

The Victoria NATURALIST

SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
2003
VOL 60.2

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY





Published six times a year by the
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
P.O. Box 5220, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N4
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ISSN 0049-612X Printed in Canada
The Victoria Naturalist acknowledges the financial support of the
Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program
towards our mailing costs.
Publication Mail Commercial Sales Agreement Number 40045722
Publications Mail Registration No. 09841

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

Opinions expressed by contributors to *The Victoria Naturalist*
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Deadline for next issue: October 1, 2003

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COVER PHOTO:

Heron chicks, Beacon Hill Park
by David Pretty

Autumn is a season of change.

In nature, answering to primal instincts, creatures are
migrating to wintering grounds or preparing to hibernate.
Plants are shutting down photosynthesis and leaves are
changing from green to reds and yellows. Leaves are
beginning to cover the ground, providing mulch to protect
the seeds from winter's harshness, to facilitate the
breakdown of the seeds' protective coatings, and to start
the process of recycling nutrients back into the soil.

In our human culture, autumn is also a time of change.
Students are heading back to school. VNHS theme evenings
and meetings are once again on the calendar. Summer
holidays are over.

And so we come to the autumn of our stay as editors of
The Victoria Naturalist. During the past several years we
have had the honour of trying to provide members with
information and entertainment as well as providing a public
face to the Society. We have communicated with many
interesting people from as far away as Brazil and England.
We have had the joy of seeing new writers and photographers
take on the challenge of sharing their observations with the
rest of the membership. We have worked with a marvellous
layout person, Frances Hunter. And, we have worked with a
dedicated board of directors.

What we have missed is the opportunity to get out from
in front of the computer screen to gain our own experiences
in nature to savour, photograph and write about. Answering
to some basic instinct, we now feel compelled to take our
whole selves into nature and not just our minds.

Because it is time for us to move on from our positions
as editors, it is also a season in which one or more other
members can make a change and become involved in
bringing the *Naturalist* to the Society's members. If you are
interested in becoming involved in the *Naturalist* editorial
team, talk to President Ann Nightingale or other members of
the Board. We would like to have our replacement(s) in place
before December 1st, which is the deadline for submissions
for the January-February 2004 issue.

Make **your** change this autumn!

Marilyn and Ross

Bird Migration...Nest Success and Failure

By Marie O'Shaughnessy

The drama of fall migration is underway, and millions of birds take to the skies. This event generally heralds, for those of us who live in the Northern hemisphere, the shortening of our daylight hours and cooling temperatures. The birds however are on an epic journey to return to their wintering grounds. Their departure from their breeding grounds signifies an end to this year's breeding activity. The young birds are everywhere. The hot-spots around Victoria are already boasting of interesting sightings of shorebirds and passerines. Our own Rocky Point Bird Observatory usually captures the most interesting numbers and variety of species in this region. During the next two months, a dedicated crew of birders band each unsuspecting bird on its way through to some other local. This not only helps for identification purposes as the birds put down to feed, but allows for novice and seasoned birders to have a greater opportunity to just simply watch behaviors.

Fall migration affords us more time with the various species. The urgency for breeding has passed and birds can stay a while at some of their favorite feeding stations before moving on. The inherent drive to get to breeding territories during the spring migration dictates that birds must move quickly through our area. This generally shortens the opportunity for viewing of many of the species. Over the years I have found that observing birds while they interact with one another, especially during the fall migration period,

provided a wealth of information. For those of us who love our birds and get out there to observe one of Mother Nature's greatest phenomena, *migration*, the effort is well worth every hour of sleep lost. An interesting statement from one who hates getting up early but who truly loves her birds.

In order for Bird migration to occur we need to have birds that move from wintering grounds to summer breeding areas. Victoria and area just happens to be part of the Pacific flyway, so depending on the time of the year, large numbers of birds are moving either south or north.

The high Arctic tundra is a unique place for many migrating bird species of the America's. This area is where nesting and breeding can take place in relative safety and with minimal disturbance to developing young. Many birds fly during the night when predation is at a minimum and I have heard birds calling to one another in the darkness overhead. As breeding success and failure is all part of this whole drama of migration I wanted to share with my readers some of the success's and failures of this year's observations.

One such beautiful species of bird that migrates to sunny Victoria is the *swallow*.

This incredible flying machine migrates from places as far away as central and south America, Mexico, and California. Their arrival seems to indicate that warmer weather and lengthening days are on their way for Victorians. Who can resist their absolute 'joie de vivre'. I am truly

amazed at the speed of flight of these small birds who chirp and twitter continuously to one another during the nesting and post breeding season.

Of the five species that visit Victoria, I have a special interest in the Violet-green Swallow. In the past, over several years, I have had the pleasure of these swallows nesting in my garden. They have been successful nesters, rearing families each year from nest boxes appropriate for swallows. Now that I live in an apartment, my balcony has become home for the birds again. Two separate species of bird nested this spring. A nesting opportunity is always a welcome site for birds who must follow their instincts to breed. Not only did House Finches set up nesting in a flower planter box but also a pair of Violet-green Swallows moved in. These migrants had to fight long and hard to win the nest box that I hung in early May from those aggressive and mean-spirited house sparrows. The war between these two species was lengthy.

