

Conserve Native Plants Society Inc.

Western Prairie Fringed Orchid Suffers Loss Again

This summer might have presented a opportunity for the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid to gain a stronger foothold in the municipality of Stuartburn.

The month of June, 2007 found CNPS's Bud Ewacha and Veronica Walsh pollinating about 100 WPFO plants with hopes of enhancing the odds for successful proliferation of this species. This site was marked with stakes to ensure protection following an incident that took place in the same locale in 2006, when a road allowance maintance crew inadvertently mowed down an area of the prized, endangered and protected WPFO.

This July, during a subsequent visit to the site, Bud Ewacha discovered that the plants just previously pollinated had been cut down.

The Western Prairie Fringed Orchid thrives in only a small, select area of Manitoba and Canada, and is listed as endangered, both provincially and federally in Canada, and as threatened in the United States. It reproduces almost entirely by seed, requiring specific conditions for propagation. Seedlings can then take several years before their first true leaves push up through the soil.

Because 2004 was a particularly bad year for seed propagation, and was followed by the "accidental" cutting incident of 2006, there is cause for concern for the loss of another 100 plants in 2007.



Photo by Bud Ewacha

CNPS member and volunteer, Veronica Walsh, is shown assisting with the pollination of the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid this summer.

**(C.N.P.S.) Conserve Native
Plants Society Inc.**

www.conservenativeplants.ca

Bud Ewacha, President
35 St. Michael Road
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 2K7
Telephone (204) 253-4741
Cell: (204) 299-6320
Fax (204) 253-7241
E-mail: bud_ge@escape.ca

**Please remember to renew
your membership.**

Jack-in-the-Pulpit

This member of the Arum family is acknowledged by some as variations of a single species, and by others as three distinctly different species of Jack-in-the-Pulpit. The three variations inhabiting specific areas of the northern United States and Canada are the Woodland Jack-in-the-Pulpit, *A. atrorubens* (found locally in moist woodlands), the Small or Swamp Jack-in-the-Pulpit (New England to Kentucky), *A. triphyllum*, and the Indian-Turnip or Northern Jack-in-the-pulpit, *A. stewardsonii* (eastern Canada and the Appalachians).

All species feature the characteristic spathe, a flap which gracefully canopies a central green spike of flowers (the spadix). The frequently striped spathe can be green or purplish brown. The spadix's tiny irregular male and female inflorescences can be up to 8cm long (3 inches). Blooms appear from April to June.

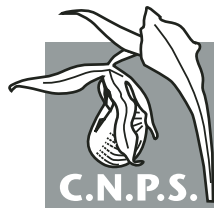
The fruit appears on the spadix as a cluster of red 1 cm wide berries, when ripened - each berry producing 1 to 5 seeds.

The trifoliolate leaves are groups of three leaves growing from the top of a long stem. Each leaf is 8-15 cm long and 3-7 cm wide. This plant's height ranges from 30 to 65 cm.

The root of the Jack-in-the-Pulpit was used extensively by Native Americans for treatment of a number of ailments, including congestion, headaches, and skin infections (it would be roasted before use). These roots contain calcium oxalate and are poisonous if consumed uncooked.



Jack-in-the-Pulpit
Arisaema
Photo by Bud Ewacha



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that your
membership fees support
CNPS projects.
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that your membership
is paid up.

Project Grants Given to CNPS

Conserve Native Plants Society has been given a grant by Nature Conservancy of Canada to help fund their ongoing Western Prairie Fringed Orchid project. The project involves the pollination, collection of seed, and the reseedling of the WPFO back into the wild. Berger Brothers Ltd. is also giving financial support to this endeavour.

Work on the WPFO has already commenced and is expected to continue until 2010.