

NATURE NEWS

From Nature Calgary

www.naturecalgary.com



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VOLUNTEER

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for general inquiries.

LEAD A FIELD TRIP

To suggest a location or lead a trip
email fieldtrips*@*naturecalgary.com

[Check the website frequently for new trips and updates.](#)

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual: \$40/year
Family: \$50/year

Contact Val 403-288-7441 or
membership*@*naturecalgary.com
[Join or renew online.](#)

SUBMISSIONS

Share your experiences, art, stories, suggestions, news, and events with Nature Calgary! Nature News is published 8 times per year and submissions are accepted by all members.

Send to:
newsletter*@*naturecalgary.com.
Next deadline: March 14, 2020

Mailing address:
Nature Calgary, Box 981 Stn. M
Calgary, AB T2P 2K4



Message from the President

Dear members,
Happy New Year! I hope that you have been able to get out to safely enjoy the wonderful weather that we have been having in January. The longer and hopefully warmer days of February and March will entice us out in the field to observe the first stirrings of spring. The returning Horned Larks and Robins, the ground squirrels surfacing, a hint of the first emergence of our flora from their winter slumber and perhaps even a Morning Cloak fluttering by.

Unfortunately the Covid-19 virus will still be with us. With this in mind combined with the severity of the second wave the Nature Calgary board decided at its January 14th meeting to continue with the pause on our field trips until at least our February 11th meeting. The board certainly recognizes the importance of our field trips to our members, but we do feel that it is important to do our part to help to bend the curve and lessen the demand on our health care system. As the vaccine roll out proceeds there is every hope that the severity of the second wave will lessen over the next month and we will be able to start up our field trips again with less risk to our members.

John McFaul
President Nature Calgary

COVID-19 Protocols

The following protocols apply to In/ Outside City single and multi Destination Trips

1. Maximum of 10 Participants including the leader.
2. Participants must be members of Nature Calgary.
3. Pre-registration is required.
4. Participants must sign a waiver form either on site or bring one already signed. Bring your own pen to sign the waiver form.
5. Masks or face shields must be worn when outside the vehicle.
6. Carpooling should only be done with occupants of the same household or bubble.
7. Refrain from sharing scopes, binoculars, field guides, etc. with people outside of your bubble.
8. Maximum of 5 vehicles plus the leader's vehicle.

Speaker Series

Jan 20: The Western Ghats

Speaker: Andrew Hart

Since retiring in 2016 Andrew Hart has made several visits to India. This presentation will center on the Western Ghats, a mountain range that runs parallel to the west coast of India. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight hot-spots of biological diversity in the world. It contains a large proportion of the country's flora and fauna, many of which are endemic. The area is predominantly rural and the presentation will describe a number of interactions with local people as well some of the natural history highlights including Nagarhole National Park.

Time: Wednesday January, 20 7:30PM MST

Click to Join: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 829 9284 9963

Passcode: 870077

Image: Andrew Hart- Elephant



Feb 17: Exploring the Ice Age Across Alberta

Speaker: Dr. Chris Jass

Alberta is rich in fossils, and over the past 10 years, Dr. Chris Jass (Curator of Quaternary Palaeontology at the Royal Alberta Museum), has explored the province in search of Ice Age fossils. In his presentation, Dr. Jass will take you to his favorite palaeontological sites around the province, highlight what we can learn about Ice Age history, and how it helps inform us about our planet today.

Time: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:15PM MST

Click to Join: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 879 7195 1829

Passcode: 047067

Image: Matt Wallace- Pocaterra Ridge



Mar 17: Kananaskis Country Ecology Program

Speaker: John Paczkowski

John is a senior park ecologist for Kananaskis country and will discuss the multidisciplinary approaches used to understand the ecological dynamics occurring in this beautiful landscape.

