

Native Orchid News:

THE NEWSLETTER OF NATIVE ORCHID CONSERVATION INC.

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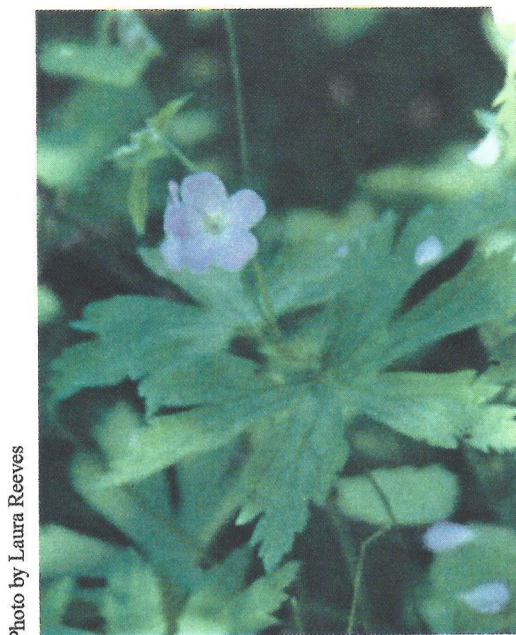


Photo by Laura Reeves

Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

117 Morier Avenue
Winnipeg, MB
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Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, April 14, 2004

Rare Plant of the month
Wild Geranium
(*Geranium maculatum*)

NOCI Website:
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please remember to attend our upcoming Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, April 14th 7:30PM, at Dakota Lawn Bowls Club, 1212 Dakota Street. Elections to the board of directors will take place at that time. Lorne Heshka will present a slide show "Orchids, Whales and a Polar Bear".

If you are interested in becoming a director or want further information, contact our nominating chair, John Neufeld, as follows: Steinbach office (204)326-3442, Winnipeg direct 475-5484, evenings (204)326-2357. The following members have agreed to let their names stand for election to the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting on April 14, 2004. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

DORIS AMES - Doris has been a member of the organization since 1998 and has served it in many capacities including most recently as president. She has had a life-long interest in plants and animals and the health of the environment and has had numerous articles published about orchids and other plant species.

RICHARD REEVES - Richard has been a member of NOCI since 1998. He has served as treasurer and is currently the editor of the newsletter. Richard has been an amateur naturalist and environmentalist for as long as he can remember.

EUGENE REIMER - Eugene grew up on a farm near Giroux, Manitoba. He is a life-long naturalist and a long-time member of the Manitoba Naturalists. He has been a member of NOCI since 2000. He is currently our webmaster and our treasurer.

ALICE WARREN - Alice has been secretary of NOCI for the past five years. She has a life-long love of nature. Her family has owned cottages on Gull Lake for more than 60 years. She has a special interest in preservation of the surrounding wetlands since being introduced to the magnificent fen there, with its beautiful orchids.

RARE PLANT OF THE MONTH (SEE COVER PHOTO)

Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)

By Laura Reeves

Wild geranium is also known as spotted geranium, wild cranesbill, or spotted cranesbill.

The wild geranium reaches the northwest extent of its range in Manitoba. Currently, it is ranked as S1 by the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre. This means that it is very rare throughout its range - with 5 or fewer occurrences, or very few remaining individuals - and may be especially vulnerable to extirpation.

Botanist Charles Lowe recorded the wild geranium in Manitoba sometime between the 1920's and 1940's, leading to the mention of Manitoba in the range description in Peterson's Field Guide to Wildflowers. Unfortunately, there is no herbarium specimen or clue to the location of his find to back up his report. (There is speculation that this information may have been destroyed after World War II when funding for herbariums was tight.) Currently, this species is only found in two isolated sites on the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve.

On the Preserve, this geranium grows in dry aspen woods, reaching a height of 1 to 2 feet (30 to 60 cm). It has been found in the company of dewberry, Canada anemone, pea vines, black snakeroot and poison ivy, with or without an overstory of hazelnut. It prefers partial shade, but may also be found in areas such as bush edges that have a good amount of light.

Its flowers, which appear in mid to late June, are pink, approximately 1 inch (2.5 cm) across and have a long central beak, typical of the Geranium family. This beak is a distinguishing characteristic of seeding plants. While not flowering, a casual observer can easily mistake the wild geranium for Canada anemone. However, a closer look will reveal a difference in leaf shape where the petiole joins the base of the leaf. In the anemone, this edge is sharply triangular. In the geranium, it is saddle-shaped. (See Peterson's Field Guide to Wildflowers for a coloured sketch of the geranium.)

