



# Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

Langley Field Naturalists acknowledge we are in the unceded Indigenous lands of the Coast Salish (Stó:lo) people

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Newsletter

**SPECIAL BC NATURE AGM/CONFERENCE 2023 REPORT** June 2023 Supplement

## NATURE WHERE CITY AND COUNTRY MEET - May 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> 2023

The 2023 Annual General Meeting and Conference for BC Nature, "Nature where City and Country Meet", was hosted by Langley Field Naturalists at the Langley Golf & Country Club. In spite of unsettled weather, the 175 participants enjoyed the social time, the guest speakers and the variety of field trips.

Friday evening saw us enjoying a barbecue in the barns at Campbell Valley Regional Park - with the Nicomekl Enhancement Society manning the barbecue and Marie Puls and her friend Maple serving the food. The weather didn't dampen the spirits, and LFN's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday cakes were cut to a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday".

We began with a reception on the Thursday evening, with Fern Gabriel of the Kwantlen welcoming us to the Sto-lo traditional lands. We enjoyed a wonderful selection of appetizers, a slide show of the history of Brydon Lagoon, and an introduction to nature in the lands surrounding Trinity Western.



Fern Gabriel, Lisa and Ted enjoy the pictures of Brydon Lagoon  
Photo: Sheila Puls



Lisa & Sheila ready to cut the cakes  
Photo: Marie Puls

Friday's schedule included three well-attended early birding walks. At 8.30 am, everyone gathered for coffee and muffins, greetings by the local politicians, and then enjoyed talks by our three guest speakers. A social time over lunch and then it was time to head off for field trips - more details of speakers and field trips elsewhere in the newsletter.

Early birders were out again on Saturday, and the morning consisted of more field trips. The weather wasn't wonderful, but no one got too wet and naturalists are used to braving the showers. Returning to the conference centre for lunch, sponsored by Dorosh Construction (thank you Mike Klotz!) we settled in for the Annual General Meeting of BC Nature.

The evening banquet, with guest speaker Andy MacKinnon, included wonderful food, BC Nature awards and a wrap-up of the silent auction. A successful AGM indeed!

**Sheila Puls**

*This special edition of the Newsletter is to give some of the highlights of the conference. Not all events are included, but it is hoped that enough are written up to give us memories of this event which was hosted so successfully by the LFN.*



*Lisa at West Creek*

*Photo: Nora Truman*

## **BC NATURE AGM & CONFERENCE 2023 COUNCIL OF CLUB REPRESENTATIVES**

On Thursday, May 4, after greeting and catching up with each other, Club Representatives sat down to our meeting at 4:00 pm with a full agenda to complete before 6:00 pm. We quickly approved the agenda and adopted the minutes of BC Nature's AGM in Kelowna in May 2022.

The first item was President Alan Burger, chairing his last Club Representative meeting. He announced that BC Nature now has an incoming president, Nancy Flood, a retired professor from Thompson Rivers University, which allows him to finally step down after the extra years serving as president through the pandemic. He says BC Nature's organization has changed dramatically due to work by our new Executive-Director, Stewart Guy, since he began 15 months ago. Stewart took organizational tasks away from the president, freeing up more time for policy work. Also, our new contract fundraiser Andrea Simpson has found more funding from organizations and the government for more paid staff. Liam Ragan is now a full-time IBA and KBA (Key Biodiversity Area) Coordinator, Kephra Beckett is a new full-time conservation coordinator, and Mary Shannon is our new Office administrator and bookkeeper.

Bylaw change motions the Board has approved

include shifting the Harassment Officer to a new Human Resource Committee with more bylaw changes listed in the AGM Report booklet. These motions will be voted on at the AGM by all members.

After discussing the Treasurer's Report in the AGM booklet, already approved by the Board, Club Representatives passed a motion to recommend approval at the AGM on May 6th of the unaudited December 31st, 2022 statements.

As members of the nomination committee, Alan Burger and Gary Hunt proposed the following slate of nominees for approval for BC Nature's Board positions. The Board members' election is the Club Representatives' responsibility, and the results will be presented at the AGM on May 6th. All nominees were voted on and approved by Club Representatives as follows:

Nancy Flood: President, 2-year term,  
Alan Burger: Past-President, 2-year term  
Viktorija Juciete: Lower Mainland Coordinator, 2-year term

Reappointment to Board of Directors:  
Barbara Town: Treasurer  
Rick Gee: Director-at-Large, one-year term  
Susan Thorne: Co-secretary, two-year term  
Gary Hunt: Thompson-Okanagan-Shuswap Coordinator, 2-year term.

Confirmation of appointments made by the Board  
Olga Lansdorp: Director at Large  
Stewart Wilson: Kootenay region Coordinator  
No action was needed for the Directors continuing on in their two-year terms.

