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 Fax: call to arrange
 e-mail: rossarch@islandnet.com

Guidelines for Submissions

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 any size 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 Editors, Marilyn and Ross Archibald, at 384-3063 (before 9:00 p.m.), 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 will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included with the material.

VNHS MEMBERSHIP

For membership information and renewal, please contact Claudia Copley, 479-6622, or write to Membership Committee c/o The Victoria Natural History Society, Box 5220, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4.

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Molluscs at Work

Don't blame the snails at Canada Post for the late arrival of this issue of the *Naturalist*. The mollusc responsible for the delay is the President, who was too slow in arranging for our new editors, Marilyn and Ross Archibald, to take over the reins from outgoing editor Glen Moores. My apologies to the members for this. The good news is that your magazine will continue to improve from here on, as soon as I get out of the way and let them get at it.

— Bruce Whittington

A NOTE FROM THE NEW EDITORS

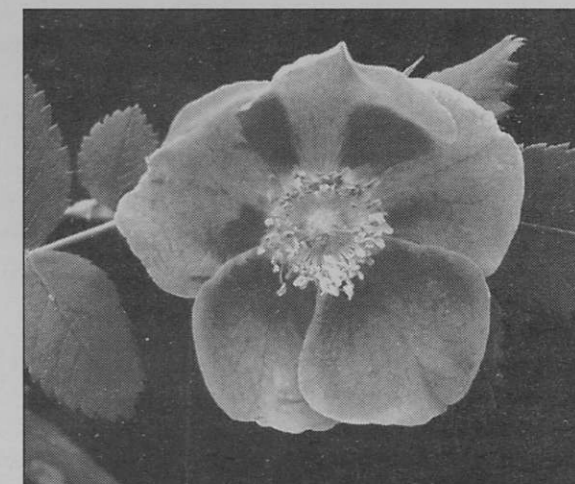
It is exciting to have become involved with a publication that has such a long history of quality. We look forward to meeting long term contributors, as well as seeking out the talented, yet shy, new writers among you.

Our goal is to plan issues far enough in advance to be able to publish theme issues. In the September-October issue we will focus on the creatures and activities of autumn. What are our avian, terrestrial, and aquatic neighbors doing during the autumn?

Please give some thought to articles you could write on the theme. Even if you have never submitted an article before, don't be shy as both of us are willing to help new writers get started.

So dust off your cameras, flex your fingers and start writing.

Marilyn and Ross



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The Mysterious Thayer's Gulls

By Yorke Edwards

By far the most numerous birds that I see from our house are in winter when Thayer's Gulls rest on the north shores of the Trial Islands. Each day there are none at first light, but at sun-up they begin to arrive, singles and loose groups straggling in through the early morning until at times there are hundreds. Well before mid morning they can number a thousand or more, and wonder if the grand total is over two thousand because many are on the hidden sides of the narrow islets and on other hidden shores. There are also days together when they number only a dozen or two.

When they are in hundreds spread across several islands they are difficult to count because my eye at the telescope soon gets lost in the crowds. It works better when count a patch of twenty-five or so, then count patches of somewhat similar size to estimate the crowds not very accurate, unfortunately, but the large assemblies do estimate well over a thousand birds.

Others often crowd into a bay facing east and mostly hidden behind Trial's north shore; and there are rare times when many loaf on islets close to the golf course and east of our windows on McMicking Point.

There is almost no coming or going through the day, but as dusk begins there is a prolonged departure of singles and loosely spaced individuals in small groups, all seeming to head south. Nearly all have been on the islets from sun up to sun down. There are mysteries there. When do they eat?

Where are they going for the night? From what I see, they loaf all day. Do they eat at night? Since see only one side of their lives it is dangerous to speculate. Perhaps they just feed elsewhere every other day and — well — the only possibilities all do seem improbable.

