

# Manitoba Native Orchids Compendium

## Northern twayblade (*Listera borealis* Morong)



The species name is from the Latin *borealis* "northern" in reference to its northern distribution.

A widespread but very rare orchid in Manitoba. This species prefers the cool mossy environments of northern coniferous forests. Each plant is a single stem up to 20 cm high including the inflorescence. Two heart shaped leaves are located directly opposite each other approximately half way up the stem. The flowers, 8 – 16 per stem, are a light blue-green with a relatively large lip for the size of plant. This species is very similar to the *Listera auriculata* and the flowers must be closely examined to separate the two. The base of the lip of *Listera borealis* has auricles that diverge from the column rather than curve towards it as in the case of the *Listera auriculata*.

This elusive species can be well hidden in its environment. From late June to mid July look for this orchid in moist locations in particular along streams and rivers in the northern coniferous forests in the upper two thirds of the province.

Considered rare and very similar in appearance to its close relative *Listera auriculata*. This species, when discovered, should be carefully photographed and its location documented and the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre should be notified.