



THE OSPREY

Newsletter of the
West Kootenay Naturalists' Association

415 Olivia Crescent, Trail BC V1R 1A6
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Eastern Kingbirds

Photo courtesy of Alistair Fraser

<http://kootenay-lake.ca/>

GENERAL MEETINGS

The new schedule is as follows: Six meetings per year and the Annual Picnic in June as before. October meeting in Nelson, November potluck in Genelle, January meeting in Castlegar, March meeting in Trail, and the April AGM and potluck in Genelle as before. May meeting TBA. Meetings are held on the last Monday of each month, 7:00 pm, except as noted. Potlucks start at 4:45 pm when the doors open for setup. Changes may be mentioned at meetings, via Google group and/or in your local newspaper. Beverages will *not* be available until someone steps forward to handle this task. THE FOREGOING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. For June annual picnic venue, see appropriate Field Trip Schedule. No meetings in September, December, February, May, July, August, or December. "The Osprey" in hard copy is distributed at October, January, and May meetings. If you have email, we encourage you to get it by email if possible. It's in colour, and the Club saves a great deal on postage.

WKNA OFFICERS 2016-17

ELECTED:

PRESIDENT	Peter Wood	250-359-7107 annpeterwood@gmail.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	VACANT	
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PRESENTATION COORDINATOR	VACANT	

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BUTTERFLIES	vacant	
INJURED BIRDS/ANIMALS	Carol Pettigrew (birds)	250-365-3701
INVASIVE PLANTS	vacant	
RIVERS DAY (National)	vacant	
RIVERS DAY (Provincial)	vacant	
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FIELD TRIPS

**This schedule has been suspended indefinitely.
Contact a FIELD TRIP DIRECTOR (see Page 2)
for information on trips and meetings.**

If you do not have email, contact a FTD for hard copy updates.

*Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is January 11, 2017
Material accepted by the Publisher any time up to this date.
We reserve the right to edit for space, clarity, spelling and syntax.
Major changes will be discussed with the contributor.*

CHECK OUT OUR CLUB WEBSITE

Regional Naturalists' website: www.kootenaynaturalists.org

**Getting your *Osprey* by email? Watch for it
on the Friday before the meetings in Sept, January, and May**

**** JUST A REMINDER ****

1. **Do you have any suggestions for new areas to visit?** Would you be willing to lead a hike? Please contact a Program Director with your great ideas. Thank you to all the contacts/leaders in all seasons. We learn so much from each of you.
2. **Common courtesy and common sense** dictates that you call the contact person to confirm your attendance at an event on the program, AND THAT YOU CALL TO CANCEL if you later find you cannot attend. Lead time for the newsletter is as much as nine months between planning and execution. Nothing is written in stone and changes may have to be made from time to time, due to weather conditions or personal reasons. We would not want you to miss out on a single chance to enjoy our environment! **Don't wait until the last minute** to phone if you are interested in any of our events.....leader may have already left, especially if camping or long distances are involved.
3. **The leader of an outing is responsible for:**
 - I Finding a replacement contact/leader if you cannot be available for your planned outing. A replacement *leader* may choose to do the same outing, or they may suggest another.
 - I Getting the appropriate waiver form signed by every person attending. *Member* waiver forms are included in your newsletter (if you are getting hard copy), one for each hike you are leading. You will also receive one *Day Membership* waiver. If you are getting your newsletter by email, you will receive three attachments: *there are TWO waivers – one for all attendees and one for guests (one-day membership + \$1.00). Print/photocopy the guest waiver beforehand and keep extra copies just in case.* Forward these forms to Webb Webster and Esther Brown, respectively, immediately.
 - I Making sure that no one is left behind with car trouble at the parking area, especially in winter.
 - I Arranging to have the trip report forwarded to the Editor. The leader may delegate this, of course, but please advise the Editor from whom to expect it. The writer also has the obligation to get the report submitted in time.
4. **NO PETS** are allowed on any of our outings.

TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, April 9, 2016:

FLETCHER FALLS AND KASLO RIVER TRAIL Eight West Kootenay Naturalists embarked on the Kaslo area hikes. Barb and Clint Saunders were anxious to discover Fletcher Falls. The 50 foot (approx.) waterfall was magnificent with all its spring run-off and the mist that enveloped its moss walls. The group was surprised to see that Kokanee spawn in these waters and that a marine campground exists. Then, it was on to the Kaslo River Trail. We started at the upper pedestrian bridge and made our way down to the newly completed lower bridge. We came across volunteers working on a mountain bike park area for young children. As you walk along the Kaslo River banks, you can see remnants of the old Kootenay Electric Light and Power Company: the spillway and the Gilkes turbine which generated 300 horsepower. Glacial till and bedrock are exposed along with the sediments of melting glaciers. As we hiked up on the west side, it was like being in an Interior rain forest with Cedar and Hemlock dominating the diverse variety of trees. We came across Devil's Club, as well as mushrooms and polypores, but it was still too early for many flowers. Near the upper bridge, we discovered a couple of new loops and, as a group, we decided to take the lower loop (4.5 km). It was like walking through an open rainforest. It was a good day all around until we got back to the cars. Unfortunately, the second car would not start and BCAA had to be called. As a reminder, when on trips, it is always best to make sure that all parties can get started and drive away.

Pat West



Saturday, May 7, 2016:

MEL DEANNA HIKE -- Libby Ruljancich led a very informative hike with respect to the wildflowers and plants of the area. The eleven participants began to recognize the characteristics of certain plants and shrubs. Edible and non-edible plants were identified by Libby as we hiked along the trail. Some plants of course, being edible, may not be so palatable. Certain edible bulbs used by the Indians meant a lot of spent energy on gathering, in order to acquire enough food for their needs. Then, there were those plants which were deadly, such as Death Camas. It was interesting to learn that Bracken Fern, which were gathered for Japanese export and eaten locally, have been linked to stomach cancer. As we determined foods from the forest which could be eaten, we became part of the food chain for the insect population, specifically mosquitoes and noseemes [no-see-ums]. Ed Beynon noticed some Goldeneye and a few other species of ducks. Thank you Libby for broadening our horizons and leading such a lovely outing! Photo is Mallow Ninebark.

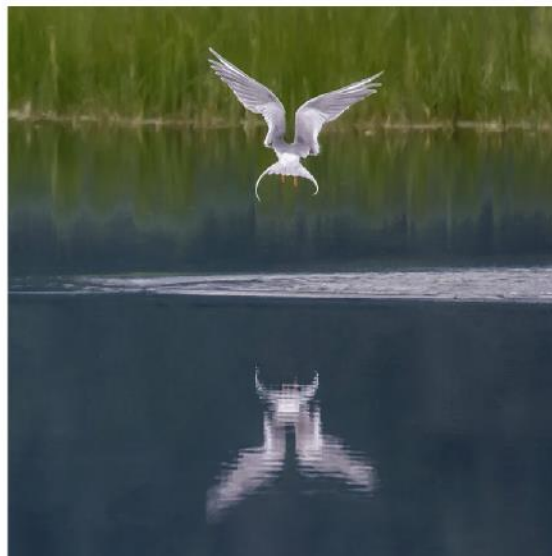
Pat West



Saturday, May 21, 2016:

Five members and a guest assembled at Salmo, and travelled to Creston, stopping on the way to admire two handsome pairs of Harlequin Ducks at the Salmo River Bridge. We were originally twelve people but half the group cancelled because of an unfavourable weather forecast. We were fortunate to have a key to the gate at Summit Creek campground so we could drive the full 8 km to the Kootenay River channel. The whole area is gorgeous, with snowy mountains as a backdrop, super quiet and with outstanding birding. Usually it is quite a hike in, so we felt very privileged. And the weather turned out to be super -- overcast skies yielding to sunshine in the afternoon. The birding was good; nearly all the migrants have arrived. Yellow Warblers were abundant, many Least Flycatchers and a large number of nesting Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen. Virginia Rails were making their Kiddick-Kiddick calls all day. The Forster's Terns were building nests, as were Black Terns {they build on floating reed clumps}. Alistair has a stunning photo of a Forster's Tern cavorting above its reflection, and another of an aerial Eastern Kingbird bill wide open scolding another. A moose with budding antlers and many families of ducks, lines of tiny chicks following a parent. If you love birds, and nature generally, this is a wonderful place at this time of year. These seven amazing photographs graciously submitted by **Alistair Fraser**. **The first is also on the cover of this issue.**

Peter McIver





Sunday, June 12, 2016:

Birding at Brilliant Flats and Waldie Island area -- The birds were very active after many days of cool, rainy weather. A total of 55 species of birds were seen or heard: Great Blue Heron, turkey vulture, Canada goose, wood duck, mallard, blue-winged teal, common and Barrow's goldeneye, common merganser, ruddy duck, bald eagle, osprey, peregrine falcon, spotted sandpiper, Vaux's swift, calliope hummingbird, downy woodpecker, flicker, western wood-pewee, alder flycatcher, willow flycatcher, dusky flycatcher, pacific-slope flycatcher, western kingbird, eastern kingbird, Cassin's vireo, red-eyed vireo, crow, raven, tree swallow, violet-green swallow, northern rough-winged swallow, cliff swallow, black-capped chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, robin, vireo, gray catbird, cedar waxwing, yellow warbler, Macillvray's warbler, common yellowthroat, redstart, western tanager, spotted towhee, chipping sparrow, song sparrow, junco, lazuli bunting, red-winged blackbird, meadowlark, cowbird, bullock's oriole, house finch, and goldfinch. Highlights were four species of swallows and two species of kingbirds all in the same small patch of bushes and a peregrine falcon soaring high above. Photos by Hazel.

Hazel & Ed Beynon



Saturday, June 25, 2016:

On an overcast day, 14 members and guests met in Winlaw at 7:30 to bird some of the beautiful North Slokan River's best birding sites. In the morning we first visited the Winlaw Rapids Bluffs (White-throated Swifts and nesting Red-tailed Hawks) then Pedro Creek Marsh looking unsuccessfully for rails, but where it was bursting with the songs of Common Yellowthroats, Yellow Warblers, Willow Flycatchers, Red-winged Blackbirds and other marsh loving species. The pastures of Larsen's Ranch yielded Bobolink, Meadowlarks and Eastern Kingbirds, from where the group proceeded to just south of Slokan City to explore the rail trail south. This is a great place for American Redstarts and other warblers, and after exploring the area the group split, with half walking the 4 km to Peter Mclver's cottage, while the rest birded some more on the trail and on the cottage property where we all met for lunch. On the way home most of us stopped at Elderbee on Perry's Back Road, across the river, where we had excellent views of a Lewis's Woodpecker and more marshspecies. The weather was perfect for birding, overcast yielding to cool sun and the group enjoyed the gorgeous scenery and high bird activity – about 70 species were recorded.

Peter Mclver

Saturday, July 2, 2016:

PAYNE BLUFFS/THREE FORKS/GALENA TRAIL/OLD SANDON ROAD -- On the Payne Bluffs Trail, we discovered the Altoona Mine (silver bearing galena) with an ore-cart track, as well as Cody Spur. As we hiked further we encountered a mine shaft, the Payne Concentrator and a viewpoint of the old Victor Mine, which was later renamed Viola Mine. At Payne's Bluff [sic], the trail is fairly well cleared, but the cliff is eroding. Take a look at the picture of railway tracks that partially hang in the air. After lunch, it was time to descend the Three Forks trail with its numerous switchbacks for a distance of 1.4 km from the Payne Bluff Junction. From the entrance of the Galena Trail, it is approximately a half hour to reach the Alamo. Hard to believe that Alamo Siding was quite a little community with a power house, a concentrator, mines, post office and even a hotel. Pegasis told us that her father would visit a friend, who had a house and garden at Alamo Siding. Judy and Gladie took a trip on the cable car across Carpenter Creek. From there, we hiked up the bank to the old mine shafts and community housing. A trail above led us to the Old Sandon Road which was a gradual ascent along the steep bank back to the Galena entrance. Along this trek, we identified: Bunchberry, Cow Parsnip, Devil's Club, Dogbane, False Salmon Seal, Foam Flower, Forget Me Nots [sic], Hare Bell, Hawk Weed, Greenish Flowered Pyrola, Grove Lover, Heal-all, Large Wintergreen (pink flowers), Leafy Lousewort, Oregon Grape, Paintbrush, Purple Lupine, Pathfinder, Pine Drops, Pipsissewa, Queen's Cup, Rein Orchid, Thimbleberry, Tiger Lily, Twinberry, Twin Flower, Western Rattlesnake Plantain, Wild Sapparilla, Vetch, and Wintergreen.

