

Saskatoon Nature Society Newsletter

October 2026

Vol. 48 No. 8

An Evening with Our Conservation Friends

Renny W. Grilz, PAg, Director, Conservation -
Meewasin Valley Authority &

Andrea Laughren, Regional Vice-President, Nature
Conservancy Canada, Prairies Region

In person and online!

**Rm # HLTH 1A60, Health Sciences Bldg., U of S,
Thursday, October 15th, 2026 @ 7:30 PM**

Renny leads a multidisciplinary team responsible for the stewardship, restoration, and ecological management of the Meewasin Valley. With more than 25 years of experience in conservation across the Canadian Prairies, Renny has worked with Meewasin, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Ducks Unlimited Canada.

His work at Meewasin is helping advance a more integrated, science-informed approach to conservation that connects on-the-ground stewardship with ecological monitoring, research, GIS and data, partnerships, and public engagement. This includes prairie and wetland restoration, targeted grazing, invasive species management, native plants, and the restoration of natural ecological processes. Renny is a founding member of the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange. Renny is also co-owner of Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company, where his family has been growing native prairie wildflowers and producing native seed for more than 30 years.



Andrea Laughren brings more than 25 years of leadership experience across the non-profit, charitable, public and private sectors. As Regional Vice-President for the Prairie Region, she provides strategic leadership to advance conservation across Manitoba and Saskatchewan, building partnerships that help conserve nature while supporting healthy communities and sustainable economies.

Passionate about nature, Andrea starts most mornings walking her dog, Rocky, taking time to appreciate the natural world before the day begins. She is inspired by the opportunity to help ensure future generations experience the same connection to nature and is proud to work alongside an exceptional team dedicated to conserving the landscapes that sustain both people and nature.



Thank you for joining us for **An Evening with Our Conservation Friends** — an inspiring gathering celebrating the people, projects, and partnerships helping to shape the future of conservation. Learn more about the important work of the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Meewasin and hear about exciting conservation initiatives happening across the prairies and in Saskatoon!

Please note that if the link to join online requests a passcode, please enter SNS. If you have trouble connecting via the Zoom link, please text or phone LeeAnn at 306-880-9027. Please consider joining the meeting a little early so we can address any problems.

*All members who have registered an email address with SNS will receive an **email containing the link to join the meeting through Zoom**. If you have not registered an email address with us, but would like to do so, please contact Claire Bullaro at c.bear@sasktel.net.*



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/>

Sunday, October 4, 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Whooping Crane Viewing Trip 2

Meet at Flying J Travel Centre parking lot south of Denny's Restaurant, 3850 Idylwyld Dr N

Leader: Bob Godwin

Open Only to current Saskatoon Nature Society members.

Limit: 5 vehicles plus leader.

SNS members should register in advance by email to

trips@saskatoonnature.org



Saturday, October 10, 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Whooping Crane Viewing Trip 3

Meet at Flying J Travel Centre parking lot south of Denny's Restaurant, 3850 Idylwyld Dr N

Leader: Kerry Hjertaas

Open Only to current Saskatoon Nature Society members.

Limit: 5 vehicles plus leader.

SNS members should register in advance by email to

trips@saskatoonnature.org

Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding near Osler

Sep 21 – until snow stays

Limited number of participants each evening. First come basis.

You must request to attend your preferred date by texting Marten Stoffel at 306-230-9291.

If weather is appropriate and space is available, he will confirm by text and give you directions.

Monday, October 12, 2026, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Woodlawn Cemetery Bird Walk

Work up an appetite for Thanksgiving dinner by strolling through Woodlawn Cemetery. We'll look for late fall migrants and early-returning winter residents. Later we may move to the riverbank.

Meet at the Cemetery's gate, just off 33rd St, on Memorial Ave, west of Warman Road. See red star on map in our guide. Google pin is

<https://goo.gl/maps/NSHg8PbGvdy>

Bus: Route 14 North Industrial departs downtown terminal at 9:01 AM and arrives at 33rd St and 1st Ave about 9:10 AM. Walk east 2 short blocks to Memorial Avenue.

Leader: Robert Johanson (306-653-2610)

Guide to Nature Viewing Sites: Page 154.

Saturday, November 7, 9 AM – 1 PM

Blackstrap Waterfowl Trip

We will drive to Blackstrap Lake to look for ducks, loons, grebes and other waterfowl. At this time of year, some unusual species sometimes show up here. Bring a scope if you have one.

Meet at the Wild Birds Unlimited parking lot on the SE corner of 8th Street and Emerson Avenue.

Leader: Kerry Hjertaas (306-260-6602)

Guide to Nature Viewing Sites: Page 24.



