



Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

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Newsletter

June 2020



JUNE 1ST TO JUNE 14TH

Langley Field Naturalists members are encouraged to participate in this Bioblitz.

Discover the diversity of life that calls Langley home. The watershed groups of Langley are looking for all of the different plants, animals, fungi and everything in between that can be found in Langley during the two weeks from June 1st to June 14th, as part of Canadian Environment Week and Rivers to Oceans Week.

You can join a project on iNaturalist (a free app for your phone or sign up on your computer, www.inaturalist.org). Another way to join in the fun is to just tag your social media posts with #LangleyBioblitz or send a list of species seen and their locations to stewardship@leps.bc.ca.

For more information contact stewardship@leps.bc.ca.

FIELD TRIPS UPDATE

Our field trips from late March to the end of June had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in July we will be doing evening walks which will be limited to a maximum of 20 participants. Pre-registration for these walks will be mandatory so that if more than 6 people register we will be able to arrange for extra leaders so that we can do the walks in small groups while ensuring social distancing is maintained. In this way we will have the opportunity to enjoy an evening walk in the fresh air.

Gareth Pugh

DEREK DOUBLEDAY ARBORETUM DAVID TRUMAN BIRD GARDEN



Photo: Nora Truman

David's Bird Garden at the Derek Doubleday Arboretum is well underway. The Township of Langley, Arboretum and Botanical Society of Langley and the Rotary Club of Langley have been working on pathways, plantings and benches. Another bench will soon be placed along with a plaque.

A small dedication ceremony will be announced in the next month or so. The sounds, scents and colours are alive everywhere on the Arboretum grounds. It's a great place for a walk.

Nora Truman



Web photo

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



Dear Naturalists,

I hope, with great love, that this message finds you well. We are living through strange times but I am acutely aware that this could be so much worse. We have a good health care system, low population density, and strong minds. While COVID-19 causes a great deal of stress it has also granted our Earth a small reset, and hopefully many of us, too. Many are finding they can do more with less (except toilet paper...), rely on cars less, and the great importance of supporting our local economy especially our local farmers.

I hope each day you are able to take some time to connect with others. Please don't wait for others to call you; this may be a day that they need you to be strong and call them.

If you're looking for a little extra connection, our executive is looking for a few positions. You can join these amazing people twice a month instead of just the third Thursday. We need to fill the position of Vice President (and I'm pretty sure our fabulous newsletter editor, Sheila, would more than welcome a message from the VP if it is sent in before the deadline); we also need a new head for our display committee, and a backup secretary for the days our more than patient secretary, Nora, is unable to make it to the meetings.

We will be voting on our new executive through an email in June so please be sure to vote. Our AGM will be held through Zoom and you can connect by just calling by your regular phone or through your computer, tablet or smart phone.



Please take care of yourself, be kind to others, get outside as often as you can, and wash your hands.

Lisa Dreves

CAMPBELL VALLEY PARK NATURE HOUSE



The Nature House at Campbell Valley is closed for the foreseeable future due to the corona virus. Please watch for updates as events change quickly.

The MV staff has launched a webinar series featuring many of the usual presenters at our summer series at the Nature House. There will be one webinar a week, alternating Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The webinars are free but people are required to register to get the link to the Zoom webinar. Check the Metro Vancouver website for the Zoom login details.

The first one was "The Spice of Life: Langley Biodiversity" on Saturday, May 23rd with our Langley Environmental Partners. This would have been our opening day at the Nature House. The second, on Wednesday May 27th, is "Heroes in a half shell: Painted Turtles on BC's South Coast". Biologist Andrea Gielens from the Wildlife Preservation Canada will talk about the threat that painted turtles face.

Look for future webinars on the Northern Spotted Owl Program, a success story from Langley; Kanaka Education & Environmental Partnership Society (KEEPS); Fraser Valley Conservancy; and our Metro Vancouver interpreters will lead a virtual hike on a trail in Campbell Valley Park; plus more interesting subjects to come.

The 40+ hosts of the Nature House look forward to resuming 'normal' schedules next year but encourage all to visit our Campbell Valley Park for your recreation this summer.

Sylvia Anderson

A NATURALIST STAYS HOME SPRING IN THE TIME OF A PANDEMIC

It has been an interesting spring to say the least! Living on rural acreage means not having to go far to enjoy the renewal of nature and the return of feathered friends like the Rufous Hummingbirds and Barn Swallows. I was happy to see a pair of Brown Creepers near our little creek, and several Tree Swallows flying over the pasture.

