

Photo courtesy of Jim Thorne

We respectfully acknowledge that we live within the unceded traditional territories of the Snaw-naw-as People and the Qualicum First Nation, the traditional keepers of these lands.

We intend to nurture better understanding and pursue opportunities for collaboration with our First Nations neighbours.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

May 31, 2025

Hello fellow Anats and I wish you a very happy spring which has well and truly sprung! My pollinator attractants are blooming, but I have to confess to some disappointment as the actual pollinators are a bit thin in my garden. Hoping they are more numerous elsewhere.

Meanwhile it was lovely seeing the fawn lilies and then the trilliums open up. There were still some left in shady places at the time I sent this. Our outing to the Harewood planes was an amazing first time for me as the meadows were covered in camas, including a white one (at a distance so little chance of anyone harvesting it.)

Toni was able to identify the leaves of a very rare flower growing in a vernal pond and sent me some photos. **Hosackia Pinnata (Lotus Pinnatus)**. She included a photo of the actual flower. Wow factor plus! As a student of mine used say.



In other news, the Brant Festival was a great success. More people than last year participated and our Brant on the Bay set up didn't get blown away. Also, the Brant put in an appearance which is always good. Dave Hutchings led tours of the Englishman River Estuary and Lynne Brookes taught a beginners birding class that was full. The final event in the festival was the Hamilton Marsh tour on May 10th. Always an amazing place to visit.

Lynne Brooks and I joined other conservation groups in the area to meet with our new MLA Stephanie Higginson. It was a very productive meeting and we're happy to report that she truly understands environmental issues. She suggested that three regular meetings a year would be a good idea. We happily agreed!

We have two more meetings at St. Edmunds this season and then our picnic dinner at Rathtrevor in July. Don't forget something for the auction and of course some cash to buy your tickets for said auction. Wishing everyone a very happy approaching summer!

Liz Thorne

OFFICERS AND CONTACTS

President: Elizabeth Thorne

Past President: Sally Soanes

Vice President: Sally Soanes

Treasurer: Pat Newton

Executive Secretary: Randy Richardson

Meeting Secretary: Randy Richardson

Membership: Bonnie Mullin

Special Projects: Lynne Brookes

Stewardship: Dave Hutchings

BC Nature Contact: Liz Bredberg

Website: Kerry Baker

Newsletter: Liz Bredberg

Facebook: Tom Constable

Outreach Contact: Sue Wilson

Email & Zoom: Liz Bredberg

Club/Membership Information: Check our [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page or write to: Arrowsmith Naturalists, Box 1542, Parksville, BC, V9P 2H

If you know of someone who needs a few words of comfort or encouragement please contact our Outreach Person, **Sue Wilson** 250-248-7280, http://susiebird@gmail.com

CONTENTS

President's Corner	p. 1
Club Activities	p. 3
Outings	p.3
Stewardship	p. 7
Advocacy	p. 12
ANats Nature Notes	p. 15
Reading Material	p. 22
BC Nature AGM Report	p. 22
Coming Events	p. 23

CLUB ACTIVITIES

OUTINGS

Arrowsmith Naturalists continue to be intrepid hikers, visiting many beautiful sites in the region, including Shelly Creek, Englishman River Falls, Pheasant Glen, Dodds Narrows and Buttertubs Marsh.

Gabriola Island

A trip to Gabriola Island was of particular note, when ANats were treated to a sighting of orcas.



Arrowsmith Naturalists spotting orcas!



Orca

Nanoose Bay—Red Gap Forest Walk

On Wednesday May 14, 20 people set out to walk 5.2km in Nanoose Bay's Red Gap Forest, which is in various stages of regrowth. We also found old Fir and large Arbutus, mostly on old logging roads, with a few sections of narrower trails. Lots of trails- easy to get lost for a while!

We saw wild flowers, a large puffball and heard many birds including wrens, several species of warblers, robins, flycatchers, which can all find suitable habitats in this area.

At the midway point of the walk, we arrived at a meadow containing some gorse, a few old apple trees, and the "Big Fir" which is not very tall, but has probably one of the widest branch canopies we have seen. Everyone was herded under there for a picture!



