



www.centralvalleynaturalists.org

Meetings are held the second
Wednesday of each month
(except July and August) at 7:30 p.m.
in the Seniors' Resource Centre
Michael Collins Room
2478 McCallum Road, Abbotsford

Mailing address: P.O. Box 612
Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z8
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NEWSLETTER

March 2008

*“To know nature
and to
keep it worth knowing”*

The objectives of the Central Valley Naturalists

- *To enjoy and interpret natural history*
- *To promote an understanding and an appreciation of natural ecosystems*
- *To promote the concept of stewardship of natural resources*
- *To participate as naturalists in public consultations related to questions of environment and development in the Fraser Valley*

*Don't forget to
renew your 2008
CVN membership!!*

Meeting Schedule

March 12, 2008

Members' Slide Night

CVN members will be sharing their nature slides and experiences.

Science Fair Winners will also give their presentations

April 9, 2008 see below

May 14, 2008

Programs being explored for April and May are:

- ❖ forest ecology
- ❖ environmental inventories and mitigation of transportation projects
- ❖ Mountainview Conservation & Breeding Centre's effort to help the endangered Spotted Owl.

June 11, 2008

Annual Picnic



January 2008 Newsletter

at Bunbury's place at 6:30 pm

More details to follow



FIELD TRIPS

The **FIELD TRIPS** could be of 2 to 4 hours in duration.

Please remember that all participation in field trips is at your own risk. For details on any of these Field Trips and carpooling, contact **Michael Manley at 604-859-9982.**

N.B. PLEASE CONTACT THE LEADER A DAY BEFORE THE FIELDTRIP OF YOUR INTENT.

This will greatly help in planning and carpooling, etc.

March 8, 2008 - Saturday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Join *Birds on the Bay* and the *Langley Field Naturalists* for a walk along the *Fort-to-Fort Trail* at *Derby Reach Regional Park* that provides access to both forest and river, for sightings of ducks and birds. In addition, we will view the location of the first fort site and visit quaint historic Fort Langley.

March 29, 2008 - Saturday
Birch Bay to be confirmed

April 5, 2008 - Saturday

Serpentine Wildlife Area to be confirmed

April 12, 2008 - Saturday
- 9:30 am

Hogan Family Nature Park
Cleanup



The Park is situated on Debruyne Road off Bradner Road. Once there you are well on your way to the Bradner Flower Show held April 11 - 13. First help us clean the *Naturescape* flower bed at HFN Park. Many hands make light work and the rewards are bountiful: clean park, good company, coffee, cookies and a walk amongst the spring flowers. Perhaps Glenn will show us something special again!

April 21 - Monday



2008 PITCH-IN CANADA Week
April 21 - 27

April 21 - Pemberton Hill Cleanup

A CVN work party is being organized to remove garbage from the north end of Bradner Road, Pemberton Hill, to contribute toward cleaning up our environment during Pitch-in Canada Week. This gravel road section has a history of abuse but was recently closed by the City making it feasible to keep the area free of dumping. This will be held Monday April 21 between 5 and 8 p.m. It is a rough hillside suitable only for people comfortable with working on unstable, steep ground and not for children 12 or under. Pre signup will be requested at the March or April meetings to help with organization and to share final

instructions. Look for other projects that may be organized in your neighbourhood. For more information contact Wendy DaDalt at 604.856.2575 and the campaign website www.pitch-in.ca

May 8, 2008 - Thursday

Arbour Day

Details to follow

May 10, 2008 - Saturday

Iona Regional Park and Sewage Lagoons

With ornithologist Dr. Martin McNicholl to see the yellow-headed blackbirds that nest each spring in this area which is rich in bird life. This fieldtrip is combined with the Langley Field Naturalists.

May 29 to June 1, 2008



BC Nature Spring Conference and AGM in Penticton

The theme of the conference is "South Okanagan: A Century of Change"
Check out the Winter 2007 edition of BC Nature for details on the speakers and the many wonderful fieldtrips that are planned.

