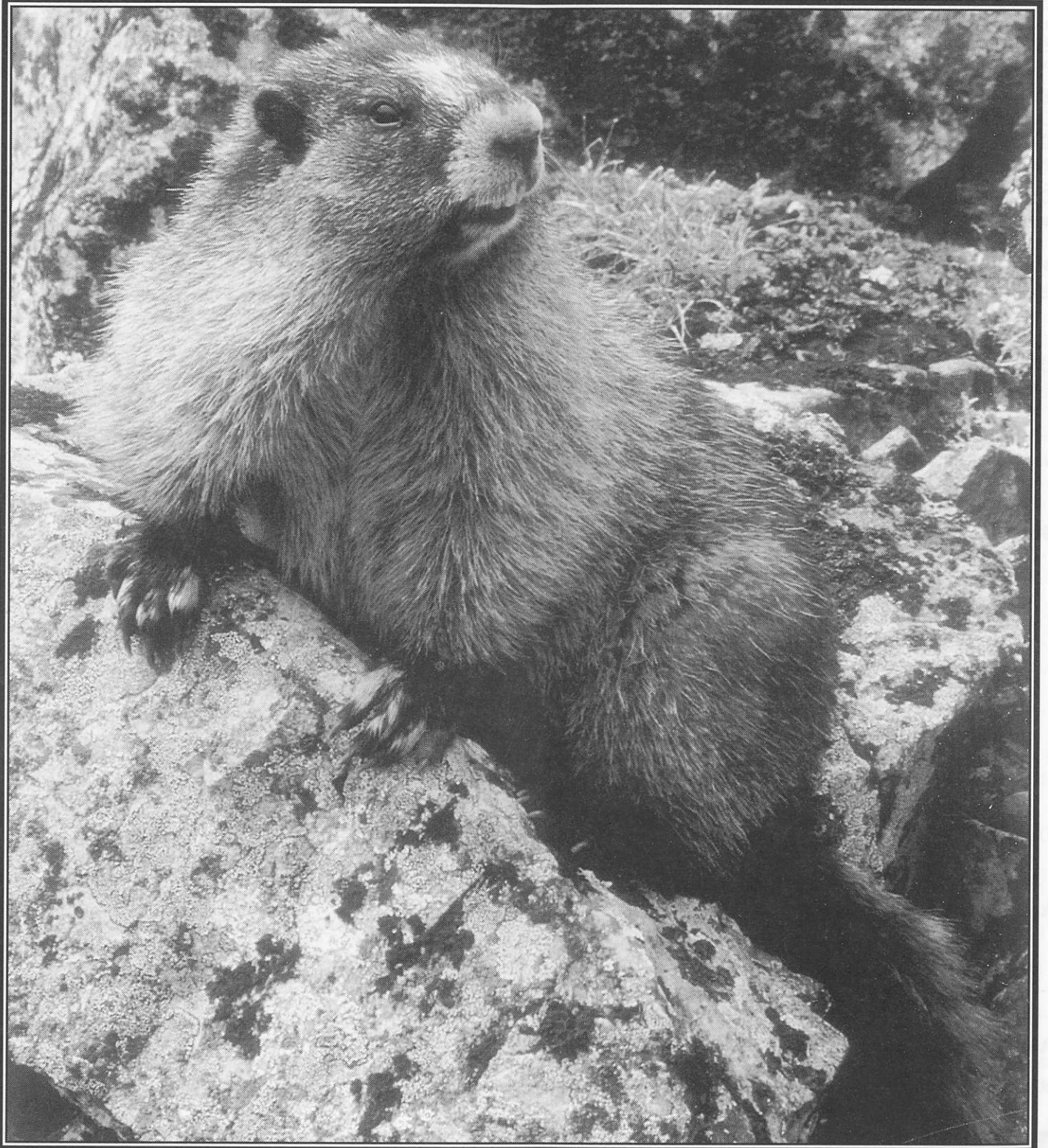




The Victoria NATURALIST

SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
2001
VOL 58.2

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY





Published six times a year by the
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
 P.O. Box 5220, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N4
 Contents © 2001 as credited.
 ISSN 0049-612X Printed in Canada
 The *Victoria Naturalist* acknowledges the financial support of the
 Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program
 towards our mailing costs.
 Publication Mail Commercial Sales Agreement Number 1273108
 Publications Mail Registration No. 09841

Editor: Marilyn and Ross Archibald, 384-3063
Desktop Publishing: Frances Hunter, 479-1956
Distribution: Tom Gillespie, Phyllis Henderson
Printing: Fotoprint, 382-8218

Opinions expressed by contributors to *The Victoria Naturalist*
 are not necessarily those of the Society.

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Honorary Life Members

Miss E.K. Lemon, Mrs. L.E. Chambers, Mrs. Peggy Goodwill,
 Mr. Vic Goodwill, Mr. David Stirling

Officers: 1999-2000

PRESIDENT: Bruce Whittington, 477-8611, fieldnat@pacificcoast.net
VICE-PRESIDENT: open
PAST-PRESIDENT: Tom Gillespie, 361-1694
 thomasw._gillespie@telus.net
SECRETARY: Maureen Funk, 477-6957, mfunk@islandnet.com
TREASURER: Gordon Hart, 721-1264, gordh19@telus.net

Directors and Committees

Claudia Copley, 479-6622, dccopley@island.net (*Membership*)
 Robert Chappell, 388-4696, rwchappell@home.com
 (*F.B.C.N. Representative*)
 Sheila Mosher, 652-3502 (*Parks and Conservation*)
 Darren Copley, 479-6622, dccopley@island.net and
 Rick Schortinghuis, 642-3596 (*Events, Trips and Programs*)
 Marie O'Shaughnessy, 598-9680, moshough@pacificcoast.net
 (*Publicity*)
 Ross Archibald, 384-3063, rossarch@islandnet.com (*Publications*)
 Ann Nightingale, 652-6450, motmot@home.com (*Social Comm.*)
 Tom Gillespie, 361-1694, thomasw._gillespie@telus.net
 (*Scholarships, Awards*)

Other Functions

Birder's Night: Bryan Gates, 598-7789
 Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary: Dannie Carsen, 595-2773

Annual Dues, Victoria Natural History Society

Includes *The Victoria Naturalist* and *B.C. Naturalist*
 Regular \$30.00 Golden Age \$25.00
 Family \$35.00 Junior Subscriber \$20.00
 (Any donation in excess of the above fees is income tax deductible)

Annual Subscription Rate, Victoria Naturalist \$20.00

RARE BIRD ALERT: 592-3381 **VNHS EVENTS TAPE:** 479-2054

SUBMISSIONS

Deadline for next issue: October 1, 2001

Send to: Marilyn and Ross Archibald, Editors
 208 Linden Avenue, Victoria, BC V8V 4E4
 Phone: 250-384-3063 (no calls after 9:00 p.m. please)
 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 docu-
 mentation of location, species names and a date. Please label your sub-
 mission with your name, address, and phone number and provide a title.
 We will accept and use copy in almost any legible form but we encour-
 age 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.

ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

We do our best to ensure your ad is produced accurately. Should we
 make an error, please contact us and a correction can be printed in the
 next issue. A charge is levied for typesetting. Minor alterations to exist-
 ing ads cost \$10.00. Add \$15 per photo for PMT. Advertising fees are
 due and payable when copy is submitted. Please submit a cheque pay-
 able to The Victoria Naturalist.

Ad Size	Price	Dimensions (in inches)
Back page	\$120	7.5" width x 8" height
Full page, inside	\$100	7.5 width x 9.5" height
1/2 page, horizontal	\$80	7.5" width x 4.75" height
1/2 page, vertical	\$80	3.5" width x 9.5" height
1/3 page horizontal	\$50	7.5" width x 3.25" height
1/3 page, vertical	\$50	3.5" width x 6.5" height
1/4 page, horizontal	\$40	7.5" width x 2.25" height
1/4 page, vertical	\$40	3.5" width x 4.75" height
1/8 page, horizontal	\$25	3.5" width x 2.25" height

Rates as of February, 1994. May be subject to change.

Submit advertising to:

The Victoria Naturalist, P.O. Box 5220,
 Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8R 6N4
 or phone Marilyn or Ross Archibald at 250-384-3063

Thank you for your patronage.