Just past the 'Big Fir' is reportedly the biggest arbutus tree in our area; it has a very large circumference base, and then forks out into many more large trunks.

After about three hours of twists and turns, and lots of stops along the way, we arrived back at the parking area.

--Jeanne Schippers



Really big arbutus



Forest Gnome?



Echo Azure



Spotted coralroot

Photos by Bonnie Mullin

Harewood Plains

May 3, 2025

Arrowsmith Naturalists enjoyed a moderate walk, led by David Helem and Duncan Campbell, among the wildflower splendour of common camas, sea blush and monkeyflower. As noted above in Liz Thorne's letter, there are also rare species in the area.



Sea blush and monkey flower



Common camas (as if such beauty can ever be called "common?"—ed)



Red columbine



Photos by Bonnie Mullin

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship has long been a major part of the Arrowsmith Naturalists' activities.

Stewardship Report: Englishman River Estuary, Spring 2025

Here we are again: through another Winter, almost through Spring and on the verge of Summer. It's a great time of year with spring wildflowers, the sweet resinous fragrance of Nootka rose bushes, fresh green emerging grasses, all accompanied by the melodies of migratory and nesting birdlife. Great time to be alive, isn't it! And, of course, one of the very best places to be and feel alive is the Englishman River Estuary (ERE), at least for me...and I hope you will agree.

Once we were back at our stewardship work in mid-February, our preoccupation was to cut down a number of female English holly trees and strip the red berries from the limbs. The task was not easy, what with tripping hazards on the forest floor and the prickly leaves. But, with some great teamwork and a few laughs, we managed to fill 16-18 large garbage bags with twigs and the attached berries and send them off for disposal in the RDN landfill. For the time being, the male trees have been left standing as they do not pose the same threat of propagation. However, they will not be forgotten.

I know that we boasted that we had removed the Scotch broom from the ERE, and it wasn't an empty boast. However, years of accumulated seed in the soil means that young plants will emerge every year, so an annual cull is required...particularly for those plants mature enough to bloom and produce more seed. This "cull" is a much simpler process than felling giant 6 to 10 foot stalks but it occupies several weeks each bloom period of locating and then removing the blooming plants.

Much of June will involve lighter work as we go after the infestations of spotted knapweed. By and large, we have been able to prevent the spread of knapweed by cutting off the flower stalks before the plant can produce seeds. Unfortunately, this noxious weed has gained a substantial foothold at other locations on Vancouver Island so consistent effort and vigilance are critical to our control on the ERE.

For the most part, our work at the ERE is guided by the plans and needs of the Nature Trust of BC(TNT). Our general mandate is to monitor and remove invasive plant species and to assist with restoration projects when asked. The Wilson Nature Park at the end of Mariner is an ongoing restoration project where we may be asked for assistance this summer. Many new shrubs and trees were planted over the winter but these will need watering during our dry summer. At present, TNT has not finalized plans for the summer but we can anticipate an "ask" sometime soon.

Another restoration project where we can anticipate involvement concerns the newly-acquired TNT property stretching from Shelly Road to the Englishman River. Restoration has been delayed by the requirement for an archeological survey, hopefully sooner than later.

So, we have a busy time ahead of us...as always. We always invite fellow ANats to join us, either as occasional stewards or as part of our team of “regulars”. Stay tuned.



Mark & Helen, battling holly

Dave Hutchings
Stewardship Coordinator

French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve

In collaboration with members of the community and the French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve, Arrowsmith Naturalists have continued clearing invasive species from the Preserve, including holly, ivy, spurge laurel and large stands of Himalayan blackberry.



Blackberry Busters of French Creek

In addition, club members have taken part in delivery of informative flyers to homeowners in the surrounding area, telling of the potential damage to the nesting heron population, to the preserve, and to surrounding properties posed by clearance and construction in an adjoining privately owned hectare. (Please see below, under “Advocacy.”)

We continue clearing lamium and other invasives from Shelly Creek, and have taken part in planting native species.

Tidings of Great Joy from French Creek and a Request:

French Creek Estuary Great Blue Heron Colony

Wonderful news to share!

