



Our Backyard

A NEWSLETTER ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN SAANICH

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Gardening Made Sustainable with Native Plants

By Angelina Alonso, Capital Regional District

In our region, we're lucky to have long days of sun and little rain over the summer months. This is because most of the Capital Regional District falls under a rain shadow, which creates a dry, Mediterranean-like climate. These dry conditions, however, can be tough on plants that are used to wetter conditions, such as the cultivated annuals and perennials we use in our gardens.

Want to work with nature and still enjoy a beautiful view throughout the growing season? Garry Oak meadow ecosystems, including the trees, flowers, and grasses that naturally live in them, are adapted to survive in our dry summers. They actually do most of their growing in winter: oaks increase their roots and bulbs send up the following year's shoots. In summer, they go dormant; that's why they can survive on so little water during the warmest months.

You can help promote wise water use and create a beautiful garden by using drought tolerant plants in your own yard. Native plants, such as Oregon Grape, Snowberry, native grasses, and flowers thrive once established in our gardens, helping to strengthen our native ecosystems. This helps our region practice good water conservation habits, protect park ecology, and care for our watersheds. Native plants also create corridors of habitat and food sources for beneficial insects and wildlife.




The Capital Regional District is committed to environmental protection and stewardship and has partnered with the BC Landscape Nursery Association to promote sustainable gardening practices through drought-tolerant native plantings. Fall is an ideal time to plant native plants. CRD Water Ambassadors will be at local nurseries in August giving out free native plant seeds, showcasing native plants and their benefits, and demonstrating gardening and water saving tips you can practice at home. A list of native and drought-tolerant plants is also available on the CRD website: www.crd.bc.ca/nativeplants.



Saanich Residents Share Habitat with Species at Risk


By Alicia Butula, Habitat Acquisition Trust

Saanich residents can help protect rare species that call our region home. Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT), the regional non-profit land trust, helps people understand and care for natural environments in the Capital Region. HAT has partnered with the federal Habitat Stewardship Program since 2005 to work with landowners in places where species at risk may live.





In Saanich, we know that Western Painted Turtles make Swan Lake and Beaver Lake their homes; however there are probably other populations that we don't know about. This species' coastal populations are federally listed as endangered, so learning more about its habitat is very important. Watch for female turtles searching for nests up to 300 metres from water during the summer. Turtle nesting sites exist in unexpected places like trails, gravel roadsides, open bluffs, and sandy lakesides- areas with very little vegetation. The key to identifying these turtles is to look for the colour of their undersides: red or orange for Western Painted Turtle, and yellow for the introduced Slider. You can also watch for the red ear mark behind the eye of the Slider.

Biologists Christian Englestoft and Kristina Ovaska conduct scientific research through HAT's landowner contact program. Englestoft says more work is required to protect this species because biologists still need to learn more about their movements during the summer nesting season. Thanks to landowners that have helped us monitor for the turtles, HAT is finding previously undiscovered habitat areas.

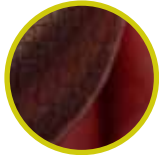



The Blue-grey Taildropper is another species at risk in Saanich. Kristina Ovaska found this rare slug at Logan Park in December 2010. Biologists know little about this extremely rare mollusc and wonder if its habitat is shrinking. Sending HAT photos of bluish-coloured slugs can help us to help this species.




The tiny and secretive Sharp-tailed Snake is yet another species at risk found in Saanich.

Although they are not active until September, landowners with south-facing rocky woodland areas can contact HAT anytime to determine if their land has suitable habitat.



These species and humans can co-exist if landowners take simple steps to enhance and protect habitat. Voluntary stewardship by landowners is critical because federal species at risk legislation does not apply to our region's extensive private lands.



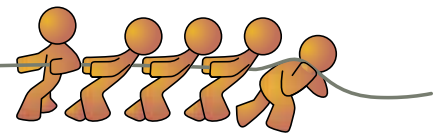
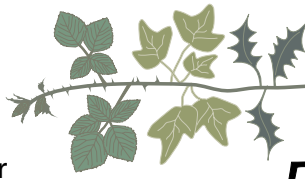
To help HAT protect endangered wildlife, send photos to Hatmail@hat.bc.ca or call 250-995-2428. If you are already a Habitat Steward with HAT, please give us a call to share your stories and accomplishments!

Top photo: Biologist Christian Engelstoft measures a large female painted turtle at the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary as part of HAT's ongoing Species at Risk Project. Photo credit: Todd Carnahan



E. Sellenton

Sally joined the program because she likes to keep fit and Scotch Broom makes her sneeze (she wants it gone!). Mark joined because he needed some volunteer experience for high school and he remembers his local park before English Ivy crept in. Kalil joined because he wants to protect habitat for the birds he loves watching. These volunteers have joined the now more than 100 diverse volunteers active in the green and growing Saanich Parks Pulling Together Volunteer Program.



Pulling Together **Volunteer** Program

Young and not-so young, retired folks, working professionals, students, families, and international visitors are all carefully removing invasive plants in more than 35 Saanich Parks. Pulling Together has two main streams. The Garry Oak Restoration Project (GORP) is an ecological restoration and education project that has been active since 1999 and focuses on nine specific Garry Oak ecosystems. Community Stewardship groups work in neighbourhood parks where local residents have decided to take an active role in caring for their parks. We are removing Scotch Broom, Himalayan Blackberry, English Ivy, Eastern Cattail, Orchard Grass, Oyster Plant, and many more invasives. We need your help in your favourite Saanich Park natural area.

Fall is a great time to join the program because that is when we have our annual training and recognition event (Saturday, October 15). New volunteers of all ages and abilities are always welcome. The wetter season is also our most active time for work parties. Join us and learn about the program and our work parties. Contact Jenny Eastman at jenny.eastman@saanich.ca for more information.

By Jenny Eastman, Coordinator of Volunteers

Urban-nesting Cooper's Hawk Research

By Cory Manton, Saanich Parks



Over the past 16 years, Saanich Parks Urban Forestry staff have supported research on urban-nesting Cooper's Hawks by local hawk enthusiast and retired Ministry of Environment biologist Andy Stewart. Saanich Parks staff provided most of the tree-climbing services for this project – so far ascending more than 350 nest trees and banding in excess of 1,500 nestlings. This particular aspect of the study was pivotal to Andy's research.

Many of the nest trees climbed were technically challenging and on a scale unmatched elsewhere in North America. Added to this mix were a few highly aggressive hawks defending their nests. All of this work has been achieved without a single incident or injury to human or hawk – a tribute to the skill, training, and safety practices of Saanich Parks staff.

Andy notes: "Indeed, the professionalism and enthusiasm demonstrated by your staff throughout this study have never failed to impress me or the numerous public who have come to observe this activity. The project has been a very positive and fruitful experience for all involved and several of your arborists have told me that this project was a career highlight for them."

Congratulations to all those involved in this project over the years. If you see Andy or one of our Saanich arborists out in the field be sure to let them know you appreciate this work going above and beyond the call of duty.



Garry Oak Restoration Project Updates

By Jenny Eastman, Coordinator of Volunteers



During the early spring and summer, GORP work parties took a rest to allow wildflowers to drop seed on our nine sites. We are now back at work cutting and raking invasive grasses at Playfair Park as we try to understand how best we can suppress invasive grasses while allowing native wildflowers to survive and thrive. We have had much guidance and support in this work from local botanist Matt Fairbarns. We'll need a great deal of help at work parties as we rake to remove the thatch that builds up when invasive grasses are cut.

We are also removing drought-stressed Scotch broom on the exposed hill-top sites at Mount Tolmie, Little Mount Douglas, Mount Douglas Summit and Chatterton Hill. For the work party schedule or for more information about GORP, please see www.gorp.saanich.ca

Invasive Species Management Strategy

By Cory Manton, Saanich Parks

Saanich is in the process of developing an Invasive Species Management Strategy (ISMS) to optimize municipal resources by setting priorities and establishing a program to minimize the impacts of invasive species in Saanich. The ISMS will address invasive species management on public and private land, staff roles and responsibilities, priorities, actions, community stewardship, partnerships, and resources.

During the past several months the consulting team (Val Schaefer, Restoration of Natural Systems Program, University of Victoria) and Saanich staff have researched and reviewed relevant background information and documents. We have also met with various stakeholder groups such as Saanich staff, Council Committees, ENGO's, Saanich Community Associations, special interest, and stewardship groups to listen to their concerns.

An online Survey is currently posted at www.saanichparks.ca. The Survey will be available for response until September 9, 2011. We will continue with additional review and consultation, leading up to a public open house in mid September.

You can read more about the Invasive Species Management Strategy at www.saanich.ca/parkrec/natural/index.html. You can read more about invasive species in general at www.saanich.ca/living/natural/invasive.html.

Saanich Parks Tries its Hand at Urban Agriculture

By Kelly Mulhern, Saanich Parks

In 2010 Saanich Park's Horticulture staff took the initiative of incorporating edibles into a few locations in the municipality. The most notable, Gorge Waterway Park (next to the playground), the Saanich Parks Yard, and the Municipal Hall planters in Middleton Plaza (at the entrance to the Hall from the parking lot.)

At the Gorge, vegetables included corn, scarlet runner beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, cucumbers, sunflowers, and even a banana! Hand made signs were produced for each plant which added to the charm, and hopefully the children who visited the playground got a chance to see how their vegetables are grown, while enjoying a snack at the same time.

At the Municipal Hall we planted tomatoes and a selection of herbs in the planters and filled hanging baskets with juicy strawberries cascading down. These typically would have horticultural flowers in them.

Due to the tremendous success of this program last year, we have planted the same locations as last year and expanded it slightly to include another bed at the municipal hall. The bed is located at the entrance to the parking lot off Darwin Avenue. Currently we have planted pumpkins, three varieties of pole beans, "Bright Lights" Swiss chard, several varieties of leaf lettuce, and a mix of greens including spinach, kale, and mizuna. After many of these are harvested we will be planting some winter vegetables to take their place and prolong the harvest through to next spring. We hope to have three different types of kale, Red Bull brussels sprouts, January King cabbage, purple sprouting broccoli and a new crop of Swiss chard.

Once our crops start producing, we encourage the public to share in the harvest and perhaps start an edible plot in the garden or a planter filled with veggies of their own.



Urban Forestry and Natural Areas Corner

By Cory Manton, Saanich Parks

For more information on these projects, contact Saanich Parks at 250-475-5522 or parksadmin@saanich.ca

We are excited about a number of urban forestry, invasive species removal, and ecological restoration projects underway or planned for this fall being undertaken or supported by Saanich Parks. Here are a few you can check out:

Douglas Creek Improvements

In August 2011, Saanich Parks, along with the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and members of the Goldstream Salmon Hatchery will complete a large scale in-stream project to provide for improved salmon rearing habitat in the lower section of Douglas Creek. This project has been going on for more than 10 years through partnerships with the above noted players. If you have time to come down to the park in late August and early September you can watch a Spyder Hoe transform the creek into riffle pools to support habitat for spawning salmon. On November 6, 2011 (Tree Appreciation Day) Saanich Parks staff, along with community volunteers, will plant thousands of native trees and shrubs to restore any area disturbed along the banks of Douglas Creek.



Mount Douglas Creek Watershed

Over the course of the last ten plus years, the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society and the District of Saanich, in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Pacific Salmon Foundation, have undertaken improvements to Douglas Creek. Works have included adding spawning platforms and woody debris structures, fish carcass transplants, salmon chum fry releases, and riparian planting. In June 2011 Saanich let a Request for Proposal to engage the services of a qualified consultant to review the hydrological conditions of Douglas Creek and to make recommendations on improvements to mitigate peak flows and improve water quality. This would help to support a vibrant and healthy salmon fishery, and to provide related educational and recreational opportunities for watershed residents and visitors to Mount Douglas Park. This work will continue through the summer and fall of 2011.

Cuthbert Holmes Park

In the fall of 2010, two sites near the upgraded Admirals Bridge were planted with several hundred native trees and shrubs, to compensate for riparian and Garry Oak habitat that was disturbed during the bridge re-construction in late 2009. Excavators removed non-native trees and invasive shrubs and replaced them with native plants. The soil surface has been left rough to help emulate natural structure, while coarse woody debris has been added to create micro-climates and minimize erosion until the new plants become established. Saanich worked with the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT) to design this Garry Oak compensation site, which is directly beside the approach on the northeast side of the bridge. Technically part of Cuthbert Holmes Park, the two sites are being maintained by Saanich Parks to establish the new plant material. Over the course of the next few years the native plant material will become established and require minimal additional maintenance.



Feltham/Bow Park

In the spring of 2011 Saanich Parks began a project to reduce the grade of a connector trail that travels through Feltham Park and Bow Park to connect McKenzie Ave. with Cedar Hill Road. Saanich received funds as a result of a nearby development to make improvements to the trail, remove invasive species and restore the area surrounding the trail section that passes through some Garry Oak ecosystem. Throughout this summer and fall Saanich Park staff, along with Pulling Together volunteers, will be removing invasive species such as Himalayan Blackberry and English Ivy from within a stand of Garry Oak, Bitter Cherry, Indian Plum and Black Hawthorn trees. On November 6, 2011 (Tree Appreciation Day) hundreds more native trees, shrubs, and bulbs will be planted along this section of trail.

Glencoe Cove/Kwatsech Park

In the summer of 2011, Saanich Parks along with staff from the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, identified critical habitat for a species at risk within Glencoe Cove/Kwatsech Park. Parks staff installed cedar split rail fencing to reclaim a trail section located in close proximity to this species at risk. By closing the trail for restoration our goal is to reduce the risk of disturbance to this species.





Will you help the *Bring Back the Bluebirds Project?*

By Dawn Fizzard, Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team



To support the recovery of Western Bluebird populations in the region, the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT) is looking for:

1. Confirmed sightings – When and where did you last see a Western Bluebird on the Islands?
2. Suitable habitat for nest box installations:
 - Large, open, grassy areas (meadow or agricultural).
 - Low hunting perches (fence posts, downed trees, scrub oak).
 - Warm/sheltered microclimate for early nesting.
 - High volume forage (natural insect prey).
 - Safe from House Sparrows and cats.
3. Woodworkers and carpenters to build nest boxes for installation by GOERT.
4. Stewards to monitor and report occupant information and keep boxes safe.

Please e-mail bluebird@goert.ca or call 250-383-3427 to report your sightings, potential nesting habitat, and for more information about the Bring Back the Bluebirds Project. Visit the new bluebird page at the GOERT website for descriptions of habitat and project updates: www.goert.ca/bluebird

To learn about the San Juan Preservation Trust's Western Bluebird reintroduction project on San Juan Island last, view this Northwest Cable segment:

www.nwcn.com/video/featured-videos/NW-Postcard-Bluebird-Reintroduction-on-San-Juan-Island-124867214.html

NATURE... BRING IT ON

By Andrea LaPointe, Saanich Resident

My family relocated to Saanich from the Fernwood area just over two years ago and now live near Mount Douglas Park. On my way home one morning I could not help but smile when I saw a mother deer and her fawn on the edge of the road. The mother was obviously accustomed to the sound of the bus, but the fawn was startled and clumsily bounded up the lawn away from the street. During my short walk home from the bus stop I heard various types of birds singing in the trees and enjoyed watching a Spotted Towhee hopping along a patch of grass beside me. As I rounded a corner I came across a young deer on someone's front lawn. I crossed the narrow street to give her some space and we watched each other as I passed. Not two minutes later I caught sight of a hawk landing in a tree while an agitated hummingbird buzzed nearby. In less than 15 minutes I think I saw, and heard, a more diverse group of living creatures than in eight years of living in my old neighbourhood.

I feel fortunate to have found a home that is not only located a reasonable distance from work, school, and extra curricular activities, but also is home to so many different plants and animals. I occasionally hear people complain that there are too many trees, or that the wildlife is a nuisance. I believe that the diversity found in our area should be celebrated and protected. If I wanted to live in a sterile environment I would not have chosen this area. I understand the need for management in an urban ecosystem, but every day I look forward to sharing this space with as much flora and fauna as is sustainable.



LiveSmart BC Business Program:

Businesses in Saanich:

Get Paid to Save Money on Your Energy Bills!

By Glenys Verhulst, Communications Coordinator, City Green Solutions

With the LiveSmart BC Small Business Program your business can:

- Receive a free energy assessment with a business energy advisor
- Learn about upgrades that improve your work environment and deliver quick payback through energy savings
- Receive utility and provincial grants for upgrading lighting, heating and cooling systems, refrigeration systems, and more

If you are a business owner in the Capital Regional District, contact us today to schedule your free visit with a City Green business energy advisor.

Start saving today!

Contact Matt Greeno, City Green Business Energy Advisor

250-381-9995 ext. 115 | inspire@citygreen.ca | www.citygreen.ca

Duck News

By Julie Valdis (Cedar Hill Golf Course)

Wood Ducks in Saanich received a helping hand this month when two nesting boxes were installed in King's Pond at Cedar Hill Golf Course. The project was initiated by pond neighbour, Jim Moores, who also constructed the boxes. With the assistance of Victoria Natural History Society member Darren Copley and Cedar Hill Golf Course's Julie Valois, the boxes were positioned on poles near two of the islands in King's Pond.

One of North America's most attractive waterfowl, Wood Ducks are known as cavity nesters because of their habit of nesting in tree holes, which would typically be made in dead trees by woodpeckers. The objective of the nesting boxes is to provide the ducks with safe havens in which to lay their eggs and hatch their young. When a Wood Duck has successfully established its nest in a box once, it will usually return to that box year after year. The boxes will be maintained and readied with fresh wood shavings before each nesting season. An increase in the population of Wood Ducks in King's Pond is sure to mean an increase in the viewing enjoyment for the entire community.



Upcoming Events

Saanich Recreation Free Programs

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

Preschoolers In The Park (Drop-In)

Fridays, 10-11:30am

Play on our adventure playgrounds, enjoy organized circle time, and partake in a nature/urban walk through surrounding neighbourhoods and trails. Bring a jogger or child carrier. Parent participation required. Program cancelled if raining 1/2 hr before start time.

Aug 26 Vantreight Park

Meet at playground located Vantreight Dr off Ferndale

Music In The Park (Drop-In)

Tuesdays, 6-8:00pm

Bring your picnic blanket and enjoy an evening of music in your local park. Face painting and crafts for kids, food available for purchase. Limited parking.

Aug 23 Rudd Park

The Gardens at HCP

www.hcp.ca

Pre-registration is required by calling 250-479-6162

Naturescaping your Garden

Saturday Sept. 10th 1pm-4pm

Birds, bees & frogs- oh my! Come join local ecologist & invasive species specialist Marion McCoy and learn how to attract wildlife & biodiversity to your garden. Naturescaping is a way of gardening that provides animals with habitat for resting, nesting & food as they travel across the landscape. This interactive workshop will include lots of photos, hand-outs and a walk through the Gardens at HCP. Participants are encouraged to bring photos, questions, and a plant list of their current garden.

HCP Members \$25.00

Non-HCP Members \$35.00

Capital Regional District Community Events

www.crd.bc.ca

Please call Swan Lake at 250.479.0211 to register

Native Plant Gardening Workshop

Swan Lake Nature House (3873 Swan Lake Rd.)

Wednesday, Sept. 28, 1 to 4:00 pm

Wednesday, Oct. 5, 1 to 4:00 pm

Saturday Oct. 15, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Sunday Oct. 16, 1 to 4:00 pm

Thursday Oct. 27, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Sunday Nov. 6, 1 to 4:00 pm

Tuesday Nov. 15, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

A FREE workshop on gardening with drought-resistant native plants. Instructor Patricia Johnston will provide instruction on native plant identification, their benefits, and how to use them. Includes a tour of the Swan lake native plant garden. Pre-registration is required by calling 250.479.0211.

Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

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

Frog Day

Thursday, August 25, noon to 3 pm

Long sticky tongues, breathing through skin and webbed feet! Discover what makes frogs so fabulous. Join us for a puppet show, hands-on displays, live animals and froggy crafts. Crafts \$3.

Seed Day (Drop-in)

Sunday, September 25, noon to 3 pm

In the autumn Mother Nature is planting her garden for next year. Includes: crafts, hands-on exploration, seed scavenger hunt, seed displays, plant a seed to take home.

Guided Birdwalks

Every Wednesday and Sunday

Meet at 9 am in the parking lot

Take a step for TLC at this year's Victoria Marathon!

<http://blog.conservancy.bc.ca/>

Whether you're a seasoned runner or just wanting to take a step to Be the Change, please join TLC's Wild Runners in the 32nd Annual GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon. On Sunday, October 9, 2011, our team will be hitting the pavement to raise money for B.C.'s special places.

Simply visit the Victoria Marathon website at www.runvictoriamarathon.com and register for your event of choice. When filling out your online registration select TLC The Land Conservancy as your charity of choice. Then send us an email at membership@conservancy.bc.ca to introduce yourself and we'll send you a runner's toolkit to help get you started. There also will be prizes and fun incentives for participants. For more information, please call 1-877-485-2422.

Goldstream Nature House

Visit www.naturehouse.ca for more programs

250 478-9414

2011 Nature of Island Artists Art Show

September 17th to October 12th, 2011

Every two years, the Goldstream Nature House is transformed into a magnificent nature art gallery. This renowned art show features artists from Vancouver Island and the surrounding Gulf Islands who are inspired by natural history. Over the past twenty years this show has grown into a huge success as a fundraiser for the Goldstream Nature House. More than 100 artists participate in each show including well known locals such as Robert Bateman, Fenwick Lansdowne, Mark Hobson, Morgan Warren and many more. All proceeds from the sales of artwork help support environmental education at Goldstream Provincial Park.

