



THE HARLEQUIN

VERMILION FORKS FIELD NATURALISTS

POST OFFICE BOX 2074

Princeton, BC V0X 1W0

Newsletter #68

January to April 2015

Editor June Hope 295-3524

Vermilion Forks Field Naturalist -

President's Report – Jean Turner

Season's Greeting Everyone, I hope your holiday was wonderful and wish you All the Best for 2015.

In November our winter arrived with a vengeance with an early heavy snowfall and a record breaking freeze for a short while. It was enough to cause significant damage and devastating limb loss to many of the established trees in downtown Princeton, some of which were 50 years old. Princeton will look different next summer.

I hope gardens were put to bed comfortably in the autumn. It is sad to lose favourite plants. It was a joy to be welcomed at the Kelly's house by Joan's sparkles and Frank's huge smile for our Christmas party. They are such generous community anchors each year by opening their home to us. We all thank you both.

The AGM is but a few weeks away on February 10, 2015. The executive has approved a motion to change the date of future AGM's from February to September. Attending members will be asked to vote on this; a 75% in favour is required for this special resolution to pass. (reference VFFN constitution bylaws Page 3/3.) The VFFN is not only a club but legally a society, subject to the rules of the Society Act; this is outlined in all 75 legal sized pages. Because we are a registered society, registered at the B.C. Corporate Registry, application has been made as follows:

1. To the Canada Revenue Agency, Charities Division, Ottawa. To change our fiscal year from January – December 31st. The Society Act won't allow us to change from February to September because September falls outside the 6 month limit allowed for an AGM following the end of a fiscal year.
2. If the CRA gives approval to the change then application is made to The Corporate Registry Division in Victoria, along with the appropriate fees.
3. If approval is given by the CRA then an AGM has to be held in September 2015. YES two Annual General Meetings in one year, followed by subsequent September AGMs. The process is straightforward enough if the rules are kept. I am happy to answer any questions and have a copy for the Society Act for reference.

FIELD TRIPS: January – May 2015

If you wish to go on a walk *please phone the leader* a day or so beforehand. *Plans sometimes change, and you may be left waiting at Billy's Family Restaurant if you don't phone.* All destinations and dates are tentative. Persons joining field trips do so at their own risk, and should sign a waiver to protect the society from harm. Hikers should wear appropriate clothing, sturdy boots, and **should carry a lunch with something to drink.** To reduce the production of green house gas, we gather at a central point, usually Billy's Restaurant, in order to share transportation. **If you share a ride, please make a contribution to the driver for gasoline!**

Easy field trips are generally level and not very arduous. *Moderate* field trips are longer, and may involve some strenuous gain in altitude, and may take you off roads and through forest. *Difficult* field trips often involve some steep rock scrambling, rough bushwhacking, and may last all day. Children are welcome, but it is wise to consult the leader prior to the hike about its difficulty. Leave your dogs at home unless the leader gives permission to bring them. Leaders should ensure that everyone coming on a hike has signed a waiver.

Your field trip directors have assembled this set of outings. These occasions are always congenial and highly enjoyable. Do participate!

January 17	John Henry & Mary Masiel	250-295-7154
-------------------	-------------------------------------	---------------------

Mystery snowshoe outing! More information will be given closer to the date.

January 31	Fisherman's Cove	Greg & 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 food and water, camera and binoculars. Meet at Billy's at 9:15 and we should arrive at Osprey Lake by 10 am. Please confirm with Terry or Greg.

February 14	Swan Lake	Cathy Lahaie	250-295-7596
--------------------	------------------	---------------------	---------------------

Snowshoeing will be *easy* along these trails, and we can enjoy the winter beauty and peacefulness of our favourite sanctuary. Bring food and drink, and we'll make use of one of the picnic tables for our lunch. We'll meet at Billy's at 10 am. Please confirm with Cathy.

February 28	KVR Trail	Janis Wright	250-295-7560
--------------------	------------------	---------------------	---------------------

This should be an easy snowshoe trek as we explore the trail north of Belfort Road. We've walked in this area before, but should have an entirely new perspective in the winter. Bring a snack and water, and perhaps we can have lunch in town afterwards! We'll meet at Billy's at 9:30 am. Please confirm with Janis.

