



Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

C/o Secretary, 203-9018 208th Street, Langley, BC, V1M 2Y8

www.langleyfieldnaturalists.org

e-mail: langleyfieldnaturalists@shaw.ca

Newsletter

June 2015

South Langley Trail New Section on 8th avenue between 256th and 264th Streets



South Langley Trail

Photo: Bob Puls

The morning of Wednesday April 15th dawned sunny, but cool, and I had nothing on my calendar - how did that happen!? So it seemed a good time to check out the new trail, that the Back Country Horsemen have recently completed, as the last link between the Campbell Valley and Aldergrove Regional Parks. On with the hiking boots, grab the walking stick and camera and off I go down 256th Street to 8th Avenue.

On the way in I was birding and this is when I realized my binoculars were on the dining room table! Nevertheless I listed 21 species by the time I reached the end of this trail section at 264th Street. The trail is nicely gravelled all the way, with wooded sections interspersed by stream valleys crossed by a couple of brand new bridges, and a variety of open and closed habitat.

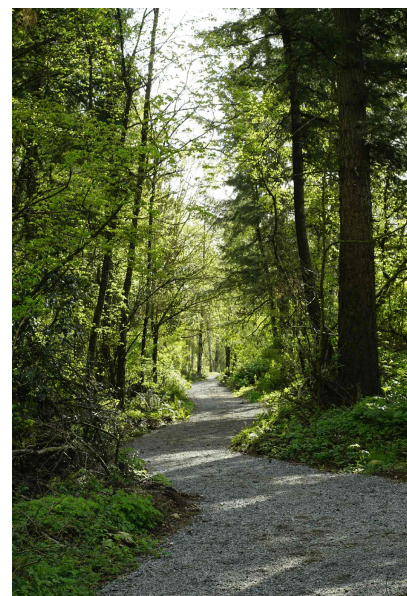
Upon photographing the trail, I discovered that I had my 50mm macro lens on board instead of the 18-200mm I normally carry. I must have been in a real hurry! The Common

Yellowthroats were calling everywhere near the streams and ponds and I recorded at least 10. I saw several Yellow-rumped Warblers, and probably encountered others I could not identify as I discovered my iPod with bird songs was still by my computer in the office. I always forget something, but three items on one trip is a sure sign of aging!

American Robins and Song Sparrows were calling constantly and a Barred Owl flew past and landed in a tree nearby - no telephoto lens! Red-tailed Hawks circled, a Merlin flew past and a couple of noisy Pileated Woodpeckers added to the enjoyment.

On the return trip I jotted down the flowers I saw and was quite pleased that I could remember the names of 40 species; just the Vanilla Leaf produced a senior moment and I had to look it up when I got home. A nice two-hour stroll the Naturalists might enjoy on an early morning or evening walk.

Bob Puls



South Langley Trail

Photo: Bob Puls

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2013-2014 DIRECTORS

President: Bob Puls
604-856-7534 ~ bob@puls.ca

Vice President: Sharon McVeigh
604-308-6975 ~ bcbirder@gmail.com

Past President: Jude Grass
604-538-8774 ~ judegrass@shaw.ca

Secretary: Joan Taylor
604-868 6417 ~ lfnsecretary@shaw.ca

Treasurer: Ian Taylor
604-868 0107 ~ ist0909@shaw.ca

Conservation: Bob Puls
604-856-7534 ~ bob@puls.ca

Membership:
& Newsletter: Sheila Puls
604-604-856-7534 ~ sheila@puls.ca

Education: Anthea Farr
604-576-7731 ~ anthea.bombus@gmail.com

Programmes: Jude Grass
604-538-8774 ~ judegrass@shaw.ca

Field Trips: Anne Gosse
604-888-1787 ~ corkie1@shaw.ca

Publicity: Sylvia Anderson
604-534-8419 ~ ssanders@telus.net

FBCN Director: Kathy Masse
604-513-8927 ~ wmasse@telus.net

Webmaster: Lisa Dreves/Joan Taylor

REPRESENTATIVES & CONVENORS

Historian & Librarian: Toots Tucker
604-532-6398 ~ llyod@telus.net

Meeting Greeters: Tessie Copeman / Rebecca Tin Tun

Refreshments: Cecily Isler / Ursula Kernig
604-514-9697 ~ pcangus@telus.net

Forslund-Watson: Ryan Usenik
604-530-3257 ~ jrusenik@telus.net

Parks & Environment (City): Lisa Dreves
604-532-0081 ~ lisabob2@yahoo.com

Campbell Valley Park Association: Jude Grass

Derby Reach Brae Island: Anne Gosse

Young Naturalists Club: Anthea Farr
604-576-7731 ~ YNCNicomekl@gmail.com

Member Participation Committee: Joanne Rosenthal
604-455-0116 ~ jrrose77@yahoo.com

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month
from September to June, starting at 7.15 pm
at the Langley Community Music School,
4899 207 St. Langley
Executive meetings are held
on the first Wednesday of each month Sept - June
at the LEPS office or at Executive members' homes.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Has May seemed like a crazy busy month, or is it just me?

The weather finally improved so that the vegetable garden could be planted, the sheep finally had plenty of grass to eat and the birds started nesting in abundance. Of course this meant mowing the lawns as well.

I have already filled out 22 bird nesting records for the Nest Monitoring Program and still have to monitor most of them. Then there was the wonderful AGM of BC Nature on Salt Spring Island, which will be reported in detail in this edition of the Newsletter, where we got to explore new territory and listen to terrific speakers on a variety of subjects.

This was preceded by some of our members visiting Tofino for the Spring camp, and followed for others by a three day trip to Merritt, birding and botanizing. We logged just over 100 species of birds on this safari including three Burrowing Owls, a Prairie Falcon, Calliope Hummingbirds and several Wilson's Phalarope, 'Lifers' for many of us.

Then back home to find my neighbour had cut his hay and was expecting me to bale it for him - this I did yesterday, which was good timing as now it is raining again.

Next general meeting is the Langley Field Naturalists AGM, so it remains to be seen who will write the next president's report. In the meantime many thanks to all of you who have supported the LFN so well over the past 7 years of my presidency. The club has been fun, effective and educational for me and so many others.

Bob Puls

GRANT NARROWS PARK & PITT POLDER
ECOLOGICAL RESERVE/PITT-ADDINGTON
MARSH WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA.
APRIL 24TH 2015



Sandhill Crane

Photo: John Gordon

The long lonely road in to Pitt Polder Park is bordered by uncultivated, remote and empty, wild-looking habitat - fabulous for wildlife. A healthy looking coyote paced our car and then disappeared. We met our leader John by the side of the road, taking pictures of a lone Sandhill Crane before we reached the parking lot. At the parking lot, nine hardy participants followed our leader up the wooded triangle to the viewing tower.

Even though the day was dark and cloudy we heard many Common Yellowthroats and Marsh Wrens and we spotted White-crowned Sparrows, Red-winged Blackbirds, Varied Thrush, Spotted Towhees, and several Rufous Hummingbirds. Lots of Tree Swallows were flying about. John pointed out a Flycatcher; however the Flycatcher was not singing. We watched an Osprey and two Bald Eagles having an aerial fight over the Osprey's fish - the Osprey finally lost. We also had a great sighting of a Merlin sitting above us, plus a Coopers Hawk speeding by. The Ospreys were nesting on the river pilings.

Our day ended up with 33 species of birds and a rain storm on the way back to our cars. Our thanks to John Gordon for leading our group to this bountiful birding area. Also a thanks to Tom for recording our finds.

