

---

---

# PARK Partners



The newsletter of the Greater Vancouver Regional District Parks Partnership Program · Winter 2007 · Vol. 8 No. 1

## Winter storms hit regional parks hard

While most people in Greater Vancouver heard news stories about the devastating impacts of winter storms on Stanley Park, it was not the only park to take a hit from raging winds, rain, snow and ice.

A number of regional parks were also hit hard by a series of winter storms that pummeled the region in November and December. About 3,000 trees were blown down; trails were blocked; footbridges were washed away and roadways were damaged.

Some of the most heavily damaged park sites include Belcarra, Capilano River, Campbell Valley, Crippen, Kanaka Creek, Lynn Headwaters and Pacific Spirit regional parks. Cleanup and repair work will require additional resources and needs to be done before the busy summer season.

"Our main focus has been to get the facilities open and make the parks safe," notes GVRD Parks West Area Manager Mitch Sokalski.

See page two to find out more about the damage to regional parks.



Photo: GVRD Parks

**Winter wallop:** Hurricane-force winds toppled trees across Tumtumay-wheaton Drive in Belcarra Regional Park (above), as well as across many of the park's popular hiking trails.

## 2007 Ideas Fair and Volunteer Recognition goes to Campbell Valley Regional Park

In appreciation of the contributions made by park partners and park volunteers throughout the regional parks system, GVRD Parks, the Regional Parks Forum and the Campbell Valley Park Association presents the annual Ideas Fair and Volunteer Recognition on Saturday, March 31, starting at 9 am and running until 3:30 pm.

The day begins with tours of Campbell Valley Regional Park. You

could join in a tour of Little Campbell River, check out the park's Equestrian Centre, learn more about the history of the area on a heritage tour, take part in the "Hug a Frog, Love a Leech" program to better acquaint yourself with aquatic life in Campbell Valley's ponds, or sign on for the eclectic "Canines, Critters and Trees" tour that takes in a labrador retriever training club, a wildlife rehabilitation centre and a tree farm.

Lunch follows at the Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club. And then it's on to Ideas Fair, a great opportunity to learn more about what other park associations, community groups and nature-related organizations are up to.

More details on the tours will be posted on the Park Partners website ([www.parkpartners.ca](http://www.parkpartners.ca)) as they become available. Registration forms will be mailed out in February.

# Trees, trails and roads fall victim to storms



Photos: GVRD Parks



Some regional parks, such as Iona Beach weren't hit too badly by a series of winter storms that brought severe winds, rain, snow and ice. But others saw significant damage. Below, a few of the worst hit.

**Belcarra Regional Park** More than 1,500 trees were blown down in Belcarra. Fallen trees blocked a number of trails in the park as well as its main access road: Tum-tumay-wheaton Drive. The large root wads of some fallen trees also tore up sections of the Admiralty Point Trail. Trails are reopening as the storm debris is cleared.

**Capilano River Regional Park** About 250 trees were toppled in Capilano River Regional Park. Capilano was ravaged not only by fierce winds but also by torrential rain. A landslide on Houlgate Creek tore out a footbridge and buried a 50-metre section of the Capilano Pacific Trail. The section of the Capilano Pacific Trail between Shinglebolt Trail and Rabbit Lane will remain closed until the area is stabilized and the bridge replaced.

**Lynn Headwaters Regional Park** About 175 trees were toppled by wind and rain here. Four bridges were either washed out or, in one case, upended by a large root wad. Several trails were closed due to

storm damage including fallen limbs and trees.

**Pacific Spirit Regional Park**

About 900 trees were toppled in Pacific Spirit Regional Park, but here the snow did as much damage as the wind. In the first snowfall, about 600 trees fell or were snapped in half. On Swordfern Trail, fallen conifers damaged a section of boardwalk. The trail will remain closed until debris is cleared and the boardwalk repaired. The trail between South West Marine Drive and Imperial was also closed to the public.

**Matsqui Trail Regional Park**

The trail between Glenmore Road and the CN Railway underpass was closed when stormy conditions caused erosion on a section of the Olund Trail. Repairs are anticipated to take several weeks.

**Minnehada Regional Park**

The North Trail was closed while staff worked to remove downed trees and storm debris.

**Force of nature:** At Capilano River Regional Park (left), torrential rains resulted in a landslide that washed out a footbridge and closed the Capilano Pacific Trail. At Pacific Spirit Regional Park, (below left) trails were closed when about 900 trees were toppled by winter windstorms. Parks staff must not only clear the fallen debris, but must ensure that remaining trees pose no hazard to park visitors.

## Storm Clean-up Fund to help restore parks

Wind, snow, rain and ice have taken a toll in several regional parks. Parks staff are doing their part – working hard to ensure each park is safe and sound. Now, there's a way for you to help too.

Replacing footbridges, restoring trails and repairing structures damaged by this winter's wild weather will take both time and money.

The Pacific Parklands Foundation has started a Storm Clean-up Fund to help out. You can help by donating online at [www.pacificparklands.ca](http://www.pacificparklands.ca) or at a donation station.



# Regional Parks celebrates 40th anniversary in 2007

When the Greater Vancouver Regional District first came to be in 1967, there were four regional parks – Aldergrove Lake, Belcarra, Burnaby Lake and Campbell Valley.

At the time, the concept of a regional park system was to provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities across the region that weren't available in municipalities, and to ensure that significant natural landscape features of the region were protected.

Forty years later, the GVRD Parks system includes 21 regional parks, four park reserves, three greenways and two ecological conservancy areas that together make up 12,850 hectares of greenspace.

It's an amazing achievement and in 2007, GVRD Parks will be celebrating those achievements as well as looking to the future of regional parks.

Final decisions are being made on special events that will help mark 40 years of regional parks. Among the ideas: a "passport" program to guide

people through 40 hidden treasures in regional parks; parks open houses; special events, stewardship activities and community events..

We'll also be looking for volunteers to help out with some of celebrations. If you're interested in finding out more, send an email to [volunteer.info@gvrd.bc.ca](mailto:volunteer.info@gvrd.bc.ca) or call (604) 432-6351.



**Looking back:** In 1967, Capilano River Regional Park was already a favourite place for families to spend a day together.

## Explore the park in the dark at Night Quest

Night Quest at Pacific Spirit Regional Park is that one day night of the year where park visitors are encouraged to explore a regional park under cover of darkness.

It's a chance to walk along lantern-lit trails, learn more about the creatures of the night that inhabit Pacific Spirit and experience a side of the forest that most people would only want to do in the company of others.

It's also a chance to roast marshmallows over a bonfire, go on a poetry walk, get your face painted (kids only!) or check out some of the groups that volunteer at Pacific Spirit. Among them is the Pacific

Spirit Park Society that presents Night Quest in conjunction with GVRD.

Night Quest takes place on March 24, from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Park Centre on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, about 400 metres west of Blanca Street.

Bring a flashlight, headlamp or lantern to start your journey anytime between 7 and 9 p.m. And give yourself at least one hour to complete your night quest.

Everyone is welcome. Registration is not required. And it's free.



**Night creatures:** Visitors enjoy a toasty fire (above) and learn more (left) about the nocturnal inhabitants of Pacific Spirit Regional Park.

Photos: Dawn Hanna

# Volunteer coordinator brings passion and energy to Pacific Spirit

by Helen Spiegelman

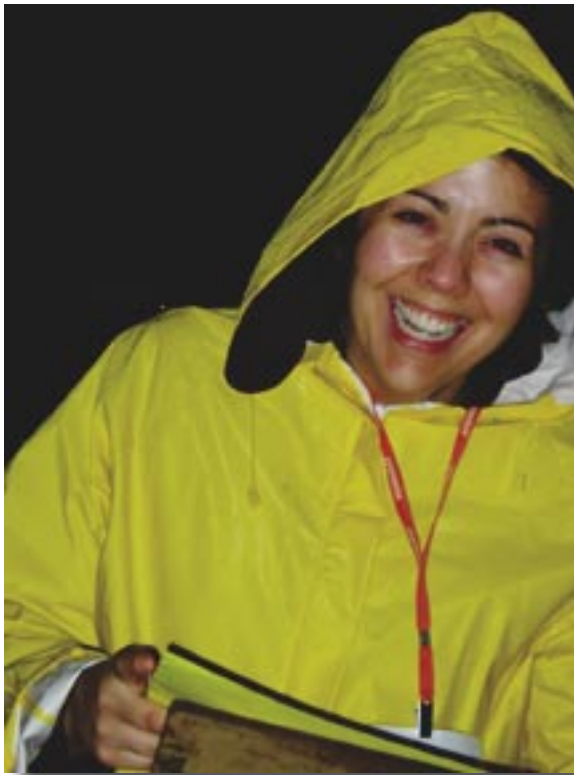
Since 2003, allocation grants from the GVRD Parks Partnership Program have made it possible for the Pacific Spirit Park Society (PSPS) to secure the support of a part-time volunteer coordinator.

