



### Our Mission -

*"TO ENSURE THE PRESERVATION OF THE CHARACTER AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF WAGNER NATURAL AREA FOR EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH PURPOSES."*

# Friends of the Fen

WAGNER NATURAL AREA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



## Upcoming events:

Mid-winter 2019

### Annual General Meeting

**Being planned:** our annual update on the status of the natural area and the Society will take place in mid-winter; details to come.

### 2019 Activities

**Usual events:** Always something new to see on our May Species Counts and the Orchid Walk (on Father's Day). Of course, our Spring and Fall Clean-up Days will provide a more energetic opportunity to support Wagner Natural Area.

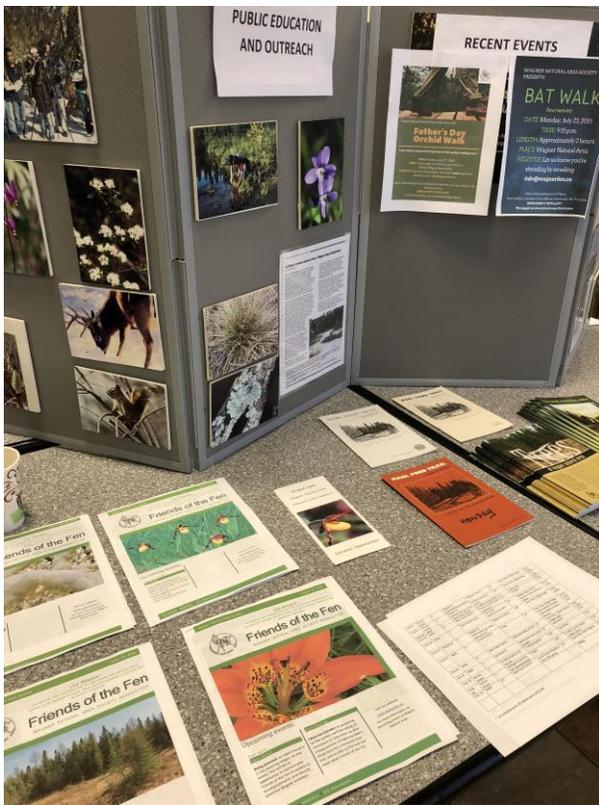
Visit our website:

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

for more information on upcoming events at Wagner Natural Area.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:

## Annual Open House at Pioneer Centre a Success!



About 30 attendees enjoyed the Wagner Natural Area Society annual Open House at the Pioneer Centre in Spruce Grove, November 10th.

On display were historical documents about the creation of the natural area and of the Society, research reports, numerous outreach and public education publications, maps galore, and pictures of many of our flora and fauna.

Our summer students

(pictured on newsletter cover) shared their stories about their experiences at Wagner.

Britney (top) commented on how, through her communication audit, she had the opportunity to interview several members and talk with volunteers, which was an inspiration! Elementary school tours were a treat, especially watching how excited the kids got when Irl was teaching them about tadpoles. She commented on the overall appreciation gained for this area and all the people who have dedicated so much of their lives to protect it. Her favourite review from Google about WNA said “Walk slow, look high and low. Lots to see!”

## Support us!



The Wagner Natural Area Society welcomes new supporters, volunteers, and all people interested in natural history and the preservation of the ecological integrity of this delightful natural area.

### VOLUNTEERS / MEMBERS

People of all talents and interests are desired and welcomed to become more closely involved with the Natural Area and the Society.

Email: [info@wagnerfen.ca](mailto:info@wagnerfen.ca)

### DONATIONS

All donations to Wagner Natural Area Society help maintain the integrity of the Natural Area and its surroundings, provide education material, enhance visitor's experiences, and support on-going research studies and surveys.



As a Conservation student from U of A, Megan (left) reported on how her work at Wagner Natural Area helped her form a better understanding of wetland and boreal ecology. She increased her working knowledge of

vegetation assessments, while working with experts; similarly, she gained important field experience in wildlife surveys; and she learned the importance of public education and keeping natural areas special. Other advantages of her job were learning the importance of always asking questions, following up on networking opportunities, and getting more “in tune” with what she’s studying at school.



Dave Ealey talked briefly about the past, present and future of WNAS.

William Wagner won a legal victory against CPR over the rights to the marl that came to the surface on his property. That success prevented the wholesale extraction of the marl and ensured the natural

features could be retained in the extensive “boggy” area. Naturalists and academics, notably Bill Morgan, Edgar T. Jones, Bill Fuller and Cy Hampson, were regular visitors who marvelled at the unique flora and fauna. The north half section was acquired by the Alberta government in 1971 and became an important early site in the provincial natural areas program in 1975. Bill Morgan of the Alberta Wildlife Foundation helped influenced road construction in the mid-1970s to avoid significant parts of the natural area and buffers. However, further highway plans in 1982 led to the establishment of the Wagner Natural Area Society (WNAS). Major support from the Alberta Wildlife Foundation, Community Initiatives Program and Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), as well as comprehensive research of the unique flora, enabled the protection of the eastern shoulder of the natural area and the diversion of road construction.

Steady work at managing conflicts with other users, establishing management planning, supporting museum- and university-based research and collaborating with funding agencies, most notably NCC, has resulted in the expansion to Wagner’s current size—twice the original land area. Continuing development pressure, particularly in the southern recharge area that provides the life-giving water for our fens, as well as day-to-day management of our site have become the challenges of today.

Many current members of WNAS have been involved in the natural area since the beginning in the early 1980s. We’re now at a stage when we need to build our capacity and gain new blood. Our two summer students this year represent the generation from which we need to recruit to help us build for the future. And there are kindred organizations that we want to collaborate with for mutual support.

## MEMBERSHIP --- WAGNER NATURAL AREA SOCIETY

### Support / Donate / Volunteer

For information about Wagner Natural Area and the Society, and about field trips and other activities organized from time to time for the benefit of all friends of Wagner, go to [www.wagnerfen.ca](http://www.wagnerfen.ca).

Wagner Natural Area Society is a Registered Charity. Donations to the Society will help maintain this very special area. Donations of \$20 or more will be receipted for Income Tax purposes.  
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The Society's annual fee is \$10 for Supporters and \$15 for Voting Members. The Society's fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

Annual fee (Supporter \$10/Voting \$15): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

May the Society CONTACT you by: EMAIL: Yes / No

PHONE: Yes / No

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If you can VOLUNTEER to help the Society with maintenance of the Natural Area (circle): Yes

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with cheque/money order, payable to Wagner Natural Area Society, to:

Treasurer, Wagner Natural Area Society,  
30531-118 Ave., Acheson, AB T7X 6M5

## RESEARCH:

Tree Swallow banding continued in 2018 as part of the ongoing population monitoring of our feathered friends. Data are being compiled from this and past years' efforts for a more structured look at how well our birds are doing. Photos show an adult completing nest cleaning duties!



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An interesting observation was made by our summer student, Megan, who watched a Swainson's Hawk capture and consume one of our swallows, possibly a recent fledgling, at the Villeneuve field—part of the circle of life!

## A letter from the WNAS President: Dave Ealey

This week (November 27) the Board conducted one of its regular meetings to attend to the ongoing business of keeping the Society operating. We welcomed a new Appointed Director to the Board, **Katelyn Ceh**, who also serves the field of environmental conservation as a Manager in the Nature Conservancy of Canada. We're pleased to have her join us and share her expertise in guiding WNAS toward the future.

I am also personally grateful for the efforts and insight of the other Board members, many of whom have a wealth of experience at and knowledge about Wagner Natural Area: **Alan Hingston, Ben Rostron, Beth Jenkins, Carolyn Vanderveen, Derek Johnson, Irl Miller, Jasper Keizer, Michael Jenkins, Tony Sneep**. Thank you all for your many contributions on behalf of our special area.