

# The Log

Autumn 2005

FRIENDS OF ECOLOGICAL RESERVES NEWSLETTER

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## In-coming Presidents Report

by Mike Fenger

It is an honour and privilege to be associated with this dedicated group of volunteers and I happily offer all of you my energies in this new post. Thanks to Don Eastman and Peggy Frank and the wonderful and seasoned members of the Board for their commitment over the last few years at the helm. Thank you all.

For those of you who do not know me, here is a brief background. I have spent three decades as a government forester focused on conservation of biological diversity. As provincial biodiversity specialist, I have experience in policy, legislation, research, land use planning, inventory and environmental risk assessment. I was a member of the old growth strategy task force whose work formed the basis for expansion of the Protected Areas. I now have a private consulting practice. I believe deeply that Ecological Reserves are essential to our understanding of the environment and are the beacons for future generations when these protected areas will be the few remaining places where natural ecosystems preserve nature's blueprint. We are their stewards who convey the message that these areas are vital for the welfare of us all.

I want to celebrate some of the triumphs of the past two years since I became involved with FER. First, welcome back to the Ministry of Environment. The "Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection" handle was not only awkward but lacked a biological element. We thank MOE staff and FER volunteers and pay tribute to the sustained effort they put into the revised Warden's handbook. It is now available at [http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conserved/er\\_warden\\_handbook\\_\\_24may2005.pdf](http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conserved/er_warden_handbook__24may2005.pdf).

We also need to celebrate The Log and the webpage ([www.ecoreserves.ca](http://www.ecoreserves.ca)), our windows on the world and visa versa. These are high quality communication tools and informative sources for understanding ERs. Thanks to Denise, Editor of The Log and Alison, our Webmaster and to all our writers and contributors.

I have been fortunate in the last year to visit reserves in the Victoria area with Board members and wardens and I now begin to understand the challenges of access, education and invasive plants. Field tours to the Oak Bay Islands ER, Trial Island ER, Race Rocks ER, Mount Maxwell ER, Mount Tzuhalem ER,

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# The Log

Autumn 2005

The LOG is published 3 times a year by the Friends of Ecological Reserves to promote the establishment, management and maintenance of Ecological Reserves in British Columbia. The LOG is distributed to members, volunteer wardens, affiliates, supporters, government, friends and the enquiring public.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Friends.

Articles for publication are invited. The deadline for submissions for the Winter issue of *The LOG* is November 1, 2005

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*"President's Message" continued from page 1*

Mount Tuam ER, and Honeymoon Bay ER also enabled Morgan McCarl (our co-op student) to meet with the wardens and gather firsthand information on the assessment of the existing ERs. Further from home I was able to spend time with Eva Durance and visit Haynes Lease ER and Mahoney Lake ER in the south Okanagan. Even further from home I was able to spend 5 days with Parks staff members Larry Boudreau and Janice Joseph as a member of the team reviewing the boundaries of Gladys Lake ER.

Looking ahead, some of the challenges and opportunities for us appear to be communications between FER and the staff at Ministry of Environment (MOE). FER wardens are the extra eyes and ears for government staff and the regular exchange of information and inclusion in plans and priorities will benefit the ERs most directly. The interviews with wardens indicate that volunteers contribute the same amount of time annually as five persons helping oversee ERs. This is a significant boost to maintaining the integrity of ERs. Well done wardens! We are heeding your words and believe MOE staff also will be receptive to improvements from your insights. Working with MOE to implement improvements to the warden program is high on the "to-do" list.

*"A wonderful role for FER is to act as catalysts to dramatically increase and sustain ER-centered research and monitoring."*

In the year ahead, two significant projects initiated by FER will be completed. The work begun by Morgan McCarl will help focus our organization and bring the attention of the Ministry to what most needs to be done within the existing 147 ERs. Many are suffering degradation through access and overuse (Comox bluffs), others are suffering from increases in invasive species, broom, gorse and ivy (Trial Island) which are taking over from the native fauna for which the reserves were established. Many ERs lack a warden which means that MOE staff is less likely to be aware of changes and the need for a government response. Of the ERs lacking wardens, those closest to population centers are a priority for recruitment since they are most at risk from human incursion. Many wardens, some after contributing for 30 years, indicate a desire to make way for others. We will need to understand how best to meet the challenges that face wardens associated with ERs in remote areas such as marine islands as these are difficult and costly to access.

Most worrisome for me however, is the lack of consistent information and research that has been collected for ERs. If ERs are considered as books and we (society) as the librarians, our job will be to maintain the collection, not let it deteriorate, and not lose sight of the fact that the purpose of books is to inform readers, to educate and to inspire. Aside from a few notable and well-thumbed exceptions, most of our "books" lack readers. Baseline monitoring information and research is deficient or absent. That's not to say we aren't pleased and proud of those researchers and students we have been able to support and that have helped unravel the environmental mysteries awaiting those with interest and desire. A wonderful role for FER is to act as catalysts to dramatically increase and sustain ER-centered research and monitoring. Currently we support research to the full extent that donors and sponsors enable us to and we are grateful to those who have trusted us with contributions. The limited resources of FER indicate that if we want more focus in ERs we will need to attract funding from research institutes, colleges and universities too. To that end we plan to explore forming an FER science-advisory group to help us decide on focus and open some doors.

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"President's Message" continued from page 2

The other significant project supported by FER is the overview of the current ERs and Protected Areas. The question posed is: how well do these areas provide for a system of natural research benchmarks for long term monitoring and research? Our hope is that this assessment will form a significant contribution from FER and will lead to an increased profile. With the guidance from the Board I look forward to sharing the results and finding the next steps following the provincial assessment.

*"I believe deeply that Ecological Reserves are essential to our understanding of the environment and are the beacons for future generations..."*

Finally, I see a strong need in the next year to develop a mission and goals statement. Potential sponsors, donors, members, and prospective members all appreciate a clear and concise outline of why we exist and our plans for the future. The board and executive too benefit from this and it will be a useful tool for fund raising. I look forward to my time with FER and will approach the Presidents role knowing that what we focus on expands. ■

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## New Warden Handbook Launched

After much hard work and many drafts, the new Warden Handbook is available. The commitment to working on a new edition came out of The Gathering of volunteer wardens in Kamloops in 2003 at which time Nancy Wilkin of the then Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (now Environment) pledged her support. Regrettably, the Ministry has no plans at present to make it available in hard copy as it is not their policy to print publications that are available on line.

Wardens Art Carson, Malcolm Martin, Laurie Rockwell and Bev Ramey worked with Friends board member and past president Peggy Frank and warden

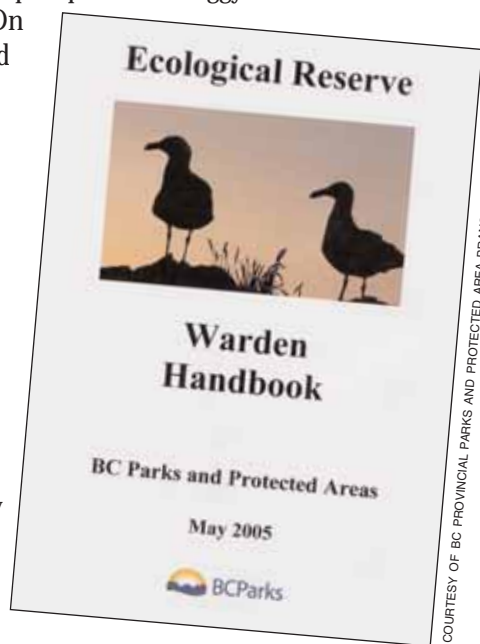
Eva Durance served as de facto chair. On the government side, Laura Darling had input from Area Supervisors across the province and others in Victoria.

It was a huge team effort which was completed in an amazing 18 months. Nice work, everyone!

The new handbook can be accessed online at: [http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conserves/er\\_warden\\_handbook\\_\\_24may2005.pdf](http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conserves/er_warden_handbook__24may2005.pdf)

Thanks to all who toiled so hard to make this updated version come into being. ■

*Cover of the new Warden Handbook*



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## Congratulations to Don Eastman

Don Eastman, our past president has been awarded the John Rieger Award by the Society for Ecological Restoration for his contributions to the theory, practice and public awareness of ecological restoration. Don spent 32 years as a wildlife conservation biologist with the Ministry of the Environment followed by five years at UVic as the Faculty Coordinator of the Restoration of Natural Systems program. He developed a new course model in which students work with community, a restoration expert and partners like the Capital Regional District, the Land Conservancy and the Gorge Waterway Association to develop restoration plans for an environmentally degraded area. These plans have been used successfully to fund and carry out the proposed restorations. Congratulations Don and thank you for your efforts both in the community and for The Friends. ■

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## Corrections

In the Ecological Reserve feature of the Spring 2005 issue, Hudson Rocks Ecological Reserve was incorrectly described as being 25 km North of Newcastle Island. The correct distance should read "2.5 km". Hudson Rocks also indicates "no warden on record" when in fact Bill Merrilees has been the warden there since its inception in 1996. ■

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# A Glimpse of Morgan McCarl's work on the Ecological Reserves Report

by Peggy Frank

Morgan's report looked at Ecological Reserves (ERs) in British Columbia in 2005 from two distinct viewpoints: that of the volunteer wardens and that of the area supervisors. Based on availability and ability to participate, Morgan interviewed a random selection of wardens and area supervisors with responsibility for ERs throughout the province. This issue of *The LOG* focuses on her findings from warden interviews.

There are 146 ERs in British Columbia and only 80 (or 55%) have wardens. More wardens are certainly needed. Morgan was able to interview 45 wardens regarding their experience in 66 ERs (some oversee several reserves). Given that there are only 80 ERs with wardens, Morgan's report represents at least 83% of potential warden interviews. We conclude that the information gathered is representative of the Provincial volunteer wardens. The first few interview questions addressed the length of time a warden had been volunteering, the amount of time being spent on warden duties and whether they planned to continue in their role as warden for the next five to ten years. The objective was to document the effort and experience of ER wardens.

The wardens have hundreds of years of combined experience. Almost all wardens (95 %) have over five years of experience, 80% have over ten years of experience, 60% have over 15 years experience and 40% have over 20 years experience. The average warden has been active for over 15 years. The longest active warden has been in service for 32 years, while the shortest term of service was one year. Twenty wardens, or 39%, began their service within five years of the establishment of the ER which they monitor. There

is an incredible amount of historic knowledge amongst the wardens. The amazing number of years of dedicated service indicates one of two things: either the warden program has been a success in terms of retaining wardens over long periods or the wardens are incredibly dedicated volunteers. Since the warden program was dropped, along with several other environmental programs almost two decades ago, we can only conclude that the wardens are completely dedicated to their work.

Unfortunately, and predictably, eighteen of the wardens interviewed (42%) plan on stepping down from their reserve responsibilities for one reason or another within the next five years. Of these eighteen wardens, ten have a replacement in mind. Several of these proposed replacements are members of the same naturalist club as the warden. Given this changing situation, and the current existing shortage of wardens, a recruitment program is urgently needed. There is a growing need to create awareness of these volunteer positions, mentoring programs and clear requirements for recruitment of wardens. This process will be enhanced by support.

The concept for partnership between government and volunteer wardens was initiated in the 1970s soon after the first ERs were created. At this time ERs were separate from Parks and had their own program within government. The volunteer program began at this time. The program is a tribute to those who initiated it and must be judged a success in terms of longevity as seen in the 30 year veterans. Harnessing the involvement of volunteers over a long period is especially noteworthy, given that the program has not been operational since the mid-1980s.

Partnerships are currently being espoused as a way of doing business and using tax dollars to their best advantage. Many new partnerships have been initiated between provincial government, private sector and non-government organizations. The Ministry responsible for ERs (WLAP) Business Plan (objective 3) indicates a desire to continue partnerships in statements such as:

"Increased number of partnerships to conserve species and their habitats."

