
PARK Partners

The newsletter of the Parks Partnership Program for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks • Summer 2009 • Vol. 10 No. 2

Wildlife Tracking Workshop participants learn to decipher animal clues

Sunny skies and fresh sign marked both Wildlife Tracking workshops held Apr. 11 at Boundary Bay Regional Park and May 9 at Brae Island Regional Park.

Organized under the Regional Parks Forum's stewardship stream, both workshops were led by wildlife tracker Roger Bean (who also happens to be operations supervisor for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks' East Area). Workshop participants got to spend the first couple of hours finding out how to recognize the tracks, scat and other sign left by various wildlife that inhabit regional parks. Then, it was time to get out into the field and put newly-acquired skills into practice.

At Boundary Bay, participants found tracks left by voles, mice, snowshoe hares, great blue herons and coyotes (as well as numerous domestic dogs.) Several picked-over duck carcasses (and one intact skull) left by bald eagles were also easy to spot. Scat contained clues to coyotes, river otters and more.

A huge thanks to Roger Bean for all his time and hard work!

If you missed out on these workshops, but would be interested in a future wildlife tracking workshop, send an email to dawnhanna@telus.net.



Get tracking!: (top) Participants at the Boundary Bay workshop watch and learn with Roger Bean (at centre, kneeling) and (above) check resource books to sort out whose tracks are in the sand. At left, the tracks of a raccoon.

All photos: Linda Mueller

Pacific Spirit Park Society introduces busy volunteer coordinator

By Shelagh Dodd

It has been almost a year since I was hired as the coordinator of volunteers for Pacific Spirit Park Society. Before I started the job I thought I was fairly familiar with the park, but throughout the last 10 months I have learned a lot about invasive species, park restoration and the park's living communities. As I learn more about the threats to the park's natural environment, I care even more about protecting it.

My job has been primarily to recruit volunteers to assist the invasive species, park restoration and Camosun Bog restoration groups and while I focus on that effort I get to work with some pretty amazing and dedicated people. Pille Bunnell and Brian Woodcock, the chair and vice-chair of the society, the members of society's board of directors and Metro Vancouver's West Area park staff have all been extremely supportive. Also, the passion and number of volunteer hours that the group leaders invest into the park inspires me to find volunteers to support their goals.



Helping hands: Shelagh Dodd pours juice for a PPS volunteer.

The society's membership has grown throughout the year and many of the members have volunteered in a variety of activities. We have also received a lot of support from high school students. While the students may initially want to volunteer to earn credit towards their required volunteer hours, some students get hooked on helping and they have become regulars at the work parties.

Working as the coordinator of

volunteers is really gratifying. Not only do I see great progress with invasive species removal and park restoration, but the volunteer activities provide another opportunity for people to become connected with park. Throughout the summer and fall I am looking forward to engaging more people in the volunteer activities and if I am successful not only will the park benefit, but the volunteers will do so as well.

Regional Parks Forum update

As is usual for the summer season, meetings and other gatherings slow down as warm weather lures us outside. Still, the Regional Parks Forum is already looking forward to a busy fall. A networking event is set for September (date TBA) and Parksfest is set for Saturday, Nov. 7. Watch the Park Partners website (www.parkpartners.ca) for updates over the summer months.

Stewardship Stream update

The first few months of 2009 have been busy ones for the Stewardship Stream. Three workshops for Wildlife Tree Stewardship were held at Burnaby Lake, Campbell Valley and Boundary Bay regional parks. All were well-attended and volunteers are out there keeping an eye on nests and wildlife trees this spring.

Wildlife Tracking workshops were also held this spring, at Boundary Bay and Brae Island regional parks. Both workshops had overflow registration. Look for the fall

workshops, to come soon, with word on more possible wildlife tracking offerings.

Finally, a workshop on community involvement in restoring public landscapes and habitat was held at Boundary Bay Regional Park. Work party events are slated to follow this fall.

The organizing is underway for fall workshops and initiatives. More to come!

Education Stream update

Two grant-writing workshops were held in May at Campbell Valley and Kanaka Creek regional parks. Dates and places are being organized for more workshops in the fall.

