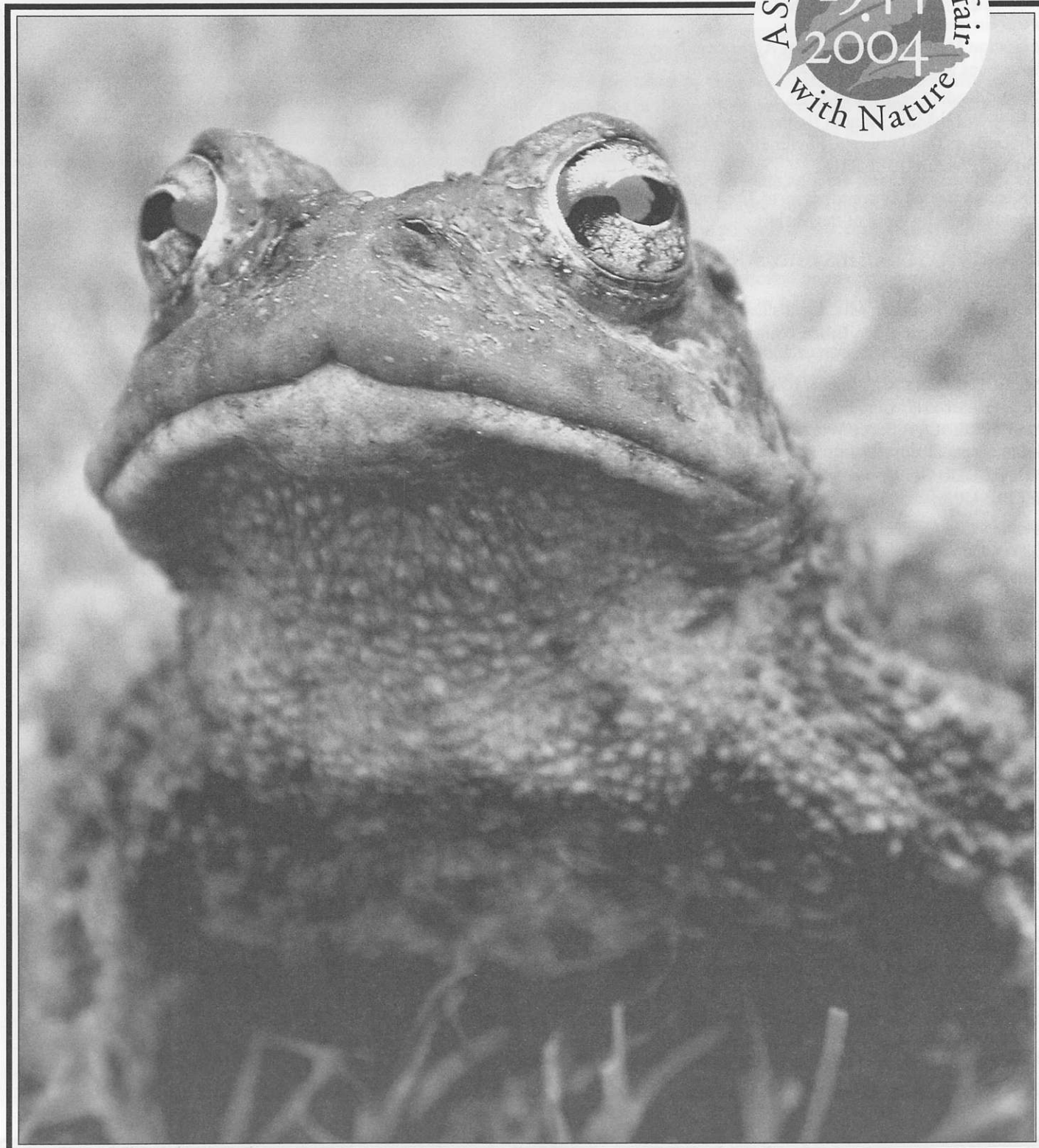




# The Victoria NATURALIST

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VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY





# The Victoria NATURALIST

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## COVER PHOTO:

"Buffy" the Western Toad (*Bufo boreas*) that  
 lives in the Nature House at Goldstream Park.

*Photo: Adam Taylor*

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Earlier this year, when planning was underway for our 60th  
 anniversary events, former VNHS president David Allinson  
 provided some information about an interesting historical  
 photograph available in the BC Archives. He had his  
 attention drawn to it by a former honorary member of the  
 society, Enid Lemon, who also provided him with a version  
 that had names associated with it. I have printed the photo  
 in this edition of the magazine (p.5).

The photo depicts, as indicated in the caption, the first  
 field trip taken by the predecessor of all natural history  
 societies in the province: the British Columbia Natural His-  
 tory Society. This group of serious and suited men laid the  
 foundations of our local club, and, although ours did not of-  
 ficially begin until 60 years ago, the links between their early  
 adventures and our current ones cannot be disregarded.

Looking at the photo brings several things to mind for  
 me. Number one: Where are the women? Were they just too  
 busy to go wandering around appreciating nature, or were  
 they not invited? Children were obviously welcome, and one  
 of them is even a girl!

A more interesting thing to note is where they're sitting:  
 amid a dense stand of lowland Garry Oaks. Given the time  
 of year, this ecosystem would have been full of its trademark  
 wildflowers, all maintained by the prescribed burns First  
 Nations in the region had been conducting for centuries.  
 What a day they must have had exploring this rich and now  
 critically endangered ecosystem! Perhaps it was experiences  
 like this one that inspired the establishment of Uplands Park,  
 an extremely rare example of this particular type of Garry  
 Oak ecosystem. We only care about what we know.

The third thing that I am constantly reminded of, from  
 so many different directions, is the long standing relationship  
 between what is now known as the Royal British Columbia  
 Museum and natural history societies in general, and ours in  
 particular. At least two of the people in the photograph illus-  
 trate this point. John Fannin was the first curator at the mu-  
 seum, appointed in 1886. Charles Newcombe was a famous  
 collector associated with the museum, and his son later be-  
 came an assistant biologist at the museum. The first meetings  
 of the BC Natural History Society were held in the museum  
 and the two organizations were inextricably linked. The link  
 has continued for more than a century now, with bird record  
 committee data collected by naturalists held and published  
 by the museum, handbooks produced by the museum that  
 naturalists around the province rely on, and museum experts  
 like Phil Lambert organizing evening lectures, activities, and  
 publishing articles in our magazine. Even the photograph that  
 led to all these thoughts came from the museum!

*Claudia*



## President's Message

From time to time, I hear people say that they think that VNHS isn't involved enough in conservation issues. In fact, conservation issues are a priority for the VNHS Board and for many of our members. However, we may not toot our own horn loudly enough. Perhaps our highest profile conservation works have been done by groups and individuals under other umbrellas – the VNHS Green Spaces Project and Habitat Acquisition Trust to name two.

VNHS members are committed to making a difference. Victoria is also blessed to have a large number of conservation organizations, and according to a membership survey done a few years ago, VNHS members are members of multiple associations. As such, our members may be toiling under the banners of other groups, but they are also representing VNHS in their conservation pursuits. A list of partner and associated groups posted on our website may give you a sense of how far-reaching our participation currently is.

VNHS organizes a number of "on the ground" conserva-

tion efforts: invasive species removal; bird surveys, plant surveys, and butterfly surveys, for instance, but one area where we shine is in our contribution to natural history education. We produce six issues of an amazing magazine (*The Naturalist*), hold more than thirty presentation nights and fifty field trips each year. We support programs for children through the Swan Lake and Goldstream Nature Centres.

Education is at the root of caring, and caring is at the root of commitment. I, for one, have found my commitment to conservation has increased dramatically since I became a VNHS member, and I suspect that the same is true for many of you.

We can do more, however. If you are involved with conservation efforts with other groups, or have projects in mind which we can support, please share your information with VNHS. We can post your dates and invite our members to participate. Together, we can make a difference.

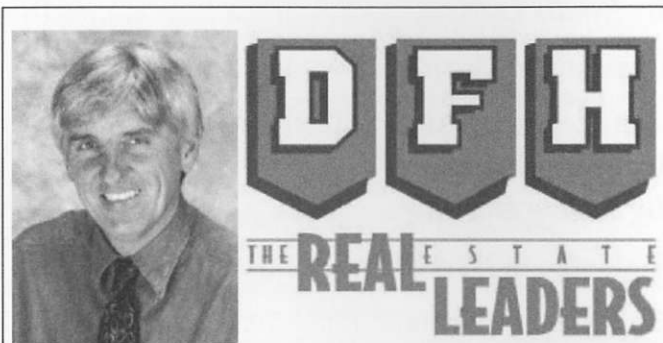
Ann Nightingale, President

### Congratulations

To Bruce Whittington on board Naturalist this summer cruising from Vancouver to Alaska. Bruce is giving interpretive talks and watching for birds, whales, glaciers and other wildlife.

