

Sarracenia

Volume 16, Number 2.

Spring 2008

Newsletter of the Wildflower Society of Newfoundland and
Labrador.

c/o Botanical Garden, Memorial University, St John's, NL, A1C 5S7

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"Creeping Nana" (Dwarf Hawksbeard, *Crepis nana*)

Helen A. Jones

President's Message.

Wildflower season is here at last! Bring it on!

Nova Scotia, wildflower member, Carl Munden, e-mailed me on March 25th sending a gorgeous picture he had taken of coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*). While walking along Portugal



Cove Road near Windsor Lake, on Victoria Day weekend, dressed in warm winter coat and hat, I spotted a small patch of coltsfoot attempting to raise their little heads in bloom. Oh we have a lot of catching up to do!

I do hope our photography enthusiasts will enjoy this Sarracenia. We are delighted to offer another outdoor photography workshop, this one lead by John Bridson. John will offer advice on how to photograph mushrooms in those dark difficult places. I would like to remind members of our 2nd Photography Competition (see entry rules in this issue) and encourage members to begin snapping those prize-winning pictures early.

We hope that members will be pleased with our schedule of summer walks. We have two new leaders: our first trip to Sheppard's Pit will be with Wilf Nicholls, and, at the end of the summer, Alan Whittick will lead us in a seaside/-seaweed walk. I would remind members to check with the designated leader for each walk to make certain that inclement weather has not interfered with plans for that day.

John Maunder has been busy putting the final touches on our week-long excursion to Gros Morne and the itinerary looks jammed-packed

with botanical goodies. Every year it seems interest in our field trip grows and we have again reached our maximum allowable! I suspect that it has a lot to do with the John's fine planning and leading. We are especially looking forward to seeing again our wildflower friends from off the Avalon and the island!

On behalf of all members I would like to thank Karen Herzberg for agreeing to become our new Membership Secretary, and welcome Alan Whittick on the executive. Also, a special thanks for our Winter/Spring Speakers, Ken Knowles, Jessica Humber, Michael Collins, Alan Whittick and Howard Clase.

Finally, on behalf of all wildflower members, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to both Ken Proudfoot, whose wife Helene, and Murray Colbo, whose wife Deidre, recently passed away.

Wishing all a safe and exciting wildflower season!

Carmel Conway

Editor's Note.

This issue is unusual in that it has no articles devoted specifically to plants. Since most of those submitted were about photography I decided to leave it that way and have a special issue devoted to photography. As a follow-up to this John Maunder and I are discussing the possibility of having a workshop devoted to processing digital images (resizing, cropping, adjusting colours, etc.) probably based around the free software "Irfanview". Since this is available without charge and does all these basic operations it will put everyone on a level footing.

I hope that the next issue will have a few plant articles, but that depends on the membership, I cannot publish what isn't submitted!

The 2008-9 Executive

President:	Carmel Conway	722-0121
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Vice-President:	John Maunder	335-2462
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Editor:	Howard Clase	753-6415
Board Members:	Judith Blakeley	437-6852
	Todd Boland	753-6027
	Helen Jones	437-6852
	Ross Traverse	437-5539
	Alan Whittick	753-0626

Field Trip Schedule for 2008

Thursday June 12:

Exploring Sheppard's Pit, Pippy Park (Sheppard's Pit is an area where the Botanical Garden is experimenting with re-vegetation with native plants.)

Leader: Dr. Wilf Nicholls.

Meeting Place: Botanical Garden Parking Lot, 6:30 p.m. (Followed by tea at The Garden if time permits.)

Saturday June 14:

Photography Shoot for *Diapensia* and *Loiseleuria*.

Hawke Hills

Leader: Carmel Conway.

Meeting Place: Car-pool at Arts & Culture, 9:30 a.m. or meet on the Hill. Carmel will check before trip to ensure in bloom.

July 6-12:

Gross Morne Field Trip

Leaders: John Maunder assisted by Park Staff.
Field Trip Schedule has already been provided to participants.

Regatta Day (Wednesday August 6 or whenever it occurs): Seal Cove and Holyrood Area. (This is an area with several plants that are unusual on the Avalon, such as *Bartonia paniculata* and *Ilex verticillata*. There should be lots of orchids, including *Pogonia*.)

Leader: John Maunder.

Meeting Place: Tim Hortons at corner of Thorburn Rd and Nagles Hill Rd. leaving 9.30. All day trip, bring lunch. (A cell-phone number will be available on request

for anyone wishing to join the trip in progress.)

TBA

General Protestant Cemetery.

Leader: Todd Boland.