The Thayer's Gull and its two close relatives, the Kumlien's Gull and Iceland Gull, have troubled ornithologists for decades. In the same order, those three gulls, in summer, nest west to east across Canada's many Arctic islands from Banks Island to Baffin Island, and then farther east to Greenland's west coast. No Iceland Gulls nest on Iceland. Thayer's Gulls, the western ones, have a darker plumage than relatives to the east. They have black wing tips. The eastern Iceland Gulls have wings all white. Between the two Kumlien's Gulls have only small areas of black on their wings' ends

As biologists from Canada's national museum found in 1975 and 1976, Thayer's Gulls in summer are on the western Arctic Islands, Iceland Gulls are on southern half of Greenland's west coast, and the two overlap on Canada's eastern Arctic Islands producing Kumlien's Gulls, which have variable mixes of the appearance from the other two

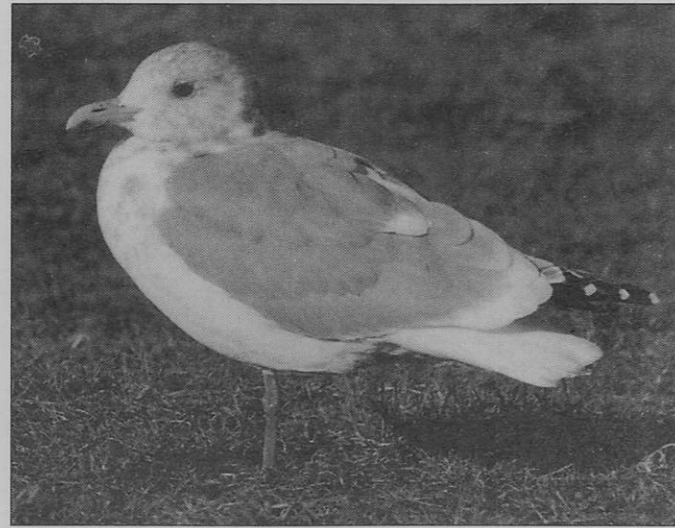


Photo: Marie O'Shaughnessy

(see *The Birds of Canada* by W. Earl Godfrey, National Museum of Canada, 1986).

Across the geographic spread of an animal species that is changing "across the map" is called a "cline". Across a cline, a species is becoming different in appearance across its range as are also its genes. As a nearby example, our numerous Glaucous-winged Gulls that stay around Victoria are in an old cline. Up the coast into Alaska the gulls are pale and down the coast through Oregon they are darker and called Western Gulls. Clines like that are species in the making.

Currently, the Glaucous-winged Gull and the Western Gull are regarded as separate species because there is not now much interbreeding.

All of the three kinds of Arctic gulls nesting across the Arctic Islands are now called Iceland Gulls (*Larus glaucooides*). They are an example of a species containing three subspecies that are only part way to becoming recognized as two or three different species. They still interbreed in large numbers, therefore all three kinds are still Iceland Gulls. They look different, however, so they are called three subspecies. The result is that the three subspecies are Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides glaucooides*), "Kumlien's" Gull (*Larus glaucooides kumlieni*), and "Thayer's" Gull (*Larus glaucooides thayeri*). Ponderous as it may be, those many gulls on the Trial Islands in winter are Iceland Gulls, subspecies Thayer's Gulls. But if you want to be brief and correct about them, just name them Iceland Gulls.

For a long time I have wondered who was Thayer, and who was the man named Brooks who proposed that the Thayer's Gull was a species. The proposal was accepted in 1915. In my long and unsuccessful hunt for "who was Thayer", I was thorough — except for missing the most thorough historic information about our North American

birds. My answer was found in "Bent", a series of books holding large amounts of good, but not recent, information.

Arthur Cleveland Bent began in 1919 to write about all bird species in North America. He died with only the finches and sparrows undone. From 1919 to 1985 he wrote sixteen volumes for the United States' national museum) the Smithsonian Institute. Bent's second volume published in 1921 has the early history of Thayer's Gulls.

Late in the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth many gentlemen collected birds' eggs, often buying rare ones for large prices. Col. John E. Thayer had in his collection eggs from two nests of gulls on Ellesmere Island, the northernmost land of Canada. A few migrant adult specimens of that gull had also found their way into museum collections. It was then a mystery gull considered, erroneously, to be a near

relative of the Herring Gull.