"Partnerships will be a crucial mechanism in the ministry's shift from being sole protector of the environment to promoting a shared stewardship approach. Key strategies include: working to establish and maintain relationships with First Nations, communities, academia, environmental organizations and industry to undertake activities to conserve species and habitats, and providing standards, guidelines and best management practices to private landowners to develop and implement sustainable stewardship practices."

Not surprisingly, Morgan's first recommendation is to strengthen the partnership between the government, FER and ER wardens by establishing an ER Warden program within central government so that lines of communications and accountability are clear at both the provincial and regional levels of government and to the volunteer wardens. The report recommends dedication of a full time person to manage the ER Warden Program. This position would be responsible for communications, direction, support, archives and assistance both to the wardens and to Ministry staff involved in ER management. ■

# Fences in Mt. Maxwell Ecoreserve

by Bristol Foster

There are now at least two 2m+ high exclosures in the Mt Maxwell ecoreserve, to keep both deer and sheep out. The old fence we put up was pretty useless as deer could jump in and help themselves. The exclosures are only about 1 ha each but it will be interesting to see how especially the Garry oak does without deer... ■



BRISTOL FOSTER

Bristol Foster inspects exclosure fences in Mt. Maxwell Ecological Reserve

## Canon Scholars Award – Emily Gonzales

In the “better late than never” category, it has just come to the attention of The Log that Emily Gonzales, PhD. student at UBC and one of last year’s winners of a Friends of Ecological Reserves scholarships, was also awarded one of eight prestigious Canon National Parks Science Scholarships of US\$78,000 in November of 2004. Says Emily, “It was a great honour and has been an incredible opportunity to meet the other scholars and discuss issues in National Parks around the Americas.” Congratulations Emily! ■



## The Gathering 2006

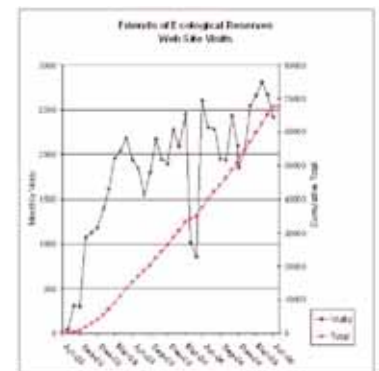
by Peggy Frank

Well it's time to plan another Provincial Warden Gathering – or is it? We would like to have the input by the end of 2005 so we can begin to plan and try to secure funding. It was such a great event in Kamloops, we need to find a way to do it again. But it is *your* event. Please provide your input to make it exactly what you want.

- Should we have another Provincial Gathering of ER wardens?
- What time of year?
- Where should it be – on the south coast? In the southern interior? In the northern interior? On the north coast?
- How long should the Gathering be?
- What should we discuss? What do you want to hear about? What do you want to learn?
- How should we arrange the sessions – workshop style – presentation style – other?

Send us your thoughts by e-mail or snail mail to [ecoreserves@hotmail.com](mailto:ecoreserves@hotmail.com) or Friends of Ecological Reserves, Box 8477, Victoria BC V8W 3S1 ■

For back issues of The Log,  
pictures, links and more visit  
[www.ecoreserves.bc.ca](http://www.ecoreserves.bc.ca)



# Honeymoon Bay Ecological Reserve

by Genevieve Singleton  
Warden, Honeymoon Bay Ecoreserve

The late Cedric and Gertie Myers, residents of Honeymoon Bay, well-known naturalists and members of the Cowichan Valley Naturalists were instrumental among others in having the Sutton Creek area of Honeymoon Bay (9 km west of Lake Cowichan on Vancouver Island) protected for its outstanding populations of *Erythronium revolutum*. It is a pretty little area of 7.5 hectares with Sutton Creek meandering on one border. There are beautiful open glades of Big leaf maple, forested areas, and a beautiful spring flower show of *Erythronium* and many other flowers, including some blue and yellow-listed ones. It is located at the edge of the rainforest and rain shadow forest and protects significant species from both zones.

***“The community organized, fundraised and replaced the flower identification sign, which was of sentimental value to residents, having been made by a well-loved local woodsman and artist Vincent Allan.”***

Western Forest Products donated the land in 1983 to the BC Second Century Fund, now called Nature Trust. In 1984 it was leased to the Province as an Ecological Reserve for 100 years. Leon Pavlick did a botanical inventory in 1984.

I became Warden in Feb. 2003 when asked by BC Parks. There had not been a Warden in some time.



The new Honeymoon Bay Ecological Reserve sign painted by local artist Shelley Ogden

Increasing levels of garbage dumping led to the closure of the parking lot (in the ER) in the spring of 2003. The crowning insult was when a grow op was dumped there and a posting on the Friends of Ecoreserve website stated that a marijuana plant was in the debris.

Soon after the parking lot was closed Syd Watts, Warden for Mt. Tzouhalem ER and I went to the reserve to pick up winter deadfalls. On our return trip we stopped at the local gas station where to our great surprise there was a petition addressing management of the Reserve. After discussion it turned out that community had a variety of concerns including the fact that a historic flower identification sign had been taken down without their input. This had been done since the sign was damaged from being in the elements. There was also a great deal of upset about the parking

lot being decommissioned. Merna Moffat, local community activist organized several meetings of the community and concerned parties. Don Closson, Cowichan Area Supervisor of BC Parks, the Friends of Ecological Reserves Board of Directors and the Cowichan Valley Naturalists were most helpful in facilitating and participating in several meetings with the community at large. I am very appreciative for their efforts since this led to a better understanding of issues to all parties concerned. It was agreed that all parties would be more proactive in communicating with each other. The community appointed a local resident to liaison with the Warden and the residents. Jim Fitzmaurice took this on and has done an excellent job and in addition has been most helpful with work parties at the Reserve.

