

MEEWASIN EXPLORER

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Introducing Meewasin's Green Circle

We all have a special bond with the natural world. This is a bond that Robin Chapman feels deeply when she spends time in the Meewasin Valley. A donor and volunteer since the early 1990s, Robin's connection to Meewasin is one she shares with her entire family.



"When my mother's siblings were all still alive, they decided to plant an entire grove of trees on the Meewasin Trail in memory of those who had passed away," she says. "Those trees are still there today, and they serve as a reminder of our family's roots."

Though Robin's parents never lived in Saskatoon, they made many trips to visit family and friends. During these visits, Robin's father loved to walk along the river and enjoy the scenery. When her father passed away, Robin and her husband Ian decided to honour him by donating a bench along his favourite stretch of Meewasin Trail.

"Dad gave so much to the community, and he loved spending time by the river," says Robin. "To honour him in this way is to save a place for him that truly belongs to everyone."

Robin and Ian believe it is up to people like them to ensure the Meewasin Valley remains pristine and accessible for all to enjoy, **which is why they became members of Meewasin's Green Circle.**

"**Our Meewasin** is truly about protecting the natural beauty around us. As long-time donors, we want to ensure that this special place remains for generations to come. This is why we chose to become members of the Green Circle – when people step up as caretakers and leaders, it can inspire others to do the same. Meewasin's role of conserving the valley is essential to ensuring this precious space is protected, and we believe we can all play an important role in this legacy."

To learn more about Meewasin's Green Circle, visit our website meewasin.com

Meewasin Annual Clean Up Campaign

We are now looking for a sponsor for the 2017 Clean Up Campaign. If you or your organization has an interest in sponsoring this publicly supported annual event with approximately 30,000 participants in 2016, please contact Meewasin at 306-665-6887 for more information.

Volunteers from businesses, schools, community associations, other groups, and individuals generously donate their time and energy every spring to keep Saskatoon clean, healthy and beautiful! Participants who sign up with the Clean Up Campaign, either as a group or individual, may choose the area they clean or have one assigned to them.

*Did you know you can get the Explorer electronically?
Help us reduce our paper consumption and switch your paper
Explorer subscription to an electronic one.*

Phone 306-665-6887 or email meewasin@meewasin.com and provide us with your name and email address.

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MEEWASIN VALLEY AUTHORITY - 402 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH, SASKATOON, SK S7K 3G5

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MEEWASIN

Meewasin Pelican Watch 2017

Saskatoon residents have special visitors each summer. From April through October, American White Pelicans gather by the weir to fish. These birds, at one time on the endangered species list, have been a beautiful sight on the South Saskatchewan River since the late 1970s. Their arrival in Saskatoon is a sign of spring.

Meewasin has held a Pelican Watch Contest since 1996. Each spring, Saskatoon residents guess the arrival time of the first pelican to land between the CPR Bridge and the weir. However, it is more than just a contest, it's an opportunity to learn about the once endangered pelican.

The Saskatoon Nature Society has observed the pelicans arrival over the last 20 years. The earliest recorded time was April 4, 2012 at 7:00 a.m. and the latest being April 20, 2014 at 3:15 p.m.

Watch out for the Meewasin Pelican Watch contest opening March 1 - March 31, 2017.

Enter online at meewasin.com

Meewasin

Recipient of the 2017 Native Prairie Restoration and Reclamation Award



Photo courtesy of Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan.

Meewasin is a conservation agency responsible for stewarding, managing, and providing public access to the South Saskatchewan River valley and several natural areas in and around Saskatoon. Meewasin employs an integrated resource management program to care for its natural areas including prescribed burning and an aggressive approach to minimizing the spread of invasive plant species.

Prescribed burning has been an effective management tool to mimic natural disturbance regimes on Meewasin native prairie sites, but it does provide unique challenges in an urban setting.

Trying to manage invasive species in both urban and rural settings also poses unique challenges with new potentially invasive "ornamental" species appearing while trying to manage "traditional" invasive species found in more rural areas.

Meewasin says thank you!

2017 Plant-A-Tree Ceremony

The Meewasin Plant-A-Tree Program brings life to the Meewasin Valley for generations to come. The 2017 ceremony will celebrate both recipients and donors of the program on Saturday, June 17, 2017, at 1:00 p.m. in Boomtown at the Western Development Museum.

Please join us!

The deadline for sponsorships of trees, bricks and benches to be dedicated at the June 2017 ceremony is March 31, 2017

Preserve your memories through Meewasin.

meewasin.com



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MEEWASIN

Invasive Plant Spotlight – What do you have growing in your yard?

