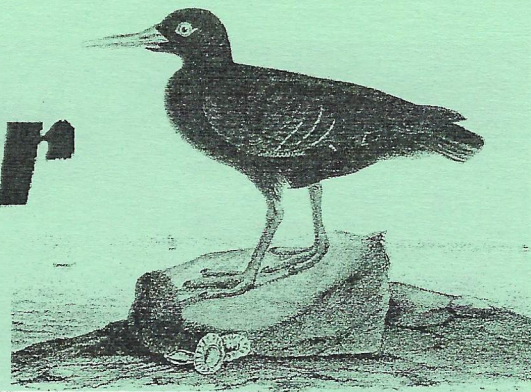


# Oystercatcher

The Newsletter of the

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club

Fall 2004



## Calendar

### October 28

**Social at United Church.**  
Slide show with Prof. Neville Winchester (Note: start time) 7.00 pm.



### November 25

**Social at United Church.**  
Bob Hall will share his experiences in the High Arctic. 7.30 pm



### December 14

**Christmas Luncheon** at Meaden Hall. 11.30 - 2.00.

## OYSTERCATCHER

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

<http://saltspring.gulfislands.com/lthompson/>

## President's Message

Fred Powell

**T**hank you for allowing me the privilege of being your president. Having been a member of this organization for about 14 years, I continue to be astounded by the physical stamina exhibited by many of you. I'm also impressed by such a variety of abilities and talents within this club.

We've just returned from our excursion to Strathcona Park. Thanks are due to Ron Hall for organizing this event. The 49 members who attended this successful trip participated in some interesting hikes and walks. Many of the group went to Gold River one day for a ride on the UCHUCK III. The boat went as far as Friendly Cove where everyone had a little time to learn more about the place. We did experience a few rain showers which didn't seem to deter either the UCHUCK riders or the remainder of the group who did some hiking closer to our accommodation. On the next day about 20 of the group accepted the invitation to see Percy Dewer's former mountain-top homestead. Overall, I would say that our accommodation and food were excellent.

Following my pleas for a secretary in the last edition, no less than three members came forward to volunteer for the job! As a result, Hope Williamson filled in for our June meeting and now Nieke Visser will assume this duty on a regular basis. THANK YOU ALL!! I hope others will come forward in the future when asked to volunteer as these folks have done.

Now that a number of us have consumed, once again, a delicious assortment of blackberry treats, we're ready to tackle the trails ahead with renewed vigour and energy. ■

## Summer Trips in Strathcona

**O**n an overcast afternoon in August you might have spotted three men in a boat on Buttle Lake. Except this wasn't just three ordinary men, these were three only partly sane hikers and three fully loaded backpacks in a 14 foot canoe. It was so low in the water that the breaking waves occasionally spilled over into it. Nevertheless, they made it over to the Phillip's Creek campsite where they were joined by a woman who had the sense to make the crossing in a kayak. The people involved were Simon and Heather Rook/Horne, Lynn Thompson and Kent Anders from Nanaimo.

After a rather windy night, these four then attempted the 1300metre climb on a switch-back trail up the mountain to Marble Meadows, one of the more remote areas in Strathcona Park. It was a tough one, took five and a half hours, and we were all dead beat, but we all made it. We then proceeded to spend three days exploring this absolutely exquisite area. Kent was our plant expert, and he was able to fill us in on the great variety of wildflowers that were in full bloom. After many promptings, we were finally able to name at least the most common of them. The area gets its name from the fact that ~~at least~~ at least half of it is covered in limestone rock. There are some good trails in the area, but as it is mostly above the tree line except for small stands of sub-alpine fir and mountain hemlock (see, I still remember some of the lessons!) one can pretty much go where one wants. In the three days we were up there we saw just one person, a lone climber on his way to the Golden Hind, the highest mountain in the park. And remember this was in pretty good weather at the peak of summer. All three days were partly cloudy, but the clouds were almost always above even the highest moun-

*continued on next page*



## John Myers

Most of us know that John Myers has been an active member of the club for a long time. but I'm sure we don't know exactly how much he has been involved. On arriving on Saltspring in 1993 he immediately contacted the club and with his wife Joan went on a hike. On this first hike he realised that "the participants, many much older than ourselves, never stopped, never ceased talking and climbed hills without a pause. We quickly realised that we had better get in shape and joined the club."

