
PARK Partners

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Volunteers help restore habitat on Bowen Island

By Markus Merkens

Davies Creek is a small stream that runs through Crippen Regional Park on Bowen Island. The health of the stream has been significantly impacted over the last 100 or so years due to the installation of a dam and human development at the lower end of the creek. Today the stream suffers from lack of riparian vegetation, presence of invasive plant species, lack of gravel along the lower reaches of the stream and absence of large woody debris along some sections.

Over the last two years volunteers belonging to the Crippen Stewardship Group, made up of volunteers from the community and from other on-island organizations including the Bowen Island Weed Warriors, the Bowen Island Fish and Wildlife Club and the Bowen Island Garden Club, have been working to improve the ecological integrity of Davies Creek.

They have been removing invasive species, such as English ivy and English holly, and planning restoration activities to enhance the riparian strip on either side of Davies Creek. The stewardship group with the help of BCIT, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Evergreen and parks staff completed several significant projects this fall, at times under challenging meteorological conditions. The work included both in-stream enhancement and riparian planting.

The in-stream work involved building a 20-metre rock and gravel wedge along a scoured section of the stream as well as the introduction of four large pieces of woody debris to improve stream structure. The woody debris consisted of tree root balls with stems attached that are between four and six metres in length. These features will provide spawning habitat, cover and structural complexity to the stream.

The riparian area planting on the south side of the creek



What a difference a day makes: Crippen Stewardship Group volunteers started digging holes on a soggy Saturday (above); BCIT students finished planting 650 native plants on the following sunny Monday.

Photos: Markus Merkens

included preparing a 200-plus metre planting area that was between two and eight metres wide and planting over 650 native trees, shrubs, ferns and forbs. The planting was completed over two days in mid October. After a rather wet and dreary Saturday planting event, the entire BCIT Fish, Wildlife and Recreation class and several instructors assisted on a brilliantly sunny Monday morning to finish up.

The project received funding from the Pacific Salmon

continued on page 2

Youth get hands-on experience in regional parks

By Theresa Harding

Metro Vancouver participated as a mentoring organization to five young people from September to December in the Youth Watershed Leadership and Mentoring Program, hosted by the Fraser Basin Council, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks and the Watershed Education Program. Parks staff mentored three youth who were engaged in very different projects.

Park planner Jeff Fitzpatrick was mentor to high school student Sarah Elias who was interested in learning about stream restoration, native plants and ecosystem diversity. Together they worked on a Campbell Valley Regional Park project that included site analysis, planting design and joining staff and volunteers for a community planting project. From this experience, Sarah takes away insights on park planning and environmental design and knowledge of new software and communication techniques. Sarah said, "I think there should be more awareness created in high schools through courses, field trips and seminars. The world today is full of uninformed people when it comes to the environment and how people impact it."

Kevin Shantz, research and GIS technician said, "I feel that this was a valuable exercise in engaging students and further developing their interest in the natural environment." Kevin was matched with Lina Azeez, a geography student interested in Geographic Information System applications pertaining to watershed management. We both enjoyed our time working together and our partnership was particularly effective as our work augmented Lina's cartographic background and provided her with practical field experience. Metro Vancouver was able to conduct valuable invasive species mapping in Kanaka Creek Regional Park that will form the base of a vegetation management plan."

Natural resource management specialist Janice Jarvis, said, "It has been a great learning experience, both for staff and the participants. We often only get a chance to work with volunteers for a few hours during a planting or invasive removal project. The FBC participants, however, were able to become involved in the planning as well as implementation of a project, which has been even better. Janice worked most closely with Rhys Krannitz, a 15 year-old high school student from Langley. Rhys was very



Chums for life: Sarah Elias dissects a salmon as part of the youth mentoring program.

actively involved in the fundraising campaign to purchase West Creek Wetlands and have it protected as a park.

Since parks has taken jurisdiction, studies on the beaver population in the area have been conducted. Rhys' project involved field mapping several areas near the lake where beaver forage (willow whips) will be planted to help keep beavers busy in the park without expanding into neighbouring properties. Rhys has researched appropriate plant species and calculated the number of plants required. He is organizing volunteers to plant in the spring. Since Rhys is so knowledgeable about West Creek Wetlands, he also conducted a tour for the park interpretation leader and is summarizing notes for future tours.

The mentoring relationships in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, facilitated by the community development coordinator, have demonstrated to staff that youth mentoring has valuable immediate and long term outcomes for parks and young people.

Crippen planting, continued from page 1

Foundation, Metro Vancouver Parks and in kind support from Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Metro Vancouver Regional Parks is grateful to all who assisted on this project and the funding agencies that made it possible.

Special thanks go to the Crippen Stewardship Group volunteers who

put in a sustained effort year round, especially Moira Greaven, Bill Rush, Mike von Zuben, Dee MacCarthy and Lynn Beattie. Thanks also to Dawn Hanna who helped coordinate the planting.

A rather ambitious restoration and enhancement program is in the planning phase for 2010 that will

include the development of a winter rearing pond near the mouth of the Davies Creek as well as significant native vegetation restoration on the north side of the creek.

Markus Merkens is a natural resource management specialist for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks.

