



President's Message

by Alexandra Mancini

In this International Year of Biodiversity, our Society has taken its environmental stewardship efforts to a new level, working to influence policy development in the District of West Vancouver. On April 26, we made a presentation to Council with some specific requests: the development of policies for the control of invasive species in parks; greater protection of trees in parks; a plan to maintain or re-establish wildlife corridors linking green spaces; increased funding for the Parks department for maintenance and restoration of parks; and an immediate trial of Japanese knotweed eradication using herbicide stem injection. Council supported the request for a Japanese knotweed pilot project. The other items are to be addressed by the newly formed Parks Master Plan Working Group.

The proposal for eradication of all seven infestations of knotweed in Caulfield Park was estimated at \$12,500. As this was an unbudgeted item for 2010, the matter came before Council again on July 26 and Parks requested that this project be considered for the 2011 budget. As the Society felt the urgency to begin work this year, we offered a donation of \$3000 to be used immediately. This was well received and two patches of knotweed were treated on August 20. So far, the effect is encouraging, but the real evidence will come next spring when we watch for new growth.

At our Annual General Meeting on May 29, we welcomed Areta Sanders to our Board as the new Secretary and extended our sincerest thanks to Sylvia Mathers for her many years as a Board member. Sylvia has kindly agreed to remain active in our Society's events and be our chief steward and neighbourhood liaison for Klootchman Park. We would like to thank our other chief stewards for their continued dedication and leadership, specifically Terry Joyce (Caulfield Park), Richard Beard (North Piccadilly Park), and the 1st West Vancouver Scouts led by Commissioner Chris Nemeth (Trails Park). As our activities in the six-park network increase, having these chief stewards in place becomes essential.

Also of note, we have had phenomenal support from youth groups this year including new volunteers from Sutherland Church and Katimavik, who removed a mass of invasive plants from North Piccadilly Park (see page 2). This fall we have a significant restoration planned for Caulfield Park, an ivy pull in Lighthouse Park, and two educational talks.

This month our Society partnered with the Ferry Building Gallery to mount an art exhibition "Inspired by Nature: Parks of West Vancouver". We wanted to raise awareness of the natural values of parks in the community. In connection with the show, Dr. Jeff Marliave spoke on rockfish and glass sponges, and Dr. Keith Wade spoke on forest biodiversity. Many thanks to all the artists for their generosity, Lyn Noble for organizing the event, and the Gallery staff and docents. The opening event attracted over 300 guests and received excellent coverage in local newspapers.



Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
North Piccadilly Park	2
Knotweeds	3
Why I Love to Bird	4
Members' Activities	5-6

Lighthouse Park Preservation Society is a membership based non-profit organization formed in 1998 to:

- protect the natural integrity of Lighthouse Park;
- promote public awareness of its natural features;
- and support the development of biological zones near the park boundaries.

President - Alexandra Mancini

Vice-President - Jeff Marliave

Past President - Marja de Jong

Westman

Secretary - Areta Sanders

Treasurer - May Loudon

Membership - Aline Brown

Directors

Elsbeth Bradbury

Ed Donaldson

Keith Wade

Francis Caulfeild came as an English tourist to the small cove that later bore his name. He was enchanted by the beauty of the place and purchased the entire District Lot with a view to building a home there as well as developing an ideal village. He wanted to create a residential area in harmony with its natural environment. He gave a large waterfront strip - now Caulfeild Park - to the District. He also reserved a nearby patch of forest - now North Piccadilly Park - as parkland.

In 1914, the Pacific Great Eastern railway began to run along the southern boundary of Piccadilly Park. Clovelly Walk and North Piccadilly Road split the forest into three portions, but apart from this construction, the forest with its small creek and ancient Douglas-firs lay relatively undisturbed. Eagles nested in a treetop. Salal, mahonia, sword ferns and huckleberry formed a dense under-storey.

In 1977, George Tocher felled one of the last old growth Douglas-firs in the park and carved a section into a canoe, the Orenda. The following year, with Gerhard Kiesel, he sailed the craft from Dundarave pier to Hawaii. A slice from the same log was taken to Lighthouse Park where it was displayed to demonstrate the tree's age when cut, 500 years. The slice, known fondly as the tree cookie, still stands beside Beacon Trail. The slowly rotting base of the tree remains in North Piccadilly Park as a testament to lost giants.



