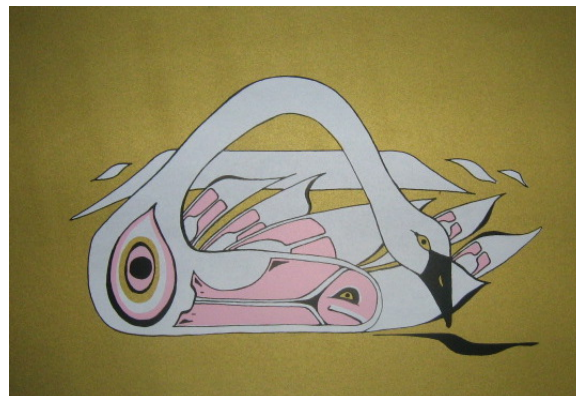


Comox Valley Naturalists Society

November 2015 Newsletter



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President's Message

Personal Responsibility

By Loys Maingon

Fall 2015 heralds many changes for CVN members. As I sit down to write this the night after the national election, the results of the election reflect many of the concerns that naturalists across Canada voiced over the past four years, and I think it also reflects a significant turning point in the interests of naturalists.

This election has seen one of BC Nature's best-known provincial members, Dick Cannings (MP, South Okanagan-West Kootenay) elected to a seat in the national parliament. The necessity that has impelled one of the best birders in Canada to engage in public service, step forward and assume personal responsibility is symptomatic of the urgency of the environmental situation in which we now find ourselves, and which will be the subject of discussion in Paris next month. Though I am sure that Dick Cannings would prefer to continue to bird through the Okanagan on his bicycle, as he has done for decades now, the state of the planet and of the national environment are too serious a matter to leave up to politicians – it is a personal responsibility, with which Dick Cannings has wrestled for a long time as a scientist, and now assumes as a citizen, and we can only wish him well in his public service.

History shows that Canadian naturalists have long been at the forefront of environmental awareness campaigns

and issues, and have always felt compelled to speak out on conservation issues. Revenue Canada's March 11th investigation of the Kitchener-Waterloo Field Naturalists for voicing concern over the state of the environment marked a tipping point, and will go down in history as an irreversible shift for Canadian naturalists. The status quo, which for the past 5 years has enforced a policy of complicit silence, simply became no longer tolerable. Contrary to Revenue Canada's attempt to muzzle, the event actually underscored the personal responsibility that we all have to speak out.

That is the basic message which Pope Francis communicated in his well-known encyclical this summer, and which the Dalai Lama once again hones with his characteristic good humour in a recent, much viewed video. The video is well worth watching, regardless of one's faith or lack thereof:
<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/oct/20/dalai-lama-says-strong-action-on-climate-change-is-a-human-responsibility>.

Times have changed since the days in which naturalists could just step back and avoid engagement and activism in the hope that common sense inherent in the political process might prevail. Environmental responsibility is a community engagement, not just an individual interest, and after three decades of excessive interest in the individual, the state of the planet now requires a shift of focus towards the greater good of the eco-community's well-being.

As I prepare to step down as president after over 4 years on the executive, the BC AGM committee is working out the details for a large community event, to be held from May 12-15. Though numbers are never certain, I am told that CVN should expect at least 150 guests and up to 300. CVN will celebrate its 50th anniversary, hopefully with a new president at the head, chairing the proceedings and BC Nature's AGM, and taking CVN in new directions. The theme of this AGM/birthday bash is

“Celebrating Nature for 50 years and 100 years of Conservation.”

Thanks to the hard work of my predecessors, CVN has been making conservation history in the Comox Valley for the past 50 years, but it has only done so because of the awareness and prescience of turn-of-the-century Canadian and American preservationists who understood that the loss of species and habitats they witnessed could only be reversed if strong international environmental laws were enacted, and personal ethos changed. Back in 1978, Janet Foster provided us with a primer in Canadian conservation history,¹ which detailed the calamitous and precarious state to which unregulated use of natural resources had brought wildlife populations and habitats, as well as the courage of the men and women who reversed that trend, and who brought about Canada’s founding conservation document: *The International Migratory Birds Convention* of 1916.

