

Iris

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The Alberta Native Plant Council Newsletter

Arctic Wildflower Lovers Watch Spring Arrive

by Linda Kershaw

The *Into the Wildflowers* course at Churchill, Manitoba last June (2004) was a great success, despite a rather slow start to springtime. Imagine our surprise on arriving at the Northern Studies Centre to discover a brown landscape with the occasional patch of snow! Where were the carpets of rhododendrons, saxifrages and mountain avens that blanketed the same landscape at this time last year??! The globe may be experiencing a warming period, but Churchill chose to go against the trend as summer arrived three weeks later than usual this year.

Fortunately, our intrepid crew chose to focus on the benefits of this change in schedule. Not a single biting insect had emerged. The pack ice was still in, so we were able to watch seals and their pups sunning on the



The star of the show—rosebay rhododendron Photo: L. Kershaw

ice near shore. The late spring also meant that the polar bears were still out on the ice, fattening up for their summer fast - a luxury they've missed in recent years.

Over the short five days of the course, we were able to watch some of the earliest bloomers emerge. Our first discovery was the tiny crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). At first glance, we were sympathetic of the poor plant's fungal infection, but wait, those are anthers!! We had never seen these tiny (3–4 mm), purplish flowers, because they are usually long gone by the time summer fieldwork starts. Each day brought new discoveries. Creamy alpine bearberry (*Arctostaphylos alpina*) bells dotted mats of dead leaves; fuzzy willow catkins (*Salix arctica*, *S. calcicola*) emerged along the roads; cushions of purple mountain saxi-

frage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*) erupted with color. But the star of the show was the gorgeous rosebay rhododendron (*Rhododendron lapponicum*), a beautiful shrub that is rare in Alberta but common at Churchill. It finally started to bloom on the 4th day of the trip, and every plant that we found brought exclamations of delight.

If you really want to appreciate the beauty of arctic flowers, you have to be willing to get down on your hands and knees, and this group had no hesitation. We had time to explore the beach, rocky headlands, dry and wet tundra, and forest sites, and enjoyed seeing many creatures including caribou, black bear, foxes, eagles, sandhill cranes, and a myriad of waterfowl and shorebirds. One lunch we were treated to the sight of a hunting

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Our first discovery—crowberry flowers.
Photos this page: L. Kershaw



Warm sand and shelter from the wind kept us comfy, waiting for the beluga boats.



Black alpine bearberry flowers emerge over last year's leaves.



Another discovery!

peregrine falcon streaking by!

Although we enjoyed hiking and searching for plants every day, the trip wasn't all about plants. A zodiac ride out through the pack ice, to float among a pod of beluga whales, was a definite highlight. There was also time to tour the Eskimo Museum, the Parks Canada Centre in the old Railroad Station and the Town Centre complex, and to search for souvenirs in the well-stocked shops in town. All in all, we had a great time, and all felt that we'd experienced something new and different in a truly northern setting.

The course was such a success, that the Churchill Northern Studies Centre wants to offer it again next year from June 25–29, 2005. If you are interested in exploring the Churchill area, you can contact the Centre's director, Mike Goodyear goodyear@churchillmb.net or check out the learning vacation section of their website www.churchillmb.net/~cnsc.

For more information contact Elisabeth Beaubien at (780) 438-1462 (elisabeth.beaubien@ualberta.ca) or Linda Kershaw at (780) 662-3626 (lkershaw@incentre.net) ❀



Botanists are always interested in travelling to new places!

The Good Steward—Caring for Our Natural Areas

Selections from the 2004 Workshop

Edmonton, May 8–9

Summary by Pat McIsaac

ANPC as Steward: Experiences in Diverse Sites

For many years, the Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC) has been an active steward for several protected areas across the province. Members have taken on key roles for particular sites and have organized regular visits to the natural areas, monitoring them informally, and staying informed on management issues as they arise. Recounting their experiences at the workshop were Birgit Friedenstab, steward of Nisku Prairie, Derek Johnson, steward of Clyde Fen, and Alison Dinwoodie, steward of Whitehorse Wildland.

Birgit Friedenstab lives on an acreage near Nisku Prairie and for ten years has made it her personal goal to ensure that the site is protected and managed so that it will always be a place to go to enjoy native plants. Over the years she has come to know and love many of the grassland plants, participated in many fieldtrips and gained much experience in working with the local municipality (Leduc County), which now has a contract with the ANPC to manage the Nisku Prairie.

Derek Johnson works with the Canadian Forest Service and has extensive experience with peatland ecology and boreal forest wetlands. He has been an active member, for many years, of several natural history organizations in Alberta. Derek has a special interest in the taxonomy and ecology of vascular plants, bryophytes and lichens, particularly rare species, and he was a valuable member of the editorial team producing *Rare Vascular Plants of Alberta* (2001). (For copies of this book, refer to advertisement in previous issues.)

Alison Dinwoodie has always spent time outdoors hiking in the mountains and, as an Alpine Club of Canada member, was active with their Environment Committee in Edmonton. In 1989 she applied for stewardship of the area that became the Cardinal Divide Natural Area, closely working with the ANPC. Her 15 years of experience as steward of this site has

taught Alison about alpine vegetation and grizzly bears, management plans and coal mines, and has provided a practical way for the Alpine Club to contribute something back to their mountains.

The Urban Landscape

Natural areas within the urban landscape were addressed at the conference by Councilor Allan Bolstad of Edmonton, who opened the workshop, and Chris Manderson.

Allan Bolstad sat on Edmonton City Council for the past 12 years and is known for his particular interest in and championing of Edmonton's natural areas. He worked very hard to preserve a wetland in north-central Edmonton called Poplar Lake, participating in lengthy negotiations between the City, the developer, and an engineering company studying hydrological issues of the site. Ultimately, Poplar Lake was preserved and incorporated into a storm water management system, and it continues to serve as an important staging area for waterfowl. This occurred in the mid-1990s and was a precedent setting development for Edmonton.

In the late 1990s, construction was booming in Edmonton, and an increasing number of environmentally significant areas were being lost as subdivision development proceeded. In response to this situation, Councilor Bolstad began to co-chair an informal conservation committee that works with volunteers from the community on strategies to improve conservation practice in Edmonton. As well, he recently prompted the City to assist the community in forming a conservation lands trust, which had long been identified as very important.

Chris Manderson is a biologist and planner with Calgary Parks. He works in the area of protecting and acquiring natural environment parks for the City. For the past two years, he has also been working on developing and implementing an urban wetland conservation policy.

Chris noted that over one-half of Calgary's parks are natural areas. Almost all of Calgary's natural area parks are ac

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quired through the development process. As a result there are significant challenges in building a natural area system in a rapidly growing city, not the least of which is trying to apply the principles of landscape ecology to park system design, and ecosystem restoration in an urban environment. In his presentation, Chris gave an overview of natural areas in Calgary and how the Parks Department protects them, as well as discussing the challenges faced in managing and restoring existing natural environment parks.

