

Conservation Corner for April 2020

Hiking season will be here before we know it. And with the onset of the spring weather comes the opportunity to see our native orchids. We have over 70 species of endemic orchids nationally. Of these, around 60 can be found in Ontario with 40 plus appearing on the Bruce Peninsula.

Each year the Friends of the Bruce District Park Association (<http://www.friendsofthebruce.ca/>) host a festival celebrating the orchids that can be found in the area. The Bruce Peninsula Orchid Festival is a wonderful way to be introduced to the diversity of the area and to meet other wildflower enthusiasts. In addition to the orchids that grow in the area, the festival looks at other rare plants which are native to the Great Lakes basin. Guided tours help you safely explore the area without the danger of trampling these amazing plants. The festival organizers believe that through education we can help prevent the poaching and extinction of our native plants, particularly orchids. It is also a criminal offence to remove anything from a national park. The festival is the first weekend in June, from the 5th to 7th this year. Registration will open by mid-April (<http://www.orchidfest.ca/about-us.html>). If you decide to come, book your accommodation early, and register for the lunch on Saturday if available. Come to the festival and experience the truly awesome.