The roots of the wild geranium are highly astringent because of their 10-20 percent tannin content. As a result, they were once used to stop bleeding, dysentery and diarrhea as well as to treat gum disease, canker sores and kidney/stomach ailments. In the United States, where this plant is commonly found, it is becoming a popular perennial in flower gardens.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - DORIS AMES

Spring is fast approaching and we are looking forward to getting out into the field again. The next issue of the newsletter will include our summer field trip schedule. We will have a display once again at the Manitoba Orchid Society's Orchid Show on April 2, 3 and 4th at Assiniboine Park Conservatory. Every year this is a wonderful show with many beautiful orchids on display. Please plan to come out and see the displays at that time. If you are able to volunteer for a shift or two with our display there, please contact me. We also need volunteers for displays at other locations in March and April. Over the past two months we have been busy working on the field guide and on new displays. On February 3rd I had a chance to meet the new Minister of Conservation, the Honourable Stan Struthers and the Deputy Minister Don Potter. The Manitoba Eco-network arranged for its member groups to meet with the minister to acquaint him with their organizations and any concerns they had in the conservation field. Our Members Night was a great success and I was glad to see so many members in attendance. Congratulations to hosts Peggy and John who did a wonderful job. Please see Peggy's report elsewhere in this newsletter. Our next Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 14th 7:30PM at the Dakota Lawn Bowls Club, 1212 Dakota Street. Elections to the board of directors will take place at that time. As well, NOCI member Lorne Heshka will put on a slide show entitled "Orchids, Whales and a Polar Bear" about his trips to Churchill to photograph orchids. See you then.

2004 MEMBERS' NIGHT A SUCCESS!

Submitted by Peggy Bainard Acheson, Co-committee Chair, Members' Night

Judging by the pictures on NOCI's website (<http://nativeorchid.com/MembersnightPhotos04feb.htm>) and from positive comments received from guests, it appears that NOCI's third annual NOCI Members' Night, held February 6, 2004 at the Dakota Lawn Bowls Club, was the focus of a wonderful evening. Over 60 members and guests of NOCI came out to enjoy two wonderful presentations, recognition of our many volunteers over 2003, refreshments, and much more.

Feature speakers, NOCI members Pat MacKay and Bob Lamb, presented a fabulous slide presentation called "Biologists in Wonderland: Bush-walking in Australia" which highlighted the plants, animals, and insects that highlighted their adventures during sabbaticals in Australia. Board members, John Neufeld and Eugene Reimer, also gave an excellent Powerpoint presentation of their trip to the Bruce Peninsula Orchid Festival in May, 2003. I'm sure they had a lot of fun putting that together for our enjoyment.

In honour of our 2003 volunteers (list below), Doris Ames, President of NOCI, gave out certificates. She also inspired us with her words, telling us how everyone's input is important, no matter how big or small, to the bigger picture of the environmental and conservation agenda. As part of the refreshments, a large cake with the NOCI logo and the notation, "Thank you 2003 volunteers" was served. To express appreciation to our corporate sponsors, a colour poster, printed in the form of a certificate, and listing their names, was set up behind the cake (list below).

The raffle has become a very popular event at Members' Night as we raised \$229, helping to offset the cost of the hall rental and refreshments. I would like to give a big thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes. Also, thanks to Board member Bob Joyce, his wife, Kathy, and Ellen Johannesen for selling tickets and drawing the winners. A list of donors, items and winners is included below.

After the presentations, refreshments were served, and everyone had a chance to mingle and get to know one another better. Members also had an opportunity to enjoy the new Field Trip and Events display and to browse Richard Reeves' beautiful orchid note cards. Richard kindly donated the proceeds to help defray costs. I would also like to thank my co-chair John Neufeld, Alice Warren, and the rest of the Board and many of their family members for helping to make this event possible and a success. Hope to see you all next year!

