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COMING BVN PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Save the date! BVN's 2018 evening speaker series resumes on October 23, 2018. Admission is free. Donations at the door. Mark your calendar and join us for a new season of conversations and natural history presentations.

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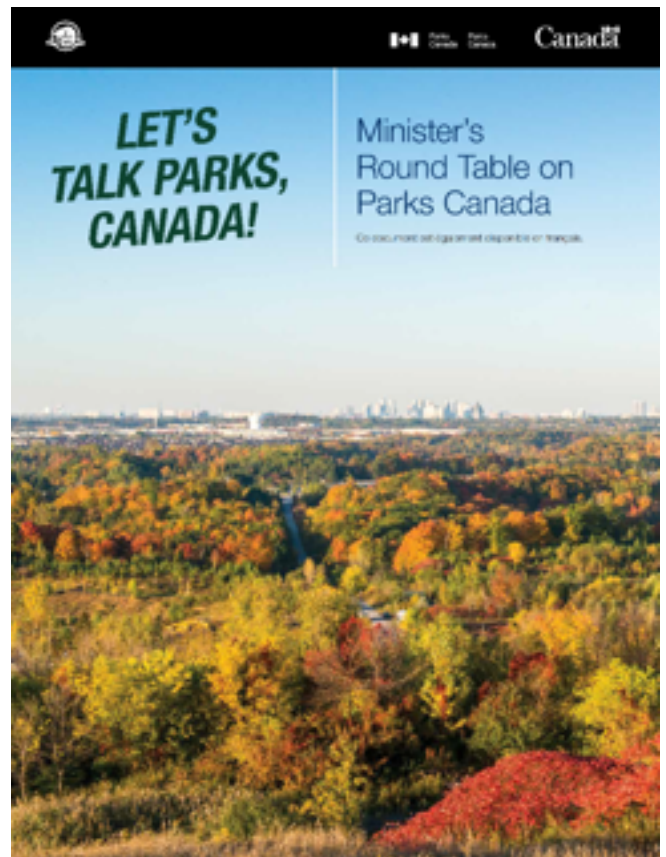
The Wolf - A Story of Survival and Obsession
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The Invention Of Nature

WHO DO YOU CALL?

Useful Incident and Emergency Numbers

LET THEM KNOW YOUR MIND...

Contact information for letting politicians, governments and land managers know what you're thinking. Give credit where credit is due and remind them that they work for you.



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

2018 EVENING PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Our October to April program of free presentations occurs on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Banff Seniors Centre starting at 7:30 pm. Watch the “[Events](#)” tab on the BVN web site for the beautiful posters advertising these special social and informative evenings commencing on October 23. Admission is free. Donations at the door. Mark your calendar and join us for a new season of natural history presentations.

In the meantime, drop in to [Trails Fest](#) at the Canmore Nordic Centre on June 10th. BVN will have a display on our [High Elevation Localized Species Project](#) with a quick tutorial to help you get set up and start saving your observations of Pikas, Marmots, Goats and Ptarmigan while you are enjoying trails this summer.



NEWS AND ISSUES

MINISTER'S ROUND TABLE REPORT

Ecological integrity as a top priority for national parks seems to be the result of the 2017 Minister's public Round Table consultation process on the future of national parks. This is encouraging news. It will be interesting to see how it is applied with upcoming issues such as ski area plans and 2026 Winter Olympic bid.

The theme of “protect and restore” was the most significant theme that emerged from the Round Table engagement. Canadians spoke about the unique place that national parks and national historic sites play in their lives, and the need to ensure they are managed, maintained, and restored so that future generations can enjoy the same experiences as the current generation. Here's what the report says about reaffirming ecological and commemorative integrity as the first priority.



