



Once again the annual gathering of naturalists from across the country for the Canadian Nature Federation conference was a highly successful affair. Organized and hosted by the friendly and energetic Calgary Field Naturalists' Society, the event was held at the University of Calgary, July 2-6, 1982. This year's conference focussed on the resources and reserves of Alberta. A broad offering of field trips introduced visiting naturalists to the tremendous natural diversity to be found in Alberta. Mountains, grasslands, potholes, badlands, river valleys, aspen parklands and much much more - all were enthusiastically explored by the visitors, under the excellent guidance of local naturalists.

After having had a chance to see first-hand Alberta's tremendous natural endowments, everyone returned to Calgary for 2 days of conference sessions. These introduced us to an even more spectacular array of Alberta's special places, but also alerted us to the very grave pressures that threaten many of them.

Presentations were grouped into 4 sessions. The first session on stewardship covered aspects of industrial and recreational developments which are having an undesirable impact on the environment, and outlined some of the specific difficulties to be surmounted in developing and enforcing management schemes which will reduce environmental degradation.

A session on rivers helped us to appreciate the great beauty and enormity of Alberta's waterways, as well as their essentialness to all aspects of life in the Province. However, pressures on the river systems from pollution, damming, irrigation, flood control, and recreational demands are enormous. Sadly enough, it seems the efforts of conservationists are frequently ignored by government and business interests when it comes to river management.

Ecological reserves and natural areas offer hope for preservation of unique portions of the natural environment. Ongoing research seeks to identify and describe those areas most deserving of protection. Some headway is also being made in the acquisition and management of such areas.

Since the Rocky Mountains form such a special part of Alberta's heritage, an entire session was devoted to this region, its glacial history, flora and fauna, as well as the aesthetic experience of being in the high country.

In addition to field trips and conference sessions, the Calgary hosts kept everyone busy between times with displays, bookstore shopping, early morning bird walks, slide presentations, square dancing and a banquet. All in all the conference was a very enjoyable experience of Alberta, its people as well