Steering group members have met to discuss possibilities for workshops and set priorities for the fall. The logistics are being worked out, so look soon for information about future workshops and training initiatives coming to a park near you!



Coquitlam teen wins Gordon Smith award

Annie Hsu, a 15-year-old student at Pinetree Secondary School in Coquitlam is the winner of the 2009 Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award. The award was created to honour Gordon Smith, a former planner with Metro Vancouver and a 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.

Jeremy Plotkin, the community development coordinator for Metro Vancouver regional parks' Central Area, wrote the notes below for this year's Ideas Fair.

"I met Annie this past summer during my position as the volunteer coordinator for the Beachkeepers program at Belcarra Regional Park. I immediately had a sense of how keen Annie was even before I met her. On my recruiting poster, I specified that one needed to be at least 16 years old to volunteer as a Beachkeeper, since the job required great maturity and interacting with park users who may be violating fisheries regulations. Annie was 14 at the time and called me to convince me to let her volunteer. I was hesitant at first, but her references assured me she was quite capable, so I agreed.

"And indeed, that summer Annie proved her enthusiasm. She exceeded her 30 hour volunteer commitment and contributed more time than any other Beachkeeper – over 70 hours – talking with park users about park etiquette, educating the public about fisheries regulations, intertidal conservation and natural history, and taking care of live displays. She also participated in a scientific study where volunteers handled, measured and described over 1,500 crabs for DFO marine biologists to later analyze the health of the crab population at Belcarra.

"Annie is currently active with her school's Environment Club and is starting a second youth organization to discuss and address current conservation and environmental issues within the community and around the world.

"Currently, Annie sits on the Coquitlam City Youth Council and works with the Tri-Cities to organize Youth Week. Throughout the year she volunteers with Coquitlam Leisure and Park Services to provide programs for youth and serves on the Pinetree Teen Committee.

"Her other volunteer activities include being an ESL Assistant for the 2008 International Education Assistant Program; gift wrapping with the SHARE Society; being a peer tutor with the Success Club at Pinetree Secondary School; being an usher/greeter at the Evergreen Cultural Club; and being a community support volunteer with the Canadian Cancer Society.

"While her volunteer list is impressive alone, her



Photo: Bob Gunn

Inspiring youth: Andrew Smith (left) and Margaret Smith (right) congratulate award winner Annie Hsu (centre) on her achievements.

dedication and enthusiasm have the greatest influence on others.

"Annie's science teacher, Yvonne Chan, describes her as 'an exceptional student who not only is an academically gifted student, but also generously uses her talents to help those around her'. Yvonne is confident that Annie will flourish and excel in the opportunities made available to her through this award."

Fundraising campaign launched

Pacific Parklands Foundation is gearing up this summer to launch a fundraising campaign for the Gordon Smith Environmental Stewardship Fund. To support this very worthwhile initiative, send in your contribution (payable to Pacific Parklands Foundation) and note on the cheque that the donation is for the Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award. For more information, check out the PPF website at www.pacificparklands.ca and look under current projects.



First Annual Art in the Park Festival at Minnekhada

Calling all artists!

The Minnekhada Park Association is seeking artists to participate in a two-day art festival and exhibition in scenic Minnekhada Regional Park in Coquitlam. This event will offer live music, roving performers, an outdoor café, workshops, a children's area and, of course, the artwork of many talented, local artists. This festival will provide a high quality event for artists to network with the public and their colleagues, and to promote their studio practice. Space will be available for artists both inside historic Minnekhada Lodge and outside in the circular driveway by the fountain. There is an exhibitor fee; however, no percentage of the artists' sales is retained by the organizers.

Participation Requirements

Entry fees and two to three photos of your artwork are required with your application. Vendor selection is made by a jury to ensure variety and quality of entries. Applications are due July 1. Each entry will be reviewed and notification letters will be sent by Aug. 1. Late applicants will also be juried and may be placed on a waiting list. Entry fee cheques will be held until after jurying. If your application is not accepted, your cheque will be returned at that time. For more information please contact Jeremy at (604) 520-6442, or visit www.metrovancouver.org/artinthepark



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Free Family Activities

CAMPBELL VALLEY REGIONAL PARK – VISITOR CENTRE
Weekends and statutory holidays from May 16 to September 7, 2009
1 – 4 PM

Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Campbell Valley Regional Park with a trip to the Visitor Centre. Learn about the park's history, wildlife and features. Field guides are available and families can sign out free Discovery Packs, self guided resource kits for pond and forest exploration.

