



oystercatcher

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2008

PRESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

SPRING TRIP: JUNE 2-5, 2008

Congratulations to all members who had anything to do with the new pathway along Lower Ganges Road. It seems that it really is the success that was envisioned. Mind you there are still a couple of minor bits of work to do before we can put paid to the project. Both benches that were concreted into place were fixed too low to be comfortable for most people so the concrete will have to be removed and replaced. And there are large rocks to install at two locations to delineate the border between path and road. Volunteer work party times will be coming your way soon. And by the way, grant applications have already been written for phase 2 of the pathway, which will run along Atkins, Blain and perhaps Crofton roads.

By all accounts the spring trip to Naramata was a big success. Can we thank enough the good work of Fred Powell, and the timely and able assistance of the Kings and the Radfords? Well done to all of you.

It seems as though a great many people took advantage of this summer's weather to gather at Art Spring on Tuesdays. Indeed this may have been a record year for the amount of participation during the summer hikes.

You have heard and seen the controversy surrounding the application of Bearsden Enterprises Ltd to put a road through some of the trail network in the area of Hope Hill. I know that some of you took the opportunity to send your views to the appropriate person in Crown Land Resources. I also wrote a letter on behalf of our Club to recommend rejection of the road application. Hope it all helps.

And so, as usual after the summer break, the latter half of our hiking/walking/rambling year begins. I look forward to seeing you during the weekly events and perhaps for a cup of coffee afterwards.

Zeke Blazecka

It was last October when I put out a call to members to see if anyone would be interested to go to Naramata next spring. I then inquired of the Naramata Centre to see what the availability and cost would be for about 40 visitors. We picked the first week on June which followed the BC Nature AGM in Penticton as some of our group might be at that event. Following the Centre's reply it was determined we could stay for that time but needed a \$1600 non-refundable deposit to confirm our intentions. We asked each member for a non-refundable deposit of \$30 to hold our reservation and by the end of October we had enough signed up to cover the deposit. By the time final payments were given at the end of April, 65 members had signed up. For various reasons, a few folks had to drop out leaving 53 who actually made the trip!



Ramblers on Mt. Tuam

Frauke Prystawick

During the last week of May, Brian & Marjie Radford and Hu & Ann King travelled to the Okanagan spending quite a bit of time checking out the options for the Club's spring trip. They ended the week by attending the BC Nature AGM in Penticton.

Nancy and I arrived Sunday evening in order to be ready to issue room keys and direct club members to their accommodations. Refreshments provided by Naramata Centre were on hand as the members trickled in before 5 p.m. Accommodations worked out so that 46 resided in 'Maple Court', 3 in 'Rose Cottage' and 4 cuddled up in their tents next to the creek. Dinner was ready for us all at 5:30.

After dinner we all assembled in the meeting room called the 'Loft' to hear about plans for the next few days. It was a long drive from home, so many 'hit the hay' early that evening.

Tuesday dawned fairly bright and sunny as we tucked into

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Editor's page

Earlier this year, we had to say goodbye to two very dear members: Chris Pattinson and Hans Schroeder. Chris was the keeper of the photo book before she handed the job over to Arleen Sadler and has been involved in the Club in many aspects. She still participated at the Christmas bird count, and we will miss her expertise in identifying sea birds. Both Chris and her husband Dick were honoured as trailblazers some years ago. Hans was a faithful participant at the week-ly events until his health would not allow him to even go out with the rambles. Hans contributed to the Club by organizing the Mount Baker trip. To commemorate both members, the Club donated towards the Trans Canada Trail.

Last season ended, as usual, with the Strawberry festival in Ruckle park. The local berries were far from edible due to the cold spring, and that set Frauke Prystawick scrambling for ripe strawberries. Well she found them, and although they were not grown locally, they were delicious. Thanks to Frauke and her crew for all their work. This year, the season had a little extra after the Strawberry Festival: a trip to a Duncan winery. Thanks to George Wachmann for organizing this event.

