



# Saskatoon Nature Society Newsletter

January 2022

Vol. 44 No. 1

## **Invertebrate diversity, distribution and ecology: an often overlooked and understudied frontier in Saskatchewan**

**Online presentation by Iain Phillips  
7:30 PM Thursday, January 20, 2022**

Curiosity about, and enthusiasm for Saskatchewan's insects has been an easy career route for Iain Phillips, as growing up in the Cumberland Delta and Qu'Appelle Valley around Lumsden surrounded him with opportunity to explore and observe some of the rich diversity this province has. He left Lumsden to go to school at universities around the world, but has always returned to bring his experience back to the ecosystems we have in the province that are far too little understood. Since 2006, Iain has worked for the Water Security Agency (formerly the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority), and has grown his position there to include an adjunct professorship at the University of Saskatchewan, positions with the Entomological Society of Saskatchewan, and as Director of the Troutreach Program NGO with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. Iain currently lives in Saskatoon, and when he is back in town after further collections of insect life around the province he is busy raising two larval humans of his own these days.

Iain will be providing a talk on how invertebrates can be used as indicators of human disturbance in Saskatchewan's ecosystems, insights we have on how their populations have changed with development, and optimism for the resilience of invertebrate diversity.



All members who have registered an email address will receive information by email on how to join the Zoom meeting. For those who do not have the technology to use Zoom, we hope that you will be able to join someone in your close social group. If you have not registered an email address but would like to do so, please do as soon as possible (contact [c.bear@sasktel.net](mailto:c.bear@sasktel.net)). If you do not use email or if you have any questions, please contact Blair McCann at [president@saskatoonnature.org](mailto:president@saskatoonnature.org) or 306-653-2958.

## **Field Trips**

Participants must follow social distancing at all times and wear masks when requested by the leader. There will be limited sharing of scopes or other equipment. Members who wish to participate in a particular field trip must contact the listed leader by phone or email as quickly as possible. Participants are free to depart early if they wish. Members with FRS radios should bring them on out of town trips. Bus Information: 306-975-3100. Many of our trip destinations are described in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of "A Guide to Nature Viewing Sites in and around Saskatoon" available from

<https://saskatoonnature.org/special-publications/>

**Winter trips may be cancelled or postponed if the Environment Canada temperature 2 hours before the start of the field trip is less than -20C or if the wind speed exceeds 30 km/h.**

Check <https://saskatoonnature.org/> website for any updated information

**Monday, January 3, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

**Pike Lake – Whitecap Bird Count**

Help us survey the bird population near Pike Lake for this final Christmas bird count.

**Register** in advance by submitting the form on our website or contacting Donna Bruce (306-956-3437) or by email to [donna.bruce@sasktel.net](mailto:donna.bruce@sasktel.net)

*More field trips on page 2*

## President's Message

I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. Now that the winter solstice is behind us, I always feel that we've turned the corner and spring is just over the horizon. As a geography guy, I'm fascinated by the change in day length as spring approaches. If it feels like the gain in day length after the winter solstice is taking forever, your perception is correct. The increase in day length, or loss at the summer solstice, is almost zero around the solstices. For example, there was only a one-second change in day length on the day of the last winter solstice back in December. As we move towards the spring equinox, the rate of daily change increases until it reaches its maximum a few days before the equinox: just over 4 minutes a day. That's a huge change, especially when it's spread over an entire month. If you're interested in seeing more information on how this all works, check out this website:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/canada/saskatoon?month=12&year=2021>

It's fun to watch the days lengthen as spring comes over the horizon.

A number of folks have indicated that they haven't been receiving the SNS newsletter that has been emailed to them. Claire Bullaro works hard to get the newsletter emailed out in a timely manner but she has been facing a number of challenges due to increased security measures that have been implemented by the various internet providers. Claire has raised the issue with the Board and we're in the process of assessing the various options in terms of possibly moving to dedicated email software. If you haven't been receiving the newsletter email, one thing you can do is log onto your email account and change the SPAM filter settings. Last fall SaskTel unilaterally increased the filter setting from Standard to Aggressive. I changed the setting back to Standard on my account and my emails are now arriving as they should. If you're not sure how to change this setting, a quick call to your internet provider should help you sort out the problem.

