

Nature Alberta May Count of Plants In Bloom (May 25-31, 2013)



C. Hansen



The Alberta May Count of Plants in Bloom is an annual event sponsored by the Nature Alberta. This year, the dates for Count Weekend are May 25 and 26, but since count weekend dates vary from year to year, all data collected during Count Week, May 25-31, are valid.

History of Nature Alberta May Plant Count:

- Suggested by Loran Goulden in 1974.
- First count initiated by Chip Weseloh and Julie Hrapko in 1976.
- Conducted province-wide and compiled by Nature Alberta since then.

Objectives:

1. To record all species of vascular plants in bloom throughout Alberta during the last week in May.
2. Using a standardized approach, determine the stage of flowering (phenology) of each species in bloom.

Importance of May Count:

- Provides valuable information on the distribution and phenology of flowering plants in Alberta.

- Important for monitoring spread of non-native species (invasive plants).
- Provides insight into response of plant species to variations in climate (climate change, global warming).
- Increases knowledge of native plants and improves expertise in plant identification.
- Encourages appreciation and conservation of native plants and habitats.

Who Can Participate:

- Anyone who is interested in, and familiar with, Alberta wildflowers. Expertise in wildflower identification is valuable, but not mandatory.

How You Can Participate:

1. Select your favorite natural area(s).
2. Contact your local natural history society or May Count compilers to obtain a checklist of plants in your area, if available.
3. During Count week (May 25-31, 2013) survey your area and record on your checklist any species that are in bloom. A hand-written list is acceptable.

Thank you for your participation



4. Include both native and exotic plants (weeds) in your list.
5. If surveying more than one location, record observations on separate checklists.
6. If possible, document the flowering stage of each plant in bloom using the following code:

3 = in bud but not flowering

4 = in bloom up to 10%

5 = in bloom up to 25%

6 = in bloom up to 50%

7 = full bloom (100%)

8 = fading

9 = completely faded; no flowers.

7. Record date, participant(s) names, location, and habitat details. Unusual observations, comments, and comparisons with previous years are extremely valuable. If necessary, obtain photographs and/or dried specimens for identification purposes.
8. Forward checklists, observations, photos, specimens to Count Compiler:

Suzanne Visser

3516 60 St NW

Calgary, AB T3B 5E8

e-mail: svisser@ucalgary.ca

Further details can be obtained from the Count compiler.

Please submit Count results by June 30, 2013.

A summary of your observations will be published in the Nature Alberta magazine.



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