Monitoring Programs

Plant monitoring within the province was addressed at the conference by Joyce Gould and Sandra Marken.

Joyce Gould discussed the elements of a successful monitoring program and gave examples of various types of monitoring projects in relation to management planning in natural areas. The role of volunteers in conducting monitoring projects was also discussed.

Joyce Gould coordinates the botany program at ANHIC and works on protected areas issues. As a PhD candidate in Conservation Biology at the University of Alberta, Joyce is conducting research on rare plant conservation. She has been involved in various monitoring projects including rare plant monitoring in provincial protected areas and vegetation monitoring on Ellesmere and Baffin Islands in the Canadian Arctic.

Sandra Marken, a biologist with Golder Associates, described the role that monitoring now plays in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA). Sandra noted that, in the past, EIAs primarily involved an impact assessment of the proposed project on baseline environmental conditions, including vegetation resources. There was little in the way of monitoring to test or confirm the predictions. EIAs have since evolved to include a much greater component of pre-project and/or follow-up monitoring, to assist with implementing appropriate action in response to the results.

In a sense this is much like stewardship, where the proponent is responsible to monitor and ensure that the baseline environment is responding as predicted. The monitoring program then must be planned to meet the objectives identified by the proponent and the regulatory agency. Objectives may include monitoring for some or all of the following: landscape stability, erosion, vegetation ground cover, commu-

nity representation and spatial parameters, vegetation composition and cover, plant vigour, and other variables, as identified.

Two recent programs provide excellent examples of how industry is monitoring project impacts and using the results of monitoring programs to design projects and mitigate impacts identified. One project involves a proposed mine in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Some of the key questions around vegetation include: will dust from the mine affect surrounding vegetation; will impacts to the spatial area and location of communities be as predicted; what are the results of various reclamation treatments? The monitoring program is designed to test these questions and provide information from which to make appropriate decisions. A second monitoring program, also in the NWT, is designed to test the effect of a proposed winter track on vegetation. The monitoring program includes both a winter and summer component and is designed to test the effect of winter traffic induced snow-pack indices, and the relationship between snow-pack effects and possible changes in vegetation composition, cover and vigour along the road. Results from this program will be used to assist with project planning, route decision, traffic density, etc.

Establishing Native Plant Communities

The challenge of establishing native plants in restoration projects was addressed by David Walker and Heather Sinton.

Dr. David Walker specializes in land reclamation as a researcher, instructor, consultant and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary. With more than 25 years of experience in western and northern Canada and parts of the USA, he has consulted to all levels of government, national and provincial parks, oil and gas industry, electrical power industry, ski industry, and non-governmental environmental organizations.

David explained that deciding what to plant in a restoration project can be difficult. It is very important to assess the site realistically and set achievable goals and success criteria. Good performance of native plant materials is critical to achieving the goals of a project. The type and source of native plant material can affect its ability to perform. Seed must be analyzed for

germination and purity prior to purchase to determine whether it is "good, bad or ugly".

Heather Sinton is the Land Quality Program Manager with Alberta Environment. Over the years, she has been actively involved in the development of provincial policy, criteria, guidelines and educational materials for reclamation of industrial sites. She has also directed research and reviewed environmental protection plans for major projects. Heather has had a particular interest in improving reclamation and revegetation practices on natural landscapes through the use of minimum disturbance practices and the application of native plant materials. She is the author of several books on these topics.

In the second part of this presentation, Heather noted that the presence of non-native plants in a restoration project can be helpful, but it can also be fatal. The difference lies in good site assessment, proper planning and risk assessment, as well as knowledge about the species present or being introduced. Some species of non-native plants are invaluable as site stabilizers, while others will willingly take over the whole site, choking out the desired plants. Stewards also have to think about the best method of controlling unwanted plants and what some of the side effects of treatment might be.

Controlling Non-Native Species in Native Rangelands

Jay Woosaree addressed the subject of control of non-native plants. Jay is the project leader of the Native Plant Program at the Alberta Research Council (ARC). At ARC he is working on projects such as new native seed mix for roadside reclamation, revegetation of fescue grassland on wellsite disturbances, Western Forage Variety Testing Program, grass seed variety testing, and reclamation of wellsite disturbances in the sandy soils of east central Alberta.

Jay spoke on the control of non-native species in native rangelands. He noted that the intentional and unintentional introduction of non-native species in native rangelands has led to an alteration of native ecosystem and function. Given the propagule supply of these species, it is unlikely that more native plant communities will remain free from foreign plant invasions. Examples of such species include smooth brome grass, Canada thistle, crested wheatgrass,

Kentucky bluegrass, scentless chamomile, and toadflax. The presentation further described some of the control measures (mostly chemical means) available for these species.

Alberta Agriculture's publication *The Crop Protection Blue Book* provides valuable information on herbicides that have been registered for use on crops. Some herbicides used for selective weed control in native crops include Buctril M (bromoxynil/MCPA) for annual broadleaf weeds in grasses, Lontrel (clopyralid) for thistle control and some annuals in grasses and some forbs, MCPA for annual broadleaf weeds in grasses, Basagran® (bentazon) for annual broadleaf weeds in grasses and legumes, Triumph Plus (fenoxaprop-p-ethyl/MCPA/thifensulfuron) for annual grassy and broadleaf weeds in grasses, Achieve (tralkoxydim) for grassy annual weeds, and Banvel II (dicamba) for broadleaf weeds in grasses. Roundup (glyphosate) can be used for spot weed control in native rangeland to control problem weeds in small areas, but will kill any plant that it touches.

Stewardship on Private Lands

Renny Grilz presented *Stewardship—The Nature Conservancy of Canada Approach to Long-term Management of its Properties*. He is currently Alberta's Provincial Stewardship Coordinator for the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Renny has a lifelong interest in native plants and has pursued training in plant ecology. His work as rangeland agrologist with Ducks Unlimited took him across the prairies before coming to Edmonton. Renny's time is also spent scouring road ditches throughout Alberta on behalf of the family's Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company.

The Alberta Region of the Nature Conservancy of Canada has a three-year-old stewardship program. The department is responsible for ensuring the properties NCC owns or has an interest in are accomplishing the goals for which they were acquired. The steps involved in stewarding a property are:

1. Assessment—initial site visit to determine the conservation requirements and challenges of a specific property;
2. Budget—written outline of immediate and future stewardship costs;
3. Baseline—a field based report on vegetative communities, wildlife usage, health assessments, management concerns

and recommendations;

4. Monitoring—annual visits to a site followed by a written report documenting the condition of a property;

5. Management plan—documentation of conservation goals and techniques to achieve goals; and

6. Site management—activities carried out on properties to achieve goals (i.e. fencing, water development, weed management, signage, etc.).

The presentation further detailed each of these steps and described how stewarding individual properties fits into NCC's national and regional stewardship protocols.

Banquet Presentation: Stewards and Advocacy!

