

Hi, welcome to our first newsletter. I sat on top of Moss Rock Park feeling the sea breeze, smelling the warm August scents and thinking about writing this newsletter. The violet green swallows darted just over my head, orange skippers sunned on the lichen covered rocks beside me. Below, I caught sight of plump fresh acorns bulging out in fat corsage at the end of the thick green spray of oak leaves. Oh, yes! a migrating 'neotropical' warblee was fly catching over on the far side of yonder oak. Directly to the north, in full view, lay the BIG glorious back yard of Government House. What a splendid stretch of Garry Oaks. I wished their Royal Highnesses a walk through the meadow on their stay. For I knew many volunteers have worked there to remove broom and blackberry to return the meadow to their rightful heirs. But not this time other glories took centre stage for the Royal Family. I turned my eyes to the southeast, what I saw was another showcase of volunteer community caring and a wondrous Garry Oak habitat, Trial Island. Not so long ago, due to citizen involvement the sewage treatment plant due for the Island was rejected by Oak Bay. Today, Trial Island's biological diversity is protected as an ecological reserve.

Why am I telling you all this? Well, because I've heard rumours that the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society protects the trees. Please do tell all you know that yes, we have spoken out for tree protection by-laws and yes we did launch an acorn to seedling campaign and we have promoted Garry Oak month but our purpose is much more than trees. To speak out for the ecosystem and all its biodiversity, is a big job. It has been easier to talk trees but life on earth is under siege, more so than at any time before in our planet's history. To protect our local biodiversity and to pass on 'nature's' commonwealth legacy we must, as committed volunteers, take up the challenge. We have made a difference! The public is beginning to value Garry Oak Meadow, yet, Christmas Hill waits. Can we work to bring about protection of a significant portion of Christmas Hill, not just for the trees but as a home for all the living things? I feel we can, Read on: there are tasks to be done and knowledge to be learned. Over to you.

Joyce Lee
479-8944

CAMAS WEALTH

Our Society has much wealth, volunteers who help in our many activities. Thanks to our founding members, Joyce Lee, Briony Penn and Willie MacGillvray. Briony wrote an emotional article about Christmas Hill, many of you responded to her plea. Willie has been working fulltime as Swan Lake coordinator of restoration. Francis Hunter has developed the brochure and poster formats. I should mention Briony's flower board is circulating through the Peninsula. Have you seen it? Francis worked frantically with Briony, water colouring the flowers. Lots of compliments! Mary Bratt's generosity brought other projects to realization. Richard promotes protection of our Garry Oak ecosystem in a multitude of ways. He is one of the 'movers and shakers' for the Government House backyard biodiversity project. The Colloquium was Richard's brainchild. Fran Aikens offered to bring together the Proceeding. Due to her work you can read the first Garry Oak Ecosystem book. Briony's brochure and the Colloquium Proceedings were the first Canadian publications on our Garry Oak ecosystems. Our vision statement: this document was put together by our members one June Saturday in Linda Saunders home. Our hopes and dreams were typed by Joel Ussey with Anne Keay pulling us all together for this effort. Supporters and energetic workers, Jean Anne Whiteman, Ann Clarke, Vivian Patterson and Lois Gardner were the mainstay of Project Acorn. Tom Gillespie is an incredible volunteer. He just jumps in for the duration. Pierre d'Estrube and Mietka Gawlik have contributed much time and energy to Saanich Garry Oak preservation.

THE GARRY OAK MEADOW

VICTORIA'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

Newsletter * September, 1994

The tree by-law and Garry Oak Preservation Zones are notable. Thank you. Many more supporters will be unsung heroes due to lack of time and space. Thank you! When you are called, please say yes. Together we do make the big difference.

MESSAGE BOARD

Marg McColl, corresponding secretary, thank you person and phone tree coordinator has two messages.

1) Marg will write thank you letters to anyone who you feel deserves to be recognized for their efforts in protecting our Garry Oak Ecosystem or for contributing to our goals of raising public awareness and educating the public about the endangered status of the Garry Oak Ecosystem. Just give her a call at 477-3673 or write 3720 Ascot Drive, Victoria, BC V8P 3S1.

2) As phone tree coordinator, she asks that if you move or change your phone/address then you should contact Tom Gillespie (361-1694) rather than passing the information on to the phone tree volunteers. Help us keep up with you.

Marnie Phillips, director and display committee coordinator requests inquiries from people interested in helping with our display, passing out our brochure and generally to put a face on our society - 598-8820.

Displays

The Garry Oak Society has two free standing displays. One is the hand painted board depicting the flowers of the Garry Oak meadow. This board has been located in various municipal halls in Greater Victoria.

The other display, which is professionally designed, is composed of four narrow panels hinged together. Information is presented in a visual and informative style.

These displays are available for meetings, foyers of buildings, etc. Any ideas for the placement of these displays are welcomed and may be given to Yvonne Leeming (477-3815) or Marnie Phillips (598-8820).

The display committee would like to thank Kornelia Meszaros, Campbell Construction and Yvonne Leeming (among others) for their time and effort and ongoing commitment toward our goals.

Thanks,

Marnie Phillips Vic Derman will be working to develop public education material: video and computer. He asks for a storyline. Can you work on a story to present to the public? We need to heighten their awareness and carry them through to individual commitment and action. Call Vic at

Joyce Lee, our representative on the Provincial Capitol Commission - Greenway Advisory Committee asks for anyone who has background in real estate, land assembly, planning and/or an understanding of the Land Act. Alternates to downtown, monthly Tuesday, noon hour meetings and advisors (by phone) are very necessary in order for our voice and views to be fully recognized and supported with Greenways funding. This is an opportunity to secure the land base necessary for habitat protection. To be effective our voice must be organized and consistent. Call Joyce at 479-8944.

Allister Wilson has drawn up a petition for tree by-law in Oak Bay and Victoria. Over 100 signatures. We need to circulate it. Phone 727-6634 and ask for one.

Andria Telow wishes to locate individuals interested in working towards identification of nature's pathways in the View Royal area. Andria has asked View Royal for a task force to being an inventory. View Royal needs this badly - if you can help or if you can refer people please give

Andria a call.

Mietka Gawlik would like the society to maintain our regular monthly meeting. Together we can talk to maintain our momentum. If you share Mietka's interest join her on the program committee. Call 727-0527 soon for October meeting.

Fran Aitkens has been editor, distributor and promoter of our Colloquium Proceedings. If you can help with mailing, invoicing and distribution please give Fran a shout at 598-3723. She would like that.

Garry Oak has lots of fat juicy acorns and would like a couple of folks to organize a BIG & FAT ACORN CONTEST for Garry Oak Day November 5th. How about you and your family? Call Garry Oaks Hot Line 727-6634.

Don Bottrell, Dogwood Tree Services is sponsoring Plant amnesty at the Esquimalt Home Show on September 17th. Call 652-9654.

Tom Gillespie wonders if members would like a GOMPS pin or t-shirt. If you'd like to coordinate this or work on this call Tom at 361-1694

Bright ideas for more money to fund our efforts? Call Tom.

Many can give of their time, others feel a donation is their contribution. Thanks to all of you. We hope to spend wisely! A note to donors, you can earmark your donations to specific projects. Mary Bratt gave \$300 to our flower board; Hand Gautier donated \$100 to our newsletter. All donations receive a tax deductible receipt.

Donors List

Patricia Tarr	\$30
Molly Erickson	\$50
Jocelyn Braithwaite	\$100
Anne Humphries	\$40
Archie Campbell	\$40
Wolf-willi Boepple	\$13
Sheila Hodgson	\$13
Doree MacGillivray	\$12
Alan Henley	\$13
Munro's Books	\$500
Ivy's Bookstore	\$52

Local businesses have supported our goals and have volunteered time, expertise and money. Give them your support!

Fran Aitkens	Editor
Francis Hunter	Desk Top Publishing
Xerox Canada	
Demand Dispatch	
Munro's Books	
Ivy Books	
Campbell Construction	

YES! WE CAN!

Denise Cammiade wanted to do something to help protect our meadows. She thought and thought: Bright idea! For every bag a customer brought to the store the book shop gave 1¢. She presented her idea to: Jim Munro and to the Oak Bay Merchants. Results! Munro Books \$500. Ivy Bookstore \$52. Way to Go! Say hi to Denise next time you visit Munro's Books.

Did you know?

Michael Korican made a hypercard stack for a display on a Macintosh

computer. Complete with bird songs. Thanks, Michael. Call 727-6634 to obtain

Willie McGillivray's video on the 'Meadow Move' is available for loan.

Brochures need to be distributed to public places call 727-6634.

Results happen: Pierre d'Estrube charter member arranged meetings with Saanich staff how we are on the way to Garry Oak Preservation Zones call Pierre at 477-2410.

Filing cabinet, book cases and office equipment desperately needed call 727-6634 with your offers.

Garry Oak biodiversity in School District 61 has begun. Call Joyce 479-8942 if you can help with typing or writing 'Acorn To Seedling' or school visits and or outings.

We're growing in leaps and bounds, membership is over 100 but our efforts must be louder still. Give someone you know a membership today.

Arborists support our goals!

Dogwood, Tree Services, Hartshorne Tree Service and Mt. View Tree Service are members.

Conference, October 5 - 7 at the Victoria Conference Centre, Marnie Phillips invites your involvement.

The Joys of Volunteering (or Does Anyone Get Paid?)

You may have wondered whether anyone in the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society gets paid for their efforts. The answer is "no". There can sometimes be confusion about this. For example, Willy MacGillivray works as a full time staff member for the Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Centre. However, when contacted at this centre, Willy is not being paid an additional salary when he discusses issues related to the Oak Meadow Preservation Society. Also, Joyce Lee, as Director, receives no payment for her work. The joys of volunteering thus spring from an inner sense of satisfaction in pursuing a worthy cause rather than from expectation of monetary rewards. (In the case of Joyce phoning members to persuade them to actually do something, it may help to have masochistic tendencies).

Christmas Hill Protection?

A critical public planning process for the slopes of Christmas Hill is underway in Saanich. In response to widespread public concern about the fat of the slopes, Saanich Council ordered the Planning Department to undertake a public review of the issues in anticipation of development proposals for the large parcels of private land surrounding the Nature Reserve at the summit of the Hill. The process is to be "fast-tracked"; the Planning Department must report back to Council by March 1995.

A flow in the comprehensive review process is that development is not frozen until it is complete. South Island Development corporation (SIDC) has filed yet another development application for their lands on the southwest slope. That application is continuing to move through the development approval process even as the comprehensive review commences. Other developers could file proposals for their parcels which would receive the same treatment.

Two public meetings have been held to date. The purpose of the first was to identify issues for study; of the second to ratify how the review will proceed. A Steering Committee is to be struck to examine the issues. Lively debate ensued about its composition, dividing, as might be expected, along lines of probable competing interests. As proposed by

senior planner Neil Findlow, the Committee would have 20 members, including one representative of each of the 8 major landowners, three representatives of residents' associations, three unaffiliated neighbourhood residents, three representatives of public interest groups (one of whom would be from the Garry Oak Meadow Society), and three planners. In the end, Saanich planners will decide the composition of the Committee, a useful illustration of the extent to which the outcome of the review remains within their control.

Although the Steering Committee will be charged with examining the issues, its work will be public. In order to keep the process open and democratic, the public is invited to attend all meetings and to speak when issues of concern to them are being studied.

The work of the review promises to be time consuming, possibly tedious, and probably contentious. Nevertheless it is critical that those concerned with the future of Christmas Hill persist in attending meetings and speaking out despite these discouragements. As proposed, the voiceless ones of the Hill have only one defender on the Steering Committee, easily lost among 19 separate interests. Lend them to your tongue, so their needs may be heard amid the clamour.

We all know how little is left of the unique Garry Oak ecosystems of Vancouver Island. The slopes of Christmas Hill represent one of the last opportunities to expand their protection. Without expansion of the protected zone on Christmas Hill, and the addition of buffers to reduce human impact on the Nature Reserve, it is doubtful the Christmas Hill summit can survive as a native ecosystem. Please join your representative on the Steering Committee at meetings as often as you can.

Call Sharon Waite today 479-3380

News we are Happy For

Glencoe Cove, Tod Inlet, Mount Finlayson, Panama Hill recent arrivals to our park inventory, all contain Garry Oak ecosystems. In Victoria Friends of Summit Park formed coordinated by Diedre Gotto. They are now working on a master park plan and sanctuary. NEWS we are waiting for. Call Diedre at 385-6359. Madson Lodge lands, many believe the West Bay walk way follows park land. The Salvation Army has plans to develop the wild Garry Oak habitat. Go for a walk and write a letter to Esquimalt to support the park.

On Commonwealth legacy. Panama Hill Park Saanich is located between Wilkinson and Carey on Roy Road. Panama Hill has a diverse vegetation, reflecting its varied history and growing conditions. There is old pasture, Colquitz Creek and rocky outcrop. The Garry Oaks are found on the high point with Douglas Fir. Wayne Erickson led the walk in July to celebrate the new park, John Adams and friends of the Strawberry Ratepayers Association cooked hot dogs. Marie Phillips brought along a G.O. M.P.S. display. Earlier, before the crowd of forty arrived, Joyce spotted a deer and fawn browsing. Write Andrew Petter, give him praise for this important Garry Oak meadow park. (c/o Legislative Buildings Victoria, BC).

Glencoe Cove in Gordon Head is also a new park with a transitional Garry Oak community. Thanks to the efforts of Friends of Glencoe Cove for their dedication, actions and commitment. The Provincial Capital Commission is responsible for the park. Thank you letters from our members are a nice way of raising the profile of the Society and reinforcing our goals. Elizabeth Cull was very supportive in a difficult process that led to the park creation.

These parks came about through the strong belief of committed individuals. These folks are now watch dogs on the process.

Directors Report

The society has just joined the Victoria Volunteer Bureau and the California Oak Foundation. Welcome to membership groups who support us. Fernwood Community Association, Pender Island Naturalists, Cowichan Valley Naturalists. Eric Redekop has formed an Education Committee. Interested?? Call 595-7270.

Minutes are kept of Directors meeting. Special thanks to Wilma Vincent, an exceptional secretary for your time as director. You can be a decision maker be actively involved in your society, become a director. Call Joyce 479-8944.

Victoria Naturalists sponsored events:

Esquimalt Home Show features plant amnesty - advocacy for our plant life.

Biodiversity lecture - Tuesday October 11, 1994 7:30 pm (Evelyn Hamilton) Begbie Building, Room 159, UVIC.

Gowland Hike Saturday, October 15, 1994 9:30 am Helmcken Park and Ride Bev Glover 721-1476

Mark Your Calendar

You are cordially invited to a discussion and social with members of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society. Topic is 'All you really need to know to grow your own Garry oak'. Bring your acorns, friends, and mug. Wed. Sept. 28, 7:30PM at the View Royal Community Hall (Old island Highway between Admirals Rd. and Helmcken, 727-6634).

Last Thursdays of month Meetings at: Swan Lake, 7:30 pm on October 27th, November 24th, and January 26th. Bring a mug, your friends and your enthusiasm. Join fellow members of G.O.M.P.S. for social evenings. For details call 727-6634.

Arborist conference is a Pacific N.W. 'Urban Forestry At The Cutting Edge' October 5 - 7, Conference Centre call 598-8820 for details on ways to be involved.

Garry Oak Day, Sat., Nov. 5. Please get out on this week and encourage anyone you know to plant/collect acorns.

Readings

English Ivy - No friend to Garry Oak is the title of a sidebar on page 5 Saanich Parks and Recreation Fall Leisure Guide.

Saanich has a new Trail Guide out as well. It's free and worth finding.

Saanich's Citizens Guide to the Tree By-law is necessary for all of us. The by-law needs your efforts to be effective. Get one today!

'Nature, our Commonwealth' is also a recent brochure worth getting. It mentions Lone Tree Hill "...ramble take you through lovely open groves of Arbutus and endangered Garry Oak".

The Victoria Naturalist September/October '94 has two articles on Garry Oak. Thanks to Leon Pavlick and Yorke Edwards, two naturalists who love to write. Leon's focus is history he reviews for us how our oak received its name. By the way, one of our members is nee: Garry. (We are happy to have Patricia Tarr as a supporter!) Yorke Edwards observes the interaction of Stellar's Jays and Acorn Crops.

The publication focuses on the natural history of our area. Thus many articles offer us insights on the habitat's many species or on Garry Oak Meadow biological diversity.

Is the Garry Oak a goner? Story and photography by Peter Symcox p. 20 Beautiful B.C. Magazine, Fall/1994 p. 24 'a bitter fight is being waged between developers and preservationists! Ah, the poetic(?) license of the press. Well, maybe bitter is not the right word but we got coverage in yet another internationally distributed magazine. Will someone write them a letter to say thanks? More articles featuring the biological diversity and the impact of our lifestyle or nature is needed - anyone?

Beautiful B.C. Magazine summer issue has a sidebar features Lt.Governor Lane and his Garry Oak Meadow!

'Home Place' Stan Rowe. I wanted to mention some book available at your library. I read them and they all offer us a better perspective on our landscape. Call number 304-20971.

'Wildflowers of Field and Slope', this series is from the larger work, by Dr. Lewis J. Clark, Wildflowers in the Pacific Northwest (photograph call number 582.13 c/a and description)

Biodiversity in B.C. 1994 C.W.S. publication. This is a big book worth browsing in our Living Legacy RBCM publications. Reviews some management approaches for biodiversity in B.C. The diversity of life forms, so numerous that we have yet to identify most of them, is the greatest wonder of this planet.'

Finally a poster (or 2) and book on Garry Oak Meadows produced by the hard working volunteers of your society. You can learn lots by spending \$10.00 for the Colloquium Proceedings. (i.e. Garry Oaks have been here for 7,000 years in greater numbers read all about it)

Downtown at the Field Naturalists Store or through Swan Lake or mail your request:

	Order Form		
	Cost	Mailing	Total
Poster (Upland Park)	10.00	3.00	\$13
Flower Display	10.00	3.00	\$13
Colloquium Proceedings	10.00	3.00	\$13

Free for distribution our brochure, poster - call 727-6634
N.E. Framed posters are available from Hauk de Bruin (652-1267) 977
Damelart Way, Brentwood Bay.

Distribution/Marketing coordinator need to coordinate this action. What do you think?

Since this is the Society's first newsletter, your feedback would be very helpful. Please answer the following questions and send your response to: Anne Stack, 4119 Santa Clara Avenue, Victoria, BC V8Z 5H5

1. What did you like most about this newsletter?
2. Do you have any suggestions for the next newsletter?
3. Are you interested in working on the next newsletter e.g. submitting an item, editing, helping with the format? If so, please write your name, address and phone number below along with how you would like to be involved.

Some feedback on GOMPS future activities.

1. Outings to develop your field identification skills.
2. Social activities i.e. picnics, dinners, visits to members own Garry Oaks meadows, etc.
3. Work shops: Develop skills and expertise in order to promote our cause.

Photography, presentations, public speaking, native plants, gardening, writing - letters, articles

4. Lecturing
5. Other i.e. Broom pull, project acorn

Info Call Hotline 727-6634

Regular September Meeting

You are invited to join members and supporters of Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society on Wednesday September 28, 7:30 pm View Royal Community Hall, Old Island Highway (Opposite firehall) between Admirals and Helmecken.

Quest Speaker

Certified I.S.A. arborist, Don Bothell of Dogwood Tree Service will give an informative discussion on tree care with emphasis on Garry Oak and their sensitive root systems. Don will illustrate his talk with original slides. Bring a mug, a friend and your questions. Be prepared to discover many interesting observations from a thoughtful and professional individual. You will see trees from a new perspective.

For further details call the Garry Oak HOTLINE 727-6634

Acorns - sort your acorns and bring along a bag of acorns. Lets plan on planting 1000+, bring your ideas and get growing!!

Invitation

You are invited to join in our actions to protect, preserve and restore to the greatest extent possible the remaining Garry Oak stands and ecosystems.

Yes, I share your vision

- ☐ My cheque for \$12/\$18
☐ Gift Membership
☐ Donation to further protection of Garry Oak biodiversity

Name:

Address:

Postal Code

Phone:

☐ Yes, I want to help in society activities.

The Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Please send to G.O.M.P.S. c/o Swan Lake 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, BC V8X 3W1

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 1995

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 1995: If your name does not appear below, your membership expired on January 31st. Please be reminded that members whose dues remain unpaid after 22MAR95 are not allowed to vote, nominate, or be nominated at the Annual General Meeting on 23MAR95, and that all membership classes are entitled to one vote only. On 06FEB95, current memberships (60) included: Margaret Black, David Boag, Kathleen Bristowe, Pat & Bob Broadland, Katherine & Stephen Brownsword, David Campbell, Jane Carson, Adolf & Oluna Ceska, Carl Cogger, Roger Colwill, Pierre d'Estrube (Director), Kathy Fletcher, Virginia & Paul Gareau, Tom Gillespie (Treasurer), Bernard Gillie, Dorothy Hartshorne, Michael Harvey, Alan Henly, Beth Hill, Anne Humphries, Frances Hunter, Rod Katz, Robin Kingsley, Mike Korican & Chris Churchill, Heather Lawton, David & Yvonne Leeming, Deborah Lefrank, Joyce Levy, Jean MacDonald, Doreen MacGillivray, Willie MacGillivray (President), Margaret Maunsell, Joan McHardy, Kornelia Meszaros, Mount View Tree Service, Peter Murray, Laure Newnham, Marnie Phillips, Gary Potter, Eric Redekop (Secretary), Ian Reid, Dorothy Roberts, Susan Scott, Michael & Anne Stack, Katie Stewart (Director), Edward Stillinger, Friends of Summit Park, Philip Symons & Marya Nycand, Lana Taves, Andria Tetlow, Nancy Turner, Don Vincent, Wilma Vincent (Director), Sharron Waite, Norman & Joan Wale, James Whiteaker, Neil Williams, Jean Wood, Kay Wood, Valerie Woodruff.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MARCH 23RD: The following agenda for the Annual General Meeting of the Society was adopted by the Board of Directors at their 06FEB meeting:

1. Call to order (7:30pm).
2. Observance of quorum and other requirements.
3. Issuance of voting cards to current members (dues paid as of 22MAR95).
4. Recognition of the Chair and appointment of the Secretary.
5. Annual Report of the Treasurer, including statements from the Auditor.
6. Setting of annual membership dues.
7. Resolutions brought to the membership by the Board of Directors:
 - a. RESOLVED, that the Bylaws of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society be amended by adding to clause 2.11e, "the annual membership fees to be paid by the Society, on authorization by the Board of Directors."
 - b. RESOLVED, that the Bylaws of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society be amended by deleting "8 directors manage the business" and inserting "7 directors manage the business."
 - c. RESOLVED, that the Bylaws of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society be amended by deleting "4 is the quorum for Directors' meetings" and adding, "quorum for meetings of Directors shall be a majority of the Directors then in office, but not less than three Directors shall form a quorum."
8. Nomination of members for election to the Board of Directors.
9. Election of members to the Board of Directors.
10. Adjournment.
11. Informal social period.

DIRECTORS PLAY MUSICAL CHAIRS: In a mini-shuffle at the 06FEB Board Meeting Director Wilma Vincent turned over duties of the Membership Development Chair to Director Eric Redekop (595-7270), who gave up the duties of Program Chair to Director Katie Stewart (386-4792).

FINANCE CHAIR REPORT: The Society recently donated \$500.00 to the Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society to recognize their ongoing support for Society activities. Swan Lake Nature Centre staff receive Society mail and telephone enquiries, and our membership frequently use their meeting space. A financial report is being prepared by the Treasurer and Auditor for presentation to the membership at the Annual General Meeting 23MAR. The Fund-raising Committee is developing a long-range funding plan for the Society. Interested members should contact Tom Gillespie (361-1694).

DONATIONS: Many thanks for the generosity of our donors who, over the last few months have contributed a total of \$635.00. Donors include: Pierre d'Estrube, John Esling, Hendrik Gautier, Margaret Haines, Alan Henley, Anne Humphries, Doreen MacGillivray, Margaret Maunsell, Dorothy Roberts, Sidney Community Arts Council, Patricia Tarr, Norman Wale. Our apologies for accidental omissions; if you have been overlooked, let us know.

FOR SALE: Hebda, Richard & Aitkens, Fran (Eds.) (1993). Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings, Victoria 1993. 18 articles, 2 appendices; plastic coil bound, 93 pp. To order, send \$12.00 (includes postage & handling) to the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society Fund-raising Committee, c/o 954-A Queens Avenue, Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6

PROGRAM CHAIR REPORT: The Garry Oak Inventory Project (Research Committee) needs a new Project Coordinator to get the project underway as soon as possible. Any member may be appointed to carry out the project, but without a volunteer member, the Board of Directors may be forced to appoint a Director to develop this program. Interested members should contact Directors before the 06MAR Board Meeting. Operation Clean Sweep (Preservation & Restoration Committee) is proceeding on several fronts. Broom removal projects are underway at Christmas Hill, Anderson Hill Park, and Mount Tolmie Park. An Oak Grassland Rehabilitation Symposium focussed on the problems associated with removing invasive exotic plants (eg. broom) is tentatively planned for June; 20-30 participants have been sent a project introduction and survey. The Support Initiatives Group reports that a Garry Oak Protection Bylaw received 1st, 2nd, and 3rd reading by Oak Bay Council 23JAN, and that copies of the proposed bylaw were sent to our membership in Oak Bay for their information. The Education Committee reports that Camosun College Community Education is offering "Natural History of Garry Oak Habitats" (18MAR-06MAY) and UVic Continuing Studies is offering "The Natural History of Mount Tolmie" (02APR). For more information, interested members may contact Katie Stewart (386-4792).

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR REPORT: The Displays Committee has developed a new display system and placed it in several public locations recently, including the BC Hydro building on West Saanich Road. Look for our famous flower board at BC Systems, 4000 Seymour Place. A display including member photographs is available for viewing at Victoria City Hall until the end of March. If you know of any other suitable public display locations or can help with moving displays 3-4 times a year, please contact Marnie Phillips (598-8820). Member Kornelia Meszaros has produced a Society organizational chart for display in four forms: mounted poster, 11x17 fold-out, overhead & slide transparencies (see back page). For more information, interested members should contact Willie MacGillivray (475-0587).

NAME THE NEWSLETTER CONTEST: The Newsletter Committee would like membership input to find a name for the Newsletter. If you have an original idea to contribute, write your newsletter name and your own name on separate pieces of paper, and put them in two separate envelopes, marking the one enclosing your entry with an X. Put both envelopes in another larger envelope and mail to: Name the Newsletter Contest, c/o 2510 Asquith Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 3Y1

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CHAIR REPORT: For dates of upcoming meetings and events, see the CALENDAR section. The Society needs more membership involvement in leadership and committee activities. Most seats on the Board of Directors become vacant at the end of March, and several committees have remained inactive recently due to lack of membership participation. Due to recent developments, the future of the Society could be very exciting, but it needs your active support to grow. Contact Eric Redekop (595-7270) for more information.

