



# Langley Field Naturalists



*To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education*

c/o Secretary, 203-9018 208<sup>th</sup> Street, Langley, BC, V1M 2Y8

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Newsletter

June 2017



Margaret Cuthbert with Al Grass and Anthea Farr

Photo: Sheila Puls

At the May meeting of Langley Field Naturalists, Marg Cuthbert, Education Chair of BC Nature, presented a certificate to Al Grass in recognition as "Naturalist Mentor of Distinction". A similar certificate had been presented to Anthea Farr at the BC Nature meeting in Lillooet earlier in the month. Congratulations to both of these hard working, knowledgeable naturalists who are always so willing to share their knowledge. We are honoured to have them as members of Langley Field Naturalists.



*The Mad Hatter and the White Rabbit  
invite you to*

*"The Mad Hatter's Tea Party"*

*Thursday June 15<sup>th</sup>  
immediately following the  
Annual General Meeting*

*Prize for the best hat  
Please bring finger food to share*



**Saturday July 29th**  
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](mailto:judegrass@shaw.ca) or 604-538-8774  
*I will send out instruction for finding the Grass Shack when you RSVP*



**NOTE: In light of the BC Nature increase in membership fee by \$2, at our AGM we will be voting to raise the LFN membership fees to \$32/single, \$37/family as of September 1st.**

## LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2016-2017 DIRECTORS

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

Vice President:

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

Secretary: Joan Taylor (Assist: Nora Truman)  
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: Sheila Puls  
& Newsletter 604-856-7534 ~ sheila@puls.ca

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

Field Trips: Gareth Pugh  
604-576-6831 ~ gareth@intergate.ca

Publicity: Lillianne Fuller  
604-533-0638 ~ lillianne101@shaw.ca

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

Webmaster: Lisa Dreves/Joan Taylor

## REPRESENTATIVES & CONVENORS

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

Greeters: Rebecca Tin Tun/Helen Thompson

Refreshments: Cecily Isler / Monica Newman  
604-514-9697 ~ pcangus@telus.net

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

Campbell Valley Park Association: Jude Grass  
604-538-8774 ~ judegrass@shaw.ca

Derby Reach Brae Island: Anne Gosse  
604-888-1787 ~ corkie1@shaw.ca

Nature Kids Anthea Farr 604-576-7731  
nicomekl@naturekidsbc.ca

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**



The Lillooet Naturalists put on a great Spring Meeting for BC Nature. You can see reports of the meeting and field trips in this newsletter, with a presentation on the research conducted into the Fisher and Wolverine populations of the area being particular highlights.

Back in Langley, conservation continues to take up most of my time. I attended the City of Langley open house for the development of the land under the hydro right-of-way this week. The LFN have been asked for suggestions for this site in the past and haven't had much to say. The options presented by the interested parties seem to provide a fairly complete coverage of the hydro right-of-way, but include a walking trail. Parking for vehicles was a big concern. My comments were to please maintain a wildlife corridor. I am concerned that if they leave enough cover for birds and mammals they are going to have a nightmare protecting their crops from predators such as deer, rabbits and raccoons which will make fencing inevitable and perhaps prevent wildlife movement altogether.

The Trans-Mountain / Kinder Morgan Pipeline is still a concern and I have been invited to join the SRES in meeting with MP John Aldag today to hopefully clarify DFO's role in the construction should it go ahead.

I am pleased that a young (teenager) ornithologist has volunteered to do regular bird counts at our Forslund/Watson Wildlife Area. Last week he and his brother identified 51 species on site and have been seeing species we have not recorded in the past. Hopefully they will be able to join us at some of our regular meetings.

Congratulations to Anthea and AI for being acknowledged by BC Nature as Naturalist Mentors of Distinction.

**Bob**

## 8TH AVENUE TRAIL FIELD TRIP REPORT FRIDAY MARCH 3RD 2017;

This is the third umbrella trip in a row that I have led!



*Another wet walk*

*Photo: Bob Puls*

Today's trip was an LFN introductory Field Trip to the trail and due to the continuous rain, only Gareth, Tom and Al Grass turned up. Bill Burgey met us at his property which borders the trail. Due to the rain, rather than walk from my house, we drove to the trail head in Tom's car where we met Bill.

Bill (also an LFN member) accompanied us as far as the second bridge at which point we were suitably cold and wet and returned homewards.

Bill showed us around some of the trails on his property which we are welcome to use and described some of the geology of the area which includes Kames and Kettles left over from the ice age. The gravel deposits throughout this area were deposited by glaciers and not by river action.

We found some BUM's (brown unidentified mushrooms) which I think were *Cortinarius vibratilis*. Very few birds showed themselves, but on return we saw a pair of Hooded Mergansers on the pond at the corner of 8th and 256th so I decided to post an eBird entry after all.

**Bob Puls**

## FORSLUND WATSON NATURE RESERVE SATURDAY APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup> 2017

On Saturday April 22 (Earth Day), twelve LFN

members and one guest participated in a nature walk at Forslund Watson Nature Reserve. With the weather man's cooperation, participants observed nature around the two Ducks Unlimited ponds, the raptor meadow and the treed corridor where there are several fruit trees. Because of the time of year, several flowering trees were observed.