Nominations are still sought for a Vice-president and a Co-Secretary, but there were no nominations from the floor.

BC Naturalists Foundation had assets of about one million dollars at the end of 2022. Income from the assets is used in part to maintain the foundation's portfolio and distributed to BC Nature clubs with grants for their projects and BC Nature Scholarships. The Council of Representatives appoints the Foundation members and nominates the foundation's directors.

Club Reps appointed Claire Meggs and Michelle Parry as BC Naturalist Foundation members and nominated them for 1 three-year term. Also, Sheila

Puls and Colleen Simmons were nominated and renewed for three years.

Brief Reports from the following: Stuart Guy emphasized the importance of Liam Ragan and the development of KBAs, their biodiversity and the support of caretakers. He has reached out for federal money for support and is connecting with other like-minded organizations such as Sitka and WCC. Kephra Beckett, the new Conservation Coordinator, is working on a Municipal Protected Areas Project. We can contact her if we need help advancing our case in municipal environmental projects.

Breakout for regional discussion had the Lower Mainland group discuss the need for BC Nature to increase the technical support they offer to clubs.

We had an open discussion on the problem of getting members to take on board positions. One suggestion was to limit executive positions to two-year terms, with only one option to renew. Another idea for clubs seeking a new president is to have two co-chairs, which has proved successful for the Abbotsford Mission Club.

We finished with Bob Peart, who has held many positions, including Chair of Nature Canada and Executive Director of the Sierra Club, and now has his own consulting firm. He briefly reported his organizational review of BC Nature, leading the Board through this process. A new governance structure now leads BC Nature towards developing a new Strategic Plan.

We enjoyed a light meal after our productive meeting, finishing near 6:30 pm.

*Kathy Masse*

## DIGNITARIES

My job was to invite and welcome the dignitaries. Invitations went to each level of government and each level of government was represented.

### Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

Kwantlen Elder Fern Gabriel welcomed us to the unceded lands of the Stó-lo people.

### Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> Opening Ceremonies

In attendance were:

John Aldag, MP Cloverdale/Langley City, sent Katie Vermeulen as his representative who brought greetings. He also sent a letter which was read by

Chair Sheila Puls.

Tako Van Popta, MP Langley/Aldergrove.

Megan Dykeman, MLA Langley East.

Andrew Mercier, MLA Langley.

Eric Woodward, Mayor of Langley Township.

Mike Solyom, Langley City Councillor representing Mayor Pachal.

### Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> Banquet

Nathan Pachal, Mayor of Langley City with his husband Rob Bittner.

*Lilianne Fuller*

## THURSDAY EVENING RECEPTION



*Appetizers Photo:  
Joanne Rosenthal*

Following the First Nations Land Acknowledgement, the conference started with a Thursday evening appetizer reception, with a slide show of Brydon Lagoon through the years & seasons, presented by Anthea Farr.

This was followed by Ted Goshaluk introducing us to the variety of nature to be found in the lands surrounding Trinity Western University. Both presentations highlighted that nature can indeed be found “where City and Country meet”.

Following the presentations, and while we enjoyed the appetizers and socialized, Eric Habisch’s “I Spy in Langley” - a variety of the species photographed in Langley, ran in the background.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

### NATIVE BEE SOCIETY OF BC

The first speaker of the morning was Christine Thuring of the Native Bee Society of BC - this is the newest member club of BC Nature, having had their membership approved only the day before!

Her talk consisted of four sections of challenges for bees, including habitat loss, pesticides, diseases and climate change.



Christine talks of challenges for bees

Photo: Sheila Puls

Christine spoke of the importance of bees in our food chain, and told us that there are about 400 species of bees in Canada, with about 150 species living in this area. Having shown us many of these - she spoke of the provision of safe nesting areas and stressed that many nest in the ground, and gave us permission to keep a messy lawn area as this is where so many can hide.

She also spoke of the necessity to provide a variety of forage plants to provide food throughout the seasons.

## BEHAVIOURAL ECOLOGY

The second speaker, Ron Ydenberg, a Professor at Simon Fraser University, spoke of the difference a change in behaviour can make in an ecosystem - one example being the re-introduction of wolves in Yellowstone Park. This changed the behaviour of the grazing animals, who didn't range in the same way when avoiding predators, and this allowed the previously close-grazed areas around the rivers and streams to grow up, giving hiding places to other smaller species, which then started to reappear. Thus a single change can have a much greater impact.

## FRASER VALLEY WATERSHEDS COALITION

The last speakers of the morning were salmon biologists Mat Foy and Natasha Cox of the Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition. This society's goal is to help conserve and enhance all the watersheds across the Fraser Valley and his talk was about the small salmon Coho fry survival rates in the various watersheds. The small Coho fry swim and search

for food in fresh water streams and lakes and they can spend up to a year or more in and around their birth spawning areas.

