



# The Pack Rat

Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association June/July 2004



*Yamnuska 50th Anniversary Hike*

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## President's Report...

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**W**ith the onset of the hiking season, it has been a pleasure seeing some of the non-winter participants emerge from hibernation to sally forth on the initial hikes of the season. Unfortunately, the 50th Anniversary hike up Yamnuska on May 9 was not pre-approved by the weather gods and suffered from an untimely snowfall which limited the turnout. Nevertheless, 16 people did trudge through the snow as far as the east end of the summit block where 12 succumbed to the siren call of hot coffee or soup back in town. Four stalwarts continued on to the summit for a fine view of...fog. All returned safely after an interesting descent on the snow covered scree. So we ended up mirroring the original hike where most people did not make the summit!

The big event will be the July 17-18 anniversary weekend with the in-town pancake breakfast on Saturday and the hikes and

pot luck event on the Sunday. We will try and order up better weather.

The Executive will be looking at the purchase of a digital projector in response to the trend toward digital photography. This is a somewhat pricy item so we would like to ensure that if we purchase one that is appropriate for our needs. If any member has advice in this regard, i.e. can comment on the specifications required or the reliability of various units, please contact me. The main use would be for member or other presenter digital photo shows either from a laptop PC or possibly from our server where we would set up a special area where members could assemble digital photo shows.

Finally, we have had lots of new members join up recently. Welcome to the Ramblers! Hopefully the snow will not last too long so that we will be able to offer lots of activities for the summer.

## ***Gem Trek releases new hiking map-guide for Waterton Lakes National Park***

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**E**xplore Waterton Lakes National Park with Gem Trek Publishing's new map-guide to this less-visited Canadian Rocky Mountain park, located in southwestern Alberta.

More than 225 kilometres of trails in the park lead to waterfalls, wildflower meadows, teal-coloured mountain lakes and rugged alpine terrain. This map covers all of Waterton Lakes National Park, adjacent Akamina-Kishinena Provincial Park and the Goat Haunt area of Glacier National Park, Montana, accessible by tour boat from Waterton townsite.

The *Waterton Lakes National Park* map is at a scale of 1:50 000, with contour lines at 25-metre intervals. Relief shading highlights the topography. Hiking and biking trails are clearly shown, with distances labelled from point to



point. The map shows all roads, campgrounds, picnic areas, viewpoints and other facilities in the area. Also on the front is an inset map of Waterton townsite, showing all hotels and motels and including their contact numbers.

On the back of the map is a trail guide to the area, featuring write-ups of more than 30 recommended outings, ranging from easy walks to strenuous day hikes and overnight trips, as well as four recommended mountain bike rides. Each trail description includes precise directions to the trailhead, a difficulty rating from easy to difficult, distance covered and elevation gain, and highlights to watch for along the way.

“In keeping with our goal to provide up-to-date, user-friendly trail maps,” says Donna Nelson, company co-owner, “the trail write-ups on the back of the map are

grouped into easy, moderate and more strenuous hikes. Whether you are looking for a short interpretive stroll along a red rock canyon or a more demanding ridgewalk through high alpine country, there is something to suit everyone interested in the outdoors.”

Interpretive mountain guide Peter Merkley, guidebook author Mike Potter (*Fire Lookout Hikes in the Canadian Rockies* and *Ridgewalks in the Canadian Rockies*) and Gem Trek staff hiked or cycled all of the trails in Waterton Lakes National Park with a GPS (Global Positioning System) unit to ensure the accuracy of trail locations.

The *Waterton Lakes National Park* map-guide is printed on two sides on high-quality paper and retails for \$7.95. It is available at Map Town in downtown Calgary and will soon be available at Mountain Equipment Co-op, most Chapters and Alberta Motor Association locations and many outdoor stores in Calgary. Also look for it at outdoor stores and bookstores in Waterton townsite.

