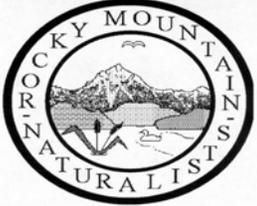


Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

RM naturalists newsletter is published quarterly

Spring 2007

Volume 4, Issue 1



Editors corner

Please send any articles or comments to
scoutfir@shaw.ca



Also, note that the deadline for articles
for the summer issue is June 21

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CLUB NEWS:

Check your emails for the next meeting of the RM Nats. For the next while and hopefully longer, at the Real Canadian Superstore meeting room. Check your e-mail for agendas and final locations.

Regular meeting dates for 2007

April 14, 2007 - 7:00 to 10:00 PM

May 16, 2007-730 to 10:30 pm

Outing leaders: Don't forget to jot down quick notes on your outing and pass them into the newsletter. Humour highlights, sightings and pictures work just fine.

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.FCBN Club camps for 2007

BC Nature Camps 2007

Join us now for springtime in the sunny Okanagan or late summer at Bamfield, on the wild West Coast of Vancouver Island!

Last year, both these camps were sold out. However, there are still some places available this year for these two Camps. Contact Pat or Anne to find out more about these fun adventures.

Okanagan

Leader: Pat Westheuser

The Okanagan Camp will take place May 6 to 11, right after BC Nature's Annual Conference and General Meeting at Vernon (May 3 to 6).

The camp will focus on bird, wildflowers and hikes, in the spectacular scenery around Okanagan Lake.

Accommodation is either in cabins or tents (your choice) and the cost is only \$450 for five days, which includes field trips and food - an amazing deal! This is an excellent chance to make friends and see a renowned nature destination in B.C. Register now by calling Pat Westheuser at 250 769 6605 or emailing hughwest@shaw.ca

Bamfield

Leader: Anne Murray and staff of the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre

The Bamfield Camp will be held at the Marine Sciences Centre on the shores of Barkley Sound, Vancouver Island. The date has been extended by a day: September 7 to 13. We go to Bamfield via the historic Lady Rose or Frances Barkley boat from Port Alberni, a four hour trip down the Sound. The Camp is a wonderful chance to learn more about the marine life of the rocky shoreline and ocean waters around the Broken Islands. There are also opportunities to learn more about the local Huu-ay-aht First Nations and the heritage stories of this remote area.

The cost, including meals, accommodation, field studies and labs, is \$900 per person. To register call Anne Murray 604 943 4460 or email sanderling@uniserve.com

These camps are members only, but non-members need only pay an additional \$15 direct member fee to join in.

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. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLUB CAMP (R. Goodwin) Creston - June 8, 9, and 10, 2007

Accommodations: Participants are responsible for making their own arrangements. Many of us are staying at the Mountain View Inn.

Meals: Participants are responsible for bringing their own food. Friday night we will have a "wiener roast" at 6:30 at Mountain View Inn at their BBQ area. On Saturday, we are having a "pot luck" dinner around 6pm so bring a salad or dessert to share and your own meat for BBQing at Mountain View Inn. Remember your cutlery, plates, drinks, etc. Don't forget your lawn chairs!

Dogs: Well socialized dogs that do not interfere with the comfort of other participants are welcome. Check with your accommodations to see if pets are allowed. Policy for pets at the Creston Valley Wildlife Center is unknown.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, June 8 - Meet at the Wildlife Center at 2 pm. Interested folks can drive about 5 minutes to French's Slough for a flat water paddle with Ruth and Kent. Others can join Kathy and Al for a walkabout either at the Wildlife Center or the Summit Creek area.

Saturday, June 9 - Early Morning Birding at the Center. Meet at 7am for a walkabout. More enthusiastic walkers can loop Lone Pine Hill. Breakfast on the deck at the Wildlife Center at 9am. Staff will talk with us about the current work at the Wildlife Management Area. The Center is open from 9am to 4pm. We will then head out to drive to the hot spots for birds in the Creston area until mid afternoon. Of course we will be noticing all flora and fauna as we explore the area! Bring your lunch.

Sunday, June 10 - Balancing Rock Trail, hike up Mt Creston, 9am to noon. Meet at the trail head just south of the Wildlife Center.