Meeting Place: 6:00 p.m. Old Topsail Road Entrance.

Monday September 1:

Bill Tifford Memorial Walk – A stroll around Long Pond.

Leaders: Leila & Howard Clase.

Meeting Place: Fluvarium Parking Lot, 2:00 p.m.

.....followed by Gin & Tonic Barbecue at Carmel's: 133 Firdale Drive, Airport Heights, Pippy Park. Starting time: 5:00 p.m. (Participation in walk not required:-)

Mid-Sept:

Finding and Photographing Fungi.

Leader: Dr. John Bridson.

Meeting time and place: To be determined.

September : Exploring Seashore & Seaweed.

Leader: Dr. Alan Whittick.

Meeting time and place: To be determined. May be combined with the following.

Late Sept/early Oct.

Perplexing *Atriplexes*, *Rumexes* and *Goldenrods*. Haricot and/or other places on St Mary's Bay.

Leaders: (probably) the Clases and John Maunder.

Meeting time and place: To be determined.

Some more prize-winning pictures from the 2007 Competition (continued on p. 22.)

Plant-animal interactions. 3rd place.



Hare eating *Plantago major* - Gene Herzberg

Plant Habitats 3rd place



**Harebells at Stevensville Crossing
Karen Herzberg**

Helen Jones- Nature Photographer

by Carmel Conway

When our executive begins its task of putting together an exciting line-up of speakers for our Fall/Winter season, Helen Jones' name is immediately suggested. Simply explained- Helen Jones is an all-time favorite and her work draws a good crowd. So, on those cold winter evenings there is no better place to be than at the Botanical Garden, lost in the spectacular far-off images created by Helen. Her work is always exotic, fresh and downright inspiring.

A native of South Africa, Helen recalls at an early age being captivated by the remarkable beauty of her homeland, and the strong connection between the people, the land and wildlife. She was inspired by the magnificence of parks such as Kruger, Wankie, and Gorongosa.



As a health care professional, Helen worked in South Africa, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), England, Northern Ontario, eventually settling in Newfoundland. It was over these years that Helen's love of nature and photography blossomed. She traveled extensively visiting bird, plant and scenic hot-spots such as Point Pelee, Quetico Parks, Gros Morne, Pacific Rim, Alaska, Oregon, Florida, Botswana, Namibia and Costa Rica, with her wildflower friends eagerly awaiting her return to delight in her images.

Helen became really serious about her photography in about 1991, when she started a small photography and framing business. Her work is now well known throughout the Island. Competing both locally, nationally and internationally, she has racked up quite an impressive collection of awards and achievements:

- Winner of the prestigious B.G. Wildlife Photographer of the Year Contest, 2000.

- Honorable Mention for *Mertensia maritima*, 4th Annual Photo Competition, Wildflower Magazine, 1996.
- First Prize for Purple Finch, Birds of the Wild, 1st Annual Contest and Second Prize for Blackpoll Warbler Female, 1995.
- Awarded the Smith Trophy Award, Special Botany- NAPA Competition for Iced Pussy Willow, 1994.
- Honorable Mention, 1st Annual Photo Competition, Wildflower Magazine, Mountain Cranberry (Partridgeberry), 1993.
- Awarded the Nikon Certificate of Merit and Nikon Certificate of Distinction, 1978.
- First Prize, Rock Formation, Gros Morne National Park, 1978.
- First Prize, Quetico Boreal Forest, and Second Prize, Gannet, Cape St. Mary's, Nfld, St. John's Camera Club, 1978.



Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) Helen A. Jones

Helen's work can be spotted in many wildflower, birding and nature magazines and calendars (Birder's World, Canadian Wildflower, Photo Digest).

Despite a demanding career, owning a business, and pursuing and competing in her craft, Helen always found time to be involved in our Society. As an executive member and strong photography advocate, she has held both indoor and outdoor digital and 35 mm photography workshops. In recent years she has converted to digital camera imaging. Encouraging members to improve their camera skills, she strongly emphasizes the importance of knowing your camera well, specifically, in thoroughly studying the manual. Helen neither manipulates her

images nor environment, and has always encouraged this principle in her students. Though serious about her craft, her sharp dry wit and colorful humor, have made learning with her incredible fun.



Sea Lavender (*Limonium carolinianum*)
Helen A. Jones

Helen was instrumental in our Society's having its 1st Photography Competition, and it was such a success that another is in the works. She is active in the Natural History Society and Camera 35 Club.

A selection of her images will be found in this issue of Sarracenia.