Anne Gosse

**DECEPTION PASS STATE PARK
SPRING FLOWERS
APRIL 15TH, 2015**

Nine BC naturalists joined leader Elvina Stewart on the annual outing to search for the many early spring flowers in Deception Pass State Park. Under sunny skies we parked at Bowman Beach and then hiked over the rocky scenic cliff trail to Rosario Beach and onto the wonderful grassy flower-filled open cliff faces above the water.

Along the way we came across several Calypso Orchids, Spring Gold, Rock Crest, Orange Paintbrush, and lots of Starflower. We watched Tree Swallows swooping near the Rosario pier, Bushtits, Sparrows, and spotted two Oyster Catchers and four beautiful Harlequin Ducks on the rocky islets off shore. A lovely Horned Grebe was displaying to several females. On the grassy bluffs we searched for and found the usual Chocolate Lilies, Purple Camus, Death Camus plus several other tiny flower species such as Blue-eyed Mary, Filaree, Nodding Onion, Veronica and tiny shore Lupine. After



Deception Pass

Photo: Anne Gosse

our picnic lunch we travelled over to the sandy shoreline, past Lottie Bay and onto Lighthouse Point. There were many sightings of duck species in the bay plus several Harbour Seals and Sea Lions. On Lighthouse Point we found Fawn Lilies, Chocolate Lilies, Purple & White Death Camus, Larkspur, Spring Gold scattered along these lovely grassy bluffs along with wonderful views of Deception Pass bridge. A colourful carpet of pink Sea Blush greeted us at Cranberry Lake. Our exhilarating day ended with 32 species of birds, and numerous species of wild flowers.

Anne Gosse

TWO BIRD SURVEY REPORTS:

First, I want to say a big thank you to all the participants in both surveys, thank you for your time and for volunteering. (especially newbie Caroline McIsaac who bravely participated and reported as a new birder)

THE PURPLE MARTIN WATCH SURVEY



Purple Martin boxes

Photo: Anne Gosse

Several people have walked out to the very tip of Brae Island and reported back. Unfortunately there are still no Purple Martins sighted. The Purple Martin boxes were installed three years ago in hopes of encouraging the declining population of Purple Martins back along the Fraser River. Purple Martins have been declining and they are good insect eaters for our Langley riverside parks. Our last survey reported boxes no.5, no.2, and no.3, on the tip of the point pilings - had Tree Swallows nesting in them and boxes no.1 and no.4 had nesting Starlings. The other boxes further around the corner down river to the right showed no activity. However, Barn Swallows, Violet-green Swallows and nesting Geese families were seen around the point.

DRBIPA VIEWING PLATFORM BIRD SURVEY

The survey members are seeing and hearing Sandhill Cranes on nearly every visit. Josh and Lin Inman recently heard two Barred Owls, two Virginia Rails, a Sora Rail and lots of warblers and woodpeckers plus Sandhill Cranes and lots of Wood Ducks. Anthea Farr and Corey Bunnell managed to get two good pictures of Sandhill Cranes. One morning while sitting by the bog I heard a Western Screech Owl call. In early spring the bog was full of Marsh Wrens calling. This demonstrates what rare and special places



One of two Sandhill Cranes

Photo: Corey Bunnell

bogs are.

Anne Gosse

BLUE HERON RESERVE APRIL 11TH, 2015

Eight members plus Margaret Holford's two



Birding at the Heronry

Photo: Anne Gosse

delightful grand-daughters joined Gareth Pugh at the Blue Heron Reserve in Chilliwack. We walked along the dike into a cold west wind with a little light rain which thankfully did not last long. We had good views of a pair of Downy Woodpeckers and a Northern Flicker at the entrance to the Reserve while a large number of swallows performed their aerobatics above us and Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Mergansers and Starlings flew overhead. There were very few birds in the slough alongside the dike but Common Merganser and Mallard were spotted as we approached the heronry where we were told 135 nests have been counted so far this spring. Using the scopes we had very good views of the birds, many of which were already incubating their eggs. We also saw a Bald Eagle sitting on its nest on the edge of the heronry, a symbiotic relationship whereby the

eagle keeps all other predators away in return for some of the heron chicks to feed it's own young. As we walked further along the dike we could hear Common Yellowthroats singing around us and Tom Wildeboer spotted five Greater Yellowlegs in a muddy field among the dead stalks of last year's corn.

At this point the slough widens out and several species of duck were easily viewed here, including two pairs of Wood Ducks, always a lovely sighting. As we walked through the woods back towards the Nature Centre, we stopped on the riverbank hoping to see a Spotted Sandpiper but could only find three female Common Goldeneye feeding in the swift current and a few more Yellowlegs. Tom got a glimpse of mink as it ran into the undergrowth, but otherwise the woods were very quiet until we reached the lake where several species of ducks and a pair of Pied-billed Grebes were resting while a kingfisher flew past.

The main spectacle, however, was a large flock of swallows which were feeding on the midges, so we had good views of Barn, Tree, Rough-winged and Violet-greens, a great opportunity to be able to compare them at quite close range. From there we followed the trail back to the Centre where we ate lunch at the picnic tables while watching a variety of birds around the feeders.

After lunch we finished the day by walking out to the blind at the far end of the lake. On the way we heard two Wilson's Warblers singing on either side of the trail but not much else of note. When we arrived at the blind we were very lucky to see an otter swimming towards us; then it disappeared into the bushes but soon reappeared in the company of another otter and we were privileged to see them playing in the water very close to us before they swam away up the lake. A fitting end to a great trip. 42 species.

Gareth Pugh

PS: We saw a Mink, a Beaver, and two River Otters! Wow! Also we saw nest building, flying in and out, sitting on eggs and we watched for "egg turning" in this large colony (197 nests!) Thanks Gareth for leading us all!

Al Grass

GEORGE C. REIFEL MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY, DELTA SATURDAY MARCH 28TH 2015



At Reifel Sanctuary

Photo: Anne Gosse

Ten keen, eager naturalists joined our leader Al to welcome back any early spring migrants and to see what we could discover on this lovely morning. In the parking lot we heard the Sandhill Cranes. Near the entrance, we found one lonely baby Black-crowned Night-Heron, counted several different sparrow species around the front feeders and searched for the Harris Sparrow - with no luck. We spotted many species of waterfowl on the various sanctuary waterways. On the dyke trail we greeted one Saw-whet Owl, found a Bushtit nest and its owner, plus two Red-breasted Nuthatches. We had great views of a Bewick's Wren at the first blind - along with Golden-crowned Kinglets and one Yellow Warbler.

At the viewing tower we scoped flocks of Black-bellied Plovers along the shoreline plus Snow Geese and a few Yellowlegs. Along the outer dyke path we heard a Sora Rail calling and watched a Northern Harrier in flight. Our day ended with a fantastic count of 56 different species! Wow! Lunch was eaten in the warming hut while chatting over our day. Then, as we drove along the Sanctuary slough, we watched a River Otter swimming around and then across the channel. Another great day outside - with several great finds, with great sunny weather, and the best yet with great birding friends! Our thanks to Al for leading our happy group.

Anne Gosse

NORTHERN SLOUGHS CHILLIWACK TO CHEHALIS FLATS MARCH 21ST 2015



Trumpeter Swans

Photo: Ian Kakebeeke

Our "birding drive" from Mission to the Chehalis Bald Eagle & Salmon Preserve to view raptors and waterfowl was made under a heavy thunder cloud downpour. We debated whether to start off and thought we might outrun the pouring rain bursts. Unfortunately they followed us up the valley and we were glad of our cars in which to take refuge.