The current PSPS volunteer coordinator, Gisele da Silva, brings an interesting mix of interests to her work in the park. Since coming to PSPS in April 2006, Gisele has been a cheerful behind-the-scenes presence at events in the park including Night Quest, the opening of the Camosun Bog boardwalk and community meetings organized by PSPS. When recent storms battered the park, she set up a program with the Trail Initiatives Group to direct volunteers to help park operations staff with the cleanup.

Gisele had never worked in a park before coming to Pacific Spirit, but says she really likes “the outdoorsy aspect” of learning about nature and wildlife. Most of her environmentalism in the past has been urban issues like bikes and recycling and she has enjoyed learning about nature from the park volunteers and staff that she works with.

While she may not have a lot of parks experience, Gisele is very familiar with volunteering and non-profit organizations. Hailing from Vancouver’s East Side, Gisele’s passions are around social justice, the arts and women’s issues, and this is where she directs a lot of her own volunteer energy.

Gisele has played a leadership role in many community festivals in Vancouver including Under the Volcano, a volunteer-led festival of art and social change; the People’s



Gisele da Silva

Prom, an alternative Valentine’s Day event that raises funds for grassroots community groups; and Sista’hood, a community celebration of women and the arts.

While she was an undergraduate at Simon Fraser University (she received her degree in 2005), Gisele served on the university senate, responsible for governing all of the university’s academic activities and priorities.

For employment, Gisele divides her time between her small contract with PSPS and a nearly full-time job as the volunteer coordinator with the West End Seniors’ Network. There, she oversees 150 volunteers of all ages and capabilities. They include high-school students who visit home-bound seniors, as well as home-bound seniors themselves who volunteer to make scheduled phone calls to check in on their peers.

*Helen Spiegelman is chair of the Pacific Spirit Park Society.*

## Regional Parks Forum Members 2007

### Boundary Bay

- Don Farquhar
- Ursula Easterbrook (alternate)

### Burnaby Lake

- Tom Saare
- Bob Gunn (alternate)

### Burns Bog

- Dave Murdoch

### Campbell Valley

- Jude Grass

### Capilano

- David Cook

### Colony Farm

- Corinne Riedyk

### Crippen

- Sue Ellen Fast

### Derby Reach & Brae Island

- Dave Jordan

### Iona Beach

- Judy Williams

### Kanaka Creek

- Jackie Campbell
- Dave Smith (alternate)
- Ken Williams (alternate)

### Lynn Headwaters

- Ralf Kelman

### Minnehaha

- vacant

### Pacific Spirit

- Tom Dunn
- Judy Williams (alternate)

### Tynehead, Surrey Bend & Roberts Point

- vacant

### Members at Large

- Hilda Avery
- Leon LeBrun
- Joseph Lin
- Mel Turner
- Marianne Smyth
- Eugene Duruisseau

### Catching the Spirit Youth Society

- Rick Hankin, Chair

### Pacific Parklands Foundation

- Terry Wilshire

### GVRD Park Committee

- Cllr. Bruce Drake

### GVRD Parks

- Ed Andrusiak (Parks Manager)
- Stephen Suddes (Division Manager, Parks Visitor Services and Partnerships)

### Administration

#### Forum Facilitator

- Anne Cochran  
(604) 731-7055  
[acochran@infinet.net](mailto:acochran@infinet.net)

#### Communications Coordinator

- Dawn Hanna  
(604) 831-5069  
[parkpartners@telus.net](mailto:parkpartners@telus.net)

#### Forum Chair

- Deb Jack

#### Forum Vice-chair

- vacant

# Kanaka Creek volunteer brings passion and a photographer's vision to the park

By Ross Davies

When KEEPS volunteer Mike Stefiuk first joined the Kanaka Creek Regional Park based stewardship organization, he didn't settle for merely bringing his heart and passion to the group.