This international document did not come about easily. It posed cultural and juridical challenges very similar to the challenges that Laudato sí and the Dalai Lama pose for us today. The key to the international convention was the imposition of regulations curtailing individual freedom to exploit natural resources, in the collective interest. This challenged both American and Canadian federal and state and provincial laws and areas of jurisdiction. It required that various levels of government and individuals set aside their privileges and cooperate for the common good. It was an international recognition of the unsustainability of the unlimited and deregulated exploitation of nature, and a direct challenge to individualistic concepts of personal rights that trumped the common good. It was an early international recognition that real sustainability begins with the recognition that economies are part of our ecology and need to be constrained to work for the greater good of the eco-community, of which humans are a part.

We find ourselves in 2015 at a global scale in situation not unlike our predecessors’ concerns at the continental scale. So our 50th anniversary and BC Nature AGM on May 12–15 won’t just be about the past. It is about the future. It is a good opportunity to consider our personal commitment to CVN and to its future. In the right hands, CVN should be a potential instrument for the greater good, namely social and environmental change in the Comox Valley. In that role it should play an important part in the Comox Valley’s environmental future well into this century. To be otherwise is to be out of step with the challenges posed by climate change. If CVN is just a personal “club” for the entertainment and profit of a few, it will quickly become irrelevant to forthcoming

generations who must learn to adapt to the new realities of climate change.

The programme of this AGM will celebrate many facets of our conservation history and future. The opening night will be opened by Terry Thormin’s photography and Kevin Flesher’s poetry, with a presentation on BC Nature’s new IBA programme by our own Krista Kaptein. Saturday will open with a First Nations address and six speakers on new economics, watershed restoration and conservation, and tree diseases. After reflection, at the evening birthday Helen Robinson will launch the Comox Valley Plant List, and Dr. Briony Penn, whose recent book is a likely candidate for the Governor General’s award, will give a presentation on Canadian conservation history. At the AGM, the President of Bird Studies Canada, Dr. Stephen Price, will tell us about international bird migration, and in the evening Dr. Val Schaefer will talk about the future of restoration science. This, and much more, should give CVN much to celebrate 50 years of achievement, and much to look forward to.

1. Janet Foster (1978). *Working for Wildlife: The Beginnings of Preservation in Canada*. University of Toronto Press.

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NatureKids Activities

By Jocie Brooks

September

Members of NatureKids BC (formerly the Young Naturalists) and CVNS met at Miracle Beach Provincial Park on Sunday, September 13, a sunny, but very windy day. To start off we had the children throw maple seeds into the air and watch them helicopter down with great effect.

In the woods we found slime mold, some mushrooms, and a few slugs (mostly the introduced chocolate arion). The children were keen to touch anything slimy, and smell the mushrooms, one of which had a strong shrimp odour. Jarrett amazed the children with his magic trick, suspending a maple leaf mid air. Some of them caught on to the fact that the leaf was dangling from a long thread of spider's web but the sense of magic remained. Branches were snapping off in the wind and crashing to the forest floor, prompting us to warn parents to look out for falling branches and debris, but the children were more excited than frightened by the wind.

We walked from the nature house to the campground and back on the forested trails. Though wind-blown we all got back safely. A tree had fallen across the road, taking down a power line with it, but it was cleaned up quickly and we were soon on our way.

There was a great turnout for this walk, with 17 children, parents and some grandparents.



Camas

Photo: Sharon Niscak

October

On October 25, Charlie Vaughan, a long-time member of the Oyster River Enhancement Society and CVNS gave us a tour of the Oyster River Hatchery in Black Creek. We began the tour at the entrance to Bear Creek Regional Park off of Macaulay Road and walked to the hatchery building and back.

The children were thrilled to see two black bears (in the distance, thankfully), and evidence of bears chewing and rubbing on some of the signage. Several children found bear hairs to take home as souvenirs.

Other highlights were pink salmon and a spectacular display of honey mushrooms. We also saw a monstrously large chocolate arion slug.

Charlie asked the children many questions to get them thinking about the salmon lifecycle and what makes for healthy spawning habitat. It has been a very good year for salmon, and Charlie pointed out the gravel bed of a gently flowing stream that was "chock full of eggs."