THEMED ACTIVITIES AND DISPLAYS WILL BE OFFERED THIS SUMMER INCLUDING:

May 17	'Bullfrogs!'	Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS)
June 7	'Climate Change & What You Can Do About It'	Youth Climate Leadership Alliance
June 14	'Equestrians'	Campbell Valley Equestrian Society
June 21	'Natural Pesticides'	LEPS
July 5	'The Wild Side of Campbell Valley'	Langley Field Naturalists
July 12	'For the Birds'	Friends of Semiahmoo Bay
July 19	'Introduction to Star Gazing'	Metro Vancouver
Aug 9	'Wildlife Rehabilitation'	Critter Care
Aug 30	'Pioneer School Day' *free drop in program at Lochiel Schoolhouse from 2:00 to 3:30 PM	Langley Centennial Museum
Sept 6	'Historic Langley Speedway'	Langley Speedway Historical Society

You Can Become a Visitor Centre Host!
A volunteer orientation session will be held at the Visitor Centre on May 5 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Volunteers are asked to contribute a minimum of two 3 hour shifts over the summer.

The Visitor Centre is located at the corner of 8th Avenue and 204th Street in Langley, via the South Valley park entrance.



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Please call 604-530-4983 for more information.
www.metrovancouver.org

30th Anniversary COUNTRY CELEBRATION

at Campbell Valley Regional Park, Langley
Saturday, Sep. 19, 10 am to 7 pm &
Sunday, Sep. 20, 10 am to 5 pm

This old-fashioned country fair has been a fall family tradition for 30 years! Stay tuned for exciting new activities and entertainment to commemorate this memorable occasion.



Entrance is \$2 per person (\$1 for kids aged 7 to 12; free for kids 6 and under, and for seniors 65 and over). Come in pioneer costume and get in free! Tickets are available at the gate.

For more information, go to www.metrovancouver.org

Pacific Parklands Foundation

Summer 2009 News

Foundation AGM wraps up

Pacific Parklands Foundation held its 8th Annual General Meeting March 5, 2009 at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. The board received and approved the audited financial statements for the 2007/08 fiscal year as presented by Manning Elliott Chartered Accountants. Sixteen individuals were nominated and elected to hold office as directors until the next annual general meeting of the foundation (under the bylaws of the Society, enacted Nov. 17, 2005, all directors are deemed to have resigned at the Annual General Meeting in 2009).

Councillor Mel Kositsky, Township of Langley, was appointed to serve as the Metro Vancouver non-voting representative on the board for 2009. Ed Andrusiak, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks manager, made a presentation to the board on Metro Vancouver's overall strategies and priorities that relate to the regional parks.



PPF President David Pohl



Pacific Parklands
FOUNDATION

New appointment to the board

Kevin O'Callaghan is a partner at Fasken Martineau. He conducts a litigation practice that involves complex commercial litigation that focuses mainly on aboriginal, regulatory and environmental issues.

Kevin attended Queens University and attained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1994 and then went on to the University of Western Ontario and attained an LL.B in 1999. He was called to the bar in BC in 2000. His experience stretches throughout Western Canada, and north to the Northwest Territories. Kevin has appeared before courts in BC, Alberta and the NWT, as well as

the Supreme Court of Canada.

Kevin provides ongoing advice to resource companies on obligations



to First Nations and agreements with First Nations. He has also advised clients on a myriad of environmental matters including cost recovery actions, environmental assessment, off-site migration, ground water contamination and regulatory offences.

Kevin lives in North Vancouver with his wife and three children; they spend as much of their free time in the outdoors as possible. Hiking and walking in the summer and skiing and sledding in the winter.