Against all odds, Great Blue herons returned to their Viking Way colony. The colony came under siege in December 2024 when the land was partially logged and cleared by the property owner, Don May Construction. People were worried that the herons wouldn't return, but they did! This is the 3rd consecutive year herons have nested here, emphasizing the importance of this breeding site with its plentiful food supply at the tidal mudflats, two creeks, sandbar beaches, and the Nature Preserve pond and wetlands.

The Viking Way and Deep Bay colonies are the only two identified, active heron nesting sites from Nanoose Bay to Deep Bay. In 2023 the Save Estuary Land Society conducted an eight month Bald eagle and Great Blue heron nest monitoring project from Nanoose Bay to Deep Bay. Of the 14 heron nest sites monitored, 12 were found inactive, many in disrepair, and were still inactive when revisited. One new, active heron nest was found at Hoylake Rd W at Alder Rd. The nest was inactive in 2024 & 2025.

Breeding on BC's coast for Great Blue herons (*fannini* subspecies) primarily occurs in

southeastern Vancouver Island, southern Gulf Islands, and the lower Fraser Valley and isolated pairs and small colonies along the central and northern mainland coasts and Haida Gwaii. Threats from habitat loss, particularly breeding and foraging habitat, due to development, human disturbance, and eagle predation are ongoing in the southern part of the range where concentrations of birds are highest (BC Conservation Data Centre: Conservation Status Report, March 2022). Canada supports approximately half the global population of the Great Blue Heron *fannini* subspecies, all of which are in coastal BC (COSEWIC 2020).

From 2023 – 2024 the Viking Way colony fledged 28 chicks, a significant contribution to the heron population. The Viking Way and Deep Bay colonies are vital to the breeding success and population of these Great Blue herons within BC, Canada, and globally.

Help Protect the Viking Way Heron Colony

The Save Estuary Land Society and partners are kicking off a fundraising campaign to raise funds toward acquisition of the one hectare of land to protect the French Creek heron colony.

To make a tax-deductible donation by cash, cheque or e-transfer:

Contact Denise Foster at the Save Estuary Land Society: Email: saveestuaryland@gmail.com

Registered Charity No: 786588079 RR 0001



A pair of herons cuddling in their refuge.

Photo courtesy of Deborah Freeman

FCENP AMPHIBIAN SURVEY

The amphibian survey has begun at the FCE Nature Preserve. Survey activities will run from May 2025 through May 31, 2026 to follow the amphibian life stages. This survey aims to ID amphibian species,

indicate relative numbers of individuals of each species, and identify most important breeding areas onsite. Information about the amphibians within the Nature Preserve will help guide restoration efforts as well as serve as a baseline against which to measure changes in the amphibian populations withing the Nature Preserve.

- Provincial and RDN permits were applied for/secured to conduct this survey project.
- A certificate of volunteer liability coverage was secured through BC Nature (naming the RDN as insured)
- The survey lead secured professional liability coverage (naming the RDN as insured)
- The construction of (24) 3' x 1' x 2in. cover boards was accomplished by volunteers. These cover boards will serve as late fall/winter/early spring shelters for salamanders. They are designed in such a way that occupants can be quickly viewed and identified with minimal disturbance.
- On May 23, 15 of the approximately 16 wetlands were staked with hydroperiod stakes to learn which contain water for a period long enough for amphibians to breed in them.
- Kyla Seward (MABRRI) has mapped (GPS) the six transects determined by survey lead, Elke Wind, herpetologist and RPBio.
- On May 30, the 24 salamander "cover boards" will be placed with four along each of the six transect lines and marked with flagging. As these are somewhat heavy and awkward this will most likely be another all-day effort.
- Next steps include monitoring water levels in the ~16 wetlands, identify amphibian species through inspection of larval, juvenile and, in fall 2025 and spring 2026, adult stages.
- Fourteen volunteers have signed up to help with these survey efforts and MABRRI and RDN staff will assist with this endeavour throughout the year.
- Sandy and Robin Robinson have again graciously allowed us to store project materials for restoration and research activities in their wonderful shed. Their contribution to these efforts is crucial and much appreciated.



Cover boards

Notes and photos by Lynne Brookes

ADVOCACY

In the spirit of our commitment to “know, enjoy, and preserve nature,” Arrowsmith Naturalists play active roles as advocates for natural areas and for policy.

