GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

March, 2004 **Vol. 10, No. 7**

Art show to feature Garry oak meadow

A group of fabric artists known as Uncommon Threads will present an exhibition and sale of their works next month at a heritage church in Metchosin. Theme for the show is the Garry oak meadow. The exhibition to be held April 17 to 25 at St. Mary the Virgin Church will feature works by 13 artists. Internationally known fabric artist Bev Juno of Sooke will be a featured guest.

"We all have a connection to the oaks," says artist Alison Kobylnyk. "We have an affinity for them. In Metchosin there are many Garry oaks, some in the churchyard. In springtime the yard is covered with lilies."

Fabric art below by Isabel Tipton

Last year, Uncommon Threads held their first show which was very successful says Kobylnyk, "in spite of the fact that not a lot of people know about fibre work." There are quilts, clothing, rugs, cushions, fabric landscapes and hangings. All the art works will have a connection to the Garry oak meadow.

The show and sale will be held at St Mary the Virgin Church at 4354 Metchosin Road from April 17 to April 25. Sunday hours are from 12:30 to 4:30 pm and Monday to Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. It will be a chance to see the Garry oak meadow of the churchyard in bloom with lilies and to see our heritage ecosystem reflected in art.

AGM March 23, 7:30 pm
Swan Lake Nature House

Come out and see a slide show about Common Plants of the Garry Oak Ecosystem by Pat Johnston, native plant garden consultant. GOMPS needs new board members. Why not volunteer?

Four-hundred-year-old oak moved despite protests

The following story is rewritten from an Associated Press news item.

Despite the fact that the US has declared the oak as its national tree, a developer in Santa Clarita, Calif. moved a 400-year-old oak tree to make room for a new housing development, ending protests that included a man living in the tree's branches for 71 days.

John Quigley, 42, staged the protest in the oak, which supporters dubbed "Old Glory." It was hauled away to a preserve about an eighth of a mile from its former location to be prepared for transplanting.

Quigley's protest ended when a judge ruled the developer had a right to uproot the tree to widen a road for the housing development. The developer said it cost him $1 million to move the oak.

The company agreed to relocate the oak, which it had planned to push down after Quigley's demonstration aroused public support for the tree

"To watch it being towed down the road with a bird in its branches, the same bird I think that was in there when I was, was strange," said Quigley.

Native Plant Gardening

Indian Plum great specimen shrub or hedgerow plant in the garden

By Pat Johnston, *Native Plant Gardening Consultant*

Indian Plum (Oemleria cerasiformis) is the first native shrub to bloom in the spring. Outside my living-room window I enjoy watching my Indian plum come to life at this time of year. Once the dainty, white flowers, which hang in 5-10 cm long clusters, burst open I know spring has sprung. Often the flower comes first then the pretty, lime-green leaves.

Indian Plum is a great shrub to have in your garden. A fast grower, it can rise from 1.5 to 5 metres tall in dry to moist areas, in sun or shade. From the flower comes a small plum with a large pit. It is edible but bitter. The birds love them! Plant Indian Plum in a thicket/hedgerow, or as a specimen shrub. The one outside my window sits by itself among Sword Ferns (Polystichummunitum) and puts on a great show in all seasons. Others are planted with Oceanspray (Holodiscus discolor), Red Flowering Current (Ribes sanguineum), Saskatoon(Amelanchier alnifolia), Snowberry (Symphoricarpos albus), Mock Orange (Philadelphus lewisii) and tall Oregon Grape (Mahonia aquifolium) to create a fence or hedgerow between neighbours. Thickets of shrubs are a wonderful habitat for wildlife to nest, seek shelter and eat.

Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Financial Statement for 2003

Income:		Expenditures:	
membership dues	$ 1,080.oo	charitable donations	$ 550.oo
donations---general	$ 915.50	newsletter	$ 501.29
U.Vic. co-op student project	$ 6,437.65	society annual registry fee	$ 25.00
interest on bank account	$ 353.19	Postage and office expenses	$ 52.93
rebate on General Sales Tax	$ 39.60	New Brochure	$ 428.oo
sales of tree posters	$ 380.oo	AGM Expenses	$ 112.23
		Soil Research Project	$ 6,437.65
		Telephone	$ 717.53
		Travel expenses	$ 87.03
		Support Initiatives	$ 46.90
total income:	**$ 9,205.94**	**total expenses:**	**$ 8,958.56**

excess of income over expenses $ 247.38

All accounts held by Pacific Coast Savings Credit Union

General Account Balance as of December 31 2003	$ 786.36
Balance of tree inventory grant	$ 454.32
One year term bond due Dec.1---2004	$ 6,000.oo
One year term bond due June 6---04	$ 3,000.oo
Net assets as of December 31 2003	**$ 10,240.68**
Shell Canada grant—balance applied for	$ 1,585.40

