

NEWS FROM NALT



Our Mission: to support, promote and protect the natural values of land and water in our area.

Newsletter of the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust Society

July 2023

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Hosackia pinnata.

Photo: Lynda Stevens

Harewood Plains Press Release

The Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT) is working with conservation partners to protect the Harewood Plains from development. The plains, located south of the Nanaimo Parkway east of Harewood Mines Road, are an area of thin soils over hard conglomerate rock resulting in open meadows skirted by trees and Coastal Douglas Fir forests. This unique geological feature is home to the City of Nanaimo's floral emblem – the rare *Hosackia pinnata*, along with other at-risk species.

NALT Executive Director Paul Chapman says that the ecological integrity of the plains is threatened by a subdivision proposal recently presented to the City of Nanaimo. On April 18th, an application was submitted for the area of the plains that lies within the city boundary.

Identified as a priority for conservation by NALT as well as other agencies, the Harewood Plains are comprised of Coastal Douglas Fir forest and Garry Oak meadows. Chapman describes the plains as “connected by hydrology to provide an area of rare abundance of forest and meadow flowers. In the spring, the forest floor and meadows progress through a series of colourful shows as plants emerge and bloom.”

NALT and other city environmental groups, including Nature Nanaimo, have formed the Harewood Plains Working Group to generate public awareness, raise funds, and reach out to provincial organizations to explore how the plains can be protected.

Two small city parks are adjacent to the 90 plus-acre property. A 26-acre area located at the eastern most end of the land is protected from development by a conservation covenant.

NALT co-chair Dean Gaudry says it's not enough. “Second only to climate change, nothing imperils habitat as much as development. Roads and foundations will irrevocably interrupt the flow of water across the land which is a key component for the bounty of the plains. The seasonal flow of water and the formation of vernal pools provide the conditions needed by these imperiled plant communities. It is not enough to identify a plant and protect its immediate vicinity. We need to look at what features support that rare plant or insect and protect that ecosystem. Anything less will fail.”

Julia Roberts speaking on behalf of Nature Nanaimo agrees, “Development upslope of the already protected areas will sever the connections that are integral to the health of the plains. We need to follow those connections upslope to identify the area needed to ensure the delicate balance of the plains endures and protect it in its entirety.”

“Everything is on the table,” says Paul Chapman, “This is a place we can't afford to lose.”

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is published by the
Nanaimo & Area Land Trust

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*to support, promote and protect
the natural values of land and water
in our area*

The Nanaimo & Area
Land Trust Society
was registered as a B.C. Society
in 1995, and subsequently was
granted charitable tax status
and the right to hold
conservation covenants.

Charitable tax #:
893193771 RROOO1

Staff

Executive Director:
Paul Chapman
Administrative Assistant:
Nanette Leather
Stewardship Manager:
Linda Brooymans

Contractors

Nursery Coordinator: Susan Fisher
Conservation Covenants Manager:
Emily Barnewall
Financial Manager: Cyndi Pitvor
Cleaning Services: Jen Wilson
Western Painted Turtle Coordinator:
Mandi Jensen

Pro-bono Services

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Investment Management:
Andre Sullivan

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NALT's 28th Annual General Meeting – A Recap

On June 22nd, 34 NALT members gathered in-person, while a few more joined online to attend NALT's 28th Annual General Meeting. Due to some technical glitches, the online experience left much to be desired, but those who attended in person were updated on NALT's financial position, programs and operations. Members present also passed a resolution to add wording to NALT's bylaws as required by the BC Societies Act, and re-elected 4 Board Directors to a two-year term (re-joining the 5 directors midway through their term of service). A common thread throughout the meeting was the many partnerships that NALT engages in to help achieve conservation outcomes. We do better together.

After the business of the meeting concluded, attendees were served Caribbean themed foods from the JLA food truck.

