



# THE HARLEQUIN

## VFFN NEWSLETTER 2015 Summer & Fall Edition

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Our quarterly newsletter (spring, summer, fall and winter) features items regarding nature, society events and items of interest. For more information visit our website: [www.vffn.ca](http://www.vffn.ca)

**PLEASE CONTRIBUTE:** Our website and newsletter are open to all members to contribute short articles, photos, or anything of interest to the club. [vffnbc@gmail.com](mailto:vffnbc@gmail.com)  
Attn: Mary

With all the hoopla that accompanied the setting up of a website for our group, not knowing whether it would be a go or not, I did not write a summer newsletter. However, now that the matter is settled, and we have a working website, we can move forward. Please note that our website is [www.vffn.ca](http://www.vffn.ca) not vffn.org. The latter is the incomplete one and not our official website. Thanks go to Cathy and Jason Lahaie who keep the technical aspect of the site going. Without their help there would be no website! Also, I learned that the harlequin logo that appears in the letterhead was done by Madelon Schouten, Jerry Herzig, and Don Burbidge and is the official logo of the society.

### PRESENTATIONS

On June 10th, Joan Kelly, Donna Hills, and I visited Ms. Campana's Grade 4 class to present certificates to students in recognition of the class volunteerism in helping with the annual spring cleanup of Cormack Marsh.

Joan Kelly also presented a Bluebird box to the group with an explanation of the duties involved in maintaining the box. Special recognition was given to Austin for his unusual zeal in the cleanup.

The Home School students were also recognized in the Tuesday, June 9th, General Meeting of VFFN for their assistance in this venture. Only a few were able to attend the presentation.



## **SPEAKERS SERIES**

**JUNE 9, 2015**

SORCO was unable to make the presentation so Sue Elwell was asked to give us an update on the Hummingbird Project, which she did, and an interesting presentation it was. The Hummingbird banding group keeps going all summer long with their program; they are really a very dedicated group.



The doors closed for July and August and everyone took off in different directions to enjoy the summer.

**SEPTEMBER 8, 2015**

Jo Hughes from Manning Park came to speak to the group. I was not here but anyone who wants to send me a short report on her presentation is more than welcome to do so.

**OCTOBER 13, 2015**

What does it take to be a geologist? Kees Visser, President of BC Nature, a retired engineer and geologist, spent an hour giving us the answer. It was an interesting presentation done in such a way that if one was considering geology as a career option one would understand precisely what would be involved. He explained how each stage of study led to the next step. Each stage gave the intended geologist skills that he or she would use in the field. Eventually, the talk ended with a brief explanation of drilling for oil, and all the factors involved in the process of identifying the right area, geologically. It was a different approach to a topic that few of us knew or appreciated. It was a good program and Mr. Visser was a good choice for a speaker.



**NOVEMBER 10, 2015**

With great enthusiasm our evening speaker, Lee McFadyen, plunged into her topic on how and why the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative (ORRI) came into being and how this project benefitted everyone in the Okanagan Valley, including the main character in the narration, the Sockeye Salmon.

In 2000 the project entered its planning stage. The goal was to reintroduce the Sockeye Salmon to the Okanagan River. In 1998, the Sockeye Salmon numbered only 2008, but by 2014 that number had risen to 200,000+!

To encourage the Sockeye to return, the Okanagan River had to return to its former self, pre-1950, before the channelization of the river. After the flooding of 1948 in the Okanagan Valley, dams and the channel were installed for flood control, and in doing so, destroyed the habitat of the Sockeye Salmon. The conditions that existed for the Sockeye to lay its eggs were gone. Dams along the Columbia River also impeded the travel of the fish up the Columbia River to the Okanagan River and beyond.



Lee McFadyen listens intently to question being asked.

The major goal of the ORRI is the removal of all impediments to the travel of the Sockeye Salmon, ending up in Okanagan Lake and having access to the natal areas along the way. It was an entertaining, informative, and inspiring meeting.

### COYOTE STORY

**Why are there no salmon in the Similkameen River?** When Coyote came to the Okanagan Valley, he was looking for a wife. He approached the people of the Similkameen River Valley, but they refused his request. He then approached the people of the Okanagan Valley and made a similar request; this time the people were agreeable, and as a token of his appreciation, Coyote gave the people the salmon as a gift.



## CHUCKLES

Madelon Schouten, VFFN member, reports that driving home, she saw a mother bear and her 2 cubs about to cross the road. She stopped so the bears could cross. When the mother bear crossed and went up a rise, she realized that she had only one cub. Looking back she could see the other cub still dithering on the other side of the road. Grunting encouragement the mother bear tried to get the cub to move. Meanwhile, Madelon was stopping traffic to let this cub join its family. Finally, the mother bear came down the rise, crossed the road, and gave the cub a mighty cuff, and the cub then obediently followed its mom across the road.

## PROJECTS

The bottle collection drive at the Happy Hut was a successful venture. In three months the club made \$749.95. The Hut withdraws the collection boxes during the winter and resumes in the Spring. Jean and Frank Turner are continuing collection of bottles at their home.

A donation from the Rotary Club made possible the new gate at the southwest entrance to the Swan Lake Reserve.

Credit goes to Frank Turner, Tip Anderson, and Glen Sellers for putting up the gate which was named in honour of Frank Kelly who was an active member of VFFN. Noon in the sign refers to the Noon Blind which is located just north of the gate. For those who are smarter than I, and knew why the blinds are called Noon & Sunrise, I, for one, didn't. Now it is all clear; it refers to the position of the sun whilst viewing from the blinds at Swan Lake.



photo: Cathy Lahaie



Note the blue sign.  
School children are  
encouraged to make  
signs to remind the  
public to be mindful of  
protecting a wildlife  
reserve.

photo: Cathy Lahaie >



Flowers from the Pyrenees; similar yet different.  
photo: M.Masiel



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