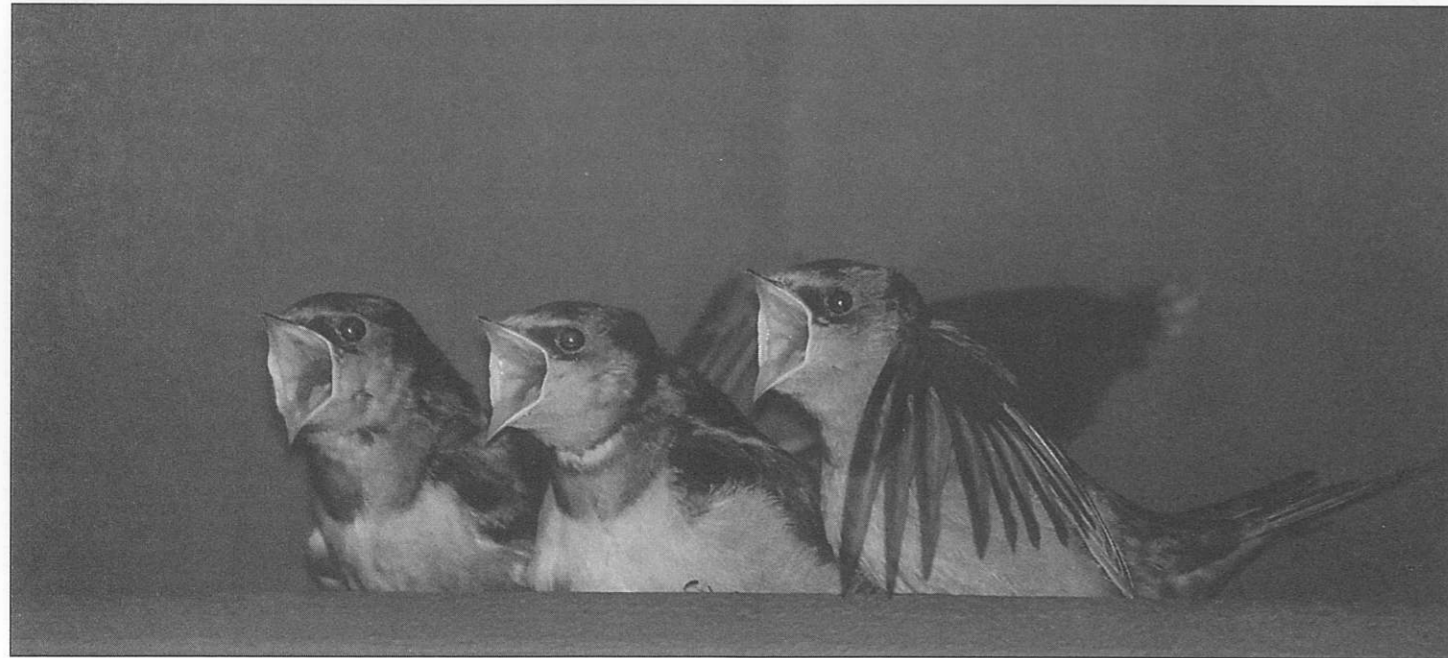
I went away to Europe for a month toward the end of May to find, on my return, that my Swallows weren't even nesting yet. However, luck was on their side. After a successful breeding period, two enthusiastic young Swallows left the safety of their nest box in early August. Here was success on the wing. They flew around and in and out of the nest box all day strengthening their flying muscles. In late afternoon, they returned to be fed from their box and spent another comfortable night in their bed of feathers. They were fed on the wing for a few more days and then finally linked up with others to 'stage' or group before heading south on their fall migration.

The chirping has stopped and all is quiet. 'Empty nest syndrome' has occurred at this address. Despite this emotion of loss, I am content with the knowledge that I have helped Mother Nature add eight new little lives to her bounty. The

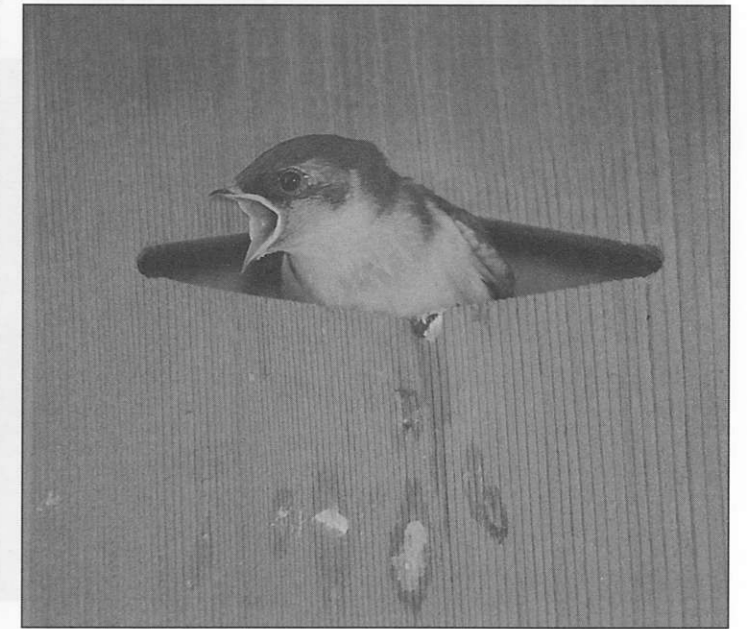
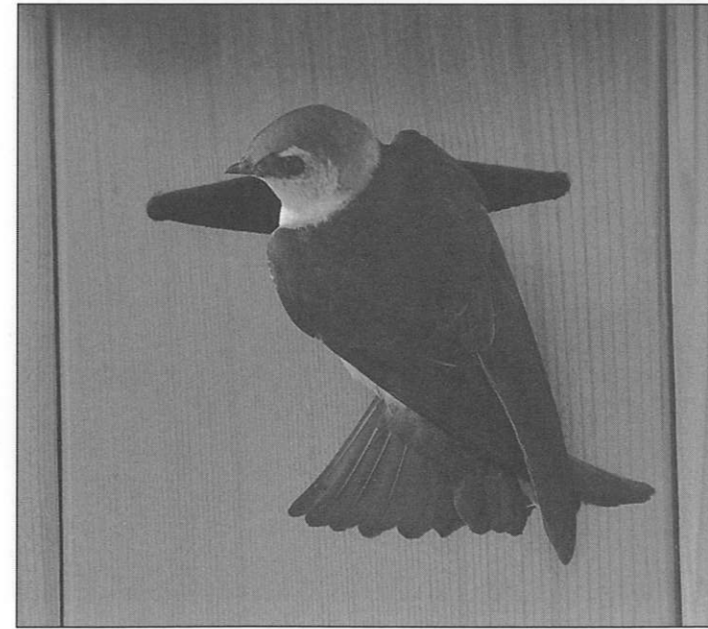
Violet-green Swallows have far to return to their wintering grounds and no doubt have many dangers to face, but I hope this little family can overcome the dangers and arrive safely.

