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COVER PHOTO:

Propertius Duskywing (*Erynnis propertius*)
 by James Miskelly.

It is apparent that you, the membership of the Victoria Natural History Society, have some extremely difficult decisions ahead: I do hope you're ready. I have seen the challenge you're about to face, and I must say, I'm a little daunted myself.

If you don't know what I'm referring to, go to the calendar section of this issue and prepare to be amazed at the range of activities provided by our members for our members. It is quite a sight, and I'm very impressed by Rick Schortinghuis for coordinating all of it. Congratulations Rick: you have outdone yourself. I'm not sure even I'll be able to decide which field trips to participate in over the coming months!

I hope all of our membership will mark Saturday, June 5 on their event calendar, and join us at the picnic we're hosting at Island View Beach as a celebration of our 60th anniversary (see back cover for details). This day promises to be filled with activities to suit everyone's interests and to gain a few new ones. It is not every day that a "hands-on" opportunity to learn about marine fish is available, so the beach seine at noon will be a definite highlight.

I'm looking forward to putting faces to the names on our membership list: another of my challenges will be trying to remember them all. Since there are more than 700 members, we are going to make quite an impression when we all get together. I'll have to reserve the centerfold of the next issue to accommodate the photograph!

See you all on June 5.

Claudia

President's Message

What can VNHS do? Rarely a week goes by without a call or email to VNHS asking what we can do about a particular situation. The concern may be possible development and destruction of habitat. In other cases, the calls are informing us of recreational or other uses incompatible with plant and animal life in the area. Sometimes it is a request for us to go on record to oppose or support an action being taken by a government organization. And in yet other situations, it is a call for assistance with a worthwhile conservation project.

So, what can VNHS do?

The answer is not a simple one. As an organization, we have a limited set of tools:

The Board can write to a property owner to express the Society's views. The Society's viewpoint would have to be approved by the Board, knowing that it may well conflict with the personal views of some of our members.

We (the Board and VNHS members) can tell our members of the situation through our meetings, magazine, and website and hope that they will get involved.

The Board can inform the media and politicians, but we have no control over which causes they will choose to support. Recent editorials in the *Times-Colonist*, for instance, have clearly shown a preference for recreational use of lands over protection of sensitive environments or endangered species.

The Board can propose alternative courses of action that would work reasonably well for the project proponent and for the environment. Again, we have no control over whether our suggestions will be accepted or not.

But can VNHS actually *do* something? The real answer to this question depends entirely on our members. As individuals, we can make a difference in many of these situations.

As individuals, we can make our views known to our political representatives and the media. This holds much more weight than a letter coming from a Board. After all, the Board can't vote. If you see something happening (good or bad) that you want to ensure your MLA or MP knows about, write to them. Better still, if you have the interest, get involved in local government or advisory committees. You might be amazed at how many decisions are made with very little outside input.

As individuals, we can contribute to the knowledge base of natural systems. We can participate in protection and management of natural areas. We can reduce pesticide use and vehicle emissions. We can educate the public.

There is a lot that VNHS can do – but only if its members are willing.

Ann Nightingale, President



Victoria Natural History Society
Rare Plant Walk (February 14,
2004, Devonian Park).
Photo: Moralea Milne

Anne Adamson

By Bruce Whittington

VNHS has lost a long-time member with the passing last August of Anne Adamson. Anne was a member for many years, and made many important contributions to the Society.

A graduate of Victoria High School, Anne lived in Victoria most of her life. She was an avid gardener and was especially interested in rock gardens. She also believed in sharing her knowledge, and the fruits of her labour; many people recall coming away from Anne's garden with cuttings, or divided plants to be put in their own gardens.

She was a dedicated volunteer at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria for many years. Anne was a lover of photography, and provided flowers from her garden for many events organized by her photography club. She was also active in establishing an auxiliary to the Bishop Cridge Centre for the Family.

It's not clear when Anne became active in the Victoria Natural History, but it was in the early 1970s at least. Never one to sit idly by, she took on many roles. Perhaps her most significant contribution was as the organizer of the Audubon Film Program run by VNHS since the 1940s. Anne was in charge of the program for almost ten years in the 1970's and 1980s. The program was an important revenue generator, and contributed to many of the Society's conservation initiatives.

As organizer of the Audubon films, Anne also took very seriously the job of hosting the visiting speakers. She arranged social gatherings which included members of the naturalist community. These were not stodgy affairs, for Anne enjoyed a good time, and hilarity apparently reared its head more than once.

When she stepped down from her role in the Audubon program, Anne served on the VNHS Board. She took on the Social Committee as her role, and gave Christmas Bird Count gatherings and Annual Banquets her special touch. Anne also contributed articles to the *Victoria Naturalist*.

Anne was gracious and diplomatic, but if she needed you to do something, then you did it. She had a gift for rounding up volunteers, and getting the most out of them, and making sure everyone had a good time in the process. She organized over 100 volunteers for the first Goldstream Art Show, paving the way for what became a highly successful biennial event.

In addition to her long involvement in VNHS, Anne was a regular with the "Tuesday Group" of birders for as many years. She was less active in her later years, but continued to support VNHS as a member.

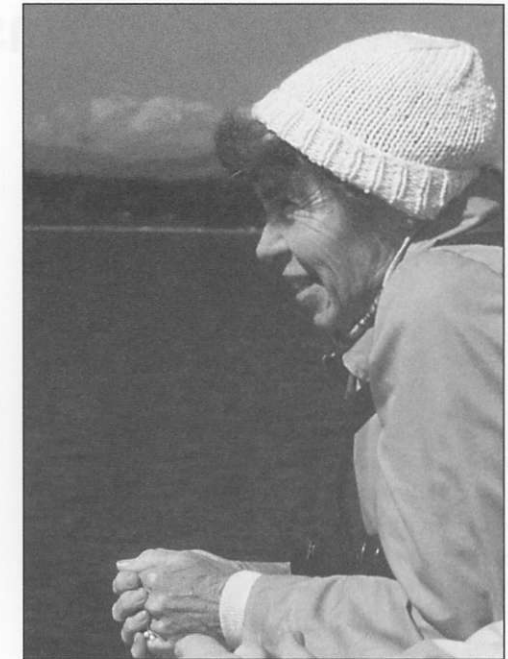


Photo: Bruce Whittington

...And Her Legacy

Anne Adamson will be remembered by the Society and its members for her enthusiasm, dedication, and her love of the natural world. She in turn remembered VNHS, in her will. She has left the Society a generous bequest from her estate.

The Adamson bequest will not be finalized, but VNHS has received in excess of \$70,000 to be used in its projects. The Society's Board of Directors is deliberating to determine where Anne Adamson's legacy can be used to maximum advantage.

VNHS has a history of providing viewing platforms for public use. Such platforms are used heavily at Quick's Bottom and Blenkinsop Lake. The Board has decided to use a portion of the Adamson bequest as seed money, to help raise additional funds for a viewing platform at Viaduct Flats.

VNHS members have been actively involved in the development of a management plan for Viaduct Flats, working with the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific, which leases the land, the Municipality of Saanich, which holds a conservation covenant on the flats, and other stakeholder groups.

The viewing platform will likely be erected near the intersection of Interurban Road and Viaduct Avenue West, and is an important component of the public education mandate of the management plan. It will be accessible by people of all abilities, and will be constructed of environmentally sensitive materials. The support of Anne Adamson for the project will be prominently acknowledged.

Plans for the balance of the bequest have not been finalized. The Board feels that this is a significant gift and will give it serious consideration. VNHS has sent its condolences to the family of Anne Adamson, and is grateful to them for their cooperation.

A Little History: the Unsettling Sixties

By Bruce Whittington

The 1960s had begun with the publication of Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*. This landmark of environmental writing opened a Pandora's Box filled with environmental issues. It was sobering, to say the least. But the Victoria Natural History Society continued to do what it knew best: studying and enjoying the natural world, and sharing that knowledge with others.

VNHS members have always been a source of diverse experience. Throughout the 60s, there were field trips and articles about astronomy and aquatic insects, sea lions and sundew. The decade also saw a growing interest in birds.

The Bird Group organized a "Bird Recognition Course", a good idea we have only recently rediscovered ourselves. The Christmas Bird Count was now a significant event in the VNHS calendar, and results were carefully reported in the magazine. As participation grew, the counts grew too, setting a record of 127 species. Compiler David Stirling admitted to a little "daydreaming" about whether a count of 140 was possible. Today, a count of 140 is considered only routine – a sign of the growth of birding in the Society since that time.

