



turtle tracks

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Spring 2018

From the Chair

by Ted Kilpatrick

Well, a big project for FOMB has come to a close this past year, as many of you know. The long awaited visitor centre educational displays were installed last summer and have been well received. A few glitches were encountered and corrective steps were taken by Science North over this past winter and we should be good to go this coming summer.

As you are aware, Misery Bay is the only Ontario Park run by volunteers. We have a new volunteer coordinator Ken Mackenzie. Yes, John Diebolt has stepped away this year after many years dedicated to this effort. He is however still very much involved with FOMB. Please give Ken as much support as you did John for the weekend coverage. He can be reached at kenmfomb@gmail.com

The accessible trail is about one third completed and we will be working on this again this spring, once the snow melts. It has been a very slow start to spring this year here on Manitoulin!

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As always we are looking for people interested in becoming involved with Misery Bay. After all, "Misery loves company." If you would like to join the board and become actively involved please let us know.

Our annual general meeting will take place at the centre on June 23rd. Please plan to join us that day. Details will follow in the local newspapers.

Thanks and hope to see you on the trails.



**N.B. Friends of Misery Bay AGM at visitor's centre 10 AM Saturday
June 23**

World-Class Exhibits Now at the Visitor Centre

By Jan McQuay

The new exhibits at Misery Bay are world-class. Visitors entering the Centre might wonder if they've been teleported to Science North, Canada's second largest science centre, in Sudbury. There is a good reason for that, because Friends of Misery Bay commissioned the folks at Science North to create the new exhibits for us. The result is a wonderful indoor mini science centre, with professional displays that are mostly interactive, and chock full of information.

My favourite is the interactive map display. This is where you will find an overview of the features along the trails. Sometimes hikers have remarked, "I didn't see anything special" after their hike. They just didn't know what to look for, but now if they check out the interactive map, they will see eighteen different points of interest. We call these the "hot spots".



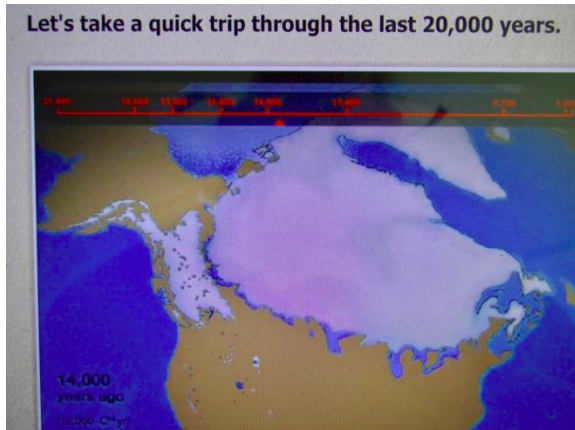
Interactive map lets you check out features along your trail.

Press one of the dots along the trail map and the touch screen takes you to pictures and a brief description of that spot. Otherwise, how would any casual hiker know to look for C-shaped chatter marks at the Alvar Arena (hot spot #2)?

Those chatter marks were etched into the rock pavement at least 13,000 years ago by glaciers when they scraped their way south during the last ice age. They are easy to miss, or to misinterpret as fossils, unless you check it out before your hike.

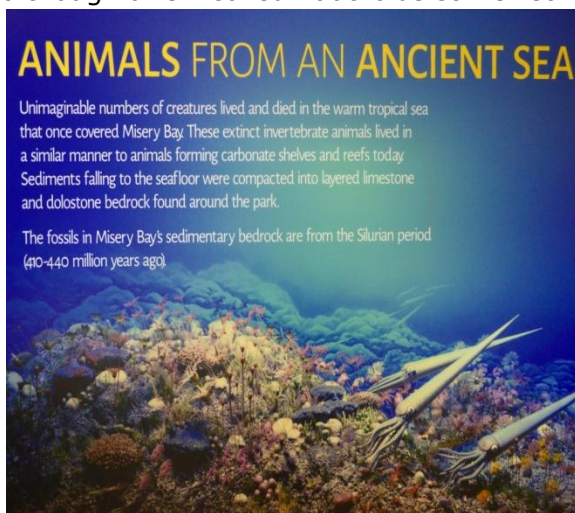
Or click on hot spot #7, the exposed flat bedrock pavement that reminds me of an ancient abandoned plaza on a slight tilt, slipping very gradually into the bay. This dolomite pavement is some of the newest land on Manitoulin, most recently exposed less than 900 years ago as the water levels of the lake dropped. Here we can walk directly on this ancient Silurian seabed where creatures lived more than 420 million years ago.

