

Comox Valley Naturalists Society

June 2026 Newsletter



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(Honours) in Biology and Mathematics from Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario.



Sophie holding an ochre sea star when she first started her PhD in 2022. *Photo supplied*

We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we gather and operate is the unceded traditional territory of the K’ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

CVN Awarded First Brandt Research Grant

By *David Innes*

CVN’s Brandt Memorial Committee has awarded our first grant for Honours or Graduate-level environmental research in the North Island region. The grant program honours the legacy of Charles Brandt (1923–2020), a noted Comox Valley naturalist and conservationist who left a generous bequest to CVN.

Our first recipient is Sophie Johnston who receives a \$5,000 grant to support her field research on coastal areas of north Vancouver Island. Sophie is currently a PhD student at the University of British Columbia under the supervision of Dr. Chris Harley. She has a BSc

Sophie currently has a publication in the journal *Marine Ecology Progress* and has other manuscripts in preparation on the effects of a warming ocean and ocean acidification on marine invertebrate species and coastal ecosystems.

The intertidal zone ecosystem is critically threatened by ongoing climate change. Sophie’s PhD research is documenting the effects of ocean acidification on intertidal marine communities in the Johnstone Strait. The goal of her research is to investigate how a dominant

ecosystem engineer shapes marine community structure along a gradient of ocean acidification.

Herbivorous snails play an important but often overlooked role in marine ecosystems in controlling the growth of algae. Since space is a limiting resource in coastal ecosystems, competition between species to colonize the substrate determines the distribution of intertidal organisms. Limpets, a type of marine snail, are efficient grazers which clear diatoms and macroalgae (including canopy algae, kelps) from the rocky substrate. This indirectly benefits foundation species such as barnacles and mussels which are then able to settle on exposed substrate.



Lottia pelta, the shield limpet, inside an inclusion ring
Photo supplied

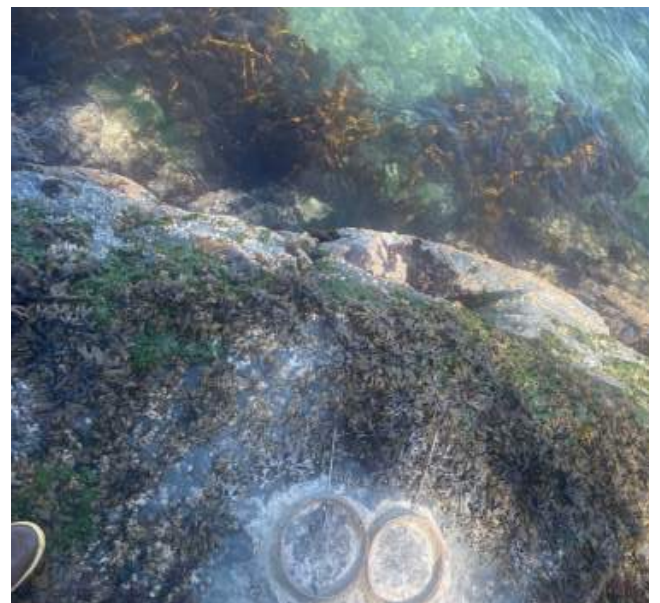
Herbivores like limpets thus play an exceptionally important role in coastal community dynamics. They promote the settlement of foundation species which in turn provides habitat and a food source for many species such as crabs, worms, sea anemones, other snails, and fish that live in mussel and barnacle beds. Therefore, these species indirectly benefit from limpet grazing.

Ocean acidification not only alters the morphology of limpet species by increasing shell erosion, but can also increase their thermal

sensitivity, limiting grazing efficiency and survival in the intertidal zone. Thus, the effects of ocean acidification on such ecosystem engineers could result in large-scale, rippling impacts on marine communities, from microscopic algae to top predators.

Sophie will use the limpet grazing system to study how ocean acidification shapes intertidal communities in the Johnstone Strait, a deep, narrow channel on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island characterized by turbulent, acidic (low pH) waters. She will set up experiments at four sites between the Johnstone Strait (Naka Creek and Alder Bay), Quadra Island, and Hornby Island (two sites with moderate pH and two with low pH) that have similar community composition of herbivores, algae, and foundation species.

Limpet (snail) exclusion experiments will be installed to determine how the role of herbivores differs between acidic and neutral conditions. Exclusion experiments have long allowed ecologists to isolate and identify the role played by a species in its community.