For the study, they concentrated on the Chilliwack River to see how the Coho salmon fry feed and keep themselves alive while growing large enough before going out to the open ocean. The study was from April 1 to Oct. Also, the large overflowing rushing muddy river floods we have been experiencing in recent years needed to be examined for the Coho fry survivals as well.

Interestingly, it was discovered that the first rains trigger something inside the small Coho fry. They believe the smell of "mud" triggers them to go into quiet protected places - specifically the off-channels of rivers that are the abandoned bends and nearby wetlands. These fresh water off-channel ponds were found to be the perfect shelters for the small Coho fry to feed and enlarge. As well, it also safeguarded them from being eaten by larger predators in the rivers and lakes.

The study concluded that there was a bigger survival of the Coho fry that went into the off-channels of the rivers than the ones who stayed only in the rivers and lakes, thus proving the importance of off-channels, wetlands, and old river bends. The off-channel survival rate was found to be 1.2% bigger than that of the river fry, which stresses the importance of saving and protecting these wetland areas for Coho fry and other salmon species.

*Anne Gosse*

## FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

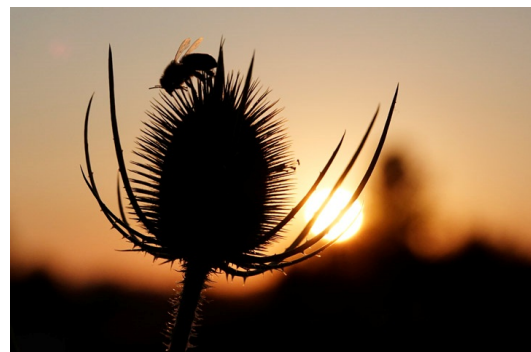


Photo: John Gordon

A dozen naturalists attended a two part flower photography workshop headed by LFN member and photographer John Gordon. The first hour and thirty minutes slide presentation covered basic forms of

composition. The group explored the use of leading lines, repetition of shapes as well as numerous other techniques. The second part of the workshop took place at Sendall Gardens where we put into practice some of the techniques we had been exploring beforehand. The time passed so quickly because we were having so much fun. The final thirty minutes of the workshop was spent using slow shutter speeds to create 'painterly' effects within the camera. That was perhaps the most satisfying part, to see participants smile when they came up with something creative. It seemed everyone went away with some new insights that will hopefully improve not only their flower photography but their overall approach to creating images of nature.

*John Gordon*

## TRINITY WESTERN FIELD TRIP

If I had known I was going to be asked to write something about the excursion with Dr. David Clements through the trails of Trinity Western, I would have taken notes as my memory is short. We started our walk around McMillan Lake. It is home of many waterfowl and around 18 species of fish - 8 of them being invasive. They have used electrofishing to rid the lake of these unwanted visitors but so far it has not been totally successful. The Lake is also home of the endangered painted turtle.

The second stage of our walk was on a relatively new trail through the Blaauw Eco Forest. Along the trail we were introduced to the large Oregon Forest Snail that is a species at risk. It is only found in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley making its' home in deciduous forests near bigleaf maples and stinging nettles. Further along the trail another large snail was spotted. It was the Pacific Sideband, the largest land snail in B.C., and can be found in grassy areas as well as forests.

Some of the plants I recall that Dr. Clements pointed out were Elderberry, Stinging Nettles and Devil's Club. Many more were mentioned as the forest is rich with them.



*Pacific Sideband Snail*  
*Photo: Nance Charron*

Crossing over a bridge, we looked down onto a salmon stream, the name escaping my memory! A heron was spotted in the distance. We

also spotted a Pileated Woodpecker closer to the University.

The trails at Trinity Western are an oasis away from the urban sprawl and so very close for Langley residents to visit. I am thankful I had the opportunity to visit it with other Field Naturalists under the guidance of Dr. David Clements.

*Nance Charron*

## LANGLEY BOG WALKS

On May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, Ted Goshulak and I welcomed Nature BC AGM participants to the Langley Bog. After a brief stroll through the neighbourhood from the McKinnon Crescent Parking lot, we passed through the park gate and into the forest at the Bog's southwestern edge. Ted and I introduced participants to the bog, giving background to its recent human history (peat mining, cranberry and blueberry farming) and natural history (bog as a hydrologically isolated\*, nutrient-poor, Sphagnum-dominated wetland).

