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## LOCAL

### Meadowlark Festival returns to South Okanagan

By SCOTT TRUDEAU/Penticton Herald

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The Meadowlark Festival in the South Okanagan and Similkameen May 19 – 23 offers 90 events and the chance to convene with Mother Nature in all her splendour.

On Saturday join local author and bird expert Dick Cannings who will emcee the Meadowlark Festival Celebration Event from 6 – 9 p.m. at Linden Gardens. The casual affair replaces the banquet as the main social and fundraising event of the festival with proceeds benefiting the Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Alliance. Please note tickets must be purchased in advance.

Those in attendance will have the chance to purchase a ticket to win a signed, framed picture from Laurie Wilson Neis, this year's featured festival artist.

On May 19, international water advocate Maude Barlow from the Council of Canadians will be joined by a local panel of water experts is meeting in to discuss the topic, The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water.

Featured are Anna Warwick Sears, executive director of the Okanagan Basin Water Board, Stu Wells, Osoyoos mayor and member of the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society and Tom Siddon, recipient of the Okanagan Water Leadership Award.

The discussion happens from 7 - 10 p.m. at the Shatford Centre.

Tickets are \$10 with all proceeds benefiting the conservation alliance.

This year to increase its presence in the community the festival will set up a temporary venue beside the Penticton Wine and Visitor Information Centre.

Among the dozens of nature tours and events to choose from Thursday morning is the Eco-System Experience Tour from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and a Hiking Tour of the Skaha Conservation Area at the Skaha Bluffs from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Afternoon events include Smell the Roses from 1 – 4 p.m. and the Ecommunity Place Indigenous Culture and Riparian Tour from 2 – 4 p.m.

On Friday the Okanagan Cultural and Ecological Canoe Trip happens from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Vaseux Lake and the KVR History and Birding Cycling Tour with Cannings from 6:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. In the afternoon there's a Nature Photography Workshop from 1 – 5 p.m. and in the evening take in the free exhibit, Birds and Other Wild Neighbours in the Okanagan between 7 – 9 p.m.

On Saturday, Making a Splash, featuring the Vancouver Aquarium Aqua-Van happens from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. This family-oriented event is free and takes place beside the Wine

and Visitor Information Centre followed by the festival celebration starting at 6 p.m. at Linden Gardens.

On Sunday numerous hiking, horseback, bus and walking tours are also happening at various locations.

Visit the Similkameen Valley between 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. for, How Do Organic Farms Operate? From 8 – 10 a.m., enjoy Breakfast on the Lake with Award-Winning Author Allan Casey or take the Last chance Birding Tour at White Lake from 8 – 11 a.m.

For a detailed list of events, ticket prices for all events, availability and contact information visit [www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca](http://www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca) or stop by or call the office at 250-492-5275 Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from noon - 2 p.m. The office is located at 203 - 246 Martin St.

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