



“Nature on the Move

~ Fall Migration through the Delta”

**Fall General Meeting & Conference
Hosted by Delta Naturalists' Society
at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn,
September 29 to October 2, 2011**



**Thank you Ursula Easterbrook!
for all of your beautiful photographs**

Cover photographs

Background shot cover - Foreshore Boundary Bay

Snowgeese - Reifel Bird Sanctuary, Ladner

Short-Eared Owl - Boundary bay

Salmon - in the spawning channels - Weaver Creek

BC Nature (Federation of British Columbia Naturalists)

Fall General Meeting, October 1, 2011

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Report on BC Nature Activities May Through September 2011

President's Report FGM 2011 *John Neville*

There are always issues evolving and problems to solve in BC Nature, so I welcome the opportunity to keep you up to date.

Our Arrowsmith Club have been requested by their local School Board to increase BC Nature and club liability from 2(two) to 5(five) Million dollars. Our insurance company (SBC Insurance) have agreed to cover the Arrowsmith Club till the end of the year for an additional cost of \$1.10 per individual . Currently this is a one-off situation for Arrowsmith members, but may become the norm for everyone in the future? Please talk it up at the club level, so that we can discuss it at the FGM and consider a formal resolution at the AGM next May. The directors will have an opportunity on October 1st to discuss the matter directly with Bob Ross from our insurance company.

Clubs pay their memberships to BC Nature at the beginning of each year. I hope that all clubs will experience growth in members as the year progresses. For example , our newest club WildResearch has expanded from 16 to 120 members in their first year. Your Executive, at its last meeting, debated when? and if ? to charge partial year dues to new members. The cost to send a magazine is \$3 per copy from the office, which BC Nature has always absorbed. Because we are able to do some averaging with our insurance company, additional new members (partial year), are covered for liability. One suggestion was to send the magazine digitally for the first partial year? Perhaps you also have views on this issue, if so, we would like to hear them.

We have seen a marked drop off in participation in BC Nature camps this year. The Strathcona Camp had to be canceled due to lack of participation. The Fraser Canyon Field Camp, April 28th to May 1st, was a great success with knowledgeable speakers/leaders, fascinating locations and (mostly) co-operative weather. There was space for 24 participants but only twelve signed up. This is a great shame as the volunteers do enormous amounts of work to create these wonderful opportunities. Organizers in the future should consider advertising beyond our membership and provincial boundary. For example, Nature Alberta and Saskatchewan offer a special advertising rate for NGO's.

The organizers of two of our projects have raised significant amounts of money recently. Important Bird Areas raised \$33,000 from the BC Conservation Foundation and the Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program in the Okanagan has raised \$41,000 from the Habitat Stewardship Program. Congratulations to all concerned.

As your Communications Director, working through your Executive, I've started work on several projects. For example our Office Manager, needs some support to put out our BCnature magazine every quarter. I am really pleased to announce that Penelope (Penney) Edwards from Victoria has agreed to become our Honorary Editor-in -Chief. Your Executive approved a motion to set aside a minimum of \$10,000 from last year's surplus funds so that we can do a major upgrade to our website. You might like to take a look at other provincial naturalist organizations to see how their websites are being developed, for example Nature Ontario. Our website is one of the places that we can know nature and keep it worth knowing. We also agreed to apply for grants for this project so as to save BC Nature funding where possible. Another commitment we made was to upgrade the old Directors Manual and make it available again by January 2012.

In conclusion , I would like to invite clubs to consider hosting the AGM and FGM in 2013.

My best wishes to you all! ❀

BC Naturalists' Foundation *Bob Dyer*

In February our Foundation was able to issue grants to six member clubs of BC nature, and these grants were put to good use: new interpretative signs were established by the North Okanagan Naturalists at Cools Pond, and also the Friends of Semiahmoo Bay put up interpretive signs at Little Campbell River and did restoration; restoration work using our grants was also done by the Comox Valley Naturalists and by the Chilliwack Field Naturalists; the Arrowsmith Naturalists produced a seasonal bird checklist, and the South Okanagan Naturalists used the funds to showcase fifty years of conservation in the South Okanagan. In terms of donations or legacies received, 2011 has been a very quiet year so far, and of course we rely on these sources to build the capital which provides our grants.

The capital of our Foundation is now approaching \$400,000, including our Endowment Fund with the Vancouver Foundation. The assets managed by the Foundation Directors recovered strongly from the market low point, and are holding up relatively well in the current financial turmoil. The Vancouver Foundation had a slow recovery from the 2008 downturn, but now appears to be on an improving trend. However, in the current very low interest rate environment and weak return on equities the income of our Foundation is below the level we might hope for. At the end of the year we expect to be able to provide about the same level of club grants as we did last year. ❀

Camp Report 2011

Anne Murray and Bev Ramey

As reported at the AGM, the field activities planned for 2011 were two camps, two bird blitzes and two exploratory camps.

The Fraser Canyon Field Camp, April 28 to May 1st, organized by Chilliwack Field Naturalists in cooperation with the Hope Mountain Centre, was a great experience for all participants. Campers enjoyed learning about the Canyon's human and natural history in the company of top experts in archaeology, geoscience, birds and botany.

The second camp, planned by Comox Valley Naturalists for Strathcona Park in mid-July, unfortunately had to be cancelled as registration was too low. The program looked very interesting with hiking and a chance to see montane species, in this oldest of BC's parks, currently in its 100th anniversary year. The organizers had put in a lot of work, as one can imagine, so it was very disappointing that the camp could not be held. It would be helpful to have some feedback on this. I suspect that we did not provide sufficient advance notice for it, or that the advertising in the magazine and eNews somehow did not get noticed. However, low registration may have been caused by diverse factors such as the time of year (summer), location (mountains, hiking), maybe even your previous attendance at, and costs associated with, going to the very popular Williams Lake AGM this year. Please let us know your thoughts, as a way of helping us design and plan camps that will suit our membership.

This was the inaugural year for the Skagit Bird Blitz and participants reported it a great success and look forward to a repeat in 2012. The Manning Park Bird Blitz attracted a full slate of birders from near and far. Manning Park was a fun weekend, highlighted for me by Janne Perrin spotting us an unusual Grey Catbird, looking a bit frazzled by the rain. The pair of American Three-toed Woodpeckers were nice too. The two Bird Blitzes were jointly sponsored by BC Nature and the Hope Mountain Centre for Outdoor Learning (www.hopemountain.org). Hope Mountain Centre did the organizational work, and managed both events. Our thanks to Scott Denkers, Kelly Pearce and their team for all their work!

Two Exploratory Camps were organized by Bev and Bill Ramey. The first week of July backpacking trip headed into the Potato Range in the West Chilcotins. This destination was "an evening before" decision while mustering at Margaret Hubble's Eagle Lake Paradise Resort, and viewing the low snow pack levels at the planned destination of the Niut Range. The decision was made by the ten backpackers in the group to shift location from the mountain range on the west side of Tatlayoko Lake (Niut) to the east side of the lake. It was the right decision as we hikers frequently gazed across the lake to those Niut mountains socked in with clouds, while we basked in sunlight, although windblown, at our 2000 metre ridges. Campers contributed to the BC Breeding Bird Atlas by conducting point counts and recording breeding evidence, surrounded by alpine flowers and the stunning backdrop of the Coast Mountains. Notable were the extensive meadows of flowering spring beauty (*Claytonia lanceolata*, Indian potato) which appeared so white from the distance that we first thought the meadows to be snow fields.

The second Exploratory Camp destination saw nine backpackers hiking in the South Chilcotins, up Tyaughton Creek to the Fortress Ridge and Castle Mountain area. Held the third week of July, hikers recorded Breeding Bird Evidence for the Atlas, while enjoying the craggy spires, slopes of serpentine hues scattered with alpine flowers, all made even more dramatic by the rapidly changing weather.

2012 Camps and Field Activities - Salt Spring Island Camp based at Cusheon Lake Resort and organized by the Salt Spring Island Trail and Nature Club, is back by popular demand for a second year. Here is your chance to tour this beautiful Gulf Island with experts in marine biology, spring flowers, and birds. Dates for the camp are: June 4 to 8, 2012. Registration will start Sunday, January 15, 2012, at 9:00 am by contacting Nieke Visser at 250-537-5443 or niekevisser@shaw.ca. Additional information and registration instructions will be announced in the winter issue of BC Nature magazine, on BC Nature's website www.bcnature.ca and its e-newsletter as well as on the SSTNC website: www.saltspringtnc.ca.

Lillooet Naturalists are offering a fall camp. The proposed date is either the last week of September or the first week of October, 2012. Highlights will include birding, hiking, and enjoying the scenery in this fascinating area on the Fraser River, tucked between the Coast Mountains and the Interior. We may have a boat trip on Seton Lake. There will also be an evening spent at the Xwisten (Bridge River) Fishing Rocks area with a salmon dinner to follow. Anyone who joined us for this treat at the Lillooet Fall General Meeting a few years ago will remember what an excellent experience it was. Watch for more information in the winter issue of BC Nature and on the BC Nature website www.bcnature.ca. ❀

Important Bird Areas Report

Anne Murray

The key focus of the BC Important Bird Areas Program this year has been to continue our support of IBA Caretakers' work and to update as many site summaries on the IBA website as possible. Our local IBA Team blends staff and volunteers from BC Nature and Bird Studies Canada (BSC), as well as working with Nature Canada and BSC at the national level.

Caretakers volunteer their time to monitor birds and habitat, acting as stewards of their local IBAs. Over the last few years, many of them requested signs to notify the public of the existence of the site and why it was important for birds. Krista Englund, our IBA Program Coordinator, has been working with Nature Canada on a national IBA sign that simply identifies sites as IBAs. These signs have now been produced and will be going up in 27 IBAs including Boundary Bay – Fraser Delta, Tofino Mudflats, Strathcona Park, Vaseux Lake, Creston Valley, Skidegate Inlet and Chilcotin Junction.

Krista has also been very successful in finding funding for larger, interpretive signs featuring information about particular birds. New interpretive signs will be going up at Stanley Park (Burrard Inlet IBA) with support from Vancouver Parks Board, Saanich (Sidney Channel IBA), and in the South Okanagan (Vaseux Lake IBA, Kilpoola Lake IBA, Osoyoos Oxbows IBA).

Active Pass IBA signage, organized by the Caretakers at that site, was also completed and installed this year on Mayne and Galiano Islands with support from Parks Canada and BC Parks.

Karen Barry, Bird Studies Canada's IBA Coordinator based in Delta and Nanaimo, is working on two interpretive signs about fish and wildlife habitat values at Englishman River and Little Qualicum River estuaries, a project that came through yet another society. The signs will be in the Little Qualicum to Nanoose IBA. The signs will mention the IBA, and are being produced with the support of the BC Conservation Foundation and Living Rivers-Georgia Basin.

