

The Log

Winter 2005

FRIENDS OF ECOLOGICAL RESERVES NEWSLETTER

Yule Log 2005 – The President's Report

by Mike Fenger

The Yule season is a special time, a time to reflect upon the year and count our blessings. Many thanks to the dedicated board members, wardens, researchers, members and donors who support FER. Your collective stewardship improves the Ecological Reserve system.

This year we can look forward to the second Ecological Reserve Wardens' Gathering being organized in September some time after Labour Day and likely in Kamloops. This is your meeting so we need your ideas as to what you want to hear and discuss. We are grateful to have Marlynn Lambert as a gathering contact. Marilyn can be reached at marilyn.lambert@pacificcoast.net or 250 477-5922. More information can be found in the notice on page 13. Our intent is to gather your ideas and have the draft agenda for The Gathering in the spring issue of *The Log*.

For the remainder of my report I want to summarize my observations

from a trip I took to Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve in July. The proposed redoing of the ER Boundaries and a reduction of the reserve size is the first major challenge facing FER since I became president.

Early in the 1980s, I mapped the Spatsizi Plateau, Cry Lake, Iskut and Dease Lake maps sheets and gained an understanding of the ecological values and the sheer magnitude of this amazing area. As the winter wildlife spotter on inventory flights I marked moose, caribou, sheep and goat locations and came to understand the habitat they favoured summer and winter.

Fast forward 30 years and my return to the Spatsizi as a member of the Gladys Lake Ecological boundary review committee. FER's role is to act as an advocate for Ecological Reserves and reducing the size of an ecological reserve is not what an advocate does. Our position paper indicated we sought a management solution through other provisions in the Ecological Reserve Act. Our

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The Log

Winter 2005

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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 March 10, 2006

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LYNNE MILNES

Lake reflections in Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve

“Yule Log...” continued from page 1
recommendations went to the committee and our solution was a minority view. Legal advice, provided to FER pro bono, confirmed that legally the ER Act was not able to do what we thought it could. Our best recourse was to participate in the boundary review and ensure changes were kept to a minimum.

“The proposed redoing of the (Gladys Lake) ER boundaries and a reduction of the reserve size is the first major challenge facing FER since I became president.”

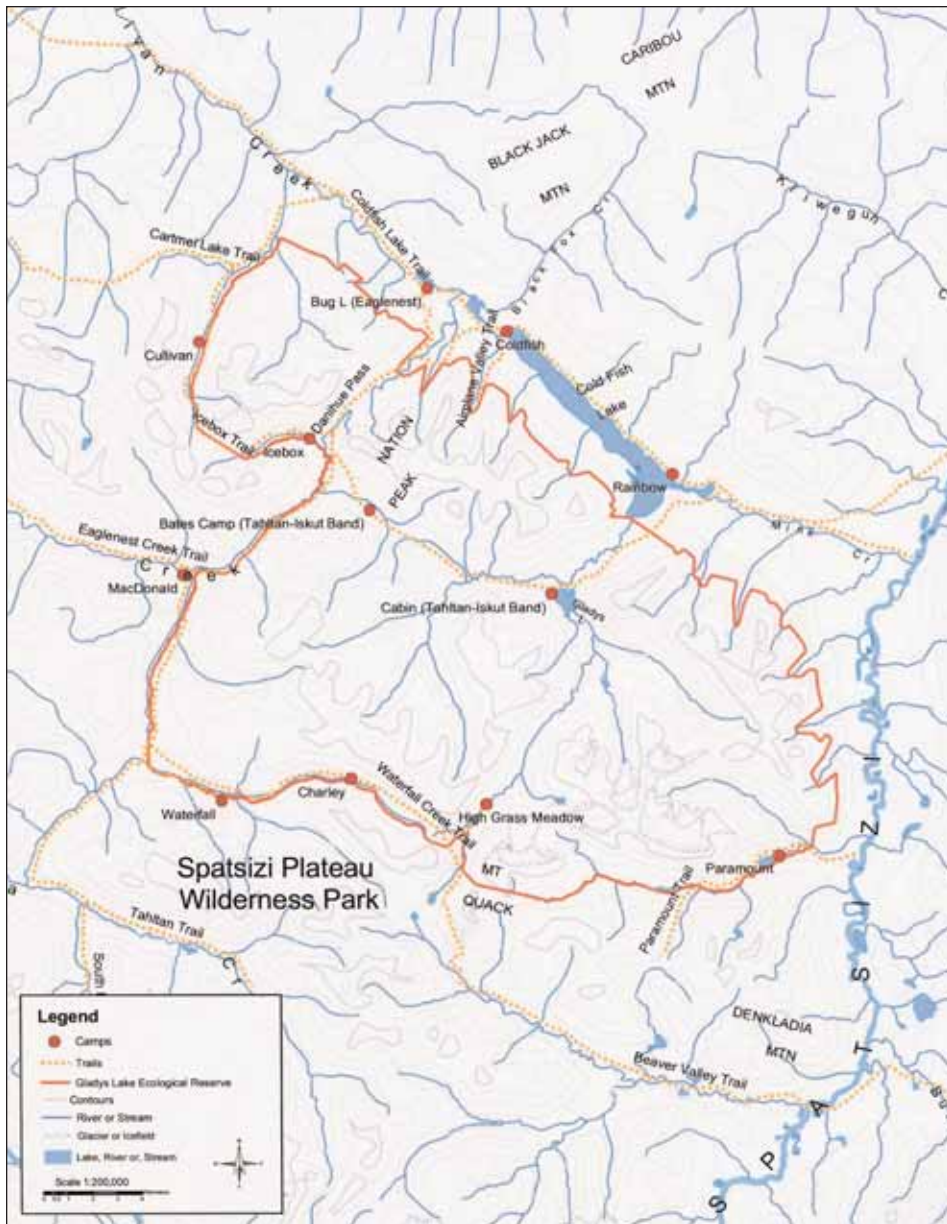
Larry Boudreau of Parks met me at the Smithers airport and we were off to Eddontenajon to meet Janice Joseph who had organized the logistics for the *Gladys Lake ER Historic Trails/ Boundaries Sub Committee*. I was along as the committee's Terms of Reference require that *“field work related to any proposed boundary changes include*

