

# 2022 Camping Journal

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, July 19	<b>Site:</b> 98	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#1	<b>Weather:</b> Mixed sun and showers	<b>Temp:</b> 21	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun AB

Finally, we are out camping! Except for the year when we didn't get out at all, this is the latest we have started. Lots of things conspired to delay this trip: medical appointments, the jacks and slides all quit, weeks of rain and my 2-week trip in the car to visit family and friends in BC.

Gasoline is still stupidly expensive at \$1.70 per litre. A lot cheaper than it was but still way more than the \$1 per litre it should be. So we are here at Wabamun in July instead of Carson-Pegasus in May. We had an uneventful drive here and now that the second front shock absorber has been installed, the ride and handling are improved.

We checked in at 2pm. They asked us to wait until 3pm to occupy our site so they could check and tidy it. That's still an hour earlier than the official check-in time. We parked at the day use area and ate lunch then Camper and I walked to the boat launch to watch the circus there. No major disasters like vehicles in the lake or boats crashing into the docks or shore. Still fun to watch boats come and go.



*Wabamun Prov Park Campground*

The campsite was neat and tidy as expected. The jacks went down and the slides went out just like they are supposed to so I am pleased. It took a half hour to get all set up and then I stretched out in my chair in the sunshine and promptly fell asleep. The first of several rain showers woke me up a short time later so I went inside the RV to finish my nap.

We had our usual BBQ burgers for dinner. It cooled off quite a bit with another shower or two, so we decided no fire tonight. We did go for a drive around the campground. As usual for July there are kids everywhere having fun. We got home around 9pm when most of the kids were also heading home. We went to bed at a reasonable hour.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, July 20	<b>Site:</b> 98	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#2	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 22	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun AB

Today was a regular camping day filled with eating and a nap or two.

A quiet morning turned into a quiet afternoon so we decided to go magnet fishing at the day use and boat launch area. There were wall to wall people in the day use area and dozens of kids on one of the docks so I fished the other two. I found a bottle cap on the first one and a fishing lure at the second. I also found a chain but couldn't get the other end loose so left it there.

I soon clicked on something big – it actually made a noise! I got all excited hoping I had found a bike or an outboard motor. Nope. Turns out it was a steel pipe about 30" in diameter stuck in the mud at a 45-degree angle. The magnet grabbed hold of the pipe and I couldn't budge it. Tess and a random young woman helped me to not move it. I was afraid my magnet was gone but as the water cleared, I could see it about 18" below the surface.

I emptied my pockets and went in the water to get it. The bottom mud was very soft and I immediately sank past my knees. My flip-flops are still down there as there was no way to get them out. Of course my flailing around in the mud clouded the water again so I felt along the rope for my magnet and found it still firmly attached to the pipe. I suspect the pipe may be a fire pit from the campground which I think are about 4 feet long. Whatever it is, it refused to budge. Because the pipe is round, the flat magnet had an edge not touching the pipe. I got some fingers on the exposed edge and put everything I had into a couple of sharp tugs and it popped off. Woo Hoo! My \$125 magnet is safe.

My feet were not safe. Now I had no flip-flops and had to walk back to the day use area across very hot manufactured decking boards and asphalt before reaching the grass. From there it was a long walk across a gravel parking lot to the car and there was no way my flip-flop-less tootsies were going to make it. Tess brought the car to me and we returned to camp.

We met our next-door neighbours Randy & Brenda (I think) from Spruce Grove. They have a nice 5<sup>th</sup> wheel and Ram diesel truck. They are here with their grandkids.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, July 21	<b>Site:</b> 98	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#3	<b>Weather:</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun AB

The temperature dropped to the mid teens last night, perfect for sleeping. I was up at 8:00 and Tess was up by 9:30 and after a leisurely breakfast, we were ready to face the day. We talked about going back to the day use area to people watch but somehow never made it.

I did check the playground across the street with my metal detector and it was pretty clean. I found a toy car which I left on the bench for a kid to find, a US penny, a very small metal button cover (or something) and a used up sparkler. Everything except the toy car went into the trash. I spent some time organizing my fishing tackle box and, of course, had a nap in the sunshine. I love my afternoon naps in the sun!

I spent a half hour chatting with the owner of the other Class A rig in this loop. The usual guy topics around toads, satellite TV and early retirement. Then I think I had another nap.

Dinner came around and we had a nice fire – the first of the year. We even scored some free firewood from neighbours that left some behind when they checked out this afternoon.

