



# LIGHTHOUSE PARK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Fall, 2026

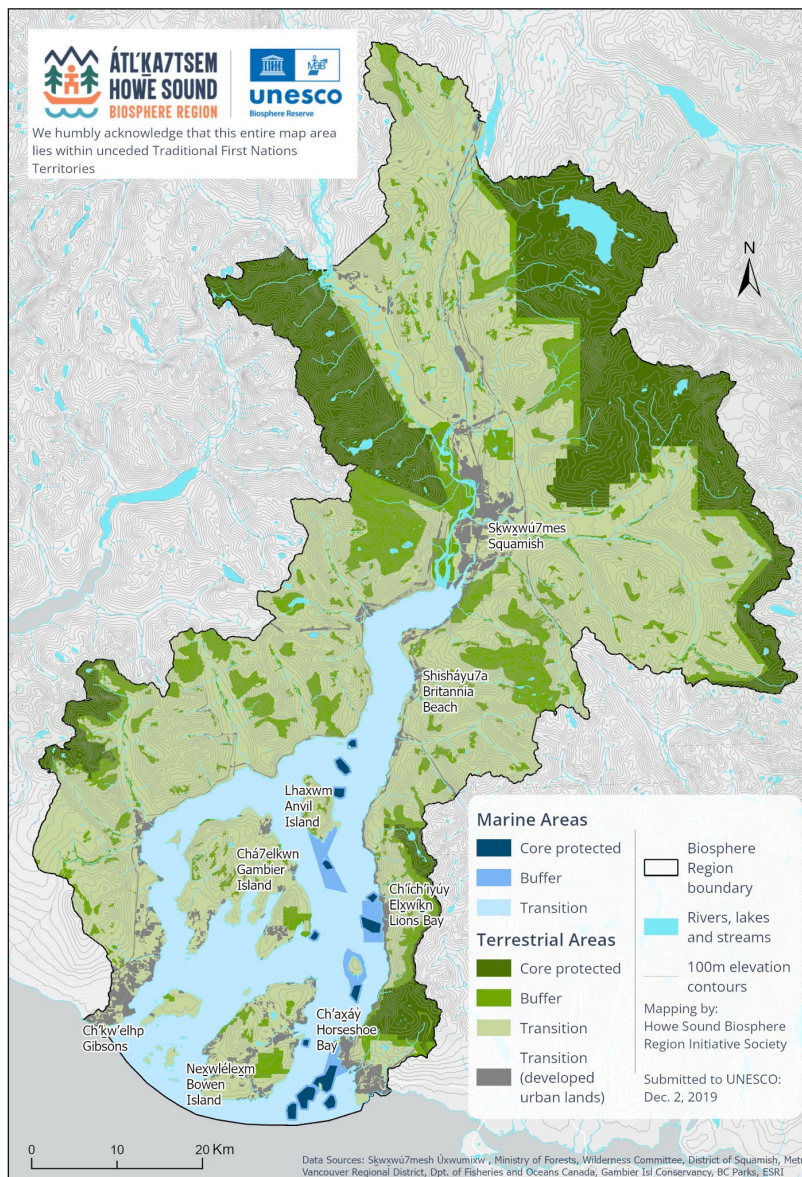
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## CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF THE ÁTL'KA7TSEM / HOWE SOUND UNESCO BIOSPHERE REGION

By Ruth Simons, D. Litt.

In 2026, we celebrate the fifth anniversary of UNESCO's designation of the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region. If you're new to the biosphere and wondering where Lighthouse Park fits in, here's a quick introduction.

Átl'ka7tsem, the Squamish Nation word meaning "paddling into the inlet," is one of the names the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) use for Howe Sound. The biosphere spans



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### About us:

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

### Directors

President – Alexandra Mancini  
Vice President & Secretary – Areta Sanders  
Treasurer – Jane Srivastava  
Other Directors  
David Broughton  
Daphne Hales  
Sally McDermott

### Membership

Membership – Lynn Nordman

### Newsletter

Elspeth Bradbury  
Jennifer McQueen  
Areta Sanders



approximately 2,000 square kilometres of watershed, from Cypress Creek in West Vancouver to Black Tusk and west to Langdale Creek on the Sunshine Coast - from mountain peaks to the ocean floor. It is Canada's 19th UNESCO Biosphere Region and British Columbia's third.

UNESCO Biosphere Regions are internationally recognized places where people and nature are working to thrive together. Rather than imposing regulations, UNESCO provides a framework that promotes collaboration, sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, education, and research while respecting Indigenous rights and title.

The designation is especially meaningful for Howe Sound. After more than a century of polluting industrial activity, UNESCO recognizes both the region's remarkable ecological recovery and its exceptional biodiversity. Lighthouse Park is one of the amazing places within the biosphere for its heritage value, old-growth trees, beautiful views, shoreline and accessibility for people to be out in nature.

Although the biosphere lies within the traditional territory of the Squamish Nation, it also includes five municipalities, three regional districts, the Islands Trust, and two provincial electoral districts. For decades, there was no shared vision for the region. The UNESCO Biosphere framework now brings governments, Indigenous Nations, organizations, businesses, and residents together around common goals.