Based in Cochrane, Alberta, Gem Trek Publish-

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**Activities**

Hiking, Backpacking,  
Skiing, Cycling,  
Climbing,  
Scrambling,  
Mountaineering, Educa-  
tion & Awareness  
Programs, Social  
Functions

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**Meetings**

Every Wednesday  
evening at 7:30 p.m.

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**Mail**

Rocky Mountain Ram-  
blers Association  
c/o Calgary Area Out-  
door Council (CAOC)  
1111 Memorial Dr NW  
Calgary, AB T2N 3E4

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**Trip Info**

282-6308 Information  
Line and at Meetings

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**Website**

The Packrat is available  
on the RMRA website at  
**www.ramblers.ab.ca**. If  
we have your email  
address, you will be  
automatically notified  
that an electronic copy  
of the Packrat is on the  
website.

ing Ltd. specializes in  
detailed trail maps and  
driving maps of the Cana-  
dian Rockies and western  
Canada. The company  
continues to fill a need for  
good local maps with 20  
maps to date, 15 of which  
are trail map-guides with  
Gem Trek's trademark  
relief shading.

Gem Trek has also  
produced large-scale relief-  
shaded trail maps for Parks  
Canada that have been  
erected at trailheads  
throughout Banff, Jasper,  
Kootenay and Yoho national  
parks.

For more information,  
visit the Gem Trek Publish-  
ing Ltd. website at  
**www.gemtrek.com**.

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***A letter to the Ramblers...***

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My dear friends,

I have never written you  
a letter of thanks and  
appreciation, but this time I  
want you to know how  
thankful I am for the Ram-  
bler membership that I  
enjoy with you.

For many years, you were  
my companions in the  
outdoors, having fun in  
recreation. I have been very  
moved by the compassionate  
expressions of my Rambler  
friends.

I wish you success and  
good outdoor activities.

Love,  
John Schleinich

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**Minutes****Coordinators' Council Meeting  
April 20, 2004**

1. Minutes of the meeting  
of September 9, 2003  
were adopted as read.
2. New business arising  
from the minutes. Alan  
will follow up with Bob  
St. John on the inten-  
tions of "chronically  
inactive" coordinators.
3. Trip statistics were  
reviewed. From 1995 to

present participation has  
grown steadily, taking a  
large increase last year in  
most categories, but  
noticeably not in track  
set skiing. This year  
winter trips are at a  
record high. Track set  
trips have recovered  
from the previous year's  
low but are still lower  
than for several years.

- Several coordinators reported calling many track set trips which did not go.
4. First aid and avalanche awareness course requirements were discussed, with the status quo maintained.
  5. No probationary coordinators were eligible for full coordinator status.
  6. Probationary coordinators continued: Andy Dragt (one mentored trip taken), Herb Kariel (first aid), and Ivan Pull (first aid).
  7. New probationary coordinators elected: Greg Deabler, Aldis Hallson, Norman Acquaroff.
  8. Snowshoe trips were discussed, and it was agreed they are to be treated exactly like any other winter (ski) trip regarding avalanches.
  9. The issue of specific rock fall hazards on trips below SC7 was discussed. It was agreed that comments from coordinators on trip reports will be extracted for use in the trip hazards section on the website.
  10. Non-club trip reporting was discussed, with the status quo remaining.
  11. Moved by Wally Drew and seconded by Gary Denman: "That the criteria for both Rammy awards and Pins be Trip Days" (previously trip days for Rammies and official trips for Pins) **Passed.**
  12. The issue of what is a trip was discussed. It was agreed that any outing of interest to the membership, which is announced officially, with the requirement of signing the waiver trip sheet, is a trip. There will continue to be no credit for unofficial trips (one or two people).
  13. Moved by Anita O'Reilly and seconded by Wally Drew: "That the summer car pool rate be 5 cents per kilometre." **Approved.**
  14. Waiver administration for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events was discussed. For the Elizabeth Parker Hut week-long camp, there will be a waiver for the camp, with each club trip organized during the week requiring a separate trip sheet sign up.
  15. Moved by Anita O'Reilly, seconded by Peter Fischer: "That we allow invited guests for the May 9 and July 18 anniversary hikes to sign one guest membership to cover both dates, without signing the waiver." Amendment by Alan Mathies, seconded by Doug Davison: to delete "without signing the waiver." Approved. Amendment by Ron Hunter, seconded by Alan Mathies, to add: "That we recommend to the Executive that." Approved. Motion approved as amended. Anita will ensure that all guests are given clear information on how to review the Information Guide on the website or in hard copy, so it will not be onerous for them to review the material, and our waiver protection will be maintained.
  16. It was agreed that rather than set any schedule for bagging 50 peaks during
- Guidelines will be given out to participants to encourage them to join these trips or ensure the organizers know of their whereabouts.