Board of Directors 2009

Executive

David Pohl, President
Bryan Wallner, Vice President
Anastase Maragos, Secretary
John Scott, Past President

Directors

John Good
Rick Hankin
Ken Hicks
Steve Hnatiuk
Dr. Ed O'Brien
Kevin O'Callaghan
Janice Podmore
Blake Pottinger
Donna Rossi
Tamara Taggart
Terry Wilshire
Dr. Mordehai Wosk

Ex officio

Ed Andrusiak
Mel Kositsky

Executive Director
Denise Coutts



Left: Sarah Beairsto receives her leadership award from Dr. Mordehai Wosk. **Above:** Ariel Wosk presents the leadership scholarship to Johnathan Chan.

Environmental leadership awards presented

Sarah Beairsto and Johnathan Chan received the inaugural Dr. M. Wosk Awards for Environmental Leadership at the Pacific Parklands Foundation Annual General Meeting on Mar. 5.

Dr. Mordehai Wosk and his family established the Environmental Leadership Awards Fund to encourage youth leadership in environmental areas. Dr. Wosk explains that “with one good leader, there is the potential of attracting a thousand or more participants. Without that one good leader, thousands of people may never get involved.”

Sarah currently teaches Grade 6 and French as a second language at Maple

Lane Elementary School in Richmond. She is a founding director of the Catching the Spirit Youth Society, has been involved with the Catching the Spirit program since its inception and was the first program coordinator. In 2005, Sarah received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in recognition of her contribution to the CTS program. As well as being an active volunteer with a number of groups in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, Sarah is also a Girl Guide leader and the provincial cookie adviser for BC Girl Guides. Sarah is particularly interested in continuing to grow and develop a Catching the Spirit program that is youth driven, and as well ap-

plying her educational background to further facilitate experiential learning opportunities for youth in our parks.

Johnathan was selected to receive the scholarship as a result of his role as a peer leader in the Catching the Spirit program and a route marshal for the Light the Night event. Currently a grade 12 student at Prince of Wales Secondary School in Vancouver, Johnathan has participated on his school's badminton, soccer and ultimate teams. He believes that volunteering is a way to help his community grow into a much better place. He has learned that Earth is a strong but fragile planet, not to be taken for granted.

Foundation on the move

Pacific Parklands Foundation recently moved offices to the 6th floor of the Metro Vancouver building. The new office space provides for an expanded area to host donors, the PPF board, foundation staff and even a summer student. Contact information is as follows:

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Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8
Tel. 604.451.6168 / Fax. 604.432.6296
Email: denise.coutts@metrovancover.org
www.pacificparklands.ca



L to R: Denise Coutts, executive director; Carol Dion, marketing consultant; Maria Ramirez, bookkeeper and Victoria Patrick, grant writer.

Volunteer service acknowledged

Four service awards were presented for extraordinary volunteer service by PPF President David Pohl at the foundation's Annual General Meeting.

Councillor Mel Kositsky

Mel Kositsky cares about providing parks and recreation facilities and services for all – from youth to seniors. He served on the PPF board of directors from 2003 to 2008 and is a non-voting representative on the board, appointed through the Metro Vancouver Parks Committee.

Mel is a councillor in the Township of Langley and is a media consultant and freelance writer, including a weekly column with the Langley Advance on community events and the horse industry. His volunteer work in the community includes Langley Big Brothers, co-founder of the Langley Volunteer Bureau, and former director of the Langley Chamber of Commerce and a member of the building committee of the Langley Seniors Resource Centre.



Mel Kositsky

John Leathley Q.C.

John was recognized for his outstanding commitment to the foundation as a founding member and a director and secretary from 2000 to 2008.

John is a founding partner of Pryke Lambert Leathley Russell LLP in Richmond and was appointed Queen's Counsel by the Attorney General of BC in 2003. His practice emphasis is on civil litigation, including wills and trusts disputes, construction, insurance/personal injury, employment law and general corporate/commercial litigation.

John is a member of the Law Society of BC, the Canadian Bar Association, the Vancouver Bar Association and UBC's Law Faculty Alumni Association. He served as governor of The Hamber Foundation from 2001 to 2007.



John Leathley

John Scott

John Scott received the award for his outstanding dedication and service as a founding member and president of the Pacific Parklands Foundation from 2000 to 2008.

John is CEO of the Scott Construction Group. A professional engineer, John founded the company in 1984 and turned it into one of Western Canada's largest and most respected construction firms. The company has distinguished itself through the construction of many Vancouver landmarks, including Waterfront Place, the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue and renovation of the Hotel Georgia.

