

The



LEAFLET

The Newsletter of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Spring 2015
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New Uplands Park Kiosk Celebrates the Garry Oak Ecosystem

GOMPS is proud to be a financial supporter of the new interpretive sign in Uplands Park. Our donation of \$5000 contributed to the construction of this amazing new sign. The story below is a reprint from the web site of the Friends of Uplands Park and we thank them for coordinating this project!

The new Uplands Park Kiosk was unveiled on November 2, 2014 at the annual Oak Bay Tree Appreciation Day. Community members came to plant Garry Oak trees and Camas bulbs and to be present for the unveiling. Mayor Nils Jensen gave a wonderful talk about the history of Uplands Park, and acknowledged the leadership of the Friends of Uplands Park in bringing the vision of a new Kiosk into reality.

The beautiful watercolours of artist Briony Penn tell the cultural and ecological story of Uplands Park and outline the challenges and responsibilities of caring for this endangered ecosystem. Matthias Reinicke, of Lime Design Inc., provided all the graphic work for the 4 KIOSK Panels. Oak Bay Parks Department, under the leadership of Chris Hyde-Lay, constructed the beautiful cedar structure framing the KIOSK panels. A map featuring the main trail network in Uplands Park will help visitors understand the scale and diversity of Uplands Park.

Friends of Uplands Park Co-Chairs, Margaret Lidkea and Kathleen Matthews thanked the many people who contributed content, ideas and expertise these past three years, from the initial visioning, through the approval and fund-raising process, and throughout all phases of content development and editing.

Our funders are gratefully acknowledged: Oak Bay Council, the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society and the Parks and Recreation Foundation of Victoria. A special thanks also to GOERT for their expert input regarding the species in Uplands Park, and, to James Miskelly for his research on the timeline.

This story is reproduced with permission from: <https://friendsofuplandspark.wordpress.com/2014/11/13/new-uplands-park-kiosk-celebrated-on-tree-appreciation-day-november-2-2014/>

Annual General Meeting



Tuesday May 26, 2015
7PM @ UVic David Strong Bldg.
Room C118
Details at
<http://www.garryoak.info>



The Elrod Covenant

Recently I visited a Metchosin property that HAT is in the midst of protecting forever. This conservation-minded family is pleased to be able to donate a conservation covenant on 20 acres of natural habitat – their backyard. The area being protected connects to an existing park and is covered in rocky outcrops blanketed with native wildflowers, grasses and mosses, with a mixed forest of Douglas-fir and Western Hemlock. We are excited of course; it is an amazing opportunity to conserve local nature.

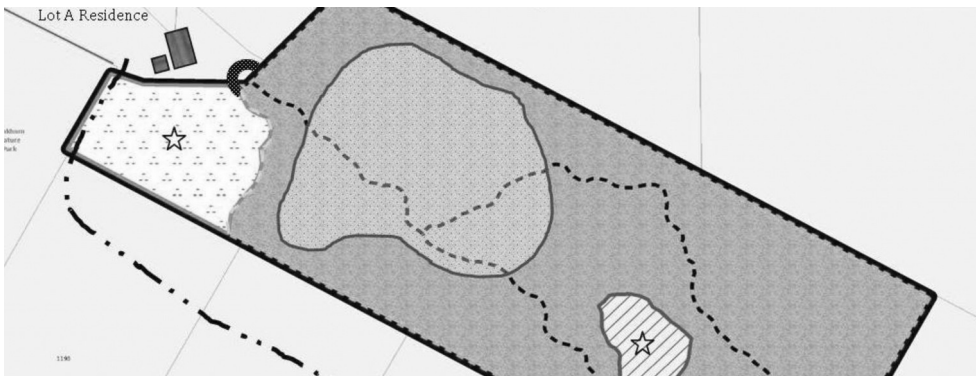
It is an opportunity that wouldn't exist without the work of others. The property was first identified by the Metchosin Foundation, who contacted the landowners and started talking with them about permanent protection. Local biologists with the Foundation volunteered their time to help prepare a baseline (an ecological and physical description of the land), and the Foundation has donated money to help pay for the costs of creating the conservation covenant.

Covenants are extremely cost-effective as a tool to conserve land permanently, but the simple truth is protecting land costs money. Even though the family is donating the covenant (a gift of partial interest in land), which is worth tens of thousands of dollars, there are still many other associated costs for which cash is needed. Land surveys, legal advice for landowners and the land trusts, staff time, and appraisals all cost money - thousands of dollars each – not to mention an endowment to ensure that funds are available for long-term monitoring and maintenance in the future.

