



# NEWSLETTER

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

July 2020

## On the Land

by Erika Bland

It's July?! Where did that come from? Time for an overdue DCA Lands update.

Work bees on the land this spring have mostly been curtailed due to pandemic distancing restrictions, and I want to thank everyone for your patience if our trails are a little shaggier than usual. Please feel free to pluck off overhanging ferns along trails as you walk. We did recently hold one successful, safely-distanced work bee to get Central Park trails trimmed up, so thanks to the volunteers who came and helped out with that! (DCA could really use a battery powered lawn mower and weed-eater, if anyone is feeling especially generous today! ☺) Two new rustic benches will soon be installed at Central Park to serve as additional resting spots, one on Swale trail and one at the Pickles/Alder trail junction. Big thanks to Laura Pope and Dean Heyland for your work on these, and to Denise MacKean for the idea!

Early this year, with funding from Habitat Stewardship Program, DCA was able to hire Jenny Meyer and Leticia Gardner to continue our ongoing Scotch Broom Removal at the Settlement Lands Butterfly Reserve. Along with past workers, and many volunteers, we have really gotten the broom at the Settlement Lands under control, and I was so pleased to walk on Central Road in May and June this year and see almost NO yellow!

Stacey Borgstrom was hired through grant funding from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation earlier this spring to resurrect the 'Peace Pagoda' at the Settlement Lands. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Stacey and her volunteer helpers, D.R. and Darryl, for all the time and effort they put into this project. This structure was initially built in 1984 by the Denman Island Peace Group for the Renaissance Faire, and will now serve the community as a place for quiet reflection and nature observation for many years to come. A dedication event will be held to celebrate this renewal of the Pagoda when gatherings are once again more appropriate.



I recently submitted our final report for this 3-year Land Stewardship grant, which since 2017 has enabled DCA to accomplish a great deal of work at the Settlement Lands.

I am pleased to announce that HCTF has granted DCA another 3 years of funding! This new project focuses on invasive plant removal and revegetation, monitoring for American Bullfrogs (SEE PAGE 2), fire prevention activities, some additional signage and boundary marking, and continued stewardship activities for Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly. This time, the grant can fund activities across the three DCA conservation areas: Settlement Lands, Central Park, Winter Wren Wood as well as the Denman Island Natural Burial Cemetery on which DCA holds a conservation covenant.

Finally, DCA will be working again this summer and fall in collaboration with Islands Trust Conservancy, to care for ITC Nature Reserves. Stay tuned for some invasive species removal work-bee notices later this summer and in early fall.

## DCA Taylor's Checkerspot Activities

The Demonstration Pollinator Garden at the Settlement Lands Butterfly Reserve saw its first real buzz of activity this spring, from the past three years of work to create the garden which was funded in part by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

Sponsored by Wildlife Preservation Canada, DCA carried out surveys for the presence of Taylor's Checkerspot butterflies and habitat on privately held lands this May and June, and we will be planting more pollinator host plant seeds at the Reserve this fall.



*Scouler's Harebell blooming in DCA Pollinator Garden, Photo by Gerry Ambury*

We have created a little infomercial video about Taylor's Checkerspots which is available on our website at [www.denman-conservancy.org/denman-nature/tcb](http://www.denman-conservancy.org/denman-nature/tcb).

Andrew Fyson carried out Checkerspot surveys in Denman Provincial Park this year for BC Conservation Foundation.

### **American Bullfrog Monitoring on Denman Island**

In June, over 30 islanders agreed to help DCA by carrying out volunteer monitoring at wetlands and lakes across the island, to listen for American Bullfrog calls. Huge thanks to these folks, and to those who did not sign up to monitor, but still sent me reports. Though we had an especially wet and not very warm June, there were still some good warm days appropriate for monitoring, and I am grateful for everyone who got out there and gave a listen. I am sad to report that at least one calling Bullfrog has been reported at Chickadee Lake on multiple occasions, and there was also one report from Railway Grade Marsh. I will be consulting the Wildlife Advisory Committee and BC Parks to come up with a plan for a necessary rapid response. If you are willing to continue going to your monitoring sites at least once a week on hot afternoons/evenings in July, I would be very grateful. Visit [www.denman-conservancy.org/denman-nature/bullfrogs](http://www.denman-conservancy.org/denman-nature/bullfrogs) for more info.

**DCA is seeking help to build a new gate** for the vehicle entrance to Winter Wren Wood. Please contact Erika Bland at [dcalandmanager@gmail.com](mailto:dcalandmanager@gmail.com) or 250-702-7773 for more details. We have a small budget for this project for materials and labour.

## DCA's 5 Year Plan

Following presentation of DCA's 5 Year Plan to the Annual General Meeting in February, the Board adopted the Plan as a guide for action in the coming years.

### **Directors for 2020**

Doug Bell	Anne Fisher
DD Fuchs	Dylan Gale
Luise Hermanutz	John Millen
Ron Shepherd	Patti Willis
Susan-Marie Yoshihara	

Directors are all Denman Island residents

**Contributors to this Newsletter:** Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, Dylan Gale, John Millen, Patti Willis



Frog by Annie Siegel (not sure if this is a Bullfrog – Annie did this sketch for the DCA Newsletter in 2004 – Ed.)



