



Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society

P.O. Box 91053, West Vancouver, B.C. V7V 3N3

www.cypresspark.ca

Fall 2023 Newsletter

A warm welcome to our Friends of Cypress community!

Directors:

President: Alex Wallace

Vice President: Anne George

Secretary: Anne Leathem

Treasurer: Sandy Booth

Directors at large:

Marshall Bauman

Gail Ross

Bill Kinkaid

Fiona Wright

Tom Kurucz

2023 AGM Notice

Tuesday October 10, 2023 at 7:30pm

Kiwanis Great Hall, 999 21st St., West Vancouver

Please note you are encouraged to park at or near the West Van Recreation Centre, or nearby streets such as Gordon or 21st, followed by an easy and short walk in.

Guest speaker: Ruth Simons -

The Átl'ka7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region



MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

A reminder to all members: please renew your 2023 membership using the form at the end of this Newsletter.

Thank you

2023 AGM Tuesday October 10, 2023 at 7:30pm

We are pleased to announce our guest speaker will be Ruth Simons, Executive Director of the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society. The Átl'ka7tsem / Howe Sound Biosphere Region was designated as Canada's 19th UNESCO Biosphere Region in 2021.

Cypress Provincial Park is one of five high-elevation parks and core areas important to the Biosphere Region. Join Ruth to discover the wonders of this Biosphere and what it means for those living within and near the Átl'ka7tsem/ Howe Sound watershed.

The Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society has been at work on OECMs (other effective conservation measures) and the Nchu'ú7mut/Unity Plan, a land and marine use plan created through a collaborative, participatory approach for a sustainable future.

Ruth will share the work of the Society and what it means for the future of protected areas within the region. We welcome members and non-members to the AGM, however only those with paid FCPOP memberships are eligible to vote.

President's Report - Alex Wallace

BC Parks Partnership Agreement, Insurance and Liability

One of the most difficult issues that the Board has had to deal with in recent years is the demand from BC Parks that our group sign a BC Parks Partnership Agreement in order to indemnify and protect the Government against any claims resulting from trail work in the Park. We have had numerous discussions with BC Parks, and finally after consulting with West Coast Environmental Law (who were involved in our Judicial Review of the previous development and logging plans, some 20 years ago) we sought help from an experienced insurance lawyer from the Vancouver law firm of Webster, Hudson and Coombe in order to get legal advice on this important matter.

Having done our due diligence, we will be signing a BC Parks Partnership Agreement this Fall, in order to continue our work. However, the complexities of this liability agreement need to be explained at the AGM, as it is still an odd

Reconnaissance mission with Ryan Village

Photo: Anne George



New Blue Gentian Lake area stairs

Photo: Lyn Grants



Trail Works and Repairs

The Mountain Coaster presents a major difficulty in getting trail contractors up to Black Mountain to bid on any trail work project, current or future (we are told we must submit three bids from approved contractors for any project). Therefore, on August 3rd this summer there was a hike and meeting with Ryan Village (the new Howe Sound Area Supervisor for BC Parks) and some of our members on Black Mountain Plateau.

We reached a resolution on many ongoing issues such as:

- consensus that we would not use the two large stacks of unused custom-cut yellow cedar boards on Black Mountain for the proposed Sam Lake boardwalk, but instead would work out a plan to helicopter them to Blue Gentian Lake for a boardwalk in the wetlands to the new 'floating' picnic table at the lake, which is a popular visitor destination. We will fund this project, and the replacement picnic table (to replace the 'sunk' picnic table) - starting in 2024.
- funding the rock for filling the gabion boxes on Hollyburn Peak Ledge, and the helicopter time for the gabion rock long-lined in nets to Hollyburn. The transport via helicopter was completed on August 18th.
- funding the upgrades at the Magnesia Meadows Emergency Mountain Hut out on the Howe Sound Crest Trail

The second part of the Hollyburn Peak ledge repair is being completed this summer, and this will be a much needed safety improvement to this popular 'family' trail. To date, the stainless steel safety chain has been installed securely, and the ledge has been cleared off, with the stump now gone. Funding will total approximately \$20,000 over the two years.

It was also confirmed that we will hand over our 300ft spool of hemp rope (bought for Yew Lake) for use on posts at Blue Gentian Lake, as dog 'impacts' on the wetland alongside the boardwalk are an issue there.

