

2024 NORTHERN PRAIRIE STAR PARTY (NPSP)
Hosted by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Edmonton Centre (RASC EC)
Tuesday, September 3 to Sunday, September 8, 2024

SCHEDULE, GENERAL INFORMATION AND GROUND RULES

(as of July 7, 2024 Version 7, visit website at: <https://edmontonrasc.com/northern-prairie-star-party/> for updates)

REGISTERING FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT: Please register ONLINE and IN ADVANCE at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1APNhPORKjObs90dwNN3uUC71xOvXdDLgOJSb6M60FKw/viewform?pli=1&pli=1&edit_requested=true This will assist with planning. Payment is due via e-transfer no later than Thursday, August 15.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION: If you are camping overnight, please enter by the main campground entrance and proceed to your allocated site (if unsure, check in at the Event Tent). If you are not camping (evening viewing and/or Saturday program only), please enter via the North Gate off TWP road 492 (see map posted on NPSP website and on registration page) located between Group Site 9 and the Event Tent. Proceed to the Event Tent to check in – this is the location of Saturday's afternoon presentations.

OBSERVING CERTIFICATES: NPSP participants are welcome to complete one or more **Observing Lists** and/or the **mini-bimarathon** during the star party. Get your list(s) at the Event Tent. Hand in your list by noon on Sunday to be checked and certified.

BLACK NUGGET LAKE OBSERVATORY BNLO Viewing & Tour: BNLO volunteers will open the 32-inch Unyk-Drew Telescope for viewing by attendees on Friday and Saturday evenings, with a tour scheduled for Saturday morning.

QUIET UNTIL NOON: For all days of the star party, please stay quiet until noon in the north part of the campground.

STAR PARTY SCHEDULE

Tuesday through Thursday:

There is no organized program. Attendees are encouraged to mix and mingle – the Event Tent will be erected on Wednesday and provides a great gathering place along with the existing Cook Shelter.

Friday, September 6

1 to 2:30 PM: - *Ingredients for an Unforgettable Sky Talk* workshop with Dr. Brian Martin and Dave Mussell

3 to 4 PM *Green Laser Pointer Certification Session* by Clayton Knoll

EVENING: BNLO tours and viewing through the 32-inch Unyk-Drew Telescope (weather permitting)

Saturday, September 7

MORNING: 10 to 11:30 AM - Swap and Shop table, at the Event Tent (time to be determined)

MORNING: Black Nugget Lake Observatory Tour (time to be determined)

11:30 AM to 1:20 PM: Solar observing and telescope set up and use demonstrations (in and around the Event Tent)

1:30 PM: PRESENTATION: Dr. Martin Connors, Professor of Astronomy, Mathematics, and Physics, Athabasca University – *One Hundred Years Ago, Galaxies did not Exist*

2:40 PM: PRESENTATION: Margaret Ridder, Ph.D. student studying astrophysics at the University of Alberta – *The life, death, and undeath of our Sun and other stars*

4 PM: Dr. Christa van Laerhoven, RASC Astronomy Ambassador, planetary scientist (Ph.D. from Dept of Planetary Sciences, University of Arizona) and Vice President of RASC Yukon Centre – *The History of the Solar System*

5:30 ~ 7 PM: BBQ (burgers, hot dogs, condiments, beverages (NOT potluck)), grand prizes & NPSP group photo

EVENING: BNLO tours and viewing through the 32-inch Unyk-Drew Telescope (weather permitting)

Sunday, September 8

Noon: deadline to drop off completed Observing Lists at the Registration Table next to the Event Tent.

Noon: If leaving the campsite, check out time is 12 noon.

STAR PARTY EVENINGS (Sunset & Astronomical Twilight Ends) – Source: www.timeanddate.com

Sunset	8:12 PM (Tuesday September 3)	to	8:02 PM (Saturday September 7)
Astronomical Twilight Ends	10:21 PM (Tuesday September 3)	to	10:09 PM (Saturday September 7)

STAR PARTY MORNINGS (Astronomical Twilight Begins & Sunrise) - Stay quiet until noon in the north part of the campground.

Astronomical Twilight Begins	4:36 AM (Wednesday September 4)	to	4:46 AM (Sunday September 8)
Sunrise	6:45 AM (Tuesday September 3)	to	6:52 AM (Sunday September 8)

NPSP DATES for 2025 & 2026! September 16 to 21, 2025; September 8 to 13, 2026

Please review the ground rules on the back of this page.

