



# Nose Hill

News and Views  
fonhs.org



Number 51

The Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter

Fall 2014

## President's Message

by Anne Burke

Thank you for your continued support and please renew your membership at \$10.00 by mail. Our Facebook Page is still growing by leaps and bounds. Our website at: [www.fonhs.org](http://www.fonhs.org) has become a go-to resource for all things Nose Hill Park. The executive met monthly, with regular discussions about issues and concerns raised by members and the public. We published and distributed two newsletters.

*"Our Sandstone City's geological past unfolds at Nose Hill, illustrated by bedrock outcrops, gravel pits, glacial erratics and spectacular views of the Bow Valley."*

I came across this description during Historic Calgary Week when there was an Ice Age Tour of Nose Hill. The Chinook Country History Society partnered with a guide from the Alberta Palaeontological Society to tour 6-million years of Calgary history. You can take your own uphill walk on the paved pathway from 14 St. NW and the 64 Ave. parking lot.

The Coyote Connectivity Project specifically targets identifying and understanding changes in networks (priority habitats and corridors). This will

allow changes under different planning scenarios (e.g. the ring road). The goal of this project is to understand how coyote movement changes seasonally and whether it is due more to behavioural ecology or to climate.

The project was initially supposed to project models solely from GPS-GSM collar data from 10 coyotes city-wide. However, only two coyotes were caught in 2013 and a collar dropped off from one coyote within 4 months. This specific project started in May 2011; it is expected to be completed before the end of 2014. The overall research program is facing challenges with the development of animal care protocols from the U. of C. that will not be perceived as impacting animal health.

The overall project is expected to last until 2020 with research projects on:

- coyote spatial ecology (Spatial Ecology of Urban Coyotes)
- coyote reproductive behaviour ("Citizen Coyote")
- health among wildlife, domestic animals, and people

The Urban Coyote Project is online at: <http://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/Parks/Pages/Urban-Coyote-Study.aspx>. It is also available at <http://vet.ucalgary.ca/coyote/>. There are: a

twitter account (@UrbanCoyotesYYC; #coyotesYYC) and a facebook page (Calgary Urban Coyotes).

On May 2, there was the first "Jane's Walk" at Nose Hill Park, in honour of Jane Jacobs, the urbanist writer and activist. The walk leader was Shelley Alexander from U. of C. Shelley has hand-reared coyote pups, studied wolf-pack behaviour, and launched The Calgary Coyote Project. She recently joined the Science Advisory Board for Project Coyote (USA).

The purpose of the walk was to share research about "song dogs", as coyotes were once called, how they live in the city, their challenges, and how we can co-exist. In first nation's myth, the coyote was the "trickster". Now urban design affects the survival of both pups and adult coyotes, in Calgary and North America.

There is now a draft plan for "A BiodiverCity: Calgary's 10-year strategic plan". Our Calgary ecosystems are: Fescue Grasslands and the Aspen Parklands. Nose Hill contains a significant portion of rough fescue grassland left on the Canadian prairies. Apart from the native grasses, one of the dominant species in the park is the Trembling Aspen. These two eco-regions, which sustain biodiversity, are habitat to coyotes, white-tailed deer, and other wildlife. The fall is a period of stress for coyotes. In the fall, coyotes who reach maturity leave the pack to fend for themselves.

I was invited to take part in "Stakeholder Views on Biodiversity in the

City". The City and the University of Calgary organized the Oral History Project Session jointly to discuss conservation pressures and opportunities, using aerial mapping, and storytelling. The group considered signature parks, such as Nose Hill, Ralph Klein, Carburn, Edworthy, the Weaselhead, and Bowmont, as well as community gardens and other urban green spaces. (Fish Creek is a provincial park). The next step was personal stories told on camera. The meeting was a sub-project of the main project: "Worldwide Views on Biodiversity: A Public Engagement Workshop to Consult Albertans on Biodiversity Issues".

This summer there were more park events: community stewardship, citizen science (bird counts and animal tracking), and parks interpreters. If you have 12 hours of park-time per month, from June to October, and you are interested in learning more about the city parks programs, call 3-1-1 or visit our website: [fonhs.org](http://fonhs.org) for details.