CALENDAR

11FEB95 Government House Broom Bash, 10am-Noon (Bryce: 387-1371)
23FEB95 General Meeting, 7:30pm, Swan Lake Nature Centre
02MAR95 Board Meeting, 7:30pm
18MAR95 Natural History of Garry Oak Habitats, Camosun
23MAR95 Annual General Meeting, 7:30pm, Pacific Forestry Centre,
506 West Burnside Road, Victoria, B.C.
02APR95 Natural History of Mount Tolmie, UVic
27MAY95 Urban Wildlands Conference, UVic
JUN95 Oak Grassland Rehabilitation Symposium, Victoria

DIRECTORS & OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President & Public Relations Chair.....Willie MacGillivray
Vice-President.....Vacant
Treasurer & Finance Chair.....Tom Gillespie
Secretary & Membership Development Chair.....Eric Redekop
Director & Program Chair.....Katie Stewart
Director.....Wilma Vincent
Director.....Pierre d'Estrube
Directors (2).....Vacant

MEMBERSHIPS & DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

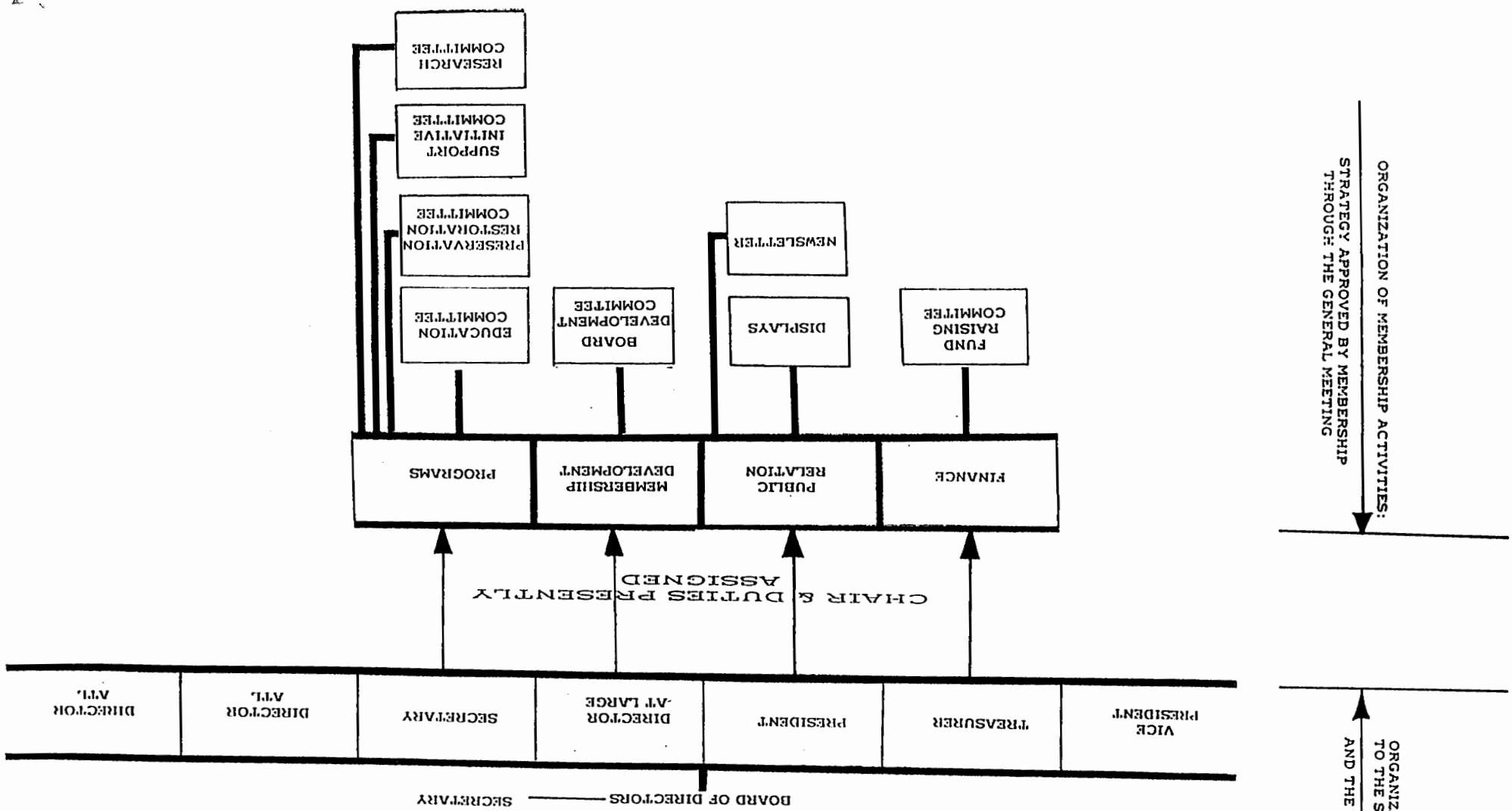
- [] Individual membership dues \$12.00
[] Family membership dues \$18.00
[] Donation
[] Gift membership, send receipt to: _____

Please send more information about:

- [] Membership committee activities
[] Local commercial sources for native plants
[] Growing, planting oaks

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY
C/O 3873 SWAN LAKE ROAD, VICTORIA, B.C. V8X 3W1

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR THE
GARRY OAK MEADOW
PRESERVATION SOCIETY



ORGANIZATION OF MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES:
STRATEGY APPROVED BY MEMBERSHIP
THROUGH THE GENERAL MEETING

ORGANIZATION ACCORDING
TO THE SOCIETY'S ACT
AND THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

GARRY OAK
MEADOW
PRESERVATION
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4
APRIL, 1995

Native Plant Study Group

If you're interested in learning more about native plants and don't want to just consult books, come to the Native Plant Study Group's meetings.

We meet the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Royal Museum. (Meet at main doors). The last few meetings have been quite stimulating, with talks and slide shows. Dr. Geraldine Allen spoke on erythroniums, including a species recently discovered in California, and Willie McGillivray talked about the value of native plant gardening. Carol Jones spoke about her work — massive site reclamations such as mines, using native plant materials. She propagates her own materials using seeds and cuttings from plants collected near the sites. A follow-up field trip to her nursery is on April 23.

Printed hand-outs have included: Species list of erythroniums, botanical terms, and native plant material lists (retail sales) from Thimble Farms on Saltspring Island and C.E. Jones on W. Saanich Rd.

To join the Native Plant Study Group costs \$5 annually. Since this is a subgroup of the Victoria Horticultural Society, an annual membership (\$15) is also required for the VHS. President of the NPSG is Brenda Costanzo (598-7129).

CHRISTMAS HILL BROOM SWEEP AWAY

On March 3, 1995, a huge amount of broom was removed by helicopter from the top of Christmas Hill and taken to the bottom of the hill where there was machine access. The broom had been pulled/clipped by approximately 200 volunteers over several weekends in late winter.

Project co-ordinator Willie MacGillivray says using a helicopter saved hundreds of hours of man-power (people going up and down the slopes carrying broom), as well as preventing compaction of the soil.

Prior to the actual day of removal the broom had been loaded into large fishing nets so that on the actual lift-off day, only six people were needed — three on the top of the hill and three on the bottom. Willie says the removal was flawless, taking only a half an hour instead of the anticipated one hour.

Arron Flaigg watching helicopter take off

Photo by Darren Stone,
courtesy of the *Saanich News*



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECT NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 1995 Annual General Meeting of the Society was held March 23 at the Pacific Forestry Centre on Burnside Rd. The membership decided to maintain the status quo regarding annual membership dues, passed two bylaw amendments, and elected a new Board of Directors. The first bylaw amendment reduced the number of Society directors from eight to seven, while the other altered the quorum rules for board meetings.

Five of the six remaining vacancies on the Board of Directors were filled by Pierre D'Estrube, Paul Gaureau, Hal

Gibbard, Tom Gillespie and Sharron Waite. At their first meeting April 3, the sixth vacancy was filled by Katie Stewart, who was appointed Director pro tem for another year.

WELCOME NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS

Tom Loring, Harold Wolf, Hornby Island Nature Conservancy.

Current membership: 71 regular and 20 family. Total household: 91 representing 111 members.

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE

At the first meeting of the new BOD, Katie Stewart was appointed Director pro tem for another year, then the Directors assigned the duties of President to Katie, of Vice-President to Pierre D'estrube, of Treasurer to Tom Gillespie, and those of Secretary to Eric Redekop.

Tom Gillespie will continue as Finance Chair, Eric Redekop will continue as Membership Development Chair, and Sharron Waite will be the Program Chair; Katie Stewart was assigned the duties of Public Relations Chair.

CALENDAR

CAMAS DAY: Beacon Hill Park, **April 22.** Guided walks: 9:30 a.m., birding; 11 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., wildflowers, butterflies, native history.

14TH ANNUAL EARTHWALK: **April 22.** Leaves Centennial Square at noon, walk to Legislature to hear music and speakers.

INTERPRETIVE WALK OF MT. TOLMIE: Join guide Eric Redekop (595-7270) **April 23,** at 10:00 a.m. at the reservoir parking lot.

NATURAL HISTORY OF GARRY OAK HABITATS: **April 27,** Camosun.

Two connected events:

ART EXHIBITION: Celebrating the beauty of Sooke Hills. Opening ceremonies, **Friday, May 26, 7-9 p.m.,** 4th Floor Galleries (443 and 444), Eaton Centre.

URBAN WILDLANDS CONFERENCE: Focus on the Greater Victoria region. Several speakers including Dr. Richard Hebda on the Garry oak ecosystem. **May 27, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.,** Begbie Building, Rm. 159, UVic. Info: Dr. Saul Arbess, 370-3384; pre-registration, 380-3098. Admission by donation.

OAK GRASSLAND REHABILITATION SYMPOSIUM: June. Further details to be announced.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart
Vice-President	Pierre D'Estrube
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie
Secretary and Membership	
Development Chair	Eric Redekop
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite
Director	Paul Gaureau
Director	Hal Gibbard

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |

DO ANY GOMPS members have established native plant gardens/meadows or are in the process of doing so? If so, please contact Katie Stewart (386-4792), who is attempting to convert her garden and would like advice. Also, do you know of any other native plant gardens/meadows in the Greater Victoria area. The G.O.M.P.S. is interested in surveying how many native gardens there are.

GOMPS ON INTERNET! (Michael Koric, 598-3599). Computer users the world over can now learn more about Garry oak meadows, thanks to a local Internet service provider. Pacific Interconnect (744-5871) has graciously agreed to post a hypertext version of our original brochure on the Internet's World Wide Web as a public service announcement. Their Universal Resource Locator or URL is <http://www.com/> and our information is off the What's New or Main Street pages.

FOR SALE: *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings*, Victoria, 1993. (Hebda, Richard & Aitkens, Fran; Eds.) 18 articles, 2 appendices; plastic coil bound, 93 pp. To order, send \$12 (includes postage and handling) to the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society Fund-Raising Committee, c/o 954-A Queens Avenue, Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6

NAME THE NEWSLETTER CONTEST: If you have an original idea to contribute, write your newsletter name and your own name on separate pieces of paper and put them in two separate envelopes, marking the one enclosing your entry with an X. Put both envelopes in another larger envelope and mail to: NAME THE NEWSLETTER CONTEST, c/o 2510 Asquith Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 3Y1.

GOMPS DISPLAY is at BC Buildings, 4000 Seymour Place from March 27 - April 17.



Camassia leichtlinii (Baker) S. Wats. Great Camas from *The Lily Family of British Columbia* by T.M.C. Taylor, illustrated by Frank L. Beebe
Royal B.C. Provincial Museum Publication #25

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY
c/o 3873 SWAN LAKE ROAD, VICTORIA, B.C. V8X 3W1



Highway plant rescues

Widening the highway may make it easier for drivers to leave town, but thousands of native plants and hundreds of trees are being destroyed in the process.

At least two GOMPS members — and other people — have been doing plant rescues since late winter. They have collected and transplanted many plants (some in sods) in their yards.

Some of the species include spring gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*); blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*); sea blush (*Plectritis congesta*); shooting star (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*, *d. pulchellum*); white fawn lily (*Erythronium oregonum*); chocolate lily (*Fritillaria lanceolata*); camas (*Camassia quamash*); satin-flower (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*); kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*); coastal strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*); western buttercup (*Ranunculus occidentalis*); broad-leaf stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*); miner's lettuce (*Montia perfoliata*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*); death-camas (*Zygadenus venenosus*); small-flowered woodland star (*Lithophragma parviflorum*) and licorice fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*).

Even after the bulldozers had torn up the soil on one site, shooting stars and fawn lilies had popped up. I was impressed with their resilience.

On Millstream Road, where yet another Garry oak habitat is well on its way to oblivion, hundreds of camas were uprooted and overturned a day or two before I first

wandered around the site. I collected around 700 plants.

Shrubs and ferns, such as Oregon grape (*Mahonia nervosa*) and bald-hipped rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*) and sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), were very difficult to move, because their roots were too deep in rock crevices.

When I was on the top of one bluff, I noticed a man attempting to dig out a small shrubby Garry oak. I didn't stay to see if he was successful.

The highways construction is being done under contract so the Ministry of Highways can't give permission for people to go on the sites. The best times to collect are after 4:30 p.m. weekdays when the crews have stopped working or on Sundays. A preliminary scouting is useful to see what plant material is available and where blasting is imminent. Pink flagging tape marks the boundaries. If possible, try to take a larger section of plant

material, rather than individual plants, to increase the chances of survival. You might find some surprises, too.

A No Trespassing sign is now posted on the site at Millstream Road (just past the Park & Ride). If you choose to disregard it, there is still lots of camas as well as some shooting stars, blue-eyed Mary and satin-flowers that could still be collected. However, the site might be blasted at any time, although the road crews seem to be presently working on the other side of Millstream Road and along the highway.

How successful my transplanting will be is, of course, a big unknown.

Quite a lot of the plant material has already bloomed. I'm curious to see what my garden will be like in a year's time. It's worth the try, nonetheless, whatever the outcome.

— Katie Stewart

June 10 Broom Control Symposium

Objectives:

- 1) To establish and co-ordinate people involved in broom removal activities in Garry oak grassland habitats;
- 2) To exchange current information about the effectiveness of certain broom removal strategies, techniques and procedures;
- 3) To produce a statement of principles to guide volunteers or

other people who want to plan broom removal activities;

- 4) To produce a comprehensive bibliography of source materials regarding broom control.

The registration fee is \$30, which includes the all-day symposium, all printed materials, a field trip and a Dunsmuir Lodge buffet.

A few volunteers are needed to help out. Contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

Garry Oak Inventory Project

In July 1994, GOMPS received a \$2000 grant to conduct a Garry oak inventory in the four core municipalities (Victoria, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt).

The project entails volunteers walking their neighbourhoods or other areas and counting the number of Garry oak on a block-by-block basis.

To begin with, coordinator Eric Redekop (595-7270) has prepared 23 maps to cover the City of Victoria. Volunteers are

needed. Eric says a fair amount can be covered in as little time as an hour. Even if you have only one hour a week to walk and count that would be helpful. Kids can be involved also.

Eric hopes the information gathered will assist GOMPS to advocate a tree bylaw for Victoria.

Funding for the project is from the government's Public Conservation Assistance Fund, Wildlife Branch, B.C. Environment.

Gardening under the oaks

The May members' meeting will focus on native plant gardening. Do you have any expertise? Do you want to learn more? This will be an informal get-together to exchange ideas and discuss successes and failures. Bring photos, gardening journals, books and anything else you can think of that you might like to share. May 11, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary.

Welcome new and Renewed Members

A. Traviss Corry, John and Catherine Weed, Neel Tje Van Strien, Michael Corry, Jean Anne Wightman.

Current membership: 75 Adult and 21 Family. Total household: 96 representing 117 members.

Membership seed/seedling exchange

If you have (or likely will have later this year) any extra native plant seeds or seedlings, GOMPS is interested in setting up an exchange for our members. Phone Katie Stewart at 386-4792.

Broom control event

Staff from Aveda Esthetique crumbled dead standing broom on Mt. Tolmie on April 9. Under Eric Redekop's direction, the volunteers cleared a rocky knoll in a northwest area where a fire had occurred previously. Eric terms the newly cleared area an "experimental zone".

Urban Wildlands Conference

Conference on Strengthening Our Covenant with Natural Communities in the Greater Victoria Region

To bring public attention to the need for protection of the "Sooke Hills Greenbelt" (Tod Inlet to Sooke Basin), Garry Oak Meadows and Urban Foreshores

Objective

"Urban Wildlands" will be a working conference that explores the ecological, recreational and spiritual values associated with urban wildlands for human, plant and animal communities. It will respond to the question: How can these lands be protected from urban encroachment for all succeeding generations?

As part of the fastest growing economic region in North America (the Georgia Basin), Vancouver Island is experiencing unplanned urban sprawl with its accompanying degradation in the quality of living. Lands presently in the public domain are in danger of being alienated, for short-sighted economic development.

At this moment, a unique opportunity remains to protect the vital wildlands in our region. To that end the conference is dedicated.

— excerpt from
Conference brochure

Dr. Richard Hebda will speak on the Garry oak ecosystem. As well, there will be several discussion groups, including one on the Garry oak ecosystem.

This conference will take place May 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria.

Space is limited. Please pre-register by telephone at (604) 380-3098. Admission is by donation. For more information contact Saul Arbess at 370-3384 or Fax 370-3660.

Format

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

- Dr. Saul Arbess, conference chair

Speakers, including:

- Robert Bateman, artist
- Dr. Bruce Cumming, environmental biologist
- Larry Farwell, water conservation expert
- Dr. Richard Hebda, botanist
- Dr. Chris Pielou, ecologist
- Ray Zimmermann, conservation advocate

1:30 - 5:00 p.m.

- Discussion groups to develop action plans
- Plenary session: Taking the next steps

Splendour in their yard — native plants flourish thanks to Vincents

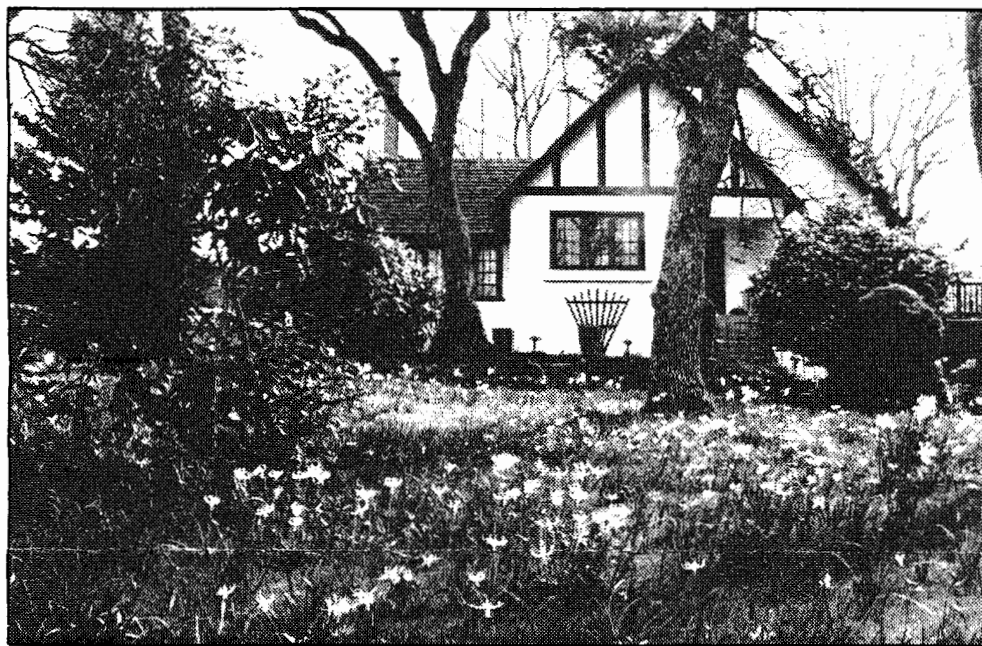


Photo by Peter Symcox, courtesy of Wilma and Don Vincent. Wilma is a former director of GOMPS.

Don and Wilma Vincent have one of the most unusual — and beautiful — yards in Victoria.

Every spring, a magnificent and profuse display of fawn lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*), chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria lanceolata*), shooting stars (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*), and camas (*Camassia quamash*) blooms in the grass underneath their Garry oaks, along with naturalized crocuses, tulips, daffodils and grape hyacinths.

When they bought their 1/2-acre Blenkinsop Road property in the fall 23 years ago, the tenant told them that wildflowers bloomed in the spring, but the Vincents didn't know what to expect.

Initially, the fawn lilies had bloomed only in their back yard, but over time they have become well established in their front yard, as well.

This year Don noticed a superb chocolate lily specimen, which had several of what he called "daughter" plants in close proximity to the main plant. He counted seven flowers in the clump.

The Vincents do have formal

gardens, including a large area for vegetables, but they allow nature to take its course with the wildflowers. To protect the early stages of plant growth, Don ropes off the front yard along the driveway and road in late winter until the plants are noticeably visible.

He doesn't cut the grass until the first week of June.

Wilma says, "The big thing is not mowing until after the flowers have set seeds and the seeds ripen. When we mow, the seeds disperse."

After the grass is cut, they leave it on the ground for up to 10 days and if the weather co-operates, the seeds will drop, Wilma says.

Using a tractor is necessary because of the late date and amount of foliage. The Vincents tried to use a lawn mower when they first allowed the wildflowers to grow, but soon realized it was an impossible task without a tractor.

The chocolate lily seeds don't ripen by cutting time, says Wilma. As an experiment this year, she wants to move one plant to an area behind her greenhouse

where the grass isn't mown, to see if she can eventually collect some seeds.

Twenty-three years ago, there were 30 mature Garry oaks on the property; now there are 23. Wilma says that a few oak seedlings are also growing, but they tend to pop up in places where they won't grow well.

The Vincents' yard has been photographed many times. It was featured in the fall 1994 edition of *Beautiful B.C.* magazine and in a recent edition of the *Saanich News* in an article on native plant gardening.



Chocolate lily (*Fritillaria lanceolata*) in Vincents' yard.

Photo by Katie Stewart

Newsletter contributions wanted

The Newsletter Committee welcomes contributions, both editorial and pictorial. If you have any photos of plants, shrubs, trees or activities related to the concerns of GOMPS that the committee might be able to use, call Eric Redekop at 595-7270 or Katie Stewart at 386-4792.

CALENDAR

MEMBERS' MEETING: May 11, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Focus on native plant gardening.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: May 23, 7:30 p.m., at Tom Gillespie's, 954-A Queens St., Victoria.

ART EXHIBITION: Celebrating the beauty of the Sooke Hills. Opening ceremonies, Friday, May 26, 7-9 p.m., 4th Floor Galleries (443 and 444), Eaton Centre.

URBAN WILDLANDS CONFERENCE: Focus on the Greater Victoria Region. Several speakers including Dr. Richard Hebda on the Garry oak ecosystem. May 27, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Begbie Building, Room 159, University of Victoria.

OAK GRASSLAND REHABILITATION SYMPOSIUM: June 10, Dunsmuir Lodge.

MEMBERS' MEETING: June 22, time and place to be announced. Focus on broom control.

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Secretary and Membership	
Development Chair	Eric Redekop
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Director	Paul Gareau
Director	Hal Gibbard

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: | |
| _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks | |

GOMPS displays

April 22 — Camas Day at Beacon Hill Park

April 20 - May 11 — Empress Hotel

April 24 - May 12 — CRD on Yates Street

May 13 — Victoria Recreational Day at the Memorial Arena

June 12 - July 14 — Saanich Municipal Hall

— Marnie Phillips, 598-8820

GOMPS ON INTERNET!

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GARRY OAK
MEADOW
PRESERVATION
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 6
JUNE 1995

Going ... going ... gone?

Mark June 14 on your calendar, folks. That's the evening Saanich Council holds public hearings on two issues of critical interest to GOMPS: the Christmas Hill Slopes Study Plan and South Island Development Corporation's (SIDC) proposal for their land on the southwest corner of the hill, at McKenzie Avenue and the Pat Bay Highway.

The outcome will forever change the Hill, and the fate of the community of plants and animals which have made it their home. No more will the eagle soar above the Hill on rising thermals, nor red-tailed hawk children chase their parents through the skies screaming to be fed. The Nature Sanctuary at the summit is simply too small to support the present biodiversity once development begins.

The Christmas Hill Slopes Study Plan is a Saanich Planning Department document drafted after the Christmas Hill Slopes Study Advisory Committee discussed issues affecting the Hill. It is important to recognize that the "Guiding Principles" set forth in the Committee's report to Council do not reflect consensus arising from discussion, but points considered by various members to be important; the Committee itself, composed of representatives of diverse interests, did not write the Plan going to public hearing.

It should come as no surprise then, that it is inadequate to protect the Christmas Hill remnants of an all-but-vanished ecosystem.

Although it protects some oak groves and rock outcrops, it does not protect all the oaks even in the most significant groves and it leaves some groves without any protection, at all.

Moreover, it fails to provide for effective linkages to Swan Lake in one direction and the Blenkinsop Valley in the other, to prevent the Christmas Hill plant and animal populations from becoming isolated, causing the extirpation of some from the Hill.

Nevertheless, if there must be development, the most recent revision of the SIDC plan at least preserves major oak areas on the site, through a combination of dedication of 24 per cent of the site as parkland, and covenanted no-build areas (sic). The density has been reduced to 332 housing units, plus a small commercial area (4,000 sq. ft.) and a church (to be built on the west side of Douglas Street). In addition, the developer has agreed to hold for 10 months, an area adjoining the Nature Sanctuary on the highest land, for sale to Saanich for \$1.2 million, (see map). This additional land would improve views and preserve more trees and meadowland.

Sounds reasonable? The density of housing is still too high if viewed from the perspective of trying to prevent further degradation of plant and animal habitats; and this development is only the start. The two other large parcels on the Hill to the north may be next. Rogers Farm, and the Hutchison lands (between Rogers and Lily Avenues, west of Quadra Street), both have significant numbers of irregularly distributed oaks.

The Hutchison family has presented preliminary plans to the local ratepayers' association. There are also smaller but still substantial lands abutting the Nature Sanctuary east of Rainbow Street, opposite the SIDC

land. The highest, MacDonald Farm, is still actively farmed, but has had increasing problems with illegal incursions.

The parcels to the south are already in the hands of a developer, Harvey Simons.

This may be the last chance to influence the transformation of Christmas Hill, because approval of the Slopes Study Plan and the SIDC proposal will set a precedent for future development.

Some things each of us can do:

- 1) Attend the public hearing June 14 (7:30 p.m., Garth Homer Centre) and speak to Council.

