



Our Backyard

A NEWSLETTER ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN SAANICH

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Saanich Environmental Awards

Recognizing people and organizations that make a positive contribution to the natural environment in Saanich since 2000.

Do you know a group, individual or business that has made an outstanding contribution to the natural environment in Saanich? If so, please consider nominating them for a Saanich Environmental Award. Awards are made in seven categories: Individual, Business/Commercial, Volunteer Organization, Youth Group/School, Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainability and Long-term Achievement.

Awards will be presented to the winners at the first Council meeting in June. Winners receive a framed certificate and have their names added to a permanent plaque at Saanich Hall.

Nominations will be accepted until April 20, 2012. Nominations can be made online by visiting the Saanich website at www.saanich.ca/living/natural/enviro_awards.html

Have your say! Tell us about new ESA's!

By Adriane Pollard, Saanich Environmental Services

The District of Saanich is expanding its Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA) mapping. The purpose of this initiative is to improve our existing inventories by looking for areas that may have been missed during past mapping initiatives. These inventories appear in our three atlases which flag ESA's, some of which are protected in development permit areas.

Data collection for this initiative will occur in two phases. In phase 1, the public are invited to send information on sites that could be of interest which may be visited by our consultant for further scientific data collection. In phase 2, the consultant will collect data on sites that they have researched through various sources of published information.

**Do you know of a special site in Saanich that has natural features which may make it environmentally significant?
You can participate by letting us know about it.**

Please see our webpage for more information, including the Site Form, at www.saanich.ca/living/natural/esamapping.html





HAT Diversity

By Peter Dunsmore-Papagiannis,
Habitat Acquisition Trust

Over the past few weeks, Habitat Acquisition Trust has been fortunate to work with two new partners on two great restoration and education projects. S.J. Willis School, an inner city school that houses many different learning programs for a wide range of students, wanted to do some invasive species removal on their property and approached HAT for help. We are grateful they chose us, as we ended up working with amazing students from all ages and backgrounds, including younger students who were at S.J. Willis School to finish up their high school diplomas and more mature students who were newcomers to Canada and just learning to speak English. It was an inspiring mix of people who all bonded over restoring nature and worked hard to make a difference at their school.

The next week, we were once again greeted by another group of high school students, this time from St. Michaels University School. These boarding students had travelled from around the world to study in Victoria, and we wanted to share our special ecosystems with them, not to mention put them to work! Twenty-two hard working boys and their house parents travelled to Havenwood Park to pull Scotch Broom. They carried huge tarp loads of broom down the face of Havenwood, and were able to clear a large rocky outcrop that we hope will now flourish with native species come spring. Working with these culturally diverse students was a great experience for us and them, and it allowed us to share something that we have common: **a love of special natural places that will be our legacy for our children – wherever they are.**



New Rare Slug Identification Guide

This unique publication by slug expert Kristiina Ovaska is part of HAT's program for the recovery of Species at Risk. Our biologists are now meeting with interested landholders who wish to participate in HAT's slug monitoring project in 2012. Focus areas for volunteer monitoring include private lands around: Thetis, Matheson, and Prospect Lakes, Esquimalt Lagoon, and in the Highlands.

Please consider printing the two page ID guide for your local bulletin board. To order copies or to volunteer with HAT's taildropper monitoring program please call Todd Carnahan 250-995-2428.

For an online version of this guide and more information about HAT's outreach project click here or visit: www.hat.bc.ca/index.php/blue-grey-taildropper-slug-stewardship

By Todd Carnahan,
Habitat Acquisition Trust

Goward Woodland volunteer enthusiasm is contagious

By Everett Peterson (250-477-8331), Site Steward, Goward Woodland

Norm Mogensen, Harry Drage, and Bill Dancer like pulling English Ivy and other invasive plant species too. Thanks to the leadership efforts of Norm, Harry, and Bill, aided by many other volunteers, the Cadboro Bay Residents Association now has Haro Woods and Konukson Park to showcase as areas that today have much less ivy and other invasive plant cover than before.



