



# Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

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Newsletter

June 2018

## PAINTED TURTLES IN LANGLEY

The Painted Turtle gets its name from the bold yellow stripes 'painted' on its head, neck, legs, and tail, and from the red, irregularly shaped markings that pattern the plastron (belly shell) and under-rim of the carapace (back shell). The carapace of these turtles is black to greenish black, and males may have dark worm-like markings. Females are larger than males with plastrons up to 25 centimetres long. Male plastrons measure between 9 and 17 cm long. Claws on the front feet also differ between sexes – males have long slender claws while females have short claws.



Red-eared Sliders at Brydon Lagoon

Photo: Lilianne Fuller

As the only native freshwater turtle in BC, the Painted Turtle is unlikely to be confused with any other species. However, the Slider, with a bright red patch on each 'ear,' has unfortunately been released into wetlands by pet owners in many parts of BC. The Western Pond Turtle, once resident in the Lower Mainland, no longer occurs in the province.

Painted Turtles prefer the margins and shallows of lakes, ponds, ditches and sluggish streams with muddy bottoms and lots of aquatic plants. These areas provide important habitat for feeding, basking, shelter from predators, and hibernation.



Turtles at McLean Pond; the largest is a slider, but there are also Painted Turtles at the pond.

Photo: Lilianne Fuller

Painted Turtles also require nearby upland nesting areas (within 150 metres) that are usually south-facing, with no vegetation and dry, light soil free of roots and large stones

Although abundant in many parts of the United States, the Painted Turtle is at the northern limit of its range within B.C. With little suitable habitat available for this specialised animal, the BC population of Painted Turtle is relatively small (likely only a few thousand).

Source:  
BC Ministry of Environment

## LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2017-2018 DIRECTORS

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**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**



As I approach the tenth anniversary of my presidency I'm reflecting on what the LFN has achieved during this time:

1. Forslund Watson Wildlife Area - several hundred conifers planted to enhance diversity, a new vernal pond installed, nest boxes installed and monitored, bat box installed, owl box installed, Flying squirrel boxes installed and continued bird and dragonfly counts.
2. Mountain View Crown Land Bio-diversity study - survey trails blazed, 2000 species of flora and fauna recorded over the past 8 years.
3. Purple Martin Nest Box project - assisted Metro Vancouver Parks with this project which has finally been successful.
4. Aldergrove Regional Park Wetlands Restoration (Marvin Marsh) - monitored bird use over the duration of the project.
5. B.C. Breeding Bird survey - assisted with this five year project.
6. Christmas Bird Counts - assisted with several area counts, as well as the DRBIPA count, the Glen Valley Spring count and A Rocha count.
7. Library and Historical record updates and locating office records at LEPS.
8. WEB site and Facebook upgrades and postings.
9. Bird Brochure launch and upcoming Butterfly brochure publication.
10. Conservation - Brydon Lagoon stewardship in the City, but far too many failures in the Township.

Not a bad record I submit.

**Bob**

*During that time Bob also received Langley's "Environmental Hero Lifetime Achievement award", "2017 LEPS Stewardship Volunteer of the Year award" and BC Nature "Club Service Award".*

## WE NEED AN INFUSION OF NEW IDEAS FOR THE LFN EXECUTIVE



Our club activities are conducted by a dedicated Executive, all volunteering their skills and knowledge to lead field trips, evening talks, community activities and conservation initiatives. Still, our current executive members are mostly retirees, some working for years in a position, growing older, and less able to contribute energetically.

For the Langley Field Naturalists to continue with a high degree of strength and vibrancy, we need to recruit new and younger members to our executive every now and then. In this way, we ensure infusion of more modern perspectives and new approaches. We welcome new volunteers who wish to bring their innovative ideas to the club, allowing a well-deserved retirement for some of our long serving executive.

We encourage all of you to consider taking on an executive role in the LFN as an opportunity to contribute to a new way of performing a given executive position. As an entry to this new role, a member could also shadow a position he or she is interested in, as a way of easing into an important role. You would be working with and mentored by a great group of people.

## LFN RECYCLE PROGRAM



An account using the number 222-222-3333 has been set up for Fraser Valley Bottle & Return-It Depot (Unit 108, 22575 Fraser Highway (beside Big Box, Murrayville)) and Willowbrook Return-it. (19641 60 Ave.)

Either bring cans and bottles to the LFN meeting or put your containers in a clear plastic bag. Bring your bagged containers to your nearest Express Return-it depot. Find the Barcode label machine and enter 222-222-3333. Select the number of bags you are dropping off. Print the barcode label(s) and stick them on your bag(s). Drop the bags where they are piled up near the barcode machine. Done.

*Nora Truman*

## TREE PLANTING AT ARBOUR DAYS IN MEMORY OF RHYS GRIFFITHS

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 2018, Arbour Day celebrations took place at the Philip Jackman Park in Aldergrove, and a tree was planted in memory of Rhys Griffiths. Close by, another was planted in memory of his long time friend and fellow environmentalist, Dick Bunbury. Although the park is very urban, and the trees non-native, it is still a fitting tribute to two lovers of nature who will be very widely missed.



## ANOTHER LONG-TIME MEMBER PASSES

### SUSAN MARGARET (SUE) PLUMRIDGE

Sue passed away March 29<sup>th</sup> at the age of 98. For 94 of those years she had lived within a four mile radius in Langley City. Born Susan Wilson, she married Bill Plumridge in the early 40's, Bill being postmaster in Langley for many years.

