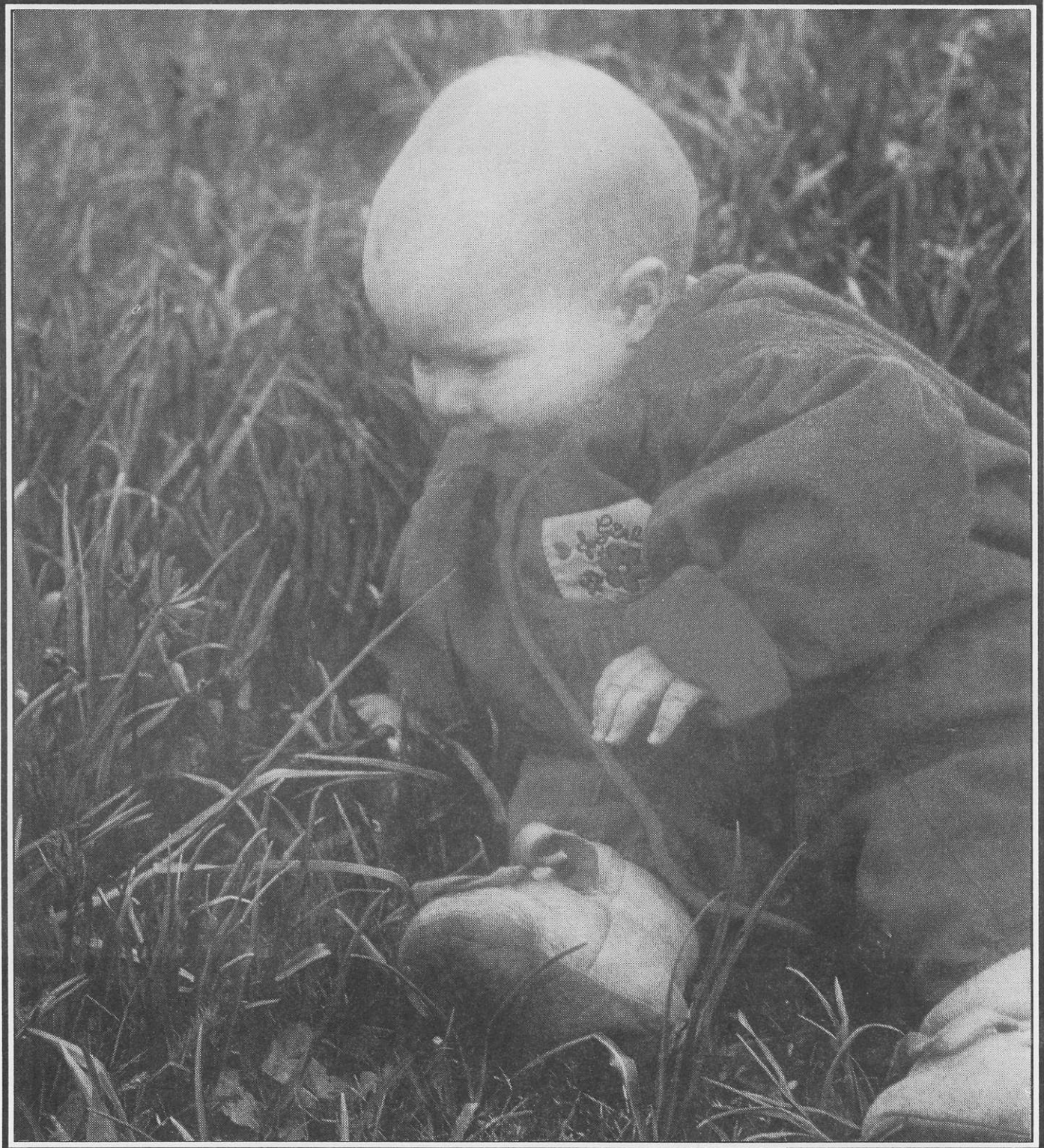




The Victoria NATURALIST

JULY
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1993
VOL 50.1

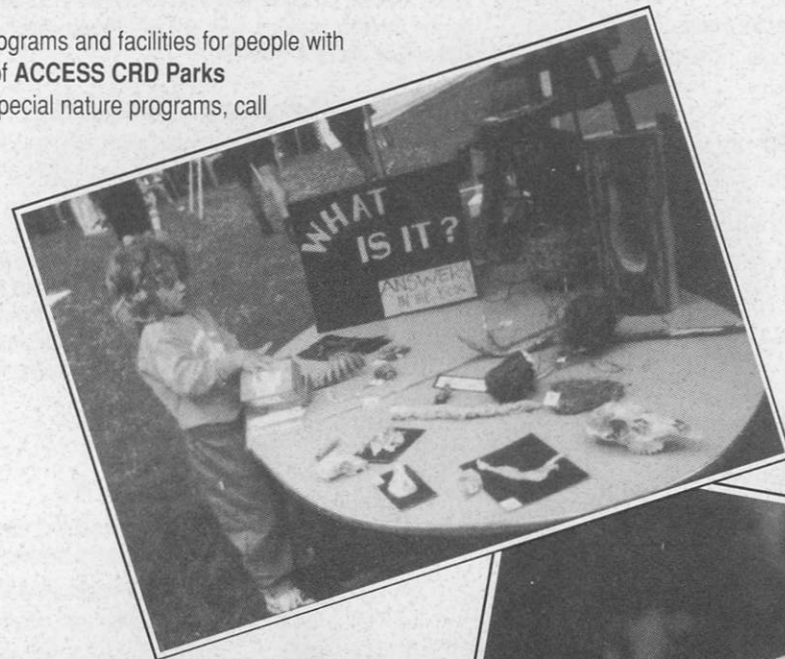
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Group Nature Programs

CRD Parks designs nature walks and special programs for community groups such as walking clubs, seniors, kids summer camps, or other special interest organizations. If you and your group would like to spend an hour or two exploring a CRD Park, give us a call.

We also offer special programs and facilities for people with disabilities. For a copy of **ACCESS CRD Parks** and for information on special nature programs, call 474-3344.



Nature Houses

Friendly CRD Parks staff and volunteer naturalists await your visit to the Nature House at Francis/King Regional Park and the Nature Information Centre at Witty's Lagoon Regional Park. See, touch and smell live exhibits; view the interpretive displays; talk to a naturalist.

Summer Nature House Hours

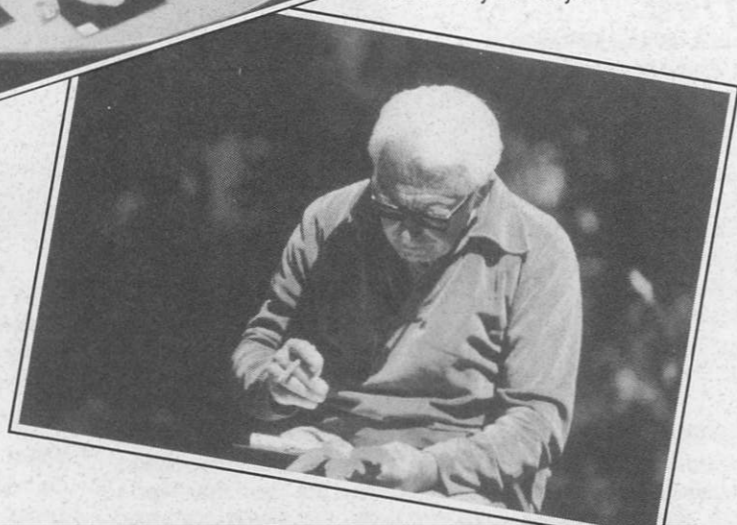
Francis/King Regional Park
(Munn Road in Saanich)
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park
(Metchosin Road in Metchosin)

Open June 30 to September 6
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday to Sunday
and holiday Mondays



Facilities Reservations

Group picnic sites in some CRD Parks are available for reservation at a nominal fee. Booking these sites requires a permit. For more information contact CRD Parks at 478-3344.



Registration

Programs with a fee require pre-registration.

Forms are available at:

- CRD's main office (524 Yates Street)
- CRD Parks (490 Atkins Ave.)
- Francis/King Nature House (in Saanich)
- Witty's Lagoon Nature Information Centre (in Metchosin)
- Panorama Leisure Centre (in North Saanich)

Register by



phone, fax, foot (in person), or mail

Pay by VISA or cheque to
CRD Parks Nature Programs.

(Prices include G.S.T.)

Mail/bring to:
CRD Parks
490 Atkins Ave.
Victoria, B.C. V9B 2Z8

Phone: 478-3344
Fax: 478-5416

What's Happening in CRD Parks?

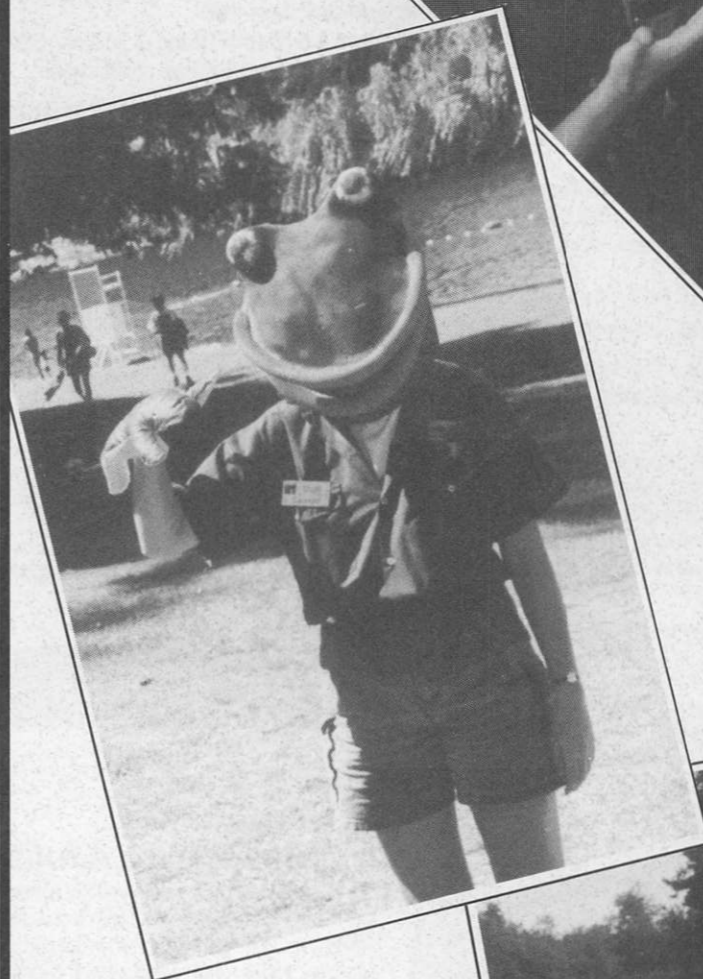
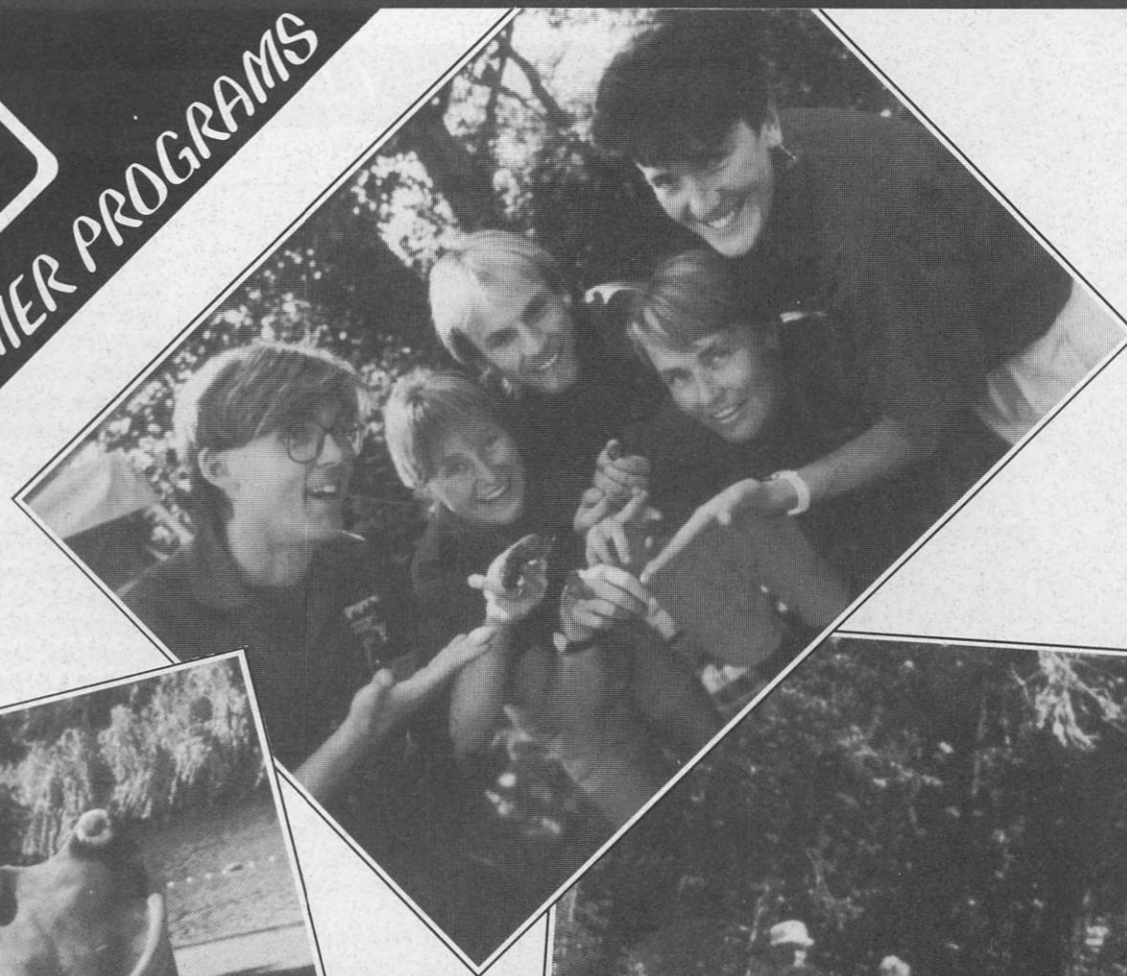
Dial 474-PARK
(474-7275) for 24-hour
access to nature house
hours, nature programs and
natural history sightings.



Capital Regional District Parks
490 Atkins Avenue
Victoria, B.C. V9B 2Z8
(604) 478-3344
or 474-PARK (recorded information)



1993 SUMMER PROGRAMS





1993 SUMMER PROGRAMS

Children's Programs

Young Nature Explorers

These 2-hour nature programs for children 5 to 9 include games, nature explorations and crafts.

Slither and Slime Yes, a whole program devoted to creatures that make some people go *yechh!* Your children will love this program about snakes and slugs...and bullfrogs too!

Wednesday, July 14 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon
or 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Beachcombers Heard about the housing shortage for hermit crabs? And what in the world are "crab pajamas"? This is a great program for children who love to muck about in sand and tidepools.

Wednesday, July 21 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon
or 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park (in Metchosin)

Creepy Crawlers Spiders and bees and ants, oh my! From master architects to champion weightlifters, the insect world is filled with weird and wonderful critters.

Wednesday, July 28 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon
or 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Francis/King Regional Park (in Saanich)

Fee: \$5 per child per program; \$4 per child for families with 3 or more enrolled. Pre-register early to avoid disappointment.

Parents and Tots Nature Adventures

These 1 1/2-hour nature programs are for adults and their pre-schoolers (ages 3-4) and include games, nature explorations, stories, and crafts. Parents, be prepared to play too!

Hug-A-Slug They're slimy, slithery, sticky, or icky, but oh so wonderful if you give them a chance. Slugs are not only fun but very important in our forests. Your children will love them and you will too!

Wednesday, July 14 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Tidal Tots Tidepools, clam holes, snails, and crabs are just part of the seashore fun you can share with your children.

Wednesday, July 21 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park (in Metchosin)

Wee Weavers Spiders are web-weaving wonders and far from detestable. In fact, they're downright lovable! Join your children for a playful spider event.

Wednesday, July 28 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Francis/King Regional Park (in Saanich)

Fees: \$5 per adult/child pair and \$3 for additional child (maximum 2 children per adult).

This is a great opportunity for those with both older and younger children. Enroll your older children in Young Nature Explorers morning program and then explore with your younger children in Parents and Tots Nature Adventures.

Big People, Little People

This is a playful 2-hour program for children (5-7 years) and their adults, exploring nature *together* through games, stories, walks, and crafts. Test your forest listening skills; see how quietly you can move over dry twigs; find out what's amiss on the "un-nature trail." Parents, be prepared to play in this one too!

Saturday, August 21 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Coles Bay Regional Park (in North Saanich)

Fee: \$5 per adult/child pair, \$3 for each additional child.

Stones 'n Bones

A special 2-day archaeology day camp where children (10-13 years) with a curiosity for things of the past can get some hands-on experience. Find out what an archaeologist really does!

August 4 & 5 (Wed & Thurs) 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park (in Metchosin)

Fee: \$20 per child. We will attempt to co-ordinate carpooling. Limited enrollment.

Junior Naturalists

Explore a seashore and a lake...discover what creatures live there and how they are specially adapted to their particular habitat. This is a 2-day nature camp for children 10 to 13 years.

Day 1 - Seashore
Wednesday, August 18 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park (in Metchosin)

Day 2 - Lake Life
Thursday, August 19 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Fee \$20 per child. We will attempt to co-ordinate carpooling. Limited enrollment.

Workshops

Sharing Nature with Children - A Workshop for Adults

Do you want to rediscover your childhood and learn how to share wonder with your children? Naturalists will lead you on a special day of games, walks, and explorations designed to deepen your experience of nature and to help you share this experience with children. This workshop is suitable for parents, teachers, community group leaders, and any other adults who want to explore nature with children.

Sunday, September 19
10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Francis/King Regional Park (in Saanich)

Fee: \$14 per person. Pre-registration required. Limited enrollment.

Special Events

Spring into Summer

Start off another season of festivities in CRD Parks, as we "spring into summer" on this day of fun for everyone.

- travelling nature house with live displays (snakes, slugs, frogs)
- entertainers "under the small top" tent
- face painting
- prizes
- children's games

Sunday, June 27 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Saanich Strawberry Festival

Join CRD Parks staff as we help Saanich celebrate its annual Strawberry Festival. Free shuttle bus starting at noon from Royal Oak Shopping Centre.

- pancake breakfast
- CRD Parks nature walks, exhibits, crafts, and games
- entertainment
- food concessions
- pony rides
- petting zoo

Sunday, July 11 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Slug Fest

This event is more fun every time we do it! Find out about a slug's built-in water slide. Pet a slug. Make a slug. Bring your own garden slug and enter it in competition for biggest and fastest slugs. This is a day in celebration of our unofficial ambassador of the forest. You didn't know about our annual Slug Fest? Come and see what the fuss is about!

- slug walks
- slug races
- travelling nature house
- slug skits
- games, prizes

Sunday, July 25 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Devonian Regional Park (in Metchosin)

Fabulous Frog Festival

If you missed this terrific time last year, shed no tears...the bullfrogs are back! Find out about the great bullfrog invasion at Elk/Beaver Lake. Learn about frogs: their loves, foes, and struggles. Bring your family, your friends, and your favourite frog cartoons and jokes. Be prepared for some froggy fun!

- travelling nature house with live displays (snakes, slugs, and of course, frogs)
- froggy fables and special guests
- froggy nature walks
- froggy crafts for children
- froggy facepainting
- froggy games
- froggy prizes

Sunday, August 8 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park (in Saanich)

Snake Day

Snakes, snakes, and more snakes! Who would have thought this would be our most popular program? Some come for the love of snakes and some out of morbid fascination. Whatever your reasons, you're sure to learn something you don't know. Drop in anytime. Special snake shows at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

- local snakes
- snakes to touch (really!)
- snake crafts and games
- guest snakes (exotic)
- snake lore

Thursday, August 26 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Witty's Lagoon Regional Park

Weekly Programs

Nature Walks

Join CRD Parks Naturalists for explorations that uncover the fascinating in CRD Parks. From a forest walk to a seashore snoop, a look at native petroglyphs to a search for bullfrogs or a peek at basking harbour seals, there's something for everyone!

Walks are held throughout the week and are free. For topics, dates and locations, pick up the monthly program flyer at CRD Parks, community recreation centres and libraries, or phone 474-PARK.

Sunrise Seekers Canoeing

Canoe through the early morning mist searching for elusive birds and other lakeshore life on Elk/Beaver Lake, in Saanich.

Saturdays	
July 3 to July 31	6:00 - 8:30 a.m.
August 7 to September 4	6:30 - 9:00 a.m.
September 11 to 25	7:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Note: There will be no canoe program August 22 in order to accommodate the Canadian Masters Rowing Competition.

Sundays	
July 18	6:00 - 8:30 a.m.
August 1*	6:00 - 10:00 a.m.
September 5*	6:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Fee: \$6 per adult or teen, \$3 per child 12 and under. All equipment provided.

*Special 4-hour canoe programs include a stop on one of the islands. Fee is \$8/\$4.

Fifty Plus

These natural history excursions are for active adults ages 50 and over. We'll be exploring three different themes in three different CRD Parks. Sign up for all of them, or pick one which suits your fancy.

Fee: \$7 per hike or \$18 for all three.

Hike 1 - East Sooke Regional Park

On this hike we'll explore the rugged west coast of our island. Discover the natural history of the area, bird-watch along the coast trail, and stop for lunch at the petroglyphs.

Thursday, July 22 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Hike 2 - Mt. Work Regional Park (McKenzie Bight)

Ethnobotany will be the theme here, as we follow the trail through a lush ravine forest where wildflowers bloom long past regular flowering time. Have lunch at the Bight where the views are beyond compare, and stop at a midden on the way back.

Thursday, August 12 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Hike 3 - Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

It's early morning for this one, to take advantage of the lake calm. We begin with a basic introduction to paddling skills by a certified Flatwater Canoe Instructor. Then we'll follow the edge of the lake, looking for elusive birds (and bullfrogs!) before stopping for lunch on one of the islands.

Thursday, September 2
7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Pre-registration required. Limited enrollment.

The Roving Naturalist

Coming to a CRD Park Near You

Naturalists will be popping up in some of our parks this summer, doing impromptu programs. Look for crafts for the children, nature experiments, midden explorations, or mini-nature walks. We don't know where these Roving Nats will show up next, so keep your eyes peeled!



Critter Crafts

These two programs will be a real hit with children ages 5 and older, who like arts and crafts.

Build-A-Bug How in the world do you build a bug? Find out in this great program for children who want to make bugs and learn about them at the same time.

Saturday, July 3 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Francis/King Regional Park (in Saanich)

Build-A-Bird Another chance for children to get creative and crafty, only this time it's with birds. Build 'em big, build 'em small—however they look, it's fun for all.

Saturday, August 14 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Francis/King Regional Park (in Saanich)

Fee: \$5 per child per program. \$4 per child for families with 3 or more enrolled.

Basic supplies will be provided, but we encourage you to bring other "bits of stuff" that can be recycled into bug or bird bodies (old nylons, colourful scrap paper, styrofoam, string, etc.)