Like most of the forested part of the Cadboro Bay local area, Goward Woodland was also dominated in the late 1980's by English Ivy, English Holly, Scotch Broom and Himalayan Blackberry. In 1990-91, when Goward House (2495 Arbutus Rd) was being restored to a usable building, a devoted group of Goward House Society volunteers, led by John Hopkins, began invasive species removal, focussing first on ivy on tree trunks. Dead ivy stems still clinging to stems of Douglas-firs surrounding the Goward House parking lot are testament to the forest restoration efforts started 20 years ago by these volunteers. Removal of the forest floor carpet of ivy was left to a later date.

It was not until the Mogensen-Drage-Dancer leadership in Haro Woods showed what was possible that Goward House Society was inspired to think the same for the six-acre Goward Woodland. Efforts to remove all ground cover ivy and other invasive plants continue to this day. The current five-year plan (2010-2014) for invasive species removal is focusing in 2012 on the portion of the Goward Woodland that borders the rear of the properties on Rowley Road. In 2013-2014, attention will focus on forest restoration along Haro Road, near the Arbutus Grove Children's Centre.

The Goward Woodland has not been designated as a park but it is zoned as P-4, Recreation and Open Space. The property is owned by the District of Saanich and is leased to Goward House Society with renewable five-year leases. Words on the plaque of a teak bench placed in the Goward Woodland, through shared funding by Goward House Society and a Saanich Centennial Grant in 2006, confirm that this urban woodland jewel is available for "everyone to enjoy".



Cadboro Bay residents are invited to enjoy the features offered by Goward House. If interested, you can pull ivy on this public land without membership in the Goward House Society; and if you are a member there is no requirement to pull ivy. Information on programs and activities can be seen at the web site www.gowardhouse.com. On the homepage of that website, clicking on 'Gardens and woodland' describes in more detail the public footpath system, the 2010-2014 forest restoration work plan, and provides a link to a Shutterfly photographic record of restoration in progress within the Goward woodland.

You Can Help Bring Back the Bluebirds!

By Carolyn Masson, Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team

Do you remember Western Bluebirds? These native songbirds once thrived in our local Garry Oak ecosystems but have gradually disappeared and are now considered extirpated (locally extinct). Western Bluebirds are one of more than 100 species at risk in Garry Oak and associated ecosystems. With your help, we can bring them back!

Biologist Trudy Chatwin says, "In May 1989, when my twins were four years old, we watched Western Bluebirds nesting in a beautiful Garry Oak meadow on Mt. Tzuhalem, near Duncan. Since 1995, however, the local population of Western Bluebirds has not been known to nest in BC. I would like to help restore nesting populations of this important and beautiful bird so that my daughter Heather, a leader of the Victoria Young Naturalists' Club, can inspire others with the thought that they can be a part of restoring nature, and that they too can watch Western Bluebirds at their nests."

Partners in the Bring Back the Bluebirds project, the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT), Victoria Natural History Society, Nature Conservancy Canada, Ecostudies Institute, and the Salt Spring Island Conservancy have been putting up nestboxes in suitable habitat for several years. However, experts tell us that we need a re-introduction to jumpstart the population. Building on the success of a five-year re-introduction program on neighbouring San Juan Island, we are ready to have Dr. Gary Slater bring pairs of Western Bluebirds from healthy populations in Fort Lewis, Washington, to sites in this area this spring. We are getting permits and volunteers ready to go, but we are experiencing a critical shortage of funds. The Victoria Natural History Society and its members have generously donated \$10,000 already. With those donations in hand, we will be closer to bringing Western Bluebirds to a meadow near you! To donate to this exciting project, go to [<http://vicnhs.bc.ca/donate.html>] (choose 'bluebird project').

If you have bluebird nestboxes on your property, now is the time to be watching for bluebirds and reporting sightings—or better yet—nesting activity! Please report to GOERT at bluebird@goert.ca or 250-383-3427.





