



Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

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Newsletter

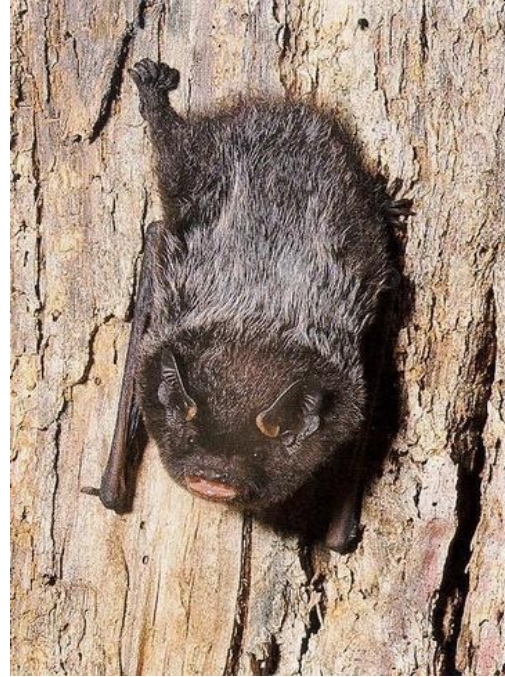
March 2021

BATS ABOUT BATS Bat Exploration

In February 2020 Langley Field Naturalists were informed that we were the recipient of a \$575.00 Club Support Grant. This was greatly appreciated, and the monies were used to purchase an Echo Meter Touch 2 PRO bat detector. Left over monies were used to cover courier and brokerage charges associated with this purchase. With club funds, the LFN also purchased an Apple iPad that is solely dedicated for use with the bat detector. Manual counters were also purchased for participating in Bat counts. LFN's goal in getting this unit was to allow members to comfortably get more involved in bat detection in the Langley's.

This past summer the unit was used 38 times throughout the Langley's and Surrey. A total of 1161 bat vocalization recordings were made that permitted an identification of bat species. The three most common species that were recorded were: Little Brown Myotis, Hoary Bat and Silver-haired Bat.

One previously undocumented maternal bat roost was identified and reported to the BC Bat Community. LFN participated in four manual counts at this maternal roost for the BC Bat Community.



Silver-haired Bat

I-Naturalist photo

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the club was restricted in the number of group outings they could organize. On four different evenings, volunteers in charge of operating the bat detector system went to a member address and participated in bat exploration at that location. The balance of the outings were done by a group of volunteers allowing them to get more familiar with the bat detector system for observing bats and for seeking bat habitat.

Having the unit, even with COVID-19, has created more interest among LFN members about bats. We look forward to using the unit next year and hopefully for years to come. The unit allows members to comfortably get out exploring for bats in their community.

Keith Chrystall

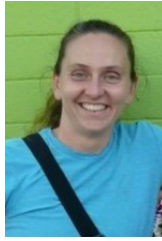
Note: This report was sent to BC Nature Foundation as detail of the use of the grant.



Little Brown Myotis

Canadian Wildlife Federation photo

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



What an absolutely stunning time of year! And by far the best part of living on the west coast is when you have family back east. Making them jealous when you spot the first flower buds of the season is so much fun!

We probably all know about the early clusters of white osoberry (formerly Indian plum) but keep a sharp eye out for the yellow swamp lantern peeking up through the mud. Beaked hazelnut will soon be showing off their tiny pink buds now that their impressive catkins are already on display. Common forsythia might be in bloom already but it doesn't compete with the bursts of yellow from our local Oregon grape, especially when they are filled with hungry, buzzing bees. And speaking of bees! Keep an eye out for a bigleaf maple in bloom, loved by native and honey bees. The drooping racemes become a flurry of activity on a sunny day - bees get so excited I don't think they know if they are coming or going!

This spring I hope you get a chance to get out and explore our local parks, maybe take it a little slower while trying to spot some of the tiny specks of colour of our native plants.

If you are able to maintain a safe distance, point them out to others in the parks, too! There are thousands of new people that are just discovering our parks due to COVID-19. You can easily spot the newbies - walking quickly, looking from side to side, absolutely overwhelmed with the beauty of the outdoors. If you happen to catch their eye while you are checking out a flower, a bird, an insect, please be an ambassador of our natural world and point out what you see and step back so they can check it out if they are interested. Who knows, you might be inspiring a new lover of nature or, dare I say it, a new member!

Take care out there, try to stick to parks in our health region and drag a buddy along for a socially distant chat or a healthy competition to see who can spot the most blooms first!