Everyone enjoyed this walk, and we give a special thanks to Charlie for volunteering as guest leader. Our next outing will be the children's bird count in November.

Build It and They Will Come

By Frank Hovenden

Wildlife habitat is one of those things that everybody talks about but nobody does anything about. I exaggerate a little but not too much. With urban areas dominating much of our landscape, reserving wildlife habitat exclusively within parks is an out-dated idea. Little islands of biodiversity within an ocean of urban development and resource extraction zones will ensure the continuing downward trend in wildlife numbers we are witnessing all over the world.

So the question is what can I do to help? Lots! The smallest city lot can be transformed into a bird and wildlife sanctuary. I can guarantee you that when done right they will come. The traditional lawn will attract a few robins and not much more. With backyard habitat your bird list will expand exponentially.

If you want birds, don't start with a bird-feeder, start with a tree. A tree offers food, nesting sites, roosting sites and security for birds. Not all trees are equal nor suitable for city life. It is tempting to take a free Douglas fir offered by a tree planter friend. Avoid this at all costs. A Douglas fir is programmed to grow over a metre a year reaching 70 m in height. It is just too darn big for

the close confines of urban life. The same goes for western red cedar, western hemlock and our local true firs. These are the trees that keep the tree service companies in business cutting down and removing when they get too big! In our tree-growing paradise this can be as short as 20 years from the time they were planted.

I suggest one of our deciduous trees. These have the advantage of summertime shade while allowing the winter sun to penetrate to your house. The Garry oak is an excellent choice for here in the Comox Valley. Its acorns provide food for birds like the Steller's jay. It is relatively slow growing, and tends to grow a wide canopy. This gives it stability when our winter southeasters blow.

Other deciduous trees worth having are our native crab apple, Pacific dogwood, and cascara. These are relatively small trees that do well in urban areas. These all produce fruits that are attractive to birds such as cedar waxwings. The dogwood has the added advantage of a great spring-time floral display, which makes it BC's provincial flower.

Another tree worthy of consideration is the arbutus. This member of the *Ericaceae* family keeps its leaves throughout the year. This is a tree suited for hot dry exposures. It has gorgeous bark which changes colour from tan to light green to red. Its beautiful orange berries bring in the robins, starlings, and a host of other birds. A caveat for this tree is that its old leaves are shed in the summer and this is followed by the shedding bark. A predisposition for raking is required, but the payout is worth it.

Some of these trees may not be available at the local nurseries. However, they are available through native plant nurseries such as Streamside Native Plants in Bowser.

While cleanliness may be next to godliness, nature's standards are not so exacting nor restrictive. Many of our backyard birds enjoy a brush pile. When I disturb the white-crowned sparrows in my backyard, they prefer to run into the safety of the brush pile rather than fly away.

A brush pile has to be made with consideration to neighbours and safety concerns. However, within reason a small pile of tree branches offers great habitat and security for sparrows, towhees, and other ground dwellers. Reserve a corner of your yard for a brush pile. It is good place to store your pruning from your trees, and postpones a trip to the landfill.

Your backyard is habitat waiting to happen. Use your natural history knowledge to make it a reality and let nature come to you.



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Wetland Wonder Wanderings

Morrison Creek Headwaters

By Jan Gemmell (*Morrison Creek Streamkeepers*)

A young stand of alders traced the route of an old road, and off the beaten track my partner Jim and I wandered, curious to see if it would lead to something of interest. The alders and the semblance of a road ended, leaving us clambering down a slope of thick salal hiding old slash piles. The way eased into bracken that looked like it had been pressed by slumbering animals. Progress was finally discouraged by soaked ground filled with a tangled thicket of thriving willow. Now, we saw willows. Willows are hardly rare, but this was a small kingdom of willows, with a court of lady ferns and some skunk cabbage for subjects. Having wandered off the dry road that crosses the Morrison Creek headwaters from Lake Trail towards Maple Lake many times, our curiosity inevitably leading to wetness, I was developing an appreciation of wetlands' distinct and varied vegetative personalities.

