

Central Okanagan Naturalist

www.okanagannature.org

September , 2024



Mountain Lady's Slippers Photo courtesy Mike Howard

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September, 2024

Monthly Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of the month.

The next general meeting takes place on September 10, 7:00 p.m., at Evangel Church, 3261 Gordon Drive, Kelowna. Please see our Speaker details below.

WELCOME NEW CONC MEMBERS!

Our club is growing and thriving, and we welcome our newest members. We look forward to meeting you in the natural world.

- Cynthia Robinson
- Julia Proulx

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

CONC SPEAKER, SEPTEMBER 12TH GENERAL MEETING

A CONTINUED EXPLORATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN SUMMER 2023 – RICK GEE



In the summer of 2023 Jen and Rick spent a couple of months in Newfoundland and Labrador. They took many pictures. They have already shown their Labrador and west coast of Newfoundland photos so in September they will show their photos of the rest of the island of Newfoundland. You may remember that the first part of their trip was notable for the bad weather. Come and see what the second part of the trip held in store for them.



Know Nature and Keep it Worth Knowing

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REGULAR COLUMNS

BIRDING REPORT

BY MIKE HOWARD

2024 BIRDING ACTIVITIES

During the first seven and a half months of 2024 members were able to participate in 75 CONC organised birding excursions. This included:

- 29 Monday outings
- 28 Thursday outings
- 5 Saturday outings including a trip to Douglas Lake (during Sandhill Crane migration)
- The Rick Howie Interior BC Swan and Eagle Annual Count (January)
- The Johns Family Nature Conservancy 2024 Survey (May)
- Contribution to Les Gyug's Okanagan Mountain Park Survey

On these outings we observed 173 avifauna species and submitted 148 eBird checklists bringing our total number of checklists submitted by the "CONC Birding Group" to 477.

2024 outings are possible thanks to all the birding excursion leaders who select a location, lead the excursion, and then report the results of the outing. Our thanks to:

- Annette Lachaine
- Archie MacDonald
- Bruce Kennedy
- Carol Sharplin
- Deborah White
- Douglas Graham
- Faith Furgason
- Gwynneth Wilson
- Ian Walker
- Jasmine Korcok
- Joyce Fraser
- Karen Blumel
- Lisa Rae
- Margaret Bryan
- Markus Weilmeier
- Mike Howard
- Pam Laing
- Rick Gee
- Sharon Taylor
- Simon Pethick
- Steffany Walker
- Vivian Manning
- Wendy Wright

Several of our very talented photographers have added photographs of the birds we observed for the benefit of our members and as evidence to eBird in our role as citizen scientists. Our contributing photographers included:

- Bruce Kennedy
- Douglas Graham
- Ian Walker
- Karen Blumel
- Lisa Rae
- Pam Laing
- Vivian Manning

A special thanks to:

- Faith Furgason
- Sharon Taylor
- Markus Weilmeier

who have recorded the majority of our eBird checklists so far this year.

Birding activities planned for the remainder of 2024:

Monday and Thursday outings restarted on August 15, after the summer recess. Three monthly second Saturday outings are scheduled for September, October and November.



Mallard – Vivian Manning



Black-necked Stilts – Julia Proulx



Northern Rough-winged Swallow – Ian Walker



Lewis's Woodpecker – Bruce Kennedy



Yellow-headed Blackbird – Pam Laing



Red-tailed Hawk – Lisa Rae



Trappers Tea

This year CONC regular weekly botany outings began on May 5 and ended on July 22. This is the period when the diversity of flowering plants is greatest. In addition to those scheduled events there was one impromptu outing on April 19 to see Steer’s Head flowering at Jackpine Meadows. The number of species seen over all the outings was 386 (357 in 2023) and the average number per scheduled outing was 84 (61 in 2023). A summary of the dates, locations, number of attendees, and the number of species seen are shown below.

