



Glossary

Please note: detailed definitions for many of these terms can be found in both the Project WILD Glossary and the Project WET Glossary.

Creek side: the sides or banks of a creek or stream of water which is smaller than a river.

Ditch: a long, narrow excavation dug into the ground, usually for drainage.

Dye: a substance taken from a plant that is used to colour cloth or paper. It is sometimes made from flower petals, leaves or roots.

Ecosystem: a community of living things and their physical and chemical environment in an area of any size, all of which are linked together by energy cycles and nutrient flow.

Endangered: an official classification for a wildlife species which is in imminent danger of dying out in a specific geographic area. In Saskatchewan, endangered species are also called *species at risk*. For example, Burrowing Owls are currently listed as *endangered* in both Saskatchewan and Canada.

Flowering plants: a large class of plants that are characterized by having ovules and that form a seed. This class includes plants that we wouldn't usually think of as "flowering," including the grasses. Plants that are not part of this class include the ferns, which form spores rather than seeds.

Flowers: the part of a plant, often brightly coloured, that produces seeds, usually with a calyx, corolla, stamens, and carpals.

Grasses: a large family of mostly tall, slender plants with jointed stems, sheathing leaves, and flowers in spikelets. Saskatchewan's provincial native grass is Needle and Thread grass.

Grassland: a plant community dominated by grasses.

Habitat: the environment which provides the basic needs for plants to grow (light, water, soil and space) or for animals to live (food, water, shelter or cover and space) in the right arrangement.

Leaves: the parts of plants that grow out from the stem and that produce food through the process of photosynthesis.

Medicinal: as applied to plants, means that parts of the plant may be used by people in treating or preventing illness. For example, oranges have medicinal properties as they contain vitamin C, which is known to prevent scurvy and to boost immunity to disease.

Prairie: a large area of flat or rolling native grassland with few trees.

Roots: the part of a plant which is usually underground, anchors it into the soil, gathers water and nutrients and stores food for the plant.

Species: a biological classification for a population which appears similar and can naturally interbreed and produce fertile offspring.

Stem: the main trunk of a plant from which the leaves and flowers grow.

Traditional: Customary practises, behaviours, beliefs or knowledge passed on from one generation to another.

Woody plants: are those that form a layer of hardened tissue from the secondary xylem. Xylem functions like the veins of plants, allowing for material to be transported throughout the plant. Most woody plants are familiar to us as shrubs and trees. On the prairies we also get some unique half –shrubs which have some woody growth, such as pasture sage.