Wetlands of British Columbia: A Guide to Identification by W.H. Mackenzie and J.R. Moran, a Ministry of Forests Forest Science Program publication, provides a flood of information on the wetlands in the province. Under the "Wetland Realm" (there are estuarine, flood, and transition realms as well), there are five wetland classes: bogs, fens, marshes, swamps, and shallow water. Those five classes are further divided into sixty-plus types of wetland, each with characteristic vegetation. The mind, not just the feet, could get bogged down in classifying wetlands.



Morrison Creek Headwaters

The Morrison Headwaters forms at the base of an escarpment composed of glacial till. Several springs flow from the escarpment and provide cool consistent flows for Morrison Creek. The landscape below the escarpment is knobby, with kettle holes and esker ridges that provide numerous pockets for wetlands. Old logging roads on low berms further divide the land. Beaver that thrive on the cottonwood, maple, alder, willow, and dogwood that grew after logging have helped create this Venice of wetlands. Classifying all the varied wetlands in the Headwaters would be quite an education.

We found numerous plant dramas in the Headwaters: an avenue of armpit-high skunk cabbage glowing green, a grove of towering devil's club under alder. The roots and stems of devil's club have a pungent odour, fitting for a plant with reputed medicinal properties. A small pond sported stinky flowering buck bean, a plant I'd seen in ponds in Paradise Meadows, but a surprise to find at lower levels. Sweet scented bog orchid was worth gingerly tramping around the sloping edge of a linear swamp. There are cattails filling or edging in on ponds and watercourses, with tall snags rising in the background. Metre-high sedges rule in other locales, and in one pretty fen, lower, more modest sedges and rushes poke above the water, beaver or muskrat trails woven through them. Flooded swampy woods of hemlock and cedar border this fen, the dogwood shrubs sprawling in between, reaching for the light; a most challenging place for a stroll.

Beavers have made large terraced wetlands, one pond a metre or more above the next behind old dams barely recognizable for the trees and shrubs that have grown from the branches laid down. Tracks and scat indicate that these dams are wildlife bridges. The open waters support pondweed and pond lilies. Large cedar stumps with tufts of salal and springboard notches, standing in the middle of a pond, speak of a far off time when the pond was forest.

Towering gray snags are also a reminder that people are not the only changers of the landscape. Beavers provide much habitat with their pond building, but they remove some forest habitat as well. Conifers keep their roots dry on the knobs of higher ground that rise abruptly from pond edges, allowing some places of dry transit. Elsewhere, a low, barely visible shrubby mound snakes along in the open through grasses, salal, and trees—an abandoned dam, the ground around slowly returning to forest.

Emerging once from a forested area into a small sunny pocket, we were surprised to find what looked like a drainage ditch dug in the middle of nowhere. From the skid marks, and presence of a small pond we realized that it was a beaver canal, dug to help flume branches. Nearby, bunchberry, not yet seen anywhere else in the headwaters area, was happily growing in the sun. A beaver lodge stands within sight of the upper road toward the Maple Lake side of the headwaters. Everywhere are signs of busy gnawing.



Morrison Creek Headwaters: Trillium with multi-petals

Plants in all their variety stand still to be viewed. In spite of ubiquitous evidence of their presence, the beavers are not seen, being nocturnal. So too, the cougar, one having crossed our trail at the top of the escarpment one stargazing summer eve. One morning, an unseen bear

huffed and crashed away from us on the other side of the salmonberries.

Unlike in Comox, the Headwaters deer are not seen, except tracks and scat, perhaps because of the wolf that Jim and our daughter Carly once spotted. A family of otter showed their heads, in a pond, during the run of pink salmon. Tree frogs chorus, red legged frogs hop by, balls of northwest salamander eggs cling to reeds, and salmon and lamprey spawn. We are often hopeful that we've seen signs of elk. Mallards quack when alarmed in nesting season, but most ducks mostly duck into hiding places.

I wonder what unusual birds may hide out in these varied wetlands. Or bats? Are there bats flying over the open ponds on summer nights, tucking themselves into snags during the day? Who will come with us one night to help keep the cougars away and bat watch? Or come for a tramp with us during the day!

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Rivers Clean-up 2015

By Murray Little

On Sunday October 11, CVNS members again took to the Air Park and picked up a wide selection of discarded items. After a hard rain on the previous day, the Sunday was dry and warm. Most of the evidence was of drinking and eating and clothing. There was a multitude of cigarette butts (hundreds of them) along with 5 lighters. Beverage cans and bottles, coffee mugs and lids, and bottle caps and straws were frequent. There were 12 shoes, (and not a pair amongst them), pants, towels, and personal items.