Other activities: Fishing, golfing, tours of the Brewery or candle factory, walk on the Dewdney Trail, visit local shops, plant nurseries, and produce vendors.

If you are unable to come for the weekend, come for a day! Any questions, call Ruth or Tony.

(Regional meeting at 1pm on Sunday for club executive and other Kootenay clubs at the Creston Wildlife Center. Greg is organizing this.)

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Bluebird statistics for 2006

Art Gruenig has summed up the 2006 bluebird box stats and at this rate, we may even surpass 25,000 bluebirds fledged in 2007. At the end of the 2006 nesting season, the program has fledged 23,394 bluebirds!!

Here are the detailed statistics for 2006, thanks again to Art for sponsoring this program and making it the success it is today.

Mountain Bluebird

	First nesting	Second nesting	Total
Nests used	135	44	179
Eggs	669	172	841
Infertile eggs	56	10	66
Nestlings hatched	613	162	775
Nestlings perished	184	14	198
Young fledged	429	148	577

Western Bluebird

	First nesting	Second nesting	Total
Nests used	191	72	263
Eggs	969	351	1320
Infertile eggs	90	32	122
Nestlings hatched	879	319	1198
Nestlings perished	88	11	99
Young fledged	791	308	1099

I know for my own bluebird route, the tree swallows have almost completely taken over. My route fledged over 150 tree swallows compared to only 28 mountain bluebirds. But as Art says, "well the swallows need some where to go too" Wise words as usual from our bluebird guy!!!

PS. Don't forget to clean your boxes this month....

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East Kootenay nature sightings undergo rapid range expansion! (Dianne Cooper)

As many of you are aware, the MVW Database was released in November 2006. Since that time, we have filled 7 orders for the database! This may not seem like much but it's mind-boggling when you consider how far-flung Mildred's sightings will become once they are added to these other databanks.

Local evidence

History Archives

One recipient of the database is the *Columbia Basin Institute for Regional History* who "research both human and natural occurrences in the Columbia Basin" to "rescue the facts, images and stories and to make the information available to encourage more research." Their website is: <http://www.basininstitute.org/home/main/index.html>.

Hundreds of local people contributed sightings to Mildred White - she was a sponge for hearing about what birds people saw and loved to share her love of nature with others. It's great to have all these people acknowledged locally.

Education

The *College of the Rockies* also have a copy. The head of biology instruction, Dr. D. McBride anticipates the sightings will be very useful in their Biology courses.

Province-wide and beyond

Public Access

The Province of British Columbia's *Wildlife Species Inventory*, administered by Dr. Mike Panian of the Ministry of Environment, is adding Mildred's sightings to the provincial database. Dr. Panian was astounded by the number of sightings collected by Mildred and says "This is the largest one-time contribution by a single person in the history of the Species Inventory Project!" His plan is to display the MVW sightings on 'iMapBC', an interactive map of the province where you can access natural resource information about any location in BC.

You'll be able to click on the map (once you have selected the appropriate 'layer') and up will pop all sightings for that location from the Mildred White Database. For example, right now you can go the map, add the layer for "Big Trees" from Conservation Data Centre data and find out that there are some big larches in an old clear cut on Plumbob Mountain southeast of Cranbrook.

Visit <http://maps.gov.bc.ca/imf50/imf.jsp?site=imapbc> to view the map. Very, very cool.

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Other

Mildred White contributed many records to the four volume tome "The Birds of British Columbia" by R. Wayne Campbell, et. al. Much of these data are now administered by Mr. Campbell through a foundation called *The Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies* in Victoria, at www.wildlifebc.org/index.php?pageid=1. One of their goals is to update the species accounts of each species in Birds of British Columbia, starting with the loons. Mildred's sightings will come in handy.

Continental and beyond

Dick Cannings, through *Bird Studies Canada*, way back there in Ontario, is incorporating Mildred's sightings on a website service called "eBird" run by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology of Ithaca, New York and the National Audubon Society. Here, you can view and explore North American bird distributions and occurrences built from data contributed by other birders (from any source they can get their digits on, I'm sure) *and* contribute your own data.

Mildred's sightings are integrated into all other contributor's sightings then organized by location. However, how many contributor's could there be for the location: "Ta Ta Creek--Woods' Corner"? To see a 'histogram' of Mildred's sightings from her own feeders and home property, go to: <http://ebird.org/canada/index.html>; *click* on 'View and Explore Data'; then *select* 'All birds at a location'; *select* 'Hot spots in this state or province' and *select* British Columbia from the drop-down list (and *click* 'Continue' at the bottom). Then scroll down to and *select* "Ta Ta Creek--Woods' Corner" (and *click* 'Continue' at the bottom). Look at that! Also very, very cool!

I am thrilled by the great reception the database has had with the major databanks. I'm sure Mildred would have been even more thrilled. It was her dream to have these sightings easily available to anyone - looks like it's happening.

Check out upcoming issues of the newsletters of the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists and the Columbia Basin Institute of Regional History for an ad or write up about the database.

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Winter outings summary

Butte snowshoeing

Saturday was a great day for any activity outside! After a seemingly endless grey winter, we had a day of sunshine. Five of us from the Rocky Mountain Naturalists headed up the Wycliffe Buttes for a snowshoe. The loop around the first Butte was easy travelling but we headed back towards the second loop and did some real snowshoeing. The snow was unexpectedly deep, and for those of us who fell down, needed help getting pulled up! Few birds (crossbills, pileated woodpecker, nutcrackers, and chickadees) but great views of the valley and snow covered peaks. On the Butte we saw lots of coyote and elk tracks. Very pleasant outing with Hilde, Pam, Tony, and Peter.



Slaterville walking tour

Seven naturalists were out for a Sunday morning walk around Slaterville. Sunny and warm temperatures greeted us on our first official birding tour of the area. A Great Blue Heron was one of the first species to welcome us as it flew high overhead. On the morning walk we started from the Salvation Army parking lot and walked up across the back street seeing many areas not usually visited by our members. The birds encountered went from the expected Common Ravens, American Crows, Mountain and Black Capped Chickadees, Rock Pigeons and a Downy Woodpecker. Also spotted Mallards, Canada Geese, Red-winged Blackbirds and a Red-tailed Hawk. Great to see the American robins out in full force, about 20 in one yard and for many of us our first Tree Swallow of the year.



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Meeting and Outing listings

<p>April 4th Birding with Peter " Bummers Flat & Wasa area " Meet: Rampart Rest Area 9:00 a.m.-- Bring a lunch Phone-- - 426-2458</p>	<p>May 10th-12th Botany B.C. Osoyoos B.C. Jim Duncan 427-2600</p>
<p>April 4th 6:00 p.m. Elisabeth Lake Work bee Tara-- 489-1990</p>	<p>May 12th "Little Big Day" Greg- 489-2566 Banquet-- Heritage Inn</p>
<p>Monday, April 9 - Botany enthusiasts will enjoy hiking both Buttes in Wycliffe. Neil Jennings of Wolf Creek, author of Uncommon Beauty a book on native wildflowers, joins us. Meet at 9:30 at the end of McClure Road. Approximately 6 hours, bring your food and water. Phone Ruth at 427-5404 if you plan to attend</p>	<p>May 16th Monthly meeting Community Service Room @ Super Store 7:30pm</p>
<p>April 14th Slide Show with Suzanne Hout Community Service Room @ Super Store 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>May 19th-21st Meadow Lark Festival Penticton B.C. Greg-- 426-2566</p>
<p>April 15th Birding at Elisabeth Lake with Greg 9:00 a.m. Phone-- 489-2566</p>	<p>May 23rd "Birding through Community Forest" Margol & Travis Meet: Husky and Staples 9:00a.m. bring a lunch phone-- 426-7332</p>
<p>April 18th "Birds of Prey" Presentation Colin Trefrey Community Service Room @ Super Store 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>May 30th Evening Ramble @ "Doran's Marsh" Meet: south entrance @ maintenance shed elainedoran@shaw.ca Time: 7:00p.m.</p>
<p>April 22 Morning walk at Bummers Flats. Meet at 1000 hrs at south entrance maintenance shack Tony-489-1813</p>	<p>May 31st Kootenay International Restoration @ Fort Steel9:00 a.m. Contact: Jim Duncan 427-2600</p>
<p>April 25th "Pitch Inn" Community Forest Meet: Entrance east of Cranbrook Golf Course 6:00 p.m. Greg-- 489-2566</p>	<p>June 2nd Family Festival @ Elisabeth Lake (to be confirmed)</p>
<p>April 28th "Explore Wasa Ridge with Ruth" and birding in the area Meet: Wasa campground 9:00 a.m. bring a lunch phone-- 427-5404</p>	<p>June 6th Elisabeth Lake Work bee 6:00p.m. Tara-- 489-1990</p>
<p>May 2nd Elisabeth Lake Work bee 6:00 p.m. Tara-- 489-1990</p>	<p>June 8th-10th Club Camp Creston B.C. Ruth--427-5404 Regional Meeting @ Creston Valley Wildlife Centre Time: 1:00p.m. Contact Greg- 489-2566</p>
<p>May 3rd--6th B.C. Nature F.B.C.N. Vernon B.C. Greg-- 489-2566</p>	<p>June 22nd-23rd B.C. Lakes (Wasa) Contact Jim Duncan- 427-2600</p>
<p>May 4th-5th "Plants in Bloom" Cranbrook B.C. Jim Duncan 427-2600</p>	<p>June 30th Cotton Wood Growth Meet: Husky & Staples 11:00 a.m. bring a lunch Greg- 489-2566</p>
<p>May 5th-12th "Wings Over The Rockies" Invermere B.C.</p>	<p>July 4th Elisabeth Lake Work bee 6:00 p.m. Tara-489- 1990</p>
<p>.</p>	<p>Aug 1st Elisabeth Lake Work bee 6:00p.m. Tara--489- 1990</p>

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Other upcoming events

British Columbia Lake Stewardship Society Annual Conference: On the Beach - A Skinny Dip into Sustainability of Lake and Watershed Development (Jim Duncan)

June 22, 23 and 24, 2007 at Wasa

This year the conference has expanded its focus to include development around water including watersheds. The conference will take place in the Wasa Community Hall and all meals will be provided.

For information, contact Kathy, Secretary wllid@shaw.ca or write her at Box 133, Wasa, BC VOB 2K0.

More information will be coming out shortly.

Kootenay River Network June1 (Jim Duncan)

The KRN organizes a special event each year in conjunction with our Annual General Meeting. This year's event will take place on Friday, June 1st at Fort Steele. This will be a family event beginning at 9:00 a.m. with a custom program relating the history of the East Kootenay with the Kootenay River. The morning program at the Fort will involve some actors with some tours and a lunch in the hotel. The KRN will pay for the gate fees and the food. After lunch we will tour the Joseph Creek restoration at Kinsmen Park in Cranbrook and end with a tour of the restoration work at Elizabeth Lake done by the Rocky Mountain Naturalists. The KRN would like to celebrate all environmental volunteers with their families. All we need to know is if you are interested incoming. You can let me know by return e-mail and I will send you a registration form when they are available.

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RM Naturalists have a new meeting place

The Rocky Mountain Naturalists held our latest meeting in the Real Canadian Super Store - Community Room. Here our outings coordinator, Kathy, is busy writing up all the great suggestions from members for spring outings. This is an excellent facility for us



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail to:
Rocky Mountain Naturalists
P.O. Box 791
Cranbrook, B.C.
V1C 4J5

\$25 for family
\$20 for individual

Name _____ Phone # _____
Address _____ Postal Code _____

Cranbrook Communities in Bloom Committee

Spring Conference

for Professionals and Home Gardeners
Friday May 4th and Saturday May 5th 2007
at the Heritage Inn, Cranbrook BC

Join Celebrity Guest Speaker, and Well-Known Author

Des Kennedy

and others presenting sessions on
**Pruning, Mulch, Turf, Container Gardening,
Garden Beneficials, Garden Humour**
and more

Further information and registration forms
available online at
www.cranbrook.ca
or at the Cranbrook Rec Plex
and at local nurseries
Fees from \$75.00

Canada
**Communities
in Bloom**



BOTANY BC

2007 Botany BC Registration: Osoyoos Thursday, May 10th/07 to Sunday May 13th/07

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

e-mail: _____

CAN \$115.00 or US \$96.00 includes Meet and Greet on Thursday evening, all field trips, all speakers/presentations, entertainment, and bag lunch Friday May 11th & Saturday May 12th 2007 and BBQ Salmon dinner on Saturday May 12th 2007.*

CAN \$115.00 or US \$96.00 x _____ (# of people) = _____ total
(cheques payable to Botany BC)

Additional information required:

Vegetarian? Yes / No Allergies: _____
(please mark one)

* If you think you will not make it to the full Botany BC program, and may miss a meal, please let me know. We may be able to adjust your registration fee accordingly. Please mark where appropriate.

