

NATURE BAY NEWS

Newsletter of the Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society

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Record Number of Visitors to BNC

In **2017 SABNES** kept the Brighthouse Nature Centre open throughout a twelve week period as opposed to 5days/wk in previous years. As a direct consequence our staff recorded a total of 5,433 interactions with visitors compared to 4,278 in the previous year. We were very fortunate in being able to attract the services of four excellent individuals to person our centre. We hired **Kayla Fulton** and **Hayley Fiebelkorn** to staff the centre together on weekdays and **Ryon Ready** and **Aidan Sparks** to share the staffing at weekends. With the extra help during the week Kayla was able to organize a Summer Kids' program ([Wednesdays With the Wild](#), **WWW** for short.) Its objective was to foster an interest in the natural world, including wildlife and habitat conservation, in school aged children. To achieve this goal **WWW** reached out to local daycare providers, in addition to groups already engaged in outdoor and environmental pursuits. On Wednesdays from 10-12pm children and adults attended a **free** program led by a local expert, naturalist and/or educator. Activities included a combination of nature-related games, talks, crafts, walks and storytelling. The guest presenters planned their day, and Kayla and Hayley did any preparation needed to facilitate and support the activities. They established a partnership with the **Shuswap Outdoor Learning Foundation** (co-founders **Ceren Caner, Jeremy Ayotte, and Geoff Styles**) which proved invaluable to the initial planning. They provided advice, support and enthusiasm and also shared their contacts to approach to serve as guest presenters. **SABNES** thanks all those involved with this very successful endeavour. Presenters included **Geoff Styles, Jeremy Ayotte, Louis Thomas, Tom Brighthouse** and **Neil Brooks**. Additional thanks go to Kayla for preparing a list of all the resources used in **WWW**, including contact information of presenters, participants, daycares etc., which will be invaluable to future BNC staffers in ensuring that **WWW** is continued in future years. [Geoff Benson](#)



COAL DUST CONCERNS

On December 12, 2017 **Marijke Dake**, **SABNES** member and resident of Salmon Arm, shared her extensive research into coal dust and **CPR** coal trains to the **SABNES** Board. This is a concern of many residents in Salmon Arm and Canoe who have reported the residue covering their decks, patio furniture and boats, as well as the potential harmful effects of coal dust on health and the environment.

The 12 to 20 coal trains travelling through Salmon Arm every day are sprayed with an environmentally benign polymer surfactant, once at the coal mines in East Kootenay and again at the Tappen Re-spray Facility about 30 km west of Salmon Arm. This water/polymer spray barrier reduces coal dust and the chances of coal shifting enroute to Vancouver.

Marijke developed a petition asking that a third CPR Re-spray Facility be built **east of Salmon Arm** to reduce the amount of coal dusting **before** the coal trains travel through Salmon Arm and Canoe. She will present the petition of approximately 100 signatures to the City of Salmon Arm's **Environmental Advisory Committee** and to the **CSR**D in January 2018, along with a request for a letter of support for the third Re-spray facility. [Marijke Dake](#)

Volunteers on the Foreshore

Working clockwise from the top left:-



- A) **Ian and Arda Shields** on their own initiative restored the by-pass on the gate to Christmas Island. Way to go guys!
- B) **Sid Visser, Geoff Benson and Janet Aitken** (off or rather on camera) installed a new bench (inset), placed just before the gate to **Christmas Island**. The bench formed part of a generous donation by **Bill Overend** in memory of his father **Howard Overend**.
- C) **Doug MacKay** removes large pieces of Styrofoam that have washed ashore from old docks. It is the type that breaks down into tiny beads that can be swallowed by fish and birds, thus it is important to remove before it washes into the spring lake water.
- D) **Gary Lomax** replaces the **Eric Christmas** memorial plaque at the entrance to the boardwalk. The plaque had mysteriously "disappeared" and was found hidden in the **BNC**. **Christmas Island** is eponymously named after **Eric** who was a key player in the formation of **SABNES**.

Lodgepole Pine



Trees for the Next Generation -

Despite the challenging conditions of flood, drought, and heat in 2017, nature is regenerating along the foreshore trail. Young conifers are sprouting in several sections of the trail. **Douglas-fir** and **Lodgepole pine** seedlings are showing themselves now that the greens of summer have dissipated.

