

MEEWASIN EXPLORER

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***The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit. –
Nelson Henderson***



Fran Walley believes the Meewasin Valley is the heart of our city – one that must be thoughtfully cared for. As a Meewasin board member and nature enthusiast, she is always amazed by the number of people she sees drawn to the banks of the river.

“I’m convinced that the river, and the great access we all enjoy, is really a magnet for activity,” says Fran. “In other cities, the downtown closes up at the end of the business day. But in Saskatoon, the downtown remains vibrant and full of people – with the Meewasin Valley providing a great backdrop for many activities.”

For Fran, the Meewasin Valley is a gift – one that enables her to deeply connect with nature, right in her own city.

“I’ve always been really connected with nature,” says Fran. “I am drawn to it, as are so many people. It is amazing to be able to connect with nature in the heart of our city.”

Because of her deep and shared connection, Fran also strongly believes that we must work together to preserve and care for this precious space.

“It takes a really thoughtful and long-term approach to make sure the Meewasin Valley is protected in a way that we can all enjoy,” says Fran. “Meewasin provides that thoughtful and well-measured approach to conserving the resource, and making sure that all voices are heard – right down to those wild creatures we share our space with who can’t speak for themselves.”

While Fran will continue to enjoy the natural splendor of the Meewasin Valley, she recognizes that the legacy of the Meewasin Valley belongs to the next generation.

“My Meewasin is one that will exist long after any of us,” says Fran. “It is a connector between the past and the future. We need to be prepared to invest in a future that won’t belong to us, but to those children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who need peace and tranquility in their lives – just as we enjoy it. And we need to be good stewards of an environment that we share with other people, and with other creatures, and birds and plants and insects. Once lost, this beautiful resource is lost forever, and we need to fight to protect the Meewasin Valley for future generations, and for all of those with whom we share the environment.”



Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin wants your ideas on what YOU can do to improve our watersheds!

Agrium’s Caring for our Watersheds is a contest that encourages students to brainstorm ideas that ensure the health of their local watershed. This contest is open to students, individuals or groups of up to 4 students in grades 7 to 12 in Saskatchewan. All you have to do is research your local watershed, identify an environmental concern, and submit a proposal that offers a realistic solution to the question of: “What can YOU do to improve our watershed?” Students that enter can win cash prizes for themselves, for their school, and funding to implement their ideas! Deadline for proposal submissions is March 16, 2018.

To find out more and to register for the contest visit the website: <http://www.caringforourwatersheds.com> or contact sbouchard@saskriverbasin.ca

Call 306-665-6887 for more details.

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Meewasin

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MEEWASIN

Invasive Plant Spotlight – What do you have growing in your yard? Scentless Chamomile (*Tripleurospermum perforatum* syn *T. inodorum*)



Photo credit Glen Lee of Saskatchewan Wildflowers

Scentless Chamomile is an invasive plant and designated as noxious in Saskatchewan by the Ministry of Agriculture. Being designated as noxious means that landowners, both urban and rural, have a duty to control these plants on their property due to the economic, health, and environmental damage the plant may cause (Statutes of Saskatchewan, 2010). Scentless Chamomile can act as an annual, biennial or perennial plant, produced by seed only and is scentless. It grows up to about 1 m tall with reddish stems and was introduced from Europe as an ornamental plant and/or contaminant to crop seeds. Leaves are green, alternate and finely divided, resembling carrot tops. Flowers are white and each stem has a single flower. A robust plant can produce up to 1 million seeds. It is often mistaken for Oxeye Daisy, which is also an invasive species designated as noxious. To control this plant you can repeatedly hand-pull or dig plants before seed production, mowing repeatedly before full flower to reduce seed production, or use a

recommended herbicide that is suitable for the task. Plants will re-bloom if only deadheaded. Hand-pulling is considered to be the most effective method as roots are easily removed from soft soil, but flowers will still set seed after being pulled. Bag dead plants to prevent spread, avoid composting and minimize soil disturbance.

Meewasin has Scentless Chamomile on a number of its sites due to the very invasive nature of this plant. Meewasin's Resource Management crew is actively working to control this plant through various integrated invasive species management methods such as: repeated 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.

Enhancing Grassland Bird Habitat on Meewasin Sites

Grassland bird populations have dramatically declined between 55% over the last three decades across the prairies (<http://www.wwf.ca/?25881/Significant-Canadian-wildlife-declines-revealed-in-new-WWF-Canada-study>). Meewasin, with funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program, has been working to enhance its conservation sites (e.g. Meewasin Northeast Swale, Cranberry Flats Conservation Area, Beaver Creek Conservation Area) to help this declining grassland bird population. Meewasin conservation sites are home to numerous species at risk grassland birds including bobolink, Sprague's pipit, loggerhead shrike, short-eared owl, and common nighthawk (to name a few).



Habitat loss and invasive species are two of the greatest threats to these insect-eating grassland birds. Meewasin's Resource Management Program uses innovative techniques to improve the quality of grassland habitat by reducing noxious weeds, invasive grass species, and dense shrub cover through integrated techniques including prescribed burning, targeted conservation grazing (last newsletter introduced the 270 sheep that were about to enter the Meewasin Northeast Swale), and conservation mowing. Ecological monitoring initiatives including grassland bird breeding surveys, grassland health assessments, and BioBlitz's are used to measure the effectiveness and success of our conservation activities.

To learn more about Meewasin's innovative work to enhance grassland bird habitat, visit our website at www.meewasin.com/about/conservation.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MEEWASIN

Meewasin Valley Authority Holiday Hours

The Meewasin Valley Authority Administrative Offices will be closed December 23rd to January 1st inclusive, opening again on Tuesday, January 2nd, 2018.

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday!



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.

Conserve Our River Valley

With a gift for those you love

- Shrub \$50 • Deciduous Tree \$150
- Bur Oak or Conifer Tree \$500 • Brick \$250
- Bench \$3000 • Seating Block \$5000

Tax receipts issued. For more information contact Betty at Meewasin at 306-665-6887

A world-class corridor: naturally beautiful, uniquely ours! meewasin.com

Protect Our River!

Street water drains straight to river, *untreated.*

Thank you! Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin, Meewasin Valley Authority and the City of Saskatoon would like to thank everyone who took the time to take part in the Yellow Fish Road™ program this year. This program reminds us that what goes down our storm drains directly impacts our river. Please join us again next year in spreading the word that "Rain Only" should be going down storm drains.

RAIN ONLY

HOURS: 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. WEEKDAYS, CLOSED WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS

BEAVER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

INTERPRETING SASKATOON'S NATURAL HISTORY



Beaver Creek Conservation Area (BCCA) Hours of Operation

Throughout November and December BCCA is open 9am-5pm Monday through Friday and CLOSED all weekends and holidays. From December 23 through January 1 BCCA is CLOSED.

When visiting BCCA, the Interpretive Centre is open for washrooms and activities in the Discovery Theatre and SaskEnergy Beaver Pond. A selection of four hiking trails is available as well as sunflower seeds for hand feeding the black capped chickadees.



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 MEEWASIN.COM

UPCOMING EVENTS



Tim Hortons Twinkle Lights Skating Party - December 19: The Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @ PotashCorp Plaza located in Kiwanis Memorial Park will have it's official opening ceremony on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 starting at 5:00 p.m. The celebrations will include a tree lighting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. as well as hot chocolate, baked goodies and free giveaways courtesy of Tim Hortons. Check meewasin.com and Facebook for more details closer to the event.



For more information on all Meewasin events, visit our website at meewasin.com/events.

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