



FRIENDS OF  
KANANASKIS COUNTRY

## If You Admire the View, You Are a Friend Of Kananaskis



*"Canoeists in the Mist", Robert Lee, FOCK Top 12 Photo Contest Winner*

### In this month's newsletter...

- The Program Report
- News from the Board: Your hiking safety guide
- Other News: **Patagonia Spring Fundraiser!**
- The Critters of K-Country: Hummingbirds
- The Movies of K-Country: Bourne Legacy

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### Happy Earth Day

*By Rosemary Power, Program Coordinator*

If you are reading this Friends of Kananaskis newsletter, chances are that you already care about our planet and your impact on the Earth. Likely, you try to reduce the impact of your day-to-day life and to make a positive difference where you can. Joining the Friends of Kananaskis and helping us with trail building and maintenance is one way you can help (it can be good for your health and fun too). We have plenty of volunteer opportunities coming up this summer on our many trail projects.

In past years we have had very little involvement in the maintenance of trails in the Elbow and Sheep regions. This year, we hope to begin giving Kyle Jacobson and conservation officer Pat Ronald a hand with their work in that area. Until this year Kyle and Pat have been doing most of the trail work themselves but the flood created more repair work than they can accomplish alone. Provincial funding to help repair the flood damage is being used to hire some trail crew members to assist them, and we will be looking for volunteers to help this new trail crew. In particular, we're interested in forming a core group of volunteers from the Black Diamond, Turner Valley, Longview areas.

Our first project of the season will be the Highway 40 cleanup in conjunction with Alberta Transportation. The event is scheduled for May 3 with May 10 as the backup date in case of bad weather. We've had such a terrific response from our volunteers for this event that we have had to turn some of you away, something we hate to do! I want to extend my thanks to all who offered their support.



In past years our next events would have been held at the Canmore Nordic Center, primarily because the trails there are some of the first to dry out after winter snow and spring rain. This year, we may not be able to begin trail work at the Nordic Center until a little later; the reason for this is that, Matt Hadley, who has done such a tremendous job designing and maintaining the mountain bike trails at the Canmore Nordic Center is leaving Alberta Parks to pursue a career as a mountain biking coach with the Rundle Mountain Cycling Club as well as to accommodate his own racing schedule. We are incredibly sad to see Matt leave but glad he is staying in the valley. Matt has generously agreed to donate his time, and will be offering a one-day course on mountain bike trail construction to our volunteer crew leaders. Matt's replacement will not likely be hired until mid May so it's too early to comment on what work we will be doing at the Nordic Center in 2014. We will definitely keep you posted.

Work on Bow Valley trails is expected to commence sometime in June or early July. Trail crew boss Jeff Eamon, who is responsible for this region, says he's going to be busy training new trail crew members until late May but expects to have significant need for volunteers on the Ribbon Creek and Galatea trails this summer. These trails experienced particularly heavy damage in last years flood and require major rebuilds. Heavy equipment is going to be used in the much of the initial trail work and volunteers will follow the equipment and sculpt the bulldozed track into a hiking trail.

In early July we hope to begin work in Peter Loughheed Provincial Park. Due to road closures, we could not help

with the rebuilding work in this area until the middle of the summer. Presently we are looking at about eight different flood related projects in the Kananaskis Lakes region in addition to helping with some routine trail maintenance. These projects include assisting with a half-kilometer reroute on the upper Kananaskis Lakes Trail and



rehabilitation of the old trail. Cleanup will need to be done on short sections of the Pocaterra, Elk Pass and Whiskey Jack trails, which also need rerouting. We will likely spend a few days widening a trail in the Chester Lake area to create some separation of snowshoe and ski trails in the Chester/Sawmill region. If weather and bear activity permits, the boardwalk at the top of Highwood Pass is also scheduled for a 'paint job' for an easier day of work for those limited by heavy lifting and other physically challenging tasks.



We are presently looking for corporations interested in helping us by sending groups of 10-15 people volunteers for a day of trail work. Working together on a trail is a great way to build your team and accomplish some meaningful trail work at the same time. For further information on this, please contact [rosemary@kananaskis.org](mailto:rosemary@kananaskis.org).