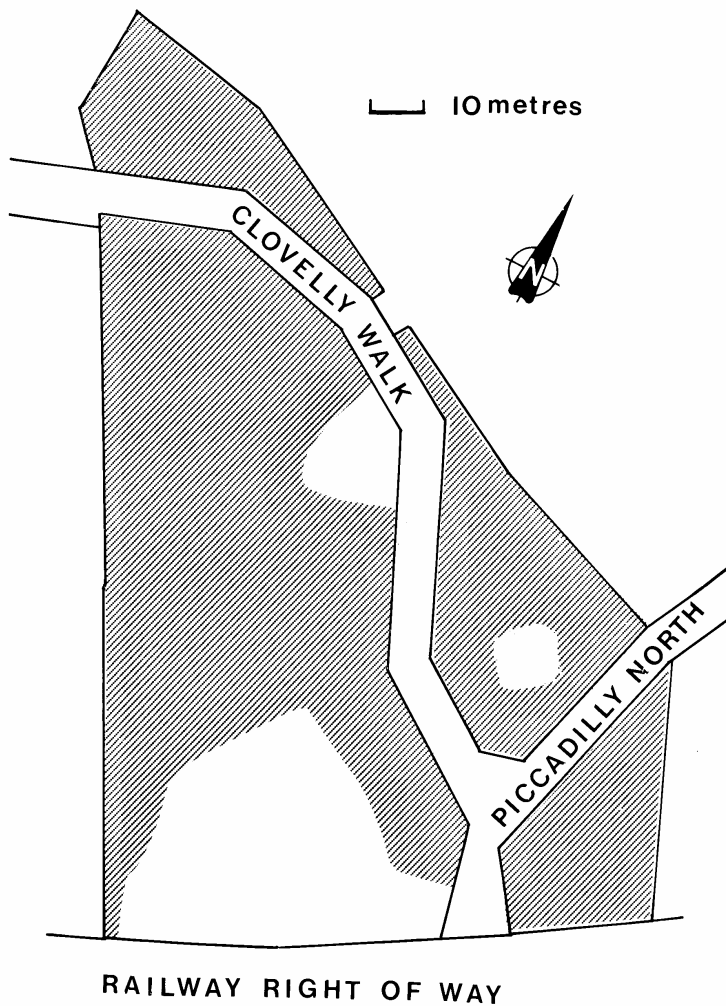
Katimavik volunteers at Piccadilly Park, July, 2010 Photo: Richard Beard

Over the decades, Clovelly walk and North Piccadilly Road became busier as the neighbourhood developed. From the roadways, the forest continued to appear calm and green with a vestige of remaining old growth. In reality, however, an army of invaders was at work. By 2006, when the Lighthouse Park Preservation Society adopted North Piccadilly Park as part of its Six-Park Network, the forest was a mess. English ivy had choked out the native plants in large areas and had a stranglehold on many trees. Well-armed Himalayan blackberry had taken over in open patches while knotweed and Himalayan balsam had formed a thicket by the railroad. Small-flowered touch-me-not was thriving in damp spots, and the innocuous looking variegated leaf of lamium had spread like green lava along the roadsides from one carelessly dumped hanging basket. Periwinkle had also spread from neighbouring gardens as had laurel and holly.

In 2009 with the support of the District and the help of some neighbours, the Society held two ivy pulls. Our priority was to clear off the trees in order to reduce future re-seeding, but we also cleared part of the smothering ground cover. This year, Richard Beard volunteered to become our chief steward for the park. With another volunteer, Saba Farmand, he surveyed the vegetation and mapped the invasive species.

In July and August two youth groups (sponsored by Katimavik and Sutherland Church) spent over 200 volunteer hours pulling ivy and digging lamium over an area of 1,000 square meters. Another 6,000 square metres remains to be cleared and some of this area will require subsequent replanting. Society volunteers co-ordinated these events with Parks and worked hard alongside the young adults. The Society also provided instruction, which included a guided tour in Lighthouse Park led by Elaine Graham.

Our aim is to restore the six parks and to enhance connections between them and other natural areas. In this way we hope to maintain and promote their biodiversity; to ensure, for instance, that Piccadilly Park can still be graced by such birds as the Swainson's thrush, which migrates from Brazil to perform one of the summer's characteristic songs. It will take years to rectify the neglect of the past decades, but we have made an encouraging start and are grateful to all who have helped.