Pat West



Kootenay Bank Swallow Survey – June 30, July 7, 11 & 18:

Nine naturalists participated in colony checks and active nests counts at Bank Swallow breeding sites in the Slokan Valley and along the Columbia River on these four dates. In addition, several members monitored colony activity apart from the scheduled field trips. Many thanks to each of you! In all, 15 colonies were checked. Nine of the 15 colonies were used in 2016, and there were a minimum of 713 nests with chicks tallied. This means at least 1400 breeding adults present in just these two local areas! The field trips were part of a larger project to inventory and monitor Bank Swallow colonies throughout the Kootenay region. Thanks to Malcolm Fitz-Earle for use of his photo: Counting in comfort at the golf course colony. Second photo: Part of the colony at China Creek.

Janice Arndt



China Creek June 4



Golf course July 11

Saturday, September 10, 2016:

Seven hikers turned out on a lovely fall like day to hike to Ross Lake. It turned windy and cool at the lake during lunch, but warmed up again on our decent back down the trail. We all ate huckleberries along the route, but noted they were not as plentiful as in other years. There were a few logs over the trail we had to climb over but all agreed it was a nice hike. Photos by author.

Diane White



Protected B.C. caribou herd welcomes 11 new calves **First Nations conservation program brings herd back from the brink**

Once hundreds of animals strong, the Klinse-Za caribou herd of northeastern B.C. had only 16 members in 2013. Now, thanks to the conservation efforts of local First Nations, the birth of 11 new calves brings that number up to 61. In its third year, a program spearheaded by the West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations captures pregnant female caribou and allows them to raise their calves in a protected environment before eventually releasing them. "They're very, very cute," said Harley Davis, one of the "shepherds" who has been monitoring the newborn calves. "You watch them play with one another. Some are stronger than others; some are faster than others. You do get to know them after a while."

Logging activity threatens caribou habitat -- Roland Wilson, chief of the West Moberly First Nations, says caribou in the region are at increased risk of predation due to logging. The herd has historically spent its winters high in the mountains, where wolves have trouble getting to them. But new logging roads now give wolves easy access to the caribou's former sanctuary. He said the program's success is encouraging but not enough on its own — and neither is the province's wolf cull program. He says the only long-term solution is habitat protection.

"We can pen and recover as many caribou as we have, but if we don't have the habitat for them and don't have the protection for the habitat, it's not going to mean anything," he said. "They're just going to keep getting eaten." Caribou have historically been an important resource for First Nations. Davis felt it was important for him to get involved in the program so that they will continue to be in the future. "I wanted to ensure that I played a part in ensuring that there is going to be caribou around when my grandchildren are born, when they have children," he said.

"I don't want them to see them in pictures and books or videos or whatever. I want them to go out there and see them in real life." If all goes well, this newborn caribou calf and her mother will be released into the wild in a few weeks' time.

West Kootenay EcoSociety sees EAO decision as step to Jumbo Valley staying wild forever

Supporters to "Keep Jumbo Wild" are lining up to applaud the recent BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) decision that said the builder of the ski hill in the heart of the Jumbo Glacier was not compliant with the condition of its certificate.

"We're happy to see another nail go into the coffin of this dangerous and unwanted project," David Reid of the West Kootenay EcoSociety said in a prepared statement. "The Province needs to hold this project to a high standard and make sure that the developer doesn't cut corners that could endanger human lives or the environment."

In a letter dated April 24, Manager of Compliance, Autumn Cousins for the EAO told Oberto Oberti of Glacier Resorts Ltd to halt construction on two buildings until new safety conditions can be met in the event of an avalanche. Cousins said GRL must cease construction of structures in the Day Lodge Location and Service Building Location in order to minimize the extent of the non-compliances.

Reid said an independent analysis of avalanche risk found that the two floating subfloors constructed in October 2014 are partially or entirely within areas with medium to high risk of avalanche. He said the Environmental Certificate has been a matter of intense scrutiny as opponents of the project have noted the lack of compliance with measures required to protect endangered species, ensure adequate water supply, and protect Jumbo and Toby creeks, among other issues.

The Environmental Assessment Office had previously issued a letter of non-compliance just days before the proponent poured several tons of concrete in the wilderness valley. Reid said that although GRL says the risks can be mitigated, the environmental certificate states that all building must be outside of the hazard area and does not address mitigation.