Five large bags of items were picked up, as well as an assortment of larger things. These included a sleeping bag, one oar, part of a frame from a bed or chair, a phone book, a broken plastic chair, two black plastic trays from the oyster industry, and two shopping carts. Dead things we found included one gull and two Canada geese.

A suitable debriefing was held at the Park Café over coffee and cinnie buns.

Bill Heidrich and a Project Watershed team had their clean-up at Simms Park at the same time, and also had a successful day.

CV Conservation Strategy News

NATURE—Protect, Connect, Restore

By Murray Little

Comox Valley Conservation Strategy – Community Partnership has developed a new Strategic Plan which will guide us over the next 3 years. Having developed a new Nature Without Borders (NWB) report, and completed the third edition of the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI), our intention is to ensure that these are put to good use. Our efforts will be directed toward three strategic priorities, under each of which are plans to address public education, local government relations, landowners/industry, and an internal CVCS plan. Full details will be available soon, but a summary of the three strategic priorities is provided here.

1. Conservation Areas

The key problem is the continuing rate of loss and fragmentation of sensitive ecosystems and lack of habitat connectivity through impacts such as flooding and loss of species.

The SEI has just been revised, and the third version is now out. It shows us that the Comox Valley has lost

73% of its sensitive ecosystems between 1992 and 2012. CVCS will be working to increase public awareness and to encourage actions by local government and landowners to protect sensitive ecosystems and habitat connectivity.

Work is under way to identify priority areas for protection. From the SEI document's 2500 polygons, about 214 have been sorted as priority. Further work continues toward a short list from which individual approaches and actions may be developed. During this phase, groups such as the CVNS Birding and Botany groups may have valuable input when determining the ecological values of the sites.

2. Build Water-wise

At present, water runoff from development and low-density sprawl results in damaged watercourses and loss of natural areas.

All development should occur within the boundaries of existing settlement areas, and should maintain the pre-development natural water flows (volumes and directions), and whenever possible should restore lost ecosystems.

Already CVCS has approached Courtenay council and requested that the City make integrated stormwater management planning a city priority for 2016. The health of urban streams has been on a steady decline due to the cumulative impacts of urban development. The CVCS and our watershed stewardship partners have been advocating for improved storm water management for years.

3. Watershed Health—Sharing Our Watersheds

There is a general lack of understanding of how watersheds function; that flooding, turbidity, and low flows are symptoms of cumulative impacts, including climate change.

CVCS will work with its member groups to increase public understanding of watershed health. Watershed stakeholders must view restoration and protection as major components of long-term solutions that address watershed issues.

We continue to follow up on information that is still becoming available after the floods of 2014.

Both the NWB report and the SEI report are available at the CVCS site:

www.cvconservationstrategy.org/CVCS-documents-maps/

2016 Conservation Calendars on Sale Now

The 2016 Comox Valley Conservation Strategy calendars are now available for sale at retail locations in Courtenay, Cumberland, and Comox. The calendar is published annually to support the Comox Valley Conservation Strategy Community Partnership, which aims to protect, restore and connect the Valley's natural areas through conservation, education, and advocacy.

The 2016 calendar showcases some of the Valley's most iconic natural areas, and includes terrific wildlife photographs. Each month one of our member groups is profiled, highlighting the important role that stewardship groups play in the health of local ecosystems and watersheds.

The funds raised by calendar sales help the CVCS program to continue supporting these groups, and to work on common goals such as advocating for watershed protection and the conservation of the last remaining sensitive ecosystems in the region.

The calendars can be purchased at many local businesses, or phone Murray at 250-703-2653.

Tiger Slug

Limax maximus: A "New" Invasive Found in the Comox Valley

By Loys Maingon

A new terror for gardeners, but a new delight for biologists and zoologists. Recently "discovered" in 2014 in the South Okanagan, and found around Victoria as an as yet rarely seen invasive species since 1998. Although seen rarely, at this early point in time, its increased distribution suggests that it is in the process of adapting quite well to Vancouver Island.