Signs are not only useful in informing the general public about the presence of IBAs but are also a good opportunity for building connections or partnerships with municipal and regional governments, parks staff and other agencies, as the signs are usually placed on public land. To advance conservation at the local level through IBAs, BSC has applied for additional funding to develop conservation tools for local governments on the East Coast of Vancouver Island and the lower mainland.

Updating site summaries has proved to be a longer and more complex task than we initially imagined. Karen has been working with Krista on prioritizing sites for updating and collecting data sets. While we had earlier reviewed and revised the habitat descriptions for many site summaries, the bird information was very out of date. In order to have a proper evaluation of whether the site still met international or national thresholds, we needed the global and continental numbers, which were also in the process of reevaluation by the relevant bird organizations, such as BirdLife International and Audubon. So progress has been slow, but it is beginning to come together. The process will be greatly helped by the establishment of a Regional Technical Committee to review the data for BC sites, and we are grateful to Dr. Art Martell for stepping forward to lead this initiative. At the same time as we are reviewing bird data, the maps for some sites are under review and/or are being redrawn, to take account of bird movements, changes to habitat and other such factors. We are also able to correct earlier errors and take advantage of the vast improvements in mapping technology since the boundaries were originally drawn.✂

Outdoor Recreation Council *Don Guild*

Report from the 34th Outdoor Recreation Council AGM held at BCIT in June 2011

Chair Bob Gunn began the meeting with introductions, information and concerns of member organizations. A summary of the issues of possible interest to BC Nature members are:

- The Trails Association of BC (Larri Woodrow) is celebrating the opening of the Kinsol trestle on the Vancouver Island section of the Trans-Canada Trail in July.
- The BC Speleological Association of BC (Adrian Duncan) is alarmed at the BC Ministry of Environments' failure to respond to the 2010 ORC resolution urging that they develop comprehensive cave protection legislation to curtail the ongoing vandalism of caves throughout the Province (he noted that this damage is widespread, affecting caves along the Chilliwack River, Vancouver Island and even Cody Caves Provincial Park). Also of deep concern is preventing the spread of a fungus known as white nose syndrome (*Geomyces destructans*) to bats in BC from east of the Rockies, as it could decimate the local bat populations. This could then heavily impact agriculture since bats can hold harmful insect populations down to low levels. He urged ORC members to support a stronger public education campaign on the importance of bats. (This looks like a viable BC Nature project!)
- The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (Brian Wood) is monitoring the proposal to establish hiking huts along the Spearhead traverse in Garibaldi Provincial Park, which is contentious with BC Parks, Aboriginal groups and even within the hiking/climbing community. They support the phase-out of heli-skiing in the area. Another issue they are pursuing is access across the Whistler Olympic Park in the Callahan Valley.
- The Backcountry Horsemen of BC (Rose Shroeder) noted lack of funding for trail maintenance. They have established 6 back-in horse trailer bays in EC Manning Provincial Park near the lodge.
- 9 paddling clubs forming the BC Marine Trails Network Association (Nick Heath) are working with the Recreation Sites & Trails Branch to achieve rec. sites every 15 km along 22,000 kms of shoreline. 2 trails were opened last month: Port Hardy to Tofino and Sydney to Nanaimo. These sites offer safe landing and upland camping to paddlers. See www.BCMarineTrails.org.
- ORC Senior Advisor, Ray Philman, reported that the Kokish River small hydro project can't be supported because it could result in the loss of the summer Steelhead run and seriously impact salmon runs as well as whitewater kayaking. Regarding the proposed National Park Reserve on Bowen Island, he felt that the island community will likely oppose it.
- Quad Riders Association of BC (Zan Doyle) highlighted the challenge of providing access to many branch motorized trails off of the rails to trails corridor established over the past 30 years since rail line abandonment. He contended that access to many of these secondary trails would be impossible if the rails to trails were made non-motorized. Establishing alternative corridors is cost-prohibitive for them. They support any newly constructed hiking/biking/horse trails being kept non-motorized.
- Leonard Thor of the Recreational Canoeing Association of BC noted that due to the high ecological footprint of "run of the River" power projects, they do not consider them to be green.
- The Four Wheel Drive Association of BC (Kathy Whittemore) noted that 9th annual cleanup of Stave Lake area resulted in the cumulative removal of 100,000 pounds of trash.
- BC Nature (Don Guild) highlighted the lamentable lack of funding for BC Parks and urged support for the return of interpretive programs in these parks.

Business Meeting highlights

- No reply from the BC Government to an ORC letter dated 13 July 2010 urging them to implement the BC Recreation Trails Strategy. Nor was there any response to the ORC letter sent to the Minister of Environment in October 2010

- recommending that comprehensive cave protection legislation be enacted as soon as possible.
- Resolution summary (1 long resolution):
- Urge the Premier & Minister of Environment to issue guidelines clarifying to parks staff & NGO's work volunteers can perform in BC Parks, including the necessary approvals to be obtained and to ensure that the terms of the Public Liability and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance the Province now provides for volunteers is widely known. Additionally, provide liability insurance for Directors & Officers when a non-profit organization organizes work crews in a BC Park and provide coverage similar to that offered under the Forest Recreation Insurance Program. Also introduce legislation to protect non-profit org. volunteers from liability for damage caused by their acts or omissions in the performance of authorized volunteer work. Passed unanimously
- Treasurers Report (Jeremy McCall)
Revenues: \$24,558 - Expenses: \$25,340 = Balance: (\$782) <small deficit> (unaudited figures)
- Election of Officers:
There were 7 nominees to fill 7 vacancies, all approved by acclamation, with Bob Gunn returning as Chair. Jeremy McCall is continuing as volunteer Executive Director.
- Significant member services:
- Member notification of applications for Crown Land tenure affecting recreation
- Notification of BC Parks Master Plans, updated Management Plans
- Campaign to reintroduce a volunteer program in BC Parks
- Notification of Environmental Assessments, both Provincial & Federal
- Canadian Trails Federation: ORC joined in 2009 and attended the National Trails Roundtable held in Banff in 2010. ORC is encouraging other Provincial trail organizations such as the TransCanada Trail to join so the CTF membership base is broadened. ✨

Parks & Protected Areas Report for Fall 2011 BC Nature Magazine *Don Guild*

National Park News

Bowen Island National Park Reserve Assessment Study:

Parks Canada has issued a Revised Park Concept for a National Park Reserve on Bowen Island. They have held two public meetings to introduce the Revised Park Concept; one on Bowen Island and the other in North Vancouver, both at the end of August. This feedback, along with a telephone survey conducted by a third party, will inform the Feasibility Assessment Report and will conclude the first step in the process. Further steps in the process are: Negotiations, Establishment, Interim Management guidelines and Management Plan.

South Okanagan-Similkameen Feasibility Study:

Talks and meetings are ongoing, so the hope of a park is still alive, but no details are available at this sensitive juncture in the process.

Jasper National Park Tangle Ridge development proposal:

Brewster Travel Canada is proposing to build a glass-bottomed skywalk off of Tangle Ridge (along the Icefield Parkway, north of the Icefield Visitors Center) accompanied by a \$15-\$30 charge to see it, much like the one over the Grand Canyon in Nevada. In addition to commercializing a view that is currently free to those who hike, there is concern that it will seriously disrupt the resident Bighorn Sheep, Mountain Goat and Mule Deer, impacting the ecology of the area by pressing human presence further off the highway corridor. Is Parks Canada even considering the cumulative displacement of plant habitat and wildlife by commercial interests in Jasper? In the 1970's it was such a significant concern that they shut down many outlying businesses in the park. A letter from the Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club expressing this concern to Parks Canada resulted in a reply assuring them that the proposal was within Parks policy to establish new experiences for park visitors. It appears that commercial opportunity could once again trump ecological integrity in the very place where it is supposedly given the highest priority. For more background, follow this link: <http://www.fitzhugh.ca/news/2690-new-project-proposal-for-icefields-parkway>

BC Parks News:

With the 100 th anniversary of BC Parks, we are more fortunate than many countries and jurisdictions to have over 13% of our Provincial land base set aside in Provincial Parks. While the funding for these parks and protected areas is woefully inadequate, the foundation for an ecologically representative system has been solidly laid through this vital land securement. The Centennial of BC Parks has been marked by many events held throughout the Parks system due to ad-hoc funding, but shamefully there was no money for core interpretive programs.

BC Nature congratulates Trevor Goward, along with John and Edwina Kurta, for their foresight and leadership in dedicating their property to benefit the ecosystem and wildlife of Wells Gray Provincial Park. The wetlands and wildlife corridor these lands provide are a priceless legacy and an admirable demonstration of their concern and compassion for the wellbeing of the park.

BC Parks has been working on many management plans around the Province, closing public input for the Shuswap Lake area at the end of July and for many Vancouver Island parks at the end of September. They are currently initiating plans for parks in the Lillooet area (Big Bar Creek, Bridge River Delta, Fred Antoine, French Bar, Gwyneth Lake, Marble Canyon, Skihist and South Chilcotin Mountains) and are welcoming public input on these until December 1.

Alberta Proposed Park Legislation:

To her credit, the Alberta Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Cindy Ady, is taking a second look at legislation introduced last year to simplify the Alberta park classification system and zoning regulations so the public can clearly

understand the purpose of a park and the activities allowed in it. The legislation being revisited endorsed a mandatory public process for changes in the park system. It also sought to establish a Parks Conservation Foundation and a Parks Advisory Council. Based on legislative debate and recent feedback from Albertans, Minister Ady is incorporating this new information into the legislation before reintroducing it. Hopefully an already progressive piece of legislation will strengthen the protection afforded to the significant natural areas of Alberta. ✨

Young Naturalists' Club of British Columbia *Daphne Solecki and Kristine Webber*

Many thanks to Delta Naturalists Society for hosting the YNC FGM in parallel with the BC Nature FGM and providing us with meeting space. We truly appreciate the support. We have several interesting developments to report on.

YNC Clubs Coordinator - Tammy Keetch

Many of you had the opportunity to meet Tammy Keetch at the AGM banquet in Williams Lake. Following early struggles with getting reliable internet connection, Tammy is now in full swing in her position telecommuting from Horsefly BC. So far this new way of working seems to be doing fine. As part of her position, Tammy will be travelling to various parts of the province to meet personally with YNC leaders.

Club News - *New clubs/leaders changes* - A new club on Quadra Island has been initiated by Dionne Lapointe-Bakota, which is great news. Some BC Nature members have offered to assist Dionne. New leaders have been recruited for North Okanagan YNC (Aaron Deans) and Victoria Home Learners YNC (Lisa Wilson and Michelle Schaafsma). Cowichan Valley YNC has split into two groups - Cowichan Valley Young Naturalists Club (leaders John Scull and Linda Hall) and the Cowichan Valley Home Learners Young Naturalists Club (leader Jenny White). Interest is being shown in starting a Home Learners club in Sooke. YNC is still looking for a leader for the Nanaimo Club.

