

Manitoba Native Orchids Compendium

Spotted Coralroot (*Corallorhiza maculata* (Rafinesque) var *maculata*)



The genus *Corallorhiza* is interesting in that it does not produce green leaves like most other plants. It is "myco-heterotrophic" receiving its nutrition from other plants by way of specific mycorrhizal fungi. The plant lives underground as a rhizome, sending leafless flowering stems above ground during appropriate seasons.

Two varieties of *Corallorhiza maculata* can be found in Manitoba. Variety " *maculata*", the less common variety, can be distinguished from variety "*occidentalis*" by close examination of the inflorescence under magnification. Variety " *maculata*" has floral bracts that are usually entire (not forked), 0.5 to 1.0mm long and 0.5 to 0.9mm wide. The other distinguishing feature, the lower portion of the middle lobe of the lip, is either slightly dilated with the ratio of the widest width to base width less than 1.5, or the lip may not be dilated and has parallel sides. In regions to the south and east of Manitoba this variety blooms from one to 4 weeks later than "*occidentalis*", however in Manitoba the blooming times of the two varieties are very similar with "*maculata*" only slightly later.

Corallorhiza maculata may be found throughout the southern 2/3rds of the province, blooming from mid-June to mid-July. Look for it in mixed forests or dry coniferous forests.