MAP of NORTH PICCADILLY PARK

The shaded areas indicate coverage in 2009 of invasive species including:

English Ivy, *Hedera helix*

Himalayan knotweed, *Polygonum polystachyum*

Cherry laurel, *Prunus laurocerasus*

Lamium, *Lamium galeobdolon*

Periwinkle, *Vinca minor*

Himalayan blackberry, *Rubus armeniacus*

Himalayan balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera*

Small Flowered Touch-Me-Not, *Impatiens parviflora*

English Holly, *Ilex aquifolium*

KNOTWEEDS - DID YOU KNOW?

- Knotweed roots (rhizomes) may extend up to twenty metres from a parent plant and grow to a depth of three metres.
- Root and stem fragments as small as one centimetre can form new colonies.
- Stem sections submerged in water can produce viable plants within six days.
- Four types of knotweed now occur in B.C. All are invasive. Some, such as the hybrids that grow in West Vancouver, produce viable seed.
- Because knotweed will grow through asphalt and damage paving, footings or drains, it can affect land values.
- Colonies choke out all other plants to form monocultures of little value to native insects, birds or mammals.
- In Britain, some knotweed colonies now exceed 1 km in size, and control efforts cost more than 240 million dollars annually.
- In B.C., Surrey's 2009 operating budget for the control of invasive species, including knotweed, was \$305,000 in addition to a capital project budget of approximately \$50,000 and a separate budget for planting rehabilitation.
- West Vancouver currently has no budget for the control of invasive species.



WHY I LOVE TO BIRD

by Suann Hosie

4



Photo from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lazuli_Bunting

(Even if the newsletter was printed in color, it is very difficult to reproduce the brilliance of the blue in the live bird – ya hadda been there!)

Sunday, June 6, 2010 found three of our stalwart Lighthouse Park bird counters afoot on the trails. It was an overcast day, temperature between 13-15 degrees. We reached Point Atkinson by about 10:00 a.m. Our small group had enjoyed seeing and hearing a great variety of birds that morning, some in migration (8 black swifts flying below the overcast near Shore Pine Point) and many engaging in courting and nesting activities.

The flute-like song of the Swainson's thrush was particularly poignant that day because these long-distance migrants had just arrived in late May after their journey from Middle and South America. Listening to birds - really listening is one of the joys of birding. Identifying birds by sight or sound is more than a sport; it is a link to the natural world which can be enjoyed at many levels and in virtually any location. One does not have to identify the exact bird species; it is enough to recognize the unique characteristics of each one - its behavior, eating habits and its preference for habitat. But let's get back to Point Atkinson...

I heard an unfamiliar song: a sweet, high-pitched warble, very insistent. Thank goodness for the bird's persistence because Areta located him as he sang from scrubby bushes not far from the rocky south-facing shore. All of us then gazed at the small bird with the knock-out blue head and shoulders. He glowed like Lapis Lazuli, the gem for which he is named. But he wasn't supposed to be on a rocky seacoast! It took a while for us to grasp the fact that we were probably seeing a new bird for Lighthouse Park!

The little fellow was a bit off course - Lazuli buntings head for drier, more interior habitat. But they are known to forage and nest low to the ground. This individual was probably refueling before he reached more favorable breeding grounds. They usually breed in the interior but have been known to nest occasionally as close as Pemberton and even Coquitlam. Their BC spring arrival dates are clustered around the first week in May, which fits nicely with our sighting.

No matter the season, no matter the reason, there is much to enjoy while birding. No previous birding experience is necessary for those who want to join our monthly birding forays. The participants always bring some special abilities; we botanize as well as bird, thanks to Ed. We delight in Thibault's diverse knowledge about species and relationships of other members of the animal kingdom. (We have sighted river otters at Shore Pine Point!). Hugh always adds wisdom about diverse aspects of the natural world while recording details of the count. Elaine keeps us up to date on how well the efforts of LPPS volunteers are succeeding in keeping the park in as much of a natural state as possible.

For all the LPPS members reading the newsletter, please consider joining the bird count or encouraging a friend to tag along. I usually bring an extra binocular. The pace is comfortable and the company unparalleled!

Why do I bird? I bird for moments such as the encounter with the Lazuli bunting - another of the many gems which are set in my memory of 35 years of birding.

