



NEWSLETTER

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

Oct. 2024

BEST BOOK SALE EVER!!!

Many Thanks for the Best Book Sale Ever

The great success of DCA's book sale this year is due both to the generosity of the Denman community and to a super group of volunteers who spent many, many hours sorting books. And we can't forget the Hornby Island Community Fund, who after their book sale, donated as many of their left-over books, as we could pack into the back of a pick-up truck. But the Hornby books are only the beginning, because Denman Islanders are great readers, and always donate a huge variety of excellent books.

To attract some of Denman's summer residents and visitors, this year the book sale started in mid-August. The sale continued throughout the month of September, and the extended dates were well worth it. The sale brought in \$5197.05 in donations! All those recycled books will be recycled once again, as our leftovers will now be donated to the Free Store or to the Rotary Club for their book sale.

Many thanks to everyone who donated books, sorted books and to everyone who came and bought books!

Markets, Membership, and Tee Shirts

This summer we had a great spot at the market and DCA Board members were at our table almost every Saturday morning. Occasionally though it was just too rainy, so we hope no one came looking for us on those rare weekends when we opted to stay home in our warm, dry houses.

Our newly revised map of protected lands on Denman Island was on display this summer and it was a big drawing card, attracting both residents and visitors who wanted to talk with us about walking trails and conservation on Denman Island. They were also attracted by our "Forest Community" tee shirts designed by Denman Islander Jane Fawkes. If you missed the chance to buy one of these ever-popular Tee shirts, they are on sale year-round in the Craft Store, for which we are very appreciative.



The market is always our best opportunity for Board members to chat with community members and Island visitors and either encourage them to renew their memberships or to become members for the

first time. In late November we will be sending out our membership letter, but if you don't receive one and would like to become a DCA member, we'll be selling memberships and Tee shirts at the Xmas Craft Fair and look forward to seeing everyone there.

Damage to the Komasa Bluffs – Denman's Coastal Treasure

The photos accompanying this article depict recent excavation on the Komasa Bluffs. Digging into the Bluffs is both environmentally damaging, and highly dangerous to those who disturb the unstable and shifting Quadra Sands. The creation of the 3 caves involved concerted labour and a shovel was retrieved from the site.



What we know about Denman's Coastal Treasure and why it matters when humans senselessly harm it.

Stretching 5 km along Denman's northeastern edge, the Komasa Bluffs soar 100 metres above the waters of the Strait of Georgia.

The Bluffs are characterized by rock and sediment coastal cliffs, rare 18,000-year-old marine fossils, veteran trees, old second growth, snags, and fallen trees for wildlife habitat.

The Bluffs, composed of Quadra Sands, contain what hydrologists speculate is the largest groundwater aquifer on Denman. The Bluff ecosystem is a significant component of the diverse and highly productive inter-tidal and sub-tidal region of the Strait of Georgia in that vicinity.



Shore-birds rest and forage in the shelter of the Bluffs during their journey along the Pacific Flyway. Off-shore, over-wintering and breeding waterfowl preen and forage as mink, river otter, and black tail deer make their way along the beach.

Since 2006, Denman Conservancy Association (DCA) has held a Conservation Covenant on the Komasa Bluffs. According to Taara Environmental who undertook the Baseline Report of the Covenant Area, "The ecological significance of the Covenant Area cannot be overstated."

The Bluffs are privately owned. DCA and the landholders entered into a legal agreement (Covenant) to protect, preserve, and conserve the area as close to its natural state as possible and thus, prevent any use of the 60.3ha Covenant Area that interferes with its natural state. There a significant penalty for breaching the terms of the Covenant. DCA monitors the Covenant Area to ensure that it remains undisturbed and along with the landholders, we are dismayed by its damage. It is noted that the Covenant specifies that there is no right of public access to the area to prevent disturbance to this Island treasure.

We hope that the Denman Community, along with visitors to the island, can appreciate and support the ongoing protection of this sensitive and unique ecosystem

On the Land

In the time since our last newsletter, the rains subsided and then returned; the Nighthawks came and went; the ferns unfurled and then withered; the moss...remained. And now attention turns once again to pumpkin spiced chai lattes and where did I put my cozy socks?

