



NEWSLETTER

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

February 2019

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

The

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of DENMAN CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION

7:30 pm on Monday, February 25, 2019
in the **Back Hall**

The AGM business will include:

- ❖ Reports from: Co-chair, Treasurer & Lands Manager
- ❖ Election of Directors
- ❖ Surprise Preview of the Spring Frog Chorus
- ❖ Volunteer Recognition

Refreshments and 'Meet the Directors' following the meeting

On the Land

Happy Wetlands Year!

By Erika Bland

Did you know that upwards of 50% of all North American bird species nest, overwinter or feed in wetlands? Denman Island is an important site for many birds along the Pacific Flyway Migration Route, because of the large number and extent of wetlands here. In celebration of this unique feature of this place we call home, DCA has declared that 2019 will be a Year to Celebrate Wetlands on Denman Island. We have some exciting events planned! First, I will organize a walk/talk at least once each month to visit special wetlands. On Jan 26, 13 people took part in first walk of this series: Jenny Balke took us on a tour of 'beaver gardens' at the Settlement Lands. On Feb 2, World Wetlands Day, Jenny led another walk at Railway Grade Marsh Covenant Area, also an important

beaver hotspot on the Island. On Sunday, March 10th, I will lead another walk in the Settlement Lands, and discuss the water quality and wetland monitoring work that DCA has undertaken with support from Environment and Climate Change Canada's National Wetlands Conservation Fund. And, to welcome back the frogs this spring, on March 16th, please join us at the Front Hall for a Spring Frog Chorus Concert & Silent Auction. The community choir will perform a selection of songs in celebration of all things water and wetlands. Please contact Erika if you would like to donate an item for the silent auction:
dcalandmanager@gmail.com/250-702-7773.

And, please come to the DCA Annual General Meeting on Feb 25 to see a teaser performance leading up to the main event!

Also in keeping with the theme, for this year's Home and Garden Tour, the DCA Central Park Committee will host a tour stop and guided walks at Central Park, highlighting Graveyard Marsh and the Swale, two unique and important wetlands. More to come... stay tuned!

DCA by the Numbers: Random Stats from 2018

| | |
|------|--|
| 270 | Members |
| 12 | Board Meetings; 12 Lands Committee Meetings; |
| 5 | Admin/Funding Committee Meetings |
| 230 | Fundraising Membership Drive letters sent |
| 4 | Newsletters; 14 Website Blog Posts |
| 350 | Facebook Page Followers |
| 14 | <u>Walks & Talks</u> : Vulture Presentation; 2 Settlement Lands Nature Walks; Railway Grade Marsh Wetland Walk; 3 Morrison Marsh Nature Reserve and Bird Count walks; |
| 6 | Evening bat walks; Felt Batty Workshop (9 Bat species identified on Denman) |
| 11+ | <u>Work bees</u> : <i>Broom</i> – Settlement Lands, Lindsay Dickson , Central Park; <i>Holly</i> – Morrison Marsh Natural Burial Cemetery, Central Park, Lands; <i>Trail maintenance</i> – Central Park, Railway Grade Marsh |
| 100+ | Hours help from DIRA Trails Committee to maintain DCA and other trails |
| 1 | Major trail repair & trail rerouted to avoid a wetland in Morrison Marsh Nature Reserve |
| 7 | Workers provided by DCA with contract employment for Lands projects |
| 10 | Conservation Covenant Monitoring and Reports; |
| 5 | Community Naturalist volunteers helping with Covenant Monitoring site visits |
| 2 | Seedy Saturday & Christmas Faire info table |
| 17 | Saturday Market info table |
| 1 | Book Sale @ Blackberry Faire & 4 Sept. Saturday Book Sales w/ 1000s of donated books |
| 1 | Paint job & new floor in DCA Room |
| 3 | Updated Conservation Covenant Area Management Plans |
| 112 | Hours - Summertime Fire Watch evening monitoring @ Chickadee Lake |
| 67 | Bird species identified at the 24-hour Bird-athon, raising \$2500 |
| 1 | Fundraiser – Beautiful Bird Quilt donated by the Denman island Quilters |
| 1 | Youth Summer Intern |
| 8 | Water quality monitoring visits @ Homestead and Pickles Marshes - funding from National Wetlands Conservation Fund |
| 8 | Beaver monitoring visits to Settlement Lands Field study @ Central Park w/ Denman Community School |
| 1 | Pollinator garden at the Settlement Lands, for the endangered Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly |
| 1 | Taylor's Checkerspot Community Open House |
| 500 | Dollars added to the Dave Fraser Bursary Fund at North Island College |

From the Land ...ctd

Fillongley English Holly Removal January 2019

Thank you ever so much to all the energetic and cheerful folks who came out Jan 28, 29 and 30 to help with the manual removal of English Holly in Fillongley Park. I would like to express my gratitude for the wonderful support from Luise Hermanutz (of DCA), David Innes (Comox Valley Naturalists), and Teresa Beers (Pesticide Free Denman), in coordinating the volunteer work bees. Together, 26 people spent 78 hours removing 2301 plants of varying sizes from the site. We hope that BC Parks will see from this effort that manual removal is preferable to herbicide use for holly control in Fillongley Park, going forward. The work is not over, of course, but this initial trial was successful, and showed that many hands make light work and together we can have a very significant impact.

Taylor's Checkerspot Community Information Open House.

Saturday, March 9th, 9:30-12:30 at the Old School, please join us for an update on the Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly Recovery Project on Denman and Hornby Islands. Refreshments Provided. Representatives from DCA, BC Parks, the BC Ministry of Environment and the Vancouver Zoo Captive Rearing Facility will be present to answer questions about current project work.

New Conservation Area Road Signs.

DCA will soon install two new wooden signs along Pickles and Lake Roads. Prompted by a history of illegal logging, camping and refuse dumping in these areas, in part because of their relative remoteness, these signs will help to clarify on the ground that this is a contiguous network of protected conservation lands including Inner Island Nature Reserve, the Settlement Lands, Central Park, and Winter Wren Wood. These lands also adjoin with the Denman Island Provincial Park and Protected Area. Many thanks to Dave MacPhail and Denise MacKean for their help in making these signs.

Youth Nature Guide Program Coming Spring 2019.

From March to May 2019, in collaboration with Denman Island Community Education Society and the School's Parents' Advisory Committee, DCA volunteers and School staff, students and parents will carry out a series of Youth Field trips and classroom inquiry sessions focused on creating a 'peer-reviewed' Nature Guide for Central Park. We need volunteers to make this happen! The objective is to have many volunteers each contribute a small amount of time and energy. If you haven't already, you can sign up to volunteer for a field trip, a classroom session, or to be a peer reviewer, by contacting Erika, dcalandmanager@gmail.com or 250-702-7773.

Erika continues:

In other news, in January, I applied for a Canada EcoAction Grant for DCA, for a 3 year project called 'Inner Island Freshwater Stewardship Initiative' which will involve a number of activities including invasive species removal, a study of ephemeral streams, monitoring for bats, and a host of sponsored Freshwater Education Programs for all of us water-loving Inner Islanders and involving the K'omoks First Nation Guardian Watchmen. Cross your fingers for us as we wait to hear if this funding proposal will be accepted!

Also in keeping with the theme, for this year's Home and Garden Tour, the DCA Central Park Committee will host a tour stop and guided walks at Central Park, highlighting Graveyard Marsh and the Swale, two unique and important wetlands. More to come... stay tuned!



Installing a bat house...see Page 4

Contributors to this Newsletter:

Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, Katarina Meglic,
John Millen, Patti Willis.

Save the Date! The DCA Home and Garden Tour returns to Denman June 15-16, 2019.

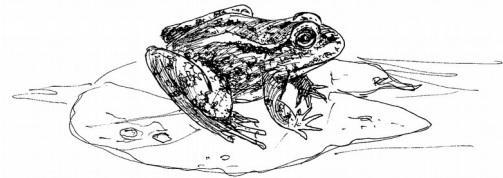
This year, as the Conservancy celebrates the Year of the Wetland, be on the lookout for marshes, creeks, and ponds that feature in many of the participating properties. We like to think of them as nature's water features, and they provide breeding grounds for pollinators, and a water sources for both wildlife and small-scale agriculture. You'll be able to find out all about the flora and fauna unique to these damp ecosystems at the DCA display at Central Park over the tour weekend.

There are some very exciting homes debuting on the tour this year, including Pelka and Rob Wiltshire's hand-built masterpiece of westcoast design and whimsical gardens; Lindsay Ross's home and studio, filled to the brim with artistic details and eclectic collections, and Leyah Kelly's exuberant garden.