He brought the entire watershed, along with all of its creatures.

Mike had already been making frequent forays into the watershed, looking at everything from erosion sites to nesting sites. Somewhere along the way, he added a camera to his field kit, and the immediate result was a comprehensive photo library of conservation area encroachment and dumping sites throughout Maple Ridge.

However, Mike was only getting started. Since the release of the 2002 Conservation Area report, Mike has re-doubled his drive to share the watershed he loves through the lens of his camera, fortified by the infectious enthusiasm of his daughter Amber.

We have had the magic of nature brought into our living rooms. We have dined with a crayfish, been underwater with a coho salmon, and watched over the silent rain forest with a barred owl.

We have seen sights we had never seen, and have been to places we had never been. We have developed an even greater appreciation for this jewel of a regional park. Perhaps most importantly though, Mike has reminded us that greenspaces are essential to humans too, since it is good to know that we can occasionally escape from the so-called civilized world.



Photo: Mike Stefiuk

**Picture perfect:** One of many photographs taken by Mike Stefiuk, this image shows Kanaka River tumbling over the park's ancient sandstones.

**Mike of all trades:** In addition to being a photographer, Mike has also volunteered his time to help out at special events for Kanaka Creek Regional Park, like here at Rivers Day, where he engages visitors in an environmental game.



Photo: Ross Davies

## Pacific Spirit pioneer turns 90



Iva Mann, who was the primary driver for getting the provincial government to create Pacific Spirit Regional Park, turned 90 this past November. She lobbied government to set aside all 800-plus hectares as citizen of the UEL, a volunteer and trail builder and as a 20-year GVRD board member representing Electoral Area A. Iva first took up the call to have the land dedicated as a park back in 1957. – Mitch Sokalski

# Donors help endowment funds to grow and to help raise eco-aware youth

By Laura Swift

In the last issue of Park Partners, we talked about the two endowment funds held by the Pacific Parklands Foundation. Both of these funds have seen good activity in the last few months and we want to share the successes:

## The Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Fund

This fund is in the midst of an active fundraising mail campaign. The Foundation has sent out letters to more than 50 individuals and groups and has so far received \$770. Our goal is to meet last year's donations of \$2,000, so we still have a way to go!

Each year, we offer a \$500 scholarship to a deserving young environmentalist. Ultimately, we would like to make this fund self-sustaining. If we have another successful year like 2006, we will have reached our targets!



2006 YES winner Greg von Euw accepts his award from Regional Parks manager Ed Andrusiak and Margaret Smith at last year's Ideas Fair.



Dr. Mordehai Wosk (centre) with his son Ariel (left) shares good news with PPF chair John Scott.

## The Dr. M Wosk Youth Leadership Fund

This fund was started by the very generous Mordehai Wosk family in 2005. In December 2006, we received an additional \$50,000 towards the endowment.

The purpose of the fund is to engage, train and empower today's youth with the skills necessary for the future sustainability of our spectacular city and regional parks. Participants will be trained in ecological issues and environmental preservation as well as in organizational and communication skills necessary to make a profound difference. The impact of their work will be felt by all as they grow to become the leaders of the future.

To donate to either endowment fund, visit [www.pacificparklands.ca](http://www.pacificparklands.ca) and click on Current Projects.

## PPF board appoints new director

Well-known television personality Tamara Taggart has been appointed to the Pacific Parklands Foundation's board of directors.

Taggart has been a weathercaster on the local CTV affiliate for the past five years. She has also hosted the lifestyle series *Love it or Lose it* and appeared in

feature films and television series.

"Tamara has a keen interest in community work and is very enthusiastic about promoting the activities of the Pacific Parklands Foundation," noted PPF Chair John Scott. "She will make an excellent addition to the board of directors."



