosa* var. *villosa*) and the Olive-backed Pocket Mouse. The property also provides excellent habitat for mammals such as White-tailed Deer, Mule Deer, Moose, and Elk. The property is directly adjacent to the large Dundurn military base which is native habitat.

June 24 - Fairy Hill - meet at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum parking lot (Regina) at 8:30 am. Gary Seib is the tour leader.

Fairy Hill is just a 20-minute drive north of Regina on Highway #6. Totalling 1,642 acres (665 hectares), this expanse of native grasslands, woodlands, river and flood plains serve as a home for aquatic and terrestrial species and a haven for visitors wishing to enjoy this area. Rare species found at Fairy Hill include loggerhead shrike, northern leopard frog, bigmouth buffalo fish and Sprague's pipit. This area is also well used as a staging area for ducks and geese and serves as a stopover for many and varied shorebird species. 🌱

NPSS Board Member Profile



PHOTO BY JACQUIE BOLTON

Jacquie Bolton - Secretary

I was born and raised near Swift Current on a farm and ranch. I grew up with a love for riding horses out in the pastures around our home which sparked a life long love of native prairie and the natural world. I attended Olds College in the early nineties and received a diploma in Land Resource Management. After that I went on to study rangeland management at the Montana State University and completed my B.Sc. in Range Science in 1994. From 1994 to 2012 I worked with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada at the Research Center in Swift Current. I began my work there in the soil research programs and the remaining 15 years were spent with the plant ecology research program. Since 2012 I have been working in the field of natural health but continue to regularly enjoy time out on the prairie and staying involved with prairie conservation.

I currently reside on a farm near Swift Current with my husband Stacy. We try to get out hiking whenever we can, and we also enjoy canoeing, backpacking and just generally experiencing the great outdoors. I am excited to be more involved with the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan and I look forward to meeting more of the members at upcoming events! 🌱

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