



Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

C/o Secretary, 203-9018 208th Street, Langley, BC, V1M 2Y8

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Newsletter

December 2013



Black-necked Stilt

Photo: John Gordon

A Black-necked Stilt – native to coasts south of Oregon – which was spotted near White Rock’s namesake brought a flock of birding enthusiasts and photographers to the waterfront October 10th, after word of the red-legged shorebird’s presence hit the Internet that morning. John Gordon was one of the photographers who caught photos of this rare visitor.



Black-necked Stilt flying just in front of the White Rock

Photo: John Gordon



Mountain Bluebird, Glen Valley Oct 2013

Photo: John Gordon

John has also been photographing other rare visitors to our area . The Mountain Bluebird is more common in the springtime as they pass through on migration. These two were found feeding at McCormick Road and Lefevre Road in October 2013.



Mountain Bluebird Female, Glen Valley

Photo: John Gordon

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Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month from September to June, starting at 7.15 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207 St. Langley

Executive meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month Sept - June at Executive members' homes.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



November has seen our usual rainfall, replenishing the water table and rejuvenating our streams. The Coho salmon are running in Davidson's Creek and I counted 12 spawning pairs in the Mountain View section last week. Our overwintering birds have returned to the feeders in large numbers and we have an Anna's hummingbird at our feeder again. One change that I have noticed is an increase in Golden-crowned Sparrows with an accompanying decrease in White-crowned Sparrows. We generally overwinter 4-6 White-crowned and 2-4 Golden-crowned, but so far this fall I have only seen one White-crowned but 8 Golden-crowned - wonder if this is widespread or just a local phenomenon?

This Fall has been a good one for mushrooms with my Mountain View count having increased to 338 species, new ones appearing each year with others only having been encountered in a single year. I look forward to the Royal B.C. Museum volunteer's assessment of the Mountain View spider collection which they are kindly working on.

It is encouraging to see so many new members at club meetings and I look forward to meeting many of you at our outdoor events. Coming up, we are concentrating on the Christmas Bird Counts: December 14th is the Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge/Langley count, December 29th is our section of the Surrey/White Rock/Langley count and to give you lots of notice, the Derby Reach/Brae Island Count (DRBIPA) will be on February 1st. If you haven't signed up for one or all of these counts, be sure to give me or Kathy a call (email) and get on the list; they are great fun and immensely educational - you don't have to be an expert birder.

Bob Puls

**BC NATURE FALL MEETING
CRANBROOK, BC
"EARTH, WIND, FIRE AND WATER:
THE SPIRIT OF NATURE."**

BC Nature's Fall General Meeting was held in Cranbrook on September 19th - 21st. Twelve Langley Field Naturalists made the 10 hour drive to take part in this wonderful weekend. Bill and I checked into beautiful Elizabeth Lake Lodge overlooking a 6 hectare bird sanctuary and wetland. We were in a wonderful location to enjoy nature and participate in the 3 day conference with naturalists from all over the province.

The conference began with a presentation by Kootenay photographer Janice Strong, introducing us to the beautiful landscapes that we would experience over our next few days.

Early morning birding each day was followed by coffee and muffins at Elizabeth Lake Lodge - such gracious hosts!

After welcoming us Friday morning, we were given the story of creation by Joe Pierre, a wonderful story teller from the Ktunaxa First Nation near Cranbrook. He told a mythological tale of creation, using old stories of the Ktunaxa people where creatures in the animal world shaped the Kootenay landscape and created different races of people.

Next we heard four presentations that fascinated and educated us. We heard Allison Kennedy, an ethnobiologist, speak about the native Plants in the Cranbrook Community forest that have long been used for medicinal purposes. We listened to Ingrid Liepa, an environmental consultant on air quality and climate change. Health improvements can be gained by improving air quality at the local level. Randall Harris, the Team Leader for Ecosystem Restoration for the Rocky Mountain Trench, told us how fire suppression had altered the traditional ecology of the area. To restore a healthy environment, light burns of the forest will result in more light for trees to grow and better carbon fixing for grassland recovery. The last presentation, by Penny Ohanjanian, concerned the reintroduction of Northern Leopard Frogs. Penny participated in the

re-establishment and monitoring of the species at Bummer's Flats near Cranbrook.

In the evening, we gathered for an enjoyable outdoor social event at Elizabeth Lake Lodge hosted by the Rocky Mountain Naturalists for wine and cheese.

At the Directors meeting Saturday morning, Betty Davison made two worthwhile presentations, the first on fund raising and the second on succession planning for clubs. BC Nature can provide support for fund raising by giving grants, provide good software purchase plans, and supply tax receipts to clubs under BC Nature's umbrella.

