



The Heron Herald

Volume 10 Issue 5 The Chilliwack Field Naturalists September 2005

CFN 2005-6 EXECUTIVE

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SPECIAL - Holiday article from our President

On July 1st, Janne Perrin, Marilyn Cram and their friend, Linda Calliou, embarked on a tenting trip to the Yukon and Alaska. They put nearly 10, 000 kilometers on Janne's van, traveling the Alaska highway from Dawson Creek to Delta Junction and many points in between and



beyond.

The travelers swam in Laird Hot Springs during a thunder and lightning storm, saw Mountain Bluebirds in the Sign Post Forest at Watson Lake, cruised the Yukon below the watchful eyes of Bald Eagles and Bank Swallows, and were greeted by thousands of Cliff Swallows upon leaving Diamond Tooth (Gertie's Gambling Hall) at midnight in Dawson City. Dawson was mosquito-free thanks



Midnight Sun

to these feathered control officers who lined the buildings with their mud homes.

From Dawson, they traveled the "Top of the World" highway to Tok and Chicken and on to the Santa Claus campsite at North Pole, Alaska. This became our home base for trips to Denali and the Arctic Ocean. Terns cried overhead, while Marilyn swam in the frigid ocean.



Six million acre Denali revealed Mount McKinley through the clouds, nine Grizzly Bears, Caribou, a Golden Eagle, Artic Ground Squirrels, and a riot of flowers. To

transverse the Dalton Highway (a haul road to the oilfields), the trekkers signed on for the "Trans Arctic Circle Treks, Ltd.," a three-day van trip. Despite its



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reputation, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline seemed not to bother wildlife or flora. Grizzly Bears use it as a pathway and the cubs for a jungle gym. Caribou easily pass under it and it is insulated, earth quake stable and refrigerated into the perma-frost. As we crossed the Brooks Range to the tundra and the oil fields, we saw increasing numbers of wildlife. Herds of Dall Sheep, Musk Ox and Caribou grazed close to the oil fields. Loons, Tundra Swans and White-fronted Geese nested on Lake Colleen. A den of Artic Foxes frolicked beside the road and Artic Terns cried overhead. In the town site of Deadhorse, (an alcohol and drug-free village, operated by the Alaska Pipeline/Oil Company, Our midnight walk revealed dozens of Red-necked Phalaropes and Lapland Longspurs.

After the Arctic, the travelers cruised Prince William Sound with Sea Otters, Stellers Sea Lions, Tufted and Horned Puffins, Auklets, Murres, Guillemots, a Hump-backed Whale and great ice floes noisily calved from the glaciers. After this cruise and a tour of the Fort Seward and Hammer Museum at Haines, we ferried to Skagway, backing off the ferry Alaskan style, to rub shoulders along the boardwalks of this



gold rush town with the 10,000 Cruise Ship passengers.

The route home was via the Stewart-Cassier Highway - to drop Marilyn off at Tatogga, BC. She embarked on a fly-in hike of the Spectrum Mountains for eight days and then a canoeing trip of the Lower Stikine to Wrangell, Alaska. She arrived home in mid-August. Linda and Janne arrived July 26th after observing spawning salmon (but no bears) at Fish Creek, Hyder, Alaska, Kitwanga Totems, and the *world's largest fishing rod* in Houston, BC. A most interesting trip for us all.

Janne Perrin

FIELD TRIPS

1. On Thursday evening July 7th. Heather

The Chilliwack Field Naturalists

Larstone hosted a delightful evening viewing the



Naturescape at her home. Nine naturalists attended the outing. Heather has a yard on one-half acre, full of interesting plants and tastefully landscaped. The flora include a Mulberry tree, (the berries were delicious) and Queen Anne's lace. A Smoke Tree, planted in memory of Steve Cannings, is thriving. The woodpeckers have been pecking on a dead Elderberry tree. We enjoyed a walk as well, on the Vedder River Trail. The atmosphere was warm and inviting on a lovely summer's evening. Thank you Heather for your hospitality

Nora Mitchell

2. **Wednesday, August 24th**

A Country Walk,

On yet another lovely summer's day here in Chilliwack a group of Naturalists met at the Jackaman's country cottage and garden. The stalwart walkers were soon on their way down the lane bordered by the summer wild flowers at their best. The bright blue of chicory outlined the lane that led us to the main dike bordering the Vedder River. Once over the dike we entered lush woodlands with wet lands either side providing a home for beavers, a variety of ducks and the great blue heron emblem of the club.