Cemented copper rings (the cement is currently drying) at Naka Creek.
Photo supplied



Copper rings with two limpets included (far ring) and limpet exclusion (near ring) *Photo supplied*

Copper is an effective antifouling agent and deters gastropods like limpets with minimal off-target effects. Copper rings 25 cm in diameter will be attached to boulders to act as “fences” in the intertidal zone to either exclude or include limpets (to test the effect of the fence itself).



Copper rings at Alder Bay, from a pilot experiment Sophie ran last year. Limpet inclusion ring (left) without any settled algae. The limpet exclusion ring (right) is taken over by algae. *Photo supplied*

In addition to field experiments, Sophie will run pH tolerance experiments in the laboratory to determine thresholds for the growth and survival of select species, including barnacles, limpets, and algae.

The results of this research will be of particular interest to residents who inhabit areas near or along the Johnstone Strait and those interested in the trophic level effects of ocean acidification—the reduced growth of herbivores, barnacles, mussels, and oysters can affect the population sizes of predators like sea stars and otters.

60 Years of Stewardship and Community

By Kathy Haigh

Comox Valley Nature marked a major milestone this spring—our 60th anniversary. Founded in 1966, CVN is one of the North Island’s oldest and most active nature organizations.

To commemorate six decades of community engagement and ecological leadership, we held a 60th Anniversary Celebration on April 26. The event brought together members, volunteers, and guests to reflect on CVN’s long legacy of protecting and learning from the region’s forests, wetlands, and shorelines.

Over the years, CVN has championed numerous restoration and education initiatives. These include programs such as Garry oak and wetland restoration, Courtenay Airpark Walk restoration, birding, botany and shoreline groups, an annual bursary for high school graduates, and ongoing community partnerships to maintain sustainable access to local trails and habitats.

In 2026, we are also incorporating our anniversary theme throughout our public walks. To get involved or check the various upcoming nature walks, visit our Events web page.

As we look ahead to our next chapter, we remain rooted in our founding mission—to know nature and keep it worth knowing. Through guided walks, lectures and conservation projects, Comox Valley Nature continues to inspire stewardship and connection with the rich ecosystems of the Comox Valley and beyond.

60th Anniversary Event Videos

For those of you who missed our 60th Anniversary celebration or would like to re-view the slide shows Bruce Moffat put together for our enjoyment at the event, he is sharing these on his YouTube channel for anybody to view:

- The welcome video of birds:
<https://youtu.be/H0kdz74w7Pw>
- Photos by Photography Group members:
<https://youtu.be/5PK1m0bg7x4>

Bruce originally posted the videos on his channel in private for some members who missed the event. But after one member said they were going through the longer video to try to identify the nearly 120 species of birds in the valley in the photos and videos, Bruce has now made them generally available.

So, there is a challenge included, how many of the birds can you identify?



Indigenous Connection to Land

By *Whitney Peek*

I would like to acknowledge indigenous connection to land by sharing indigenous-written or indigenous-led words:

In 2004, Leanne Simpson, a Nishnaabeg writer and scholar, wrote the following [1]:

Indigenous Knowledge comes from the land through the relationships Indigenous Peoples develop and foster with the essential forces of nature. These relationships are encoded in the structure of Indigenous languages and in Indigenous political and spiritual systems. They are practiced in traditional forms of governance, and they are lived in the hearts and minds of Indigenous Peoples. Without intact ecosystems, Indigenous Peoples cannot nurture these relationships.

Leigh Joseph, a member of the Squamish First Nation and professor at Simon Fraser University wrote the following with co-authors in 2022 [2]:

The very foundation of colonialism has always been to separate Indigenous People, often forcibly and violently, from the land and its resources, including separation from culturally important plant cultivation and harvesting areas to gain uninhibited access for use by settler populations. The intentional separation of Indigenous bodies from the land served the purpose of disenfranchising people and removing them from their source of power, strength, health, and wellbeing. Negative impacts to Indigenous relationships to the land and waters including (but not limited to) development, pollution, urbanization, industry, and extraction translate to negative impacts on Indigenous peoples' health and wellbeing and loss of biodiversity.



Camas field.