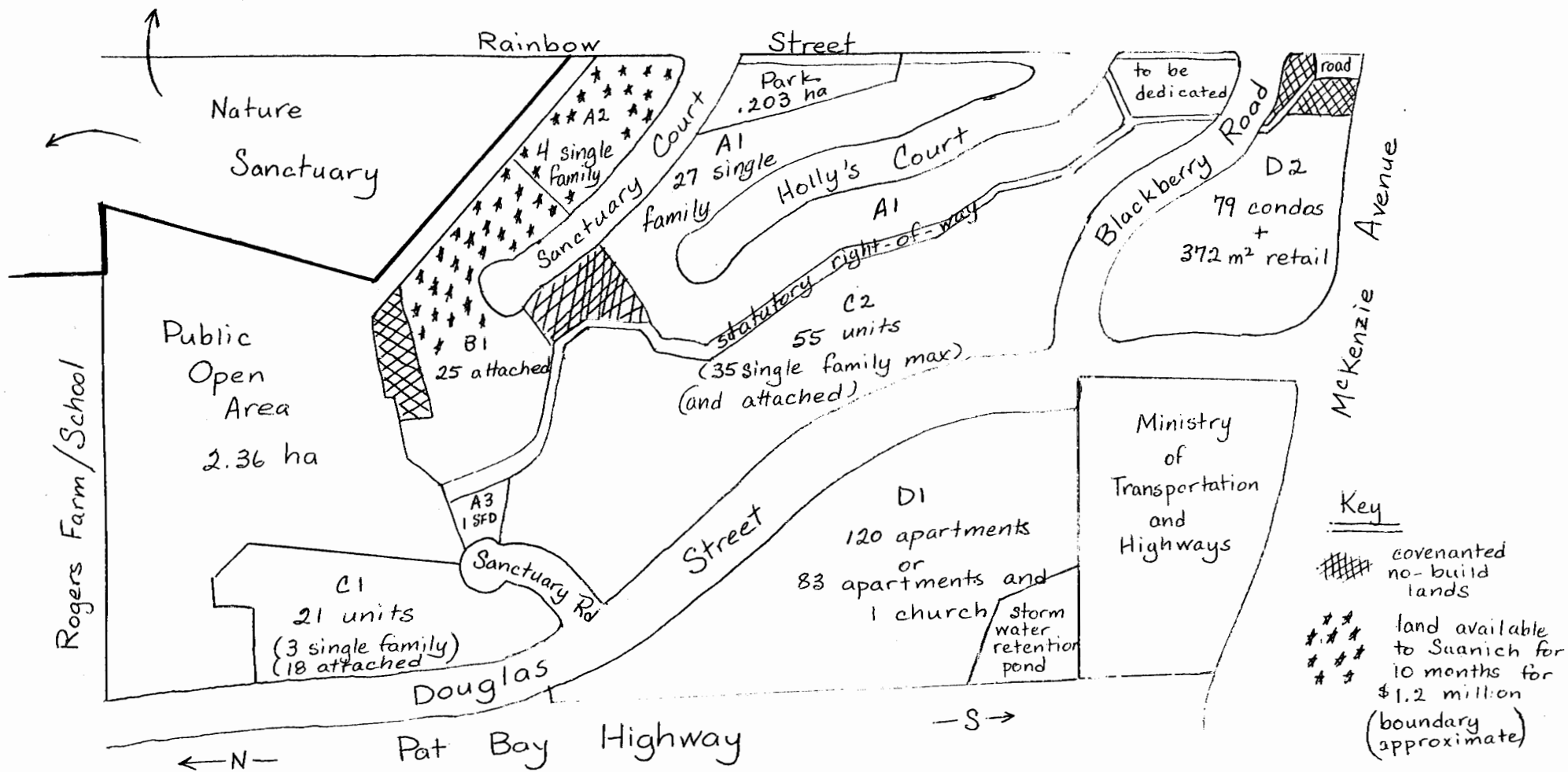
- 2) If you are uncomfortable speaking in public, write a letter to Saanich Council, expressing your concerns. Be sure to get it to the Clerk's office (770 Vernon Ave.) by June 2 so it can be included in the package of materials prepared for councillors.

- 3) Write to Andrew Petter, the local MLA, or to your own MLA, requesting a financial commitment from the province to purchase Christmas Hill lands for preservation of the natural environment and heritage landscape.

- 4) Contact the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the B.C. Nature Trust, and any other organization, asking for the same thing.

Politicians and conservancy groups have already been approached by some individuals, but they have little incentive to act in the absence of broad concern about the fate of Christmas Hill.

— Sharron Waite



When will habitat destruction cease?

Degradation of Garry oak meadows is an ongoing concern. Sometimes it's on a massive scale, such as areas included in the highway widening, and other areas mentioned in this newsletter. Recently GOMPS directors have heard concern about two areas being considered for development — the Salvation Army lands adjacent to the seawalk in Esquimalt and municipally-owned lands at Cook and Maplewood adjacent to the Cedar Hill Golf Course in Saanich.

Even parks are not exempt from habitat loss. In early May, GOMPS Director Eric Redekop, a long-time observer and patron of Mount Tolmie Park, noticed two peculiar events in the park, and wrote to Councillor Judy Brownoff to describe how "a large patch of native soil was highly disturbed and part of it overlain by a slab of concrete several inches thick...[killing] dozens of rare native plants, including a swath of Easter lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*) which had flowered and were about to set hundreds of seeds." Regarding the sudden removal of an arbutus and an oak, Saanich Parks Director Don Hunter explained that "these two dead trees were removed to allow Public Works staff to work in safety beside dead trees."

In their correspondence, both Don Hunter and Judy Brownoff have recommended that a group of "Friends" be established for Mount Tolmie Park, with input from the surrounding community. In order to ensure that such a group truly reflects the community, its membership should be drawn from as many park patron groups as possible. This rationale is based on the reality of park use as well as on statute.

Saanich Bylaw 366 established Mount Tolmie Park on November 18th, 1926, "for the purposes of a recreation area and playground for the use and enjoyment of the public, including not only members, residents or occupants in the Municipality of Saanich, but also residents, occupants and other those the members of the public in the surrounding cities and municipalities and members of the public generally."

Accordingly, GOMPS endorses the foundation of such a group, with a broad regional membership base drawn from the surrounding communities of Saanich, Oak Bay, Victoria, as well as from other user groups, including University of Victoria faculty, staff,

and students, tour bus operators, and bicycle racing enthusiasts.

The process for founding this organization is relatively simple. Several interested parties meet to select a group name, describe its purposes, and the nature of its operations. At least five will become the original directors and executives, and about two months later, the Registrar of Societies will make it all official. The new group then has about a year to develop membership before calling its first Annual General Meeting. In the meantime, the directors can strike committees to carry out such activities as advance the objects of the group.

One of the first challenges will be to persuade Saanich councillors and park management staff that development of a comprehensive management plan for Mount Tolmie Park is essential to protect its fragile natural qualities and features.

While several municipal documents

presently govern management activities in the park, there is no single document which interprets these in the context of the park itself. Earlier this month, the sudden removal of two native trees from a natural park, and the destruction of rare native wildflowers by construction of a memorial park bench, both "normal operations," demonstrated that these documents alone are inadequate.

Mount Tolmie Park represents one of the largest contiguous areas of Garry oak ecology in our region, and is the largest such area in Saanich. With increasing population density in the urban core and increasing regional tourism, this unique natural heritage deserves our careful attention to protect its capacity to serve biological, aesthetic, and spiritual, as well as civic purposes.

For more information about Mount Tolmie Park, contact Eric Redekop (595-7270).

Urban Wildlands Conference a success

The Urban Wildlands Conference on May 27 was well attended [in spite of such diversions as Folklike in Seattle, which prevented some local environmentalists from attending]. The morning plenary featured speakers on environmental ethics, biodiversity in the Sooke Hills, water conservation and saving the Sooke Hills for a greenbelt.

I particularly liked Richard Hebda's talk on the Garry oak meadow. He rushed in from a native plant propagating workshop he was in the middle of co-leading at the museum and gave a passionate, inspired talk with a slide presentation before leaving again for his workshop. He was quite humorous, also.

Richard said he started studying the Garry oak ecosystem after arriving from Hamilton, Ontario, where there no longer is much native habitat close to the city. He thinks there's still a chance here to conserve our remaining habitat so that we continue to have *wildlands close at hand*.

In the afternoon participants broke off into four discussion groups to talk about the morning's topics and action plans for the future. Willie MacGillvray was the facilitator for a small group of people discussing the Garry oak ecosystem, GOMPS activities and public education.

—Katie Stewart

Oak Grassland Rehabilitation Symposium update

There is still time for interested GOMPS members to register for the symposium. This event, occurring at Dunsmuir Lodge on June 10, features at least five speakers in the morning and a field trip to Mount Tolmie and Christmas Hill in the afternoon. Included in the \$30 registration fee are a buffet lunch and field trip transportation.

Topics range from "Identity Crisis: Do We Know What We Want to Restore?" (Hans Roemer, speaker) to "Biological Control of Noxious Weeds" (Brian Wikeem, speaker).

If you'd like to attend, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270 by June 6. Space is limited and filling up quickly.



A SPRING SCENE at Summit Park. Camas and buttercups carpet the ground beneath the Garry oaks in late April. By midsummer this area will be sere and brown.

Photo by Katie Stewart

ONGOING

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE

One thousand more Garry oak meadow posters have been printed; 200 will be distributed through a commercial wholesaler. GOMPS also has place-mats, wildflower posters and the *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings* for sale. Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION COMMITTEE

SEEDS/SEEDLING EXCHANGE. Interested members contact Katie Stewart at 396-4792.

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP will resume soon. Call Eric at 595-7270 for information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND GARRY OAK INVENTORY PROJECT still needs volunteers. Get your exercise and count oaks, too. Discover Victoria! Call Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOMPS DISPLAYS:

May 27 — Wildlands Conference, UVic
 June 10 — Broom Symposium, Dunsmuir Lodge
 June 12-July 14 — Saanich Municipal Hall
 — Marnie Phillips 598-8820

Help protect Hornby Island's "Thousands Oaks" grove

Text written by Conservancy Hornby Island, Box 55, Hornby Island, B.C. V0R 1Z0.

"The largest remaining high quality example of a Garry Oak meadow community remaining in Canada. The 'Thousand Oaks' Garry oak meadow site is of national significance."

— Nature Conservancy Canada

A Walk in the Grove

From the southwest edge of Helliwell Park, we walked west, across a grassy field and up a gentle incline.

by far the largest contiguous stand of the Garry oak-Brome community located to date. There was one disquieting element to the site: fresh flagging tape marked a number of stakes placed at intervals through the grove.

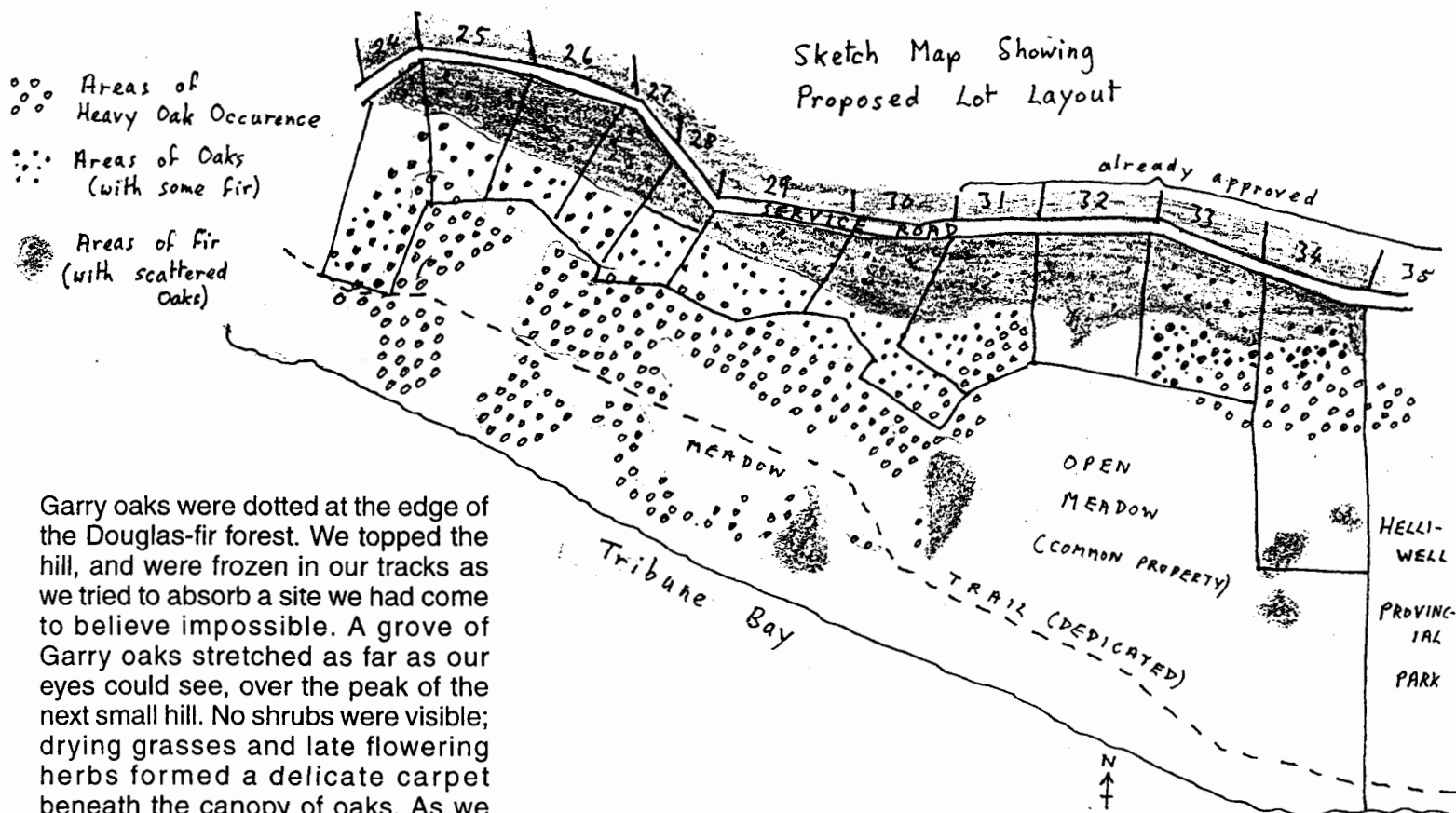
We knew this was on private property but had also heard that in the original proposed development plan of 1979 the owner had agreed to protect the stand of oaks from development. Once in the Victoria office, we made inquiries and have since discovered that the new development proposal now includes the grove of oaks

long as there is a human species?

If the Garry oak meadows are not to go the way of the great auk and the passenger pigeon, any protected areas strategy for the province must highlight this unique and endangered plant community.

— B.C. Conservation Centre Newsletter, September 1992

Hornby's "Thousand Oaks" grove is home to the last known colony of the beautiful butterfly called Edith's Checkerboard.



Garry oaks were dotted at the edge of the Douglas-fir forest. We topped the hill, and were frozen in our tracks as we tried to absorb a site we had come to believe impossible. A grove of Garry oaks stretched as far as our eyes could see, over the peak of the next small hill. No shrubs were visible; drying grasses and late flowering herbs formed a delicate carpet beneath the canopy of oaks. As we watched, a small deer bounded into the grove, stopped behind a large oak, then stared back at us, curious but unafraid.

We walked carefully through this peaceful grove observing the late blooms, searching for the remains of earlier spring flowers, noting the low number of introduced species. The stand occurs over approximately 5 ha,

as "building sites" so that all lots can take advantage of the view which this small rise in elevation would provide.

This, of course, is the unending controversy: do the rights of the private individual outweigh the rights of the public to appreciate the full diversity of earth's natural systems as well as the intrinsic right of those systems to exist? Will this story repeat itself as

"We strongly recommend that this oak grove be protected and that the protected area consist of the core oak grove and a surrounding buffer sufficient to assure the continued health and existence of this endangered Garry oak-Brome community type."

— B.C. Conservation Data Centre

continued, over

For this protection to be assured, the following is required:

1. Lots should not extend into the oak grove (i.e. south of the oak-Douglas fir transition).
2. No building, landscaping or other development should occur in the south-slope drainage zone (which is bounded by a small ridge just south of the service road).
3. Specific, enforceable covenants (with deterrent penalties) should be in place for both the grove and adjacent lots.
4. The grove should be designated as a conservation area with a vegetation management plan to restore and complement natural processes.

How can these requirements be attained?

1. Continued pressure should be put on the Approving Officer to abide by the advice of conservation experts (and the desire of the community) to

ensure that the grove receives maximum protection rather than being compromised. However, the Approving Officer is not mandated to 'preserve and protect' and can decide to approve at his own discretion.

2. The Islands Trust can insist that approval not be given until park dedication has been dealt with. (Under the Municipal Act, owners of land being developed shall provide park land acceptable to the local government or cash equal to the market value. The five percent requirement equals about 18 acres for High Salal.) Park dedication could be used as a lever to obtain full protection for the oak grove.

3. The Minister of the Environment can be urged to invoke Section 4 of the Environment Protection Act by declaring that the proposed development of the oak grove would potentially have a detrimental environmental impact.

Where to write:

Hornby Island Trust Committee, Islands Trust, 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 1H8

R. J. Howat (Approving Officer), Ministry of Transportation and Highways, 6475 Metral Drive, Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 2L9

Elizabeth Cull, Minister of Environment, Legislative Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Margaret Lord, MLA, 491 Fourth Street, Courtenay, B.C. V9N 1G9

Welcome new members

Galiano Conservancy Association, Galiano Island; Laurene Derman, Victoria; Craig Morrison, Outremont, Quebec; Sheila Mosher, Saanichton and Cheryl R. Mason, Langley.

Current Membership: 80 Adult and 21 Family. Total household: 101, representing 122 members.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart	386-4792
Vice-President	Pierre d'Estrubé	477-2410
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie	361-1694
Secretary and Membership Development Chair	Eric Redekop	595-7270
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite	479-3380
Director	Paul Gareau	592-9089
Director	Hal Gibbard	477-2986

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |

CALENDAR

OAK GRASSLAND REHABILITATION

SYMPOSIUM: June 10,
Dunsmuir Lodge,
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS HILL PUBLIC HEARING: June 14, 7:30 p.m.
Garth Homer Centre,
813 Darwin Street, Saanich.

- 1) Christmas Hill Slopes Study Plan
- 2) SIDC development proposal

MEMBERS MEETING: June 22 on Mount Tolmie.
Follow-up to Symposium.
Meet at the gravel parking lot at 7:30 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m.,
at Paul Gareau's,
3503 Camcrest Place, Saanich.

THE NEXT GOMPS NEWSLETTER will be a combined July/August issue coming out at the end of July.



Four-hundred-year old Garry oak gets the axe



REMAINS OF GARRY OAK cut down by Sir James Douglas School's annex.

The City of Victoria urgently needs a tree protection bylaw. As it is now, cutting down a 400-year-old Garry oak can occur just because a few people think it isn't as healthy as it ought to be.

On July 21 an arborist felled the large Garry oak near the annex of Sir James Douglas School at Fairfield Road and Moss Street. Members of the Fairfield Community Association were outraged.

GOMPS member Tom Loring phoned the School District's head of maintenance, Doug Grant, to find out why the tree had been cut down. Mr. Grant was quite apologetic because he hadn't alerted the association beforehand.

Apparently some teachers at the school thought the tree hadn't leafed out fully and were concerned about its healthiness. Mr. Grant called Mt. View Tree Service, which the school district had used previously and its certified arborist decided that the tree should come down because it was rotting. Tom said the side of the tree facing the building was dead, but it otherwise appeared healthy.

Tom suggests that in the future a second opinion from a qualified arborist be sought before a Garry oak of questionable health is cut down. He also advocates a tree protection bylaw for trees on public and private lands, especially if the "ownership is of a major tree which affects the neighbors."

Tom sits on the City of Victoria Advisory Committee on the Environment and Public Works. It has drafted a bylaw, using as reference the tree protection bylaws of Oak Bay and Esquimalt. The committee's proposal is currently being considered by Victoria City Council.

Mount Tolmie Broom Removal Project

Broom removal activities in Mount Tolmie Park recently resumed, with several volunteers attending 5 events between July 12 and 26. The broom-free zone in the southeast corner of the park was significantly expanded on its northern perimeter, between Mayfair Drive and the eastern park boundary. Volunteers removed the equivalent of 30-40 cubic meters of plant material, in addition to smaller amounts of blackberry and ivy.

Work at this time of year is particularly

demanding, due to warm temperatures, bright sunshine, and the occasional wasp nest. To make matters worse, volunteers have to carry debris about 200 meters from work areas to the side of Mayfair Drive. While wasp nests are flagged with pink tape to warn park visitors walking through newly cleared areas, some of these warning flags somehow get removed between events, so be prepared to run (or get stung) if you go exploring in these areas of the park.

Informal work events continue on Wednesdays, beginning at 9:00 a.m., and will run until the end of August. Loppers and saws are the tools of choice to cut broom stems at this time, as pulling is minimal. Work will be suspended for September to prepare for the winter broom removal season, which will commence after early autumn rains have moistened meadow soils enough to permit pulling of stems. If you would like to participate, call Eric Redekop (595-7270).

A visit to High Salal Ranch on Hornby Island

In last month's newsletter, we included an article outlining the concerns of Conservancy Hornby Island (CHI) regarding a proposed housing development which would affect the "Thousand Oaks Grove" on Hornby Island. On June 28 I toured the areas encompassing Phases 4 and 5 of this development.

I arranged with Tony Law of the Conservancy to meet at the Co-op store on the Island. This was my first visit to the Island and I was amazed that I saw no broom as I was driving along, although I did see a very small amount at High Salal Island Ranch, but not at the meadow or sites to be developed. Originally I was going to tour the area with Tony but a few days after we made our arrangement, he received a phone call from the developer, Keith Sorensen, of Grass Roots Land Corp., who thought that incorrect information regarding the development was being circulated. Also on the tour were David Veale, B.Sc., a botanist who had done several studies for Grass Roots, and Jan Bevan, a member of the Conservancy and of the Advisory Planning Commission, which advises Hornby Island's trustees for Islands Trust.

Our first stop was neither of the development sites but near a Garry oak alongside a cedar stump. Mr. Sorensen said he had cut the cedar down in 1982 to make shakes for his house, and as a result, the oak had flourished once it was no longer in the shade. A culvert had improved the site drainage as well. Jan wondered, in an aside to me, what was the purpose of Mr. Sorensen telling us this and I said maybe to show us that he knows something about the growing conditions for Garry oaks.

We walked around the Garry oak portion of sites 31-34 of Phase 4, which have already been approved. Dwellings will be set back from the Garry oaks into the fir zone [See map last newsletter]. According to Mr. Sorensen, no oaks will be removed, and all housing designs have to be approved by a design committee, of which he is a member. Only one house is under construction and it will be small and low key, although its builder/owner is designing as he builds. Mr. Sorensen says in this case he will be keeping a close eye on its construction.

An open meadow lies between the Phase 4 housing sites and the cliffs of Tribune Bay. It is common property, but not protected by covenant.

Mr. Sorensen also took us through the Phase 5 lots (24-30) and analyzed each housing site on a lot-by-lot basis. He

showed us a photo of the ocean view from Lot 25 as it would be if a house could be put up with no allowance for the oak grove (which he said was never his intention), to demonstrate the potential view which was

the fir has since taken over.)

Behind the fir zone lies the service corridor, with its underground water, electricity and telephone lines. Septic fields will

"Gorgeous 3 to 6 acre waterfront and semi-waterfront acreages located at High Salal Ranch, Hornby Island. Nestled between Tribune Bay Provincial Park and Helliwell Provincial Park, High Salal Ranch is like an ecological reserve of 371 acres. The quiet serenity of its upland forests, its sweeping vistas of the rugged coastline and of the silver sands and sparkling waters of Tribune Bay have long been the private domain of those few hikers exploring deer paths through the property. But, now, this can be all yours ..."

Posted sales pitch at Hornby Island ferry landing

being given up.

In the first proposal the lots intrudes significantly into the oak grove. Mr. Sorensen also showed us a photo of the ocean view from Lots 25's housing site in this proposal; it still had a good ocean view. The proposal has been revised so the houses are set further back into the fir zone. We were shown any Garry oaks that were contained within these areas.

have to built among the firs and so will any carports.

"We feel we have to give a view with every property," Mr. Sorensen said. The revised housing sites still give some views but not as much as the initial proposal. One site has no views of the ocean at all but does open onto the grove.

Mr. Sorensen seems to have surveyed each site, trying to pick the best area pos-



ASSESSING A HIGH SALAL subdivision site, Tony Law (left) of Conservancy Hornby Island and Keith Sorensen (right), Grass Roots Land Corp., check out lot line.

Photo by Katie Stewart

(Mr. Sorensen advised cutting down some Douglas firs to allow more sun for those oaks. He also said that the Douglas fir has begun to overtake the oaks, evidenced by comparing aerial photos of the ranch taken 20 years ago and the area

sible for each house while at the same time trying to protect the Garry oaks and to still make a profit. Whether that protection will be sufficient is a major concern of the Conservancy, as there is no buffer zone.

A conservancy covenant will go right to the lot lines if the proposal is approved, said Mr. Sorensen. He was hoping to eliminate the 8 m setback so the protected area would go right to the edge of where the houses will be built but Islands Trust can't allow that. Tony said that Grass Roots had already sent in proposed covenants to Islands Trust but they weren't approved so new proposals are under study.

There is still scientific uncertainty about how close to build near Garry oak. Mr. Sorensen showed us more photos of houses on Hornby Island, some with Garry oaks within one foot of their foundations, another which was very close to a paved road and which had bark growing over some barbed wire encircling it.

Mr. Sorensen said other owners in the strata development approve of the

they are buying and value the oak grove as much as their ocean views. What remains to be seen is whether Keith Sorensen "walks the talk," as Jan puts it.

□

A few weeks after my visit, GOMPS received a newsletter and a phone call from CHI. Mr. Sorensen's revised proposal is still unacceptable according to the Conservancy because:

□ The lot layout does not comply with the Preliminary Layout Approval which requires that lots "not conflict with the grove."

□ It does not conform to the recommendation of the BC Conservation Data Centre that the oak grove be protected with a "surrounding buffer."



DEVELOPER KEITH SORENSEN and project botanist David Veale look toward Tribune Bay on Hornby Island.

Photo by Katie Stewart

revised scheme. He showed us a letter of support he had received from Robert Bateman, who had also gone on a tour. Mr. Bateman's daughter has bought a lot (no. 31, I think) and she will build on it "very sensitively," Mr. Sorensen said.

Tony suggested CHI could get involved with Grass Roots and the strata owners to manage and protect the grove.

Both Tony and Jan still have concerns. For example, Jan isn't in agreement with Mr. Sorensen's definition of what constitutes the oak grove and Tony wonders who has the expertise to build in the grove.

As the real estate blurb states, the site is indeed gorgeous. I hope the owners will appreciate what superb and rare sites

□ The proposed covenants are inadequate and an appropriate third party has not been named as a monitor.

□ There is no vegetative management plan; the developer doesn't seem to realize that the issue isn't just not cutting down the oaks.

The lot layout for the High Salal subdivision development for the "Thousand Oaks Grove" has been submitted to the Regional Approving Officer.

CHI hosted an information meeting with Mike Edgell, Chair, Dept. of Geography, UVic and Bill Turner, Nature Conservancy of Canada on July 25. The Regional Approving Officer, Robert Howatt, came to the Island the next day for a public meeting to answer questions.

Mr. Edgell walked the site with Tony and said that a buffer zone is needed. Mr. Turner said the proposed covenants are inadequate and that there needs to be a vegetative management plan. CHI is requesting that the Habitat Protection Branch do an ecological survey and that no approval be given until such a study is done. As it stands now, the Approving Officer's decision regarding the proposal will likely be given within two months, but Islands Trust will probably ask for an extension.

CHI has written a detailed letter to Robert Ferguson, Senior Lands Officer, BC Parks, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks requesting that the "Thousand Oaks Grove" be urgently considered for acquisition as an ecological reserve.

□

On July 12, the Canadian and British Columbian governments released a joint press release announcing the **Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy**, a five-year joint program creating an "expanded and integrated network of coastal and marine parks on the Pacific coast.

"A key component of the legacy is a commitment by each government to invest approximately \$6 million annually over the next five years to acquire land in the Gulf Islands of the Strait of Georgia on a willing-buyer/willing-seller basis for new protected areas.

"The public has clearly expressed its desire to help protect the most valuable areas left on our West Coast, and has demonstrated a willingness to contribute to that goal," said Elizabeth Cull, B.C. Environment, Lands and Parks minister.

"Given the constant urban expansion of nearby Vancouver and Victoria, the Strait of Georgia's natural environment is one of the highest at-risk areas in Canada," said Canadian Heritage Minister Michel Dupuy. "As a direct response to concerns raised about the future of our West Coast marine heritage, both levels of government are expressing a firm commitment to protecting this area."

The press release states in its back-grounder section:

"Natural Values of the Strait of Georgia Region

□ This region is perhaps the most at-risk natural environment in Canada, given the expanding urban pressures of such nearby centres as Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle. At the heart of this highly developed region lies the southern Gulf Islands.

□ The mix of vegetation in this area is unique in Canada, including arbutus,

cont. next page



A VIEW OF THE OAK grove (above). The open meadow between lots 31-34 and Tribune Bay (below).

Photos by Katie Stewart

Garry oak and the more obscure prickly pear cactus. More familiar species include western red cedar, Pacific dogwood and the broadleaf maple.

□ Animal species include Bendires shrew, the California bat, Townsend's chipmunk, Douglas squirrel, the western spotted skunk, and the black-tailed deer.

Also:

□ The goal: a family of existing and new heritage areas on the coast managed cooperatively by different agencies.

□ Joint federal-provincial acquisition of key natural areas in the Gulf Islands of the Strait of Georgia.

□ New provincial parks and ecological reserves."

The Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy program has already committed \$950,000 of the \$1.3 million required to buy 150-hectare Bodega Ridge on Galiano Island. The remainder comes from money already raised. Initially local residents mortgaged their homes to buy three properties, then the Nature Conservancy of Canada became involved, promising to assume their mortgages if fund-raising by the Conservancy was successful.

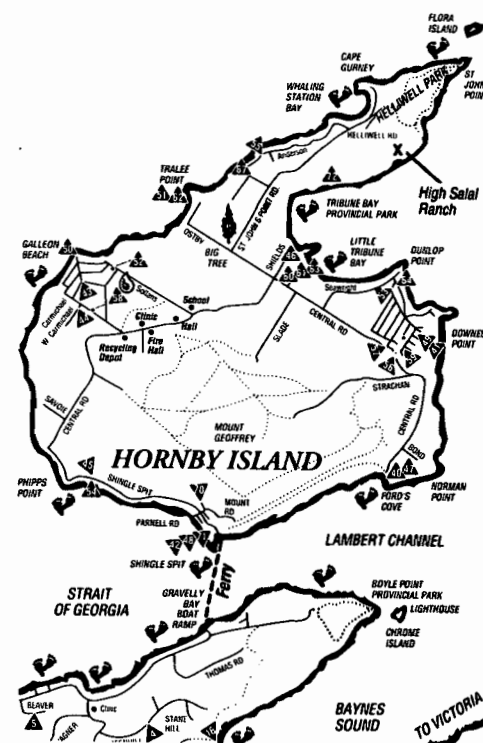
I think the "Thousand Oaks Grove" is an ideal and obvious area to consider for

protection under this program, as either a park or ecological reserve.

I urge all GOMPS members to join me in writing letters of support for Conservancy Hornby Island and the "Thousand Oaks Grove." Some addresses were included in the last newsletter; here are several others.

For an ecological study:

Nancy Wilkinson,
Habitat Protection Branch,
Ministry of Environment, Lands
and Parks,
3rd Floor, 780 Blanshard Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4



For an ecological reserve or park:

Robert Ferguson,
Senior Land Officer,
B.C. Parks, Ministry of Environment,
Lands and Parks,
2nd Floor, 800 Johnson St.,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Under Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy
Mel Turner,
Manager of Regional Planning Services
B.C. Parks, Vancouver District
1610 Mt. Seymour Rd.
North Vancouver, B.C. V7G 1L3

copy to: Bruce Amos,
Canadian Heritage,
Jules Leger Bldg., 4th Floor,
25 Eddy St.,
Hull, Quebec K1A 0M5

If you have the opportunity, visit Hornby Island and see the grove yourself. A trail connecting from Helliwell Park cuts through the meadow.

— Katie Stewart



Highway plant rescue

Since June, there has been both good news and bad news about the rescue of meadow plants from the highway project work zone. First the good news.

Bobbie Arbess and volunteers from the West Coast Environmental Youth Alliance (WCEYA), inspired by an article in the GOMPS May newsletter describing several members' plant rescue efforts, have been regularly visiting the work site northwest of the Millstream Road interchange.

Thousands of individual native plants were rescued and transferred to the Swan Lake Native Plant Garden, along with sifted topsoil. Further space was tentatively secured in CRD Parks greenhouses for an anticipated surplus of plant materials, with help from Joel

Ussery.

These plants were to be held until CRD Parks could formulate a habitat rehabilitation policy, and identify suitable sites for transplants of highway project plant stock.

The bad news? The work site is under construction contract, so volunteers are technically trespassing; any group organizing a systematic project commits an offence under the BC Society Act, and unauthorized entry by individuals cannot be controlled.

Until mid-June, WCEYA volunteers were using the presence of camas and other seed heads to identify zones with higher densities of mature plants. In this way, hundreds of bulbs were recovered every hour from relatively small work areas, even by volunteers work-

ing alone. Unfortunately, someone apparently unaware of this plant rescue project went into the work site and removed most of the seed heads. When volunteers arrived the next day, they had no idea where to dig.

Since then, it has taken several hours or days to recover hundreds of bulbs from large work areas, even by small groups of volunteers working together. Blasting of the bedrock proceeds inexorably from the east, destroying plants left unrescued because they could not be found in time.

A *Times-Colonist* article recently attacked community concerns expressed about the treatment of vegetation in the highway project areas, describing Highways Department habitat rehabilitation efforts, such as the planting of Garry oaks at the Quadra and McKenzie interchanges. While laudable, these trees alone neither replace nor represent the habitat destroyed by construction, which also includes native herbs and shrubs.

Deliberate and routine involvement of community volunteers in advance of the construction process would require a fundamental shift in the Highways Department from a reactive to proactive mode. Perhaps then, less of this endangered habitat would be lost, and more native plant material could be systematically rescued and returned to highways right-of-ways for everyone to see and enjoy.

—Eric Redekop

PCAF Garry Oak Inventory Project

Our Garry Oak Inventory Project is proceeding well, with several volunteers regularly conducting field surveys. While the project will eventually be expanded, data collection is currently limited to the City of Victoria proper.

This is because Victoria will likely be the last CRD core jurisdiction to adopt a civic tree protection bylaw. One of the arguments advanced during tree bylaw debate in Oak Bay, was that the administration of a tree bylaw would become an unwelcome financial burden, or an intrusion on private property rights. Should this argument be offered in Victoria, data from our inventory could help civic officials quantify staffing needs and expenses for bylaw administration.

For example, James Bay is a large neighbourhood, but it has less than 10 Garry oaks; Fairfield also has very few oaks. Staff time required to administer the few trees in these neighbourhoods would be far less in proportion to the area involved. With respect to private property rights, politicians should remember that treed property is generally worth more, generating greater tax revenues; unnecessary tree losses represent higher taxes for everyone.

Ironically, development is frequently encouraged to expand the tax base, and trees within building envelopes are routinely lost. Data from our inventory could help civic officials quantify the revenue generating capacity of existing trees, and perhaps persuade them to enact a bylaw which reflects this value. For example, if a 300 year-old tree represents \$10,000 in taxes over 20 years, fines for damage or destruction should be correspondingly high.

If fines levied were also proportional to the size or age of the tree lost, the previous example might suggest a fine of \$150,000. Currently, developers fined for tree or other bylaw offences typically pass these expenses on to the property purchaser, the true value of trees on property is never recognized by either the city or the property owner, and society will eventually pay a price for this folly.

After inventory work in Victoria is completed later this year or early next year, our data will need processing and preparation for presentation. We have funding from the Public Conservation Assistance Fund to support this work, but still need to find a volunteer with GIS skills. In the meantime, volunteer field surveyors should call Eric Redekop (595-7270) for more information.

Welcome new members

Sharon Godkin, Sidney; Ken Lane, Victoria; Dan Marshall, Victoria; Christine Ensing, Victoria; Victoria Stevens and Alan Drengson, Victoria; Robin McIntosh, Vancouver and Marsha Williams, Victoria.

Current members: 86 Adult and 22 Family. Total household: 108, representing 130 members.

CALENDAR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:
Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m., at Paul Gareau's.
3503 Camcrest Place, Saanich.



A display to travel



Our easy travelling display is shown beside a newly planted Garry oak (Marnie and Mara pose for the camera). When a diseased tree was removed from the boulevard in front of our home in Oak Bay, I requested a Garry oak replacement. Three were planted.

I joined GOMPS in the spring of 1994 and became display coordinator. Appreciation of the world's environment starts with the understanding of the ecosystem here in Victoria. With Kornelia Meszaros leading the way, we developed our lightweight easy packing display. During the first year, it appeared at a variety of venues, for periods of time ranging from one day to a month.

The amount of work involved: a few phone calls, and the drop off/pick up. Volunteers often helped.

By seeing this display placed in a busy foyer, visitors become aware of this ecosystem, if only by osmosis. I'm confident that the image of the Garry oak tree becomes part of their memory, hopefully changing the way they feel about this endangered ecosystem.

I look forward to coordinating displays until April 1996. Then it will be time for a new person to take over this position and have an opportunity to make a difference.

If any GOMPS members have ideas where the display can be placed, please feel free to contact me. Not all inquiries I make result in a placement, so suggestions are welcome.

FREE, to a conscientious person — a well organized display. Available April 1996.

— Marnie Phillips

GOMPS TRAVELLING DISPLAY with display coordinator Marnie Phillips and her dog Mara, "the secret weapon for catching the eye."

Photo by John Phillips

Habitat destruction at Summit Park

In August, the south meadow of Summit Park became the playground of a group of "frisbee-golfers." They tied blue ribbons around 18 trees and cleared patches of ground down to bare earth with turquoise painted stones as markers.

The appearance of these blue markings was a mystery until a member of the Friends of Summit Park Society [FOSP] happened to see a CHEK 6 TV program on Aug. 11 called CHEK Around. The show, hosted by Gordie Tupper, was promoting "frisbee-golf" in Summit Park with a group of young men demonstrating their sport and inviting other members of the public to join them. FOSP quickly faxed a

letter to Victoria City Council and the Parks Board requesting clarification on the use of Summit Park for sports activities and requesting the removal of existing blue markings.

Two days later FOSP received a phone call from the Parks Board stating that indeed Summit Park was not a suitable site for sports and they would proceed to remove all markings and attempt to contact the persons responsible to advise them of the seriousness of their actions.

The young men who organized the "frisbee-golf" area met with members of FOSP in Summit Park. The men were

courteous and articulate but could not fully understand our concerns about the park's welfare — especially about the fragility of the meadows. They were also ignorant that regardless of the nature of the park, they should not be going into any park and disturbing and damaging the existing vegetation.

They pointed out that there were no signs posted prohibiting sports. Therefore, in the future FOSP hopes to work with the Parks Board to produce signs to be posted in the park which will alert people to the fact that Summit Park is part of the Garry oak ecosystem and as such, is fragile and increasingly rare and should be treated with respect.

— Karen Uldall-Ekman, member
Friends of Summit Park

NOTE: GOMPS also sent letters to Victoria City Councillor David McLean, John Plantinga Director of Victoria Parks and Recreation and James Wood, producer of CHEK Around, but to date we have not received any replies.



BARE GROUND and a painted arrow at base of Garry oaks in Summit Park indicate "frisbee-golf" route (above). This was one of 10 sites scraped by "frisbee-golfers" preparing for their tournament. Moss containing licorice fern was pulled off this rock and tossed into the bushes (below).

Photos by Katie Stewart



Water conservation forum Sept. 21

What are the alternatives to building higher dams? How can water conservation save us money? How can a water conservation program work in our community?

The Water Conservation Forum on Thurs., September 21 at Victoria High School will try to answer these questions and others you may have. Guest speaker Dick Wanderscheid, Conservation Manager for Ashland, Oregon, will explain the results of his community opting for a \$825,000 US water conservation program in 1991 rather than spending \$20 million US for a water expansion project, including a dam.

Another speaker will be Bev Velestuk, Coordinator, Water-Use Efficiency, Canada Council of Ministers of the Environment, talking about water conservation from the council's perspective.

Professor Michael M'Gonigle, Chair of Environmental Law and Policy, Faculty of Law, UVic, will be moderator for the panel discussion following the speeches.

The forum opens at 7 p.m. to allow people to visit the various displays. Speeches begin at 7:30 p.m. This event is sponsored by Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Society and other people interested in water conservation issues. Admission is by donation.

Profile: Friends of Summit Park Society

Around the capital region a number of groups associated with a specific area are concerned about protection issues and public education. GOMPS hopes to profile some of these groups in upcoming newsletters. First in a series.

The Friends of Summit Park was formed in the spring of 1994 in reaction to the threat of development in the old Smith Hill reservoir adjacent to Summit Park. Residents had come to appreciate the tranquil waterscape of the reservoir as a complement to the natural Garry oak meadow landscape that is Summit Park. When a proposal to drain the reservoir and build a tennis club came forward, we realized how much we had to lose.

A society was formed and over a hundred individuals had joined by June 1994. The threat of tennis courts was overcome and the on-going work of the Friends began. We realized that the park was

more than welcome green space in the middle of increasing urban density. It also represented one of the last remnants of native Garry oak meadow in Victoria. This understanding brought with it a commitment to preserve and enhance the sensitive Garry oak ecosystem of the park, to promote awareness and encourage ecological responsibility in the park and its environs, and to call for expansion of the park boundaries when the opportunity arose.

To further these goals, members of FOSP are working on a quarterly newsletter (as well as maintaining a phone tree) to keep members informed of meetings and events. This fall we will be looking into educational opportunities at Quadra Elementary School. We will plan a spring nature walk in the park to celebrate the camas, fawn lilies, shooting stars and other wildflowers.

We have been researching a floating island for the reservoir's resident and migrating birds. We continue to develop a working relationship with the City of Victoria on park planning and maintenance. Recently, members were out staking in the park to alert city workers cutting the long grass against fire hazard to areas where seedlings were growing and cutting was to be avoided.

We have found that we can make a difference! To quote Margaret Meade: never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world; it is the only thing that can!

Friends of Summit Park welcomes new members. Memberships are \$5 and \$10 a year. Call Deirdre at 385-6359 (3050 Jackson St., V8T 3Z8).

— Deirdre Gotto

SUMMIT PARK
in spring.



Photo by
Barbara Cardle

Camosun arborist works to save Lansdowne oaks

I recently got a call from Susan Williams, who is doing tree work at Lansdowne for Camosun College. Apparently more than 80 mature Garry oaks were either dead or mortally damaged during construction of parking space on the north side of the campus during the 1970s, and by development of the University Woods residential area in the late 1980s. While the exact causes remain unclear, addition of fill and paving, as well as general changes to local drainage are suspected as major reasons for many trees becoming a hazard to public safety. At the time, Dr. Dan Cornish worked very hard to prevent outright loss of any oaks in the development area. In spite of his efforts, however, development of the parking area two decades ago may eventually result in unnecessary tree loss.

At first Susan thought many of these trees would need to be removed, but now believes a more conservative compromise

might also yield valuable information about the potential for rehabilitating other oaks damaged in this way; because so many trees suffered negative impacts, there is a large sample of subject trees to study. At the moment perhaps as few as five oaks may need to be removed, with the others receiving less drastic rehabilitation treatments. In each case removal or rehabilitation will be thoroughly documented to expand our knowledge base and to aid in further efforts to preserve the remaining trees in the grove.

To their credit, Camosun administrators have also consented in principle to planting five oaks elsewhere on the Lansdowne campus for each mature oak lost in the parking area. Susan is working with Camosun to establish a special landscape arrangement zone at the corner of Lansdowne and Foul Bay Road, which would become home for many of these oak seed-

lings.

Watch for an in-depth report on this project in the next newsletter, or call Susan Williams at 652-1188 (Peninsula Co-op) if you have any questions.

— Eric Redekop

Editorial note:

Re: letter titled "Article negative" (on the next page)

The "Highway plant rescue" article in our July/August newsletter was not critical of the Garry oak planting project at the Quadra/McKenzie Interchanges but rather (1) of the Times-Colonist article which held up these projects as justification for wholesale destruction elsewhere, and (2) the exclusion of community groups who could supply volunteer labour the Ministry admits it does not have.

— Eric Redekop

No to park suggestion

Thank you for your letter regarding the Garry oak grove adjacent to Helliwell Provincial Park; I am quite familiar with the area and have provided advice to the Ministry of Transportation and Highways' Approving Officer.

Currently, I believe that an attempt is underway by all involved to ensure the grove is protected by covenant. If this were to happen, then this protection could be realized without public funding, allowing this funding to be applied to other significant properties where this covenant protection cannot be applied.

I appreciate your effort in informing me of your Society's position and I shall continue to monitor this issue.

M. H. Turner,
Manager of Planning,
South Coast Region,
Ministry of Environment, Lands
and Parks

—Four letters and eight copies concerning various aspects of the "Thousand Oaks Grove" development have been sent to various public officials by

GOMPS. To date, one reply has been received regarding the grove being considered for a park under the new Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy.

Article negative

I am writing in response to your article entitled "Highway plant rescue" published in the G.O.M.P.S. July/August 1995 newsletter. It was disheartening to read your critical views of the Victoria approaches highway construction project and the Garry oak planting project at the Quadra/McKenzie Interchanges.

Regarding this year's spring collecting, I understand Gene Mazza, the landscape coordinator for the Vancouver Island Highway project was contacted by several people wanting to salvage plants. In future, given enough advance notice from a community group, he could probably organize a plant salvaging work party prior to the beginning of construction. However, I understand that due to construction schedules on this project that this was not possible. You do mention in your article, though, that volunteers were able to gather and transfer thousands of

native plants to the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. This seems more of a success story than a bad news story, as the article states.

Much like your organization, the Ministry roadside office is a small group of staff (three people) who look after all vegetation management aspects of the provincial highway system. We would like to have more time and staff to devote to projects such as plant salvaging work groups and Garry oak meadow restoration, but we can only do so much with limited budgets and staff in a given year. We do review landscape development plans closely and work hard to strike a balance between highway construction and existing ecosystems.

We hope to improve on the items outlined in your article, such as plant salvaging and meadow restoration and would very much like to continue working with the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society on some of these projects in the future.

Jane Waters, Coordinator,
Roadside Development Programs,
Ministry of Highways and Transportation.

Ministry describes highway replanting program

Jane Waters, Coordinator, Roadside Development Programs, Ministry of Highways and Transportation, requested GOMPS to include the following article she wrote regarding the Garry oak plantings at the Quadra/McKenzie Interchanges.

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways worked with the Provincial Capital Commission, GOMPS members Willie MacGillivray and Jean Wightman, Forestry Canada and a group of community volunteers to grow, design and implement this project in 1993/94 as part of the 1994 Commonwealth Games celebration. The Ministry decided that a legacy tree planting initiative was a more long term commitment and ecologically better thing to do than planting colourful, high maintenance red, white and blue annuals along the roadsides. Roadside staff realized that planting Garry oak seedlings at the Quadra Interchange in a bark mulch bed with plastic tree guards was not the way nature intended the trees to grow, however, it was the recommended method for the best chance of establishment and survival success with low maintenance and potential vandalism on the proposed site.

At McKenzie Interchange at the second planting (1994), it was decided to plant 400 more seedlings in the existing grassland knoll where native and introduced

grasses would compete for nutrients, space, water, etc. Here a weed suppressing blanket was used to heighten the chances of survival from invasive grasses and weeds. All of the planting techniques were arrived at through consultation with representatives of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society, Forestry Canada, and a project manager, Ms. Carol Jones, P.Ag./Nursery operator, who has grown Garry oak seedlings for many years in her own nursery in North Saanich.

These two plantings are part of a much larger picture, a legacy tree program the Ministry embarked upon in 1993, with the mandate to grow native plants, namely native trees along the highways in the Greater Victoria area. Since the issue of Garry oak restoration was one of the most pressing and close to home in need of habitat rehabilitation, local highway sites were an appropriate venue for this undertaking. The roadside development office views these first two plantings from a research perspective, as well as an inter-agency and community collaboration effort. Through this kind of research, information will be gathered about the species through monitoring their growth rate, weed invasion, water and soil requirements, pests, and overall health. The intention is to investigate the possibility of planting more native meadow herbs, bulbs, and shrubs on these and future sites.

The Ministry currently has native shrub seedling and wildflower trials in progress on other sections of the Island Highway. Again, their growth/survival rates are being closely monitored so that improvements can be made on existing growing and restoration techniques.

In an ideal world many of us would like to see wildflower meadows, arbutus and oak trees along the entire southern portion of the Island Highway, but the highway landscape is at best a harsh environment, and through years of observation and plant trials it often ends up being a matter of survival of the fittest (plant species). Over the past few years, the Ministry has also established "leave strips" or retention zones along some newly constructed sections of the Vancouver Island Highway, where construction activity and mowing is not permitted and vegetation is left in its natural state for ecological and aesthetic reasons. These retention zones not only save taxpayer dollars, eliminating revegetation costs, but they provide an improved driving experience down a new section of highway with mature, native vegetation along the roadsides.

It is hoped that more local inter-agency cooperation can take place on these kinds of projects, which in the long run, will improve the overall highway landscape and community spirit about the province's largest linear greenway.

Approval to raise Sooke Dam premature

On August 18, the Greater Victoria Water Board passed a motion to raise the Sooke Dam at a cost of \$16 million. One hundred and forty-two hectares will be flooded and another 87.4 hectares will be "blowdown management zone."

Are there less costly and less potentially damaging alternatives? Will the water be safe to drink? Is raising the dam really necessary?

The GVWD and Water Board maintain that we need more storage and thus a higher dam to accommodate the increased population which will come to this region. Yet their own figures show that even without a conservation program and policy, per capita consumption has dropped from 145 gal. per day per capita in 1985 to 121 gal. pdpc in 1994, even though the population increased by about 20 per cent in that time. The net result was actually a slight decrease in the total amount consumed in 1994 (12.7 billion gal.) compared to 1985 (12.6 billion gal.) With a water conservation program that figure could be reduced to 90 gal. pdpc. without any major lifestyle changes and at minimal cost resulting in great ecological benefits — no logging around Sooke Lake and more water left in the system for other life forms.

The City of Edmonton has a water conservation policy and is "committed to reducing overall City per capita to 400 litres (90 gal.) per person per day by year end of 1997 and maintaining reductions in per capita water use equal to the growth rate from 1997 to the year 2000."

So could a proper water conservation program be the solution?

The GVWD does not even know. It has not had an independent cost-benefit analysis of water conservation prepared to evaluate whether this would be a reasonable alternative. Even their own environmental assessment, which was done by AXYS Environmental Consulting and several other firms, does not address water conservation issues.

Their 1994 report, *An Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Expansion of the Sooke Lake Reservoir* (available in the public library) noted that there are "no data available with which to assess the sizes of the fish populations in Sooke Lake Reservoir," though it noted there are significant salmonid spawning areas in Begbie Creek and Begbie Lake which would be destroyed by flooding.

"In general, site-specific information on wildlife populations, habitat availability and quality, and habitat use in not available for Sooke Lake Reservoir and the adjacent region ... without this information it is not possible to quantitatively assess the potential impacts of reservoir expansion on wildlife, identify potential conflicts between wildlife and operation of the reservoir, or identify site-specific mitigation measures."

The report recommends doing a number of different surveys, for example, site surveys to determine if any rare and endangered species such as sharptail snake, which is on the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks' Red List, occur within the zones affected.

The AXYS report notes numerous other concerns such as the possibility of chemicals leaching from a section of abandoned C.N. right-of-way that will be submerged and trophic upsurge, "the term applied to effects of increased loading of growth-limiting nutrients that leach from innundated soils and vegetation after flooding." In particular, the report is concerned with leaching from Begbie Lake's bog areas which would be flooded.

Obviously, I cannot quote all of the areas of the AXYS report that concern me. Has the GVWD conducted all the recommended surveys and studies? Has it addressed all the concerns raised in the report? By the board voting to raise the dam am I to assume that the GVWD has in fact done so? Have the board members even read the AXYS report?

I am astonished and alarmed that the GVWD seems to be exempt from doing an environmental assessment under the B.C. Environmental Assessment Act because of a technicality — raising the dam five metres rather than six.

The B.C. government proclaimed a new Environmental Assessment Act on June 30, 1995. The documents entitled *British Columbia Environmental Assessment Act Summary* states: "The new Act will help guarantee that any large-scale developments or major modifications to existing projects are environmentally responsible and fit into long-term plans for maintaining the economic and environmental health of British Columbia."

Among 'projects subject to review: dams and reservoirs.

"The new Environmental Assessment Act provides a neutral and open process

for evaluating reviewable projects. The review process encourages input from the public ... the review process has been designed so that all participants have the opportunity to raise any relevant concerns at the various stages of the review."

Without that environmental assessment, how can the public be heard? The board has not been receptive to the public's input, and on occasion has been downright hostile. At a recent board meeting, the board opted to cut the 18 public speakers' allotted five minutes each to half the time because the board thought there were too many speakers, even though several of the speakers had carefully prepared statements timed to fit the five-minute limit. Even more recently the board decided to limit how often the four most frequent speakers — who represent several organizations and are well prepared with their research — could speak. Some democracy.

We taxpayers have no say whether we want the dam raised. There is no referendum process. Do want to spend \$16 million on a dam, another \$120 million on a filtration plant and whatever else the board — essentially, in my view, a rubber stamp for Water Commissioner Jack Hull — approves as capital expenditures, based on engineering solutions, with no consideration for water conservation measures? What recourse do we have?

As a conservation-minded organization, concerned with habitat protection and habitat loss, GOMPS should be taking a position on this issue. While I realize that no Garry oak meadows will be directly affected by flooding around the Sooke Reservoir, I am concerned that humans continually expect to change nature to suit our purposes, rather than adapt to the existing conditions — in our case, the Mediterranean climate we live in, with its typically dry summers and wet winters.

So I will be writing two letters, one to Environment Minister Moe Sihota requesting an Environmental Assessment and another to Dr. D.A. Kasianchuk, Comptroller of Water, 765 Broughton St., 6th Floor, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4, requesting an evaluation of the water conservation alternative to building the dam, with copies to all Water Board members.

See you at the Water Conservation Forum on September 21, 7 p.m. at Victoria High School.

— Katie Stewart



GARRY OAK SEEDLING was taken in 1988 to the Arboretum, University of Utrecht, City of Zeist, Netherlands. The tree is kept indoors. The photo was taken in May this year.

Photo courtesy of Henk Gautier

Anderson Hill Broom Sweep a successful community event

"Broom Sweeps" produce an obvious benefit — land and ecosystem restoration.

There are also some intangible benefits such as fresh air and exercise for the participants, fostering a positive community spirit and enhancing the vista of the area.

GOMPS member Roger Colwill organized a successful Anderson Hill Broom Sweep on July 8, the second in a continuing series. He estimated that between 90 and 100 people cleared about 0.6 ha of the invasive plant. The goal is to clear the entire 2.6 ha park of broom by the year 2000.

Capers and Rattenbury provided incentive by contributing coffee and pizza for the workers.

The next Anderson Hill broom event will be in the fall.

Volunteers needed for Uplands Park broom removal

The Girl Guides of Oak Bay want volunteers to help remove broom at Cattle Point, Uplands Park.

Dates scheduled are November 4 and 5, from 1-4 p.m.

Bring your own tools and gloves. Meet at the information table at Cattle Point entrance. For more information, contact Margaret Lidkea, 595-8084.

Saanich Parks creates new zoning designation

The Corporation of Saanich is creating new zoning for 14 municipal park properties. They propose changing Zoning By-law 1988, to Amendment By-law 1995, No. 7526.

Zone District P-4 (recreation and open space) will become Zone District P-4N (natural park) to "give a greater assurance of protection to Saanich's Natural Parks," according to wording in newspaper advertisements.

Parks to be rezoned: Arbutus, Benson, Konukson, Logan, Moor, Mt. Tolmie, Panama Hill, Peacock, Phyllis, Quick's Bottom, Stoneywood, Trevlac, Viewpoint and Wedgewood.

The rezoning will be on Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Saanich Municipal Hall.

Acorns requested for planting night

GOMPS is arranging with Forestry Canada to have an acorn planting night at the Canada Forest Service Pacific Forestry Centre greenhouse on Burnside Road. When the acorns are planted they will be moved into a greenhouse for germinating and tending, readying them for planting next year.

Acorns are supplied by the public so any GOMPS members interested in collecting them please do so.

At last year's planting night 3900 acorns were planted. The Highways Department used many of the seedlings for their roadside planting program.

The date of the planting night and where to take the acorns will be announced in the October newsletter.

CALENDAR

SAANICH PARKS ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT — Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Saanich Municipal Hall. Zoning By-law 1988, Amendment By-law 1995, No. 7526.

NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP DISPLAY — Sept. 16, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Sept. 17, 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Victoria Horticultural Society Fall Show, G.R. Pearkes Arena

MT. TOLMIE BROOM PROJECT TALK — Sept. 21, 7 p.m., Native Plant Study Group, A215, Clearihue Building, UVic. Speaker: Eric Redekop

WATER CONSERVATION FORUM — Sept. 21, 7 p.m., Victoria High School Gymnasium

GOMPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — Oct. 5, 7:30 p.m., Hal Gibbard's, 1439 Wende Road, Saanich

City-wide broom bash coming soon to a meadow near you

Starting October 14, our Society is sponsoring a City-Wide Broom Bash which will run until November 5 (Oak Day). Our members will organize broom removal events in local parks where Garry oak ecology is threatened by this invasive exotic plant. If you would like to organize or support an event in your neighbourhood, contact Eric Redekop (595-7270) or Willie MacGillivray (479-0211).

Trillium Research Project underway at UVic

A group of students has been working to change campus attitudes and values regarding native vegetation issues at the University of Victoria. The Native Vegetation Committee is one of the student-funded Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) organizations. Its aim is to promote natural areas and issues on campus through projects such as student and faculty education and awareness, the Native Plant Garden on campus, advocacy and direct action. However, most important for the future of the university grounds is the Trillium Research Project.

The committee's work is especially needed to educate students, faculty and administration to value and protect the natural areas on campus which include a Garry oak meadow, wetlands and Douglas fir forests such as Mystic Vale. A change in University attitude is needed

sensitive to these issues, in the same way that university environment is at the forefront of society in social issues and recycling.

The Trillium Project is the most important project initiated. Its primary objective is to develop a strategy to protect and promote the native vegetation and wildlife habitat of the university campus. It is an interdisciplinary project to understand, preserve, and enhance key natural areas on campus through student-directed studies, class projects and work study.

The project is being undertaken by committee members and students at the undergraduate level with input from university professors and other professionals. Environmental Studies, Geography and Biology students can obtain directed studies credits performing the project's

these issues with a community survey.

The survey had 78 respondents from the 170 questionnaires distributed. These were mainly campus students and local residents and the results show a strong support for the project's objectives. Eight-seven per cent perceive the natural areas on campus as having cultural and historical value and adding to the University's "sense of place"; 73 per cent do not support using ornamental plants as the predominant landscaping instead of native plants; 90 per cent favoured government and local preservation initiatives and specifically, 78 per cent think that the remnant oak meadow on campus should be protected.

As for the safety issues raised by retaining natural areas, only four per cent felt that these areas make the campus dangerous (a further 12 per cent were undecided). Increased lighting and 'safe walk' routes could be included with future development to alleviate these concerns.

One main aspect of the project is the identification and classification of native vegetation on campus to determine ecologically sensitive areas. This is important baseline information in the preparation of a conservation strategy. The research is ongoing and time consuming, but important to the overall project.

Another aspect is to encourage awareness and participation with campus users and residents. This would include campus maps highlighting natural areas with basic information on the ecology specific to the different sites. Also, to give people another way to embrace and relate to the physical spaces, areas of campus and such things as chip trips should be named to reflect the characteristic natural surroundings.

While the project is still under development, natural areas on campus do seem safer for now. The University is just finishing a period of capital development. While the University has no long term plan to accommodate future development with the protection of natural areas, there are no current plans for development in these areas. This may give the students time to develop an effective conservation plan with the Trillium project.

— John Gordon, member of the Native Vegetation Committee, VIPIRG
Room 144, Student Union Building,
University of Victoria, Victoria, B.C.
V8W 3P3. Phone: 721-8629.
Fax: 721-7285.



ROBIN SMITH of VIPIRG Native Vegetation Committee plants Garry oak seedlings in Garry oak meadow at the University.

Photo by Brenda Costanzo, Assistant Curator, Herbarium, Dept. of Biology, UVic

since the University has been treating the more natural and undeveloped areas on campus as just 'empty space.' With this attitude, undeveloped areas have been used for a variety of damaging activities, one of the worst being the dumping of unwanted fill from construction.

There is added value to the committee's work on campus. The work will help to protect natural areas in Victoria which, except for Mystic Vale, do not enjoy any protection. Furthermore, the development of a strong stewardship philosophy and the incorporation of the natural vegetation in future campus growth will make potential future leaders of society

research. VIPIRG and the UVic Centre for Sustainable Research and Development have provided funding. The ultimate goal is to develop a long term vision for the campus environment that can be implemented into university policy.

The project is unique among undergraduate research because its goal is to effect change within the University at all three levels: student, professor and administration. The questions of whether, which, how and why certain areas of the campus should be protected come from the answers of students, local residences and other University interests. Initial work in the project addressed

ONGOING

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE

One thousand more Garry oak meadow posters have been printed; 200 are being distributed through a commercial wholesaler. GOMPS also has placemats, wildflower posters and the *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings* for sale. Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION COMMITTEE

SEEDS/SEEDLING EXCHANGE. Interested members contact Katie Stewart at 386-4792. Camas seeds are available.

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP. Call Eric at 595-7270 for information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND GARRY OAK INVENTORY PROJECT. Contact project coordinator Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOMPS DISPLAYS:

September — North Saanich Municipal Hall

September 21 — Water Conservation Forum, Victoria High School, 7 p.m.

October — Victoria Horticultural Society

— Moss Street Market

— maybe a week with the Department of Wildlife Display

November — Camosun College

January — Victoria City Hall

February — Department of Transport, adjoining Downtown Public Library

— Marnie Phillips 598-8820

NEWSLETTER

If you have any contributions — photos, art work, letters of agreement or disagreement or anything else you'd like to contribute, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270 or Katie Stewart at 386-4792 or mail to 954-A Queens Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart	386-4792
Vice-President	Pierre d'Estrubé	477-2410
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie	361-1694
Secretary and Membership		
Development Chair	Eric Redekop	595-7270
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite	479-3380
Director	Paul Gaureau	592-9089
Director	Hal Gibbard	477-2986

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |

Salvation Army development proposal controversial

Victoria's Raging Grannies are worried that a remnant Garry oak meadow along the West Bay walkway will be destroyed in a proposed 11-storey condominium project.

The Salvation Army-owned lands will be the site of 110 condominiums, a church centre and 10 three-bedroom low-income housing units, to be located at 837 Dunsmuir Road.

According to a *Times-Colonist* article August 10, "... the area is not identified in the CRD Official Regional Parks Plan as a potential park, the lands are being assessed as part of a green space strategy now under way."

The Salvation Army needs to apply for rezoning and a change to Esquimalt's Official Community Plan in order to build. So far nothing has been submitted to council. In the meantime, the Grannies, who would like to see the area included in a park, are appealing to people to write to Esquimalt City Council or sign petitions.

They suggest if you are interested in starting a petition to post it at your workplace. Their wording:

"PETITION TO:

Esquimalt Council, 1229 Esquimalt Road, Victoria, B.C.

We, the undersigned citizens of Esquimalt and Greater Victoria, wish to express our concern about the proposed development on the Matson/Dunsmuir site along the West Bay Walkway also known as the Westsong Way.

We respectfully request that municipal and provincial governments work together to retain the Garry oak slope on this property and designate it an urban waterfront nature conservancy.

Please deliver or mail completed petitions to: Members of Council, Esquimalt Municipal Hall, Attn: Municipal Clerk, with copies sent to the Provincial Capital Commission and the Capital Regional District."

Welcome new members

Sylvia Mosterman, Sardis, B.C.; E. Ruth Telford and Family, Victoria.

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY
c/o 945 QUEENS AVENUE, VICTORIA, B.C. V8T 1M6



A GREAT TEAM EFFORT made the July 1995 broom removal at Anderson Hill a success, with approximately 90 people participating. Another broom removal is scheduled November 4 for Anderson Hill. See pages 4 to 6 for a description of broom removal and the dates of the "City-Wide Broom Bash."

Photo by Sharon Tiffin,
courtesy of Oak Bay News

What's so bad about broom, anyway?

Most GOMPS members are familiar with Scotch broom. In fact, a few members know it too well. However, there are GOMPS members who do not live in British Columbia and who may not be aware of its invasive nature.

Looking at broom blooming in the Spring, one would never realize from the beauty of its yellow flowers against a bright sunny sky that the plant could endanger local ecosystems.

Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) was introduced to Vancouver Island by Captain W. Colquhoun Grant, a Scot who arrived in Victoria c. 1849 and settled 26 miles away in Sooke. He obtained broom seeds from the British consul in the Sandwich Islands. Of perhaps a dozen or so that were sewn, three sprouted.

Broom "found none of the checks and balances of its homeland and literally ran wild. A sea of gold indeed, but a flood that has swamped many of our native species — a tide that shows no sign of turning." (Lewis J. Clark's *Wild Flowers of the Pacific Northwest*, Gray's Publishing, 1976.)

From that innocent beginning, broom has become naturalized on the Lower Mainland, the Gulf Islands and southern Vancouver Island. It has been spotted as far north as Texada, Cortes, Hernando and Savary Islands. Broom grows inland to Hope and also on the Sunshine Coast as far as Powell River.

Inland, broom grows mainly on the roadsides but on the warmer coast, it is often found on exposed hills. As a result of its extensive colonization, many forest

sites, parkland, ecological reserves and farmland have large quantities of broom.

In the past, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and B.C. Hydro contributed to its spread by planting broom to stabilize slopes. Apparently, the MoTH had broom on its list of "desirable native species." (*Broom and Gorse in British Columbia: A Forestry Perspective Problem Analysis*, published by the Ministry of Forests, 1992.)

Broom is an aggressive invader of disturbed areas. A member of the *Leguminosae* family, it produces a prolific amount of seed annually after the second or third year of growth. One bush can contain as many as 2000 to 3500 seed pods with about nine seeds per pod. The seeds

Continued on back page

Perspectives on cutting Garry oaks in Gonzales Hill Regional Park

CRD Parks rationale

Gonzales Hill Regional Park has a few less Garry oaks than at the beginning of September. Lynne Shields, a frequent visitor to the park, contacted GOMPS when she saw that six trees had been cut down in the grassy area near the parking lot.

GOMPS Director Tom Gillespie inspected the site with Ms Shields and determined that the trees were around 130 years old. I visited a few days. When I was there, a CRD parks employee was in the process of levelling the stumps I thought, but on a subsequent visit I realized he had been, in fact, removing the stumps and later had planted grass seed in their place.

I contacted Lloyd Rushton, Capital

Regional District Parks administrator, who said he had received a complaint from a local resident about limbs falling off the trees, which were in the grassy area near the parking lot. Staff members looked at the trees, and called in a consulting arborist.

Mr. Rushton said the arborist filled out a "tree hazard" form, which was developed by an international arborist society, and rated the trees at eight out of nine for potential hazard. The arborist cored the trees to see if they were alive, and determined that they were dead or close to dead, with only five per cent of the crown cover still alive; he recommended removing the trees. Mr. Rushton disputed the number of trees Ms Shields cited, saying

that two of them were multi-stemmed.

Mr. Rushton said CRD policy is that they don't cut down dead trees, but leave them as wildlife trees. However, in this case, because they decided the trees were unsafe, they had to come down. When the CRD does cut down trees, it is also their policy to replant two trees of the same species for every tree cut down, although not necessarily in the same locale, he stated.

Incidentally, a seventh Garry oak elsewhere in the park was also cut down. This tree had been used for the last 30-40 years as a support for a stay wire by B.C. Hydro.

— Katie Stewart

Thoughts from a regular visitor

A few days ago, I walked up Gonzales Hill as I often do, seeking the beauty and peace of the sunrise in that familiar place. But I was horrified to discover six Garry oak trees in the park had been cut to the ground.

My peace was shattered. I was overwhelmed with feelings of grief, disbelief, anger and powerlessness. I couldn't understand what had happened. How could these trees have been cut down, especially in a park? They had lived in

that spot since before my grandparents had been born but they had not fallen of natural causes — they had been cut down.

Why were these trees felled? They had lived in an area called a park, a haven, a place of safety where they could be appreciated, enjoyed and respected. They provided shelter and food for squirrels, insects, and many varieties of birds. They brought beauty, inspiration, comfort, and a sense of history to many. They

brought hope to the city dwellers who climbed the hill seeking a deeper connection with the forces of nature. And they existed for their own sakes, expressing in their Garry oak fashion, the essence of treeness. But they are gone now. Why?

These trees were cut down because they had been diagnosed as dead and hazardous to the area. In what way were they dead? In what way were they hazardous?

The trees were dead in the sense they were no longer able to grow taller and broader or produce leaves and acorns. Their roots were damaged and unable to support new tree growth. But these trees were wonderfully full of life and the potential for more life as they were hosts to countless organisms and creatures who depend upon dead and decaying trees for food and shelter.

In a forest or in a natural Garry oak meadow the fallen branches and trees are left to return, in their own time, to the earth. And all the companion insects, animals, birds and plant life depend upon this natural cycle. Nature, left alone, diligently and perfectly maintains the vitality of the Earth.

When dead trees are cut down and removed from their birth place an important natural cycle is interrupted. The more we continue trying to tidy up nature in an effort to protect humans, the more we are causing stress to the natural world which sustains us.



CRD PARKS WORKER removes Garry oak stumps in Gonzales Hill Regional Park.

Photo by Katie Stewart

Continued next page

Not only do we harm the Earth, but we deprive ourselves of the aesthetic beauty of dead trees that stand for many years changing shape, texture and colour as branches and bark gradually fall off.

Garry oaks live in such a small corner of the world and have suffered such severe losses as we have developed our city, that I believe every remaining one deserves our greatest respect and affection.

Instead we consider them hazardous if they are dying too close to us or our possessions. We make our decisions to cut and remove them out of fear — fear of branches falling, trees falling, humans being hurt or killed by trees falling, fear of blame, of litigation, of bankruptcy. Fear breeds fear, and so we try to control and contain nature, to eliminate all possible risk, to insure, to regulate and protect against every imagined fearful possibility.

But I want to make my own choices, to be responsible for my own life. If I am afraid of branches and trees falling on me I will stop going to Uplands and East Sooke Parks. I will avoid being near old trees in strong winds. PLEASE don't cut down any tree to protect me from possible harm. Don't drain the lakes because I could drown in them. Don't blast away the mountains I climb because I could fall down them.

I will die one day, one way or another. I may die in my bed, suddenly. Or perhaps



NEWLY SEWN GRASS seed in a circle marks the spot where trees were cut down.

Photo by Katie Stewart

from a lingering disease, or maybe I'll be hit by a falling branch or tree. But I will die and no amount of trying to control nature to prevent my death will indeed stop me from dying.

Nature sustains me. It feeds, clothes and shelters me. It inspires, comforts and heals me. It challenges and intrigues me

but it is not my enemy. I do not need to be protected from it.

Can we learn from the loss of these native trees and become more gentle, thoughtful and respectful in our relationships with all forms of nature? If so, then these trees will not have been cut down in vain.

— Lynne Shields

CRD alerted by Gonzales Hill Preservation Society

Very briefly, the Gonzales Hill Preservation Society grew out of the Gonzales Hill Residents' Association, which was established in 1980 in order to counter the attempts of developers to have City of Victoria zoning by-laws changed so as to permit condominium construction.

When the federal government decided to close the Gonzales Hill weather station and to sell one third of its grounds for development, the Residents' Association was transformed to the Preservation Society to better accord with the campaign to establish the territory as a park.

Nevertheless, the Society's *raison d'être* remains unchanged: to ensure that any development in the area conforms with Victoria and Oak Bay by-laws governing single family dwellings. The Society, nonetheless, is also concerned with preserving the area's natural surroundings as much as circumstances permit.

In that respect, the recent felling of Garry oaks in what is now the CRD Park was not overlooked by the Society. Indeed, it was a Society member who noted that several trees seemed to be dying and alerted the CRD. The CRD

then had the trees in the park examined by a professional arborist, who recommended that they be taken down.

That decision, which the Preservation Society supports, was thus an act of preservation, not of wanton destruction as may have seemed to the untrained, and to those unaware of the malaise which seems to be affecting Garry oaks on Vancouver Island. We, of course, hope that no other trees will have to suffer the same fate.

— William Rodney, Chairman, Gonzales Hill Preservation Society

Nursery needs GOMPS members' help collecting acorns

We are interested in growing Garry oak in numbers sufficient to meet the requests from garden centres and various plant societies. However, living in Chilliwack, we are at a disadvantage to collect seed. We are looking for two types of assistance:

1. Acorns collected from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands identified as to general area of collection, and

2. The location of a stand of Garry oak which is rumoured to be on Sumas Mountain or near Sumas border crossing.

If you can assist us, please call, fax, write or e-mail:

Theo and Sylvia Mosterman,
Mosterman Plant Propagators,
43233 Lumsden Road,
Sardis, B.C. V2R 4R4

Telephone: 604-823-4713

Fax: 604-823-4749

e-mail: mpp@bcnta.nwave.com

Editor's note: Sylvia Mosterman recently joined GOMPS.

Welcome new members

Bill Scott and Janet Simpson, Victoria;
Rick Simmons, Nanoose Bay and Lynne Shields, Victoria.

How to remove broom: The short answer

When I tell people that I coordinate a broom removal project at Mount Tolmie Park for the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society, one of the first questions they ask is, "How do you get rid of broom, anyway?" The short answer, "With persistence and a lot of hard work," seldom satisfies the truly curious, however.

"The short answer seldom satisfies the truly curious."

"Should I cut it or pull it?" is typically the next question. Unfortunately, this is where the complexity of the problem should not be overlooked, yet often is. The answer is, "Yes, depending on certain conditions." What people often overlook are the "certain conditions" which prescribe or prohibit one technique or the other.

"Broom stems have chlorophyll, which promotes regrowth of any stump left exposed to sunlight."



NEW SPROUTS appear on a broom stump at Anderson Hill.

For example, we have gained valuable insight into the effects of cutting broom from the work of GOMPS member Joel Ussery. We have learned that larger broom stems resprout less frequently than smaller ones, that stems cut above ground level resprout more frequently, that stems cut below their first lateral root almost never resprout.

Consequently, larger stems, cut in during summer drought below their first lateral root are least likely to resprout from the stump, while small stems, cut above ground during the rainy season are most likely to resprout. This is because even broom stems have chlorophyll, which promotes regrowth of any stump

frequently, and that stems cut below their first lateral root almost never resprout.



NON-NATIVE BROOM competes with snowberry bushes at Uplands Park.



IMPROVED ANDERSON HILL vista can be seen since the July 1995 broom removal.

left exposed to sunlight.

"Pulling the whole plant out of the ground eliminates resprouting altogether."

While pulling the whole plant out of the ground eliminates potential resprouting altogether, any disturbance of the soil surface promotes germination of broom seeds; within a year after pulling broom from a meadow, it can be carpeted with millions of ankle-high sprouts.

Broom stems should never be pulled when found on mossy outcrops, where roots may have penetrated joints in bedrock below shallow soils; disturbances caused by complete removal in such cases may be too great to repair.

"Pulling is a most effective technique during the winter months."

Pulling broom is a most effective and efficient technique for removal during the winter months, after autumn rains have moistened meadow soils; mindful of the disturbance factor, even larger stems can be completely removed.

During the summer months, however, only the smallest stems should be pulled because, compared to larger stems, pulling of small stems is less likely to disturb the soil surface, as lateral root structures are less developed.

The most efficient way to pull broom is to find the base of the plant, stand astride it and grasp the stem as low as possible, pulling straight up, and with care to minimize disturbance.

Many mature broom infestations have dead broom stems standing among the living branches, which are easily recognized by their weathered silver-grey appearance and absence of foliage.

These branches can be broken down into metre-long lengths and left on site to enhance surface soil structure and moisture retention capacity, thereby reducing erosion potential, provide habitat for the meadow insects which are food for birds and mammals, and deter prohibited bicycle traffic by presenting a hazard to pedals, chain and spokes.

"Repair any disturbances immediately: Tamp down loose areas and cover with litter."



THERE IS STILL broom removal to be done at Christmas Hill.

Photos by Katie Stewart

In fact, removal of dead broom is the first step to clearing an area. Stack dead branches nearby for use later. If you come across any blackberry, cut the canes to knee high and stack the debris separately for handling and disposal; canes cut lower than knee high are hazardous because they are more difficult to see in tall grass, and can easily catch on shoe laces or pant cuffs.

Next, remove the extremely large stems (eg. stumps as thick as your arm) with a swede saw. All debris should be carried to your disposal area, since dragging broom stems on the ground causes disturbance to thin soils and mossy outcrops, and disperses additional seeds.

Now, moving through the stand with your loppers, pull the little ones and lop those you cannot dislodge. Any cut stem should be cut as low as possible, preferably below its first lateral root. Repair any disturbances immediately; tamp down any loose area and cover it with litter (eg. dead grass, leaves, sticks) for protection.

Stack your debris in small piles, with all the stem butts facing one way, so that it is easier to pick up and carry to the disposal area. Whenever working in our sensitive Garry oak meadows, use bright plastic tape on a stick to mark the locations of fragile plants, such as young oak seedlings, and to protect them from foot traffic.

"During the local wildflower period, soils and young plants are particularly vulnerable to compaction and trampling."

There are two times during the year when broom removal activities should be suspended. Depending on the location, winter removal activities can begin around October and should wind up by January or February.

During the local wildflower period, soils and young plants are particularly vulnerable to compaction and trampling. After the wildflower season, work may resume once summer drought conditions have been established. In our Garry oak meadows, this would be in June or July, when all the herbs and grasses have withered brown.

Because the success of summer activities depends on prevailing drought conditions, cutting work should be suspended around Labour Day. Stems cut in August will probably die from cutting and moisture stress within a few weeks, while those cut in September may not be under sufficient stress to be killed, particularly if winter rains return early.

"Every situation is unique."

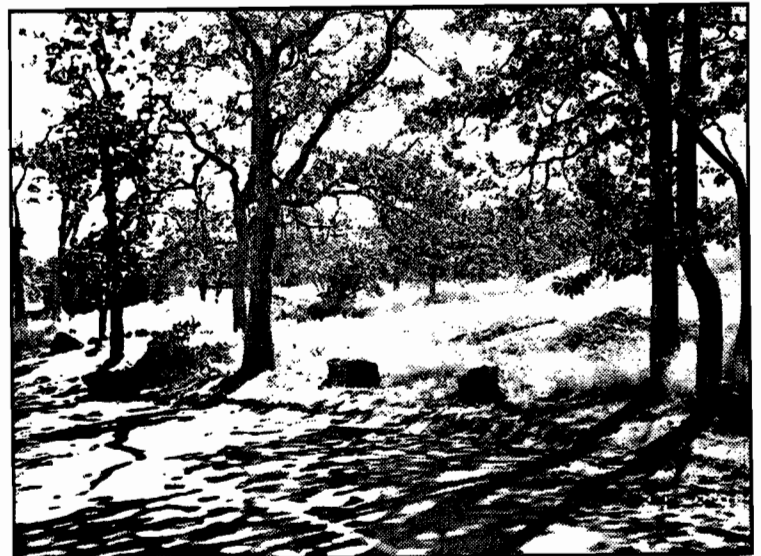
Let me emphasize that these are only guidelines. Not only is broom removal a technology we know little about, it is an art as well, requiring no small measure of personal experience to develop the skills and judgement needed to achieve success. Every situation is unique and requires its own thoughtful, patient approach.

Without dedication and persistence, application of the techniques described above will only yield success in the short term, and it is doubtful in many cases whether complete and permanent removal of broom may ever be achieved. However arduous, this journey is like every other in at least one respect: it must begin with a first step.

Get involved. It can be a family thing, a neighbour thing, a civic pride thing, or a sustainable living thing. It can get you in shape, get you out, or get you up: so get with it. Join a removal project in your neighbourhood park, or start a new one. Call your local Parks and Recreation Department for permission and direction, then call us for volunteer support, publicity, recognition, and encouragement.

If we keep at it long enough, perhaps in the next century visitors to Victoria will include pulling broom on their list of must-dos, along with high tea and a double-decker bus ride.

— Eric Redekop



THIS GARRY OAK meadow on Mount Tolmie now thrives since broom was removed.

City-wide Broom Bash scheduled October 14 to November 5

Operation Clean Sweep is coming to a meadow near you, in what some hope will become an annual event, the City-Wide Broom Bash. All over the region, volunteers of all ages and both genders will be bashing and hauling the nasty weed, in the first major offensive of its kind.

In some locations, such as Christmas Hill and Government House, large areas have been cleared of mature broom for some time, but millions of young sprouts need to be pulled. In other areas, such as

Knockan Hill and Rithet's Bog, volunteers will struggle against broom stalks larger than their wrist and more than twice their height.

The fall and winter season is nearly perfect for removing broom, since even larger stems can be gently pulled entire from meadow soils moistened by rain and dew. However, this favorable climate for pulling broom is also unfavourably cold and wet for unprepared broom bashers. Multiple layers add padding as well as insulation, and can be removed as

needed; wear a pair of nylon gloves inside your work gloves and a nylon sock inside your woollen work socks. A dark woollen cap will not only reduce loss of body heat from exposed areas, but will help protect ears and face from foreign objects.

