



Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society

PO Box 91053, West Vancouver BC V7V 3N3

www.cypresspark.ca

Due to COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS:

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the

Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society

(Previously Scheduled for **APRIL**, 2020)

Has Been Postponed

and RESCHEDULED TO **October 2020**

[New Date and location to be announced.]

FCPP SPRING NEWSLETTER

BC Parks Status during Covid-19.

The following statement was issued by Parks March 15 at 5:00pm

“While BC Parks is bringing in some new novel coronavirus (COVID-19) protocols, people throughout B.C. will still be able to enjoy day-use parks as a positive way to connect to nature.

Some day-use services and facilities are currently available at the following provincial parks:

- Mount Seymour Provincial Park – access restricted to some lower-elevation trails. Parking and road access are closed.
- Cypress Provincial Park – access restricted to some lower-elevation trails. Parking and road access are closed.”
- AS of April 8, all BC parks have been closed.

The road closure barrier on the Cypress Bowl Road is at Chippendale. The road is not closed to cyclists. (The lack of vehicle traffic is making it a much safer road for cyclists during the current closure.)

Cypress Ski Area News

Cypress Mountain Resort announced the complete closure of their ski hill operation on March 14th as a precaution, citing concerns about the potential spread of the Covid-19 virus.

All in all, it had been a good snow season. Their season pass guarantee states that the resort has a commitment to be open a total of 76 days. Cypress Mountain Resort was open for 108 days during the 2019/20 Winter Season. The good snow season continued well beyond the closure date, making the sudden but necessary closure a disappointment to all of us who spend time on the snow.

Winter 2019/2020 Report Backcountry Access Corridor (BAC) was well sign posted for access to Black Mountain and Howe Sound Crest trail.

Backcountry Access Tags are still available in the Brown Bag Room (in the Black Mountain Lodge). As you approach the ski area, the access to the BAC corridor is through a gate labelled Hikers. It is understood that for the next season BAC tags will be available at a kiosk outside the Cypress Creek Lodge. The Brown Bag Room and the Washrooms in Black Mountain Lodge have been better maintained this winter. They are heavily used on busy weekends and during holidays by paying customers, i.e. not just backcountry hikers and skiers. Cypress Mountain Resort is required to maintain these facilities under its Park Use Permit.

Following concern expressed last winter season by Alex Wallace about the cross-country ski run encroachment on to the 'Hikers Access' Corridor to Hollyburn, the poles and ropes were installed properly for this year's access corridor in accordance with the Cypress Park Master Plan. Thanks to BC Parks Rangers the winter trails to Hollyburn Peak, Cabin Lake and the Black Mountain Loop and the Howe Sound Crest trail to the Bowen Lookout were all poled.

All the backcountry access trails are well used by many snowshoers, by those on spikes and crampons, and by backcountry skiers on week days, and of course on weekends.

Vancouver Area BC Parks Staff 2020

February 2020 saw the resignation of Scott Donker as Vancouver Area Supervisor. Scott had held that position since 2018. An Acting Vancouver Area Supervisor (or Supervisors) will be appointed.

David Whiteside, who was acting Area Supervisor while Scott was on paternity leave last year, has taken the position of Area Supervisor in Squamish. David will certainly be missed for his cheery disposition and his deep appreciation and knowledge of both Seymour and Cypress Provincial Parks.

With David's permission we have copied his response (in part) to Friends of Cypress Directors' letter of congratulation on his appointment:

"It was an excellent first few years with parks – working with groups who are so passionate about their local wild spaces, like the Friends of Cypress, is one of the reasons I've decided to build a career with this organization. It's not many jobs where you work alongside so many people advocating for our the values we are trying to protect" .

Friends of Cypress Provincial Park in Discussion with Cypress Mountain Resort.

On February 17, 2020, Alex Wallace and Anne George of FCPP were invited to a meeting with Russell Chamberlain, CEO of Cypress Mountain Resort. During the three-hour long meeting, Russell and Brent Harley of BHA (Whistler-based ski area planning consultants), revealed a comprehensive 'Four Season' operation set of plans which would see a considerable expansion to the existing Cypress Mountain infrastructure to allow several summer activities, all within the Controlled Recreation Area set out in their Cypress Park Use Permit 1506.

