

NATURE NEWS

From Nature Calgary

www.naturecalgary.com



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VOLUNTEER

Volunteer*@naturecalgary.com
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
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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: **October 25, 2020**

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



Message from the President

Dear members,

I hope that you have been able to get out lots to enjoy the wonderful fall weather we have been having. It certainly is one of my favourite times of the year with the crisp mornings and warm afternoons enjoying the fall colours of our local parks and in the high country out west.

I would like to thank all of our volunteers who participated in the cleanup of the 68 Street SE wetlands on Sept. 18th which was so ably organized by our special events team. Well done!

As you know we are now entering the run-up to the Calgary municipal election which will be held on October 18th. If the opportunity arises, this is a good time to remind and query the candidates about the importance of our natural areas and the general biodiversity of Calgary. Resource allocation, both financial and staffing, to the Calgary's Parks department has been significantly cut back over the last couple of years. This has impeded their ability to do their important work. Another concern that I have noticed is the deforestation of inner city neighbourhoods due to the densification policy that council is pursuing. This negatively impacts the city's biodiversity, climate resiliency, hydrology and viewsapes.

I regret to announce that we will once again not be hosting our annual banquet this year due to the ongoing Covid pandemic. I thank Penny Smith for the efforts she had made toward organizing one for November.

Finally kudos to our field trip leaders for continuing to step forward to provide our members with opportunities to get out to enjoy our natural heritage. We are always looking for new volunteer field trip leaders to share the load. Please contact Howard at fieldtrips@naturecalgary.com to contribute to the vitality of Nature Calgary.

Well wishes,

John

Bird Study Group

Calgary Migratory Species Response Team . . . Where Rescue Meets Research

Speaker: Kathleen Johnson

October 6, 2021 7:30 PM via Zoom

Founded in fall of 2019, Calgary joined the efforts of organizations across North America working to reduce the risks faced by migratory species. Each migration period CMSRT works in a coordinated effort to survey birds and bats in Calgary's downtown core. They rescue those found alive and learn from those found deceased.

Co-founder Kathleen Johnson will be speaking about how the team collects data, what is done with that data and what happens to any birds or bats that are found alive. As well, Ms. Johnson will address the role of residential buildings in bird strikes and how to mitigate those events in our own homes. CMSRT has participated in Nature Canada's project to certify cities as Bird Friendly; a designation that was awarded to Calgary in May 2021.

Birding in Portugal

Speaker: Diane Stinson

November 11, 2021 7:30 PM via Zoom

In April 2019 Diane and her husband went on a birding and culture tour in Southern Portugal. Starting in Lisbon, their small group explored the Tagus and Sado Estuary Nature Reserves, seeing such birds as Eurasian Spoonbill, Squacco Heron, Black-winged Kite, Little Bustard and Collared Pratincole. Driving on to Alentejo they were treated to views of Montagu's Harrier, Eurasian Eagle Owl, Red Kite and Great Spotted Cuckoo. Standing by the cliffs and shore at Cape St. Vincent, the most southwestern point in Portugal and mainland Europe, was truly awesome.

Tune into this special presentation to learn about their incredible journey exploring historical and cultural sites, birding in Portugal, and the amazing people they met along the way



Eurasian Hoopoe by Diane Stinson

Bird Study Group

Black Swifts Take Flight in Banff National Park

December 1, 2021 7:30 PM via Zoom

Speaker: Jennifer Reimer, Project Lead for the Black Swift Monitoring Program in Banff National Park since 2015, has followed birds across the globe for many years, from studying pair duets of the Eastern Whipbird in Australia to conducting seabird inventories off Haida Gwaii and Vancouver Island. After completing her graduate studies on the importance of developing Canada's first marine protected areas for seabirds, she was soon drawn back to the Rockies and has been working in wildlife management for Parks Canada ever since.

