

ARROWSMITH NATURALIST NEWSLETTER



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*To Know,
Enjoy
and
Preserve
Nature*

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Here we go on our next swing around ‘ol Sol!

Did you feel the joy in 2014 that came from knowing that you as an individual and that we as a club contributed towards the betterment of nature, getting the word out, and encouraging others to join in? Did you in return get eyes-full, ears-full, camera’s full and maybe also the feels, scents and thrills that come with being a part of Nature? If so—there’s more in store in 2015! If not, I’ll bet you’ll find that your more active participation will surely help you “feel the love!”

The Arrowsmith Naturalists Club has long been a fellowship of kindred spirits and a source for learning about and the enjoyment of Nature. Our on-going stewardship has also been a part of what we are. As we continue with our cyclic activities such as the important citizen science contribution—the annual Christmas Bird Count, the Brant Wildlife Festival (BWF) Brant on the Bay Viewing, the Hamilton Marsh Tour; displays at farmers’ markets, QB Beach Days, KidFest, and the habitat improvement at the Englishman River Estuary, we’re not always aware of the many other Nature affirming activities our club and individual members are involved with in the community. Some examples include our club’s support of a BCN grant proposal request for permanent native plant signage at Errington Elementary, response to a request from The Nature Trust to undertake and provide Brant counts during the BWF, author Nature Notes articles, teaching classes that “grow” more naturalists—at kindergarten, a mixed age home school, and at the VIU Elder College.

Many of our members are also actively involved with other local Nature-oriented organizations such as The Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society, Streamkeepers, Friends of French Creek, North Island Wildlife Recovery Association, Communities to Protect our Coast, and others I’m sure.

Most importantly for our club, many of our members take on the necessary roles within our organization that “keep all of these good things happening.” Each of you who get the word out about meetings and activities in newspapers and newsletters; provide the coffee and cookies for mid-meeting snack attack; greet and record new members; provide “Sunshine,” work with the Young-Nats; “person” the A-Nats exhibits; keep us on track with agendas and minutes; keep an eye on our purse; serve as our conduit with BC Nature; contribute to the newsletter; manage the projector; organize or lead field trips; maintain our website; forward communications; attend committee meetings; keep track of conservation/environment issues; and get programs together for all the months—many thanks to each one of you. Collectively you allow us all to better know, enjoy and preserve nature.

Yearly, I’ve noticed a growing recognition of and respect for the Arrowsmith Naturalists’ contributions to our community. As we enjoy ourselves, Nature, and do our good work in the year ahead, we’ll not only be “feeling” but “sharing” the love of Nature for the good of it--and of ourselves.

As you read through the pages ahead, make plans to jump in, help out, and enjoy!

Lynne Brookes, President

THE ARROWSMITH NATURALIST ...

is published three times a year in February, June and October. Articles on birding, travel, botany and environmental matters are welcomed by the end of the month prior to publication. The next deadline is May 2015 for the June 2015 edition.

Hand-written or typed articles and photos are accepted. Some editing may be required for length or held off for another edition as per available space. Please e-mail articles to m.e.6@me.com or send by mail to:

Margaret Hill, **Editor**

194 Valdez Ave, Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1R8.

General Information: Club membership information is available at both of the public libraries, on the web site <http://www.arrowsmithnats.org>, or write to Arrowsmith Naturalists, Box 1542 Parksville, B.C. V9P 2H4

Membership includes monthly meetings (talks and/or slide shows), regular outings (bird watching, botanical), BC Nature newsletter four times a year and the club newsletter in February, June and October.

New memberships are always welcomed...Family \$35.00, Single \$25.00

MEETING TIME:

Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Meeting begins at 7:30.

Arrowsmith Naturalists Officers and Contacts:

President: Lynne Brookes - Executive Business
(250) 586.4595

Vice President: Elaine Lefebvre -
General Meeting & Club Activities 250. 586.5805

Past President: Dave Hutchings

Secretary: Sue McLean and Sue Wilson

Treasurer: Derrick Grimmer

Membership: Toni Wyckoff

Directors:

Dave Erickson

Derrick Grimmer

Terry Taylor

Rosemary Taylor

BC Nature Rep: Sandra Gray

E-mail Correspondence: Bill Campbell

ConservationEnvironment: Gary & Ronda Murdock

Field Trips: Ed Wilson

Newsletter Editor: Margaret Hill

Promotion: Sallie Dabb

Refreshments: Ron Wyckoff and Dave Erickson

Speaker Program: Alison Bakker

Stewardship: Dave Hutchings

Young Naturalists: Alison Bakker

Web Site: David Helem

Stewardship:

Dave Hutchings is taking over the job of Broom Bashing coordinator from Maggie Little. Note the schedule change as follows:

Participants will meet on the **first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:30am** at the bottom of Shelley Road, Parksville. Weather permitting, they will do a tour of the estuary and see what areas need attention.

