



FALL UPDATE

Fostering harmony between nature and community.

Highlights of the Year

So much has happened since our spring newsletter it would be impossible to attempt a full narration. However, I will touch on some of the more intriguing elements of our recent work.

Our board has been busy re-writing some of our organization's rules and by-laws so that we can act as a land trust and covenant holder. This work may not be glamorous, but it will provide a tool for long term conservation on Mayne Island, of which 95% is privately owned.

Meanwhile, our staff and volunteers have been progressing with a conglomeration of more tangible projects. Our Walk-about program reached a milestone of 50 walkabouts delivered to date following a record season, and we're inspired by the interest many land owners on Mayne are taking in getting to know and preserve their non-human neighbours. Our native plant nursery is finding its legs (or roots), with production increasing; making more locally adapted plants available for restoration and sale. We've been learning about wetland function and restoration, and have begun our first pilot wetland restoration project. The skills and knowledge we're gaining will enable us to assist other land owners with future small wetland restoration projects.

Ecosystem restoration work continues at Henderson Park, Bennett Bay, and Mt. Parke. At Mt. Parke we have cleared 100% of accessible mature broom from Haliday Ridge, and we're preventing daphne and holly from gaining a foothold in the lower sections. At Henderson our team has made exceptional progress managing Scotch broom and protecting trees planted in the lower, previously logged areas. A variety of invasive species are being managed at Bennett Bay and slow

but steady progress is being made in re-planting the field.

Our wonderful summer staff, Laura and Olivia, returned to UBC to finish their Resource Conservation degrees. They were busy selling plants and promoting our projects at the Farmer's Market, helping with restoration, caring for the nursery, mapping kelp and eelgrass, conducting vegetation surveys, creating and delivering interpretive beach walks, and creating education materials for our anchor out for eelgrass project.

MICS has been approved to comment on the Kinder Morgan/Trans Mountain pipeline project. The deadline for commenters' submissions has been extended to March 16, 2015. On Wednesday August 6, MICS, along with Mayne Island Coastal Watch, hosted a COMMUNITY CONVERSATION about the consequences of increased oil-tanker traffic in the Salish Sea. Please let us know your thoughts on this important issue as we want our membership and the Mayne Island community to help us shape our response.

Other activities there is no room to cover in detail include hosting speaker Andy Lamb (seastar wasting disease), completion of our nature photo contest and associated calendar, oceans day, beach cleanup, movie nights, preparations for the 2015 Active Pass Nature and Arts Festival (see below), a songbird diversity and abundance study, and a successful 9th annual May Day. We look forward to the winter ahead during which we will be as busy as ever! For more information about our projects, call us at 250-539-5168. - Rob Underhill

Read more about our projects and activities at <http://conservancyonmayne.com>

Active Pass Nature and Arts Festival

In April of each year, at the western entrances to the Salish Sea, it is a time of gathering and anticipation. On the marine side, multiple species of birds and marine mammals are preparing for their coming migrations to breeding grounds while on the land side, the spring displays of diverse wildflower species are in full swing. The spirit and energy of this time of year is palpable and the communities of Mayne and Galiano islands are having a celebration.

With the mission "To promote and celebrate the natural beauty and wildlife of the Active Pass Region of the Salish Sea, the unique communities within it and the art it inspires.",

the inaugural Active Pass Nature and Arts Festival 2015 will be the launch of this annual celebration, April 17-19, 2015 on Mayne Island. The festival will showcase the significant natural values of the region, coupled with the rich history, art and creativity of the adjacent island communities.

A Festival Organizing Committee has been created with representatives from island-based organisations including the Mayne Island Conservancy, the Southern Gulf Islands Arts



Council, the Mayne Island Chamber of Commerce, the Mayne Island Lions, and the Galiano Conservancy Association all working to create this exciting event. We are promoting this event as a must do for naturalists, birders, photographers, visual artists and arts enthusiasts, historians, families and children around the region. The Festival will feature exhibits and workshops of local artists and their crafts, marine and land-based nature and birding explorations of the region, authors, photographers, island food, music and live theatre, gallery tours, historical tours, and family oriented activities; all inspired by where we live.

Planning is also begun for the opening reception and Festival Feast with our keynote speaker Dr. Rob Butler (www.robbutler.ca).

The Festival Organizing Committee has launched the on-line registration and program at www.festivalactivepass.com. Please check it out. If you want to volunteer to help please contact Michael Dunn at ed@conservancyonmayne.com.

Your Membership Is Our Lifeblood!

We are now taking annual memberships for 2015, and we would love you to join us once again. Your membership is worth much more to us than the \$5 per person: it connects us to our community in so many ways. Your numbers contribute to our credibility when we seek funding for the many projects the Conservancy does on the island. We know how many demands you have from worthy causes—we experience this ourselves—so we hope you will think of us again when planning your giving this season!

Watch for our full newsletter in the spring of 2015