



Denman Conservancy Association

# NEWSLETTER

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

April 2016

## Celebrate with us at DCA's Frog Festival

**Art Show:** Gallery opening on Friday night April 29 at 6 pm.  
Open Saturday, April 30 and Sunday May 1st at 10 am – 4pm.

**Froggy Face Painting** on the porch of the Denman Arts Centre  
on Sunday, May 1st, from noon to 3pm.



Frog Festival 2016 is a light-hearted celebration of nature in spring as exemplified by the cheerful sounds of our chorusing entertainers in ponds and wetlands at this time of year!

As an **All Frog** festival, both our loudly singing tree frog, now formally the Pacific chorus frog *Pseudacris regilla*, and our bigger rare and much quieter northern red-legged frog *Rana aurora* are included. Both frogs may travel some distance from water, and both need clean fresh water in ponds and wetlands for laying eggs and rearing tadpoles for future generations. At this time of year, all the frogs are busy attracting mates pool-side! While chorus frogs can be heard by female frogs and humans alike, red-legged frogs sing underwater, heard by fellow frogs or by hydrophone.

During the rest of the year both frogs use moist, vegetated habitat everywhere on Denman, and occasionally visit our homes and other structures. Red-legged frogs can really leap, travelling and foraging on the forest floor, often using debris alongside large downed trees for travel corridors and protection. Chorus frogs prove they really have tree frog tendencies and can be anywhere up in the forest or garden, often seen sunning on a

leaf, flower or post-top, from where they will hop into the vegetation if disturbed. Both frogs will eat any insect, spider or slug that they can fit into their mouths, but all their tadpoles are vegetarians. Being part of the food web, all stages of both frogs' lives are a welcome food item for various predators. Eggs and tadpoles rarely survive if sharing ponds with fish unless there is ample complex habitat for escape and protection.

For frogs – Ponds are us! A nice vegetated wetland, even if it dries out in later summer is a great mating ground and birth place. Denman's myriad of small inter-connected waterways and wetlands are a paradise for frogs. They just need frog-crossing guards for the roads.

Artists of all media are invited to submit works for showing and judging in the Arts Centre Gallery for that weekend. All works of art must feature a frog.

Entries should be brought down to the Arts Centre on Friday morning April 29th between 10 am and Noon.

Cash prizes and untold glory will be awarded based on community balloting

Curator Andrew Fyson, 335-9047

## Settlement Lands Update

On February 6, over 45 keen Islanders participated in a walk-about on the Settlement Lands led by Andrew Fyson, Jenny Balke and Erika Bland. This followed a well-attended Community Open House last September to solicit input on a draft conservation proposal for the lands. On February 23, the Islands Trust Fund Board agreed to hold a Conservation Covenant on the lands and will contribute \$3000 to the project. The registration of a covenant on the lands' title will ensure their protection in perpetuity. Next steps will be the collection of baseline data, including a Spring plant survey, and completion of a Baseline Report by early Fall. The Baseline Report will assist in assessing the lands' changes as they evolve over time. A Management Plan will be drafted and the terms of the covenant agreed upon. Please stay tuned - your continued input will be needed.

The Settlement Lands is 157 acres on either side of Central Road (between Pickles and Lake roads).



## American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts

At the recent Gulf Islands Conservation Convention on Mayne Island there were speakers from the American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts. This group is active in BC conserving lands in the Islands Trust area. For Americans owning land that they wish to covenant or donate to a Canadian Land Trust, the American Friends is registered US 501(c)3 public charity with bi-national charitable status and American citizens may wish to investigate this option. The advantage for Americans is that they receive their tax donation value in US dollars and the donation is not subject to capital gains tax as it would be if given directly to a Canadian group. There are costs involved for the Canadian Land Trust in registering with the American Friends to receive the land but the conservation value may be worthwhile.

### Membership Application Form

### DENMAN CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION

Membership is \$10 per person per calendar year. Many members combine their membership and annual donation in a lump sum. A charitable tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$10 or more. To ensure you receive our notices about meetings, programs etc., **please provide your email address**.

I wish to make a tax-deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

The Denman Conservancy Association has charitable tax status.

Please make cheques payable to:

**Denman Conservancy Association,**

**Mail to: PO Box 60, Denman Island, BC, V0R 1T0**

## Notes from the Land

### The butterflies are flying!

By Erika Bland

**The butterflies are flying!** In the first week of April I saw a few of those wonderful little Blues (I think the ones I saw were Western Spring Azure) that are beginning to flit about forest clearings, and I spotted what I think was a Mourning Cloak (it nearly landed on my bright blue shirt!) in the Lindsay Dickson Nature Reserve. I was inspecting the area where we will be continuing to cage some small fir and cedar trees against deer browsing. By the way, if you would like to volunteer to help me with this project one sunny day this summer, please send me an email ([erikaaction@gmail.com](mailto:erikaaction@gmail.com)) for more details.

Last week, we set up a transect for monitoring Taylor's Checkerspot and other butterflies in the Settlement Lands Butterfly Reserve area. Myself and a few other DCA folks will be walking this transect a few times a week to see what we can see—stay tuned, and cross your fingers for us.

