



Langley Field Naturalists

To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education



Langley Field Naturalists acknowledge we are in the unceded Indigenous lands of the Coast Salish (Stó:lo) people

c/o 201-4839 221 St, Langley, BC V3A 2P1

www.langleyfieldnaturalists.org

e-mail: langleyfieldnaturalists@gmail.com

Newsletter

December 2024

NICOMEKL NATUREKIDS FALL OUTINGS



Ready to go!

Photo: Anthea Farr

Our first event was a Painted Turtle release at the man-made Silvermere Lake in Mission. The Painted Turtles (a species at risk) had been carefully raised in captivity and were now more than ready to go! Biologist Andrea Gielens showed us all how to hold a turtle (like a sandwich). One by one, these special, micro-chipped turtles were released in a shallow, well-vegetated corner of the lake.

Some swam quickly away and some just sank down into the mud (all normal behaviours, Andrea told us).



The Release

Photo: Anthea Farr



Learning to cast

Photo: Anthea Farr

On another rare sunny fall day, we were off to the Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery. There we learned about BC's freshwater fish, including sturgeons. Then it was time to fish at the hatchery's lovely and well-stocked ponds. Each kid learned how to cast and, eventually, each kid caught a Rainbow Trout! The trout could be held for 5 seconds or less, before being gently released back into the pond. Lots of smiles on kids and parents!



Success!

Photo: Anthea Farr

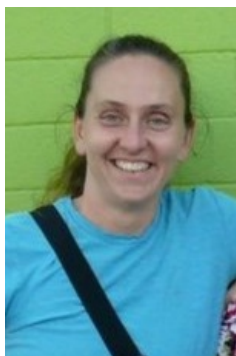
As fall progressed, rainier weather ensued, making for a very muddy tree planting event at Sullivan Park. However, this created the perfect conditions for our next event: a mushroom walk at Tynehead Park. Many bright, colourful fungi were observed, as well as spawning coho in the fast-flowing river and creeks.

All in all, we had a nice variety of outings, with water featuring prominently in all of them. Our thanks to the LFN for covering the cost of the "Learn to Fish" event.

If you know of any families with 5 to 12 year-old children keen about nature, check out <https://naturekidsbc.ca/> - we welcome new members!

Anthea Farr

President's message



Heading into the holiday season and a new year I find myself scrolling through every Christmas themed movie I can stream as background noise for cleaning and crafting adventures. Every story ends in a happy ending, fanfare and music. The other thing these shows always seem to have in common is an unending fountain of money. How else would the characters pull off plane trips on Christmas Eve, massive New Year's Eve parties, and don't get

me started on the gobs of plastic decorations; they must have to rent a storage locker just to decorate for Christmas.

The other day, a friend suggested I check out a documentary: "Join or Die". I figured why not? Try something a little different over the usual holiday RomComs that were probably making me more depressed than jolly. The documentary focuses on the US Democratic crisis, and how it relates to reduced engagement in clubs. It was inspiring and yet another nod to why we need groups like the LFN and BC Nature.

Unique sets of data that were used for quantifying and correlating the finds was possibly my favourite part of the documentary. I love data! One unique data set was picnicking! Looks like we need to host a lot more picnics!

After watching I was left with a new drive to get out and spread the word about our club. Find as many members as possible, promote our indoor programs and have so many people join our walks that we need to turn people away. Engagement in projects by our existing volunteers is also very important, possibly more than getting new people to join.

2024 brought us more opportunities to engage with nature which will continue into the new year. Hope to see you out there in the new year for a planting event, leading a new walk, or hanging out at a community event as we shape the community we want to be a part of.

Lisa Dreves

*Wishing everyone a very merry
Christmas
and a happy 2025*

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS 2024-2025

DIRECTORS

President: & webmaster	Lisa Dreves lisabob2@yahoo.com
Vice President:	Vacant
Past President & Conservation/library	Bob Puls bob@puls.ca
Secretary:	Nora Truman lfnsecretary@hotmail.com
Treasurer & Newsletter:	Sheila Puls sheila@puls.ca
Membership:	Marianne Carefoot mcarefoot@yahoo.com
Programmes:	Anne Gosse corkie1@shaw.ca
Field Trips:	Gareth Pugh gareth2@uniserve.com
Publicity:	Lilianne Fuller/Garima Wilson
History project:	Lilianne Fuller lilianne101@shaw.ca
BC Nature:	Eric Habisch eric.habisch@gmail.com
Member At Large:	Caren Porter, caporter@shaw.ca Merle Booi, merle.booi@gmail.com

REPRESENTATIVES & CONVENORS

Greeters:	Rebecca Tin Tun/Helen Thompson
Refreshments:	Lynda Lightfoot lilightfoot@shaw.ca
Forslund-Watson:	Ryan Usenik jrusenik@telus.net
NatureKids:	Anthea Farr nicomekl@naturekidsbc.ca
Member Participation:	Joanne Rosenthal jrose77@yahoo.com
Displays:	Vacant

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month from September to June, starting at 7.30 pm
Executive meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month Sept - June

ALL THINGS BUTTERFLIES 2024

OTTER PARK BUTTERFLY/POLLINATOR GARDEN



Getting started

Photo: Eric Habisch

At the time of writing we have completed the preparation of the site and planted plants that will provide the habitat, both as larval host food and adult butterfly nectaring sources. There are still additional steps for the garden, such as more invasive weed suppression work, defining the borders of the garden to assist the Township of Langley crews when they do maintenance nearby and signage, both for educational purposes and thanking those whose funding made the garden possible.