Hamilton Wetlands Annual Tour

Many of the regional environmental groups take part in this event. Arrowsmith Naturalists have traditionally acted as guides to visitors to the tour.

On May 10th we had just about perfect weather for our Annual Tour - a bonus event of the Brant Wildlife Festival. The numbers were okay at about 120 but it was huge in that they were almost all fresh faces - first timers to Hamilton Marsh! It was a nice mix of adults and children.

I queried people as they left the tour and asked them, "Was it fun? Did you learn a lot?" There were all very impressed with their tour guides and their level of expertise. Yay ANATS!

This event never ceases to impress me - so many groups standing strong in support of Hamilton Marsh.

Participants included: Arrowsmith Naturalists, Arrowsmith Independent School, Ducks Unlimited Oceanside, Friends of French Creek Conservation Society, Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABBRI), Nanaimo Area Land Trust, and NIWRA - North Island Wildlife Recovery, and of course the Hamilton Wetlands and Forest Preservation Society. (Lord help me if I'm forgetting anyone!)



Young visitor trying out a spotting scope





Marsh life collected by Arrowsmith School students



Notes and photos by Ceri Peacey

Arrowsmith Naturalists know that advocacy can be fun and scrumptious!

Saturday evening, May 24, 2025, many of us attended the 'Namgis First Nations Feast and Evening of Culture Fundraiser to raise money for the ongoing fight to save the wild salmon and dispose of all the fish farms!



The Feasting came first: Halibut soup and elk stew with bannock and breads and MANY desserts!! All made by the local First Nations.

Following the Feast came the most wonderful evening of stories. We were told many stories of the fish farm battles and gratefully a few good success stories. Where the fish farms have been disposed of the wild salmon have rebounded in good numbers. But the fight goes on!!

There is absolute proof through research that the farmed fish develop viruses, bacteria and lice which attack and kill the wild salmon fry. Would you believe the farmed fish are fed red dye to make the meat red!!! Watch what you buy!!

Then the dances began, and we were told the meaning of each dance or song. The robes and costumes were magnificent. By the end of the evening, they had us all up dancing around the hall to the drumbeats, in friendship and solidarity.

The battle must go on till every fish farm is gone!!!

We were so blessed to be part of this evening.





Notes and photos by Bonnie Mullin

ANATS NATURE NOTES

Brant

The annual arrival of the Brant migration always calls Arrowsmith Naturalists forth into action.

In addition to guiding tours of Englishman River Estuary and French Creek, members offered instruction in spotting and identifying birds and many of us took part in the annual Brant on the Bay event. The weather for Brant on the Bay was unusually propitious, and in addition to a good showing of brant, we spotted other species of note including a whimbrel.

The weekly brant count began at the end of February and continued to the beginning of May. The count was comparable to last year's, and was shared with MABRI, the BC ministry of Land, Water and Resource management, the Canadian Wildlife Service , BC Nature Trust and (of course!) count participants and our Facebook page.

Trillium

Karen Hodgson has sent the Newsletter three photos of trillium—a flower that heralds spring on Vancouver Island for many of us.



Observers often report that they have seen three different species of trillium in the forests of Vancouver Island. In fact, there is only one species of trillium here. What we are seeing in the varied colours of flowers is the gradual “senescence” of the plants. As they mature, and as they are visited by pollinators, they change from white to pinkish to purple. Some sources state that this is a way to signal to pollinators that they have done their duty in pollinating a plant, and it will now benefit from being left to develop without further visitations. See <https://libres.uncg.edu/ir/wcu/f/Shipman2011.pdf>

Spring Blooming Trees

Earlier this year, odd images and questions started appearing on Facebook gardening and nature-related sites; people were curious about the thousands of green two-leaf seedlings that were appearing everywhere. You might have noticed the carpets of green seedlings growing in local forests and along tree-lined paths. This spring was a great year for big-leaf maple seedlings.

