



Native Plant News

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www.npss.sk.ca

Winter 2014

NPSS AGM for the Dogs

Yes, it was another long winter, but there was still something for plant enthusiasts to celebrate. The Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan held their 20th annual general meeting on February 6-7, 2015 at TCU Place in Saskatoon, SK. As this year was the 20th anniversary of the society, the theme of "Native Plants: Past, Present and Future" allowed us to reflect on where we've been and where we're going.

Friday night started off with a surprise: Dr. Vernon Harms, Professor Emeritus of the University of Saskatchewan and lifelong champion of native plants was awarded the first-ever "Lifetime Achievement in Botany Award" by the NPSS. As this is a new award to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the NPSS, it was also awarded posthumously to two of Dr. Harms' colleagues: John Hudson and Dr. George Ledingham. More on this

can be found in the article in this newsletter.

Following the award, keynote speaker Aimee Hurt from Working Dogs for Conservation talked about how scent detector dogs were being used to survey for rare or invasive plants, and of the fascinating conservation projects that her dogs were involved with around the world. Their dogs can be trained to identify almost anything organic and often have better detection rates than their human counterparts. In fact, Aimee spoke of one example where a dog kept insisting that an invasive plant called Dyer's Woad (*Isatis tinctoria*) existed in an area where it had been previously dug up, and it turns out that the dog was smelling a root fragment buried a foot underground that had been missed by the initial removal efforts! More

on their organization can be found on their website, <http://wd4c.org/>, or on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/WorkingDogsForConservation>. A great YouTube video demonstrating how the dogs work can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWa8rrNJZDY>

After Aimee's presentation, a new documentary entitled "Grasslands" was screened. This new film produced



PHOTO BY CANDACE NEUFELD

Kerry Hecker talks about the NPSS then and now.

by 291 Film Company explores the grassland region as a whole, and visits exemplary prairie areas in both Canada and United States. Saskatchewan author Heather Peat-Hamm also took the stage to read from her new book "Blue Grama". The book contains poems, songs and line drawings about the prairies and its residents. Autographed copies of Heather's book can be found on our website store at <http://www.npss.sk.ca/?s=8> A wine and cheese reception and a show of member's photos capped off the evening.

Saturday morning began with the business portion of the annual general meeting which transitioned into a presentation of the 2014 NPSS projects by Executive Director Chet Neufeld. Kerry Hecker, Manager of the Last Mountain Lake National Wildlife Area



PHOTO BY CANDACE NEUFELD

An enthusiastic crowd attended this year's AGM.

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Native Plant News is a quarterly publication of the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan (NPSS) and is one of the benefits of membership. Members are invited to submit articles, news, views, photographs and comments. Views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the NPSS.

Deadlines:

	Submission	Publication
Winter Issue:	November 1	December 15
Spring Issue:	February 1	March 15
Summer Issue:	May 1	June 15
Fall Issue:	August 1	September 15

Membership Dues (Year End November 30)

Individual \$30	Non-profit organization \$100
Family \$45	Corporate \$200
Student \$15	Life \$500

Please contact the NPSS office for information about the lifetime membership installment payment option.

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and past NPSS board member explored the theme of “Past, Present and Future” with a retrospective look and what the society has accomplished over the past 20 years. The tone of the event then transitioned into the present with a screening of the BBC documentary “Life: Plants”. Dr. Eric Lamb, a professor from the University of Saskatchewan, continued



PHOTO BY CANDACE NEUFELD

Keynote speaker Aimee Hurt.

the theme by discussing recent research that he and his team have conducted on Smooth Brome (*Bromus inermis*) and its effect on soil composition and function.

Later in the afternoon Jeff Lettvenuk, GIS Lead at the Saskatchewan Research Council, whisked the crowd into the future with a presentation on the exciting world of drone technology and how it can be applied to conservation projects. Barry Gibbs, Executive Director of the Alberta Invasive Species Council, continued the look forward with a presentation

on the future of invasive species management. The day wrapped up with a final documentary, this time a film entitled “Amazing Plants”.

