



NATURE BAY NEWS **SPRING 2004**

Newsletter of the Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society
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Phone 250-832-0917

Website: www.sabnes.org

President's Report by Bob Holtby

Greetings from the Nature Bay Board. We have been very busy this winter. In February the final copy of the Habitat Management Plan for the Salmon Arm Bay was received and reviewed to establish our action responses to them. Copies of this plan are available from our hard working Secretary Tom Brighthouse, the Public Library, and our Interpretive Centre.

Much of the action plan depends on the participation of the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, which is the

lessee from The Nature Trust. The Board will be meeting with the Minister, Bill Barisoff, on June 5 for a tour and an opportunity to review these plans.

We are looking forward to the "roll out" of our web site that has been built for us by Rick Kwitkoski with funding from HRDC through the Economic Development office in Salmon Arm. Rick has also agreed to join the Board as our "Webmaster". Thanks to HRDC and EDC for making this all possible.

Our Interpretive Centre is now open for the season starting May 26th and is hosted by Nicki our student employee. We have some new models in the centre that you may enjoy viewing. We also will be undergoing some construction at the centre to move the door to the north side that

will, along with a deck, integrate the centre with the boardwalk that should be completed this fall. We appreciate the work of Bill Eaton on this project. His application resulted in a grant of \$2500 from the Shuswap Community Foundation.

You will notice a change in format for this newsletter. Ron Wedman has taken over the duties of editor from Karen Bissenden. Many thanks to Karen for her past hard work on behalf of the society. Thanks to Ron for taking on this important task.

Volunteers are always needed for the work of the Society. If you have any spare time, drop into the Interpretive Centre and we'll be sure to provide you with an opportunity to further our work.

JOIN US FOR OUR WEB SITE ROLL OUT AND NATURE BAY SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING
WHEN: 7:30PM JUNE 3 WHERE: ART GALLERY, 70 HUDSON AVE NE

Bastion School Students Flock to Nature Bay by Art Herbert

On a perfect, sunny Friday morning, May 7, two classes of Grade 2,3,4, and 5 children hiked down to the waterfront Nature Reserve in search of feathered friends. Armed only with binoculars and bird books, they were accompanied by their teachers, Georgette Clayton and Art Herbert, and several parents.

Waiting for them at the marsh boardwalk was SABNES member Joyce Henderson. She brought along two spotting scopes which she focussed on waterfowl such as the American Wigeon, Western Grebe, Northern Shoveler, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds,

Canada Geese, Mallards, Barn, Tree and Violet-green Swallows, and the elusive Sora. Joyce was very informative about the species seen and patient with the kids knocking the scopes off target.

The group then moved along to the Inter-



pretive Centre, where Tom Brighthouse related some very interesting information about the birds of prey on display. From there the group moved down to the wharf for more sightings including Coots, Rock Doves, and the nesting Osprey.

After a snack break, everyone walked over to McGuire Lake where many turtles and birds including Common Mergansers were seen close up. The long walk up the hot hills back to Bastion Elementary completed the expedition. Twenty-eight species were identified on a very special day thanks to the tremendous support of SABNES members and the natural beauty of the waterfront area. It was a rich educational experience for everyone involved.

Step inside and meet your Godwit by Tom Brighthouse

If we had a stuffed or carved Godwit, this would be an appropriate sign outside the Interpretive Centre. However we do have a host of stuffed and carved birds bought last summer with a grant from the TD Friends of the Environment .

You must see the carvings by Francis Houde of Kelowna. Elsie and I had our eye on these for a year before we had the opportunity to acquire them for Nature Bay. Mike Saul and I liked the idea of buying carvings when we realized that many birds are hard to find in the taxidermist's collection. The smaller birds such as the Marsh Wren and the Yellow-headed Blackbird are rarely found in feather condition good enough for taxidermy. Short supply is also because of strict regulations which control ownership by permit only. Our pygmy owl waiting to be stuffed would normally cost \$65 or nothing if it were for a ritual. As we could not think of an appropriate ritual we paid the \$15 for educational purposes. Another \$175 and we'll add a stuffed pygmy owl to our collection.

Meanwhile, the previous attractions are

still part of our exhibit. Every visitor is pretty well forced to see the video of the dancing grebes. They often like to see Gary Carder's DVD of the birds of the foreshore. Even experienced birders have asked to use the computer programme. One group heard a lovely warbler song on the trail and wished to determine which species it was. Any bird in North America can be called up and can be told to sing on command.

Then of course we can sell you scenic post cards, note cards by Pat Nesbitt, a bird calendar, the booklet on grebes by Frank and Doris Kime, and the plant booklets by Mary-Lou Tapson-Jones. Particularly attractive additions are the posters of Frank's paintings. Five in all, they were funded by Frank, BC Naturalists, TD Environment fund and brought to fruition by the Shuswap Naturalist Club. We are waiting for news of a grant to produce a souvenir mini-field guide, an attractive rain resistant fold-out brochure with small pictures of perhaps a hundred of our most common or colorful birds. We aim to make a couple of dollars on each sale. Tim Giandomenico of the Prestige Inn has agreed to provide an outlet for this item.

There are plans for the coming season

which will enhance the friendliness of the building itself. Mary Harrington is particularly pleased that the Board agreed to open up the eastern door, and build an attractive patio facing where the new walkway will pass. A few carefully selected signs will invite the visitor inside for perhaps a cool glass of water and a place to rest the legs. The district administrator and the Downtown Improvement Association have already showed support for what we want to do.

