

ROSE POGONIA — AN ORCHID NEW TO MANITOBA

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Several eastern North American orchids approach their western limits of distribution in the boreal forest of southeastern Manitoba.^{6,7} The Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides* (L.) Ker.) is a showy pink-flowered species which has apparently not been reported previously from Manitoba, but has been recorded as far northwest as the Rainy River district of northwestern Ontario, and adjacent northeastern Minnesota.^{1,8,5} This prompted me to look for this species while exploring some bogs in southeastern Manitoba.

On 1 August 1982 I visited an open bog within the Bog River wetland complex, approximately 6 km southeast of River Hills, Manitoba (50° 2' N, 95° 57' W), and was delighted to find 15 Rose Pogonia plants in bloom. These included one group of 10 plants within an area of about one square metre. All were growing in an extensive stand of sedges (*Carex* spp.) and small birch shrubs (*Betula glandulifera*), with scattered sedges (*Phragmites communis*) and small tamarack trees (*Larix laricina*), and numerous Pitcher Plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*).

All the Pogonia plants were growing along a 300 m stretch of a north-south trail, which is lightly used by snowmobiles in winter. The sedges were shorter, and the ground was wetter, on the trail than off it. Brief off-trail searches did not reveal any more Pogonias. Case notes " [Rose Pogonia] usually grows in the wettest parts of the bog, often on floating tufts of sedge. . . . If present at all, it is usually abundant. It spreads by means of root shoots and forms dense colonies."

No Pogonia specimens were collected, but satisfactory photographs of two blooms were obtained and accompany this article. Colour photographs and a detailed map of the locality have been deposited with the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Winnipeg, and the herbarium of the Whiteshell Nuclear Research Establishment, Pinawa.

Two similarly coloured orchids occur in bogs in southeastern Manitoba: Arethusa, Dragon's Mouth or Swamp Pink (*Arethusa bulbosa*) and Calopogon or Grass Pink (*Calopogon pulchellus*).^{3,4} Arethusa resembles Rose Pogonia, but has a much more slender leaf and less prominent floral bract; the bloom is a more purplish pink and lacks the fringing of the lip. Calopogon is readily distinguished by the "inverted" configuration of the bloom, with the narrow lip uppermost. It also normally has more than one flower per stem, whereas the Pogonia usually has only a single flower. Case notes "Arethusa, Rose Pogonia and Calopogon regularly occur together. Rarely indeed in northern Michigan or Wisconsin does one of these species occur without the other two; yet at times each does grow where the other two do not."¹ In southeastern Manitoba I have found Arethusa and Calopogon in partly open black spruce - tamarack bogs, including an area within 1 km of the Rose Pogonia locality. However, neither appears to be present where the Pogonias were found. Two other orchid species were found growing near the Pogonias: Hooded Ladies' Tresses (*Spiranthes romanzoffiana*) and White Bog Orchid (*Habenaria dilatata*).



Rose Pogonia near River Hills, Manitoba

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It is interesting that *Arethusa* occurs locally along a narrow band from southeastern Manitoba to northwestern Saskatchewan, while *Calopogon* and *Rose Pogonia* appear to reach their range limits in southeastern Manitoba.^{2 4 3 6 7} The latter two orchids bloom later than *Arethusa* in southeastern Manitoba, and it may well be worth searching for them in appropriate habitats farther northwest, in July or early August.

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¹ CASE, F. W., Jr. 1964. Orchids of the Western Great Lakes Region. Cranbrook Institute of Science.

² HARMS, V. L., C. A. KINDRACHUK and B. C. GODWIN, 1977. Further Record of the Rare Dragon's Mouth (Swamp Pink) Orchid, in Saskatchewan. *Blue Jay* 35: 138-141.

³ JOHNSON, K., 1981. Rare Plant Alert: Orchid Gives Bees Plenty of Spills and Thrills. *Bull. Man. Nat. Soc.* 4(6): 7.

⁴ JOHNSON, K., 1981. Rare Orchids Part II: *Arethusa*: The Dragon's Mouth Orchid. *Bull. Man. Nat. Soc.* 4(7): 7.

⁵ LAKELA, O., 1965. A Flora of Northeastern Minnesota. Univ. of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

⁶ LOOMAN, J. and K. F. BEST, 1979. *Budding Flora of the Canadian Prairie Provinces*. Agriculture Canada Pub. 1662.

⁷ SCOGGAN, H. J., 1957. Flora of Manitoba. *Natl. Mus. Can. Bull. No.* 140.

⁸ SCOGGAN, H. J., 1978. The Flora of Canada, Part 2 — Pteridophyta, Gymnospermae and Monocotyledoneae. *Natl. Mus. Nat. Sci.*, Ottawa.