

NATURE BAY NEWS



The newsletter of SABNES- the Nature Bay Society November 2002



Western Grebes nesting in and on Reed Canary Grass on our foreshore. Thanks to Blair Borden for photo.

FORESHORE INVASION

Canary Grass – also known as Meadow Grass, but not to be confused with Orchard Grass, which has a narrower, hairier leaf. Old photos show that indeed grazing was part of the control and that the grass was not always so prolific. However due to the very hardy nature of this plant, it has become a threat to the marshlands as it progressively chokes out the native wetland species and creates a monoculture.

Control methods have been tried throughout the world with varying successes and failures. These methods include: burning, various herbicides, hand pulling, tillage, restoring water levels, grazing, covering with plastic or paper, and heavy equipment. While most of these methods are not appropriate for

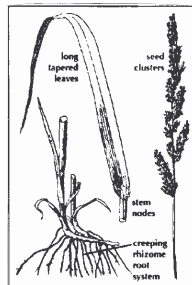
The marshlands of Salmon Arm Bay are experiencing a quiet but aggressive invasion. Not tourists, not developers, not even aliens, all of which you would have spotted in your walks along the trail. The invasion is from *Phalaris arundinacea*, also known as Reed Canary Grass. This coarse attractive perennial can grow as high as six feet; its flat long leaves vary from purplish in the spring, fading to lighter green and then to the typical straw colour as summer, then autumn progresses. Watch for a growth pattern of dense but branched clusters in moist areas. The shiny brown seed heads are attractive to some birds, most of whom are unconcerned about the inroads of the

invader.

While there are two main types of this grass it's extremely difficult to distinguish the native and non-native types. On our foreshore it's likely that a Eurasian type was introduced for grazing purposes. As it reproduces by runners, hardy rhizomes, and by seed, it can quickly dominate the landscape.

When the foreshore was used for grazing, it seems that the "natural mowing" helped to

control the spread of Reed



Continued, page 4

President's Message ---John Henderson



We all remember how high the lake rose this spring so that Christmas Island and much of the foreshore trail were under water for about 8 weeks during May, June and July.

On June 8th, Grebe Day, the Grebes nesting on Christmas Island had just been flooded out of 49 nests. But Grebe Day was still a success as over 60 people joined the Shuswap Naturalists for nature walks and many more came down to enjoy the day at the waterfront. A whole group from the BC Optometrists Assoc. as well as many locals were introduced to the joy of bird watching that day. Fortunately the grebes re-nested along the foreshore and later produced over 40 young.

When the flood waters receded many trail sections were buried under debris and some were damaged. However by August 18 when the running club held their foreshore run, the trail was in excellent condition thanks to volunteer work by SABNES and running club members. I especially thank those

2 who worked so hard to have it ready for

the event. And, a particular thank-you to Calvin Van Bulkirk for the km signs along the trail which indicate the distance from the wharf -- great addition!

The flood waters also floated the Ted Lee Memorial bench to a new location on the trail. By the time you read this the District maintenance crew led by Terry Myers will have it "back home". The District of S.A. and its maintenance crew deserve our continuing thanks for all their work on our trails and other facilities.



Our summer student, Nicole Warren did a great job for us. Along with the help of Tom Brighthouse she reorganized and updated the Interpretive Centre displays. Jim Shaver, a naturalist from Penticton, and Pam Saul loaned us several items, including bird skulls, and these were effectively displayed. Nicki also led nature walks and even made a request to the Shuswap Community Foundation (SCF) on our behalf for a grant. After a productive summer Nicki returned to SFU.

We have received a grant of \$1,000 from the SCF and

offer our sincere thanks for this and for the previous grant of \$500 which was used to install an osprey nesting pole near the wharf. The osprey found it within a week of its erection so I am hopeful that we will be able to watch the entire osprey nesting process next year.

We are working on building a toilet near the Raven end of the trail using the grant from the Salmar Community Association.

The executive is excited that a new study will be completed in 2003 to give us a 10 year up-to-date plan for the management of Salmon Arm Bay.

We, the executive are now calling our organization **The Nature Bay Society**, which makes it easier to explain our man-date to the community.



The executive continues to work well together and I would like to thank them as well as our volunteers and our members, both corporate and individual, for their support this year. Thanks also to the Naturalists for their support and help.

Finally, I want to bring to your attention that the land bordering the foreshore East of the wharf will soon be developed. Our executive

Continued, page 5

Presidents Message cont...

will be meeting with the developer Vic Bates to hear his plans for this land.