Best foot forward, I just stumbled on a very beautiful slug. Yes, slugs are beautiful and really useful molluscs, and these days I would kiss one any day before I shook the hand of the already tediously parasitic politicians on the hustings.

So, first the biologist's point of view. What would the world look like without slugs? Well, a forest without slugs would be like a river without crayfish. (I hope you have heard that we are in trouble because as our rivers warm, we are experiencing massive die-backs of crayfish.) Crayfish and slugs are shredders in the food chain – they are not just food for something we like. Without shredders, decomposition is slowed radically, and that means that the environment and the food chains that support it change completely. Without slugs, there would be no organic duff on the forest floor, and everything would basically unravel. Shredders are, together with ants which distribute and organize shredded organic product, some of the most useful organisms in an ecosystem. They may not be as huggable as bears and wolves, but without them, our ecosystems would be in deep trouble – as seemingly our rivers may soon be.

So, this new beautiful slug popped up around Merville today, not far from where I live. It is a quite handsome mollusc with tiger spots at the head and solid stripes down its body. It is very different from our native banana slug (*Ariolimax*) which is clear or lightly spotted, and the European black slug (*Arion ater*). In size, it is between these two, and with the black stripes it is as though it were a hybrid of the two. It is therefore another rival to our native slug, and an added blight for gardeners.... And it is a nocturnal predator.

It has some neat features. It is hermaphrodite but has to mate. The mating ritual is quite complex and can only elicit human envy. In many ways slugs are not only much more ethical and useful than some humans, they probably are more sophisticated lovers, and *Limax maximus*' mating habits are unusual "even for slugs." The Wikipedia description is well worth quoting – as you might think I am inventing, it is not for the faint-at-heart who might find "The Sex Life of the Camel" too bawdy:

"...the hermaphrodite slugs court, usually for hours, by circling and licking each other. After this, the slugs will climb into a tree or other high area and then, entwined together, lower themselves on a thick string of mucus, evert their white translucent mating organs (penises) from their gonopores (openings on the right side of the head), entwine these organs, and exchange sperm. Both participants will later lay hundreds of eggs."

These exotic features set aside, *Limax maximus* first arrived in California in 1896, and seems to be working its way up the coast, very slowly. BC reports from E-fauna indicate that there have been sporadic sightings on the mainland since 1954. It seems to have hitched a ride onto Saltspring Island and from there into Victoria about 1998. Possibly because there has been a lack of funding at both the provincial and federal levels, there has been no monitoring or control of this potential invasive which competes with our native slug. Thanks to the lack of science funding and monitoring, it is quite likely to become as common as the European black slug or the "Dutch" or "milky slug" who are well-known companions of every gardener, and the best excuse gardeners have to invest in beer.

Now that *Limax maximus* is definitely confirmed to have established itself in the Comox Valley, best make light of it.... Slug hunting has not yet been proposed as a tourism industry by the Comox Valley Economic Development Society, but who knows.... the Comox Valley taxpayers have seen stranger things. "By slug slime hangs many a tale," whispered a mating *Limax maximus* in the pneumostome of his/her mate by the light of the moon.



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Upcoming CVNS Activities

Leaders are still needed for some walks. Please volunteer.

General Instructions for Field Trip Participants:

- Car-pool at the Old Church Theatre, 755 Harmston Avenue in Courtenay, or meet guides at trail heads, unless otherwise announced.
- Arrive at the meeting area 10 minutes prior to the appointed time.
- Wear clothing and footwear suitable for the conditions.
- Bring water and a snack.
- No dogs please.
- Share travelling expenses when car-pooling.

Schedule

Send your suggestions for trips to coordi.nator@comoxvalleynaturalists.bc.ca.