YNC recently received a grant from MEC to fund First Aid kits and training for YNC Club leaders. Our thanks to all these new leaders and to all YNC leaders who continue month in, month out to provide wonderful programs for their members.

Activities - The YNC clubs and members have been busy over the summer! Here is some of what we've been up to:

Stewardship: Vancouver Young Naturalist, Maja, spent her summer organizing youth work parties to help restore Beaver Lake Bog in Stanley Park. She was awarded a Generation Green award from Vancouver Foundation for this project. You can follow her progress by linking onto her blogger blog from the www.ync.ca website.

Citizen Science: This summer Young Naturalists across the province helped Heather Kharouba, a UBC PhD with her research by photographing and recording observations of butterflies across BC. Heather is interested in how butterflies are adapting to the impacts of climate change. This project is the start of a new emphasis on Citizen Science that the YNC is hoping to encourage. YNC members already take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count; we are looking for more projects. If any BC Nature Club has a project in which YNC members could be involved please let us know. In support of increasing "citizen-based science activities" YNC has received a grant from Environment Canada EcoAction to test and promote the new Vancouver BioKit (an interactive field guide for families to assist in exploring and experiencing biodiversity in their neighbourhood and become involved in stewardship activities).

Camping: Camping is a great way for a family to enjoy the natural world together but can seem daunting for families that have never camped before. This summer the YNC offered Camping 101 for Lower Mainland YNC Members. The program was offered in partnership with Metro Vancouver Parks who provided an evening bat program and canoeing trip on day 2. And yes we did have sunshine! "My family are a bunch of computer nuts who don't spend enough time outdoors, and camping is something I would really like us to do so we can connect with each other & explore the natural world." camping 101 participant. We will take 'lessons learned' from this experience to build a program that we hope can be adopted by other YNCs. Andrea Farr and Lynn Pollard have successfully led YNC Nicomekl summer camps for several years now, and we have learned from them too.

Grandparents' Day: This fall, in partnership with the Elders Council for BC Parks, the YNC offered a special nature program for grandparents and grandchildren to mark Grandparents' Day. This went well with 20 or so participants. A pamphlet of suggested activities was produced for a take-home incentive to do more grandparent/grandchild sharing. We hope to make this an annual event and celebrate Grandparents' Day (Sept 11)

Nature Mentors: Young Naturalists' Club of BC is currently developing a nature mentors program and database to connect biologists, naturalists and environmental educators with young naturalists. For more information on this initiative or to register in the nature mentors database please contact info@ync.ca

EcoHeads - this fall YNC is piloting a stewardship-based youth initiative at the West Point Grey Community Centre
Sharing the YNC Model - This September YNC participated in an international conference on Health and the Environment called Healthy by Nature. The YNC presented an interactive panel discussion with YNC executive, a group of Young Naturalists Club members and volunteers. The youth shared their experiences as Young Naturalists, describing in their own words, the types of stewardship projects and opportunities they experienced with their YNC Club as well as the lasting impact these experiences. We hope this will inspire more YNCs in other parts of Canada!

What are YNC Graduates up to now? We heard that one YNC grad leads her high school environment club and another is studying ornithology. After our past members survey is implemented this fall we'll have even more stories, so stay tuned!

For a full picture of the clubs, their leaders and the fantastic programs they provide for our young naturalists, please go to our website, www.ync.ca, and click on "MY CLUB." ✨

Club Reports

Lower Mainland Region

Abbotsford-Mission Nature Club - Abbotsford *Jacqueline Reznick*

In June, Abbotsford Mission Nature Club members enjoyed our annual picnic. This year it was at Fishtrap Creek Park. A park with many connecting trails located very centrally in the City of Abbotsford. One of the trails is "Discovery Trail" which we walked after dinner. Fishtrap Creek Park has a pond with a few resident beavers and their work on local trees is evidence of their habitation. We continue to explore the idea of a Nature Hut and the real need for its presence in our area. This park will be high on the list as a possible location for a Nature Hut.

Our Club has once again been invited by the City of Abbotsford to the Canada Day Celebration. We set up our display inside Rotary Stadium where Gerry Powers, Steve Howard and we shared the Metro Vancouver Park tent. We partnered with Metro Vancouver Park to talk about creatures of the night. We had more than 2500 people of all ages pass our booth. Gerry's and Steve's displays are a great tool to educate the public regarding wild life.

We had planned to attend Colony Farm Regional Park to observe bird banding by Master Bander, Derek Matthews. The weather did not cooperate and it was cancelled. We hope to attend a future banding session.

We continue to write letters to all levels of government regarding many local developments. We have sent a letter to the Provincial Government regarding the proposed aggregate mine on Sumas Mountain, that if approved would have a life span of one hundred years. We are glad to see the City of Abbotsford is also against the proposed mine.

The City of Abbotsford has included our recommendation to the Species at Risk task force and recorded it on their newly released report. They have also sent out Requests For Proposals to conduct an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, including green energy, green economy and environmental management planning.

We have confirmed speakers for the upcoming season. Larry Cowan on 'Birds from Ecuador', Pamela Zevit on 'The Work of the South Coast Conservation Program', Dr. John Richardson of UBC Department of Forest Sciences on his ecology and conservation biology activities and Dr. Kent Mullinix of Kwantlen College on 'Sustainable Agriculture and how it can Benefit Wildlife'. ❀

Chilliwack Field Naturalists - Chilliwack *Helen Turner, Janne Perrin and Bona Baillie*

The Chilliwack Field Naturalists Club continues to enjoy educational speakers. About a hundred people turned out for Graham Osborne's, Master landscape photography special public presentation. Mr. Osborne entertained with superb pictures and action adventure stories. Carin Bondar, Creator of Biomusings, was the guest speaker at our March AGM. Other speakers informed us on butterflies, invasive plants, Oregon spotted frog and an Arctic voyage.

Chilliwack Field Naturalists host monthly field trips to enjoy the great outdoors. The Spirit Mask trail in Harrison Hot Springs, Langley's Campbell Valley Park, Morris Valley on the west of Harrison Lake, Boundary Bay, Thacker Mountain, Cheam Lake Wetlands and joint trip to the Bert Brink Wildlife Management Area with the Langley club were all enjoyable.

The 2010 Christmas Bird Count had 38 counters, 5 feeder watchers that netted 95 species and 47,405 individuals. Highlights were an American Goldfinch, 2 Anna's hummingbirds, yellow-rumped warbler, turkey vulture, yellow-headed blackbird, a Wilson's snipe and 57 Eurasian collared doves.

Lifetime memberships were awarded in May to founding members Don McPhee, Val Whetter and to long-time member Hazel Cannings. Val attended our annual Chilliwack Hope River walk, Great Blue Heron Nature Reserve outing and Camp River Wildlife Area June picnic. Sadly on July 29, at the age of 91, we had to bid farewell to Val. What a great lady!

A pub night at the Jolly Miller in April was a new fundraiser for us. It attracted 60 people. We also raise funds annually through our January silent auction and April Pitch-In.

The Pitch-In funds were used to sponsor a nest at the Great Blue heron Nature Reserve. We continue to partner with the GBHNR to host the Eastern Fraser Valley Young Naturalist Club. Popular outing this year included a winter bird walk, wildlife art, heron homecoming and a pond crawl.

Outreach activities are important to the Chilliwack Field Naturalists. In May Janne Perrin presented a birding program to the Robertson School Young Naturalist Club. We took part in the 2010 November Fraser Valley Bald Eagle Festival. We volunteered at Chilliwack's Party in the Park in July to educate the public on recycling.

Camp River Wildlife Area, our stewardship property, has monthly coffee cutters Wednesday evenings in summer and Saturday mornings in winter. Native shrubs were purchased through a BC Nature Foundation Grant and planted in April

by CFN members and the public. Another public planting is scheduled for the fall. We appreciate receiving the grant. A tractor to assist in blackberry control on this 8.1-hectare site is still on our wish list.

Membership in our club remains stable. Several new members bring new ideas and energy to the group.

We continue to monitor environmental issues. We presented submissions to both Cloudworks' Harrison Lake independent power projects and the Hemlock Valley Ski Resort expansion. Club members send numerous petitions and letters throughout the year. ✨

Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society - White Rock *Marg Cuthbert*

Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society is celebrating a 10th Anniversary retrospective and Project Partner and Volunteer Appreciation Reception October 16th with Dr. Robert Butler speaking about "Feathers, Friends and Our Future". We'll conduct our annual general meeting in the morning to give the community an opportunity to get to know us!

On October 16th, we will unveil the Little Campbell River Forest Trail Interpretive Signage. There will be about 78 new plant species signs and 13 large habitat signs each with a specific subject such as beaver, wetland pond, wood ducks, nurse log etc. The project will keep us intensely busy thru September and October as our Project Partners, A Rocha Canada, Surrey's SHaRP, Langley Environmental Partners Society, the Semiahmoo Fish & Game Club and Little Campbell Watershed Society work to improve the trails for special needs, remove invasive non native plants, followed by an enhancement planting of native trees and shrubs (including beaver fencing!) along the riparian edge. We also have organized work crews to install the new posts for the signage. BC Nature and BC Naturalists' Foundation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and A Rocha Canada are providing the necessary funds to accomplish this worthwhile educational project. We're looking forward to seeing the results of all our hard work!

Jude Grass continues to meet the challenges coordinating our Birds on the Bay & Beyond Program which provides an opportunity for our numerous fellow Naturalist groups to participate together to provide hundreds of free nature events for people of all ages every three months year round. We just met for our annual meeting with agency partners City of Surrey and Corporation of Delta to brainstorm for 2012. Jude is doing a great job on our behalf.

The FoSBS volunteer team has accomplished much this spring and summer and have attended numerous public events with educational displays and activities. Over 25 people attended the Shorekeepers methods training workshop May 20 - 22 with DFO support and all six sites in Boundary Bay were again surveyed with the excellent project coordination of Sharon Jones. DFO is currently entering all past years data to the Shorekeeper atlas.

It was exciting to again be mapping the eelgrass meadows in Boundary Bay this year after a sojourn of three years with the BC Seagrass Conservation Group who is providing project support. Our project coordinator Alison Prentice had few very low tides this year but she was able to monitor 4 sites. We also hosted a June 4th Eelgrass mapping & monitoring methods training workshop with over 50 people attending. Alison also coordinated our participation and contribution to the *Spartina anglica* removal effort in Boundary Bay providing volunteers for mapping, plant removal and seed head clipping. She herself went out in mid September to assist FREMP staff to survey the salt marsh and shore of Brunswick Point.