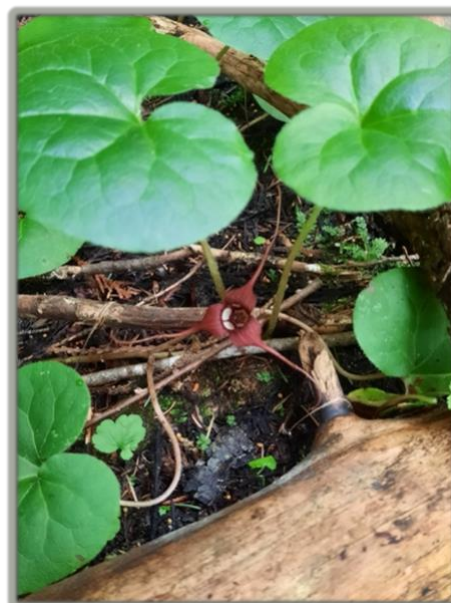
Date	Location	Number of attendees 2024 (2023)	Number of species seen 2024 (2023)
April 19	Jackpine Meadows to see Steer’s Head	7 (10)	10 (13)
May 3	Beaver Lake Road/to 1st cattle gate	8 (11)	57 (35)
May 8	Knox Mountain lower Apex trail	7 (4)	47 (47)
May 17	Lower Scenic Canyon	12 (7)	85 (48)
May 24	Beaver Lake Road/to lodge	8 (9)	82 (53)
May 31	Jackpine Meadows/Telemark Nordic	6 (8)	68 (52)
June 7	Three Forks Community Park	5 (7)	57 (59)
June 14	Wrinkly Face Provincial Park	11 (14)	77 (78)
June 21	Prather Creek	5 (8)	83 (72)
June 28	Larch Hills Nordic	8 (13)	79 (79)
July 5	Big White Rd and FSR 201	9 (5)	91 (77)
July 19	Jackpine Meadows/Telemark Nordic	5 (8)	95 (68)
July 19	Big White summit	12 (11)	75 (62)
AVERAGES		8 (9)	84 (61)

The outings focused on plants flowering at the time of the visits, and keyed on reproductive features to facilitate identification. Flowering began earliest in the valley and advanced at higher elevations as the season progressed. Early in the year we saw lots of our signature Okanagan species Arrowleaf Balsamroot, as well as various species of desert-parsleys, mustards, violets and popular favorites like Chocolate Lily, Skunk Cabbage, Lemonweed, Ballhead Waterleaf, Yellow Bell, Western Spring Beauty, and Bitterroot.

A checklist and field guide were used to assist identification in the field and the final list of what was seen was sent to the participants after each outing. Photos taken by participants and posted on iNaturalist were captured under one link for each outing and also sent to the participants.

Some notable highlights of the 2024 season:

At Jackpine Meadows, while there was still some snow on the ground, we saw the small poppy Steer’s Head flowering together with a colourful subalpine flush of white Western Spring Beauty and Yellow Bell interspersed with Long-Flowered Bluebells. The first Steer’s Head flowers this year were 2-3 weeks earlier than last year and the earliest recorded since I began monitoring in 2016.



Wild Ginger



Western One-flowered Broom Rape

We started the regularly scheduled botany season on May 3 with a visit to the lower portion of Beaver Lake Road. We found 57 plant species in bloom including spectacular vistas of flowering Arrowleaf Balsamroot and a large bloom of Skunk Cabbage. Three weeks later, on May 24, we revisited Beaver Lake Road and found 82 species, only 30 (36%) of which were seen on the previous visit. Participants' photos for the May 20-24 period, posted on iNaturalist can be seen at: [iNaturalist Beaver Lake Road](#)

At Jackpine Meadows and Telemark Nordic on May 31 we found 68 species. Plants of note were 2 species of Lewisia related to the familiar Bitterroot as well as Cusick's Paintbrush, Alpine Sorrel, and a Chocolate Lily with a yellow flower. Six weeks later, on July 12, we revisited Jackpine Meadows and Telemark and found 95 species (our highest diversity of the season), only 25 (26 %) of which were seen on the previous visit. Some of the uncommon finds were Gairdner's Yampa, Alaska Rein Orchid, Hooded Ladies' Tresses, Needle-leaved Navarretia (blue-listed: of special concern in BC) and Alpine Sorrel (red listed: at risk of being lost in BC). Participants' photos for the July 4-12 period can be viewed at: [iNaturalist Jackpine Meadows](#)

At Wrinkly Face Provincial Park we saw uncommon Shortflower and Brewer's Monkeyflowers, and the blue-listed Needle-leaved Navarretia. Participants' photos, posted on iNaturalist, can be viewed at: [iNaturalist Wrinkly Face](#)

At Prather Creek participants found 83 species including a few uncommon species such as Yellow Coralroot and Dainty Moonwort. We identified 8 species of ferns including 4 species of moonwort. With mushroom experts in attendance, we also found some LBMs (little brown mushrooms) and several larger, more identifiable mushrooms. Photos can be seen at: [iNaturalist Prather Creek](#)



Round-leaved Sundew

At Larch Hills we found 10 species of orchid and 79 species overall. Two Twayblade orchid species were flowering and a third was just ready to open. A highlight for many was seeing the carnivorous Round-leaved Sundew and the flower of Wild Ginger. We also found and identified some interesting mushrooms during this visit. Photos can be seen at: [iNaturalist Larch Hills](#)



