



# HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Friday, October 28th • Saturday, October 29th

The fun begins on Friday night with an Owl Prowl, that is sure to be a **HOOT!**

- 🎃 Spookiest Campsite Contest 🎃 Skeletons
- 🎃 Costume Contest 🎃 Trick-or-Treat 🎃 Pumpkin Carving Contest
- 🎃 Marshmallows 🎃 Wolf Howl

Join us at the Visitor Centre on Saturday where a Park Naturalist will guide you through a collection of animal skeletons. Mew Lake Campground will feature "pick of the patch" pumpkin carving, spookiest campsite and best costume contests. Everyone is invited to participate in trick-or-treating among the campsites on Saturday night, and later, for a howling good time at the nearby Old Airfield with a Wolf Howl.

## ALGONQUIN VISITOR CENTRE HOURS OF OPERATION

Open Daily  
9 am - 7 pm  
until October 10, 2016

Open Daily  
9 am - 5 pm  
October 11 to 23, 2016

Winter hours  
Weekends 9 am - 5 pm (full services)  
Weekdays 9 am - 4 pm (limited services)  
October 24 to December 23, 2016  
January 2 to April 21, 2017 (Closed December 24-26, 2016)



Holidays  
Open Daily 9 am - 5 pm (full services)  
Christmas (December 27 to January 1, 2017)  
Family Day (February 20), March Break (March 11-19)  
Easter Weekend (April 14-17, 2017)

Algonquin Logging Museum - Open Daily 9 am to 5 pm until October 16, 2016  
The 1.3 km trail with outdoor exhibits is available year-round.

## ALGONQUIN PARK IS BLACK BEAR COUNTRY

For most Park visitors, seeing a Black Bear in its natural environment is an exciting experience. However, the excitement diminishes when that Black Bear is rummaging through your cooler or tent, searching for food. As visitors camping in bear country, you have a responsibility to follow the bear rules and to know what to do if you encounter a bear.



PETER FERGLISON



### Rules in Bear Country

Each year, Park staff spend hundreds of hours dealing with problem bears – help our staff by following the rules when camping in bear country.

#### 1 Never feed or approach bears

The Black Bear is an intelligent animal, with the ability to remember food locations and can quickly become accustomed to human sources of food. People who feed bears create problems for everyone.

#### 2 Store food out of reach of bears

In campgrounds and picnic areas, store all food (including pet food) inside the closed trunk of your vehicle, if possible. Do not store food, cooking utensils or fragrant items, such as soap, toothpaste, or shaving cream in your tent.

When camping in the backcountry, put all food in a pack and hang it well off the ground – at least four metres off the ground and two metres away from the tree trunk – and away from the vicinity of your tent.

#### 3 Keep your campsite clean

In campgrounds, reduce the availability of garbage, and consequently garbage odours, by depositing your sealed bags of garbage daily in the bear-proof waste containers. Clean your picnic table and barbecue after every use, and clean up any spilled grease.

When camping in the backcountry, burn any food scraps and fat drippings thoroughly in a hot fire. Any remaining garbage should be placed in your litter bag and suspended along with the food. To eliminate food odours, dishes should be washed immediately after each meal (preferably well away from your campsite).

**Charges can be laid for leaving out items which may serve as attractants to any wildlife.**



The Visitor Centre offers **FREE WiFi** internet access ...and while there, don't forget to check out The Friends of Algonquin Park Bookstore and Nature Shop, and the Sunday Creek Café.

