

NATURE NETWORK

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Newsletter Sponsors

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Next submission deadline: March 15, 2009

**Club members and the public are
welcome to attend all events.**

January 16 – Turkey Vultures

Join us at our monthly meeting as *Dr. Wayne Nelson*, habitat and wildlife biologist with Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division talks about a study and banding of Turkey Vultures in east-central Alberta from 2003-2008. These very interesting birds regularly nest in attics, lofts, and mangers of abandoned farm buildings. Wayne will discuss the wing tagging and development of nestlings, a new study in Alberta.

- Location: Royal Alberta Museum
- Time: Coffee at 7 p.m. lecture 7:30 p.m.

February 2 - Orchids and their Habitats



Dr. Ben Rostron is an engineer and hydrogeologist by profession but his “amateur” passion is for orchids. The two often come together during his work in wetlands. Drawing on his collection of images and his experiences in Wagner Natural Area and elsewhere in North America, Ben will explore the connection between orchids and ground water.



- All presentations will take place at the J. Percy Page Centre, 118 Avenue and Groat Road, Room # 8, at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be available after the presentation.
- Contact: EPSG coordinator Patsy Cotterill at 780-481-1525 or email: nutmeg@planet.eon.net

February 7 – Snowy Owl Prowl



The country roads north of St. Albert are often a great place to find Snowy Owls. We will try to hit all the best spots to find these arctic birds.

- Leader: Peter Demulder
- Meet: 8:30 a.m. McDonalds on St. Albert Trail by Ron Hodgson Pontiac.
- Duration: Finished by mid-afternoon; trip is weather dependent; we will carpool.
- Difficulty: All driving with very little walking.
- Bring: liquids and lunch; car pool money
- Contact: Peter Demulder 780- 459-3509 or Brian Stephens 780-439-2841

February 20 – Who’s Eating Who? What Great Horned Owls Can Tell Us About Small Mammal Populations



Roy Schmelzeisen, from Alberta Conservation Association, will discuss how Great Horned Owls help wildlife managers to determine the status of mice, voles and other small mammals that this common predator feeds upon.

- Location: Royal Alberta Museum
- Time: Coffee at 7 p.m. lecture 7:30 p.m.
- Cost of admission by donation

March 1 – Kinnard Ravine



The last few years we’ve found a Great Gray Owl, a Great Horned Owl, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, Brown Creepers & other winter birds on this trip. Who’ll show up this year? You’ll have to come out to see! This outing is ideal for new members, families and friends.

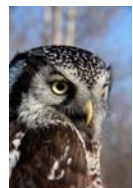
- Leader: Gerald Romanchuk
- Meet: 9:30 a.m. at McDonalds, 112 Avenue and 82 Street
- Duration: Finish by mid-afternoon.
- Difficulty: Great footpaths and trails, but it could get icy so have suitable footwear. This trip is all walking.
- Bring: Snacks, hot liquids and candy for the leader.
- Contact: Gerald Romanchuk 780-991-6521 or Brian Stephens 780-439-2841

March 14 – Opal Area



The Opal area (north of Fort Saskatchewan) has 2 natural areas and is often a hot spot for Northern Hawk Owls and Great Gray Owls. We will cover the range roads and depending on snow depth, take a walk in one of the natural areas.

- Leader: Gerald Romanchuk
- Meet: 9:00 am, Tim Horton’s, 97 St. & 160 Ave (east side of street – near Canadian Tire)
- Duration: Should finish by mid-afternoon (depends on the birding & the weather).
- Difficulty: Mostly driving, some short walks.
- Bring: Car pool money, lunch, liquids.
- Contact: Gerald Romanchuk 780-991-6521 or Brian Stephens 780-439-2841



March 16 - Annual Members' Night



This is our "show-and-tell" evening where we share information on plants and plant places, and it is one of our most enjoyable evenings. Please bring about 10 images if you wish to share your favorite plant experiences. Slides, stories, technical expertise and readings are all welcome.

- Location: J. Percy Page Centre, 118 Avenue and Groat Road, Room # 8, at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will follow.
- Contact: EPSG coordinator Patsy Cotterill at 780-481-1525 or email: nutmeg@planet.eon.net

March 20 – Insects and Photographing Them

Terry Thormin will be our guest speaker. He will speak on insects and the photography of insects in Alberta.

- Location: Royal Alberta Museum
- Time: Coffee at 7 p.m. lecture 7:30 p.m.
- Cost of admission by donation

March 28, 2009 – Annual Edmonton Nature Club Banquet

Please join us for our annual banquet, a wonderful evening of fine food and great company. Please purchase your tickets early as this event sells out every year (priority will be given to paid members of the Edmonton Nature Club).