Initial site preparation of invasive plants began on May 19th 2024 with a follow-up work day on July 6th 2024. The work was performed by volunteers from Langley Field Naturalists, Bertrand Creek Enhancement Society and Langley Environmental Partners Society.



Work continued

Photo: Eric Habisch

Planting of the flowers and shrubs purchased occurred on October 12 2024. It was a timely planting as we experienced an Atmospheric River a number of days later, which guaranteed the new plants had a good watering and were settled into their new home. Leaves from the neighbouring trees have now fallen to further protect the plants through this fall and winter in preparation for next season's emerging. We look forward to seeing the fruits of our labour in the upcoming spring of 2025 where we can continue our work to complete the project while enjoying any winged visitors.

While working onsite on the various days, we did have a few butterfly visitors already, which we feel bodes well for the site. On our planting day, even in October, we had a couple of Cabbage White butterflies check out the garden area.

Lots of photos of the work that has occurred have been posted to the LFN and LEPS's social media feeds with an article going out in the Langley Advance Times back in June. Have a look for them.

We plan to apply to be part of the David Suzuki Foundation's Butterflyway project as well.

LFN BUTTERFLIES OF LANGLEY BROCHURE/HANDOUT

Anthea, Bob and myself are working on updating the very popular LFN Butterflies in Langley brochure. The updating includes the species that may be seen presently in Langley, their larval food plants with adult nectar flowers and what the likelihood would be of seeing them. It will be ready for next year's butterfly season.

STATE OF BUTTERFLIES IN THE LANGLEY/METRO VANCOUVER REGION

This past season has been a less than fruitful one of observing butterflies in Langley and the Metro Vancouver area for that matter. Compared to previous years, the numbers appear to be down. Like other species, butterflies are directly affected by habitat loss and our changing weather and we are now seeing those effects.

In 2024, 18 species were documented in Langley into iNaturalist which is presently the "go to" platform for the recording of observations. Some

of the species only had individual observations and not the many of years past.



Brown Elfin Butterfly

Photo: Eric Habisch

The numbers were low and the flight periods appeared to have been shorter compared to last year. I participated in the David Suzuki Foundation's Butterflies In Your Backyard Project (BIMBY) where on Zoom calls, theories and speculation were exchanged. The consensus was good data was required to answer the question "where have all the butterflies gone".



Western Elfin Pine Butterfly

Photo: Eric Habisch

A silver lining to this season was the discovery of three species in Langley that had not been documented before in any online database or historical literature we had access to. These butterflies appear to be a resident population and not random migrants passing through. The Brown Elfin, Western Pine Elfin and Mariposa Copper were found in Derby Reach Bog with access from a permit we secured from the Metro Vancouver Regional District. These butterflies can be found elsewhere in the Lower Mainland but it was an exciting time to find them here in Langley. Who knows what other species

of butterflies may be in Langley still to be discovered? There is more work to be done.



Mariposa Copper Butterfly

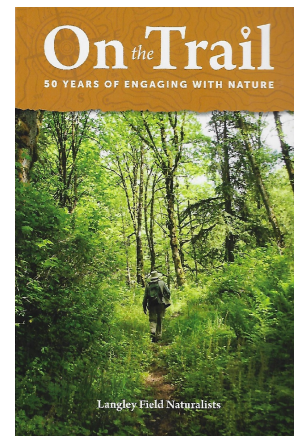
Photo: Eric Habisch

The 2024 DSF BIMBY report is due to be released at the end of November and I will share it with everyone once it is out.

Until next season...

Eric Habisch

Just in time for Christmas,
get a copy of our history book,
'On the Trail'.



A very nice gift for your party hostess
or a stocking stuffer.

Member price is \$15.00.
Email Lilianne today.
Lilianne101@shaw.ca

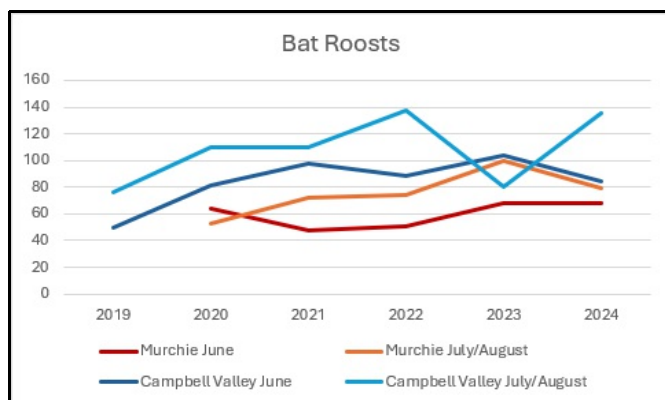
BAT MONITORING

The growth of our urban areas and the loss of native habitat areas has meant bats have fewer and fewer places to hunt for food and to find shelter to rest and raise their young. In BC we are also concerned about the arrival of White nose syndrome, knowing how it can decimate a bat population.

Biologists in BC do specific monitoring counts of bats as well as other species to keep abreast of any changes in the bat population. BC Bat Community is the agency leading this cause in our area. With some of the bat species, the females gather in groups called roosts to have their young (pups). Once the pups are mature both the female and the pups leave the roosts. It is during this time when the pups are being born and are maturing that bat counts are performed. Bats leave the roost at sunset to hunt and forage for food before returning to the roost at sunrise.

