

## GN Field Trips, Neighbourhood Walks and Activities in 2020

Even though various events had to be adjusted or cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19, GN had a successful year with a variety of outdoor activities and events throughout the year.

At the beginning of the year, winter conditions were ideal for **Cross-Country Skiing** Spring Creek Trail in Elkwater four times as well as once in Police Point Park; enjoyed by 14 people during the ski outings.

On April 22, International Earth Day, **Cleanup** around Connaught Pond was done by eight participants followed by **Litter Blitz** of Ranchlands riparian area and Police Point Park over the next two weeks.

With relaxation of the restrictions in May, 20 **Neighbourhood Walks** and other outdoor activities were enjoyed by GN members throughout the late spring, summer and fall seasons. During two of the walks in September, **Litter Cleanup** of Ranchlands and Strathcona Island Park was included.

In addition, 15 separate walks, led by Gerry Ehlert, were conducted focusing on **searching for and reporting invasive Eurasian Buckthorn** in areas such as Connaught Pond, SE Hill Trail, Kin Coulee Park & Ajax Coulee, Police Point Park, Kiwanis River Park in Marlow, and along the riparian area between Gas City Campground and Echo Dale Regional Park. Two separate events in August, led by Hugh Armstrong, involved **picking of Baby's Breath** along the area north of the main entrance to Police Point Park to remove and dispose of the flower seed load.

In mid- October, Milt Spitzer was able to lead the only **Birding Field Trip** of the year by going to Schuler and McLaren Lakes to see the Fall Migration of Tundra Swans, Sandhill Cranes, and various Geese species including Great White-fronted, Snow and of course Canada Geese; the day was enjoyed by five members.

With arrival of a great dump of snow in November, **Cross-Country Skiing** was once again enjoyed both in Police Point Park as well as along the Spring Creek Trail in Elkwater.

The Medicine Hat Interpretive Program organized and ran a great variety of activities during 2020. Even though the Nature Centre was closed for much of the year, the activities were available online or outings conducted by registration of small groups. In addition, the **Spring Bird and Wildflower Count** as well as the **Christmas Bird Count** were organized by Marty Drut. A summary of the MHIP activities is given in Chief Interpreter annual report as well as on the MHIP and GN Websites and reported in the GN monthly Sagebrush Chronicle.

Submitted by John Slater