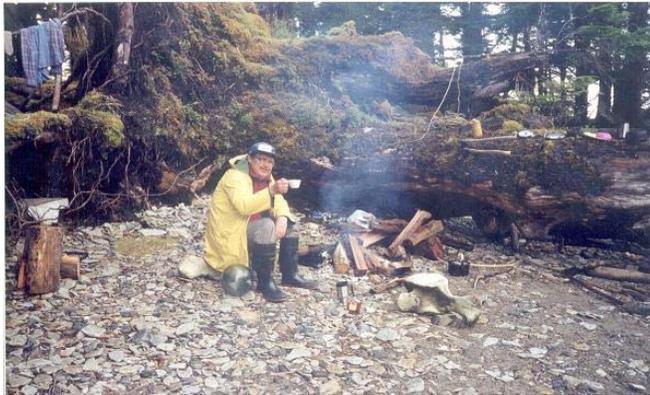


# Comox Valley Naturalists Society

May, 2011

## President's Report



**Dave Lacelle Haida Gwaii Camp**

Hopefully all of you are (finally) enjoying a pleasant Spring. I am writing this in mid-April before I leave on my annual month long retreat/hike in Haida Gwaii, and it is starting to look like Spring...

Our Society is running very well, with all programs and activities on track. The Birders are busy and both they and the Botany group have a busy schedule of walks and activities. The CVNS's New Horizons for Seniors project "Sharing our Natural History" is providing some extra walks this year in order to 'proof' some of the nature areas in this new interactive guide. Please support this endeavour, YOUR knowledge as a Naturalist is important for this project. Our BC Nature Summer Camp at Strathcona Park July 15 – 19 is also being managed by the very capable hands of Pam Munroe and team.

The core of CVNS is its many volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who keep the society running smoothly. I would especially like to thank Loys Maingon for stepping up and filling the vacant Vice President position. We again have a complete Executive – while I am at it, thanks are also due to the current members of the executive,

Robin, Al, Angela, and Jackie, for continuing another year. We cannot make decisions without you. Now, back to the preparation for the Haida Gwaii trip...Take care,

*Dave. Lacelle*



## Saw-whet Owl

*Photo Charles Brandt*

The Saw-whet Owl, rather common resident, at the Oyster River Enhancement Society hatchery. This female was near her nesting box installed by Bryan Gates, assisted by Brad. On May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 there were three half-grown young in the box. The female was under attack when out of the box by various birds - chickadees, robins and warblers.

*Charles Brandt*

You can find us on our web site: [www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca](http://www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)

**Comox Valley Naturalists Society, Box 3222 Courtenay, B.C.**

**V9N 5N4**

**COMOX VALLEY NATURALISTS SOCIETY****BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(note prefix 250 needed to dial local numbers)

President:	Dave Lacelle	<a href="mailto:lacelle1@telus.net">lacelle1@telus.net</a>
Vice-President:	Loys Maingon	<a href="mailto:aardscanltd@gmail.com">aardscanltd@gmail.com</a>
Secretary:	Angela Dawson	<a href="mailto:angela.dawson@shaw.ca">angela.dawson@shaw.ca</a>
Treasurer:	Al Schut	331-0156 <a href="mailto:alschut@shaw.ca">alschut@shaw.ca</a>
Past President:	Robin Harrison	339-4754 <a href="mailto:robinjen@shaw.ca">robinjen@shaw.ca</a>
BC Nature Delegate:	Jackie Gray	<a href="mailto:jtgray@telus.net">jtgray@telus.net</a>

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Birding	Art Martell	334-2979
Botany	Dulcie Hamilton	334-4507
Conservation	Frank Hovenden	338-9962
	Norma Morton	339-7336
Wetland Restoration	Frank Hovenden	338-9962
Liason CVEC	Dave Lacelle	
Trip list	Fred Constabel	335-1352
Membership	Steph Nathan	334-7701
Newsletter		
Advertising	Krista Kaptein	338-9962
Editor	Sharon Niscak	339-4606
	Email: <a href="mailto:newsletter@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca">newsletter@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca</a>	
Speakers	Dave Lacelle	
"Card Lady"	Jennifer Harrison	339-4754
Web administrator	Dave Ingram	

Website: [www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca](http://www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)**MEMBERSHIP****Single \$30, Family \$40 (Life \$300)****Junior 12-18 \$10, Student 18-22 \$15**

Mail cheques to Steph Nathan, 1785 Urquhart Ave, Courtenay, BC, V9N 6W5.