It was a beautiful red sunset tonight so tomorrow should be a nice day if the old sailor’s adage holds true. We will pull out at 2:00 and make the 40-minute drive home still on the top half of the gas tank. A good first trip of the year.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday, Aug 14, 2022	<b>Site:</b> 4	<b>Campground:</b> Devon Lion’s
#4	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 24	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Devon AB

We decided a couple of days ago to come out for a few days and Devon is the first place that had a vacancy. Devon is about 15kms west of the Edmonton International Airport and not on the flight path. The campground is on the bank of the North Saskatchewan River beside a golf course. The main roads are paved although our loop is gravel. The sites are close together but level. There is 30-amp power, water, and sewer which is a nice treat. There are large trees behind us providing shade.

The trip from home took just over an hour so it is farther away than Wabamun Prov Park. There is lots to see and do in the area so we won’t be bored. Camper has a haircut scheduled for Tuesday, so I’ll run back to Morinville for that. There are no TV channels here so I’ll have to remember to bring the portable hard drive with the movies on it in case we are stuck inside one evening.



*Lions Campground at Devon AB*

Once we finally found our site and then got set up, we decided to head the Century Mile casino at the airport for dinner and to try our luck. Well, our luck was bad. Nothing new for me, of course, but rare for Tess. After burning through our modest budgets, we decided to go home for dinner instead. Just as well, they lock the entry gate at 11:00pm so we wouldn't have been able to party until the wee hours anyway.

We got home about 8:30, ate and did the usual camping style of nothing. Nice.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, Aug 15, 2022	<b>Site:</b> 4	<b>Campground:</b> Devon Lion's
#5	<b>Weather:</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 30	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Devon AB

I was up bright and early to a beautiful, sunny day. There is wifi here so I spent the morning working on the family tree once I had done the previous day's journal entry. Around 1:00 Tess took Camper for a short walk and she came back with our neighbours, Norm and Patty Bartel. They are retired teacher and principal from Stony Plain. Like us, they are sticking close to home because of high fuel prices. They have a nice 2005 34' Dolphin they have owned for 5 years.

Camper and I went for a long walk along the river and found a place to get down the bank if we want to try our luck fishing later. The water is surprisingly clear which is probably a good thing since it is the source of the metro Edmonton area's drinking water. Round trip was probably about 1.5km which is too far for Camper so as soon as we got back he went to sleep for several hours. He is 14 now and that walk was too much for him.

In the afternoon we went on a beer run up the hill to Devon. It is a very tidy and clean little town with all the services you might need, including a small hospital. Cold beer supply replenished, we BBQ'd dinner and relaxed. Later, I took Camper for his evening walk and I stopped off for a moment to chat with our neighbours and wound up staying for a couple of cold ones.

We both had nice long showers before bed. They are a treat when camping because normally we only carry enough water for a week or so and have to conserve. Not this time!

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, Aug 16, 2022	<b>Site:</b> 4	<b>Campground:</b> Devon Lion's
#6	<b>Weather:</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 28	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Devon AB

Another beautiful, sunny, and hot day. First order of business was to go home, dropping Camper off at the groomer on the way. I watered Tess' plants, picked up a case of pop and the portable hard drive just in case we want to watch a movie. Then I got some nuggets at McDonalds and by the time I was finished, Camper was ready to go. The trip back to Devon was uneventful.

I managed to burn a couple of hours in the afternoon with a nap. Nothing new there. Tess was outside playing or reading on her tablet. Our neighbours came over for a drink and we had a nice visit. They left at dinner time and we had chili for dinner.

The radio said the sun will set at 9:01pm tonight so the nights are getting longer. Another month and it will be feeling like fall even though it is hot and muggy now.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, Aug 17, 2022	<b>Site:</b> 4	<b>Campground:</b> Devon Lion's
#7	<b>Weather:</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 28	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Devon AB

I slept I until almost 9am then sat at the computer doing yesterday's log and tidying up some family tree data. Tess rolled out of bed about 11 and after a leisurely start to the day, we were ready to face the world about 1:00pm. This is what camping when you are retired is supposed to be like!

We decided to go to River Cree Casino to play and to take advantage of their half price food until 5:00pm. It took about 15 minutes to get there, the same as the casino at the airport we visited earlier in the week. We had a good meal, including a beer for me, and the bill was less than \$20. On top of that bargain, I left the place up \$340 – woo hoo!