Following this tasty interlude, the keynote presentation was delivered by VIU Political Studies Professor, Lauren Touchant. Lauren spoke of international and national climate change policies and initiatives, and the qualities of the Canadian political structure that provides opportunities for communities to carry out climate change actions and affect climate change policy. The evening ended with the promise that NALT would explore collaboration opportunities with Lauren.

Bottle Drives

Since our last newsletter, we have held two bottle drives. On April 15th, we were all hoping that the forecasted rain and winds would hold off, while on July 15th we all would have loved some rain to fall on our parched landscape.

As it turned out, we remained dry for both events, and our buoyant volunteers managed to cheerfully sort through waves of refundable donations. On April 15th, thanks to the generosity of supporters and passersby, we raised \$1,200 while on July 15th, our stalwart volunteers sorted \$1,950 worth of bottles, cans and cartons. We also received nearly \$900 from folks dropping off their refundables and putting them on the NALT account. The proceeds from both events are allocated in support of watershed stewardship initiatives such as the School Water Stewards or [Western Painted Turtle Ambassador project](#).

Our next bottle drive is scheduled for October 14th, in the parking lot beside Lucky's Liquor Store at the Country Club Centre.

Thanks to the donors, our volunteers, Lucky's Liquor Store, the Country Club Centre and Nanaimo Regional Recycling.



Trails Named to Commemorate the Contributions of Two of NALT's Founders.

Two of NALT's founders have had trails named in their memory in area parks.

Founding Board Director Barbara Hourston (1933-2020) has had a trail named in her honour in Linley Valley Park. Concerns about development near Cottle Lake was a catalyst to the creation of the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust and Barbara was one of the community leaders of the campaign to raise awareness and ultimately acquire the property for City parkland.

Gail's Trail

Gail's Trail is named for Gail Adrienne, founding executive director of the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT). Gail's profound influence helped realize many of our community's parks and protected spaces.

Gail led the efforts to secure Mount Benson. She organized a broad coalition of community support, including a series of fundraisers such as the *Music for the Mountain* concerts. After many negotiations over multiple years, the land for Mount Benson Regional Park was acquired. A conservation covenant is in place to protect its natural values.

Thanks to Gail's vision, we all get to enjoy the view.



Gail Adrienne



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO



BARBARA HOURSTON TRAIL

Barbara Hourston Trail is named for a founding Board Director of the Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT). Barbara was a community activist involved in the launching of many groups and initiatives, including early efforts to protect Linley Valley as parkland.

In 1992 Barbara, organized the Linley Valley Park Committee and began a campaign to protect the land surrounding Cottle Lake as a City Park. Signatures were gathered and funds were raised, and in 2003, NALT partnered with the City of Nanaimo to purchase and secure the first park in Linley Valley.

Barbara was a steadfast, happy warrior for the environment and a champion for our community.



Gail Adrienne (1944-2020) was the first and longest serving executive director of NALT and was the face of many campaigns to protect habitat and secure lands for parks. Mount Benson Regional Park's Gail's Trail is named in her honour. Gail's Trail runs across the mountain and connects the various routes to the summit, much as Gail fostered community connections during the campaign to acquire the land that now makes up the Park.

*Never doubt that a small group of
thoughtful, committed citizens can
change the world: indeed,
it's the only thing that ever has.
~ Margaret Mead*

News from the NALT Native Plant Nursery July 2023

It's Summer

After a very busy spring of sales, guided walks, packaging seeds, watering and tending young plants, now we move into the second half of the year.

All of a sudden we have LOTS of stock and fewer sales. Hey, it's dry and warm.

We sold A LOT of seeds, and now they are ready to harvest again. The cycle continues. Plants to water and weed. Some volunteers are off on holidays; while one VIU student is volunteering with us in summer while he is on school break. Thanks, Salah. If you're looking for particular plants and seeds, check out our inventory at www.nalt.bc.ca or visit the Nursery Wednesday 10 – 3 or Saturday 11 – 3 at 3145 Frost Road. You will be welcome!