The banquet speaker was **Glen Semenchuk**, who is well-known to many in Alberta's naturalist and environmental community. Glen is currently the Executive Director of the Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN). He edited *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Alberta*, co-authored *Field Guide to Alberta Birds*, and has represented FAN on many stakeholder committees. Glen has over 30 years experience as an environmental consultant involved in wildlife projects across northern Canada and currently sits on the board of the Alberta Conservation Association.

Glen's view is that the combination of stewards and advocacy is viewed and promoted by many as undesirable. How parochial! Once we get beyond the negativity that has been thrust upon the advocacy label, we find that it is an essential activity to move concepts, ideas, and beliefs forward. Advocacy efforts of the voluntary sector, including stewards, are often the backbone of positive change and growth. The Voluntary Sector Forum, a leadership body comprised of 22 members from across the Canadian voluntary sector, in a Pre-Budget Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance in September 2003 stated that:

"Advocacy efforts benefit all members of society by creating changes that help people... Through the credibility and tenacity of sector advocacy, ideas and services that were once considered to be on the 'lunatic fringe' have become the mainstream of today's society. Significant examples of this include the development of public awareness of and support for protecting the environment... Many organiza-

tions advocate on behalf of individuals and groups of individuals who are disadvantaged and marginalised and whose voices would otherwise have a difficult time being heard. The sector also advocates for entities that are voiceless such as air, water and endangered species." ❁



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 editors whenever possible. Disputes will be resolved in favor of the Audience.

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Garner Orchid Fen Natural Area Established

by Lorna Allen

In 1992 an excited Tom Maccagno contacted what was then the Alberta Natural Areas Program. Why the excitement? He was reporting a gem of a wetland site near Plamondon, in northeast Alberta. Although not large (about 166 ha or 410 ac), it is an intriguing little wetland, fed by iron springs. There are pools where the springs emerge, that the unwary can sink into. The water then disperses through the fen, which is made up of a complex of high spots (hummocks) and pools, creating



Malaxis monophylla Photo: L. Allen

a habitat perfect for orchids. If you were lucky enough to be able to join in on Botany Alberta 2004, you would have had the chance to visit this fascinating fen.

Parts of the site are forested with classic stands of black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*); other spots are dense willow (*Salix pseudo-monticola*, among others) or river alder (*Alnus tenuifolia*) shrublands. And there is also one of Alberta's rare plant communities; a tamarack/prairie sedge (*Larix laricina* / *Carex prairea*) community. But the focus of the excitement around this site is the orchids. Eleven of Alberta's 27 orchid species are found in or near the fen, including the rare white adder's-mouth (*Malaxis monophylla*).

From that first excited phone call in 1992, Tom has spearheaded a persistent campaign of gathering support for the protection of the fen and increasing the knowledge about the significance of the site. The campaign has included leading many field trips to the fen, one resulting in a mention in the June 2002 issue of *Na-*



Listera sp. Photo: L. Allen

tional Geographic (see box). A number of groups have added their support to the protection of the fen, and the Garner Fen Orchid Preservation Society was incorporated in 2001. This persistence finally paid off, with the establishment of the site as a Natural Area in August of 2004. Congratulations to all those that worked so hard to make this happen. ❁

The orchids found to date in Garner Orchid Fen Natural Area

Corallorhiza maculata
Spotted coralroot

Corallorhiza trifida
Pale coralroot

Cypripedium calceolus
Yellow lady's slipper

Cypripedium passerinum
Sparrow's-egg lady's slipper

Platanthera hyperborea var.
hyperborea (not confirmed)
Northern green bog orchid

Platanthera obtusata
Blunt-leaved bog orchid

Platanthera orbiculata
Round-leaved bog orchid

Listera borealis
Northern twayblade

Listera cordata
Heart-leaved twayblade

Malaxis monophylla
White adder's mouth

Orchis (Amerorchis) rotundifolia
Round-leaved orchid

"Leaving a gravel road, we hiked down into a forested wetland where clusters of light gray lichens clung to dead branches of black spruce. Cold, dark water filtered through the fen, underlain by permafrost—a fact that became evident when I took a walking stick, plunging it through the moss, hit a frozen layer with a thunk. Scattered throughout the fen were delicate, quarter size white and yellow orchids, supported throughout by waxy green leaves."

The Great Northern Forest by Fen Montaigne, National Geographic, June 2002.

Alberta Weed Species

Spotted knapweed

by Mari Decker

Alberta's *Weed Control Act* designates plants as restricted, noxious and nuisance weeds. There are seven plants ranked as restricted in Alberta, and spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa* Lam.) is one of them. "Restricted" weeds are ones that must be eliminated when found—there's relatively little of it in the province currently, and it is desirable to ensure it stays that way!

Description: Spotted knapweed has a purple composite flower with black-tipped, non-spiny floral bracts. The leaves are pinnatifid and are covered with translucent dots.

Proliferation: Spotted knapweed was introduced from Europe into Victoria, BC in 1893 as a contaminant in alfalfa seed. Propagation is exclusively by seed and is not considered problematic in cultivation, however spotted knapweed has affected over 8500 acres of rangeland in BC! The seeds easily germinate in disturbed soil, and the plants produce a chemical that inhibits other plants from growing. Spotted knapweed is a perennial that can live for up to nine years.

Control: The best control for spotted knapweed is prevention of proliferation. Watch for this plant, and get rid of it whenever it is found! It can be controlled relatively easily with herbicide, however monitoring is required, as the seeds can stay viable in the seedbed for up to five years. Although mowing has not been found to be successful, reseeding with desired species inhibits establishment and/or growth of this restricted weed.

Help keep Alberta knapweed free! ☘



Centaurea maculosa Photo: M. Decker

Alberta Native Species

Smooth blue beardtongue



Penstemon nitidus Photo: M. Decker

by Mari Decker

Smooth blue beardtongue (*Penstemon nitidus*) is a perennial wildflower of well-drained, grassy prairie hillsides occurring in the southern third of Alberta.

It has a flower panicle of blue-purple tubular flowers and grey-green, waxy leaves. The flowers have one sterile, hairy stamen that looks like a "bearded tongue." They have four fertile stamens as well, making *penta* (five) -*stemon* (stamens), the origin of the Genus name. *Nitidus* means shining and could refer either to the glabrous leaves or to the metallic luster of the flowers.