World Ocean Day June 5th was a great success with about 2500 people attending a gorgeous, sunny day at Blackie Spit Park. Over 30 exhibitors provided informative educational displays and fun family activities. This event also formally launched our summer Beach Hero Marine Interpretive Program and this year Christina and Amanda did an amazing job of guiding families and school groups in beach etiquette and knowledge of the marine environment. They continue to collect data on recreational fishing and crabbing and also report poachers to DFO whose funding support is essential for us to provide the program. Attending numerous public events and farmer's markets they are raising public awareness about Boundary Bay and its importance for migrating birds. Our 2011 summer Beach Hero Interpreters reached over 6,000 people.

September 18th we again participated in the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup at Blackie Spit where coordinators Alison & Andrew Prentice organized volunteer teams for debris removal of the sensitive salt marshes. Other cleanups this year have removed huge amounts of Styrofoam and plastics from these important migrating bird and fish spawning habitats. Numerous invasive plant removals at three project sites have managed to support the native plants striving for light and water and another planting at Blackie Spit is scheduled for October 22.

Now into the fall season, our educational coordinator Yvonne Dawydiak with naturalist Lynn Pollard resume the school program scheduling classes of students for the 'Birds in Focus', Marine Discovery or Pond/Wetland Discovery programs. With 9 resource kits available, we continue to provide teachers with a resource kit, introductory presentation and an outdoor nature experience. The program successfully reached over 1000 students this past 2010/2011 season.

Financial cutbacks have presented many challenges to us for ongoing delivery of existing programs and project work but our volunteer team is amazing and their dedication makes all the difference. ✨

Langley Field Naturalist Society - Langley *Annabel Griffiths*

The Langley Field Naturalists have had a busy year. Our membership remains steady at 70 paid subscriptions representing about 100 people. Anne Gosse scheduled 27 Field Trips during the year and by contacting other Lower Mainland clubs such as White Rock, Alouette etc between 10 to 20 people came out to enjoy nature, especially birds, flowers and mushrooms. Participants often express their great enjoyment of these outings. One fascinating trip was to see Dr David Lank's Ruff

breeding colony at the research station at Simon Fraser University. We saw the whole process from mating, where there are three different types of feathered males competing for the females, chaos often reigns! We saw the eggs in incubators and even a four hour old chick, very cute. Anne with Joan Taylor lead a group of 46 girls aged 8-11 from a Nature Activity Camp organised by the Mormon Church on a Field Trip explaining what Naturalists do emphasizing conservation of wildlife in their natural habitat and education of members.

LFN members were busy doing bird counts for other organizations, including 19 birders who came out for the Christmas Bird Count. The weather was very kind and 61 species were found and 6531 birds counted. Members participated in the Derby Reach & Brae Island count in January, and the Alouette Field Naturalists asked us to survey Langley Bog for Sandhill Cranes at dawn five Saturdays in a row from March to April at the same time as Alouette members were watching on the other side of the Fraser. Sightings were timed and recorded for direction of flight to see if Langley Bog Cranes fly to Pitt Polder. Sandhill Cranes last nested in Langley Bog in 2009. LFN were asked to organize the Glen Valley Bird Count in late May. 17 birders from various clubs appeared at 6 a.m. to find 82 species and 3739 birds. Members also helped with the Manning Bird Blitz and the Skagit Valley Bird Blitz. Bob Puls and John Gordon participated in a BC Breeding Bird Atlas survey around Bluff Lake in the Chilcotins for 6 days in June. Over 100 species of birds were recorded as well as encounters with black and grizzly bears, including two who did not see the humans and were advancing down the trail towards them until Gareth Pugh made a noise to let the bears know 6 humans were there too. The bears turned around and left. Phew Pugh!

Bob Puls, with other members' help, continues the Biodiversity study of fauna and flora on the 150 acres of Mountain View Crown land. A motion camera revealed coyotes, black tailed deer, opossum, raccoon, black squirrels and a black bear, but not the hoped for red fox or bobcat. 1331 different species have been found. Identification of beetles and flies have been difficult. Bob has taken hundreds of photographs to help with ID. Jenny and Ben Auxier continues to monitor and pull lamiastrum in the Forslund/Watson property, and 96 Western Red Cedars were planted there last fall. The deer like eating the tops off them, but some of the cedars have been caged and so protected.. Brydon Lagoon gets shallower each year, however, a new perching log for wildfowl has recently been anchored to replace an old one that broke away. More geese are flying into the Lagoon due to the demise of nearby Brydon Pond, which used to be their favourite landing and breeding site.

Ten members attended the BC Nature AGM at Williams Lake in May, and everybody spoke about their enjoyment, the learning opportunities and the friendly hospitality of the Williams Lake Naturalists.

The LFN support financially, the very active Nicomekl Young Naturalists, Anthea Farr being one of the excellent leaders along with Lynn Pollard from White Rock Naturalists. 19 Young Naturalists ranging in age from 4 to 16 had a great camp in Manning Park over Labour Day weekend, the best ever I was told. Parents accompany their children, so there were over 40 people. ✨

Little Campbell Watershed Society - Langley *David Riley*

Little Campbell Watershed Society members are very concerned about a proposal to load structural fill along the bank of the main stem where important coho spawning occurs. Decades ago gravel was extracted from the site and it has since been used for grazing. If the proposed fill sloughs off or fine sediment enters the river and spawning gravels, members believe the river will be irreparably damaged. It is even more a concern with the recent news that partner group A Rocha Canada has discovered Salish sucker in the river across the street. This is a blue listed species considered extirpated in the Little Campbell River. (note: the Little Campbell River has been designated the 12th most endangered river in BC).

Volunteers continue to closely monitor other development sites and meet with city staff regularly to voice concerns. The role of watch dog is not welcome but what choice is there in these days of "there are no bad developments".

On a positive note and perhaps this is a reflection of our consistent advocacy in the past, the City of Surrey has initiated a "referral" process whereby Surrey automatically sends the first draft of any development concept directly to the LC Watershed Society rather than waiting until later to see if we are paying attention. Although this is in no way a ceding of any decision making power to concerned and informed citizens, it is a way for the city and developers to get an immediate read on perceived environmental effects and to make the inevitable negotiation process less stressful for everyone. Given this watershed is not always well understood by developers or decision makers, it gives us a better chance to share a huge body of citizen knowledge without being immediately dismissed as mere nimbys.

Little Campbell Hatchery volunteers continue to work around the clock and this past spring they hosted over 80 school tours and released over 30,000 salmon fry. They continue to monitor local wildlife and nesting birds, the barn owls have produced two broods, great horned owls raised young as did spotted sandpipers, Rufus hummingbirds, red breasted sapsuckers, barn (two broods) and tree swallows etc. Active beavers and river otters keep the forest changing on a daily basis!

The interpretive signage project is raising awareness about the current status of the riparian and forest plants, some being overwhelmed by invasives such as buttercup, Himalayan blackberry, policemen's helmet and reed canary grass. The fall planting will enhance the native species and address some of these concerns. Please visit our website: www.lcws.ca ✨

Nature Vancouver - Vancouver *Dorothy Nelson*

The highlight of our summer has been camp, this year held at Waterton National Park, Alberta during the weeks of July 17 to 24 and July 24 to 31. Our camp committee, comprised of Don Griffiths (chair), Kitty Castle, Elly Brok, Fred Hornby, Helen Gowans, Peg Neilon, Nigel Peck and Bill Kinkaid, are to be commended for once again selecting a wonderful site for the camp and managing both without a hitch. Both camps were close to maximum attendance at or near 50 campers each.

In addition to the beauties of the park itself, the journey to and from Vancouver was particularly pleasant, greener than usual due to our long wet Spring.

July 10 was the date for a picnic at Lighthouse Park in West Vancouver for members and guests, a fine day for guided trail walks before and after the picnic. This first time event will no doubt become a summer tradition.

The 93rd Annual General Meeting of Nature Vancouver was held April 28 and was well attended. The Conservation section reported their focus this year has involved drawing attention to increased oil tanker traffic in Burrard Inlet, searching for ways to protect a little known wetland in rural Richmond, and urging that the North Arm Jetty be incorporated into Iona Beach Regional Park. The Marine Biology section continues to enjoy a supportive partnership with the Vancouver Aquarium. Field trips included eelgrass beds near the Tsawwassen ferry terminal, the Marine Mammal Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, the invertebrate teaching lab at the Vancouver Aquarium and the intertidal zone at Stanley Park. Botany and Geology sections are chaired by David Cook, and included talks on vegetation change on the Saanich Peninsula, Cypress through the Seasons, Wind as a Natural Disturbance Agent in Coastal BC Forests and field trips to study the geology of the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, geology of Jericho Beach park, ascent of Mt. Strachan, hikes to Dog Mountain and Norvan Falls. Jude Grass is chair of the Birding Section which enjoys well-attended monthly meetings and many birding field trips. Nigel Peck, chair of the Outreach Committee, with Sue Garber and Nellie Bacou participated at such events as Earth Day at Jericho and Everett Crowley Parks, Commercial Drive Car Free Day, and farmers' markets to promote Nature Vancouver. Membership Committee, chaired by Jeremy McCall reports membership consistent at 650-700; concern about retention of members led to a members' survey created by Daphne Nagorsen to help discern members' needs and wishes within the organization.

Publications include reprinting of the pamphlet Explore the rocky Shore at Stanley Park, (by Sheila Byers) as a small booklet; an updated History of Nature Vancouver and the Discovery Index, committee chair Cynthia Crampton, expected at the end of this year; a Birding Guide update, Jude Grass/Cathy Aitchison; Discovery, editor Jeremy McCall, now published once a year; and the club newsletter, Vancouver Naturalist, editor Julian Hudson, published four times per year.

Ron Long chairs the Photography Section which attracted 230 photographs from 32 photographers for the annual competition, including five young Naturalist Club members. He conducted four photography classes at the Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary this year which were fully subscribed.

Kelly Sekhon continues his able management of our website - www.naturevancouver.ca; complementing the Nature Vancouver website is a Nature Vancouver Facebook page which features upcoming events, news and announcements. Kelly also provides a weekly e-mail to members for reminders of upcoming events. Jude Grass continues to coordinate evening programs and workshops.

YNC Vancouver is now in its 10th year under the leadership of Eva Nagy and there are now two new clubs in the Vancouver region : YNC Stanley Park and YNC North Vancouver as well as YNC Lower Mainland Home learners, all of which provide excellent monthly programs to their members, children and families in the Vancouver area. ✨

Squamish Environmental Conservation Society *Mary Mitchell*

Squamish Environmental Conservation Society continues to focus on preservation of the estuary and ecologically sensitive areas in the Sea to Sky Corridor. We continue to have issues with squatters, illegal campers, garbage, recreational impacts, dogs, development to name a few. It all comes down to education of the community to appreciate what we have here. It is an ongoing battle, which can be both frustrating and rewarding at the same time.