Prize Winners

Hand-knit afghan	Al Ames
Wooden bowl and lid	Judy Moxley
The Art of Robert Bateman	Betty De Jong
The World of Robert Bateman	Eugene Reimer
Bottle Crown Royal	Jim Roy
Manitoba Wayside Wildflowers	Sally McGillivray
Complete Guide to Medicinal Herbs	Mark Gray
Bottle Seagram's whiskey	Willa Semetok
Perpetual calendar photo frame	Bep Vanderwoude
Framed picture of butterfly (door prize)	Amichai Bakerman
MB Museum admission Pass	Denny Smith
Lee Valley gardening planner	Susan Bouchat
Signed Trans-Canada Trail book	Huguette Calvez
MEC weekendrental coupon	Bob Rempel
Fort White gift certificate	Amichai Bakerman
Oak Hammock Marsh annual membership	Jim Roy

Prize Donors

Kathy Everett	Doris & Al Ames	Manitoba Museum	Fort Whyte Nature Centre
Bill Belcher	Yvonne Lozinski	Lee Valley Tools	Oak Hammock Marsh
Keith Seidel	Peggy Bainard Acheson	Mountain Equipment Co-op	

2003 Volunteers

Adrian Ames	Donna Danyluk	Bob Joyce	Richard Reeves	Monique Wall
Al Ames	Henry DeCuyper	Florence Krogh	Birnie Reid	Ian Ward
Doris Ames	Betty DeJong	Walter Loewen	Nora Reid	Alice Warren
Peggy Bainard Acheson	Kathy Everett	Yvonne Lozinski	Eugene Reimer	Jac Wiebe
Bill Belcher	Joan Heshka	Christiane Neufeld	Iris Reimer	Mary Wiebe
Winifred Belcher	Lorne Heshka	John Neufeld	Denny Smith	Eva Yurechka
Bethany Booy	David Johannesen	Keith Putt	Mary Smith	
Huguette Calvez	Ellen Johannesen	Laura Reeves	Bep Vanderwoude	

Corporate Donors

C.P. Loewen Family Foundation	Premier Horticulture
Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program	Province of MB Sustainable Development Innovations Fund
Manitoba Hydro	R.M. Alexander
Manitoba Model Forest	R.M. St. Clements
Mountain Equipment Coop	Shell Environmental Fund
Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens	Sun Gro Horticulture Canada Ltd.
Pine Falls Paper Company	The Winnipeg Foundation

RENEWAL REMINDER

Please renew your membership for 2004 in order to continue receiving newsletters and to be entitled to go on field trips. Membership is only \$10.00 per person. Your support helps us continue our efforts to save rare plants and their habitat. To renew please send your cheque made out to Native Orchid Conservation Inc. to:

**Peggy Bainard Acheson
Membership Chair, NOCI
1307 - 90 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB
R3T 4K8
R3T 5K8**

If you have already paid your 2004 membership, we thank you and please disregard this notice.

Please Don't Pick the Flowers!

by John E. Neufeld

People who pick wild flowers bug me. They bug me because they are completely selfish, in the bad sense of that word. (There is a good sense too.) They do not think of others. They pay no heed to anyone other than themselves.

Why else would they pick what they see and admire? Why can't they just let them be? Let them be to provide joy to others at some other time? What makes them think that they own the flowers? That they can kill what is gloriously alive and giving pleasure to all who see?

I love wildflowers. Someone once said that nature is the unedited manuscript of God. If that is true, and I believe it is, then wildflowers are the exclamations points! They are the gems on the necklace. Emerson said that the "world laughs in flowers." I love that statement!

It has long been one of my fundamental beliefs that the world is holy. It is the receptacle of the spirit. No it is more than that, it is the spirit itself. The world and the spirit are not distinguishable. They are indissoluble. Any one who would try to sever them is sadly misguided. Some of the best evidence to support that view is found in wildflowers. They are sparks from the divine fire. Flowers have the power to stun us into quiet wonder.

Of course, flowers are not the only things that reveal the glory. The world is filled to the brim with such things. William Blake, the great English poet as always put it very well when he said, famously,

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

Yet some people want to horde that beauty for themselves. Even if their action destroys the beauty, as it does inevitably. How impoverished such people must be that can desecrate the holy. Why not rather enjoy the beauty and then let it go? Let it go so that others can enjoy it too. Why bring it into your house where no one other than you or your friends can see it? The glory is there for all of us. No one has the right to appropriate it. All attempts to appropriate it will result in the beauty crumbling like dust in an old man's cup. You can no more hold onto the beauty than you can catch and tame a fleeting joy. Again, Blake got it right again when he said,

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise.

Flowers are here. Enjoy. Don't Pick.