

NATURE BAY



SALMON ARM BAY
NATURE
ENHANCEMENT
SOCIETY

NATURE BAY NEWS

Newsletter of the Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society

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

Email: sabnes.org@gmail.com

Website: www.sabnes.org

Acknowledgement: Nature Bay lies on the unceded and traditional territory of the Secwepemc peoples

Summer 2022

SABNES AGM

Tuesday July 5th at 7.00pm

Marine Peace Park

Outdoors- Near the Gazebo Stage

Show you Care - Bring your Chair

We will have a brief business meeting and a time to chat after

President's Message

It has been another busy SABNES spring. On June 4, the Shuswap Community Foundation held "A Gathering for Gratitude" event in Marine Park. **Mayor Harrison** helped to open the ceremony by honouring our very own **Tom Brighthouse**, the instigator of the Foundation in Salmon Arm. Since 2011, SABNES has received over \$20,000 in grants. We are grateful for the many volunteer hours and collective expertise that contributes to the success of both the Foundation and SABNES.

Over the years, the City of Salmon Arm has supported SABNES with grants totaling \$42,800, including this year's \$3400 "Grants in Aid" to help fund our Interpretive Program at the Brighthouse Nature Center. Because the Federal government did not award us their usual Canada Summer Jobs grant, the City's support made possible the continuation of our programs. Thank you!"

In May, Geoff Benson, our hard-working Treasurer and Newsletter editor, and I showcased SABNES at a Shuswap Rotary Club meeting. Thanks to them, we secured \$10,000 towards our Bird Viewing Platform. Since 2011, they have also contributed many volunteer hours and over \$4700.

At Haney House before 80 guests of "Shuswap Women Who Wine", I promoted our fund-raising campaign for building a Bird Viewing Platform along the Foreshore Trail. This organization added over \$630 to our fund. We hope to complete the Platform later this summer. In the meantime, follow its progress the next time you walk the Trail. Melissa LaRiviere designed the signs you will see on three sides of the BNC. Both Melissa and Ethan Quilty are returning student interpreters. Melissa's hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Ethan, who produced videos for us two years ago, works Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10:00 to 4:00. Stop by to visit them at the BNC, adjacent to the Wharf parking lot, 750B Marine Park Drive. The Centre is closed on Tuesdays.

Once again, thanks for your generous donations and continued membership. Let this newsletter be a reminder to renew. We rely on your support for our day-to-day operation of the Brighthouse Nature Centre and the various projects we undertake to protect wildlife in The Bay.

Janet Aitken

Western Grebes in the Bay

Calm water, excellent lighting and zero boats made for perfect counting conditions at dawn on May 24th. Many grebes were gathered around reedy shorelines along the south end of the bay and in Tappen Bay, presumably in preparation for nest building.

A total of 315 adults were counted. One notable trend has emerged over the past six years: there are more and more grebes found in Tappen Bay. Several factors may be contributing to this, such as tall grassy habitat along the shore and a smaller amount of



human/boat activity. However, those conditions have been relatively consistent through the years so there must be other factors at play as well.

You may recall last year's numbers were a bit alarming – just 198 adults returning - so it's encouraging to see this year's numbers exceed 300. The count in May of 2020 was 345 adults which turned out to be a banner year so we're hopeful 2022 will be just as successful. However, recent flooding may have drowned a significant number of eggs. We are expecting the first babies any day. Can't wait to see them , Di Wittner.

With thanks to **Fern Fennell** for the excellent Western Grebe photos

SABNES welcomes back **Melissa LaRiviere** and **Ethan Quilty**, who will be staffing the **Brighthouse Nature Centre** this Summer. Here's a short paragraph from each of these talented individuals:-

"My name is Melissa LaRiviere, and this is my second summer as a nature interpreter with SABNES. So far this year I have installed the botanical tree markers I designed last year, which correspond with the tree I.D. poster I made at the front of the building. It seems that people enjoy it so far, so I am thrilled! Also, the animal college opposite the public washrooms was mounted and is hopefully attracting more people to the front of the BNC. Currently I am designing a bird identification guide, as well as preparing for some large visiting groups, and attempting to design a regular Wednesday program for kids. In September I will be starting a post-degree teaching program, as I plan to become an elementary school teacher! Thanks again SABNES for this great opportunity. I am constantly astounded at and inspired by everyone's hard work and dedication to this society and all the good work it does! "

"Hi all, my name is **Ethan Quilty** and I am very excited to be back at the Nature Centre this year! This will be my third summer as a Student Interpreter. I'm currently in the process of taking some time off to travel and work before returning to Victoria to start Grad School next January. This summer, I'm really excited to have some great conversations with visitors and learn more about our community's efforts to protect the bay. I am hoping to start a booth at the Saturday farmer's market on Ross Street. In addition, I am really interested in incorporating some traditional local knowledge into my work. As always, I am very thankful to be home and living, learning, and playing in the traditional territories of the Secwepemc Nation.