Orange Hawkweed

At Big White Road and FSR 201 (Forestry Service Road 201) we saw a mix of middle elevation and some subalpine plants. Some of the uncommon finds were Hooker's Thistle, Robbin's Milk-Vetch, Richardson's Geranium, Cut-Leaved Anemone, Northwestern Moonwort, and Diverse-leaved Cinquefoil. Photos can be viewed at: [iNaturalist Big White Road](#)

At Big White Mountain we saw a good diversity of subalpine plants in bloom. After taking the Bullet chairlift to the top of the mountain we hiked to the summit and then some returned home while others hiked down the mountain via the Alpine Meadows and Falcon trails. Some of the uncommon finds were Lyall's Goldenweed, Glaucous Gentian, Alpine Sandwort, White Mountain Avens, Whitebark Pine, Parry's Arnica, and Cascade Willow. Photos taken by 7 of the participants can be viewed at: [iNaturalist Big White](#)



Morel mushroom

Orchids and Ferns:

During this season orchids were of interest to most participants, who found 15 species overall, including Yellow, Striped and Spotted Coralroots; Yellow and Mountain Lady's Slippers; Rattlesnake Plantain; Northern, Heart-leaved and Broad-leaved Twayblade; Slender, Fragrant White, Alaska and One-leaved Rein-Orchid; Calypso Orchid; and Lady's Tresses.

For some participants ferns were of particular interest and 9 species overall were identified including three species of hard-to-find moonwort species: Dainty, Mingan and Northwestern Moonwort.

Mystery plants:

Mystery plants are those whose identity is not readily apparent, and that usually require some follow-up after the outing. Good photos, used in conjunction with eFlora and/or iNaturalist, often solve the mystery. Other times the identity is obtained during a subsequent visit when additional anatomical features are present, such as seeds or berries. As a last resort plant keys are used, usually those in Illustrated Flora of British Columbia or Flora of the Pacific Northwest. For our CONC participants the usual mystery plants were the yellow-flowered groundsels, butterweeds and arnicas, the various mustards and the blue-flowered asters because there are several of each of these that look very similar.

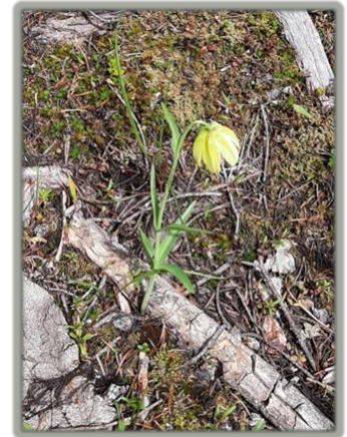
Ongoing botanical activities, events and information:

While there are no more scheduled vascular plant outings for this year there will be a September 12 outing to look for mushrooms. A notification by email will be sent to interested CONC participants.

On an ongoing basis, you can see what plants people are seeing in our area by checking out iNaturalist projects such as the [Mission Creek Greenway Biodiversity Project](#) and the [Okanagan Biodiversity project](#).

September and October is the prime time of the year for mushrooms. If you're interested in mushrooms you'll want to check out the [Sicamous Fungi Festival](#) September 20-22 in Sicamous. Other events are sponsored by the [Vancouver Mycological Society](#), the [South Vancouver Island Mycological Society](#) and other mycological societies in BC and Washington State.

Regarding botany field guides and helpful references, we have been using *Plants of the Southern Interior of British Columbia*, Lone Pine Press as our principal field guide during our outings. The best online resource for BC plants is [eFlora](#). A very good alternative, especially when the eFlora webpage is down is the [Burke Herbarium site](#). An excellent FREE cellphone/tablet app is *British Columbia Wildflowers* available for both Android and iPhone/iPad. [iNaturalist](#) is a very popular on-line resource for identifying plants from photos at. If you want a simplified approach to learning plants, *Botany in a Day, The Patterns Method of Plant Identification* is a good place to start.



Chocolate Lily (yellow flower)

We don't get up as early as the birders and we don't walk as much as the hikers but we do enjoy great scenery, fresh air and good company. Details of when and where to meet are provided on CONC's webpage and by email to interested members. If you have questions or suggestions regarding this upcoming season, please forward them to botany@okanagannaturalist.com.

OUTINGS REPORT

BY ROBBIE BOWERS & GLENDA NEWMAN

HIKING (SOLE SURVIVORS AND RAMBLERS)



Snowshoeing transitioned to hiking during the early spring with regular hikes scheduled by the end of March.