Each day about 15 participants strolled along the hog fuel (i.e., cedar "sawdust") trail as Ted and I pointed out various aspects of the bog and explained what it might have looked like before the top layer of Sphagnum (a.k.a., peat moss) was



*Kildeer nest*

*Photo: Ted Goshulak*

stripped off, leaving a degraded remnant patchwork of features, some bog-like (mounds of Sphagnum) and others not so bog-like (hog fuel roads, elevated rows of introduced blueberries, other introduced plants, and large trees not typical of bogs). We explained and showed how the bog is hanging on, with the smallest hints such as the Round-leaved Sundew (small carnivorous plant) attracting the

greatest interest, and we discussed what Metro Vancouver will do to encourage its restoration (remove hog fuel, install culverts beneath the hog fuel roads, retain water, and plant Sphagnum).



Round-leaved Sundew with sticky leaves awaiting prey. Unfortunately, the human visitors were a little too large.

Photo: Ted Goshulak

Although the bog seemed to delight the visitors, it did not deliver the Sandhill Cranes Ted and I were hoping for, but a couple of Killdeer nests made their absence easier to forget. On the second day, some lucky participants were treated to views of a Sandhill Crane in a field adjacent to one of the houses along MacKinnon Crescent as they made their way back to the parking lot.

**Phil Henderson**

\* Receives water from rainfall and none from the nutrient-rich waters of adjacent mineral-rich creeks or wetlands.

## MILASTER FIELD TRIP

Eight intrepid naturalists set out to explore Milaster Passive Park, a site not yet open to the public. The gentle rain falling did not deter us, and soon after leaving the cars we had good views of Golden-crowned Kinglets foraging in nearby leaves. Given the weather, we had no expectations of seeing butterflies, but it was ideal for slugs. Black Arion slugs were abundant, and care had to be taken by those who did not want a squished slug on the bottom of his or her boots!



Eric explains the story of the potential park Photo: Anthea Farr

The trail was pretty good - just one somewhat challenging section on wet boards through tall wet grass, but no one slipped off the boards. Nathan Creek was hurrying along, but we did spot a small fish (probably a coho) in a sheltered spot by the water's edge. When we reached the pipeline, we had good views of the latest construction there. Thankfully, no crew members were working there, so it was relatively quiet.

Some of the highlights: the lovely notes of a Warbling Vireo singing near us, a Hairy Woodpecker busily hunting for insects on a tree trunk (ignoring our presence), a splendid Pacific Sideband Snail on the hillside trail, followed by the discovery of two Lancetooth Snails (who were noticing only each other), an abundance of licorice ferns (pointed out by Eric), and all the comradery and welcome exchanges of information that can happen on such a leisurely walk.

**Anthea Farr**

## ALDERGROVE REGIONAL PARK - FRIDAY

After gathering at the door of the banquet hall at the Langley golf center, we left a little bit after 1 pm. At the Main entrance we waited until 1.25 pm. We were a bit hurried as people needed to be back at 4 for meetings. So we started at the site of the most recently created wetland which is just a few years old. (The oldest pond was developed more than 10 years ago.)

The newest pond is now filling in with plants and some shrubs and trees are growing in the surrounding areas. More wetland birds are showing up: diverse ducks and songbirds such as Common

Yellowthroat and Red-winged Blackbird. We also heard several birds in this area such as Pacific-slope Flycatcher and Brown Creeper.

While heading south we encountered the Owl box put up for Barn Owls. It did not look used, but the 3 barns in the lower area are all used by Barn Owls. Soon after, we headed towards the creek and some of the westerly wetlands. The goose nest that was predated the week before was hardly visible, but most if not all of the eggs were gone and we could not see the other goose nests at all due to the fast growing grass. Some of the swallows were now active on the nest boxes. In the carport/barn the robins and Barn Swallows were nest building or nesting. We got a good look of one of the Redtails, but the leaves have developed so fast that we could just make out the nest, but we could not see if there was a second bird on the nest.



Barred Owl

Photo: Perry Poulsen

We had 4 species of swallow: Northern Rough-winged, Tree, Violet-green and Barn. We did see a few of the beaver lodges and many signs of their activity. We had some time left because of our hurrying and so we wandered a little bit too much of our planned route back. But after finding a Barred Owl, we just had to see it from the other side for a better look and we ended up walking an extra km. The number of bird species seen or heard was 26. We just about managed to get the people back on time for the meeting.

**Wim Vesseur**

## **ALDERGROVE REGIONAL PARK - SATURDAY**

We gathered after goodies and coffee at the golf center and getting everyone together took some

time. Not everyone showed up and 7 of us left for the Aldergrove Regional Park. The drive to the park took somewhat longer than the day before so we only started at 9:45 am.