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DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE: MAY 25, 1993

Send to: Warren Drinnan, Editor,
 2284 Cooperidge Drive, RR3 Saanichton, B.C. V0S 1M0
 or 2nd Floor, 525 Head St., Victoria, B.C. V9A 5S1
 Phone: Home—652-9618, Work—361-3543.
 FAX: 361-3052

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Members are encouraged to submit articles, field trip reports, birding and botany notes, and book reviews with photographs or illustrations if possible. Photographs of natural history are appreciated along with documentation of location, species names and a date. Please label your submission with your name, address, and phone number and provide a title. We will accept and use copy in almost any legible form but we encourage submission of typed, double-spaced copy or an IBM compatible word processing file on a 360K 5.25" diskette plus printed output. Having copy submitted on diskette saves a lot of time and work for the publications group and we really appreciate the help. If you have an obscure or very old word processing program, call the editor, Warren Drinnan, at 361-3543 or 652-9618, or save the text in ASCII format. Blank diskettes may be obtained from the editor and we will return any of your own diskettes submitted. Photos and slides submitted may be picked up at the Field-Naturalist, 1241 Broad Street, or will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included with the material.

VNHS MEMBERSHIP

For membership information and renewal, please contact Tom Gillespie at 361-1694, or write to Membership Committee c/o The Victoria Natural History Society, Box 5220, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4.

ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

The deadline for advertising submissions is the first of the month preceding publication. Please contact Jennifer Emms at 479-6323 regarding advertising which requires typesetting.

Ad Size	Price	Dimensions
Back Page	\$120	7.25 x 8 in.
1/2 Page	\$80	7.25 x 5 in.
1/3 Page	\$50	7.25 x 3.25 in.
1/4 Page	\$40	3.25 x 4.675 in.
1/8 Page	\$25	3.25 x 2.25 in.

Guidelines

1. Ad copy should be typeset and camera ready, not just sketched or typed on a typewriter.
2. Minor alterations to existing advertisements will cost \$10. Typesetting of ads is charged at \$20 per hour.
3. Add \$9 per photo for PMT (at Island Blueprint).
4. Advertising fees due and payable when copy submitted. Please submit a cheque.

Submit Advertising to:

Jennifer Ems, 5409 West Saanich Road, R.R.5, Victoria, B.C., V8X 4M6. (Phone: 479-6323 or 385-4212)

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OUR COVER

This issue marks the beginning of our 50th year of publishing *The Victoria Naturalist*, surely one of the longest running magazines of its type. Volume 1, Number 1, included a series of articles on spring flowers and a summary of the opening address by Dr. Clifford Carl to the first meeting of the Victoria Natural History Society, which is reprinted on page 9. Dr. Carl's comments on the important role members of the Society can have as collectors of information, in providing advice on the use of wildlife, and in education, were obviously inspirational. There have been many examples of such contributions over the years, including data for the Birds of British Columbia atlases (most of which came from natural history organizations such as the VNHS); the sponsorship of natural history trips and events such as Camus Day; volunteer and financial contributions towards the preservation of habitats such as the Parksville flats; and the provision of a scholarship fund for the University of Victoria and Camosun College. *The Victoria Naturalist* congratulates all past and present members of the Victoria Natural History Society.

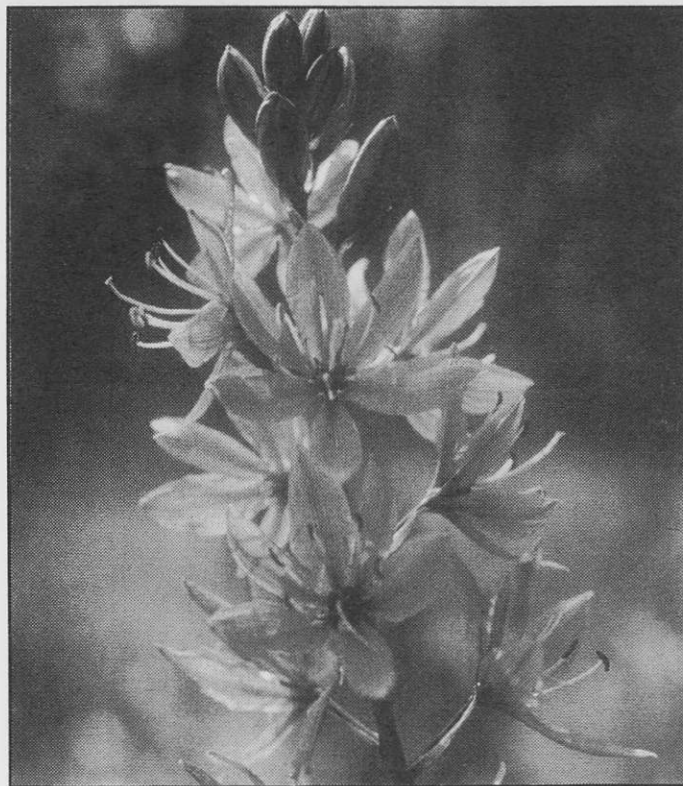
Our cover this issue features a very junior naturalist, ten-month-old Camus Clowater-Eriksson who can be seen carefully examining her namesake plant while taking part in the Camus Day activities at Beacon Hill Park. More on Camus Day can be found in Peggy Price's article on page 4. (Cover photo: Peggy Price)



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Early Camus. (Photo: Peggy Price)

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the field-naturalist

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Camas Day In Beacon Hill Park — April 17, 1993

By Peggy Price

Clouds and cool weather did not dampen the spirits of those enthusiastic birders who arrived early at Beacon Hill to attend the 9:00 a.m. 'Birding Walk' which began Camas Day. We were fortunate to have four experienced leaders—Chris Sandham, Jeff Gaskin, Lyndis Davis and Don L'Hereux. Each of these led a birding group to various sections of the park. The writer joined Don L'Hereux's group and we headed to the east side.

As we entered the south east woods we were able to watch a Raven being harassed by a group of abusive Crows. We learned that Ravens nest in the park. The Great Blue Heron also still nests here, although the Bald Eagles are driving them out. A remnant of the heron colony is now nesting near Goodacre Lake. The voice of a Rufous-sided Towhee was heard calling from the thickets and the lone call of a California Quail drifted across the Garry Oak meadow. Other voices, such as a Hutton's Vireo, Bewick's Wren, and White-crowned, Gold-crowned and White-throated Sparrows added to the songs of Spring. The call of a Red-breasted Nuthatch brought binoculars into action.

As we strolled along the east woods trail Don told us that there was talk of cleaning out the underbrush in this area. He said if this is done it would do away with species which nest in the brush or on the ground, for the undergrowth is their habitat. The preservation of the underbrush is the only way to ensure their survival in the park.

Soon the morning was brightened with the melodious bubbling song of a Winter Wren and we were provided with a lengthy concert. The star performer frequently flitted into view on nearby shrubs, with hardly a break in the flow of his music. We learned that the male Winter Wren builds several nests in his efforts to attract a mate. Apparently, this extended engineering feat is what it takes to win her heart. His beautiful song attracts her to the nest site. If she is sufficiently impressed she will add some of the finer materials to the nest and they will then begin their family.

A Cooper's Hawk flew in and settled on a maple nearby. This woodland hawk also nests in the park and preys mainly on small birds. The remains of some of its recent victims were seen. Bits of plucked feathers lay near the path. Upon closer examination, it was believed the unlucky bird may have been a small owl, for most of the feathers had a fuzzy fringe, indicating silent flight. Further along, Northern (red shafted) Flicker feathers indicated it too may have been an unwilling meal.

Arriving back at the summit we heard of some of the successful sightings of other groups. Lyndis Davis reported that a Bald Eagle's nest had been seen, north of Goodacre Lake, where the heronry used to be. They also saw a Rufous-sided Towhee, Varied Thrush, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Orange-crowned Warbler, Bushtit, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Eurasian Widgeon, American Widgeon, Pine

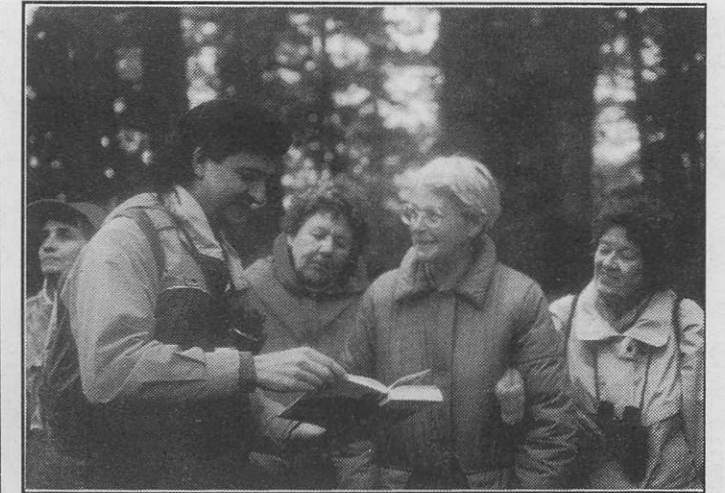
Siskin, Mallard, Bald Eagle, Great Blue Heron and Downy Woodpecker.

Grant Keddie, an archaeologist at the Royal B.C. Museum, led the Native History tour. He took us on a fascinating walk which led to the burial cairns and then down across Dallas Road to a point near the ocean, where he had done some excavations in September last year.

Prior to setting off, Grant provided us with a most interesting summary of the earliest history of Beacon Hill. He took us back 25,000 years. If we were standing on the same spot the climate could have been somewhat like it is today. However, it was beginning to become very cold and this intensified as the years went by. Soon very few animals could survive. One of these was the woolly mammoth. About 18,000 years ago, glaciers spread over the Saanich Peninsula. When we go out to the gravel pits today the gravel we find there is from the advancing glaciers at that time. In this gravel, the remains of a woolly mammoth were recovered, which Grant dated at 17,000 years.

The climate continued to get colder. The mainland glaciers merged with the local ones and scoured all living things from the face of the earth in this area. Along the waterfront you can still see the smooth trails of the glaciers in stone— "...you can actually see the direction in which the glaciers were going - and so life was obliterated from Vancouver Island."

Suddenly (in geological time) the climate changed. By 13,000 years ago, most of the glaciers had melted away. "...where we are standing now was probably an arctic-like environment. Look over to the large gravel pit in Colwood." Grant pointed west. "...that bench is called the Colwood delta—it was formed when material melting out from the glaciers came into the ocean. Like the mouth of the Fraser River, all the sediment dumped into the ocean—we know this from shells found there." The sea level rose, and the ice was gone. Grant described the scene. "Where we are standing



Don L'Hereux, leader of one of the four early Birding groups, helps fellow birder identify a discovery. (Photo: Peggy Price)

today, this would be a tiny island— Beacon Hill Island— just the top of this knoll! Nearby, we would see Gonzales Island, Workpoint Island, and Mount Douglas Island, just like a Gulf Island setting but in an Arctic environment."

Although evidence of human occupation has not been found this far back on Vancouver Island, there has been an interesting discovery on the Olympic Peninsula. In a bog a mastodon was found. These are smaller, distant relatives of the woolly mammoth. This ancient creature had died of natural causes in a swamp. It had earlier been wounded by hunters and the bone spear point was still stuck in its leg. So here is evidence that people were hunting mastodons 12,000 years ago, near Victoria. Grant is hopeful that they may find such evidence of early man on Vancouver Island.

—continued following page



Grant Keddie, leader of the native history tour, explains the significance of Beacon Hill's stone cairns. (Photo: Peggy Price)



Camus Day organizers Connie Hawley (left) and Helen Oldershaw. (Photo: Bev Glover)

Then the sea level started to go down quickly. By 11,500 years ago it reached the level of today. Then the animals returned, probably walking across the braided sand deposits from the mainland. Where we now stand there were bison roaming among the willow forests and open grasslands. Lodgepole pines were becoming established.

The oldest site showing evidence of human habitation in B.C. is found in the Peace River, dated back 10,500 years. The Fraser soil profile site shown in the Royal B.C. Museum is 9,000 years old. The midden under the Gorge bridge is dated, so far, at 4,100 years but they have not yet reached the bottom so the actual date could be much older.