Check the calendar of events below, and call the event coordinator for more information or directions. To join in any of these activities, meet the project coordinator on site for specific instructions. Remember to work safely and have fun.

BROOM-BASH SCHEDULE

- SAT. 14 OCT.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Mount Tolmie, Hal Gibbard, 477-2986; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids.
- SUN. 15 OCT.** 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Knockan Hill Park, Andria Tetlow, 479-1947; park at Strawberry Vale Community Hall. A sign giving directions will be posted on the interpretation board near the Burnside Road entrance; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids
- SAT. 21 OCT.** 9:00 a.m.-Noon, Government House, John Olson, 658-8993; bring gloves, kids
- SUN. 22 OCT.** 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Christmas Hill, Joan Cowley, 479-0211; bring gloves, family; meet at Nature Centre parking lot; refreshments to follow at Nature Centre
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Mount Tolmie, Eric Redekop, 595-7270; bring loppers, saws, picks, gloves, kids
- SAT. 28 OCT.** 9:00 a.m.-Noon, Rithet's Bog, Linda Beare, 658-8993; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids
- SUN. 29 OCT.** 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (planned), Summit Park, check with Dierdre Gotto, 385-6359 to confirm; bring loppers, saws, gloves; refreshments
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Mount Tolmie, Eric Redekop, 595-7270; bring loppers, saws, picks, gloves, kids
- SAT. 04 NOV.** 9:00 a.m.-Noon, Anderson Hill Park, Roger Colwill, 598-0077; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids; refreshment break
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Cattle Point, Margaret Lidkea, 595-8084; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids
- SUN. 05 NOV.** 9:00 a.m.-Noon, Mount Douglas Park, Kenneth Rankin, 477-8007; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Cattle Point, Margaret Lidkea, 595-8084; bring loppers, saws, gloves, kids

Update: One Thousand Oaks Grove

Letters to GOMPS

From Environment Minister Moe Sihota, answering a letter sent to his predecessor, Elizabeth Cull, regarding the grove:

"I understand that the Approving Officer with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways recently met with the Hornby Island community to once again review the original conditions of the subdivision as they relate to the oak grove and the existing bylaws of Islands Trust.

As you may know, recommendations on the Garry oak grove as a proposed

protection area will not be made until next year. However, I remain confident that, if the spirit and intent of the original conditions and the bylaws are met, the conservation values of the grove will be protected without expenditure of public funds.

I appreciate your interest in ensuring the preservation of the Garry oak grove."

From Nancy Wilkin, Habitat Protection Branch, Ministry of Environment in response to a letter requesting an eco-

logical study:

"You may be aware that on September 6, 1995, the developer met on site with Robert Howat ... Andrew Harcombe ... Dr. Hans Roemer ... Doug Morrison ...

The Conservation Data Centre representatives and Doug Morrison provided information to Robert Howat which will be taken into consideration before a decision is made. If you want further clarification on this ministry's perspective of the issue, I suggest you contact Doug Morrison at 751-3223."

From Conservancy Hornby

On September 6, 1995 the Ministry of Highways Subdivision Approving Officer, representatives from the Ministry of Environment, The Islands Trust, and Conservancy Hornby Island toured the High Salal Oak Grove with the developer, Keith Sorensen, at the invitation of the Approving Officer, in order to receive input from the environment experts toward establishing a clearer and more scientific definition of the "Oak Grove" meadow area and necessary buffer zone.

Those present were:

Ministry of Highways — Rob Howat, Approving Officer, Nanaimo; Dan Bowen, Highways staff, Courtenay.

Ministry of Environment — Doug Morrison, Director, Habitat Protection Branch; Andrew Harkham, Conservation Data Centre, Victoria; Hans Roemer, Ministry Biologist, Victoria.

The developer — Keith Sorensen.

Islands Trust — Sandra Smith, Planning Manager, Victoria; George Buvyer, Hornby Trustee.

Conservancy Hornby Island — Aden Crane, Director; (Carol Martin, Conservancy Coordinator, had been asked by Conservancy members to attend in Tony Law's absence, but was refused by Mr. Sorensen to enter onto the High Salal property.)

The Conservancy has been asking for an independent ecological review and definition of the Garry oak meadow area and its oak/fir transition zone, as committed to by various ministers in the past, and is concerned that the Ministry of Environment botanists be left to do an uninfluenced "arms length" survey of the grove and its boundaries for the purpose of determining the area(s) of the grove

and meadows which should be protected with conservation covenants, as required by the original conditions for subdivision approval.

The Conservancy is happy to report, however, that the representatives from the Ministry of Environment Conservation Data Centre and the Habitat Protection Branch have been asked to produce a report and recommendations for the Approving Officer at a future date.

The Conservancy understands that the report's recommendations will then be used by the parties, including the Hornby Conservancy, to assist in establishing the boundaries of and management plans for the required oak grove meadow conservation areas, before lot lines and building sites are given further consideration. The 1979 Preliminary Layout Approval, still in effect, requires that there be a covenant on the Grove prohibiting removal of trees or other vegetation from it and that none of the lots "conflict" with it.

— Tony Law, Conservancy Hornby Island

CALENDAR

FRIENDS OF BEACON HILL PARK — Annual General Meeting, Wednesday, October 18, 7:30 p.m., The Victoria Truth Centre, 1201 Fort Street. (Enter by north-east door off parking lot.) Featured guest: Dr. Chris Bayshaw, originator of the Royal B.C. Museum Native Plant Garden, presenting a slide show on native flora of Beacon Hill Park.

NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP — Thursday, October 19, 7 p.m., Room A215, Clearihue Building, UVic. Featured speaker at 8:15 p.m.: Carole Small — Landscaping Basics for Your Native Plant Garden. (Dues for the Native Plant Study Group are \$10, covering September-April.)

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO YOUR BACKYARD — Sunday, October 29, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., (drop-in), Francis/King Regional Park, Munn Road, Saanich. 478-3344.

"BIRDS OF THE NIGHT" SLIDE SHOW AND OWL HUNT — Thursday, October 26, 7:30 p.m. Francis/King Regional Park, Munn Road, Saanich. \$4, \$10 Family. Call 478-3344 to register.

GOMPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — Thursday, November 9, 7:30 p.m., at Hal Gibbard's, 1439 Wende Road, Saanich.

GOMPS acorn planting

Anyone collecting acorns for the upcoming planting can contact Tom Gillespie at 361-1694 for pickup or delivery directions.

Rob Hagel of the Pacific Forestry Centre, where the planting will be done, wants to hold the acorns in a freezer for 30 days before planting. Planting nights are tentatively scheduled for November 22 and 29. Anyone wishing to assist in the planting should sign up with Tom as only nine people per evening can help out.

GOMPS will be distributing around 1500 seedlings from last year's planting to various interested groups.

ONGOING

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE

One thousand more Garry oak meadow posters have been printed; 200 have been distributed through a commercial wholesaler. GOMPS also has placemats, wildflower posters and the *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings* for sale. Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION COMMITTEE

SEEDS/SEEDLING EXCHANGE. Interested members contact Katie Stewart at 386-4792. Camas seeds are available.

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP. Call Eric at 595-7270 for information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND GARRY OAK INVENTORY PROJECT. Contact project coordinator Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

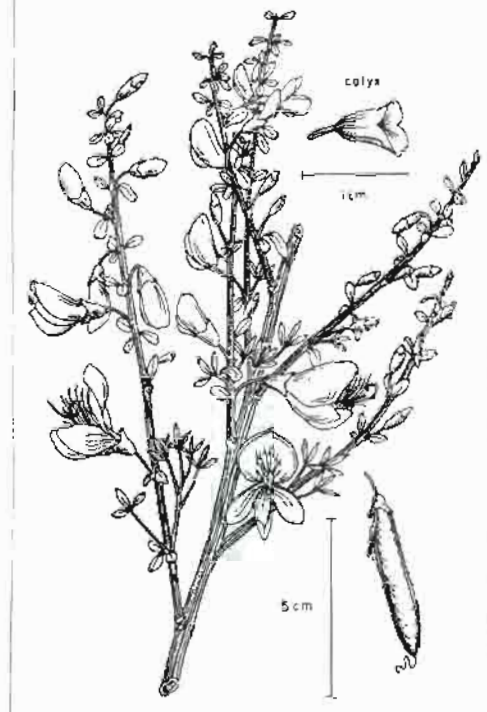
PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOMPS DISPLAYS:

- October** — Victoria Horticultural Society
 — Moss Street Market
 — maybe a week with the Department of Wildlife Display
- November** — Camosun College
- January** — Victoria City Hall
- February** — Department of Transport, adjoining Downtown Public Library
 — Marnie Phillips 598-8820

NEWSLETTER

If you have any contributions — photos, art work, letters of agreement or disagreement or anything else you'd like to contribute, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270 or Katie Stewart at 386-4792 or mail to A-954 Queens Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6.



BROOM (*Cystisus scoparius*). Source: Taylor 1974. Courtesy of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria. From the Ministry of Forests booklet *Broom and Gorse in British Columbia: A Forestry Perspective Problem Analysis* (1992).

explode out of the pods when ripe and can remain in the soil for over 30 years. In fact, one can hear the crack of the pods exploding.

The seeds are readily dispersed by vehicle tires, water and birds.

Broom thrives in our Mediterranean coastal climate and adapts to the summer drought conditions. It grows quickly, up to 2.5 m in two years, and can live for 10-15 years. It fixes nitrogen in the soil.

"In British Columbia, broom is considered a potential threat to maintenance of native biological diversity by precluding the establishment and spread of rare and endemic plant species, particularly those that occur within the unique Garry oak ecosystems in the small Coastal Douglas-fir zone." (*Broom and Gorse in British Columbia*.)

Broom and Gorse in British Columbia mentions various approaches to broom control, including chemical. Not much work has been done on biological control in Canada, unlike in the United States, which also has extensive broom invasion. New Zealand also faces the same problems as British Columbia; it has an extensive broom population as well as gorse, which covers three percent of the total

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart	386-4792
Vice-President	Pierre d'Estrubé	477-2410
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie	361-1694
Secretary and Membership		
Development Chair	Eric Redekop	595-7270
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite	479-3380
Director	Paul Gareau	592-9089
Director	Hal Gibbard	477-2986

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY
 c/o A-954 QUEENS AVENUE, VICTORIA, B.C. V8T 1M6



Let's celebrate our noble Garry oak

The Municipality of Oak Bay again proclaimed the first Saturday of the November as Garry Oak Day at our society's request.

The Garry oak could be considered the signature tree of the Saanich Peninsula. Dr. Arthur Kruckeberg, in his book *Gardening With Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest* (University of Washington Press, 1982) writes, "Like so many of our noble native trees, Garry oak has been taken too much for granted. As urbanization continues to spread out into the oak-grass-Douglas-fir prairies, specimens may be spared and become part of the urbanized landscape. But more often they succumb to the irreversible activities of housing, roads and other development ... they should be planted, both to compensate for loss and for their intrinsic ornamental value."

In our Garry oak inventory, conducted so far in the City of Victoria, we have noticed that there are not many young seedlings or trees. One reason might be that some people mow the seedlings because, as my neighbour says, "they're like weeds and in the way." So we need to talk to our neighbours about their value and their exotic beauty. I can't imagine our landscape without the Garry oak, the only native oak in B.C.

Large or shrubby, they are an intrinsic part of our urban and rural landscapes. Incidentally, where is the region's largest Garry oak? Two different sources, *Trees of Greater Victoria: A Heritage* (Heritage Tree Book Society, 1988) and *Hiking Guide to the Big Trees of Southwestern British Columbia*, (by Randy Stoltmann, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 1987) cite a Garry oak at 1435 Wain Road in North Saanich as the largest. It was measured in 1984 as having a 15.5-foot (4.72 m) circumference at a height of 4.5 feet (1.37 m), an 80-foot (24.4 m) height and an 80-foot crown spread (24.4m). The latter book also gives statistics on a taller tree of 115 feet (35 m) with a foot smaller diameter and much less crown spread, also in North Saanich, but the location was not given.



GOMPS DIRECTORS Katie Stewart and Pierre d'Estrubé participated on Tree Appreciation Day by planting a three-year-old Garry oak near Bowker Creek in Cedar Hill Park.

□

In Saanich, November 5 was Tree Appreciation Day, with two events organized by The Saanich Significant Tree Committee. Saanich council established the committee, whose members are concerned about trees being pressured by development.

Community volunteers, including Scouts and Guides, planted native trees — Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), grand fir (*Abies grandis*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*) and Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) — along with native shrubs, red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*) and red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) at Sierra Park in Gordon Head and along Bowker Creek in Cedar Hill Park. All plant material was donated

by the Greater Victoria Water District from their nursery except the Garry oaks, which the Pacific Forestry Centre supplied (perhaps grown from acorns collected by GOMPS?)

Pierre d'Estrubé and I were among the many volunteers at the Cedar Hill planting, which was sponsored by *Beautiful B.C.* magazine and Save-on Foods (the latter provided food for the volunteers). We were glad to see such community interest and applauded the organizers' efforts. However, we were concerned about how the planting was done, the lack of site preparation, and the quality of the soil but that's for discussion at a future date with the organizers of the event, who plan to make such plantings an annual event. Pierre and I planted cedars, shrubs and two three-year-old Garry oaks.

— Katie Stewart

CRD board endorses most of Sooke Hills greenbelt proposal

Local environmental activists are delighted with the Capital Regional District parks department's recommendation that much of the Greater Victoria Water District's surplus lands — commonly known as the Sooke Hills — be converted to parkland.

The report was released on Thursday, Oct. 26 and by Wednesday, Nov. 1 the CRD parks committee, consisting of local elected representatives, was deciding whether to endorse it in principle. After some discussion and tinkering with the wording, the committee voted in favour of the Parks Department's recommendations. A week later the CRD board also endorsed the report, so negotiations with the water board can now begin.

The report, *CRD Parks Assessment of the GVWD Existing and Future Non-Catchment Lands*, says (page vii) "Original remnant forest site associations (communities) found in the non-catchment lands are significantly under-represented in federal, provincial, regional and municipal parks and protected areas." In fact, of the Nanaimo Lowlands Ecoregion, less than one percent of the area is protected, and less than a one-half percent of the original forest still exists.

Largest of the areas to be included under the aegis of CRD Parks is the Veitch Creek watershed, comprising 1,447 hectares. According to the report, "The Veitch represents an unparalleled opportunity to protect a large, intact upper portion of a catchment and manage it as an ecological unit. Nowhere else in the region does this opportunity exist [page viii]."

In this watershed are plant communities considered rare or imperiled, such as "Idaho fescue and junegrass bunch grass [page 34]." It is also an area of significant wildlife habitat.

The other major portion of land identified in the report is the Niagara Creek catchment, of which the GVWD owns 1258 hectares. There are remnant areas of the original forest (stands of Douglas-fir) which have never been logged. "The rolling upland terrain of the Niagara catchment is not represented in existing parks in the Capital Regional District [page 30]."

The area had already been identified by the B.C. Protected Areas Strategy as a potential provincial park. Therefore, the parks department recommends that the "B.C. Ministry of the Environment, Lands and Parks acquire all or part of the Niagara catchment as an addition to Goldstream Provincial Park [page 31]."

Representatives of two local conservation groups spoke at the parks committee

meeting. Dr. Saul Arbess of the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Society, and Alison Spriggs of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, thanked the parks department for their report but were concerned that all of the lands around Waugh Creek weren't included for protection, just the southeast portion. They would prefer that the entire watershed be protected.

Nevertheless, if negotiations with the GVWD are successful, and if the province adds the Niagara Creek watershed to the existing Goldstream park, the combined areas will be a substantial addition to the green space corridor linking Saanich Inlet and Sooke Basin.

At the April 1995 GOMPS BOD meeting, Ray Zimmermann, co-founder of the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Society, made a presentation to enlist our support — to ask the GVWD to designate the surplus off-catchment lands (already owned by the four core municipalities) as a park and not sell or trade them to support GVWD capital costs. These lands constitute the largest area needed to make the sea-to-sea concept viable. The remaining properties needed to complete the greenbelt are crown lands and privately owned land, some of whose owners may be amenable to having covenants attached to their properties.

Hundreds of people have sent letters to the water district urging the protection of the Sooke Hills. GOMPS has done so also. David McLean, chair of the Greater Victoria Water Board, replied to my letter: "In deciding the future of the non-catchment lands, the district's primary concern will be the protection and preservation of its catchment lands, but is

also sensitive to the desire to preserve green space in our area. The district believes that its objectives can be achieved while at the same time contributing to the preservation of wilderness areas and the expansion of the parks network."

GOMPS members who support the sea-to-sea proposal still have time to write to the water district and board, the CRD board, the four core municipalities, Colwood and Langford municipalities, and Environment Minister Moe Sihota. At the parks committee meeting, Victoria councillor Geoff Young, who also sits on the water board, said that some surplus lands may have to be traded to acquire catchment land currently not owned by the GVWD. However, the water district had a \$10 million fund available for acquiring land which they diverted to the Sooke dam project so lobbying to have that money used for its intended purpose might be helpful.

The Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt Society and WCWC are not the only groups lobbying. At the November 1 meeting, Jack de Lessard, a forester representing the Greater Victoria Community Forest Society, spoke on behalf of his society, which wants to "manage" the forests.

Their society has a quite different idea about the use of the Sooke Hills. I thought it rather odd Mr. Lessard avoided using the word logging; instead he used the much more benign "manage" and "demonstration forest." However, CRD chairman Frank Leonard said the CRD Parks mandate excludes resource extraction.

— Katie Stewart

CALENDAR

NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP — November 16, 7 p.m. Room A215, Clearhue Building, UVic. Featured speaker at 8:15 p.m.

SOOKE HILLS MULTIMEDIA SLIDE SHOW — November 17, 7:30 p.m. Room 159, Begbie Building, UVIC. Western Canada Wilderness Committee's conservation vision for Victoria's backyard wilderness. Featuring live music and theatre. Admission by donation.

200 GARRY OAKS NEED PLANTING — November 18, 9 a.m.-noon at Mt. Douglas Park. Call Bob Bridgeman, 477-7464 for location.

NATIVE SHRUB PLANTING BEE — November 18 and 19, 25 and 26, Mt. Tolmie. Call Eric Redekop, 595-7270 for details.

ACORN PLANTING NIGHTS — November 22 and 29, 7-9/9:30 p.m. Pacific Forestry Centre Greenhouse, 506 Burnside Road West.

GOMPS SOCIAL NIGHT — December 6, 7-10 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Road.

GOMPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — December 7, 7:30 p.m. at Pierre d'Estrube's, 1542 Athlone Drive.

Active management recommended for 1000 Oaks grove on Hornby Island

Andrew Harcombe and Hans Roemer, plant ecologists with the Conservation Data Centre and Doug Morrison, Regional Habitat Section Head, have submitted a report with their recommendations regarding management of the 1000 Oaks grove on Hornby Island to Robert Howart, Provincial Approving Officer, Vancouver Island Region, Ministry of Transportation and Highways.

The ecologists weren't certain what constituted the oak grove, whether it was the area of almost pure Garry oaks with few conifers or if it included all the Garry oaks which were in the conifers. Each would require different buffer areas.

Since fire no longer controlled the advance of the conifers, they were concerned that the Garry oaks would be eventually overtaken by them.

"Management recommendations for the common property (pure oak grove) can be handled in two ways: active management to preserve the present state of the grove or total "hands-off". The latter option would allow coniferous forest regeneration that over time would shade out the Garry oak and see the change to a coniferous forest understory rather than the present grass-wildflower mix. We suggest a more active approach to maintain the status quo.

Historically, the present ecosystem would have been maintained by ground fire and possible browsing. Since burning is not a viable option in the vicinity of capital properties, late summer mowing may have similar results: advantage to many of the spring wildflowers, such as shooting-star and early camas and disadvantage to the late summer seeding of introduced perennial grasses, such as orchard grass, presently a dominant.

This is done in at least three Victoria parks and has demonstrated a resurgence of the wildflower species. This mowing recirculates organic material back into the ecosystem. Care would have to be used to avoid young Garry oak seedlings. Mowing would be done in late July or early August, when the seeds of the latest wildflowers have matured.

Since most of the desired plants require a dormancy period during the summer drought, no watering can occur. The site could be mowed again in late January to remove additional dead plant material and any re-growth of grasses. This would ensure optimum light conditions and a lack of competition for the ground-hugging new leaves of mature spring flowers that will soon appear.

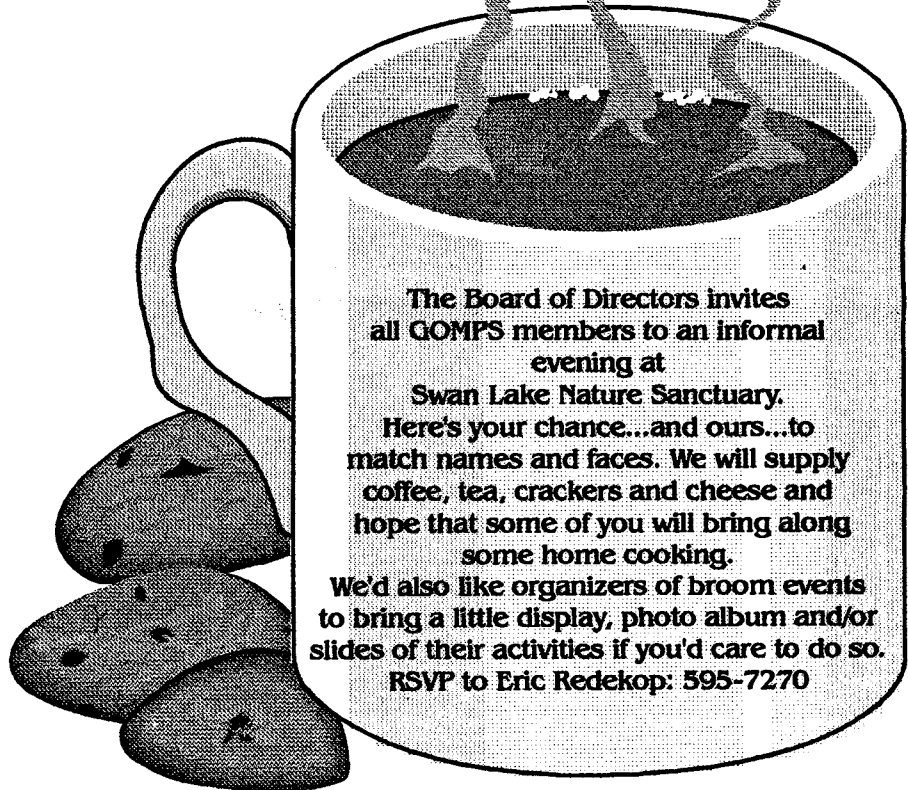
Occasional planting of Garry oak trees may be required if naturally-germinating seedlings do not appear to be providing replacement trees. Care must be taken that none of the adjacent development either interferes with the rooting parts of the grove nor adds additional water to the grove that might upset the present hydrological balance. Some seeding of wildflowers from adjacent sites (specifically, early camas) would help to bring back wildflowers which have disappeared due to past grazing."

The report also looked at manage-

ment outside of the common area and recommended carefully preserving any remaining oaks and the larger Douglas-fir, disposing sewage away from the grove and landscaping with appropriate native plants to minimize water usage.

The participants who were at the September 6 meeting at High Salal Ranch meet will meet again at the end of November to "discuss the findings of the report and ultimately an amicable solution to the best method of protecting the oak grove and its associated ecosystem."

GOMPS Social



The Board of Directors invites
all GOMPS members to an informal
evening at

Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary.

Here's your chance...and ours...to
match names and faces. We will supply
coffee, tea, crackers and cheese and
hope that some of you will bring along
some home cooking.

We'd also like organizers of broom events
to bring a little display, photo album and/or
slides of their activities if you'd care to do so.

RSVP to Eric Redekop: 595-7270

**December 6 from 7 to 10 pm.
Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary
3873 Swan Lake Road**

Profile: Friends of Knockan Hill Park Society

Around the Capital Region, a number of groups associated with a specific area are concerned about protection and restoration issues and public education. The GOMPS newsletter is profiling some of these groups. Second in a series.

The Friends of Knockan Hill Park Society was created by a group of nine neighbours concerned about the future of the park on December 16, 1990. Ours is a registered non-profit society with a current membership of 32 families and individuals.

Initially, park issues demanded monthly meetings of our executive of nine, but it now meets bi-monthly. We have two general meetings a year, one of which is the annual general meeting.

Our mandate is to protect, preserve and perpetuate the wilderness character, the flora and fauna of Knockan Hill Park, to encourage the principles of conservation, and to promote expansion of the boundaries of the park when and where the opportunity arises.

In pursuit of this, we have sought support from the neighbourhood by means of informative meetings with presentations by naturalists and lobbied Saanich Council and its Parks Department with our concerns.

