

# Manitoba Native Orchids Compendium

## Grass Pink (*Calopogon tuberosus* (Linnaeus) Britton, Sterns & Poggenberg var. *tuberosus*)



Only those who frequent black spruce and tamarack sphagnum bogs in early to mid-July will encounter this orchid. In Manitoba its' range extends from the southeast corner, north and west to include Hecla Island Provincial Park and the Moose Creek Provincial Forest immediately west of Lake Winnipeg. Often found in loose colonies, the 40 to 60 cm high plants with up to 8 blossoms per inflorescence provides a spectacular display. Population size can vary dramatically from year to year.

Like many orchids, the grass pink has an interesting pollination mechanism. The labellum (lip) faces in an upward (non resupinate) position and the yellow club shaped bristles on the lip resemble the stamens of other flowers. Pollinators including larger bees and small butterflies are attracted to these false stamens and their weight causes the labellum to hinge in a downward motion. The column is located beneath the lip and the insect contacts the column. Pollen adheres to the insect and is carried to other flowers where a repeat procedure effectively cross-pollinates the flowers.

The Latin name of the Genus of this orchid is derived from the Greek *kalos* "beautiful" and *pogon* "beard", describing the bristles on the lip.