

## GN Field Trips, Nature Walks and Activities in 2023

Even though various events had to be adjusted or cancelled again in 2023 due to continued COVID-19 conditions and initially cold weather, the GN Club had a successful year with a variety of outdoor activities and events throughout the year.

Following the snowfall in November and December 2022, the winter conditions in the first three months of 2023 were ideal for **Cross-Country Skiing** in Police Point Park as well as on the Spring Creek Trail in Elkwater. In fact, April 6<sup>th</sup> was the last day of xc skiing in Elkwater. A total of seven outings were enjoyed by 6 different GN members during the five months.

By mid-February, we were able to commence our **Nature Walks** on various trails in Medicine Hat. Throughout the year, a total of 31 nature walks were enjoyed by as many as 12 different GN members. In late fall, the weather stayed unusually warm and dry so walks were still offered. Many times the participants met at the Nature Centre to see the MHIP displays and enjoy Bird Identification activities.

For celebrating **World Water Day** on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, a tour of the City Water Treatment Plant was enjoyed by 15 members. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Martha commenced year 3 of the **Adopt a Pond and Path** program with a video reported by CHAT TV. Also throughout the year, walks were conducted at various ponds located within the City.

For **International Earth Day** on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the City launched its **Annual Litter Cleanup** program which was conducted throughout the summer. And on April 26<sup>th</sup>, a tour of Chinook Greenhouse was taken by 8 members to view the growing of various coniferous seedlings for reforestation in Alberta and BC.

Six **Birding Field Trips** were conducted; on April 1<sup>st</sup> to Manyberries area (Birding Trail Guide #4) led by Milt Spitzer; on April 22<sup>nd</sup> to Sauder & Murray Reservoirs (Trail #2) led by Phil Horch; on May 6<sup>th</sup> to Wildhorse (Trail #6) led by Milt; on May 13 in Police Point Park for World Migratory Bird Day led by Phil Horch, Dan Schiebelbein, Marty Drut; on June 24<sup>th</sup> to Cypress Hills (Trail #7) led by Phil Horch; and lastly on Sept 30<sup>th</sup> to McLaren Lake by Milt Spitzer.

During the summer, Marilou Montemayor/SEAWA CEO led informative events at Connaught Pond and along Seven Persons Creek in Saratoga Park as well as to Sauder Reservoir to view the results of the **SEAWA Riparian Restoration projects**. Weed pulls of Hoary Cress in Saamis Coulee and Russian Olive in Kiwanis River Park were carried out. Also, Cathy Linowski led an informative tour of the Archeological Site in Saamis Coulee.

Another special event was arranged by Elaine Zimmer at the SHAW International Centre for Contemporary Ceramics for a presentation by Zack Nickman involving the use of an invasive aquatic plant for making Pottery Glaze.

The Medicine Hat Interpretive Program organized and ran a great variety of activities during 2023 either at the Nature Centre or outdoors in Police Point and other Parks. In addition, the **Spring and Christmas Bird Counts** were conducted throughout Medicine Hat; including Manyberries area.

Submitted by John Slater