

## **Williams Lake Field Naturalist Field Trip List for 2022**

**Hike and Bird Spokey Hollow Sunday May 15th** Come spend a day hiking and birding along some of the local bike trails on Westsyde. This will be a 4 to 6 hour birding hike. The trail winds through wooded areas, skirts a small pond and swamp area and has some great views of the Williams Lake Creek Valley from above. Be prepared for a few short, steep sections. Expect to see a good variety of birds. Bring water, lunch and binos. Be aware it is tick season. Meet at 9 AM at Station House Gallery parking lot. Trip leaders are Sean and Betty Donahue. Please call or text 250-267-2800 to sign up.

**Chilanko Marsh Bird Count Saturday May 21st** (leader Jim Sims (778) 764-2752 or smedleysims@gmail.com) This annual field trip is offered on the Victoria Long Weekend. The count at the marsh will start at 9:30 am. Please meet at the Puntzi Tanker Base, follow the Wildlife Viewing sign 2km west of the turnoff to Puntzi Lake. Allow a good 2 hours of driving time. Unfortunately, Jim will not be hosting a post count pot luck supper nor will there be a pancake breakfast. For those of you who want to stay in the area for the weekend there will be another birding walk in the area of Eagle Lake on Sunday and you will be welcome to participate. You can contact Jim for information on where you can stay for Saturday and Sunday evenings.

**Birding in the Upper Williams Lake River Valley Sunday May 29th** (Trip Leader Phil Ranson 398-7110) Meet on Sunday, May 29 at 08:00 at the trail parking lot across Mackenzie Avenue from the Cemetery. We will take a short walk of about 2 hours duration around the settlement ponds and along the river trail, looking and listening for the many birds that breed in the varied habitats that the valley offers, paying particular attention to the warbler and flycatcher species. Please bring binoculars and leave pets at home.

**Farwell Canyon Lower Grasslands Sunday, June 5** (leader: Ordell Steen, 250-398-5017): This trip will include a short hike to explore the plants and birds of the low elevation grasslands (shrub steppe) at Farwell Canyon. We will walk down the old road on the south side of the Chilcotin River towards the first post-settlement bridge (an earlier Secwepemc bridge was present), past a variety of grassland communities to sagebrush terrace above the river. Expect to see plants in flower. Hiking boots strongly advised. Bring plenty of water, a lunch, binoculars, and a camera. Meet at 7:45 a.m. at the Scout Island Nature House.

**Wednesday Evening Paddle on Williams Lake Wednesday June 8, 6:30** Led by Peter Opie This will be an easy paddle on the lake to look at interesting community of birds and other wildlife at the far end of the lake. We will meet at Grebe Drive on South Lakeside at 6:30. Please take a good look at the road transition from the paved to gravel before driving down to the lake as there is a drop that could damage the underside of your vehicle. Most people may choose not to drive down, but leave their vehicles on the road above.

**Churn Creek Wildfire Hike Sunday, 19 June** Led by Peter Opie and Jim Young This is a joint excursion with the Friends of Churn Creek. We will view the landscape after last year's wildfire. Expect to see a variety of habitats, forest, grassland and wetlands that have been affected by the fire in varying degrees and having some degree of green up. This will be a moderate hike partly

on existing trail. Bring good boots, a hat, water and a lunch. We will meet at the Kiosk at 1km on the Empire Valley Road at 9:00 am. For car-pooling, meet at the wye parking lot west of A&W at 7:00 am. Expect return to Williams Lake by 5:00 pm. Call Peter 250 392-1440 if you need more information.

**Russett Bluff Hike Wednesday, 15 June Led by Peter Opie** This will be a moderate hike following a single-track mountain bike trail with a constant 10% grade, designed for uphill biking. We will climb about 250 meters in 2.5 km, about one hour one way. There is a bit of a steep scramble to the lookout point where we will have fabulous views of the entire lake, Sugarcane and beyond. Bring good boots and maybe hiking poles. We will meet at the east end of South Lakeside Drive at 7:00 pm.

**Fox Mountain Walk Wednesday Jun 22nd** (Leader Ray Hornby 392-2271) A field trip walk on Fox Mtn for approximately 1-2 h. Meet at the junction of Teal Place and Fox Mtn Rd at 6 pm for an enjoyable walk along the trails. Panoramic views of the lake along with good opportunities to see wildlife and selection of wildflowers. Parking along Teal Place.

**Farwell Area Middle Grasslands Sunday June 26** (leader: Ordell Steen, 398-5017) This trip will include a short walk to explore the plants, birds, and other wildlife of the middle elevation grasslands near the start of the Junction Sheep Range access road above Farwell Canyon. We will enjoy amazing scenery and look for the different grassland and forest communities and how they differ from the lower elevation grasslands of the June 5 trip. Expect to see flowering plants and other wildlife. Wear hiking boots and bring plenty of water and a lunch. Meet at 7:30 at the Scout Island Nature House.

**Beaver Valley Paddle Sunday, 12 July** Led by Peter Opie We will paddle 15 km of Beaver Creek from Chambers Lake to Beaver Valley Provincial Park and back. This lovely valley trip will pass through three lakes in the chain, through old-growth forest and a mile along a slow and lush meandering creek. We should expect to see wildlife feathered and otherwise. By mid-July, reduced current should provide for easy return upstream. This would be a leisurely, three-hour trip one way. Richard Case will be our guide. We will put in at David and Susan Zirnhelt's, 5679 Jacobson Road. Meet there at 9:00 am or at Scout Island at 8:00 am to carpool. Call Peter 250 392-1440 if you need more information.

**Churn Creek Goose Lakes Hike Sunday, 11 September** Led by Peter Opie and Jim Young This is a joint excursion with the Friends of Churn Creek. We will access the Goose Lakes from Gang Ranch. A moderate hike will view a variety of ecosystems including the wetlands with lunch spot at Cougar Point for the view of Churn Creek and grassland benches on both sides. Bring good boots, a hat, water and a lunch. We will travel the 2000 Road via Farwell Canyon. For car-pooling, meet at the wye parking lot west of A&W at 7:00 am. Expect return to Williams Lake by 5:00 pm. Call Peter 250 392-1440 if you need more information.

**Junction Sheep Range Sunday October 23rd** (Leader: Fred McMechan 392 7680) Meet at Scout Island at 8:00am. Bring a lunch and your binoculars for this annual day long drive and hike into the park. This will be the peak of the California Big-Horned Sheep rut so look forward to seeing the sheep and perhaps you will be lucky and see or hear some head-butting.