

# Arrowsmith Naturalists Newsletter

Volume # 17

Issue Number 2

June 2011

<http://www.arrowsmithnats.org>

To know, enjoy, and preserve Nature



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**The Arrowsmith Naturalist** is published three times a year...in February, June and October. Articles on birding, travel, botany and environmental matters are welcomed by the end of the month prior to publication. The next deadline is September 2011 for the October 2011 edition.

Hand-written or typed articles are accepted. Some editing may be required for length or held off for another edition according to available space. Please e-mail articles to [mmhillm@shaw.ca](mailto:mmhillm@shaw.ca) or send by mail to: 194 Valdez Ave, Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1R8

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**General Information:** Club membership information is available at both of the public libraries, on the web site <http://www.arrowsmithnats.org>, or write to \*Arrowsmith Naturalists, Box 1542 Parksville B.C. V9P 2H4. Annual membership is \$35.00 per family, \$22.00 single or \$12.00 junior (up to 18 years). Membership includes monthly meetings (talks and/or slide shows), regular hikes (bird watching, botanical), BC Nature newsletter four times a year and club newsletter in February, June and October.

New Memberships are always welcomed.

## BULLETIN BOARD

**Parking:** If you find you have to park in the over-flow lot down the street from the school, be aware that the gates are locked at 9:30 p.m. One of our members found herself locked in and had to phone for a ride home.

**No Smoking:** Smoking is not allowed anywhere on school property.

**Sunshine:** If you know of an Arrowsmith Naturalist, who is ill, in hospital or recently bereaved, please contact: Pam Helem, at (250) 468-7475 or at [arrowsmithnats@gmail.com](mailto:arrowsmithnats@gmail.com)

### Club Publications:

A reference copy of the current newsletter is available at each of the libraries at Parksville and Qualicum Beach.

Meetings and Outings information sheets are available at Mulberry Bush Book Store in Qualicum Beach and Parksville.

**Fall BC Nature Conference:** It will be hosted by the Delta Naturalists; Sept 29 to Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.

<http://bcnature.ca/pages/conferences/conferences.html>

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## President's Report

As I sit here at the keyboard, I can gaze out the window at yet another cool but ever-changing spring day. If you are a gardener, you are about three weeks behind the stage when you wish for a colourful, productive start to the growing season. However, if you are a naturalist as well, you can rejoice that this is the best of all seasons when nature comes out from a period of dormancy and hibernation into one of a renewal of life in all its forms. The birds return or pass through on their way to nesting areas; bear cubs and deer fawns explore a new, exciting world, and new green shoots and flower buds quickly open to repeat a beautiful cycle of life that inspires optimism.

And, for the most part, the past few months for the Arrowsmith Naturalists have been ones to inspire some optimism. It is all too easy to "accentuate the negative" and lose sight of the positive in a world which often seems seriously "off-kilter". One of the very heartening events of the past month has been the awarding of the Rene Savenye BC Nature Scholarship for \$1,000 to Wade Van Herwaarden, a student from Kwalicum Secondary. The scholarship is given to a student pursuing studies "that contribute to awareness, appreciation and understanding of our natural environment". Wade was presented with the award at our May General Meeting.



Watchful parent.

The field trips organized by Maggie Little and Penny Marshall have been outstanding, with the close-up sighting of a very young Great Horned Owl on the nest at Yellow Point Regional Park to the magnificent swathes of Blue Camas, Sea Blush and Yellow Monkey Flower (with some Chocolate Lilies, Naked Broom Rape AND Lotus Pinnatus thrown in for good measure) at Harewood Plains in South Nanaimo. Many thanks to



Great Horned Owl – Photos by David Helem

Charles Thirkill, the steward of the Harewood ecological reserve, for an excellent tour and

talk. By the time you read of this, we will have completed another eagerly-awaited trip - the 2 Pub Walk at the Oyster River. Of course, the major attractions will be the birds, flowers, the marshes and sand dunes.

The stewardship work at the Englishman River Estuary continues with the perpetual (it seems) campaign to eradicate the Scotch Broom and Japanese Knapweed. However, when we see less and less of those bright yellow blooms each year, we have to remain optimistic that in our corner of Nature the battle is being won. A recent alliance of BroomBusters, the Mt. Arrowsmith Biosphere, the Nature Trust and our group attacked a large bank of old-growth broom at the Estuary near the Surfside RV Park, with a large area cut to the ground. Well done, everyone.

