



Langley Field Naturalists



To encourage nature appreciation, conservation and education

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Newsletter

September 2013

BRYDON LAGOON

On the 31st of July Bob Puls, Roy Yates and Kirby Hanawalt took on the job of retrieving, repositioning and re-anchoring the logs on the lagoon where the ducks and geese can roost, away from terrestrial predators.

Some of the logs had broken free and washed up against the shore, so the salvage operation involved Kirby paddling around in his kayak, finding them in the grass, capturing them and towing them back to the duck feeding station where Bob refitted anchor chains and an anchor and replaced floatation boards to stop the logs from spinning. Then Roy in his inflatable or Kirby in his canoe towed them



Kirby retrieving a log

Photo: Bob Puls



Roy returning log to its permanent position

Photo: Bob Puls

back to their appropriate site as directed by Rhys and Annabel Griffiths.

One log was tied to an existing platform as we didn't have sufficient chain and an anchor to place it by itself. This was rectified a week later by Kirby after Rhys had purchased more chain and a concrete block.

May the waterfowl rest in peace.

Bob Puls

Don't FORGET!



Just to remind everyone that the Langley Field Naturalists dues for September would be appreciated in September!
(Our year is September - August)

CONGRATULATIONS

2013
LANGLEY ENVIRONMENTAL HERO AWARDS

Congratulations **LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS**
Business & Organization Category
2013 Langley Environmental Hero

We recognize your outstanding contribution toward raising environmental awareness in your community.

Dated on this, the 1st day of July in the year 2013.

Langley Environmental Hero Organizing Committee: The Langley Times, Mark Warren, NP Langley Environmental Partners Society, and the Fort Langley Naturalists Club.

Mark Langley, NP Langley Environmental Partners Society
Doreen Langley, NP Langley Environmental Partners Society
LangleyTimes.com



Langley Field Naturalists Environmental Hero 2013 (Business and organization category) see page 8

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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



Welcome to the start of the LFN's 41st year of operation.

Hopefully you are all aware that we were nominated for, and chosen, as the 2013 Langley Environmental Hero Organization. I accepted this award for the LFN on July first at McLeod Park, presented by Frank Bucholtz, Editor of the Langley Times Newspaper (one of the selection committee). Then on August 17th, presided over by Mark Warawa MP, all the recipients had the honour of planting a commemorative apple tree (Gravenstein) in the Heritage Orchard of the Fort Langley National Historic Site. It was fabulous to have many of our members in attendance at both events.

A record breaking dry spell this summer, with no rain from mid-June to the end of August, seems to have been to the liking of our Barn Swallows - the 10 pairs nesting in my barn have all raised two clutches with at least forty offspring to enhance their numbers. Unfortunately the weather seems to have also been to the liking of the most destructive invasive species to hit my farm in the last decade - the Eastern Grey squirrel. My filbert nut trees have been cleared already and very few walnuts remain on my five trees, which would have yielded several hundred pounds of nuts if the pests had left them to ripen.

Meanwhile life goes on and I hope you all had a wonderful summer.

Bob



**REIFEL REFUGE
JUNE 7TH, 2013**



The Reifel Ramblers

Photo: Anne Gosse

Our leader, Al Grass, was joined by seven naturalists at Reifel Refuge on this outing. We found the bird sanctuary to be like one big baby nursery playpen with a multitude of newborn hatchlings! There were lots and lots of Canada Goose goslings, many ducklings and several chicks from Cowbirds and one Tree Swallow chick seen. The Canada Goose goslings were waddling along beside their parents everywhere - in all different sizes of development. Many Mallard and Wood Duck babies were seen along the paths and in the ponds. We watched a baby Tree Swallow learning to fly from its birdhouse - into a warm breeze - with many wobbly take-offs and landings. Brown-headed Cowbird hatchlings and their families were underfoot in most places. However, sadly, this year no Sandhill Crane colts survived.

Our day's best and most exciting find was of a nesting pair of Bullock's Orioles - wonderful to see in their bright and striking colours. They obligingly provided us with several photographic opportunities from a nearby branch to show off their spectacular glowing sunlit yellows and oranges. We were happy to see them nesting in the refuge as this species winters in Mexico and northern Central America.

We finished our day eating lunch on the picnic tables amongst many Canada Goose families. An aggressive Canada Goose and family pinched Al's lunch muffin while he was not looking!

