

Foreshore Map

featuring

Grebes on the Bay

From Courtship



To Fledging

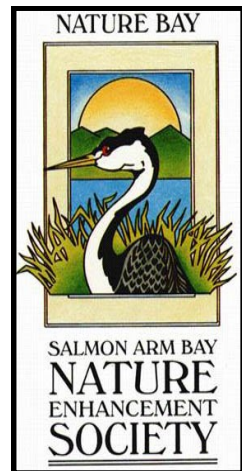


And how YOU can help them survive

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website : www.sabnes.org

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



YOU can help by :-

Not operating any kind of watercraft in areas designated (sensitive nesting habitat between March and September inclusive).

Keeping to marked trails and complying with the posted dog restrictions between the west and east wildlife sanctuary gates.

Thank you

SABNES Board

Map Legend

- Sections of trail designated as wildlife sanctuary **No dogs allowed**
- Foreshore trail on which leashed dogs **are** allowed, **except between April 15 and June 15**
Max leash length is 2 metres
- Frank and Doris Kime Trail
No Dogs Please
- Route to Peter Jannink Nature Park
- Walk around McGuire Lake
- Osprey Nests
- Buoys



Walk from Brighthouse Nature Centre to West gate of Foreshore Trail via elevated walkway

Foreshore Trail has viewing benches and picnic tables

Commonly Seen Birds

- Western Grebe #1
- Red-winged Blackbird #2
- Yellow-headed Blackbird #3
- Osprey #4
- Great Blue Heron #5
- Tree Swallow #6
- Ring-billed Gull #7

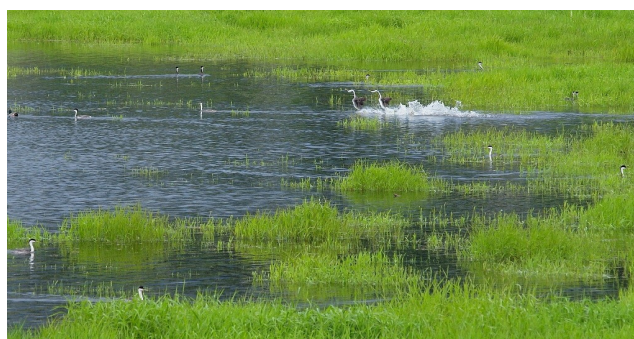


The colonies of Grebes which visit the Shuswap are predominantly **Western Grebes** and their much rarer cousins of the same genus, the **Clark's Grebe**. More than half of **Western Grebes** hatched in British Columbia begin their life here in Salmon Arm Bay. Only three colonies live in BC. The other two, in the north arm of Okanagan Lake and in the Creston Wildlife Reserve, are quite a bit smaller. **Two further colonies, at Swan Lake and Williams Lake, no longer exist because of human disturbance.** The Grebes that nest in Salmon arm spend their winters in saltwater coves along BC's coast. In April they return to this part of Shuswap Lake to raise a family. This location is ideal because the lake is shallow, there is abundant grass for nesting, and food is plentiful (small fish, aquatic insects, and worms).

Grebes have an unusual courtship ritual. Side by side with wings stretched out and necks erect, a pair appears to run together along the surface of the water. This is often observed in April and May from Salmon Arm Wharf or the shoreline nearby. They bring one another gifts of fish

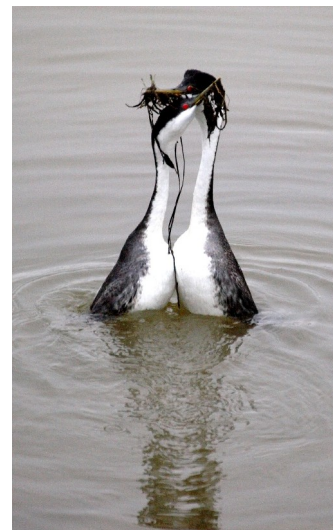
and wildlife.

The couple prepares for a family by building a floating nest and attaching it to grasses. It has to be large enough to hold an adult bird and strong enough to resist an occasional spring storm and the gradual but relentless rise in the water level of the lake. The female lays an egg every day or two until the clutch is complete. The parents take turns sitting on the two to five eggs that rest in the hollow in the centre of the nest. **This is an extremely sensitive time for the**



birds. Unguarded eggs may be eaten by gulls or crows; storms or boat wakes may capsize the nest; kayakers and canoes can cause the couple to abandon their eggs. In each of these cases, the birds would have to build a new nest, usually in a different part of the bay. This means the young will have less time to grow strong before migration.

The chicks begin to break out of their shells after about 23 days. As soon as each one hatches it crawls from under the incubating parent. Then, with its down still wet from the egg, it climbs upon its parent's back. Once all of the chicks are safely cradled between the



wings of one parent, the whole family swims off, leaving the nest forever.

For the next few weeks, the chicks spend most of their time cradled on the back of one parent or the other. Usually one parent carries the chicks while the

other dives for food to feed itself and the little ones. When the parents are ready to trade jobs, the young get a chance to practice swimming. The parent carrying the young rears up out of the water, beating its wings until it is almost standing. The chicks slide down into the water. The other parent swims close to the paddling chicks and holds one leg straight and stiff at the surface of the water. One by one, the chicks climb up the leg out of the cold water and onto the warmth of their parent's back. As the

chicks grow, they spend more time in the water, swimming on their own. The parents continue to feed them for about eight weeks. **During this time it is critical for them to have a safe, quiet environment. If disturbed, chicks can get separated from their family. If that happens, they may starve or fall victim to predators.** After about ten weeks, the chicks will have grown enough flight feathers to fly short distances. By fall they will be able to join their parents and other grebes in the colony to migrate to their

feeding grounds on the West coast.

Come and see the birds



To Learn more about Grebes and other foreshore wildlife, visit the **Brighthouse Nature Centre**, open June through August. See videos of Grebes and other birds. View displays and learn about the latest bird sightings in the bay region.

Thanks to :-

Clive Bryson for the superb Grebe photos

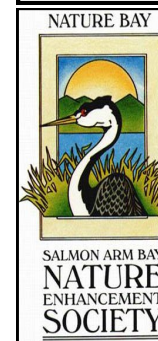
(Check out Clive's website at <http://clivebryson.pixu.com/gallery>)

Pamela Dettwiler for the informative Grebe article

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