



Denman Conservancy Association

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 60, Denman Island, B.C. V0R 1T0

October 2008

Central Park Update

This fall, we are still hoping to make the improvements to Pickles Road Trail that have been discussed and planned all through the summer. The trail starts from the park entrance near the Marcus Isbister Old School Centre and runs more or less parallel to the western boundary, to the northwest corner of the park where it exits precisely at the corner, joining an existing trail that continues through the adjacent crown land. With luck, and weather on our side, Steve Isaak will be taking his low impact machine in to make a small but solid and culverted crossing of the boggy hole. With the completion of this work, Pickles Road trail will be the Central park portion of a multi use trail suitable for pedestrians, bicycles and equestrians running from the Old School Centre to the junction of Pickles road and Central road.

However, until the work is completed, the upper end of the trail is unsafe for equestrians and bicycles at all times and for pedestrians when wet because of poor footing across a small wetland area. A warning sign for equestrians near the crossing is currently alerting users to the situation. We strongly urge pedestrians to use caution on this part of the trail, particularly in wet conditions.

This past summer, the Central park committee has been busy with planning and trail maintenance and is pleased to see that the trails are being used regularly. We are excited about the visible recovery of forest and restoration of habitat. Please keep dogs strictly under control out of respect for other users who may not be comfortable with them and for the safety of wildlife. We ask as well that all droppings be removed.

Baillie Grant wrap

September's Baillie Bird Wrap-up was delayed due to the organizer's unfortunate altercation with a step ladder. The discussion of the Baillie projects is planned for October 24th. Activities by young birders and their mentors will continue during the winter.

Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly

Notes by Andrew Fyson

Commemorative Stamp

On October 1st 2008, Canada Post issued a set of 4 stamps to draw attention to the beauty and endangered status of the Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly and 3 bird species. Islanders can celebrate Denman's stewardship of this endangered species on letters by regular mail!



Breeding on the Settlement Lands

The Taylor's Checkerspot has its only known Canadian breeding colonies on Denman Island. This species is well established on the Settlement Lands where the larvae have been found feeding on Ribwort plantain and two species of Veronica.

In May 2008 I was studying a small wetland on the Settlement Lands when I observed a Taylor's Checkerspot fly by and disappear among the sedges and wood waste a few metres away. I followed and observed this female walk from one small plant to another and finally choose a 3 cm high *Veronica scutellata* plant where she started to lay eggs on the underside of a leaf. I knelt for over an hour observing and photographing the egg-laying until my knees could take it no more.

I observed the eggs for nearly a month before they hatched into tiny larvae, less than 3 mm long. These larvae built loose webs around the food plant. They consumed a plant every 2 days or so and then moved on to the nearest neighbour.

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Denman Conservancy Association
is thrilled to announce that the

Central Park Purchase is completed

we invite you to come out and celebrate with us.

It's true. Thanks to your generosity the mortgage was paid off two years ahead of schedule! The fund raising committee wishes to thank everyone who donated and who participated in our fund raising efforts. This purchase was funded largely through your donations and by fundraising events such as the House and Garden Tour.

You are invited to a
Mortgage Burning Potluck
Please come and celebrate with us on
Sunday, October 25 at 6 pm
At The back hall

A little history: Just three years ago in September of 2006 DCA was able to purchase the 147 acres we now call Central Park. The acquisitions committee of DCA had previously identified this property as a priority for purchase. Much credit is due to board member Denise MacKean. Acting decisively, she took the plunge and bought this spectacular chunk of Denman's natural beauty. She offered the property to the DCA at her cost with an interest-free loan to be paid off over 5 years. On March 27, 2006 the board took this offer to the membership who approved it enthusiastically.

If you go walking through Central Park today you'll still see the remnants of the extensive logging that took place in the late '90s. You'll also witness the inspiring power of nature to regenerate, of the land to heal itself. On the human front, the Central Park committee and many volunteers have made and maintained trails, provided signage, and constructed boardwalks. We can now walk or ride from the Old School to Pickles Road, away from traffic and noise.

Central Park is about to become a leading example of conservation groups working with community to care for the dead in a sustainable way. If the DCA membership agrees, a 2 acre portion of the southeast corner of Central Park will become a natural burial ground, one of the first in BC. This project is being led by the newly-formed Denman Island Memorial Society. While it might be the appropriate place to bury the mortgage, I for one can't resist the satisfying feeling of symbolically commending the debt to the flames in the Hall woodstove.

Burial or immolation, help us lay the debt to rest and celebrate a heart-warming community effort as we share food and drink.

Lindsay-Dickson Covenant Secured

It's a long winding road! The final step to complete the protection of the Lindsay-Dickson Nature Reserve is the completion of the conservation covenant on the land. The Reserve is owned by the Islands Trust Fund and managed by DCA. Holding a covenant on the land gives us long term security against the government changing its mind about the value of maintaining the land as a Nature Reserve. DCA started campaigning as soon as it was formed in 1991 for the preservation of this land. Success came in 2001 when the Provincial Government purchased the property to be held by the Islands Trust Fund for conservation.



One of the Douglas fir veterans in Lindsay-Dickson NR (and also J Thornton)

As part of the Reserve is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), it was necessary to obtain the approval of the covenant from the Agricultural Land Commission. The Commission, recognizing the special importance of the old growth veterans present in the eastern part of the Reserve, has approved an unrestricted conservation covenant on that part. The conservation covenant over the remainder recognises that agricultural land use is not prohibited within the ALR portion of the Reserve. On 15 October 2008 the covenants were accepted by the Land Titles Office for registration.

