



Denman Conservancy Association

# NEWSLETTER

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

February 2021

## NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

The  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
of **DENMAN CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION** will be  
**7:30 pm on Monday, February 22, 2021**  
on **ZOOM**

The AGM business will include:

- ❖ Reports from: Co-chair, Treasurer & Lands Manager
- ❖ Election of Directors
- ❖ DCA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

\*\*\* *To request a link to the meeting email [info@denmanconservancy.org](mailto:info@denmanconservancy.org)* \*\*\*

## On the Land

by Erika Bland

DCA is nearing the end of Year 1 of a 3-year project funded by Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation Land Stewardship Grant. Thanks to this funding, over this past year we have been able to stay active on the lands, hiring several Denman Island residents in ongoing work to remove invasive plants in DCA conservation areas.

Glen Kraushar (with volunteer help from Cal Rejall) has removed more than 80 *Ilex Aquifolium* plants – including some massive trees and clusters of trees, in Central Park and Winter Wren Wood. Chloe Woodruff, Jenny Meyer, and Leticia Gardner all removed a huge amount of Scotch Broom at the Settlement Lands in 2020, and Chloe initiated the eradication of a patch of invasive St. John's Wort (which found its way to the land through previous dumping of garden waste) by digging, cutting and solarizing the plants with tarps.

Leticia Gardner brought her contagious enthusiasm and humour to organize 10 volunteer invasive plant removal work-bees at Central Park, Winter Wren Wood and the Settlement Lands last fall, and numerous volunteers came out to help. With support from Islands Trust Conservancy, Myles Walters will be helping with invasive plant removal in the Lindsay Dickson, Morrison Marsh, Inner Island and Valens' Brook Nature Reserves.

Our annual Fillongley Park Big Volunteer Work Bee has been cancelled this year (due to the restrictions on gatherings) but the BC Parks funding usually dedicated to this effort will stay on-island, redirected to hiring a local person to continue our efforts there until volunteers can pick it up again. Thanks to everyone for your amazing work!

Calling all Gardeners:  
**Help DCA Grow Pollinator Plants!**

DCA has long been a steward of habitat for the endangered Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly on Denman Island. At the Settlement Lands butterfly reserve, we have established a pollinator garden where host plants for this species, as well as other pollinator-friendly plants, are growing. This spring, inspired by similar work on Hornby led by their Natural History Society we are encouraging islanders to grow flats of host plants used by Checkerspots so that we can continue to bolster their habitats across the island. Some important plant species used by Taylor's Checkerspots on Denman include Wild/Woodland Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*), Marsh Speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*), and Thyme-leaved Speedwell (*Veronica serpyllifolia*). Eflora BC is an Electronic Atlas of Plants of British Columbia, and has detailed information on all of these plants and more. Thanks to Luise Hermanutz and Dave Innes for contributing hundreds of strawberry plants this past year. If you would like to be a host-plant grower for DCA, please email [dcalandmanager@gmail.com](mailto:dcalandmanager@gmail.com) for more info. A Wild Seed Grant from Wildlife Preservation Canada means we have some seeds to share with people who would like to participate!



*Woodland strawberry plants  
for Taylor's Checkerspot stewardship*

Update on Fundraising Events  
**Good News and Bad News**

No surprises, 2020 was a challenging year for DCA's fundraising, much of which ordinarily is achieved through in-person events. This year was different, starting in September with the cancellation of the Blackberry Fair. Our annual book sale held at the Fair, not only raises funds to support DCA's conservation work, but is also an opportunity for the board and the membership to chat together.

We missed seeing people!

We also missed seeing people at the Christmas Craft Fair which has always been another great chance for board members to talk with neighbours and sell memberships and tee shirts.

And now after much consideration and a lot of wait and see, we have faced the cold hard fact that we will have to cancel this spring's Home and Garden Tour. This was a difficult decision, because it is our largest fundraiser, and it is only held every two years. Tour coordinator Katarina Meglic explored the idea of an outdoor gardens only tour, but as Covid-19 continues to spread and the vaccine may be slow to reach us, cancellation was the only decision we felt we could make.

That's the bad news.

But here's the good news. We think better days are ahead. We had a great time at the market last summer, meeting both old and new members, and selling trees, tee shirts and memberships. We are looking forward to seeing you all again during the 2021 market season and thanks to the Denman Craft Shop, our tee shirts are still available and continue to sell. We are hoping that life will be close to normal by the fall, and the Fair and book sale can go ahead, so hang on to your gently used books until further notice. And the Home and Garden Tour is not gone for good, but only postponed until 2022, then to be held every two years after that.

*We are thankful for all the support we receive from our members, and hope we get to see you all in person sometime in 2021. Until then, stay safe - keep healthy.*



*Pollinators on Self-heal at Settlement Lands Pollinator Garden – photo Gerry Ambury*

## DICES Spring Break Pollinator Day Camp

DCA is continuing our Youth Nature Education outreach work this year in collaboration with DICES. During the Spring Break in March DICES and DCA will facilitate an immersive learning experience for students to learn about butterflies, bees, and birds and their important service as pollinators. Early spring is the season when the larvae of the endangered Taylor's Checkerspot butterfly begin to feed before pupation, and is a good time to start thinking about all the diverse pollinators we will begin to see as life awakens from its winter sleep on beautiful Inner Island. Contact Erika Bland [dcalandmanager@gmail.com](mailto:dcalandmanager@gmail.com) for more information or if you would like to volunteer. This program is made possible through a grant from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.