Also offered were suggestions of other sources of grants through government agencies and community groups. Succession planning for BC Nature clubs is important to ensure a club's survival. Clubs should have a plan to identify prospective leaders and offer encouragement and support to assume leadership. Job shadowing of an executive position is a good way to demystify and learn the role. Making welcome new members and encouraging them to take part in club events and volunteer in projects are good ways to make strong committed members to ensure succession.

We were introduced to BC Nature's new Vice President, Kees Vissers, whose first project is working on a new 2015 Strategic Plan for BC Nature. In the breakout sessions for directors of each region, the Lower Mainland group focused on opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline and the tripling of tankers off the west coast.

The Fall General Meeting began with a presentation by Ken Morrison, Manager of Planning and Land Administration, who told us about additions to BC Parks and Protected Areas in 2012. 277,000 more hectares were added by end of April 2013. Joan Snyder, the Education Chair of BC Nature for many years, was given a long service award. We heard a presentation by Krista England, co-ordinator for the Important Bird Areas for BC Nature, who gave a report on the Caretaker Network in the province. This group of volunteer caretakers in each of the IBAs monitor, report, and raise awareness of any threats.

The weekend ended with an excellent banquet on Saturday night as we listened to our keynote speaker Brian Clarkson. Brian is a Cranbrook photographer who volunteers his photographic talents to environmental and charitable organizations throughout the world. He shared his beautiful photographs and experiences of friends he has made around the globe.

Sunday morning had a field trip led by Diane Cooper, an expert birder, on a birding expedition "To Yahk and back" (except that the LFN members didn't go back but continued homeward!). We were shown several excellent roadside and off-highway birding spots and this was a pleasant end to a very enjoyable conference.

A great conference enjoyed by all attendees!

Kathy Masse

**The 2014 meeting dates are:
Annual General Meeting
Victoria, May 1st - 4th**

**Fall General Meeting
Salmon Arm, September 25th - 28th.**

Plan to attend!

GUESS WHAT! LFN HAS A NEW COMMITTEE!

A Members Participation Committee has recently been formed. This committee was formed to encourage and support active participation in club activities. The committee will be developing plans to help support our executive positions and bolster members' participation in various club activities. Questions, comments and/or input can be directed to Joanne Rosenthal (chair), Kathy Masse or Anne Gosse. We welcome all ideas and input.



BC NATURE FALL MEETING CRANBROOK, BC *The Bluebird Monitoring Trail*

While attending the fall AGM in Cranbrook this year, some of our LFN group joined the Bluebird Monitoring field trip with Art Grueing. He led our group along the areas back roads - stopping at ranch fences where he has been installing and monitoring the Mountain Bluebird bird boxes for over 30 years.

He explained to our group the kinds of conditions that were needed by bluebirds to raise their young. He also showed us the inside of several bluebird boxes - pointing out whether each particular box had produced young or not and the reasons why. One nest still contained the unhatched eggs, showing us the colour and size of these little gems.

After stopping at several spots, we completed our outing at Elizabeth Lake, the local wildlife reserve and wetlands just on the edge of town. Here we were given a fascinating look into a Western Painted Turtle project (this is the only native fresh water turtle in BC!). Art explained that the local naturalist group has been nurturing these Western Painted Turtles by providing a nesting area and then releasing them into the marsh each year. A special enclosed area had been put aside for these endangered turtles. Art uncovered a nest to reveal lots of tiny baby turtles inside and we all gently helped them into the water and watched them swim away. What a lovely finish to our outing.

Anne Gosse



Golden Eagle Photo: John Gordon
See February 21st Field Trip with John Gordon

**BC NATURE FALL MEETING
CRANBROOK, BC
*The Butterfly Hunt***



Callippe Fritillary

Photo: Bob Puls

Dean Nicholson began this field trip by showing us some of his collection of butterflies which is professionally mounted and is en route to the Royal BC Museum in Victoria. This was to educate us to what we might see, and to enable us to identify them if they were there! He then led us on a short drive to an easy walk along the bank bordering Bummers Flats. All along the bank there is a line of Rabbit Bush, which on a warm day becomes a mecca for dozens of different species of butterflies, moths and other flying insects. Amongst the species we saw were Angelwings (Hoary Comma), Clouded Sulphur, Western White, Melissa's Blue, Grey Hairstreak, Western Banded Skipper, Zerene Fritillary, Callippe Fritillary, and Tachnid Flies. A fascinating field trip on a glorious day.

Sheila Puls



Hoary Comma or Angelwing

Photo: Bob Puls

**BC NATURE FALL MEETING
*Cranbrook Community Forest***

Michael Keefer led this walk on Saturday morning, a truncated version of the Friday 7 km hike as I understand. We walked through a ponderosa pine/bunchgrass zone in which Michael pointed out the various grasses; Rough Fescue *Festuca campestris*, Crested Wheatgrass *Agropyron cristatum*, Foxtail Barley *Hordeum jubatum*, Giant Wild Rye *Elymus cinereus*, and Pinegrass *Calamagrostis rubescens* were seen. Densely crowded young trees were found in one area, way too close together for commercially viable timber. We then examined a burnt stump which showed evidence of over ten fires - the way in which nature used to thin the forest prior to human efforts at fire suppression. We were encouraged to experience a close up sniff of the Ponderosa Pine bark with its vanilla-like essence.



Smell the vanilla!

Photo: Bob Puls

Next we were shown the reclaimed city dump which Michael described as a perfect example of what not to do in restoration. The site had been seeded with agricultural, rather than native, species, resulting in a good growth of non-native weeds and invasive plants. Finally, we walked around an area of wetland where spider webs were in evidence but it was too late in the season for any native flowers.

Bob Puls



Spider webs

Photo: Bob Puls

**BC NATURE FALL MEETING
CRANBROOK, BC
*Ecosystem Restoration in the
Rocky Mountain Trench***

I participated in an outing described as 100 metres (3 stops) on level ground, called a "gentle, dry, running shoe suffice terrain, on a good gravel 2WD road" with Randy Harris, a registered forester, who has worked for the BC Government since 1976. This was to demonstrate his work on the Ecosystem Restoration of the Rocky Mountain Trench. This sounded very interesting as there were possibilities of seeing the habitats of Yellow Badger, Flammulated Owl, Lewis Woodpecker and Grizzly Bear around the Cranbrook area.



Ecosystem restoration

Photo: Anne Gosse

Off we all drove, a convoy of five SUV's and one nice sedan. Not wanting to get lost, we kept close behind our leader's pick-up truck - which had an identifying green canoe on top. First, we visited some Yellow Badger holes, all the while keeping a sharp eye out in case we were lucky enough to see a badger. Randy told us about his research into these neat little animals and then we were off to view the habitats of Flammulated Owl, Lewis's Woodpecker and the Grizzly Bears. Unfortunately, our leader was unaware that a heavy rain storm had drenched the mountains overnight.

So up we started over a narrow gravel two track mountain ranch road on our circular driving route. Suddenly, we were in a narrow deep muddy track, traveling through very long stretches of brown watery deep holes - which were heavily laden with thick dark oozing mud! This sodden muddy road led us through long mucky stretches of thick mire, over cattle

guards, beside highland grassy pastures, past fresh grizzly kill carcasses, startled cows and over large rocks. This track was not for the faint of heart - or for brand new vehicles! However, there was no turning back once committed. It reminded us of the Mad Teacup Ride in Disneyland! Around each curve we met another long deep puddle which caused shrieks of disbelief which would have disturbed the peace and quiet of any nearby Flammulated Owls or Grizzly bears, should we have ever seen one.

When we finally emerged onto the paved highway intact and stopped to regroup, we found to our amazement no vehicle was missing! Being the only female driver and behind the leader, I got out of my car and quipped, "Wow, now I know why you carry a canoe!". Our leader apologized profusely; my fellow male drivers never uttered a word.

Anne Gosse

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 15TH
GEORGE REIFEL BIRD SANCTUARY**

It had been rainy and wet when we departed Langley; however we found the bird sanctuary dry and cloudy - making us thankful we had not been discouraged by the weather. Eight Sandhill Cranes were patrolling the parking lot amongst the usual unruly Mallard mob. The Cranes seemed quite tame, eating out of people's hands. After welcoming back the wintering Black-crowned Night Herons, we drifted up the West Dyke trail where we came across a collection of Brown Creepers, Fox, Golden-crowned, Song and House Sparrows, plus Spotted Towhees, Juncos, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

Our morning amble turned out to be a great raptor viewing day since we sighted Northern Harriers cruising and a Cooper's Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, and Bald Eagles along the paths. We counted the many waterfowl on the ponds and later were shown a sweet-eyed little Saw-whet Owl under a low fir branch. Our day ended in the warming hut where we tallied our two bird counts of 41 species while enjoying lunch - and watching the downpour begin in earnest.

Thanks again to Al Grass for a great day of birding.

Anne Gosse

GEORGE REIFEL BIRD SANCTUARY SEPTEMBER 27TH



Walking at the Reifel Refuge

Photo: Anne Gosse

Seven naturalists met at Reifel Refuge for a Friday fall morning amble through this wonderful bird sanctuary. The weather proved to be not too rainy - only sprinkling now and then, even though the predictions had been dreadful.

The black wing-tipped white Snow Geese were back in great numbers, swirling overhead throughout the morning as we listened to their plaintive calls. We found a Great Horned Owl hidden amongst tree shadows across a slough and stopped to take a few pictures. We also saw a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and distinctly heard a Virginia Rail calling loudly. Our count by the end of the morning was 33 different species. We finished our walk enjoying lunch in the warming hut and chatting with some Chilliwack Club members.

Anne Gosse

BRUNSWICK POINT OCTOBER 25TH



On a misty morning at Brunswick Point Photo: Anne Gosse

Nine avid naturalists joined our leader Viveka at Brunswick Point dyke parking lot. However, we were met by a heavy Scotch foggy mist so we decided to try the wooded "wedge parcel" first - while we waited for the mist to lift.

While there, we were treated to great views of Golden-crowned Sparrows and a Fox Sparrow who posed obligingly for our cameras. As the mist lifted on the dyke trail, we managed to see many Northern Harriers sailing over the fields, two Red-tailed Hawks, waves of hundreds and hundreds of noisy Snow Geese calling overhead, flocks of Black-bellied Plovers, one Wilson's Snipe, and a swirling group of Dunlin on the foreshore.

It is always a joy to go out with Viveka as she gives lots of helpful birding tips on how to identify the different species seen along the way. Several lessons were given on how to identify the different types of sparrows - by pointing out each bird's different features: the Song, Lincoln, Fox, Golden-crowned, White-crowned and Savannah Sparrows.

There were lots of Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, and Mallard on the water. Double-crested Cormorants were seen drying their wings. As well, several Western Meadowlarks and Golden-crowned Kinglets gave us lovely glimpses. One beautiful Great Horned Owl was found well hidden in some leafy trees by our newbie Lyn. A Peregrine Falcon whizzed by as we were leaving. A total of 33 species were seen and enjoyed. Thanks Viveka for all your bird identifying tips that are always welcome for reinforcement - for all old and new birders alike! Another great day of birding!

Anne Gosse



Deer on Mountain View trail

Photo: Bob Puls (Trail camera)

MINNEKHADA REGIONAL PARK OCTOBER 5TH

Bev and Ken MacKay, Dee and Lloyd Paulson, Paulina and Fernando Selles, and Lyn and I met our leader, Josh Inman, in the parking lot in Minnehada Park at 9 am on Saturday October 6th. Everyone was on time - although many had gotten lost at least once.

The day was cool but the weather looked promising, although most of us wore rain-gear just in case. We set off into the park with the first leaves of fall gently raining down from the trees. Many stops were made along the path to look at and photograph the many fungi that were present. We didn't know any of the names but were amazed at the varieties in size, shapes and color. There weren't many birds seen along the path down to the lake, although a Red-breasted Nuthatch was heard making its "yank yank yank" call.

Once we got down to the lake, we spent some time looking for any ducks that might be present and were happy to find quite a few, including a group of the always beautiful Wood Ducks and a single Pied-billed Grebe. We kept our eyes peeled along the dyke and into the forest for black bears, but luckily the closest we came was a pile of fairly fresh scat in the middle of the path.



At the lookout at Minnehada Regional Park

Photo: Anne Gosse

We followed the path east and took the turn-off to the lookout over Addington Marsh. This path is nice because it has not been "gravelized" like the main path so it is a nice quiet walk. There are a couple of steep descents which caused some anxious moments but everyone made it.

At one of these descents, we came upon a little tree frog which took no notice of all the attention it was getting as it crossed the path. We stopped for a while at the look-out to take in the view and look for more birds. All that remains of the platform that used to be there are the cut-off pilings in the rock.

After we had retraced our steps back to the main path, we continued around to the junction where one path leads back to the lakes and the parking lot and the other leads to the high knoll and beyond. Four of the group decided to head back and four of us decided to press on up to the knoll. It was quite a climb along a path with lots of tree roots across it.

With much determination, we all made it to the top and were even rewarded with a good sighting of a Hermit Thrush along the way. It was well worth the effort to get to the top, especially since, as we came out onto the bluff, we saw two Sandhill Cranes calling and flying over the lakes below. We all shed large amounts of clothing as we were much too hot after the climb and the sun was coming out. We then sat admiring the view and eating lunch, before getting ready to head back down the trail.

The trip down seemed like nothing compared to the trip up and we were soon heading back along the main trail towards the route back to the lakes that the rest of the group had taken a few hours earlier. On arriving back at the cars, we were all in agreement that the day had been a great success and that Minnehada Park was a wonderful place to spend a cool, dry autumn day.

Anne Gosse

*Bird species for the trip (total of 24 species):
Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin,
Black-capped Chickadee, Pacific Wren,
Northern Flicker, Canada Goose, Wood Duck,
Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Shoveler,
Bald Eagle, Ring-necked Duck, Steller's Jay,
Golden-crowned Kinglet, Great Blue Heron,
Hermit Thrush, Common Raven, Sandhill
Crane, Scaup sp, Gadwall, White-crowned
Sparrow, American Wigeon, Chestnut-backed
Chickadee, Song Sparrow.*

BOUNDARY BAY REGIONAL PARK OCTOBER 19TH

Fog! We have had to worry about rain and snow, but never fog! However, the fog was not as thick as had been predicted when we arrived at Boundary Bay Park. Fourteen naturalists, plus several newbie's, met our leader John Gordon in the parking lot.