Ten species of *Penstemon* occur in Alberta. They are in the *Scrophulariaceae* family which was so-named because plants of this family were thought at one time to cure the skin disease scrophula. *Penstemon nitidus* was first named by David Douglas, a Scottish botanist (1798–1834), but the name was first published in 1846 by George Bentham in the 10th volume of *Prodromus*, an attempt at a worldwide flora. *Prodromus* was started in 1816, and worked on for 102 years, but never finished unfortunately, though it did lay the groundwork for many other publications. ☘

Endangered Species Conservation Committee (ESCC) Update

by C. Dana Bush

Alberta Species Listed under Canada's *Species At Risk Act* (SARA)

Schedule 1—Endangered

Tiny cryptanthe—*Cryptantha minima*

Schedule 1—Threatened

Western blue-flag—*Iris missouriensis*

Soapweed—*Yucca glauca*

Haller's apple moss—*Bartramia*

halleriana

Slender mouse-ear-cress—*Arabidopsis*

salsuginea

Schedule 1—Special Concern

Tall woolly-heads (Prairie pop'n)—

Psilocarphus elatior

Schedule 2—Endangered

Sand-verbena*—*Tripterocalyx*

micranthus

Schedule 2—Threatened

Western spiderwort*—*Tradescantia occidentalis*

Schedule 3—Special Concern

Smooth goosefoot—*Chenopodium subglabrum*

Hare-footed locoweed—*Oxytropis*

lagopus var. *conjugens*

Bolander's quillwort—*Isoetes*

bolanderi

Not yet on a Schedule—Threatened

Porsild's bryum**—*Braya humilis* var.

porsildii

Species Approved by ESCC for Listing under Alberta's *Wildlife Act*

Endangered

Soapweed—*Yucca glauca*

Western spiderwort—*Tradescantia*

occidentalis

Threatened

Western blue-flag—*Iris missouriensis*

Sand verbena—*Tripterocalyx*

micranthus

To be assessed this month

Tiny cryptanthe—*Cryptantha minima*

* Status has been reassessed by COSEWIC based on the most recent status report. The status of these species may change (i.e., added to Schedule I), pending the results of public consultation and federal decisions.

** Status has been reassessed by COSEWIC, however, as of August 2004, the species is not scheduled to undergo public consultation or addition to Schedule 1. These public consultations (and potential subsequent addition to Schedule 1) must, however occur within approximately one year of status reassessment. ❀

Alien Plants Invade Alberta

Reprinted from Agri-news

by Alberta Invasive Plants Council

No, they're not from outer space, and you've probably seen a few of them around. The battle against weeds in agriculture has been a long one, but are weeds the same as invasive plants? Well, sort of. The general definition of a weed is a plant growing in a place where it is not wanted, and this could mean wild roses growing in a hay field. Invasive plants are usually non-native, very aggressive competitors for plant resources, able to displace native or desired vegetation in both agricultural and wildland areas.

Many of these non-natives have physical features such as long taproots to access moisture, prolific seed production each year (Scentless chamomile), or can reproduce rapidly from creeping roots or even root fragments (Canada thistle, Toadflaxes, Spurges). Many are not palatable to wildlife or livestock, and a few are toxic or deadly (Tall buttercup, Hound's-tongue).

Invasive plants are a perennial aggrava-

tion and expense to producers, as well as damaging to our natural areas. Dense stands of invasive plants reduce the natural diversity of plant communities, reduce forage for wildlife and livestock, and reduce and/or alter habitat for wildlife. The costs of treatment by industry and government are borne by us all.

So how did these non-native plants get here? Some arrived over 100 years ago unintentionally as seed contaminants. Others were intentionally introduced from the home country of immigrants as beloved ornamentals. Because these plants arrived without their natural insect and disease pests they have an advantage over our native plants.

Not all non-native plants are invasive—many of our crops and other beneficial plants are non-natives as well, but don't behave as invasive plants do. One recent exception is Caraway. This plant has been a commercially grown spice crop in western Canada for some time now, but when "Wild caraway" gets into natural areas it is extremely invasive. Pasture and even lawn grasses are rapidly replaced by dense

stands of caraway in just a few short years. This plant's response to repeated mowing is to stay short and bloom. Caraway in hay fields is rapidly dispersed to new areas when the sold hay gets transported and fed. Please learn to recognize this invasive plant and remove it.

The Alberta Invasive Plants Council (AIPC) is a not-for-profit association of professionals from federal, provincial, municipal governments, non-government organizations, and industry that is dedicated to raising awareness about the ecological and economic problems caused by invasive plants. The goals of the council are to increase Albertan's awareness of the impact invasive plants have on the environment, economy and society; foster and facilitate cooperation amongst invasive plant stakeholders; and provide expert advice and guidance to public, industry and government on invasive plant issues.

Invasive plants are spread primarily by human activity, but also by wind, water, wildlife & livestock. Fortunately everyone can be part of the solution to stop the spread! For information on the AIPC and invasive plants please visit the website at www.invasiveplants.ab.ca or call (403) 638-3805 and ask for the AIPC Coordinator. ❀

Parks and Protected Areas, 2004 Volunteer Awards

by Ed Karpuk

ANPC Recognized as Outstanding Steward Group

As the current president of the Alberta Native Plant Council (ANPC), I had the privilege of attending the Parks and Protected Areas 2004 Volunteer Conference at the YMCA facility in Bow Valley Provincial Park, September 24th to 26th. It was my honour to accept the **Outstanding Steward Group Award** on behalf of the ANPC at the conference banquet. The following speech provides the details surrounding the award and is reprinted with permission from the author Brad Marshall and the banquet Master of Ceremonies Don DenHoed. Both men work for Parks and Protected Areas.

The Outstanding Steward Group Award is presented to a group or organization that contributed considerably to the preservation and/or appreciation of their protected area.

The Alberta Native Plant Council consists of a group of people who strive to promote knowledge about Alberta's native plants and work to conserve and preserve these species and their habitats. This group joined the Volunteer Steward Program in 1988 as stewards for the Big Sagebrush Candidate Natural Area. In 1994, they added two more sites: Clyde Fen Candidate Natural Area and the Cardinal Divide, which later became part of the Whitehorse Wildland Park.

The volunteers of the council work as a team to protect, preserve, and conserve their assigned protected areas for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. They have chosen to steward three separate protected areas in three different natural regions of the province to take advantage of their diverse membership across the province.

One of their most impressive works is the reclamation at Cardinal Divide. Through this project, spearheaded by Elisabeth Beaubien and David Walker, they accomplished a significant educational component by employing local students to work on the project, who then shared the information they received about the fragile and special nature of the site with others.

The collecting of native seeds, growing them and then planting them back, is a highly labour intensive project that would have been impossible without knowledgeable volunteers to collect and sort seeds. By using plants from the area, the highest level possible of restoration standards was achieved with no concerns with genetic swamping or pollution.

The effort and time invested in accomplishing their work to date has been a tremendous benefit and has helped to make people aware of the uniqueness of their sites. It is therefore our pleasure to reward their long-term commitment and support by presenting the Alberta Native Plant Council with this year's Outstanding Steward Group Award.

I would like to mention, in addition to Elisabeth Beaubien and David Walker, other ANPC members who have played active stewardship roles, namely, Alison Dinwoodie for Whitehorse Wildland Park, Reg Ernst for Big Sagebrush, and Derek Johnson, Patsy Cotterill and Graham Griffiths for Clyde Fen. The efforts of these people and other ANPC volunteers who have provided assistance in the past, ranging from trail maintenance in Whitehorse Wildland Park to plant species counts in Clyde Fen, are a significant part of the reason the ANPC was chosen for the Outstanding Steward Group Award.