Planning for Fall

If your group is interested in a visit to the Parnassian Woods that Peter and Anneke VanKerkoerle donated to NALT, just email us at plants@nalt.bc.ca and ask to arrange an interpretive walk. If your group is interested in a native plant related workshop, you can request a class at plants@nalt.bc.ca.

A Summer Story

Once upon a time an "empty" terracotta pot hung on the wall outside the nursery office. Thinking to plant something special, Bob took the pot off the wall and found a beautiful nest with 4 brown-toned eggs. OOOH! The pot went back up on the wall, just in case.

Soon after, we spotted a junco carrying worms to the nest. A quick peak revealed 3 "beautiful" half feathered chicks with wide open beaks.

Last week when we arrived at the Nursery, the area was quiet, and we started using the office door once again. The 3 chicks had fledged with 1 egg remaining.

We'll admire the artful nest a while before replanting the pot. And we'll remember the wonderful junco saga.

Wishing you all a happy, "plentiful" summer from the Nursery crew.



Dark-eyed junco chicks.

Photo: Deryck Cowling



A celebration of colourful native plants at the Harewood Plains.

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Got Bats?

Since last year NALT has taken on the role as Mid-Island Coordinator of the BC Community Bat Program. The objective of the program is to carry out education and outreach in the community about bats, their habitat needs and how property owners can live with bat colonies. The program also seeks to identify roost sites and carry out bat counts at those sites as a way to keep track of bat populations in our area. The Mid-Island region stretches south from Bowser to Chemainus and west to Port Alberni. Areas in the region that are known to be bat 'hot spots' are Horne Lake, Nanoose and Cedar/ Yellowpoint. Since 2022 we have identified 10 new roost sites thanks to the public sharing their knowledge. If you know of a roost site, please report it to stewardship@nalt.bc.ca or midisland@bcbats.ca.

Some species of bats will readily use human-built structures as day roosts and for raising their offspring. Bats can fit in tiny crevices and will use your siding, flashing, soffits, chimney, attic, shed or barn as a safe, warm and dry place to rest if it is in the right location. Since bats do not chew or modify the structures they use for roosting, you don't need to worry about destruction of your property, though it is important that your tiny tenants not find access to any living spaces used by humans. In the majority of cases, bats and humans can safely co-exist, and for certain species, such as the Little Brown Myotis, stewardship and management of these roosts has become vital to their survival.

If you have bats in your area and you want to provide additional roosting habitat, or if you need to exclude the bats that are using your attic or chimney, you can install a bat box. It is recommended to source your bat box from the BC Community Bat program, or if you are handy, to build your own box using plans available on the site. This ensures that the box is well suited for the weather conditions in our region and the species of bats that are found there. It is important that the box have a minimum of 12 feet clearance below and face south or south east to ensure high solar exposure. Keep the box in a location that doesn't have branches, poles or other buildings in front of it. Then, register your box at bcbats.ca to help us learn more about bat boxes as a roost habitat site.

Not all bat species in our region use bat boxes or human-built structures for roosting. Some species prefer to use natural structures such as trees and tree snags, cliffs and rock crevices. For example, the Hoary bat and the Silver-haired bat roost in the foliage of trees or in snags. For bat species that show flexibility in the use of natural or human-built structures it is often the maternity colonies (where females raise their pups) that are found in human-built structures. That is because the larger spaces and weather protection allow for the large groups and the huddling that bats use to keep warm while roosting. In the past, old-growth trees with large rot holes, woodpecker holes, splits or hollow trunks, were the primary source of maternity colony habitat. In our region, these trees can be hard to find.

Thanks to the generous support of wildlife research biologist Scott Wilson, NALT has had the opportunity to acoustically monitor several sites in our region for bat presence and abundance. Thus far, we have recorded 9 species of bats in our region: Townsend's big-eared bats, Big Brown bats, Hoary bats, Silver-haired bats, California Myotis, Little Brown Myotis, Yuma Myotis, Long-legged Myotis and Long-eared Myotis. Our website hosts a map with this data available to the public. This data helps us to understand which bats use what types of habitats and in what areas in our region.

