



THE HARLEQUIN

VERMILION FORKS FIELD NATURALISTS

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Newsletter #65

February - May 2014

Editor June Hope 295-3524

Vermilion Forks Field Naturalist -

President's Report
Jean Turner

I was surprised when the membership asked me to assume the Presidency following Cathie Yingling who did such an outstanding job. With no great experience and with your support I will do my best.

In 2013 we had 71 members. To volunteers who organise projects and to so many who are willing to help, thank you.

Membership fees for 2014 remain unchanged . However, the Arts Council has a new policy: Individual memberships of \$5.00 will be paid directly to the Arts Council as of January 1st rather than a group membership fee as in past years.

Executive members continue to give outstandingly successful efforts:

Trish Reid and Cathie Yingling - B. B. Nature Directors
Peter Antonick and Janis Wright - Field Trip Coordinators
Joann Gabriel - Evening Programmes
Charles Weber - Treasurer
Joan Kelly - Secretary and Social Convener
Janis Wright - Publicity and Membership
Madelon Schouten - Chair - Swan Lake Committee
June Hope - Newsletter
A personal Thank You to you all.

The annual Christmas Bird Count was held on January 4th. Madelon Schouten organises this international event, which involves hundreds of birders in Canada, USA, Mexico, and several South American countries. Madelon's dedication is well known and appreciated. Sadly, she has indicated that this will be her final year. The Lahaie family has volunteered to take over from Madelon in 2014.

Anyone interested please join us - contact Madelon at 295 7078 for details.

Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year.

-Jean Turner

President - VFFN

Vermilion Forks Field Naturalist -

Guest Speakers: January 2014 – April 2014

Tues., Jan. 14 - Doug Rebagliati - "Self- Guided Tour of South India"

Tues., Feb. 11th - John Henry & Mary Masiel - "Travels in Croatia"

Tues., March 11th - Tanya Luszcz - (Bats or Birds)

Tues., April 8th - Lynn Pollard - "Pond Study"

In Memory of John Edward Beltz June 23, 1923-October 31, 2013

A teacher and a lawyer, John led a rich and varied life.

John was passionate about the environment. He founded the Right to Quiet Society at a time when few were aware of acoustic pollution; he was active in the establishment of Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society; he called for action against coal-bed methane gas extraction in the Similkameen Valley.

As a child John lived in Indonesia and became fluent in Dutch and Indonesian. He attended high school in Lausanne, Switzerland, where schooling was in French and where he learned German as well. He returned to Vancouver at the outbreak of World War 11 to complete high school and went on to UBC. After graduating from UBC in 1943 John joined the US navy. He was assigned to Indonesia in 1945 where his language skills in Dutch and Indonesian were invaluable. An exciting early life!

While John loved to travel in Europe, in Germany and France in particular, he was also happy to be "at home" in North Vancouver and in Princeton. Until the last few years he walked, preferably uphill, every day.

Invasive Plants - New Year's Resolutions

By Lisa Scott - January 2014

Being as though it's a new year, I thought it would be appropriate to start the year with a list of resolutions that you may wish to consider for 2014. Rest assured it has nothing to do with weight loss, more exercise or stopping smoking (not that those aren't good things to resolve to do)!

It's essentially a summation of the best means of reducing invasive plants in the Okanagan-Similkameen region and improving the overall health of our natural habitats and agricultural areas. It will also help us save lots of money, because remember, invasive plants in crops and pastures alone costs Canada approximately **\$2.2 billion annually**.

Whether you've battled bindweed in your backyard, picked hound's-tongue seeds off your pants or noticed the increase in knapweed in our grasslands, you've become aware of the spread of invasive plants. Invasive plants are a problem, but often the solutions are relatively straightforward. Take the time to read through these top twelve resolutions and chose at least one that you can strive to achieve in 2014.

1. Learn to identify invasive plants growing in the Okanagan-Similkameen region. Peruse our website to view the complete list and download information sheets: www.oasiss.ca
 2. Report sightings of new invaders in our region or patches of common species in remote locations where they may go undetected.
 3. When gardening, choose plants wisely. Be suspicious of plants promoted as "fast spreaders" or "vigorous self-seeders." Do not transplant aggressive species that are known to be invasive. Instead, select native plants that are adapted to our local ecosystems or non-invasive ornamental species.
 4. Avoid using exotic wildflower seed mixes.
 5. Be wary of wild birdseed mixes. Carefully select the seed mix or create the mix yourself. Put the seed mix on cookie sheets and bake to prevent germination. In the spring, remove any unusual plants growing under or near your bird feeder, before the plant goes to seed.
 6. Dispose of invasive plants carefully. Do not 'recycle' garden debris or compost. Properly dispose in trash bags or by drying out any material to destroy remaining vegetative parts.
 7. Avoid letting invasive plants fruit or set seed, as birds and animals can spread the plants to other areas. Deadhead flowers, seedpods and berries of known invasive plants.
 8. Reduce soil disturbances and re-seed disturbed soils with a suitable seed mix.
 9. Avoid picking plants from roadsides, gravel pits or other disturbed areas.
 10. When exploring the great outdoors, check your vehicle, boat, bike, camping gear, shoes and pets for invasive plant seeds that may have hitched a ride. Dispose of any seeds carefully.
 11. Encourage friends and neighbours to learn more about invasive plants, and share information that you have learned such as how to identify a certain species.
 12. Get involved with local efforts to control invasive plants.
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For further information on invasive species go to our NEW website: www.oasiss.ca or contact the Program Coordinator for the Okanagan-Similkameen, Lisa Scott, at 250-404-0115 or email her at oasiss@shaw.ca

