



The Red Deer River Naturalist

SPECIAL NATURE CENTRAL EDITION: EDITORS—MYRNA PEARMAN AND SHAYE HILL

JULY, 2021

NATURE CENTRAL: CELEBRATING OUR WILD ALBERTA PARKLANDS



Over the past months, Shaye Hill (RDRN Naturalist in Residence) and Sherry Scheunert (RDRN Assistant Naturalist) have been exploring, documenting and conducting biophysical inventories on the protected areas in Central Alberta. These natural areas are owned and maintained by various stakeholders, including Ducks Unlimited Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Environment and Parks, and various Counties. These properties have all been listed on our website and can be readily searched by distance (within 25 km, 50 km, 75 km and 100 km of Red Deer). It is our goal to have more of the public enjoy these areas in a respectful and non-consumptive way. Details about these properties are also shared with the public over social media platforms (Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram and Twitter).

In addition to documenting these properties, Nature Central also offers Saturday walks and is sponsoring some children's events (see page 2 and 3 for upcoming events). We hope that RDRN members will come out and support these events!

A celebration of the program was held at the Cliff and Mary Soper Natural Area near Blackfalds on July 1. Our thanks to Cliff Soper for hosting this well-attended and well-received event.



Nature Central is a joint partnership of the Red Deer River Naturalists and Nature Alberta.



From top left: The RDRN Nature Central planning committee; Shaye and Sherry at the July 1 launch; a happy group of hikers; Shaye showing the group a wood frog; a western toad, one of the many exciting creatures the Nature Central team has found while exploring the protected areas of Central Alberta.



Family Activities: Bring Your Children or Grandchildren to These Free and Engaging Outdoor Activities!



POND DIPPING at the Tees Trout Pond

Wednesday August 4: 10 AM - 12 PM or 1 PM - 3 PM

For Children Ages 6 - 14 (Maximum: 10 children)

Learn about amphibians and invertebrates. We will be exploring open water, so wear rubber boots & bring an extra pair of clothes ... just in case! Parent Supervision Is Advised.

BUTTERFLY WALK at JJ Collett Natural Area

Sunday, August 15: 10 AM - 12 PM or 1 PM - 3 PM

For Children Ages 6 - 14

Learn all about butterflies with **Benny Acorn**. Come enjoy a fun filled day catching and identifying species, and creating nature crafts. Bring snacks, sunscreen, bug spray & dress for the weather.



WILD ABOUT BEES at Kuhnen Park

Wednesday August 18: 10 AM - 12 PM or 1 PM - 3 PM

Learn about pollinators with **Charity Briere**, Entomologist & **AB Native Bee Council** board member. Nature walk will locate signs of pollinators and learn more about our native insect species. Together we'll create nature crafts too!

Nature Kids
NATURE ALBERTA
Kerry Wood Institute Centre
Wild NATURE CENTRAL

FAMILY NATURE NIGHTS 2021

Tweets in the Trees

AUG. 10, 2021
REGISTRATION:
6:00-6:25PM
EVENT:
6:30-8:30PM

Register at <https://www.naturecentral.org/events.html>



NATURE WALKS

All walks are free and guided by Shaye Hill,
RDRN Naturalist in Residence

To register: www.naturecentral.org/walks.html or Phone 587-447-WILD (9453)

PORTER CONSERVATION AREA SATURDAY, JULY 31, 10 AM – 12 PM

This conservation area, **located West of Spruceview**, does not have groomed trails, but does have some game trails and informal hiking paths. This natural area has the Raven River (famous for its brown trout) flowing through it. Enjoy the river as well as a variety of habitats, including riparian, mixed-wood and grassland areas. On this nature walk, we will offer bird and plant identification tips, discuss highlights about the history of the area, and share other interesting natural history information.

Recommended items to bring: Bug spray, walking stick, comfortable walking footwear, binoculars, water and snacks, sunscreen, camera and any field guide that may interest you. This area has a parking lot but no toilet facilities.

NOVA CHEMICAL COMMUNITY WALKING TRAILS SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 10 AM – 12 PM

This natural area, **located East of Blackfalds**, has well groomed trails and an extensive boardwalk. The site is an interesting matrix of wetlands interspersed with patches of aspen forest and grasslands. It offers habitat for many different duck species, as well as a variety of grassland and forest birds. On this nature walk, we will offer bird and plant identification tips, discuss highlights about the history of the area, and share other interesting natural history information.

Recommended items to bring: Bug spray, comfortable walking footwear, binoculars, water and snacks, sunscreen, camera and any field guide that may interest you. This area has a parking lot and toilet facilities.

DICKSON DAM SITE 7 SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 10 AM – 12 PM

This natural area, **located East of Innisfail**, does not have groomed trails but does have some game trails and an oil lease road. The area consists of a mixed-wood forest with a few grassland patches. A wide variety of wildlife species call this place home, including white-tailed deer, red squirrels, coyotes, moose and forest birds. On this nature walk, we will offer bird and plant identification tips, discuss highlights about the history of the area, and share other interesting natural history information.

Recommended items to bring: Bug spray, comfortable walking footwear, binoculars, water and snacks, sunscreen, camera and any field guide that may interest you. This area does not have a parking lot or toilet facilities.

MAGEE LAKE NATURAL AREA SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 10 AM – 12 PM

This natural area, **located East of Morningside**, does not have groomed trails so we will be following an informal path. The area consists of a mature forest with some sparse grassland areas. The area is perfect habitat for moose, deer, coyotes and a variety of forest birds. On this nature walk, we will offer bird and plant identification tips, discuss highlights about the history of the area, and share other interesting natural history information.

Recommended items to bring: Bug spray, comfortable walking footwear, binoculars, water and snacks, sunscreen, camera and any field guide that may interest you. This area does not have a parking lot or toilet facilities.





FEATURED PROPERTY: STAINBROOK SPRINGS



Small but mighty can explain this 17-acre natural area. Throughout this small patch of protected area, Lincoln Sparrow's chitter though the willows. Padded-down grasses used as bedding areas give the indication of deer and moose in the area. There is a man-made boardwalk with a small pathway leading to the North Raven River, Alberta's most famous brown trout river. More details about this property can be found at www.naturecentral.org! This property is managed by Alberta Conservation Association, the Alberta Fish & Game Association and Trout Unlimited Canada.

A PHOTO COLLAGE OF CENTRAL ALBERTA NATURE—BY SHAYE HILL