*Why not join him?*

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*Opposite page*

**First field excursion of the British Columbia Natural History Society, Cadboro Bay, April 12, 1890**

Because the information available about the photo is difficult to decipher, here is a "best guess" of who these people are. From left to right, the adults are J. Fannin, J. Merritt, O.C. Hastings, unknown man with cane and light pants, James Deans, J. K. Worsfold, J. Fielding, Dr. C.F. Newcombe, Captain J. Devereux, L. B. Sorgate(?), E. M. Skinner, and O.L. Foudrier(?). If you know who any of the unidentified people are (including the children) I would be pleased to include it in the next issue.— Ed.

*Photo taken by Albert Hatherly Maynard. Courtesy of the BC Archives Collection of the Royal British Columbia Museum (Call number G-03182).*

## Victoria Natural History Society 60th Anniversary Picnic June 5, 2004

By Donna Ross

Caspian Terns, Pacific Loons, Yellow Sand-verbena, Beach Morning-glory, Decorator Crabs, Silver Spotted Sculpin, Purplish Coppers, Green Lacewings and Black Widow Spiders – are a few plants and animals that Victoria naturalists found at our 60th Anniversary Picnic at Island View Beach on Saturday, June 5th. Over 65 people came out despite blustery wind and threatening skies to help celebrate our "Sixty Year Love Affair with Nature". Over the day, the weather held and, with five different nature walks, there was a lot to do. We met old friends and ate yummy hot dogs cooked to perfection at Rick's capable hand.

Just before cutting the birthday cake, Ann Nightingale, our president, shared her impression of how important this kind of day is in cross-pollinating – so to speak – the different disciplines. Birders saw the wondrous colours and patterns on insects up-close with Claudia's hand magnifier and the plant enthusiasts shared the delights of a beach seine inimitably presented in Darren and Phil's funny and instructive style. Although many of us have a particular love, it is good to see naturalists distribute their interests broadly. We hope to see more birders at Marine Night and more plant lovers take on learning bird songs! The more we appreciate in

the natural world, the more we enjoy, and the more prepared we are to speak to the issues that threaten species' survival.

The day held some surprises: The Ceskas and the botany group actually moved out of sight of our tent and after the beach seine we were treated to the sighting of a rare Bare-chested Phil! To this, add the auspicious naming of a new insect species unique to Island View Beach – James ably identified and named the 'Slatey-backed Rose-Chafer'!

Kidding aside, the day was more than just field walks to point out species names and taxonomies. Our leaders – Tom, Rick, Adolf, Oluna, Phil, Darren, Claudia and James – modelled respect and value for the conservation of space and habitat as well as for the beauty and aesthetic sensibilities of nature observation. Speaking for myself, I am proud to support a society that has been teaching Victorians to appreciate the natural world since the Second World War, and has survived and thrived with its dedicated volunteers and enthusiastic experts, who generously share their knowledge and love of the natural world.

Thank you to all the members who came out to support our 60th Anniversary Picnic.

Our Society enriches our lives.





# A Little History: a Legacy Grows in the Seventies

By Bruce Whittington



As the 1970s began, the Victoria Natural History Society was in its stride, and poised for a new maturity. The Society would turn 30, the masthead already listed 15 past presidents, and 5 of those had gone to the Great Field Trip in the Sky.

The decade was one of new and fearsome environmental challenges. The eloquent and ardent conservationist Roderick Haig-Brown spoke to the group about the problems facing the Pacific salmon, 30 years before the crises of today. VNHS continued to support the Federation of BC Naturalists, providing some stability as new clubs joined from Cowichan, Comox, and Salt Spring Island.

VNHS took positions against the construction of mills in the Cowichan River estuary, and against development in the Skagit River Valley. The Society also went on record in support of the FBCN opposition to the nuclear tests at Amchitka Island in the Aleutian Archipelago in 1971.

The *Naturalist* continued to be an active voice for VNHS. Merle Harvey edited the magazine in the early part of the decade, until she was succeeded by Jeremy Tatum, with his passion for detail, and decidedly wry humour. A gentleman by the name of Harold Hosford became a member in 1970, and he quickly became active in the Society. He took the job of Editor of the *Naturalist* in September of 1974, bringing his own brand of folksy charm to the magazine. Hosford also served VNHS members through his column called "Stray Feathers," which ran in the *Victoria Daily Times* for 17 years.

Some familiar faces appeared in the pages of the *Naturalist*. Kaye Suttill wrote that 1973 was a particularly good year for Arbutus trees in the VNHS area, and Anne Knowles wrote several articles about birds. The *Naturalist* also publicized the many events organized for the members and published many informative natural history articles, often in the form of "cover stories." The magazine was still manually typed before publication, but the first inklings of a digital era surfaced when Jeremy Tatum produced computerized Christmas Bird Count results in 1970.

Birding grew in popularity in the 1970s, and also became more prominent in the magazine. In 1970, a birder named Keith Taylor moved to Victoria and he soon began a steady stream of new records for the area, including the failed nesting of a Least Flycatcher, and a sighting of a Northern Wheatear. In 1976, another whiz of a birder named Michael Shepard took over the task of producing the bird reports in each issue of the *Naturalist*. By 1977, there were

still reports of about 100 Western Bluebirds in Metchosin.

One of the Society's most-used services, the Rare Bird Alert, went live in March of 1977, with the late Vic Goodwill compiling all the sightings, and his wife Peggy answering calls and recording the outgoing messages.

VNHS field trips were many and well-attended. A new trip was planned, "if there was enough interest," to Hurricane Ridge on the Olympic Peninsula. The trip has become an annual event and a VNHS tradition. February of 1977 marked the beginning of another tradition, the first VNHS Annual Banquet, held at the Holyrood House; the cost was \$6.00 per person.

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The Junior Program continued to be busy under Gail Mitchell, including Wednesday afternoon programs at the museum. A young Andrew Harcombe, a VNHS award winner, went on to receive other scholarships, and today is the Director of the province's Conservation Data Centre.

Inflation also hit in the 1970s. In the middle of the decade, it cost 6 cents to mail each copy of the *Naturalist* but that cost had risen to 15 cents by the end of the decade. The cost of a single membership in the Society had increased from \$5.00 in 1975 to \$7.00 in 1979.

The 70s also saw another sign of maturity – it was a decade that saw several bequests which would allow the Society to make significant contributions to the community. A long time member named Alfred Nehring died in May of 1973, and left much of his estate to VNHS. When all the doc-

A long time member, Alfred Nehring died in May of 1973, and left much of his estate to VNHS...the money continues to earn interest today, which is used to fund scholarships and conservation projects.

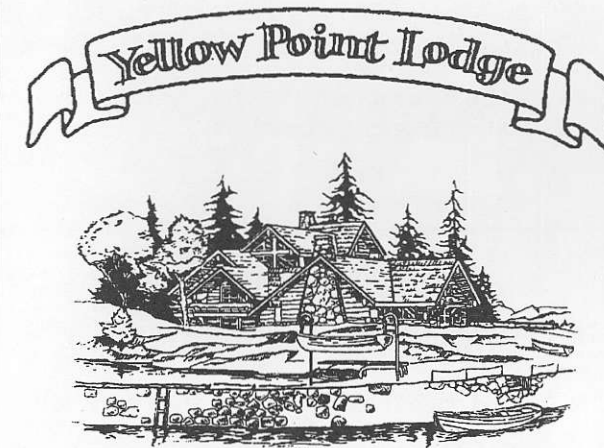
uments were signed, the Society had received over \$54,000. This money continues to earn interest today, which is used to fund scholarships and conservation projects. VNHS made a one-time contribution of \$10,000 toward the work of a young Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society, beginning a long and productive relationship.

In September of 1975, Victoria's best-loved naturalist, Freeman King, passed away at age 84. "Skipper" had been a mentor to thousands of young naturalists, and VNHS paid tribute to his enormous contribution by establishing the Freeman King Scholarship.

Sam Simcoe, a member who was an ardent supporter of East Sooke Park, died in 1976. He left VNHS \$10,000 to

be used for scholarships, and with the bequest, the Society established two bursaries in his name, which are awarded annually. A young naturalist named Barbara Chapman, whose interest in natural history was kindled in VNHS, was tragically killed by a Grizzly Bear near Revelstoke in 1976. The Society mourned her loss, and remembered her with a new scholarship in her name in 1979.