Do you want to help out with bat stewardship? Send an email to stewardship@nalt.bc.ca and help us with bat counts, acoustic monitoring and other projects.



School Water Stewards

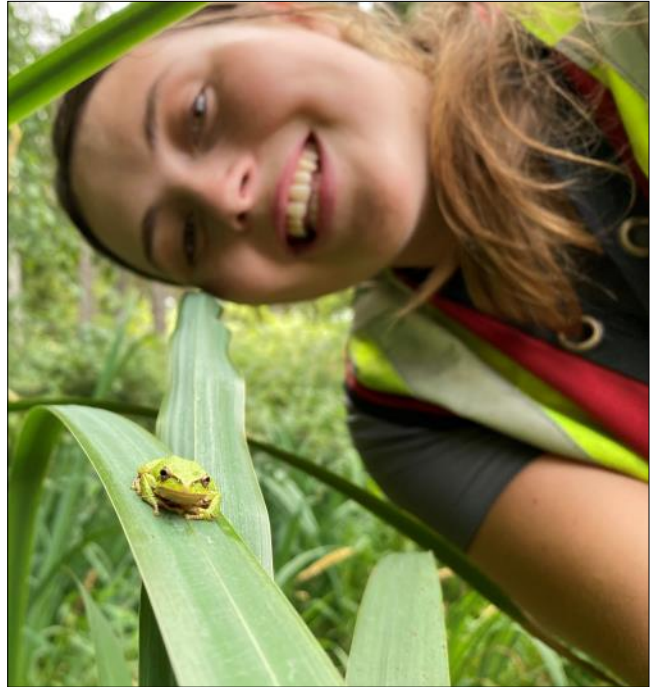
NALT's most recent School Water Stewards Coordinator, Emily Wharin, has moved on to employment more closely related to her long-term employment pursuits. We will miss Emily's positive energy, tech savvy and creativity. Good luck Emily!

Although it has proven difficult to both fund and staff this vital component of our education and outreach program, we will continue to search for innovative ways to sustain it. In the short-term, Linda Brooymans will be increasing her involvement with the program for the beginning of the 2023-24 school year. The plan is to have sufficient funding in place by January to once again fill a full-time coordinator position.

To give you an idea of the scope and reach of the School Water Stewards program, here is an excerpt from Emily's report prepared for the recent AGM on June 22nd:

I joined NALT as the School Water Stewards Coordinator part way through 2022. My arrival in October lined up with start of our School Water Stewards lesson delivery for the 2022/2023 school year. This year of the School Water Stewards Program (SWS) was a learning experience for me and a chance to bring a fresh perspective to our existing lessons, along with the addition of a few new activities and lessons with the help of my colleagues.

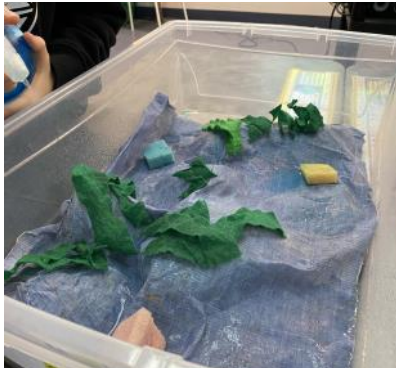
One of our most notable additions to the program this year was an updated Water Quality lesson for the younger grades we work with. This lesson now features a natural filtration activity which was added to the lesson plan by Marni Brown (former NALT contract educator and board member). This hands-on activity has been very successful and has become a great way to connect students to ecosystems that provide natural filtration services such as wetlands and forests.



The other exciting addition to the SWS lesson offerings this year was a Groundwater lesson, developed by Linda Brooymans (NALT Stewardship Coordinator). This lesson allows students to gain a hands-on understanding of how groundwater works. It introduces students to the concepts of aquifers, infiltration, wells, depletion, porosity, and permeability. The lesson has been an especially great option for classes from School District 69, many of whom rely on groundwater as their source of drinking water.