# Change in tax rules make donating stocks an attractive option

By Laura Swift

Just before Christmas, Pacific Parklands Foundation director Richard Hankin made a very generous gift of shares to the foundation. Richard is part of a trend. More and more often, successful investors, as a result of tax changes in the federal budget of 2006, are donating securities listed on prescribed stock exchanges, mutual funds and segregated funds of life insurance companies to charities.

Donating securities directly can produce higher net tax savings than selling the same securities and donating the proceeds.

Here's an example: Say you want to make a \$2,000 donation to a favourite charity and you have publicly-traded securities that originally cost \$1,000 but are now worth \$2,000. Assuming that your income is taxed at the top marginal rate of about 46 percent and that you have already donated \$200 in the year, the tax savings that would result from either donating the shares directly or donating the proceeds from sold shares can be seen in the table to the right:

As you can see, you will come out ahead if you donate the securities directly.

The new tax rules create many possibilities resulting in tax savings to donors and in the gifts of increasing values to Charities. Under one plan, a gift of \$10,000 of flow through shares which have appreciated in value, can be made with an after tax cost to the investor of \$800.

Never have taxes seemed so good!

To maximize the effect of contributions, Pacific Parklands Foundation can provide you with a range of ideas that you might discuss with your financial and legal advisors.

	Sell securities and donate gross proceeds	Donate securities
Value of donation (A)	\$2,000	\$2,000
Cost base (B)	\$1,000	\$1,000
Capital gain (A-B=C)	\$1,000	\$1,000
Capital gain inclusion rate (D)	50 percent	0
Taxable capital gain (C×D=E)	\$500	0
Tax on taxable capital gain (E×46%)	(\$230)	0
Donation tax credit (A×46%)	\$920	\$920
Net tax savings (S)	\$690	\$920
Net after-tax cost of donation (A-S)	\$1,310	\$1,080
By donating the securities, the donor's after-tax cost in this example is reduced by \$230.		

## Five simple steps to apply for funding support for your park project

### Step 1: Understand your project

You know your dreams best of all, and you know why your project is important to your association, park and community.

### Step 2: Contact PPF and describe what you have in mind

Call Laura Swift at (604) 760-7631. Let her know what you have in mind and what you've done to date. Ask for input and a checklist.

### Step 3: Fill out the project checklist

This is an important piece of information that gives everyone an idea of what is needed for your project's success. Get approval signatures for the work requested on the form.

### Step 4: Submit the completed checklist to PPF

All funding requests are vetted by the PPF and the foundation reserves the right to accept or reject fundraising requests.

### Step 5: Approval granted



# The Regional Parks and Greenways Plan: Part 1

By Dawn Hanna

It's been just more than a year since the GVRD board endorsed the Regional Parks and Greenways Plan, meant to guide GVRD Parks for the next 10 years. Since not many of us include formal reports in our bedtime reading, we thought it was a good idea to share some of the goals and strategies contained in the plan. Below is the first installment.

First, a bit of background: the Regional Parks and Greenways Plan (RPGP) is really a piece of a bigger picture, known as the Sustainable Region Initiative, which is based on the principle of caring for the economic prosperity, community well-being and ecological integrity of the region.

In line with those principles, the RPGP has three primary goals:

**Goal 1:** Protect and enhance regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage features;

**Goal 2:** Provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship; and

**Goal 3:** Support economic development and quality of life in the region.

To realize those goals, the RPGP spells out strategies that help outline the steps from vision to reality.

We'll look at the first strategy designed to help realize the first goal of protecting and enhancing regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage structures.

**Goal 1 - Strategy 1: Secure and enhance regionally significant landscapes and critical habitats.**  
The role for the GVRD will be to:



**Building bridges:** Park visitors enjoy the views from the bridge at Colony Farm Regional Park, one of the parks identified in the Regional Parks and Greenways Plan for adding to.

- **Lead** in acquiring significant landscapes and features,
- **Coordinate** the identification of threatened habitats and
- **Partner** on securing conservation lands.

For a good example of how this might work, you need look no farther than the recent acquisition of the West Creek Wetlands in Langley (see page 12 for more details.) There, the GVRD put forward the lion's share of the purchase price and partnered with the Township of Langley, the BC Trust for Public Lands and TLC The Land Conservancy to purchase 66 hectares of habitat that is home to at least 170 species of wildlife.