Talk and Walk series brings out the best of Pacific Spirit

Story and photos by Pille Bunnell

Talk and walk isn't about going for a walk and having a nice chat with your friends! "Talk and Walk" is the name of a program that the Pacific Spirit Park Society is offering now for the third year. Once a month, experts from various fields offer a two-part presentation for the park user community. On the second Thursday of the month, the expert guest entertains an audience for an evening with knowledge, stories and visuals – and in some cases with samples too. This is the "Talk" – a casual everyday name to make it clear that this is not a lecture for specialists; rather it is a fun evening of ideas and inspiration for ordinary people.

The "Walk" is, if anything, even more fun than the Talk. On the weekend after the talk, the same expert takes a group of people on a field trip in Pacific Spirit Regional Park. The field trip brings everyone face to face with the subject matter of the talk – you get to see it in real life, up close and alive. And of course, its not only a matter of seeing with your eyes; you can hear, smell and touch as well. I should add that some beings, like the shy beaver who is the subject of an upcoming Talk and Walk, will only be experienced through its works; it is unlikely that we will actually see a wild beaver up close and alive! However, during the November Walk about stream ecology, participants watched as a barred owl crossed their path over and over again as it was mobbed by crows. So unexpected sightings do pop up!

These unexpected sightings, whether dramatic or interesting but almost secretive bit, often lead to delightful and illuminating stories by the expert – who is generally a good naturalist as well as a subject area specialist. People on a field trip are much more comfortable about asking questions. So conversation often gets quite lively!

The topics of the Talk and Walk series vary from fish to forests to food plants, geology, birds – all kinds of things that have to do with nature and the environment. Please see the list for what is coming up in the spring of 2010. About 3 weeks before each Talk and Walk there will be a more complete description on the PSPS website www.pacificspiritparksociety.org under "what's new" or "events".

Come and join us, everyone is welcome. Bring your friends. The more we understand, the more we love this natural world, and the more likely it is we will manage to sustain it along with ourselves!

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



A closer look: Participants in the December Talk and Walk about evergreen native plants learn how to identify different ferns with leader Dawn Hanna (grey); budding naturalists gets a close up look at overwintering spores on a sword fern.

Upcoming Talks and Walks

- Feb. 11 (talk) and 13 (walk): **Beaver – an Agent for Change**, Markus Merkens, Metro Vancouver biologist
- Mar. 11 (talk) and 14 (walk): **Tree and Forest Architecture** with Steve Mitchell, UBC Forestry
- Apr. 8 (talk) and 18 (walk): **Geology of Point Grey and Burrard Inlet** with David Cook, geologist
- May 13 (talk) and 15 or 16 (walk) **Feathered Lives**, June Ryder, Important Bird Area representative

For times and details, go to
www.pacificspiritparksociety.org

Derby Reach volunteers target invasive plants for removal from park

By Lisa Dreves

Yellow lamium, lamiastrum, dead nettle, silver nettle, yellow archangel – whatever you call it, *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* is a weed to be reckoned with. Often found in hanging baskets, lamium is a pretty evergreen plant with silvery variegated leaves.

Lamium is capable of smothering ferns and other low-lying plants in either sun or shade. As it deftly moves out of a garden or through a forest it leaves behind a huge blanket that prevents any new plants from succeeding in the area. This “lamium blanket” lacks diversity, food for native birds and other wildlife, deep roots and self control.

Fall or winter is a great time of year to tackle this plant in your backyard. Our rains loosen up the soil, so when you pull on a handful of those silvery leaves you also get a most satisfying helping of roots.

Volunteers with the Derby Reach Brae Island Parks Association are working to remove lamium and other invasive plants in Derby Reach Regional Park.



Pitching in: Larry Meneely and Glenn Howes of the Derby Reach Brae Island Parks Association work to remove invasive lamium from the park.

Easy to spot in their bright yellow vests, these volunteers have been given special permission by Metro Vancouver to pull the invasive plants as they are walking through the park.

For more information about volunteering with the Derby Reach Brae Island Park Association, go to www.parkpartners.ca/partners/derby/derby.htm or contact Theresa, the Metro Vancouver community

development coordinator at theresa.harding@metrovancover.org or call 604-530-4983.

For more info on what you can do about lamium in your own yard, visit: www.leps.bc.ca or contact Lisa at ldreves@tol.bc.ca or 604-532-3517.

Nominations wanted for Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Service Award



Know of a young person who has worked tirelessly for the environment and been an inspiration to others?

Nominations are being sought for the 2010 Gordon Smith Youth Environmental Stewardship Award. The award, created to honour Gordon Smith, a former park planner and champion for the environment who loved involving children and youth in his projects, encourages and inspires young people to pursue environmental activities and studies.

Nominees must be 19 years of age or younger and their volunteer service must

be in the Lower Mainland but not necessarily within regional parks.

Application forms are available at www.parkpartners.ca. 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 2010 award must be submitted by April 1, 2010. Send submissions to denise.coutts@metrovancover.org or by mail to Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, 4330 Kingsway, 6th Floor, Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8 Attention: Denise Coutts.