This school year we also made some improvements to our existing lessons. For example, we upgraded the kits used in our Watershed Model Building lesson by using more sustainable materials. Previously this lesson involved using single-use materials including paper and tinfoil to build a watershed model. We replaced those materials with reusable sensory foam and beeswax wraps to create the topography of our watershed models. The switch has been well received by the students, who have been having a lot of fun with the tactile experience of the sensory foam.



In the 2022/2023 school year we worked with 25 classes from 7 different elementary schools in School District 68, including Syuwéřct, Georgia Avenue, Frank Ney, Hammond Bay, Quarterway, Brechin, and Departure Bay Elementary. In School District 69 we worked with 14 classes from 6 different elementary schools including Nanoose Bay, Arrowview, Errington, CEAP (Collaborative Education Alternative Program), Bowser, and Oceanside Elementary. Amongst these classes we completed a total of 105 School Water Stewards lessons.

We also completed 13 stewardship projects amongst our participant classes. These included a variety of projects such as, invasive species removal, riparian planting, salamander monitoring, In-stream restoration/debris clearing, Western Painted Turtle surveys, bird counts, plant phenology monitoring, and storm drain painting. A few of these projects were new to the program this year, most notably the plant phenology monitoring – which involved a grade 6/7 class monitoring specific plant species two times per week to track the changes in each plant's phenology (growth – noting stages such as budding, leaf buds breaking, growing in leaf size, flower buds, flowers etc.).

Thank you to the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) for their funding of the SWS program this year, including a bussing fund which allowed us to take 8 classes from School District 69 on field trips to local water features that were not within walking distance of their schools. I would also like to thank Melissa Thomlinson from the RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program, for the positive collaboration between our programs such as assisting us with the delivery of our SWS lessons and including us in the delivery of the RDN Field Trips to the Nanaimo and Englishman Watersheds.

Thanks to our contract educators Marni Brown and Harry Tassel for the help delivering lessons that required extra support, and to Linda Brooymans for training me to deliver the lessons and supporting me along the way.

~ THANK YOU ALL ~

Many thanks to all the individuals, organizations and businesses who have donated their time and skills as volunteers, contributed items or services, made financial donations, renewed or started a membership, or have begun a monthly pre-authorized contribution (PAC).

March 4 to July 27

Individual Donations & New Memberships – NALT: Bertha Abma, Lynne Alton, Bill Bailey, Rhonda Bailey, Connie Baird, Emily Barnewall, David Blackbourn, Daisy Blumensaat, Doug & June Bogle, Doug & Michele Catley, Marilyn Cheveldayoff, Constance Clifford, Carley Colclough, Tiggy Cooper, Derede & Frank Dalziel, Julie Devereux, Nancy Dickinson, Marie Donovan, Blake Drummond-Hay, Hilary Eastmure, Gillian Elcock, Bob Fenton, Inge Fleet, Norah Forrest, Janice Furevick, Gina Gall, Eliza Gardiner, Gillian Guy, Brenda Grice & Douglas Anderson, Louise Hamilton, David & Connie Hargrave, Cornelia Hermus, Kim Hogg, Marilyn Huffman, Chris Jaeger, Oliver James, Reta Johnson & Jim Bell, Barb Kerfoot, Dorothee Kieser, Jessica Kirby Ink Ltd, Ian Knipe, Beth Le Baron, Bo Staffan Lindgren, Jessie Longo, Janeane MacGillivray, Gail Matt, William J. Merilees & family, Nanaimo Hatchery, Taylor Nielsen, Mary Peters, Janice Porteous, Wendy Mae Van Oldenborgh, Jean Paterson, Sheila Patterson, Steve Romanik, June Ross, Derek Rundell, Jane Saxton, Joy Schile, Nicole Slater, Janet Snelgrove, Lynda Stevens, Faith Takishita, Akin Tekin, Christy Thomson, Jack Tieleman, Judith Tye, Erik & Bobbie Warners, Caroline Wabisca, Norm Wagenaar, Dorothy Wallace, John Weir, Wally Wells, Barbara Wildman-Spencer, Brianna Wright