Patsy Cotterill receives Parks and Protected Areas Achievement Award

Also at the awards banquet, the Parks and Protected Areas **Achievement Award** was presented to ANPC member, Patsy Cotterill, a dedicated botanist and a passionate advocate for the preservation of Alberta's native plants and their natural habitats. Her achievements, which led to this award, are recognized in the following speech presented at the banquet (also reprinted with permission from Brad Marshall and Don DenHoed).

The Parks and Protected Areas Achievement Award is presented to an individual who, through their volunteer activities, has



Photo: E. Karpuk

affected a park, protected area, staff, customers, project or program in a special or significant way.

We are recognizing an individual who does just that and is well known to staff. Although she has been a valued member of our staff, off and on for several years, it is for her considerable volunteer contributions that we are recognizing her today.

Since 1984, Patsy Cotterill has been a volunteer with protected areas, in numerous capacities, regularly lending her expertise in botany. During the plant-growing season you will find her out volunteering, every opportunity she gets. Information that she collects about any unusual or rare species is passed on to various organizations, including the Alberta Natural Heritage Information Centre operated by Parks and Protected Areas Division.

Patsy works tirelessly to increase our knowledge of plant species in our protected areas, thereby highlighting the importance and uniqueness of these places. She has accumulated an incredible amount of information that she shares with resource people. Almost every weekend in the summer you will find her leading guided walks to increase public awareness and understanding of the importance of plants and plant communities.

Patsy, on behalf of everyone you have mentored to a greater enjoyment and appreciation of plants, we present to you the Parks and Protected Areas Achievement Award—with our thanks.

It is gratifying to know that the stewardship activities of dedicated ANPC members are being recognized and encouraged through these awards. Keep up the excellent and vital work! ❁

Update on Whitehorse Wildland Park and Cheviot Coal Mine—October 2004

by Alison Dinwoodie

A Challenging Summer

As some of you are aware, the Cheviot Mine haul road has been under construction all summer, making access to the Cardinal Divide nearly impossible. The only access, under mine vehicle escort, was during the long weekends and the weather then was not cooperative! In May, there was 20 cm of fresh wet snow, July was wet, August was actually fair, but September was very wet the week before, and the road beyond Whitehorse Creek campsite was impassable.

To add insult to injury, the one day we did get to the Divide, we arrived there with a flat tire, very late in the day, in an unfamiliar vehicle which had the spare tire carefully hidden and inaccessible, and no passing traffic. Fortunately, as I was walking back the 4 km to Mountain Park for help, a mine vehicle came by, and as we were debating what to do next, a motorcyclist came up the hill and had the tire out and changed in no time. For once I was glad to see one of the mine workers; particularly as it turned out he was a heavy duty mechanic. Such are the joys of stewardship in the back country!

The vehicle escort service run by the mine was essential, as you certainly didn't want to meet any of their monster machines on the road (and I mean Monster, with shovels bigger than your truck), not to mention the mud. But on the bright side, perhaps the wildlife and vegetation in the Whitehorse Wildland Park (WWP) has had a bit of a rest this year, with little or no traffic. However, the Cardinal headwaters was probably the main destination for all the convoys of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) which came in during the long weekends. I am very concerned about the state of that valley, but was thwarted in attempts to check it out this summer.

Revegetation along the Haul Road

Yes, the haul road is in, though the public road from the campground to Mountain Park is not finished, as of the beginning of October. And, yes, it is a "big mess" in what was previously a pleasant valley. The haul road "footprint" is rather larger than a dinosaur's—let's hope it doesn't end up



Trail Riding in the Wildland Park Photo: A. Dinwoodie

the same way, entangled in legal ivy!

We have had some meetings with the mine people. So, the roadside site of the nationally significant moss species, *Mielichhoferia macrocarpa*, has been spared, though whether it survives the dust from the nearby haul road remains to be seen.

The wet weather this year has been good for the mine's first attempts at revegetation. For example, the berm between the haul road and the new public road alongside it, just past the Inland Cement quarry road, was showing signs of fireweed (*Epi-lobium angustifolium*) and willow (*Salix* spp.) sprigs, as well as the seeded annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*).

According to the mine's temporary environmental planner, revegetation will emphasize reusing all top soil, remounding slopes (I call it "humps and hollows") for better microclimate diversity, using things like short-term annual grasses to provide an initial mulch, and moving away from thick reseeding, which tends to stifle other growth. The environmental planner also agreed with some of our suggestions for species which would be better

avoided, such as creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), and sweet clover (*Melilotus* spp.), and they have already removed Kentucky bluegrass, (*Poa pratensis*), alsike clover (*Trifolium hybridum*), and cicer milkvetch (*Astragalus cicer*) from their seed mixture.

At least, that is what I gathered when I met with the planner a couple of weeks ago, although I kept emphasizing that I am not a botanist, and these were only suggestions from my friends at the ANPC. As a non-botanist, I had to take him to task for not supplying the botanical species names (and varieties) for their seed mixture, as it curtailed my efforts to obtain more information about the species. (Even



Dirt Biking Photo: A. Dinwoodie



OHV-caused erosion Photo: E. Beaubien

non-botanists can learn to appreciate Latin.) So, in terms of reclamation and revegetation, they seem to be moving, though slowly, in the right direction.

If any of you have any comments (positive or negative) or other suggestions regarding the revegetation, I would be more than happy to pass them on.

Concerns for the Future

As far as the future goes, one positive effect is that the haul road is a significant barrier to any off-highway vehicle (OHV) access on the west side of the Grave Flats road (signage indicates “Private Road, Trespassers will be prosecuted”), and as all traffic on the haul road is radio-controlled, any activities can be immediately reported.

Wildlife apparently cross the Luscar Mine roads quite happily, but my concern would be, not so much with the huge trucks with maximum speed 50 kph, but for situations where animals suddenly leap over the haul road berms onto the adjacent public road, and meet with OHVs and recreational vehicles barreling along at speeds up to 90 kph. Although reconstructed alongside the haul road, the public road will still be gravelled and maintained (occasionally) by the county.

Review of the Access Management Plan

Another major item is the review of the Access Management Plan (AMP), which determines OHV use. The current AMP (1994) did not take into account Cheviot Mine at all, and OHVs were recognized at the Energy and Utilities Board/Canadian Environmental Assessment Act hearings as having additional cumulative impacts on vegetation and wildlife. Hence, maintenance of a buffer between WWP and the

mine workings was recommended as an essential part of the mitigation for Cheviot Mine’s development. At present, work has started on the Cheviot pit and on the west side of the Mountain Park OHV staging area, so that whole area is now off-limits to OHVs.

There is currently discussion of the relocation of the OHV staging area, which is required by next spring, but one requirement is that it be moved well away from WWP. The last thing we need is more concentrated OHV use in the Cardinal headwaters area, or on the Divide itself.

Help Is Needed

We need to put pressure on the departments of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and Alberta Environment to make the restriction of OHVs west of the Grave Flats road a permanent condition under the AMP, in order to fulfill the obligations of the mine to environmental sustainability.