Our Club has voted to donate \$300 to the Nature Trust toward their ongoing campaign to complete the purchase of Moorecroft. We are planning a public presentation to the Nature Trust, with the press in attendance, to both raise our profile somewhat and encourage others to contribute to the purchase. Hopefully, we can also encourage folks to come forward as volunteer park wardens to help preserve the features which make Moorecroft such a gem.

At our recent General Meeting, the Club discussed the role of advocacy in our mandate "to know, enjoy and preserve Nature". A description of what we do at present (letter writing, stewardship, etc.) was presented and the ensuing discussion explored whether we should continue at our present level of advocacy or become more actively engaged. Most members felt that there was some need to raise our profile in the Oceanside community

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while others warned of the dangers of becoming too ambitious, given the limitations of a group with our demographic composition. The consensus seemed to indicate that we should maintain our present efforts while looking for opportunities to raise public awareness when opportunities arise. The discussion not only reiterated support for what we are doing presently but also underlined the value in providing a forum whereby each and every member of the Club feels that he or she has a voice. Thank you all for your contribution to this exchange of views.

Plans are well underway in preparation for the BC Nature Fall General Meeting in 2012. As you know we are co-hosting this event with the Nanoose Naturalists at the Bayside Quality Inn, Parksville. Our initial meetings of the steering committee and the many volunteers who signed on to help have revealed much latent expertise and many good ideas for speakers, social activities and field trips. Much of the planning is in the formative stage at present but more firm decisions will be in place by the fall.

Once again, the Arrowsmith Naturalists will be participating in Parksville's KIDFEST on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Betty Collins and Robert Mercer have organized our participation in this delightful event for several years, and are hoping for others to step into their shoes this year. KIDFEST was almost cancelled this year for the lack of volunteers but was saved by some dedicated folks who did not want to see it disappear as an important kid and family-oriented summer activity. Volunteer work adds so much spirit and life to our communities but we cannot call upon the same folks year after year. Hopefully, this event is one that our group not only believes in but is willing to support with some very enjoyable volunteer time.

Hope to see you there.

It is really gratifying to see the level of membership in the Club remain fairly stable, while other groups experience a bit of a decline. And it is even more heartening to see that we have attracted several new and returning members over the past few months. To all you "newbies" and returnees, a big WELCOME. We encourage you to come out to a variety of Club activities and to offer your suggestions for making your Arrowsmith Naturalist experience an enjoyable one

Dave Hutchings, President

## A "Rare" Opportunity

Submitted by: Pam Helem

An overcast sky did not dampen the enthusiasm of the large group, who had gathered at the trail head to Harewood Plains on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. Even as we were parking the cars, we glimpsed brilliant Yellow Monkeyflowers dotting the roadside bluffs. Twenty-one Arrowsmith Naturalist's joined a small group from Nanaimo to meet Charles Thirkill, coordinator of Friends of Harewood Plains, and his wife, Ruth. After ensuring we had adequate footwear for the muddy conditions we might encounter along the trails, Charles guided us into an area of south Nanaimo, unknown to most of us, yet a stone's throw away from the busy Parkway.

Our first views were waves of pink Sea Blush, Blue

White Crown Sparrow amongst Sea Blush and Blue Camas

Photo by: Penny Marshall



Camas and Yellow Monkey-flowers spread over gentle

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slopes larger than football fields. Dotted amongst the Camas was the occasional white one, apparently a genetic mutation; the creamy Meadow Death Camas and Western Saxifrages. Large swaths of the Alaska Saxifrages were gradually filling the ugly scars left by ATV and dirt bike riders, who, probably unknowingly, destroyed the fragile habitat of the Plains. Charles, with his expert knowledge of this area, pointed out the Chocolate Lilies and parasitic Naked Broomrapes hiding in a shady grove; vernal pools where tiny tadpoles scattered when disturbed; delicate Scouler's Popcorn flower; Narrow-leaved and Small-leaved Montias, which emerged from the thick green and red mossy hillocks covering the conglomerate bedrock. Then, as we headed along a gravelly trail lined with dense thickets of Nootka roses, Ocean Spray, Nine-bark and Willows, he stopped beside an example of the rare wildflower we had been anticipating and one of the main reasons for the protection of the unique habitat on Harewood Plains: the Bog (or Meadow) Birds-foot Trefoil or *Lotus pinnatus*.

