

NATURE BAY NEWS



November 2003



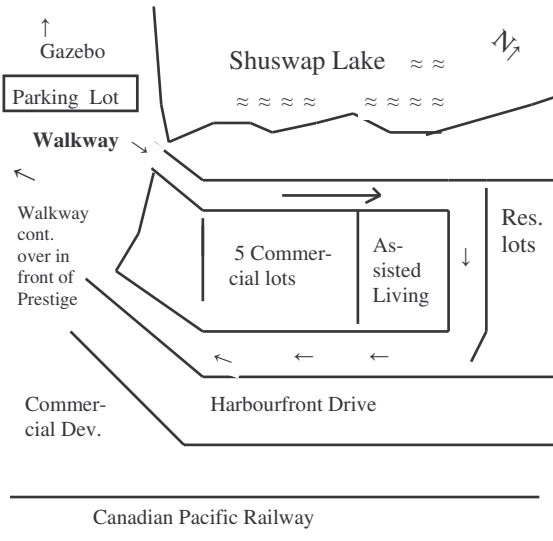
Photo by Ron Wedman

Post Prime Gats

Waterfront Walkway

After meetings, proposals, consults, protests, and suggestions, Salmon Arm will have a waterfront walkway with costs shared by the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, and commercial property owners. In a recent announcement from The Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative \$437,000 was granted to the Shuswap area for local and tourist benefit. Developers will contribute up to \$81,250; the 2003 district budget has already allocated \$80,000 and has set up a reserve fund along with plans to complete the walkway by our centennial: 2005.

Tentative Walkway Plan:



The diagram shown is still tentative, but plans include an elevated connection from the existing parking lot, going east, unobstructed, across the front of the commercial lots and curving back onto the sidewalk. On the west side of the wharf this wheelchair accessible walkway will pass in front of the Prestige Inn and continue past some residential developments and offer spectacular close up views of foreshore birds.

All efforts will be made to minimize the environmental impact of this million dollar project. Work will begin in early spring before nesting season.

Presidents Report: Bob Holtby

One cannot begin a report to the membership of SAB-NES without recognizing the tireless efforts of the directors and executive. My work has been light compared to their efforts. Please give them a thank you when you see them in the community.



Most of my work has been in representing the board to the community and as a result of present events and conditions I'll report here our activities, and our plans for the future.

At the semi-annual meeting, the membership requested that the board take a hard look at the role of the Interpretive Centre. There are two concerns with this facility. First, its location in the parking lot for houseboats is not desirable in the summer in peak houseboat season. One can hardly see the centre, let alone get access to it. Consequently, our visitor numbers have dropped significantly. A solution to this physical problem is to move the centre to a loca-

tion closer to the Nature Trust lands. There is District property at the end of the residential area which may be suitable.

I believe that if that were to happen, we would probably be better served with a building with more windows and display space and a viewing deck.

The second concern raised about the Interpretive Centre is our season of operation. Our prime viewing times are not during the peak summer season but rather in the "shoulder seasons" of spring and fall. In order to staff the Centre during that time, we need to develop a cadre of volunteers who are trained to provide visitor information. We will be discussing this issue at the Annual Meeting and look forward to meeting volunteers.

We have received a report from the Regional District Weed Inspector concerning the presence of noxious weeds on the Nature Trust lands. Bill will de-

tail this report on page 4. As advisors to the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (WLAP) on the Nature Trust land, we must ensure that the foreshore remains free of such invasive plants; some are toxic to birds and other species.

At this writing, we are awaiting the report on the new Management Plan and we hope it will be available at the Annual Meeting.

I am pleased that the Honourable **Joyce Murray**, Minister of WLAP will join us for our Annual General Meeting. She will have an opportunity to view the foreshore prior to the meeting and I'm sure will appreciate your views.

Finally, I must express my honour to the Board of chairing the Society for this past year. I hope that I have been able to add to the value of this incredible asset to our community.



Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society

**YOU'RE
INVITED!**

AGM

Friday, November 14, 2003
7:30 pm
Salmon Arm Art Gallery

Speaker: **Honourable Joyce Murray**
Minister of Water Land and Air Protection

Refreshments

NATURE BAY (SABNES)

Board of Directors

President:

Bob Holtby 832-7865

Secretary:

Tom Brighthouse 832-3951

Treasurer:

Mike Saul 832-0926

Elected Directors:

Karen Bissenden 833-4886

Bill Eaton 832-2428

Doug Leatherdale 832-2850

Ron Wedman 832-4634

Appointed:

Fish and Game Club:

Rod Madryga 832-0236

Ministry of Water, Land, Air:

Rick Howie 371-6245

Downtown Improvement:

Karen Angove 832-7571

Shuswap Naturalist Club:

Gary Carder 832-4171

District of S.A.:

Cllr. Marty Bootsma 832-3400

Chamber of Commerce:

Tim Giandomenico 833-5800

CORPORATE MEMBERS OF SABNES

LIFE MEMBERS

Askew's Foods

Royal Bank

Companies/ Org.

10+ people (\$150)

Adams Lake Indian Band

Prestige Harbourfront Inn

Shuswap Lake Vacation

(Twin Anchors)

Shuswap Vet Clinic

Companies > 10 (\$100.)

Browne&Johnson

Surveyors

Companies > 5 (\$50.)

BPL Industries

Foto Shoppe

Glenn Power Contractors

Lee and Verdumen

S.A.New & Used Building

Silicon Gardens

Skookum Cycle and Ski

Southwind Ranch B & B

Thrifty Car Rentals

Donated Valuable Services

Frames by Filliatraut

Salmon Arm Stationary

S.A. Economic Corp.

Traditional Log Homes

*These corporations
add to the possibilities
available to
SABNES.*

Please support them!

Generous Grant from
Toronto Dominion
of \$3,000 allowed the
purchase of stuffed
and carved birds for
the Interpretive Centre... awesome!

Talking Noxious:

by Bill Eaton

Over the years the directors of Nature Bay Society have been concerned about the spread of invasive weeds in the waterfront areas. The main problem is the spreading vine, “woody nightshade”, *solanum dulcamara*, sometimes also called “climbing, or “bittersweet” nightshade.

The plant is recognized by tiny purple flowers all summer which turn to transparent red berries resembling tiny tomatoes in the fall. The branches are green, becoming gray-brown (woody) on the mature plants. If crushed, the plant smells unpleasant and apparently tastes both bitter and sweet if eaten, however all parts of the plant are poisonous. Recent studies indicate that the bright red berries are least toxic and probably not harmful to curious children. Pheasants have been known to eat the mature berries. But the plant and immature berries have caused poisoning in cattle, sheep and humans.

Bittersweet nightshade is an alien, introduced species from Eurasia and northern Africa but can now be found almost all over North America. In the past it has been planted for ornamental and medicinal purposes.

However, in our area it has become an invasive, rapidly spreading plant that smothers the indigenous marsh plant life. While it grows easily in

any moist site, in our areas you can find examples of it by the Christmas Island plaque and on Turner Creek Trail near the Podollan Inn.

On several occasions over the years directors and volunteers have waded into the marsh pulling and yanking out the vine to be hauled away by the truck load to the dump. This year some success was achieved by covering an area with a tarp. But the suckering habit and high seed germination success rate of nightshade makes eradication difficult, and it remains a present and persistent danger to the ecology of the nature bay waterfront.

For this reason we will be focusing our stewardship this year on noxious weed control, including nightshade, poison ivy, & knapweed. Grants will be sought, and Paul Goodkey of the CSRD will advise the board.

Woody Nightshade

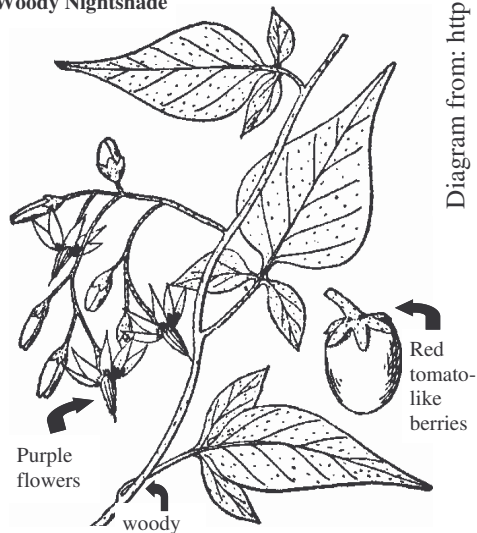


Diagram from: <http://plants.usda.gov>

Red Winged Black Bird

in the early morning
a song that lulls me through
memory

little bird
size of my hand
colour of my heart, brilliant
scarlet flashes through
the black winged air