We had counted 35 species by the end of the day.

Anne Gosse

**SKAGIT VALLEY PROVINCIAL PARK
JUNE 21ST, 2013**



Gathering at the bridge

Photo: Al Grass

We gathered at the Silver Creek Bridge on the Silver-Skagit Road. Here we were treated to excellent views of dippers.

Onward, we stopped at Silver Lake where we observed Barrow's Goldeneyes, and checked drill holes in the roadside rock for nesting Violet-green Swallows.

Continuing down the road, we headed down to the picnic area at Ross Lake for lunch. Sapsuckers working nearby birch trees attracted many hummingbirds to the "wells".

After lunch, we crossed the bridge over the Skagit and hiked to Chittenden Meadows, site



Rufous Hummingbird drinking from a "well" Photo: Al Grass

of a grove of Ponderosa pines. Bird highlights at the meadows included Chipping Sparrow and Lazuli Buntings. Purple violets, tiger lilies, rosy pussy-toes, columbines and paintbrush were some of the plants noted.

Al Grass

HOUSTON TRAIL SUMMER WALK

JULY 3RD, 2013

Jeepers, Creepers, Did You See Those Peepers?



Barred Owl

Photo: Bob Puls

Eleven naturalists, which included two newbies, joined our first 2013 summer evening Wednesday walk on a lovely warm night. Right away, we were greeted by a lovely Barred Owl, first spotted flying past by our LFN "Hawkeye" Joanne. He sat on a branch near the beginning of the trail letting us get some good views of him. We stood watching his head swivel about and giving us the "eye" every so often. He was a big beautiful bird with large eyes and he looked very healthy. We think he was out hunting.

When he finally flew off, we started on our circle route - stopping every so often to listen and/or search for birds. We saw plenty of bear evidence (droppings) on the trail and a few rabbits.

We heard or saw the Swainson's Thrush, Song Sparrows, Pacific Wren, Spotted Towhees, American Robin, Dark-eyed Juncos, Chickadees, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanagers, Wilson's and Yellow Warblers, Kinglets and Creepers plus our lovely Barred Owl.

We enjoyed a few laughs and a great wander through this lovely mossy "big treed" park. We arrived back at the parking lot at precisely 8:30 pm - warm and happy and feeling very lucky to seen an owl.

Anne Gosse

CAMPBELL VALLEY PARK

SUMMER WALK, JULY 9TH, 2013

On a lovely warm summer evening, with a nice cooling breeze, 25 naturalists joined Al Grass on a nature ramble. We saw or heard most of the "usual suspects" along our lovely wooded park trails. Al also explained about the tree and plant life.

Al showed us an "arsenic" type of caterpillar, told us about how birds are very important for pollination of berries and flowers, as well as insects. He went on to tell us about the use of the three forested tree layers by the many different species of birds. The Spotted Towhees and Song Sparrows scratch around on the forest floor; the woodpeckers and creepers and others use the middle level of the woodlands - pecking insects and sap - with the top tree canopy occupied by Western Tanagers and others, giving each species its own food share of the woods.



At the listening bridge

Photo: Anne Gosse

A pause at the listening bridge gave us a group photo opportunity, with those standing behind being careful not to slip backwards into the Little Campbell River!

Even though we only saw about 18 species of birds, which included two of our summer visitors, the Wilson's Warbler and Western Tanager, we had a very enjoyable and informative walk and arrived back at our cars just as dusk was gathering; thanks again to Al.

Anne Gosse

GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK (LOWER FALLS TRAIL), JULY 17TH 2013

It was a beautiful sunny day. Our first bird was a lovely MacGillivray's Warbler at the edge of the parking lot. The Lower Falls Trail follows Gold Creek, a beautiful stream flowing from mountain snow fields - ideal dipper habitat (no dippers that day). Birds seen and heard included: Belted Kingfisher, Black-throated Gray Warbler (nice view), Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Cassin's Vireo, Rough-winged Swallow - nesting in the river bank, Black-headed Grosbeak and Pacific Wren.

No Mountain Goats were spotted on nearby Evans Peak, but it's a good place to look for them in the park.



Indian-pipe

Photo: Anthea Farr

Plants noted included the beautiful Indian-pipe (*Montotropa uniflora*), which lacks chlorophyll. Pojar and MacKinnon - Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast, comments "roots of Indian-pipe are connected via fungi to the roots of nearby coniferous trees..."

