

April showers . . .

We have all heard the old saying that “April showers bring May flowers” and that is certainly true this year. Although a little late, the prairie is now in full bloom with many small flowers bravely swaying in the breeze. Blue-eyed Grass and Yellow Star Grass create a carpet of blue and yellow along many of the trails, with Golden



Alexander, Scarlet Paintbrush and Hoary Puccoon adding in bright accents. In many places clusters of Small Yellow Lady’s Slipper, as well as the endangered Small White Lady’s Slipper, bring an elegant beauty to the prairie scene. Sometimes known as spring ephemerals, these flowers take advantage of the increased sunlight reaching the ground before all the grasses start to grow and shade them out. These wonderful little spots of colour bring a welcome change from the white of winter and tell us that spring is finally here and summer is right around



the corner.

Wolves . . . A Rare Visitor to the Preserve

One of the most fascinating mammals found in North America is the Wolf. Sporadically, wolves have been sighted on the Preserve however, they are not a common species. Many people have a deep underlying fear that they will be attacked by a wolf but there are few documented attacks on humans in North America. In fact, wolves often shy away from any human contact, as it is a simple case of "they're more afraid of you, than you are of them". If you happen to see one, be cautious, but enjoy the experience. When hunting alone, common prey species for wolves include small mammals and birds. As a pack, they sometimes attack deer, moose, and other large mammals, but pursue the weak, old, or diseased individuals for easier capture. This can be beneficial to the prey population as these weaker individuals are weeded out and increase the overall health of the herd; however, if too many young animals are taken from a herd this will restrict the population.

. . . Flying Flowers

As temperatures have risen this spring, butterflies have been observed more frequently over the past few weeks. The Mourning Cloak is one of the earliest species seen in the spring as it over-winters as an adult, most others over-winter in the egg phase! Species occurring in Manitoba show all the colours of the rainbow from the deep orange shades of the Monarch and Viceroy and brilliant yellows on the Tiger Swallowtail to the iridescent blue of the aptly named Silvery Blue and violet-coloured Purplish Copper. For those of you who know your prairie plants and are looking for more of a challenge, why not begin watching the “flying flowers” in your backyard and on the prairie!



Look . . . over there . . . A New Trail



We have received many positive comments from visitors at the Prairie Shore Interpretive Trail and we are excited to announce that a second Interpretive Trail has been developed in the Preserve’s north block. The Nature Conservancy of Canada held the grand opening of the Agassiz Interpretive Trail on June 24th in the presence of sunny skies and an enthusiastic crowd. This trail presents two options for visitors, a short 1km walk or a 3km hike, and both pass through oak savannah, sedge meadows with the endangered Western Prairie Fringed Orchid and upland tall grass prairie habitat. To get there, travel 11.5km east on highway 201 from highway 59 and watch for signs leading to the parking area, 0.6km north of highway 201. With additional Preserve land located in the general area, there is the potential to expand the trail system in the future. Please leave your comments on the white board attached to the trail head sign.

Contact Information

As in the past, we continue to offer guided walks for groups of 6 or more. To book a tour or offer your comments and suggestions, give us a call at (204) 425-3229 or send a message to: tgpphq@escape.ca



Searching for Butterflies

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Y L R R           H R C M
O O T E R T       C R E E O O
R N R I P I I     E I P L U I N
E E T C R P N G   G N P B R Y E A
C S P P I O I N E     I G Y R N L U B R
I A I P O V P K P R   T L R V I L L L E C
V D B Z O W R P S O S   N E A L N G B O Y O H
O N A B R C E U I D W W E T L I G N Y P E P A A
R E E A Y S S H I E C A L S C O R P D P L R
E Y C M G I A H P S T I L L O E O B P F L I
  E I S B E Z C E L T T O L V P R R A L L
    E B W R R I U A O L O O F R
      Y B W C H R O K S I P W W R I O
        E A O L R F I R D S A N S O T O R R
          D R O R B W L T T I T K F C R E A L R L
            R C A M O N A R C E P P I L O E O I A I L
              F Z E Y D P H S A D G N O L P A B V O L S O
                S P D A K O T A S K I P P E R P F B L E R G
                  D R E V I R M O N   E R   L O N E L A I L S
                    M O U R           R A R S
  
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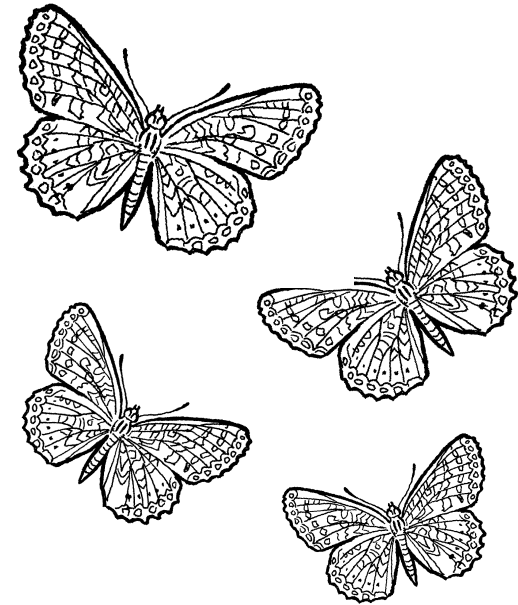
The following butterfly names are arranged forward, downward, and diagonally within the puzzle – happy searching!

Alfalfa Sulphur	Mourning Cloak
Cabbage White	Pearl Crescent
Dakota Skipper	Poweshiek Skipper
Dorcas Copper	Ringlet
Eyed Brown	Silver-spotted Skipper
Long Dash	Silvery Blue
Meadow Fritillary	Tiger Swallowtail
Monarch	Viceroy

The Preserve was established to protect and conserve the native species found there. Please do not pick, dig or collect any of the plants or animals. Remember motorized vehicles are prohibited.

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Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve



Prairie Ponders Summer 2004

Critical
Wildlife Habitat Program