

WINTER WONDER

A teacher-conducted field study for
Kindergarten students

FISH CREEK
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTRE

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www.Fish-Creek.org



Introduction

This is a curriculum-connected, full day field study with multidisciplinary preparatory and post-visit activity support. The intent is to offer a natural world experience for students that reflects the outdoor field study components of the kindergarten program statement as set out by Alberta Learning and also reflects the priority actions of Alberta’s Plan for Parks .

Fish Creek Provincial Park is one of Canada’s largest urban provincial parks, stretching from the western edge of the city to the Bow River. The park has a strong vision within its visitor services program plan to support and foster environmental and cultural education.

Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

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Facility & Rules

THE FACILITY

The Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre, located at the west end of the Park off of 37 Street SW, offers five indoor classrooms, an outdoor picnic area and access to an extensive variety of natural ecosystems: an old spruce forest, grasslands, riverine, creek, pond wetlands and disturbed (urban) areas.

The Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre offers you the following facilities and services:

1. Each teacher will be given a classroom to use as a home base for the day's activities.
2. Some equipment for the day's activities will be available at the Park. It is your responsibility to count all equipment and return it at the end of the day. **There is a fee charged for lost or broken equipment.**
3. Washrooms and water fountains are located in the building. There are no vending machines or coffee available.
4. A short orientation (about 15 minutes) will be provided to the entire group upon arrival to welcome and introduce everyone to the park, its rules, the program for the day and what the students may discover outside.
5. Parent volunteers will have a separate orientation (about 10 minutes). This will introduce them to the equipment provided, to a map of the activity area (maps provided), to the general flow of the day, and will answer any questions that they may have.
6. A washroom and snack break will take place *after* the group orientation and during the parent volunteer orientation. Please ensure that the students are supervised during this time.
7. **There are NO indoor activities available. Please bring your own activities and/or DVDs when planning for inclement weather.**



SNACK BREAK PROCEDURES

Your class may eat inside the facility, within their assigned room. Please ensure that the students understand the following :

INSIDE THE BUILDING

- Students must be supervised by an adult while they are in the building (classrooms and washrooms).
- Classes from other schools may be in the facility at the same time. Please respect them and keep noise to a minimum, especially in the washrooms, hallways and other common areas.
- Help us keep the classrooms clean. There are garbage containers in the brown cabinets by the classroom doors.
- Recyclable containers go into the brown cabinet labelled “Juice boxes, cans and bottles”. Do the students know what recycling is, how it conserves resources and how it helps the environment?
- Leftover fruit and vegetable materials, such as banana peels and apple cores, are collected in a white compost bucket in each room.

OUTDOOR FACILITIES

There is a picnic area just to the north of the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre, about two minutes walk up the trail, with plenty of picnic tables.

There are several picnic tables and a fire pit behind the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre. This area is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

When using the fire pit area be sure to:

- Provide your own roasting sticks and firewood. **Do not use branches or deadfall from the park.**
- Have a bucket of water nearby **before** the fire is lit. Check that the fire is out before you leave.
- **Do not feed or disturb wildlife.**

Preparation Materials

I. Site Visit

Teacher Orientation

Attending a teacher orientation prior to your class visit is mandatory and essential for familiarizing yourself with the facilities and the surrounding trails.

Returning teachers are not obligated to attend but are welcome. Dates for the teacher orientations will be sent to you via email so you can register for an orientation on a date of your choice.

2. Preparation Checklist

A full, detailed teacher checklist for your field trip preparation is available at the back of this resource package or by clicking [HERE](#). These are general guidelines to assist you in planning your field trip.

3. Program Start and End

Program start and end times are flexible to accommodate bus availability and travel distance to the park. In general, half-day programs start between 9:30- 10:00 am and finish between 11:30 and 12:30 pm.