Cheryl Bryce, a member of the Songhees nation, on Lekwungen ancestral land, co-authored an article with Jeff Corntassel in 2011 and in it, states [3]:

In order to protect the remaining five percent [note that in 2026 it is likely closer to 1%] of *kwetlal* (camas) yields and reinstate *kwetlal* food systems, it will take generations working at removing invasive plant species (such as Scotch broom), pollution concerns, and colonial development.

Also:

The Douglas Treaties were supposed to allow traditional harvesting of resources in their territory but in practice that has never happened or been acknowledged. Look at the Indian Act ...when they passed laws that it was illegal to leave the reserve without a pass, told what you can grow on the reserve, harvest off reserve and what you can purchase it was one more aspect of cultural genocide...It was illegal to gather traditional foods outside of reserve lands and yet the practice of gathering the foods, processing and eating them...were what kept us alive, both from the perspective of diet and culture.

That article goes on to define Indigenous self-determination as “unconditional freedom to live one’s relational, place-based existence, and practice healthy relationships” and “cultural revitalization starts with protecting the land,

reinstating traditional roles, and practicing everyday acts of resurgence.”[3]

Cheryl Bryce, whom I just quoted, is an example of someone who embodies indigenous self-determination and resurgence in her work. After learning traditional practices from her grandmother when she was a child, she now regularly engages in acts of resurgence when she harvests *kwetlal* on her family’s ancestral harvesting lands, which are now considered both public parks and private land, in what’s known as Victoria and the Greater Victoria area. She is frequently harassed while doing this work, sometimes having the police called on her by settlers who fail to understand the significance of, and her right to do this work. She also founded the Songhees Community Tool Shed, a project that connects both indigenous and settler people with the opportunity to decolonize the land by removing invasives and planting and tending to native plants.[3]



Camas flowers.

Also of note is a community organization called Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) that supports this project by providing capacity for the work, meaning that they provide staff, communications and promotion, a snack tent, and more, while the Songhees set cultural

protocols and build their own capacity. Now that they've expanded staff, the Songhees will take the lead while HAT continues as volunteers. I had the opportunity to participate in a Songhees Community Tool Shed event led by Cheryl Bryce as part of my Traditional Land and Resource Management class in May. If you are interested in hearing more, I'd be happy to chat. (The indigenous works I shared were from that class as well.)

I included this specific community-based example because it's illustrative, but also because at the same time I was in Victoria, I saw the news that the K'ómoks First Nation treaty agreement received royal assent in BC.

When finished, this agreement will change a lot in the Comox Valley—land holdings, governance, and more. It made me wonder—how can Comox Valley Nature be in a deeper relationship with the K'ómoks First Nation, standing in solidarity with their work to decolonize the land at this pivotal moment? Could we also provide capacity for the work they will be doing? What would that look like?

The federal treaty process may take several more years, but perhaps now is a good time to engage and learn. All said with the caveat that it should be as the K'ómoks First Nation sees fit, has capacity for, and in terms and protocols fully defined by them.

Finally, I want to reiterate that land is culture, permanently woven into health, well-being, relationship, kin, knowledge sharing, reciprocity, language and governance for Indigenous peoples. It is generational and exists on different temporal scales than those of western society. As a settler here, I can't truly have a comprehensive understanding of this connection. However, I want to express gratitude for Comox Valley Nature having the opportunity to gather and collaborate on the

traditional and unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, which includes the Pentlatch, Sathloot, Sasitla, Ieeksen and Xa'xe peoples.

[1] L.R. Simpson (2004). Anticolonial strategies for the recovery and maintenance of Indigenous knowledge. *American Indian Quarterly*, 373–384.

[2] L. Joseph et al. (2022). Shifting narratives, recognizing resilience: new anti-oppressive and decolonial approaches to ethnobotanical research with Indigenous communities in Canada. *Botany* 100(2): 65-81.
<https://doi.org/10.1139/cjb-2021-0111>

[3] J. Cornthassel and C. Bryce (2011). Practicing sustainable self-determination: Indigenous approaches to cultural restoration and revitalization. *Brown J. World Aff.* 18: 151.

Volunteer Opportunities

The valued activities that we enjoy in this organization are entirely dependent on our wonderful volunteers. The leaders of the following groups are stepping down from their roles (enormous thanks for their work!), so we need a new generation of volunteers to keep these activities going:

- Botany Group
- Shoreline Group (one of two co-leaders)
- Outreach Coordinator (manage our presence at public events)
- Public Walks Coordinator
- Volunteer to post public events on website (no official name, modest computer skills needed)

None of these roles must be a solo adventure—leadership teams are encouraged, to share the work. Also, the present leaders and others will help with the transition.

