



# Prairie Originals

WILDFLOWERS  
NATIVE GRASSES



My gardening philosophy at  
this time of years is

*"I Live in the Garden  
I Just Sleep in the House."*

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## What's Blooming Now?

Our growing season so far this year has been quite interesting! With the exception of a week and a half of nice warm weather in mid June it has been quite cool. Our flowers are blooming about 2 weeks later than usual. The June blooming Alexanders, Canada Anemone and Wild Iris are just finishing now and the summer flowers seem to be reluctantly opening their blooms to the cool summer weather. The upside to cool weather is that the flowers are lasting quite long. The Harebells and Dwarf Milkweed have been blooming for a least a week already and the Black Eyed Susan, Gaillardia and Swamp Milkweeds are just beginning to open. The cool season grasses such as Green Needle, Tufted Hairgrass, June Grass and Sheep Fescue are also beautiful at this time of year.



*Clockwise from top left:  
Harebell, Swamp Milkweed,  
Tufted Hairgrass, June Grass,  
and Dwarf Milkweed*

## St. Norbert Farmer's Market

We continue to provide plants at the Market every Saturday from 8am to 3pm rain or shine. If you purchased any plants earlier this season we would be happy if you bring back the empty plug packs and trays either to the Market or to our Selkirk location. It saves us money, conserves resources and keeps them out of the landfill. We will be at the Market until mid/late August.

We continue to be open at our Selkirk location Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 5pm throughout the summer and in September too.

### Bird and Butterfly News



We haven't had a huge number of Monarch butterflies yet but some have showed up already and laid their eggs. The first one appeared here on June 19th. We found at least 25 caterpillars of assorted sizes happily munching on milkweed leaves in early July. Some have probably already crawled away and formed a chrysalis.

We spotted some of the Great Spangled Fritillary caterpillars on the Northern Bog Violets in early June. These caterpillars are velvety black with orange spines. They have already grown up and crawled away to form their chrysalis. They ate all the leaves of the violets but I see that they are growing new leaves again now. The adult butterflies will probably start hatching any day now.

### New for 2009

We have two new beautiful goldenrods this year for dry to medium soils. They both grow 30-50 cm tall (12-20") and have the typical nodding golden flowers. Goldenrods are all very good nectar plants for bees, butterflies and assorted other insects. Low & Showy go well with other low growing wildflowers and grasses for dry to medium soils. Both these goldenrods have wide native ranges across most of Canada and the United States. Low Goldenrod is everywhere except California, the east coast states, Quebec and the Maritimes. Showy Goldenrod (*photo on right*) is everywhere except the western United States.



**Low Goldenrod** *Solidago missouriensis* is the earliest blooming goldenrod, starting in July and going throughout August. It spreads by roots so it spreads more than the Showy. It can also take drier conditions. Low Goldenrod can be identified by its red stems and 3 ribbed linear-lanceolate leaves.

**Showy Goldenrod** *Solidago nemoralis* is a clump forming plant. The stems and leaves are covered with fine downy hairs giving them more of a grey-green look. In fact in the United States it is called Gray Goldenrod. It does live up to its name. It has very colourful and showy flowers.

### Garden Tours

If you have a group and would like a tour of the landscaped areas, stockbeds and container growing areas give us a call.

## Manitoba's Provincial Grass

Have you voted yet? Choose between Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Side Oats Grama and Blue Grama. If you would like to see these grasses in person before voting, all of them can be seen at Prairie Originals. They are all warm season grasses so a good time to see them is mid/late August through September. Big and Little Bluestem are also growing in the Forks Flowerbed of Native Plants between the Scotia Bank stage and the river and at the Nature Conservancy Prairie beside the Spaghetti Factory at the Forks.



## Beneficial Bugs

In the insect world we have many, many different kinds of insects. Insects are a very important but difficult to see part of our ecosystems. Many beetles, worms, spiders, and flies actually benefit our plants and vegetables – as pollinators, as soil builders, and as predators of plant eating insects. It is only a very small percentage of insects that cause problems for us in our gardens. So you have the good bugs and the bad bugs. The good bugs help to keep the bad bugs under control.

This is the best possible news any gardener could ask for. You can prevent many pest problems by growing the right flowers. Just as you grow certain plants to attract butterflies and hummingbirds, you can choose plants that will sustain a thriving community of pest eating bugs as they beautify your landscape.

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Just like other creatures, beneficial insects need food, water and shelter. If your garden supplies these, beneficial bugs will patrol your rows for you, eliminating pests while you sip mint tea and relax.