- The most common concern raised was that the principles of ecological and commemorative integrity are at risk of being compromised. Participants called for the Minister to reaffirm that ecological integrity will be the first priority in decision-making in national parks and national marine conservation areas, and commemorative integrity will be the first priority in decision-making in national historic sites.
- In the context of ecological integrity, many participants mentioned the need to strengthen the role of conservation science in the development of park management plans, and to restore funding to research, ecological monitoring, and public reporting that was cut in previous budgets.
- Participants recognized the value of Indigenous traditional knowledge in conservation and restoration and encouraged Parks Canada to continue to work collaboratively with Indigenous peoples and

communities to advance conservation and apply Indigenous traditional knowledge to conservation and restoration programs.

- Some participants emphasized the need to strengthen the protection of national marine conservation areas, including through stronger legislation. Others observed that the sustainable use of marine resources could be achieved, but must be subordinate to the preservation of marine ecosystem health.
- Concerns were raised that a focus on commemorative integrity, which should include an emphasis on learning and understanding, had been reduced in favour of a focus on repairing physical infrastructure. There were calls to reinforce commemorative integrity by adequately funding educational and interpretive programs.

Specific to Banff and Jasper National Parks:

“What We Heard:

Review the commercialization and development that occur in national parks, particularly in Banff and Jasper National Parks.”

“What We Will Do – The Minister’s Response:

In order to ensure that ecological integrity is not compromised, we will take the following actions:

- Ensure that management plan review and renewal in Banff and Jasper national parks incorporates focused engagement on processes and approaches for decision-making for large-scale commercial development that considers the priority of ecological integrity as well as the principles of openness and transparency.
- Undertake a review of development and land use management decision-making tools to ensure a consistent and transparent process for development decisions at Parks Canada places.
- Ensure that the highest standards of environmental assessment are applied to new development and redevelopment proposals in national parks, national marine conservation areas, and national historic sites.
- Explore ongoing improvements to transportation plans for Parks Canada places that experience high vehicle traffic, including initiatives to limit traffic, add shuttle services, or provide alternate transit and travel options.”

The full report is a good read. Go to www.letstalkparkscanada.ca

ARE THE OLYMPICS COMING?

That is a good question. With long range plans for Sunshine 35 years overdue and the Lake Louise planning process still incomplete it seems there is lots of discussion about Banff National Park being a venue for the Calgary 2026 Olympic bid. Clearly, those who would use our national parks for big international sporting events are either out of touch with Canadians or do not agree that ecological integrity is the main priority for national parks as the Minister’s Round table confirmed. If the Minister for Environment and Climate Change really cares, she will recommend this event be held in a more central location like Europe where more environmentally sustainable transportation is available and average travel distances are shorter.

BVN does not support holding Olympic events in national parks and does support the wisdom that kept the 1988 Olympics out of the park. We would certainly like a chance to offer some other ways to spend the \$30 million Olympic bid dollars that could support ecological integrity directly. We hope you agree and let your local, provincial and federal politicians know your mind.

SATURDAY IN THE PARK

“You don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it is gone”. Heat a frog in a pot of water slowly up to boiling and it will not react until it is too late. It would seem the Banff visitor experience may fit the cliché. On May 19, a morning walk to watch the spring run-off at Bow Falls included a helicopter droning in circles at low elevation over the townsite and down at Bow Falls a zip-line had been set up with no less than six cables scratched across the view of the Fairholme Range between Tunnel Mountain and the golf course. The sad thing is that nobody else there seemed to mind. After all, if you go to a world class destination you should expect the same distractions available everywhere else in the world. Or not?

PROTECT THE BIG HORN

South of the Bow Valley region Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park have recently been established and are subject to management plans. One of the next big pieces in the puzzle of protecting the ecosystems that connect to the Bow Valley is protecting the Bighorn country to the northeast of Banff National Park in the protection gap between the White Goat Wilderness and the Siffleur Wilderness. The Alberta Wilderness Association’s vision for the 8,000 km² Bighorn Backcountry consists of:

- ✓ A 5,000 km² pristine wilderness area which would ideally be protected as a Wildland Provincial Park.
- ✓ No mineral leases other than existing ones which would be phased out in time (minimal change from existing status).
- ✓ No coal development, of which there is currently none.
- ✓ No commercial forestry (some management for fire and other threats)
- ✓ No cattle grazing allotments, of which there are none now.
- ✓ No provision for commercial tourism developments.
- ✓ No motorized recreation within Prime Protection and Critical Wildlife Zones, as well as federally protected critical habitat for species at risk

BVN members and others are encouraged to contact the [Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative](#) or the [Alberta Wilderness Association](#) for background information and to see what you can do to support their work to establish the Bighorn as a wildland park.

