

HELEN SCHULER NATURE CENTRE

The Helen Schuler Nature Centre is one of Lethbridge's premier attractions where people and nature meet. Situated on a 200 acre nature preservation park with scenic views of coulees and cottonwood forests, the Centre offers a walk on the wild side, only minutes from downtown. Nature Centre staff and volunteers offer a wide range of programs and popular events each year. Whether you enjoy busy festival events or quiet, low-key walks and watchable wildlife moments, the Nature Centre has something for you.



Volunteers donated more than 7,800 hours to educational programs, events and conservation projects in 2017.

SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS & KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Conservation Initiatives

Thanks to generous support from Pratt & Whitney Canada, 2017 marked the 10th anniversary of the Coulee Clean-Up program. A record number of groups and individuals participated in the milestone year. More than 1,300 people covered 93 percent of the coulee locations, the highest coverage rate seen to date.

What's the Connection?

Parks Canada, Waterton Lakes National Park hosted a travelling exhibit at the Helen Schuler Nature Centre. The *What's the Connection* exhibition featured the sights and sounds of rare white-bark pine environments and the work being done by Parks Canada to restore and maintain these critical landscapes. The popular exhibit also featured maps, information and videos of the recent Kenow Fire event.

Celebrating 100 Exhibits

During the spring and summer season the Nature Centre celebrated its 100th exhibit. *The 100 Reasons To Go Outside* exhibition focused on the growing body of research that supports the known

benefits of spending time outdoors in nature. These include improved mental health, creative problem solving, feelings of happiness, self-confidence and stress reduction. During this exhibit the Centre also celebrated its 1,000,000th visitor.



River valley conservation programs were recognized with a Green Superhero Award from Environment Lethbridge.

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Programs and Events

The year 2017 was another successful year for the Helen Schuler Nature Centre. The Nature Centre staff and volunteers offered a wide range of programs and events that included:

- Interactive Exhibits – The Nature Centre partnered with 20 organizations, local artists and photographers to host 9 unique exhibitions throughout 2017.
- Science Outdoors – More than 450 nature-based school programs shaped the educational experience of over 12,000 Lethbridge and area students.
- Shoreline Cleanup – more than 6,100 individual pieces of litter were bagged and removed from 12.5 kilometres of Lethbridge shoreline.
- Supporting Community Events – Nature Centre staff and volunteers brought fun and educational activities to more than 30 community events in 2017, promoting the benefits of connecting with nature and being outside.
- Environmental Leadership – The Natural Leader's Project Program coordinated the planting of 242 wildflowers and 48 trees, covering more than 5,000 square feet of our city with landscaping projects that support urban wildlife.



Nature Centre staff helping participant at Urban Farming Event.

Success Stories

- The average Canadian child spends less than one hour per day outdoors. In 2017, Nature Centre staff and volunteers spent more than 1,200 hours outside, connecting children and nature, one experience at a time!
- In 2017, the Helen Schuler Nature Centre was named Attraction of the Year at the Southwest Services and Tourism Awards. The Southwest Service and Tourism Awards pay tribute to those who excel in promoting southwest Alberta as a destination through outstanding customer service, unique marketing initiatives and dedication to high standards of business integrity.



The Helen Schuler Nature Centre was named Attraction of the Year in 2017.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Approximately 24,000 people engaged with the Nature Centre's Facebook page. #FactFriday and #BirdoftheWeek are popular weekly features.
- The Nature Centre offered more than 1,000 different programs and activities designed to get our community outside in 2017.
- More than 65% of the Nature Centre's 51,000 visitors in 2017 were from Lethbridge and surrounding area. Local residents enjoy connecting with what's happening in the river valley and spending time with friends and family outside.