

Sargeant Bay Society

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Newsletter #81

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Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Society was held on April 15. The one, somewhat unusual decision at the meeting, was that the Society will undertake to replace and pay for the information signs at the beach, as BC Parks was on a tight budget this year. The two signs on the berm were badly faded and the map on the Info Centre was hopelessly out-of-date. It was further decided to continue our Vegetation Control Program and our Summer Program.

The directors for this year were elected and their functions decided in a subsequent directors' meeting as follows:

Tony Greenfield: President
Joop Burgerjon: Secretary / Editor / Webmaster
Maggie Marsh: Treasurer
Katie Caple: Membership Secretary
Elise Rudland: Summer Program Organizer
Ron Dinsdale: Director at Large
Annette Clarke: Director at Large
Lexi Harrington: Director at Large

Ron Breadner, Pam Runkle and John Newell did not stand for re-election. All are thanked for their contribution to the affairs of the Society, John Newell in particular for editing our newsletters for seven years. Lexi Harrington, who joined the Society two years ago, was suggested as a potential director at the meeting. When asked, she accepted. After the meeting was adjourned, Annette Clarke showed her slides of Frog Pond Lane on Cooper Road.

Summer Program

Tony Greenfield's "Birding by the Bay" event on May 17 drew record attendance. Perhaps it was a bit too much for the birds, as most seemed to be hiding more than usual.



Kye Goodwin's plant walks at Smugglers' Cove, April 19



and at Triangle Lake, June 21, were also well attended.



Judged by the dress code, the weather in June was quite a bit warmer than in April.

Frog Pond Lane

One year after this small wetland between Cooper and Lohn Road was conceived by Annette Clarke and realised by the SCR D, the vegetation and frog population is recovering surprisingly well from the excavation needed to landscape the ponds. The water level in the ponds was not affected by this very dry summer, confirming that these ponds are indeed sustained by ground water.

Most of the frogs that bred were Tree Frogs. Their eggs and tadpoles developed successfully into froglets.



There is an acute need for effective signage to describe the purpose of the wetland. A mother with two small kids let them swim in the ponds. When told the ponds were meant to restore frog habitat, she wondered why we needed more frogs. Annette is designing the signs, but funds are still needed for printing the signs and a structure on to which to display them.

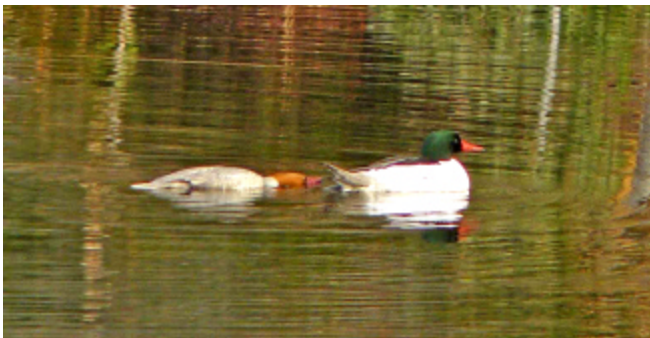
A video about the SCR D parks will also feature the Frog Pond Lane Park and is expected to be aired on Coast TV later this year.

Birds at Sargeant Bay

On April 4 John Newell, and later Rand Rudland, Tony Greenfield and Lexi Harrington saw a male Mountain Bluebird on the berm, a rare bird on the Sunshine Coast and a first for Sargeant Bay.

On May 10 Lexi Harrington saw a chicken-sized bird at the beach. She was very hesitant about this bird, that she had never seen before. After 15 minutes of careful observation she had to decide it was a Whimbrel, another very rare bird on the Sunshine Coast and first for Sargeant Bay.

On April 5 Joop Burgerjon witnessed two Common Mergansers mating in Colvin Lake. This is a breath-less experience for the female, as she spends this procedure under water. On May 31 a female Common Merganser with eight one-day old ducklings were sitting on a floating log. Obviously, this can't have been the same female. Common Mergansers are regular breeders in the wetland.



On June 14 Jim McFarlane, Jorge Jorchinski and Rand Rudland saw a little black chick walking out of the wetland: a young Virginia Rail. Virginia Rails are also common breeders in the wetland, but are rarely seen.

On June 23 Sue Hayer reported a female Wood Duck with 7 ducklings in the beaver pond above the long dam across the wetland near the bench. A male Wood Duck, perched on the crashed fir, was seen by Joop Burgerjon on August 18.

The Great Blue Herons that nested in the forest upland from Redrooffs Road did not come back this year. Over the last three years there were three to four nests, but the nests were raided, presumably by eagles, before the young could fly. This year inspection of the nest sites revealed the skeleton of a mature bird, judging by the length of the skull: 21 cm. If even the adults are killed, the colony must come to an end.



Salmon

On July 19 we checked Colvin Creek for salmon fry. The flow in the creek was slow, due to the dry summer, so the fish were easy to see. There were considerably more than in the last few years, all Coho. Also one juv. Cutthroat Trout.



During all of September salmon were jumping in Sargeant Bay as never before. Fishermen were trying to catch them from the beach, the rock, from boats and miscellaneous other floating devices. These salmon were not heading for the fish ladder, however. Our salmon are expected to come in between November 15 and December 15. We urge everybody to help keeping the fish ladder clear during this period. A special tool is stored under the bridge.

Plants

Floating Pondweed now covers 25% of Colvin Lake and has completely replaced Canadian Waterweed. A newcomer is the Yellow Pond Lily, of which there now is one plant.



Feedback

We welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. 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 sargbay@dccnet.com.