The fall cleanup on Nose Hill was on Sunday, Sept. 28. (Edgemont entrance to off-leash area). This was part of the P.U.P.P.Y. program, with City Parks & Bylaw Services. In order to maintain and preserve the City's parks, the focus on park stewardship will help keep our off-leash areas safe and healthy for pets, people, and wildlife.

Anne Burke

**Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Nose Hill Society,  
12 November, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in Pub/Lounge at the Triwood  
Community Centre, 2244 Chicoutimi Dr. NW.**

**Agenda**

- 1) Approval of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, Wednesday, November 13, 2013
- 2) Annual Report by the President
- 3) Approval of the audited Financial Statements
- 4) Appointment of the Auditors for the coming year
- 5) Election of Officers

Elections will be held for the following positions, for two-year terms: President, Vice President, and two Directors. Nominations for these positions should be received by the Secretary of the Society before the start of the Annual General Meeting.

The Treasurer, Secretary, and two Directors will continue serving the second year of their terms in the coming year.

- 6) Other Business: We need your input! We want to hear from you. Come out and share your views
- 7) Adjournment

**Guest Presentation**

**Shelley Alexander. The Calgary Coyote Project.**

Shelley Alexander has conducted field-based and GIS analysis of large carnivore ecology and studied human-wildlife conflict in the Canadian Rockies since 1990. Shelley specialized in wolves and coyotes, beginning her career as a field technician for the Banff Wolf Project. She also worked as an animal handler for the Dalhousie University's Animal Research Station, Nova Scotia, where she hand-reared coyote pups, studied wolf pack behaviour, and examined the effectiveness of non-lethal deterrents to reduce coyote depredation of sheep. Her doctoral research addressed road fragmentation effects on 13 mammal species in Banff and Kananaskis Country, Alberta. Using extensive snow tracking, Geographical Information Systems and Remote Sensing (RS) she examined habitat relationships, species co-occurrence, the barrier effect of traffic volume, and identified optimal sites for placing wildlife crossing structures on the Trans-Canada Highway.

Since 2001, she has worked as a faculty member for the Department of Geography and the Master's of GIS Program, University of Calgary. In 2005, Shelley launched The Calgary Coyote Project, and spearheaded the web-based education and on-line mapping system, Living with Coyotes ([www.rockies.ca/coyotes/](http://www.rockies.ca/coyotes/)). She served as a Principal Investigator and/or Collaborator on several other projects since 2001, including the Raincoast Wolf Project, the Swift Fox Critical Habitat Project, and the Calakmul Road Effects Project in Yucatan, Mexico. Her newest research collaboration has taken her to Zimbabwe, where she is employing GIS in the conservation of the endangered Painted Dog (*Lycaon pictus*). She recently joined the Science Advisory Board for Project Coyote (USA).

**Thirty things to do on Nose Hill  
that do not require an I-pad or smart phone**  
(no offense to the city of Calgary and the OISEAU programme)

We hope you watched the total lunar eclipse on October 8<sup>th</sup>, just before sunrise.

Watch the sunrise from the erratics on the east slope.

Watch the sun set from the west side along the ridge above Shaganappi Trail.

Search for the largest leafed plant (Hint: might be a draw between burdock and cow parsnip.) Look for the boggy forest at the north side of the park for cow parsnip and along the quarry road or the Many Owls Valley (MOV) path for burdock. Only one is native. Do you know which?

Identify all the white flowers in one year, then the yellow ones the next year.



Chickweed (photo by Susie Mah)

Fewer flowers are blue and pink, and there are only 2 orange flowers. (Hint: bring a book such as *Wild Flowers Across the Prairies*).



Western Wood Lily (photo by Susie Mah)

Lie down in the grass and imagine being on a prairie schooner in the "sea" of grass.

Lie down and watch the ants traveling from their amazing and massive nests. See if you can follow one for an hour (Hint: you may move a lot more than you thought).

