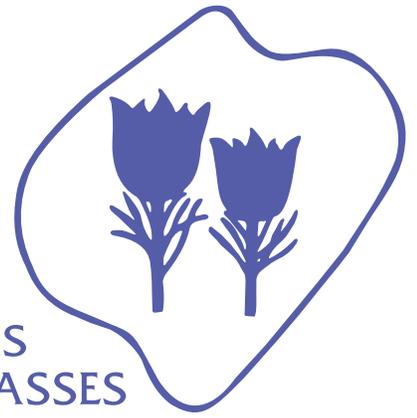




Prairie Originals

WILDFLOWERS
NATIVE GRASSES



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Natural & Distinctive

Summertime and the living is easy. It is a great time of year to relax and enjoy yourself! However here at Prairie Originals we aren't putting our feet up yet. July is when we do all our summer potting for next year. Since our wildflowers and grasses are perennials, we put some of our seedling plugs in 4.5" pots and grow them outdoors for the rest of the summer. We then cover all these pots with flax straw in November and uncover them in April. By May they have sprouted and are ready for sale. We are also planting three new prairie areas with Indian Grass, Big Bluestem and Little Bluestem with assorted wildflowers.

Sweetgrass - We did not have any Sweetgrass plants this spring, however it germinated well outside in May so it is now available in 5 packs, by the tray of 70 plugs or in 4.5" pots.

Please note: We are closed at our Selkirk location on Saturday, July 12th and Sat. Aug. 23. On Saturday, July 19th we are open 9 to Noon.

If anyone has empty Prairie Originals plug trays or 5 packs I would be happy to reuse them. You can drop them off at our Selkirk location or leave them with me at the St. Norbert Market.

WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW?

In July we have the largest number of flowers blooming in our stockbeds. Varieties in bloom now include Northern Bedstraw, Harebell, Red Lily, Alumroot, Solomon's Seal, Bush Honeysuckle, Purple Coneflower, Prickly Rose, Wild Iris, False Sunflower, Black Eyed Susan, Swamp Milkweed, Dwarf and Whorled Milkweed, June Grass, Tufted Hairgrass, Giant Wild Rye, Awned Wheatgrass, Yarrow, and Giant Hyssop.



Giant Hyssop



Wild Iris



Red Lily

"You are welcome to come & wander through the flowers during business hours and soak up some prairie ambience."

BIRD & BUTTERFLY NEWS & OTHER WILDLIFE TOO

The butterflies haven't been too plentiful this year as yet, probably partially due to the cool, spring weather. There have been a fair number of Tiger Swallowtails visiting here. They are yellow with black stripes. The host plants for their caterpillars are Birch and Aspen trees. We are also seeing some Pearl Crescents, which are small orange butterflies with dark brown markings. Their host plants are Asters, especially Smooth and Many Flowered Asters. I haven't seen any Monarch's yet, although I did see a Monarch caterpillar when visiting a garden in Winnipeg the first week of July.

We had an exciting discovery in one of our display beds on June 4th. I reached down to touch a Harebell, that I was showing a group of people, and a little bird popped out. It had been sitting on a nest with four tiny turquoise eggs, hidden among the Harebell foliage. It



The eggs hatched on June 11th and the little birds left the nest on June 19th, only 8 days later! It was fun to watch their transformation from tiny hatchlings to fluffy chicks to full feathered birds. They were frequently observed with their heads up and beaks wide open waiting for some food. Since they left Stef and I are feeling the effects of Empty Nest Syndrome.

June is also firefly season in Manitoba. I had the pleasure of seeing them for the first time ever last June, when our whole backyard was transformed into a twinkling wonderland one night. They are around again this year. I saw them in late June and also the night of July 1st after the Fireworks. One rainy day in June I had a flashing bouquet of flowers sitting in my dark shop! I guess the firefly didn't want to leave because it was raining. They sure produce a bright light for such a tiny little bug. It was only about 5 mm long (1/4").



BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS

Almost all wildflowers are perennials. Since they come back from the roots every year, they don't have to be planted every spring, which saves time. Some of our natives are short lived perennials or pioneer plants. They grow and bloom quickly and after a few years the parent plant dies out. However, it often is replaced by new seedlings that start on their own when the seed falls to the ground. You must be careful not to pull out these new seedlings. Some of the pioneer plants include Gaillardia, Fireweed, Black Eyed Susan, Coneflower, and Wild Flax. Most other varieties grow back from the roots every year for a number of years.

