



Minnesota Plant Press

The Minnesota Native Plant Society Newsletter

Volume 26 Number 3

Spring 2007

Monthly meetings

Thompson Park Center/Dakota Lodge
Thompson County Park
360 Butler Ave. E., West St. Paul, MN 55118
651-552-7559 (kitchen)
6 p.m. — Social period
7–9 p.m. — Program, society business

Programs

The MN NPS meets the first Thursday in October, November, December, February, March, April, May, and June. Check the website for more program information.

May 3: “Motorized Recreation in Minnesota: Social and Ecological Consequences,” by Matt Norton, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. **Plant of the Month:** *Carex garberi*, Scott Milburn.

June 7: “Decorative Tree Harvest from Minnesota’s Spruce Bogs: Social and Ecological Consequences,” by Mike Phillips, DNR Division of Forestry. **Annual Native Plant Sale.**

See and count orchids

Western prairie fringed orchids and Red River prairies are the focus of a field trip to wildlife management areas near Crookston, Minn., July 7 and 8. Co-sponsors are the MN NPS, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Nature Northwest. Nancy Sather and Derek Anderson of the Minnesota Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, MN DNR, will lead participants to orchids in several wildlife management areas. In addition to counting orchids, they will visit a state-of-the-art management study at Pembina Trail Preserve and enjoy an evening presentation on recent orchid research. For more information and to register, write to derek.anderson@dnr.state.mn.us

Restoring Minnesota’s ecological landscape

by Hannah Texler, regional plant ecologist, Minnesota DNR. This is an abstract of part of her talk at the March 8 Society meeting.

As a plant ecologist and an avid native plant gardener, I am heartened by the burgeoning use of native plants for landscaping, gardening, and restoration of disturbed landscapes, and I am grateful to all of the organizations and native plant and seed businesses that are crucial to making this happen. In this age of national discussions about using native prairie mixes for biofuels, it is especially exciting. This makes it an excellent time to take a step back and ask whether the use of native plants is as informed by ecology as it could be.

This article summarizes some of the ways the science of ecology can help us create more successful, diverse, and locally adapted native plantings and restoration projects.

The ecological issues

The four levels of ecology most pertinent to the topic include landscape, plant community, species, and genetic ecology. I’ll briefly discuss why each is important and give some practical suggestions about resources for incorporating them into practice.

Landscape ecology

Most of Minnesota’s landscape is characterized by fragmented patches of vegetation, often separated by land uses that provide barriers to the movement of native plants and animals. By paying attention to landscape ecology, one can look for opportunities to connect patches of native habitat, provide meaningful animal movement corridors, and surround isolated native plant communities with appropriate restored habitat.

Plant community ecology

Many restoration projects are very low in diversity and have been informed by a single goal, such as preventing erosion on steep slopes or providing habitat for a few wildlife species. While these are worthy goals, plantings tend to be more successful and ecologically meaningful when many plant species that occur in the native

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President's Column

by *Scott Milburn*

Another year of botanizing is about to begin. This has been an exciting year, and we still have quite a bit to do. The Society has a great deal of momentum, much thanks to our last president, Jason Husveth. Jason's tenure on the board will end in June after six years, and we look forward to his participation in the future. The formula derived by Jason under his tenure was to focus on a few things and to do them well. These few things, which include monthly programs, symposia, the newsletter, and field trips, are the bread and butter of the Society. Logic would suggest continuing with this approach.

As noted in our last newsletter, the Society has been in existence for 25 years. We will celebrate this milestone next September and hope that our entire membership will be able to participate. It is amazing to think how much has changed over the past 25 years, especially in terms of technology. With this increased ability to communicate, we still face the challenge of how best to reach prospective members in an attempt to increase overall membership. The board has started to develop new materials for that very purpose. We are also looking into new ways to make annual membership renewal less burdensome. With this, we are looking to grow, but we cannot do this without your help. I have been extremely impressed with efforts thus far, but I would encourage all of our members to think of ways to attract new members and to expand.

Spring and summer field trips

by *Ken Arndt*

Now is the time to sign up for MN NPS field trips. Sign-up sheets and detailed information will be at each monthly meeting. Or, go to our website and follow the link to "Field Trips" for information and to sign up.

Saturday, April 28, 1-4 p.m., join Barr Engineering Botanists Daniel Jones, a Society board member, and Daniel DeJoode at **Nerstrand-Big Woods State Park**. This fine example of "Big Woods" is home to many spring ephemerals and the federally endangered dwarf trout lily.

