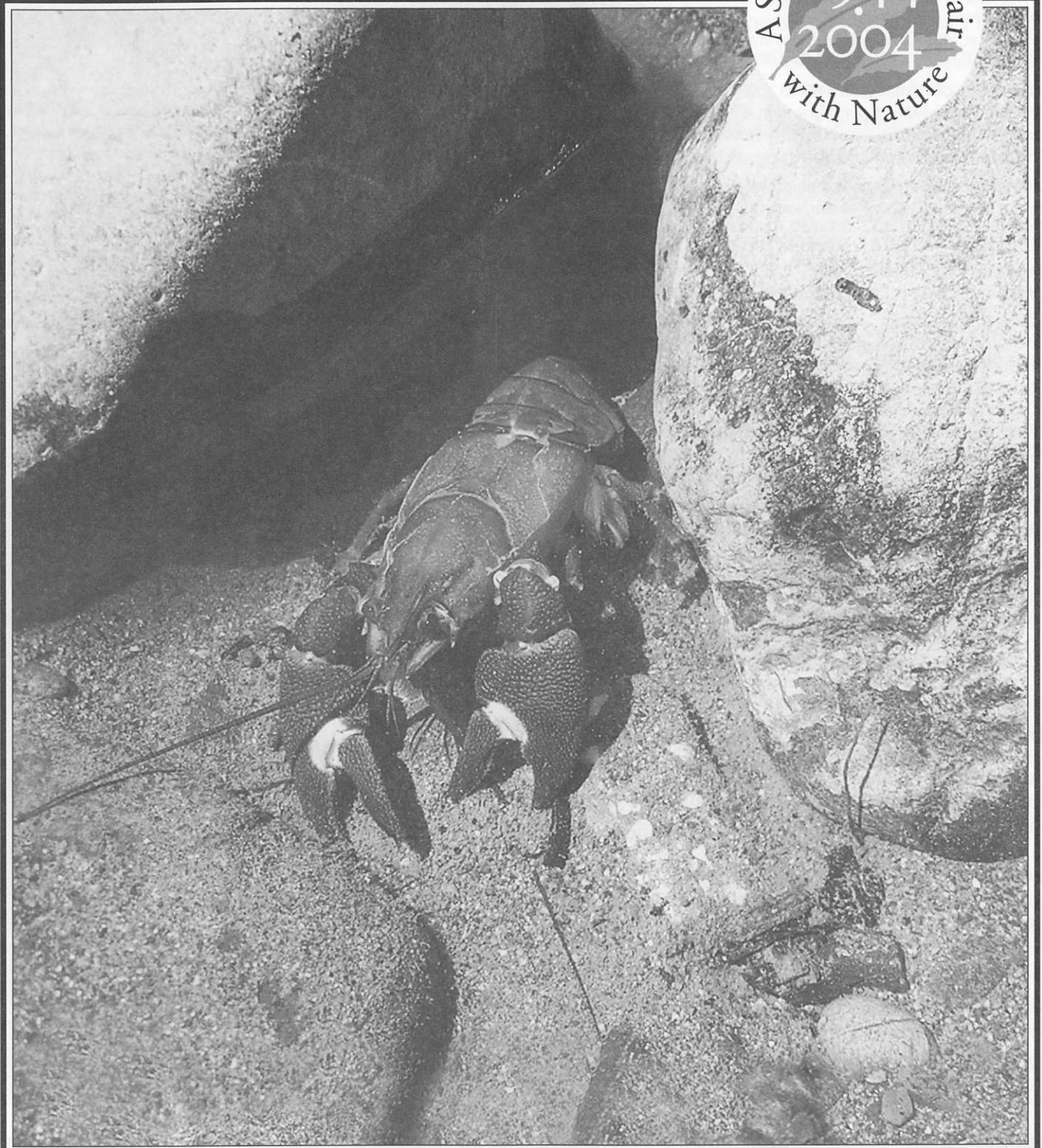




# The Victoria NATURALIST

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### Guidelines for Submissions

Members are encouraged to submit articles, field trip reports, birding  
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### COVER PHOTO:

Crayfish (*Pacifasticus leniusculus*)

Photo: John Defayette

Although I enjoy taking full credit, the final appear-  
ance of the magazine is actually due to the skills of  
our desk-topper, Frances Hunter. And, while I do  
target a diversity of topics, the final content of each  
issue can really only be attributed to members. The  
one thing I can take credit for, whether it is a hit or a  
miss, is the reprinted article from the past; since I am  
the sole decision-maker on which story to go with.

I chose this issue's based on **initiative**, which  
may seem like a strange criterion, but it is a charac-  
teristic I'd like to have more of myself, and one I'd  
love to see more often in others. The natural curiosity  
of then-editor Marjorie Ketcham is charmingly  
illustrated in her hunt for a story to go with a great  
photo. Her initiative took her deep into unfamiliar  
territory, but she persevered and, in the end, wrote an  
article about a topic in which she had previously been  
quite uninformed (page 8).

Initiative is what the VNHS board is hoping  
local educators and students will take, if the  
resources are provided. As part of the legacy of Anne  
Adamson, a resource "kit" is going to be provided to  
local schools in the hopes that natural history will be  
included in what students learn about (page 4).  
As part of this initiative, we also hope that VNHS  
members will participate as resources for teachers  
and students: on field trips, in the classroom, on  
Professional Development days, etc. (page 16).  
We can teach the teachers, but more importantly, we  
can encourage **them** to want to learn. Like Marjorie.

So now that I've been inspired by Marjorie's  
initiative, I'm ready to take on one of my "black  
boxes": the fungi. I've vowed to grab my copy of  
*Mushrooms Demystified* and dedicate some space  
in my brain for fungal Latin names. I had better get  
started though: the fall rains aren't that far off!

*Claudia*

## President's Message

For many of us, September marks the start of a "new year" as much as January does. It is the beginning of a new school year, a time to return to normal activities after a summer vacation, and the reactivation of VNHS regular gatherings. Throughout 2004, we have been looking back at where we have been to celebrate VNHS's 60th anniversary. We'll continue to do this until the end of the year, but this is also a good time for us to look forward.

In July, the Board met to discuss the near future of VNHS, particularly with regard to a wonderful "present": the gift left to the Society by Anne Adamson. While some of the funds will be used to construct a tangible legacy project at Viaduct Flats and additional interpretive signage at Esquimalt Lagoon, the Board discussed how the rest of the bequest could be used to benefit the future of natural history exploration. The details will be worked out over the next several months, but funds have been reserved for projects intended to increase interest in the next generation of naturalists:

- \$25,000 has been allocated to purchase resource materials for local schools
- \$20,000 has been added to the scholarship fund so that educational awards may be increased
- \$8,000 of additional support will be made available to local nature centres upon receipt of a plan to show that this money will be used to increase access to educational programs
- \$5,000 will be available for the construction of interactive displays for local nature centres

The Board will also be encouraging active participation by VNHS members to get the natural history message out to children and young adults through working with teachers, the Young Naturalists Club, and others with similar interests.

This year, help us make natural history a truly natural part of growing up.

Ann Nightingale

### Explore the Galapagos Islands with B.C. Naturalist Alison Watt

November 5-15, 2004



Extensions to mainland Ecuador and to a lodge in the Amazon jungle are also offered.