A month or so ago, I sent out an email asking members if they had some story suitable for the Oystercatcher. In response received some rather interesting accounts on travel, and on our regular Tuesday outings. One of the responders was Margaret Spencer. Margaret tells us about her first walk on the Camino de Santiago (she went back for more since then). She was not the only Trail and Nature Club member to complete this 800 kilometre plus hike: Willy Waddell, Kees Visser and Zeke Blazicka all

followed in the footsteps of ten thousands of pilgrims over hundreds of years, and hopefully Margaret's story will inspire more people to embark on this historic trek. I also received articles from Eileen Wittewaall, Anke Smeele, and Fred Powell, and pictures from Frauke and Lynn Thompson.

I like to wish everyone a good hiking season! And please do not forget to renew your membership!



Salt Spring mushrooms.
Artwork by Judy Nurse.

Red-legged frog spotted



This photo was taken August 7, 2008 when I realized the many frogs emerging from my pond and pond weeds, were not all Pacific Tree Frogs who make all the mating calls in the spring. I sent the photo to a number of people asking "Is this a red-legged frog?" No one could say for sure until I sent it to Briony Penn. This was her response:

"Yes that is a red legged frog. They are provincially a species at risk but on Saltspring the population is holding its own. I have seen them on Isabella Point, Cusheon Creek, Beaver Point, Stowell and Weston Lake area, Ford Lake and Booth Bay so they are fairly well distributed! What they need are deep well shaded pools and creeks with plenty of buffer of forest around them. Their greatest threat are cars when the young start to disperse during the first rains around now. I rescued two live ones and one dead one off Beaver Point Road last week in the rains."

Tree frogs are usually a lovely bright green who migrate up to my garden's damp, undisturbed places. They have a distinct black mask that extends from the nostril to the shoulder. The red legged frogs have gold eyes and a fair bit of speckling. They can grow up to 10 cm. long while I've never seen a tree frog more than 5 cm. In this end of August, the tree frogs are about 1 1/2 cm. long and the red legged from 2 cm. to 6 cm.

So watch for them on the road beside ponds and lakes. Perhaps check your own pond and be as surprised as me when I took the time to stand quietly and watch for the life of many creatures. This wetland rising to an arbutus knoll with some rare wild flowers and down a cliff to a mixed Douglas fir woodland, will shortly be covenanted to the Islands Trust Fund and the SSI Conservancy through the NAPT EP program, because of the variety of its biodiversity and its beauty, to be preserved for future generations....

Nieke Visser

Eileen Wittewaall

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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is difficult to write something in mid August, but our regular season will start again soon, on September 9, with the Blackberry festival in Ruckle Park. This summer a few members were able to arrange hikes all over the island and even beyond, and some members attended these on a regular basis.

Some people of the Salt Spring working community expressed an interest in hikes and walks on Sundays. The coming season we will organize, on a trial basis, a few Sunday outings from September to November. These activities will be in addition to our regular Tuesday outings. Also this season we will offer regular Walks on Tuesdays and separate monthly Nature Walks, however not necessarily on a Tuesday. See the calendar on page 7 for the nature program.

On Friday, September 26, the SS Trail and Nature Club will co-sponsor (together with the Paddler's Club) an audio-slide show by David Denning titled *"Rowing Through Time: Adventure and Natural History in the Grand Canyon"*. This exciting show will be in the Community Gospel Chapel adjacent to Portlock Park and starts at 7.30pm. Entrance fee will be \$5, and we hope for a large attendance.

Our regular Socials will start on October 23 in the United Church. Ashley Hilliard will give a presentation on the *"A Trip to Eastern Cuba"* and Andrea Rankin and Margaret Spencer will do their show on Antarctica in November.

We hope that the attendance improvement will keep up, but we also encourage you to talk or email Zeke or myself if you have thoughts on the Socials.

Although nobody in his right mind thinks about Christmas at present, we have set December 9 for our Christmas luncheon.

We have received many great ideas for a fall trip, such as the Bugaboos, Lillooet, Manning, Sooke and more, but we have no takers for the organization of such a trip. The last few years the organization has fallen on the shoulders of only a few members, but they cannot continue to do so. With our large membership we need more people willing to do this and the Club has some resources and assistance for those who come forward.

In absence of a fall trip I encourage you to participate with the Fall Conference of BC Nature in Sorrento, October 2 to 5. There will be some excellent walking/nature trips and talks. Look for details at the BC Nature website: www.bcnature.ca.