Bob Turner and I, together with a dedicated team of volunteers, founded the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society in 2017. Today we are a registered charity that has completed four years of capacity-building support from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Collaboration is central to UNESCO's model, building partnerships has become one of our greatest strengths. Through the Howe Sound Community Forums, Ocean Watch Action Committee, Howe Sound Conservation Network, and twice-yearly Biosphere Roundtables, we bring together First Nations and many stakeholders to advance the shared priorities of the Nchu'ú7mut (Unity) Plan.

Over the past four years, we completed 20 projects with partners across the region. Projects have included the Biosphere 101 online course, wildlife corridors with Nature Squamish, rockfish monitoring with the Marine Life Sanctuaries Society, and fish-bearing stream and coastal tailed frog research with the Gambier Conservancy. Working with local governments, we helped identify lands that qualify for recognition as protected and conserved, adding to the 33% of the region that is already recognized as conserved or protected.

We have also been encouraged by growing momentum for conservation throughout the region. Recent milestones include protecting the Eagle Ridge upper lands in West Vancouver, the Roger Curtis lands and Ecological Reserve on Bowen Island, continued restoration of the Squamish Estuary, and the historic Squamish Nation–Province land-use agreement protecting more than 6,500 hectares of ecologically and culturally significant land.

Maintaining a strong organization is essential to supporting the UNESCO designation. Along with grants, partnerships, and community donations, we recently established the Howe Sound Legacy Endowment Fund through the West Vancouver Community Foundation.

While challenges remain - including the start-up of the Woodfibre LNG facility and increased marine traffic - the many organizations and volunteers who steward Howe Sound will continue working together to ensure strong environmental oversight.

Having grown up in West Vancouver and lived in Lions Bay for the past 37 years, I continue to find new reasons to be inspired by this extraordinary place. Looking ahead, opportunities such as a Howe Sound Biosphere Discovery Hub in Horseshoe Bay offer exciting possibilities. The future of the biosphere is full of promise, and I look forward to continuing this journey alongside the many people who care deeply about Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound.

To learn more about the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region and how to get involved, visit our website, subscribe to our newsletter, or follow **#HoweSoundBRI** on social media.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*For all volunteer events please wear old clothes, sturdy shoes and work gloves. Please bring your own water bottle. Volunteers who are 12 years and under must be accompanied by an adult.*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL, CAULFEILD PARK**

Meet at the Anchor on Pilot House Road.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL, LIGHTHOUSE PARK**

Meet at the Juniper Trail Entrance in the parking lot.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL, CAULFEILD PARK**

Meet at the Anchor on Pilot House Road. The event will be led by West Vancouver Parks

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL & RESTORATION PLANTING, THE DALE PARK**

Meet at the corner of The Dale and Water Lane.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 9:00 a.m. – noon

### **RESTORATION PLANTING, EAST BEACH, LIGHTHOUSE PARK**

Meet at the upper kiosk in the parking lot.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL, LIGHTHOUSE PARK**

Meet at the Juniper Trail entrance in the parking lot.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **WEED PULL, KLOOTCHMAN PARK**

Meet at Klootchman Park at trail head on Howe Sound Lane. Park on Howe Sound Lane or Crossway.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 9.00 a.m. – noon

### **RESTORATION WORK, TRAILS PARK**

Meet on Water Lane, about half-way between The Dale and Beacon Lane. We will be covering large areas of blackberry roots with black plastic.

### **MONTHLY BIRD COUNT**

The first Sunday in the month we meet in the parking lot at the entrance to Birdsong Path. All are welcome and you do not have to be an experienced birder to participate for extra eyes and ears are always welcome. For more information call or text Suann 604-240-2452.

We will meet at 8:30 a.m. on September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 6.

See page 6 for a description of what we observed during our spring counts.

## EDUCATIONAL TALK



Image Credit: Colleen Gara

### **Getting to Know the Wolves of British Columbia By Chavon Robertshaw**

Saturday, November 14, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm  
West Vancouver Memorial Library

Join us to explore the fascinating world of wolves and the important role they play in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Learn about wolf biology, behaviour and ecology, the conservation challenges they face in British Columbia, and the minimally - invasive research methods helping to guide their protection.

Chavon Robertshaw works as Program Coordinator and Wildlife Technician with Raincoast's Wolf Conservation Program. Here, she studies how large carnivores, such as wolves, are recovering in wild landscapes on the South Coast of BC, and how science, paired with indigenous knowledge can support their protection.

Space is limited please register for this event at <https://westvanlibrary.ca/?p=165195>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Alexandra Mancini

Much good news to share this fall! We greatly appreciate the \$8000 in generous grants we received from the Helpalittle Foundation and the West Vancouver Foundation to help us protect and restore the native plants and habitat at East Beach in Lighthouse Park and along Caulfeild Creek in The Dale Park. Both of these locations have terrain that is too steep for LPPS volunteers and with this grant money we can hire professionals (Green Admiral Nature Restoration) who can work safely using climbing gear (ropes, harnesses). The invading plants that are crowding out locally rare native plants are mostly Himalayan blackberries. It will be very tough work to get out their roots. We are planning at least 5-6 full days of work by a professional team this fall, supplemented by 3-4 experienced LPPS volunteers working alongside in adjacent flatter areas (an in-kind contribution expected to be 120-150 hours of labour). Watch for some before and after photos in our January 2027 newsletter!