Pulling Together Volunteer Program

By Jenny Eastman, Coordinator of Volunteers jenny.eastman@saanich.ca

Hand-in-Hand and Pulling Together

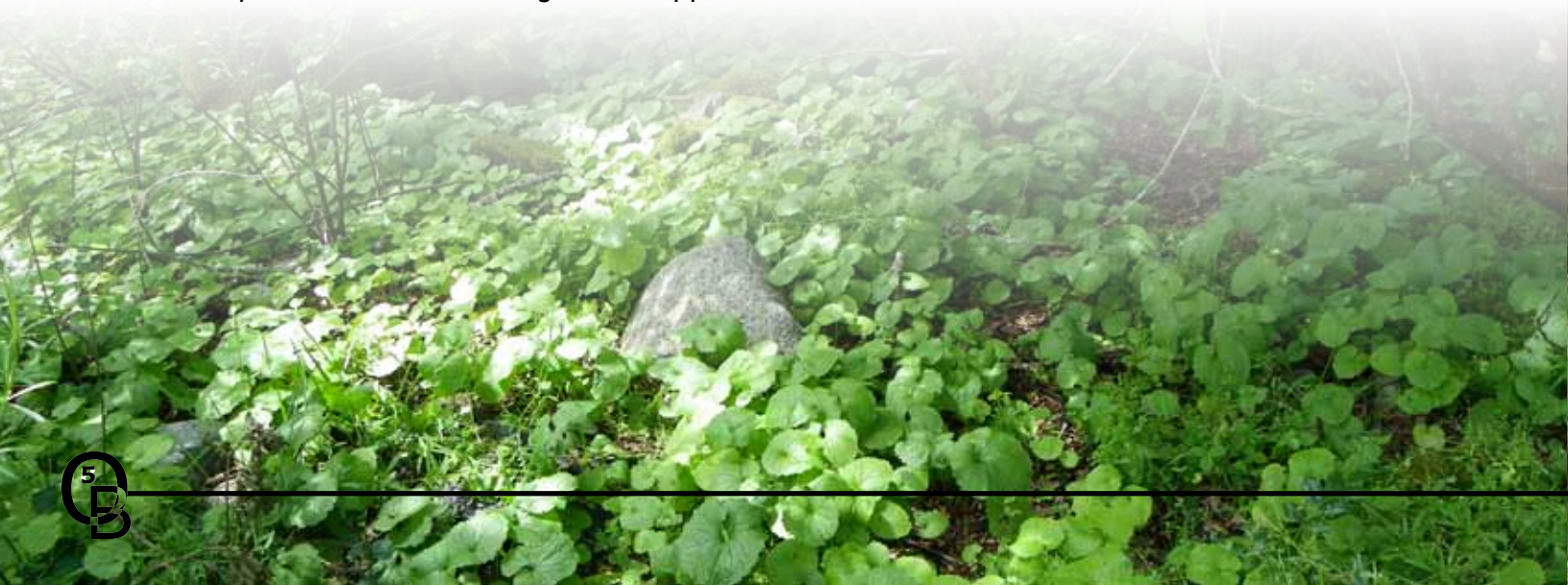
Volunteers get more done when we work together. This spring, not only are we “pulling together” as a team, we’re working hand-in-hand with more community groups than ever before.

The *Pulling Together* Volunteer Program has long had a strong relationship with the University of Victoria, and that relationship is growing again. This spring, three Saanich parks will have new action-oriented restoration plans written by teams of UVic students. The students have been visiting their assigned parks, reviewing documents and thinking hard about how to lay out practical restoration plans for each site. Keen teams of students have been working at Arbutus Cove, Braefoot, and Emily Carr Parks. We also have a team of UVic residence students joining us at select work parties to add their muscle and youthful energy to our work.