Russell outlined plans for a proposed Zipline, "the longest double Zipline in the world", which would stretch from the ski lift terminal on the peak of Mt Strachan to the top terminal of the Lift at Fork Run on Black Mountain, over the Yew Lake Meadows and trail. There are also proposals for two lift-assisted mountain bike areas on ski slopes on both Black and Mt. Strachan, with two 'Mountain Coasters' operating on rails in summer, and with small restaurants or 'burger shacks' at prominent viewpoints, in addition to significant lift upgrades. As yet, we have had no contact with BC Parks relation to a possible public planning process to Amend the Cypress Park Master Plan in order to accommodate any part of this proposal, i.e. an Open House, public input, etc. The public may initially be confused by the fact that the BC Parks Cypress website still has the **1997 Master Plan** posted as the "Current Master Plan", whereas the **2006 Amended Master Plan clearly** has superseded this, in order to add the expansion on Black Mountain which included the 2010 Olympic Venues, and remove the previous Old-Growth logging plans from the 1990's.

Not unexpectedly, the FCPP Board has reacted with multiple concerns to the proposal as described. An alignment from peak to peak would take the high-elevation 'World Record' Zipline out of the Controlled Recreational Area over the eastern end of the Yew Lake Wetland Meadows and the Yew Lake Barrier free trail. Naturally the Board has other concerns: environmental, safety, visual and noise pollution during construction, and during the annual summer operation itself. Alex Wallace has written to Jennie Aikman, Regional Director of BC Parks, and Dylan Evers, Parks and Protected Areas Section Head, Lower Mainland, to advise them of the February 27th meeting and to ascertain if they have been alerted to the proposal.

More to follow!

In the interim, there are several other planning proposals that potentially will affect visitors on their way to enjoy the park: as previously noted, the BPP Rodgers Creek proposal was approved by West Vancouver Council in an expanded form on December 3rd of 2019, and this will eventually include 16 storey towers adjacent to the Cypress Bowl Road in the Chippendale area. All of the Cypress Bowl Road traffic from these residential towers will be added directly to the park and ski area traffic, a safety issue that has not as yet been resolved, although blasting and clearing along the Cypress Bowl Road continues at a steady pace. A proposal has been mooted for a Gondola up to the Hi-View Lookout. Currently we are still awaiting the transfer of Hi-View Lookout to BC Parks, so it is not clear when this land transfer will be completed, and who the Gondola proponent would negotiate with. As can already be seen, there is barely enough room for people to park and picnic at Hi-View. If you then include the residential tower already being built adjacent to Mulgrave School, and the proposed "Cypress Village" new town to be constructed by BPP between the WV Works yard and Cypress Falls Park, that makes a total of Five development proposals, either within or on the way up to Cypress, with two approved and under construction so far.

Board Activities

Digital Version of the FCPP hiking map

The FCPP hiking map has been transferred to digital format capable of importing to GPS devices, mobiles or desktops. Formats are GeoTIFF, Geo-referenced PDF, MBTiles, or KMZ. We are pleased with the expert work of Gavin Castle who was contracted to complete this work. The Digital version of the FCPP hiking map will be available on the FCPP website.

FCPP Website

A new, improved and up-to-date website will be on line soon. Rudy Kehler of Simplify Social Marketing Ltd. has been contracted to complete the work. We are thankful to Mike and Kitty Castle, Anne Leathem, Katharine Steig and Gavin Castle for the many hours, weeks and months of work completed on the FCPP website development a few years ago.

Resignation from FCPP Board It is with great regret that we acknowledge the resignation of Irene Miller who has served FCPP as Treasurer with diligence and great competence since **1995**. An amazing record of service. Thank you Irene!! You will be missed.

Devil's Club

Some Historical and Natural History Notes

Lynette Grants

Winding up the Howe Sound Crest Trail mid morning, sun filtering through the majestic trees, an understory plant, with its big leaf transparency, can take your breath away.



Most of us are quick to recognize this plant and remember its name, a plant with a somewhat ominous common name of Devil's Club, and an equally ominous botanical name, *Oplopanax horridus*.

We may not understand *Oplopanax* (even with a Latin background), but we certainly get the meaning of *horridus*. Yes - "horridus" - the plant with a thorny spine, and numerous small thorns on its stems and on the undersides of those transparent, big, graceful leaves.



Devil's Club is a deciduous understory shrub common to us here in the forests of the Pacific North West, with a growth range from Alaska to central Oregon, eastward to the southwestern Yukon, the Canadian Rockies, northwestern Alberta, Montana, and a small distribution near the Great Lakes region of Ontario and Michigan. It was and is a plant well known to and valued by the indigenous people of the region, a plant important medicinally, spiritually and technologically. The indigenous name for the plant varied from community to community based on the language spoken.