The world of dangers for birds during migration is well documented in the new movie, 'Winged Migration'. Directed and produced by Jacques Perrin, this movie took four years to produce and was filmed in over forty different countries. The incredible landscape photography seen in this movie combined with the close encounters of flying birds allows one to leave one's seat and go "Fly with the Birds." I have seen this movie twice already and have been lifted to new heights. My plan is to soar with the birds and experience the wonder of migration yet again before it leaves. This is a movie of contrasts. Contrasts that pull at the heart strings as one observes the disparity between the free and the caged birds. The film also captures the incredible journeys of migrating birds, as they overcome the extremes of weather, the harshness of terrain, the vast expanse of seas, man and machinery, and finally other animals and birds that predate on these feathered creatures. To arrive at the breeding grounds after such epic journeys and to observe birds start to nest and breed is a miracle in itself. To think that all bird attempts to nest result in success, given such odds, is to be as an ostrich who keeps its head in the sand. It never occurred to me that success for breeding was so dependant on so many variables. I have gleaned much knowledge during my involvement this year with the birds, and the experience of 'Winged Migration' only reinforced my love for these creatures. Assisting with the WITS, Wildlife Tree Stewards program has also broadened my horizons.

Nest failure is a natural event and is Nature's way of control. With joy we can witness breeding success, but at other times we can only feel sadness. I was to witness this first hand as I observed and photographed various attempts



Baby Barn Swallows were fledged from the Victoria yacht club in July. Photos: Marie O'Shaughnessy



Violet-green Swallows nested on Marie O' Shaughnessy's balcony overlooking the bay at the Marina. Two young fledged August 9th which is very late for these swallows. They surprisingly are still returning to spend their nights in the box.

by Anna's Hummingbirds, Bald Eagles and Great Blue Herons this spring. Victoria has a wealth of habitat conducive to nesting. Anna's hummingbirds start nesting relatively early but one nest that I was observing at the University during early April suddenly failed as the two young appeared to starve to death before they could fledge. Perhaps the mother was killed by a moving car or just predated upon. Her mate does not share the parenting so the young are very vulnerable. Certainly she never returned to her babies and they perished.

With the advent of web cams on the Internet, one has the advantage of becoming a 'voyeur' as one peers at the computer screen into nest habitat. Here one can have a front row seat into the fascinating world of birds and watch bird behavior that otherwise would never have been seen. Nest success is a joy to watch but when nest failure occurs it is heartbreaking. One is left to ask the question, Why? Two of the eagle's nests that I watched this spring were abandoned after the young perished. I watched, with great emotion the female Bald Eagle in Washington cover her dead two-day old baby with nest debris. Within 24 hours she covered her remaining infertile egg and then abandoned the nest. This was a particular hard experience to watch, for at the time I was on holiday in England. I had been in the habit of logging on to the Washington's Department of Fish and Wildlife's web cam on a daily basis in Victoria. This particular pair of eagles I had watched for several weeks, so was eager to continue the saga. Luckily, after this disappointment, Washington set up an alternate nest cam that I could watch where a young eaglet was being successfully parented.

A similar experience of nest failure occurred earlier in April. The Bald eagle nest site in Oak Bay, where two young had successfully flown last year, was now abandoned. I had watched incubation duties and I believe hatching this year. The nest cam in Oak Bay does not afford a bird's eye view into the nest and to assume what actually happened in this



Baby Great Horned Owlets are from Beaver Park, off Jennings Road. They were taken at the nest tree site in late April.

nest is based on behavioral observations of the adults when hatching took place. All I can assume is that the young hatched and they died. It was a week after hatching that the eagles departed and took up roost and nest building at Willows Beach. Their efforts at breeding again were much too late for this season. Other nest failures were witnessed this year when a friend and I decided to document and photograph the 'heronry' at Beacon Hill Park. Victoria's picturesque park is home to approximately 90 pairs of breeding Great Blue Herons during the months from March to August. We studied the various behaviors of these stately birds from courtship, nest building and repair, copulation, egg laying, incubation, brooding of the young, first flight and even predation by the park's own Bald Eagles. Nest failure was very evident in the colony as the eagles flew past and took a small feathery snack from some of the more vulnerable nests. It appeared after three nest robberies by the eagles that a pair of herons would finally give up and move back into a denser part of the colony. As late as July 17th I could still identify three herons on eggs, where most other nests had young that had either fledged or were ready to do so. These observations at the Heronry were a fascinating experience and will be the topic of a future article.

During the next few weeks I invite you to look up and notice a bird on the wing. Fall migration is here and the journey has begun. Some are seasoned flyers having performed this journey many times over. These are the survivors that have encountered the dangers. Many of those above your heads are young birds in groups left to fend for themselves. Day and night they wing their way over new and challenging landscapes. They fly as birds have always done for millions of years. For those birds that need to migrate, their song is written in the wind. The need to pro-create in these little feathered creatures is inherent. The whole migration drama is a mystery but the magic we call Birds is truly Spiritual.



The Anna's Hummingbird baby in Ann Scarfe's backyard. It had just left the nest and was calling its mother with a call that sounded just like any other baby bird.

Snakes in the Greenhouse

By Donna Ross

A farm in the country is a wonderful place to grow up, see, touch and be part of the natural world. As children we would chase each other around the farmyard with a snake held up by its tail, the pursued shrieking wildly; another time the pursued would become the pursuer, giggling with the thing in their grasp.


As an adult, working and commuting with all the press of the times, I have little time for stopping to examine the minutiae of nature. For many years, we have had garter snakes around our property and in our greenhouse. Sometimes amazing numbers can be seen in the morning sun, warming themselves. I have watched them slither away at our approach and planned one day to look into their biology and discover the 'facts' of their lives. Of course I never did.

This spring the gardens and greenhouse became my responsibility, and so I have had much more time – that precious commodity – to observe the snakes in the greenhouse. Our crops of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and lettuce have always been under threat from slugs, which

thrive in the moist, warm environment. We have used chemical slug bait at times in the past but felt it was not a good choice because of damage to other organisms. And, the beer-in-the-trap strategy has never worked all that well for us. Most of the time I picked the slimy things off the plants. Not a pleasant task!

This year, I have found not one slug in our greenhouse, and not one plant has been damaged. The snakes have taken up residence there (I have observed four at one time), and so I deduce that the snakes, needing some form of nourishment, must be eating the slugs. Indeed, according to the Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Network (CARCNET) website, the northwestern garter snake eats slugs, earthworms, fish, frogs, small snakes, small mammals and birds.

As much as is practical, we practice organic gardening because we want to have healthy, vigorous, and nourishing food without chemicals – chemicals that are doing heavens knows what to our bodies and the larger environment. The garter snakes seem to be helping out in this regard, as well as keeping me company as I dig, weed and plant.



