

PEACH-LEAVED WILLOW IN EAST-CENTRAL SASKATCHEWAN

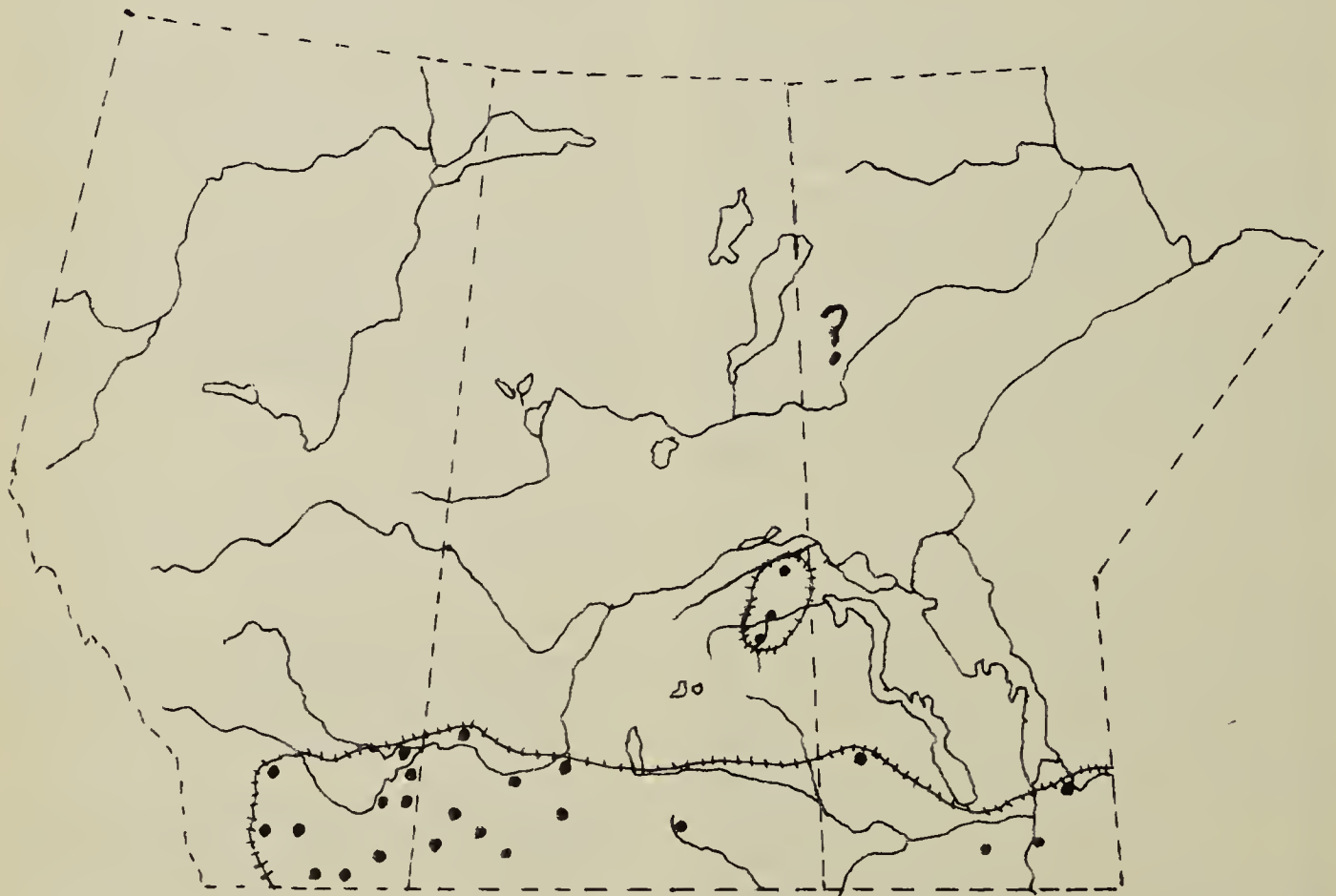
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There was an interesting, illustrated article by Don MacPhedran in the March 1983 *Blue Jay* about some introduced Peach-leaved Willow in the Prince Albert area.⁷ This article is about the native Peach-leaved Willow (*Salix amygdaloides*) in east-central Saskatchewan.