Presentation: Black Swifts (*Cypseloides niger borealis*) are the largest swifts in North America and the only subspecies to occur in Canada. This high flying aerial insectivore is the ultimate habitat specialist seeking commanding views of plunging waterfalls to nest beside. The species was listed as Endangered in Canada in 2019 due to steep declines in the Canadian population. In Banff National Park, Black Swifts have been observed nesting in the park and on the eastern edge of their range since 1919! Researchers are implementing an array of tools to better understand these cryptic creatures who spend most of their lives on the wing! Come find out how Black Swifts are doing in Johnston Canyon and how creativity is key to studying them.



Black Swifts by Jennifer Reimer/©Parks Canada

Field Trips

COVID restrictions on Nature Calgary field trips:

- Trips will be limited to a maximum of ten participants (members only).
- Pre-registration is required.
- Wearing face covering (masks) is optional.

Nature Calgary recommends that all participants on NC field trips, including the leader, be fully vaccinated. While we will not be asking for confirmation, we are asking for voluntary compliance. We request that anyone with COVID symptoms, or any other issue that puts other participants at risk, not attend.

NC organizes volunteer led field trips throughout the year. New and impromptu field trips may be added to the website anytime. Check frequently.

For the most up-to-date list of field-trips, please visit our website:

<https://naturecalgary.com/events/calendar/>

Day	Date	Time	Destination	Leader
Friday	01-Oct	9:00 AM	Ralph Klein Park	Kaya Konopnicki
Saturday	02-Oct	9:00 AM	Inglewood Bird Sanctuary	Nimali Seneviratne
Tuesday	05-Oct	9:00 AM	WID - Irrigation Canal	Kaya Konopnicki
Friday	08-Oct	9:00 AM	West Bragg Creek	Kaya Konopnicki
Saturday	09-Oct	8:00 AM	Kerry Wood Nature Centre (Red Deer)	Penny Smith
Wednesday	13-Oct	9:00 AM	Weaselhead Natural Area	Matt Wallace
Friday	15-Oct	9:00 AM	WID - Irrigation Canal	Kaya Konopnicki
Tuesday	19-Oct	9:00 AM	Bebo Grove FCPP	Kaya Konopnicki
Wednesday	20-Oct	9:00 AM	68th Street Wetlands	Tony Timmons
Friday	22-Oct	9:00 AM	Frank Lake	Kaya Konopnicki
Tuesday	26-Oct	9:00 AM	Wolf Willow - LaFarge Meadows	Kaya Konopnicki
Wednesday	27-Oct	9:00 AM	LaFarge Meadows - Boat Launch	Tony Timmons
Friday	29-Oct	9:00 AM	Griffith Woods	Kaya Konopnicki
Saturday	30-Oct	9:00 AM	North Glenmore Park	Penny Smith
Saturday	27-Nov	9:00 AM	North Glenmore Park	Penny Smith

Where do YOU Want to Explore?

Have any idea of a park to explore in Calgary? Maybe you have an interest in learning about citizen science, photography, ecology, or geology?

Send any field trip requests or suggestions to the Nature Calgary Field Trips Coordinator, Howard Heffler (fieldtrips@naturecalgary.com or 403-804-2489) for future outings.



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



Community News

Election Season

Calgary's Municipal Election is on October 18! It is an important opportunity to reflect on your relationship with the environment and the type of leadership you expect over the next four years. Consider voting for ward candidates and mayoral candidates that have environmental goals to ensure that the ecological integrity of Calgary's natural environment are preserved.

Ward boundaries have been updated for the 2021 General Election. Find out information about your ward and who is running for the offices of mayor, councilor, public and separate school board trustee in the upcoming Calgary 2021 General Election by visiting: <https://www.calgary.ca/election/information-for-voters/candidates.html>

Your Park: International Stewardship - 68th Street Wetlands Clean-up

On September 18, Nature Calgary and community members met at Elliston Park for the first ever Parks and Pathways clean-up at the 68th Street Wetlands. A total of 38 people armed with garbage bags, litter pickers, gloves, and snacks spent two hours thoroughly cleaning the shoreline and edges of the wetlands. People collected items that ranged from plastics, car parts, stuffed animals, and siding (from houses). At the end of the day, over 20 bags were picked up by Calgary Parks. Although we collected plenty of refuse, there still remains a surplus of microplastics and waste along the high-water mark of the wetlands. We look forward to future opportunities to help keep this amazing birding location healthy.