Birds flock to habitat at Colony Farm

By Elaine Golds

Even before Colony Farm became a regional park in 1995, a small great blue heron colony had formed at the mouth of the Coquitlam River where it enters the Fraser. This heronry, located a short distance from the park, was protected as part of a new Wildlife Management Area in 1994. These herons are often seen at Colony Farm searching for prey. Young herons in their first winter lack the skills to catch fish so the voles and frogs in the fields at Colony Farm are an important source of food for them. The Coquitlam heronry has grown every year since Colony Farm became a park. It is now one of the four largest heronries in the Lower Mainland, thanks, in large part, to the vital feeding areas found at Colony Farm.

For the past 10 years, volunteers with the Colony Farm Park Association have been monitoring the herons at Colony Farm between October and April. The data collected provides valuable information on the specific areas of the farm most used by the herons. Last year, to enhance public appreciation for the herons, a species at risk, the park association offered family walks in March when the herons congregate in large groups as part of a pre-courtship ritual. In conjunction with the Burke Mountain Naturalists, a new brochure on great blue herons was prepared. These walks, which were very popular with over a hundred people attending, will continue on an annual basis. In 2010, they will be held on Mar. 14 and 27 starting at 9:30 am from the parking lot at the end of Colony Farm Road.

Barn owls are another species at risk that rely on the fields at Colony Farm. For several years, the barn owls at Colony Farm nested successfully under a nearby bridge but the owls abandoned this site when a cat discovered how to access the area. Kiyoshi Takahashi, a member of the park association, felt it was important to provide a safe alternate nesting site for the owls. While the first nest box



Photo(s): Kiyoshi Takahashi

Birds of a feather: Great blue herons (above) and barn owls (right) are among the 200 bird species that depend on important wildlife habitat contained within Colony Farm Regional Park in Coquitlam.

he installed did not meet with the favour of the owls, a nest box in a shed at Colony Farm was successfully used in 2009.

Data collected through banding studies, conducted for the first time in 2009 by the Vancouver Avian Research Centre is adding to the list of bird species observed at Colony Farm, now approaching 200 in number. Colony Farm, with the largest amount of protected old-field habitat in the Lower Mainland, is clearly becoming a significant site for many species of birds. In 2010, the park association, in conjunction with the Burke Mountain Naturalists, Nature Vancouver and



Birds on the Bay will continue to lead nature walks on International Migratory Bird Day (May 8) and during Environment Week in June when the lazuli buntings may be reliably seen at Colony Farm. Elaine Golds is the chair of the Colony Farm Park Association.

The Photographer's Eye with Mike Stefiuk

Winter wanderings reveal hidden details of the season

Article and photos by Mike Stefiuk

Wintertime presents quite a different experience of our regional parks, whether you snowshoe, cross-country ski or just take a leisurely walk along the trails. Many changes have happened: Fallen leaves cover the forest floor, grasses fade and shrubs change colours. Animals have also adjusted to the seasonal changes.

You can't help but notice the differences in the big picture, but this is also an opportune time to look more closely at things more easily overlooked in spring and summer. Look more closely at decomposing leaves and you'll notice the patterns of their skeletons, check out the trees and you'll see empty nests in the bare branches, look more closely at the root systems of toppled trees, and you'll notice that even though one part of their lives is over, that a host of new life – mosses, lichens, tree and shrub seedlings – lives on.

Weather conditions can also offer different visual treats. Heavy fog can leave interesting water droplet formations that give a distorted view of the surrounding landscape. After a cold night, the frost patterns on the bare branches, logs and grasses can be quite spectacular, especially if backlit by the morning sun. Look for ice formations and countless patterns of



Winter wonderland: Icicles mingle with the draping boughs of western red-cedar along the scoured rock walls of Kanaka Creek (top), intricate ice crystals fill in for foliage on a bare branch (left), fog droplets linger on last season's berries (right).

ice crystals in sand, on ponds and in slow flow areas of creeks. Don't forget to look for icicles hanging from cliffs.

Wherever you wander in your wintertime explorations, remember to be careful and safe on the trails. It's

also a good idea to let someone know where you're planning to go and what time to expect you back. Enjoy your winter outings.



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

Pacific Parklands Foundation

Winter 2010 News

Partners come together to value natural capital

Pacific Parklands Foundation (PPF) recently entered into a funding agreement with the David Suzuki Foundation (DSF) for the completion of a natural capital review of the Lower Mainland and a subsequent public engagement strategy to disseminate findings.

This agreement is the next step following the completion of *Phase 1: Feasibility Review and Public Engagement Report* to the PPF. The agreement covers Phase 2 and Phase 3 and has a number of comprehensive project deliverables. The project runs from November 2009 to October 2010 and fits well with Metro Vancouver's Sustainability Framework: Ecological Health – enriching life through healthy ecosystems.

Phase 2: Natural Capital Valuation Review

The David Suzuki Foundation will complete a natural capital review of the Lower Mainland that will measure and value the non-market ecosystem services of the terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems in the region. The geographic scope of the project will be east to Hope and west



Simply priceless: Wetlands such as these at Codd Island Ecological Conservancy Area will be included in a review of natural capital in the Lower Mainland.

to Squamish, including Bowen Island. The review will also contain two case studies of certain ecosystem types (i.e. wetlands of Metro Vancouver), utilizing 2010 data made available by Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, one of the key partners in the project.

