



Elsa the American White Pelican spends her 3rd Christmas at Frank Lake

Photos courtesy of John Reasbeck



So aptly name for the character “Elsa” in Disney’s Frozen because the cold never bothers her.

In the spring, Frank Lake (South of Calgary and East of High River) teems with hundreds of American white pelicans. But for the 3rd winter in a row, one lone pelican has stayed behind, not able to migrate because of an injured wing. And thanks to a human friend, John Reasbeck, she won’t spend another winter alone.

Since November 2021, Reasbeck has frequented Frank Lake. With his camera, he snaps photos of the bird and visits with her. Once home, Reasbeck shares an Elsa report on the Alberta Birds Facebook group.

This is something he feels compelled to do. He makes the trip every three to four days, weather permitting. He details what he can of the pelican’s plight telling his audience about the weather, the powerful wind gusts, how warm or frigid Elsa looks perched upon her little island, and how her wing is doing.

Biologist Chris Fisher says Elsa’s ability to survive Alberta’s harsh winters is a feat. Frank Lake is an ideal place for her to overwinter, despite the challenging elements, Fisher said.

A pipeline brings in water from High River, along with plenty of Prussian carp, keeping Elsa fed. Her feathers, Fisher adds, are like a down cover keeping Elsa warm.

“If she remains healthy, well-fed and well-groomed, hopefully she’ll be able to make it through a third Calgary winter, which would be some sort of crazy record for all American white pelicans.” Fisher said.

As a wildlife biologist, Fisher says Elsa’s story is exciting because it connects people to nature.

Of course, with fame comes responsibility. And in the birding community, there are concerns about people crowding Elsa, or worse, trying to rescue the bird.

Reasbeck respects her space—she is, after all, a wild animal. He stresses she’s visible enough to get beautiful photos of, but approaching her—or trying to get near her little island—isn’t appropriate.

“It’s just totally inspiring to see a creature out there who can withstand the elements. And maybe overcoming some of the difficulties, maybe all the difficulties that she’s had so that she doesn’t have to spend the Next winter here.

Story reported by: Helen Pike—CBC Calgary’s Mountain Bureau reported, based out of Canmore.



DID YOU KNOW? Return your seed bags or bring your own container to refill and we will give you a recycle discount



A graphic with a red banner containing the text "EXCITING NEWS!" in white, bold, uppercase letters. The banner is surrounded by yellow and blue shapes and small red triangles, giving it a dynamic, celebratory appearance.

EXCITING NEWS!

NEW service now being offered!

The Wild Bird Store in partnership with Andrew Barnes, now providing at home wild bird consulting service.

Specializing in helping you and your property become Wild Bird friendly for maximum results.

Services offered will include:

Bird feeder(s) recommendations for species focus and seed types

- Type(s) of seed and for which species it will be best suited
- Preferred location for maximum results
- Bird feeder accessories
- Hummingbird feeders and accessories

Nesting

- Nest box selection for native species—including all cavity nesting and platform species for Alberta
- Preferred location for nest boxes
- Maintenance tips
- Advice on how to deter invasive species (House sparrows and European starlings)

Watering needs

- Bird baths
- Heaters and heated baths
- Accessories including drippers and bubblers
- Location dos and donts
- Maintenance tips

Bat Houses/Chambers

- Location requirements
- Housing styles—including single vs multiple chambers

After each visit all discussion points and recommendations will be provided along with a 10% OFF coupon to be used at the Wild Bird Store on your next purchase.

PLEASE NOTE: 10% coupon is only valid for a one-time purchase and must be presented at time of purchase. In-store ONLY (excludes online)

For further information, pricing and scheduling, please contact

Andrew Barnes cell # (403) 923-8121 (call or text)

Email: birdsbeesyyc@gmail.com



Saturday Morning Bird Walks

With Jim St. Laurent

Jim's years of guiding bird walks has been instrumental in teaching "birders" how to get the most out of their birding excursions. Children 12 and older are most welcome as long as accompanied by an adult and have purchased a ticket through Eventbrite.ca

All participants on any bird walk must have purchased a ticket through Eventbrite.ca and present the ticket to Jim prior to the bird walk.

The weather plays a big part in bird walks and Jim reminds participants to dress anticipating weather changes and to carry water to keep hydrated.