Time: Mar 17, 2021 07:15 PM MST

Click to Join: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 896 7456 7211

Passcode: 560862

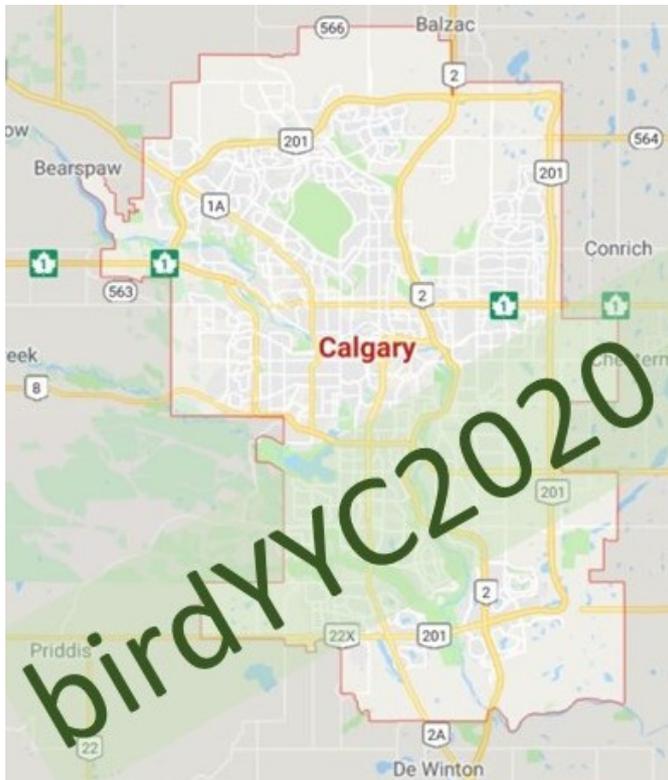
Image: Matt Wallace- Bighorn Sheep



Bird Study Group

Bird Study Group meets at 7:30pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month.

Due to COVID-19, meetings will be held via Zoom.. Links and meeting codes will be emailed to members closer to the event date.



BirdYYC2020 : The Whole Story

Speaker: Howard Heffler

Following a tradition of “big year” birding competitions held in 2000 and 2010, Nature Calgary promoted a similar initiative in 2020. Birders were invited to participate in a friendly challenge to find as many species of birds as possible within the Calgary city limits. Howard will talk about birding in the COVID-19 era and share some anecdotes from the challenge.

Time: Wednesday February 3, 07:15 PM MST

Click to Join: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 870 4935 6496

Passcode: 924608

North American Grouse Species and Conservation

Speaker: Don McKinnon

Don will provide an overview of the distribution, habitat, behavior and conservation concerns of North American grouse species. He will outline threats and present strategies being used to help at-risk grouse species to recover.

Time: Wednesday March 3, 2021 7:30PM MST

Click to Join: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 811 8324 4592

Passcode: 614609

Image: Gavin McKinnon- Sharp-tailed Grouse



Field Trips

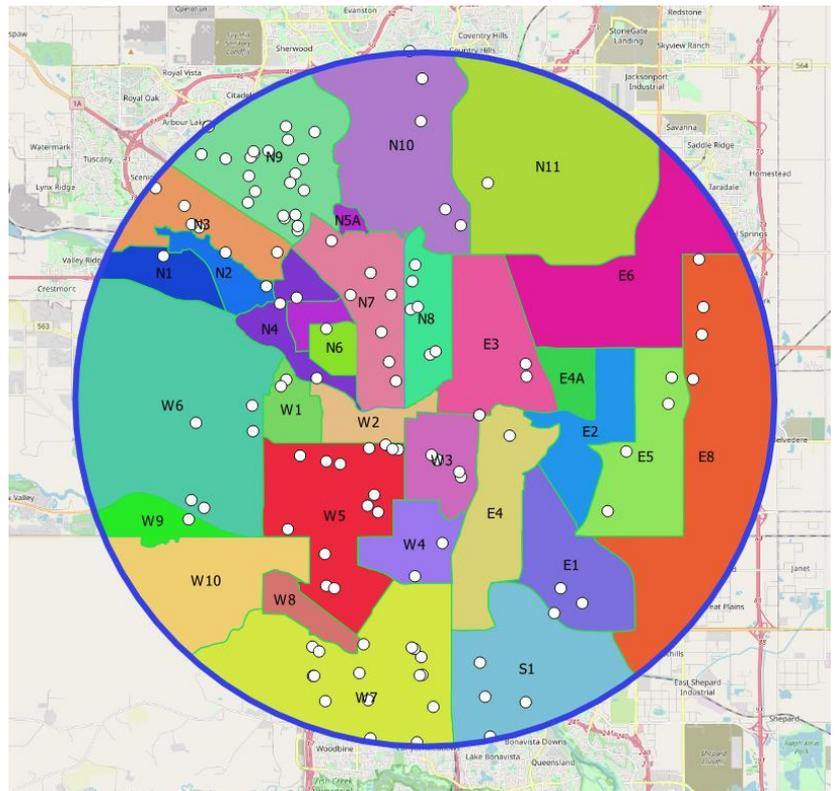
Field Trips are currently on-hold due to COVID-19 restrictions. Please [visit our website](#) for news and updates on future field trips.