**Receipts** at meeting or send SASE**Membership due January 1st.**

If not paid by February 28th, names are struck off the CVNS and BC Nature lists.

New members joining after September will have their membership extended to the following calendar year: January to December.

**Change of address, phone number or e-mail:**

Please advise Steph Nathan, 334-7701

**NEWSLETTER:**Deadline Oct. newsletter: **Oct. 1, 2011**

Newsletters are published: February, May and October. The newsletter is e-mailed to members.

Available at monthly meetings.  
(\$5.00 per year if mailed).

Articles are welcomed: natural history, trips, unusual sightings, etc.

**MEETINGS:****Regular monthly meetings** are held 3rd Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Florence Filberg Centre, 411 Anderton Avenue, Courtenay.**June meeting:** potluck at member's house**No meeting July, August and December****Bird meetings** are held the first Thursday of the month 7:00 pm at the Filberg Soroptimist Lounge. For info: Art Martell 334-2979**Botany Meetings****Botany meetings** are scheduled on the first Monday of every month and held at a member's home, 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch.

For info: Jackie Gray 250-331-0313 and Dulcie Hamilton 250-334-4507

**Trip Lists Please dress for the weather, car pooling is encouraged and costs shared.**[www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca](http://www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)**Suggestions for trips** welcomed: [fconstab@shaw.ca](mailto:fconstab@shaw.ca)

## Why is the blue of the sea so dark?

by Chris Pielou

On a sunny day, you can count on seeing a blue sea under the blue sky. Sky and sea almost match. But not quite, and few people seem to wonder why the sea is such a dark blue compared with the sky; sometimes it's almost as blue-black as a Steller's jay's neck. What is the reason for that?

There are two reasons.

The chief reason is that the sea reflects only some of the colour from the sky, not all. As everybody who is following the effect of global warming on the extent of Arctic ice knows, ice has a high *albedo*, or reflectivity, which means it reflects a large fraction --- up to 90 per cent --- of the light that falls on it, back to the sky. In contrast, water has a low albedo, lower than 10 per cent. This implies that 90 per cent of the light is absorbed: it penetrates the sea's surface and continues on down through the sea water for some distance. If it didn't, you'd never see your feet on the bottom when you stand up after a swim. The light that penetrates loses its energy by heating the water imperceptibly, until the energy peters out, possibly at a depth of a metre in murky water, or at a depth of over 200 metres in clean, transparent water.

As a result, the colour reflected up from the sea surface is much dimmer than that from the sky. Think how pale a desert looks in a satellite photo, compared with the blue-black of an expanse of sea: the desert reflects nearly all the sunlight and absorbs hardly any of it: the sea reflects only 10 per cent of it and absorbs the rest. That is one reason why the sea looks darker than the sky it reflects.

The second reason is the way water reflects light from the sky. Any given spot in the sky is reflected back to your eye as a "bent" ray from that particular spot. Note that the two angles the ray makes with the reflecting sea surface are equal to each other, as shown by // and \\ to left and right respectively. (This is a portrayal of the elementary law of physics that when a ray of light is reflected from a surface, the angle between the incident ray and the surface is equal to that between the reflected ray and the surface.)

Now compare the two diagrams below; they show the angles correctly, all else has to be of a size to be recognizable.

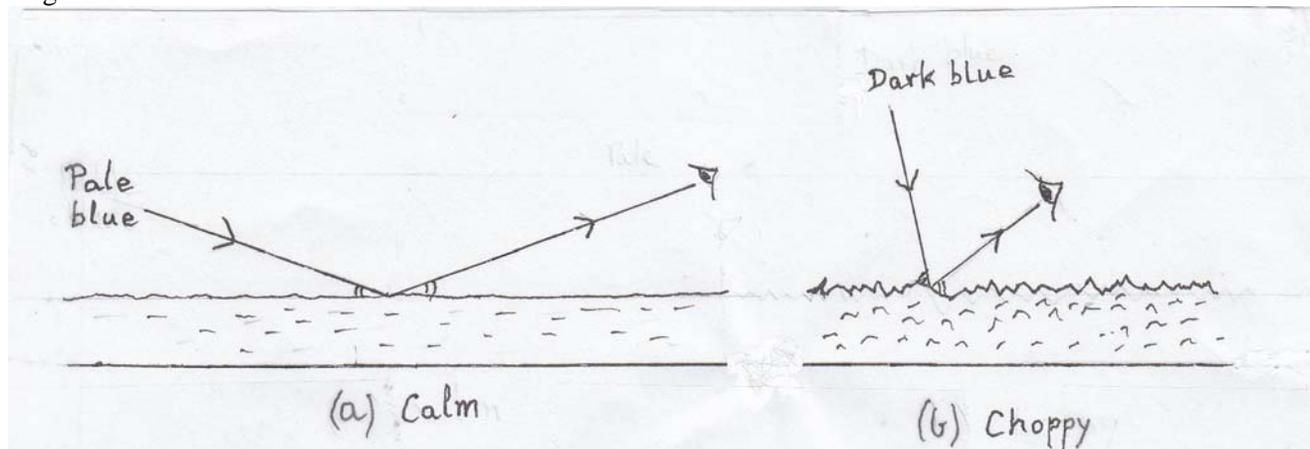


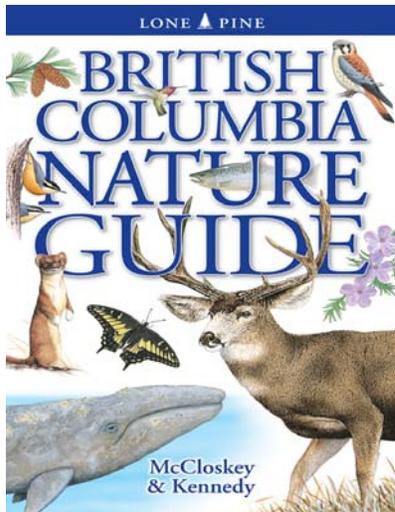
Diagram (a) shows light being reflected from a smooth, horizontal sea surface. The light seen by the observer (the "eye") just above the horizon actually comes from just above the horizon: the blue of the sky there is very pale and that's how the eye sees it.

Diagram (b) shows what happens when the sea is choppy, as it is nearly all the time (unless it's covered with white caps). The slopes of the waves facing toward the observer are tilted so that they reflect the deep blue light from higher in the sky toward the eye, and that's what the observer sees. No wonder a choppy sea looks deep blue.



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## BC Nature Guide

Lone Pine Publishing's book *British Columbia Nature Guide* features the flora and fauna highlights of our Province. In this guide the 'habitat' icon for each chapter provides a convenient section to the mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, fish, invertebrates and the trees, shrubs and forbs, ferns and grasses that inhabit the bioregions in BC. The chapters are conveniently organized and colour-coded for easy reference. Each chapter provides an overview of the flora or fauna included in the chapter with small illustrations of the featured species on the first page. This is followed by a larger illustration with a short description, interesting features to observe and "where found".

To make it even more user friendly, a quick reference chart to the 406 animals and plants included in this book is conveniently located in the first section along with colour maps showing eco-regions, parks and nature areas.

Highly recommended as a guide for children, youth, parents and teachers. It is a convenient size and compact, so slip into your backpack when exploring our wonderfully diverse Province.

Author Erin McCloskey's work, as an editor for Lone Pine, apparently has helped her develop the experience necessary to effectively hone in on features that make this book user friendly. The list of contributing illustrators and acknowledgements speaks to the virtues of collaboration. The list price is \$21.95 and should be available at your favorite book stands.