our 50<sup>th</sup> year, the trips coordinator will keep track of the number of peaks from the beginning of the year, which will likely far exceed 50.

17. New procedures for uploading photos onto the website and using "live names," by which members' full names are shown to members only, while the general public only sees first names, were briefly outlined. An article by Bob St. John on ideas about attracting more membership was mentioned.
18. Marianne Wolters suggested that an informal information meeting be held with potential and current probationary coordinators—was accepted.
19. It was agreed that the website be used to keep members informed about issues such as the proposed fees for track set skiing in the Kananaskis Country.
20. Ken Park was thanked for his efforts in providing ski improvement courses for the membership.
21. Adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

## Volunteer Trail Work in K Country

by D. Reimer

Once again, Friends of Kananaskis are organizing volunteers for the once-a-month trail work program it operates in K Country. As a volunteer, you would spend about 5 or 6 hours doing anything from cleaning up litter to removing deadfall to repairing bridges. You'd be part of a team of 6 to 10 people with a leader who would show you what to do and how to do it.

Tools are provided but you'll have to bring your own lunch. Sometimes the leader even brings along cookies or doughnuts as a treat! You'll need gloves and it's a good idea to wear clothes that can stand some tough wear.

This is a great way to give back something for the privilege of hiking on some really great trails. Lots of other groups contribute and last year saw over 3,000 hours of labour donated by adults, seniors, children, bikers, hikers, climbers.

Dates are all the second Saturday of each summer month as follows:



JUNE 12	JULY 10
AUG 14	SEPT 11

If you have one of these days free and could help, please call Dorothy-Ann Reimer at 225-2499 to register. We need a few days lead time every month so trail crews can be organized - so don't leave it until the last minute.

### PACKRAT ADVERTISING RATES

The Club offers advertising space in **PackRat** and the following rates apply:

Quarter Page	\$10
Half Page	\$20
Full Page	\$40

Payment **MUST** be received prior to publication.

## Kananaskis Pass Traverse

Sept 3 - 6, 2004

(4 days, 5 nights)

Starting at K-country's Upper Kananaskis Lake, this circle trip will cross both the North and South Kananaskis passes by entering BC's Height of the Rockies' Provincial Park and descending onto the Palliser River Valley. Highlights of this backpack include Lawson Lake, Maude Lake, Beatty Lake, Beatty and Leroy Creeks, Palliser Valley and River, Three Isle Lake and super views of the Palliser Pass and the Royal Group Mountains.

- Co-ordinator: Ken Park **244-6809**
- Max. number of hikers: **8**
- Sign up early he/she who waits is f\_\_\_\_\_ (foolish)
- Reservation deposit required.
- Approximate Cost: **TBA**



## Fees To Ski

by D. Reimer

**W**hen the snow flies next Fall, Ramblers will have to cough up money to cross-country ski on track-set trails in K Country. Most will pay the daily adult fee of \$5 though seniors (those aged 55 and over) will get a break and pay \$4. Season passes will be available at \$67.50 (adults) and \$54 (seniors). Vouchers will also be available at 11 for the price of 10.