Walks & Talks? Yes, there will be some this winter. Watch for notices in the Grapevine.

This Newsletter was put together with the assistance of: Jenny Balke, Annie Corrdry, Patrick Fawkes, Carol Freeman, David Freeman, Andrew Fyson, LeeAndra Jacobs, John Millen and Carroll Taylor.

Teenage Volunteer Alert!

Denman Conservancy wants to remind young Denman Islanders that the Doug Olstead Award, to honour a teenage volunteer, is available again this year and must be applied for in writing before December 31st, 2008. The award is worth two hundred dollars in recognition for volunteering in your community.

There are many opportunities to get involved on Denman, but we suggest the Recycling Depot. Gloria Michin tells me there is a need for help. What a perfect place to see and be seen on Denman! Come out and give it a try, get involved. With Climate Change facing us, you can do your bit to help save the planet right here on Denman. Think about it; if each community had a recycling program like we have on Denman, what a better place this world would be. On a more practical note, think about your volunteer experience and how that will help the look of your resume. This could make a difference for future employment and certainly for future scholarship applications.

Keep Denman beautiful by helping at Recycle and write us a letter at Denman Conservancy, Box 60, Denman Island, V0R 1T0

DCA on the Web

Conservancy Blog

Several Conservancy members have been posting their pictures and observations on the Conservancy Blog: <http://denmanconservancy.blogspot.com/>

There is a series of posts on beautiful Tumblewater Meadows in the Beaufort Range and a puzzle about the Tussock Moth caterpillars. All members of DCA are welcome to join in and share their nature news. Phone John Millen at 335 2868 for help in signing on.

Our new web site address is:

www.denmanconservancy.org for all the details on the Nature Reserves and properties we manage.

Regional District Grant-in-aid

The Comox Valley Regional District has awarded a Grant-in-Aid amount of \$1000 to DCA towards the preparation of a management plan for The Settlement Lands, the large clearcut on either side of Central Road, between Pickles Road and Lake Road. The first step will be to do a baseline study of the existing ecosystem. This property is where the Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly was first recognised on Denman Island.

Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk

Denman Conservancy has received a grant from the federal government Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) for Species at Risk. The HSP provides grants for projects that contribute to the recovery of endangered, threatened, and other species at risk, and/or prevent other species from becoming a conservation concern.

Jenny Balke is leading Denman's Rare Meadow Species Stewardship Project. In September, Chris Junck of the Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team portrayed our picturesque and precious natural flora and fauna in an entertaining community slide show.

The project's next major task is to document this summer's research work. That means putting together all the property reports, transect counts and life history information that has been collected and working towards publication of some life history that has been documented for the Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly.

The HSP provides funding to "stewards" to protect or conserve habitats for species designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as nationally "at risk" (endangered, threatened or of special concern).

Public use of Conservation Lands

“Low impact Recreational use” is the phrase used in management plans to describe the expected public use of nature reserves. What does it mean? People walking on established trails are welcome in all the land managed by DCA. Remaining on the trails is important because that ensures the impact on vegetation is limited and wild critters have areas where they are secure from our disturbance.

Using a machine for transport can greatly increase a person's impact. Motorised vehicles are not permitted on our trails and mountain bikes are restricted to a few designated trails.

Bringing animals with you is a further hazard to natural values. Horses are not permitted on the lands owned by Islands Trust Fund: the Nature Reserves at Inner Island, Lindsay-Dickson and Morrison Marsh. DCA is designating specific trails in Central Park for horses and, on the route between Central Park and Pickles road, DCA is considering a diversion trail for horses to use this connection without crossing Inner Island N.R.

Dogs are not prohibited from trails on DCA managed land; however they must be ‘under control’. The control must ensure that the dog stays with its owner. For some dogs this means they should be on a leash. The intent is that the dog should not ever set off in pursuit of another animal or present an apparent threat to another person on the trail. In Nature Reserves elsewhere the rule is that dogs must be leashed. We hope this will not become a requirement on Denman Island.

Seasonal restrictions are occasionally required. Some summers are so dry that it is necessary to close the woods for fire protection. Disturbance of nesting waterfowl is another concern that can lead to a seasonal restriction in some areas.

Please visit the Conservancy lands. Your enjoyment increases the value of these areas to the community and is an important return for our preservation efforts.

Denman Properties Owned, Managed or Covenanted by Denman Conservancy Association

Property	Owner	DCA Role	Public trails & Access
Central Park	DCA		Trails from Denman Rd. and North Central Rd.
Inner Island NR	ITF*	Manager	Trail from Pickles Rd.
Lindsay-Dickson NR	ITF	Mgr. & Covenant holder	Trails from Mallard Rd. & Jemima Rd.
Morrison Marsh NR	ITF	Mgr. & Covenant holder	Trails from Greenhill Rd., East Rd. & Boyle Point Park
Settlement Lands	DCA		Management Plan under preparation. No public trails developed.
Winter Wren Wood	DCA		Trails from Lake Rd. & Nature Trail in summer
Railway Marsh Covenant	private	Covenant holder & Manager	Trail from Northwest Rd.
Komas Bluff Covenant	private	Covenant holder	No Public access provided by covenant
Chocolate Factory Covenant	private	Covenant holder	No Public access provided by covenant

*ITF = Islands Trust Fund