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, the first known use of the word "Devil's Club" was circa 1883. It is possible that the word had gained currency through an attempt at a direct translation from one of the indigenous languages. As the Pacific North West was opening up to prospecting, logging and settlement, the name Devil's Club must have seemed appropriate for the plant that pierced hands, clawed clothing, that impeded easy progress through deep forest. Grab the stem at your peril; don't touch the leaves!

The plant had been classified scientifically under the name *Aralia erinacea* by William Hooker in 1827. Hooker was working from a dried specimen collected by Archibald Menzies, ship's doctor and botanist on the Vancouver Expedition of 1791-1795. Menzies came across the plant as he made collecting forays along the shore line at the north end of the Georgia Strait. John Scouler, a young Scot and a protege of Hooker, was appointed naturalist on a Hudson Bay Company vessel in 1824. He had access to Hooker's herbarium, and to Mackenzie's description of where plants had been collected, before Hooker published the *Flora of North America*.

As Scouler went ashore on Queen Charlotte Island he recorded that the plant "was disagreeably plentiful in the woods about Queen Charlotte Island and those at Observatory Inlet. **Disagreeably plentiful**" ? - - - It would seem that Scouler had encountered the thorns and spikes!

According to the the Kew Plant list the first time *Oplopanax horridus* was used was in 1863. It is now the accepted name.

And now to "unpack" that botanical name - the *Oplopanax* of *Oplopanax Horridus*. (The *horridus*, of course, needs no explanation). "Oplo" is from ancient Greek. It refers to the Hoplite, citizen soldiers of the Ancient Greek City State who were armed with spears and shields. Hence *Oplopanax*, a plant with thorns, the thorns its armour. And *Panax* is from *panacea* or "all heal" referring to the medicinal quality of this genus.

It is because of its medicinal as well as spiritual and technological values that the plant is so highly regarded by the aboriginal people throughout its range. (The Plants of Coastal British Columbia by Pojar and Mackinnon provides a comprehensive description of its uses). Devil's-Club *Oplopanax horridus*, that plant we see on our hikes in our local mountains, is increasingly harvested and marketed by herbal distributors as a ginseng-like herbal medicine. Over harvesting of the roots will inevitably compromise its ability to persist in some areas within its range. Regrowth after forest clear cutting is also uncertain. Unwarranted exploitation would be harmful to the plant and to the culture of the indigenous people who have used, honoured and treasured it for centuries.



If it were not for this time of Covid -19 we would be on the trails watching the new leaves appear on deciduous plants such as the Devil's Club. We would be waiting to see the flowers and then the bright red berries.



Other mammals are waiting too. In 2018 an Oregon State University study found that bears are prime seed dispersers of Devil's Club seeds. In most ecosystems birds are thought of as the prime dispersers. Not so in the Pacific

North West for the Devil's Club.

The bears are waiting. We are not there to disturb them (or to be disturbed by them)!

Bears and many other critters will be enjoying the serenity of our closed Provincial Parks.



To Our Members - a note from Eva Nagy, Membership Secretary

Please remember that the membership fee is due at the beginning of the year and expires with the last day of the year. Many people pay at the AGM, traditionally held in April. Not this year. If you would like to renew your membership now, please fill in the attached membership form or download the membership form from the "Join Us" link on the FCPP website <http://www.cypresspark.ca/pdf/joinfcpp.pdf>. Mailing instructions are on the form. Alternatively you can renew at the delayed/postponed AGM. Please renew your membership. We value and thank you for your support.

FCPP Directors for 2020

As noted earlier in the newsletter Irene Miller, Treasurer, resigned as of April 21.

Mike Castle has taken on that position.

The current board will be continuing until the elections at the AGM in the Fall.

President: Alex Wallace; Vice-President: Anne George; Secretary: Anne Leatham; Treasurer: Mike Castle; Directors- at-large: Marshall Bauman, Lyn Grants, Bill Kinkaid, Eva Nagy, Gail Ross.

Advisor: Katharine Steig.

Contact us at info@cypresspark.ca

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 Eva Nagy, Membership evnagy@shaw.ca or 604 9290 4286.

Please clip and mail the membership form below or print out the "Join Us" form on www.cypresspark.ca

FCPP Directors greatly appreciate your support of the work our Society does to enhance and protect Cypress Provincial park. THANK YOU!

For membership in Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society, please mail to:

Membership, Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society
P.O.Box 91053
West Vancouver, BC V7V 3N3

Date:_____

Name(s)_____

Address_____

City and Postal Code_____Tel_____

E-Mail_____New Member_ Renewal___

Enclosed is \$10 for single/family membership.

\$_____ is added as a tax deductible donation. Total Enclosed is \$_____

(Charity BN/Registration #89249 2372 RR0001)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !