

Our Backyard

A NEWSLETTER ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN SAANICH



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Haliburton Organic Farm Growing New Farmers and a Sustainable Future

By Ann Eastman, Board of Directors, Haliburton Organic Farm Society
haliburtonfarm.org

Haliburton Farm is a success story for small-scale, local certified organic agriculture working in harmony with nature. It didn't start that way.

In 2001, concerned citizens formed the Land for Food Coalition (LFFC) when there was an application to remove the former farm from the Agricultural Land Reserve. Working with the Cordova Bay Association for Community Affairs (CBA), LFFC proposed an alternative - to create a working, organic farm with a community focus.

Thanks to these efforts, the land was sold to the District of Saanich and the work of the non-profit Haliburton Community Organic Farm Society (HCOFS) began. HCOFS appreciates ongoing support from the CBA and Saanich to enable unparalleled opportunities for new farmers - unique access to certified organic farmland on Vancouver Island and hands-on mentorship in organic agriculture.

The Farm is a demonstration site, not only for organic and sustainable farming practices, but also for ecosystem restoration. Since 2007, the volunteer-run Haliburton Biodiversity Project has worked to restore degraded wetland, meadow, and forest habitats on the Farm. Volunteers also enhance wildlife values within farmed areas by planting native hedgerows and erecting nesting structures for birds, bats, and bees, which in turn help with pest control and pollination around the farm. Now in its 14th year of operation, the Farm is a model of sustainable, small-scale certified organic agriculture with seven farming businesses and a holistic nutrition business. It offers organic agriculture and biodiversity tours and events, and partners with local schools as well as Gaia College and Royal Roads University in delivering education in agriculture, sustainability, and ecosystem restoration.

HCOFS recently partnered with the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific and the District of Saanich to present Saanich Seedy Saturday on January 9, 2016. More than 500 people bought seeds and listened to celebrated food writer, cook, and author, Don Genova.

Haliburton Community Organic Farm provides an urban sanctuary for wildlife, natural ecosystems, and food for the communities of Saanich and the neighbouring municipalities. Please schedule a visit!

The Carrot and The Stick

By Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services

Local governments have the unique ability to be involved with the community in ways other organizations can't. We are able to create bylaws, policies, programs, information, and services. Meanwhile, we interact with residents directly and on a daily basis.

An age-old question is: what is more effective—the carrot or the stick? Current thinking points to a combination of the two as being the most effective to protect and enhance the natural environment. For example, a study in 2004 found that pesticide bylaws were most effective where supported by an educational program. Educational programming in the absence of a bylaw was found to have little impact on pesticide use.

Saanich has a long history of bylaws and policies to protect the environment, such as the Urban Containment Boundary, which was established in 1968. We also have a long history of programs and outreach to promote stewardship. For example, the Garry Oak Restoration Program showcased how group effort and research could improve a variety of habitats.

Despite these efforts, we continue to lose habitat. This is not unexpected as properties develop and agricultural land is cleared. However, some recent statistics illustrate the rate of loss.

Before the Environmental Development Permit Area (which protects terrestrial and marine habitat) was adopted, more than 34 hectares of Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory area was lost to development in Saanich alone.

The Urban Forest Stewardship Initiative reported that Saanich had among the poorest results in the CRD in terms of tree canopy loss and impervious cover gain scattered throughout the municipality between 1986 and 2011.

At the same time, the report also showed that riparian canopy cover in the Capital Regional District was the only category to increase, rather than decrease. In Saanich, we found the biggest gain was in riparian herbaceous cover. This may be as a result of the Streamside Development Permit Area which protects riparian areas with setbacks for new development and requires planting native vegetation under permit.

The District of Saanich has several initiatives that may reverse or at least slow negative trends, including the Urban Forest Strategy, the revised Tree Protection Bylaw, the Streamside DPA, and the Environmental DPA, all of which place a greater emphasis on protection of forest cover and natural areas.

At the same time, growing programs like *Pulling Together*, invasive species treatment, the Native Plant Salvage Program, outreach events, resources, incentives, and partnerships will continue to empower our community to respond.

