

O. Speckled Alder

(*Alnus incana*)



Although it provides little modern medicinal use, this plant was fairly important to Native Americans. It was used to treat a variety of

ailments; the root bark mixed with molasses was used to alleviate tooth aches, the inner bark mixed into liquid was used as an eye wash, and the outer bark with its astringent-like qualities was applied to wounds to stop bleeding and reduce swelling.

G. Tamarack Tree

(*Larix laricina*)



The tree is a species of evergreen, but is unique because it sheds its needles each fall. If you feel the needles

you will notice that they are quite soft. The tamarack tree is common in bogs due to its ability to live in acidic, nutrient poor soils. The gummy sap from this tree is said to be as sweet as maple syrup and also good for treating indigestion. In northern Minnesota, Ospreys prefer to nest in dead tamarack trees, and bald eagles will occasionally use them as well.

T. Round-leaf Sundew

(*Drosera rotundifolia*)



This is a plant that is rare in the region. It is actually one that eats insects, and it only lives less than a year. Because this plant lives in poor nutrient, acidic bogs, it utilizes the bog insects for nutrients. The insects get stuck to sticky 'dew' on the leaves and red hairs along the leaves edge. The hairs and leaves then curl around and enclose the insect to digest it.

For further information on the animals and plants at Rydell NWR, books may be checked out in the visitor's center or purchased at the gift shop.



Rydell National Wildlife Refuge

17788 349th Street Southeast

Erskine, MN 56535

(218)687-2229/ (800)841-0172

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RYDELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Sundew Bog Trail Guide

Theme: Bog Plants



This guide will walk you through the Sundew Bog boardwalk, located along the Golden Pond Trail. This unique ecosystem supports several plants that are regionally rare, including the insectivorous round-leaf sundew.

Sundew Bog Trail

Along the trail, you will see red flags with black letters. These letters correspond with the information in this guide for further details.

S. Water Horsetail

(*Equisetum fluviatile*)



This type of plant, having a stem that is 80% hollow, is generally found in a wetland. Europeans and Native Americans used this plant for scouring and filing due to the rough and durable stem. They

also ate the young stems in early spring.

U. Broadleaf Arrowhead

(*Sagittaria latifolia*)



This plant is also known as Indian potato and duck potato because the Native Americans gathered the edible tubers, or roots, for food and although the ducks don't eat the buried tubers, they do eat the seeds.

Beavers, porcupines, and muskrats will eat the whole plant. The tubers taste like potatoes and can also be prepared in the same way as potatoes, either cooked or raw.

N. Cotton Grass

(*Eriophorum angustifolium*)



This plant is actually not grass, it is considered a sedge (sedges have edges, but grass is round!). It is also often referred to as

bog cotton. The cotton like see hairs can be used for making candle wicks, pillow stuffing, paper making, and tinder.

D. Sphagnum Moss

(*Sphagnum flexuosum*)

Sphagnum moss is the living moss that grows on top of its dead form, called Peat moss. It is



commonly used by the floral industry to line wire baskets and make wreaths.

It used to be used for

dressing wounds due to its ability to hold up to 20 times its dry weight in liquid. This was stopped after discovering it caused a fungal disease causing ulcerous skin lesions. However, occasional touching will not harm you.

E. Purple Marshlocks

(*Comarum palustre*)

This plant is a perennial from the rose family.



The leaves and seeds are eaten by waterfowl browsing animals such as deer. The leaves can be dried and used a substitute for tea.

E. Bladderwort

(*Utricularia subulata*)



This insectivorous plant can be identified above the water level by its yellow flower, with irregularly shaped petals. Below the surface, these plants have

roots with small bladder shaped sacks that capture tiny aquatic organisms as they swim by. When prey swim by, they stimulate hairs located on the trap door of the growth, and the door opens and sucks in the unsuspecting prey. The traps on the bladderwort are considered one of the most sophisticated systems within the plant community.

W. Bog Birch

(*Betula pumila*)



This is the only shrub-like birch in the Midwest. The Ojibwa Indians utilized Bog Birch medicinally as a

gynecological and medicinal aid. They also used the twigs to make baskets. This plant produces a pleasant aroma (bark and leaves) when crushed.