



# 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

c/o 201-4839 221 St, Langley, BC V3A 2P1

[www.langleyfielddnaturalists.org](http://www.langleyfielddnaturalists.org)

e-mail: [langleyfielddnaturalists@gmail.com](mailto:langleyfielddnaturalists@gmail.com)

Newsletter

September 2023

## MILASTER PASSIVE PARK Summer 2023

Work on the bio-inventory this summer has been very limited, due to the presence of the TMX pipeline crew and later the "Fish pond" excavators. Both groups had security on the site which just added to the disturbance, with the exceptionally hot summer being an added challenge.

In July Eric reported a couple of people on site; the first gentleman I spoke with was one of two people there on behalf of the township. He left but I found the other guy, an engineer (contractor), walking back out with his dog. Had a good chat of what was up. They will be back with equipment around August 1 to work on the first pond. The plan of what he shared is they will take down the barrier they built up last time they worked there and have the creek flow through the pond. The idea is to stop sediment from building up further down the creek by the farms. He said they're doing the work August 1 because of the "fish window" and there will be someone there for bird monitoring as well as fish capture and moving.



Transferring fish

Photo: Bob Puls

Bob visited in August. The contractors have a resident security guard, living in a camper at the old house site. I chatted to him for a bit. They have to be finished and out of there by Mid September, at

which time we can get back to undisturbed inventorying. Meanwhile they have just diverted Nathan Creek through a pipe which is discharging the water back into the creek beyond their work site - still quite a bit of water flowing. The intent is to enlarge the "Fish Pond" and make the creek run through it (as reported to Eric earlier). The old creek bed will remain as an overflow channel to the west. Of interest to us is that they have been scooping all the aquatics out of the pools and placing them back in the creek downstream.



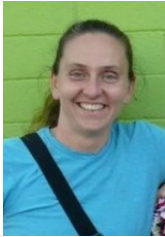
Fish pond excavators

Photo: Bob Puls

The fish pond contained hundreds of Brook Lamprey, many sticklebacks and a lesser number of coho fry. He didn't think they had found any other species, but I didn't get a chance to talk to the people scooping out the pools whilst I was there. He said a heron was helping them every day, at which point it obligingly landed in a tree by the site. He said I could wander around and take some photos, but then the crew boss arrived and asked about my missing hard hat and steel-toed boots. Work BC rules apply to visitors! So, I figured it was time to leave. They have done a nice job of upgrading the driveway.

Wim and Eric have continued with monthly bird counts (still at 81 species), but the pipeline trail needs to be cleared of 7 foot high Reed canary grass and Himalayan balsam. Fauna species count is 822 and the Flora count is 462.

**Bob Puls**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Autumn comes with romantic notions of walks under canopies of crimson, gold, and auburn, drives in the countryside to a fancy restaurant, or, maybe, jumping in a giant pile of crunch leaves... And then we remember we live on the wet coast, not a Hallmark movie. Green gives way to brown leaves, but with some luck a hint of yellow. While we get the best of the seasons, most of the year the east coast wins autumn for about 3 weeks.

But we wouldn't have soggy brown leaves without the rain! And rain means it is time to plant. Best time of the year, in my opinion. There is nothing like the possibilities that come with planting a tree. A simple act that leaves a legacy for future generations.

Trees can go in our gardens or be starter trees on a patio to donate or plant later. Patiently waiting for a tree to grow from seed can only deepen your appreciation for a forest. Selecting the right tree is important. Beyond sun exposure, moisture and drainage, you need to research root spread, seasonal interest, rate of growth. I ask the experts at the nurseries these questions; I do research as well, but Dr. Google doesn't always have the right answers.

We can also join in community tree planting events and plant in the community's backyard. Always the most loved of environmentally focused events (somehow planting trees speaks to people more than picking up discarded cigarette butts?), a tree planting event is positivity smooched into those little black pots that explodes every time someone gently grasps the base of a little tree or shrub and pulls.

Then there is next level tree planting. Like the serious, tier 4, boss level, King Kong-sized tree planting. I am talking about organizing a tree planting event. That corner of the park that you wonder why in the world the city staff bother mowing, or the field of boring reed canary grass, or the edge of a field that could be a corridor.

I often find spaces I want to plant when I am out for a walk, and fall is when I get the most excited about finally doing something to plant them. I haven't gone so far as gorilla planting by tossing out tree seeds in little balls of clay and soil; at least I wouldn't admit to doing that in a quarterly newsletter. But I like to dream about organizing events and sometimes the dreams get organized enough to share with municipal staff or councillors. I have had some success getting events organized but I want more, and the Langleys need more planting events.

So, my proposal for this fall and moving into our next 50 years: let's get planting together! Who's in? If you are interested in helping get more trees into our park spaces connect with me and let's see what the LFN can do to make Langley better.

**Lisa Dreves**

## LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2023-2024

### DIRECTORS

- President: Lisa Dreves  
& webmaster 604-532-0081 ~ lisabob2@yahoo.com
- Vice President: Vacant
- Past President & Conservation/library Bob Puls  
604-856-7534 ~ bob@puls.ca
- Secretary: Nora Truman  
604-533-4585 ~ lfnsecretary@hotmail.com
- Treasurer & Newsletter: Sheila Puls  
604-856-7534 - sheila@puls.ca
- Membership: Marianne Carefoot  
416-219-7752 - mcarefoot@yahoo.com
- Programmes: Anne Gosse  
604-888-1787 ~ corkie1@shaw.ca
- Field Trips: Gareth Pugh  
604-649-1027 ~ gareth2@uniserve.com
- Publicity: Lilianne Fuller  
History project: 604-533-0638 ~ lilianne101@shaw.ca
- BC Nature: Lilianne Fuller  
604-533-0638 - lilianne101@shaw.ca
- Members At Large: Eric Habisch  
778-231-0273 -eric.habisch@gmail.com
- Caren Porter  
604-427-4499 ~ caporter@shaw.ca

### REPRESENTATIVES & CONVENORS

- Greeters: Rebecca Tin Tun/Helen Thompson
- Refreshments: Lynda Lightfoot  
604-856-6138 ~ ltlightfoot@shaw.ca
- Forslund-Watson: Ryan Usenik  
604-530-3257 ~ jrusenik@telus.net
- NatureKids: Anthea Farr 604-576-7731  
nicomekl@naturekidsbc.ca
- Member Participation: Joanne Rosenthal  
6778-239-5615 ~ jrrose77@yahoo.com
- Displays: Lesley Goodbrand  
604-530-2714 - lgoodbrand@shaw.ca

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month from September to June, starting at 7.15 pm  
Executive meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month Sept - June

## HONOURING AL & JUDE GRASS

Neal Aven of Surrey Parks sent a couple of photos of the newly installed commemorative stone for Jude and Al at Fergus Watershed Biodiversity Preserve (FWBP). He and his staff have been hard at work getting this done and we are most grateful for their efforts.



The plaque is a rock between two benches - Photo: Neal Aven

We are invited to drop by and say hi to Jude and Al at an informal gathering **Friday, September 15** at 10:30 at the FWBP to check out the stone and engraving and of course to say hi to Jude and Al. They will be delighted to see you. Hopefully you can make it.

Feel free to pass this along to the Grass' acquaintances who may not receive this directly.

Fergus Creek parking lot:

<https://goo.gl/maps/kqSPHY7jZC5wYEir8>

Friday, September 15, 10:30.

**Phil Henderson**

## HILLKEEP PARK, ABBOTSFORD - SATURDAY, MAY 27<sup>TH</sup>



Pacific-slope Flycatcher

Photo: John Gordon

The LFN trip to Hillkeep Regional Park in Chilliwack proved to be eventful. The forest canopy was full of

bird song and the lack of traffic noise made the walk an excellent opportunity to identify the songs and calls of the forest's inhabitants. Only one person attended. We encountered sixteen species and were able to see them all, including MacGillivray's, Yellow, Wilson's and Yellow-rumped Warblers. The most common but the most eloquent songster was of course the Swainson's Thrush. We had several good sightings of this normally secretive bird. Black-headed Grosbeaks were in all corners of the forest as were Western Wood-Pewees. We missed the early May migration of warblers and Olive-sided Flycatchers, a treat for a future field trip. We finished the walk by taking in the spectacular views of the Fraser Valley from the trail lookout.

Half the kilometres were covered using a hybrid vehicle which was the other highlight of the day.

**John Gordon**

## NATHAN CREEK, FRIDAY, JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>

Four people joined me for the walk. After a short introduction, we started along the dike. There were lots of swallows flying around: Cliff, Barn, Tree and Violet-green. A Bald Eagle posed for us at a few locations along the way. There was also an immature one flying around. We saw lots of Great Blue Herons, including a number of immature ones. Mallards with young were spotted in the creek and Common Yellowthroat Warblers and Willow Flycatchers were seen. Tree Swallows were using some of the LFN nest boxes. The weather was cool and cloudy and it started to rain a bit just as we were heading back, but it didn't amount to much. Over all, the walk was satisfactory with a total of



Grey skies but happy faces

Photo: Herman Vanderleest

seventeen species, though the low number of waterfowl was disappointing. We figured it might be a result of all the off-leash dogs running around. Species list: Starlings 14; Robins 6; Bald Eagle 2; Eurasian Collared-Dove 1; Red-winged Blackbird 7; Song Sparrow 2; Savannah Sparrow 2; Violet-green Swallow 2; Barn Swallow 15; Cliff Swallow 10; Tree Swallow 12; Great Blue Heron 12; Mallard 12; Common Yellowthroat 1; Willow Flycatcher 1; Common Merganser 1; American Crow 4.

**Herman Vanderleest**

## **IRENE PEARCE TRAIL - SATURDAY, JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup>**

Just three of us (Ryan, Betty and myself) sauntered along the trail named after one of our own members: Irene Pearce.

At least 18 species of birds were heard or seen, including sightings of Black-headed Grosbeaks and other birds feeding on the bright red elderberries. We were surprised by another sighting: fungi in June.

Thanks to a recent rainfall, there they were: Inky Caps!

Near the end of our return walk, we met two



*Underside of an Inky Cap*

*Photo: Anthea Farr*

latecomers who had registered for this walk. They pointed out that LFN's driving directions to the site were less than perfect. Something to remedy for future walks there! After exchanging birding tips, we bade farewell and continued on in opposite directions. I am sure that both groups enjoyed their separate walks in this lovely forest.

**Anthea Farr**

## **BRAE ISLAND - FRIDAY, JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup>**

It was a beautiful evening for our walk around Brae Island, typical of the weather you might expect for late August but not so much for the end of June. Makes a person wonder what August will bring this year. Our small group walked along the Tavistock trail past the Fort Camping campground and into the trees on the west side of the park. Along the way we quickly inspected some of the island bank stabilization work that LEPS has been overseeing: planting trees in the sandy soil to help mitigate erosion along some of the more vulnerable points of the shoreline.

We also checked the LFN bat box that was installed a few years ago. There was a small amount of guano on the collection tray placed below the bat box, indicating that there has been a visitor or two using the box recently. It's great to see signs that bats have at least found one of our boxes and made use of it, if only temporarily.

The trees are very lush this time of year. We were completely enveloped in greenery heading out to Tavistock Point. Salmonberries were ripening at several points along the trail. Lots of birds were active in the forest. Identifying calls, mostly with the help of the Merlin App, we heard Varied Thrush, Northern Flickers, Spotted Towhee and Bewick's Wren. Crows, Robins, Chickadees, Tree Swallows and a few rabbits were easy to spot along the trail and along the island shoreline. The undergrowth was still damp enough for some fungi to be fruiting in the shadier places. Slugs and centipedes were crawling across the trail, particularly as the sun went down and shadows drew deeper.