Before we set off, our leader told us some very helpful picture taking and camera hints - along with a few birding tips that he had learned over the years. He spoke about the different variety of cameras and what type would work better for various people's photography interests. He then went on to make many good suggestions about picture taking with regards to light, background and camera settings as we walked along the dyke. He also stressed the importance of keeping a birding diary of "where and what" you have seen in the past in the different areas. You can later refer back to your diary and you'll find that most birds come back to the same areas each year. Another interesting hint was to watch what birds are eating as that is a good indicator of where to go and search for them.

As we strolled along the dykes to the pond, we saw several Northern Harriers flying low over the fields and the outer foreshore. A Peregrine Falcon soared by a couple of times. Lots of Northern Flickers were about. We watched for Short-eared Owls - but none appeared. A pair of Northern Shrikes were diving at European Starlings and we saw flocks of ducks rising up on the foreshore. All in all, we found quite a few different bird species along our trail and had a very enjoyable morning. We ended the morning



Northern Harrier

Photo: John Gordon

with a count of 30 species - which included five different species of Sparrows - Song, Fox, Lincoln, White-crowned and Golden-crowned. To top it off, we found a very tiny Deer Mouse frantically trying to run for cover and had a good look at him before he disappeared under logs. Thank you John for generously giving your time and knowledge - also for an interesting day of birding!

Anne Gosse

PURPLE MARTIN NEST BOXES



Checking the next box

Photo: John Gordon

Roy Teo (above), myself, Lisa from LEPS and two Metro Vancouver staff installed and cleaned Purple Martin boxes at Tavistock Point Thursday Nov 22.

One box had been used by a European Starling and four by Tree Swallows. The nest entrance holes were made a little smaller to stop the sparrows from nesting.

We are looking for volunteers who can monitor the birds in the summer. If you walk to Tavistock Point either in mornings or evenings please call me at 604 533-7171.

John Gordon

GLENN RYDER AND THE MOUNTAIN VIEW CROWN LAND OCTOBER 2013



Glenn Ryder

Photo: Bob Puls

Glenn Ryder died on October 2nd 2013. Glenn was a founder and Life Member of the LFN and one of the team that lobbied to establish Campbell Valley Regional Park.

I had seen Glenn on the Mountain View Crown Land lease only the week before and though he was becoming increasingly frail as the years passed, there was no indication that he was not long for this world - his death was a complete shock.

Glenn's last environmental project on the biodiversity site was to clear an area near the northwestern boundary to restore it for salamander and frog habitat. He dug a small pond with an island in the centre.

Glenn was still doing some industrial archaeological excavating and was working on the site of the 11th house. He had raked up quite a lot of glass, found a large chain and assorted metal which included what he described as a toy fire engine. Other artifacts which he had left at the site (and I collected) were two intact bottles, a spoon with the inscription 'NEVADA SILVER O.S.CO.' on the handle, a talcum powder bottle cap, a drill bit, and an as yet unidentified object that might have been a lock.

A few flatware / tableware manufacturers in the late 1800's and early 1900's had non-silver alloys called "Nevada Silver" or "Nevada Silver Metal." One of these was Daniel & Arter of

Birmingham, England ("Nevada Silver D&A"). I wasn't able to find a reference to the O.S.CO. Certain alloys, referred to as Venetian silver and Nevada silver, consist of nickel and silver. Although they're solid metal, rather than plated, they contain less silver than sterling does. These lower-grade compounds are often less costly than silver plate but don't polish up as brightly.

Wayne Campbell is the executor of Glenn's will and is looking for a home for Glenn's collections and records at UBC or SFU where they will be accessible for future reference. Glenn had copious wildlife records dating back to the 1940's. Glenn was also an accomplished artist and drew all the illustrations for the 'Birds of Langley' as seen in Campbell Valley Park' published in 1980 by the LFN.

Although Glenn was shy, reclusive (we affectionately referred to him as 'the invisible man'), and penniless, he made up for his eccentricity with a lifetime of natural exploration, largely in the Fraser Valley, and shared this information with local councils, ministries, museums and educational facilities. Largely self-taught, Glenn's knowledge of wildlife was immense and recognised throughout the field. Last year (2012) he was awarded 'The Steve Cannings award' by the BC Ornithologists for exceptional contributions to ornithology in British Columbia.

I will miss meeting Glenn out in the Crown Lands.