Saturday, May 12, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., join MN DNR Regional Plant Ecologist Ann Pierce and explore the **Whitewater Wildlife Management Area** in coulee country in southeastern Minnesota.

June 16 and 17 is a follow-up to this year's symposium on the Prairie Coteau. Join the DNR's Fred Harris, Nancy Sather and Robert Dana in **southwestern Minnesota**, hiking through several plant communities, including a calcareous fen.

June 30 is a field trip to the **Chippewa National Forest** near Grand Rapids. MN DNR Forest Ecologist John Almendinger will lead an all-day hike through cedar swamps, black spruce bogs, and many upland areas. Plants will include orchids, carnivorous plants, sedges, rushes and grasses.

Saturday, July 14, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Society will co-sponsor a working field trip to **Pioneer Park in Blaine**. Work with Critical Connections Ecological Services Ecologist Jason Husveth in the continued effort to restore the fen that is home to several of Minnesota's most rare plants.

Aug. 9, 6 to 8:30 p.m., join MN DNR Regional Plant Ecologist Hannah Texlar at **St. Croix Savanna Scientific Natural Area** for a hike through a fantastic hill prairie and oak savanna and assist Hannah with surveying for the rare Louisiana broomrape. This parasitic plant is typically found west of Minnesota, but recently a population was found at this SNA.

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Future plant events

The **Linnaeus Symposium** is April 24 and 25 at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn.

The annual **Friends School Plant Sale** will be May 11 - 13 at the State Fair Grandstand.

Phalen WaterFest is May 19 at the Phalen Park Pavilion, Wheelock Pkwy. and Arcade St., St. Paul.

The **Iowa Prairie Conference** will be July 13 and 14 at Briar Cliff University, Sioux City, Iowa.
www.ipc2007.com

Ecological issues

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plant communities that have become adapted to each site over thousands of years are used. Diverse, locally appropriate plantings also create habitat for more animal species; nectar for butterflies; food for migrating birds, and nesting habitat for reptiles, amphibians, and mammals — all are necessary components of ecosystems. Plant community ecology provides information that can be used to create diverse, locally adapted restorations.

Species ecology

Species ecology (also called autecology) gives information about traits of individual species that make each adapted to a particular set of conditions. Many of us choose plant species based on their beauty or their potential use as food by a favorite animal. Landscape plantings and restorations are more successful when the species used are those native to and adapted to the local landscape.

Genetic ecology

Genetic ecology provides information about how a particular ecotype of a species is adapted to a site. There is a great deal of genetic variation among populations of many plant species, giving each population traits that make it adapted to local environmental conditions.

Using plants or seeds from far away may mean the plants are not adapted to local conditions. This can result in lower success and can also import genetic material that can spread to naturally occurring plants, reducing the original population's viability by making the plants less adapted to local conditions. This is especially important with rare species, but is a concern with all naturally occurring plant populations.

Sources of ecological information

Here are a few ecological resources for native plant gardeners and restoration practitioners:

General information

An overview of using native plants for landscaping is found at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/gardens/nativeplants/index.html

The Global Restoration Network, a project of the Society for Ecological Restoration International: www.globalrestorationnetwork.org/

Landscape Ecology: Minnesota's Ecological Classification System provides a hierarchical framework for mapping the landscape based on geology, soils, hydrology, and vegetation. For more information: www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecs/index.html

A number of programs are planning for ecologically meaningful landscape protection and restoration. One is the Conservation Corridors program: www.dnr.state.mn.us/metroconservationcorridors/index.html

Plant community, species ecology

The three-volume set of field guides, *Native Plant Communities of Minnesota*, provide the most comprehensive information available about the state's native plant communities. The books can be purchased from Minnesota's Bookstore: www.comm.media.state.mn.us/bookstore/bookstore.asp

Fact sheets from the books are at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/npc/index.html

Complete species lists for native plant communities in the greater Twin Cities area, derived from vegetation plot data and developed for restoration practitioners are at: www.greatrivergreening.org/plant_communities.asp

Genetic ecology

A good discussion about the issues surrounding genetic ecology is in the article: *How local is local? A review of practical and conceptual issues in the genetics of restoration*, by John McKay et al, in *Restoration Ecology* Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 432-440, September 2005. The authors advise that practitioners use local seeds and match climatic and environmental conditions between the sites.