little sentry
on his cat-tail tower
singing me through

little eye following
every step of my approach

and of my disappearing

Miranda McLaws

Answers to Nature Quiz on page 8

- 1) The sun's position, from star patterns, & the earth's electromagnetic force.
- 2) Changing photoperiod: longer spring days, shorter autumn days.
- 3) Polar bear 4) c 5) b)
- 6) to conserve energy 7) They fly at night.
- 8) east and west coasts of Mexico
- 9) No. Only the queen survives.
- 10) a) 4 b) 7 c) 2 d) 6 e) 3 f) 5 g) 1

With thanks to Tom Brighthouse for finding these quiz questions.

Jannink Park Dedication

On October 24 the sun came out to warm the significant crowd present for the unveiling of the plaque in memory of Peter Jannink. After the piper's notes Ed McDonald of the Shuswap Naturalists explained why we were all gathered on the high mound on the west end of the park: Peter had spent many hours there with the 180° view, contributing his knowledge of birds to all who shared this love. As his wife

Janette said, in her comments later, "He found his balance".



Even as we stood listening to the history of the process from Isobel Reinertson of the Rotary Club that helped create the nature park, the birds sang. Did they know? Tom Brighthouse, Mike Saul, Les Ellenor, Dave Nordstrom, & Ken Finlayson led the group in a song, and then, following the piper, we paraded over to the veiled rock where, after a hymn, Mayor Mayes commented on the gifts the Peter gave through his passions. Then Janette Jannink with her son and daughter uncovered the plaque embedded in a desk sized rock with an enormous chunk missing ... an appropriate reflection of the gap that Peter left behind.

Biodiversity or Climax Habitat

This summer, I had an opportunity to visit the Creston Wetlands.

What a resource they have there!

With 7,000 hectares of land, mudflats, marshes, uplands, shrubs and old trees they have a vast diverse habitat that is home to some 47 endangered species.

Their objective is to maintain that diversity recognizing that it requires management to do so. Fortunately for them, they have support from BC Hydro in managing water levels and financing their operations.

Philosophically, the environment is not a fixed state of nature but a process of creation, birth, death and extinction. Ecosystems move through a succession of species until reaching a climax of a few, dominant organisms which provide little habitat for those species that need successional environments. These climax habitats exist until some cataclysmic event such as fire starts the process all over again.

Doing nothing in an ecosystem is to allow for the succession of climax species. Managing the ecosystem allows for a diverse collection of plants, animals, and birds.

With two apparent exceptions, the Salmon Arm Bay foreshore has been left alone and has moved to a climax growth of Reed Canary Grass. Two



exceptions are the development of Christmas Island and the excavation and development of berms in front of the Prestige Inn. High levels of species development are reported in those areas

while the climax areas (or monoculture) support fewer species. This contrast is what one would expect in an area with no habitat management.

Perhaps an increase in the management of the foreshore would provide an increase in habitat for certain species.

Your thoughts?

Come prepared for discussion on this topic at the AGM.

Bob Holtby

★ Time to Renew! ★

Individual and family memberships all expire on December 31 each year. Support SABNES, your waterfront (and keep getting this newsletter!) send in the enclosed membership form. And, thank-you.

Bird Up-Date by Ed McDonald



The Western Grebes continue to surprise us by moving the site of their nesting colony from year to year. This year, as Frank and Doris Kime reported, the majority of the nesting took place around the Salmon River delta and in the small bay at the railroad bridge. The colony produced 59 chicks, a high average. The best view site to witness the “dancing” was at the **Jannink Nature Park**.