If you're interested, or want more information, contact the present leaders directly (see <https://cvnature.ca/contacts>) or email info@cvnature.ca and we'll connect you.

Eagles and Snowbirds

Text and photos by Aaron White



I imagine that I share with many others mixed emotions at the news of the departure of the Snowbirds from our skies for at least a few years. Like many people in the Comox Valley, I have been thrilled to see the Snowbirds' aerobatic maneuvers overhead. But like many other nature lovers, I have also lamented the sound and fury they inflict upon our wildlife populations.

Although most of our eagles and other birds appear to have learned to accept or at least somewhat ignore the roaring jets, I can't help but be concerned that many may find the sounds and sights disruptive. A brief online literature search found this:

Low-altitude military and stunt flights induce physiological stress responses in birds of prey and waterfowl, causing sudden alarm and "flushing" (disrupting feeding or nesting routines). These disturbances, if prolonged or frequent, can impact the birds' energy budgets during sensitive breeding or migratory periods.

Anyone hearing the overwhelming roar of the jets as they thunder by can easily imagine that birds and other animals may well be terrified by their presence overhead.

I also know birds are susceptible to colliding with the jets. Indeed, a bird strike caused a Snowbird to crash in 2020 in Kamloops, resulting in the death of one pilot after the bird was sucked into the engine. That bird strike occurred at low altitude, but I also cringe somewhat when I see the Snowbirds flying high into the sky, knowing that Bald Eagles, Turkey Vultures, and other avian friends also like to soar high on thermals.

Despite my reservations about the jets, I must admit that the Snowbirds do provide some thrills for us onlookers as they zoom past. The photos here are of the Snowbirds roaring past Bald Eagles in Comox during this 2026 training season.



I Cannot Not See

By Pat Carl

This past fall and spring (2025/2026), I volunteered pretty regularly with Karen Cummins, a stalwart member of CV Nature, and Megan Ardyche of Save Our Forests Team in attacking the invasion of non-indigenous English ivy. The ivy is pervasive along one section of the Rotary Trail which abuts Bill Moore and Dogwood Parks between 17th and 26th Streets in Courtenay. Others have also volunteered regularly no matter how wet and cold it's been. Good on us.



Don and Linde at Rotary Trail ivy pull.

Photo: Karen Cummins

We've had passers-by thank us for our efforts and some who have even stopped to help. We've heard stories about neighbours who have moved to the Valley from Britain and have planted the ivy, propelled by misplaced nostalgia, despite being counselled otherwise.

Why do we care? Why should you care? Well, this particular little forest is a naturally regenerated second-growth forest that's about

100 years old. An urban forest like this benefits residents and the environment, most notably the trees, which without intervention will slowly be killed by the ivy. With intervention, the trees and other native plants will survive and flourish.



Pile of pulled ivy at Rotary Trail.

Photo: Karen Cummins

Through the English ivy pull process along the Rotary Trail, I've become very aware of just how much of a scourge English ivy is throughout the Valley. For example, walking home one day in Comox, after leaving my bike with a local dealer for a tuneup, I was quite stunned to realize how much English ivy covers the sidewalk fencing and trees along one side of Anderton Road.

And when my car was in for service recently at a local dealership, I walked to the brand spanking new Timmies located near Cliffe Ave for a cup of coffee and a bagel while I waited. I cut down a service road behind the dealership and, again, was appalled by the amount of English ivy covering the trees.

English ivy is a menace in the Valley (really, not too overstated) and I cannot not see it. Damn!

Vanier Nature Park Project Spring 2026 Report

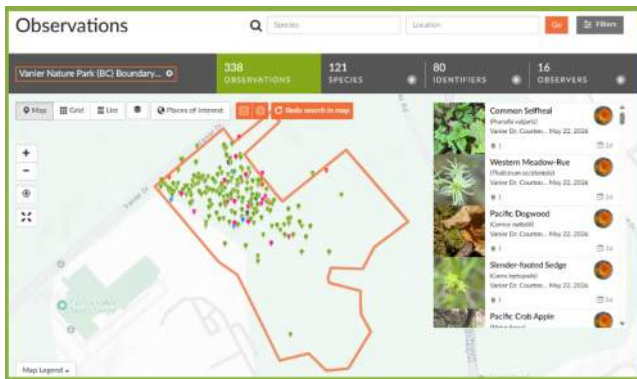
By *Eloise Holland*

Now that we are into bird nesting season, we have paused the invasive removal work that is part of our Vanier Nature Park Garry Oak Restoration Project.