In many ways, the 1970s marked the Society's coming of age, a time that pressed the Society to grow, and to take on new responsibilities in the community. VNHS met the challenge, maturing as it grew and changed, steering a course toward the organization we know today.



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# Much Maligned and Under Appreciated!

By Philip Lambert

Would you believe, that animals often considered vile and ugly, and featured on the TV show *Fear Factor* as repulsive things that contestants had to eat without throwing up, are now considered species of concern by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)? What is this unfairly maligned critter? Contrary to the opinion of most North Americans, the lowly sea cucumber is considered a delicacy in many other parts of the world, especially Southeast Asia. People in Hong Kong, China and Korea pay handsomely (up to US\$55 /Kg) for dried or frozen sea cucumber. They use the product as food and medicine and it goes by the name of *bêche-de-mer* or *trepang*. For example, *Gamat water* (boiled coelomic fluid) can calm an upset stomach, *Gamat oil* (sea cucumbers boiled in coconut oil) is applied externally for aches and pains, and dried *Gamat* is also processed into such items as lotions, oils, tablets and toothpaste.

Sea cucumbers, related to sea stars and sea urchins, live in all parts of the ocean from the intertidal zone to the abyss, where they can be one of the most common invertebrate animals. There are over 900 species of sea cucumbers known, but the ones of commercial interest are primarily in only two families (Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae). In British Columbia, we have two species of Stichopodids, the California Sea Cucumber (*Parastichopus californicus*) and the White Spined Sea Cucumber (*Parastichopus leukothele*). The former is the largest and most obvious of our sea cucumbers and crawls along the sea floor slurping up the organic ooze that collects on hard surfaces in shallow water. In 2002 in British Columbia, the landed value of this one species was \$1.5 million and the wholesale value was a whopping \$6.5 million! Scuba divers harvest the California cucumber but *P. leukothele* is out of range in deeper water.

Last March I was invited by the CITES Secretariat to attend a workshop to prepare a proposal on the conservation of sea cucumbers worldwide. Thirty-five biologists representing industry, governments, and universities from all over the world met in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to collate the necessary information. What we prepared would then go to the Animals Committee who would draft the final proposal to be presented to the 13th Conference of the Parties, made up of representatives from 164 countries, and held in Bangkok, Thailand, in October 2004.

We each presented a report on the state of the sea cucumber fishery in our country and I am pleased to report that Canada has some of the most progressive fisheries regulations. Many of the smaller nations in the Indo-Pacific have



The California Sea Cucumber, *Parastichopus californicus*, in Saanich Inlet. Photo: Philip Lambert

On the island of Langkawi in Malaysia, *bêche-de-mer* (sea cucumber) products are used in soaps, oils, lotions, water, toothpaste, tablets and cosmetics.

virtually no regulations, with the harvest of sea cucumbers being a boom and bust situation. Next, I learned what CITES was all about. Their jurisdiction is strictly international trade between member countries, so they have no say in the internal regulations of a country.

CITES has three lists or Appendices. Appendix 1 lists 600 animals and 300 plants of rare and endangered species whose international trade is strictly regulated. The plants

and animals in Appendix 2 can be traded, providing that the country of origin can prove that the harvest is non-detrimental to the population. Appendix 3 is reserved for species that a country needs assistance to protect. In a number of countries, despite adequate fisheries regulations and policing, poaching is still a major problem. Those jurisdictions can lobby CITES to enlist the help of adjoining countries within the geographic range of the species in question, and all countries that import that species. In October 2003, Ecuador successfully placed the sea cucumber *Isostichopus fuscus* in Appendix 3 because, despite their best efforts, poachers were still devastating the population in the Galapagos. Now, any dealer that imports that species must possess a permit. Hopefully, this will prevent poachers from bypassing the authorities and selling their product directly to a buyer.

On the island of Langkawi in Malaysia, *bêche-de-mer* products are used in soaps, oils, lotions, water, toothpaste, tablets and cosmetics. They are offered as cures for ailments such as upset stomachs, diarrhoea, aches and pains, cuts and inflammation, ulcers, chest pain, asthma, impotence, relief of soreness after giving birth and as a general tonic. Not all these cures have been tested; however, the University of Malaya sampled 23 species of sea cucumber and found that

one species from the genus *Stichopus* possessed pain-killing properties. Water-soluble extracts of an active compound, when tested on laboratory mice were found more effective than aspirin and morphine and 6 to 8 times safer. An oil-soluble extract, when taken orally, was also found very effective in the treatment and healing of wounds. And, by the way, sea cucumber is cholesterol free, 55% protein and 10 to 15% mucopolysaccharides (for building cartilage).

The Chinese consider sea cucumber a general health tonic, for treating tendonitis and arthritis, and as an aphrodisiac. It nourishes the blood and vital essence (*jing*), tones the kidney, moistens a dry intestine, and is a rich source of chondroitin sulfate for treating arthritis. The popular Chinese name for sea cucumber is *haishen*, which roughly translated means *ginseng of the sea*.

Now you know why many cultures revere these animals and may overexploit them in many parts of the world. If the Parties at the next CITES meeting approve the proposal to place two families of sea cucumbers into Appendix 2, they will then stand a chance of surviving with a sustainable fishery.

PHILIP LAMBERT is the Invertebrate Curator at the Royal British Columbia Museum.



Frozen sea cucumber for sale in Victoria's Chinatown. Photo: Philip Lambert



The Lollyfish, *Holothuria leucospilota*, in the intertidal zone of Langkawi Island, Malaysia. Photo: Philip Lambert



Editor's note: This article is reprinted from Volume 29, Number 5 of the Victoria Natural History Society's magazine (January 1973), 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 magazine we produce in 2004. Enjoy!



## The Western Toad on Southern Vancouver Island

By M.G. Oliver, University of Victoria Biology Department

To the vast majority of people, amphibians are perhaps the least familiar and most misunderstood group of vertebrates. This probably results primarily from their secretive habits. While 11 species of frogs and toads, order Anura, occur in British Columbia, only three are found on Vancouver Island. Each, however, is abundant in its suitable habitat. (Editor's note: the current total number of Anurans in BC is 13 based on further research, while on Vancouver Island the current number of species is five due to introductions (see below). Of the nine native Anurans in B.C., three are red-listed (rare or endangered) and three are blue listed (threatened or vulnerable)). The Pacific treefrog, *Hyla regilla*, represents the treefrogs, family Hylidae. *Rana aurora*, the red-logged frog, represents the Ranidae, or true frogs (Editor's note: This is one of the blue listed species). Its cousin, the bullfrog, *Rana catesbeiana*, introduced into B.C., is now quite abundant in the Vancouver area. (Editor's note: Since this article was published, the bullfrog has been introduced to southern Vancouver Island, and, as well, another Ranid, *Rana clamitans*, (the green frog) was introduced to the mid-island. Although the green frog does not appear to have taken a firm hold, the bullfrog is fast becoming the most likely amphibian you'll see when visiting wetlands around Greater Victoria). *Bufo boreas*, the western or boreal toad, is a member of the Bufonidae, or true toads.

The western toad is from two to five inches long and a whitish vertebral stripes permits easy identification. Its background color varies from dark brown to gray. The rough warty skins of toads separate it from other groups of frogs. Each "bump" is a mass of poison glands, but a popular belief that people contract warts from handling toads is untrue. The western toad, with an almost insatiable appetite, consumes large numbers of both crawling and flying insects. Gardeners should welcome it as a natural control for insect pests.

Largely terrestrial, the western toad frequents a variety of habitats. It occurs locally in drier Douglas fir-hemlock stands, and tends to avoid moist cedar forests. Both dry and bog meadows are also favoured habitat. Although primarily nocturnal, animals call infrequently during the day. Adults and juveniles have been sighted at the following locations:

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The rough warty skins of toads separate it from other groups of frogs. Each "bump" is a mass of poison glands, but a popular belief that people contract warts from handling toads is untrue.

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Blinkhorn Lake, Weeks Lake, Jordan Meadows, Koksilah River five miles west of Shawnigan Lake, Pease Lake on the Saanich peninsula (Editor's note: Today, western toad sightings are extremely rare to non-existent within the Greater Victoria area). The western toad commonly occurs in rodent burrows, in rock crevices, and under logs or other suitable cover. During cold weather returning to underground retreats prevents it from freezing to death. Common predators include birds and snakes, but lucky members of the species may attain an age of 30 years or more. (Editor's note: Corkran and Thoms (1996) describe defensive behaviour in toads. This includes a twitter caused by vibrating, grumbling, puffing up to look bigger, and secreting a bitter poison. No wonder they can live to be 30 years old!)