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## June Potluck Dinner

Each June, instead of a regular meeting, a potluck dinner is held at the home of one of our members. This year, the potluck will be hosted by Patti Matthews whose home is located at 3410 Sandpiper Drive in Courtenay. To get to Patti's home, drive south along Cliffe Avenue past the Walmart complex then turn left onto Millard Road (opposite Fraser Road) then left onto Sandpiper. The potluck gathering will start at 4pm, Sunday, June 19. Bring food to share, plates, glasses/cups, cutlery, a chair and stories to tell. For those new to the club, this annual event is a great opportunity to socialize and become better acquainted with your fellow club members.

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## Spring Flora for Kids and Parents in Kin Beach Park

A few weeks ago Dave, our president, e-mailed me an invitation to guide a group of young naturalists with their parents and coordinator through Kin Beach Park. Having turned into grandpa and played with kids over the last couple of years, I agreed to guide the trip, and drove to the park on Sunday afternoon, March 27, 2011. Although the roads were still a bit wet, sunshine made its way through the clouds to my delight while we were observing a carpet of Gold star flowers near the parking lot. Soon a handful of parents and a dozen kids with Lisa, the coordinator, arrived and seemed to be keen to start a walk, a nature walk.

Avoiding stepping on a small carpet of inch-tall *Drabas* and counting the number of petals (4) using my magnifying glass was the first challenge keenly accepted by a number of kids. Looking at the trees, identifying them as conifers, and learning about "mice" hiding behind scales of the cones was fun.

Learning about the radiant Gold star flowers as aster-type products and looking for the actual individual flowers was a bit tough, and soon a bee caught their attention. Mosses and lichens in the hands of kids, I asked them, what's the difference? My fascination with the toxic laurel-leaved *Daphne* and its bulk of flowers at the tip of the twigs caught the kids' attention. And more so the report of Saturday's broom bash along with the discovery of a single big shrub full of splendid yellow flowers, what a beauty! Let's check that shrub again, in the park (south side), next year. What an incredible break! Another special activity was counting the age of a recently cut tree by counting the annual rings using a finger and touching the cambium rings. Total: 90!

It was fun! Thank you Dave (President) and Lisa (coordinator).

*Fred Constabel*



Photo Flowers (florets)

*Sharon Niscak*



Petasites

The palmate coltsfoot grows abundantly on the bank between Kye Bay and Airforce Beach. Coltsfoot is a perennial herb of the Aster Family (*Asteraceae*) which grows from rhizome into colonies. The flowers (florets) appear before the leaves in early spring. All parts of the plant have a sweet celery-like scent. The young leaves do contain small amounts of unsaturated pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

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## Strathcona Park – A Birdy Place!

*By Betty Brooks*

It is hoped that birders will honor Strathcona Park's centennial year by spending some time in the park seeking the special birds that the park has to offer. Paradise Meadows and the lower lakes are easily accessible and are good areas to look for such species as Sandhill Cranes, Three-toed Woodpeckers, Hermit Thrushes, White-winged Crossbills, Pygmy Owls and Barrow's Goldeneyes. The Buttle Lake corridor is always full of surprises with sightings of Harlequin Duck, Clark's Nutcracker, Western and Eastern Kingbirds, American Redstart, Nashville Warbler, Lark Sparrow and Lazuli Bunting recorded over the years. The remains of a Red-tailed Tropicbird were found in 1991 - the first official Canadian record.

Energetic birders hiking to alpine areas in the park could encounter Golden Eagle, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch and White-tailed Ptarmigan which is a Vancouver Island subspecies and the main reason why Strathcona Park was designated an Important Bird Area. Recent bird sightings are displayed in the Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre at Paradise Meadows and Information Hut at Buttle Lake. Both centres are operated by Strathcona Wilderness Institute.