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Our Eagles

By Yorke Edwards

The many Bald Eagles along our coast live where there are numerous fish, birds and small mammals. Most days they perch while watching long hours for visible prey — their long kind of waiting called 'still hunting'.

Around the world, eagles are considered to be the kings of all small creatures. For a long time people have admired and sometimes worshipped them. Nations once used them as fierce symbols, probably because eagles are big and dominant over large hunting grounds. Roman soldiers went into battle carrying wooded eagles on their poles.

Eagles have and still inspire the First People especially those living on ocean shores in British Columbia. Most of the quiet shores were sheltered by the islands facing the sea, so both wild and calmed waters offered food while forests near the sea supplied both food and other needs. Within the calmed shorelines, the First People had time for art work. A display of their art is seen in Victoria's Thunderbird Park next to the east side of the Royal British Columbia Museum. Totem poles there are among the attractions. In the photograph shown, the wooden eagle is at the top of a tall pole. All of those poles are old, most reaching back in time to the 1800's, and most were restored through the 1950s and 1960s by a Kwakiutl Chief, the well remembered Mungo Martin, a leader who led many new carvers and painters into the arts of the People.

Most eagles hunt from tall trees near calmed waters that are sheltered by islands from Alaska to the State of Washington. Eagles' nests are usually large and high in tall trees. On the ground beneath, there are usually remains from previous eating, mostly parts of fish and ducks, as expected for eagles living close to calmed waters. The fish caught are not necessarily small ones. While boating on the Strait of Georgia, I watched an eagle hover about ten feet above the water far from the sandy shore. It then dropped, mostly into the water with its wings doing a lot of flapping and splashing. Next, it rose with wings somewhat in the air, and began to drag a fish shoreward, slowly through the water with much splashing from the flapping wings. The wings were "paddling" as well as flying, doing both through and above the water. With a long slow effort it dragged the fish onto a far sandy beach. The eagle had not been really flying; it was partly swimming while trying to fly, and the fish was only briefly visible a few times as I watched. When the fish was on a distant beach it was at last visible and was a foot or more long.

Through twenty years in our home, we have watched eagles through our southern windows toward the Trial Islands, often seeing one eagle, sometimes two. Through most months they perch, often for hours on a tall pole on the northern shore of the islands. We have assumed that the same

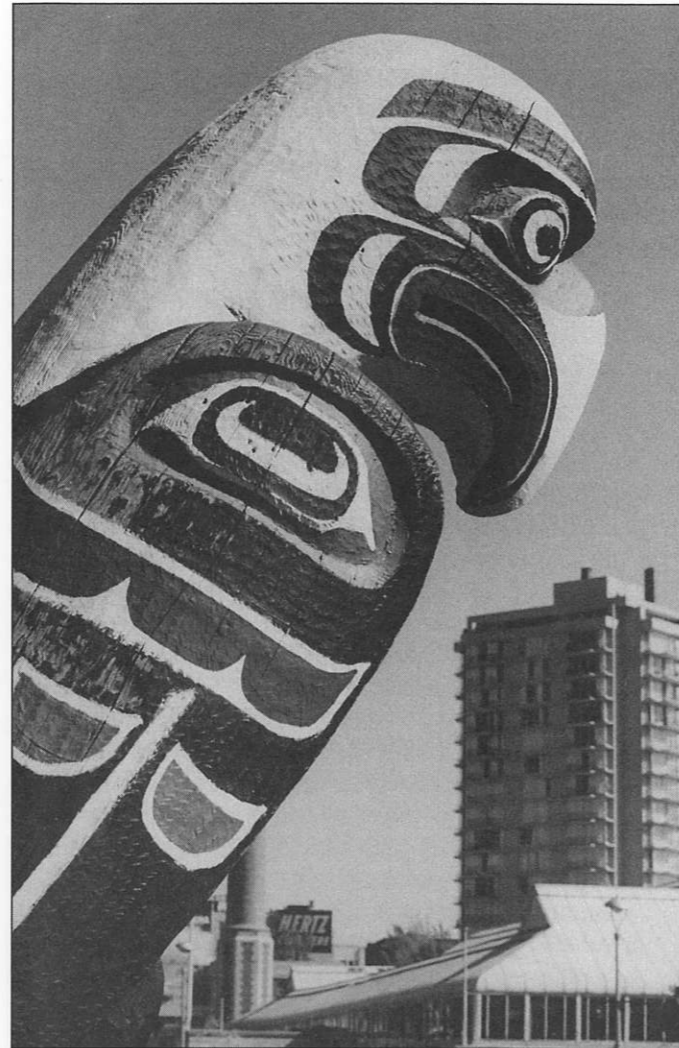


Photo: Royal British Columbia Museum

eagle pair were those nesting high on a large evergreen tree by the short and narrow Linkleas Road, because they were often seen flying to and from in that direction. Their tree was cut down. Next, and not far away, they built a ragged nest in a large poplar located a short distance west from the destroyed nest, near Saint Patrick Street and Central Avenue. After three or so years that nest fell in a winter storm, so now their new nest is just north of our Fire Hall on Transit Road.

Far beyond the Trial Islands are the distant Olympic Mountains of the United States. Across the Juan de Fuca Strait a high mountainous "wall" can be seen on a clear day. A gap through that "wall" is the valley of the Elwha River. Through that gap are the tops of two giant mountains, the Olympic Mountain (7965 feet above the sea), and west of it Mount Tom (7048 feet high). The Elwha River flowing north toward us are "salmon rivers" which have fish spawning through September into October. Eagles from afar have a good time annually feasting on the dead salmon through the two months.

Watch for Colour-banded Cooper's Hawks

A study on the ecology of Cooper's Hawks breeding in the urban environment of Greater Victoria has been underway since 1995. To date >800 of these hawks have been colour-banded at about 65 nest sites. You can greatly assist this research project by watching for and reporting observations of these banded hawks.