At the upper pond we got some Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Yellowthroat as well as Black-capped Chickadees. Along the trail we found the occasional snail. They were the Brown-lipped snail. An European introduced species. While slowly heading towards the lower ponds and Gordon's Brook, we encountered a spot where the invasive burdock was gathered. Apparently, Velcro has been developed with the seed pods of burdock as inspiration. It often clings to fur. According to the invasive species council, it can be so bad that in tall plants, bats and songbirds sometimes get stuck. One of the persons in the group was focussed a bit more on invasive plants. In one spot we saw a deer no longer relaxed, laying in the grass.

We explained that the beavers had a big impact on water levels and that sometimes the trails get flooded and some of the bird boxes are out of reach due to water levels. The beaver lodges were very visible. The swallows seemed less active than the day before and we counted fewer birds and missed the Northern Rough-winged Swallow. We even had some Pileated Woodpeckers fly over and call to each other. Another bird heard (but in this case not seen) was a Sora calling for several minutes.



Brown-lipped snail

Photo: Perry Poulsen

Both Redtails were now active around the area. Perry even saw a Mink crossing the road. We got to 29 species of birds.

We had to hurry back for lunch as we were leaving after noon. When we arrived for lunch, there was still coffee and food so we quickly found our spots to enjoy our meal.

**Wim Vesseur**

## AFTER BARBEQUE PRESENTATIONS

Once it was confirmed that the BC Nature AGM Barbecue was going to be held in the Red Barn at Campbell Valley Park, it only seemed logical to follow the BBQ with a Owl walk and a Bat information session.

### BATS

In the washroom next to the Red Barn is a known bat roost that is one of the roosts that LFN has monitored each of the last several years for the BC Bat Community. Monitoring means the roost numbers are counted each year, allowing Bat biologists to be able to compare Bat numbers from year to year. Danielle Dagenas, Regional Bat Coordinator with BC Bat Community, gave an introductory information session on bats. The group was then able to walk 50 meters and observe bats disembark from their day roost.

Keith Crystall also had the LFN Bat monitor unit set up and was able to both explain how the unit works and explain how it enabled users to identify Bat species based on the echo that the unit was picking up.

### OWLS

Sofi Hindmarch, a biologist with Fraser Valley Conservatory and an LFN member, gave an introductory presentation on owls and how to observe them in nature. During the BBQ, several participants were commenting that they were hearing owl calls from the forested area. Unfortunately, the weather person did not participate that night, and the group was not able to make an owl sighting.

*Ryan Usenik*

## MEADERY AND CIDERY TOUR

On Friday May 5<sup>th</sup>, Nora and Lynda led a group of 9 people first to Festina Lente Meadery where there was a description of wine-making with honey. There were many flavours: some with fruit such as apricot (Sol Invictus), some with fragrant flowers such as lavender (Flora Methenglin) and herbs such as Basil, (Sacramentum Basilius Melomel) that had dry tomato as well. There were 40 or more bee hives on the property with busy bees making honey.



*Photo: Nora Truman*

Next we went to The Fraser Valley Cider Company and had a full tour with Rachel the owner. We heard that the cidery was started about 7 years ago on the Langley property that was purchased while she and her partner were still working as civil engineers in Vancouver. The business took off and now Rachel runs the business full-time with 20 or so employees. The ciders are brewed on the property and our group was shown the vats, bottling machine and casks with the various ciders in a cool storage area. Our group was treated to tastings of many of the ciders on the lovely, enclosed deck. We purchased a few bottles of wine and cider to take home for the next special occasion.

*Nora Truman*

## FORSLUND-WATSON WILDLIFE AREA

A tour of the Forslund-Watson Wildlife area was offered on both Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Between the two days, twenty-seven people toured the property. The tour write-up in the



*AGM Field Trip at Forslund-Watson*

*Photo: Keith Crystall*

registration package made mention that tour participants would be able to hear about and examine the three vernal ponds that have been constructed on the property. With the three ponds having been built over a five-year period, tour participants were able to observe what we refer to as the natural development of a living pond.

The tour participants included several BC Nature staff and regional coordinators. There appeared to be agreement with the way LFN has been able to continue to manage the property as a wildlife area. As one participant commented, a jewel amid obvious developmental pressure.

On both tour dates, a tree/chorus frog (two names-same frog) were observed in both BCIT ponds. Unfortunately, nobody was able to observe amphibian egg masses. No tour of Forslund-Watson, regardless of purpose, would be complete without somebody spotting a bird of special interest. A Bald Eagle was seen making an unsuccessful hunting drive at a rabbit which the Friday afternoon group spotted earlier, close to the parking area. Near the two BCIT ponds, a Red-breasted Sapsucker was observed, along with Yellow-rumped Warblers, Yellow Warblers and a Townsend's Warbler. On both days, tour participants were commenting that they were hearing what they thought was a Red-tailed Hawk. Once at the location of the BCIT Ponds with the Saturday morning group, not only was the nest located but the female Red-Tailed Hawk was observed sitting on the nest. The highlight was on the Saturday morning walk when a tour participant caught sight of a Great Horned Owl in the forested area of the property. The group was able to confirm that the sighting not only included the two parents, but also two fledged offspring. They were almost the same size as their parents but a little fluffier. Apparently Great Horned Owls are very early nesters. Other LFN members have confirmed that this Great Horned Owl nesting pair actually had four fledged offspring in total this season.

