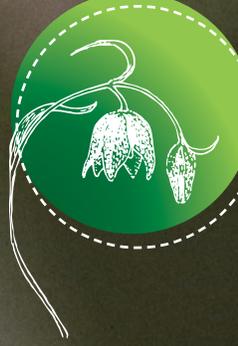


# Our Backyard

A NEWSLETTER ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN SAANICH



Volume 21 | Issue 3 | Fall 2020

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Free support for your

# CLIMATE-FRIENDLY HOME UPGRADES



By Grant Stott  
Energy Efficiency Client Services Representative,  
City Green Solutions  
[grant.stott@citygreen.ca](mailto:grant.stott@citygreen.ca)

*"We love our heat pump! It keeps our home warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The upfront costs were worth it – we love how well the heat pump works to keep our house at a comfortable temperature, we appreciate the savings on our energy bills, as well as the peace of mind of knowing we're doing what we can to be more energy efficient."*

Kathryn Calder, Saanich resident and musician.

Check out other local upgrade stories at [bringithome4climate.ca](http://bringithome4climate.ca)!



Does the colder weather have you noticing cold spots, condensation, or other issues around your home? Are you wondering about:

- how to upgrade your home from fossil fuels to renewable energy?
- how to access financial rebates for improving your home efficiency?  
or
- how to protect your indoor air quality during wildfire smoke events?

Kick-start your home energy improvement action plan while maintaining physical distancing with the Bring It Home 4 the Climate Program! The District of Saanich is a proud partner in bringing this program to homeowners in the Capital Regional District. Among other offers, participants can access a **FREE Virtual Home Energy Check-Up**, which consists of you completing an on-line survey and receiving personalized support from an unbiased Energy Expert through phone or video

call and discuss your home energy improvement concerns or goals!

This is a great opportunity to understand your home better, get unbiased advice on the best upgrades for you and your home, and maximize the rebates you could receive for completing home energy improvements! After the Check-Up, your energy expert will be there to continue offering free support as you navigate contractor quotes, rebates, and more! Generous rebates are available as well as zero percent interest financing.

From now until December 31st access double the rebates on heat pumps – up to \$6700 plus \$500 for the Group Purchase Rebate, plus \$1000 for upgrading your electrical service. To learn more about rebates for Saanich residents, visit [www.saanich.ca/rebates](http://www.saanich.ca/rebates).

Register today to get started at [bringithome4climate.ca](http://bringithome4climate.ca), or email [ask@bringithome4climate.ca](mailto:ask@bringithome4climate.ca)!