In past years on Denman the height of the Checkerspot flight season has been around the long weekend in May, but much earlier sightings have been reported, too. With the very heavy rains we had in February, I wouldn't be surprised if the larval development has been slowed slightly this year, since much of the food that larvae need (Veronica and Plantain species) was partly or fully submerged until very late on. Their fuzzy little bodies may be a survival mechanism that helps them out in these wet conditions, allowing them to float in inundated areas by preventing them from breaking the surface tension of the water.

Once the larvae have awoken in the early spring from their winter diapause (read: hibernation), and before they become their unique checkered form, TC post-diapause larvae go through a phase of rapid growth. The caterpillars feed voraciously and molt (shed their exoskeletons) 5 times before they reach a weight and size sufficient for pupation. It is amazing to see how far these little caterpillars can move in a very short time. In the Denman Island Provincial Park, where larvae raised in Peter Karsten's captive rearing facility were released, many were spotted metres away from their release points. It seems that as they increase in size, their range also increases. All the while they must steer clear of predators such as parasitic wasps, or other critters who may fancy themselves a fuzzy treat. Interestingly, it is thought that Checkerspot larvae choose their food plants because they contain a chemical that once

consumed makes the larvae less palatable to predators. However, more research on this is needed.



Three Checkerspot larvae are seen amidst the reed stalks in the centre.  
photo by Erika

Larvae are commonly seen, solo or in little clusters, on grasses, rushes, and sedges, and on woody debris. They can be seen elsewhere, too, including on bracken fern and Salal. This year I saw a few larvae on a tiny, heavily-browsed cedar!



Photo by Erika

## DCA AGM

On Leap Day, February 29th, DCA held its Annual General Meeting. The bylaw amendment to enshrine clauses to afford greater protection to conservation covenants held by DCA was passed.

DCA Directors for the coming year are:

Jenny Balke  
Doug Bell  
Annie Corddry  
Stirling Fraser  
DD Fuchs  
Jackie Hipwell (Co-Chair)  
Ken Madsen  
John Millen  
Ron Shepherd (Treasurer)  
Patti Willis (Co-Chair)  
Susan-Marie Yoshihara (Secretary)

We are especially pleased to welcome Ken Madsen to the Board. He and Wendy Boothroyd have lived on the island for 4 years after more than 30 years in the Yukon. Ken is a terrific asset to the Board having worked on various conservation issues in the north for 25 years including helping to create the Tatshenshini-Alsek Wilderness Park and helping to prevent oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He and Wendy moved to Denman because they wanted to reduce their carbon footprint and after decades of advocacy work, they wanted to live responsibly rather than just talk about it. They are the ones you see biking everywhere, even to meetings on dark and cold winter nights. He says he has been extremely impressed by the many Denman Islanders who care about living gently on the earth. Welcome Ken.



Red-legged frogs at Frog Fest too!

Not noisy like tree/chorus frogs...

But red-legged frogs are rare!

No cute little toe

pads...

But can jump like decent frogs! *Rana aurora* - special name! Special to this part of the world!

**Frog Fest - Opening April 29..... see Page 1**

**Contributors to this Newsletter:** Jenny Balke, Erika Bland, Stirling Fraser, Andrew Fyson, John Millen, Patti Willis.

## DCA and Social Media

Annie Corddry has been leading (dragging?) DCA into the Brave New World of *Social Media*. She established the DCA Facebook page in August last year. Some of us still prefer the archaic media you hold in your hands but screens are so much better for photos! and video! And big data!

In February Annie undertook to post coverage of the herring spawning events on the DCA Facebook. Carol Hunter and Dennis Forsyth agreed to help with photos as did several other photographers. Mike Morrell took on tracking and interpreting the Dept. of Fisheries information.

Carol's beautiful video of the 2015 spawning led off on February 21 and it eventually went out to 2500 viewers from our Facebook page. (It has been viewed 85,000 times over the past year from the Vimeo platform.) Peak viewing of our Facebook page reached 19,500 when Carol's pictures showing 'Herring eggs are everywhere on the east side of Denman' were posted. Glenn Ord provided a great underwater video of herring taken from his kayak. Mike's postings kept us informed about the progress of the fishery. Other photos by Dennis Forsyth, Cindy Critchly, Kather Anne, Gloria Michin, John Millen and Annie herself completed coverage of events.

Herring spawning is one of nature's most spectacular events along our shores. The Pacific Herring (*Clupea pallasii*) gather to spawn in our local waters and tens of thousands of birds arrive for the feast, as well as sea lions and other mammals, including *Homo sapiens*!

Our more traditional blog appears on DCA web site:  
[www.denmanconservancy.org](http://www.denmanconservancy.org)



photo by Dennis Forsyth

## Walks & Talks

Noted bird photographer Dennis Forsyth will treat us to a Spring bird photography presentation at the DCA room in the **Old School on Thursday May 5 at 7:30 pm**. With a focus on the 2016 herring spawning Dennis will show some of the hundreds of photos he has taken recently of birds and the herring fishery on Denman. His work is quite remarkable and anyone with an interest in avian wildlife photography should come.