The EAO's compliance letter suggests that the proponent can apply for an amendment to the certificate to allow buildings in the hazard area with appropriate mitigation. "We're increasingly confident that the project's compliance problems and failure to start on time mean that we can look forward to the Jumbo Valley staying wild forever," Reid said, and "the avalanche risk is only one of several obstacles facing the proposed ski resort."

According to a study commissioned by the Ktunaxa Nation, the project accomplished only .5% of its work for Phase I prior to the deadline for the project to substantially start. "If the Minister of Environment determines that the work to date is not "substantial," the developer would have to undergo a new environmental assessment process," Reid explained. In addition, the West Kootenay EcoSociety and Ktunaxa Nation have legal action pending in BC courts that will be heard in the next two months.

The court challenge by the West Kootenay EcoSociety — to challenge the provincial government's 2012 decision to establish the Jumbo Glacier Resort (JGR) Municipality — was adjourned after the EcoSociety received an amended response and new evidence from lawyers for the municipality at the eleventh hour.

How to Buy Proper Hiking Boots

Step 1 Decide in advance whether you're going to use the boots most while day hiking, on short backpacking outings on easy to moderate terrain, or long, extended backpacking trips over relatively severe terrain. This will determine your priorities on a number of boot features.

Step 2 Ask a boot salesperson to measure both of your feet with a Brannock device, the sliding metal scale you might be used to seeing in shoe and boot stores. One of your feet might be slightly larger than the other. If that's the case, try on boots sized to fit the larger of your feet.

Step 3 Pick out a few different pairs of boots to try on. This is when you can shop for a variety of features, including waterproof and breathable uppers (critically important to some, not so important to others), plastic, nylon or steel shanks and plates to make the boot sole stiffer and more supportive, and low- to high-cut ankles. Typically, the more severe the terrain you're going to hike on, the more ankle support you want; this means a higher-cut upper.

Step 4 Check the seams on the boot uppers to make sure they are securely stitched or cemented; if there are any signs of loose or untidy seams, don't buy the boots. Also note the number of seams; the fewer the seams, the less you need to worry about a boot blowout on the trail.

Step 5 Put the boots on and lace them up as if you were going hiking right then. Tromp around the store for a while. If the retailer offers any uneven surfaces for you to walk on--a few rocks piled together, stairs or even a wheelchair ramp in a pinch--take full advantage of them, walking uphill and downhill. If your toes come into contact with the front of the boot when you go downhill, you might get blisters while hiking. Try a slightly larger, or different shaped, boot.

Step 6 Pay attention to whether the boots pinch, rub or cause friction on any part of your foot as you walk around. Don't let yourself be convinced that the boots will feel better once they're broken in. If they pinch now, they're almost certain to pinch every time you wear them. Also, pay attention to whether each boot is loose enough that your foot can move around inside of it--bad--or snug enough to move with your foot--good--yet not so tight it pinches your toes.

Step 7 Keep trying boots on until you've found one or two favorites, then decide which (if there's more than one) feels best on your feet. Boot buying is a subjective process--only you know what feels best--so you might find that your hiking footwear preference changes over time.

In Memory of Erik Knudsgaard



Jens Erik Knudsgaard passed away peacefully in Kananaskis while guiding blind skiers on February 5th, 2016. Erik was born in Rossland, BC. Erik's hobbies included skiing, hiking, Masons, Sons of Norway and Ski for Light Canada. He enjoyed travelling to England and Denmark and especially spending time with his family and grandchildren.

Erik is survived by his loving wife Margaret, his sons; Paul (Colleen) and their children Mya and Kristian; Mark (Julie-Anne), and their children Logan, Winter and Moss; his daughters Karen and Anna; his brother Einer (Mariette); his sister Linda (Allan) as well as nieces and nephews. Erik was predeceased by his parents Hans and Linna, his brothers Frankie and David.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Erik took place on Saturday, February 13, 2016 from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Rossland with Father J. Joseph Kizhakethottathil M.S.T., Celebrant. Brent Long of Alternatives Funeral and Cremation ServicesTM in care of arrangements.

As an expression of sympathy, donations in Erik's name may be made to Ski for Light Canada c/o Barry Nelson, President, 21771-126th Avenue, Maple Ridge, BC, V2X 4P1. You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence.