



Prairie Originals

WILDFLOWERS
NATIVE GRASSES



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It has been a season of extremes in southwest Manitoba, northern Saskatchewan and Alberta this year with lots of heavy rain and flooding but we have been lucky here at Prairie Originals. We had a good rain in late May but by the first day of summer on June 21 we were getting dry and hoping for rain. We finally had a good soaker, 22 mm, on June 23 and then another 22 mm on June 26, so combined with the hot weather now, the plants are happy and growing by leaps and bounds.

What's Blooming Now?

July is prime time for prairie wildflowers. With our late spring, some of our June blooming flowers such as Canada Anemone, Wild Columbine and Northern Bedstraw are still blooming and overlapping with all the July blooming flowers that are just starting now. The flowers blooming include Harebell, Red Lily, False Sunflower, Black Eyed Susan, Swamp Milkweed & Dwarf Milkweed.

Philadelphia Fleabane *Eriqeronphiladelphicus* is covered with loads of enchanting, mauve daisies with yellow centers all through July.

It will probably be starting to bloom the second week of July this year. It grows 30 – 45 cm tall (1 – 1.5 ft.) in sun or part shade and medium to moist soil.

Philadelphia Fleabane attracts butterflies for nectar. It spreads a little bit by reseeding.

Many of our native shrubs are blooming mid/late June and early July this year such as Indigo Bush, Dwarf False Indigo, Arrowwood, Highbush Cranberry, and Prickly Rose. Grey Dogwood and Narrowleaf Meadowsweet will be blooming a little later in mid-July.



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Prickly Rose *Rosaacicularis* has a heavenly fragrance in bloom. The showy flowers produce red rose hips which are rich in vitamins A,B, E & K and are one of the best sources of vitamin C. Three hips contain as much vitamin C as an orange. Most parts of the shrubs are edible except for the seeds. Rose petals may be eaten alone as a trail nibble, added to salads, teas, jellies and wines or candied. Buds, young shoots and young leaves may be eaten raw or cooked. Lots more uses are listed in the book *Edible & Medicinal Plants of Canada*. These roses are host plants for the Striped Hairstreak butterfly caterpillars. The shrubs do spread somewhat by suckering roots so they are best planted at cottages or on larger properties where they have room to roam. It is a very tough and adaptable plant growing in sun or a fair bit of shade and in medium to moist, and occasionally wet soil. It has very prickly branches and grows to about 120 cm tall (4 ft.). It is native across Canada from BC to New Brunswick and north to Yukon & Nunavut. Prickly Rose is the floral emblem of Alberta. We have lots available in 4.5" pots, and 1 & 2 Gallon pots.



The cool season grasses are also just coming into bloom now too, Tufted Hairgrass, Green Needle Grass, Sheep Fescue, June Grass & Giant Wild Rye.

Bird, Butterfly & Creature News

We are seeing lots of Goldfinches these days and the Ruby Throated Hummingbirds are visiting the flowers of our Wild Iris and Wild Columbine. They will also feed from Fireweed flowers.

I was putting a sprinkler on one of our newly planted beds early one morning a few weeks ago and along came a hummingbird and sat in the spray, fluffing its wings and having a shower. It was magical.



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We are seeing quite a few butterflies these days, Spring Azures, a White Admiral, lots of Tiger Swallowtails (host plant is Birch, Trembling Aspen, Willow & Ash) & Black Swallowtails (host plant is Heartleaf & Golden Alexander, Parsley, Carrots & Dill) and a few Monarchs. We found the first 3 Monarch caterpillars on the Dwarf Milkweed on June 25 and 5 more on the Whorled Milkweed a few days later. On June 28 we found a Great Spangled Fritillary Caterpillar on the Early Blue Violets.



Black Swallowtail



Tiger Swallowtail

We also found something new and exciting this year, 3 Giant Silk Moths hanging in our shade house in late June! They are Polyphemus Moths with a wingspan of 10 – 15 cm (4"). Late last summer we found a fat caterpillar that looked like a little green accordion with red spots and weren't sure what it was. Now we know. These caterpillars grow for 5 – 6 weeks and reach 7 cm long and 2 cm in diameter (3" long & ¾" diameter). They feed on some of our native trees & shrubs such as Oak, Willow, Maple & Birch. The metamorphosis from caterpillar to moth is truly amazing. When fully grown the caterpillar spins a cocoon and then sheds its skin inside the cocoon to become the pupa. Inside that pupa the tissues dissolve and reform into this spectacular moth. It spends the winter hanging from a low tree or shrub branch. The adult emerges from the pupae in late spring and mating occurs the same day from late evening to early morning. Females lay eggs that evening on leaves of the host plants.

The Polyphemus Moths do not eat. They live only a week or two, just long enough to mate and start the next generation. These moths are widespread across southern Canada and the United States. In Canada we have one generation per year.

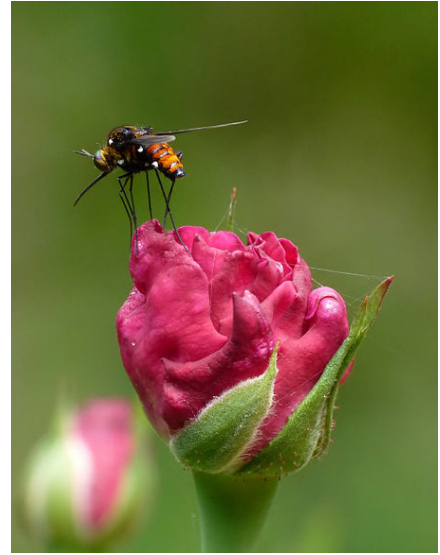


For more information on these fascinating creatures click here: www.naturenorth.com/spring/bug/silkmoth/Fsilk2.html

Beneficial Bugs

Bee Flies are a large family of flies with hundreds of different kinds. The adults generally feed on nectar and pollen and some types are important **pollinators**. Larvae generally parasitize other insects. They are called Bee Flies because they mimic bees in some ways such as having a furry body, black, brown or yellow, and making a buzzing noise. Unlike bees, they only have 2 transparent wings which are at a characteristic “swept back” angle.

They have a similar flight pattern to Hover Flies and range in size from 1 mm to 10 mm (0.4”). Bee Flies have long, skinny legs and a long, stiff tongue for sipping nectar from flowers. They hover above the flowers while sipping, touching just enough to get dusted with pollen. You may see them hovering just above bare ground in early spring, looking for a place to lay their eggs or drinking nectar from flowers in grassy, sunny places.



Spined Soldier Bugs are in the Stink Bug family and are found across Canada along streams, in wooded areas, in agricultural areas and in gardens. The Spined Soldier Bug preys on a wide range of insects including larvae of Diamond Back Moth, European Corn Borer, Imported Cabbageworm, Colorado Potato Beetle and Flea Beetles. The young nymphs are red and black and are round. Adults are brownish and shield shaped with a prominent spine on each shoulder and are about 11 mm long (0.4”). In Manitoba the Spined Soldier Bug usually has 1 or 2 generations per year and hibernates in leaf

litter from October to May. There is also a Two Spotted Stink Bug that feeds on all stages of Colorado Potato Beetle and larvae of Sunflower Beetles.



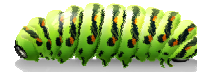
Fascinating Plants

Giant Hyssop *Agastache foeniculum* is a versatile, native perennial that grows wild from B.C. to Ontario and north into the southern parts of N.W.T. The prolific purple flower spikes are alive in summer with bees, beneficial bugs and butterflies coming to sip the nectar. As the season progresses Goldfinches and other birds come to eat the seeds to fatten up for their journey south. It is a popular plant with people too because of its long bloom time, from mid-June to mid-August, its ease of cultivation in the garden and the masses of pretty flowers it produces. It grows best in well-drained soil, preferably in full sun, but part shade is also ok.

The liquorice-flavoured leaves have been used by aboriginal people and herbalists to make pleasant medicinal teas for treating coughs, colds, fevers and for a weak heart. More recently the leaves and flowers have been used to relieve intestinal gas, to stimulate sweating and as a sedative to relieve tension. The flowers can also be chewed as a breath-freshener.

Giant Hyssop has also been taken to Holland where selection and breeding work is going on to develop especially good forms for the commercial cut flower industry.

We have Giant Hyssop available in 5 packs & 4.5" pots.

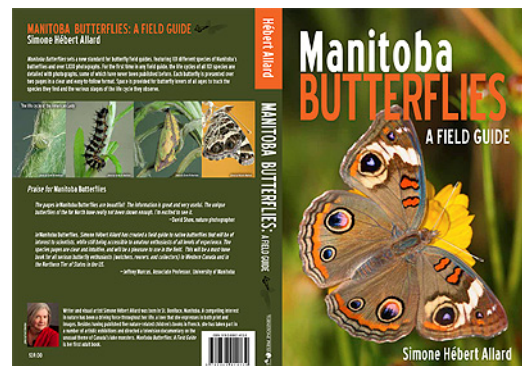


Interesting Books

We are very excited about a new book, hot off the press. It is "*Manitoba Butterflies : A Field Guide*" by Simone Allard & published by Turnstone Press in Winnipeg. It has over 1100 photographs and illustrations of 101 Manitoba butterflies including egg, caterpillar and adult of each species.

