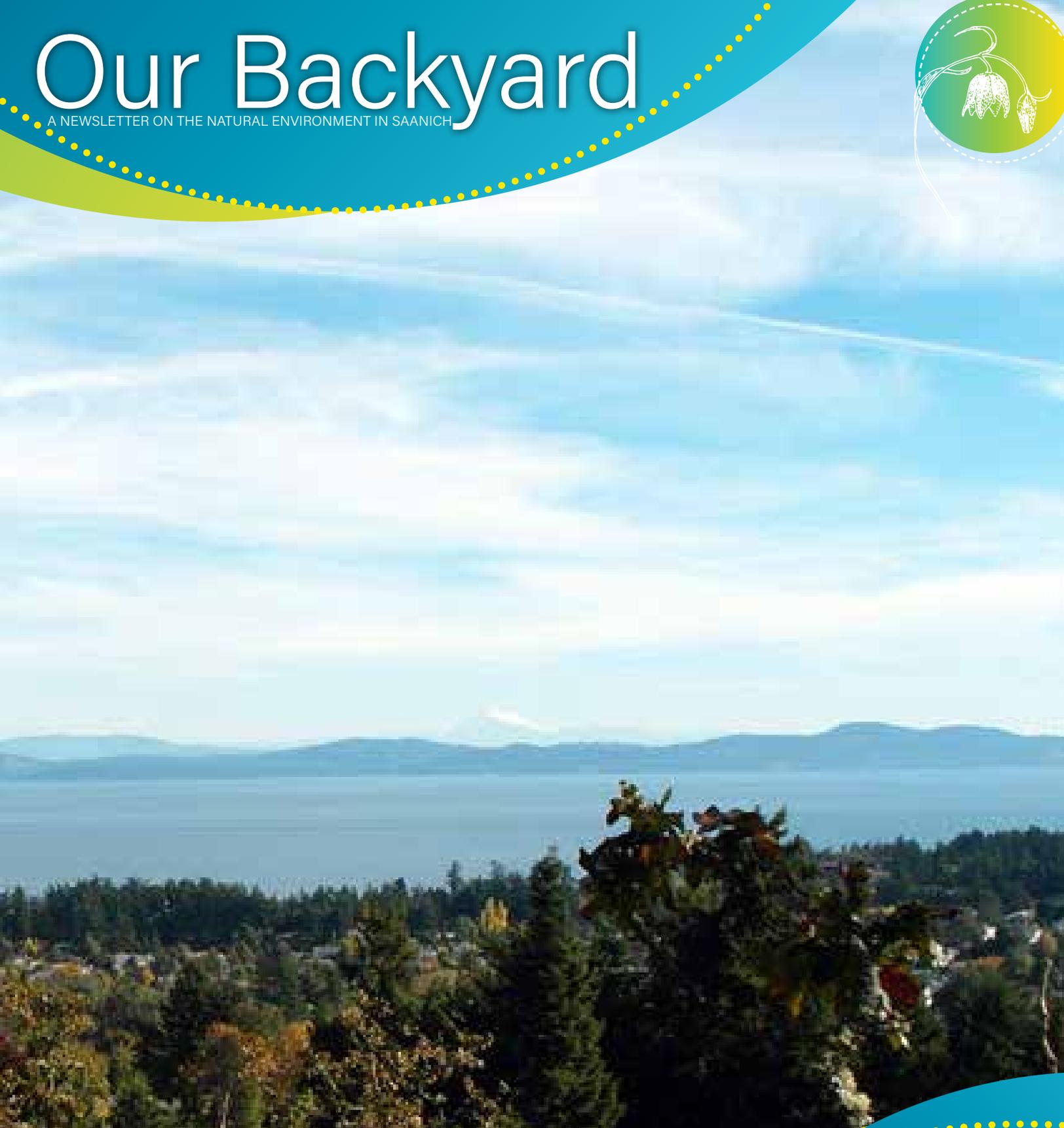


Our Backyard

A NEWSLETTER ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN SAANICH



Volume 23 | Issue 3 | Fall 2022

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Cover photo: Boulderwood Hill Park



Community Stewardship in an Urban Greenspace receives Federal Support

By Sarafina Lewis-Henderson, Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Research & Education Coordinator

Tucked away on one of Saanich's peaks sits a rare, continuous parcel of threatened Garry Oak Meadow habitat -- Christmas Hill. Increasingly, people are recognizing the benefits of urban greenspaces like Christmas Hill for their well-being and climate resilience. However, increased visitation demands can be particularly challenging in urban envelope areas that are also home to sensitive species.

Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary was recently awarded Environment and Climate Change Canada support through the Habitat Stewardship Program for a proposal to conserve Christmas Hill. This project, 'Rare Species Recovery in an Urban Greenspace through Community Stewardship', will focus on Yellow Montane Violet (*Viola praemorsa* subsp. *praemorsa*), a threatened yellow flower only found in Garry Oak meadows. This work also sets out to offer ecosystem-wide benefits to some of last remaining 3% of Garry Oak meadow in Canada through addressing invasive species, pet impacts, and trampling.

Christmas Hill is on the ancestral territories of the **lək'wəŋən** peoples, represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and **WSÁNEĆ** peoples, represented by the **WJOLÉLP** (Tsartlip), **BOKÉĆEN** (Pauquachin), **STÁUTW** (Tsawout), **WŚIKEM** (Tseycum) and **MÁLEXEŁ** (Malahat) Nations. Written into our project plan is the funding to create meaningful dialogue and relationships with First

Nations partners. This project will work at the "pace of trust" with respect, responsibility, and reciprocity as essential foundations.

It is integral that our whole community is woven into Christmas Hill's stewardship as these broader relationships to land are what will result in its long-term resilience and persistence. We are excited to co-develop stewardship plans for this special place and to increase community awareness around the importance of Garry Oak meadows and the use impacts of urban greenspaces.

Join as a Nature Sanctuary member to support this work and learn more!

<https://www.swanlake.bc.ca/support-the-sanctuary/become-a-member/>

The lands and facilities are owned by the Corporation of the District of Saanich and two small parcels by Nature Trust BC. The Nature Sanctuary Society operates through a land management agreement with the District of Saanich.



Charitable Donation Protects 8 Acres in the Blenkinsop Valley



By Dianna Stenberg, TLC Deputy Executive Director

Donwood Property (photo credit: Cathy Armstrong)

Joan Alston-Stewart

The Land Conservancy of British Columbia (TLC) is honoured to announce the receipt of a bequest of three adjacent properties in the Blenkinsop Valley, funds to maintain the properties in perpetuity, and a \$40,000 gift to Abkhazi Garden from the estate of Joan Alston-Stewart (nee Lohbrunner). The \$8.8 million bequest is the largest donation in the charity's 25-year history.

Located near Blenkinsop Lake and the Lochside Trail in Saanich, the three adjacent properties span more than eight acres of wetland, Garry Oak, and Douglas-fir habitat: 1074 Donwood Drive (4.94 acres), 4386 Lochside Drive (2.14 acres), and 4394 Lochside Drive (1.00 acre). Each consist of single- or dual-family dwellings with significant greenspace. According to their 2022 assessments, the combined value of the land and buildings is more than \$5.3 million. TLC was named among 17 charities and institutions receiving bequeathed gifts from Joan and will receive one third of the liquid assets of the estate; TLC's portion is valued at approximately \$3.5 million.

Pre-deceased by her husband Gordon in 2017, Joan passed away on February 3, 2020, at age 89. Having moved to the Blenkinsop Valley as a young girl, Joan wished to see the lands she and Gordon had called home for decades protected to advance the biodiversity of the Blenkinsop Valley. Funds donated from the bequest will be used to create an endowment fund with the Victoria Foundation to maintain the Blenkinsop Valley properties in perpetuity in accordance with Joan's wishes.