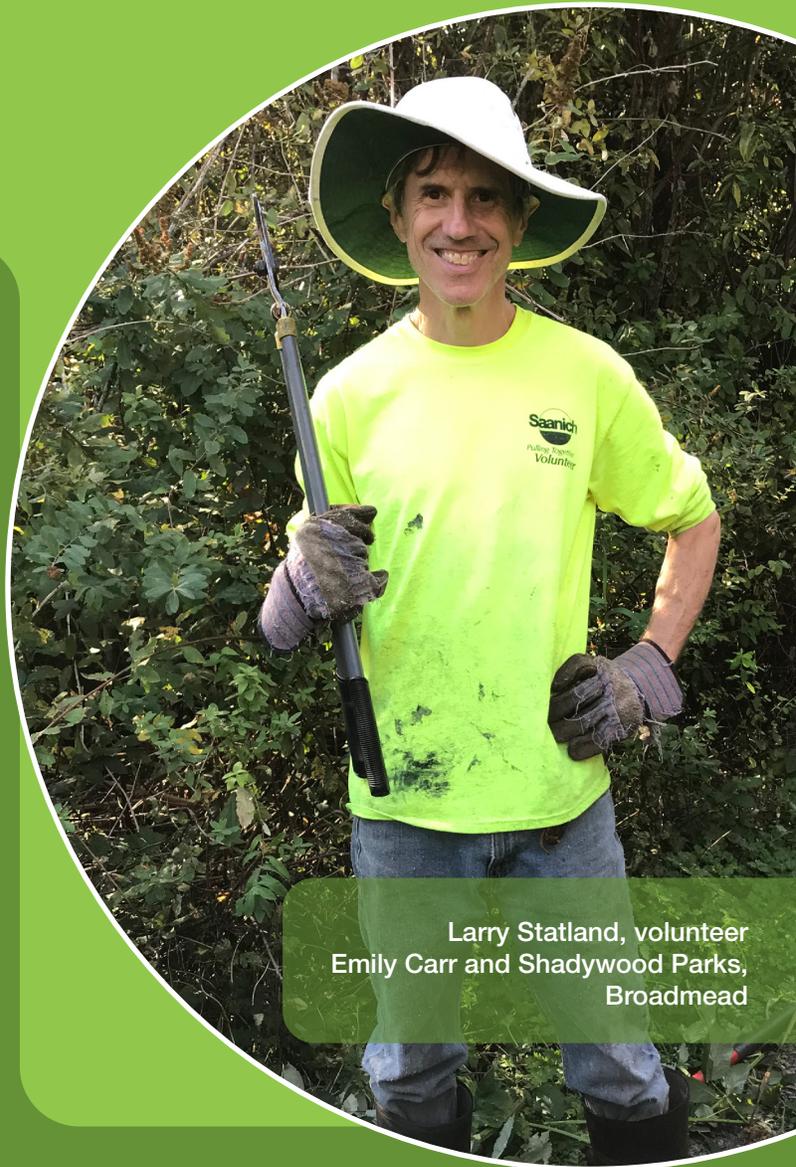
# PULLING TOGETHER

## VOLUNTEER FEATURE

By Katie Turner, Park Stewardship Coordinator,  
District of Saanich Parks

Well, this isn't Kansas! *Pulling Together Program* volunteer Larry Statland is working on restoring Emily Carr and Shadywood Parks in Broadmead. Larry hails from Kansas and is a father, musician, biologist, and philosopher. The dry prairie state is a dramatic contrast to the lush forests along Gabo Creek that Larry calls home. Larry is the lead steward volunteer for Emily Carr and Shady Wood Parks, and has been working for more than eight years removing invasive plants such as Himalayan Blackberry, English Ivy and Holly and speaking with neighbors about how to best protect these small parks beside his home.

It takes an incredible amount of energy to work as hard as Larry does. He has single-handedly removed invasive plants for hours on end to increase opportunities for native plants and habitats to thrive. Not only does he feel responsible for these two parks, but Larry also dedicates hours every week to pulling invasive plants at neighbouring Rithet's Bog Conservation Area. This stewardship commitment is also what causes frustration at times, especially when yard waste is dumped in a park "smothering native wildflowers, like Starflowers, and introduces even more invasive plants". Recently, Larry started working with Saanich's Park Stewardship Coordinator to discuss opportunities to positively engage neighbours with these parks.



Larry Statland, volunteer  
Emily Carr and Shadywood Parks,  
Broadmead

Larry hopes to inspire others to care for parks. He takes time to engage the public in the work he is doing so that they become aware of the value of stewarding the green spaces they frequent. "I'm always talking to people, lots of people!" Larry believes that positive action like stewardship will determine our future. "I realize that on a regional level these small parks are rather insignificant, but what happens here has broader implications for how we care for our environment". Larry sees how these small parks connect to a larger system, and believes that "we should all feel a sense of stewardship-after all this is where we live".

Our special thanks to Larry for the work he does to care for neighbourhood parks. If you would like to learn more about hands on, flexible, drop-in volunteering with the Saanich *Pulling Together* Volunteer Program: <https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-culture/parks/natural-areas/volunteer-for-pulling-together.html>



The Colquitz Restoration Project team.

**By Dorothy Chambers, Lead Volunteer, Colquitz River Counting Fence**

In late 2011, during the Coho Salmon spawn in the Colquitz River, a large furnace oil spill occurred on Swan Creek and made its way into the Colquitz River, and then out to Portage Inlet and the Gorge Waterway. Many Coho Salmon, Cutthroat Trout, Three-spine Stickleback and sculpins were found dead at the Colquitz counting fence. The number of Coho migrating upstream to spawn had already been declining in the preceding years.

The District of Saanich hired Ian Bruce, Executive Coordinator of Peninsula Streams Society, to organize the cleanup. The damage to the reaches of both creeks was assessed for months, and it obviously needed a lot of restoration work. Colquitz River, where it passes through Copley East Park, was of particular concern. This was one of the few spawning areas and it was very degraded. The Colquitz River Trail runs along this section of the river, and heavy use over decades had taken its toll.

In the summer of 2019, after years of consultation and collaboration, Peninsula Streams Society and the District of Saanich partnered to restore and enhance the Colquitz Watershed habitat within Copley East Park.

Working closely together, Peninsula Streams Society staff, Fisheries Biologist Dave Clough, staff from Saanich Engineering's Stormwater/Streams crew and the talented crew from Saanich Parks' Natural Areas group, 120 metres of instream habitat was restored, and the riparian area prepared for planting. They created spawning and

# RIVER RESTORATION

## Brings Hope to Urban Saanich Watershed

rearing habitat for Cutthroat Trout and Coho Salmon by adding key structural features including spawning gravel, rock crests, large rock, woody debris, and rearing pools. Viewing platforms were built to allow the public to easily view salmon spawning in their natural environment. With the help of volunteers and the Friends of the Colquitz Mainstem group, more than 200 m<sup>2</sup> of riparian area was planted with more than 2400 plants.

