

Manitoba Native Orchids Compendium

Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides* (Linnaeus) Ker-Gawler var. *ophioglossoides*)



Found in acidic peat land habitats usually in wet open bogs of floating Sphagnum or in sedge meadows of larch, cedar and black spruce forests. Will readily colonize poorly drained ditches and borrow pits in acidic sandy locations. In Manitoba the rose pogonia is at the north-western limit of its range and has been reported from only a few locations within the south-eastern portion of the province.

Plants are 15 to 30 cm tall with a single leaf approximately half way up the stem. The stems arise from a runner or stolon which can give rise to a number of stems separated at intervals of 10 cm or more. Typically one flower perches atop the stem with the occasional stem having two flowers. Bumblebees are attracted to the flowers by the colour of the flower along with its fragrance. The bearded lip is an invitation to the insect to land and it crawls down into the flower seeking nectar. As the insect exits, it carries with it the pollinia which attaches to the stigma of the next flower visited.

The scientific name is from the Greek ophis for "snake", glossa for "tongue", and eidos meaning "resembling", thus "resembling a snakes tongue" but in actual fact the name came from the similar appearance of this orchid plant to the fern *Ophioglossum*.