The Regional Parks and Greenways Plan also identifies two major actions to be taken under this first strategy.

First, the GVRD will secure critical and sensitive habitats and environmental corridors. In some cases, this means adding land and/or intertidal areas to the following parks:

- Glen Valley, Kanaka Creek, Derby Reach;
- Belcarra, Pacific Spirit, Minnekhada, Boundary Bay;
- Surrey Bend, Widgeon Marsh,

- foreshore, inter-tidal areas and uplands;
- Wetlands and upland forest sites;
- Grasslands, old field habitat and
- Utility corridors with biodiversity values.

As well, the GVRD will secure and protect sensitive habitats along wildlife and utility-greenway corridors with a priority on urban growth areas.

The other major action to be taken under the first strategy is for the GVRD to work with the province and with other interest groups to establish a Conservation Land Forum. This forum would foster land stewardship through new land protection tools such as partnered acquisitions, conservation covenants, easements, eco-gifting and other charitable donations. Such collaborative funding, acquisition and land management will ensure effective resources, expertise and integrated program efforts across the region.

That's it for this time. In the next issue, we'll look at a second strategy to protect and enhance regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage structures.

Colony Farm; and

- Burns Bog, Codd Wetland, Blaney Bog, Iona Beach.

In other cases, it means that the GVRD, in partnership with other levels of government and conservation

organizations, will seek to secure threatened habitats including:

- Fraser and Pitt River riparian zones and islands;
- Marine

Photo: Dawn Hanna



# Nominations wanted for Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Service Award

**K**now of a young person who has worked tirelessly for the environment and been an inspiration to others? Then it may be time to put his or her name forward for some formal recognition. Nominations are being sought for the 2006 Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award.

The award was created to honour Gordon Smith, a former GVRD planner and champion for the environment who loved involving children and youth in his projects. The award encourages and inspires young people to pursue environmental activities and studies. Nominees must be 19 years of age or younger and

their volunteer work must be in the Lower Mainland but not necessarily with regional parks.

Please provide the nominee's name, address, phone number, school and age, along with your own contact details. Briefly describe the student's volunteer work and its impacts on the environment, other youth and the community, plus their educational and career interests.

Nominations for the 2006 Award should be submitted by March 2nd to GVRD Parks to the attention of Wendy DaDalt either by email to [wendy.dadalt@gvrdbc.ca](mailto:wendy.dadalt@gvrdbc.ca) or by mail to GVRD Parks, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8 Attn: Wendy DaDalt.



## Work begins at Brae Island Regional Park

**S**hovels in hand, officials broke ceremonial ground recently at Brae Island Regional Park to kick off a \$5.24 million project aimed at revitalizing the park's aging campground and building new day-use facilities.

Expected to open in mid-June, camping facilities will initially include 155 new or rebuilt campsites, a group campsite, energy and water conserving washrooms, and green roofs on new buildings.

A new day-use area will feature waterfront picnic tables, viewpoints, a canoe/kayak launch and small regatta staging area and a 2-km long walking and cycling trail. Recreation, education and interpretive programming will be part of the camping experience and exhibits will eventually be installed throughout the park.

The Pacific Parklands Foundation, an independent not-for-profit society, is raising funds to add additional amenities to the site, including more trails and waterfront picnic shelter.

A celebration to mark the official opening of Brae Island Regional Park is planned for Parks Day on July 21.



**Dig this:** The first shovelfuls of sod are turned to kick off the start of construction at Brae Island. Pictured left to right are: Bob Rogers of the Derby Reach Brae Island Park Association; Township of Langley councillor Howie Vickerburg; GVRD Parks East Area Manager Wendy DaDalt; PPF executive director Laura Swift, City of Langley councillor Terry Smith; Will McKenna, GVRD Parks planner; Township of Langley mayor Kurt Alberts; Gayle Martin, GVRD Parks Committee chair; Stan Duckworth, Fort Langley Camping; and Ed Andrusiak, GVRD regional parks manager.