The western toad becomes aquatic in spring for breeding only. The red-logged frog breeds earliest, when water temperatures reach about 6 degrees C. The Pacific tree-frog breeds about a week later, generally when water temperatures exceed 8 degrees C. The western toad breeds in water from 11 to 12 degrees C, some two to six weeks after the red-logged frog. The breeding season begins in the Victoria area from late February to early April, after the ground starts to thaw. Choruses of frogs fill the air at this time. (Editor's note: This experience is becoming less and less common due to loss of wetlands, pollution, and introduced species like the bullfrog).

In general, eggs of no more than two of the three Van-



Juvenile toad at Elk Island. Photo: Adam Taylor

couver Island species have been found at one breeding site, even though all prefer the shallow quiet water of lakes, ponds, and streams for breeding. Breeding ponds and lakes are generally mature with much bottom detritus. They often contain some vegetation, with a sedge-reed vegetation cover usually at the water's edge.

On March 28, 1970, several solitary western toad males and a few amplexing pairs were located in two small ponds, each about 20 feet across, just south of Pease Lake. Many alder branches had fallen during winter storms and littered the ponds, and these presumably were the future sites for egg attachment. Water temperature at six inches depth was nearly 12 degrees C. Amplexus, the sexual embrace, is axillary, with the male holding onto the female's back. Fertilization is external as in (most) fish. The female may extrude up to 16,000 eggs in a long double string in water from three to 12 inches deep.

On May 22, 1971, several dozen western toad amplexing pairs at Weeks Lake in Jordan Meadows were observed swimming across the water's surface from the east shore in broad daylight. They swam in a westerly direction, toward a shaded tree grove of Douglas fir. About six individual

animals were seen entering the water from the east shore. The animal pairs were uniformly distributed, from 15 to 20 feet apart, and covered almost the entire lake surface. Such behavior is unusual for this animal. No eggs were seen in the lake on that date, and this indicated the breeding season had just begun.

Eggs hatch into typical tadpoles a few days after deposition. This is the aquatic stage characteristic of the life history of most frogs. Tadpoles metamorphose into tiny toads less than one-half inch long, exact replicas of the adults, some two or three months after hatching. They then assume the terrestrial existence of the mature animals.

For further information on local amphibians, consult G. Clifford Carl's excellent 1966 edition of *The Amphibians of British Columbia*, B.C. Provincial Museum Handbook No. 2. (Editor's note: This resource has been updated and reprinted and is available at the Royal BC Museum giftshop or the Goldstream Nature House).

### References

Corkran, C.K. and Thoms, C. 1996. *Amphibians of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia*. Lone Pine Publishing, Edmonton.



## A black and white photograph of a large white tent at an outdoor event. People are seated at picnic tables under the tent. In the foreground, a large flower-shaped arrangement is visible.





# Victoria Bird Checklist Report, 2000-2001

By Bryan R. Gates

The Victoria Bird Records Committee was established for the purpose of critically reviewing reports of new or rare bird species occurring in the Victoria-Southern Vancouver Island checklist area. An accurate and complete list of birds occurring here is essential, especially if we are to recognize changes in species distribution and abundance that occur over time. The influence of climate change and habitat loss (either in nesting areas or wintering grounds) on bird populations can be documented somewhat by collecting reports from you, the birding community. The discovery of a new species occurring in our area – or even of a second or third occurrence of a previously recorded species – can be important first steps in documenting long term population trends. In addition, your reports to both the committee and to the Rare Bird Alert will stimulate others to get out and search.

The procedures used by the committee are similar to those of checklist committees in other jurisdictions throughout North America and the world. We encourage anyone who finds a new species for the area, or one that is listed on the checklist as “Accidental”, to document the sighting thoroughly. Even birds seen at times of the year that are outside the seasonal bar graphs shown for that species on the most current checklist should be documented. Photographs are most helpful, but a detailed written account is essential. Any documentation must be based only on what is seen and heard by the observer(s) and must stand up to long-term scrutiny. Multi-observer sightings are always better (thus the benefits of the Rare Bird Alert), but regardless of how many people see and “confirm” a rare bird, the committee can adjudicate the record only if thorough documentation is submitted. Single-observer sightings will be reviewed by the committee and, depending on the thoroughness of the account, may be accepted. If a species new to the checklist is involved, the record most likely would be accepted as “hypothetical”.

No decision of the committee is final, whether it be “accepted”, “not accepted” or “no decision”. The committee may ask for additional information, raw field notes and sketches, etc., and can reopen a record anytime in the future if additional information concerning that species within or near the checklist area arises – for example, if an obvious range extension is noted here and elsewhere. It is important to realize that the committee is not judging the ability or honesty of the observer, but looks only at what is submitted. In cases of species that are difficult to identify in the field, or for which documentation may be in question, the committee may seek the assistance of outside experts.

Your objective, therefore, is to observe in detail any new or rare species you may encounter. Describe and sketch the parts: its size, colours, bill, back, breast, belly, wings, tail, eye, legs, etc. Give reasons why your bird is different from

all somewhat similar species that may be expected here. A *VNHS Rare Bird Report Form* is available to you on the VNHS web page at [www.VicNHS.bc.ca](http://www.VicNHS.bc.ca) or from a committee member. We urge you to use it. Expand on the basic form wherever necessary.

The committee has met a number of times in the past few years. Regrettably, the results of those meetings have not been published as regularly as they should have been. We hope to catch up in this and future issues of *The Naturalist*. Deliberation on records from 2002 and 2003 are currently underway and the findings will be reported here in the near future.

## Committee Decisions (Reached on May 28, July 8, August 5, 2000, and March 17, 2001)

The following accounts are primarily of birds reported in 2000 and 2001, but include some old records that have come to the attention of the committee or have been brought forward from earlier deliberations. The committee members in 2000 were David Allinson, Barbara Begg, Darren Copley, David Fraser, Bryan Gates and Hank VanderPol. In 2001, Bruce Whittington replaced Hank VanderPol.

Observers who submitted documentation examined by the committee are listed in the “accepted” accounts. The first name listed is, to the best of the committee’s knowledge, the person who discovered the bird.

## A. New Species Accepted (added to the May 2001 revision of the checklist).

**Dusky Flycatcher** – The species was added on the basis of 7 records. Entered as “Vagrant”, to follow Hammond’s Flycatcher:

**00-001(A):** Single – banded at Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO) Sept. 29, 1994 – Michael Shepard.

**96-004:** Single – seen/heard Sooke Potholes, June 21, 1996 – JoAnn MacKenzie, Else Holzken. This record was brought forward after being judged “No Decision” in earlier reviews.

**00-001(B):** Single – seen/heard at RPBO, May 26, 1999 – David Allinson.

**00-001(C):** Single – seen/heard RPBO, April 29, 2000 – David Allinson, Devon Anderson, Gabriel David.

**00-029:** Single – seen/heard Mount Tolmie, May 5-6, 2000 – Keith Taylor, other observers. Published

(Taylor, 2000).

**00-001(D):** Single – seen/heard RPBO, May 7, 2000 – David Allinson, Devon Anderson, Gavin Bieber; described as a different individual than seen at RPBO April 29, 2000.

**01-004:** Single – trapped and banded at RPBO Sept. 5, 2000 – Daniel Derbyshire, Graeme Gibson (photos), David Allinson.

**Baltimore Oriole** – Added on the basis of 4 old records published by Hunn and Mattocks (1985) and Campbell, et. al. (2001). This follows a split of Northern Oriole into Bullock’s Oriole and Baltimore Oriole. Entered as “Accidental” to follow Bullock’s Oriole:

**00-003(A):** Female (or 1st winter male?) – St Patrick St., Oak Bay, Dec. 15, 1971 to Mar. 28, 1972; photographed. – Published by Tatum (1972), and in Campbell, et. al. (2001).

**00-003(B):** Adult male – Swan Lake, June 2, 1981 (Hunn and Mattocks 1985) and (Campbell, et. al. 2001)

**00-003(C):** Single, Nov. 24-26, 1984, Victor St., Victoria – Barbara McDonald, (Hunn and Mattocks 1985) and (Campbell, et. al. 2001).

**00-003(D):** Single, Swan Lake, June 2, 1981, Campbell et. al. (2001).

**Gray Catbird** – Added to follow Varied Thrush:

**00-006:** Single – seen/heard at Rithet’s Bog, Nov. 9-10, 1997 – Sue Ennis, Bryan Gates, others.

**01-008:** Single – seen at 1711 Pavenham Rd., Cowichan Bay, Nov. 19, 2000 to Feb. 14, 2001 – Jim Quayle, Bryan Gates, Denise Gubersky.