Another article could be written on the fascinating information Grant provided on the early native people and their life in what is now Beacon Hill Park. We walked from the cairns on the hill to the point where evidence of houses and middens have been located, just across Dallas Road. We learned that early Spanish records spoke of Camas bulbs being used in trade. Natives came from the Sooke area and took canoe loads

of Camas bulbs back to the west coast. Local natives accumulated huge supplies of Camas and used this in trade to exchange for things like dried halibut and other products from the west coast. In recent years Camas has suffered from the park's popularity. The south hillside, once a carpet of blue, is struggling to survive.

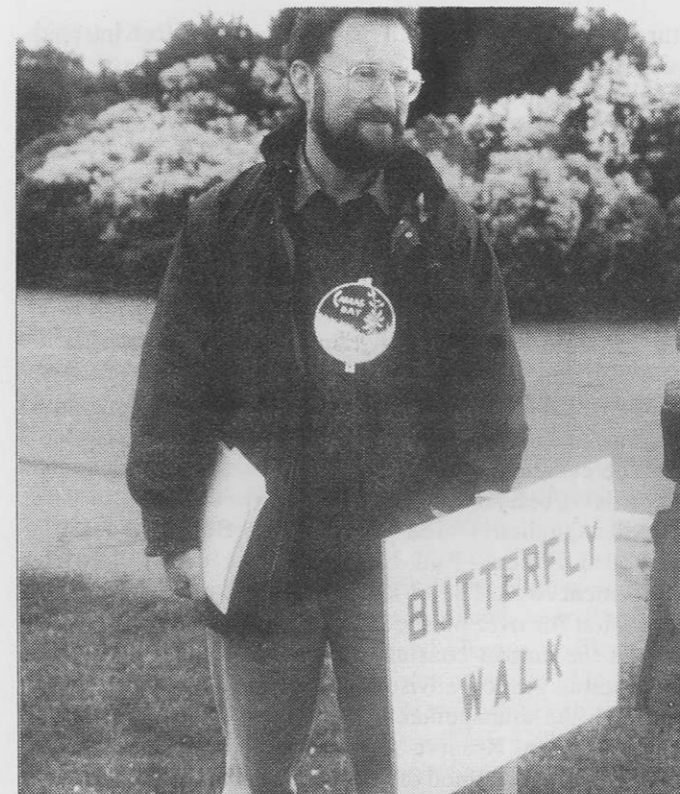
The popular wildflower walks were led by Adolf Ceska, Robert Ogilvie and T.C. Bradshaw, all botanists with the Royal B.C. Museum, and Oluna Ceska, of the University of Victoria.

Joining Robert Ogilvie, we discovered many of the wild flowers which are so much a part of the beauty of Beacon Hill. Some early Camas (*Camassia quamash*) was in bloom but not yet creating the blue display we normally expect by this time. The drawings at the Beacon Hill Flagpole (prepared by the instructors of the Lau, Welnew Tribal School of the Saanich Nation) enlightened us by showing how important the Camas was as a food source for the native people. They harvested the Camas in a systematic manner, taking the older bulbs and leaving the younger ones to mature.

In the blooming season the White Camas (sometimes called Death Camas) was removed, for the leaves and bulbs of this distantly-related plant are very poisonous. An alert member of the group spotted one of these in bloom and Dr. Ogilvie knelt down to examine it. When asked to pose for a photo while touching the plant he complained "My hand is starting to wither!"

Our Easter Lily, or White Fawn Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*) was, as usual, a delight to the eye and surely a treasure of the park. It was a thrill to discover some Chocolate Lilies in bloom. We learned that both types of this *Fritillaria* grow in our area—the early *F. lanceolata* and the bell-shaped *F. camschatcensis*.

We found Lomatium, the delightful Spring Gold and some Shooting Stars (*Dodecatheon*), relatives of the Primrose and the Cyclamen. Known to many of us as peacocks, there are



Chris Guppy, leader of the butterfly walk. (Photo: Peggy Price)

mainly two types of *Dodecatheon* in this area, *D. hendersonii*, and *D. pauciflorum*. The first is on the rare list, for it is restricted to the southern end of Vancouver Island. These beautiful flowers are much admired, even when they go to seed, for each seed capsule resembles an elegant tiny vase.

Soon a late blooming Satin Flower was spotted. These lovely early spring flowers (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*) are related to Blue-eyed Grass and both belong to the Iris family. We felt fortunate to find one still in bloom, for most had gone to seed.

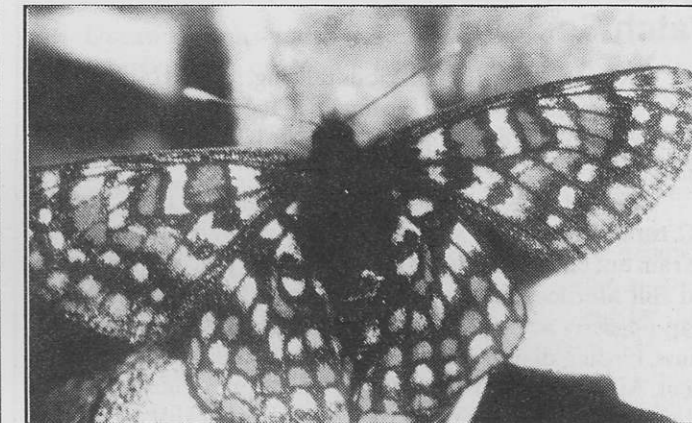
Further on, a small Yellow Violet was discovered. This too is on the rare list, being restricted to Victoria and southern Vancouver Island. This was the *Viola praemorsa*, the little Prairie Violet, with woolly silvery-grey leaves.

Many other interesting plants were discovered during our walk through the Garry Oak meadows. Broom continues to be a problem since it tends to crowd out our native species. Appreciation for our native plants is growing and efforts are being made to encourage them in the park by allowing seed disbursement before any mowing is done.

Chris Guppy, entomologist at the Royal B.C. Museum, introduced us to the butterflies of Beacon Hill. On a cloudy day the butterflies are not active, so Chris was able to enlighten us by means of attractive pictures. He told of the differing food sources used by each local butterfly. The Blues and Elfin each enjoy the white lilies (*Erythronium*) but do not pollinate them.

English Daisies and Dandelions are a good nectar source for many types. Some have special needs, either in the caterpillar or adult form. The caterpillar of the Brown Elfin feeds on Arbutus. However this is not harmful to the tree. The Proper-tius Dusky Wing Skipper's caterpillar feeds on Garry Oak but causes no harm. Its survival rests on the survival of our native oaks.

The Woodland Skipper is the little butterfly of late summer. Its caterpillar feeds on grass and is not a pest. Chris encouraged us to leave some long grass, for mowing destroys its habitat. The Edith's Checkerspot was once a resident of Beacon Hill. It feeds on Plantain, but is now endangered. Locally it is only found on Hornby Island and at Mill Bay.



Edith's Checkerspot. (Photo: Peggy Price)

The Silvery Blue, another threatened butterfly on Vancouver Island, feeds on Vetch and the Wild Pea. It is now only found in the Uplands. The Western Sulphur, which enjoys the same menu as the Silvery Blue, is no longer found in the park, nor has it been noted within the Capitol Regional District. It can still be seen in the mountainous areas of the Island, such as Strathcona Park and the Nanaimo Lakes.

The attractive Sara Orange Tip butterfly used to be found along the cliffs and knolls of Beacon Hill but is not found here any more. Its main diet was the Wild Mustard plant.


It was rather sad to hear of the loss of a number of butterflies from Beacon Hill Park. Chris told us that Uplands is now the best butterfly area around and May is the best time to see them. Another good viewing area is the Galloping Goose Trail.

Camas Day in Beacon Hill Park is a day packed full of information and interest for naturalists new and old. The leaders chosen were well-informed and enthusiastic and it was a privilege to learn so much more about the delights to be found within our city park. Such events can only increase our appreciation for the natural treasures contained within this special area and encourage all of us to work to ensure their continuing survival.

Peggy Price is a frequent contributor to *The Victoria Naturalist*.



Robert Ogilvie discusses the Death Camas. (Photo: Peggy Price)



THIMBLE FARMS

Bedding plants – Hanging baskets
Shrubs & ground covers
and fruit trees.

RR1 Arbutus Rd., Southey Pt. 537-5788
Salt Spring Island

Growing Native???
10% off native plants to VNHS members

Brant Festival 93 – A Continued Success

By the Mid Island Wildlife Watch Society

It was ten hours of tenacious tallying, topped off with tall tales and toasts to the winners at the Brant Festival 93's Big Day Birding Competition, held April 3 in the Parksville-Qualicum area.

Twenty teams and a total of 75 participants from around B.C. turned out for the second annual Big Day, which began in the rain but ended in bright sunshine. While judges Rob Butler and Bill Merilees verified the checklists during a post-count wrap-up party at the Bayside Inn, participants bid on framed prints, birding diaries and other items donated to the Big Day Silent Auction. When the tallying was over, eight teams had exceeded the 90-species mark on their checklists and 123 species had been listed overall.

The "Port Alberdies" team of Sandy McRuer, Shirly Prince and Don Cecile captured the 'Most Species - Experienced' trophy for 1993, recording a total of 100 species. The threesome also won hats donated by Pacific Trekking for recording the 'Best Waterfowl List' and Sandy McRuer's sighting of a Say's Phoebe at Rath Trevor Provincial Park earned the 'Bird of the Day' award.

The "One Day Wonders", composed of Bashir El Khalafawi, Tony Gibb, Connie McCann, Bud Wilson and Dale Bonnycastle, claimed the honors for the 'Most Species - Novice' category with 55 species recorded. The group also recorded the 'Best Waterfowl List - Novice' and were awarded books donated by Bruce Whittington's Field

Naturalist store in Victoria. (Bruce also won 'Most Intrepid Birder' award, and a feeder from Buckerfield's, for participating with his leg in a cast.)

The Big Day's top prize, a pair of Bausch and Lomb Elite 8 x 42 binoculars donated by Bausch and Lomb Canada, was won by Don Doyle, a big-game biologist with the B.C. Ministry of Environment. Don said owning a pair of what has been called one of the best binoculars in the world will only increase his enthusiasm for birding.

B.C.'s Ministry of Environment Wildlife Viewing Program sponsored the Big Day. Environment Minister John Cashore teamed up with the Birds of B.C. authors Wayne Campbell, Neil Dawe and John Cooper for his first foray into a Big Day birding competition.

The evening before the Big Day, Cashore announced that a stretch of Crown foreshore land in the Parksville-Qualicum area – from Craig Bay to the Little Qualicum River – had been designated a Wildlife Management Area. The 17-kilometre stretch, which provides vital habitat for over 60 species of waterbirds, including the Brant, is the largest coastal site of its kind to receive such special status. A local advisory committee is being formed to assist with the management plan for what is already being called the "Brant Reserve".

Organizers deemed the Brant Festival 93 one of the most successful ever. More than 3,000 visitors attended the three day celebration; there were at least that many Brant staging in flocks along local shores.

The Mid Island Wildlife Watch Society has announced that April 8-10, 1994 has been set for Brant Festival 94, with the Big Day Birding Competition set to fly on April 9.

For more information on the Festival and the Big Day, write the Brant Festival Big Day, Box 327, Parksville, B.C. V9P 2G5 or call (604) 248-4117.

Welcome to New Members

- April 6 David Livingston, of Sluggett Road: studies native plants.
- April 6 Michael A. Martin and family, of Pentrelew Place: are birders.
- April 9 Gerald Williams and family, of Cedar Avenue.
- April 13 Barbara Faulkner, of Vista Bay Road: enjoys hiking, birdwatching, and wildflowers.
- April 13 Ben Jupp-Knight, of Fell Street: a new junior member interested in all of nature.
- April 13 Gerhard Fischer, of Rockland Avenue: enjoys birding and hiking.
- April 16 Sylvia and Robin May, of Harrison Street: are interested in birding and the "Great Outdoors".
- April 16 Sheila Mosher, of Newton Heights Road: studies botany, especially grasses, birds and local invertebrates.
- April 25 Stephen Bonin, of Huband Road in Courtenay.
- April 25 Carolyn Richman, of Sea Ridge Drive: is a CRD naturalist doing birding and ethnobotany.
- April 28 Ben van Drimmelen and family, of Linkleas Avenue: study birds and plants.