Donations – Donate a Car Canada: Eliza Gardiner

Donations – Harewood Plains Campaign: Anonymous (3), Tiggy Cooper, Julie Devereux, Barbara Lee Grimmer, Oliver James, Jessica Kirby Ink Ltd, Lynda Stevens, Faith Takishita, Caroline Wabisca, Brianna Wright

Donations – Nanaimo River Property Acquisition: Janeane MacGillivray, Gail Matt

Donations – Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable: Mosaic Forest Management

Donations - Westwood Ridges - Mt Benson Acquisition Phase II:

Donations – In honour of: Gail Matt in Honour of Janeane MacGillivray

Donations – In memory of:

Natural Abundance Native Plant Nursery - Donations and In-kind Goods: Derrick Grimmer & Lynne Brooks, Carol Elder, Richard Hankin, Craig Pearse & Brian Banks with Nanaimo Hatchery, Janice Johnson, Dorothee Kieser, Derek Rundell, Brian Short, Nikki Toxopeus, Sean Wong with the Ministry of Transportation

Business & Organization Donations – NALT: Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

New Pre-authorized Contributions: Nanette Leather & Steve Howie, Joan McIntyre, Lynda Stevens

Increased Pre-authorized Contribution: Ian Gartshore

Volunteers since March 4th, 2023:

Lynne Alton, Salah Baker, Holly Blackburn, Daisy Blumensaat, Doug Bogle, June Bogle, David Bradford, Linda Brooymans, Myrna Broughton, Colin Brown, Marni Brown, Ryan Brown, Paul Chapman, Joe Clark, Iain Colquhoun, Caryl Covey, Carter Cowling, Deryck Cowling, Sam Blackstaffe, Dave Cutts, Gerry Davis, Julie Devereux, Kathy Doyle, David Drakeford, Brent Eaton, Meagan Evans, Bob Fenton, Shirley Fisher, Nick Fisher, Susan Fisher, Lana Fitzpatrick, Yuan Gao, Dean Gaudry, Lee Grimmer, Robert Haist, Jean-Michel Hanssens, Sylvie Hawkes, Pat Hogue, Dan Hooper, Kevan Hudson, Denis Hughes, Mandi Jensen, Peter Jeremy, Bob Kissinger, Ian Knipe, Gayle Kosh, Christian Laroche, Nina Locke, David Mackenzie, Eric MacNeill, Ilithyia Marshall, Laura McLeod, Wayne Morgan, Linda Nichol, Kelly Nixon, Veronica Nixon, Janice Porteous, Sharon Preston, Howard Redekopp, Mika Reid, Harriet Rueggeberg, Debbie Sifton, Gary Smart, Lynda Stevens, Harry Tassell, James Taylor, Shawna Taylor, Jack Tieleman, Nikki Toxopeus, Judith Tye, Coco vanZyl, Alanna Vivani, Kerry Wallace, Bonnie Wacholtz, Norm Wagenaar, Cole Wangen, Jenny Webb, Wally Wells, Bob Williams, Fraser Wilson, Amy Wilson, Scott Wilson, Guy Wilson.

The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it. ~ Robert Swan



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please return completed form to
NANAIMO & AREA LAND TRUST

- 1. EMAIL:** admin@nalt.bc.ca
2. PRINT & POST: #8 - 140 Wallace St,
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Would you prefer to remain anonymous? ☐ yes

Nanaimo & Area Land Trust is a Registered Charitable Organization and tax receipts will be issued for contributions of \$20 or more.

NALT does not sell, trade or loan our database of donors, members or contacts to individuals or other organizations.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!