

# WINTER WONDER

A teacher-conducted field study for  
Kindergarten students

FISH CREEK  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTRE

---

[FishCreek.Education@gov.ab.ca](mailto:FishCreek.Education@gov.ab.ca)

[www.Fish-Creek.org](http://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.

---

# Table of Contents

## FACILITY & RULES

- The Facility 3
- Snack Break Procedures 4

## BEFORE THE VISIT

- Preparation Materials 5
- Orientation Videos 6
- Pre-field Trip Activities 7

## PARK ACTIVITIES

- Program Equipment 8
- Information Booklets 9
- Field Trip Activities 10

## POST-FIELD TRIP

- Post-field Trip Activities 11

## RESOURCES

- Preparation Checklist 12
- Parent Recruitment Letter 13
- Winter Scene Worksheet 14
- Student Journal 15

## MAPS

- Access map 18
- Map of program trails 19



# Facility & Rules

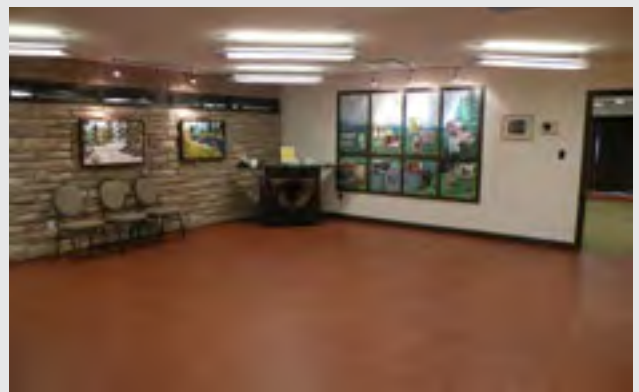
## THE FACILITY

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.**



---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## 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

## 1. 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.

## 2. 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.



## 3. Field Trip at a Glance

<b>Group Orientation (10 minutes)</b>	Overview of park rules, safety and behaviour expectations for the day
<b>Student Snack Break Parent Volunteer Orientation (10-15 minutes)</b>	Overview of program activities, equipment and trail safety for parent volunteers.
<b>Educational Activities</b>	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.
<b>Groups return to Learning Centre for Program Wrap-up</b>	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.***

# Orientation Videos

Attending a teacher orientation prior to your class visit is essential for familiarizing yourself with the facilities and the surrounding trails. Returning teachers are not obligated to attend the workshop, but are certainly welcome to come for a “refresher” course. 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.

## 1 Teacher Orientation Video

Prepare yourself by watching a brief video about field trip logistics, resources and helpful tips. If you have any additional questions, comments or concerns about the field trip after watching the video, please contact the Environmental Educator.

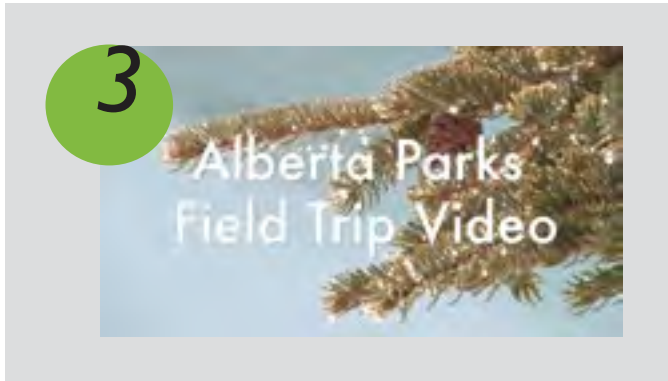
## 2 Parent Orientation Video

Whether your program is a guided hike with our Education staff, a custom program or a teacher-led field study, parent volunteers are an essential part of our programs.

When recruiting volunteers, **please ensure that the adults are aware that they will be outside in the park for a majority of the day.** Knowledge of nature is not a requirement, but ability to supervise and work with students is key.

## 3 Student Orientation Video

Prior to your field trip, you can show your students the orientation video that reviews proper field trip attire and the role of parks in Alberta.



# 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.



## Shapesorter

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

Each page of the information booklet will have guiding questions on the bottom to help facilitate curriculum-connected discussions and inquiry.