appropriately qualified ecologists who can assess their ecological consequences”. Though not a botanist/ecologist I am qualified to assess land and felt it was essential to have a first hand look and report back to the board.

The three of us were dropped at Cold Fish Lake where Tommy Walker used to have his guide camp and had built numerous cabins. We had gear and food for three days: two days on horseback to ride and map the trail through Danihue pass and Cullivan Creek and one day for a helicopter survey of the remaining trails and camps.

We walked from Cold Fish Lake to Bug Lake to Collingwood's guiding camp. Here we met Reg Collingwood, the other member of the boundary team, and left for Danihue pass. We were a company of five with a string of seven horses. Janice carried a Global Positioning System that would record the location of the trail as we rode while we discussed the new boundary and appropriate width allowances. Boundary changes are an act of the legislature so accuracy is vital. We made two stops in Danihue pass one at the eastern end and another in the

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COURTESY OF LARRY BOUDREAU, BC PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS SMITHERS

“Yule Log...” continued from page 2
 middle where they tie the horses when clients hike into the ER. It was about a two hour to ride through the ER to Icebox camp. The trail was well worn and has long been in use.

“...the report of the boundary committee... will show where new boundaries will go to exclude the historic horse trails and... associated grazing areas...adding up to a considerable reduction in area.”

When the ER was established, access and use of existing trails was promised by government. Happily for FER, the ER Act is a very clear piece of legislation. Grazing and hunting are not permitted, nor is the cutting of trees or the maintenance of camps unless under permit and for research purposes. We were breaking the intent of the ER Act since we had no permit for research and we were in an ER on horses, who grazed whenever they could. Strictly speaking, Larry and Janice should have taken enforcement action. Watching the bull caribou and a dozen stone sheep, I reflected that this ER reserve provides the largest no hunting zone in northern BC.

The camp at Icebox is outside the ER and after we pitched tents the horses were hobbled and set out for the night. They headed for the best grazing area which was across the creek back in the ER. It was disappointing to see that this was the area they preferred and had been using since before the ER was established.

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BRISTOL FOSTER

Guide camp at Cold Fish Lake

“Yule Log...” continued from page 3

Did cutting this area out of the ER remove a unique feature from the reserve or were there other similar meadows elsewhere in the ER free from the trampling and grazing of horses?

We rode the Icebox trail to the pass and descended into Cullivan Creek and back to Bug Lake and over-nighted at Cold Fish. The Icebox horse trail was well inside the ER before we crossed into Cullivan. My mental estimate of how much would have to be removed came to at least 250 hectares at this point. I would know for sure when the line work was plotted.

The final boundary day was helicopter assisted. The distances are huge and it was a practical way to expedite a boundary mapping task. It wasn't hard to understand how difficult it is to maintain an FER warden presence in such vast remote areas. We landed at MacDonald Camp, where the horses also cross into the ER to graze as they do at Waterfall and Charlie Camps. High Grass Camp is several kilometers inside the ER. We landed to assess the condition of the Gladys Lake cabin that Dr. Valerius Geist built and used as the base camp from which to study sheep. It was serviceable and being maintained by Parks. If it were not for this sheep research work, this ER may never have been established. Considering all the sheep ranges in northern BC, the Gladys Lake sheep herd is not situated on the highest quality wildlife habitat and though moose, caribou, bear and wolf are present, there are much higher numbers and concentrations in other areas of north western BC. This does not diminish the value of the ER, a large no hunting area free of motorized access, a quiet refuge for wildlife. It made me wonder where the high quality caribou, moose and goats refuges might be since hunting is permitted in all Parks.

Reg Collingwood took us to a unique mineral lick at low elevation north of the ER, Grand Portage, and indicated that this was a worthy candidate for an additional ER. From the helicopter, the work of many sheep tongues in reshaping the sediments for minerals was easy to see and sheep were present in the forested escape terrain.

As the Yule Log goes to press the report of the boundary committee is nearing completion. It will show where new boundaries would go to exclude the historic horse trails and

remove the associated grazing areas from the ER adding up to a considerable reduction in area. The Board of The Friends will discuss the boundary committee report when it appears and will respond.

This is just a glimpse of what has been getting my focus these past months. I look forward to seeing all of you at The Gathering in the fall.

