



Strathcona Wilderness Institute – 2018 Summer Activity Report

Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre : Paradise Meadows Trail Head

The Centre was open from June 29th until October 9th in 2018, for a total of 97 days: 2 days in June, 30 days in July, 31 days in August, 27 days in September, 7 days in October. The Centre was staffed by two students (Rupert Love and Dan Tucker) through the Canada Summer Jobs programme from June 29th to August 31st and by a cohort of 11 Volunteers. Brenda Geddes was contracted to oversee the management of the Centre and coordination of the volunteers.

10,297 visitors were recorded at the Centre, with a daily average 100 (substantially above the 87.5 of 2017) The smoke from forest fires on the mainland and the heat did not seem to be deterrents. As usual in September and early October, school field trips increased the overall totals to over 300 on one day, over 200 on 5 days. In addition there were about 140 participants in the organized events in the Forbidden Plateau area (Hikes & Nature Walks etc - see details below)

Visitor Provenance Summary for 2018

Canada: 75% of total visitors

US: -- 5.5 % of total visitors

Europe: -- 15 % of total visitors

Other overseas countries: 4.5% of total visitors

Organized Summer Events

We scheduled a total of 24 guided Hikes and interpretive Nature Walks in the Parks, 19 on a variety of the Forbidden Plateau trails, including the shorter Paradise Meadows loops, and 5 in the Buttle Lake area, covering every weekend through July and August, plus three weekends in September. 3 hikes were cancelled because of heavy rain. 2 of the interpretive walks included a presentation at the Wilderness Centre. 12 volunteers led these Hikes and Nature walks, as well as three of the SWI Directors. (R. Mindell, L. & A. Maingon)

School Groups

While there were at least 12 Schools staging Field Days in the Park, only one contacted us, and in the end did not follow up on our offer to act as guides.



Wheelchair & TrailRider Use

Approximately a dozen visitors made use of the Wheelchairs for the Paradise Meadows Boardwalks. The TrailRider was taken out on 3 occasions for day-trips, including one (arranged by Andy Smith) with our Chairperson Judy Norbury to visit the Croteau Group Campsite. It was also used on two occasions to transport injured hikers to the trailhead.

SWI Mycology Workshop – Sept 15th - SPWC

The first of a projected annual event had a 32 registered participants (two above our initial limit) plus 5 presenters, 2 organizers and 2 volunteer helpers.. The day-long workshop, with indoor presentations and ID workshop in the lower meeting room of the SPWC and out door forays into the Park was an unqualified success in spite of rather cool damp weather.

The Buttle Hut beside Park HQ at Buttle Lake

The information Hut at Park HQ at Buttle Lake was staffed during the week from June 26 to August 31 by a student, Molina Dawson, through funding from the Canada Summer Jobs programme; this was the first time that we had funding for a student at Buttle. Every weekend from June 22 till the Labour Day Weekend with 9 volunteers and one Director sharing the task. Over 62 days a total of **1888** visitors were recorded. The average # of weekend visitors was the same as last year at 45 per day (998 total for 22 weekend days compared to 1117 for 25 weekend days last year). The provenance breakdown was Canadian 68%, US 11%, European 19% Other 2%.

Organized events at Buttle

New this year were two interpretative Nature Walks – one focussing on Geology at Karst Creek and one on Faunal Track and Sign on the Elk River Flats, with a total of 18 participants. Two Hikes were scheduled – Elk River Trail and Upper Myra Falls- with 10 participants. 2 were guided by volunteers, 2 by directors R. Mindell and L. Maingon. A further walk at the Shepherd's Creek/Wild Ginger Trails (on the September long Weekend) failed to attract participants.