Kees Visser

Bald Eagle on Baker Ridge
Nieke Visser



IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

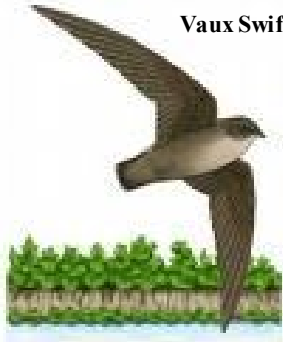
Just a reminder that Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club memberships expire August 31 each year. Membership fees are due by September 30.

Fees for 2008/2009 are \$20 per person if paid before December 31, 2008 and \$25 per person if paid January 1, 2009 or later (for renewals only)

All new and renewing members (including honorary members) are requested to fill in a NEW registration form for 2008-2009 (included in this issue for your convenience).

Forms and fees may be returned by mail to the address on the membership registration form, dropped off to the Membership Secretary's envelope in the Cobbler's Box, or delivered by hand to the Membership Secretary or other executive member at any club activity. Payment by cheque is preferred for ease in tracking payments.

Barry Spence, Membership Secretary

**Vaux Swift**

In June I visited Cortes Island for a few days of hiking with my daughter. Having lunch on a bluff we noticed about ten black swallow-like birds flying above the cliffs. From time to time some of them would drop 6-10 m straight down and then arch back up a little way with a rapid wing movement resulting in a wing-hum, not unlike the courtship display of the rufous hummingbird. They were Black Swifts foraging for insects. And here is an excerpt of what is known about them.

Swifts may look like swallows, but they are an entirely different species. They belong to the family of Apodidae, which means that they have sort of rudimentary feet (pod = feet in ancient Greek, a-pod = no feet), a result of their aerial lifestyle. Both the Vaux Swift and the Black Swift visit our region in summer to breed. The Vaux is the smaller of the two (11 cm.), and lighter in colour. Swifts can be distinguished from swallows by their rectangular tail and their narrow wings. With wings extended the swift looks a bit like a strung bow with its narrow wings strung backwards. Another feature that sets them apart from swallows is that they beat their wings alternately rather than simultaneously. Swifts are truly aerial acrobats. They literally live in the air: they feed, drink, bath, mate and gather nesting material in flight. They land only to build a nest, and feed and care for their young. They are known to ride on storm fronts to catch the insects that are blowing in the wind, and can fly at amazing speed of more than 160 km per hour!

Although Black Swifts forage over forests, marshes, and lakes for insects, they built their nest near rivers, and preferably near waterfalls. The Vaux Swift picks an old woodpecker nest or a natural crack in a tall riverside tree to lay 4 or 5 eggs. The Black Swift lays one single egg on a sheltered ledge of a steep cliff, often behind a waterfall. Both are thought to be monogamous and care for their nests in “shifts”: one parent sits on the nest at night, the other stays close by.

Eighteen centimetres long and a mass of 45 gram, the Black Swift is the largest swift breeding in North America. His distinctive features are long, pointed wings and a slightly notched tail. Adult plumage is entirely black with lighter areas on the sides of the forehead. The Black Swift occurs widely throughout western North America in summer, with its breeding range extending as far north as south-eastern Alaska and as far east as central Colorado. Nowhere in this range is it considered to be an abundant summer resident. Despite this extensive distribution, only about 80 specific nesting localities have been documented. The reason is obvious: most nesting sites are associated with sheer cliffs and waterfalls.

**Black Swift**

The first nest of the Black Swift was not found until 1901, when a certain Mister Vrooman collected a nest and its single white egg on a seacoast cliff near Santa Cruz, California. This location and single-egg clutch, so unlike what was known for any other swift at the time, caused many ornithologists to treat his discovery with scepticism, until many years later Vrooman was able to prove beyond doubt that his discovery had been correct. Besides seaside nesting, the Black Swift also uses inland sites with nests placed in cool, dark, damp sites near or behind waterfalls in mountains; the first such inland nesting was found near Banff, Alberta, in 1919. No wonder their nests were not discovered earlier!