Al Grass

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:
 This year the Christmas Bird Count
 for our area will be on
SUNDAY 29TH DECEMBER.
 Drivers, recorders and birders needed!
 No experience necessary.
 (Also Vancouver December 15
 Ladner December 22)

SUMMER SOCIAL AT THE GRASS SHACK

Once again, Jude and Al hosted a wonderful summer social at their beautiful home. This year, it was made extra special as we helped celebrate the Sapphire (45th) Wedding Anniversary of Ian and Joan Taylor, where they happily shared their cake with all of us.



Still smiling after 45 years!

Photo: Sheila Puls

Al led two walks around the trails surrounding their house, and, as always, we enjoyed a bountiful pot luck lunch, being entertained by a variety of visitors - friendly hummingbirds and friendlier squirrels, plus the usual assortment of feeder birds enjoying their own lunch as we enjoyed ours.

Thank you, once again, to Al and Jude for



Relaxing before the afternoon walk

Photo: Jude Grass

opening their home for this very special annual event.

Sheila Puls

**EVENING WALK
BRYDON LAGOON
JULY 24TH 2013**



Bald Eagle chicks

Photo: Bob Puls

It was perfect weather for an evening nature walk. The pathway to the lagoon was lined with Queen Anne's Lace (wild carrot) in full bloom. This is one of the larval foods of the Anise Swallowtail butterfly - we looked but none were found (it's always worth a look).

A nice list of 19 bird species was tallied. Highlights included Western Tanager, Cooper's Hawk, Common Yellowthroat, Killdeer and Pied-billed Grebe. Two eaglets were spotted in the nest with an adult eagle perched nearby.

Al Grass

**MOUNTAIN VIEW CROWN LAND
EVENING WALK, AUGUST 14TH, 2013**

On a Wednesday evening, fourteen naturalists gathered under the railway overpass on Rawlison Crescent for a tour of part of the biodiversity study area. Anne scheduled the walk months ago, only to find us on what seemed to be the one rainy night in the past couple of months. The group included several members of WOLF (Watchers of Langley Forests) as well as some White Rock members.

So we set off in gloomy daylight, with raindrops starting to fall. We kept up a fairly brisk pace (for naturalists) along the Mountain View property line trail, until we entered the crown land which is all forested and sheltered from the rain. We viewed my moth trap which isn't working at all well since converted from 120v compact fluorescent to 12v UV, LED's.

Instead of attempting the 2 hour loop trail I had contemplated, we followed the trail into the site of the saw mill that burnt down in about 1920 and which has been partially excavated by Glenn Ryder as part of his industrial archaeology study. Hillary (librarian at the B.C. Farm Machinery and Agricultural Museum) was quite excited by the history of the old bricks found at the site.



Mountain View North Trail

Photo: Bob Puls

There was little bird or insect activity in the gloom, but I can report that during the summer, the trail cameras have picked up both a Black bear and a Red Fox, plus lots of coyotes and a few deer. I am still finding new insects and on one day this week, found three new species of *Cortinarius* mushrooms, bringing my mushroom total to 315 and overall species count to 1492 and rising.

Bob Puls

Don't forget:

**EARTH, WIND, FIRE AND WATER;
THE SPIRIT OF NATURE
BC Nature Fall General Meeting**

19th - 22nd September 2013
Cranbrook, BC

Details in BC Nature Summer edition

Several LFN members are attending -
why not join us?
Or look for reports in the
December newsletter

**CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK
BUTTERFLY OUTING & NATURE WALK
AUGUST 16TH 2013**



Woodland Skipper

Photo: Al Grass

It was not good 'butterflying' weather but we had a nice look around the park's wildlife garden and the plants that attract them (nectar and larval food). Two lepidopteran species were observed - the Woodland Skipper and Cabbage White butterfly. (Note: A mystery bug, photographed by Bob, turned out to be a *Cispeps folficollis*, which is a yellow collared scape moth)

Esther Johnson, from the White Rock and Surrey Naturalists, - "the butterfly lady" brought a nice specimen of a 'hornworm' - the caterpillar of the sphinx moth. Thank you to Esther for all your help.

After, we went for nice stroll from the Nature House to the Listening Bridge on the Little River Loop Trail. Along the way, we saw some beautiful spiders and a "lightning bug" (a fire fly), which is not a bug, nor a fly, but a beetle.

