

SALT SPRING TRAIL AND NATURE CLUB
President's Report for 2011
Annual General Meeting, 26 January 2012

The Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club's mandate is to stimulate interest in hiking and related outdoor activities and natural history; and to study flora and fauna in their natural habitats. 2011 was again a good year for hiking, walking, rambling and indeed also for observing and enjoying nature on Salt Spring Island. There were many highlights, but there were also a few concerns.

I like to start with the highlights:

-As you will see in the financial report, the club is financially sound and we have a large membership of over 200 members.

- We have decided to look after the Jack Foster Trail, since no other authority is looking after the trail. We are currently trying to obtain funds for a board walk over a swampy section as well as stairs for safer beach access. Over the last year we did some trail clearing in Mt Maxwell and Ruckle Park; we also participated in the cleaning up of the Alvin Indridson Nature Reserve. Thanks to all volunteers, especially Herb Otto and Brian Radford.

- In June 2012, our Club will organize again a BC Nature Field Camp and preparations are well underway. The organizing committee of Nieke Visser, Zeke Blazecka, and Richard Shead are working hard to make this Camp again a success.

- In early May 2011, Nieke Visser and myself organized a three day Spring trip to Tofino. Twenty nine members participated with hikes on Flores Island (the Wild Side Trail) and on Meares Island, excursions by boat to watch birds and bear, whales and a dip in the Hot Springs and last but not least a shoreline excursion and walks in the National Park. The weather cooperated; the accommodation and food were great. In short, the trip was a great success.

- In November 2011 the BC Nature Director submitted a letter to the Northern Gateway Review Panel, in which our club expressed their concerns about the present plan for the pipeline to Kitimat.

-Nancy Braithwaite received the 2011 Trailblazer Award, thanks to her long time commitment and hard work for the club, such as organizer of many walks and hikes, and as BC Nature Director for many years.

- On the social front, we have had seven presentations this year. These evenings were generally well attended. Thanks to the coordinator, Niels Gerbitz, and all the speakers. We started to work more with the Salt Spring Conservancy by mutual advertizing and cooperative scheduling of events.

- We have had three issues of The Oystercatcher. Gary Adams is the editor and is doing a great job. Keep nature or hiking articles flowing to him.

- Many volunteers who are not on the Board, give us excellent support, I like to thank Sue Lehmann, who coordinates the website and the Driftwood announcements, as well as Marjorie Radford, Ann King, Jacquie Severn, and Lucille Adderley, who are always ready to help out at the "Socials". In addition, many members are involved in the annual Christmas bird count, which is sponsored by the club.

Now over to the concerns:

Although we have now more members coming forward to lead the weekly events, it is important to have a sizeable pool of leaders. I strongly encourage you to lead events; otherwise they will not happen. Your participation enriches the club and is appreciated by all. Some of the “older” leaders are more than willing to co-lead with you or to help you. This is also valid for spring and fall trips; these will not happen if you do not come forward.

As for this meeting, I like to encourage you to bring forward your ideas to make our club better. And during the year, please contact me or any other Board member with ideas, complaints, or issues you like to talk about.

Finally, for 2012 we should have a new Board. Some Board members are staying on in their position, but some have finished their term and will be leaving the Board. I like to thank all Board members for the work they have done, express my thanks to leaving Board members Zeke Blazecka, Janice Dickie, Marcelle Roy, Niels Gerbitz, Teresa Hitch and Marilyn Harding.. I, as your President, will leave as well but will stay on as Past President. We will be looking forward to a good hiking 2012!

Kees Visser
President

NB. At the AGM, I was nominated again as President, which I have accepted, but I intend to resign after 1 year in January 2013.