Lisa Dreves

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2020-2021 DIRECTORS

President: & webmaster	Lisa Dreves 604-532-0081 ~ lisabob2@yahoo.com
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Newsletter	Sheila Puls 604-856-7534 ~ sheila@puls.ca
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Publicity:	Lilianne Fuller 604-533-0638 ~ lilianne101@shaw.ca
FBCN Director:	Kathy Masse 604-513-8927 ~ wmasse@telus.net

REPRESENTATIVES & CONVENORS

Historian & Librarian:	Toots Tucker 604-532-6398 ~ llyod@telus.net
Greeters:	Rebecca Tin Tun/Helen Thompson
Refreshments:	Lynda Lightfoot 604-856-6138 ~ llightfoot@shaw.ca
Forslund-Watson:	Ryan Usenik 604-530-3257 ~ jrusenik@telus.net
Derby Reach Brae Island Park Assoc.:	Anne Gosse 604-888-1787 ~ corkie1@shaw.ca
Nature Kids:	Anthea Farr 604-576-7731 nicomekl@naturekidsbc.ca
Member Participation Committee:	Joanne Rosenthal 604-455-0116 ~ jrrose77@yahoo.com

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month from September to June, starting at 7.15 pm currently via 'Zoom'

Executive meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month Sept - June

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



Nora Photo: Nora Truman

In case you missed, it our fantastic LFN secretary Nora Truman received the LFN Volunteer Of The Year Award in 2020. This was announced at the June 2020 AGM Zoom Meeting.

In addition to the excellent job she does taking meeting minutes and keeping members well informed, she volunteers her time in many other ways.

She is a dedicated member of the Display committee and spent many hours working on organizing the LFN Earth Day event which had to be cancelled. Nora is the LFN representative on Langley Environmental Partners Board. Nora is a most dedicated and willing volunteer and her positive contributions help represent LFN well in the community.

On behalf of LFN our sincere thanks and gratitude go out to Nora!

Joanne Rosenthal

LIFE AT FORSLUND WATSON NATURE RESERVE:

This is a property at 2705-232nd St. that was a bequest to the province of BC, to remain as a nature reserve. It is currently managed by Langley Field Naturalists. This means it must be left mostly undeveloped and untouched, and as such is not open to the public. As managers of the property, LFN members need access to check and do maintenance work at the property and as a result we get to enjoy it as a place of natural wonder.

The forest area needs little maintenance other than to clear fallen trees and undergrowth from the trail. Forslund Watson is like many other areas in the Fraser Valley which were logged years ago either to harvest the trees or to make space for farmland. It is mainly an alder forest with a few larger evergreen trees and many young evergreen trees that have been planted by LFN members. Roughly 25 years ago several non-native trees were planted. As with all areas in the Fraser Valley, many invasive plants and trees are using Forslund Watson as their home. The natural progression of a regrowth forest is happening at Forslund Watson.

Many of the alders have reached the end of their life. This is evident in two ways. First, we are seeing

more deadfall, which is evident in the number of trees that must be cleared from the trail each year. Secondly, the canopy is opening, and this is providing more sunlight for smaller plants, resulting in lower growth plants. Today the forest supports a healthy undergrowth from ferns to vines and low growing deciduous trees.

Our efforts to establish more evergreen trees have been hampered by damage to the trees. We have been blaming deer for this damage. It appears the males (bucks) like to rub their antlers against the trunk which results in damage to the bark. A closer look at the damage reveals what almost looks like scratch marks leading some to wonder if it was perhaps made by a cougar or bobcat. It points out the need to plant many young trees to get a few mature trees several years from now.



The scratch-like tree damage makes one wonder if damage is from a deer, cougar or bobcat.

Photo: Ryan Usenik

Less than half of the small nest boxes are being used. Last year there were three used by Tree Swallows and two housed wren fledglings. The Barn Owl box still has not had any activity. Two of the Wood Duck boxes had eggs that were partly developed but no fledglings were evident. The Wood Duck box that was attached to the same pole as the

bat boxes was selected by a pair of Kestrels and two young were observed in the area.

Regular bird counts were posted with e-bird last year for a total of 98 species. As expected, Mallard, American Wigeon, Cackling and Canada Geese numbers are high. Ducks Unlimited, who created the ponds beside the hayfield, did so for these and other wildfowl species. Today the hay field is seeing minimal winter grazing activity compared to years ago.

The species with the highest count was Pine Siskin. Only one observation of the following species was reported to e-bird: Brown-headed Cowbird, Bufflehead, Eurasian Wigeon, Dusky Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Evening Grosbeak, Northern Harrier, Osprey, Black Swift and Red-eyed Vireo.

Part of our management of this area includes doing things like animal and bird counts and reporting them to e-bird (Forslund Watson Wildlife Area) for the use of citizen science and the eventual development of programs to help save diminishing species numbers. We encourage more LFN members to get out, enjoy the area and help create more data. Perhaps we can reduce the number of single incidence reporting.

Several years ago, Ducks Unlimited, with the encouragement of LFN, developed a vernal pond at the west end of the main hay field. It quickly is turning into a natural pond with several native species growing. LFN have been pushing for the development of more vernal ponds in the upper (west) field. This is a wet area that is overgrown with canary grass and it is too wet to harvest along with the other field in late spring or early summer. This is a high area that does not drain well, thus is a natural area to develop into a wetland area for the propagation of amphibian life. As we go to press, it looks as though work could start as early as this fall. Stay tuned for more updates on this development.

An excellent opportunity to introduce yourself to the Nature reserve is to join an LFN walk. Once familiar with the area, members will feel more comfortable enjoying this area on their own. In its own way it is a small jewel in South Langley.

Ryan Usenik

FRASER RIVER FLOODS PRESENTATION

If you missed the presentation "Fraser River Floods" by Jane Watt, it was recorded and is available at <https://youtu.be/aZkdBhfPKTg>

WALKING OFF THE PANDEMIC 2021

While a world-wide pandemic keeps on raging, remaining safe and healthy means walking for exercise. So, whenever you can, with masks and distancing, try venturing outside into the tree-cleaned fresh air for a walk. Here in the Lower Mainland, we are very fortunate to have a good variety of green forested walking trails to explore in our local regional parks. These park's paths usually meander under large cedars, lovely firs, and giant cottonwood trees, weighted-down with mosses and lichens, while their skirts display masses of sword ferns, brackens and emerald-colored mosses.

To give us a good variety of interesting rambles, my husband and I have travelled many different park pathways. This winter, while we strolled along the trails, we searched for mushrooms or "turkey tails", or "hoof fungus" (Tinder Fungus) on stumps and trees. Along the way, we found American Dippers bobbing on the Alouette River's rocks, Snow Buntings at Blackie Spit and chanced upon several species of owls in the forests.

Now, with the promise of spring, we anxiously await the flowering trilliums, the salmonberry flowers, skunk cabbage, and the many other wildflowers on the forest floors. The month of May brings the fruiting of the salmonberry, which in turn, brings the return of the Swainson's Thrush, called the "The Salmonberry Bird" by the first nations. Likewise, in spring the Yellow Warblers arrive back from South America to nibble on insects among the buds of the deciduous trees.

One of our local park's trails takes us through a child's "enchanted fairy forest" decorated with wee gnome's houses, small birdhouses, and pinned with colorful butterflies and stars. Plus, we have found several "favorite" benches to rest upon in these different parks - to enjoy the sunshine, the birds and the wonderful views.



Swainson's Thrush
Photo: John Gordon

So while this worrisome pandemic keeps us cautious and indoors, perhaps take a masked walk in our local parks to breath in their fresh, tree-cleaned air and marvel at a surrounding array of nature's seasonal wonders.

Anne Gosse

MILASTER PASSIVE PARK

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Full access to the park commenced in March 2020 after the site had been cleared of all buildings. The property commences at 272nd Street (where Nathan Creek flows under the road) and rises steeply to a high point on the north and east boundaries. The western part is composed of the Nathan Creek floodplain with a meadow to the west and the Trans-mountain pipeline right-of-way to the south.

We commenced by trail blazing with our club volunteers and the help of Al Neufeld, Township Parks supervisor. Many thanks are due to Herman and Tom, ably assisted by Ted, Gareth, Bob, Wim and Ryan. Eventually we established a loop trail between the north and south old logging roads to the property line at the north peak of the escarpment. This included a magnificent set of steps at the beginning of the north trail, engineered and constructed by Tom and Herman with Bob supervising. One of the earlier trails was established along the east side of Nathan Creek as far as the Trans Mountain pipeline clearing. As water levels in Nathan Creek declined, Tom and Herman constructed a low bridge across it to reach the meadow on the west side and continued a trail to the Pipeline on that side of the creek. At times the creek could be crossed near the pipeline joining the trail on the east. Nathan Creek is prone to massive shifts in water levels, up to about 4 feet whenever it rains, and the bridge soon washed out. A permanent bridge could entail a massive engineered structure which may eventually be undertaken by the Township.

Bird counts were undertaken monthly by our birding team led by Gareth and including Ted H., Wim, and Gareth, with assistance from Bob and Anthea and Corey. By the year's end we had identified 70 species with the last addition being an American Dipper in January, a most unusual sighting for Langley.