All of the BC Parks green trail signage in the Black Mountain Plateau is in the process of being replaced, and Ryan Village indicated that this was a priority, as there was some visitor confusion about the Black Mountain Loop and other 'side trails' over the past several years. This again will be a great improvement, and one that we have advocated for.



Gail Ross fixing signs at Yew Lake
Photos: Lyn Grants



Advocacy

Alex has sent letters to the Cypress Mountain Resort General Manager and local MLA's regarding the car racing, motorcycle noise, burnouts and campfires in lot 3 and other areas of the park. Several fatalities have already occurred in the last few years, and there was another High-Speed crash at Hi-View lookout in early September, with a huge oil spill from the demolished vehicle. Alex is also reaching out to local authorities for a roundtable meeting on this issue, as it is more than just an ongoing nuisance. The noise continues daily, even after dark, and there have been ongoing incidents overnight, as the park is open 24 hours day in the summer- unlike most Provincial Parks, which are almost 100% Locked and Gated from 10pm to 6am. This includes campfires lit alongside the parking lots, Lamborghini and motorcycle events, plus photo shoots and the use of drones, however no one seems to be able to prevent this drag racing activity.

After reviewing the Cypress Park Master Plan and Cypress Park Use Permit 1506, Alex has reached out to Dave Richmond, the new BC Parks Regional Director regarding the new axe throwing 'attraction' (and the giant Paul Bunyan Axe Sculpture) adjacent to Cypress Creek Lodge and the Olympic Rings. Our opposition to this noisy commercial activity is due to it not being approved by BC Parks, and not included in the Cypress Park Use Permit Schedule of approved commercial activities. Apart from it not being in any planning process or even mentioned in the above Permit 1506 documentation, several of our members have articulated their view that it is inappropriate and intrusive in a park setting. FCPP was not consulted regarding this activity, and the giant axe appears to have been installed overnight.

There is significant damage in the trail margins and wetlands on the Black Mountain plateau and surrounding area from off leash dogs. While more signs may help, enforcement would be necessary to truly make a difference and BC Parks simply does not have the resources to ticket dog owners. Although many dog owners do follow the on-leash rules, there is some confusion over the wording of the Park Act, and it should somehow be made clear that any trail with an 'on leash' sign at the trailhead is then totally an on-leash area. This may seem like a minor item, however the Northwestern Salamander numbers appear to have crashed this year, possibly as a result of successive hot summers and low oxygen levels in the lakes, so any further damage to wetland areas needs to be avoided (plus swimming dogs are not good for the salamander egg masses). This follows the unfortunate disappearance of most of the pikas at Cypress, so we may need to focus more on conservation projects in future years.

Access News

The Howe Sound Crest Trail upgrade project is on hold for a complete planning review, which we are told will take a full year, before any further work is done. FCPP raised \$450,000 for this project (from VANOC & Ottawa) and we worked on it for roughly 12 years, before being invited not to participate or fund it further. The detour that we put in at the north end of the Howe Sound Crest Trail at kilometre 23 is working, following the logging road closure by the rock quarrying business on Kallahne Creek. There is no word on when or if the construction of the new 'Porteau Cove' town by Concord Pacific will start at that end of the Howe Sounds Crest Trail (i.e. at Porteau Road).

Ironically, this is the source of rock that was used to rebuild the ledge on Hollyburn Peak, apparently it was the only rock available. This is ironic, because we had previously advocated for this area to be transferred from BC Rail to BC Parks some decades ago - an idea that the Director of BC Parks agreed with, as this would have extended Cypress northward to Porteau Cove.

UBC Research at Hollyburn - Contributed by Mari Wilson

UBC PhD student Mari Wilson is interested in seed free plants such as mosses, liverworts, ferns, and lycophytes at Cypress Provincial Park. Her research will examine the terrain under the power lines and along the trails near First and Fourth Lakes in the Nordic area.