Thanks very much, and see you soon!"

SABNES is on FACEBOOK Login to Facebook and then search: [salmon arm bay nature enhancement society](#)

SPLENDOUR IN THE GRASS

Last year's arid Spring and Summer turned Shuswap Lake's marsh into a vast prairie grassland, complete with wildflowers, flowering shrubs and voles. This year's cool wet days have restored the marshland to near normal and, along with that, have replaced the dehydrated windblown grasses of yesteryear with a sea of emerald ribbons swaying over a freshwater floor. Because the rising lake level has brought the abundant birdlife closer to shore, naturalists, dog walkers and other visitors from near and far have joined Salmon Arm's keen birders to stroll along the popular public walkway at the rear of the Prestige.

The first birds to stop viewers in their tracks are the yellow-headed blackbirds. Non-birders, having adopted the walkway as a highlight of their exercise route, are soon converted. The male yellow-heads, for example, have learned that if they silently perch on the walkway's bright railings then they will earn the undivided attention of numerous homo sapiens. The latter pause for a careful look and whisper compliments. These gregarious birds wait patiently, even when groups of visitors approach from both directions! Bikes, scooters, electric carts, rambunctious children and dogs are tolerated. To prove their dedication, people give the cunning blackbird a wide berth. First-timers take photos or bring cameras the next time. They make eye contact



Not even a mangy crow fazes this resilient yellow-headed blackbird

with approaching walkers and point to the attraction. As with red-winged female blackbirds, the yellow-headed females arrive later to give their prospective mates time to build a choice of nests amongst the bulrushes. After all, if the male redwings prefer to collect a harem of up to 15 females, why shouldn't the females play hard to get!

They say one shouldn't dwell upon first impressions. Unless we take time to observe homely American Coots, they'd get little attention from the public. After watching them tend their nests day after day, however, we can only admire them. Whilst one Coot sits on the nest snuggled amongst the marsh grasses, the partner makes endless trips to shore to collect the remains of last year's vegetation for nest rein-

Two American Coots working hard to keep their nest afloat



forcement. If the nest mender meets an overly curious Canada Goose *en route*, it leaps at it with wings flapping. The enemy may be 5 or 8 times the mass of the defender, but the Coot always wins. Sometimes, the geese form a crescent around the Coots' nest to observe, but thus far not to attack. One morning the nest was displaced during the night by a mysterious intruder, but the Coots worked all the next day to restore the nest to its unkempt normalcy.

Fortunately, most of the grasses and reeds have remained taller than the water is deep which offers some stability and cover. Come watch these species and many others that have adapted to changes in the marsh as well as to their observant fans.

Judith Benson

SABNES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected Directors

Janet Aitken, President.
Geoff Benson, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor.
Mona Broad, Hanne MacKay, Carla Kirkpatrick,
Sid Visser, Debbie Noakes, Di Wittner, Mitch
Olineck, Don Derby, Jon Mills

Appointed Directors

Councillor Sylvia Lindgren, **City of Salmon Arm;**
Fish and Game Club and **Downtown Salmon**
Arm Improvement Association: No appointed
representatives.

Non-voting Directors

Georgia McLeod, Secretary
Tom Brighthouse, Advisor

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

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

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

NEW: Pay your SABNES membership or make your donation by e-mail transfer to :

sabnes.org@gmail.com

Membership Form (for you to renew if necessary)

(If you **have been a member**, we only need you to enter **new** information
If you are **sending your subscription by e-transfer**, please separately e-mail us
the contact information asked for below)

Name: _____

Address : _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Amount Paid : _____ Date : _____

Please Check

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

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

Email: sabnes.org@gmail.com

Membership Form (for you to send to a friend family member or colleague)

(If you are **sending your subscription by e-transfer**, please separately
e-mail us the contact information asked for below)

Name: _____

Address : _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Amount Paid : _____ Date : _____

Please Check

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A Way of making an Everlasting contribution to SABNES

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