

Fall General Meeting and Conference
September 22 - 25, 2016

“Northern Treasures:
Fish, Fur and Feathers”



Prince George
Naturalists Club

Prince George, BC
Host Club: Prince George Naturalists Club

Photographs: Thank you to Clive Keen for the Cover Photograph and the photographs interspersed throughout this report.

BC Nature (Federation of British Columbia Naturalists)

Fall General Meeting, September 24, 2016

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Report on BC Nature Activities

President's Report Alan Burger, President

It's been a busy 4 months for BC Nature since our May AGM. Our membership continues to grow, to over 6,000 members in 53 clubs, thanks largely to the efforts of our two most recent past-presidents Kees Visser and John Neville. This spring we welcomed the BC Great Blue Heron Society as a federated club.

We've had a few changes in the BC Nature executive. Long-time chair of the Conservation Committee, Rosemary Fox, is stepping down this fall but will continue in the committee; Peter Ballin is the new chair and member of the executive. Thank you for your many years of unflinching dedication to conservation issues in our province Rosemary! We also have a new Vice-president - Virginia Rasch from the Kootenays region. The Parks and Protected Areas coordinator position has been vacant for many months and the executive decided to move this position to within the Conservation Committee. Our long-serving Secretary Claudia Copley is changing hats and takes over from Penney Edwards as the Communications Chair. A big thank-you to all of you who serve on the executive and in our various committees.

A big event for BC Nature this summer was our involvement in the Federal Court of Appeal's decision to overturn the Harper government's approval of the Enbridge Northern Gateway oil pipeline. Working pro bono, a legal team from the University of Victoria's Environmental Law Centre, led by Prof. Chris Tollefson, represented BC Nature and Nature Canada in the Northern Gateway hearings and the subsequent appeal to the Federal Court. This court's decision hands the issue back to the federal cabinet and many people are watching closely to see how the new Trudeau government will deal with issues of environmental integrity and climate change.

BC Nature has been active on other conservation fronts. Along with many other environmental groups BC Nature joined the Rivers Coalition, led by rivers-advocate Mark Angelo. This coalition aims to make better care of BC's rivers a priority in the upcoming provincial elections. We also sent letters to governments on several conservation issues - for example, on the impacts of off-road vehicles in Oliver Mountain, and on the likely impacts of a proposed run-of-the-river power project on Frost Creek near Cultus Lake. In both of these cases the issues were raised by member naturalist clubs. We encourage our clubs and individual members to bring major conservation issues to the attention of our Conservation Committee.

Our Education Committee headed by Margaret Cuthbert does a great job in working with schools, clubs, educators and parents to promote nature knowledge. They sponsor nature workshops and mentoring programs in many parts of BC. We give money annually to the BC Science Fair program and to our Rene Savanay scholarship, given to worthy post-secondary students.

One of the things I've discovered since taking over as president is how much work gets done behind the scenes at the BC Nature office. Office manager Betty Davison does an amazing job in keeping things on track and communicating with all our clubs and committees. Betty also does the major share of producing our magazine four times a year. This summer we had an excellent interim manager - co-op student Kristina Charina. Thanks to you both!

We look forward to an exciting FGM in Prince George. The local organizing committee, led by Allan Carson, Sara Sparks and Maryanne Reavie, has been working hard to lay on a diverse and interesting program of talks and field trips. Thank you and your volunteers for your great work.



By Clive Keen

One of the most exciting visitors from the Arctic to Prince George is this Gyr Falcon, which spent the winter living on the Rock Doves of the First Avenue railyard.

BC Naturalist Foundation Bob Handfield, President

Annual appeals - is there no end to them? Some are pretty slick and the appealing organization spends tens of thousands of dollars to try to get you to part with some of your money. You get "free" Christmas cards without even asking or perhaps its 100 address labels with a small error that means you can never use them. Fear not -no such campaign from this Foundation will cross your desk, but you will see a simple appeal letter in the centre spread of the Fall issue of *BCnature* magazine. The Foundation (your Foundation) exists really for only one purpose - to raise money so that we can help BC Nature and its affiliated Clubs "Know Nature and Keep it Worth Knowing". So I trust that you will consider the Foundation as you decide where to distribute your charitable giving and that you will give generously.

The Foundation's Annual Report is available online on the BC Naturalists' Foundation page on BC Nature's website <http://www.bcnature.ca/bc-naturalists-foundation/> or, if you would like a printed copy, contact the BC Nature office at 604 985-3057. Printed copies are also available on the Foundation's display table at the FGM.

The Foundation greatly appreciates the many generous individuals who have made donations over the past years and who have named the Foundation in their will or other form of planned giving. All contributions to the Foundation are invested in its capital, and only the investment earnings are used to fund naturalists' projects. Because of our growing endowment, Annual grants have been steadily increasing - \$10,000 was awarded in 2014 and that increased to \$11,000 in 2015 and \$12,000 this year.

Since its formation 23 years ago, the Foundation has provided more than \$156,000 in grants to BC Nature and its member clubs for conservation and education projects.

The Foundation's AGM and Directors meetings took place in May of this year at BC Nature's AGM. The annual financial statements for year end 2015 show another good year for the Foundation. The Foundation's capital generated earnings of more than \$15,000. Year-end net assets are \$319,326 (compare with 2015 - \$303,388), plus the Foundation holds an additional \$219,348 with the Vancouver Foundation, bringing our total endowment to more than half a million dollars.

If your club is interested in applying for a Club Support Grant, the deadline to submit your application is January 31st. Contact the BC Nature Office Manager for further details, or the application form can be found on the Foundation's page on the BC Nature website.

If you have any questions regarding the Foundation please contact Bob Handfield, bobnmaggie@shaw.ca

Foundation Board of Directors 2016

President - Bob Handfield

Vice-President - Tom Bearss

Treasurer - David Tsang

Secretary - Heather Neville

Directors-at-Large: Gerald McKeating, Stephen Partington, Bev Ramey, Kees Visser, and Pat Westheuser

Breeding Bird Atlas

Anne Murray

As reported at the BC Nature AGM, the BC Breeding Bird Atlas Program came to a successful completion this year with the launch of the online publication of the Atlas at www.bcbirdatlas.ca in January.