Annual Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, January 4th, 2014

15 participated in the Christmas Bird Count

About half were from the VFFN and the rest from the Okanagan

It was a very cold, (minus 14) morning so very few birds were seen in the morning, but it picked up considerably in the afternoon. There was a total of 55 species.

We had pizzas and read our results to the group in the Arts Council room which worked very well.

This was Madelon's last year to organize the CBC. Cathie and Amanda LaHaie have very kindly volunteered to take over this job next year.

Many thanks go to Madelon for the many years that she organized the Christmas Bird Count.

Joan Kelly

AND the COUNT was as follows:

by Cathy Lahaie

The total number of birds counted was 1971 in 54 species. There were 13 people in the field and 2 feeder watchers.

Our totals are as follows: Mallards 32, Common Goldeneye 4, Barrow's Goldeneye 12, Hooded Merganser 1, Common Merganser 5, Ring-necked Pheasant 1, Ruffed Grouse 4, Bald Eagle (adult) 19, Bald Eagle (immature) 8, Sharp-Shinned Hawk 1, Cooper's Hawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 6, Rough-Legged Hawk 4, Golden Eagle (adult) 1, Golden Eagle (immature) 2, Rock Pigeon 3, Eurasian Collared Dove 46, Mourning Dove 10, Northern Pygmy Owl 2, Belted Kingfisher 3, Downy Woodpecker 7, Hairy Woodpecker 16, Three-Toed Woodpecker 1, Northern Flicker (red-shafted) 26, Pileated Woodpecker 5, Northern Shrike 4, Gray Jay 6, Steller's Jay 47, Clark's Nutcracker 83, Black-billed Magpie 63, American Crow 104, Common Raven 546, Black-capped Chickadee 15, Mountain Chickadee 180, Red-breasted Nuthatch 73, White-breasted Nuthatch 22, Pygmy Nuthatch 60, Brown Creeper 1, American Dipper 12, Townsend's Solitaire 1, American Robin 9, Varied Thrush 1, European Starling 63, Bohemian Waxwing 54, Spotted Towhee 8, Song Sparrow 13, Dark-eyed Junco (Ore) 51, Red-Winged Blackbird 26, Brewer's Blackbird 10, House Finch 61, Red Crossbill 98, American Goldfinch 134, Evening Grosbeak 3, and White-Crowned Sparrow 3.



Tony Cherry

Our club was saddened by the passing of Tony Cherry in December. Tony was a kind and gentle soul, soft spoken, with a quick wit and smile for all. His friendly manner made him a pleasant companion on field trips, and he had a knack for making new members feel welcome.

Tony liked to reminisce about his early travels and work in Australia and his later trips to Latin America. He entered Simon Fraser University at forty years of age and took a degree in Latin American Studies and Geography with an overall GPA of A-. His love of nature, perhaps stemming from his boyhood exploration of the Yorkshire moors, was evident in his many years of work at Swan Lake. Tony and Cora have been members of VFFN since 2000. We join Cora in mourning this dear man.

FIELD TRIPS: January – May 2014

January 11 Allenby Area Mary Masiel 250-295-7154

Bring your snowshoes for the next few outings!! Shirley & WahFee Low are graciously hosting this *easy* walk through their property in the Allenby area, and will join us on a 1 ½ - 2 hour tour. Bring a snack & hot drink and meet at Billy's at 9:30. Confirm with Mary.

January 25 Fisherman's Cove Terry Tellier 250-295-7354

Join Tellier's at Osprey Lake for this *moderate* snowshoe trek on their property at 4184 Princeton-Summerland Road. It will last approximately 2 hours, with plenty of time to enjoy the vistas and animal tracks. We can warm up around a campfire afterwards with coffee or hot chocolate. Bring snack, water and lunch if you want to eat in the Bud Shed later. Meet at Billy's at 9:15. Confirm with Terry or Greg.

February 8 Baldy Mountain Thea Adamo 250-295-0162

Enjoy a *moderate*, 1 ½ - 2 hour snowshoe outing with Thea, who will lead us up Baldy Mountain. Meet at Billy's at 10 am, and bring snack, drink, and binoculars. Confirm with Thea.