Outside the office, John is a leader in numerous industry and community organizations. He has also helped establish a construction chair at UBC and presently sits on the UBC Faculty of Applied Science Campaign Cabinet.

John is an avid outdoorsman – jogger, skier, golfer and fisher. Most weekends you will find him enjoying the outdoors in one of the Metro Vancouver regional parks.



John Scott

Blake Pottinger

Blake was honored for his dedication and commitment to the foundation as a director and treasurer from 2003 to 2009.

Blake is president and CEO of Anglo Canadian International Shipping Company. During his 25 years with the company, he has been involved in all aspects of the company's business including ship chartering, brokerage, agency, ship company investment, management buy-out and divestiture, subsidiary acquisitions, real estate, new business and administration. A chartered accountant by training, Blake has and continues to be active in industry and community associations as well as a variety of local charities, both as a director and treasurer.



Blake Pottinger

RBC Foundation supports Pacific Spirit

The RBC Foundation captured the limelight at Night Quest on Mar. 21 with a donation of \$25,000 to Pacific Parklands Foundation in support of Pacific Spirit Regional Park's programs and activities.

A wide variety of recreational and educational opportunities are available at the park including 763 hectares of forest and foreshore, an ancient wetland, ocean beaches, upland temperate rain forest and the Fraser River estuary. The park is located west of Vancouver. Metro Vancouver residents enjoy and participate in the following activities:

- cycling, hiking and horseback riding
- Camosun Bog boardwalk
- discovery-oriented nature programs
- swimming and picnic areas
- Catching the Spirit environmental youth summer program

The RBC Foundation contributes to and supports environmental sustainability, park stewardship and educational initiatives; their generous



L to R: Dr. Ed O'Brien, Reena Caissie (RBC branch manager), Gerry Mignault, Denise Coutts, Brian Woodcock, Laurence Brown and Pille Bunnell.

donation will be put to good use with the Camosun Bog signage project, nature and environmental programs and improving hiking, riding and cycling trails.



PPF partners with Suzuki Foundation on feasibility study

Pacific Parklands Foundation entered into an agreement recently with the David Suzuki Foundation to conduct a feasibility study of a natural capital review of the BC Lower Mainland from May 1 to Jul. 1. This initiative fits well with Metro Vancouver's Sustainability Framework: Ecological Health – enriching life through healthy ecosystems.

Maintaining the health of ecosystems is not simply of interest to those who enjoy nature, but is critical in sustaining the region. In terms of ecological health, the region will be more sustainable if actions are taken to:

- secure and protect important ecological areas
- reduce pollution and greenhouse

gas emissions

- restore and create habitat.

The DSF, in cooperation with Metro Vancouver Regional Parks staff and others, will complete the feasibility study and it will include:

- identifying the land cover spatial datasets that are available for the study area (land use/land and water cover types);
- identifying the natural

David Suzuki Foundation

capital datasets and spatial data analysis tools that are available for the study area (soil carbon, wetlands, forests, and water flows);

- identifying the suite of non-market ecosystem services that will be enumerated in the study (pollination services, carbon sequestra-

tion and storage, water storage and filtration, waste treatment, cultural services e.g., recreational values);

- providing a brief overview on previous natural capital research that has been done for the study area;
- proposing the geographic scope of the study;
- proposing a communications and public engagement strategy for the public release of the natural capital review;
- proposing a budget and timeline for completion of a full natural capital review of the Lower Mainland (Phase 2); including research, development and production of a report and the implementation of a public communications and engagement plan.

The DSF will be represented by Dr. Faisal Moola and will report to Bryan Wallner, vice-president of the PPF board of directors.



The Photographer's Eye with Mike Stefiuk



Starting with this issue, we are happy to present a new regular feature: The Photographer's Eye with Mike Stefiuk.

Many of you have met Mike at events such as Parksfest and Ideas Fair and have seen the beautiful photographs that he has captured in regional parks, whether it is the flora, the fauna or the landscapes.

The first image of Mike's that we are featuring is titled Blue Majesty. Below a few words from Mike:

"Most everyone has an attraction to the majestic bald eagle. At times, in the last century, a common sight

in the skies of North America, populations were nearly decimated in parts of the continent. It is one of the most adaptable of the raptors and deserves to be the first image in a line of special limited edition prints that showcase our wild and natural spaces in the Lower Mainland.

