

# ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS NEWSLETTER

TO KNOW, ENJOY AND PRESERVE NATURE

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – SPRING/SUMMER 2017

LYNNE BROOKES

Greetings to All!

Due to the hiatus in newsletter production--I have combined the Winter and Spring newsletter reports chronologically into this one "President's Report."

After an enjoyable 2016 summer of ANats' field trips, ER Estuary stewardship, the July club picnic, and our marine life exhibit at KidFest, we joined together again in September to begin enjoying an excellent lineup of programs organized by Ronda Murdoch. We soon greeted the turn of the season preparing for the the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual **Mushroom Festival** at the North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre (NIWRA). Terry and Rosemary Taylor spearheaded two major educational components of the Festival: the "Mushroom Show" (T) and the new "Mushrooms in Ecology and in Culture" exhibit (R). Twenty-six+ club members participated in all phases of this Festival which attracted over 1,000 enthusiastic visitors. Evenly split net entrance donations garnered funds to help support wildlife and nature through NIWRA and the Arrowsmith Naturalists. Kudos to all involved!

Concurrently, Sandra Gray—who also participated in the MFest—was ramping up for the 117<sup>th</sup> **Christmas Bird Count** (CBC) and the 26<sup>th</sup> for our club. For many years Sandy has ably coordinated our club's contribution to this longest-running volunteer driven wildlife census. Scores of participants were in the field and scores more were doing feeder counts at home. A sincere thank you to all of you who helped to provide vital information about bird populations and trends. Data which can alert us to environmental threats impacting not only birds but the larger ecosystems upon which we all depend. A warm thank you to Sandy for all the work done to accomplish this huge club and community effort. Thanks also are due Margaret and Martin Hill and to Toni and Ron Wyckoff and others who organized the annual CBC pot luck dinner which greeted the snow and cold weary census takers at the end of an adventurous and rewarding day.



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Sandra Gray again deftly organized another club **census of the Brant** along the entire PQB Wildlife Management Area beginning in late winter. This ongoing census—currently sponsored by the Nature Trust of BC—contributes to data on this declining Pacific Brant subspecies (*B.b. nigricans*). From January's cold and rainy days to the final sunny days in May nine primary counts and numerous incidental counts were carried out by thirteen club members. Important data was collected and funds will be donated to our club for their efforts. Club members were integral this year in the initiation of the concurrent 27<sup>th</sup> Brant Wildlife Festival. Our club again hosted the **Brant in the Bay** event on April 2, 2017. It was coordinated by Sandra Gray with the assistance of a score of members who enjoyed a sunny day, many visitors, lots of Brant in the morning and about forty Bald Eagles resting on a nearby sandbar in the afternoon.

On April 23, 2017 twenty ANats and the two new Oceanside NatureKids co-leaders joined the Friends of French Creek to provide the public the 11<sup>th</sup> annual **Hamilton Marsh Tour**. Amazingly the rain held off!

As you look through this newsletter and on our website you will see ahead more great 2017 speakers and fun interesting field trips thanks to the efforts of Ronda Murdock and Frank VanManen. Dave Hutchings and post-work Serious Coffee drinking others have already sharpened their pruners and broom and other invasive plants are being turned into compost at the much improved Englishman River Estuary thanks to their enduring efforts. Join in—it's fun and very rewarding to help restore this beautiful wildlife important area.

The two new co-leaders have taken up the reins from Alison Bakker and Val Tinney for the Oceanside NatureKids and are planning more interesting programs for the young'uns. Toni Wyckoff continues to keep track of growing membership—and much more. Pam Helem keeps the “sunshine” flowing and Ron Wyckoff and Dave Erickson roll up their sleeves each month to assist those kind enough to provide us with coffee & snacks at our meetings. Maggie Little has volunteered to handle club promotion and Catherine Watson has stepped up to assist David Helem with tech support. Ronda and Gary Murdock continue to apprise us of environmental issues and Sandra Gray keeps us linked with BC Nature. VP Elaine LeFebvre can be counted on for well-managed meetings and her inimitable sense of humour—and timing. Derrick Grimmer keeps track of our funds and Margaret Hill captures this all for our archives.