*A beautiful evening on Brae Island*

*Photo: Keith Chrystall*

At Tavistock Point we had a spectacular view of the Fraser River and North Shore mountains. A collection of logs tied up along the northern shoreline had attracted the attention of a group of Cedar Waxwings. We couldn't be certain but perhaps the logs were providing a meal of insects for the birds.

There were still pools of standing water visible from the trail out near the point. No doubt the reason for the very healthy population of mosquitoes we encountered. As we were leaving, a feast for the mosquitoes was taking up positions along the island's south shore in the form of large groups of young people enjoying their first evening of summer vacation. Good time for the bird watchers to head home.

**Keith Chrystall**

## **E.C. MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK - THURSDAY, JULY 6<sup>TH</sup>**



*Manning meanderers!*

*Photo: Perry Poulsen*

At 7 o'clock, 3 of us met at my place to drive to the lodge where we arrived early as planned to meet the other members. While we enjoyed a coffee, we did notice some swallows such as Barn and Violet-green. The trees by the entrance where Sapsuckers and Rufous Hummingbirds used to hang out was a bit quiet. But a bit further a juvenile Red-naped Sapsucker showed up. The Columbian Ground Squirrels were active in the morning sun. Soon the others showed up and we moved to the first viewpoint on our way to Blackwall Peak. On our way up we had already seen the first wildflowers and on the parking lot we did see the Cascade Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel, Yellow Pine Chipmunk and Yellow-bellied Marmot. Birds

active in the area included Canada Jay, Clark's Nutcrackers and later some Common Ravens.

On the rocky roadside, Davidson's Penstemon was flowering as well as Creeping Phlox in spots. Driving up, we parked at where the Dry Ridge Trail ends just before the gates and walked back down to the seepage area on the left side of the road. This area is always good for some bog plants such as the White Rein Orchid and the Green Bog Orchid. It was sunny but still cold and the butterflies were active. After seeing most of the flowering plants, we moved on to do some of the upper trails.



*Field Crescent Butterfly*

*Photo: Perry Poulsen*

We kept on hearing and seeing more birds while walking around. As usual, the Hermit Thrushes were singing everywhere. Some Sooty Grouse were doing their deep hooting, one close by and one further away. Eric and Perry decided after lunch to stay up high and to do some more butterfly research and they did photograph one.

After doing the loop someone suggested we go to the lower parking lot, so we walked back up the heather trail to the upper parking lot. We paid some extra attention to a tree with a very pale bark and it was identified as a Whitebark Pine. After enjoying lunch on a picnic table, we said good bye to Eric and Perry.

Then the rest of us went to Strawberry Flats to see what we could find there. The Foss family enjoyed being back in Manning Park after not having been there for quite a while and they stayed with us. In the morning we had seen and heard 23 species of birds.

Driving down, we had a short view of a Pika on one of the rockpiles.

On Strawberry Flats it was relatively quiet with birds. There were still lots of flowers blooming. On the list Nora kept, there were around 30 species for

both the alpine area and for Strawberry Flats. It was nice to see Queen's Cup, Valerian, White Rhododendron, Yellow-flowering Black Twinberry, Delphinium and many others. The Foss family left a bit sooner when their legs started to get tired. We did not get a lot more on the trail and decided to drive back a bit later.



*Birdsfoot Trefoil*

*Photo: Perry Poulsen*

On the way back, we wanted to look at the yellow flowers which were growing everywhere along the road. After seeing a cinnamon colored bear, I decided to turn around and park on an earlier seen spot to look at those flowers. Elvina soon named them Birdsfoot Trefoil, a plant native to Europe and Africa. I assume with all the roadwork done in the last few years and the atmospheric river, the seeds must have been spread out all over. When we slowly continued driving on the empty road, all 3 of us got an excellent view of the cinnamon bear, estimated to be a 2 or 3 year old. A bit further on there was a mule deer on the road and when I swerved around it, it ran back uphill.

All in all a nice day out in Manning Park.

*Wim Vesseur*

**PUFFIN WATCHING TOUR -  
THURSDAY, JULY 13<sup>TH</sup>**



*A beautiful day for a boat trip*

*Photo: Ryan Usenik*

Six LFN members joined a Birdwatching cruise from Bellingham. The goal of the cruise was to view Tufted Puffins around Smith Island which is part of a National Wildlife Refuge at the entrance to the Strait of Juan Fuca. In the early days, Smith Island, like many islands, was home to a large breeding colony of Tufted Puffins. Today the numbers are drastically reduced but fortunately each summer Tufted Puffins return to lay their eggs. Once the young fledge the nest, they travel to the open waters before maturing and returning to Smith Island to lay their eggs each summer.

The group was able to view a small number of Tufted Puffins. Because they are diving birds, it is impossible to count the number observed. A much larger number of Rhinoceros Auklets were observed. The Naturalists aboard mentioned that on a few of the previous trips they were fortunate to observe a pair of Horned Puffins but unfortunately it was not our day. On the deck we met two birders from Seattle who joined the cruise with the sole purpose of hoping to see the Horned Puffins. We will both have to try again another year.

The weatherman cooperated and while a bit breezy and cool, the trip proved to be an excellent opportunity to spend a day out on the water.

*Ryan Usenik*

**PINSCH OF SOIL FARM -  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 26<sup>TH</sup>**



*Marcel explaining the aims of the farm*

*Photo: Anne Gosse*

Eighteen participants joined the Langley Field

Naturalists and our host, Marcel, for a tour of his small-scale natural organic farm. He said it was an agroforestry project, growing food in a sustainable way that can be recycled endlessly. This was all blended into a surrounding natural forest environment, allowing birds, flowers, insects and bees to flow through.

He spoke with passion about his love of horticulture and of developing an edible balanced landscape by recycling nutrients back into the ground via composting and mulching. We were led through his wild gardens where it showed a blending of vegetables, interspersed with many different types of garden-groups. Most impressively, he was only using natural pest and insect controls. Thus, keeping synergy in mind, many types of spices, berry bushes, nut and fruit trees have been planted within this 2.5 acres. As well, amongst this lush landscape, were unusual types of plants that could be used to flavor foods including Sorrel, Fireweed and Sumac, plus a few other wild aromatic plants.

Towards the end of the evening, we had a quick look at a Barn Swallow's nest and the horse stables, which included a miniature horse named Dudley.

Our group thoroughly enjoyed his passionate gardening discourse and asked many questions. You can Google Pinsch-of-Soil or come by the Farmgate Stand: Saturdays, 11am to 5pm - to buy Marcel's produce. Finally we ended the evening saying our "thank you's" and "goodbyes" under a spectacular red setting sun.

**Anne Gosse**

## **SPARROW CREEK FARM - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2<sup>ND</sup>**

21 members turned out for an evening walk around this 7.5 acre farm which is located on the slopes above the floodplain of the Fraser River, adjacent to Fort Langley.

The walk began on the uphill side, revealing the impact of the housing development of what had been a hayfield. The slopeslides onto our property which occurred 4 and 10 years ago respectively were due first to the removal of all vegetation on the slope and the ground above and then subsequent mega home construction. The pasture is currently grazed by 2 horses and 4 goats. There has been tremendous regrowth of alders post-slide and the area appears to have stabilized. A Flycatcher and

both White-crowned and Song Sparrows were spotted along the fence as some of the group snacked on the prolific blackberries that were growing along the bottom of the slope. At the south side of the pasture, there is a barn owl house installed by the Owl Program of the Fraser Valley Conservancy. Unfortunately, it remains unoccupied. As we walked, the drilling noise of the Trans Mountain Pipeline was audible.



*Relaxing on the patio*

*Photo: Sheila Puls*

We moved to the downhill slope where the Fraser Valley Conservancy has undertaken habitat rehabilitation of the pond and surrounding area, providing habitat for the Pacific Tree Frog, the Red-legged Frog and other amphibians. Blackberries have been removed from the slope and replanted with 3500 native plants, including Western Red Cedar, Hemlock, Vine Maple, Alder, Dogwood, Willow, Thimbleberry, Ferns, and Baldhip Roses. There was bird activity in the stream area with Common Yellowthroat and several sparrows.

We walked through a streamside coniferous forest and then alongside the pond. Sparrow Creek flows north into a man-made pond with a dam and a culvert that flows under Rawlison Crescent into the Salmon River.

In the winter of 2020, Fraser Valley Conservancy initiated a project to create natural habitat for amphibians in the pond. Christmas trees were recruited from the community. In a large volunteer project, 33 trees were submerged to create egg laying habitat. This project has been a success.

There was an abundance of bird activity on the pond with Hooded Mergansers, Mallards, Wood Ducks, Cedar Waxwings, Swainson's Thrushes and Barn Swallows. The foreshore was active with

dragonflies. There was evidence of beaver activity with a chewed maple. We observed an old fish ladder on the dam. Many relaxed in the chairs listening to the birds.

We adjourned to the deck for coffee, tea, snacks and conversation.

**Roy Cline**

## **DOUBLEDAY ARBORETUM WEDNESDAY, JULY 9<sup>TH</sup>**



*Gathering for the walk*

*Photo: Nora Truman*

The rain that fell earlier in the day had stopped and our group of nine walkers gathered on the patio outside the Rotary Interpretive Centre. Some of the group had not visited this park before and were pleasantly surprised to see visitors bustling about with their produce and other treasures from the Farmers' Market that is held throughout the summer every Wednesday from 4 to 7 pm. I explained that this Township of Langley Park was developed as a result of partnerships between the Township, the Rotary Club of Langley (who spearheaded the building of the Rotary Interpretive Centre), Langley Environmental Partners and the Arboretum and Botanical Society.

We began our tour west of the Interpretive Centre where there are new plantings of grasses, shrubs and a conifer garden on a newly constructed berm. We then headed east to David's Bird Garden, the Pollinating Garden and on to the new Korean Garden with its water feature and lovely flowering Hibiscus plantings. Brian Minter's article in the August 5th edition of the Vancouver Sun describes the many varieties of shrub Hibiscus, the national flower of South Korea. From there we walked to the LEPS Demonstration Garden where Lisa helped us identify the various squash, melon, kale and garlic plantings.



*Hibiscus*

*Photo: Nora Truman*

Our next stop was the Korean War Memorial and the Vimy Ridge Oak tree that was donated to the Park by the Canadian Government. We proceeded over the Fraser Creek bridge, under the 56th Avenue overpass onto the Arbour Ribbon Trail to the pond (where there were at least ten Mallards with their families) before turning back to the parking lot. Wim kept an e-Bird list with a total of 9 species.

**Nora Truman**

## **DERBY BOG WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup>**

Ted Goshulak and I co-led a group of 12 enthusiastic participants in an evening walk of the Derby Bog / Langley Peatlands, beside Derby Reach Regional Park in North Langley. After a pleasant stroll along McKinnon Crescent from the parking lot to the entrance gate, we descended along the forested trail to the bog. Along the way we discussed the recent human history and natural history of the bog, greed and ecological destruction figuring prominently in both, (common denominators of past and present human activity in Langley). Of course, there were some positives: the remnant natural features, the conservation of the area by Metro Vancouver and its efforts to retain and restore the bog's natural attributes by encouraging research, restricting human access, and encouraging access to the wonderful group of natural law-abiding citizens: the Coyotes, Sandhill Cranes, Common Nighthawks, Sphagnum, Round-leaved Sundew, Bog Rosemary, and many others.



Looking for cranes (which are hiding) Photo: Ted Goshulak

Out in the bog, the Sandhill Cranes serenaded us (or scolded us for our intrusion and lambasted us for past, thoughtless, catastrophic environmental indiscretions) and the Common Nighthawks, a species rare in these parts, took advantage of the insects flying high above, to fatten themselves as they make their way to South America. These experiences reminded us of the importance of natural space, even degraded natural space, and the beauty, awe and enigma of nature's creatures and spaces.



Walking the sawdust trail to the bog Photo: Ted Goshulak

Below our feet, the Sphagnum moss, bog-builders and ecosystem engineers, use their water-holding, hummock-forming and acidifying abilities to modify the environment and make it better for themselves and inhospitable to others (remind you of anyone?). A few others can persist, however, with specialized adaptations that allow them to acquire nutrients in this nutrient-poor environment. A striking example is the tiny sundew, with its modified leaves with sticky

tentacles to which insects become attached, reluctantly giving up their nutrients through slow enzymatic decay.

Okay, that's all I'm saying. Curious? Want more information? Well, you'll have to join us on the next bog walk.

As darkness fell, we exited the bog and carefully made a head count. LFN was not about to contribute a bog body to this bog. Oh, one last thing. Ted diligently kept count of the birds along the way:

**Birds beyond the gate and in the bog:**

4 Common Nighthawk. 2 Sandhill Cranes, Greater Yellowlegs, Northern Flicker, Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Steller's Jay, 2 Common Ravens, 4 Black-capped Chickadee, 8 Cedar Waxwing and 2 American Goldfinch.

**Birds along McKinnon Crescent:**

2 Sandhill Cranes, 3 Purple Martin and one Northern Flicker.

**Phil Henderson**



Web photo, Sandhill Crane

**FUNDRAISER FOR CLUB**



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

OR

Willowbrook Express Return-It Depot,  
19641 60 Ave, Langley

Account number 222 222 3333  
for Nora Truman, lfnsecretary

## CANIM LAKE TRIP, MONDAY JUNE 26<sup>TH</sup> TO SUNDAY JULY 2<sup>ND</sup>



Canim Lake

Photo: Bob Puls

### Day 1

Our annual naturalists' trip this year was to the Canim Lake area in the Cariboo. Seven of us, Bob Puls, Wim Vesseur, Nora Truman, Lisa Loepky, Viveka Ohman, Anne Gosse and myself (Gareth) met at Bob's and left at 8 am. We made good time in light traffic, stopping in Cache Creek for a quick break. We drove on to the Hat Creek Ranch where we stopped for lunch and some birding of course. We stopped at 100 Mile House for gas and a final grocery shop, then took the paved road all the way to the Reynold's Resort on Canim Lake. There a spacious log cabin with a deck overlooking the lake awaited us. Once we had moved into the cabin, we went for a stroll around the resort and immediately found a Pacific-slope Flycatcher nesting in an outbuilding next to the cabin. Bob was keeping records as usual and we found 21 species before having supper. Herman and Kathleen arrived with their motorhome and joined us on the deck for Happy Hour.



LFNers at the cabin

Photo: Bob Puls

There were two picnic tables on the deck and the weather was warm so we ate outside most of the

time. We were able to sit out every evening to have dinner and discuss the day's activities. All the dinners throughout the week (I only invite good cooks on this trip!) were excellent of course, so no one lost any weight! On the first evening, some of us walked along the road where we recorded a number of different species, including Evening Grosbeaks.

### Day 2

Next morning the 'early birds' among us walked around the resort property and recorded 20 species before breakfast. After our meal on the deck, we left to head for the Hendrix Lake road. We turned down a side road leading towards the lake, parked and walked a little way. There we saw and heard a variety of birds, including a pair of Red-tailed Hawks, a rare sighting on this trip. Our next stop was at Tiny Tim and Kellington Lakes where we saw our first Loons with a single chick. Further on we stopped at a clearcut that was starting to grow back with lots of flowers with their attendant butterflies. Driving on, we had a quick look at the only Steller's Jay seen on the trip. It flew down onto the road and back up again, not stopping for a photo. Along the way we came across a wetland area where we heard a Flammulated Owl calling, in addition to many other species. Here, as at most of our stops, there were plenty of flowers in bloom and a number of different butterflies feeding on them. As we drove, we saw both Dusky and Ruffed Grouse on the road before our lunch stop at the Bosk Lake Recreation Site. There a Bald Eagle was perched atop a tree surveying the lake. A number of Tree, Violet-green and Barn Swallows were flying around, decimating the healthy mosquito population. Butterflies could be seen at small puddles from a recent rain shower. From here, we decided to make our way back to base where Tom and Greta had now arrived.



Photographing butterflies on charcoal

Photo: Bob Puls

### Day 3

The early birders saw an Osprey patrolling the lake and recorded a total of 23 species, including Western Tanager, Red Crossbill and Hermit Thrush. This was the first Hermit as we were mostly hearing Swainson's Thrushes singing wherever we went. The first stop of the day was the Canim Beach Recreation Site where we had good views of a male Calliope Hummingbird which perched obligingly for us, while a Turkey Vulture soared high overhead. A quick stop at the south end of the lake was followed by a longer one at the bridge over Bridge Creek, where there was an extensive, very productive wetland on either side of the road. From there we took the road along the south side of the lake to Howard Lake Recreation Site where we stopped for lunch. We walked out on to a little dock where dragonflies and damselflies were hatching. We could see the adults flying around and also see some nymphs climbing up reeds out of the water. A Herring Gull flew past close to shore; a pair of Loons with two chicks were on the lake and two Spotted Sandpipers were flying around. Further on we came to an open area of farmland and stopped to walk along the road a little way. Families of Cedar Waxwings were feeding. A Gray Catbird and several Lincoln's Sparrows were also seen and heard in the hedges. A Virginia Rail called in a wetland where Red-winged Blackbirds were obviously breeding, in addition to Willow Flycatchers and Common Yellowthroats. Having been recommended to visit Canim Falls, we drove to the trailhead and walked the easy .5 km trail. On the way back we stopped for half an hour at a large wetland where we recorded 24 species, including Wilson's Snipe, Virginia Rail, Sora and a Marsh Wren. Later that evening, three of us tried a Nightjar Survey but only heard one Common Nighthawk.



Red-winged Blackbird

Photo: Bob Puls

The day started well with a Sandhill Crane flying by and a Brown Creeper showing up near our cabin. Then it was off to 100 Mile House to top up gas tanks and visit some of the many lakes in the area, starting with the 100 Mile March Wildlife Sanctuary. This little town has done a great job of preserving this lake and marsh right in town, with a recreation trail all the way around and other trails leading from it. We recorded a total of 43 species, including Black Terns which were a first for some of our group, a Cliff Swallow colony of at least 20 nests and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. We started at the Tourist Info Centre with lots of water-birds to see, then moved around to the other end of the lake and walked part of the trail through the woods before turning back to take the Gustafsen Lake Road. We pulled off on an old side road through a recovering clearcut to have our lunch and enjoy the lovely sunny weather. I spotted a Long-toed Salamander which I picked up to photograph and to let everyone see before I released it.



Long-toed Salamander

Photo: Bob Puls

Tom and I went for a walk along the old road and heard and saw a Townsend's Solitaire, the only one of the trip as it turned out. Lots of butterflies to see and attempt to photograph when they landed. We moved on to the Valentine Lake Recreation Site but saw very few birds. We drove back via the Gustafsen Lake North FSR, stopping at Scout Lake where we found Horned Grebe and Eastern Kingbird to add to our growing list. The last stop was Watson Lake where we spent a busy half hour

### Day 4

tallying 23 species including Canvasbacks and Eared Grebes, both with fledglings. Lots of American Coots with their young on this lake too.



Yellow-bellied Marmot

Photo: Bob Puls

### Day 5

We decided to return to the 100 Mile House area and stopped again at Bridge Creek which was as productive as the day before and a Turkey Vulture flew over us. At Forest Grove we took Wilcox Road then Lake of the Trees Road. After a half hour stop at Wilcox Lake (where we heard a Black-backed Woodpecker and tallied 22 species), we stopped at Lake of the Trees where a Ruffed Grouse posed for us on the road. They are amazingly unfazed by vehicles and slowly walk across the road in front of you. We spent another half hour at the entrance to the Dempsey Creek Ranch and recorded 18 species, in addition to photographing butterflies and dragonflies along the roadside. When we reached Highway 97 we turned south and had our lunch at the rest area on 108 Mile Lake. There the most notable sightings were a Red-necked Grebe and a colony of Cliff Swallows on the buildings at the historic site of the 108 Mile Roadhouse on the Cariboo Wagon Trail. Moving on, we stopped at Watson Lake again as some of us wanted to get a photo of the Canvasbacks, Bufflehead and Blue-winged Teal with their ducklings. On the way to Lily Pad Lake, we had a quick look at a Cinnamon Bear with a small black cub before they ran into the bush. At Lily Pad, we found two Greater Yellowlegs and at least 60 Canada Geese with their goslings in addition to the usual birds.

### Day 6

Yet again we started at Bridge Creek as it was such a 'birdy' spot and were rewarded by the sight of a Great Blue Heron flying in, the only one seen that week. We made a short stop at the 100 Mile Marsh, then headed on to Elliot Lake where we recorded 17 species in a short stop. We drove on along Helena Lake Road through the area recovering from the

Gustafsen Lake fire in 2017, stopping periodically to listen and look but did not see any Mountain Bluebirds as we had on our 2018 trip. Turning onto Gustafsen Road, we travelled as far as Little Holden Lake and recorded a number of species but nothing new to add to our list before we returned to the resort to start packing up.

### Day 7

We were all up early and keen to get on the road. We stopped at a couple of lakes along the way where there were a number of waterfowl. Then stopped at Chasm, in the hope of seeing some Bighorn Sheep, but could not find any this time. We did, however, see some White-throated Swifts, a new species for the list. Further on we took a side trip up Meadow Lake Road to check out the wetlands in the area. There we were able to record 27 species, including a Redhead, an American Kestrel and a pair of Sandhill Cranes. We also found a large patch of daisies with an abundance of butterflies and insects, so we spent a pleasant half hour photographing as many as we could. We then returned to the main road for an uneventful drive home, at the end of another memorable trip to the Interior of this great Province. Thanks to all who participated so enthusiastically and especially to Bob for keeping such good records and Wim for his bird spotting.



Valentine Lake

Photo: Bob Puls

**Our total species** count for the whole trip which has been submitted to e-Bird was 120:

Canada Goose, Common Loon, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, American Wigeon, Ruddy Duck, Hooded Merganser, Barrow's Goldeneye, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Gadwall, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Common Merganser, Red-necked Grebe, Eared Grebe, Horned Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Dusky Grouse, Ruffed Grouse, Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Great Blue

Heron, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, Herring Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Black Tern, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian-Collared Dove, Great Horned Owl, Flammulated Owl, Common Nighthawk, White-throated Swift, Calliope Hummingbird, Rufous Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Eastern Kingbird, Western Wood-Pewee, Dusky Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Cassin's Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Common Raven, Black-billed Magpie, American Crow, Steller's Jay, Cliff Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Mountain Chickadee, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Townsend's Solitaire, American Robin, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Veery, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, MacGillivray's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Western Tanager, Lazuli Bunting, Spotted Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Western Meadowlark, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Evening Grosbeak, House Finch, Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch.

**We also saw the following butterflies** which will be submitted to e-Butterfly:

Freija Fritillary, Lorquin's Admiral, American Lady, Alexander's Sulphur, Mourning Cloak, Variable Checkerspot, European Skipper, White Admiral, Northern Crescent, Meadow Fritillary, Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, Anise Swallowtail, Greenish Blue (at Bosk Lake fireplace), and many unidentified Blue butterflies (probably all Greenish Blues).

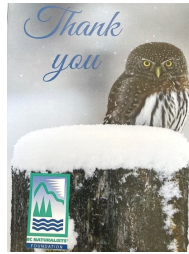
**Other sightings included:**

Black-banded Orange Moth (at Bosk Lake fireplace) and Alfalfa Looper Moth.

White-spotted Sawyer Beetle, many Bluet damselflies, and a Robber Fly.

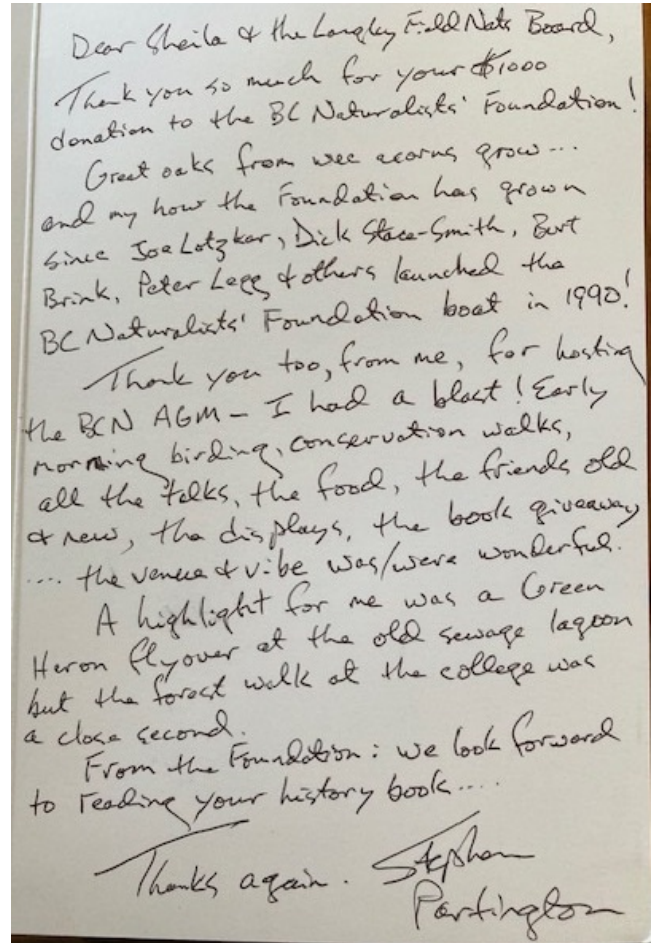
Cinnamon Bear, Yellow-pine Chipmunk, Columbia Ground Squirrel, Red Squirrel, White-tailed Deer, Snowshoe Hare, Yellow-bellied Marmot, rabbits, voles and Long-toed Salamander.

**Gareth Pugh**



**DONATION TO THE BC NATURALISTS' FOUNDATION**

The Executive took some of the profit from hosting the BC Nature AGM, and made a donation to the Foundation. This is the thankyou card received from the President, Stephen Partington.



The purpose of the BC Naturalists' Foundation is to promote the preservation of the natural environment for future generations through conservation, education and research projects.

The BC Naturalists' Foundation is a registered charity formed in 1990 by members of the Federation of BC Naturalists (BC Nature). The Foundation is independent of BC Nature, linked to it by shared goals and by the power of the BC Nature to appoint members and nominate directors.

A Foundation grant helps us publish our history.

# PROGRAMMES

## SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2023

Meeting at 7.30 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley.

Our meetings are also online by Zoom: The week before the program starts, a link will be sent out. Just click into the highlighted link and Lisa will accept you into the Zoom program.

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



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

#### PACIFIC STREAMKEEPER'S FEDERATION *Zo-Ann Morton*

Streamkeepers are a non-profit society, helping streamkeepers take action through support, education and building partnerships. Zo-Ann is co-founder of the organization and has received many awards for her community work including, in 2013, the Governor General's Caring Canadian Medal.

Streamkeeper activities most often take place at specific times during the year. Some events are dictated by the arrival, presence or departure of spawning or rearing salmon. Some activities do not take place in the stream itself, and can occur at any time of the year.

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

#### AN ECUADORIAN BIRDING ADVENTURE *Ted Goshulak*

In November 2022, Ted and two friends spent 12 days birding in Ecuador. The trip covered a number of unique habitats and ecosystems, which host a diverse group of bird species. For a preview of some of the species seen on this trip go to:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/85398>

*Ecuador is a country straddling the equator on South America's west coast. Its diverse landscape encompasses Amazon jungle, Andean highlands and the wildlife-rich Galápagos Islands. In the Andean foothills at an elevation of 2,850 m, Quito, the capital, is known for its largely intact Spanish colonial center, with decorated 16th- and 17th-century palaces and religious sites, like the ornate Compañía de Jesús Church. - Google*

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>

#### SNOW GEESE: POPULATION DYNAMICS, INTERACTION WITH TIDAL MARSHES, AND MOVEMENT PATTERNS. *Dr. W. Sean Boyd, PhD*

Dr. Sean Boyd is a Research Scientist (Emeritus) with the Wildlife Research Division, Science and Technology Branch, Environment & Climate Change Canada / Government of Canada.

Snow Geese breeding on Wrangel Island (Russia) overwinter on the Fraser River estuary. Numbers have increased by 10x since the mid-1970s. They have negatively impacted tidal marshes via their intensive grubbing behavior and they are increasingly foraging on inland farms, schools and parks. We are planning to tag geese with satellite transmitters to assess movement patterns around the Fraser delta and migrations to/from Wrangel Island.



