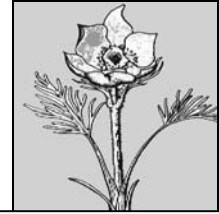


Nose Hill

News and Views
fonhs.org



Number 62

The Friends of Nose Hill Newsletter

Summer 2020

President's Report

Anne Burke

Thanks to all who attended our Annual General Meeting at the Nose Hill Library in November 2019. That feels like a long time ago, but it was a wonderful evening of shared commitment to preserving Nose Hill as a Natural Environment Park.

Nose Hill Park supports some of the last remaining native fescue grasslands in Calgary. Foothills fescue grassland is one of the most threatened ecosystems on the planet, and some of it is found on the slopes of Nose Hill. The majority of the top of Nose Hill is designated as an off-leash area. All remaining coulees, slopes and escarpments in Nose Hill Park are designated on-leash areas. They support the largest expanse of remaining native vegetation. They also provide almost all of the hiding cover for smaller species of wildlife.

In a Nose Hill update, the Ward 4 Councilor has responded to concerns about the number of posts being constructed in the Park. Some park users fear the signs will detract from the visual amenities in a natural environment park. The action was taken, based on complaints about wildlife being harassed by off-leash dogs. City Bylaw was not able to issue tickets without more signs. The entrance maps also needed to be updated. Read more at "New signage in Nose

Hill Park aims to diminish disobedient dog owners", *Live Wire Calgary* December 16, 2019, by reporter Sean Feagan, a Friends member.

Calgary launched an online review of the **Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw**. Although face to face stakeholder consultation meetings were cancelled due to COVID-19, the City continues to conduct public engagement work virtually (e.g. online, in writing or by phone). Wildlife in Calgary; feral, stray and roaming cats; urban agriculture; vicious dogs; licensing; and administration are all under review. The survey included dog behaviour in off-leash parks, dogs in public spaces, and the reasonable number of pets in a household within City limits. In the second phase of engagement The City will seek feedback on potential amendments before presenting to the Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services and City Council between January and March 2021.

A supporter of Nose Hill contributed some photos of damage to the Park fencing, writing: "A few photos from Nose Hill on 64th Street parking lot. First, there was the steel wire fence but it would be cut again and again. Then the City put up a great wooden



fence. Some people don't know what a "trail head" is so they take a shortcut here, and, by doing that, they wrecked the fence."



City Nature Challenge Calgary

Matt Wallace, who has a BSc Geography Honours and is a Freelance Urban Ecologist, organized the **City Nature Challenge Calgary**. Naturalist communities from Calgary, Airdrie, Cochrane, Okotoks, and Chestermere came together and celebrated urban biodiversity. The total number of observations between April 24-27 was 5465 (compared with 4458 in 2019), by 239 observers. There were 144 iNaturalist contributors last year. In all, Calgary now has 30,000 iNaturalist observations. More than 755 species were documented in the Calgary region. Of all Canadian cities, we are proud to say that CNC YYC achieved more observations, documented the most species, and engaged the most observers! For full results, go to <http://citynatureyyc.ca/>.

May Plant Count

The May Plant Count is A Nature Alberta Initiative annually hosted by the Alberta Native Plant Council May 25 – 31. Contributors were asked to visit the Alberta Native Plant Committee website (www.anpc.ab.ca) for guidelines on ethical plant collecting. So identifying flowering species is a priority. However, any species information was valuable to the selected natural area. Collection of plant specimens is not allowed in any protected or restricted areas. Covid-19 guidelines for physical distancing and site access restrictions were recommended.

Connect with Us:

Email: mayplantcount@outlook.com
 Facebook: May Plant Count Nature Alberta
 Instagram: [mayplantcount](https://www.instagram.com/mayplantcount)
 Twitter: [@mayplantcount](https://twitter.com/mayplantcount)

World Migratory Bird Day

World Migratory Bird Day celebrates "Birds Connect Our World," the technologies

we use to track birds, and how the information can inform conservation. www.migratorybirdday.org/ official website. WMBD is officially celebrated on the second Saturday of May in Canada and the US (May 9th in 2020), and the second Saturday of October in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean (October 10th in 2020). However, every day is Migratory Bird Day, and you can celebrate birds any day of the year! For birds in our region go to: www.facebook.com/groups/AlbertaBirds and [/www.birdscanada.org/](http://www.birdscanada.org/).

Calgary Captured

[Calgary Captured](#), a Calgary Parks initiative, announced a new season. We hope that this will provide you and yours with some fun wildlife identifying activities while we practice physical distancing. A citywide citizen science program has installed over 70 wildlife remote cameras in 17 parks across the City. You can participate by:

1. **Going to Zooniverse.org:** and search for [Calgary Captured](#) to begin identifying species.
2. **Join the Conversation:** be sure to click the #talk button on the last screen before you submit your observation!

The biggest change to take note of this season was work that occurred behind the scenes. We implemented a machine learning model, developed by the [City's Corporate Analytics and Innovation team](#), to auto-tag the images before they are posted to Zooniverse for classification. The new model scans the images and identifies ones with humans or no animals in them. It then removes those images from the final set prior to posting on Zooniverse for you to classify. This should result in you seeing animals more consistently over all!