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"Honeymoon Bay" continued from page 6

Since the parking lot was decommissioned the garbage dumping has totally decreased, and there is some local acceptance that this was a good idea. The community organized, fundraised and replaced the flower identification sign, which was of sentimental value to residents, having been made by a well-loved local woodsman and artist Vincent Allan. Shelley Ogden, a local artist did a beautiful job of painting a new sign. Al Grass built a new kiosk. A ceremony was held to celebrate the new sign and the old sign, which had been repaired, was given a place of honour in the local community hall. By the time of the printing of this newsletter there will be another new educational sign in place funded by the Cowichan Valley Naturalists clearly stating what an ER is and including information on rules and history.

*"It is a pretty little area of 7.5 hectares with Sutton Creek meandering on one border...It is located at the edge of the rainforest and rain shadow forest..."*

We have had continued issues regarding directional signage to the Reserve and have had to compromise. There is some limited signage requested by the local government. It is a delicate balancing act having an Ecological Reserve next to a population centre. Another concern is the ecological integrity of the Reserve, which David Polster addresses in a separate article. ■

## Will Honeymoon Bay Ecological Reserve Still Have *Erythroniums* 50 years from now?

by David F. Polster, M.Sc., R.P.Bio.  
Plant Ecologist

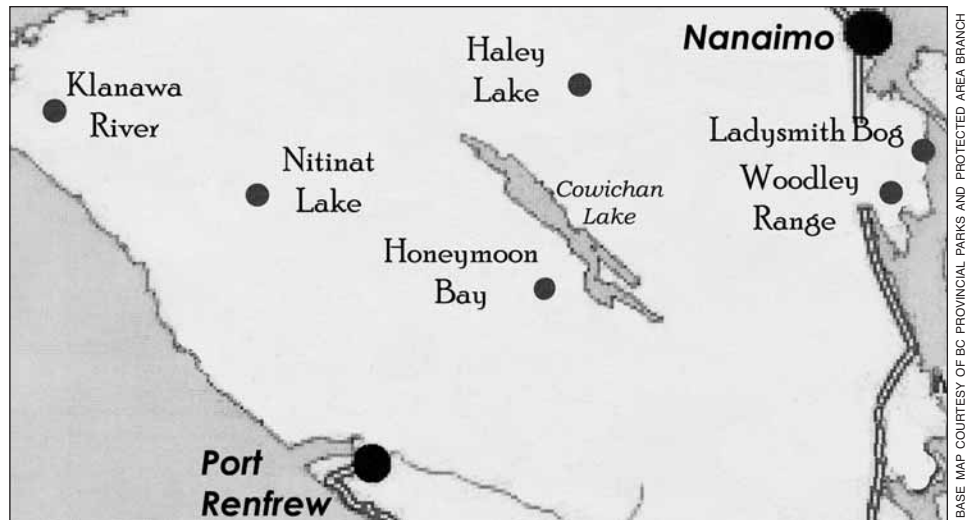
Construction of the logging road bridge across Sutton Creek at the upstream edge of the ecological reserve has caused a significant change in the hydrology of the creek and consequently the ecology of the reserve. Prior to bridge construction the creek would flood over the banks on an annual basis. This deposited a thin layer of fresh sediment on the floor of the reserve, burying seedling that were starting to establish, and more importantly, washing away the seeds of the big leaf maple. The pink fawn lilies and other perennial species were able to push up through this thin sediment layer, but many of the species that are now seen dominating the lily areas such as the false bugbane would have been suppressed. More importantly, the maple seedlings that are now taking over the reserve and will eventually suppress the lilies would not establish during the regime of flooding except in rare circumstances thus we would see old maples with no young ones in the understory.

So how is it that the bridge has caused this shift in the natural disturbance regime that is essential for the maintenance of the lily populations, and what can be done about it? When the bridge was built, rather than providing a bridge built on timber bents (groups of pilings set in a line perpendicular to the bridge that are used to support the bridge), large approach fills were constructed and a free span bridge was installed. However, as the creek flowed over a floodplain that is several hundred meters wide, the construction of the approach fills has resulted in constricting the creek during high flow periods (typically November and December just after the maple seeds have been deposited on the forest floor). The constriction in the creek creates an increase in the flow velocity that in turn causes scouring of the stream bed. The streambed in the vicinity of the bridge has dropped approximately one meter due to the loss of bed materials. This depression in the bed elevation extends for several hundred meters upstream and downstream of the bridge. The materials that have been lost from the bed are being deposited in large gravel bars downstream, resulting in bank erosion and other signs of hydrologic distress.

Remedial work would entail creating a porous bridge structure (pile supported?) and raising the bed elevation. Newbury riffles could be constructed to raise the bed elevation while enhancing the fisheries values of this section of stream in terms of spawning habitat. Detailed hydrologic studies would be required to determine appropriate bridge design as well as channel design. Given the extent of maple in-growth in the reserve, remedial work would also entail cutting the maple saplings that now cover the floodplain. Monitoring would be needed once annual flooding was re-established to see if restoring the natural disturbance regime would serve to reverse the ecological processes associated with elimination of flooding. It is not likely that BC Parks, due to limited budget, will have the resources to carry out this work. ■

# Ecological Reserves of Southern Vancouver Island

## PART II



BASE MAP COURTESY OF BC PROVINCIAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREA BRANCH

### ER 54 – Nitinat Lake

- Located 33 km NW of Port Renfrew, Vancouver Island
- 79 ha
- This reserve, established in 1974 protects the westernmost distribution of Douglas-fir on Vancouver Island. The mostly inaccessible terrain is a mix of steep slopes, rocky outcrops, bluffs and talus protecting a sensitive lakeshore habitat. The steep rocky cliffs provide nesting habitat for ducks and songbirds. In addition to trillium, false lily-of-the-valley, Siberian miner's lettuce, clasping twistedstalk and Hooker's fairy-

bells, there are at least six species of fern, 22 bryophytes and the red-listed Scouler's corydalis. According to Environment Canada's Species at Risk website, the entire Canadian population of *Corydalis scouleri* is limited to the Nitinat and Klanawa river basins and an area west of Cowichan Lake.

