

New or Little Reported Sask. Plants

By John Howard Hudson, Regina

The dry weather this summer has made botanical collecting unrewarding. However, we were able to pick up a few plant curiosities this spring, such as:

Astragalus purshii Douglas (Pursh's Milk Vetch). Collected by Dr. G. F. Ledingham and myself May 18 on dry short grass prairie south-east of Climax, on N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ 1-2-18 W. 3rd. Also seen by us on the same day on Boundary Plateau N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ 14-1-23 W. 3rd and the next day at the east end of Old-Man-on-his-Back Plateau N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ 33-2-24 W. 3rd. This plant looks much like *A. lotiflorus* except that the purple-keeled creamy flowers are about 2 cm. long and always stalked, and that the pods are densely covered with long silky hairs. It has a wide range in the High Plains and Great Basin areas of the U.S., apparently just crossing the border into Saskatchewan.

Antennaria dimorpha (Nutt) T. & G. Collected by G. F. Ledingham and myself May 18 N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ 1-2-18 W. 3rd (south-east of Climax) and on May 19 on S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ 3-3-24 (east end Old-Man-on-his-Back Plateau). This species of the *Antennaria* or Pussy-paws genus is distinctly different from the usual run of *Antennarias*. It does not spread by runners, but grows in patches about 5-6 cm. diameter from a woody crown. The pistillate (female) plants are totally

stemless, bearing 12-18 mm. long and 4 mm. in diam. scattered singly on the plant. The staminate heads are also borne singly, but on apologies for stems about 1 cm. high. These staminate heads are of more orthodox *Antennaria* form, hemispheric and about 6mm. across. Since the leaves are grey-green, narrowly oblanceolate, and about 1 cm. long, the pistillate plant looks remarkably like a *Townsendia*. Rydberg gives the range as "Mont.-Neb.-Colo.-Nev.-B.C."

Astragalus Kentrophyta A. Gray. Since this plant is reported in Budd's standard flora of our area, I need only remark that G. F. Ledingham and I found this plant on May 17 on S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ 13-15-17 W. 3rd, on a wind-swept gravel flat among sand dunes north of Webb. I took flowering specimens here on June 5.

Draba micrantha Nutt. Found this in a gravel pit June 11, N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ 18-5-12 W. 2nd, south-east of Goodwater. This small mustard looks something like the related *Draba nemerosa*, Yellow Whitlow - grass, which is common. The differences are: few or no stem-leaves (leaves mostly basal); stalks bearing pods diverging from about the same place at the top of the stem; pods about twice the size, 10-12 mm. long, 4 mm. wide. The plant is widespread through the Middle West of the U.S.A.

Lichen, A Plant Which Grows Almost Everywhere

By Joyce Dew, Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History

Lichens are very common plants. They can grow where no other plant can grow and are found living in more different places than any other plant. They can live on bare rocks, in the cold Arctic or on mountain tops, in tropical jungles and in your own back yard. They are a plant which you can find growing at any time of the year unless the ground is heavily covered with snow. The only place where you are not likely to find them is in and near cities.

You have certainly seen lichens, but perhaps you were not aware of what they were.

Lichens are great pioneers and help to make soil from rocks. When the weather is dry they dry up and shrink, then when it rains they start to grow again. Since they cling tightly to the rock, this expanding and shrinking breaks off rock particles. Lichens also secrete an acid which helps dissolve the rock. The rock particles along with tiny bits