SUNSHINE

If you know of an Arrowsmith Naturalist, who is ill, in hospital or recently bereaved, please contact: Pam Helem, at 250.468-7475 or at arrowsmithnats@gmail.com

CLUB PUBLICATIONS

A reference copy of the current newsletter is available at each of the libraries in Parksville and Qualicum Beach.

Meetings and Outings information sheets are available at Mulberry Bush Book Stores in Qualicum Beach and Parksville.

RESPECT FOR CLEAN AIR**NO SMOKING**

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in, on or around Knox Church property.

NO SCENTS OR PERFUMES

Avoid the use of any fragrances when participating in meetings or activities at Knox Church in respect for others for whom such scents are a health hazard.

Oceanside Young Naturalist Club Report

2014 was a different year for us in Oceanside YNC with so many homeschool families. We not only had our monthly Sunday afternoon Explorer Days, but included a mid week afternoon session each month in the 'Fall.

January 2015 took us to VIU to learn about how weather is forecast plus seeing past and present apparatus used. Jeff Lewis kept his talk at the children's level and involved them with questions. Parents and children were equally fascinated.

We also have been involved with the 4H Photography Club with two outings in January and February. The first at Moorecroft Regional Park. Dr. Lynne Brookes and David Blackmore, Photographer from the Oceanside Photography Club, joined us to share their expertise with the children. The Young Naturalists were a bit overwhelmed at first with the numbers of 4H ardent photographers, but were happy to have them as mentors. I hope there will be some Young Naturalists who will add photographs to the 4H photography display on the opening night of the Brant Festival March 7th at the Bayshore.

We are still hoping for a volunteer to step forward as leader(s) for the Nanaimo Group. Until then, the Nanaimo members will join the Oceanside Young Naturalists club.

Young Naturalist Outing to: NANAIMO FISH HATCHERY



Stages of fish egg development to fry stage.

PHOTOS BY:
Kristine Hupp



YNC at the Nanaimo River Hatchery watching a salmon dissection. The children examined different parts as they were passed around on the plates. They especially enjoyed looking through the eyeball!!!

GIFT OF WEEDS

English Daisy....Weed or Herb?
Bellis perennis - family *compositae*



Almost year round in bloom, this pretty (Latin: *bellis* = pretty), frost resistant plant grows in meadows and lawns, closing its blooms at night, in the rain and following the light in the day.

Its medicinal properties were well known in folk medicine.

Wrongfully, as we know today, it was banned in Germany for abortive properties. Instead it helps during strong and painful menstruation, healing internal injuries, tissue damage, boils, acne, pneumonia, diarrhea, sprains, burns and swelling (fresh flowers applied to the area). As a tea, *bellis* cleans the lungs, strengthens the pleura and bladder, activates kidneys, liver and gall bladder. A

pinch added to children's tea makes them strong and healthy. A pharmacy in your front lawn! Since none of its parts is toxic, it can be eaten raw. The young leaves with their nutty flavour are good in salads, cooked with spinach and chopped in fresh or with cottage cheese as a spring cleansing.

The tight green buds pickled with vinegar and tarragon taste like capers.

It may be wise to welcome English Daisies in your lawn and be familiar with its qualities: a fresh vegetable and 'cure-all' at the ready. Earthquake preparedness could be the gift of this simple plant as useful to know as how to whistle through your fingers.

Submitted by: Maya Carson

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

In the year 2014 until the end of June, we had 104 Members, which is the largest number of people registered since I have been doing membership.

Of 104, we had 24 new members join in that time.

For the 2015 year membership, as of January 26th, 2015, we have 81 members registered. (28 FAMILY memberships & 24 SINGLE memberships)

We have 9 NEW MEMBERS joining us so far for the 2015 year.

Welcome to the following people who have joined Arrowsmith Nats since September 2014:

Leanne and Maynard DALDERIS

Linda BROOYMANS & Mark WILLIAMS & Adele RENARD

Kay TOTH

Vickie WALTERS

Neil CALLANDER & Nancy RANDALL

Jane TOWILL

We hope you all enjoy being part of our Naturalists club!

This is my final report as Toni Wyckoff is taking over as Membership Secretary for 2015. She will do a great job for the Club!

I have really enjoyed being on the executive of Arrowsmith Nats and getting to know more of the members!