About twenty years ago, Sue and Bill joined LFN, and even after Bill's death Sue remained an enthusiastic member. She remained a member until this last year, when her health caused her to make the decision not to renew. Her death was only three months later.

## BC NATURE CLUB SERVICE AWARD

At the BC Nature Annual General Meeting, two Langley Field Naturalists' members received special awards - Bob Puls received the Club Service Award and Anne Gosse received the Naturalist Mentor award (and will be featured on the back cover of the next BC Nature magazine).



*Bob receives his award*

*Photo: Kathy Masse*

Bob joined the Langley Field Naturalists in the early 2000's and has been our excellent President since 2008. In addition, he has served as Conservation Officer for 8 years.

Bob has also been an active volunteer with other community groups, such as the Langley Heritage Society, Fort Langley National Historic Site, and WOLF (Watchers of Langley Forests). As well, he served on the Board of Langley Environmental Partners.

Perhaps Bob's most outstanding contribution as a volunteer is his persistence as an environmental watchdog, not only of development projects in Langley Township and Langley City, but also of degradation of farmland. He also watches for degradation in our local reclaimed gravel pits. For all these issues, he writes many letters and attends council meetings to speak up for nature. He attends focus groups for Langley Township, urging preservation of our natural heritage as well as cultural heritage.

Bob welcomes others to help with his many Citizen Science projects. He is a section leader in two Christmas Bird Counts, urging both experienced birders and newcomers to join him. He has encouraged two local teenagers to conduct monthly

bird counts in Langley's Forslund/Watson Wildlife Area. Bob also welcomes help with his nature monitoring projects, such as at Mountain View Crown Lands.

Inspired by naturalist Glenn Ryder's records of the area, Bob initiated regular surveys of Mountain View. With help from other naturalists and North American experts, Bob found and identified over a thousand species of vertebrates, invertebrates, plants and fungi - information that may help to preserve this special property.

Bob clearly enjoys being outside, whether installing nest boxes at Brydon Lagoon, counting birds at Marvin Marsh, or planting trees at Forslund/Watson. He has been recognized as an outstanding naturalist in Langley; winning Langley Environmental Hero Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012 and LEPS' Steward of the Year in 2017. Bob is an inspiration to other LFN club members and is well deserving of BC Nature's Club Service Award.



*Anne Receives her award*

*Photo: Dave Riley*

Anne Gosse brings her enthusiasm and love for nature to the Langley Field Naturalists. This enthusiasm encourages members and the public to more fully appreciate our natural environment. Anne joined our LFN club 15 years ago and soon became the field trip leader. Her skillful selection of interesting trips and excellent leaders resulted in many memorable nature adventures. As she is an excellent birder, Anne led many of these trips herself. She posted an online blog after each trip, illustrated by her wonderful photos.

Anne also loves the Tofino area and its rich

intertidal life, which is why she organized BC Nature's Tofino Field Camp for three years. She successfully planned all the details of the camp: accommodations, food, speakers and trip leaders. This exceptional camp always had a wait list.

Anne gives generously of her time, bringing her love of nature to kids. She has led many birding walks for Brownies, Sparks and schoolchildren. At our LFN display booth at various public events, she enthusiastically engages kids in hands-on activities. With her ready smile, leadership and love of nature, Anne is a treasured member of the Langley Field Naturalists and most definitely a Naturalists Mentor.

***Thank you to Bob and Anne for all the work you do for nature and the environment.***

## **BC NATURE AGM VANCOUVER, MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> TO MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

BC Nature's 2018 Annual General Meeting was hosted this year by Nature Vancouver who are celebrating their 100th anniversary. For 3 days we enjoyed inspirational presentations on interesting topics and instructive field trips to beautiful local environments. On our final afternoon we came inside for our AGM.

Many of the topics covered were the same as at the Directors' meeting so details won't be repeated here. However, I recommend you go to BC Nature's website <http://www.bcnature.ca/> and under 'Latest News' click on the link to the Annual Report and Financial Report. This brings up the Annual Report that includes not only the President's Report, but also the hard working Conservation Committee's Report, listing all the issues they have pursued for the year. Other reports include the Education Committee report, Communications', Office Manager's, Treasurer's, Project's, NatureKids BC and more. The most interesting will be the Club Reports from all regions of the province. You will read about projects and initiatives of other clubs that could inspire similar projects for the Langley Field Naturalists.

When the Education Report was mentioned, Chair: Margaret Cuthbert announced a Naturalist Mentor chosen to be highlighted in the next issue of BC Nature's magazine. Anne Gosse was one of the selected and we watched proudly as she received her certificate of appreciation. (See page 4)

Jill Sturdy from Nature Canada spoke briefly about the organization working with nature groups throughout the country. They work federally on policy for better environmental laws. Another goal is to engage and inspire young people.

Elyse Curley, BC Parks South Coast Community Liason Officer, gave a power point presentation about their Community Engagement Program, which began in 2002. BC is divided into 5 regions and each region has a community liason officer. BC Nature has liaised with this program since 2006. BC Parks have a volunteer funding opportunity for a grant of \$5000 for a club's project such as invasive removals, nature monitoring or building small structures in BC Parks that must be completed in a year.