In the years prior to her passing, Joan met with TLC staff and board to discuss her wish to protect the urban greenspace surrounding her home for birds and other wildlife. If you are looking for more information about planned giving with TLC, please visit www.conservancy.bc.ca or contact Cathy Armstrong at carmstrong@conservancy.bc.ca or 250-479-8053.

Saanich Parks Volunteer Profile



By Barbara and Andre DeLeebeek (Pulling Together Volunteers) and Katie Turner (Park Stewardship Coordinator)

Barbara and Andre De Leebeek are Pulling Together lead stewards in Boulderwood Hill Park and restoration volunteers in PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park). This committed couple can be seen at other stewardship work parties in Saanich Parks, and always with smiling faces.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Saanich Parks?

The objective is clear: habitat restoration. We enjoy everything... from Saanich Parks being there to help and inform the process, to the pleasure of getting out in nature, and the satisfying physicality of removing unwanted plant species while bonding with fellow volunteers.

Tell us about one of your most memorable experiences volunteering?

It was very satisfying to remove the last of the larger invasive Scotch Broom from the summit of Boulderwood Hill after several years of effort by ourselves and others. Now that the broom has been removed, we see native vegetation such as Camas, Fawn Lilies and Licorice Fern repopulate where the broom once dominated.

Tell us a bit about yourself?

We were raised and educated in Burnaby. Work life took us to Alberta and then the wide world beyond for over 25 years. Our 2 daughters were born and raised mostly in Europe and live there still. We deem ourselves citizens of the world but upon retirement returned to our roots.



Boulderwood Hill Park

Volunteers pulling together at Boulderwood Hill Park



Habitat restoration has always resonated with us and wherever we have lived we have contributed locally. Moving to Saanich, we were thrilled to volunteer with the Pulling Together Program. We are active dancers, hikers, and a nemesis to invasive plants.

Andre and Barbara lead work parties on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30-3:00 at Boulderwood Hill Park and they welcome helpers. For more information about the Pulling Together Volunteer program [Volunteer for Pulling Together | District of Saanich](#) or to join a work party [Events Calendar | District of Saanich](#)

Eight-legged Pumpkins

By Claudia Copley,
Entomology Collections Manager, Royal BC Museum



Garden Cross Orbweaver spiderlings (*Araneus diadematus*)
Credit: Thomas Barbin: <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/26951993>

Pumpkin season is the time to really appreciate orb-weaving spiders in our region– they seem to be everywhere! The reality is that almost every one you notice is the introduced Garden Cross Orb-Weaver (*Araneus diadematus*) - a European species that now inhabits urban areas throughout much of southern British Columbia. It can easily be recognized by the cross shape on the front of the abdomen, no matter what colour form you find.

The orb-weaving spiders belong to the family Araneidae, and there are 35 species in 11 genera in the province. They are responsible for the 'classic' Charlotte's Web-type spider web (without the messages!), and there are videos online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNtSAQHNONo>) that will show the step-by-step creation of these marvelous structures. They are known to construct a new web each day, and the silk from the previous web is eaten to re-use the proteins, which are biologically expensive to produce.

Although the orb-weavers are most noticeable in the fall, there are actually many more born each spring that did not survive to reach adulthood. By fall the multitudes that emerged from one egg sac have been reduced by birds, other spiders, wasp predators, and a myriad of other sources of mortality. But, because they are forming an egg sac in their expanding abdomen, the females sitting in the centre of their large orb-webs become very obvious to us this time of year.



Garden Cross Orbweaver adult female (*Araneus diadematus*)
Credit: Darren Copley: <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/138894953>

If the opportunity arises, take the time to observe a male carefully approaching for mating. He is much smaller with large boxing glove-like palps in front, and it can take a long time for him to get close. The actual mating happens very quickly once he gets close enough because she is very likely to eat him. Either way, both males and females die over the winter but the egg sac that resulted from their mating will overwinter for next year's spider population.

Orb-weaving spiders do not have a dangerous venom and, like spiders more generally, play an important role in food webs. They primarily eat insects and they are eaten by many other organisms. Webs are even used by birds such as hummingbirds to construct their own nests. Although the Garden Cross Orb-Weaver spider is not native, it has become the most easily observed species in urban environments. As you venture out into more natural areas you may have opportunities to see some of its native relatives, which can be as large or larger, and variously patterned but always lacking the cross.