Memberships as of December 31 2003

Regular Adult 30 Family 31

with 61 households representing 92 members Free Subscriptions 11

_____ President

_____ Treasurer

_____ Date:

In a Nutshell:

Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society Annual General Meeting will be held at 7:30 Tuesday, March 23 at Swan Lake Nature House. Board meets at 7pm. If you really want to help preserve Garry oak meadows volunteer for board duty and take a more active role.

The Garry Oak Restoration Project of Saanich publishes a newsletter, GO Restore! If you are interested in receiving a copy, contact GORP by email at www.gorpsaanich.com or phone 475-5494, local 3477.

CONTACT US

.... *by phone* **[250] 475-2024**

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.... *on our website* **www.garryoak.bc.ca**

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April, 2004 **Vol. 10, No. 8**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2003
GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The Board of Directors continues to strive to halt or slow the onslaught on the Garry oak ecosystem that is mainly due to various forms of development, whether it is different forms of subdivision or individual homeowners increasing the size of their buildings. It is, however, discouraging to realize that very little can be done to stop this continual loss due to general society's prime objective of maximizing profit on private properties.

Many of our directors continue to participate in the activities of other related organizations that have grown up since our formation in 1992. These are: the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team (GOERT), the Garry Oak Restoration Project (GORP), the Garry oak Ecosystem Education Kit (GEEK) and the Significant Tree Committee of Saanich. You will notice that GORP, GEEK and the Significant Tree Committee are all Saanich initiatives, for which they must be warmly applauded, but still we continue to lose Garry oaks and ecosystems at an alarming rate even in that municipality. It has been estimated that we are losing Garry oaks and their ecosystems at the rate of about 20% per decade. Considering that we are starting at something less than 5% of the historic range, it does not take a statistician to see where this is headed, and how fast, if we do not halt this trend!

The following are just some of the many activities undertaken by our society:

- Sponsored a University of Victoria student doing a study on the relationship between Garry oak ecosystems and their geological substrate. This culminated in a report to Richard Hebda of the Royal British Columbia Museum.

- Pat Johnston participated in the planned expansion of the Cridge Centre for the Family. Unfortunately, the main result of this was just salvaging some plants, with the loss of some Garry oaks and associated habitat.

- We continued to participate with the Restoration of Natural Systems department in a University of Victoria oak grove protection and restoration project.

[Continued on Page 2]

- Several of us visited Swanwick Farm to give advice on Garry oak ecosystem management.

- Mike Meagher continued his studies of the ages and growth rates of felled oaks.

- Mike and Tom Gillespie took part in several discussions, regarding the location of a new children's spray pool in an oak grove in Beacon Hill Park, not yet settled.

- Pat hosted a school visit from Whitehorse Y.T.

- Pierre attended the planting of memorial oaks in Porter Park to recognize the passing of Mr. Tom Loring, a ten year GOMPS member.

- Nominated Greg McCallum and James Cassels for a Saanich Environmental Award for their work at Greystones Estates with Garry oaks and associated ecosystems. They won!

- Mike and Pierre revisited our Retreat Island (Riddington estate) covenant to check that all is still all right and no damage has occurred

- Pierre has been talking to Saanich regarding their Noxious Weed Bylaw in an attempt to include English Ivy in the list of noxious weeds.

- Mike and Pierre visited Sequim in Washington State to discuss their Garry oak work.

- I made comments, or gave advice to other parties, on a few development plans that required the removal of Garry oaks, to little avail.

- Pat tried again to apply for funding to hire a part time assistant to help with the work of the society, unfortunately, with no success.

- Pierre produced his Garry oak care brochure, using a Shell Environmental Fund grant. Ten thousand copies were printed.

- Mike, as secretary, has sent out a number of letters regarding Garry oak matters.

- Tom continued to keep an eye on our finances.

- I responded to about 70 phone calls to our voice mail number, in a few cases passing them on to other board members.