The annual Strathcona Park Bird Search, which was started by SWI in 1991, will be held this year on the weekend of June 25-26. While the main action will be at Buttle Lake where camping is available, birders are encouraged to explore any area in the Park, especially Paradise Meadows and Mt. Becher, snow permitting. All levels of birders, novice to expert, are welcome for the day or weekend. To participate please contact Betty Brooks 250-337-8180 or Krista Kaptein 250-338-9962.



## BC Nature Summer Camp Strathcona Park Lodge July 15-19, 2011

Comox Valley Naturalists are co-hosting a summer camp with BC Nature at Strathcona Park Lodge from July 15-19. This is an appropriate choice for this summer's camp as it is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Strathcona Park and the BC Park system. Participants will be staying in the College Building at Strathcona Park Lodge and all meals are included in the camp cost of \$600. Birding, botany, and general exploration trips have been planned throughout the four days of activities. These will be led by several members of the CV Naturalists club. In the evenings we will be entertained by a play about the Price-Ellison expedition which led to the formation of Strathcona Provincial Park; the history of the Strathcona Park Lodge; and the wonders of Vancouver Island sasquatch. We are offering an optional trip on the MV Uchuck from Gold River to Friendly Cove. For those who are a bit more adventurous we will be exploring the Upana Caves near Gold River. The Lodge itself has access to a beach for swimming and lots of areas to wander and ruminate on nature.

This camp is being coordinated by Pam Munroe with assistance of Don Munroe, Mandy Vaughan, Linda Cheu, and Mary Murphy. To register please contact Pam at 250-338-0187 or [dpmunroe@telus.net](mailto:dpmunroe@telus.net)

*Pam Munroe*



**Alpine Meadow** *Sharon Nisack*

**Strathcona Park 100 Year Anniversary**

## Strathcona Park – 100 Years



Summit Mt Albert Edward

*Courtesy E. Bell*

Courtenay and Campbell River are the primary access points to Strathcona Provincial Park. This rugged mountainous region located in central Vancouver Island first received park designation in 1911. It boasts spectacular mountain wilderness dominated by dramatic snow capped mountain peaks, lakes and alpine meadows and bogs connected by cascading creeks and rivers. Although the Park provides abundant opportunity for adventure, recreation and breathtaking views, its lasting value is the integrity of an intact remnant of wilderness in an increasingly industrialized world.

In the southern section, Della Falls, one of the highest falls in Canada, cascades over 440 meters. The Golden Hinde with an elevation of 2,200 meters is the highest point on Vancouver Island. Myra Falls is near the south end of Buttle Lake.

Over the years conflicting land use threats have jeopardized regions of the park. Buttle Lake, one of the finest fishing lakes, was dammed and flooded and then polluted by an open pit mine in the heart of the pristine Park. This lake also provides the water for Campbell River. A 15 percent deletion and downgrading of the Park in 1984 would have allowed more mining.

A core of dedicated people who treasured this spectacular pristine wilderness sought protection for future generations. They also admire and respect the diverse fauna and flora that depend upon this region for their survival. Many members of the Comox Valley Naturalists have worked diligently to protect Strathcona Park. This year we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary while keeping a close eye on any threat that challenges its future.

*Sharon Niscak*

**Members are encouraged to submit articles about the Park for the next newsletter.**

## Introducing the BC Butterfly Atlas

Over the past year, we have been working to initiate a citizen-based survey of butterflies in British Columbia. The **BC Butterfly Atlas** would follow on the recent success of the BC Breeding Bird Atlas ([www.birdatlas.bc.ca](http://www.birdatlas.bc.ca)) and successful butterfly atlasing projects in other jurisdictions (e.g., Canadian Maritimes, Maine, Vermont, UK). The project would standardize efforts by volunteers to collect butterfly records across a series of 10 km x 10 km squares (based on BC Breeding Bird Atlas) covering the whole province over a five-year period. The atlas would also collect incidental butterfly observations from a wider range of contributors. A new website would be a key part of the atlas and would provide information on survey methods, butterfly identification, and show the survey results graphically.

