



NEWSLETTER

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

September 2020

On the Land

by Erika Bland

ITC Management Plans and Reconciliation

Earlier this year, Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) completed updates for two of their Nature Reserve management plans (Lindsay Dickson and Inner Island) and a new plan for Valens' Brook Nature Reserve. Thanks to Denman Conservancy members Jenny Balke and Louise Bell who were instrumental in the writing and editing of these plans with ITC.

I am very pleased to see new language in these plans surrounding the importance of the Nature Reserves for indigenous peoples and highlighting ITC's commitment to relationship building and reconciliation with First Nations. The management plans are presented as living documents that will evolve as opportunities for knowledge sharing arise and understanding grows.

Recognizing that a shortcoming of the current plans for real reconciliation is that they are largely informed by 'Western' knowledge systems and science, ITC is also working on developing a parallel *Management Plan for Areas of Cultural Heritage and Sacred Significance* that can be used to guide management alongside the individual property plans.

Practically speaking, a new objective included in all of the plans is to support and protect the continued use of areas of sacred and cultural significance by First Nations as per the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act. Section 35 recognizes and affirms the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of aboriginal peoples within Canada, and has been upheld by subsequent tests in the Canadian legal system finding that aboriginal rights include aboriginal title.

I will continue to look to ITC staff for guidance as DCA works on building our own knowledge and understanding about reconciliation and relationship

If there are community members out there on Inner Island a.k.a. Sla Dai Aich who are keen to explore what this kind of relationship building might look like in the context of the work of Denman Conservancy, please get in touch with me: dcalandmanager@gmail.com.

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.

Saturday Market Report

You Joined, You Donated, You Bought Tee Shirts!

The weather has been kind to Denman Island and we've seen so many of you at the Saturday Market this year. Thanks to our intrepid Market organizers the Denman community has been able to safely access the bountiful produce of our farmers and artworks crafted by our artisans—not to mention all kinds of delicious ready to eat goodies!

Conservancy has also benefited from your interest and generosity. You came to say hello and look at the colorful tee shirts, maps, and small trees we had for sale. One young woman came back week after week, each time purchasing another tree to plant in her new garden.

And so many of you bought shirts for yourselves and for friends and family. In fact, tee shirts sales have seldom been this good! A lucky thing, too, since we were unable to have our annual fall book sale. So far the DCA tent at the Market has brought in \$1310. DCA says thank you to everyone who dropped by to see us at the Saturday Market.

Due to popular request, we now have 100% cotton long sleeved tee shirts featuring the well-loved design work generously donated by Jane Fawkes. All the shirts with both short and long sleeves are available at the Saturday Market and downtown at the Denman Craft Shop. Thanks so much for your support!

WINDY MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT

Morrison Marsh and Windy Marsh were once a single wetland. They were severed when McFarlane Road was built without a connecting culvert. Windy Marsh then lost an important source of water when runoff from Morrison was redirected into a channel that runs down the McFarlane Road ditch and empties onto McFarlane beach. Consequently, Windy Marsh has gradually dried out, and now the wetlands and all its wildlife are at risk, as are neighbourhood wells close to its margins. Denman Conservancy and the Friends of Windy Marsh have begun a project to restore this fragmented wetland.

If you are interested in learning more, we invite you to an

Open House display and discussion at the Old School, Saturday 3rd October, 9:30 am to noon.

which will introduce the project in its early stages, and answer questions and concerns. If the weather cooperates we will hold this outside. Otherwise an indoor display will be set up with appropriate Covid-19 precautions.

Field trips to the marshes will be arranged to take place on Sunday 4th October.

Make a Reservation to join the Sunday Field Trip at the Open House or by contacting Erika at dcalandmanager@gmail.com

Where is Windy Marsh? Opposite Morrison Marsh, on the north side of McFarlane Road. It sits between Beaver Drive and Owl Crescent, but is obscured by all the shrubs that have invaded due to low water. Its water flows out though Graham Creek at the north end of McFarlane beach.