Have a wonderful Yule season and by the way, FER place mats make great gifts. ■



Mountain pass in Gladys Lake Ecological Reserve



Stone sheep at Gladys Lake

COURTESY OF BC PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

BRISTOL FOSTER

Race Rocks Field Trip

by Mary Rannie

On October 16 Garry Fletcher led a Race Rocks tour 'with a cherry on top' i.e. a climb up the corkscrew staircase inside the only original building left on the island, the lighthouse. We were thankful that its thick walls had inset arched windows that illuminated our way up to a magnificent view of weather, sea and protected wildlife. Race Rocks is a migratory haven and haul-out for northern and California sea lions, a few elephant seals, harbour seals, 5 types of gulls and, alas, 15 breeding pairs of Canada geese which are increasing their foothold year by year.

Elaine Eastman's tone revealed her sympathy for the lighthouse keepers as she remarked on the constant barking and roaring of pinnipeds. Mike and Ann Slater do extra duty as wardens of Ecological Reserve #97, also a Marine Protected Area. This is a busy place... 24 hour cameras record and transmit wildlife information from various locations and a website generates interest around the world. For example, Pam Birley in Leicester, England makes photographic slides from the 360 degree remote Camera 5. She was able to capture views of an eagle's nictitating membrane, a request from Garry Fletcher!

Garry's bent for history adds a special tone to this marine safari. He conveys a sense of continuity between Race Rocks' stormy past and its present fight to survive as protector of human lives and as a viable nature sanctuary. We noted the shabby interior of the lighthouse and resolved to remind the Ministry of Heritage and Culture of its responsibility. Garry is pleased that the Department of Defense, when doing its dynamite testing on nearby Bentinck Island, is paying attention to the needs of the sea lions resting on the islets. DND keeps the blasts down to 2 at a time, so that the animals don't feel compelled to leap into the sea.

Reducing energy costs at Race Rocks continues. As our newsletter goes to press a tidal current generator is being installed near the docks, giving oil a back up function. (See *The Log*, Winter 2004 for articles about the generator.) Seven oil tanks have been removed, allowing grasses to grow back. Up in the lighthouse a tiny light bulb covered with a Lucite refracting surface, the Fresnell lens, is the warning beam for mariners passing in the fog. As we returned in the boat, storms a safe distance all around us, the sun's pale beams on the Olympic Mountains hinted at hope. These rocky islets have an important history and a vital present to maintain. ■



2006 Annual General Meeting

Friends of Ecological Reserves Annual General Meeting

February 24, 2006 at 7:30 PM
(Meeting of the Board begins at 6:30 PM)

Location:

The Murray and Anne Fraser Bldg.
(Law Building), University of Victoria

Guest speaker will be Dr. Tom Reimchen of UVic's Department of Biology who will be discussing some of the new research findings that have emerged from a decade long investigation throughout our coast of the ecological linkages between the open Pacific Ocean and the canopy of the oldgrowth forests. For more information on his research, go to <http://web.uvic.ca/~reimlab/>

All members as well as those interested in becoming members are welcome to attend.

For more info call Tom Gillespie at (250) 361-1694 or check the website at

<http://www.ecoreserves.bc.ca/>
E-Mail: ecoreserves@hotmail.com ■

Visit www.ecoreserves.bc.ca



Warden's Handbook Online – Access Trick

As many of you know from the Autumn issue of *The Log*, the Warden's Handbook is now available online at:
http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/conservation/er_warden_handbook__24may2005.pdf

If you're having trouble getting the link to work, you're not alone. That's because there is a bit of a trick. Note that the underscore immediately following the word "handbook" is actually two underscores together. Just hit your underline button twice. There is a rumour that a hard copy of the handbook might be in the works for those of you without an internet connection. We'll keep you posted. ■

Call for Research Proposals

Each year, the Friends of Ecological Reserves (FER) welcomes applications for funding in support of research related to ecological reserves in British Columbia.

To evaluate proposals FER needs the following information:

- title of research project
- name of applicant(s)
- contact information of applicant (email, phone, mailing address)
- institutional (college or university) affiliation
- a brief description of the research and its relationship to ecological reserves in BC
- any other pertinent details
- two letters of reference supporting the project
- total budget required for project, with an indication of contributions from other sources
- amount requested from FER

Note: If the project is a multi-year proposal, provide an indication of how the project is to be supported/funded through its duration.

Applications will be evaluated based on how the project meets FER's priorities, the financial viability of the project and the financial need of the applicant. Research grants are generally between \$500-\$2000. As a condition of award, applicants are asked to submit regular

reports on their research findings and may be required to present a public lecture on their research and to write an article for our newsletter, *The Log*. Applications for funding for the current calendar year should be received by **January 31, 2006**.

Send applications to:
Friends of Ecological Reserves
PO Box 8477 Stn Central
Victoria BC V8W 3S1

Preference will be given to applications that address FER priorities such as:

- Research that addresses major knowledge gaps and high risks.
- Baseline inventories and monitoring of ecological reserves to determine if the reserves are maintaining the values for which they were established.
- Studies of the ecological reserves and adjacent areas, particularly in areas of high human visitation and habitation, to develop strategies that will limit negative impacts on the reserves.
- Studies of human visitation/preservation of ecological values conflicts.
- Policy studies on the ecological reserve system, volunteerism and communicating the need for natural study areas. ■

Memberships Keep on Giving!

by Lynne Milnes, founding Director of FER

The Friends of Ecological Reserves is asking for your membership for another year so that we can continue to protect and promote Ecological Reserves throughout BC.