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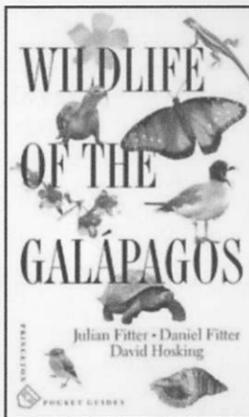


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## The Big Victoria Natural History Society Multi-Field Trip Day

East Sooke Park, Alyard Farm Parking Lot, Becher Bay Road

September 25, 2004

Inter-tidal, Hawk Watch, Botany, and Geology Field Trips



Make plans to attend the Big Victoria Natural History Society Multi-Field Trip Day on September 25, 2004 at East Sooke Park. This omnibus field trip is organized to help celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the VNHS, and to encourage all naturalists on Vancouver Island to come and visit Victoria. All of the best features of Victoria's natural history will be on display for you to enjoy, and you won't have to hike miles to take in all that there is to offer. Capital Regional District Parks will have tents and displays of flora and local field naturalists will be in attendance to answer all your questions.

In the morning, starting at 8:30 at the parking lot, there will be an inter-tidal beach walk at Becher Bay with Phil and Marilyn Lambert. This will take 1.5 hours. You should be able to see many organisms that are more common on the open west coast, such as gooseneck barnacles. We plan to set up display aquaria in a picnic enclosure adjacent to the beach so that all of you get to see what the in-coming tide may hide.

Starting at 10:00 at the parking lot: "Rising Raptors", a CRD field trip, will head out and end up at Beechey Head at about 11:00. This will be where people will get the best view of the Turkey Vulture and raptor migration.

A botany walk for beginners will start at the tents in the parking lot at 12:00 and go until about 1:30. This trip will take you around the dry coastal Douglas-fir forest near Beechey Head. Botanist Matt Fairbarns will be your leader, showing off most 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 forma-



Hawk watching at East Sooke Park. Photo: Bev Glover

tions, glacial deposits and petroglyphs common to East Sooke Park. This part of Vancouver Island has some of the most interesting geology in the province. The geological walk will start at the tents and be led by Nick Massey. It will start at 1:30 and go to 3:00.

We expect to complete the Big Field Trip day at 3:00 pm.

# Adjusting to Maturity in the 1980s

By Bruce Whittington

The decade of the 1980s was a period of some adjustment for the Victoria Natural History Society. There were traditions and history, but there were new challenges too. There is a sense that VNHS needed to crystallize its vision of its self.

This manifested itself in small ways, like the competition held by the Society to select a new logo for VNHS. The winning design, by Lyndis Davis, was simple and elegant, and still graces our masthead and stationery.

There were larger changes as well, and some of the most evident are in the pages of the magazine. In the mid-1980s, *The Victoria Naturalist* was guided by Roy Prior, an amateur naturalist with a vision for a stronger scientific presence in the magazine. He accomplished this without losing the other essential element – the club news and chatter that ties our Society together.

When Prior stepped down in 1986 to move to eastern Canada, VNHS made a major change to the *Naturalist*. With the design assistance of Jim Weston, the *Naturalist* emerged in a new larger format, with more photographs. The new format could be printed less expensively, which was an important consideration in a time of rising costs. VNHS had wrestled with the issue of rising costs earlier in the year, and after considerable debate, had voted to allow advertising in the *Naturalist*, in large measure to help offset costs.

Victoria's accomplished artist-naturalist, Mark Nyhof, took the helm of the magazine and continued with the same focus, encouraging our naturalist community to share their scientific experience and observations in the *Naturalist*.

Kaye Suttill published a long series of essays that explained the derivations of plant names in British Columbia. Keith Taylor produced a series of articles on bird distribution on Vancouver Island. Robin Baird prepared many features about marine mammal distribution and behaviour in local waters. There were many others, of course, and these articles are all still timely, and well worth reading today.

The pages of the *Naturalist* from the 1980s also document change in the natural world. Harold Pollock and the late Charlie Trotter had good results with their nest box program and were optimistic they could help the troubled Western Bluebird population, but the species went into a catastrophic decline despite their best efforts. On the plus side, birders learned of a major and previously unknown migration of raptors and Turkey Vultures over southern Vancouver Island.

Another VNHS publishing landmark came in December of 1986, with the publication of the *Naturalist's Guide to the Victoria Region*. Edited by Jim Weston and David Stirling, the new guide brought together a compendium of knowledge contributed by our members, about the natural history of our region. It remains the only resource of its kind today.



## In the 80s birders learned of a major and previously unknown migration of raptors and Turkey Vultures over southern Vancouver Island.

The Society continued to wrestle with the growing need for conservation work. It was always a part of the VNHS mandate but the challenges were daunting. The old growth forests of the Carmanah Valley and Meares Island were threatened, and VNHS expressed its concern, but the conservation role was more and more being taken by other organizations, like the Western Canada Wilderness Committee. VNHS continued to work locally, with a tireless Wilf Medd acting as advocate for such areas as Quick's Bottom and King's Pond. Comprehensive surveys of important habitats like the Martindale Flats were undertaken.

VNHS, however, has always been more comfortable in its role in nature education. This presence remained strong in the 1980s, in our relationship with Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, and with the maturing Capital Regional District Parks program. VNHS provided the support necessary for the construction of the viewing platform at Blenkinsop Lake.

VNHS took another new direction in 1988. The Society had a long history with the museum but rising costs there prompted a look elsewhere to hold meetings and programs. Then-president Betty Kennedy, of the University of Victoria, established a new relationship with UVic, which has proved very economical, and appropriate considering our strong scholarship program there.

Membership grew to over 600 in the decade, with many new members. The decade also saw the passing of many long-time members, but perhaps the greatest loss to VNHS was the death of A.R. Davidson in early 1989. "Davey" contributed to the *Naturalist* into his 104th year, was the caretaker of a growing VNHS library, and a vital source of information on the Society's history.

In a sense, the Victoria Natural History Society had reached a certain maturity, and was refining its relationships, and reassessing its priorities. It was an organization old enough to be aware of its history and experience, but still enjoying the vitality of an organization that was growing, and welcoming new members with new experience and new visions. As the 1990s loomed on the horizon, VNHS settled more comfortably into its seat to see what lay ahead.

# An Anise Caterpillar Tale

By Audrey Kyle

Several times over the past few years a fennel plant has volunteered to grow on my five acres of heaven here on the Saanich peninsula. I knew enough to look for the Anise Butterfly caterpillar, and twice I was lucky and watched for a few days while three beautiful green, orange and black caterpillars munched away. We could actually hear them chomp! Every day I watched, but soon there were only two, next time one, and then, none. I assumed a bird had picked them off and I wondered how I could protect them the next time.

A week ago, sure enough, three caterpillars again appeared on my lonely fennel plant. I showed my friends and neighbours, and carefully watched them grow. One neighbour, Cam Finlay, came over and took a photo. This time I

thought that I would fool those hungry birds by wrapping cheesecloth all around the fennel; leaving just the top and bottom open. Surely, this would be enough to scare off the birds. Soon there were only two. Maybe the light was wrong and I just couldn't see the camouflaged bug. However, when the light was better and there was only one left, I was afraid the birds had won again. Next morning I looked again. Success! Last night's caterpillar had transformed itself into the next stage. Surely now it was safe. One out of three was something! I checked an hour later to watch a wasp take the last bite out of my "safe" pupa. I was quite heartbroken, but now I know not to let fennel grow under my apple and plum trees. Next year I will plant some well away from areas where wasps congregate.



Anise Butterfly caterpillar. Photo: Cam Finlay

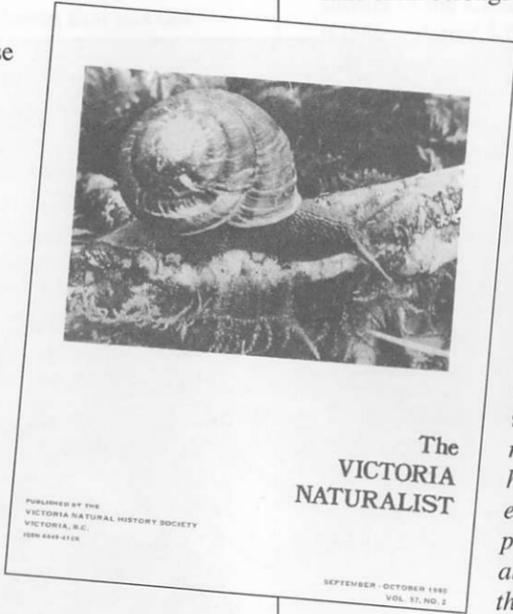
Editor's note: This article is reprinted from Volume 37, Number 2 of the Victoria Natural History Society's newsletter (September/October 1980), as part of our 60th anniversary celebrations. One article from each of the last six decades will appear in each of the six issues of our newsletter we produce in 2004. Enjoy!