The birding section has their monthly bird counts in the estuary, on the second Sunday of the month. Our Estuary is an important IBA and we have a very dedicated group of birders who participate in the statistics. The birders have put together a website for sharing birding information. We encourage you to take a look at <http://squamishbirds.webs.com/>. As well as the monthly counts we participate in the Christmas bird count, and other Bird Studies Canada programs. We have had some interesting nesters this year, including a pair of Green Herons that raised 3 young....pictures on the above site. Some other recent sightings in the area are Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Long Billed Dowitcher, Least Sandpiper, Barred Owls (including 3 young) and Great Horned owl

We are in the process of revamping our Eagle Watch program. Our long time co-ordinator is stepping down due to health reasons. We all wish him well and appreciate the years of service he gave to the program. We hope to have a new coordinator up and running in time to train volunteers for this years season. Each year we organize volunteer Eagle Watch interpreters that set up scopes on the Eagle viewing dike, answer questions and educate the public about eagles. It is a great program with hundreds of people stopping by to ask questions. While the eagle numbers have been down the last couple of years, we continue to hope that nature will cooperate and provide food for a healthy return.

Our Volunteer Interpreter Program (under a grant from Squamish Savings (a member of Van City Credit Union) is still a work in progress. We are in the middle of our interpretive signage for one of the Estuary loops and hoping to have a roll out in the fall. It has been a tough go with one thing and another, but the signs are looking great. At the same time we continue to work with partners to install some communal signage in key areas, and work on revamping the existing Estuary trail brochure. One of our signs will feature an amazing watercolour by local artist Zoe Evamy (take a look at <http://www.zevamy.com/>). Again our thanks go out to Squamish Savings and Van City for the educational funding.

We continue to partner with other organizations and are out and about in the community. Look for our next public booth in the fall at the annual Brackendale Fall Fair. ✨

Wild Research - Lower Mainland *Paul Levesque*

WildResearch became a federated club in March of this year, and our board of directors have worked tirelessly to build the organization from the ground up. We have incorporated BC Nature's Strategic Plan into most aspects of our operations and planning processes. We started 2011 with five members and we now have 120 members.

In April, we launched our new website www.wildresearch.ca. Our new logo was design by graphic artist Irene Gubelmann. The new logo depicts a silhouetted Black Swift soaring over water with the Coast Mountains as a backdrop. Once the logo was developed, the website's esthetics were then designed using the colours and design elements of the new logo. The end results were stunning, and the new website looks very professional. Jordon Thomas, Samantha Franks and David Hodgkinson developed the mechanics of the webpage over several months, and the end results were well worth the wait. We also included a "Tweeter Feed" and developed a Facebook page for the organization. Both of these social media tools are linked to our website.

Fundraising has been a major focus for the past year. Our main approach to fundraising has been to develop funding proposals and submit them to various granting agencies. In April, we received \$1,000 from Bird Studies Canada's James L. Baillie Memorial Fund. In June we received \$9,100 from the Provincial Government's Public Conservation Assistance Fund. We have also received over \$1,200 in private donations.

In mid-August, WildResearch assisted with organizing the 4th Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group Meeting. The meeting was held at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, and was attended by approximately 40 shorebird research biologists from North and South America. WildResearch offered three field trips for the meeting participants to birding hotspots in the lower mainland. Samantha Franks organized the field trips and the field trip guides included Christine Rock, Willow English, Nathan Hentze, Paul Levesque, Anna Drake and Samantha Franks. We also raised \$500 through field trip fees.

WildResearch president, Mike Boyd, over saw our winter monitoring program at Iona Island Regional Park in Richmond, BC. The objectives of the winter monitoring are to determine the diversity, abundance and survival of songbirds overwintering at Iona Island. Five species were colour banded to increase detection probability and survival estimates. Winter monitoring was conducted for 21 days between mid November and mid March, and 278 birds were banded, 147 of which were colour-banded. We also had 361 recaptures of 22 different species and 190 resightings of colour banded birds. WildResearch's Fall bird monitoring started at Iona Island on August 16th and will continue until November 15th. The bird monitoring at Iona Island is our core field project.

WildResearch also organized a pelagic birding trip aboard the M.V. Frances Barkley on September 18th. The trip was well advertised and drew participants from Ontario, Alberta, Washington State and across British Columbia. We even had one participant joined us from the United Kingdom! On the 18th September 90 birders and photographers sailed from Ucluelet to La Perouse Banks 37 kms off shore. The pelagic trip was a very successful fund raising event and membership drive. We raised \$8,500 for our programs. We also saw a sharp increase in traffic to our website that lasted for over four months. Paul Levesque organized the pelagic birding trip. ✨

Kootenays *Regional Coordinator - Greg Ross*

West Kootenay Naturalists' Association - Castlegar *Joan Synder*

Our club enjoyed an active year of field trips and interesting meetings. We had weekly year-round outdoor activities comprised of hikes, birding trips, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Field trip destinations ranged from Ripple Ridge at Kootenay Pass to Kootenay Creek Provincial Park and viewing the spawning Kokanee salmon.

Our monthly evening speakers program provided a wide range of topics and locations that included hiking in the height of the Rockies Provincial Park, salmon fishing in Haida Gwaii and a visit to the Orkney Islands. A highlight of our AGM last spring was a visit by founder member, Bill Merilees, who outlined the work being done to record the first 100 years of Bird Studies in the West Kootenay.

A significant wildlife sighting of the Western Bumblee (*bombus occidentalis*) was made by our member, Dr. Alistair Fraser along the West Arm of Kootenay Lake. This insect has vanished from western the US and is close to extinction in southern B.C. Dr. Fraser also reports sighting a Cicada (*platypedia putnami*) in the same area. The last reported sighting of this species in Canada was in 1942.

In conjunction with the Regional District Central Kootenay (RDCK), WKN questioned the financial and technical feasibility of "Run of River" Hydro generating plants, particularly the proposed Glacier/Howser development. Although the environmental assessment of the project has been suspended, the proponent continues to further develop his application for environmental approval despite there being no purchaser of the power output. To date, no response has been provided to the many questions posed by the submission.

Finally, WKN joined with the Castlegar Friends of Parks and Trails and the Castlegar District Wildlife Association in submitting recommendations in the form of a brief to the Castlegar and District Recreational Commission on the Habitat Restoration and Replacement for Pass Creek Regional Park. It is an important wildlife habitat and a sensitive area for nesting

birds (particularly owls) along the Columbia River. The need to preserve such spaces adjacent to populated areas becomes more important as humans spread across the landscape. ✨

Northern Region ***Coordinator - Fred McMechan***

Bulkley Valley Naturalists - Smithers ***Anne Hetherington***

Bulkley Valley Naturalists continued with their schedule of fall/winter presentations and took advantage of Parks 100 funding to host special presentations by Dr. Archibald on the history and significance of the local Driftwood Fossil Beds Park. Parks 100 also supported a joint presentation by Bulkley Valley and Skeena Valley Naturalists for amphibian-awareness signs, presentations and activities at Lakelse Park, organized by Dr. Norma Kerby.

A Habitat Conservation Trust Fund project covered expenses for a Frogwatch volunteer monitoring project organized and installed by Dr. Norma Kerby and her field assistant Ken Adair. They generously volunteered their time and expertise for three months this summer. Partnering with other naturalist groups and keen individuals has been very rewarding and resulted in projects we wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. Here's Norma's summary: "We had overwhelming enthusiasm in the Stikine Region (from Telegraph Cr to Ft. St. James and Kitimat) and did not have enough monitoring boards to accommodate the interest."

There are now 64 locations with 147 sites participating in this monitoring program. We are also setting up listening or monitoring stations for the spring - by identifying the ponds now and training the volunteers, they will be ready to go in March. Volunteers are also collecting invertebrates for Royal BC Museum.

It was a very successful summer and we met such neat people! Special thanks to Bulkley Valley Naturalists for their continued support of our projects. For a full page article about the Frogwatch monitoring program please go to www.terracestandard.com - editorial July 13th. ✨

Kitimat Valley Naturalists - Kitimat ***Walter Thorne***

Besides surveys for our 4th season of BC Breeding Birds, monthly beach bird sites, and new amphibian research stations, fish drain painting, our club has been busy. Our main focus has been defense of the Kitimat Estuary. We at KVN have continued to research and consult regarding the Enbridge Northern Gateway Oil Port Proposal. As funded intervenors our work is cut out for us. We certainly have a lot to lose. We appreciate the support of Nature Canada and all the other clubs throughout BC Nature.

Our river delta supports thousands of migrating birds, millions of migrating fish, and countless organisms. Historically the estuary has suffered cumulative impacts of wide scale valley logging, and heavy industry, including aluminum, pulp and paper, sawmilling, and Natural Gas Plants. In addition there are several partly underway and proposed LNG facilities. All this means trouble for fish, eel grass beds, and of course birds.

We can happily report that we have in the past year nearly doubled our membership to 10 and we have entered into a new Amphibian research program in conjunction with Northwest Community College and the Royal BC Museum in Victoria. In addition we have launched a campaign which we invite you to join. We are trying to get the Kitimat River designated as one of BC's most endangered. Stay tuned.

It is often difficult in our community obtaining access through industrial lands to the estuary. Thanks for the support and encouragement regarding our port city issues that we receive collectively from BC Nature and our many friends in scattered communities throughout the province. Please note KVN had 4 members at this spring's excellent William's Lake conference. We look forward to the fall AGM in Delta.

Prince George Naturalists - Prince George ***Clive Keen***

The Prince George Naturalists Club is continuing to rediscover its feet, with a number of field trips and evening presentations, with talks ranging from sturgeon recovery to effective wildlife photography, and trips ranging from a visit to The Ancient Forest to a guided walk around private parkland.

For birders in the club, a high spot was production of a new edition of the Checklist of North-Central Birds. This guide, which lists 297 birds known to have occurred in the area, also clearly indicates when they are likely to be seen, and how likely they are to be seen. It is a gem -- and yet we were all delighted when it was made slightly out of date when the first breeding record of a Lazuli Bunting was recorded not long after the guide emerged from the printers.

Members are also contributing to conservation issues both practically (bird-box erection) and by contributing comments about developments with potentially negative effects on the environment. A wide range of activities is currently (Mid August) being finalized for the Fall. ✨

Quesnel Naturalists - Quesnel *Lorna Schley*

Quesnel Naturalists began the year with our AGM and elections on January 16. We participated in two snowshoe hikes in February, one to the Sisters Creek Recreation Trails at Kersley and the other along Baker Creek which, being frozen, made access possible. Rosamund Pojar from Smithers held a workshop in April on identification of Trees and Shrubs in Winter.

