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# PARK Partners



The newsletter of the Metro Vancouver Parks Partnership Program • Winter 2008 • Vol. 9 No. 1

## Talk and Walk series reveals secrets of Pacific Spirit

By Pille Bunnell

**D**id you know that licorice fern really does taste like licorice? That some of the sword fern plants in the forest are as old as the trees that tower above them? Or that alder trees don't "mind" dropping their nitrogen rich leaves in the fall because they have special bacteria living with their roots that make nitrogen for them?

The program that weaves all these fascinating tidbits of information into delightful forest walks conducted by various experts is the Talk and Walk program sponsored by the Pacific Spirit Park Society and Nature Vancouver. It takes place in Pacific Spirit Regional Park. On the second Thursday of every month, a topic is presented in a talk, along with wonderful visuals and other props, and on the following weekend



Photo: Pille Bunnell

**Hidden treasures:** Making discoveries on the trail is an activity for all ages.

the presenter returns to lead people on a walk where they can see it right there in the forest.

As I accompanied the forest walks something about the participants really encouraged me deeply. I saw people of all ages enjoying the sense of their world expanding as they saw, heard, tasted, felt and smelled more. Children were giving their rapt attention for an hour or more, and adults were absorbing new experiences as avidly as if they too were still kids. Clearly everyone

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## 2008 Ideas Fair goes to Colony Farm Regional Park

**I**n appreciation of the contributions made by park partners and park volunteers throughout the regional parks system, Metro Vancouver, the Regional Parks Forum and the Colony Farm Park Association presents the annual Ideas Fair and Volunteer Recognition on Saturday, March 8, from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm.

The day begins with tours of Colony Farm Regional Park and the Riverview

Lands. You could join in a tour of Wild Botanicals and Herbs at Colony Farm, or bring the kids to take in the Nature Explorers kids tour. Other options include a Spring Surprises bird walk, a hike of the dyke along Coquitlam River, a "backyard" power walk, a community garden tour, a tour of the Riverview arboretum and a slide show on the history of Riverview and Colony Farm.

Lunch follows along with presentations. Then there will be a chance 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.

## Regional Parks Forum Members 2008

### Boundary Bay

- Don Farquhar
- Ursula Easterbrook (alternate)

### Burnaby Lake

- Tom Saare
- Bob Gunn (alternate)

### Burns Bog

- Dave Murdoch

### Campbell Valley

- Jude Grass
- Murray Jones (alternate)

### Capilano

- David Cook

### Colony Farm

- Corinne Riedyk

### Crippen

- Sue Ellen Fast

### Derby Reach & Brae Island

- Sharon Meneely

### Iona Beach

- Judy Williams

### Kanaka Creek

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

### Lynn Headwaters

- Ralf Kelman

### Minnekhada

- Roger Loubert

### Pacific Spirit

- Tom Dunn
- Judy Williams (alternate)

### Members at Large

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

### Metro Vancouver Parks Committee

- Councillor Bruce Drake

### Metro Vancouver Regional Parks

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

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- Anne Cochran  
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### Communications Coordinator

- Dawn Hanna  
(604) 831-5069  
parkpartners@telus.net

### Forum Chair

Deb Jack

### Forum Vice-chair

Tom Dunn

# Tynehead Hatchery Open House and Tour

- Learn about the salmon cycle, and what goes on at the hatchery.
- Discover why we need hatcheries and see hatchery operations. You may be surprised by the kinds and numbers of salmon we raise!
- Find out what makes a good salmon river and how you can help.

**When:** Mar. 8 from 10 am to 2 pm and  
May 4 from 11 am to 3 pm

**Cost:** By donation towards our *Raise the Roof for 2008* fundraising campaign

**Age:** All ages

**Where:** At the Tynehead Hatchery.

**Details:** Wear boots and be prepared for the weather. Part of the tours will be outside.

Plan to stay for a couple hours and take a walk in the park on the salmon trail as well. For directions to Tynehead, go to [www.gvrd.bc.ca/parks/Tynehead.htm](http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/parks/Tynehead.htm)



*Tynehead Hatchery is operated by the non-profit volunteer Serpentine Enhancement Society. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the hatchery, which happens to need a new roof. With our fundraising campaign, Raise the Roof for 2008, the Serpentine Enhancement Society hopes to secure funds to continue this valuable work.*

## Talk and walk, cont.

was having fun learning little bits of knowledge and tying them all together into a web of understanding. Faces would glow with lights of “aha” when people learned that the little white mushroom only lives on salmonberry stems, and that it is really pretty when looked at close up; then their eyes opened wide on learning that those same salmonberries form an underground network that can survive a fire in the forest. They were enjoying themselves in a really deep way.