The Atlas is proving an essential source for bird conservation. By Jan 2016, the Atlas team had already answered more than 250 conservation and data requests from government, industry, conservation agencies, academic institutions, and NGOs. With 16,500 new records of rare and sensitive species, the Atlas is now the key source of bird information for the province. Congratulations to all involved in this important and ground-breaking publication! Final report.

BC Nature Camp Committee Report

Heather Neville, Chair

BC Nature has a new Camp Committee. We need your thoughts and ideas. Look for our questionnaire/survey at the FGM. We have three fabulous camps in the works for 2017. Look for details in your Winter BCnature magazine.

The "camps" will use the usual method of registration, by telephone. Details will be in the BCnature Winter Magazine for all clubs in 2017.

Watch bcnature.ca/education/field_camps website for up-to-date details.

Our committee will be meeting in person at the Fall General Meeting on September 23rd at 8:00 a.m. in the restaurant at the Coast Hotel. Come join us!

Committee Members

Chair: Heather Neville

Fiona Flook

Anne Gosse

Pat Westheuser

Betty Davison

Communications Report

Penney Edwards

The magazine, BCnature, continues to be the prime form of communication with members, along with the more frequent e-news, thanks not only to a growing number of contributors but also to Betty Davison, who does virtually all of the physical/mechanical, etc. work of putting the quarterly publication together, plus collecting and posting the e-news items.

We do have an editorial committee, now consisting of Rick Gee and Claudia Copley, and until recently, myself. When Betty gets the magazine draft ready, she sends it electronically to the three of us who independently read each page, look at every photograph, and send our comments back to Betty who makes the changes prior to sending the final proofs to the printer.

I stress the point of independent review because Betty has mentioned on more than one occasion, that there isn't a lot of similarity in our suggestions! Guess we are following different style guides, are from different backgrounds, even generations. Rick seems to get finished first and I am definitely the last.

This report is my final one as the chair of the Communications Committee. Due to work commitments and for personal reasons, I have resigned and Claudia Copley has agreed to succeed me, now that she is ending her term as BC Nature's secretary. I hope to be able to contribute to the magazine, either articles or book reviews, or even proofreading.

BCnature is your magazine. We welcome articles and photos, letters to the editor, etc. We reserve the right to edit for length and coherence, but are generous with by-lines and photo credits!

Conservation Report

Peter Ballin & Members of the Conservation Committee

After seven years of service as chair of the conservation committee, Rosemary Fox has retired. Well.. she remains vice-chair of the committee while the new chair, me, Peter Ballin, figures out how to manage the reins. Rosemary has long championed

conservation causes, especially in the north (she lives in Smithers), and continues to bring incredible energy and focus in getting the conservation message across and translating words into action. She began her legacy of achievements, achievements for all of us, in 1970, contributing to the establishment of Spatsizi Provincial Park, and then the Stikine River Provincial Parks. Not only has she served in a variety of executive positions in BC Nature, but also with other environmental NGO's. She led BC Nature's opposition position to the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project. In 2013 Rosemary was awarded the Elton Anderson Award, celebrating service to BC Nature in the spirit of dedication, devotion and energy exhibited by former President Elton Anderson. (Thanks to Bev Ramey, Fred McMechan, and Anne Murray for input.)

The new guy on the job has served on the conservation committee as the wetland go-to and representative on the Wetland Stewardship Partnership since 2009. I worked at Vancouver Community College for 35 years, mostly teaching biology to adults. My favourite course was the Biology 11 equivalent, where we focused on ecology, evolution, and biodiversity, and spent lots of hours in the field. I also established a natural history continuing education program at the college. After retirement, I began volunteering at the Vancouver Aquarium, and was adopted by Thompson Rivers University, where my research targets the Western Painted Turtles that cruise by my cabin, east of Kamloops. I live in Vancouver most of the time, but belong to the Kamloops Naturalists Club. With the committee, I hope to represent you and your conservation concerns to our executive, and through them, to our policy-makers.

Rosemary Fox provided this brief on the Northern Gateway Pipeline Project:

The controversial proposed 1,177 kilometre Northern Gateway oil pipeline project, opposed by BC Nature since formal hearings into the project commenced in 2012, was initially approved by Stephen Harper's Conservative government in 2014. If it goes ahead, the Northern Gateway proposed pipeline would bring 225 crude oil supertankers – some as long as the Empire State Building is tall – annually to B.C.'s North Coast. It has been estimated that one oil spill the size of the Exxon-Valdez would severely damage B.C.'s \$50 billion coastal economy and wipe out all projected economic gains from the pipeline.

Several First Nations, BC Nature and a number of other environmental groups challenged the federal government's approval in court, and in June of this year Justin Trudeau's Liberals overturned the previous government's approval. The federal government's cancellation of its earlier approval could still be challenged by the project's proponents.

We are deeply grateful to the University of Victoria's Environmental Law Centre, and in particular its founding Executive Director, Chris Tollefson, who generously offered the Environmental Law Centre to represent us in the hearings.

Education Report **Margaret Cuthbert, Chair**

The Education Committee's Annual Report was submitted to the BC Nature AGM in May in Courtenay. Six committee members met on May 13 during a lunch break between speakers and field trips. Due to the importance of BC Nature Education, not having allotted time to meet does the committee a disservice but we continue to do our best.

The Education Committee extends a warm welcome to Sue Thorne (Kitimat Nature) and Jarrett Krentzel (Comox Valley Naturalists & Director of Hand-In-Hand Early Years Nature Education Program) to the committee and we look forward to their expertise to guide us in future direction and priorities. We regret Sue Hemphill has stepped down due to an increased work load but we are grateful that she will continue to share her experience and advice when requested.

The Naturalist Mentor Program received full support to proceed with an acknowledgement pin and certificate for long time contributing member Naturalist Mentors with an additional certificate planned for newer mentors. Members emphasized that it is very important to do an acknowledgement to the Naturalist Mentors and also agreed it would be meaningful if the individual club Presidents awarded the pins as a special item on their AGM agenda's. The committee also agreed that it was important to develop criteria for the clubs for awarding the pin. Pin design was agreed upon and Marg proceeded to investigate costs. The Executive approved proceeding with the pin in 2015 and again in July 2016 but it seems the Education Committee may not have funding.....?

Members explored the question "should clubs find funds for an honorarium for member volunteers who provide Park's Day programs?" It was suggested a member speak with Parks staff about supplying an honorarium for the volunteers expenses, not the Naturalist Clubs.

Two committee members are reviewing the BC Nature clubs annual and education reports and compiling education information into a single 2016 Clubs Education Report to be ready for the fall meeting. It would be most helpful if clubs submit their education report form so that information can be standardized, they can find the form on the BC Nature website.

The Education Committee submitted the annual BC Nature Science Fair awards article to the Summer BC Nature Magazine to keep members informed. Also the Rene Savenye Scholarship subcommittee selected Haley Crozier as the successful candidate in 2016 and submitted an article and photo to the Fall Magazine.

The Education Committee is currently looking at future direction and priorities and this will be a topic of discussion at the Fall BC Nature meeting. All BC Nature members' suggestions are very welcome.

The committee will also welcome Daphne Solecki and Tammy Keetch of Nature Kids to explore the ways we can bridge communication and support between BC Nature and Nature Kids.

Walter Thorne (Vice Chair) and Jude Grass have kindly agreed to continue to fulfill Chair duties while Marg is away birding in Africa.

Important Bird Areas (IBA) Krista Kaptein

Bird Life International has officially changed the name to Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas (the acronym is still IBA) The BC IBA Caretaker Network is now about 60 Caretakers & co-Caretakers, involved in over 90% of BC's 83 IBAs. Around the province, our volunteer Caretakers & assistants, who care for BC's IBAs, are critical to the Program's success. Caretaker projects range from outreach to bird surveys, education to conservation. e.g. IBA signage at White Lake, Chopaka Customs, Laskeek, Langara, and Nootka Island IBAs; distribution of IBA brochures; events such as the Nature & Arts Festival at Active Pass IBA, Wildwings Art & Nature Festival at Somenos Marsh IBA, Manning Park Bird Blitz at Sumallo-Skagit IBA; bird surveys including Skookumchuck IBA Lewis' Woodpecker surveys, Chilcotin Junction IBA Flammulated Owl surveys.

The BC IBA program has continued with achievements, collaborations and targets since the spring as follows:

- Presentation on IBAs at BCN AGM in May in the Comox Valley.
- Focus on IBAs articles published in BC Nature magazine Summer 2016 and Fall 2016 issues.
- The BC Conservation team continues to provide technical support. Many thanks to the core team which includes Anne Murray, Dr. Art Martell, David Bradley and Karen Devitt of Bird Studies Canada, and further expertise including Dr. Rob Butler, George Clulow, and Catherine Jardine of BSC, as needed.
- Liaison with Bird Studies Canada headquarters staff in Ontario: Andrew Couturier, BSC Senior Analyst, and Amanda Bichel, Ontario IBA Coordinator, who made some recent updates to the BC IBA website pages.
- BC IBA eNewsletters sent, reaching about 320 people in the IBA network every three months.
- Application for BC IBA Program core funding for 2017 to BC Gaming. Other funding has been a challenge to obtain, but applications are ongoing!
- Outreach ongoing to lightkeepers for Caretaker recruitment, with BC Parks for website linkages, and with BC Parks & BC Ferries for IBA sign installation.
- Ongoing Caretaker Support including Caretaker business cards, small IBA signs, support letters.
- Ongoing Progress toward re-building of the bird blind at Vaseux Lake IBA - thanks to Vaseux Caretaker Eva Durance, and the whole team of Okanagan IBA Caretakers, government & NGO staff who form the support team. The majority of the funding for the re-build was secured by the end of August, and included a contribution from the BC Nature Foundation. The old, unsafe blind has been demolished & the new one is being re-built. Official opening will be in 2017.

There will be a presentation featuring IBAs on September 22, 2016 as part of the BC Nature FGM in Prince George; and one on Nov. 9, 2016 at the WildWings Art & Nature Festival in Duncan. In the coming year, funding will continue to be sought to support IBA promotion, communication, and conservation initiatives. Site summary updates will continue in collaboration with Caretakers. The Coordinator will continue to support Caretaker initiatives at their request. Anne Murray continues as volunteer IBA Program Liaison for BC Nature; and members of the BC IBA Conservation Team, Caretakers, Bird Studies Canada, Nature Canada, and other partners and supporters, continue to contribute a significant amount of in-kind time and expertise to the Program.

Office Report Betty Davison, Office Manager

We have had a productive summer this year with our fabulous summer student, Kristina Charania. Kristina kept my desk in great shape for my return and I am missing her cheery demeanor and speedy, efficient outlook. Kristina also managed to enlighten me about "Zero Waste Lifestyle", no small feat and it will take me some time to even match her resolve in this lifestyle. In the *BCnature* Fall magazine, is Kristina's article on her time with BC Nature and NatureKids BC. As with past summer students, we were able to keep our social media profile going. Our facebook page now has over 400 followers. Quite a feat! We started end of last summer with about 30 followers so this summer has proved that we are spreading our word to the far reaches of the internet. It would be great to reach 10,000 one day!

Another successful *BCnature* magazine put to bed today and I hope by the time you read this, you will have received your copy in the mail or if you are on the e-version, notification that the magazine is now ready for download. Our list of members that now receive electronic copies is growing by 10 to 20 per month.

Insurance - things are going smoothly with our new insurance broker and if you require a certificate of insurance, please email the office with the particulars of the event (address and dates) and usually within 24 hours, we can email you the certificate.

Outdoor Recreation Council Penelope Edwards

Unfortunately, because of work commitments, I was not able to attend the Outdoor Recreation Council on June 11. However, I can say that the voting members accomplished much, through their approval of several major resolutions. The first was approval of the re-written by-laws, an undertaking by the executive that took up an unanticipated amount of time. The by-law revision was the result of the enactment of the BC Society Act. I am sure there were cheers when the motion was carried!

Another important resolution, which caught the attention of the editorial writers of Victoria's Times-Colonist ("Don't fence off beautiful BC" - June 29, 2016), concerned the blocking of access of the public across private land for recreational purposes. The problem arises when there is privately-owned land surrounding parcels of public land, such as a lake, and the landowner refuses to allow the public to use an access road or trail, because it crosses their land. For example, there are many lakes in the

province that have been stocked with fish, at public expense, but they cannot be reached by sport-fishers because the access road is gated.

This is an issue that has been of concern to ORC and its members for many years. ORC commissioned a study of the problem and possible solutions by students of the Environmental Law Centre at the University of Victoria. The study, titled Enhanced Access to Privately-Owned Lands, is available on the ORC website and includes examples of how this problem has been managed elsewhere, including the UK, Sweden, Nova Scotia and Watcom County in Washington State, as well as recommendations.

Increasing funding to BC Parks is another major issue for ORC. The approved resolution commits ORC to contact all BC government ministers to ensure their awareness of the inadequate state of funding for BC Parks and to call on like-minded NGOs (Non Government Organizations) to join a “concerted campaign” for a significant funding increase in 2017.

For many years, ORC has been a leading advocate for the management and conservation of the province’s rivers, through BC Rivers Day (Saturday, September 25 this year) and the publishing of the Endangered Rivers List. ORC is supporting a coalition, proposed by a number of environmental NGOs, including West Coast Environmental Law and the David Suzuki Foundation to encourage all political parties to develop river-related conservation and protection policies as part of their electoral platform, for the provincial election next spring.

The draft minutes of ORC’s 2016 AGM, plus the Environmental Law Centre’s “White Paper”, are available now on the ORC website. ORC’s executive meeting minutes also are posted on the website, following approval. The website address is www.orcbc.ca.

NatureKids BC Kristine Webber

This will be my Last BC Nature Update! I can hardly believe the good fortune I've had to work with NatureKids BC for almost 9 years. Such an important mission and so many wonderful people- like all of you at BC Nature!- to work alongside. It really has been a gift, and now it is time for change.

Why now? There are many exciting things happening both in the child and nature movement and at NatureKids BC so it is a good time to step back and open up a space for a new Executive Director. NatureKids BC is in a great place: we have has a strong network of nature clubs across BC supported by great staff and volunteers. We have a new brand, a revamped, full-colour Nature WILD magazine and a sparkly new three-year strategic plan to help a new ED lead the way forward. In addition, this spring Vancouver will play host to the International Child and Nature Conference, this will be a wonderful time for a new Executive Director to meet colleagues and make important connections.

As for me, I won't be far away. Well not too far away, I'll be on Mayne Island farming, potting and getting used to my new role as a NatureKids volunteer and chief cheerleader. Thank you for all your support over the years and for the warm welcome I know you'll give to our new Executive Director.”

Yours in Nature, Kristine Webber



Kristine practicing her new "lifestyle"

Action Award Winner!

Congratulations to Maya from the Delta Home Learners NatureKids Club for earning her Bronze Action Award! Some of Maya’s amazing work included:

- Studying the growth of Amanita Mushrooms
- Promoting a Wilderness Committee petition
- Assisting a friend in making a bird feeder
- Completing a project on Woolly Bear Caterpillars

NatureKids BC’s Action Award program is a fun way for members to explore, learn about and take action for nature. Bronze, Silver and Gold level Action Awards recognize individual children for their self-directed outdoor and community activities.

Bird Aware Cat Care (BACC):

Youth Citizen Scientists Protect Birds and Keep Cats Safe in BC. This fall NatureKids BC members will be participating in a new citizen science project aimed at helping to keep both cats and birds safe. Free-roaming cats present a significant predation pressure for local bird populations. There are an estimated 7.9 million domestic cats in Canada and fewer than 30% are kept indoors. It is estimated that cats kill 200 million birds across Canada each year.

Free-roaming pet cats also face numerous threats (e.g., disease, vehicle collisions, fights with wildlife) by being outdoors and experience significantly shorter lives compared to their indoor counterparts. Thus both cats and birds derive benefit from cat owners taking a more cat-safe approach to pet ownership. However increasing the percentage of indoor cats is not simple and requires a disruption in entrenched beliefs, values and responsibilities regarding pets and wildlife. In this project we’ll be coupling positive educational messaging with on-the-ground trials of various tools and strategies to reduce bird mortality.

BACC targets NatureKids BC families and complements the work of Nature Canada and the Stewardship Centre for BC’s Cats & Birds Program. There are a number of ways BC Nature Members can help with this project!

- Provide training in bird identification for volunteer youth citizen scientists in your local area (e.g., via a NKBC Explorer



Congratulations to Maya for her Bronze Action Award

- Day and / or on a one-on-one basis)
- Volunteer to be paired up with a volunteer youth citizen scientist in your area to help with the experiment where needed
- Fill in our online adult survey on the topic of cats and birds (to be available online in the fall 2016)
- Conduct your own cat experiment using your own, or a friend's, house pet (i.e., in the same manner as the youth volunteers)

To learn more or if you would like to participate, please contact Tammy (coordinator@naturekidsbc.ca) or Elke Wind (project lead - ewind@telus.net; 250-716-1119).

NatureKids BC Club Changes

Welcome to new volunteer nature club leaders: Mandy Ross (Kamloops), Janelle Parchomchuk & Kyle Fossett (South Okanagan), Alex King (Nanaimo), and Susanne Sloboda, NEW CLUB - Ridge Meadows. Thank you and best wishes to departing leaders: Michelle Sims (Prince George) and Jarrett Krentzel (Comox Valley)

NatureKids is seeking volunteer nature club leaders or co-leaders for the following clubs: Victoria, TriCities, Kelowna and Oceanside Clubs. A Volunteer Club Leaders' primary role is to organize monthly outdoor nature adventures, called Explorer Days, for NatureKids club members. For more information contact Tammy Keetch at coordinator@naturekidsbc.ca

Club Reports

Lower Mainland Region Jude Grass - Regional Coordinator

No written report

Kootenays Regional Coordinator - Joan Snyder

The West Kootenay Naturalists' Association (WKNA) has approximately 100 members, currently, who are mostly residents of Castlegar, Nelson, Salmo, Trail, Rossland, Slokan Valley and communities in between.

We have had a busy and rewarding year. Our activities have been concentrated into the four following categories:

1. Day-hiking (Nature spotting and taking photos) weekly in the beautiful Kootenays year round, on foot or on snow-shoes occasionally with an invited nature specialist.
2. Five (5) General Meetings (GMs) per year. The main agenda for each meeting was a slide presentation by an invited guest speaker. During the 2015/16 season these excellent presentations have been:

Dr. Doug McBride presented "A biologist's Travels in the Republic of South Africa",

Ms. Jana Malinek On her travels in Iceland

Ms. Libby Ruljancich, B. Sc. On "Local Edible and Useful Plants".

Mr. Brent Hancock, B. Sc., P.Eng.; "The Wild Flowering Plants of Western Australia"

Dr. Alistair Fraser with his talk "Ogopogo Gait or what devotees don't explain".

These presentations were very enjoyable, educational and well attended by our members and friends. At the November and May meetings we also enjoyed pot-luck suppers.

3. In late June, we had our annual picnic preceded by a half day nature/birding walk. We gathered at Winlaw in the Slokan Valley, and visited several favourite birding sites of our picnic host, Peter McIver, and wrapped up with a picnic at Peter's cottage above the Slokan River with lovely views of the mountain peaks around the Mulvey Lakes basin in Valhalla Provincial Park.

4. Special Activities this year included:

- Participating in the annual Fall Rivers' Day clean-up of garbage accumulated along the Columbia River at Trail.
- The first year of studies of Bank Swallow nesting sites in the Pend D'Oreille River area south of Trail (funded by BC Nature and Columbia Basin Trust).
- WKNA delegates were invited to participate at public input sessions hosted by staffers of the local Ministry of FLNRO, concerning proposed new regulations to limit motorized access in threatened wildlife habitat in the Pend D'Oreille-Columbia Rivers confluence area
- Substantial WKNA participation in the Christmas and spring bird counts with Bird Studies Canada.
- Continuing (actually increasing) WKNA financial support of a student scholarship at our local Selkirk College.
- Sending a cautionary letter to Castlegar Parks and Trails Society concerning their proposal to increase the density of trails on the Dove Hill area near Castlegar for the benefit of mountain bicyclists and probable threat to resident and migratory wildlife and birds that use the area.
- Plans to begin a long-term project on Phenology of Some Common Plants in the West Kootenays in the spring of 2017.

If you would like more information about our club and see copies of some of our excellent newsletter, The Osprey, go to our website at <http://www.kootenaynaturalists.org>

Northern Region Regional Coordinator - Fred McMechan

This report includes report from some of our clubs on their activities from the BCN AGM in May to mid-August.

Kitimat Valley Naturalists (KVN), Walter Thorne:

- LNG projects have slowed down, though some survey and environmental work continues
- Members continue to do monthly coastal water bird surveys, a breeding bird survey was completed in June and we continue to monitor our salamander boards
- Kitimat had a successful photo fest with KVN members attending and being presenters
- There has been a new pursuit for some of our members. We have been out counting bats on several occasions. Some older buildings are due for demolition very soon. It was noted that maybe bats were living in the largest building so we have determined that there is a large colony of more than 1,500. Plus there are bats in another smaller building. We are working with the District of Kitimat and Skeena to determine the best course of action. Hopefully demolition will not occur until after the bats have left in the late fall. We hope to have bat condos constructed so next year the bats will have somewhere to return to.

Quesnel Trail and Nature Club, Lorna Schley

- Our club has had an active summer, with a number of hikes and activities. In June we visited the Ancient Forest, east of Prince George, and marveled at the thousand-year old Cedars, the rare lichens and other plants. One highlight was the wild ginger which was in flower. We were impressed by the amount of work that has been done building boardwalks and signage.
- Other hikes were Armstrong Hill in the Moose Heights area with wonderful views of the Fraser River, Kosta's Cove in the Ten Mile Lake area and Barkerville-Stout's Gulch. In July a trip to Nazko included a visit to the old Johnston homestead and waterfalls and a tour of the CANLAVA lava rock mine. The site is a part of a dormant volcano. A walk to a lake and a cave rounded out the trip
- We continued to monitor the two sets of bluebird nest boxes, the Dragon Lake Bluebird Trail and the West Fraser Bluebird Trail

Williams Lake Field Naturalists, Fred McMechan

- We had a busy period at the Scout Nature Centre providing nature programs for school classes in May and June, and for children's groups in July and August. Three university students and other staff were involved. We also communicated with many tourists who stopped to visit.
- We are in the process of planning to construct a board walkway on the Willow Trail which will occur in October
- We have been involved with the School District to organize the nature Kindergarten class which will start in the fall. This class will take place at the Nature Centre.
- During the nesting season for Mountain Bluebirds we monitored approximately 15 bluebird trails. As well, we monitored the Flammulated Owls, which took place in the Important Bird Area (IBA) along the Fraser and Chilcotin Rivers.
- We had several field trips including trips in the Williams Lake River Valley, and to the Chilcotin grasslands and the Churn Creek Protected Area.



By Clive Keen

One field trip by the Prince George Naturalists Club had the good fortune to encounter a herd of the seriously endangered Woodland Caribou.

Thompson-Okanagan-Shuswap Region Regional Coordinator - Janet Pattinson

The Kamloops Naturalists had their annual semi-competitive bird count in late May with 157 species tallied. Also in May was the annual club picnic at Paul Lake. At the Canada Day weekend a group car pooled to the top of Greenstone Mountain to check out the alpine flowers and wildlife.

For the Nicola Naturalists' May meeting, Enrique Reyes and Nathan Dyck told about the Merritt Green Energy Project that is under construction. This facility will generate electricity from waste wood.

In June there were joint field outings with the Vermillion Forks Naturalists from Princeton and the Central Okanagan Naturalists from Kelowna. When a visiting Cross Canada Cycle Touring Society group came to town, Alan Burger gave them a presentation on wildlife of the Nicola Valley.

Members of the club have participated in ongoing surveys for owls, nightjars and Lewis's Woodpeckers. The club website offers information on local butterfly and moth species. There are photos, descriptions and information on the biology of local Lepidoptera provided by club member Bob Scafe, who also leads field outings to find and identify butterflies.

The club's five-year amphibian project has concluded with a report. It includes distribution maps of five amphibian species at 214 wetlands across a 7,200 square kilometre grid. All this is a result of over 1,600 volunteer hours and analysis by the professional herpetologists of Biolinx Environmental Research. Copies of this report can be downloaded from the club website: <http://nicolanaturalists.ca/>

The club continues to work with BC Parks to protect Western Toads breeding at Kentucky-Alleyne Provincial Park. A low wooden fence built by club members in 2014 to keep toadlets off the camp road is working well. Members helped to design a new interpretive sign for the park that explains the life cycle of the toad and the need to protect this important breeding site.

At the May monthly meeting of the **North Okanagan Naturalists**, Lloyd Mitchell shared his adventures in Alaska. Our annual May field day was spent in Kal Park where members engaged in hiking, birding, and botanical pursuits before concluding with a picnic at Coldstream Park.

One of our Summer Nature Walks included time at Silver Star to see the wonderful flower display including monkshood and sandwort. There has also been Hummingbird banding. Bird boxes for Bluebirds and swallows are monitored and cleaned out. For the September meeting the speaker will be Duane Thomson of the Okanagan Rail Trail group. Club members are concerned about Commonage developments that are taking away grassland.

In May **Shuswap Naturalists** had a successful day of pulling invasive weeds such as the woody nightshade from wetland areas of Salmon Arm. Another such event is planned for late September. On two outings to Mara Meadows small groups of members were treated to seeing several species of orchids, an abundance of sundew plants, the interesting landscape created by the active beavers and a pair of nesting Sandhill Cranes.

For this year the club decided to make the annual education award in memory of a founding member of the club, Harry Higgins, who passed away in June.

The club also gave a donation to a research project this summer on the Deadman River which is west of Kamloops.

South Okanagan Naturalists have a variety of ongoing activities and annual commitments. There is advocacy on current issues through the club's conservation committee at all levels of government such as support for local governments in establishing a local conservation fund through a levy on property taxes. There are weekly birding outings and a monthly census of the Penticton Oxbows in support of efforts to protect these areas. Members assist with maintenance of the South Okanagan Habitat Garden at the Penticton Okanagan College Campus. Members produce educational articles in one of the local newspapers. They assisted with a hummingbird banding event and with setting up and operating the Vaseaux Lake bird banding station. Members participate in the Meadowlark Festival.

Our September meeting will be on Wednesday September 7, with speaker Duane Thomson of the Okanagan Rail Trail group.

Club field trips and the annual club picnic took members to many parts of the Okanagan region.

Vancouver Island Region Regional Coordinator - John Neville

Arrowsmith Naturalist Club - Submitted by Sandra Gray

About 45 members dined amid the massive Douglas Firs at our Annual Club Picnic held at Rath Trevor Park the last week of July. Several volunteers manned a booth for Beach Day at Qualicum Beach. In August our Club had a well-received nature education display for Kids Fest in Parksville. Outings have been few this summer but they start up again in September. We are preparing for and looking forward to our Mushroom Festival on October 16 ... you are invited ... check the Club website for details and come see our "shrooms."

Comox Valley Naturalists Society (CVN) - Submitted by Sharon Nisack

Comox Valley Nature is a hum of activities with many members participating in birding, botany, photography, Garry Oak restoration, wetland restoration and NatureKids activities. The highlight of the year was hosting the BC Nature Spring AGM. After months of planning the organizing committee was thrilled at the response. Delegates from all over BC arrived to enjoy dynamic speakers and engaging field trips to some of our beautiful Comox Valley locations.

The Mack Laing Society and CVN members presented feasible plans and heritage professional assessment to Comox Council to preserve Hamilton Mack Laing's Baybrook home, however, Comox Council voted to have it demolished. In recognition of the Mack Laing Society's outstanding contribution to heritage the group was awarded the highest honour Heritage BC Award. This award is presented for outstanding and significant achievements in heritage conservation, planning, education and awareness in BC communities. The Comox Council recently announced that they will also demolish Mack Laing's Shakesides home, which was left in his will to be used as a nature house along with a significant amount of money, his hand crafted furniture, collections and art work.

Five birders traveled further afield to enjoy a six-day birding trip to the Chilcotin. In addition to wonderful scenery the highlights included a Northern Hawk Owl in Tweedsmuir Park, Solitary Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs and Lesser Yellowlegs in breeding plumage in the Anahim area, Blackpoll Warblers, heard near Anahim; breeding Arctic Terns and Semipalmated Plovers at Eagle Lake, and millions of mosquitoes at all locations.

In addition to numerous weekly outings to view and record bird sighting, the Christmas and Spring bird counts, Bill Heidrick collected binoculars to take with him to Mexico for fledgling nature students. The monthly Coastal Water Bird and Trumpeter Swan counts round out the yearly activities. The birding group meets monthly to share experiences, plan and learn.

The Botany group also meets once a month to share information and field opportunities. A visit to Sutton Pass Ecological Reserve included exploring the marsh area to seek the blue-listed Northern Adder's tongue "fern" *Ophioglossum pusillum*. The group reported "The unusual tiny plants carpeted whole areas at the eastern end of the bowl, along with Marsh Violet, Lesser Spearwort, and Western St. John's Wort". When the snow melts and the trails are open at Paradise Meadows CVN and SWI engage in joint walks. In a recent walk to the Meadows 73 plants were identified, with many in bloom including the purple Jeffrey's Shooting Stars.

A few members meet to learn more about photography and the techniques from our expert photographers. The photographers contribute to displays, engage in outreach and record the beauty of nature in its many forms. Some of these images,

notably Terry Thormin and Bryan Walwork's wonderful photographs, have been enjoyed by the public in our monthly meetings and at other venues during the year.

Murray Little's keen eye sighted an abundance of Erythronium on the right of way for the new North-Courtenay Connector bridge and road re-routing. Working with the property owners he arranged for a plant rescue on the proposed route prior to construction. Over three mornings and one afternoon the Wetland Restoration group with volunteers from the Mack Laing Society rescued 587 lily plants. One of the issues encountered was when to collect the mature corms. It was decided to dig when the seed capsule started to turn brown and before the small brown stems died back and disappeared from sight. By digging a 6 inch square of soil with the corm and packing them in a shallow pit out of the construction zone they were made safe for future moving. In addition to the Erythronium, Lilies, Solomon Seal, Trillium, Ribes, Bugbane, Elderberry, Swamp Lantern Bugbane and Lady Fern went to new homes. About 100 Trilliums were located to move prior to construction.

The Garry Oak nursery continues to thrive. Continual networking is raising the awareness of Garry Oak and the importance of preserving and planting to restore area lost over the years to developers and agriculture. A new tree bylaw recognizes the importance of indigenous species. However, Garry Oak trees continue to be lost as homeowners and developers destroy the trees.

One of our founding members and twice President, Dulcie Hamilton passed away at the age of 92. Dulcie was the recipient of the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award and actively engaged in stewardship activities for 50 years. She was instrumental in the creation of Seal Bay Park, organized the trail building crew and was a diligent supporter sharing her love of the flora and fauna and nature. Dulcie lead many field trips, work parties, developed displays and helped wherever needed. Her positive smile and warmth will be remembered by all who knew her.

We are sad to announce the passing of Dr. Chris Pielou (Evelyn Crystalla Pielou) on July 16, 2016. Chris's outstanding contribution to ecological conservation is monumental. Her incredible skills in mathematics and ecology led to the model for measuring the complexity of ecological mathematics. Chris contributed significantly to the development of mathematical ecology, the mathematical modeling of natural systems and wrote six academic books on the subject plus journal articles between 1969 and 1984. After her retirement she continued to write popular books on ecosystems and environmental topics. These include *After the Ice Age*, *The Naturalist's Guide to the Arctic*, *The World of Northern Evergreens*, *Fresh Water* and *The Energy of Nature*. Chris also faithfully contributed short articles on a variety of subjects for CVN newsletter for many years. Some of these will be re-printed in the upcoming newsletter. Although others will laud her keen mind, her mathematical and statistical genius I knew her as a humble, modest and independent soul with a deep regard for the earth, avid curiosity, passion for understanding and love for her family and close friends. A true eminent ecologist!

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club submitted by Nieke Visser

1. Purple Martin Recovery Project was started in January 2016 with the assistance of expert Charlene Lee, Director/Administrator of Georgia Basin Ecological Assessment and Restoration Society (GBEARS) in Nanaimo. A small group of volunteers from both the Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club (SSTNC) and Saltspring Ocean Stewards (SOS) constructed approximately 30 nest boxes, scouted for the best nesting sites, and obtained permission from owners and authorities. The first boxes were put up on pilings and docks around Salt Spring Island starting in April this year, just in time for the returning fledglings of last year to occupy them. In the mean time we also recruited volunteers to monitor the various nesting sites. Peter McAllister graciously donated his time and boat to first scout, put up the nest boxes, and he monitors the sites. The boxes that were put up in April and May saw nesting activity this year. The boxes installed in June and July saw interest but no successful nesting. We are confident the martins will be back next year. The local newspaper became interested as well and spent a whole page on the project.

On July 27, Charlene Lee came over from Nanaimo and banded at two sites (seven boxes) with the help of Peter McAllister, providing water transportation, and local veterinarian Susan Fussel, holding the nestlings for banding and recording the data while Charlene banded. A total of 26 young were banded and four were too young to band. The ages of young ranged from three days old in a subadult nest to 28 days (one of which flew away unbanded). The old sites in Long Harbour and the new site at Fernwood dock were not banded as the tide was not high enough to reach the boxes. This was an unexpected success rate and a great encouragement to continue with this project.

In light of the rather bad weather resulting in low numbers of insects (i.e. food for the martins) we could not have wished for more. Thanks to Peter McAllister, Murray Coates and Tony McLeod who together built all those boxes, and to ornithologists Ren Ferguson and Susan Hannon for their expert advice. Also thanks to all other volunteers who helped to make this project a success. Future plans are to erect displays at Fernwood Dock and the Fulford Harbour ferry terminal to educate the general public on this project. The Purple Martin Recovery Project is funded by the SSTNC.

2. Shoreline Project was funded by the CRD and the BC Nature Foundation purchased a set of two probes that measure, among other parameters, salinity, dissolved carbon dioxide and oxygen. The probe is momentarily used to study water quality of three lakes on Salt Spring Island which have problems with algae bloom and other water quality issues. Weekly measurements of water quality in Ganges harbour (ocean) will be carried out starting next year spring. For this project volunteers were needed as well, and we found there was plenty of enthusiasm.

One sea star count was done this summer around Goat Island. A small decline in the number of sea stars was noted but its significance is debatable. This time a count of juvenile sea stars was included as well; there were only a few, but it may be the start of sea star recovery. Next summer's count will hopefully show more juveniles.

3. Excursions and Presentations The club enjoyed monthly presentations so far this year with a break during the summer months. Subjects ranged from ornithology to kayaking from Victoria to Alaska, to exploring Salt Spring's best hikes and climbing Mt McKinley in Denali National Park in Alaska. Weekly outings are still well attended. In June we enjoyed a boat trip to Prevost Island where we were again very well received by the De Burgh family.

Victoria Natural History Society submitted by Darren Copley

VNHS has accomplished nothing new or noteworthy over the summer...everyone has just been out having fun!

Treasurer's Report
Prepared by Betty Davison

Fiscal Year January 1 - December 31	2016 Actual	2016 Budget	% of Budget	2015 Actual	2015 Budget	% of Budget
Revenue						
Advertising	9,625	\$ 10,200	96%	5,361	10,000	54%
Annual & Fall General Meeting	4,482	8,000	56%	7,642	5,000	153%
Camps & Special Events	22,837	22,720	101%	54,455	15,000	363%
Club Membership Dues	54,194	54,000	100%	52,835	50,000	106%
Fundraising & Appeal	2,745	16,000	17%	4,060	15,000	27%
Insurance Premium Recovery	9,327	9,200	101%	9,170	8,500	108%
Interest	215	50	430%	31	750	4%
Miscellaneous	0	50			250	0%
Other Membership Dues	706	1,600	44%	800	1,500	53%
Project Admin Fees	1295	1,500	86%	1,795	2,500	72%
Rent	2,700	2,700	100%	2,700	2,700	100%
Total Revenue	108,126	123,320	88%	140,186	111,200	126%
Expense						
Accounting	4,899	4,000	122%	3,881	3,900	100%
Annual & Fall General Meeting	1,208	2,000	60%	659	1,000	66%
Awards	388	500	78%	402	500	90%
Bank Charges	268	1,000	27%	134	650	21%
BCnature Magazine	13,409	19,000	71%	2,179	18,000	12%
Camps & Special Events	19,325	20,000	97%	31,779	11,000	289%
Dues	181	150	121%	156	200	78%
Fundraising	0	200		175	500	35%
Internet	1,521	2,500	61%	1,782	2,500	100%
Insurance premiums	10,977	11,000	100%	10,598	9,500	71%
Office Supplies/Postage/Printing	2,427	3,800	64%	4,396	4,500	112%
Rent - Services for Elders	200	150	133%	31	1,000	0%
Salary & Benefits - office	23,487	38,000	62%	28,311	38,000	75%
Payroll Related Charges	6,387	10,000	64%	2,185	9,000	24%
Summer Students	2,904	2,000	145%	1,053	2,500	42%
Miscellaneous	3,186	25	1270%	31		0%
Subcontract	0	500	0	891	500	0%
Telephone	893	1,800	50%	2,687	7,000	38%
Travel & Accommodation (Net of Donations)	4,991	4,500	111%			
Total Expenses	96,651	121,125	80%	91,298	111,750	82%
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue over Expenses	\$11,475	\$2,195		48,888	-550	

Notes:

2016 Actuals versus 2015 Actuals are noted for the same period - Up to September 15.

2016 Budget and 2015 Budget figures noted are for 12 month period (January 1 - December 31)

Items of note **Income:**

- We are much further behind in our fundraising efforts (2015 Actuals to 2016 Actuals)

Items of note **Expenses:**

- Accounting Fees increase - due to annual audit fee increase
- BCnature Magazine - 2 editions covered in the cost, there is also income of 10,000 from BC Gaming Grant that offsets half of the expense.
- Summer Student Increase - Due to extra two-week hire - will be offset with less expenses from Salary Benefits
The total BC Nature Summer Student wages were \$9265, net figure is shown under Summer Student expense after deductions of the Canada Summer Jobs funding and NatureKids contribution.
- Misc. increase: Approved by Executive \$2,500 extra expense for JFK Law Firm for Enbridge court case
- Travel & Accommodation - An increase in the number of Directors who filed reimbursement expense reports versus donation through the Executive and Directors donations Income category.

Club Membership Information - 2016

Club Name	Total 2015	Total 2016	Internet Presence
Lower Mainland			
Abbotsford-Mission Nature Club	63	79	http://www.abbymissionnatureclub.org/
Alouette Field Naturalists	23	24	
Bowen Nature Club	76	24	http://bowennatureclub.blogspot.com/
Burke Mountain Naturalists	194	234	www.bmn.bc.ca
Chilliwack Field Naturalists	42	33	www.chilliwackfieldnaturalists.com
Delta Naturalists Society	88	121	http://dncb.wordpress.com
Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society	20	24	www.birdsonthebay.ca
Langley Field Naturalists Society	96	156	http://www.langleyfieldnaturalists.org/
Little Campbell Watershed Society	8	10	www.lcws.ca
Pender Harbour & District Wildlife Society	26	36	www.penderharbourwildlife.com
Royal City Field Naturalists	12		Club is now folded
Squamish Environmental Conservation Soc.	41	40	http://www.squamishenvironment.ca/
Stoney Creek Environmental Committee	25	39	www.scec.ca/
Sunshine Coast Natural History Society	137	172	https://sites.google.com/site/scnaturalhistorysoc/
Surrey Environmental Partners	7	8	
Nature Vancouver	800	833	www.naturevancouver.ca
Whistler Naturalists Society	28	28	http://www.whistlernaturalists.ca/
White Rock & Surrey Naturalists Society	90	77	http://www.facebook.com/WRSnaturalists
WildResearch	306	382	www.wildresearch.ca
Kootenays			
Fernie Nature Club	40	38	http://www.ourfernienatureclub.com/fernienatureclub
Rocky Mountain Naturalists Society	64	111	http://www.rockymountainnaturalists.org/
West Kootenay Natrualists Association	108	108	http://www.kootenaynaturalists.org
Northern BC			
Bulkley Valley Naturalists	67	68	www.bvnaturalists.ca
Kitimat Valley Naturalists	35	44	
MacKenzie Nature Observatory	39	41	http://mackenzienatureobservatory.ca/
Prince George Naturalist Club	54	110	http://pgnc.wordpress.com
Quesnel Naturalists	36	48	
Timberline Trail & Nature Club	14	14	http://www.timberlinetrailandnature.com/
Williams Lake Field Naturalists	196	189	www.williamslakefieldnaturalists.ca
Thompson-Shuswap-Okanagan			
Central Okanagan Naturalist Club	220	281	http://www.okanagannature.org/
Kamloops Naturalist Club	127	128	http://www.kamloopsnaturalistclub.ca/
Kamloops Thompson Trail Alliance **	13	12	http://www.kamloopsthompsontrailsalliance.com/

Club Name	Total 2015	Total 2016	Internet Presence
Lillooet Naturalist Club	108	108	http://www.lillooetnaturalistsociety.org/
Nicola Naturalists Society	54	85	http://www.nicolanaturalists.ca/
North Okanagan Naturalists' Club	113	123	http://www.nonc.ca/
North Shuswap Naturalists Club	13	12	
Oliver-Osoyoos Naturalists	57	61	http://oliverosoyoosnaturalists.com/about-us/
Shuswap Naturalists Club	102	68	http://www.shuswapnaturalists.org/
South Okanagan Naturalists Club	130	123	http://www.southokanagan.com
Vermillion Forks Field Naturalists	70	65	http://www.vffn.ca/
Vancouver Island			
Arrowsmith Naturalists	99	102	http://www.arrowsmithnats.org/
Comox Valley Naturalists	219	286	http://www.comoxvalleynaturalists.bc.ca
Cowichan Valley Naturalists Society	110	87	http://www.naturecowichan.net
Nanoose Naturalists	58	59	http://www.nanoosenaturalist.org/
Pender Island Field Naturalists	83	88	https://www.facebook.com/penderislandfield-naturalists
Rithet's Bog Conservation Society	10	10	www.rithetsbog.org
Rocky Point Bird Observatory	98	184	http://rpbo.org/
Saltspring Trail and Nature Club	163	165	http://saltspringtnc.ca
Victoria Natural History Society	559	703	www.vicnhs.bc.ca
Subtotal	5111	5830	
Affiliate Clubs	14	11	
Life Members	24	20	
Subscription Members	12	10	
Direct Members	96	106	
Subtotal		147	
Total All Categories	5341	6089	