We were recently successful in obtaining a small amount of seed funding from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) to begin to develop the project. We also are waiting to hear back regarding additional funding from the Habitat Stewardship Program. In 2011, we hope to form a steering committee and advisory group for the project, recruit partners and potential observers, develop the atlasing methods (protocols for surveys, data collection forms, requirements for documentation), and establish a basic website. HCTF has invited us to submit a full proposal for funding in 2011.

If you are interested in learning more, the attached document more fully outlines the proposed project and discusses the need for this project.

### **How you can help us:**

**Join our contact list:** We are establishing a contact list of people who wish to stay informed about the project. If you would like to stay informed, please send a quick email to me at [patrick@raincoastappliedecology.ca](mailto:patrick@raincoastappliedecology.ca) and I will add you to this list. Also, *please forward this email to others who might be interested.*

**Consider being involved in the steering committee or advisory group:** We are hoping to establish a steering committee and advisory group for the BC Butterfly Atlas. We may contact you shortly about being involved in this capacity. The steering committee will be more involved in project planning and implementation, and may have regular meetings (or conference calls). The advisory group will have a more secondary role, providing advice and assistance as needed. In addition, we would like to establish a group who can help verify records once atlasing gets going.

**Help with testing atlassing methods:** We are also looking for individuals who may be interested to test our proposed atlassing methods in one or more 10 km x 10 km atlas square in 2011. The time commitment is estimated to be a minimum of 12 hours spread across the general butterfly flight period in your area (May to August). If you are interested in this or know someone who would be interested, please contact me by email.

If you have any questions about the BC Butterfly Atlas, please do not hesitate to contact either Nick or me. We look forward to working with you on this important project.

*Patrick Lilley and Nick Page*

Email: [patrick@raincoastappliedecology.ca](mailto:patrick@raincoastappliedecology.ca)

## Exploring Point Holmes Intertidal Life

You may have driven past Point Holmes beach at low tide and noticed an area of bright green seaweed-covered stones interspersed with large boulders. Against the backdrop of the coast mountains on a sunny day, this makes an attractive scene, and at some time you may have stopped to photograph it. Have you taken time to peek under the seaweed and roll over a few stones to see what lies beneath? If not, you are missing out on the best local rocky beach for exploring the fascinating world of intertidal life. Point Holmes beach is home to an amazing variety of sea creatures intertwined in an incredible web of life. To fully appreciate what's there, visit during an extra low tide (i.e. 3 feet or less). The best daytime low tides occur in late spring and early summer.

Life in the intertidal area requires toughness and adaptability to fluctuating environmental conditions. A variety of factors, including temperature extremes, salinity, length of time exposed to the air and wave turbulence determines species distribution. To survive, each species has developed particular methods to cope with these conditions. These include both physical and physiological adaptations. The far upper reaches of the beach present the greatest challenges. This area is only occasionally covered in seawater so any creatures living here spend most of their life out of the water. They also have to contend with high summer and freezing winter temperatures as well as low salinity due to rainfall in winter. Drying out is a constant threat in summer. Consequently, the upper beach

supports the least number of species. Certain varieties of barnacles and periwinkles are among the relatively few animals to inhabit this area.

As you poke around the beach, working your way toward the water, you will notice that the variety of animals and seaweeds increases from the upper to lower beach as conditions for survival improve. Beneath rocks in the middle beach area, purple shore crabs are common; while lower down, other varieties including hairy shore crabs, red rock crabs and porcelain crabs are found. Also common in the mid-tidal zone are purple seastars (turn one over to examine their fascinating tube feet operated by a type of hydraulic system), several whelk species, barnacles (different species than those on the upper beach) and calcareous tube worms, amongst other species.

Further down are other varieties of seastars, bright orange sea cucumbers (related to sea stars), several varieties of chitons with their eight shell plates, sea anemones and sponges. Fish species such as blennies, sculpins and gunnels are found under nearly every rock in the lower tidal area. Two of the most interesting fish are plainfin midshipmen, which are often found guarding a layer of bright yellow-orange eggs attached to the undersides of rocks, and northern clingfish which attach securely to rocks with an adhesive disc. If you are lucky, in a pool next to one of the large boulders, you may encounter an octopus.