Wildflower photos help minority group

Peter Dziuk, a nursery inspector for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and a Society member, has started a wildflower greeting card business with a small minority collective in North Minneapolis. It is called "Wildflowers for Ordinary People."

Proceeds from card sales benefit James Everett's and Sister Jean's efforts to rebuild Minneapolis' North Side. Their projects include at-risk youth programs, the SubZero Collective (collectivesight.com), and Mothers of Slain Sons, a political action committee supporting women who have lost sons to domestic violence or war. For information, call 612-521-8021, ext. 285.

"My intent is to provide a valid source of economic capital for a historically excluded group, while at the same time providing meaningful outreach on a topic that both my spouse and I have become passionate about, to inner-city minority communities and the public at large," Peter said.

Peter has about 20,000 digital images of wildflowers. He has donated all the tools of his project — hundreds of images, several hundred handmade cards, card racks, materials, cutting boards and a computer. Everett is enlisting volunteers to create new cards,

Peter has started to translate the cards into Spanish, Hmong, and Somali and wants to develop tribal contacts. "This is an opportunity to remind people that humans lived in harmony with all of these species for thousands of years," he said.

The cards are sold at \$3.95 each at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul; Highland Nursery on West 7th St., St. Paul; 101 Market in Otsego, Minn., and through Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota. For more information, go to www.ejamn.org.

Regarding endangered and other listed species

by Roy Robison, president, Landscape Alternatives, Inc., and a former MN NPS board member.

Concern for the diminished natural occurrence of all native plants is central to Landscape Alternatives' very existence. Our policy regarding the plants we propagate and offer for sale has always been that the plants must be of local ecotype as much as is possible and be able to be commercially produced either by our company or by another reputable, licensed nursery.

This policy automatically leads us to avoid all federally listed endangered species. We also avoid plants that either take exceptionally long to produce or have exceptionally stringent establishment criteria, such as the lady slippers. There are many wonderful species that are not considered threatened that we still don't sell because they are just too difficult or unreliable to propagate. We'd like to change that but can only do so much on our own. We look to the University of Minnesota and the appropriate state agencies for leadership in research and support for our industry.

Thus, we were very disappointed when we learned recently of efforts to apply the Minnesota Endangered Species prohibitions to our work. We certainly support the intent of the law to stop the wanton destruction of Minnesota's rare natural resources. We have always strongly discouraged digging from the wild because even if the transplant is successful, there is no net increase in population. This is the key to the matter. Landscape Alternatives and other reputable native plant and seed nurseries work to increase populations of native plants and, by their use of local germplasm sources, preserve the existing gene pool.

There are three main aspects to the Minnesota Endangered Species Act,

as we understand it. The first is the prohibition. This is the gist of the complaint being made. The second looks beyond protecting what is here to the future, when listed species may be so abundant as to no longer be threatened. This is where Minnesota's native plant nurseries have a great role to play. We should be seen as partners with state regulatory agencies, not adversaries in protecting Minnesota's natural plant resources! Minnesota's professional native plant nurseries have the propagation experience and facilities required to make a valuable contribution to solving the endangered species problem.

Finally, as with all state legislation that may affect interstate commerce, there is an important exclusion to the law. Any state-listed (not federal) plants purchased legally outside of the state may be transported legally into the state. Such interstate commerce is protected by the United States Constitution.

The natural ranges of native species do not follow political boundaries. A given species may be "rare" in one state because the state line crosses through the edge of the species' natural range. On the other side of that line, the plant may not be considered "rare" at all and thus can be propagated and sold. Therefore, should efforts to restrict Minnesota native plant nurseries from working with certain listed species succeed, all that will be accomplished is to harm part of our state's business community. Our customers will just buy from outstate sources. This will only increase the threat to local genetic populations.

For the good of all Minnesota native plants and the small nursery businesses that raise them, we ask state officials to work with us so that one day no Minnesota native plant will be endangered.

DNR response

by Hannah Texler, regional plant ecologist, Minnesota DNR

On behalf of the DNR, I want to thank Roy for expressing his concerns and for participating with me and others on the panel at the MN NPS meeting where this was discussed.