The next year he got involved by organising a trip to Pearson College and East Sooke Park. Later he organised trips to Shawnigan Lake (1996?) and Hope (2003), and filled in for Fred Powell on trips to Naramata and Quadra. On these trips he gained a reputation for getting lost and ending up on railway lines, but always got back in time for Happy Hour. He said he always knew where to go, he just wasn't sure how to get there!

In 1997 he was elected president, and about this time became a very active member of the first Parks and Rec. trails committee, which was formed to develop a network of public trails on the Island. More recently he has been involved in the Channel Ridge development, where he was the first to identify the possibility of a major public park after the Village completion.

John is very committed to the club and has always believed that the it should provide a wide array of activities for all levels of members, and has usually been quite vocal in voicing his concerns. (Indeed, we are all aware of his extraordinary gifts as an orator.)

Besides his club work John has been on the boards of Greenwoods, the Sailing Club, the Library, and a volunteer for ten years at the Visitor Information Centre. ■

*Simon Rook*

## Upcoming Events

*Ron Hall.*

Our first social of the fall season will be on 28 October (Thursday ) at 7.p.m. which is a half hour earlier than usual, as our guest comes from Victoria and must get back that night. He will meet with us in the United Church basement and show us a wide array of slides and tell us about his experiences doing his research in the treetops of the world. His name is Prof. Neville Winchester, and he is with the University of Victoria in the Biology Department, and his work has taken him to South America, Polynesia, and most recently Panama, as well as here in B.C., and other far-flung places of the globe. He will begin promptly as he must catch the ferry from Vesuvius at 8:40. The talk promises to be very interesting. We hope you can attend !

The second guest speaker of the fall will be at the United Church on the 25 November (Thursday ) at the usual time of 7.30 p.m. Bob Howe will share with us some of his experiences in the High Arctic, where he has been working for the last couple of years studying global warming and climate change. In 2001, Bob led a group of trekkers close to the North Pole, so he will have some very engaging slides to show us of areas that almost none of us will have ever seen before. He enjoys an interactive style where the audience is encouraged to ask questions as the evening unfolds. This also sounds like an excellent evening, and there will be no time constraint as Bob lives on our island.

Our Christmas Luncheon will be held on 14 December (Tuesday ) from 11.30 to 2.00 p.m.. at Meaden Hall. The volunteers will have the venue decorated for the season, to add to our enjoyment of the lovely meal that will be provided for us, and drinks should be available to round out the indulgence. We hope to see lots of our members there for this festive occasion.

Just casting a glance well ahead into the new year, our AGM will be held on 27 January from 5.00 to 9.00, as a potluck dinner with open bar, at Meaden Hall. PLEASE MARK THIS ONE IN YOUR CALENDAR NOW, ALONG WITH THE OTHER EVENTS MENTIONED ABOVE, SO THAT YOU DO NOT MISS OUT ON THEM. ■



## Trail Mix

### New Members

Connie Hardy  
Murray Reiss  
Janet Crosbie and John Hardy  
Shirley LaFortune  
Barbara Appelby  
Mila Auld  
Doreen Davidson  
Bruce Wallace  
Rita Evans



**Taxi Fare:** Remember, \$1 for a trip to North End, \$2 to South End, Ruckle Park, \$3 to Musgrave, etc.  
Day trips off-island, \$0.25/km.



**Email:** If you now have an Email address, send it to Membership Secretary George Wachmann [wachmann@saltspring.com](mailto:wachmann@saltspring.com)

tains, so were really were fortunate. On the morning of the fourth day it started to rain, so we made a decision to leave immediately.

Lynn told me that it depended on how fast he forgets the pain of going up as to whether he does it again, but a few days later the memory of pain had evidently disappeared, as he was saying that he really thought he might like to see some of the things we missed.. That tells you what kind of impression the trip made.