This season we are also working hand-in-hand with:

- Lakehill Elementary students to plant native species in Beckwith Park.
- St. Michaels University School students to remove invasives at Mount Tolmie and Browning Parks.
- Saanich Baptist Church to remove invasives in many different parks.
- Royal Victoria Yacht Club to do a beach clean up at Cadboro Bay.
- Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association to host a work party at Glasgow Park to remove invasives and plant natives.
- Mount Douglas Secondary students to remove invasives and learn about park ecosystems at Mount Douglas Park.
- Maria Montessori students to remove invasives at Mount Tolmie.
- Victoria Baha’i Community to remove invasives at Mount Tolmie.
- Home Hardware (Burnside) to access grant money to help us plant more trees.

If you have a group that would like to work in one of your Saanich Parks, please be in touch. We provide all tools and refreshments. We’d love to pull together with your team. All our events, contact information, and program details can be found at <http://www.saanich.ca/living/natural/opportunities.html>



Whitehead Park

& the Friends of Tod Creek Watershed

Many of you have no doubt noticed the changes taking place in Whitehead Park. With the gratefully-received Fido-Evergreen Grant of \$2,000, The Friends of Tod Creek Watershed, with much help from Saanich Parks, are attempting to bring the outlet area of Prospect Lake and the beginning of Tod Creek back to proper functioning conditions. Because the non-native Golden Willow had long been able to spread and huge amounts of introduced Himalayan Blackberry had grown alongside them, the creek was unable to maintain healthy oxygen levels necessary for fish and other organisms. We first removed the blackberries, and, in 2010, Saanich Parks hired a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to oversee the removal of the willows. For the past few years we have met almost every Monday morning to remove any willow twigs and sprouts and to carry on with the blackberry removal. On the east side of the creek we have raked out the start of a pathway which is back from the riparian area along the edge of the creek, planted sword fern, and encouraged native plants to recover.

The riparian area, that area where land and water meet, is extremely important for the health of the water body. Without it, the lake is subject to eutrophication. This is a condition caused by excess nutrients from fertilizers, faulty septic tanks, worn out septic fields, and manure piles, among other things. Healthy riparian vegetation (eg. Cattails, rushes, reeds, and native trees and shrubs), create a stable shoreline that is not subject to wave erosion and is able to trap sediments and nutrients. This healthy shoreline is a great place for fish, mammals, birds, and amphibians: providing areas for reproduction, protection, and feeding. A healthy riparian area is essential for good water quality. By trapping sediments and preventing excess nutrients from entering the lake or stream, they prevent the growth of algae, which destroys the lake for swimming and fishing. Healthy riparian areas also act like a sponge, holding water and slowly metering it out during times of low flow. We are attempting to restore the riparian vegetation in Whitehead Park, and we hope that our demonstration encourages others to do the same on their property.

On March 31 from 1 – 3 pm we will hold a planting party in Whitehead Park in the areas we have cleared. We would love it if people came by to help or just to see what we are up to. Refreshments will be available.

We are also applying for funding from various sources to begin restoration of the west side of the creek. We will need to hire a QEP to advise us about removing the non-native Yellow Flag Iris and replacing it with native vegetation. This work can only be done in the fisheries window (August 15 – September 15) so we hope to do as much preparation as we can in order to take advantage of the short window.

As always we would like to thank Saanich Parks, particularly Cory Manton and Jenny Eastman, for providing us with help and for removing our waste piles. We also greatly appreciate the training we have received through the Saanich Parks Pulling Together program so that we are comfortable in what we are doing.

By Mary Haig-Brown and Winona Pugh, Lead Stewards
Saanich Pulling Together Program and the Friends of Tod Creek Watershed.



SEPTIC SYSTEMS DO'S AND DON'TS

By Gail Pike, Capital Regional District www.crd.bc.ca/septic Phone: 250-360-3030

Properly functioning and maintained onsite septic systems are an excellent means of treating domestic wastewater. There are approximately 2,237 septic systems in Saanich.

When septic systems work properly, they are efficient, inexpensive to maintain and safe for people and the environment. If they fail or malfunction they can cause health hazards, water pollution, major repair costs, and odours.