Thankfully, one species that we have no evidence of arriving again this year was invasive American Bullfrogs. Thanks to the dedicated volunteers keeping an eye and ear out around Denman's wetlands and lakes, we can report no confirmed presence of this potentially disastrous island hopper.

If you've walked the Railway Grade Marsh trail over the past few weeks, you'll have noticed some new and improved signage at the information kiosks at each end, along with some trail and drainage improvements at the southern portion of the trail. As the water levels begin to rise again this fall, more trail work will take place to improve the remaining northern section and make it more easily passable in wet conditions.



Muskrat Seen in RGM

The restoration of the former parking area within Winter Wren Wood benefitted from a moister spring and summer than previous years, and as a result the natural revegetation (along with some supplemental plantings) is beginning to take hold and return this degraded area to its former glory.



Railway Marsh

And as the temperatures continue to cool off, we'll be ramping up our invasive species control work across all DCA lands and ITC Nature Reserves to keep ourselves a little warmer and continue to help safeguard Denman's native biodiversity, sharpened saws and loppers at the ready. As always, if you're interested in getting involved with this or any other areas of DCA land stewardship, please get in touch.

Happy spooky season!

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Hope through Action Event: November 3rd

Hosted by the Denman Conservancy Association, *Hope Through Action* is an exciting event taking place on **Sunday, November 3rd** that will explore the concept of ecological resilience and discuss tangible methods to heal the land so that it may keep sustaining us and the infinite other lifeforms whom we share it with. We're privileged to welcome three incredibly knowledgeable speakers who will share with you their work, answer your questions and discuss these topics in depth.

Lia Tarle is an archeologist working for the K'omoks First Nation whose work specializes in cultural heritage preservation and repatriation. From their perspective, we will expand our knowledge on the Indigenous cultures that inhabited Denman for thousands of years, and the ways in which they shaped its ecosystems. We will also be welcoming Tal Engel, founder of WolfTree Integrative Forest Rehabilitation. Tal is an emerging restorationist whose novel and bold methods are designed to provide young forests with the ability to one day become beautiful old growth. Adam Huggins will be island-hopping to us from Galiano Island, where he is the Galiano Conservancy Association's Restoration Coordinator and co-host of the widely acclaimed *Future Ecologies* Podcast. His expansive work addresses the multiple aspects of resilience, by interweaving wetland restoration with food sovereignty and Indigenous allyship. We are really excited to have these three minds together and bring some fire to the stage! We hope you are too.

The Hope Through Action speaker panel will be taking place on **Sunday, November 3rd from 11:00am to 2:00pm** at the **Denman Activity Centre**. We will break mid-way for a local food lunch provided by our very own Erika Bland.

This free event is generously supported by the Comox Valley Community Foundation. We hope to see you there!

Vineyard Work at 1700 The Point Road

There have been questions from the Denman Island community directed to the DCA about the work being done at 1700 The Point Road. While DCA has no jurisdiction over the site itself, the Danes Creek Covenant Area borders the property. DCA has sent correspondence to the landowner in an attempt to find out what the plans are for the site. DCA personnel have also made multiple visits to the site to talk to site managers regarding future plans and operations at the site.

There has been extensive clearing and some excavation completed on the site. In response to a DCA letter, the landowner has stated that the plan is



Partial view of the clearing on 1701 The Point Road

to eventually build a 100-acre (40 Ha) vineyard. Master plans for the site are not complete at this time but planting will begin in the spring in the recently cleared 30 acres (12 Ha). He has also stated that the project will “strictly abide by the relevant environmental regulations”. DCA notes that the property is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and clarity about environmental regulations will need to be confirmed.

The work may or may not impact the Danes Creek Covenant Area. DCA is discussing what protocols need to be put into place to monitor any changes within the Covenant Area, given the adjacent work. Please stay tuned for more information as it becomes available to DCA.



Railway Grade Marsh Western Yellow Pond Lily