



January 2025



The Marl Pond Trail boardwalk at Wagner Natural Area, 2007-04-04.

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Editorial

Welcome to 2025!

With the days getting gradually longer, some of us are already planning our gardens and excursions for the coming season. Without the distraction of deciduous foliage, now is also the time to appreciate our coniferous trees. Our natural forests don't provide much diversity, but a walk round a suburban neighborhood will usually present more scope for tree detection. Our urban conifers provide many services in the city, and it is worthwhile knowing their names. Accordingly, we have provided some information on Alberta species in this issue, with more to come.

ENPS' project this fall has been to conduct a survey of our membership and volunteers, thanks to volunteer Aaron Vansevenandt, who has professional expertise in this area. A big thank you to those of you who have already submitted your feedback – the response has been good. The survey closes on January 25.

This winter, please also take the time to peruse our website: enps.ca. If there is missing information that you would like to see there, feel free to let us know at info@enps.ca.

STOP THE PRESSES!

As we finalized this issue on January 19th, news broke of the death (following a windstorm) of Cochrane's iconic "grandfather tree," a tourist attraction and much beloved icon of the community. I went online to find out more about it and it took scrolling through several stories before I could determine what species it was. A couple of reports said it was a white spruce (which undoubtedly it was, although the surrounding trees looked like lodgepole pines), one said it was a white pine, and most said nothing at all.

I believe these stories point to two interesting but conflicting themes. One is that people are in awe of old trees, and value them, but only as cultural and social icons. The other theme of the stories demonstrates a complete dearth of botanical knowledge, or else much confusion about conifers. Since conifers are such a major feature of our western landscapes, I think they deserve to be better known! We go into much depth in this issue on exactly that subject.

Events

ENPS Annual General Meeting

ENPS' 2025 Annual General Meeting will be held both in-person and virtually, on ZOOM, making it possible for anyone to participate. Members of the public are welcome to attend, but only members of the society are eligible to vote. In addition to a review of the society's activities in 2024, there will be a presentation of what we've learned from the recent member and volunteer survey. An email will be sent to members in the near future with further details.

[Read more...](#)

Time & Location:

Thursday, February 20, 2024,
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

In-person at the Orchid Resource
Centre (OSPF)
4459 99 ST NW
Edmonton, AB

Online on the ZOOM platform (Pre-
registration required for online
attendance.)



Nature Alberta Speaker Series: Stories From the Water

with Myrna Pearman – Nature photographer and writer

Join Myrna Pearman for a presentation that showcases her passion for spending time outdoors, often in her kayak. Through beautiful photographs

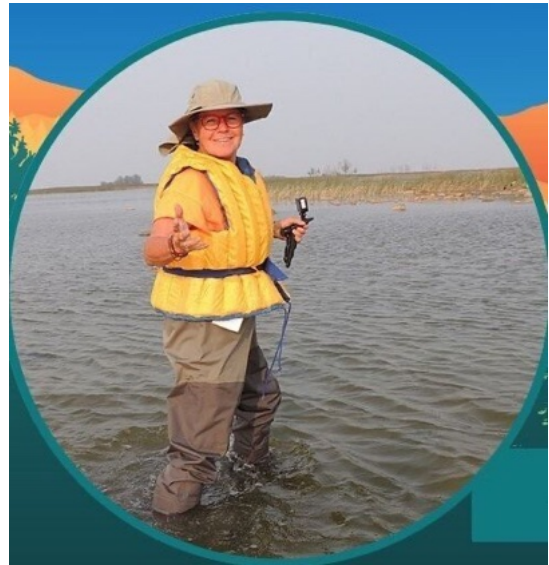
Time & Location:

Jan 30, 2025
7:00 p.m.

and lively storytelling, she will share her observations of the rich diversity that is found in and around wetlands, and she will provide fascinating glimpses into the daily lives of some of our less commonly observed wetland wildlife.

A registration link can be found here:
<https://naturealberta.ca/stories-from-the-water/>

Online on the ZOOM platform



News

ENPS Member and Volunteer Survey

ENPS membership has grown significantly in recent years due to greater public interest in, and awareness of the benefits of, local native plants. This is why we are conducting a voluntary survey of our members and volunteers. We want to better understand how to improve our member/volunteer engagement and how to best deliver meaningful member experiences and volunteer opportunities.