Red Crossbill (Imm. male) Helen A. Jones

Without doubt, I have been a true fan of all of Helen's work, and must confess a certain envy of her images of birds in particular. Feeling that Helen has a special relationship with subject, it is as though they simply land, turn and artfully pose for her. Quite captivating!

Basic Tips and Techniques for Photographing Wildflowers

by Judith Blakeley and Helen A. Jones

This article was developed as an information handout to accompany an outdoor photography workshop given to members of the WFS in June 2007. The tips and techniques outlined here may be of interest to other WFS members who want to improve their wildflower photography and/or may be planning to submit photographs to the upcoming wildflower photography contest (details to be announced).

These suggestions are primarily for digital camera photography; however, many will apply to film camera photography as well.

1. Sharpness

Blurry pictures are caused by body movements, camera shake, and/or wind. When taking close up pictures (especially with a macro lens) of small objects such as flowers, small movements are magnified along with the image. Sharper images can be obtained by controlling these three factors.

Tips:

- Always use a tripod. This reduces the effect of hand and body shake. If you cannot use a tripod, brace your arms and hands against a solid object or put your elbows on the ground.
- Use the image stabilizer when you have no tripod. Turn it off when using the tripod.
- Increase the shutter speed (1/100 sec. or faster) using

the shutter priority mode if there is enough light.

- Take multiple pictures (continuous shooting mode). One in the series will likely be sharper than the rest.
- Use a cable release to avoid the shake associated with pressing the shutter release button.
- Take pictures early in the morning when there is less wind. Wait for the breeze to lessen or stop before taking the picture.
- Use a plastic bottle as a wind break. Cut a window into it for your camera lens and place the bottle over the plant.
- Use a flash, but make sure you don't wash out the lighter tones, as this loses detail, such as veins on the petals (check for "blinkies" -see below #5). Some minor "blinkies" are OK -those that are on some reflective areas such as water droplets.

Learning Activity:

Take a close up picture of a flower while hand holding your camera. Take a picture of the same flower using a tripod or by steadying your arms. Compare the images on your computer screen and magnify them several times.

Note: Slight blurring is inherent in all digital images. Use the sharpening tool found in your Photoshop (or other) program to correct this. (Don't overdo it.) Remember, however, that no amount of sharpening will correct

a very blurry picture.

2. Perspective

Tips:

Try not to take all your pictures of flowers from the same position, for example, looking straight down on the flower head. Some flowers lend themselves very well to this viewpoint but others demand a side view or a view from an angle somewhere in between in order to capture the best artistic perspective of the plant or flower.

A second suggestion in relation to perspective is to try to take pictures of flowers in both the landscape and the portrait orientation. Again, some flowers will lend themselves better to one orientation over the other. Also, you will be able to include different parts of the plant in one orientation vs. the other. Lead the eye into the photo.

Learning activities:

- a) Take a picture of a flower e.g. bunchberry looking straight down on the flower. Then take a picture of the same plant from a side view. Compare the images. Which do you prefer? Try doing this with several different plants.
- b) Take a picture of a flower using a landscape orientation, then using the portrait orientation. Compare. Which orientation best suits the flower/plant? Which do you prefer?

3. Depth of Field

Depth of field refers to the degree of sharpness throughout the photo.

Tips:

You can alter your depth of field by using the “aperture priority” mode on your camera. This is also referred to as changing your F stops. A lower F stop number (larger aperture) e.g. F=3.5 lets in more light than a higher F stop e.g. F=11. It also reduces your depth of field meaning less of the background will be in focus. When taking close up pictures of flowers you may want only the flower in focus and the background in pleasing blurry colours. Dial in a low F stop, focus on the part of the flower that you want in sharpest focus and press the shutter.

When you want to include both the flower and the background in sharp focus, use a higher F stop (smaller aperture). The higher the number, the more of the background you will get in focus. Optimal F stops vary from camera to camera, therefore, learn which gives you the effect you prefer. Some point and shoot cameras offer various F stops but when you review the image you don't notice any difference. This is because it is not possible with your particular camera.

If you have a depth of field preview button, use it.

Learning Activity:

Choose a fairly large flower or group of flowers. Focus on nearest edge of flower, or nearest flower in a group. Use a low F stop (e.g. F=4) and take a picture. Take a second picture using a high F stop (e.g. F=11). Compare the images.

4. Composition

Tips:

Try not to always take pictures

where the primary subject, e.g. the flower, is plumb centre. Divide your view screen into 9 smaller rectangles or into thirds. Place the subject in one of the rectangles or at the junction of the thirds rather than the central one before you take your picture. Be sure the focus is on the primary subject.