If you do decide to explore Point Holmes intertidal life, beware of the slippery sea-weed covered rocks and wear appropriate footwear. Take care when rolling over stones to minimize damage to the inhabitants. Always roll the stones back—very carefully. I am sure that you will find exploration of this beach a very rewarding experience.

*Robin Harrison*



## Mitlenatch Island MIST

By Steph Nathan



Barb Dobre and I (Steph Nathan) just returned from a fantastic week on Mitlenatch Island as volunteer environmental Stewards with 'MIST': Mitlenatch Island Stewardship Team.

The wildflowers were spectacular: fields of Chocolate Lilies, small patches of White Fawn Lilies (Easter Lilies), Sea Blush, Early Saxifrage, Western Buttercup, Maiden Blue Eyed Mary, Yellow Monkey Flower, Shooting Star, Blue Camas, Dove Foot Geranium, Sheep Sorel & Small Flowered Woodland Stars are just a few of the flowers that were in bloom.

Each day the numbers of Glaucous-winged Gulls increased, delighting us as the bare rock nesting areas filled with birds snuggling up in pairs all over the Island. They entertained us with their antics, such as their paired 'choking' display to warn others to stay out of their chosen nesting area.



"Sweedie" the new wood stove in the rustic cabin was very welcome as a storm followed us to the Island. As well as the new stove, new windows, roof and interior paint were major improvements to the cabin made by MIST last year following a big fundraising effort.

A substantial part of our work is greeting visitors. Our team provides a brochure about the island that includes a map of the trails. We inform them that Mitlenatch is a

Class A Provincial Park and that the rules include no camping, no fires or pets, and to please stay on the trails so as not to disturb the plants, birds and other animals. Surrounding the island is the 300 metre protected marine area of the park--where no marine harvesting is permitted. Landing on the island is restricted to the middle of Camp Bay and NW Bay - Oystercatchers nest on the rocky edges of the bays. May to September is the busy season with some days seeing over 100 visitors.

When weather permitted, and as part of the Invasive plant removal program, we removed blackberries. We also trimmed the trails for visitors.

Watching the Oystercatchers chase the crows and Glaucous-winged gulls from their nesting areas was a



new sight for us. As the sea lions and seals shared several rocky tidal islands, there was constant commotion with their boisterous behaviour and bossy barks. Eventually they settled down to peaceful purring which lulled us

to sleep each night. There were 23 species of birds and about 30 species of plants that we were able to identify.

This early in the season I only saw three white footed deer mice and a single snake. The largest garter snakes in B.C. are usually more evident, but the cold weather kept them out-of-sight. Only one made an appearance on our last afternoon under sunny skies as the temperature finally warmed up.

On two nights CFB Comox Search and Rescue performed exercises in Georgia Strait (Salish Sea) with their flares looking like fireworks illuminating the sky around us for 10 or 15 minutes at a time... the dark that followed allowed us to see the Milky Way and millions of stars.

As this is the largest seabird nesting colony in the north Salish Sea and includes a large nesting site with a large population of Pelagic Cormorants and recently, Double-crested Cormorants, MIST are continually fundraising to support the important work of protecting these nesting areas. Your continuing support for the protection of Mitlenatch Island is very important. Donations can be sent to Ken Graham, MIST Treasurer: 11565- 84<sup>th</sup> Ave. Delta, B.C. V4C 2L9.

If you are interested in joining `MIST` or obtaining more information about Mitlenatch Island contact Peggy Sowden at email: [davetpeggys@msn.com](mailto:davetpeggys@msn.com)

## Volunteer Opportunity at Strathcona Wilderness Centre

Do you love nature, and beautiful mountain scenery? Do you also enjoy helping people and visitors to our Valley? You might like to volunteer a day or two this summer, to help staff the Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre up at Paradise Meadows, operated by the non-profit Strathcona Wilderness Institute. Visitors from Vancouver Island, across Canada and around the world come to Strathcona Provincial Park every summer. From July to mid- September, the Wilderness Centre provides education and information to visitors, on everything from the plants, to the birds, to the trails of Paradise Meadows. Volunteer orientation is provided, and gas costs up the mountain are reimbursed.