EDUCATIONAL TALKS & WALKS



"Chicken of the Woods" *Laetiporus conifericola* Photo: Rosemary Taylor

**"The Fishes remain the same while
the World around them changes"**

with

Andy Lamb

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27th, 2010

7-9 p.m.

West Vancouver Memorial Library,
Welsh Hall West

Andy Lamb is a scuba diver who has worked as the chief collector/aquarist for the Vancouver Aquarium, and a fish culturist for the Dept. of Fishers & Oceans. The co-author of two books on West Coast fishes, Andy will talk about the fish species of the Pacific Northwest, their endurance in the face of a changing world, and our relationships with them.

Mushroom Walk

with

Terry Taylor

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17th, 2010

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Lighthouse Park

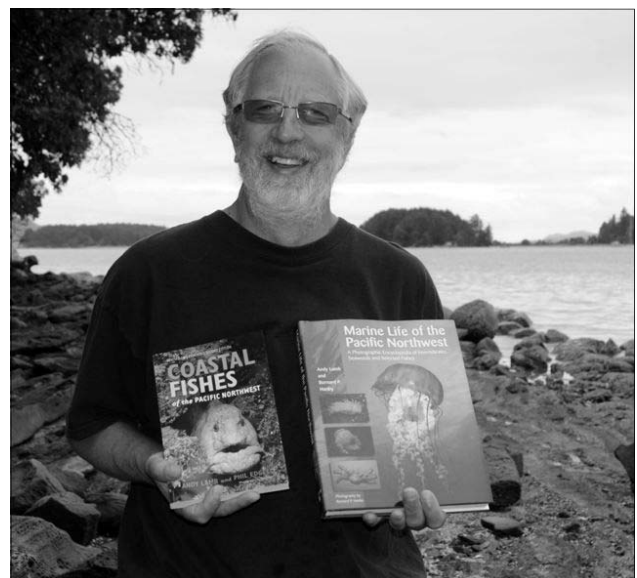
Terry Taylor is highly respected for his extensive knowledge of local ecology, which he enjoys sharing on guided walks. If you would like to learn more about the identification of mushrooms and the role of fungi in old-growth forests, meet Terry at the upper kiosk in the parking lot for an informative walk along the trails of Lighthouse Park.

SUNDAYS 2-4 p.m.

PHYL MUNDAY NATURE HUT

If you would enjoy greeting visitors from across Canada and abroad, volunteer to host the Nature Room on a Sunday afternoon. You will learn more about Lighthouse Park's natural & human history.

Contact May at 604-926-3174



RESTORATION

Saturday, October 16th - 9:00 a.m.

We shall be planting native shrubs and trees in Caulfeild Park, in the location of the former Pilot House garden. This area has been partially cleared of invasive species by volunteers over the past year, and we are now ready to begin restoring it to its natural West Coast habitat. Meet at the anchor on Pilot House Road.

Please wear old clothes and work gloves, and bring along clippers, and wheelbarrow if possible.



Volunteers clearing ivy from Caulfeild Park, March 2010

INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL

IVY PULL

Saturday, October 2nd 9:00 a.m.- Noon

Lighthouse Park

Wear old clothes and work gloves. Meet at the upper kiosk in the parking lot of Lighthouse Park. For more information call Alexandra at 604-922-1485.



Ivy & laural removed by volunteers from Piccadilly Park, Sept. 2009

MONTHLY BIRD COUNTS

Meet at the upper kiosk in the parking lot on the

first Sunday of every month -

October 3rd, November 7th, Dec. 5th, 2010 and

January 2nd, February 8th, 2011 - 9:00 a.m.

Contact Suann Hosie at 604-926-9094 if you would like to participate.

NEW OR RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM



Date.....New Member.....Renewal.....

Renewal fees are due at the Society's year-end, May 31, for the following twelve months.

Name.....

Address.....City.....

Postal Code.....Phone.....Email.....

(*Renewing members please fill in any change of contact information.)

Individual \$15.00 yearly _____ or 3 years at \$40.00 _____

Senior (60+ yrs) \$10.00 yearly _____ or 3 years at \$25.00 _____

Family \$25.00 yearly _____ or 3 years at \$65.00 _____

(Number of individuals in family _____)

Donation, tax deductible \$ _____ (Canada Rev NEW OR RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

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