Four members attended the B.C. Nature AGM in Williams Lake in May and found it most worthwhile, with excellent field trips and presentations.

A number of our members again monitored the set of 28 bluebird boxes on our Dragon Lake Bluebird Trail. It was a more successful season than last year, with more nests with eggs and more birds fledging. Another project involved tidying up the Ted Thompson Memorial Garden in West Quesnel.

Field trips and hikes began in May. A number of us joined the Quesnel Birding Club on some outings in the area. We had some hikes along the Telegraph Trail led by Dwight Dodge. Also, we joined the Caledonia Ramblers on a few of their hikes, one of which was the Pinnacles and area. A hike along the opposite side of Baker Creek from the Pinnacles provided a different view of the area, and the Cottonwood Canyon and Baker Creek Falls were revisited (leader, Joe Patton). Hikes to the south of us in the Alexandria area were to Alix Creek Falls, Chocolate Mountain and Wineglass Falls. Social events included the potluck at Ten Mile Lake Park in May, and summer barbecue at the home of Ingrid and Anders Eriksson.

Sally, our president, has been attending the meetings of our local Climate Action group and we are hoping to view a number of films being planned and possibly lend a hand. It is also hoped to have a speaker from B.C. Parks to inform us of plans re the creation of Dragon Mountain Park as a Class A protected area.

We wrote a letter to the environment minister, Terry Lake, requesting that funding be reinstated for Interpretation Programs and Park Naturalists. ✨

Williams Lake Field Naturalists *Fred McMechan*

The Williams Lake Field Naturalists hosted the 2011 BC Nature AGM and Conference, May 12 to 15 at TRU, Williams Lake Campus. We enjoyed giving the registrants an opportunity to visit the Cariboo Chilcotin region and to learn about its natural history.

We operated the Scout Island Nature Centre for another year. We provided nature programs for children, families and tourists. We employed four university students from May to August who taught school classes in May/ June and provided "Nature Fun" outings for children in July and August. Our staff also taught school classes throughout the year. At the Nature Centre banquet we celebrated the 40th anniversary of The Nature Trust of BC when Dr. Rob Butler visited and was the guest speaker. The Nature House continued to be a valuable interpretive place for visitors. We were busy with fund raising, trail maintenance and construction, wildlife monitoring, planting projects and weed management. The website for the Nature Centre is www.scoutislandnaturecentre.ca

We continued to maintain and monitor the Mountain Bluebird trails in the Williams Lake region. There are about 15 trail routes with about 1000 bluebird houses in this project.

Under the direction of our co-editors we circulated our newsletter, the "Muskrat Express", to our members. We also provided information about our club on our club website, www.williamslakefieldnaturalists.ca

We provided field trips and presentations for our members throughout the year. Field trips took place in the Cariboo Mountains, the Coast Mountains and on the Chilcotin Plateau. ✨

Thompson-Okanagan-Shuswap Region *Coordinator - Vivian Birch Jones*

Lillooet Naturalists Society - Lillooet *Vivian Birch Jones*

Ten of us from Lillooet attended the Williams Lake AGM – well done Williams Lake Field Naturalists!

The restoration site has a new sign, created by a local First Nations' artist with help from the welding program students, "Sat'atqwa7 - The River - Restoration site" – this was local front page news.

Restoration and education activities were in full swing over the spring and summer season. Buses of school children from Lillooet and Lytton toured the spawning channel and learned all about salmon and their life cycles in April. A Young Naturalist group has started in our area, led by the very capable Angela Jean Louis. The restoration crew worked with the high school program and planted indigenous plants from the nursery at the REC Centre entrance on Main Street. The native plant nursery has a table at the weekly Farmer's Market and sells native plants and provides information and resources

about growing native plants. This large and growing project has its own advisory board and much of the management and oversight is being provided directly by Cayoose Creek Band as time goes on. They have plans to extend the restoration efforts along the Seton River corridor to the lake.

The invasive species group started work and received funding from the regional district and the provincial government – they have broad support and good partners. The Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Society have now incorporated as a society. The first educational evening March 6th was well attended – LNS was the umbrella group for this new initiative.

Our second annual Wildflower Count was on Easter Sunday – we have added invasive weeds to our surveys. Trips for maintaining and monitoring the bluebird box trail are ongoing.

We also partnered with the Tribal Council to host a Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation conference in Lillooet in July and it was a success.

Todd Manning is in the area doing some follow up work on the wildlife tree project he started a few years ago - he plans to give a talk to the our naturalist group. We helped the MOE biologists put up an educational sign about our local Species at Risk to inform the public about the research done last season – copies of the reports are in our local library and online at the BC Hydro FWCP site. Larry Davis is conducting fisher research in our area and indications from the field work are positive. Other research and restoration projects, such as the grizzly bear research for critical habitat identification and protection, funded by BC Hydro and linked to our Society for local logistics and public outreach are ongoing. All the researchers were invited to have public outreach booths at the Salmon in the Canyon Festival, August 20th. Fin Donnelly and the Rivershed rafting crew joined us for the festival – we have helped sponsor two local youth for that rafting trip on the Fraser River this year. It all came together with music and great food on the day. Parks Canada participated and provided cake for all. A video of the event is up on our site.

After sorting out some access issues with the Ministry of Forests, we are working on a second edition of the Lillooet Hiking Guide. It was a happy day for our crew when we learned that the wicked cross ditches on Downton had been repaired to a level manageable for a vehicle with good clearance. This put a premier hike back in the Guide, now we have to work with Fire Protection on some of the roads they deactivated. In the meantime we are enjoying the hiking.

We have been invited to sit on the Water Use Planning committee with BC Hydro for the Bridge River and also the local Provincial Parks committee – we will do both, time permitting. Since our AGM early in 2011 we have held four director's meetings as well as been in active e-mail communication as there is so much going on. We are planning to host a BC Nature camp in the autumn of 2012. ✨

Nicola Naturalist Society - Merritt *Alan Burger*

This is the first year for our fledgling club. We held monthly evening meetings in the fall and winter at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology – speakers included Jared Hobbs (Cowboy Country Critters), Dr Karl Larsen (Wildlife Research in the Grasslands), Dr. Alan Burger (Arctic Wildlife in a Changing Climate), Andy MacKay (Bear Awareness), Dawn Brody (Burrowing Owls and their conservation) Murphy Shewchuk (Photographing Nature), Dr. Sue Senger (Grizzly Bear Conservation in southwestern BC). We also ran the Merritt Christmas Bird Count, held several workshops on bird identification and field trips to see the local flora and fauna.

In collaboration with Dr. Kristiina Ovaska, of Biolinx Environmental Research of Victoria, we also established an amphibian monitoring project in the Nicola Valley and adjacent areas. As collaborators we received funding for this project from the BC Public Conservation Assistance Fund and BC Habitat Conservation Fund, which allowed us to purchase equipment, bring professional herpetologists to Merritt, run a training workshop and set up a volunteer monitoring system. The first spring and summer of this project was extremely gratifying – we discovered several new breeding sites of the threatened Great Basin Spadefoot, did reconnaissance work at numerous wetlands and established baselines for long-term monitoring of Spadefoots, as well as Columbia Spotted Frogs, Pacific Chorus Frogs and Western Toads. In our dry environment frogs are good indicators of the health of our lakes and other important water-bodies. We have established an interactive website featuring news of the club's activities, details of our amphibian monitoring program and an impressive gallery of photos from our members: <http://www.nicolanaturalists.ca/>. ✨

North Okanagan Naturalists Club - Vernon *Pamela Jenkins*

Last Fall Harold Sellars produced a brochure about us that was placed in strategic places around town. There have been weekly birding trips for most of the year organised by Peter Mayfield. A September trip was to see heritage trees in the Coldstream area. In October seven of us went to Nakusp Hotsprings. Workbees have been held at Cools Pond and later using a BC Nature grant decaying signs were re -designed and replaced.

A bird walk was held on a very cold day before the annual Christmas bird count, which was held on another very cold day. Our Christmas party was held on our December meeting night at the Vernon Lodge.

We've enjoyed various monthly speakers starting off with Eva Durance in September. In the New Year, instead of Thursday hikes some of us went on informal cross country ski and snowshoe trips. The snow lingered a long time this year.

At the end of April, ten of us enjoyed a trip to the South Okanagan staying at Vaseau Lake, battling high winds, but still seeing 50 different bird species. Gail Loughridge has organised humming bird banding sessions and workshops, and Mar-

garet Hubble has been in charge of our bluebird monitoring and bluebird trail organisation. We continue to plant, water and weed the Swan Lake Nature Reserve. Water was so high during the Spring run off that it was not possible to reach the bird blind without wearing hip waders until August, and it is still very muddy. The city has improved the parking area and access to the Swan Lake reserve. Thursday hikes continue and in July we had a week long holiday based in Clearwater, so that we could explore Wells Gray Park. One of the highlights was a trip to the Trophy Mountain meadows at the right time to see hillsides covered with glacier lilies.

Two of our members, Peter and Hylda Mayfield, were honoured by the Regional District for their environmental efforts. ✂

Shuswap Naturalist Club *Janet Pattinson*

Meetings: After a summer break, our monthly meeting have started up again. From October through May we have a line up of some great speakers at our monthly meeting. We have invited speakers on a wide range of topics including some of our members who have traveled to some exotic places and can tell us of the wildlife observed in such remote places as Bhutan.

Socials: In June we had a “pot luck” supper after a brief meeting in Peter Jannink Nature Park on the waterfront in Salmon Arm. Another potluck is planned for September, we are having a “pot luck” lunch after a brief meeting at Sunnybrae Park on the lake front on Tappen Bay. Both are very popular gatherings.

Outings: In the spring and fall we have many organized outings to a variety of places in the local area, in many cases repeat visits to our favourite spots. Thomas Hayes Ecological Reserve, Chase Meadows, Balmoral Area and Salmon River Delta are just a few of the outings we have had and/or are planned for the fall. Our clubs involvement in outreach to the community involves taking groups on birding tours along our foreshore. This is most satisfying in the summer when we have a fair amount of tourists staying in the area.

Birding: A few of our members have taken on the responsibility of monitoring one of the IBA's near Douglas Lake Ranch. Other have taken part in the bird nesting map project which is meant to be completed this year, but some remote areas have still to be worked on. Both are worthy projects! We also produced a new bird list for the Salmon Arm area this year. We will once again participate in the Christmas Bird count.

Scholarships: We have a \$750 award given in the fall each year to a student at TRU that is studying in areas of habitat, conservation or the environment generally. We receive these funds from an endowment managed by the Shuswap Community Foundation.