There was only one Resolution presented this year: The Bulkley Valley Naturalists' "Banning the Use of Lead in Ammunition and Fishing Gear" which garnered much discussion. Walter Thorne of the Kitimat club stated that the wording of the resolution was very firm and BC Nature's resolution, if passed, could alienate northern residents who hunt and fish. After much discussion, the consensus was that this resolution was badly needed to protect wildlife and the wording should not be changed. The resolution passed as written.

Anne Murray spoke about the Important Bird Areas program initiated in 1996 as a caretaker program working with BC Nature and Bird Studies Canada. There is a specific outreach to indigenous communities to become involved in the program. Roger Emsley, Roberts Bank Representative for BC Nature and a member of the community group "Against Port Expansion", spoke about the proposed doubling of Roberts Bank Terminal. Van Ports is pushing hard for this but Roger says there is no immediate economic need. There is an environmental assessment ongoing for several years with a submission from BC Nature. The biofilm that is essential for the survival of migratory shorebirds would be destroyed by this development. The changes in salinity that would occur would be permanent, irreversible and disastrous, especially for Western Sandpipers.

The AGM adjourned shortly after 4:00 pm.

***Kathy Masse***

## **BC NATURE'S CLUB DIRECTORS' MEETING TUESDAY MAY 10TH UBC FOREST SCIENCES CENTRE**

After checking in to our accommodation at Ponderosa Commons, I headed over to the UBC Forest Sciences Centre for BC Nature's Director's meeting. It is always good to meet up with club directors from all over the province, sharing news and common issues.

President Alan Burger gave his President's report, emphasizing a few important points. A new Harassment Officer, Gwen L'Hirondelle of the Squamish Environmental conservation Society, has been appointed by BC Nature. As well, Gwen, along with the President and Past President, will form a Disciplinary Committee as per BC Nature's constitution. While rarely needed, it is useful to have the ability to deal with such issues. He also noted his part in the Protected Places Initiative led by Nature Canada which aims to have protected 17% (currently 15%) of the province by 2020, urging the provincial and federal governments to help reach the targets. BC Nature and Nature Canada have just jointly received \$30,000 per year for 2 years from the Sitka Foundation; funding to promote protection of the Fraser River Estuary and Creston Valley Wetlands.

BC Nature has gained a new club this year with the reactivation of the Nanaimo club which already has 104 members. With the loss of the North Shuswap club, BC Nature received back \$1500 which they have decided to gift as a support for clubs who have not hosted either an AGM or FGM for the last 15 years, enabling them to do so. The AGM 2019 will be held by the Cowichan Valley Naturalists in Duncan. A host is still needed for the 2019 FGM.

The treasurer's report was presented and discussed.

Motions were presented and voted on to approve the re-appointment of Alan Burger for a second term, but just for one year, as well as a re-appointment of Virginia Rasch as Vice-President for a



*The atrium at the Forest Sciences Centre*

second term, just for one year. In May 2019 Virginia will become BC Nature's president. Joyce Tombouljian was voted in as the new Treasurer for 2 years, as well as the appointment of Claudia Copley as co-Secretary along with Susan Thorne. Of special interest, Jude now has a Co-Coordinator for the Lower Mainland Region, Hilary Miller of WildResearch, who is a much needed addition for the management of our large region. A Communications Director is still needed.

Vice-president Virginia Rasch led a discussion concerning the Strategic Plan Review. A need for organizational renewal has been identified to improve BC Nature and its clubs. To this end, a professional facilitator is sought to lead an Executive retreat to formulate a plan. As well, another paid staff is needed in the office to help Betty.

Matt Price from Nature Canada spoke to us about improving BC Nature's image to the public. We need to initiate people-centred campaigns, enhanced by technology and data. We also need to draw in more diverse people to our organization. It is planned that Matt will present a work shop on this at the FGM in Duncan aimed at clubs, and called "Engagement Organizing".

Betty spoke to us about the new online membership data base. It will be tested from June through August on four clubs and gradually rolled out to all clubs, to be fully operational by October, with proper training of club membership people inputting data. The new system will make mailing magazines and annual billings easier and will save time and money. It will be secure for each club and will have the ability for clubs to run historical reports.

The meeting concluded with a breakout session for each region to discuss local issues. The LFN belongs to the largest group, the Lower Mainland, and we discussed getting together for a long awaited meeting of our region's clubs. Jude will find a suitable date for this meeting to be held in the near future.

**Kathy Masse**

**BC NATURE AGM  
THE FUTURE OF BC FORESTS  
SPEAKER: DR JOHN INNES**

Dr Innes, the Dean of UBC Faculty of Forestry, spoke of the need to change the traditional view of BC Forests from being an infinite source of raw timber to a source of bio-economy - attaching a new value to the forests. He spoke of moving from using solid wood to engineered wood products which use less raw lumber - bio-plastics to replace plastic, and using cellulose filaments.

He stressed biodiversity, a new need to value conservation, and funding forests for carbon and wetland credits. Biodiversity is also essential to protect soil and water, and to maintain good habitat for wildlife.

Still missing is the recognition of the impact on human health - that for over a thousand years people have recognized that being in nature is healing, but that now this can be measured, and a new "forest bathing" - spending time in nature - trend is increasing.