- Potential Threats: adjacent logging activity, especially on the eastern boundary of the reserve could impact the integrity of the reserve through blow-down or upslope erosion.
- Wardens: Jan and Warrick Whitehead



DENISE DE MONTREUIL

*Pink fawn lily*



COURTESY OF BC PROVINCIAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREA BRANCH

*Nitinat Lake Ecological Reserve*

### ER 113 – Honeymoon Bay

- Located 9 km W of Lake Cowichan town on Sutton Creek
- 7.5 ha
- This small triangular reserve between Sutton and Millar Creeks protects a large population of rare pink fawn lily (*Erythronium revolutum*) and numerous other wildflowers in an open woodland setting of bigleaf maple and red alder. Blooming around mid-April, the fawn lily cannot tolerate its leaves being picked and also requires a long period (4 to 6 years) to develop from seed to bloom. The blue-listed Smith's fairybells is found in the reserve as are the yellow-listed wild ginger, enchanter's nightshade, baneberry, vanilla leaf, starflower and kidney-leaved buttercup.

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“Ecological Reserves...” continued from page 8

- **Potential Threats:** The reserve attracts a great number of visitors during the blooming season with the attendant litter, trail widening and braiding, trampling and other disturbance of the wildflower habitat. Nearby logging is impacting drainage in the reserve and may eventually affect species survival.
- **Warden:** Genevieve Singleton (see Genevieve’s article on Page 6 regarding history and community issues in the Honeymoon Bay reserve and Dave Polstar’s piece on Page 7 on the effects of bridge hydrology on plant life in the reserve).



COURTESY OF BC PROVINCIAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREA BRANCH

Klanawa River Ecological Reserve

## ER 117 – Haley Lake

- Located approximately 32 km SW of Nanaimo
- 888 ha (according to the BC Parks government website)
- Established on land donated by MacMillan Bloedel Ltd 18<sup>th</sup> February 1987 with a boundary expansion of 27 hectares donated by Fletcher Challenge Canada Ltd. in 1991 (incorporating the Bell Creek colony). In 2000, as part of the BC government’s Protected Areas Strategy, the Haley Lake Ecological Reserve was expanded by 256 ha in a land trade with TimberWest, this increased the



COURTESY OF BC PROVINCIAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREA BRANCH

Vancouver Island marmot  
(*Marmota vancouverensis*),  
Haley Lake Ecological Reserve

reserve to its present total size. Haley Lake remains the only protected habitat for the rare and endangered Vancouver Island marmot (*Marmota vancouverensis*), an endemic species, and is listed in the World endangered species Red List. The reserve is situated on the steep rocky slopes of a subalpine ridge extending from Green Mountain in the Nanaimo River drainage and linked to Butler peak by a high pass. Meadow vegetation on talus and other colluvium forms the main marmot habitat and includes the rare Olympic Mountain aster (*Aster paucicapitatus*), the Olympic onion (*Allium crenulatum*), and the coastal shield fern (*Dryopteris arguta*). Thanks to its photogenic appearance and the hard work of the Marmot Recovery Foundation, the plight of these chocolate-brown burrow dwelling creatures has been well-publicized. The captive breeding program at Mount Washington under the direction of Dr. Andrew Bryant continues to turn out young marmots, some of which have been released at Haley Lake. Protecting the few remaining wild pairs from predation is the main problem. In

the winter of 2002-2003 six Golden eagles along with several wolves and cougars were shot resulting in a major public outcry. Non-lethal methods have been used in the recent introductions to the reserve. Two marmots released in 2000 are still there and this year 7 one-year-old marmots were released, 3 remain in the reserve (3 males left the reserve but 2 were killed in the logging slash by golden eagles). The recovery team and a university team have been staying on site. There are now four marmots, which were also released, living at Green Mountain. This was done in the hope that any dispersing marmots would have somewhere to go when they migrate to other colonies.

- **Potential Threats:** adjacent forestry activity on the boundaries of the reserve, causing noise and vibration, impacting water retention by alpine meadows; migration routes to other colonies are hindered by logging openings and vegetation change; too much pressure from studies and media. Although the Nanaimo Water Board is becoming stricter on access in the watershed

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"Ecological Reserves..." continued from page 9

there is still little control of hunters and others from going to the reserve even though it requires a permit.

- Wardens: Jan and Warrick Whitehead

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## ER 138 – Klanawa River

- Located near the West Coast Trail Unit of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, 5 k N of the mouth of the Klanawa River
- 90 ha
- Situated on a forested floodplain, this reserve contains some of the last old-growth stands in the area of western hemlock, western redcedar and Sitka spruce. Endangered marbled murrelets are thought to nest here as sightings are more numerous than in the next most likely nesting habitat at Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park. The river is populated by coho, chum and Chinook salmon, winter-run steelhead, sculpin, Pacific lamprey and cutthroat, although severe declines in fish numbers have occurred as a result of gravel movement probably due to forestry activities upstream. The reserve is considered the best site in the province for the red-listed redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*) and also contains the red-listed Scouler's corydalis.
- Potential Threats: Its proximity to logging activity means that logging roads, windfalls and the host of problems attendant on easy access all threaten this reserve. In addition, the reserve falls under the recommended minimum to maintain ecological viability.
- Warden: no warden on record

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## ER 139 – Ladysmith Bog (Yellow Point Bog)

- Located 10 km S of Nanaimo
- 141 ha

- This reserve protects a sensitive bog ecosystem with a great diversity of wetland and forest plant communities, open meadows, swamps and shallow lakes. It provides habitat to waterfowl, beaver and otter, small-mouthed bass, pumpkin-seed sunfish, stickleback and cutthroat trout. Considered to be close to the most biodiverse in the reserve system, the bog contains the blue-listed Vancouver Island beggarticks (*Bidens amplissima*), slender-spike mannagrass (*Glyceria leptostachya*) and water marigold (*Megalodonta beckii* var. *beckii*).
- Potential Threats: The reserve's proximity to urban areas and historical use as a recreational area makes it vulnerable to continuing human visitation. Soils in the reserve are thin and sensitive to mountain bike traffic, horse-back riding, cranberry harvesting and loss of water through water licenses on Priest Lake. Introduced species like Scotch broom are making incursions.
- Warden: no warden on record although Del Ferguson has made application and is awaiting confirmation.

