

Manitoba Native Orchids Compendium

Hooded ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes romanzoffiana* Chamisso)



The name *Spiranthes* comes from the spiral arrangement of the flowers on the inflorescence, and *romanzoffiana* honours Nicholas Romanzoff, a nineteenth century Russian minister of state. This species was discovered on an Aleutian island while Russia still ruled Alaska.

The hooded ladies'-tresses occurs widely in Manitoba from the U. S. border in the south to the shores of Hudson Bay in the north. It may be absent in the extreme south-western portion of the province.

As can be expected with the wide range of this orchid, the hooded ladies'-tresses is found in a variety of habitats including the tall grass prairie in the south, sphagnum rich black spruce and tamarack bogs of the northern forests, and on the open tundra around Churchill. This orchid adapts well and disturbed areas like roadside ditches are a favoured habitat. Variable in appearance, plants in the open prairie are generally stocky with a crowded inflorescence, while plants in the sphagnum black spruce and tamarack forests are usually taller and the blossoms of the inflorescence are in a lax arrangement.

This orchid may be found blooming from mid-July to mid August. Pollinators collected by Paul Catling included halictid bees and bumble bees. (Catling, P. M. 1983b *Pollinators of north-eastern North American Spiranthes (Orchidacea)* *Canadian Journal of Botany* 61:1080-1093).