Learning Activity:

Choose a flower. Take 3 different pictures of the flower using three different focal points -other than the central one. Compare your images. Which one does justice to the plant? Which do you like the best?

5. Lighting

Tips:

The ideal times to take pictures of flowers is when the sky is cloudy or overcast and the shadows are soft. This prevents the colours from becoming washed out, and avoids images that have too much contrast between sunny areas and shadows. In digital photographs you can see areas that are too white and washed out by turning on the “highlights” feature and watching for parts of the image that “blink”. Some cameras have a feature (+/-) where you can dial in a negative number to reduce the amount of white out (e.g. -0.3). Film users should know middle tones and adjust exposure (+/-) accordingly.

Other good times to take pictures are early morning or late afternoon when the light is less direct and softer or warmer. You can easily obtain images of flowers that are backlit or side lit by the sun. Another good time to take pictures is after rain or fog when water droplets add an interesting element (esp. if you use a macro lens).

Learning Activities:

a) Take pictures of a flower with the sun behind you, with the sun in front of you and with the sun at the side. Compare the images.

b) Take a picture of a white flower in bright light using the +/- feature on 0; on -0.3; on -0.7; and on -1.0. Which picture has fewer “blinkies” on your highlights screen? Which picture shows the most detail in the white sections of the flower? Do the opposite with darker images. Dial in +0.3 & +0.7.

c) Take a picture of a flower using backlit sunshine. Take another of the same flower using your flash. Which picture looks more natural, has more detail?

Basically very light images need less light and darker images need more light. The reason for this is because all cameras are set up to take middle tone. Each camera varies so get to know which setting gives you the kind of image that appeals to you. Most digital cameras are set up to take some very good images in bright sun, but by making slight adjustments one can get the “wow” effect.

To conclude, don't get too worried about the technical details, just get to know the aspects that give you the most appealing image. Learn one technique and once that becomes second nature to you, try the next one.

Creating lovely images is great for the soul. **Enjoy** ☺ ☻

Reference:

Kelby, Scott (2006). The digital photography book. **Peachpit Press.**

Notice: The Second Annual Wildflower Society Photo Contest

The great success of our first annual photo contest has convinced your Executive that we should try the whole thing again this year!

However the contest dates will be a little different. Upon reflection, it was decided that running the Contest at the same time as the Christmas Slide Show is just too complicated.

So. The next contest will be run during the latter part of the coming winter. Entrants should be prepared to submit their photos by the end of January 2009.

The contest rules will also be a little different:

1. three categories:
 - a) plant portraits - flowers (including grass, sedge, rush, and conifer flowers)
 - b) plant portraits – other features (seeds, berries, old cones, buds, leaves, bark, ferns, horsetails, quillworts, plant parasites and diseases; wide discretion)
 - c) plant-animal interactions (people are animals too!)
2. a maximum of six entries, with no more than three entries in any one category
3. all plants photographed must be native species, or naturally-growing introductions - NOT cultivated exotics, or horticultural varieties
4. all photos must have been taken within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador,
5. there are no date restrictions
6. all entries must be digital (scans of transparencies will be accepted, although, because they are “copies” of originals, they tend to be less sharp and crisp)
7. photos should not have been submitted to the previous annual photo contest, or to any previous Christmas Slide Shows
8. photos should be submitted in 1024 x 768 .jpg format, if at all possible [any larger images submitted will be reduced to 1024 x 768 (or close to it) by the contest compiler (for on-screen projection, this will not reduce the apparent

resolution); smaller images will be accepted, but image resolution will necessarily suffer because of the nature of the medium (that said, some of last year’s winners WERE smaller images!)]

The method of submitting photos is very important. Last year, a number of entries sent by e-mail appear to have disappeared into cyberspace!

Several points should be considered:

1. the preferable photo submission method is via CD or DVD, using “snail mail” (ie. Canada Post), or direct hand delivery
2. submissions via e-mail are still OK, but remember to keep the total file size of any e-mail, including attached photos, to below 5 megabytes (so as not to overload e-mail accounts); this may require the sending of more than one e-mail
3. always request a “confirmation of receipt” from the contest compiler

Members SHOULD NOT BE DISCOURAGED, in any way, by all of the technical jargon set down above. Digital photography is a new skill, and, understandably, many camera owners have yet to achieve a very high comfort level with many of its finer technical challenges.

To this end, the contest compiler will do his best to help submitters out, on an individual basis. As well, he intends to start putting together a basic “cookbook” of simple procedures designed to assist members in some of the most basic technical matters. Periodically, elements of this “cookbook” will be published in the “Sarracenia”, or else be e-mailed directly to members. There is also the possibility that some informal workshops might be arranged during the year, depending upon member response.

