



Denman Conservancy Association

NEWSLETTER

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

May 2024

*** 2024 Home and Garden Tour ***

9 AM to 4 PM, JUNE 15 and 16

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

2024 Home and Garden Tour

Step into a world of natural beauty and architectural wonders at the Denman Island Home & Garden Tour, a cherished tradition since 1992. Designed to support the Denman Conservancy Association, this biennial event promises an extraordinary journey through 12 unique homes and gardens, each telling a story of conservation and creativity. From beachfront cottages to lush hobby farms, each property offers a unique glimpse into the Island's natural beauty and creative spirit.

Among the notable landmarks is the legendary botanical haven of Sandy and Des Kennedy, revered in numerous television broadcasts, literary works, and periodicals. Also commemorated in print is "Mossy Hollow" the home of Bee Balm, featured in Lloyd Kahn's book, *Builders of the Pacific Coast*.

Take leisurely strolls through cascading gardens, serene ponds, and wooded ravines, encountering rustic abodes nestled amidst ferns and forests, as well as modern dwellings showcasing self-sustainability with solar panels, water conservation systems, and beachfront decks. Experience hobby farms that champion sustainability and craftsmanship, complete with workshops, historic barns, ponds, and solar energy solutions.

Become enchanted by the beauty and creativity of log homes adorned with stained glass, local artwork, orchards, gardens, saunas, and lychgates. Lose yourself in the charm of renovated cottages boasting tranquil geodesic domes, gardens brimming with herbs and fruit trees, and modern kitchens overlooking backyard havens with hot tubs.

Don't let this opportunity slip away! Secure your tickets today and embark on a journey celebrating the splendor, innovation, and unique island spirit of Denman Island.

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased on-line at the DCA website (denmanconservancy.org) or at various venues: Garden Works (Courtenay), Denman Hardware (Denman Island), Hornby Gas Bar (Hornby Island), KenDoor (Qualicum), Cultivate (Parksville), Weinberg's (Buckley Bay), Blue Heron Books (Comox)

Cyclists: organizers would like to see cyclists take over the Island during this event, so as an incentive, there will be a free draw for those riding on the tour, to win a basket of prizes. In the past, we've had over 100 cyclists. To enter the cyclists' draw, simply enter your name at the Arts Centre in downtown Denman Island.

Your Good Condition Used Books are Wanted!

DCA will once again this summer have a giant used book sale to raise money for conservation on Denman Island. Denman Islanders are so generous in donating books that we have trouble getting rid of them all, so this year we are going to start the sale in the middle of August, so that hopefully some of our many summer visitors will decide to wander up the stairs of the Old School and buy books. In order to have plenty of time to sort the books, we're going to start collecting books now. So, if you have books that are in good, resellable condition, that you would like to donate to a great cause, please give us a call. We'll either pick up books at your place, or let you know where you can drop them off.

Phone Numbers:

Stirling Fraser: 250-335-1009

DD Fuchs -250-335-1413

Susan-Marie Yoshihara: 250-335-0253

Also, if you're interested in helping us sort books this summer, we'd love to hear from you. We hope you'll plan to join us for the sale on Saturday mornings starting August 17, at the Conservancy Room in the Old School. And remember all books will be available by donation.

Preserving Fillongley Park: Community-Led Efforts to Avoid Herbicide Use

English holly is prevalent across Denman, and whilst it exudes holiday charm, this non-native species spreads rapidly, outcompeting native flora and disrupting local ecosystems. Fillongley Park has been no exception to the relentless spread of the prickly forest-dweller, where over decades the plant has spread throughout the moist and shady areas of the park, outcompeting other native species, and surrounding the old homestead meadow. Conventional methods for English holly control are reliant on chemical herbicides because of its prevalence and tenacity. However, due to the importance and sensitive nature of the salmon-bearing Beadnell Creek and riparian area within Fillongley Park, passionate community members assembled to address the holly infestation without

resorting to introducing potentially harmful chemicals into the watershed.

Beginning in November 2018, in collaboration with the DIRA Pesticide Free Committee, planning commenced for a three-day long volunteer holly removal work-bee, which was subsequently carried out from January 28-30, 2019. Roughly 2,300 individual plants were removed over these three days, by 25 volunteers, who contributed a total of 78 hours of volunteer time. This is in addition to the

volunteer hours spent on coordination. Overall, this trial was successful in removing most holly plants within the trial area.