Community News

Calgary's 69th Annual Christmas Bird Count

The results from Calgary's 69th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) were shared by Phil Cram at the January Bird Study Group. Despite the adversity posed by COVID-19, Calgary organizers adapted to ensure the event could proceed on January 20th, 2020.

Team sections (see map) were divided into smaller areas where 1-2 people (unless from the same household) surveyed. This allowed for greater coverage of areas perhaps overlooked in past years. Feeder Watchers (FW) also played an important part in helping to count and document species. 130 field surveyors and 187 FW participated (a new FW record for Calgary).



2020 Christmas Bird Count Map Sections.
White dots indicate Feeder watcher locations..

A total of 69 species were identified on count day and the total number of individual birds was 59,379. Canada Goose (26,641) was the most abundant bird species with the majority seen along the Elbow and Bow River. Mallard (11,809) and House Sparrow (6906) capped off the top three bird species. There were three all-time first bird species observed on count day in the Calgary circle: 1 Anna's Hummingbird, 1 Mountain Bluebird, and 1 Swainson's Thrush! [Click Here](#) to explore the CBC YYC 2020 Map for yourself.

If you're interested in participating in CBC YYC 2021 (in the field or as a Feeder Watcher) or looking for other citizen science events throughout the year, [Please fill out this form](#) so we can inform you about events and how to participate!

Next Citizen Science Event: [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) February 12-15, 2021

Nature Calgary would like to congratulate and thank Phil Cram on 19 successful years of organizing the Calgary CBC.

Community News



Bill Wilson Exploring the Weaselhead Natural Area (Image: Matt Wallace)

Birding By Bike

In the urban planner's book of jargon, it's referred to as NMT (Non-Motorized Transport). Bill Wilson has been birding via bike for over 10 years and recently celebrated his most successful year with 259 species (a new NMT birding record for Alberta). It was no easy task as he rode a total distance of 9100 kilometers throughout the province (140 km was the longest single trip). For these kinds of birding expeditions, Bill might leave his house at 1 AM to make it in time for the prime birding hour. Birding by bike is an extension of Bill's leisure time, where he combines two of his biggest passions that form unforgettable experiences. He noted that with some luck on your side and time (spent biking) in the field, birding by bike may be the way to go to improve your personal bests. With Calgary's incredible and ever-expanding bicycle network, this could be your year to challenge yourself to an NMT birding experience. If you're really up for a challenge, try to take the big NMT Alberta birds 260!

If you have an idea for community content in an upcoming issue of Nature News, Please send your events, ideas, art, stories, and experiences to: newsletter*@naturecalgary.com.
Next deadline: March 14, 2020.



Rare Bird Alert:

report rare bird sightings to Bird Alert Compiler, Terry Korolyk at 403-300-1067
For latest sightings check: [Albertabird](#) or [BirdTrax](#)