OF WILD THINGS

HARLEQUIN DUCK LONGEVITY RECORD *Cyndi Smith*

Harlequin Ducks are similar to other species of sea ducks in that they have delayed sexual maturity, low annual production of young, high annual adult survival, and a long life span. Life span may be longer for males than for females, as females generally have lower summer survival likely due to higher predation risk while nesting, whereas both have similar winter survival rates.

As part of the Banff National Park Harlequin Duck Project, on May 7, 1995 Ian Goudie and I captured a male Harlequin Duck in a mist net set across the Bow River, downstream of Lake Louise near Morant’s Corner. We attached a standard USFWS metal band on the right leg, and a red plastic band with white code BO on the left leg. He was aged as after-second-year by his definitive male plumage, meaning that he had hatched in at least 1993. Male BO was recaptured again on the Bow River in spring 1996 and 1997.



Harlequin Ducks, spring 2018 Amar Athwal

Male BO was not observed again until March 14, 2014 at Hornby Island, about 25 km southeast of Comox, BC, in the Strait of Georgia, by John Ashley (who studied Harlequin Ducks in Glacier National Park, MT, in the

1990s). Hornby Island is one of a number of Pacific herring spawning areas that attract waterbirds to feed in aggregations of 50,000 to 300,000 individuals in late winter. Aggregations of 3,400-5,500 Harlequin Ducks have been estimated there.

At the time of his resighting, male BO was a minimum of 20 years and 9 months old, setting a new longevity record for the species.

[Excerpted from: Smith, C.M., J. Ashley, R. Ian Goudie & C.M. Smith. 2017. New longevity record for Harlequin Duck more than 20 years. *North American Bird Bander* 42(3):72-74.]

BUM FUNGUS? *Peter Duck*

As the snow finally began to melt this spring I was wandering about the valley with some aspiring new guides taking a course for the Interpretive Guides Association. We came across these odd bits of pine twigs with cones cast from the tree tops last fall. The twigs seem to have these odd shaped galls which, under the cover of a deep snowpack, seemed to have had all the bark nibbled off by mice or voles. Many of the galls seemed to wrap around the twig in lobes that touched on the opposite side of the twig. For lack of a better term we temporarily dubbed these galls as being caused by “bum fungus”. At the end of the day a quick trip into cyber space identified these as the galls created by the fungus *Endocronartium harknessii*. Some information on this fungus has been published by the Yukon Forestry Department and Natural Resources Canada. Apparently there is a higher sugar content in the gall tissues which may explain the small mammal nibbling. The fungus is nothing new to the area and some older naturalists may have noticed these galls over their years. Fusako Shimura has located a 1972 report entitled “Forest Fungi Collected In Yoho National Park, British Columbia” published by the Northern Forest Research Centre Edmonton, Alberta (Information Report Nor-X-27)



BEARS EXPLAINED *Colleen Campbell*

As one outcome of a decade of fieldwork for the Eastern Slopes Grizzly Bear Research project, BVN Board member, Colleen Campbell presents dozens of talks about bears every year. She gave this talk as part of this year's Wings Over the Rockies Festival. Here is an excerpt from that presentation. We invite you to visit our website to read the [entire essay](#).

Though their natural history, strategies and patterns for surviving in our tough environment and their most critical challenges can be generalized, each bear is a unique being. All bears are important. In summary, they are intricately threaded into our lives, no matter where we live.