- April 28 Arlene Yaworsky, of Simcoe Street: is interested in birding, ecology and wildlife drawing.
- April 28 Ann Wilson, of Fairfield Road: enjoys plants, birds and ocean or beach life forms.
- April 28 Ellen Tremblay, from Victoria: is a birder.
- April 28 Colleen Millar, of Surfside Place.
- April 28 Wilfred and Virginia Lund, of Clive Drive.
- May 3 Ann Eriksson, of Blenkinsop Road.
- May 4 Maria Kaffka, of Wicklow Street: is interested in birds, wildflowers and conservation.
- May 10 Alan Drengson and Victoria Stevens, of Fell Street: enjoy wildlife and landscaping with native plants.
- May 10 Christine Saliaris, of Sayward Street.
- May 10 Steve and Sylvia Brown, of Cedar Hill Road.
- May 17 Maxine Bradley, of Wenman Drive.
- May 17 Ishbel Elliott, of Saturna Island.
- May 22 Ruth Baxter, of Ontario Street: enjoys hiking and learning about nature.
- May 22 Mike Ryan, of Wilkinson Road.
- May 22 Inga Nykwist, of Hasquiatt Place.

1993 Spring Bird Count

Introduction by David Pearce

The third annual spring "Christmas Bird Count" took place on May 8 with 136 participants. The dawn started off cool and overcast with a few scattered showers but then it brightened up and we finished at noon with clear sunny skies and a high of 16 degrees. This is the earliest we have held the spring count so a few of our winter visitors were still here while most of the spring migrants had returned. As a result, we set a record total of 170 species and 28,480 birds! This compares with our previous record of 159 species and 25,760 birds in 1991.

Spring arrived late this year, due to cool wet weather throughout most of April and early May. Highlights of this year's count included a Northern Goshawk near Butchart's Gardens (again); two Green-backed Herons at Blenkinsop Lake; 27 Greater White-fronted geese over Ten Mile Point; a Golden Eagle and Northern Pygmy Owl in the Highlands; two Ruffed Grouse and a Blue Grouse on Scafe Hill; a Mountain Bluebird on the Victoria golf course; and, a White-throated

Sparrow on Triangle Mountain. Other interesting counts were: three American Kestrels; seven Ospreys; 50 Red-tailed Hawks; one Wandering Tattler; three Ruddy Turnstones; two Purple Martins returning to Victoria Harbour; one Red-necked Phalarope; two Ring-billed Gulls; one Caspian Tern; two Common Terns; 81 Vaux's Swifts; and, two Red-breasted Sapsuckers.

Due to a rough weather at sea the Oak Bay Islands count could not be done on May 8 but was completed over the following two days.

The post count gathering was held at the Goldstream Nature Centre where we were entertained by dozens of Rufous Hummingbirds at the feeders and by David Fraser who organized a bird quiz.

Our spring count has always been held on the second Saturday in May and this happened to coincide with the second annual International Migratory Bird Day organized by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center in Washington, D.C. I have sent them our results for the past three years and I would like to thank to Clive Strauss for providing "The Migratory Bird Handbook" produced by the Smithsonian.

The Victoria Naturalist would like to thank David for all his efforts in organizing the Spring Bird Count and in putting together the information into a data base and providing us with the tabulated results.

Wildlife and Man

By G. Clifford Carl

The wild creatures which are found in nature do not live in peace as is sometimes popularly supposed. On the contrary, in order to survive they must constantly struggle against conditions within their environment or against other living organisms which may be either competitors or predators. The result is that the association and relationships between animals and plants in any one community are very complex and it is only by piecing together a multitude of apparently disconnected observations that a pattern finally becomes visible.

One type of association is the form of a "food chain" which begins with plants, the basic source of all food, progresses through the herbivores to the carnivores, and ends with the larger flesh-eating mammals or birds. In such an association the organisms at the beginning of the "chain" are small and exist in large numbers; toward the end of the chain the size of the individuals in each group increases while the numbers decrease. Many such food chains exist in each community and all may be interconnected.

Each species of living thing tends to increase and is held in check by various forces such as climatic conditions, supply of food and presence or absence of enemies. As a result, the number of any species is constantly changing and in turn the numbers of animals or plants associated with it in the food chain fluctuate with it. There fore, there is no such thing as "balance of nature"; the associations between animals and

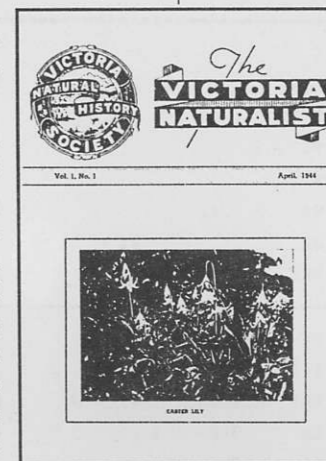
plants are not static, as implied by the word "balance" but rather are dynamic. The chief characteristic of life is constant change.

Man interferes greatly with the complex associations that exist in nature by clearing extensive areas of land, by killing off large numbers of animals for food and by the indiscriminate slaughtering of predators. In order to prevent certain extermination of some species and serious depletion in others it is necessary to carry out some sort of government control.

In this conservation work, organizations such as this newly formed Victoria Natural History Society can play an important part. Our activities can be directed along three main lines. First, we can act as collectors of information concerning the wildlife of our Province, information which may be of use later to officials in formulating their policies of control. Second, we can function in an advisory capacity in matters concerning the intelligent use of our wildlife. Third, we can aid in educating the public, by lectures, demonstrations and informative articles both for school children and adults so that they will come to appreciate the value which exists in the world of nature around them.

I feel that we in this district are indeed fortunate in having such a wealth of natural history material round about us and that we will derive much pleasure in its study. At the same time we have before us unlimited opportunities of putting knowledge so gained to some useful purpose, commencing at an opportune time.

This article is a summary of the keynote address presented at the first meeting of the Victoria Natural History Society on March 14, 1944 and published in the first issue of the Victoria Naturalist, April, 1944.



First issue of *The Victoria Naturalist*, April 1944.

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

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|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. BUTCHART GARDENS/NORTHERN HIGHLANDS | 5. LANGFORD LAKE | 9. PORTAGE INLET - THE GORGE |
| 2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS | 6. ALBERT HEAD - TRIANGLE MOUNTAIN | 10. VICTORIA HARBOUR |
| 3. GOLDSTREAM | 7. ESQUIMALT LAGOON - MILL HILL | 11. BEACON HILL |
| 4. THETIS LAKE/HASTINGS FLATS | 8. ESQUIMALT HARBOUR | 12. OAK BAY |

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Red-throated Loon												
Pacific Loon						1						
Common Loon						3	7	1		1	2	
Pied-billed Grebe												
Red-necked Grebe							3	2				
Eared Grebe												
Western Grebe							2					
Double-crested Cormorant	8		14	3	2	6	39	8	27	28	23	12
Brandt's Cormorant			1							9	8	
Pelagic Cormorant						5	5	33		42	12	7
Great Blue Heron	6	4	1	2	1	1	3	26	8	6	16	1
Green-backed Heron												
Trumpeter Swan				1								
Mute Swan						8	8		2		2	
Greater White-fronted Goose												
Brant							9					4
Canada Goose	82	15	4	51	27	26	27	35	14	16	11	
Wood Duck		2					2					
Green-winged Teal				2	2							
Mallard	69	23	4	20	30	44	20	3	25	27	202	7
Northern Pintail						8	2					
Blue-winged Teal												
Cinnamon Teal				1								
Northern Shoveler												
Gadwall												
American Wigeon				12		9	2			1	3	3
Ring-necked Duck				6								
Greater Scaup							10					
Lesser Scaup									3		1	
Harlequin Duck						2	2	2			17	15
Oldsquaw												
Surf Scoter						2					7	
White-winged Scoter											6	
Common Goldeneye												
Bufflehead	1		7		9	6	5	3	17		3	10
Hooded Merganser	1		3	1	1	6	10		3			
Common Merganser	15		9			12			1			
Red-breasted Merganser					1	4	13	1			3	
Turkey Vulture	6	7	8	6	3	3				1		
Osprey	1				1		2	1				
Bald Eagle	9	1	4	2	2	4	1	4	2	2	6	1
Northern Harrier												
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1					2						

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY | 18. ELK LAKE - CORDOVA BAY |
| 14. 10 MILE POINT | 19. PROSPECT LAKE - QUICKS BOTTOM |
| 15. GORDON HEAD - MOUNT DOUGLAS | 20. MARTINDALE - BEAR HILL |
| 16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL | 21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS |
| 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Red-throated Loon								1		1	
Pacific Loon		3				5		17	1	27	Record high (previous high 12)
Common Loon	1	3				4		4	2	28	
Pied-billed Grebe				1						1	
Red-necked Grebe	1	1	1					2	1	11	
Eared Grebe						2				2	New species
Western Grebe										2	
Double-crested Cormorant	17	23	5	2	2	12	5	9	630	875	Record high (previous high 806)
Brandt's Cormorant						1				19	Record low (previous low 63)
Pelagic Cormorant	4	9	15			11		6	140	289	Record low (previous low 360)
Great Blue Heron	10	2		3	2	7	7	17	3	126	
Green-backed Heron					2					2	New species
Trumpeter Swan										1	
Mute Swan				1						21	Record high (previous high 17)
Greater White-fronted Goose		27								27	New species
Brant										13	Record low (previous low 30)
Canada Goose	6	93		5	9	39	61	72	2	595	Record high (previous high 412)
Wood Duck							8			12	Record low (previous low 27)
Green-winged Teal							2	2		8	Record low (previous low 14)
Mallard	51	17	5	62	23	28	38	40	2	740	
Northern Pintail										10	
Blue-winged Teal							1			1	
Cinnamon Teal										1	
Northern Shoveler								3		3	
Gadwall										2	
American Wigeon						6		3		39	
Ring-necked Duck						2				8	New species
Greater Scaup	7									17	
Lesser Scaup										4	
Harlequin Duck	2	8							11	59	Record low (previous low 75)
Oldsquaw		4						14		18	
Surf Scoter		50	60			45		23		187	Record low (previous low 234)
White-winged Scoter	2	32	15			13		8		76	Record high (previous high 46)
Common Goldeneye							1			1	
Bufflehead	22	2				29		13		127	Record high (previous high 118)
Hooded Merganser	2						2		3	32	Record high (previous high 24)
Common Merganser							3			40	
Red-breasted Merganser			4			23		21		70	
Turkey Vulture	1					1	1	4		41	
Osprey						1		1		7	Record high (previous high 5)
Bald Eagle	2		1	1	1	3	1	4	7	58	Record high (previous high 44)
Northern Harrier							1			1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk							3	1		7	

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

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SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Cooper's Hawk		2			1			2			1	2
Northern Goshawk	1											
Red-tailed Hawk	16	5		6	2	5						
Golden Eagle		1										
American Kestrel												
Merlin				1		1					1	
Ring-necked Pheasant	8			6		1	1					4
Blue Grouse				1								
Ruffed Grouse		1	1	2								
California Quail	19	1	11	12	50	23	2	2	11	13	1	7
Virginia Rail												
Sora					1							
Black-bellied Plover						1						8
Semipalmated Plover												
Killdeer	9	1		2	8	1	1		1	11	1	
Black Oystercatcher								4		3	5	2
Greater Yellowlegs						1						
Lesser Yellowlegs						3						
Solitary Sandpiper				1								
Wandering Tattler												1
Spotted Sandpiper	1			1								
Whimbrel											5	20
Ruddy Turnstone												
Western Sandpiper				12		20			1			
Least Sandpiper				16			4					
Dunlin						32					1	
Short-billed Dowitcher						3						29
Long-billed Dowitcher												2
Common Snipe						1						2
Red-necked Phalarope												
Bonaparte's Gull								3				
Mew Gull			2			20	1			1	9	8
Ring-billed Gull								2				
California Gull											15	1
Thayer's Gull						4						2
Western Gull						1	1					
Glaucous-winged Gull	218	29	12	31	22	204	144	221	60	218	488	200
Caspian Tern						1						
Common Tern												
Common Murre												
Pigeon Guillemot						1	3			1	6	4
Marbled Murrelet												
Rhinoceros Auklet						1					12	