As I said at the meeting, we greatly appreciate the vital work done by native plant and seed nurseries, and we consider them important partners in the protection and stewardship of biodiversity. We also acknowledge that the endangered species statute and rules are imperfect and difficult to interpret and hope to be able to improve them once we have the resources to do so.

I would like to correct two points that Roy made in his letter. First, the law has always applied to native plant and seed nurseries; this is not new. Second, he is correct in stating that by law (Minnesota Statute 84.0895) we can't prohibit importation into this state and subsequent possession, transport or sale of state-endangered and threatened plants that are legally brought here from another state. However, we can regulate these activities.

Our interpretation is that while nurseries from other states can legally bring plants or seeds from species that are endangered or threatened in Minnesota into the state, these species cannot be propagated or planted here without a permit. So effectively, no one can plant state-listed endangered or threatened species without a permit. For a discussion about why we believe the law does protect rare species, see the article in the Winter 2007 Minnesota Plant Press.

Note: Roy Robison's comments and the DNR response are a follow-up to the panel discussion at the March 8, 2007, MN NPS meeting.

Native vegetation has valuable riparian role

by Brian Nerbonne, stream habitat specialist, Minnesota DNR Central Region Fisheries. This is an abstract of his presentation at the Nov. 2, 2006, meeting.

It's easy to think of a stream as a world unto itself — its own ecosystem contained within the banks that define it, with separate worlds living above and below the water's surface. However, streams are intimately tied to the land use of the entire watershed that surrounds them, especially the streamside environment known as the riparian area.

The riparian area of streams serves many functions that are crucial to their physical condition as well as biological makeup, and the vegetation present is the most important factor in how riparian areas affect streams. One of the most direct effects is how vegetation controls the stability of stream banks, thereby contributing to the shape and dimensions of the stream channel. Non-native species such as Kentucky bluegrass or smooth brome have roots that penetrate up to only a foot into the soil, while native grasses such as big bluestem or switchgrass have root masses that extend up to six feet deep.

For stream banks that exceed more than a foot in height, only deeper-rooted native vegetation is able to hold soil together to reduce erosion. The same can be said for native tree and shrub species such as green ash, cottonwood, various dogwood species, and most willow species. These woody plants have roots that penetrate around three feet into the soil. They are generally better at holding stream banks in place than herbaceous vegetation, due to the greater diameter of the roots of woody plants. Non-native woody invasives such as buckthorn do not

provide as much protection for stream banks because they create dense monocultures that limit understory growth and deter the regeneration of longer lived and deeper-rooting tree species.

Runoff from the surrounding landscape must pass through the riparian area as it drains off the land, meaning the riparian area serves an important function in buffering the stream from pollutants such as silt and excessive nutrients. Riparian vegetation slows runoff velocity and settles out sediment particles, as well as the phosphorus that is frequently bound to them. Both woody and herbaceous vegetation are able to remove sediment, although grassed buffers tend to be slightly more effective due to a higher stem density that is better at slowing runoff. Buffers are also effective at removing nitrogen and pesticides.

Riparian vegetation is especially important in providing habitat for organisms that live in the stream. Overhanging vegetation and undercuts below well-rooted stream banks provide overhead cover that is important in protecting fish from avian predators. Additionally, wood habitat in streams is crucial to the invertebrates that form a lower level of the aquatic food chain. These invertebrates rely on wood as stable refuge from the shifting sands that often comprise the bed of streams. Other invertebrates, especially in small streams where shading limits algal production, rely on leafy detritus from surrounding vegetation as their primary food source.

Excessive stream bank erosion can contribute to a decline in sensitive stream biota due to reduced foraging efficiency in turbid waters, sedimentation of gravel areas important for invertebrate production, or the smothering of fish

eggs while they incubate on the stream bottom.

Stream restoration work often focuses on stabilizing eroding stream banks, although the methods used vary significantly. Traditionally, stream banks were covered in rock riprap to reduce erosion, but this approach often only shifts erosion problems downstream, does not improve habitat, and can lead to increased warming of the stream. An alternative is to employ temporary techniques to stabilize the steam bank while establishing suitable vegetation to create a stable stream bank in the long term. A riparian buffer of an appropriate mix of native grasses, forbs, sedges, shrubs, or trees suited to site conditions is one of the best long-term solutions to protect stream health.

Plant sale is June 7

by Ken Arndt

Our annual native plant sale will be June 7, following the speaker's presentation. We encourage members to divide or propagate their own native plants and donate them. A few volunteers are needed to help set up the sales area and assist members with their plants. When the sale begins, volunteers will select plants first, followed by those who donated plants, and then by other members and visitors.

The sale will be on the patio outside of Dakota Lodge. Bring your plants by 6 p.m. We want only native plants from Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Do not bring cultivars (horticultural selection) of native plants. Plants should come from your own property, gardens or other private property, with that owner's permission, but not public property.

Dig your plants two to four weeks before the sale, put them in typical nursery containers, and label them with both common and scientific names. Pricing will be done by volunteers. Dave Crawford and Ken Arndt are co-chairs. To volunteer, contact karndt@ccesinc.com or call 651-433-4410.

Accessory treatments help suppress reed canary grass

by *Craig A. Annen, consulting ecologist, Michler & Brown, LLC.*

In a previous article (*Minnesota Plant Press*, Spring 2005), I reported on the effects of a grass-specific herbicide, Vantage[®] (sethoxydim), on reed canary grass. [Vantage is presently marketed as Sethoxydim G PRO[®].] After observing substantial recovery in the post-treatment regrowth year, I postulated that apical dominance in reed canary grass rhizomes might affect herbicide performance and the ability of this species to recover (resurge) from herbicide treatments. In this article, I summarize results of an experiment designed to test if short-circuiting rhizome apical dominance prior to sethoxydim application would enhance this herbicide's effects on reed canary grass.

The purpose of this experiment was to determine if either tillage or plant growth regulator (PGR) pretreatment followed by sethoxydim application would suppress reed canary grass to a greater extent than solitary use of herbicide. One year of coupling tillage (ca. June 1) to sethoxydim application (ca. June 21) reduced reed canary grass stem density 35 percent greater than sethoxydim application only.

Two consecutive years of the tillage-sethoxydim treatment reduced reed canary grass stem density 443 percent greater than sethoxydim application only. Tillage also enhanced native species abundance (up to 270 percent) and diversity (up to 87 percent) because tillage stirs up the seed bank and buries litter, facilitating germination. Application of a 2:1 mixture of Cycocel[®] (chlormequat chloride) and Proxy[®] (ethephon) growth regulators (ca. June 15) followed by herbicide application (ca. June 21) for two consecutive growing seasons reduced reed canary grass stem

density 26 percent greater than sethoxydim application alone.

A vegetation survey was conducted during the post-treatment regrowth year to assess the degree of reed canary grass resurgence taking place in each treatment. Resurgence occurred in all treatment plots during the regrowth year, but it occurred to a lesser extent in tillage-herbicide and PGR-herbicide plots than in sethoxydim-only plots. Thus, coupling tillage and PGR pretreatments to sethoxydim application for two consecutive growing seasons reduced reed canary grass resurgence capacity relative to solitary herbicide use. In general, plots that were more diverse at the beginning of the experiment responded more positively to treatments than plots that were less diverse or monotypic at the beginning of the experiment, regardless of which treatment was administered. The presence of native vegetation may augment control measures by shading out reed canary grass during its recovery period. Although tillage and PGR pretreatments enhanced sethoxydim's effectiveness on reed canary grass, multiple-year treatments were required to reduce resurgence capacity, demonstrating the necessity for long-term management to control this species.

Surges in native species abundance and diversity may not always accompany tillage treatments. The diversity-enhancing effects of tillage may be limited to transitional communities where reed canary grass is commingled with native species or occurs as a clonal patch within a native species matrix, areas where native species seed banks are more likely to be intact and in moderate or high density. I am presently testing this hypothesis with a tillage experiment in a restored

landscape that has a limited seed bank due to previous land-use history.

A variety of treatments and treatment combinations are available for reed canary grass abatement and subsequent native species restoration. Results of this study demonstrate that tillage and plant growth regulator pretreatments can enhance the effectiveness of sethoxydim on reed canary grass if administered for at least two consecutive growing seasons.

Craig A. Annen is a practicing restorationist and researcher. For more information, contact him at 608-424-6997 or annen00@aol.com.

Help search for dwarf trout lilies

The Minnesota Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program is seeking volunteers to help with dwarf trout lily monitoring and searches. They especially need volunteers who are available on weekdays.