The Society's contribution to the understanding of other aspects of Victoria's natural world continued to grow. Miss M.C. Melburn continued her annual monitoring of the first flowering of hundreds of species of plants. The database was now extensive enough, for example, to confirm that the spring of 1969 was exceptionally late – only 12 species had been reported blooming, at a time when 50 were expected.

They say times change, and we can verify that from the pages of *The Victoria Naturalist*. In the 1960s, members were reporting that Coho Salmon were more common in the Goldstream River during the fall spawning run than Chum Salmon. Today, there are only a few hundred Coho, and tens of thousands of Chum.

Still, some things never seem to change. In October of 1966, Yorke Edwards wrote of the continuing loss of Garry Oaks to development. He lamented the fact that it was "almost impossible to obtain a Garry Oak to plant... Nurseries don't have them." Edwards proposed that naturalists should start oak seedlings and make them available to landowners. Almost 40 years later, we are still losing oaks. Thankfully, some nurseries now do carry Garry Oaks, and there are several conservation initiatives dedicated to saving the remaining Garry Oak habitat.

Familiar names begin to appear in the pages of the *Naturalist*. Nancy Chapman wrote field trip reports for "Junior Jottings". Ms Chapman went on to international



recognition in the field of ethnobotany as Dr. Nancy Turner. A young Wayne Campbell sent in bird reports to the Society, including a sighting of 4 Bank Swallows at Mitlenatch Island. Campbell's name would become synonymous with ornithology in British Columbia. The photographs of Jessie Woollet and Enid Lemon are beautiful even in the black and white pages of the magazine. Lemon was given an Honorary Life Membership in the Society for her work, and Woollet's family has donated her collection of colour slides to VNHS.

The Society's library was in a growth stage in this decade, under the care of "Davey" Davidson. He told of three rare volumes by Edward Forbush, the gift of a grateful birder who was enthralled by Victoria's Sky Larks.

VNHS members continued to work towards a provincial federation of nature clubs. Two Victoria men, David Stirling and Elton Anderson, were instrumental in establishing the BC Nature Council. The Council met in Victoria in October of 1964, and in these early days included eight member clubs. By the end of the decade, it had become the Federation of BC Naturalists, and today has 49 member clubs.

The Nature Council was the provincial voice on environmental issues. It rallied support for the protection of significant natural areas in the province. In 1966, it reported that members in the Okanagan Valley worked to save 89 songbirds poisoned when an orchard was sprayed with the insecticide Parathion. It was a sobering validation of the warnings of Rachel Carson.

VNHS members worked in other partnerships on a variety of projects. The Junior Members had a long association with Francis Park, which was originally a provincial park. VNHS accepted the role of managing the park, which subsequently became a part of the regional park system. Other members were at work developing the Oak Bay Native Plant Garden

As the decade drew to a close, the Society had grown to 430 members – a little more than half what it is today. Membership still cost a modest \$3.00. VNHS celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1969 in a rather quiet fashion. Then editor of the *Naturalist*, Ruth Cambers, mused about what the next 25 years would be like, what 1994 would be like.

Naturalists could still enjoy the natural world around them, and teach others about it too. But there were new realities to face, realities like pesticide poisonings, and environmental disasters like the sinking of the oil tanker Torrey Canyon. For naturalists, the 1960s words of Bob Dylan had meaning too: The times, they were a-changing.

Nesting Nighthawks

By Michael Porter

Forty-seven years is a long time between finding Common Nighthawk nests. On July 22nd, 1956 I stumbled across two almost fully-fledged chicks, which I then banded, in a forest clearing just north of Prince George, British Columbia. I didn't find them again.

The second occasion was again an accidental find, this time in East Sooke on July 6th, 2003. Although I flushed a bird, I could find no evidence of a nest. Re-visiting the same location three days later on the morning of July 9th, again I flushed the bird from almost under my feet, but this time there was a solitary egg, suggesting it was freshly laid. This assumption was borne out by later events. Further re-visits did not reveal any additional eggs, although 87% of clutches of Common Nighthawks consist of two eggs. Compared with my earlier experience, the date initially suggested that this could perhaps be a second attempt at breeding this year but, checking sources, the date was within a normal range for breeding. As a rule, Nighthawks only have one clutch per year.

The nesting site was in a slight hollow on a south facing rocky outcrop with a few stunted fir and pine trees and shrubbery that offered some shade in places. There was no nest, the egg was simply lay amid a mix of gravelly rock, small dead branches and old cones in one of the shadier spots available.

I continued to monitor the nest on a regular basis. On July 23rd there was still one egg but on July 25th there was a newly hatched chick, a tiny fluff ball exactly where the egg had been. It was so well camouflaged against the ground litter that it was difficult to discern and it took some time for my wife to distinguish the chick from its background. The incubation period on Vancouver Island has been recorded as 18 days but as I did not visit each day I could not confirm this with precision. It was clear that on July 25 the chick was very newly hatched, either that day or the day preceding, and an incubation period of 17 or 18 days is suggested. The eggshell had been removed.

When visiting while incubating, the female simply flew off and disappeared among the trees. Her behavior changed once the egg hatched. Then, when disturbed, she would fly around very closely, sometimes uttering a hard "chek" call repeatedly, totally unlike any call normally associated with Nighthawks, at least that I had ever heard. On July 29th when the chick was 5/6 days old, it had moved about two meters to be in greater shade. On this occasion, the parent performed an injured bird routine fluttering and trailing close to the ground and settling with the gape wide open. The performance was repeated several times with the opening and closing of the enormous gape, finally settling on an exposed rock about 10 meters away from where a watchful eye was kept on the proceedings.

By August 2nd, the chick was back at the original egg

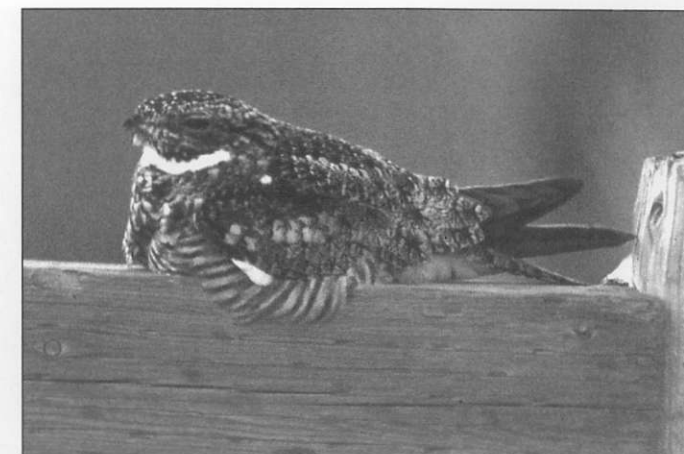


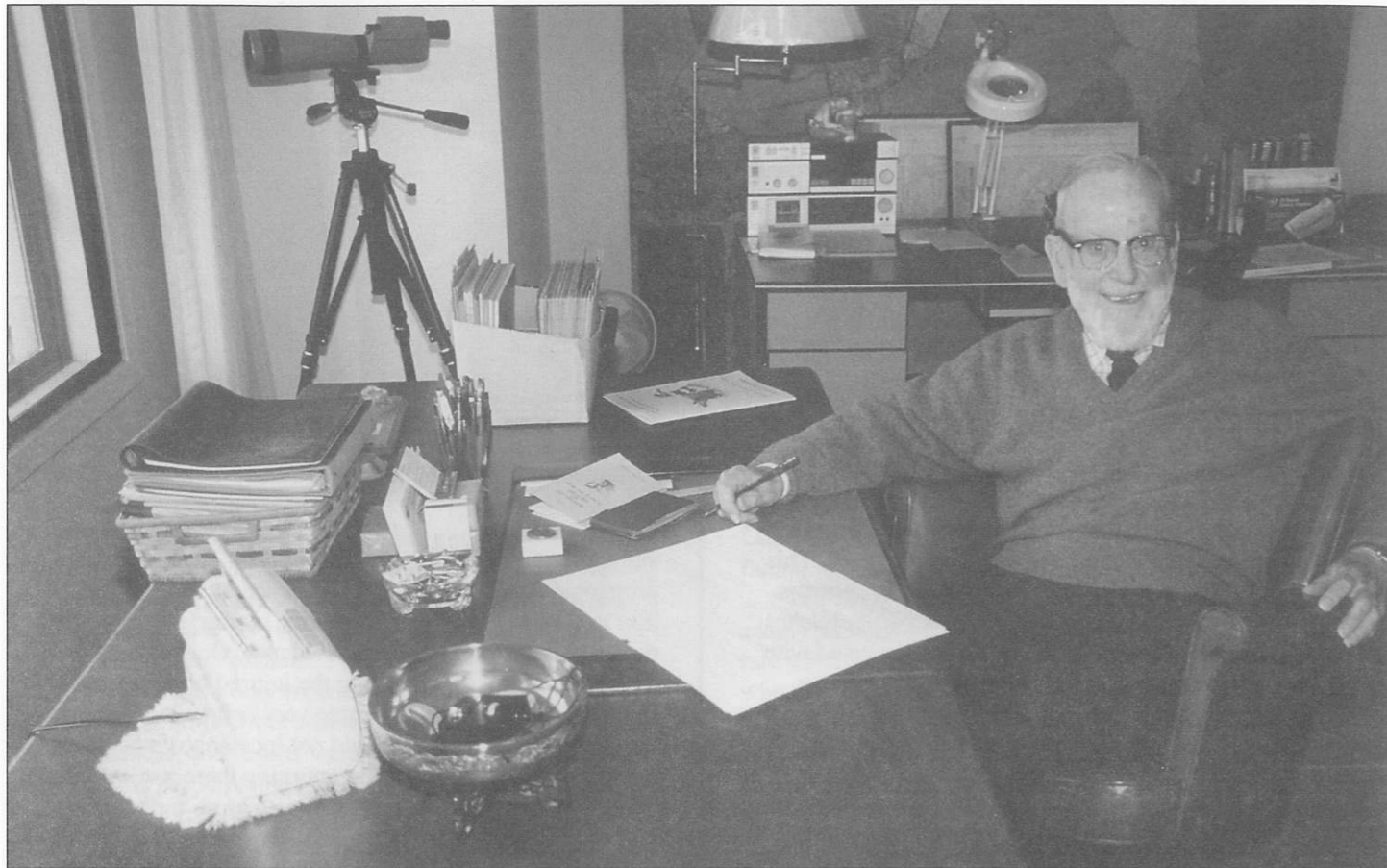
Photo: Bruce Whittington

site and remained there until August 9th. The chick was growing quickly and showing evidence of feathers. In addition to the usual injured bird routine by the female, on this occasion both parents were in evidence. On August 13th I flushed both parents and again the injured bird routine was followed, accompanied by some very soft calls, unlike those heard earlier. However, I could not locate the chick despite a diligent search. The following morning there was a solitary adult flying around the site but there was no further injured bird routine on this occasion, although the adult did settle on the same rock as before to watch me. I could not locate the chick. I returned later that day and located the chick, which was sitting in the shade of a dead broom bush about 15 meters from the egg site. On getting closer it flew off into a nearby tree. No adults were present this time. Although I did not find the young bird on August 13th, from the behavior of the adults it appears that the young bird could not fly on that day but could on August 14th. The fledging period appeared to have been 20 days, although it is generally given as 18 days. The young bird stayed around the site until August 18th, after which it was not seen. I did not see either parent after August 14th although they were probably around, since they usually continue to feed fully-fledged birds for several days. A long flight to the wintering grounds in the southern portion of South America lay ahead for the young Nighthawk.

Watching the erratic flight of Nighthawks at dusk and dawn is one of summer's pleasures but one that is becoming less common. Common Nighthawk populations are declining significantly. In a longitudinal study in Saskatoon, the population declined by 42% over a twenty-year period. The causes of this decline are uncertain.

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Photos provided by Wayne Campbell

J. E. V. Goodwill, 1916-2004

By Alan MacLeod

Authority is the word I most associate with Vic Goodwill. I was a fairly new birder in September of 1979 when I found a strange sandpiper at Clover Point. I phoned Vic to describe the bird – not much bigger than a starling, cinnamon crown, buffy neck and breast, greenish legs – and to claim I'd just found my first Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. No, you didn't, Vic responded without ceremony; what you saw was a Ruff. He had been there earlier the same morning and seen a Ruff, and that was all there was to it.

Going back over my field notes of that long-ago day, it is quite clear to me now that I did in fact see a Sharp-tail. That lucky morning featured both a Sharp-tail and a Ruff at Clover Point. But at the time it didn't matter: if Vic Goodwill said my bird was a Ruff then that's what it had to be, so I duly entered it as such in my life list. Such was the authority of Vic Goodwill. Indeed, it was only a year ago, nearly a quarter-century later, that I removed that entry and decided that Ruff is a lifer I have yet to see.

Vic's authority arose from this: he subjected himself to the most exacting standards of observation, recording and reporting. And just as he held himself to a high standard he expected other observers to do likewise. I recall an occasion from about the same era – 1979 or thereabouts – when Albert 'Davy' Davidson, a hundred years old at the time and a significant bird authority in his own right, showed me a letter in which Vic had chastised him for insisting on using out-moded bird names in his sight records. Vic had commanded that Davy cease reporting 'Lutescent Warblers' and call them Orange-crowneds as he was supposed to. I well remember the wounded-deer look Davy wore that day as he described the impact of Vic's letter.

But no one felt injured by Vic's authority as it was displayed through the years he and his wife Peggy operated the Victoria Bird Alert. Vic was hard of hearing so Peggy took most of the phone calls and it was her voice that most often greeted callers to the phone line. Their hotline was a model

Vic Goodwill's 17 years' worth of bird observations for the central mainland coast are unique and will be pivotal in efforts to influence critical land-use decisions in that vital part of B.C.

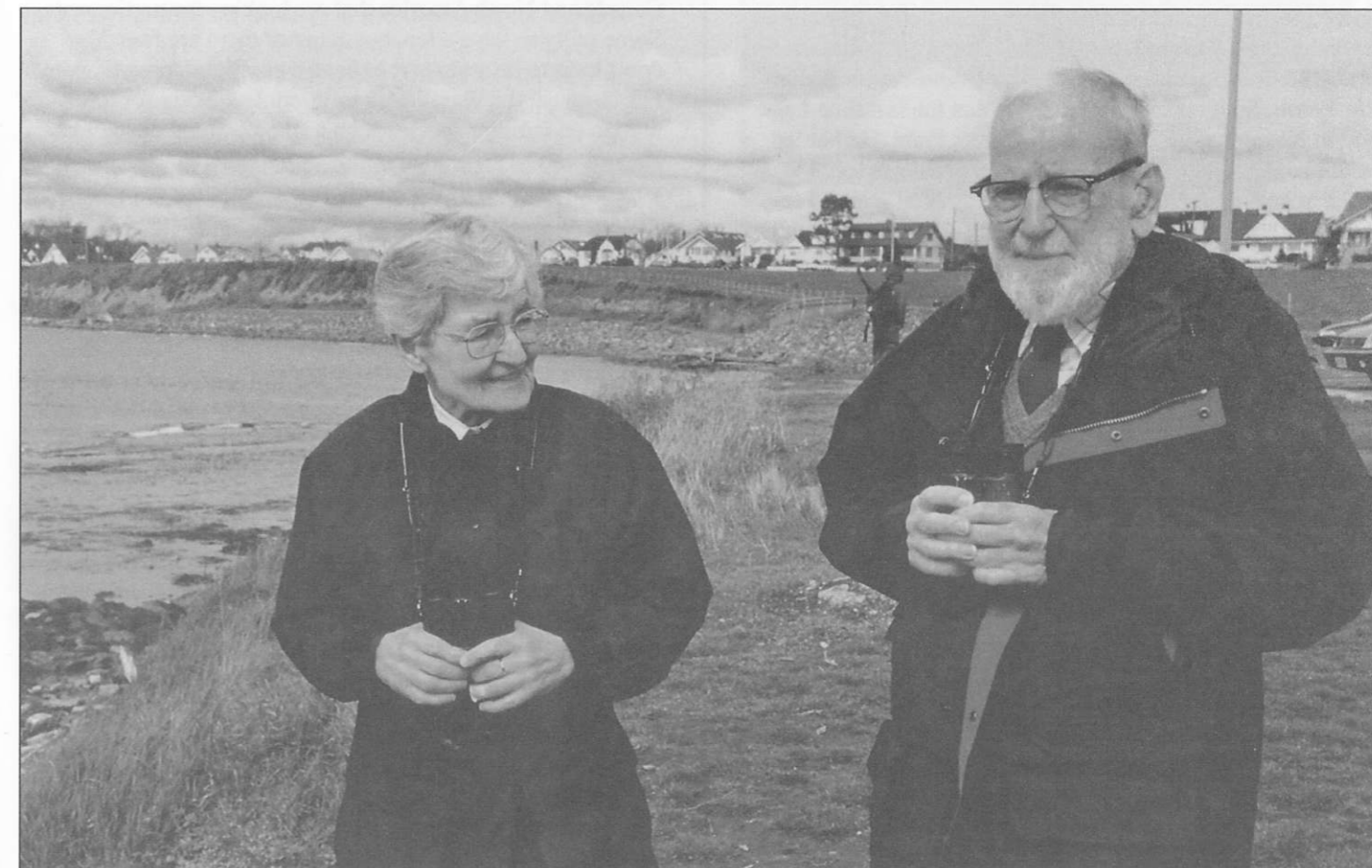
of precision, coverage and selection that, with all due respect to those who have operated it since, has never been matched. And they were kind to novices too. In my keen early birding years I would call Peggy not only to report any rarity that might pass my way but also every Cooper's Hawk, Common Snipe and Marsh Wren too. With me, Peggy and Vic were always patient and generous with their time.

The power of Vic's talents were also plain to see during the years 1972 to 1985 when he was in charge of compiling seasonal reports of bird observations for American Birds. I knew him best then, when Vic's reports for south Vancouver Island set the gold standard: comprehensive, meticulous, authoritative. By 1980 I was in Vic's stable of regular sight-record contributors. It was a big enough job organizing hundreds of my own sight record cards four times a year; I always marvelled at the time and dedication Vic gave to put-

ting together his mammoth compilations. I counted myself lucky to be among the favoured few who received a copy of his seasonal reports and always looked forward to poring over each new report in detail. Once, Vic generously agreed to lend me all the back issues so that I could photocopy the whole set for my own library. I still have them, all thirteen volumes.

The monumental, four-volume *Birds of British Columbia* is built on the observation records of some 16,000 birders. Of these, Wayne Campbell, the senior author, ranks only two other birders as standing as tall as Vic Goodwill for the scope of their contributions to *Birds of British Columbia*. Wayne describes Vic as a remarkable, meticulous observer who donated 600,000 records to the Wild Bird Trust of B.C. His 17 years' worth of bird observations for the central mainland coast are unique and will be pivotal in efforts to influence

Vic and Peggy at Clover Point.



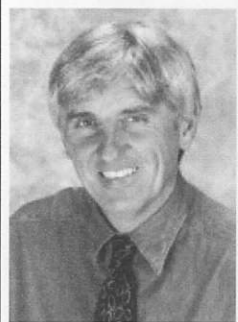
critical land-use decisions in that vital part of B.C.

And it's not just British Columbia that has benefited from Vic Goodwill's efforts. For 31 years, beginning in 1941, he worked for the Canadian Hydrographic Service and had occasion to see much of Canada's coastline – east, west and Arctic. He spent the final six years on the west coast, retiring in 1972. From the beginning, he said, it was plain that his work as a coastal hydrographer and his passion for birding were "made for each other". Wherever his work took him – whether it was Bonaventure Island, Quebec; Cape St. Mary's, Newfoundland; Chesterfield Inlet, Northwest Territories, wherever – he birded, recorded and reported. Have a look in the acknowledgements section of Earl Godfrey's *Birds of Canada* and there you will find J.E.V. Goodwill listed among those singled out as key contributors. Look up the entry on Cory's Shearwater and find Godfrey relying on Vic's notes from 29 days of observations off Nova Scotia in 1960 and 1961.

Every year I spend a chunk of time at my summer place on the Great Bras d'Or, Cape Breton Island. Often, while consulting Tufts' *Birds of Nova Scotia* I have chanced upon references to Vic's observations. Only recently I went looking for ideas about where to look for the bird we now call Bicknell's Thrush only to find this: that Vic Goodwill had found this thrush at Kidston Island, near Baddeck, in 1946 and again in 1947. The year I was born Vic was finding Bicknell's Thrushes just a short haul from my summertime backyard. I am still looking for one.

In my mind's eye I see Vic at Martindale Flats looking for falcons through his gunstock-mounted scope, or scouring for seabirds off Clover Point. It was there in 2002 that the Wild Bird Trust honoured Vic with its Conservation Education Award. So it makes perfect sense that the last time I saw him, in November of 2001, was at Clover Point. He battled leukemia for years and had other health problems too. I was struck at how much the years had caught up with him. I felt like being sociable but Vic was no more interested in small talk than he had ever been. Despite his infirmity he had work to do. He was there to find a Rock Sandpiper and having found it, was on his way.

Vic Goodwill departed this mortal coil February 20, 2004.



Jim Farrell 477-7291

You Know Something We Don't Know...

By Ann Nightingale

Although public interest in nature seems to be increasing, something strange is happening in the world of natural history records. Despite the growing number of "amateur" naturalists and the advent of online reporting, submissions to many databases are down. This may be due in part to the rapid growth of the "casual" naturalist who really only takes in a field trip or two a year, and the aging of some of the more "traditional" naturalists who keep meticulous field notes for every outing. Or it may be that new naturalists simply don't realize the significance of reporting their observations.

In these days of cutbacks to governmental environmental programs, citizen science is more important than ever. Information provided to databases can provide early warnings of changes to habitats and populations, including evidence of the effects of climate change. Observations by naturalists might inspire investigations by students and researchers. Many database managers are now making data readily available free-of-charge through their websites.

There are a number of projects being carried out across Canada and North America that are looking for participants. Some of these have a fee, but many of them are free. You don't have to be an expert or have a computer to participate. For instance, the PlantWatch program is looking for information on familiar species such as the common dandelion. Reports can be submitted online or by mail. Consider adding your observations to those of hundreds of other naturalists so that we all can learn more about our environment.

Here are a few contacts for a variety of projects:

NatureWatch (www.naturewatch.ca) 905-336-4414

- FrogWatch
- PlantWatch
- IceWatch
- WormWatch

Bird Studies Canada (<http://www.bsc-eoc.org>)

- Toll-Free 1-888-448-BIRD
- Project FeederWatch
- Project NestWatch
- Canadian Lakes Loon Survey
- Nocturnal Owl Monitoring Program
- BC Coastal Waterbird Survey (1-877-349-2473 (BIRD))
- BC Beached Bird Survey (1-877-349-2473)

BC Cetaceans Sightings Network (www.wildwhales.org/)
1-866-I SAW ONE

- Whale, Porpoise, and Dolphin sightings
- Sea Turtle Sightings

Letters

To the Board and members of VNHS

I am honoured that I should have joined the small group of people to have been given an Honorary Life Membership in the Society.

I had lived in Victoria for 17 years and had no idea that the Society existed or that there was anyone else "out there" interested in birds. I met Katherine Sherman, in 1980, when we were docents at the Royal BC Museum and on the same team, teaching children about the shore and water birds. Katherine saw my enthusiasm (and ignorance) about the birds and asked if I was a member of VNHS. She told me more – I signed up, and the rest is history, as they say.

The Society has given so much to me – opening my eyes to the natural world we live in. I have met many wonderful people, heard many interesting speakers, and taken part in great trips, both near and far. It has been a privilege to serve the Society.

Sincerely, Lyndis Davis

To members of the Victoria Natural History Society:

My name is Michael Miller, and I am a PhD student in the Department of Biology at the University of Victoria. As this year's recipient of the Samuel Simco Bursary, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to you for your very generous donation. This money, which will go towards paying my tuition for the current semester, has been a great help as I attempt to wrap up my PhD degree. I have recently submitted the dissertation to my committee, and will be undergoing the defence of it shortly.

The topic of my dissertation is the population biology and conservation of Lyall's mariposa lily, a threatened plant of the south Okanagan grasslands. This species, one of Canada's rarest, is known from only a single hilltop west of the town of Osoyoos. For the past several years, I have been monitoring three populations of Lyall's mariposa, together with populations of a co-occurring but more common species in the same genus (sage-brush mariposa), in an attempt to identify potential threats as well as current population trends. I have found that this species is potentially at risk from a variety of factors, including over-grazing, fire suppression, and invasion by exotic weeds. Based on these findings, the federal agency COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) has recently placed Lyall's mariposa on the list of federally threatened species, thereby giving it special priority for management and protection in the future. If you are interested in finding out a bit more about the species, and you have access to the internet, you can visit the COSEWIC website at: <http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca> and follow the links for plants – threatened status – *Calochortus lyallii*.

Please wish me luck as I endeavour to wrap things up (it's a bigger job than I ever imagined it would be!), and thanks again for your kind support.

Sincerely Yours, Michael Miller

To The Victoria Natural History Society,

Thank you for awarding me the Samuel Simco bursary. I am currently in my fourth and last year in biology at the University of Victoria, and I have always had a special interest in the areas of wildlife and habitat conservation. As I am sure you know, tuition fees have been steadily rising throughout the past few years, and consequently I have had to work to supplement my student loan. This bursary has allowed me to spend my last semester concentrating on my studies, rather than a part-time job. Thank you once again for the role you have played in making my last semester an enjoyable one.