Creeping Bellflower (Campanula rapunculoides)

Creeping Bellflower is an invasive plant, designated as a noxious weed in Alberta by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. It has not yet been designated as a noxious weed in Saskatchewan. Creeping bellflower is a perennial plant that grows up to 1 metre tall and was introduced from Europe as an ornamental species. Its popularity as a garden ornamental plant has increased its spread across North America. It will choke out other plants as it spreads by both seeds and creeping roots. Its leaves are green and alternately spaced. Upper leaves are spear-shaped and may have hairs on the underside, while lower leaves are heart shaped with coarse toothed margins and long stalks. Stems are green to purple and may or may not have hairs. Flowers are purple, 2-3 cm across and bell-shaped with five united petals.



Flowers are frequently located along the same side of the curving stem. Each plant can produce up to 3000 seeds annually, which spread easily due to their light weight and small wings. Creeping Bellflower often comes in generic wildflower mixes (in addition to a host of other non-native and potentially invasive species) so *avoid planting mixes that do not list the species or list invasive species in their contents*. To control this plant you can repeatedly hand-pull or dig plants (including as much of the roots as possible) before seed production, mow repeatedly before full flower to reduce seed production, or use a recommended herbicide that is suitable for the task. Bag dead plants to take to the landfill and to prevent spread avoid composting and minimize soil disturbance.

Meewasin has Creeping Bellflower on a number of its sites due to the very invasive nature of this plant. Meewasin's Resource Conservation crew is actively working to control this plant through various integrated invasive species management methods such as: repeated pulling, digging, herbicide, monitoring and awareness. The use of a variety of integrated management methods help to increase overall effectiveness in the removal of this plant both within Meewasin's jurisdiction and across the province.

For more information, visit these resources:

- *Weed Control Act*, Statutes of Alberta (2008, c. W-5.1). Retrieved from Alberta's Queen's Printer: http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=W05P1.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779760602
- *Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture* "Minister's Order for the Designation of Prohibited, Noxious and Nuisance Weeds in Accordance with the *Weed Control Act* (2010)" at <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=44fb5d3e-a7e0-461c-84d5-876f651a3ed4>
- Alberta Invasive Species Council Fact Sheets "Creeping Bellflower" at <https://www.abinvasives.ca/factsheets/161020-fs-creepingbellflower-1.pdf?iframe=true&width=800&height=600>

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BEAVER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

INTERPRETING SASKATOON'S NATURAL HISTORY

Beaver Creek Programming March and April

March Marvels - Sundays @ 2:30 p.m.

Wish winter away with an interpretive led program beginning at 2:30 p.m. at the Beaver Creek Conservation Area Interpretive Centre. Are you able to switch coats out like the snowshoe hare? Are you out of 'cache' like the beaver? An interpreter will share some 'wild' facts about spring happenings.

April Antics - Sundays @ 2:30 p.m.

Spring is a time to get moving. Are you more like a deer, a coyote, or a snowshoe hare? Join in the challenge with an interpreter to discover how you measure up! Program begins at 2:30 p.m. in the Beaver Creek Conservation Area Interpretive Centre.

Nature Craft - Saturdays and Sundays 1 - 4 p.m.

Come out and discover another way to appreciate nature by creating a nature inspired craft. Craft cost is by donation.



Did you know?

The snowshoe hare is one of our most common forest mammals and is found only in North America. It is one of two species of hares found at Beaver Creek. The misnamed jack rabbit, our second species of hare, prefers the open prairie.

Easter Week at the Creek - April 17 - 21

Take time to come out to the Creek during this week to hike a nature trail, take an "Eye Spy" challenge, or explore the SaskTel Beaver Pond Room inside the Interpretive Centre. Ask an interpreter for some seed to try your hand at feeding the Black-capped Chickadees, or take a track card to see who is out and about. During Easter week a come-and-go craft will be offered from 1 - 4 p.m. Ask an interpreter for details.



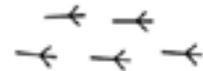
Easter Bunny Count

April 14 - 23

Search and count the camouflaged snowshoe hares at the creek.
Enter your count for a chance to win a Folkmanis puppet!



About Beaver Creek Conservation Area



Beaver Creek Conservation Area offers the general public and schools opportunities to discover the wonders of nature year round. Hands-on activities in the Interpretive Centre offer children the opportunity to learn more about Saskatchewan's flora and fauna. Everyone can enjoy a hike along a selection of four nature trails. Beaver Creek is an ideal place to come out to enjoy the art of wildlife watching.

A Creek Forming A Valley; A Valley Forming Habitats

BEAVER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA - FOLLOW LORNE AVENUE SOUTH 13 KM ON HIGHWAY #219
CHIP'S HOT LINE: 306-374-2474 FAX: 306-665-6117 E-MAIL: MEEWASIN@MEEWASIN.COM