



Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre

Reeder

November/December 2008
Volume 16, Issue 6

MARSH HAPPENINGS

Astronomy Nights

Look Up! Look way up...

For many stargazers, winter is their favourite season for watching the sky. The long daylight hours of summer and the smog and haze that mask the heavens give way to crystal-clear nights. Although it is sometimes difficult to stand outside motionless in the cold while observing stars, the winter sky makes it all worthwhile.

Standing center stage is Orion, the Hunter, the most brilliant constellation of all and very easy to find during the winter months.

Orion is the best constellation for demonstrating that stars come in different colors: from Betelgeuse, the giant red star, to Rigel, the brilliant blue star. Hanging from the belt of Orion are a group of dim stars. Upon closer inspection, one realizes that it is not actually a group of stars but a cloud of gas called a nebula. The Orion Nebula is visible even using a pair of binoculars but it is a wonder to behold through a telescope.



Every third Thursday of the month, Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre offers an astronomy session for those who would like to find out about constellations or just learn a bit more about the night sky. An indoor presentation is followed by an observation session on the rooftop where the Centre's telescope is rolled out to let you see the wonders of the universe.

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

Are you ready for a challenge? Come see the new exhibit at the Centre this winter!

Envirothon is a yearly competition where teams of high school students compete to test their environmental and resource management knowledge in four key areas: Wildlife, Soils and Land Use, Aquatics, and Forestry. There is also a current environmental issue that changes from year to year. The goal of Envirothon is to build the students problem-solving and team work skills while increasing their environmental awareness.

This winter, the Centre will have some of the very same questions students face for visitors to try. Come and test your environmental knowledge! All of the questions are fun, interactive and challenging and will be set up in a station format in our Feature Hall. Can you identify different animal scats? Use a clinometer to discover the height of a tree? Decipher soil layers? Age a fish? These are just some of the many questions waiting for you!

The Manitoba Forestry Association (MFA) runs the Envirothon program in Manitoba. Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre works with the MFA to provide expertise, equipment and promotion for the Envirothon program across the province. For more information on Envirothon in Manitoba, check out www.mbenvirothon.com.

Thank you!

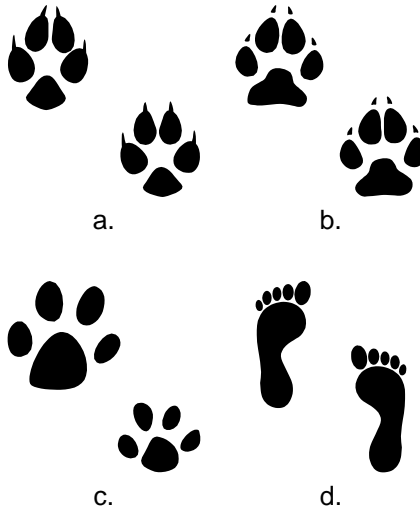
Oak Hammock Marsh would like to thank the following for their contributions to the Centre during 2008.

- A. Web
- Archaeological Society
- Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
- B. Konzelman
- Blaze Bistro (Delta Winnipeg)
- C. Bezte
- D. Sutton
- Champagne Dreams
- F. Baldwin
- Hecla Oasis Resort
- Inn at the Forks
- J. Duncan
- J. McLellan
- L. McCain
- M. Katzeley
- M. Smith
- M. Sutherland
- Manitoba Naturalist Society
- Manitoba Theatre Centre
- Mineral Society
- Morden Museum
- Oak Hammock Marsh Carving Guild
- Pantages Playhouse
- Peguis First Nation
- Pick of the Crop
- Piping Plover Recovery Program
- Prairie Canada Carvers Association
- Prairie Theatre Exchange
- Royal Astronomical Society
- Royal Winnipeg Ballet
- Selkirk Birdwatchers Club
- T. Muir
- Winnipeg Rocks and Mineral Club
- Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
- Y. Kuipers

MARSHY QUIZ

- Which wetland mammal(s) spread oil on their fur to make themselves waterproof?
 - Beaver
 - Muskrat
 - Short-tailed Weasel
 - a and b
 - b and c
- True or False? Peanuts and popcorn make great food for birds.
- True or False? During the fur trade era, a fur that had been worn as clothing for one winter was more valuable than a new fur.

4. Which of the following tracks belong to a Red Fox?



Answers: 1. d 2. false 3. true 4. a

GIFT SHOP

Holiday gifts ideas for the whole family at the Marsh Shop.

- For Dad check out the levitating globes
- For Mom beautiful hand-painted silk scarves from Thailand
- For the younger set, percussion frogs are sure to please.

The shop also carries a nice variety of stocking stuffers under \$10.00.

CAFÉ

Be sure to visit the Café this winter. Enjoy homemade soups, hot chocolate or hot apple cider on a frosty day. Or come out for breakfast or the daily lunch special. The Café will be open 7 days a week 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Oak Hammock Marsh
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For More Information

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Website:
www.oakhammockmarsh.ca

Hours of Operation

July to October
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
November to June
10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Call ahead for Café hours.

Extended hours during the fall.

The Interpretive Centre is open beyond its public hours for group bookings and meetings.

ASK THE NATURALIST



Do chickadees flock in winter?

Chickadees are one of the best birds to observe during winter. They are present all winter in noisy, conspicuous flocks. These flocks are not loose-knit, free roaming flocks. They are stable in number and have a rigid social structure.

Flocks have an average of six birds and form around a dominant pair which bred during the past summer. Other members may be young of the dominant pair, other young or a few stray adults.

While watching chickadees at a feeder you may see a bird take over another's feeding spot by scaring it away. This is a way of expressing dominance in a flock.

Throughout the winter you may see a chickadee flock at the same place several times. A flock will have three to five favourite places to feed and will move between them during the day. These sites define their territory and are defended against other chickadee flocks.

WINTER CAMP



Day camp makes winter break fun!

Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre is offering winter camp for children aged 6 to 9 on December 29, 30, and 31. Camps run daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Each day features a different theme. Campers will participate in a variety of exciting indoor and outdoor activities including snowshoe walks, scavenger hunts, animal tracking, winter games, and seasonal crafts. Register your child or grandchild today so they can experience the marsh in the winter.