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### COVER PHOTO:

Adult eagle and young on Monterey Avenue,  
 Oak Bay by David Pretty

## The Challenge Continues...

Have you noticed the new signs in hotel rooms lately?

Many hotels have started programs in which they offer  
 guests who are staying for more than one day the option of  
 not having their towels and/or sheets changed daily, as used  
 to be the case. These hotels suggest that the reason for  
 offering this option is to reduce the environmental impact of  
 their operations. But, is that the only reason?

There are clearly economic benefits from doing what  
 is right for our home in the biosphere. By not washing as  
 many sheets and towels on a daily basis the hotels are saving  
 money on laundry detergents, hot water, dryers, and probably  
 even on staff wages.

Progressive businesses are finding that they can save  
 money by taking the high road when it comes to caring about  
 the biosphere before the apparent bottom line. For example,  
 a solar thermal water heating system provides St. Rose  
 Hospital in San Antonio, Texas with up to 90% of the  
 facility's hot water needs saving the hospital close to \$17,000  
 per year compared to the alternative of using a steam boiler  
 fired by fuel oil. You can find out about more green building  
 success stories like this at the following website: [http://  
 www.sustainable.doe.gov/buildings/gbsstoc.htm](http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/buildings/gbsstoc.htm).

What got us thinking about the cost saving of green  
 practices arose out of our noticing a little graph of energy  
 usage on our hydro bill. It showed that we had saved  
 ourselves about \$35.00 over our previous year's expenditures  
 in one billing period that coincided with the time that our  
 electric clothes dryer has been out of service due to a  
 breakdown. Now we are continuing to dry our clothes by  
 hanging them in the basement when the weather is not  
 suitable for drying outside on the clothesline. You can find  
 out how much money your appliances cost by checking  
 out the BC Hydro Appliance Calculator at: [https://  
 ewa.bchydro.bc.ca/hep/appcalc/calc0619/pg1.asp?ID=0](https://ewa.bchydro.bc.ca/hep/appcalc/calc0619/pg1.asp?ID=0).

Tannis Warburton has made some suggestions about  
 what each one of us can do to reduce our ecological  
 footprint, one step at a time. What actions are you taking  
 to meet the nature challenge? Drop us a note.

*Marilyn and Ross*



# So Few Words

By Trisha Cull

## The Beginning

...10,000 years ago...

I cannot hear the ice scraping across the belly of the province, no scuttle of rock, or primal groan within, miles of ice deep. I cannot see its beginning or end, but it is one solid mass, a voiceless white blanket moving quite deliberately, despite itself, toward the Pacific Ocean.

What communes so deep, between it and what it expands across, I do not know, only that it is dark and infinite in its circumference. The scent comes like old ice clinging to the dregs of winter, hoarfrost and rime, ice that has grown so old it is even tired of itself.

But from underneath comes faintly a bittersweet scent of dahlia or damask rose just now sprouting through, though I have not yet knelt down and dug my fingers in or held up to my nose this new "perfumed tincture of the roses" (Shakespeare's Sonnet 54). It is no place I have yet tread upon in bare feet or skinned my knees against, only a hint of flowers and what might be, what sun, what rain, what twilight may cling upon one day in the spring.

I have just arrived, a new wild gardener with a spear, ready to cleave from the white the infinite manifestations of my imagination, to claim this place as my own. Here, I plot my labour and love with each gash, so that over time I become the many nuances of the land — thin ice, ice adrift, calved and hummocked, ice at the edge of the sea. And as the earth warms — snow blown in, water-filled snow, snow adrift, snow falling quietly.

I will dig until I have dug deeper than all other gardeners, and my plot trembles with the qualms of my conscience, its boundaries wide and dissident.

And when the first stream emerges, I will follow it to its mossy end in a valley in the gloaming. I will follow it, widening as a forest gives way. I will call it earth, my tongue ill equipped with so few words for ice, what the land could not say for ten thousand years.

*I will know that it was me...*

## East Creek

...present day...

**Brooks Peninsula, Vancouver Island, BC**

*...the glacier, scientists say, crept around the forests of Brooks Peninsula, while the rest of the province succumbed to the ice...*

LeMare Lake Logging has proposed a revised \*FDP (Forest Development Plan) that will include 34 cutblocks, 16

of which will be clearcuts (478.1 hectares = about 1000 football fields), as well as 31.7 km of new logging roads. Some of the clearcuts will be as large as 60 continuous football fields (30 hectares). Over 5 years, the total amount of timber to be removed will be 323, 195 metres<sup>3</sup>.

East Creek is one of the six remaining pristine watersheds on Vancouver Island, and the nesting place of the endangered Marbled Murrelet. American logging giant, Weyerhaeuser, holds logging rights of the lower part of the valley, and promised environmentalists it would not disrupt the area due to its delicate ecosystem. However, LeMare Lake is proposing a road through a Marbled Murrelet reserve, in areas previously designated as stream habitat, wildlife reserve, or inoperable for logging, clearly paving the way for Weyerhaeuser.

Because Brooks Peninsula escaped glaciation over 10, 000 years ago, it is an irreplaceable gateway to BC's archaeological and ecological history. Its ancient cedar and hemlock uplands are also the refuge of other wildlife, such as eagles, wolves, bears, black tailed deer, Roosevelt elk, and five species of salmon.

Located on the northwest coast of Vancouver Island, East Creek winds through one of our many old growth forests. Many similar forests have been liquidated over the past half-century, in an effort to improve the province's wealth and stability. The rate of cut, however, has far exceeded sustainable levels. This has led not only to deterioration of the ecosystem, but also "the demise of salmon runs and related fishing jobs, species facing extinction, water quality degradation and the costs of watershed restoration, denial of First Nations constitutional rights, and severe community instability as logging and milling jobs dry up." (<http://www.saveeastcreek.com/theplace.htm>).

Conversely, if East Creek is left intact, its long-term economic potential from ecotourism is staggering, while the logging benefits will be short-lived and marginal in comparison.

These forests are public lands, owned by British Columbia citizens. It is up to us to take action. Perhaps more importantly, it is up to us to explore our rising cynicism and indifference, and what role we will play in shaping the future of the planet.

I believe we are each influenced, for good or bad, by an industrial era that fosters insatiable greed by deconstructing

*\* LeMare had a previous FDP approved (December 2002) but is choosing to re-submit. They did not implement any of the East Creek portion of the previous plan, so no logging or road building has occurred yet in East Creek.*

our tenuous relationship to the natural world. We must ask ourselves in the most prophetic sense:

*Why am I here?*

## Why?

*"Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort her secret, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection"*

(Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature, Emerson: Essays & Poems. *The Library of America: 1996*).

## Long Beach, Vancouver Island

August 1992

No, I do not know why. I am eighteen years old, lying face down in the sand. A warm wind stirs across my body, and the surf laps then recedes upon itself back across the stones of Botanical Beach.

In the distance, I eavesdrop on the noises of my company gathered around a campfire. They are preparing for nightfall, chopping wood, zipping tents, and drinking beer. That is my sister's voice, her laughter. I have read letters from her over the past few years since she left home for university, so now she has become the words themselves, but only in the most remote and romantic way. *Carmanah. Clayoquot.*

While I am a small-town girl and have only ever seen the ocean once before, only once touched the surprising silvery skins on the underbellies of fresh sea shells, only once tasted such salt, I too wish to embrace this ephemeral green world she has written of so often. Until now, my protest has come swift but brief while watching documentaries about baby seals bloodied by clubs, a vague interest in vegetarianism, and a silent abhorrence of live lobster bins at the grocery store.

Now, if only through emulation and worship, some drawn out need for rebellion, I too long to chain myself to trees and cry *Carmanah!* as the logging trucks draw near.

And I think, pressing my palm flat against the sand as the day's last warmth emanates yet, *I am going to do something here.*

But the next morning we are awakened by wind thrashing the canvass, a dangerous swell of ocean lapping outside the door, and a violent assault of rain as we poke our heads outside. We pack up camp, hike out with a kayaks on our backs, beer bottles dotting the shore.

then...

I study Creative Writing at the University of Victoria, learn about status quo journalism and how to carefully craft an argument somewhere in between fact and fiction. I never grasp the difference, and fail miserably on several

assignments, but succeed at writing a short piece about some aspect of campus using one-syllable words only. I write about *ducks*, and get an "A".

Sometime around my third year of study they shorten the formal title of my program of study to *Writing*, omitting the *Creative*.

In the proceeding years my student loan catapults to forty thousand dollars. I eat over-packaged varieties of processed food and drink coffee from Styrofoam cups to alleviate the costs. The tuition freeze ends, but my bus pass cost is absorbed in the hikes.

A year later I pull off the highway at Cathedral Grove. A quiet man distributes pamphlets out of the back of his van, which state that Weyerhaeuser has proposed a plan to log 7 of 12 hectares of the Little Qualicum River Floodplain forest. Environment Canada and BC Ministry of Environment identify the area as the second largest floodplain on the east coast of Vancouver Island. It is a rare and sensitive ecosystem that provides the nursery forest for all 7 wild salmonid species. ([http://www.portaec.net/local/cathedral\\_grove/logging\\_at\\_qualicum\\_and\\_cathedra.html](http://www.portaec.net/local/cathedral_grove/logging_at_qualicum_and_cathedra.html)).

I drive home trying to grasp the logic of cutting down ancient trees so more people can come and see the ancient trees.

Two weeks ago, I watched a telethon by the World Wildlife Federation. One man choked a Siberian Tiger with his bare hands while another speared its throat with a two-pronged wooden spear. There are approximately 300-400 Siberian Tigers left roaming wild today (<http://ca.news.yahoo.com/020124/5/hop8.html>).

I have begun to change. A new cynicism gradually invades. The campus expands incrementally each year. New buildings occupy once grassy spaces. There are fewer and fewer ducks, and more and more rabbits. Neither the ducks nor I can calculate the schizophrenic schedule of the campus fountain, one day full, and the next empty.

But I succumb to the randomness and in time forget about the empty spaces, and take pleasure in walks through Mystic Vale, cautious of the pesky cougars that on occasion visit there.

Today, walking across campus I caught a glimpse of one of the protesters camped out on a wooden platform in the fringe of trees on the other side of recently clearcut forest behind the Elliot Building. We crossed paths and smiled, but said nothing. A fleeting thought of medical school crossed my mind and I imagined myself walking the halls of the new medical building that will soon adorn the landscape, knowing I can no longer afford it.

I think of a boy on a wooden platform among the trees, a flicker of orange tarpaulin, and a thrush of wind.