We have successfully classified over 200,000 images so far! The research team is still working on compiling a full year of data for analysis and once complete, we will be posting updated findings on the [Zooniverse page](#).

We are pleased to continue this work with our program partners. Log on today and take a peek into Calgary's local parks when people aren't around and see what the critters get up to! Thank you for your continued support and participation,

(Lynette Hiebert, MEDES Parks Ecologist, Landscape Analysis, Urban Conservation | Parks)

Quick Wildlife Factoids source: (www.alberta.ca)

Bats are naturally shy and are not blind; a single little brown bat can eat up to 600 mosquitoes in an hour.

Beavers normally live up to 10 years and are primarily nocturnal.

Bobcats are the smallest of Alberta's wild cats - about twice the size of a domestic

cat; though rare, bobcat sightings are increasing.

Cougars are often confused with other animals and many sightings reported to wildlife agencies are found to be coyotes, bobcats, yellow dogs or even house cats.

Coyotes look like a cross between a fox and a small collie or German shepherd and weigh 9 to 14 kgs

Crows and magpies will eat anything; they are able to mimic the calls of other birds.

Do not let your dog bark at or antagonize the **deer**. Never approach fawns. Never feed deer.

Around **foxes**, keep your cats indoors and don't allow your dogs to roam. Rabies hasn't been found in a fox in Alberta since the 1950s.

Geese have a strong homing instinct; Canada geese can live up to 20 years.

Moose are strong swimmers and their long legs help them cross any landscape.

Porcupines feed on salt and salt residue, and have been known to chew on leather items; dogs are often unable to resist investigating nearby and may suffer for their curiosity with a nose full of quills.

Rabbits and hares; in Alberta, there are mountain cottontail rabbits, snowshoe hares, white-tailed jackrabbits (a type of hare) and a variety of domestic rabbit breeds; wild rabbits are grey to brown all year and hares are grey to brown in

summer and white in winter; rabbits normally live only 12 to 15 months; domestic rabbits can be differentiated from wild rabbits by the variety of colours and sizes and are not protected by any of Alberta's wildlife laws.

Raccoons have a highly developed sense of touch.

Raptors include **hawks** and **owls**; the **merlin** and the **peregrine falcon**, have rebounded from near-extinction in the 1960s.

Red squirrels rarely live past 4 years old; they prefer to live in mature trees.

Skunks are not normally aggressive and don't truly hibernate.

Alberta has six resident **snake** species.

Woodchucks keep a very clean burrow; when not feeding, they can often be found sunning themselves on fences, walls, rocks or logs.

Make your property unattractive to wildlife. Dogs, rabbits, chickens or other animals that live outdoors should be kept in a secure enclosure with a strong roof (<https://www.alberta.ca/human-wildlife-conflict.aspx>).

Back in the Day Nose Hill Park: Things You Might Like to Know

by Marjorie MacQueen who was Edgemont Representative.

1. **From the 1940s on, Citizens mobilize for Parks.** The Local Council of Women, Federation of Calgary Communities, and other groups lobbied the City and the Province for years to

establish both Fish Creek and Nose Hill Parks. In 1973, the Province established Fish Creek as a provincial park. Now it was up to the residents in NW Calgary to save Nose Hill as parkland.

2. City allows development on designated parkland: approves subdivision. In 1973, City Council ratified the Nose Hill Park Design brief which established the size of the park at 4000 acres. But in 1976, the City authorized a new subdivision, reducing the park to 2600 acres. Shaganappi Trail was built; Carma started developing Edgemont. When our family returned to Calgary in 1985, after being away for a few years, we bought in Edgemont. I soon joined the Nose Hill park Communities Board (12 communities surrounding the park) to represent Edgemont's interests.

3. Businesses thrive on the hill. Its agricultural zoning allowed Glen Abbey Corporation and United Management to operate a horse-boarding and riding business. J.F. Burns had a gravel pit on his 160 acres parcel.

4. Over 5000 Citizens march along John Laurie to save the park. Hartel, which held a large parcel on Nose Hill, proposed a zoning reclassification to City Council. A group of citizens, already organized, did a call out, and, in early March of 1979, on the Sunday before Monday's Council meeting, more than 5000 citizens marched along John Laurie Boulevard to proclaim their support for Nose Hill. Council listened.

5. The Supreme Court of Canada legislated. Hartel wrote up an offer for the City to purchase its holding on the hill. When the City couldn't meet its price point, Hartel went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. By 1984, the Supreme Court decision was to give the City of Calgary the right to purchase land at its own pace while dismissing Hartel's appeal with costs.

6. 1988 alert: Developer sells a parcel of land to a builder. This was a thinly disguised attempt to force the City of Calgary to purchase the rest of Nose Hill lands.

7. In 1989, Calgarians get their (2600 acre) park. Developers convinced the provincial government, under Don Getty, to propose Bill B52. Yet, another attempt to acquire rights to develop Nose Hill, if passed, this legislation would affect municipalities throughout Alberta. The Communities Board launched an information campaign which led to the Province agreeing to share half of the \$26.6m price tag to buy out private ownership in Nose Hill Park.

(This article was previously published in the *Edgemont Community Newsletter*, Feb. 2020).

Executive & Board 2020

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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". It has 182 members and 2615 photos so far. 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

New members can join the Friends of Nose Hill by mailing \$20.00 to:

Friends of Nose Hill Society

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