### **7 Ways to Attract Beneficials**

1. No insecticides – They will kill the good bugs along with the bad bugs.
2. Grow some grass – All clump grasses provide excellent summer shelter and over wintering sites for ground beetles, ladybugs, assassin bugs and other beneficials.
3. Create a diverse garden – Pests flourish in a monoculture. Therefore, the more diverse the plant life in your garden, the less likely a specific pest will be able to establish itself. Annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees, stone paths, rocks, etc. all add diversity. Plant some corn. Corn tassels produce lots of pollen for beneficial bugs. You will be surprised how striking corn looks in flowerbeds and you can eat it too.
4. Plant lots of flowers – They provide pollen and nectar that attracts good bugs and sustains them when pest populations are low. Many beneficial insects must feed on nectar (for carbohydrates) and pollen (for protein) from flowering plants to get the energy they need to search for prey or to reproduce.
5. Plan for flowers all season, spring through fall – Little parasitic wasps like small flowers such as those in the parsley family (*Umbelliferae*) like dill, alexanders, mint, and yarrow. The trick to always having these little parasitic wasps coming into your garden is to always have flowers waiting for them. If you plant dill & coriander in May and again in June some of the plants will be in bloom most of the summer. And if you plant again in late July those plants will flower in September.
6. Provide water – Anything from a dish filled with pebbles and water to a fishpond if fine.
7. Go wild – Native beneficial bugs love native vegetation, especially Asters, Hyssop, Gaillardia, Purple Coneflower, Goldenrods, Wild Mint, Wild Bergamot, Milkweeds, Alexanders and Yarrow. They also love flowering herbs such as Borage, Dill, Fennel, Basil, Coriander and Lavender.

Beneficial bugs include insects such as ladybugs, lacewings, parasitic mini wasps, hoverflies, spiders and tachinid flies.

Lacewings and ladybugs control a wide variety of soft bodied insects especially aphids.

Hover flies get aphids in tight places. They are also active in very early spring.

Tiny parasitic wasps attack many pests including caterpillars, stink bugs, scale, etc.

Spiders spend the winter in piles of leaves, tufts of dormant grass or other insulated spots.

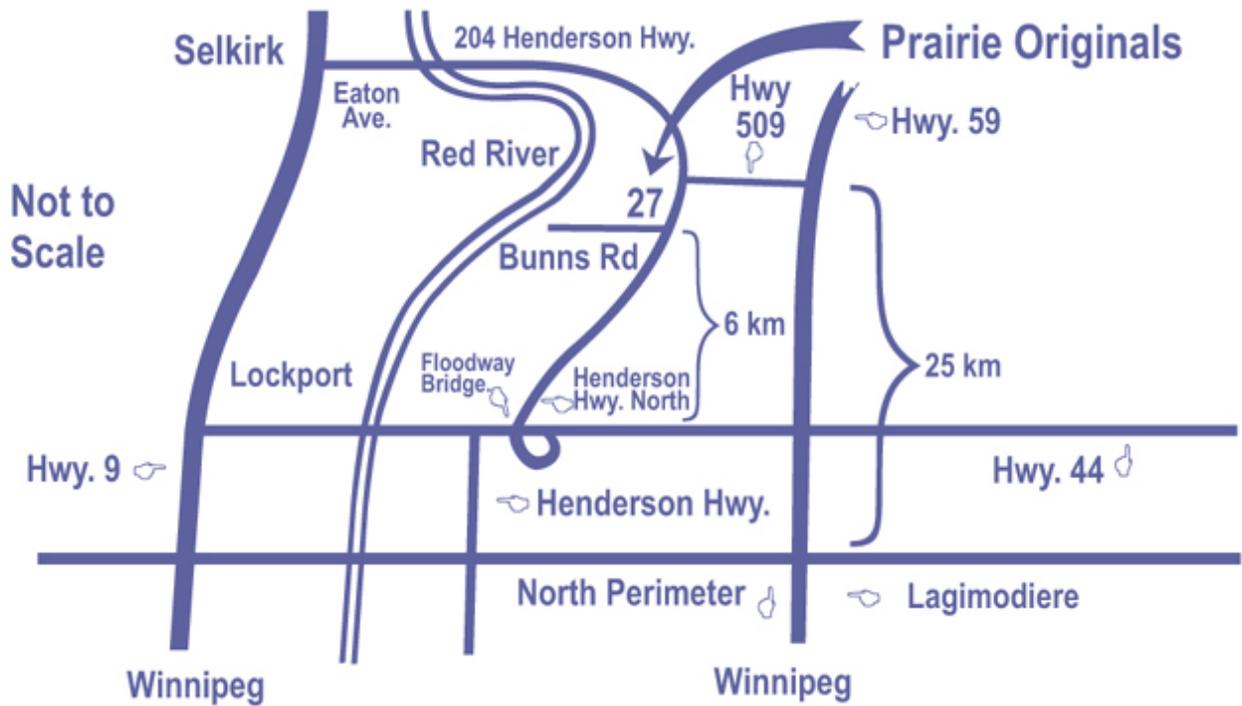
Ground beetles are large, shiny, blue-black or brown beetles with long legs and they are fast moving. They feed on slugs, snails, cutworms, root maggots, and Colorado potato bug larvae. Attract them with perennial ground covers, stones and logs.



**Until next time,**

***Shirley Froehlich, Stefania Johnson  
& Gwen Donohoe***

# LOCATION



# HOURS

May 12 - June 27

Monday to Friday

10 am - 6 pm

Saturday

9 am - 5 pm

Sundays - until June 15

11 am - 5 pm

July, August & September

Usually open Monday to Saturday, **Phone to confirm**

Evenings by Appointment