Bob Puls



Leucistic deer at Mountain View

Photo: Bob Puls (Trail Camera)

FORSLUND/WATSON WILDLIFE AREA

On November 15th, some of the F/W committee met with our Ministry representatives Sylvia Letay, Ecosystems Officer, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, South Coast and Brent Gurd, her biologist colleague who works with her on the project and is an alternate contact for us. This turned out to be the wettest afternoon of the month so we unanimously voted not to tour the site but instead retreat to the 'Wired Monk' for coffee, warmth and an indoor discussion.

We had good discussions which included tree planting for increased diversity in the woodland, a written contract for hay cutting, Blackberry and Lamium control, bullfrog control and enhancement of salamander and Red-legged frog habitat.

Whilst meeting at the 26th Street entrance, it was found that the fence had been pushed inwards, thereby releasing the locked gate latch. Ryan put a chain through the lock to the post, thus making the gate secure on the following day.

John Gordon has volunteered to take over the monthly bird tally, and Gareth Pugh has volunteered to take over the nest box monitoring on the site. Bob showed Gareth where the 33 boxes are located and checked them all. Despite all three of the Wood Duck boxes being used last year, only one of them was used in 2013. Many of the swallow boxes were occupied by Deer mice who will likely face eviction prior to the swallows returning in the spring. The total use of the boxes in 2013 seemed to be one pair of Black-capped Chickadees, one pair of Tree Swallows and one pair of Violet-green Swallows. Hopefully we can come up with ways to increase usage in 2014.

Our current plans are to go ahead and plant some of the Sitka spruce that LEPS have available for us and see if the deer are as partial to them as they are to the young Western Red Cedars we planted in 2011-2013.

Bob Puls

WINTER FUNGI: COLOUR IN THE WINTER WOODS



Chicken-of-the-woods Photo: Al Grass

The winter woods are often muted shades of gray with few colours save browns, and perhaps greens. Winter is not the 'mushroom season' but there are fungi and lichens to lend a note of cheer to your walks.

Some of these are:

- * *Stereum, spp* - look like bracket fungi and can be very colourful with oranges, pinks and yellows. Great camera subjects. No pores on undersides like polypores.
- * Turkeytail (*Trametes versicolor*) also known as the rainbow fungus with its variable bands of pink, yellow, orange, brown and grey, a polypore on rotten logs like alder.
- * Jelly Tooth or 'cat's tongue' (*Pseudo-hydnum gelatinosum*) looks like a small oyster fungus but has 'spines' instead of gills. Lovely tan on top, white below. On well rotted logs.
- * Carbon Antlers (*Xylaria, sp*) - sometimes called 'dead-man's fingers' but that name should be applied to a different species.
- * Crust Fungi - some, like *Phebia*, form beautiful orange crusts on dead wood.
- * Lichens - crustose, foliose, and fruticose.

A good hand lens reveals amazing beauty and colourful details. Look for them on tree bark or rocks.

Al and Jude Grass

FUNGI AND BIRDS?



Hawk Wing Fungus

Photo: Al Grass

Some fungi evoke images of birds and bird nests, at least as far as common names are concerned. These include:

- * Bird's nest fungi - three common genera: *Nidula*, *Crucibulum*, and *Cyathus*. Their cups contain structures - the "eggs" called peridioles containing spores. The nests are splash cups. Peridioles are knocked out of the cups by rain drops, a method of spore dispersal.
- * Turkeytail (*Trametes versicolor*) - its banding looks like a turkey's tail, sometimes with colours like pink, gray, and brown.
- * False Turkey Tail (*Stereum sp*) - resembles *Trametes* from the topside, but has no pores. A *Stereum*.
- * Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus, sp*) - beautiful orange/yellow polypore sometimes called the Sulphur Polypore. J. Duane Sept (*Common Mushrooms of the Northwest*) notes: "Its texture is that of chicken (not the taste) as its common name suggests".
- * Fried Chicken Mushroom (*Lyophyllum, sp*) again on the theme of chicken. Said to taste like chicken (or perhaps 'suggests chicken').
- * Hawk Wing (*Sarcodon, sp*) a *Hydnum* or "tooth fungus". Its common name comes from the close resemblance to the "delicate layered feathers of the wing of a hawk" - - . (J. D. Sept). (A "chicken hawk"?)
- * Nest Cap (*Phyllotopsis, sp*) name comes from its depressed cap suggesting a nest.

In truth, it's really a matter of a rich imagination - there are references to other creatures too like pig's ears (*Gomphus, sp*); hedgehog (*Hydnum, sp.*), Oysters (*Panellus, spp*) and beef steak (*Fistulina, sp*). A rich imagination indeed!

Al & Jude Grass

Literature Cited:

Sept, J. Duane.2006. *Common Mushrooms of the Northwest*. Calypso Publishing, Sechelt, B.C. Canada. 94pp.