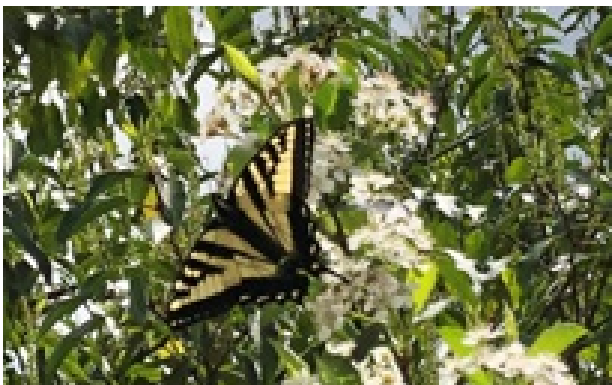
A large Red-tailed Hawk and at least one Barred Owl hunt in our yard regularly. The Barred Owl treated my grandkids to a private viewing last week, right beside their new tree fort. It was during late afternoon, and he seemed as interested in watching them as they were watching him. The local Blacktail deer have been very visible, and so far have stayed out of the garden!



Oyster Mushrooms

Photo: Joanne Rosenthal

Near the end of April, I started checking for Oyster Mushrooms. They were a bit later this year, probably because of the dry April. I found several new logs with them growing profusely during the first week of May.



Western Swallowtail

Photo: Joanne Rosenthal

As soon as the flowers started, we saw the wild bees and butterflies again. I hope you enjoy the pictures, the Western Tiger Swallowtail butterfly is on one of my Black Elderberry bushes!



Bumblebee on Japanese Pieris

Photo: Joanne Rosenthal

The garden needs attention and the birds are singing - it's time to head outside!

Joanne Rosenthal

BC PARKS FOUNDATION

BIG NATURE CHALLENGE



Your challenge:

help crowd-source one million observations of wildlife in our beautiful province, while also getting the health benefits of spending time in nature.

Simply find wildlife (or signs of wildlife)

It can be any plant, animal or evidence of life.

Take a Photo using a phone or digital camera

Determine location if your phone or camera does not have GPS.

Share your photo on a partner app

Upload your photo(s) and observation details through any of our partner platforms iNaturalist, eBird or www.naturechallenge.ca

**HOUSTON TRAIL, BIRDS AND BRYOPHYTES
SATURDAY MARCH 14TH
LED BY PHIL HENDERSON**



Antlered perfume lichen (Evernia prunastry)
Photo: Gareth Pugh

Phil had tried to cancel this walk the previous evening due to the high winds, but Nora's power was off so word did not get out. As a result Nora and I showed up, together with three non-members, so we decided to do a shortened walk as far as the viewing platform despite the biting cold wind and the temperature around zero.

Our three guests were very enthusiastic; two of them had brought magnifying glasses, so Phil was kept busy pointing out the finer points of various lichens, mosses and liverworts. He also answered questions on various trees and bushes pointing out the differences between Beaked Hazelnut and Red Alder catkins, Common Snowberry, Osoberry and Red Huckleberry bushes and we even found a small Grand Fir.



Hair ice (Exidiopsis effusa) Photo: Gareth Pugh

As we walked across the open meadow in the sunshine the temperature was noticeably higher (about two degrees!). A dozen American Robins were foraging there, and a Red-tailed Hawk

perched on a cedar tree gave us good views. As we proceeded along the main trail, a Barred Owl flew into a tree above us, so we all stopped to get good looks at it and to point it out to passersby.

When we arrived at the viewing platform we saw that the wind was whipping up the water on the lake and no ducks were to be seen so, after Phil had told us about the late Bays Blackhall (a local force for conservation and the inspiration for the platform), we hurried back to the parking lot in an effort to warm up.

Gareth Pugh

**LATIMER LAKE
SATURDAY MARCH 7TH
LED BY JOHN GORDON**



Pileated Woodpecker Photo: John Gordon

Despite inclement weather which cut our walk short, participants for the Latimer Lake walk left with the feeling they would return at a later date when a better condition prevailed. Despite less than ideal conditions, the group led by John Gordon recorded twenty species to e-Bird. The highlight was three Pileated Woodpeckers that have been in the area for the entire winter.