Acer macrophyllum, or big-leaf maple, is a favourite native tree of mine. The dramatic show of fresh green leaves and greenish, yellow-white inflorescences that dangle from reddish-brown branches are the first strong colours of spring in my local forests. As well, big-leaf maples are one of the earliest sources of food for our local pollinators (bees, beetles, butterflies, hummingbirds and moths) until the flowering shrubs and ground plants can provide a broader range of food options.

This year, I tried to keep track of the timing and locations of early blooming trees. The earliest bloomer I found was the osoberry tree (*Oemleria cerasiformis*). I found the first white bloom and small pale green leaf clusters on March 7. Apparently Hooker's willow trees bloom even earlier but I didn't encounter any on my walks.

By the end of March I saw the first green-yellow flower buds on the big-leaf maples on the edges of the Qualicum Beach Community Forest and along the lower areas of Little Qualicum River. By the middle of April, other flowering native trees took over and I started to see the small white flowers of bitter cherry trees and Douglas maples.

By the end of April my neighbourhood was full of blooms: arbutus trees covered in sweet-scented white flowers and the first big "petals" of Pacific dogwood and other types of nuttall. By this time many of the native shrubs and plants were also blooming and offering plenty of choice for our busy pollinators.

If you are interested in learning more about native trees and plants that are important for local pollinators (and of such interest and visual appeal to us), you can check out —

Earliest blooming trees - from [Pollinators Plant Guide - East Vancouver Island](#)

See also: <https://www.nanaimo.ca/green-initiatives/natural-environment-and-ecosystems/wildflowers-in-nanaimo> - a mixture of information on native plants, shrubs, trees

Looking for native trees, shrubs, plants to plant in your garden? Check out the detailed NALT Nursery – Care of Native Plants guide from <https://naltpollinatorproject.ca/native-plants-for-your-garden/>
Submitted by Sylvia Riessner

Where have all the maple trees gone?

One of the most common trees in our local woodlands is the broad leaf maple, also called big leaf maple. But I prefer the Canadian name, broad leaf. It possesses the largest leaves of any maple. That is why the species name is *Acer macrophyllum*. It is also reported to be the largest maple in North America.

In the spring it is covered with flowers, that come out before the leaves do. However, virtually nobody notices them because they are yellow green, and look like newly emerging leaves at a distance. There are so many flowers that if they were white or pink they would rival cherry blossoms. In autumn thousands of typical maple seeds are produced, and in April and May the forest floors around maple trees are covered with seedlings. These seedlings are much larger than most seedlings, and the two large strap shaped leaves are easily seen from a distance.

With so many seedlings you would expect the ground would be covered by young maple trees, but that is not the case. The same abundance of seedlings occurs every spring, so there should be also sorts of young trees of various ages. But there are not. Why do these seedlings virtually never survive? I have heard various reasons for this, and it would be interesting to look under the maples in the coming weeks and see what happens to them. The most likely situation that was mentioned to me is that the soil is too dry in most summers and they die from drought. Is the survival better on wetter stream sides? Are they shaded out by the forest canopy? Do maple trees produce chemicals that poison their own seedlings to prevent competition?

Another interesting thing about our maples is the fact that a tree usually has one main trunk, the same as most trees do. But every now and then you will see a tree with many trunks. And if you look closely you will probably see that a number of maples nearby also have many trunks. These are trees that were at one time cut down. A cut maple produces many shoots from the stump. The growing tip of a tree produces compounds that inhibit the growth of lower branches. One dominant tree top allows a tree to get taller and compete for sunlight against its neighbours. There is not one dominant leader on a maple stump. A number of the shoots continue to grow and so a bushy tree is the result.



Report and photo by Terry Taylor

Encounters with Purple Pinecones?

Did you know that May is prime time for Vancouver groundcones (*Kopsiopsis hookeri*). I've noticed them before in the spring, usually just one or two at a time, spaced apart along the local trails in Qualicum Beach and elsewhere on Vancouver Island. They are intriguing plants (I used to think they were closer to fungi than plants due to the ephemeral nature of their appearance each year, and the odd way they burst up through the driest, hard-packed areas along a trail).

During a recent bicycle ride I encountered so many groundcones (around 20 on one particular section of trail) that I took time to learn more about them. Apparently Vancouver groundcones (named for their resemblance to conifer cones) are common in coastal areas of southern BC and Vancouver Island and appear and bloom during

May. Although older guidebooks call them saprophytes, it turns out that they don't live on dead or decaying organic matter. Instead they are parasitic plants that hook into the water and nutrients of nearby woody plants (i.e., salal and kinnikinnick).

