



THE PARK PRESS

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Backyard Feeders



Residential Bird Feeders

Staff Photo

Many people enjoy feeding wildlife in their yards, especially during winter, but this practice can actually be harmful to the animals. In most cases, wild animals do not need food from humans to survive; they are adapted to life in the wild. During winter many animals den up and live off of their fat stores, only venturing out to forage on nice days. By providing a constant food source humans are interrupting their natural behaviour. Some birds will not migrate if they have abundant food, but they are not equipped for the cold weather. Also wildlife populations constantly fluctuate naturally with the conditions in their habitat, so increasing local populations can throw off the natural balance of the ecosystem, stretching resources too far. Another issue is that wildlife will return to places where they have found an easy meal rather than find food themselves, so juveniles may not learn to forage for themselves.

As wild animals encounter humans more often, they lose their natural fear and can potentially become a nuisance. They may also end up hit by a car, or killed or injured in some other way in urban environments. Wild animals also bring pests and diseases with them, like ticks, which can be transferred to humans and our pets. The best way we can care for wildlife is to maintain quality habitats and healthy ecosystems for them to live in. Plant native bushes and trees that will provide not only shelter, but a natural food source like berries and nuts. Provide a fresh water source. Do not use herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals. If you do choose to feed animals in your yard, keep the feeders clean and full of natural foods.

Help keep the “wild” in wildlife!

For more information on feeding wildlife with care visit:

<http://novascotia.ca/natr/wildlife/living-with-wildlife/feeding-wildlife-full.asp>



Blue Jay Near Feeder

Staff Photo

<http://wildlifepark.novascotia.ca>

Featured Park Friend: Arctic Fox



Arctic Fox (Winter Coat)

Staff Photo

Name: Arctic Fox

Scientific Name:

Alopex lagopus

Size:

Height – 30cm (12in)

Length – 75-115cm (30-45in)

Weight – 2.5-7.5kg (5.5-16.5lbs)

Colour: A thick white coat in winter changing to a two-tone brown coat in summer. Some animals have blue colouration being light blue-grey in winter and dark blue-grey in summer.

Lifespan: 3-6 years.

Habitat: Arctic tundra (above the treeline) as well as arctic ice floes and marine coasts.

Range: The entire arctic tundra across Canada, Alaska, Greenland, Iceland, Scandinavia and Russia.

Feeding: Carnivores, feeding mostly on lemmings, Arctic fox are so dependent on this food source their population grows and crashes following the lemming 3-4 year cycle. They will also eat other small mammals, seabirds, eggs and leftovers from polar bears.

Breeding: Mating begins in March or April with playful courtship. The pair will then find a den and fix it up together. After a gestation of 51-57 days the litter of around 11 pups (whelps) is born. The male hunts for the family until the babies are weaned at 5-6 weeks. The pair then works together and the pups are ready to leave the den 14-15 weeks after birth.

Fun Facts:

Litters of up to 22 pups (whelps) have been recorded in Russia and a family of arctic fox can consume 4000 lemming during the denning period.

Equipped with thick fur, small extremities and complex circulatory systems, arctic fox can survive in temperatures of -50°C (-58°F).



Young Arctic Fox (Summer Coat)

Staff Photo

Upcoming Events

Snowshoeing at the Park

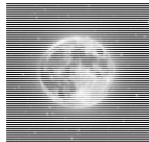
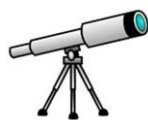


Have you ever wanted to try snowshoeing? We have the snowshoes if winter gives us the snow. This will be offered periodically on weekends starting January 10, 2015, from 10am-1pm. We wish to encourage people of all ages to try this easy and free recreational activity. To make arrangements or get more information:

E-mail legacycentre@novascotia.ca or Phone 902-758-5316.

To check weather conditions at the wildlife park call 902-758-2040.