## Land Snails (Mollusk, Gastropoda, Pulmonata, Helicidae)

By Marjorie Ketcham (Editor)

As the new editor of the Victoria Naturalist, I was given a packet of shiny black and white pictures of interesting natural history subjects, I was told they were ready to be used for future covers of our magazine, and that all I would need to do is to get someone to write an article about each one. I thumbed through the lot to choose a subject for the cover of our September-October issue. I was fascinated by a very fine, clear photograph of a snail. Marjorie Elston, our able assistant editor, agreed it was a super photo. (Editor's note: This photo was taken by Bertha McHaffie-Gow. Her photos regularly graced the covers of The Naturalist and she is also a regular participant in the biennial Goldstream art exhibit.) She said all we had to do was just call Dr. Ainscough in Entomology at the Provincial Museum (Editor's note: Brian Ainscough has since left the museum. Rob Cannings is the current curator of Entomology) and ask him to do a story for us on the snail, and would have no worries. Next day I phoned Dr. Ainscough, only to find he was on vacation. I called others, recommended to me, only to find they were either out of town for the summer or on vacation, all except Brian Hughes, a graduate student from the University of Victoria, who was starting work on his thesis on gunnel fish (Editor's note: This was actually Grant Hughes, the current Director of Curatorial Services at the Museum.). He said snails were not in his field, but that if I would come over to the Curatorial Towers at the Provincial Museum, I could use the library there; then he asked me what kind of a snail was in the picture. I said a pretty snail on a log. He laughed and said, you know there are land snails, salt water snails and fresh water snails. I quickly examined my photo and told Brian I'd call back in a few minutes and let him know what I had.



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I turned to my World Encyclopedia, and was only confused to find that there are snails with lungs, which belong to the order Pulmonata; snails with gills, which are members of the order Prosobranchiata; that the common land snail belongs to the family Helicidae; and that all snails belong to the class Gastropoda. I knew snails belonged to the group of animals known as Mollusks, and that they have no backbones, and that they have soft bodies, which are not composed of segments, and that they are usually covered with a hard shell consisting of one or more parts. This much I recalled from early biology courses. Oh yes, I remembered also that the shell of the mollusk is secreted by a covering mantle, formed on snails, also clams, oysters, whelks and mussels, but not on slugs, octopus or squids. (Editor's note: Some species of mollusk that don't appear to have a shell have actually internalized it. The biggest exception is the octopuses, which have completely lost even a vestige of a shell. This allows them access to some very tight spots: they just need to be able to squeeze their beak through!) and that mollusks make up a phylum in the animal world. But I still wasn't sure what kind of a snail I had to write about. I called Brian again to say I would come to the library. He said fine, he was on the fourth floor in the Curatorial laboratory. So off I went with picture, paper, and pen to the Curatorial Towers. After 15 minutes of convincing a security officer at the entrance to the Towers that I really was who I said I was, and having to show him my Pharmacare card for identification, I was asked to sign in a Special Guest Book, and was led to the elevator to go upstairs. Brian was there waiting. He was an angel. He looked at my photo and said yes, my photo was of a Mollusk, Gastropoda, Pulmonata, Helicidae, or land snail. We went through index cards and decided that Purchon's 2nd Edition *Landsnail - Biology of*

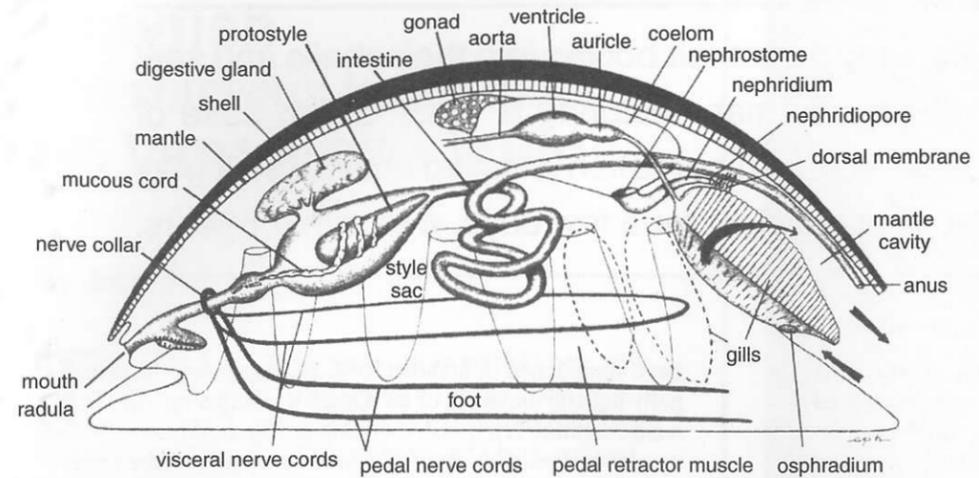


Figure 1  
Generalized ancestral form of snails and their relatives showing mantle cavity at posterior end. (Taken from *Invertebrate Zoology*, Robert D. Barnes, 1987.)

the Mollusca was my best reference source for information on my pet snail. I was almost as excited as when I was told whether my first newborn child was for sure a boy or a girl. At least my picture was not a Prosobranchiata, a snail with gills; what a relief.

From Purchon I found that a snail is a very slow-moving mollusk, that it usually has a spiral shell and a broad flat foot. Some snails are only as large as a pinhead, while others grow to a length of two feet. I looked at my picture; I had no idea of the exact size of my snail. I did more research and after hours of study decided that my snail belongs to one of Nature's most unusual phenomena.

Snails usually live from two to five years, and more than 80,000 species are known. Snails are found in all parts of the world, including dense jungles, at the bottom of the ocean, and even in frozen wastelands of the Arctic regions. They do live on land, in fresh water and in salt water. Snails feed on plants or on animal matter.

Land snails usually are found in damp places, under logs and stones, at the edges of ponds and rivers and in damp woods. My snail was on a log. All land snails have lungs, and most of them have shells. Those without visible shells are called slugs. When the land snail crawls, it produces a sticky solution that serves as a roadway. The muscles of its foot then move in a rippling motion, causing the snail to move forward. The sticky solution acts as a protection against injury. This solution is so effective that snails can crawl across the edge of a razor blade without being injured.

Snails must have moisture to live. During the day when the air is dry, land snails hide in the shade or in damp spots. They crawl under leaves or any other dry object that will help to conserve moisture. If they cannot find a spot damp enough, or if the season is very dry, they hibernate. They draw their bodies into their shells and seal themselves off from the air by manufacturing a "door" at the base of their shells. When the outside air becomes moist enough for their comfort, they come out. This special kind of hibernation is called estivation. It may take place at any time and may last for a few days, a month, or years.

Land snails are hermaphroditic, with both male and

female reproductive systems. They usually lay their eggs in damp places, burrowing out a small depression with the foot. The young emerge after several days. They stay in the nest a few days, but soon leave to seek food.

Snails are generally considered harmless, and some are of great usefulness to man. But some large snails can bite viciously. Snails whose poison can kill a man are found in some areas of the Pacific Ocean. Some snails carry organisms that cause diseases in man. Snails that attack and kill oysters can be found along the east coast of the United States. In addition, some snails cause great damage to plants and flowers. Crop damage caused by snails amounts to millions of dollars.