4. Field Trip at a Glance

Group Orientation (10 minutes)	Overview of park rules, safety and behaviour expectations for the day
Student Snack Break Parent Volunteer Orientation (10-15 minutes)	Overview of program activities, equipment and trail safety for parent volunteers.
Educational Activities	Students explore the park in small, parent-led groups. Environmental Educator will be available to answer questions and provide support during your lunch break and at the end of the day and is always available should the need arise at the Learning Centre.
Groups return to Learning Centre for Program Wrap-up	Final washroom break, head count, inventory and return equipment borrowed from the park, gather personal belongings.

Program Wrap-up should take place at least 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure.

TEACHER CHECKLIST: Preparing for Your Day at the Park

Prepare yourself

- ☐ Read the teacher package thoroughly: phone 403-297-7926 if you have any questions.
- ☐ Register for and attend a Teacher Orientation date on site before your field trip.
- ☐ Book your bus(es).
- ☐ Give every driver - including the bus driver - a copy of the route map (found in the Appendix).
Make sure all drivers know you are coming to the west end of the park, near Woodbine!
- ☐ Check student health forms, looking for allergies in particular to bee/wasp stings
- ☐ Bring a first aid kit and a few band aids with each adult.

Prepare the students

- ☐ Discuss how Fish Creek Provincial Park is a wild environment.
 - Do not feed or disturb wildlife: Quietly observe all wildlife from a comfortable distance.
 - Leave only footprints: Share discoveries, but leave everything as they found it.
 - Pitch in: Litter should be placed in the rubbish bins provided or in a pocket.
- ☐ Discuss behavioural expectations. Explain that the field study will be another school day, just at a different place. All the school rules apply.
- ☐ Discuss the purpose of provincial parks and protected areas. Have the class make a list of ways they can show respect for living things during their visit to the park. *Possibilities include:*
 - Stay well back from the banks of Fish Creek
 - Leave ant hills, nests and rotting logs alone and intact. They are animal homes.
 - Walk with care and mindfulness to minimize your impact.
- ☐ Discuss outdoor safety. Students need to:
 - Stay with an adult all times.
 - Walk, do not run.
 - Keep feet on the ground: no climbing.
 - Leave dead branches on the ground:
- ☐ Discuss what to wear on the field trip
 - Hats, sunscreen, insect repellent.
 - Runners, comfortable boots (no sandals/high heels). Dress in layers and bring extras.
- ☐ Complete some preparatory activities, either the ones in this package or your own.

Prepare the adults

Please follow the recommended adult to student ratios as outlined in your school board regulations.

- ☐ Provide the following to adult volunteers and review with them: Key Messages, Chaperone Letter, Map, Inform them they will be provided an orientation and information booklet on the day to assist them during the program.
- ☐ Emphasize the following: there is nowhere to buy anything in the park, including coffee.
- ☐ Ensure adult volunteers are aware that their role is to lead a small group of students for part of the day and supervise students during the snack period.

FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK: Key Messages

Please review and be sure everyone understands the following information before your visit the park.

- Our vision: Alberta's parks inspire people to discover, value, protect, and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.
- Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.
- Alberta's parks and protected areas belong to all Albertans and contain many different natural landscapes that are home to numerous plant and animal species as well as significant cultural and historic resources. The province's network of parks and protected areas helps to ensure that Alberta's natural and cultural heritage is preserved for future generations.
- There are a wide variety of visitors and users of our parks. Everyone must respect and share the park and its facilities and resources.
- Stay on designated trails while moving through the park and participating in group activities. Staying on designated trails reduces impact to the natural habitats of the park. Please share the trail with other users.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited. The park's ecosystems provide all the food and habitat wildlife require for their basic needs. Feeding wildlife can cause wildlife to associate humans with food. Quietly observe wildlife from a safe and comfortable distance so as not to disturb them or put them or you at risk.
- Everything in the park – living and non-living is protected. Students are welcome to share their discoveries, but must remember to leave everything as they found it. Do not remove anything natural from the park.
- Litter must be placed in garbage cans or packed out.
- Use only designated fire pits. The collecting and burning of park vegetation is not permitted. You must ensure fires are fully extinguished before leaving them.