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## ER 142 – Woodley Range

by Gary Backlund

- Located 2 km north of Ladysmith
- 166 ha
- Established in 1996, this reserve is comprised of meadows, bogs, second and old growth forest, and rock outcrops. The soil tends to be very shallow and moist due to a high degree of seepage. This reserve is one of the largest protected areas in the region, and supports the widest variety of plants (almost 200 now listed) in any British Columbia ecological reserve. Twenty-seven of these plants are rare, and five species plus a plant community are either red or blue listed. There are 15 sensitive ecosystems within the



Bog Bird's-Foot Trefoil  
(*Lotus Pinnatus*), Woodley Range ER



White-Top Aster (*Aster Curtus*),  
Woodley Range Ecological Reserve

reserve, as cataloged by the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) System. The reserve is somewhat unique in that over 60% of its area is catalogued as SEI. The two red-listed species are the White-Top Aster (*Aster curtus*), and the Bog Bird's-Foot Trefoil (*Lotus pinnatus*). Both are on the Species-At-Risk list and are rated as threatened. Woodley Range may have Canada's largest White-Top Aster population. When Woodley Range Eco-Reserve was created, one of its three known communities of White-Top Aster was severely dominated by Scotch Broom. Since the Broom control project started, the Aster has come back in large numbers. A count done on July 7, 2001 estimated 4,986 plants in this one community. Since that date four additional White-Top

continued on page 11

"Ecological Reserves..." continued from page 10

Aster communities have been discovered within the reserve.

- Potential Threats: Most of the rare plants within the reserve are not shade-tolerant and Scotch broom removal is critical to their well being. Some of the rare plant populations are located on the trails and recreational use, including hiking, directly affects their well being. Development within a new adjacent subdivision may impact the bogs, which supports one red-listed and one blue-listed species. Recently a large truckload of used gypsumboard was dumped such that its leachate would enter the bog, but the board was discovered and removed before this could happen.

Motorcycle riding, four-wheel driving, horseback riding, and mountain biking have also been problems in the past, but these types of usage have diminished in the last few years. The wardens are thankful for the strong support of Wade Calder and Drew Chapman of BC Parks in dealing with the above issues.

- Wardens: Gary and Katherine Backlund (father and daughter team). Gary started as a warden when the reserve was created and Katherine became a co-warden in 2001 at age fourteen. She learned to walk on the ecoreserve (long before it was an ecoreserve). She has been helping with mapping of both rare and invasive species, plus doing Scotch broom removal since 1996.

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## Notice to Wardens:

The next issue of *The Log* will feature Mt. Tzuhalem (ER 112), Rose Islets (ER 18), Canoe Islets (ER 17), Ballingall Islets (ER 151), Ten Mile Point (ER 66), San Juan River Estuary (ER 141) and San Juan Ridge (ER 83). Wardens of these reserves are asked to contact Denise de Montreuil, Editor of *The Log* at 250 598-9825 or e-mail the Friends of Ecological Reserves at [ecoreserves@hotmail.com](mailto:ecoreserves@hotmail.com) to fill us in on the latest news from your reserve. Our apologies if we've missed out on wardens in past ER features – we're doing the best we can but our contact list is woefully out of date. If you are a recently anointed warden (recent being any time in the past five years) get your contact information to The Friends so we can put you into the mix. ■

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Dear FoER,

I just wanted to write a short note to thank you for supporting the work we are doing on *Polystichum kwakiutlii*.

Nearly all of the field and lab work for the *P. kwakiutlii* project is complete. A brief chromosomal study on material collected in the fall remains unfinished. Meanwhile, fieldwork on other projects has led to several interesting botanical discoveries. For instance, Paula Bartemucci and I have documented a new locality in BC for the insectivorous sundew, *Drosera linearis*. We found it in a calcareous wetland in Mt. Robson Provincial Park. We also encountered the rare moonwort, *Botrychium montanum*, in the Incomappleux watershed near Revelstoke BC. The Incomappleux is a valley that harbours pristine stands of antique interior cedar-hemlock forests, with cedar trees that measure up to 4 metres diameter at breast height! These forests also support a number of rare inland-coastal disjuncts, especially among the lichens. Inland-coastal disjuncts are species that are usually somewhat common on the coast, but that are known from only a handful (or fewer) watersheds in the inland rainforests (which are probably better known as "snow forests" as they often receive more than 5 metres of annual snowfall). These disjuncts are not currently recognized as a high conservation priority, which is an unfortunate oversight. Most coastal-inland disjuncts have been reproductively isolated from their primary distributions for thousands of years; not only are they components of plant communities not found elsewhere on the planet, but they also represent active speciation. The Incomappleux Valley clearly has tremendous value for conservation and we will probably be hearing more about this valley from conservation groups in the coming years.

Respectfully, Patrick Williston

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## So Long and Thanks for all the Minutes (with apologies to Douglas Adams)

Santiago Alvarez has stepped down from his position as office manager for The Friends. We'll miss your friendly face and your energy, Santiago and The Friends thank you and wish you all the best in your future endeavors. ■

# The Trial Island Field Trip – April 24, 2005

by Mary Rannie

“If you happen to eat part of a death-camias plant, even the leaf, you have no choice but to wait and pray” according to botanist Adolph Ceska. A grim death from this poisonous plant (your heart beat and blood pressure drop), should encourage better knowledge about wildflowers! Dr. Ceska and his wife Oluna led a fascinating trip to the Trial Islands ER #132, located close to Victoria’s Oak Bay shoreline. While not a significant sea bird site, only an oystercatcher’s distinctive piping caught our ears, the number of rare vascular plants is formidable as are the stands of common spring flowers.

Lightkeepers and wardens Ian and Joan McNeil kept an eye on us as our four boats landed on the beach at South Trial Island. We headed out single file on the path so as to respect the fragility of the blooms and germinating plants. The strong winds and summer drought conditions were in evidence by the bonsai’d Garry Oak trees and

dense thickets of snowberry and rose. Increasingly-present broom mocked us. We talked of “dealing with it” with the help of the Conservation Corps. Adolph pointed out several species in the vernal pool, a meadow community on a upland site with improved soil development: little white flowers of Spouler’s popcorn-flower, tiny red, then blue and yellow blooms of *Montia hovei*, often overlooked and considered rare (only five sites exist in California). Magnus Bein had to use his magnifying glass for a real view.

