

THE BLUF JAY

The official organ of the Yorkton Natural History Society continued in loving memory of the founder, our first President and Editor, the late Isabel M. Priestly.

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OUR FLORAL EMBLEM

(an editorial from the Regina Leader Post)

It would be a matter of deep regret if Saskatchewan should find itself in the embarrassing position of having an official floral emblem which cannot be found in the province. Yet this possibility apparently exists. For, while there is a profusion of these flowers - the prairie lilies - today, overplucking may result in their disappearance. The disappearance of this tall, beautiful, orange-red flower of the wayside, and meadows, would be generally deplored.

Naturalists are concerned over the future of the lily, adopted as the provincial floral emblem by the legislature in 1941, and known botanically as "lilium philadelphicum andinum." They report that, although Saskatchewan has an exceptionally fine crop of these lilies this summer, due to the wet spring and abundant rainfall, there is danger of the plant disappearing as the flowers are being picked indiscriminately and often torn up by the roots.

It is pointed out that because the plant in blossom time puts all its strength into producing its flower and seed pod, the bulbs and roots lose their strength during this period. Therefore this strength must be built up again before the end of the season. This can only be done by use of the stalk and leaves.

If the plant is plucked, the loss of the stock and leaves means that the bulb and roots may die or take years before they grow again...

In some countries, to destroy the official emblem is a violation of the law. In many of the parks also there are regulations forbidding the picking of rare flowers. Offenders can be prosecuted. The Act passed by the Saskatchewan legislature in 1941 designating the prairie lily as our official floral emblem, includes no such provisions. If the situation is really as serious as naturalists suggest, it might be in order to reword it, providing for action against those who pick the flower indiscriminately.