Which is where the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society or GOMPS came in. GOMPS is able to co-hold the covenant with HAT, and their expertise in Garry Oak and associated ecosystems will be a great help in ensuring that these rare ecosystems on the property are properly care for over time. As well, they have committed \$5000 to pay for professional services, like the survey, needed to complete to the covenant.

HAT, the Metchosin Foundation and GOMPS are all working together to raise the nearly \$15,000 needed just to protect the property. The VNHS has also generously supported HAT's covenant program over the years, and helped us secure several important habitats in the Capital region. Working together can save natural places, and it is a pleasure to work with other organizations and individuals committed to caring for nature.

This article was written in 2012 by Adam Taylor, Executive Director of Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) and first appeared in the newsletter of the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) and is reproduced with the permission of HAT.



DEFINE:

conservation covenant

A conservation covenant is a voluntary agreement made between a landholder and an authorised body (such as GOMPS) that aims to protect and enhance the natural, cultural and/or scientific values of certain land.

In December of 2013 GOMPS, HAT and the Elrod family signed a covenant to protect lands in Metchosin.

In January 2015 we received the annual report detailing the property. During future monitoring visits GOMPS' staff will have the option of participating!





The Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team Society Changes and Future Plans

An update written by Val Schaefer, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., Chair

The funding situation for the Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team Society has changed. The funding priorities for granting agencies have shifted and major Federal support for GOERT's species-at-risk work has greatly declined. However, even though we have a reduced capacity, the GOERT Society will continue to provide coordination, education, research and policy roles for the recovery of the Garry Oak Ecosystem.

We still plan to play a significant role in recovery planning, public education and the restoration of Garry Oak Ecosystems in the future. In particular, we can help to ensure proper science-informed approaches to ecological restoration for species-at-risk and the appropriate use of Best Management Practices. We will still continue to play a lead role in the Bluebird Project with our community partners. Together with the Restoration of Natural Systems Program at the University of Victoria, we also plan to offer an annual fall colloquium that reports on the latest research and restoration work on Garry Oak Ecosystems. We will continue to restore Garry Oak habitat through the Back to Our Roots Project and target the recovery of individual species such as the Taylor's Checkerspot.

After May 31, 2015, we will no longer have full-time paid office staff. The office will be managed by a part-time staff person to handle inquiries. All other of our activities will be done on contract or by volunteers. Through our volunteer Board and the Team we will still apply for funding available to nongovernmental organizations such as the Habitat Stewardship Program, the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund and EcoAction. There has been more emphasis on restoration work in these funding programs and we expect to do more restoration work ourselves as a result. We will also seek support from foundations and apply for government contracts.

In the past we have exclusively depended on grants but we expect to begin building a membership base to fund activities through fees. We will also rely more on volunteers to develop and conduct our research, coordination and education activities.

We thank you for your patience as the GOERT Society explores new ways to conduct its species species-at-risk work.

Over the past few months GOMPS Directors have been busy planning the next stages for our Garry oak nursery project. With two years worth of acorns already sown we are planning to move our stock onto the nursery this fall. Help will be needed to accomplish these tasks and we invite you to visit our website or join us on Twitter to find out how you can help.

twitter.com/GOMPS_Victoria



Annual General Meeting



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7PM @ UVic David Strong Bldg.
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Social Media



GOMPS is searching for a Social Media Wizard to join our Volunteer Team.

**Please contact our Board of Directors
grow.oaks@gmail.com**



Are you good with money?

GOMPS has a volunteer position available for a Treasurer. Experience is an asset but not required.

Please contact our Board of Directors by email

grow.oaks@gmail.com

or write to us at the address shown at the end of this newsletter.

GOMPS Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, May 26th 2015
7:00 – 9:00 PM in Room C118 of the David Strong Building at the University of Victoria

We will feature 2 speakers this year who will detail their efforts to protect land and promote outdoor learning experiences!

Langford resident Joan Varley will talk about her recent struggle with her local government in an attempt protect natural space and habitat.

Educator Carol Eby of South Park Family School describes her District's new initiative Coastal Kindergarten which promotes discovery, play and exploration!



Please join us for personal insights into environmental stewardship, building respectful relationships with nature and see how joining the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society can help preserve biodiversity.

The Leaflet is a publication of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society aka GOMPS

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