We look forward to seeing future statistics that reflect stewardship efforts in Saanich.



HAT partners with Horticulture Centre of the Pacific to Create Sunning Spots for Turtles in Trouble

By Jill Robinson, Executive Director Habitat Acquisition Trust www.hat.bc.ca

Have you ever peered across a local pond in Saanich or throughout Greater Victoria and thought you saw a small twig suddenly disappear below the surface, followed by a steady stream of bubbles? Or witnessed a sudden flash of red, followed by a splash that sends waves of ripples across the water. If you have keen eyes, a flair for wetland habitat, or just happened to be at the right place at the right time, there's a chance you've caught a lucky glimpse of an endangered species local to our waters – the Western Painted Turtle.

Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) has a special interest in these red-bellied creatures as a part of our Species at Risk program. Through research, education, and stewardship we are working to better understand the threats impacting Western Painted Turtles and their habitat.


The Western Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta bellii*) has a wide distribution in western North America, including western Canada south of the 51st parallel. In British Columbia, there are two populations: Intermountain - Rocky Mountain Population in the southern interior, and Pacific Coast Population in the southwest. These turtles forage and hibernate in wetland habitats, important for foraging and hibernation, and love suitable warm sites on land for egg-laying. Egg-laying habitats are often in short supply and are a limiting factor for this species and other freshwater turtles. Western Painted Turtles can be difficult to tell apart from introduced turtles. Typically, the plastron (bottom shell), of the Western Painted Turtle has a striking red and black pattern. The red on the bottom shell is often visible even when the turtle is basking on a log. Western Painted Turtles also have a relatively flat, smooth upper shell when compared with the introduced Red-eared Slider (which has no red underneath, but typically a red mark behind the eye).

One of HAT's objectives in protecting these unique turtles is enhancing their habitat. This Spring at Viaduct Flats, a wetland in Saanich, HAT will be working with local biologists, staff at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, and members of the community to improve turtle habitat by placing basking logs in the ponds. This has been successfully implemented by HAT at a number of local lakes and ponds, as basking sites are not available in many wetlands. This type of habitat allows them to crawl out of the water and warm up in the sun. Turtles need to bask to raise their body temperature to promote digestion and other vital processes such as

synthesize vitamin D. Basking also helps control ectoparasites and algae growth on the carapace (shell). In addition to turtles, basking logs will also benefit other wildlife, including waterfowl, herons, and snakes. Logs also enhance wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors.

Western Painted Turtles are threatened by development, intensive recreational use, road mortality, and nest predation by natural predators and/or free-roaming pets. Already southern Vancouver Island has lost more than 75% of its wetlands; habitat that is critical to Western Painted Turtles and many other species. By placing logs in Viaduct Flats, we are taking a step towards improving habitat for turtles and many other species that share similar homes.



A photograph of a turtle resting on a log in a pond. The pond is filled with lily pads and surrounded by dense green foliage. The turtle is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image, facing left. The background is a lush green wall of leaves and branches.

Turtles found on land are not lost - they are coming to or from their ground-based nests up to 300 metres from water. Watch for nesting turtles on south-facing open slopes near ponds and wetlands in the following watersheds: Hagan, Tetayut, Bilston, Craigflower, and Colquitz. Please report and photograph all observations to HAT: 250-995-2428 hatmail@hat.bc.ca.

The BC Ministry of Environment has produced a Western Painted Turtle Identification Guide (www.hat.bc.ca/attachments/Turtle-IDGuide-May2008.pdf).

HAT continues to partner with interested volunteers, land owners, managers, and citizen scientists to conserve and improve the habitat of these endangered species, and ultimately improve their future, and the future of others species that share their homes. HAT also focuses on Sharp-tailed Snakes, Western Screech-Owls, Blue-grey Taildropper Slugs, bats, and amphibians. If you observe any of these creatures within the CRD, please contact us to report your sightings, and learn more about how you can contribute to the protection of these important species.

Contact HAT 250-995-2428 hatmail@hat.bc.ca

Remember, leave wildlife where they are! Do not pick up, move, or otherwise disturb them unless it is in immediate danger (such as on a road). For more information, visit our website.

Lead Steward Profile

David Trudel

Lead Steward Knockan Hill Park

By Jenny Eastman, Coordinator of Volunteers
Saanich Pulling Together Volunteer Program

Standing in a meadow filled with the spring shoots of Common Camas, volunteer David Trudel recounts how creation began at the top of Knockan Hill. The Indigenous creation tale tells of young women harvesting camas bulbs*, then lured into the heavens to join the “star people”. After growing homesick for the taste of camas they returned to earth on ropes, which fell to earth to create Knockan Hill. David’s passion is to protect the important cultural and ecological history of this park.

Raised in Maple Ridge, BC, David enjoyed a childhood surrounded by nature, playing on the banks of the South Alouette River. As an adult, he noticed the effect on himself of time spent in urban environments and he began to seek out ways to get off the asphalt and into parks. “In order to stay grounded you need to connect with the earth on a daily basis”, he notes.

David first moved to the Strawberry Vale area in 2002, noticing a sign about a “broom pull” (put up by the Friends of Knockan Hill Park) he decided to join in to learn what broom was and to meet his new neighbours. It worked. He learned, he connected with neighbors, and he has spent the years since then on the executive of the Friends of Knockan Hill Park and as Lead Steward of this sensitive Garry Oak and Douglas-fir ecosystem. “My volunteer work in the park is a wonder and a

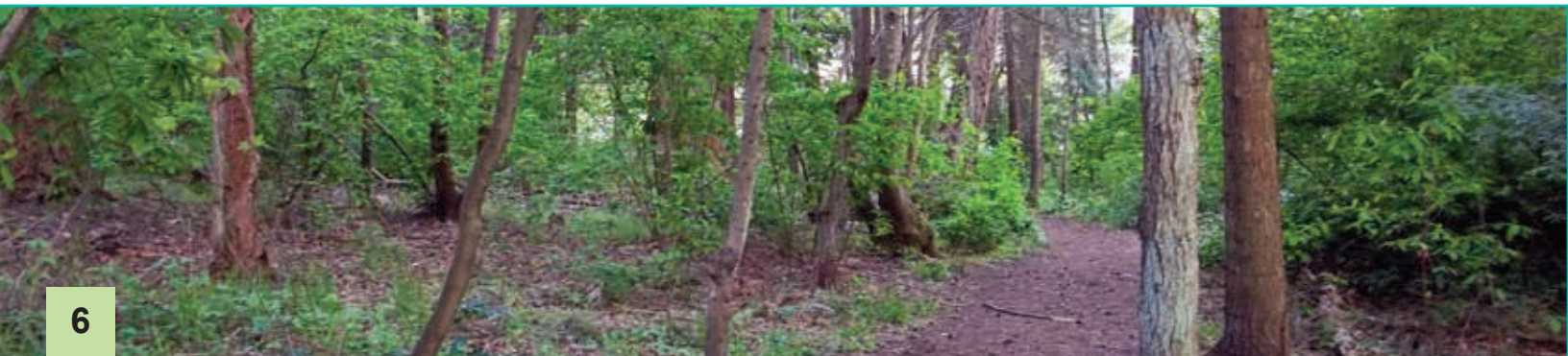


challenge”, David states. “How do we encourage people to visit and love our parks, but to care for them and to visit with little impact? I’m always thinking about that question.”

Now retired and a survivor of open heart surgery and committed vegetarian, David’s focus is connecting with nature, developing his writing, and working towards creating a less violent world. David expresses his gratitude for volunteering in one of the world’s greenest municipalities where natural area parks abound. As for why he volunteers David ponders, “There are so many big ecological issues and it’s easy to think I can do nothing to impact these mega-issues. But to go out and cut English Ivy off one tree, to save that tree. Well... it’s a micro-action I can take to shift the balance. I can’t stand by and see this park lost to invasive species and bicycle damage when this spot may be where all of creation began!” Our thanks to David for all his care of Knockan Hill Park.

For more about the Friends of Knockan Hill Park:
www.knockanhillpark.ca

***Caution:** While Common Camas bulbs are an important food source, Death Camas bulbs are highly toxic and often grow alongside and appear identical to the untrained eye.