## Workshops focus on nature's delights and details

**W**ith millions of shorebirds, waterfowl and songbirds migrating through each spring and fall, Boundary Bay has always been for the birds. Designated as one of Canada's most Important Bird Areas (IBA), Boundary Bay is a major stop-over on the Pacific Flyway. Habitats of eelgrass beds, mud flats, estuaries, salt marshes, bogs and watercourses support more than 333 species, some rare and endangered. For the past few years, this avian heritage has been celebrated by the Birds on the Bay program. Among the many offerings of guided walks, workshops, boat tours, presentations (and more) are four workshops co-sponsored by GVRD and the volunteers of Cammidge House and Boundary Bay Regional Park. Read more about each below:



Photo: Ursula Easterbrook

Short-eared owl

### Friday, March 9

#### **Birds in Focus - A Visual Presentation, 7:30 to 9:30 pm**

Due to popular demand, Ed Dubois, Roy Hamaguchi and John Lowman will show their fabulous photos of birds of the Lower Mainland and beyond. These expert bird photographers will present new images, including those of snowy owls and birds that migrate even farther south after having passed through Boundary Bay.

Cost: \$5

Place: Cammidge House, Boundary Bay Regional Park, Tsawwassen  
Pre-registration is required. Call 604-432-6359.

### Sunday, March 11

#### **Birds in Focus - Photography Workshop, 9 am to 1 pm**

With local photographer Ursula Easterbrook, come explore basic to advanced photography skills, techniques, film choice (for non-digital photographers), equipment selection, birding locations and more. Bring your camera, tripod and anything else you might need to photograph birds (captive raptors may be present) during a practice session in the park. A follow-up session will be held on

March 31st for those wishing critiques.  
Cost: \$20 (ages 12+)  
Place:

Cammidge House, Boundary Bay Regional Park, Tsawwassen  
Pre-registration is required.



Photo: Ursula Easterbrook

Bald eagle

### Saturday, March 31

#### **Show and Tell, 9 am to 1pm**

Participants of the Birds, Bugs and Buds on the Bay workshop and the Birds in Focus workshop are invited to return, show their work and connect with friends. Leaders Ursula Easterbrook and Rosemary Taylor will be present.

Cost: Free

Place: Cammidge House, Boundary Bay Regional Park, Tsawwassen  
Pre-registration is required. Call 604-432-6359.

### Saturday, March 24

#### **Birds, Bugs and Buds on the Bay: A Nature Journaling Workshop 9 am to 1 pm**

Join workshop leader Rosemary Taylor and learn how to record what you see in a creative way. Dress for the weather; we'll spend an hour or so outdoors looking for signs that spring has arrived. Bring sketchpad, notebook, something to write, draw or paint with, camera, binoculars or hand-lens, and observe the large and small natural events heralding a change of season. Then warm up with coffee and cookies in Cammidge House, while sharing ways of creating a nature journal that records highlights of our foray. On March 31st we will gather to display the results: pictures, poems, prose and more.  
Cost: \$5 (ages 12+)

Place: Cammidge House, Boundary Bay Regional Park, Tsawwassen  
Pre-registration required. Call 604-432-6359 for more info or to register.

# Weedbusters wins environmental award

The Weedbusters program at Burnaby Lake Regional Park recently received an “Environmental Star” award from the City of Burnaby for its efforts to remove invasive plants without the use of pesticides and to restore the natural plant communities at Burnaby Lake.

“The award went to the WeedBusters program – rather than an organization or individual – in recognition of the community partnership approach that the program employs,” notes Alison Evely, the GVRD’s technical advisor to the program. “It’s a good example of a joint GVRD/partnership program with GVRD handling the research and public education component and the partnership group as regular volunteers and co-presenters.”

The Weedbusters program is a joint effort between GVRD Parks and the Burnaby Lake Park Association. It started in 2004 to address the issue of invasive species in Burnaby Lake Regional Park and restore the park’s natural diversity.

Since its inception volunteer Weedbusters have removed about four tonnes of Scotch broom, two tonnes of policeman’s helmet and almost one tonne

of English ivy from Burnaby Lake. Volunteer Weedbusters also initiated a plant salvage from a development site in Surrey. Salvaged plants were used to restore a site where ivy was removed.

Weedbusters remove invasive plants – whether it’s Scotch broom,



Photos: Karin Albert

**Broom bash:** Burnaby Lake weedbusters have removed about 4,000 kg of Scotch broom – one of Greater Vancouver’s most invasive plant species – during the past three years. Below, a truckload and more of pulled Scotch broom.

policeman’s helmet or English ivy – before they set seed. The pulled plants are composted at an industrial composting site that uses a high enough heat to ensure that seeds and pathogens are killed.

After Scotch broom or policeman’s helmet is removed, grass seed is sown to provide some quick cover and to prevent new seedling establishment. Weedbusters are close to eliminating all the Scotch broom plants from the park. (Many thousands of Scotch broom seeds, however, remain just underground. Scotch broom

seeds are believed to be viable for at least 30 years.) Several big patches of ivy remain, enough to keep Weedbusters busy for a few years. “It is a long-term effort,” notes Evely. “But it is manageable and we are already seeing a big difference in areas we’ve cleared.”



## A growing concern

Scientists worldwide consider invasive species to be one of the greatest threats to biodiversity, second only to habitat loss.

Invasive plant species can outcompete the native plants that wildlife depend on, and cause other detrimental impacts such as erosion, increased fire hazard and more.

In a recent report, the top 12 invasive plants in regional parks were identified:

- Himalayan blackberry
- reed canary grass
- English ivy
- Japanese knotweed
- giant hogweed
- purple loosestrife
- English holly
- Scotch broom
- policeman’s helmet
- yellow flag iris
- yellow lamium
- creeping buttercup

# Partnership saves West Creek Wetlands in Langley



Photo: Glen Valley Watershed Society

**Home sweet home:** The West Creek watershed provides habitat for a variety of wildlife species, including a small population of black bears.

The West Creek Wetlands, considered one of the most significant areas of wildlife habitat in Langley has been saved thanks to a unique partnership. The Greater Vancouver Regional District, the Township of Langley, the BC Trust for Public Lands and TLC The Land Conservancy joined forces to purchase and secure more than 66 hectares of habitat that is home to at least 170 different species, including species at risk such as the snowshoe hare, barn owl and red-legged frog.

“West Creek Wetlands is a significant addition to the GVRD parks and greenways system” said Lois Jackson, chair of the GVRD. “I want to recognize the contributions of the partners, especially TLC, whose negotiating skills and tireless perseverance made this acquisition possible.”

Running through the property is the main channel of West Creek, one of BC’s 14 designated “sensitive” streams, with healthy stocks of coho and chum salmon. Wildlife-rich Wood Duck Lake in the northern part of

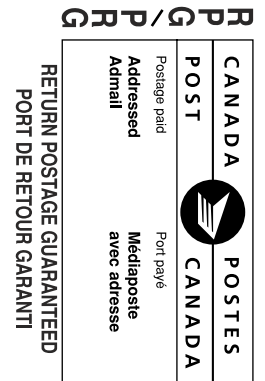
the property is maintained by the dam-building activities of a beaver population.

The purchase price for this valuable habitat was \$2.5 million (the property was appraised at \$3.6 million.) The GVRD contributed \$1.4 million, the Township of Langley \$700,000, the BC Trust for Public Lands \$300,000, and TLC \$150,000. In addition, the former owner generously agreed to reduce the purchase price by donating \$1.1 million to TLC’s fundraising campaign.

“The former owner was extremely generous and had a wish to see the site preserved in its natural state,” noted TLC executive director Bill Turner. “I’m proud to say we accomplished this goal with the help of concerned citizens, naturalist and heritage groups, local businesses, and governments.”

West Creek Wetlands was first brought to the partners’ attention by the local community groups Glen Valley Watersheds Society and Langley Environmental Partners Society in 2004.

GVRD  
4330 Kingsway  
Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4G8



Deadlines for future issues:

Issue	Copy Deadline	Mailout
Spring 2007	March 31	mid-April
Summer 2007	June 30	mid-July
Fall 2007	September 30	mid-October

Park Partners is published four times a year by GVRD’s Parks Partnership Program. The contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of GVRD Parks.

We welcome your contributions. To make submissions, contact Dawn Hanna at (604) 831-5069 or [parkpartners@telus.net](mailto:parkpartners@telus.net)