It was not an unproductive day for birding as we ended up with about 25 species - with a good variety of waterfowl on the flooded sloughs and rivers. Great views of Hooded Mergansers, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks, Gadwall, Mallards, Common Mergansers. We made a stop at the Sasquatch Inn to warm up while hoping the rain would stop. We looked for Dippers at Weaver Creek salmon hatchery but the hatchery channels were flooded as well. We returned home early due to the bad weather but otherwise happy with the good company and good count. Thanks to Gareth for leading our group.

Anne Gosse

GIRL GUIDES EARN THEIR BIRDING BADGE

Anne Gosse and Joan Taylor led 11 girls from the 2nd Telegraph Trail Girl Guides on a walk on the Little Loop Trail at Campbell Valley Regional Park. It was a cloudy evening so our fingers were crossed that the rain would hold off for our two hour event.

The girls were attentive and interested and once we explained the need to be quiet, we set off on our quest to find three birds. They had to

be able to identify birds based on size, flight pattern, colour, and song. They had to know where they nested and how many eggs they usually laid.



Feeding the Chickadees

Photo: Joan Taylor

They also spotted Wood Ducks, Salamander, unidentified rodent and frog spawn.

Whilst taking a short break to feed the chickadees and themselves, it started to rain and dusk was falling so back to the cars and home.

Joan Taylor

IONA REGIONAL PARK AND SEWAGE LAGOONS SATURDAY MAY 16TH 2015

Eighteen naturalists from Langley, White Rock and Chilliwack met at the parking area in front of the large lake at Iona Regional Park. It was 9 am on a partly cloudy day with the temperature in the high teens. Perfect for a morning of birdwatching! After a quick outline of the day's itinerary, we slowly made our way along the trail towards the smaller, northerly lake. There were numerous Marsh Wrens singing and one which was starting to build a nest. He was bending the reeds over by grabbing the flower at the top and then dropping down with it and hooking it onto another reed.

We made it to the path between the two lakes having seen only a pair of Gadwall. The large lake was almost completely empty. Numerous male Red-winged Blackbirds were strutting their stuff in the reeds and bulrushes around the edges of both lakes. The females were also present, choosing a male and tending to nests.

Only a single male Yellow-headed Blackbird was showing his dominance over the Red-winged Blackbirds at the west end of the smaller lake. It wasn't until the very end of our hike that we finally saw a second male. The females were either very well hidden or hadn't arrived yet. While watching the Yellow-headed Blackbird, we saw a Rufous Hummingbird in the wild roses as well as an American Goldfinch, a Wilson's Warbler and an Osprey, which was fishing in the large lake behind us.

We continued along the path between the two lakes until we came to the first of the mist nets being used by the banding station which has been set up by WildResearch and which is now in its 5th year of operation. The mist nets were open and there was a bird in one so we spent some time identifying which species it was. When we got to the second mist net we found three birds caught in it.



At the banding station Photo: Anne Gosse

Just when we were wondering if anyone was going to be coming to collect the birds, two people with small bags in their hands came down the path towards us. The birds didn't have long to wait. None of them were struggling but being tangled in a net must put a lot of stress on the bird. We arrived at the banding hut to find Paul Levesque, one of the founders of WildResearch, waiting to greet us.

Paul gave the group a brief explanation of what they are doing at the banding station and why it

is helpful for future conservation decisions. We also got to see up close the now banded birds that we had seen in the mist nets.

After leaving the banding station we headed for the gate into the sewage ponds. Josh had the code but the gate wouldn't open. Luckily there was another birder on the other side who came to our rescue. He had trouble opening the gate as well. Something had wedged between the gate and the fence but with a good shoulder check the gate finally opened. Three of the four ponds were full of the nice smelly sewage water and mud which shorebirds and waterfowl seem to love.

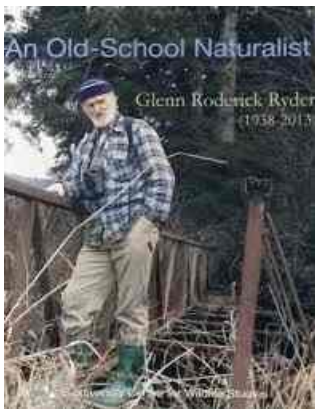
One pond had a large number of ducks including Green-winged, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal as well as two Wilson's Phalaropes which were feeding along the edge of the mud which jutted out into the pond. In the corner of one of the other ponds, we found a number of different species of shorebird including Semipalmated, Western, Pectoral and Spotted Sandpiper as well as a few Dunlin and Killdeer. After circling a couple of the ponds, we went back through the gate, which now opened with ease, and headed along the trail towards the Fraser River. There were a number of nest boxes set up for the Purple Martins but we only saw one pair, sitting together on the ledge outside the opening to one of the boxes. On a wire holding up one of the poles with nest boxes attached to them we were lucky enough to see four types of swallow, Barn, Northern Rough-winged, Tree and Cliff, sitting next to each other for easy comparison. We continued along the path and soon were back at the parking lot. An excellent morning of birding was had by all. Some left immediately but a few stayed and had lunch looking out on the Strait of Georgia. Unfortunately the tide was out so there were no exciting gulls or terns to add to our list. In total we saw 51 and heard 1 species. In the order seen/heard these were:

Bald Eagle, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Yellowthroat, Gadwall, Marsh Wren, Spotted Towhee, Barn Swallow, Rufous Hummingbird, Sora(h), Northwestern Crow, American Goldfinch, Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Tree Swallow, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Ring-necked Duck, Osprey, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Rough-winged Swallow,

Anna's Hummingbird, Canada Goose, Warbling Vireo, Black-capped Chickadee, Yellow Warbler, Northern Shoveller, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Killdeer, Cinnamon Teal, Greater Scaup, Wilson's Phalarope, American Coot, Dunlin, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, European Starling, Common Raven, Brewer's Blackbird, Purple Martin, Spotted Sandpiper, Song Sparrow, Glaucous-winged Gull, Savannah Sparrow, Cliff Swallow, Ring-necked Duck, Double-crested Cormorant, American Wigeon, Dark-eyed Junco, Orange-crowned Warbler.

Josh Inman

GLENN RYDER MEMORIAL



On April 19, 2015, under clear skies and a blanket of memories, Glenn Ryder came back to life for all who gathered at south Campbell Valley Regional Park. Friends, acquaintances, the curious and even passers-by listened to stories told by a diverse collection of friends who each had something different and interesting to say. Respect, fascination and awe bound all attendees together. It mattered not how well you had known Glenn or whether you had known him at all; everyone came away with new stories and perspectives, a greater appreciation of who he was, how he influenced so many, and how he contributed so much to our knowledge of natural history.

Wayne Campbell and Phil Henderson initiated and hosted the event but it was the many volunteers, staff and participants who made it such an enjoyable celebration.

Thanks to

* Metro Vancouver, which provided the

exceptional venue, tables, chairs, audio and visual equipment and technical support: Wendy Dadalt, Roger Bean, Tanis Steutz, Shaun Hazel and Janice Jarvis who arranged and oversaw the planting of native species just west of the barn.

* the Langley Field Naturalists who contributed many hours to organizing food, chairs, tables and people: Lesley Goodbrand, Anne Gosse, Jude Grass, Cecily Isler, Caroline McIsaac, Monica Newman, Sheila Puls and Joan Taylor.

* the speakers: Wayne Campbell, Phil Henderson, Wendy Dadalt, Bob Puls (Langley Field Naturalists), Hank Roos (Abbotsford-Mission Nature Club) who read a tribute on behalf of past President Johanna Saaltink, and friends Chris Buis, John Cooper, Al Grass, Bruce Klassen, Terry McIntosh (tribute read by Phil Henderson), Sylvia and Keith Pincott (tribute read by Wayne Campbell), Gerry Powers, Ian Robertson, Ken Summers and Cindy Young (tribute read by Phil Henderson with Cindy Young).