Although the forest industry claims that BC leads the world, the truth is that BC is lagging behind much of the rest of the world. We need new attitudes, new industries, new governance, more value added products and more non-extractive forest uses.

Dr. Innes' presentation was challenging to hear, but he offered excellent perspective and a clear way forward - now we have to hope he can convince the politicians and industry leaders!

**Sheila Puls**

**BC NATURE AGM- SPECIES AT RISK  
SPEAKER DR. ERIC (RICK) TAYLOR  
UBC ZOOLOGY & BEATY BIODIVERSITY  
MUSEUM**

Dr. Taylor is chair of the Commottee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife and Species at Risk in Canada (COSEWIC) and a director of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum at UBC. He spoke about the status of Species at Risk in BC and Canada. The number of Species at Risk in Canada is 814 and

84% on the list are not recovering. Three on the list have gone extinct.

He told us how the department and government identify risks to the many different categories of species. Field biologists studying within their niche specialty (such as mammals, flora, lichens, insects, and reptiles) are all competing to have their endangered species on this list. However, it is quite a slow and cumbersome process taking at least two years to finally get on the SARA list. Each category is first assessed, supporting research paperwork filled out, and after many consultations it is submitted to a sixty-person panel. The species submitted needs 31 votes. Finally, if it passes, it will be put on the protection list and hopefully recovery will begin.

Why are 84% not recovering? The numbers of Species at Risk are very high in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario due to the intersection of land and water. The leading causes of endangerment, however, are habitat loss and degradation. However, at times the endangered species has to get approval from several different jurisdictions, such as a couple of different provinces, several indigenous people groups, as well as federal and provincial governments. Added to that, several provinces and territories do not have a SAR program at all. Making matters worse, the Canadian public does not suffer directly enough from SAR to draw and maintain enough attention to most species' losses. Nevertheless, 82% of the public say yes to species protection but the political cost of doing nothing is very low.

He admits the problem is huge but it does gradually work. The public has to start raising the right questions so that we do not hear our politicians say, "Yes, we are going to take a look at it". Yes, it can be done - as it was the will of the people applying political pressure that resulted in the closure of the BC Grizzly Bear hunt.

**Anne Gosse**



**COSEWIC**  
Committee on the Status of  
Endangered Wildlife in Canada

**COSEPAC**  
Comité sur la situation des  
espèces en péril au Canada

## BC NATURE AGM - URBAN FORESTS OUR HEALTH, WELLBEING AND CREATIVITY

Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk, Professor, Urban Forestry, Dept. of Forest Resources Management, UBC Faculty of Forestry, spoke on Urban forests. He began his presentation by recommending a book by Florence Williams, "Nature Fix". Its premise is based on the powers of the natural world to improve health, and to promote reflection and innovation based on scientific research. Urban forests make many crucial contributions to the quality of life and environment. Living in a green city increases life expectancy. Without nature, a person also experiences loneliness and sadness. Green spaces reduce stress and increase physical activity and cognitive ability by opening up a person's senses to the scents, the nature sounds and the light playing through the trees. Moving to a greener area measurably improves mental health.

Urban forests also provide ecosystem services to a city. They have a cooling effect and they lessen storm water runoff. Water quality is improved and air pollution lessened.

European governments are starting to realize that all people should have access to nature. And Toronto is now developing a shade policy for the city. In Japan, "forest bathing" or spending time in nature is an accepted way to improve a person's well-being. In South China, a Forest City is being constructed to reduce pollution and give a balance with nature. Yet Nature is not yet an integral part of health care in North America.

Cecil states we should wait no longer to make greener cities a reality. Barriers to implementing a policy for a green city include competing economic interests. Some opposition is shaped by tradition: fear of the dangers and risks in nature, such as biting insects and falling branches.

We should communicate to the public about the benefits of nature in cities. Everyone needs to have access for their mental and physical health. Alliances with the medical profession must be built to further spread the message. A positive development for British Columbia is the establishment of an Urban Forest Degree Program at UBC in 2015. These graduates will readily find employment because of increasing

urbanization, people's desire for more recreation and the growing knowledge about the effects of urban forests on human health and wellbeing.

New research shows how to integrate this new knowledge into the planning and management of urban forests.

**Kathy Masse**

## BC NATURE AGM FIELD TRIP CAMOSUN BOG RESTORATION



*Watching the "boggers"*

*Photo: Anne Gosse*

I chose to join the Camosun Bog Restoration group to discover what they were accomplishing within this small city-surrounded bog. We were guided by Laurence Brown on a beautiful warm sunny day around the circle boardwalks, while listening to his information. We watched the Crazy Boggers youth group getting dirty, digging and planting sphagnum moss to restore open areas. We were told that the nearby subdivision street drains have been found to be slowly siphoning off the precious waters of the bottom bog layers - thus drying out the peat bog. To prevent further erosion, they are now looking into several steps to prevent further seepage. One can see that this Camosun Bog group is working very hard to preserve this lovely, quiet, and peaceful gem within a bustling city.



*A view of the bog*

*Photo: Anne Gosse*

**Anne Gosse**

## BC NATURE AGM FIELD TRIP SPANISH BANK & SALISH CREEK STORIES

It was not so long ago that Vancouver was home to over 50 wild salmon streams. Today, Vancouver's streams are mostly lost, covered by houses, roads, businesses or buried underneath sewers or culverts.