Contents

New Real Estate at Goldstream Provincial Park <i>By Kate Leslie and Erica Janes</i>	4
Whistling Sentinel of the Alpine Meadows <i>By Marie O'Shaughnessy</i>	6
Native Plant Gardening for the Water Wise Gardener <i>By Patricia Johnston</i>	7
Gorse <i>By Yorke Edwards</i>	9
Tribune Bay on Hornby Island — a Boating Health Issue <i>By Bev Bullen</i>	10
The Nature of Island Artists Show	11
Another Arizona Adventure <i>By Rob Gowan</i>	12
Report on the Spring Bird Count	13
2001 Spring Bird Count.....	14
HAT Tricks	20
Welcome to New Members	20
President's Report.....	21
Calendar of Events.....	22
Bulletin Board.....	23

COVER PHOTO

Hoary Marmot by Marie O'Shaughnessy

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Who is responsible? In his 1995 Massey Lectures,
 published under the title *Unconscious Civilization*, John
 Ralston Saul suggested that as a society we have become
 the title of the book — an unconscious civilization.

We blindly live our lives, accepting as inevitable
 all that happens to us, and around us, rather than risking
 censure, or stepping out of our comfort zones to take on
 new challenges or new responsibilities. What keeps us
 in our shells? What is wrong with curved walls in our
 houses; even if contractors dislike them? What prevents
 us from doing what we know is right?

Over the past year adventurous V.N.H.S. members
 have stepped out of their shells to write *Naturalist*
 articles for the first time. In this issue we learn about an
 adventurous beaver (or beavers) that has ventured into
 new territory to create a new home. We are told about an
 adventurous group providing habitat in more pleasing,
 natural landscaping, defying the convention of neat green
 lawns that provide economic benefit for some at the
 expense of the rest of the biosphere. Another adventurous
 group is tackling a serious problem that governments
 have been slow to address.

A common thread here is an awareness that
 something needed to change. Change does not come
 about by accepting all that happens as inevitable; it
 comes when we stop classifying activities as the sphere
 of certain groups, and when individuals step beyond their
 conventional patterns, challenge accepted ways of doing
 things, and become involved.

Each one of us is individually responsible for the
 society of which we are members. We should not need
 to have the title of leader to take the initiative. By doing,
 by being active, we become the leaders in our society —
 a changing, evolving society.

Marilyn and Ross

New Real Estate at Goldstream Provincial Park

By Kate Leslie and Erica Janes

There is new real estate at Goldstream this year! If you have been down to the Freeman King Visitor Centre at Goldstream Provincial Park lately, you will have noticed that the Visitor Center staff is quite excited about the activity of a relatively new arrival to our region. Since June 24th, a beaver (or maybe two, or three?) has been expanding its dam within full view of the Riverside Trail. It is the first time in many years that a beaver has been active in the park.

Beavers were extirpated from the Victoria area many years ago, but continued to thrive further north, in the Cowichan area. This was a common theme throughout Canada. At the time of European contact, there were an estimated 60 million beavers in Canada. They were nearly extinct by the turn of the century, when they became protected. Our resident may have swum down Finlayson Arm to Goldstream, or may have come down from the Sooke Hills Wilderness Area.

Carol Berryman (Goldstream's resident mentor and 'retired' park interpreter) first noticed beaver activity in the park during the fall of 1999. At that time, she saw branches that had been chewed by beaver in the swampy area near the river. In the fall of 2000, Saanich Tribal Fisheries discovered the beaver had dammed a back channel of the river, and they had to make a small break in the dam to allow returning coho salmon to travel up the stream.

It was not until this summer though, that the beaver started construction in an area visible to park visitors. In just three weeks, the beaver built a large, sturdy section of dam

across the river that considerably raised the water level between the picnic area and an area known to park interpreters as the 'dissection bar' (where salmon dissections take place in the fall).

The beaver is thought to live in a lodge that is located in the 'quiet zone', the area within the park that is zoned for wildlife use only. This lodge, though land-bound, appears to be connected to the river through a series of excavated canals and underground passages. We do not know if there is one beaver, or two, or possibly more, nor whether the beaver is male or female. In fact, due to the beaver's mainly nocturnal nature, no one has seen the elusive creature to date...only its tail has been heard slapping the water, warning of intruders.

But what about the salmon?

Many Goldstream visitors wonder about how the dam will affect returning salmon in the fall. If water levels are high enough and we get some heavy autumn rainfall, part of the dam may be washed away, allowing free passage for the salmon. Barring that scenario, the dam in its present state may provide sufficient space for salmon to pass through: although the stream is backed up, the dam does not fully bridge the river. Staff at the Goldstream Hatchery will assess the situation in the fall, and they may decide to make a small break in the dam to allow the salmon passage.

In the meantime, the dam is a welcome addition to our drought-reduced stream. By raising the water levels in the



Left: A big leaf maple tree that the beaver is in the process of felling on the lower Goldstream River. Right: Beaver canal excavated underwater between two big leaf maple trees and roots. Photos: Doug Andrew

...The dam is a welcome addition to our drought-reduced stream. By raising the water levels in the river, the beaver has alleviated much of the stress that coho and chinook fry would have had to endure in warm, shallow summer waters.

river, the beaver has alleviated much of the stress that coho and chinook fry would have had to endure in warm, shallow summer waters.

Beavers play a pivotal role in storing water during dry periods, such as the one we are experiencing now in the Victoria area. In fact, researchers in Oregon have estimated that in late summer and fall, up to 25 percent of the water held in small coastal streams may be held in beaver pools (Bergstrom 1985). Given that even a few inches of stored water means that more fish survive, our Goldstream resident is doing the fry a big favour!

The beaver is helping the coho and chinook in other ways too. By eating about 2,500 pounds of leaves and small branches a year, and defecating in pools, beavers bring a great deal of organic matter into streams and play an important role in nutrient cycling (Bergstrom, 1985). Because of beaver feces, the water in the beaver pools and immediately below dams contains more nitrogen and phosphorous than water from elsewhere in the stream. The calmer and more nutrient-rich waters provide ideal conditions for insects, and in turn for coho and chinook fry.

One study on the west coast found that the rich food



More beaver handiwork. Photo: Doug Andrew

base of beaver ponds resulted in a 300% weight gain for fish over-wintering there, compared to the fish in main river channels (Sedell in Bergstrom, 1985). Perhaps this summer will yield some record coho and chinook fry at Goldstream!

In addition to their role in nutrient cycling, beavers are important agents of natural succession. When they move into a new territory, trees are felled in order to build dams, which results in pools being formed along a stream's course. Goldstream's beaver is presently in the process of felling at least six different trees, and there are already noticeable changes in not only the water level, but in the plant communities present. The flooding allows more water-tolerant plants to grow near the stream, and gradually the ecosystem will take on a new look. Once the beaver leaves the area, the dam may break, draining the wetland and leaving a meadow behind to be colonized slowly by new plant communities.

One can only imagine what kind of effect Canada's 60 million beavers had on the landscape before European contact. Not to mention the changes induced by the Pleistocene Beaver, a 500 lb. giant that lived throughout North America until about 10,000 years ago.

Meanwhile, back at the Visitor Center, we have been busy with our name-the-beaver contest. Over 300 entries were received during the month or so that the contest was run, mainly from visiting children. At the time of writing, the contest was ending and the selection committee was starting to make its decisions.

Come visit us to learn more beaver facts, see our beaver display and discover the name chosen for Goldstream's beaver. Look out for the dam along the Riverside Trail as you make your way down. During September, we are open from 9:00 until 4:30 daily. Please call before you come down, however, as the Visitor Center will likely be closed for set up of our annual art show, The Nature of Island Artists.

Reference

Bergstrom, Dorothy. Beavers: biologists "rediscover" a natural resource. In: Forestry Research West. October 1985. USDA Forest Service.

Whistling Sentinel of the Alpine Meadows

By Marie O'Shaughnessy

The Hoary Marmot, *Marmota Caligata*, is a member of the Rodent family and is generally found at the timberline and in alpine meadows. The endangered Vancouver Island Marmot is a relative of the woodchuck, which is a distant cousin to the Hoary Marmot. Our *Marmota Vancouverensis* is the only species of mammal unique to Vancouver Island.