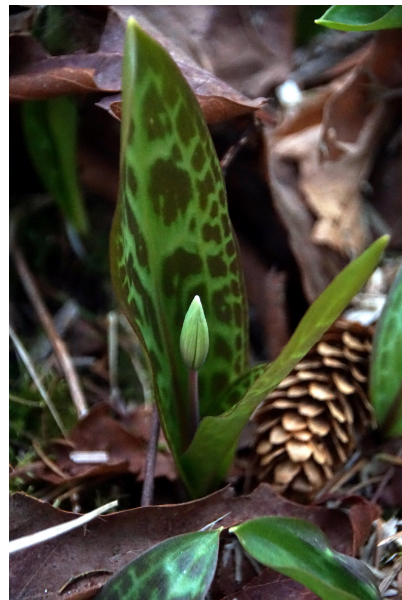
Flora and Fauna surveys were led by Bob, Anthea and Corey with a total of 371 flora and 620 fauna (including the birds) totalling 991 species in 11 months, a not insignificant study. Bob employed his moth trap for the summer and fall, catching more caddisflies than moths. He will re-engage the system in the spring. Leaf litter samples were collected by Bob and insects and spiders separated using a Berlese funnel and microscopic examination. Spiders were identified by Darren Copley and Rob Butler at the RBCM in Victoria. We are left with quite a few unidentified creatures and found the iNaturalist program useful in identifying many specimens. Deployment of a trail camera has not been very successful to date, due to technical and siting

difficulties, combined with operator errors; we now have night-time photos of coyotes and Black-tailed deer. Bob is hoping for better luck this year.

Special thanks go to LEPS, Lisa, Pina and the summer students for doing an aquatic inventory in the creek. Lisa also GPS'd the trails and provided maps.



Six species at risk have been recorded at the site: Oregon Forestsnail, Blue Dasher, Autumn Meadowhawk, Red-legged Frog, Barn Swallow and the federally listed Little Brown Myotis. A fairly large patch of Fawn Lilies can be seen near the site of the old residence. Some invasive species can be seen: Himalayan Blackberry, Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Lamium, and some Ragwort along the driveway.



In 2021 we hope to continue the inventory. Al Neufeld has since retired and Chris Marshall is our new Township Parks representative.

Bob Puls
February 2021

PROGRAMMES

Our monthly meetings along with amazing presentations will be offered online through Zoom.

All you do is download the free ZOOM program into your computer, or ipad, or phone. Do nothing else. Our President, Lisa, will send a link the week before the program starts. Just click into this link (highlighted in Lisa's email) and Lisa will accept you into the Zoom program.

THURSDAY, MARCH 18TH, 2021

WILD ABOUT WILD BEES!

Anthea Farr & Corey Bunnell

Time: 7:30 via Zoom

Anthea and her son Corey will give us an up-close and personal look at the pollinators of Langley and Surrey. As most of you know, Anthea is a co-leader of NatureKids Nicomekl and is also a member of the College of Applied Biology.

THURSDAY, APRIL 15TH 2021

WHY ARE RATTLESNAKES

SO VULNERABLE?

Dr. Christine Bishop

Time: 7:30 pm via Zoom

Come to hear about Christine's research as she tells us about this fascinating reptile. Listen to what she has learned about rattlers from the 20 years of collaboration with the Osoyoos Indian Band in the Okanagan Valley. Christine has received recognition for Outstanding Science and Conservation, South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program, 2007. Christine is also a Research Scientist with Environment & Climate Change Canada and is adjunct professor at Simon Fraser University & University of British Columbia.

THURSDAY, MAY 20TH, 2021

ADVENTURES ON THE PACIFIC COAST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Wim Vesseur & Tineke Goebertus

Time: 7:30 pm via Zoom

Join us to hear about Wim and Tineke's exciting tales from kayaking trips, along with back-packing trips along our wild and wet coastline! Wim is a very knowledgeable birder as well an avid photographer; come to learn about their adventures.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 16TH 2021.

KEEPING A LEGEND ALIVE, FRASER RIVER STURGEON!

***Sarah Schreier, Executive Director,
Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society***

Time: 7:30 pm via Zoom

Hear about the white sturgeon research done within a study area of over 200 kilometers of the river from the Fraser Canyon to the Fraser estuary. The program has resulted in one of the best baseline data sets on sturgeon in the world, creating an internationally recognized population model.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 21ST 2021

EXPLORING MADAGASCAR

Pauline O'Toole

Time: 7:30 pm via Zoom

Explore Madagascar with LFN member Pauline O'Toole and learn something of the culture, flora and fauna of the world's 4th largest island. This island is home to more than 250,000 species, of which 70% are found nowhere else on the globe!

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 18TH, 2021

COEXISTING WITH WOLVES!

***Adam T. Ford, Assistant Professor,
Canada Research Chair -***

Wildlife Restoration Ecology, UBC Okanagan

Time: 7:30 pm via Zoom - from UBC Okanagan

Dr. Adam Ford, professor at UBCO, is conducting research on wolves with his students at the Wildlife Restoration Ecology lab to better understand them and their behaviors. Researchers are using audio technology to bring the B.C. wolf, an elusive and often misunderstood creature, into the spotlight. The team has been using audio devices to track them by monitoring their howls in the East Kootenays.

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION:

ALL FIELD TRIPS ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED. E-MAILS WILL BE SENT OUT WHEN WALKS ARE RESUMED.