May 31, 2008 - Saturday 6:00 am to Noon

Glen Valley Bird Count - Glen Valley Watershed Society

Here is your chance to spend an enjoyable day in one of the most beautiful parts of the Fraser Valley. Glen Valley is a quiet, rural area nestled against the Fraser River and straddling the Langley/Abbotsford border. With a diversity of habitats Glen Valley is home to a wide variety of birds and wildlife.

The GVWS will be hosting a wrap-up barbecue to give everyone a chance to enjoy some good food and mingle with other birding enthusiasts.

Meeting place is the Fort Langley Winery located at 26100 block of 84th Avenue. To register or for more information contact Sarah Atherton, Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS) 604-532-3517 or satherton@tol.bc.ca

June 20, 21 and 22 (weekend)

Bird Blitz in Manning Park, BC

Details to follow

Sign on a dandelion-covered lawn:

**“Give them an inch,
and they’ll take a yard!”**



FIELD TRIPS
REPORTS

February 9, 2008 - Saturday

Cheam Lake Wetlands Regional Park and Hope Slough

Snow covered the ground and a wispy fog covering was hanging above Cheam Lake Wetlands when we arrived to find Denis Knopp and approximately 20 other naturalists waiting. Many Trumpeter Swans and ducks could be heard calling out on the

lake. The low marshy areas still had an icy covering; however, Denis gave us an excellent tour, walking us around the circle while telling us about the wetlands bog. I was fascinated by all that lives in, or migrate to, or stay in the area - truly making it quite a unique place. Denis reported that Cheam has several types of dragonflies - one is very rare. Also, several species of birds either nest or migrate through, such as the Green Heron and Least Flycatcher. We returned home along the Camp and Hope Sloughs where we found many, many Wood Ducks, as well as other waterfowl.



However, of the highlights of the day was when young Rhys spotted a pair of fat shiny beavers sitting on a log in the slough! Getting caught up in his excitement, we managed to get a few pictures. (not available at time of newsletter)

Anne Gosse, Langley Field Naturalists

CONSERVATION

"To keep it worth knowing"

The following letter re **Whatcom Road** was sent to city staff and also to Mayor and council. Thank you very much to those who came out to the city's presentation,

contributed to the discussion, and added valuable input to our final submission.

Our city's natural areas badly need watchdogs and our members' efforts will help to conserve these irreplaceable spaces.

We encourage others to come forward at the different public hearings and open houses - numbers make a difference in making things happen!

COMMENTS ON WHATCOM ROAD EXTENSION FROM CENTRAL VALLEY NATURALISTS

February 26, 2008

The Central Valley Naturalists would like to thank city staff Phil Blaker, Tanya Bettles and Jan Loots for the opportunity to meet and discuss the Whatcom Road extension project.

We have the following comments on the proposal:

We hope that more consultation, as opposed to information presentation, will take place on upcoming project proposals that significantly affect Abbotsford's natural environment. It appears that Option 2 has been chosen without public input, compromising the public consultation process. The option chosen has significant environmental impacts and we feel that the public should have been able to have meaningful input into the route selection.

We are pleased that the city is proposing innovative storm water and drainage techniques, and pollution removal. However we are concerned that the existing hydrological regime may be altered with detrimental impacts on surrounding forested and existing and proposed wetland habitat, especially when the cumulative effects of tree removal, residential construction and other impervious infrastructure are considered.

We commend the city for hiring consultants to propose mitigation measures. We are unsure to what extent these proposed measures would be used by wildlife. There is particular concern that the habitat fragmentation caused by bisecting the area with the extension will result in the western side of the road acting as a population sink – one large animal culvert crossing may not be sufficient for the length of the proposed road extension. Although choosing the cheapest option has been partially justified by the resulting availability of funds for mitigation, how likely is it that the budget for the recommended mitigation measures will be approved?

We feel it is critically important that staff and council work with developers to ensure that significant core habitat is preserved on both sides of the road. Otherwise all attempts at remediation and mitigation of the road's impacts, including wildlife travel corridors, will be an expensive but pointless exercise. It would be seen as an attempt to appear to be doing the right thing.

We strongly believe that the value of streams, even ephemeral ones, and riparian vegetation for wildlife other than fish requires more consideration in planning decisions.