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| 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Cooper's Hawk	1	1		3	1	1	1		2	18	
Northern Goshawk										1	
Red-tailed Hawk	1		2		1		4	8		50	Record high (previous high 39)
Golden Eagle										1	
American Kestrel		1		1				1		3	
Merlin							1			4	
Ring-necked Pheasant				3	2	1	12	5		43	
Blue Grouse							1			2	
Ruffed Grouse										4	
California Quail	9	5	10		14	25	17	55		287	Record low (previous low 321)
Virginia Rail						2	2			4	
Sora							3			4	
Black-bellied Plover										9	
Semipalmated Plover									3	3	
Killdeer				2	4	5	6	29	2	83	Record high (previous high 67)
Black Oystercatcher			2						10	26	
Greater Yellowlegs										1	
Lesser Yellowlegs										3	
Solitary Sandpiper										1	New species
Wandering Tattler										1	
Spotted Sandpiper		1			1	11				15	
Whimbrel	1								1	27	
Ruddy Turnstone									3	3	
Western Sandpiper				12				1	29	20	Record low (previous low 172)
Least Sandpiper										127	
Dunlin						4	16	82	5	127	
Short-billed Dowitcher							1		2	36	Record low (previous low 113)
Long-billed Dowitcher									5	37	
Common Snipe								1		4	
Red-necked Phalarope									1	1	New species
Bonaparte's Gull										3	
Mew Gull									4	49	
Ring-billed Gull										2	New species
California Gull										16	
Thayer's Gull						2				8	New species
Western Gull										2	
Glaucous-winged Gull	83	43	50	30	94	142	216	177	2,080	4,762	Record low (previous low 4,932)
Caspian Tern										1	New species
Common Tern									2	2	New species
Common Murre								2		2	
Pigeon Guillemot	12	49	25					14	128	243	Record high (previous high 95)
Marbled Murrelet		3							3	6	Record low (previous low 33)
Rhinoceros Auklet	3							1	2	19	Record low (previous low 68)

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SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Rock Dove	3	1		1		2	29	8	4	12	148	3
Band-tailed Pigeon	10	2	1	5	14	14	16	7				
Mourning Dove	1											
Western Screech-Owl	2		2		1							
Great Horned Owl												
Northern Pygmy-Owl		1	1									
Barred Owl												
Vaux's Swift				45	2		4				20	
Anna's Hummingbird	1		1		2				2			
Rufous Hummingbird	38	21	29	20	45	32	3	2	2			
Belted Kingfisher			6	1	5	4	2	1	1			
Red-breasted Sapsucker			1		1							
Downy Woodpecker	2	4		6	1			4	2	1	4	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	1	4	3	2							
Northern Flicker	10	30	13	11	15	15	6	3	2		1	
Pileated Woodpecker	4	2	2	6	1	2	4					
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	12		1		3						
Western Wood-Pewee												
Willow Flycatcher	4											
Hammond's Flycatcher	2	12	2	9								
Pacific Slope Flycatcher	32	29	34	80	20	1	2		2			
Eurasian Skylark	4											
Purple Martin										2		
Tree Swallow				4	1	2			2	7		
Violet-green Swallow	194	48	32	112	181	162	13	30	77		31	3
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	12	1	2		13	1			6			
Cliff Swallow	4	14		2								
Barn Swallow	114	10		21	18	44	3	20	37	4	17	25
Steller's Jay	1	10	18	3	23	1			1	3		
Northwestern Crow	159	26	30	158	71	113	31	135	57	147	99	80
Common Raven	42	46	4	7	3	4	3	4		1	10	
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	44	15	22	30	39	25	7	34	5	5	9	24
Bushtit	7	6		4	6	2		16	14	6	12	4
Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	8		21	11	10	3	7	4	3	4	2
Brown Creeper	2	4	2	17	1	3	1		3		2	1
Bewick's Wren	12	12	12	14	13	2	8	7	1	9	7	
House Wren	4	14		5	11	6	2					
Winter Wren	12	10	35	15	11	1	3		3	3	1	1
Marsh Wren				4			1					
American Dipper			1									
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	5	27	22	7	1	6	5	5	4	2	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet					1	2			1			
Mountain Bluebird												1

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY | 18. ELK LAKE - CORDOVA BAY |
| 14. 10 MILE POINT | 19. PROSPECT LAKE - QUICKS BOTTOM |
| 15. GORDON HEAD - MOUNT DOUGLAS | 20. MARTINDALE - BEAR HILL |
| 16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL | 21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS |
| 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Rock Dove	10	1			6	4	3	15		250	
Band-tailed Pigeon		5				1	16	1		92	
Mourning Dove			1							2	
Western Screech-Owl						2	6			13	Record high (previous high 9)
Great Horned Owl	1	1				1				3	Record low (previous low 9)
Northern Pygmy-Owl					1					3	New species
Barred Owl						1				1	
Vaux's Swift		6	2				2			81	Record high (previous high 3)
Anna's Hummingbird	4	6			1					17	Record high (previous high 11)
Rufous Hummingbird	1	1	10	3	6	26	35	8	1	283	Record high (previous high 247)
Belted Kingfisher	3			1		2		2		28	Record high (previous high 20)
Red-breasted Sapsucker										2	
Downy Woodpecker					11	4	4	6		50	Record high (previous high 39)
Hairy Woodpecker						2	1			14	
Northern Flicker	1		6	3	1	11	13	5		146	Record high (previous high 108)
Pileated Woodpecker						1	4	2		28	
Olive-sided Flycatcher										26	
Western Wood-Pewee							1	1		2	
Willow Flycatcher						3				7	
Hammond's Flycatcher			1				2			28	
Pacific Slope Flycatcher			2	2	1		42	32		279	Record high (previous high 190)
Eurasian Skylark								10		14	
Purple Martin										2	
Tree Swallow					16	27	13	16		88	
Violet-green Swallow	72	15	10	47	286	126	268	187	6	1,900	Record high (previous high 1,686)
Northern Rough-winged Swallow					3	5	4	3		50	Record high (previous high 38)
Cliff Swallow					1		26	14		61	
Barn Swallow	7	3	15	17	28	31	72	85	16	587	
Steller's Jay							1			61	Record high (previous high 43)
Northwestern Crow	121	39	15	29	68	84	71	141	4	1,678	
Common Raven		1	6	1		10	9	8	1	160	
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	10	5	20	11	23	52	66	48		494	
Bushtit	20	4	8	19	35	14	34	4		215	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	5	10		3	7	17	1		122	
Brown Creeper		1	8		13	2	2	3		65	
Bewick's Wren	12	5	5	7	38	12	13	42		231	
House Wren			4		9		14	4		73	
Winter Wren		5	15	1	7	7	5	30		165	
Marsh Wren				1	11		14			31	Record high (previous high 21)
American Dipper										1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet			12		11	15	13	12		151	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			2	1		2	1	1		11	
Mountain Bluebird										1	New species

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

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|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. BUTCHART GARDENS/NORTHERN HIGHLANDS | 5. LANGFORD LAKE | 9. PORTAGE INLET - THE GORGE |
| 2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS | 6. ALBERT HEAD - TRIANGLE MOUNTAIN | 10. VICTORIA HARBOUR |
| 3. GOLDSTREAM | 7. ESQUIMALT LAGOON - MILL HILL | 11. BEACON HILL |
| 4. THETIS LAKE/HASTINGS FLATS | 8. ESQUIMALT HARBOUR | 12. OAK BAY |

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Townsend's Solitaire			1				1					
Swainson's Thrush												
Hermit Thrush	1								1		1	
American Robin	173	101	87	188	104	111	19	105	43	90	130	65
Varied Thrush	2	3	7	1		3			1			
American Pipit							2				28	
Cedar Waxwing				4				5				
European Starling	243	5	50	53	78	110	28	225	105	338	232	45
Solitary Vireo	3	5	1	7	3	3	2				1	
Hutton's Vireo		1				3						
Warbling Vireo	3	3		1	7	2			3	1	1	
Orange-crowned Warbler	112	98	40	96	68	59	19	18	11	13	14	10
Yellow Warbler	10	3	2	4	6	5		2				1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	7	20	5	40	52	3	5	2	3	1	19	
Black-throated Gray Warbler	14	8		14	3	2	2					
Townsend's Warbler	11	32	75	78	19	2	13				1	
MacGillivray's Warbler	4	18	4	2	10	1	1		1			
Common Yellowthroat	31	7	1	12	5	3	2			1	1	
Wilson's Warbler	4	11	35	32	9	2	1	2	14		9	1
Black-headed Grosbeak					1							
Rufous-sided Towhee	43	36	3	30	44	5	2	5	14		10	55
Chipping Sparrow	13			6	4	4	7	5	1			
Savannah Sparrow	47			5	2	6	9		3	8	2	7
Fox Sparrow												1
Song Sparrow	24	18	10	33	31	11	4	2	8	10	15	6
Lincoln's Sparrow	1			1								
White-throated Sparrow						1						
Golden-crowned Sparrow	30	19	8	3	26	10	16	4	6	14	38	10
White-crowned Sparrow	23	26	4	19	34	6	4	2	2	7	9	4
Dark-eyed Junco	14	24	18	17	18	16	8	15			2	
Red-winged Blackbird	44	12	2	13	24	10	11	2	13	17		1
Brewer's Blackbird	22			2	4	11	4		6			
Brown-headed Cowbird	18	16		21	17	12	2	1	9	1	5	20
Western Tanager	3	1		2		2						
Purple Finch	14	12	12	16	14	3	3		1	12	1	1
House Finch	12		1	5	35	27	7	5	17	14	38	21
Red Crossbill				1		1					2	
Pine Siskin	47	10	5	84	23	69	31	1	12	17	16	
American Goldfinch	14	4		2	3	1	5				1	
Evening Grosbeak							1					
House Sparrow	2			8	76	14	4	38	45	68	85	15
TOTAL BIRDS	2,190	929	721	1,619	1,407	1,457	683	1,076	731	1,191	1,897	767
TOTAL SPECIES	79	64	57	83	74	94	76	51	57	46	67	52

1993 Spring Bird Count Data

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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| 16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL | 21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS |
| 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Townsend's Solitaire										2	
Swainson's Thrush							2	2		4	
Hermit Thrush				1		2				6	
American Robin	159	64	40	52	129	199	115	243	1	2,218	
Varied Thrush						3	4			24	
American Pipit					24			78		132	Record high (previous high 37)
Cedar Waxwing								2		11	
European Starling	76	46	35	130	111	105	95	250	7	2,367	
Solitary Vireo		1			1		6	2		35	Record high (previous high 29)
Hutton's Vireo				3						7	
Warbling Vireo		3	4					12		40	Record high (previous high 29)
Orange-crowned Warbler	24	13	30	2	37	9	82	86	1	842	Record high (previous high 719)
Yellow Warbler			1	1	13	5	11	11	1	76	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	3	3		1	10	31	26		232	Record high (previous high 103)
Black-throated Gray Warbler			1				2	2		48	
Townsend's Warbler		3	20		3		30	15		302	Record high (previous high 261)
MacGillivray's Warbler							1			42	
Common Yellowthroat				20	5		29	26		143	
Wilson's Warbler	3	4	6	1	3	1	1	10	1	150	Record high (previous high 108)
Black-headed Grosbeak					3	2				6	
Rufous-sided Towhee	27	12	20	8	38	50	29	53		484	
Chipping Sparrow	1				3	3	9	37		93	Record high (previous high 61)
Savannah Sparrow	4	2	4	3	4	8	3	75	1	193	
Fox Sparrow				1						2	
Song Sparrow	11	2	10	12	32	28	30	47	5	349	
Lincoln's Sparrow				2				5		9	
White-throated Sparrow										1	New species
Golden-crowned Sparrow	5	7	20	6	7	4	3	24		260	Record high (previous high 54)
White-crowned Sparrow	7	4	12	1	17	2	39	22		244	Record high (previous high 198)
Dark-eyed Junco	3		8	2			66	7		218	Record high (previous high 144)
Red-winged Blackbird	3	5	20	80	38	33	94	37	4	463	
Brewer's Blackbird	13			1	2		28	56		149	
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	15	3	2	25	4	29	23	1	226	
Western Tanager			2	1	5		1			17	
Purple Finch						2	26	21		138	Record low (previous low 176)
House Finch	70	18	25	3	56	36	51	53		494	
Red Crossbill		3	2				14	4		27	
Pine Siskin		4	20		15	28	47	26		455	
American Goldfinch	2	3	25	1	23		29	28		141	
Evening Grosbeak			6		9		14			30	Record low (previous low 110)
House Sparrow	24	17	8	60	50	27	20	104		665	
TOTAL BIRDS	937	709	684	662	1,391	1,436	2,127	2,744	3,122	28,480	
TOTAL SPECIES	52	57	57	53	62	74	88	92	41	170	

A New Plant from Goldstream

By Bill Merilees

The Saanich Peninsula has long been noted as a botanist's paradise. As part of the dry coastal Douglas-fir biotic area, the uniqueness of its flora is well-known. In 1972, Adam Szczawinski and Antony Harrison listed 1,024 plant species as being present, 691 indigenous and 333 introductions. The purpose of this short note is to add yet another introduced species to this list.