Building on the success of their previous project, during the summer of 2020, Peninsula Streams Society and the District of Saanich undertook the restoration of an additional 80 metres of the downstream river. This will provide roughly 200 metres of continuous high-quality riparian habitat. New rock crests, spawning gravel, large rocks and woody debris were added to counter erosion and support salmon and trout spawning and rearing. Clay soils were de-compacted and replaced with healthy clean soil. Following this in-stream work, stream monitoring, riparian planting and maintenance will now continue with the support of volunteers.



Councillor Brice and Don Illingworth at the Copley Park Restoration Site E

This project has successfully generated public awareness about the threats facing urban salmon streams while facilitating community-based stewardship. Dozens of local residents have reached out to express their happiness at the natural aesthetic improvements. Viewing spawning fish safely from the new platforms is encouraged and generations of locals can form a personal connection to this watershed. Colquitz River Watershed has suffered the usual abuses experienced by an urban watershed: pollution, erosion, and stormwater run-off. Somehow, trout and salmon still persist, showing incredible resilience. They give us hope that with continued habitat restoration, fish populations will recover and succeed in this urban watershed. Thanks again to Saanich Parks and Engineering staff for their professional approach and enthusiasm.

The restored section is easily viewed from the Colquitz River Trail, just north of Copley East Park, accessible from Eastridge Crescent. Please contact [PeninsulaStreams@gmail.com](mailto:PeninsulaStreams@gmail.com) if you are interested in future volunteer



Peninsula Streams Society Executive Coordinator Ian Bruce speaking with a group of summer students about the Colquitz Project.

opportunities with Colquitz River Mainstem, or would like to know more about this project. For more information, like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Peninsula.Streams.Society/> and visit <http://peninsulastreams.ca/watersheds/colquitz-watershed>



# The Colquitz River Salmon Counting Fence

By Dorothy Chambers, Lead Volunteer  
Colquitz River Counting Fence

For two years, the **Salmon In The City** volunteers tried to outsmart the River Otters that had breached the bottom of the salmon counting fence fish trap and gained access to the inside.

In early September, in collaboration with Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Saanich Parks, Esquimalt Anglers, Fish-Kissing Weasels Environmental, World Fisheries Trust, and Golden Rods and Reels, work began to secure the trap and a new aluminum bottom from Playsted Sheet Metal was installed.



A week later, a hungry otter was on the outside looking in....frustrated with the improvements!

I hope to see the community and the salmon this fall!



# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD WINNERS



# 2020

We grant seven environmental awards each year. Since 2000, we've recognized more than 150 people and organizations contributing to protection of the natural environment in Saanich. The Awards are an initiative of the Saanich Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee (ENAC).

## Saanich Environmental Awards: Category Winners



### Long Term Achievement - Dave Lock (posthumous)

Dave Lock is being honoured posthumously with the Long-term Achievement Award for his leadership in restoration and stewardship at Mt. Tolmie Park. Dave gave incredible passion and energy to his work at Mt. Tolmie Park for more than 25 years, as well as to the community. He excelled at engaging student volunteers in conservation efforts but welcomed all ages to join him in ecological restoration, stewardship and enjoyment of the rare ecosystems in the Park. An example of his commitment and energy was single-handedly hosting 30 invasive events with more than 600 volunteer hours provided in one year. Dave spent thousands of hours carefully removing invasive species from the park with meticulous planning and record keeping. His reach was far, including volunteers, students, naturalist groups, researchers and government staff - all gravitating to his clear, warm communication style, his expertise and his passion. Local schools and volunteers have pledged to carry on Dave's stewardship legacy.





## Individual Environmental Achievement - Lori James Derry

Lori is receiving the individual award for her volunteer achievements in environmental restoration and stewardship in the Prospect Lake area. Lori contributes considerable time to her volunteer efforts, including restoration and stewardship at Whitehead Park, Killarney Creek, South Prospect Lake Park, Tod Flats and the native plant garden at Prospect Lake Elementary School. She has brought additional talents to this valuable work such as designing plant labels for community enjoyment and education, a plant identification manual, photography, as well as building and maintaining a website that provides valuable community resources. Lori has been a key organizer for community stewardship events, fundraising, and serves as an active member of the Friends of Tod Creek Watershed and the Prospect Lake Heritage Society.



## Biodiversity Conservation - Dr. Hans Roemer

Dr. Hans Roemer is receiving the Biodiversity Conservation Award for his research, stewardship, and leadership in protecting rare ecosystems in Saanich and beyond. Dr. Roemer's work has focused on Garry Oak ecosystems, Ecological Reserves, and protecting and carefully documenting rare ecosystems. His knowledge guided the original Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory in the region and he has served as a positive advocate for conservation. Dr. Roemer's own garden in Saanich is a testament to his work on Garry Oak ecosystem restoration and protection.