Pre-field Trip Activities

Preparatory activities are essential to the success of your trip! The preparatory activities described here will introduce the field study day to your students and will allow them to practise the skills to be used during the field study day.

Feel free to use your own activities and the ones described in this package. Within the activities you select and present to your students be sure to consider other curriculum areas and explore how all subject areas can be connected to your field study day.

1 "S" Labels Worksheet: No

The theme of this program is **"S is for snow and...."**. Ensure the students are familiar with the letter "s" and the sound it makes when pronounced.

- Put a large "S" on a conspicuous object whose name starts with "s" in the classroom (e.g. Sand Centre). Ask the students to name the object. Repeat their answer, emphasizing the "s" sound.
- Turn it into a game to test observation skills by asking the students to find the new "S".
- Depending upon your students skill levels, you may try putting the letter on an object whose name does not start with "s" but is next to one that does. Can the students correct the error?

2 "S" Day Worksheet: No

Celebrate "S" the day before your field study.

- Ask the students to wear, if possible, at least one item of indoor clothing that starts with "S". Brainstorm with the class to make a list of what these might be (*sweater, slacks, sneakers, sweatsuits*).
- Ask the students to bring a special object from home that starts with "S" (e. g. *stuffed toy, storybook, stone, stickers, sports things*) for sharing circle.
- Have only food and beverages that start with the letter "S" for snacktime (e.g. *strawberry flavoured drinks, sesame crackers, Shreddies, seeds - pumpkin or sunflower, snowpeas, sprouts, salad*).
- During storytime, focus on the "S" page of an alphabet book. Richard Scarry's "ABC Word Book" would be excellent for this because there are many things on the 2 "S" pages to discover and discuss.

3 Sensory Snoops Worksheet: No

Discuss the senses. Have the students name them. Make a collage from your discussions. Centre your bulletin board display with a picture of a young person. From each sensory source have pictures that illustrate that particular sense.

4 Sensory Snoops Worksheet: No

Introduce winter as a season. Focus the discussion on the natural events that define winter, particularly the sun's position and how that affects the amount of daylight and the temperatures. Remind the students that snow can occur in the Calgary area during any season so the presence of snow is not a reliable indicator of winter.

Discuss things people do in the fall to get ready for winter. Outside work might include emptying flower beds and vegetable gardens, putting the hose or barbecue away, getting out the snowshovel. Inside, extra blankets might be added to the beds, shorts put away and warm clothing brought out, winter coats and boots checked for fit or buying new ones.

Introduce migration and hibernation as ways some animals avoid winter because they will not be able to meet their basic needs for food and shelter. To continue the "S" theme you could focus on spiders and snakes as examples of hibernators and songbirds or swallows as examples of migrators.

5 Student Journals Worksheet: Yes

The student journal is a tool the students, teachers and parent volunteers will use to record and reflect on what they are learning through their multidisciplinary exploration of the natural world.



Program Equipment

The Learning Centre will provide your students with equipment and resources to utilize throughout the day.

PLEASE NOTE: There is an additional fee for lost, stolen or broken equipment.

For the *Kindergarten Hidden Worlds* program, your students will be provided with the following:



Seasonal Scavenger Hunt

Students will seek signs of the changing season with kinesthetic, auditory and visual objectives. This is not meant to be a competition, rather it is a fun way for students to hone their observation skills.



Shap sorter

Students will look for shapes in nature using the shap sorter. Students will compare and contrast the shape and size of the found natural object with the shap sorter shapes.



Magnifying Glasses

Students will use the magnifying glasses to examine signs of squirrels and snowshoe hare (such as tracks, evidence of feeding, droppings).

Students will use the magnifying glasses to investigate snow and signs of winter.

Field Trip Activities

Information Booklets



The Learning Centre will provide your adult chaperones with an information booklet with all of the field trip activities outlined and explained in full detail. These booklets will have pictures and information that will support and enhance your students' learning.

These booklets will be provided at the Park for your field trip.

By providing laminated copies, at your field trip we hope to reduce the amount of photocopying and wasted paper.

Important Notes:

- We greatly appreciate all feedback to strengthen our resources; please let us know if you have any recommended changes

Field Trip Activity Summary

The following Field Trip Activities are curriculum-connected. You are certainly welcome to change, remove or follow the activities to suit the needs of your students.

1 Snowy Sights *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will find/associate objects in nature that are illustrated in the student journal such as squirrels, signs, snow, and shrubs.

4 “S” Touches *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will identify textures in nature that begin with the letter ‘s’ (soft, smooth, scratchy, spongy, slippery).
- Students will draw the objects they discovered.

2 Sounds *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will listen for sounds that they can describe using a word that starts with “s”.
- Students will draw a picture of the source of the sound.

5 Shape and Size *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will look for shapes in nature using the shap sorter.
- Students will compare and contrast the shape and size of the found natural object with the shap sorter shapes.

3 “S” Smells *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will identify things that smell and describe them using words that start with a “s”.
- Students will be challenged to find all 4 odour types (strong, sweet, sour, stinky).
- Students will draw the things they smelled.

6 Snacks, Steps and Shelters: Squirrels *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will find and observe the evidence of red squirrel activity.
- Students will identify and draw the things that a red squirrel needs to survive the winter.

7 Snacks, Steps and Shelters: Snowshoe hare *Worksheet: Yes*

- Students will find and observe the evidence of snowshoe hare activity.
- Students will identify and draw the things that a snowshoe hare needs to survive the winter.

Post-field Trip Activities

In addition to a class discussion about trip highlights and favourite activities, students may need class time to complete data sheets or to share information about their discoveries.

Student Journals *Worksheet: Yes*

Distribute the student journals and explain, page by page, what the students could draw. Use the adult journals as references if the students require some assistance. Page 8 provides space for the students to do a fall picture of the Park. Invite the students to share their completed journals with their classmates either verbally during a sharing circle or by adding them to the class "library" so others could look at them any time.

Experience Chart *Worksheet: No*

Develop a class experience chart. Have each student contribute something that they experienced at the Park to the list. Beside each response print the student's name. When everyone has had a chance to contribute, start back at the beginning of the list and, for each response, invite the contributing student to come up and draw the body part used to make that discovery. Can they also name the sense?

Example: squirrel - Mary; she would draw eyes and say sense of sight.

"S-Periences" *Worksheet: No*

Review the "S" hunt with the students. What smells, sounds, sights and textures did the students discover that started with the letter "s"?

You may want to combine this with the experience chart by circling the student responses that start with the letter "s".

Winter Scene *Worksheet: Yes*

Photocopy the following picture and distribute to the students, either individually or as small groups.

Point out that, while there are trees in the picture, other living things are missing.

- Ask the students to add a spider, a snake, a songbird (or whichever the animals you used in your discussion of hibernators and migrators) a red squirrel and a snowshoe hare.
- Be sure the students understand you want them to show, in the picture, what these animals are doing in the winter.
- Students could add people to the picture also. Did the students remember to show the people properly dressed for winter? Are the people engaged in a winter activity?

"S" is for Snow *Worksheet: No*

Challenge the class to list as many words as they can that start with the word snow. Students could, instead, either individually or in small groups, draw a picture showing the objects. (e.g. snowman, snowflake, snow angel, snow fort, snow shovel, snowplow, snowblower, snowstorm, snow tires, snow cone).

Dear Adult Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering for a field trip to Fish Creek Provincial Park! This excursion allows students to explore, discover and learn in one of the largest urban parks in North America.

Here are a few tips that may help you enjoy your visit:

- Pack a hearty and healthy lunch (snacks and water too!). There are no vending machines or stores onsite to purchase food.
- Please dress appropriately for the weather. We will run our programs rain, snow or sunshine.
- Ensure that you are aware of what part of Fish Creek the program is taking place. We host educational programs at the WEST end (near Woodbine) and the EAST end (near Deer Run).