The new vernal pond is continuing to show more natural life, but no frog egg masses have been observed so far this year. There was some discussion re further things we could do to hopefully attract more frogs to the vernal pond.

A platform has been erected below the bat house but it did not reveal that the box had been occupied this past week. As is reported in this Newsletter, last year the south coast bat monitoring project revealed significantly more bat species in the area than were expected.

36 species of birds were recorded by the birders. It was the first time the Eurasian Collared Dove was recorded at FLW.

The group viewed a large number of new Tree Of Heaven shoots. It was determined that a mature Tree of Heaven had blown over a couple of years ago. Apparently when a Tree of Heaven is up-rooted, one of the ways it reproduces is to send up a large number of shoots. As this is considered an invasive species, discussion was held re the eradication of it from FLW.

Another walk will probably be held in mid summer.

**Ryan Usenik**



*Checking the pond*

*Photo: Anthea Farr*

## CHEAM LAKE FRIDAY MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup> 2017

This is a lovely setting with Mount Cheam dominating the mountain scenery. The weather was cloudy and cool but refreshing. We walked the main trail taking us past the Lagoon on one side, the lake on the other, and forward into the woods. From the bridge over the pond, we had clear views of the Alga (*Chara sp.*) which looks coral-like.

The birds of the day included Eurasian Wigeon, Wood Ducks, Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Merganser (12!), Common Merganser, Trumpeter Swans (40), Gadwall, Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker. The Double-Crested Cormorant was a nice surprise.



*Ring-necked Duck*

*Photo: Al Grass*

Passerines included the expected sparrows, chickadee, and Pine Siskins. Later John Gordon took us to the Quarry at the base of Sumas Mountain where we saw two Peregrine Falcons. John told us this site has a large Cliff Swallow colony and in Summer Rock Wrens have been seen (thank you John).

**Al Grass**



*Peregrine Falcom*

*Photo: Bob Puls*

## SEMAHMOO FISH AND GAME CLUB NATURE TRAIL WALK SATURDAY MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup> 2017

The weather was cloudy and cool as we gathered at this lovely site. We first noted a pair of Hooded Mergansers in the river. Our guide, Roy Thomson of the Semiahmoo Fish and Club, guided us along the trail (which is signed naming the plants along the way. This excellent resource was a project of Marg Cuthbert of the Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society).



*American Wigeon*

*Photo: Al Grass*

Bird highlights included Red-breasted Sapsucker; drumming and sign; Red-tailed Hawk active nest; Bald Eagle, Purple Finch (singing), Northern Flicker, Spotted Towhee, Brown Creeper (2 – good views); Pileated Woodpecker (sign); Anna's Hummingbird (lots of flowers for the birds); Mallard, American Wigeon, and Canada Goose. There were scarlet cup fungus - one of the beauties of spring - and a mink! Thanks to Roy, who also gave us an excellent account of the work of the SFGC.

**Al Grass**



*Scarlet Cup (Sarcoscypha coccinea)* *Photo: Bob Puls*

# South Coast Bat Conservation Society

Bat research, conversation and education



April: The South Coast Bat Conservation Society (SCBats) conducted a bat inventory at Forslund Watson Nature Reserve for the North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat). This report provides a summary of findings from 2016 monitoring.

One ultrasonic bioacoustics recording device (Wildlife Acoustics™ SM2Bat) was deployed along the woodland edge 450m west of the pond (UTM zone 10U 529965 easting and 5433356 northing). Recordings were made between sunset and sunrise on 10 June through 18 June. Bat identification was made from acoustic recordings by a professional biologist trained in bat acoustic analysis using the software AnaLook developed by Titley Electronics.

Seven bat species were identified at the reserve. One species detected, the little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*), is listed under Schedule I of the *Species at Risk Act*. Although this species remains abundant in British Columbia, severe population declines from the emerging disease White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) are anticipated within the next decade. One species not native to British Columbia was also detected, the Brazilian free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*). This fast, high-flying species appears to be extending its range northward from the United States.

**Table 1:** Species Detected at Forslund Watson Nature Reserve, 2016

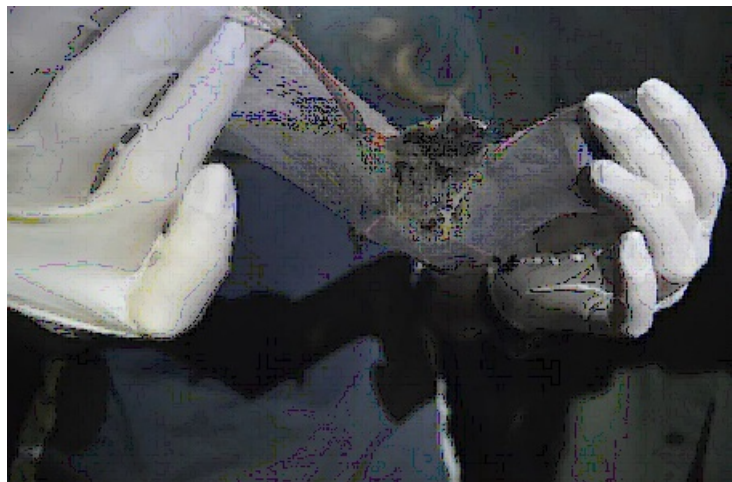
<b>Species (Scientific name)</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Species-at-risk</b>
Big brown bat ( <i>Eptesicus fuscus</i> )	High	No
Silver-haired bat ( <i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i> )	Medium	No
Hoary bat ( <i>Lasiurus cinereus</i> )	Low	No
Long-eared Myotis ( <i>Myotis evotis</i> )	Low	No
California Myotis ( <i>Myotis californicus</i> )	Low	No
Little brown Myotis ( <i>Myotis lucifugus</i> )	Medium	SARA Endangered
Brazilian free-tailed bat ( <i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i> )	High	No