## Volunteer Organization - Power to Be Adventure Therapy Society

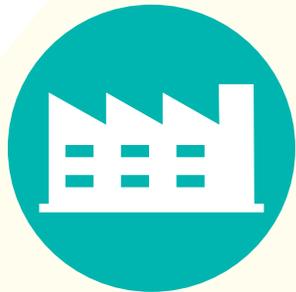
The Power to Be Adventure Therapy Society is being recognized with the volunteer organization award for stewardship, restoration, and youth empowerment. Power to Be, an organization that has created inclusive opportunities in nature for over 20 years, began a long-term lease of the 78 acre former Prospect Lake Golf Course site in 2016. Since then, the organization has been committed to environmental stewardship of the site including partnerships that have enabled restoration and habitat enhancement activities, and principles like "Leave No Trace" programming. Their barrier-free nature and stewardship experiences empower and support youth. Efforts on site have included invasive species removal, tree planting, habitat creation (such as bat boxes, turtle logs and barn swallow ledges), research opportunities, as well as a commitment to the One Planet Saanich initiative.



# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD WINNERS



# 2020



## Business - Red Barn Market

The Red Barn Market is receiving the business award for leadership in local food security and sustainable business practices. This business started as a small farm market in rural Saanich and has grown to a locally-owned grocery supporting local producers and communities by providing local products. Also committed to reducing their carbon footprint, the business supports alternative transportation to access their markets and has experimented with initiatives such as fuel-free courier delivery. The Red Barn Market's business practices include an extensive recycling program, re-use of unsold produce, and regular donations that support community stewardship efforts.



## Sustainability - Compost Education Centre

The Compost Education Centre (CEC) is being recognized with the Sustainability Award for leadership in compost education and environmental stewardship. For 28 years, the CEC has provided the region with a variety of accessible programs and demonstration gardens, supporting residents to develop the tools and skills needed to compost, reduce waste, grow food and conserve soil and water. In addition, the CEC has recently made a collaborative partnership with Royal Roads University for a Healing City Soils program with hands-on training, free soil testing, and resources. The work of the Compost Education Centre is community building and potentially has long-term environmental benefits as residents increase soil stewardship and their actions for sustainable living.





## Youth - Arbutus Global Middle School

Arbutus Global Middle School is being recognized with the youth award for their commitment to environmental stewardship and restoration at Haro and Hollydene Parks. For more than 4 years, student efforts in Hollydene Park, and more recently Haro Park, have included invasive plant removal, mulching, and planting native plants. Students have developed connections to the natural areas and some have put in additional time removing invasive plants outside of school hours. The support of Arbutus Global Middle School in community stewardship activities empowers students to make a difference in their community and potentially to develop a life-long sense of environmental stewardship.



## Honourable Mention - Mt. Douglas *Pulling Together* Team

The Mt. Douglas *Pulling Together* Team is receiving an Honourable Mention for volunteer achievements in restoration and stewardship at Mt. Douglas Park. Led by Judy Spearing for more than 15 years, this team has restored large areas of disturbed ecosystems in the 184 ha park. This work has included a 14 year battle with a substantial Garlic Mustard outbreak as well as clearing large amounts of ivy, blackberry, and broom from the park. Their work has also had a positive impact for the environmental health of neighbouring areas. This volunteer team's work has included collaborating with community volunteers, educating park visitors, and working with Saanich Parks staff in their creative and dedicated stewardship efforts.



Derek, Ted, Lora, Laurie, Mike and John at garlic mustard pull in Mt Doug



Mulching the knoll

This is an annual award. See the list of our past winners and sign up to receive email updates about the annual Environmental Awards.

[saanich.ca/enviroawards](https://saanich.ca/enviroawards)

**Nominations for the 2021 awards  
will open in March 2021.**



# Biodiversity and Protected Areas in Saanich

Resilient Saanich  
BiodiverCITY

By Adriane Pollard, Saanich Manager of Environmental Services

Saanich is currently undertaking a process, "Resilient Saanich", to create an Environmental Policy Framework which will include a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. The new strategy will guide our efforts to preserve, protect, and enhance the variety of native species and ecosystems in Saanich.

Biodiversity loss is a global crisis and governments at all levels have targets and commitments to address this threat, including conservation and restoration. Examples of biodiversity conservation targets can be viewed in

Resilient Saanich Factsheet #3 (<https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/Environment/RS-FS3-biodiversity-targets.pdf>). Below, we look at how Saanich measures up to the most commonly used governmental target:

- By 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of coastal and marine areas will be conserved.

The table below breaks down where we find protected natural areas in Saanich.