Ramblers hiked on Tuesday (led by Connie) and Thursday (led by Robert). Locations included Myra-Bellevue, Scenic Canyon, Knox Mountain and Peachland, due to the 2023 West Kelowna forest fire, trails in Stephens Coyote Park and Rose Valley remain closed. Hiking was

cancelled the second week of July due increasing temperatures and will resume in early September.

Sole Survivors also began hiking in late March with weekly Wednesday hikes scheduled to many locations including Okanagan Mtn Park, Spion Kop, Black Mtn, Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park, Naramata, Okanagan Falls area, Enderby Cliffs and a new hike led by John Stratford to Ravine Edge near Vernon.



CYCLING

Friday biking trips began in mid-April and have included the Kelowna waterfront, Kelowna Airport and area, Wood Lake and Kalamalka Lake via the rail trail.

ANNUAL SUMMER HIKING CAMP – JASPER



Twenty-one Sole Survivors arrived in Jasper July 22, looking forward to 5 days of hiking. Two hikes were planned for each day, the gondola was booked for Thursday, and we were looking forward to the challenge of hiking Indian Ridge. Our first night we enjoyed a delicious selection of goodies' for "appie night" and discussed hiking Valley of the Five Lakes and Geraldine Lake/ Athabasca Falls the next day. Unfortunately, all the plans went sideways when we were evacuated about 2 hours later. After a trying drive home, and a day



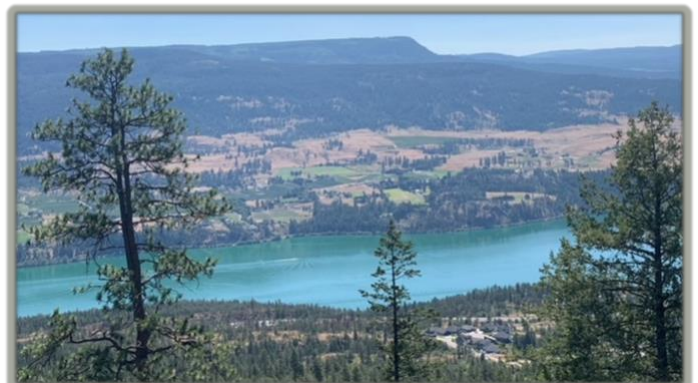
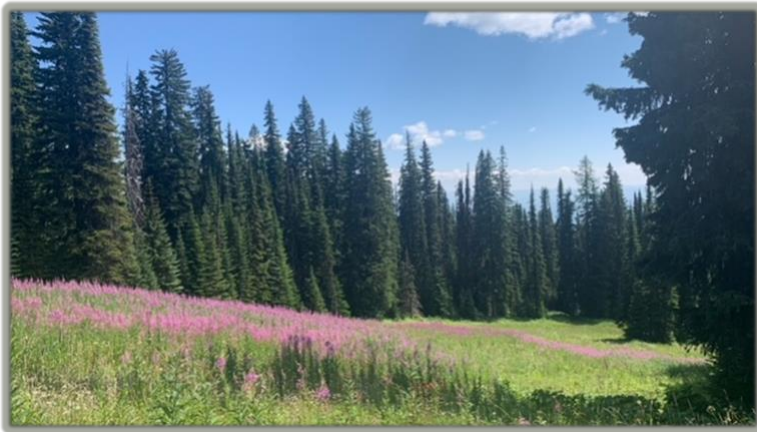
to recover we made the best of it and were on the hiking trail Wednesday and then a potluck dinner was planned for Thursday to enjoy the meals we had brought for the week. Sadly, Jasper didn't fare as well as us, and the devastation is heartbreaking.

WEEKEND EXPLORERS is taking a hiatus for the summer months.

Many thanks to the numerous members who volunteered to lead the hiking and cycling and Ian Walker for organizing and leading the Weekend Explorers excursions.

ADOPT-A-STREAM PROGRAM

The semi-annual cleanup will be scheduled for the fall, details to be confirmed; watch for an email announcement



FEATURES:

THOMSON MARSH VIEWING PLATFORM PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

By MIKE HOWARD

With thanks to the efforts of the CONC TMVP Project Team (Archie MacDonald, Bruce Kennedy, Douglas Graham, Les Gyug, Lisa Rae, Roy Sinden, Wayne Wilson from COLT and Mike Howard): On May 30, 2024, CONC signed an agreement with the City of Kelowna to transfer the responsibility of the completion of the installation phase of the project to the City. The agreement calls for the City to complete the installation in accordance with the design submitted by CONC and previously approved by the City. The balance of the CONC project budget was transferred to the City on June 21, 2024. CONC has no further financial obligations.