Phase 3: Public Engagement Strategy

Using the findings of the natural capital review, the DSF will work with PPF, Metro Vancouver and its project partners to raise awareness about the services that nature provides and invite residents to participate in

dialogue on the implications of the review for environmental stewardship. DSF staff will help to leverage the networks and skills of local partners, media and municipal governments, and will create educational material to highlight the research findings through a multifaceted communications and public-outreach strategy.

Throughout the project, DSF will be represented by Dr. Faisal Moola who will liaise with PPF's Executive Director Denise Coutts, and report to PPF Board Vice President Bryan Wallner.

Thank you to our project partners

Thank you to the David Suzuki Foundation and our project partners confirmed at this time, including Metro Vancouver and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia. More project partners will be announced in the new year.



David
Suzuki
Foundation

SOLUTIONS ARE IN OUR NATURE

Robinson joins PPF board

Pacific Parklands Foundation President David Pohl announced the appointment of Peter Robinson to the Pacific Parklands Foundation board following the foundation's directors meeting on Sept. 30, 2009.

Peter Robinson is the chief executive officer of the David Suzuki Foundation. He has a diverse background spanning four decades in business, government and the not-for-profit sector. Prior to his appointment as CEO of the David Suzuki Foundation, he was the CEO of Mountain Equipment Co-op, the country's largest outdoor equipment retailer. During his seven years at MEC, he led the organization through a period of sustained sales and membership growth across Canada.

Peter is a member of British Columbia's Climate Action Team and the Ontario Premier's Climate Change Advisory Panel. He has a long history of humanitarian work, including

monitoring prison conditions with the International Red Cross in Rwanda in 1998 and leading a team for seven years that monitored detained asylum seekers in BC. In addition, he is currently the chair and chancellor of Royal Roads University in Victoria, an institution that focuses on applied programs at the master's level.

Peter holds a Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Management, a Bachelor of Arts in Geography, as well as diplomas in Community Economic Development and Fish & Wildlife Management.

David Pohl said, "Peter has a keen interest in community work and is very enthusiastic about promoting the activities of the Pacific Parklands Foundation – he will make an excellent addition to the board of directors."

Mr. Robinson joins an accomplished and dedicated group of Pacific Parklands Foundation board members including David Pohl, president,



Peter Robinson

Bryan Wallner, vice president, Anastase Maragos, secretary, John Scott, past president, and directors John Good, Richard Hankin, Ken Hicks, Steve Hnatiuk, Dr. Ed O'Brien, Kevin O'Callaghan, Janice Podmore, Blake Pottinger, Donna Rossi, Tamara Taggart, Terry Wilshire, and Dr. Mordehai Wosk, plus non-voting representatives, Mel Kositsky and Ed Andrusiak.

Donation Stations Program gets a makeover

A donation stations marketing plan was completed this past summer by BC Institute of Technology student Pamela Nair for the Pacific Parklands Foundation. It was funded in part through the Government of Canada's 2009 Summer Career Placement Program. Along with a new message, the plan includes a public relations strategy and a rebranding of the unique Donation Stations Program.

The program was launched on Sept. 19 at the 30th Annual Country Celebration at Campbell Valley Regional Park and showcased the "mobile" donation station that was built to travel with Pacific Parklands Foundation to fundraising events. The slogan for the new

program is "Love Life, Live Green" which indicates an appreciation and respect for all the facets that make up our lives, particularly the environment we live in.



The objective of the marketing plan is to raise awareness and funds for the foundation to continue their mission of protecting greenspace, enriching communities and encouraging philanthropy. The plan encompasses

several strategies that appeal to the target audience's love for nature.

The new stations will be placed in

various regional parks this spring and will be part of the foundation's 10th anniversary celebration and awareness campaign. PPF fundraises for projects within each of the individual parks including building boardwalks, installing signage, removing invasive species, protecting wildlife and providing programs for youth.

Impark is promoting its Go Green campaign and is partnering with Pacific Parklands Foundation on the donation station initiative. The stations are refurbished parking meters that accept donations by credit card. When park users donate, the funds go to PPF in support of improving and sustaining regional parks for the long term.

The donation stations marketing plan is available on the PPF website at www.pacificparklands.ca under Press Room.



Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre Academy Project

A funding feasibility study for the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre (KCWSC) was recently completed for Pacific Parklands Foundation (PPF) by The Arlington Group. The study prompted a clarification of the concept of the stewardship centre as a centre for hands-on interpretive experience provided by the hatchery, facilitation programming and volunteer activities.

The vision for the centre is that it functions as a community focal point for Maple Ridge and the wider Metro Vancouver community. In addition to the hatchery activities, the proposed KCWSC will be a model of watershed stewardship, environmental sustainability, education, outreach and grassroots engagement. It is also envisaged that the centre will become a destination for visitors to learn more about ecology and cultural heritage of the part of the Fraser Corridor.

Steering committee underway

The next imperative step in moving the project forward is to strike a steering committee to produce a memorandum of understanding between all the key partners. PPF director Kevin O'Callaghan has been appointed to champion the project on behalf of the foundation. He is a lawyer with the firm of Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, and specializes in First Nations and environmental law.

The MOU will clarify roles, responsibilities and commitments of all parties involved, defining the lines of authority, decision-making and communications and the development and/or implementation and adherence to key policy documents.