We also had good looks at a number of Brown Creepers which are beginning to sing, making them easier to locate. I encourage everyone to make a return visit during April and early May when the park comes alive with birdsong.

John Gordon

**GORDON SMITH YOUTH
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD
BRANDON MUNDAY**

*Brandon is the son of Diana Munday, our
Membership Secretary*



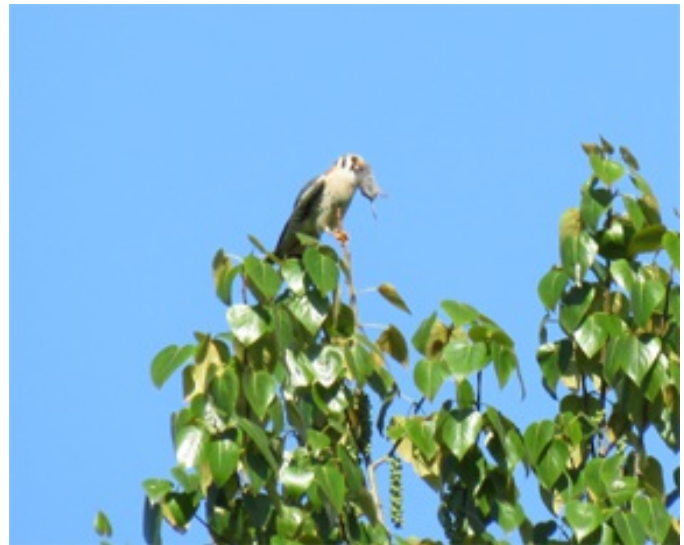
Photo: Bien Aplacador Photography

Brandon, a grade 12 student at Brookwood Secondary School in Langley was nominated by Nicole Marples, Executive Director of Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS). Nicole noted that Brandon consistently volunteered in conservation and restoration efforts, with his family when young, and now commits time on his own to the community and working to becoming a future innovator.

He has been involved with invasive plant removal and hands-on stewardship with LEPS for five years and volunteered as a Campbell Valley Nature House host last year. Brandon participates with his family in Langley Community Farm Market stewardship efforts, including delivering stewardship-based workshop fundraisers to benefit local non-profits. He has taken the initiative to develop himself as a leader and mentor among his peers not only in school but with other youth of all ages in the community. He has organized and led in research projects, citizen science and is also the point person for many youth initiatives.

Brandon will be attending the University of Waterloo, starting with an undergraduate degree in Applied Mathematics, and following up with pursuing Chemical Engineering with a focus on changing the course of climate change.

FORSLUND/WATSON WILDLIFE AREA



Kestrel with vole

Photo: Corey Bunnell

KESTRELS:

A pair of American Kestrels is thinking about nesting on the property. Corey saw one fly out of the nest box that is below the bat box, on the east side of the permanent pond. Possibly the male was checking out the nest site prospects to show the female (which is what kestrels do, apparently). That was the only time we saw one at that (or any other) nest box.

Courtship was going on, with the male Kestrel giving the female a fat vole he had caught. He then took the vole back, flew to another tree, had second thoughts, returned and gave her the same vole again! (Corey got the second "pass the vole" on video.) The rest of the afternoon they were hunting over the hay field or the field north of the property, or perching, mostly in cottonwoods along the north edge or northwest corner of the permanent pond.

Note: Kestrels can also include dragonflies and other birds (even flickers) in their diet. Not sure how they might interact with the Red-tailed Hawks or Tree Swallows. No interactions were seen and we did see all three species flying over the hay field at the same time...

TREE SWALLOWS

At least 9 were seen. If the first box west of the permanent pond was number 1, we saw swallows go in and out of box 1, 3, 4 and 6. The bat box west of the pond was almost constantly used by Tree Swallows as a perch site.

WATERFOWL:

Vernal pond: 1 pair Mallards.
Permanent pond: 1 male Mallard, 1 pair Gadwall, 1 pair Hooded Mergansers plus an extra female.

VULTURES:

One Turkey Vulture flew over the hay field, twice.

FROGS:

The vernal pond still has lots of chorus frog tadpoles. Numbers may go down, as 2 garter snakes were seen nearby (they eat tadpoles).