*Rufous Hummingbird - photo by Dennis Forsyth*



*Bee on Salal flower at Settlement Lands  
photo by Gerry Ambury*

## Railway Grade Marsh – The Continuing Saga

Some may remember the Railway Grade Marsh forest prior to its logging by 4064 in 2000 -- soft mossy green, filtered light, towering trees, and quiet beauty. In 2006 when DCA settled a lawsuit against 4064, among other benefits, DCA received a Conservation Covenant on the Railway Grade Marsh.

In 2012, a committee began drafting a management plan for the area, but it was never completed. Another committee took up the baton in 2019 and now has a draft plan in-hand. Among the overarching goals of the plan is, “to support and enhance the continued use of areas of sacred and cultural significance by First Nations where such uses are compatible with the protection of ecological values.” To this end, the committee has reached out to First Nations in our region and the Naut’sa mawt Tribal Council. We wrote that, “We seek your perspectives and input about the ecological values and people’s relationship to [the] lands...and the best way to protect those values and advance those relationships.”

Of course, we will be seeking input from the Denman community in the not too distant future.

### Denman Conservancy on Facebook

Since 2015 DCA has been maintaining a Facebook page for communication with members and other interested people. Dennis Forsyth’s marvellous bird photos along with his commentary are among the most popular items. We also value Mike Morrel’s annual commentary on the herring roe fishery. Information about work parties and other DCA projects is posted there.

Recently there have been about seven posts per month. Facebook loves to report numbers – no doubt as part of their scheme to occupy as much of our time as possible. While most posts are seen on between one and two hundred screens, some travel far wider. In December pictures and a story by Dennis of a family of river otters being chased by a Bald eagle went to 13,800 screens.

With this evolving media scene the DCA web page is not visited (or added to) so much; however it remains the best information source about the land DCA owns and the history and activities of the organization.

### Contributors to this Newsletter:

Gerry Ambury, Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, DD Fuchs, Dennis Forsyth, Andrew Fyson, John Millen, Patti Willis



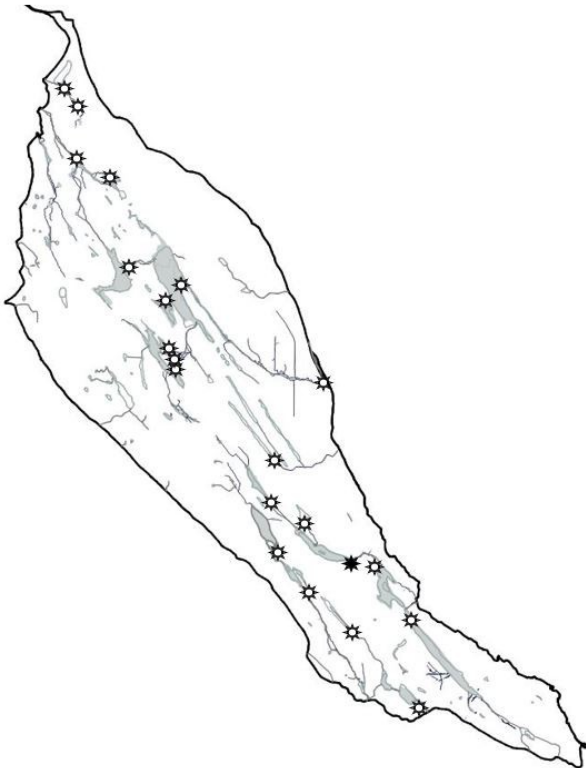
## Beaver and Fresh Water on Denman

by Jenny Balke

Who'd have thought that Denman's environmental character would be due in a large part to Canada's largest furry rodent? Denman is a wet place for a gulf island, and this wetness is helped along by its underlying geomorphology together with the busy actions of a keystone species...an ecosystem designer or in many cases, a re-designer.

Often life with beavers may not quite coincide with human designs. So 'beaver-deceivers' for water control and flooding issues, or tree protection for valuable plants may come into play. But overall we've so much to thank beavers for - when we swim in the lakes, enjoy fresh water marshes and have water flowing in creeks in summer. All that water that would normally run off, instead sits around and slowly seeps into the water table, filling our wells.

Likewise, all the other wildlife and plants that depend on the fresh water habitats, are in debt to beavers. We just have to look around the island to realize beavers are an important part of Denman.



Location of beaver dams on Denman Island  
active & inactive



Beaver photo by Andrew Fyson

### AGM Reminder

Denman Conservancy AGM  
will be held as a ZOOM meeting  
at 7.30 pm on Monday 22 February 2021

to get an invitation to the meeting email a  
request to  
[info@denmanconservancy.org](mailto:info@denmanconservancy.org)

### Question for Today:

If we want to store carbon in our forests wouldn't it make sense to harvest them with selective cutting as advocated by Herb Hammond and as practised by Merv Wilkinson at Wildwood, as well as at many Community Forests in BC?

\* removing the selected trees allows those remaining to grow faster

\* at Wildwood growth put on by trees between 50 years and 75 years old tripled or even quadrupled their volume of wood

\* soil losses of carbon after clearcutting appear to be significantly greater than from selective harvest

John Millen

Herring Fleet coming soon to waters near you!

photo by Jan Florian