Partners join forces to make a difference

Pacific Parklands Foundation and the Kanaka Education and Environmental Partners Society (KEEPS) joined forces with London Drugs in Maple Ridge to launch a fundraising and awareness campaign in support of the new centre, to be located in



Artist's rendering of the future Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Centre

Kanaka Creek Regional Park. The new centre will replace the aging Bell-Irving Hatchery and expand its operation and grassroots community engagement.

Clint Mahlman, Senior VP, London Drugs stated, "This is an important project for our local community and London Drugs will work closely over the coming months with KEEPS and the Pacific Parklands Foundation to get the message out to the community to support this campaign and to help keep our watersheds and salmon rivers healthy."

It will cost approximately \$3 million to complete the proposed centre including the design, building and site construction and furnishing the new facility with equipment. Metro Vancouver, KEEPS and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans partner to operate the Bell-Irving Hatchery. Metro Vancouver and KEEPS together deliver high quality programming and environmental stewardship throughout the park.

Local support will help to keep the natural ecosystems of the Kanaka Creek Regional Park and watershed healthy and productive through edu-

cation, scientific research, land preservation and community involvement – all based on sustainability principles.

Donations can be made online at the Pacific Parklands Foundation website at www.pacificparklands.ca.

Call for Donations

*You have the power
to make a difference ...
Donate today!*

Pacific Parklands Foundation raises funds to:

- enhance trails and playgrounds
- promote youth programming
- preserve natural ecosystems
- protect the environment

To learn more about the many worthwhile projects supported by the foundation check out the PPF website at www.pacificparklands.ca and look under current projects. We need your help to continue with this very important environmental work.

Foundation supports Fall Parksfest

Pacific Parklands Foundation took an active part, again last year, in supporting the Nov. 7 Parksfest event – giving a fundraising workshop and a variety of door prizes.

The workshop, led by PPF executive director Denise Coutts, was well received by a small but keen group of participants and focused on creative and innovative ways that volunteer park partners can work with PPF to leverage funds and other resources for small park projects.

A variety of door prizes were secured for the event in an effort to recognize the value that the volunteers bring to the regional parks system and 16 participants went home with a

special gift – thank you to the following donors:

- Patricia Fieldwalker Designs: One woman's silk night shirt, value \$275,
- John Scott, Scott Construction Group: two tickets to Nov. 26 Vancouver Canucks game against Los Angeles,
- Dave Pohl, RBC: two men's golf packages,
- Blue Majesty limited edition print, photographed by Mike Stefiuk; and book, *The Bald Eagle*, written by David Hancock,
- Purdy's mixed box of chocolates,
- Pacific Parklands Foundation umbrella,
- BC Hot House – two men's and two women's golf shirts and
- five copies of *The Bald Eagle*, written and autographed by David Hancock.



PPF executive director Denise Coutts (R) presents a lucky winner with a beautiful Patricia Fieldwalker night shirt.



**Pacific Parklands
FOUNDATION**

2000 to 2010

Celebrating 10 years of protecting greenspace, enriching communities, and encouraging philanthropy.

In the next edition, we will highlight our 10th anniversary celebrations as well as report on our 2010 Annual General Meeting, the 2009 Dr. M. Wosk award recipients and our new and retiring board members, and include an update on the programs and projects planned for 2010.

Selection Committee makes tough decisions

Dr. Mordehai Wosk, Bryan Wallner, Ariel Wosk, Dr. Ed O'Brien and Donna Rossi came together Dec. 2 to select award recipients from applications submitted for the 2009 Dr. M. Wosk Environmental Leadership Awards.

The awards were open to students within the Metro Vancouver region who have completed grade 12, are in the final year of high school, or are currently enrolled in a BC college, institution or university and who are passionate about ecological issues and environmental preservation in the Metro Vancouver regional parks system.

Dr. Mordehai Wosk and his family established the Environmental Leadership Awards Fund to encourage youth leadership in environmental areas. Dr. Wosk said, "It was very inspiring to review each of the applications and read about the good work that all of these individuals have done in making a significant difference in our regional parks. The committee had a difficult task selecting the 2009 award recipients with so many qualified applicants to choose from."

All applicants were notified in December as to the status of the selection process and the eight successful candidates will be presented with their awards by Pacific parklands Foundation at a special event planned for early in the new year.



Dr. Mordehai Wosk

Injured and orphaned wildlife find sanctuary on shores of Burnaby Lake

By Krystal Brennan

Wildlife Rescue Association of BC (WRA) is a part of the Burnaby Lake Park Association, and we are very fortunate to be located in such a rich environment. As the largest urban rehabilitator in BC, WRA takes in more than 3,000 injured, orphaned and pollution-damaged animals each year. Every bird or mammal that is ready to be released back into the wild needs the best habitat to ensure optimal chances of survival. Migratory birds are released with their flocks and, if local populations have already left in the fall, then the animals will overwinter at WRA. During breeding season, many animals become territorial, and one needs to understand the characteristics of each species to know when and where each animal should be released. In winter, some animals share denning sites, though several wildlife species are solitary and require habitat that doesn't encroach on another's territory.

Burnaby Lake is an oasis in the middle of the city and becomes the site for many releases all year round.