At our December general meeting, Michael McLaughlin made a wonderful presentation on the woodland caribou situation in Saskatchewan. It was a very informative talk with lots of great discussion during the Q & A. I've had a number of enquiries about how folks can view Michael's presentation. A pdf of the slides is available on the SNS

website under the heading, Indoor Programming. Here is the link: <https://saskatoonnature.org/events/>

On a similar caribou-related topic, the September/October issue of *Canadian Geographic* has an amazing article on the state of caribou herds in the rest of Canada. Here's the link to the article:

<https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/article/caribou-are-vanishing-alarming-rate-it-too-late-save-them>

These incredible animals have been on the planet for a million years and now face staggering number reductions in almost every herd. The situation is alarming but not hopeless. A concerted effort on the part of government, industry, conservation groups and First Nations will be needed if we hope to save these intrepid creatures.

Blair McCann

Note: Our president has had a health issue come up and will be stepping aside from the position temporarily. The [president@saskatoonnature.org](mailto:president@saskatoonnature.org) email will be monitored by the board in the meantime. We wish him well!

### Field Trips continued...

#### Saturday, January 15, 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM Sanatorium Site Bird Walk

**Advance Registration Required.** We will walk through the former Sanatorium site portion of Holiday Park to look for winter songbirds. This park is one of five naturalized parks in the city which is managed to promote a diversity of wild birds and mammals.

**To register:** email [trips@saskatoonnature.org](mailto:trips@saskatoonnature.org)

Meet at the south end of Avenue K, adjacent to Bowerman House. <https://goo.gl/maps/wniy6XzhVKA2>

**Leader:** TBA

**Bus:** Route 9 Riversdale departs downtown terminal at 1:01 PM and arrives at Avenue K and Schuyler about 1:15 PM. Walk south one block along Avenue K.

**Guide to Nature Viewing Sites:** Page 126.



Blue Jay

May Haga

**Saturday, January 22, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Winter Tree/Shrubs Twigs and Buds at Beaver Creek**

Learn how to identify trees and shrubs with their winter buds and twigs. Enjoy the trails at Beaver Creek Conservation Area during the winter months.

**Register** through email [rgrilz@meewasin.com](mailto:rgrilz@meewasin.com) or 306-262-4970

**Leader:** Renny Grilz

**Saturday, January 29, 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM and**  
**Saturday, February 5, 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM**  
**Snowy Owl Excursion**

**Members only. Advance Registration Required.** We plan to drive a 60 km census route along back roads to count Snowy Owls from Mildred to Elrose. Most years, there is a high concentration of Snowys along this route. Your vehicle should have winter tires, good ground clearance and a tow rope and a full gas tank. Bring winter boots and a warm parka. Bring a lunch.

**To register:** text 306-230-9291 stating date of trip..

**Leader:** Marten Stoffel

**Saturday, February 19, 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**  
**Forestry Farm Bird Walk**

**Advance Registration Required.** We will walk through this park watching for winter finches and other songbirds.

**To register:** prefer email to [godmee@sasktel.net](mailto:godmee@sasktel.net) or phone 306-343-8590.

**Meet** at south end of “overflow” parking lot next to the main hall.

<https://goo.gl/maps/N1xo9789xxqaFkQn8>

**Leader:** Bob Godwin

**Guide to Nature Viewing Sites:** Page 130.



*Townsend's Solitaire*

*May Haga*

**Saturday, February 26 10:30 AM - 12 Noon**  
**Winter Wildlife Tracking at Beaver Creek Conservation Area**

Learn how to identify wildlife through their tracks in the snow. Enjoy the trails at Beaver Creek Conservation Area during the winter months

**Register** through email [rgrilz@meewasin.com](mailto:rgrilz@meewasin.com) or 306-262-4970

**Leader:** Renny Grilz

## Young Naturalists

The Young Naturalists is all about nature activities for kids and their families. Each program offers interesting activities geared for children aged 5 to 11 years. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. To register or for more information e-mail: [naturekids@saskatoonnature.org](mailto:naturekids@saskatoonnature.org).

- Saturday, January 8 Tracks and Scats
- Saturday, February 5 Chickadee Pishing

Depending on current COVID-19 guidelines the group size on these Young Naturalists programs may be limited. Visit the Young Naturalists web page for more details.

<https://saskatoonnature.org/young-naturalists/>



## Calling all Volunteers

Nature Saskatchewan obtains most of its funding from Sask. Culture. One of the factors influencing the success of Nature Saskatchewan's application is the support it and affiliated societies receive from volunteers as evidenced by the number of hours worked. We ask that each member of SNS tally the hours you have volunteered in 2021 and send your totals to Yvonne Cuttle at [cuttyg@shaw.ca](mailto:cuttyg@shaw.ca) or any board member. Once compiled, they will be forwarded to Nature Saskatchewan early in 2022. Thanks to all for your good work on behalf of SNS during 2021, and for the additional time that, I hope, you will be willing to spend on this request.