But many types of snails are friends of man. Cannibalistic snails have been used to destroy snails that damage crops. Some types of snails are used as scavengers in aquariums. Snails provide food for many kinds of fish. Snails are also considered food delicacies in many parts of the world.

Fresh water snails usually live among water plants in rivers and ponds. Some have lungs, some have gills. Many fresh water snails lay eggs, others give birth to live young.

Salt water or marine snails have gills. They make their home on rocks, sand and mud. Some live on the deepest part of the ocean floor. Marine snails are usually of one sex only and they usually lay eggs. Marine snails include the limpets, periwinkles and whelks.

In the order Pulmonata, or land snails, the primary modification is the conversion of the whole mantle cavity into an air-breathing organ with a heavily vascularized lung on its roof. The ctenidia (gills) have been lost.

The mantle cavity serves primarily for respiration, also collecting of food, incubation of early developmental and larval stages, even locomotion. Prior to the discovery of (*living members of*) class monoplacophora (1952 in a deep sea sample), the diversity of the form of the mantle cavity in modern mollusks was explained as having been derived from a hypothetical ancestral form in which the mantle cavity was posterior in position (Fig. 1). The modern representatives of this class have a lateral mantle cavity and metamericly segmented ctenidia.

In both orders, Pulmonata - snails with lungs, and Prosobranchiata - snails with gills, the mantle cavity occupies

When snails hibernate, they draw their bodies into their shells and seal themselves off from the air by manufacturing a "door" at the base of their shells... This special kind of hibernation is called estivation. It may take place at any time and may last for a few days, a month, or years.

an anterior position and both the gut and the nervous systems are twisted. The rectum opens as usual into the mantle cavity and feces are discharged from an anus, which is situated above and behind the head. This is a curious arrangement, one which seems at first sight to have serious disadvantages. There must have been powerful grounds for establishing this as the basic configuration in this successful class of mollusks. It is agreed that originally the mantle cavity occupied a posterior position and that neither the gut nor the nervous system was twisted. It is further agreed that at a very early stage in the phylogeny of the class, a process of torsion of the visceral mass occurred whereby the mantle became displaced through 180° of arcs in an anti-clockwise direction, when viewed from above, so that henceforth the mantle could lay in its present position above and behind the head.

We cannot know the functional processes which actually brought about this change, but there are plausible speculations on the disadvantages of having a posteriorly-sited mantle cavity. If the ancestral gastropod or snail crawled on a surface which carried a certain amount of sediment, some of this would be disturbed and raised in suspension temporarily. The water drawn into a posteriorly-situated mantle cavity would then be slightly contaminated by unwanted small particles. Moreover, the opening of the mantle cavity would be sheltered behind the visceral mass, where it would not get the benefit of gentle water currents caused when the snail moved about in calm water.

Various members of the Pulmonata (snail with lungs)

have approached or invaded fresh water. Among the principally aquatic members of the Order Basommatophora, *Lymnaea stagnalis* is a marsh dwelling and breathing snail. Other species of *Lymnaea* are truly aquatic and can breathe either air or water, as can *Physa fontinalis*. Some Pulmonates have also established on the sea shore, for example the limpet genera *Siphonaria*, and *Trimusculus*.

There is much more that could be written about land snails and their developments and habits.

The time spent studying the Gastropoda for the cover of this issue of the Naturalist was most interesting and rewarding. If any of you come upon an outstanding, unusual, or interesting phenomena of natural history, do write it up and send it to the editor. We may even use it with a picture for the front cover. May we all have a meaningful, happy, friendly fall season together, learning of and enjoying the marvelous natural history abounding in Victoria, or wherever we may come or go.

(Editor's note: Watch for a new resource for your library: Land Snails of British Columbia will be published soon as part of the popular and long-running Royal British Columbia Museum Handbook series. In this handbook, Robert Forsyth, a research associate with the Royal BC Museum, fully describes 88 species of terrestrial snails and slugs that live in the province. With each species description, he includes information on its natural history and distribution in BC. Keys are included, as well as a comprehensive glossary of terms, and a colour section highlighting living animals in their natural habitat.)

## Crayfish (*Pacifasticus leniusculus*) on Vancouver Island

By John Defayette

The underwater world opens up an entirely new vista for the naturalist. Snorkeling is the next best thing to diving, and is an exciting way to discover Vancouver Island lakes. This past summer Eloise and I have enjoyed exploring many lakes, some within an hour or less drive from Victoria. These included Fairy, Lizard, Elk, Beaver, Spectacle and Cowichan Lake.

The hot, sunny days warmed the water, and a slight breeze causes the water lilies to crowd together. Most times while snorkeling there did not appear to be many fish; perhaps they had moved into the deeper water of the lakes. But we did see some trout, and of course the introduced Small-mouthed Bass and Pumpkin-seed Sunfish.

And then there were Crayfish! Crustaceans have always been of interest, especially crab, lobster and shrimp on a dinner plate. In New Orleans and Scandinavia you can enjoy Crayfish served in many ways, but here in BC they generally don't make an appearance at dinner!



Crayfish look very similar to Lobster and belong to the Order Decapoda. The hard exoskeleton that covers the different parts of the body is like a suit of armor. The body is divided into 3 regions-head, thorax and abdomen. The head has many of the sense organs including the "feelers" or antennae. Five pairs of legs are found on the thorax, while swimmerets make up the appendages located on the abdomen. The claw is used for grasping, clasping, biting, fighting, burrowing and house building. Crayfish can lose a limb and grow a new one, and 'molt' to grow by backing out of the shell through a slit in the waistline. Crayfish are bottom dwelling and will scavenge as well as eat aquatic vegetation.

Although Crayfish are pugnacious, they are also wise enough to seek shelter from larger predators by burrowing in the mud or sand for concealment, or to surprise their prey. Sometimes they hide under rocks or among underwater plants. When surprised, they can propel themselves backwards using a rapid tail flick to avoid capture.

Snorkeling has one downside: it reveals human waste! Most of the lakes had beer cans, plastics, and other items thrown away, which mars the experience.

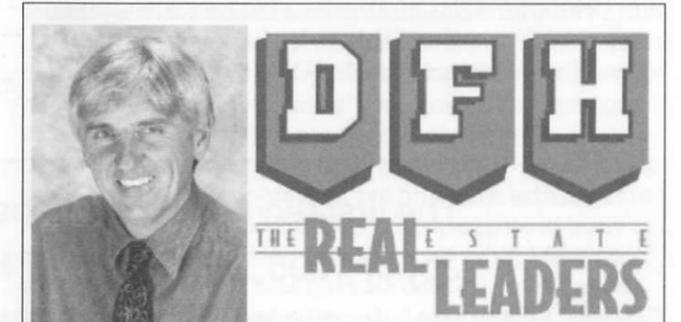


Photo: Carol Porteous-Crawford

## Facing Extinction: The BC Bellybird

By J. Douglas Porteous Ph.D.

As late as the 1970s, the BC Bellybird was a common sight throughout the province. Indeed, some experts felt that it should have been designated the official BC bird. Its distinctive field marks include a dark green head and back, with a bright yellow headstripe and belly. Very prominent eyes. Voice: a single thin *keek*, followed by a diminuendo *flap-flap*. Habitat: roadsides. Food: garbage. Breeding habits: entirely unknown. Nest: never found. This species has no fear of humans, which may have been its undoing. Since the 1970s it has been disappearing at a rapid rate. A single specimen (see accompanying photograph) has recently been spotted in the BC heartlands, but, for reasons of security, the exact location cannot be revealed at this time. Any further sightings should be reported to the appropriate authorities. Swift action by the provincial government is necessary to arrest the Bellybird's imminent extinction.



Jim Farrell 477-7291

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# Early Banders

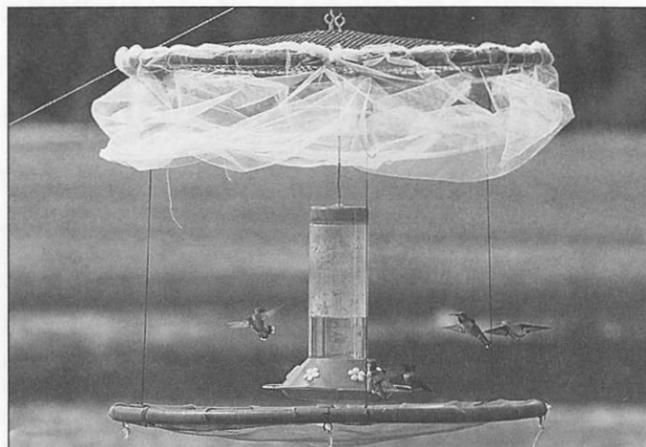
By J. Cam Finlay

With the ever increasing activity of bird banding on southern Vancouver Island; this year over 1000 Purple Martins were ringed (the European term for banding) and over 2000 hummingbirds, plus the extensive work at the Rocky Point Bird Observatory including the Northern Saw-whet Owl project and the new MAPS project, I thought it fitting to provide some background on this activity.

Searching through my files, I came upon an article by Hilton (1991), a keen bander from South Carolina, from which I extracted some information. The earliest known banding effort was during the Second Punic War in about 218 BC, when Roman foot soldiers tied threads around the legs of captured swallows at headquarters. On each day the soldiers marched, one knot was placed in the string so that when a swallow was released at the end of the day and returned home it would inform headquarters how far the troops had progressed.

By the late 1500's, many different kinds of birds were being marked. Marco Polo noted Chinese barons outfitting hunting falcons with silver tablets, each inscribed with the owner's name and province. The first record of a metal band attached to a bird's leg was about 1595, when one of Henry IV's banded Peregrines was lost in pursuit of a Bustard in France. It showed up 24 hours later in Malta, about 2160 km away (Hilton 1991). This bird would have averaged about 90 km per hour! Geoff Holroyd of the Canadian Wildlife Service, found similar results from his banding of a Peregrine returning from South America to its nesting ground in northern Alberta in the early spring a few years ago.

According to Hilton (1991), other Europeans were ringing birds, particularly trained birds of prey, through the 1600s and 1700s. For example, in 1710, a German falconer captured a Gray Heron that had been ringed in Turkey, nearly 2000 km away. A system for bird banding did not develop until 1890, when Hans Mortensen, a Danish schoolteacher, began placing aluminum rings on legs of Eurasian Green-winged Teals, Northern Pintails, White Storks, European



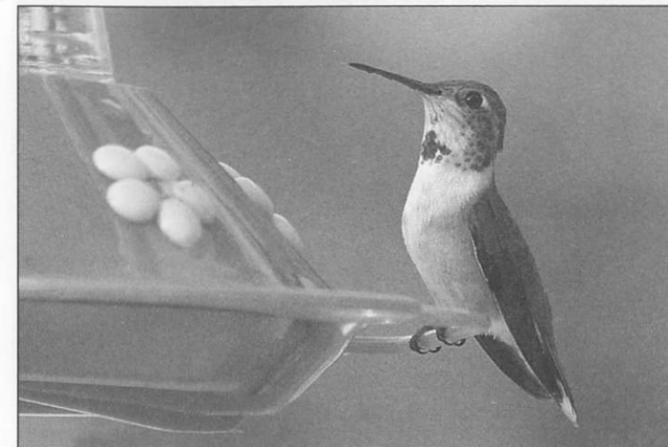
The trap. Photo: Ralph Hocken

Starlings and several types of hawks (Hyslop and Hayakawa 1990). Mortensen inscribed the bands with his name and address, in the hope they would be returned to him if found. His system became the model for our current efforts and he had so many interesting recoveries that other Europeans took up the practice. The German Ornithological Society started a ringing station in East Prussia in 1903 and the French and British began large scale banding six years later.

In the USA, John James Audubon is recognized as the first American bird bander. His encounters are among the first records of birds migrating and then returning to their nesting grounds in subsequent years. He attached a light silver thread to the leg of some nestling Eastern Phoebes just before they fledged from a cave nest site. The following year in the same area he captured several on nests and noted two with the silver threads still attached (Hilton 1991). In 1902 Dr Paul Bartsch banded 23 Black-crowned Night-Herons near Washington, D.C. and had his first recovery later that year (Hyslop and Hayakawa 1990).

In 1911 the American Bird Banding Association was formed. By 1920, the continued increase in banding efforts became too much for this organization, so the US Biological Survey (later to become the US Fish and Wildlife Service) assumed control (Hyslop and Hayakawa 1990).

Here in Canada, in 1905, James Henry Fleming placed the first numbered and recorded band on the leg of an American Robin in his Toronto garden. The bands he used were

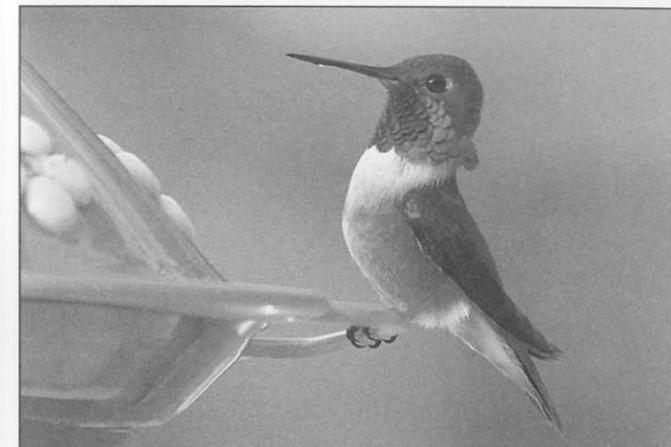


Female Rufous Hummingbird. Photo: Ralph Hocken

designed and supplied by P. A. Taverner, who wrote *Birds of Eastern Canada* in 1922 and later *Birds of Western Canada*. Taverner also wrote the first *Birds of Canada*. In 1904 Jack Miner set up a waterfowl sanctuary near Kingsville, Ontario. By 1909 he had attracted so many birds that he wanted to learn where they were going, so he attached a labeled band to a Mallard that August. This duck was shot at Anderson, North Carolina, four months later. This recovery is considered the first complete record of a banded bird and recovery on the continent. Miner continued to band waterfowl until his death in 1939. In that time he had banded 20,000 Canada Geese! (Hyslop and Hayakawa 1990)

The Canadian Bird Banding office was established in 1923 to issue permits, supply bands, and keep records of Canadian banding studies. It is now administered by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). Establishing this office must have stimulated naturalists to get out and band, since *The Canadian Field Naturalist* began reporting banding results that year (1923) with information from southwest B. C. (Anonymous 1924; Anonymous 1925). Also Thead Pearce wrote an article on his banding of Glaucous-winged Gulls at a colony in B.C. (Pearce 1923). In that same volume there are other reports of banded birds, including a Green-winged Teal banded on the Fraser delta on Sept 28, 1923 and recovered Oct. 1, 1923. G. D. Sprot banded a pheasant at Mill Bay on Dec. 20, 1923 and recovered it Nov. 10, 1924 in the same area. J. A. Munro banded a California Quail at Cedar Hill, Vancouver Island on Sept. 23, 1923 and recovered the bird on Feb. 10, 1924. A Steller's Jay was banded by G. D. Sprot at Mill Bay on Sept. 26, 1923 and recovered Sept. 12, 1924 at the same place. Later Sprot reported on his banding of "resident" birds, including: California Quail, Steller's Jay, junco and towhee on the west shore of Saanich Inlet at Mill Bay (Sprot 1925). J. A. Munro notes that he banded two juncos and recovered them at the same place at Colquitz, Vancouver Island (Munro 1924).

