

Sargeant Bay Society

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Newsletter #72

March 28, 2005

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Wednesday, April 6, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.
at the
Halfmoon Bay Elementary School
8086 Northwood Road, Welcome Woods.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order.
2. Minutes of the 2004 Annual General Meeting.
3. Business arising from the minutes.
4. President's Annual Report.
5. Financial Report.
6. Membership Report.
7. Election of Directors.
8. Any other business

In Memoriam

We were saddened to learn of the sudden passing of Ron Basford at his home at Sargeant Bay on January 31.

Ron was a founding member of the society and a director from 2001 to 2004. During the campaign to save Sargeant Bay from the developers, he provided invaluable legal advice. He was eminently well placed to do so, being the Minister of Justice in Ottawa at the time. He attended the early public hearings about the marina application, where the proponent boasted that he had been assured of federal funding, but Ron was quick to explain why such funding

would not be available. Having someone of his stature on our side was a huge help in making the case for preservation.

We will always remember his inquisitive mind, sharp wit and imaginative proposals. He will be sorely missed.

Ron is the fifth past director we are commemorating, following Bicy Caple (1985), Janet Dolman (1988), Eric Hoare (2003) and Martin Flynn (2003), a sure sign that our society is aging. We do need some new blood.

Birds

The sights, sounds (and smells) of spring are reappearing in the park. Yes, the skunk cabbage is in full bloom.



Photo: John Newell

Once again, this has been a lean winter for waterbirds at Sargeant Bay. A few *buffleheads* and a single *piebilled grebe* have been present fairly consistently in the wetland, but the occurrence of sea ducks has been patchy at best. The Bird Studies Canada waterbird survey recorded 13 surf scoters and 21 *Barrow's goldeneyes* on count day in November, and 30 scoters in February. On March 8 six *trumpeter swans* spent some time in Sargeant Bay and on March 13 a flock of 16 passed over at low altitude.

Spring migrants are returning to the Coast a little earlier than usual this year, no doubt a reflection of the mild weather we experienced in February. Tony Greenfield and Rand Rudland saw violet-green swallows and a single *yellow-rumped warbler* along the berm at Sargeant Bay as early as March 6. The first *rufous hummingbirds* were reported from Secret Cove and Gibsons on March 7 and, although I am unaware of any specific reports, had almost certainly returned to Sargeant Bay by mid-month.



Photo: Rand Rudland

Male rufous hummingbird

Some migratory birds probably never left at all this winter. John and Elvie Newell reported a rather chilly looking *turkey vulture* on January 3, perched on the snag at the foot of the beach access road. Possibly the same bird, together with another, were reported in West Sechelt in early February.

Beaver and Salmon

For the second year in a row the beavers have not built a dam at the fish ladder, unlike the previous 12 years since it was installed in 1991. They are still active in the ponds upstream from the lake. Recently, they lowered the water level in the upper ponds substantially. Approaching from Redrooffs Road, it is now possible to follow the creek much further downstream before hitting the ponds. It is hard to imagine what makes the beavers tick.

As a result, salmon had unhindered access into the lake this season. Joop Burgerjon photographed one big male coho just above the ladder in December (see picture, next column) and another lonely one was seen at the spawning beds downstream from Redrooffs Road. It is still too early to expect to see any fry.



Photo: Joop Burgerjon

Summer Program

Elise Rudland has again organized an interesting program of spring and summer events in the park. If past experience is any guide, they will be thoroughly enjoyed by all who attend. Make a note of the following dates in your calendars.

Plant Identification Walks:

Sundays, April 3 and April 17.

Meet in the parking lot at 10.30 a.m. and join local botanist Kye Goodwin on a walk along the berm and onto The Rock at Sargeant Bay. The spring flowers should be at their best.

Birding by the Bay; Sunday May 15.

The red-winged blackbirds will be singing their hearts out in the wetland and nesting will be in full swing. Join local birder Tony Greenfield to learn more about our local birds and their songs. Meet in the parking lot at 9.00 a.m.

Summer Hike; Sunday, July 17

Join Jeff Muckle on an exploratory hike along the Halfmoon Bay trails from Trout Lake, through the old-growth forest, by Triangle Lake and down to the marsh and the beach. Meet at the south Trout Lake pull-out at 10 a.m. Car-pooling arrangements will be made to return participants to their vehicles at Trout Lake.

Feedback

Finally the customary note that feedback is always welcome. As you received this newsletter by e-mail, it is easy for you to let us have your comments: Just click the reply button, or address to: sargbay@dccnet.com.