



Photo by the late Dr. W. C. McCalla  
Many-spined Prickly Pear, *Opuntia polyacantha* Haw.

## A Further Report of "Pink" Blue Beard-tongue

by W. S. Richards, Saskatoon

In reporting on a pink form of Blue Beard-tongue (*Penstemon nitidus* Dougl.) found at Moose Jaw (**Blue Jay**, 18:132, Sept., 1960) the editor wondered if any reader had noticed colour variations in this species.

On June 8, 1963, while on a botany - photography hike near Brown's Lake, about 10 miles southwest of Saskatoon, members and friends of the Saskatoon Natural History Society were delighted when a young member found a beautiful pink Blue Beard-tongue growing on a sandy hillside. This plant, which was about 12 inches high, had three main stems, each stem having an inflorescence covering the top three inches. The colour was distinctly pink; other specimens nearby varied from blue to purplish and pinkish. No white-flowered specimens were seen. The pink-flowered plant quickly became the centre of interest for all the photographers, and many lingered

to take extra "shots" after the main group had passed on.

The Slender Beard-tongue (*P. procerus* Dougl.) and the Lilac-flowered Beard-tongue (*P. gracilis* Nutt.) were also both common in this area. According to J. H. Hudson we were just at the northern limit of the range of a fourth species, the White-flowered Beard-tongue (*P. albidus* Nutt.) but we did not see any on this field trip.

Finding an unusual colour form in any native species always provides a pleasant surprise. In the vicinity of Saskatoon I have noticed white varieties of the Spider Flower (*Cleome serrulata* Pursh) usually pink, Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense* (L.) Scop.) generally purple, and Blue Lettuce (*Lactuca* sp.) generally blue. I have also frequently found blue-flowered specimens of Moss Phlox (*Phlox hoodii* Rich.) which is normally white.