## Golden Eagles

The Golden Eagles programs are on hold due to continuing Covid concerns. Membership in the Golden Eagles is open to retirees and partners interested in birds and the natural world. Participants should be members of the Saskatoon Nature Society and consider membership in Nature Saskatchewan.



- **Request for Human Nature articles**

Nature Saskatchewan is looking for contributions to the Human Nature article feature in Blue Jay. Human Nature is a regular feature at the end of each issue that is written by members or supporters of Nature Saskatchewan about their favorite natural area in Saskatchewan and why. The direction of the article is left up to the author. Some people write from an ecological point of view while others write about their emotional and personal connection to the chosen natural space.

Articles should be around 500 words or so and can include photos. If you are interested in submitting a Human Nature article please contact Ellen at [ebouvier@naturesask.ca](mailto:ebouvier@naturesask.ca).

## NatureCity Podcast

"The NatureCity Podcast is the show where we get to know our wild neighbours. Join hosts Adrian and Rachel as we interview amazing scientists, artists, and citizens to learn more about Saskatoon's wild side: magnificent river valley, parks, conservation areas, gardens and urban forests, together with the fascinating creatures and native plants that surround us.

There is so much to learn by looking around us, and we hope the first season will get you looking at the world around you in a different way. First, we ask our guests why they dedicated their personal and professional lives to nature, conservation, biology, citizen science, and community. Next, we learn about their work and experiences, what they see when they go out in nature, and what we can learn about the nature around us. Then we discover what we can do to support their work, engage the next generation, and get involved.

Let's put on our shoes and see what's out there!"

The first Podcast episode features Sara Bryson, our past president.

<https://wildaboutsaskatoon.org/podcast/>



## Have you paid your 2022 membership?

SNS memberships go from January-December. This is your **last newsletter**. Renew right away to ensure delivery of your next newsletter.

-use the membership form included with this newsletter or use the link at:

<https://saskatoonnature.org/membership/>

### Reminder:

**Saskatoon Nature Society Members are eligible for the following discounts:**

- Early's Farm and Garden Centre provides a 10% discount on regular-priced seed, birdhouses and books;
- Wild Birds Unlimited provides a 10% discount on many regular-priced items;
- Don's Photo offers a discount on photo-finishing



## Sustainability Speakers Series

The Sustainability Speakers Series is hosted by the Saskatoon Public Library in partnership with the Saskatchewan Environmental Society (SES). These environmentally themed monthly presentations are **free** for all to attend. The following events will be online on Tuesday evenings and will start at 7:00 p.m. and end by 8:30 p.m.

### January 25 / Local food and reducing food waste

In Canada, the average household wastes 140 kg of food each year. This represents \$1100. Catherine Beaudoin will discuss easy tips to reduce food waste at home as well as key advantages of eating local.

### February 22 / Regina's energy & sustainability framework

Regina's Energy & Sustainability Framework sets community targets for achieving net zero emissions through sourcing net zero renewable energy by 2050. It also lays out the specific actions the community will need to take to achieve these targets. Greg Kuntz and Ryan Gray will provide an overview of the Framework.

### March 22 / On a collision course – birds and humans

Jan Shadick, wildlife rehabilitator at Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation, will talk about the perils facing our feathered neighbours. From habitat destruction and pollution to windows and cats, birds face a minefield of obstacles migrating each spring and fall. Windows and glass are a leading cause of bird mortality every year. Learn what you can do, and what the latest research is suggesting.

### April 19 / YXE Wildlife: Biodiversity monitoring in Saskatoon

Katie Harris from the University of Saskatchewan will provide an overview of Saskatoon's very first long-term, large-scale urban wildlife monitoring study. This will include a discussion on the issue of urbanization, its impacts on wildlife biodiversity, and some of the ways that wildlife are adapting to our ever-urbanizing world. (This event will be hosted by the Library in partnership with SES and Café Scientifique.)

Zoom links to the live webinars are in the Library's Program Calendar

at: <https://saskatoonlibrary.evanced.info/signup/Calendar>

Zoom links can also be found in the Library's Program Guide (<https://saskatoonlibrary.ca>) and the SES website (<https://environmentalsociety.ca>).

Recordings of the presentations will be made available here:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRUK7BHZUVfrHCXuJyBeO0lgjjeqBwseY>

## Call for Nominations to the Board of Directors

The board of directors of the Saskatoon Nature Society is elected at the March Annual General Meeting. If you would like to serve on the board, please contact the past-president Sara Bryson at 306-261-6156.

