



# Prairie Originals

WILDFLOWERS  
NATIVE GRASSES



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## Natural & Distinctive

Spring has finally arrived, I think!!! You will probably have noticed that the plants are a week or two behind this year compared to last year. Many varieties are frost tolerant and sprout early in the spring, however some varieties prefer heat. These heat loving varieties wait for a stretch of very warm weather before they sprout. These late sprouters include Joe Pye, all Milkweeds, Purple and White Prairie Clovers, and the warm season grasses, including Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Switchgrass, Indian Grass, Blue Grama, Side Oats Grama, Buffalo Grass and Prairie Dropseed. These plants are just starting to show a touch of green this week at my place.

### ST. NORBERT FARMER'S MARKET

We will be at the Market this year starting on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 3pm. It is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Market this year so there will be some special events to celebrate on June 7<sup>th</sup>. For more information on the Market see their website at [www.stnorbertfarmersmarket.ca](http://www.stnorbertfarmersmarket.ca). My assistant Stef Johnson will be at our Selkirk location on Saturdays from 9am to 5pm from now on. Our Selkirk location will be closed July 12<sup>th</sup> and August 23<sup>rd</sup>.



## WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW?

The **Marsh Marigold's** have put on a great show this year. They have also lasted quite a while since it has been so cool. They are just finishing around the 7<sup>th</sup> of June. Early Blue Violet,

**Three Flowered Avens** and **Blue Eyed Grass** are all in full bloom now and will probably last another week or two. With the **Pussy Toes**, the big toes are just finishing blooming and the little toes are just starting. The little toes have smaller leaves and later flowers than the big toes.



Three Flowered Avens



Blue Eyed Grass

**Wild Plums** and **Saskatoons** and **Pincherries** started blooming the last week of May.



Wild Plums



Saskatoons

## NEW VARIETY FOR 2008

**Buffalo Grass** *Buchloe dactyloides* is an unusual, low growing grass with grey/green leaves. It grows about 10 cm tall (4") and spreads by above ground stolens or runners, the same way that strawberries spread. It is also unusual in that there are separate male and female plants. This drought tolerant, warm season grass likes full sun and prefers dry to medium clay soils. It is a great groundcover for sunny, dry areas. I have several areas established so you are welcome to come and see what it looks like. Buffalo Grass is very rare in Canada. It is now listed under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). In Canada, it is at the northernmost tip of its range and has only been found along the Souris River Valley in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In the United States, this grass is found in abundance and is a co-dominant grass of the dry short-grass steppes of the Great Plains.

## GREAT COMBINATIONS FOR SUNNY, DRY AREAS

### #1 90 – 120 cm tall (3-4')

Yarrow  
False Sunflower  
Giant Hyssop  
Wild Bergamot  
Smooth Aster  
Green Needle Grass  
Big Bluestem

### #2 15 -30 cm tall (6-12")

Crocus  
Pussy Toes  
Three Flowered Avens  
Yellow Coneflower  
Western Silvery Aster  
June Grass or Sheep Fescue  
Side Oats Grama or Blue Grama



yarrow



False Sunflower



Smooth Aster and Goldenrod



Yellow Coneflower



Western Silvery Aster

## BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS

One of the exciting things about growing native plants in your garden is that they really do attract birds and butterflies. Songbirds bring flight and movement and sound to our gardens. Birds like goldfinches, Grosbeaks and Junco's feed on the seed of many prairie plants as they ripen in summer and fall. They especially like Coneflowers, Blazing Stars, Sunflowers, Prairie Clovers, Asters and Grasses. Native shrubs also produce lots of berries for the birds. Many birds such as chickadees, Swallows and native Sparrows also eat lots of insect pests. Hummingbirds are also fascinating creatures to watch. A big favourite of them is Wild Columbine. We have a patch of Wild Columbine in front of our kitchen window and we often see hummers there while eating breakfast.

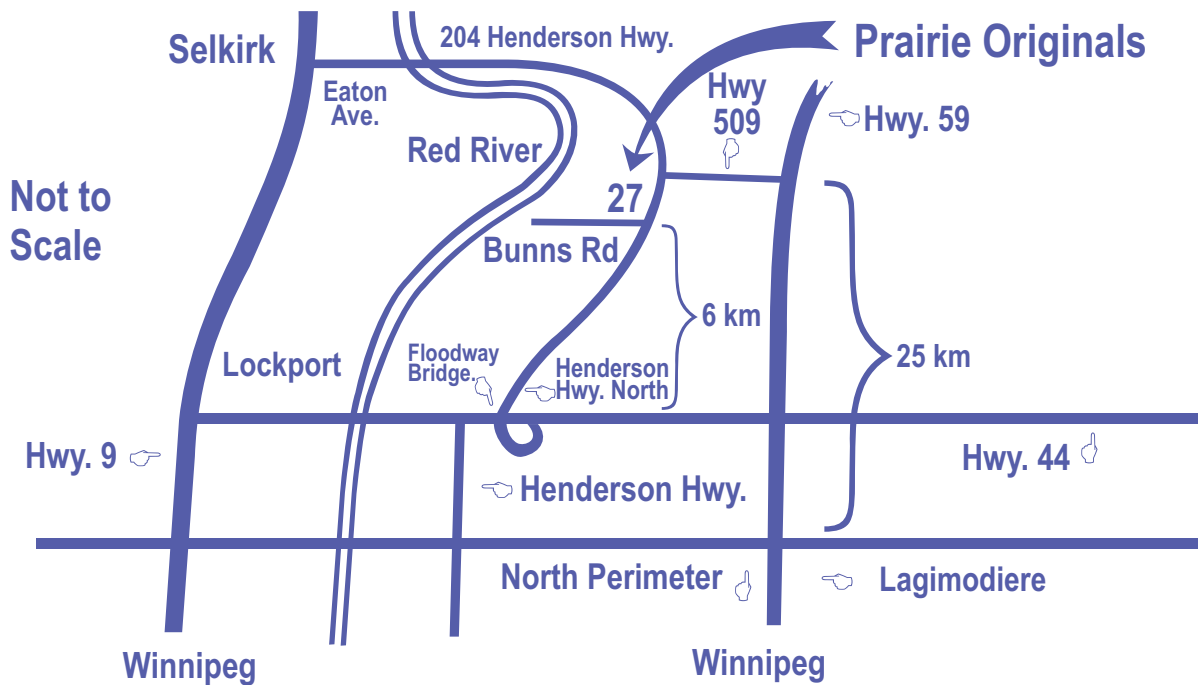
Butterflies add simple beauty, movement and wonder to a garden. They add to the quality of life and help us learn about nature and our connection with it, right in our own backyards. The more native plants are available in private gardens and not just reserves and parks, the more butterfly and moth populations will increase and the healthier the whole ecosystem will be.

A garden for butterflies needs lots of sun. And it needs food plants for the butterfly caterpillars and nectar plants for the adult butterflies. Adult butterflies get nectar from many different flowers, however the caterpillars are picky eaters. They will generally feed on only one or two types of plants. For example Monarch caterpillars only eat Milkweed, Fritillary caterpillars go for violets and American Painted Lady caterpillars only eat Pussy Toes, Pearly Everlasting, Prairie Sage and Ironweed. Many wildflowers produce good amounts of nectar for adult butterflies, however a few of the very best are Meadow Blazing Star, Joe Pye, Black Eyed Susan and New England Aster.

That's all for now, so Until next time,

Shirley Froehlich & Stef Johnson

# 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