Colour-bands are uniquely coded with 2 vertical alphanumeric characters (i.e. number over number or letter over number) and are placed on the left leg (see illustration). To provide ease of visibility, these codes are repeated 3 times around the circumference of the band. Bands can be read at a distance of about 20 m with binoculars or up to 75 m using a spotting scope. Red bands were placed on females and black bands were put on males. If you observe one of these marked hawks, please record the band colour and code, date and time, whether it was in adult or juvenile plumage, as well as the location. **Please report all sightings, even if you were unable to determine the band code.**

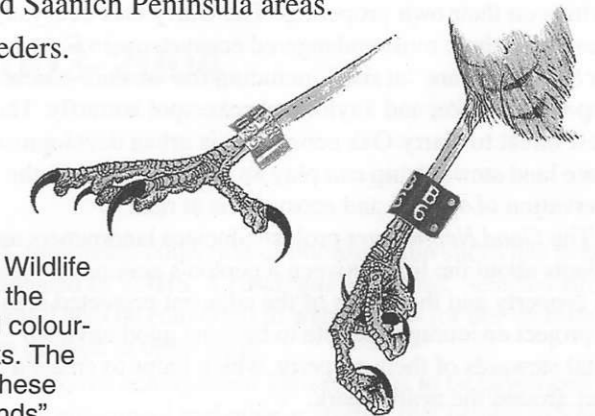
To date we have received >1,000 observations of these marked birds, from as far away as Nanaimo on Vancouver Island, and from Delta on the mainland coast. We have also received reencounter reports from Washington, Oregon, Nevada and California. However, over 95% of year-round sightings come from the Greater Victoria and Saanich Peninsula areas. Many were observed in the vicinity of backyard bird feeders.

Please report Cooper's Hawk observations to:

Andy Stewart
Wildlife Biologist
3932 Telegraph Bay Road
Victoria, B.C. V8N 4H7

Phone: (250) 387-9780
or 477-1328

E-mail:
andy.stewart@shaw.ca



U.S Fish and Wildlife bands are on the right leg of all colour-banded hawks. The numbers on these aluminum bands" cannot be read except when in hand.

This example colour-band would be recorded as "Red B over 6". Red bands signify it is a female and black bands indicate it is male. These bands are always on the left leg.

Welcome to New Members

Wendy Barry
Toronto Street

Sheila Burgar
Beach Drive

Joseph and Anne L'Hirondelle
Davies Road

Kathleen McDonald
Del Monte Avenue
birds

David G. McLean
Goward Road
wildlife and conservation

E. Marie Peach
Oak Bay Avenue

Shyanne J. Smith
Becher Bay Road
Sooke, BC
botany, conservation, biology



HAT Tricks

By Pauline Brest van Kempen and Jennifer Eliason,
Landowner Contact Specialists

You too can be a Good Neighbour!

Habitat Acquisition Trust's *Good Neighbours Project* is continuing into three new areas! With generous funding from the Habitat Stewardship Program (an initiative of Environment Canada), this phase of the project is focussing on the endangered Garry Oak Ecosystem. EcoAction Canada and Human Resources Development Canada are also helping to fund this phase of the project.

By talking to people who live adjacent to Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary (in Saanich), Highrock Cairn Park (in Esquimalt) and Uplands Park (in Oak Bay), we hope to raise awareness about the Garry Oak ecosystem and to encourage landowners to undertake stewardship activities on their own properties. The Garry Oak ecosystem is one of the three most endangered ecosystems in Canada. Over 90 species are "at risk" including the Western bluebird, Sharp-tailed snake, and Taylor's checkerspot butterfly. The largest threat to Garry Oak ecosystem is urban development. Private land stewardship can play an important role in the preservation of species and ecosystems at risk.

The *Good Neighbours* project educates landowners and residents about the link between a person's actions on their own property and the health of the adjacent protected area. The project encourages people to become good environmental stewards of their property, which helps to create a buffer around the nearby park.

Landowner contact includes discussing the importance of maintaining wildlife habitat, adding native plants to the home garden, reducing or eliminating pesticides, composting, removal of invasive plant species, water conservation, and other private land stewardship options. Our visits include a walk-about the property, enabling us to assist landowners with native and invasive plant identification, pest identification and wildlife gardening questions.

The first phase of Habitat Acquisition Trust's *Good Neighbours Project* was a great success. Hundreds of letters were sent out to landowners that live around Oak Haven Park (in Central Saanich), Esquimalt Lagoon (in Colwood) and Mount Douglas Park (in Saanich). Over 33% of the people we contacted with a follow-up phone call participated in the project by having a *Good Neighbours* visit. The landowners we visited were asked to consider signing a stewardship agreement, in which they pledge to be good environmental stewards of their properties. People were very agreeable to this idea, and 82% of the landowners we visited signed an agreement. These people were also awarded with an "Environmental Steward" sign, which they have placed at the

front of their property, demonstrating their commitment to their neighbourhood and the environment.

The Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) is fundraising to pay for these signs, with a substantial contribution coming from the Victoria Foundation. Funding from the TD Friends of the Environment was used by the VNHS to help HAT pay for our "Environmental Steward" signs.

We have already met with over forty landowners living around the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary and shared our knowledge of the Garry Oak ecosystem with them. We are in the process of signing Voluntary Stewardship Agreements with landowners and we will be awarding them with an "Environmental Steward" sign. Next, we will begin contacting neighbours of Highrock Cairn Park in Esquimalt.

If you are a neighbour to any of the listed parks and would like a home visit, or you would like more information about the Good Neighbours project, give HAT a call at 995-2428!

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President's Message

By Ann Nightingale

A friend of mine asked me the other day why I get involved in activities like Purple Martin nest box stewardship, bird banding, or even the Victoria Natural History Society. My answer was that I have learned over the years that one person really can make a difference. The Martin project is a classic example. From near extirpation, Purple Martins have been brought back to healthy numbers in B.C. by work by individuals like Cam Finlay, Darren Copley and Tom Gillespie.

Whether it is increasing awareness by sharing the love of nature with family, friends and strangers, getting up before dawn to monitor bird migration, or putting on the boots and gloves to pull purple loosestrife from Viaduct Flats, VNHS members are making a difference every day. VNHS often

receives requests for assistance with issues ranging from general public education to responding to legislative changes such as allowing falconers to capture more wild birds. It is an honour and a privilege to have an opportunity to increase awareness of the value of nature.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find a long "to do" list that the VNHS Board came up with during our retreat this summer. We don't expect to be able to do everything on the list this year, but we thought we would put it out to the members to help us decide which projects are realistic.