ST. NORBERT FARMER'S MARKET

We continue to take plants to the Market. We take a little bit of all varieties available. The offerings brought by other vendors is increasing week by week. On July 5 there were lots of Strawberries, as well as new potatoes, beets, broccoli, cut flowers, etc. The Market also has entertainers and buskers every week.

COMPOST FOR THE GARDEN

I read once that compost is like chocolate for the garden. And it's true! It adds lots of organic matter to the soil and lots of nutrients too. An inch of compost on the surface of the soil is the best plant disease preventer known to exist. It also suppresses weeds very well. When you are creating new beds for planting, it really helps to add 8-10cm (3-4") of compost and till it in before planting. This organic matter improves the soil texture by aerating heavy clay soil and increasing water retention in sandy soil. The plants establish quicker in well prepared soil. I get my compost from Stony Mountain Institution and it is excellent. You need to have a truck or hire a truck to haul it though. You can also make your own compost or if you don't have enough, some topsoil companies are now offering compost for delivery. Samborski Garden Supplies and Reimer Soils both have it.

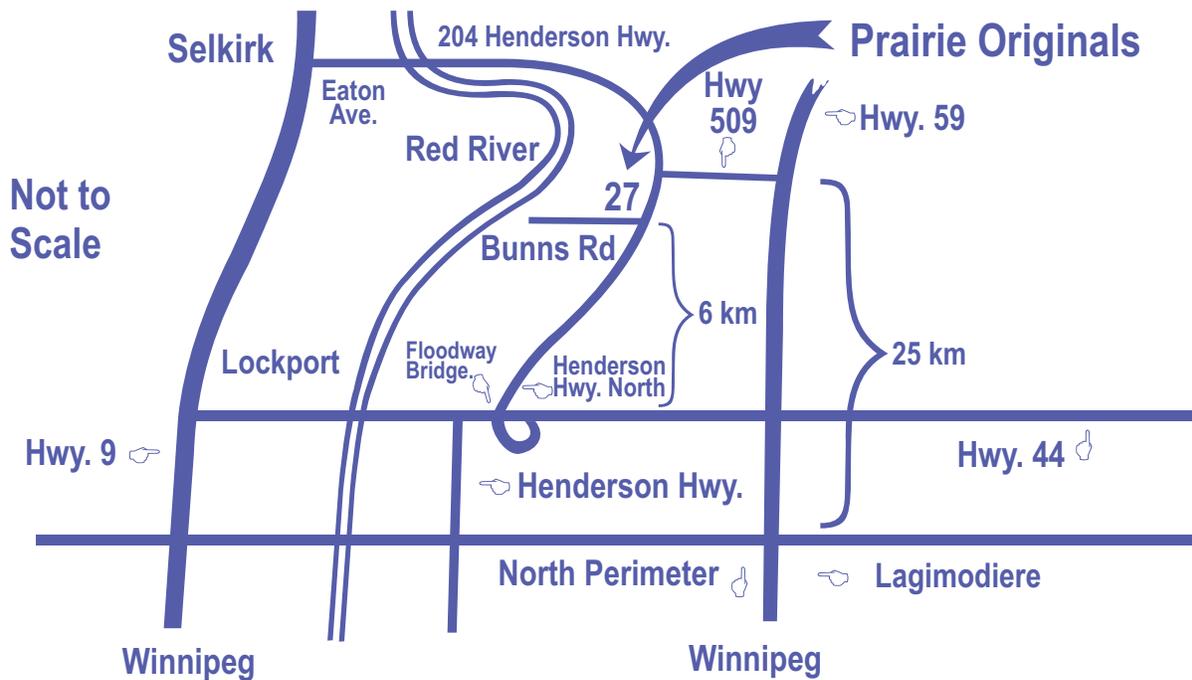
Until next time

Shirley Froehlich and Stef Johnson



June Grass

LOCATION



HOURS

May 12 - June 27

Monday to Friday

10 am - 6 pm

Saturday

9 am - 5 pm

Sundays - until June 15

11 am - 5 pm

July, August & September

Usually open Monday to Saturday, **Phone to confirm**

Evenings by Appointment