The Oxford dictionary states that 'Hoary' implies having such hair that is white or grey with age. Indeed, the ample winter fur coat of the Hoary Marmot is peppered with grey, white and brown, which afford great camouflage when sitting among the boulders of its rock pile home. The white hairs of the muzzle, forehead and mantle give the Hoary Marmot an aged appearance.

Colonial creatures, marmots live amid the rocks and boulders of alpine meadows, where they hibernate for 7-8 months of the year. Beneath the snow pack they lay in deep dens where their body temperature drops dramatically and their body systems virtually close down.

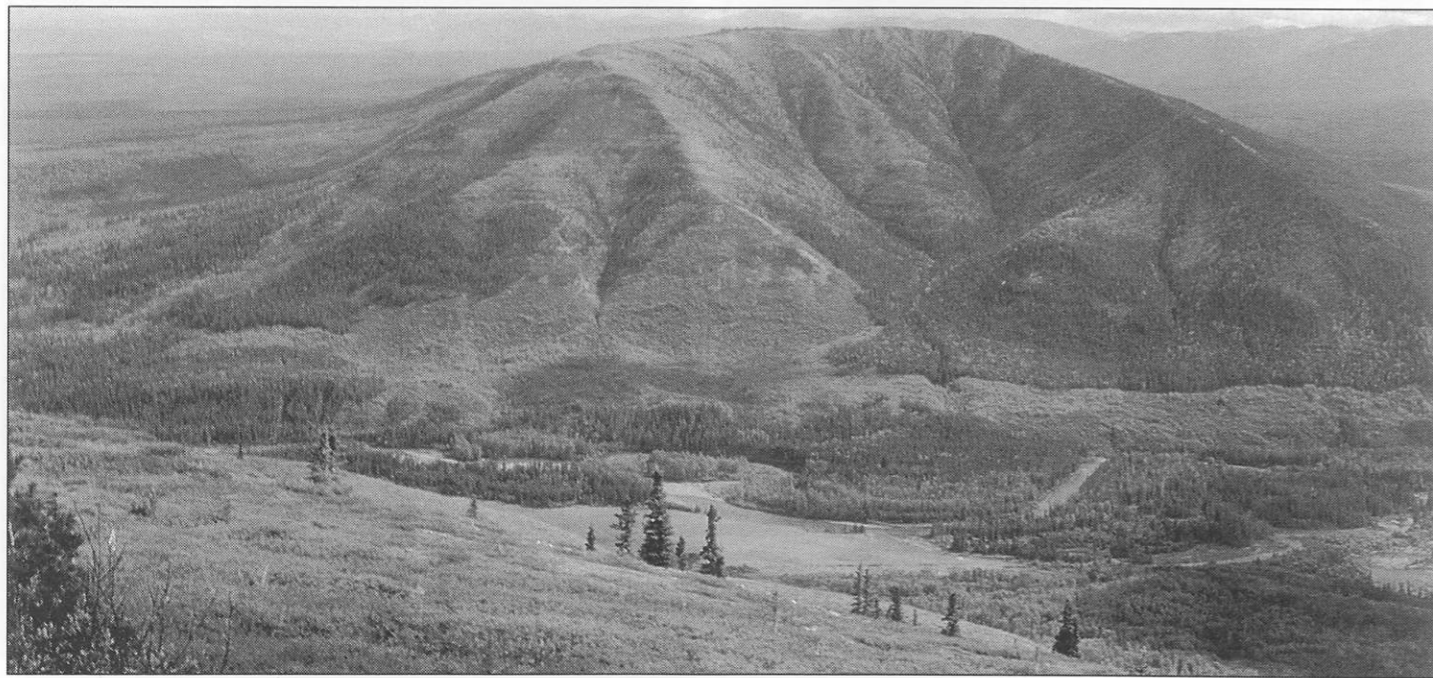
In late spring as the meadow grasses sprout, these bucolic creatures emerge from their dens to start the cycle of life once again. A litter of four or five young are usually seen as the days lengthen into summer. Feeding on grasses, flowers, berries, roots, mosses and even eggs of ground nesting birds during the summer, these playful creatures can be seen either



frolicking, tail flicking, wrestling within the meadows or just sunning themselves upon their favourite boulder.

Usually one marmot takes the position of sentinel and perches high upon a lookout rock. When danger threatens, a shrill whistle can be heard from the sentinel over some distance. The whole colony suddenly disappears underground. Marmots are subjected to predation during the summer months as coyotes, wolverines, cougar and golden eagles patrol the alpine meadows for an easy meal.

The inquisitive Hoary Marmot whose photograph accompanies this article was seen high in the Alpine on Pink Mountain, near Fort Nelson. I was one of 30 participants on the extension trip in 2001 with the B.C. Field Ornithologists. We had all attended the AGM at Dawson Creek and were heading north to look for Ptarmigan. Clambering over the rocky mountain terrain, I encountered the marmot and was tolerated as I made an approach to its den. This little creature did indeed 'fill the frame'. Its delightful poses and quizzical expression gave me an even greater insight into the world of the Whistling Sentinel' of the Alpine Meadows.



Dynamic scenery, Fort Nelson. Photos: Marie O'Shaughnessy

Native Plant Gardening for the Water Wise Gardener

By Patricia Johnston

I hate to say this, but "Hurrah" for the drought! No, I don't like the earth being this dry and I hope it rains long and hard this fall to fill our reservoir. The drought, however, has done some good. It has changed our attitude, not only about how we use water, but how we garden.

How many of you have noticed a huge decrease in the amount of time spent cutting the lawn, moving sprinklers around the yard and fertilizing the lawn? Restrictions of outdoor water usage has meant considerably less work attending to the lawn. A lawn is a lot of work. For many, surrounding our homes with large expanses of green sod has become a habit. The labour required to keep this often-unused-piece-of-land looking green, weedless, and shortly cropped is endless.

Why not decrease, or eliminate, your lawn? If you want to keep the area green, replace your lawn with evergreen ground covers, such as the native plants, Kinnickinick, Oxalis, and Wild Strawberry or replace your lawn with clumps of drought-resistant native shrubs planted in areas where you want some shade. Try Indian Plum, Oceanspray, Mock Orange (all smashing specimen shrubs) and tall Oregon Grape or create beds of drought-resistant native perennials and bulbs, such as Camas, Satin Flower, Shooting Star, Nodding Onion, Yarrow and Goldenrod. You could also fill what *used-to-be-lawn* with interesting paving stones to create an outdoor seating area. Try something new. Take a look at your lawn and imagine what you can put in its place.

Decreasing or eliminating your lawn can be done in various ways. In my garden, we laid 2 to 4 inches of newspaper, at least a foot of oak leaves, then planted through it. This method kills the grass and weeds almost completely, and supplies the soil with a mulch. Other methods include digging out the sod, or spreading black plastic over the area to kill what is underneath. Stevie Daniel's book, *The Wild Lawn Handbook — Alternatives to the Traditional Front Lawn* is an excellent source of information for making changes to your lawn.

On one hand, the drought has made less work in the garden, on the other, it has increased it. The amount of time and energy consumed by hand watering has had a huge impact on gardeners. I know I don't want to be spending my precious time standing in the garden (in the *early* morning, at that!) hand watering my water-hungry plants to keep them alive. For this reason, as well as the important need to conserve water, start gardening with native plants. Native plants are naturally drought-resistant. They are adapted to our climate. Although native plants require water to become established in our gardens; once settled in, they grow well without water. A thicket planted three summers ago, to act as



Fringecup. Photos: Patricia Johnston

a hedgerow between our house and the next, received little watering after its first year. Lack of watering has not restricted its growth or health. Despite this year's drought, in mid-August, the native shrubs in the thicket — Nootka rose, Oceanspray, Snowberry, Saskatoon and tall Oregon Grape, to name a few — are looking good.

Native plants of our region are beneficial in our yards. Not only do they reduce the need for massive amounts of water to keep them alive, they are chemical-free. Native plants are adapted to the pests that might infest them. I have grown native plants in my garden for five years, never using pesticides. Other than the odd plant with aphids, I have had no problem with insects.

Unlike plants imported from other countries and regions (exotics, I call them), native plants do not require fertilizers to keep them growing and looking healthy. Laying down a mixture of compost and leaf mulch annually on your garden beds will provide excellent food for native plants. Add a bit of manure to this and you will create an award winning garden. To see an example of this, take a walk along Gonzales Bay beach and have a look at Pat and Neil Bowles eight-month old native plant garden. (Their home is the new house built in the middle of the Bay.) Their native shrubs and perennials, fed with leaf mulch and manure look like I have never seen them in the wild!