The Friends is entirely volunteer run. We have no office, no fulltime staff or capital costs but we do support as many students as we can who are conducting important research in and around Ecological Reserves. We also support those students who are exceptional volunteers in their environmental community. Students are trained by the Board and encouraged to get involved and they do. Your membership supports the publishing of *The Log* three times a year, ongoing field trips to Ecological Reserves, outreach to wardens throughout the province, the wardens meeting and ongoing negotiations with government staff in support of Ecological Reserves. It is a lot of work for a dedicated group of people who have busy day jobs.

Your membership keeps us going. Your gift of a membership to a friend or relative will be remembered with each issue of *The Log* and you will be satisfied in knowing you are helping to protect BC's most fragile environments. Remember to renew your FER membership and give a gift of a membership knowing that your gift will keep on giving all year long. ■



PHOTO CREDIT: DAVE QUINN

Visit www.ecoreserves.bc.ca

Islands in the Salish Sea: A Community Atlas

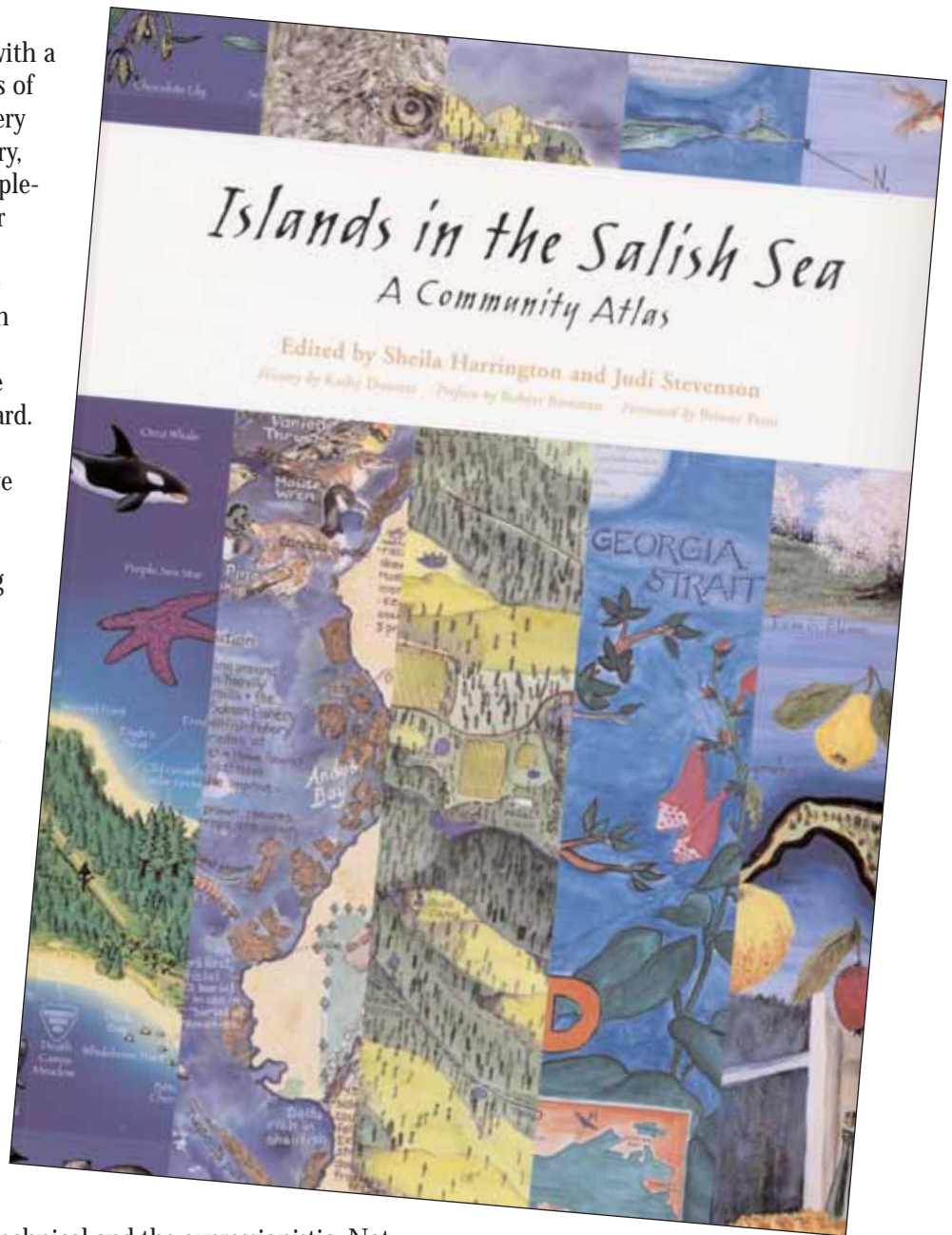
Edited by Sheila Harrington and Judi Stevenson
TouchWood Editions, 159 Pages \$44.95

Aware of it or not, all of us walk around with a map in our heads of the functional aspects of our neighbourhood: the route to the grocery store, the location of the library, the bakery, the park, the school. Overlaying and complementing this mental street atlas is another kind of map, one rich in serendipity that might include the beautiful garden on the corner, the tree where the eagles nest each year, the brown pebble beach where the shorebirds gather, a stand of ancient apple trees, the remnant of some long-ago orchard.