In May a small group conducted a botany survey, and we extended the map range of the survey to include the wetter area of the park that is closer to Vanier Drive.

We also called on Bruce Moffat and his photography group to take drone footage of the park. This will help with future planning and show us change over time.

Terry Lewis and Bob Hauser have now completed the re-tagging of the trees in the grove. The round tags you see on the trees are in keeping with the city’s protocol for tree data monitoring. We also think it will be harder for the Ravens to steal these tags.



Extent of plant survey. Screenshot from iNaturalist



New tree tag. Photo: Eloise Holland

We found several cascara (*Frangula purshiana*), Pacific ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), and skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*). You can find the full list of plants by visiting [inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org) and searching for “Vanier Nature Park (BC).”

In early May we consulted with Tal Engel of Wolfree Integrative Forest Rehabilitation. We discussed the best way to improve water retention in the site. This will involve decommissioning the drainage ditch that enters the woods off Vanier Drive. Possible choices include adding coarse woody debris or installing beaver dam analogues. These are a low-cost way to slow water flow and enhance stream habitat to mimic natural wetlands and ecological processes.



Skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*). Photo: Wikimedia Commons



Beaver dam analogue. Photo: BCWF

Together we are developing a planting plan that will include non-competitive midstory trees such as Pacific crab apple, Douglas maple and vine maple. These plants will take advantage of the new light flowing into the understory and stall regrowth of invasive plants. We will also plant shrubs such as red-osier dogwood, elderberry, and Pacific ninebark.



Pacific crab apple (*Malus fusca*)

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

We are really excited about this next phase of work and the changes it will bring.

To learn more or to volunteer, contact Eloise at vanier@cvnature.ca.

A Collaborative Plan for CVN Botany Walks

By Karen Cummins



Botany group at Bear Creek Park.

Photo: Karen Cummins

Botany Group members are collaborating to offer Botany walks. In May, Mandy and Kathryn L. led a walk at Comox Lake Bluffs, and Mandy also led a walk at Oyster River in June. Kathy H. will lead a walk along upper Glen Urquhart Creek to Hurford Hill Park in July. The upper Puntledge River will be the August location for a walk led by Kathryn L. and Veronique. If another 6 people put up their hands, together we can provide a walk a month through to next April.

Do you have a favourite nature walk area that you would enjoy sharing? Volunteer walk leaders should be prepared to:

1. Explore the proposed route to identify *some* of the plants (don't feel you need to know all the plants along the way or point them all out).
2. Consider where you may want to stop and talk about certain plants, the type of ecosystem or the history of the site.
3. Provide a description of the walk to Veronique including the length, estimated time to walk the route and degree of



difficulty (steep, rocky, flat, etc.), directions for finding the parking area and group meeting point. Veronique will send out the walk notice to the Botany Group.

- 4. Lead the walk as you have planned. Veronique will sign attendees in at the start of the walk.

In our experience, leading a Botany walk is a great opportunity to sharpen observational skills, learn new plants and ecosystem types, and discover the resources to identify plants. Also, it's just great fun to share the joy of observing plants with others.

Embrace the challenge and perhaps ask a friend to partner with you. Know that resources such as field guides (*Plants of Coastal British Columbia* by Pojar and MacKinnon), the E-flora BC website, the Nature Viewing Guide on the CVN website which includes plant lists of many different nature viewing sites, past CVN Botany posts on the CVN website, and apps such as iNaturalist are all your friends on this botanical adventure.

Please let us know at botany@cvnature.ca if you have any questions. Veronique and I are happy to help you. Thank you for considering being part of reimagining how the Botany group can function with the contributions of many members and guests.

Little River Nature Park Stewardship Work Update for Spring and Early Summer 2026

By Karen Cummins



Mass of Hooker's onion. Photo: Karen Cummins

Despite a very dry spring, the waves of native plants blooming at Little River Nature Park were lavish again. Hooker's onion, Menzie's larkspur, bare-stem desert parsley, field chickweed, Roemer's fescue and others came in waves and went out leaving abundant seedheads for the future of the beach plain ecosystem.