This encourages me as I think we humans still enjoy our sense of connection, of being not apart from, but a part of the world. I think this is what gives us the deep basis for actually making our life here on earth sustainable. This is why I do things like organizing this program.

In the fall, Terry Taylor expanded

our horizons on mushrooms and other fungi, and John McLean and Bart van der Kamp clarified some of the complexities about how forests evolve along with their tiny insect denizens. Jared Hobbs started the 2008 season with a brilliant and thought provoking presentation on the plight of the spotted owl.

In March, look for a Talk and Walk on forest invaders and what you can do to keep them out of our parks. In April, Pille Bunnell on spirituality and sustainability. In May, Judy Williams on the Wreck Beach foreshore. And in

June, an e-photo workshop and rally! Check the PSPS website for details [www.pacificspiritparksociety.org](http://www.pacificspiritparksociety.org) If you have something to contribute to the program, please contact the webmaster!

*Pille Bunnell is vice chair of the Pacific Spirit Park Society.*

# This hedgerow is for the birds!

By Alison Evely

Last October, more than 65 enthusiastic volunteers braved rain and mud to create new habitat for wildlife at Colony Farm Regional Park. Metro Vancouver staff and Colony Farm Park Association members were joined by community members, scouts, gardeners and environmental clubs. Together, we planted 1,400 native trees and shrubs to create a 600-metre hedgerow for birds and other wildlife. Volunteers ranged in age from two to 72.

Hedgerows have traditionally been planted between agricultural fields to provide shelter for insect-eating birds, to block wind, prevent soil loss, provide shade for livestock and reduce soil temperatures and evaporation. They increase biodiversity by providing valuable habitat for wildlife and help offset greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change. In Europe, agricultural hedgerows can be centuries old.

At Colony Farm, the hedgerow will add biodiversity to an area of the park that was, until recently, dominated by reed canarygrass. Reed canarygrass is an aggressive grass that expands to form a dense thatch that excludes

other species. In 2006, the field was cleared and replanted with a mix of wildlife friendly grasses. The new hedgerow runs along the field edge.

In the short term, cascara, birch, crab-apple, hawthorn, cottonwood and maple trees interspersed with native shrubs will provide nesting opportunities, food and shelter for birds and other wildlife. As the

hedgerow matures, the cottonwood trees will mature and die to provide homes for cavity nesting birds and perch sites for birds of prey. Park staff will monitor and maintain the hedgerow and remove invasive blackberry species. A contractor has been hired to water the hedgerow and plant any trees that die over the next two years.



Photo: Alison Evely

**Dig it:** Planted shrubs and trees provide more habitat for wildlife at Colony Farm.



Photo: TerryHughesPhotography.com

Pacific Parklands Foundation secured close to half of the funding for this exciting project. We thank Vancity Community Fund, Kinder Morgan Canada, TD Friends of the Environment and Tree Canada

Foundation for their generous donation of almost \$20,000 toward the hedgerow planting. We all look forward to birds and wildlife enjoying their new home for many years.



# Regional Parks staff take starving eagle under their wing

By Marcel LaBreche

On Oct. 11, a fully recovered four-month-old juvenile bald eagle was released back into Burn Bog Ecological Conservancy Area from where it had come. Timing was perfect as other eagles were returning to the area from the pink salmon run migration. It was a perfect release; the juvenile flew up and circled once and then flew away into the bog. A release can be very a very dangerous time for a bird as they are often stressed and could potentially get injured again. Luckily the only injury was to my thumb, which was bitten three times through my leather gloves.

The eagle's story began in April 2007 when we started monitoring a new bald eagle nest that was located in the 2005 Burns Bog ECA burn zone. During our monitoring of the nest in June, two eaglets were identified. Unfortunately, during a patrol on Jul. 28, it was observed that the nest had fallen. We suspect that the burned tree (a dead western hemlock about 15 metres high) was unable to support the weight of the nest. The older of the two nestlings had fledged successfully, but the younger, smaller bird was on the ground. At that time the bird appeared alert and we choose to leave it in case the parents were still around.

On Aug. 4, we returned to the fallen nest site to reassess the situation. As the parents had not been seen in the area for a week, we did a physical assessment of the bird. (Roy Teo, who worked at the bog this year, has experience with many birds through his rehab work with Wildlife Rescue

and bird studies and banding with Canadian Wildlife Service). It was determined that the bird was emaciated, indicating it had probably been abandoned. We carried the bird out (a 1.6 km hike) and brought it to OWL, a wildlife rehab center that specializes in raptors, located in Delta. Rob from OWL agreed with our assessment and indicated that the bird was in poor condition and starving, possibly "a day or two from dying". The bird was left in OWL's care at their facility.