Night Sky Astronomy

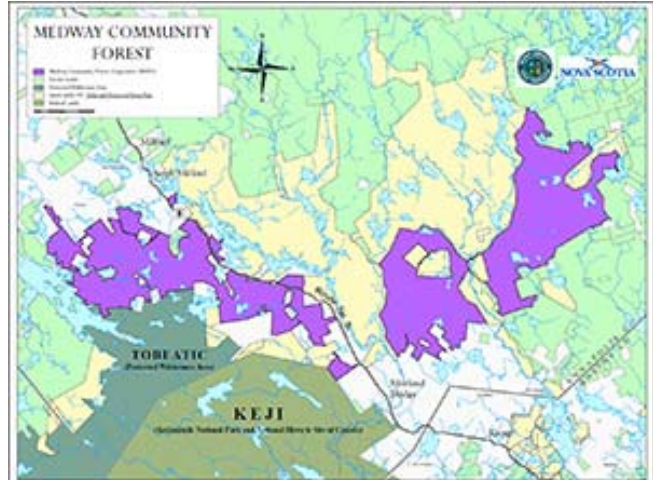


Saturday February 21st
Talk at 5:30pm Viewing at 6:15pm

Join Paul Heath, an Outreach Interpreter with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, and explore a few mysteries within our Solar System, puzzling Planets and “Is there life outside Earth”? We’ll look at what we discovered and how we are trying to uncover the facts hidden amongst the mysteries.

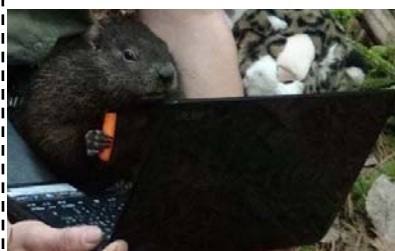
Please phone 902-758-7094 after 4:00pm on the day of the presentation to confirm it is not cancelled due to bad weather. For general inquiries call 902-758-5316 or e-mail: legacycentre@novascotia.ca

Community Forests



Map of Community Forest Project in NS DNR Photo

On January 30th, the Nova Scotia government signed an agreement with Medway Community Forest Co-operative Ltd to begin managing the first community forest in Eastern Canada. A community forest involves three areas of sustainability: social, ecological and economic. It allows for more local control over forest resources. The benefits can be both monetary and non-monetary. Community forests can support local economies, provide long-term employment, foster stewardship, strengthen community relationships, promote innovation and provide local training, among many other things. This three year pilot project will take place on 15,000 hectares (37,000 acres) of Crown land in Annapolis County. The government is also contributing \$274,000 to the project which is supported by many local groups too.



Groundhog's Day might be over but keep up with Sam all year on Twitter: @ShubenacdieSam



Upcoming Events

Guest

Speaker Saturdays

Saturday March 21st 1:00-2:30pm

Canada's Coolest Ocean Creature

Presented by Sean Brilliant of
the Canadian Wildlife Federation

Canada is 9 million km² of land – but also 6 million km² of ocean. There are thousands of wildlife species in our oceans. Some you probably know, but you may not realize how cool they are. Others you've probably never even heard of or didn't know they were a part of Canada. Do we need to protect all of these species? Do we even affect them? What role do we all have to make sure we protect our oceans? And, which is Canada's coolest ocean creature? Join us and find out!

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


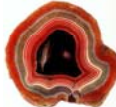

The beauty and revitalizing energy of spring surrounds us; the breath-taking perfume of mayflowers, the skin-tingling voice of the song sparrow and spring peeper, and the vibrant colours of bursting buds and wildflower blossoms. In this presentation, I will use signs of spring to illustrate what biodiversity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

Please phone 902-758-7094 after 10:00am on the day of the presentation to confirm it is not cancelled due to inclement weather.

For general inquiries call 902-758-5316 or email: legacycentre@novascotia.ca



Did you know?

- ◆ Plums, Cherries, Peaches, Apricots and Almonds are all members of the **Rose** family (*Rosaceae*).
- ◆ Bald Eagles, Mute Swans, Whooping Cranes, Black Vultures and Atlantic Puffins all **Mate for Life**. 
- ◆ Nova Scotia's Provincial Gemstone is  **Agate**, a type of Quartz and each piece is unique.
- ◆ One in every ten thousand **Clover** plants has the "lucky" four leaves.
- ◆ **Fish** can be aged by counting the growth rings on their scales or otoliths (earbones). 



Just 4 Fun!!

Circle the animals that stay active throughout the winter!



Black Bear

Beaver

Groundhog

River Otter

Coyote

Snapping Turtle

American Toad

Blue Jay

White-tailed Deer

Great Horned Owl

Snowshoe Hare

Red Squirrel

Garter Snake

Striped Skunk

Answers: Coyote, White-tailed Deer, Snowshoe Hare, Beaver, River Otter, Blue Jay, Great Horned Owl and Red Squirrel