If one were asked to define what it means to be a plant, the capacity to photosynthesize would likely be the first thing that comes to mind. There are, however, numerous ways plants have circumvented our image of them as green, self-sufficient organisms. Carnivorous plants, for example, are some of the most beloved exceptions. *Triantha occidentalis* is one recently discovered sticky, carnivorous species that can be found in boggy areas around Cypress Provincial Park often alongside sundew and butterworts. Some plants, alternatively, parasitize other plants for their food, such as mistletoe, and some even parasitize existing fungal networks. The latter case is one particularly interesting scenario of plant parasitism that she studies. Plants and fungi can often have mutually beneficial partnerships, where plants provide food from photosynthesis to underground fungal networks, and these networks provide nutrients to the plant in exchange. Some other plants manage to tap into networks engaged in these beneficial relationships and steal both food and nutrients without providing anything in return. Such plants are called mycoheterotrophs (*mykos* – mushroom, *heteros* – other, *trophe* – food). One extreme example that can be found around BC is *Monotropa uniflora* or ghost pipes, aptly named for its ghostly white appearance due to a loss of photosynthetic ability.

Ferns and lycophytes present an especially interesting manifestation of mycoheterotrophy. These plants alternate between two life stages. One is called the sporophyte, the green plant we commonly see, and the other is the gametophyte, a very small organism that can often be found scattered across the soil surface. In mycoheterotrophic ferns and lycophytes the small, white gametophyte generation lives underground and does not photosynthesize. The sporophyte is not entirely removed from suspicion as some plants can photosynthesize to acquire part of their food and steal the rest from fungal networks. Her research investigates these unique organisms on several fronts, such as how they manage to lose photosynthesis, how they interact with fungi, and how they have evolved. If finding these culprits are of interest, lycophytes such as *Lycopodium clavatum* and *Diphasiastrum stichense* are ubiquitous in

First Lake
Photo: Tom Kurucz



Walks and Hikes in association with Nature Vancouver

The following report encompasses hikes led this past summer, as well as a few to follow after this Newsletter is distributed. All leaders are both Friends of Cypress Provincial Park and Nature Vancouver members. While most of the hikes offered are within Cypress Provincial Park, some are in surrounding areas where natural features are similar in some instances, and quite different in others. This often leads to interesting observations and discussions. All of the hikes listed are offered to members of both FCPP and Nature Vancouver.

July 9 - Bowen Lookout

The first hike of the season was to Bowen Lookout, led by Janey Rozanski and Lyn Grants on a perfect summer day. The pace was leisurely with time to discuss and identify some of the trees and plants en route. We lunched at the lookout, entertained by the Steller's Jays and the Whiskey Jacks, and delighted in the view over Howe Sound and to Bowen Island. Fifteen people participated, many planning to join subsequent hikes.

July 22- Hollyburn Peak

Bill Kinkaid led this strenuous hike to Hollyburn Peak with a small group. The trail was in mostly good condition with a few rocky, muddy, steep and rough sections so good footwear was a real asset on this hike.

July 28 - Yew Lake Walk

Gail Ross led this walk to Yew Lake and the Old Growth Forest. There were 13 participants, including some board

Yew Lake
Photo: Gail Ross



Western Coralroot
Photo: Gail Ross



Round Leafed Sundew
Photo: Gail Ross

July 29 - Blue Gentian Lake Loop

Led by Lyn Grants, 17 hikers traveled from the Hollyburn area of Cypress Provincial Park to Blue Gentian Lake. One of the highlights was the sighting of blue gentians (*Gentiana Sceptrum*), flowering en route to the lake. It seems every year the range of the gentians has expanded. At the lake were more blue gentians, as well as water lilies, sundew and dwarf dogwood. The pace to the lake and back up again was leisurely, giving us time to enjoy the beauty and diversity of our surroundings.

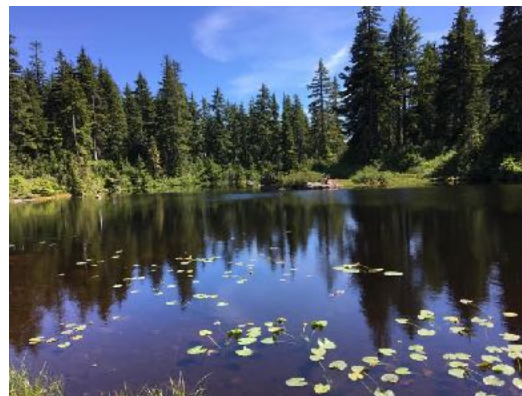
Dwarf Dogwood (Bunchberry)

Photo: Lyn Grants



Blue Gentian Lake

Photo: Lyn Grants



Explorers at the lake

photo: Lyn Grants

August 18 - Whyte Lake

This hike, led by Lyn Grants, started with a warning about a wasp nest and a closed bridge. Not to be deterred, we bushwhacked up the slope above the bridge and avoided the wasps. Our destination was to the Provincial Park sign on the Baden Powell Trail. The trail beyond the sign is narrow with cliffs and heavy vegetation on each side, and the surface rooty and stony. Continuing would wait for another day's hike perhaps. On our return we had time to relax in the sun on the Whyte Lake deck, a perfect place for lunch and to enjoy the quiet beauty of the lake. We stopped frequently to look up at the magnificent trees, and congratulate ourselves on having enjoyed such a wonderful day.

