



Denman Conservancy Association

NEWSLETTER

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

October 2015

Hats Off to 'DIMMERS'!

Thanksgiving Sunday, October 11, 2015 was a landmark day for our island, with the official opening of the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery. Gratitude is a word that may come to mind for that day, and is certainly one of the feelings we have for the hardworking group of islanders (the 'DIMMERS') who formed Denman Island Memorial Society (DIMS) and then jumped through the many, many hoops required to achieve this wonderful new amenity for our island. Thanks also go to many islanders who volunteered to help DIMS with this successful project.



The view from Central Park

photo John Millen

The Conservancy is proud to have played a part in this unique community accomplishment. When Central Park was purchased in 2006, the possibility of using some of the land for a cemetery was in mind. The 'green' or natural burial nature of the cemetery was a must for the DCA as this was conservation land. We are fortunate that DIMS embraced this idea and achieved the goals set in 2009. The DCA and DIMS worked long and hard to create the conservation covenant that was registered on the land at the time of the transfer, as well as the Management Plan. These tools ensure the long-term protection of this land. It is estimated that this land will meet burial needs of Denman for 100 years.

As areas are filled they are left to grow naturally, so other than the Gathering Place a Douglas fir and cedar forest will regrow. The path through the cemetery dubbed the 'Allée' links with Alder Trail in Central Park and can be used by pedestrians as part of a 'loop' walk. For more information about the covenant visit the DCA website (www.denmanconservancy.org) and click on Our Work, then Covenants. We also recommend you visit the cemetery at 6400 Denman Road and read the information kiosk to learn about natural burial and the plans for the cemetery, or check out their website, www.dinbc.ca

DCA at the Denman Christmas Craft Fair

Be sure and visit the DCA booth at the Denman Island Craft Fair on December 5th and 6th. This year our table will be set up in front of the stage in the Denman Activity Centre (Seniors Hall) and we'll be offering for sale a perfect Christmas gift, the Conservancy's Silver Jubilee Calendar. We also will have for sale our ever popular "Forest Community" tee shirts designed by Jane Fawkes as well as Jane's newest colorful design of butterfly tees. As usual DCA memberships will be available for purchase and board members and volunteers will be on hand to answer your questions about the Conservancy and about protected lands on Denman Island.

DCA 25th Jubilee Calendar

Silver Jubilee Calendars will go on sale mid-November at Abraxas Books, the Denman Craft Shop, the Denman Island General Store, the Denman Hardware and Emporium and will be sold at the Denman Christmas Craft Fair December 5th and 6th.

Contributors to this Newsletter:

Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, Annie Corddry, Stirling Fraser, DD Fuchs, Carol Hunter, John Millen and Patti Willis.

Silver Jubilee Calendar

For 2016, a Silver Jubilee Calendar will mark the Denman Conservancy Association's celebration of 25 years of working with the community to preserve, protect and enhance the quality of the natural and human environment on Denman Island. This Calendar was made possible by the community's out-standing participation in the calendar photo contest. The Conservancy thanks everyone for entering photographs and also for helping to judge the winners.

The calendar photo contest attracted 47 photographers submitting a total of 143 photos. It was a difficult task, but two off-island photographers with calendar-preparation experience short-listed 60 images for display and judging at the Art Centre October 16-18. This spectacular photo-display of the beauty of Denman Island demonstrated the talents of the photographers and demonstrated why the work of the Conservancy is so special to the community. At least 130 people visited the gallery to view the exhibit and to vote on which photos were their favorites for the calendar.

Overall winning photos selected by the community vote were taken by: Rebecca Apter, Jenny Balke, Mikell Callahan, Lucy Dabbs, Naomi Elliot, Sandy Fulton, Andrew Fyson, Linda Lin, Sylvie Marcil, John Millen, Barbara Shelly-Dyck, Paul Wullum, and Yoshi Yoshihara. Congratulations! The winning photos will also be displayed in January 2016 on the Mike Lindsay Art Wall at the General Store.

The Silver Jubilee Calendars will go on sale mid-November at Abraxas Books, the Denman Craft Shop, the Denman Island General Store, the Denman Hardware and Emporium and will be sold at the Denman Christmas Craft Fair December 5th and 6th.

Upcoming Walks and Talks

A guided walk in the Settlement Lands is planned for later this fall. Tour one of the gems of the DCA with a knowledgeable guide/naturalist and learn about the unique features of this DCA property. After Christmas when water levels are at their highest (we hope) there will be a bog walk in Railway Grade Marsh with the new Lands Manager Erika Bland. Wear your gumboots, enjoy the DCA's own proprietary chocolate mousse and appreciate your wood stove even more.

Spring offerings will certainly include another Dennis Forsyth show featuring his amazing bird photography and our annual bird box building workshop. Affordable housing DCA style.

Watch for announcements of these events in the Grapevine.