On arrival at the secondary dike along the south shore of the Vedder we were greeted with late flowering purple buddleia with its pungent scent. The pathway had narrowed down to a jungle type pathway with shrubs brushing our arms on either side. Through gaps in the greenery could be seen the crystal clear Vedder bubbling over the rocks. After negotiating a cattle guard we moved on to a



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footpath that bordered a lovely salmon stream its clear water outlined by the beautiful blue of massed forget-me-nots. In doing so, we disturbed a heron busy waiting for his lunch to appear in the water below. All around us were massive cotton wood and cedar trees providing a huge canopy of green. Other than our chatter, the silence was indeed golden.

As we walked we were also conscious of the over growing blackberry bushes with their tempting fruit. This year's crop was particularly bounteous with some berries as large as ones' thumb. Needless to say Heather was not a person to look at a free opportunity and soon had us all picking blackberries.

Our walk continued to a former salmon counting area where we negotiated a narrow plank bridge before making our way back along the secondary dike where we were



joined in our walk by a small group of cows, and finally back to our start point. By then we were all hot and

welcomed the opportunity to sit at picnic tables under the thick canopy of horse chestnut trees to enjoy our picnic lunch and coffee and cake supplied by Joan. All agreed it was a delightful and relaxing walk.

Jack Jackaman

THIS 'N THAT

1. Don't forget our first meeting on Tuesday evening, Sept.20th. Don McPhee will be showing his excellent slides.
2. Do check out and plan to attend the special community meeting in the library on October 26th. It is hoped that some community folks will decide to join our club at this event. Refreshments will be part of the evening.
3. It's time to say "good-bye" to Judy Mueller and her family who will soon be moving to Nanaimo. Our Young Naturalists will certainly miss her leadership. Judy has often contributed

The Chilliwack Field Naturalists

articles and sketches to our Newsletter and has been looking after Memberships for our club.

Note: The Young Naturalists will be taking part in *The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup* on September 17th on Ballam Rd. Everyone is welcome to join them. Contact Judy at 604-795-7296.

4. Your executive met in August and had a look at our finances, developing a budget for the coming year. We appear to be in good shape, with 44 current memberships (35 single and 9 family), and several fund-raising events planned throughout the year.
5. The FBCN Fall Meeting this year will be from Sept 29th – Oct. 2nd in Lillooet. Titled: *Canyon to Alpine*, it will feature field trips and workshops on topics such as – American Dippers, Spotted Owl, history of Jade and a local Jade walk, raptors of BC etc. Some of our members are planning to attend all or part of this session. Call Helen if interested.

October Speakers

Francis Iredale and Jason Barsanti will be talking about SARA (Species at Risk) at our next month's regular meeting. They will also give some info about the BC Conservation Corps and describe their role in species monitoring and recovery planning. Local species that are threatened are Tall Bugbane, Phantom Orchid, Pacific Watershrew, and the Coastal Giant Salamander.

"OPTIONS REPORT"

The FBCN is asking club members to have a look at this report. It is concerned with the licensing and registration of Off-Road Vehicles, an important issue for naturalists.

You may find the document online at: www.ORVCoalitionBC.org

Feedback and comments are welcome – contact Janne or Rose for instructions.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE CALL OUR CO-ORDINATOR HAZEL FOR QUESTIONS RE: FIELD TRIPS

Date	Time	Event	Location	Details	Contact
Sunday September 18th	12:30 pm	Field Trip	Earl's	Hike the trail around Hick's Lake and to the Beaver Pond 	Helen 792-0972
Saturday October 15th	11 am	Field Trip	Earl's	Autumn walk through Cheam Lake Wetlands (bring your lunch)	Hazel 858-0803
Tuesday October 18th	7:30pm	Regular Meeting	Vedder Middle School	<u>Speakers:</u> Jason and Francis (Ministry of Environment) <u>Topic:</u> <i>Species at Risk</i>	Janne Perrin 796-9182
Wednesday October 26th	7pm	Community Awareness Meeting	Chilliwack Library	<u>Showing of The film:</u> "Being Caribou"	Janne Perrin 796-9182
Saturday November 5th	10am	Field Trip 	Earl's	See wintering birds at Maria Slough (lunch at the Seabird Café)	Janne 796-9182
Tuesday November 15th	7:30 pm	Regular Meeting	Vedder Middle School	<u>Speaker:</u> Alana Hilton Faculty of Forestry – UBC <u>Topic:</u> <i>Amphibians</i> 	Janne Perrin 796-9182
Tuesday December 13th	6:45 pm	Pre-count Meeting	Chilliwack Library	count areas to be assigned <u>Slide Show</u>	Denis 858-5141
Saturday December 17th	6 pm	Christmas Bird Count and Pot Luck Supper	Cottonwood Retirement Centre's Club House	TBA	Hazel 858-0803

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