Our staff will be available throughout the day to ensure that you and your group have a safe and educational experience in the park.

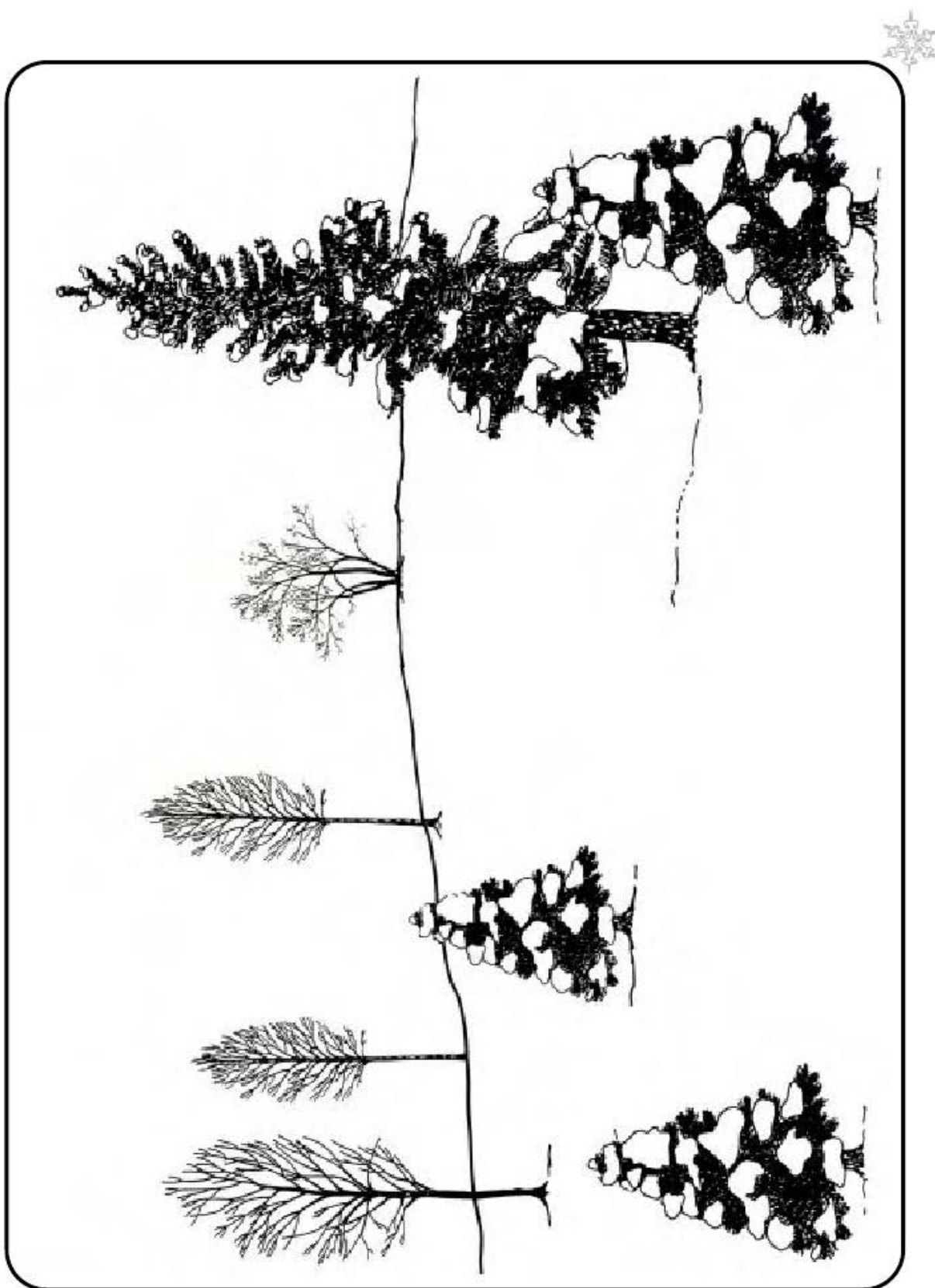
You are not expected to be a naturalist or history expert, but a positive attitude goes a long way!