Even today much remains to be learned about the enigmatic swift. The South American wintering range of North American breeders has only recently been recognized. Other unique aspects of the breeding biology of the black swift are its single-egg clutch, its long incubation and fledging periods, and apparent specialization in foraging on the nuptial-flight swarms of fat-rich, winged reproductive ants. Young hatchlings of the black swift are observed to be left alone for long periods of time, while the parents travel far away to forage. As the nests are usually in a damp place, the hatchlings drop their body temperature to conserve energy. When foraging, adults “accumulate insects and arachnids in the back of the throat continuing into the esophagus and bind them with saliva to produce a sticky assortment of insects. This insect conglomerate or food bolus is produced exclusively to feed the young. Food is distributed from the bolus by repeated regurgitations—perhaps 10 times over 2–3 min—and again about an hour later.

References:

1. Peter E. Lowther, and Charles T. Collins (2002): *Black Swift (Cypseloides niger)*, *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, Ed.), Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Retrieved from the *Birds of North America Online*: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/053>
2. Nancy Baron, and John Acorn (1997): *Birds of Coastal British Columbia*. Lone Pine Publishing.
3. Harvey Thomassen and Kevin Hutchings (2004): *Birds of the rain Coast / Habits and habitat*. Harbour Publishing.

...TO BE A PILGRIM:

A WALK TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA, MARCH 9 TO APRIL 9, 2005

I. Why walk 800 kilometres?

Well, my husband David and I always enjoyed linear walks and we had in fact discussed doing it many years ago but I was the one who felt it was probably beyond me. So I did it for him. I also felt it would be a wonderful way to see Northern Spain where my daughter-in-law comes from. It would also be a time to reflect on my life, my family, my faith, and I wanted to see if I could stick at something difficult that would be easy to give up on.

II. Some history.

Legend has it that St. James (Sant' Iago) went to Spain to preach the Gospel. He was a singularly unsuccessful proselytizer, making but seven converts to Christianity, so he returned home and was subsequently martyred. His followers put his body in a stone boat without sails, oars or crew and a week later it landed on the Galician coast where his body was retrieved and buried some 20km inland. In 813 a hermit was drawn to the spot by twinkling stars (Compostela = field of stars) and the bones were identified, and



sanctified, as those of St. James. They now lie in the Cathedral at Santiago. Pilgrims to Santiago began to rise in number and peaked in the Middle Ages when many of the towns and villages along the *camino frances* from France were built. Pilgrimages fell out of popularity, until in the mid-twentieth century a priest from O Cebreiro on the Camino began to piece it together again. Older people in communities all across the country remembered, or had heard, what route the Camino had taken. In recent years it has become a popular thing to do, and most people on Salt Spring know somebody who has done it, or at least a part of it.

III. The route, the hostels, the food.

I began at the beginning of the *camino frances*, which starts in St. Jean Pied de Port, on the French side of the Pyrenees, making the first day's walk a very demanding 28 km. *Peregrinos* (pilgrims) stay in *albergues* (hostels for *peregrinos*) that vary widely in comfort. Sometimes I was in bunk-bedded rooms of up to eighty beds, some very close together indeed. Occasionally I was in a room with only three or four beds. Bathroom facilities were mostly divided as to gender but not always, so one had to be a little careful emerging from the shower! If the *albergue* was in a tiny village, a meal would often be avail-

able in the evenings. The young people (mostly in their thirties and working; I was too early for the university crowd) usually preferred to cook for themselves. I liked to eat out, and on the first half of the journey *amenu del peregrino* would be available in many bars or restaurants. Later on, the *menu del dia* served the same purpose. Always cheap, always good, three courses including (a lot of) wine, with choices for each course. During the first half of the journey, cars and trucks would often give an encouraging toot as I passed near a road, and many people in the villages would say "*Buen Camino*" (good road) as I went by. After Burgos that happened less often, as the number of pilgrims increased, many people preferring to do perhaps the last two or three hundred kilometres rather than the whole 800k. Indeed, in Galicia, towards the end of the pilgrimage, people hardly give pilgrims a glance; they have become a little jaded.

