



# Prairie Originals

WILDFLOWERS  
NATIVE GRASSES



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It is hard to believe that summer is drawing to a close once again. I think the big blast of heat and humidity in late August has made many of us glad to see the change in the seasons.

This is a great time of year for planting the 4.5" pots as well as the 1 & 2 gallon pots of native shrubs. We have a good selection of wildflowers and grasses and an excellent selection of native shrubs & vines.

We also have seed available in mixes as well as single species. October is an excellent time for seeding.

## What's Blooming Now?

September is peak time for our warm season prairie grasses as well as the Asters. Narrowleaf Sunflower is still blooming in early September too due to our late spring. Many Flowered Aster with white flowers and Smooth Aster with mauve flowers are our most common Asters in Manitoba and you will see them everywhere at this time of year. New England Aster with purple flowers is less common and found mainly in southeastern Manitoba in moist areas.

**Indian Grass** *Sorghastrum nutans* looks fabulous in mid August and September with bronze coloured seed heads and its height of 150 cm (5 ft) makes it stand out in the garden. This warm season grass grows in clumps so you don't need to worry about it spreading and taking over the garden. It is very well behaved. In a prairie style planting it is nice in combination with flowers such as Heartleaf Alexander and Northern Bedstraw, which bloom in June while the Indian Grass is still very small, and Culver's Root and Smooth Aster. A complimentary cool season grass to go with it is Tufted Hairgrass or Awned Wheatgrass.



## Bird, Butterfly & Creature News

We are finding quite a few more Black Swallowtail butterfly caterpillars again these days. We had a lot in June and are finding the second generation now on Heartleaf & Golden Alexanders as well as on dill in the vegetable garden.

We had quite a few Pearl Crescent butterflies (*right*) this summer, which we haven't seen in a few years. These little orange & brown butterflies require Many Flowered Aster and Smooth Aster as host plants for their caterpillars.



Goldfinches seem to be everywhere at this time of year as they fuel up for their long journey south in September. They enjoy the seed of False Sunflower, Giant Hyssop, Meadow Blazing Star and Narrowleaf Sunflower to name a few.

## Beneficial Bugs

There are 861 species of **Ground Beetles** in Canada. They make the top ten list of beneficial garden insects. Most are black or brown and shiny with ridged wing covers. They run very fast when disturbed and cannot fly. Ground Beetles eat larvae of cutworms and diamond backed moths, aphids and Colorado Potato Beetle eggs, larvae and pupae. Ground Beetle larvae and adults have been shown to eat many times their own weight in prey if given the opportunity. They are found under leaves, rocks, logs and boards by day and hunt for prey at night. They can be found in moist woods, fields and gardens.



## Fall Hours

We are finished at the St. Norbert Market for the season, however the Market remains open on Wednesdays and Saturdays until October 26.

We continue to be open at our 27 Bunns Road location near Selkirk throughout September and into October. We are generally open Mon. to Fri. 10 – 6 pm and Saturdays 9 – 5pm but please phone to confirm. We will be closed Thanksgiving weekend Oct. 12 to 14.

## Fascinating Plants

We at Prairie Originals think that **Canada Milkvech** *Astragalus Canadensis* is one of our undervalued and under-planted wildflowers. This robust plant has lush, attractive foliage and towers of creamy coloured, pea-like flowers in July. It grows 60 – 90 cm tall (2-3 ft.) and is well behaved in a garden setting. We have had it in the same bed for 5 years and it has not escaped or even tried to escape like some other wandering perennials do. It prefers full sun and medium to moist locations so it does very well in both loam and heavy clay soils like we have in the Red River Valley. It is happy even when we have soggy summers. In the wild it grows



all across Canada except Yukon and the Maritimes. This includes Nunavut so we know it is cold hardy.



It is a valuable plant for wildlife too. Canada Milkvech is a host plant for caterpillars of Silvery and Western Tailed Blue butterflies. It also has lots of nectar for honeybees, bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Unfortunately deer and rabbits find the flowers and foliage quite tasty so you may need to protect it with deer repellent like Deer Away or Bobbex if you live in deer country.



## Meet the Weeds

You have probably heard that phrase **“Know Your Enemy”** so we thought it would be good to make sure everyone knows what some of our common weeds look like and how they behave. For people new to gardening, they can be divided into two general groups, annuals and perennials.

**Annual weeds** are very fast growers. They germinate, shoot up, blossom, set seed and die, often within a few weeks or months. They reproduce only by seed and live just one season. These are usually easier to get rid of with shallow roots. The key thing with annual weeds is to remove them before they have a chance to go to seed.

### Tartary Buckwheat

*Climbs & vines around other plants*



### Annual Sow Thistle

*Leaves are a little prickly and it spreads very easily by seed.  
Very easy to remove the roots.*



### Portulaca

*A low plant with rubbery leaves that makes mats covering the ground.  
Do not let this one go to seed.*



### Common Groundsel

*Yellow flowers and fluffy seeds.*



*Continued on page 5...*

Continued from page 4...