# The Royal Roads Property

## An Island of Nature in a Sea of Development

By Harvey Williams

Between August 29, 2001 and November 15, 2002, volunteers, trained and led by Norm Mogensen of the VNHS Green Spaces Project (GSP), dedicated some 1,135 hours to surveying and mapping the ecological, cultural, and historical values of the Department of National Defense (DND) lands on which are located Royal Roads University. The results of that study, commissioned and supported by the DND, were submitted to Mr. Arthur Robinson, Federal Lands Forester of the Pacific Forestry Centre on December 31, 2002. This is a report to VNHS of the study's findings.

From the air, the DND-Royal Roads lands appear as a great green donut of natural forest surrounded by urban development. The centre of the donut is the Royal Roads campus, and a bite appears to have been taken out of the donut where it touches Esquimalt Lagoon. That bite is the lawns and parking lot that slope down to the water from historic Hatley Castle, the former Dunsmuir family mansion. Most readers will already know that Hatley Castle is the old Dunsmuir mansion modelled after an English estate.

The study revealed a terrain shaped by ice age glaciers and a landscape rich in ecological diversity and previously unreported archaeological sites. The effects of the receding glaciers are much in evidence including a portion of the Colwood glacial outwash delta, some of its fringe escarpments, and the seepage zones below them. The melting of ice lenses (large blocks of buried ice) left behind by the retreating glaciers has formed depressions in the ground called kettles. On the eastern side of the property, bedrock outcrops protrude from the thin soil that has formed upslope from the glacial features.

Much of the site was logged in the late 1800s. There is now much healthy, older forest containing hundred year-old second growth western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var *menziesii*), interspersed in the well-drained areas with open woodlands of Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) and arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*). In the seepage areas, wet lowlands and the wetlands along streams, growths of giant red alder (*Alnus rubra*) tower over beds of skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanum*). Lands once cleared for agriculture either continue to support open or broom-invaded (*Cytisus scoparius*) grasslands or more often have reverted to a pre-Dunsmuir wetland or riparian state.

Newly described archaeological features include numerous shell middens and culturally modified trees — Douglas firs with head-height, smooth, flat surfaces apparently created by hewing away the rough surface of the

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### A future "Stanley Park" for the fast-growing Colwood/ Langford community.

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bark. Although such trees have been reported in many places as far north as Hornby Island, their purpose remains a mystery. Some of the middens were at sites so remote from the traditional beach village sites that they may mark hidden encampments used when enemy raiding parties threatened. Or they may have been used by the women as "menstrual retreats". Soopollalie, a locally rare bush used in trade by interior people was found near a large midden implying trade between coastal and interior people.

Of particular interest are the seven "Big Trees" on the Royal Roads property. All coastal Douglas fir trees, they range in diameter from 7.12 to 7.81 metres placing them from the 5th to 11th in diameter among the trees currently registered in the BC Registry of Big Trees. Height and canopy size, also criteria for inclusion in the registry, were not recorded because the volunteer team was not equipped nor trained to make those measurements. Moreover, the tops were broken off many of the larger trees, perhaps due to whip lashing during severe earthquakes such as the one that occurred on January 26, 1700, which would have registered 9 on the Richter scale.

Thetis Lake Park and Mount Douglas Park are the only two other naturally forested sites of comparable size, apparent age, complexity and state of preservation that abut the urban containment boundary of Greater Victoria. The Royal Roads site differs significantly, both ecologically and geologically, from them.

A future "Stanley Park" for the fast-growing Colwood/ Langford community and an outdoor laboratory for ecological and environmental studies for Royal Roads students: this is the vision that the VNHS-Green Spaces study has illuminated. But if this vision is to become a reality, there must be planning before any further development occurs that might impair the natural features of the property. To that end, expansion of the Royal Roads campus should be limited to the estate property off Sooke Road. Urban development by Colwood and Langford must not be allowed to encroach on the Royal Roads property and nearby development must be managed so as to minimize its impact on the property. This is a trivial price to pay for the benefits that protection of the natural features of the property would bring to Royal Roads University, its students, and the residents of the of the surrounding communities.

# Victoria Loves Anna!

By Ann Scarfe

The people of Victoria love their hummingbirds! We found this out when Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary conducted a phone-in survey of the distribution of Anna's Hummingbirds on the Greater Victoria area in January. Over 2 weeks (January 15 to 31), we received more than 900 phone calls, with callers very enthusiastic of their sightings and filling us with stories of their favourite feathered gems. Our staff, and office volunteers filled in page after page of sightings. They all deserve a great vote of thanks, as do Karen Wood, Evelyn Spenser and Edith Hunsburger from VNHS who also helped with the weekend family Hummingbird program.

We received phone calls from Lasqueti Island, Duncan, Cobble Hill, the top of the Malahat, Nanoose Bay and Maple Bay. (We know that there is a breeding population in Nanaimo as well). There were also sightings from Jordan River, as David Allinson and his field trip crew reported.

Five years ago a survey resulted in about 140 phone calls. The general area of sightings at that time was south of Royal Oak Avenue, and East of Quadra Street, with additional reports from View Royal, Triangle Mountain, and Florence Lake. Some immediate questions arise regarding the tremendous response this year. Did we advertise more this year? Probably, as the *Saanich News* and the Go section of the *Times-Colonist* did articles, and I did a spot on CBC morning radio. Are people now more aware of hummers? Yes, most definitely, and people feel an ownership with the birds that come to their feeder.

Our map this time showed an increase in distribution into the Fairfield, Royal Oak, and Cordova Bay Ridge area, and a definite presence in the Colwood-Langford-Metchosin-Sooke area. The Gordon Head-University and Broadmead areas continue to support a healthy population. On some streets it appeared that everyone has a feeder!

Not all callers were able to identify the sex of their bird sightings. In total we had sightings of about 660 males, 635 females and 759 unknown. So our question is: how can we then determine the actual number of birds in the area? How many feeders do the birds regularly visit? Do they exhibit 'trapline' behaviour as some hummingbird in Monteverde do? How far afield do they go? Studies from California and Arizona indicate that the breeding territories of males is 0.1 hectare, with a 'buffer zone' of variable size, but usually 4-6 hectares. As far as I know, no studies have been done regarding Anna's in a more northerly climate. A further review of recent hummingbird research is necessary.

I would 'guesstimate' that we have a population of 300-500 Anna's Hummingbirds in the Greater Victoria area. (The Christmas Bird Count of 2002 had a count of 104 individuals, but the bulk of these were not seen at feeders.)

This is just a guess, from looking at the 'dot data' on the map we have prepared. But, are there more this year because of the mild winter? Do any migrate to Victoria from points further north?

All the sightings were marked on a map displayed at Swan Lake (a special thanks to Barb McLintock who helped me with this huge job). There needs to be a more detailed look at the collection data, preferably by someone with statistical knowledge. Is there a student out there that needs a project?

The main thing that we have found out is that Anna's Hummingbirds are flourishing in our area, and their range is expanding, mostly because of feeders that more and more people now realize can be left up all year. And they bring a lot of joy to a lot of people, especially on damp, dull days. There were two reports of birds with one foot (one on the Gorge, and one in Gordon Head), as well as one with a bent bill. So if anyone sees these birds, do let us know. It may be the first stage of learning their feeding range and territory.

I hope to learn more at the Festival of Hummingbirds early in April in Tucson.

ANN SCARFE is Program Manager at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary.



Anna's Hummingbird. Photo: Marie O'Shaughnessy



# Frogs, Frogs, Frogs

By David Stirling

We can't hear the birds for the croaking of the frogs. I am with a gung-ho birding group in central Europe — Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. We peered at a turkey-size Capercallie's crazy mating display at dawn in the ancient spruce forests of the Carpathian Mountains; watched a Black Woodpecker demolishing a rotten beech tree; found Ural Owls, Tawny Owls and Boreal Owls in nest boxes; marvelled at a pair of huge Eurasian Eagle Owls nesting in an active rock quarry; watched Eurasian Brown Bears and hairy Wild Boars crunching corn cobs in the Transylvanian Alps; had a break from nature to visit Dracula's castle; saw a Chamois and four incomparable Wall Creepers on an almost perpendicular cliff; found six species of

coltsfoot; photographed White Storks nests on the power poles and had a 4:00 a.m. breakfast of green onions and fried eggs in Romania's ex-dictator, Ceaucescu's hunting lodge.

Now, in the Hortobagy, Hungary's famous bird bazaar, migration is in full spate. Flocks of Ruffs adorned in white, chestnut and variegated neck ornaments are moving north for an orgy at the lek. Lingered Graylag Geese and Common Cranes graze in the meadows and fill the air with their wild music. Two species of harrier quarter the reeds, bulky Lesser Spotted Eagles perch on distant trees just breaking into spring leaf and beautiful Red-footed Falcons are practising their group manoeuvres. Grey Herons, Purple Herons, Great Egrets and Eurasian Spoonbills stalk the pond margins while we stalk the prize bird of the day — the Great Bustard.

We are trying to zero in on Nightingales, Reed Warblers, Penduline Tits and other small songsters of tules and shrubbery but even on this sunny, warm morning, frogs and toads that one would think should be exhausted after last night's watery jam session, are in full croak. Only the "boom" of a Bittern can be heard above the trills, grunts, rasps and burps. In this aquatic cacophony I can separate five distinct species, all well defined. The star performer is the Fire-bellied Toad, a small [my idea of a toad is a large warty critter] amphibian with a mournful, low "hoh." It seems to be far away in another pond but it is actually in a ditch almost under foot. This delightful creature's ventral surface looks like a flaming Olympic torch. Perhaps, toads view each other from underneath.

From Australia to Ontario and Mozambique to Costa Rica amphibians are in trouble. A recent study in Costa Rica found that 40% of frog and toad species had disappeared from a thirty km square area and the rare Golden Toad may be extinct. Drainage in the marshes, pollution in the ponds and frogs' legs on the dinner plate is having a deleterious effect on these animals. In the Hortobagy, frogs are still belching out a spectacular spring concert, a delight to the ears of a frog music junkie.

With the help of, or in spite of, liberal libations of Tokaj wines, we logged six species of owls, ten woodpeckers, seventeen diurnal raptors and fifteen different butterflies. Nevertheless, the frogs of Hortobagy will always be one of my special memories.

Spring on Vancouver Island brings us the massed chorus of Western Tree Frogs from winter's rain-water pools. Later, when permanent water holes warm up, we can tune our ears to the twangs of Green Frogs and the groans of Bull Frogs, two controversial transplants from 'Down East.' Enjoy while you can.



## 2003 Natural History Courses



Here's a chance to support the society while learning a bit more about natural history. These programs will be taught by experienced VNHS trip leaders who have volunteered their time. The proceeds will support VNHS conservation and education activities. Please note the lower prices for members (yet another reason to join!). We are interested in offering other courses but require more leaders to come forward. Please call Claudia or Darren Copley at 479-6622 if you have any suggestions.