Since then, banding of passerines on the Island has been sporadic. Over the years people like Michael Shepard and



Male Rufous Hummingbird. Photo: Ralph Hocken

Andy Stewart, among others, have actively banded song birds. While other professional biologists have continued to band waterfowl, upland game birds and seabirds.

I checked with David Allinson, one of Rocky Point Bird Observatory's founders, who supplied me with its background. Activity began there in July of 1994. The first year they banded 1954 birds of 59 species in 46 days versus 90 days operating the nets now. The first crew included Michael Shepard, Colleen O'Brien, the late Beverly Glover, and David Allinson. Last year (2003), 3730 birds were banded (of 61 species), using many more helpers over the season. Almost 25,000 birds have been ringed (of 96 species) since they started. In addition to their banding program, the volunteers record birds that don't enter the nets. A total of 291 species have now been observed in the Rocky Point checklist area. The most birds banded in one day were 187 on September 20, 2003. Paul Levesque started another project at Rocky Point – the Nocturnal Owl survey in 2002, with 210 Northern Saw-whet Owls and 2 Barred Owls banded. The following year (2003) they banded 311 Northern Saw-whets and another 2 Barred Owls.

Victoria naturalists have recently become involved in another banding project – the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) program. Ann Nightingale informed me that it was created by the Institute for Bird Populations in 1989 to assess and monitor the vital rates and population dynamics of over 120 species of North American land birds in order to provide critical conservation and management information on their populations. Paul Levesque initiated the Victoria endeavour in 2003 at two sites – Royal Roads and Rocky Point. Five-hundred and fifty-three individuals of 38 species were banded in 2004, more than twice as many as in 2003. Aging and sexing of the birds are critical features of the MAPS program. These tasks are done by examining the plumage for feather quality, wear and molt patterns, plus skull ossification, wing length, brood patches, cloacal protuberance and non-feathered body parts. Like the other Victoria banding projects, the work is done mainly by volunteers.

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The first record of a metal band attached to a bird's leg was about 1595, when one of Henry IV's banded Peregrines was lost in pursuit of a Bustard in France. It showed up 24 hours later in Malta, about 2160 km away (Hilton 1991).

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Recording and measuring. Photo: Ralph Hocken

I began a banding program of nestling Purple Martins in 1996, when their numbers were still very low: an estimated 57 pairs in 1995. This included putting coloured, numbered bands on one leg and the federal band on the other leg. The first year we banded only 16, but in 1997 we banded 196 nestlings and one adult. Numbers of nesting pairs and fledgling martins have continued to increase; this year (2004) over 300 pairs have had over 1000 nestlings ringed with colour and federal bands. Many of our banded birds have returned, with bands read from as far away as San Francisco, plus two of our fledglings that later nested near Portland, Oregon.

My interest in banding hummingbirds began in 1997. With the assistance of many volunteers (mainly members of the Victoria Natural History Society), that first year 355 birds were ringed. Numbers have increased each year to over 2000 birds banded this past summer, with nearly 100 volunteers helping out. Most of the banded birds returning have been from the site where they were banded with up to 20 percent coming back for a second year. This percentage compares to less than one percent recovery of non-game birds and 10 percent for game birds across North America. One of the hummingbirds we trapped in 1997 had been banded as an adult at Fanny Bay north of Parksville in June of 1991. Thus it was almost seven years old when we trapped it in April, 1997. We caught another bird this spring at our home that we had banded there as an adult almost 6 years ago, making it almost 7. To date, I have had no really long distance recoveries.

## Welcome to New Members

**Audrey Kyle**  
Hector Road  
gardens, hiking, sailing

**Claire Turcotte**  
Milton Street  
birds, botany

**Alex Peden**  
Hollyridge Terrace  
aquatic biology

**Susan and Tony Knowler**  
Tiswilde Road

**Debi Wade**  
Drake Road  
birds, native plants

**Patricia Perkins**  
Shelbourne Street  
birds, entomology,  
native plants

**Anne Kranenburg**  
Helmcken Road  
birds, Garry oak  
ecosystems

**Mary Patricia Aldrich**  
Carrick Street

**Clive D. B. Loader**  
Fieldmont Court



Measuring the culmen. Photo: Ralph Hocken

Last winter I was invited to join the Hummingbird Conservation Monitors Project, which includes people in Arizona and Washington State. This program is designed to assess the hummingbird population levels over the years (because of concerns regarding habitat loss), with particular emphasis on Rufous Hummingbird declines. It has been a major commitment of both me and several others who are assisting. It is a long term project, but already some results are beginning to show. More will be reported in future years.

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## Salvaging in Saanich

By Carolyn MacDonald – Saanich Environmental Education Officer

In the spring of 2001, a program began through the Municipality of Saanich to coordinate salvaging of native plants that would otherwise be lost during development. Over the last 3 years, the Native Plant Salvage Program has developed into a strong network, providing salvage and educational opportunities for a membership that has grown to almost 130 people. Many plants have been rescued from bulldozers and are flourishing all around Saanich in community gardens, restoration sites and the yards of salvage members. While the program has been very successful so far, there is still much to do to raise awareness about it.

The most important thing to know about Saanich's salvage program is that it is not occurring as an alternative to habitat protection. With a team of environmental staff reviewing subdivision and rezoning applications, and parks staff reviewing all development applications for specific environmental factors such as tree issues, the sites that finally come up for salvaging are those having secured permits with all preservation issues dealt with as far as possible. Much of the plant salvaging that is being done through this program is focussed on building envelopes, road and driveway development and other areas outside of protected natural state covenants.

Salvage sites in Saanich are volunteered by the landowner/developer and coordinated through Saanich Environmental Services. Once a salvage site has been secured, a site information form is filled out, with all details and restrictions. This information, with a site map, is then sent out, via email, to the program membership.

Members of the salvage program do not have to be residents of Saanich to participate, but they do have to sign an agreement/waiver form and attend a program orientation session. Salvagers work on the sites under their own guidance, following the policies of the program. (Only members of the program are allowed at a salvage site.) The rescued plants, with the hard work of these volunteers, help maintain native biological diversity and regain wildlife habitats in damaged areas. The program also raises awareness in our community of the importance of native ecosystems and often increases communication and understanding between people who come from different points of view.

As awareness and appreciation of native ecosystems increases in Saanich, protection and restoration efforts grow! Find out more about the salvage program on the web at: [www.saanich.ca/resident/community/enviro/salvage.html](http://www.saanich.ca/resident/community/enviro/salvage.html) or contact me at the following: [macdonac@saanich.ca](mailto:macdonac@saanich.ca) or 475-5475.



Easter Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*). Photo: Carolyn MacDonald

**Yellow Point Lodge**



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# VNHS Goes Back to School

By Ann Nightingale

Over the summer, the VNHS Board was contacted by a few people who are dismayed at the lack of natural history education available in the schools. While some schools are blessed with teachers who have enthusiasm for natural history, many others have no staff with experience in plant or animal identification, ecology, or any area of natural science. The Board was challenged to do something about this. There was no question that increasing natural history exposure in the schools was a terrific idea, but where could we begin and how could we make sure that what we proposed was going to be "doable"?

The Board discussed several ideas, some of them pretty good in our opinion. However, we have to admit that the Board members are not well-placed to be making decisions on how to get the information into the schools. Most of us do not have children and/or grandchildren, and even fewer of us have been involved in the school system in the last twenty (or even thirty!) years. Clearly, we are going to need the expertise of others!