Please look over the list and see if there is anything there that inspires you. Perhaps it will give you some ideas of your own. Then take a moment to let us know how you think VNHS should be making a difference this year.

Make Your Mark with VNHS in 2003-2004

By Ann Nightingale

Each summer, the VNHS Board spends a day looking at options for the next year. This year's board retreat was held at Gordon and Mary Anne Hart's home, and was an inspirational setting. The Board came up with over 25 ideas for things that we would like to see VNHS do. Needless to say, the Board members could not possibly do all of these things themselves! Good ideas are not worth much unless we can find people to help make them reality.

To start the 2003/2004 year off with a bang, we are providing a list of projects looking for hands to get them going. A few of these projects have leaders and are looking for people to help, but most of them are looking for project leaders as well as helpers. Please take a few minutes to look over the list to see if any of these are of interest to you. If so, you can let us know by sending us the form at the bottom of the page or completing the online form on our website (www.vicnhs.bc.ca). With your help, we are hoping to generate enough interest to get several of these projects going this year

Administrative projects

1. VNHS currently has a library that is housed at Swan Lake Nature House. *We need to create an inventory of our books*, develop a mechanism for lending them to VNHS members and make recommendations for future acquisitions.

2. A significant collection of photographic slides has been donated to VNHS. *A catalogue is needed*. Selected slides could also be converted to web images for our website or to be used in other ways.
3. A *resource management system* needs to be developed to track equipment and other materials that belong to VNHS. As a volunteer organization, items often change hands, and it is easy for things to get "misplaced."
4. A *VNHS historian or archivist is needed* to compile and organize historical information about the society and to recommend ways to keep information updated. VNHS will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2004. **Bruce Whittington** would likely be involved in this project.
5. Assistance is needed to *compile an index of articles* that have appeared in the *Victoria Naturalist* since the last index was produced (about 10 years ago.)

Education Projects

6. VNHS should determine if there is sufficient interest from members for *field camps and tours*. These trips would require promoting, booking, leader selecting, arranging and changing. **John Defayette** would be involved with this project.
7. VNHS could create a *Birding in Victoria or Birding on Vancouver Island map* similar to that produced by the

- Washington Audubon Society. This project would need a leader, fundraisers, and distributors.
8. Working with the Federation of BC Naturalists, coordinate one or two *inter-club field trips*.

Community Relations

9. *2004 is the 60th anniversary of VNHS*. We are looking for ideas on the best way to celebrate the society. This project will require a leader, and depending on the nature of the celebration, many helpers to make it a memorable event. Suggestions from the Board retreat ranged from creating a special decal, a special edition of the *Naturalist* or launching a nature festival that would continue in future years. Thoughts for a theme for a festival include Dragonfly, Gary Oak, Hawk Watch, WinterBirding, Harlequin Duck, Anna's Hummingbird, or Trumpeter Swan.
10. VNHS is interested in setting up a *speakers bureau* for public education. This project requires a speakers' bureau coordinator, and of course, speakers! If you have a topic you could present, please respond to this project.
11. In order to help members who are going to address community groups, VNHS would like to create a variety of *slide shows and PowerPoint presentations*. Photographs and slides are available. Scripts need to be developed for a number of different presentation lengths.
12. *A Cat Owner Education program* is an item that has been raised several times. This project would require a leader who could relate well to cat lovers. **Darren Copley** will probably be involved with this project.
13. *Web-cam projects*. **Bob Chappell** has been doing amazing things with nest box cameras and other remote monitoring setups. This project would require a leader to coordinate activities, fundraisers to acquire equipment and volunteers to liaise with groups and individuals regarding locations.
14. *Esquimalt Lagoon Interpretive Signage*. The first of the VNHS-initiated signs was installed at Esquimalt Lagoon this summer. VNHS needs someone to fundraise and coordinate with the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative for the second sign (to be installed near the bridge at the lagoon.)
15. *Liaison with other environmental and conservation groups*. Victoria has an abundance of organizations with roots in natural history. We know that many of our members are also members of other groups. If you are a member of both VNHS and another environmental or conservation group, and would like to serve as liaison between the organizations, please let us know. It may be possible to profile these organizations through VNHS publications or the website.
16. *Work with other Victoria events* to include a natural history option. This project would need a leader to contact event organizers to see if a natural history information session, field trip or other activity could be integrated.

17. A project leader is needed to look into the feasibility of whether *conservation license plates* (as in Florida) could be established. Cost of the plate goes to support a conservation project. Similarly, investigate the potential for a "non hunting" fishing and hunting license to support conservation.

Conservation projects

18. The VNHS Board discussed a number of *conservation projects*. These require project leaders, fundraisers, publicists and many helpers to see them through.
19. *A Barn Owl nest box project* in cooperation with biologists doing research on the Vancouver Island Barn Owl population. **Ed Pellizzon** will be involved with this project.
20. *Purple Martin nest box project*. Victoria has a number of aging Purple Martin colonies. These need to be checked, existing boxes repaired and new sites found. **Darren Copley** will be involved on this project.
21. *Oak habitat monitoring and maintenance*. Victoria is fortunate to have a number of Garry Oak meadows. VNHS would like to create an inventory and maps of existing habitat to monitor changes. This project would look at working with the Garry Oak Preservation Society. **John Henigman** would likely be involved..
22. *Invasive species removal*. Either independently or in conjunction with other groups in the area, schedule several hands-on invasive species removal days during the next year.

Young naturalist projects

23. *Nest box building* could be linked to school-based natural history education projects and courses.
24. Offer *field trips* "close to home" for school groups. A project leader would be responsible to communicate with schools and arrange for field trips on or near the school grounds.

I am interesting in working on the following projects: Give numbers: _____

As a _____ leader, _____ fundraiser,
 _____ helper, _____ other _____

Name

Address.....

.....

Phone.....

Email.....

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>.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 6

Natural History at China Beach

Join **John Henigman** for a natural history walk in Juan de Fuca Provincial Park starting at China Beach. Walk down to China Beach, along it and back up at Second Beach for a 3 km loop. We will look for plants, birds and other animals and will have a checklist. John will provide background on the climate, geology, ecosystem function and aboriginal history. Meet at the Helmcken Road Park and Ride at 7:00 a.m. to carpool. Call John at 250-598-6326 for more information.

