

# THE PARK PRESS

April 2015    Volume 7    Issue 2    Page 1

## Rabbit vs Hare



Snowshoe Hare

Staff Photo

Rabbits and hares look a lot alike, but they are in fact different species, much like sheep and goats. In general hares are larger and have longer legs and ears than rabbits do. This makes hares faster than rabbits, which is useful since hares live entirely above ground, never digging burrows; although cottontail rabbits also do not burrow. Snowshoe hares can travel up to 45km/h (28mph) and jackrabbits up to 64km/h (40mph). Rabbits tend to freeze, hide, or go in their burrows to avoid predators instead.

Other differences between the two species can be seen at birth. Young hares (leverets) are born with fur, their eyes are open, they can move and regulate their heat. Their mothers can leave them right away and don't need much of a nest.

Rabbit mothers on the other hand, make a nest lined with their fur, grass and other soft, warm materials to raise their helpless babies in. Young rabbits (bunnies or kits) are born blind, naked and unable to regulate their heat. The species also have different mating habits. Rabbits are more social, living together in colonies. Male rabbits will fight to become dominant and then get to mate with the most females. Hares, on the hand, live independently, coming together to breed with very little fighting. Male hares chase the females, proving their worth if they can catch them. Hares have a longer pregnancy of around 42 days while rabbits average 30 days, but both can breed multiple times a year. A final difference is in their diet. Rabbits prefer soft grasses, leaves, and vegetables, while hares eat harder vegetation like bark, twigs, buds, and shoots.



Domestic Rabbit

Staff Photo

## Featured Park Friend: River Otter



River Otter in Winter

Staff Photo

**Name:** River Otter

**Scientific Name:**

*Lontra canadensis*

**Size:**

Length – 0.85-1.4m (2.8-4.5ft)

Weight – 5-13.5kg (11-30lbs)

**Colour:** Dark brown with lighter undersides and face.

Their fur is thick and waterproof, and their tails make up a third of their body length.

**Lifespan:** 8-10 years.

**Habitat:** any water habitat including: rivers, ponds, lakes, marshes, estuaries and even along ocean coasts.

**Range:** Throughout Canada and the US, except the extreme Arctic and parts of the central and southwestern US.

**Feeding:** Carnivores, eating mostly fish, but also crustaceans, mollusks, amphibians, birds, insects and reptiles, including turtles.

**Breeding:** Mating occurs sometime between December and April after parturition, delayed implantation of the fertilized eggs takes place until the following spring, a litter of 1-3 pups is born after a 60-day gestation. The mother cares for the young in a den. They are able to swim after 2 months and are independent by autumn.

**Fun Facts:** They remain active all winter, using holes in the ice to breathe. They have waterproof fur, webbed feet and can close their ears and nostrils to keep water out. They also have a clear eyelid so they can see underwater.

They can dive up to 18m (60ft) and are able to hold their breath for around 8 minutes.



River Otter Sleeping

Staff Photo

## Upcoming Events

### Learn 2 Fish

**Sat May 2  
9am-12:30pm**

Join a sport fish development officer, to learn the safe and proper way to fish in NS and see what you can catch. **Fishing equipment will be supplied. This is recommended for ages 8 to 100.** You must pre-register and receive a confirmation to participate in this event by phoning: 902-758-5316 or emailing: [legacycentre@novascotia.ca](mailto:legacycentre@novascotia.ca).

### Fishing Opportunity

**Sun May 3  
9am-12pm**

Meet at the Greenwing Legacy Centre for an opportunity to fish in a stocked pond. This is for fisher folks who already know how to fish. There will **not** be any instruction or teaching component, but an interpreter will be there to oversee the event. You must bring your own fishing gear, worms, hat, insect repellent, water and snacks. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

### Whose Egg is it?

**Sat May 16  
11am-3pm**

Join us and see who hatches! We have been incubating eggs and the chicks will be ready to peck free from their shells. Learn about nesting, hatching, and brooding in the wild, while meeting the new arrivals!

**Regular Park Admission Applies**  
**For more info call: (902) 758-5316**  
**e-mail: [legacycentre@novascotia.ca](mailto:legacycentre@novascotia.ca)**

## New Arrival!



A sure sign of Spring is newborn animals. Though spring will likely be late this year we do have one youngster eager to impress guests. Our latest addition is a young female Dall Sheep. Did you know Dall Sheep are also called Thinhorn Sheep and live in more northern regions than Bighorn Sheep? They are also the only white wild sheep in the world!

## Snowshoeing



Snowshoeing at the Park was a great success this year. Thanks to everyone who decided to embrace winter with this fun activity. See you next year!



Be sure to 'like' us on Facebook!



Follow Sam on Twitter  
[@ShubenacadieSam](https://twitter.com/ShubenacadieSam)



## Upcoming Events

Guest

Speaker Saturdays

Saturday April 18th 1:00-2:30pm

Spring! Brought to you by  
Biodiversity!

Presented by Dr J Sherman Boates of  
NS Department of Natural Resources

The beauty and revitalizing energy of spring surrounds us; the breath-taking perfume of mayflowers, the skin-tingling voice of the song sparrow and spring peeper, and the vibrant colours of bursting buds and wildflower blossoms. In this presentation, I will use signs of spring to illustrate what biodiversity is, explore what diversity is, and explain many of the hidden and critical ways that biodiversity benefits us all.

Saturday May 16th 1:00-2:30pm

Threats to Nova Scotian Reptiles

Presented by Dr. Steve Mockford of  
Acadia University

Nova Scotia is home to only 10 of Canada's 58 reptile species. I will talk about our reptile species, where they live, and their life history. I will also talk about our interaction with these species and how we affect each other. Several of Nova Scotia's reptile species are recognized as being at risk and I will talk about the threats that cause this risk, what we can do about these threats, and about how volunteers have contributed to the conservation and recovery of these reptiles at risk in Nova Scotia.

For general inquiries call 902-758-5316  
or email: [legacycentre@novascotia.ca](mailto:legacycentre@novascotia.ca)



## Did you know?

- ◆ The more leaves a **Maple Tree** has the sweeter the sap and syrup will be.
- ◆ **American Goldfinches** are strict vegetarians, eating almost nothing but seeds. 
- ◆ **Ladybugs** come in many colours other than red including: pink, yellow, white, orange and black; and not all of them have spots. 
- ◆ A group of **Fish** is often called a School but some have particular names, like a group of **Trout** is a Hover, **Herring** is an Army, **Bass** are a Shoal, **Sharks** are a Shiver and **Jellyfish** are a Smack.



Can you find the Spring Flowers  
hidden in this puzzle?

R	A	I	C	L	Y	T	S	F	R	L	Z
T	E	W	R	S	Z	N	F	P	E	U	P
H	P	P	I	I	O	S	U	T	W	F	D
Q	X	A	P	W	S	C	I	G	O	P	L
C	D	E	D	I	R	A	E	U	L	I	A
F	R	R	T	E	L	I	L	Y	F	L	V
Y	O	J	T	E	Z	S	E	K	Y	U	E
P	L	T	I	L	L	Y	Y	C	A	T	N
B	U	P	O	E	G	O	A	D	M	L	D
B	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L	A	I	E
S	X	J	D	T	V	W	F	V	F	L	R
S	U	C	O	R	C	U	D	X	S	N	N



BUTTERCUP	IRIS	MAYFLOWER
CROCUS	LADYSLIPPER	SNOWDROP
DAFFODIL	LAVENDER	TULIP
DAISY	LILY	VIOLET