algonquinpark.on.ca



Algonquin

# The Raven

A Natural and Cultural History Digest

Vol. 57, No. 4 • October 1, 2016

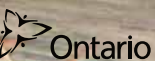
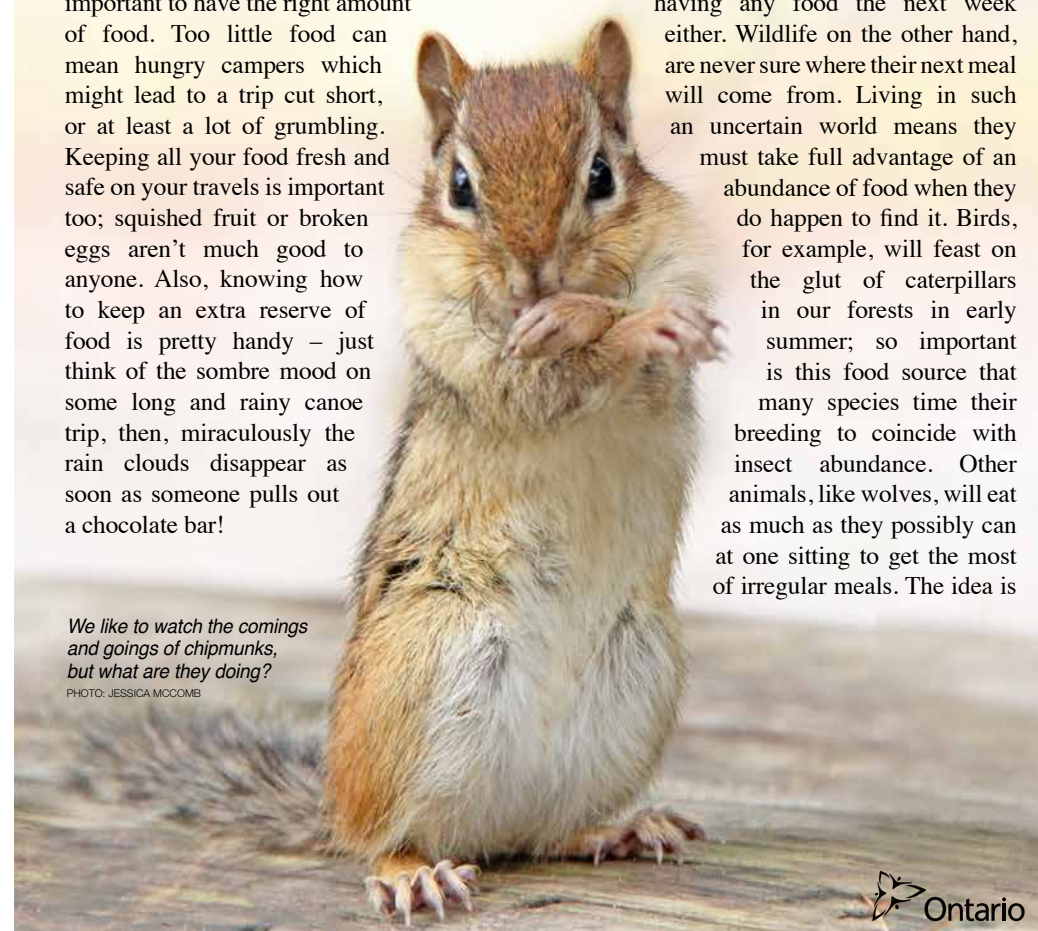
## Cheeky Chipmunks

by David LeGros

Whether you are packing snacks for an afternoon picnic or planning the meals for a two-week canoe trip, everyone knows it is important to have the right amount of food. Too little food can mean hungry campers which might lead to a trip cut short, or at least a lot of grumbling. Keeping all your food fresh and safe on your travels is important too; squished fruit or broken eggs aren't much good to anyone. Also, knowing how to keep an extra reserve of food is pretty handy – just think of the sombre mood on some long and rainy canoe trip, then, miraculously the rain clouds disappear as soon as someone pulls out a chocolate bar!

We usually get most of our food from the grocery store, and forage there on a regular basis. We don't worry about the store not having any food the next week either. Wildlife on the other hand, are never sure where their next meal will come from. Living in such an uncertain world means they must take full advantage of an abundance of food when they do happen to find it. Birds, for example, will feast on the glut of caterpillars in our forests in early summer; so important is this food source that many species time their breeding to coincide with insect abundance. Other animals, like wolves, will eat as much as they possibly can at one sitting to get the most of irregular meals. The idea is

We like to watch the comings and goings of chipmunks, but what are they doing?  
PHOTO: JESSICA MCCOMB





During the summer, chipmunks put food into many small caches spread throughout their territory. This is known as scatter-hoardings.

to eat as much as you can when you can get it—food is rarely abundant for long, hard times are often in the near future, and it is beneficial to be fat for winter.

Only a few animals prepare for the harsh winter ahead by storing food. Unlike humans, most animals do not have a stable “home” or storehouse to hide food in. After all, depending on the type of food, it may spoil or another creature may steal it. A few animals in the Algonquin woods do collect food for the winter and at this time of year they will be busy gathering and storing what they find. One creature that not only stores food, but hoards it, is the Eastern Chipmunk.

The Eastern Chipmunk is perhaps the most frequently seen mammal by Algonquin Park visitors—and with good reason. They may be very common in good habitat, such as the hardwood forests of western Algonquin, ranging from 10 to 20 chipmunks per hectare (Algonquin Park is roughly 700 000 hectares, meaning there are an estimated 7 to 14 million Eastern Chipmunks!).

The summer diet of our striped neighbors is made up of leaves, buds, flowers and fruit, and perhaps to our surprise, a regular helping of meat in the form of insects and invertebrates, small frogs and snakes and even bird nestlings and eggs. By the fall, they have shifted their diet to seeds, nuts, acorns, maple keys and even mushrooms. Chipmunks eat seasonally,

and have been since before it was trendy for humans to do so. The shift in diet not only reflects the seasonal availability of food, but also the shelf life of the food items. Eastern Chipmunks must store food for the winter.

Unlike many mammals, the Eastern Chipmunk does not pack on a thick layer of fat in preparation for the winter. Instead, the chipmunk gathers vast amounts of food to see it through the winter.