... But, enough of that! It’s time to dust off your cameras, charge your batteries, and set off into the woods!

Be bold! ... Think “prize-winning photo”, NOT “snapshot” ...

This simple attitude shift will almost certainly make a huge difference to your results. Think composition, and aesthetics. Start looking for really special and unique

subject matter. Try to see what you have never seen before. Look upwards instead of downwards. Be original.

... BUT, don't forget to focus or to hold your camera steady, and always pay attention to lighting. If you are up to it, you may also want to "crop" and "tune up" your results a bit.

Unless you object your winning pictures may be published in Sarracenia.

Remember that this contest is all about getting out, and seeing new things, and having a good time. Hopefully, we will have a great number of entrants, and many wonderful results.

GOOD LUCK AND GOOD SHOOTING!

Contest Compiler:

John Maunder, P. O. Box 250, Pouch Cove, NL A0A 3L0 jem@nl.rogers.com

Notice: The Annual Christmas Slide Show – 2008

Our regular Christmas Slide Show will go ahead, as usual, at our December meeting.

This slide show is our yearly opportunity to come together, have a chat, and share our recent botanical experiences, through the medium of photography.

The slide show is not a contest, and the rules for submission are pretty relaxed.

Nonetheless, the images submitted, and the stories told about them, are always pretty amazing!

So, while "visions of prize-winning images" dance in your heads this summer, don't forget about the Christmas Slide Show. Keep the interesting images coming!

Entrants should be prepared to submit their Christmas Slide Show photos by November 15, 2008.

Slide Show Compiler: John Maunder, P. O. Box 250, Pouch Cove, NL A0A 3L0 jem@nl.rogers.com

Wildflower Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

Membership Form

Name: _____

Street/PO Box _____

Town/City: _____ Province/State _____ Post Code _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail address: _____ Willing to receive Sarracenia by e-mail? _____

Renewal _____, or New Member _____ Amount Enclosed:- \$ _____

If you have a Memorial connection, please give your Department address if you are willing to receive material via the University's internal mail;

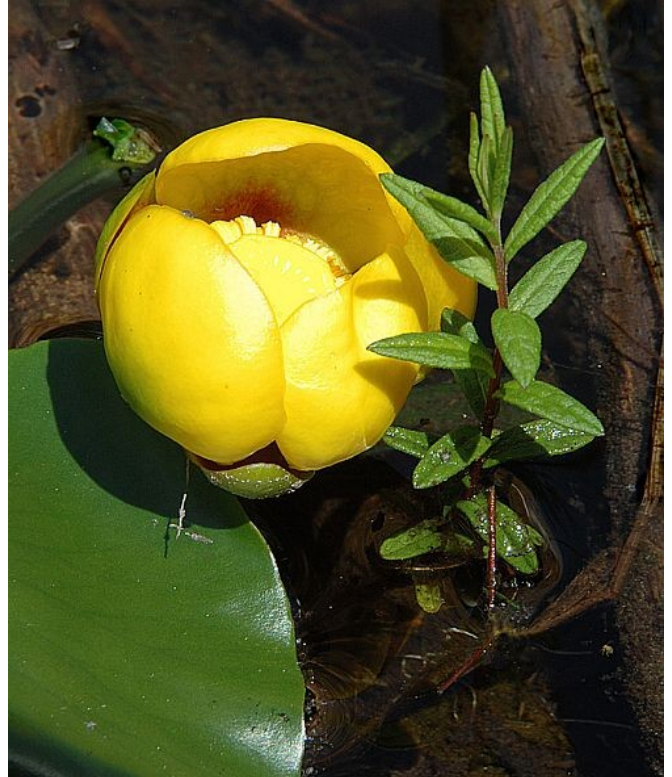
Continued at bottom of p22.....

Plant - animal interactions 2nd place.



Cypripedium with Crab Spider Judith Blakeley

Wildflowers in Natural Settings - 3rd place.



Nuphar variegata

John Bridson

....membership form, continued from p21.

Our subscription year runs from September to August, please renew ASAP. Annual subscription is \$10.00. Please save the Society money by agreeing to receive Sarracenia electronically if possible.

For anyone joining for the first time during January to April the fee is \$15.00, which also includes membership for the following September to August.

Mail completed form and cheque/money order (sorry we cannot accept credit cards) to:

**Membership Secretary,
Wildflower Society of Newfoundland and Labrador,
c/o Memorial University Botanical Garden,
St. John's, NL, Canada, A1C 5S7**

Please do not address to a named individual.

Or bring completed form and cheque to next indoor meeting.