Participants who complete the survey, and provide their name and contact information, will be entered into a prize draw to win one of three (3) \$50 prepaid VISA gift cards. The deadline for participation is January 25. To take part in the survey, please go to the following link:

[**Proceed to Survey \(Click Here\)**](#)

URGENT REQUEST FOR TECHNOLOGY VOLUNTEERS

Can you help? Two of our volunteers on the website and newsletter teams have had to resign recently, for personal reasons. Consequently, we are in urgent need of volunteers with technology smarts who can do design and formatting of these communication tools – or are willing to learn. Please contact us at volunteer@enps.ca if you are interested. Thank you!

Advocacy

Calling on Volunteers for 2025

By Patsy Cotterill



ENPS launched our first-ever member survey over the Christmas period, and we encourage everyone who received the form to fill it in if possible. We are seeking more information about our members, why they joined, what their particular interests are, and whether the society is meeting their expectations. As well, last but not least, we want to know whether you want to get more involved as a volunteer, to help us maintain and possibly extend our activities.

[Read more...](#)

Snow on Canada buffaloberry, Edmonton, 2025-01-12. Photo: P. Cotterill.

Articles

Getting a Headstart on Seeds and How to Sow Them



Sales display (of ENPS native plant seed packages) at Apache Seeds, 2023-09-21.
Photo: M-J. Gurba-Flanagan.

For those of you interested in starting your seed sowing now, or later in the season, **Apache Seeds** (10136 - 149 Street) will be open all winter and will be selling a selection of ENPS' seed packages.

For information on seeds and how to deal with them, see Liz Deleeuw's article "**Seeds: What's the Story**", in the October 2023 issue of the *Wildflower News* (pages 11-12).

[Read more...](#)

Plant Profile: Buttercups, Part 2

By Patsy Cotterill

Ranunculi: Part 2. The Aquatic and Riparian Species

In a previous article (<https://www.enps.ca/post/plant-profile-buttercups-part-1>), we described the buttercup species (members of the Ranunculus family) found in the Edmonton area in moist, shady terrestrial habitats. This second article will examine those buttercup species found in wetter conditions.



Submersed leaves and stems of yellow water crowfoot (*Ranunculus gmelinii*), with flowers above the water surface. Sandhills Trail, Elk Island National Park, 2015-05-30. Photo: P. Kyle.

[Read more...](#)

Plant Talk: Know Your Christmas Trees/Conifers, Part 1

By Patsy Cotterill

We have relatively few species of conifer in Alberta, and only somewhat more in Canada as a whole, yet many people do not bother to distinguish between them, often referring to them all as “firs” or “pines.” Apart from the sheer fun of it, knowing the difference between a fir, spruce or pine could help you make a better choice of festive tree at Christmas time.

With few other plant distractions, winter in the north can be a good time to identify conifers. In the Edmonton area, three species of conifer (white and black spruce, and tamarack) grow in Wagner Natural Area. Just south of there, populations of jack pine occur on the Devon sand dune, along with tamarack in the associated wetland hollows.

[Read more...](#)



Autumn colours of tamarack (yellow) with black spruce, in Wagner Natural Area, 1982-10-01. Photo: J. D. Johnson.

Lifetime ENPS Membership

You can now become an Edmonton Native Plant Society member for life. Memberships are \$20. Purchase by email: membership@enps.ca, through our website: <https://www.enps.ca/become-a-member> or visit one of our booths at plant events in your area. ENPS members are also eligible for a free Lifetime Membership with Nature Alberta.

Aims of the Edmonton Native Plant Society

- Promote knowledge of Edmonton area native plants
- Conserve our native plant species and their habitat

- Preserve native plant species and habitat for the enjoyment of present and future generations
- Educate individuals, businesses, and local governments about native plants

Please send compliments, concerns and questions to: info@enps.ca

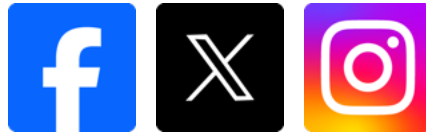
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