The flowers are tiny but clearly visible between the bracts (which overlap just like a pine cone) but the seed capsules are too small to see easily. I found the range of colours during this year's sighting interesting and thought the range (from purple through red to off-yellow and dirty-white) might indicate different stages of development. Apparently it is just a variation and none of the sources I checked explained if it had any significance.

There's still time to look for your own groundcones on the forest trails around you. I went back to check on mine three days afterwards and could only find a few, each of them clearly decaying. So, I'm left with more questions – maybe some of you have answers or sightings to share.



Submitted by Sylvia Riessner

Observations from Rosemary Taylor

Nothing like going to the beach to see what's going on, only to find that absolutely nothing is happening anywhere along the many beaches we visited that day. The tide was coming in, only because it had to, barely noticeable as it seeped in towards the high tide line.

But all of a sudden, as I peered out to sea, I caught sight of an eagle, fishing. It flew in low and fast, legs down, talons ready to snatch something for dinner just below the surface. I've seen eagles fishing that way many times, and marvel at the fact they are so accurate in claiming their prey, then

either eating it on the wing or flying off to some safe place to enjoy the meal.

But this eagle didn't do that. I was standing on the beach, but the bird was quite a way offshore, and must, I assumed, have caught something bigger than it could lift. It tried twice, unsuccessfully, to flap its wings and take off, but couldn't make it. So what to do?

Being a quick thinker, this eagle soon solved the problem. Making sure it faced the beach, it started swimming, beating its wings, butterfly style on the water, methodically, regularly, with great patience and persistence. It was a long swim, but it kept going for several minutes as a little crowd gathered on the beach, all rooting for it as it seemed to be going nowhere fast at one point. However, it caught the incoming tide, and slowly but surely made it to shallow water, and finally stood on the dry beach just at the tide line. It brought nothing with it by way of the catch I presumed it had made - maybe it missed, maybe it was too heavy and got dropped, but the rather wet eagle stood for a while, probably glad to rest its wings, till it realized it was now on dry land and could take to the air again.

At that point, four other eagles appeared from almost nowhere, seemed to greet 'the swimmer', and all five took off, circled round overhead together, then each finally went their own way. The new arrival flew up into a nearby tree where I could see every feather clearly. And of course that was the time when I didn't have a camera with me!

Another time I was sitting at the breakfast table, gazing out over our expansive view towards Texada Island, when I noticed what appeared to be a straight red line heading my way over the rooftops nearby. It can't be a drone - drones don't have straight red edges, and anyway, no-one in this area would be flying one. It turned out to be a red-winged blackbird! Strangely enough, for years now at this time, they come up to our garden from a small lake on the golf course some distance away, as they head for the suet feeder hanging from our deck. Both male and female come in turn to take beakfuls of suet back, I presume, to chicks in the nest. This year, it seems, the blackbird's epaulettes are the biggest and brightest ever, so when not flapping their wings, they become a flying red line.

And now for a mystery that needs to be solved. Can anybody tell me which authority mows the bank across the road from the Parksville Museum and runs past the back of the Craig Bay development on North West Bay Road?

The reason I ask is because every April the bank, which extends from the corner of North West Bay Road right to the first turning into the Craig Bay development, becomes a wonderful display of pink storksbill flowers.