Canvasback pair

M. Haga

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

Saturday September 12th was our annual fall bird count, and the weather co-operated with the counters to enjoy the day! We have had some tough rainy days this fall, but Saturday worked out well. We patiently wait for the numbers from John but in the meantime, we can always speculate based on our sectors. I had the great honour of working with a new volunteer who was very sharp on her birds and especially spotting and counting them! My area in the NW sector is largely water based so we get a lot of ducks, and I find this time of year challenging as sometimes everything seems to look like female mallards – not so this year! Fiona was spot on pointing out unique features that I seemed to have missed! She also was looking in different places that I also seemed to have glossed over. Thank you, Fiona! This is why it's nice to refresh your viewpoints with new volunteers, so nothing is missed, and the birds get counted!

Also, I have to say the annual Fall Pizza Evening at Joe Stookey's was another big success. Joe is a great host and chef, keeping us well fed and entertained on a beautiful fall evening. The weather looked challenging early in the day, but it cleared up nicely. The evening's conversation seemed to really have people concerned about where the birds have gone. We were treated to a Pileated Woodpecker visiting the trees nearby, but Marten noted the magpie numbers are very low. He also noted that while we see warblers still, they are not in the big numbers that were present just a few years ago! Many thanks to Joe and Gayle for hosting us; we sure appreciated the evening!

Speaking of volunteers and members, exciting news – we have reached a very special benchmark of receiving our 500th membership! Bravo! That means a lot – congrats to all those who make the SNS work and provide the services that local people are looking for, whether it be field trips or presentations or doing advocacy work; it's what people are looking for! Most interestingly, we had a member renew and sign up as a volunteer for conservation and advocacy – right on! It helps so much when we are looking for support; we have a good starting point. So, if you are thinking of helping out – don't be shy, send me a note and we will get you plugged in!

I have to say a special thank you to Mercy and Rylan who are working on social media, they are doing a great job of advertising in a very creative manner on Facebook. If you haven't checked us out on Facebook, be sure to click like on our page and follow us! Also of special interest, you may

want to check out Ebird trip reports which include our more recent outings. You can see the list of species, where the trip went and some photos! Here is the report from the summer shorebird outing with Kerry Hjertaas: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/552836> - very interesting indeed!

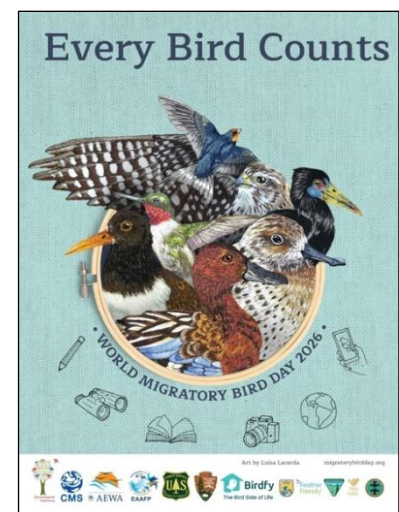
You may be seeing a new look on our website as well, as Trent upgrades the site to make it more current. Trent is always looking for feedback on what works for people and what they are looking for – any thoughts be sure to reach out to Trent!

Recently, as president, I received an email from Susan Robertson of Broderick letting us know that the community of Broderick is considering building a viewing pier and trails on their reservoir and would we help as interested birders – I replied sure! Always happy to lend a hand getting more birding hot spots nearby and with a committed community!

We will be having a very interesting evening with two very important conservation partners, Meewasin and NCC. It's been a while since they have been at one of our meetings - a lot has happened and even more could be happening! With renewed leadership at both organizations, I'm sure Renny's and Andrea's comments will be insightful and timely. We continue our partnership with NCC and of course we are very interested in what's happening with the National Urban Park and the newly announced Northeast trail development and the Maple Grove plans. I hope to see you all out on Oct 15th!

As I look forward to the month ahead, I see Big Bird Day and in the Southern Hemisphere, World Migratory Bird Day is coming up on Saturday October 10th. This is great reason to get out and explore our region for birds that are on their way south or check in on those who might be staying longer with us. Conservation and counting those birds are always a great reason to get out and look around!

- David



Bravo!!

**Saskatoon Nature Society
membership
hits the 500 mark!**

Well done!

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/>

Sandhill Cranes - Saturday, Oct 3

Northern Saw-whet Owl Field Trip - Oct (TBD)

Bird Feeder Workshop – November 14



Sandhill Cranes

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, beverages, lunch and chairs unless otherwise noted by the trip leader. For out-of-town trips, those who have CB radios 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.

October 1- Golden Eagle Luncheon - 12:00 to 2:00 pm.

