



THE PARK PRESS

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Extra Snowy

**Snowy Owl****Photo By Wayne Barrett**

This winter, Snowy Owls have been sighted all over the Maritimes and into the Northeastern United States. These birds normally call the Arctic tundra their home. However, in the winter when food is scarce they migrate South around November, then return North in March to breed. Spotting these owls in Central Canada and the Prairies, where the terrain is more similar to their tundra home, is common compared to seeing them in the Atlantic regions. Seeing so many in Nova Scotia likely means that their population is particularly high this year. Their population roughly follows a four-year cycle of highs and lows, but their migration has an irregular pattern making their appearance here something of a mystery.

The general theory for their higher than normal population numbers is attributed to the predator-prey relationship Snowy Owls have with Lemmings; a staple in their diets. When the lemming population is high, more juvenile owls survive, increasing the owl population. With the increase of predators the lemming population then decreases, which in turn brings the predator population back down. This same cycle can be observed in predator and Snowshoe Hare populations.

Whatever the reason, Snowy Owls are here in force this winter so enjoy the rare sight. Since the sun never sets during their summer nesting season, these owls are diurnal rather than nocturnal, meaning they are active during the day. Just remember, if you are lucky enough to spot one, they are still a bird of prey so give them plenty of space.



Injured Snowy Owl
receiving treatment at
the Cobequid Wildlife
Rehabilitation Centre,
Hilden N.S.

Photo courtesy of the
CWRC

Featured Park Friend: Arctic Wolf



Arctic Wolf at Rest

Staff Photo

Name: Arctic Wolf

Scientific Name: *Canis lupus arctos*

Size:

Body Length – 1-1.8m (3.3'-6') long including tail of 30-50cm (1'-1.5')

Weight – 35-50kg (85-120lbs)

Colour: Generally white but they are closely related to the Grey or Timber wolf so can be mottled with grey, brown and black.

Lifespan: 7-9 years

Habitat: the Arctic tundra

Range: Alaska, Northern Canada and Greenland. Two hundred years ago Grey Wolves and their subspecies were the most widely distributed mammal in the world.

Feeding: they are carnivores hunting mainly muskox, caribou, elk, and moose. Occasionally hare and birds. They work hard only catching about 1 in every 10 large mammals they chase. They can eat 9kg (20lbs) of food in a sitting.

Breeding: the alpha male and his female mate in March or April and after a 9-week gestation the litter of 3-8 pups is born. Due to the permafrost they cannot dig dens so instead use rocky outcrops and caves. The pups stay in the den for two weeks but remain near it for at least a month. Members of the pack help raise and feed the litter.

Fun Facts: Arctic wolves rarely come in contact with humans so didn't suffer the same persecution and near extermination as their cousins the Grey Wolf. This makes Arctic Wolves the only subspecies of wolf that is not threatened or endangered.



Arctic Wolf Feeding

Staff Photo

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<http://wildlifepark.gov.ns.ca>

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Upcoming Events

Guest

Speaker Saturdays

Join us for a Free Educational Experience on the Fourth Saturday of the Month from **1:00-2:30pm** at the DUC Wetland Centre.

Feb 22 - Andrew Hebda

Invasive Species

Mar 22 - Gwenyth Jones

Symbiosis in Nature

Apr 26 - Emily Gratton

Learn to Camp

May 24 - Jana Cheverie

Conservation and Wetland Success Stories

For more information e-mail:

legacycentre@gov.ns.ca

No registration necessary.

Presentations are geared for mature audiences.

In case of bad weather call **(902) 758-7094** after 10:00am on the day of the presentation for an update.



Share your Park
Photos with us on
Facebook!



Did you know?

♦ One of the many uses of **Red Spruce** (Provincial Tree of NS) is to make string instruments like guitars.

♦ **Polar Bear** fur is transparent, hollow and has no pigment (colour). It reflects and scatters the light so it appears white, just like snowflakes do.

♦ Freshly caught **Smelts** smell just like cucumbers.



♦ **Beavers** cut down an average of 200 trees per year and can fall trees up to 40cm (15inches) in diameter.

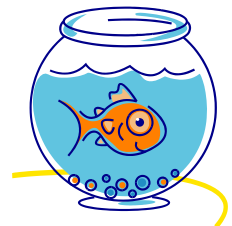
♦ A group of **Owls** is called a Parliament, a group of **Crows** is a Murder and a group of **Ravens** is an Unkindness.



Just 4 Fun!!

Joke Time:

Q: Where do Superman's goldfish live?



A: In the Super Bowl



Q: What do you call a Groundhog's laundry?

A: Hogwash

Follow Shubie Sam on
Twitter
@ShubenacadieSam



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<http://wildlifepark.gov.ns.ca>

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Upcoming Events

Snowshoeing



Come out and try Snowshoeing! We provide the snowshoes if Nature provides us with snow! This event will be offered periodically on weekends starting Dec 14th from 10:30-1:30. We encourage people of all ages to try this easy and fun recreational activity. To make arrangements or for more information: Phone: **(902) 758-7094**

Or Email: **legacycentre@gov.ns.ca**

Call **(902) 758-2040** on the day of the activity to check current weather conditions at the Park.

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 free face painting, hot chocolate and more before the bag piper and town crier start the loud celebration. The animal park will be open from 8:15am-3pm for free. We will be accepting donations for the local food bank. There will be a 10am guided nature walk. Dress for the weather! In case of inclement weather call **(902) 758-5316** after 6:30am the day of the event to ensure it's still on.



Just 4 Fun!!

Groundhog's Day Word Search

Once you find all the words in the puzzle can you uncover the secret message using the leftover letters?

T	S	W	H	U	B	E	Y	N	E
S	W	O	I	N	A	R	O	G	T
A	E	R	C	N	A	I	R	W	A
C	A	R	A	U	T	O	D	O	N
E	T	U	R	I	U	E	I	D	R
R	H	B	D	N	E	S	R	A	E
O	E	A	D	A	M	S	B	H	B
F	R	H	I	G	D	A	Y	S	I
T	O	P	R	E	D	I	C	T	H
G	K	C	U	H	C	D	O	O	W

Groundhog
Predict
Weather
Shadow

February
Tradition
Burrow
Hibernate

Winter
Forecast
Woodchuck

Secret Message:

_____ ' _____ !

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