The other exhibits expand on various themes. Sometimes facts like distance and time can seem very abstract. It's one thing to learn that the glacier was 1.5 kilometers deep, but seeing that compared to the CN Tower really puts it into perspective. Another exhibit takes us on a time-travel of the Laurentide Ice Sheet from its peak 20,000 years ago to the present. Manitoulin Island was still covered with ice 12,500 years ago, although the lower Great Lakes were ice-free.



This time-travel exhibit takes you over the last 20,000 years.

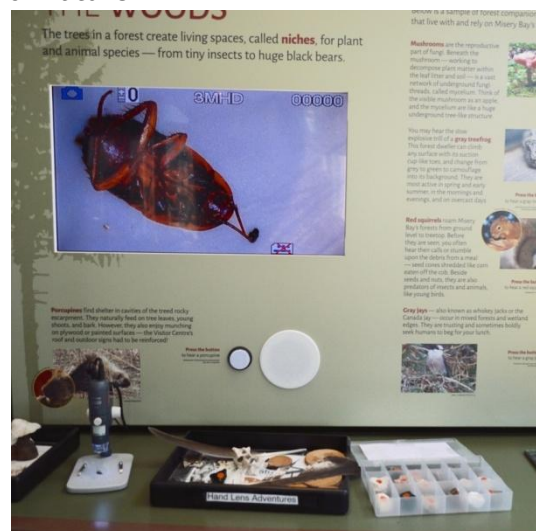
A colourful exhibit takes us back all those millions of years to the warm Silurian sea. Some of the creatures look like flowers on a tall stem. Press the button and you will learn these are crinoids, colonies of animals that included a column of small discs and a movable “flower”, which is why they are also known as “sea lilies”. The creatures with long conical shells, large eyes and tentacles are nautiloids, an early predator that propelled itself by squirting water through an aperture in its shell, a form of jet propulsion. These straight conical nautiloids are extinct, although a few coiled nautiloids still exist.



These marine creatures lived more than 420 million years ago.

Then we come to what is really special about Misery Bay and in fact much of Manitoulin Island, which is the alvar habitat. Alvar habitat is so rare that frankly a lot of people haven’t even heard the name before. In the western hemisphere they are only found in the Great Lakes region. There are alvars in Sweden, which is where the name comes from. One of the displays explains the different types of alvar, from bare pavement to trees that have to spread their roots across thin soil to find their nutrients.

Have your kids ever heard a porcupine? How about a Canada jay or a red squirrel? Just press a button to hear their little grunts, chirps and chatter. The same exhibit has a microscope connected to a screen so you can focus on close-up views of nature and everyone can see on the screen. Have you seen the scales on a butterfly wing? Most of the time we are oblivious of the microscopic world. This is another way to appreciate the intricacies of nature.



On the screen you can see things literally in microscopic detail.

These are some of the nine new exhibits at Misery Bay. They were a major effort,

involving several years of planning on the part of our volunteers, working with the professionals at Science North and fundraising. At \$270,000, this project would not have been possible without the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, FedNor and Ontario Parks, and the generosity of local businesses and individuals like LaFarge, the Smith Family and many others across Manitoulin.

The new exhibits enhance the park experience for our visitors. We hope people will come in good weather and bad and that it will prove to be an important attraction to the western end of Manitoulin Island, a place where visitors and local folk alike will discover what is so special about our Island.

Bushed Cars

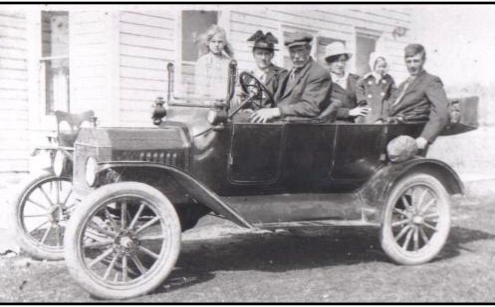
*[Ever wonder how the remains of an old automobile ended up in the bushes near the Shelter at Saunder's Cove at the end of the Inland Alvar Trail? It is a good example of what is known as a "bushed car." Long-time Friend of Misery Bay, **George Whyte**, gives a fascinating account of these artifacts that are a part of Manitoulin's cultural heritage.]*

For many centuries sailing vessels that were no longer operational were taken out into the lake or ocean and "scuttled". Automobiles on the Manitoulin suffered a similar fate. Auto-Buggies, as they were first called, arrived on the Manitoulin after World War One, when soldiers returning from overseas longed to have this new invention. But, with the advent of the Great Depression in the 1930's, many

Manitouliners could no longer afford the gasoline and the repairs for their cars and trucks. Some folks even pulled their cars with horses, an arrangement called a "Bennett Buggy" (named after Prime Minister W.A.C. Bennett). Other folks merely drove their cars into the bush and left them to rust. This custom became known as "Bushing" your car.



Offloading at Kagawong



An Early Ford on the Manitoulin



Courting after "The War"



"Bennett Buggy" at Ice Lake during the 1930's Depression



The Murphy Point Dump 1968



Mac's Bay – Bushed in the 1950's



Evansville – Bushed in the 1970's



The Bell Road – Bushed in the 1980's

Hikers on the Manitoulin often come upon old cars and trucks that have been "bushed". Frugal Manitouliners often keep their vehicles until there is no longer any value for a "trade-in" at the car dealership. So they simply drive it into the bush and abandon it.

The Shelter at Saunder's cove is located on land purchased from the Crown by "Curly" Williams in 1929. He had a timber

camp on the property during the Depression and during World War Two. The camp included a cookhouse and three bunk houses, which during the early 1950's became summer cottages for his extended family. During this 25-year period of activity, several of the automobiles that were used at the timber camp and the cottages were "scuttled" or "bushed" in the surrounding trees.



The latest vintage vehicle to be "bushed" was a Chevrolet from the early 1950's, which was "left to die" on the shore just west of the gazebo.



Tiny Twayblades

by Marcel Bénéteau

The word Orchid brings to mind colourful exotic blooms from tropical countries, or at least from your local florist or supermarket. Of course members of this largest of all families of flowering plants also grow in temperate climates, with over sixty species found from coast to coast to coast across Canada. Thirty-three species and several varieties grace Manitoulin Island with their presence and of those, twenty-seven can be found among the various habitats of Misery Bay Provincial Park. "Colourful and exotic" surely describes some of them, such as the Ladies'-slippers, Coralroots and some of the rare pink bog orchids, but showiness is not a defining characteristic of the orchid family.

What *does* make an orchid an orchid? Aside from a symbiotic relationship with microscopic fungi in the soil and other technical aspects not necessarily apparent to the untrained eye, all orchids share a common structure: the flowers are composed of three petals – one of which is generally enlarged and flattened into a lip (labellum, or pouch, as in the case of the Ladies'-slippers), as well as three sepals. They also have a unique structure called the column, in which male and female reproductive organs are fused together. **(fig. 1)**. This simple structure nevertheless allows for nearly endless variations of form, colour and size and is discernible in even the smallest and plainest orchids.

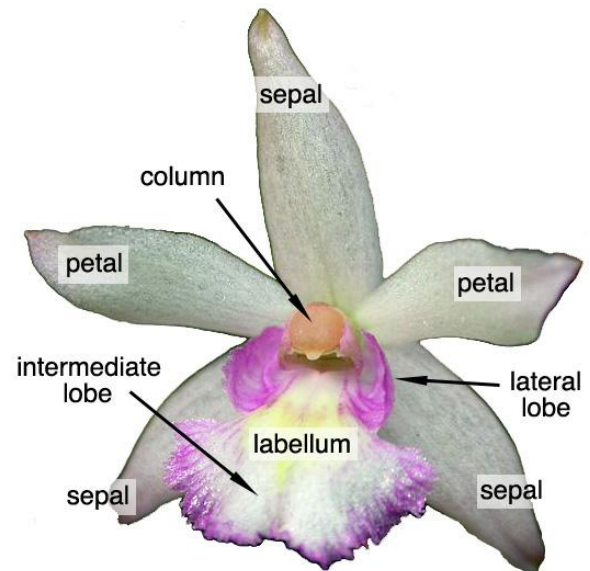


Fig. 1 Parts of an orchid

"Small and plain" adequately describes the three species of twayblades that occur in various locations on Manitoulin Island, including Misery Bay. But in spite of their inconspicuous nature, they are not without interest and present quite a challenge to the amateur botanist. All of them come in varying shades of green and often grow among much taller plants. The first of these species, Loesel's Twayblade (*Liparis loeselli*) is the only member of the *Liparis* genus found in Ontario. It is named after Johann Loesel, a 17th century German botanist and it is found in humid environments in Europe and eastern North America. It is the most widespread and easily found twayblade in the park, visible among the sedges growing along the boardwalk on the west side of the park and also along wet peaty alvar edges and shorelines. It is often found in the same habitat as Pitcher Plants (**see fig. 2**).