The event was well-attended and received positive comments from many participants. We couldn’t have done it without the dedication of the NPSS annual general meeting committee, our gracious presenters, our fabulous



PHOTO SUPPLIED

One of the detector dogs working in the field.

sponsors and, of course, all who attended. Special thanks to our event sponsors. SaskPower was the exclusive Carbon Neutral Sponsor, which means that their sponsorship dollars purchased carbon offsets for all of the emissions generated by our event, including everyone’s travel. Another long-time sponsor of our event is SaskEnergy, who was our sole Platinum Level Sponsor. Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company also provided the seed packet table favours for the event. *



Dr. Vernon Harms Wins NPSS Lifetime Achievement in Botany Award

The Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan's "Lifetime Achievement in Botany Award" is a new award for 2015, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the NPSS. The purpose of the award is to recognize worthy recipients in the field of botany for their outstanding achievement and lifelong earnest effort toward the goals of better understanding and conserving native plants in Saskatchewan. The recipient need not be a professional, but if so, must demonstrate significant volunteer effort in addition to their career. Their work must have a lasting impact on Saskatchewan's people and places. As this is the highest honour awarded by the NPSS, it is only awarded to the most deserving of individuals and so a select few are ever inducted into its ranks.

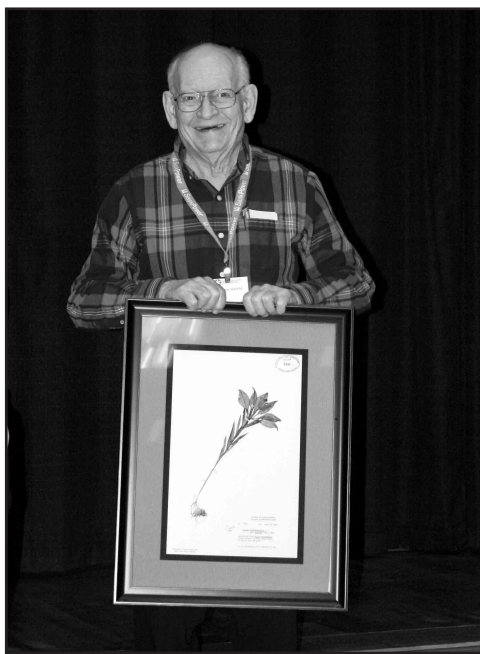


PHOTO SUPPLIED

Dr. Vernon Harms presented with framed specimen.

The award was given to a surprised Dr. Vernon Harms, who we managed to keep it a secret from, and even brought in some of his children to celebrate the event. A few of Dr. Harms' former students were also on hand to help present the award and

celebrate his achievements. After a presentation outlining his numerous remarkable achievements, some of which are listed below, Dr. Harms was presented with a framed herbarium specimen of a Western Red Lily (*Lilium philadelphicum* var. *andinum*) which he had collected on one of his past forays. He will also have a native tree species of his choosing planted in his honour in a dedicated bed for winners of the Lifetime Achievement in Botany Award.

As this was the first year for this award, the NPSS decided that it should also be awarded posthumously to two of Dr. Harms' colleagues, John Hudson and Dr. George Ledingham. Both have made massive contributions to native plant conservation and education in Saskatchewan in their own right and will also have native trees planted in the bed along with Dr. Harms' tree.

Thanks to the following people for helping to organize the award ceremony: Dr. Rob Wright, Anna Leighton, Joanne Marchand, Dr. Mary Vetter and Jordan Hildebrandt.

The following is a short biography on Dr. Harms:

Born in 1930 in Kansas, USA, Vern obtained his M.Sc. in "Plant Anatomy & Paleobotany" at Kansas State University in 1959 & his Ph.D. in "Plant Systematics" in 1963 at the University of Kansas. After completing his Ph.D., Dr. Harms taught at the University of Alaska (where he was also the Herbarium Curator) and Northwestern Louisiana State University before beginning his lengthy career at the University of Saskatchewan in 1969. For the next 28 years, he would divide his time between his duties as Curator of the W.P. Fraser Herbarium and as tenured Professor of Botany in the Biology Department until his retirement in 1997. As curator, he orchestrated the merger of the Russell (Agriculture Canada) and Swift Current Herbaria collections and the Saskatchewan Wildlife Collections to increase the Fraser Herbarium collection by more

Upcoming Events

2015

*Canadian Society for Ecology and
Evolution Conference
'Ecology and Evolution of Managed
Landscapes'*

May 22-24 2015

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK
Conference registration and more info
can be found at:

[https://ccdeconference.usask.ca/index.
asp?cid=101](https://ccdeconference.usask.ca/index.asp?cid=101)

*Saskatchewan Archaeological Society
Plant Identification Workshop and Walk*

May 24th, 2015 • 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Beaver Creek Camp

(15 km south of Saskatoon
on Highway #219)

Students \$20 (members) \$25 (non-members)

Individuals \$25 (members) \$30 (non-members)

Please register by Wednesday, May 20th.