- Speaker: To Be Announced
- Location: The Faculty Club, University of Alberta 11435 Saskatchewan Drive
- Time: Doors at 6 p.m., buffet dinner at 7 p.m., talk to follow.
- Cost: \$35 per person
- Contact: Katie Calon, 780-425-5466 for tickets

March 29 – Whitemud Creek



Photo: C. Priestley

On this morning walk we should see a variety of woodpeckers, Boreal and Black-capped Chickadees, nuthatches, redpolls, crossbills, and possibly a Barred Owl or Northern Goshawk.



- Leader: Brian Stephens
- Meet: 9:30 a.m. Parking at Rainbow Valley (Snow Valley Ski Area) off Whitemud Freeway. Note the change in start point from previous years.
- Duration: Should be done around noon.
- Difficulty: Great footpaths and trails, but it could get icy so have suitable footwear. This trip is all walking.
- Bring: Snacks, liquids
- Contact: Brian Stephens 780-439-2841

April 5 – Misty Ridge



This is the spot Jim comes to monitor eagle migration, and we hope to see some early eagles and hawks moving through.

- Leader: Jim Lange
- Meet: 7:30 am at the MacDonal's at Westmount Mall, or call Jim to arrange pick up in St. Albert.
- Duration: All day trip. We usually stop at Westlock for dinner on the way home.
- Difficulty: Mostly driving & an optional walk down into the river valley.
- Bring: Car pool money, lunch & liquids, appropriate clothing & footwear.
- Contact: Jim Lange 780-455-7021



April 17 – Museum Talk

- Speaker: Glen Semenchuk, Federation of Alberta Naturalists – topic TBA in next Nature Network
- Location: Royal Alberta Museum
- Time: Coffee at 7 p.m. lecture 7:30 p.m.
- Cost of admission by donation

April 18 – Owl Prowl



Owl expert Ray Cromie will take us out in the early evening to listen for owls. There will be some optional afternoon birding in Elk Island Park as well. Photo: L. Priestley

- Leaders: Ray Cromie & Gerald Romanchuk
- Meet (3 options):
 - 2:00 p.m., Elk Island Visitor Information Center – for afternoon birding
 - 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Brookville Shell/Restaurant (Hwy 16 just west of RR212) for dinner
 - 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Brookville Shell/Restaurant (Hwy 16 just west of RR212) for owling **NOTE: Owling time is tentative, check website for confirmation**
- Duration: Should be done around 10:00 p.m.
- Difficulty: Afternoon mostly walking; driving in the evening.
- Bring: Warm clothing, bright flashlight if you have one
- Contact: Gerald Romanchuk 780-991-6521



April 20 – What's Wrong with that Plant? Diseases and Insect Pests of Woody Species including Planted Ornamentals and Wild Species



Gail Rankin, well-known local horticulturalist specializing in plant diagnostics, horticultural talk-show host and instructor in the Faculty of Agriculture at the U of A, will enlighten us about the diseases and insect pests that afflict our local cultivated and native woody plants.

- Presentation will take place at the J. Percy Page Centre, 118 Avenue and Groat Road, Room # 8, at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be available after the presentation.
- Contact: EPSG coordinator Patsy Cotterill at 780-481-1525 or email: nutmeg@planet.eon.net

April 25 / 26 Snow Goose Weekend

More information to come – buses should be running both days, so we are not planning a field trip.

Alberta Nocturnal Owl Survey and NEW Diurnal Owl Survey Volunteers Needed

The Beaverhill Bird Observatory's Nocturnal Owl Survey has been running in Alberta since 1998 with almost 200 volunteers. We are also initiating a new Diurnal Owl Survey in 2009. The goal is to determine population trends of owls in Alberta and contribute to a Canada-wide survey. Are you interested in looking and listening for owls in March and April? We send you a route near the area you would like to go, along with a survey package and CD of owl calls. You require a reliable vehicle (roadside survey), a portable CD or tape player, a small thermometer, a compass, and flashlight. Each 10 station survey requires about two hours to complete and we ask for volunteers to do two surveys between March 20 and May 5. If you are interested in participating in this volunteer program please contact Lisa Priestley 780-918-4804 e-mail: lisa@beaverhillbirds.com (please provide a mailing address, what general area you would like your survey route, and whether you are interested in the diurnal and/or nocturnal owl survey.



Photo: C. Priestley