Sandie Hollick-Kenyon led this walk, and focused her presentation on two of these small urban watersheds. They are wonderful examples of how the efforts of community groups, passionate volunteers and governments can protect and restore nature in an urban environment.

Spanish Banks Creek flows through Pacific Spirit Park under Marine Drive and into English Bay at Spanish Banks Beach. Spanish Bank Creek was culverted in the 1920s; however, some portions of the watershed remained in relatively good condition. The creek was salmon bearing prior to urbanization. A group of volunteers and participating government ministries collaborated to revive and renew this creek and watershed. A 10 year project began in the 1990s to daylight the creek and naturalize the watershed with hopes of bringing back salmonoids. We saw several pictures that proved how successful the project was, including photos of a family of 6 otters frolicking at the mouth of the creek. A pond built proved to be a good home for numerous salamanders and we saw pictures of returning salmon.

Salish Creek (also known as Acadia Creek) is another small stream that has captured the attention of conservationists. This creek originates in Pacific Spirit Park near UBC. After a volunteer took a video of a Coho salmon struggling to enter a culvert at Salish Creek, attention focused on improving this habitat.

In 2017, funds were donated to UBC to enhance this creek and improve fish passage. Based on the success achieved with Spanish Banks Creek, Salish Creek can also become a wonderful habitat for fish, animals and humans to use and enjoy.

**Joanne Rosenthal**

## BC NATURE AGM FIELD TRIP JERICHO BEACH PARK RESTORATION



*Jericho Beach west pond  
Photo: Kathy Masse*

This walk was led by John Coope - retired professor of Theoretical Chemistry UBC. After parking our cars on 4th Avenue, we gathered at the trailhead and listened to John tell us the history of Jericho Beach Park. In the beginning years of Vancouver, it was first logged, then became a picnic spot and then it became the first golf course west of Ontario in 1890. The area became a military base from 1921-45. It was turned over to Vancouver in 1965 and various plans were suggested, including housing. The final plan for the park was made in 1985, when, due to public

pressure, the whole area became a passive park. Various community groups began working to restore the habitat and remove invasive plants. Our leader John began working in the park in the 1990's and in 2004 was a founding member of the Jericho Stewardship Group. One member of this group is Nature Vancouver. JSG has monthly work sessions but John himself has worked any day that he can, often on his own.

We began our walk through the upper trails, while John explained how they removed acres of blackberries, replanting native shrubs in their place. The Jericho stewardship group wanted variation in the trails so they established open areas, followed by treed areas. Eventually we arrived at the lower ponds. John explained that they were originally salt marshes, filled in, later becoming fresh water ponds. The east pond is a beautiful habitat, where we saw Mallards, Wood Ducks, and Kingfishers. The western pond has become choked with reed canary grass and the group is working on removing it. Already, ducks have returned to the small cleared area. We heard and saw many Red-winged Blackbirds.

On the beach we watched seagulls finding snails, flying high and dropping the snails on to the rocks below, hopefully to smash them open for lunch. Some crows were on standby and raced in,

attempting to steal a snail. Further down the beach, we saw a flock of Oyster Catchers, standing on the shore.



John Coope

Photo: Kathy Masse

When we began our walk, I noticed that John was carrying a battered hat under his arm. Finally reaching the beach area, he donned this well-worn hat and explained he has worn this hat every day that he has worked in the park and it has protected his head from rain, sun, blackberries and other hazards. The state of his hat is a testament to the number of hours he has accumulated in invasive removals and native plantings! I admired the

beautiful area as we walked back to our cars and am thankful that this dedicated group (JSG) keeps working on this still monumental restoration project at Jericho Beach Park.

**Kathy Masse**

## **BIRDS AND BRYOPHYTES WALK, DERBY REACH REGIONAL PARK, SATURDAY MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>**



Checking the mosses

Photo: Anne Gosse

Led by Phil Henderson, about 20 naturalists gathered in the parking lot at the north entrance to Houston Trail in Derby Reach Park for a morning of strolling through the woods, listening and looking for birds and the tiny green plants that occur all around: the bryophytes. Bryophytes include

mosses, with which everyone is familiar, the liverworts, some of which may be mistaken for mosses (leafy types) or even lichens (thallose or flattened and strap-like types), and the hornworts which are rare and may only appear briefly in conditions of favourable temperature and moisture.

Most of the common birds of winter were present in the forest (Pacific Wren, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Spotted Towhees, Brown Creepers) and the edges of the wetlands (Song Sparrow). Near the end of the walk we watched a male Hairy Woodpecker working a Paper Birch at the trail's edge. After obliging everyone with good views, it flew off and mounted its mate on a branch high above, unabashedly obliging everyone with more good views. "You don't see that everyday," someone announced.

The sexuality of bryophytes, perhaps less surprising and exciting because it is constantly on display, was viewed by participants without guilt or exclamation. The union of sperm and egg results in a sporophyte, the top part of which is the capsule containing spores for a new generation. These were present on the female plants of *Dicranum scoparium*, *Hypnum circinale*, found on rotting logs and the cedar fence rail, and *Hylocomnium splendens* ("stair-step moss") found on the forest floor. Asexual vegetative reproduction was evident in *Dicranum tauricum*, a dark, straight-leaved *Dicranum* found in the same locations as *D. scoparium* and *Hypnum circinale*. The rigid tips of *D. tauricum* readily break off when brushed, to form new plants.