I would like to give special recognition to and sincere thanks to Sue Wilson who not only well fulfills her role providing agendas and minutes as General Meeting Secretary but also took on this demanding role for the Executive during Newsletter Editor and Executive Secretary Kat Derksen's period of recuperation. If that wasn't above and beyond already, in early 2017, Sue also took on the crucial role of recording secretary at the initial planning meetings for the 2017 Brant Wildlife Festival.

Our members make our club the wonderful organization it is. Thank you to all who “make it work” for all of us.

See you at the always enjoyable Arrowsmith Naturalists' Annual Picnic on July 24<sup>th</sup>!

Lynne Brookes, President

## **ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS CLUB/MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

**General Information:** Club membership information is available at both Parksville and Qualicum Beach public libraries; on the web site <http://www.arrowsmithnats.org>, or by writing to Arrowsmith Naturalists, Box 1542, Parksville, B.C. V9P 2H4

**Membership includes:** Monthly meetings (talks and/or slide shows), regular outings (bird watching, botanical), BC Nature newsletter four times a year and the club newsletter in February, June and October.

New memberships are always welcomed. **Membership Fees:** Family \$35.00, Single \$25.00. Annual membership dues are collected at the October & November club meeting.

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**MEETING TIME/LOCATION: Where:** Knox United Church, 345 Pym St, Parksville, BC **When:** 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of January to June & September to November. **DOORS OPEN:** 7:00 pm. **MEETING START:** 7:30 pm.

**RESPECT FOR CLEAN AIR - NO SMOKING & SCENT FREE** - Smoking is not permitted in, on or around Knox United Church property. As well, please refrain from wearing perfume or scented products

## ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS OFFICERS AND CONTACTS

**President:** Lynne Brookes - Executive Business

**Vice President:** Elaine Lefebvre - General Meeting & Club Activities

**Past President:** Dave Hutchings

**Executive Secretary:** Kat Derksen

**General Meeting Secretary:** Sue Wilson

**Treasurer:** Derrick Grimmer

**Membership:** Toni Wyckoff

**Directors:**

Dave Erickson, Terry Taylor, Rosemary Taylor

**BC Nature Rep:** Sandra Gray

**E-mail Correspondence:** Elaine Lefebvre

**Conservation Environment:** Gary & Ronda Murdock

**Field Trips:** Frank Van Manen

**Newsletter Editor:** Kat Derksen

**Promotion:** Maggie Little

**Refreshments:** Ron Wyckoff and Dave Erickson

**Speaker Program:** Ronda Murdoch

**Stewardship:** Dave Hutchings

**Broom Bashing:** Dave Hutchings

**\*When:** 9:30am - 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month:

**Where:** Bottom of Shelley Road, Parksville. Weather permitting, they will do a tour of the estuary and see what areas need attention.

**Oceanside Nature Kids BC:**

**Archivist:**

**Web Site:** David Helem/Catherine Watson

## ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS SPEAKERS PROGRAM SEPTEMBER 2017- JANUARY 2018

**June 26, 2017 - Don Hare** - Don is the new Executive Director with the Coastal Invasive Species Committee. He will speak on "What are Invasive Species and Why You Should Care?" Don's presentation will address priority invasive species in Oceanside area and what is being done on a local, provincial & provincial level.

**September 25, 2017 – Ross Peterson** - Speciesism is the assumption of human superiority leading to the exploitation of animals. It involves the assignment of different values, rights, or special consideration to individuals solely on the basis of their species membership.

**October 23, 2017 – Terry & Rosemary Taylor** - ANats members Terry & Rosemary will be providing a Paleontology presentation.

**November 27, 2017 – Dr. Ken Marr** – Curator of botany (since 2001 Royal BC Museum. Dr. Marr's interest is in the classification, biogeography and conservation of terrestrial vascular plants - in particular the alpine flora of northern BC. (presentation subject TBA)

**January 22, 2018 – Member's Night.** Members are encouraged to share their nature photos with the group at this meeting. Up to 12 photos may be submitted. Please bring them on a USB stick to the meeting and be prepared to give a brief explanation of each photo!

**ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS EVENTS****July 24, 2017 – Arrowsmith Naturalists Annual Picnic @ Rathtreavor Provincial Park****December 17, 2017 – Parksville Qualicum Beach Christmas Bird Count (CBC)**

This will be the 27<sup>th</sup> year for our BCPQ, also the 117<sup>th</sup> CBC. Volunteers are needed to join a team in the field. Teams are usually 3-7 birders possessing a mix of skill levels. As well, volunteers for “at home” feeder counts are needed. For more info contact: Sandra Gray

**December 17, 2017 ~ 5:00pm – ANats Annual Pot-Luck Dinner** at St. Anne’s/St. Edmund’s Anglican Church Hall ~ 407 Wembley Rd, Parksville

**ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS OUTINGS****June 2017 – December 2017**

**Meeting Locations Key:** C&J = Corner of Craig and Jensen streets, Parksville ~ QBT = Qualicum Beach Visitor Information Centre, 2711 Island Hwy W, Qualicum Beach ~ N&P = Northfield and Parkway rest stop parking, Hwy 19, Nanaimo ~ SB= Hwy 19A North and Sunnybeach Rd ~

✓ Indicates easy walking

**Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup>** -- **Paradise Meadows & Battleship Lake** -- A lovely walk through mountain meadows to see the flowers and then lunch at an alpine lake. Battleship Lake return is about 6 km. Bring lunch, wear sturdy footwear and dress with layers – just in case of a change in the weather. Meet QBT 9:30 am or the Horne Lake Rd and Hwy 19 intersection (Exit #75 ) at 9:50. Leaders: TBA.

**Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup>** -- **Club Picnic @ Rathtreavor Provincial Park - picnic area #1 @ - 4:00 p.m.** -- Come out for the Arrowsmith Naturalists Annual club picnic. Bring folding chair, plate, utensils, BYO coffee/tea, jacket, etc. according to weather and a potluck dish to share. Also, please bring a ‘nature’ related item(s) for the raffle. Please see the [map](#) for location of cooking shelter nearest gatehouse. Park at the north-end of parking lot # 1 and walk through the old growth trees to the cooking shelter.

**Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>** -- **Mid-Island Wildlife Recovery Centre** – Join Dave Erickson as he leads us for a tour through the Recovery Centre explaining the history and services provided here. Meet C&J 9:30am. Leader: Dave Erickson.

**Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>** -- **Newcastle Island** -- *“If you heard Bill Merilees presentation at the general meeting you won't want to miss this. Bill has agreed to guide us in person around this historic and beautiful place.”* May involve a fair amount of walking. Bring lunch and meet C&J 9:30 am, or Maffeo Sutton Park ferry terminal 10:30 am Leaders: Toni & Ron Wyckoff.

**Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>** -- **Somass Estuary / Port Alberni Lagoon** - This conservation property is located on the site of the earliest pioneer farm in the valley (1850s). A gentle walk of under 2 km that will include birding at the sewage treatment plant. Bring suitable clothing and bag lunch or depending on weather - lunch in Port Alberni, at “Bare Bones” or if you prefer, bring picnic lunch. Meet: QBT 9:30 or at the Port Alberni Visitor Centre at 10 am. Leaders: Margaret & Martin Hill.

**Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>** -- **Thames Creek Trail** – Mushroom walk – mushrooms, mosses, lichens. Join Terry Taylor in one of his usual fall mushroom walks. This is a new site for the Club's “Outing's List”. Meet QBT 9:30 am. Bring Lunch. Leader: Terry Taylor.

**Wednesday October 18<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 QTB 9:30. Leader: Catherine Watson.

**Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>** -- **Morrell Sanctuary, Nanaimo** - A walk along some of the 11 km of trails in a protected 2nd growth rain shadow forest, which is important for the very large number of native plants that thrive here. It is also a notable birding area. Lunch: Jingle Pot Pub; Meet: C&J 9:30 or N&P 10am. Leaders: David & Pam Helem.

**Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>** -- **Qualicum Beach Museum** – Special showing of the Museum's fossil collection with expert, Graham Beard. Meet at the **Museum at 1pm**. Parking at the Qualicum Beach Train Station. If weather

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permits afterwards, we can take a walk along trails in Heritage Forest with Terry Taylor. Leaders: Rosemary Taylor & David Helem.

**Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup> -- Courtenay Airport & River Walk** – Easy, wheelchair accessible. Always enjoyable and generally good winter birding. Approx 1 km. Lunch at a Courtenay Restaurant. Meet QTB 9:30. Leader: Roger Taylor.

**Wednesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> -- (*weather permitting*) -- Riefel Bird Sanctuary, Delta --**

NOTE - Date to be confirmed by e-mail to members. Probably the best opportunity most of us will have to see a huge and wonderful variety of migrating birds this year. There are both longer and less demanding circuits to walk. Bring lunch. **Meet C&J 6:30 am**, depart C&J at 6:45 am for the 7:45 am Duke Point ferry and return 3:15 pm from Tsawwassen. Please confirm with leader: Dave Erickson.

**Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> -- Lighthouse Trails** -- We can improvise once we get there. Lots of options in the forest and on the coast in this lovely area. Bring lunch. QBT 9:30 am, Leader: Maggie Little.

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> -- Christmas Bird Count** -- Be part of the 118th CBC, the longest running citizen science survey in the world. Join a team in the field, usually 3-7 birders with a mix of skill levels, or count birds from home for the Feeder Count. Pot Luck Dinner immediately following the Count at St.Anne's/St.Edmund's Church Hall which always promises good food and many tall tales from the participant birders. Call Sandy at 248-5565 to help with count.

## BOOK REVIEW

By: *Rosemary Taylor*

### The Tide - The Science *and* Stories Behind the Greatest Force on Earth

By: *Hugh Aldersey-Williams* (2016)

A fascinating read from start to finish. Before you know it, you'll have discovered so many interesting things about the tide we watch coming and going every day. Thought you knew it all already? Read on. What REALLY happens when the tide goes out and comes back in? Where does the water go to? Is it ONLY the moon that controls the action? What lives permanently in the inter-tidal? What visits the shoreline as it is revealed and covered up again?

Many places round the world don't have a tide - we all know at least one, but you'd be surprised how many there are and where they are found. Then again, at high tide there are many tidal bores - surfers have ridden the waves for long distances on some of the major ones.

Historically, when tides could not be accurately predicted, warships often had to wait it out till the tide enabled them to come close to shore. And where WAS the shore in those days? By looking at old paintings of the 16th and 17th century, modern geologists have visible data showing how shorelines have changed, been eroded, or land which was at the water's edge is now miles inland.





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Thinkers like Galileo, Newton and other scientists expounded their theories, enabling tides and times to be carefully calculated, which then enhanced trade by enabling ships to predict their travel time. As an example, reaching the English tea market fastest meant the highest prices for the cargo, and the ocean-going tea clippers raced to get up the Thames before their rivals who were hard on their heels.

There are so many interesting points discussed, chapter by chapter, it would take too long to include them all, But to mention a few, how does a sand dollar 'swim'? How is Venice faring these days? How are low-lying areas coping with high flood tides? How can we measure rise in sea level? It's not a simple calculation, and how is it affected by land still rising after the last ice age? What creates vortices in tidal water? You may have noticed some very small and harmless ones from the ferry going through Active Pass, but they are small potatoes compared with others found elsewhere.

Musicians and poets, as well as artists, find inspiration in the sea and its ever changing nature. If you love being by the water, this book will make it an even more amazing place than perhaps you ever imagined.

(Book Review by: Rosemary Taylor. Photo Credit: Kat Derksen)

## WHAT IS THIS?



Remember this? A promise was made in the previous newsletter to identify this organism. Well. Here are the answers: It is *Badhamia utricularis*. It is a slime mold. This particular specimen was found on one of the trails leading into Hamilton Marsh. It was found in the late spring/early summer.

## The BC Wildlife Federation

By: Les Dabbs

MISSION STATEMENT: "The BC Wildlife Federation is a province-wide voluntary conservation organization representing all British Columbians whose aims are to protect, enhance and promote the wise use of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations."

The Federation is British Columbia's largest and oldest conservation organization and list their Strategic Objectives as:

1. To ensure the sound long-term management of British Columbia's fish, wildlife, park and outdoor recreational resources in the best interests of all British Columbians, and to coordinate all the voluntary agencies, societies, clubs and interested individuals interested in that objective, and

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2. To develop and support a comprehensive educational program to make all British Columbians aware of the value of British Columbia's fish wildlife, park and outdoor recreational resources, and to arouse in the public conscience a recognition of, and a respect for, the place of fish, wildlife and outdoor recreation in the wise use of the nation's natural resources.