Upcoming Events

5th Annual RiverSong: Celebrating Life Along the Colquitz

Sunday, September 25, 1:00 – 4:00pm

Cuthbert Holmes Park

Mark BC River's Day by celebrating the 20th anniversary of Cuthbert Holmes Park through sharing cultural arts and environmental appreciation. Celebrate the plants, animals, fish, birds and insects that live and depend upon the Colquitz River, which is an historically important fish bearing waterway. Sponsored and developed by professional artists Paula Jardine and Carolyn Knight, Friends of Cuthbert Holmes and Saanich Parks and Recreation. For details: www.saanich.ca/calendar.html, diane.thorpe@saanich.ca or (250)475-5557.

Victoria Natural History Society

Visit www.naturevictoria.ca for more programs

Natural History Night (every 2nd Tuesday)

Native Pollinator Enhancement

Tuesday, Sept 13, 7:30 pm UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

Botany Night (every 3rd Tuesday)

The Rise and Fall of Ecological Reserves in British Columbia

Tuesday, Sept 20, 7:30 pm UVic Elliott Building, Room 167

Marine Night (last Monday of the month)

Fish Watching in the Caribbean

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

Birder's Night (every 4th Wednesday)

Birds of the Corpus Christie area of Texas

Wednesday, Sept 28, 7:30 pm

UVic Fraser Building, Room 159

BC Rivers Day Event at Mount Douglas Park

www.ourbackyard.saanich.ca

Sunday, September 25, 2011

A FREE event celebrating BC Rivers Day with Saanich Environmental Services, Saanich Parks, and the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society. Visit the above website for more details closer to the date, or contact the editor.

CRD Regional Parks

Visit www.crd.bc.ca/parks 250-478-3344

Drop in at the CRD tents at Beaver Beach.

Blood and Guts (Drop-in Event)

Saturday, August 20, 1-3pm

Francis/King Regional Park

They're everywhere and they're tremendous—join a CRD Regional Parks' naturalist at this drop-in event to discover more about our local tree species. A guided walk to 500 year old trees begins at 1:30pm. Meet at the Francis/King Nature Centre off Munn Road.

Forest Feast (Drop-in Event)

Friday, August 26, 11am-2pm

Francis/King Regional Park

Activities, displays, and guided walks to celebrate the richness of our West Coast forests. Meet at the Francis/King Nature Centre off Munn Road.

Bountiful Berries (Guided Walk)

Tuesday, August 30, 1-2:30pm

Elk/Beaver Lake Park

We'll explore for blackberries, Oregon grape berries, salal berries and more. There will also be an opportunity to taste jams made from some of these natural delights. Meet at the nature centre in the main Beaver Lake parking lot. Wheelchair accessible.

Forest Tea Party (Guided Walk)

Saturday, September 10, 1-3:00pm

Francis/King Regional Park

The forests around Victoria are full of plants that make delicious teas year 'round. Join us for an interpretive tea tasting featuring some of our local plants. A short guided walk to see some of the plants growing in their native habitat will precede the tea-sampling. \$7/person + HST. Pre-registration required before September 9.

An Introduction to Herbal Pharmacy (4 session course)

Thursday, Sept. 15, 22, 29, 6-9pm and

Saturday, Sept. 17, 1-4pm

Francis/King Regional Park

Get ready for winter with this introduction to making your own herbal products with a community herbalist. The course includes a basic introduction to plant identification and guided walk, and you will make some of your own products from native and European plant species. \$50 + HST for the course. Pre-registration required before September 10.

Art-in-the-Park (Drop-in Event)

Sunday, September 18, 11am-2pm

Francis/King Regional Park

These nature inspired activities and crafts are sure to get you excited about the beauty of the natural world. Drop by the Francis/King Nature Centre off Munn Road.

Hawk Watch (Special Event)

Saturday, September 24, 11am-3pm

Francis/King Regional Park

Join CRD, the Victoria Natural History Society, and Pacific Northwest Raptors for live displays and activities as well as viewing opportunities with spotting scopes. The 20-minute hike up to the viewpoint requires sturdy footwear along a steep and rocky trail. Bring binoculars, water and a lunch. Aylard Farm parking lot off Becher Bay Road



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