Use a bulrush as a wand and watch all the seeds blow into the air. (Hint: only one pond has them and they came from Magrath).

Perform random acts of weed pulling. When the ground is damp, pull goat's beard and toad flax. Gloves help.

Spell your name or something important to you in rocks. There are tons of gravel in the quarry to play with. The peace symbol is now a figure eight.

Find as many caterpillars as you can (Hint: late August is a good time to find some of the weirdest ones)



Hawkmoth caterpillar  
(photo by Susie Mah)

How many butterflies can you identify? Mourning Cloaks are found in the aspen areas but there are many others in the open grassy areas.

Bring a bag to pick up garbage (my record on a long weekend was 63 bottles and cans of all types).

Bring a pair of binoculars and see if you can find the northern shrike that has been hanging about this year (Hint: try the road in MOV).

See how many routes you can walk without stepping on any pavement.

See how many grasshoppers you can catch (and of course release).

Check out the three ponds for Tiger Salamanders. (Hint: if there are no snail trails you won't find salamanders. Snails arrive with the ducks).

Sit above the coyote den in June and watch the kits play amongst the rocks and grass (Hint: you need binoculars so you do not interfere with the animals).

See if you can spot any fawns in June (my record, and I am still amazed, is 5 in one day and all of them were under two weeks of age).

Enjoy a picnic before it is too cold to sit in the grass. Best places for picnics: the opening by the mountain ash in MOV, the sandstone outcropping, anywhere in Porcupine valley's trees.

Try to spot the porcupines during the summer (Hint: they are still often in the trees); much more difficult than in winter.



Porcupine in tree (photo by Susie Mah)

Learn to identify the three hawk species by sight and sound (Hint: there are many great websites with calls).

Follow tracks in the snow. See if you can actually find the animal that made the tracks.

See if you can find all of the conifers on the hill (Hint: there are more than you think; in the

'80's there were 18 and now there are at least 40).

Stack rocks into some beautiful art (it's harder than you think to balance them).

Look for the garter snake hibernaculum. (Hint: go for the driest sunniest spot and know your facts first).

Look for snowflakes on your coat. All of them will be different and beautiful. There is a fabulous website to explain how to photograph flakes. Check it out BEFORE you leave home.

Check out the wild fruit and vegetables ...strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons and choke cherries are abundant but there are also asparagus and edible mushrooms(GET EXPERT ADVICE. Hint: the roots of many plants, such as burdock and camessia, have been used by ancient peoples. Rose hips are rich in vitamin C and make great tea. (Hint: pick after a heavy frost)/



Wild Rose (photo by Susie Mah)



Throw sticks for your dog at the quarry pond (photo by Sheila Rambousek)

Get up to Mule Deer Plateau one crisp February morning to count the deer grazing there (Hint: there will be zero mule deer).



Photo by Susie Mah.

**Friends of Nose Hill Society**  
**Membership Year: 2014** **\$10.00**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RENEWAL 9** **NEW 9**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail address** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your cheque or money order to:  
**Friends of Nose Hill, Suite 171, 130-5403 Crowchild Trail NW, Calgary, AB T3B 4Z1**

## Executive & Board 2014

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Vacant

### Secretary

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## Nose Hill News and Views

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The Friends of Nose Hill invite submissions of articles, poems, thoughts, drawings or photographs from members, visitors and others who have experienced the Hill. We will do our best to print all submissions, but because of space limitations, we reserve the right to edit as necessary.

Please include your name and phone number with submissions.

**The views expressed are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect those of the FONHS**

## The Friends on Facebook

The Friends of Nose Hill have a Facebook Group. If you are a Facebook member, check out the group: "Friends of Nose Hill Society". Feel free to post your stories, photos, comments and questions about the Park.

Members who would like to receive future issues of the Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter by e-mail should send an e-mail message with their request to: [ervan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ervan@ucalgary.ca)

New members can join the Friends of Nose Hill by mailing \$10.00 to:

**Friends of Nose Hill Society**  
**Suite 171**  
**130 – 5403 Crowchild Trail NW**  
**Calgary AB T3B 4Z1**