It was a perfect day at Glenn's favourite time of the year in the heart of his old stomping grounds in Campbell Valley.

A full account of the proceedings will be published in the forthcoming issue of *Wildlife Afield*, the biannual publication of the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies (BCFWS) (<http://www.wildlifebc.org/>). Those who missed acquiring Glenn's biography, *An Old-School Naturalist*, at the event can order it at the BCFWS website by pressing the "Wildlife Afield journal" tab.

Phil Henderson

TRIP TO MERRITT, MAY 18TH TO 20TH 2015

Our Merritt trip started at Falls Lake Recreation Area near the Coquihalla Summit. Ten members plus three other BC Nature members joined Gareth Pugh to hike to the lake in warm sunny weather. After a 45 minute hike up and down the trail through the Lodgepole Pine forest, stopping to look at some flowers and to listen to the Townsend's Warblers singing, we



Falls Lake

Photo: Bob Puls

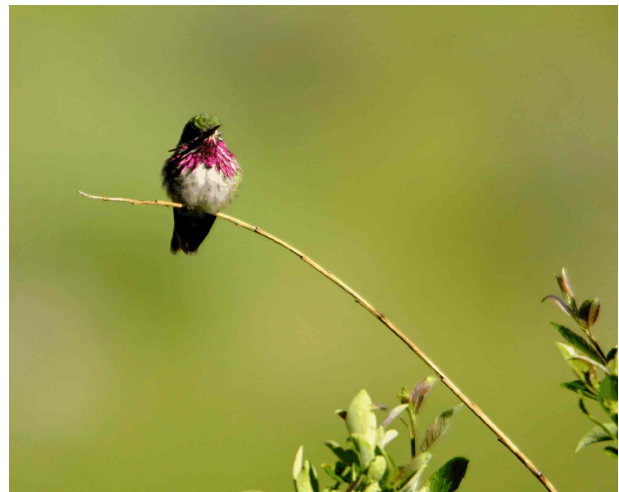
arrived at a beautiful calm lake set among the high mountain peaks with the blue sky reflected in it. After taking photographs, we retraced our steps very quickly to the parking lot and headed to Merritt to check into our motel. After a light lunch, we drove in convoy to the Quilchena Hotel where Tom and Greta Wildeboer, who were camping at Monck Provincial Park, were waiting for us. Our next stop was on Pennask Lake Road where we spent an hour watching local species such as Burrowing Owls, Swainson's Hawks, Meadowlarks and Vesper Sparrows in the open dry grasslands. We were very lucky to find three owls standing guard at their nest sites and also heard a fourth calling nearby.

We then retraced our steps to the main road and headed for the Laurie Guichon Wetlands, a Ducks Unlimited site where we were treated to the sight of a good range of wetland birds, some of which were new for several of our members, doing courtship displays or fighting off competitors while the Yellow-headed Blackbirds sang loudly over their territories. The male Ruddy Ducks, Horned Grebes, Eared Grebes, Blue-winged Teal and Cinnamon Teal were particularly colourful, while Black Terns flew to and fro like swallows on the far side of the lake.

Eventually we tore ourselves away to return to our hotel for dinner, after which the more energetic among us decided to try for owls in the hills around the town. Our first stop was to visit Murphy and Elizabeth Shewchuk who had given us very valuable information about the area. While there we saw a most unexpected Ring-necked Pheasant which the Shewchuks had been feeding all winter. Our evening sortie

did not produce any owls but we did find a Swainson's Thrush and MacGillvray's Warblers along the forest road.

The next morning we left at 8 am and started with the old road out of Merritt which has been replaced by the Coquihalla Connector, so we were able to walk up a quite wide paved road without any traffic with birds singing all around us on another warm sunny day. A Calliope Hummingbird perched close to us, giving great photo opportunities and excellent views in the scopes, especially for those who had not seen one before. Several Flycatchers were seen and heard and a pair of Red-naped Sapsuckers gave us excellent views on a nearby utility pole. Our next stop was the Grasslands Interpretive Site at the side of the highway, where we learned about the efforts by local naturalists and concerned landowners which have resulted in the preservation of some of the original grasslands. We followed the gravel road to Marquart and Lundbom Lakes where people were camping at the Recreation sites and fishing in the lakes so there were very few ducks to be seen. However at the end of North Lundbom Lake we stopped at the camp site



Calliope Hummingbird

Photo: Bob Puls

where we spent time watching a female Cassin's Finch as it looked for food around the picnic tables and also watched Spotted Sandpipers vying for territory along the lake shore. A flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds feeding nearby suddenly took flight as a Prairie Falcon swooped in but failed to catch one, a thrilling sight as it was so close to us. A few minutes later it returned, obviously looking for lunch and stayed in sight for a few minutes

before giving up and flying away.

In the afternoon we headed for the Douglas Lake Road which gradually wends its way up through the grasslands of the Douglas Lake Indian Reserve and the Douglas Lake Ranch. We stopped at various points along the road, including one where we saw a single Sandhill Crane, which we later found out was part of a pair breeding there, in a field with over a hundred Canada Geese. We finally arrived at the old airstrip which once serviced the Ranch and found a large pond there which contained a lot of birds, including Wilson's Phalarope and Redhead plus a coyote slinking around the lake. After doing a full check of the pond, Leona's keen eyes found four Horned Larks feeding on the old airstrip, we assumed either on seeds from the many plants and grasses growing out of the cracks in the asphalt, or possibly ants, so everyone had the chance to see a bird that is a rare passage migrant in the Lower Mainland.

From there we headed back to Monck Provincial Park where Tom and Greta put on a barbeque for us with the Shewchuks as guests.



Barbecue time

Photo: Bob Puls

They were very good company and told us a lot about the area.

On the last day, three couples said their goodbyes as they were heading further into the Interior for a few extra days vacation. Then we set out for the Kane Valley, a new location for all of us, where our first stop was in semi-open forest where many beetle kill trees had been removed, leaving excellent habitat for a variety of birds; we saw Red-naped Sapsucker, Cassin's Vireo, Hammond's Flycatcher, Mountain Chickadee, etc. As we travelled on we saw several small lakes with camp sites on

them. We stopped at one to eat lunch and take a walk in the forest, where we found several clumps of Fairy Slipper. Continuing on we came to a lake which came right to the road - we startled two Soras that were in the rushes only a few feet off the road. In the shallow water we found a pair of Western Toads in a mating embrace and had a good opportunity to observe tadpoles, dragonfly larvae and other aquatic insects at close range, while a Yellow Warbler and a couple of Flycatchers entertained us in the nearby dwarf willows. Our best sighting from then on was our first, and only, Eastern Kingbird and a Garter Snake swimming across a lake



Yellow Warbler

Photo: Bob Puls

before we reached the Coquihalla near Kingsvale for the final drive home.

All in all, this trip exceeded my expectations with wonderful weather even though thunder showers were forecast for the area. All the participants said how much they had enjoyed themselves. Thank you all for supporting this trip, to the three SOB's (spouses of birders) who travelled with their wives and "did their own thing" during the day and thanks to Tom and Greta for putting on the barbeque. We recorded about 110 bird species and saw a number of mammals including Yellow-bellied Marmot, Coyote, Red Squirrel, Muskrat and several deer. There were not as many wildflowers out as I had expected but Balsam Root, Lupine, Paintbrush, Saskatoon and others gave colour to the landscape. We also saw a number of different butterfly species including Comma, Orange-tip, Silvery Blue, Western Spring Azure, Ringlet and Persius Duskywing.