Cultivating native gardens brings 'nature' into our neighbourhoods and creates greenways for everyone to enjoy. My native garden introduces into the sterile urban landscape some of the natural plant life that once was here. Growing these heritage plants has given me a strong sense of my place in the environment. I have come to value and love our natural habitat, motivating me to help protect what is left and restore others. An exciting outcome of my native garden is the Garry oak acorns that have sprouted. With no lawn mowers cutting them, fingers weeding them and water killing them, the acorns have regenerated successfully. We have over 100 baby Garry oaks on the property! Allowing for the

regeneration of the Gary oaks is mandatory if we are to have trees to replace the majestic old ones.

Native plants also attract wildlife. Birds are drawn to native shrubs like Red Flowering Current, Salmonberry, Elderberry and Nootka Rose for berries, fruit, seeds and shelter. Butterflies are enticed by the nectar of native Penstemon, Fireweed and Larkspur. I was delighted to see large numbers of birds in the meadow this year, going after the dry flower stalks going to seed. Another joy is watching bush tits snacking from the seedheads of Oceanspray branches. Hummingbirds love the bright orange flowers of the Western Trumpet Honeysuckle.

Producing different habitats with native plants is fun. We have created a restful woodlands garden on the north side of the house, using mainly Sword and Deer Ferns, Wild Bleeding Heart, False Lily of the Valley, Trilliums, Hooker's fairybells and short Oregon Grape. There are many lovely, native shade-loving plants to cultivate a woodlands habitat. A thicket or hedgerow is another habitat you can develop using the many beautiful shrubs of our region. Indian Plum, the first native flowering shrub of the spring, is a joy to have in the garden, as is Twinberry, Red Osier Dogwood, Salal, Salmonberry and Hardhack. A meadow, though more difficult to develop and maintain, is another habitat to create. Glorious spring wildflowers of this region to plant are; Satin Flower, Shooting Star, Fawn Lily, Camas, Chocolate and Tiger Lily, Larkspur, Indian Paintbrush, Western Buttercup and many more. Evergreen plants are a boon to any garden. Some easily-grown, evergreen native plants are Kinnickinick, Silk Tassel shrub, Evergreen Huckleberry,

Below: Meadow in its first and second year.



Nodding Onion, Falsebox, Oregon Grape, Manzanita, Alumroot and Fringe-cup.

The first step to native plant gardening is learning about the plants. Walks in our parks and wild areas will quickly help you become familiar with the plants of our region, and their growing conditions. Andy MacKinnon and Jim Pojar's book, *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast — Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Alaska* is an invaluable native plant guide to take with you. April Pettinger's book, *Native Plants in the Coastal Garden — A Guide for Gardeners in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest* is an excellent book on gardening with native plants. You might also want to visit some of the native plant demonstration gardens in the Victoria area. These are: Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, Horticultural Centre of the Pacific, 1325 Kings Road (residential garden), Royal B.C. Museum and the University of Victoria. Native plants can be purchased from Woodlands Native Plant Nursery (250-812-5930), Thimble Farms on Saltspring Island (250-537-5788) and Streamside Native Plant Nursery in Campbell River (250-338-7509). Do not take plants from the wild, and if collecting seed, only take 10% of the seed from a plant. Start using native plants in your garden. Not only will you be saving time, energy and money, you will be contributing to the conservation of our precious water and creating healthy neighbourhoods. Native plants are beautiful in gardens! Native plants feed our soul. Good native plant gardening!

PATRICIA JOHNSTON is a native plant and waterwise garden consultant who hopes drought conditions will soon be over, and that everyone will have awakened to the joy and benefit of gardening with native plants.

Gorse

By Yorke Edwards

Not long ago I fell from a narrow path into low, crowded Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) at the edge of a large area of taller bushes. Feeling countless needles was a memorable experience. The worst part was getting up again, because everything around me was just thousands of needles. Painfully, slowly, I inched out feet first.

Daily, when walking dogs along a narrow path between walls of Gorse growing up to five feet high, sharp spines penetrate my clothing if I am not on the centre of the path. The bushes crowd together leaving few spaces between one another.

A Gorse bush is comprised of mostly needles. Even its leaves are needles, except in spring when the flowers are blooming and new needles still quite limp. In only a few places are there glimpses of the trunks, one to three inches thick, zigzagging about, often almost horizontal.

The largest are main branches about several feet long. Along those longest needles, grow the numerous second longest branches, which are needles inches long. On the secondary needles are the third kind, bunches of needles (which, believe it or not, are the leaves) that grow in groups of about three to seven around the secondary stems at intervals of an inch or less. Those smallest needles are a half to about an inch long. Last Spring I cut off a foot-long end piece of a main branch and later counted over 300 needles, not including the young and soft new needles that were small, limp, and at the ends of all secondary branches.

Both birds and mammals are at home in the Gorse patch, sometimes using it for safety from hawks and other predators, all because of the needles. The species I have noted to be dwelling in the Gorse, roughly in order of their numbers, are House Finches nesting; Song Sparrow nesting; Red-winged Blackbird nesting; Quail nesting; House Sparrows; Bewick's Wrens; Towhee; and only through winter, Golden-crowned Sparrows and Fox Sparrows. Mammals I have seen are House Mice, Norway Rats, and Otters occasionally, and currently, someone has abandoned two brown-coloured rabbits, unwanted, especially if they are male and female. The only reptiles I have seen are Common Garter Snakes, basking on the path in the sun.

My botany book for the Pacific Northwest calls Gorse a serious European pest. The book also notes that Gorse needs a warmish climate and is a tough shrub that thrives best of all in the salty air near ocean shores. It can be a dangerous fire hazard because of its woody nature, and because the crowded branches of adjacent plants intertwine with each other to create a unified density.

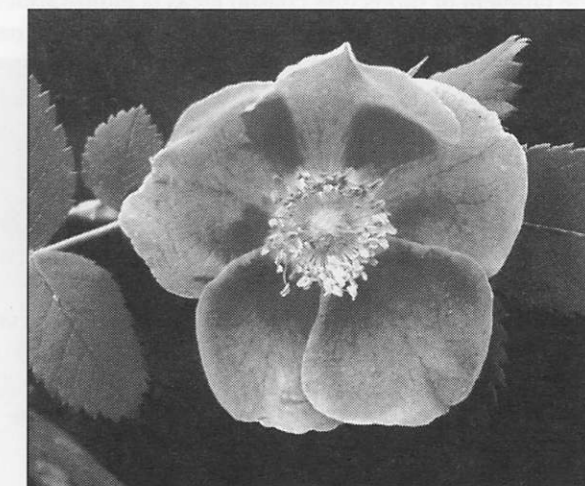
Even Gorse seeds are tough. In Britain, Gorse seeds that had been dormant in the ground for at least 25 years eventually sprouted. This long period of viability makes Gorse hard to get rid of.

Gorse, and its close relative Broom, originated in the warm, southern part of Europe. Both thrive in the same kind of climate and have invaded the same large area known as Cascadia — the rather warm and dry region from Vancouver Island down to California. Gorse escaped to be wild on Vancouver Island long ago. Joseph Henry's book, *Flora of Southern British Columbia*, printed in 1915, reports that Gorse is well established "in Vancouver and Victoria". It is said that the first planting of Gorse on Vancouver Island was in a garden near Sooke from where it escaped circa 1850. That escape may have started the invasion of our current crowds of Gorse.

Gorse and Broom are similar in many ways, partly because both are in the huge Pea Family, the *Leguminosae*. Like Broom, bacteria at Gorse roots capture nitrogen from the air that in turn enriches the soil, as well as feeding the plant. Thus, both shrubs enrich soils where many plants could not otherwise flourish.

Gorse is both admirable and destructive. It is interestingly tough, and in early spring is covered with flowers that paint many distant hills yellow. At the same time, it crowds out our native plants.

Like clear-cut logging and urban sprawl, invasive plants such as Gorse and Broom destroy our native landscapes, crowding out beautiful blue Camas blossoms, delicate Easter lilies, Chocolate lilies, and pink Shooting stars that would otherwise blanket our un-mowed natural areas.