February 22 Stemwinder Mountain Janis Wright 250-295-7560

This *moderate* snowshoe trek will last approximately 2 hours, starting and ending at the cabin, so bring a lunch and we can eat and have hot drinks before we head for home. Meet at Billy's at 10 am and confirm with Janis.

March 8 Lower Allenby John Henry 250-295-7154

Everything hinges on snow conditions for this field trip, so there will be more info closer to the date. The hike is expected to be *moderate*, with a focus on geology. Meet at Billy's at 10 am and bring a lunch and drink. Confirm with John.

March 22 Swan Lake Amanda Lahaie 250-295-7596

This will be a good opportunity to view the additions and improvements made by the club's Swan Lake committee, while enjoying the exercise of a good, *easy* walk. Bring binoculars, camera, drink and lunch, and we'll make use of the new picnic table down by the lake! Confirm with Amanda and meet at Billy's at 10 am.

April 5 **China Ridge Base** **Linda Neumann** **250-295-7013**

Join Linda for an *easy*, circular walk in the woods around the foot of China Ridge, with great views available within minutes! Bring a snack and we'll meet at Billy's at 10 am. Confirm with Linda

April 19 **Wolfe Lake** **Tip Anderson** **250-295-3369**

Tip will take us on an *easy* walk around Wolfe Lake, different from previous hikes in the area. We'll start at Pat Parson's sawmill and circle the lake, taking in the bird life and beaver dam as we travel, approximately 3 hours. Bring binoculars, camera, lunch and drink and we'll have a fire at the campfire afterwards. Confirm with Tip and meet at Billy's at 10 am.

May 3 **Separation Lakes** **Joan Kelly** **250-295-7743**

Bring your binoculars! Now that Separation Lakes is no longer dry and bird life has returned to the area, this should be a great time to do some birding. We'll have an *easy* walk along the KVR trail, approximately 2 hours. Bring food, water and camera. Confirm with Joan and meet at Billy's at 9 am.

May 16 **Meadowlark Festival** **Joan Kelly** **250-295-7743**

This popular annual event includes two *easy* field trips, one to Swan Lake, and the other to Vermilion Bluffs and the Hoodoos along the KVR trail. Evening film presentation undetermined as yet. All local events are held on the Friday of this long weekend. Please contact Joan if you are interested in being involved with the festival.

May 31 **Alison Lake** **Trish Reid** **250-295-6002**

Join Trish for an *easy* walk around Alison Lake, approximately 1 ½ hours. This is a good time to view wildflowers and birds, which should both be in abundance. Meet at Billy's at 9 am and we'll carpool to the south end of the lake, where the walk begins. Bring a lunch and we'll eat in the comfort of the Reid's home before departing. Bring binoculars and camera and confirm with Trish.

VFFN Executive February 2013 – January 2014

President	Jean Turner	0878
Vice President		
Secretary	Joan Kelly	7743
Treasurer	Charles Weber	6419
BC Nature Directors	Trish Reid (Coordinator)	6002
	Cathie Yingling	4802
Directors	Cora Cherry	0678
	Trudy Kowalchuk	3336
	Jean Turner	0878
Evening Programs	Joann Gabriel	3361
Field Trips	Peter Antonick (Coordinator)	3640
	Linda Neumann	7013
	Janis Wright	7560
Memberships	Janis Wright	7560
Newsletter	June Hope	3524
Past President	Cathie Yingling	4802
Phone Committee	Janis Wright	7560
Publicity	Janis Wright	7560
Social Convener	Joan Kelly	7743
Swan Lake Committee	Madelon Schouten (Chair)	7078
	Peter Antonick, Cora & Tony Cherry, Joan Kelly, Ed, Cathy, Jason & Amanda Lahaie, Anthea Pugliese, Charlotte Sellers, Charles Weber, Consultant: Maggie Trehearne	
Youth Coordinator	Ken Heuser	7647



"Know nature and keep it worth knowing."

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION--THE VERMILION FORKS FIELD NATURALIST SOCIETY

I, the undersigned, apply for membership in the Vermilion Forks Field Naturalist Society (The Naturalists) and acknowledge that I am aware of the risks inherent in participating in the activities of the society, and do hereby, in consideration of this membership, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, release and forever discharge and agree to indemnify the Naturalists, their members, directors, officers, trip leaders, agents or representatives from and against all claims, actions, costs, expenses and demands by reason of any damage, loss, death, injury, disability or psychosis arising out of or in any connection with my participation in these activities, notwithstanding that the same may have been contributed to by the negligence of the Naturalists. I (we) accept the terms of this release from liability. I (we) are 19 years or older.

Date _____

Signature(s) _____

Please print name(s) in full

Box Number _____ City _____ Postal Code _____

Phone Number _____ Enclosed are \$ _____

E-mail Address

Student Membership is \$10.00 Single Adult Membership is \$25.00 Family Membership is \$35.00

Fees may be mailed to Vermilion Forks Field Naturalists Box 2074 Princeton, B.C. V0X 1W0

To receive your newsletter by email please check X here.....YES! save paper