- Jerri Lee produced seven fine issues of the Garry Oak Leaflet, our newsletter with production funding from the Shell Environmental Fund.

This report could not be complete without acknowledging the time consuming and worthy efforts of all the board members. Thank you all for your support for our cause.

Hal Gibbard, President

Members of the Backyard Garden Committee who created the garden at 1323 and 1325 Kings Road are (left to right) Ruth Keogh, John Olafson, Pat Johnston, Linda Beare, Jean Forrest, Pam Sinclair and Lynda Grant (seated front).

Native plant demonstration garden sets a fine example

The Native Plant Demonstration Garden, located at 1325 Kings Road, is a delightful sight this spring. Fawn and chocolate lilies, Oregon Grape in bloom and wild currant are just some of the plants you see. Conceived in 1996, the garden has been the creation of a good number of people. In addition to those gardeners pictured above, hard work was contributed by the West Coast Ecological Youth Alliance and the Native Plant Study Group and others.

For gardeners who want to be free from watering chores as well as not having to fertilize, a Garry oak ecosystem is the way to go. What better way to get inspired than to visit a garden such as this one at the corner of Kings and Roseberry where a map is provided as well as signs along the way to guide you through the garden identifying the various plants. Pat Johnston, a native plant garden consultant, recently retired from the GOMPS board. However, Pat will still be contributing to our efforts to save the endangered Garry oak meadow habitat and she will continue to contribute native plant gardening tips to the Leaflet.

Creating a Garry oak meadow in your yard

by Pat Johnston
Native Plant Garden Consultant

Many of you have experienced the joy of seeing a Garry Oak meadow--a field of Camas (Camassia sp), Western Buttercup (Ranunculus occidentalis) and other wildflowers. If you haven't, this is the time of year to see one. Beacon Hill Park, Uplands Park, Playfair Park, Gore Park and Mill Hill are a few of the areas where you can appreciate what originally attracted settlers to our area.

Garry oak trees and their meadows once blanketed the southern tip of Vancouver Island. In fact, your yard may have once been a Garry oak meadow. Mine was. With the help of eight other native plants garden "nuts", we re-created a meadow in my yard. You can too. Following are some basic suggestions. As there is no right way to establish a meadow, allow yourself to experiment a little.

1) Decide what you want to grow in your meadow. Some of the common native Garry oak meadow wildflowers are:

Camas (Camassia sp))
Chocolate lily (Fritellaria lanceolata)
Shooting star (Dodecatheon sp)
Fawn lily (Erythronium sp)
Larkspur (Delphinium menzeisii)
Western Buttercup (Ranunculus occidentalis)
Nodding Onion (Allium cernuum)
Fools Onion (Brodiaea hycinthina)
Field Chickweed (Cerastium arvense)
Columbine (Aquilega formosa)
Spring Gold (Lomatium utriculatum)

2) Decide where you want your meadow to be. Start with a small area in your lawn. Ideal conditions are full or part sun.

3) In the fall, plant your wildflowers directly into the lawn, then mulch with 2 inches of leaf mulch. The mulch will keep the grasses to a minimum and allow the wildflowers to grow.

4) In the spring let the lawn grasses grow and the wildflowers bloom. Once the meadow flowers have bloomed and set seed, usually in July, you can cut the meadow if you want a more manicured look.

5) Each year keep adding wildflowers, expanding your meadow to take up more and more space in your yard. Also, by letting your wildflowers go to seed you will be promoting the continuity of the meadow.

The benefits of having a meadow in your yard are:

1) contributes to the conservation of Garry oak ecosystems!

2) attracts wonderful birds, butterflies and beneficial insects to your yard!

3) low maintenance - no more lawn mowing and watering!

4) conserves water - once your meadow is established, it is drought-resistant!

5) eliminates the use the chemicals!

6) it's beautiful and part of our natural heritage!

Garry oaks and native shrubs are available at Russell Nursery, 1370 Wain Road, North Saanich. Phone 656-0384

Hotline set up as Sudden Oak Death invades BC

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the BC Landscape and Nursery Association are asking the co-operation of the public as they scramble to contain a possible spread of Sudden Oak Death (SOD). GOMPS is concerned the disease could spread to and kill our Garry oaks.