Tom Wildeboer supervises Ryan Usenik installing the Wood Duck nest box
Photo: Bob Puls

INVERTEBRATES:

First dragonflies are out: California Darner, 4 spot Skimmer, Pacific Forktail. The choke cherry (?) tree with long plumes of white flowers (NW of the vernal pond) is teeming with native mining bees, plus a few bumble bees, flies, etc. The "Serengeti" of the pollinator world?

NOTE: We did not have time to go in the woods or to check the apple trees near the house - spent too much time watching & photographing kestrels!

Anthea Farr

CHECKING OUT THE LOCAL WALKS

During this lockdown, I have been reviewing my newspaper list of every nature walk that has been presented by the LFN for the past five years. In normal times, I usually find myself too busy with office work to go on these walks, so it was a real pleasure to visit a few recommended ones. We did not leave Langley because of the wealth of trails we have in our own community.

As well Tony and I have discovered a couple of lovely spots during some of our own walks in nature. One is a little-known trail that extends from McLean Pond and we even found a stairway leading down to a gully. We have not ventured down there yet but are leaving that adventure for another day.



Photo: Lilianne Fuller

Early in the lockdown, I visited upper Hi-Knoll Park and took photos of the numerous painted rocks that were placed as encouragement for people visiting the beautiful forest. I contrasted that with photos of Langley's empty places and spaces and made a video. The Langley Advance Times put it up online and the video got almost 3,000 hits.

Lilianne Fuller

Lilianne's video showing Langley during the lockdown can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SoKc8O1hs0>

MILASTER PASSIVE PARK BIO-INVENTORY REPORT

Because the property is not open to the public, work has continued on this bio-inventory study for the Township of Langley during the Pandemic lockdown. For interest, these are Bob's notes...

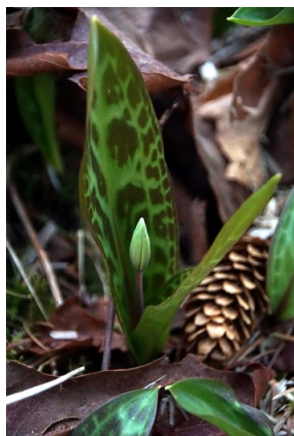
APRIL 3RD 2020

I left home just after 9:0 am and it was raining by the time I was half way, after which it turned into hail. The steep curvy road down the escarpment was white with hail, but my old truck behaved and we reached the bottom safely. Todd's car was parked by the gate, but no sign of Todd. So I opened the gate and drove in; there was a Varied Thrush on the driveway, and then I spotted Todd coming down one of the trails.



Gareth birding

Photo: Bob Puls



Fawn Lily Photo: Bob Puls

We checked out the Fawn Lilies first and just a couple had come into bloom (white flowers), after which we strolled along the creek trail looking for tracks in the sand. We only found raccoon prints. It continued to hail on and off and was cold enough to be December! I collected more lichens for identification, whilst Todd collected mosses. Todd kept the bird records and will share his eBird posting. There was not much bird activity and nothing new. Trilliums were in flower on one of the slopes near the house site.

I collected some leaf mulch and soil for insect and spider sampling from the odd area that was not covered in frozen hail stones. This is now in my Berlese funnel where it will sit for a few days. I photographed all of my collected samples and will continue with identification tomorrow.

APRIL 10TH 2020

Anthea and Corey discovered there was a sign posted on the gate to Milaster's, saying COVID-19 etc. and CLOSED on it. Having driven half an hour

to get there on Good Friday, they pretended they hadn't seen it - thereby breaking a by-law or quarantine law (or possibly both?) and risking being fined. (However, the Township staff have given us permission to continue our survey as long as we follow COVID-19 strategy and maintain social distancing.) Anthea sent a list of what they found or think they found.

APRIL 24TH 2020

I met Gareth at the Park at 10 am. Gareth followed the woodland trails to survey birds, and maintain COVID-19 social distancing, and recorded 17 species.

I followed the creek trail south to the TMP right-of-way, with a sweep net. After a record dry spell for April it had rained in the past week so the vegetation was still too wet for sweep netting insects. There were lots of dark ground (wolf) spiders running through the grass and I collected a few for later identification. As it warmed up, and the sun came out spasmodically, insects became more active and landed on rocks to warm up. We saw a Mourning cloak and several Margined White butterflies.