Simon and Heather were so impressed that the very next week they decided to go to the park again to climb Mt. Albert Edward, the third highest mountain in Strathcona. This time the hike in from Mt. Washington is not steep, although it is badly worn in places. We camped for three nights at Circler Lake, which is the closest campsite to the mountain. Because this area is not nearly so remote as Marble Meadows, there were lots of campers.

The second day we got up reasonably early and started up the long trail to the summit. The trail is not difficult, but it is almost all very rocky, meaning you have to watch every step. We made it up just under four hours and had lunch at the top. The day was almost cloud free, which is unusual in the mountains, so the views were spectacular and we stayed there a full hour and a half. The return trip took about the same time as the ascent, as we were tired and had to be careful on the rocky trail, and were we ever glad of that swim in the lake!!

The next day we did some less demanding exploring in the area, and were rather reluctant to leave, as the weather was still brilliant, but we were out of food. In the words of the famous Austrian actor: "We'll be back". ■

## FBCN Report

*Nancy Braithwaite*

**T**he last Regional Meeting of the FBCN was held in nanaimo on the 11th September. Betty Collins from Qualicum, the new Regional Director, was in the chair and Frank Hovenden, director from Comox, was recording secretary. (The June meeting was cancelled because too few people could have attended it..)

We discussed matters arising from the March meeting; membership insurance and Parks' Day which some clubs managed to celebrate most successfully. I hope we shall be able to do it in August next year. Two new clubs have joined the Vancouver Island Region: the Rithet's Bog Conservation Society and the nanoose Naturalists. There are now eleven naturalists' societies attached to the FBCN on the Island.

On 25th September, the Victoria Natural History Society hosted an inter-club Field Trip Day at Aylard Farm in East Sooke Park, where hawks and vultures gather preparing to migrate across the Straits of Juan de Fuca.. It was organized to help celebrate the 60th anniversary of the VNHS.

The FBCN AGM, hosten by the Central Okanagan Naturalists, will be help at the Ramada Lodge in Kelowna from the 30th September to the 2nd October. I am very pleased to know that five club members from Salt Spring have registered. Apart from the serious matters of the Regional General Meeting and the Directors' Meeting, there will be a banquet with a speaker. On the Friday morning there will be various lectures followed by field trips to study the geology of Mission creek and the aftermath of the fir in Okanagan park. For the early risers there is birding and, as a grand finale, WINE TOURS! ■

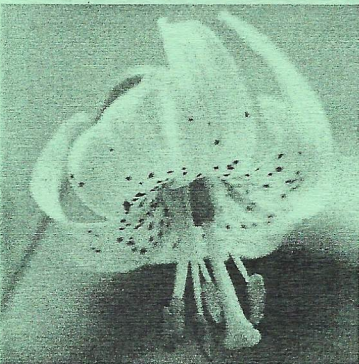


photo: Simon Rook

## 2004 Executive

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Vacant

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### HONORARY MEMBERS

Bob Ball	Jean King
Loes Holland	Eleanor Lloyd
Jean Holmes	Joan Lott
Marc Holmes	Tony Pedersen

## 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 their 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.

## Membership Fees

Your executive has passed a motion to start collecting Membership Fees at the beginning of the activity year rather than waiting until December (See Spring edition of the Oystercatcher). Our fees are still very low — \$17.00 per member!\*

The benefits of this are as follows:

- It will assist us in getting all of the dues in on time
- Reduce follow-up with those who haven't paid because of Christmas activities, winter vacations, etc.
- Get a more accurate head count for the Federation of BC Naturalists (FBCN) who carry our insurance
- Eliminate doubling up on fees for new members who join from September through November (they have had to pay fees again in January in the past).

The FBCN has revised the waiver forms to make them more standard throughout the province. Enclosed is our new waiver form and we ask you to read, sign and return it with your club dues.

Please pay your membership dues now! Either drop them off at the Cobbler's Box to the attention of the Treasurer, or mail them to P.O. Box 203, Ganges PO, SSI, V8K 2V9

\* Renewals after December 31, 2004 are \$20.00 per member ■

Salt Spring Trail & Nature Club,  
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Publications Mail Agreement No. 40049783