The Harewood Plains is a combination of coastal Douglas Fir habitat, where rainfall occurs mainly in winter, and open mossy meadows, where seasonal seepage provides a cool moist habitat for this trefoil, (and ten other endangered species). A promise of the tiny yellow and cream pea-like flower was emerging, but the long spell of cooler than normal spring weather had slowed the usual flowering time of May to end of June. While this low-growing, short-lived perennial trefoil can occur from the northern Californian coast to B.C., it had become "critically imperiled" in BC, and listed "endangered" by COSEWIC. Harewood Plains is privately owned, including larger stakeholders such as Island Timberlands, (for whom Adolf Ceska conducted a habitat inventory in 2003), and BC Transmission Corporation, which maintains the transmission lines right of way through this area. *L. pinnatus* has simple needs: "open, seasonally wet meadows, along the margins of creeks, or in the seepages where underground water comes to the surface. It grows in sites with shallow soils, ....sloping sandstone or conglomerate bedrock." Those Monkey flowers, and

Sea Blush are associated species.

Threats to this vulnerable unprotected site from logging, further urban development, and damage from recreational vehicles led to a meeting of concerned citizens in 2004 with representatives from the City of Nanaimo, GOERT, NALT, and private land owners. The urgent need for protection was recognized and eventually led to the formation of the Friends of Harewood Plains. Subsequently, through grants and loans of machinery from those private land owners, an ongoing clean-up effort has removed refuse and abandoned vehicles, placed huge boulders to block access to unauthorized off-road vehicles and removal of some of the invasive vegetation. Charles told us that, regrettably, further grants have not been made available this year, however the Friends were encouraged to continue with broom removal when it resulted in wildflowers flourishing again in areas once overgrown and/or destroyed.

Many of us returned to our cars in a wildflower euphoria and headed to the Black Bear pub for a late lunch. We were very appreciative for the opportunity

to meet with Charles Thirkill and



*Lotus pinnatus*  
Photo by: David Helem

experience the beautiful special habitat he and the Friends are endeavouring to protect for many others to enjoy in the future.

References:

- \* Charles Thirkill, The Friends of Harewood Plains. (thirkill@telus.net)
- \* Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team. 2003. Species at Risk in Garry Oak and Associated Ecosystems in British Columbia, Victoria, B.C.
- \* Donovan, Marta. 2006. Conservation evaluation of the Bog Bird's-foot Trefoil, *Lotus pinnatus*, in Canada.

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Canadian Field Naturalist 120(2): 157-162.

## BC Nature Annual General Meeting and Conference 2011 Williams Lake

*Editor's note: Thanks to our president, Dave Hutchings and our BC Nature representative, Pat Bourgeois, their respective reports that follow provide a comprehensive insight into the AGM Conference.*

The Williams Lake Field Naturalists hosted a very successful AGM from May 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>. With a theme of "Enjoying Nature in the Cariboo-Chilcotin" we were treated to an extensive array of field trips and presentations which focused on the Williams Lake area as the "Crown of the Cariboo-Chilcotin"; "Cariboo-Chilcotin ecosystems - diversity and uniqueness"; the "Behaviour and ecology of the Northern Flicker - a keystone species in central BC"; "Ants, from BC to Borneo"; an "Overview of the Effects of Climate Change on Large Lake Ecosystems in the Cariboo-Chilcotin"; a wonderful photographic essay on "Motherstone - BC's Volcanic Plateau", and a keynote address by Wayne Sawchuk, entitled "Natural Cache - 25 Years of Exploration in the Muskwa-Kechika". Wayne was one of the prime movers in pressing to preserve this unique wilderness area as a Provincial Park.

The Arrowsmith Naturalists were represented at the AGM by a robust group which included Pam and David Helem, Marilyn Futer and Bill Campbell, Pat and Jim Bourgeois, and Chris and Dave Hutchings. Not only were we there to enjoy the presentations, field trips and to socialize with other naturalists from throughout the province, but we were keeping a wary eye out for ideas to incorporate into our FGM 2012 planning and to note any organizational issues which we may want to avoid.