 **precise color
processors ltd.**

QUALITY PHOTOFINISHING

747 Discovery Street, Victoria, B.C. V8T 1H1
Phone: (250) 385-5512

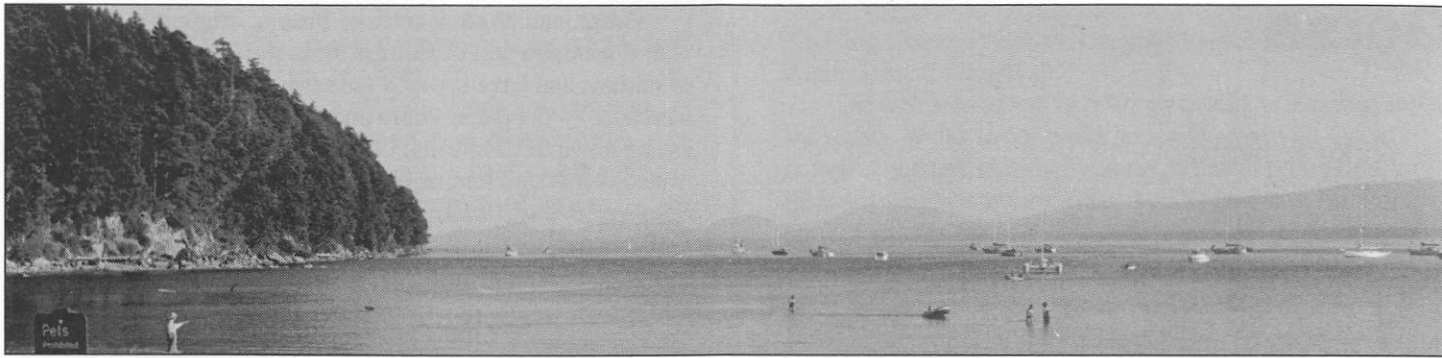


Photo: R. Cain

Tribune Bay on Hornby Island — a Boating Health Issue!

By Bev Bullen

Residents of Hornby Island are asking the hundreds of boaters who anchor in Tribune Bay to use their holding tanks, rather than dump sewage overboard. With the Canadian waters off the B.C. coast needing protection, it is no longer acceptable for pleasure craft or commercial vessels to pollute the marine environment. Since the Federal government has not taken the necessary action to protect the marine areas, caring citizens are doing everything they can to protect these areas for the Canadian people.

The problem of protecting coastal areas is multi-faceted, because there are many causes of degradation. However, one thing we can do something about is sewage pollution from boats. The United States, far ahead of Canada in this regard, has legislation making it mandatory for pleasure craft to have holding tanks. In Canada, we lag behind... but hopefully, similar legislation will be in effect here before too long. Everywhere we see signs that our marine environment is in trouble, and with increased public concern, Ottawa is under pressure to act. This legislation can't come too soon.

Tribune Bay experiences little tidal flushing in summer. Up to 40 pleasure craft can be anchored off this mile-long sandy bay during the good summer weather; and why not? They are in paradise! Up to 2,500 children use the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre every spring and summer, and 250-500 swimmers use it daily during July and August, creating a recipe for trouble if boaters in the bay dump raw sewage.

Doug Biffard, an aquatic ecologist with B.C. Parks, summed up the problem: "During the 1990s we were concerned about the environment — Marine Protected Areas, preserving land for parks, and air quality. To-day environmental concerns are linked to health issues; diseases are more prevalent, vaccination programs are not infrequent, and we think of Walkerton. How often do we hear of hepatitis C, or meningitis, with E-coli being the greatest threat? So pollution in Tribune Bay becomes a health issue".

On Hornby Island, a local task force is spearheading a

drive to contact non-government stakeholders in the affected area, including shore residents, marina operators, boaters, First Nations groups, community organizations, advisory councils, and sport and shellfish harvesters. A lengthy task in itself! The resulting file of information, and support for a Pollution Free Zone for boat sewage in Tribune Bay is being compiled for submission to the B.C. Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (formerly MELP), the Coast Guard and the Ministry of Transportation, before being sent to the Federal Government in Ottawa. Included in the file will be anecdotal accounts from swimmers or paddlers at the bay who may have encountered a "foreign substance". The information is being collected by:

Hornby Island Task Force,
Hornby Island Ratepayers Association,
Box 16, Hornby Island, B.C. VOR IZO

The file is to be submitted in September, 2001, to the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. The residents are hoping that the various overlapping agencies in Ottawa will receive the file and will respond positively by approving the designation of Tribune Bay as Pollution Free from Boat Sewage by Spring, 2002.

In the meantime boaters are being asked to respect the bright orange and black International buoy sign in Tribune Bay indicating "No Dumping", and to use the pump-out stations either at Deep Bay or Comox. Doug Biffard summed it up well: "Let's follow the Precautionary Principle: If you don't know, don't dump. In other words, when you have an option to dump elsewhere, use it". Hornby Island residents are doing their part, boaters are asked to do theirs.

BEV BULLEN is a VNHS member and volunteers as part of the Parks and Recreation Committee. She can be contacted at: 7705 Anderson Dr., Hornby Island, B.C. VOR IZO. Phone: (250) 335-1922. bjbullen@island.net

Thanks to Doug Biffard, B.C. Parks & photographer, R. Cain.

Has It Been Two Years Already?!!

The Nature of Island Artists — Goldstream Park — September 15 - October 8

The Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS), Cowichan Valley Naturalists, the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT), Arenaria Research and Interpretation, BC Fisheries, and BC Parks are again sponsoring an exhibition of nature-inspired art this fall: September 15 to October 8. The exhibit has been traditionally held at the Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre. This year we will also be offering a concurrent showing at the Freshwater Eco-Centre in Duncan.

The intent of this exhibit, which has been held approximately every second year since 1988, is to showcase a variety of artists who gain their inspiration from the natural environment and who live on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. It is the variety of mediums, including paintings, photography, three-dimensional, fibre, and glass, which help to make this a show for every taste. Cards and prints are available in the bookstore, making the show suitable for every budget!

The 1999 show had more than 14,000 visitors. This year we are expecting even more visitors, and will be offering tours of the exhibit and special programs to school classes. There will also be demonstrating artists during the show. The goal of the show is to increase the public's awareness of the need to protect the natural world, and the role that parks play in that protection.

Items with a minimum bid of less than \$500.00 will be sold by silent auction. All items priced higher than \$500.00 will be sold outright. This year, the proceeds from the art show will be distributed equally to fund the Eagle Extravaganza education programs at Goldstream Provincial Park and H.A.T.'s recent projects, including Laughlin Lake on Galiano Island. The Duncan show will go towards conservation and education efforts in the Cowichan Valley.

There has been a great deal of interest in the show from artists who have not previously exhibited with us, as well as all the familiar contributors: Bateman, Hobson, Warren, Carwardine and others. Fenwick Landsdowne and Robert Genn have agreed to be patrons for this year's exhibit, and we are easily expecting to reach (but hopefully not exceed!) the carrying capacity of the exhibit hall! It is through the generosity of the artists and the VNHS membership that we are able to pull off such a successful event: pat yourselves on the back while you read this!

For more information regarding hours of operation, please call Goldstream at 478-9414 or the Eco-Centre in Duncan: 746-6722. To volunteer to staff the show, please call the number in the "Bulletin Board" section. If you are an artist interested in participating, we regret that there is no room this year but be sure to put your name in at the show and you will be called as the next one approaches.

The Nature of Island Artists
September 15 - October 8, 2001
Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre, Victoria, B.C. For Information: 478-9414
Freshwater Eco-Centre, 1080 Wharfedale Rd., Duncan, B.C. For Information: 746-6722

Another Arizona Adventure

By Rob Gowan

You may have read in the January/February 2001 edition of *The Naturalist* about my trip to Arizona that featured rain, snow, hail, flooding and birding. This May, I returned to Arizona with my girlfriend Sarah and am happy to report that the weather down there can also be warm and sunny. In fact, on this trip, it was really quite hot with official high temperatures over 100, and temperatures inside my non-air-conditioned truck seeming more like 200. I did not actually try to cook eggs on the dash but would not have been surprised if it were possible to do so.

Sarah finds it difficult to get excited about birding except when it comes to owls. As a result, one of the goals of this trip was to look for owls. On the first day, we headed to Scheelite Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains in search of a Spotted Owl. Sadly, we came up empty. I think part of the reason may have been trying to keep one eye in the trees looking for the birds while the other was scanning the ground for rattlesnakes.