SCBats is committed to the bat research, conservation, and education in British Columbia. We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to work with Langley Field Naturalists on bat conservation. We look forward to working with you again in 2017.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

Felix Martinez-Nuñez,  
SCBats Chair  
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SCBats Treasurer  
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Note: Another survey will be completed this year.



**DIRECTORS' 2017 MEETING  
AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
LILLOOET, BC, MAY 4TH TO MAY 7TH**

**Directors' Meeting:** We arrived in Lillooet on May 4th, a beautiful warm day, and picked up our registration forms at Fort Berens Estate Winery. After enjoying the scenery at the winery, I headed to the Directors' Meeting at the Lillooet Recreation Centre. I always enjoy re-uniting with club directors from all over the province to share stories and concerns. The main purpose, of course, is to attend to important BC Nature business.

President Alan Burger gave his report, referring us to the AGM booklet, but he wanted to highlight a few items such as the work done by BC Nature to amend our by-laws to conform to the new Societies Act. The issue of raising membership fees for clubs will be discussed at the meeting and voted on at the AGM. Restricted funds have now become available for funding club projects, such as wildlife youth programs and nature brochures. The upcoming Fall General Meeting will be in Vernon in September, the next AGM will be hosted by Nature Vancouver at UBC in May 2018.

Treasurer Reda Akladios, who could not be at the meeting, shared his December 31st, 2016 Financial Statements with us over the internet. He emphasized how our income is down from previous years because of less revenue from BC Nature camps and lower charitable donations. The need for a raise in fees is confirmed when we look at these numbers. We voted and approved the motion to raise BC membership dues.

Under the guidance of Kees Visser, we voted to accept BC Nature's new Vice President Virginia Rasch from Cranbrook. We also voted in favour of Vivian Birch-Jones and Susan Thorne to jointly hold the position of Secretary for a period of two years.

Past-President Kees Visser went over the changes that the Bylaws Sub-committee had already corrected, mostly with wording. But Kees had found even more wording that either had to be deleted or re-worded. After these further amendments, Kees would bring forward all amendments to the AGM for a vote.

Education committee leader referred us to her written report but wanted to highlight the new Naturalists Mentors Award that will be given for the first time this year. She wants clubs to be aware that they can nominate someone for this new ongoing award.

Heather Neville, Camps Committee chair, said that four camps for next year will be announced in BC Nature's Winter magazine.

We were advised to read other reports such as Office Updates, the Conservation Committee, Communications Committee and BC Naturalist Foundation in the AGM booklet.

After a brief discussion of issues concerning club concerns, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

**Annual General Meeting:** After a wonderful Friday of amazing field trips and a Saturday morning of informative talks, BC Nature's AGM began at 1:00 pm at the Bridge River Indian Band headquarters. After a delicious lunch provided by the Bridge River Band members, we were ready to sit down to a very full agenda.

The meeting opened with the introduction of BC Nature's new Vice-President Virginia Rasch from Cranbrook.

President Alan Burger referred us to the AGM booklet to read The President's Report, Treasurer's report, the Office Report, the Communications Committee, the Conservations committee and the annual reports from clubs. Briefly, the same issues as discussed at the directors' meeting were mentioned before a motion to accept all reports was called for approval and passed.

Kees Visser, of the sub-committee dealing with the new Societies Act, told us any new or amended bylaws can now be submitted electronically and any new bylaws or

amendments can now be approved at any general meeting, not just the AGM. He then explained the changes to BC Nature's bylaws and called for a vote on acceptance. After discussion of wording, the motion to accept was passed.

Next was a discussion about raising membership fees for club members, required by the \$8,000 deficit from previous years. In 2015 funds had to be moved from the contingency fund to cover operating funds. After debate about how much to raise fees, a motion to raise fees \$2/membership was called and passed.

Next came the presentation, discussion and voting on eight resolutions submitted by BC Nature clubs. Seven of the resolutions after discussion were passed after only slight amendments, including resolutions on roadside vegetation management during nesting season, Fossil Heritage, Unencapsulated Expanded Polystyrene used as flotation, BC Nature's position on climate change, re-instatement of BC Rail service to Lillooet and beyond, proper provincial management for Lillooet Area trails and finally solar power generation. The only resolution that was defeated concerned banning the wolf kill, submitted by the Cowichan Valley Naturalists. The discussion began with the presentation of an emotional appeal by the Cowichan club. Ensuing discussion involved many members noting the emotional words in the resolution would ensure its defeat. The resolution should be re-written more clearly, with less sentiment. Another suggestion was to break the resolution into two: one resolution concerning the value of the wolves and a second for the preservation and improvement of Caribou habitat. This resolution, as it stood, went down to defeat.