**00-006:** Single – heard-only by three observers at RPBO, Nov. 9-10, 1997. This record remains under review as the committee determines if other records committees accept “heard-only” birds.

**American Redstart** – Added to follow Black and White Warbler:

**00-009(A):** Single hatch-year female – seen first, then trapped, banded and photographed at RPBO August 5, 1999 – Daniel Derbyshire, David Allinson

**01-009(B):** Single imm. seen off Quadra St, Victoria Sept. 26, 2000 – Keith Taylor, Bryan Gates, (Hank VanderPol, Marie O’Shaughnessy, others).

**Sage Sparrow** – Added to follow Black-throated Sparrow:

**00-014:** Single – seen and photographed on Dallas Rd. waterfront Feb. 16 to 19, 1998 – Robert Barnes (visiting from Ontario), Roy Prior, Barbara Begg, Marie O’Shaughnessy (photos), many observers.

**Spectacled Eider** – Added to follow Steller’s Eider:

**00-007:** Single male “in full or near-full breeding plumage” seen off James Island Sept. 22, 1962 – Charles Guiguet and one other. This is an old record from field notes filed by Guiguet in the Royal BC Museum and published by Campbell, et. al. (2001).

Brought forward for review in 2000, accepted in 2001.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler** – Added to follow Magnolia Warbler:

**00-008:** Single – seen in Maple Bay near Duncan Nov. 25-27, 1987 – observer Dennis Fast?

This is an old record brought forward by the committee in 2000 when it was published (Campbell, et. al. 2001). Accepted in 2000.

**White-winged Dove** – Added to follow Band-tailed Pigeon:

**01-001:** Single – seen at and near Obed Ave., Saanich Jan. 10 to Feb. 19, 2001 – J.L. Meads, Gerry Ansell, David Stirling, Marie O’Shaughnessy, Bryan Gates, Barbara Begg, many observers.

This bird was accepted as wild after consultation with local pigeon fanciers.

**Yellow-breasted Chat** – Added as Hypothetical (H) to follow Wilson’s Warbler:

**01-003:** Single – seen at 8448 West Coast Road, near Otter Point, Nov. 8, 2000 – Bryan Gates (single observer).

**White-rumped Sandpiper** – Added as Hypothetical (H) to follow Least Sandpiper:

**01-007:** Single – seen at Clover Point, Sept. 1, 2000 – David Allinson (single observer).

**Black-footed Albatross** – Added on basis of old records brought forward, to follow Clark’s Grebe.

**67-001 (X 00-004)** – Single – followed the ferry *Coho* March 20, 1967; published in *Audubon Field Notes* (1967)

**78-001:** Single – seen in BC waters from ferry *Coho* during seabird surveys, Sept. 5, 1978 – Steven Spiech (per Wayne Campbell)

**79-001:** Single – seen in BC waters from ferry *Coho*, Sept. 18, 1979 – Terry Wahl (per Wayne Campbell).

## B. Additional Records Of “Accidental” Species Accepted (and added to the May 2001 revision of the checklist)

**Great Gray Owl – 2nd record**

**00-015:** single – seen and photographed at 1884 Connie St., Sooke – Kathy Cameron and family.

**Slaty-backed Gull – 2nd record**

**00-019:** Single 3rd winter bird – seen and photographed on Bench Rd. at Phipps Rd., Duncan, Feb. 15-28, 1998 and at Cowichan Bay April 12-15, 1998 – Derrick Marven (photo), Bryan Gates (photo), other obs.

**Hooded Oriole – 3rd record**

**00-030:** male – visiting feeder near Esquimalt Lagoon July 19, 1997 – Maureen and Don Westlake, Hank VanderPol. (The first record is of a male at



feeder in Oak Bay on May 20, 1978, well described in files at Royal BC Museum and published in Campbell, *et. al.* (2001). The second was a male at the feeder of Audrey and Robert Wallis in Sidney, May 6-7, 1996.

**Costa's Hummingbird** – 2nd and 3rd records

**00-033:** Adult male – at feeder on Penrhyn St. Cadboro Bay, Apr. 25 to May 17, 1997 – Margaret and Rob MacKenzie-Grieve, Bryan Gates (photo), Bruce Whittington (photo), many obs. (Of interest is the fact that this second record occurred at the same address as the first record, but 25 years later).

**00-039:** Male – well described at feeder on Pasco Rd., Sooke, Apr. 7-13, 1999 – Gary Lewis and family.

**Hudsonian Godwit** – 4th record

**00-035:** Single – seen at Esquimalt Lagoon Sept. 26, 1999 – Barry Gatten, Jeremy Gatten.

**Forster's Tern** – 4th record

**00-037:** single – seen at Clover Point, Victoria, Aug. 26, 1999 – Ron Satterfield, Vic and Peggy Goodwill.

**Indigo Bunting** – 3rd to 6th records

**00-040(A):** adult male – seen on Martindale Rd. at Lochside Dr., Aug. 2-3, 1998 – David Allinson, Devon Anderson, Barbara Begg.

**00-040(B):** adult male – seen Mary Hill, June 30, 1998 – Michael Shepard

**00-045:** male – seen Latoria Road, Metchosin, Sept. 27, 1998 – David Allinson.

**00-038:** adult male – seen at Jennings' Lane (Elk Lake), June 21, 1999 – Darryl Lum, Margaret Huntley.

**Black Tern** – 3rd Hypothetical record

**00-043:** breeding-plumaged adult – seen over Quamichan Lake, Duncan June 12, 2000 – James Fenneman. (All three records of this species here have been single-observer sightings. Thus the species remains as "Hypothetical").

**Northern Waterthrush** – 4th to 11th records, changing the status to "Vagrant"

**00-020:** single – seen at King's Pond, Saanich, Aug. 30, 1998 – Keith Taylor, Barbara Begg, many obs. In addition, the following records were accepted: single window-kill Oak Bay, Aug. 23, 1994 – Hugh Gordon; single birds banded at RPBO Aug. 23, 1994, Aug. 24, 1995, Aug. 25, 1995, and Aug. 15, 1997; single window-kill UVic, Aug. 13, 1997.

## C. New Species Not Accepted Or Awaiting Further Documentation

(Note: Except where published, the names of the person(s) reporting are not included here. Those having documentation or supporting information about the

following records are invited to submit that information to the committee).

**Mourning Warbler**

**00-002** – This bird was seen and possibly banded at RPBO Sept. 1, 1995. Apparently a photo of the bird was taken, but documentation has not been made available to the committee.

**Ivory Gull**

**00-013:** single – seen in Victoria Harbour February 19, 1925 by W.H.A. Preece (*The Canadian Field Naturalist* (1925). Although accepted as a legitimate record by Campbell, *et. al.* (1990), the committee felt that the description given was insufficient to confirm a new species for the checklist.

**Little Stint**

**00-025:** Single – seen at RPBO, July 12, 1998. No documentation submitted.

**00-026:** Single – reported at Esquimalt Lagoon in the mid-80s. Photographs may exist, but no documentation submitted to the committee.

**Mountain Chickadee**

**00-034:** Single – seen at Cobble Hill, July 9, 1998. The single-observer description contained little information and focussed on the white eye-line, which was visible only once while the bird was wet. The committee felt that the documentation was inadequate to confirm a new checklist species.

**Spotted Redshank**

**00-036:** Single – observed without binoculars by 2 people at Cadboro Bay, Sept. 23, 1996. The description was fairly thorough, but focussed mainly on leg colour, which the committee felt may have been affected by light angles. A subsequent report of a Spotted Redshank in Washington State at about the same time could not be confirmed by Wash. authorities.

**White-throated Swift**

**00-044:** Report brought forward of a single bird, seen by a visiting birder, over Mount Douglas, Aug. 13, 1991. The description lacked necessary detail and did not eliminate all somewhat similar species expected here.

## D. Additional Records Of "Accidental" Species Not Accepted Or Awaiting Further Documentation (As with C above).

**Dickcissel**

**00-016:** Single – seen at 2867 Fuller Lake Rd., Chemainus, March 24, 1999. Described as "junco-size" and having a "black bib and yellow breast and



The Bird Records Committee hard at work. From left to right: David Fraser, Bryan Gates, Bruce Whittington, Darren Copley, Barbara Begg. Missing: David Allinson. Photo: Bruce Whittington

eyebrow", with no other description. The committee concluded that this description was not sufficient to exclude other species.

**00-016:** Single – heard-only at RPBO, October 9, 1999. No recording or written documentation was received for review.

**Elegant Tern**

**00-018:** Single – seen and videotaped at Clover Point, Victoria, Sept. 5, 1997. The tape was viewed by the committee and, on a split vote, it was agreed to submit the tape to an outside expert for comment. No decision has been reached.

**South Polar Skua**

**00-041:** Single – seen in BC waters from ferry *Coho*, Aug. 27, 1999. Although the report included details, it did not fully eliminate the possibility of Pomarine Jaeger.

**Yellow Wagtail**

**00-042:** Single – seen very briefly (5-10 seconds) by two observers (single party) on Martindale Rd. near Lochside Dr., May 7, 1999. The committee felt that the brief view, description, and angle of the sun left doubt about the identification of this bird.

**Frigatebird sp.**

**00-028:** Single – seen over the Island Highway at Frane Road, June 24, 1997; described as a juvenile (2nd stage) frigatebird. No written documentation received. (Subsequent to this report, also in June 1997, information was received of a Magnificent Frigatebird at Tofino on June 19, 1997 (Rick Toochn), and of a frigatebird species seen over Bamfield sometime between January and May 1995. Both are outside our checklist area, but may tend to support the Frane Road sighting. "Frigatebird species" had been added as Hypothetical to the 1994 revision of the checklist on the basis of a 1994 report from Mill Bay).

## E. Concluding Remarks

The committee extends its sincere thanks to all of those who have taken the time to contribute valuable documentation of rare birds observed, and encourages everyone to do the same.



# Eye-Shine – Rio Negro

By Lyndis Davis

I recently traveled with Quest Nature Tours to the Rio Negro, Amazonia, Brazil. We started from Manaus, 1600 km from the Atlantic and the main trading and supply port for the river system both east and west of the city. There were 15 naturalists and a Canadian leader on a 75m boat, the M/V Tucano, with a crew of 8 Brazilians, including two expert naturalists.

We usually went out in the pangas 4 times a day: In the early morning for a river run when the birds were most active, and then, after breakfast for a walk on the forest trails. After a rest in the heat of the day, we would visit a village or swim from a firm white sandy beach, and, after dinner, we were taken out again for a night river run. There were also talks about the river and the lives of the natives and their foods.

In the evening, as the pangas motored along the shore, the guides used a powerful beam of light to look for eye-shine which would indicate an animal. All the while, bats and nightjars were on the wing around us.

One night the driver cut the outboard and the panga slowly moved into the wild rice bed at the edge of the river. Suddenly one of the guides jumped from the bow, grabbed at the water and came up clutching a small spectacled caiman

– perhaps 4 months old. We all got a good look at it before it was released. We saw several more caiman on our night runs and also during the day. Sometimes they were on the bank where they would stay watching us until we got too close, then, with a splash they'd disappear. We also saw black caiman, but only in the river.

The next thrill was catching the eye-shine of a three-toed sloth in a tree. He was hard to pick out but eventually all of us saw him. We saw sloths on several more nights and on the final day one was moving through the top of the trees in daylight. Sloths are very unusual creatures. They eat various types of leaves and travel through the trees v-e-r-y slowly. They feed for about 8 days (again v-e-r-y slowly) and then come down to the ground to defecate. They dig a hole, poop into it, cover it up and return to the trees. This can take as long as 3 hours, and during that time they are very vulnerable to predators.

The tiny eyeshine of tree boas were easy to see – they were picked up in the branches right beside the water – a creamy coloured “branch” in with the brown and green ones. They were about the size of a fat finger in girth and about 3 feet long.

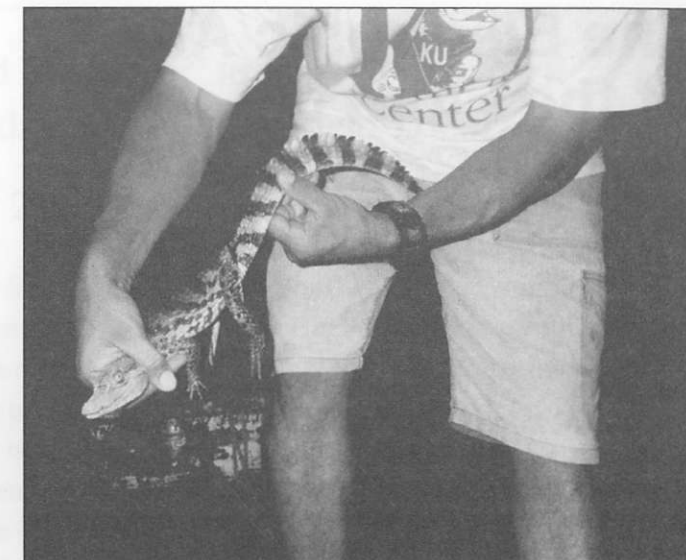


The biggest thrill for me was seeing a potoo, but not until the last evening and I had almost given up hope! He was “extending” a tree stump very close to where the Tucano was anchored. We spent a long time watching him do – nothing!

Sometimes the motor was cut and we drifted into the reeds. We were all quiet as the night sounds surrounded us – frogs, crickets and the call of the occasional bird. The chirps and croaks coming from the reeds on the left-hand side were different in tone and rhythm from those in front of us, which were different again from those on the right. A real “night chorus”, and quite magical.

The trip on the Rio Negro made a very deep impression on me – my fellow naturalists, the excellent guides and above all the wonderful learning experience. It is a place still full of things to learn.

Photos provided by Lyndis Davis



## Welcome to New Members

**Marika Ainley**  
Glenora Place  
*birds, conservation*

**Michael Klazek and Susan Colonval**  
Brymea Lane  
*birds and botany*

**Angela Deering**  
Empire Street

**Annetta Delacretaz**  
Mainwaring Road

**Sam and Cori-Lee Fisher**  
Hulford Street

**Leslie Johnston**  
Sylvester Road  
*birds*

**Leah Kinarthy**  
MacDonald Drive

**Yen Hsu and Julia Kuo**  
Torquay Drive  
*birds*

**Barbara Lewis**  
Cadboro Bay Road

**Phil and Lois Mesner**  
Glendenning Road

**James and Jane Ramsay**  
Margate Avenue

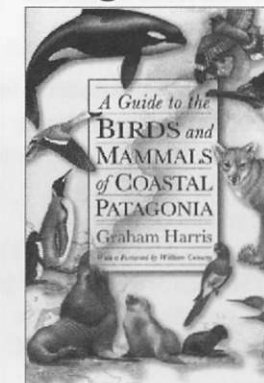
**Albert Hestler and Elizabeth Sadler**  
Balmoral Road

**Andrew and Lisbet Slater**  
Eagle Reach

**Keith and Angela Walker**  
Grandis Place  
*birds, botany, marine, insects*

**Valerie Wedekind-Gold**  
Royalwood Court

## Penguins... At Goldstream?



Not yet, but the Nature House has a great selection of field guides for around the world. Whether you are traveling to Patagonia, Mexico, or your backyard we have the field guide you need to i.d. the wildlife - even if it's a Penguin.

The Nature House gift shop has a great selection of field guides for home and abroad, children's books, stuffed animals, and more. Proceeds help keep the Nature House open. 478-9414/www.arenaria.com Gift Certificates available.



**Goldstream Nature House & Bookstore**  
478-9414 www.arenaria.com  
Open daily 9:00 am to 4:30 pm



# The Electronic Atlas of the Flora of British Columbia (www.eflora.bc.ca)

By Angela Deering

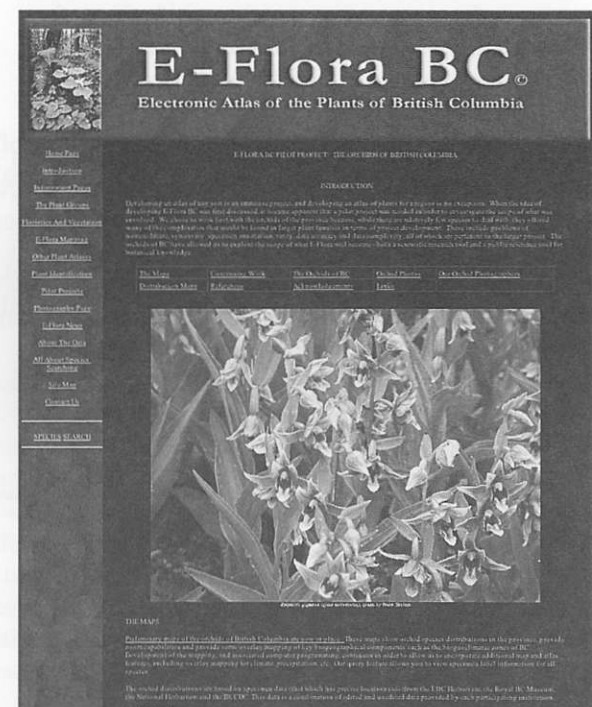
Be sure to visit this terrific new on-line information tool about the plants of BC. The Native Plant Society of British Columbia (NPSBC) has launched E-Flora BC. E-Flora BC is an electronic atlas of the plants of British Columbia. The purpose of the atlas is to provide a centralized source of information on BC plants. Each species account will include information on distribution, biology, ecology, taxonomy, and botanical literature, as well as photographic illustrations and line drawings.