Gareth Pugh

GOING BATS AT FORSLUND WATSON

On April 11 Ryan Usenik organized the installation of a bat box (house) in the Forslund/Watson Wildlife Area. Ryan constructed the box, acquired all the required construction and installation materials, loaded and transported the materials to the site, did the site selection and site preparation as well as helping to erect the box in its current location. The box is located just to the West of the Ducks Unlimited pond.



Ready to install Photo: Kirk Miles

The work party assisting Ryan Usenik consisted of Ryan Miles, Zak Osmond and Alan Irwin.

Kirk Miles

BRYDON LAGOON FEBRUARY 25TH 2015

Good Weather and Wonderful Birding

We began our adventure by checking out the ponds where we were treated to sightings of Long-billed Dowitchers - always a challenge to ID (unless they call).

The Pied-billed Grebe sighting was a real treat. We had a total of 11 waterfowl species including the handsome Ring-necked Duck (ring-billed?), Gadwall (not always seen) and the beautiful Hooded Merganser. Sharp-eyed birders sighted three raptor species - Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, and Cooper's Hawk. It was nice to see a kingfisher - and to hear its rattle-like call.

Along the path towards the eagle's nest a Hairy Woodpecker was spotted (not always easy to find). Golden-crowned Sparrows were seen picking at the ground, along with Song Sparrows and towhees. Anna's Hummingbird, Eurasian Collard Dove, Northern Shoveler were some of the other highlights.

Thanks to Annabel for co-leading the outing and to Rhys and Annabel for inviting us to their home after the walk for some treats.

Al Grass



Installed!

Photo: Kirk Miles

There are several different designs of bat boxes utilized to create a man-made roost. This box is a Rocket Box. The Rocket box design has proven to be a design that has one of the highest occupancy rates. They have also been shown to serve as a maternity box (mothers raising young in them).

Typically the Rocket box has fewer numbers of bats and fewer maternal bats than the most common " Chamber Box" design, but its success with its high occupancy rate was used to make it the choice for Forslund /Watson to expose the box to the local bat population for use. When the Rocket box becomes established with the local population, a Rocket Box used in conjunction with a Chamber Box results in the Chamber box being heavily utilized as a maternal box.

The Rocket box is suitable for many BC/lower mainland bats. These bats are the Big Brown Bat, Long-eared myotis, Little Brown myotis (endangered), Northern myotis (endangered), Yuma myotis. A bat detector has identified Big Brown Bat and Little Brown Bat at the F/W site last year. Also present was the Hoary Bat.



Gadwall

Photo: Al Grass

BC NATURE TOFINO CAMP 2015

The BC Nature Tofino Camp was a very busy one again this year and all the camp participants raved about how they enjoyed it. A bit of rain fell on our first day but after that it was sunshine all the way!

On the Whales & Hot Springs Boat Trip we observed a Grey Whale; counted his breathing spouts, seeing him dive with great swishes of his huge tail several times. We also witnessed a young injured Seagull floating in the ocean being attacked by two Bald Eagles while other gulls tried to fend them off. On the rocks of Cleland Island we saw the colony of Steller's Sea Lions, California Sea Lions, and harbour seals, plus Cormorants, and we also drifted by several rafts of floating curious Sea Otters.



Birding by boat

Photo: Anne Gosse

On the Birds & Bears Boat Trip we sighted thousands and thousands of shorebirds resting on the mud flats. A Turkey Vulture waiting for leftovers was perched beside two Bald Eagles who were tearing at a fish. Two glossy Black Bears were seen along the shoreline turning over rocks and nibbling on crabs.

The Meares Island boat taxi deposited us by the boardwalk trail into the majestic ancient old growth forest. The small dock had disappeared in the winter storms, leaving some to belly flop in and out of the boat. The high wooden path needed repairs in places, so we carefully watched our feet while stopping to admire the huge giant trees, some 1300 years old. A mink was seen scattering into the trees along the way.



Birding from the beach

Photo: Anne Gosse

Pacific Rim Park Warden Pete Clarkson led us birding on Wickaninnish Beach and told us about the Tsunami cleanup effort still on-going in the area. He is heavily involved in the clean-up and he is now in a film soon to be released called "Debris" - NFB Documentary by John Bolton - plus he is to appear in a documentary called "Lost and Found".

Birding with Andy Murray we found Western, Least, Semipalmated Sandpipers, plus Sanderlings, Whimbrels, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitchers, a few Spotted Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, and Marbled Godwits being flushed up by a Prairie Falcon over the tidal mud flats with many set up scopes. Swarms of dipping, swaying, and moving flocks were seen over nearly every beach and mud flat in Tofino. By the end of our camp we had counted 79-80 different species of birds.

As well, Bob Hansen ex Pacific Rim Parks, George Patterson of the Botanical Gardens and Dan Harrison of the Rainforest Education Society again stepped up to provide our nature camp with some great and interesting talks and walks. New this year, Tofino's RedCan Catering supplied our meals and were given a standing ovation for their fantastic culinary efforts by camp's end. We all left Tofino awed by the beauty and wildlife of this fantastic and lovely area.

Anne Gosse

BC NATURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MAY 7TH - 9TH 2015 - SALT SPRING ISLAND

As always, Langley Field Naturalists were well represented at the BC Nature meeting. We have not attempted to describe every talk and all the field trips, but hope the following will give you a good idea of the fun we have, and how much we learn. All members are welcome, so mark your calendars for next year! Highlights included hearing from the local MP, Elizabeth May, incredible pictures from Ian McAllister in the Great Bear Rainforest and surrounding waters (who knew there were wolves who only ate seafood?!), and a great cabaret entitled "The Only Planet". Salt Spring Island is a great place to visit, the weather was perfect, the hospitality was superb, and if we did question the quinoa pudding at the banquet, well that was hardly needed after the delicious meal!

Sheila Puls

Highlights from David and Nora Truman



At Blackburn Lake Field Trip Photo: David Truman

The two of us attended on Friday and Saturday.

Friday we went on the Blackburn Lake field trip with a group that was about 15 people. The history of the nature reserve was explained. The land was formerly a 9 hole golf course and the owners donated the land. Christine Torgrimson, one of the directors for the reserve, explained that they are trying to restore some of the watershed to its original flow and they are planting native species of plants. The highlight of our birding here was the seeing the Red-breasted Sapsucker. The managers of the reserve also have added a building to the property, also donated. The building is used as office space for the research biologist and two staff, plus the reserve manager. It also has a meeting room plus a small kitchen. The whole setting is an example of research and nature education.

Saturday we went on the early birding walk with John and Heather Neville to Burgoyne Bay and got to meet one of the creators of the bird call and song tape that we play in the car. This was great to try and identify bird calls and songs.

John can also recognize the woodpeckers and sapsuckers by the pecking sounds they make. We are now pretty good at recognizing the Olive-sided Flycatchers by their songs. We all saw a Kingfisher on this walk.

Saturday afternoon we went on the field trip to Ford Lake with Bob Weeden and saw Yellow and Wilson's Warblers and heard lots of Pacific Slope Flycatchers. With this group we saw a total of about 32 species of birds. Again we heard all about the management of the property as a nature reserve. In this case there is farmer leasing part of the land for grazing cattle and sheep so this is an interesting dimension to preserving the land for the protection of wildlife.