Once the Cheviot and Prospect pits have been reclaimed (using best practices as suggested by ANPC), the Mountain Park old town site and cemetery have been recognized as a heritage site, and the protection offered by the WWP and a revised AMP is extended to the Cheviot Mine haul road / Grave Flats road boundary, we have the makings of a substantial protected area for the future. **Please help us achieve this!**

For more information, contact Alison Dinwoodie, (780) 437-7183, adinwoodie@shaw.ca or Elisabeth Beaubien, (780) 438-1462, e.beaubien@ualberta.ca ☘



Trollius in snow Photo: L. Allen



Golden-mantled ground squirrel
Photo: L. Allen

ANPC to Help Fund Rare Plant Recovery Work

by C. Dana Bush

ANPC is considering helping the Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) with recovery plan implementation by applying for Habitat Stewardship Funds. Of particular interest, currently, is the plight of sand verbena, an S2 listed species in Alberta (there are 6–20 occurrences in the province or many individuals in fewer occurrences). Sand verbena is caught in never-never land. The largest sand verbena site is currently being excavated for its sand. As sand verbena is not listed on SARA as a Schedule 1 species, nor is it yet listed under Alberta’s Wildlife Act, the excavation (on private land) is entirely legal. By the time it is legally protected, the ESCC may need to upgrade it to endangered status in Alberta. Steven Deugau (Southern Director) will be working with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) to acquire outside funding for the recovery plan of sand verbena.

ANPC is also considering holding a technical workshop to train botanists on how to acquire much needed rare plant data.

If you are interested in helping with the acquisition of funding for recovery plan implementation or the technical workshop, please contact Dana at cdbush@telusplanet.net or (403) 282-3975. ☘

It's your future...the ANPC weighs in on Alberta's debt-free future

Summary by Chris Manderson

Last August, the Alberta Government asked for Albertans to give their input on how the government should move ahead in a debt-free future. As the Alberta government has paid down its debt over the past ten years, they have reportedly saved approximately 1.4 billion dollars in interest payments. Now that Alberta is on the verge of becoming the only debt-free province in Canada, the government has been asking Albertans how they would like to spend the windfall in a questionnaire posted on the government website and mailed out to all residents.

Their veracity on the web-based survey may be questionable, given that there was apparently few controls on who posted responses, or how often. Many organizations promoted the website to their members with a "vote early, vote often" perspective. Our President, Ed Karpuk, wrote to the Finance Minister on behalf of the ANPC. The ANPC asked that the province take some of the surplus and put it towards stepping up protection of our natural heritage and biodiversity to keep pace with development. Key points in the letter are outlined as follows:

- Devoting resources to enhancement, which includes enforcement, of existing policies and legislation that promote the conservation of natural habitat. Examples are strengthening legislation that protects endangered species and their habitat, promoting tax policies that provide incentives for land conservation, and revising the Municipal Government Act to give municipalities greater powers to preserve natural land;

- Developing a public lands policy that maintains and expands the amount of land in public ownership, for the purposes of protecting habitat, developing linking corridors between habitat areas, ecological services and recreational opportunities for Albertans. It would prohibit, for example, sale of grazing leases to private owners, and sale of surplus land in the transportation and utilities corridors having ecological value;

- Expanding and consolidating the land base of the Province's protected areas, natural areas and river corridors, according

to sound scientific principles. This can enable the formation and maintenance of a linked and ecologically functional network of natural habitats that represents the landscape and hence the biological diversity of Alberta;

- Increasing staff and programs in our universities, museums and government offices to carry out basic ecological studies and monitoring of native (wild) plant species to determine population status and trends in these species. The objective being to guide conservation and recovery plans for them where appropriate, and adequately funding these much needed planning and management activities, including funding to allow monitoring of their success;

- Increasing staff and programs in our universities, museums and government offices to carry out basic ecological studies and monitoring of invasive introduced (alien) species and adequately funding control programs where needed;

- Increasing public awareness and appreciation of the Province's natural heritage and biodiversity. This would include a variety of initiatives such as promoting programs that bring natural history to schools, outreach to targeted audiences such as farmers and landowners (for example, along the lines of the successful "Cows and Fish" program), as well as increasing interpretive staff and interpretation in provincial parks, natural areas and even in highway rest stops, which the government should reinstate to promote road safety and tourism. Partnerships with industry and the public involving stewardship of natural areas should be encouraged, with staff dedicated to coordinating such partnerships and providing training and funding; and

- Providing funding to municipalities to assist their efforts in urban conservation and the creation and management of natural parks (for example, in innovative planning, and in stewardship). The government may wish to consider providing financial support to land trusts that are being established in the province for the purposes of protecting and managing natural and agricultural lands. ❁

Keeping the Wild in the West

Rapporteur's Summary by Cheryl Bradley

It falls to me, the rapporteur,
To listen up and be sure
To catch each theme and each key trend
And summarize it in the end
Of this our seventh gatherin'.

My ears are full, my heart is too
For we have shared so much, it's true
Together we have a common quest
Of keeping the wild in the west;
For all of us an oblige noblesse.

Our scope is prairie which we see
Has disregard for boundary
Of province, state and nation, so
From Canada to Mexico
We are sharing what we know.

We call different places home
From many walks of life we come
Urban and rural, ranchers and farmers,
Biologists and naturalists, managers and planners,
Young and older, teachers and learners.

A Minister from afar and Alderman here too
Said "we need more folks like you"
Our future as a society
Is tied to the health of the prairie
Including its biodiversity.

But oh, the challenges are so darn huge
Great human forces do construe
To change this landscape so finite
More people, roads, cows, crops and light
Cumulative effects are out of sight.

Species adapted to native prairie
Its fire, its drought, its herbivory
Are put at great risk when the ecosystem
Is so out of whack due to actions of men
What can they endure? How great is our sin?

Some work on research and science to show
What parts are lost in the tinkering we do?
We evaluate species, their numbers and trends
Define factors which could mean the end
Of our feathered, scaled, glabrous or soft hairy friends.

Seventh Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference

Some work on networks designed to protect
Large cores and corridors of habitat
We need to think big to meet the test
Of keeping all of the wild in the west
Protect the biggest and best of what's left!

Some work on landscape's big balance sheet
We document change, the effects that it metes
Out to the prairie. How much is lost?
What are the trends? What are the costs
Or benefits to us who impact the most?
Some inventory our natural wealth
We work on benchmarks and measures of health
Place principles and practices in the hands
Of ranchers and other managers of lands
Cause attitude shifts and improved management plans.

Some of us work on our own property
We take stewardship seriously
We balance our own interest with the public good
Protect homes for wildlife 'cuz we feel we should
Knowing health of the land links to our livelihood.

Some of us work on private conservancy
Linking sellers and buyers who will agree
To manage land for nature's needs
uppermost
Some in perpetuity, no matter the host
It's more than just dancing, it's sharing the toast.

Some work on restoring as the *raison d'être*
Healing the sores will make the prairie better
We minimize impact as a first approach
Reintroduce natives and carefully coach
Kill aggressive invaders so they won't encroach.

Two decades ago we began making plans
For prairie conservation on Canadian plains
Together we've set goals, objectives and actions
We've worked really hard not to break into factions
To find common ground and consensus directions.

