

Saskatoon Nature Society Newsletter

July - August 2024

Vol. 46 No. 6

Field Trips

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 3rd edition of "A Guide to Nature Viewing Sites in and around Saskatoon" available from

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

Monday, July 1

Orchid Trip MacDowall Bog

We will drive to the Nisbet forest (north of Duck Lake) and look for lady-slippers and other wild orchids. Bring lunch, mosquito repellent and rubber boots. Number of participants will be limited. Preference will be given to people who were not on last year's trip if necessary. Leaders: Bob Godwin, Sara Bryson, Joshua Erikson and others.

To register: phone 306-343-8590 or email godmee@sasktel.net

Saturday, July 13, 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Douglas Park Sand Dune Walk

We will hike a 10 km loop and explore the sand dunes, looking for tiger beetles, wildflowers, and birds. Good walking shoes, plenty of water, and sun protection are essential. Pack a post-hike picnic lunch and there is an opportunity for ice cream on the way back.

Leaders: Joshua Erikson and Sara Bryson

Register by text at 306-270-5430.

Meet at parking lot in front of Wild Birds Unlimited store in mall at SE corner of 8th Street at Emerson Avenue.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/CjYETobzwmHSXTdq7>

Car pooling is encouraged.



Sunday, July 21, 9 AM – 12 PM

Swale Bioblitz

We will explore the swale identifying native plants and birds using iNaturalist / eBird and searching for any species at risk. You may stay for as long as you like.

Leaders: Sara Bryson and others

Register by text by July 18 to 306-261-6156.

Saturday, July 27, 9 AM – 3:00 PM

Shorebird Trip

Bring a lunch. Bring a scope if you have one.

We will drive along rural roads looking for sandpipers and plovers.

Meet at Western Development Museum by grain elevator

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/uf35ExYE39WvpWjRA>

Leader: Kerry Hjertaas (kerry.hjertaas@usask.ca)

Sunday, August 4, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Nature Trip to NCC* Asquith Nature Destination

Members only. We will hike the nature trail looking for wild plants and birds on this property. We will use the new "Asquith Nature Destination Trailside Flowers" pamphlet. We hope to find bluebirds and orioles. Bring water, lunch, sunhat and a backpack. We will stop for lunch in the meadow.

Leader: Sara Bryson (306-261-6156)

Saturday, August 10, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Lakewood and Heritage Park Bird Walk

We will walk the trails in these adjacent parks to look for water and song birds.

Meet at the north end of the gravel parking area to the east of the civic centre building.

Leader: Diego Medina (306-318-7625)

Saturday, August 24, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Forestry Farm Warbler Walk

We will walk through this park looking for migrating warblers.

Meet in the parking lot next to the old superintendent's residence.

Note: parking fee is \$5.

Leader: Kerry Hjertaas (306-260-6602)

*NCC: Nature Conservancy Canada

Fall Bird Count – Saturday, September 7

This count covers the city plus the rural area SE of Saskatoon.

To register, please send your full contact information to

trips@saskatoonnature.org

Organizer: Stan Shadick

Compiler: Kerry Hjertaas

As a volunteer or participant in the activities of the Saskatoon Nature Society (SNS), you are fully responsible for your own safety, and for your own personal insurance in case of injury. Please exercise great caution and care on field trips or any other outings. The Saskatoon Nature Society is not responsible for damage incurred to vehicles or other personal property while participating in any SNS activity. If going onto private land, always ask for permission, be friendly and respectful, exercise caution, and please be aware that participants may be responsible for damage to landowners' property.

President's Message

I hope everyone is having a good summer so far! I know the weather, especially the wind, has been challenging but when you pick good days you can have some pretty nice times outside! I was very fortunate to take part in one of Stan Shadick's outings to Grasslands National Park and it was simply amazing! We were able to see 4 Piping Plovers in 3 different Saskatchewan lakes in one day – pretty special indeed!

Closer to home, I want to give a special shout out and big thank you to Joan Feather and Anna Leighton for their work on the Asquith Nature Destination Trailside flowers brochure now complete and available at the entrance of Asquith Nature Destination just 45 minutes west of the city. It's a beautiful brochure with outstanding photos by Glenn Lee. An easy-to-use guide based on flowering colours and months of bloom; it will be an excellent tool to enjoy a visit to the Asquith NCC site that we actively support – Thank you Joan & Anna!!

A couple of updates on my activities – I had very enjoyable evening meeting with the Saskatoon Cosmopolitan Club, telling them about the Saskatoon Nature Society and how we all have the common love of nature, and we need to work to protect it. I shared with them some of the bird count data we have, and I think they were impressed! I also met with some folks from NCC to get updates on their current goals on protecting our natural landscapes. We will hear more about this in the fall at one of our general meetings so stay tuned! As well, I was invited to an informal Zoom conversation regarding the current state of the proposed National Urban Park (NUP) tentatively slated

for Saskatoon region. I was happy to participate on behalf of the Nature Society as this fits our goals well in terms of protection, conservation and education. While we seem to be moving at glacial speed here, I was glad to see people are still advancing this important initiative!