Sincerely, Michelle Ross

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"These are excellent instruments...
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and Best Buy list. It is really a
wonderful glass to use in the field,
and backed with an excellent
warranty... (Nov. - Dec. 2003, pg.65)

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Editor's note: This article is reprinted from Volume 20, Number 4 of the Victoria Natural History Society's newsletter (December 1963), as part of our 60th anniversary celebrations. One article from each of the last six decades will appear in each of the six issues of our newsletter we produce in 2004. Enjoy!



Insects and Garry Oak

By David Evans, Canada Forestry

Nearly 500 species of insects have been found in association with Garry oak, *Quercus garryana* Dougl., on southern Vancouver Island. This figure has been established by a study of oak insects in the Victoria area during 1957-1961. Beetles, moths and wasps each comprise about one-quarter of the total, and many of the other insect groups are represented to a lesser degree in the remaining 25 per cent. Approximately 100 of the species have yet to be identified, and it is anticipated that others will be found when the

results of 1962-1963 investigations are incorporated. Garry oak is particularly attractive to insects because of its abundant succulent foliage, which offers shelter and protection as well as food. The oak is the principal tree in the sunny, open, well-drained areas it prefers, and this narrow ecological zone is one that hosts many insects which would have difficulty living elsewhere. A few of them are completely dependent on Garry oak.

The insects vary from *Prionus californicus* Mots., a



Propertius Duskywing (*Erynnis propertius*), a blue listed butterfly in British Columbia whose larvae feed on the leaves of Garry Oak. Photo: James Miskelly

2.5 inch brown wood-boring beetle, whose white grub-like larvae tunnel in old oak roots for at least two years before reaching maturity, to fragile, bright-eyed lacewings, and minute gall wasps of the genus *Callirhytis*, which spend nearly their entire existence inside the pollen anthers of the male flowers of the oak. Small as these wasps are, they are parasitized by other wasps that are even smaller, which are able to locate *Callirhytis* larvae within their usual home, and insert eggs into the chamber – brilliant emerald and golden adults that emerge are about one twenty-fifth of an inch long. Most oak insects cause little or no injury to the trees, many are beneficial: eliminating weak and injured tree sections, assisting in pollination and controlling harmful insects by predation and parasitism. The insect population on oaks is a year-round food supply that attracts many birds and keeps them in provisions when other sources are not available.

From our viewpoint, it is caterpillars of local moths that are responsible for the greatest damage to oaks, although it appears only for a brief part of the year when the leaves are past their best. Foremost among these is the oak looper,

The insect population on oaks is a year-round food supply that attracts many birds and keeps them in provisions when other sources are not available.

Lambdina somnaria (Hulst), a geometrid that periodically creates severe defoliation in localized areas. The caterpillars are grey-green, dotted with darker marks, and the August-flying moths are bright buff in colour. The numbers of leaf webbing larvae are considerable; most of them overwinter as eggs or small larvae, and many of them commence feeding on buds before they are fully open, so that by the time the leaves are mature, so many different insects have been at work on them that they appear worn out before their time. Every part of the tree supports its own type of insect: tiny grey springtails and bark lice live on the bark, round-headed beetles bore beneath the bark, and there are small ambrosia beetles that bore into the wood of the trunk; scales and flat-bugs suck sap from the twigs, and aphids take juices from the more tender shoots and leaves. Acorns are infested with snout beetles, and lepidopterous larvae and gall wasps may be found on nearly any section of a tree, including the roots.

One of the more curious dwellers among oak foliage is the neuropteran snakefly, *Agulla*. (Editor's note: Snakeflies are no longer considered part of the neuropteran order, they are in their own order: *Raphidioptera*.) This black, mantis-like creature is about an inch long – females have a slender ovipositor that might be mistaken for a stinger. They have two pairs of clear, gauzy wings, but their outstanding

feature is their long upright "neck" that facilitates locating and capturing prey, which consists of aphids, small caterpillars and other soft bodied insects. Despite its size, the snakefly, with its intelligent expression and quick aggressive movements, can create an impression of deadly belligerence. Young snakeflies are fast-moving, flat-bodied, brown and white larvae with three pairs of legs, less intimidating in appearance than their parents, but more voracious in appetite. Lacewings, ladybird beetles (both adults and larvae), snakeflies, stinkbugs, and countless spiders of many species are the principal agents of natural control in oak insect population.

Environmental conditions have many complex variables that have yet to be fully understood. However, causes of mortality among oak insects might be listed as follows, in order of importance: insect and spider predation; weather hazard; predation by larger animals, birds, rodents, reptiles, etc.; parasitism; miscellaneous causes; and disease. The price of survival is extremely high in the insect world. Just as Garry oak is unique among our native trees, so is the insect community it supports. (Editor's note: Since this article was published, many non-native insects have arrived to partake of our oak trees in addition to the native species mentioned here. Some of these are very familiar to us now – Gall wasps, Winter moths, Gypsy moths – because they have been quite destructive or certainly have the potential to be.

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

Raffle Results

By Marie O'Shaughnessy,
Publicity Director

Congratulations to the three winners of the VNHS Raffle that was drawn during our recent AGM, held at the University of Victoria on Tuesday, March the 9th, 2004.

First prize for the Steller's Jay framed print went to **Darwin Robinson**, Mayor of Esquimalt.

Second prize for the field guides and backpack went to **Judith Cullington**.

Third prize for the Bird Course went to **Elizabeth Portman**.

Many thanks to all of you who purchased tickets. We appreciate your support. Approximately \$500 was raised for our current conservation project, the Esquimalt Lagoon interpretive signs.

Highlights of the 2003 Sooke Christmas Bird Count

By Jack McLeod (*Coordinator and Compiler*)

Date: Saturday December 27, 2003

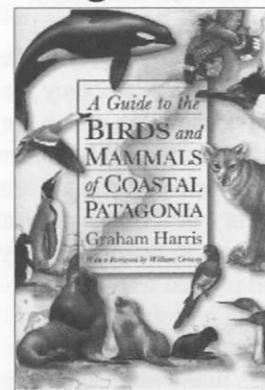
Weather: Dawned partly cloudy and cold, about 0°C with ground frost. About 9:00 clouded over and for the rest of the day there was mixed rain and snow. It was a most uncomfortable day.

Turnout: 38 participants

Species: 106 – down a bit from the past five years. Highlights include:

- Black-legged Kittiwake – new to the circle. Four observed in the Strait of Juan de Fuca off Whiffin Spit. (Jeremy Gatten and Bruce Whittington).
- Palm Warbler – new to the circle. A single bird observed in the morning at Whiffin Spit (Mike and Barb McGrenere).
- Other highlights include Ruddy Duck (2), Red Phalarope (1), Ring-billed Gull (1), California Gull (3), Townsend's

Penguins... At Goldstream?



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Sooke Christmas Bird Count, December 27, 2003 Summary Sheet

Species	Number Observed								TOTAL
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	
Red-throated loon							1		1
Pacific loon	2	6		2	3		1		14
Common loon	5	9	1	2	1	2		2	22
Pied-billed grebe			5			4	1	1	11
Horned grebe	50	2	17			9	12		90
Red-necked grebe	2		2	2			2		8
Western grebe		1		1					2
Double-crested cormorant	27	57	53	33	46	21	1	4	242
Brandt's cormorant	1	80		9	18		6		114
Pelagic cormorant	4	23	21	13	3	5	8		77
Great blue heron	1		3	5	4	5	2		20
Mute swan		2	10						12
Greater white fronted goose		1							1
Canada goose	15	245	276	37	31	5	149	8	766
Green-winged teal		5							5
Mallard		69	429	20	22	8	14	12	574
Northern pintail		8	28						36
Eurasian wigeon		2	5						7
American wigeon		434	408	6			1	13	862
Ring-necked duck		3			19				22
Greater scaup		1	21	30					52
Lesser scaup	2	17	2						21
Harlequin duck		16			2		2		20
Oldsquaw	26	11				7	2		46
Black scoter	2								2
Surf scoter	56	145	37	34	17		18	2	309
White-winged scoter	7	2				13			22
Common goldeneye	5	26	32	18	2	2	2		87
Barrow's goldeneye	1		13	4				2	20
Bufflehead	62	468	136	110	92	123	55	26	1072
Hooded merganser		13	3		5	11	12	1	45
Common merganser		18	61	23	8		4	100	214
Red breasted merganser			21	2	19	3	4		49
Turkey vulture					2		2		4
Bald eagle	6	7	6	4	8	5	3	2	41
Sharp-shinned hawk		1							1
Cooper's hawk					1			1	2
Red-tailed hawk	1	5	1	2	3	1			13
Merlin	1	1							2
California quail		11	91	20	1	10	30	17	180
Virginia rail						3			3
American coot			2						2
Red phalarope (*)				1					1

Sooke Christmas Bird Count, December 27, 2003 Summary Sheet

Species	Number Observed								TOTAL
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	
Kildeer			7					1	8
Black oystercatcher		2		1	1	8	1		13
Black turnstone		17	1		7		6		31
Surfbird					1				1
Sanderling							7		7
Common snipe		1							1
Black-legged Kittiwake(*)				4					4
Mew gull		42	11	32	850	76	42	5	1058
Ring-billed Gull(*)							1		1
California Gull (*)			2		1				3
Thayer's gull	1		3	1	45	2			52
Western gull		1	1						2
Glaucous-winged gull	41	122	137	49	487	69	75	37	1017
Unidentified gull			47			75			122
Common murre				3	259	5			267
Pigeon guillemot.				6	1	2	1		10
Marbled murrelet			3	4					7
Rock dove		11			1			15	27
Great horned owl			2	2		1		1	6
Northern pygmy owl (*)					1				1
Anna's hummingbird		1	1			1			3
Belted kingfisher	1	6	6	3	1	4	3	3	27
Red-breasted sapsucker			2				1		3
Downy woodpecker	1	1	5	2	4		7	1	21
Hairy woodpecker	1		1	1	4		2		9
Northern flicker	3	22	16	9	34	6	20	7	117
Pileated woodpecker					1		1		2
Steller's jay	2	20	19	17	3	8	10	19	98
Northwestern crow	26	105	254	8	3	16	16	23	451
Common raven	5	34	14	12	8	7	2	43	125
Chestnut-backed chickadee	26	52	86	64	49	41	45	14	377
Bushtit	30	9	10		6				55
Red breasted nuthatch		6	10	9	6	7	6	8	52
Brown creeper	2	6	8	1	3	5	13	1	39
Bewick's wren		1	3		2	1	6	5	18
Winter wren	6	13	7	45	22	28	11	4	136
Marsh wren		1	1		3				5
American dipper		1							1
Golden-crowned kinglet	30	51	441	87	90	66	85	40	890
Ruby-crowned kinglet	10	16	32	5	13	10	4	6	96
Hermit thrush		5	2	5	5	5	3	2	27
American robin	5	27	148	42	83	31	62	12	410
Varied thrush	4	14	13	25	19	12	5	6	98

Sooke Christmas Bird Count, December 27, 2003 Summary Sheet

Species	Number Observed								TOTAL
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	
Cedar waxwing			2						2
European starling	46	98	248		8	1	100	13	514
Hutton's vireo				1					1
Townsend's warbler			1		1				2
Palm warbler (*)		1							1
Spotted towhee	6	19	33	9	9	13	20	18	127
Savannah sparrow (*)		1			1				2
Fox sparrow	6	28	58	2	1	11	30	14	150
Song sparrow	6	19	76	13	7	22	26	14	183
Golden-crowned sparrow	11	74	34	1	8	21	42	8	199
White-crowned sparrow	1	14	5						20
Dark-eyed junco	37	110	336	302	86	217	76	335	1499
Red-winged blackbird	85	36	1		8		120		250
Brewer's blackbird		35					24	25	84
Purple finch		44	2		1	1	10		58
House finch	1	238	25		13	6	16	4	303
Red crossbill		22	20	36	13	27		2	120
Pine siskin	204	336	334	475	181	25	35	175	1765
Evening grosbeak		3							3
House sparrow	9	54	9				48	10	130
COUNT TOTALS	882	3408	4161	1654	2657	1067	1314	1062	16205
SPECIES TOTALS	48	75	71	55	65	51	61	46	105

* = Field description required
 dup = duplicate record
 U = unusual species BCSO
 N = new species to BCSO
 HC = high count for BCSO

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

Getting the Dirt: Straight from the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre!

By Louise Ditmars and Lynn Marie

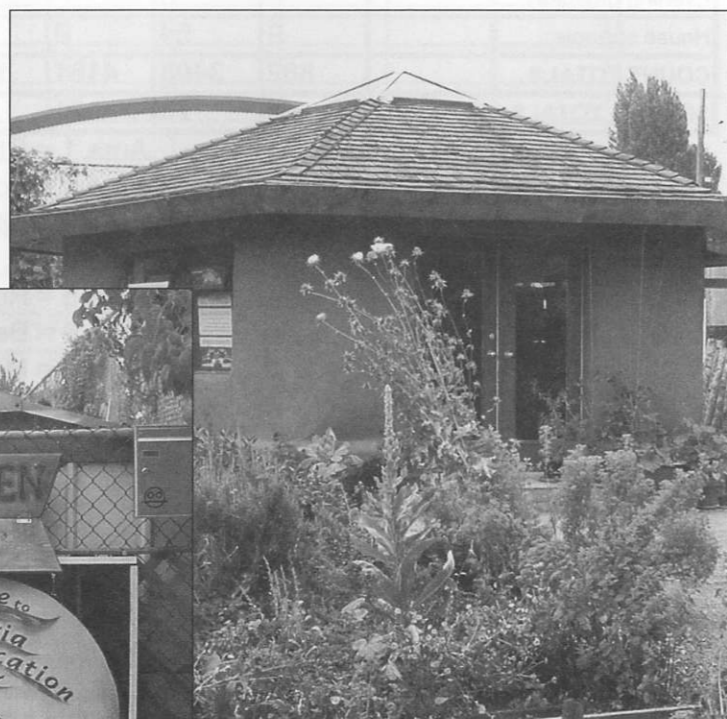
What is easy to do in your own home, reduces waste, and improves the environmental health of the entire Capital Region? Composting! Although it may seem small, your composting efforts save landfill space and reduce the environmental effects of the landfill such as the production of greenhouse gas and the burning of fossil fuels to transport your waste to the landfill. Using compost also saves water, improves soil structure, reduces soil erosion and eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides that are harmful to humans and other creatures.

Composting is a natural part of the cycle of growth and decay and can be as simple as adding your food and yard waste to a backyard bin and letting nature take its course. Materials will decompose with the help of bacteria, worms and other small organisms. This natural process will result in a dark, crumbly, earthy material called compost or humus.

If you live in an apartment or lack a backyard, you can still compost indoors by using a technique called worm composting. This is an odour free method that uses special worms called red wigglers. To set up your system, buy or retrofit a compact, square, plastic bin with drainage and ventilation. Add shredded newspaper or composted leaves as bedding for the worms. Once red wiggler worms are added, they consume half their weight in food scraps every day, converting your kitchen scraps into "black gold": nutrient rich compost.

The Greater Victoria Compost Education has been educating residents of our region on the methods and benefits of composting since 1992, and we have a great track record! In 2003, over 12,000 people participated in our programs, and we succeeded in diverting over 90,000 kg of waste from the Hartland landfill through the sale of composters. To bring the composting message to residents, trained volunteers staff mobile displays at community events throughout the year. These volunteers, graduates of the Compost Educator Volunteer Training Program, give residents the information they need to compost. Volunteers attend over 50 community events per year such as Home Shows, the Flower and Garden Show, markets and fairs.

We are here to help you with your composting and organic gardening needs! We offer workshops on composting, as well as on organic gardening and related topics. You can also phone our hotline to have your composting and organic



Photos courtesy of GVCEC



gardening questions answered. For \$15 a year, you can even become a Compost Club Member. As a member of the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre you will be supporting composting and organic gardening education programs while receiving the following benefits:

- Free admission to all two-hour workshops (held at least once monthly), and a 20% discount on all daylong workshops offered.
- 10% discount on gardening and composting supplies at participating garden centres and at the Compost Education Centre
- Our Quarterly newsletter "The Latest Dirt".

Upcoming Workshops and Events (April, May and June)

Compost Club Lecture Series

(2 p.m. – 4 p.m. \$10.00 or free for Compost Club members)

Date	Topic
April 17	Plant Propagation
May 8	Urban Chickens: Eggs in the City
June 12	Beneficial Insects

Composting Basics Workshops (Free)

Repeat workshops, held once monthly

Saturday May 1 and June 5, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Two-Hour Organic Gardening Workshops

(\$10 or free for Compost Club members)

Date	Topic
June 12	Planning your 12-month Veggie Garden 11am-1pm

Full Day Workshops

(10 a.m. – 5 p.m. \$50 or \$40 for Compost Club members)

Date	Topic
June 26	Introduction to Permaculture

Plant and Yard Sale

(Saturday May 15, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Free)

Veggie starts will be offered for sale, as well as gently used household items



For More Information

To find out more about composting, volunteering, upcoming events, or to purchase a backyard or indoor composter, visit the Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre at 1216 North Park Street from Wednesday to Saturday from 10-4, or the web site at www.compost.bc.ca, or call 386-WORM.

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*Offer valid March 1-June 30, 2004

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A Sixty-Year Love Affair With Nature

Over 700 people enjoy membership in the Victoria Natural History Society and receive this Newsletter. Wouldn't it be wonderful if 500 of you attended our Society's 60th Anniversary Picnic on June 5th at Island View Beach? See the announcement on the back page for more details of the day's events.

You will see from the list of field trips and talks planned for the next few months, that we are making an extra effort to give you exceptional opportunities to learn more about the natural world around us. Nature lovers in the Victoria region are fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers who



spend many hours planning and leading these outings. Bring a friend or two (and your camera to take pictures for our photo contest) and share in the celebration of these natural treasures during our 60th Anniversary.

The 60th Anniversary Planning Committee

Welcome to New Members

Tracy Anderson
Quadra Street
Birding, marine conservation issues

Winona Auchterlonie
Brownlee Place

Robin Bassett
Eberts Street

Richard Black
Balmacarra Road
Birding

E. J. Cross
St. Patrick Street
Birds

Dennis and Janice Flewelling
Barrett Drive
Birds, marine life

Andrew and Larry Gagnon
Bewdley Avenue

John and Eve Gow
Parkwood Place

Art Grabham
Fifth Street

Sharon Hartwell
Grange Road
Botany, birding, native plant culture

Jennifer Haywood-Farmer
Darwin Avenue

Carmen Holschuh
Prior Street
Birds

James Howes
Carolwood Drive
Birds, geology

Sid and Rosemary Jorna
Kemp Lake Road
Butterflies, frogs, wildflowers

Gerhardt Lepp
Joffre Street
Birds, botany, ecology, hiking

Peter and Olwyn Malone
Central Saanich Road
Birds

Patricia and Gerald McKeating
Edmonton, Alberta

Terry B. Mildare
Blair Avenue
Birds

Amy and Blair Paterson
Victoria Avenue

Lee Haines and Erin Rafuse
Saanich Centre
Birds, botany, gardening, photography

Charlene Simon
Selkirk Avenue
Birds, native plants

Norma J. Smith
Knight Avenue
Birds

Donna Southwood and Family
Denewood Place

Sid and Jen Tafler
Howe Street
Wildlife and conservation

Beatrice Tellier
Cedar Hill Cross Road
Birds, botany

Bruce Torrie
Dawn Lane
Birds

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:** 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>.

MAY

Saturday, May 1

Garden Tour

A Showcase of Beautiful and Sustainable Landscapes and Gardens

This tour is brought to you by the Wild Garden Party, a collaboration of local non-governmental organizations that includes City Green, Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre, Habitat Acquisition Trust, Lifecycles Project Society, Native Plant Study Group, and Naturescape BC. Featured gardens are located throughout Greater Victoria and come in all shapes and sizes. What they have in common is a commitment to lessening their impact on the natural world. Tickets are \$10 and all participants will be entered in the door prize draw for an autographed copy of *Native Plants in the Coastal Garden* by April Pettinger and Brenda Costanzo, and dinner for two at the well known local restaurant. To purchase your ticket (\$10), please call or drop by the Habitat Acquisition Trust office (995-2428 or 316-620 View Street).

Saturday, May 1

Birding Royal Roads and Esquimalt Lagoon

Join **Ann Nightingale** for a birding walk around Esquimalt Lagoon. Possibilities include Caspian Tern and Ruddy Turnstone. We should see a good variety of spring migrants. Meet at the south end of Esquimalt Lagoon at 7:30 a.m. This is a 3-4 hour walk. Call Ann at 652-6450 for more information. No pets please.

Sunday, May 2

Camas Day

This annual event, held at Beacon Hill Park, will include free guided walks for birds, botany and archaeology. Birding walk at 9:00 a.m. and Wildflower and Native History walks at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Meet at the top of Beacon Hill by the flagpole. This event is sponsored by the VNHS and the Friends of Beacon Hill Park. For more information call **Helen Oldershaw** at 592-6659 or **Tom Gillespie** at 361-1694.

Sunday, May 2

Wild Flowers and Birds on Mount Tzuhalem

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

Saturday, May 8

National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day

A great date to increase public awareness of the impacts of feral and free-ranging cats on wildlife, identify ways for cat owners to minimize impacts, and inform cat owners of laws prohibiting the release or abandonment of cats in the wild. The *Cats Indoors!* Campaign is sponsored by the American Bird Conservancy, and they have a terrific website that is full of enough information to convince everyone that an indoor cat is a happy cat! <http://www.abcbirds.org/cats/>

Saturday, May 8

Birding Swan Lake

Join **Chris Saunders** for a birding walk at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Meet at the main parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Call Chris at 391-1159 if you need more information.

Sunday, May 9

Birding at Witty's Lagoon

Join **Dannie Carsen** at one of Victoria's birding hotspots! It's a peak weekend for migrant songbirds and the lagoon may produce a nice mix of waterfowl and shorebirds. Meet at the main parking lot on Metchosin Road at 7:00 a.m. No pets please.

Saturday, May 15

A Butterfly Walk on Observatory Hill

Join **James Miskelly** for a Butterfly Walk on Observatory Hill. Meet at the bottom of the hill 10:00 a.m. for a walk to the top. It's difficult to say what will be seen, because it is so weather dependent but James will also talk about the many historic records from this site.

Saturday May 15

Spring Plants of Mill Hill Regional Park

Join **Adolf & Oluna Ceska** on another botanical adventure: The fifth in a series of monthly trips to search for rare plants of our area, all in celebration of our 60th anniversary. We should see several rare spring plants (*Scaevola* – *Idahoia scapigera*, deltoid balsamroot – *Balsamorhiza deltoidea*, heterocodon – *Heterocodon rariflorum*, etc. and a rare liverwort – *Targionia hypophylla*) Meet at the parking lot off Atkins Road at 9:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and allow 2-1/2 to 3 hours. Call Adolf Ceska at 477-1211 if you need more information.

Saturday, May 15

Birding Blenkinsop Lake

Join **Kevin Slagboom** in birding the Blenkinsop Bridge area and Lochside Trail. Meet at the south end of the bridge at the end of Lochside Drive at 7:00 a.m. Call Kevin at 658-0940 for more information. No pets please.

Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16

Victoria Butterfly Count

We are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers so get out your field guide! **Cheryl Mackie** is the count coordinator; give her a call at 479-4083.

Sunday, May 16

Hummingbird Banding Demonstration and a Nature in Trevlac Park

Join **Joy and Cam Finlay** at their home at 270 Trevlac place, this is off of Hector Rd which is off of Interurban Rd. Cam will explain the process of banding hummingbirds, which he has been banding for the past eight years. Cam has five sites on Vancouver Island that are part of the North American Hummingbird Monitoring Network. After observing the Hummingbird banding, you can take a nature walk with Joy to Trevlac Park. It starts at 7:30 a.m. Call Joy or Cam at 479-9833 if you need more information.

Friday, May 21

Birding Mount Newton

Join **Sheila Mosher** for a birding walk on Mount Newton's south slope. We should see Black-throated Gray Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Western Tanager as well as many other migrant and resident birds. Meet at the corner of Haldon road and Newton Heights at 7:00 a.m. Phone Sheila at 652-3502 if you have any questions. No pets please

Saturday, May 22

A Native and Exotic Plant Walk at Beacon Hill Park

Join **Agnes Lynn** for a walk to all the different native plant areas in Beacon Hill Park. These include a Garry Oak Meadow, a small stand of Douglas Fir, the sea bluffs along the ocean and the many exotic plants in between. Meet at the playground parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Call Agnes at 721-0634 if you need more information.

Saturday, May 22

Birding Observatory Hill

This is a great place to hear and maybe see a good number of the warblers, vireos, and flycatchers that nest or pass through our area. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the bottom of the hill. This will be a 3-4 hour walk, bring a drink and a snack. Leader TBA.

Sunday, May 23

A Nature Walk at Cowichan River Provincial Park

Join **John Henigman** on an all day nature walk in Cowichan River Provincial Park near Duncan. Meet at the Helmcken Park and Ride at 9:00 a.m. for car pooling to the Provincial Park. John will provide maps for drivers. Once at the Cowichan River trail, we will walk down to the River, along it and back to parking lot in a 5 km

loop. The Cowichan River valley is very beautiful and packed with native plants and animals typical of this area. Lots of wild flowers and beautiful views! People should bring water, lunch and be wearing good walking shoes and have layers of clothing (it could rain). The trails are easy walking but unimproved and include some hills. We will return to the Helmcken Park and Ride by 4:00 p.m. Call John at 598-6326 if you need more information.