Douglas Creek Weir Improvement

By Rick Hatch, Saanich Parks

The Douglas Creek weir, located at the Robinwood trail entrance into Mt. Douglas Park, saw a major restoration project completed in the fall of 2015. In conjunction with the Public Works department, the weir improvement project was done to enhance habitat quality and to increase the storm water capacity of the creek system. This work will improve the health of the creek and also prevent bank erosion by doubling the holding capacity of the damaging sediments that enter the system. The section that was used to gain access to the weir was transformed during Tree Appreciation Day with the planting of hundreds of native trees and shrubs.

Further downstream, the fourth year of the stream bank and bed restoration took place starting from Ash Bridge moving upstream. Large boulders, stumps, and logs were brought in and strategically placed along the stream banks to reinforce and stabilize them. Extensive cabling was done by Parks and Public Works staff to hold the system in place. Recently, a new monitoring device was installed at the weir in partnership with Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society. The Friends also organizes the annual salmon fry and fish carcass releases throughout the year. It is very exciting to see the transformation of the creek system over the past several years.



Before creek restoration at weir.



After creek/sump improvement and planting.




Rock delivery at Ash Bridge.



Boulder placement along stream bed.


Cedar Split-Rail Revival

By Rick Hatch, Saanich Parks



Glendenning Trail: a highly compacted area from foot traffic was compromising Douglas-fir roots and not allowing growth of native plants. The area was mulched and planted.

Over the past few years Saanich Parks has increased the installation of cedar split-rail fencing along many of its park trails. There are several reasons for this, including: to restore compacted natural areas for planting, deter short-cutting/rogue trail development, zoning off sensitive ecosystems, and decreasing the spread of invasive plant species within our parks. Many of the shorts cuts that have been created within our park trails have compacted the soils surrounding mature trees, affecting the nutrient and water absorption abilities of the root systems. Invasive plants such as Garlic Mustard and Lesser Celandine are also being spread when traffic veers off the trails and disturbs the invasive plants and exposes the soil. Some of the split-rail fencing was installed to protect sensitive areas such as riparian and creekside restoration sites that the *Pulling Together* volunteers have worked so hard at restoring and maintaining. Most of the sites are planted with native plant and mulched after the split-rail fence has been installed. The ultimate goal is to restore and maintain the wonderful parks and trails that Saanich has to offer. Enjoy!



Mt. Doug – Whittaker Trail: wet site with Skunk Cabbage and Red Elderberry was being damaged by people & dog use. ~ Red 40 Elderberry and Salmonberry plants were used to help restore this area.

Natural Area at Outerbridge Park Transformed

By Rick Hatch, Saanich Parks

A small shaded area of compacted, nutrient poor soil, with no growth of native plants, was restored in the fall of 2015. Only a few young Grand Fir trees and two surrounding patches of Snowberry existed in the area prior to the restoration. There was also a row of Cypress trees that significantly shaded the area making it difficult for native plants to establish. Arborists removed six of the Cypress trees, retaining the row effect but significantly opening up the canopy to sunlight. The existing soil was treated to a thick layer of leaf and old chip mulch then carefully tilled to amend the compacted, poor nutrient soil. Prior to planting, a cedar split-rail fence was constructed to direct trail use to existing trails and to deter users from cutting across the newly planted area. A gate was installed for the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP) volunteers to move their gear from storage into the horticulture beds that they maintain throughout the year. The HCP volunteers joined Saanich staff to help plant 750 native plants including, Tall and Dull Oregon Grape, Nootka Rose, Sword Fern, Western Redcedar, Saskatoon, Oceanspray, and others. With the hard work from the HCP volunteers in both the horticulture beds and natural areas, Outerbridge Park is being transformed to the state that Mrs. Outerbridge envisioned so many years ago.



2016

Saanich Environmental Awards

Nominate Someone Online today!

Deadline for nominations is **Friday, April 15th at 4pm**



saanich.ca/enviroawards

For more information on the awards,
please contact Environmental Services,
250-475-1775 or saanich.ca/enviroawards

On January 30th, three local Guide units worked with the District of Saanich to improve the habitat in a local park.