The coordinators of the project that resulted in "Islands in the Salish Sea" have managed, through a community mapping project, to set down on paper a series of maps that are like the collective dreaming of the people who live on the islands of Georgia Strait, otherwise known as the Salish Sea. The brain child of Briony Penn, Sheila Harrington and Judi Stevenson, the project sets out to identify the values that are seldom reflected in conventional maps with their lines and boundaries and territorial imperatives. More than 3,000 people who live on these islands contributed to the project and the resulting maps were exhibited to great acclaim. This atlas, along with a great deal of comment on the process that led to its creation and a few facts and figures about the geographical area, was put together to share the process and its end result more widely.

The maps are surpassingly beautiful, diverse, bursting with colour and life, crammed with detail, a rich hybrid of the technical and the expressionistic. Not surprisingly, the natural world gets the lion's share of the attention although cultural and historical values are not overlooked. Sketches of a favorite cafe, the local cemetery or a historic barn flank charming watercolors of the local flora and fauna. Thumbnail notations detail historic events, prominent pioneers, first nations lore and the particularities of island life.

This level of information is not always well-served by the size of the reproductions, despite the volume's generous 9" x 12" dimensions. These works of art deserve the full glossy paper, foldout section, coffee-table book treatment. That said, the book's affordability is perfectly in keeping with its community roots. In the end, the maps transcend their content, communicating what is almost inexpressible: that profound emotion that a community feels for its home ground. ■



Ecological Reserves of Southern Vancouver Island

PART III

ER 17 – Canoe Islets

- Located at the NW entrance to Porlier Pass, adjacent to the south end of Valdes Island, 15 KM NE of Chemainus
- 0.6 ha
- Description: Consisting of two small rounded bedrock islets, the turbulent waters around this reserve are affected by the swift currents of nearby Porlier Pass. Little vegetation beyond lichens is present on the islets but the surrounding waters (not included in the reserve) are rich in marine invertebrates making it an important feeding ground for several species. Blue-listed double-crested cormorants nested here historically and the hope is that by protecting the islets, they may nest here again. California and northern sea lions and harbour seals use the islets as a haul-out and glaucous-winged gulls and other sea-birds nest there.
- Potential Threats: proximity to kayaking routes and pleasure boat traffic.
- Warden: Derek Astbury

ER 18 – Rose Islets

- Located off the northern tip of Reid Island, Trincomali Channel, 11 km NE of Chemainus
- 0.8 ha



Rose Islets

- Description: These low rocky islets are an important seabird nesting habitat and a significant roosting and feeding habitat for pigeon guillemots, black oystercatchers, glaucous-winged gulls, harbour seals, killer whales, river otters and bald eagles. The vegetation consists of herbs, grasses and a few shrubs, in all about 40 species of plants. The ministry website claims there were 15 double-crested cormorants nesting there in 2000, down 70% as in the rest of the Strait of Georgia since 1987. The warden says it is doubtful there were as many as 15 nests and that only about 6 remain at present.
- Potential Threats: increased kayak traffic in the area, low flying aircraft and ferry wash disturbing the birds, pleasure boat traffic.
- Warden: Derek Astbury

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Dead junipers on Ballingall Islets

DEREK ASTBURY



Ballingall Islets

COURTESY OF BC PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

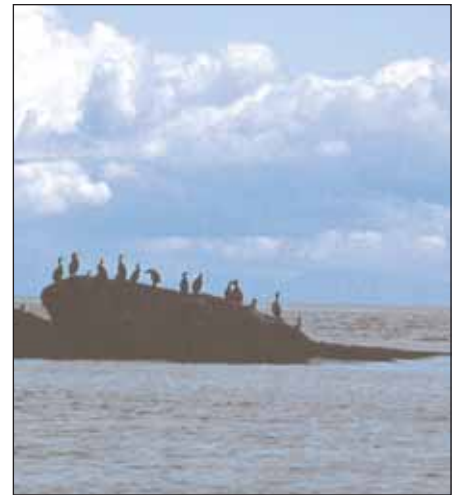
"Ecological Reserves..." continued from page 8

ER 151 – Ballingall Islets

- Located in Trincomali Channel just north of Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park off Galiano Island
- less than one hectare
- Description: This reserve was established in 1963 to protect colonies of double-crested and pelagic cormorants although none

have been seen nesting there since 1987. Gulls and pigeon guillemots continue to nest here. The MoE's purpose statement suggests looking into replacing the removed and fallen junipers with artificial structures in hopes that the cormorants will return to nest there although no action has yet been taken in that respect.

- Potential Threats: removal of the dead gnarled juniper trees that cormorants have used in the past



Canoe Islets

COURTESY OF BC PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

for nesting, proximity to Montague Harbour and marine traffic, lack of protection for the foreshore.

- Warden: Derek Astbury

Derek has been warden of the above three reserves since 1998. His work several years ago in Britain scuba diving with the biologist Bob Earl led to the setting up of a series of marine parks there and to his continuing interest in marine protected areas. He observes the three reserves from the water on an almost monthly basis and has photographed and video-taped them extensively. Over the past few years he has noticed a great decline in the numbers of birds in the area of the reserves although the habitat on the islands remains visibly unchanged.

