



## About Our Cover

On the cover is western or yellow skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*), also known as swamp lantern, a monocot found in wetland areas of the Pacific Northwest. Named for the skunky odor it emits, skunk cabbage uses its strong smell to attract scavenging flies and beetles that it seduces for pollinating. The flowers of the skunk cabbage are housed in a prominent cylindrical spadix that is ensheathed by a large, showy yellow spathe and are some of the first flowers to appear on the monochromatic spring landscape of northern British Columbia, where this photograph was taken. Skunk cabbage is the largest-leaved plant within its range, but this is not evident until well after the plant has flowered and gone to seed, after which it produces several leaves that can grow up to nearly 1.5 m tall and half as wide. These leaves were reportedly used by indigenous peoples for wrapping food and as drinking vessels, among other things. An interesting attribute of the skunk cabbage is its ability to produce heat that it can use to clear surrounding snow to get a jump-start on spring and to imitate the warm and rotting flesh of animals, which attracts pollinators. The photograph was taken near Prince George, BC, by Roy Rea (reav@unbc.ca), with a Canon 5D camera and Canon Zoom lens EF 24-105.

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