From Scheelite Canyon, we drove to Madera Canyon where we hoped to find an Elf Owl. We arrived at Santa Rita Lodge in Madera Canyon just before sunset and learned that Elf Owls were nesting in a power pole on one side of the road while Whiskered Screech Owls were nesting in a pole on the other side. We took a seat and waited. Gradually more and more people arrived. By sunset, there were about 20 of

us happily scanning the poles. As luck would have it, most of us were looking at the Elf Owl pole when someone called out that an owl had flown from the Screech Owl pole. We all swiveled around, scanning the pole and adjacent trees but were unable to locate the bird. Slowly we all returned to the Elf Owl pole. Every so often, someone would see something moving but it seemed more likely that their eyes were playing tricks in the gloom. Finally, someone called out that the owl was out on the wire running from the pole. Sure enough, there it was looking down on us. Who knows how long it had been sitting there wondering why we were all staring at an empty power pole! In the next few minutes it flew around and chattered a bit giving us a good look at North America's smallest owl.

One of my goals for this trip was to look for hummingbirds. The hummingbird search started with a visit to Patagonia and the Patton's backyard feeders. Lightening was flashing and thunder booming when I arrived, but I managed to see Violet Crowned and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Thick-billed Kingbird and Bronzed Cowbird before the rain began.

Next, I visited Beatty's Miller Canyon Guest Ranch and Orchard. They have a number of feeders set up for public viewing near the entrance to the Ranch. I had the place all to myself watching Black-chinned, Magnificent, Blue-

Throated, Broad-billed and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds buzzing around. Just as I was getting ready to leave, the owner came out and invited me to the private viewing site that consisted of 10 to 15 feeders located in the trees. At any given time there were at least two birds on each feeder and others coming and going. It was a real treat to sit there in the middle of the action.

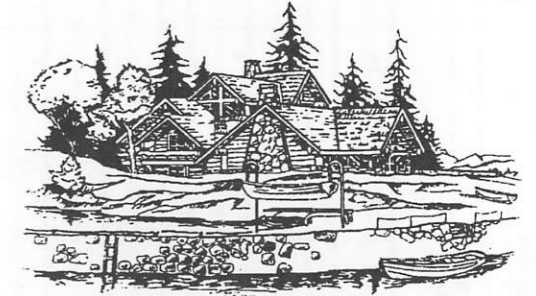
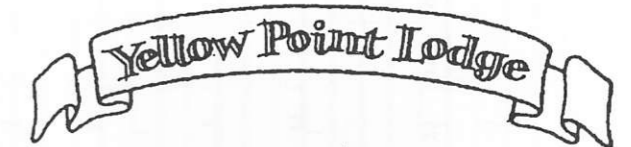
In addition to the owls and hummingbirds, I was out to see as many species as possible. On the second day, this meant returning to Madera Canyon. On the way up to the trailhead, I saw Yellow-eyed Junco, Summer and Hepatic Tanagers, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Lucy's Warbler. Once at the trailhead, it was time to look for the Elegant Trogon. I started up the trail with some birders from Oregon and almost immediately heard the strange "wonk, wonk, wonk" trogon call. Eventually we came around a corner and saw a female fly up the slope. The others decided to wait at this point while I continued up the trail. After about a minute's walk, I spotted a beautiful male trogon sitting at eye level about 20 feet away. I watched it for awhile, then decided to turn back and tell the others. I met them coming up the trail and told them about the trogon. They told me they had been watching two Northern Pygmy Owl mating in the trees.

On our third and final day in southern Arizona, we drove up and over the Chiricahua Mountains. Near the top we had good views of the Mexican Chickadee and Red-faced Warbler. At our campground on the other side, there were Painted Redstarts, Mexican Jays, Gambel's Quail and many Acorn Woodpeckers.

In the little town of Portal, other birders told us about a Great Horned Owl nest in "a large cottonwood near the post office". We found the cottonwood and sure enough, there was the female owl looking down at us. Once again, southern Arizona did not disappoint. There were a few birds such as Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Crested Caracara and Olive Warbler that I had hoped for but did not find. I guess that means I will just have to go back down there again some day. Sounds good to me.



Rattlesnake. Photo: Rob Gowan



R.R. 3, Ladysmith, B.C. V0R 2E0
(250) 245-7422

Patricia Johnston, M.Sc.
Consultant
Native Plant and WaterWise Gardening
* helping you create a low maintenance,
chemical-free garden *
595-5600
patj@tnet.net

Report on the Spring Bird Count, May 2001

By Marilyn Miller

The Spring Bird Count successfully took place on Saturday May 5, 2001. A total of 146 species were recorded, with a grand total of 13159 birds counted. This is one more species than last year, but over 9000 birds fewer than last year. We really missed the 3000 Glaucous-winged Gulls counted last year on the Oak Bay Islands!

Over the winter I intend to put together a comparison of past years' bird counts. I hope that this will point out some trends. For instance, last year we had 6 active Barn Swallow nests at our barn. This year only three adults came back. Luckily, one was male, so we have two active nests. One

female is sitting on her second brood right now, mid-July. Has anyone else similar experiences? Are Barn Swallows in trouble? A comparison of previous years' results should show this.

I hope to present some ideas to the members at the September Birders' night. In the meantime, I ask all members to reflect on the reasons for doing this count, and whether they wish it to continue.

MARILYN MILLER is the Spring Bird Count Coordinator.

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Butchart Gardens/Northern Highlands | 2. Central Highlands | 3. Goldstream | 4. Thetis Lake/Hastings Flats |
| 5. Langford Lake | 6. Albert Head/Triangle Mountain | 7. Esquimalt Lagoon/Mill Hill | 8. Esquimalt Harbour |
| 9. Portage Inlet/The Gorge | 10. Victoria Harbour | 11. Beacon Hill | 12. Oak bay |
| 13. University/Cadboro Bay | 14. 10 Mile Point | 15. Gordon Head/Mt Douglas | 16. Swan Lake/Cedar Hill |
| 17. Blenkinsop/Panama Flats | 18. Elk Lake/Cordova Bay | 19. Prospect Lake/Quick's Bottom | 20. Martindale/Bear Hill |
| 21-23. Oak Bay Islands | | | |

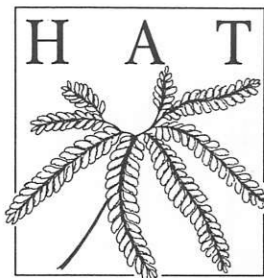
Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21-23	TOTAL
House Wren			2	5															4	1		12
Winter Wren		15	21	30		17	14	1	6	6			3	8	13		6	3	3			146
Bewick's Wren		16		16		19	14		22	15	4	2	18	19	4	16	10	3	12	11		201
Marsh Wren				1			2									16	4		20			43
American Dipper			6																			6
Golden-crowned Kinglet		7	1	29		13			2				1		16	2			2			73
Ruby-crowned Kinglet													2						1	1		4
Western Bluebird																						
Townsend's Solitaire													1						2			3
Swainson's Thrush																			5			5
Hermit Thrush																1						1
Varied Thrush		1	5	1		1									7				4			19
American Robin		144	26	89		58	44	25	120	44	32	42	20	40	41	62	25	16	58	192		1078
American Pipit																				237		237
Cedar Waxwing																						
European Starling		3	57	91		63	13	37	289	74	21	24	10	19	8	47	16	24	6	199		1001
Solitary Vireo																				4		4
Hutton's Vireo														1								1
Cassin's Vireo		1	1			3			1										2			8
Red-eyed Vireo																						
Warbling Vireo				5		3			3					1	3		2	3	2	1		23
Orange-crowned Warbler		52		33		19	12		24	1	3	2	22	21	5	13	17		21	13		258
Yellow-rumped Warbler		5		32		21	4		13			1		3	1	14	18		3	13		128
Black-throated Gray Warbler		1				2	1							3	1				3	1		12
Townsend's Warbler		36		18		18	2							4	1					2		81
Yellow Warbler		1	6	3										2		2	3			1		18
MacGillivray's Warbler		13		1									1									15
Wilson's Warbler		2	4			9			10	10	7		7	11	7	6	11			2		86
Common Yellowthroat		5		4		8			3							15	7		8	15		65
Western Tanager				1											2	2	2		1			8
Lazuli Bunting																						
Black-headed Grosbeak		1															2	1				4
Spotted Towhee		25		35		29	4		12		2	14	12	18	6	11	10	1	30	16		225
Chipping Sparrow		9		24		6	11	1					1					1	8	8		69
Fox Sparrow				2		1	3		2							3			2	1		14
Savannah Sparrow		2				4	2		3	10		2	3		2	3	2			31		64
Lincoln's Sparrow							1															1

2001 Spring Bird Count

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Butchart Gardens/Northern Highlands | 2. Central Highlands | 3. Goldstream | 4. Thetis Lake/Hastings Flats |
| 5. Langford Lake | 6. Albert Head/Triangle Mountain | 7. Esquimalt Lagoon/Mill Hill | 8. Esquimalt Harbour |
| 9. Portage Inlet/The Gorge | 10. Victoria Harbour | 11. Beacon Hill | 12. Oak bay |
| 13. University/Cadboro Bay | 14. 10 Mile Point | 15. Gordon Head/Mt Douglas | 16. Swan Lake/Cedar Hill |
| 17. Blenkinsop/Panama Flats | 18. Elk Lake/Cordova Bay | 19. Prospect Lake/Quick's Bottom | 20. Martindale/Bear Hill |
| 21-23. Oak Bay Islands | | | |

Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21-23	TOTAL
Song Sparrow		15	7	18		25	14		14	7		12	7	10	7	15	11	1	12	22		197
Harris' Sparrow																						
White-throated Sparrow																						
White-crowned Sparrow		39		4		6	4		3	1				8			6		9	23		103
Golden-crowned Sparrow		10		1		27	4		13	1	1	3	2	10	2	3			6	6		89
Dark-eyed Junco		34	5	38		13	14					1			6				56	9		176
Lapland Longspur																						
Western Meadowlark																						
Red-winged Blackbird		12		11		39	14		8	7		1	6	2	15	55	11	6	81	55		323
Yellow-headed Blackbird																						
Brewer's Blackbird				11		9	12	15						1		13	1			71		133
Brown-headed Cowbird		14		4		12	4		10	6	6	4	9	8	5	7	8	2	13	20		132
Northern Oriole																						
Purple Finch		12	2	2		2	2			5		2		8			1		10			46
House Finch		1		58		57	23	7	90	43	21	13	18	23	25	41	11	4	38	47		520
Red Crossbill									1				1				4					6
Pine Siskin		31	9	95		66	25		42	29		7	15	53	29	18	21	10	53	141		644
American Goldfinch		10		5		1			1					2	10	1	11		14			55
Evening Grosbeak				1																		1
House Sparrow				52		36	15	8	357	102	14	20	2	30	24	146	40	10		52		908
Total Species	0	57	40	64	0	76	65	23	49	41	26	44	42	54	62	48	52	33	71	71	0	138
Total Birds	0	777	343	1187	0	1014	771	279	1672	672	506	545	471	683	510	1097	487	266	845	2048	0	14173

2001 Spring Bird Count



HAT Tricks

Like a crab, bursting out of its one-room shell, HAT has expanded into larger premises. Two floors down in the Central Building, we are getting settled into a much more flexible workspace. The mahogany panelling and linoleum tile floor had an unsettling familiarity to us all, and our summer student Nadine Brodeur wondered aloud if we could get a ping-pong table. You are welcome to drop in for a visit, suite 316, 620 View Street.

HAT's ConservationConnection website has grown substantially through Nadine's efforts. There are now over eighty conservation groups, which are active in the CRD listed on the site. HAT has worked with the BC chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) to continue the networking, which blossomed at the Connecting for Conservation forum in April. Two subsequent meetings have resulted in the formation of a broad conservation network for the region, which will evolve, as its partners need it to.

Nadine has also done an exceptional job of updating HAT's filing system for conservation covenants. Because these creative and cost-effective conservation initiatives are intended to last forever, a secure and complete system is essential. HAT is negotiating covenants across the region, and these are normally held jointly with other land trusts like The Land Conservancy of BC, Islands Trust Fund, or Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Meagan Christie continues her work in the Tod Creek watershed. One hundred and fifty nest boxes have been assembled and put up for Purple Martins. Wood Duck nest boxes are being placed in suitable areas as well. Karen Hurley is working with students at Durrance Elementary School on restoration planning in the watershed. There is an active and committed group of community environmental stewards, who have come together as the Friends of Tod Creek.

HAT has regretfully said goodbye to Clare Rumball,

who has taken a position with the provincial government. She is putting her experience with HAT to good use as a policy analyst working with the non-profit sector. Clare has made an invaluable contribution to HAT's early years, and hers will be difficult shoes to fill.

In order to complete one of Clare's projects, Planning and Stewardship Options for Your Community, we have been very fortunate in contracting Kevin Key. Kevin does consulting work, but is also the municipal planner for the District of Highlands. This resource kit for municipal decision-makers will be completed early this fall.

Clare also laid the groundwork for a project called "Good Neighbours". We will be making a start on this project this fall, by identifying parks and green spaces, which would most benefit from protective buffers on the private land surrounding them. Those landowners, if agreeable, will then be contacted to provide them with information about good stewardship practices, and long-term habitat protection measures like conservation covenants.

The campaign to purchase Laughlin Lake is nearly halfway to completion. HAT is grateful to the Barraclough Foundation of Victoria, which has contributed \$3,000 towards the project. A part of the proceeds of the "Nature of Island Artists" show at Goldstream Park and the Freshwater Eco-centre will support the Laughlin Lake campaign.

HAT is pleased to welcome Loucas Raptis as its newest Sustaining Member. Loucas has been a strong supporter of both HAT and VNHS (see the previous *Victoria Naturalist*). Sustaining Memberships carry a one-time cost of \$1000, which is tax-receiptable. The HAT board is currently using these contributions to build HAT's endowment fund with the Victoria Foundation. This is an excellent way to make a lasting contribution to HAT's work, and we are happy to provide more information to anyone who is interested.

By Bruce Whittington

President's Report

"Now More Than Ever"

By Bruce Whittington

As we swing into September, our Society gets into action again, with a full slate of excellent evening programs, and field trips. It is a time to look forward, to make the most of the coming program year.

All of the Society's activities depend on volunteers, and we have a very dedicated corps of volunteers to keep us going. Our membership would like to see us doing even more, and there is no reason we cannot expand our activities. Or is there?

Statistics Canada has just released the results of its second survey of charitable giving and volunteerism among Canadians. The news is both good and not so good.

In the year 2000, 6.5 million Canadians contributed as volunteers. That is remarkable. However, the bad news is that this number is fully one million less than in 1997. Back to the good news side, where we learn that the average number of hours volunteered per person rose, from 149 in 1997 to 162 in 2000. These averaged figures are a little misleading, however. The truth is that one quarter of all volunteers contributes 71% of all volunteer hours. What this means is that we are volunteering less, and depending more and more on fewer and fewer people to fill in the gaps. Sound familiar?

Well, if we are volunteering less, maybe we are making up for it in other ways. By donating to charitable organizations, we can empower them to accomplish some of what might be done by volunteers, and create jobs to boot. Let's return to Statistics Canada.

Canadians did give more money to charities in 2000 than they did in 1997. However, the increase is less than the increase in per capita income. Therefore, we are giving proportionally less than before. British Columbia has had some tough times, you say. Well, it is true that Albertans top the list of givers. They are right up there with those other

wealthy provinces, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. British Columbia? We share the basement, with Quebec.

This declining support of the non-profit sector is serious enough in its own right. Now, however, we are faced with the additional damage caused by a new Liberal government, bent on slashing everything it can. Habitat Acquisition Trust has recently had two out of three E-Team positions it was approved for clawed back as part of "fiscal restraint". This is but one of a litany of cutbacks. There is serious concern that some major government environmental funding agencies will be eliminated. Therefore, if we think "They" are going to pick up the slack, we have a long four years ahead of us.

No, it is going to fall to us if we want to see the natural resources we value so highly appreciated, understood, and protected. We as individuals and as a Society, are going to have to give a little more, and a little more often, and we are going to have to think a little harder about what we can do to help make the difference. Each of us can make personal contributions of time and money. Some of us may be able to contribute through our businesses or professions. Talking to friends about the causes you believe in will often ignite exactly the spark that is needed to elicit support from new sources. Write a letter or two.