Field trips centered on the grassland ecology of the region: the plant communities from the low to upper grasslands; the birds of the grasslands; the common and rare plants of the Doc English Ecological Reserve; the Scout Island Nature Centre (a real gem!); the ecology and forest management of Interior Douglas-fir forests and the Churn Creek Protected Area near the famous Gang and Empire ranches. The Churn

Creek area, west of the Fraser River, supports one of the few almost intact native grasslands in B.C., with some impressive wildlife. On our visit we saw a golden eagle, a mother bear and three cubs, deer, vesper sparrows and evidence of badgers, while other groups encountered kestrels and prairie falcons as well.

At the AGM, John Neville - the BC Nature President - announced the formation of five new naturalist clubs: Prince George, Kitimat, Nicola Valley, Surrey and Wild Research, a club at Simon Fraser University. Both Prince George and the SFU club, in particular, point to an infusion of young blood in the naturalist movement in B.C. This is a very heartening development.

We learned that Sue Lovelace has resigned as the Vancouver Island Regional Coordinator in order to spend more time with her young family. This position carries with it few onerous duties but it is vital in maintaining communication and cohesion among the Vancouver Island clubs. If you wish more information about the post and what it entails, please see me.

The resolutions presented to the AGM all passed, although not unanimously in every case. Our resolution regarding the Raven Underground Coal Mine was passed unanimously with one small change in wording, and with some enthusiastic compliments from the delegates from other clubs. Perhaps the most controversial resolution dealt with Cat Licensing. Although the resolution passed, some delegates wondered about both the willingness of local politicians to "bell this cat" (terrible pun, I know!) and the ability of local officials to enforce such a bylaw. Nevertheless, the meeting felt that the issue was important in drawing attention to the

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millions of birds and other creatures which are victims of cat predation each year.

Daphne Solecky, the guiding force behind the Young Naturalist Clubs of BC, spoke of the continuing program to connect young people with nature. Over the past ten years, the YNC has developed a very effective model of engaging children and their families - although in some areas (such as Oceanside) the process is still a struggle. Kristine Webber, the Young Naturalists CEO, introduced a new Club Coordinator, Tammy Keetch, who brings a wealth of experience in nature education. As young women,

Tammy and Kristine bring some very visible energy and passion to the YNC.

And, finally, I encourage you to consider attending the Fall General Meeting or next year's AGM. The FGM will be hosted by the Delta Naturalists from September 29 to October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 2012 AGM will be in Kelowna. Co-operatively, the Arrowsmith and the Nanoose Naturalists, will be hosting the 2012 FGM in Parksville.

Report by: David Hutchings

## BC Nature 2011 Annual General Meeting Report

As always the AGM in Williams Lake was a jam-packed weekend. The field trips and workshops were interesting, educational and very well presented.

The Saturday morning Director's meeting covered many issues:

- BC Nature has revised some of their rules and by-laws. According to the constitution, they must advise the membership 90 days in advance of the changes which they propose to put into effect as of the 2011 Fall General Meeting. The changes are generally minor and are of a primarily housekeeping nature. One of the changes, though, is the creation of a new volunteer position on the BC Nature Board of Directors: Communications Director. The director will assist with the BC Nature website and with the newsletter. Current president, John Neville, will take on this additional role for a one year period. After this first year, he encouraged others to step forward and volunteer for the position.
- Project reports described: The ongoing work of the BC Important Bird Area (IBA) Program; The successes in the Okanagan of the WiTS (Wildlife Tree Stewardship) Program while WiTS continues to struggle with difficulties in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. BC Nature has determined that their past role with the program must change but has not yet decided how this will be done - many wish BC Nature to stay involved but there is a serious lack of volunteers and funding. The BC Nature board of directors will continue their deliberations on the WiTS program.
- The BC Provincial government is not providing any funding this year for park interpretation. Bev Ramey, BC Nature past president, is very upset with this decision and is encouraging each club and their individual members to write letters to the provincial government protesting the lack of funding and also to their local newspapers to bring the issue to the public's attention. Rather ironic in the year of BC Parks centenary.

The next BC Nature conference is this fall. Members are encouraged to attend. The FGM will be hosted by the Delta Naturalists Club from Sept 29 to Oct 2 - with free bamboo T-shirts to the first 50 early registrants. The theme is: Nature on the Move - Migration through the Delta. As our club will be co-hosting, with the

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Nanose Naturalists, the next FGM (Sept 2012), attending the 2011 FGM will be an excellent way to gain some experience and knowledge about what our role will be. Plus you will enjoy a great weekend!