In addition, we have an ambitious 8 volunteer events planned in 5 parks this fall (see page 3). The fall is always our busiest time of year for work parties, with 3 solid

months available for removal of invasive plants after bird nesting season is over.

Have you noticed the new Lighthouse Park-themed mural painted in the bus stop shelter at Beacon Lane on Marine Drive? The District of West Vancouver Public Art Advisory Committee granted permission for us to install this mural and funded the artist's professional fees for designing and painting the mural. The painting includes more than 25 species of plants and animals found in the park. It is absolutely stunning, garnering significant enthusiasm from the public and even causing traffic jams as it was painted over several days. We love it! The artist is Jean Bradbury.

## LPPS MEMBERSHIP

### Do you love Lighthouse Park?

You may not feel able to volunteer physically in the park, but among the ways you could help the Lighthouse Park Preservation Society is by becoming a member. The cost is as low as \$10 yearly for seniors. Visit our website [www.lpps.ca](http://www.lpps.ca) and click on the Membership button for rates and ways to join.



Mural in Progress Image Credit: Daphne Hales

## CAULFEILD PARK FIR BALL

By Dr. Aine Plant and Elspeth Bradbury

If you have visited Caulfeild Park, you may have noticed this strange fuzzy object high in a Douglas-fir. From a distance, you might have mistaken it for an oversized nest or a large clump of debris. If you looked more closely, you'll have seen that it's made of densely packed foliage attached to a small branch. Is it a parasitic plant? Was it caused by insect damage or perhaps bacterial infection?

Thanks to information from Aine Plant who has a Ph.D. in plant biology, we now have more information about this striking abnormality.

In the tips of plants and in the leaf buds along their stems there are growth points known as meristems. Normally, in cone-bearing trees like Douglas-fir, the final meristem - the one at the top of the ladder - plays boss. It leads upward growth and suppresses in varying degrees the growth of all points lower down. This hierarchy produces the familiar Christmas tree shape of most young conifers.

In the case of our Douglas-fir, a cell in an all-important top meristem stepped out of line. Its genetic code has a mutation, and this change deprived the boss of its power to dominate. No longer held back, the underlings went wild in a sort of competitive free for all. Our fir ball - or mutant broom - is the interesting result.



Photo Credit:  
Marshall Bowman

## BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY SYLVIA!



Sylvia Mathers and Sally McDermott hiking near Mt. Waddington in July 2019.  
Photo Credit: Sally McDermott

This summer, Sylvia Mathers celebrated her ninety-fifth birthday. She has been an active member of our Society for 27 years, seldom missing an event, and regularly – rain or shine – attending work parties to remove invasive species. She hikes distances that might daunt someone half her age, joins the local Wildflower Walks, volunteers in the Trail Watch Program organized by Friends of Cypress Provincial Park, and has taken part in many Nature Vancouver summer camps. Those of you who've met Sylvia know that she's always on the move – on foot – but did you know that she also swims in the ocean off the rocks at Caulfeild? Nothing daunts our amazing nonagenarian.

*Sylvia, the pleasure you take in time spent outdoors, and your boundless energy in caring for our local environment are an inspiration. We wish you many happy returns.*

## BIRD COUNT OBSERVATIONS

By Areta Sanders

During the monthly bird counts we have the chance to observe Lighthouse Park's birds as they set about their lives. The spring is always a busy time with birds raising and feeding their young.

The park is home to a pair of Barred Owls, and this Spring they had three young owlets. Kathleen McCormick took this amazing photograph.



You may wonder what they eat, and Kathleen solved that question. She has taken a photo of one consuming a rat and this one enjoying a snake. They will also eat birds and insects.



During the July bird count we were lucky enough to watch a Black Oystercatcher squawking its concern about a chick, freshly hatched, which had wandered away from the nest located on an exposed rock below the lighthouse. Later we discovered that the chick had returned to the nest. These birds feed on shellfish, especially mussels and clams and their bill is well equipped to lever the shells open.



Black Oystercatcher with chick indicated by green arrow.  
Photo Credit Paula Merkins

Bald Eagle news: Unfortunately, neither of the Bald Eagle pairs in the park produced chicks this year. The nest on the Valley Trail is very well hidden but the nest at Shorepine Point is visible from the main rock outcrop when looking east. Maybe you will see eaglets at this nest in April 2027.

## TREASURER NEEDED

Looking for a way to volunteer with LPPS?

Jane Srivastava, our current Treasurer, will be stepping down from this position at the AGM in June 2027. Please contact us at [lighthouseparkps@gmail.com](mailto:lighthouseparkps@gmail.com) if you are interested and would like to find out more about this not very onerous, but very necessary position.