Eggs in Thayer's collection were the first objects to lead the way to this new kind of gull, and a few adult specimens of the gull in museum collections were also studied. Then, an American ornithologist, W. Sprague Brooks, published in the Harvard College Bulletin the discovery of a new species of gull. He named the bird *Larus thayeri* Brooks.

In Biology the proposed Latin name for a proposed new species has the author's name attached to the species' name. Thereafter, colleagues may or may not accept it as a species.

Mr. Thayer's Gull, named by Brooks, is now accepted not as a species but as a subspecies. Thayer and Brooks both "live on" in the gull's name. The formal scientific name of Thayer's Gull proposed by Godfrey is now: *Larus glaucooides thayeri* Brooks.

The Lodgers

By Geoff Barnard

Our house in North Bay, Ontario, was blessed by nesting robins year after year. The birds preferred the south side, and used the hydro meter, the downspout, and various spots in the thick Virginia Creeper. At breakfast one morning, I glanced out, and a pair were busy on the window ledge.


Next morning, just twenty-four hours later, the nest was complete, and the birds had lined it with mud, one squatting down and rotating itself to make a smooth bowl. Within minutes an egg appeared. Two more arrived on consecutive days, and the female began incubating them. I had some concerns at this point, as the ledge was fully exposed to the sun, which gets extremely hot on a south wall in early summer, but the birds knew better. By the end of the week the nest was concealed by the burgeoning growth of the creeper. We, of course, had an inside view, and put a bit of cardboard up to screen our movements.

The eggs hatched consecutively, a day apart, and uglier creatures you never saw. The birds were covered in pinkish-grey skin and had flattened heads, with bulging closed eyes, and an enormous bill. They grew a covering of down, and quickly became very cute, gaping to be fed as soon as anything appeared above them. They were a great hit with the neighbourhood children, for you could reach out of the window, they would all pop up agape, and you could stroke them with a finger.

Sanitation was solved in ingenious fashion. The young would disgorge a white sack, an adult would take it and fly off, ensuring that there would be no telltale white splotches near the nest. One report says that the birds drop these sacks in water when possible, which does much to explain the apparent targeting of suburban swimming pools.

Two weeks passed, the young fledged, and were standing flapping their wings. One went over the edge, and we retrieved it. The next day Jean reached out to pet them, and two bailed out. Apparently a sense of self-preservation develops, and a shadow overhead becomes a threat.

Both parents reacted to the bail-out, and went down to the ground. One fledgling was led into the bush past the driveway, and the other lured into the backyard, perhaps to separate them against predation. Is it possible that the birds can react to a problem to that extent, or was it just an accident? The third fledgling departed unnoticed, and we were left with pleasant memories of our temporary lodgers.



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Black Bears and Salmon

By Carolyn MacDonald

An amazing picture emerged while listening to Dr. Tom Reimchen's presentation on "Black Bear and Salmon Interactions in Coastal Forests". Imagine each bear taking an average of 700 salmon during the course of a salmon run. And what do they do with them? They take them into the forest, usually eating only the brain first, followed by the muscles. The half-eaten salmon carcasses abandoned in incredible numbers contribute immense amounts of food not only for other animals, birds and insects, but also, amazingly, for the trees.

