

Lions, tigers greet skiers

By Roy Downs
Cross-country skiers are seeing more than squirrels and blue jays along the trails at one of the area's newest cross-country ski operations this winter. At African Lion Safari



and Game Farm, skiers are more apt to run across a lion, tiger, moose, elk, deer, buffalo or cheetah.

It's perfectly safe, say Safari officials. The animals are on the other side of the fence from the eight miles of groomed ski trails surrounding the Safari's six animal enclosures. And the skiing is no charge.

Don Dailley, manager of the game farm on Highway 8 near Rockton, said he wanted to do something to improve winter attendance at Safari-land, so he investigated merging the animal operation with some type of outdoor winter recreation activity.

Cross-country skiing was the answer, due to its current popularity. Mr. Dailley hired experts to design three trails, ranging from an easy beginner trail through an intermediate level course, up to an expert trail for the skier who wants something more difficult or challenging. The easy

trail is three and a half kilometres, the longer course runs 10 km.

Skiers should be able to see many of the Safari animals from the trails, but binoculars are advised and cameras are more than welcome. All the North American animals roam outdoors daily and they are joined by lions, tigers and cheetahs which have adapted well to Canadian winter conditions.

"It's quite a thrill, to ski 10 feet away from an elk or a moose," said Mr. Dailley.

Skiing is free—there is absolutely no charge for using the trails. An equipment rental concession operated by Milton Sports and Cambridge Sports offers 150 pairs of skis, and a complete package—skis, poles, bindings and boots—costs \$6.

Instruction sessions may be offered later, depending on demand.

Picnic tables are placed along the trails

and the cafeteria features skiers' luncheons, hot mulled wine, hot cider for the children and daily entertainment. And a Trading Post is open for skiers wanting to warm their toes.

Ponds at Safari-land are frozen solid and free skating is an added bonus. But you may have to skate around a friendly seal or two—they roam freely about the grounds.

During the winter months, skiers are welcome weekends and holidays only, 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. After March 1 the Safari is open daily 12 noon to 4.30 p.m. plus 9 to 4.30 weekends and holidays.

After skiing, many visitors drive their cars through the animal park, or hop the Safari bus for a guided tour. Admission to the animal farm is \$3 for adults, \$1.50 for children and youths aged 3 to 17.

Safari-land is on Highway 8 (north of Hwy. 5 and south of Hwy. 401) between Hamilton and Cambridge.



YOU CAN "TALK TO THE ANIMALS" while you ski cross-country at African Lion Safari and Game Farm this winter. Some of the trails go right past the animal enclosures. The Carr family from Cambridge—Gordon, wife Judy, daughter Joanne and son Andrew—stopped along

the trail to admire the elk in the North American compound on a recent Sunday afternoon outing. The Safari charges admission if you drive through in your car, but the skiing is free along 8 km of groomed trails.

(Champion photos by Roy Downs)

THE SKI SHOP at African Lion Safari and Game Farm offers 150 sets of equipment (boots, poles and skis rent for a modest \$6 per set) in the introductory season of cross-country skiing at the popular tourist attraction. Manager Steve Dabner helps beginners Jacquie Dayman of Troy and Loanda Kindt of Branchton to get fitted up properly. Skiing is free, the only cost is the ski rental.



WHERE ELSE can you enjoy a winter picnic and chat with nearby elk and other wild animals, but at African Lion Safari and Game Farm, Highway 8, Rockton? Janice Fox took a rest while cross-country skiing there on the weekend, to make friends with a friendly herd of elk. The new ski trails at Safari-land run past several of the wild animal compounds.

—Today, Jan. 24, is Halton, a good day to quit smoking. The Halton Council on Smoking is sponsor of the occasion.

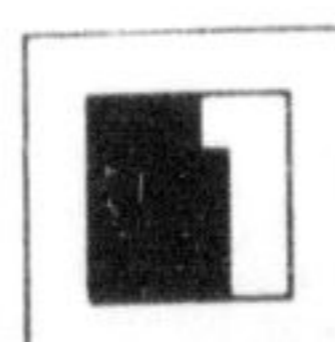


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LIVING WITH ARTHRITIS A PROGRAM FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

The Arthritis Society is sponsoring a series of meetings — "LIVING WITH ARTHRITIS". These meetings are open to anyone — especially patients and their families. Topics discussed will range from the medical aspects of arthritis to diet and quackery.

The meetings will be held on four consecutive Wednesdays (Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14 and Feb. 21) at the Casa Loma Campus of George Brown College. The meetings will run from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

There is a registration fee of \$5 which covers all four meetings. To register or for further information, call The Arthritis Society at 967-1414.

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