Bare-stem desert parsley. Photo: Karen Cummins



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Menzies' larkspur.

Photo: Karen Cummins

The invasive plants we didn't watch go to seed and proliferate were purple lamium, curly dock, broom, Himalayan blackberry and Dalmatian toadflax. Every year is a different stewardship game and this year was no exception. After many years of work the numbers of curly dock and Dalmatian toadflax were, blessedly, vastly reduced, from truckloads to a few garbage bags.



Whitney, Murray and Karen J. pulling lamium in May.

Photo: Karen Cummins

Our energy was instead refocused to keeping Himalayan blackberry at bay on the estuarine plain and above the pond. Blackberry is not every volunteer's favourite plant to deal with, so my thanks to our regular crew of 10 who pulled

on their leather gloves and stayed cheerful. It was very satisfying to leave Nootka rose and trailing blackberry to thrive where the Himalayan blackberry had dominated.



Starting to cut a large blackberry patch.

Photo: Karen Cummins



Nearly finished cutting blackberry patch.

Photo: Karen Cummins

Our collective thanks to Jason from Sellentin Habitat Restoration who made sure that all the broom, Himalayan blackberry and gorse was dealt with on the adjacent strata property, and to Broombusters who removed broom near the parking lot.

Education and Outreach Taking CVN to the Community

By *Karen Cummins*



CVN Education and Outreach at MARS Native Plant event.
Photo: Karen Cummins

So far this year our new CVN Education and Outreach tent has been to five community events throughout the valley—Ifeld Secondary School Eco Fair, Bird Friendly Comox at Filberg Park, MARS Native Plant Event and Highland Eco Fair at Highland Secondary School. We will be at the Comox Valley Farmers Market June 20, and three more events follow in August and September from Fanny Bay to Courtenay.

Typically, from 35 to over 100 people stop at our booth at any one event to ask questions, pick up brochures, see what activities we offer, play our bird and plant games, and ask about the native or invasive plants on display. Having other environmental organizations with their messages and missions all around us adds up to quite a buzz of energy.



Kathie with plant and bird games at MARS.
Photo: Karen Cummins

I want to thank all our CVN volunteers for the energy they bring to greet the community at these events and who make our presence at them possible—Joy D., Kathie W., Barbara N., Angela D., Suzanne G., Viviane, Whitney, Kathryn L., Rosella, Lee, Pao, Shirley C., and Lynne.



Sharing resources and answering questions at MARS.
Photo: Karen Cummins

Shoreline Group Report

By Yvette Crane



Sea lions and eagles at Hornby Island. Photo: Arie

In March, a small group of Shoreline and Marine Group members travelled to Hornby Island to take a herring boat tour organized by Hornby Island Conservancy's HerringFest26. It was a long day with four ferry rides but a unique experience travelling on La Fille, a lovingly refurbished tugboat.



Cormorant at Hornby Island. Photo: Arie Moerman



Sea lions at Hornby Island. Photo: Arie Moerman

April took us for an educational and active day at Towhee Creek. It was "salmon rescue season," and we learned all about what is involved in gathering the data on the smolts and then assisting them to continue their migration to the ocean. Allan Chamberlain and the other Tsolum River staff and volunteers were so helpful and knowledgeable and above all, passionate about the important conservation, restoration and education work they are doing.



Capturing and measuring smolts in Towhee Creek. Photo: Lee Grimmer



Bucket of smolts.

Photo: Debbie Haynes



In May we took a tour of the Kus-kus-sum site, “now that the wall is down”, led by Project Watershed, and heard all the details of the success of this restoration site. What an amazing accomplishment!

The Willow Point Reef field trip with Sandra Milligan from North Island College took place on June 15. Notes from Sandra:

We had a great day on the reef, with a very low tide. With many eyes, we found so many organisms, some of which I didn't know, but thank goodness for iNaturalist! Some of the species I didn't have on the list as they are not regulars. I count 87 species, but the number we saw was higher due to the number that I couldn't ID to genus.

Highlights included multiple giant sea cucumbers, long-armed brittle stars, many gunnels, worms, and so many "crusts"—tunicates, bryozoans and sponges.

You can download Sandra's species list here: <https://tinyurl.com/willow-pt-spp-20260615>

Some scenes from Willow Point Reef (all photos by Debbie Haynes):





2026 Bursary Winner



Our final trip of the year, planned for August or September, will be a tour of the estuary and discussion of the historical fish traps, led by CVN's Dan Bowen.

Finally, I am stepping away from the co-lead role for this group. I would love to talk to you about the fun of setting up these field trips! Email me at shoreline@cvnature.ca and I can give you an overview of what is involved. Best part is...you get to attend all these fantastic trips and meet amazing, knowledgeable people.

Also, to be added to the Shoreline & Marine Group email list, contact us at shoreline@cvnature.ca.

Sophia Priestman, a graduate of Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School, is the 2026 recipient of the CVN Bursary. Our \$1000 bursary was presented to her at the school's awards ceremony on May 28.

Sophia graduates with straight A grades. She made extensive contributions to the Environment Club throughout her career at Isfeld, taking on the president's role in grades 11 and 12. She was also very involved in the Model UN Program, and participated in other school clubs and sports.

Outside school, Sophia has volunteered with Anderton Therapeutic Garden and with Lush Valley for several years. At 12 years old she was offered a job by five vendors at the Farmer's Market and chose Alderlane Bakery where she is in her sixth year of employment. She also has helped out at Pendleton Farm.

Sophia has been accepted at the University of Victoria where she will pursue a dual major in Environmental Studies and Economics with a minor in Applied Ethics. Of this somewhat unusual combination of disciplines, Sophia says:

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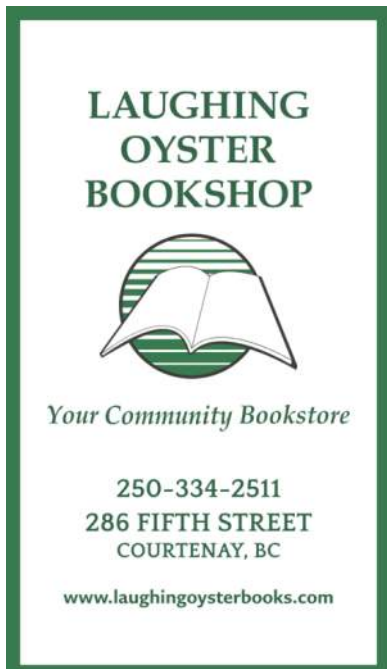
Family run, Comox Valley grown, with strong roots in our community

This variety of disciplines will allow me to see complex political and environmental issues from multiple perspectives and find innovative solutions that both foster sustainability and ensure welfare for all (human and non-human alike).

Congratulations, Sophia!



Nootka rose (*Rosa nutkana*) near Williams Beach.
Photo: Susan Denny



Field Trips and Nature Walks: General Information

Interest Group Field Trips

Birding Group: Birding walks are held weekly, most on Thursday mornings, and once per month on a Sunday. For information or to be included on the Birding Group list, send email to birding@cvnature.ca.

Botany Group: Typically meets for one walk per month, with occasional additional outings. An email is sent prior to the meeting to confirm location, time and topic. To be included on the Botany Group list, send email to botany@cvnature.ca.

Shoreline Group: Aims to have several field trips and/or guest speakers per year, with details communicated by email. To be included on the Shoreline Group list, send email to shoreline@cvnature.ca.

General-Interest Nature Walks

CVN offers opportunities for members and the public to participate in guided nature walks, ideally about once a month. These may focus on a particular theme or simply promote appreciation of our natural areas.

To learn about upcoming walks and register to attend one, visit the Events page on CVN's website (<https://cvnature.ca/events/>). Note that the number of participants for most walks is limited, and registration is required. Also note that a walk may be designated for the public only or for members only.

General Instructions for Field Trips

- All field trips are club events and reserved for members only unless otherwise stated.
- Meet either at the carpooling location (if specified by the leader) or the trailhead 10

minutes before the specified time unless otherwise announced. The carpooling location is usually the Driftwood Mall (Canadian Tire) parking lot, near Cliffe Avenue close to Boston Pizza. For trips going north, it is usually the Courtenay Country Market on Hwy 19A about 2 km north of Veteran's Memorial Parkway.

- Participants are responsible for their own safety.
- Walks typically take at least 2 hours.
- Wear clothing and footwear suitable for the conditions.
- Bring water and a snack (or lunch for longer trips).
- No dogs please.