Sunday, September 7

Birding the Victoria Shoreline for shorebirds

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

Tuesday, September 9

A Look at Lepidopterans: Close-ups of our local butterflies and moths.

The evenings in September are the time when any light on in the house draws in visitors from all around. Here is your chance to learn about some of our local species from the expert. Dr. Jeremy Tatum has taken fabulous up-close photos of both the adults and their immature stages (eggs, caterpillars, pupae) of local butterflies and moths and will talk about their varied life histories. Predator avoidance strategies will also be discussed: smells, patterns, colours, free falls, and other forms of pure trickery! Jeremy has been raising butterflies and moths for many years, and he is an incredible source of information about this order of insects. There isn't a field guide available (yet!) that looks at the variety of species he has! We'll see you at 7:30 pm, Room 159, Murray and Anne Fraser Building (formerly Begbie), UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Sunday, September 14

Birding Viaduct Flats

There should be good variety of shorebirds, waterfowl and other migrants. Meet at Viaduct Ave at Interurban Road at 8:00 a.m. Leader TBA.

Tuesday, September 16

Dr. Terry McIntosh: "Travelling by Volcanoes: Spring Botanizing in East Russia"

Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

This talk will focus on the botany and related adventures of an early spring trip from northern Japan, through the Kurile Islands, into Kamchatka, and, finally, into the Aleutians and the Pribilofs. The flora in these parts will be compared to our own and that of eastern North America. There will also be lots of volcanoes in the background! Or, as Dr. McIntosh wrote on further reflection: "This presentation will be an insane reflection of the plants, people, and volcanoes from northern Japan, through the Kuril Islands Kamchatka, and into the islands off Alaska. You must be 18 to attend, and have had recent counselling."

September 20 to October 13

"The Nature of Island Artists" Art Exhibit

This exhibit, which has been held every second year since 1989, showcases a variety of artists who gain their inspiration from the natural environment and who live on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. We feature art in a variety of mediums, including paintings, photography, three-dimensional, fibre, and glass. The 2001 show had approximately 10,000 visitors. This year we will again be offering tours of the exhibit and special programs to school classes. There will also be artists demonstrating their skills during the show and displaying more of their artwork. The goal of the show is to increase the public's awareness of the need to protect the natural world, and the role that parks play in that protection. Participating artists are asked to include a hand-written paragraph on either: the importance of educating people about protecting the natural environment (at places like the Goldstream Visitor Centre) or, what specifically inspired them during the creation of their piece. The show will run from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily.

Saturday, September 20 and Sunday, September 21

Victoria's Monthly Butterfly Count

Call **Jeff Gaskin** at 381-7248 if you would like to participate.

Saturday, September 20

Vancouver Shorebirding

Vancouver gets a greater variety and number of shorebirds than does Victoria. We will check out Iona, Riefel and Boundary Bay. Meet at the entrance to Beaver Lake Park on Elk Lake Drive at 6:00 a.m. to carpool, costs will be about \$40.00 dollars per person. We will return on the 5:00 p.m. ferry. Bring a lunch. Call **Rick Schortinghuis** at 652-3326 for more information.

Sunday, September 21

Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

Bruce Whittington (477-8611) will lead this trip on the M.V. Coho on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and this is the best opportunity to see bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 sailing of the M.V. Coho (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$18.00 (US) return. You should have two pieces of ID (at least one with a photo) for customs. We will return on the 12:45 p.m. sailing.

Wednesday, September 24

Birders' Night

Murray and Anne Fraser Building (ex Begbie), 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, a novice birder and your coffee cup.

Sunday, September 28

Hawk Watch: East Sooke Park

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

Monday, September 29

Marine Night

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

James Cosgrove, Manager of Natural History at the Royal BC Museum, will speak about his recent trip to Australia where he photographed marine life from temperate to tropical waters. His talk, Diving Australia, Kangaroo Island to the Great Barrier Reef, will be a great start to our new season. Don't miss it! Announcements are also posted on <http://pacificcoast.net/~plambert/index.html> or on the VNHS website at <http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/home.html>.

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 4

Natural History Walk in Nanaimo

Join **John Henigman** for a natural history walk at both Morrell Nature Sanctuary forest and Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Area in Nanaimo. Both areas are close to each other and each involves a 2.5 km walk. We will look for plants, birds and other animals and will have a checklist. John will provide background on the climate, geology, ecosystem function and aboriginal history. Meet at the Helmcken Road Park and Ride at 7:00 a.m. to carpool. Call John at 250-598-6326 for more information.

Sunday, October 5

Birding at Whiffen Spit, Sooke

In recent years Lapland Longspurs, a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a Ruff have stopped at this migrant trap in Sooke. Meet your leader (TBA) at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the foot of Whiffen Spit Road.

Sunday, October 12

Migrants on Jocelyn Hill

Rick Schortinghuis (652-3326) shares his knowledge of the Gowland Range on this walk in search of songbirds and raptors. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a lunch. Be prepared for a 4 to 5 hour hike. Meet at the Lone Tree Hill parking lot on Millstream Road at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, October 14

When Elvis the Elk Sings, Audiences Listen

In order for our conservation messages to be heard, we have to learn to speak in the "language" of our audience. Scott Mair, who many of you may have heard being interviewed on CBC Radio about the Dominion Astrophysical Station's "Centre of the Universe" facility, will demonstrate some techniques that have made his educational messages accessible to a much broader audience. Scott has been performing to audiences of all ages for many years in an effort to disseminate natural history information, and he is terrifically entertaining. So come out and enjoy the show. You will go home with new ideas about how to get people involved in the natural world. We'll see you at 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Murray and Anne Fraser Building (formerly Begbie), UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Tuesday, October 21

Thor Henrich: "A Glimpse into the Flora of the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador"

Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 22

Birders' Night

Murray and Anne Fraser Building (ex Begbie), 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, a novice birder and your coffee cup.

Sunday, October 26

Goldstream Salmon Run Run

One of HAT's many projects is helping fundraise to keep the Goldstream Visitor Centre open and continuing to provide education programs to schoolchildren of our region. As part of this fundraising effort, the Goldstream Salmon Run Run was held for the first time in October 2002 and was extremely successful. This 5 km family fun run was a big hit with all the participants and is now destined to be an annual event. The route through the campground makes this the most scenic run Victoria has to offer, so call us for more information on how to register! (995-2428)

Sunday, October 26

Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

Join **David Allinson** for this trip on the M.V. Coho on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and this is the best opportunity to see bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 sailing of the M.V. Coho (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$18.00 (US) return. You should have two pieces of ID (at least one with a photo) for customs. We'll return on the 2:00 p.m. sailing.

