

Site Name:	Redwater
Site Type:	Natural Area
Status:	Order-in-council (OC)
Subtype:	Education
PASite ID (Map Ref #):	69
O.C. No. (Land Ref. Manual):	454/71
Site # (Parks Website):	431
Reserved Area:	0.00 ha. (0.00 ac.)
Designated Area:	1810.56 ha. (4473.89 ac.)
Total Area:	2200.00 ha. (5436.20 ac.)
Additional Protected Areas:	see PNT area
Lat/Long Co-ordinates:	53.923247402 N, -112.964332814 W
Natural Region:	Boreal
Natural Subregion(s):	Dry Mixedwood
2nd Natural Region:	
2nd Natural Subregion(s):	
IUCN Classification:	II
Operated By:	Parks Division
Info Phone:	780-960-8170
Steward(s) Aug2002:	Volunteer(s) 1
Steward(s) Aug2003:	Volunteer(s) 1
Steward(s) Dec2011:	yes
Petroleum & Natural Gas Surface Access Aug2002:	No Surface Access
Day Use Site(s):	Redwater
Recreation Activities:	Hiking - front country, OHV riding, Snowmobiling

Access:

Notes: Redwater Natural Area includes transverse, parabolic and barchan sand dunes. There are jack pine-lichen woodlands on dune crests and diverse wetlands, including black spruce-tamarack/sphagnum moss muskeg, sedge-dwarf shrub fens, and occasional open sloughs ringed by cattails, in dune depressions. Aspen-paper birch stands also rim wetlands.

The area has been used extensively for off-highway vehicle riding and snowmobiling, but this is permitted only on designated trails. Some sections have been heavily disturbed by petroleum and natural gas activity.

This site lies in the Boreal Forest Natural Region, Dry Mixedwood Sub-region. The Dry Mixedwood Sub-region is the only Boreal Forest sub-region that does not have excellent representation within Alberta's parks and protected areas network. There are still significant shortfalls in the glacial lakebed, ground moraine, sandplain and sand dune natural history themes. Listed in "Other Natural Areas" (Alberta Parks web site, 2012).

Field Trip to Redwater Natural Area Saturday June 18,2005

The Friends of Redwater Natural Area have agreed to host a SAPPA field trip on Saturday June 18, 2005. Please meet at the north staging area and parking lot at 10:00a.m. To get to Redwater Natural Area, take the Manning Freeway or highway 21 to Ft. Saskatchewan. Continue east on highway 15 to the junction of highway 830. Turn left and head north on highway 830 to highway 38. Turn left on highway 38, cross the Vinca Bridge and continue west until you see the sign for the Victoria Trail. Turn right onto

Victoria Trail and follow the road for approximately two miles to R.R. 205. Turn left onto R.R. 205 and head north approximately three miles to the staging area.

The Redwater Natural Area is a multi-use area that has had a high number of all-terrain vehicles utilizing the area. Consequently, the Friends of Redwater Natural Area have led a campaign to educate users on trail etiquette and permissible activities. Gains have been made and the Society will be happy to share these with you. This outing will definitely give you an opportunity to see the challenges Natural Area Stewards face in multi-use area. Be prepared to walk in deep sandy soil and spend approximately five hour in the outdoors.

(SAPAA Newsletter Apr 2005)

Summer field trip to Redwater Sandhills Natural Area, June 10

Four people joined Laura and Bruce Martin of the Friends of the Redwater Sandhills Natural Area at the north end of the OHV staging area. Access to the non-motorized area (which is less than a third of the natural area) is about 2 km along a private road off Victoria Trail. The Edmonton Orienteering Society was also having a meet there. There is quite a network of trails, so it pays to have a large-scale map (thanks to the orienteers!) or to have knowledgeable guides. We walked about a kilometre to check out a fence-line that forms a boundary between the motorized and non-motorized areas. Unfortunately the latter keeps being reduced because the OHV riders insist on access to certain trails. (We observed a fine stand of jack pine which should have been kept within the non-motorized zone.) The damage the OHVs have done to this very fragile sand dune complex is very extensive.

One of the botanical highlights was the presence of sand heather (*Hudsonia tomentosa*) in full flower. The distribution of this species is restricted to the sandhills habitats north of Edmonton, with the exception of the Athabasca Sandhills in the far northeast corner of the Province. It is extremely susceptible to disturbance, which is all the more reason to protect this area. Our thanks go to Laura and Bruce for showing us around and, more importantly, for continuing to be stewards, helping to make sure that some "protected area" remains within the Redwater Sandhills Natural Area.

(SAPAA Newsletter Sep 2006)

Images:



