

Eagle Point Nature News

Adventure Awaits....

www.epbrparkscouncil.org



March 30, 2020



Puddles and Birds - Spring is in the Air!

This morning, I was out catching snowflakes with my camera and a couple of knit scarves. I didn't let the snow didn't get me down! I am confident spring will arrive with puddles and birds singing any day now! Puddles and birds - two sure signs of spring and the theme of this issue.

"Speaking of Spring, did you know that....."

◆ Great Horned Owls and Canada Jays are already incubating their eggs and expecting their chicks to hatch very soon?

◆ Black Bears and Grizzly Bears have been seen emerging from their hibernation dens?

That means **you** need to take extra precautions when you're out for a walk in the wilderness! Always travel in a group and **learn how to use Bear Spray!** Watch the video!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgE9o4xX1WI>

◆ That awful, tell-tale scent wafting about in rural areas means skunks have left their winter dens too? They're out looking for food and mates. Female skunks will be looking for a new maternity den where they can have their kits.

◆ There are a few species of insects that emerge onto the snow surface on warm days (spring)? We saw a snow fly yesterday on our walk. Get up close to the snow surface and have a good look!

When it seems like winter might never end, it's good to know that Mother Nature can be trusted to remind us that spring is on it's way!

K.Schwengler, Education & Outreach Coordinator, EPBR ParksCouncil



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GOOD STUFF TO DO WITH YOUR KIDS - Part 2

I. PUDDLE RAFTS

A lesson in buoyancy & density

With puddle season just around the corner, why not build a few boats and try them out in the puddles and small streams near your home? Remember to wear rubber boots and keep a parent/guardian nearby!

Test out a variety of materials to see which float best!

Puddle Raft Design #1 Materials/Supplies

- * 4 or 5 sticks, about 12 cm long
- * 2 sticks, about 10 cm long
- * sturdy string or fishing line
- * wood skewer or feather
- * piece of cloth
- * glue
- * marker
- * ruler
- * scissors

Find 4 to 5 sticks about 12 cm long each. Cut a good length of string (about 1 m). Tie a secure knot around the end of one stick, then start to wrap it in a figure eight pattern to stick #2. Repeat for both ends. Wrap string around stick 2

and 3 with several figure 8 loops and so on until you've got your raft secured with string.

Measure how wide your raft is. Cut the two remaining sticks so that they are a little longer than your raft is wide. Secure one to each end with a separate piece of string using the figure eight and knot it. Make sure all of your strings are tightly tied.

Make a mast with a feather, a wood skewer or a thin, long stick. If you use a stick or skewer, cut a piece of cloth into a triangle and decorate it with a drawing or your initials. Fold the short end over your skewer and glue it. Wait for it to dry. Attach your mast to the centre of the raft with string or glue. You're ready to test it in a puddle! You might want to use some fishing line as a leash! Make sure your leash is about 2 metres long. Now you can test it out without losing it.



Puddle Raft #1

Puddle Raft Design #2

Materials/Supplies

- * 3 corks
- * 2 rubber bands
- * 1 recycled chopstick or wood skewer
- * piece of cloth
- * marker
- * large paper clip
- * glue

For Puddle Raft #2, wrap two elastics around 3 corks as seen in the photo. Cut a triangle of cloth and glue onto your skewer, then push the skewer into the middle cork. If you want to use your raft in a stream, you should attach a leash made out of at least 2 meters of fishing line.



Puddle Raft #2

See the full video on our Youtube page at: <https://youtu.be/LkKLly865t-g>

II. WILD BIRDS' EGGS

Did you know that Alberta Birds lay a lot of interesting eggs in a variety of colours and sizes - many eggs even have spots and speckles!

What purpose do you think

Which eggs belong to which birds?

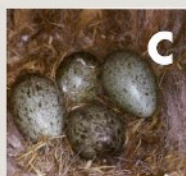
These eggs are over 8 cm long



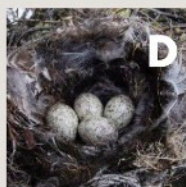
These eggs are about 2.2 cm long



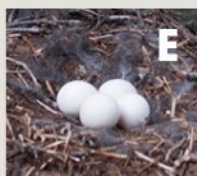
These eggs are about 5 cm long



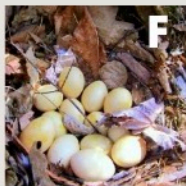
These eggs are about 3 cm long



These eggs are about 5.3 cm long

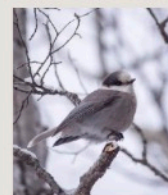


These eggs are around 3.6 cm long



GREAT GREY OWL

lays 2 to 5 eggs in March - May



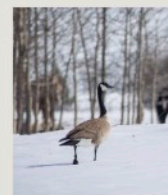
CANADA JAY

lays 3 to 5 eggs in late February or early March!



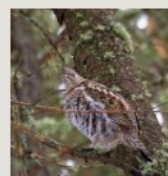
MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD

lays 4 to 8 eggs in April - May



CANADA GOOSE

lays 2 to 9 eggs in March or April



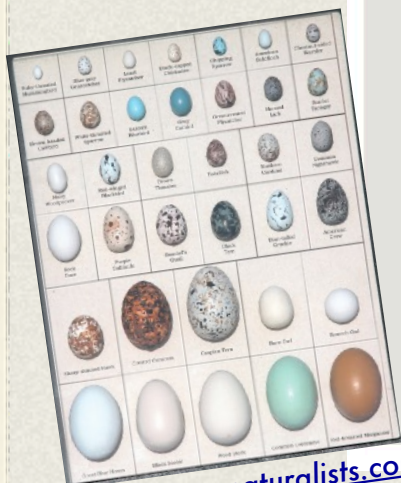
RUFFED GROUSE

lays 7 to 12 eggs May to June hatch



COMMON RAVEN

lays 3 to 7 eggs in March or April



www.acornnaturalists.com

Answers: A - Canada Goose, B - Mountain Bluebird, C - Common Raven, D - Canada Jay, E Great Grey Owl, F - Ruffed Grouse.

Links for Further Learning

Interested in Wild Bird Eggs and Nests?

Check out the following links for more reading and beautiful photos:

The Spruce: *Wild Bird Egg Identification*
<https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-identify-bird-eggs-387352>

The Birders Report: *Egg and Nest Identification* <https://thebirdersreport.com/egg-and-nest-identification>

Live Bird Cams - Check in to see actual birds nesting, incubating, hatching and feeding their young!

Ellis Bird Farm's Albert and Ellie: <https://www.ellisbirdfarm.ca/ellie--albert.html>

Bird Watching HQ (Around the world bird cams) at <https://birdwatchinghq.com/live-bird-cams/>

Buoyancy and Density on Youtube:

1. Kids Want to Know: "Buoyancy: What Makes Something Float or Sink?" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMIXU97E-uQ>
2. SciShow Kids: "Sink or Float?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQuW8G2QV_Q



Photo link - <https://animals.net/bufflehead/>



Questions or Suggestions?

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Visit our website:

www.epbrparksCouncil.org

**We want to see your puddle
rafts! How creative can you
get?**

**Email us a photo at
outreach@epbrparksCouncil.org
and we'll share your photo on
our Facebook page!**



III. Track of the Week!

Can you guess what made the track? This picture was taken in Blue Rapids Provincial Recreation Area. There were no human tracks near it. Choose the most likely track maker from the four choices below.

- A. Black Bear
- B. Red Fox
- C. Mountain Lion
- D. Timber Wolf

Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council thanks our supporters for their continued support during this challenging time!

Our featured supporter of the week is Pembina Pipeline!

