

## SHRUBS

### Low Juniper

*Juniperus communis* is a medium sized evergreen shrub that can grow to a height exceeding 1 metre.



The leaves are around 1 cm. long, awl shaped and light green. The bluish berries are actually called cones and arise from where the

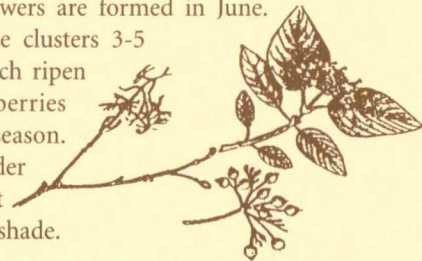
leaf joins the stem. The low juniper can be found in sunny, open locations growing in sandy soil.

### Red Osier Dogwood

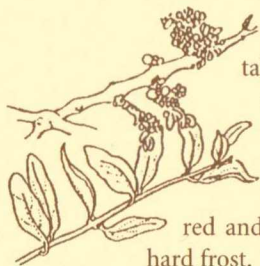
*Cornus stolonifera* is a deciduous shrub growing to two metres in height. It can be easily identified by the bright red color of the branches. The leaves are ovate and arise opposite each other on the stems. The flowers are formed in June.

They are white clusters 3-5 cm across which ripen into white berries later in the season.

This is an understory plant that grows in semi-shade.



### Buffaloberry



*Sheperdia argentea* is a thorny shrub 1-5 metres tall. The leaves are oblong and silvery white on both sides measuring 3-5 cm in length. The berries range in color from orange to

red and are palatable only after a hard frost.

## TREES

### Balsam Poplar

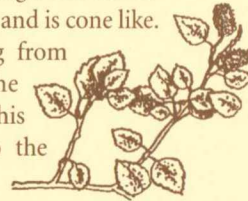
*Populus balsamifera* is the largest tree species on the Island. The leaves are dark green on the upper side and can be almost brown on the underside. The mature bark is deeply furrowed and corky looking. It is usually found in the more moist areas, and can reach heights of 25 metres.



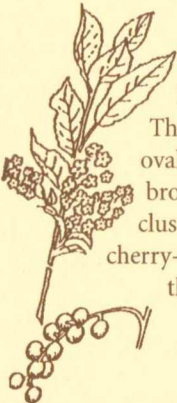
### Black Birch/River Birch

*Betula fontinalis* is considered a small tree reaching heights of 9 metres. It grows in a many stemmed clump with purple/black birch-like bark. The leaves can vary from 2-4 cm in length, and are almost round with a double-toothed leaf edge. The flower is what is termed as a catkin and is cone like.

They can be seen hanging from branches throughout the growing season. Look for this tree in low areas close to the river's edge.



### Chokecherry



*Prunus virginiana* is considered a small tree or large shrub reaching heights of anywhere from 2-8 metres.

The leaves are thick, 5-8 cm long and are oval. The bark is smooth and reddish brown. The flowers are white, borne in clusters that ripen into a cluster of black cherry-like fruit. This plant can be found throughout the Island.

The Kiwanis Club of The Battlefords have contributed greatly to this recreational area over the years. The construction of the shelters, the nature trail and the initial hiking trail network are all projects credited to the club.

Finlayson Island is jointly maintained by the Town of Battleford and the City of North Battleford.

Plant Sketches by Julian Sadlowski

# FINLAYSON ISLAND

## Year Round Nature Park

## HISTORY

Finlayson Island is located on the North Saskatchewan River between the arched bridges that connect North Battleford to Battleford. The island was named on March 25, 1964 by the Government of Saskatchewan in honour of Donald Matheson Finlayson.

Donald Finlayson, known by his friends as "Dan" arrived in Battleford in 1879, when Battleford was still the capital of the Northwest Territories.

Dan homesteaded in the Battle River Valley where he introduced oats as a viable crop for the district. He also was one of the first farmers in the area to experiment with wheat.

Dan served as a member of the home guard during the North West Rebellion. His house was burned down during the Rebellion, and in 1894 he relocated to a homestead on the banks of Scentgrass Lake in the Roundhill District. He was a member of Parliament from 1908 until 1934.

## VEGETATION TOPOGRAPHY & WILDLIFE

The forest covering Finlayson Island is termed a Riparian Forest. Riparian simply means living on the bank of a river. Although the terrain is virtually unchanging across the Island, many different soil types and moisture regimes can be found there, resulting in a wide variety of plant material.

Towards the far west end of the Island there is a marsh area where thistle and marsh grasses thrive. As you turn east on the road trail there is a sand dune formed from river deposits. This well drained sun baked area hosts plant life such as dryland grasses, common juniper and sage. As you cross the highway to the east side of the Island, the soil type changes to that of a silty clay. The ability of this soil to hold water is greater, and the plant life changes accordingly to that of a Poplar Forest.

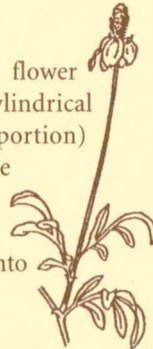
In the summer of 1990 a plant survey of the Island was conducted. 130 different trees, shrubs and wildflowers were identified. Along with the wide range of plant material, abundant wildlife can be found here as well. White-tailed Deer and Great Horned Owls can be seen all year round. In spring the drumming of the Ruffed Grouse is a familiar sound on the Island.

Finlayson Island is a great place to hike or ski or picnic. The interesting vegetation and wildlife make it a unique recreational opportunity for all to enjoy.

## PLANTS TO LOOK FOR WILDFLOWERS

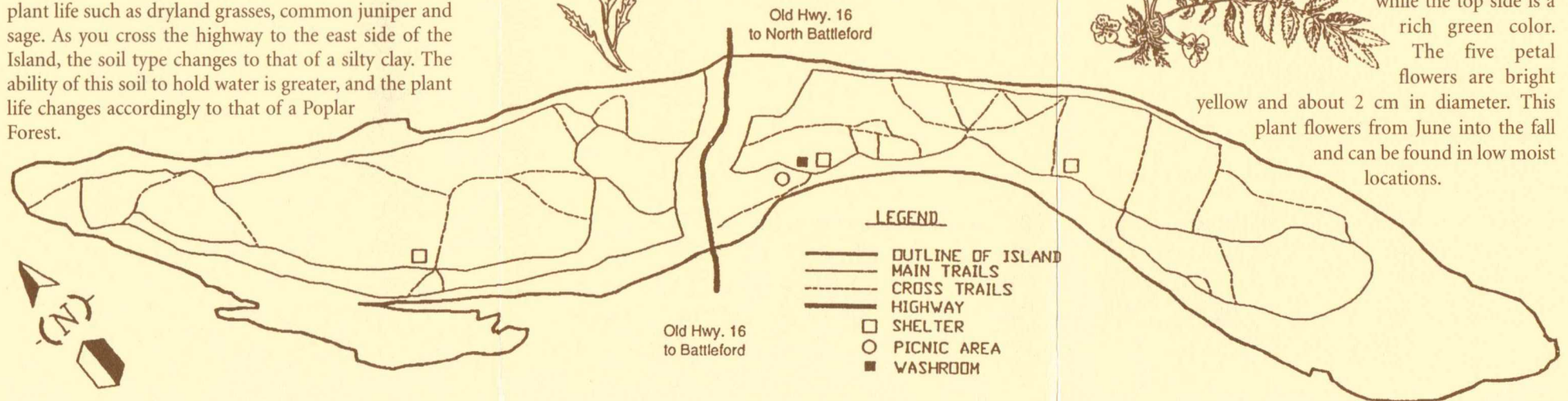
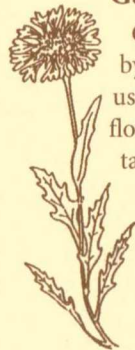
### Yellow Cone Flower

*Ratibida columnifera* has a unique flower characterized by a long cylindrical brownish/purple disc (centre portion) surrounded by yellow ray florets. The flowers are borne at the end of long stalks varying in height from 30-60 cm. The leaves are very deeply lobed into narrow segments.



### Gaillardia

*Gaillardia aristata* can be identified by its large yellow/orange "daisy like" flower. It usually grows in clusters with only one flower/stem. The stems can grow to be 60 cm tall. This striking wildflower can be found growing in drier areas flowering from Mid June-July.



## Field Mint

*Mentha arvensis* is characterized by its small pink flowers that circle the stem at the same locations leaves arise from. It has narrow sawtoothed sharp pointed leaves and a very definite square stem. This plant can grow to 45 cm tall, and is found in more moist areas of the Island. The mint odor is very strong when the leaves are squeezed.

## GROUND COVERS

Generally speaking ground covers are low growing "mat" forming plants found on the forest floor.

### Bear Berry

*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* is considered a trailing shrub with pinky white urn shaped flowers. The flowers are about 1/2 cm long and give way to bright red berries later in the season. The leaves are dark green, spatulate and retain their color all year long. The plant can be found in dry, sunny locations growing in sand.



### Silverweed

*Potentilla anserina* is a low-growing ground cover that spreads by runners. The leaves are compound and can have anywhere from 7-25 leaflets. The underside of the leaves are strikingly silvery white, while the top side is a rich green color. The five petal flowers are bright yellow and about 2 cm in diameter. This plant flowers from June into the fall and can be found in low moist locations.