People are asked to help in the recall of all camellia plants originating from the large Monrovia nursery in California which ships plants throughout the United States as well as to Canada. A recall of camellias originating in the Monrovia nursery was issued by the CFIA April 20. A hotline at **1-877-666-4170** is ready to take calls from people who purchased plants in pots marked Monrovia. See directions below.

The recall is due to the finding March 8, 2004 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed that Phytophthora ramorum, the causal organism of SOD was on six varieties of camellia samples taken from Monrovia. Hosts and associated plants were destroyed. As of April 13, seven states confirmed the presence of SOD on nursery stock originating in California. Kentucky, Florida, Louisiana and West Virginia have banned all California Nursery material from their states. Others banned California nursery stock susceptible to SOD.

According to an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* earlier this month, "The news hit like an earthquake as forest pathologists from around the world gathered at Sonoma State University for a California Oak Mortality Task Force meeting...It's a huge nursery with thousands of plants that went all over the place," said Susan Frankel, a US Forest Service plant pathologist.

"The scope of this disease makes us very nervous," John Bell, a CFIA biologist told *MercuryNews.com*, "It has an incredible broad range of hosts, everything from roses to rhododendrons."

CFIA says ten plants that were confirmed by laboratory tests as positive for Sudden Oak Death have been identified in six British Columbia retail garden centres. CFIA does not publicly identify facilities that have tested positive. The garden centres have had all SOD host plants in the nursery held for surveillance (regardless of origin of the plants), and the positive plants and adjacent host stock destroyed.

CFIA inspectors are sampling all retailers (regardless of size) and nurseries that imported and/or received plant material from Monrovia Nursery in Azusa,California. As of April 19, CFIA has processed 2450 leaf samples, of which 2077 are negative, 10 positive and the remainder still in process.

If you have a plant or plants identified or suspected to be a Monrovia camellia, the CFIA and BCLNA will send a representative to your home to remove the plant(s). Please have ready the name of the garden centre where you bought the camellia and the approximate purchase date.

DO NOT touch the plant. Leave it undisturbed in your garden. Suspect plants should be removed **ONLY** by qualified staff to prevent further spread of the disease. Plants can be tested only at an accredited laboratory. **DO NOT** take the plant or its leaves to a garden centre.

If you have a suspect camellia removed from your garden, you will receive a certificate that can be redeemed at a garden centre.

Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society Board of Directors

President: Hal Gibbard
Treasurer: Pierre D'Estrube
Secretary: Michael Meagher

Tom Gillespie
Peter Allen
Jerri Lee

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June, 2004 **Vol. 10, No. 9**

Camellia Recall

Sudden oak death continues to be a concern

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the BC Landscape and Nursery Association continue to alert the public regarding its camellia recall due to potential infection with Sudden Oak Death on plants imported from Monrovia Nursery in California. Anyone who purchased camellias between Sept. 1/03 and March 04 in pots marked "Monrovia" should call 1-877-666-4179. The CFIA reports that 20 camellias out of more than 800 inspected so far had SOD. The Plant Health Division posted the following list of species known to be carriers of Sudden Oak Death.

Abies (True firs)
Acer (Maple)
Aesculus (California buckeye)
Arbutus (Madrone, strawberry tree)
Arctostaphylos (Manzanita, bearberry, kinnikinnick)
Camellia (Camellia)
Castanea (Chestnut)
Corylus (Hazelnut, filbert)
Fagus (Beech)
Hamamelis (Witch hazel)
Heteromeles (Christmas berry, toyon, California holly)
Kalmia (Mountain laurel, calico bush, western laurel, alpine laurel)
Leucothoe (Leucothoe)
Lithocarpus (Tanbark, oak, tanoak)
Lonicera (Honeysuckle, twinberry)
Pieris (Pieris, lily of the valley shrub)
Pittosporum (Victorian box, pittosporum)
Pseudotsuga (Douglas fir)
Quercus (Oak)
Rhamnus (Buckthorn, cascara coffeeberry, redberry)
Rhododendron (Rhododendron)
Rhus (Poison oak, sumac)
Rosa (Rose)
Rubus (Salmonberry, raspberry, blackberry)
Sequoia (Coast redwood)
Taxus (Yew)
Trientalis (Western starflower)
Umbellularia (California bay laurel, Oregon myrtle, pepperwood)
Vaccinium (Blueberry, huckleberry, foxberry)
Viburnum (Arrow wood, snowball bush, nannyberry, European cranberry, common snowball, Japanese snowball, laurustinus.

Make your vote count to save the DND lands

The following is an edited version of an article by Keith Ferguson and Calvin Sanborn.

The federally owned DND lands in Colwood and Metchosin are a magnificent and unique area of relatively undisturbed forest within Greater Victoria. They stretch from Esquimalt Harbour to Esquimalt Lagoon, from Fort Rodd Hill to and including Royal Roads. These lands are Victoria's last chance to establish the equivalent of Stanley Park.

However, these lands are at risk of urban development following a recent announcement by the Department of National Defense that the lands are potentially surplus to their needs. The upcoming federal election (June 28) provides an opportunity to highlight the risks to the DND lands, and to ensure their protection. Ask your candidates whether these lands should be subdivided or protected.

The Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca riding in particular, which contains the DND lands, is thought to be one of the closest election races, and with sufficient public input the fate of the DND lands could become a significant election issue. But this is an important issue for all GreaterVictoria ridings. Please help to protect these lands by contacting the candidates and giving them your views, by raising the issue at All-Candidate Meetings and by writing letters to the editor, with copies to all local papers, raising the issue.

Native Plant Gardening

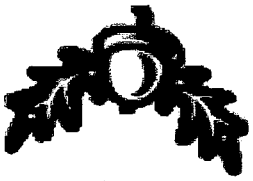
June yellows in the native plant garden

by Pat Johnston, Native Plant Garden Consultant

One of my favorite perennial native plants is Wooly Sunflower (Eriophyllumlanatum). I began with one plant growing in 2 - 4 inches of sandy soil on a sunny, rocky outcrop. I now have many in various rocky crevices and perennial beds. It is a prolific self-seeder. Wooly Sunflower (25-60 cm tall) provides a wonderful show of cheery, yellow, daisy-like flowers in June.

Another yellow June bloomer is Stonecrop (Sedum sp.). There are three native Sedums that grow well in gardens--spathulifolium, lanceolaturm and oregonum. Like Wooly sunflower, Sedum is drought-resistant. Plant Sedum on rocky outcrops and as a ground cover along the edges of perennial beds. Sun and partial shade are their preferred light conditions. Sedums grow low to the ground--anywhere from 15-25 cm tall depending on the species. Each species is evergreen and a slightly different color and shape. And, each has bright yellow flowers that bloom one right after the other, extending the blooming period to a month or more. I recommend you find a place for these lovely June yellows in your garden.

In a Nutshell



Under the supervision of teacher **Lydia Wiet,** Grade 4 school children at **Sir James Douglas School** recently planted three oaklings adjacent to the schoolyard. One came from Pierre d'Estrube's crop on Athlone Drive. Another oak is an offspring of an oak transplanted in 1968 at Yellow Point Lodge.

"It was 19 years old but only 18 or 20 inches high,"says Pierre. "It had been bonsaied. After transplanting, it took off reaching the roofline of the lodge and it produced acorns. The third plant is an offspring of the Royal Victorian, the oak that managed to escape the expansion of the cancer clinic at the **Royal Jubilee Hospital.**"

Children cleared the daphne, planted two young oaks from a neighbour as well as chocolate lilies, camus, Nootka rose, Oregon grape and wild strawberries from **Janet Simpson,** another teacher. The city provided mulch and the children water the plants every second day.

Uncommon Threads, a group of fabric artists did the Garry oak proud at a recent art show at St. Mary the Virgin Church, Metchosin Road where the lilies bloomed beneath the Garry oaks in the heritage churchyard. The art was innovative and inspiring.

One-eighth of the world's bird species are at risk of extinction because of climate change and habitat destruction according to **BirdLife International,** a partnership of 100 conservation groups who produced the State of the World's Birds 2004.

We thank **Pat Johnston** for introducing us to our new board member, 25-year-old artist **Peter Allen.** "I grew up sailing around the Gulf Islands and will always remember my father teasing me about my love for the gnarly trees along the coastline. I paint different forms and in different mediums, but my inspiration is simple. To me, art is nature. Nature is art," says Peter. "Pat Johnston took me in as a site steward for **GORP** and brought me to the GOMPS board. There is now Camas on my front lawn. The neighbours are curious. It is an honour to work with these 'GO' groups."

The **University of Victoria** board of governors voted to change the structure of the Campus Development Committee and Facilities Development and Sustainability Committee following extensive lobbying by students, faculty staff and community members. The changes bring the committees closer to the vision laid out in the Hanen Review Report on Campus Planning which urged sustainability in its broadest sense.

This is the result of the youthful energy of students through **POLIS** which organized a counter proposal to the establishment's centrally-controlled policies for UVIC's future growth, says GOMPS board member **Pierre d'Estrube.** Several GOMPS members participated in the public and committee meetings lobbying against the administration's resistance to change.

Garry oaks to be saved as Esquimalt council approves development on the Matson lands

The Garry oak ecosystem on the Matson Lands in Esquimalt is one step closer to being protected from development. While Council approved a development consisting of two condominium towers and 10 two-storey townhouses, developer David Price of Mandalay Developments agreed to turn over 40 per cent of the site to the Nature Conservancy of Canada for preservation. All sensitive Garry oak areas will be protected when the project gets final approval of Council. GOMPS has been involved in the lobbying process and we've been told our board member Mike Meagher impressed Council with his presentation. Nice work Mike!

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Sept. 2004 **Vol. 11, No. 1**

A Report by Dr. Michael Meagher

SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION CONFERENCE

The Society held its 16th Annual Conference "Restoration on the Edge" at the University of Victoria August 24-26th, attracting about 800 delegates from all continents. Support from the Canadian International Development Agency, $100 000 in all, was very helpful in supporting the attendance of several registrants from small countries. The Keynote address: "Environmental Reconstruction and Sustainable Rehabilitation", was delivered to the public in the evening of the first day by Dr. Maurice Strong, a well-known Canadian businessman and advocate for environmental protection.

Following the opening address by Dr. Briony Penn, a general Plenary session each day was followed by a number of more-specialized sessions, including one devoted to Garry oak and associated habitats organized by Warren Devine of the US Forest Service, Olympia. Over 2 days, 12 speakers, many of them local, presented information ranging from the current vs. historical extent of Garry oak in BC, factors affecting tree growth from below ground (mycorrhizae) to the response to release from overtopping conifers, rare plants and restoration programs in the Gulf Islands, and Camas' importance in First Nations' culture. The GOMPS/ GOERT/GORP/GEEK lineup was on display, but no quiz was offered to prove that visitors had them clear. Despite the rainy weather, many of those visiting us left able to identify Garry oak vs. the other oak species planted by UVic.

Other topics in the "break-out sessions" were Mined-land reclamation, Urban Restoration, Invasive Species Management, Endangered Species and Ecosystems, Monitoring, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Use of Fire, Marine and Coastal Restoration, Tools and Resources, Grassland and Arid Restoration, Alpine Restoration, Restoration Economics and Carbon Budgets, Restoring Indigenous History and Culture to North American Landscapes, History of Ecological Restoration, Climate Change, Riparian Restoration, Restoration Philosophy and Ethics, Communities in Restoration, Wetland Restoration, Education, Urban Wetlands, Agriculture, Green Infrastructure, Re-vegetation Techniques, Tropical and Subtropical Restoration, Savannah Restoration, Florida Everglades, Road and Roadside Restoration, Watershed-Scale Restoration, In-Stream Restoration, and Restoration Encyclopaedia. Several field trips were offered, some starting before the Conference. GOMPS was able to attend the full Conference, rather than just one day, due to the generosity of Parks Canada's Brian Reader, Chair of GOERT. Many thanks, Brian.

EVERGREENS IN THE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

by Pat Johnston, Native Plant Garden Consultant

Evergreen plants are some of my favorite plants. I like a variety of greens in my garden throughout the winter. Some wonderful evergreen native shrubs include:

* Evergreen Huckleberry (Vaccinium ovatum) - slow-growing shrub with delicious fall berries - shade/partial sun
* Salal (Gaultheria shallon) - likes moisture to get started - makes a great hedge
* Hairy Manzanita (Arctostaphylos columbiana) - lovely grey-green foliage - dry sun
* Manzanita media (Arctostaphylos x media) - low-growing - grey-green foliage - dry
* Kinnickinick (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi) - great ground cover – scarlet fall berry - dry
* Oregon Grape (tall) (Mahonia aquifolium) - dry sun - grows tall
* Oregon Grape (short) (Mahonia nervosa) - dry shade - low-growing – good under conifers
* Oregon Grape (creeping) (Mahonia repens) - dry sun - low growing – great ground cover
* Common Juniper (Juniperus communis) - wonderful silver tones - loves heat
* Silk Tassel Plant (Garrya elliptica) - native to Oregon/California coast- large shrub to 7 m - attractive silver tassels in December
* Falsebox (Pachistima myrsinites) - slow growing - dry shade - great under conifers
* Snowbrush (Ceanothus velutinus) - white flower early spring - wants sun