### Beginning Birding



An easy introduction to the pursuit of birding for those with little or no previous experience. The emphasis will be on bird identification in the field. We will start with an illustrated lecture on March 6, 2003 and 6 Saturday morning field trips from March 8th to April 12th. The cost will be \$65 for non-members and \$45 for members.

Take the next step beyond the basics of identification. Our group of local VNHS experts places an emphasis on birding by ear and the identifying field marks of those difficult groups and species. This course includes 8 very diverse field sessions around Victoria led by 8 different leaders. Sessions run on Thursday or Sunday mornings beginning on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003. The cost is \$95.00 for non-members and \$65.00 for members. Each session is limited to fifteen.

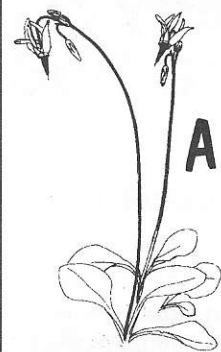
### Beyond Beginning Birding



If you have any questions, or would like to register, call Darren Copley at 4796622. More detailed brochures will be available in the new year.



**Victoria Natural History Society**



# Gardening for Wildlife

## A Native Plant Gardening Sale and Demonstration



**Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27**  
**10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Sale: Native Plants (over 100 species) Door Prizes Displays**

**Native Plant Seeds**

**Presentations**

**Books**

**Bird Feeders**

**Nesting Boxes**

**Admission:**

**\$3/day, \$5/weekend pass**  
**Friends Members Free**



**Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary**

**3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, B.C.**

**For more information: 479-0211**

**A complete plant list and description of presentations is available on our web site - [www.swanlake.bc.ca](http://www.swanlake.bc.ca)**



**Also.....**

**Native Plant Gardening Program Series**

**- four in-depth workshops relating to successfully gardening with native plants.**

**Saturdays March 22 to April 12.**

**Pre-registration required.**

**Details available at [www.swanlake.bc.ca](http://www.swanlake.bc.ca)**

## CAMAS DAY

**WHEN: Saturday, May 3, 2003 - 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**WHERE: Beacon Hill Park (walks begin at the flagpole)**

### Guided Walks

**9:00 a.m. Birding Walk in Beacon Hill Park (1 hour)**

Join Tom Gillespie from the Victoria Natural History Society and learn to recognize some of the birds who call the park home.

**11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Wildflower Walks (1 hour each)**

Noted botanists Adolf Ceska and T. C. Brayshaw will lead groups to seek out the common and not so common flowers in the wildflower meadows of the park.

**11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Native History of Beacon Hill Park (1 hour each)**

Grant Keddie, Archaeologist at the Royal B. C. Museum, will lead a fascinating walk to archaeological sites in the park.

Sponsored by the Victoria Natural History Society and Friends of Beacon Hill Park.  
For information call Helen Oldershaw at 592-6659 or Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.



# Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

## 2002 Report

Respectfully submitted by Dannie Carsen

We had a very busy year at Swan Lake with successful fundraisers, new land added to the sanctuary requiring re-fencing at Christmas Hill, and a variety of new programs and projects. I was elected to the board as Chair and have enjoyed working with board members and staff on many Sanctuary tasks. Here are some highlights for 2002:

- The Sunset Barbecue was a roaring success this year with a 20% increase in attendance and \$5,780 raised. The Native Plant Sale was still remarkably successful, raising \$8,130 for the two-day event. The 2003 Native Plant Sale is scheduled for April 26th and 27th.
- The steps for the new Christmas Hill trail were completed with the generous assistance of \$4,800 from donors to the *Own a Christmas Hill Rock* campaign. VNHS members made substantial contributions and are the proud owners of many a step up Christmas Hill! The official opening will be scheduled to coincide with wild-flower peak, probably April or May 2003.
- The Swan Lake Marketing Plan will be guided by three comprehensive reports by Claudia Smith's UVic marketing students. Our newest board member, Brock Smith, has offered his expertise in marketing to winnow through all the great ideas and create a successful plan for marketing Swan Lake and its programs and events. This marketing plan will be tied to a freshly developed strategic plan. The major effort of developing a new strategic plan is even more important due to succession planning for staff.
- The new entrance on the west side of the Sanctuary will be completed by February, linking to the new rock steps up the west slope. Right at the new entrance is a welcome sign with a trail map. The committee working on the marketing plan is considering how trails, the native plant garden, and the teaching shelter may be best used to both foster greater awareness of the natural world and provide financial support for Sanctuary operations.

### Floating Boardwalk Campaign

Flotation failure has necessitated the replacement of floatation for most of the floating walkway and docks.

Re-orientation of the floating boardwalk to improve wind resistance is also planned. The cost will be approximately \$40,000 with free labour supplied by the Pacific Naval Construction Troop of the Canadian Armed Forces Engineers. Swan Lake will have a crew of 20 engineers for several weeks.

We would love to have your assistance to get the boardwalk floating higher! Sanctuary Board members have started the funding drive with the purchase of two floats. You or your group can buy a float for only \$500! You can also buy a plank for a more modest contribution of \$50. If you like the idea of buying a float or a plank, please call Terry Morrison at 479-0211 for more information.

Successful ongoing programs for 2003 include:

- Grades K/1, 2, 4, 5, 7/8 field trips to Swan Lake
- Owls and Snakes in-school programs
- Summer programs including special events, senior's groups, youth groups, and parks and recreation groups
- Seasonal family-oriented special events at Spring Break and Christmas
- Native plant gardening and water conservation programs (sponsored by CRD Water Department)

New programs for 2003 include:

- Hummingbird Week, from January 20th to 26th, was a celebration and survey of Anna's hummingbirds (the preliminary result was up to 500 Anna's Hummingbirds in Greater Victoria; see Ann Scarfe's article in this issue)
- Spider program in-school (traveling)
- Advanced native plant gardening courses leading up to the native plant sale

You'll notice Sanctuary staff working this spring on Christmas Hill trails, fencing the west boundary of Christmas Hill (with Saanich Parks), and creating and installing directional signs and "stay on trail" signs on Christmas Hill. Current volunteer openings exist for work parties to remove scotch broom and volunteer "weekend wardens" to patrol Christmas hill for dogs and bikes. Swan Lake hopes to continue its close relationship with the VNHS and greatly appreciates all the help they provide.

# I Wonder...What Do Surf Scoters Eat?

By Joy Finlay

We eagerly looked out on Craig Bay the first morning of our late January week in Unit 627 at Pacific Shores Nature Resort just across from Rath Trevor Provincial Park. The tide was coming in and so were rafts of Surf scoters, the beaks of the males oh so strikingly colourful through binoculars. They drifted around and then regrouped with a purpose. Over the week we watched them move purposefully as a group to two separate feeding areas. Watching from the waters edge, we were about 150 metres from them.

Each bird dove out of sight, and then surfaced with a firm dark blob in its beak. They turned the object in their beak until it was in place for swallowing. Were they really eating mussels? That's what it looked like.

We puzzled and observed. We enjoyed mussels in a delicious bowl of seafood bouillabaisse, leaving the beautiful but hard shells to the side. Could a gizzard handle such a shell like that? We searched at low tide for signs of mussels, finding only two, but found more varnished clamshells. Maybe the dark blobs they ate were varnish clams too or maybe they were other bivalves we found shells of?

Yes, surf scoters do eat mussels. From food content investigations, one scoter had 212 small ones in its gizzard (*The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds* by John K. Terres). Another had 574 periwinkles in its stomach. The strength of their gizzard is impressive and effectively grinds up the many kinds of shellfish they swallow.

The gizzard, defined as the muscular stomach of birds, is another topic in itself. Apparently it has been of special interest to scientists for some 300 years. The powerful grinding can be heard with a stethoscope. Experiments with turkeys compared the work of their gizzard to a force of 437 pounds in a vice to flatten the same kind of glass hard material the turkeys were fed.

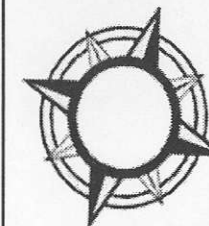
Seeing is believing after all — Surf scoters do feed on mussels and their gizzards grind them up, shells and all.



**Tuesday, March 11**  
**VNHS Annual General Meeting**  
7:30 p.m., Room 159  
Fraser Building, UVic.

## Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands All Inclusive Naturalist Tour Packages May 2003

Come and discover a truly unique and exotic land only a short flight from Vancouver. *Northwest Recreation Services* offers all-inclusive, fully guided tours of Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands. These small group tours concentrate on exploring the natural, cultural and settlement history of the area. Land and ocean based tours are offered to areas throughout the Islands including the Argonaut Plain and Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. For specific tour information please contact:



Andrew Merilees  
Northwest Recreation Services  
PO Box 798  
Masset, BC V0T 1M0  
(250) 626-3949  
nwrec@mhtv.com

Coming soon, check us out at:  
[www.northwestrecreation.com](http://www.northwestrecreation.com)

Your guide to discovery on the Queen Charlotte Islands



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



## Wildlife Tree Stewardship Initiative Summary 2002

The Bald Eagle Nest Tree (BENT) monitoring program began in 2000 to build an inventory of Bald Eagle nest trees and to document eagle productivity and tree condition. In July 2001, the Wildlife Tree Stewardship Initiative (WiTS) was formed with the goal to create, coordinate, and assist a network of Community stewards committed to conserving coastal wildlife tree habitats through volunteer monitoring, landowner agreements, and community education along the Strait of Georgia.

Our area of the initiative covers the corridor of seashore and communities from Sooke to Sidney. Out of interest, we also monitored several small islands off Sidney.

In the CRD area (excluding the smaller islands) there are:

- 64 nests documented
- 14 nests active — producing 22 chicks as far as we know
- 19 young fledged
- 27 monitors assisted
- 5 new nests recorded this year.
- 6 of the nests that were active last year were not active this year.
- the Oak Bay Firehall nest has a website and video camera displaying the progress of the young. [www.oakbaycam.com](http://www.oakbaycam.com)
- One young eagle in Sidney either fell or flew into some thick brush and was stuck for a few hours but eventually returned to the nest.
- The small islands off Sidney were a hotbed of activity with 14 nests seen within an 8 km. radius of Sidney. Ten of these were active although not monitored closely enough to give a definite number fledged.
- Sooke is an area of much curiosity. This year we did not know of any active nests between Rocky Point and Otter Point. That is not to say they aren't there but BAEA observations of that entire area seem to be down.
- One Red-tailed hawk nest was monitored (produced an unknown number of young) and one Osprey nest — which was active but no young seen.

If anyone is interested in helping with the expansion of this program to include osprey, herons, owls, etc. please contact:

Gwen Greenwood  
8590 Alec Rd  
Saanichton, BC  
V8M 1S4 250 652-2876

Many thanks go to Federation of BC Naturalists, along with representatives from Environment Canada, BC Hydro, and Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection.