Thank you again, we are very excited to see you in the park soon.

Warmest regards,

Environmental Education Team





Snacks, Steps and Shelter:

Snowshoe Hares

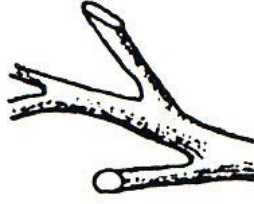
Circle the pictures of things the snowshoe hare needs!



Shelter- low
branches



Insects



Twig ends



Shelter-nest



Birds

Winter Wonder



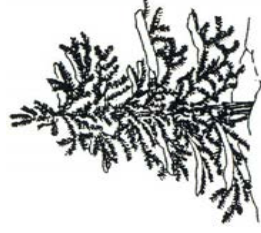
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Snowy Sights



Snacks, Steps and Shelter: Squirrels

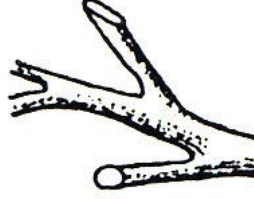
Circle the pictures of things the squirrel needs!



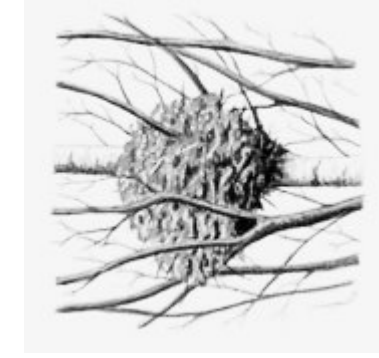
Shelter- low
branches



Insects



Twig ends

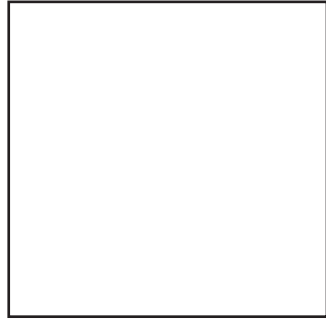
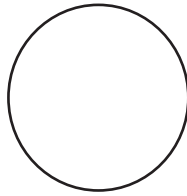
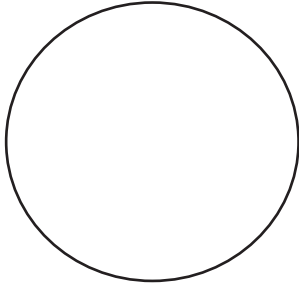
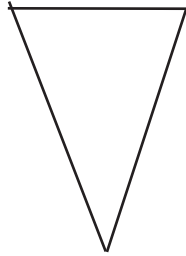


Shelter-nest



Birds

Shape and Size



5

“S” Sounds



4

“S” Smells

Draw the creatures you discovered *under* the objects in the picture below.



3

“S” Touches

Draw the creatures that you saw using the mirror!