THE DO'S OF SEPTIC SYSTEM CARE

- Attend a free 2.5 hour CRD Septic Savvy Workshop. Call CRD Hotline at 250-360-3030 or go to www.crd.bc.ca/septic for more information.
- Learn and record the location of your septic system, including tank, distribution box and dispersal area.
- Have your septic tank pumped out every 2 to 5 years. CRD Bylaw 3479 requires that all Saanich residential septic tanks be pumped out at least every 5 years.
- Have Registered Onsite Maintenance Providers (ROWPs) do an inspection, develop a maintenance plan and attend to repairs promptly (see contact information below). Allow easy access to the system for monitoring and maintenance. The Inspector should inspect the entire system: tank, tees or baffles, effluent filter, distribution box, dispersal system and pump chamber (if applicable). A pump out is not an inspection.
- Keep a record of location, pumpings, inspections, and maintenance.
- Install an effluent filter. Solids will be kept out of your dispersal system, and your system will last longer.
- Practice water conservation to allow for settling in the tank and to avoid saturation of the drain field.
- Use greener alternatives to toxic cleaners and chemicals. Harmful chemicals can kill the beneficial bacteria in your septic tank and the environment.
- Renovating? Contact the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) office at 250.519.3401 for advice on whether your septic system will need upgrading and if you need help locating your system.

THE DON'TS OF SEPTIC CARE

- Don't use septic tank "starters", "additives", or similar products. They do much more harm than good.
- Don't use granular drain cleaners. One tablespoon can kill all of the beneficial bacteria in your system.
- Don't use a garburator.
- Don't park, drive, pave or put heavy objects or machinery over your dispersal system.
- Don't plant trees or shrubs in the dispersal system area. Grass is ideal.
- Don't allow roof drains, perimeter drains or surface water runoff to discharge into your tank or onto the dispersal system.
- Don't use your toilet or drains as a trash can. Cooking grease, fats, cigarette butts, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, hair, plastics, lint, metal, rubber, coffee grounds, tea leaves, and cat litter should all be kept out of your septic system.
- Don't attempt repairs or alterations to your septic system yourself. Only a ROWP or a Professional Engineer should work on your septic system (<http://owrp.asttbc.org>).

Can We Use YOUR Garden In A Pollinator Conservation Research Study?

By Julie Wray, Simon Fraser University

Did you know that one out of three bites you eat is thanks to a bee? And that some kinds of native bees are declining? We want you to know how much the flower and vegetable gardens of Greater Victoria support pollinator conservation, and how you can help.

We're looking to visit gardens once a week from mid-April to July, collecting the bees, flies, and beetles that pollinate flowers. With your permission, we'd also put out small (10 cm diameter) bowls filled with soapy water for two days during this period; pollinators are attracted to the bright blue, yellow, and white colors (but drown in the water). We can then determine the biodiversity of pollinators in your garden—and compare it to that in the endangered Garry Oak ecosystem, where we've identified approximately 150 species of bees so far! We'd like to understand what kinds of gardens best support the biodiversity of these important insects. We are especially interested in gardens in close proximity to the following parks: Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary (north of McKenzie Avenue), Mount Tolmie Park, Highrock/Cairn Park, and Uplands Park—but any gardens on the Saanich Peninsula would be great.

If you are willing to let us sample your garden, or just want some additional information, please contact graduate student Julie Wray (jwray@sfu.ca, 778-782-3304 office, 604-441-8934 cell) or professor Elizabeth Elle (eelle@sfu.ca, 778-782-4592 office, 604-813-4592 cell) at Simon Fraser University, and for a bit more information about what we do, visit our web page www.sfu.ca/biology/faculty/elle/index.html



A Native Plant Garden... Eventually

By Andrea LaPointe, Saanich Resident

We have lived in Saanich for almost three years, and for nearly the same amount of time I have been dreaming of replacing the horticultural shrubs on our boulevard with a native plant garden. The first step, of course, was to apply for a boulevard permit through the District of Saanich's Engineering Department. Up until last year I had not accomplished much besides planting an Indian Plum and a Red-flowering Currant. In April last year I took a big step forward by receiving a Bigleaf Maple tree as part of my application for a boulevard permit. I also put in several Tall Oregon-grape plants, two of which are not yet very tall. Overall it still does not look like much.