Bob Peart, the incoming president of Nature Canada, spoke to us. His job is advocating on national issues such as pipelines and, as always, he will work with BC Nature. His main goal is to get all Canadians outside, enjoying and protecting nature.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm after the completion of a jam-packed agenda.

**Kathy Masse**

## Early Morning Birding, Friday

Three groups met at 6 am on a cool overcast morning. I was in a group led by BC Nature President Alan Burger, who took us to the spawning channels on the Seton River. There we walked the perimeter trail, hoping to find some of the wide variety of summer visitors for which the area is famous. The channels are a man-made spawning stream managed by the Sekwe'el First Nation. It was built as habitat compensation to assist the reproduction of the large numbers of several species of salmon that come up from the Fraser River. First stop was the feeders behind the Splitrock Nursery at the beginning of the trail, where Brown-headed Cowbirds, Spotted Towhees and House Finches could be seen.

As we ambled along the trail, we saw Yellow-rumped Warblers and Song Sparrows but could not find the hoped-for McGillivray's Warbler. A Warbling Vireo posed for us and a Nashville Warbler was heard singing in the dense bushes but refused to be enticed into the open with bird calls. A Cooper's Hawk flew over us and obligingly perched on a hydro pole to give us great views in our Leader's scope. We found a pair of Harlequins in the channel and also found two males scrapping over a female. Then as we walked along the river dike, a Ruffed Grouse was spotted as it darted into the bushes.



*Seton River Spawning Channels*

*Web photo*

This was a very enjoyable walk in a new location for most of us, even though the species count was low due to the late spring and the cool weather.

**Gareth Pugh**

## BC NATURE AGM, LILLOOET FIELD TRIPS

### Xaxli'p Community Forest, Ethnobotany and Invasive Species

I had no intention of going on this trip, but the one I registered for was cancelled. Turned out I enjoyed it. Also turns out that all three items in the title really are related. We were welcomed by Herman Alec, a Xaxli'p and Chair of the Board of Directors for the community forest. Robin Strong, the forest manager, gave us an illustrated talk about the ontogeny and purpose of the forest and Jacquie Rasmussen talked to us about invasive plants. We were then served lunch before going into the field.

I particularly liked the 'map biographies' developed from interviews with elders that were incorporated into forest planning to sustain plants with traditional uses into forest planning and management. We saw both examples of this management and efforts to control invasive species in the field. I found their forest plan sound and discovered that burdock, particularly giant or great burdock (*Arctium lappa*), entraps bats, hummingbirds and songbirds. It was only when I got home to the web checking what all species got caught that I discovered that Velcro was developed by a Swiss engineer, tired of pulling burdock seed heads from his dog's fur. Sticky, lethal Velcro.

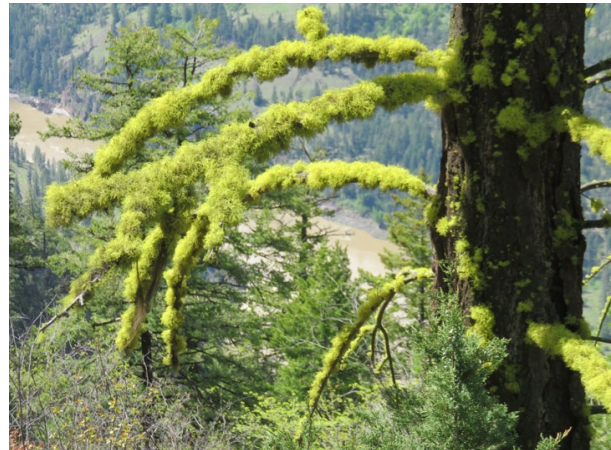
**Fred Bunnell**



*Long-horned bee* Photo: Anthea Farr

## Fountain Ridge Hike

I had no idea this would be such a challenging hike, or that I was not in the shape I thought I was. A group of about 15 of us set off after our leader, a relatively young man and avid mountain biker. The only times I saw him again were at a rest stop (he'd been there for ages waiting for us stragglers) and again at the lunch stop. The trail climbed up steeply and relentlessly, with very few level parts. Pauses had to be short as the mosquitoes soon caught up. There were ticks too, but I think they were all flung off before they had time to bite.



*Wolf lichen*

Photo: Anthea Farr

Adorning trees along the trail was the incredible, brilliant green wolf lichen. Also, the Saskatoon bushes were in fine form, ablaze with white blossoms. We were serenaded by a Red-breasted Nuthatch and saw numerous grouse droppings. Corey found a bright red jumping spider. The view at the lunch stop was a fine one, even though clouds obscured the peaks. Coming back, we were fascinated to watch a snow avalanche flowing down a slope across the valley.

The steep downhill sections were brutal on the knees of some of us (and yes, we older ones did have trekking poles). It was a relief to reach the open grassland and flowering balsamroot near our cars. At that point, the sun came out and so did the bees and butterflies, including long-horned bees and a lovely orangetip butterfly. That was the best part of the hike for me – just a few dozen meters from our car!

**Anthea Farr**

## Wildflowers/Butterflies/ St'at'ime Plants



Out in the meadow

Photo: Bob Puls

The morning was cool and cloudy as 16 of us left in four-wheel drive vehicles for the logging roads east of the Bridge River, north of Lillooet. Candice Jack led us along restricted access roads on her traditional territory where she pointed out which plants they harvested and how they ate them. Eleanor Wright was our Lillooet naturalist leader and Odin Scholtz the expert in all things natural. We first stopped at a small meadow at moderate elevation and examined the flora and fauna on the site.

Butterflies were a bust for the day, it being too windy and cool, but we saw lots of interesting plants and insects.

We then continued up the mountainside to various small ponds and meadows at increasing elevations. Intermittent showers had us switching into rain gear now and again, but on the whole it was pleasant weather.



*Selaginella wallacei* (l) and *S. densa* (r) Photo: Bob Puls

Highlights for me were Barrow's Goldeneye on one pond with many Yellow-rumped Warblers flitting around, lots of lichens and mosses, in particular the club-mosses *Selaginella wallacei* and *S. densa*, which we rarely find in the lower mainland, as well as *Hippuris vulgaris* Mare's-tail (similar to Horse-tail) growing in the water. There were lots of insects feeding on the Arrow-leaved balsamroot and dandelion flowers, most of which seemed to be *Melissodes* species of long-horned bees.



*Melissodes* sp.

Photo: Bob Puls

The most striking find was a Western Terrestrial (wandering) Garter snake about 30" long which Candice greeted with a resounding First Nations scream and a leap when it appeared out of a shrub close to her feet.



To cap off the trip as we descended from the highlands, we saw a rainbow in the valley below.

**Bob Puls**

## **Xwisten Fraser River Fishing Rocks & Archeology**

My field trip in Lillooet was the "Traditional Fishing Rock and Archaeological Village Tour." Our guide was Ashley of the Xwisten or Bridge River Band. Her family is from the Bear Clan.

The tour began from a roadside view of the fishing grounds at the junction of the Bridge and Fraser Rivers. The St'at'imc people (members of the Lillooet Tribal Council) still use this area every summer to gather and wind dry salmon for winter consumption. The traditional fishing practises used include dip nets, gill nets and drift nets.

We took a walk down a gravel trail to get a closer view of the area. Ashley answered our multitude of questions and described how Salmon are caught and dried on each family's racks. The racks remain in place all year. It takes a lot of effort to construct them on the rough, steep terrain. The racks must be set well back from potential flood areas. Many racks were lost during the 1997 flooding. How do the people know when to prepare for the fishing? Ashley told us "When the rosebuds bloom the salmon are coming!" The hot, dry, and windy summer climate in the area is perfect for drying the salmon. Sockeye is the species used for drying. The racks must be supervised all summer to keep the black bears away.

One senior fellow in our group told us his memories of seeing drying racks all along the Fraser down to Boston Bar. He described it as a "sea of orange along the river". Sadly there are only pockets of this activity left with nature and human impact on the rivers and streams.

The next part of our tour was at the extensive archaeological site north of Lillooet. It contains the remains of over 80 identified underground pit houses or S7istken. This site was the traditional winter home of the St'at'imc people. Pit houses were built communally. A shallow pit was dug and then a structure was made using about 150 layers of clay, boughs and leaves. It was supported by a series of poles. A chimney hole with pole ladder was the main entrance. A second side opening was used by the elders, women and children. A typical pit house could

last 20 years. Then the poles were removed and the structure was burned to the ground. A new house was constructed on top of the old site. At one of the excavation sites, over 17 layers of old houses were discovered along with artifacts such as tools, fish bones and material traded with the Europeans. It was amazing to see and walk through the area where the depressions of about 30 pit houses remain. The site of the Chief's house had tunnels connecting 2 other houses and various cache pits. It was strategically situated to overlook the entire village. This village site was occupied for several thousand years. It is believed the village population was at its height about 200 years ago with a population of about 2000. We went inside the pit house, rebuilt over 10 years ago by the community as a symbol of history and tradition. (see photo).

To complete our tour, we had lunch at the Xwisten Band HQ. We were served sockeye salmon fillets accompanied by side dishes and dessert of whipped soapberries or Sx'usum. We also sampled the wind dried salmon. I can attest that Chef Annie does a wonderful job and "makes the best bannock in Lillooet!" It was a great tour highlighted by spectacular scenery, local history and interesting people.

Thanks to all the volunteers and the people of Lillooet who made the AGM and our stay so enjoyable!

***Joanne Rosenthal***



*Pit house*

*Photo: Joanne Rosenthal*

## Backcountry Birding with Ian Routley



*Confluence of Bridge and Fraser Rivers Photo: Bob Puls*

Ian Routley, a well-known member of the Lillooet Club and a very experienced birder, led us on a fascinating trip up the Fraser River canyon. We headed north on Highway 99 and our first stop was above the confluence of the Bridge River, where Ian gave us some background on the Bridge River Band and the conservation work they have been involved in. He told us how Lillooet is at the centre of seven bio-diversity zones which is why there have been so many different species recorded there. Every species of owl found in Canada has been recorded there and a number of rarities have turned up from time to time.

We drove on for several kilometres until we reached Ian's main objective, a large ranch on the bench lands above the Fraser. After driving some distance off the road on a rough track, we parked the vehicles and started walking across the grasslands towards the river so that we could look down onto the area where Long-billed Curlew are known to nest. Ian stopped part way to set up his scope and show us a Golden Eagle's nest on the cliffs across



*Curlew nest*

*Web photo*

the river but there was no bird on the nest. As we continued walking through the grass, Ian saw a curlew walking away very furtively and looked down to find a nest with four eggs almost under his feet, so he quickly led us away. Everyone had great views of the curlew's unusual behaviour as it tried to lure us away.

As we walked back, we heard and saw Meadowlarks, Chukar and Vesper Sparrow. On our way out we met the rancher who asked Ian to show him the location of the Curlew nest so that they could protect the area until the chicks hatch. It was good to see the level of cooperation with the local naturalists.

Driving further up the main road, we turned off onto a gravel road leading up into a higher elevation valley. There we stopped for our lunch break, with sweeping views of ranchlands where cattle and young calves were grazing under partially cloudy skies: a typical spring day. After lunch, we drove further on to see a small reservoir. As we walked across the fields, we saw some Horned Larks and a large flock of migrating American Pipits, while around the reservoir large numbers of at least three species of swallows chased insects around us. From there we drove on to an area where Sapsuckers breed, but the cool showery weather must have dampened their spirits as we only heard one drumming in the distance. As the road was in worse condition at this point after the recent heavy rains, we turned back to the main road.

On our way back, the sun came out so we stopped to take a short walk in an area of Ponderosa Pine, where many trees had been lost either to fire or the Pine Beetle epidemic. Ian showed us an area where there were a number of depressions in the ground that are all that remain of the pit houses of a large settlement. It had been abandoned many years ago due, it is believed, to a shortage of food in the area as a result of climatic change, similar to what has happened with other ancient civilizations.

This was another very enjoyable outing which was, for me, the highlight of the whole weekend.

**Gareth Pugh**

## Koaham Train to Seton Portage and Tsal'alh

### *The train that never came!*

Originally intended to be a round trip train excursion, this was amended thanks to a last minute CPR decision to work on the track. So at 7 am we gathered at the Lillooet train station to be greeted by our guide, Christine Galliazzo, a forester and Lillooet naturalist. We boarded a small bus and headed out along Pioneer Route 40 - a winding country road. The scenery is beautiful, and we stopped for a view of the confluence of the Bridge River & Fraser River, where the First Nations have many fish drying racks; this is a favourite fishing spot.

Travelling on, past the Xwisten Bridge River Indian Band headquarters (where we would be meeting on Saturday for the AGM), we travelled beside the Bridge River, often high above, with sheer drops down beside the road. The road became gravel, the angle steeper as we climbed higher.

Our next stop was at the Terzaghi Dam for a good view of Carpenter Lake - presently somewhat low to enable work to be done on the dam. This is part of the Seton Portage hydro electric project of BC Hydro - where they drilled through the mountain to pipe water from Carpenter Lake (which is much higher) to Seton Lake, generating electricity at Seton Portage.

We turned to drive across the lake - leaving the road to Bralorne - and along the side of Carpenter Lake on the South Shalalth Road. This road was not for the faint of heart - hairpin bends, sheer drops for hundreds of feet with no verge or guard rails, and much of it single track with occasional passing places - most of which were on the hairpin bends!

Arriving in Seton Portage after a 3 hour journey, we were met by Garry John of the local First Nation, on the shore of Anderson Lake. He welcomed us with a traditional drum song of welcome, and explained their story of how Anderson and Seton Lakes used to be one. He told us about the land given to them as reservation, and how the railway had taken some, and BC Hydro had taken more, until they are left with less than half their original lands.



Seton Lake

Photo: Sheila Puls

Anderson Lake is beautifully clear, Seton Lake shows as a glorious turquoise - due to turbidity. According to Garry, if Hydro stop generating for two days, the lake returns to clear.

With the advent of rain, some walked and others rode the bus to a First Nations campground, where his people gave us a wonderful bag lunch before we headed into Seton Portage train station for the return journey. The train had been due at the station at 11.30 am, but by 12 noon it had not arrived, so Christine made a phone call - and oops, there had been a slide across the rails. Luckily, Christine had asked the bus driver to stay with us until we boarded the train, so we piled back on the bus and, with a short stop at the local pub to drown our sorrows, we braved the road back to Lillooet. On arrival back at Lillooet Train Station, there was the train - and the staff were apologetic about not being able to fetch us, and opened up the train so we could see inside. A fascinating trip even without the train ride!

**Sheila Puls**



Koaham Train at Lillooet

Photo: Sheila Puls

## PRESENTATIONS:

**FISHERS** Larry Davis MSc., RPBio

**WOLVERINES** Richard Weir, MSc., RPBio

These two excellent Saturday morning presentations were complementary, about two relatively unknown members of the weasel family. Both are very shy of human contact, and little is known about them - most especially the numbers living in our wilderness. These two wildlife researchers have been working on a project to find more about these reclusive animals.

Larry Davis explained that there were thought to be about 3800 Fishers in BC, and that they are 'blue listed'. They den in the internal cavities in old growth trees and there was concern that declining habitat could mean declining numbers. With a maximum 8 year life span, maturity at 2 or 3 years old and a birth rate of 1 or 2 kits a year, the lack of habitat was of concern. It was decided to build nest boxes and install them in areas known to be inhabited by the species.

A number of plywood boxes were built and installed in the Bridge River area, with still and movie trail cameras to check whether they would be used - and two were used the first year. The size of the entrance was considered critical as the male is thought to kill the kits. Larry showed video of the moms and kits - one female was very upset about the intrusion of the light/camera used to check the box, the other was completely unconcerned. He also showed a hilarious video of the male Fisher, head stuck in the entrance hole, legs waving, in an attempt to get in.

Maintaining the den boxes will provide reproductive habitat for an estimated 14 Fisher that reside in the watershed.



*Fisher*

*Web photo*



*Wolverine*

*Web photo*

Richard Weir started by explaining that Wolverines are just large weasels, and that although they have a reputation for being vicious, they prefer to avoid human contact. Their preferred habitat is where people are not - snowy landscapes and deep forests.

Wolverines are scavengers who will also hunt and can bring down a caribou. There are thought to be about 3500 in the Province, and they too are 'blue listed'. The Wolverines are a species of management focus for the B.C. Government due to uncertainty about sustainability of legal trapping and harvest.

Richard had mapped out an area in the Kootenays to attempt to obtain numbers of this shy species. Ramps were built with barbed wire tunnels to access hanging bait in order to try to get hair samples for DNA. Small clippers were mounted with the barbed wire. Trail cameras were installed.

The resulting videos showed the persistence of the animals as they walked up the ramps, leaped and hung onto the bait, ate for a while before dropping to the ground, walking round and doing the same again. As they posed for the leap, the still cameras caught an excellent view of the markings so it was possible to identify individuals. As to the hair samples - Wolverines are reluctant to spare any hair - one walked up the ramp over 20 times and left a total of 2 hairs!

The good news is that there were about 3 times the number identified as had been expected.

These are two ongoing projects sponsored by the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program.

**Sheila Puls**

## WHAT IS A BUTTERFLY GARDEN? AL GRASS

This year we will be selecting colourful plants for a butterfly garden, but what makes a good butterfly garden? Essentially there are two needs for these insects:

- 1) Nectar sources – lots of colour.
- 2) Larval (caterpillar) feeding plants – nettles and willows are locally important



*Western Tiger Swallowtail*

*Photo: Al Grass*

In our area, some of the butterflies that we can expect to see are:

- Western Tiger Swallowtail
- Anise swallowtail
- Pale (Black and White) Swallowtail
- Anglewings (several)
- Mourning Cloak
- Lorquin's Admiral
- Red Admiral
- Cabbage White
- Pine White
- Woodland Skipper
- White-lined Sphinx (moth) – it acts and feeds like a hummingbird – beautiful!

Butterfly gardens are also excellent for hummingbirds like our two common species Anna's and Rufous. The garden here will be a nectar source garden. There are plenty of wild plants on site for their caterpillars (willow, stinging nettle (very important), cow parsnip, etc.!

**Al Grass**

## PROGRAMMES

Meeting at 7.15 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley



PLEASE Bring your own coffee mug - we don't want to keep using disposable ones.

### THURSDAY JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup>

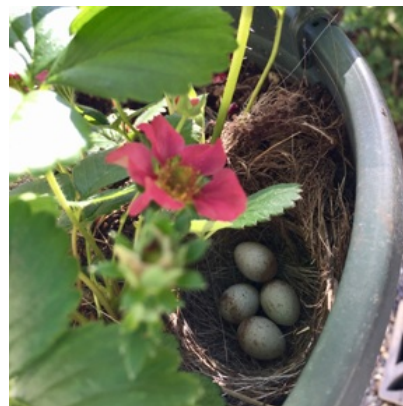
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** see page 1  
**MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY**

### THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

**BC SPECIES AT RISK -  
DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE**

Speaker Fred Bunnell

A look at ecological and legislative reasons why BC has so many species at risk. Points are illustrated by looking at the fate of the first four species legally designated as endangered in the province (in 1980). The rabbit hole lurks because in the Wonderland of BC these are still the only species legally designated as endangered.



*Junco nest in strawberry hanging basket - with eggs, and later with two chicks*

*Photos: Joanne Rosenthal*



## FIELD TRIPS

Please Note: anyone wishing to carpool should phone in to make arrangements beforehand, otherwise please meet at the designated meeting place. **Please call to let the leader know to expect you.** The walks are generally about two to three hours long and are open to all Naturalist Clubs & members of the public (adults & children, but no pets please). Dress for the weather and bring water, binoculars and a snack, plus bug spray in the summer.

*Note these walks are weather dependent so if the weather is bad and no calls are received then the leader will not show up.*

### SATURDAY JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### LANGLEY COMMUNITY DAY

Douglas Park, City of Langley

### FRIDAY JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> - SUNDAY JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup>

#### MANNING PARK BIRD BLITZ

Phone 604-869-1274 or  
info@hopemountain.org for information  
\$60 per birder

### SATURDAY JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup>

#### IRENE PEARCE TRAIL

Leader: Anthea Farr

Time: 9:00 am at the parking lot, east side of  
224<sup>th</sup> St at where 5th Ave would be.

Join the Langley Field Naturalists as we walk the trails in this rural park, that was turned into a park after pressure was exerted by the Council of Ratepayers and LFN. It is part of the Municipal Natural Park with the Little Campbell River flowing through it and has stands of mature Douglas Fir. Phone: 604-576-7731 for info and to let us know to expect you.

### WEDNESDAY JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>

#### GEORGE C. REIFEL

#### MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY – DELTA

Leader: Al Grass

Time: 9:00 am at Reifel

Join the Langley Field Naturalists to walk the trails in this well known nature reserve. Expect to see lots of birds in the middle of the breeding season and a great variety of trees and shrubs. Please dress for the weather and wear proper foot ware. There is a small admission fee. Bring lunch, snacks, and refreshments. Meet at the Reifel Sanctuary. Phone 604-538-8774 to let us know to expect you.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 5<sup>TH</sup>

#### WESTERN TOADS, THEIR FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

Leaders: Christy Juteau and Ryan Usenik

Time: Meet at A Rocha,

1620 – 192nd Street at 6:30 pm

Join Christy and Ryan to view and learn about the A Rocha on site projects. Also learn about their work with a local Western Toad breeding colony. If nature cooperates we hope to view migrating Toads. If the migration is late, we will notify participants when it starts and where to view it. Phone 604-530-3257 for info and to let us know to expect you.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 12<sup>TH</sup>

#### E.C. MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK

#### PAINTBRUSH TRAIL & VIEW POINT LOOP

Leader: Bob Puls

Time: Meet in Langley at 7:30 am or  
Manning Park Lodge at 9:30 am.

Join Bob to wander along some of the Manning Park trails to check the summer flowers in this wonderful park in the coastal mountains. Choice of trail will depend on the snowpack. Bring botany books. Weather permitting only. Phone 604-856-7534 for info and to arrange car pooling.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>

#### WEST CREEK WETLANDS

Leader: Lisa Parker

Time: Meet on the south side of 72nd Ave  
approx 400 metres west of 264th Street  
at 6:30 pm. Parking is available on the  
north side of 72nd Avenue.

Join Lisa for an evening walk through the woods to the lake where beaver are usually seen. Phone 604-532-0081 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **WEDNESDAY JULY 26<sup>TH</sup>**

### **CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK**

Leaders: Jude and Al Grass

Time: Meet at 16th Ave Parking Lot at 6:30 pm.

Join Jude and Al to walk the trails and explore nature in high summer. Phone 604-538-8774 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **SATURDAY JULY 29<sup>TH</sup>**

### **GRASS SHACK SUMMER SOCIAL**

All members welcome

Time: 10 am to 4 pm

Birdwatching and guided walk

See ad on page 1

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 2<sup>ND</sup>**

### **NICOMEKL FLOOD PLAIN**

Leaders: Al Grass and Lisa Parker

Time: Meet at Portage Park at the end of 204th Street at 6:30 pm.

Join Al and Lisa for a summer evening walk along part of the extensive trail system in the heart of Langley. Call 604-538-8774 or 604-532-0081 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9<sup>TH</sup>**

### **HOUSTON TRAIL - DERBY REACH**

Leaders: Anne Gosse & Joan Taylor

Time: Meet at Houston Trail parking lot on Allard Crescent, Langley at 6:30 pm.

Join Anne and Joan to walk the trails and see the new observation platform with views over the pond. Phone 604-888-1787 or 604-868-6417 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup>**

### **ALDERGROVE REGIONAL PARK**

Leader: Bob Puls

Time: Meet in the parking Lot at 645 Lefeuve Road (one block South of 8th Avenue) at 6:30 pm

Phone 604-856-7534 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 23<sup>RD</sup>**

### **FORSLUND-WATSON WILDLIFE AREA**

Leader: Ryan Usenik

Time: Meet at 2705-232nd Street at 6:30 pm. Join Ryan as he leads us through this property which LFN co-manages with the B.C. Ministry of the Environment. Part open fields and part woodland. Wear waterproof footwear as some of the trails may still be flooded. Phone: 604-530-3257 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **SATURDAY AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup>**

### **CYPRESS PARK AND YEW LAKE**

Leader: Al Grass

Time: 9:15 am in the Cypress Bowl Parking lot at the info kiosk. Parking fee in effect.

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 the 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. Phone 604-538-8774 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>**

### **POINT ROBERTS**

Leader: Gareth Pugh

Time: 9:00 am at Lighthouse Park

Join us as we visit Point Roberts to walk along the beach and scan the ocean for whales and the various seabirds that can be found there. We will also visit Lily Point Park and Marine Reserve which is in Whatcom County Park. Bring lunch, snacks and refreshments and, of course, your passports. Phone 604-576-6831 for info and to let us know to expect you.

## **FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>**

### **GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK**

#### **FALL FUNGI, MUSHROOMS AND MORE**

Leader: Al Grass

Time: 9:30 am in the Park Entrance Parking lot (just past the goat)

Bring lunch as we will finish at the Alouette Lake Day use area. We will walk the Spirea Nature Trail and the Lower Falls trails in search of fungi and more. Phone 604-538-8774 for info and to let us know to expect you.