Report by: Pat Bourgeois

## CONGRATULATIONS!



This year's winner of the BC Nature Rene Savenye Scholarship for \$1,000 is a Kwalikum Secondary student - Wade Van Herwaarden. Wade was presented with his scholarship at the club's May general meeting.

It was a job shadow experience with the BC Conservation Foundation crew, surveying the profile and configurations of the Englishman River estuary channel, that confirmed Wade's desire to work in conservation and natural resource protection and management. From the time that he was very young, Wade has had an affinity for nature which was encouraged and nurtured by his parents. Whether it was "saving worms" as a young child or yearly donations to the North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre, the drive

to save the Vancouver Island Marmots, and the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Wade has maintained an awareness and appreciation of nature. He has grown also to appreciate BC's parks and wilderness areas, developing a strong awareness that we must protect these not only for the present but also for future generations.

Active within many sports and using his leadership and communication skills as a volunteer both in and outside of the school community, Wade has maintained a solid academic standing. It is encouraging that such a fine young man has decided to enroll in the Resource Management Officer Technology program at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, BC. This is a 2-year diploma course designed to prepare students for careers related to the protection and management of Canada's fisheries, wildlife, and parks resources with the option of continuing to the degree level.

We wish Wade every success.

## Who is Rene Savenye and what is his Legacy?

Rene Savenye's interest in palaeontology began with a geology class at the University of British Columbia but became a passion when he was taking a summer class toward his teaching credentials. From 1964 until his untimely death in 2002, fossil hunting was a big part of life for Savenye, who was also a teacher at Princess Margaret secondary school in Surrey.

Searching, collecting and cataloguing fossils went far beyond work. Thanks to his wife, a portion of his 38-year collection has been donated to the Royal B.C. Museum. Museum staff and volunteers needed eight months to prepare the exhibits of 2,700 plant, animal, fish and marine invertebrate fossils.

The new museum exhibit is about a third of Rene Savenye's collection. A shed outside their Surrey

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home (as of 2004) still stores thousands of other fossils, most not catalogued and many only a part of a creature, such as a wing. His collection is one of the oldest and largest of its kind in B.C.

The exhibit has specimens from about 50 B.C. sites. The fossils range from the Cambrian Period of a half-billion years ago to the Pleistocene Epoch or ice age only tens of thousands of years ago.

He drew international acclaim in 1995 when he discovered what is believed to be the second oldest fossilized bee in the world. The bee, found near Merritt, is not at the museum but instead housed at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby.

During his last hunt on July 26, 2002, the amateur naturalist was struck by lightning near Lake Louise. Rene Savenye died at 63 doing the work he passionately loved.

Savenye was posthumously awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and became the first recipient of an award named after him and presented by the B.C. Palaeontology Alliance.

*Reference: Times Colonist, 2004; excerpts from story by: Gerald Young.*

## YOUNG NATURALISTS NOTES:

The Oceanside Young Naturalists hereby extend an invitation to the members of the Arrowsmith Naturalists to join them on Sunday, September 18th, 2011, to participate in the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, at Sunnybeach Road Beach, Qualicum Bay, starting at 1:30 p.m. Garbage bags/containers and Tally Sheets are provided, but please bring some stout gloves. This is an annual event that takes place right across Canada, and tonnes of garbage is retrieved to help keep the environment clean and safe for all.

## Eyes Bigger Than An Unhinged Jaw Will Accommodate!!



### Nature in the Raw

This is a photo of a garter snake attempting to feast on a sick, young Pine Siskin only to discover that it was not able to get past the wings. OOOPS...the snake gave up, regurgitated the bird...sans head feathers.

*Thanks to Sallie Dabb for this real life photo.*



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## ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS MEETINGS AND OUTINGS

### June, 2011 to October, 2011

Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Carpool if possible. For more info contact Maggie at 757-2328 or Dave Hutchings (250) 752-1613.

**Please Note: - Guests are very welcome. A Guest Waiver and Day Membership forms are available at time of outing or on the website:**

**[www.arrowsmithsnats.org/membership](http://www.arrowsmithsnats.org/membership). These forms must be read carefully, completed and signed with an accompanying \$1.00 fee before participating in an outing.**

**Saturday, July 16th Canada's Parks Day**

Celebrate the festivities in many parks - regional, provincial, national, and territorial.

