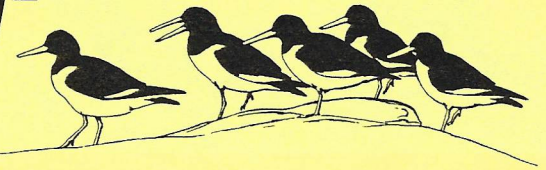


Oystercatcher



The Newsletter of the Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club

Calendar

May 22-24

Bowen Trip



June 19th

Strawberry Tea



Sept 10-12

Big White Trip



Sept 18th

Bryan's Blackberry Bash

OYSTERCATCHER

Oystercatcher is published three times annually. Comments, articles or ideas are welcome. Mail them to Oystercatcher, Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club, Box 203, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V9

Hiking in Northern Arizona *Ian Fraser*

We started our trip to Sedona in the last week of January 2001, by car. We traveled down the West Coast on route 101 as far as northern California then over the hills to Reno in Nevada. After testing our usually poor luck on the one armed bandits we carried on east a ways to Fallon then south through Los Vegas to Laughlin then east again to Flagstaff.

Flagstaff is at an elevation of over 7000 feet and it was 22 degrees F. with at least sixteen inches of snow on the ground when we arrived from the moderately warm desert not far to the west. This was not a very auspicious sign for the weather just 24 miles to the south, in Sedona. After spending the night in Flagstaff, and wondering if maybe we were a couple of months too early, we headed down the mountain to Sedona by way of Oak Creek Canyon. The Mogollon Rim, an abrupt drop from the high plateau country on which Flagstaff is situated, runs roughly east to west about 15 miles south of Flagstaff. Oak Creek Canyon is one of the canyons that have its beginning as a fissure in the Rim.

Oak Creek Canyon is traversed by highway 89A, which is a narrow road and very steep and twisty, but also very scenic. The canyon starts at about 6500 feet and descends to about 4000 feet in the vicinity of Sedona. The vegetation starts off as typical high plateau pines and rather quickly becomes full desert in a matter of a very few miles. In addition, the rock changes from the usual dull colored sandstone to a bright brick red multicolored panorama that changes hues all day long as the sun moves across the sky. Most important of all though, is the fact that the south facing valley and canyon act like a reflector oven and trap the weak winter sun, thus raising the temperature to a winter range of low 40's to high 60's in a normal year.

The key is "normal year", this year was not usual as can be attested to by any that went south for the warmth in January or February.

We stayed in Sedona for a bit over three weeks and explored in all directions from there. It was very nice hiking weather but definitely not shirt-sleeve weather most of the time. We even had a little snow one night. Other years when we have been there at the exact same time one could walk about during the middle of the day in a tee shirt quite comfortably.

The beauty of the Sedona area is in its surroundings. High red rock mesas and deep long twist canyons with little clear streams and progression of vegetation from pure desert to almost alpine in a relatively short hike. A short drive in most directions will take you to other historically interesting old towns, ghost towns and ancient native dwellings. Sedona lies in the Coconino Forest Park and its citizens are very protective of their good fortune. Sedona is named after the wife of an early settler.

For those interested in outdoor sports there is hiking, fishing, biking, 4wheel driving and even swimming in the summer. For those interested in history, photography or shopping, there is plenty to do.

While Mary browsed the stores and outdoor plazas, I explored the "back country", which begins at the end of many of the streets in town. In the three weeks we were there I made an effort to hike at least two different trails a day and I still did not come close to exhausting the area within 10 miles of the centre of town. Most of the trails are well marked and can be hiked or walked, depending on your pace, with running shoes or light hiking boots. There are several books and booklets describing these trails readily available. If you get bored its two hours to Phoenix and 40 minutes to Flagstaff.



Trail Mix

New Members: June & Sheila Tokarek, John Curran, Dorothy Heath, Richard & Nohemi Mills, Jean Addison, Owen & Faye Benwell, George & Ann Hignell, Gordon & Gail Kent, Lee Evans, Geraldine Sharp, Bob & Patricia Gibson, Barbara McDevitt, Margaret Moore, Ivan & Susan Mouat, Brian Rowley, Geoffrey & Margaret Allen, Harold Brochmann, Gloria Dorworth, Barbara James, Shirley Railton, Willie Waddell, Norma Andrew, Ken Mugridge, Rosemary Partridge, Patricia Duke, Robert & Patricia Gorman, Patricia Houston, Arona Kagnoff-Henderson, Gayle Burandt, Peter Wiegand, Bob & Adryce Brawn, Jan Jang, Rita Sagness, Nelly Weibel.



Last Hike: A fond farewell to our pals Keith Webb, Past-President, and John Lloyd, Honorary Member.

Taxi Fare: Remember, \$1 for a trip to North End, \$2 to South End, Ruckle Park, \$3 to Musgrave etc.