For several years LFN has looked after doing the bat counts at two roosts in Langley for the BC Bat Community. With each count, volunteers position themselves just before sunset and wait for the bats to leave the roost. Typically, all bats leave the roost within an hour. Weather conditions and temperature can influence the number of bats that leave a roost on any evening. Another factor that can influence the number of bats counted is human error. Our count numbers are forwarded to BC Bat Community.

An official bat count involves doing two counts in June which coincides with when the pups are being born and remaining behind when their mothers go off foraging for food. Another two counts are done in later July and early Aug when some of the pups are already leaving the roost. BC Bat Community combines the two counts and uses this number as the official number of bats for each roost.



The above chart by Lisa Dreves, with yearly numbers, shows increased population growth in both roosts that are being monitored in Langley. It shows that if roosts are not disturbed or influenced by any other outside force, they are maintaining their population numbers. Because a female bat only has one pup per year, even under ideal conditions they can not increase population numbers very fast. It also means if we have a negative effect on a bat population number, they recover very slowly.

An excellent way to understand bats better is to volunteer with a bat count. As bats are nocturnal, most people seldom see one, let alone a large number of them at any one time.

Ryan Usenik



LANGLEY CITY BECAME A NEWLY CERTIFIED BAT-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY!

Langley City has pledged to:

- Protect, enhance, and create bat habitats
- Share important bat information and provide handouts at City Hall. Literature about bats must be available in City Hall. The BC Community Bat Project handouts for builders, roofers, realtors, pest control companies and homeowners (including the Happy Bat brochure from the BC Stewardship Society) must be displayed and provided when relevant permits and licences are awarded (e.g. house demolitions, business license renewals, etc.).
- Promote learning and awareness about bats.

Congratulations to Langley City and thank you to Terri-Lou and Ron Trainor for working to this end!

SUPPLEMENT TO THE MEADOW LAKE RANCH TRIP, PUBLISHED WITH SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Gareth's excellent report on our summer trip to the Chilcotin emphasized bird counts, which are the prime objective of these annual weeklong events. However, there are lots of opportunities for other naturalist sightings, and this report covers some of them.

Botany:



Herman botanizing

Photo: Bob Puls

Many flowers were recorded that are not seen in our Fraser Valley location. Salsify was abundant with two varieties being present: Meadow Salsify – *Tragopogon pratensis* and Yellow Salsify – *T. dubius*.



Meadow Salsify

Photo: Bob Puls



Yellow Salsify

Photo: Bob Puls

An unusual parasitic plant, Naked Broomrape - *Orobanche uniflora*, that taps nutrients from many other species was seen in a couple of locations. We also recorded Sainfoin, Wild Blue Flax, Field Locoweed, Woollypod Milk-vetch, Wandering Daisy, Long-leaved Daisy, Brown-eyed Susan, Death Camas, Old Man's Whiskers, Pasture Sage, Prairie Cinquefoil, Golden Corydalis, Rocky Mountain Butterweed, Field Pennycress, Cut-leaf Anemone, Dalmatian Toadflax, Lemonweed, Larkspur, Sticky Geranium, Nodding Onion, Prickly-pear cactus, Lance-leaved Stonecrop, Northern Bedstraw, and

Small Wallflower - all of which I photographed, but many more species were seen.

Fungi:

Fungi were few at this time of year, but we did see some puffballs, one specimen of Orange-capped Scaberstalk - *Leccinium sp* and Wolf's Milk.

Insects:



A massive invasion of Nootka Roses by Green Blister Beetles was interesting and Tineke got a fantastic closeup of one beetle, with her cellphone camera macro adaptor, which showed every hair on the creature.

On a stroll one evening, from the lodge, we encountered a massive hatch of Mayflies. Photos show John's jacket, and nymph case with free fly; we were all covered in them, and close examination revealed them still carrying their shed nymph cases and then emerging completely from them.



Photo: Bob Puls



Mayfly with shed case

Photo: Bob Puls

A bit later, in the light of the sinking sun, we saw glistening dots all through the grasses. Close examination of the dots showed them to be caterpillars, probably of a Tussock moth species.

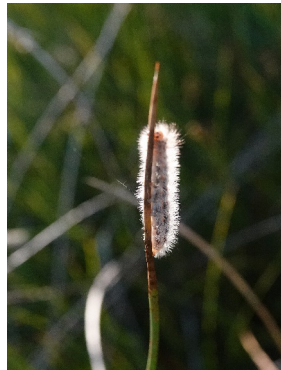


Glistening caterpillars

Photo: Bob Puls

Viveka was the butterfly enthusiast, and Gareth covered most of those sightings in his article.

Gareth also covered most of the mammals we saw, including Red Squirrels, Rabbits, Chipmunks, Marmots, Black Bears, Coyotes, Deer, a Moose and a hotly contested Mule Deer v Elk, which unfortunately didn't pose for a photo.



Caterpillar *Photo: Bob Puls*

Another great annual trip with many thanks to Gareth for arranging it.