**NEW to our programs, these booklets will be printed and laminated for your field trip use. A copy of the Information Booklet was provided to you at the time of booking. If you have not received the booklet, please ask us to resend it.**

### Important Notes:

- Please do not print these booklets for your adult chaperones. By providing laminated copies, we hope to reduce the amount of wasted paper.
- Please do not distribute the information booklet PDFs to other teachers. These resources are developed for use within our programs.
- 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 shapersorter.
- Students will compare and contrast the shape and size of the found natural object with the shapersorter 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).

## Planning your Field Study in the Park: Teacher Checklist

Give every driver—including the bus driver—a copy of the route map.  
Make sure all drivers know you are coming to the west end of the Park, near Woodbine!

### Prepare yourself

- Read the teacher package thoroughly: phone 403-297-7926 if you have any questions.
- Modify the activities to fit your lesson plans, students' skill levels and time in the park
- Check student health forms, looking for allergies to bee/wasp stings.

### Prepare the students

- Discuss how Fish Creek Provincial Park is a wild environment. Discuss the difference between wild and tame animals and environments (coyotes vs. pet dogs, Fish Creek Provincial Park vs. school yard, etc.)
  - 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. When leaving the trails to complete program activities take care to minimize your impact.
- Discuss outdoor safety. Students need to:
  - Stay where an adult can see them at all times.
  - Walk, do not run.
  - Keep feet on the ground: no climbing.
  - Leave dead branches on the ground: they do not make safe walking sticks.
- Discuss what to wear on the field trip
  - Hats, sunscreen, insect repellent.
  - Runners (not sandals).
  - Dress in layers: the forest can be cool in the morning.
- There is nowhere to buy anything here so bring plenty to eat and drink.
- Complete some preparatory activities, either the ones in the next section of this package or some of your own.

### Prepare the adults

- Please follow the recommended ratios as outlined in your school board regulations. Divide your class into working groups.
- Review the park rules with the adults, [send the link to the orientation video](#).
- Emphasize the following: there is nowhere to buy anything anything here, including coffee.
- The adults' role is to lead the activities with the same small group of students all day.

### Bring

- A cheque made payable to the *Government of Alberta* for \$2.00 per student (no charge for adults).
- Student booklets (or journals), pencils.
- A few bandaids with each adult and your first-aid kit.

Dear Adult Chaperone,

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:

- 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)
- Take a minute to watch this [orientation video here](#)

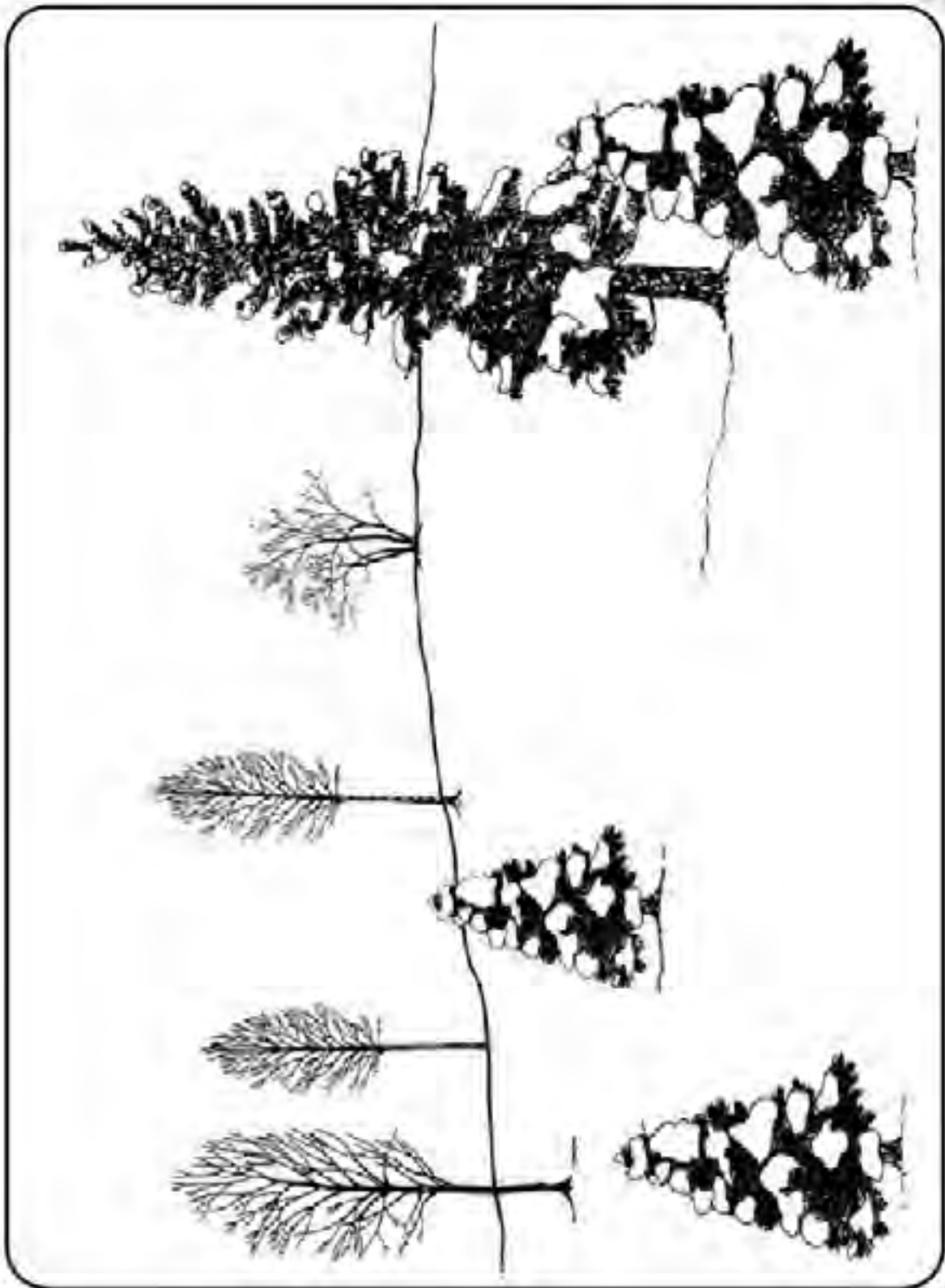
Our staff will be available throughout the day to ensure that you and your group have a safe and educational experience in the park.

