

NATURE BAY NEWS

Newsletter of the Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society

PO Box 27, Salmon Arm, B.C. Canada V1E 4N2

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Spring
2012

PLEASE JOIN US

AGM 7:30 pm Thursday May 31st

SAGA ART GALLERY, 70 HUDSON AVE NE
EVERYONE WELCOME, REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

FOLLOWING THE AGM **RUSSELL CANNINGS** WILL GIVE A TALK
ON HIS

**RECORD-BREAKING BIG YEAR
OF BIRDING IN BC**



" I will talk about my big year and how it corresponds with the great diversity the province has to offer (both birds and in geography). If time permits, I may also add in some sociological stuff about birders."

RUSSELL CANNINGS

BIOGRAPHY OF RUSSELL CANNINGS

"Growing up in the Okanagan Valley, birding was a way of life for the Cannings family and Russell took to it right away, seeing his first Northern Saw-whet Owl when he was 2 weeks old. Since then his passion for birds has taken him all over North America and indeed the world.

After completing a history degree at UBC, he decided to take all of 2010 off to "just bird." In doing so, he set a new BC record for birds seen in one year (373 species); add that to a 12-day trip to Texas with Dad, he had seen well over 500 species for the year.

Even though he has a history degree Russell works as a field biologist all over the province, conducting both breeding work and migration monitoring projects. Since his "big year" he has set up a province-wide "Bird Alert" blog and is close to completing a new birding site guide to British Columbia. His favourite birds to work with and look for are owls but he also feels right at home riding the high seas and looking for tubenoses!"

I welcome your comments, ideas, articles, poems and photographs for **your** future newsletters. Please e-mail them to me at sabnes.org@gmail.com , or mail them to the SABNES postal address on the back sheet. Thanks, **Geoff Benson**

The Western Painted Turtle; a Blue-listed Species

The Western Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta bellii*) is well named. It has bright yellow stripes on its head, neck, tail and legs. A red shell covers its belly, and the dark shell on its back is artfully decorated with matching red trim. It is BC's only remaining native pond turtle.

Painted Turtles inhabit ponds, marshes, lakes and slow-moving creeks. They prefer the edges and shallow areas with muddy bottoms and lots of aquatic plants. These areas provide important habitat for feeding, basking, shelter from



predators, and hibernation. Their diet includes insects, snails, shrimp, earthworms, frogs, tadpoles, algae, aquatic plants, and carrion.

Adult turtles spend the winter hibernating in the mud. When the water warms and ice leaves the pond courtship begins. The female carefully prepares a foot-deep nest which is usually on an open, south-facing site with loose or gravelly soil. The nest may be up to 150 metres from the pond, with the turtle often having to cross over a road. The 'Turtle Crossing' signs we see occasionally are not a joke. In June or July she will lay 6-18 eggs. She covers them carefully and fills the nest with soil, camouflaging it with vegetation and debris. Her job is done and she walks away.

The baby turtles break out of their eggs in early fall. They stay in the nest until the next spring when the survivors make their way to the water. Survival rates are quite low due to freezing and predator attacks on both eggs and hatchlings. The hardy ones who do survive may in time grow to be the size of a dinner plate. Scientists estimate that Painted Turtles can live up to 40 years in the wild.

The Western Painted Turtle is a blue-listed species in BC. This status means that they are considered vulnerable to habitat loss and are at risk from human activities or natural events. It is



illegal to harass them in any way. In our area the turtles in McGuire Lake are of particular concern. This lake has been stocked with trout and is a handy spot to introduce young children to the joys of fishing. Unfortunately, this often results in turtles being snagged on fishhooks. To help protect the turtle from injury or abuse fishing should be done in the deeper parts of the lake and barbless hooks should always be used. Wild turtles should never be taken home as pets.

Dorothy Parks

Students Plant Trees on Foreshore Trail



Grade 4/5 students from **North Canoe School** celebrated May 1 with a useful piece of labour on the Raven end of the foreshore trail. Even though the trail has been raised, there is still a danger of the gravel being eroded by heavy waves during high water. Trees and shrubs planted opposite this low lying section will eventually curb the extreme wave action. Meanwhile logs or other materials are needed as a temporary measure be-

fore the high water this year.

The tree planting project, headed by Kim Fulton of Armstrong along with school principal Jeff Abbott is part of the RBC Blue Water Project, connecting students to Conservation "C2C", sponsored by the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund and Wild BC.

Tom Brighthouse



SABNES is purchasing 3 more buoys to more clearly indicate those areas off limits to boaters. These areas are important nesting sites for birds



G.Benson

Views from Peter Jannick Park May, 2012

Elected Directors

Gary Lomax, President; Geoff Benson, Treasurer; Ed Dahl; Hanne MacKay; Tony Say; Pamela Dettwiler, Mike Saul

Appointed Directors

Don Parks, **Shuswap Naturalist Society** ; Cllr. Ken Jamieson, **CSA**; Elaine Gustafson, **MOE** ; Hank Shelley, **FishNGame** ;Gale-Paule Davison,**DIA**

Non-voting Directors

Georgia McLeod, Sec
Tom Brighthouse, Advisor
Joyce Henderson, Advisor

We greatly appreciate the financial and service support from the following companies :-

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Lakeside Insurance Services
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Randy’s Cleaning Service
Salmon Arm DIA
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Shuswap Accupuncture
Shuswap Flight Centre
Shuswap Lady Striders
Stella Jones Inc
Talerico Fine Art Gallery
TD Canada Trust
Warren Bell MD
Standard Roofing Corporation
Wickett Business Services

GRANTING AGENCIES

City of Salmon Arm
Human Resources Development Canada
Salmar Community Association
Salmon Arm Rotary Club
Salmon Arm Savings and Credit Union
Shuswap Community Foundation

Annual Membership Fees *

Individual..... \$ 15
Family..... \$ 25
Sustaining Individual..... \$ 50
Sustaining Family..... \$ 100
Life Membership..... \$ 500

Corporate or Organization

1-4 Employees.... \$ 50
5-10 Employees..... \$ 100
+ 10 Employees..... \$ 150
Life Membership..... \$ 2,500

* All but \$5 is tax-deductible

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

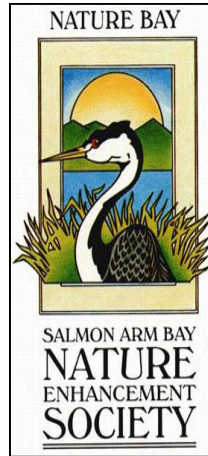
Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Amount Paid: _____ Date : _____

Nature Bay Society is a Charitable Organization.

Receipts for Income Tax purposes will be issued
SABNES, P.O. Box 27, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N2



Clockwise Above—Osprey enjoying a salmon at the wharf, **Tree Swallows** along the Foreshore Trail, **Ring-billed Gulls** nesting on Christmas Island