Nature Calgary would like to thank all of the volunteers that participated on the day of the clean-up! We are grateful to Calgary Parks for allowing us to pioneer a new location that will be added to the official list of sites next year. In addition, we thank TD Parks People for supporting all three Elliston Park events this year!



Nature Calgary's incredible Volunteers -Photo by Kaya Konopnicki

Community News

Nature Calgary AGM 2021

The Nature Calgary Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on November 17 via Zoom (See link below) and provide an opportunity to review the many accomplishments that Nature Calgary has achieved over the last year. Other topics will include the annual review of the financial status of the club and vote in the new board for 2022.

If you have an interest in joining the board or becoming more involved with Nature Calgary, This is your chance! Contact John McFaul at president@naturecalgary.com with questions or any information you would like from the board to learn more about opportunities.

After the AGM is adjourned there will be an opportunity for members to present a small number of their favourite nature pictures that they took in 2021. The total number of images will be capped. Contact John McFaul at president@naturecalgary.com regarding showing images at the AGM.

Topic: Nature Calgary's AGM Zoom Meeting

Time: Nov 17, 2021 07:30 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99095149163?pwd=VzBWeDhyR3I1MEVHSzJRQzFtcERJUT09>

Meeting ID: 990 9514 9163

Passcode: 304228



Community News

Christmas Bird Count 2021:

The 2021 Calgary Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will take place on Sunday December 19. Early stages of planning are underway. If you have participated in previous counts, Matt Wallace will be reaching out to people in October to see if you are interested in participating. If you have *never* participated before but would like more information on how you can be involved, Please send an email to Matt at CityNatureYYC@gmail.com.

Twelve Nature Calgary members met two driver volunteers for the latest golf cart birding trip at Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park.

"After dutifully showing our proofs of vaccination we set off under the expert guidance of Blake Weis. Moving down the hill we soon encountered a flock of 25 Mountain Bluebirds along the railway line. We saw an accipiter flying by too far away to confidently ID, and then encountered a young and inquisitive Coyote on the path.

We found a young looking Merlin in the woods and carried on to the stretch by the river. As we arrived at the favourite viewing point we found a young Bald Eagle perched on a power pole exactly where we were going to stop. We waited a while and after making a few calls it flew off. We made a few stops to scope along the river. Most migrating waterfowl have not arrived yet, but we did see a Common Loon, some Grebes, and a few Common Mergansers.

In the woods on the way back we found some woodpeckers and various small groups of Robins, Chickadees, Starlings and Pipits. On the bluffs nearer the visitor centre we saw four immature Bald Eagles which seemed to have found something good to eat on the ground.

Fall colours are really developing in the park and worth a visit just on their own.

We covered 18 km, once again demonstrating the value of these golf cart trips in such a vast park. A total of 23 species were observed."

[The complete eBird list can be viewed here.](#)

- Andrew Hart, Airdrie



Bald Eagle By Andrew Hart

Community News

A New Citizen Science Bat Box Project!

If you have a bat box, scientists want to know about it!

Bats in Canada face multiple threats from habitat loss and disease. A bat box is a simple way to provide additional roosting habitat for bats, yet little is known about bat box use in Canada. Information on bat box use is especially important as three bat species in Canada are listed as endangered: little brown bats, northern long-eared bats, and tricolored bats.

If you have a bat box and would like to participate in this study, please fill out this online multiple-choice survey with questions about your bat box. Your participation is important even if your box does not have any bats!

Please fill out this form to participate:

https://trentu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_86og8C3MIgO2ff7

This project is in partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Canadian Wildlife Federation. More information on the project is posted here: <https://wcsbats.ca/Our-work-to-save-bats/Batbox-Project/BatBox-Project-Canada-wide> and here <https://rrvfn.org/canadian-bat-project/>



A bat box in Saskatchewan. Photo by Jared Clarke



Bat boxes in Ontario. Photo by Stephen Cluff