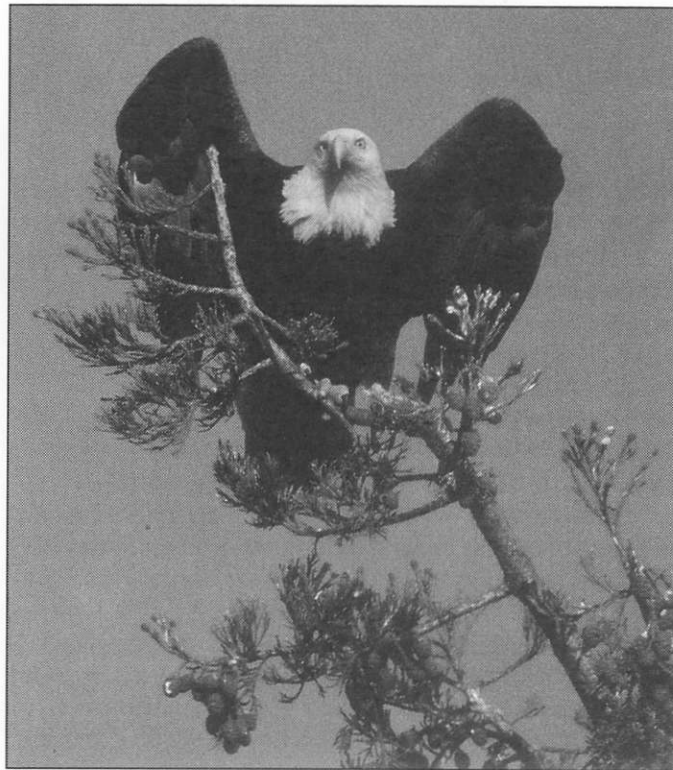


Photo: David Pretty



Young eagle on Monterey Nest site, Oak Bay.  
Photo: Marie O'Shaughnessy

## Fight to Save BC's Parks Goes On-line

By Corrie Leung, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

Wildcanada.net and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society BC Chapter have launched a new online citizen action centre in response to government cuts and policies affecting British Columbia's park system. Visitors to <http://www.savebcparks.net> can learn about the most critical issues facing provincial parks in BC, and take action by sending free faxes directly from the website to the appropriate government decision makers.

This website is a new online tool that combines old-fashioned face-to-face outreach and education with sophisticated on-line tools to protect nature. It provides the public with a unique opportunity to reach political decision makers on park issues. Visitors will find sample letters in response to 5 highlighted park issues, background information for each of these issues, and a Virtual Tour that visually describes each park. It is an easy tool for visitors to send five separate letters, with the simple click of their mouse, directly to Premier Gordon Campbell and Minister Joyce Murray (Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection). Letters from residents of BC are automatically tailored and sent to their provincial MLA.

Take Action and make your voice count; visit <http://www.savebcparks.net> and send your letter today! It is the responsibility of all British Columbians to ensure that BC's most treasured parks remain unimpaired for future generations.

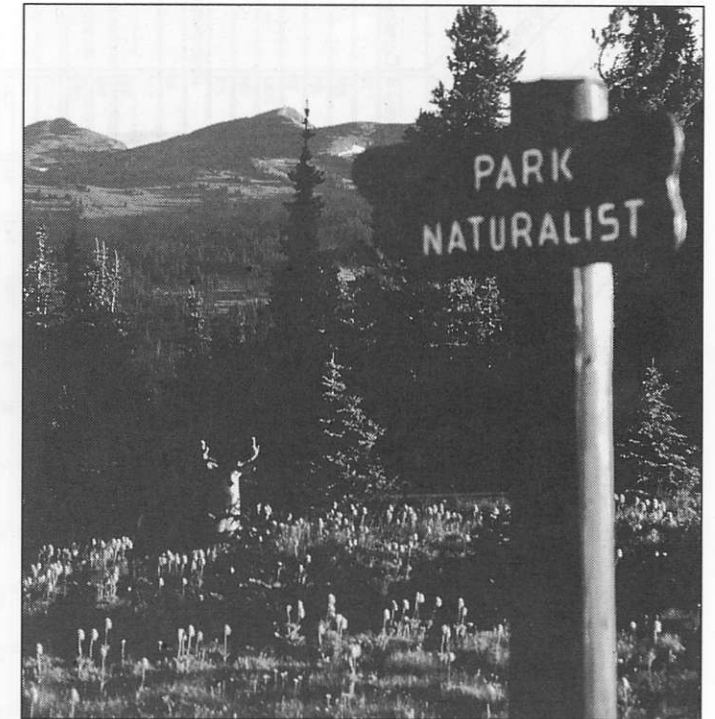


Photo: Ivan Hunter

## Results of the 2002 Christmas Bird Count

By Ann Nightingale

On December 14, over 160 real birders braved the usual Christmas Bird Count weather—wind, fog, and rain—to seek out all the birds there were to see in the Victoria count area. Once again the seas were too foul (pun intended) for the boats to get out so the ocean fowl counts were unseasonably low. We ended up with 134 species, including some unusual birds.

We recorded one new species for the Christmas Bird Count — a single Marbled Godwit seen flying over the Oak Bay waterfront — and three record highs. Despite low rainfall in the autumn, we recorded a high number of Northern Pintails. American Pipits apparently enjoyed the drier weather, also setting a new Victoria Christmas Bird Count record. A third species that broke our previous record was Peregrine Falcon.

Red-Necked Phalaropes put in appearances offshore at Albert Head and on Prospect Lake. Thanks to a recent transplant from Alberta, Bob Carroll, four Snow Buntings

didn't get through the count area unnoticed.

Although there were no new low count records, there were some notable misses. Band-Tailed Pigeons, Brown-Headed Cowbirds, Turkey Vultures and American Kestrels managed to evade all counting teams, and the Snow Geese and Wandering Tattler, which had been seen several times in the weeks prior to the count also kept a low profile. The cowbird, kestrel and tattler were recorded during the count week period.

Barbro Baker once again coordinated a great post-count gathering at St. Luke's Church Hall. Thanks go out to everyone who helped out with the count and the post-count gathering, especially the area leaders.

For those who are interested in reviewing Christmas Bird Count data, historical information and trends can be seen online at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/>. The circle code for the Victoria area is BCVI.



Victoria 2002 Christmas Bird Count																						
Count Areas	Count Areas																				Total #	Comments
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 10	Area 11	Area 12	Area 13	Area 14	Area 15	Area 16	Area 17	Area 18	Area 19	Area 20		
Species (*) = field notes																						
Red-throated loon						2								2				5	1	12	22	
Pacific loon						5					5	3	15	20	7			2		11	68	
Common loon	1					2				1	4	5	1					2		2	21	
Pied-billed grebe		1			10	2	10		3							8	3	15	11	2	65	
Horned grebe						3		2			3	1		1	3			29		2	44	
Red-necked grebe					1	5					13	5	3	1				2		4	34	
Eared grebe																				1	1	
Western grebe								1					1					1		1	4	
Brandt's cormorant						12						1		4						9	26	
Double-crested cormorant	2	4		3	121	23	3	84	38	95	8	10	13	5	7	14	14	60	18	8	530	
Pelagic cormorant			10			1		4		20	7	16	2	41	6			28		5	140	
Great blue heron	3		1	1	2	3	4	19	6	1	5		2	3		3		5	3	8	69	
Greater white-fronted goose								1													1	
Canada goose	1005		26	296	47	157	181	70	101	18						5	515	156	143	553	3,273	
Mute swan						1	18	6	2												27	
Trumpeter swan	76																2	4	16	39	137	
Wood duck																6	2		4		12	
Gadwall						6				12								24	11		53	
Eurasian wigeon						2					2										4	
American wigeon	460	24	23	12	3	2010	125	169	59	46	167	4	226		14	235	22	66	49	173	3,887	
Mallard	989	11	71	174	69	32	274	2	76	13	203	3	178	35	109	311	1313	170	91	396	4,520	
Northern shoveler	11				6	5										24	3	7	5	5	66	
Northern pintail	1182			6		7	9		2								5		4	89	1,304 high (prev 1268 in 2001)	
Green-winged teal	338		5	4		4	1						1				53	5	28	69	508	
Canvasback						3															135	
Redhead (*)											1										1	
Ring-necked duck	4	56		18	29	1										18	96	2	71	54	349	
Greater scaup									10												16	
Lesser scaup						2			325			8					4	1	1		346	
Unidentified scaup							5														5	
Harlequin duck						5				36	20	11		7							79	
Surf scoter						20	22	1		86	25	2		122	57						440	
White-winged scoter			6			3						11		6					2		22	
Black scoter						1					4										5	
Long-tailed duck (Oldsquaw)						1					5		25	30	25			78		266	430	
Bufflehead	16	12	119		20	112	162	15	137	204	10	118	11	10	230	40	1	85	16	296	1,614	
Common goldeneye	2		40			5	36	3	22	132	54		2		30	2		55		3	386	
Barrow's goldeneye	2	1	188																		191	
Hooded merganser	16	20	12	1	16	12	3	6	30	22	8	39	13	25	10	221	20	66	5	31	576	
Common merganser			15	3	28	1	7	2	2	8	6					3	17	119	13		224	
Red-breasted merganser						2	28	37	5	4	50	62	1		1	175	6		36	25	432	
Ruddy duck						5										5					10	

Victoria 2002 Christmas Bird Count																						
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	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 10	Area 11	Area 12	Area 13	Area 14	Area 15	Area 16	Area 17	Area 18	Area 19	Area 20		
Species (*) = field notes																						
Bald eagle (adult)	6	4	57	7	3	5	3	6	2			3	2	6	3		6	4	7	3	127	
Bald eagle (imm.)		3	28			3				4								2	2	1	44	
Northern harrier																					1	
Sharp-shinned hawk	1	1		2		1	1			1	1								4	1	18	
Cooper's hawk	2	7	1	1		1		1	6		1	1	1	5		1	2	2	2	3	37	
Red-tailed hawk	4	4		4	1	2			2								4	1	1	4	27	
Merlin							2	1									1	2	1	2	9	
Peregrine falcon	2	1		1				1					1				3		1	2	12 New high (prev 11 in 1997)	
Ring-necked pheasant				4																	5	
Ruffed grouse				1																	1	
Blue grouse (*)			1																		1	
California quail	24	18		31		4	3		2			10	1	4					4	12	113	
Virginia rail																				2	2	
American coot						22			2				1			5	13	484	28	3	558	
Black-bellied plover									2												6	
Killdeer	15			9		1															47	
Black oystercatcher										4	2	4	35	3							48	
Greater yellowlegs										1		3	2								7	
Whimbrel												1									1	
Black turnstone						5	21			70	8	11	8	4							127	
Surfbird										4	20										24	
Sanderling							1			18											19	
Dunlin						19	12														32	
Red Phalarope*						1															2	
Marbled Godwit													1								1 New species	
Common snipe						2															16	
Bonaparte's gull			1			3						26									30	
Mew gull			5			265	805	21	107	22	20	26	36	52	15	38	1	247	4	187	1,851	
California gull						1	1									1					4	
Herring gull			8													5					2	
Thayer's gull			5			31			4			4	1			42	1			6	94	
Western gull			2			2	1				2					1	1				9	
Glaucous Gull			1																		1	
Glaucous-winged gull	259	48	3552	110	252	493	361	40	380	26	134	83	75	189	61	72	437	353	81	302	7,308	
Unidentified gull	20								210												475	
Common murre						34				1			1	1							38	
Pigeon guillemot						2						2	13	6				2			25	
Marbled murrelet													4	2							7	
Ancient murrelet						15								5							20	
Rhinoceros auklet										32				1							34	
Rock dove				16		21	187	18		3	60	8			13				31	39	419	
Mourning dove																					2	
Barn owl																					1	
Great horned owl																				2	2	