On June 17th, 1981, in Goldstream Provincial Park, a fairly extensive patch of a white flowered *Sanicula* was found in full bloom. The area was just upstream from the Mount Finlayson Road, on the east side of the Goldstream River. The



Sanicula europaea. (Photo: Bill Merilees)

typical form of a *Sanicula* was noted but the species did not 'fit' any of the four native species recorded for the Saanich Peninsula, which have either yellow or purple flowers.

Observations at this site have continued to the present and culminated in 1992 when Leon Pavlick from the Royal British Columbia Museum visited the site and confirmed an earlier tentative identification of this plant as *Sanicula europaea* (see photo).

Since 1981, the size of this population has not shown any change. In total, it covers perhaps 50 square metres under some large Western Red Cedars and Big-leaf Maples, in an area that appears to have been disturbed a fairly long time ago.

This area of Goldstream Provincial Park has always been a favoured area by the public. A small goldrush in 1863-64, and later as the start of the famous Malahat Drive (complete with a Tea House), are but two of the interesting historical chapters that focus on this area. Today, of course, this region of the Goldstream River is noted for its impressive Chum Salmon run in November.

At some time, possibly during the Tea House era, it is

... the seeds of this species have numerous millimetre-long, hooked spines that are adept at clinging to whatever passes by.

presumed someone planted the *Sanicula europaea* which persists to the present time. Though not particularly attractive, it is not an unattractive plant either. Its best use would appear to be as a ground cover in shady areas.

Like other *Sanicula* species, the seeds of this species have numerous millimetre-long, hooked spines that are adept at clinging to whatever passes by. For this reason, providing the seeds produced are viable, one might expect this species to occur elsewhere in Goldstream Park or nearby areas.

The B.C. Park Act protects all natural objects within Provincial Park boundaries and even though it is an 'introduced' species, *Sanicula europaea* is still protected. However, for those wishing to 'view' or photograph this newest addition to the Greater Victoria flora, the opportunity awaits. Unlike reports of a rare bird, which can disappear as quickly as it was noted, this species is firmly rooted. For the interested observer it cannot get away!

Acknowledgements. Thanks are owed to a number of people for their interest, assistance and encouragement with this note. Gail Mitchell, Jennifer Beckett and Leon Pavlick in a number of different ways helped identify this species.

Bibliography:

Szczawinski, A.F. and A.S. Harrison, 1973. *Flora of the Saanich Peninsula - annotated list of vascular plants*. Occasional Papers of the British Columbia Provincial Museum, No. 16. Victoria, B.C.

Bill Merilees is the Visitors Service Coordinator for the Strathcona Region of the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in Nanaimo. He is a frequent contributor to the Victoria Naturalist.

Ensuring Livability in Greater Victoria

By Joel Ussery

On April 30 of this year the Parks and Conservation Committee of the Victoria Natural History Society hosted *Ensuring Livability in Greater Victoria*, a forum designed to establish partnerships for natural areas conservation. Politicians, planners, developers, naturalists, realtors, representatives of 'citizens' groups, consultants and landscape architects were invited to this one-day event to exchange information and ideas about current conservation initiatives and priorities for the future.

The forum combined this examination of regional conservation concerns with presentations looking at mechanisms and tools for natural areas conservation developed by the Federation of B.C. Naturalists (FBCN) in cooperation with the Vancouver law firm of Lidstone, Young, and Anderson.

Landscape architect Michael Bocking set the stage with a keynote address emphasizing the need for a "sense of place" and a connection between nature and ourselves. The importance of natural areas to our quality of life was further developed by speakers whose perspectives ranged from the scientific to the spiritual.

Representatives from the FBCN, provincial, regional and municipal government agencies, and the community group perspective, then reviewed some of the current regional problems and conservation initiative now underway. A discussion of legal mechanisms and policy tools which local governments can implement to protect (or maintain) the viability of natural areas followed. Options included bylaws and regulations as well as financial incentives and stewardship agreements.

Finally, a panel of politicians, planners, a developer, and a community group representative, identified priority actions to meet the challenge of natural areas conservation in the CRD. Despite varying perspectives, there was a general recognition that the formation of partnerships was essential in any regional strategy for natural areas conservation. The need for an inventory of important remnant areas was seen as a major priority. Once these areas are identified the appropriate conservation methods can be chosen and coordinated action begun.

It is difficult to adequately address a complex topic in a one-day forum. However, a good start was made. This event brought together many of the people in Greater Victoria who are actively involved in natural areas conservation.

Although no concrete action plan was formulated a broader constituency is now more aware of the cumulative decline in natural areas in the CRD and the need for coordinated and timely action to conserve what remains. There is now increased knowledge of the variety of conservation techniques that exist with the potential for creative and effective solutions through cooperative effort.

A number of inventory initiatives were spawned, or given added incentive, as a result of the forum.

There are still major challenges to overcome. All levels of government are being forced to cut back their spending. The local government system is focused on development, not conservation. It is difficult to coordinate municipal activities at the regional scale.


Long-range planning is hampered by the deluge of development and re-zoning applications. However, momentum is building to overcome these obstacles. The *Ensuring Livability* forum should stimulate more organized debates and working sessions to increase the profile and effectiveness of natural areas conservation in Greater Victoria.

A summary of the proceedings will be available in the near future. Watch for details in the *Victoria Naturalist*.

Acknowledgements.


Financial support for the forum was provided by the Victoria Natural History Society; the Federation of B.C. Naturalists Foundation; Lidstone, Young and Anderson; Canada Trust's Friends of the Environment Foundation; the Provincial Capital Commission; and, the University of Victoria.

Joel Ussery is a member of the Victoria Natural History Society's Parks and Conservation Committee.



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- ~ 1 mile of waterfront with secluded coves and beaches.



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Recreation Day '93

By Bev Glover

The Victoria Natural History Society was invited to participate in the Victoria Park's and Recreation's Recreation Day on April 25, 1993 at the Memorial Arena. This well-attended family event was planned with lots of activities for "kids" from 3 to 93. The key word for a successful booth was "hands-on". We competed admirably with trampolines and goats from the Beacon Hill Park Petting Zoo by borrowing dissecting microscopes from the University of Victoria's Biology Department. There was a wide variety of objects to examine, from small fossil trilobites and snake skins, to bird's nest fungi and insect trapping Sundew plants. Children and their parents were fascinated at seeing these and other display items up close.

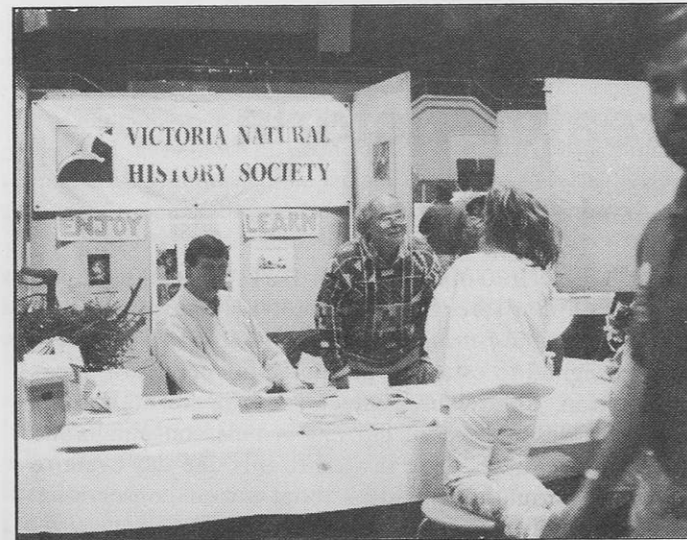
Bev Glover is the Chair of the Publicity Committee of the Victoria Natural History Society.



David Allinson helps fair-goers with the dissecting microscopes.



Children loved the "hands on" activities at Recreation Day.



David Pearce (left) and Tom Gillespie at Recreation Day.

Victoria Natural History Society Nature Art Show September 4 to 19

The Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) and BC Parks is, once again, sponsoring an exhibition of nature-inspired art at the Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre. This will be similar to the 1991 (and 1988) show which was very successful in raising money for the VNHS Scholarship Fund and for a viewing platform at the Goldstream Park estuary. Money will be raised through commissions on art work, poster sales, donation box and raffle ticket sales. Artists that have agreed to participate so far include Mark Nyhof, Morgan Warren, Bertha Gow, Patty Dowler and Robert Bateman, who is donating a lithograph to the silent auction.

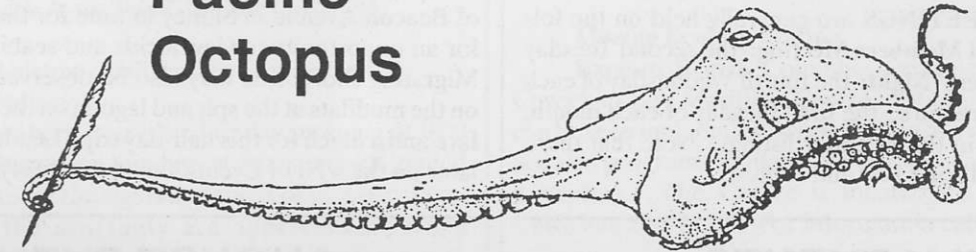
The success of the past shows was due to the fantastic volunteer effort by the Victoria Natural History Society and this will be required once again. Anne Adamson and Beth and Victor Chatwin have agreed to coordinate the volunteers required to staff the show. If you wish to staff the exhibit at any time during the run of the show—please call the Chatwin's at 592-5346, the sooner the better.

A show poster is being produced with a painting of Seller's Jays by Morgan Warren. It is a beautiful rendition of our provincial bird in the autumn around a hornet's nest. This will be ready near the end of June.

If you would like to exhibit a piece or you know of an artist that you think should be invited to participate call Leah Ramsay or David Fraser at 479-0016 or the Visitor Centre at Goldstream at 478-9414.

There will be a Wine and Cheese Gallery Opening for VNHS members staffing the display, the artists and BC Parks people on Friday, 3 September from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Bring a flashlight for the stroll back to the parking lot.

Pacific Octopus



The Virtues Of Snorkelling

I recently went snorkelling with someone dear to me. It was a lazy Victoria Day (meaning the holiday) and we sauntered down to a sheltered bay on the Strait of Georgia. In our own time we suited up beside the still ocean. Across the water the mountains of the Olympic Peninsula stretched like the back of a long dead dinosaur covered with icing sugar. On the water sat small flocks of ducks and now and then a gull flapped by lazily.