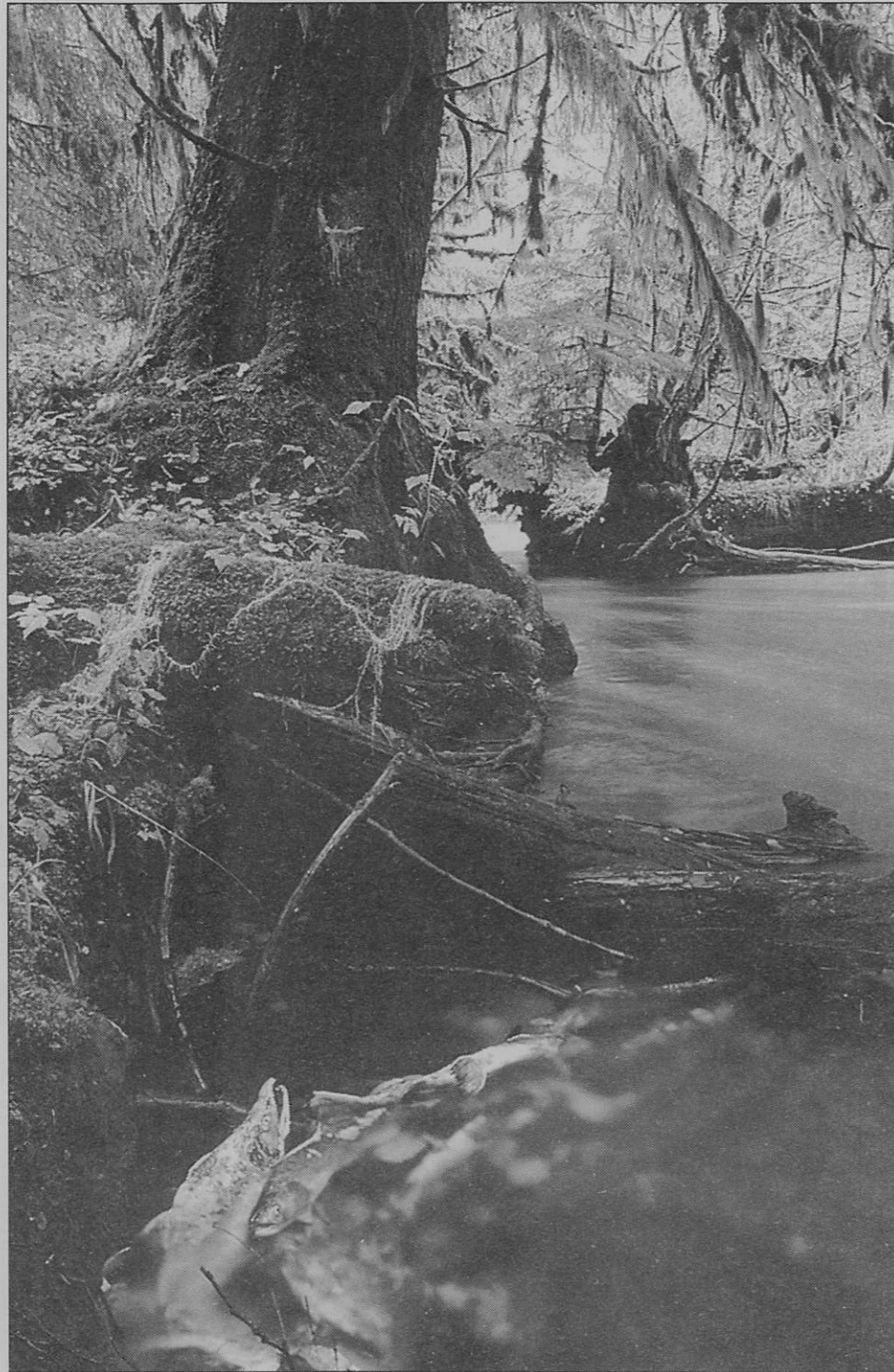
Dr. Reimchen's research has proven that trees growing in the riparian areas of salmon spawning streams have 4x higher growth rates than in other areas, and this thanks to the added nitrogen nutrient coming directly from the salmon brought in by the bears!

His large assortment of tables and graphs were surprisingly clear to even the novice naturalist, showing the incredible relationship between bear, salmon and ecosystems of BC. The ramifications for provincial ecosystems are endless when considering the web of these interconnections. I'm sure there wasn't one person at Dr. Reimchen's presentation who wasn't awestruck by the crucial link that salmon and bears provide in supporting the fragile biodiversity of coastal BC ecosystems.

One more thought to ponder...

Black Bear deaths in BC for 1999

Legal hunt	6,000
Poaching	4,000
Conservation Officers	1,600



Spawmed salmon at Green Inlet, Central Coast. Photo: Ivan Hunter

Rocky Point Bird Observatory

By Bev Glover

Many of you know that there has been a pilot project designed to survey the migration of birds moving through Rocky Point near East Sooke Park. After five years, it was believed that the migration of birds was significant enough for us to apply to become an official bird observatory and continue this important work. The Victoria Natural History Society has endorsed the decision to try to get observatory status. With further support from the Canadian Wildlife Service and Bird Studies Canada, we have just received society status and have now joined a network of observatories across Canada that includes Delta Marsh in Manitoba and the migratory bird leader, Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario.