**Ryan Usenik**

## **MOUNTAIN VIEW TRIP MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

Tom and I led a group of 15 AGM participants through the trails of Mountain View Crown Lands on a cloudy but dry morning. Though some of the walkers were interested in birds, the focus ended up being the native plants that were in all their spring-time splendour this day. Tom and I did our

best to point out and ID most of the common plants that have been growing in this property undisturbed for the last 100 years. Bleeding Heart dominated the paths with Vanilla Leaf, Pacific Trillium still in bloom along with False and Star-flowered Solomon's Seal. We also highlighted the Stream Violets dappled along parts of the path, Sweet Cecily, Hooker's Fairybell and the many Osoberry that were just finishing blooming.



*Photo: Rick McKelvey*

We made our way through some dry and wet areas to the nurse tree which would be our final destination, where we found the only Devil's Club plant we encountered in our travels. There too was what we concurred was probably a False Azalea all by itself as well. Yes, birds were heard but not many seen and there were roughly 20+ recorded in eBird with the assistance of Merlin ID. What a great site to showcase for our BC Nature AGM visitors that highlighted exactly lands that need preservation and protection.

**Eric Habisch**



*At Mountain View*

*Photo: Rick McKelvey*

## **EARLY BIRDING IN CAMPBELL VALLEY PARK, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

After driving to the Langley golf course to pick up the participants, we left at 6.15 am with 8 of us to see some birds in Campbell Valley Park. As the gate on the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue parking lot was not open, Tom and I decided to do the vernal ponds and McLean Pond instead. Driving around the corner, we parked on the north side of the house.

While walking along the ponds towards the forest on the other side, we quickly picked up some regulars such as Dark-eyed Junco, American Robin, Song Sparrow and others. In the forest we were hearing a Warbling Vireo singing as well as Brown Creeper. Meanwhile I explained that the vernal ponds were put in to help the Western toad to disperse into the park from the only breeding area in the area and as a breeding spot for other species, such as Pacific chorus frog and loads of insects.

We were lucky enough to find a singing House Wren. When we were going down to the Little Campbell River a Rufous Hummingbird showed its colors despite the weather. Back up and around the meadow we kept on hearing the low sound of the Mourning Dove.

In the past, Bald Eagles nested there, high up in a cottonwood, but the birds moved after the tree came down. After that, some Redtails built a nest in a tree on top of the edge, but that nest came down last winter. The Redtails are still around but did not show themselves this early morning.

When we were getting back to the cars to go to McLean on the other side a Killdeer called.

Arriving at McLean Pond a few minutes later we walked over the grounds of the previous Vancouver tree farm. The last few years Coyotes have been denning in the forest and raising the pups in the meadows.

On the pond there were still some waterfowl such as American Coot, Bufflehead and Canada Goose. Returning via the east side of the meadow on the east side of McLean Pond we found some more birds among which a Pileated Woodpecker flying over. All in all not bad birding for a drizzly morning.

***Wim Vesseur***

## **EARLY BIRDING IN CAMPBELL VALLEY PARK, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>**

After driving to the Langley golf course to pick up the participants, we left at 6.15 am with 11 of us to see some birds in Campbell Valley Park. As the gate on the 16th Avenue Parking lot was not open, Tom and I decided to do the Vernal ponds and McLean Pond again. Later we found out the Gate on 200 Street parking lot was opened. A slight miscommunication somewhere. I asked if someone wanted to do an E-bird list and Angela offered herself for the task for which we owe her many thanks.

While walking along the ponds towards the forest on the other side, we quickly picked up some regulars such as Dark-eyed Junco, American Robin, Song Sparrow Savannah Sparrow and others. The Red-winged Blackbirds were more obvious. In the forest we were again hearing a Warbling Vireo singing, as well as Brown Creeper. Meanwhile I explained that the vernal ponds were put in to help the Western toad to disperse into the park from the only breeding area in area the and as a breeding spot for other species such as Pacific chorus frog and loads of insects. Someone called "ducks flying over", and focussing on the birds in the air, we decided it must be Loons and most likely Common Loons. Later I discussed this with some other birders and based on the legs hanging down by the tail I changed it on the shared list to Common Loons. This was a new patch bird for me. On the old checklist for the park, loons had only been reported as a rare fall sighting. In the past, Bald Eagles nested there high up in a cottonwood but the birds moved after the tree came down. After that, some Redtails built a nest in a tree on top of the edge, but that nest came down last winter.