Mourning Cloak butterfly

Photo: Bob Puls

Several California Darner dragonflies were flying and one species that was smaller but wouldn't land to be identified. Most common were the black and yellow striped syrphid flower or hover flies in various sizes - I photographed several.

Bluebottles and other flies were seen and my white truck cab was covered with (house) flies when I returned to it. Saw quite a few large Bee flies

(*Bombylius major*), not sure if that is good as they prey on bumble bees.

Several large Yellow-faced bumble bees were evident but impossible to photograph.

I collected a bag full of leaf mulch which is now in the Berlese funnel for extraction of invertebrates. Deer tracks were common along the river banks but didn't see any other mammal signs.

A couple of new flowers were in bloom, Bluebells and Ground Ivy as well as Black cherry and apple trees. One oddity was a white flowered Salmonberry.



Bluebell

Photo: Bob Puls

MAY 9TH 2020

I visited on my own and collected more leaf mulch from the riparian area for examination via Berlese funnel.

MAY 15TH 2020

I met Gareth at 2.0 pm and Anthea and Corey also attended. Gareth and I hiked up the stream trail to the ponds at the top of the escarpment (north boundary), collecting leaf mulch and birding. The bird list amounted to 19 species with a total of 51 for the site so far.

Several Bullfrogs jumped into the pond and a Douglas squirrel chattered at us. A rabbit was seen at the old building site and we counted 10 endangered Oregon Forest snails on our hike.



Oregon forest snail

Photo: Bob Puls

Corey and Anthea stayed in the riparian area and had a good afternoon finding new dragonflies and Red-legged frogs. Anthea submitted a long list of sightings which have been added to the inventory.

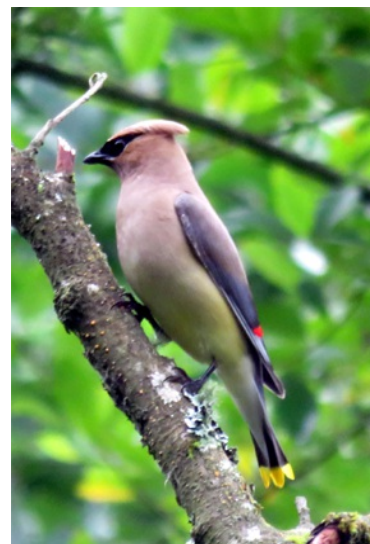
MAY 19TH 2020

Lisa hosted a Zoom meeting at which Al Neufeld announced his pending retirement on June 26th and introduced Chris Marshal as his acting replacement at the Township. Lisa provided a summary of the meeting's discussion in PDF format which has been printed and added to the Milaster binder.

SUMMARY

The bio-inventory currently stands at 272 identified Fauna and 277 identified Flora for a total of 549 species with quite a few as yet unidentified insects still to be added.

Bob Puls



Cedar Waxwing

Photo: Bob Puls

PROGRAMMES

THURSDAY, JUNE 18TH

“ZOOM” ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please consider stepping up to help the Langley Field Naturalists club carry on into the future. At this time of global warming your voice can make a difference - even if it is in just a small way. Join a committee or a group – remember every little bit helps.

If possible, in the Fall we will again be meeting at 7.15 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley. Alternatively, we will hold the meetings via “Zoom” virtual platform - e-mail notification will be sent out.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH

CAMOSUN BOG RESTORATION

*Susan Chung, Science Educator,
Co-design Artist Facilitator*

Pacific Spirit Regional Park is one of our region's ecological treasures and receives thousands of visitors a year. Within the park lies Camosun Bog, a unique and fragile ecosystem that is home to dozens of plant and animal species. It's also an area that is deeply loved by the community. The Camosun Bog is a threatened ecosystem that has existed for 2000 years.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15TH

SAVARY ISLAND ECOLOGY

Phil Henderson, Biologist

The crescent-shaped Savary Island is unlike most of the Gulf Islands in that the island runs east-west, an 8-km long, 1-km wide clay ridge covered in sand – an atypical landscape which most resembles a hideaway in the south seas. Flora: Owing to the warm nature of the soil and its sheltered position, the flora is different from that of the rockbound coast and other islands. In spring Savary enjoys a profusion of wildflowers – sea blush, camas, rattlesnake plantain, fawn and chocolate lilies to name but a few.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