March 14	Wolfe Lake	Tip Anderson	250-295-3369
-----------------	-------------------	---------------------	---------------------

We always have a good time at Wolfe Lake, and Tip will take us on a circle tour this time. Bring lunch to cook over a fire afterwards. We'll meet at Billy's at 10 am to carpool. Please confirm with Tip.

March 28	River Road	Frank & Jean Turner	250-295-0878
-----------------	-------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------

This is a field trip for everyone! Those of us who want to walk will do so along River Road, but those who simply want to enjoy the camaraderie of the group and the warmth of the fire afterwards can simply drive to Turner's home and head down to the river. Walkers can meet at Billy's at 10 am, and we should arrive at our destination by 11:30, just in time to cook our lunches over the open flame! Please confirm with Jean or Frank.

April 11	Happy Hollow Farm	Charles & Bev Weber	250-295-6419
-----------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------

Come and visit the sheep farm during lambing season! We may have an opportunity to feed new lambs and possibly even witness one's arrival! Be prepared for muddy conditions, bring a lunch and we'll eat around a fire afterwards. No dogs or young children on this outing please. No need to confirm but we'll meet at Billy's at 9:30 to carpool.

April 25	Barcelo Falls	Rika Ruebsaat	250-295-4006
-----------------	----------------------	----------------------	---------------------

Barcelo Creek flows down a canyon into the Similkameen River about 5 kilometres beyond Keremeos. A 4 kilometre hike uphill through the canyon brings you to Barcelo Falls, a lovely shady spot for lunch. There is a trail to get behind the falls and for the more energetic a trail that continues up to the grasslands above the falls. Meet at 9 am at Billy's with food and drink.

May 9	Cinder Cone	Charlotte Sellers	250-295-6079
--------------	--------------------	--------------------------	---------------------

Charlotte will take us on a 1 ½ hour hike from China Creek Road up a gentle slope to a volcanic area that offers some great views. Be prepared for ticks, bring binoculars, water and snack. Please phone Charlotte to confirm, and we'll meet at Billy's at 9 am.

May 30	Lost Cow Trail	Joan Kelly	250-295-7743
---------------	-----------------------	-------------------	---------------------

Joan will lead us on this *easy* and scenic trail. We'll be out a couple of hours, so bring a snack and water. Phone Joan to confirm and we'll meet at Billy's at 9 am.

Invasive Species and the Law

Earlier this month, the Ontario government announced they are re-introducing a proposed Invasive Species Act. If passed, this legislation would protect the province's natural environment from invasive species and the significant social, environmental and economic costs they pose for Ontarians.

The Act proposes to:

- Give Ontario the tools to ban activities such as possessing and transporting certain invasive species.
- Allow the government to intervene earlier and enable rapid response actions, including working with partners to stop an invasive species from spreading -- for example by preventing the movement of contaminated firewood.
- Help promote compliance through inspection and enforcement measures.

If passed, the Invasive Species Act would position Ontario as the first and only jurisdiction in Canada to enact standalone invasive species legislation. Similar legislation is being discussed for BC, so there is no doubt that senior levels of government are going to carefully watch things play out in Ontario.

The introduction of such legislation supports BC's Invasive Species Strategy, a strategic framework for improved invasive species management in our province. It offers a foundation for invasive species work across BC and is the basis for many programs and efforts.

This 2012 document identified the need to **establish and enforce effective regulatory tools as one of several solutions to the challenges we face with invasive species. The strategy recommended there be an analysis of existing legislation, regulations and policies, and the identification of gaps and opportunities for integrating and updating legislation.** One of the challenges to effective regulation of invasive species is the multitude of legislation and regulations that require and enable different results. As of 2012, there were 15 federal Acts and 8 provincial Acts relating to invasive species – a hodgepodge of legislation to wade through and interpret.

Many readers may be familiar with BC's Weed Control Act which imposes a duty on all land occupiers to control designated noxious plants. However, for many non-plant invaders, there is no similar legislation.

So what does this mean in layman's terms? It means that we are heading in the right direction. The need for streamlined legislation has been recognized by provincial government and staffs are currently preparing options for consideration in BC. Of course a "made for BC" Invasive Species Act is years out and requires a lot of work to get there. But when it's officially proposed and (hopefully) passed, it will serve as a critical tool in our collective fight against the growing threat of invasive species.

If you wish to view BC's Invasive Species Strategy, go to:

http://bcinvasives.ca/documents/IS_Strategy_for_BC_Final_2012_06_07_print_sm.pdf

Invaders Lurk Beneath Winter Wonderland

The unexpected dump of white stuff this week made me re-think my topic for today's article. Our days of toiling in the garden and disposing of unwanted plants seem far behind us now, but for some people (me!) invasive species are continually on the brain. I just returned from a snowy exploration in my backyard and couldn't help but notice a stalk of Dalmatian toadflax poking through several inches of snow. Survival of the fittest without a doubt!

It may seem odd to be discussing invasive plants at this time of year, but personally I find it intriguing how plants are so well adapted to our seasonal conditions. Each season plays a role in plant survival and productivity. While some invasive plants have set seed and completed their life cycle, many species are just getting started and they are quite happily lying in wait beneath the snow.

Let me start by introducing you to winter annuals. This specialized group of plants germinate in the fall or winter and grow during any brief spell of warm weather, but otherwise remain somewhat dormant during the winter. They overwinter as low rosettes, resuming growth and producing seed in the spring. Winter annuals typically finish their life cycle in late spring and early summer, as temperatures increase. They are prolific seed producers and their spread is mainly by seed. Rather inconspicuous, they typically go unnoticed during the cooler months, becoming much more visible in their flowering and reproductive stages of growth.

Most homeowners are familiar with the ubiquitous chickweed, probably the most common winter annual that invades turf and gardens. Other less common but equally troublesome annuals includes henbit, stinkweed, groundsel, shepherd's purse and several other mustard species. But without question, the most common winter annual in our region that poses a significant environmental impact is cheatgrass. This annual weed has earned the nickname 'spear grass' due to its sharply pointed seeds. The seeds readily penetrate fur, socks, pants and boot laces during the summer months or lodge themselves in the paws or ears of unwary dogs.

But what about perennials, such as the toadflax I mentioned earlier? Perennial weeds are more of a problem because they can live for several years. They survive the winter by storing food in their roots. During the winter no growth is occurring. However, some carbohydrates are used from the reserves to maintain the plant and prepare the dormant buds for spring.

While winter doesn't give us the opportunity to get out and clip, mow or pull those undesirable plants, it does give us time to do some research about the species that are problematic in our region and plan for the new year.

For further information on invasive species go to our 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



Male Juvenile Costa



Female Juvenile Costa

And for a little Smile!! Big Bird Hummer!



This year's Christmas Bird Count (above birds not included)

CBC was held on Sunday January 4th. We had 12 participants in the field and 4 feeder watchers. Considering the weather, a 50 species day was pretty good. The highlights for the day were 3 male and 1 female Western Bluebirds and 8 California Quail.
Thank you to Cathy Lahaie

Hikes Photo Display

Stemwinder Snowshoe



Mount Baldy and China Ridge Snowshoeing



VFFN Speakers List for January to April

Joann Gabriel (295-3361) Speakers committee

Tues. Jan. 13/ 15 - 7pm. - Mary Masiel & John Henry - Travels in Italy

Tues. Feb. 10/ 15 - Rob Marshall - Update on Weyerhaeuser Forestry plans - (tentative)

Tues. Mar. 10/15 - Lynn Pelly = Nature Encounters in Africa

Tues. April 14 – TBA



Spruce Grouse

Photo courtesy Ed Staples

VFFN Executive February 2013 – January 2014

President	Jean Turner	0878
Vice President	Charles Weber	6419
Past President	Cathie Yingling	4802
Secretary	Joan Kelly	7743
Treasurer	Ida Larson	3044
BC Nature Director	Cathie Yingling	4802
VFFN Directors	Peter Antonik, Trish Reid, Madelon Schouten, Janis Wright Joann Gabriel, Cathie Yingling, Anthea Pugliese, Joan Kelly Jean Turner, Ida Larson,	
Evening Programs	Joann Gabriel	3361
Field Trips	Peter Antonick (Coordinator) Thea Adamo Janis Wright	3640 0162 7560
Historian	Joan Kelly	7743
Memberships/Publicity/Communication		
	Janis Wright	7560
Newsletter	June Hope	3524
Social Convener	Joan Kelly	7743
Swan Lake Committee	Madelon Schouten (Chair) Peter Antonick, Cora Cherry, Joan Kelly, Ed, Cathy, Jason and Amanda Lahaie, Anthea Pugliese, Charlotte Sellers, and Charles Weber.	7078



"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