Victoria 2002 Christmas Bird Count

Count Areas	Victoria 2002 Christmas Bird Count																				Total #	Comments
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Species ( * ) = field notes																						
Barred owl																					3	
Short-eared owl																					1	
Northern saw-whet owl																					4	
Anna's hummingbird																					104	
Belted kingfisher	2	2	3	2	3	1	1	6	2												37	
Red-breasted sapsucker																					4	
Downy woodpecker	2	1	1	2	1	2	3														6	
Hairy woodpecker																					9	
Northern flicker	29	15	7	17	11	20	17	9	22	5	5	9	27	12	7	6	16	27	13	269	12	
Pileated woodpecker																					2	
Northern shrike																					1	
Hutton's vireo ( * )																					2	
Stellar's jay	12	13	4	15	19	16	7	2	7												144	
Northwestern crow	972	20	325	305	94	18	76	20	311	32	67	23	54	71	859	70	97	4022	57	224	7,717	
Common raven	25	34	2	10	22	14	6	4	2												192	
Sky lark																					73	
Chestnut-backed chickadee	62	77	39	75	88	61	64	35	98	14	44	50	85	105	61	53	42	131	321	81	1,586	
Bushlark	6	23	8	37			34	25	109	78	102	40	43	147	29	40	30	47	62	88	948	
Red-breasted nuthatch	3	2		2	1	3	2	2	7	5	4	2	3	6	2	3	2	4	10	1	64	
Brown creeper	3	3		13	6	2	4	3	3	4	5	3	11	4	1	4	21	6	23	119	119	
Bewick's wren	3	4		11	6	2	4	2	5	5	2	2	3	10	7	7	5	7	13	21	119	
Winter wren	3	9	23	17	6	4	12	8	12	14	3	2	2	10	24	2	5	16	21	20	213	
Marsh wren	2	1		2	1	1															23	
American dipper																					8	
Golden-crowned kinglet	107	177	147	97	76	92	87	25	77	15	12	9	50	55	36	14	9	82	311	147	1,625	
Ruby-crowned kinglet	12	9	3	12	15	6	21	2	9	23	1	4	9	10	8	16	17	21	12	23	233	
Hermit thrush																					8	
American robin	156	2553	256	472	253	577	351	71	452	32	68	18	250	489	248	79	330	273	2882	529	10,339	
Varied thrush	7	14	23	4	4	20	26														122	
European starling	120	723	45	78	142	132	63	24	319	270	74	11	55	363	6	46	44	179	462	655	3,811	
American pipit																					272	New high (prev 212 in 1997)
Cedar waxwing																					131	
Yellow-rumped warbler																					2	
Spotted towhee	36	15	8	22	14	15	27	2	9	11	3	8	20	32	25	32	22	44	55	86	486	
Savannah sparrow																					24	
Fox sparrow	15	7	3	11	25	5	54														313	
Song sparrow	36	9	17	32	37	14	46	1	26	56	9	2	9	25	18	17	21	32	66	127	600	
Lincoln's sparrow																					8	
White-throated sparrow																					17	
																					6	

Victoria 2002 Christmas Bird Count

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	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 10	Area 11	Area 12	Area 13	Area 14	Area 15	Area 16	Area 17	Area 18	Area 19	Area 20		
Species ( * ) = field notes																						
White-crowned sparrow																					165	
Golden-crowned sparrow	35	3	8	23	12	24	17	10	52	32	6	5	3	30	9	57	31	23	38	202	620	
Dark-eyed junco	350	36	20	116	190	75	130	50	202	38	44	18	42	144	170	9	81	222	387	424	2,748	
Snow bunting ( * )																					4	new high (prev high 3 in 1993)
Red-winged blackbird	100	2		52	13	2	1	2													508	
Brewer's blackbird																					571	
Purple finch	10			50	150		67	9													23	
House finch	131	14	3	43	2	11	52	25	92	76	80	31	36	127	117	70	75	104	65	323	1,477	
Red crossbill																					14	
Pine siskin	27			20	450		30	153													1,859	
American goldfinch																					60	
House sparrow	26	30	2	65	26	54	10	12	479	191	32	12	5	67	206	97	168	112	88	135	1,817	
Count Totals	6,635	4,115	5,153	2,690	1,920	4,605	3,659	830	3,902	1,884	1,424	659	1,570	2,524	2,797	1,768	3,768	8,112	5,967	7,292	71,274	
Species Totals	52	43	46	50	48	81	66	46	57	48	48	51	57	60	45	55	56	66	67	95	134	

# Highlights of the 2002 Sooke Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 21, 2002

The day dawned crisp and cool, low 2 Celsius and high about 7. It was clear most of the day and partly cloudy toward dusk. On the Strait of Juan de Fuca the seas were calm. Who could ask for a better day!

There were fifty participants, probably a record for the Sooke Count. All nine areas were well covered and there was particularly great coverage of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

**Species Count:** 115. **Count Total:** 35,616.

Highlights included:

- Red Phalarope:** Four groups observed a total of 560 individuals of this species along the Strait; the second time this species has been recorded from the Sooke Count. Eight Previous records from Christmas Counts in British Columbia yielded a high count 24, so this record will likely stand a long time.
- California Gull:** Four groups also recorded this species. Previous Sooke records were 1 in 1992, 6 in 1994, so this year's count of nine individuals is a high.
- Yellow-billed Loon:** This seldom-seen species was observed at Sooke Harbour from the Government Wharf.
- Other highlights included a feeding flock of 8000 unidentified gulls, 5333 Common Murres, and 669 Ancient Murrelets, all observed off Race Rocks, and Spotted Sandpiper on shore at the Sooke Basin. Land birds included two Annas' Hummingbirds, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Western Meadowlark.

**Owling:** Great cooperation from the owlers this year. Five groups participated, yielding Western Screech Owl (1), Great-horned Owl (6) Northern Pygmy Owl (2), Barred Owl (1), and Northern Saw-whet Owl (2). Thanks to coordinator Denise Gubersky.

**Feeders:** Thanks to Coordinator Shirley Connor. Seven groups (12 individuals) reported and they added Cedar Waxwing and White-throated Sparrow to the species list.

**Special Thanks:** To Area leaders Robin Robinson, Denise Gubersky, Rick Shortinghuis, Alan MacLeod, Colleen O'Brien, Mike Shepard, Barbara Begg, and Bruce Whittington for prompt submission of data; to Gary Fletcher and Brent Beach who supplied watercraft; and to Jean McLeod and Terri Muir for tasty food. Finally, heartfelt thanks to all the participants who helped make this year's Sooke Count such a success.

JACK MCLEOD, *Coordinator and Compiler, January 18, 2003.*



# Sooke Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 21 Summary Sheet

Species	Number Observed										TOTAL
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Feeder	
Red-throated loon		3		1				1	1		6
Pacific loon	19	15	4	49	12	5	6		13		123
Common loon	6	10	1	5	4	3	6		1		36
Yellow-billed loon		1									1
Pied-billed grebe		2				2					4
Horned grebe	89	11		1	2	12	17	1	8		141
Red-necked grebe	1	5		4	8	8	8		8		42
Western grebe		1	5		3						9
Double-crested cormorant	55	112	53	60	84	17	6	9	37		433
Brandt's cormorant		6		3	365				8		382
Pelagic cormorant	35	35	9	24	23	6	1		12		145
Great blue heron	5	7	16	2	3	4	2	2	4		45
Trumpeter swan			2								2
Mute swan		6	8				2				16
Greater white fronted goose		6									6
Canada goose	41	391	322	62	73		10	2	24		925
Green-winged teal		1	6								7
Mallard	10	164	206	37	3	5	54	38			517
Northern pintail			11								11
Northern shoveller		8									8
Gadwall		1	9								10
Eurasian wigeon		3	1					2			6
American wigeon	10	634	326				8	90			1068
Ring-necked duck		2			21	7	2	2			34
Greater scaup	3	19	6	14							42
Lesser scaup		9	3								12
Scaup sp.				2							2
Harlequin duck	2	8			32	2			2		46
Long-tailed Duck	11	21		24							56
Surf scoter	47	262		37	24		6		31		407
White-winged scoter	4			13		3					20
Common goldeneye	1	16	76	16		2		9	3		123
Barrow's goldeneye			14					1			15
Bufflehead	70	411	147	286	95	137	57	13	109		1325
Hooded merganser	2	11	1	2	7	13	11	2			49
Common merganser	10	10	5	1	3		1		2		32
Red breasted merganser	7	91	62	6	4	23	40		12		245
Turkey vulture					6						6
Bald eagle	3	5	1	5	2	1	1	1	5	2	26
Sharp-shinned hawk	1		1		1		1			1	5
Cooper's hawk			1		1	4	1	1			8
Red-tailed hawk	1	4	1	2	4		2	3		1	18
Merlin	2	1	2				1		1		7
Peregrine falcon			1		2						3
California quail	12	18	73	6	10	2	4	18		59	202
Virginia rail						3					3