Email: If you now have an Email address, send it to Membership Secretary Lynn Thompson at lthompson@salt-spring.com

Trail and Nature Club Fall 2001 Off Island Trip **BIG WHITE**

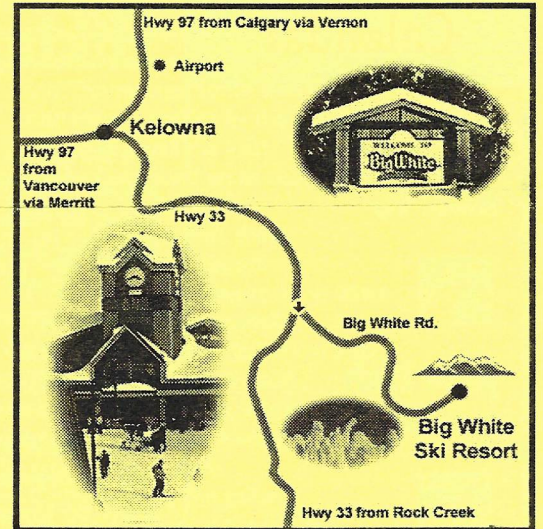
We are in the final planning stages for a Fall trip to Big White Ski Resort, scheduled for September 10, 11, and 12th. Big White is about 50 minutes from Kelowna, via Highway 33 and the Big White road.

The only hotel open in the summer is the White Crystal—an expensive hotel in the ski season, but reasonable in summer. The rooms have a kitchenette, and the hotel has a dining room and a bar. It is centrally located in the middle of the village area. A small corner store style of grocery is open all year. We plan to do our own lunches and breakfasts, and will have dinners in the hotel dining room.

The resort is at 6200 feet altitude—one of the highest in B.C. It is the second largest ski area in B.C.—only Whistler is bigger. This means that there is a lot of terrain suitable for hiking, walking, and rambling. We (Tom and Joanne) will go up to the mountain in July and plan routes

The cost per person is \$185. A cheque for \$62 should be paid on sign-up, and the balance (\$123) paid by July 30th. This is for a double room and dinner for three nights.

We will be glad to answer any questions you might have about the trip—~~537-2429~~ is our number.



Extended Off Island Trips

Remember, a payment of one third of the cost is to be made at signup. This includes a \$25 refundable fee in the event of cancellation. The final two thirds is to be paid six weeks in advance of the trip. If cancellation is made less than one month prior to the trip and there is no substitute there will be no refund. To be eligible for signup, a participant must be a paid-up member for at least two months.

We should also warn people that the weather can be variable. It is usually sunny and fairly warm in September, but last year it snowed on Labour Day! It didn't last, luckily. It would be a good idea to take gloves, sturdy boots—there can be some boggy areas—and layers of clothing so you can add on or take off as the day progresses.

This is a wonderful time to drive through the Okanagan Valley—lots of fruit stands at the road side, offering fresh fruit and vegetables. Anyone who plans to stay over a few more days (you are on your

own making arrangements if you do this) could also do some winery tours as well as loading up on fruit.

A trip to Big White will be a new experience for the club. We'll do all we can to make it a good one

Tom and Joanne Cartwright

KLARISBAUER

FBCN REPORT

Nancy Braithwaite

The Christmas bird count took place on December 17th and the 124 bird counters were underfettered by the snow. They saw 16,599 birds of 107 species. Amongst the most unusual sightings were a Green Heron, a Greater White-Fronted Goose, a Northern Goshawk, 3 Semi-Palmated Plover, 4 Snow Bunting and a Western Flycatcher. Our Western Towhee is now to be called "spotted" to distinguish it from the eastern variety and political correctness (or racial discrimination) has forced the suitably-named old-squaw to become a dull long-tailed duck.

Juncos were the most commonly seen bird with 2098, followed by 1365 robins and 1082 chickadees. Western Grebes are looking up again with 719, having dropped from 5361 in 1990 to a mere 53 in 1993.

The FBCN AGM will be held in Williams Lake from the 24th to the 27th of May. It will be a wonderful opportunity to see dramatic landscapes in the Upper Fraser River Valley and the Church Creek Protected Area, as well as the flora and fauna of the Cariboo-Chilcotin grasslands.

Crown Lands

10 of the 12 parcels on Salt Spring have "Threshold Communities" (undisturbed groupings of mature plants and trees). This has been discovered thanks to the research done by botanist Marc Johnson with assistance from members of the Trail and Nature Club and the Conservancy.

There was a public meeting in November at which we were told that BCAL (British Columbia Assets and Land) does not regard the local designation of our Crown Lands for Park Reserves as binding on the province, although they approved it as part of our OCP process.