Our main concerns for the park, and actions include:

□ the lack of special status for natural parks in Saanich (we lobbied for the recently instituted P4N zoning category);

□ the impact on the park of residential development (we lobbied for buffer zones around natural parks and alerted new residents of the needs of the park);

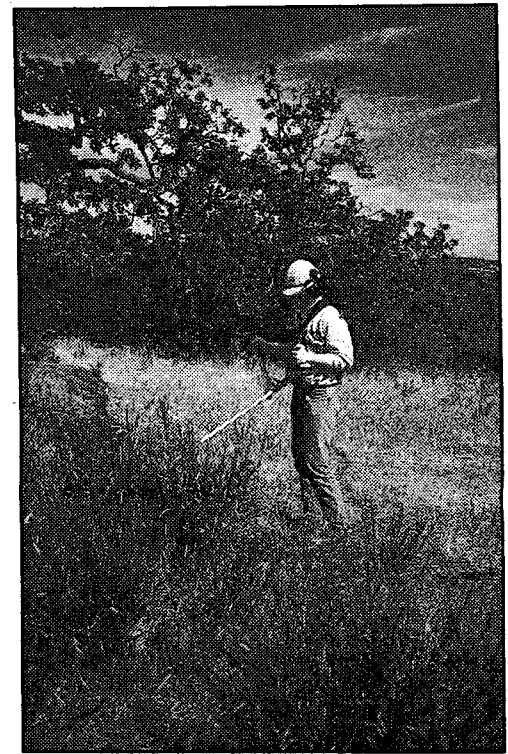
□ requests for and the removal or alteration of trees in the park (we protested the unsupervised felling of 15 Douglas firs in March 1991 and questioned the recommendation to alter over 50 more);

□ the imposition of unnecessarily wide chip trails and destruction of wild flowers (we closely monitored the construction of the new trail system in 1991 and re-chipping in 1992);

□ the damage to native flora inflicted by invasive plants: broom, English ivy, Himalayan blackberries, daphne ... (we have removed shoulder-high broom from the top slopes of the hill and aim to keep the Garry oak meadow clear of broom);

□ destruction of vegetation, especially mosses, by bicycles (with permission we cut an alternative trail between Knockan Hill Estates and Mildred Street in March 1993);

□ the fate of the heritage cottage and garden within the park (we represented local opinion to save them from demolition and for restoration and management, as a unique local heritage site, now adminis-



CHRIS TETLOW is shown cutting broom at Knockan Hill Park in the Summer of 1994.

tered by the Saanich Heritage Foundation);

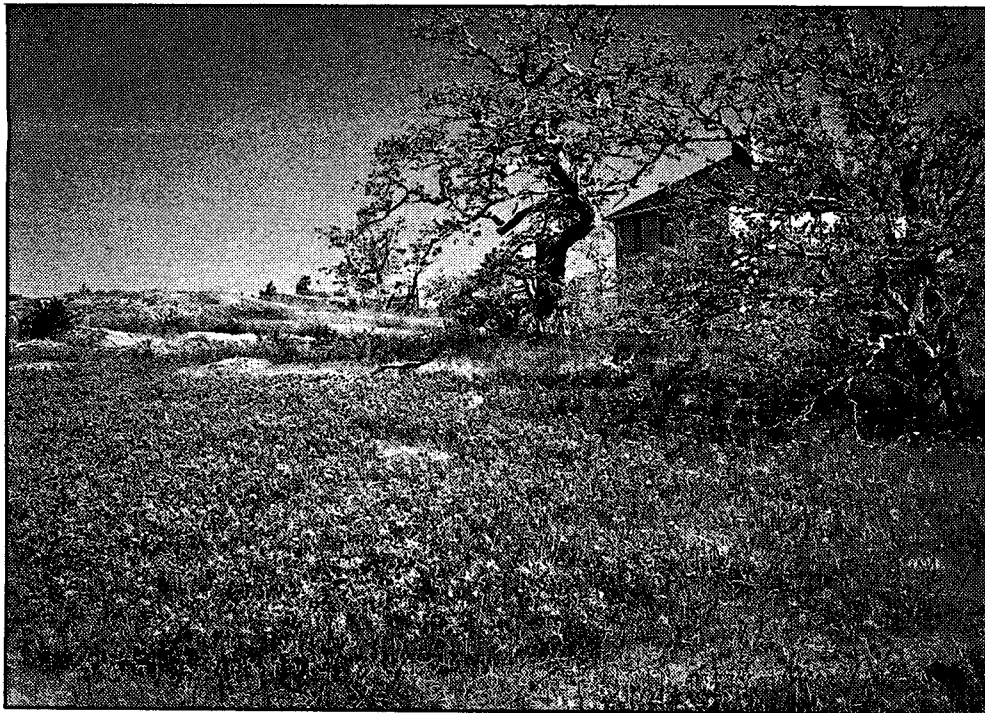
□ lack of information about the park (we produced an information pamphlet in 1993, and built an interpretation board in June 1995);

□ expansion of the park boundaries (we are in communication with View Royal Parks Commission and the Nature Conservancy of Canada to preserve the supporting, still natural, but privately owned lands on the View Royal side of the park).

We maintain local awareness by distributing a newsletter to all households in the neighbourhood once a year, and to members four times a year. We were awarded a Saanich Partnership Award for our stewardship of the park in 1993. We also support other groups in their efforts to save our natural environment: Gowlland Foundation, Glencoe Cove Society, View Royal Natural Habitat Group etc.

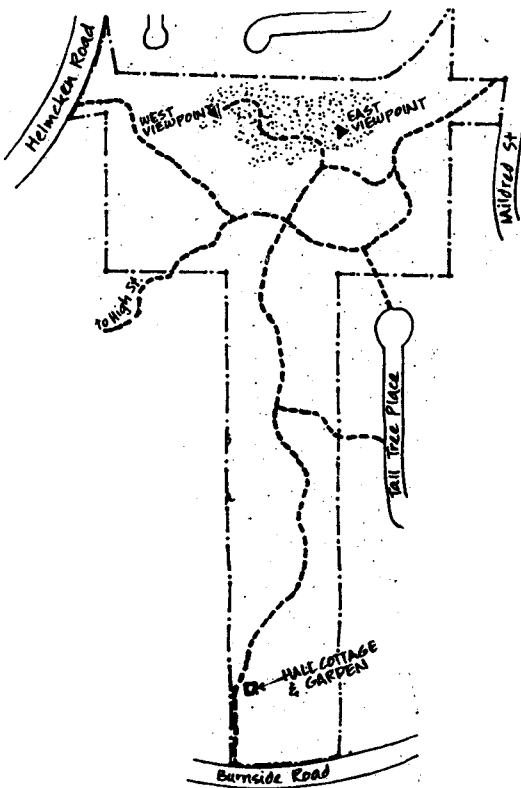
Although ours is only a small local group trying to raise concern for the local native habitat, we do appreciate the dedication of time and effort required to have an impact on the general population and local authorities.

— Andria Tetlow, Corresponding Secretary. She is also a GOMPS member.

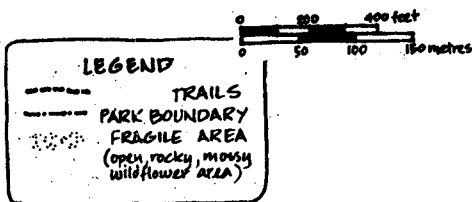


THE RETURN OF THE CAMAS at Knockan Hill Park in the Spring of 1995.

Photos by Andria Tetlow



NEW CHIP TRAIL across top of Knockan Hill Park. Photo was taken in January 1992.



Summary of the Friends of Knockan Hill Park Fall 1995 Newsletter

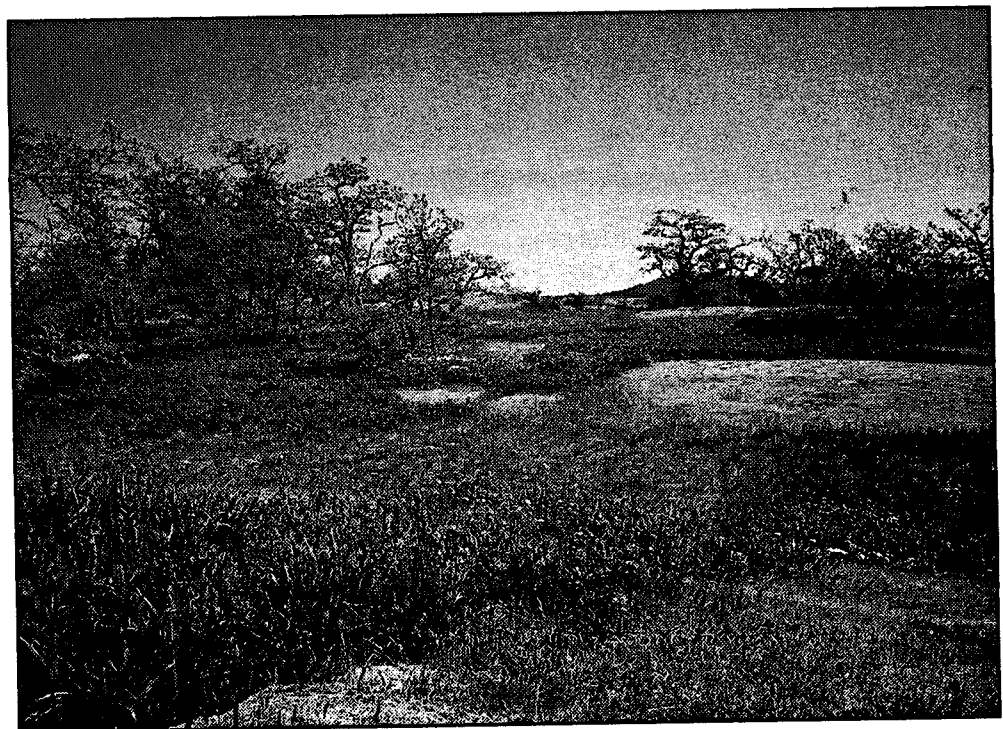
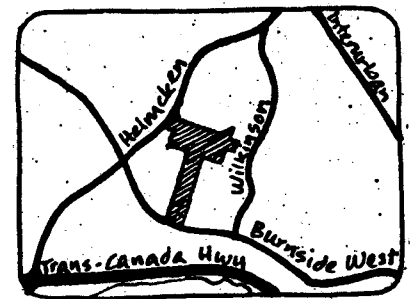
- ☐ Broom removal October 1 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The target — to keep the top of the hill clear of broom;
- ☐ establishment of a park journal "which is intended to document the flora and fauna events, plus anything else of significance relating to the park." Messages with time and date are telephoned by the observer to one of the members;
- ☐ a schedule of work parties for continuing the "transformation of the cottage garden";
- ☐ thanks to the builders of the interpretation sign near the Burnside Road entrance;
- ☐ social gathering announcement for November to celebrate five years of Knockan Hill Park stewardship by the society

Anyone interested in becoming a member of F.K.H.P.S. can send \$5 c/o 3816 Mildred Street, Victoria, B.C. V8Z 7A8.

Editor's note: Andria sent the Newsletter some relevant background information, including a brief F.K.H.S.P. presented to the Saanich Parks and Recreation Committee in 1991. The group was very thor-

ough in their analysis of what the 8.674-hectare park needed, such as keeping parking to a minimum for maintaining quiet; listing specific locations of Scotch broom, ivy, Himalayan blackberry to be removed; monitoring invasive plants; rerouting a trail away from a large bed of fawn lilies; posting signs; and notifying park neighbours of the presence of work crews in the park.

Andria also organized a broom removal event on October 15 as part of the City-wide Broom Bash.



GARRY OAK MEADOW in Knockan Hill Park — post broom. Photo was taken in Spring 1995.

Arborist awaits amended account

September 25, 1995

As I was reading through the last GOMPS Newsletter (Volume 2, No. 7 July /Aug95), I was shocked to read "400-year-old Garry oak gets the axe." I was saddened, not by the removal of the Garry oak at Sir James Douglas School annex, but more so by the misrepresentation of the facts surrounding the removal. It appears that the Garry Oak Meadow Society [sic] has decided to crusade for the uninformed.

As Mr. Loring observed, the majority of the upper crown in this tree was dead. Yet, what he failed to observe was that the above-ground body we call the tree is only part of the complete organism. The root system should be considered equally, if not more importantly, on observing trees in the urban environment such as this.

The crown in this tree was a very good indicator of the health problems it was experiencing below ground. The root system had been completely paved over in the past, and with conventional construction and paving techniques, the damage was irreversible.

By examining the condition of the wood tissue at the base of the tree, the soundness of the root system, and the extent of decay, one can then estimate the failure potential of the tree. A trained eye could in fact tell a clearer story from the stump alone than your article implies. Other factors to consider are targets, if in fact the tree does fail. In this case, it was a courtyard beside an elementary school, the targets being obvious.

Someone chose to disturb the root system and paved over it years ago, which very effectively destroyed the tree. This would have made an excellent focal point for your article, instead of dwelling on the removal of this tortured specimen, and an opportunity for those who don't face these problems on a daily basis, to see how difficult it is to develop an area without disturbing the native environment.

We in the tree industry view arboriculture as a proactive science, and are constantly challenged by the construction industries who continue to do things the "old way". Until things change, we will continue to attempt to undo the damage that has already been done.

As an ISA certified arborist [and] employee of Mount View Tree Service, I

am insulted by the insinuations of Tom Loring and the ignorance of the people who researched and printed the article. One might deduce from reading this article, that this tree was removed prematurely without forethought or concern, which is untrue, and I therefore look forward to reading your response and correction in the next edition.

I also am pleased to hear of the drafted bylaw for the City of Victoria. I do, however, hope that consultations take place with professionals with a background in arboriculture and current construction techniques.

Yours sincerely, Graham Mackenzie,
Certified Arborist

Mount View Tree Service is a corporate member of GOMPS.

Editor's response:

If I were to ask individual GOMPS members why they belong to the society, I would imagine that some answers might be that they are aware that they live in a very small, threatened ecosystem which they wish to protect as it continues to diminish; that they care passionately about Garry oaks with their wonderful exotic forms and that they are profoundly moved and uplifted by the beauty of meadow wildflowers in spring.

Most of us are not experts on the botany and health of Garry oaks and its associated ecosystem, but we are concerned when one Garry oak here and seven Garry oaks there are deliberately taken down. Mr. Loring, who is now retired, has "some training in tree care and was a practitioner [his words]." He is a qualified urban forester.

In the case of the tree at Moss and Fairfield Streets, I was remiss in not getting the viewpoint of the arborist, presumably you, who cut down the tree. I did not mean to imply that you were not knowl-

edgeable nor thorough in your assessment of the tree's health.

I was aware when I looked at the stump of the tree that it had once been part of a Garry oak ecosystem before it became an isolated, stressed specimen with pavement covering its roots. How did you determine that the damage was irreversible to the roots? Could the pavement have been removed from underneath the drip line and the tree fertilized? Has that ever been done? Could the tree have remained as a habitat tree for local fauna? These are questions I should have asked.

I was alarmed at the process involved — of how some teachers (also not experts, I presume) thought the tree wasn't safe, made a phone call and within a relatively short period of time, the tree was down. Is there a better process? Like Tom Loring, I see nothing wrong with a second opinion, especially if a significant tree is about to be cut down. In medicine, patients often opt for a second opinion, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the first doctor wasn't competent.

The Municipality of Esquimalt requires that: "the owner of a 'Protected Tree' [Garry oak, among other species] shall apply to the municipality for a permit to cut down the tree," even if: "The tree is dead, dying, severely damaged, unstable, or severely leaning and is in danger of falling." I hope that when the City of Victoria finally enacts a tree protection bylaw, it will have a similar requirement.

You may not have been saddened by the loss of that particular Garry oak, but Mr. Loring was, and so were a number of his neighbours, for that tree was a pre-dominant part of their daily landscape. Since its removal affected them, the school board's informing the neighbourhood would have been in order.

— Katie Stewart

Acorn planting volunteers still needed

On November 22 and 29, GOMPS members and other people will be planting acorns at the Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 Burnside West. A few volunteers are still needed for November 29. The time will be from 7 p.m. to 9 or 9:30 p.m. Please call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694 if you are interested. Volunteers should dress warmly and wear boots.

Friends of Summit Park craft sale

Friends of Summit Park are participating at a Christmas craft sale at Quadra School gym, November 17, 6-9 p.m. and November 18, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Acorn and oak leaf-shaped cookies and ornaments will be for sale as well as Garry oak meadow posters and placemats.

Welcome new members

Mail Boxes Etc., Victoria and Fran Spencer, Victoria.

New Girl Guides Garry oak conservation crest developed

Margaret Lidkea, District Guider and Program Naturalist at Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, has been working with local Girl Guides clearing broom at Uplands and Anderson Hill Parks for a few years in her Garry oak conservation project in Chatham and Shoal Bay districts.

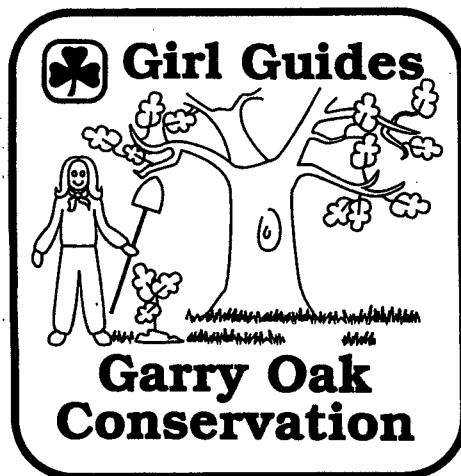
Recently she developed the Garry Oak Conservation Crest for Guides or Pathfinders, including their time as Sparks and Brownies. A Pathfinder conceived the design of the crest, which an artist drew.

In the September 1995 Girl Guides newsletter, *The Lamplighter*, the project was outlined.

Crest: The Garry Oak Conservation Crest is meant to be given to Guides or Pathfinders who have completed the following commitments during their Guide years, including those as Sparks and Brownies. This is a locally developed emblem, and must be put on the

camp hat or the blanket, not on the badge scarf.

Purpose: To learn about one of Canada's most endangered habitats, our local Garry Oak Meadow, and how to restore and conserve it for future generations.



1. Visit a Garry Oak Meadow.

2. Explain what the Garry Oak Meadow habitat is, and name some of the plants and animals that live in it together.

3. Learn about three invasive plants that are destroying this habitat, and tell how they are doing this.

4. Tell how you can conserve this habitat.

5. Spend at least five hours actually helping, by doing at least three of the following activities:

- learning about the Garry Oak Meadow, its wildflowers and the invading plants;
- removing invasive plants from a park or campsite, with your unit or district;
- planting Garry oak seedlings;
- collecting and sorting acorns to be grown into seedlings;
- planning a District or a public broom removal event;
- informing the public (e.g., Girl Guide information table, writing newspaper articles, showing videos to groups);
- other (explain).

Friends of Summit Park work on saving habitat

The City of Victoria owns three undeveloped lots on Summit Avenue between the Smith Hill reservoir and Cook Street. Council has decided to sell off these lots, among others, and recently closed the tendering process on them. When the For Sale signs went up in September, members of Friends of Summit Park started questioning the wisdom of selling off these lots for development.

These properties are a natural continuation of Summit Park and the reservoir lands. Garry oaks and shrubby undergrowth provide significant habitat for birds and wildlife. Although there are two private properties between the reservoir lands and the three lots in question, there is a connecting corridor of green space which acts as a green link between them.

The Friends of Summit Park would like to see these three lots added to Summit Park with covenants put on the sections of the two private properties that serve as a corridor. Both property owners are very willing to see this happen. We would like to see these lots remain primarily as wildlife habitat, within the park setting. Because so little priority has been given to this type of land use in the city, it is all the more important to ensure the few such wild areas that are left are protected. Keeping natural areas in the city makes the city a better place for people.

The Friends have bought some time

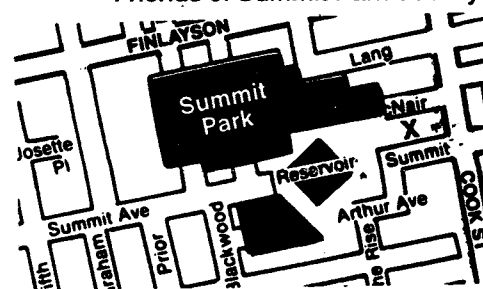
with council by making a commitment to find funds to acquire these lots for the park. We are approaching the Greenways Committee, which provides funding to link green spaces in the Capital Region, and the Nature Conservancy, which applies funds to saving green space. It is frustrating to have to raise money to buy property from the city in order to give it back to the city as protected green space, but we are hopeful that the city will also be willing to contribute to allow this to happen.

Please show your support for this initiative by writing to council and letting them know that saving green space and natural habitat count for more in the long term than short term cash infusions into city

coffers. Accepting the lowest bid to sell off these lots is not in the best interests of the public when the land in question provides increasingly rare green space and wildlife habitat.

— Deirdre Gotto,

Friends of Summit Park Society



Planting Bee volunteers needed

Volunteers are urgently needed to help plant about 100 native shrubs at Mount Tolmie Park on the weekends of November 18 and 19, and 25 and 26. Saanich Parks & Recreation recently accepted a proposal from the GOMPS Preservation and Restoration Committee to purchase and plant native shrub stock in areas near the summit reservoir where volunteers removed broom earlier this year. The planting project objectives are to:

- a. supplement existing native shrubs.
- b. reduce potential for soil erosion.

- c. modify potential intensive use patterns.
- d. expand habitat for dependent wildlife.
- e. increase microclimatological diversity.
- f. improve visual aesthetics.

The P&R committee has already prepared the planting plans and ordered the plant stock from Thimble Farms, which will be delivered the previous week. Volunteers are asked to dress for the weather (rain or shine) and bring a small shovel. For directions or more information, please contact Eric Redekop, at 595-7270.

ONGOING

PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOMPS DISPLAYS:

November 7 — Used by Friends of Summit Park at the Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Plan Open House, Union Hall, 2750 Quadra St., 7 p.m. One door prize consisted of a Garry oak seedling, four different species of native plants, four different packets of native plant seeds, and some camas bulbs.

November 17 and 18 — Quadra School Christmas Craft Fair.

November — Camosun College Cafeteria

January — Victoria City Hall

February — Department of Transport, adjoining downtown Public Library

— Marnie Phillips, 598-8820

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE

One thousand more Garry oak meadow posters have been printed; 200 have been distributed through a commercial wholesaler. GOMPS also has placemats, wildflower posters and the *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings* for sale. Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION COMMITTEE

SEEDS/SEEDLING EXCHANGE. Interested members contact Katie Stewart at 386-4792. Camas seeds are available.

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP. Call Eric at 595-7270 for information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND GARRY OAK INVENTORY PROJECT. Contact project coordinator Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

NEWSLETTER

If you have any contributions — photos, art work, letters of agreement or disagreement or anything else you'd like to contribute, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270 or Katie Stewart at 386-4792 or mail to A-954 Queens Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart	386-4792
Vice-President	Pierre d'Estrubé	477-2410
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie	361-1694
Secretary and Membership		
Development Chair	Eric Redekop	595-7270
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite	479-3380
Director	Paul Gareau	592-9089
Director	Hal Gibbard	477-2986

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to: | <input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal) |
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |
| _____ | |

Green Spaces Strategy wants public input

The Capital Regional District (CRD) board and the Provincial Capital Commission (PCC) are preparing a Green Spaces Strategy, covering an area of 244,252 hectares. This includes the Southern Gulf Islands and the area from Port Renfrew to the Malahat and south.

With our population, now around 326,000, predicted to increase another 115,000 over the next 25 years, it is very important that natural areas be protected from development.

In the CRD/PCC October 1995 newsletter *Green Space Strategy*, green space is defined as: "Natural and semi-natural areas, both land and water, that are of ecological, scenic, renewable resource, outdoor recreational and/or greenway value. These areas are considered to have high ecological and/or social value as green spaces. Green space land could be developed, partly developed or undeveloped public and private land."

The purpose of the strategy is to determine which significant natural environment areas should be protected and how they should be protected, as well as who should be responsible for their protection.

Among the objectives of the Green Spaces Strategy are several of particular interest to our society:

- ☐ to conserve rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems and species in the CRD;
- ☐ to maintain biological diversity by protecting and enhancing a variety of habitats;
- ☐ to conserve ecologically valuable areas in large contiguous units and connect them with greenways, and;
- ☐ to foster partnerships for the conservation and stewardship of green space.

The public is encouraged to participate in the planning. You can obtain the newsletter with attached questionnaire from the CRD Parks Office at 490 Atkins Ave., CRD offices at 524 Yates St. and the PCC office at 613 Pandora Ave.

Open houses and meetings are being held around the CRD in November. Unfortunately, the local ones will be over by the time the GOMPS newsletter is sent out.

On November 18, Green Spaces Strategy is holding a workshop at Bayside Middle School in Brentwood Bay for people interested in identifying green spaces and issues and giving feedback about the Strategy. If you're interested contact Brenda Schmidt at 478-3344 to register.

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY
c/o A-954 QUEENS AVENUE, VICTORIA, B.C. V8T 1M6



Profile: Friends of Beacon Hill Park Society

Around the Capital Region a number of groups associated with a specific area are concerned about protection and restoration issues and public education. The GOMPS newsletter is profiling some of these groups. Third in a series.

The Friends of Beacon Hill Park was founded in 1989. At this time, the City of Victoria proposed to cut the coastal shrub along Dallas Road to make it more accessible to police patrols.

This sparked a group of concerned citizens to form an environmental group. The group, calling itself the Friends of the Southeast Woods, along with the Sierra Club and the Victoria Natural History Society (V.N.H.S.), went to city council and presented the value of the natural habitat, particularly for migrating birds.

With the help of Doctors Ogilvie,

Ceska and Brayshaw of the Royal B.C. Museum, we were able to convince city council that a social problem could not be solved by damaging the environment. We are grateful to these botanists who continue to help and support us.

We proposed a replanting (restoration) program in conjunction with a group of Girl Guides. This program, supported by a start-up fund provided by the V.N.H.S., continues to this day.

Garry oak meadows

Next, our attention was turned to another fragile area of the park: the Garry oak meadows on the slopes of Beacon Hill and other smaller areas throughout the park. At this point, we registered as a non-profit society, renaming ourselves The Friends of Beacon Hill Park, "dedicated to preserving the natural and cul-

tural history of the park."

We started a program of public education about the park by conducting walks throughout the uncultivated sections of Beacon Hill Park. This evolved into the yearly walks (wildflowers, birding, archaeology, butterfly, etc.) and displays now known as Camas Day, which we co-sponsor with the V.N.H.S.

We celebrated our fourth annual Camas Day last April. We have been very fortunate to receive the expertise of Bob Ogilvie, Adolf Ceska, Chris Bayshaw and Brian Keddle who help support us not only at this event but throughout the year.

Threats to the meadow

The Garry oak meadow on the slopes of Beacon Hill is under constant pressure to be over-utilized for large-scale events such as the Great Canadian Picnic on July 1, which use heavy equipment and involve heavy pedestrian traffic.

After a great deal of lobbying, and with legal aid from the B.C. Law Society, and endless meetings with all concerned (city council, parks department and the Great Canadian Pacific group), the event was moved to the Cameron Band Shell in the cultivated area of the park.

We are currently working on another threat to the Garry oak meadow on Beacon Hill.

The old Checkers Pavilion has been neglected over the years and is now condemned. The Friends at one time considered using it as a nature and history interpretive centre. However, improving the facilities would put too much pressure upon the surrounding meadow.

Therefore, we now believe the building should be taken down or moved elsewhere. Meanwhile, a hitherto unknown men's group (the Sterling Men's Group) has offered to rebuild the pavilion and city



GIRL GUIDES INSPECT Oregon grape plants in the Southeast woods of Beacon Hill Park.

Photo by Helen Oldershaw

Continued next page

council has approved the preliminary plans without an environmental review being conducted.

We are concerned about the environmental damage this would have on the surrounding areas as we are worried that this new development may open the way to more services being supplied (hydro, water and increased parking spaces).

Possible meeting with Moe Sihota

How many Victorians realize that Beacon Hill Park is actually under a charter to the City of Victoria by the Province (1882) Because of this, the park does not qualify as a local community park and is for the enjoyment of all of B.C.'s citizens. We are asking for a meeting with Moe Sihota, the minister of environment, lands and parks, in respect to the city's lack of an environmental impact study.

One of our present projects is the mapping of native plants found in the park. In Summer 1995, under the guidance of Chris Brayshaw, we had several plant identification forays.

We are working in cooperation with the city parks department in order to create a management plan for the natural areas of the park (mowing times, watering schedules, etc.). By collecting and collating this data, we hope to move toward the creation of natural area preserves which cannot be changed by the political



DR. ROBERT OGILVIE leads a group of keen naturalists on a plant-identifying walk on Camas Day, 1995.

Photo by Helen Oldershaw

manipulation of special interest groups. Strong bylaws are needed to protect these precious areas for generations to come.

New members welcome

Although most of our meetings concern only committee members, we keep in touch with our membership through periodical newsletters, telephone contact and one or two general meetings throughout the year. Our last two meetings have included illustrated talks on the park

given by Dr. Chris Bayshaw and GOMPS member and director Eric Redekop.

We always welcome new members. Our membership fee is \$5 per household. If you are interested in supporting our group in any way please phone Helen, 592-6659 or Joyce, 592-4232. Or write to F.B.H.P. c/o 357 Irving Road, Victoria, B.C. V8S 4A3.

— Helen Oldershaw and Joyce Harrison,
F.B.H.P. directors

LETTERS

Ivy in Saanich parks

This letter is a follow-up to our meeting with Pierre d'Estrubé and Hal Gibbard of your society, concerning English ivy growing on Garry oak trees.