Participation by Non-Members

Other members of BC Nature are welcome on CVN members' field trips. Other guests can participate at the discretion of the trip leader (numbers may be limited). Those who are not CVN members must also sign our *Assumption of Risk, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims* agreement.

About the Society

Website

<https://cvnature.ca/>

General Email Address

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Mailing Address

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Board of Directors

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(president@cvnature.ca)

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(bcn_rep@cvnature.ca)
Wetlands Restoration Director: Karen Cummins (wetlands@cvnature.ca)
CVCP Representative: Kathie Woodley
(cvcp_rep@cvnature.ca)
Directors-at-Large: David Innes,
David Orford, Whitney Peek

Group Leaders and Other Volunteers

Membership Secretary: Aileen Williams
(membership@cvnature.ca)
Bookkeeper: [vacant] (accounts@cvnature.ca)
Birding: Heather Lindholm
(birding@cvnature.ca)
Botany: [vacant] (botany@cvnature.ca)
Shoreline: Yvette Crane and Mary Mitchell
(shoreline@cvnature.ca)
Nature Photography: Bruce Moffat
(moffat.images@gmail.com)
Vanier Forest Garry Oaks Project: Karen Cummins and Eloise Holland
(vanier@cvnature.ca)
Airpark Restoration: Frank Hovenden
(fhovenden321@gmail.com)
Environmental Heritage and Culture: Gordon Olsen
Swan Count: Ernie Stefanik, Krista Kaptein
(krista.coordinator@gmail.com)
Program Committee: David Innes
(davidi@cvnature.ca)
Bursary: Barbara Neilson (bursary@cvnature.ca)
Charles Brandt Memorial Committee: David Innes (brandt@cvnature.ca)
Trees of the Year: Verna Mumby
(toty@cvnature.ca)

Education and Outreach: Karen Cummins

(wetlands@cvnature.ca)

Website: David Orford (web_admin@cvnature.ca)

Facebook and Instagram: Eloise Holland

(socialmedia@cvnature.ca)

Newsletter Advertising: Kathie Woodley

Newsletter Editor: David Orford

(newsletter@cvnature.ca)

Constitution and Bylaws

Available in PDF form on this web page:

<http://cvnature.ca/about-us/>

Membership

Annual Fee: \$30 for a one-member household; \$40 for a two-member household; \$10 for a youth voting member.

Includes membership in BC Nature.

The membership year is the calendar year (January to December), and payment for renewals is due by January 31.

Membership form (including the *Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement*) is available at meetings and on the website. This form or the online equivalent must be completed each year.

Discount of \$16 if you are already a paid-up member of BC Nature (either directly or through another club).

An optional additional fee of \$5 is payable if you wish to receive printed copies of *BC Nature* magazine (otherwise available online).

Pay at general meetings, on the website, or mail a cheque payable to Comox Valley Nature (with your completed form) to:

CVN Membership Secretary

P.O. Box 3222

Courtenay BC, V9N 5N4

Change of address, phone number or email:

Please advise the Membership Secretary.

General Meetings

A **monthly general meeting** is held most months except June, July, August and December. Details are given in the President's email notices to members. The current location for in-person meetings is the Main Hall of Comox United Church.

The **annual general meeting** is usually held in February.

Guest Speakers

Typically, one presentation by a guest speaker is held per month, either at an in-person general meeting or as an online webinar. Details are announced in the periodic email notices to members and on our website.

Newsletter

The newsletter is published three times per year (March, June, and November). The full-colour version is available on the website in PDF form, and a link is emailed to all members on the general email list.

The newsletter depends on your contributions. Please consider contributing an **article** or **note** on any topic of interest to other members such as natural history, conservation activities, trips, unusual sightings, or a book review. **Photos** are also appreciated, either with a story or stand-alone. You can send your contribution by email to newsletter@cvnature.ca.

We would appreciate receiving articles by the first day of the publication month. All articles are subject to editing.

NatureKids

CVN has a cooperative relationship with NatureKids Comox Valley, a separate nature club for children which is part of the NatureKids BC organization. For more information, see <https://www.naturekidsbc.ca/>.

What you saw



Glaucous-winged Gull eating a moon snail.
Photo: Aaron White



White-crowned Sparrow nest at Little River Nature Park.
Photo: Véronique McIntyre



Poppies beside Lazo Road. *Photo: Susan Denny*



Himalayan blackberry root dug up at Little River Nature Park.
Photo: Véronique McIntyre