Our next step is to begin gathering members and/or volunteers who wish to help make the Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO) a success. Though not official yet, memberships will likely be about \$25.00 and will help to generate some of the operational funds. As is true of any society, it will take volunteers to help run the migration monitoring program. We will be gathering names of those interested in helping out (see Bulletin Board). There are many ways you can help.

We will need people to help in the actual bird banding work. If you have experience with bird banding and extraction of birds from mist nets, here is an opportunity to continue to get more experience. If you are interested in learning to do this, we will need to begin training sessions. This volunteer work requires the greatest level of commitment.

We need volunteers to do a one hour census which follows a marked route through the official study site. This needs to be done daily through the entire season. We are particularly looking for people willing to do a particular day on a weekly or biweekly basis.

If you feel your birding or banding skills may not be good enough to lead the census or handle birds you can begin assisting by being a recorder and learn along the way.

We could use some handy assistant(s) to help take care of the site. Rocky Point is a restricted area on Department of National Defense Land as well as an ecologically sensitive area. The site is quite primitive and the bander-in-charge will live on the site. We must meet rules for access, conduct, wastewater management and fire safety. Care taking duties

can include bringing needed water and supplies, fixing equipment, taking away refuse and waste water, cutting grass along net lanes, mending nets and other odd jobs.

There are other jobs that are more organizational but still vitally important which do not require going out to the study site. These include promotions, managing membership, helping with volunteer time-tabling, helping with training sessions, writing articles, fundraising and more.

If you are interested contact us to leave your name and we will let you know about one of the information evenings where you can learn more about being a member and/or volunteer before committing.



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President's Report

By Bruce Whittington

When the VNHS was founded, in 1944, the appreciation and study of natural history was a relatively simple business. Naturalists were not burdened with the prospects of global climate change, unsustainable resource extraction, and burgeoning human populations. There was a comfortable security in the natural order, and yet there was, too, still the flush of discovery of new species, and new understandings of the workings of the natural world.

Today, no one can deny that things have changed. In the Society's lifetime, we have come face to face with declining bird populations, environmental degradation, rampant habitat loss, and yes, extinctions at an unprecedented rate.

Does this mean that the Society's mandate has changed? I don't think it has; but I do think that there is a new urgency to accomplish some of our stated objectives. Simply put, those objectives are education, research, and conservation.

So how are we doing? One of the keystones of our Society has been its magazine, *The Victoria Naturalist*. It continues to set an example which other, larger organizations envy. As Glen Moores steps down after two years as editor, we can thank him for continuing the tradition. And I welcome incoming editors Ross and Marilyn Archibald.

Our program of field trips and evening natural history presentations continues to educate and entertain our members, and I thank Darren Copley and Rick Schortinghuis for handling this job so well.

We can be proud as a Society of the work being done in conservation. Tony Embleton has spearheaded a very active Greenspaces Inventory Committee. His group is not only documenting the natural resources of sensitive ecosystems in our area, but also working hard to put the information in the hands of those who are responsible for decisions regarding the management of those lands.

VNHS members have shown strong support for our affiliated land trust, the Habitat Acquisition Trust. By working with HAT, we can continue to accomplish more in the increasingly important field of habitat protection.

As a Society, we have continued our long association with the Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary. In this way, we can help provide education in natural history to thousands of children. The VNHS support of the Goldstream Art Show, which this year enjoyed record attendance, helps programming in the park, and also helps HAT with its work. We donated \$1000 to the upgrading of the boardwalk in Francis/King Regional Park, to improve disabled access there. And we are in the early stages of cooperating with the

Esquimalt Lagoon Enhancement Association on habitat protection and education there.

We have also honoured individual Society members for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of the Society, with our Distinguished Service Award. Marilyn Lambert and Tom Gillespie have each contributed much in a variety of capacities. David Pearce was honoured for his service particularly in the Christmas Bird Counts, and received his award just before he passed away in November.

Are we doing enough? Success in an organization like ours is a difficult thing to measure. We have developed a five year plan, and we are now in the second year, and doing well. We have conducted a member survey, and we are in the process of putting together the results from that. Those things will tell us whether we are doing what we want as a Society. And it will give us a standard against which we can measure our success.

But we must also, I think, measure our success in terms of the natural world which brings us all together as members — is it healthy, or is it worse than the way we found it, or at risk of irreversible change? And what of the next generation? Does it share our values? Does it have the tools it needs to pick up where we have left off, or could we be doing more to prepare those people for the increasingly onerous task of keeping this planet grinding along? And how about the simple pleasure in a springtime camas meadow? Are we sharing that wonder with new naturalists in our community?

Over the past year, I've been very proud of the way the Board has continued the traditions of the VNHS, and its vision for the future, too. I want to thank each director for the time and effort they have given the Society. We will all miss those directors who are stepping down — John Olafson, Parks and Conservation committee representative, Membership chair Catherine Fryer, Publications chair Glen Moores, and Social Committee director Steven Baker. I've enjoyed working with them all. And I welcome to the Board our four new directors, Claudia Copley, Ann Nightingale, Sheila Mosher, and Ross Archibald.

We have, as they say, crossed the threshold into a new century. As a Society, the VNHS has a wealth of resources as it faces the future — the commitment of its directors, the collective experience within its membership, and tying it all together is a deep love of the natural world. I am pleased to continue as President of the Society. I believe we're heading in the right direction, and I look forward to working with you all as we blaze a new path — a very small, environmentally friendly path — for the Society in 2000.

Distinguished Service Award Recipients

Tom Gillespie

Tom Gillespie is a long time member of VNHS, and he set about very early in taking an active role. A keen birder, he has been a frequent field trip leader. Tom accepted a position on the Board in 1991, taking over the responsibilities of the membership list from Ed Coffin.

Tom brought the membership list into the computer age, and for many years he continued to maintain and refine the system he implemented.

He stepped into the Vice-President's seat, and then followed that with two years as President of the Society. Now, as the current Past President, Tom is responsible for supervising the Distinguished Service Awards. (It was a bit of a trick getting this one past him.) He is currently also the chair of the Parks and Conservation Committee.

So you'll see Tom's name on the masthead of the *Naturalist*, but what you don't see are his behind-the-scenes contributions. As a logical extension of keeping the membership list, he produced the mailing labels for the *Naturalist* and continues to be involved in the mailing of our magazine.

Tom is also the one who slips into all the meetings ahead of everyone else, making sure the lights are on, and the slide projector is set up. Tom does it all in a quiet way, so much so that we begin to take it for granted, but without someone like Tom, the Society would not run as smoothly as it does.

Marilyn Lambert

Marilyn Lambert is an accomplished naturalist in the traditional sense, who sees the connectedness in all things. She is as comfortable leading a wildflower walk as she is hauling in a beach seine.

Marilyn has led many trips for the Society, but she has also contributed as a Director, member of the Birder's Committee, and organizer of Marine Nights. She is an active volunteer at the Rocky Point Bird Observatory, and has organized the mass of VNHS volunteers who keep the Goldstream Art Show running smoothly.

With a strong commitment to habitat protection, Marilyn was a founding Director of the VNHS Habitat Acquisition Trust. She continues to sit as a Director, and also organizes the successful and popular HAT's Off! birding tours on an annual basis.

Marilyn's abilities are complemented by a genial personality, a concern for those around her, and a ready willingness to share her love of the natural world with others.