IV. Easter on the Camino

I was fortunate to get to the Burgos Cathedral in time for the 11 a.m. Palm Sunday Mass. All sorts of municipal figures (I imagine they were) in medieval dress, nobles (?) in velvet with ostrich plumes, huge palms carried in procession, and many in the congregation carrying green branches with small leaves, I don't know what they were. On Good Friday I was in the small town of Sahagun, and the procession there was something to behold, huge tableaux each carried by a dozen or so hooded men, all the different brotherhoods with their pointed hoods, which always remind me of the Ku Klux Klan, several with bands playing. Then on Easter Sunday I was in a very small town on the edge of Leon where I was dragged into the crowd following one tableau of Christ. I wondered where I was being taken. Then we met another tableau of the Virgin



of the Virgin Mary (the two bands playing were not in the same key and it was rather painful). After greeting each other, Mary was then lowered to the ground, dressed all in white, and, according to the

mime portrayed by my abductor, she ascended into heaven. I felt privileged to have been a part of all three celebrations.

V. Memorable people.

Jesus and Angel were two young truck driver brothers. Since I could not pronounce their names easily, I called them Bill and Bob. Within 24 hrs everybody was

calling them Bill and Bob, and they loved it! On occasion they would sleep out in the fields, but mostly in the *albergues*. They walked very, very slowly, with long sticks, but they never stopped. They reached Santiago five days before I did!

Reiner was a Jesuit priest shaped exactly like Humpty Dumpty with thin legs. I would come upon him on the path, having a rest, and reading the Bible. In every town or village where he stayed he would request the local priest to allow him to celebrate at the 7.30 p.m. Eucharist. In spite of his build, he was a very fast walker. We were poles apart in our faith, but I shall never forget him.

Jesus Jato runs an *albergue* in Villafranca del Bierzo. He has made it his life's work to care for pilgrims. I can't think of any of my friends who would willingly have stayed there: it was very rough, and probably not too clean, but Jesus welcomed me with two kisses, a cup of coffee, followed by a bowl of thick soup. For a nominal charge we all joined in the communal evening meal, cooked by Jesus, and the atmosphere of love and communion that impressive man created, almost within minutes, was incredible.

VI. Memorable moments:

At Rabanal del Camino, just west of Astorga, I was out on the path before dawn with my flashlight, because I had a long way to go that day, 32 kilometres over a mountain. I made my way carefully along the rough path, and then the dawn broke behind me, one of those beautiful red dawns that spreads over the sky. It heralded a glorious, sunny, clear day, and my very best day of the Camino...

Tiago and Vera were a young Portuguese couple with whom I had become friendly. Vera had foot trouble, so she gave up and took the bus. Tiago then began pounding along doing 40 km a day, so I lost him. One day I suddenly came upon huge letters, made out of piles of little pebbles in the middle of the path, saying 'GO MAGGIE, TIAGO, VERA'. I stood and laughed, took a picture, and walked on. Later I realized that message must have been there for two days, and nobody had disturbed it. Perhaps I am part of the Camino for ever.

Walking into the Cathedral at Santiago, pack on back, stick in hand, in the middle of the Pilgrim's Mass, with the clear soprano voice of a nun echoing through the building. I was close to tears.

VII. Divine intervention?

I was about 150 metres from the top of a pass, running out of steam. I stopped to rest, looked down, and there beside the path was an orange! I poked it, it was indeed



an orange. I picked it up, got out my knife, peeled and ate it - and with renewed energy bounced over the pass!

The next day Reiner and I were doing our washing at the *albergue* (outside, cold water and washboards) and I showed him the remnants of my bar of soap, saying I would have to find somewhere to buy more. Reiner said "There are two pieces in front of you." With my protestant ethics bulging I said

"Oh but they aren't mine, I couldn't..." Reiner said "You have been given soap. Take it." I took it.

The next day was the hardest of the Camino. Known as the Camino Dur, there is a very steep climb for several kilometres at the end of a 29.5 kilometre day. I had thought I would do it in two days so had not had my pack trucked up to O Cebreiro by Jesus Jato as most other people had done. After ten kilometres I changed my mind, decided to go for it, BUT I HAD MY PACK !! I asked around a village, but nobody would drive it up to O Ce-

breiro. Brad, from Alaska, said "I'll carry it for you". I said "Brad, you will NOT". I went into a bar for coffee and Sean, from Alaska, said "I'll carry it for you". I said "Sean, you will NOT". They roared with laughter about how light it was (hmmm), and I gave in.

VIII. Conclusion.

The Camino is a different experience for every pilgrim. For some it is a nice walking holiday, for others an intensely religious experience. The Spaniards love their Camino and many will spend several days a year on it. For me, my feelings about it changed. I found it was not about taking photos (though I did that) or seeing cathedrals and museums (though I did that). It was not about exchanging email addresses with new friends whom I will realistically never see again (though I did that), nor was it about doing more miles in a day than I had thought possible (though I did that, too). It was about walking alone, mile after mile, in the rhythm of the days, thinking, not thinking, loving this world, touching lives and being touched by them.

It was all about being a pilgrim, and giving thanks.



Margaret Spencer

RHODODENDRON WALK IN VICTORIA, MAY 27, 2008



Left to right: Anke with granddaughter Zoe, Naomi Hart, Vanina Katz and Dulcy Wilson in Playfair Park
Anke Smeede

Tuesday May 27th: the timing was just right this year for a walk among the splendidly colourful display of Azaleas, Rhododendrons. At the same time it was an opportunity to admire the masses of Camas lilies under the Gary Oaks in Playfair Park, along with the sweetly fragrant Nootka Roses along the paths of the Cedar Hill Golf Course. The perennial border at the Park is getting more interesting every spring and the unique Royal Paulownia Tree (Japan) was showing off its full head of delicate mauve tresses. The only other Paulownia in Victoria

stands at the front of the Legislature Buildings. They are sure an exotic treat to see (unfortunately, my photo did not do it justice, but I will try again next year!).

Thanks to the small and very keen group (see picture above) for braving the ominous dark Salt Spring clouds, cold wind, and rain on the ferry early in the day only to be rewarded with glorious Victoria sunshine and warmth for lunch in the Park and for a tour of Finnerty Gardens at the University of Victoria later in the afternoon! Naomi Hart is a descendant of Rev. Wilson who lived on Salt Spring in the "early settler days" and her mother was born here. Naomi, a gifted artist, now lives in the UK. She was here to draw and paint on Salt Spring and to gather more info on her famous forefather and her roots on Salt Spring. Naomi is working on an exhibit of her paintings in the town hall of Ganges, France, this September where she is making the connections between her experiences and drawings from the Ganges River in India and Ganges SSI, she is calling it: *from Ganges to Ganges via the Ganges* and she is aiming to repeat this exhibition at Artspring in the spring of 2009. Naomi also donated some beautiful art books to the library on the town of Ganges in France and its surrounding mountains. Sue Mouat was planning to come on the walk as well, but was not able to. Most of the rhodos and azaleas in Playfair Park actually originated in Sue's parents' rhodo nursery in Royston on Vancouver Is-



Rhodos at Playfair Park
Anke Smeede

land in the 1940 / 50's!!)

The famous and unusual handkerchief trees (*Davidia Involucrata*, China) were in full bloom, showing off their gorgeous white flowers truly the size of white handkerchiefs (I hope the photo does it justice!) and there were brilliant red blooms with delicate textures, yet the size of a satellite dish, on the peonies!

Many thanks to Dulcy Wilson, our Walker Coordinator for giving me the opportunity again to share this very special area of our beautiful paradise all around us.

Anke Smeede



Davidia Involucrata
Anke Smeede

CALENDAR

Tuesday September 9

Blackberry Festival in Ruckle Park starting at noon and preceded by short inaugural outings. Check the Driftwood and/or the website for details.

Friday September 26

Audio-slideshow by Dave Denning:

"Rowing Through Time: Adventure and Natural History in the Grand Canyon".

Where? Community Gospel Chapel, Vesuvius Bay Road

Time? 7:30PM

Costs? \$5

This event is co-sponsored by the SS Trail and Nature Club and the Island Paddlers

Saturday September 27

Nature Outing

Theme? Edible Wild Plants

Excursion leader? Teresa Hitch

Where? Meet at Drummond Park

Time? 1:00 PM

What to bring? Plant ID books, knife, cup, plate and utensils.

More info? Phone John Flanagan 250-653-2344

Thursday, October 16

Nature Outing

Theme? Mushrooms

Excursion leaders? Al and Victoria Olchoweki

Details to follow, check Driftwood and/or website

Thursday October 23

Monthly Social

Ashley Hilliard will present a slide **A Trip to Eastern Cuba**

Where? United Church, Ganges.

Time:? 7:30 PM

Coffee, tea and goodies available. Donation suggested to cover the costs of hall rental and food.

Thursday November 20

Monthly Social

Margaret Spencer and Andrea Rankin will do a show and tell about their trip to **Antarctica**

Where? United Church, Ganges.

Time:? 7:30 PM

Coffee, tea and goodies available. Donation suggested to cover the costs of hall rental and food.



View north from McIntyre Bluff

Lynn Thompson

.....from page 8

breakfast at 7:45 a.m., after which picked up our bag lunches and organized our cars to head out for the day. The Hikers drove south towards Oliver, parking near a farm market and walked through a new vineyard towards the trail head. Brian Radford led as we strolled to the top of McIntyre Bluff. The view overlooking Vaseaux Lake and the South Okanagan was exceptional.

In the meantime the walkers, led by Hu King, drove East above Naramata to the KVR and tramped along part of the track bed, taking some side trails as well. A short shower occurred but no bother to all.

Ramblers headed towards Penticton, stopping at Mun-son Mountain to check out the Okanagan vistas. I believe some toured the wineries on the way home.

Most members returned in time for 'Happy Hour' at McLaren Hall before the 5:30 call to dinner. After dinner we trooped over to the 'Loft' to hear a talk given by Peter Ord, director of the Penticton Museum. The talk was all about

the "Bunch Grass", and how it figured in the early development of the Okanagan. An unusual topic indeed. Questions followed as we wrapped up the evening.

Wednesday started off a bit warmer as the group gobbled up their breakfast, grabbed their bag lunches and headed off for the day. Ramblers took a drive to Summerland to visit the gardens at the Federal Experimental Farm. Then drove down through the town to a lake-shore picnic spot for lunch. Afterwards, they stopped at a couple of Naramata wineries on the way home.



Bitterroot

Lynn Thompson

Walkers drove South to Okanagan Falls and discovered a wonderful walk overlooking Skaha Lake. Hikers took to the woods South and East of Naramata adventuring along the '3 Blind Mice' trail.

All returned for happy hour and dinner. Again the meal was very good as we picked up our food cafeteria style. This time, we shared our eating space with a large youth contingent from Squamish.

Wednesday evening was unstructured as some sat around the piano in the loft with Beth, others -- wandered about the village looking in on the farm market, visited more wineries, walked the labyrinth at the Centre or just lazed about.

Thursday we were all up and at it for breakfast at 7:45, picked up our bag lunches and said our goodbyes before driving home. Some folks extended their trip by continuing on to other destinations in the BC interior.

Our (my) grateful thanks to the Radfords and the Kings for organizing the day trips and arranging for our speaker. I had some fun setting up the accommodations which went rather smoothly actually. The staff at Naramata Centre were very helpful and cooperative too. This was our third visit here and probably not the last judging by the number of satisfactory comments I've received. Happy trails everyone !!

Fred Powell.



Scarlet Gilia

Lynn Thompson



Okanagan Lake south from little tunnel

Lynn Thompson

GENERAL INFORMATION



The Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club features Tuesday outings September through June at three levels of ability. The monthly schedule of outings and events is published in the Driftwood on the last Wednesday of the month and on our website at www.saltspringtnc.ca. On the fourth Thursday in October, November and February through May, the Club meets at 7:30 pm at the lower hall of the United Church. The Club is affiliated with BC Nature and Nature Canada.



Ramblers enjoy walking without pressure with frequent "time-outs" to take pictures, to examine plants, flowers, rocks, fossils, and from time to time sample local restaurants. Members of any level of fitness are welcome. Ramblers start at 10:00 am and usually end by 1:30 pm.

Walkers move at a more relaxed pace. They usually try to avoid long steep climbs and will stop to catch their breath along the way. Outings generally cover 8 km or less and end by 2:00 pm.



Hikers like long, adventurous and occasionally quite strenuous hikes, and like to gain a bit of altitude. They need strong boots and a good but not excessive level of fitness. Hikes usually start at about 10:00 am and end between 2:30 to 3:30 pm.