These cheeky rodents are rarely concerned with our presence, and some even become quite bold, so it is easy to watch them. You may have seen a chipmunk scurry down a small hole at the edge of the trail and you may have wondered what is down there. A chipmunk’s burrow is not just a simple hole in the ground—it can be a rather elaborate tunnel that serves many functions. The tunnel usually begins with a straight drop of nearly a metre down, then levels out. From here, there may be several chambers, including an enlarged sleeping area lined with shredded leaves, several dead end tunnels for escape, debris storage areas and even a latrine. All told a chipmunk’s burrow may be up to 10 m long! Perhaps the most impressive part of a chipmunk’s burrow is its one, or more, food storage chambers. It is here that the chipmunk will store all the food it has busily gathered in late summer and fall. However, before it can store anything there, it must first gather the food.

The Eastern Chipmunk uses two strategies to gather food for the upcoming winter: scatter-hoarding and larder-hoarding. Scatter-hoarding, typically done in the summer, involves the chipmunk going out and collecting food from all over its territory, which is roughly a few hundred square metres, and storing the food in small caches here and



Chipmunks gather a variety of seeds and nuts, including the seeds inside the cones of conifers.

there. By the fall, all the small caches will have been transported to one place—the larder-ward! This is the stockpiling of food in one central location, usually the food storage chamber in the burrow. No matter which technique chipmunks use to cache food, they

By fall, all small caches are combined in one big caches in the chipmunks burrow. This is known as larder-hoarding.



gather food like seeds, nuts and berries in their cheek pouches, which they fill to comical proportions and transport their food back to their cache.

Chipmunks have adapted to winter conditions by avoiding them altogether. For them, it makes more sense to avoid the cold temperatures and lack of food by spending the winter in the safety of the burrow. Chipmunks enter a state of torpor by early winter, so it is uncommon to see a chipmunk after December. The chipmunk will enter its sleeping chamber, curl up and settle in for the winter. The name of the game is saving energy. Just like humans do when not at home, we turn the furnace down—there is no sense in heating a home that we are not using. In the chipmunk’s case, it is turning down its metabolism and reducing its body

temperature. During the active season, the chipmunk’s body temperature is around 38°C, about the same as a human, but during the winter it may drop to 5-7°C! You are probably thinking by now, if the chipmunk lowers its metabolism and sleeps away the winter,

why does it need to compulsively gather food? The Eastern Chipmunk is not a true hibernator, and unlike its big neighbour, the Black Bear, it does not accumulate big fat reserves. This means that about once a week during the winter, the chipmunk must turn its metabolism back up (and warm its body up too) and eat some of the carefully gathered and stored food. These infrequent meals provide enough energy for the week ahead, in their torpid state.

Chipmunks spend the entire winter like this—torpor regularly interrupted by snacking! The high quality food, like seeds and nuts, sustains them and does not spoil through the winter. They will eventually emerge in the spring, usually when there is a little bare ground and some food becomes available, starting the quest all over again. The average date of the first chipmunk observation around the Algonquin Visitor Centre is mid-March.

As you explore the Park and see the multitude of chipmunks scurrying through the leaf litter, remember they are on an important mission—one of finding enough food to survive the winter. Imagine how busy you might be trying to organize an entire winter’s worth of food in your basement! No wonder the chipmunk gathers and hoards with such enthusiasm; the alternative is pretty bleak!

## Wintering Words

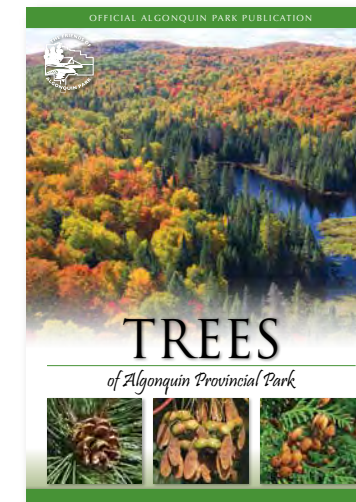
**TORPOR** – Following environmental cues such as cooling temperatures and reduced day light, the animal responds by reducing its body temperature and becoming inactive. Torpor is usually for short periods, where the animal rouses to feed, and then returns to a state of torpor.

**HIBERNATION** – A prolonged and uninterrupted period of torpor. The animal does not awaken easily or regularly.

*Examples of animals that hibernate: Skunks, bees, snakes, and groundhogs to name a few—but bears and bats are the most well-known.*

## DO NOT FEED THE WILDLIFE!

The chipmunks and other wild animals in Algonquin are perfectly capable of finding all the food they need on their own. Despite their willingness to eat human food, it is of low quality to them – so don’t feed them! Wildlife may become bold and unafraid of humans, increasing their risk of being killed by pets, vehicles or some other human-caused incident.



### Publications

#### Trees of Algonquin Provincial Park

Trees are by far the largest living things in the Park. With a little practice, you can quickly become adept at identifying all of Algonquin’s trees, and this will open the door to understanding the fascinating forest ecology of Algonquin.

ONLY \$4.95

Available at the Algonquin Visitor Centre Bookstore & Nature Shop, East Gate and West Gate, or online at [algonquinpark.on.ca](http://algonquinpark.on.ca)