Register online at www.saskarchsoc.ca

(under Programs)

or contact (306) 664-4124 or

saskarchsoc@sasktel.net

Tamarack Garden Club

*Spring Fling for Gardeners - Using Native
Plants in Your Landscape"*

May 2, 2015 • 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Melfort United Church Education Centre

220 Burrows Avenue West, Melfort, SK

Admission - \$10

For more information, contact Terry Sparks

at (306) 752-5695 or

sparks_terry@hotmail.com

Wings over Wascana Nature Festival

May 29, 2015 (School Day) and

May 30, 2015 (Public Day)

Regina, SK

For more info on events, visit
the Friends of Wascana Marsh site at

<http://www.wascanamarsh.ca/>

*To submit your native plant related
event to our events list, send your
information (including date, contact,
phone number and location) to
info@npss.sk.ca.*

than 32,000 specimens. While instructing undergraduate courses in botany, plant taxonomy, plant systematics, plant evolution, historical phylogeography and plant reproduction, supervising graduate students, and raising a family, he continued to travel throughout the province, conducting vascular plant surveys and assessments and collecting plants. 35,000 of the total 180,000 specimens currently housed in the Fraser Herbarium were collected by Dr. Harms!

Although retired, Dr. Harms worked as Acting Curator for the W.P. Fraser Herbarium until 2000 and continued in the capacity of Emeritus Professor of Botany in the Biology Department at the University of Saskatchewan, where you will find him working hard in the Herbarium Research room!

In his spare time, Dr. Harms has volunteered his expertise to several committees including the Botanical Assessment Working Group, Species Specialist Group for Vascular Plants for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and The Saskatchewan Species at Risk Committee.

He wrote COSEWIC Status reports for Impoverished Pinweed (*Lechea intermedia* var. *depauperata*), Buffalograss (*Bouteloua dactyloides*), Mackenzie Hairgrass (*Deschampsia mackenzieana*), Floccose Tansy (*Tanacetum huronense* var. *floccosum*), Large-Headed Woolly Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* var. *megacephala*) and Felt-Leaved, Turner's

& Sand-Dune Short-Capsuled Willows (*Salix silicicola*, *S. tunorii* and *S. brachycarpa* var. *psammophila* respectively).

In 1992, he wrote "The Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of Saskatchewan" with Peggy-Ann Ryan & Judy Haraldson and he developed the Saskatchewan Rare Plants Database.

His 2003 "Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Saskatchewan, and the Provincially and Nationally Rare Plants of Saskatchewan, along with his 2006 "Annotated Catalog of Saskatchewan Vascular Plants" are provincial references used by botanists across the prairies.

He is still going strong, co-authoring the Flora of Saskatchewan Association fascicles "Fern & Fern Allies of Saskatchewan", "Lilies, Irises & Orchids of Saskatchewan" and "Grasses of Saskatchewan" with Anna Leighton (and likely contributing treatments for most of the remaining taxa).

Award nomination process:

Anyone can nominate a candidate by stating their case in writing to the NPSS board of directors, along with evidence to support their eligibility. Nominations can be submitted to the board at any time of the year, but the honour will be awarded at the NPSS annual general meeting. As the selection criteria is rigorous, the award will only be given intermittently when a qualified individual is identified. ✨

Plan to Attend the Annual NatureCity Festival

Wild About Saskatoon, of which the NPSS is a member of, is once again hosting their annual NatureCity Festival from May 23-29, 2015. There will be dozens of events all over Saskatoon, with an event somewhere in the city almost every hour of every day.

For its part, the NPSS will be hosting the first of its summer field tours during the festival week. We will be visiting the Saskatoon Small Swale on Friday, May 29th at 6:30 pm. We will be meeting at the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation building. The Small Swale is characterized by rolling topography filled with wetlands and mixed grass prairie. It is also home to several provincially and nationally rare species. We will likely see over a dozen spring wildflowers in bloom. The tour is free and is suitable for all ages and experience levels.

Keynote presentation:

"Healthy by Nature: An Evening with Dr. Shimi Kang and Cam Collyer" The presentation will be on Monday, May 25 at the Broadway Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Shimi Kang is an internationally celebrated doctor, researcher, and best-selling author. Cam Collyer is the Program Director of the Evergreen Foundation.