On the way back, the road pavement patching crew was done for the day so traffic flowed well until we came upon an RCMP cruiser with its lights on. This is a narrow road so everyone slowed down to gawk at the two vehicles in the ditch. Looks like someone ran a stop sign and got T-Boned.

Once home, we invited Norm and Patty over for a fire. We had a good visit, a couple of drinks, and packed it in about 11:30 – late for us. We are getting old, sigh. Before going in, while waiting for the fire to die down, I packed up everything except the carpet. After drowning the remains of the fire, I went in too. Back home tomorrow.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wed Sept 7, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#8	<b>Weather:</b> mixed	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Back on the road again for what may be our last trip of the season. We hope to catch our limit of rainbow trout over the next several days. The 2+ hour drive here was uneventful. I did notice the gas mileage seems to have improved now that the catalytic converters have been replaced with a straight pipe and we have fresh fuel. The dash trip computer isn't terribly accurate, so I'll reserve judgement until we fuel up when we get back home.

About 1/3 of the campsites are occupied, pretty normal for after Labour Day camping. We picked site H178 on the bottom road of the peninsula because it is well protected from the winds. We have stayed here several times in the past. We went fishing for an hour and, other than realizing Tess needs a new spinning reel, nothing happened. No bites, no fish. Maybe tomorrow.

Back at camp we BBQ'd burgers, dogs, and Kubi. By the time we finished eating, it was dark. No fire tonight as we are both tired. My legs were very jumpy, so I took my meds. I also had a shot of Sambuca and, combined with my bedtime CBD, I expect to sleep like a log.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thurs Sept 8, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
<b>#9</b>	<b>Weather:</b> light showers, cloudy	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt



*Site H178 at Carson-Pegasus Prov Park*

I did indeed sleep like a log. I was up at the crack of 9am feeling pretty chipper. My legs are not jumping but my back is more sore than usual so, of course, more meds for that. I've tried both mattresses we have at home plus the one here in Seven and my back is still sore in the mornings, so it is not the mattress I'm sleeping on.

Queen Elizabeth II died this morning and I am sad. I saw her in person in Vancouver, maybe 40 years ago. She has been our Queen for as much of my life as I can remember. The day before she died she welcomed the new British Prime Minister. Her 15<sup>th</sup> time to do that. Duty first to the end. Prince, now King, Charles has some very big shoes to fill.

We had planned to get some fishing in today but those plans got pushed aside in favour of a trip to town for a new fishing reel for Tess and naps, Also, \$5 chicken wings at the casino. My good deal of the day was a new rod, reel and 15 pieces of assorted tackle at Can Tire for \$32 which I paid for with points. Free is always a good deal.

Since we were at the casino for wings, I thought I'd try my luck at the tables. No blackjack tables were open so I tried Spanish 21. Slightly different rules and the tens are removed from the decks so it changes the %ages. It took me a half hour to lose my \$100 so it could have been a lot worse at \$15 per hand. I think I will stick to regular blackjack from now on. It took me about the same length of time to lose my last \$100 on the slots. I hate casinos.

Tess was playing the slots as usual and slowly lost her budget, she had \$15 left and tried another machine that was calling to her. On her 3<sup>rd</sup> spin she won \$470, recouping all our losses for the night including the wings and beer with a little extra left over. We promptly left!

Tomorrow we shall catch fish!

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Fri Sept 9, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#10	<b>Weather:</b> sunny breaks	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

I was sitting in the co-pilot's seat working on the computer cleaning up family tree data when a squirrel ran up the tree about a metre outside the window. He didn't notice me and kept going up the spruce tree. A few minutes later spruce cones started raining down on the roof and awning. They are surprisingly noisy but won't do any damage, so I just let him do his thing to get ready for the long, cold winter ahead.

This morning the peninsula is nearly full. There was a 43' bus style motorhome parked in the lot where the day fishers park as I don't think there is a vacant site big enough for it. After bacon for breakfast and general tidying up, we gathered up our fishing gear and walked to the seawall.

There were several fishers already there and most claimed a fish or two. We found a couple of empty benches and got to work. Tess caught 3 fish and I caught 2 over the next four hours. My back was very sore this afternoon and when Tess hooked one of her fish, I tried to hustle over to her with the net to land it but she was too impatient to wait and yanked it out of the lake with the fishing line nearly hitting me in the head with a trout! The neighbours got a chuckle but Tess got her fish. Then they stopped biting, as fish do; nobody was bringing in anything.