## Protected Natural Areas in Saanich

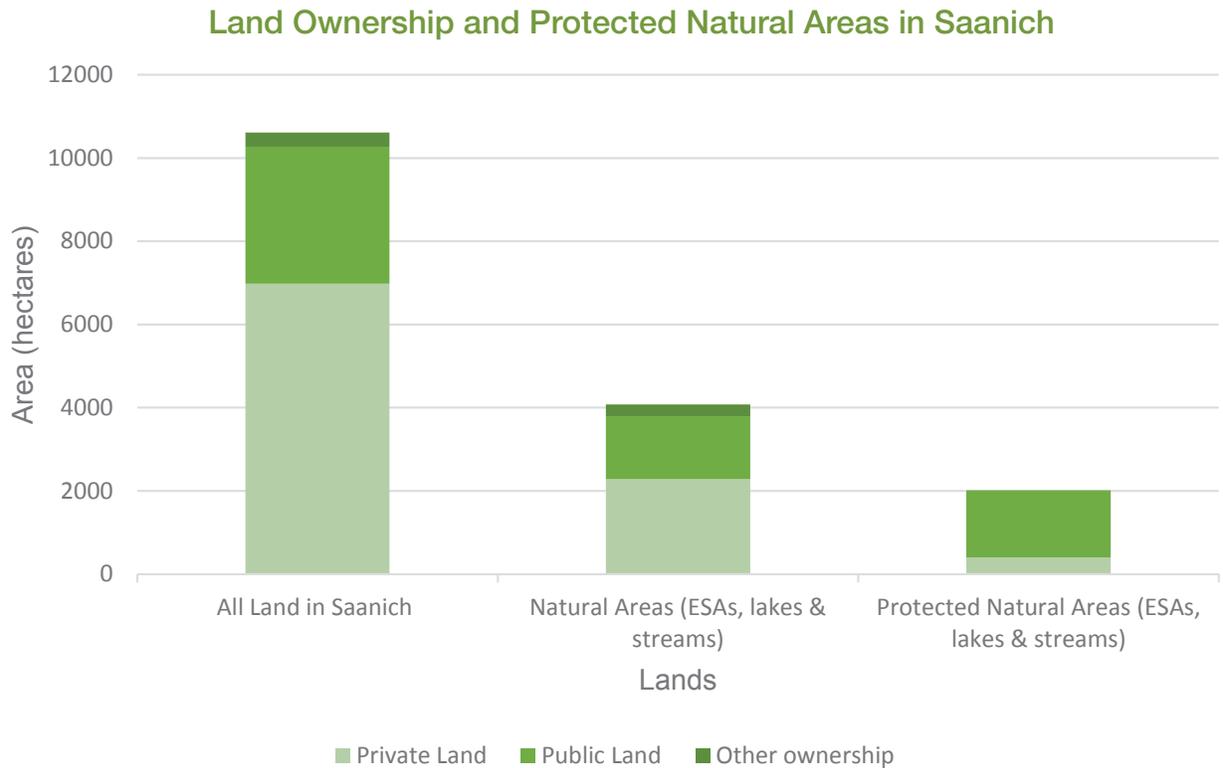
Type of Land	Estimated Protected Natural Area (ha)	Notes about the Data
Saanich Natural Parks and conservation areas	504	Natural area is defined as Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory, Conservation Data Centre rare elements, Coastal Douglas-fir Mapping, Saanich Ecosystem Mapping, wetlands, Marine Backshore Unit, and Wildlife Trees.
CRD Parks	587	
Streamside Protection & Enhancement Area	458	
Saanich Natural Parks—additional natural area	62	Estimated natural areas not captured in the above inventories (air photo interpretation)
Lakes and Streams	403	Generated by GIS Mapping
Natural State Covenant areas	68	Surveyed measurements
Total protected natural areas	2058	Percentage of Saanich: 19%

There are approximately 300 hectares of additional natural area owned by municipal, regional, provincial, and federal governments or entities that are not necessarily

designated for protection of the natural environment. Additional natural areas have not been analyzed on private land.

There are also two protected marine areas off the shores of Saanich—the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary and the 10 Mile Point Ecological Reserve and thirteen percent of the marine coastline from Cadboro Bay to Central Saanich is publicly owned.

The upcoming new edition of the *Saanich Environmental Reference Atlas* contains several inventories of natural areas that cover 4090 hectares of land. The figure below illustrates how much of inventoried natural area is protected on private, public, and other land (such as a privately-owned public entity).



This information tells us that:

- 66% of land in Saanich is **privately owned** and contains 56% of Environmentally Significant Areas, of which 17% is protected.
- 31% of land in Saanich is **publicly owned** and contains 37% of Environmentally Significant Areas plus lakes & streams, of which 86% is protected.
- 3% of land is not clearly public or private (“other ownership”) and contains 8% of Environmentally Significant Areas, none of which is protected.

These numbers only tell us about the quantity and ownership of protected natural areas. Biodiversity targets also address species at risk, loss of habitat, long-term resilience, ecosystem services, and conservation measures. For example, 68% of Bald Eagle and Great Blue Heron nests are in areas where vegetated buffers are unprotected and 78% of rare species and habitats occur on public land, which is typically in larger parcels and undeveloped, with less habitat fragmentation than private land.

Ultimately, Saanich has not yet established biodiversity targets. This is just a snapshot of some of the main statistics that may aid in the conversation and guide our efforts.



# The Junior Stewardship Project Series

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, many parents found themselves in a challenging situation with the new school year just ahead. While most students have returned to the classroom, there are a large number of students now learning from home; presenting new challenges for students and their parents. Subsequently, the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary was receiving numerous phone calls and emails from parents inquiring about nature programs to engage their new homeschoolers.

As a Program Naturalist, I wanted to respond to this need by creating a new program to teach environmental stewardship with a hands-on approach.

**Designed for students ages eight to twelve, our new Junior Stewardship Project Series engages and encourages young stewards to seek out ways to support our environment by taking action.**

This bi-weekly program creates a sense of connection, care, and responsibility for each other and the natural world that supports us.

Every class is based on a different project within the nature sanctuary. The program modules include: lake water quality monitoring, meadow restoration, invasive species removal, and slope erosion prevention. Students work outside alongside naturalists and other community leaders;

By Erica Van Dyk, Program Naturalist,  
Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

building connection and respect for the land and each other. Collaborative teamwork and collective learning are increasingly important as phrases like “physical distancing” and “isolation” are so commonly used in our daily lives right now.

Through the program, I hope to inspire students to develop a sense of connection, wonder, gratitude, and accomplishment by bettering the ecological integrity of the Nature Sanctuary lands. At the end of each class, students take home their gloves, encouraging future stewardship in their own communities. I hope you will consider joining us in future offerings of this program, as we put our hands in the dirt together, and build our community’s awareness about the crucial environmental actions that are needed more than ever for our shared planet.

# Canadian Wildlife Service Study of at-Large Dogs in Migratory Bird Sanctuaries

By Jacques Sirois, Chair, Friends of Victoria Harbour  
Migratory Bird Sanctuaries ([vicharbourbirds.ca](http://vicharbourbirds.ca))

If you are interested in, or have knowledge of the impacts of at-large dogs in the three Migratory Bird Sanctuaries of Greater Victoria, Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary (est. 1923), Shoal Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary (1931) and Esquimalt Lagoon Migratory Bird Sanctuary (also 1931), here is a chance to help out.

The Canadian Wildlife Service recently hired a consultant to “conduct a comprehensive literature review, and develop survey methodology to assess impacts of at-large dogs on migratory birds within key areas of the MBSs”. The hopes of the study are to “help raise knowledge and awareness of the issue, improve outcomes for migratory birds, and inform future management planning in the MBSs”. If you consider yourself a knowledge holder, and would like to provide information for the study (likely through a future survey), send your name to Erin Roberts ([erin.roberts2@canada.ca](mailto:erin.roberts2@canada.ca)). A report is expected for March 2021.

Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary is surrounded by five municipalities: Saanich, Oak Bay, Victoria, Esquimalt, and View Royal. In Saanich, all of Cadboro Bay and Cadboro Beach (below the high-water mark), eastern Portage Inlet, the Colquitz River Estuary and contiguous shores are in the sanctuary. The federal Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations stipulate that: No person who owns a dog or cat shall permit the dog or cat to run at-large in a migratory bird sanctuary.

Greater Victoria’s historic bird sanctuaries were established to control hunting almost 100 years ago. Today, they are home not only to birds but to a large biological diversity, including species-at-risk, all of which are valued, valuable, and priceless assets in modern-day urban environments. Drastic, current declines in global and Canadian bird populations make this type of study very important to their protection.

For more information on Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations and legal descriptions of the sanctuaries see: [https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/c.r.c.,\\_c.\\_1036/page-1.html](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/c.r.c.,_c._1036/page-1.html).



Dogs at large chasing a Pacific Great Blue Heron, a species at risk, Cadboro Beach, Victoria Harbour MBS, June 13, 2018, a common occurrence.



Several dogs at large, Cadboro Beach, Victoria Harbour MBS, July 9, 2018, also a common occurrence. VHMBMS map.

# The Birds of Cedar Hill Park

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: A common winter bird of our hedgerows. The brilliant red crown of the male is rarely visible.

Photo credit: Liam Singh



By Susan Haddon, Founding Board member and past Chair, Friends of Cedar Hill Park

Seventeen-year-old Liam Singh is a young man with a passion. As a young child, his parents took him to the beach and to Mount Doug, where he delighted in turning over rocks to uncover and study invertebrates. It was in Madagascar, however, where he discovered there were people focused on particular species – birds in this instance. He was hooked.

Returning to Victoria, he connected with Victoria Natural History Society and Rocky Point Bird Observatory; spending time absorbing knowledge from those he met there. What keeps him interested, he says, is “the thrill of trying to find something new, variations in species, the effects of aging”.

Liam has been conducting quarterly bird surveys in Cedar Hill Park for the past three years, sponsored by the Friends of Cedar Hill Park Society. When asked whether

he’d found anything surprising, he says he’s found more species than he’d expected, including a Harris’ Sparrow, a rare find, twice. Liam suggests we “need to slow down, pay attention” to the sights and sounds around us to fully experience this aspect of nature.

Another of his passions “goes hand-in-hand with bird-watching”, Liam says. He is a very accomplished photographer and explained that the camera can be used as an aid in bird identification. Photos can be expanded so finer detail can be observed and they can also be studied more deeply later. He says his favourite species “are probably gulls because they are difficult to distinguish from each other”. For the rest of us, we likely feel good just knowing it’s a gull!

Last June, Friends of Cedar Hill Park Society hosted a bird walk with Liam and in 2018 had him as a guest speaker, providing opportunities for members and friends to become more familiar with this wonderful aspect of Cedar Hill Park life. To see species and numbers Liam has identified with the surveys, go to [friendsofcedarhillpark.com](http://friendsofcedarhillpark.com).



Harris’ Sparrow: A rare visitor to Victoria, and Canada’s only endemic breeder (in the north part of central Canada)

# An Otherworldly Glimpse of a Hydrologic Treasure



By Everett Peterson, Lead Steward, Goward House Woodland

The accompanying image is not a typical view of the woodland surrounding Goward House (2495 Arbutus Road). In a setting reminiscent of a swimmer about to enter shoreline waves at seaside, Merle Peterson is waist-high in a sea of Slough Sedge (*Carex obnupta*). This otherworldly view identifies an ecosystem that occupies about 10 % of the land in the 2.4 hectare (6 acre) Goward House lease area. This sedge-dominated zone, a wetland for about half the year, occurs in a band parallel to the course of Haro Creek. Parts of this zone are sometimes referred to as the Haro Creek floodplain, and in this wetter-than-normal ecosystem Skunk Cabbage is a frequent species along with the Slough Sedge.

This sedge area is the hydrologic core of Goward woodland. The zone's main natural tree species are Red Alder and Black Cottonwood. This wetter zone is of ecological interest because of its sharp vegetation contrasts with the drier and better-drained areas of Douglas-fir, Arbutus and Bigleaf Maple. The pictured sedge zone is also an excellent example of what has been termed municipal natural assets, because of the services such ecosystems provide, such as stormwater

management and flood control. By avoiding the need for infrastructure costs of items such as engineered bioswales, such natural features play an important role in erosion control, water filtration, and carbon storage. For more information on examples of municipal natural assets, see the website for the initiative led by Roy Brooke at [www.mnai.ca](http://www.mnai.ca). For the Goward House lease area, this sedge wetland provides a fireguard benefit because of its relative resistance to potential ground fires. This zone's occurrence parallel to Haro Creek drainage channel also provides some legal protection against future realty development through provisions of British Columbia's Streamside Protection Regulation (B.C. Reg. 10/2010).

If you have an ecological restoration site that has the good fortune to contain areas of groundwater discharge or natural floodplain, Slough Sedge is a valuable species to use in your restoration program. It is evergreen and is not an aggressive invader into other micro-habitats because of its need for naturally-occurring near-surface groundwater. By means of small root plugs, this sedge has shown good transplanting success into relatively wet sites where it is not now present.

## Saanich Recreation Trails & Treks

<http://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-culture/active-living-guide.html>

250-475-5408

### Weekend Walks

(FREE registration is required)

#### Sundays | 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Discover the beauty of Saanich parks and nature in your backyard. Guided walks are open to adults of all ages. Please wear sturdy footwear and bring drinking water. Walks go rain or shine. Leashed, well-socialized dogs welcome. Penny Stevens

**New\* - registration is required.**

#### Nov 15 | Gorge Waterway Loop

Meet by playground in Gorge Park parking lot, on Gorge Road West, off Tillicum Rd

#### Dec 6 | Lambrick Park to Glencoe Cove

Meet outside of entrance of the Gordon Head Rec. Centre at Lambrick Park.