Nature excursions are normally organized every third Tuesday of the month except December led by an expert naturalist and are open to all levels.

Membership: Annual dues are \$20 per person. All members must sign a waiver annually. Send completed membership and waiver forms with your cheque to the Membership Secretary, PO Box 203, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K 2V9, or drop them off at the Cobbler's box, attention Barry Spence.



Taxi fare: Members are encouraged to carpool during outings and reimburse the driver as follows:

On-island trips: North of Duke Road: \$2 per passenger; South of Duke Road: \$3 per passenger, Ruckle Park and non-paved roads: \$4 per passenger.

Off Island trips: \$0.30 per km per vehicle plus ferry costs.

Spring/Fall trips: No club policy.

Moving? Change of email address? Please let your Membership Director know a.s.a.p. Email: sspence@telus.net; telephone: 537-2332.

Your comments or contributions are welcome. Please email them to Nieke Visser: niekevisser@shaw.ca or leave them in the cobbler's box.

A word from your coordinators

The hiking, walking and rambling coordinators would like to welcome all of you back for a new season. The three of us are working hard to coordinate interesting outings for everyone. We would greatly appreciate any volunteers to lead outings! If you would like to lead a group, or know of any interesting trails in your area, please contact us (see page 3 for telephone numbers or email addresses)

Many thanks from Frauke, Dulcy, and Lise



Walkers at Bear Point (Ruckle park)

Nieke Visser

HONORARY MEMBERS

Bob Ball	Owen Benwell &
Loes Holland	George Hignell
Tony Pederson	John Myers
Jean King	Ian Fraser
Joan Lott	Bob & Betty Ball
Eleanor Lloyd	Dick & Chris Pattinson
Jean Holmes	Betty Kirk
	Brian Radford

PAST TRAIL BLAZERS

Lynn Thompson	Charles Kahn
Bill Harrington	Simon Rook
Paul & Beth Ranney	Jim Barber
	Alan & Rita Robertson

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Vacancy: treasurer
Job description: contact Judy Nurse (250-537-2293)
Term: two years
Start date: at AGM in January 2009.

Vacancy: Trail Coordinator
Job description: contact Mark Ritchie (250-537-8953)
Term: two years
Start date: As soon as possible.



Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club
Box 203, Ganges P.O.
SALT SPRING ISLAND BC V8K 2V9

2008-2009

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION and WAIVER OF LIABILITY
This document affects your legal rights. Please read it carefully.

Membership registration is for the current SSTNC Year,
September 2008 - August 31, 2009.

Name(s): _____
(Please Print): _____
Mailing address: _____
Postal code: _____
Phone: _____ email: _____
Emergency contact: _____ Phone: _____

Signature of this agreement is a condition of participation in Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club activities. By signing this agreement you will waive certain legal rights, including the right to make a claim for damages with respect to these activities and you will absolve the Club and its representatives from liability. Participants who are not members of the Club and/or the federation of BC Naturalists (FBCN) will be eligible for liability coverage under the FBCN insurance scheme for a maximum of three (3) field trips.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK, RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND WAIVER OF CLAIMS

Assumption of Risk

I am aware that certain activities of the Club, including field trips and nature trips involve risks and may result in personal injury, death, property damage, expense or related loss, including loss of income. These risks include negligence on the part of the Club, its directors, officers, members, employees and volunteers who organize or lead activities, described herein as the "the Club and its representatives". I freely accept and fully assume all such risks and the possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from participation in such activities.

Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims

In consideration of the club accepting my application to participate in the activities described, I/We agree as follows:

1. To waive any and all claims that I/We, or my/our heirs, may have in the future against the Club and its representatives with respect to these activities
2. To release the Club and its representatives from any and all liability for any personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, which I/We may suffer as a result of my/our participation in this activity, due to any cause whatsoever, including negligence, breach of contract or breach of any statutory duty of care.

I/We have read this agreement and I/We understand it. I/We are aware that by signing this document, I/We are waiving certain rights, which I/We may have with respect to the Club.

Signature(s): 1. _____ Date: _____
2. _____ Date: _____