SKAGIT VALLEY FIELD TRIP

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 9TH

WEATHER: SUNNY AND WARM



American Dipper

Photo: Al Grass

We gathered at our usual meeting place - the Silver Skagit Bridge, where we were entertained by a pair of American Dippers, who put on a wonderful show including beautiful singing. Salmon were spawning which, no doubt, attracted dippers who love to feed on roe. We continued down the road to Silver Lake where we stopped to scan for birds like Barrow's Goldeneye. The road, by this time, was getting rough - - and rougher! The road was in a word 'awful' - the worst we've seen it in all the years we've been going to the Skagit. We decided to turn back and go to nearby Cheam Lake Wetlands Regional Park where we had lunch and a nice walk around the park, tallying 21 bird species including Red-tailed Hawk, Pied-billed Grebe, Brown Creeper, Marsh Wren, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Belted Kingfisher, Wood Duck, and raven. Also two coyotes were spotted. Thanks to all who came.

Al & Jude Grass

FALL PROGRAMMES

Check our website for updates!

Meetings are held commencing at 7.15 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley. Unless otherwise indicated, they consist of a brief monthly business meeting, followed by the feature presentation (approximately one hour), followed by refreshments.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 19TH

"MEMBERS' NIGHT"

AND CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Please bring up to ten slides or digital images or other display material to share your natural history experiences with other members.

Followed by a pot luck, finger food social: please bring a savory or sweet goodie to share.

Thursday January 16th

WETLAND PROTECTION AND RESTORATION IN BC *Dan Buffett, Ducks Unlimited Canada*

Dan will highlight the importance of wetlands, highlight the losses of wetlands in the lower mainland in the last century, an overview of DUC's conservation program in BC, with a focus on the BC Coast, and recent examples of conservation projects DU has undertaken to benefit all kinds of wildlife.

Bio: Dan Buffett is the Head of Conservation Programs BC Coast Office of Ducks Unlimited Canada. He works with both government and non-government agencies, as well as landowners, to protect and restore freshwater and estuarine habitat along the BC Coast. Dan has worked with Ducks Unlimited Canada since 1993, and completed his Masters in Resource and Environmental Management from Simon Fraser University in 2006.

Thursday February 20th

RECOVERY OF THE WESTERN PAINTED TURTLE IN THE LOWER MAINLAND AND FRASER VALLEY: RECOVERY THROUGH PARTNERSHIP, PLANNING AND PERSISTENCE.

Andrea Gielens

The Western Painted Turtles (*Chrysemys picta bellii*) is BC's only native turtle species. The Pacific Coast population within the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley is threatened with extirpation by loss of habitat, harvesting, invasive species, and extensive human impact.

Several years of survey, outreach, threat mitigation and habitat restoration have allowed for the assessment, prioritization and implementation of recovery actions. However, recovery of turtle populations in this region will require more intensive forms of recovery actions, such as augmentation, particularly at sites with non-breeding (non-viable) populations.

Currently, there is only one site, out of 23 known

occupied sites, which is viable and appears to be stable; however, it is also under threat. Additional occupied sites are degraded, yet turtles persist in limited numbers- often less than 5 individuals per site. These sites have been prioritized according to an evaluation matrix (Community and conservation planning matrix). Community/landowner support, risk assessment, habitat quality and historical implications present different priorities for population recovery. This novel assessment process has prioritized recovery sites and will help inform a 5-year plan for recovery that is currently being developed. *Bio: Andrea Gielens has a Bachelor's degree in zoology and animal behaviour and a Master's degree in Environmental Management. She has worked both in Canada and Europe, at Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Wildlife Preservation Trust on conservation programs for many species of amphibians and chelonians. She has worked extensively with both the Oregon Spotted frog Recovery Team (since 2006) as well as the Western Painted Turtle Recovery team (since 2010) in population recovery programs for both species.*

Thursday March 20th

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S MAJESTIC THOMPSON RIVER *Bernie Fandrich*

Bernie is the well-known proprietor of Kumsheen Raft Adventures, based in Lytton, BC. For 40 years, he and his family have been leading rafting and nature tours along the Thompson River. Now he has published a book covering the fascinating story of this magnificent river, from Savona to Lytton. Bernie will be sharing with us many of the entertaining anecdotes, excellent photographs and unusual historic tales to be found in his book. He will also have copies of his book for sale and autographing.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

SATURDAY DECEMBER 14TH

Pitt Meadows Bird Count (we do the section of their circle which is south of the Fraser River - Derby Reach to Surrey Bend). Meet at Denny's Restaurant in Walnut Grove at 7:30 am. Contact Bob Puls 604-856-7534

SUNDAY DECEMBER 29TH

Surrey-White Rock-Langley Bird Count. No experience necessary, we meet at the ABC Restaurant at Glover Road and the Langley Bypass at 7:30 am. Contact Kathy Masse 604-513-8927

ANNUAL BIRD COUNT

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST

Time: 7:30 am - 1 pm

Derby Reach and Brae Island bird count.