Entering the water was, as always, a paradigm shift in perception. After enjoying the wide, above-sea panorama we had to adjust ourselves to a new world, smaller in extent but crammed with life. A three-dimensional liquid stage grew into our vision as we finned slowly, almost effortlessly, out to a small kelp bed that lay just offshore.

Our minds began to wander and waft like the kelps before us. Transparent jellyfish pulsated past us, the sunlight shafting down into the clear water. Our eyes played over the barnacles and limpets that covered the rocky shore in the shallow water and then down to slightly deeper water where a variety of algae grew prolifically. A huge purple sea urchin showed between the fronds of a seaweed and we watched as thousands of tube feet searched the water between sharp spines. Hermit crabs scuttled busily from one place to another. A red rock crab clung to a rock as a school of little perch darted away between a forest of kelp fronds.

Snorkelling is a lovely way to experience the sea. British Columbia is blessed with clean water, myriad coves and sheltered bays that are safe for diving. It is a tranquil experience - therapeutic even, and whilst a sociable pastime (never dive alone) it is also a very personal experience because you generally don't converse as much as you would whilst sharing nature with someone in other places or ways. Snorkelling is also free of some of the pressures of SCUBA diving - the loads of equipment, the gung-ho element and the cost. Having said this, snorkelling is an excellent introduction to SCUBA diving, which does allow you to dive deeper and stay down for longer - aspects which open up new undersea experience possibilities.

More and more divers are getting into fish watching too. Here too, snorkelling can give you a better look at many species of fish that would be scared away by the sound of your exhaled bubbles if you were SCUBA diving. Naturalists who like to make lists find snorkel fish watching right up their gully. Perhaps with more people getting into watching fish the term "fishers" (used in North America to describe fishermen/women) will come to mean the non-destructive watching of fish in the same vein

as the term "birders" has come to be synonymous with bird watchers. Then there is always the possibility of starting a new bird list - a list of birds seen underwater. I have spoken to west coast divers who have seen murrelets zooming around underwater in Barkley Sound and I have watched a cormorant fishing whilst diving on the south coast of South Africa and marvelled at King Penguins flapping about like underwater fighter planes, jets of air streaming behind their tails, whilst diving off Marion Island in the southern Indian Ocean.

You are almost guaranteed of coming away from a snorkel dive with some enriching memory or some addition to your perception of nature. It might be a colourful rockfish flaring its fins, it might be a wolf eel slithering over the reef, a patch of delicate anemones or a school of herring filling your vision. Or it might be a discarded tin can that angers you and causes you to care about the state of a world most people don't bother seeing. If you have never snorkelled before, take a peek into the quiet world this summer and if you do experience anything you would like to share, please write to the Octopus, care of the Victoria Naturalist. See you down there.

WHALE HOTLINE



harbour porpoise



Dall's porpoise

Report marine mammal sightings and strandings to:

380-1925 in the Victoria area
On the water: VHF channel 68 to the vessel *Sundiver*


1-800-665-5939 toll-free anywhere in B.C.

All sightings, no matter how old, are useful for research purposes and are entered into a computer data base. Records are available to all researchers. When current local sightings of killer whales or any unusual species are reported, researchers will try to respond to them. Please report date, time, location, description of the animals, number, direction of travel, and behaviour, as well as your name, phone number and address in case further information is required.

CALENDAR

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **General Members Meeting:** the second Tuesday of each month. **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday of each month. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Note that there will be no meetings during July and August.

JULY EVENTS

 **Friday, July 2 to Monday, July 5.** Northwest Aquatic and Marine Educators Regional Conference. "An Aquatic Affair" is the theme of this meeting which will be held at the Cowichan Lake Education Centre. To receive a registration package contact Kathryn Behrisch at the Vancouver Aquarium, P.O. Box 3232, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3X8 (685-3364).


Saturday, July 17. Birding at Fort Rodd Hill National Historical Park. Join David Allinson (478-0457) on this morning walk to view resident songbirds and other species in sections of the park not normally accessible to the public. The park's natural history is as interesting as its cultural history. Meet at the main parking lot in the park for a 10:30 a.m. start.

Thursday, July 22 to Sunday, July 25. The 22nd Canadian Nature Federation's Annual Conference. The North Okanagan Naturalists' Club is hosting *From Desert Sands to Alpine Slopes* at the Silver Star Mountain Resort as part of celebrating their 42nd anniversary. Explore the famous Okanagan Valley, from the desert in the south to the alpine slopes in the north. For more information, write to the Secretary, North Okanagan Naturalists Club, P.O. Box 473, Vernon, B.C., V1T 6M4.

Sunday, July 25. Shorebird Migration at Witty's Lagoon Regional Park. Hank Van der Pol (658-1924) will help you identify the south-bound shorebirds on the mud flats as well as resident songbirds in the forest at this popular Metchosin park. Meet at the parking lot at 9:00 a.m. for this morning trip.

Saturday, July 31. Birding at Sidney Spit Provincial Park. Meet at the foot of Beacon Avenue in Sidney in time for the 10:00 a.m. sailing for an opportunity to view alcids and seabirds from the ferry. Migrating shorebirds may also be observed in good numbers on the mudflats at the spit and lagoon on the island. Bring ferry fare and a lunch for this half-day trip. Leader to be announced later on the VNHS Events Tape (479-2054).


AUGUST EVENTS

 **Sunday, August 8.** Sidney Island Birding. Our summer trips continue to this scenic park, with particular emphasis on shorebird migration. Meet in time for a 10:00 a.m. sailing at the foot of Beacon Avenue in Sidney with lunch and ferry fare in hand. The leader will be announced on the VNHS Events Tape.

Saturday, August 14. Birding at Cowichan Bay and Area. Join David Pearce (477-2664) to observe the success of Purple Martin nestlings, as well as both resident and migrant species on the Cowichan River estuary. Bring a lunch and beverages for this full day trip. Meet at 8:15 a.m. at the Helmcken Park 'n' Ride to carpool or meet the group at 9:00 a.m. on the Cowichan Bay Dock Road.

Saturday, August 28. Sidney Island Birding. Ours series of trips to the island continues. See the July 31 and August 8 trip notices for details. Meet leader David Allinson (478-0457) in time for the 10:00 a.m. sailing.

BULLETIN BOARD

 **For Sale** *Ocean to Alpine - A British Columbia Nature Guide.* This new book by Joy and Cam Finley is available from Lyndis Davis (477-9952). Also Available for sale: National Geographic's *Field Guide to Birds*; the *Naturalist Guide to the Victoria Region*; the Victoria Area Bird Checklist; and, the new Victoria Natural History Society's Window Decals.

Birders Journal

Latest observations from across Canada; rarity reports; identification and distributional articles; Ontario Round-Up; international conservation news; Photo-Quiz and Prize-Bird; colour photographs; top-quality artwork and colour plates; CBC news; letters; Product Reviews; Book Reviews; Notes and regular columns.

The Leading Magazine for Canadian Birders

Annual Subscription (six issues) including postage; in Canada \$34. In the U.S. US\$38 (cheques in US funds are acceptable). Overseas C\$49 (or US equivalent). Please make your cheque payable to *Birders Journal* and mail to: Circulation Department, *Birders Journal*, 8 Midtown Drive, Suite 289, Oshawa, Ontario L1J 8L2, Canada.

Back Issues of the Victoria Naturalist
Copies of back issues and indices of the *Victoria Naturalist* are available from Tom Gillespie (361-1694).

Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Public Bird Walks
Join Max Sternberg every Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m., and David Allinson on Sundays at 8:00 a.m., for guided hikes around the lake for the sights and songs of summer. Free, but donations to the sanctuary are appreciated. Bring binoculars and hats. Birdwatchers at all skill levels are welcome.

Purple Loosestrife Alert.
Please keep a watch for Purple Loosestrife in the Greater Victoria area while you pursue your naturalist activities this summer. The long showy spikes of small purple/pink flowers are evident from June to September in wet areas of all types. So far, the Parks and Conservation Committee is aware of two major areas of infestation: Kings Pond and Viaduct Flats, with a small number of plants in the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Please call Doris Brix (479-7420) or Colleen O'Brien (388-4520) to report additional sites.

VNHS Nature Trust Fund Update.
The VNHS fund-raising drive on behalf of The Nature Trust of B.C. is now completed. The total raised by individual donations was \$2,470.00 plus the VNHS Directors contributed \$1,000.00 on behalf of the Society as a whole. Thank-you to all members who donated to this fund. The Nature Trust reports that the overall fund-raising drive was successful with over 80% of the 1.12 million dollars recovered thus far. Future donations can be sent directly to: The Nature Trust of British Columbia, 808 - 100 Park Royal South, West Vancouver, B.C., V7T 1A2.

Garry Oak Meadow Society Membership
The Garry Oak Meadow Society aims to promote, conserve and restore our native oak meadow lands. You can help them to preserve our rarest Canadian habitat by joining the Society or through donations to any branch of Pacific Coast Savings Credit Union. For further information contact Joyce Lee at 386-3785.

Garry Oak Meadow Search
The Garry Oak Meadow Society has begun an inventory of special flowering locations. Let them know of your favourite - it doesn't need to be publicly owned. Contact Joyce Lee at 386-3785. They are also looking for slides and photographs on common birds and flowers that are associated with the Garry Oak meadow ecosystem for their displays and presentations.

Native Plant Garden Tours
The Royal B.C. Museum conducts tours weekdays at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. until September.

Book Sought
Life histories of North American cardinals, grosbeaks, buntings, towhees, finches, sparrows and allies, Part One, by Arthur Cleveland Bent. This is the volume that covers finches

and is needed to complete a set. If you know where a copy can be obtained you can call Barbara Begg at 656-5296.

Marine Ecology Station
Explore British Columbia's marine biodiversity at the Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre. Life exhibits of B.C. sealife can be seen under microscopes and in live video displays. There are also programs available for schools, camps, naturalists and educators. The Centre is located on the water at 1761 Cowichan Bay Road. For information call 746-4955.

Swan Lake Summer Activities

A wide variety of family programs and special events will be going on at the Swan Lake-Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary located at 3873 Swan Lake Road. Nature House hours in July and August are Sunday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. For further information phone the Nature House at 479-0211.

July and August Family nature walks every Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 11 a.m. These guided family nature walks cover a variety of natural history topics. Learn more about your local flora and fauna. Saturday walks take you around the lake trail, while Thursday walks explore the Christmas Hill trail.

July 6, 1:30 p.m. Creepy crawlers for four year olds. Little kids, love bugs and small beasties. Simple crafts and games make this a fun event. Must pre-register at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.

July 8, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Reptile day. A snake show, reptile crafts, visiting celebrity reptiles and refreshments will be featured on this day.

July 14, 9:30 a.m. Gardening without water. Join local author Briony Penn for an exhilarating talk on gardening with less water and making your garden into a meadow.

July 23, 9:30 a.m. Herbs for health and happiness! Expert herbologist Carol McGrath's walks are fun and informative. She will help you learn about medicinal and culinary uses of local and exotic plants. Must pre-register at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.

August 5, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. A really BIG DUCK day. This is no average day of fun! This is really BIG fun. We will be making a huge duck from paper and then launch it in the lake. Big duck refreshments will be served.

August 12, 1:30 p.m. Pool parties for ages 7 and 8. Bubble making, fish prints, slug slime and slide. Bring your bathing suit and towel for water fun. Must pre-register at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.

August 19, 1:30 p.m. Pool parties for ages 5 and 6. See previous entry. Must pre-register at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.

August 26, 1:30 p.m. Bird Day for ages 9 and 10. Like to have fun learning about birds? We will hunt for swallows and sneak up on herons. We will look at nests and eggs. There will be great crafts and badges will be awarded too. Must pre-register at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.



Shooting Star. (Photo: Peggy Price)