

**A whale of a prairie.** Of Ka-ma-ma Prairie's forty-three species of rare and endangered plants, one of the most interesting is a tiny annual that doesn't even have a common name. We address it by its Latin name *Draba verna*. A modest mustard plant only a few inches tall, it grows in a shallow layer of rock powder lying above a dolomite slab of rock. On a sunny day in June the soil on this rim will be dry as a bone and baked to over one hundred degrees in temperature. But today is the first week of April and the tiny plant is in full bloom. Three weeks later this annual will transform the fuel stored in its tiny leaves and roots to produce just one to three seeds before it dies. Gazing at the *Draba* we are struck with the delicacy and vulnerability of life – life on the edge. Joy comes from the certain knowledge that because Ka-ma-ma is a nature preserve -- when we return next spring, the dry rock ledge and the tiny *Draba* will still be there, re-creating the cycle of life as it has for millions of years. **Hope comes from knowing that together we can save one piece of land.**

