



## Over 1800 Participants at Canadian Birkie 2023 exceeds Past Five Years

### Enjoy Virtual Birkie (February 13-27) and New Moon Birkie (February 18) Adventures

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Photo: [JanStudios.com](https://www.janstudios.com)

#### February 13, 2023:

Over 1800 participants to date in the 2023 Canadian Birkie Ski Festival has exceeded participation over the past five years, says Dave Cooper, President, Canadian Birkebeiner Society.

"Over 1,150 skied in the Birkie Saturday Long Start and Short Start events and there were over 230 participants in the Barnebirkie or children's Birkie on February 12 at Hawrelak Park in Edmonton."

"It was wonderful meeting up with old and new friends in the ambiance of the Woodvale Facility and Golf Clubhouse and enjoying the performance of the Vohon Ukrainian Dance Ensemble," Cooper said.

The Canadian Birkebeiner Society is accepting donations together with the Ukrainian Canada Congress in support of Ukrainians currently residing in Alberta because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Donations can be made online at [www.uccab.ca](http://www.uccab.ca).

#### Want more Canadian Birkie Adventures?

##### Join Us for the Virtual Canadian Birkie, February 13-27, 2023, \$20

"The Virtual Birkie allows us to connect with people from around the world and North America in our shared love of cross-country skiing," says Canadian Birkie Marketing Chair, Delianne Meenhorst. "It's so valuable for those who live in a place where an in-person event is not possible.

"For some people, the Virtual Birkie is their favourite event, because they can choose the day and more favourable weather conditions. We love hearing about their experiences on our social media sites."

When you participate in the Canadian Birkie virtually, you can classic ski, skate ski, snowshoe, skate, or skijor. If the snow gods aren't shining down on your part of the planet, you can roller-ski, cycle, run or walk. Choose your day and Birkie distance: 2, 4, 8, 13, 31 or 55 kilometres. Also pick your pace and your place! Access the Virtual Canadian Birkie facebook page at: Virtual Canadian Birkie - Canadian Birkebeiner Society to learn more.

Groups and organizations are encouraged to enlist their family, friends and organizations for the Most KM Group Award. For details, go to: <https://canadianbirkie.com/virtual-birkie/> Participants can post their photos at <https://canadianbirkie.com/photo-contest/> and tag them on Facebook @CdnBirkie.com/photo-contest/, on Twitter @canadianbirkie and/or on Instagram @canadianbirkie. They can also join our Virtual Canadian Birkie Facebook Group.

#### Missed the Full Moon Birkie? Experience New Moon Birkie on February, 18, 2023.

"The only source of light will be the faint glow from the stars since you will be well away from vehicle lights, street lamps or house lights," says event organizer Peter Kershaw. "Located in the Beaver Hills Biosphere, the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area is the ideal location to observe stars, planets, meteorites, even the International Space Station.

"With clear skies and no moon, the Milky Way and the rest of the firmament should be visible from horizon to horizon. We might even get lucky and have an aurora borealis display. However, with no moonlight, headlights are even more essential on the trail."

#### Event Details: New Moon Birkie, February 18, 2023, 6 pm to 10 pm, \$15

Follow the lure of a starlit, Lost Lake Trail to Meadow Hut and back. **Headlights are required as there will be no full moon.** Distance is up to 12km return from the Waskahegan Staging Area, in Blackfoot Cooking Lake Public Recreation Area. <https://canadianbirkie.com/full-moon-birkie/>.



#### What You Should Know

The Canadian Birkebeiner Society volunteers carefully monitor participants and weather conditions. Participants must register in advance. Participants must check in and out at the Waskahegan Staging Area shelter, ski with a buddy and have a functioning head lamp.

While skiing, stick to the right-hand track, as others may be travelling downhill on their return lap. Since the return trip is the same as the route out, participants may turn around at any point. At approximately 3 km along the trail, there will be a manned open fire. The heated Meadow Shelter at 5.5km will provide hot drinks and the chance for a short break before returning to Waskahegan Staging Area. The total return ski is up to 12 km return.

Dress warmly in layers that can be shed or added to regulate body temperature. Carry spare foot, hand and headwear and water or a hot drink in a backpack. If weather or snow conditions are inappropriate for skiing, the Society may cancel the event or offer the alternative of a 4 km night walk for safety reasons.

#### Plan Ahead for Next Year

It helps to get some instruction if you are planning to ski one of the long-distance Birkie courses. This can be accessed through local cross country ski clubs under the auspices of Nordiq Alberta, the governing body for cross country skiing in Alberta. For information about ski clubs and outdoor resources in Alberta, go to: <https://nordiqalberta.ca/find-a-club/> The Canadian Birkebeiner Society also offers training tailored to the preparing to ski the Canadian Birkie at: CanadianBirkie.com.

Visit our blog at for real-life stories about Birkie preparations, training and more at: <https://canadianbirkie.com/blog/>

#### Media Contacts

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