We made a commitment to this project by allocating a considerable sum of money for the purchase of resources (field guides, collection and study supplies) for donation to local schools. We're pretty sure that sending a care package to the principal would not be the best way to deliver the goodies, but we aren't sure what would be. We talked about choosing a few schools to try out as a pilot project, perhaps delivering a slide presentation to an assembly as well as a

package. We thought about offering schools our services by providing volunteer naturalists to accompany students and teachers on field trips. Some of our braver members suggested that we offer nature outings as learning opportunities for teachers on their Professional Development days. We discussed offering our own members some "PD" so that they would be better prepared to go into the schools. We would like very much to work closely with groups like Swan Lake and Goldstream Nature Centres and the Young Naturalist Club, as they have considerable experience reaching school-aged children.

We know that there are teachers in the VNHS membership! Some of you may be retired, but you probably still have connections and ideas of what should be done and how to do it. If you have family or friends who work in the schools, you could be a great asset to this project.

We also know that some of you "non-teachers" have knowledge that is just begging to be shared. Would you be willing to go along on a school field trip or speak to a class of students once in a while? Could you be the next Skipper King?

If you have ideas or would be willing to help us improve natural history education, please contact Ann Nightingale at [motmot@shaw.ca](mailto:motmot@shaw.ca) or at 652-6450. There will be a meeting in September (Wednesday, September 29, 7:30 pm at Swan Lake) for those who express an interest, so that we can develop a plan of action.



## Photo Contest Judging - Wine and Cheese Reception

Friday, September 10th from 7-9 pm at Goldstream Nature House



Come out to the Goldstream Nature House during the week of September the 11th through the 19th (9-4:30 pm) to see the entries in the VNHS 60th Anniversary Photo Contest.

Choose your favourite photo by voting in the 'People's Choice' contest.

Winners of the contest will be announced at a Wine/ Fruit punch and Cheese reception on Friday, September 10th from 7-9 pm at Goldstream Nature House. Judges and others will be present for a discussion on the topic of digital and traditional photographic techniques.

Come and join us to have a good time and admire our fellow naturalist's photographic skills! Winner of the People's Choice will be announced at the October VNHS Natural History Night.

# Lifecycles Project Society: You Can Get Involved!

By Su Everts

Lifecycles is a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to cultivating awareness of and initiating action around food, health and urban sustainability in the Greater Victoria community. This organization is geared towards education and building community connections through hands-on projects that work towards creating better local and global food security.

There are a number of ways that you can participate in achieving LifeCycles' goals, depending on your area of interest. You can get involved as a volunteer fruit picker with the Victoria Fruit Tree Project, or contribute your skills as a member of our Board of Directors. The contribution you make to the LifeCycles "mission" can be as simple and as effective as building your own backyard garden, or planting an extra row of vegetables for donation to your local food bank at harvest time.

## LifeCycles Program Areas:

### Garden Creation

LifeCycles works with all ages to create urban organic food gardens in people's backyards, balconies and rooftops. We also help to create community gardens and gardens for special needs.

### Food and Agriculture Education

LifeCycles has both school and community based education programs to teach about food security, sustainable agriculture and urban agriculture. International partnerships, such as with farmers in Cuba, bring a global perspective to our education work.

### Food Distribution

We live in an abundant city and it is important that all people at all times have access to healthy food. Programs like the Victoria Fruit Tree Project, and Grow A Row play a role in trying to get available food to those who need it most.

### Fruit Tree Project

LifeCycles welcomes Laryl Males, a 2-year volunteer with us, as the new Fruit Tree Project Coordinator. Under Laryl's guidance, the Fruit Tree Project volunteers are harvesting a valuable source of food for the community. The picked fruit is shared among tree owners, volunteer pickers and the Fruit Tree Project; the fruit is then distributed to community resources and food banks.

Due to reduced funding and fewer grants, LifeCycles has had to introduce a once-a-year fee to purchase and maintain

equipment and help cover the myriad costs of keeping the project going. This fee covers all trees that an owner needs to have picked, regardless of when the trees ripen: \$20.00 for up to 4 trees and \$5.00 per additional tree.

To date, we've picked over 1300 lbs of fruit from 20 yards, providing over 600 lbs of fruit for food banks and community agencies. This bounty includes cherries, transparent apples, and golden and Japanese plums. If you have a tree(s) that needs picking or would like to volunteer, please call Laryl at the Fruit Tree Project: 385-7425.

### Grow-a-Row

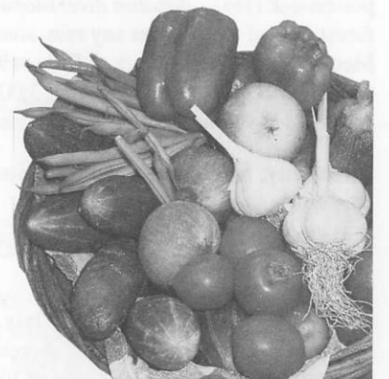
LifeCycles urges all gardeners to join our Grow-A-Row Project to help feed the hungry. If you will donate a row, or even a partial row, of vegetables for the food banks, we'll happily help you harvest your bounty and distribute it on your behalf. Please give us a call to sign up: 383-5800.

## Upcoming LifeCycles Events:

- **October 23: A Celebration of Apples:** Join in our 3rd annual fun, family event featuring virtually everything to do with apples (11 am – 4 pm, St. Ann's Academy). And that evening, come along for the grand finale!
- **October 23: An Evening All About Apples:** Don't miss this popular LifeCycles benefit event held at Spinnaker's Brew Pub & Restaurant! For \$75.00 each, guests will be fêted with a delectable dinner of fresh local foods featuring apple delicacies with each course, entertainment and a silent auction. Many items are donated by participants in our Youth Entrepreneurship Program, giving guests a first-hand look at the remarkable businesses these young people have established. Book your reservation now!

### Contact Information for LifeCycles Project Society

527 Michigan Street  
Victoria, BC V8V 1S1  
Phone: (250) 383-5800  
Fax: (250) 386-3449  
e-mail: [info@lifecyclesproject.ca](mailto:info@lifecyclesproject.ca)



# 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>.

## SEPTEMBER

### Friday, September 10

#### Photo Contest Wine and Cheese Reception

Winners of the VNHS Photo Contest will be announced at a Wine/Fruit punch and Cheese reception being held from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Goldstream Nature House. Judges and others will be present for a discussion on the topic of digital and traditional photographic techniques. Come and join us to have a good time and admire our fellow naturalist's photographic skills! All are welcome to attend, just remember to tuck a flashlight into your pocket for the walk to the parking lot.

### Sunday, September 12

**Field Trip – Exploring the Victoria Shoreline for Shorebirds**  
**Marie O'Shaughnessy** (598-9680) will lead this search for migrant shorebirds. Meet at Clover Point at 7:30 a.m.

### Tuesday, September 14

#### VNHS Natural History Presentation – Seabirds, Seals and Southern Seas: Working as a Naturalist in Antarctica, South Georgia and Patagonia

**Dr. Alan Burger** is a wildlife consultant, an Adjunct Associate Professor in Biology at UVic., an itinerant naturalist, and an active member of the Victoria Natural History Society. He will share slides and experiences of his work as a naturalist in Antarctica and travels in Patagonia in 2003-04. Everyone welcome: 7:30 p.m. in Room 159, Fraser Building UVic. Don't forget your coffee mug!

### Saturday, September 18

#### Field Trip – Plants of Mary Hill

Join **Norman Mogensen, Adolf Ceska** and **Oluna Ceska** on a botanical adventure to Mary Hill to see (but not to touch!) Pacific poison-oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), old-growth Douglas-fir forest, and, if we ever get any rain, some interesting mushrooms. Meet at the Helmcken Park & Ride at 9:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and water and plan to be back at about 3:00 p.m. Call **Adolf Ceska** at 477-1211 if you need more information.