Alas, our firefly does not "light-up".



Cispeps folficollis

Photo: Bob Puls

A total of 21 bird species were noted, including 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, Western Tanager and Black-throated Gray Warbler.

Al Grass

**ALASKAN BROWN GRIZZLY BEARS
JULY 2013**

I have always dreamed of visiting the Grizzly Bear Sanctuary in the Kutzeymateen near Prince Rupert - so being in Alaska this year, we decided my birthday treat would be a trip to see the bears while I had the opportunity. In Juneau, Alaska, I signed up for an "Alaskan Brown Grizzly Bear Tour".

Six of us were flown over the top of Admiralty Island, above the native village of Hoonah, in a small six-seater seaplane, where we glided smoothly down into a remote lonely forested inlet. Here, we were met by two young guides dressed in camouflage clothing, carrying rifles strapped over their shoulders with pistols and knives in the belts. They said there were about 5,000 grizzly bears on the island!



Grizzly Bear

Photo: Anne Gosse

Led along a muddy rain forest trail into a large cedar and fir forest, bordered by a dense underbrush of devils club, ferns, and hanging moss, we finally emerged on a shallow river's small gravel bar. We were asked to stand still and be quiet. We could see and hear many large King salmon splashing around in the shallow river. Within a few minutes, a large heavy reddish Alaskan grizzly bear sauntered out from the underbrush and into the river to fish. We enjoyed watching him chasing & catching salmon and splashing about in the river. Suddenly, another bear appeared to chase the first one off. Later, a third large bear came down the river closer to us, splashing around not 30 yards away! One time while chasing salmon he charged directly towards our group! Gulp! Time flew by and before you knew it, two hours had vanished. It was very a heart thumping experience and a wonderful outdoor adventure.

Anne Gosse.

LANGLEY FIELD NATURALISTS HONORED!

JULY 1ST, 2013

Langley MP Mark Warawa and members of the 2013 Environmental Hero nominations committee recognized Langley's Environmental Heroes at the Canada Day celebrations at McLeod Athletic Park.



*Receiving the award from Frank Buckholtz
Photo: Sheila Puls*

In the business and organizations category, Langley Field Naturalists was awarded for its environmental stewardship in Langley over the past 33 years. Their projects in Langley include: inventory of Mountainview Crown Lands, inventory of natural areas, early garbage clean-ups, and adoption of two trails, stewardship of the Hope/Redwoods Conservation area and protection of the Brydon Lagoon.

"Environmental stewardship is a critical part of preserving Langley's communities, forests, rivers and wildlife. That's why we started the Langley Environmental Hero Awards," said Warawa. "These awards highlight the importance of protecting the environment and recognizing the work of Langley's passionate Environmental Heroes."

On August 17th, the Heroes in all categories met with MP Mark Warawa at the Fort Langley National Historic Site and planted a commemorative apple tree in the Heritage orchard. A plaque will be installed naming the 2013 Heroes - and this tree joins the one planted last year when Bob Puls was named for the first Lifetime Achievement award.



Bob's comments Photo: Sheila Puls

Each of the recipients of the award was asked to make a short speech, and Bob gave an (almost) non political resumé of the work of the Langley Field Naturalists, but mentioning that we still have an ongoing fight to "protect nature in the Langleys, and to keep it worth knowing"!



Planting the tree Photo: Sheila Puls

So, go down to the National Historic Site sometime and check on the trees by the fence, close to Royal Street. May they grow and thrive as a mark of our commitment to our environment.



The members attending the tree planting Photo: Sheila Puls

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 SEPTEMBER 26**

(**NOTE one week later than normal meeting)

BIRDING IN THE LOWER MAINLAND AND BEYOND **John Gordon**

The term 'Total Birding' is used to describe the study of bird habitat, feeding habits, food sources, migration and climatic patterns. A study of these and other elements can help the birder find specific species of birds throughout the year. John will cover the best locations to photograph birds in the Lower Mainland, briefly touch on photographic techniques and equipment, as well as other useful tips to set you on your way.