When we were getting back to the cars to go to McLean on the other side, a Killdeer called and we saw a Redtail being chased by a Killdeer. Most likely the Redtail was trying to get one of the chicks of the Killdeer nesting in that area.

Arriving at McLean Pond a few minutes later, we tried to find some birds there. We were moving a bit faster to be on time for a sip of coffee and a bite. We just managed to be back before the coffee was finished. We had 24 species of birds at the vernal ponds and 27 species at McLean for a total of 35 species.

***Wim Vesseur***

## BC NATURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

After spending Saturday morning enjoying field trips exploring different areas of Langley's diverse landscape and sharing a communal lunch, BC Nature members gathered for the Annual General Meeting. The meeting's agenda was adopted, and the minutes of the AGM on May 28, 2022, in Kelowna, were approved by the membership.

Alan Burger chaired his last AGM as President by welcoming our incoming President, Nancy Flood. He again emphasized how our new executive director's changes with paid staff have enabled BC Nature to focus on achieving its goals. The new fundraiser, Andrea Simpson, with her outreach to other foundations and the government, has increased our financial footing with more grants and donations. An important goal of BC Nature is to help clubs, and it needs more input from clubs.

Treasurer Barbara Towns presented BC Nature's December 31st, 2022, financial statements to the general membership for acceptance. The Board had already approved the statements, and the Club Representatives recommended acceptance for general members. The motion for membership to approve the statements passed. A second motion to appoint the chartered professional accounting firm of Reid Hurst & Nagy Inc to conduct the review engagement for the 2023 fiscal year-end also passed.

Many clauses in BC Nature's bylaws are listed as motions for change in the annual report and need approval at the AGM. Included motions are shifting the Harassment Officer to a new Human Resources Committee, and changing some of the President's duties because some duties have moved to the new executive director. These, and other bylaw changes found in the annual report booklet, were voted on and passed as a special resolution by the general members of BC Nature.

Olga Lansdorp, Director-at-Large and Viktoija Juciute, Lower Mainland Coordinator, reported on the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative they are working on. Regardless of gender, race or economic status, all are worthy of inclusion. They are working on an audit to evaluate the existing equity and inclusion status in BC Nature. Another goal is to provide a means to provide guidelines for equity to clubs.

All reports for clubs are included in the Report booklet. As well, several short presentations were made by staff and committees to highlight their written reports:

- \* Alan Burger of the Nominating Committee reported on the vote of acceptance of the new BC Nature Board at the Club Representative meeting of May 4, 2023. We still need to fill the Vice-President and Co-Secretary positions.
- \* Stuart Guy, Executive Director, wants to take BC Nature's IBA/KBA to the next level with more support for caretakers. We must connect with young people, First Nations and NatureKids. Making clubs stronger with his help in increasing membership will benefit all.
- \* Liam Ragan wants to increase First Nations partnerships in his work with IBAs and KBAs.
- \* Kephra Beckett, Conservation Coordinator, is working on a Municipal Protected Areas Project to identify and support clubs to work with their municipalities to protect key natural areas. She encourages clubs to contact her to support the work they are doing in their local areas.
- \* Betty Davison, Office Manager, is pleased many members have adopted the enews edition of BC Nature's magazine and suggests those wishing to continue with the print edition pay a small yearly subscription rate.
- \* Marg Cuthbert, Education Chair, presented a certificate for BC Nature Club Mentors to Margo Hearne and Peter Hamel from Haida Gwaii, who run the Dekatla Wildlife Sanctuary in Masset. She encourages clubs to send her more nominations for the Club Mentors Award.
- \* Bob Peart expanded on his Governance Report. He recommends clarifying the role of the Club Representatives and making a strategy for new memberships. Diversity in membership is key to healthy clubs, and a meaningful relationship with NatureKids encourages youth toward a lifelong love of nature and its protection. Considering these goals, a new Strategic Plan for BC Nature will proceed.
- \* Peter Ballin, Conservation Chair, expresses both optimism and concerns. Now the government, with our suggestions, is saying the right things. But action is needed to match the vision, such as laws with enforcement and monitoring.
- \* Stephen Partington, President of the BC Nature Foundation, reported they disbursed over \$19,000 in seven grants to BC Nature clubs this year, plus \$4,000 for the Bert Brink and Rene Savenye scholarships.
- \* Kathy McKenzie of NatureKids, said this club is an intergenerational experience for families and provides educational outreach to communities.

Members voted on a motion to approve all reports submitted in the Annual Report.