## Your Hiking Safety Guide

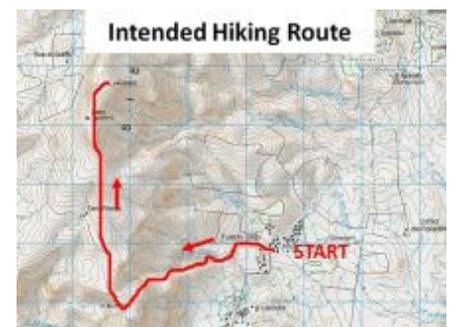
*By James Early, Co-Chair*

With hiking season upon us, it is probably a good time to have a brief refresher on what it takes to hike safely in Kananaskis Country. A couple of months ago, Derek told you what he kept in his Emergency Kit, so take one more look over that advice. However, you should also consider:

### *Where Are You Going?*

It is important to tell someone where you are going, what route you plan to take and how long the hike is expected to be. If you were to hike alone, which is not recommended, or if you and your partner were both to run into difficulties, then rescuers / a search party will know where to start looking for you. While cell reception in Kananaskis is slowly improving, do not rely on your cell phone.

### *Be In Shape*



Your hike should be based upon your skill level. Walking on the flat is easy for most of us, but distance and terrain can make all of the difference. Be sure to select a hike that is within your fitness level. Know your limits. Be sure to hike a trail that is comfortable for the least experienced / fit in your group, and do not push yourself too hard.

### *Do Not Hike Alone*

Whether it is encounters with bear, or other wildlife, a fall that results in a sprain or break, or just for the company, it is always recommended that you hike with a partner or group. Safety may be some distance away, and a friend can be relied upon to get help if circumstances require it.

### *How's The Weather?*

Before you pack for your hike, check the forecast and pack/prepare accordingly. Be sure to ask yourself "what if", and follow the Boy Scout's mantra, and "Be Prepared". If there is a risk of adverse weather conditions (extreme heat, ice, snow, torrential rain) then be prepared for that eventuality.

### *Fashion or Substance?*

Alternate, dry clothes are always a good idea. For some hikes, they can be left in your vehicle. For other, likely longer hikes, you might wish to take the change of clothes with you. Perhaps it is rain, or perhaps you got just too close to the edge of that lake, and you become soaked. Remember, the Boy Scout's mantra: "Be Prepared".

### *Your Feet*

On any given hike, the terrain of the trail can be varied. Rocks, tree roots, mud, and water can all come into play during the course of your hike. As such, make sure that you are wearing appropriate footwear, and make sure that they are comfortable and sturdy. Break-in new hiking boots before you go for a hike.

### *Pack Your Bag – including Water and Food*

In addition to your emergency kit (see Derek's article from a couple of months ago), you might want to consider sunscreen, your camera, a watch, and a notepad/pencil.

It is essential that you bring plenty of water with you. On a hot summer day, a human body can require several litres of water. This is particularly true for more arduous hikes that involve hikes longer than three hours, and steep, uphill climbs. Plan for a small meal and a few power bars or other light snacks. The snacks should be designed to keep energy levels high and your mind alert.

### *Fishing?*



Be sure to have a licence, and know the rules.

### *Cellphone*

While you cannot rely on cell phone service, or batteries, you should be sure to have it fully charged before you start your hike. If your cell phone has GPS you will be able to use your cell phone to help you find your way if you are lost. If service is available, you will also be able to call for help if needed. Further, the Education Subcommittee at the Friends of Kananaskis Country is currently working with Alberta Parks to begin the development and installation of interpretive signs and, if feasible, “Q”-Codes may be located on those signs which, with a cell phone, you may be able to scan and learn about the environment and landscape around you. Stay tuned for that development.

### *Bears*

If you encounter bears on your hikes, you should know that they can pose a real danger to you if they feel threatened. Make noise while you are hiking. This will limit the element of surprise that may threaten a bear if you suddenly come upon one. If you do come across a bear, calmly turn away from the bear in the other direction, and slowly walk away. Try to stay aware of the bear’s movements behind you and always be prepared to use bear spray as a last resort if the bear begins to aggressively move toward you.

In advance of your hike, be sure that you have a bear spray that is not expired, that you know how to use the spray (Alberta Parks has a great video on YouTube) and ensure that it is accessible – usually at your waste, not in a back pack.

### *Stay Alert!*

Always follow trail signs. The signs are there for your safety. Be aware of wildlife, changes in weather, trail conditions and terrain and always consider turning back if the trail begins to become too difficult for your level of fitness and experience.

### *Hiking?*

Do not leave the trail. If you are concerned that you are off course, retrace your steps until you find the last trail marker. If you become lost or separated from your group, remain in the same place. If you are waiting for rescue, attempt to position yourself in the most open of nearby spaces so that you can be seen more easily.





Look, don't touch, and properly dispose of garbage

It goes without saying that you should be enjoying the natural environment around you, but please, do not try to pet the bears! Let nature do its thing, undisturbed, and stick to the trails. Do not attempt to touch, disturb or interfere with nature. Certainly, do not take it home as a souvenir. The only thing you should take are pictures.