Volunteers work in teams to search designated areas under supervision of DNR staff and/or experienced volunteers. The exact schedule depends on lily phenology and can occur anytime between April 23 and May 10. All work is within an hour's drive south of the Twin Cities in Rice, Goodhue, or Steele Counties. Minimum time commitment is one full day. Sites vary in topographic difficulty and risk of getting wet feet. Training is in the field.

To volunteer, contact Derek Anderson, botany assistant: derek.anderson@dnr.state.mn.us or 651-259-5071. Include your full name; phone number where you are best reached at the last minute; and e-mail if possible. Indicate the total number of days you are willing to commit, and list dates during the two-week time period when you are available. You can expect a follow-up e-mail or phone call no earlier than the week of April 16.

Plant Lore

by Thor Kommedahl

What is spiderwort?

Spiderwort is *Tradescantia bracteata*, *T. occidentalis*, or *T. ohioensis*. They are in the spiderwort family (Commelinaceae) of monocotyledons — these three of six species are native to Minnesota.

Where did it get its names?

Tradescantia was named after British plant collector John Tradescant (1608-1637). He was gardener to King Charles I in London. It was named spiderwort either because the sap from broken stems forms filaments like a spider's web, or the angular leaf arrangement suggests a squatting spider. *Bracteata* refers to bracts in the inflorescence. *Occidentalis* means western and *ohioensis* means of Ohio. Wort means herb, but is often added to common names if a plant was once used in medicine.

Where does the plant grow?

Spiderworts are typically prairie plants: *T. bracteata* is the most widely distributed of the three native species in Minnesota, and *T. ohioensis* occurs in extreme southeast counties of the state. However, *T. ohioensis* and some other species have been planted in gardens and have escaped cultivation elsewhere.

What does the plant look like?

Plants are perennials. All three species have three petals that are blue to rose-colored, six stamens, and flowers that are borne in umbel-like cymes. Long bracts that resemble leaves in shape subtend the flowers. *T. bracteata* has dense, sticky hairs on sepals and pedicels, *T. occidentalis* is sparsely hairy, and *T. ohioensis* is hairless.

Does it have any medicinal uses?

Cherokee Indians made a plant tea for treatment of kidney and stomach ailments. A leaf poultice was applied to insect bites, and a root poultice for cancers.



Photo of *T. occidentalis* by Scott Milburn



Photo of *T. bracteata* by Sean Jergens

Does it have any economic importance?

Although grown as an ornamental in gardens, none of these three species is as popular as *T. virginiana*. Wandering Jew (*T. fluminensis*) is grown as a house plant. Spiderworts have been eaten as a raw salad or pot herb.

A winter afternoon

by Ken Arndt

On Feb. 17, 10 MN NPS members enjoyed a warm afternoon outing at Terrace Horticultural Books in St. Paul, shopping for plant books. Owner Kent Petterson opened his store for us and also donated 10 percent of sales from member purchases to the Society. He gave us a tour and a short history of the business before we were let loose in the candy store. If you didn't make it, go to this great little bookstore sometime. Information is at www.terracehorticulturalbooks.com

Robert (Bob) Jacobson dies

by Roy Robison and George Hild

The Minnesota Native Plant Society lost a good friend when Robert (Bob) Jacobson died suddenly Jan. 23 at his home in St. Paul.

Bob was a very active member of the Society. Besides attending numerous monthly meetings, leading field trips and presenting several talks, he also was the editor of the *Minnesota Plant Press* from fall of 1990 through spring of 1993 and a frequent contributor of articles.

He is survived by his parents, Jean and Robert L. Jacobson of Minnetonka, and his brother, Ronald Jacobson, of White Bear Lake.

Bob worked at MnDOT for 19 years and played an important role in getting the state to use local native ecotypes in MnDOT projects. He worked closely with other organizations to develop specifications that are still used today. He was currently working on various wetland programs in the Environmental Services Department of MnDOT.

Bob helped the use of Minnesota native plants by testifying before several committees at the state Capitol a few years ago, supporting the use of natives along roadsides and against a law that would have banned their use.

Bob loved plants; he also loved animals. He lost his big black dog a few years ago, and that was hard on him. Bjorn was a slobbering scoundrel that Bob insisted on bringing with him on field trips. He was also a "leaner," so combined with the dripping, the experience always proved interesting.

There are plans to rename a couple of wetland projects for Bob, as well as the establishment of the Bob Jacobson Wetland Memorial Fund. Donations are also being accepted by the Humane Society.

Minnesota Native Plant Society
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Spring 2007