A special "Thank you" to Margaret Hill for all her help in keeping the Membership lists updated as new people joined us.

Hugs, and Enjoy!.....*Gail Armstrong*



Yellow Warbler at Somass Estuary
Photo by Ed Wilson



Trumpeter Swans at Holden Lake
Photo by Martin Hill

ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS MEETINGS AND OUTINGS

February to June 2015

CARPOOL IF POSSIBLE. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: ED WILSON: (250) 248.7280

PLEASE NOTE - GUESTS ARE VERY WELCOME. A GUEST WAIVER AND DAY MEMBERSHIP FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF AN OUTING OR ON THE WEBSITE: WWW.ARROWSMITHNATS.ORG/MEMBERSHIP THESE FORMS MUST BE READ CAREFULLY, COMPLETED AND SIGNED WITH AN ACCOMPANYING \$1.00 FEE BEFORE PARTICIPATING IN AN OUTING.

MEETING LOCATION(S) KEY:

C&J = Craig and Jensen; QBT = Qualicum Beach Tourist (centre on 19A); N&P = Northfield and Parkway rest stop parking lot; Sunnybeach = Hwy 19A north & Sunnybeach Rd

✓ Indicates easy walking

Mon Feb 23: GENERAL MEETING - at Knox United Church, 345 Pym, Parksville @ 7:00 p.m. *Please respect Knox Church policy of "No perfumes or scents when participating in activities or meetings".* **TOPIC:** Recent Thesis on Swainson's Thrush **SPEAKER:** Christopher Stephens

✓ **Wed, Feb 25: Lighthouse Trails** - We can improvise once we get there. Lots of options in the forest and on the coast in this lovely area. Bring lunch. QBT 9:30 am, Leader: Maggie Little

✓ **Sat, Mar 7: Morden Colliery** - An interesting abandoned coal mine site with good walking across Thatcher Creek to the Nanaimo River. Plants, birds and history. Lunch at the Jingle Pot Pub. C & J 9:30 am, Northfield 10 am. Leader: Dave Hutchings

Sat, Mar 7: BRANT FESTIVAL - opening night @ Bayside Inn; tickets \$20.00 - available Parksville Community Civic Centre.

Wed, Mar 18: Lazo Marsh - N E Comox Wildlife Area. A large area in North East Comox Park to explore. It might involve more walking than usual, possible wet areas. Lunch and suitable clothing and boots recommended. QBT 9:30 am. Leaders: Pam & Dave Helem

Sun, March 22: Brant in the Bay: Parksville Community Park - View Brant geese and other birds through spotting scopes set up by the Arrowsmith Naturalists. 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. FREE Brant Festival event.

Mon Mar 23: GENERAL MEETING - at Knox United Church, 345 Pym, Parksville @ 7:00 p.m. *Please respect Knox Church policy of "No perfumes or scents when participating in activities or meetings".* **TOPIC:** Story Teller **SPEAKER:** Michael Kusugak, *an Inuit storyteller.* **PLEASE NOTE:** *There will be a collection of \$5 per person to cover speaker's fee.*

✓ **Sat Mar 28: Moorecroft Park** - A great opportunity to see the restoration work that transformed the park explained by one of the volunteers – our own Lynne Brookes. Bring lunch if it's sunny – perhaps the Rocking Horse Pub if it clouds over? Meet at Craig and Jensen at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Lynne Brookes

ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS MEETINGS AND OUTINGS*February to June 2015*

Wed., April 8: The Holland Creek Trail and Falls, Ladysmith - A lovely, and at times taxing walk in a new area – for us. This good trail, which affords good views of the creek, involves a steady climb through a mixed forest. The reward is the waterfall at the end of the trail. Bring lunch and afterwards enjoy a stroll through one of the Island's historic old towns. Meet at Craig and Jensen at 9:30 a.m. or Northfield at 10:00. Leader: Duncan Campbell

Sat, April 18: St. Peter's Churchyard and Mt Tzouhalem - Easy to moderate walk to enjoy spring flowers, e.g. fawn lilies. Later, we will go to Mt Tzouhalem to see the eco-reserve. Meet at C&J 9:30 am or Northfield 10 am. Bring lunch. Leader: Dave Hutchings

Sun April 26: Hamilton Marsh - A walk through the woods to discover the emergence of spring at the Marsh. A good opportunity to see migrating birds and other aquatic life. Ceri Peacey, the founder of The Friends of Hamilton Marsh, has kindly agreed to come along to be our resource person

Bring your friends and family to explore this amazing marsh in Qualicum Beach and learn about the interesting plants and wildlife with Friends of French Creek. Our club acts as tour guides to guide groups of children and parents from the parking lot to the Marsh, where there will be opportunities to experience and learn about pond critters. Also a display table will be in the parking lot with information about the Marsh, the Young Naturalists and Arrowsmith Naturalist club. By donation. 10 am to 2 pm.