Please read your *Naturalist* regularly and thoroughly. Look for the volunteer listings, and make a note of fundraising initiatives, like our new scholarship fund for Royal Roads University.

I have to say that I think things are going to get worse before they get better. However, ours is a strong organization, and we can make a difference. It was never more needed than now.

Welcome to New Members

Korene Asbury
Rutledge Street

Gunter and Carol Nuernberger
Eric Road

Charlotte Robson
Island Highway
(birds, native plants)

Peter and Linda Maddaugh
Shore Way

Jane Gittens
Purcell Place

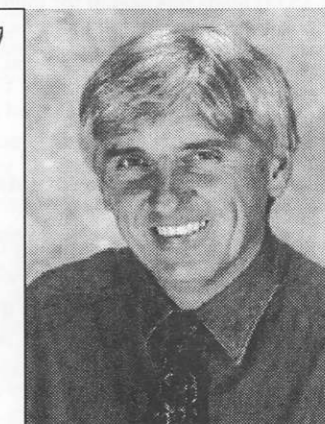


6 YEAR HIBERNATION

The local real estate market has sprung back to life after six years of relative inactivity. Well-priced properties are selling in a matter of days with 'multi-offer' situations not uncommon.

Jim Farrell

DFH Real Estate Ltd.
477-7291



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month (directors' meetings are held at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary); **Natural History Presentations** (formally known as the General Members Meeting): the second Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., in Begbie 159, University of Victoria; **Botany Night:** the third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre; **Parks and Conservation Committee Meeting:** the third Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre; **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Murray and Anne Fraser 159, University of Victoria. **Marine Night:** the last Monday, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Telephone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 for further information and updates.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 8

Birding the Victoria Shoreline for Shorebirds

Marie O'Shaughnessy (598-9680) leads this search for migrant shorebirds. Meet at Clover Point at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 9

Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

David Allinson (478-0493) will lead this trip on the M.V. Coho on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and this is the best opportunity to see bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 sailing of the M.V. Coho (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$14.00 (US) return (\$22.00 Can), and it is a good idea to have some ID with you for customs. We will return on the 12:45 p.m. sailing.

Tuesday, September 11

Backpacking Costa Rica

Join Todd Carnahan as he relives the sights and sounds of Costa Rica's tropical diversity. A nature photographer and park planner, Todd spent two months in coastal rainforest, coral reefs, shark-infested rivers and cloud forest canopies. This interactive multimedia show includes flora and fauna, habitats, environmental issues, and organic farming in the small Central American nation. We will see you at 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Sunday, September 16

Birding at Cuthbert Holmes Park

Jeff Gaskin (384-1573) leads this search for migrant songbirds through a variety of habitats in this park that he birds regularly. Meet at the Parkes Arena parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

Monday, 24 September

Marine Night

"Sponge Reefs Unique to BC: A Coral Reef Analogue"

7:30 pm at Swan Lake Nature Centre.

Dr. Bill Austin will speak to us on the discovery of a massive sponge reef in Queen Charlotte Sound. His talk will include video footage of this amazing find and he will explain the significance of it to the fields of biology and palaeontology. Dr. Austin is the Director of the Marine Ecology Station <<http://www.mareco.org>> at Port Sidney Marina in downtown Sidney.

Wednesday, September 26

Birders Night

"From Beaumont to Big Bend"

Murray and Anne Fraser (ex Begbie) 158, 7:30 p.m. Join David Allinson of Victoria for a slide-illustrated presentation on the birds of the Texas Gulf coast and Rio Grande valley as he recalls a recent three-week birding tour of Texas. Note the added bonus of audio — accompanying the pictures of unique species of this bird-rich region of North America will be their songs and calls. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, a novice birder and your coffee cup.

Sunday, September 30

Hawk Watch: East Sooke Park

Hundreds of Turkey Vultures are joined by a dozen other species of birds of prey in their annual southward migration. Meet Dannie Carsen (595-2773) at the Aylard Farm parking lot in East Sooke Regional Park, off Becher Bay Rd. at 10:00 a.m., or car pool at Helmcken Park and Ride at 9:20 a.m. Bring a lunch.

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 6

Birding at Whiffen Spit, Sooke

In recent years Lapland Longspurs, a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a Ruff have stopped at this migrant trap in Sooke. Meet your leader Jack McLeod (642-5369) at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the foot of Whiffen Spit Road. Call ahead to arrange a car pool.

Sunday, October 7

Migrants on Jocelyn Hill

Rick Schortinghuis (642-3596) shares his knowledge of the Gowland Range on this walk in search of migrating songbirds and raptors. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a lunch. Be prepared for a 4 to 5 hour hike. Meet at the Lone Tree Hill Parking lot on Millstream Rd. at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, October 9

"Haida Gwaii — Wild But Not Wilderness"

Tom Parkin will give us an overview of the Queen Charlotte archipelago. This seventy-minute slide presentation includes the flora and fauna, as well as information about the Haida. See you at 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Sunday, October 21

Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

Leader still to be determined (volunteers?) for this trip on the M.V. Coho on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The

crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and this is the best opportunity to see bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 sailing of the M.V. Coho (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$14.00 (US) return (~\$22.00 Can), and it is a good idea to have some ID with you for customs. We will return on the 2:00 p.m. sailing.

Wednesday, October 24

Birders Night

Members Night

Murray and Anne Fraser (ex Begbie) 159, 7:30 p.m.

Once again, it is your chance to tell us about what you did and saw on your summer vacation or on a recent birding trip. If you have a few slides or graphics to show-and-tell, contact Bryan Gates at 598-7789 or at the Rare Bird Alert — 592-3381 to register. Everyone is welcome to present and everyone is welcome to attend. Bring a friend, a novice birder and your coffee cup.

Monday, 29 October

Marine Night

7:30 pm — Swan Lake Nature Centre.

Dr. John Harper of Coastal & Ocean Resources Inc. (or one of the student participants) will speak about a recent project to map the bottom of Tod Inlet in Saanich Inlet, in conjunction with an eel grass transplant project. Being next to Butchart Gardens and having a long industrial history, they found lots of interesting items on the sea bed. Come and get a fish eye view of Tod Inlet.

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 4

Birding the Pumpkin Patch

Late migrants, winter arrivals and raptors should make for some great birding with Brent Diakow (656-3190). Meet at the farm market at the corner of the Pat Bay Highway and Island View Road at 8:30 a.m. Gumboots are highly recommended!

BULLETIN BOARD

Volunteer Naturalists Needed

CRD Parks is looking for several volunteer naturalists to staff the Nature Houses at Francis/King and Witty's Lagoon Regional Parks. The commitment is for at least one year. If you're interested please call Laesha or Jenny at 478-3344

The Goldstream Artshow (Sept. 15 to Oct. 8, 2001) — Yet Another Chance to Help!

The biennial art exhibit at the Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre would not be possible without the dedicated contributions of dozens of volunteers, artists, and the support of the local community. Yes, it's that time again! In the past, members of the Victoria Natural History Society have volunteered their time to make this show a success. These tireless efforts go towards supporting stewardship activities in the Greater Victoria region through BC

YOUNG NATURALISTS EVENTS

Friday, September 28

Night Wings

Swan Lake Nature Center, 7:00 p.m.

Bring along your flashlight and dress for a night hike into a "Bats' World." Discover where they live and collect "night fliers" to see what they eat and why they are so helpful. Listen for echolocation calls with the aid of a bat detector. Learn about the ten species of bats in the Victoria area and build a mobile featuring one of these.

Call Laurie VanInsberghe (472-6138) or Shelia Mosher (652-3502) to register.

Sunday, October 21

Fall Biodiversity

Mt. Douglas Park

Join Laurie and Michael VanInsberghe on a hike through different ecosystems in the park. How are they similar? How are they different? Help to discover often overlooked, hidden worlds and see things you have never noticed before. Weather permitting we will finish up with a marshmallow roast at the park picnic site. Call Laurie VanInsberghe (472-6138) or Shelia Mosher (652-3502) to register.

 **The Victoria
NATURALIST**

P.O. Box 5220, Stn. B.,
Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4
Publications Mail Reg. 6428

Expires: Dec-01

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



Happy V.N.H.S. members on an alpine wildflowers/birding trip to Hurricane Ridge.

Photo: courtesy of the bus driver