*Carson-Pegasus Sunset*

By now, we were nearly ready for dinner so we headed back. Because I was nearly crippled with back pain, Tess got out the wood and lit a nice fire. She heated up some chili for me and ate one of her just caught trout. After dinner we finished the fire, had hot showers then settled down to watch a forgettable movie before bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sat Sept 10, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#11	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

We woke up to sunshine and a full campground, or at least this loop is full. The weather forecast included a frost warning for last night, but I didn't see any on the ground. Not surprising as we are right beside the lake. Sweater weather is predicted for today. Since it is Saturday and the loop is full, I am expecting lots of fishers on the seawall today.

We got out fishing by about 1:00 and it was very slow. I had only one nibble and Tess landed one fish by 7:00pm when we finally gave up. It was a beautiful day for sitting on the seawall chatting with other fishers. No wind, sunny skies and the temperature was perfect. September days don't get any better than this one.

We had a nice fire back at camp and went in around 9:00pm, ate dinner and watched another movie. Even though we only caught one fish, it was a great day.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sun Sept 11, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#12	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 24	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another nearly perfect fall day with only occasional wind gusts. It was the perfect temperature and the sky was clear and blue. We were up at the usual time and late in the morning, Tess took Camper for a walk. They checked the fishers at the seawall and there were lots of fish coming in. In a bit, we walked over to the seawall to fish too.

Our timing was bad as the bite was over by the time we got there. I had one bite and landed no fish. Tess didn't even get a bite. The man fishing beside us was using the same bait and was at the same depth and he caught 8 fish in a couple of hours! Turns out Manuel is also from the Philippines and every time Tess went over to chat with him, he caught another fish! He generously gave her 4 rainbows so we didn't go home empty handed. Nice guy!

I BBQ'd dinner and Tess cleaned her fish. We only have enough firewood for one more fire before I have to get out the propane fire bowl so we decided to wait until tomorrow. We were settled inside by 9:00pm and watched a decent shoot-em-up movie before bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Mon Sept 12, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#13	<b>Weather:</b> sunny breaks	<b>Temp:</b> 19	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another busy day. The web site says good fishing should be 2:30-4:30 today so around noon I took my magnet and went to the boat launch to see what I could find. Aside from the usual assortment of nails, screws, washers and broken or rusty fishing hooks, I found 3 dimes, a nickel, two fishing knives, and a couple of lures. My best one-day haul ever!





*Magnet Fishing Treasure From Carson Lake*

I got back home around 2:30 and decided to rest my back for a bit before joining Tess on the seawall. When I got there, she was the only one fishing. She and camper were shivering in the wind and the lake was choppy. I put Camper inside my sweater because he was so cold. We each got a bite and Tess landed one fish. About a half hour later we had had enough and came home.

There was no wind on this side of the peninsula and a fire quickly got us all warmed up. There was not a lot of wood left as we burned it all. If we want a fire tonight, it will be propane powered. The fire was done about 8:00 as it was nearing sunset so we went in for the evening.

A couple of OK movies then a hot shower and it was time for bed. Tomorrow will be our last full day here so we are nearly done for the season.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday Sept 13, 2022	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#14	<b>Weather:</b> sunny breaks	<b>Temp:</b> 21	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

It started to rain pretty heavily last night. The sound and increased humidity always means a good sleep and I was up before 8:00 ready for my coffee and toast. About noon we were ready to face the world. Tess and Camper went fishing while I got out my metal detector and went to the playground. I figured after the long weekend, there should be plenty of treasure there. Wrong. I found only a small fragment of a light chain link and an old rusty screw. The screw could have hurt a kid so it made the effort worthwhile but I had hoped for more.

After doing the dishes and tidying up I sat down to read in the sunshine. Tess and Camper came home bout 3:00 and after a snack, Tess went back to fish. Camper decided to stay with me so we cuddled and had a nap. About 4:30 we went down to try our luck fishing. We got a visit by a mink (I think) looking to steal a fish for his dinner. He was brown and very pretty. Camper scared him off.

Tess brought her one fish home at 5:00 while I stayed another hour without a single bite. Eventually, I went home to Kraft Dinner for supper as there is no other food left and Tess didn't want to go out to eat. Since we burned the last of the firewood last night, I fired up the propane firepit. It is nice to have a fire but it isn't the same as burning wood.

We went in about 9:00 and watched a good movie before bed. Back home tomorrow.

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Only 14 nights out this year, far fewer than our average. Next year we will get out more although we still haven't figured out if we will take a big trip somewhere. A lot depends on the price of fuel.