The 1st Marigold Guides, Portage Inlet Pathfinders, and 27th Victoria Guides from the Portage Inlet District of the Girl Guides of Canada planted 26 trees in South Valley Park to improve the habitat for wildlife and provide important shade for the stream.

1st Marigold Guides has been working with the District of Saanich for the past three years to remove Himalayan Blackberry that had invaded the park as a result of a local residential development project. The work pulling blackberry cleared enough space for trees to be planted.

Thanks to a \$1500 grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the District of Saanich, and Novus Plants Nurseries, twenty-six girls had the full tree-planting experience, including digging holes in the mud, cutting the roots of the trees, and ensuring the trees were securely planted in the ground.

“It’s nice to see improvement made instead of the damage done by non-native species.”

Eric and Sherry, local residents.

“To give back to the community and the environment – this project is a great and fun way to do this,” Tracy, Guider 27th Victoria Guides. The girls, ranging in age from 9 to 14, enjoyed “being good to nature,” “being with my friends,” but “not the puddles.”

The best part according to Alyssa (13) with Portage Inlet Pathfinders was “giving more oxygen to the Earth and helping slow down global warming”.

The District of Saanich was integral to the success of the work by Girl Guides on our park, says Natasha with 1st Marigold Guides and the organizer of the project. “The community came together to improve the natural environment so everyone can enjoy it.”

The District of Saanich will maintain the trees by adding mulch and watering the trees during the summer drought.

Girl Greatness Starts Here

Guides Spruce Up South Valley Park!



By Natasha Staffeldt-Jost, 1st Marigold Guides, Portage Inlet District

Native Plant Sale



Sat-Sun, April 23-24 9 am to 3 pm
3873 Swan Lake Road

Over 4,000 plants and over a hundred species available for purchase at our Annual Native Plant Sale. Have a look at our list of plants here: swanlake.bc.ca/plant-sale
Pre-orders over \$50 are available by calling 250-479-0211
Parking is limited. Please carpool if possible.

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 saanich.ca/ourbackyard



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

Upcoming Events

Saanich Recreation Trails & Treks

www.saanich.ca 250-475-5408

Weekend Walks (FREE Drop-In)

Sundays | 1 pm to 3:00 pm

Discover the beauty of Saanich parks & nature in your backyard. Guided walks are open to adults of all ages. No registration necessary. Please wear sturdy footwear and bring drinking water. Walks go rain or shine. Leashed, well socialized dogs are welcome unless indicated nature sanctuaries.

Apr 17 - Beckwith, Blenkinsop, Lakehill

Meet at Beckwith Park parking lot, on Beckwith Ave, off Quadra

May 15 - Swan Lake to Playfair Park

Meet in parking lot behind Saanich Municipal Hall, end of Darwin St.

Jun 19 - Prospect Lake Area

Meet at Prospect Lake Elementary School, on Prospect Lake Rd

Gentle Walk & Talk (FREE Drop-In)

Thursdays | 9:30 am to 11 am

Enjoy beautiful scenery, a friendly chat, and gentle exercise as we walk through our parks & trails. Suitable for all walking abilities, but wear suitable footwear. Dogs not permitted.

Apr 7 - Rithet's Bog to Brydon Park

Meet on Dalewood by kiosk, off Chatterton Way

Apr 14 - Prospect Lake Centennial Trail

Meet at Whitehead Park at intersection of Prospect Lake Rd & Goward

Apr 21 - Layritz to Copley, to Quick's Bottom

Meet at Layritz Park parking lot, off Glyn Rd, off Wilkinson Rd.

Apr 28 - Tod Inlet

Meet at Tod Inlet access, on Wallace Dr, opposite Quarry Lake

May 5 - McMinn to Doris Page Park

Meet at McMinn Park, beside tennis courts, off Maplegrove Pl

May 12 - Knockan Hill

Meet at Strawberry Vale Community Centre, park on street

May 19 - Cedar Hill to Playfair Park

Meet at Cedar Hill Rec Centre parking lot, outside main entrance,

May 26 - Swan Lake - Reynolds

Meet end of Nelthorpe, off McKenzie

Jun 2 - Arbutus Cove to Hollydene

Meet at Arbutus Cove Park, end of Arbutus Cove Lane

Jun 9 - McMinn to Kentwood to Outterbridge

Meet at McMinn Park parking lot, 4820 Maplegrove at Lochside Dr.

Jun 16 - Lower Trails of Mt Douglas Park

Meet in main parking lot at Ash & Cordova Bay Rd.

Jun 23 - Calvert Park to Logan Park

Meet at the far west end of Viaduct Ave, off Interurban

Habitat Acquisition Trust

Visit www.hat.bc.ca for more programs

Native Plant Garden Tour 2016 (Drop-In)

Sunday May 1 | 10 am to 3 pm

Visit private, and public gardens in your neighbourhood, ask gardeners questions, and get tips on creating your own backyard oasis. Native plants will be for sale at select gardens, with a portion of the proceeds going to local conservation projects. Visit hat.bc.ca for a detailed guide.

CRD Parks & Environmental Services

250-478-3344

Our naturalists lead guided walks, hikes, canoeing, and drop-in events for all ages. Most are free, all are fun! The Parks Nature Outings and Events brochure can be found here: www.crd.bc.ca/parks-events

The Gardens at HCP

www.hcp.ca

Volunteer Needed - Ethnobotany Trail

Wednesdays | 9:00 am to 12 pm

505 Quayle Rd, Saanich

Assisting our Ethnobotany Lead Steward, the ideal volunteer would be knowledgeable with restoration work and good with people. The volunteer would also help to direct less experienced volunteers within the group. Other work may include record keeping and planning, and occasional Saturday work. Please email volunteers@hcp.ca to apply.

Mushroom Companions to the Garden and Farm (Workshop)

Sunday, April 10 | 1 pm to 4 pm

Learn about mushrooms with Danielle Stevenson of D.I.Y. Fungi. Highlights edible and medicinal mushrooms which can be grown in spaces you can't otherwise grow in, or can be companion planted in your gardens and orchards to boost plant growth and build healthy soil ecosystems. HCP Members \$35 NonMembers \$45. To register, call 250 479 6162.

Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

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

Guided Bird Walks (Drop-In)

Every Wednesday and Sunday | 9:00 am

Bring your binoculars and meet in the parking lot for this walk around the lake. Donations are appreciated.

2016 Annual General Meeting

Thursday, April 7 | 4 pm

You are invited to enjoy light refreshments and meet the Staff, Directors and other Members of SLCHNSS. The registration desk will open at 4:00 p.m. where copies of the meeting agenda, auditors report and voting cards will be available.

Annual Native Plant Sale (Drop-in Event)

Saturday & Sunday, April 23/24 | 9 am to 3 pm

Over 4,000 plants and over a hundred species available for purchase at our Annual Native Plant Sale.

Pre-orders over \$50 are available - please see website for details. Parking is limited. Please carpool if possible.

Bee Day (Drop-in Event)

Sunday, May 29 | 12 pm to 3 pm

What's the buzz about bees—are they really good dancers? Bee songs, crafts, and some bee spit to taste. You'll be amazed, bee enchanted, and bee happy. Bee there or bee square.

Compost Education Centre

1216 North Park Street

www.compost.bc.ca 250-386-WORM (9676)

Introduction to Rainwater Harvesting (Workshop)

Saturday, April 16 | 10 am to 12 pm

This introductory workshop is perfect for people who are keen to start learning all about rainwater harvesting. The workshop will define and explain watersheds, lay out the principles of rainwater harvesting, define terms such as greywater and blackwater, and go over the laundry to landscape system of rainwater containment using techniques such as cisterns and earthworks. \$20/regular, \$15/member Register at Eventbrite: www.composteducation.eventbrite.ca

Soil Science 101 Workshop (FREE)

Saturday, April 30 | 10 am to 12 pm

We'll look at soil properties and processes and relationships to plant growth, environmental quality and society. Register at <http://composteducation.eventbrite.ca/>

Edible Weeds

Saturday, May 28 | 2 pm to 4 pm

Join Katherine Harding of The WildFoods Experience for an outdoor workshop that will teach you a whole new appreciation for the weeds in your garden. We will discuss identification techniques, edibility, common medicinal uses and how to use weeds as soil condition indicators. Wander around the Compost Education Centre gardens and neighbourhood to examine weeds growing under a variety of conditions and learn to decipher what they are trying to tell us. \$20/regular, \$15/member Register at Eventbrite: www.composteducation.eventbrite.ca

Composting Basics Workshop (FREE)

Saturday, June 11 | 10 am to 12 pm

Learn all the basics of composting and discover which system is right for you! Register at <http://composteducation.eventbrite.ca/>

Victoria Natural History Society

Visit www.naturevictoria.ca for more programs

Natural History Night (every 2nd Tuesday)

The Canadian Beaver | Tues, Apr 12, 7:30 pm

TBA | Tues, Sep 13, 7:30 pm

UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Botany Night (every 3rd Tuesday)

Botanical Art | Tues, Apr 19, 7:30 pm

TBA | Tues, Sep 20, 7:30 pm

Swan Lake Nature Centre

Marine Night (last Monday of the month)

Ecology of Pacific Herring | Mon, Apr 25, 7:30 pm

TBA | Sep 26, 7:30 pm

UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Birder's Night (every 4th Wednesday)

Crested Auklet Migration Secrets | Wed, Apr 27, 7:30 pm

TBA | Wed, Sep 28, 7:30 pm

UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

25th Camas Day (Drop-in Event)

Saturday, Apr 30 | 7am to 2pm

Beacon Hill Park

The 25th Camas Day includes wildflower, birding, archaeology and other natural history walks. Check the Friends of Beacon Hill Park Society website www.friendsofbeaconhillpark.ca closer to the date for more details.

Saturday Morning Birding (most Saturdays)

Meets every Saturday morning, usually at 8:00 a.m., rain or shine. Check the Calendar page of the VNHS website (www.vicnhs.bc.ca/website/index.php/calendar) on the Thursday/Friday before to find out the week's location. Novice and experienced birders welcome. Non-members can participate Free up to three times.

The Native Plant Study Group

www.npsg.ca 250-598-1999

The Native Plant Study Group meets at the University of Victoria, the third Thursday of each month (except December). Join us for dynamic speakers and discussions relating to native plants of our area. (No experience required, just an interest in native plants and their habitats!)

Restoration of Playfair Park's Garry Oak Meadow: a work in progress

Thursday, April 21, 7 pm

UVic, MacLaurin Bldg, Rm D116

Since 2010, Colleen O'Brien has given more than 5,000 hours and lead Playfair Park's volunteer efforts to liberate Camas and other native plants from the clutches of dense alien grasses. She has developed a method to control invasive annual grasses and herbaceous weeds and has even rescued a red-listed species in the process. Colleen will explain how to remove alien grasses and weeds while putting best restoration methods into practice. Non-member drop-in fee: \$5. Students: FREE

Friends of Cedar Hill Park Society

www.friendsofcedarhillpark.com/parkwalk.html

ParkWalk: "Walk a little; learn a lot"

Saturday, May 14 | 1 pm to 4 pm

Cedar Hill Park Trail

Come celebrate our beautiful green spaces on a self-guided walk with both scheduled and continuous presentations along the trail. Native plants and their uses, local history, watershed info, local conservation projects, and much more. Rain or shine!

Saanich Cycling Festival

www.saanichcyclingfestival.ca

Sunday, April 17 | 11 am to 3 pm

Saanich Municipal Hall (780 Vernon Avenue)

Cycle to any of the 8 Celebration Stations on the new family friendly route that highlights the beautiful cycling and trail systems within our District. Participants will be given a passport booklet at any of the Celebration Stations and you will collect a stamp at each station you visit. Once you have collected your stamps visit the main celebration station at the Saanich Hall and turn in your passport for a chance to win a variety of prizes. The more stamps you collect in your passport the more chances you will have to win. The main Celebration Site will be located at the Saanich Hall.

