



THE OSPREY

**Newsletter of the West Kootenay Naturalists'
Association**

2662 Hwy 3A, South Slocan BC V0G 2G1

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July thru October 2019



Honeysuckle above Genelle (May 22 flower hike) © Margo Saunders

GENERAL MEETINGS

New schedule is as follows: Meetings are held on the last Monday of the month, 7:00 pm, *except as noted*. Five meetings per year and the annual Picnic in June. September, January and March meetings at the Castlegar Community Complex, November potluck and meeting at Genelle Hall, May potluck and AGM at Genelle Hall. Potlucks start at 4:45 pm when doors open for setup. Meal begins at 5:30 pm. Program begins at 6:45 pm. Changes may be mentioned at meetings, via Google group and/or in your local newspaper. Beverages will be available beginning next season! Ann Wood has generously volunteered to handle the arduous task of packing the supplies and making the coffee and tea. THE FOREGOING ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. If you want to bring cookies, squares, etc, please do! For June annual picnic venue, see Field Trip Schedule. No meetings in October, December, February, April, July, August, or December. "The Osprey" is emailed on the Friday preceding the September and January meetings, and the week after the May meeting to show the current year's Officers.

WKNA OFFICERS 2019-20

ELECTED:

PRESIDENT	Peter Wood	250-359-7107 annpeterwood@gmail.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	vacant	
PAST PRESIDENT	Brent Hancock	250-304-6840
RECORDING SECRETARY	Elaine Jackman	packrat_j@hotmail.com
TREASURER	Paula Neilson	silver.lady33@gmail.com
MEMBERSHIP REGISTRAR	Janis Gilbert	janisg522@gmail.com

APPOINTED:

ARCHIVIST <i>BC NATURE</i> DIRECTOR (WKNA)	vacant Joan Snyder	250-365-7633 snowdance@shaw.ca
FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR	Diane White	250-825-4178 L8ddi@shaw.ca
PRESENTATION COORDINATOR/ FACILITY BOOKING	vacant	
WEB-PRESENCE DESIGNER/ CO-ORDINATOR	Tarah Reesor	tarah.reesor@gmail.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Margo Saunders	250-693-2229 penandpaddle@gmail.com
SUNSHINE COMMITTEE	Margo Saunders	250-693-2229 penandpaddle@gmail.com

SECTION CONTACTS AND COMMITTEE HEADS:

BIRDING ENERGY & CONSERVATION, & WKNA DIRECTOR TO BC NATURE	Ed Beynon Joan Snyder	250-365-7806 250-365-7633 snowdance@shaw.ca
BIRD COUNTS: Bird Studies Canada WKNA, Christmas and Summer Bluebird Box Monitor Coordinator	vacant vacant Susan Spiller	250-921-5122 sspiller1977@gmail.com
VIOLIN LAKE STAKEHOLDERS LIAISON	Margo Saunders	250-693-2229 penandpaddle@gmail.com
GOOGLE GROUP ADMINISTRATOR	Arnold By	250-368-3068 awby@shaw.ca

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2018 summer hiking season rather petered out with not so many trips towards the end as in previous years. Dense smoke may well have been a deterrent to us. Our first regular evening meeting of (last Monday in September) also passed without a gathering, or much notice from the members. I wrote, by email to all on our Google group bewailing our leadership troubles and warned that if at the November (Pot-Luck, guest Presentation and General meeting) did not generate some volunteers to help run the club, then it would fold by year-end and we would close our bank account, with closing-out monies going to our usual accepted beneficiaries, the Selkirk College WKNA bursary and the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area education program.

The November dinner, the fine and informative presentation by WKNats regulars Ed and Hazel Beynon documenting their trip from Greenland to Pelly Bay on the Boothia Peninsula, and the general meeting were well attended. **AND we were sufficiently encouraged to make firm plans to carry on as a club into the New Year, at least as far as our AGM, on the last Monday of May.** Several people stepped forward in November, for the tasks of Trip Coordinator, Recording Secretary and Website Developer to help with developing a current and user-friendly web presence and publicity. So I booked rooms (and Esther prepaid) for our January and March evening meetings with guest presenters. The November meeting agreed that, for now at least, our centre of operations for non-pot-luck evening meetings will be Castlegar, not circulating around Nelson and Trail as well as Castlegar as we had been doing in the previous many years. Our Pot-Luck meetings will continue to be held at the Genelle Community Hall where we are lucky to be able to rent their lovely facility for those twice-yearly events, held on the last Monday eve at end-Nov and end-May. Our ever-reliable and long-serving Esther Brown (Treasurer and Membership Registrar) let it be known in November that she would be resigning her duties before the May AGM and then she set about recruiting the two people who have agreed to take on her dual role. Not only that, Esther then made herself available to help train those volunteers, and researched the business of signing on new Signing Officers with our Credit Union account.

We had two very nice presentations for our January and March evening presentation meetings. In January, local naturalist, beekeeper and retired nurse Paula Neilson presented her poems and photos of local birds and in March, Selkirk College biologist Rob MacCrae presented many pictures and cartoons concerning the myths of Spring Mushroom hunting. Both evenings were very well attended and our guest's presentations much appreciated. A Thank You Card and gift presentation to Esther Brown preceded.

The appointment of our new volunteers for Treasurer and Membership Registrar, new member Paula Neilson and Janis Gilbert respectively, by motion of the members present and also as two of the three Signing Officers for our Credit Union account. Two weeks later, when an appointment at the CU could be arranged, Paula, Janis and myself spent rather too long, signing-on there as new Signing Officers for our account (any two of the three). Paula became a member of the neighbourhood CU to make this possible.

Besides all this paperwork, thanks to new Trip Coordinator/Advertiser Diane White and our new Web Site Developer Tarah Reesor, there have been, and promise to be, lots of week-day and weekend trips, lead by member volunteers. Our outdoors program is up and running again after the slow-down at summer's end 2018. We made WKNats annual donations to our two regular beneficiaries by motion at the November GM; many members participated in the Annual Christmas Bird-count coordinated, compiled and submitted by local very knowledgeable, bird enthusiast (but yet not a WKNats member) Craig Sandvig. We also look forward to a June 8th early morning bird-walk and lunch-time BYO picnic in the lower Slocan Valley lead and hosted by long-time WKNA member Peter McIver. Our trusty Editor of "*The Osprey*", Margo Saunders, continues on in her roles of prompting trip reports for the newsletter and bringing important local nature happenings to our attention through its pages and the Google group. Joan Snyder continues on as our rep to BC Nature and as totally committed defender of our Southern Mountain Caribou. (viz. Joan's presentation at the public input session in Nelson, last Tuesday eve together with many voices from the Valhalla Wilderness Committee). Arnold By can be faithfully relied upon to bring his PA system to our gatherings for those many of us with failing hearing.

I still am hoping for at least a Vice-President to step forward at our May-end AGM but am OK with another year as Pres, though the WKNA would be well served by a new person at the helm with more spare energy than I.

My current list of the WKNA members, as of 18, has 51 addresses of which eleven are couples.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Wm. Wood

JOIN/RENEW MEMBERSHIP IN WEST KOOTENAY NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION

Single \$30 Family \$46 Membership covers 2020 calendar year

To be eligible to win a 2021 *single membership* (prize value \$30)
your membership must be paid BY January 15 each year.

Replacement Trail Monitors Urgently Needed! Bluebird nesting box trail monitoring in Castlegar

We sincerely thank Sarah Currie for monitoring the trails for the past 5 years, but due to work pressure, she is no longer able to do this. There is a trail on each side of The Regional Airport, and some boxes on The Selkirk College lands. Sarah is willing to give orientation for the trails. We are hoping that we have a new monitor for the boxes by the Columbia Trail.

Monitor Duties

- Check the boxes in early Spring, before the birds arrive. The most common nesters are Mountain Bluebird, Western Bluebird, Tree Swallows, House Wren.
- Make regular checks during the nesting season from May until August, reporting on the species of bird nesting, and how many young successfully fledge. The results of monitoring are reported SIBTS Southern Interior Bluebird Trail Society.
- Clean out boxes at the end of the season. You will receive a tutorial on the safest and easiest way to do this.
- It is preferable to have two people monitoring each trail, so if you enjoy hiking with a buddy, or your spouse, please consider volunteering.

Contact: Susan Spiller sspiller1977@gmail.com Phone 250 921 5122

FIELD TRIPS

Contact the FIELD TRIP COORDINATOR (see Page 2)
for information on trips and meetings.

PLEASE NOTE:

BRIAN D'EON WILL BE YOUR CONTACT FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

*Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is **September 21, 2019***

*Material accepted by the Editor 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.

TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, January 19, 2019:

Snowshoe to Sunspot cabin -- Despite a forecast of snow and overcast skies, nine WKNats and guests came to snowshoe and were rewarded with good weather. The trip was advertised as going to Sunspot Cabin but we also went to Booty's and Eagle's Nest Cabins, so it was a three cabin tour. We went to Sunspot on the Seven Summits Trail, ate our lunch there, then we returned on the steeper ski out route. Thanks to Diane White and Judy Brown for the photos. Hazel and Ed Beynon were the trip leaders.

Hazel & Ed Beynon





Wednesday, January 30, 2019:

Snowshoe around Nancy Greene Lake -- Six WKNats and a guest arrived at Nancy Greene Lake at about 10:00 am. It was a cloudy day with a temperature of -9 degrees C.. We took the trail to the left (south) side of the lake and as we crossed the bridge over the out flowing creek we saw an American Dipper foraging at the lake outlet. As we proceeded along the trail we identified eight different species of conifers: Engelmann Spruce, Western Larch, Douglas Fir, Subalpine Fir, Lodgepole and White Pine, Western Hemlock and Red Cedar. Bark, needle shape and composition, as well as the general appearance of a particular species were used for identification. We also saw Alder, Cottonwood, Willow, Red Osier Dogwood and Soopolallie. First Nations people used the shiny red berries of the soopolallie to make a type of ice cream. We passed a large spruce tree which had survived a lightning strike. The long spiral scar from that strike was plain to see. When we came to the west boundary of the park the trail turned north around the west end of the lake. In this stretch we saw lynx tracks and many tracks of snowshoe hares. Hares are the principal food of lynx. We also saw some weasel (ermine) tracks. After we reached the north side we headed onto the lake for a different experience, walking on the lake, and for great views, especially that of Old Glory. Other birds that we saw or heard on this outing were evening grosbeaks, mountain chickadees, and white-winged crossbills. Leaders were Hazel and Ed Beynon.

Hazel & Ed Beynon



Nancy Greene Lake, by Diane White



Start of trip, by Diane White



On bridge, by Alison Etter



Struck by lightning,



On the trail, both by Diane White

Saturday, February 9, 2019:

Red Dog & Mosquito Cabins -- On what was the coldest day so far this winter at -17 and wind at 50 KPH, 12 brave snowshoers started out on a trek to the above mentioned cabins. There were 8 Nats and 4 guests; several had bowed out due to weather that day. The wind was not evident in the trees and we took the steep route to Red Dog and then on to Mosquito. The sun was warm through the windows and Hazel built a nice fire. We headed back another route and found the wind brisk in the meadow, but the sun was beautiful and warm once we were in the trees. We made it down to the cars in record time. A great day was enjoyed by all.

Diane White