The usual delights were chocolate lilies, tall and short varieties of camas, defined by how the petals dry (the former in an upper direction, the latter sloppy and in all directions), a different kind of shootingstar with a yellow band at the base of the stamens, death camas, which except for a florid white flower head, has stem, leaves and bulb indistinguishable from the blue varieties and two kinds of butter-

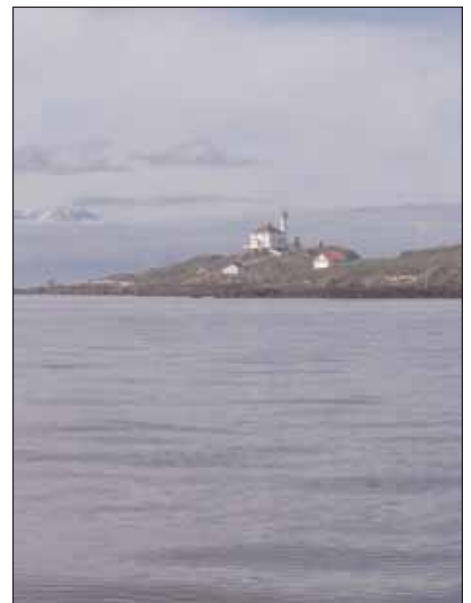
cup, Western and California, which due to hybridization result in some flowers having more petals than others. A fauna sighting was a lovely swallowtail butterfly brought by a capricious breeze!

We filled the boats driven by Phil and Marilyn Lambert, Bruce Whittington and Don Mais (thanks all!). An extra special presence was Shaw TV’s Lorraine Scallon, who filmed a 3-minute segment for Channel 11. We’ve since viewed the Shaw piece and congratulate Mike Fenger, our new president for his super contribution. Jeff and Colleen from CBC radio came along to research a feature on ERs for the AM station. We look forward to hearing the result. ■

*Mary Rannie plays in the Victoria Symphony when she isn’t organizing field trips for the Friends of Ecological Reserves and serving as a board member.*



A bevy of botanists: L to R, Raquel Negrelle and Vanilde Zanette from Brazil, Carina Lemke from Germany, Evelyn Hamilton, Adolph and Oluna Ceska



Trial Island Light Station

# The Benefits of Giving Life Insurance

by Lynne Milnes

Recently The Friends received an inquiry about a bequest of a life insurance policy. This is a simple method of giving to the Friends of Ecological Reserves and allows the donor to make a significant gift at a reasonable cost over the donor's lifetime. FER in turn will honour that gift and the donor's wishes for the direction of the fund i.e. for research, for environmental protection, for education etc.

There are many potential scenarios but here is one: the donor contributes monthly to a life insurance policy through his/her employment either individually or combined with a spouse. The donor then appoints the charity, in this case the Friends, as the beneficiary of the policy. This is usually registered with the insurance policy or can be part of the donor's will.

An added benefit is a possible tax credit in the amount of the gift. If the donor declares the charity as an irrevocable beneficiary then the total amount of the policy can be deducted off the estate and the donor can deduct that same amount as a tax credit carried up to five years. In this way if the donor knew he/she were to experience a capital gain e.g. sale of a property or investment then that would be the year to declare the tax credit and avoid paying extra tax. The donor may or may not wish to use this tax credit, it does not matter.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars are donated to charities every year through life insurance policies. These insurance contracts are not subject to estate fees as the funds are held outside the estate. Family squabbles and other legal administration fees are also avoided. The Friends of Ecological Reserves are ready and able to accept such gifts. These financial legacies are passed on through the work of the society. Contribution to the Friends are realized in the further protection of Ecological Reserves in BC and in the support of scientific research in Reserves from the wild west coast to the dry interior and from forestlands to mountain peaks.

The donation of a life insurance policy to the Friends of Ecological Reserves establishes a conservation legacy for everyone reaching far beyond the donor's original gift. For more information about this type of bequest or others please contact Lynne Milnes of the Friends of Ecological Reserves at 250-598-1567 or [lmilnes@shaw.ca](mailto:lmilnes@shaw.ca). ■



Pine Island Light Station

MICHAEL MITCHELL

Dear Friends,

I am writing to thank you for your continued support of sea otter community ecology research in the Checleset Bay Ecological Reserve off the west coast of Vancouver Island. It is your continued support that has allowed the continuation of this long-term ecological research. Long-term studies such as this are becoming increasingly important as humans start to understand how much environments change in response to both natural and human induced perturbations. By understanding how variable natural systems are, and how they change over short and long-term periods of time, it may be possible to understand the effects that humans are having on coastal ecosystems.

Sincerely,  
Jane Watson

## CALENDAR

### Field Trip to Race Rocks Ecological Reserve

**Sunday, October 16, 2005**

Fee: FER members \$15.00, Non-members \$30.00, Seniors/students \$25 (Fee includes a one-year membership to FER)

To register or for more information, call Mary Rannie at 250 478-8936 or show up at the docks at 8:45 A.M. for a short crossing by boat to Race Rocks.

Trip limited to 15 people.

Wear waterproof clothing and bring cameras and sketchbooks and a snack.

Trip duration: 3-4 hours

### Georgia Strait Alliance's Gala Dinner Auction & 15th Anniversary Celebration

**October 22, 2005**

McMorran's Beach House  
in Victoria

An elegant seafood dinner, live and silent auctions (fine art, a kayak, paddling trips and gear, luxury and wilderness getaways, outdoor adventures, boating supplies, great entertainment and dining experiences), door prizes, entertainment and refreshments.