Sunday, November 8. (Club Walk). Seal Bay Park. Meet at the Bates Road parking lot at 9:00AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, November 14. (Club Walk). Nymph Falls, north side. Meet at Park entrance on Forbidden Plateau Road at 9:00AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Sunday, November 22. (Club Walk). Kye Bay. Meet at the Home Depot parking lot opposite North Island College and near the traffic lights at 9:00AM or at the Kye Bay parking lot at 9:15AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Sunday, November 29. (Club Walk). Bear Creek Park. Meet at Courtenay Country Market at 9:00AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, December 5. (Club walk). Brooklyn Creek Park. Meet at 9:00AM at Pritchard and Dogwood in Comox. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, December 12. *Christmas Bird Count begins and continues through to January 4 – this walk and the next may be revised if there are time conflicts.* (Club walk). Mud Bay/Fanny Bay. FBI for lunch. Meet at Harmston at 9:00AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, December 19. (Club walk). Courtenay estuary. Meet at Millard Creek Park at Millard Road (Sandpiper Drive) at 9:30AM. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, January 9. (Club event). Boyle Point, Denman Island. Meet at 9:00AM at Buckley Point parking (where the ferry departs) – west of the road. Car

pool on ferry. Lunch on Denman. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, January 16. (Club walk). Miracle Beach. Meet at 9:00AM at Courtenay Country Market. Leader: needed.

Saturday, January 23. (Club walk). Little River Park. Meet at 9:30AM at park entrance on Wilkinson Road off Ellenor Road (near Comox to Powell River ferry terminal). Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, January 30. (Club walk). Ruth Masters Park. Meet at 9:00AM on 1st Street at the Rotary Riverside Trail. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Reminder for Field Trip Leaders

All field trip participants who are non-members must sign the waiver recognizing that there are risks inherent in all outdoor activities.



Semipalmated Plover

Photo: Charles Brandt

About the Society

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Executive

President: Loys Maingon (250-331-0143,
aardscanltd@gmail.com)

Past President: vacant

Vice-President: Jarrett Krentzel

Secretary: Gabriel Baubaiges

Treasurer: Isabella Erni (TreasurerCVNS@gmail.com)

Group Leaders and Other Appointees

Birding: David Robinson

Botany: Karin Franzen, Alison Maingon

Families Group: Jocie Brooks, Jarrett Krentzel

Conservation: Loys Maingon

Photography: Terry Thormin

Wetland Restoration: Murray Little

BC Nature Delegate: Sharon Niscak

Comox Valley Environmental Council liaison: Jarrett Krentzel

Comox Valley Conservation Strategy liaison: Murray Little

Trip Planning: Joyce Bainbridge

Membership Secretary: Maris Ratel

Web Administrator: Krista Kaptein

Newsletter Advertising: Kathie Woodley

Newsletter Editor: Sharon Niscak, David Orford

Speakers: Loys Maingon

Membership

One adult: \$30; Family: \$40;

Junior (12-17): \$10; Student (18-22): \$15

Mail cheque (payable to Comox Valley Nature) to:
 CVNS Membership Secretary
 314 Aitken Street
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Receipts are provided at meetings, or include a SASE.

Membership fee is due January 1. If not paid by February 28, names are removed from the CVNS and BC Nature lists. New memberships started after September include the following full calendar year.

Change of address, phone number or e-mail: Please advise the Membership Secretary.

Membership Form

If you received a paper copy of this newsletter, the membership form that you can use for your 2016 renewal (or for a new membership) is attached. Otherwise, the form will be sent to you by e-mail.

Scholarship Fund

Please consider including a donation to the CVNS scholarship fund when you renew your membership.

Meetings

Monthly general meetings are held on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Florence Filberg Centre, 411 Anderton Avenue, Courtenay.

June meeting: Potluck at a member's house.

No general meeting in July, August, or December.

Bird meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Filberg Soroptimist Lounge, Courtenay. For information, contact David Robinson.

Botany meetings: Second Monday of the month at a member's home, 12:00 p.m. An e-mail is sent prior to the meeting to confirm location and topic.

Botany walks (weather permitting) follow the meeting and are also scheduled at other times. To be included on the botany list, contact Karin Franzen or Alison Maingon.

Newsletter

The newsletter is published 3 times per year (March, June, and November). It is e-mailed to members, and is also available at the monthly meetings. If you wish to receive printed copies by Canada Post, the fee is \$5.00 per year.

The newsletter depends on your submissions. Please consider contributing an article on any topic of general interest to other members—for example: natural history, trips, or unusual sightings. You can send your contribution by e-mail to newsletter@comoxvalleynaturalists.bc.ca.

We would appreciate receiving contributions by the first day of the publication month.