Salmon Arm is located in the Interior Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic ecozone; Douglas-fir are the dominant species along many of the mountain slopes and valley bottoms in this area.

The seedlings that we see along the trail will hopefully thrive to become the next generation of trees for decades to come.

Sarah Weaver (new Board member)

Douglas Fir



The Blessed Beavers are Back!

Though Winter has settled in on the foreshore, there is still lots of activity to observe as you enjoy the trail. There have been two beavers sighted at the lodge pond recently. Their need for food from the cottonwood bark continues through the winter. It is often noticed that when a beaver takes a tree down, four or five more begin to sprout up, thereby ensuring the continued growth in the habitat. **Hanne MacKay**



Nest Boxes Along the Foreshore Trail

Di Wittner (Wildlife Biologist and new Board member)

In an effort to enhance bird habitat on the foreshore, SABNES arranged for a number of new nest boxes to be erected in the spring of 2017 between Peter Jannink Park and Raven subdivision. Target birds are ducks and swallows, but other cavity nesting species such as owls, woodpeckers, chickadees and bluebirds may also occupy them.

In October, the SABNES coordinator began a monitoring project that will see these boxes and all pre-existing ones properly maintained and tabulated. Each box has a unique number. Its condition and contents are recorded to determine trends related to nesting success and mortality, location, height and aspect. Over the next few years, SABNES plans to greatly increase the number of nest boxes. We invite interested woodworking hobbyists to make a box or two every year with the goal of doubling or tripling the existing number. Also needed are new posts to replace those that have deteriorated. Square posts are best (4x4s) but not essential. To this end, several members of the Shuswap Naturalist's Club and SABNES have offered to help with construction. A good nest box has several features that are essential to the survival of fledglings, so we encourage builders to be picky about selecting plans and construction. Many easily acquired plans found on the Internet are not properly designed and can, in fact, be harmful to nestlings. A well designed box facilitates the removal of used nesting material at the end of each breeding season to rid the box of parasites, bacteria and wasps. Contact me and I will send you plans for a simple but effective bird-box.

Maintenance of an increasing number of boxes takes considerable effort. **SABNES** invites interested individuals and families to adopt a number of boxes to maintain. If data collection is more of interest, that's another way to become involved in this exciting project. Please contact me at sabnes.org@gmail.com and put **Nest Boxes** in the title line. Thanks for your participation and support!



Mew Gull

Birding in the Bay 2017

The early wet spring and high water followed by the long dry summer created a few challenges for birding in the Bay area this year. Regardless, a respectable **209** species have been reported on www.ebird.ca to the end of November.



Herring Gull

The **Western Grebes** had another good year. They started to arrive mid-April and were actively looking for nesting sites by mid-May. Before the end of May they were nesting in several locations around the Bay despite the high water. By the end of summer there were approximately **150** pairs with up to **200** young. Among them there was at least one **Clark's Grebe** mating with a western grebe.



Grebes

Clark's

Western

There were two active **Osprey** nests near the wharf, one at the R/R crossing and the second adjacent to the spit by the wharf. They eventually successfully raised five young. However, several of the osprey nesting sites went vacant this year. Could this have been because there were four **Bald Eagle** pairs nesting around the Bay? Daily, the ospreys were harassed by the eagles to release the fish they had caught.

Christmas Island was again busy with **Ring-billed Gulls**. There were about 500 pairs nesting, although the early high water washed away a number of the nests, many of the gulls were able to lay again before the end of **June**. Among the **Ring-bills** there were at least one pair of **Mew Gulls** and a pair of **Herring Gulls**.