MC Adam Sawatsky (Host of A-Channel Morning), Auctioneer Arvid Chalmers (Salt Spring Hysterical Society), and Special Guest Rafe Mair

Tickets \$65 (with partial tax receipt) available until noon October 20th, \$10 auction credit if you purchase your ticket before September 30

List of auction items and advance bids at: <http://www.georgiastrait.org/auction/>

# The Wildflowers of Skwaha Ecological Reserve

by Evelyn Hamilton with special thanks to Ian Cumming

Wildflowers in the Skwaha Ecological Reserve were a highlight of this year's Botany BC field trip. The reserve provides one of the earliest shows of wildflowers in the province. The slopes were covered with mass displays of yellow balsamroot, red paintbrushes, white spring beauty, yellow glacier lilies and blue lupines when we visited on May 27, 2005.

The reserve lies to the east of Botanie Creek, about 20 km north of Lytton, BC. The elevation rises from 1100 to over 1600 m. The tree line is about 1600m on this south-facing slope. A group of keen botanists hiked through the reserve, from a trail that begins on a left bend of the gravel road about 1.5 km past the end of Botanie Lake. We followed an old road uphill to the east for 1.7 km and then headed NE uphill into the meadows, curving north as we got higher.



IAN CUMMING

Western Spring Beauty (*Claytonia lanceolata*), Skwaha Ecological Reserve



IAN CUMMING

False Solomon's Seal (*Smilacina racemosa*)



IAN CUMMING

Few Flowered Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon pulchellum*), Skwaha Ecological Reserve

Onions were a recurring theme as we searched for the rare or endangered species known to occur in the ER including *Allium acuminatum* (Hooker's onion), *A. geyeri tenerum* (Geyer's onion), *Brodiaea douglassii* (large flowered brodiaea), *Comandra umbellata pallida* (pale comandra), *Cypripedium montanum* (mountain lady's slipper), *Lewisia pygmaea* (alpine lewisia), *Melica spectabilis* (purple oniongrass), *Mitella trifida* (three-toothed miterwort) and *Triteleia hycinthina* (fool's onion). There were also a number of *Polemonium* species (Jacob's-ladder).

We were fortunate to have Bill Paul a member of a local First Nation band accompany us and share his knowledge of the area and traditional uses of the plants.

A number of stunning photographs of the flowers and landscape are available courtesy of Ian Cumming at <http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~ianc/>

Anyone planning to visit the reserve should first obtain permission from the Parks staff in the Kamloops Ministry of Environment office (250) 371-6200. In addition, you should seek permission from the Lytton Band, as the access goes through their reserve. ■

## Vicky Husband Scholarship Winner Announced

This year's Vicky Husband Scholarship winner is Jessica Slattery who is pursuing a Master's Degree in Environmental Philosophy at the University of Victoria. Jessica is a passionate advocate for tropical rain forests and has managed to convince the Student Union Building and the Faculty of Graduate Studies to switch from an Indonesian product to an ethically produced 100% recycled paper. Jessica sums up her personal philosophy this way: "...the future of life as we know it requires that everybody from all disciplines, social and economic classes and ages becomes aware of the value of environmental integrity and how humans can be a part of that integrity." Congratulations, Jessica and good luck in your studies. ■

# FRIENDS OF ECOLOGICAL RESERVES MEMBERSHIP FORM

Box 8477 Stn Central Victoria BC V8W 3S1

- Renewal for 2005                       New membership

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Category**

- INDIVIDUAL: \$ 20       STUDENT/SENIOR: \$ 15       FAMILY: \$ 25       INSTITUTION: \$ 25

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**Please apply my donation to:**

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 Scholarships for post-graduate research  
 where most needed

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# Websites of Interest

by Denise de Montreuil

This issue we investigate the wonderful world of audioblogging or “podcasting” as it has come to be known, a name derived from the ubiquitous iPod music player. A podcast is an internet audio broadcast and resembles in spirit the text based blog or weblog in that anyone with the right equipment and the inclination can put one together. Some are legitimate programs from public radio and other conventional sources, but most are independent transmissions, available only online. Most are sponsored and are available free to anyone with the software to handle it, i.e. an audio-playing program for listening online and/or a “podcatcher” for downloading a program to listen to on a mobile device like an iPod or MP3 player or to burn to a disc to play on the CD player. For a more thorough explanation of podcasting, how to get started, and information on the history and minutiae of this relatively new medium, go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>. You’ll find lists of links to podcasts to explore or you can go to [www.podcast.net/cat/12](http://www.podcast.net/cat/12), [www.podcastpickle.com/](http://www.podcastpickle.com/), or [www.podcastalley.com/](http://www.podcastalley.com/) for more lists. Be warned, however, that countless hours can be consumed sampling the hundreds of alternatives available. Here are a few environmentally oriented podcasts to get you hooked...er, started:

**Living on Earth:** a weekly environmental news and information program from National Public Radio. Recent features include alternative energy technologies, climate change and the story of Kenyan scientist and environmentalist Wangari Maathai, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for her role in starting the tree-planting project known as the Green Belt Movement. [www.loe.org/](http://www.loe.org/)


**Radio Ecoshock News:** quickie pieces (5 to 7 minutes) on climate change, pollution, energy and endangered species, commercial free, 3 to 5 times a week. As its name implies, they take what might be considered an extreme viewpoint (or maybe not extreme enough, depending on your politics) on topics like the toxic aftermath of Katrina in New Orleans, the North American infatuation with gas guzzling SUVs, and toxins in newborns. Sarcastic, funny, and yes, a bit grim. [www.ecoshock.org/](http://www.ecoshock.org/)

**More Hip Than Hippie:** the podcasting magazine of green living. Irreverent, breezy and informative: what more could you ask for? Episodes on recycling, alternative fuels and vehicles, green buildings and much more. [www.morehipthanhippie.com/](http://www.morehipthanhippie.com/)

**On the Wing:** audio magazine of birds and birding based in Seattle. A recent program focused on chickadee alarm calls. <http://onthewing.libsyn.com/>

**Earthwatch Radio:** The University of Wisconsin-Madison produces this weekly series of five bite-sized (2 minute) programs on science and the environment. <http://ewradio.org/>

## The Log



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