You are not expected to be a naturalist or science expert, but a positive attitude goes along 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



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Snowy Sights



## Snacks, Steps and Shelter: Squirrels

Circle the pictures of things the squirrel needs!



Shelter- low branches



Insects



Twig ends



Shelter- nest



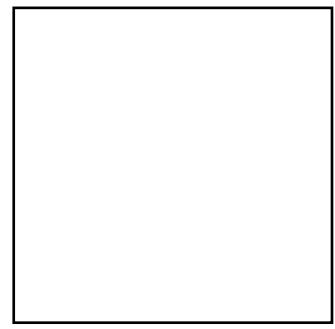
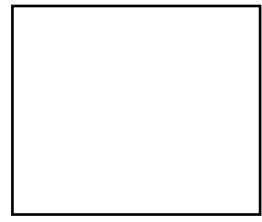
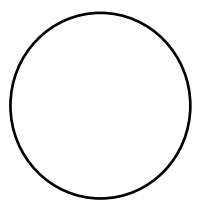
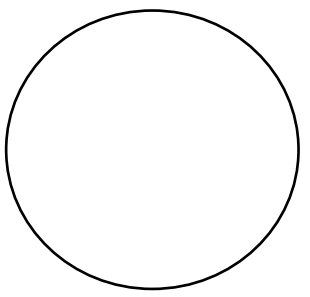
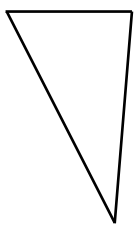
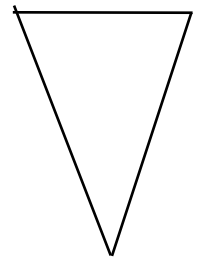
Birds