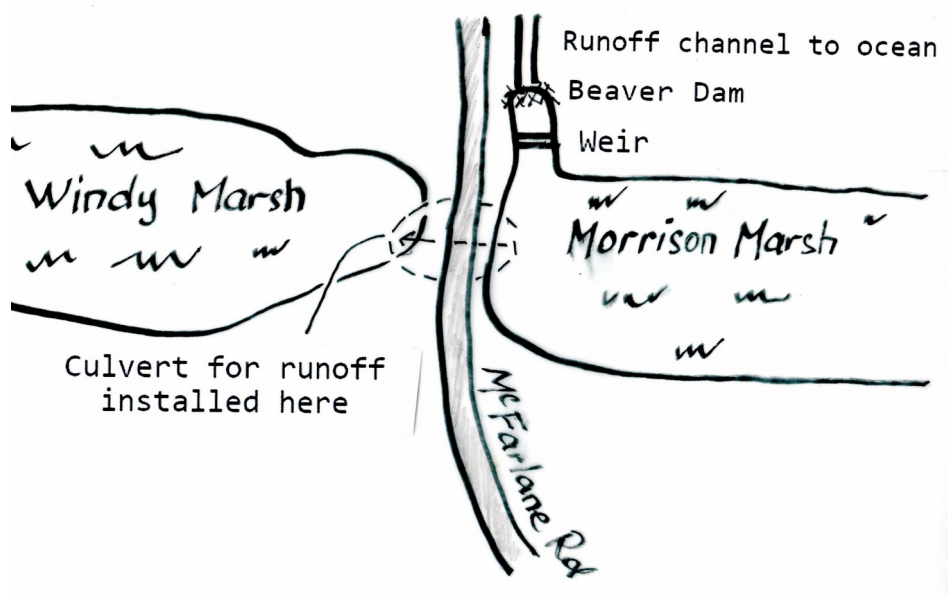
How will the water levels on Morrison Marsh be affected? Right now, these levels are maintained by a weir installed by Ducks Unlimited in 1984 and by a beaver dam that raises the level even higher. Our project's objective is to redirect the extra runoff that would otherwise be diverted down the highway ditch to the ocean. The objective is for the effects on Morrison Marsh to be minimal.

How far has this restoration project progressed?

Will Islanders have an opportunity to contribute to its development?

This project is just beginning and we are interested in your input. To date we have the support of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, which has stated they will create the design and pay for the installation of a connecting structure under McFarlane Road. Ducks Unlimited, who built the weir for Morrison Marsh, is supportive of this restoration and will contribute an ecological assessment of Windy Marsh. Much has yet to be done to obtain permits etc. etc., so there's lots of time to hear everyone's voices.

Please join DCA for an outdoor discussion of this exciting new wetlands initiative:
Saturday Oct. 3 at the Old School and
join the field trip, Sunday – by reservation with Erika.



Contributors to this Newsletter:
Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, John Millen,
Patti Willis, Dorrie Woodward, Susan-
Marie Yoshihara

Invasive Species Removal on DCA Lands

Thanks to a 3-year grant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation Land Stewardship program, DCA has been able to hire three people this year to help with invasive species removal across our lands. We are grateful for this funding, and for these awesome individuals! This fall, DCA will host a series of volunteer work bees (respecting physical distancing and Covid-19 safety precautions) at Central Park, Settlement Lands and Winter Wren Wood. Please watch out for upcoming work bee notices from Liticia, so you can plan to join in!



Hi, my name is Chloe Woodruff. I'm an avid gardener and outdoor enthusiast. After recently completing a Bachelor of Horticulture Science Degree, I moved to Denman Island to learn more about small-scale regenerative farming practices. In early July, I became a member of the Denman Conservancy Association, where I help to protect and restore diverse ecosystems through the removal of invasive plant species.

Hi, my name is Glen Kraushar and I have just retired from 34 years of treeplanting. I have been weaving willow baskets for 30 years and growing willow for over 20 years. I have recently started to do odd jobs around the island, and look forward to working with DCA on English Holly removal and enjoying wandering the lands.

