



Denman Conservancy Association

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 60, Denman Island, B.C. V0R 1T0

August 2023

Bibliophiles, Book Lovers, Browsers and Buyers

!!!! DCA Annual Book Sale !!!!

When: Every Saturday in September from 9:30 to 12:30

Where: DCA room in the Old School

How: All book sales are by donation. This is a major DCA Fundraiser!

The Annual DCA Book Sale starts on September 2

We literally have thousands of books. They are semi sorted into non-fiction categories everyone can enjoy. To name a few:

Local Writers

Canadiana

British Columbia

Science

Philosophy

GARDENING!

COOKING!

Spirituality

Religion

Games

Travel

And many more....

Then, we have hundreds and hundreds of fiction books. All sorted by author, with a special nod to Science Fiction- in a class (and many boxes) by itself.

Please come and enjoy the browse, talk to literary strangers and friends during the search for that book you've had on your mind that is out of print. It's here!

There will be several fun containers into which you can place your lovely, heartfelt donations to keep DCA doing the important conservation, outreach, education and lots of other really fun stuff for our Island and our descendants.



Chickadee Lake (looking southish)

Wildfire Threat at Chickadee Lake

There have been at least 2 serious wildfires at Chickadee Lake in past years. Another was

prevented when an islander intervened to stop someone from starting a fire in the dry forest to make toast.

One person from a team of 7 neighbours goes out every dusk to make sure there are no campfires or smokers. They collect trash, including cigarette butts on trails. [As an aside, cigarette butts are the most abundant form of plastic waste in the world, with about 4.5 trillion individual butts polluting the environment.]

At 35 acres, Chickadee is the largest body of open water on Denman Island. It's one of the last undeveloped lakes in the Islands Trust Area. The Lake is the headwaters of the salmon-bearing Beadnell Creek system, flowing into the Strait of Georgia. It provides an overwintering/nesting/resting site for waterfowl and migratory birds on the main West Coast Flyway. The Lake and its surroundings have varied habitats to support a rich abundance of plant & animal life, including species-at-risk. It's a fresh water drinking source for many Denman families. And, of course, it's a well-loved, scenic swimming and strolling place.

Dogs must be on leash. We ask everyone to take care of this special place.

On the Land

Spring and early summer means Conservation Covenant monitoring visits. It's always so nice to wander around in these protected areas noting ongoing changes, whilst also spotting which vegetative wonders are in bloom. Although, with such an early onset of summertime dry conditions and temperatures this year, many of the usual suspects had already had their moments in the sun and were looking a little worse-for-wear by the time I stumbled upon them. This was in stark contrast to last year, where the 'spring' monitoring kit-list included insulated gumboots, puffy jacket, and woolly gloves.

As we prematurely careened into the hazy days of summer, our dedicated volunteer team of American Bullfrog monitors once again mobilized to keep eyes and ears out in Denman's wetlands and lakes for signs (male mating calls) of this potential menace. I'm glad to report that as of writing, we have had no reports of Bullfrogs this year. Mating season has now passed, but it's still important to keep our eyes peeled for any of those exceptionally large tadpoles or frogs.

Volunteers have been busy helping with work to establish a trail system within Raven Woods and Wetlands, with the aim of connecting the Pickles Road trailhead to the Settlement Lands trail network. Due to the extreme fire risk, this work is currently being done with hand tools which somewhat slows progress; however, we hope to have the planned trails and creek crossing in place by later this year.



Hand cutting of obstacles by intrepid trail blazers in Raven Woods

DCA's Winter Wren Wood restoration project to revitalize the former parking and turnaround areas has started. Volunteer work bees are taking place to relocate and reuse the old split-rail fencing to protect the restoration areas. We will be working to slowly build soil and replant native species in this Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem once we (fingers crossed) get some decent rain in the Fall.

We are always looking for extra pairs of hands, feet, brains (?) to help with all these various projects, so if you aren't already on the 'Andy's gonna bug you'

email list, and any of the above sounds remotely interesting, please get in touch or say hi to the lovely folks at the DCA table at Saturday markets.

One of my favourite joys of this time of year is getting lulled to sleep by the swooshing Nighthawks, interspersed with the occasional questioning of our local Barred Owls. So, I'll sign off with an owl question: What did the prescriptivist owl say?

Whom, whom.