Fees will apply at Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, Evan Thomas (Ribbon Creek) and Mt. Shark. Bragg Creek and Sandy McNabb will still be free since snow is too unpredictable. You'll also need a ticket if you only use the tracked trail to get to your untracked area (e.g. Upper Spray Valley, Elk Lake).

Daily tickets will be available at the 2 Visitor Centres and at the Village Centre in Kananaskis Village and must be acquired on the day that you ski (so they'll need a date stamp).

No improvement in facilities or services is planned. K Country estimates the cost of their winter program as \$300,000 and fees will bring in around \$100,000. The money collected will go into a 'Dedicated Revenue' fund exclusively for K Country's operation.

The Minister (Gene Zwozdesky) states that the majority of people thought fees would be acceptable. Seniors' groups are still very much against fees and have done a lot of letter writing and continue to protest. They may, in fact, be the heaviest users of tracked ski trails.

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## JUNE is Wilderness Awareness Month

### 1. A Celebration of Wilderness Festival

Saturday, June 5, 2004  
11:00 - 3:00 PM

Bowness Park, no cost, all are welcome.

### 2. Landscapes of the Red Deer River: A Guided Bus Tour

Sunday, June 27, 2004  
8:00 AM

\$30 AWA members  
\$40 Non-members

Details Below.

### **A Celebration of Wilderness Festival**

You are welcome to join AWA at Bowness Park for *A Celebration of Wilderness*, an event showcasing the wilderness experiences of Albertan's through a variety of fun activities!

Featured events include:

- A guided interpretive walk
- Wildlife demonstration
- Live music
- Oral storytelling
- Environmental education
- Children's activities
- Outdoor gear demonstrations

The event is free and open to the public but bring your own picnic.

Come share your wilderness experiences with AWA as part of Canada's own Environment Week.

Bowness Park  
Saturday, June 5  
11:00- 3:00 PM

### **Landscapes of the Red Deer River - A Guided Bus Tour**

Join AWA for an interpretive bus trip to the

Drumheller region of the Red Deer River. This region is a biological and historical wonder!

Over countless thousands of years, wind and water have worked to sculpt this amazing landscape which we see today. Millions of years of history are written in stone!

The area is home to an abundance of wildlife, from eagles to meadowlarks, cacti to pelicans.

Setting off from Calgary, we will be traveling through the Red Deer River Valley, looking at some of the spectacular natural history of this region. The tour will include presentations from local naturalists, canoe guides and snake experts.

Contact Nigel or Adam at the AWA office if you have any questions.

ph.403-283-2025  
e: [awa@shaw.ca](mailto:awa@shaw.ca)

[www.AlbertaWilderness.ca](http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca)



### **Grizzly Mortality**

**I**t is probably Canada's most breathtaking bit of nature, a turquoise jewel of a lake surrounded by lush forest and soaring mountains. But a new study of bear populations in the Rockies adds a decidedly grisly image—the rotting carcass of a bear—to the postcard perfection of Lake Louise.

A landmark project led by the University of Alberta to pinpoint the places where southern Canadian grizzlies are most likely to die by human hands has identified Lake Louise as the one spot bears wouldn't want to be.

The wilderness splendour that attracts tourists to the lake from around the world is, naturally, a magnet for grizzly bears, too. They are also drawn by the buffalo berries that are plentiful in the area.

But, according to three decades of bear mortality statistics collected from the southern British Columbia-Alberta border region, grizzlies have been more likely to die at Lake Louise

CONT'D ON PAGE 11



## Test Your Knowledge of Canada's Species at Risk

See how well you know about Canada's wildlife and the species at risk. Refer to the back page for the answers to see how well you did—but don't cheat, please. If you scored six or better, give yourself a big pat on the back.