Bob Puls

DERBY BOG **WEDNESDAY, JULY 17TH**



Gathering for the walk

Photo: Benita Antonio

On a warm summer's evening, 22 keen participants joined me on a stroll through North Langley's Derby Reach Bog / Langley Bog, a place off limits to the public and accessible only with a permit. Metro

Vancouver kindly granted the Langley Field Naturalists (LFN) permission to embark on this foray. The Langley Bog is one of the largest remnant domed bogs in the lower mainland and a local treasure. Of course, it would have been a more highly valued and treasured treasure if it wasn't for humanity's incessant need to tear natural features asunder to make a few bucks.



Round-leaved Sundew (Drosera rotundifolia)

Photo: Benita Antonio

Sphagnum moss, the fascinating and beautiful primary constituent of bogs, is prized in gardening for its amazing water holding capacity: the large, dead balloon-like cells make up about 90% of the weight of the plant, with narrow, green photosynthetic cells forming the interstices between them. That water-holding capacity is the key to its value in the garden, amending rapidly draining, coarse mineral soils and breaking up fine mineral soils so our cherished ornamentals can thrive.

You may better know Sphagnum moss by its commercial name, peat moss. Peat is just dead plant material, so peat moss is dead and partly decayed Sphagnum. It is fascinating stuff, well, more so the live stuff, but it all counts, and it is the dead, slowly decaying bits beneath the colourful tops that allow the bog to grow upward, drawing water towards the sky, creating that dome of Sphagnum characteristic of the large bogs in the lower mainland. Everyone knows of Burns Bog, but the smaller, lesser known and visited Langley Bog is a fine place to visit and get your bog fix.

Metro Vancouver (MV) purchased this property for conservation. Over the years it has permitted university-affiliated scientists and members of the LFN to conduct studies in the bog. The price of admission is providing MV with the information we acquire. A fair exchange. With the information MV

gains, it can better understand what it has and how best to ensure it persists. Although not greatly biodiverse, bogs have specific characteristics – low pH and nutrient levels, saturation and little oxygen – that support a select few specialized plants, with Sphagnum the most important and impressive.

But it wasn't all Sphagnum and other plants, although surely that would have been enough. A Great Horned Owl made an appearance, flying across the sawdust path in front of the group. It landed in a small birch alongside the path to pose for all to admire. It wasn't only thrilling for the oldsters in the group; the three enthusiastic youngsters seemed quite excited too.

There is so much to discover and cherish in a bog, but you must look carefully and spend much time. Therein lies the danger. You can leave a bog, but the bog will never leave you.

Phil Henderson

SPARROW CREEK FARM WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14TH

Eleven members met for a warm summer evening walk. In the front pasture we saw at least 6 American Goldfinches feeding on a patch of thistle. We walked down the old Rawlison Crescent gravel road to Sparrow Creek pond. There was an abundance of dragonflies and damselflies at the pond edge. Eric provided an excellent education on the classification, feeding habits and flight abilities of the dragonflies.

The 2 year old area of native planting (Osier Dogwood, Salmonberry, Sweet Gale, Osoberry and Black Twinberry) on the edge of the pond are doing well in spite of the hot summer. We saw Barn Swallows over the water and some remaining Cedar Waxwings, Common Yellowthroats and a warbler. In a small Willow tree, we discovered a flock of Bushtits, estimated to be in the range of 30-50 birds. We saw a Red-tailed Hawk being repeatedly harassed by a Red-winged Blackbird.

We looked at the 2 year old plantings in the back pasture. They were doing well, in spite of the never ending Blackberry growth. The Vine Maple was noted to have a mould on its leaves, which has been noted elsewhere this year.

We returned to our home deck for coffee, tea, snacks and conversations about the walk.

Roy Cline

NOEL BOOTH PARK AND BROOKSWOOD POND SATURDAY, AUGUST 31ST



The walkers

Photo: Nora Truman

Our group of 14 walkers gathered on a lovely Saturday morning at the 36th Avenue perimeter trailhead. I showed the group a large fisheries map of Langley and traced the route of Anderson Creek which travels through Noel Booth Park and also passes through three other parks, Dale Ball Passive Park, Brookswood Park and in Surrey, Hi-Knoll Park, before joining the Nicomekl River.

We walked south along the trail, browsing to look at Bracken, Western Sword Fern, Salal, Douglas Fir and Western Cedar. The path turns west running parallel to the creek and descends behind the playing fields where the creek flooded in 2022, the year our region received record rainfall which flooded farms and homes in Sumas Prairie.

We passed over a walking bridge towards Noel Booth Elementary School and crossed in front of the school going west to enter the trail heading south. It was mentioned that the school is named after Noel Booth who came to British Columbia from Nottingham, England in 1911. He was a merchant and built a general store that stood on 24th Ave between 200th Street and 208th Street from the 1920's until 2014. He served as a Langley Reeve several times and as an Alderman for fifteen years. He was also a school trustee from 1938 to 1941 and the school named after him was built in 1981.

We continued our walk going east along a wide path that has deep ditches on the south side indicating this was previously a road for access to

Brookswood Pond where there was gravel extraction prior to the 1970's.

As Brookswood developed, there was municipal pressure to change the zoning at Brookswood Pond to allow another sports field. In 2007, a group of concerned citizens, including Kathy Masse and Anthea Farr from our Langley Field Naturalists, drafted a written submission of protest that was read at a public Township of Langley meeting by Kathy. They strongly proposed that Brookswood Pond should be designated as a passive park with walking trails. The protests were a success and saved the park.