Welcome to New Members

MARCH

Carol Anthony
Duchess Street

Students For Environmental Awareness
c/o Camosun College Student Society, Foul Bay Road
dispersing conservation information

Jeanie and Mel Hendra
Styan Road

Linda Knox
Beckton Road

Terry and Sharon Russell
Beach Drive
birding, native plants, and conservation

Ron W. Steele
Fernhill Road
outdoors, fishing, skiing, birding, sailing, boating, camping, and travel

David Leigh
Blythwood Road, Sooke

J. Howard Standing
Rosita Street, Tarzana, California
protection of Saanich Inlet

Eileen Townsend
Sooke Road

Thanks
to all the VNHS members
who supported us
for eleven years,
and especially,
to a marvellous staff.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REMINDER: most of the regular meetings of the VNHS are not held during the summer months. The Natural History Presentations are now finished but will continue again in September. REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month; **Natural History Presentations** (formally known as the General Members Meeting): the second Tuesday of each month; **Botany Night:** the third Tuesday of each month; **Parks and Conservation Committee Meeting:** the third Wednesday of each month; **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday of each month; **Marine Night:** the last Monday of each month. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Telephone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 for further information and updates.

MAY

Saturday, May 6

Marine Group Field Trip

Join **Phil Lambert** for an intertidal foray. You should wear hiking boots or rubber boots. The footing can be wet and slippery. You might expect to see sea anemones, sea cucumbers, snails, chitons, sea stars, sea urchins, sponge, fish and much more. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Esquimalt Anglers Boat ramp (aka Fleming Beach or Macauley Point) at the foot of Lampson Street in Esquimalt.

Sunday, May 7

Birding Royal Roads and Esquimalt Lagoon

Join **Ann Nightingale** for a birding walk around Esquimalt Lagoon. Possibilities include Caspian Tern, and Ruddy Turnstones. You should see a good variety of spring migrants. Meet at the bridge on Esquimalt Lagoon at 7:30 a.m. Call Ann at 652-6450 for more information. No pets please.

Saturday, May 13

Mt. Tzuhalem Wildflowers

Join **Syd** and **Emily Watts** for a walk to the Ecological Reserve on Mt. Tzuhalem to see the wonderful wildflower displays. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the gate on Chippawa Rd. To reach Chippawa Rd., turn right onto Tzuhalem Rd. in Duncan, then turn right on Maple Bay Rd. At the sign for "The Properties" turn right onto Belcarra and then left onto Chippawa. Call Syd at 250 746-5768 for more information. No pets please.

Saturday, May 13

Spring Migration at Rocky Point Bird Observatory

With an ever-growing list at 262 species, the Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO) is a wonderful place to learn more about songbird migration. Join RPBO President **David Allinson** on the spring bi-weekly bird census route in search of migrants. Last May, rarities included Tennessee Warbler, Dusky Flycatcher, and Calliope Hummingbird. As the site is located on federal DND land, access is restricted. Registration is required and participants will be limited to 12 people. Preference will be given to those that have not yet had a chance to visit the site or who have had limited experience there. You will also learn more about how you might become a volunteer for on-going activities at RPBO. Donations will be appreciated for the newly fledged RPBO society. For more details and to register, contact David at 478-0493 (*Evenings only*).

Saturday, May 13

Cowichan River

Join **Dannie Carsen** for a wonderful half-day hike to the Cowichan River footpath. We will watch for warblers and dippers during this walk from the Cowichan Fish and Game clubhouse to the Bible Camp on the Cowichan River. This walk is on a good trail but it has some ups and downs so bring your favourite hiking boots along with your lunch and something to drink. The footpath wends its way through second growth alders, firs and maples and has several enjoyable spots for observing river birds such as Green heron and Spotted sandpiper. Meet at Helmcken Road Park 'n' Ride at 7:30 a.m. or at the Allanby Road junction with Island Highway in Duncan at 8:30 a.m. We will turn left off the Island Highway at Allanby Road, cross the bridge, follow Indian Road to Glenora Road, then continue on Vaux Road to Robertson Road to park near the Fish and Game clubhouse. Please contact Dannie Carsen at 250-595-2773 or dcarsen@pacificcoast.net for more information.

Sunday, May 14

A Natural History Walk at Witty's Lagoon

Join **Andy McKinnon** (co-author of *Coastal Plants of BC*) for a walk around Witty's Lagoon. You'll find Andy to be a wealth of interesting information. Meet him at the main parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Call Andy at 478-8473 for more information. No pets please.