Andy B.
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Birdathon Results

For those of you who missed the summary in the Flagstone, the Birdathon took place in the spring. It was designed to be fun, educational and raise funds for the DCA. This was written by organiser and master birder Ken Madsen, who has generously let me "use" (plagiarize) his words for the Newsletter. "When the starting bell for the Birdathon went off, Wendy and I were waiting at the Denman West Ferry Terminal. No, we were not there for a protest against BC Ferries, we were expecting to find the Rock Pigeons that always hang around down there. The Purple Martins were there and so were Barn Swallows, but no pigeons. When it comes to birding, you can't expect the expected. However, the unexpected flies by when you least expect it. Here are a few of the minor miracles that happened during this year's Birdathon.

Lyndsay Fraser, a relative newcomer to Denman, heard a Sora squawking in the wetland near Chickadee Lake (yes, you can identify birds by their songs and calls) and saw Caspian Terns hanging out with a couple of Great Blue Herons on an exposed sandbar. She and her fellow birder found their last two birds just two minutes before the end of the Birdathon, described her experience as "a blast" and raised hundreds of dollars for the Denman Conservancy. Lyndsay's Sora ID pushed the total number of species this year to 93.

Jenna Rudolph cruised around the island on her e-bike and human-powered bike and saw an Anna's Hummingbird dive-bombing a Barred Owl (the owl weighs about 200 times as much as the tiny hummer). Jenna identified 65 species, and although many birders found almost as many, Jenna won the prize for most birds – all without burning any fossil fuels.

Dennis Forsyth, who is having what he describes as a "very birdy year," found almost half of his impressive total by just sitting in his yard. He also hosted several visitors who added to their Birdathon totals with the finches, warblers and swallows that frequent his home.



Flamingo- one of the few species NOT seen on Denman this year during the Birdathon.

Kaia Russell (our "feature birder") was also the youngest birder in the Birdathon. Mike Morrell met up with her and watched Turkey Vultures and crows feeding on a dead sea lion and Kaia had a great look at a bright and beautiful Yellow Warbler. When Wendy and I met up with Kaia there were so many Warbling Vireos singing it was hard to hear anything else. It was impressive to see how quickly Kaia learned birdsongs, including Olive-sided Flycatchers belting out their songs which can be loosely translated as "Quick! Three beers!" Through the generosity of the Denman Islanders who sponsored her, Kaia raised more than \$1,500 for DCA.

Thanks to the birders in this year's Birdathon who reduced their use of fossil fuels in an impressive manner. They motored along in electric cars, rode

bicycles and e-bikes and hiked along trails. Thanks to Kaia Russell, Dennis Forsyth, Mike Morrell, Jenny Balke, Jane Lighthall, Erika Bland, Steve Carballeira and Wendy Boothroyd who helped make the Birdathon a success. Thanks to everyone who sponsored a birder and helped raise money. Thanks to those who donated prizes.

The Birdathon raised over \$5,200!

Batty Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who has counted their bats this summer. All this information helps us learn about our bats!! Bat boxes are being used and our colonies in buildings (those bigger areas that bats prefer and where they can better survive) are hanging on. Our mosquito population seems to be increasing so it's great that our bats are still at work helping to control them. Also, thanks to all the 27 or 28 folks who attended our recent bat walk hosted by the project's coordinator and the bats' new Ambassador, Sadie Gibbs. Lastly, the Bats thank our beavers for keeping water in ponds for those drinkers-on-the-wing!



Townsend's big-eared bat Photo Heather Johnson

Beaver Buzz

DCA's beaver project folks have been at work, monitoring two important culverts plus collecting beaver spotter and beaver problem information. As expected, the water levels dropped over the summer and the remote cameras caught a variety of other species besides the occasional beaver. The fall will mean more beaver activity! Suggested solutions for beaver problems to come...

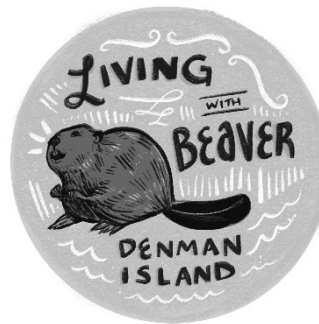
Meanwhile – our beavers are doing their best to maintain water levels and protect Denman from the ravages of fire. Beavers stop fires in their tracks and even redirect fires! The water in their ponds and dug-channels soaks gradually into the landscape, keeping it moist, green and fire-resistant, while also providing firebreaks to hinder wildfire-spread. As they say 'Can't start a campfire with soggy sticks.'

BEAVERS= FIRE-FIGHTERS!

Great video – suitable for everyone!

By Dr. E Fairfax

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAM94B73bzE>



logo by Leya Anderson

Save The Date

**The dates have been set for the next
DCA Garden Tour!**

**2024 Garden Tour – June 15 and 16
Watch the Newsletter for ongoing
updates.**