The overall purpose of the atlas project is to be cooperative, comprehensive and inclusive, drawing upon the expertise of field botanists, plant growers, photographers, researchers, naturalists and others throughout the province. By drawing together individuals and data from across the province, E-Flora will become a valuable compendium of information about the plants of BC.

The project is coordinated by Dr. Brian Klinkenberg, and is a major initiative by the NPSBC in partnership with the UBC Herbarium and the Spatial Data Lab in the Department of Geography, University of British Columbia. The origin of the idea of developing an atlas of the plants of British Columbia was conceived several years ago by Dr. Adolf Ceska and other members of the NPSBC. The idea was revisited in early 2002 by Dr. Klinkenberg, and it was decided that the time was right to develop an interactive on-line atlas of BC plants.

Because of the magnitude of the project, E-Flora is being carried out in stages. The first stage was a pilot project on the orchids of BC. Now that the pilot on orchids has been completed the project has moved on to phase two – soliciting data from other institutions, developing general search capabilities, and further refining of the atlas content.

When you're next surfing the internet, take a moment to view this great new resource at [www.eflora.bc.ca](http://www.eflora.bc.ca). Use the quick search function on the home page and search for the dainty calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*) or perhaps you are more partial to the giant hellebore (*Epipactis gigantea*). You will find that the calypso orchid is widely distributed throughout BC and that the giant hellebore is indeed an orchid as well as a species of special concern in BC.



Calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*). Photo: Rich Mably

## Join the VNHS for a "Multi-Field Trip Day" at East Sooke Park (Hawk Watch, Botany, Inter-tidal and Geology Field Trips)

September 25, 2004

Make plans to attend the **Big Victoria Natural History Society Multi-Field Trip Day** (what a mouthful!) on **September 25, 2004** at East Sooke Park (Alyard Farm Parking Lot, Becher Bay Road), starting at 9am. This omnibus field trip is organized to help celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the VNHS, and to encourage naturalists from all over Vancouver Island (and beyond) to visit Victoria. Many of the best features of Victoria's natural history will be on display for you, so you won't have to hike miles to take in all that there is to offer. The Capital Regional District Parks will have tents and displays of birds, and other flora and fauna adjacent to the parking lot. Local field naturalists will be in attendance to answer your questions and arrange the field trips. Stay tuned for more details about travel directions, field trip times, and other arrangements.

For many years, birders from all over the south coast have come to East Sooke Park to see the hawks and vultures migrate across Juan de Fuca Strait to Washington State. This is a spectacular birding event, and one of the more leisurely, since the best time to see the birds is 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

At 9 a.m. there will be an inter-tidal beach walk at Becher Bay. There you will see many organisms that are more common to the open west coast, such as gooseneck barnacles and sea urchins. We plan to set up display aquaria in a picnic enclosure adjacent to the beach so that everyone will get to see what the in-coming tide may hide.

A botany field trip, planned to last about two hours and starting after the beach walk, will take you around the dry coastal Douglas-fir forest near Beechey Head. You will see many of the trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants that are common to this forest type.

To complete the day, a local geologist will take you on a geological field trip intended to show off the rock formations, glacial deposits, and petroglyphs common to East Sooke Park. This part of Vancouver Island has some of the most interesting geology in the province.

We expect to complete the Big Field Trip Day at about 2 or 3 p.m.

## Christmas? Already? The 2004 Christmas Bird Count

Is July too soon to start thinking about the Christmas Bird Count? Not if we hope to meet our 60th anniversary goal of 160 species during the count week!

Our previous record was 152 bird species on a single day in 1991. We haven't come very close to this record for several years, but every year we also miss a number of birds that we "know" are in the area. To reach our target, we are going to need some "special teams" in addition to our bush-beaters and feeder watchers for the 2004 CBC on December 18.

We are looking for people who are willing to seek out particular species: rare birds reported in the weeks before the count, uncommon birds in difficult habitats (grouse, high

elevation species, gulls, seabirds, etc.). To get the best counts of seabirds, we will need boats which can manage typical winter weather – wind and rain. We are also looking for people who might not be up to a day of walking who would be willing to stake out some of our birding hot spots: Clover Point, King's Pond, Esquimalt Lagoon, Cattle Point, etc. for a few hours on the count day. We'll also be looking for a "clean up" squad to try to find "missed" birds during the last part of the count week.

If you are interested in being on one of this year's special teams, please call or email **Ann Nightingale** (652-6450; [motmot@shaw.ca](mailto:motmot@shaw.ca)) with your thoughts on how you can help us meet this very special goal.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held September-April 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>.

## JULY

### Friday, July 9

#### *Nocturnal Natural History*

Come out for an evening adventure at Goldstream Provincial Park with **Darren and Claudia Copley**. We'll all meet at the Helmcken Park and Ride at 8:30 pm and carpool out to the Visitor Centre for a 9 pm start. There you'll see bats living in the attic via the "Bat-Cam", and see some of the highlights of this maternity colony: bat births caught on videotape! A walk to the river with a bat detector will allow you to experience the sight and sounds of bats foraging, and we'll also stop at the bat roosting site in the picnic area. While we're exploring, back at the nature house we'll have a bright light set up to attract insects. By the time we get back we'll hopefully have a sheet full of various moths, caddisflies, lacewings, and anyone else that can't resist a shining object! Bring a flashlight and your curiosity. If you can't make it out this time, check out Saturday July 31 for another chance.

### Sunday, July 11

#### *Birding Mandarte Island and Sidney Island*

We will travel by chartered boat to the large seabird-nesting colony on Mandarte Island. Glaucous-winged Gulls, Pigeon Guillemots, Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants can be found nesting there. The boat drops us off at Sidney Island to take in the first southbound shorebirds. You can return on any scheduled Sidney Island Ferry sailing. Bring a lunch and something to drink. Cost is \$21.50 per person [includes the return ferry fare from Sidney Island]. Meet at the ferry dock at the foot of Beacon Avenue in Sidney at 8:00 a.m. sharp. Reserve your spot early by calling **Rick Schortinghuis** at 652-3326. Leader TBA.

### Saturday, July 17 and Sunday, July 18

#### *Victoria Butterfly Count*

We are always looking for keen eyed volunteers, so get out your field guides. Call **Cheryl Mackie** [count coordinator] at 479-4083 if you would like to help out.

### Saturday, July 17

#### *Canada Parks Day*

Head out to your favourite greenspace and enjoy the day! At Goldstream Provincial Park the Vancouver Island Plein Air Painters will be painting on site from 10-4 p.m. (as well as the next day – Sunday the 18th). The event is titled "In The Steps Of Emily Carr."

### Sunday, July 18

#### *Hurricane Ridge*

This trip, a VNHS tradition, is timed to catch the beautiful summer alpine flowers on Hurricane Ridge in Washington's Olympic National

Park. Bird from the ferry, and look for high elevation species in the mountains. There are facilities in the park but a lunch and something to drink are highly recommended. Be prepared for cold temperatures and/or rain, also wear sturdy hiking boots. Meet at the Black Ball ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 5:45 a.m. [allow time to park ] for the 6:10 sailing of the M.V. Coho. Ferry cost is \$25.40 [CDN] return. You will require two pieces of ID [one with a picture] for going through customs. Cost of the charter bus and entry to the park is \$32.00 [CDN]. We will return on the 5:15 sailing from Port Angeles [90 minute crossing time]. There is room for 38 participants plus the 3 leaders. This trip always fills, so reserve early (prepayment required) by calling the Goldstream Park Nature House at 478-9414. VNHS members will be given priority. Leaders **Rick Schortinghuis** and others TBA. Call Rick at 652-3326 if you need more information.