Rehab at OWL included hacking, where a surrogate mother is used to feed the eaglet until its gets stronger. Then the eaglet was put in a flight cage to strengthen its muscles and learn how to fly. The final stage includes banding the bird. This will help researchers understand the range of this bird during migration and track problems such as poaching, power line electrocution, poisoning or West Nile virus. The staff at OWL were very professional and kept us up to date with the eagle's condition throughout its recovery.

On the day of the release we met at OWL and were brought into the flight cage to catch our bird. There were two adults and five juveniles in the cage, all flying back and forth, sometimes inches from our heads. We were told to stay out of the flight path and I had



**Rescue mission:** Marcel LaBreche recovers emaciated juvenile eagle and prepares it for transport to OWL.

no problem obeying the rules. After catching three juveniles, we finally found the one with the band that matched our numbers. Bev Day, who oversees OWL, told us that they have seen a lot more juveniles this year than other years.

It was a good feeling knowing that we made a difference and gave this eaglet a second chance. Burns Bog Ecological Conservancy Area is a large 2,200 ha protected area and should provide sufficient habitat. Our bald eagle was four months old and it will take four to six years before it is fully mature with the well-known white head and tail.

I would like to thank all the people that helped with this wildlife response, especially Roy Teo, Kevin Shantz and the wildlife rehab staff at OWL.

*Marcel LaBreche is the park operator at Burns Bog Ecological Conservancy Area .*



Eagle talons

# 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's time to put his or her name forward for some formal recognition. Nominations are being sought for the 2008 Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award.

The award was created to honour Gordon Smith, a former GVRD Parks 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 complete the application form (available at [www.parkpartners.ca](http://www.parkpartners.ca)), with the nominee's name, school, age and contact info (and your 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 2008 Award should be submitted by Feb. 29 to Metro Vancouver Parks to the attention of Wendy DaDalt either by email to [wendy.dadalt@metrovancouver.org](mailto:wendy.dadalt@metrovancouver.org) or by mail to Metro Vancouver Parks, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8 Attn: Wendy DaDalt.

## Super Saturday brings climate change home

**M**etro Vancouver's annual day of learning drew more than 100 attendees this past November, making it one of the most successful Super Saturdays ever.

Dr. Richard Hebda, the keynote speaker, was a big hit with his talk on climate change and the kinds of impacts we can expect to see in parks and other natural areas in BC. In an evaluation, one attendee simply noted "Wow", while another summed up most of the attendee feelings nicely with: "Excellent, excellent presentation. Realistic, well documented, not laced with hopelessness. Very useful and something everyone should hear."

If you missed Dr. Hebda's presentation, you can always take in a trip to see the climate change exhibit at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria (where Dr. Hebda is curator of botany and earth sciences). You can also go online and take a look at some of the maps of projected changes included in Dr. Hebda's presentation on the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium's website at [www.pacificclimate.org/impacts/rbcmuseum/](http://www.pacificclimate.org/impacts/rbcmuseum/)

Morning speaker Dr. Rick Kool of Royal Roads University was also popular for his second year running with an inspiring talk about using stewardship to connect people and nature. And afternoon speaker Ian Bruce of the David Suzuki Foundation showed how part of the solution is getting involved to ensure that our elected representatives take the



Photo: Daron Hanna

**Full house:** Keynote speaker Dr. Richard Hebda talked about some of the changes we're likely to see in our parks with climate change.

message to government.

A wide variety of workshops were held on subjects ranging from building nest boxes and bat boxes to managing invasive species to "wowing" audiences with inexpensive yet effective props.

Regional Parks Forum facilitator Anne Cochran will soon begin the planning for Super Saturday 2008. If you have suggestions for speakers and/or workshops, or if you'd like to be involved in the planning committee, please contact Anne at [acochran@infinet.net](mailto:acochran@infinet.net) or (604) 731-7055.

# The Regional Parks and Greenways Plan: Part 5

By Dawn Hanna

In this fifth installment of an informal look at the Regional Parks and Greenways Plan, we'll look at some more of the goals and strategies outlined for regional parks and greenways over the next 10 years.

Last time around, we looked at how Metro Vancouver plans to provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship. This time, we'll look at how Metro Vancouver intends to work with the community to develop recreation and wellness opportunities.

**Goal 2 - Strategy 4: Work with community, ethnic and social organizations to expand recreation and wellness opportunities.**

The first of three actions outlined calls for Metro Vancouver to collaborate with service agencies and community organizations to expand recreation opportunities and services in regional parks. This might include expanding opportunities for multicultural communities or for special needs visitors. It might also involve education programs for youth and new Canadians, including developing multi-language publications and website info and supporting community events.

The second action relates to putting standards in place to ensure that park facilities and services are more accessible to wheelchair users and others with physical impairments. This means reviewing existing standards to improve trails and access to buildings and waterfront areas; it might also mean using more ramps and boardwalks and removing or redesigning barriers.

The third action is all about integrating the needs of different cultures into public education and partnership initiatives. For example, some surveys have found that those of European descent tend to volunteer

on an individual basis, while other cultures prefer to volunteer as a family, meaning activities need to be suited to a wide range of ages and abilities.

Metro Vancouver also plans to facilitate programs on crime prevention and personal security with community partners. And to facilitate activities for new Canadians and ethnic groups.



**Spring cleaning:** Burnaby Lake Park Association volunteer Bob Gunn shows young volunteers how to maintain a nestbox

**Goal 2 – Strategy 5: Provide education programs to foster environmental stewardship, health and wellness, personal safety and social responsibility.**

Living sustainably is a task that many people are eager to take on, but many still aren't quite sure exactly how to do that – or even where to start.

Metro Vancouver, known as the “sustainable region” and with its motto “putting ideas into action” is perfectly poised to help folks make the transition to living in a more sustainable way.

Metro Vancouver regional parks plans to help by developing education, special events and partnership programs to emphasize sustainability and appropriate recreation use in parks. Some ways this might happen:

- Train-the-trainer programs on sustainable lifestyles;
- Community sustainability

challenges and lecture series;

- Development of a regional sustainability network; and
- “Sustainability in Action” projects in parks.

Regional parks also provide a terrific opportunity for the community to engage in hands-on stewardship that might include heritage restoration, species recovery and/or biodiversity enhancement projects.

Through the Park Partners program, Metro Vancouver wants to continue engaging park associations and other community groups to help in education, stewardship and other activities. As well, Metro Vancouver wants to implement a volunteer recruitment program that would support partners and staff. And engage existing organizations on such initiatives as:

- Wildlife rescue and care;
- Species at risk conservation and recovery programs;
- Native plant recovery and cultivation; and
- Heritage restoration and

education.

A third component involves partnering with educational institutions to use parks for research, curriculum instruction and occupational training. Such endeavours could help in:

- Establishing environmental benchmarks and monitoring climate change;
- Conducting research and developing management tools that advance biodiversity conservation;
- Expanding environmental, health and wellness education programs, habitat restoration; and
- Supporting environmental curriculum development and work experience programs.

*That's it for this time. In the next installment, we'll look at how Metro Vancouver plans to partner with businesses and organizations to provide enhanced services for park visitors.*

# Dr. Vernon Cuthbert “Bert” Brink 1912 – 2007

*By Judy Williams*

The lessons and examples Dr. Bert Brink taught us about being good earth stewards made him our “guiding light,” recalled Metro Vancouver East Area Manager Wendy DaDalt recently.

Bert touched many lives with his wisdom and gentle strength. His absolute commitment to the environment and quiet activism led to such honours as the Order of Canada, the Order of BC, the Queen’s Jubilee, the Canada 125 medal, the 2007 Lieutenant Governor’s Conservation Award and many others. He exemplified what it is to be an earth protector. Behind the scenes, he helped shape government policy, prompting actions on such issues as climate change as well as helping to establish protected areas in Georgia Strait, Puget Sound and, locally, in the vast Ladner marshes.

I recall Bert at McDonald Slough pointing out the necessity of letting fresh infusions of water through the causeway, and standing amidst the glory of tall cattails in the deep estuary explaining the biodiversity of the Musqueam Marsh along with Paul Binkert and Will Paulik, each of them guardians in their respective ways.

Within Metro Vancouver parks, Bert shared his passion and vision as a member of Save Our Parklands, which encompassed parklands from Boundary Bay, Iona, and Pacific Spirit to Barnston Island and Campbell Valley as well as Derby Reach regional parks. He helped prepare regional parks for the Lower Mainland Nature Legacy Program and always, was able to retain the “bigger picture,” sharing his vision with Metro Vancouver staff.

A good example of that shared vision was his perseverance to protect the horseshoe escarpment of land between Yorkston Creek and West Creek Wetlands in Langley to the

Matsqui Trail in Abbotsford. Bert helped staff realize the importance of the Glen Valley escarpment. He walked the escarpment and wetland sites with Wendy and other Metro Vancouver staff. As a result, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks added Two-Bit, Poplar and Duncan fishing bars plus Crescent Island to Glen Valley



Dr. Bert Brink

Regional Park. Metro Vancouver plans include studying the escarpment in 2008/2009 to identify lands in order to expand Glen Valley Regional Park beyond the river fishing bars, Crescent Island and West Creek Wetlands.

Bert attended public meetings and worked assiduously with the Fraser River Coalition towards keeping Barnston Island in the Agricultural Land Reserve. In addition, Bert was the driver behind the Order of Canada Grove designed by Cornelia Oberlander and built adjacent to the Campbell Valley Visitor Centre area in 1992 to commemorate Canada’s 125th birthday. It was a gift from those who

have received the Order of Canada (OC) in BC. The group carried out similar projects in other parts of BC but the Campbell Valley Grove was intended to be the most visible and important of their BC projects. Exactly 125 trees were planted by school children there.

As an original member of the Agricultural Land Commission, Bert was instrumental in the ultimate preservation of Burns Bog before the Burns Bog Preservation Society was formed. He also advised the Camosun Bog group in Pacific Spirit. In addition, he helped protect Fraser River Park, Deering Island, and Burnaby Bend. Bert worked with agencies at all levels of government from federal to regional, contributing to the Heart of the Fraser program, while working collaboratively with port authorities, the Fraser River Estuary Management Program, Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program and the Fraser Basin Council. Right to the end of his life from his hospital bed, Bert was promoting action in FREMP’s member municipalities toward mitigating and devising adaptive strategies to cope with rising ocean levels and climate warming.

Bert’s knowledge and curiosity knew no bounds. He understood BC and its natural wonders probably more intimately than anyone ever has. And, he particularly loved the Central Interior tablelands near his beloved Hefley Lake family cottage, a retreat from his busy and productive life as a conservationist.

Bert will be dearly remembered and deeply missed.

*Judy Williams is co-chair of the Fraser River Coalition.*

# Remembering Carol Farrell

## 1943-2007

By Judy Williams

Often we are defined by what we do, but Carol was also defined by her wonderful warmth illuminated by her million-watt smile. She was the quintessential volunteer, always pitching in quietly behind the scenes since 1989 to make each park event, whether a bog or ivy-pulling work party or Night Quest, a success. Carol was vibrantly interested in what each of us was doing and even pitched in on several occasions to help face paint at Night Quest.

At a Tynehead Volunteers-in-the-Park ceremony to honour various park volunteers across the entire GVRD, Carol proved to also be a guardian angel.

Gayle Martin, Metro Vancouver Parks Committee Chair, and I had parked side by side before heading into the park for the two-hour gala picnic. Upon our return to the vehicles, we discovered thieves had drilled through our locked keyholes, and trashed or stolen anything of value. We were devastated. Fortunately, Carol had walked back out with us. We were both in shock, but Carol just took over as one of her roles at her work was dealing with insurance claims.

Carol even came down to Wreck Beach on one of our 26 annual Wreck Beach days to help me face paint just as she also did at Night Quest. She was also a good sport and let herself be painted as well. At Night Quest, she clapped as vigorously as the kids when I told them my stories about Heron Boy, a fictitious ancestor of the modern Musqueam I created as a Night Quest story teller!



Carol had a way of keeping her own personal life private, while focusing her interest outward onto others. She was always supportive of the Wreck Beach community in the many challenges we faced dealing with UBC efforts to build towers, roads and seawalls or to cut 16 hectares of trees in order to build bicycle paths across the cliff faces. She always asked about the various projects and was indispensable as a dedicated Pacific Spirit Regional Park protector.

Whether a V.I.P., a Sunday Host, a Crazy Bogger or the Night Quest volunteer hostess for other volunteers in the Metro Vancouver kitchen, Carol's many kindnesses, cheerfulness and passion for the park and nature shone through.

Night Quest 2006 was the last time I saw Carol, and even though she was extremely frail looking, her smile was beatific as she listened to my stories, watched the face painting and

encouraged other volunteers during the evening. When I asked how she was, she simply smiled and told me she was fine when it was so painfully obvious that she was not.

After Carol did not appear at Night Quest 2007, I tried unsuccessfully to track her down, and told myself I would find her later to see if she needed help or was okay. Somehow later never came, and now it is too late to extend that helping hand.

However, it is not too late to tell the world about a wonderful, giving woman whose smile brightened our lives immeasurably. She is missed, for it is through persons such as Carol that our park has been and will continue to be held in gentle, protective hands.

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:  
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Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8

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