**1. Besides birds and mammals, wildlife includes:**

- insects
- reptiles and amphibians
- wild plants
- fish
- all of the above

**2. Which of the following is not one of Canada's species-at-risk categories?**

- extinct
- extirpated
- doomed
- special concern
- threatened
- endangered

**3. How many Canadian species are currently 'at risk'?**

- 75
- 350
- 402
- 1025
- 415

**4. Which of these species are at risk?**

- pallid bat
- bashful bulrush
- Banff Springs snail

- timber rattlesnake
- all of these

**5. Which of these species are not at risk?**

- barren-ground caribou
- blue ash
- painted turtle
- brown elfin butterfly

**6. Which of these species dates back over 100 million years and is now endangered?**

- polar bear
- leatherback turtle
- sugar maple
- Atlantic cod

**7. Which of these factors contribute to species decline?**

- over-harvesting
- pollution
- habitat loss
- climate change
- all of the above

**8. 'Habitat' includes which of these elements?**

- food
- water
- shelter
- space
- light

**9. A species no longer existing in the wild in Canada but occurring elsewhere is:**

- extirpated
- endangered
- threatened
- extinct

**10. What can you do to help species at risk?**

- create wildlife habitat
- write to public officials
- eliminate pesticide use
- support conservation groups
- all of the above

The Packrat is published six times a year by the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association. We welcome comments, articles, and ideas from our members and, if content is deemed suitable, will be used as space permits.

Email submissions to the newsletter editor at [packrat@ramblers.ab.ca](mailto:packrat@ramblers.ab.ca) or forward contributions to RMRA, c/o Calgary Area Outdoor Council, 1111 Memorial Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2N 3E4.

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### An Old Lady's Poem

What do you see, nurses,  
what do you see?

What are you thinking  
when you're looking at me?

A crabby old woman, not  
very wise, uncertain of  
habit, with faraway eyes?

Who dribbles her food  
and makes no reply when  
you say in a loud voice, "I do  
wish you'd try!"

Who seems not to notice  
the things that you do, and  
forever is losing a stocking  
or shoe.

Who, resisting or not,  
lets you do as you will, with  
bathing and feeding, the  
long day to fill.

Is that what you're  
thinking?

Is that what you see?

Then open your eyes,  
nurse; you're not looking at  
me.

I'll tell you who I am as I  
sit here so still, as I do at  
your bidding, as I eat at  
your will.

I'm a small child of ten...  
with a father and mother,  
brothers and sisters, who  
love one another.

A young girl of sixteen,  
with wings on her feet,  
dreaming that soon now a

lover she'll meet.

A bride soon at twenty-  
my heart gives a leap,  
remembering the vows that  
I promised to keep.

At twenty-five now, I  
have young of my own, who  
need me to guide and a  
secure a happy home.



A woman of thirty, my  
young now grown fast,  
bound to each other with  
ties that should last.

At forty, my young sons  
have grown and are gone,  
but my man's beside me to  
see I don't mourn.

At fifty once more, babies  
play round my knee, again  
we know children, my loved  
one and me.

Dark days are upon me,  
my husband is dead; I look

at the future, I shudder with  
dread.

For my young are all  
rearing young of their own,  
and I think of the years and  
the love that I've known.

I'm now an old woman...  
and nature is cruel; 'Tis jest  
to make old age look like a  
fool.

The body, it rumbles,  
grace and vigor depart,  
there is now a stone where I  
once had a heart.

But inside this old carcass  
a young girl still dwells, and  
now and again, my battered  
heart swells.

I remember the joys, I  
remember the pain, and I'm  
loving and living life over  
again.

I think of the years...all  
too few, gone too fast, and  
accept the stark fact that  
nothing can last.

So open your eyes, people,  
open and see, not a crabby  
old woman; look closer...see  
ME!!

Remember this poem  
when you next meet an old  
person who you might  
brush aside without looking  
at the young soul within, we  
will one day be there, too!

than anywhere else in the central Rockies ecosystem.