The NCC and the NUP conversations got me thinking about the bigger picture about protecting biodiversity and the global crises that we are facing. Then last week, May 22, many of you would've read a news release from Birds Canada celebrating International Day for Biological Diversity in an exciting way. They wrote "The federal government has announced an investment of 15 million Canadian dollars over three years for Birds Canada to support biodiversity and the health of ecosystems in Latin America and the Caribbean through the Conserva Aves Initiative. This contribution will safeguard threatened endemic and migratory birds and their habitats, helping to achieve the objectives of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework." Birds Canada continues by saying "The goal is to create 100 new protected areas totaling at least 2 million hectares."

This is great news indeed to stop the loss of biodiversity through creating protected areas for wildlife. The news release profiles the Piping Plover, the Black Tern and the Canada Warbler among the many birds at risk that make Latin America and the Caribbean their winter homes. I was more than curious to read further about the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, something I am not familiar with. This United Nations framework was passed in Montreal in December 2022, over a year ago and hailed by some as the "Paris Agreement for nature."

The federal government has created the Milestone Document, an interim framework to help create a new long-term response to the Biodiversity crisis. The Canadian 2030 Strategy is scheduled to be ready for the Cali, Colombia Convention on Biological Diversity in late fall this year. While no longer seeking citizen feedback, the Milestone Document is still a very compelling read. I was delighted to see both grasslands and wetlands as a prominent concern. Here is the link to the milestone document: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/biodiversity/national-biodiversity-strategy/milestone-document.html>)

I think this is something we should keep track of and be ready to comment further on - let me know what you think!

In my last message, I mentioned that I might pass on a note about the odd book I've just read – well here's my latest

recommendation – *The Economy of Sparrows* by Trevor Herriot. I'm sure there are a few of you who have read this already as Trevor is no stranger to many of us here in Saskatchewan. Having written many well-received non-fiction titles already, Herriot has turned his hand to writing fiction, which he does skillfully. Set in southern Saskatchewan amongst a bird-watching backdrop, many of us will find much in common with the characters. Check it out, it's a great summer read and let's support Saskatchewan writers!

In conclusion, please check out the lists of outings here in the newsletter! I hope to see you out and about!

David

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. Advanced registration is required. To register or for more information e-mail: naturekids@saskatoonnature.org.

Visit the Young Naturalists web page for more details.

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

- Mary Houston Bluebird Trail. Multiple dates (see the Young Naturalist web page for dates).
- July mid week Butterflies. Wed. July 10.
- August mid week Butterflies Wed. August 7.



White Admiral B. Godwin

Golden Eagles

The Golden Eagles is an informal group of Saskatoon Nature Society (SNS) members. Our interests include all aspects of the natural world (birds, plants, etc.), as well as social and multicultural history. We engage in out-of-town and city field trips. Participants should be SNS members and consider membership in Nature Saskatchewan.

Unless otherwise indicated, we meet on Thursdays at the Churchill Shopping Centre, Taylor St. and Clarence Avenue. Please check departure dates and times. Typically, participants are asked to bring snacks and beverages, lunch and chairs unless otherwise noted by the trip leader. For out-of-town trips, those who have CB or FRS radios should

bring them. Carpooling is at participants' discretion but is encouraged.

Leaders may request pre-registration for certain destinations. Participation is free, although some destinations may charge admission or encourage donations. Please contact the trip leader if you have any questions.

Thursday, July 4, 9:00 AM, Morning only

Patterson Arboretum, Uofs

Meet at the Arboretum (access via Preston Ave south of College Drive)

Leader: Joan Feather 306-653-3160 jfeather@sasktel.net

Thursday, July 11, 8:00 AM

Maymont area NCC Conservation Easement south of N. Sask. River

Meet at Westgate Mall to carpool

Bring snack, beverage, lunch, chair

Leader: Kathryn Cameron 639-998-1110 katcam@shaw.ca

Thursday, July 18, time TBA, Full day trip

Back to Batoche Days Festival and/or Batoche Historic Site

Meet at Churchill to carpool

Festival free for seniors; Historic Site daily admission

\$11.25 for seniors

Lunch TBA

Leader: Joan Feather 306-653-3160 jfeather@sasktel.net

Thursday, July 25, 9:30 AM

Purple Martin colony west of Furdale, and Ancient Spirals trail walk

Meet at Churchill to carpool

Bring snack, beverage, lunch and chair

Leaders: Joan Feather 306-653-3160

jfeather@sasktel.net

and Geri Eaket 306-914-6217 bgeaket@gmail.com

Thursday, August 1, time TBA

Prairie Ridge Resort (formerly Petrofka) trail walk

Meet at Lawson Heights Mall to carpool

Purchase lunch on site, or bring picnic lunch

Leader: Geri Eaket 306-914-6217 bgeaket@gmail.com

Thursday, August 8, 8:30 AM
Restoring 71 acreage trail walk
Meet at Churchill to carpool

