

**Topic title:** “40 years of canoe tripping: What I have learned so far....I think”

**Description:**

Our guest speaker, Glen Hooper, has been canoe tripping for 40 years, much of it solo through Canada’s arctic, subarctic and boreal forest. As a solo tripper, Glen has plenty of time to think on his typical 30-40 day remote expeditions, do photography, get himself into trouble, and so far he has gotten himself out of trouble and remained in one piece, ...and reasonably sane (...he says!). Glen is a professional wildlife ecologist in his working life, and with his camera he interprets the landscape filtered through an ecologist’s eye. Another filter Glen will be using is time, reflecting on what he has learned after 40 years...he thinks.... In his presentation, Glen will be sharing common themes of his exploration of Canada’s northern landscape by canoe – the themes that have risen to the top and continue to endure in every trip, such as the ecology and geology of the landscape, the history, and the human challenges of living and travelling solo on the Boreal Shield and Barrenlands.

**Bio:**

Glen Hooper was born and raised in southern Ontario by parents who were non-paddlers. For some reason out of the blue, his parents sent him to canoe camp when he was young, and Glen says that was one of the best things they ever did for him. Canoe tripping became central to Glen’s life. Glen graduated from University of Guelph with a B.Sc. specializing in wildlife ecology, and he has since spent his working career in this field of study and resource management. While living in southern Ontario, Glen was always looking north. In 1997 Glen moved north to Thunder Bay, where he lives and works today as a wildlife biologist for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. In his job, Glen works to look after the interests of wildlife and the health of ecosystems in northwestern Ontario, which he says is a heavy responsibility, but a responsibility which he considers a honour and privilege to be entrusted with - a career he has always wanted.

Glen’s canoe tripping career has evolved to become specialized in long, remote canoe trips, preferably of a month or longer. He is fortunate to have a career where he can negotiate extended leaves to permit these long trips. Glen also trains in open boat whitewater paddling which builds skills for big water trips. Glen’s solo tripping résumé includes trips on the Coppermine, Burnside, Elk & Thelon, Dubawnt and Taltson rivers in the arctic and subarctics; and tours through Wabakimi, Woodland Caribou, St. Raphael and Algonquin provincial parks, as well as travels on Crown land routes in southern and northern Ontario. Group trip highlights include Ontario’s Missinaibi River, Manitoba’s Seal River, and Quebec’s Nottaway River.

In addition to summer paddling adventures, for the past 10 years Glen has been active in traditional winter camping, hauling toboggan by ski and snowshoe, and enjoying living in the deep cold using the traditional skills of fire in both canvas tents plus woodstove, or open fire camping style. Glen says that he now has serious dilemmas for how to divide his leisure time between summer and winter - travel the soft water by canoe, or the hard water by ski and snowshoe.