Ross's Goose

Every year we get thousands of **Canada Geese** passing through both in the spring and in the fall. Often with them are **Snow Geese** and this year was no exception. On April 23 there was also a much rarer and smaller **Ross's Goose**, feeding in front of Peter Jannink Nature Park. During the week of June 13 a **Green Heron** showed up. It was first sighted near the mouth of the River, and



Green Heron

was also seen around the spit beside the wharf. This species is common on the Coast but has never been reported here before. This brings the total number of species reported in the Salmon Arm Bay area to **282**. Two other species, seen here only rarely, were **9 Marbled Godwits** on **July 15** resting on a log beside the pond just to the east of the Nature Park. Previously **5** had been seen near Christmas Island in **August 2002**. The second rare species was a **Whimbrel** flying over the breakwater at the end of the wharf on **July 30**. It was seen in the same place last year and previously near Christmas Island in **September 2002**. Over this



Marbled Godwit

year, 36 species of water fowl have been seen in the Bay. This is about average. There were also 26 species of shore birds, which also is about average. Because of the early high water in the spring, all the migratory shorebirds were seen in the fall. Near the wharf in **July** up to 6 young **Franklin's Gulls** were seen among the **Ring-billed Gulls**. Also near the wharf, a **Sabine's Gull** or two could be spotted, perhaps mixed in



Franklin's Gull



Whimbrel

with **Bonaparte Gulls**. Fewer smaller birds were seen this year. For example, the **Robin** population seems to be much lower than usual. Perhaps they came and left earlier than usual because of warmer weather. **The destruction of trees and the continued development along the waterfront certainly is eliminating habitat.** I am particularly piqued about the unsightly disaster just to the west of the **Prestige Inn**, but perhaps new buildings are easier on the eyes than birds!!! At least the **Redpolls** are higher in number this fall.

Ted Hillary

SABNES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected Directors

Janet Aitken, President.
Geoff Benson, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor.
Mona Broad, Hanne MacKay, Gale-Paule Davison, Gary Lomax, Sid Visser, Sarah Weaver, Di Wittner.

Appointed Directors

Councillor. Ken Jamieson, **City of Salmon Arm; FishNGame** and **Downtown Improvement Association**; No appointed reps

Non-voting Directors

Georgia McLeod, Secretary
Tom Brighthouse, Advisor

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

LIFE CORPORATE MEMBERS

Askews Foods
Royal Bank

CORPORATE MEMBERS

Browne Johnson Land Surveyors
Dr Lyle A Martin
Gentech Engineering Inc.
Hub International Barton Insurance
Dr Chris Parfitt
Bowers Funeral Services Ltd.
Shuswap Acupuncture and Laser Therapy Clinic
Petro Car Wash

GRANTING AGENCIES

City of Salmon Arm
Salmon Arm Rotary Club
Shuswap Community Foundation
Habitat Conservation Trust Fund

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

(If you have been a member, we only need you to enter new information)

Name: _____

Address : _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Amount Paid : _____ Date : _____

I would like to give **SABNES** my time to help staff the nature centre (June, July and August)

Please check

to help with trail clean-up and maintenance

Nature Bay Society (**SABNES**) is a Charitable Organization.
Most of the Annual Fee is tax-deductible.
Receipts for Income Tax purposes will be issued.

Nature Bay Society, P.O. Box 27, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N2

website : www.sabnes.org
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Shirley Bigelow DeKolver



Trumpeter Swans on White Lake. Taken on Dec14,2017

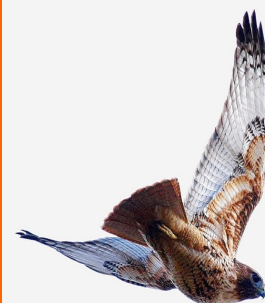
Funding for our Nature Centre

This year the Nature Centre operating expenses were **\$13,900**, nearly double those of last year. We are grateful for grants of **\$3,500** from the **City of Salmon Arm** and **\$3,803** from the **Fed. Govt. Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ)** Program, which together accounted for slightly more than half of the expenses. **The remainder was paid from SABNES funds generated from memberships and generous donations. Please help us increase our memberships by sharing your newsletter with friends and relations.**

A Way of making an Everlasting contribution to SABNES

As the year is draws to a close, please consider making a donation to **SABNES** via the **Shuswap Community Foundation (c/o SABNES Endowment Fund)**. Your donation will remain in perpetuity in the fund, and generate income which will be used to help keep the **SABNES** lands in their natural state for the foreseeable future. **Please** send your cheque payable to **Shuswap Community Foundation, PO Box #624, 450 Lakeshore Drive, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N7**. Please mark on your cheque that you wish to place the donation in the **SABNES ENDOWMENT FUND**. The **Shuswap Community Foundation** will send you a tax receipt.

Red-tailed Hawk



Clive Bryson