### Saturday, September 18 and Sunday, September 19

#### Victoria's Monthly Butterfly Count

Call **Cheryl Mackie** at 479-4083 if you would like to participate.

### Sunday, September 19

#### Field Trip – Birding Viaduct Flats

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

### Sunday, September 19

#### Field Trip – Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

Join us on this trip on the *M.V. Coho* on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1½ hours and this is the best opportunity to see pelagic bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat, so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 a.m. sailing (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$18.00 (US) \$24.80 (CAN) return. You should have two pieces of ID (at least one with a photo) for customs. We'll return on the 12:45 p.m. sailing. Leader TBA

### Tuesday, September 21

#### Botany Night – Natural History (mostly Botany!) and Ethnobotany of Hawaii

**Dr. Kendrick Marr** (Royal BC Museum, Botany Curator) will present slides and commentary on some of Hawaii's unique flora (89% endemic) and landscapes. His presentation will include a brief introduction to the geological and cultural history of Hawaii, ethnobotany, and the problems caused by introduced plant and animal species. All welcome. Meet at the Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, September 22

#### Birders' Night – Member's Night

Come out and show off some "birdy" experiences you had over the summer holidays. This could include the nest of something that decided to share your yard with you, or slides of a special rarity that turned up at Rocky Point. Please contact **Marie O'Shaughnessy** (598-9680) to indicate that you will be presenting. Everyone welcome. 7:30 p.m., Fraser 159, UVic. Bring a friend and your coffee cup.

### Saturday, September 25

#### VNHS Multi-Field Trip Day – Hawk Watch, Botany, Inter-tidal and Geology Field Trips at East Sooke Park

This omnibus field trip is organized to help celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the VNHS, and to encourage naturalists to come and visit Victoria. Many of the best features of Victoria's natural history will be on display for you to see and enjoy and you won't have to hike miles to take in all that there is to offer. Capital Regional District Parks will have tents and displays of birds, and other flora and fauna adjacent to the parking lot and local field naturalists will be in attendance to answer your questions and arrange the field trips. **Check out page 4 of this issue.**

### Sunday, September 26

#### Field Trip – Vancouver Shorebirding

Vancouver gets a much greater diversity of shorebirds than Victoria,

so come along for a trip to see them. Some of the birds we could see are: Willet, Baird's Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper, and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. We will check out Iona, Reifel and Boundary Bay. Meet at the entrance to Beaver Lake Park on Elk Lake Drive at 6:00 a.m. to carpool. Cost will be about \$40.00 per person. We will return on the 5:00 p.m. ferry. Bring a lunch. Call **Rick Schortinghuis** at 652-3326 for more information.

### Monday, September 27

#### Marine Night – Sponge Reefs in B.C.: A New Take on an Ancient Ecosystem

**Sarah Cooke** is a graduate student at UVic, working on the ecology of the sponge reefs of Hecate Strait. She has been looking at the community of fish and invertebrates that live on the reefs and will present an illustrated talk with photos and videos of the life associated with this unique habitat. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Swan Lake Nature Centre. Everyone welcome.

## OCTOBER

### Sunday, October 3

#### Field Trip – Birding at Whiffen Spit, Sooke

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

### Sunday, October 10

#### Field Trip – Migrants on Jocelyn Hill

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

### Tuesday, October 12

#### VNHS Natural History Presentation – Rainforest Wolves – Life on the Edge

**Chris Darimont** is a PhD Candidate at the University of Victoria and a Conservation Biologist with the Raincoast Conservation Society. Raincoast's Rainforest Wolf Project answers interesting and important questions about wolves, their prey, and their endangered rainforest home on the central coast of British Columbia. Chris will give a brief introduction to this work. Then an award-winning and beautiful documentary from Discovery Canada on wolves of the rainforest will

be shown. There will be time for questions afterwards with a representative from the Raincoast Conservation Society. It all starts at 7:30 p.m. in Room 159, Fraser Building, UVic. Bring a coffee cup and a friend. Non-members welcome.

### Tuesday, October 19

#### Botany Night – Summer 2004 in the Yukon and Atlin

Join **Judith Holm, Adolf Ceska** and **Oluna Ceska** for an update on their floristic work in southern Yukon and northern BC, as well as hear about what went on at this year's Botany BC meeting, held in Atlin. Everyone welcome! Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

### Sunday, October 24

#### Field Trip – Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

Join **David Allinson** for this trip on the *M.V. Coho* on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1½ hours and this is the best opportunity to see pelagic bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, and Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat, so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 sailing of the *M.V. Coho* (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$18.00 (US) \$24.80 (CAN) return. You should have two pieces of ID (at least one with a photo) for customs. We'll return on the 1:45 p.m. sailing.

### Monday, October 25

#### Marine Night – Toxic Loads in our Region's Marine Mammals

**Dr. Peter Ross** of the Institute of Ocean Sciences at Patricia Bay will be returning to give us an update on his work on contaminants found in marine mammals on the BC coast. He is well known for publicizing the plight of west coast killer whales with regard to PCB's and we have had many compliments about his previous talks, so do not miss this talk! 7:30 p.m. at Swan Lake Nature Centre. All welcome.

### Wednesday, October 27

#### Birders' Night – Birds and Blondes on the Beaches of California

Join **Ed Pellizon, Chris Saunders** and **Ted Ardley** of Victoria, as they recount their recent birding experiences in Coastal California. Chris's photographs may reveal more than just birds! Everyone welcome. 7:30 p.m., Fraser 159, UVic. Bring a friend and your coffee cup.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### Become a volunteer at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

Expand your knowledge of the natural history of this area. Volunteer opportunities include Nature House Receptionist and Assistant Naturalist (working with school groups). A commitment of 2 to 3 hours once a week is all that is required. Training is provided. For further details contact Joan at 479-0211 or email [volunteer@swanlake.bc.ca](mailto:volunteer@swanlake.bc.ca).

### 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. Thank you for your consideration.

### CRD Parks

To check out what field trips are going on at CRD parks, go to their web site, [www.crd.bc.ca/parks](http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks)

### 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.

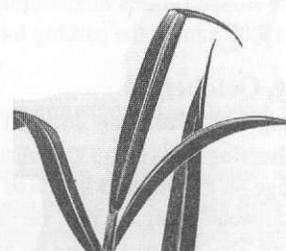
Renewal date: Aug--04 X

Barrie Bird  
3820 Epsom Drive  
VICTORIA BC V8P 3S7

**FEES ARE  
DUE**



Victoria Natural History Society's  
**Drawing for Field Books**  
September 10-12



This weekend drawing course will introduce you to outdoor sketching and field-book note taking. With a balance of individual instruction, group instruction and demonstrations, you can expect to improve your skills in sketching and field-book drawing in studio and in the field. The focus for this course will be on sketching birds, plants, and insects.

*Joanne Thomson is an accomplished artist in water-colour and illustration. She has earned a Masters Degree in Adult Education and loves to open people's eyes to their own creative potential. Joanne has studied and understands both the barriers to learning visual expression and the ways to overcome or remove those barriers. Her classes are joyful, open, informative, ego-boosting and safe places to learn and experiment.*

Classes will begin Friday evening September 10th, 7-9 pm for a get-acquainted session and for demonstrations and practice with the gesture, contour and blind contour drawing methods. Classes will then continue on Saturday the 11th and Sunday the 12th for full days of outdoor and indoor drawing and instruction.

In total there will be 12 hours of instruction. The fee will be \$120.00 and there will be a minimum class size of 7 and a maximum of 12.

To register, or for more detailed information, please contact **Donna Ross** by phone (384-5327) or email ([hoshihana@shaw.ca](mailto:hoshihana@shaw.ca)).