We've heard that the big plan is the fractal shore
There are plans within plans going on ever more
Transboundary and ecoregional
Watershed plans and intermunicipal
Ranch and park and endangered species all.

We're reminded in conservation we should be humble
Our decisions should rest on a three-legged stool
Environment, economy, culture all three
Need to be considered for sustainability
And antennae alert for nature's complexity.

Water, say some, is the thread to connect
Urban dwellers with the quest to protect
Native prairie, for environmental services it provides
About 33 trillion dollars worldwide
Release a flow of incentives to the countryside!

Governance, say some, is where change must start
To influence the whole, not just manage the parts
Reduce fragmentation of jurisdictional responsibility
Address the lack of government's capacity
To stay the course in a four-year pulse democracy.

We've come four hundred strong to Calgary
We honour contributions to conserving prairie
Awards to farmers, researcher and naturalist
Recognition for dedication, thanks for giving your best
To ensure that we're keeping the wild in the west.

Key words I have heard a dozen times or more
"Communicate", "cooperate", reach out to others more
Not just among ourselves but to all society
We may be most effective in our own "community"
Be "strategic", progress is not just lots of activity.

But oh, the challenges are so huge
What about succession? What about youth?
Some call for young leaders to take the reins
Of keeping the wild in the western Great Plains
All these young faces show they wait in the wings.

I hope I've reported your wisdom truly
Now I am done, you'll hear no more from me
Except to advise—to your own self be true
And if you get weary and the challenge seems too huge
Walk out in wild prairie, she'll give back to you.

(Thank you to Mike Quinn for the inspiration. My apologies to cowboy poets everywhere.) ❀

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

VOLUNTEER POSITION

ANPC is looking for a volunteer for the Conservation Committee to work to conserve native plant habitats

For more information, please check out the ANPC website at www.anpc.ab.ca or contact Lorna Allen at lorna.allen@gov.ab.ca

FOLIAGE: A Beginner's Guide to Plant Identification

by Elaine Gordon

I do a lot of volunteer work with youth groups and this is the story of how and why my Foliage project was started

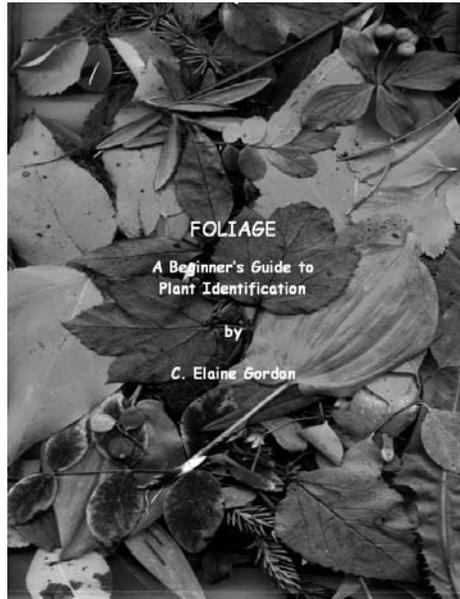
About three years ago, I found that the demand on my time as a volunteer working with youth groups was being stretched to its limit. At the time, I was helping youth groups and their leaders to identify plants for their stewardship projects in the beautiful Edmonton river valley.

I can go out with a group of kids, or adults for that matter, and point out plants as we walk along and poke through the vegetation. But every time, without fail, by the time I get to the sixth plant or so, the first one is forgotten, even with meticulous note-taking. Field guides are wonderful tools, but as I heard time and time again, most group leaders pick up one or two excellent field guides, go down to the river valley and try to identify the plants. They find they can't do it.

Firstly, field guides all depend on flowers for identification. Most plants only bloom for a short time, and not at all if conditions are not right for flowering. And secondly, field guides all use a scientific classification system, which is not easily understood by an average Girl Guide or youth group leader (the "why are asters at the back" syndrome). One Girl Guide leader lamented, "We just flip pages and hope for the best." The thought struck me that what is needed is a book - a very basic, very simple book on plant identification.

Clearly, this is something that is missing. There is a huge gap in the information available to kids, group leaders, acreage owners, families, or anyone who just wants to be able to go out for a Sunday afternoon walk or undertake a project but who does not have the time or inclination to take a course in plant taxonomy.

I decided that this book must be simple enough to encourage enquiring minds, and at the same time must be scientific enough to provide a good solid basis for further study. It must be something anyone can pick up, throw in a day-pack and use without too much fuss, but at the same time it must teach some scientific basics in plant identification. The result is a book that



uses leaves to identify the most common plants within the boreal forest and parkland regions.

I wanted to achieve two goals. Firstly, I want to teach people to use a simple dichotomous key and, secondly, I want them to develop an eye for detail. These two skills will form a good basis for people who want to go further and take some formal courses in plant identification. The key I developed uses characters such as leaf types (simple or compound), leaf margins, hairs, and leaf arrangements to separate plants into groups having similar characters.

As beautiful as flowers are, I decided to use leaves as the focus for plant identification because they are around long after (and usually before) flowers bloom. Leaves have few parts and all the parts are easily seen without any special equipment. There are some groups of plants that are almost impossible to distinguish without flowers. For taxa such as grasses, sedges, and willows, flowers really make life a lot easier, but those flowers are small and complicated. At this stage, if a 10-year old can learn to distinguish between a grass stem and a sedge stem, the child will be well on the way to a solid background in plant identification. And after all, some research scientists lump them all together as "graminoids".

My book, then, has a dichotomous key, which leads users to a particular group of

plants. Each species within the group then has a separate page with some facts and pictures. Whenever possible, flowers, fruits, and stems are shown. There is no scientific classification, as botanists are accustomed to using. Rather, the species pages within each group are ordered alphabetically.

I have also included pages comparing similar plants. Thinking back to when I was first learning to identify plants, I recall that the alders and beaked hazelnut caused me plenty of headaches, and I still check out chokecherry and pincherry leaves every spring, so comparisons seemed a useful inclusion. As well, there are some interesting facts sprinkled throughout - the "beleaf it or not" sections.

The biggest problem in putting this book together was the illustrations. This should be easy, right? Just look up 50 to 100 common plants, do a write-up on



*Anemone
patens*

each, draw pictures of their leaves and work out a key based on the leaves.

Write-ups are easy. There is lots of information available. However, the pictures and illustrations were a bigger problem

than I expected. Armed with several floras, field guides, and textbooks, I started off doing line drawings. My first thought was that, no matter how hard I try to make these drawings my own, I am still copying them and somehow, somewhere, I will get in trouble for copyright infringements. Also, looking very closely at some of the drawings, some of the details, like veins, are a little obscure. Most of my friends are exceptionally good botanists and I can bet my left arm that they will find discrepancies between the drawings and the "real thing". What to do?