"This bald eagle soars the skies near Blue Mountain, the headwater source of Kanaka Creek in Maple Ridge. A number of resident pairs live in the area, and competition for food escalates in the late fall/early winter when up to 25 to 30 other adult and juvenile eagles arrive during the

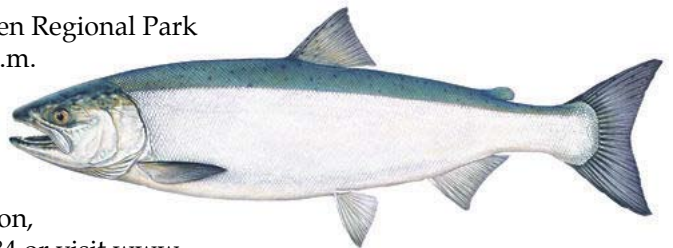
annual return to Kanaka Creek to spawn."

Only 250 prints of this image have been printed on 16 x 20 acid-free paper and are embossed with the KEEPS seal for authenticity. For a \$60 donation to the Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society, you will receive a numbered print. All proceeds go to the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre. For more information or to order a print, call Mike at (778) 836-2436 (after 5 p.m. please) or email rubblerocks@shaw.ca

Coho Bon Voyage at Crippen Regional Park

The 17th Annual Coho Bon Voyage takes place at Crippen Regional Park on Bowen Island on Sunday, Jun. 7, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Participants can release young salmon, take a guided tour of the Terminal Creek Fish Hatchery and discover the ecological importance of small creeks and the salmon life cycle. Meet at the hatchery, a 15 minute walk from the ferry dock along the park trails. For more information, contact the Bowen Island Fish & Wildlife Club at 604-947-9584 or visit www.bowenhatchery.org



Spring has sprung for Catching the Spirit

By Natalie Haltrich

Spreading the Pacific Spirit and chum salmon through parks and waterways, Catching the Spirit has been out and about this spring rallying energy and showing its true colours. If this spring is an indicator of what's to come, then look out! Those CTS youth in their red tees will be spreading the spirit right into various Metro Vancouver regional parks this summer.

As the new program coordinator on board, I got my first real glimpse of CTS in action this past March in Pacific Spirit Regional Park at Night Quest. A gaggle of CTSers from programs past and the one soon to come joined to create and host the CTS display – an interactive water awareness game (thanks Marlissa Moro!) and fish loads of fry from the Tynehead Hatchery in Surrey. The enthusiasm and energy, both, were gigantic.

The energy carried into the many events and happenings surrounding

Earth Day in mid April. The solid and oh-so-energetic CTS Tynehead displayed again at the Bear Creek Earth Day festivities and also helped the hatchery and tens if not hundreds of kids (CTSers to come perhaps?) release 70,000 chum fry into Bear Creek.

Then off to West Vancouver we were, to partake in Earth Days: Climate Change where we hosted a game, met tons of new people, and might even have recruited a peer leader or two. Thanks West Vancouver organizers for including us in your great event! And to top off this fun and happening spring (so far), the Wildlife Rescue Association invited us to their 30th anniversary birthday party at Burnaby Lake's rowing pavilion. The sun was out, the folks were plenty and CTS was busy building birdboxes with many of the day's visiting youngsters.

CTS registration has just started, so don't be shy. If you are between 12 and 18 years old and would like to



Chum bucket: Adam (from CTS Tynehead) helps with the chum release at Bear Creek Earth Day.

hang out with us this summer, then let us know and bring a friend. You can find our forms online at www.catchingthespirit.com. Or come out and see what we're all about at the next spring event we attend. We'll be waiting for you!

Thank you to Catching the Spirit's generous sponsors!



RBC Foundation provided a generous gift of \$25,000 in support of Catching the Spirit. L to R: Kevin O'Callaghan (PPF), Natalie Haltrich (CTS), Bryan Wallner (PPF), Jennifer Cabeldu, RBC Foundation and John Scott (PPF).