If you come across a clearly sick or injured animal, leave it and contact a wildlife officer. If you have to go "number two", bury the feces 15 cm below ground, and do so at least 100m from the closest river, stream, creek, lake or other body of water. Do not dispose of garbage on the ground. Keep your garbage with you and dispose of it at the trail head in appropriately identified containers. Recycle wherever possible and, even better, try to pack a "garbage-free" lunch.

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### The Greater Bragg Creek Trails Association Fundraiser is coming!



Our friends over at GBCTA are having their 4th annual fundraiser, *Tunes for Trails!* It's taking place Saturday, May 24 at the Bragg Creek Community Centre. Fun music, silent auction, and a fun party. Tickets for *Tunes for Trails* are \$25 and available in Bragg Creek from the Best Little Wordhouse in the West at 403 949-4995.

Or, you can purchase on-line through PayPal (with your PayPal account or credit card) via the [GBCTA website](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the home page).

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## FOKC Spring Fundraiser with Patagonia!

Our friends over at Patagonia Calgary & Banff are partnering with FOKC to help rebuild K-country trail damaged by Floods of 2013. Shop online at [patagoniaelements.ca](http://patagoniaelements.ca) in the **Clearance section** and save 50%-70% . Patagonia will donate 10% of your total sale to FOKC. **Offer valid only from May 2 to 19, 2014.**





## The Critters of K-Country -- Hummingbirds

by Derek Ryder, Co-Chair & Director of Communications

Kananaskis Country is home to a wide variety of creatures, great and small. Big ones, like bears and elk, get a lot of attention. In this series, I'm going to look at some of the ones we pay less attention to.

I never knew there were so many hummingbirds in K-Country until I moved there. But now that I know what to look and listen for, I find them all over the place – though given their size, that's a bit of a challenge. Other than the photos on the feeders, all the other images are of hummers I've photographed in the wild -- so they can be found and photographed (a big lens helps).



A number of species of hummingbirds call K-Country their summer home, with the Rufous the most common but Calliope also fairly plentiful, and the odd Black Chinned around, too. No matter the species, they start arriving around now (late April) from their wintering grounds in Mexico and the Southern USA. Typically the males arrive first, and they are also the first to leave, typically in mid July. The girls aren't far behind arriving, but they stick around longer, with sightings getting less frequent by mid-August.

Rufous hummingbirds are easy to tell apart; the male is orange-brown, with a dull brown neck gorget (you can see it in the photo above) that becomes iridescent red when reflecting sunlight the correct way, which you can see in the photo to the right. The females are shiny green with a gray underbelly and a small black chest spot,



and are normally slightly bigger than the males (see photo at the bottom).



Calliope males and females both look like female Rufous with one major exception: the male has this awesome purple streaked neck gorget, which you can see in the photo to the left. During mating season, he can actually splay that gorget out when he's trying to show off for the girls; it looks like a bright purple flower. Calliope are smaller than Rufous, but from a distance in binoculars, that's a tough thing to tell.