Morning only

Leader: Kathryn Cameron 639-998-1110 katcam@shaw.ca

Thursday, August 15, 8:30 AM
Ukrainian Catholic St. Volodymyr Park tour and trail walk
Meet at Churchill to carpool

\$5 donation for site use appreciated

Bring snack, beverage, chair, lunch

Leader: Nancy Lease 306-371-9286

berzerker9001@hotmail.com

Thursday, August 22, time TBA, Morning only
Fall warbler walk near Factoria
Meeting place TBA

Leader: Nancy Lease 306-371-9286

berserker9001@hotmail.com

Thursday, August 29, 8:30 AM
Shekinah trails and birds
Meet at Lawson Heights Mall to carpool

\$15 per person for use of site

Bring snack, beverage, lunch, chair

Leader: Geri Eaket 306-914-6217

bgeaket@gmail.com



Meadow Blazing Star K. Meeres

A Bit of Golden Eagles History Hilda Noton

2024 marks the 40th anniversary of the Golden Eagles. It was formed in 1984 as an informal subgroup of the Saskatoon Natural History Society*. Three experienced (and sometimes serious) birders, Ron Bremner, Frank Roy and Jim Wedgewood were retired and liked to meet on Thursdays. They invited others to join them. During the summer they met weekly and once a month during the winter. They enjoyed being outdoors, kept bird sighting observations and often contributed to bird count records and *Saskatoon Field Notes*.

Field trips started out in local areas but soon widened to Blackstrap, Pike Lake, Redberry Lake, Thickwood Hills, Fort Carlton and the North Saskatchewan River Valley.

Our field trip schedule remains the much same today; we still do local field trips and often drive out of the city, sometimes to the same places that the founding members visited.

Recent trips included local parks, Regional Parks, Last Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Sanctuary, areas with bluebirds, shorebirds and whooping cranes. Of historic interest, we visited St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster where the cathedral is decorated with Berthold Imhoff art, Ancient Echoes Interpretive Center with Indigenous history and artifacts, at Herschel, Saskatoon Ukrainian Museum and Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Stan Rowe, ecologist and former professor at the University of Saskatchewan, was a member of the early group. After leaving the prairies, he spoke about the Golden Eagles, ".....we Saskatoonians went out exploring--- intrigued by the different landscapes of hills, valleys and plains, admiring flowers in season, watching for wild creatures. It was fine recreation, good exercise in the fresh air, with a relaxing lunch together in a quiet spot. Few thought of it as anything more than an enjoyable outing, but I am sure that it goes deeper than that. In such experiences we return to our evolutionary roots, exposing ourselves briefly to the way we were, to the way humans lived as foragers for most of the last four or five million years, ever since the genus Homo branched off from the chimpanzee and the bonomo apes".

*In 2008 the name was changed to Saskatoon Nature Society

*Much of this history was taken from 'For the Love of Nature' by Atilla Chanady.

Is birding good for the brain?

Researchers at the University of Toronto are conducting a study to learn about the influence learning about birds has on cognitive and brain health. If you would like to take part in the study please go to www.birdingstudies.com

Did you know that learning skills—like bird identification—can reshape the brain?
Join us as we continue to explore connections between neuroplasticity and knowledge of the natural world.



Our newest online study is now available at www.birdingstudies.com

The study (~15min) is open to all, regardless of experience. Research updates and publications are also posted on the site so you can see what you're helping us discover. Study participation spots refresh monthly. Thanks!

 Participants can enter raffle for binoculars giveaway 

Saskatoon Nature Society

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Website:

<https://saskatoonnature.org>

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SaskatoonNatureSociety

Newsletter



The deadline for the next newsletter is **August 16**. Please send any announcements or articles to Kathy Meeres. Please email: 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) with your email address to switch. Thank you.

Chairs and Coordinators


Conservation	Sara Bryson	306-261-6156	
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Director	Heather Brenneman		
Director	Bill Robertson		
Director	Jan Spencer		j.spencer01@sasktel.net

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.

JULY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Orchid Trip	2	3	4 GE: Patterson Arboretum	5	6
7	8	9	10 YN: Butterflies	11 GE: Maymont area NCC	12	13 Douglas Pk Sand Dunes
14	15	16	17	18 GE: Batoche	19	20
21 Swale Bioblitz	22	23	24	25 GE: Purple Martins Furdale & Ancient Spirals	26	27 Shorebird Trip
28	29	30	31			

AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 GE: Prairie Ridge Resort trail	2	3
4 NCC Asquith	5	6	7 YN: Butterflies	8 GE: Restoring 71 acreage	9	10 Lakewood & Heritage Pk Birds
11	12	13	14	15 GE: St. Volodymyr Park	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 GE: Factoria Warblers	23	24 Forestry Farm Warblers
25	26	27	28	29 GE: Shekina trails	30	31

YN: Young Naturalists; GE: Golden Eagles