Saturday December 10, 2022 CARBURN PARK

(9:00am meet in parking lot at 67 Riverpark Drive S.E.)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2022 WBS bird walks

Saturday January 14, 2023 SNOWY OWL PROWL

(9:00am meet in parking lot at rear of Wild Bird Store)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2023 WBS bird walks

Saturday January 28, 2023 GRIFFITH WOODS (Fish Creek Park)

(9:00am meet in parking lot 160 Discovery Ridge Blvd. S.W.)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2023 WBS bird walks



Christmas Traditions

Twelve Days of Christmas—Even though most hear the song between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, the Christian 12 days of Christmas, which spans the birth of Jesus and the visit of the Magi, actually take place December 25 to January 6.

The earliest version of the poem-turned song is thought to have been published in *Mirth With-out Mischief*, a children's book from 1780, with the modern version credited to English composer Frederic Austin who set the poem to music.

Each year the *PNC Christmas Price Index* totals up the total cost of the 12 gifts name in the song based on current markets. For 2021, everything from a partridge in a pear tree to 12 drummers drumming would run up a bill of \$41,205.58.

There was even a black and white movie made in 1955—if you can find it, watch it—priceless!





QUESTION: How can I deter house sparrows from visiting my feeders?

RESPONSE: The House sparrow is a highly aggressive and invasive bird species universally hated by the North American bird-loving community. The best way to discourage them from feeders is to offer the right foods. Cracked corn, wheat, oats, millet and most mixed seed offerings are a definite no-no.

Your best food offerings are safflower seeds, nyjer (or thistleseed), suet, peanuts and mixed nuts. If you wish to continue to offer sunflower seeds, do it in a feeder design that sways in the wind, as sparrows are more likely to get spooked by a moving feeder. House sparrows are also less likely to go after sunflower seeds in the shell because they take a lot more work to process. House sparrows do not like hanging upside-down nor do they like preformed bell-shaped seed offerings. Avoid suet with embedded treats. Keep in mind that House sparrows generally like to feed on the ground or on platform feeders, so keep spilled seed to a minimum. Perches shorter than 5/8 of an inch also help prevent House sparrows from perching on feeders. Some folks have successfully added hanging wires or ribbons to dangle from the tops of feeders.

Getting rid of any dusty, gravelly areas where House sparrows like to dust-bathe might make your yard less attractive to them. Discourage the little devils from breeding and roosting in your yard by eliminating any potential nesting cavities or wall ivy and keeping garage and shed doors closed when not in use.



DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D

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ABOUT DR. DAVID



David M. Bird is Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology and the former Director of the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University. As a past-president of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, a former board member with Birds Canada, a Fellow of both the American Ornithological Society and the International Ornithological Union, he has received several awards for his conservation and public education efforts. Dr. Bird is a regular columnist on birds for Bird Watcher's Digest and Canadian Wildlife magazines and is the author of several books and over 200 peer-reviewed scientific publications. He is the consultant editor for multiple editions of DK Canada's Birds of Canada, Birds of Eastern Canada, Birds of Western Canada, and Pocket Birds of Canada. To know more about him, visit www.askprofessorbird.com or email david.bird@mcgill.ca.

DONATIONS

Located at The Wild Bird Store (near the seed bins). We collect your cash as well as “wishlist” donations and arrange to deliver them to local wildlife organizations including Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation, Alberta Institute of Conversation and Ellis Bird Farm.

We ask for your support quarterly for each of these organizations.

This quarter for the months of December 2022 and January & February 2023, your donations will go to:



Thank you for your support

Alberta Institute of Conservation (AIWC)

<https://aiwc.ca>

ON CONSIGNMENT



LEICA 10x42 binoculars
Comes with both ocular and objective covers and strap

\$900.00 + GST
(Final sale)

DID YOU KNOW?

The Wild Bird Store offers the “Book Nook” as a gathering place for your next meeting. The room is for rent for \$50.00 +GST fee which includes the set-up of the chairs, video equipment, coffee, tea and water are available.

Please contact info@wildbirdstore.ca for more information or to reserve your spot



OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE

In Store or on the Seed Truck, social distancing is encouraged.