Now we need some creative advertising to let people know we offer something special. Grants have been applied for and we should be able to have more posters in town. We will be included on the town map and on the little card which appear on the pillows of hotel guests.

I believe the new walkway will increase our exposure and the Board members are looking forward to a busier summer at the Centre.



Nature Bay Society Website
WWW.SABNES.ORG

Check out our newly launched website to get the latest information and views from the Nature Bay Society. The funding for its project was provided by the Federal Government's **HRSD** (Human Resources Skills Development) program, formerly HRDC.

They paid for Rick Kwitkoski's wages, the site Domain Registration and Site costs with our server. This all came together under the Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation and District of Salmon Arm through the Salmon Arm Tourism Development initiative. In addition funding was provided to prepare a new Nature Bay Map for public distribution to be published in June 2004.

Rick Kwitkoski has volunteered to be our Webmaster to make sure the site is kept updated and maintained.

Thanks to HRSD and the District of Salmon Arm for all their help.

NATURE BAY Board of Directors

- President:**
 Bob Holtby 832-7865
Secretary:
 Tom Brighthouse 832-3951
Treasurer:
 Mike Saul 832-0926
Elected Directors:
 Bill Eaton 832-2428
 Doug Leatherdale 832-2850
 Ron Wedman 832-4634

- Appointed:**
Fish and Game Club:
 Vacant
Ministry of Water, Land, Air :
 Vacant
Webmaster:
 Rick Kwitkoski 675-3688
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

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 Verdurmen and Lee Legal Services



Society Objectives: To assist the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and Nature Trust of BC with the development and operation of the Salmon Arm Bay, its walkways, trails and viewing facilities for scientific, educational and environmental purposes and to increase the awareness and involvement with related projects in the community.

Annual Membership Fees Structure:

- Individual..... \$10
- Family\$20
- Sustaining Individual \$50
- Sustaining Family.....\$100
- Life membership\$500
- Corporate or Organization
- 1-4 Employees.....\$50
- 5-10 Employees.....\$100
- +10 Employees\$150

NATURE BAY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM:

PO Box 27, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N2

Ph. 250-832-0917

Thanks for joining !!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Amount Paid: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Shuswap Lake Water Levels

Shuswap Lake water levels can change by over 3 meters in an average year. This year the lowest level occurred on March 5th and since then has risen about 2.1 meters. Typically the level will come up another meter by the middle of June. You can monitor lake water levels on the new and improved District of Salmon Arm web site www.salmonarm.ca and look in the "What's New" section for the latest lake levels.

Gulls a plenty!

On May 11th Tom Brighthouse and John Henderson counted 1050 active Ring-billed Gull nests on Christmas Island, averaging 3 eggs each. Hatching should start by the end of May. Of these nests it was estimated 50% are above the high water mark.

The Ring-billed Gulls discovered the island in 1994, 3 years after the island was created. The yearly nest count is as follows (year/number): 1996 - 500, 1998 - 650, 1999 - 346, 2000 - 325, 2001 - 750, 2003 - 885, 2004 - 1050.

Once sought after for its white feathers the Ring Bill Gull has made an amazing recovery in North America in the last 50 years and is likely its most numerous gull. A concern is the relationship between Gulls and other birds, including the Western Grebe. Will the Gull population detrimentally affect the Grebe population?

Request for Information

The Nature Bay Society is working to broaden the information it has on the natural life in the bay area. Birds have been the main animal of interest but we are now looking for information (books, photos etc.) on other life forms including Insects, Fish and Plants. If you have any reference material you would like to donate to the Nature Bay Society please contact Nicki at 833-0917 or drop it off at our Interpretive Center.

What's a WPCC??

The quality of life in the Salmon Arm Bay is a reflection of the quality of the water that enters it. About 1% of this water on the average comes from our District's Water Pollution Control Center (WPCC) a.k.a. the "Sewage Treatment Plant" located at 121 Narcisse St NW near Janink Park.

The WPCC is now being upgraded. Changes are being made to reduce the level of Phosphorus in the effluent by using a new Filtration System. Phosphorus in part affects the growth of algae in water and when the algae decomposes, it reduces the level of oxygen that is available for aquatic life.

The upgrade will also eliminate Chlorina-

tion used for effluent disinfection and switch to Ultra Violet light for this purpose. This protects the receiving waters and aquatic life from the potential harmful effects of any residual Chlorine or by-products of the Chlorination system. In addition the upgrade will increase the capacity of the plant, include systems for redundancy, reduce odour problems and provide onsite automatic power generation should the power fail to the facility.

All in all it will be a significant improvement for the consistency and quality of waste water effluent entering our Bay. For information on these items and other improvements please contact Hart Frese, WPCC Operations Manager at 832-3500.

Editor's note:

So here goes folks, a newsletter put together by an Engineer. Could be as interesting as a plumber running a Health Food Store. The thought boggles the mind.

Thanks to all the contributors for this issue and mainly thanks to Karen Bissenden for her tutoring. I need all the help I can get. We appreciate any thoughts or feedback on this issue.
Ron Wedman

Shuswap Naturalist Club Project

The Shuswap Naturalist Club is currently working on a photo documentation of the various flora and fauna in the Bay from now until 2005. Headed by Ed McDonald and Gary Carder the object will create an up-to-date inventory of the various species of life in our area. The information will be used to build a database for future reference.

**COME AND MEET NICKI OUR SUMMER HOST AT THE
NATURE BAY INTERPRETIVE CENTRE
LOCATED NEAR THE SALMON ARM BAY WHARF PARKING LOT**

**OPEN 1-8 PM PH 833-0917
WEDNESDAY THRU TO SUNDAY**