After experimenting with a poor dogwood leaf, I decided that chalk rubbings worked the best. That way no one can argue leaf margins, or veins. That solves the problem with copyright. Will it scan so I can digitize it? Actually, it worked quite well. Then, looking at the poor limp dogwood leaf lying on my desk, I was inspired to put it directly on the scanner. Voila! Perfect! So, scanning the actual leaves became the solution to my problem.



*Lycopodium
obscurum*

That was the start of what is now a passion. From simple leaves, to leaves and stems, bark, and now flowers and fruits, I've been developing better and better skills for scanning plants. Scanning and enhancing three-dimensional images is a whole new world. It takes a lot of finicky work, sometimes several days to do a single plant, and for some reason, the smaller

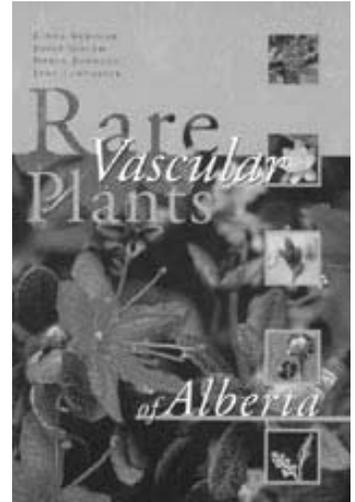
the plant the longer it takes. One single ground cedar (*Lycopodium obscurum*) took over a week, but the end results are well worthwhile. They are beautiful. They are real. And no one can argue that a leaf or flower is incorrect. (I was very honoured when Patsy Cotterill and Derek Johnson suggested that we use some of my images for gifts for the speakers at the Alberta Native Plant Council annual workshop this spring.)

My book is basically finished now, although I keep finding things to add and I expect that I will continue to do so until someone finally drags the pages out of my hands. I am presently working on finishing the images and reformatting the text in order to cut down on layout costs. The Federation of Alberta Naturalists (FAN) will be publishing my book, hopefully in the next few months. However, the cost to print a book is prohibitive. It will take a minimum of \$35,000 to print 3000 copies. It is more practical to print 5000 at \$45,000. Clearly, the only way is to apply for funding to offset the printing costs.

I would like to thank Anita Gerlinsky and her Girl Guide group who used my key to identify the plants in the Kennedale Ravine in the Edmonton river valley. These very enthusiastic girls, aged 9 to 12, were a

great deal of fun to work with, and although they thanked me for helping them, I must admit that I got far more from our evening together than I could ever give them.

Thanks so much to Alberta Native Plant Council for giving \$1,000 to support my project (ANPC Small Grants), which ultimately will help many others to enjoy our wild plants and beautiful outdoors. ☘



Buy from ANPC and save!
See previous issues of IRIS or contact the Secretary.

ANPC Small Grants Program

The ANPC Small Grant Program which provides funds for research, study and appreciation of native plants supporting plant conservation is now in place. The application form can be obtained through ANPC webpage:

(<http://www.anpc.ab.ca/contact.html>)

or by e-mail: info@anpc.ab.ca

or by writing to ANPC at the following address:

ALBERTA NATIVE PLANT COUNCIL

Box 52099, Garneau Postal Outlet

Edmonton, AB

T6G 2T5

Attention Photographers!

The Alberta Native Plant Council is looking for photos of Alberta plants and plant habitats for display on the ANPC website, located at www.anpc.ab.ca.

Please send photos in digital format (jpg, tif, gif) to Ken Sanderson at ken@sandnarrow.com.

Bradley wins Emerald Award!

by Lorna Allen

She won many fans in February 2004 when she got up to do the wrap-up for the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species workshop in Calgary. Instead of taking her allotted 50 minutes, she sauntered up to the podium; popped on an incredibly battered cowboy hat and summed up the workshop in ten minutes, with amazing humour and style (see poem). Who is she? Cheryl Bradley, this year's Emerald Award winner in the Personal Commitment category. She is an active ANPC member, involved in many aspects of plant, and particularly prairie, conservation. The write-up on the website provides this summary of her activities:

Cheryl Bradley, Nature's Advocate

Early in her career, Cheryl worked throughout the Province with Alberta Parks as a park resource analyst and planner conducting field surveys, literature searches, air photo interpretation and system planning. Through her work and volunteer activities for the protection of nature, Albertans know more about how our rivers and riparian ecosystems work; how important native aspen parkland and grasslands are; the value of using native plants to repair damaged prairie ecosystems and what treasures Alberta has in "special places". Cheryl has also helped us to understand what we can do to preserve endangered species; how rivers and water quality are affected by industrial agriculture and urban lawns and how people can work towards sustainable communities, rural and urban. As an environmental consultant, Cheryl has conducted rare plant surveys, vegetation inventories and mapping, and environmental assessments

for numerous clients. She has helped various interests work together to address environmental challenges as an organizer and participant in public consultation processes. She works and volunteers tirelessly for the protection of nature, but also takes time to enjoy Alberta's natural beauty.

www.emeraldawards.com/2004.html

But we in ANPC know there is so much more. For example, her willingness to take on projects and her ability to see them through. Although many people were involved, none would argue that Cheryl was one of the leaders to see Rough Fescue designated as Alberta's official grass (the Provincial Grass Project which was a cooperative project involving several organizations and government agencies). So it was no surprise to see her take an active part in the 2003 ANPC Workshop *In Celebration of Rough Fescue*—the fifth time she has given a presentation at our annual event.

Cheryl Bradley continues to represent the ANPC on the Prairie Conservation Forum (PCF) and has been an active participant (e.g. chair for one year). At PCF meetings, Cheryl provides updates on ANPC activities related to prairie (e.g. workshop on rough fescue, rare plant book, guidelines for collection) and represents ANPC's interest in prairie native plant conservation. Cheryl has an admirable ability to thoroughly research an issue and then maintain her commitment to resolving it. She handles situations and people using humour and sensitivity! Known for her reasoned but unwavering work to reduce impacts on native grasslands and parkland, she is truly deserving of this award. Congratulations Cheryl! ❀

Thanks!

The ANPC would like to express our thanks to **Ksenija Vujnovic and Elisabeth Beaubien**.

Ksenija did an excellent job as associate and chief editor of IRIS over the past four years. The amount of time, organization and effort required for this endeavour are truly appreciated.

Elisabeth has announced her resignation from the Education and Information Committee and from the executive after 18 years of dedicated service (since 1988!). Five of those years, she served as president of the ANPC. Elisabeth provided valuable support, good humour, enthusiasm, expertise and knowledge to the ANPC.

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.
 - To develop briefs or position papers for special projects; for example, biodiversity, forest vegetation management, wetlands, rare species or phenology.
 - To organize field trips, plant studies and May Species Counts.
 - To update lists of current research and conservation projects.
- To preserve natural habitats and plant communities.
 - To support legislation that protects native plants.
 - To take action to establish, preserve and manage protected areas.
 - To undertake Alberta projects jointly with like-minded groups.
- To encourage appropriate use of Alberta's native plants.
 - To produce information on the use of native plants in land reclamation.
 - To develop and distribute collection, salvage and management guidelines.
 - To update a list of native seed sources and suppliers for horticulture and reclamation.