Communications: We have a newsletter produced twice a year that is generally distributed at one of our meetings. It includes articles by some members on their personal naturalist activities. We have a new opportunity to write articles for one of the local newspapers on topics of interest to naturalists. Members have been taking turns in doing the writing. ✂

South Okanagan Naturalists Club - Penticton *Dennis St. John*

Sales of the Okanagan Valley Birding Trail Guide continue to be a strong generator of revenue for SONC. Following the example of a SONC inspired sign featuring birds of the Penticton Waterfront, the club this year was instrumental in the placement of a similarly themed sign at Okanagan Falls with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

SONC members have again been active in the Wits program, the Vaseux Lake Migratory Bird Banding Station, the effort to restore the Burrowing Owl in the South Okanagan, and to volunteer time at the South Okanagan Rehabilitation Centre for Owls. Club members continue to be active supporters of a renewed effort by Parks Canada to establish a national park in the South Okanagan -Similkameen. The club again participated this year in a post-race cleanup of a section of the Ironman Canada race course, an ecologically friendly way to raise funds to support our other activities.

SONC assisted the Penticton Golf and Country Club this year in their effort to enhance the natural values of the golf course, and acquire International Audubon Certification. Members have carried out weekly bird surveys and advised staff on plantings to enhance habitat for birds and butterflies and other pollinators.

SONC has developed a new website (google South Okanagan Nature) which, among other things, allows membership payment online. A Naturewise column written by club members appears monthly in a local newspaper. The club is preparing to celebrate our 50th anniversary by developing a year long display series and activities in conjunction with the Penticton museum.

SONC also awards a Bursary for a student pursuing studies in environmental science at Okanagan College and awards a prize at Penticton's annual student science fair. This year also marks the twentieth year of the Habitat Garden, a native plant garden cooperatively managed with Okanagan College.

SONC has weekly bird outings throughout the year and organizes a number of field trips. ✂

Vermillion Forks Field Naturalists - Princeton *Cathie Yingling*

The year has passed quickly and as usually we have accomplished a lot of activities. Our 19th Annual Christmas Bird count on January 2, 2011 found 13 hardy field observers braving -15C. With snow and wind to a barmy -6C. Fifty four species were counted, five fewer than last year. A new species to the count and our bird checklist is the Eurasian Collared Dove. This species has been present in Cawston for years as a breeding bird. With 22 sighted, perhaps breeding may occur in this area as well.

In February we held our annual meeting and celebrated 20 years as a group. Madeloune Schouten presented a brief history of our club.

Field Trips were many and varied. In October, a group hiked to the top of Lodestone Mountain At the top a stunning 360 degree view of Mountain Peaks; we had a winter snowshoe hike in January at Chain Lake at the Pelliars. Nineteen members came out for that, on a beautiful sunny day. We hiked around Allison Lake with Trish Reid and Kelly Cook led a group on the Skagit River Trail in July

Evening Speakers have been interesting and varied. Mascot Gold Mine tour of a pictorial presentation of the history of Hedley, the Mascot Mine; and the development of the interpretive Museum on the top of the Mountain. We have visited this and it is worth a day trip. Laure Neish talked to us about the Breeding Bird Atlas and showed us field photos from the first two years of the Project. This generated interest and a group have taken on responsibility for area around Princeton. Okanagan Mountain Regeneration with Harold Baumbrough, renowned botanist and photographer gave a presentation of the regrowth of Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park since the forest fire of 2003. In September we are looking forward to Sue Elwell's slide presentation of local birds and exotic birds taken on holidays.

I mentioned the Breeding Bird Program, but we also have a group involved in the Wits program with Alison Black. We held a Humming Bird Workshop as well in the spring. Cathie Yingling attended the AGM in May at Williams Lake. Trish Reid attended the Regional meeting in July in Merritt.

We also participated in the Meadow Lark Festival – which we have done for over 14 years. In the morning Sue Elwell lead a Birding group on the KVR to the Vermillion Bluffs and Hoodoos and; Madeloune Schouten lead a group into Swan Lake Nature Conservatory. She also led a group of 19, in the afternoon, to what we call the Top of the World – up Hembly Mountain- with Wild Flowers and great views.

Jeff and Sue Turner showed their wonderful documentary of “The Last Grizzly of Paradise Valley.” Over 100 people turned out for this event. Sue and Jeff took questions and told about the making of this beautiful documentary of Princeton's backyard. A great event appreciated by everyone.

This summer we are participating in the 100 year celebration of our Parks. The VFFN operates with the Princeton Community Arts Council, which draws many groups together for participation and use of facilities in our Riverside Wellness Centre. They have organized an Art in the Park at Manning Park –August 18, 2011, celebrating 100 years of Parks in BC, We are having a display of Birds in the area, Banners, and Pictures and of our work with the Swan Lake Nature Conservatory.

We have taken a step back from our involvement on the Management Plan for a regional area park at the moment. We still support the idea in principal but we need more input and information if we are going to move forward. ✂

Vancouver Island Region *Coordinator - Vacant*

Nanose Naturalists Report - Nanose *Carolyn Dodd*

With 71 members, the Nanose Naturalists continue to meet on the second Thursday of the month from September through June. Meetings held at the Nanose Library on Northwest Bay Road commence at 7:00 pm. The 2011-12 program once again focuses on dovetailing speaker topics and outings. This directed planning approach proved successful last year.

The program included land, sea and sky elements. Topics spanned investigation of Vancouver Island geology, sustainable forest practices at the Wildwood Farms, wildflowers at Honeymoon Bay, to the south coast management of the Salmon and Herring Fisheries, an introduction to the west coast Neptune Research project, the Deep Bay VIU Centre for Shellfish Research, and our annual participation in shoreline clean up at the Nanose Bay Estuary. Club members participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count and the Brant Wildlife Festival Big Day Birding.

Since our last report, the emphasis for advertising club activities targetted our community bulletin and contributed to increased membership as well as meeting attendance. The community bulletin reaches our peninsula community through mailbox distribution.

What's up for 2012? Our biggest event is, together with the Arrowsmith Naturalists, hosting the BCN Fall Meeting and Conference scheduled for the last weekend in September 2012. Come and discover Nature by the Salish Sea. ✂

Pender Islands Field Naturalists - Pender Island *Gerald McKeating*

We are pleased to report on the activities of Pender Island Field Naturalists for the past year, as follows:

April - A wildflower walk led by Bonnie Parks was well attended. A late spring disrupted blooming. A few lilies were left to view; however, there were over 300 Calypso orchids in evidence. Our observation elsewhere is that Calypsos were very prolific this year.

On April 22, Richard Philpot gave a lively talk entitled "Close ... Encounters with Whales and Dolphins" – this was a photo-based presentation with marine mammal vocals accompanying the slide show. This special event was cosponsored by the Pender Island Conservancy Association. Again, this talk filled the Library meeting room.

June - The sailing trip to Saturna Island on the "Blue Jacket" was a great success. We had two trips on June 23 and 24, attended by 11 field naturalist members. Except for the winds, the weather cooperated and under Jack Ferguson's expert seamanship, we traversed Boat Pass at high tide slack both days. The Belle Chaine Islets were virtually covered with wildlife, hundreds of seals hauled out on the rocks and on the first trip, some sea lions. Numerous Pigeon Guillemots floated on the water close to the cliffs, resplendent in their black and white plumage and bright red legs. Eagles seemed to be everywhere. On Cabbage Island, we watched a young eagle on its nest, exercising its wings, almost ready to go to try life in that great big world. A highlight for most of us, was the exploration on foot of Cabbage Island. The geology on the Georgia Strait side was especially interesting and on the first trip we had the benefit of David Spalding's presence to interpret it.

September - Eleven members walked with David Spalding on a warm and sunny morning on September 10 from the top of Bridges Road to the beach and experienced David's knowledge of the geology of the area. A fossil had been found earlier in the summer and David shared it with the group.

October - On October 1st the annual trip to Race Rocks will be held – again, it has been fully subscribed (20 people). Two spaces were auctioned at the recent fund raiser for Brooks Point – a gift from the Club. ✂

Rhithet's Bog Conservation Society *Sharon Forrester*

The purposes of the Rithets Bog Conservation Society are to recognize the heritage value of Rithet's Bog and to carry out activities that will preserve its unique wetland ecosystems for the benefit of present and future generations. Rithet's Bog Conservation area is home to several rare plant species. One of these, the Purple Sanicle, is struggling to survive due to the growth of broom, blackberry and invasive grasses.

Society members hold regular work parties with volunteers to remove invasive plants. This fall the group will work with Ducks Unlimited and Saanich Parks to remove cattails.

Members also hosted education tables at community events including Swan Lake Native Plant sale, the International Migratory Bird Day event, and the Broadmead Area Residents day.

Cat predation on songbirds at Rithet's Bog is an issue, especially with a feral cat colony being supported adjacent to the Bog. We take the position that no cats should be allowed to remain in the Conservation area. Efforts to relocate the colony are ongoing. ✂

Rocky Point Bird Observatory *Shona Lawson*

RPBO continues to be an active participant in public education and outreach. In March RPBO held our annual Introductory Bird Monitoring and Banding Workshop at Royal Roads University. This workshop included learning ageing and sexing birds, and safe handling technique skills that can be used at a banding station or other monitoring programs. Also in March RPBO had a display at the BCSPCA's WildArc (wildarc.com) annual open house event. RPBO in collaboration with the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) offered Beginning Birding and Beyond Beginning Birding courses to the public, teaching people how to identify birds and their habitats. VNHS kindly donated proceeds to RPBO. On May 14th, 2011 RPBO in partnership with VNHS, and the Capital Regional District (CRD) Parks Department hosted their second annual International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) at Beaver Lake Regional Park. The event show cased bird banding demonstrations, bird watching and raptor flight demonstrations and included additional, participants such as Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team (GOERT) and other CRD Departments. On May 19th, RPBO hosted our first Avian Colloquium: Wild Birds Under Different Lights. Presentations ranged from falconry to avian research. Both VNHS and University of Victoria were co-hosts and supporters of this event. RPBO now has a space in the Victoria Natural History Society's bi-monthly publication The Naturalist called Chatter which also features life history information on a different bird species each issue. The editor, Claudia Copley, has kindly given RPBO this space so we can share information about the society, our activities and bird species to a broad audience.

RPBO has started some new fund raising programs this year that include an Adopt-A-Bird and Sponsor-A-Net and Sponsor-An-Owl-Net. RPBO is also going to be hosting two Bird BBQ's in late September – early October. This event is a BBQ and public education and banding demonstration event focusing on RPBO's NSWO Project and other avian monitoring projects. Other fund raising includes hummingbird cards with proceeds going to the Hummingbird Project of BC.

