



SUMMER 2020

River Park Clean-up

Until we can get back on track with our group's park clean-up efforts, please help by removing any leftover dog feces you come across during your walk. Every bit contributes to create a pleasant and safe experience for all users.



UNSUBSCRIBE OPTION

If for any reason you no longer wish to receive communication, just let me know.

Candice



✉ riverparkoffleash@gmail.com

🌐 riverparkdogs.com

🐦 [@riverparkdogs](https://twitter.com/riverparkdogs)

📘 [riverparkdogs](https://www.facebook.com/riverparkdogs)



Safety in the Park

Hope everyone is staying well and keeping safe as we continue to adjust through stages of the pandemic.

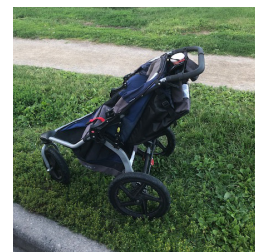
Many of us are so grateful to have River Park as our retreat and happy place during these uncertain times. When so many things in life seem unsettled and anxious, we can count on the positive experience this wonderful space provides for the dogs and us to relax, breathe, socialize, and feel happy and somewhat normal.

We have maintained continued access while other types of outdoor recreation closed down. Thanks to The City of Calgary for posting signs at all main entrances and high access areas to remind us to keep health in mind and maintain physical distancing. Take care everyone!



Lost and Found

On July 15, someone found a stroller in River Park and took it home for safekeeping. Inside was a harness and leash. To claim all items, please email LNTrimble@hotmail.com or text 403.710.6790, and identify the harness and leash.



Problematic Weeds

Weather conditions have been ideal for overgrown weeds on the east side of River Park again. The invasive weeds include: Crested Wheat Grass, Kentucky Blue Grass, Smooth Brome and thistle.

Long, thick weeds make it hard to find dog droppings (and at times, even the dog), and reduces the usable space during warm weather months for all of us.

If you're concerned about the conditions and appearance, please call 311 to voice your opinion and ask for it to be addressed.










Quality of Your Dog's Output is a Health Indicator

As caregivers for our dogs, we're pretty good at knowing when they're not feeling well. Usually we notice changes in behaviour, habits and energy level or lack of appetite.

Another health measure is the consistency of their poop. It's easy to see when picking up while walking in the neighbourhood or at the off-leash park but it's also a great idea to do a daily check

on the deposits in your yard. Here's a [great article](#) and chart from Purina to help measure output. If you find a trip to your veterinarian is necessary, this can help describe consistency.

Fecal Scoring Chart		
SCORE	SPECIMEN EXAMPLE	CHARACTERISTICS
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very hard and dry• Often expelled as individual pellets• Requires much effort to expel from body• Leaves no residue on ground when picked up
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Firm, but not hard, pliable• Segmented in appearance• Little or no residue on ground when picked up
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Log shaped, moist surface• Little or no visible segmentation• Leaves residue on ground, but holds firm when picked up
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very moist and soggy• Log shaped• Leaves residue and loses form when picked up
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very moist but has a distinct shape• Present in piles rather than logs• Leaves residue on ground and loses form when picked up
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has texture, but no defined shape• Present as piles or spots• Leaves residue on ground when picked up
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watery• No texture• Present in flat puddles

Bench Renewal Update

As mentioned in the February off-leash newsletter, the 10-year lease on our two benches in recognition of River Park dogs will expire early in 2021.

Parks Foundation states the cost to renew our benches is \$3500 each + GST (the original price we paid and the cost to arrange a new bench is \$4200 + GST so they're extending "a deal").

So far, interest in renewing has been quite low. Fewer than 15 people are willing to donate. As a result of job losses and uncertainty, we estimate it will be even harder to fundraise during a pandemic.

If we proceed, we feel it's more feasible to fundraise for one bench and then ask Parks Foundation to place both existing plaques on it.

Please [contact us](#) if you want to donate to renew our lease. If there's enough interest, we'll move forward with fundraising. If there's not enough interest, I'll inform Parks Foundation that we'll decline participation.



Vandalism in River Park... Again

Over the years, the park has been subjected to an unacceptable amount of vandalism including graffiti as well as physical damage to structures.

In 2020, we've found some of the fountain decorations were taken, some plants removed and several of the benches were tagged with graffiti. It's hard to understand why these things happen in the first place, and somehow it's more unfathomable during a pandemic. Lynn M and Brian C provided photos of two recent



Mosquitoes - Be Gone!



Unfortunately conditions have been perfect for high volumes of mosquitoes this year. They certainly enjoy feasting on people as well as dogs.

While many dogs have a thick coat to protect them, mosquitoes find short fur on noses is an easy access point. These pesky bugs pose risks such as heartworm, West Nile virus and allergic reactions for many dogs.

To safeguard our furry family members, keep their heartworm treatment up to date and avoid walking during peak times (dusk and dawn). Also ask your veterinarian about natural repellent products for dogs such as lemon eucalyptus oil, soybean oil, geranium oil, thyme, clove oil or neem oil. Check out [this article](#) with many natural options for dogs (including some that are homemade) suggested by [Dogs Naturally Magazine](#). As well, here's [a feature](#) from [Consumer Reports](#) about natural repellents for humans.



Paws for Thought

Some interesting finds to share with everyone this month:



[The Dodo](#) recently featured two labs that just love water — to view the fun videos, click their names: [Harper](#) and [Stevie](#)



An [interesting read](#) from [Science Magazine](#) about dogs using the earth's magnetic field



Researchers in [an article](#) from [Science Daily](#) suggest owner behaviour has a bigger impact on dog communication than previously thought



transgressions. Some of the graffiti throughout the park was too offensive to show.

Contact 311 to report vandalism and they will make the necessary arrangements to rectify it. Please don't take it upon yourself to do repairs, as previous attempts have caused more issues for City crews such as added costs for replacement.

Thank you for your consideration to keep watch over the welfare of the park.