Species	Number Observed										TOTAL
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Feeder	
Red phalarope (*)	132			114	129					185	560
Kildeer	16		9						9		34
Black oystercatcher		1	11		48				2		62
Greater yellowlegs		1									1
Spotted sandpiper				1			1				2
Black turnstone	7	30	9		27	3					76
Surfbird			2		2						4
Rock sandpiper					5						5
Common snipe			2		1						3
Bonaparte's gull			1								1
Mew gull	2	159	3	23	1218	9	42		9		1465
California Gull (*)		1		1	2				5		9
Herring gull	17				12						29
Thayer's gull		6	4		2002						2012
Western gull		3	1		1						5
Glaucous-winged gull	22	356	203	67	840	46	42	71	56		1703
Unidentified gull	23	2			8000	7					8032
Common murre	1			387	4800				145		5333
Pigeon guillemot	3			2	11	7					23
Marbled murrelet		1	4						2		7
Ancient murrelet				13	642				14		669
Rhinoceros auklet	1			11	1				4		17
Rock dove		6						27			33
Western screech owl								1			1
Great horned owl		1		1	4						6
Northern pygmy owl			1					1			2
Barred owl					1						1
Northern saw-whet owl					1			1			2
Anna's hummingbird			2					2			4
Belted kingfisher	1	2	13	3	4	4	6	4	1		38
Red-breasted sapsucker	2		5	2			1			1	11
Downy woodpecker	1	5	2	3	2	2	2	2			19
Hairy woodpecker	1	1	1	2	6		1			1	13
Northern flicker	9	28	21	20	55	15	11	18		8	185
Pileated woodpecker		5		2	2	2					11
Steller's jay	22	38	22	12	60	20	20	23		12	229
Northwestern crow	36	183	291	16	1	4	33	38		22	624
Common raven	9	22	9	6	6	6	5	54		4	121
Chestnut-backed chickadee	29	70	125	97	24	91	36	72		40	584
Bushtit	36	34	48					10		9	137
Red breasted nuthatch	6	6	13	10	7	2	10	7		6	67
Brown creeper		1	7	4	1	12	10	4		1	40
Bewick's wren	1	5	15			3	8	10		1	43
Winter wren	4	10	42	49	33	21	16	38			213
Marsh wren			1		2						3
American dipper		2									2
Golden-crowned kinglet	70	13	117	134	80	133	22	172		5	746
Ruby-crowned kinglet	8	29	22	30	12	5	15	66			187
Hermit thrush	1			1				3			5
American robin	27	89	181	34	220	120	54	60		4	789
Varied thrush	2	12	14	24	10	9	7	39		4	121



Species	Number Observed										TOTAL	
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Feeder		
Cedar waxwing											15	15
European starling	32	270	194	31	44	25	155	93			3	847
Hutton's vireo					1							1
Yellow-rumped warbler		1	1									2
Spotted towhee	15	36	60	20	9	20	18	34			12	224
Fox sparrow	15	53	138	15	4	14	31	30			13	313
Song sparrow	16	82	99	45	15	29	31	39			5	361
Lincoln's sparrow	1	1				1						3
White-throated sparrow											1	1
Golden-crowned sparrow	14	64	12	5	2	28	32	18			10	185
White-crowned sparrow	5	29					6				8	48
Dark-eyed junco	83	236	227	106	28	106	54	200			101	1141
Red-winged blackbird	12	7			12		12	1			3	47
Western meadowlark			1									1
Brewer's blackbird	1	50						2				53
Purple finch		15	2			1		1				19
House finch		56	45		8	12	74	24			6	225
Red crossbill		16	3	58				3				80
Pine siskin	150	215	237	70	145			125			8	950
House sparrow	25	103	15				20	10			9	182
COUNT TOTALS	1305	4666	3608	2081	19332	1019	1021	1497	712	375		35616
SPECIES TOTALS	64	82	75	59	71	52	51	53	28	31		115

\*= Field description required  
dup = duplicate record  
US = unusual species  
HC = high count for circle

Area 1 = Otter Point/Young Lake  
Area 2 = Sooke Townsite/Whiffin Spit  
Area 3 = Billings Spit/Sooke R./Sooke Basin (north)  
Area 4 = E. Sooke Pk./Sooke Basin (south)  
Area 5 = Rocky Point/Race Rocks  
Area 6 = Beecher Bay, Matheson Lk. Pk.  
Area 7 = Metchosin/Pedder Bay  
Area 8 = Roche Cove/North Metchosin  
Area 9 = Pelagic - Beecher Bay to Otter Point

## Notice of Resolution

Notice is hereby given that the Directors of the Victoria Natural History Society propose the following resolution, to be discussed and voted upon at the Annual General Meeting of the Society on Tuesday, March 11, 2003.

WHEREAS by Clause 1.01 of the Bylaws of the Society there are six classes of membership as follows:

- Individual — for any person 16 years of age or older;
- Family — for husband and wife and/or parent(s) and dependent children and each person shall be classed as an individual or junior member;
- Golden Age — For any person aged sixty-five or over;
- Junior — for any person under the age of 16 years who has paid the membership dues, and the dependent children within a family membership;
- Sustaining — for any person eligible for membership who pays a minimum of three times the annual dues based on the individual membership;
- Honorary Life — any person who has rendered outstanding service to the Society by increasing knowledge of and interest in natural history may be made an honorary life member;

AND WHEREAS it has been determined that these six classes of membership no longer accurately reflect the desired membership classes of the Society:

Be it Resolved that the following clause be substituted in the bylaws for Clause 1.01:

There shall be six classes of membership as follows:

- Individual — For any person 16 years of age or older who is not in full time attendance at a recognized course of study;
- Family — For spouses or life partners and/or parents and their dependent children and each person shall be classed as an individual or junior member;
- Senior Member — For any person aged sixty-five or over;
- Student/Junior — For any person who is in full time attendance at a recognized course of study or who has not reached 16 years of age and who is not included in a family membership;
- Sustaining — For any person eligible for membership who pays an amount in dues as set by the Society from time to time and which is greater than those of a regular membership;
- Honorary Life — Any person who has rendered outstanding service to the Society by increasing knowledge of and interest in natural history may be made an honorary life member;

## Letters

Victoria Natural History Society,

I am writing to express my gratitude for having been granted the Samuel Simco Bursary this semester (fall 2002). The financial aid will be put towards my tuition and will help me tremendously, as I completely rely on government financial help. Your contribution goes towards helping a female science student achieve a Bachelor of Science with Distinction. Thank you again. It is a significant contribution to my education.

Caroline H. Fox

Victoria Natural History Society,

I would like to thank-you for awarding me the Freeman F. King scholarship. The monies received will be helpful in paying for tuition and school supplies, and are very appreciated.

I was impressed and motivated by Mr. King's dedication to nature and his role in promoting the appreciation and preservation of natural sites. I am honoured to receive a scholarship in his name.

As I complete my final year of a Bachelor of Science with a major in Biology, and throughout the rest of my own life, like Mr. King, I will also try to maintain and encourage in others respect and appreciation of the natural world.

Thank-you, Amy Spink

Dear Marilyn and Ross Archibald,

For some time I have been meaning to write to mention that I have very much appreciated your editorials. The one in the current issue is about a problem that has concerned many of us for a long time.

There are a couple of additional points I should like to make. One concerns present day regulations, which disallow clotheslines of any sort in some subdivisions. I think that is dreadful because clothes drying in electrical dryers are extremely costly in energy. It is nice, in very wet weather, to have the option of using such a dryer but here for most of the year, clothes can be mostly or completely dried outdoors at a huge saving in energy so clotheslines *should be allowed*. As well, the clothes come in smelling wonderful. Also, I see nothing objectionable about a line full of clothes drying. In other words, land developers should not be allowed to make those regulations.

In about the past ten years, I have written to Powersmart at least three times expressing this opinion and my comments have never been acknowledged. That has caused me to wonder how serious 'PowerSmart' is about energy savings.

Thank you again for your thoughtful editorials.

Yours truly, Tannis Warburton

Editors, *The Victoria Naturalist*

Santa Claus  
True North Pole

Dear Editors,

I am a bit miffed after reading *A Reindeer is a Caribou*.

The author is right when he says that I collected my Caribou — oops, Reindeer from Europe. They were recruited from the gentle, refined animals of Lapland in northern Scandinavia, not from those shaggy, wild Canadian beasts.

Poor Rudolf is sulking again. He was just recovering (after months of counselling) from the trauma of his teammates laughing and calling him names. Being barred from those rollicking Reindeer games was particularly harmful to his psyche. There was even a rumour (not true) that his nose was the wages of his tipping absolute vodka. Now they are calling him Rudolf the Red Nosed Caribou! Devastating!

Sincerely, Santa [signed, in red]

S. Claus for Rudolf and the fleet-of-foot Caribou team.

(Editors Note: Imagine our surprise when we received this signed letter. Note the spelling of Rudolf. This letter has just got to be from The Man!)

## Queen's Jubilee Medal to Island Naturalists

Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal were awarded by the Honourable Joyce Murray, BC's Minister of Water, Land & Air Protection on February 1, to two of our members for their contributions to the community.

Jeremy McCall, FBCN President, provided the following background for these awards: "There are many naturalists throughout BC who have given countless hours of their time as volunteers over the years, whether in the fields of nature education and interpretation, through their contributions to the conservation of precious BC species and habitats, or by helping members of the public to appreciate BC's exceptional natural features. Those who are to be honoured with the Jubilee Medal on this occasion are really just the tip of the iceberg, and in many ways they represent the entire naturalist community".

**Bill Merilees**, Nanaimo, for his exceptional contribution to nature education by acting as the volunteer organizer and guide for nature tours throughout BC and the Pacific Northwest, which have been enjoyed by more than 1,000 British Columbians;

**David Stirling**, Victoria, for his significant contribution to the establishment of the park naturalist program in BC and for leading countless natural history field trips as a volunteer for many years.



# The Accumulation of Garbage

By Tannis Warburton

The accumulation of garbage in communities throughout this country is a very serious environmental problem. In a discussion of the problem, governments are often quoted as stating that every man, woman and child produces almost two kilograms of waste per day. By dividing the total mass of garbage by the total number of citizens, authorities avoid acknowledging that various huge manufacturers and advertisers are the major producers of garbage.

The major part of garbage is not produced by consumers, but is foisted on them by these manufacturers and advertisers. Governments must stop nagging and blaming the consumers who are in fact the victims and attack the real source of most of the problem. Whether it is food, hardware or children's toys, most of what we need is excessively wrapped. As well, every week, masses of unwanted papers, fliers, magazines, packages of coupons, etc. arrive at our doors. For consumers, the added 'sting' is that they of course pay for all this unnecessary packaging and pay again in taxes for its disposal, while manufacturers get tax 'write-offs' because the garbage they so aggressively distribute is listed in their ledgers under "costs". In order to produce all the paper, our forests are needlessly destroyed and our atmosphere polluted to make the paper pulp. It is a never-ending cycle.

Sorting refuse and recycling bottles, tins and paper is important but it is trivial compared with the need to vastly reduce the creation and distribution of massive amounts of non-recyclable materials by manufacturers. Plastic, properly

used for durable goods such as plumbing, portable toilets, telephones, casings for all kinds of electronic equipment etc. is a boon. As well, it is a wonderful material for making various kinds of medical equipment such as containers for plasma, blood and IV solutions and for medical tubing. We should value it for such purposes. On the other hand it is a disgrace to be using plastic for "throw-away" wrappings such as grocery bags and fast food containers. Styrofoam is especially bad. Disposable diapers too, are rapidly becoming a garbage menace. Of course we need paper products like toilet paper, but the rolls need not be swathed in plastic. Thin paper wrap would be vastly better. Many foods need careful packaging in glass, tin or even plastic at times but discretion should be used.

Management of garbage disposal is important and in our area, recycling has been promoted for some years, even long before the blue box plan started up. However, most materials can be recycled only a limited number of times, which means that until governments stop blaming the victims, and enact laws to severely restrict the creation and distribution of garbage by manufacturers and advertisers, the waste problem will worsen and plague us more than ever.

Media ads constantly promote the use of "throw-away" goods. That must change.

*[Editors' note: This article originated as a letter to political leaders in 1991. The fact that it is still relevant raises the question whether our "leaders" are our leaders, or whether ordinary citizens need to lead the leaders.]*

# President's Message

By Bruce Whittington

This is the last epistle you will read from me as President of VNHS. It has been five years since I rejoined the board of the Society, and I have served four as President. It is an old saw, but time really does fly by.

I have always felt that VNHS held a collective experience that was both very broad, and very deep, and the last four years have cemented that feeling for me. I also know that this experience fuels a great potential to further the Society's goals. I have been really proud of the way our members have helped enhance the VNHS presence in the community.

We have seen members quietly working with other organizations to guide the protection of such important areas as Rithet's Bog and Viaduct Flats. Others are contributing their time and knowledge to document Bald Eagle nesting trees, and conduct waterfront bird surveys, breeding bird surveys, and Christmas Bird Counts and Butterfly Counts.

VNHS has been a partner in other initiatives, too. Video cameras have been installed to observe the nesting of Cooper's Hawks and other species, and we have supported the "Nature of Island Artists" exhibit at Goldstream Park Visitor Centre. A hard working group helped spread the word about native plant gardening, with the wildly successful "Wild Garden Party" exhibit at the Victoria Flower and Garden Show.

The VNHS Green Spaces Project has built on its early inventory efforts, establishing itself (and the Society) as a credible and proactive organization contributing to habitat protection. The amount of work, which has been done, is mind-boggling.

Our tradition of support for Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary continues, both financially, and with representation on its Board. VNHS has also provided financial support for Habitat Acquisition Trust, which it founded in 1995, and the Rocky Point Bird Observatory. Both organizations are actively supported by VNHS members as well.

VNHS quietly provides opportunities for students in the environmental field, through several financial awards at post-secondary institutions, the newest established at Royal Roads University in 2002.

Within our Society, our program of natural history presentations and field trips sets a very high standard. Our birding courses are helping members and newcomers learn more about our birds, and contribute to our fundraising for conservation projects.

Our publications continue to reach out to our own members, and to the broader public. The *Naturalist* has published Society news, and important scientific notes alike. Our bird checklist was updated in 2001, with the support of

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Many of our successes are ongoing, continuing work begun years before. Others are new, and a few have yet to bear fruit... It is a real source of pride to me, looking back at what we have done together, as a community of naturalists.

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the Victoria Foundation, and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation made it possible for us to publish a new colour brochure, to reach out to new members. VNHS has also launched a completely redesigned web site ([www.vicnhs.bc.ca](http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca)), which keeps our members up to date, and helps us to let other naturalists know how to reach us.

We have assisted with interpretive signage at King's Pond, and Victoria International Airport, and will soon have signs erected at Esquimalt Lagoon, as part of our role in the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative. They are all helping to inform the public about wildlife in our community, and the importance of conservation and good stewardship.

We are part of a broader community, too. As a member club of the Federation of BC Naturalists, we hosted a very successful FBCN Annual General Meeting, and we have been well represented at FBCN events.

Is it all done? No, there are a lot of initiatives I would like to have given more time to. Our Parks and Conservation Committee need to look at a revised role. The Young Naturalists Club of B.C. is offering an excellent magazine, and programs for younger naturalists and their families, and needs more support from VNHS as it becomes more firmly established.

Many of our successes are ongoing, continuing work begun years before. Others are new, and a few have yet to bear fruit. I have written them down, not as an exhaustive list, and certainly not to identify (or omit) some rather than others. Rather, it is a real source of pride to me, looking back at what we have done together, as a community of naturalists. In particular, I have been very grateful for the work of colleagues on the Board, who have helped make my time as President a rewarding one. I am pleased that most will still be there when I return as Past President. I am looking forward to more successes, and I have no doubt we will have them.

## Welcome to New Members

**Sandra and Ted Davis**  
Colville Road  
*Botany*

**Douglas Carrick**  
Harwood Road  
Hornby Island

**Brian Simmons**  
Boyd Street  
*Birds, conservation, marine*

**Anne and Connla Wood**  
Fairfield Road

**Hazel Colme**  
Fairfield Road  
*Birds, botany, fauna, marine*

**Pat and Ean Maxwell**  
Tryon Road  
*Birds, hiking, gardening, sailing*

**Faith Balmer**  
Fairfield Road  
*Birds, animals, marine*

**Debra Barr**  
Aspen Place  
*Birds*

**Mary-Anne Hampson**  
Lochside Drive  
*Birds*

**James Miskelly**  
Meadowvale Drive  
*Entomology, botany*

**F. Roland DeCosse**  
Beach Drive  
*Birds*

**Brendan Rush**  
Dufour Road, Sooke





## HAT Tricks

By Boyd Piper, Executive Director

three Beacon Hill Parks combined! Negotiations on a further eight properties are under way.

HAT's stewardship project list is even more extensive:

- *Connecting for Conservation*, a forum and vehicle for local community conservation groups to connect, is into its third year ([www.conservationconnection.bc.ca](http://www.conservationconnection.bc.ca)) and HAT is hoping to coordinate this year's forum with the national stewardship conference — *Leading Edge: Stewardship & Conservation in Canada 2003* to be held in July;
- *Tod Creek Watershed Project*, a community restoration project involving a salmon-bearing stream,
- *Planning and Stewardship in Your Community*, a municipal planning and outreach project;
- *Provincial Parks Programming*, a joint education venture to keep the Goldstream Visitor Centre and its associated school programs running;
- *Urban Forest Stewardship Project*, an initiative to protect and raise awareness about our remaining urban wooded areas; and
- *Good Neighbours Strategy*, an extremely successful community outreach programme in its first phase and a second phase in planning, connects to local groups around identified parks to create ecological buffers around these protected areas by encouraging the owners of adjoining private lands to use good stewardship practices and to implement stewardship agreements and conservation covenants.

HAT is also involved in the planning of the *Leading Edge* conference, which will be a great way to focus on our region's vibrant conservation and stewardship movement ([www.stewardship2003.ca](http://www.stewardship2003.ca)).

As you can see, I have a lot of work ahead of me. But HAT has great staff and with our supporters we can succeed in *creating a conservation legacy*.

I hope that I can count on your support and, as always, donations are welcome. Feel free to drop by our office (316 – 620 View Street), call us at 250-995-2428, e-mail us at [hatmail@hat.bc.ca](mailto:hatmail@hat.bc.ca) or check out our website: [www.hat.bc.ca](http://www.hat.bc.ca).

I am quickly learning that it is always busy at the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) office but for me in particular these last few weeks have been a whirlwind.

I began halfway through the month of January as the new Executive Director and was immediately absorbed into the midst of a major funding application. This was on top of all of the other tasks associated with being HAT's executive director (not to mention trying to learn a new office system!).

I am a lawyer, but I am not your usual lawyer. My strengths and interests are in strategic planning, communications and public policy. I came to HAT from a short spell in private practice but I have worked for the David Suzuki Foundation, the Tenants' Rights Action Coalition and the provincial government to name but a few. In all, including going back and getting a law degree as a mature student, I have spent twenty years in the non-profit, labour and environmental sectors and I have loved it.

Other environmental work for me has included the Friends of Matson Lands, a community group committed to protecting the last Garry oak meadow in the Inner Harbour, and working with Rhinoceros Auklets as my spouse's field assistant on Triangle Island.

Habitat Acquisition Trust is our regional land trust and I am looking forward to working with you to make HAT the first name that comes to the public's mind when you ask about habitat preservation in the Capital Region.

HAT is beginning its fourth year of its five-year plan and I anticipate great successes. HAT's mandate is to promote the preservation of the natural environment on southern Vancouver Island and the southern Gulf Islands by:

- conserving habitats by acquisition, conservation covenants, or other legal mechanisms; and
- promoting habitat stewardship, education and research.

HAT has an excellent history of successful land acquisitions under its belt beginning with Ayum Creek in Sooke in 1998 and continuing to the recent completion of Laughlin Lake on Galiano Island. This year holds out the promise of several more significant acquisitions in the Capital Region.

HAT holds or co-holds 16 conservation covenants in the Capital Region for a total of 685 hectares protected — that is equal to Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park, Mt. Douglas and

## 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 Murray and Anne Fraser 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. The VNHS Calendar also appears on the Internet at: <http://www.vicNHS.bc.ca>.

### MARCH

#### Sunday March 9

##### *Tod Creek Watershed Open House Day*

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Habitat Acquisition Trust and The Friends of the Tod Creek Watershed present our Open House. Activities will include poster board displays, kids activities, nest box building, and native plant propagation. Snacks will be available. If you are interested in any of these activities and/or you live in the Tod Creek watershed, please join us at the Prospect Lake Community Hall, 5358 Sparton Road. For more information, please contact HAT at 995-2428 or by e-mail: [hatmail@hat.bc.ca](mailto:hatmail@hat.bc.ca)

#### Tuesday, March 11

##### *VNHS Annual General Meeting*

7:30 p.m., Room 159 Fraser Building, UVic.

#### Tuesday, March 11

##### *Natural History Night Wandering Wolverines*

Wolverines are one of the North American wilderness icons. Fabled for their ferocity and destructive nature they are actually one of the least understood carnivores. In order to better our understanding of wolverine biology, provincial government biologist **Eric Lofroth** initiated the Northern Wolverine Project in 1995. This research program has worked in cooperation with projects in Alaska, southern BC, NWT and Idaho to further our knowledge of the species life history. Eric will discuss the research that he has conducted and how his findings fit with our understanding of wolverine ecology elsewhere in its range. See you at 7:30 p.m., Room 159, the Fraser Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

#### Sunday, March 16

##### *Birding Viaduct Flats and Quick's Bottom*

Come and check out the great new trails around Viaduct Flats, and those trails connecting with Quick's Bottom. Meet on Interurban Road at Viaduct Avenue West at 8:00 a.m. Leader TBA.

