

RAM'S-HEAD LADY'S-SLIPPER

Rediscovered In Saskatchewan

by WILLIAM J. CODY*

W. P. Fraser and R. C. Russell listed the Ram's-head Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum* R. Br. (sub *Criosanthes arietina* (R. Br.) House) simply as "(Sask.)".⁴ This would indicate that they knew of an earlier literature record, but that they had not seen a specimen nor had any knowledge of where the plant might be found in the province.

The Saskatchewan literature record was undoubtedly the range given in Rydberg's Flora, which in turn was undoubtedly based on the report by W. J. Hooker "Portage of the Grand Rapid of the Saskatchewan. *Drummond*".⁷ Drummond's specimen is likely preserved in the Herbarium at Kew in London, England. It was, however, according to Scoggan, not collected in Saskatchewan, but along the Saskatchewan River near the northwest end of Lake Winnipeg, in what is now Manitoba, and was reported by him as being the first collection from that province.⁸ Other examples of species erroneously reported for Saskatchewan on the basis of ambiguous data given by early collectors, such as John Richardson, Thomas Drummond and Eugene Bourgeau, are listed by A. J. Breitung in his discussion under "Excluded Species".¹

The first authentic report for Saskatchewan was by Fraser and Russell.⁵ This report was based on an undated specimen collected by O. C. Furniss, merely labelled Prince Albert. This specimen which is preserved in the W. P. Fraser Herbarium at the University of Saskatchewan was presumably

gathered between 1937 and 1944. The report apparently went unnoticed by Fernald, Correll or Scoggan, who gave the range . . . "west of Manitoba".^{3 2 8}

It was thus most interesting when I received a colour photograph of the rare plant for identification from Mr. Don MacPhedrau of Prince Albert. The picture was taken in May of 1944 a few miles northwest of Prince Albert where the plants had been discovered by Mr. and Mrs. Andy Rosent. The occurrence in Saskatchewan of the Ram's-head Lady's-slipper is thus corroborated.

There are three other species of Lady's-slipper which are known to occur in Saskatchewan. These are the Yellow Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus* L. var. *parviflorum* (Salisb. Fern.), the Northern Lady's-slipper (*passerinum* Richards.) and the Stemless Lady's-slipper (*C. acaule* Ait). All of these species have a slipper-like lip and two of the sepals partly to entirely united under the lip, thus making five perianth parts. The Ram's-head Lady's-slipper may be recognized by the entirely free dorsal purplish-brown sepals and the sac-like lip which is much inflated at the base and prolonged downward into a blunt, conical white or pinkish-white pouch which is strongly netted with crimson or madder-purple. The presence of distinct perianth parts rather than as described above, was the characteristic used by some authors to distinguish the segregate genus *Criosanthes*. The specific name *arietinum* means "ram-like" and, as pointed out by Correll, is an allusion to the slope, position and general appearance of the lip, which in relation to the other floral parts, which simulates the head of a charging ram.

* Plant Research Institute,
Central Experimental Farm,
Ottawa, Ontario. K1A 0C6

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⁵FRASER, W. P. and R. C. RUSSELL. 1944. *Revised, annotated list of the plants of Saskatchewan*. University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Sask.

⁶HOOKER, W. J. 1839. *Flora Boreali-Americana*. London.

⁷RYDBERG, P. A. 1932. *Flora of the prairies and plains of central North America*. New York Botanical Garden, New York.

⁸SCOGGAN, H. 1957. *Flora of Manitoba*. Nat. Mus. Can. Bull. 140.



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Don MacPhedran