Our group saw a Red-naped Sapsucker in the trees as we approached the section of trail that circles Brookswood Pond. We saw many Nuthatches feeding up high on Douglas Fir. Eric mentioned that in the winter, Brookswood Pond is visited by Mallard Ducks, Canada Geese, Wood Ducks, Scaup, Green-winged Teal, Bald Eagles, Great Blue Heron and even Kingfishers. There are several species of small fish in the pond such as Sunfish and Bass.

We continued our walk past the Fire Hall and then north under the canopy of trees. There were Salmonberries along the borders of the trail and it turns out the plant name is from a story the Chinook First Nation tell : "The coyote was instructed to place the berries in the mouth of each salmon he caught in order to ensure continued good fishing".

We continued our walk going west parallel to Anderson Creek where there was Himalayan Blackberry, Ocean Spray and Spirea bordering the trail. Our walk finished with a little question and answer quiz and two copies of our club's second book, "Plants of Langley" were given out.

Nora Truman

FORSLUND WATSON PROPERTY SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7TH

Eight LFN members participated in the Forslund Watson walk on a beautiful fall morning. Thanks to cooler weather earlier in the spring and early summer, the water level was higher than normal in all the ponds. In fact probably none of the ponds will be vernal (dry up) this year.

The past 3 years BCIT has had a field lab project on the Forslund Watson property, where a vernal pond was constructed each year. This year BCIT is doing



The participants

Photo: Ryan Usenik

the lab project in the interior of BC. The vernal ponds act as excellent habitat for amphibians. Increasing wetland areas also benefits a wide range of other wildlife.

Reed Canary grass, which is an invasive grass species, grows very well in wetland areas. Hopefully many of the native shrubs that have been planted around the 3 BCIT ponds will be able to establish themselves. Many of the planted shrubs have had a wire cage placed around them for protection from the deer which like to browse on the new growth.

16 species of birds were observed. The group saw where the Great Horned Owls had nested and fledged the last two years. It was pointed out that Great Horned Owls do not build a nest. They use a nest that was built by another species in a previous year. A Steller's Jay and a Kestrel were observed in a bit of a dispute over territorial rights.

As a nature reserve, nature at Forslund Watson carries on with very little assistance or interference from humans.

Ryan Usenik

MOUNTAIN VIEW CROWN LANDS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

Seven LFN members met on a mild Fall morning to hike through this lovely patch of mature mixed forest. Thanks to the efforts of the club's hard-working bunch of trail clearers, we had an easy trail to follow as it meandered up and down and along the edge of the escarpment. At present no trails have been cleared down to Davidson Creek but I told the group about the remains of the old sawmill and the artifacts that Glenn Ryder discovered during his investigations of that part of the site. I also pointed out some old pits, from the time when First Nations had a fishing camp in the area, which are thought to have possibly been the site of pit houses. A number of large stumps from the long-ago logging had now become nurse stumps and had trees of varying sizes growing out of them.



At Mountain View

Photo: Perry Poulsen

There is no fence along the North boundary of the property and a substantial amount of logs, soil, etc., has been pushed into it from the adjacent berry farm. Despite requests from LFN, nothing has yet been done to rectify this situation.

Bob Puls wrote a detailed report on the property in 2019 following completion of a ten year bio-diversity survey which LFN were requested to carry out from 2009 to 2019. A number of people contributed to the report and club members assisted Bob with the survey, during which approximately 1643 species of birds, mammals, invertebrates, fish, amphibians, trees, plants and fungi were identified and catalogued.

Perry kindly agreed to take the lead and he pointed out a number of fungi as we went along, including a Rounded Earthstar. The two commonest were Turkey



Rounded Earthstar

Photo: Perry Poulsen

Tail and Hoof Fungus. Perry pointed out a number of small birds, including Yellow-rumped Warblers which were still migrating through the area. In total he recorded 16 species on e-Bird.

The cleared trail ends at a large Cedar tree which has a hole at the bottom with water in it due to the high water table in that part of the forest. Thanks to the trail clearers, who had laid down planks, we were able to walk across the wet area through large Skunk Cabbage. From there we retraced our steps back to the cars and completed a most enjoyable morning by visiting the nearest coffee house at JD Farms on 248th Street.

Gareth Pugh

MILASTER PASSIVE PARK SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH

We had nine walkers come out on a grey cloudy morning for the walk at this yet to be open to the public park. Our first stop was at the newly created sediment catchment pond which is part of Nathan Creek. Part of the embankment had been damaged from the rains last year and we could see the repair work that had been done to that impacted area. It will be tested when the rains of November come.

We could see a few of the fish fry in the murky waters near the bank where we stood. The group proceeded on the trail up behind the old house site where the tall Bigleaf Maple trees are. The "cathedral", as it was nicknamed by one of our walkers, was in its glory with the branches heavily laden with mosses and Licorice Ferns.



Robust Lancetooth Snail

Photo: Eric Habisch

On the trail we found snails in the leaf litter and had to be mindful where we were stepping. It was great to have Anthea along to fill in the gaps with her knowledge of the smaller residents of the forest. One of the finds was a larger Robust Lancetooth Snail with a much smaller snail in its mouth. Not something you see every day. Also found later was a Narrow-collared Snail-eating Beetle which could have been bad news for the snail should they have met. Another native snail, Pacific Sideband, was also seen but we were not fortunate enough to find any Oregon Forest Snails on this day.