**“S” Sounds**



**Shape and Size**



### “S” Smells

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



### “S” Touches

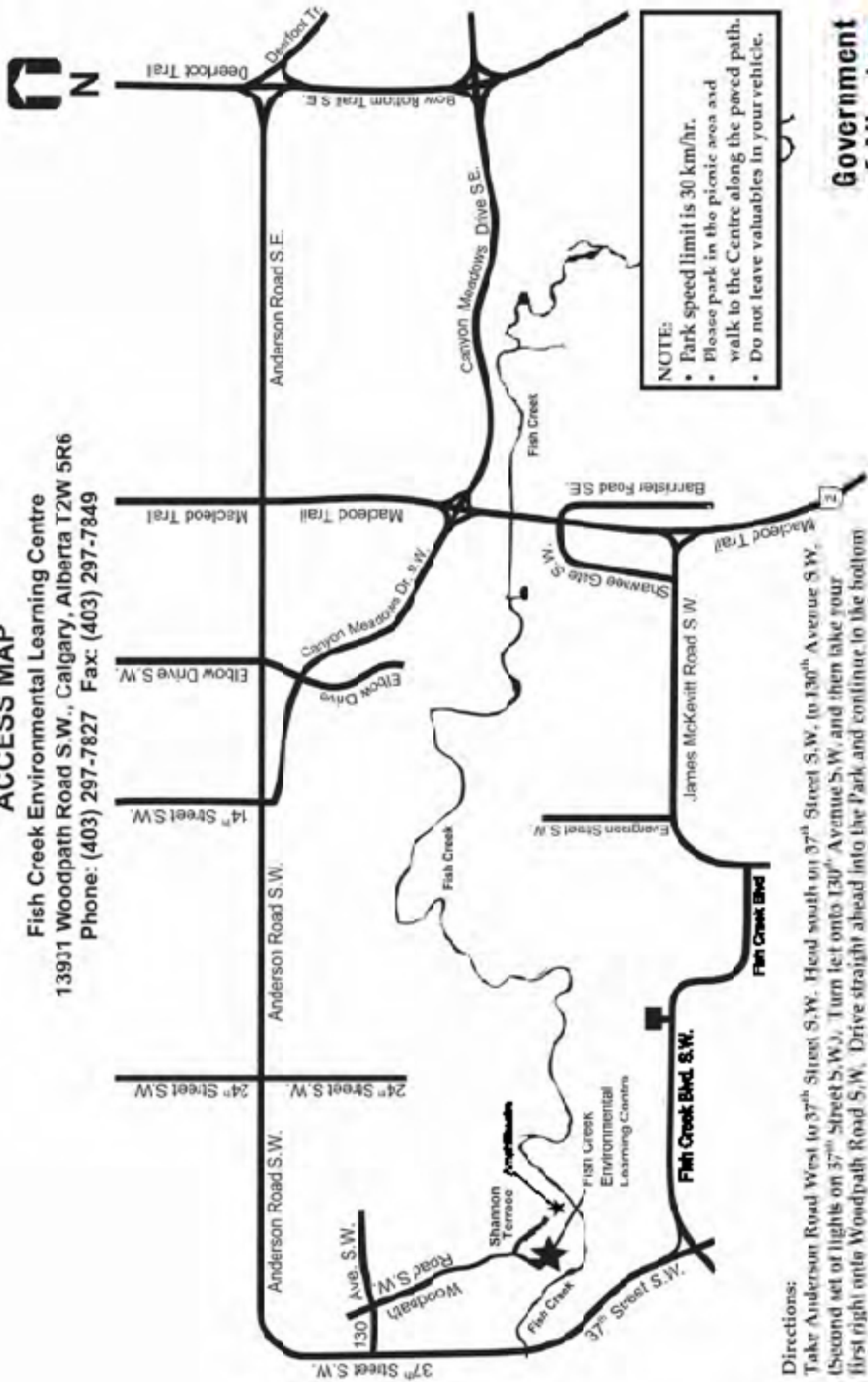
Draw the creatures that you saw using the mirror!



# Directions Map

## ACCESS MAP

Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre  
13931 Woodpath Road S.W., Calgary, Alberta T2W 5R6  
Phone: (403) 297-7827 Fax: (403) 297-7849



**Directions:**  
 Take Anderson Road West to 37<sup>th</sup> Street S.W. Head south on 37<sup>th</sup> Street S.W. to 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.W. (second set of lights on 37<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.). Turn left onto 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.W. and then take your first right onto Woodpath Road S.W. Drive straight ahead into the Park and continue to the bottom of the hill. The Environmental Learning Centre is on the right hand side (watch for signs).

**Government of Alberta**

# 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.

- Washrooms
- Picnic Sites (with fire pits)
- Amphitheatre
- Public Parking
- School Group Parking Only
- Bench
- Fence
- Asphalt Trail
- Shale Trail
- Dirt Path