In addition to this there are chapters on butterfly basics, butterfly gardening, defense mechanisms and rearing butterflies. It is great for nature lovers, gardeners, butterfly enthusiasts and students. We highly recommend it.

It is available at our store and at our space at the St. Norbert Farmer's Market for \$39.00 + GST.



Websites to Explore

The www.wildaboutgardening.org website by the Canadian Wildlife Federation is part of their **Backyard Habitat Program**. Habitat loss is one of the greatest threats to Canadian wildlife, in large part due to rapidly expanding development.

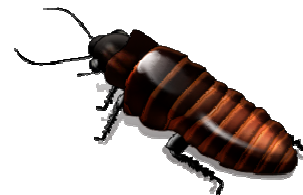
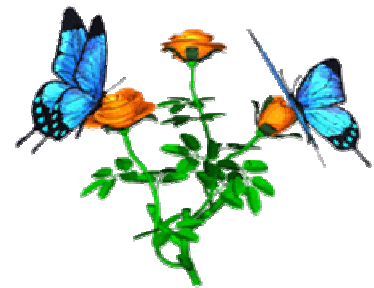
The website provides all kind of information on Gardening for wildlife and recreating natural habitats in our own backyards, be they large or small. Wildlife-friendly gardening and land stewardship, reflects that we're a part of, not separate from, nature. It is maintaining our property in an earth-friendly manner, which benefits us, too, with clean water for swimming and drinking, clean air for breathing, and nutrient-rich soil for our food. And creating habitat for local and migratory species supports their vitally important services of pollination and pest control. Gardeners can make their outdoor space — be it balcony, garden or large tracts of land — wildlife and earth friendly.

Until next time,

Shirley Froehlich, Stefania Johnson

Alexis Nazeravich, Kelly Leask

and Jacquie Stanton





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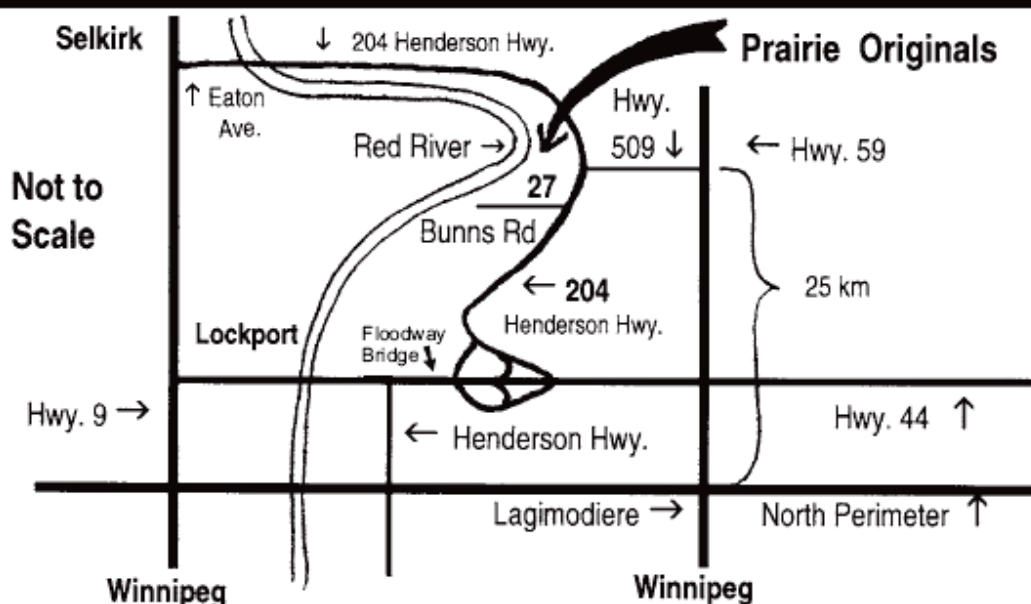
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LOCATION



HOURS

May 11 - June 29	Monday to Friday	10 am - 6 pm
	Saturday	9 am - 5 pm
Evenings by Appointment	Sundays - until June 16	11am - 5 pm

July, August, September - Usually open Monday to Saturday but **phone to confirm**

ST. NORBERT FARMERS MARKET

June 1 - mid Aug.	Saturday	8 am - 3 pm
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Located on Pembina Highway, about 1/2 km south of the perimeter.