ER 66 – Ten Mile Point

- Located at Cadboro Point, 3.5 km SE of the University of Victoria
- 11 ha
- Description: Protecting 450 metres of intertidal shoreline, about 70% of this reserve's area lies below mean low water level. The reserve includes a sheltered cove, rocky headlands, tide pools, rip current channels and four islets which are accessible at low tide. Diverse populations of marine invertebrates occur and subtidal species include sea stars, sea cucumbers and rockfish. Rhinoceros auklets and

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“Ecological Reserves...” continued from page 9

pigeon guillemots feed in the waters around the reserve, and salmon, harbour porpoise, harbour seals and orcas occur offshore.

- Potential Threats: Easy accessibility, proximity to an urban area, a lack of community appreciation and understanding of ecological reserves and their purpose and the perception that marine resources are inexhaustible has had considerable impact on this reserve. Associated problems include trespassing, removal of reserve resources (rocks, wood, marine life, kelp, oysters), marine harvesting, recreational use and “promotion” of the area by local governments as a public recreation area. Fecal contamination from a nearby outfall has likely negatively impacted marine species in the reserve.

- Warden: Doug Biffard

Recent observations suggest that the red-listed northern abalone formerly seen here are likely no longer present. A few shells can be found but no living animals. The mussel beds have shrunk, the tube worms and barnacles are gone, and the rock fish and ling cod are sparse. The land portion of the reserve has a good representation of the typical plant species of the area including wild rose, camas and snowberry with few invasive plant species present. Canada geese have been observed using the reserve as a nesting area.

ER 83 – San Juan Ridge

- Located 22 km E of Port Renfrew, southwestern Vancouver Island
- 98 ha
- Description: The steep terrain of this reserve has a northerly aspect, giving it ridgetop winds and deep persistent snow cover. These conditions give rise to sub-alpine or alpine vegetation at fairly low elevations. This is one of only two locations on Vancouver Island where the blue-listed white glacier



San Juan Ridge Ecological Reserve



Mimulus dentatus, San Juan Estuary

lily (*Erythronium montanum*) is found as is whitefingers lichen (*Siphula ceratites*) a rare snowbed lichen. Black bear, cougar and Columbia black-tailed deer

move through the reserve while amphibian populations are found in bog areas.

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COURTESY OF BC PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

Mt. Tzuhalem ER

“Ecological Reserves...” continued from page 10

- Potential Threats: The reserve’s relative inaccessibility protects it from most recreational incursions although that is beginning to change as the nearby Kludahk Trail becomes more well-known. The controversies over obtainability of the Kludahk Outdoor Club’s maps of the trail and over access issues get a thorough airing at the forum at Club Tread’s website (www.clubtread.com).
- Warden: no warden on record

ER 141 – San Juan River Estuary

- Located 5 km NE of Port Renfrew
- 79 ha
- Description: The reserve protects a portion of a large river delta and serves as a benchmark for forest research as well as protecting early seral floodplain plant communities. Many sensitive plant species are found here including the red-listed

tooth-leaved monkey flower (*Mimulus dentatus*) and paintbrush owl-clover as well as the blue-listed Smith’s fairybells, angled bitter-cress and nodding semaphore-grass. Salmon spawn in the river and black bears feed during the autumn run. Bald eagles, mink and river otters are found here and it is important habitat for Roosevelt elk.

- Potential Threats: Log jams and high water levels play a role in the shifting of river banks with the possibility of the loss of rare species. The warden reports that he has had trouble locating the mimulus during recent visits and he has observed that the river carves out new channels each year. There are long term concerns about salmon returns on the San Juan River.
- Warden: Dean Rebneris

ER 112 – Mt. Tzuhalem

- Located 4 km ENE of Duncan on Vancouver Island
- 18 ha
- Description: This reserve protects a fine example of Garry oak woodland and spring wild-flower meadows on the south facing slopes of Mt. Tzuhalem. Scattered gnarled Douglas-fir and arbutus are found between Garry oak groves and mossy outcroppings. Many endangered, threatened or vulnerable species of plants, invertebrates and birds are found in the reserve. Upwards of 150 species of vascular plants have been recorded and 30 species of birds forage, roost and raise their young here including California quail, northern flicker, pileated woodpecker, western bluebird, hermit thrush and warblers.
- Potential Threats: development adjacent to the reserve means frequent visitation and recreational use and growing impacts upon the ecological integrity of the reserve. Invasive species such as scotch broom and orchard grass and a number of pests that threaten Garry oaks are an ongoing problem.
- Warden: Syd Watts
For a history of Syd’s work in ER 112, see page 12 of this issue. ■

The Log in Colour

Did you know that you can view *The Log* in colour at the Friends of Ecological Reserves website? The current issue goes up shortly after the print edition is sent out and back issues can also be accessed. Most of the photos you see in *The Log* start their life as colour images and you can see them in all their glory on the website. Go to www.ecoreserves.bc.ca. ■