My goal is to establish native plants along the boulevard and get rid of the existing shrubs. The project is, of course, limited by budget but that may not be such a bad thing. I have had plenty of time to plan, re-plan, and improve upon the re-plan. I am also trying to take into account the fact that the present horticultural shrubs, although not my idea of attractive, do serve a purpose or two. Therefore, the phase-in approach continues.

It only took a few sunny days to get me thinking about the outdoors and I am eagerly awaiting the semi-annual Swan Lake Native Plant Sale. I envision a boulevard that has colour nearly year round, berries and seeds for the birds (and maybe my kids) to eat, and shelter for a variety of creatures. It will be my little contribution to nature amid the large space that is taken up by our house, driveway and lawn.

Next up is to acquire the plants and hope for a fair weather weekend. If the mental image becomes reality then by late spring I should have a nicely planted section of Snowberries and Nootka Roses between the crazy Photinia and Pyracantha neighbours. The rest will come in good time.

Bylaws and Policies for Use of a Boulevard: www.saanich.ca/services/engineering/boulevard.html

Upcoming Events

Saanich Recreation Free Programs

www.saanich.ca/resident/recreation 250-475-5408

Sunday Hikes (FREE Drop-In)

Sundays, 1 pm - 3:30 pm

These FREE guided hikes are open to adults of all ages. Please wear sturdy and supportive footwear and carry adequate drinking water. Sorry, dogs are not permitted.

May 13 - Playfair Park to Peacock Hill

Meet at Cedar Hill Rec. Centre parking lot at the foot bridge

Jun 17 - Colquitz Creek & Cuthbert Holmes Park

Meet in parking lot of Tillicum Mall, near Silver City Theatre

Gentle Walk & Talk (FREE Drop-In)

Thursdays, 9:30 am – 11 am

These free guided walks are open to adults of any age. Wear sturdy footwear, dress for the weather and bring adequate water. Sorry, dogs are not permitted.

Apr 5 - Cedar Hill Golf Course to Kingsberry Pond

Meet in Cedar Hill Golf Course parking lot, end of Derby St.

Apr 12 - Knockan Hill

Meet at Strawberry Vale Community Centre on High St., off W. Burnside, park on street

Apr 19 - McMinn to Doris Page

Meet at McMinn Park, beside tennis courts, off Maplegrove

Apr 26 - Mt Doug Park to Glendenning

Meet near washrooms in main parking lot off Cordova Bay Rd., at Ash St.

May 3 - Calvert Park to Logan

Meet at end of Viaduct, off Interurban

May 10 - Beckwith Park-Maltwood-Stoneywood

Meet at Beckwith Park parking lot on Beckwith Ave.

May 17 - Prospect Lake Park

Meet at Whitehead Park at Prospect Lake Rd. & Goward Rd.

May 24 - Finnerty Gardens & Mt. Tolmie

Meet at Henderson Rec. Centre, main door, Cedar Hill X.Rd

May 31 - McMinn Park - Kentwood - Outterbridge

Meet at McMinn Park, beside tennis courts, off Maplegrove

Jun 7 - Tod Inlet

Meet at Tod Inlet access on Wallace Dr. opposite Quarry Lake, south of Benvenuto

Jun 14 - Rithet's Bog to Brydon Park

Meet at kiosk on Dalewood, off Chatterton

Growing Food in the City

www.gaiacollege.ca 250-709-2229

www.haliburtonfarm.org

Starting April 4, 2012

Haliburton Farm, 741 Haliburton Road

Gaia College, Royal Roads University, and Haliburton Farm in Victoria have teamed up to bring you the most comprehensive, amazing, inspiring, empowering Growing Food course ever! We don't just talk about food security – we help to make it happen right now. Grow an abundance of healthy, nutritious and delicious food right away this year – save hundreds of dollars on your food budget – and take a giant step towards increasing your family's food security! See above websites for registration information and prices.

Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

www.swanlake.bc.ca 250-479-0211

The last Sunday of each month (and during spring break in March) Swan Lake hosts a different celebration of the natural world: Games, crafts, songs, and hands-on exploration – fun for the whole family.

Guided Birdwalks (Drop-In)

Every Wednesday and Sunday, 9:00 am

Bring binoculars and walking shoes and meet in the parking lot for this informative walk around the lake.

Fossil Fair (Drop-In)

Sat/Sun, March 24/25, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

The Victoria Palaeontology Society will share their ongoing research and identify fossils for you. Kids can participate in a scavenger hunt, make fossil and dinosaur rubbings, look at tiny fossils through microscopes, and dig for fossils in a sandbox to take home as a treasure. Admission by donation.

15th Annual Spring Native Plant Sale

Sat/Sun, April 21/22, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

This sale has 5000 native plants of 140 different species. See poster on back page for more details.

Wildflower Weekend (Drop-In)

Sunday, April 29, 12 pm – 3:00 pm

We celebrate the wonderful world of wildflowers with guided tours of our native plant garden, hikes, crafts for the kids and fun music at the Wildflower Revue. Admission by donation.

Bee Day (Drop-In)

Sunday, May 27, 12 pm – 3:00 pm

Bee hives. Mason Bees. Bee crafts. Bee songs. Honey tasting. Bee there or Bee square. Admission by donation.

Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program

Do you like eagles?

(WiTS) needs a few volunteers to monitor eagle nests on southern Vancouver Island. This is a great citizen science project and the results of the last 10 years in the CRD area can be seen at www.wildlifetree.org. Please contact Gwen Greenwood: tggreenwood@telus.net. 250 652-2876

Saanich Family Cycling Festival

Join Us As We Celebrate Earth Day

Sunday, April 22 www.saanichcyclingfestival.ca

Shelbourne Family Bike Ride

4.9 km Ride Departs at 11:00am

The ride starts at Camosun College and ends at UVic-Lot#10 (see website for route maps)

Kid's UVic Bike Ride

Kids Ride Departs at 11:00 am

Festival Activities

11:00am - 2:30 pm Lot #10 at Uvic

Upcoming Events

CRD Regional Parks

Visit www.crd.bc.ca for more programs 250-478-3344

Ugh! A Slug (Drop-in Event)

Saturday, March 24, 10:30 am - 12 pm

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

Peek under fallen logs and leaves in search of the giant gastropod that is one of nature's best recyclers. Meet at the Beaver Lake nature centre off the main parking lot.

Discovering our Native Bees (Course)

Saturday, April 14, 11 am – 3 pm

Francis/King Regional Park

Join Gord Hutchings to discover more about our native bees. Participants also make a Mason Bee condo. \$17+HST. Pre-registration required before April 13. Space is limited.

Forest Tea Party (Drop-in Event)

Saturday, April 28, 1 pm – 3 pm

Francis/King Regional Park

Forests are full of plants that make delicious and nutritious teas. Join us for an interpretive tea-tasting featuring some of our local plants. \$7+HST. Pre-registration required before April 27. Space is limited.

Winged Migration (Special Drop-in Event)

Saturday, May 12, 7 am – 3 pm

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

Celebrate the return of our feathered friends on International Migratory Bird Day with CRD Parks, Rocky Point Bird Observatory, and the Victoria Natural History Society. Participate in guided walks, mist-netting and bird banding demonstrations, children's activities, and presentations. Meet at the filter beds parking lot off Beaver Lake Road.