Agars Corner - Hwy 16 and Floral Rd

Menu: chicken parmesan with noodles, veggie tray, dessert and coffee/tea. **Please identify any dietary concerns or allergies when registering.** The cost per person is \$35 which includes gratuity - plan to pay at the site, exact cash only please. **Registration required by September 24** with Valerie Martz phone/text 306-229-0419 or email vmartz@shaw.ca

We must provide a number for the caterer a week in advance. Late registrants will only be accommodated in place of late cancellations, after September 24. We must pay the caterer for the number we submit so no shows or late cancellations must be paid. Please let Valerie know when you register if you wish to carpool from Churchill Shopping Centre.

During the meal we'll enjoy member images. **If you have images you would like to include, contact John Patterson by September 24** (phone/text 306-371-9354, or email: jrpatterson@shaw.ca) for more information.

Oct 7 & 8 – Saw-whet Owl Banding – Osler, 7:00- 10:00 pm

Meet at Flying J at 3850 Idylwyld Dr N. Maximum of 10 people per evening.

Registration for each evening is required with Geri Eaket 306-914-6217

Leaders - Marten Stoffel and Regina Koenders (from Saskatoon).



Northern Saw-whet Owl M. Haga

Oct 14 & 15- Whooping Cranes, 9:00 am (morning only).

Meet at Flying J at 3850 Idylwyld Dr N. Bring snacks and chairs. Carpooling is encouraged (maximum of 5 cars).

Registration for each date is required with Geri Eaket 306-914-6217

Leader - Marten Stoffel.

October 22 - River Ridge Walk and Langham Museum. 9:00 am.

Meet at Petro Canada Station at 71st and Hwy 16. Museum by donation. Soup and sandwich lunch at Langham Museum.

Leader - Regina Koenders 306-230-9293

October 29 - U of S Art : College Gallery (Peter MacKinnon Bldg) and Ag Bio Bldg. 10:00 am

We will meet in the Administration building (105 Administration Place) outside of Student Central/Room c80 on the first floor with a student ambassador to take us around to a couple locations and galleries, where we will be joined by Leah Taylor from the Galleries Department. We will start in the Peter MacKinnon Building at College Art Gallery 1, and after that we will go to the Agriculture Building to see the gallery there as well as other pieces.

Lunch at Filosofi, 414 Cumberland Ave N.

Registration required by October 22 with Regina Koenders 306-230-9293 (Maximum 25).

**Living Sky Wildlife Rehabilitation
Bird Bingo (Wingo) Evening**

October 28
Details at

<https://livingskywildliferehabilitation.org/bird-bingo/>

It's not too early to RENEW!

Membership Information

SNS memberships go from January-December. **Renew by December 31 to ensure delivery of your newsletter.**

Memberships paid after July 1 will continue through the following year.

SNS Membership can be paid for 1, 2 or 5 years. Member cards are mailed out annually.

Donations qualify for a tax receipt.

Don't forget the retail discounts available

- 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.

You can find a link to the membership form and information at:

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



Mark your calendars for October Big Day—10 Oct 2026! Like Global Big Day, October Big Day is an opportunity to celebrate our shared love of birds. Last October, 900,000 people united for a single day of birding. Can we beat that number and make this year the first October Big Day with more than a million people enjoying birds together?

Wherever you are on 10 October, take a few minutes to enjoy birds and share what you find. Participate from anywhere—even from home! By taking part in October Big Day you're also celebrating Global Bird Week and World Migratory Bird Day. Be a part of the global team and help set new records for October birding.

For more information, see

<https://ebird.org/news/october-big-day-2026>

Saskatoon Nature Society

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PO Box 27013 GROSVENOR PARK

SASKATOON SK S7H 5N9

Website:

<https://saskatoonnature.org>

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SaskatoonNatureSociety

Newsletter



The deadline for the next newsletter is **October 17**. 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.

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Director	Guy Wapple.....	
Director	Wally Wells.....	

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.

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Northern Saw-whet Owls; date TBD				1 GE: Luncheon Agars Corner	2	3 YN: Sandhill Cranes
4 Whooping Cranes-2	5	6	7 GE: Saw-whet Owl banding	8 GE: Saw-whet Owl banding	9	10 Whooping Cranes-3
11	12 Woodlawn Cemetery Bird Walk	13	14 GE: Whooping Cranes	15 Oct Meeting ----- GE: Whooping Cranes	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 GE: River Ridge and Langham	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 GE: College Galleries	30	31 

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Blackstrap Waterfowl Trip
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 YN: Bird Feeder Workshop
15	16	17	18	19 Nov Meeting -----	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

YN: Young Naturalists; GE: Golden Eagles