We are sending a resolution to the FBCN to be put forward at the AGM urging our Crown Lands be protected in accordance with the Island Trust Committee's proposal in the Community Plan of 1998 as follows:

Resolution 2001-4 Crown Land on the Southern Gulf Islands

WHEREAS publicly owned (Crown land) is in very short supply on the Southern Gulf Islands, and

WHEREAS population size and building densities continue to increase as privately held parcels are built on

to the maximum zoning allows, and

WHEREAS tourist visits are ever increasing, and

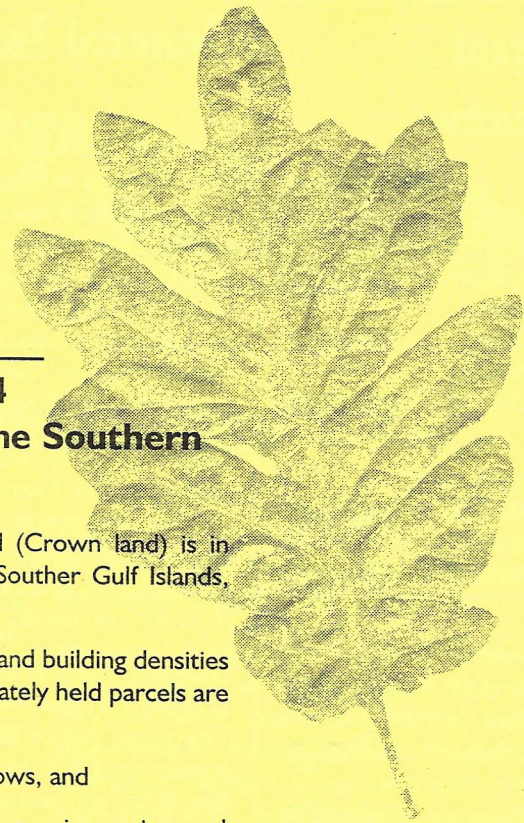
WHEREAS the Southern Gulf Islands represent some of the few remaining areas in the dry Coastal Douglas Fir Zone, including the threatened habitat of the Garry Oak meadows, and

WHEREAS clearcutting on privately owned Texada Lands Corporation property on Saltspring Island is already destroying substantial areas of the dry Coastal Douglas Fir forest, and

WHEREAS the Southern Gulf Islands are a show piece on the International Border and visible form the major ferry route between Victoria and Vancouver, and

WHEREAS on most islands through extensive public consultation, Official Community Plans have been prepared that designate Crown lands for park or conservation purposes, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Federation of BC Naturalists urges the Provincial Government to ensure that all Crown Lands on the Southern Gulf Islands are retained in public ownership for conservation purposes.



Current

Executive

President:

Bill Harrington 537-1116

Vice-Pres:

Simon Rook 537-5180

Past Pres:

Linda Quiring 507-5016

Treasurer

Rollie McCallum 537-0052

Secretary

Janet Andersen 537-8720

Walkers

Al Robertson 537-9459

Ramblers

Harold Page 633-2320

Hikers

Fred Powell 537-4730

FBCN

Nancy Braithwaite 537-9336

VOLUNTEERS

Membership

Lynn Thompson 537-1814

Trail Co-ordinator

Ian Fraser 537-9849

Archivist

Joanne Cartwright 537-2419

Photography

Chris Pattinson 537-9147

General Information

The Salt Spring trail and Nature Club features Tuesday outings September through June at three levels of ability. The monthly schedule of outings and events is published the final Wednesday of the month in the Driftwood. The fourth Thursday of each month the Club meets at 7:30 PM in the lower hall of the Ganges United Church. The Club is affiliated with the Federation of BC Naturalists.

Ramblers enjoy walking without pressure to keep up speed. Members of any level fitness are welcome. Ramblers have frequent "time-outs" for taking pictures, examining flowers, plants, stones, fossils, and hugging trees. Rambles start at 10 AM and usually end around 1:30 PM

Walkers move at a relaxed pace taking time to smell the roses. Walkers usually try to avoid long steep climbs and will stop to catch the breath along the way. Walks are generally less than 8 km and end around 2 PM.

Hikers like long, adventurous and occasionally quite strenuous hikes, and like to gain a bit of altitude. Hikers need good strong boots and a good but not excessive level of fitness. They may smell the roses, but do it rather quickly. Hikes usually start at 10 AM and finish between 2:30 and 3:30 PM.

Membership: Annual dues are \$17.00 per person. New members must sign a waiver. Send waiver form and membership dues to Membership Secretary, Box 203, Salt Spring Island BC V8K 2V9

Tasmania Australia

12 boozers with guide Dick

To see the birds and wallaby's

The wombats (take your pick)

The Dickey Bird + Moorish Hen

The fairy with its call

The Turnstile + That noisy Bird

And Tassie has them all.

Why Monte Zuma had to fall

So far for us to hike

Will be an endless mystery;

But scrubbing Wrens and Kite.

And Cockacoot and loripeet

and Thomwings, some with spots

And Honey suckles by the ton

I loved them all the lots!

To see the Frogmund on its nest

A highlight! Thanks to Tim,

The Lyre angel wouldn't show

(She sings a psalm + hymn)

When we raced 3 hours up + down

To Monte Zuma waterfall

The "Flower Girls" found me a stick

Their name is Ruth + Sall(y)

Ruth has a husband who, like me

drinks beer, so did our Helen

The trio Elenor + Barb

and Cathy, wine by the gallon

We had a knitter in the group

The only non-bird gal

She watched our bags as needles clicked

Bill spotted rather well.

We threw the precious stick away

In un named River (not Volga!)

Don't care a skate about the name

The best bird was the Brolga!!

So Thank-you Dick + birds + fish

and turtles (I was late!)

A KISS FOR YOU, I miss you all

MERRY CHRISTMAS- g'day mate.

Loes

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