Registration is \$12 and tickets can be purchased at the Broadway Theatre, McNally Robinson Booksellers or on the NPSS website at <http://www.npss.sk.ca/?s=8> and choose the "Events" tab. Full details are available at <http://www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org/#!keynote/c2ca>

For more information on these and other events, please visit www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org ✨



PHOTO BY JONATHAN CRUZ
Shimi Kang.



PHOTO SUPPLIED
Cam Collyer.

New Plant Species for the Province

By SARAH VINGE-MAZER

Provincial Botanist - Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre

Bacopa rotundifolia, Water Hyssop, has been confirmed for the first time in Saskatchewan!

In 2013 the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (SKCDC) received an email request containing photos for identification of an unknown plant species. It took some time to come up with a candidate species – *Bacopa rotundifolia*. This species, however, had never been verified to occur in Saskatchewan. In the world of botany, photos of course are not sufficient evidence for such a find, so in 2014 SKCDC staff set out to locate the site and successfully obtained a specimen which was sent to the W.P. Fraser Herbarium in Saskatoon.

This species was found growing in the drawdown, mudflat zone on the margin of a wetland, in a crop, south of Weyburn. It was found to be flowering in early August in both 2013 and 2014. While little is known about this species in Saskatchewan, it may be threatened by wetland drainage and cropping practices. The original wetland site from 2013 was found to have been drained in 2014 and partially cropped, and no plants were found at that original site.

With only a single known site in the province, this taxon automatically receives a provincial rank of S1 (extremely rare). Future surveys will be conducted to gather more information on this species in Saskatchewan.

This discovery provides evidence for the importance of remnant habitats for rare species within agricultural landscapes. ✪



PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE-MAZER

***Bacopa rotundifolia* and its small white flowers amongst other wetland plants.**



PHOTO BY SARAH VINGE-MAZER

Wetland with *Bacopa rotundifolia*. Flags mark the plants.

BAWG Updates Provincial Plant S-Ranks

By SARAH VINGE-MAZER

Provincial Botanist - Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre

The Botanical Assessment Working Group (BAWG) has recently reassessed the ranks of seven species. A summary of the reassessments can be found below. This brings the total number of taxa reassessed by BAWG to 28. In addition, BAWG has considered the tracking status of seven other species and has made changes to those tracking statuses in advance of formal rank reassessments.

Please note that every effort has been made to ensure that this list is accurate; however, the lists provided on our lists page (see link below) are the final authority for this type of information. <http://www.biodiversity.sk.ca/SppList.htm>

For more information on the ranking process, please see our ranking page at <http://www.biodiversity.sk.ca/ranking.htm>. If you have a plant taxon that you believe should be a priority for a rank reassessment, please contact the SKCDC botanist, Sarah Vinge-Mazer, at (306) 787-7039 or sarah.vingemazer@gov.sk.ca

Taxa with S-Ranks Recently Reassessed or Tracking Statuses Changed

Scientific Name	Common Name	New (or current) S-rank	Old S-rank	Notes
<i>Corispermum americanum</i> var. <i>americanum</i>	American Bugseed	S3?	S1	Remains on the tracking list; previous assessment was based on incomplete information
<i>Corispermum hookeri</i> var. <i>hookeri</i>	Hooker's Bugseed	S1	SNR	Newly added to the tracking list
<i>Corispermum ochotense</i> var. <i>ochotense</i>	Russian Bugseed	S1	SNR	Newly added to the tracking list
<i>Corispermum pallasii</i>	Pallas' Bugseed	S2	SNR	Newly added to the tracking list
<i>Corispermum villosum</i>	Hairy Bugseed	S2	SNR	Newly added to the tracking list
<i>Festuca campestris</i>	Prairie Fescue	S1	n/a	New taxon for the province, added to the tracking list
<i>Packera plattensis</i>	Prairie Ragwort	S1	S3S4	All but one herbarium specimen were revised to <i>P. paupercula</i> , so this species is more rare than previously thought. Remains on the tracking list
<i>Chenopodium atrovirens</i>	Dark-green Goosefoot	SNR		Newly added to the tracking list; rank not yet assessed
<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i> var. <i>andinum</i>	Western Red Lily		S3S4	Removed from the tracking list; species covered by the Provincial Emblem Act
<i>Lupinus pusillus</i> ssp. <i>pusillus</i>	Small Lupine	S3	S3	Although numerous, its restricted range keeps it at an S3
<i>Osmorhiza depauperata</i>	Blunt-fruited Sweet-cicely	S4	S3S4	Removed from the tracking list
<i>Polygala senega</i>	Seneca Snakeroot	S4	S3S4	Removed from the tracking list
<i>Sisyrinchium mucronatum</i>	Mucronate Blue-eyed-grass	S3S4		Deferred until herbarium specimens can be confirmed by an expert
<i>Symphotrichum ascendens</i>	Western Aster	S3S4		Newly added to the tracking list; rank not yet reassessed