August 25 - The Hollyburn Giant

Nine adventurers, led by Marshall Bauman set 'Off to see the Giant' in near perfect conditions. After crossing a small canyon on the Baden Powell trail, we headed up through old growth forest on the western flank of Hollyburn Mtn. We found the Giant, and several 'look-alikes' less than half a kilometre above the trail. The Giant is 3.2m in diameter and is one of the largest known yellow cedars in B.C. Despite its broken top & ancient appearance the tree is still alive and estimated to be over 1,000 years old. Several metres upslope from the Giant is the largest known mountain hemlock in Canada, with a diameter of 1.9m. No pikas were seen, and the survival rate for our participants was 100%. Marshall found it rather charming that while they had lunch beside a 1,000 year old tree in an ancient forest, some discussed the strategies of improving their Wordle scores. How Human is that!



Marshall's meanderers
Photo Credits: Marshall Bauman



September 2 - Blue Gentian Lake Loop

Carol Ensor and Lyn Grants led the second hike to Blue Gentian Lake. The hike was again well attended, and again the weather was splendid. While some of the gentian looked distinctly faded by the unusually hot days in August, we found others in great clusters of brilliant gentian blue. We were fortunate to have great photographers with us who have shared their photographs. A wonderful day, a very beautiful hike!

Blue Gentian
Photo: Tom Martin



Pearly Everlasting
Photo: Bettina Matzkuhn



Still to come:

September 23 - Hollyburn Mountain Trail to Peak

Leaders: Diane Fast, Anne George

Meet at Hollyburn Nordic Area BC Parks Kiosk at 10:00 am

430m elevation gain, 8km return, 5 to 6 hours. Boots with good ankle support and good hiking poles recommended

Nature Vancouver rating C5

Contact Anne at ageorge@mail.ubc.ca

September 30 - St Mark's Summit with Leader Bill Kinkaid

This will be a strenuous hike on the Howe Sound Crest Trail in Cypress Provincial Park to a lookout over Howe Sound. The trail is being improved and upgraded, but there are still rough and steep sections with roots, rocks and mud so good footwear is required. Total return distance is approximately 12 km with an elevation gain of over 500 metres. Bring lunch and lots of water and be prepared for all weather conditions.

Pre-registration is required before Thursday 28 September.

Contact Bill at billkinkaid@gmail.com

October 3 - Forest Ecology of Old Growth Forest with leader David Cook

Join Ecologist David Cook along a short section of the Baden-Powell Trail east of the downhill ski area. This is not a hike but a slow walk with many stops over a short distance looking at the characteristics and ecology of an old-growth forest in the transition zone between the Mountain Hemlock and Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zones. We may see some mushrooms.

Pre-registration is Required – contact David Cook at cokeco2@yahoo.com. The size of the group will be limited to approximately 15 people. Meet at 12:00 noon at the old Black Mountain Lodge in the main Cypress Bowl parking lot (NOT at the new Cypress Creek Lodge). The trip will take approximately two hours depending on the number of stops; 1.0 km roundtrip (yes, that's 1.0 km. not 10 km.). Moderate terrain but several rough and rooty sections. Deep-tread hiking boots with ankle support & hiking poles recommended. Elevation gain is 140 metres. Dress for the weather and bring water and a snack.





Joining FCPP or Renewing Your Membership

Your \$10 FCPP membership is for a one-year period. If you wish to check your membership status for renewal, please contact the membership secretary.

You are welcome to join or renew your membership by either:

1. Mailing your cheque and membership form below to Treasurer, FCPP, Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society P.O. Box 91053 West Vancouver BC V7V 3N3
2. Paying electronically through our website. See <https://cypresspark.ca/membership>

Membership Form

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City and Postal code _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____ New Member ____ Renewal _____

