

Native Orchid News:

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photo by Richard Reeves

Native Orchid Conservation Inc.
117 Morier Avenue, Winnipeg, MB
R2M 0C8

Notice of Special Meeting of Members:
Friday, November 22, 2002 at 7:30PM.
Location: Dakota Lawn Bowling Centre
1212 Dakota Street, Winnipeg, MB
See page 4

Rare Plant of the Month:
Eastern Bloodroot
(*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

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FIELD TRIPS 2002



NOCI 2002 FIELD TRIP REPORT

By Peggy Bainard Acheson, Membership Chair

We stood silently in a wet meadow among a colony of trembling aspen. The trees, their pale green leaves fluttering gently, stood like sentinels watching over the wondrous spectacle before us. The morning sky was clear and blue and it was already getting warm. All of a sudden I started to hear the sound of cameras clicking as people in the group carefully vied for a spot to get a close-up picture of the glorious pink double-headed Showy Lady's Slippers (*Cypripedium reginae*) standing tall in the grass. This was my first field trip of the year with Native Orchid, and as I stood there I marveled at how fortunate I was to get this opportunity to take part in such a glorious day.

There were about 13 of us on this trip along Woodridge Road, a congenial group even though many of us had only met for the first time that day. We drove a little further on and stopped to explore a moss-covered black spruce wood where we saw a mass of Ram's Head (*C. arietinum*), the smallest and most delicate of the Lady's Slippers. I was so excited; I had only seen them after they were well past their prime and I had never seen so many in one place. This was not the only wonder we encountered there. On our way into the forest those in front turned and shushed the ones coming behind them. In the deep grassy hummock that she had chosen to make her nest was a brooding spruce grouse (*Canachites canadensis*), sitting on her eggs and desperately trying to look inconspicuous. She never moved a muscle while we crept slowly and carefully closer to steal a look at her and then respectfully backed-off.

Two other plants we encountered that day were Goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*) and Bishop's Cap (*Mitella nuda*), both small, white and with notable historical medicinal qualities. Goldthread is rare in our region and gets its name from its thin yellow rhizomes. It has been used to treat alcoholism and to make medicinal teas for sore throats, canker sores, and the like. In the 19th century it was actually listed in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia. Bishop's Cap is so small you need a magnifying glass to appreciate its beauty. Fortunately, someone had a small magnifier with them so we could see its petals surrounded by four pairs of tiny "antennae". Other orchids we saw that day included *Amerorchis rotundifolia*, known as Small Round-Leaved Orchid, *Corallorhiza trifida* or Early Coralroot, and *Coeloglossum viride*, or Long Bracted Orchid. We saw so many other common and rare wildflowers throughout the morning. Later, we stopped to enjoy a picnic lunch at a small park in Woodridge. It was a treat to be in the company of people who shared a common interest.

For the record, here is a summary of the field trips NOCI led this summer:

May 4th: This Crocus trip was cancelled due to cold weather.

May 25th: Native Orchid took 16 participants through the southeast part of the province where they saw hundreds of gorgeous Crocus and the rare Bloodroot. (See Richard's write-up elsewhere in this newsletter).

June 15th: Woodridge Road just after the floodwaters receded (as described above).

June 22nd: Gull Lake Wetlands where nine members witnessed a plethora of diverse plant life including orchids such as the Round Leaf Orchid (*Platanthera orbiculata*), the Tall Northern Green Orchid (*P. hyperborea*), Dragon's Mouth, (*Arethusa bulbosa*), and Striped Coralroot (*Corallorhiza striata*). Of course, the carnivorous plants such as Pitcher Plants, Sundews and Butterworts are always fun and interesting to those who have never encountered them. It was great to see the Northern Bog-Laurel (*Kalmia polifolia*) in bloom that day, too.

June 29th: Back to Woodridge where 11 members saw seven kinds of orchids in bloom. That was a hot day at 33 C.! We also saw Yellow and Red Indian Paintbrush, the Western Wood Lily, Bog Bean, Sea-side Arrowgrass, and something called New Jersey Tea.

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July 6th and 7th: Native Orchid lead 10 members of the Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens from Southern Ontario to Gull Lake and #15 Hwy, where they were thrilled to see the Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*) in bloom.

July 20th: 14 members were back out at Gull Lake.

July 29th: The Whiteshell trip had a total of six members. Plants seen on that trip included Viper's Bugloss, Vervain, and Ironwood.

All told, we had a total of 79 people on our trips this year. Being a witness to these ephemeral delights is a joy you never forget no matter how often you've been privileged to see them. Thanks to everyone who took part in this year's field trip season. Hope to see you and meet more of our members on next year's trips!

Field trip photos from page 1 clockwise from top left:
Grass-pink (*Calopogon tuberosus*), June 29 group picture, Showy Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*), Ram's Head Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*), Wood Lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*)
Flower photos by Eugene Reimer, group photo by Peggy Bainard Acheson

RARE PLANT OF THE MONTH (SEE COVER PHOTO)

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

By Richard Reeves

Bloodroot is an herbaceous perennial of the poppy family. It is the only species of the genus *Sanguinaria*. The orange-red juice of the roots and stems gives Bloodroot its name. The Latin word "sanguinaria" means "bleeding".

Bloodroot blooms in May (8 to 29) on undisturbed, shady slopes. It prefers rich woodland soil with good moisture retention. The flowers open in full sun and close for the night.

The stem, bearing a single flower, emerges from the centre of a curled, basal leaf. The white-petalled flowers of the Bloodroot are about 3.5 cm (1.5 ") wide. There are usually eight petals, four larger and four smaller, but there can be up to sixteen petals. At flowering time the 5- to 9-lobed leaves are about 10 cm (4") wide. The stems are 7 to 15 cm (3 to 6") tall. The leaves and stems continue to increase in size after flowering.

The red juice of the Bloodroot has been used as body and face paint by Native American Indians. The juice is also used as a dye. It produces a yellow-orange to tan color depending on the fabric. Over the years Bloodroot has been used to treat a myriad of medical conditions. However, self-medication should be avoided as the plant is known to be toxic.

Bloodroot is ranked as S2 in Manitoba, which means that it is rare in the province (6 to 20 occurrences) and may be vulnerable to extirpation.

CHANGES TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

On October 2, 2002, under Section 24 of the NOCI Constitution, Bud Ewacha was removed by the board of directors as a member of the board of Native Orchid Conservation Inc, for being unwilling to work as a member of a team and refusing to take direction from the board. On the same day the board appointed Doris Ames, president and John Neufeld, vice president of NOCI. On October 16th, under Article 10 of the NOCI Constitution, Directors Bob Joyce, Peggy Bainard Acheson and John Neufeld called for a special meeting of the membership to ratify this decision of the board. This meeting will be held Friday, November 22, 2002 at 7:30PM. at Dakota Lawn Bowling Centre 1212 Dakota Street, Winnipeg, MB. There will be open discussion of the matter and a vote will be taken at this time.

ACTIVITIES

We are continuing with our surveys of timber sale areas, weather permitting. These trips are so delightful, with the fall colors out in full array in the forest. The scene, with it's mellow gold lacy tamarac branches against the deep green of spruce trees, punctuated here and there with the orangish-yellow of birch leaves and red-leaved plum trees, is an artist's palette of delights. There are no bugs and it's not too hot or humid. Animals are everywhere; on a recent trip we saw white tailed deer wearing their grey winter coats, a bald eagle, grouse, and a pair of beautiful white and grey timber wolves. We should all get out and enjoy the outdoors before winter comes.

On Sept.20-22 seven NOCI members attended a conference at the University of Winnipeg called "Forests of the Northern Lights, Boreal Forests of the World VI". More than 300 scientists, environmentalists, and indigenous people living in the circumpolar boreal forest around the world attended. Issues affecting the boreal forest, including climate change, identification and conservation of forests, land tenure and land rights, were discussed. The goal is to define a common vision for management of these forests that will preserve the taiga for future generations, and one that will take into consideration the rights of indigenous people living there. Conferences of this type are so encouraging. You get to talk to so many like minded people about common problems and you go away with fresh enthusiasm, to protect the environment.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

It was recently pointed out to me that my article on the Ragged- fringed Orchid in last month's newsletter contained an error. I wrote that the Ragged -fringed Orchid plant is usually 6-15'(feet) tall!! I know we grow things big here in the swamps of Manitoba, but that should certainly have been 6-15"(inches) tall. Sorry about that. Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter and to Richard and Heather Reeves for doing the layout. If you have any comments or questions about anything in this newsletter or suggestions and contributions for future articles, please contact Doris Ames, 117 Morier Avenue, Winnipeg MB R2M 0C8 or e-mail adames@mb.sympatico.ca