A variety of migratory birds gather each spring and summer around the lake and its tributaries, nesting along the banks, in trees and bushes - all perfect release spots for birds such as cedar

waxwings to rejoin a population. Winter and year-round populations of songbirds, raptors, seabirds, reptiles and some mammals also call Burnaby Lake home. Apart from the usual battle with invasive species, Burnaby Lake remains largely natural and is able to support a large number of wild animals.



Varied thrush

When releasing rehabilitated animals, we have to think about the habitat and the best weather available. Since it rained on 27 of November's 30 days in 2009, many birds and mammals were released in the first week of December. One such animal was a fox sparrow that was brought to

WRA on Nov. 4 after being attacked by a cat, suffering from a fractured bone and possible infection from the cat's bite. This little bird was given a wing wrap and antibiotics for treatment, and after just three weeks it was ready to leave. The bird was released in early December and it immediately flew towards a nearby snowberry bush. Snowberry is one of the few plants with fruit lasting well into the winter months, providing important food and shelter for many animals.

Two other lucky birds were varied thrushes that had come to us on Nov. 14 and 29, respectively, after flying

into windows. The thrushes were given medication to treat the impact traumas and their weights were closely monitored. They eventually moved to outdoor aviaries and were ready for release at Burnaby Lake on Dec. 8. These solitary birds flew in opposite directions into some trees along the south shores of the lake. The aviaries had met their needs at WRA, but now these thrushes were healed and ready to spread their wings.

When in the office, I feel fortunate to have a view of the park, catching glimpses of just a small number of the birds and animals here. I know that so very many animals call this area home throughout the year, and I know that thanks to the work of many volunteers, this park will remain a wonderful habitat for wildlife. I also know that many animals, lucky to be alive, are now thriving in their new home at Burnaby Lake after a successful rehabilitation.

Krystal Brennan is the education coordinator for the Wildlife Rescue Association of BC. For more information on the WRA, go to www.wildliferescue.ca



Helping hands: Noreen Brox, a Wildlife Rescue Association volunteer, releases a healed fox sparrow.

Hibernating in winter? Not Catching the Spirit!

By Natalie Haltrich

Although fall and winter have meant near hibernation for Catching the Spirit in the past, there is nothing sleepy about the program this season. Momentum from the summer has helped keep our eyes wide open as we've launched headstrong into monthly activities and revived our Youth Council. We are approaching our 10th year of program delivery after all, and would rather not have any cobwebs (or snow!) to dust off come May!

In October, we headed out to Beecher Creek in Burnaby with the Beecher Creek

Streamkeepers group. What a fantastic job they've been doing over the years to restore and enhance the area! We continued from where past work parties have left off, clearing load after load of English ivy and Himalayan blackberry and the odd pull of policeman's helmet. Over 100 trees and shrubs were also planted along the trail and under the cover of the lovely canopy above.

From pulling and planting to socializing and serving we went in November. Near 20 youth were off to the Surrey Urban Mission to meet and serve breakfast to friends of the mission. For the last 10 years, the mission has been serving Saturday breakfast and other weekly meals to the homeless and those living in poverty. One hundred percent volunteer run and donation based, the mission also opens its doors as a shelter when temperatures dip below minus four degrees. Although it wasn't quite that cold when we were there, the rains were falling hard and there was a chill in the air that left us all appreciative of what we had and could go home to. The mission's



With a little help from some friends: Catching the Spirit crew helped serve breakfast and made new friends at Surrey Urban Mission in December.

welcoming volunteers are sure to get a tasty homemade meal and a hot brew or two into all the bellies of those who walk through its doors.

December's event led us to the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House where we helped host an annual festive affair over two evenings. And what a time it was!

There was turkey and dessert, a plethora of holiday songs in languages galore, and even a Christmas tree *piñata* for the bright-eyed little ones to crack open. The multicultural evening was enjoyed by over 300 people from the community, with Santa also making an appearance. Catching the Spirit was about in the

background serving dinner and clearing tables and wrapping holiday hampers full of gifts and goodies. Hats off to the neighbourhood house for doing such a fantastic job of lighting up the holidays for many folks in the Mount Pleasant community.

So, what Catching the Spirit events does the future hold you ask? Off we are in early January to snowshoe at Mount Seymour. It is winter after all, and who can let it pass without snow angels and snowballs! With Night Quest at Pacific Spirit Regional Park

on the horizon expect to see youth in red along the trails and through the trees.

Among the ivy removal, holiday feasts and snowy boughs are the many youth who make up the Catching the Spirit Youth Council. Meeting regularly over slideshows and potlucks, their thoughts and energy have been coming together to help inspire the program. A special thanks goes out to Adam Heffey of Tynehead and Edward Ngai of Pacific Spirit who have been doing a great job coordinating the council, running meetings and keeping me on my toes! Open to all youth, the council meets at a different location across our vast region to ease the commute and make joining all the easier.

Catching the Spirit approaching its 10th year

That's right. Ten years in Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. How grateful we are to be able to continue to deliver Catching the Spirit across the region. A great thank you to the many donors, sponsors, partners, supporters and participants of the Catching the Spirit program over the years. Come out and help us celebrate our tenth anniversary this year! *Natalie Haltrich is the coordinator for Catching the Spirit.*



Talented musicians conduct a forest symphony at Pacific Spirit

By Celina Starnes

More than 360 enthusiastic members of the public were enchanted by the talented musicians who dotted the trails south of 16th Avenue in the evening light of Pacific Spirit Park on Sep. 18.