Web photo, Snow Geese

## LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS, FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE, SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2023

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). Please dress for the weather and bring water, binoculars and a snack (plus bug spray in *summer*).

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

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>

#### HIGH POINT

**Leader:** *Nora Truman*

**Time:** 9:00 am in the parking lot on the East side of 200<sup>th</sup> Street, south of the crosswalk and Jacobsen Creek.

Join Nora for a walk to enjoy nature at High Point. First we will walk through the forest on Campbell Boundary Trail west to the detention pond, then north to the High Point Lake on the Pepin Trail. Waterfowl are sometimes seen at High Point Lake. At the viewing platform, there are often many birds in the shrubbery and tree tops. We continue down the Campbell Boundary Trail past a meadow and into the forest again to our beginning point. **Phone: 604-533-4585 to register.**

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>

#### IRENE PEARCE TRAIL

**Leader:** *Joanne Rosenthal*

**Time:** 9:00 am in the parking lot on 224th Street where 5th Avenue would be if it existed.

Join Joanne to walk the gentle trails in this rural park looking for fabulous fall fungi and other signs of Fall and learn about the Wood Duck and Flying Squirrel boxes that have been installed by club members. It is part of the Municipal Natural Park with the Little Campbell River flowing through it and has stands of mature Douglas Fir. **Phone 778-239-5615 to register.**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**  
at 10:30 am  
**Honouring Al & Jude Grass**

Fergus Creek Parking Lot  
168 Street and 14 Avenue, Surrey

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>

#### O.W.L. AND BOUNDARY BAY DIKE

**Leader:** *Anne Gosse*

**Time:** 10:00 am at O.W.L., 3800 - 72nd Street, Delta

Join us for a guided tour of the facility to find out how injured birds are rehabilitated and released back into the wild. There is a small charge of \$5 - \$6 per person. If the weather is suitable we will follow this visit with a walk on the Boundary Bay dike to look for the variety of birds that spend the winter in this very important area, including the beautiful Short-eared Owl. Bring lunch. **Phone 604-888-1787 to register.**

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

#### BLACKIE SPIT, CRESCENT BEACH, SURREY

**Leader:** *Perry Poulsen*

**Time:** 9:00 am

**Meet:** Crescent Beach Pier, (across from the parking lot by the outdoor swimming pool).

Join Perry to explore the Spit and look for the birds that are migrating south through this important area with its varied habitat. **Phone 604-366-4695 to register.**

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

#### MILASTER PROPERTY, ALDERGROVE

**Leader:** *Eric Habisch*

**Time:** 9:00 am at 7040 - 272nd Street

Join Eric to see this new park which is not yet open to the public but in which LFN are carrying out a bio-diversity study for the Township of Langley. Wear waterproof footwear as one part of the trail is very wet. **Phone 778-231-0273 to register.**

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup>**

### **JACKMAN WETLANDS PARK**

**Leader:** *Herman Vanderleest*

**Time:** 9:00 am in the parking lot at 272nd Street at 10th Avenue across from the Transfer Station

Join Herman to walk the trails of this rural park with its mix of lakes, wetland and mature trees and look for the wildlife there. It is the site of a former Township gravel pit and dump which was declared full in the 1980's and capped. Then it was designated as a park and LFN helped with the restoration tree planting that was done. **Phone 604-856-1179 to register.**

## **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26<sup>TH</sup>**

### **GEORGE REIFEL BIRD SANCTUARY**

**Leader:** *John Gordon*

**Time:** 9:00 am at the Sanctuary Gift Shop

Join John to walk the trails around this popular wildlife refuge. Snow Geese and other wintering birds will have begun returning. Always a good chance to find owls such as the Great Horned. Bring lunch and water. Small entrance fee (\$5.00) for non-members of BC Waterfowl Society. Bring an extra sweater and hat as it can be chilly out there. (Note: Pre-booking is still mandatory at Reifel and should be done 3 days prior to visiting by each individual). **Phone 604-533-7171 to register.**

## **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>**

### **ALDERGROVE REGIONAL PARK**

**Leader:** *Tom Wildeboer*

**Time:** 9:00 am at the main parking lot at the end of the access road off 8th Avenue

Join Tom to walk the trails in this lovely park with its varied habitat from marsh to mixed forest to open grassland and a great variety of flora and fauna. **Phone 604-530-2633 to register.**

## **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>**

### **SERPENTINE FEN**

### **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA**

**Leader:** *Wim Vesseur*

**Time:** 9:00 am at the gate behind Art Knapps, 4391 King George Boulevard. The gate will be open until 9:00 am

Join us for a walk around this wetland that is jointly managed by Ducks Unlimited and the Ministry of the Environment where a variety of ducks and other birds spend the winter. **Phone 604-534-3447 to register.**

## **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>**

### **BRYDON LAGOON**

**Leader:** *Ted Goshulak*

**Time:** 9:00 am at the 53rd Avenue parking lot near 198A Street, Langley

Join Ted to walk around the lagoon where a variety of duck species come to spend the winter and see the restoration work being carried out by LEPS. Phone 604-888-0408 to register.

## **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>**

### **BLACKIE SPIT - CRESCENT BEACH**

**Leader:** *Perry Poulsen*

**Time:** 9:00 am at Crescent Beach Pier, (across from the parking lot by the outdoor swimming pool)

Join Perry for a walk around this popular park, where a variety of migrant and resident birds can be found in winter, followed by a warm-up at a local coffee shop. **Phone 604-366-4695 to register.**

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## **MEMBERSHIP**

It is time to renew your membership - the fillable membership/waiver form is attached.

You can fill, save and attach it to e-mail to [fnmembership@gmail.com](mailto:fnmembership@gmail.com) and send an e-transfer for the dues (\$32 single, \$37 family) to [fn treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:fn treasurer@gmail.com), or print it and bring it with payment to the first meeting.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

**Your executive**