BASICS OF BIOMAGNIFICATION & HOW IT AFFECTS COOPER'S HAWKS

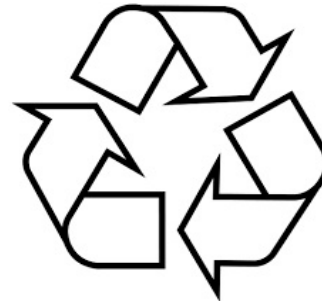
Kate Fremlin

A few years ago, researchers found a Cooper's hawk in Metro Vancouver that holds the record for being the most contaminated bird ever identified. PhD student Kate Fremlin from SFU will present her research

showing how toxins like DDT move up the earthworm – Robin – Cooper's Hawk food chain. Learn about the basics of biomagnification from Kate, and how this process can affect top-level predators, including us. Birds of prey are particularly susceptible to chemical pollutants, especially to the so-called "legacy pollutants" like DDT which are banned but still present in the environment.

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS RECYCLE PROGRAM

(Fundraiser for club projects)



1. Put your containers in a clear plastic bag.
2. Bring your bagged containers to your nearest Express Return-it depot.
3. Find the Barcode label machine and enter 222 222 3333.
4. Select the number of bags you are dropping off.
5. Print the barcode label(s) and stick them on your bag(s).
6. Drop the bags where they are piled up near the barcode machine.
7. Done!

Two locations:

Fraser Valley Bottle & Express Return-It Depot
Unit 108, 22575 Fraser Hwy, beside Big Box,
Murrayville

Willowbrook Express Return-It Depot
19641 60 Ave

Account number 222 222 3333 for Nora
Truman (had to be a person's name)

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS
FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE, SUMMER 2020

*Please meet at the designated meeting place. **Pre-registration with the leader will be mandatory as we must know in advance how many participants to expect and, if necessary, arrange for more than one leader to ensure that no more than six persons are in each group in order to maintain required social distancing.***

The walks are generally about two to three hours long and are open to all Naturalist Clubs members (adults & children, but no pets please). Please dress for the weather and bring water, binoculars and a snack (plus bug spray). Note these walks are weather dependent.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8TH

BLAAUW ECO-FOREST

Leader: **Ted Goshulak**, 604-888-0408

Time: 6:30 pm at 8640 - 257A Street

Walk through this 30 acre preserve of mixed and coniferous forest, ponds and a bog which is an important refuge for some endangered species at risk including the Red-legged Frog.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15TH

BRYDON LAGOON

Leader: **Lisa Dreves**, 604-532-0081

Time: 6:30 pm at the 53rd Avenue parking lot near 198A Street, Langley

Join Lisa to do a bio-inventory around Brydon Lagoon. This will be an event for all ages, a low-key opportunity to collect data, where everyone can join in to see how many living things they can identify.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22ND

BAT WALK

Leaders: **Ryan Usenik**, 604-530-3257 & **Keith Chrystall**

Time: 8:30 pm, 53rd Avenue at 184th Street
Join Kirk for a chance to see large numbers of bats emerging from their day-time roost. Parking is available on 53rd Avenue. Bring chairs if you wish, there is an easy walk on a paved road to the viewing area. We expect to see endangered Little Brown Bats and Yuma bats which should begin flying at around 9:10 pm; expect to see several hundred.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29TH

FORSLUND/WATSON WILDLIFE AREA

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 BC 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. At the end of the walk we will be checking for bats with the bat monitor.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5TH

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.

Take an evening walk through the woods to the lake where beaver are usually seen.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19TH

DOUBLEDAY ARBORETUM

Leader: **Keith Chrystall**, 604-427-3697

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

An opportunity to view the new Doubleday Arboretum to visit the LEPS demonstration garden and the new trails connecting Doubleday Arboretum and McLeod Athletic Park.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26TH

WILLIAMS PARK

Leader: **Joanne Rosenthal**, 604-455-0116

Time: 6:30 pm in the gravel parking lot at the park entrance, 6595 - 238th Street

Enjoy a walk around this rural park with open spaces, forested areas and the river trail along the banks of the Salmon River. Williams Park has been described as a "hidden gem" and is located in part of the Salmon River Watershed. There is a picnic shelter, washrooms and one trail is Handicap accessible. Meet in the gravel parking lot at the entrance to the park. Bring water and a snack to enjoy after the walk.