I/we will miss: lunch on Fri, May 11; lunch on Sat, May 12; dinner Sat, May 13.

Please send registration form and payment to:

Botany BC
c/o Elizabeth Easton
Ministry of Forests - Research Branch
Box 9519 Stn Prov. Gov't
Victoria BC V8W 9C2 CANADA
Location address for drop off: 1st Fl. 722 Johnson Street, Victoria

Please respond promptly because we have to limit our group to 110 people this year due to meeting room space at NK'Mip Desert Cultural Centre. Thanks!

BOTANY BC

DINING

Dining options for Friday, May 11th:

Dinner is on your own for Friday, May 11th, but may we suggest the following:

The Passa Tempo restaurant at Nk-mip resort
(<http://www.spiritridge.ca/dining.html>). Reservations recommended.

Investigate other options in Osoyoos at
http://www.destinationosoyoos.com/restaurants_cafes.html.

Ambrosia restaurant has reasonable prices and offers both Canadian and East Indian cuisine. **Campo Marina Italian restaurant** is a tried and true choice for biologists on business in Osoyoos. The [Ridge Brewing Company Pub & Restaurant](#) is a standard pub but appeared decent, as is the **Burrowing Owl pub** (new name?). The **Wildfire Grill** is also a good choice and there is a Mexican restaurant, **El Toro Loco Mexican Café & Cantina**, both on Main St.

BOTANY BC

ACCOMODATIONS



NKMIP RESORT

Accommodations:

1. Everyone is responsible for their own accommodation. **PLEASE BOOK prior to Tuesday, April 10, 2007 if you intend to stay at Spirit Ridge Resort.**
2. Some 1-BEDROOM DESERT SUITES (up to 4 adults, \$165 + 14% taxes per night double occupancy + \$20 per person above 2-person booking) at Spirit Ridge Resort (1200 Rancher Creek Road Osoyoos, British Columbia Canada V0H 1V0) have been booked to enable us a group rate for Botany BC.

1-BEDROOM VINEYARD VILLAS (up to 4 adults, \$199 CAN + 14% taxes per night) and 2-BEDROOM VINEYARD VILLAS (up to 8 adults, \$239 + 14% taxes per night) can also be booked with the group rate listed here, but a Spirit Lodge representative has to approve it. If you are in this situation, let Elizabeth Easton know. Descriptions of the units are found at:

<http://www.spiritridge.ca/accommodation.html>.

BOTANY BC

3. In order to book a room, a deposit of **1st night's room rate** must be provided. All major credit cards accepted; may pay by debit card.
4. Individual reservations can be made by the following methods:
Telephone: 250-495-5445 or Toll-Free: 1-877-313-9463
Email: info@spiritridge.ca.
6. Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort & Spa has a 48 hour (two day) cancellation policy. In the event a guest needs to cancel their reservation, they will receive a full refund of their deposit provided they cancel in advance of 48 hours (2 days). In the event they cancel within 48 hours (2 days) of their reservation, they will forfeit their deposit, the equivalent of one night's stay including taxes, to the resort. The deposit becomes non-refundable.
7. All villas and suites are non-smoking. Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. Check-out time is 11:00 a.m. If any rooms are not vacated by this time, the individual will be responsible for the late charge, unless prior arrangements are made with the Resort's management.

Camping is also available at NK'mip Campground and RV Resort <http://www.campingosoyoos.com> (8000 45th Street Osoyoos BC, V0H 1V6; map of site at <http://www.campingosoyoos.com/map2.htm>). This campground may be one of the busiest in Osoyoos, but it is also well-situated in general and close to the central activities of the program. The photo at this site doesn't give the campground justice. Many sites are close to the lake and the northern locations are quiet and scenic. Other campgrounds near town include Haines Point Provincial Park and Tamri Motel & Campground.

See <http://www.destinationosoyoos.com/hotels.html> for other nearby accommodation options.