Settlement Lands

The Settlement Lands is a 157 acre block of recovering forest lands located along Central Road between (Chickadee) Lake Road and Pickles Road. DCA acquired this property about ten years ago in settlement of a law suit against the logger, 4064 Investments Ltd.

The location of these lands provides an important connection between already conserved lands, including the Denman Island Provincial Park, land held by the ITF (Inner Island Nature Reserve), and lands held by DCA (Central Park and Winter Wren Wood), thus creating a substantial Protected Areas Network.

A remnant of old-growth Douglas- fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii* forest remains on the property adjacent to Pickles Beaver Pond, and likely other original species have been retained and will regenerate, thus maintaining some of the genetic legacy of the previous forest. This riparian old forest is a valuable fragment of the vanishing Coastal Douglas- fir moist maritime biogeoclimatic subzone vegetation.

The property has three large wetlands: Pickles Beaver Pond, the Homestead wetland and the Swale are major components of the headwaters of Beadnell Creek, Denman's largest Class A salmon stream. The large wetlands are varied having open water sections as well as vegetation such as cattail, buckbean, tule, spirea, and pond lily, plus flooded field areas. Smaller open sedge wetlands are found in various parts of the land, including two wetlands where breeding populations of Taylor's Checkerspots have been recorded. In addition there are wet areas of red alder and slough sedge. Beaver are actively improving the property

Denman Conservancy is now in the process of confirming the conservation status of these lands by:

- Offering a conservation covenant to Islands Trust Fund
- Asking the Local Trust Committee to rezone most of the property to Conservation Zone. (A 12 Hectare portion in the ALR will retain its Agriculture zoning)
- Preparing a Management Plan for the property

About 60 people visited the Open House held at the Old School on Saturday 26th September to see the displays of photographs and maps showing the land, its conservation values and DCA plans for the Checkerspot butterfly reserve and public walking trails. (see also Taylor's Checkerspot article on P.4)



Zella Clark – Our Gratitude

by Patti Willis

The Conservancy is honoured to have received a generous bequest of \$100,000 from Zella Clark who died last year at the age 94. Born in Chilliwack, Zella spent summers at Cultus Lake where her appreciation of the natural world was nurtured, perhaps prophetic of the loyal support she lent to DCA later in life. She trained as a teacher and in 1942 joined the Royal Canadian Air Force Women's Division. Stationed overseas in England, she met her future husband Sid and together they raised six children. The Clarks are a long-time Denman family having purchased what would become Orkney Farm in 1972. Though diminutive in stature, Zella was prominent in community life. Zella studiously documented many island events with her trusty camera. I have memories of being invited for tea to see her latest photos and to be introduced to the plants in her garden, which she so lovingly tended. We are profoundly grateful for

Zella's confidence in DCA and we will use her gift wisely. Thank you Zella.

Central Park Update

The young forest continues to grow in Central Park, becoming ever more beautiful. If you have never visited or not done so in a while, we encourage you to go for a walk there. You'll (usually) find handout maps at the main entry across from the Old School.

2015 was the year slated for our Management Plan review. The Central Park management committee has essentially completed this review. Looking at the many actions in the original 2009 Management Plan, we were happy with what has been accomplished. We are re-examining a few things planned originally that we have not done and opting for somewhat different plans. We will, of course, have ongoing trail upkeep to manage for the foreseeable future. Fortunately we have a number of enthusiastic volunteers who have helped us time and again. New volunteers are always welcome.

Please check out the updated maps at the Central Park kiosk by the main entry. If you have visited Central Park in the past few months you may have noticed that this kiosk was a little empty. We have been updating things there as we could.

The larger map, "Central Park Vision" shows the connectivity of Central Park to other protected lands on Denman: the Denman Island Park, the Inner Island Nature Reserve and the Settlement lands. Wildlife and humans can now travel from Central Park to Chickadee Lake and beyond through protected lands.

The Central Park map shows our existing trails mapped over an aerial photo.

We also replaced the "Rules" with a slightly edited, somewhat 'prettier' version. Soon an updated brochure will be posted at the kiosk as well. Occasionally DCA may post other notices at this kiosk.

We happily welcomed DCA's new Land Manager, Erika Bland, to assist us with our committee work this year, especially the Management Plan Review. Recently Laura Pope also offered to join the committee.

We wish happy trails to Sonya Edelston, who stepped down from the committee this year, and thank her for her many years of work on our committee.

Blackberry Fair Book Sale

DCA's ever popular book 'sale' (by donation) at September's Blackberry Fair was a resounding success, gathering over \$1100 in donations as well as sales of T-shirts and memberships.