In the evening on Saturday, we had a lovely meal and then there was a presentation by Ramona de Graaf all about Forage Fish and preserving their habitat in the Salish Sea and shoreline. What we learned was that all these small fish that are food to the bigger fish like salmon are very important and they lay their eggs in the sand on the beach so the preservation of shoreline in its natural state is very important and vital to the survival of the larger species that feed on them. Ramona informed us that in Oregon and Washington State there are now laws to protect shorelines in some areas and Canada is somewhat behind in taking action now that the science has been proven.

The scientists at this conference were very critical of our current provincial and federal governments for taking no or little action to protect species at risk or even recognizing that there is research that suggests we could do better.

David & Nora Truman

BLACKBURN LAKE NATURE PRESERVE AND WETLANDS



New building at Blackburn Lake

Photo: David Truman

The Saltspring Island Conservancy hold title to this 38.4 acres of upland forest and wetland habitat. This includes about half of the land around Blackburn Lake, a place critically important to the Cusheon Lake Watershed. The property was formerly a farm and an organic golf course. Our tour was led by Christine Torgrimson, Executive Director.

We toured the reserve and the wetlands restoration project. Our group learned that the reserve is a haven for at least 15 species at risk including the red-legged frog. During our walk we observed many birds including a beautiful Red-breasted Sapsucker. Several Black-tailed deer watched us from behind the gate and fencing built to keep them from the newly planted wetland area. Many of the objectives of this wetland resoration seemed similar to the Marvin Marsh restoration in Aldergrove.

Our tour ended at the newly constructed Visitor Center. The building is a totally green design (including solar power) and was the generous gift of an anonymous donor!

The Blackburn Lake Nature Preserve is a wonderful place to visit. The volunteers, staff and donors that made it possible are to be admired. For more info check out their website - saltspringconservancy.ca.

Joanne Rosenthal

BURGOYNE BAY & MT MAXWELL

On Friday afternoon in perfect weather I joined the field trip to Burgoyne Bay, led by Genevieve Singleton.

This was a botany walk along level ground, mostly among trees a little way inland from the shore, leading to a point that at one time had been a farm. Along the trail we found two orchids in flower, Fairyslipper - *Calypso bulbosa*, and Spotted Coralroot - *Corallorhiza maculata* ssp. *Maculate*. We also saw Yerba Buena *Satureja douglasii*, not in flower, but strongly fragrant. The Hudson Bay voyageurs and trappers learned from the first nation's people that it made a pleasant drink and also had many medicinal properties. Genevieve told us that the natives caught mergansers in this bay as a major food source.

Along the route we were shown many examples of how deer had foraged among the shrubs and once we reached the Garry Oak habitat, at the point, it could readily be seen how the deer and farming had virtually destroyed the forbs. Just the odd Common Camas - *Camassia quamash* survived with no Sea Blush (*Plectritis congesta*, another common Garry Oak associated plant) in evidence.

The following afternoon we joined Lynn Thompson on the Mt. Maxwell field trip which is in the same area, and from the mountain top you look down into Burgoyne Bay. The hike was not as arduous as anticipated, as we drove almost to the top and then walked down to the higher elevation Garry Oak habitat. There again we saw deer damage, but in fenced off areas in the Park Reserve the local flora were returning. There were many large Douglas firs on the outskirts of the Garry Oak habitat but most were dying from unknown causes, of little concern as it removed the competition from the more endangered Oaks.

Having climbed back up to the cars, we then drove to the parking lot on the top of Mt. Maxwell and enjoyed the spectacular view along the Fulford valley to Fulford harbour. We didn't see many birds on either walk, but from the mountain top we were able to look way down on circling Turkey Vultures.

Bob Puls

ROBERT BATEMAN'S STUDIO & PROPERTY



Anne "improves"? a Bateman painting?

Photo: Joanne Rosenthal

I have always been an ardent admirer of Robert Bateman's paintings. marvelling at his life-like and detailed nature pictures. I believe his beautiful illustrations speak for nature: for the animals and the birds.

He lives on 80 acres on Salt Spring Island overlooking Ford Lake. On our visit, we were met by his girl Friday, (he was away in Europe) and she guided us through his very interesting house, studio and lovely gardens. The entrance way beckoned us with the sounds of a quiet, gentle brooklet trickling into a small Japanese pond-garden, quiet and serene. Carved in an African village, his wooden front door was then shipped over to be installed in his home. Large wide light-filled windows overlooked the lake and a charming array of colorful flowers crammed the patio gardens. His home was filled with interesting carvings, statues, plus his own original works of art. As well, there were art objects that had been given to him or purchased from all over the world. Each one had an interesting story.

His art studio was bright and airy. We were shown several of his current paintings and told he works every day - even at the age of 85. We were guided through his lovely gardens and down to the lakeside dock. Many birds were seen fluttering about in the nearby trees and eating in all the many bird feeders.

His beautiful art creations made here in this home now hang on walls all over the world.

Anne Gosse

ANDREAS VOGT NATURE RESERVE

This lovely 29 hectare reserve, managed by the Saltspring Island Conservancy, is high up on a hill, so those that came on this field trip had fine views of the sea & islands to the south. Vogt, who it is named after, was a biologist who tragically died of a bee sting in a remote area.



Duskywing Skipper

Photo: Anthea Farr

The trail going up had some steep-ish sections, but was well shaded and crossed a small wetland area before rising up to the Garry oak meadows. A portion of the meadow has a deer-proof wire fence around it. A volunteer checks this fence every day of the year, to make sure no tree has fallen on it which might allow deer to get in. Quite a commitment! Inside the fence, young Garry oaks, blue camas lilies and pink seablush were thriving. Also thriving were butterflies I had not seen before: duskywing skippers, likely the red-listed *Propertius Duskywing*, which lays its eggs only on Garry oak leaves... Corey found an interesting spider too - black with a bright red abdomen which he later identified as a Johnson jumping spider.

A local family joined us on this walk, with a girl and boy who were truly "children of the woods". They ran up and down the trails barefoot, and I saw the girl pick a handful of tender young Douglas-fir needles to eat as a snack!

This was a low-key, very relaxed and pleasant walk, with time to sit in the sun and ponder nature. I suspect few tourists ever go there - but it is very rewarding.

Anthea Farr

2015 BC NATURE AGM AT ARTSPRING THEATRE, SALT SPRING ISLAND

The 46th annual General Meeting of BC Nature opened with a speech by Gary Holman, the NDP sitting MLA for Saanich North and the Gulf Islands, elected in 2013. Gary has lived on Salt Spring Island for 25 years and has served as the Island's Capital Regional District Director to help establish the island's first transportation system. He has been involved in BC's land trust movement, working to build coalitions between environmental groups to protect green space and drinking water. He is proud that 20% of Salt Spring lands are protected, (but the new goal is 30%), that the new Blackburn Lake Conservancy has come into being and about the installation of solar panels on the high school roof.

Gary says all of BC should continue progress in climate change actions that benefit all. Carbon tax, while good, should be broadened and the idea of neutrality on income taxes should be dropped. Carbon tax revenue instead should be reinvested into energy conservation. He believes local governments are on the front line in investments such as trails and cycle paths but need the resources to implement them. And the province needs to focus on specific areas such as the headwaters of salmon rivers. Only 15% of BC's lands are protected at the moment but these protected areas need to be increased, not only for the protection of wildlife but to supply more carbon sinks for green house gases.

Kees Vissers gave his President's report. There are now 5700 members of BC Nature and 53 clubs. He commented on BC Nature and Nature Canada's joint status as Intervenor in the public hearings for the twinning of the Trans Mountain pipeline through BC's parks and urban centres. BC Nature has already submitted questions but with the witnesses at the hearing not being allowed to be questioned or cross-examined, it will be a flawed process. The hearings should take place this September.



*Garry Oak habitat at Andreas Vogt Reserve
Photo: Anthea Farr*

BC Nature's 5 Year Strategic Plan from 2015 to 2020 was presented to the general membership for review. This was the same presentation made at the Directors' Meeting and was well received. A discussion followed about the special goal in the Strategic Plan to attract young members to BC Nature. Ideas were shared by the general members such as transitioning families from the Young Naturalists Clubs, perhaps by offering free one year family membership to their local naturalists club. More social media should be used. We could encourage teenagers to participate in club community involvement projects. Perhaps clubs could work with high school teachers on citizen science projects. Do hands-on projects that young people are excited about.

Anne Murray made a presentation on the new BC Breeding Bird Atlas that is nearing completion and can now be found online at <http://www.birdatlas.bc.ca/>. The work began in 2007 with 1250 volunteer recorders, many being BC Nature members. The province was divided into 100 mile squares, each with a Regional Coordinator and each square divided further into 10 mile squares. The survey ended in 2012 with over 56,000 hours logged in the field with records on 330 bird species in the province to produce the most comprehensive information source on the distribution and abundance of breeding birds in BC. The decision was made to have the atlas only on-line as opposed to a huge book version. This will make it accessible to all and is more affordable. The atlas is being released in stages and Anne gave a demonstration of how

to navigate through the different parts of the atlas. The maps and tools on the site can be used for either conservation or educational fun.

The meeting proceeded with reports referenced in the Annual report. Margaret Cuthbert, Education Chair, made a special announcement about the annual education report that will be needed in the future from each club.

**Kathy Masse
Director**

BC NATURE'S DIRECTORS' MEETING MAY 7TH 2015 GANGES PUBLIC LIBRARY

The meeting began at 4:30 pm in the library meeting room. It was good to see again club directors from all over the province. After the usual business of approving the agenda and adoption of the minutes of last September's FGM, President Kees Visser gave his update on BC Nature's news. First he restated that no club has stepped forward to host our Fall General Meeting. Therefore our next meeting will be our AGM held in Comox on May 12th to 15th, 2016. The 2016 FGM will be held on September 22nd to 25th in Prince George. Kees also brought up the fact that BC Nature is hosting a summer camp at Chilcotin Holidays, who also regularly advertise in BC Nature magazine, and who offer fall grizzly bear trophy hunts. We debated the issue without a vote, suggesting that a resolution against grizzly bear trophy hunting is more appropriate.

The Treasurers Report was given by John Toth over Skype and a motion to our group to approve the financial reports as presented, was accepted with the recommendation to bring it to the AGM for approval.

The 5 year Strategic Plan (2015-2020) was presented to the Directors for approval. The process was outlined first, including the setting up of the committee, the surveys of the



Common Camas (Camassia quamash)

Photo: Bob Puls

executive, the club directors, and the general membership. With the results, the committee established goals, strategies and action plans to achieve these goals. The 5 goals from the previous 5 year Strategic Plan are good and will be retained for the new plan, including gaining more public visibility for BC Nature and communicating nature knowledge across BC. The survey results were closely studied using a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), and incorporated into the new plan. From the overall goals, 8 action goals with key strategies to accomplish the goals were made. Each goal is given a year over year measurement to indicate how well BC Nature is achieving its goals. All Langley Field Naturalists will receive an email copy of this well organized and readable plan, including the background that went into it. The plan was unanimously accepted by the Club Directors to be taken to the AGM for approval of the general membership.

Further business included a motion by John Neville of the nominating Committee to appoint Alan Burger as Vice-President effective September 30, 2015 which was approved. Janet Pattison was approved as the new representative for the Thompson Okanagan Region and there was a confirmation vote for 4 Executive Officers and 8 Executive positions. A new vacancy has opened up for the BC Nature BC Parks & Protected Area Coordinator with the resignation of Don Guild. Don spoke to the tasks of the position and the support that will be given to the person who takes over.

Margaret Cuthbert, BC Nature's Education Chair, brought forward a motion that Member Clubs include an update on their nature education activities as an education report with their annual club reports so that nature education can be tracked and BC Nature can learn club needs. This was passed.

A worthwhile discussion of club directors about concerns of their areas concluded the meeting.

***Kathy Masse
Director***

Note: A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached to this newsletter for your interest.

DAVID DENNING'S INTERTIDAL TALK & WALK

My choice of one talk and walk were both led by the same person, David Denning. The talk called "Voices from the Salish Sea" and the walk "Intertidal excursion -marine biology" seemed good choices to increase my knowledge of intertidal life. I was right!

David Denning has lived on Salt Spring Island for 20 Years. With a Masters Degree in Science Education, his life work has been developing films, videos, and multimedia programs to inspire understanding and protection of the natural world. On Salt Spring Island, he has focused on protecting, enhancing and restoring the natural environment, especially the marine environment and providing young people with knowledge, skill and attitudes to become good stewards of the ecosystems on Salt Spring. His credentials and accomplishments are impressive. His enthusiastic presentation of his subject made knowledge easier to understand and remember.

David's talk on Friday morning showed his love of the smallest forms of life in the intertidal ecosystem. He showed us pictures of the small creatures, saying how important they were in the chain of life under the sea. He directed us to the book "The Sea among Us" by Richard Beamish and Gordon McFarlane as a good reference for the creatures he discussed. The theatre was in blackness and I could not see to write down the tiny animals' scientific names he mentioned so I will definitely get that book! Next, he put up on the screen, live specimens from aquariums focussed under a microscope.

That morning he had set out to gather these specimens to show us, by rafting down the canal in front of his house to a bay in the Salish Sea. There he scooped up barnacles and other creatures to amaze us. He kept increasing the magnification

on the live barnacles in the aquarium until we could observe the barnacles' tongues waving in the water looking for food. We were all astounded to see such an active life that we had never seen or thought about before. Another aquarium with equal magnification showed thread-like creatures living their lives, searching for food and looking

after their eggs. He imparted the sense of loss for all of us if these ecosystems were disturbed by pipelines, tankers and oilspills.

The walk led by David was equally engrossing. We stopped on the way to the beach to view the high school with its solar roof panels that are a good example of the conservation values of Salt Spring residents. He described the fundraising for the roof and the benefits of their installation.

We arrived at the beautiful beach and as soon as we walked down the stairs to the shore, David asked us to bend down and listen to the rocks. Puzzled, we all did and heard nothing, So David led us to a rock that gave off grunting noises and seemed to have a cavity under it. He lifted the rock and there was a strange fish I had never seen before, called the Plainfin Midshipman. In the spring the male of the species finds a rock and digs a hole under it. He then starts "singing" or grunting to attract a female. She arrives and lays her eggs, then leaves. The male looks after the eggs until they hatch and also waits for another female. There were many eagles on the nearby trees, waiting for either a female Plainfin Midshipman stranded on the beach or the young hatchlings not making it to the water to make a tasty meal. David held up the Plainfin Midshipman so we could see its

sharp teeth and listen to his grunts more closely.

Kathy Masse



David Denning leading the walk Photo: Kathy Masse



Plainfin Midshipman Photo: Kathy Masse

MARINE WILDLIFE BOAT TRIP



Humpback Whale

Photo: Sharon McVeigh

A very keen group, all kitted out with flotation suits, set out from Ganges Harbour aboard a Zodiac boat, all looking forward to the marine wildlife we might see. Our boat operator did say that no Orcas has been sighted that day, but he assured us that he would show us lots of other wildlife.

He spotted two Bald Eagles on the shore, and took us closer. They were feeding on a deer carcass. Very soon after that, he got the word that a Humpback Whale had been spotted south of Saturna Island. We headed off there, as were a number of other boats from Steveston, Sidney and the U.S.

We saw a spout in the distance, and very soon saw a tail fin. Sharon got a few photos, and we stayed around the area for long enough to see the whale dive several times. It was very exciting, as they are not often in our waters.

During the course of our trip we saw Pigeon Guillemots, Rhino Auklets, Murres, Surf Scoters, Bonaparte Gulls, Bald Eagles, California and Stellar Sea Lions, and a couple of seals at play on and off the rocks.

As we were returning to harbour we spotted a California Sea Lion catching a fish and eating it with much gusto. Too soon, it seemed, the trip was over and we were back on land.

Margaret Holford

AWARDS

Various awards are presented at the BC Nature banquets - this year there were two awards of interest to Langley Field Naturalists.

THE BC NATURE REGIONAL AWARD

Description:

(More than one may be presented but only one per Region) This Award is presented to a member of the Federation (BC Nature) who has served with dedication, devotion and energy to further the Federation (BC Nature) across his or her Region.



Anthea Farr receives the BC Nature Regional Award

Photo: Sharon McVeigh

It was a very surprised Anthea Farr who sat at the banquet table for some time before it occurred to her that it really was HER, and that she should get to her feet and go and accept the award! Congratulations, Anthea, a well deserved honour.

The other award, of which you will hear more soon, is

THE DAPHNE SOLECKI AWARD

Description:

(Only one may be presented) This Award recognizes persons who have contributed to nature education for children in British Columbia.

This will be announced in the September newsletter.

SUMMER EVENING WALKS

Please call the leaders let them know to expect you, and to confirm where to meet. The walks are about two hours long and are open to all Naturalist Clubs & members of the public (adults & children, but no pets please). Please wear suitable walking shoes, light jackets, bring water, binoculars and bug spray.

Wednesday July 8th 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

HOUSTON TRAIL - DERBY REACH

Anne Gosse & Joan Taylor

604-888-1787 or 604-888-7261

Wednesday July 15th, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

Jude and Al Grass - 604-538-8774

Meet at 16th Avenue Parking lot.

Thursday July 23rd - BAT WALK!

See info panel.

Wednesday July 29th, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

BRYDON LAGOON

Annabel Griffiths & Al Grass - 604-538-8774.

Wednesday August 5th, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

FORSLUND WATSON PROPERTY

Ryan Usenik 604-999-5047 or 604-530-3257.

Wednesday August 12th, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

WEST CREEK WETLANDS

Lisa Parker - 604-532-0081

Saturday July 4th,

10am to 4pm rain or shine

SUMMER SOCIAL AND NATURE WALKS

At the GRASS SHACK

17375 27A Avenue, Surrey

Bird watching in the backyard, and/or a guided walk at 10:30 am & 1:30 pm

Bring a chair, binoculars & camera and savory or sweet to share - let Jude know what you are bringing so we have a good variety.

Please RSVP to Jude at judegrass@shaw.ca or 604 538 8774

I will send out instruction for finding the Grass Shack when you RSVP

Thursday July 23rd, 8:15 pm - 9:30 pm

BAT WALK!

(Observation start 30 minutes before sunset)

Kirk Miles - 604-512-4631

Call to confirm if you are coming

Meet at 53rd Avenue/184th Street

There is plenty of roadway parking on 53rd Ave in the East industrial area. A paved blocked off road with sidewalk will be taken to the observation area

WEATHER/PRESENCE:

If it is raining heavily that will keep the majority, if not all, the bats inside their roost. The bats have not been seen yet this year.

Baring the roost having been destroyed or changed over the winter, the bats should be back again this year. If the roost is gone they most likely won't be at this site. If that occurs we can do another walk - probably at Brydon Lagoon. In July the bats will have given birth and the babies will be able to fly! Over the last two years the roost has grown from 60 to 200 bats! The bats we will see will be leaving their roost and heading to feeding grounds.

Prior to heading out for the night, they get a drink of water from the pond to the south of the road. We will be watching bats come from the North and travel South over our heads and beside us - some within inches!

They will be 20 feet in the air to inches off the roadway.

The display will last about 20 minutes. End Time: 30 Minutes after sunset 9:30pm.

*Note: a local owl is always present and airborne.



Burgoyne Bay from Mt Maxwell, Saltspring Island

Photo: Bob Puls

FIELD TRIPS

We usually meet at Douglas Park Rec Center for car-pooling, however, please call leaders to let them know you are coming and for where to meet - if at the Rec Center or at another designated meeting place. Please wear suitable walking shoes, jackets, bring water, binoculars, bug spray, also snacks and lunch for all day trips.

Wednesday July 22nd Weather permitting

MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK

PAINTBRUSH NATURE TRAIL & VIEW POINT LOOP

HEATHER MEADOWS. BOTANY WALK.

Janne Perrin (Contact Anne 604-888-1787)

8:00 am at Langley or 10:00 am at Paintbrush top parking lot.

Join the Chilliwack Valley Naturalists and Langley Field Naturalists as we wander along the lovely alpine meadow trails to see what special alpine beauties we can discover and to enjoy wonderful panoramic views.

Friday July 31st,

YEW LAKE AT CYPRESS PROVINCIAL PARK

Al Grass - 604-538-8774

8:00 am Langley or 9:30 am at Cypress Bowl Parking lot by info kiosk.

The easy walking trail passes alongside Cypress Creek and subalpine meadows to Yew Lake and remnant old-growth forest. If trail conditions permit, we might also hike up the new section of the Howe Sound Crest Trail to a new viewpoint. Bring lunch, water, protective clothing for changing mountain weather, and wear sturdy shoes/boots. This will be a leisurely outing with time for photography and birding. Parking fee in effect!.

Saturday September 5th,

CHEAM LAKE WETLANDS REGIONAL PARK

Josh Inman - 604-576-6831.

8:00 am Langley or 9:00 am at Park

This 107 hectare sensitive wildlife habitat is comprised of a lake, a marsh and forests. It is a popular bird-watching area where 184 different bird species have been recorded, plus it is home to many insects and mammals.

Friday September 11th

MIKE LAKE, GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK

Al Grass - 604-538-8774

8:30 am Langley or 9:30 am Mike Lake

Al & Jude Grass will lead this quiet forest walk, looking for two species of Sundews that grow here and it is perfect for those wanting a short 2 km flat scenic nature walk.

Turn-off for Mike Lake (and the Ranger Station) is located 4.5 km from the park gates. Watch for sign and slow down before turning left onto the gravel road, then left immediately uphill to parking lot.

Sunday September 27th, 9:00 am

DERBY REACH REGIONAL PARK HERITAGE SITE,

ALLARD CRESCENT - GEOLOGY WALK

Geologist John Clague

9:00 am at Houston Trail Heritage Site

Join the Derby Reach Brae Island Parks Association as we learn about the geology of our area with Geologist John Clague. He is an expert in Quaternary studies (the science of the last 2 million years of earth geological history), and specializes in geological hazards, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, and floods. **Only 20 participants - please phone or email js@bcrealtors.ca to book your spot. 604-888-6850.**

Saturday October 3rd

DERBY REACH / BRAE ISLAND HERITAGE APPLE DAY.

PROGRAMMES

Check our website for updates!

Meetings are held commencing at 7.15 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley. Unless otherwise indicated, they consist of a brief monthly business meeting, followed by the feature presentation (approximately one hour), followed by refreshments.

Thursday June 18th

Annual General Meeting and social time. Bring finger food to share.

No meetings are held in July or August. Next meeting will be Thursday September 17th, programme to be announced.