Fig. 2 Loesel's Twayblade with Pitcher Plants



Fig. 3 Loesel's Twayblade plants

Like all twayblades, it has two conspicuous and opposite leaves halfway up the stalk (hence the name). The entire plant is from 3 to 8 inches tall, with anywhere from two or three to twenty or so small yellowish-green flowers (less than a quarter of an inch in length) distributed along a smooth green stem. These bloom from mid-June to late July. The typical orchid structure is clearly evident, although you may need a magnifying glass to fully appreciate it:

three narrow sepals, curled length-wise into tube-like structures, and a broad lip-shaped lower petal spreading out beneath the column, providing a perfect landing space for small pollinators; the other two lateral petals are almost thread-like in form (**fig. 4**).



Fig. 4 Loesel's Twayblade, close-up of flowers

The other two twayblades in the park belong to the *Listera* genus and are even more challenging to observe. The first one, Broad-lipped Twayblade (*Listera convallariodes*, also known as Broad-leaved Twayblade), is found in humid coniferous stands. It often grows in dense colonies that can nevertheless be difficult to find because of the surrounding vegetation (see **fig. 5**). The largest of our twayblades, (up to 10 inches in height), it also has the most prominent leaves of the group (**fig. 6**). The flowers are whitish to yellowish green and feature a large broad and notched lip jutting well beyond the delicately curved column; **figures 7 & 8** show why some have called this the Swan Orchid. Others have suggested a type of insect mimicry in the distinctive shape of the flowers, which may help to attract small pollinators.



Fig. 5 Broad-lipped Twayblade in typical habitat.



Fig. 6 Broad-leaved Twayblade plant

Like all other *Listera*, Broad-lipped Twayblade employs an ingenious pollination strategy that fascinated none other than Charles Darwin. Specialized structures called "nectaries" produce small amounts of nectar on the lip where the insects land; there, microscopic hairs trigger a spray of sticky, glue-like liquid from the stigma while at the same

the anthers eject little packets of pollen that stick to the insects, who then carry the packets to other plants in the colony, thereby ensuring cross-pollination.



Fig. 7 Broad-leaved Twayblade, close-up of flowers



Fig. 8 Close-up of single flower

Easiest to miss is a second member of the *Listera* genus, Heart-leaved Twayblade (*Listera cordata*). Ridiculously small (rarely exceeding 4 or 5 inches in height), this tiny orchid usually grows in sphagnum moss in swampy cedar or spruce stands.

It blooms a little earlier than the other two twayblades, from late May to early July. Barely reaching the tops of your shoes, the diminutive flowers (5 mm or 3/16 of an inch) are sometimes tinged with red, but their green colouration against a green sun and shade-dappled background means even the most observant visitor can walk right by (or over) them without suspecting their presence. I personally have not found any in Misery Bay, although John Morton reports them in the park in both *A Plant List for Misery Bay* and *The Flora of Manitoulin Island*. The accompanying photos were taken in a small cedar swamp near South Baymouth. As you can see, the leaves are often more conspicuous than the flowers (**fig. 9**); only a fortuitous shaft of sunlight revealed the tiny blooms in **fig. 10**!



Fig. 9 Heart-leaved Twayblade in typical habitat

Figure 11 shows the deeply notched, v-shaped lip stretching out beneath the other petals and sepals. The seed cases for Heart-leaved Twayblade start to develop as soon as pollination takes place and quickly balloon out even while the plant is still flowering.



Fig. 10 Heart-leaved Twayblade flower spike



Fig. 11 Heart-leaved Twayblade flowers close-up

Like all orchids, twayblades are very habitat specific and should never be picked in hopes of transplanting them to a new location. Care should be taken along the edges of trails where these little botanical wonders sometimes bloom, adding in their own way to the wonder and mystery that is Misery Bay.

References:

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- Risen, Kim and Cindy, *Orchids of the North Woods*, Kollath and Stensaas Publishing, North Woods Naturalist Series, 2010.

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Friend of Misery Bay!**

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