2024 NORTHERN PRAIRIE STAR PARTY GROUND RULES

Our basic ground rule is the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

For the North Campground (sites 58 - 75 & Group Site 9), the following restrictions apply:

1) LIGHTING RESTRICTIONS – NO EXTRANEIOUS LIGHTS!

- **FLASHLIGHT (preferred) or HEADLAMP with a low-level RED LED light** –Be careful not to shine your light directly in another person's eyes. Don't use a lantern or a flash while taking nighttime photos.
- **SPECIAL LIGHT RESTRICTIONS FOR GROUP SITE 9, the location of the Black Nugget Lake Observatory**– For those visiting or camping in this area, no white lights allowed and low-level red lights only, if absolutely necessary. All RV/vehicles windows must be blocked. The use of green laser pointers is strictly forbidden in the BNLO area.
- **SHEILD ELECTRONIC DEVICE MONITORS** - Please shield all electronic device monitors (laptops, televisions, cellphones, tablets, etc.). Shielding can be achieved by various means: red film like RUBYLITH, cellophane or acrylic plastic sheeting; switching APPS to night vision mode; or placing devices in a stray-light reducing enclosure.
- **VEHICLE HEADLIGHTS** - Driving around the main observing/camping fields after dark is permitted only in an emergency. Headlights should remain off or should be covered by red filter material. **(IF IT'S A TRUE EMERGENCY - JUST GO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE HEADLIGHTS.)**
- **OTHER VEHICLE LIGHTS** - Interior dome or vehicle lights must be disabled or colored red. Don't forget your trunk light!
- **TENT, CAMPER & MOTORHOME LIGHTS** - Camper, trailer or motorhome running lights, porch lights and interior lights must be disabled or covered with red film. Also, cover windows to prevent light escaping into observing areas.
- **VEHICLES of NON-CAMPING ATTENDEES** - The vehicles of non-camping attendees will be parked in a special area, with headlights pointing away from the viewing area so they may leave after dark without interfering with dark sky observing.
- **NO CAMPFIRES NEAR THE OBSERVING AREAS** - Not only are campfires a source of unwanted light; their smoke and heat interfere with viewing, as well as coating optical surfaces with unwanted soot.

2) GREEN LASER POINTER USE RESTRICTIONS

- **GREEN LASER POINTERS** – Green Laser Pointers are not to be used at the 2024 NPSP except by RASC members that have been trained and certified to use them, and specifically designated for this event.

3) FOR ALL SITES USED BY 2024 NPSP ATTENDEES

- **VEHICLES - DRIVE YOUR VEHICLE SLOWLY** to minimize the amount of dust that is disturbed.
- **THE NORTH COOK SHELTER MAY BE USED** for gathering and refreshments.
- **PETS** - We discourage bringing your pets to NPSP. However, if you must bring a pet, it must always be leashed and controlled. Remember, we'll all be walking around in the dark. NPSP reserves the right to restrict pets from certain areas.
- **ALCOHOL** - Most astronomers discourage its use because of the effect it has on the sensitivity of eyes. NPSP will not tolerate the abuse of alcohol, the use of illegal substances or resulting behavior that is inconsistent with community standards.
- **PERSONAL CONDUCT** - This is a family event. Loud, aggressive and/or profane speech and behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. **Please refer to the final item in this list.**
- **KEEP THE SOUND DOWN - BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER PARTICIPANTS**
 - **QUIET UNTIL NOON** - Those observing the night skies may stay up until after 5 AM and sleep until noon, so please ensure that you and other members of your party including pets are as quiet as possible during this period.
 - **SPEAK QUIETLY** if you observe well into the morning. Remember that, for various reasons, many others don't observe into the early hours and are sleeping.
 - **TURN DOWN THE VOLUME** – Listen to the natural soundscape around you.
- **THEFTS** - Thefts have occurred at other star parties all over North America. Protect your property. We will assist the local authorities in the prosecution of anyone caught stealing.
- **LIABILITY** - The RASC and the organizers of 2024 NPSP accept NO responsibility or liability for damage or injury to your equipment or you.
- **WARNING** - The RASC and the organizers of 2024 NPSP and/or the operators of Black Nugget Lake Campground reserve the right to eject any person not willing to comply with these standards. **Please also refer to Black Nugget Lake Campground rules.** Leave your campsite tidy and free of garbage.