Everywhere the birds were found, bryophytes were also found: on the ground along the trails, tree trunks and branches, low and high. Bryophytes are present along the edge of wetlands and on logs floating within the wetlands. Sphagnum mosses (often called "peat" mosses) are a distinct group sometimes found in forests but more characteristic of the bog which we could see to the west from the Bays Blackhall viewing platform. Sphagnum are the key and defining species of a healthy bog. They hold water (and vast reserves of carbon) and acidify the environment, making it difficult for all but a certain suite of plants with special adaptations for growing in wet, acidic environments with limited available nutrients. That's a whole other world.

**Phil Henderson**

**GEORGE C REIFEL  
MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY  
SATURDAY MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>**

The morning started off with a drizzle, but this did not discourage our enthusiastic group. We checked in with Varri at the gift shop to see if there were any notable sightings. Varri also posts a weekly list of sighting in the gift shop window. One of the most common questions she gets asked, is "Where are the Owls?". Then we were off, first to do a quick check for the Black-crowned Night Heron, and waterfowl in the neighbouring slough and saw American Wigeon, Hooded Merganser, Gadwall, plus Great Blue Herons, which were perched in nearby trees.

Along the east dyke, we noted a nice collection of sparrows – Fox, Song, White-crowned, Golden-crowned and Spotted Towhees. One Fox Sparrow was partly Leucitic. Always on the alert here for Owls (none were seen by anyone that day we were told). Towards the tower and out on the dyke, Marsh Wrens chattered, Tree Swallows swooped over the marsh.

Raptors spotted were – Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, and Northern Harrier – no Peregrine Falcons today. Bird of the day was spotted by Tom – a Northern Shrike – new for the Sanctuary weekly list. No other group saw a Shrike at the sanctuary that day!

The inner shallow water sported its usual collection of waterfowl – Green-Winged Teal, Gadwall, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler as well as a small group of Greater Yellowlegs. We heard more Marsh Wrens singing, along with Red-wing Blackbirds, and there were Greater Scaup, Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye at the far (south) end.

All the Snow Geese were on Westham Island (about 20,000) across from the sanctuary. We also added Chickadees, Bushtits, Anna's Hummingbird, and Wood Ducks to the species seen. Thanks to Tom for keeping the list. A fine day, thanks to everyone and thank you, Varri.

*Al Grass*

**A TREE FOR RHYS**

Sadly, I could not be present at the tree planting for Rhys, however I have seen the name and description of the species – Black Locust.



*Black Locust*

*Photo: Al Grass*

Black Locust is a legume with dangling white, fragrant, pea-like flowers. Bees are said to make excellent honey from the nectar. As the tree matures, its bark develops crevices in which insects and spiders, find refuge. This is why Brown Creepers, Chickadees, and Kinglets forage on the bark. This makes food available for bird's year-round. Downy Woodpeckers also find nutrition on Black Locust bark.

But why Black Locust? The name comes from its rich dark black colour. A tree is a wonderful thing drawing life from both earth and sky. It speaks for everlasting love of nature. We can share the love of nature of our dear friend by ensuring that this tree gets T.L.C. Rest in Peace dear friend.

*Al Grass*

**LANGLEY ENVIRONMENTAL HEROES**

On Saturday June 9<sup>th</sup>, Mark Warawa MP presented the Langley Environmental Hero awards - two to LFN members received awards:

Lifetime Achievement - **Rhys Griffiths**  
Environmental Hero - **Ted Lightfoot**

Nomination for Hero - Sylvia Anderson

## JACKMAN WETLANDS PARK FIELD TRIP FRIDAY APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>

This became a combined LFN field trip and bird count. Six people participated, including Wim, Joanne, Angela and two non-member ladies. 28 species of birds were recorded on eBird.

The weather was cool (10°C), with light rain and mist. Three last year's Bullock's oriole nests were identified on site; they seemed to be mainly constructed from plastic fibres. Water levels in the ponds are still very high.

It was revealed by ToL yesterday that the old pit area is to be turned into a 'disc golf course' whatever that may be. There has been no public input or BCES participation in this decision. The plans only came to light because ToL were informed of LFN's desire to place a barn owl nest box on this part of the park. We still have two Wood duck nest boxes which we plan to install somewhere on the site. A private contractor was observed planting trees on site. Why were LEPS or BCES not asked to do the planting which could have been done by volunteers, or involved in suggesting suitable trees for the location?

Survey posts were noted on the northeast corner of the property leading us to wonder what next - are they still planning to sell off this portion of the park?

*Bob Puls*

## WILLBAND CREEK PARK SATURDAY APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>



*Photo: Anne Gosse*

Nineteen birders met at the parking lot of Willband Creek Park on a dry but cold and windy morning: Langley Field Naturalists, Abbotsford Naturalists, and White Rock Naturalists. Ken and John told our group about some of the known species in the area. The sun did try to make an appearance several times and finally came out as we reached our cars.

We walked the circle trail over wooden bridges and onto the lovely newly built viewing platform and found a large selection of ducks and geese on the marshy lake. Along with the usual species were Canvasbacks and Ruddy Ducks - special treat. We also were lucky to see two types of Yellow-rumped summer warblers, both Myrtle and Audubon's. Lots of swallows were zipping over the water along with a couple of hawks making lazy circles in the sky. Our species count was 38 species at the end of our day and we stopped for a warm drink at the Farmers Market.

