

The Manomin Project's Summer Solstice Newsletter



@manominproject

Updates on the Manomin Project

The Manomin Project is happy to welcome the summer season! Summer is the most exciting season for our research project because it is when we are in the field and working face-to-face with community members. But before we jump into the summer, we want to reflect on our accomplishments this spring.

Dr. Brittany Luby made great progress on the Manomin picture book. She reviewed the preliminary sketches completed by the illustrator, completed revisions, and learned about the translation process through her correspondence with Anishinaabemowin translator Mary-Ann Corbiere. Translating the picture book offers many benefits - Luby hopes one such benefit is the increased availability of Anishinaabe text classrooms throughout Ontario and beyond.

We are excited to announce that our team has grown! Thanks to the support of our generous funders, we have had the pleasure of hiring three students this year. Laura Legzdins (Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science) and Tony Huynh (Bachelor of Engineering in Environmental Engineering) joined our team in May and will be working full-time on research until the start of fall semester. Jane Mariotti has also returned to work full-time for our team for the summer. Carissa MacKenzie (Master of Science in Environmental Science) offered part-time contract fieldwork support in May.

In late May to early June, PhD student Samantha Mehlretter and Dr. Andrea Bradford visited Treaty #3 with students, Carissa, Tony, and Jane. Since it was several of the students' first time visiting Treaty #3, they

spent some time getting to know the land and the people. They visited ancestral manomin fields, spoke with community members, and attended the annual Spring Feast.



Pictured (left to right): Jane Mariotti, Brittany Luby, Josh Rognvaldson, Samantha Mehlretter, and Andrea Bradford.

While on the River, the team reinstalled water level loggers to monitor water level fluctuations. They also observed considerable changes to the "bog," which has either been moved downstream or submerged due to high water levels. Finally, the team visited several new off-river sites with the help of Guy Henry. It was a productive first visit to Treaty #3, and our team is looking forward to being back on the River in August.

To help welcome summer, Samantha Mehlretter attended an event to speak about the Manomin Project and its goals. She presented at the Canadian Water

Resources Association's conference in Canmore, Alberta on June 7th.

Meet the Team: Kaeden Merasty

This quarterly newsletter, we are excited to introduce Kaeden Merasty!

Kaeden Merasty is the founder and CEO of [The Indigenous Marketing Company](#) (IMC). He is also a proud band member of Flying Dust First Nation.

Kaeden and his team at IMC provide contracted marketing support for the Manomin Project. Currently, he manages and develops content for our social media accounts. If you follow us on Instagram, you have likely seen the work of IMC!



Pictured: Kaeden Merasty.

Kaeden plays an important part in helping us achieve our goals of sharing research updates, increasing overall awareness of Manomin, and amplifying Indigenous voices across Turtle Island that promote food sovereignty.

“Working on the Manomin Project has been a very rewarding experience. As a marketer, you have the privilege of learning about many different industries and cultures, and in this case, I was able to learn about food sovereignty and the importance of Manomin for

the Anishinaabe people. I am happy to be a part of a team that truly understands the importance of crop restoration, cultural revitalization, and treaty living.”

Thank you for your help, Kaeden! We are happy to have you as an honorary member of our team.

Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day

This National Indigenous Peoples Day, the Manomin Project team would like to encourage everyone to dedicate time to learning about the land they live on and its original occupants.

We recognize that the work of the Manomin Project primarily takes place in Treaty #3, the home of the Anishinabeg. However, University of Guelph researchers often complete work for the Manomin Project in Guelph, which is on the treaty lands and territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

To get started, we recommend that you use [Native Land](#) to learn whose land you live on, as well as what treaty governs how you and your loved ones can experience that land.

Manomin Fun Facts

“Manomin” is the Anishinaabe word for wild rice. Its root “man” refers to Kizhe Manito, the Great Spirit who created Manomin, and “min” refers to a “good berry” or “delicacy.”¹

What's Next

The Manomin Project has many exciting projects on the go this summer.

PhD student Samantha Mehlretter and Dr. Andrea Bradford are preparing for the rest of the field season. Our team plans to visit Treaty #3 two more times this season, once in August and once in September. The trip in August will be for approximately 10 days, and will include counting manomin seeds, measuring water quality, and capturing photos of ancestral manomin stands. In early September, our team will visit Treaty #3 for approximately one week to collect samples of ripened Manomin, share and interpret our results with

¹ Kathi Avery Kinew, “Manito Gitigaan: Governing in the Great Spirit’s Garden: Wild Rice in Treaty #3,” PhD diss., (University

of Manitoba, 1995), pp. X, <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item?id=TC-MWU-3684&op=pdf&app=Library>.

the community, and begin co-creating a culturally appropriate crop restoration protocol. We look forward to returning to the field and working closely with Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation.

University of Guelph members of the Manomin Project have resumed their group reading discussions. Each meeting, members discuss a reading about Indigenous ecologies and decolonizing research. They also share updates about their work. We look forward to continuing these meetings throughout the summer season.

Students Laura, Jane, Tony, Carissa, and Emma have many plans for the summer ahead.

Laura Legzdins is researching how the departure from traditional harvesting practices and the adoption of mechanical harvesters has affected the manomin seed bank, genetic diversity, and crop resilience. She will also be weaving Indigenous Knowledge and Western science to develop potential restoration strategies related to seeding.

Jane Mariotti is weaving Indigenous Knowledge and Western science to develop potential restoration strategies relating to managing invasive species and organic “litter” (also known as dead plant material) in manomin stands.

Tony Huynh’s goal for the field season is to identify promising off-river sites for crop restoration. He will evaluate several off-river sites, starting with water levels, to identify potential sites for future restoration.

Carissa MacKenzie will be assisting our team with 2022 fieldwork. Her insight was especially helpful in re-designing our water level logger deployment due to high water levels.

Emma Scott is managing our archival database on the University of Guelph’s Dataverse. They are also in communication with the Library and Archives of Canada, Archives of Manitoba, and Archives of Ontario to exhibit archival documents related to Manomin in a database for Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation band members.

Events

We are excited to announce that Samantha Mehlretter is virtually attending the [IFT First Conference](#) in Chicago from July 10th to 13th. We wish her the best of luck with her virtual event!

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.