The "Handsome" Eagle



Handsome, the eagle died last month at the age of 16. He will be fondly remembered by Steve Howard, his master, thousands of children and adults alike who were delighted to see him. Steve would bring him and his displays to Arbour Day, Eagle Fest, Mt Lehman Days, Canada Day, Bradner Flower Show, Rivers Day, fairs, malls, schools, etc. for educational purposes.

Handsome was injured as a fledgling as he was eating road kill (a deer) and was hit by a truck and eventually ended up at the Owl Rehabilitation Centre in Williams Lake. His injuries were too far gone for him to be rehabilitated so they applied for a permit so they could use him for educational purposes.

Handsome was housed at Monica's Wildlife Centre in Langley. He would make certain eagle noises when he heard the sound of Steve's truck.

There will be a **void** now at the CVN's displays and in Steve's life. Maybe we can apply for an educational purposes permit and replace him with a new eagle?

Winter-fed birds yield healthier chicks

OTTAWA – Birds that you feed through the winter will raise bigger and healthier broods next spring, according to the first study to link feeding by humans to “breeding success.”

The study from Britain and Ireland focuses on a European type of chickadee – the white-tailed version - but scientists say the findings likely apply to Canadian chickadees, cardinals and blue jays too.



Birds that had access to feeders laid the same number of eggs as those that had to find all their own food, the scientists found. But the human-fed birds laid eggs earlier, giving their babies a chance to fatten up before all the other bird families are hunting for food. Their young also grew up stronger and healthier. In the end, these families produced one more surviving young bird than the birds left on their own.

A typical nest has about 10 eggs at the start.

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Bird-lovers in the U.K. and United States combined put out 500,000 tonnes of bird food each year, the study by the University of Exeter and Queen’s university Belfast found.

“We have very mild winters, and it probably has a much more substantial effect in places where the winters are hard,” such as Canada, said lead researcher Stuart Bearhop of the University of Exeter.

But there’s a remaining mystery: What part of the food matters most?

“We really don’t know whether it’s the energy or some other nutritional value,” Bearhop said. If the birds just need calories, then anything with fat will do. But it may be that feeders are supplying vitamins and minerals crucial to raising young, such as vitamin E, crucial in egg production and embryo development.

Peanuts and many seeds are rich in vitamin E.
Vancouver Sun February 6, 2008

NEWSLETTER - the newsletter is published in September, November, January, March and May. Any news items and interesting articles can be sent to Alice Roos at haroos@shaw.ca or 604-853-4283

E-MAIL ADDRESSES - In order to keep our costs down; the newsletter will be sent by e-mail to those that have an email address. Please provide your e-mail address to either Jacqie Reznick or Alice Roos. For those that cannot be reached by e-mail, copies will be available at the monthly meeting.

CVN EXECUTIVE

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Like to Travel? Know BC? Part-time Tour Guides Needed

Are you a "people" person who likes to travel? Do you like to share your knowledge of BC and beyond with visitors?

We are currently recruiting for multi-day tour guides to help us lead our tour groups. Our company is based in Ontario and has been operating tours in Canada for Canadians (with occasional international visitors) for over 30 years. We have increased our tours of western Canada and we need a few good people to help us here on a part-time basis. Ideal for retired or semi-retired person looking for a nice way to earn some extra income.



If you'd like to learn more, please contact Western Canada Manager George Duffy at 604-851-5097 (Abbotsford) or 778-888-2379 (Vancouver and rest of lower mainland)

Membership Fees - Single \$25, Family \$30 which are due January 1 each year.
Membership provides the following benefits: 5 CVN newsletters per annum, automatic membership in the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, subscription to "BC nature" (4 issues per year)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____ Fax: _____

Particular nature interests? (optional) _____

Expertise which could benefit the CVN. (optional) _____

Additional donations gratefully accepted Amount \$ _____

Please mail to Central Valley Naturalists, P.O. Box 612, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6Z8, or give to Jacqui at the hospitality desk at the monthly meeting. Membership fees are due January 1st each year.

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