Early Evening Canoeing (Guided Paddle)

Monday, May 28/June 11, 6 pm – 9 pm

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

Canoe equipment and instruction are provided and no experience is necessary. You must pre-register. Adult \$20/Child \$10.

Morning Mist Canoeing (Guided Paddle)

Saturday, June 9/16, 8 am - 11 am

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

Canoe equipment and instruction are provided and no experience is necessary. You must pre-register. Adult \$20/Child \$10.

Wild ARC Open House

www.wildarc.com 250-478-9453

Sat/Sun, March 31/April 1, 12 pm - 4 pm

1020 Malloch Road in Metchosin

Members of the public are invited to take a unique behind-the-scenes tour of the BC SPCA's Wildlife Animal Rehabilitation Centre in Metchosin. This is a rare opportunity to learn about the fascinating work of wildlife rehabilitators. It would be appreciated if guests bring a gift for the animals from Wild ARC's wish list. Register online at spca.bc.ca/tourwildarc to reserve a spot for your family and friends!

Victoria Natural History Society

Visit www.naturevictoria.ca for more programs

Marine Night (last Monday of the month)

The Fish Stay the Same

Monday, March 26, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

B.C.'s Forgotten Oyster, the Olympia Oyster

Monday, April 30, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Birder's Night (every 4th Wednesday)

Love Among the Feathers

Wed., March 28, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Marbled Murrelets and Climate Change

Wed., April 25, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Natural History Night (every 2nd Tuesday)

Ancient Forests of BC

Tuesday, April 10, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Botany Night (every 3rd Tuesday)

Mushrooms and Other Fungi of Observatory Hill

Tuesday, April 17, 7:30 pm Swan Lake Nature House

The Gardens at HCP

Visit www.hcp.ca for more programs 250-479-6162

Build a Mason Bee Condo

Saturday, March 31, 1 pm - 4 pm

Learn how to build a bee condo with Gord Hutchings. All will go home with a bee condo ready to paint & set up in the garden! HCP Members \$40.00; Non-HCP Members \$55.00.

Ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island

Saturday, April 14, 1 pm - 4 pm

Charles Knighton will introduce you to the ethnobotany of Southern Vancouver Island. HCP Members \$25.00; Non-HCP Members \$35.00.

Resilient Gardens for a Changing Coastal Climate

Sunday, April 29, 11 am - 1 pm

Linda Gilkeson will teach you how to design adaptable fruit and vegetable gardens, how to help your plants through 'weird weather', and what you need to know to become a resilient gardener. HCP members \$25.00; Non-HCP Members \$35.00.

Pollination 101

Sunday, April 29, 2 pm – 4 pm

Linda Gilkeson will review plant biology and the different types of flowers. Learn why some plants don't fruit, how to attract pollinators, how to hand pollinate and how to avoid cross-pollination to make sure the seed you save is "true" to the variety. HCP members \$25.00; Non-HCP Members \$35.00.

Native Bees of the Gardens at HCP

Saturday, June 9, 1 pm – 3 pm

Six different families of bees are found in our area throughout the spring & summer. Gord Hutchings teaches what plants they visit, their biology, habitat requirements and also tours the Gardens. HCP Members \$25.00; Non-HCP Members \$35.00



Spring 2012

Native Plant Sale

Saturday and Sunday
April 21 and 22,
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sale: 5,000 Native Plants
- over 140 species

Free Admission
And....Nature Sanctuary
Members receive 10% discount
on plant purchases

Master Gardeners will be on
hand to answer those tough
gardening questions.

Proceeds support the Nature Sanctuary's
education programs



Complete plant list - www.swanlake.bc.ca
Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary
3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, B.C.
Information (250)479-0211

Join the Our Backyard mailing list!

Be kept up to date on local community stewardship projects and environmental issues. Subscriptions to this quarterly newsletter are free and available in electronic or paper version. To subscribe, please send your contact information to the editor or visit the following website www.ourbackyard.saanich.ca

Editor: Darren Copley | Phone: 250-475-5579 | Email: Darren.Copley@saanich.ca