FMI please contact Krista Kaptein, Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre Summer Coordinator.

Phone: 250-650-4304 Email: [coordinator@strathconapark.org](mailto:coordinator@strathconapark.org)

Web: [www.strathconapark.org](http://www.strathconapark.org) Blog: <http://strathconapark.blogspot.com/>

### Sharing Our Natural History: Nature Viewing Guide to the Comox Valley

The CVNS project: '*Sharing Our Natural History*': creating a contemporary nature viewing guide to the Comox Valley, is well underway. The contemporary nature guide will have a summary component in the form of a brochure to be distributed at community venues such as the Visitors Centre; and a more in-depth, on-line component, in the form of expanded information available to the broader community through the CVNS website.

**Field trips** to the priority nature viewing sites are ongoing. Members who have signed up to be notified of outings are being updated as walks are scheduled. Please let Krista know if you wish to be included on the list for updates.

The nature viewing sites included on the printed brochure will necessarily be limited to those sites that are most accessible, illustrate a diversity of habitats, and are well distributed geographically throughout the Valley. Please visit the CVNS website [www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca](http://www.comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca) to see the sites map & detailed information in progress of the priority nature viewing sites. More nature viewing sites will be added to the website as it is developed.

**Photographs** by CVNS members are requested ASAP for consideration in the full-colour brochure. Suggested subjects include: bear, deer, cougar, elk, VI marmot, sea lions, seals, beaver, eagles, herons, trumpeter swans, winter waterbirds, forest songbirds, gray jays, spring flowers (e.g. fawn lilies, camas, trillium, shootingstar, marsh hollyhock), big Douglas-fir, Sitka spruce, Garry oak, arbutus, forest ecosystem with hemlock and maple; subalpine (meadows, flowers), intertidal life (e.g. from rocky beaches, or sandy beaches), mushrooms, fish spawning, tree frog, rough-skinned newt, alligator lizard, butterflies, dragonflies; aerial photo of Willemar Bluffs, Goose Spit and the Estuary, with Beauforts and Comox Glacier in the background.

Please contact Project Coordinator, Krista Kaptein, [kapteink@shaw.ca](mailto:kapteink@shaw.ca) 250-338-9962 for detailed photo specifications for the brochure and website. All photos and other information for the brochure needs to be gathered by June 24. Final editing and graphic design of the brochure will take place during July and August, with the brochure going to the printers by September 16.

## CVNS Nature Walks & Activities May to June 2011

**Those who wish to carpool, meet 30 minutes prior to start of the walk at Old Church Theatre 755 Harmston Ave Courtenay to arrange rides among the group. Meet guides at trail heads.**

**Saturday, May 21, 9:00 am, Morrison Creek Trails.** Parking on Lake Trail Road in front of Lake Trail School, across from the convenience store. Walk from Arden Rd. to Robert Lang Dr, through Morrison Park and part of Masters Greenway. Guide: Steph Nathan. FMI: 250-334-7701.

**Saturday, June 4, Ship's Point .** Meet at 9:15 to car pool on Harmston Ave. or/and at 10:00 am at Fanny Bay Hall on HWY 19A. Guide: Fred Constabel. FMI: 250-335-1352 (**\*walk will be open to the general public**)

**Saturday, June 11, Miracle Beach Park.** Meet at 9:15 am to car pool on Harmston Ave. or/and at 10:00 am at the Park entrance (Nature House). Bring a snack and a drink. Guide: Betty Brooks. FMI: 250-337-8180.

**Please note:** Guides: All non-member field trip participants to sign a waiver recognizing that there are risks inherent to all outdoor activities. On all Field trips wear suitable clothing and footwear, and bring water & a snack. **No dogs please.** Share traveling expenses when car-pooling: i.e. 10 cents / km/ person.