Monday, May 24

A Natural History Cycling Tour of the Galloping Goose Trail (Sooke Potholes to Leechtown)

Join **Rick Schortinghuis** on a cycling tour into the Sooke Hills. We will enjoy the flowers, birds and scenery along the way. Meet at the Galloping Goose parking lot 2.3 km up Sooke River Road at 8:00 am. Bring a cool drink and a lunch. Call Rick at 652-3326 for more information. No pets please.

Friday, May 28

Birding the Colquitz River Trail

Join **Rick Schortinghuis** for a 3-4 hour birding jaunt between Marigold Avenue and Wilkinson Road and on to Quick's Bottom. Snacks and drinks are a good idea. Meet at Hyacinth Park on Marigold Ave. at 7:00 a.m. Call Rick at 652-3326 for more information. No pets please.

Saturday, May 29

Birding the Boardwalk at Langford Lake

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

Sunday, May 30

Birding the power lines and the ponds at the hydro substation along side Francis King Park

Join the **Gattens (Barry and Jeremy)** on a walk along the power lines that border Francis King Park and the area around the hydro substation. We will be stopping to look at the flowering shrubs, butterflies and birds along the way. This is a great area to hear or see most of the warblers, vireos and flycatchers we have in our area. Bring a lunch and a drink and meet at the nature house on Munns Rd at 7:00 a.m. This will be a 3-4 hour walk. Call Barry at 652-4357 for more information. No pets please.

Sunday, May 30

Victoria to Lake Cowichan via Port Renfrew

Join **Ed Pellizzon** on a back road field trip from Port Renfrew to Lake Cowichan. Ed will be taking the highway from Victoria to Port Renfrew and then the logging roads to Lake Cowichan. There will be plenty of stops along this wonderfully scenic drive for birding, looking at wildflowers and wildlife watching. We will also visit a giant spruce tree along the way. This will be a all day trip (200 km) starting at 6 a.m. at the Helmcken Park and Ride and finishing at around 6 p.m. call Ed at 881-1476 for more information

JUNE

Saturday, June 5

Birding Elk Lake before the VNHS Picnic at Island View Beach

Come for a wonderful stroll with **Tom Gillespie** (361-1694) through exceptional nesting habitat on the shore of a favourite recreational lake. Watch for breeding warblers, vireos, and waterfowl. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the parking lot on Jennings Lane on the west side of the Pat Bay Highway (just south of the rowing boathouse).

Saturday, June 5

Oceans Day, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

"Discover the Ocean in Your Backyard" with VNHS and all the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative partners at Royal Roads University. Dozens of displays, music, walks, talks, food and fun!

Saturday, June 12

Late Spring in Uplands Park

This trip is the sixth of a series of monthly botanical trips to search for rare plants of our area, all in celebration of our 60th anniversary. Join **Adolf & Oluna Ceska** on a botanical adventure in Uplands Park. We should see several rare spring plants (Muhlenberg's centaury – *Centaurium muehlenbergii*, heterocodon – *Heterocodon rariflorum*, Carolinian fox-tail – *Alopecurus carolinianus*, foothill sedge – *Carex tumulicola*, and for the most courageous ones, Kellogg's rush – *Juncus kelloggii*). Meet at the parking lot at Cattle Point at 9:30 a.m., and allow for 2 hours. Call Adolf Ceska at 477-1211 if you need more information.

Sunday, June 13

A Nature Walk At Francis King Regional Park

Join **John Henigman** on a nature walk around the Elsie King Trail boardwalk. John will talk about and point out what trees, shrubs and plants make up a Douglas-fir old-growth forest. We should see a variety of birds, wild flowers, and interesting insects along the way. Then we will take some additional easy walking but unimproved trails and visit other portions of the Park area. People should meet at Francis/King Park Nature House on Munns Road at

10:00 a.m. The walk should be finished by 2:00 p.m. Have a snack, water and appropriate walking shoes and clothing. Call John Henigman at 598-6326 if you need more information

Saturday, June 19

Butterflies in the Duncan Area

Join **Derrick Marvin** in looking for butterflies in the Duncan area. Meet at the Helmcken Park and Ride at 8:00 a.m. to car pool. Others can meet Derrick at Somenos Marsh at 9:00 a.m. Bring a lunch and a drink; we are going to take up most of the day. Call Derrick at 250-748-8504 if you would like more information.

Saturday, June 19 and Sunday, June 20

Victoria Butterfly Count

We are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers so get out your field guide! **Cheryl Mackie** is the count coordinator; give her a call at 479-4083.

SEPTEMBER

September 3 through September 7

Fabulous VNHS Field Trip Opportunity

The **Bamfield Marine Science Centre** is a modern marine lab located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island at Barkley Sound and utilized by five major western Canadian Universities (Univ. of Alberta, Calgary, Simon Fraser, UBC and UVic). Year round research facilities in all aspects of marine biological sciences are provided, including labs, a museum, library, herbarium, scuba, research vessels, and on site food and housing. Usually the Centre is reserved for teaching and research, but the VNHS has an opportunity to go as a group for September. The entire area is over-flowing with marine life waiting to be explored. We will leave from Port Alberni on the MV Rose on Sept. 3 and, after a 4 hour boat ride, arrive in time for lunch and receive a brief orientation. For the next 3 days we will thoroughly explore the area, including a boat ride to interesting Barkley Sound locations. Participants must be able to walk on rough shores and be nimble in climbing in/out of boats. The cost is \$999.00 and includes accommodation, meals, guided tours and more. Contact John at 250-598-3442. (Deadline, June 25.)

BULLETIN BOARD

Field Trip Companion

Are you going on one of the field trips? Willing to pick up a VNHS member in James Bay? If yes, please telephone 384-7553. Thank you for your consideration.

CRD Parks

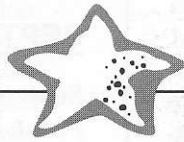
To check out what field trips are going on at CRD parks, go to their web site, http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks/documents/Spring_2004_Programs.pdf.

Bird Walks at Swan Lake

There are regular guided bird walks at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary on Wednesdays and Sundays. Meet at the main parking lot at 9:00 a.m.

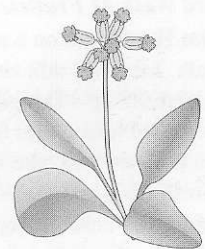
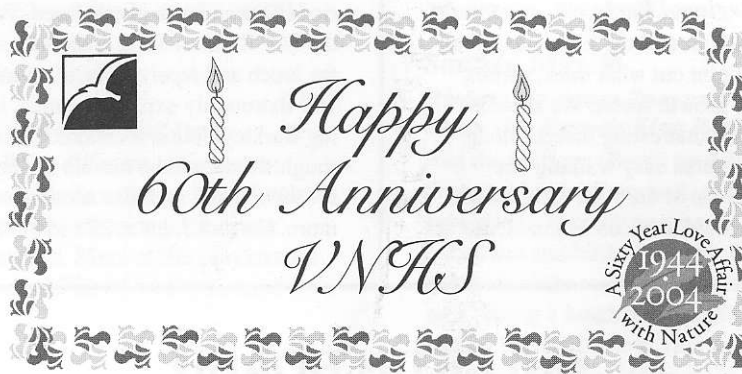
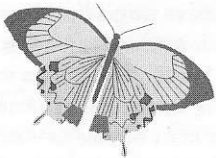
Honorary Life Member

Lyndis Davis
105--- 1110 Willow Street
VICTORIA BC V8X 3K2



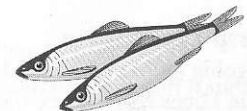
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY'S
60th Anniversary Picnic

ISLAND VIEW BEACH, SATURDAY JUNE 5, 2004, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Schedule of Events*

- 10:00 a.m. – Birding Walk with Rick Schortinghuis
- 11:00 a.m. – Botany Walk with Adolf and Oluna Ceska
- 12:00 p.m. – Intertidal Exploration with Phil Lambert and Darren Copley
- 1:30 p.m. Anniversary Cake Cutting
- 2:00 p.m. – Insect Search with Claudia Copley and James Miskelly



*Special for the keeners! Early Morning Bird Walk.
Meet Tom Gillespie at the Elk Lake Rowing Club Parking Lot at 7:00 a.m.