I feel strongly that it is important to plan and build a foreshore trail both east of the wharf and between Heron View and the Prestige Inn. If a trail is not established soon, development may occur which will make it impossible for citizens and tourists to have useful access to the shoreline of Salmon Arm Bay. Already this access is lost in front of Heron View and the Waters Edge Development. I think it would be a shame if the only shoreline public access between Heron View and the Nature Reserve was the wharf and the Marine Peace Park.

Hope to see you all at our AGM, **Nov. 23, 7:00** at the Art Gallery.

John

SABNES BOARD of DIRECTORS

John Henderson #*	
President	832-3127
Tom Brighthouse #	
Secretary and P.P.	832-3951
Mike Saul #*	
Treasurer	835-4695
Jane Petch*	
Munic. of S.A.	832-7732
Peter Jannick	832-4927
& Gary Carder	832-4171
Shuswap Natur.	
Karen Angove D.I.A.	832-7571
Rod Wedman	
Chamb of Comm	832-4634
Rick Howie	
Min. of Env. L. & P	371-6245
Mel Arnold	832-7538
& Rod Madryga	832-3792
Fish & Game	
Bob Holtby	832-7865
Jim Beckner #*	832-3534
Karen Bissenden #	833-4886
Bill Eaton#	832-2428
# Elected	* Term expiring Nov.'02



Bird Count Report

by Ed McDonald

The most interesting development of this past breeding season was the tenacity shown by the Western Grebes. By late May, the grebes had formed a colony on Christmas Island of about 50 nests. By June 7th all the nests were destroyed by high water. The grebes never did form another colony but instead used nesting sites all along the bay from the river delta to Mallard Bay. On July 29, Frank and Doris smiled proudly as they counted 47 chicks.

The Ring-billed Gull did not fare as well. The flooding destroyed their nests. Without an island to nest on, few young were produced.

The resident Osprey at the A&W nest site appear to have grown weary of the turmoil of highway traffic and are looking at setting up house on the new pole by the boat basin. Keep an eye on this spot next spring.

Judging by the number of offspring observed this August and September, the songbirds were not adversely affected by the cool spring and hot summer. The notable exception seems to be the Bullock's Oriole. Very few nests were observed this season. Fewer Rock Doves were counted around the foreshore this summer. Perhaps the boxcars on the trains are not spilling grain. It might be worth watching to see if the trend continues. The species count now stands at 219. This means that 45% of all bird species in BC. have visited our foreshore.

A couple of exotic species held our interest for much of the summer. A Black Swan was in the Salmon Arm Bay from June to Aug. and an Egyptian Goose was in the Tappen Bay area for several weeks. The goose may have been part of a California feral population and had no leg band. We are anxiously awaiting a phone call reporting the sighting of a Pink Flamingo. Of course the sighting would have to be verified by checking if the person reporting has paid his or her SABNES membership.



A Special Event for all lovers of nature:

Roy Luckow

Celebrated award-winning professional photographer
from Chilliwack, B.C. will present:

"Wading the Wetlands"

A slide show with music, narration,
and question period.



At the Nature Bay AGM:

7:00 pm

Saturday, November 23, 2002

at

the Art Gallery in Salmon Arm.

The evening will include a brief business meeting and election of officers
of SABNES. Come and be a part of the future of our foreshore sanctuary.

Please note time.

SABNES is pleased and proud to present our

CORPORATE SPONSORS:

LIFE: Askew's Foods

Royal Bank of Canada

Companies w/ 10+ employees

Adams Lake Indian Band

Prestige Harbourfront Resort

Shuswap Lake Vacation (Twin
Anchors)

Shuswap Veterinary Clinic

Suncountry Cablevision

Companies Donating Valuable

Services

Salmon Arm Stationary & Office Supplies

Frames by Filiatrault

Harbour Front Gallery

Traditional Log Homes

**Companies w/ up to 5
employees**

Blue Water Music

Crown Furniture & Mattresses

Gentech Engineering

S.A. Downtown Improvement
Assoc.

Glenn Power Contractors

S.A. New & Used Building

Materials

Silicon Gardens

Southwind Ranch B & B

Talana Accounting Services

Thrifty Car Rentals

Turner Plumbing and Heating.

