

Native Orchid Conference 2010

This year's Native Orchid Conference will be held from June 12-15th, based in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The informal theme of the meeting will be "Native Orchid Conservation: Making a Difference". Some of the main issues facing native orchids in Alberta include rapid development and land-use changes, recreational use of lands, relatively-little legal protection for native orchids, and long-term change in climate. Despite numerous obstacles, there are some good things taking place, including small-scale volunteer-based conservation groups all the way to Federally-protected national parks. Presentations are invited dealing with all aspects of native orchids, and hopefully we can celebrate some of the worldwide success-stories in native orchid conservation.

There will be a slight change in the conference format this year, with the conference lectures being held over two days before heading out of town for two days of conference field trips. Lectures and displays will be hosted at the Lister Centre at the University of Alberta Conference Centre on June 12th and 13th. On June 14th we will depart Edmonton, and head 20 km west to the internationally-known Wagner Natural Area – to visit some of the 16 species of native orchids found within there. After spending the day in and around the Wagner Area, we will head 200 km west towards the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and overnight in Edson, Alberta. On June 15th, we will visit sites in/around Edson, Hinton, and Jasper. Attendees then have a number of options of either returning to Edmonton; staying in Jasper; heading to Banff; or traveling on to sites in British Columbia.

Orchids we expect to see include the following:

- Cypripedium parviflorum complex (Wagner and elsewhere, peak blooming time)
- Cypripedium passerinum (Wagner and elsewhere, just before to peak blooming time)
- Amerorchis rotundifolia (Wagner and elsewhere, peak blooming time)
- Calypso bulbosa (Foothills, peak to past blooming time)
- Platanthera hyperborea complex (almost everywhere, just before to peak blooming time)
- Platanthera obtusata (almost everywhere, just before to peak blooming time)
- Coeloglossum viride (almost everywhere, just before to peak blooming time)
- Corallorhiza trifida (Wagner and elsewhere, past blooming, possible in Foothills)
- Listera cordata (Wagner and elsewhere, past blooming, possible in Foothills)
- Corallorhiza maculata (Wagner area and elsewhere, just before to peak blooming time)

Orchids we might see if we are lucky:

- Platanthera orbiculata (1-2 plants at Wagner, before peak blooming time)
- Malaxis brachypoda (rare at Wagner, before blooming time)
- Listera borealis (rare in Foothills, just before to blooming time)
- Corallorhiza striata (rare in Foothills, before blooming time)

For those who have been at previous conferences, finding native orchids in Alberta is slightly different than other places. In Alberta, yearly weather patterns, in particular last-frost dates, control the timing and display of orchid flowering. If Spring is early or late, one must adjust where to look for plants in terms of either sun exposure and/or altitude. Numbers of plants at the sites can be impressive, for example in peak bloom, *Cypripedium parviflorum* at the Wagner

Natural Area can be counted by the 100's. The trick to finding orchids is knowing their habitat, and then adjusting where to look according to the Spring temperatures and the plant's flowering cycles.

Accommodations have been arranged to provide as much flexibility as possible. On the University of Alberta Campus a block of "dormitory" and "hotel" rooms have been reserved for the Conference, available on a first-come, first-served basis. In addition, within close proximity to the University campus are a number of other hotels, and 10-minute access to major hotels in the downtown core via Edmonton's modern Light-Rail-Transit. Edmonton is served by an International airport with direct flights to many US cities. Short connecting flights are available through to Calgary as well.

In the middle of June in Alberta the weather is quite variable with official temperatures ranging from 10C night minimum to 21C daytime maximum (50 to 70F), rain is possible). With its northern latitude, days are long. (For example on June 21st, there is just over 17 hours of daylight.)

Registration will be limited to the first 100 people and will commence in March.

For further information, please contact:
Ben Rostron

Ben.Rostron@Ualberta.ca
780-492-2178 phone-work
780-434-3839 phone-home

Department of EAS
University of Alberta
1-26 Earth Sciences Bldg
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T6G 2E3