Autumn Update: 'Sleeping' Taylor's Checkerspots and the Settlement Lands Butterfly Reserve

by Erika Bland

The fall and winter is a restful time for the endangered Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly (*Euphydryas editha taylori*) (TC). By August, the larvae have reached their 5th Instar stage (see figure 1: TC Life Cycle). This means that, through their spring and summer consumption of plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*, and *P. major*) and speedwell (*Veronica scutellata* and *V. serpyllifolia*) plants, they have gone through several molts, and put on sufficient weight to go into diapause. Diapause is a dormant period common among some insects, in which stored nutrients taken up in the pre-diapause phase are consumed. Around February, the larvae will wake up and begin to eat again in preparation for pupation in April.

habitat of TC was based on wildfires and other disturbances. Thus, logged areas on Denman have played a role in mimicking historical ecological regimes, making space for this and other meadow species. Since the first sighting of TC butterflies (later larvae) on Denman here in 2005, there have been continuing conservation and monitoring efforts for TC in various places on the island. The logged area and old skid roads in the DCA Settlement Lands (SL) provide good habitat conditions, and the butterflies and larvae have been seen there. If left to regenerate naturally the growth of trees and shrubs in the SL would shade out the open meadow habitat of the Checkerspots. This is why a section of the SL has been designated as a butterfly reserve.

In early 2015, some work in the SL butterfly reserve was sponsored by the Habitat Stewardship Program of the Provincial Ministry of Environment, to remove a number of trees in the designated reserve area. This autumn, the DCA has received a grant for vegetation control and signage in the reserve, and this work is currently underway. Denman residents have been hired to complete the work, which includes trail clearing, removal of invasive Scotch Broom, control of bracken fern, and the removal of a few more small trees within the reserve boundary. In future, this reserve could also be managed for the conservation of other butterfly and meadow species.

The DCA is currently working on a Conservation Proposal to the Islands Trust Fund to put a conservation covenant on the lands, and recently held a public open house to share this proposal with the community. See page 2 for additional information about this proposal for the Settlement Lands. The next step once the proposal is accepted and the lands are protected by the covenant will be the creation of a management plan for the lands and the reserve.

To learn more about or get involved with the DCA's work with TC on Denman Island, please email info@denmanconservancy.org

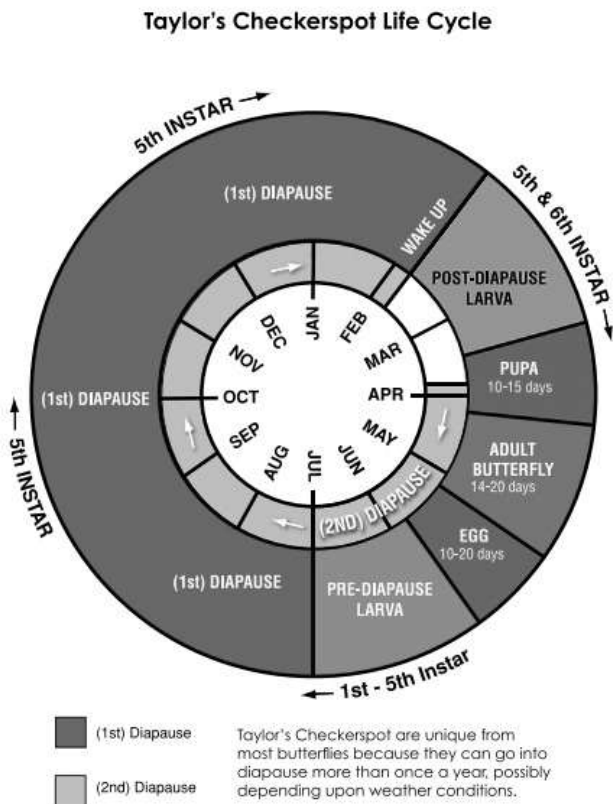
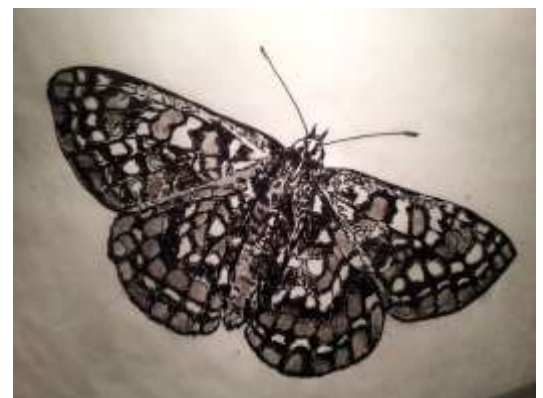


Figure 1. Source: Anderson et al. 2009. Taylor's Checkerspot *Euphydryas editha taylori* Captive Rearing Overview, Oregon Metro Zoo.

The DCA Settlement Lands TC Reserve:
Survival of Taylor's Checkerspot on Denman Island (the only place in Canada where this species is known to reside) requires open sunny areas with nectaring plants for the adult butterflies and corridors between breeding areas. It is thought that the historical range and



Taylor's Checkerspot sketch by Erika Bland