### Saturday, July 24

#### *Koksilah River Provincial Park Field Trip*

This trip is the seventh of a series of monthly botanical trips to search for rare plants of our area, all in celebration of our 60th anniversary. Join **Adolf and Oluna Ceska** on a botanical adventure to the Koksilah River Park to see pine broomrape (*Orobancha pinorum*), woodland penstemon (*Nothochelone nemorosa*), luina (*Luina hypoleuca*) and interesting plant communities. Meet at the Helmcken Park & Ride at 9:00 a.m., bring a lunch and water; plan to be back at about 4:00 p.m. Call Adolf Ceska at 477-1211 if you need more information.

### Sunday, July 25

#### *International Bog Day*

You can celebrate by going to the only remaining bog in the Victoria area: Rithet's Bog. Dogs must be leashed if they're going to join you on this outing. Thanks to some very dedicated people, the "bog-like" qualities of the area are slowly returning.

### Saturday, July 31

#### *Nocturnal Natural History*

Come out for an evening adventure at Goldstream Provincial Park with **Darren and Claudia Copley**. We'll all meet at the Helmcken Park and Ride at 8:30 p.m. and carpool out to the Visitor Centre for a 9 p.m. start. There you'll see bats living in the attic via the "Bat-Cam", and see some of the highlights of this maternity colony: bat births caught on videotape! A walk to the river with a bat detector will allow you to experience the sight and sounds of bats foraging, and we'll also stop at the bat roosting site in the picnic area. While we're exploring, back at the nature house we'll have a bright light set up to attract insects. By the time we get back we'll hopefully have a sheet full of various moths, caddisflies, lacewings, and anyone else that can't resist a shining object! Bring a flashlight and your curiosity.

## AUGUST

### Sunday, August 1

#### *Paradise Meadows*

An inter-club event guided by naturalist **Betty Brooks**. For more information: Betty Brooks, 337-8180

### Saturday, August 7

#### *Estuary Exploration*

Since the Goldstream estuary has been closed to the public, the creatures living there have reclaimed it. Join **Darren and Claudia Copley** for a nature walk out into the estuary to experience species that like a little salt in their diet. We'll supply the insect nets for a hands-on experience. Please meet at the Helmcken Park & Ride at 10:30 a.m. to carpool out to the picnic area for an 11 a.m. start.

### Sunday, August 15

#### *Tufted Puffins, Sea Lions and an Archaeological Museum*

Join us for a field trip on the Olympic Peninsula to Cape Flattery and the First Nations Cultural Center. Cape Flattery is the most northern point on the west coast of the continental United States and is one of the closest locations to Victoria where you will see Tufted Puffins. Islands off the point are home to thousands of seabirds throughout the year. In 1970 tidal erosion uncovered an ancient whaling village at Ozette, parts of which had been covered by mudslides hundreds of years ago. The artifacts that were subsequently found have now classified Ozette as one of the most significant archaeological discoveries ever made in North America! In 1979 the cultural and research center opened to the public in order to share this great archaeological find. Meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal at 5:45 a.m. [allow time to park] for the 6:10 a.m. sailing of the M.V. Coho. Ferry cost is \$25.40 [CDN] return. You will require two pieces of ID [one with a picture] for going through customs. Cost of the charter bus and entry to the

## BULLETIN BOARD

### 60th Anniversary Photo Contest

For more information and contest rules see our website [vicnhs.bc.ca](http://vicnhs.bc.ca) or the back cover of this issue, or contact **Marie** at 598-9680.

### Need a Ride To Field Trips!

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.

### Field Notebook Sketching Classes

We are planning to offer classes in nature sketching this fall. To assist with our planning, we would like information from members regarding what level (absolute beginners to more advanced) and what kind of nature sketching is of most interest. Anyone with an interest in learning to draw plants, insects, marine creatures or birds, please contact Donna at 384-5327.

### 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/summer\\_2004\\_Programs.pdf](http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks/documents/summer_2004_Programs.pdf).

museum is \$35.00 [CDN]. We will return to Victoria on the 9:30 p.m. sailing [90 minute crossing time]. Bring a lunch and something to drink, we will have dinner in Port Angeles. There is room for 38 participants plus three leaders. This trip always fills, so reserve your spot early (prepayment required) by calling the Goldstream Park Nature House at 478-9414. VNHS members will be given priority. Leaders are **Rick Schortinghuis** and others TBA. Call Rick at 652-3326 if you need more information.

### Saturday, August 21 and Sunday, August 22

#### *Victoria Butterfly Count*

We are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers, so get out your field guide. Call **Cheryl Mackie** [count coordinator] at 479-4083 if you would like to help out.

### Saturday, August 21, 2004

#### *Royal Roads University Grounds Botany Field Trip*

This trip is the eighth of a series of monthly botanical trips to search for rare plants of our area, all in celebration of our 60th anniversary. Join **Adolf and Oluna Ceska** on a botanical adventure in Royal Roads. The area has some interesting remnants of old growth forest, large trees and maybe some interesting fungi. Meet at the Helmcken Park & Ride at 9:00 a.m., bring a lunch and water; plan to be back not later than 2:00 p.m. Call Adolf Ceska at 477-1211 if you need more information.

### Sunday, August 29

#### *Shorebirding from Victoria to Sooke*

Meet at Helmcken Park and Ride at 7:30 a.m. to car pool. We will be going to Esquimalt Lagoon, Albert Head Lagoon, Witty's Lagoon, Ayum Creek and Whiffin Spit. Bring a lunch. Call **Rick Schortinghuis** at 652-3326 if you need more information.

## YOUNG NATURALISTS TRIPS

### Saturday, July 10 – Elk Lake at Dusk

Ever wonder who comes out at dusk? What makes them different from daytime creatures? Come explore Elk Lake in this guided evening program where we will discuss and hopefully spot some of these night-time creatures. Meet at Hamsterly Beach parking lot off Brookleigh Road at 8 p.m. (Elk Lake picnic/beach area). Trip goes until 9:30 p.m. and the leader is **Renee Cenerini**.

### Sunday, August 8 – Dragonflies and Other Insects

Come explore the wild and wonderful world of insects. Learn how some insects move, feed and reproduce. Dragonflies are amazing hunters with excellent eyesight, which makes them hard to catch, but with our own sharp eyesight, we may just spot a few! Meet at the Goldstream Nature House, Goldstream Provincial Park from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m with leader **Darren Copley**.





## Victoria Natural History Society 60th Anniversary Photo Contest



The Victoria Natural History Society, in celebration of its 60th Anniversary, is sponsoring a Nature Photography Contest. There are many fine photographers in our group – here is your chance to enter your work for a prize and support nature at the same time. So get out those cameras and get busy – the contest entries close August 31, 2004. Judging will occur in September, when there will be a reception and display of the winning photos. Details to follow in future issues of the *Naturalist*. Proceeds will go to VNHS 60th Anniversary Legacy Project.

### Photo Contest Rules:

1. Photos must be taken in Victoria Checklist Area (South of Ladysmith).
2. Entry categories include: 1. Flora, 2. Fauna 3. Habitat.
3. Each person is limited to three photos per category.
4. Members only can submit.
5. VNHS reserves the right to use all photos submitted.
6. Either digital or regular photos, printed 8 x10 or 8 x 12.
7. Digital entries cannot be submitted electronically. Digital prints should match the quality and character of the original file; do not send colour photocopies. Compositional changes to digital files are not acceptable; tonal or colour cast corrections are acceptable. Original file resolution must be at least 2.5 megapixels or 2800 x 2100 dpi. Original digital files or negatives must be available for reproduction.
8. Entrance fee: \$15.00 covers up to 3 photos entered.
9. Prizes in each of the 3 categories will be:
  - First Prize: \$50.00,
  - Second Prize: \$25.00 worth of merchandise,
  - Third Prize: \$15.00 worth of merchandise,

In addition, a Grand prize of \$100.00 will be awarded to best in show.

10. Entries must be received by August 31, 2004.
11. Judging will be by a panel of persons outside the VNHS membership. Decision of panel is final.
12. VNHS cannot be held responsible for entries that are lost or damaged.
13. Each entry must be labelled on the back with photographer's name, address and telephone number, category of entry, and must be accompanied by completed entry form (available at VNHS meetings, Swan Lake, Goldstream Nature House and the HAT office). Drop-off during the months of June, July and August, with cheque made payable to the VNHS at: Swan Lake Nature House, 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, B.C. **Open 7 days a week Mon-Fri 8:30-4 p.m., weekends and holidays 12 -4 p.m.**

**Be sure to have them log the photos in and be sure to include your cheque.**

Entrants will be able to pick up their photos at Swan Lake after contest completion.