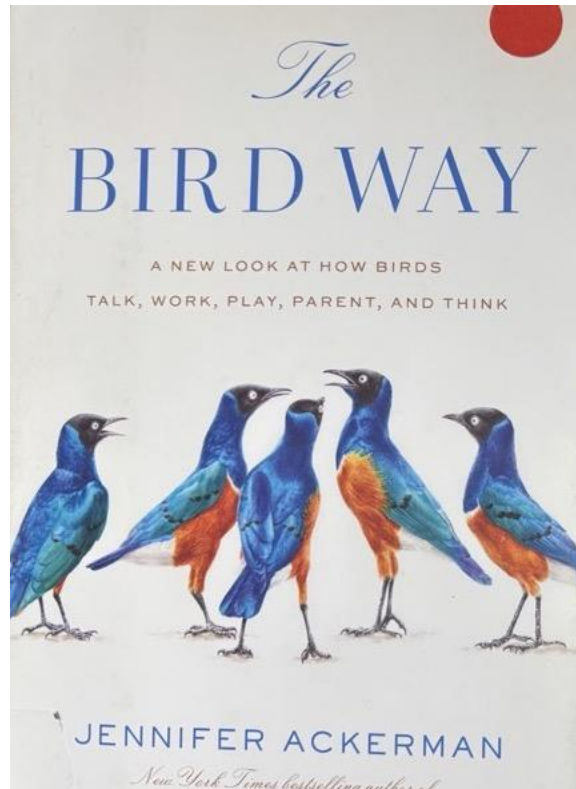
We make special trips to see it, and they last for many weeks. However, often before these gorgeous flowers are over, someone mows that bank - ever heard of No Mow May? It saddens me to see that such a precious and much needed display of untended wild flowers, doing such a good job to attract pollinators, can be so decimated and demolished by a bureaucratic mowing machine. Besides which, that colourful bank is such a pleasure to see, it deserves to be enjoyed by all for as long as possible. For years I've been asking around to find who mows that bank, and so far have failed to find an answer, as then they could be requested to at least leave the flowers until they were well and truly over.



And there's a story within a story here. As I was walking along at the base of this bank, Terry was on the path above, when a car drew up beside me. The driver got out and asked me if I knew there was a gentleman on the ground on the path above, was he hurt. I turned to look up as I couldn't see what was going on, but then discovered it was Terry, on his knees as usual, checking something out! I was so grateful to the driver for even noticing, let alone stopping to ask if all was well. Who does that any more!

READING MATERIAL

The bird way: a new look at how birds talk, work, play, parent and think by Jennifer Ackerman, Penguin Press 2020.



The book describes the recent learned behaviour research which contradicts old assumptions and misunderstandings of birds.

A team of international scientists discovered that bird brains pack more brain cells into a smaller space, Whether the bird was finch or emu, they found higher neuron counts than mammals and some primates.

Submitted by David Helem

BC NATURE AGM

This year's AGM was held in Merritt, in the rain shadow of the coast mountains. It was well run and thoroughly enjoyable. Outings included birding (of course!), plant and flower photography, sketching, hiking, geology of the area, a bioblitz and inaturalist training and much more. The weather was warm but not hot and 200 naturalists enjoyed it all immensely.

The only major item to come up at the AGM meeting was a change in the financial bylaws. BC Nature found itself in a difficult situation this last year when promised grants didn't arrive until months later than they were supposed to. The new bylaw that was passed makes it possible to set up a line of credit to cover gaps like that if they should occur again, and only if a similar situation arises.

Our resolution to ask the Ministry to do some enforcing of leash laws on our beaches was passed without questions. This is an issue everywhere in the Province. The 2nd resolution from Cowichan Valley concerned asking the Ministry to get the new rules for privately owned logging lands to get back on track. There has been public input, but no further word since the election. This also passed with no questions.

The executive of BC Nature is looking for a host for next year's AGM. They did not ask Anats. If you have contacts in other clubs, encourage them to host a conference. We found it worthwhile and so did the Merritt volunteers. Zoom can only do so much. In the meantime, enjoy Nature, now that summer has arrived!

Cheers everyone! Liz Thorne

COMING EVENTS!!!

- 6-8 June MABRi Biosphere Bioblitz <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/2025-mabr-bioblitz-4610c3af-09ad-4f46-b8be-297d59108926>
- 20 June Voices for the Islands Book Reading, 7-8 pm, Rotary Hall, Qualicum Beach
- 16-22 June Pollinator Week <https://pollinatorpartnership.ca/en/pollinator-week-canada>
- 26 June ANats meeting. 2 pm, St Edmunds Hall., Graham Beard, speaker, re fossils
- 27 June Qualicum Beach Day 12 noon to 4 pm
- 24 July, 4 pm ANats picnic, Rath Trevor Beach
- Sept 28 World Rivers Day, location TBD