#### Tuesday, March 18

##### *Botany Night, Owl-clovers in Victoria*

Owl-clovers are annual plants that look like miniature Indian Paintbrushes. **Matt Fairbarns** will reveal the peculiar life of owl-clovers and explain why so many of them appear to be threatened or endangered in British Columbia. He will also try to explain why botanists seem to make a living out of confusing names. Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, March 26

##### *Birders Night*

##### *The Purple Martin — Its Natural History*

**Cam Finlay** of Victoria has spent many years observing and studying Purple Martins and enhancing their nesting habitats in both Alberta and BC. He will present a slide-illustrated talk entitled: "The Purple Martin — Its Natural History". Join us as we migrate to South America and back. Bring a friend, a novice birder and your coffee cup. 7:30 p.m., Murray and Anne Fraser 159, UVic.

#### Saturday, March 29

##### *Birding at Rithet's Bog*

Join **Marie O'Shaughnessy**, for a birding walk around Rithet's Bog. There should be swallows around, and perhaps the first of our Rufous Hummingbirds returning to spar with resident Anna's Hummingbirds. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking lot on Dalewood Lane (just off Chatterton Way in the northwest corner of the bog). Call Marie at 598-9680 for more information.

#### Sunday, March 30

##### *Botanical Exploration*

**Hans Roemer**, a well-respected Victoria botanist, will lead you on a fascinating journey through the old growth forest on the Royal Roads University grounds. Meet in the parking lot at the end of West Campus Road by the Cedar Building at 9:00 a.m. Bring some loonies for parking.

#### Monday, March 31

##### *Marine Night*

##### *From Swimming Larvae to Crawling Adults — When Do Invertebrate Larvae "Grow Up"?*

**Maryna Lesoway**, a graduate student at the University of Victoria, will speak about the strategies used by marine invertebrate larvae to enhance settlement and metamorphosis into an adult, including the ability of larvae to delay metamorphosis 7:30 p.m. at Swan Lake Nature Centre. For updates on upcoming talks please check the Marine Night website <http://pacificcoast.net/~plambert/index.html> or VNHS website at <http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/home.html>.

### APRIL

#### Tuesday, April 8

##### *Natural History Night The Spiders of British Columbia*

British Columbia is home to hundreds of species of spiders ranging from formidable trapdoor-building tarantula relatives to tiny, delicate money spiders. Through slides, overheads, and some live and preserved specimens, spider expert **Robb Bennett** will help you



with identifying spiders and introduce you to some of BC's more common spiders. Of special interest to Victoria residents, he will include information on our local black widow, hobo and giant house spider populations as well as images and a discussion of the famous 2002 "McBride spider field." Bring in any live spider you can find for Rob to identify. See you at 7:30 p.m., Room 159, the Fraser Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

#### Saturday, April 12

##### *Spring Flowers in Brentwood Bay*

Rick Schortinghuis will lead an exploration of two parks: Oak Haven Park and Gore Park in Central Saanich. Meet 9 a.m. on at the entrance to Oak Haven Park on Garden Gate Drive (off Wallace and just South of Benvenuto Ave.) Phone Rick Schortinghuis for more information (652-3326).

#### Sunday, April 13

##### *Spring Wildflowers around Cowichan Lake*

Come along with **Marilyn Lambert** for a wildflower exploration of the Cowichan Lake area. This time of year we expect to see some amazing displays of both pink and white fawn lilies, trillium, and wild ginger. Meet at the Helmcken Rd. Park-and-Ride at 9:00 a.m. Phone Marilyn at 477-5922 for more information.

#### Tuesday, April 15

##### *Botany Night, Sand and Surf: Beach Plant Communities of the West Coast of Vancouver Island*

**Nick Page** will talk about sandy beaches on the west coast of Vancouver Island that support a distinctive plant community that is adapted to unique environmental conditions near the shore. There is a range of interesting plants that are confined to the narrow strip of beach ridges, dunes, and meadows between the upper extent of tides and waves and the dense Sitka spruce dominated forest inland. The presentation will focus on the rare and unusual plants of this ecosystem, and will give an overview of recent research on spatial patterns of the native and exotic plants species. Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

#### Sunday, April 20

##### *Wildflowers and Birds on Jocelyn Hill*

Join **Rick Schortinghuis** for a memorable nature hike up Jocelyn Hill. At this time of year Jocelyn Hill can be a good location for Townsend's Solitaires and Blue Grouse. There is an amazing diversity of wildflowers in bloom and the panoramic views from the top are breathtaking. Pack a lunch and a drink, and be prepared for a strenuous hike. To sign up for this hike please call Rick at 652-3326

#### Saturday, April 26

##### *Wild Flower and Birds on Mount Tzuhalem*

Join **Ed Pellizzon** and **Rick Schortinghuis** for a hike to the Ecological Reserve on Mount Tzuhalem, and another area of Mount Tzuhalem accessed from Genoa Bay. Bring a lunch and a drink, and be prepared for a strenuous hike. Meet at Helmcken Park and Ride at 7:00 a.m. Call Ed at 881-1476 or Rick at 652-3326 if you need more information.

#### Sunday, April 27

##### *A Natural History Walk in Uplands Park*

Join **Joy and Cam Finlay** for a guided walk in Uplands Park to see spring wildflowers, birds and butterflies. Meet at Cattle Point at 8:00 a.m. Call Joy or Cam at 479-9833 for more information.

#### Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27

##### *Gardening for Wildlife — A Native Plant Gardening Sale and Demonstration*

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Swan Lake Nature House, 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria. Selections of over 3,500 native plants (more than 100 species) are available at this special (8th annual) weekend event, as well as seeds, books, bird feeders and nesting boxes. Workshops, presentations, demonstrations and displays on gardening with drought-tolerant native plants and developing wildlife habitat in urban settings are included in the admission price. Plant list and presentation schedule at: [www.swanlake.bc.ca](http://www.swanlake.bc.ca)

#### Monday April 28

##### *Marine Night*

7:30 p.m. at Swan Lake Nature Centre.

At press time a speaker was not determined so please check <http://pacificcoast.net/~plambert/index.html> or VNHS website at <http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/home.html> for details in April.

#### Tuesday, April 29

##### *Author reading and slide show with Chris Czajkowski*

author of *Snowshoes and Spotted Dick: Letters from a Wilderness Dweller*. 7:30 p.m., David Lam Auditorium, University of Victoria. Admission is \$5.00 at the door. The admission can be applied to a book purchase at the slide show (one admission fee per purchase). For more information, please call (604) 883-2730 or e-mail [marisa@harbourpublishing.com](mailto:marisa@harbourpublishing.com) or [pamela@harbourpublishing.com](mailto:pamela@harbourpublishing.com)

#### Saturday, May 3

##### *Camas Day*

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Beacon Hill Park (walks begin at the flagpole)

Sponsored by the Victoria Natural History Society and Friends of Beacon Hill Park. For information call **Helen Oldershaw** at 592-6659 or **Tom Gillespie** at 361-1694.

## BULLETIN BOARD

The **Victoria Butterfly Count** starts up again and we are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers. Saturday April 19 and Sunday April 20 is the first one of the year so get out your field guide! **Jeff Gaskin** is the count coordinator, so give him a call at 381-7248

The **Spring Bird Count** is Saturday May 10 this year, midnight to noon. The post-count gathering will be at Swan Lake. Phone **Rick Schortinghuis** for more information and to get involved (652-3326).

The weekend of April 4-6 is this year's **Brant Festival** in Parksville. More information is available on the Internet at [www.brantfestival.bc.ca](http://www.brantfestival.bc.ca)

**John Henigman** is looking for people who are going to the **Federation of BC Naturalist meeting** in Kamloops, May 8-11. He is looking for people who are going in order to both cut costs and for enjoyment. Contact John at: John Henigman RPBio, RPF, Bird in the Hand Enterprises, 1887 Forrester St, Victoria, BC, V8R 3G7. Phone: 598 6326, [henigman@pacificcoast.net](mailto:henigman@pacificcoast.net).

## THE ART OF NATURAL HISTORY ILLUSTRATION

### *An Exhibition of Original Coloured Prints from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries,*

*presented by*

**Voss Art and Antiques Ltd.**

at

**The Martin Batchelor Gallery**

**712 Cormorant Street Victoria**

**(250) 385 7919**

**Monday March 31<sup>st</sup> to Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> 2003**

**Open 10 to 6 each day**

**Admission Free**

Two lunchtime lectures to be announced.

**The exhibition presents original hand-coloured copper, steel and wood engravings, hand-coloured lithographs, examples from the height of chromolithography, and other techniques. Artists and publishers include**

**J.J. Audubon**

**Alexander Wilson**

**Sydenham Edwards**

**W. Curtis**

**W. Weinmann**

**E. and E. Albin**

**Prideaux Selby**

**William Lizars**

**Ann Pratt**

**and others**

**J. and E. Gould**

**Abbe Laurent Berlese**

**William Baxter**

**J.G. Keulemans**

**Conservation framing will be demonstrated by open examples of botanical and insect prints. All prints are for sale but will stay for the entire exhibition. Some additional prints will be exhibited during the second week. Biographies of the artists and publishers will be displayed and copies of these will be distributed.**

**Complimentary appraisals by appointment at any time during the exhibition.**

**For more information contact Geoffrey Voss at Voss Art and Antiques Ltd. by email [voss@shaw.ca](mailto:voss@shaw.ca) or by telephone at (250) 386-1850.**



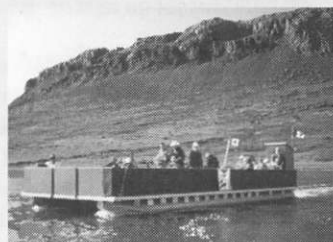
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Enquiries from group organizers or travel professionals are welcome. References on request.

We also offer wilderness travel expediting from the Central Barrenlands to the Arctic Coast for canoeing/kayaking/rafting, turn-key rental wilderness camps, guided or do-it-yourself sport fishing, conference facilities, and fall caribou programs at Treeline Lodge.

About 25% of our guests are repeat customers, some coming as many as ten times. They speak for the quality of our program:

*As we discussed our time with you with friends and tried to get them to comprehend just where we were and why, we realized that we had just spent the most satisfying vacation time ever. - Bob and Alice Sullivan, Oakville, Ontario.*

*One thing particularly special to us was the "untouristy", or nontourist feel of our stay. Between your hospitality and the acceptance shown by the Inuit, we ended up feeling we were staying not at some "tourist destination", but practically at home. There are a million travel packages out there, but none that we have ever seen gave us the feeling that we would be appreciably integrated into the community or place being visited. This community feeling is a priceless characteristic of Bathurst. - Mike and Pat Boring, New Mexico.*

*Three decades winging it thro' the North, and Bathurst Inlet, the people and the place, is the very best! - Lyn (Taylor) Hancock, BC and Australia, 1999.*



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