### Gentle Walk & Talk

(FREE registration is required)

#### Mondays & Thurs | 9:30 am - 11 am

Enjoy fresh air, beautiful scenery, friendly chat and gentle exercise as we take different walks through Saanich parks and trails. Walks follow mainly chip or gravel trails but may have some steep sections. Sorry, dogs not permitted.

With John Henigman, Elly Crawford, and Penny Stevens

**New\* | registration is required.**

#### Nov 2 & Nov 5 | Knockan Hill Park

Meet at Strawberry Vale Community Hall off Burnside Rd

#### Nov 9 & Nov 12 | Lambrick Park to Sierra Park

Meet at Gordon head Rec Centre, 4100 Lambrick Way

#### Nov 16 & Nov 19 | Bow Park

Meet at Gordon Head Rec Centre lobby, 4100 Lambrick Way

#### Nov 23 & Nov 26 | Cedar Hill to Peacock Hill

- Meet at Cedar Hill Rec Centre main doors

#### Nov 30 & Dec 3 | Lochside Trail to Beckwith Park

Meet on Lochside Trail in parking lot by Don Mann Excavating, off McKenzie at Borden

#### Dec 7 & Dec 10 | Mt Douglas to Majestic Pk

Meet at washrooms in main parking lot off Cordova Bay Road at Ash Road

Dec 14 & Dec 17 | Swan Lake, Reynolds, Playfair Parks

Meet at end of Nelthrope, off McKenzie

## Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

[www.swanlake.bc.ca](http://www.swanlake.bc.ca)

250-479-0211

### Nature House (Drop-In)

#### Monday - Friday | 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

We are pleased to announce the Nature House has reopened on a limited schedule with COVID-19 social distancing and enhanced cleaning and sanitizing protocols in effect.

Come in and explore the touch table, learn how snakes encounter the world around them, and investigate how bats 'see' in the dark. Whether you meet the local wildlife, visit the bee hive, or read a book, this learning hub will engage your senses as you connect with the fascinating ecosystems found at Swan Lake. The Nature House is wheelchair accessible. Admission is by donation.

### Guided Bird Walks (Drop-In)

#### Every Sunday | 9:00 am to 10:30 am

Bring your binoculars and walking shoes and dress for the weather. Meet in the large parking lot for this informal walk around the lake area. Donations are appreciated.

## Victoria Natural History Society

Visit [www.naturevictoria.ca](http://www.naturevictoria.ca) for more programs

### Saturday Morning Birding (most Saturdays)

Check the Calendar to find out the week's location and time ([http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/?page\\_id=1518](http://www.vicnhs.bc.ca/?page_id=1518)). All experience levels welcome. Non-members can participate up to three times.

### Christmas Bird Count (Drop-in Event)

#### Saturday, December 19 | all day

<https://motmot26.wixsite.com/christmasbirdcount>

The Victoria Christmas Bird Count is here again. Everyone is welcome! Novices will team up with more experienced counters. For more information, please contact: (Ann Nightingale - [victoriacbc@naturevictoria.ca](mailto:victoriacbc@naturevictoria.ca);

250-514-6450)

### Christmas Bird Count for Kids (Tentative)

Saturday, December 19 | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Beckwith Park

<https://motmot26.wixsite.com/christmasbirdcount>

Rocky Point Bird Observatory is hosting a special Christmas Bird Count for Kids as part of the Victoria CBC. Questions? Contact: [cbc4kids@rpbo.org](mailto:cbc4kids@rpbo.org).

### Covid19 Update to Evening Presentations (FREE but registration is required)

The four evening programs are now presented online through ZOOM. To join, please register at the link below each listing, or go to the VNHS online calendar and click on the appropriate date. [www.naturevictoria.ca](http://www.naturevictoria.ca)

### Natural History Night (every 2nd Tuesday)

Bumble Bees of British Columbia | Tues, Nov 10, 7:30 pm

Bird and Fossil Feathers | Tues, Dec 8, 7:30 pm

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqdeyoqT4oH9009D4qCDY-wR7rwhm5lmzQ>

### Botany Night (every 3rd Tuesday)

TBA | Tues, Nov 17, 7:30 Pm

TBA | Tues, Dec 15, 7:30 pm

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqdeyoqT4oH9009D4qCDY-wR7rwhm5lmzQ>

### Birder's Night (every 4th Wednesday)

Celebrating Birds with Rob Butler | Wed, Nov 25, 7:30 pm

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqdeyoqT4oH9009D4qCDY-wR7rwhm5lmzQ>

### Marine Night (last Monday of the month)

Deep Diving off Western Australia | Nov 30, 7:30 pm

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqdeyoqT4oH9009D4qCDY-wR7rwhm5lmzQ>

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Editor: Darren Copley | Phone: 250-475-5579 | Email: [Darren.Copley@saanich.ca](mailto:Darren.Copley@saanich.ca)