The locations of 297 “human-caused grizzly bear mortalities” were plotted on a map and cross-referenced with vegetation and terrain types, proximity to human activities and other landscape features. The team, including researchers from Parks Canada, the University of Calgary and wildlife officials in Montana, discovered the three worst kill locations were near Lake Louise, the Banff townsite and a stretch of provincial lands near the Red Deer River northwest of Calgary.

In separate interpretations of the data at three different map scales, “only Lake Louise stood out in having more than 31 mortality events” for each scale, the study states.

“Lake Louise is pristine, a very high-quality area for grizzly bears, but it’s also where a lot of people congregate,” says project co-ordinator Scott Nielsen, a University of Alberta biologist and lead author of a paper published in the latest edition of the journal *Biological Conservation*.

“There are great habitats there, but any time you put great habitats for bears with lots of humans you get human/bear conflict and, in certain instances, that is going to result in bears being killed,” he says. “A lot of those animals are either removed as problem animals or they’re getting hit by vehicles or there’s some other source of mortality.”

The tranquilizing and relocation of so-called problem bears by wildlife officers is so likely to lead to a grizzly’s death it is included in mortality statistics, Mr. Nielsen notes.

“Joe Public would rather see them transported,” he says, but “survival of those animals is quite low. In the public eye it looks like the province is doing something good. Effectively, they almost should have put a bullet in the bear’s head. It’s as good as dead, almost.”

Mr. Nielsen says the causes of death for grizzlies include poaching, relocation, vehicle and train collisions and hunting – although the hunting of bears, he points out, is one of the easiest mortality factors to regulate.

While saying Lake Louise is “an indicator, a flagship for what’s going on,”

Mr. Nielsen adds that because the findings record bear deaths over 30 years, they do not take full account of recent conservation improvements at Banff and Lake Louise—including electrified fences to keep bears away from certain areas and restricted access for campers to prime bear habitat.

But the study, he insists, should serve as a wake-up call to federal and provincial officials that the grizzly may be facing extirpation in Alberta.

“We either have to limit the access to some of the sites or we have to consider that bears might not be there 50 years from now,” Mr. Nielsen says.

*National Post 2004*



## Quiz Answers on Canada's Species at Risk

**1. The answer is all of the above.**

**2. Doomed is not a species at-risk category.**

COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) is a committee of experts that assesses and designates which wild species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada. The Species at Risk categories as defined by COSEWIC are:

**EXTINCT:** A species that no longer exists.

**EXTIRPATED:** A species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but occurring elsewhere.

**ENDANGERED:** A species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

**THREATENED:** A species that is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

**SPECIAL CONCERN:** A species of special concern because of characteristics that make it is particularly sensitive to

human activities or natural events.

**NOT AT RISK:** A species that has been evaluated and found to be not at risk.

**DATA DEFICIENT:** A species for which there is insufficient scientific information to support status designation.

**3. The answer is 415.**

Until November 2, 2002, the answer was 402. At a species assessment meeting on that date, COSEWIC added a number of new species to the list of "at risk" species, bringing the total number to 415.

**4. The answer is all of these.**

The pallid bat is threatened. The bashful bulrush is endangered. The Banff Springs snail is endangered. The timber rattlesnake is extirpated.

**5. The barren-ground caribou, painted turtle, and brown elfin butterfly are not at risk.**

**6. The leatherback turtle** has been splashing around in the ocean for at least 100 million years and has hardly changed since the time of the

dinosaurs. It is one of the rarest, most mysterious of all living reptiles. It is also the world's largest living reptile. The **leatherback** is the only sea turtle without a hard shell. Instead, it has a leathery backplate with seven long ridges which gives this amazing creature its name.

Today, the **leatherback turtle** is facing imminent extinction or extirpation and is listed as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. The world population of adult females has fallen from approximately 115,000 in 1982 to less than 34,000 today.

**7. The answer is all of the above.**

**8. Habitat includes food, shelter, space, and water. It does not include "light".**

**9. The answer is extirpated.**

**10. The answer is all of the above.**