Meet: Lower lounge, St George's Church, Fort Langley.

FIELD TRIPS

*Unless otherwise noted, meet at Douglas Park Recreation Centre on Douglas Crescent between 204 and 206 Street at 9:00 am for car pooling. If you prefer to meet at the walk site, please phone so we can watch for you. **Please phone in advance so that the co-ordinator does not go needlessly to the meeting site** - if the co-ordinator has not heard from any participants by the evening before the outing, then he/she will not go to the meeting site. Bring water, a lunch, binoculars, field guides and appropriate clothing for the weather. For more information, to make comments, suggest walks or to let us know you are coming, please phone Anne Gosse, 604-888-1787.*

Please reimburse your carpool driver at \$3.50 per hour of driving time. Please dress appropriately for outdoor weather conditions/trails - with sturdy foot wear and warm clothing.

SATURDAY JANUARY 18TH

Time: 9:00 am

WEST DYKE TRAIL, TERRA NOVA, RICHMOND

Leader: Gareth Pugh

Come and join Gareth as we stroll along this dyke trail which has excellent views of the Sturgeon Banks, marshes, distant Howe Sound Mt, and the Gulf Islands. A birdwatcher's paradise, this park and area is an important part of the Pacific Flyway, which sees 1.4 million birds migrating through each year. We expect to see lots of waterfowl, Snow Geese, various raptors and songbirds and grebes. To get to Terra Nova, take Westminster Highway all the way to No. 1 Road; turn right (North) up to River Road. Turn left and drive to the parking lot at the end which is right on the dyke. Meet at 8:00 am Langley Douglas Cres. Phone 888-1787 or 576-6831 to let us know to expect you.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31ST

Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

OWLING IN CAMPBELL VALLEY PARK

Leader: Al Grass

The resident owls of Campbell Valley Regional Park will be starting to think about spring, setting up their nest, and planning the family. Join Al Grass on a walk to listen for a resident Barred Owl, Great Horned Owl or possibly a Barn Owl and we might even be lucky enough to see an owl. Participants should be prepared to walk 2 km along dark trails. Please bring a flashlight. Meet at the 16th Avenue parking lot. Walk will be cancelled if raining. Limited to 16 LFN members. Registration required phone: 604-538-8774.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH

Time: 9:30 am - 12 noon

WONDERS OF THE WINTER WOODS

- FUNGUS, LICHENS, AND MORE!

CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

Leader: Al Grass

Join Birds on the Bay and the Langley Field Naturalists. Our winter woods have a wonderful diversity of plants, lichens and fungi. We will have a go at identifying some trees and shrubs by their buds as well. Bring a hand lens if you have one, and I will have some to share. Dress warmly. Meet at the 16th Avenue parking lot (North entrance to the Park). For more info contact 604-538-8774.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

9:30 am - 12 noon

GOLDEN EAGLE QUEST!

CHILLIWACK AREA & HERONRY

Leader: John Gordon

John will be taking us on an exciting search to find one of the largest and most majestic birds of prey that reside in our Fraser Valley - the Golden Eagle! We plan to look amongst the pretty pastoral farming district of Chilliwack for this large dark brown raptor. We also plan to drop into the Chilliwack Heronry for a Ring-necked Duck search and to eat lunch. Meet at 8:00 am at Douglas Crescent or at Old Yale Road ESSO, 34515 Old Yale Rd, Abbotsford, BC V2S 8G2, just off exit no. 109 Yale Rd West, to the right. Phone 604-533-7171 or 604-888-1787 for information.

SATURDAY MARCH 8TH

10:00 am - 12 noon

WHAT IS FOR DINNER?

RAPTORS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

AT MAPLEWOOD FLATS, NORTH VANCOUVER

Leader: Al Grass

Join Al Grass as we search out why are flats critical habitats for wildlife? The walk will focus on the importance of raptors such as eagles, hawks, and owls. Meet: at the WBT Site Office, 2645 Dollarton Highway 2 km east of the Iron Workers (Second Narrows) Bridge. (Gate opens at 9:30 am - lots of free parking) Meet 8:15 am Douglas Cres. Langley or 9:30 am at Maplewood Park. For information phone 604-538-8774.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2013

Time: 9:00 am to 12 noon

ALDERGROVE REGIONAL PARK

Leader: Bob Puls

Come and awaken your curiosity and engage your senses while exploring nature and the changing seasons in this beautiful regional park! We will check out the winter bird & waterfowl activity around the ponds and look at some of this park's features. Meet at Aldergrove Regional Park central parking. Phone 604-888-1787 or Bob 604-856-7534 to let us know if you are coming or to carpool from Douglas Crescent.

*** Attachment: Obituary for Glenn Ryder**