The California Quail have been making their way northward over the past thirty years. Several sightings were reported this summer in this area. The first record of them actually breeding here was observed by Paul Holmes of Foothill Road. A pair nested at his residence and produced 11 chicks of which 9 survived to become adults.



Maybe the summer fires funnelled more birds into the Salmon Arm area this year. Certainly larger populations of juveniles were reported. These included Yellow-rump Warblers, Western Tanagers, Black-capped Chickadees, Spotted Towhees and Song Sparrows. There were even two reports of Black-poll Warblers by Don Byers and Ted Hillary; a rare occurrence.

The low water this year provided extensive mudflats for the migrating birds to fuel up for the remainder of their journey. The poet, *e.e. cummings*, refers to a marsh area as “mudlucious” and the many shorebirds seem to agree. There were hundreds of Killdeer and a good population of vari-

ous sandpipers. The more unusual sightings were Stilt Sandpipers, American Golden Plover, Black-bellied Plovers, a Pomarine Jaeger, first observed by Hilary Gordon and a Little Gull, reported by Ted Hillary. The mudflats also supported above average numbers of Horned Larks and American Pipits.

This fall we have the customary large flocks of Canada Geese, Mallards, American Wigeons, American Coots and Green-winged Teal. In the middle of the bay there are also rafts of Scaups, Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks. On the other hand, there appears to be fewer sightings of Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers and this could reflect disturbance due to the construction east of the wharf.

John Coffey reported a Northern Mockingbird in his yard in North Broadview on Oct. 12. This species seems to be responding to global warming more than most species and so we might expect more sightings of this bird in the future.

The most unusual sighting was that of a Phainopepla at a five-acre lot in Glen Eden. This bird should be somewhere in Arizona or Southern California. Irene Poelzer phoned the description in. The bird comes to the feeder about four feet from her kitchen window. She noted the ragged crest, the red eyes and the long tail. The bird has stayed around for two weeks and will probably leave as temperatures drop. Photographs have been taken.

Nature Quiz

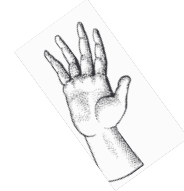


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- 1) There are 3 ways for birds to tell directions during migration. Name them.
- 2) How do animals know when to start getting ready to migrate or hibernate?
- 3) What North American bear does not hibernate?
- 4) Which of these species does not hibernate? a) woodchuck b) Artic ground squirrel c) long-tailed weasel d) chipmunk
- 5) Which of these birds does not migrate? a) herring gull b) black-capped chickadee c) dark-eyed junco d) snow bunting
- 6) Why do Canadian geese travel in a V-shape?
- 7) Why do you never see the grebes arrive in Shuswap Lake in the spring?
- 8) What is the southern destination of the American robin?
- 9) Do wasp colonies survive the winter?
- 10) Match the correct noun of abundance for the following migrants:
a) sparrows b) herons c) finches d) swallows e) hawk f) quail g) teal
1) spring 2) charm 3) cast 4) host 5) covey 6) flight 7) siege



Answers on page 5. ☹ No peeking ...



Goodbye, and Thanks for the Wish:

This is my last newsletter as “editor” and I am taking the privilege of the back page to say goodbye. Four years ago I “wished” we could have a newsletter to send to members and to share with the public as a way of encouraging new members. The board flashed their fairy wand and the wish came true. Initially, Marg Shand provided her expertise in lay out and design until I finally took the course, and you patiently waded through with my errors. Thank you.

I will miss the newsletter, the people, and the learning that happens with this organization. I want to thank all those who’ve contributed to the newsletter and to its mail out twice a year, in particular Tom Brighthouse (and sometimes Elsie!) who has written many excellent pieces, proof-read every issue, and come up with copy and photos on moments notice when “Plan A” fell through. And nary a grumble.

It’s possible, even likely, that this newsletter was a useful tool in maintaining and increasing membership, so vital in this Society. But you can help most of all. Encourage your friends and neighbours to join. For about the cost of 3 lattes or lottery tickets they are members for a whole year.

Ron Wedman will ably take over the newsletter; you can support him with your feedback, your articles and even your groaner jokes! I’ll see you on the waterfront.

8 Did you hear what the poetic owl said? “Whoo? Whoo? Did you renew?”