## Bird Friendly City.....Call for Volunteers

Are you interested in helping to make Saskatoon more bird friendly? The SNS is currently looking for expressions of interest from volunteers to join the Saskatoon Bird Team. The team will work towards our city becoming certified as a Nature Canada Bird Friendly City. A variety of skill sets are needed, and there are opportunities for various time commitments. At a minimum the Bird Team will meet four times a year. Please email [saskatoon.bfc@gmail.com](mailto:saskatoon.bfc@gmail.com) for more details.



*Snowy Owl*

*May Haga*

**Saskatoon Nature Society**

**Mailing address:**

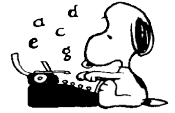
PO Box 27013 GROSVENOR PARK  
SASKATOON SK S7H 5N9

**Website:**

<https://saskatoonnature.org>

**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/SaskatoonNatureSociety](http://www.facebook.com/SaskatoonNatureSociety)



**Newsletter**

The deadline for the next newsletter is January 17. Please send any announcements or articles to Kathy Meeres. Please email: [godmee@sasktel.net](mailto:godmee@sasktel.net) or call 306-343-8590. The editor would appreciate if articles are complete and submitted electronically.

**Please consider switching from a paper to electronic copy** of the SNS newsletter. You will help us save on paper, stamps, and volunteer time and you will get information more quickly and get pictures in colour.  
**Please contact** Claire Bullaro ([c.bear@sasktel.net](mailto:c.bear@sasktel.net)) with your email address to switch. Thank you.

**Chairs and Coordinators**

Brochure	Mary Jean Roy.....306-665-0987
Coffee	
Display	Greg Fenty.....306-370-8839
Facebook Editor	Sara Bryson .....306-261-6156 (text please)
Field Trips	Stan Shadick .....306-652-5975..... <a href="mailto:trips@saskatoonnature.org">trips@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Golden Eagles	Hilda Noton.....306-374-0674
Newsletter	
Editor	Kathy Meeres.....306-343-8590..... <a href="mailto:godmee@sasktel.net">godmee@sasktel.net</a>
Mailing	Bev Beland.....306-445-3439
Mailing List	Claire Bullaro.....306-373-1787
e-distribution	Claire Bullaro.....306-373-1787..... <a href="mailto:c.bear@sasktel.net">c.bear@sasktel.net</a>
Program	Heather Brenneman..... <a href="mailto:habrenneman@sasktel.net">habrenneman@sasktel.net</a>
Publications	Donna Bruce.....306-956-3437..... <a href="mailto:donna.bruce@sasktel.net">donna.bruce@sasktel.net</a>
Publicity	Ron Jensen .....306-741-7537
Webmaster	Trent Watts ..... <a href="mailto:web@saskatoonnature.org">web@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Young Naturalists	Greg Fenty.....306-370-8839..... <a href="mailto:naturekids@saskatoonnature.org">naturekids@saskatoonnature.org</a>

**Board of Directors**


President	Blair McCann.....306-653-2958..... <a href="mailto:president@saskatoonnature.org">president@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Past President	Sara Bryson .....306-261-6156
Vice President	vacant.....
Secretary	Diane Wells .....306-229-0328..... <a href="mailto:secretary@saskatoonnature.org">secretary@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Treasurer	Laurette Lefol ..... <a href="mailto:treasurer@saskatoonnature.org">treasurer@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Director	Yvonne Cuttle.....
Director	Kathy Meeres.....306-343-8590..... <a href="mailto:godmee@sasktel.net">godmee@sasktel.net</a>
Director	LeeAnn Latremouille .....
Director	Stan Shadick .....306-652-5975..... <a href="mailto:trips@saskatoonnature.org">trips@saskatoonnature.org</a>
Director	Ryan Dudragne.....
Director	Joshua Erikson.....
Director	Heather Brenneman..... <a href="mailto:habrenneman@sasktel.net">habrenneman@sasktel.net</a>
Director	Janine McManus .....
Director	Jan Spencer ..... <a href="mailto:j.spencer01@sasktel.net">j.spencer01@sasktel.net</a>

The board of directors meets about once a month, usually in the week before the monthly meeting. If you wish to bring an item to the attention of the board, please contact the president.

## JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 CBC: Pike Lake	4	5	6	7	8 YN: Tracks and Scats
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 Sanatorium bird walk
16	17	18	19	20 January meeting	21	22 Winter Twigs and Buds
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 Snowy Owl Excursion
30	31					

## FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 Snowy Owl Excursion OYN: Chickadee pishing
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 February meeting	18	19 Forestry Farm bird walk
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Winter Wildlife Tracking
27	28					

YN: Young Naturalists; CBC: Christmas Bird Count.