**Perennial weeds** live two or more years and reproduce by seed and by spreading roots.

### Perennial Sow Thistle

*Yellow flowers with fluffy seeds and shallow, spreading roots. Grows to 90– 150 cm tall (3–5 ft). Leaves are not very prickly.*

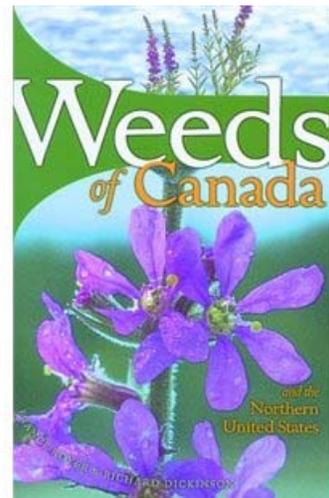


### Canada Thistle

*Purple flowers and **very** prickly leaves. Contrary to the name, it is not native to Canada. It is a weed from Europe. Spreads by fluffy seeds and very invasive, deep roots.*



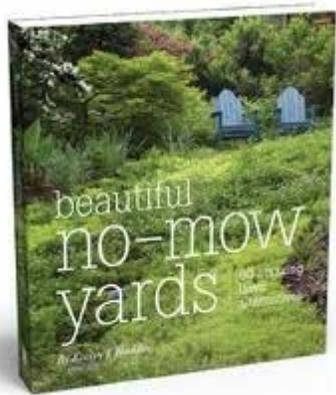
An excellent reference book on weeds, complete with lots of colour pictures and seedling pictures is **Weeds of Canada** by Royer and Dickinson.



## Websites to Explore

[www.lesslawn.com](http://www.lesslawn.com) is the website of Evelyn Hadden, the author of the book listed on the next page. It is an excellent website full of information on reducing the amount of lawn in your yard and how to do it.

## Interesting Books



**Beautiful No Mow Yards : 50 Amazing Lawn Alternatives** by Evelyn Hadden is an inspirational and helpful book, published in 2012. If you have ever contemplated reducing or eliminating your lawn this book is full of ideas. Part One is Design Ideas covering many types of gardens such as Shade Gardens, Prairie Gardens, Edible Gardens, Stroll Gardens, Play Areas and many more. Part Two gives practical information on how to make the changes and maintain it and Part Three discusses the plants. She lists them as Mounding, Mat forming, Fill-In and Minglers. The book is most useful to us in Manitoba for providing inspiration and design ideas. The author is from Minnesota so many of the plants are suitable for our

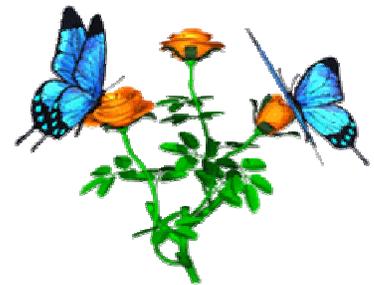
climate but not all of them. The design ideas and many colour photographs give lots of inspiration to create a yard that is both beautiful and ecologically balanced and healthy.

Until next time,

Shirley Froehlich, Stefania Johnson

Jacque Stanton and Kelly Leask

and Jacque Stanton





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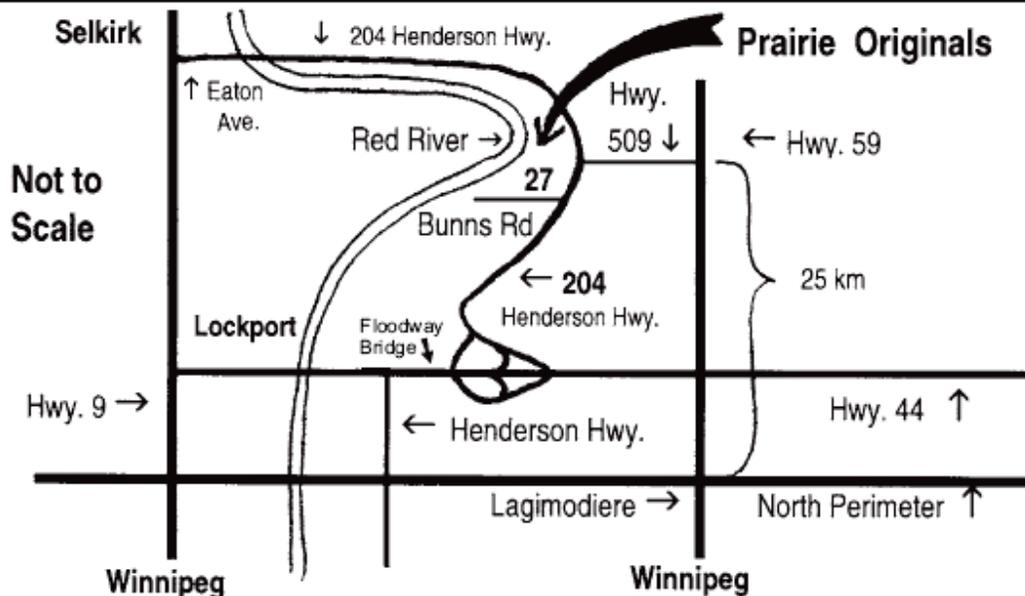
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## LOCATION



## HOURS

May 11 - June 29	Monday to Friday	10 am - 6 pm
	Saturday	9 am - 5 pm
<b>Evenings by Appointment</b>	Sundays - until June 16	11am - 5 pm

July, August, September - Usually open Monday to Saturday but **phone to confirm**

## ST. NORBERT FARMERS MARKET

June 1 - mid Aug.	Saturday	8 am - 3 pm
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Located on Pembina Highway, about 1/2 km south of the perimeter.