*Anne Gosse*

## FORSLUND WATSON WILDLIFE AREA SATURDAY APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>

Thirteen adults and two children joined leader Ryan Usenik for a walk at the Forslund Watson property.

It was too early in the year to observe many fruit trees flowering, but well over 30 species of birds were observed. For most of the participants, it was the first time to see the Barn Owl nesting box which was installed in October. Since Gareth choose to celebrate his birthday with the group, they sang him Happy Birthday.

*Ryan Usenik*

## DRBIPA LANGLEY BOG BAYS BLACKHALL VIEWING PLATFORM



*Photo: Anne Gosse*

On the morning of April 16, 2018, people gathered at the Viewing Platform off the Houston trail and overlooking the Bog for an event hosted by Wendy DaDalt of Metro Vancouver Regional Parks to honour Bays Blackhall. This plaque acknowledges her contributions to the area, not only to the

Regional Parks but also to many organizations in Fort Langley. A second plaque has been mounted at the entrance to the Viewing Platform that acknowledges the contributions of the generous donors who made the platform possible.

## A NATURALIST'S TREK – MAY 2018



*On the trail*

*Photo: Anne Gosse*

This May our leader Gareth led a group of 15 eager Langley and White Rock naturalists on a very enjoyable trip to the Lillooet area. We got straight down to business once we arrived, driving on the ever-climbing Bridge River road and stopping along the wayside to view flowers and birds. We were in search of the big three F's - Flora and Fauna plus Flammulated Owls. We saw and heard many bird species, such as Western Tanagers, Yellow Warblers, Wilson's Warblers, Lazuli Buntings, etc. Amongst the flowers seen, Bob Puls pointed out the Dodders that looks like yellow grass but is in fact an invasive species of parasitic plant that twines around the alfalfa plants, robbing them of food and strangling them.

The next morning Vivian Birch Jones of the Lillooet Naturalists Club guided us to the wildly rushing Sallus Creek's trailhead which was in a quiet dry canyon redolent with the aroma of fresh sage brush. On the trail down, we found an abundance of birds and butterflies and were amazed at the many Lazuli Buntings, Yellow and Wilson's Warblers singing, compared to our own areas. A watching American Kestrel perched above us on a lone branch. Near the bottom we were rewarded with wonderful panoramic views of the flooded muddy Fraser River below, along with Mountain Sheep across the valley on a nearby rock shelf. More impressively, Vivian shared an interesting tidbit that explorer Simon Fraser travelled this way in 1808 when he reached the

native village of Nx'ômi'n, thus naming the two rivers - Fraser and Thompson. On our climb up to the road we mimicked a group of excited paparazzi as we viewed a Red Listed Lewis's Woodpecker nesting in a dead snag.

After lunching in Vivian's lovely garden, which was brimming with bird feeders and birds, some of us decided to take a siesta as it was unusually hot for the time of year, while the rest visited a restoration site at the confluence of the Fraser and Seton rivers. We followed the trail through the sage brush, then along the river bank through the Cottonwood and Ponderosa Pine trees, where some took advantage of the bench to sit and watch the river flow by. On our way back, we came across a wet area at the river's edge where butterflies were congregating to drink, easily photographed by our camera crew.

After an early supper, on Vivian's advice we drove up Fountain Valley Road to visit the three small lakes along the valley. Each had its own type of bird life for us to enjoy as we walked along. The first lake had few water birds but a great variety of song birds.



*Vivian Birch Jones with Bob & Gareth*

*Photo: Anne Gosse*

At the second lake, we were greeted by the plaintive calling of a Sora Rail along with numerous waterfowl - including the showy Ruddy Duck, gorgeous Cinnamon Teal, Goldeneye, Pied-Billed Grebes and

Common Mergansers - plus many more of the usual species. After several debates and I-phone huddles, many a good-natured discussion ensued regarding the correct identification of some species.

On our last morning we were off to the Seton River Spawning Channel. There many community members were busily setting up displays for their yearly celebration of "Good-By Smolts", when large numbers of school children came to release the young salmon which, we were told, would take about two days to reach Vancouver and the ocean. It was a beautiful warm day and the spawning channels proved to be a great choice as the bird watching was excellent. We increased our species count to 79 - including seeing Harlequin Ducks and Bullock's Orioles. As an extra added bonus, we sighted Mountain goats walking along the nearby mountain ledges. From there we travelled a short distance up the road to the BC Hydro camp site. John Gordon led a walk along the trails there before we ended the trip at the BC Hydro picnic area at Seton Lake.

Our thanks to Gareth for all his organizing and work of trying to keep his unruly charges under control. Just to prove we were not just 2% naturalist, please see below: See more pictures on Facebook.

**Birds:** - 79 species.

**Flowers:** Too many species to list.

**Butterflies:** - 11 Butterflies were: Mourning Cloak, Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, Pale Swallowtail, Two-tailed Swallowtail, Silvery Blue, Lorquin's Admiral, a Duskywing sp., Sulphur sp., a Checkerspot, a White sp. (Gareth has photo), and an Orangetip sp.