Volunteer work bees continued in January 2020, with 29 volunteers who came out to the "Great English Holly Removal Work Bee", removing hundreds more Holly plants around the meadow area.

Since 2020, BC Parks have provided funding to hire a contractor each year to continue removal of large holly trees in the harder-to-reach areas of the park. This work was carried out by community members Glen Kraushar in 2020-22, and Rowan Hobson in 2023-24.

Every year since 2020, DCA organizes a small volunteer work bee to continue removing spreading holly plants and snipping off any regrowth shoots from previously cut stumps.

Although the battle to control English Holly will need to continue, efforts thus far have proven successful at reducing the presence of the invasive species within the park and limiting its further spread, while preventing the introduction of chemical herbicides to



this cherished area of the island. None of which would have been possible without the dedication of passionate community members.....thank you!

THE PERENNIAL CHALLENGE OF DOGS VS. WILDLIFE ARRIVES AT ISFELD SECONDARY SCHOOL

Denman Conservancy Association (DCA) always participates in the annual Isfeld Eco-Faire along with other Comox Valley environmental groups. This year, DCA 's booth was on the theme of keeping wildlife safe from dogs. As students visited the booth, some filled out a short survey. The 35 respondents wrote:

- No dogs should run free in conservation areas (100%).
- Dogs must be leashed in all conservation areas (100%).
- No dogs should be permitted in sensitive conservation areas, such as wetlands (94%).



Students at the DCA Booth at Isfeld

The students were engaged and thoughtful, having lots of ideas on how to keep wildlife safe in conservation areas including:

- Be stricter; fines or tickets; grace period, then fines
- Rules against dogs causing a ruckus
- Show people what nature looks like after being disrupted
- Dogs should be constantly supervised; with their owners at all times.
- Install trail cameras
- More signs & posters like “dogs = danger to wild-life;”

- Education for dog owners – radio, newspapers, schools, social media about the danger dogs pose to wildlife; make them feel bad/guilty
- Pamphlets about nature & why conservation is important
- Conservation officers during peak periods; volunteers monitor the area
- Create dog parks
- Use humor and fun

DCA representatives were privileged to talk to young men and women who may become the environmental leaders of tomorrow and to whom our precious planet and its wild spaces are entrusted.



New sign to be installed at RGM kiosks

Welcoming Back our Batty Bug-eaters!

The BC Community Bat Program's Gets New Denman Hornby Bat Project Coordinator

Sadie Gibbs becomes our new coordinator!

The Denman Hornby Bat Project has been active for the last seven years and we are so fortunate that the next generation of bat advocate/enthusiasts is keen to lead the project into the future. Our bat project is part of a larger BC group...the BC Community Bat Program. This program began with young biologists in BC's interior actively educating about bats and the need for bat conservation. Gradually bat-keepers in other areas joined and it became a very active province-wide volunteer association. I've often thought if all species had such an energetic, enthusiastic group, all our wildlife would be in better shape!

First 2024 Bat Rescue!

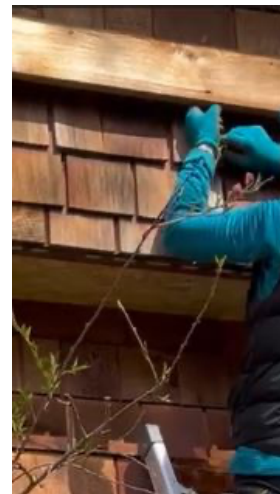
A bat-friendly land-owner discovered bats when removing a piece of siding near the roof during a remodeling project. The Bat Project was called... The owner kindly created a new temporary bat-home in an ideal location out of the way of the construction. The owner had carefully saved bats that had fallen from or were clinging to the siding. They were placed in a box – using gloves! Other bats were rescued in a sheet held taught beneath the siding boards. The bats were moved to their new temporary home. This move allowed the bats to rest in safety for the day, although they will likely choose their own new home, after checking out the neighbourhood at night.



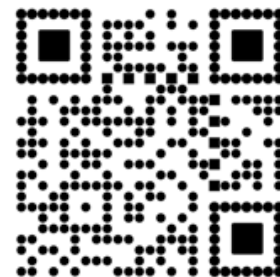
Rescued Bat



New temporary bat home



Bat transfer in progress



Scan to access DCA website