Red-breasted Sapsucker

Photo: Perry Poulsen

All the while we were walking we were serenaded by the sound of Chorus Tree Frogs throughout the property and one even posed for a few photos on the trail. Perry was fooled by one of the Steller's Jays we

came across which emulated a Red-tailed Hawk exactly. Only when this corvid flew from the trees were we sure of this mimicker.

It was a quiet morning but we still recorded 19 species of birds in eBird with one of the highlights being a Red-breasted Sapsucker probing a nearby tree in close proximity to the group. A good west coast forest walk indeed.

Eric Habisch

HOUSTON TRAIL THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17TH

Not being familiar with this trail, I did a trial run earlier in the week starting at McKinnon Crescent. So automatically I waited at the Houston trailhead on McKinnon instead of the one on Allard Crescent. While waiting in the parking lot, lots of Cackling Geese flew over and a Purple Finch was feeding in a tree.



Shaggy Parasol

Photo: Wim Vesseur

Some tree cutting machinery was waiting on the parking lot. Luckily Gareth was one of the participants and called me around 9 am to ask where I was so I drove to the other lot. Gareth had already signed everyone in and they were eager to go on this lovely day. The first part of the walk was quiet for birds, but more and more were added to the list. When we got to the viewing platform we found some ducks on the water: Mallards and Wood Ducks. On the old snag on the left was the metal heron hanging as a thank you; the second one is in Fort Langley.

Continuing, we saw spots where beavers had been munching on trees. Larger cedars were often surrounded by wire cages to protect them.

When we continued our walk, we got to the other parking lot where they had now started cutting an old tree into pieces. To avoid the noise of the chain saws we moved on quickly. Along the trail we found lots of mushrooms such as old Oyster Mushrooms, Honey Mushrooms and Shaggy Parasol among others, while in one of the trees overhead we heard and saw a Hairy Woodpecker pecking away.



Trembling Merulius (Jelly Rot)

Photo: Gareth Pugh

Returning to the Allard Crescent parking lot, we found some more birds such as Steller's Jay, a large group of Pine Siskins and lots of Robins and Juncos.

Also we saw Christine Bishop who had somehow made the same walk without finding us earlier. She had heard a Coot at the marsh and also Red Crossbills around the parking lot. Adding these to the 19 species we had recorded, we ended with a final total of 21 species.

Wim Vesseur

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY SALMON RIVER TRAIL SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12TH

Fourteen of us set out to walk the Salmon River Trail at Trinity Western University on a beautiful sunny Saturday. I had help leading the walk from my former colleague and fellow LFN member, Ted Goshulak, who retired as head librarian at TWU a few years ago.

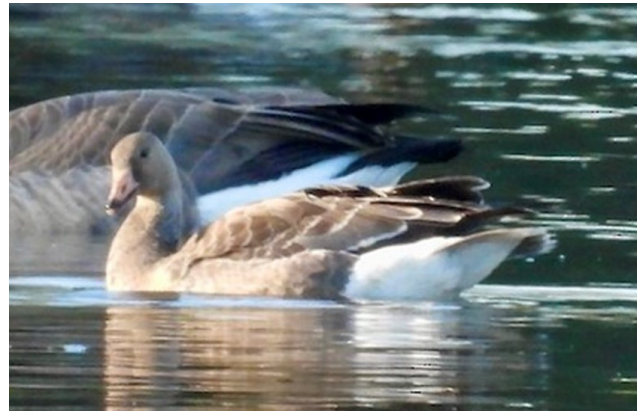
Ted kept the e-bird list for the morning, recording 20 species, including a Greater White-fronted Goose, swimming with a group of Canada Geese on McMillan Lake. Greater White-fronted Geese are not often seen in our area, as they just quickly pass through during their migration, so it was great to see this one finding some respite in the lake. Also in or near the lake we saw Wood Ducks, Mallards, a Belted Kingfisher, a Great Blue Heron and a Bald Eagle. It was also warm enough for a few insects, and Gareth Pugh found a friend in a brilliant red Autumn Meadowhawk dragonfly which alighted on Gareth's bright white jacket for a while.



McMillan Lake

Photo: Dave Clements

Probably the most entertaining bird of the day was a lively Hairy Woodpecker, in the section of the TWU Ecosystem Study Area known as the Back 40. The woodpecker seemed genuinely excited to see us and showed off his wood pecking skills, going up and down several trees right in front of us.



Greater White-fronted Goose

Photo: Ted Goshulak

Our walk took place just before we held a re-opening ceremony for the Salmon River Trail on October 19th. After a \$200,000 plus upgrade to the trail over the past 3 years, it was time to celebrate. As well as having the Township Mayor, Eric Woodward, speak at the event, we had local naturalists there representing the interests of the community. Ted Lightfoot spoke on behalf of the Salmon River Enhancement Society, Garima Wilson spoke on behalf of the Langley Environmental Partners Society, and Lisa Dreves, our amazing President, spoke on behalf of the LFN.

Indeed, we welcome members of LFN and other members of the community to come and enjoy the newly refurbished Salmon River Trail – it is open for the public to enjoy, anytime.

Dave Clements

REINTRODUCING BARN OWLS

On October 30th, LFN picked up a pair of rehabbed Barn Owls from O.W.L. (the raptor rehab centre in Delta), that were ready to be reintroduced back into the wild. With Barn Owls, rather than opening a box and letting them fly off, they are placed in a nest box. They are then left with food for two days. The box entrance is then opened in late afternoon, and the owls can leave when they feel it is safe. Hopefully at a future date when they are looking for a place to lay their eggs, they will remember the box they were placed in.