## Dylan Gale

At the AGM in February the members elected a new member to the DCA Board; welcome aboard Dylan.



Dylan moved to Denman six years ago with his partner Emily in search of a vibrant alternative agricultural community on the coast. They had spent the previous two years trialling rural living on Saturna Island, where Dylan had spent his childhood summers camping with his family, and were happy to find a good nature to people balance on Denman. Dylan has been involved in environmental protection since he was a teenager and has worked for both the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and the Ancient Forest Alliance. He has also served on the boards of the Saturna Community Club and the Denman Island Growers and Producers Alliance. He spent much of his 20s meandering through an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies and Philosophy at UVIC, which helped him develop an understanding of humankind's relationship with nature, the disconnectedness of our food systems, and the importance of decolonization in allowing our society to heal. Dylan is excited to learn from the vast experience of the DCA board and to bring his own experience and perspectives to the conservation effort on Denman Island.

### **For ongoing stories of conservation on Denman Island:**

visit Denman Conservancy on **Facebook**  
or our web site:

[www.denman-conservancy.org](http://www.denman-conservancy.org)

## More about Bats

### Denman and Hornby's Great Support for Community Bat Program

Amazing busy bats!..Busy eating mosquitos, moths and beetles around Denman's Old School. At last count the Old School attic had 935 mum-bats clearing up the bugs in the area. Four other sites where Mum-bats were counted recorded from 2 to 91 bats. One of the Hornby bat counters emailed:

"I did it. I sat outside in a comfortable reclining chair starting at 9:30. At 9:58 I was ready to give up when two bats flew out of the house. I waited another 10 minutes and no more. So a half hour of sitting with about 2 seconds of thrill. It was definitely worth it and thank you so much encouraging me and giving me the little tips I needed to watch correctly. I trust you'll be reminding us all when it's time for the next count, when the days will be a little shorter."

Bat houses around Denman and Hornby are also doing well. Hornby has it's first maternal bat colony (more than 2-3 bats) in a Community Bat Program bat house, with at least 8 mums and babies. Grant and Carol Scott are proud batty-grand-parents. Denman boasts at least three maternal colonies, one new one this year with 18 mums! Almost half of the Hornby bat houses have at least one bat and Denman bat house checks are continuing. So far, guano from 4 Hornby and 5 Denman bat houses has been collected for DNA analysis to determine the species of bat occupying the house. Many other bat roosts that are not in bat houses, like the Old School, are also part of the Bat Program. We continue to learn about our bats and all the information helps us to be thoughtful stewards for the future. Many thanks!



One of Denman's (occupied) bat houses.

# **Annie Corddry**

February 26, 1952 – June 2, 2020

The Denman Conservancy Board of Directors is heartbroken by the loss of our dear Annie.

A Director since 2007, her loyalty, acuity, kindness, and love for the natural world will be missed. She was always willing to take on a variety of tasks. When we were silent and looking the other way so as not to be noticed, she would, with a bit of a sigh, volunteer. She embraced challenges about which she knew little, like our foray into Facebook, but she was always willing to learn for the sake of DCA. And, Annie, unlike many of us, actually read the minutes and other DCA documents, and posed cogent questions none of us had considered. She was often soft-spoken, but she had a steely and incisive mind. Though solid in her ethics and distressed by injustice, she was not strident, nor imposing.

In May of last year, Annie wrote a list of the things she cared about in life. Among them, “time to put into issues and projects that matter, particularly environmental,” “accomplish my share of work in whatever group efforts I am involved in,” and, “try to live in a way that takes into account the many problems the world faces, being environmentally as well as socially conscious.”

Born in Massachusetts, she earned a BSc in biology and an MSc in public health. She had considerable mathematical skill and was undaunted by technical science, which she relied upon when she was diagnosed with leukemia in 2017. She also followed her family legacy of fine woodworking.

She brought this background to Denman Island with her husband, Dennis Lavelle, in 1980. She built two homes on Denman while, as Dennis says, “He was good at making sawdust.” They had two children, Katie and Ben. She is described as a woman who was thorough and never cut corners. Denman Island was often the recipient of Annie’s skills. She was among those who established DCA’s Central Park. There is a memory of her with an organized array of tools set up in the shade of the big Maple precisely cutting all the cedar decking for the boardwalk.

Annie loved birds, identified 33 species in the 2018 24-hour Bird-a-Thon, could name the plants along any Denman trail and generally thought we should “just leave nature alone.”

When asked about Annie’s favourite flower, Dennis said she wasn’t sentimental about that sort of thing, but that she did collect rocks (often displayed on the window sill). However, then Dennis said that Annie had long beds in her vegetable garden with at least 20% planted in annual flowers.

Denman Conservancy Association will dedicate the Central Park Boardwalk to Annie -

## **“Annie’s Crossing”**

