



THE PARK PRESS

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Farewell Friends



Black Bears

Staff Photo

In late November, in consultation with our veterinarian and following a significant decline in mobility we made the difficult, but necessary decision to euthanize our elderly black bears. These bears were brought to the park as orphans and spent 23 happy years with us. Their lifespan was much longer than it would have been in the wild, but age was taking its toll on their bodies and they showed mobility and other age-related health issues. We have received an outpouring of condolences from the community and we want to thank everyone for sharing their support, photos, and memories with us. Your sympathy in our loss has been touching. The bears were a very popular part of the park family and offered an opportunity for the public to see an animal they may not get a chance to see in the wild.

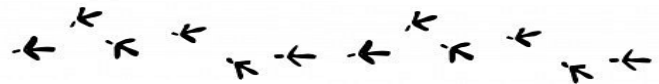
Migration Stopover



Sandhill Cranes

Staff Photo

A rare sight on the east coast of North America, a flock of Sandhill Cranes made a stopover in our Elk enclosure in early December, directly across from our own Sandhill Crane enclosure. These large birds normally breed in central, western and northern Canada before migrating through the central and western United States to winter in Mexico. Some do winter in Florida and parts of the Caribbean though, which could explain their appearance here.



Miss an issue of the Park Press? Check out the archive on our **new** website:

wildlifepark.novascotia.ca



You can also sign-up to get newsletter and park updates e-mailed to you.

Featured Park Friend: Black Bear



Black Bear

Staff Photo

Name: Black Bear

Scientific Name:

Ursus americanus

Size: Length - 1.5-1.8m (5-6ft)

Height - 1-1.2m (3.2-4ft)

Weight - male - 135-270kg (300-600lbs)
female - 70-130kg (155-285lbs)

Colour: black is most common but can range from dark brown to light brown or be tinted reddish or bluish. Their muzzle is usually lighter and they often have a white chest patch.

Lifespan: 10-15 years

Habitat: Prefer dense mixed forests and thickets far from human activity, although garbage can attract them to dumps, parks and campgrounds. They are also drawn to apiaries (bee farms), barbeques and compost.

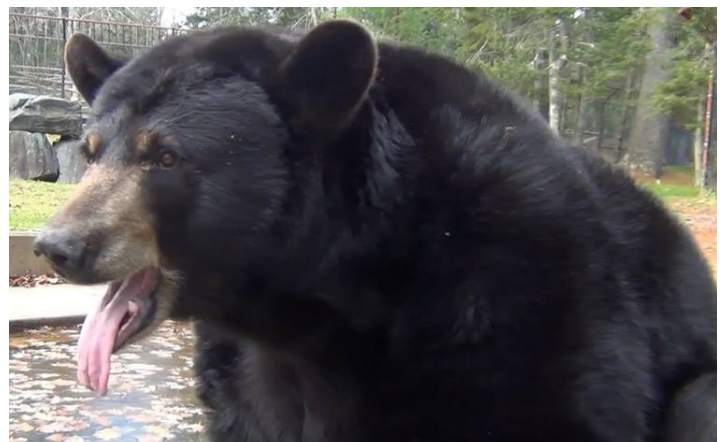
Range: Throughout Canada with populations in mountain ranges and protected parks in the US and Mexico.

Feeding: Omnivores, black bears will eat just about anything. Over 75% of their diet is plant material like grasses, roots, berries and nuts. The rest is mostly insects particularly ants and bees, they will also hunt small mammals, birds and consume carrion.

Breeding: Mostly solitary, they come together to mate in early summer. The embryo stops developing until late fall with 1-2 cubs being born in late January to early March. Cubs weigh around 250g (0.6lbs) at birth but grow quickly, emerging from the den by 3 months of age. They remain with their mother for about a year.

Fun Facts: They have an agile tongue and lips that allow them to pick up small food items like blueberries and ants. They appear slow but can run up to 55km/hr (35mph) if necessary. They are also strong climbers and swimmers.

During winter they will not eat or defecate while they sleep, but are not truly hibernating as they will wake up if disturbed or the weather is warm.



The long, agile tongue of the Black Bear

Staff Photo

Reindeer Cam is Back!



Santa checking on the Herd

Staff Photo

Back for a fourth season, Santa's Reindeer Cam is once again live until December 25th. Watch Santa feed the reindeer and check for mail at 9am and 3pm (AST) every day. You can rewind the feed up to 24 hours if you miss any of the action. You can also come to the park and watch in person on the weekends.

The park is open on Saturday and Sunday all winter from 9am-3pm.

View the webcam at:

<http://www.novascotiawebcams.com/en/webcams/reindeercam>

Be sure to check back in with novascotiawebcams.com and the park in mid-January for Sam's webcam.



Shubenacadie Sam

Staff Photo

Festive Events

Caribou Clatter And Reindeer Matter

Did you know that Caribou and Reindeer get their energy from eating lichen and moss?

Join us Dec 12, 13, 19 and 20 to learn more about Santa's hardest working helpers. From 1-3pm we will have information and activities about reindeer and lichen. There will also be hot chocolate, treats and even a visit from Santa himself at 2:30pm before he goes to feed the reindeer at 3pm. He can only spend a few minutes during this busy time of year, but the public are welcome to watch the 3pm feeding in person before the park closes.

For more information call 902-758-5316 or e-mail legacycentre@novascotia.ca

Groundhog's Day!

February 2nd is Groundhog's Day and Shubenacadie Sam will be making his prediction at 8am sharp! Don't miss the excitement! Festivities begin at 7am with face painting, hot chocolate, and more, before a bag piper and town crier start the loud celebration. Dress for the weather!

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



Upcoming Events

Night Sky Astronomy Adventure!

Friday Jan 15

(if overcast Saturday Jan 16)

Talk: 5:30pm to 6:15pm

Night Sky Viewing: 6:15pm to 7:30pm

Presented by Paul Heath, RASC

The January 15th night sky is packed with astronomy gems. Join Paul Heath, an Outreach Interpreter with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, and explore the mysteries within our Solar System: Pluto, Ceres, and the not so dwarf planets!! We'll look at what has been discovered and into the research to uncover the mysteries. Explore the Moon, Mars, Jupiter and the many bright stars of the winter sky!

If inclement weather or bad road conditions are anticipated, those registered will be contacted about the cancellation by 1:00 pm on Jan 15th.

Pre-registration required. You must receive a confirmation to be eligible for this event. For more information or to register, please phone 902-758-5316 or email legacycentre@novascotia.ca

DRESS WARM!!

Be sure to
'Like' us on
Facebook!



Did you know?

- ♦ Holly berries are actually drupes or stone fruit, like cherries or peaches, with a pit or stone surrounding their seed.
- ♦ The only mammal that can see in the ultraviolet spectrum is the **Reindeer**. Also some populations of reindeer travel the furthest out of all migrating land mammals.
- ♦ **Blue Jays** communicate their alertness using their head crest. They lay it flat when relaxed and raise it when they are being aggressive or frightened.
- ♦ There are male and female **Pine Cones**, males are small and soft while the females begin green and sticky before turning brown and tough as part of the tree's reproductive cycle.



Arctic Animal Match

Can you circle all the animals that live in the Arctic?

Coyote

Polar Bear

Garter Snake

White-tailed Deer

Caribou

Raccoon

Snowy Owl

Wild Turkey

Timber Wolf

Cougar

Painted Turtle

Moose

Beluga

Snowshoe Hare

Black Vulture

Harp Seal

Answers: Timber Wolf, Polar Bear, Moose, Caribou, Beluga, Snowshoe Hare, Snowy Owl, Harp Seal