Update

Store hours will be returning to normal

Monday December 5, 2022

10:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Saturday



Shop in Store



Curbside Pick up

Phone your order in and pay for it at least 30 minutes prior to arriving at The Wild Bird Store for pick up. Park in the curbside parking stall outside the phone us at (403)640-2632 when you arrive, pop your trunk or hatch and leave the rest to us.



Home Delivery

Deliveries will still be made on Thursdays ONLY. Please phone the store at (403)640-2632 any day prior to 12:00noon on the Wednesday before your delivery; place and pay for your delivery. Please phone with your order as early as possible to avoid disappointment. If you have any special instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.



DID YOU KNOW? EVERY Tuesday is Senior's day. Those who are 60+ receive 10% off



Sorry! Excludes optics, books, cards & consignment items

Bird Seed Truck



CROWFOOT YMCA/ARENA

(corner of John Laurie & Nosehill Drive NW)

Every Wednesday 2:00pm to 5:30pm

To ensure you get you want, please have your order in by 5:00pm on

Tuesday and we will set it aside for you

Text us @ (403)701-4571 OR email us at orders@wildbirdstore.ca

Earn and redeem customer loyalty points on

Mobile Seed Truck

We also offer these alternatives

CURB SIDE PICK UP: phone, place and pay for your order at least 30 minutes prior to your arrival at The Wild Bird Store. Please pull into the curbside parking stall, pop your trunk/hatch, phone (403) 640-2632 to advise of your arrival and a team member will come out and load your vehicle with your receipts attached. Payment can be made by Visa, Mastercard or e-transfer (Sorry! No cash)

DELIVERY: Deliveries will still be made on Thursdays ONLY. Please phone the store at (403) 640-2632 any day prior to 12:00noon on the Wednesday before your delivery; place and pay for your delivery. Please phone with your order as early as possible to avoid disappointment. If you have any special instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.

We offer a discount if you return your seed bags (sorry—not the Mother Nature bags which we cannot re-use), suet ball containers, if you bring your own container to fill or use a bag from our re-cycle bin. This discount is in addition to any other discount offered.



Write a Google review on your experience at The Wild Bird Store, and as a thank-you, we will give you 100 customer loyalty points (\$5.00 value). To get a promo code, kindly email info@wildbirdstore.ca



(Please one Google review per customer)

Earn 200 customer loyalty points (\$10.00 value) by referring a friend, acquaintance or fellow birder. Please visit the store to get a promo code



No need for a card just give your phone number. You earn \$1.00 for every \$20.00 spent (sorry, excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items) and can be used in-store and on Mobile Seed Truck. As a loyalty member, our monthly promotional and in-store “specials” are automatically given at the cash register.



Combining our Seniors 10% discount with the loyalty program (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items.)



Discount for membership 10% discount for members of Fish Creek Park, AIWC, Priddis Golf Club, Nature Calgary, Sandy Cross Conservation, Springbank Garden Club and Calgary Horticultural Society. Must present valid membership card at time of purchase.



Discount for Military Members & Veterans 10% discount on purchases in-store or on Mobile Seed Truck (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items)





Remembrance Day Friday November 11, 2022 Sunny -5.5 degrees no wind

We never miss an opportunity to going birding together—even when fall migration is over and winter has settled in.

The day started out with little to see until we turned a corner and we were rewarded with the beginning of a day that was awesome! We have seen Grey partridge and Ring-necked pheasants at all times of the year, but this was the day of the “gamebirds.”

So learned something new—which I always appreciate. Grey partridge will burrow into the snow to conserve heat and to hide with just their heads visible, so I am not sure how many we missed seeing. Now that there is literally no leaf cover there is no where for them to hide. Even so, we saw a lot of Grey partridge and Ring-necked pheasants more than we have ever seen. Ravens and Magpies as usual, one American robin and flocks of Snow buntings flying. We also encountered a single Bald eagle and not a single hawk—very strange as it was a perfect day for hunting. We could hear Black-capped chickadees whenever we stopped and listened but with the advent of winter the tree stands are mostly silent.

Slim pickings for sure, but nevertheless it was a wonderful birding day and a great way to pay tribute to those who fought and continue to fight for our freedom and keep us safe. Thank you for your service!