- *Bears have huge influence in wild places where they live.*
- *Bears - especially brown bears (grizzlies) - are implicated in historic and contemporary spiritual practices of the northern hemisphere.*
- *We are tied to bears in the modern world - through stories in every possible mode.*
- *Though not included in this article, bears are also important in medical research that may benefit human health.*

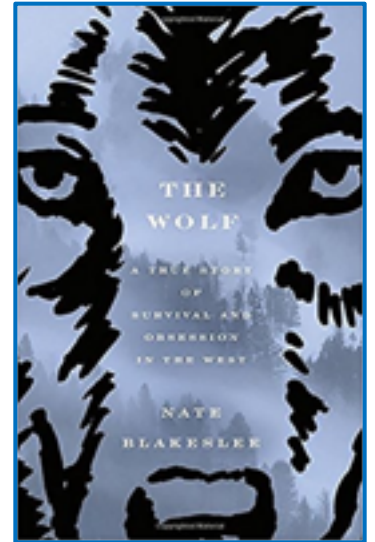
BOOK REVIEWS

THE WOLF: A True Story of Survival and Obsession the West. Nate Blakeslee (2017) *Heather Dempsey*

This book at its essence is the chronology of the re-introduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park and the ensuing challenge to keep them alive, within and beyond the park's boundaries. It is told with a storyteller's skill to describe the complexities of the natural and political dramas that have played out over the years since the wolf's return to the Lower 48. The strong and complex characters described - whether 2 or 4 legged, were especially appealing and revealing.

VISIONARY WOMEN: How Rachel Carson, Jane Jacobs, Jane Goodall, and Alice Waters Changed Our World. Andrea Barnett (2018) *Heather Dempsey*

This is the story of four remarkable women who shaped the world we live in today. Together, these women - linked not by friendship or field, but by their choice to break with convention - showed what one person speaking truth to power can do. Jane Jacobs fought for livable cities and strong communities. Rachel Carson warned us about poisoning the environment; Jane Goodall demonstrated the indelible kinship between humans and animals; and Alice Waters urged us to reconsider what and how we eat.



“In nature nothing exists alone”
Rachel Carson
Silent Spring

I grew up with three of the authors' first books, as these bestsellers were on my mother's bookshelf; Alice Waters came to my attention in the '90s. I've read and re-read many of the four's works ever since. This book reminds why they matter so much.

THE INVENTION OF NATURE: Alexander Humboldt's New World. Andrea Wulf (2015) *Bob Milko*

This is about the forgotten life of Alexander von Humboldt, the visionary German naturalist of the early 1800's who in essence is the founder of ecology. Andrea Wulf tells the story of his journey's in South America and northern Asia and how this led him to understand the interrelatedness of the biological, geological, atmospheric components of the world and his influence on many future visionaries such as Darwin, Thoreau and John Muir. As a retired professional ecologist I cannot believe that, other than in a history of science course, I have not come across the story of this man's life, probably the most influential in the development of the field ecology and environmentalism. It is superbly researched and written.

WHO DO YOU CALL?

When you are out in the parks this summer you may come across situations or observations that you want to tell the authorities about. We recommend you have these phone numbers handy. Remember, cell phone coverage is spotty in the mountains so take notes if you need to move on to make a call.

Ambulance 911

Fire Department 911

Police (RCMP) 911

Banff Dispatch 403-762-4506: park-related emergency only e.g. avalanche, forest fire, mountain rescue, etc

Banff Dispatch 403-762-1470: park non emergency e.g. bear or large carnivore sightings, human-wildlife conflicts, injured animal, illegal park activities such as fire, camping, drones.

Kananaskis Emergency Services 403-591-7755: emergencies, bear, cougar and problem wildlife sightings, illegal activities. This is also the number to report a poacher. If you wish to remain anonymous while reporting a crime, phone 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

CONTACTS

(Please let us know if you find any of these contacts need to be updated)

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ALBERTA

If your call to your MLA, or any Alberta government office, is long distance then please dial 310-0000 then the area code and the phone number for toll free access.

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