RPBO Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) program, managed by the Institute for Bird Populations in California, started in June and ran until early August. RPBO conducted MAPS at Witty's Lagoon Capital Regional District Regional Park in Metchosin and at Madrona Farm, a The Land Conservancy (TLC) property and a working farm on Blenkinsop Road in Saanich. Access to the Madrona Farm MAPS site was courtesy of David and Nathalie Chambers and TLC. Thanks to a donation from Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) RPBO was able to hire a Bander-in-Charge (BIC) for the 2011 MAPS program. RPBO is still in the field conducting the fall migration project which runs until October 18. Our Northern Saw-whet Owl (NSWO) Project started on September 15th and runs through until the end of October. The Hummingbird Project of BC started banding in March and ran through until August on Vancouver Island and the Mainland banding stations respectively. The Hummingbird Project continues to be a very important monitoring and research component for Hummingbirds in BC. RPBO has had a busy year and looks forward the coming year which plans to be just as busy and full. ✨

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club *Nieke Visser*

Regular activities: Another successful year was marked by interesting weekly outings exploring all corners of our island as well as Vancouver Island. Participation is always great, but we have encountered a shortage of leaders in the past couple of years. This problem seems to get worse lately, unfortunately.

Overnight excursions: In September 2010 about 40 club members spent three days exploring Quadra Island. Due to health problems our Club's regular organizers were unable to lead the excursions. Fortunately, members of the Quadra Trail Committee were very helpful to take on this task at the last moment for which we were very grateful. In May 2011, 30 club members went to Tofino and stayed in the Ecolodge at the Tofino Botanical Gardens, an excellent facility for retreats. Outings included shoreline explorations, excursions to Flores Island and Meares Island and boat trips into and around Clayoquot Sound for bear and whale watching. We also enjoyed an evening presentation on sea otters by a local marine biologist and bird watching.

Trail maintenance: Trails in our provincial parks have been maintained by our club regularly for many years. This past fall, however, this came to a grinding halt when BC Parks changed their policies. Hence trails in Ruckle, Maxwell and Burgoyne Bay Parks are in bad shape. Many trails are overgrown and/or blocked by downed trees; board walks and bridges are decaying. On the positive side, we were able to continue our annual broom pull in May 2011 and have successfully managed the eradication of broom (for now, the broom will be back in due time). Next year we will focus on broom in other parks such as Burgoyne Bay.

Christmas Bird Count: Our club was again sponsor for this event. Turnout of volunteers was high as usual. Comparing to a ten-year average we noticed some remarkable counts, such as a significant increase in Northern Flickers, White-fronted Geese, Barrows Goldeneyes, and of course Anna's Hummingbirds; not recorded in the last ten years but included in this count were Long-billed Dowitchers and Western Sandpipers. Robins and Siskins were down in numbers but that is not uncommon.

Presentations: On our monthly presentations nights we had very interested speakers. Some of these evenings were jointly organized with the SSI Conservancy. The attendance has increased over the past year which is encouraging.

Acquisition of a Salt Spring nature reserve: The acquisition of the 320 acre Alvin Indridson Nature Reserve by the SSI Conservancy is another example of the joint efforts between the SSI Conservancy and SSTNC. On April 30, the official inauguration took place with the Indridson family in attendance as well as most significant sponsors and donors. A number of SSTNC members were invited as well to acknowledge their contributions to the purchase. ✨

Finances 2011 *David Tsang - Treasurer*

Our position at the end of August shows us at a net positive surplus of \$23,000 however, several factors indicate that we may be close to a break-even position by year end.

- We are expecting further expenses of \$14,000 for the production and mailing of the fall and winter magazine.
- We have not accounted for further expenses from the FGM.
- Membership dues, about 52% of total revenues to date have been on budget and collected.
- Camps will come in under-budget at a loss of \$147.
- We have collected approximately half, or \$5,745 the budgeted project administration fees of \$11,178 for 2011. We are projecting at least another \$2,398 in the near future from IBA.

So far we have received \$3,000 of the \$19,000 (16%) budgeted revenue from fundraising and the appeal. Considering 80% of last year's fundraising revenue was earned between September and December, this number may be reasonable.

Donations are generally the largest part of our revenue after dues and project admin fees (which will be lower this year). Let us work to make this year's appeal successful! ✨

Budget Comparison - Page 21

The Federation of British Columbia Naturalists
Operating Fund Budget and Actuals 2011

	2010	2011	2011 Actual 8 months ended Aug 31	% of Budget
	12 month Actual	Annual Budget		
Revenue				
Club membership dues	\$ 45,764	\$ 46,000	\$ 46,396	101%
Other membership dues and subscriptions	3,062	3,000	3,767	126%
Fundraising and appeal (*Expl. R1)	20,039	19,000	3,106	16%
Insurance premium recovery	6,712	6,700	7,029	105%
Annual and fall general meetings (net of expenses) (*R2)	3,172	3,000	1,489	50%
Camps and special events (net of expenses) (*R 3)	4,230	3,000	-	0%
Project administration fees (*R4)	28,326	11,178	5,745	51%
Interest	548	500		0%
Advertising (BCnature magazine)	8,711	9,900	8,085	82%
Miscellaneous	73	-	30	0%
Total Revenue	120,637	102,278	75,646	74%
Expense				
Accounting (Expl. *E1)	2,145	2,900	1,831	63%
Awards	726	700		0%
Bank charges	586	500	225	45%
BCnature magazine production and mailing (*E2)	29,254	30,000	13,241	44%
Camps and special events (net of revenues)	-	-	147	
Dues	184	300	206	69%
Fundraising	946	1,000		0%
Insurance premiums	8,214	8,800	8,876	101%
Office supplies, postage, printing	3,192	3,600	1,975	55%
Rent, services for Elders (*E3)	-	77	3,000	158
Salary and benefits - office (*E4)	37,971	41,400	21,207	51%
Summer Student (*E5)		2,600	-	0%
Supplies and miscellaneous	498	1,000	104	10%
Telephone and communications (*E6)	2,701	960	1,238	129%
Travel and accommodation (net of executive and director donations) (*E7)	1,944	2,000	3,333	167%
Total Expense	88,284	98,760	52,540	53%
Excess (deficiency) revenue over expenses	\$ 32,353	\$ 3,518	\$ 23,106	

EXPLANATIONS - Budget Comparison:

Revenue

- *R1 - Annual appeal to still come in between September to December
- *R2 - Annual and fall meetings do not yet include fall general meeting
- *R3 - Camps were a net loss of \$147 this year (under expenses)
- *R4 - Admin fee of \$2,398 still to come in from IBA

Expenses

- *E1 - Accounting is for extra work done for review engagement for 2010
- *E2 - Anticipated \$14,000 for Fall and Winter magazine as per budget
- *E3 - Rent is low due to arrangement with Elders Council for Parks in BC
- *E4- Salary and benefits under budget due to unpaid summer leave
- *E5 - No Summer Student Approved 2011
- *E6 - Telephone and communications expense is higher due to new contract with a new provider improve the internet speed.
- *E7 - Travel and accomodation is higher due to distance of AGM, this is projected to be higher by the end of the year due to the FGM

Club Name	Total 2010	Total 2011	Website
Lower Mainland			
Abbotsford-Mission Nature Club	61	73	www.centralvalleynaturalists.org
Alouette Field Naturalists	27	20	
Bowen Nature Club	24	28	
Burke Mountain Naturalists	168	188	www.bmn.bc.ca
Chilliwack Field Naturalists	48	43	www.chilliwackfieldnaturalists.com
Delta Naturalists Society	42	46	http://dncl.wordpress.com
Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society	10	17	www.birdsonthebay.ca
Langley Field Naturalists Society	89	75	http://www.langleyfieldnaturalists.org/
Little Campbell Watershed Society		8	www.lcws.ca
North Shore Urban Bear Club	21	6	
Pender Harbour & District Wildlife Society	39	40	www.penderharbourwildlife.com
Royal City Field Naturalists	10	10	
Squamish Environmental Conservation Soc.	65	36	http://www.squamishenvironment.ca/
Stoney Creek Environmental Committee	25	32	www.bcn.bc.ca/stoney
Sunshine Coast Natural History Society	141	155	http://www.sunshinecoastnature.com/
Surrey Environmental Partners *		6	
Texada Stickleback Group Association	11	6	www.texadastickleback.org
Nature Vancouver	802	783	www.naturevancouver.ca
Whistler Naturalists Society	34	48	www.whistlernaturalists.ca
White Rock & Surrey Naturalists Society	90	89	
WildResearch *		130	www.wildresearch.ca
Kootenays			
Fernie Nature Club	109	36	http://www.ourfernie.com/fernie-nature-club
Rocky Mountain Naturalists Society	39	44	
West Kootenay Natrualists Association	95	104	http://www.kootenaynaturalists.org/
Northern BC			
Bulkley Valley Naturalists	46	35	
Kitimat Valley Naturalists	5	10	
MacKenzie Nature Observatory	36	28	http://www.mackenzienatureobservatory.ca/
Prince George Naturalist Club *		72	http://pgnc.wordpress.com/
Quesnel Naturalists	37	52	
Skeena Valley Naturalists	5	7	
Timberline Trail & Nature Club	14	17	
Williams Lake Field Naturalists	174	153	www.williamslakefieldnaturalist.ca
Thompson-Shuswap-Okanagan			
Central Okanagan Naturalist Club	137	166	http://www.okanagannature.org/
Kamloops Naturalist Club	147	129	http://ocis.net/~davids/index.html
Lillooet Naturalist Club	98	105	http://www.lillooetnaturalistsociety.org/
Nicola Naturalists *		47	http://www.nicolanaturalists.ca/
North Okanagan Naturalists' Club	120	131	www.nonc.ca
North Shuswap Naturalist Club	25	23	
Oliver-Osoyoos Naturalists	68	78	
Shuswap Naturalists Club	81	87	www.shuswapnaturalists.org

* New Club 2011

Club Name	Total 2010	Total 2011	Website
South Okanagan Naturalists' Club	95	107	http://southokanagannature.com
Vermillion Forks Field Naturalists	72	91	
Vancouver Island			
Arrowsmith Naturalists	74	82	www.arrowsmithnats.org
Comox Valley Naturalists Society	170	158	www.comoxvalleynaturalists.bc.ca
Cowichan Valley Naturalists Society	84	92	www.naturecowichan.net
Nanoose Naturalists	66	66	www.nanoosenaturalists.org/home
Pender Island Field Naturalists	59	32	
Rithet's Bog Conservation Society	9	13	www.rithetsbog.org
Rocky Point Bird Observatory	20	51	www.islandnet.com/~rpbo/
Saltspring Trail & Nature Club	213	212	www.saltspringtnc.ca
Victoria Natural History Society	643	615	www.vicnhs.bc.ca
Subtotal	4409	4682	
<i>Affiliate Clubs</i>	24	19	
<i>Life Members</i>	21	16	
<i>Direct Members</i>	122	97	
Total all categories	4576	4814	



Photograph: Ursula Easterbrook