Grey partridge burrowing in snow



Ring-necked pheasants



Snow buntings

Remember Water

Water is as important as food. Like any other living thing, a clean source of water is essential to wellbeing. Offering a birdbath during the winter season helps wild birds to easily find this valuable resource. This in turn helps them reserve energy for other activities such as keeping warm. If you live in an area where temperatures dip below freezing, consider a heated birdbath since its likely natural water forms are also frozen.



When temperatures dip below -22 degrees (especially with the wind chill), the Wild Bird Store recommends removing water from the birdbath and unplugging the unit until temperature warms up to above -20 degrees. This ensures that our feathered friends will not be exposed to water during freezing temperatures which can put them at risk of hypothermia.



When the extreme winter temperatures take effect and the snow is falling, have an inexpensive “backup” feeder clean and filled. This way when your existing feeder is empty you can simply replace it with the “backup” feeder.

Also remember to use high energy foods such as black-oil sunflower seeds in the shell or shelled, suet and peanut kernels.

Good day everyone. Here is a Blog by Birds Canada about Frank Lake IBA/ KBA. If you wish to show support in saving this area, please follow link to write the individual incharge of the approval process, Alberta Utiliti... See more



birdscanada.org
Alberta's Frank Lake is an ideal spot for birds – not a solar farm | Birds Canada | Oiseaux Canada

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Where you can see Snowy owls near Calgary:

Drive the north-south roads between Highway 564 and the Trans-Canada Highway, scanning fields, fenceposts and man-made Structures. The males are all white and not as common as the Females who have black stripes. They venture down from Alaska and can usually be seen near Calgary starting in the New Year.



Female



Male

Perched on a round bale of straw in a field



Nature Calgary and TD Friends of the Environment have produced maps to help you explore and learn Calgary's best and most unique birding hotspots. Encouraging diverse communities to celebrate the joy of birding and hope these maps will help to introduce a new generation of birders in our city.

The maps cover different birding areas within the city and are available in several languages.

Birding Carburn Park, Birding the Bowmont Natural Area, Birding at Elliston Park, Birding at St. Patrick's Island and Birding in Weaselhead Flats are available FREE at The Wild Bird Store.



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Phone: (403)640-2632

Web: wildbirdstore.ca

email: info@wildbirdstore.ca

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Monday through Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm

CLOSED Sundays and ALL Statutory holidays for Faith, Family & Friends

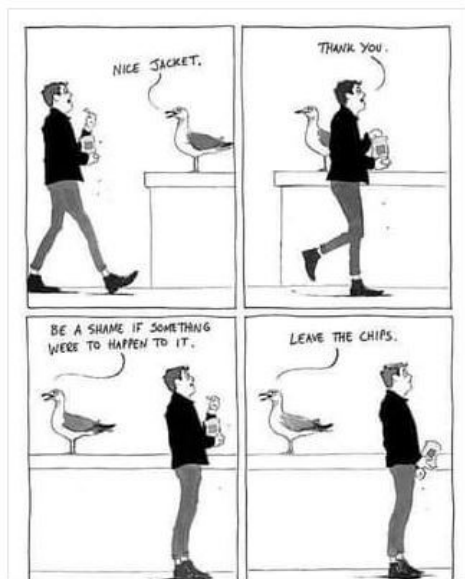
PLEASE NOTE: As of Monday December 5th The Wild Bird Store will once again be open on Mondays. We apologize for any inconvenience this disruption in store hours may have caused to our customers.

CHRISTMAS 2022 & NEW YEAR'S 2023 HOURS

- Saturday December 24 CLOSED
- Sunday December 25 CLOSED
- Monday December 26 CLOSED
- Tuesday December 27 10:00am to 5:00pm
- Saturday December 31 Closing at 2:00pm
- Sunday January 1, 2023 CLOSED
- Monday January 2, 2023 10:00am to 5:00pm



Go to YouTube, type in the search bar "The Wild Bird Store" to watch our videos and to help us become more visible. Be sure to click on "subscribe" before you leave the page.



The Wild Bird Store
Is the warranty & repair depot for:
Squirrel Buster® Bird Feeders
Aspects® Feeders
Droll Yankee® Bird Feeders

And the warranty depot for:
Leupold Binoculars & Spotting Scopes

DID YOU KNOW? EVERY Tuesday is Senior's day. Those who are 60+ receive 10% off

Sorry! Excludes optics, books, cards & consignment items

HAPPY BIRDING!