Installing the owls

Photo: Eric Habisch

With Barn Owls being nocturnal, it is important they are reintroduced back into the wild when most daytime predators are not out looking for a lost, disoriented Barn Owl.

That was the plan. When we left the box at roughly 5:00 pm they were in the box at Brydon Lagoon. The plan was to open the entrance two days later, just before sunset. The box was checked the next morning at 10:00 am, only to discover that the plug covering the entrance had been removed. When we checked the box the following afternoon, as expected there were no owls in the box and one of the mice left as food was gone.

This didn't go exactly as planned. Hopefully they left the box while it was dark, and they were able to safely orient themselves in the general area. They did get a head start.

Ryan Usenik

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Started in 1900, the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is North America's longest-running Citizen Science project. People in more than 2000 locations throughout the Western Hemisphere participate in the CBC each year.

The information, collected by thousands of CBC volunteer participants, forms one of the world's largest sets of wildlife survey data. The results are used by conservation biologists, environmental planners, and naturalists to assess the population trends and distribution of birds.

Join us - spotters and recorders, all skill levels needed!

Surrey/White Rock/Langley

Saturday December 28th

Mike Klotz (michael@10000birdtours.com)

Pitt Meadows/Langley/Surrey

Saturday January 4th

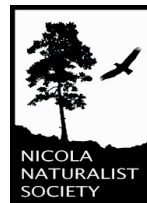
Eric Habisch (erichabisch@gmail.com) (Langley)

Gareth Pugh (gareth@intergate.ca) (Surrey)



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

"NATURE IN THE RAIN SHADOW - GRASSLANDS, FORESTS AND WETLANDS"



Hosted by the
Nicola Naturalist Society

MAY 22-24, 2025

Merritt Civic Centre
1950 Mamette Ave, Merritt, BC V1K 1R6

Registration opens
Thursday, January 2, 2025
(online and mail-in)

PROGRAMMES

DECEMBER 2024- JUNE 2025

Meeting at 7.30 pm at the Langley Community Music School, 4899 207th Street, Langley.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

MEMBERS' NIGHT

A short business meeting

**Members' slides of their years' highlights
(10-15 slides per member only please
due to time constraints!)**

This is followed by social time.
Please bring finger food to share.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16TH

CONSERVATION TALE OF THREE SPECIES: TURTLES, FROGS AND BUTTERFLIES

Andrea Gielens

Come and learn about the trials and tribulations of rearing endangered species for conservation and the tales of three species as they fight back from the brink of extinction.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

AN ETHIOPIAN JOURNEY

Viveka Ohman

Ethiopia is one of the best kept secrets in the world for viewing an astonishing range of wildlife. Most notable in Ethiopia, is the variety of endemic species that can be seen, both of mammals and birds. Also, one can take delight in the variety of the colourful inhabitants in the trees and bushes, and the people.

THURSDAY, MARCH: 20TH

BEHAVIOR & ECOLOGY OF NORTHERN FLICKERS, A KEYSTONE SPECIES IN FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

**Dr. Karen Wiebe, Professor Emeritus,
University of Saskatchewan**

Northern Flickers are common woodpeckers that many people recognize from their backyards and bird feeders. Dr. Karen Wiebe studied a population of Northern Flickers in central British Columbia from 1997-2014. She will discuss some of the fascinating behaviors of these woodpeckers, including patterns of parental care, as well as the important role they play in maintaining biodiversity on the landscape.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17TH

ENCHANTMENT OF CROWS

**Dr. Rob Butler, SFU(MSc), UBC(PhD)
Ornithologist**

From a remote island to the urban jungle, the ever-popular Society of Crows will take you on a journey into the mind of the crow to explore its complex social interactions. Society of Crows delves into the latest research of the complexities of the social behaviour of the crow.

THURSDAY, MAY 15TH

THE WILDLIFE OF LANGLEY AND BEYOND Lou Fascullo, of Lou Fascullo Photography

This presentation will cover the wildlife of the western provinces, spanning from Vancouver Island to Whitehorse, Yukon. We'll explore a variety of native and introduced species that inhabit this vast region.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19TH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOCIAL TIME

NATURALISTS SCARECROWS

The Fort Langley National Historic Site holds a fall Scarecrow competition, and thanks to Leslie Goodbrand and Nora Truman, the LFN submitted entries last year and this year. Although these did not win, I think they both deserve a round of applause.

Sheila Puls



2024 and 2023 scarecrows

Photo: Nora Truman

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS, FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE, DECEMBER 2024 - MARCH 2024

Please Note: anyone wishing to carpool should email to make arrangements beforehand, otherwise please meet at the designated meeting place.

Please let the leader know to expect you. The walks are generally about two to three hours long and are open to all Naturalist Clubs & members of the public (adults & children, but no pets please). Please dress for the weather and bring water, binoculars and a snack (plus bug spray in summer).

Note these walks are weather dependent so if the weather is bad and no registrations are received then the leader will not show up.

Unless otherwise noted, washroom facilities are available on these walks.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

BRYDON LAGOON

Leader: John Gordon

Time: 9:00 am at the 53rd Avenue parking lot near 198A Street, Langley

Join John to walk around the lagoon where a variety of duck species come to spend the winter and see the restoration work being carried out by LEPS. This is an easy walk of about 2 kms.

Note there is no washroom at this location.

E-mail johnngordonone@gmail.com to register.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

BLACKIE SPIT - CRESCENT BEACH

Leader: Perry Poulsen

Time: 9:00 am at Crescent Beach Pier, (across from the parking lot by the outdoor swimming pool)

Join Perry for a walk around this popular park where a variety of migrant and resident birds can be found in winter. It will be followed by a warm-up at a local coffee shop. This is an easy walk of about 3 kms.

E-mail pwpuelsen@gmail.com to register.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29TH

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4TH

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

See page 13

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH

IRENE PEARCE TRAIL

Leader: Nora Truman

Time: 9:00 am in the parking lot on 224th Street at 5th Avenue

Join Nora to walk the trails in this rural park that was turned into a park after pressure was exerted by the

Council of Ratepayers and LFN. It is now known as South Langley Regional Park with the Little Campbell River flowing through it and has stands of mature Douglas Fir.

E-mail lfnsecretary@hotmail.com to register.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH

JACKMAN WETLANDS PARK

Leader: Ted Goshulak

Time: 9:00 am in the parking lot at 272nd Street at 10th Avenue across from the Transfer Station

Join Ted to walk the trails of this rural park which is the site of a former Township gravel pit and dump. After the dump was declared full in the 1980's and capped, it was designated as a park and LFN helped with the restoration tree planting that was done. The ponds are home to wintering ducks and beavers can be seen there.

E-mail tgosh@twu.ca to register.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH

CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

Leader: Wim Vesseur

Time: 9:00 am at 8th Avenue parking lot

Join Wim to walk the trails through this popular park with its great variety of trees, flowers, shrubs and birds. This is a moderately difficult trail with some ups and downs so please wear appropriate footwear. Walking distance is approximately 5 km. Bring a packed lunch to eat at a suitable spot at the end of the walk.

E-mail wimntineke@shaw.ca to register.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH

SURREY LAKE PARK

Leader: Ryan Usenik

Time: 9:00 am in the parking lot on 152nd Street, just north of 72nd Avenue (note this parking lot can only be accessed from the northbound lane of 152nd Street)

Join Ryan to walk through this Surrey Park past the lake where a variety of water birds spend the winter, through the wetland area and follow the circular trail through the woods.

Note: there is no washroom at this location.

E-mail jrusenik@telus.net to register.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

WHITE ROCK PIER AND WATERFRONT

Leader: Eric Habisch

Time: 9:00 am at the parking lot by the museum, NOTE paid parking is now in effect

Join Eric to walk along the pier and the waterfront looking for the variety of seabirds that are seen wintering here. Bring binoculars and/or a spotting scope if you have one to see those shy birds not close to shore. The tide should be in our favour. Dress warmly as it can get cold at the end of the pier. This is an easy level walk of about 2 kms.

E-mail eric.habisch@gmail.com to register.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1ST

TYNEHEAD REGIONAL PARK

Leader: Tom Wildeboer

Time: 9:00 am in the parking lot at the Tynehead Hatchery in the 16700 block of 96th Avenue

Join Tom to walk the trails of this popular park with its great variety of trees, birds, mammals and shrubs in the watershed where the prolific salmon-bearing Serpentine River rises. Walking distance is approximately 3.5 km on undulating trails so please wear appropriate footwear.

E-mail t_wildeboer@hotmail.com to register.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13TH

HOUSTON TRAIL, DERBY REACH REGIONAL PARK. BIRDS & BRYOPHYTES!

Leader: Phil Henderson

Time: 9:00 am at the parking lot on Allard Crescent

Join biologist Phil Henderson to learn about bryophytes which include mosses and their relatives: tiny but beautiful plants that flourish in moist, shady sites. We will also drop down to the wetland water edge to have a look for waterfowl. Bring binoculars and hand lenses if you have them.

This is a walk of about 4.3 kms with some hills.

E-mail strix@uniserve.com to register.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15TH

FORT LANGLEY BIRD COUNT

Organizer: Phil Henderson

Leaders: Phil Henderson and others

Time: 8 am to noon

A great event for anyone interested in birds. You don't need to be an expert birder to join this fun event which covers Brae Island and Derby Reach Regional Parks. We encourage inexperienced birders, new birders, families, etc.; anyone curious and wanting to learn more about local birds. Participants will walk (a "birdwatcher's saunter") along one of six possible routes. Walks are longish but not physically challenging and all but one are on groomed, gravel Metro Vancouver paths. We will proceed in all but the nastiest weather (i.e., 2' of snow and / or -30°C).

E-mail strix@uniserve.com to register.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22ND

SEEDY SATURDAY AT THE ARBORETUM

Leaders: Nora Truman and Lisa Dreves

Time: 11:00 am in the parking lot in the 21200 Block Fraser Highway

Come out to the annual Seedy Saturday event (runs from 10:00 – 2:00) at Derek Doubleday Arboretum and for an added bonus head out with our leaders, Nora and Lisa, to enjoy the solitude of the end of winter. Explore the gardens while discussing the need to practice "lazy gardening", where we leave the seed heads of perennials and annuals through the winter to feed our local birds and wildlife. Let's see if we can find any remaining seed heads and marvel at their beauty!

Note: if the parking lot is full, St. Andrew's church just across the road allows overflow parking.

E-mail lfsecretary@hotmail.com to register.