**Insects:** - Bob has 9 insects to ID and two Jumping spiders.

**Animals:** - Mountain Goats, Bighorn Sheep, Coyotes, Squirrels, Chipmunks, Deer, Bears, Marmots, Garter Snake.

*Anne Gosse and Gareth Pugh*

## 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 21<sup>ST</sup> 2018 LANGLEY FIELD NATURALIST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & SOCIAL NIGHT

A short business meeting, AGM and social evening.

## SATURDAY JULY 28<sup>TH</sup> GRASS SHACK SUMMER SOCIAL

**17375 27A Avenue, Surrey**  
10:00 am to 4:00 pm rain or shine

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

Please RSVP to Jude at [judegrass@shaw.ca](mailto:judegrass@shaw.ca)  
or 604 538 8774

## NOTE DATES OF FALL MEETINGS PROGRAMMES TO BE ANNOUNCED

### THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>

**(Note: One week earlier than usual due to BC Nature Fall Meeting in Kelowna)**

Thursday October 18<sup>th</sup>

Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup>

Thursday December 13<sup>th</sup>

(One week early due to Christmas!)

## BC NATURE FALL GENERAL MEETING KELOWNA, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> - 23<sup>RD</sup>

<http://www.okanagannature.org/FGM2018.html>

## 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.*

### FRIDAY JUNE 22ND

#### GEORGE C. REIFEL

#### MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY – DELTA

Leader: Al Grass 604-219-2043

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 footwear. There is a small admission fee. Bring lunch, snacks and refreshments. Meet at the Reifel Sanctuary. Phone 604-219-2043 to let us know to expect you.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>

#### WEST CREEK WETLANDS

Leader: Lisa Dreves, 604-532-0081

Time: 6:30 pm on the south side of 72nd Avenue approximately 400 metres west of 264th Street. 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.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 11<sup>TH</sup>

#### E.C. MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK

Weather permitting only

Leader: Bob Puls, 604-856-7534

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

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.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>

#### CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

Leaders: Jude and Al Grass, 604-219-2043

Time: 6:30 pm at 16th Avenue Parking Lot

Join Jude and Al to walk the trails and explore nature in high summer.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 25<sup>TH</sup>

#### PINSCH OF SOIL FARM

Leader: Gareth Pugh, 604-576-6831

Time: 6:30 pm at 258 – 208th Street

Join us to visit this small scale permaculture farm where Nadja and Marcel are growing food in a sustainable way by mimicking natural ecosystems as far as possible. The farm itself consists of a market garden (just under one acre) and a forest that is being turned into a food forest. Their aim is to create an edible landscape that in itself is a strong and balanced system. The market garden features many perennial beds with perennial flowers, trees and shrubs that not only attract, but also provide habitat for beneficial insects and birds. They have just planted close to 400 native ferns, shrubs and trees in the forest area, the goal being to recreate a mini version of a typical Pacific NW forest that has many edible components but also provides habitat for many different species.

### WEDNESDAY AUGUST 1<sup>ST</sup>

#### NICOMEKL FLOOD PLAIN

Leaders: Al Grass, 604-219-2043 and

Lisa Dreves 604-532-0081

Time: 6:30 pm at Portage Park on 51A Avenue at the end of 204th Street

Join Al and Lisa for a summer evening walk along part of the extensive trail system in the heart of Langley.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup>**

### **LANGLEY BOG**

Leader: Jeremy Smith, 604-721-7702

Time: 6:30 pm at the Houston Trail parking lot on McKinnon Crescent, Langley. We will carpool from there.

Join Jeremy to walk through the bog and learn about the special fragile ecosystem.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup>**

### **DOUBLEDAY ARBORETUM**

Leaders: Lisa Dreves 604-532-0081 and  
Ryan Usenik 604-530-3257

Time: 6:30 pm in the parking lot in the 21200 Block Fraser Highway

An opportunity to view the new Doubleday Arboretum that the Township of Langley is developing, the home of the LEPS demonstration garden and the new trails connecting Doubleday Arboretum and McLeod Athletic Park.

## **WEDNESDAY AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>**

### **FORSLUND WATSON PROPERTY**

Leader: Ryan Usenik, 604-530-3257

Time: 6:30 pm at 2705 – 232nd Street

Join Ryan as he leads us through this property which LFN co-manages with the B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource and Rural Development which is part open fields and part woodland. Wear sturdy footwear as we will be walking in open fields and natural woodland trails.

## **SATURDAY AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>**

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

Leader: Al Grass, 604-219-2043

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.

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

### **POINT ROBERTS**

Leader: Gareth Pugh, 604-576-6831

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.

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

### **GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK, FALL FUNGI, MUSHROOMS AND MORE**

Leader: Al Grass, 604-219-2043

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.

### **BED, BREAKFAST & BIRDS in Northern Ireland 1-4 People**

Sharon McVeigh, past president of the LFN, now lives in a beautiful little village in Northern Ireland.

Have you ever dreamed of Birding in Ireland? Now is your chance.

The Birdlife is Amazing.  
Lapwings, Red Shanks, Buzzards, Puffins, Gannets, Songbirds and more.  
Itinerary to Suit

Personalized Guided or Self-Guided Field Trips  
Many Lakes, Woods, Seashores,  
Nature/Wildlife Parks and Reserves.  
Reasonable Rates

For Information and Reservations Contact:  
Sharon McVeigh  
Email: [bcbirder@gmail.com](mailto:bcbirder@gmail.com)  
Phone from Canada: 011 44 7446043898