



Oystercatcher

Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club
Newsletter

Summer 2021

What We've Done and Where We Are

Trail activities. Since the relaxation of Covid restraints in May, we've gradually started having activities again. Our participant numbers have been low, but we've had a few volunteer leaders and as many as 10 people on walks and hikes. We had considered extending activities into the summer, but as there hasn't been a great demand for them, we've decided to wait until September to implement a more formal program.

Thursday evening presentations in the library. A couple of volunteers have offered to make presentations in the library's Program Room in the fall and spring, and these have been scheduled with the library's staff. On October 21, Nick and Jenny Coghlan will present "The Wildlife of the Falkland Islands" and on January 20, 2022, Stefan Gessinger will talk about a ski traverse he did last winter from Comox to Tofino. The photos in both of these presentations are reported to be amazing. By the way, we still need someone to host these evening presentations. Could that be you?

Trail work. Those of us who are keen on improving our trails and beaches have been hard at work too. We've done some work to improve the trails at KDOL (the Buddhist Retreat Centre), and once again we've cut broom in Burgoyne Bay, filling a huge storage container in the process. We've made several excursions to Hope Hill to improve trail signage and the trails themselves, but more work is needed. A couple of other initiatives are described below.

Trail development. We've made some advances to private landowners to obtain permission to use trails on their land with some success, although none of these has resulted in a contract such as we have with KDOL. One of the Reginald Hill landowners has been very gracious about allowing walkers to use her land, and several landowners on Mt. Belcher have also agreed to our walking there. As a result, we've already had a couple of hikes on Reginald Hill and another on Mt. Belcher.

As a result of changes to the trail network in Burgoyne Bay, some trails have been discontinued. Much of this was the result of complaints from the landowners on the driveway leading to the CRD's liquid waste plant. We've worked with the island's equestrian community, BC Parks, and the CRD to obtain an informal agreement allowing us to access the park's trail network from the public trail on Ashya Road (off Furness Road) through the CRD land so long as we stay well away from the plant. A rough trail follows the treeline along the field to the trail network.



The public trail access to Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park from Ashya Road



The trail goes by this shed. You must not turn right as you pass the shed. Just continue straight ahead to the road shown below.



The CRD road between the CRD land and Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park. When using this access to the park, you must turn left at the field (indicated by the rough signage shown at the left in this photo). It's important not to approach the CRD liquid waste plant and the potentially dangerous trucks that use it.

Nature Events. Every month the BC Nature Office Manager, based in North Vancouver, sends out "e-news" to all our members, including a list of events that you can attend.

Our members are also free to attend events and outings of all BC Nature's member clubs, such as the Cowichan Field Naturalists in Duncan, the Victoria Natural History Society, or the Rocky Point Naturalists. These events are not advertized by BC Nature, but can be found on the websites of each club. Do some surfing on the net to see what's available.

Mt. Erskine Trail Connection Secured

It took a couple of years and lots of work, but we have now managed to secure the trail connection between Manzanita Ridge Nature Reserve and Mt. Erskine Provincial Park. Gary Quiring was responsible for most of the negotiations with the landowner and liaising with BC Parks. About \$250,000 were raised to cover the purchase price and associated costs, most of it orchestrated by our club but using the superior collection and tax-receipting capability of the BC Parks Foundation..

A celebratory walk is planned for August 30 and a commemorative bench, funded by the BC Parks Foundation, is already in place by the trail. Everyone is welcome to join the celebration. We will meet at the Mt. Erskine trailhead on Trustees Trail at 10:00 and walk up to the newly acquired land where we will toast our success, install a plaque on the bench, and enjoy the views. Please check the BC Parks Foundation website for further information and to let them know that you're coming.



Commemorative Bench



View from the trail looking east (top) and from the property border on the west (below)



Cleanup of Burgoyne Bay

On one of the many sunny days in July, half a dozen SSTNC members joined representatives of BC Parks, the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the Stqeeey' Learning Society to clean up the Burgoyne Bay beach. Some preparatory work had already been done, and our job was to move the garbage remaining on the beach to a large container provided for its removal. We managed to fill half the container and to collect about six little boats and kayaks. The event gave us a good opportunity to learn about our local First Nations people and the government agencies that help us maintain the park.



Membership Renewals

Please renew your 2022 membership by the end of September. The cost for all membership renewals—and new memberships—is \$25. The price will go up to \$30 after September 30. Membership registration forms and instructions are on our website (<https://saltspringtnc.ca/index.php/visitor-waiver-3/>). And we still use the SSTNC box in the Infocentre.

Next Year's Board

Your board is now looking ahead to the new year when we will have several openings. To make it more interesting for prospective board members, we are changing the definitions of our roles so that they are really easy to fill. We would love you to join our board. Here's your choice:

- **Co-chair.** We are dividing the responsibility for chairing meetings between two people. The co-chairs make sure that everyone else is doing the work and then take all the credit.
- **Secretary.** This individual will compile meeting agendas and take minutes at meetings.
- **Website Coordinator.** Are you a computer person? We need you to keep our website up to date.
- **Facebook person.** Are you familiar with WordPress? Can you put club messages on Facebook? If not, we can train you.
- **Walk Coordinator.** This volunteer will plan the weekly walks.
- **Presentations Host.** Club members and others volunteer to make presentations in the Library. The host organizes other volunteers to open the Library and to set up chairs.
- **Newsletter editor.** Can you put together information sheets like this one?

Our board has only four meetings each year and attendance at them is optional, as we can also communicate by email.

Important Dates to Remember

August 30 Mt. Erskine celebration

September 14 Reunion celebration to start the new season in Ruckle Park (with refreshments). Stay tuned.

October 21 Nick and Jenny Coghlan present "The Wildlife of the Falkland Islands," Library at 7:00 p.m..

December 7 Christmas Lunch

January 18 AGM

January 20 Stefan Gessinger presents his ski traverse from Comox to Tofino. Library at 7:00 p.m.