The Federation have an enviable record of accomplishments, one of the foremost is the establishment of the B.C. Habitat Conservation Trust fund. It was their idea, and they who lobbied the Government to establish it. This together with the efforts of Ducks Unlimited, The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, The BC Wild Sheep Society and local sportsmen's clubs have resulted in the setting aside and reclamation of countless hectares of wildlife habitat.

To find out what they are currently working on, I suggest going to their website and finding out why, in my opinion, they do not deserve the misquotes, untruths and false innuendo we all too often hear from some who have alternative personal objectives. ~ <http://www.bcwf.net/>

**Disclaimer:** The views and opinions expressed in the article above are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Arrowsmith Naturalists.

## Did You Know?

**Did you know?** - All of the grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) in Stanley Park, and likely elsewhere in BC, are descended from eight pairs of grey squirrels given to Vancouver by New York in 1909. And did you know? Squirrels can neither burp nor vomit!

**Did you know?** - One of the oldest known western red cedars, the "Hanging Garden Tree" on Meares Island near Tofino, is estimated to be between 1,500 and 2,000 years old.

**Did you know?** - Two-thirds of British Columbia's land base (an area larger than France!) is forest land, and more than half of that area has had little or no human contact



**Did you know?** - Vancouver Island is home to the highest waterfall in Canada. The Della Falls in Strathcona Provincial Park are 440 metres high, which is more than eight times the height of Niagara Falls.

Photo Credit: "Della Falls" - Wikipedia

**Did you know?** - Strathcona Provincial Park lays claim to being the oldest provincial park in BC. It opened in 1911 and is comprised of more than 250,000 hectares. Its history dates back 380 million years - "It is a history of violent volcanic eruptions on ancient seafloors and quiet interludes when gardens of sea lilies waved in gentle ocean currents. It is a history of rocks torn and folded by the extraordinary forces that can move continents, and of mountain ranges sculpted by the immensely thick ice sheets, which only vanished a few thousand years ago."

## North Island Wildlife Recovery Event ~ July 15, 2017 WILD WOMAN DAY!

This new and exciting event, "Wild Woman Day!", is an opportunity for like-minded women to connect and to learn about ways other women in our communities enjoy and support nature and the environment. Featured speakers include naturalists, educators, artists, healers, and environmental advocates. Keynote speaker: Kim Recalma-Clutesi. July 15, 2017 from 9:30am to 4pm. Hosted by the North Island Wildlife Recovery Association. (See [www.niwra.org](http://www.niwra.org) for program details and registration.)

### CAN/BOTTLE RETURNS

Can/Bottle Return Accounts have been set up at both the Qualicum Beach recycling centre. When returning your cans/bottles please indicate that you wish to donate the proceeds off your returns to the **ARROWSMITH NATURALISTS** account.

\*\* Please remember to make the request to credit ANats **BEFORE** your cans/bottles are counted by a staff member at the centre. \*\*

\*\*\* Please mention this to friends & family \*\*\*

Qualicum Bottling & Recycling Centre: 141 4 Ave E, Qualicum Beach

**(Please Note: ANats no longer has an account at the Parksville Bottle Depot)**



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

*"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted"*  
*Aesop*

### Barn Swallows: Rosemary Taylor

We were sitting on a bench on a floating boardwalk across the lake (Swan Lake in Victoria). These barn swallows were flying around all over the place catching bugs, and once in a while took a breather on the boardwalk railing. I think the lighter bird is probably the female.

They came really close and we could admire their gorgeous colours. The light was fantastic - overcast, which is the best light ever for photography!





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**The Arrowsmith Naturalist Newsletter** 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 25, 2017 for the October 2017 edition.**

Hand-written or typed articles and photos are accepted. Some editing may be required for length or held off for another edition as per available space. Please e-mail articles to: [arrowsmithnats@gmail.com](mailto:arrowsmithnats@gmail.com). Please use the subject matter: Newsletter submission. Alternatively, send by mail to: Arrowsmith Naturalists, Newsletter Editor, Box 1542, Parksville, B.C. V9P 2H4.

A reference copy of the current ANats newsletter is available at each of the Parksville & Qualicum Beach libraries. Meetings and Outings sheets are available at Mulberry Bush Books in Parksville and in Qualicum Beach.