Monday, October 27

Marine Night

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

At press time a speaker had not been confirmed but we will have a speaker for this evening. Please consult <http://pacificcoast.net/~plambert/index.html> or the VNHS website at <http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/home.html> for speaker and title in October.

NOVEMBER

November 1-15

2nd Annual Canada Taiwan Bird Fair

Vancouver Public Library, 330 W. Georgia St., Vancouver. Proceeds to Young Naturalists' Club of BC. Main events: November 1, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Opening Ceremonies, bird art, prizes, exhibits. November 2, 1-4 p.m.; Slide presentations, bird art, prizes, results of Silent Auction. November 8; 1-5 p.m.; "Videos of Nature in Taiwan". On-going from October 24; exhibitions of wild bird photography, wild bird paper relief sculpture, bird paintings. For details, please see website: <http://www.canadabirdfair.org>.

BULLETIN BOARD

The Goldstream Art Show — Request for Volunteers

Goldstream Provincial Park, Habitat Acquisition Trust, and the Victoria Natural History Society are once again co-sponsoring a show of nature-inspired art from September 20 to October 13, 2003. The Nature of Island Artists will be held at the Freeman King Visitor Centre (Goldstream Provincial Park) and will showcase artists from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. To successfully operate this show and raise money for school programs at Goldstream, we need volunteers to help staff the centre. If you have volunteered in the past, you have already had a phone call. Please call Claudia Copley at 479-6622 if you would like to be on the volunteer list. Volunteers will be invited to participate in the opening wine and cheese and have an opportunity to meet the artists.

GORP Needs You

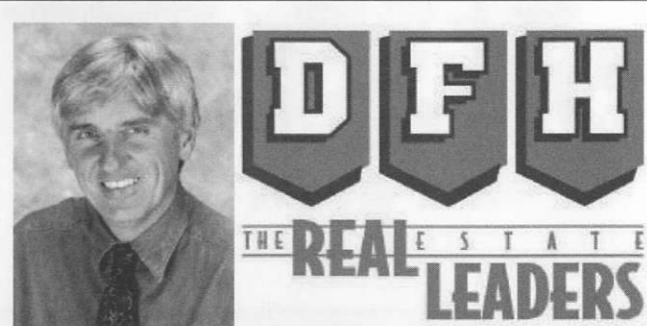
With less than 5% remaining of what was originally here, Garry oak ecosystems are one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada.

Given these ecosystems are our native heritage, it is imperative that we work towards their protection and recovery.

The Garry Oak Restoration Project, GORP for short, (sponsored by the Municipality of Saanich, Environment Canada, the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society and the University of Victoria, Restoration of Natural Systems Program) is one of the organizations working towards the conservation and protection of Garry oak ecosystems. Within the boundaries of Saanich Municipality ten Garry oak ecosystems sites are being restored.

Volunteers are invited to participate as Restoration Assistants, --Site Stewards, Photopoint Monitoring Assistants, Photographers, Community Educators, Web Site Assistants, Historical Researchers and Data Entry Assistants.

Call Pat Johnston, Volunteer Coordinator, at 595-5600 or visit the GORP website at www.gorpsaanich.com for more information.

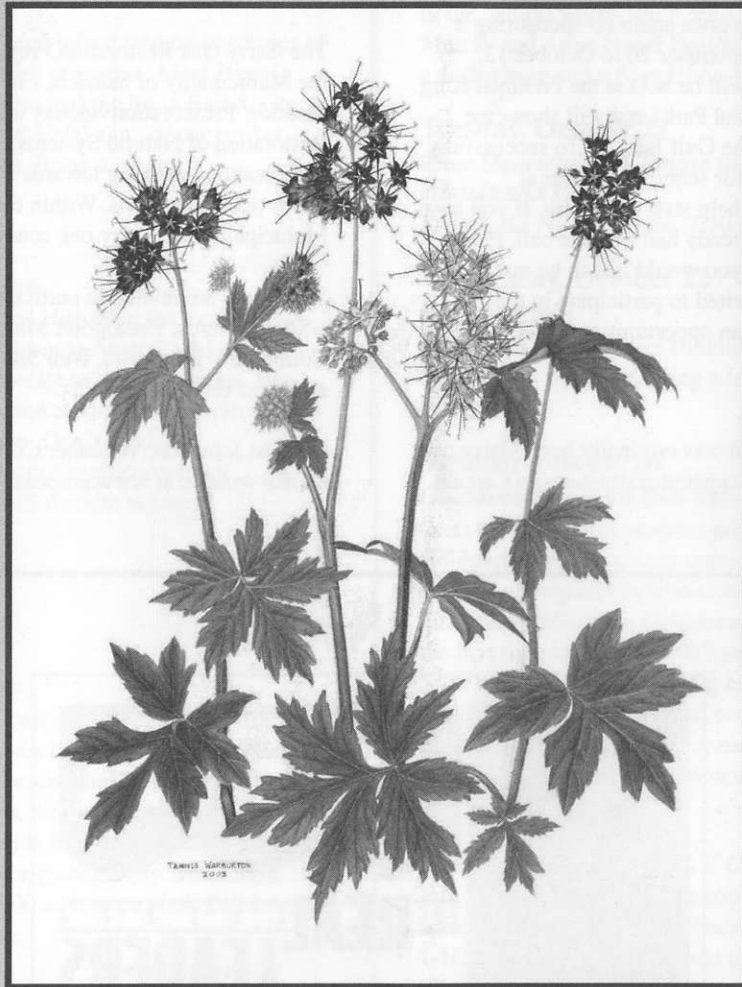


Jim Farrell 477-7291

Renewal By: Aug--03

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DUE**

Barrie Bird
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VICTORIA BC V8P 3S7



TAMMIS WEBBARTON
2003

Hydrophyllum tenuipes Pacific Watercolor by Tamms Webbarton

The Nature of Island Artists

September 19 - October 13, 2003

Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre
Victoria, B.C.

For Information: 478-9414