Attached is a link to the BC Nature 2022 Annual Report, where you can read complete reports and see the scope of BC Nature's commitment to protecting BC's environment and their support of our clubs. Especially interesting are the BC Nature Club activity reports.

<https://bcnature.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2022-Annual-report-AGM-final-BD-1-2.pdf>

*Kathy Masse*

## **SUNDAY FAREWELL OUTING ARBOUR RIBBON TRAILS (DEREK DOUBLEDAY ARBORETUM)**



*Walking on the Arbour Ribbon Trail*

*Photo: Nora Truman*

On Sunday morning, May 7<sup>th</sup>, a group of 9 met at the Derek Doubleday Arboretum on Fraser Hwy and we had a tour of the inside of the Rotary Interpretive Centre to start out. The group was impressed with the log structure. Our tour then headed outside and visited the various gardens with Rhododendrons, willows, the Korean memorial and water feature and on to the Demonstration Garden and Learning Farm. We then headed north across the Fraser Creek bridge to the Arbour Ribbon trails where we saw Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Yellowthroat and a Bald Eagle on a post north of the floodplain.

A most refreshing way to end our AGM 2023 experience.

*Nora Truman*

## **FORT LANGLEY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

The Sunday weather was pleasant for the field trip tour of Fort Langley National Historic Site. I was joined by 8 BC Nature members with a good representation from across BC. Our group had members of clubs from Surrey, Vancouver, Salt Spring Island, Vancouver Island, Kamloops and Prince George.

After checking in, we met our site interpretive guide, Walter. Our tour began with a presentation about the importance and history of the use of Cedar trees to indigenous people. Walter showed us the demonstration cedar tree near the entrance to the Fort that is an example of how cedar bark is collected without destroying the tree. There are protocols about collecting the cedar that have been passed on from elders. Walter explained some of the many historic uses of the cedar tree. We also learned that the Kwantlen Band is able to use Cedar from development sites in the Langley area before removal. They are notified of planned removal of cedar trees and may harvest bark or wood if it meets their needs.



*In the cooperage*

*Photo: Joanne Rosenthal*

Walter's presentation moved to the cooperage building where we learned some of the history of the area in colonial times. After the fur trade, the area became an important provisioning and administrative centre for the Columbia district. The Hudson's Bay Company Farm alone comprised nearly 2000 acres in Langley. Products from the farm were shipped to markets as far away as Hawaii.

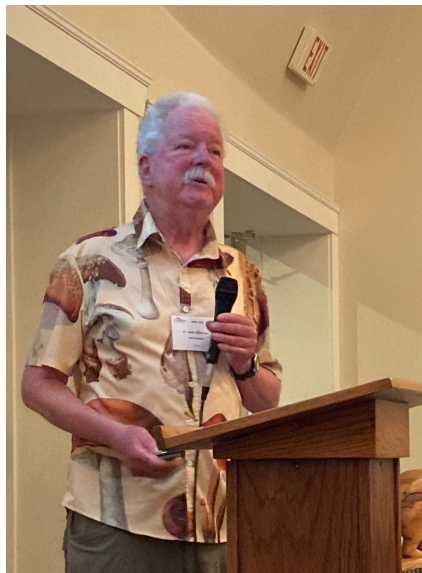
After our self-guided tour of the other buildings in the Fort, some decided to walk into Fort Langley. Over lunch we had great discussions about issues facing those concerned about the environment and current issues. The company was great and I found it enjoyable to be with like-minded BC Nats!

**Joanne Rosenthal**

## BANQUET AND AWARDS

Saturday evening banquet tables were decorated with the beautiful centrepieces, thanks to Lesley Goodbrand, which were given as a gift, as well as each table having two books as gifts donated by Hancock House Publishers Ltd.

The keynote speaker for the evening, Dr. Andy MacKinnon, gave a presentation on mycology which again highlighted how interconnected everything is in nature. He offered his well-used field guide as an auction item, which was well received!



Andy MacKinnon Photo: Sheila Puls

It was time for awards - and offered a surprise which was rather close to home. In addition to well deserved awards to Betty Davison, our long time office manager at BC Nature, and to Alan Burger, twice BC Nature President, two awards came to LFN members, much to their surprise.

Bob Puls received the Ian McTaggart-Cowan Outstanding Naturalist Award.

*This Award is presented to a member of BC Nature who has made an outstanding contribution to the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural history of British Columbia.*



Bob's award Photo: Sheila Puls

Sheila Puls received the BC Nature Club Service Award.

*This Award is presented to a person or persons belonging to a member Club recognizing their outstanding service at a local level.*



Sheila's award Photo: Betty Davison

We both very much appreciate the honour of receiving these awards

The 2024 Annual General Meeting and Conference for BC Nature will be hosted by Arrowsmith Naturalists in Parksville/Qualicum. More details will be coming soon.