The Peach-leaved Willow was discovered at Hudson Bay and Bertwell, along the Red Deer and Etomami rivers by A.J. Breitung sometime before 1942.^{2,4} Since December 1983 I have sent 18 species of willow to the National Museum in Ottawa. They have been identified by the Canadian willow expert Dr. George W. Argus and one of the most interesting was *Salix amygdaloides*.

My first collection of the Peach-leaved Willow was from along the Etomami river 12.5 mi. south of Hudson Bay (Hooper & Baker 83071601, 16 July 1983). There were three clumps of young plants with stems 4 inches in diameter near the ground and about 20 feet tall. They were growing in rich river bottom soil, near the water, among Manitoba Maple (*Acer negundo*) and American Elm (*Ulmus americana*).

On 21 July 1984 we found the Peach-leaved Willow (Hooper, Baker & Harms 84072112) in a new locality 50 mi. north of Hudson Bay, near Bainbridge river and #9 highway. Here the Pasquia Hills drops abruptly to the Carrot River valley and the



PEACH-LEAVED WILLOW IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES
(? - Unconfirmed Lynn Lake record)

Manitoba Lowlands of Saskatchewan. The area had been burned and there was a prolific growth of young willows on the fertile lowlands. We noted one patch containing three species of willows all about 15 feet tall and with small trunks - Pacific Willow (*Salix lucida* ssp. *lasiandra*). Sandbar Willow (*Salix exigua* including *S. interior*) and the Peach-leaved Willow. Older and larger trees of the latter had no doubt been destroyed by the fire.

In addition to the above reports of the Peach-leaved Willow in boreal forest the species also occurs, mostly along streams, across the southern Canadian prairies. In Alberta the most northerly report is Empress.⁸ In Saskatchewan it extends north to Eston (Hooper 84082003, 20 August 1983). In Manitoba Scoggan reports the species north to Lynn Lake⁹ but that report may be in error (G. Argus, A. Breitung, pers. corr.). The species does occur north to the Riding Mountains,³ and also to Lac du Bonnet¹⁰ (50 miles NE of Winnipeg). Since these northern Manitoba locations are in boreal forest it is possible that the species' range extends into east-central Saskatchewan from the south-east as does the Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) which also has outliers in this area.⁵

Except for the introduced Weeping Willow (*Salix babylonica*) the Peach-leaved Willow is the only one in the Prairie Provinces referred to as having slender twigs and drooping leaves.¹⁻⁶ However, this is not always the case. On 27 June 1983, at the Armit river east of Hudson Bay on flood plain and gravel bars I found willows with drooping leaves, but when I sent the duplicate (Hooper, Baker & Harms 83062711) to Dr. Argus the specimen was identified as Yellow Willow (*Salix lutea*). Checking more thoroughly I noted that it had prominent stipules. The Peach-leaved Willow has inconspicuous stipules which soon wither away.

¹ BREITUNG, A.J. 1951 Key to the willow of Saskatchewan. Blue Jay 9(4):24-26.

- ² BREITUNG, A.J. 1957 Annotated catalogue of the vascular flora of Saskatchewan. The Am. Midland Naturalist 58(1):1-72
- ³ CODY, W.J. 1983 Checklist of the plants of the Riding Mountains, prepublication copy.
- ⁴ FRASER, W.P. 1942 Notes of the willows of Saskatchewan. Can. Field Nat. 56.
- ⁵ HOOPER, D.F. 1981 Bur Oak, Nannyberry, Sandcherry and other interesting plants of east-central Saskatchewan. Blue Jay 39(2):69-72.
- ⁶ LOOMAN, J. and K.F. BEST 1979 Budd's Flora. Research Branch, Agriculture Canada
- ⁷ MACPHERAN, D. 1983 Peach-leaved Willows in Saskatchewan. Blue Jay 41(1):10-11
- ⁸ PACKER, J.G. 1983 Flora of Alberta (Revised from Moss). University of Toronto Press
- ⁹ SCOGGAN, H.J. 1978 The flora of Canada. National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa.
- ¹⁰ SCOGGAN, H.J. 1957 The flora of Manitoba. National Museum of Canada Bull. 140

ADDENDUM: Argus later identified as Peach-leaved Willow a collection from Mountain Cabin, close to the Carrot River about 2 mi. south of the above mentioned Bainbridge River collection (Hooper & Baker 84071714).