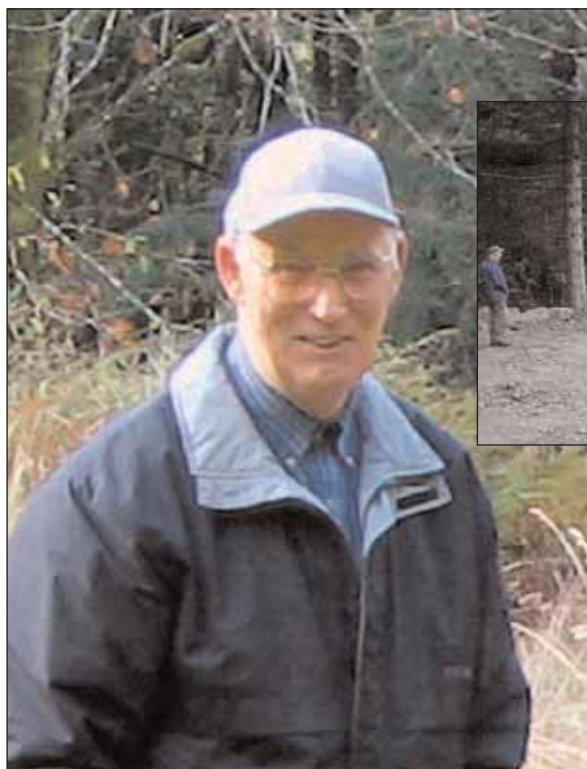
Mt. Tzuhalem Ecological Reserve #112 and Syd Watts

by Genevieve Singleton and Dave Polster
from notes by Syd Watts

Less than 5% of Garry oak woodland and associated spring flower meadows habitat still exists in its natural condition on the earth. Mt. Tzuhalem Ecological Reserve is unique since it is an excellent example of this habitat. Located on the south slope of a mountain used in the past for logging, then for recreation and now in the process of being heavily developed, the pristine state of this reserve is a wonder but by no means an accident. This is almost entirely due to the commitment and dedication of one couple, Syd and Emily Watts. When locals of the Cowichan Valley think of the Mt. Tzuhalem Ecological Reserve they think immediately of warden Syd Watts, 78 years young.

“...the pristine state of this reserve...is almost entirely due to the commitment and dedication of one couple, Syd and Emily Watts.”

Syd moved with his family from Red Deer, Alberta to Duncan when he was ten years of age. As a youth he was involved in scouting, and hiked the local hills and valleys of the area. Syd first visited the Mt. Tzuhalem area in 1937. He recalls the logging in 1945/46 when the large Douglas-fir trees were hauled from the hill to feed the post-war housing boom. In 1952 he joined the Alpine Club of Canada, leading expeditions into the mountains of Vancouver Island before there



Syd Watts, long serving warden of Mt. Tzuhalem ER



Syd Watts surveys the damage of new construction on the border of Mt. Tzuhalem ER.

were logging roads up all the valleys and before the slopes were logged. In 1979 during one of their regular hikes to enjoy the spring flowers, Syd and his wife Emily noticed flagging tape laying out a new subdivision (The Properties) and they decided it was time for action.

He led Cedric and Gertie Myers, local naturalists who were instrumental in the formation of Honeymoon Bay ER reserve, (see “The Log”, Autumn 2005) up the slopes and they agreed that Mt. Tzuhalem was a very special place. The Cowichan Valley Naturalists’ Society (CVNS) then made a video of the spring flowers and the unique ecosystems of what is now the reserve. The CVNS went en masse to North Cowichan Council Chambers. Faced by the determined

CVNS members led by Syd Watts, Graham Bruce, who was then Mayor of North Cowichan, was persuaded that the area should be preserved. In 1980 to much applause from CVNS, North Cowichan donated the land to the Province (BC Parks) for protection. Syd was appointed warden for Mt. Tzuhalem ER when it was established on May 16th, 1984.

The work that Syd and other members of CVNS have done for Mt Tzuhalem did not stop with the establishment of the reserve in 1984. A green menace was marching up the hill behind the bulldozers that were clearing the land for the housing development. Scotch broom was soon found blanketing the flower meadows. Not one to allow a few hectares (the

continued on page 13

"Mt. Tzuhalem..." continued from page 12 reserve is slightly over 18 ha) of Scotch broom discourage him, Syd organized a dedicated group from the CVNS to clear broom from the slopes. Most of these volunteers are elderly, and put us younger ones to shame with their fitness levels. These volunteers have put thousands of hours into the reserve. Some help was provided for a one-time helicopter haul to lift the cut broom from the slopes, but mostly it was hard work and dedication that has cleared the broom from the reserve. Recently Syd has had some help from a crew funded by the Habitat Stewardship Program. These young men, 50 years his junior, have had to scramble to keep up with Syd as he points out areas that have been a bit tough for his aging CVNS crew to access. Syd smiles with well deserved pride when he reports that there is now no flowering broom on the reserve.

"...being seen as the local park by the subdivision residents that surround the reserve continues to be a problem."

The reserve is under continued threat from more and more development occurring around it. Fencing and thoughtful signage provided by BC Parks has alleviated some of the pressure. However, being seen as the local park by the subdivision residents that surround the reserve continues to be a problem. A mega development, including a hotel and golf course, is going in shortly. Syd continues to keep vigilant watch.

Sadly, Emily died recently. Syd is happy to share his stories of their many rambles on Vancouver Island. He is pleased to talk about the

ecology of his reserve, how in pre-contact times the Roosevelt elk would graze on the slopes, keeping the snowberry in check. He talks about the role of fires in maintaining the open meadows and the bluebirds that he hopes will one day return to the nest boxes he has placed around the reserve. When Syd walks among the flowers in the spring talking about this patch of balsamroot or that white camas flower that returns every year

one knows that Syd is truly the "eyes" of the reserve. It is a jewel that he has devoted his time and energy in preserving for us. ■

Dave Polster is a plant ecologist and Genevieve Singleton is the volunteer warden for Honeymoon Bay Ecological Reserve.

