



B.L.E.S.S. Summer Nature Centre Report 2016

A detailed summary of the activities held for nine weeks at the B.L.E.S.S.
Nature Centre.

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Introduction

LOCATION

The BLESS Nature Centre is located on the corner of St. Albert Trail and Sturgeon Road. This is an ideal location for the Nature Centre as it is connected to the popular Red Willow Trail System. As well, during the week there is always plenty of parking for those who prefer to drive.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Nature Centre is to provide residents of St. Albert and surrounding communities the opportunity to explore nature in an urban setting by providing free crafts, games, and activities during the summer months. A broad range of topics are covered to give children a basic understanding of their local environment.

DESIGN

The Nature Centre was open Monday to Friday 10:00-4:30 (except on Wednesdays where the hours were 12:30-7:00) from June 27th – August 26th. Each week there was a different theme with corresponding crafts, indoor and outdoor activities. All activities were planned for a variety of ages and reading comprehension skill. Designed as a drop in program, all activities could be completed in under an hour, but many visitors chose to stay longer.

MATERIALS

This year the budget to run the nature centre was \$400. I spent just over half as many of the crafts and activities planned utilized supplies the Nature Centre already had in storage. This included jars, jar lids, plastic cards, metal bins, sponges, baskets and other crafting supplies. Supplies I did spend money on included poster boards, cleaning supplies, white glue, markers and printing/laminating costs.

Canada Day

Once again, St. Albert's Canada celebrations were held at Rotary Park where there is ample room for various vendors and entertainment. The BLESS booth was set up close to the sidewalk in front of the BLESS Shelter in hopes of gaining maximum exposure. This is a great event for BLESS to take part in as many questions about the Nature Centre can be answered. Additionally, flyers were handed out with the location, dates and hours of the Nature Centre. I also advertised the BLESS website which was updated with this summer's themes and hours. The activities I brought with me this year included a sample of pond invertebrates, trivia games, and a bean bag toss. I also brought a white tailed deer antler, bison horn and insect specimens. For prizes I brought chocolate bars, pencils, Big Lake stickers and owl posters. Over all it was once again a very successful Canada Day for BLESS. I was able to inform a great deal of people about the summer programming as well as remind returning children of the hours and activities they would be seeing this summer.



Weekly Overviews

WEEK 1: WELCOME WEEK (JUNE 27TH – JUNE 30TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to introduce the community to the BLESS Nature Centre by providing a variety of activities related to local wildlife and outdoor safety. I believe this is an important topic to begin the summer off with as adults and children need to be reminded of safe camping practices after a long winter of staying inside. Also, I had a herbarium of local plants on display as well as numerous guide books. Attendance a bit low, but the last day of school for Elementary kids wasn't until the middle of this week. Next year, I would like to have cray fish on display for a few days and they are always a popular attraction. Overall, this was a great first week at the Bless Nature Centre.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/Day	Rank
Monday	13	3	3	3	22	2
Tuesday	12	11	3	0	26	1
Wednesday	5	5	3	0	13	4
Thursday	7	5	4	1	17	3
Total/week	37	24	13	4	78	

Crafts:

- i) Popsicle Stick Tent
Three popsicle sticks were decorated then glued in a triangle shape. Then using construction paper, kids glued it on the back to make their very own tent. Super simple and cute!
- ii) Pinwheel
By decorating a square piece of paper then folding it together and attaching it to a straw, kids had a fun pinwheel to blow in the wind.

Activities

Inside:

- i) Canadian Match-up
Using a map of Canada, kids and parents matched provincial trees and animals to the correct province or territory.

- ii) **Bear Smart Worksheet**
This sheet had some bear smart practices on it, for example like being loud when going on walks in the forest as well as not keeping food out when camping.
- iii) **Crossword Puzzle**
- iv) **Animal and Bird Puzzles**
Handmade puzzles using pictures of local birds and wildlife.
- v) **Camping Safety True or False**
Parents and kids both enjoyed this game as it was educational for everyone. Having this game set up at the beginning of camping season was also very beneficial. Majority of people said they learned new things about camping.
- vi) **What am I?**
This was another re used activity from previous years, kids had to look in an envelope and try and guess what the animal was by just seeing a little square of the picture.
- vii) **Bless Fortune Teller**
I photocopied fortune teller outlines I found from a previous year, these were fun and easy to make and also had questions on them pertaining to wildlife around Big Lake.
- viii) **Colouring Contest**
Each week there was a daily colouring contest kids could enter. This week's picture was different animals with the Canada flag to celebrate Canada Day!

Outside:

- i) **BLESS Scavenger Hunt**
- ii) **Bean Bag Toss**
- iii) **Side Walk Chalk**

WEEK 2: FEATHERED FRIENDS (JULY 4TH – JULY 8TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to introduce different species of birds we may see in Alberta and specifically around Big Lake. We also discussed how birds hunt and eat differently depending on their bills or types of feet.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	18	18	6	1	43	1
Tuesday	14	11	4	3	32	3
Wednesday	13	8	7	6	34	2
Thursday	11	14	5	0	30	4
Friday	9	7	6	0	22	5
Total/week	65	58	28	10	161	

Crafts:

- i) Bird Puppets
Using popsicle sticks kids decorated them like their favorite bird using markers, feathers and googly eyes.
- ii) Binoculars
Kids decorated two paper rolls with construction paper, stickers and markers. The rolls were taped together and a hole punched on either side so a string could be tied around. That way kids could wear them around their neck like a real bird watcher.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) Provincial Bird Match-up
Using a map of Canada kids and adults tried to match each Province or Territory with their bird.
- ii) Birds of the Lakeside “Bills & Feet”

An activity sheet that involved matching several different kinds of bird species feet to their body and finally to their name. I had a birds of Alberta book close by to help with anyone who was stumped.

- iii) **Raptor Multiple Choice Quiz**
For the older kids who wished to test their Raptor knowledge, numerous questions focused on Raptor diet, habitat and appearance.
- iv) **Who am I?**
Numerous facts were laid out on the table about either a great blue heron, great horned owl or grebe. Then kids had to match the facts to the correct bird.
- v) **Silhouette Match-up**
This game was set on a table where names of birds were matched to a picture of their silhouette.
- vi) **Owl ID**
A poster was set up with about twelve different owls on it, kids had to match clues to the pictures. Easy, fun and educational for kids and adults!
- vii) **Colouring Contest**
- viii) **Bird Calls**
I played kids bird calls and asked them if they recognized any of the sounds. If not, I pointed out pictures of what the birds look like.

Outdoor:

- i) **Become a Bird Mom or Dad**
Kids were given a basket to go collect things outside a bird may use to make their nest. This included grass, twigs, leaves, dirt, and whatever else they thought would make a great nest.
- ii) **Birding Bingo**
A scavenger hunt focused on birds
- iii) **Bird ID Course**
Reused from last year, 20 different bird species were laminated and taped on coat hangers and hung around the Nature Centre. Kids and Adults enjoyed walking around trying to match the bird species to the list of names I supplied.
- iv) **Side walk Chalk**

WEEK 3: WACKY WETLANDS (JULY 11TH – JULY 15TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to introduce kids to wetlands. Wetlands are a very important part of the environment; it is important for kids to learn this so we can conserve them for the future. We looked at different plants that make their home in a wetland as well as animals.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	16	17	7	2	42	4
Tuesday	15	12	5	4	36	5
Wednesday	13	21	13	7	54	1
Thursday	21	10	11	6	48	2
Friday	14	15	11	3	43	3
Total/week	79	75	47	22	223	

Crafts:

- i) **Egg Carton Turtle**
Using 1 egg carton kids coloured their turtle shell. Then cut out a body from green construction paper and glued the shell on.
- ii) **Fish Hand Puppet**
Kids traced their hand on a piece of construction paper then cut it out. Using various decorations they made their very own fish. The craft was finished by taping a popsicle stick on the back to make a puppet.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) **Pin the Fish on the Heron**
A game re used from years before, much like pin the tail on the donkey. This is a great game for all ages as everyone can participate.
- ii) **Alberta Fish Match-up**
A new game I made this year. Simple for older kids and great for parents or grandparents to play with younger kids. It involved reading a description of an Alberta fish and trying to match it to the picture.
- iii) **Design a Wetland Plant**

Numerous wetland plant names were listed, such as Labrador Tea and kids were encouraged to draw what they thought it looked like. Then I showed them a picture of what it really looked like once they were done. Fun activity that produced interesting pictures.

iv) Metamorphosis Word Search

v) Wetland I Spy

Using a poster from previous years, children and adults searched for animals, plants and insects on the wetland poster from a list provided. This game was great for people of all ages as everyone was able to search the poster.

vi) Fish Puzzles

vii) Paper Hopping Frog

How to make an origami hopping frog instructions were printed out and put on the table. I also included precut green paper. Difficult for younger kids but with my help everyone really enjoyed the end result.

viii) Amphibian True or False

ix) Pond Critter Who Am I?

Outdoor:

i) Pond Dipping

Every morning I went down to the river and collected a few trays of pond invertebrates to display outside on the bench. This activity is always very popular and helps kids learn what is swimming around in our Sturgeon River. I also included sheets of pictures and descriptions of all the invertebrates, kids had fun matching them with the real life versions swimming around in the trays.

ii) Bean Bag Toss

iii) Side Walk Chalk

WEEK 4: MAGNIFICENT MAMMALS (JULY 18TH- JULY 22ND)

Objective: The objective of this week was to focus on local wildlife, focusing on identification skills and wildlife safety. Fortunately, there are many biofacts available in the Nature Centre that could be used for this theme. Kids had lots of fun feeling different antlers and trying to guess what fur belongs to what animal.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	18	16	12	5	51	1
Tuesday	14	9	8	0	31	5
Wednesday	12	19	5	3	39	3
Thursday	14	13	5	4	36	4
Friday	13	20	7	5	45	2
Total/week	71	77	37	17	202	

Crafts:

- i) Handy Bats
Tracing both hands on a piece of paper then cutting them out and gluing the palms together to make a bat. Kids also glued on googly eyes and fangs.
- ii) Mammal Masks
Using templates kids could choose to trace out either a Deer, Fox or Raccoon mask. This was one of my favorite crafts of the summer, the masks turned out really cute and fun for kids of all ages. Although this involved more of my help cutting and tracing it was definitely worth it. This year I also pre traced some masks so the younger kids would not have to do so much cutting.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) Spot the Differences
A poster hung up that had kids spot the differences between common species such as a Jack Rabbit and an Artic Hare.
- ii) Alberta Mammals
Poster was hung up on the wall with pictures of different mammals where kids had to identify the mammals that make their home in Alberta.

- iii) **Wild Things Crossword Puzzle**
Crossword puzzle based on different animals in Alberta.
- iv) **Bat Maze**
Great small simple activity for children of all ages.
- v) **Mammal or Not Mammal**
Sorting game, mainly for younger kids but older kids also had fun testing their knowledge.
- vi) **Guessing the Antlers**
Mule deer, White tailed deer and moose antlers as well as pronghorn and bison horns were displayed on the table for kids to guess who's who.
- vii) **Herbivore, Omnivore or Carnivore**
Simple game where the objective was to sort animals into one of the three categories, I was surprised to hear how many kids thought deer's were omnivores.
- viii) **Footprint Forensics**
Awesome game for everyone to participate in. To help I left out Animal Tracks of Alberta books by the game if anyone got stuck. Although it may seem overwhelming at first with approximately 15 different animal tracks to match up, I tried to assist when possible suggesting clues like why an animal may have webbed feet.

Outdoor:

- i) **Deer Stalker**
Re-used from a previous year, I hung five laminated pictures of deer's in different spots around the cabin and had kids go see if they could find them all. Next to the instructions for this game there was a fact sheet discussing the importance of camouflage for animals.
- ii) **Rabbit Race**
Using the potato sack bags kids raced like rabbits from one end of the field to the other.
- iii) **Bubbles & Sidewalk Chalk**

WEEK 5: CREEPY CRAWLIES (JULY 25TH – JULY 29TH)

Objective: This week was focused on the insects and arachnids of Alberta. There was an emphasis on identification of different insects and where you might find them. Metamorphosis of different critters was also discussed.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	18	9	10	4	41	2
Tuesday	21	27	7	4	59	1
Wednesday	6	5	2	2	15	5
Thursday	15	12	5	2	34	3
Friday	11	13	8	1	33	4
Total/week	71	66	32	13	182	

Crafts:

- i) **Name Bugs**
A popular craft from a previous year that is great for all ages. With my help or an adult, we handwrote the child's name on a folded piece of paper. Then we cut around the letters of their name and unfolded it to reveal their very own name bug.
- ii) **Caterpillar/Dragonfly Clips**
Using clothespins kids decorated them as either a caterpillar or a dragon fly using pipe cleaners, googly eyes and pom poms. Very cute craft that was popular among kids and adults.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) **Metamorphosis Match-up**
Reused from previous years, the objective of this game is to match larvae with the correct adult species. Although fairly difficult, parents and children enjoyed playing this game together.
- ii) **Matching Bug ID**
Insect pictures were glued on a poster and children had to try and guess which insect was which. Although fairly easy there was some trick ones placed in to challenge older kids.

- iii) Spider Facts
Sheets on the table with various facts about spiders. There were also spiders on display although none were alive.
- iv) Go Fish Insect Edition
Played like regular go fish except matches were difference insects and their larva.
- v) Memory Game
Plastic insects were hidden under cups, kids had fun matching the different creepy crawlers. Many kids even played this game numerous times in one visit.
- vi) Colouring
- vii) Insect Word Search

Outdoor:

- i) Bug Hunt
Nets were left outside for kids to catch insects with.
- ii) Insect Nature Hunt
A scavenger hunt.
- iii) Bean Bag Toss
- iv) Sidewalk Chalk & Bubbles

WEEK 6: GO GREEN (AUGUST 2ND – AUGUST 5TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to re enforce the importance of the three R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycling.) Also, different ways they can help the environment in their own home, like always turning off lights when they are leaving a room and recycling not only bottles but also cardboard materials was discussed. I was pleasantly surprised to hear that quite a few families used their composts at home! We also looked at endangered species and what can be done to protect them.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	
Tuesday	8	4	5	3	20	3
Wednesday	7	9	4	0	20	3
Thursday	14	15	2	8	39	2
Friday	19	19	4	2	44	1

Total/week	48	47	15	13	123
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Crafts:

- i) **Lid Banjos**
Using recycled jar lids children wrapped one or two elastic bands around the lid to create the 'strings' for their banjo. Then we taped a popsicle stick on the back for them to hold it with. Super easy craft reusing supplies that are already in the nature centre.
- ii) **Flower Vase**
Kids decorated a recycled glass jar with stickers, markers, and glitter to make their very own flower vase.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) **Reuse, Reduce, Recycle Quiz**
A fun quiz repeated from last year, educational for both kids and parents.
- ii) **Sorting Test**
Kids had to sort various objects into three categories (reuse, reduce and recycle) some were surprised at just how many things they could either reuse or recycle.
- iii) **Endangered Species Matchup**
A new game I made this year, I thought it would be beneficial to also include some animals in this theme, reinforcing the idea that when we recycle at home it also helps keep habitats clean.
- iv) **Coral Reef Matching**
A fun activity great for all ages. I also included an info sheet by the game that talked about the importance of coral reefs and how they are threatened.
- v) **Colouring Pages**
This week I encouraged kids to draw what they loved most about nature and also printed off an Earth Day maze and a picture of the earth to colour.
- vi) **Word Search**

Outdoor:

- i) **Pollutant Knockout**
- ii) **Green Bingo**

Involved walking around outside looking for people doing good things for the environment and picking up any litter in the park.

- iii) Sidewalk Chalk & Bubbles

WEEK 7: GREAT GRASSLANDS (AUGUST 8TH – AUGUST 12TH)

Objective: The focus of this week was to introduce the grasslands of Alberta and the animals that mainly live there. The grassland region of Alberta is very important as many species that are endangered live there.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	13	7	3	3	26	4
Tuesday	5	4	2	0	11	5
Wednesday	12	10	6	6	34	2
Thursday	10	8	7	2	27	3
Friday	19	13	8	5	45	1
Total/week	59	42	26	16	143	

Crafts:

- i) **Grow Your Own Grass**
This activity was repeated from last year and quite popular. Kids were given a cup to decorate then it was filled with soil and add grass seeds. We discussed what plants need to grow and to put their cup somewhere with lots of sunlight when they got home!
- ii) **Paper Bag Animal**
Also repeated from last year, a super simple craft that encourages kids to be creative. I gave them a list of grassland animals to choose from and they decorated a paper bag however they liked.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) **Animal Puzzles**

- ii) **Animal Charades**
I put names of different animals in a jar and had kids pick out a name and try and act out the animal for their parents to guess. Quite a cute and funny game.
- iii) **Prairie Animal ID**
A new game I made this year, I printed out different pictures of prairie animals and had kids try and match the name of the animal to the picture. A great game for all ages to participate in.
- iv) **Nocturnal Facts**
Reused from previous years, there was true or false questions about nocturnal animals. Some facts even surprised adults.
- v) **Borrow the Burrow Bingo**
Game I found in the nature centre from a few years ago, there was Bingo sheets with prairie animals to draw from an envelope. Easy game for all ages to play.
- vi) **Grassland Trivia**
New activity I created this year, numerous multiple choice questions about the grasslands were written out on plastic cards for kids to read. A little hard for younger kids but a great activity for older ones.

Outdoor:

- i) **Bowling for Gophers**
An old game I revamped for this year. I painted 12 yogurt containers black then drew gopher faces on them. Then kids rolled softballs at the containers outside to try and see how many they could knock over.
- ii) **Bean Bag Toss**
- iii) **Sidewalk Chalk**
- iv) **Bubbles**
- v) **BLESS Bingo**

WEEK 8: WILD WEATHER (AUGUST 15TH- AUGUST 19TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to introduce children to different kinds of weather we experience in Alberta. We also discussed different types of climates and how animals will adapt to their environment. This was a great week with numerous activities to keep kids busy learning.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	16	11	5	2	34	2

Tuesday	18	16	11	4	49	1
Wednesday	10	10	5	5	30	3
Thursday	12	8	6	2	28	4
Friday	7	5	5	0	17	5
Total/week	63	50	32	13	158	

Crafts:

- i) **Rainbow Wand**
This craft was a popular one repeated from last year, children traced two clouds onto white paper and then attached a chopstick to one cloud. Then five different coloured streamers were attached to make the 'rainbow' and the other cloud glued on top. These were very pretty and children loved playing with them in the wind.
- ii) **Weather Dial**
Another popular craft where kids picked four different types of weather on a piece of paper and colour. Then their dial was glued onto a paper plate with an arrow they could move depending on the weather that day.

Activities

Indoor:

- i) **Matching Spring Babies**
Children has to match baby animals to their mom, very fun and good for kids of all ages.
- ii) **Seasons Memory**
Using pictures of different seasons, kids played memory by flipping over cards and trying to find matches.
- iii) **Artic/Antarctic True or False**
- iv) **Baby Names**
A new game I created for this year, it involved matching the baby animals name to the mom or dad. Some are quite surprising (a baby hedgehog is called a piglet). A great little fun game to learn some new animal trivia.
- v) **Colour the Weather**
- vi) **Weather Quiz**
Reused from last year, a trivia game ranging from very easy to moderately difficulty questions about the weather.
- vii) **Tornado in a Jar**

I filled mason jars with coloured water, soap, vinegar, and glitter. Kids had fun shaking them and creating a tornado, I explained to them why this effect happens.

Outdoor:

- i) **Rainbow Chip**
I laid out numerous quo cards with different colours on them and kids had to go outside and find different things to match the rainbow chips outside.
- ii) **Rain Game**
A new game I made this year where four different sized buckets where set up outside and kids had to try and see how many rain drops (ping pong balls) they could get in each bucket. An easy game children of all ages enjoyed.
- iii) **Tornado**
Three hula-hoops were left outside for children to be “tornados” with. I left a clip-board with a blank piece of paper outside for kids to write their highest number of tornados.

WEEK 9: FOREST FUN (AUGUST 22ND- AUGUST 26TH)

Objective: The objective of this week was to teach children about local flora. Including common trees, flowers and small forbs. This included identifying techniques and common historical uses of plants.

Attendance:

Day	Adults	Elementary	5 & Under	Jr High	Total/day	Rank
Monday	5	5	3	1	14	4
Tuesday	10	6	6	1	23	3
Wednesday	18	16	8	7	49	1
Thursday	6	3	2	1	12	5
Friday	15	11	8	4	38	2
Total/week	54	41	27	14	136	

Crafts:

- i) **Sponge Tree**

A new craft introduced this year. I had kids draw an outline of a tree on a piece of construction paper. Then using sponges and a small amount of paint they painted the tree. This gave the tree a wonderful texture and was fun for kids of all ages.

ii) Tie-dye Flower

A popular craft re used from previous years. Coffee filters were coloured on with washable marker. Once kids were finished their design, a small amount of water was painted on to create the tie-dye effect.

Activities

Indoor:

i) Provincial Flower Match-up

A new game created this year where kids has to match up a picture of a provincial or territorial flower correctly. Clues were given on the back to help assist anyone who might be stuck.

ii) Happy Birthday Tree

A small activity from previous years where kids had to count rings on a tree to figure out how old each tree was. A fun game to teach kids how to tell how old a tree is.

iii) Plant Specimen ID

Another new game created this year, I collected some forbs and tree samples and pressed them at the beginning of summer. Then cards were laid out with the name of each specimen and kids had to try and match them to the correct specimen. Great activity to show kids what plants actually look like, which kids found more interesting than pictures in some cases.

iv) Wildflowers of Alberta

On a poster I wrote the name of about twelve different flowers that can be found in Alberta. Then kids had to match the clue about the flower to the correct flower name.

v) Leaf Rubbings

Kids went and collected a variety of leaves from outside and I helped them tape them on a table in a design and then using wax crayons and paper made a rubbing.

vi) Colouring Page

vii) Tree Crossword

Outdoor:

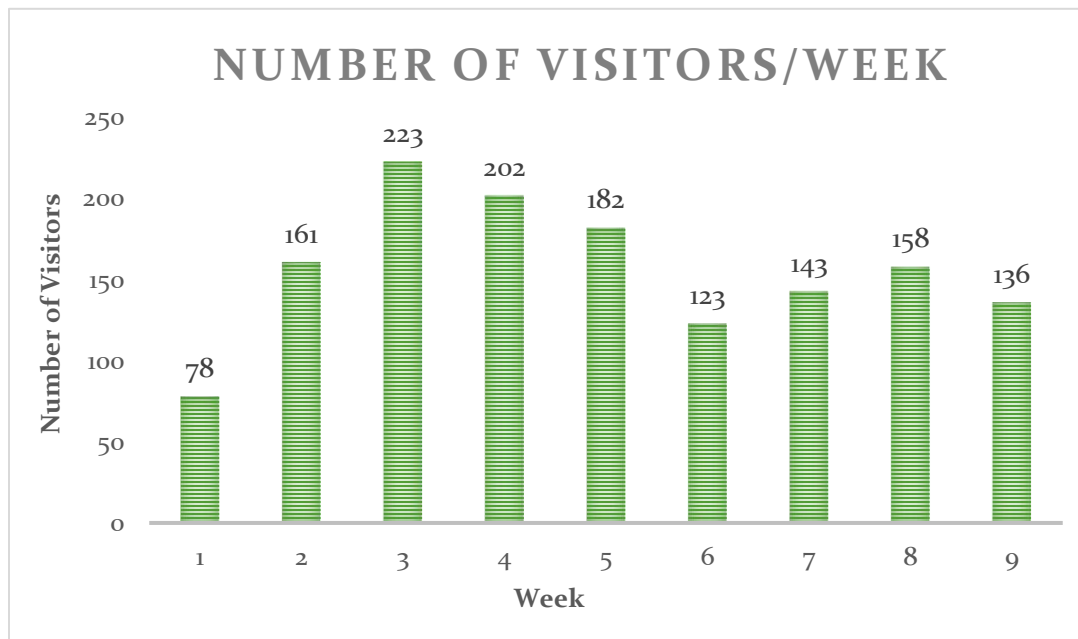
i) Wildflower Walk

Similar to the Bird ID course, pictures of different wildflowers were hung up on coat hangers outside around the Nature Centre and with a sheet provided kids and adults had to try and guess the name of the flower to its picture. I supplied a plants of Alberta Pamphlet incase people got stuck

- ii) Tree-via
A scavenger hunt based on finding trees and plants.
- iii) Bean Bag Toss
- iv) Sidewalk chalk & Bubbles

Statistics

ATTENDANCE OVERVIEW



The total number of visitors at the Nature Centre this summer was 1406. Surpassing the last two summer's numbers. Overall, it was great to see consistent numbers for all of July with numbers declining slightly for August. I assumed this was due to majority of families taking holidays in August. The busiest week of the summer was week 3, July 11- 15th which was Wacky Wetland week. These dates have also proved to be the busiest the last two years so it would be optimal to plan a theme with ample activities that requires minimal assistance from the Nature Centre coordinator. This allows the coordinator to spend even time with all the guests and not have to specifically always be helping with a certain station. The first week we saw the lowest number of visitors, I believe this was because school was just ending and the word was not out yet that the nature centre was open for

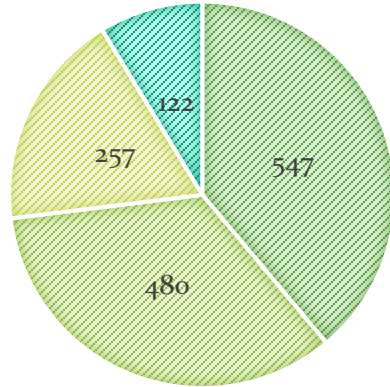
business! We also saw a drop in visitor's week 6, which was partially due to the fact the nature centre was closed Monday for the civic holiday, I assumed that week was popular for holidays. Therefore, I planned crafts and games that I could spend more time with kids due to the low volume of people I anticipated.



In previous years, the Nature Centre has seen a general increase in numbers. Hopefully, the number of visitors continuous to increase. I believe this can be done by increasing the advertising and having BLESS out to local schools for presentations in the spring and fall.

AGE GROUP OF VISITORS

■ Adults ■ Elementary ■ 5 & Under ■ Jr High



This summer once again was most popular for elementary aged children, then preschool and junior high. There are also a high number of adult visitors who are either there accompanying their kids or stopping by to see what inside. I am always surprised by the number of adults who have lived in St. Albert for quite some time and have never heard about the BLESS Nature Centre. There are also many adults who are out for a walk or run and stop in for water. I have had some junior high kids interested in the bean bag toss outside, posters I have hanging in the nature centre or books on shelf, but most of the time they are stopping by for water or are curious as to what is inside the cabin. Overall, it is great to see a variety of age groups enjoying what the nature centre has to offer over the summer months.

Conclusion

Overall, it was another very successful summer for the BLESS Nature Centre. I had a number of positive reviews of returning visitors and new visitors.

Comments included:

“Very fun and a great learning experience”

“Excellent programming!”

“Kids loved visiting and learned so much!”

I believe the Nature Centre continues to be a strong asset to the St. Albert Community and one that should continue to run for years to come. It was a pleasure encouraging kids to learn about the environment and showing them how fun the outdoors can be. Creating the BLESS Nature Centre Facebook page was also a positive action as I was able to post weekly updates with pictures and remind people when we were open or would be closed. I believe that should also be continued to be used in coming years to advertise the numerous activities the Nature Centre offers.