

The Manomin Project's Spring Equinox Newsletter

Updates on the Manomin Project

With the first equinox of the year comes exciting developments from the Manomin Project.

The Manomin Project is creating an anthology! This anthology will make information on Manomin more readily available to interested readers. Currently, the team is gathering and editing materials for the collection. The final product will be published by UBC Press.

Over the year ahead, the Manomin Project hopes to interview Elders and harvesters from neighbouring communities with the help of Grand Council Treaty #3. These interviews could help to inform future crop restoration activities by teaching us how other communities cared for Manomin. Our ability to conduct these interviews will be shaped by COVID safety protocols.

New funding has been secured for Elder honoraria and to study Manomin growth at off-river sites! The Manomin Project will receive \$20,000 from RBC's Ontario Resource Field Program for these purposes.

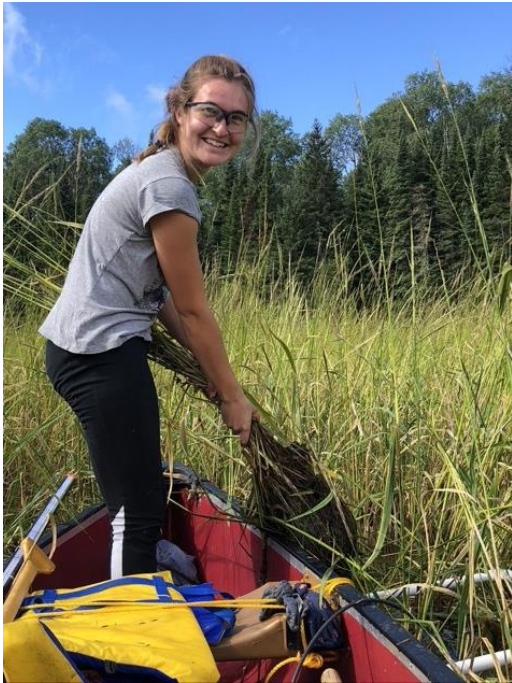
RBC has been a constant supporter of the Manomin Project since 2018, providing funding that allowed us to select field sites and set research priorities.

RBC's most recent contribution will enable the Manomin Project to complete a preliminary assessment of off-river manomin habitat in the vicinity of Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation during the 2021 field season. This assessment will include characterizing the water level patterns and learning about these sites from Elders. Elders on the Manomin Project first encouraged University of Guelph (UofG) Researchers to visit nearby lakes for comparison purposes in 2018.

Meet the Team: Elli Patrick

Meet Elli Patrick! Elli is a fourth-year Environmental Engineering student at the University of Guelph. She joined the Manomin Project as an Undergraduate Research Assistant during Summer 2020.

Elli supports the Manomin Project by gathering and analyzing environmental data. Her work to create a historical timeline to show past and present trends of manomin growth has informed our research immensely.



Pictured: Undergraduate student Elli Patrick retrieves a manomin sample from the quadrat for biomass analysis (31 August 2020).

In September 2020, Elli participated in a 10-day fieldwork expedition to the Winnipeg River alongside PhD student Samantha Mehlretter. Elli's enthusiasm and hard work ethic made her an asset to the team.

“Working on the Manomin Project has by far been the most educational and rewarding work experience I have had and will be a highlight of my undergrad!” said Elli.

What’s Next

Our team’s spirits have been renewed by the arrival of Spring! We are excitedly preparing for all that is to come in 2021.

The Manomin Project is looking forward to our first full field season after a year delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Team members from UofG have planned three trips to the Winnipeg River this growing season: two weeks in May, one week in July, and two weeks in early September.

During the May visit, Manomin will just be germinating. We will use this time to set up equipment and prepare for the remainder of the field season. This will be done by measuring water quality parameters, placing water level loggers, delineating perennial aquatic plants, and counting Manomin seeds found in collected sediment samples. These measurements will be useful to determine how environmental factors impact Manomin growth. If it is safe to gather, we will open the field season with a Spring Feast. We cannot wait for May!

In the meantime, the Manomin Project is keeping busy with several ongoing projects. PhD student Samantha Mehlretter is organizing the travel and accommodations for our field season. Dr. Brittany Luby is conducting research to understand how Manomin was treated during the 1873 Treaty negotiations. Dr. Andrea Bradford is working hard to support the Manomin Project by searching for and identifying new funding sources. Undergraduate Research Assistants Margaret (Maggie), Elli, Jane, and Emma are keeping busy with their typical duties.

Manomin Fun Facts

Did you know that the Latin name for Manomin is *Zizania palustris*? “Zizania” in *Zizania palustris* means that Manomin is part of the *Zizania* genus which is a group of grasses that are known for

producing “wild rice.”¹ Other members of the *Zizania* genus are Manchurian wild rice (*Zizania latifolia*), Southern wild rice (*Zizania aquatica*), and Texas wild rice (*Zizania texana*).² Manchurian wild rice is the only species in the *Zizania* genus not native to North America.

Traditional Manomin Harvesting

In September 2020, Upriver Media Inc. joined Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation and UofG researchers for the manomin harvest. Upriver Media Inc. captured footage of the traditional harvest and created an informational video featuring Elder John Henry. [This video is available on YouTube for streaming.](#)



New Publications

The Manomin Project is excited to announce its upcoming publication, “Beyond Institutional Ethics: Anishinaabe Worldviews and the Development of a Culturally Sensitive Field Protocol for Aquatic Plant Research” in *Water*, a peer-reviewed, open access journal.

This article discusses the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2) and its failure to consider Anishinaabe worldviews. In Anishinaabe worldviews, plants are spirited beings who should be treated with the same respect and care as humans. With appropriate consideration for other-

¹ William G. Dore, *Wild-Rice* (Ottawa: The Queen’s Printer for Canada: 1969), 18-20.

² William G. Dore, *Wild-Rice*, 16-23.

than human beings, the TCPS2 could better incorporate Indigenous worldviews and promote more ethical, less harmful, protocols for the treatment of spirited beings and protection of their relationships to humans during research.

University of Guelph researchers and Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation use oral testimonies and oral histories to argue for the inclusion of other-than-human beings in ethical research.

Upcoming Events

Dr. Brittany Luby and Chief Lorraine Cobiness will be speaking on the Keynote Panel at the Canadian Historical Association's 2021 Annual Meeting. Luby and Cobiness will discuss the Manomin Project in accordance with this year's theme, "Mobility and Exchange." This year's conference will take place from May 31st to June 2nd and will be hosted online.

To learn more about this event, visit the [Canadian Historical Association's website](#).

The Manomin Project is a cooperative research program led by the University of Guelph and Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation. This newsletter reflects our responsibility and commitment to knowledge sharing.