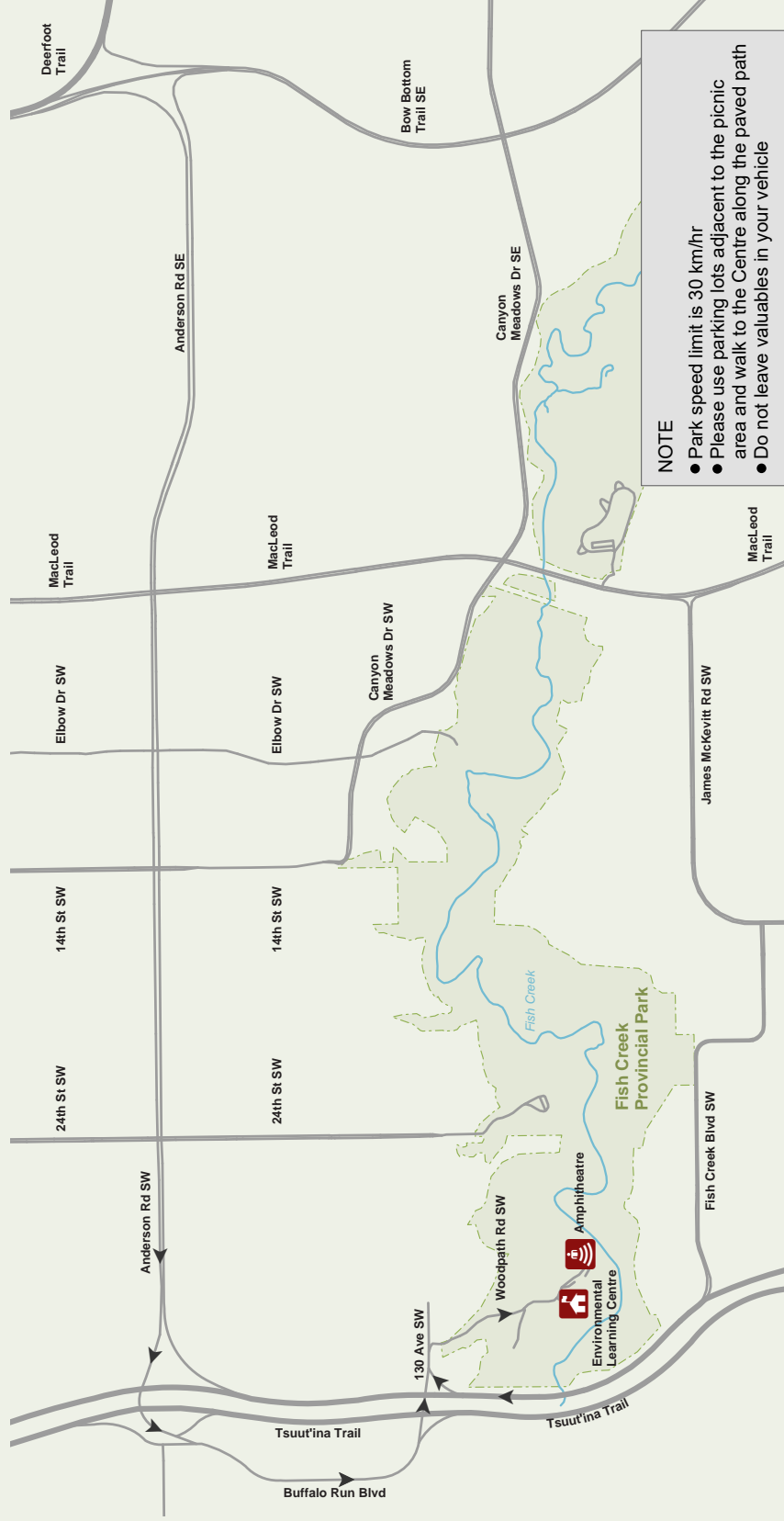


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Directions Map

Access Map - Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre

13931 Woodpath Road SW, Calgary, Alberta



DIRECTIONS

From Anderson Rd SW heading west:

- Follow signs to Tsuut'ina Trail and follow exit onto Buffalo Run Blvd
- Follow Buffalo Run Blvd past the gas bar and Costco complex to 130 Ave SW
- Heading east through two traffic circles to continue onto 130 Ave SW
- Turn right onto Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park

From south of 130 Ave SW on northbound Tsuut'ina Trail:

- Take the 130 Ave SW exit and keep right at top of ramp onto eastbound 130 Ave SW
- Turn right on Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park



Trail Map

Program Trails at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre

**PLEASE STAY IN
ASSIGNED AREAS!**

It is important that park staff
know where you are at all times.