As of the time of reporting the City had engaged the Geotechnical Engineer and released the installation tender which is due at the end of August. The expectation is that the Thomson Marsh Viewing Platform will be installed this Fall, and CONC volunteers will complete the site riparian rehabilitation after the installation of the platform

2024 JOHNS FAMILY NATURE CONSERVANCY PARK SURVEY



Photo by Sheila MacKenzie Brown

Members of the Central Okanagan Naturalists Club conduct an annual survey of the Johns Family Nature Conservancy Park for the property trustees, the Central Okanagan Land Trust (COLT). This survey covers avifauna, mammals, reptiles, flowering plants and any unusual insects like the Critter Count that is carried out for the adjacent Okanagan Mountain Park. In addition to the Parks records, this information is submitted to iNaturalist as a record of species occurrences on the Johns Family property. The results of the overall survey provide the trustee with a permanent record of species and a snapshot indication of the changes occurring in the park year over year. This in turn assists COLT in their plans for the continued management of the property under their care.



Photo by Judie Steeves

The 2024 survey covered both the public and the larger geographic area of the ecological section of the Johns Family property. On Saturday May 25th, from 8am until noon, 22 CONC members and one guest completed the survey.



Photo by Judie Steeves

We documented 638 birds, 6 White tailed deer, 3 Red Squirrel, 24 Yellow-pine Chipmunk, 57 Columbian Ground Squirrel, 5 Yellow-bellied Marmot, a Common Garter Snake, a Snowshoe Hare and the presence of Black Bear, Elk, Wolf and Coyote, in addition to the many flowering plants submitted to iNaturalist.

The bird number recorded is substantially higher than in previous years: 2023 – 582; 2022 – 485; 2021 – 566, while the number of species seen has been steadily increasing.

Many thanks again to our survey volunteers.

WHAT IS A “NATURAL” LANDSCAPE - THE GARRY OAK WOODLANDS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

BY MITCH MILGRAM



This May I attended a gathering of botanists for the annual Botany BC weekend, held this year in the Nanaimo area. As part of the program, we had the opportunity to visit the Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve, a piece of land purchased by the Nature Conservancy of Canada to help preserve one of the few remaining places that feature a Garry Oak grassland environment.

When settlers first arrived on Vancouver Island, they were greeted by vast oak parkland landscapes on the southeastern side of the Island. These landscapes were the work of the Island's First Nations, who regularly managed their territories by periodic burnings. The burning helped to clear the understory and encourage the growth of the Camas lilies, whose

bulbs were an important food source. Keeping the understory clear likely also made hunting easier. There was a similar situation that greeted early settlers on the east coast of North America, where they were quite amazed to find vast tracts of open woodlands populated by groves of edible nut trees, native chestnuts, walnuts and hickories. They failed to realize that this wasn't random but was the intentional management by the local First Nations. This practice is now referred to as “forest gardening”.

As the Garry Oak Woodlands of Vancouver Island were settled, the settlers' fire suppression practices resulted in a transformation. Both native and European species invaded. Since the Nature Conservancy of Canada took over the management of this land parcel, their aim has been to restore the land to its “natural state”. But what is its natural state? Is “natural” the managed landscapes of the First Nations of 150 years ago? It seems sensible that the Conservancy has worked hard to get rid of the highly invasive European Scotch Broom. However, it struck me as odd to hear of the efforts to push back the encroachment of natural, native plants like Snowberry and Douglas Fir. Snowberry is being uprooted and mowed; Douglas-fir trees are being girdled. It's interesting to reflect on how our native species can be interpreted as invasive species.

Whether you view these woodlands as natural or managed, they're a unique and lovely landscape, especially in the spring when the ground is carpeted in wildflowers.

WHAT WE'RE READING – BOOK REVIEW

BY LISA RAE

The Golden Spruce: “A True Story of Myth, Madness and Greed”

Author: John Vaillant
ISBN: 9780393328646

In January 1997, Grant Hadwin, a timber surveyor turned environmental protestor, swam across the freezing Yakoun River with a chainsaw and hiked into the forests of Haida Gwaii where he cut down the Kiidk'yass, a 300-year-old, 160 feet tall and uniquely golden Sitka spruce.

John Vaillant uses the destruction of this tree and the turbulent life history of Grant Hadwin as a context for many themes in *The Golden Spruce*. This non-fiction book provides readers with a description of the unique forest and coastal ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest, details historical accounts of the exploration and exploitation of the regions' resources by the logging industry and European fur traders, and also explores the culture and early history of the Haida people and their complex relationship with the European explorers.

This riveting book merits a careful read for those of us interested in a range of topics around the historical and current human impacts on the natural resources of the Pacific Northwest.

*Postscript: In May 2024, John Vaillant published another non-fiction book; *Fire Weather: The Making of a Beast*. This award-winning book provides an historical account of the oil industry, and the dynamic relationships between climate, fire and humans.*



The editors are introducing a ****NEW**** newsletter column and are inviting all travelling CONC members to submit a contribution. Many of our CONC members travel well beyond the Okanagan exploring and enjoying nature coast to coast in Canada and beyond, either birding, botanizing, hiking, or however nature may be speaking to them. We'd love to share your insights and recommendations with other CONC members who may travel to nearby areas and might enjoy exploring them. If you have nature travel info and advice to share with other members who might find it interesting, please send your nature

destination information (along with pictures) to editor@okanagannature.org for publishing in the newsletter following your submission. It doesn't need to be long, elaborate, or even include a lot of photos, just enough information that another member travelling in the same area in the future might consider visiting the area. We are thinking (longer term) of gathering these submissions into a "blog" for a more permanent reference for future members. Let us know what you think!



To launch the new column, I thought I'd share a recent experience near the Tacoma, Washington State, area. My family and I were visiting the area because the Toronto Blue Jays were playing the Seattle Mariners. One can only take so much baseball.... Before long a hike and some birding started calling me, so I pulled up eBird to search for nearby birding hotspots. Up popped the [Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge](#) (the refuge is named for Billy Frank Jr., a Nisqually Tribal leader and Native American spokesman for Tribal rights) about a half-hour south-west of Tacoma at the Nisqually River delta, south end of Puget Sound. This estuary remains in its natural state and is now permanently protected for wildlife. The refuge, though not very large, contains 7.5 kms of trails including a

boardwalk trail (the longest boardwalk in the west coast area!) through the refuge's diverse habitats including riparian forest, freshwater wetlands, estuary, and open saltwater. The tide was fully out the morning I arrived and the estuary itself was fairly quiet. That said, I counted 57 Great Blue Herons on the boardwalk portion of my walk! While I didn't make an eBird checklist for the day, I did post some of my sightings to iNaturalist [here](#). Surprisingly the biggest thrill of the morning wasn't a bird, but a nursing Pacific Harbour Seal and pup. The photographer beside me mentioned that he'd regularly visited the refuge for over 50 years and, while he'd seen lots of seals, he had never seen a nursing mom and her pup before and so close - right beside the boardwalk. I felt extremely fortunate to witness this behaviour.



If you are in the area and decide on a visit (especially during migration, but any time of year should be good) you'll want to be there as early in the day as possible (accessible sunrise to sunset), and know that what you see along the boardwalk will be very dependent on the tides. Very highly recommended.

OKANAGAN FOREST TASK FORCE (OFTF)

Kane Blake and his group of volunteers operate the Okanagan Forest Task Force, which focuses on cleaning up garbage and other illegal dumping in the Okanagan back-country. Their impressive efforts and details on their operations can be found at: <https://okanaganforesttaskforce.com/>

OFTF now has a free downloadable app suitable for Android and iPhones. As so many of CONC's members are already eyes and ears out there they might appreciate this new and easy way to report illegal dumping.



Many of you will be familiar with the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), a smallish blackbird between the size of a sparrow and robin. They can be distinguished from other local blackbirds (e.g. Brewer's Blackbird, Red-winged Blackbird) by their heavier body and head profile, shorter tail and short, finch-like beak. Mature males have black plumage with a distinguishing brown head, and mature females are plain brown with a light head and underparts, and fine streaking on the chest.

Of special interest is the cowbirds' reproductive strategy - brood parasitism. During nesting season, the female finds an active nest of another songbird species, and while the parent(s) are absent, she lays one of her own eggs in the nest. The host eggs can also be destroyed by her. Some host species appear to recognize the foreign egg, and can reject it, or build a new nest on top of the old one. But typically, the host parents are unaware of the cowbird egg, and follow-up with normal incubation, parental feeding and care. In its development, the young cowbird interloper has several features that allow it to out-compete with the host young for parental resources. For example: the cowbird has a shorter incubation period than most songbirds and being the first to hatch, it receives early parental care. As well, the cowbird hatchling/nestling has an unusual bright red gape that selectively attracts the feeding adult, allowing it to obtain more food. And, since it grows relatively faster and fledges earlier than the host species, it competes for the host parents' attention to its own young.

Given that it is reared by another species begs the question as to how a young cowbird comes to know that it is a cowbird, that is, how does it acquire the behavioral qualities of its own species such as singing, foraging, and reproducing? Apparently, there are a couple of key factors. One has to do with a vocalization unique to adult cowbirds called "chatter", which when heard, signals young cowbirds of their species affiliation. The other key factor is the habit of a fledgling cowbird to leave the host nest at night and spend time in a habitat more consistent with that of a cowbird, thereby increasing the chances of finding and associating with its own kind. If all goes accordingly, this range of multisensory cues will allow the fledgling to find and integrate into a flock of its own species.

The Brown-headed Cowbird has been known to parasitize over 220 different North American species. It is one life strategy among many, evolved to ensure the survival of a species.¹ Hypotheses of the evolutionary drivers of parasitic brooding are an interesting read and can be found at the first reference below.

In July of this year, Bruce Kennedy captured the sequence shown below of a Yellow Warbler (host bird), feeding a fledgling Brown-headed Cowbird. Our sincere thanks to Bruce for sharing his exceptional photos.



Sources:

<https://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/the-ecology-of-avian-brood-parasitism-14724491/>

<https://www.audubon.org/news/is-it-okay-remove-cowbird-eggs-host-nests>

<https://www.audubon.org/news/scientists-pinpoint-secret-password-unlocks-cowbirds-self-identity>

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Brown-headed_Cowbird/id#

[https://nestwatch.org/learn/general-bird-nest-info/brown-headed-cowbirds/#:~:text=The%20Brown%2Dheaded%20Cowbird%20\(Molothrus.that%20are%20actively%20laying%20eggs.](https://nestwatch.org/learn/general-bird-nest-info/brown-headed-cowbirds/#:~:text=The%20Brown%2Dheaded%20Cowbird%20(Molothrus.that%20are%20actively%20laying%20eggs.)

<http://ecoregionbirding.info/2014/09/24/buffalo-birds-in-the-northern-mixed-grasslands-ecoregion/>

My new favorite reference site for invasive species: <https://www.oiso.ca/find-a-species/by-name/>

Never underestimate a crow: [These crows may count in a way similar to human toddlers | Science | AAAS](#)

Did you know that The Nature Conservancy of Canada and Birds Canada were both founded by the same man? It's all about a lifelong passion for birds: [This Toronto conservationist's life was shaped by birds \(thestar.com\)](#)

Early March 2024 - Spring already!?! Birds use a range of environmental cues to initiate their migration trips, to ensure that their arrival destination is optimal for food and habitat needs. Climate change appears to be altering some of these clues (e.g. timing, length and temperature of the seasons), but not others (e.g. length of the day). Can birds adapt to the new assembly of changing, and not changing cues? [Climate change is happening too fast for migrating birds - High Country News \(hcn.org\)](#)

If you love birds, and are inclined to feed them, here is an excellent resource: [When It's Okay \(or Not\) to Feed Birds | Audubon](#)

Did you know? [Males Aren't Larger Than Females in Most Mammalian Species | Scientific American](#)

63% of Ireland's native bird species are at risk of extinction. This ornithologist is on a mission to record them all: ['Total immersive obsession': meet the man on a mission to record every bird in Ireland | Birds | The Guardian](#)

Quagga and Zebra mussels were introduced in the Great Lakes 10 years ago. And this invasive species is also a problem here... [Okanagan stakeholders strategize on regional response to invasive species of mussels - Okanagan | Globalnews.ca](#)

Why does that Northern Flicker drum on the chimney flashing at 5am? It makes perfect sense: [Who's Knocking? \(osstewardship.ca\)](#)

Imagine a park that is truly devoid of human civilization sounds: <https://www.quietparks.org/wilderness-quiet-parks>

Conserving Monarch butterflies one at a time – in New York: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-01722-0>

Outstanding nature photography: <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/2024-audubon-photography-awards-winners-and-honorable-mentions>

Getting started with birding in BC: <https://vancouver.sun.com/life/birding-bc-how-to-get-started-tips-locations>

REMINDER: REQUEST FOR PHOTOS

THE EDITORS

Future newsletter editions will include a full-page front-cover photo and a last-page smaller photo. (Many thanks to Mike Howard for his beautiful Mountain Lady's Slipper photo!) We encourage all CONC members to submit their CONC outing photos for display on our newsletter cover page or last page. All photos from mobile phone to full-frame cameras will be considered. If your photo speaks to the nature of our CONC outings, we'd love to display it in the newsletter.

Photo submission criteria:

- Taken during a CONC regular or special outing and representative of our activities: botany, birds, animals, hiking/snowshoeing/biking, landscape;
 - Taken in the previous three months from the issue date of the newsletter;
 - The photo does not include identifiable people but if any people are in the photo, you must have notified them of the submission and received their ok;
 - Don't submit a photo you intend to submit to the photo contest;
 - Photos submitted for the front page must be a sufficient resolution to fill 8.5" X 11", (sized to 2048p on the long side);
 - Any format is ok;
 - Provide a short descriptive title, and your name;
 - Email to concnewsletterphotos@gmail.com.
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- Editors will choose two photos for each newsletter - one full-size photo for the front page and one smaller photo for the final page.
 - Each photo will be credited to the photographer, with the title provided.
 - Editors reserve the right to crop/resize photos to best fit.



Nearctic Bumblebee, Photo by Lisa Rae

“Nature is pleased with simplicity.” -Sir Isaac Newton

**Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club www.okanagannature.org
P.O. Box 21128, RPO Orchard Park, Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9N8
Email info@okanagannature.org for any general enquiry**

Board 2024-25

President	Vacant	president@okanagannature.org
Vice-president	Vacant	
Secretary	Louise Nelson & Vivian Manning	secretary@okanagannature.org
Treasurer	Roy Sinden	treasurer@okanagannature.org
Past President	Douglas Graham	pastpresident@okanagannature.org
BC Nature	Fran Fisher	bcnature@okanagannature.org
Birding	Mike Howard	birding@okanagannature.org
Botany	Peter Courtney	botany@okanagannature.org
Outings	Robbie Bowers & Glenda Newman	outings@okanagannature.org
Membership	Karen Pedersen	membership@okanagannature.org
Outreach and Communications	Marjorie Gonzalez	outreach@okanagannature.org
Director at Large	Rick Gee	
Program Director	Sheila MacKenzie Brown	programs@okanagannature.org

Resource Persons

Host Committee	Bev Thomas	cymru@telus.net
Newsletter	Lisa Rae & Vivian Manning	editor@okanagannature.org
Website: www.okanagannature.org	Rick Gee	admin@okanagannature.org

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

- 2nd Tuesday of the month, September to June, 7:00 p.m. at Evangel Church, 3261 Gordon Drive, Kelowna.
- Visitors are welcome.
- Host: Bev Thomas. Please bring your own cup.

MEMBERSHIP: Karen Pedersen membership@okanagannature.org

- **ANNUAL DUES: Single \$45, Family \$60, Students \$15.** Includes the quarterly newsletter. (**Additional \$20 annual charge for newsletters sent by mail.**)
- **MEMBERSHIP FORM AND WAIVER:** Available on the CONC website: www.okanagannature.org. Send your name, address, telephone number, email address, waiver form and dues to CONC Membership, Box 21128, Orchard Park P.O., Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9N8.
- **DUES:** Dues may also be paid by e-transfer to membership@okanagannature.org. Please note your full name(s) in the field for providing additional information.
- **HONOURARY LIFE MEMBERS:** Hugh Westheuser, Pat Westheuser, Eileen Dillabough
- **MEMORIAL MEMBERS:** Arthur Hughes-Games, Brenda Thomson, Muriel Westwood, Harry Almond, Cec Dillabough

NEWSLETTER: Editors - Lisa Rae & Vivian Manning

- Send submissions to editor@okanagannature.org
- Next deadline date for submissions is December 15, 2024
- Email distribution: Karen Pedersen membership@okanagannature.org

ACTIVITIES:

All activities are seasonal. We have also launched Weekend Explorers outings on the last weekend of each month – [check Calendar for details](#). Non-members are very welcome to join one or two CONC outings. All outing details are on our website calendar. If in doubt check with the activity contact, or contact any Board Member.

BIRDING: contact: birding@okanagannature.org

- **Monday Birding:** meet 7:45 a.m. (April-Sept.) or 8:45 a.m. (Oct-March) at the Apple Bowl*
- **Thursday Birding:** meet 7:45 a.m. (April-Sept.) or 8:45 a.m. (Oct-March) at the Apple Bowl*
- **Saturday Birding:** Day-long bird trips take place on the second Saturday of the month March to November (with an August recess). Meet at the Apple Bowl at 7:30 am (April through September) or 8:30 am (October and November)

TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

BOTANY: contact: botany@okanagannature.org

- **Friday Botany** trips meet according to emailed details sent for each outing by Botany Director Peter Courtney (Spring to Fall)

HIKES: All hikers meet at the Apple Bowl* (Bring a lunch)

- **Tuesday: Ramblers** contact Robert Lake: (250) 215-3211
- **Wednesday: Sole Survivors** contact Robbie Bowers & Glenda Newman outings@okanagannature.org
- **Thursday: Ramblers Plus** contact Robert Lake (250) 215-3211

*Apple Bowl: 1555 Burtch Road - Apple Bowl parking lot, corner of Burtch and Bernard