The parks and recreation department has had a policy for a number of years to cut ivy growing on any tree in our parks and boulevards. We normally can only afford to do this work when we happen to be working in the area although many of our parks have been done.

We would certainly welcome any assistance that might be available through the members of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society.

The only condition that we require is that we be notified before any work is done in our parks. Boulevard trees would require the approval of the adjacent resident.

We look forward to becoming partners with you in attempting to bring better con-

trol of ivy growing on our trees, particularly our extremely important Garry oak.

David De Shane, Manager
of Parks Operations,
Corporation of the District of Saanich.

City of Victoria-owned lots on Summit Avenue

Thank you for your letter of November 15, 1995 addressed to Mayor Cross and the members of council regarding your concerns over the disposition of city-owned lots on Summit Avenue. Your letter has been forwarded to mayor and council and the parks and recreation department for information.

Unfortunately, your letter did not arrive in time to be placed on the agenda for the November 16, 1995 committee of the whole meeting. At this meeting, the Friends of Summit Park presented their proposals for the city-owned lots to council. Please note that following this presentation and subsequent discussion, council

passed this motion.

It was moved by Councillor [Laura] Acton, that it be recommended that:

1. The City work with the Friends of Summit Park Society and other agencies to develop options for the disposition of the three city-owned properties on Summit Hill.
2. The expertise of the parks and recreation department be utilized to assist in this process.
3. Councillor Acton be requested to work with the Friends of Summit Park Society.

I trust this information is of interest to your organization. I thank you for bringing the concerns of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society to the City's attention.

Robert Woodland,
Administrative Manager,
City of Victoria.

Backyard landscaping with Naturescape British Columbia

I am attempting to establish a native plant garden in my back yard. For inspiration I belong to the Native Plant Study Group, which is a sub-group of the Victoria Horticultural Society. I have read a number of books and magazine articles, talked to various people, and have taken a couple of courses. To augment that, I sent \$15 to Naturescape British Columbia, Caring for Wildlife Habitat at Home, and became the 380th person to receive their kit. Over 600 more people have since joined.

The kit consists of three booklets from The Stewardship Series: *Provincial Guide; Native Plant and Animal Booklet, Georgia Basin*; and *Resource Booklet, Georgia Basin*; a membership card; a questionnaire, which includes space to draw your property and its habitat; and a double-sided colour poster of Common Feeder Birds of Western North America. When I fill in my questionnaire and send it to Naturescape, I will receive the Naturescape newsletter and a Naturescape Participation Sign.

The booklets were my bedroom reading for a few nights. I noticed that GOMPS member and former president Willie MacGillivray was a member of the Naturescape Development Committee.

The 52-page provincial guide has illustrations and instructions for building nest boxes, bat houses, brush piles, amphibian pools, wildlife ponds and suggestions on how to evaluate and inventory your existing property and how you might design a Naturescape plan, including a specific design for a butterfly garden.

The native plant and animal booklet begins with a definition of ecosystem and the classification of ecosystems in British Columbia. We live in the Georgia Depression Ecoprovince (Georgia Basin), and more specifically, Nanaimo Lowland Eco-section (Campbell River to Victoria).

The 60-page booklet has animal and native plant tables. The plant categories include common and scientific names, eco-section, availability, height, sun exposure, moisture preference, foliage type and examples of habitat values. Not all species associated with a particular ecosystem are included. For example, the Garry oak ecosystem has many herbs besides great camas (*Camas leichtlini*), common camas (*C. quamash*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria lanceolata*), fawn lily (*Erythronium oregonum*) and broad-leaved stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*), which are included in the plant lists.

Part of the problem, I think, is the limited

space in the booklet and perhaps the lack of plant sources. Of the 139 trees, shrubs, ferns, ground cover and perennials listed, only nine — including *Arctostaphylos columbiana* (hairy manzanita), which I thought was difficult to propagate — are listed as generally available at garden centres; 92 are occasionally available but may be difficult to find and require some searching and 38 are listed as very difficult or impossible to find commercially.

Until more plants are available through garden centres or gardening clubs, the backyard wildlife concept may be difficult for urban gardeners to implement.

Since receiving the kit, I visited Fraser's Thimble Farm on Salt Spring Island, which is a reputable propagator of native plants and listed as a nursery source. On the ferry, I checked their catalogue against the listings in the Naturescape booklet. They had 19 plant species available in the impossible-to-find category so perhaps a small written amendment needs to be included with the booklet advising people to contact the nursery for a more complete listing.

The booklet does provide useful information for the planning stages, though. The tables for butterflies and moths include their common and scientific names, eco-sections, abundance and type of occurrence, larval food plants and

habitat and natural history. Similar tables cover amphibians, native terrestrial animals and birds. The bird tables also have a category on how to attract birds.

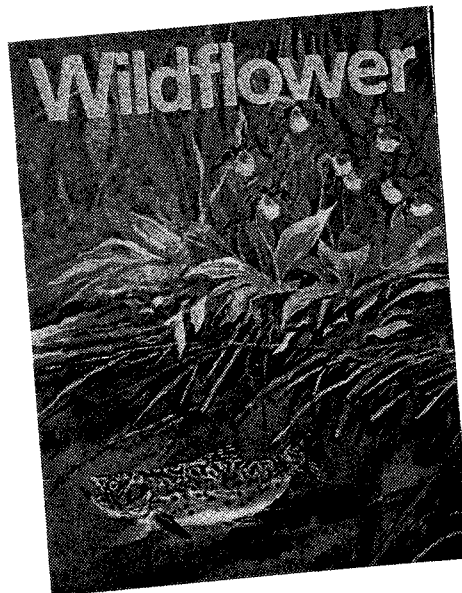
The 30-page resource booklet includes environmental emergency response numbers, national and international conservation organizations, special wildlife habitats in Georgia Basin, books, clubs, and native seed and plant sources. Though garden clubs and naturalist clubs such as the Victoria Natural History Society are listed, no other local conservation groups like GOMPS are included.

This booklet also has a gardener's guidelines, which was adapted from the Canadian Wildflower Society's Gardener's Guidelines, regarding the ethics of obtaining native plants. I was glad to see it included.

Naturescape British Columbia is funded by Wildlife Habitat Canada, Environment Canada through its Canadian Wildlife Service, the B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, the Habitat Conservation Fund and registrants in the program.

The kit is available by sending a \$15 cheque or money order payable to the Habitat Conservation Fund, 300-1005 Broad Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2A1.

— Katie Stewart



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Broom Bashes blessed by beautiful 'beams

More than 100 volunteers contributed hundreds of hours of labour, bashing and hauling Scotch broom in the first City-Wide Broom Bash, October 14 to November 5.

In spite of the season, the weekend schedule, and ominous weather forecasts, the sun shone on us each day, at least once. Even when it rained, the afternoons of November 4 and 5, dozens of

young volunteers braved the cold to bash broom at Cattle Point, thanks in part to a steady supply of snacks and hot tea.

The program was very successful in several ways:

1. Our press releases generated numerous radio, television and print media exposures for the society and Operation Clean Sweep, at no expense to the society. Local project coordinators received

additional media coverage at specific events.

2. Scheduling allowed volunteers to attend as many as 12 work events in four weeks in eight different locations: Mount Tolmie, Christmas Hill, Knockan Hill, Rithet's Bog, Mount Douglas, Cattle Point, Anderson Hill, and Government House.

3. Volunteers and coordinators developed contacts and friendships.

4. Oak Bay and Saanich donated disposal services at six locations.

5. The event provided opportunities for public education through our newsletter promotion and instructional materials distributed by coordinators at each site.

6. A high standard of volunteer support and participation was set by Margaret Lidkea and her crew at Cattle Point. Bravo!

7. Significant areas of Garry oak meadow habitats were relieved of competition from Scotch broom.

8. Opportunities for new partnerships in ecosystem rehabilitation, management, and stewardship were discussed by volunteers, coordinators, and area residents.

Broom bashing is continuing at some locations, but will be suspended everywhere after January, for the wildflower blooming period. If you would like to be involved until then, contact the coordinators listed in the October newsletter (p. 6), or call Eric Redekop at 595-7270.



VOLUNTEERS BY THE DOZENS (Girl Guides, their parents and other folks, under the leadership of Margaret Lidkea) made their 2-day event at Cattle Point a success, despite the inclement weather (above). **YANKING OUT THE BROOM** worked well at Knockan Hill Park (below). Much of the broom could be pulled out by one person; however, at times, a second person's strength sure helped. The broom was packed out of the park by tarp from the top of the hill to Mildred Street; organizer Andria Tetlow had the job of packing out the remainder after everyone had left.

Photos by Katie Stewart



Ministry of Forests Plant Propagation and Culture Workshop

When: 10 a.m. January 30, 1996 to 3 p.m. January 31

Where: Cowichan Lake Research Station, Mesachie Lake, B.C.

Cost: \$125 for a night's accommodation at the station and four meals.

Limit of 50 participants. Contact Don Carson at the station at 1-604-749-6811 or Diane Gertzen, Nursery Extension Services, 1-604-930-3309.

CALENDAR

**GOMPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING** — January 11, 7:30 p.m. at
Tom Gillespie's, A-954 Queens Ave.,
Victoria.

Mount Tolmie broom bashing continues

In January this year, dozens of volunteers contributed hundreds of hours of labour to bash and haul broom from meadow areas between Mayfair Drive and the park boundary, along the south and east.

In July and August, this broom free zone was expanded on its northern perimeter. Young sprouts have now appeared by the thousand, and those most mature by next winter will need to be removed before they add any more seed to an already rich seed bank.

Meanwhile, removal of mature seed-producing plants will progress downslope east of Mayfair Drive toward Cedar Hill Cross Road. Accordingly, four more removal events are scheduled for this winter season:

Sat., December 9;
Sat., December 16;
Sat., January 6; and
Sat., January 13.

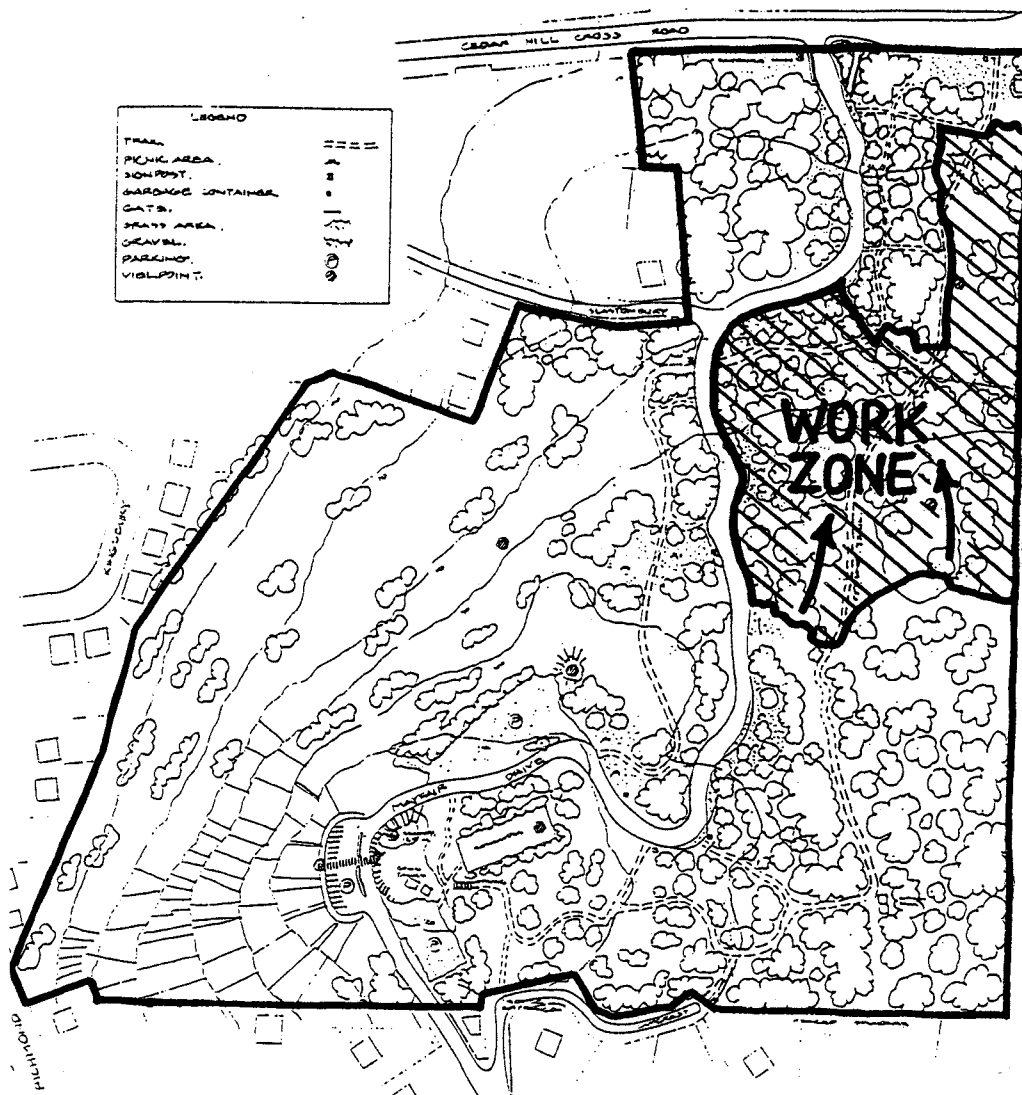
All supervised events will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. Volunteers should dress for the weather and bring such equipment as loppers, pruners, saws and gloves. Axes, shovels and machetes are not acceptable under the approved project protocols and will not be used on this site.

Our goal for this season is to clear as far as possible toward Cedar Hill Cross Road. Eventually, the whole area east of Mayfair Drive will be broom free, and we will turn our attention to the west side of the park.

As the project coordinator, I am always available to respond to your questions; if

you need more information about this project, please call me at 595-7270.

— Eric Redekop



Acorn planting almost reaches objective

Volunteers have planted 2875 acorns so far in two sessions at the Pacific Forestry Centre (PFC).

On November 22, eight volunteers, including the daughter of PFC technician Rob Hagel and her friend, planted over 1500 acorns. The girls sorted acorns which had been presoaked; the others assembled cardboard tubes — most difficult to get square — and filled the tubes and styrofoam containers with pre-mixed soil before they planted the acorns.

After the planting, the containers were topped up with soil and taken to one of the greenhouses, where they will stay until late next fall.

On the next scheduled date, several people were ill, so the planting was cancelled. However, on December 7, another

group of six volunteers planted more acorns until they ran out of cardboard tubes.

Another planting will occur in January, so we will likely pass our objective of 3000 acorns planted. If anyone is interested in helping at that session, call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

Some acorns will be given this week to the Ministry of Forests Seed Branch (see story on Native Plant Forum) to plant on a trial basis at their nursery in Surrey. Another small lot will be sent to Sylvia Mosterman, who requested acorns for propagating in an earlier GOMPS newsletter.

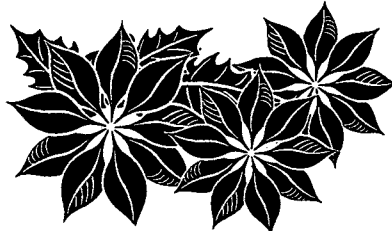
Incidentally, 250 Garry oaks from PFC were planted on Mt. Tolmie on the November 25 weekend.

LOOKING FOR LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS?

Consider:

- ✓ GOMPS memberships
- ✓ GOMPS colour posters of a Garry oak meadow
- ✓ Colour placemats of plants of the Garry oak meadow
- ✓ Wildflower posters

Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694



Native plant forum a jam-packed day

On November 25 I attended a Native Plant Forum in Vernon on behalf of GOMPS. Around 300 people were registered, with almost 50 of those being from Vancouver Island, including several GOMPS members. Participants came from as far away as Saskatchewan and Idaho.

This event was organized by Ministry of Forests (MoF) personnel and perhaps as a result, the focus was on uses of native plants and their propagation, not on conservation.

I think our free-standing display and information, including the Ministry of Environment's brochure on the Garry oak ecosystem, were a reminder that there were other issues to consider. I had a good opportunity to talk to people about these as I stood near the display during breaks.

Drew Brazier, from the MoF Seed Branch in Victoria, offered MoF facilities to grow Garry oaks for GOMPS and ship them to planting projects. Peter Kohler, who is restoring the native plant garden at UBC Botanical Gardens, bought our Colloquium Proceedings, placemat, wild-flower poster and Garry oak meadow poster. He said the poster will give visitors to the gardens some idea of what to expect as the meadow area becomes established.

Our display was one of 37, including the City of Kamloops's map of the native plant xeriscape garden at their city works yard, various seed suppliers, native plant landscapers and the UVic native vegetation committee.

Alberta Native Plant Council

Dana Bush, president of the council, was the first of two keynote speakers. She told us that as a result of an endangered species conference in 1986, the council was formed. Its objectives are: to educate individuals, industry and government about native plants; to coordinate information and activities concerning Alberta's native plants; to encourage native plant research; to preserve natural habitats and plant communities (including doing "purple peril pulls" i.e. purple loosestrife); and to encourage appropriate use of Alberta's native plants.

The council has four committees: education and information, rare plants, reclamation and horticulture, and conservation action. The council has produced nine reports on endangered plants, their newsletter *IRIS*, and is working on a field guide to the rare plants of Alberta. A rare plants conference is planned for 1997 in conjunction with the guide's publication.

Woody plant seeds

The second keynote speaker, Dr. Susan Meyer, works for the USDA Forest Service in Utah. She said that there are 50 certified native plant seed firms in the U.S. and also a number of companies growing native plants in containers.

Dr. Meyer mentioned several concerns using native seed: getting enough seed and ensuring that it will grow where it is planted; and the importance of studying the genetic variation and ecotypes of species when moving seed around.

She is among a group of researchers working with source-identified germplasm. Formerly they selected germplasm which would establish and reproduce easily; from those, they would pick ones they liked as "cultivars." Now they don't even field-grow their seeds.

They just identify the site where the seed is collected, realizing that there is a great deal of difference in the seeds from disparate locations and strong differentiation among plants even in the same population. There are also major differences of germination in the same population.

Dr. Meyer said the plants from seed have to be established over several generations to "take" in an area. Container stock is not suitable because the plants are past the difficult early stages of growth. Therefore they haven't had to adapt to the local conditions as they would have if they had been seed-sown. Also, using container stock is not a practical method for covering large areas.

From using native grasses to stream rehabilitation

Following the keynote speakers, 14 people spoke on projects they were involved in. They included Phil Burton, Symbios Researching and Consulting, who is proposing that forest road revegetation consist only of native grasses and legume mixtures; Kim Fulton, School District #21, Salmon Arm, who coordinates volunteers doing streambank rehabilitation using willows and cottonwood; and

Continued next page

Native plants as "botanical products"

Nelly De Geus was an organizer of the Native Plant Forum and also a speaker. She works for the Ministry of Forests Integrated Resources Policy Branch and wrote *Botanical Forest Products in British Columbia: An Overview*, which was published in January 1995.

According to her report, 211 "recognized botanical products" are harvested in B.C. in eight general categories: wild edible mushrooms, floral and greenery products, medicinal and pharmaceutical products, wild berries and fruits, herb and vegetable products, landscaping products, craft products and miscellaneous.

Under native landscaping plants she has this to say: "Use of native plant species for landscaping is an increasing part of the botanical forest product industry.

Entire trees, shrubs or herbs may be collected for personal landscaping or for commercial sale to nurseries and garden centres as transplants. Nurseries or garden centres indicate that the majority of their sales are not from their own stock but rather from special orders filled by independent contractors."

Harvesters and forest district staff have identified 44 native plant species — one tree species, 19 shrub species and 24 herbaceous species — used for landscaping in B.C.

On their list are mock-orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*); red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*); Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), which is NOT a native species; broad-leaved stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*), deer fern (*Blechnum spi-*

cant) and satin-flower (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*).

Ms de Geus mentioned in her report that there are biodiversity and harvesting concerns regarding threatened and endangered species but she did not make any recommendations to regulate or forbid native plant collecting. She merely stated that MoF should "continue to work with other resource agencies and stakeholders in the development of a sustainable botanical forest products industry."

She noted that the Randle Ranger District of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in the U.S. sells native tree transplants to offset forest rehabilitation costs. Currently the B.C. government does not receive any royalties for the harvesting of any botanical products.

Continued from previous page

Brenda Constanzo, assistant curator at the UVic herbarium, on UVic's native plant garden.

One talk I found fascinating was on native plants and pipeline restoration. Lynne Atwood, Faculty of Forestry, UBC, showed slides from a five-km stretch of pipeline.

Prior to excavation, plants were dug up and over-wintered; grasses were divided and grown in containers; and seeds were collected, some of which were sown in containers, the rest hydro-seeded at the site later. All plant material was held off-site until planting time the following year.

It was an ambitious project involving several nurseries and lots of people. A year later the plants seemed to be establishing themselves. Monitoring of their survival and propagation will be ongoing.

B.C. Native Plant Council

Following the final speaker, we had a choice of four workshops: plant biology and seed/propagule collection; native plant propagation and culture; native

plant uses and needs (human needs, not plant); and formation of a native plant council. I choose the latter.

The facilitators used the Alberta Native Plant Council objectives as their guideline for group discussion. There was some dissent as to whether participants on the council should only represent themselves or a group. I spoke in favour of the latter, because of the opportunity for expanding public awareness of our issues, and being part of an umbrella group which could lobby on behalf of a larger number of people.

I also said I'd like to see a certification program for any supplier of native plant material. In my opinion, material should not be collected from the wild as it presently is, but propagated. One woman spoke against this, saying the Forest Practices Code should take care of that and the native plant council shouldn't have to do any monitoring. I discovered later that she worked for MoF, and perhaps has more faith than I do. (I perused the Forest Practices Code later at home and I didn't see anything regarding harvesting of native plants, only trees.)

Doug Justice, a consultant for Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who spoke earlier in the day about a committee which prepared A (widely available) and B (demand/potential demand but limited supply) lists of native plants for landscapers, noted that some nursery retailers were buying deer ferns from harvesters for 75 cents, and it wasn't worth their while to grow them when they could buy them so cheap.

It was decided that a council was needed and volunteers' names were collected, including mine. However, because our province is so large, getting together for follow-up organizing meetings will be difficult.

When I was talking to some of the Island participants after the forum was over, they said they'd like to see a council on Vancouver Island.

Certainly an umbrella group of some sort is needed, whether it is a chapter of a provincial organization, an Island organization, or even a Greater Victoria organization — or perhaps all three.

— Katie Stewart

Park planting project popular pastime

On November 18, I supervised a crew of eight volunteers (Beth and Ray Hill, Traviss Corry, Megan Foss, Jeremy Grasby, Hana Masata, Simon Franklin, and Trevor Walker) in the planting of 109 native shrubs in Mount Tolmie Park. In total, these volunteers and others (Tom Gillespie, Brenda Costanzo, Carmel Jorgensen, Hal Gibbard and Paul Gareau) contributed about 40 hours of labour to

plan, promote, and execute this project.

With financial support from Saanich Parks & Recreation, project volunteers planted 40 oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), 40 common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), and 29 Nootka rose (*Rosa nutkana*), delivered to the park the previous week from Thimble Farms on Salt-spring Island. Volunteers are still needed to monitor plantings until established, and

to periodically photograph the landscape to document the rate and scale of visual change.

It remains to be seen whether, and to what extent, specific project objectives are realized by this effort, but it is already clear that a cooperative working relationship with Saanich Parks & Recreation Department can yield beneficial results for everyone involved. With their continued cooperation, we look forward to repeating such projects at Mount Tolmie and other Saanich parks on a more frequent basis. If you would like to develop a planting project for a park near you, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270.



TWO VOLUNTEERS PLANTING native shrubs at Mt. Tolmie Park, Nov. 18. 1995.

Photo by Beth Hill

Native plant gardens to be featured in upcoming newsletters

In the new year, we'd like to include articles on the native plant gardens of GOMPS members. Please call Katie Stewart at 386-4792 if you'd be interested in either writing an article or being interviewed about your garden.

Welcome new members

Hana Masata, Victoria; Ann Gargett, Victoria and James A. Rainer, North Vancouver.

ONGOING

PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOMPS DISPLAYS:

January — Victoria City Hall

February — Department of Transport, adjoining downtown Public Library
— Marnie Phillips, 598-8820

FUND-RAISING COMMITTEE

As our main fund-raiser, GOMPS has for sale full colour posters of a Garry oak and a meadow of camas/buttercups under a bright spring sky. We also have wildflower placemats, wildflower posters and the *Garry Oak Meadow Colloquium Proceedings* for sale. Call Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION COMMITTEE

SEEDS/SEEDLING EXCHANGE. Interested members contact Katie Stewart at 386-4792.

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP. Call Eric at 595-7270 for information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND GARRY OAK INVENTORY PROJECT. Contact project coordinator Eric Redekop at 595-7270.

NEWSLETTER

If you have any contributions — photos, art work, letters of agreement or disagreement or anything else you'd like to contribute, contact Eric Redekop at 595-7270 or Katie Stewart at 386-4792 or mail to A-954 Queens Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8T 1M6.

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President and Public Relations Chair	Katie Stewart	386-4792
Vice-President	Pierre d'Estrubé	477-2410
Treasurer and Finance Chair	Tom Gillespie	361-1694
Secretary and Membership		
Development Chair	Eric Redekop	595-7270
Director and Program Chair	Sharron Waite	479-3380
Director	Paul Gareau	592-9089
Director	Hal Gibbard	477-2986

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership dues \$12 | Please send more information about:
<input type="checkbox"/> Local sources for Garry oak meadow plants
<input type="checkbox"/> Garry Oak Inventory Project
<input type="checkbox"/> Operation Clean Sweep (Broom Removal)
<input type="checkbox"/> Growing, planting Garry oaks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership dues \$18 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift membership, send receipt to:
_____ | |
| _____ | |

Two local groups seek funding for habitat restoration project

The West Coast Environmental Youth Alliance and LifeCycles Community Organic Gardening Project are two local organizations with similar objectives: youth empowerment through learning from mentors, and hands-on, community-based social ecology projects.

In the past they have created a community compost centre and restored an urban farm, rescued native plants from highway widening sites, worked on stream restoration and created urban community gardens in the city which didn't use much water.

Together the groups are applying for funding for The DIGS Project (Doing it Green and Sustainably). The project will focus on several issues in Greater Victoria: loss of biodiversity, specifically in the Garry oak and wetlands ecosystems; and over-consumption of water. The time frame is from mid-January to mid-September, 1996.

The DIGS Project anticipates cleaning up and restoring the Swan Creek trestle area of Blenkinsop Stream by removing garbage and non-native plants and replanting native plant species, and by restoring the natural path of the stream.

Participants will learn about the propagation of native plants, habitat restoration principles and techniques, and will conduct water conservation, soil building and organic growing awareness activities.

The two organizations expect to work with four partner organizations: Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, Fairfield Community Association, Greater Victoria Water District and Harris Green Community Association.

The funding will be used for materials and the salaries of a project coordinator, a community outreach coordinator, an on-site horticulturist, and two other full time staff. Crews of volunteers from EYA and LifeCycles will also be involved.

For more information contact Lonnie Prouse at Environmental Youth Alliance, 383-2062 or Linda Geggie at LifeCycles, 383-5800.