Denise Coutts, PPF's executive director, (L) accepts a contribution of \$500 in support of the CTS program from Janice Froese (R) on behalf of the Burnaby Deer Lake Rotary.

Volunteers improve wildlife habitat at Colony Farm

By Jeremy Plotkin

To celebrate Earth Day this year, on Apr. 18 and 25, volunteers from the Burnaby Hockey Association and from the 15th Horizontes Baden Powell Service Association scout group helped Metro Vancouver staff with two projects at Colony Farm Regional Park. Over 35 volunteers put in a total of 85 volunteer hours of work over two days to improve habitat at Colony Farm.

On the first Saturday, volunteers cut back and pulled away the grasses that were choking out the rock piles and reptile sunning areas at Sheep Paddocks One - the fish and wildlife habitat project located at the northern tip of Colony Farm Regional Park. Reed canary grass was completely overtaking rock piles that were established in 2004. Now, snakes have a place to sun themselves!

The second project involved cutting and pulling grass from around the trees and shrubs in the hedgerow that was planted in 2007. More than 100 trees and 1,300 shrubs were planted by volunteers to provide habitat for migratory and resident birds. The project was funded in part by the Tree Canada Foundation. The first two years are critical for maintenance. Last year staff spent many hours cutting back grasses around the shrubs and trees to reduce competition and help the plants get established.



Photo: Jeremy Plotkin

Free the shrubs!: Volunteers pull grasses to allow room for native plants to grow and provide better habitat.

This year, thanks to our volunteers, Metro Vancouver staff will have a much easier time weeding the area around the trees and shrubs, mainly because they will be able to find them!

Iona Beach being restored by the numbers

Efforts to restore a rare sand dune ecosystem and to restore riparian habitat at Iona Beach Regional Park continue to build. In 2008, hundreds of volunteers contributed hundreds of hours to pull invasive plants such as Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry and diffuse knapweed. Many native plants were planted by volunteers. Iona also benefited from a volunteer beach cleanup last September. And research was conducted that will help move the restoration effort forward.

Below, a look at Iona by the numbers for 2008.

- 17 work parties (11 regular monthly work parties, four corporate work parties and two field workshops – one for professionals and one for secondary school science students)
- 406 volunteers (some repeats on more than one work party)
- 852 hours of work
- 25 tonnes of Scotch broom removed
- 2,300+ individual diffuse knapweed plants removed
- 700 units of native plants planted
- 90 kg of trash collected in the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

Special thanks goes to Erik Anderson, the park operator at Iona Beach Regional Park for his unwavering support. And recent special thanks goes to Denise Coutts of the Pacific Parklands Foundation and the Home Depot store in Richmond for some long-needed tools to keep us going strong at Iona!



Photo: Dawn Hanna

Kanaka says Goodbye Chums!

More than 325 people attended the annual Goodbye Chums event at Kanaka Creek Regional Park on Apr. 19. Activities included the KEEPS Watershed Road Show, an interactive aquatic invertebrate display, a puppet show by Secology and volunteer Mike Stefiuk's Rock and Roll game. Kids got to make fish hats at the craft table. And plenty of chum salmon fry were released as well – the start of their journey to the Pacific Ocean..

The first ever memorial bench in Kanaka Creek Regional Park was unveiled on this occasion as well. The bench, dedicated to the late Bill McLaren, a long-time champion of Kanaka Creek Regional Park sits in a fitting location overlooking the future site of the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre. The plaque on the bench reads: "Dedicated to Bill McLaren and Nature's Miracles".



Photo: Ross Davies



Photo: Mike Stefiuk

Front row legacy: Friends and family of Bill McLaren unveil a memorial bench in his honour. Back row (L to R) Dave Smith, KEEPS president; Mike Murray, Maple Ridge District Parks and Leisure; Michael Sather, Pitt Meadows MLA. Front row (L to R) Linda King, Maple Ridge councilor; Babs McLaren, Bill's widow and KEEPS member; Wendy Dadalt, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks; John Heaven, retired manager of Bell-Irving Hatchery.

For the latest updates on activities, news and more on the Regional Parks Partnership Program, check the website at:
www.parkpartners.ca

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We welcome your contributions.

To make submissions, contact Dawn Hanna at (604) 831-5069 or parkpartners@telus.net