It's Time to Update Saanich's Urban Forest Strategy

By Darren Copley and Alix Link,
Saanich Parks

Saanich's urban forest contributes to the well being of our community and to a sustainable environment. It is recognized as a highly valued asset in Saanich and is made up of all trees and their ecosystems in the District including:

- in parks and private lands
- on commercial and institutional lands
- along highways, roads and trails and
- throughout open spaces in the community

In 2010, Saanich's first Urban Forest Strategy was endorsed by Council, with a 10-year timeframe. The Strategy's overarching goal is to protect and enhance the urban forest canopy. During that time, the Tree Preservation Bylaw was replaced with the Tree Protection Bylaw in 2014, which was further strengthened in 2019. Saanich also planted thousands of trees and implemented many forward-thinking policies and programs (<https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Bylaws~and~Policies/tree-protection-bylaw-2014-no-9272.pdf>) including establishing the Urban Forest Reserve Fund. At the same time, since 2010, Saanich and the world we live in has changed with new challenges and opportunities. As such, we are modernizing our Urban Forest Strategy to ensure that we're prepared for the future.

Now that residents have experienced heat domes, atmospheric rivers, and COVID lockdowns, the benefits trees provide are even more important. Trees provide cooling through shading and evapotranspiration; their root systems reduce the effects of flooding, and they are proven to enhance

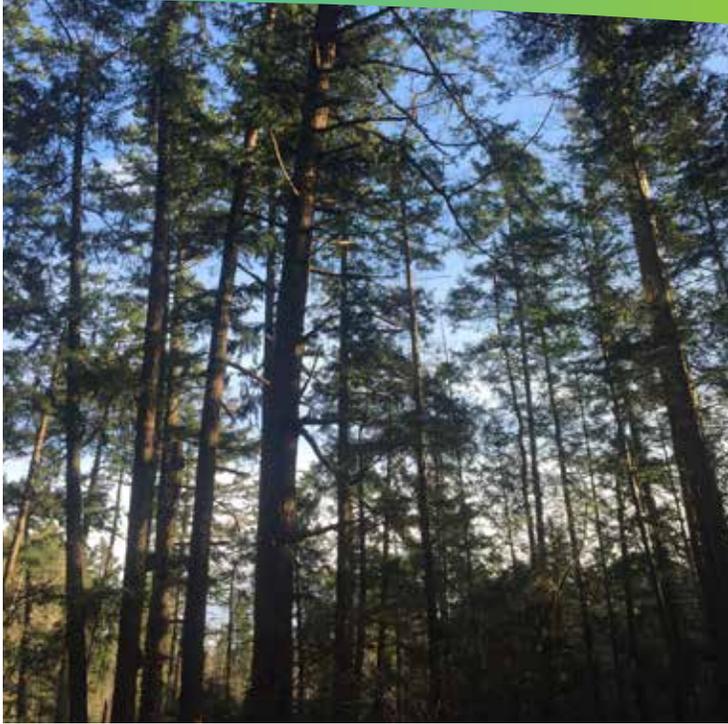


Vine Maple

mental and physical wellness. As importantly, trees provide for critical wildlife needs. For example, it has been demonstrated that a pair of chickadees need between 6,000 – 9,000 caterpillars to raise a clutch of chicks. That is a lot of caterpillars! Many native insect species rely exclusively on native trees; Property Duskywing caterpillars only eat Garry Oak leaves and Pine White Butterfly caterpillars prefer to eat Douglas-fir needles (despite their name).

The need to “Review and implement the Urban Forest Strategy” was identified in Saanich Council's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan (<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/strategic-and-financial-planning-1/the-strategic-plan.html>) and funding for this important initiative was endorsed at the end of 2020. Community members, stakeholders, municipal staff, and Council Committees will be given opportunities to help develop the Urban Forest Strategy update during two phases of engagement.

In recent months, communities have already had the opportunity to tell us about important urban forest places using our online mapping tool (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/86ea5d7de2bb4ab5a3c342d7fad0ae51>) as part of the first phase of engagement. This information combined with



The forest at Cuthbert Holmes Park

other reports and feedback, will inform the State of the Urban Forest report to provide a snapshot of Saanich's urban forest canopy cover and reflect on its status.

This winter, the project team will seek to learn more about our community's concerns and aspirations related to the urban forest. Community members will be invited to provide input at an online open house, and a survey. During the second phase of engagement in 2023, the project team will seek feedback on the draft Strategy.

The updated Urban Forest Strategy will provide guidance to staff, Council and residents in how to manage Saanich's urban forest for the next 10 to 50 years. An implementation plan is anticipated in Spring/Summer 2023 and will be included for Council's consideration.

Contribute your voice to the future of our urban forest.



Trees to be planted in Saanich parks and boulevards

Our current Urban Forest Strategy can be found on our website here (<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/natural-environment/trees/urban-forest-strategy.html>). There is also an [e-newsletter](#) where you can find out more about future engagement opportunities. Your feedback and participation in this important initiative will inform our community and its wellbeing for generations to come!

Saanich Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

Likely you know that we live in a special place here on south Vancouver Island. It is special for so many reasons, including the unique and rare ecosystem that occurs here. This ecosystem, known as the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone, covers just 0.3% of BC and, included in this zone, and even rarer, are our iconic Garry Oak ecosystems. It is here that many species at risk are found, including plants, insects and other invertebrates, vertebrates, and even fungi.

This rare Garry Oak ecosystem, stretches in a narrow band from Victoria around the east side of Vancouver Island up to Nanaimo, and includes the Gulf Islands and small pockets of the lower mainland. This is also where most of the population of Vancouver Island lives, which has resulted in significant changes in the original ecosystem and continues to put pressure on what is remaining. Land use changes, from urban development to agriculture, have reduced the remaining natural ecosystems. Invasive species, in addition to climate change, add extra pressure.

All of these factors point to the importance of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy to lead the District's work and approach in how we want to manage, maintain, and enhance the remaining natural ecosystems. The intent of the Strategy is to identify priorities and lay out a path that acknowledges the difficult trade-offs that will need to be made as Saanich continues to grow.

In revoking the Environmental Development Permit Area (EDPA) in 2018, Council directed staff to develop an Environmental Policy Framework that would include: the [Climate Plan \(2020\)](#), a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and enhanced stewardship opportunities. Council also created a technical committee, the [Resilient Saanich Technical Committee](#) (RSTC) consisting of local experts appointed to lead the initiative.

Saanich is developing its [Biodiversity Conservation Strategy](#) within the [Resilient Saanich initiative](#) (2020-2023), which is intended to guide the District's approach to maintaining, restoring and enhancing biodiversity. A [State of Biodiversity](#) Report is being developed by Diamond Head Consulting and will be available early winter. This snapshot, along with public engagement and expert advice, will provide information to inform the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. A draft strategy is anticipated in spring/summer 2023.

Recently, Saanich residents have had the opportunity to share information about urban forest and biodiversity locations they value or feel could be improved on an online mapping tool, "[StoryMap](#)".

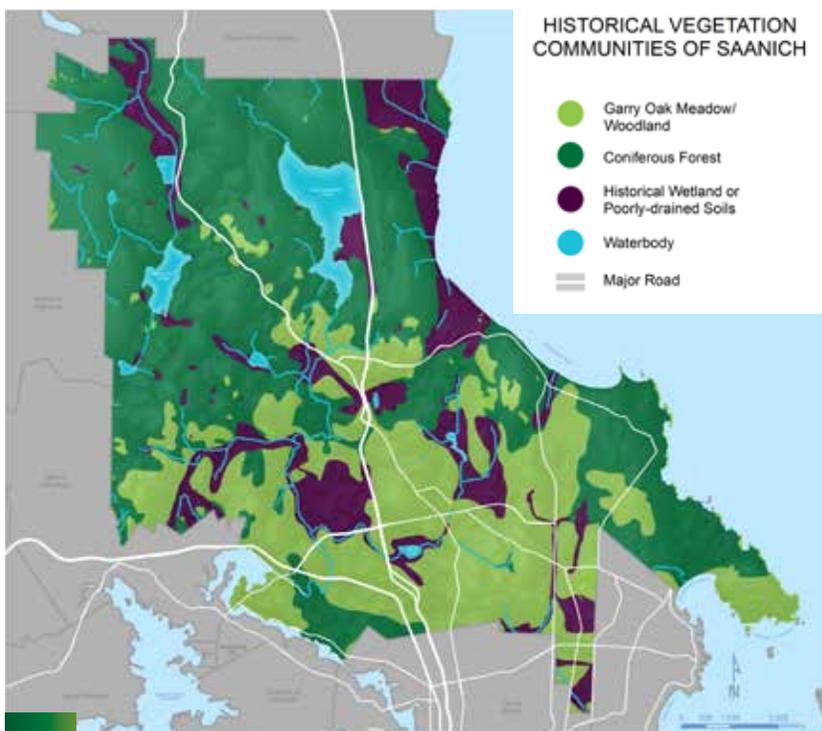
The broader Resilient Saanich initiative is being led by the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee, supported by Saanich staff and consultants. In August 2022, Council received draft [principles and goals](#) for an Environmental Policy Framework along with a workplan for the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

In November, staff and the RSTC are meeting with [WSÁNEĆ](#) community members and the [WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council](#) to better incorporate their values into the Urban Forest Strategy and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

To stay informed, you can sign up for the [Resilient Saanich e-Bulletin](#) to learn about updates and public participation opportunities. You can also view updates and past e-Bulletins on our [Resilient Saanich Updates webpage](#). If you have any questions, please contact the Resilient Saanich staff team at biodiversity@saanich.ca.

All data displayed on this map is estimated from historical maps and data sources.

Map is intended for general reference purposes only and land designations may be inaccurate at large scale.



Take Action Now to be Safe this Storm Season

Submitted by CRD Environmental Services,
November 2022

The Insurance Bureau of Canada reported that last November's floods were the most costly severe weather event in BC's history. Record-breaking rainfalls caused rivers and streams to overflow, affecting roads, triggering landslides and resulting in many people losing their homes.

With a few storms ahead in the capital region, taking action now to manage rainwater at home can help prevent floods and pollution of our waterways. What actions can we take?

- **Replace impervious surfaces with grass, gravel, cobblestone or other permeable pavement options when possible.** Using porous paving alternatives in spaces like your driveway will help absorb rainwater, reducing runoff volumes and preventing pollutants like dirt and oil residue from entering our waterways.
- **Manage rainwater with rain gardens and green rooftops.** Rain gardens and green roofs are designed to hold and soak in rainwater runoff temporarily. They effectively remove sediments and chemicals in rainwater and can be adapted to highly urbanized areas. They also support living plants by replicating natural pollutant removal mechanisms from forested ecosystems.



- **Collect and store rainwater for future use.** With a harvesting system, rainwater can be treated and purified for outdoor irrigation and domestic purposes such as flushing. Rainwater harvesting can help supplement municipal water demand, recharge our groundwater and reduce the volume of water that enters our stormwater system.



Want to learn more about preventing stormwater pollution?

Visit www.crd.bc.ca/livegreen.

Colquitz River Restoration

Providing Important Habitat for Salmon in an Increasingly Urbanized Watershed

By Katrina Adams, B.Sc., B.I.T
Water Quality and Freshwater Biology Coordinator,
Peninsula Streams and Shorelines

Peninsula Streams and Shorelines (PSS), in partnership with the District of Saanich, restored a 90 metre section of the Colquitz River within Copley Park East this past August. The result of the project provides essential spawning and rearing habitat for both Coho Salmon and Coastal Cutthroat Trout, which are regulars in the river, along with other fish and wildlife. This work is a continuation of past restoration work that occurred in the park in 2019 and 2020. Restored habitat that can now support salmon totals approximately 300 m.

The instream work involved the construction of two long boulder cluster runs and three Newbury weirs, with several spawning gravel beds. These help with oxygenating the water and increasing aquatic invertebrate diversity, providing important food sources for fish. Pools, large rock, and woody debris were added to create habitat for fish, and to repair bank erosion. A viewing platform was installed just above a deep pool near the playground, where visitors should be able to spot salmon returning to spawn in late fall. Planting will also occur later this fall to enhance the vegetation of the riverbanks with the goal of reducing erosion and to enhance overall biodiversity.

Despite the multitude of threats from pollution, urban development, and climate change, salmon come back every year to spawn in the Colquitz River, demonstrating an amazing resilience to the countless challenges that exist in an urban river. This illustrates the importance of continued habitat restoration, improving stormwater management practices as well as continuing to raise public awareness about the threats to our watersheds.

Project supporters include the Pacific Salmon Foundation, who has been one of PSS' primary supporters in their goal of restoring urban streams throughout Greater Victoria. Other project supporters include BC Community Gaming Grants, and of course the District of Saanich. Please contact peninsulastreams@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteer opportunities or would like to know more about this project. For more information, visit <http://peninsulastreams.ca/watersheds/colquitz-watershed>.



EVENTS



Saanich Recreation Trails & Treks

<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-community/parks/events-in-park/trails-treks.html>

Any questions please call Jason at 250-475-5427 or email at jason.jones@saanich.ca

Walking Round the Park *NEW* (FREE, registration required)

Mondays | 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

Join us for a social stroll and set your own pace and distance. The chosen parks have wide, level walkways with paved or well-groomed gravel surfaces and multiple benches. Bring your walking sticks, poles, rolling walker or other mobility aids.

Easy Walks (FREE, registration is required)

Mondays | 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm

One-hour, easy-paced social strolls on pavement and groomed trails through parks and interesting neighbourhoods. Routes avoid steep hills and busy trails where possible. Most walks start near bus stops. Wear supportive shoes. No dogs please.

Nov 7 - Layritz/Colquitz Creek

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

Nov 14 - Shelbourne Valley

Meet by main entrance to Cedar Hill Rec Centre, Cedar Hill Road

Nov 21 - The Gorge - Full Loop

Meet at Gorge Park parking lot, Gorge Road West, opposite Orillia Street. by the allotments. N.B. This is the parking area near the community gardens, not by the Canoe/Kayak Club.

Nov 28 - Swan Creek to Mt. View

Meet by trail entrance to Swan Creek on Jolly Pl., off Glanford Av. at Mackenzie Av. Park along Jolly Pl.

Dec 5 - Beckwith/Upper Squadra

Meet at Beckwith Park parking lot, Beckwith Ave., off Quadra St.

Dec 12 - Cedar Hill/Parks of Feltham Trail

Meet on Garnet Ave., by Nellie McLung library.

Gentle Walk & Talk 55+ (FREE, no registration required)

Tuesdays and Thursdays | 9:30 am to 11:00 am

Enjoy fresh air, beautiful scenery, friendly chat and gentle exercise. Walks follow mainly chip or gravel trails but may have some steep sections. Sorry, dogs not permitted.

Nov 8 | Hampton Park to Gorge Park

Meet Hampton Park parking lot; 225 Hampton Road

Nov 10 | Viaduct Flats to Horticulture Centre of Pacific

Meet at Viaduct Flats parking lot, Interurban Rd, N. of Camosun College

Nov 15 | Braefoot Park to Reynolds Park

Meet at Braefoot Park parking lot; 1359 McKenzie Ave

Nov 17 | Beckwith to Maltwood and Stoneywood Parks

Meet by washroom building in Beckwith Park off Beckwith Ave

Nov 22 | Glanford Park to Panama Flats

Meet at Glanford Park parking lot; 620 Kenneth Rd, off Glanford Ave

Nov 24 | Cadboro Bay to Queen Alexandra

Meet at Cadboro Gyro Park end of Sinclair Rd., beside washrooms

Nov 29 | Cadboro Gyro Park to Ten Mile Point Area

Meet at Cadboro Gyro Park end of Sinclair Rd. Beside washrooms

Dec 1 | Cedar Hill Golf Course to Kingsberry Pond

Meet at Cedar Hill Rec Centre main doors Dec 8

Dec 6 | Tyndall Park to Arbutus Park

Meet in Tyndall Park parking lot; 4370 Tyndall Ave

Dec 8 | Gorge Waterway

Meet at Gorge Water Waterway Pk. near Canoe Club off Tillicum

Dec 13 | Beckwith Park to Bernard Park

Meet at Beckwith Park near washroom building

Dec 15 | Colquitz to Hyacinth Park

Meet at Colquitz Creek park sign nr. Silver City Theatre at Tillicum Mall

Dec 20 | Layritz Park parking lot off Glyn Rd

Meet at Layritz Park parking lot off Glyn Rd Layritz off Glyn Rd

Sunday Hikes: All ages (FREE, registration is required)

Sundays | 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Discover the beauty and variety of Saanich parks. Please wear sturdy footwear as walk routes sometimes include steep, rough trails. Bring drinking water.

Nov 13 | Beckwith/Christmas Hill/Lakehill area

Meet at Beckwith Park parking lot, Beckwith Ave., off Quadra St.

Dec 11 | Mystic Vale/Cadboro Bay

Meet in Henderson Recreation Centre parking lot next to covered bike storage.

Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

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

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 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). All experience levels welcome. Non-members can participate up to three times.

At the time of this writing, in-person talks at UVic have not been approved. Please register for the online presentations—see links in each description.

Natural History night (every 2nd Tuesday)

Coastal Bears | Tues, Nov 8, 7:30 pm

It's Tough To Be Tiny | Tues, Dec 13, 7:30 pm

Botany Night (every 3rd Tuesday)

TBA | Tues, Nov 15, 7:30 pm

Birder's Night (every 4th Wednesday)

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas | Nov 23, 7:30 pm

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sdeCqzrkoHN28mXwqPzDXnM5AJ_tGPSyJ

Marine Night (last Monday of the month)

Cannibalism, Costly Care and Cuckoldry in a Singing Toadfish | Nov 28, 7:30 pm

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMocOGtrj0qH9L0rofTHtGC00rjW_N1_h7A

October 27, 2022

Hot off the press!

Check out Saanich's new Naturescape Booklet

Naturescaping is a way to protect, maintain, and enhance wildlife habitat and native biodiversity.

The new [Saanich Naturescape Booklet](#) is a 22-page resource that provides information and ideas to start or further develop naturescaping on your property. What is naturescaping, you ask? Naturescaping is a way to protect, maintain, and enhance wildlife habitat and local biodiversity and encourages the use of native plants in landscaping.

Saanich's Official Community Plan includes naturescaping as a way to maintain and improve wildlife habitats. Saanich's Local Area Plans and bylaws also promote Naturescaping.

Saanich provides residents with support for naturescaping through the Natural Intelligence Program and related naturescape initiatives and resources. The new Saanich Naturescape booklet helps empower residents to be stewards of the natural environment and protect wildlife, enhance local biodiversity, and conserve water.

Naturescaping has many benefits aside from ecological values, including economic, human health and well-being, not to mention it's fun! Through naturescaping you can also reduce stormwater run-off, reduce your yard maintenance and costs, reduce climate impacts from mowing and provide valuable ecosystem services, including supporting climate regulation.



Saanich joined the UN in declaring 2021 to 2030 as the UN Decade of Ecological Restoration. This declaration calls upon everyone to get involved in "reviving damaged ecosystems." Naturescaping is one way Saanich residents can participate and contribute to increasing biodiversity in Saanich and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Visit saanich.ca/naturescape to take part, download the booklet, and find out how to incorporate the many benefits of naturescaping into your backyard!

Join the *Our Backyard* mailing list!



Keep 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.

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