See: Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/johngordonsphotography/>

Blog: <http://thecanadianwarbler.blogspot.ca>

THURSDAY OCTOBER 17TH



Tropical Kingbird at Boundary Bay Photo: John Gordon

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S MAJESTIC THOMPSON RIVER **Bernie Fandrich**

Bernie Fandrich is the well-known proprietor of Kumsheen Raft Adventures, based in Lytton, BC. For 40 years, Bernie and his family have been leading rafting and nature tours along the Thompson River. Now Bernie 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



A raft adventure (photo from website, published with permission)

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.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21ST

OWLS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

John and Heather Neville

John will share his knowledge of the various owl species in British Columbia and will relate his experiences in finding the owls and



recording their calls. He also plays the calls along with the photos. John is the President of BC Nature and is well known in Canada and USA for his excellent CDs of bird songs and calls.

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.

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 5TH
MINNEKHADA REGIONAL PARK**

Leader: Josh Inman

Join Josh Inman for a fall birding/nature walk around Minnehada Park. We will search for the many species of dabbling and diving ducks, mergansers, loons, raptors, wintering passerines - and maybe a surprise or two along the marshes. Be prepared to walk to the High Knoll to see the wonderful views and have lunch or a snack and perhaps stroll along the dykes. This will be a moderate walk with some elevation gain involved. Meet at Minnehada Parking lot off Quarry Road at 9:00 am or carpool from Douglas Park at 8:00 am. Please phone to let us know to expect you. Josh 604-532-0455 or Anne 604-888-1787.

**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 9TH
SKAGIT VALLEY PROVINCIAL PARK**

Leaders: Al & Jude Grass

Come and join Al and Jude for a Fall trip into the Skagit for mushrooms, mammals and birds - and beautiful fall colors. This is a full day trip, so please bring lunch, snacks, water, (sunscreen and bug repellent) and a variety of clothing and footwear for the weather. Meet at the junction of the Hope Flood Road & Silver Skagit Road at 8:45 am. The Hope Flood Road exit is # 168 from Highway #1 heading east. *Note: please make sure you have enough gas as it is 130 km round trip to Ross Lake and back to the highway.* For info contact Jude 604 538 8774.

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 19TH
BOUNDARY BAY REGIONAL PARK**

Leader: John Gordon

Weather Permitting: Come join our leader and professional photographer, John Gordon, as he leads us on a bird/photography walk to find Short-eared Owls and Northern Harriers and perhaps other surprises along this high sea-dyke in Delta. This is your chance to get those bird photography questions answered. Dress warm. Time: 9:00 at 72nd Street Parking Lot. Phone Anne 604-888-1787 or John 604-533-7171 to let us know to expect you.

**FRIDAY OCTOBER 25TH
BRUNSWICK POINT, LADNER**

Leader: Viveka Ohman

We join our leader Viveka Ohman to search for returning seabirds and raptors and we will keep

our fingers crossed for decent (but possibly windy, cold) weather so please dress appropriately and bring lunch. Expect to see Buteos such as Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, possibly the charming Short-eared Owl (with its floppy moth-like flight) and Northern Harriers (with their characteristic slow tilting flight). Sparrows may be numerous and of several species, always a joy to find and watch! Please phone Viveka 531-3401 or Anne 604-888-1787. We will meet at 09:00 at west end of River Road, (past the Westham Island Bridge) at end of the road or meet at Douglas Crescent, Langley at 8:00 am for car-pooling.

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 2ND
PARKSFEST**

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

Leader: Al Grass

Come join us as we welcome back the Snow Geese and search for over-wintering shorebirds, waterfowl and perhaps Northern Saw-whet Owls in the wonderful bird sanctuary on the Fraser River estuary. This is one of the best times of the year to visit Reifel as the waterfowl are again wearing their colourful feathered coats. Please dress warmly and wear proper footwear. There is a small admission fee. Bring Lunch, snacks and refreshments. Meet at Langley Event Center 8:00 am or at Reifel Refuge 9:00 am. Phone Anne 604-888-1787 to let us know to expect you.

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 23RD
KANAKA CREEK REGIONAL PARK,
MAPLE RIDGE**

Leader: Anne Gosse

Join our leader as we look for birds and wildlife at the Kanaka Creek Cliff Falls and Bell-Irving Hatchery. This lovely walk consists of a series of easy hiking trails that follow a burbling creek as it descends through a thick mountain forest through a majestic sandstone canyons - going over impressive falls and ending in a peaceful estuary. Time: 9:00 am Douglas Crescent or 9:45 at parking lot at 251 St & 116th Ave Maple Ridge. Phone Anne 604-888-1787 for info.

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 29TH
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**