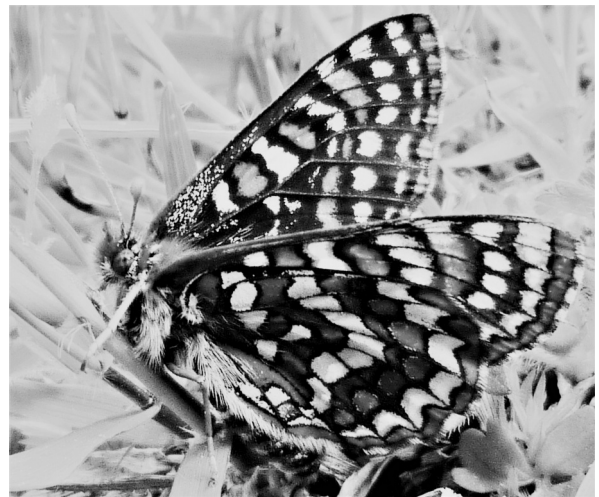


Liticia is an avid place-based educator, amateur farmer and dance party enthusiast. Liticia moved to Denman this past spring and has quickly acquired 20 chickens and is excited to sponge up the weirdness of Denman for many years to come. You can find Liticia coordinating our work bees this fall!

Where Are the Checkerspots Hiding?

This May-June's flight season revealed many endangered Taylor's checkerspot butterflies in wet fields and recovering clearcuts on north Denman. Andrew Fyson surveyed butterflies on Park lands. Erika and Jenny Balke were fortunate to look for checkerspots on eighteen wonderful private lands. Checkerspots were found on five landowner properties (*full report on DCA website*). This spring's weather was great for flying, nectaring, breeding and egg-laying Checkerspots and this hopefully will lead to a more abundant butterfly population next year.

Meanwhile, now in September, larval checkerspots are hunkered down for the winter, probably near open fields....But WHERE? Their over-wintering habitat sites are still unknown. Thus, the sleeping larvae are potentially vulnerable to our fall and winter activities. Hopefully, future research will reveal where they sleep and what habitat features they need in their sleeping quarters. Meanwhile, walking softly on the earth and leaving natural areas alone for all the other island critters, plants and interconnected cycles helps us steward nature for future generations.



A Green Afterlife?

We aren't getting any younger and this fact begs the question of our legacy. Walt Whitman said, "If you want me again, look for me under your boot soles." If we want others to see us again, they can look to the very dirt, trees, water and land we have protected.

DCA has produced a new brochure, "*The greatest gift for our children, grandchildren, their children and beyond...*" With the climate crisis and the lackluster leadership to address it, degraded habitats and disappearing animal and plant species, please consider making a charitable bequest to the Denman Conservancy Association.

A charitable bequest to DCA supports the preservation of unique, environmentally sensitive, and historically important land on Denman Island. It can be modified if your circumstances or those of your family change during your lifetime, and it may reduce the income tax on your estate. It can be a monetary gift or a property to be protected by DCA in perpetuity.

Please view the new brochure on the DCA website:

<https://www.denman-conservancy.org>.

You may request a copy at:

info@denmanconservancy.org.

You may also ask to speak to a DCA Board member by contacting this same email address.

DCA is a federally registered charity.

"The ultimate test of our conscience may be our willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard." (Gaylord Nelsen)



Central Park Benches

Thanks to Laura and Dean for placing two new resting places in Central Park.

Bat Rescue

In early August, when young bats are learning to fly and are wandering, Selinda and Mike White found a small bat in their house. There was no human or pet contact, so they put on gloves and carefully got the bat into a small cardboard box. They took the bat to a high branch on a large tree outside, where the bat climbed onto the bark. Carefully, wearing gloves, Selinda then brought some water in an eyedropper near to the little bat's mouth. The bat happily licked the water droplets. They left the bat protected in the tree overnight, and in the morning it was gone.

Note: Bats must never be approached with bare hands as a precaution against rabies, a very rare and fatal disease in wild mammals.