Water Pure and Simple

Invasion... *continued from page 1*

our waterfront, selective burning has been discussed. Local observations have shown that in those areas where the ground does not dry out, the Reed Canary Grass eventually weakens and allows the growth of alternate plants. Though the grass prefers moist areas, it seems to need a dry period. Hand pulling would only be feasible for very small select areas, and would have to be carefully repeated for three to five years, as would the use of herbicides, due to the enormous "seed bank" that has built up in the soil over the years. Herbicide use is not presently being planned. A positive note is that in at least two local areas, larger patches of cattails have been noted recently, indicating that some

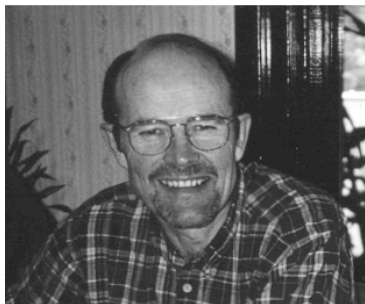


ground has been regained.

However, there is certainly no intent to completely eradicate the grass ... the Western Grebes have evolved their nesting practices and in Salmon Arm Bay they attach their floating homes to this very invader. The problem is not the grass, but its dominance to the exclusion of others. A more diverse plant selection supports a greater diversity of birds, fish and animals. In the new studies for the management of our waterfront, control of this grass will be on the planning list. For now, we can just appreciate the glistening frost on their bent golden heads on these crisp November mornings.

Karen Bissenden, with thanks
to Bob Holtby

For more info go to http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/publications/inv/p6_e.cfm or <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/waterres/smlakes/reed.htm>



Dr. Jim Beckner steps down
After many years of dedicated volunteering for SABNES, Jim will not be standing again when his term ends this month. Jim has helped with so many projects over the years, we could not list them all. In one of his roles as director, over

the last 4 years he has directed the Trail Adoption Plan and scheduled the yearly maintenance days with members. The Raven Trail is a very critical, and visual, part of the waterfront plan, and the regular upkeep crucial for public access and long term success. The board extends an **enormous** thank-you to Jim and wishes him many happy miles on the road!



YOUR VOICE:

The Nature Bay News is produced twice yearly as a membership service. To comment, question or suggest: contact Karen at 833-4886 or gbissend@sunwave.net Thanks this issue go to Ed McDonald, Tom Brighthouse, Bob Holtby, and, Canadian Photoscene for their patience!

The Back Page

Match the Mnemonics with the bird

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. "drink-your-teeeee" | a. gray catbird |
| 2. "kid-ik, kid-ik, kid-ik" | b. alder flycatcher |
| 3. "Meeoow" | c. yellow warbler |
| 4. "Cheerup, cheerily..." | d. virginia rail |
| 5. Queedle, queedle, queedle | e. great horned owl |
| 6. "feebee" | f. rufous-sided towhee |
| 7. "Poor Sam Pea'body ..." | g. robin |
| 8. "Sweet, Sweet, Sweet,
I'm so sweet." | h. blue jay |
| 9. "Are you awake? Me too" | i. White throated sparrow |
| 10. "Fee-bee'o" | j. black capped chickadee |

Note: The "..." indicates that the final sound repeats.

Q: How can you tell you are going to fail Ornithology 101?



A: You call your bird-watching neighbour to identify the bird you can hear outside and he tells you it's a toad. (this is not a joke...)

← thanks to Tom Brighthouse for Mnemonics information



Actual News: In an Eastern American Car Wash the owner began to repeatedly report substantial losses from the coin machines. Taking desperate measures, a 24 video showed that starlings were crawling into the coin trays and stealing the coins ... 100's of dollars worth were found on a near-by roof!!

Bird Moaners:



Answers to the Match:

1.f 2.d 3.a 4.g 5.h 6.j 7.i 8.c 9.e 10.b

Judge: "Young man, it says here you shot and killed a California Condor. How do you plead?" **Defendant:** "Guilty, your honour." **Judge:** "GUILTY!?! Don't you know how endangered these condors are? There are hardly any left at all!" **Defendant:** "Yes sir, I know, but I had to feed my family, we're so poor." **Judge:** "That's no excuse. I fine you 30 days in jail! By the way, what does California Condor taste like?" **Defendant:** "It's real good, sir, kinda like a cross between Bald Eagle and Whooping Crane!"

Murphy's Law of Tree Anatomy: There are 2 sides to a tree - the side towards you and the side the bird is on. **Murphy's First Law of Birding:** The greater the time spent searching for a rarity, the greater the chances it will be sitting on your car when you return to the parking lot. -- from Dennis Weaver

The centipede's feet were killing him, so he went to see the spotted owl. The owl closed his eyes, considering the problem. When he opened them he said, "Walk on your left feet one day and your right feet the next." The centipede thought this was a great idea. "How should I do this?", asked the centipede. The owl closed his eyes again and said, "I just make policy. I don't implement it."



What the difference between a Western Grebe and a Clark's Grebe? One builds a floating nest, the other gets a deck built by his neighbour.