**Monday, July 25<sup>th</sup> - Annual Club Picnic: Rathrevor Provincial Park - group picnic site Shelter #2**

Bring lawn chairs and a potluck dish, your own beverage, plates, cutlery, and item(s) for the raffle. The fun starts at 4 pm. until ?? For info contact: Dave & Chris: 752-1613. Further notice to follow, in July

**Sunday, August 14th, 2011 Kidfest**

Be sure to visit this celebration of childhood in the Parksville Community Park from 10 am - 4pm. Among the activities will be the Arrowsmith Naturalists' live display of some of the many creatures which inhabit the Salish Sea. *If you would like to help out, email us.*

**Saturday, Sept 3rd - Somenos Marsh, Sewage Ponds & Conservation Area - Duncan**

Easy. Driving and short walks to take in the large variety of birds found visiting this area. Meet Craig & Jensen for 9:30 start, Arlington Inn at 9:45 or Northfield Rd. & Hwy 19 parking lot at 10:00. Bring lunch. Leaders: Pam & David.

**Saturday, Sept 17<sup>th</sup> - Fossili Park, Sproat Lake** This unsigned provincial park features a beautiful little falls on St Andrews Creek that flows through a mixed forest. Intermediate walk. Carry a lunch to eat on the beach. Meet at the Qualicum Beach Tourist Office at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Penny.

**Sunday, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> - The Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up.** This annual event is a great way to remind ourselves of all the waste that washes up on our shores, as well as a chance to meet and support the Young Naturalists in our area and demonstrate our stewardship of nature. Meet at Sunny Beach Rd. in Qualicum Bay at 1:30 p.m. Sturdy gloves would be a good idea. Leader: Val Tinney.

**Sunday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> - B.C. Rivers Day - A chance to celebrate one of our greatest natural treasures. Club involvement TBA.**

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**Monday, Sept 26<sup>th</sup> - General meeting at Springwood Middle School, PV- 7:30 pm.** Speaker TBA.

Check the Arrowsmith Naturalists website: [ArrowsmithNats.org](http://ArrowsmithNats.org) in August or September.

**Wednesday, Sept 28<sup>th</sup> - Rosewall Creek, south of Fanny Bay**

Join us for a moderate walk up this picturesque creek to a falls. *No paddle needed!* Carry a lunch to eat at the falls. Meet at Qualicum Tourist Bureau at 9:30. Leader: TBA

**Saturday, Oct 8<sup>th</sup> - Moorecroft Park, Nanoose Bay** An easy, interesting and varied walk to view forest, bays, beaches and inter-tidal pools. Just recently, the Regional District of Nanaimo purchased the land from the United Church and created this regional park. Bring lunch. Meet at Craig & Jensen at 9:30 or Nanoose Place at 9:45. Leader: Sandy.

**Wednesday, Oct 19<sup>th</sup> - Hemer Park, Cedar** Easy, pleasant walk through second-growth forest along Holden Lake. Pit toilets. Lunch at the Crow & Gate Pub. Meet at Craig & Jensen at 9:30, Arlington Inn at 9:45 or Northfield Rd. & Hwy 19 parking lot at 10:00. Leader: TBA

**Monday, Oct 24<sup>th</sup> - General meeting at Springwood Middle School, PV- 7:30 pm.** Speaker TBA.

Check the Arrowsmith Naturalists website: [ArrowsmithNats.org](http://ArrowsmithNats.org) in October.

**Saturday, Oct 29<sup>th</sup> - Mushroom Walk at the Big Qualicum River.** This is one of our most popular outings. Bring lunch and delight in a mature forest as we examine fall mushrooms. There are some stairs and hills but, for the most part, the walking is easy. Wear good footwear, bring a mushroom book (if you have it!) and a lunch. Meet at the Qualicum Beach Tourist Office at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Penny.

## **Sunday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Bird Count and Pot Luck Dinner**

This will be the 21<sup>st</sup> year for the Parksville- Qualicum Beach Christmas Bird Count. If you would like to take part, call Sandra Gray at 250-248-5565. Sandy also has information on the Feeder Count which will take place on the same day, same area.

The Pot Luck/Wrap-up dinner takes place at St. Anne's/St. Edmunds Church Hall in Parksville (behind Wembley Mall) from 5-8 pm. Everyone welcome. Bring a pot luck dish to share and come to hear the tall tales of the day. Bring your own plates, cutlery and mug, etc. Robert and Penny (250-248-6769) have volunteered once again to do the set-up and would welcome assistance.