We're also grateful for the return of familiar favourites, including Des and Sandy Kennedy's, Corlan Vineyards, Two Roads Farm, and the Denman Island Chocolate Factory, all of whom will be opening their garden gates to help once again with this fabulous fundraiser.

The self-guided tour runs June 15-16. Tickets can be bought online at:

www.denman-conservancy.org/home-and-garden-tour,
at an earlybird rate of \$18 until May 15 (\$20 thereafter).



DCA Calendar

Annual General Meeting

Monday Feb. 25th

7.30 pm Back Hall

Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly Open House

Saturday Mar. 9th

9.30 am to 12.30 pm Old School

Wetland Monitoring Walk

Sunday March 10th

Settlement Lands time TBA

Spring Frog Chorus Event

Saturday Mar. 16th

Doors 6.30 pm Show 7.30 pm

Community (Front) Hall

Home & Garden Tour

Saturday June 15th – Sunday June 16th



GETTING READY FOR BATS RETURNING - 2019

2019 is Year 3 of the Denman Hornby Bat Project! The project's goal for Summer 2019 is to encourage participants to count bats! We'll emphasize the joys of sitting outside watching the sun go down. Then as dusk sets in the fun of counting bats as they emerge from roosts to feed on flying insects. Not only will one have a pleasurable evening, but those bat counts will assist researchers in assessing the possible effects of White Nose Disease.

Meanwhile, our two large maternal bat colonies continued to successfully rear young bats this year. The Old School mixed species colony had over 740 bats emerging in mid summer. The bats are proving to be quite a tourist attraction on warm summer evenings. In addition, our rare Townsend's big-eared bat colony is doing well with close to 200 mum bats. We also now have six buildings where landowners are participating in the Annual Bat count and we've identified an interesting hollow-tree roost site.

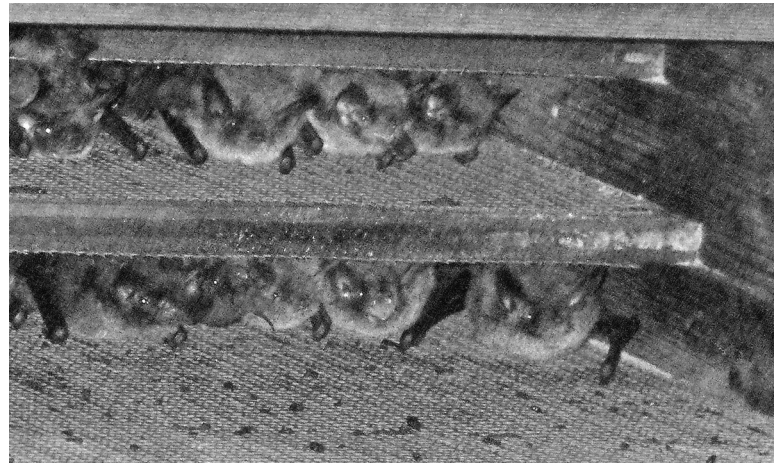
Additionally, the project now has 69 bats houses on both islands. These bat houses provide more baby-rearing and resting habitat. Many of our buildings probably offer superior bat habitat, being larger so that bats can move to the most comfortable locations, but despite that bats are already appreciating the new bat houses. At least 12 bat houses have had bat occupants and one bat house, shown below, has a thriving maternal colony.

Other bat project activities include evening bat walks. With the new bat call detector used on the walks it's fun to see which of our nine bat species are flying about. Many more bats are out there than we're aware of. These walks were started last summer and will be repeated in the different DCA lands in 2019!

Also, please let us know about any Dead Bats. We'll collect these to send in until May 31, as testing will reveal the possible spread of White Nose Disease to BC. The fungal cause of this disease may be present on bat's fur for a few weeks after they return from hibernation.

The bat project's new email address is dhbatproject@gmail.com or call 335-2151. Last year's bat project report is available on the DCA website.

Bats resident in a wall-mount Bat House



View is looking up into the bat House, so the eyes and ears of the 'hanging upside-down' bats are visible.

Volunteer with Denman Conservancy Association!

To get involved and lend a hand on DCA Lands (i.e. trail work, water quality monitoring, invasive species removal, pollinator stewardship, property management planning, events, etc.) please email dcalandmanager@gmail.com or call Erika at 250-702-7773 or visit www.denmanconservancy.org