Sunday, May 14

Birding the New Boardwalk at Langford Lake

Meet **Gordon Hart** for a birding walk on the new trail at the North end of Langford Lake. You will also be birding the power lines behind the lake. This walk will take you to the Hull's Wetland, an area that is threatened by development. Meet at 7:30 a.m. on Goldstream Avenue and the highway across from the entrance to the boardwalk. Call Gordon at 721-1264 for more information. No pets please.

Sunday, May 14

Birding Mount Tolmie

Join young naturalists **Devon Anderson** and **Gabriel David** on this birding walk on Mount Tolmie. Mount Tolmie can be a great migrant trap this time of year and quite a few rarities have been recorded over the years. Meet at the gravel parking lot on the north side of the summit at 6:30 a.m. Phone Devon (384-9292) or Gabriel (721-5476) for more information. No pets please.

Sunday, May 21

Birding Elk Lake

Come for a wonderful stroll with **Tom Gillespie** (361-1694) through exceptional nesting habitat on the shore of a favourite recreational lake. Watch for breeding warblers, vireos, and waterfowl. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot on Jennings Lane on the west side of the Pat Bay Highway (just south of the rowing boat-house). No pets please.

Saturday, May 27

Birding Mount Newton

Join **Sheila Mosher** and **Cheryl Mackie** for a birding walk on Mount Newton's south slope. We should see Black-throated Gray Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Western Tanager as well as many other migrant and resident birds. Mount Newton is also one

of the few remaining places you can see Mourning Dove near Victoria. Meet in front of the old Saanich Fairgrounds on East Saanich Rd. (opposite the Moose Hall) at 7:00 a.m. Phone Sheila at 652-3502 if you have any questions. No pets please.

Sunday, May 28

The Sights and Sounds of Observatory Hill

Join **Hank Vanderpol** on his annual birding by ear trip. Most of the breeding species should be back. This is a gentle climb on pavement up to the observatory and we'll be birding our way through a variety of habitats. Warblers, vireos, finches, flycatchers, wrens, and many others will be present. On the top you have a good chance of observing raptors. Meet Hank at 6:00 a.m. at the bottom of Observatory Hill. Bring something to eat and drink. Call Hank at 920-9936 for more information. No pets please.

BULLETIN BOARD

Volunteers and members needed

Members and/or volunteers are needed for the fall migratory season for the Rocky Point Bird Observatory from about mid July to Mid October 2000. Choice of jobs can range from organizational help, bird census to getting trained for bird handling at the banding area. For more information, please come to one of the information

nights that will be arranged. If you have signed the volunteer form already you will be notified of the information nights. Contact the site manager **Bev Glover** (721-1476, glov203-uvvm.uvic.ca) or RPBO president **David Allinson** (478-0493, goshawk-pacificcoast.net) if the site manager can not be reached.

Errata

The article entitled *1999 Christmas Bird Count* in the March/April issue, vol 56.5, has some errors. When I keyed this data into the Excel spreadsheet, 34 Black-bellied plovers migrated up a line and turned into Sandhill Cranes! Luckily, Rick Schortinghuis pointed out the fact we did not see any Sandhill Cranes on the count. Please see the table below to correct your CBC 1999 numbers:

Count Areas	Esquimalt Lagoon / Mill Hill	Victoria Count
Species (*) = field notes	Area 7	Total #
Sandhill crane (New)		
Black-bellied plover	34	34
Killdeer	2	83
Black oystercatcher	4	46
Species Totals	83	138

For the Esquimalt Lagoon/Mill Hill count area, the number of Sandhill crane seen was actually 0 (was 34), the number of Black-bellied plover seen was actually 34 (was 2), the number of Killdeer seen was actually 2 (was 4), and the number of Black oystercatcher was actually 4 (was 0).

Fixing this error resulted in a count total of 138 species (was 139). Since I did not have David Pearce's program operational when I submitted the CBC report, I also reported in error that Heermann's gull and Western tanager were first time records.

I apologise to everyone for these mistakes. I will be happy to provide updates in Excel to those who rely on the data.

Dannie Carsen



The Victoria NATURALIST

P.O. Box 5220, Stn. B.,
Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4

Expiry: Dec-2000

Philip & Marilyn Lambert
1868 Penshurst Road
VICTORIA BC V8N 2P3