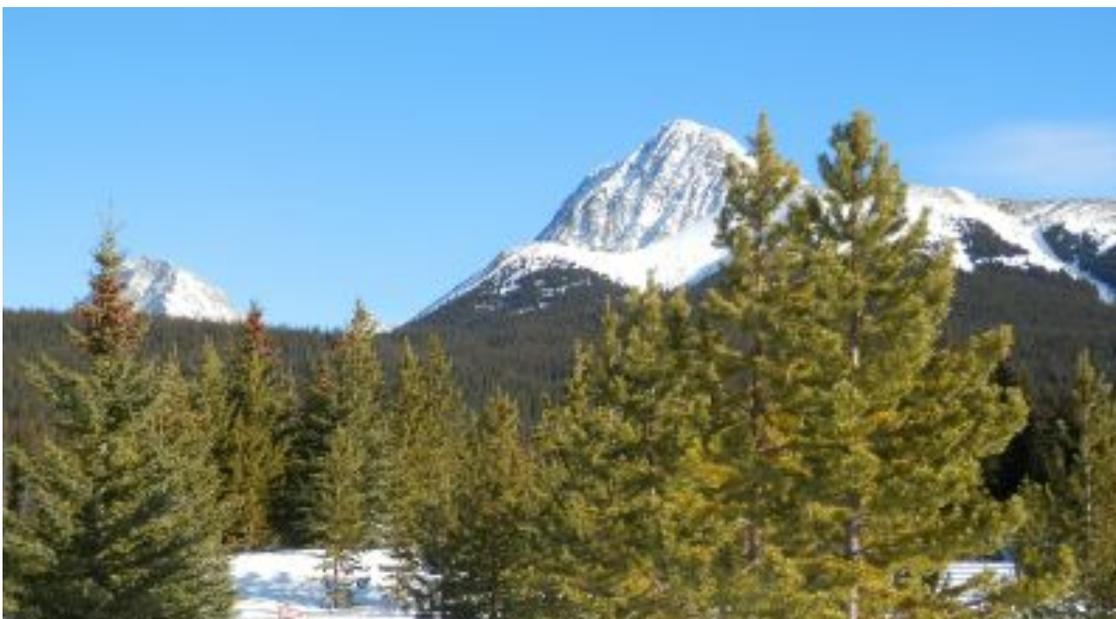


Rufous hummingbirds are aggressive as all get out for their size. During mating season, they buzz around flying giant U shapes in the sky, flashing their gorgets to the ladies sitting in the trees, chittering to get their attention. They chase each other (and other birds, too) away from flowers and food sources, and I have personally had one hover 1 foot in front of my face yelling at me to go away. Walk in K-Country in a bright red jacket and a hummer is sure to come investigate. I've seen hummers around Exshaw (Jura Creek and Grotto Canyon especially) and other places in the Bow Valley like Middle Lake in Bow Valley Provincial Park, around K-Village, at Black Prince, near Pocaterra – and the Turner Valley area of the Elbow/Sheep is pretty much “hummer central” in the Province.

While they do eat flower nectar and can be readily attracted to feeders, they also eat protein, usually in the form of spiders. On the Old Baldy trail, I watched a Rufous female come up to a spider web, hover, pluck the spider out of the web, then wrap her beak in the web to use as nesting material. Their nests are the size of golf balls, glued together with spider webs, and their eggs are the size of peas.



Hummers are surprisingly easy to photograph once found. They typically sit in a tree (though sometimes way high up at the top) guarding their food source from other hummers. The easiest to find are the male Rufous who actually make a distinctive buzz when they fly. Female Rufous and Calliope are much harder, since they are virtually silent, but they are the only things out there that rocket around at 60 mph. And they have excellent memories, and will return year after year to good food sources, so if you find them in a spot, you can find them year after year in the same place.





## The Movies of Kananaskis: *The Bourne Legacy*

12th in a Series by Derek Ryder, CoChair and Director of Communications

There have been many movies filmed in K-Country, some famous, some less so. In this series of articles, since I'm not a movie critic, I'm going to talk about these movies in a different light: how well they depict our favourite neighbourhood.

The Bourne Legacy is a 2012 movie starring Jeremy Renner, Rachel Weisz, Edward Norton, Scott Glen and Stacy Keatch. It was the re-boot of the Bourne trilogy of movies when Matt Damon agreed to play Bourne again but only if Paul Greengrass would direct. Greengrass was busy and couldn't do it, so the Legacy was re-born, and the story parallels the timeline of the original Bourne Ultimatum movie, only this time with Aaron Cross (Renner) being the indestructible one.

Any movie who's opening scene is a guy in the winter, swimming out from under a pre-flood Elbow Falls, has to be a good one about K-Country. Okay, they did digitally enhance the falls and long shot with matte paintings, but you'll still recognize it. Partially set in Alaska for the outdoor survival section of Renner's training, those parts were filmed in K-Country and extensively at the Fortress ski area. A missile rockets down the Kananaskis valley, as does a predator drone. The "cabin in the woods" that they hide out at was in fact located on the banks of Evan-Thomas creek near the trailhead parking lot, and yes, wolves chase them in the forests around there. You can read here [[www.fxguide.com/featured/the-bourne-legacy/](http://www.fxguide.com/featured/the-bourne-legacy/)] about how the wolves were filmed, and see before and after shots of the digital enhancements of Elbow Falls. There's one scene of them on the frozen lake near the Peninsula day use area is very recognizable. I was actually at Fortress while the filming was going on, though I was nowhere near it, as most of it was Will Gadd climbing endlessly over the mountains above the Back Side being filmed with helicopters. The cabin's filming site was a near-armed camp, with numerous film service trailers parked on Hwy 40.

I liked the original Bourne trilogy better than this one (I find this plot a bit confusing), but it carries the same level of human indestructability that made the originals a lot of fun. Being new, it's just staring to go on sale for the \$10 mark. If you like the original Bourne movies, this is the same, and you'll like it too.





## Your Donations are Always Appreciated and Needed

We are pleased to recognize the contributions of the [Calgary Foundation](#), who in 2014, made a 4 year commitment to support the Friends in flood recovery efforts.

There are many ways to express your gratitude for Kananaskis Country and we are always grateful for contributions that help us maintain our programs, operations and help us restore flood damaged trails. Friends of Kananaskis Country is a registered charity in good standing and we provide charitable receipts for donations over \$20.00. You can reach us directly by mail at the address below, through the [donations link on our website](#), through [ATB Cares](#), or [CanadaHelps](#). Thank you for your support!



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