A diverse group of musicians – young and old, individuals and groups, amateurs and professionals – volunteered their time to bring their melodies to the forest. The variety included a wind quintet from the Vancouver Philharmonic Orchestra, a string trio from the UBC School of Music and a few children from the Saint James Music Academy.

Park visitors were especially delighted to complete the experience with a musical quote walk and an interactive, energetic drumming station. The response was overwhelmingly positive for this first-time event for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. Glowing feedback shows that people are eager to experience this unique event again, so with some luck and a lot of effort, this event will return next year.

A special thanks to Catriona Day, the park interpreter whose focused efforts made this event such a success.

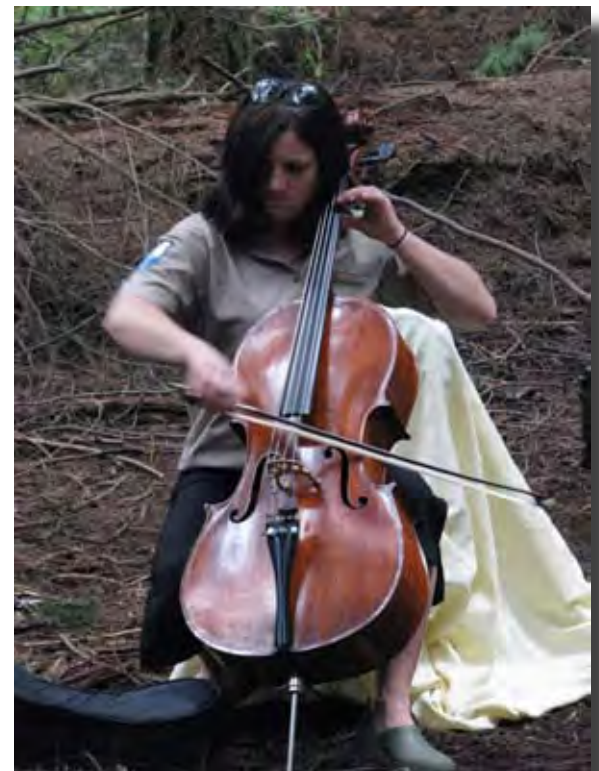
And thanks to all the musicians who volunteered:

- “Five on Sunday” Wind Quintet, Vancouver Philharmonic Orchestra (Cathy McCashin – clarinet; David Skulski – oboe; Heidi Kurz – flute; Holger Hoos – bassoon; Charlie Seaton – horn)
- “Tall Tree Strings” UBC Trio (Hyunah Cho – violin; Carol Eunah Hur – violin; Shin-Jung Nam – cello)
- Julie Lee, violinist
- Catriona Day, cellist
- Mercy, Maya-Roisin, Marlaina and Satya, cellists & singers, Saint James Music Academy
- Damara Klaassen, flautist
- Don Strom, classical/Latin guitarist
- Ahna Kristina Phillips, singer/songwriter
- Crystal Arnold, accordion player
- Brad Pyke, drummer

Celina Starnes is a Metro Vancouver park interpreter.



The Tall Tree Strings trio serenades park visitors.



Park interpreter Catriona Day plays cello.



Guitarist Don Strom makes the forest even more magical.

Christmas Singalong is a big success

By Mike Griffin

The fourth annual Minnehada Christmas Singalong was the best yet and held on Dec. 6 at the welcoming warm fireside inside Minnehada Lodge. More than 70 visitors stopped in to take in the festivities. Once again lodge caretaker Joanne Priebe provided the refreshments and demand and satisfaction was very high, Jill Kroll aka Jingle Bells Jilly led the singing with support from a Minnehada Park Association member on the guitar. A storyteller also entertained visitors and there were draws prizes donated by local



Christmas carollers get cozy at Minnehada Lodge.

Photo: Manfred Kraus

businesses, libraries, credit unions, Metro Vancouver and many MPA members.

The weather was cool, but dry and sunny – just inviting enough to tempt guests on to the veranda to admire the vista. Christmas music and carolling, a

great group and a very friendly ambience made for a wonderful afternoon and a great prelude to the holiday season. So make a date to join us next December!

Mike Griffin is the past chair of the Minnehada Park Association.

Minnehada Park Association: A year end review and roadmap for the future

By Roger Loubert

A New Year is upon us all, so first a wish to all park associations for an exciting 2010. But I'd also like to report on the Minnehada Park Association's past year and share some thoughts and experiences.

At the beginning of the year, a strategy was put into motion as Manfred Kraus, a new member, accepted the challenge to explore a creative endeavour in our bid to attract an imaginative and artistic class of members known for their love of the arts and for their love of creating. Indeed, the bet was described this way: "Can we, who are involved with Minnehada, come up with a project that would attract this kind of imaginative/creative membership?" all in an effort to shore up our naturalist type members who have a deep love and respect for all things natural and who volunteer their valuable time and efforts to preserve these natural legacies...Regional Parks,

jewels within our province and in particular, in our part of the world, Metro Vancouver.

As an artist himself, Manfred put his tremendous skills to the task as he spearheaded the project! The gamble paid off, as we discovered, and some 28 artists applied to be part of Art in The Park prior to our Jul. 1 deadline, not to mention the attendance of many other artists who came to the event and gradually are joining our park association.