The Gathering II – 2006

Planning is underway for the second Gathering of the wardens of ecological reserves. It will be held in Kamloops at the Henry Grube Centre as before on either September 8 and 9, 2006 or September 15 and 16, 2006.

The format is being developed and funding sought. Wardens, this is your gathering and we would welcome your ideas on the program of events and the subjects for discussion. Please contact any of the three organizers and give us your thoughts:

■
Marilyn Lambert: at marilyn Lambert@pacificcoast.net or 250 477-5922

■
Eva Durance at edurance@vip.net

■
Bev Ramey at bevramey@telus.net
■



Friends of Ecological Reserves Placemats for Christmas

Want to help out the Friends with your Christmas buying? Consider our lovely placemats for those hard-to-buy-for people on your gift list. The names of those who contributed their talents to this project read like a who's who of BC nature artists. Uses for the four mats are not confined to the table...they make good posters as well as useful weatherproof field guides for that next hike with the kids. They can be ordered by using the order form on page 15 or by going to our website at www.ecoreserves.bc.ca ■



Field Trip – Spring 2006

Sunday, April 23, 2006
Trial Island Ecological Reserve

Join Adolf and Oluna Ceska for a wonderful outing to view the rare spring wildflowers on a small island off the Victoria waterfront.

Fee: FER members \$10, non-members \$30, students and seniors \$25.
(includes a 1-year membership to FER)

To register or for more information, call Marilyn at 477-5922

CALENDAR

ForestEDWest Conference 2006

January 26 to January 29, 2006

The Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta

Keynote speaker: writer and
photographer Dr. Wayne Lynch
"The Spruce Kingdom"

Website:

www.forestwest.ca/index.html

E-Mail:

conference@forestwest.ca

Friends of Ecological Reserves Annual General Meeting

February 24, 2006 at 7:30 PM

(Meeting of the Board begins
at 6:30 PM)

Location:

The Murray and Anne Fraser
Bldg. (Law Building), University
of Victoria

Speaker:

Dr. Tom Reimchen

All members as well as those
interested in becoming members
are welcome to attend.

For more info call Tom Gillespie
at (250) 361-1694 or check
the website at

<http://www.ecoreserves.bc.ca/>

E-Mail:

.ecoreserves@hotmail.com

16th Annual Brant Wildlife Festival

March 31 – April 2, 2006

Parksville and Qualicum,
Vancouver Island, B.C.

Phone: (250) 752-9171

Fax: (250) 752-9883

Website: www.brantfestival.bc.ca/

E-mail: office@brantfestival.bc.ca

Websites of Interest

by Denise de Montreuil

Want to brush up on your botanical binomials, or in the case of some of us, learn how plants get their Latin names to begin with? Here are a few websites that can help take the mystery out of it. On the webpage entitled "Latin Names De-mystified", a tidy chart lays out the Latin terms for types of habitat, plant forms and geographical names. The page is an offshoot of the Wild Flower Society of Great Britain's website, <http://rbg-web2.rbge.org.uk/wfsoc/352a.htm>

For another take on the subject, go to the website of gardener Tom Clothier who explains genus and specific epithets and includes a short dictionary of terms along with a whole lot of gardening advice.

<http://tomclothier.hort.net/index.html>

While not particularly up to date, the next site is still worth looking at for its Guide to Plant Collection and Identification. A product of the University of Western Ontario's Botany Department, it gives a complete discussion of Linnaeus' contribution to plant nomenclature, the correct form for plant names, the use of common names, classification, a section on specimen collecting and several useful appendixes.

<http://biology.queensu.ca/~fowler/Bowles.htm>

Who knew lichens could be so beautiful or come in such an infinite variety of forms? Based on the book *Lichens of North America*, this website is dedicated to the lowly lichen, its biology and its relationship to the rest of the natural world. There is also a database of the human uses of lichens including its use in environmental monitoring. Turns out that lichens are the canaries in the coal mine when it comes to air pollution.

The diversity of lichens is truly amazing and at times startling: everything from blazing orange crusts to gelatinous black blobs, long stringy wisps to thick cabbagey leaves. There are tiny white cups fringed with scarlet tufts, close-packed curly green leaves with white edges, yellow or pink alien deely-bobber antennae, pale green powder puffs and branching forms that look like seaweed. You will find excellent photographs of many in the lichen gallery and a section on lichen morphology and terminology.

www.lichen.com

E-flora BC is a continuing project of the University of British Columbia's Lab for Advanced Spatial Analysis and the UBC Herbarium and bills itself as an electronic atlas of the plants of British Columbia. Its atlas pages can be accessed by conducting a species search either by entering a genus name to find all species in that genera, or by entering the genus and species name to go to the atlas page for


that species. Dropdown lists of both common names and Latin names allow you to browse or find a specific plant. Each atlas page is crammed with facts and links to world-wide plant information resources for that species. It seems a bit complicated at first but it's worth taking the time to explore. An image bank of more than 4,000 plant photographs uploaded to the site is also available to browse. <http://www.eflora.bc.ca> ■

The Log



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