The Manitoba Museum Launches New Virtual Exhibit Featuring Plant-spotting App

The Manitoba Museum has recently launched Prairie Pollination (www.prairiepollination.ca), a virtual exhibit aimed at helping the public learn more about pollinating insects and the wild plants they depend on. The endangerment of pollinators and plants is a topic of concern to many Canadians, and The Manitoba Museum has important collections that help to understand this issue. Plant and insect specimens are very difficult to display in regular gallery exhibits, so the Museum decided to create an online exhibit open to all.

This new virtual exhibit can be found at www.prairiepollination.ca. The exhibit was developed in partnership with the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) Investment Program; the Heritage Grants Program, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism Department, Government of Manitoba; and The Manitoba Museum Foundation Inc.

The project was led by The Manitoba Museum's Curator of Botany, Dr. Diana Bizecki Robson. She hopes that this exhibit will foster appreciation of these organisms and motivate people to make positive changes to their lives to help save them. "Pollinators need our help, but humans need their help even more," says Dr. Bizecki Robson. "Two-thirds of our crop species worldwide depend on wild pollinators to some degree! Those pollinators need more than just crop plants to survive - they need wild plants too."

"The Government of Canada is proud to invest in partnerships such as this one," said the Honourable

Shelly Glover, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages. "As we approach Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, it is a wonderful time for all of us to learn more about our country, including about our natural heritage."

Photographs of endangered and common prairie plants, and their insect and bird pollinators, are beautifully illustrated in this exhibit. Watercolour paintings of wild plants from the Museums' famous Norman Criddle collection, and virtual tours of wild prairies with pollination scientists add depth and context to the specimens. There is even a free PlantSpotting app available for Android and Apple devices that will enable users to post their own pictures of wild plants and pollinators.

Teachers will also be able to help their students learn more about pollination through the lesson plans in the Virtual Museum of Canada Teachers' Centre. Using the multimedia resources provided, students will learn about the life cycles and habitats of plants and pollinators, and evaluate human impacts on prairie ecosystems and endangered species.

For more information, contact:

Greg Klassen
Communications and Marketing Manager
The Manitoba Museum
Direct Line: 204-988-0614
Mobile: 204-294-4024
Email: gklassen@manitobamuseum.ca ✉

New Wildflower App for Saskatchewan

Flora ID Northwest has just announced two new Android apps for Saskatchewan and southwestern Canada wildflowers on the Google Play Store. They are pleased to make this available in a "field friendly format" that is the culmination of 20 years producing interactive plant keys. The apps are titled "1050 Saskatchewan Wildflowers" and "2350 Southwestern Canada Wildflowers." They are much more comprehensive than the usual wildflower field guide or app, with many more species, over 3300 and 7200 photos respectively, and sophisticated interactive keys with all the functionality of the keys in their PC programs. The apps each include 92% of all the native and naturalized, non-graminoid flowering species in Saskatchewan and in the 4 provinces of southwestern Canada. Species can be sorted by either common or scientific names, with synonyms listed in descriptions, and other features for managing nomenclatural changes.

For more details, see their web site <http://flora-id-northwest.com>, or the web page on Google Play Store <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.floraidnorthwest.saskatchewan> ✉



Membership Renewal Contest

The winner of our membership renewal draw was Douglas Sword of Unity, SK. For renewing his NPSS membership on time, Doug won an autographed copy of Heather Peat Hamm's new book "Blue Grama". Congratulations Doug! 🌱

Bearberry Creek Water Gardens

NATIVE & ORNAMENTAL WETLAND PLANTS

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www.bbcreek.ca Sundre, AB

Now Those Are Some Old Shoes!

Irene Dutchak recently sent the NPSS this photo, saying that this Yellow Lady's-Slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) patch is approximately 65 years old. 🌱



PHOTO BY IRENE DUTCHAK

65 year old Yellow Lady's-slipper patch.

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