And so Minnehada Art in the Park was born, attracting new interest to the park with its magnificent lodge and of course a magnificent farm, (though not open to the public, it is an inspiration to an era). Indeed all of these attributes are eventually exposed to an ever-widening public and growing membership which, in turn, takes on a canvaslike quality for the connoisseur/artist in all of us.

I'm happy to report that our

strategy is now moving forward with more and more artists, as well as naturalists (in all of us) who clearly want to make a difference but don't know where to start.

We start with attracting "The Creatives", as I call the artist that lives and works among us all, but rarely has an opportunity to expose their work. They, once excited about something, tap into that greatest of resource available to us all: the imaginative part of themselves that, once empowered, open up the floodgates of possibilities. This is precisely what Minnehada Art in The Park did for our park association.

Bringing a fresh new light and ideas/members who can not only help the nature side of our work, but bring new insights and energy, bridging art and nature in a complete circle of exploration and discovery.

Roger Loubert is the chair of the Minnehada Park Association.

Bird banding at Colony Farm nets surprises

By Liz Thunstrom

This past summer, an exciting new project took place at Colony Farm. Derek Matthews from the Vancouver Avian Research Centre established a bird banding station in the Wilson Farm wildlife area of the park, with approval and support from Metro Vancouver.

Derek and a group of highly trained volunteers set up mist nets and caught and banded an amazing 3,700 birds of more than 60 species! The most unusual was a brown thrasher, a bird that does not normally occur in this region. (The incident represents just the fourth time in recorded history that the bird has been seen in the Metro Vancouver area. The brown thrasher is normally found in eastern and midwestern Canada and the United States.)

Most important, however, were the post breeding and migratory species that were using the park's old-field habitat as a stopover to rest, moult and put on body fat prior to their migrations.

Derek has shared his findings with the park association as well as with Metro Vancouver and hopes to be able to continue and expand the banding operation next year to cover parts of the Home Farm area, currently not being surveyed.

Data collected from banding returns gives a scientific and very valuable picture of what is using the areas



Photo: Derek Matthews

brown thrasher

and when. Very little old field habitat remains in the Lower Mainland and since most of the birds using it are of international significance, a project such as this will assist, long term, wise decisions to be made for the continuing availability and health of essential habitats.

Raptor ID workshop held for heron counters

By Liz Thunstrom

The Colony Farm Park Association held an evening workshop on Oct. 28 for the volunteer heron counters. Larry Cowan and Dave Schutz, both highly experienced local birders and members of the Burke Mountain Naturalists, led the workshop.

Dave described the specific identifying characteristics, habits and habitats of the most commonly seen species of raptors at the park and noted that several are migratory. Larry presented a PowerPoint of birds he has seen and the visible identification marks and manner of flight that tell them apart to the careful observer. He also showed the incredible range and variation of colours. Both shared a number of their own experiences with the 18 attendees.

This is the ninth year of the count and several

volunteers have been doing it for all nine years. They commit to going out on a specific day, once a week, between October and April. They are amazingly dedicated and last year despite the severe weather, very few days were missed! The data they collect from the weekly point counts is compiled annually by Metro Vancouver staff and shared with the counters.

This year, the park association decided to include raptors on the count sheets to increase the knowledge for bird use of the park. With changes that may occur in the future, it is important to get as much information possible about the species that are there now, where they nest, feed, develop and congregate prior to migration,

moulting or breeding.

The volunteers were most enthusiastic at this chance to enhance their skills and the feedback was very positive.



rough-legged hawk

Bell-Irving Hatchery ready to grow salmon at Kanaka Creek



Salmon in waiting: These eyed coho eggs are about one month old.

By Ross Davies

The 2009 broodstock collection season was essentially complete by December. About 210,000 chum salmon eggs were collected, along with 25,000 coho eggs. It should be noted that the most recent year on this cycle for coho was 2006, when a combination of continuous high water and low escape-ment resulted in no coho brood stock being collected that year.

Although the pink salmon return was the strongest in decades, 402,000 eyed pink eggs were obtained from Chehalis Hatchery in order to supplement this rebuilding stock.

Overall, this fall was fairly typical weatherwise, with good conditions for migrating salmon.

Government considers changes to law for non-profit societies

The BC government has begun a review of the province's Society Act to modernize and update the statute that provides rules for the registration and governance of not-for-profit organizations in BC.

Although the Society Act has occasionally been amended, it is outdated and in need of revision. There has been no comprehensive revision of the act since 1977.

The review will address two fundamental structural questions. The first concerns the nature of the corporate model most appropriate for societies and whether a sophisticated business law framework should be adopted. The second issue concerns the extent to which the act should contain regulatory provisions or other rules that constrain the operation of societies. The deadline for feedback on the first phase of the review is Apr. 1, 2010.

British Columbians are invited and encouraged to participate by providing their comments:

Email: fcsp@gov.bc.ca

Mail: Financial and Corporate Sector Policy Branch

Ministry of Finance

PO Box 9418 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8W 9V1

Phone: 250 387-1269

For more information, please visit www.fin.gov.bc.ca/society_act_review.html

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We welcome your contributions.

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