To get there, go south from Qualicum Beach on Hwy. 4 to Hilliers Rd and turn right. Go to the second parking lot on the left.

Mon Apr 27: GENERAL MEETING - at Knox United Church, 345 Pym, Parksville @ 7:00 p.m. *Please respect Knox Church policy of "No perfumes or scents when participating in activities or meetings".* **TOPIC:** Ecological Reserves, Courtenay area **SPEAKER:** Erica McClaren, from BC Parks

Wed May 6: Hornby Is - An easy walk along the bluffs at Helliwell, Park, spectacular ocean views, spring flowers. Bring lunch. **Meet QBT 8:30 a.m; Sunnybeach 8:45 a.m. for 10:00 a.m. ferry.** Leader: Maggie Little

Sat May 16: Cameron Lake - Park at Cathedral Grove and hike along the railway tracks on the far side of Cameron Lake. The dogwood trees will put on a great display (hopefully). Bring lunch. Meet at C&J 9:30 a.m. Leader: Toni Wyckoff

Mon May 25: GENERAL MEETING - at Knox United Church, 345 Pym, Parksville @ 7:00 p.m. *Please respect Knox Church policy of "No perfumes or scents when participating in activities or meetings".* **TOPIC: SPEAKER:** TBA

Wed May 27: Oyster River Pub to Pub Walk - Amble along the sandy dunes and marshes and take in the wide variety of flowers, birds and butterflies. Easy 6 km loop walk. Salmon Point Pub lunch half way. Bring cameras. Meet QBT 9:30. Leader: David Helem

ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS MEETINGS AND OUTINGS

February to June 2015

Sat 6 June: Passerines Rogers Creek - This is a lovely walk of easy to moderate difficulty through riverside woods in Port Alberni. Bring lunch and sturdy footwear. Meet at the QBT 9:30 am. Leader: TBA

Wed 17 June: Neck Point & Piper's Lagoon, Nanaimo: - Come out to participate in seaside birding and Garry Oak meadow wildflower identification. Moderate walking with some rise Meet at Craig & Jenson in PV at 9:30 or Northfield at 10:00 a.m. Bring a bag lunch for a picnic. Leader: TBA

Mon Jun 22: GENERAL MEETING - at Knox United Church, 345 Pym, Parksville @ 7:00 p.m. *Please respect Knox Church policy of "No perfumes or scents when participating in activities or meetings".* **TOPIC:** Amphibians **SPEAKER:** Tim Goater, from VIU Biology Dept.

Sat 27 June: Paradise Meadows & Battleship Lake - A lovely walk through mountain meadows to see the flowers (hopefully!) and then lunch at an alpine lake. Battleship Lake return is about 6 km. Bring lunch, wear sturdy footwear and dress with layers – just in case. Meet at the QBT 9:30 am or at the Horne Lake Rd and Hwy 19 intersection (Exit 75) at 9:50. Leaders: Margaret and Martin Hill

Reminders for Summer 2015: • QB Beach Day • Mon, July 27 Club Picnic • Sun, Aug 15 Kidfest

A BIRD IN CLAW...is worth two in a tree!

Coming home to double digits after spending 6 weeks in the Yukon where temperatures ranged from -37°C to +2 °C was a pleasant surprise. A nice sunny day at the end of January found me outside raking leaves. Now anyone who has been in our yard knows the chickadees have insatiable appetites for peanuts and will not leave us alone. They land on my head, shoulder and even the rake demanding to be fed. I sprinkle peanuts on the stump near where I work so they will let me be. When they run out, they have a specific chirp to let me know.

As I worked this day, suddenly I heard the juncos doing their 'tick-tick' sound when a predator is near. The whole yard was in an uproar. Chickadees above my head were no longer interested in nuts and were frantically chirping. I walked over to another cedar tree looking around the yard for the perpetrator. A chickadee followed me still frantically chirping. A nuthatch was calling in another cedar so I went to check it out. Very soon I spotted a Pigmy Owl sitting on a branch. As I ran for my camera, Ron said, "It has a junco!". The Pigmy Owl sat nicely still while I took my picture and then she flew off to deeper forest.



Observe the junco in Pigmy Owl's claws.

Text and Photo by Toni Wyckoff

When you feed any bird, you feed their predators too.