A few native perennials that stay green over the winter are:

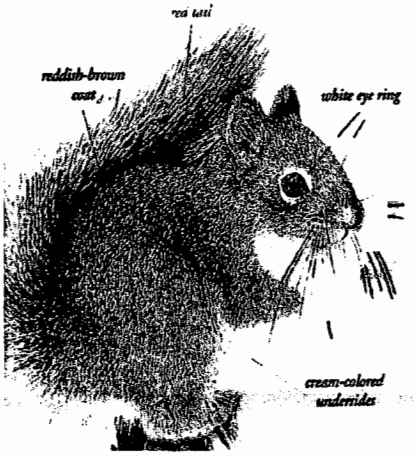
* Nodding Onion (Allium cernuum) - sun-loving- pink drooping flowers in late spring
* Penstemon (Penstemon serrulatus, fruticosa, davidsonni) – drought resistant with great summer purple flowers
* Stonecrop (Sedum spathulifolium, lanceolatum, oregonum) - sun – rocky areas
* Twinflower (Linnaea borealis) - tiny, shiny leaves - prefers shade
* Alumroot (Heuchera glabra and micrantha) - very hardy plant – pretty foliage (may die back if very cold)
* Strawberry (Frageria sp) - great ground cover (may die back if very cold)

And there are always luscious ferns such as: Sword Fern (Polystichum munitum), Deer Fern (Blechnum spicant), Licorice Fern (Polypodium glycyrrhiza) and Goldenback Fern (Pityrogramma triangularis) for your winter garden.

Don't forget the mosses! I love the bright greens of mosses in my garden.

For more information about growing the above plants consult *Plants of the Northwest Coast* by Pojar and MacKinnon, *Trees, Shrubs and Flowers to Know in BC and Washington* by Lyons and Merilees and *Native Plants in the Coastal Garden* by Pettinger with Costanzo.

Red Squirrel Native to our oak Meadows



Red Squirrel

Description: reddish-brown coat and creamy undersides, separated by black side stripe; red tail; white eye ring.
Size: length 11 - 15 in. (28-38 cm); weight 5 - 8-7/8 oz. (140-250 g)

English Ivy a Creeping Killer; a Call for Action

By Dr. Pierre d'Estrube

For most of a decade GOMPS has been sounding the alarm re the rapid spread and lethal effects of English ivy on Garry oaks. First to respond to the call was Saanich which in collaboration with us, published an information pamphlet followed shortly by one from Oak Bay. Winching their way through resistive tree protection bylaws throughout the Greater Victoria municipalities councils managed to establish a foothold with varying degrees of protection for the oaks. The political strategy has been to introduce minimal watered-down legislation initially to gain public acceptance, then gradually increase "muscle" to the bylaws with later modifications. The same applies to noxious weed bylaws. GOMPS has been urging Saanich to declare English ivy a noxious weed. Supportive bureaucrats have assured us that by-law changes were in the draft stage, but as it made its rounds through various committees and administrators, snags were encountered causing endless postponement for presentation to Council.

Finally, on the 14th of February, '04, Saanich park manager, Rae Roer, and Adriane Pollard, manager of Environmental Services, issued a report addressing the problem of invasive species. This came from feed-back from four council committees that recommended that Saanich lead the way before asking private property owners to follow suit. It was hoped that Saanich Council would endorse its plan.

The report states: "Globally, invasive species are the second most serious factor responsible for species extinction. Locally, invasive species:

- threaten all of our parks and natural areas
- severely threaten 36% of CRD parks
- comprise between 59 and 82% of plant cover in Camas meadows
- impact biodiversity, recreation opportunities, tree cover, water quality, and aesthetics

Despite the severity of the problem, Saanich staff has not dedicated adequate resources, perhaps due to the magnitude of the problem or a lack of clear direction."

The report goes on to say: "The noxious weed bylaw (No.8080) states that property owners shall clear vegetation which is likely to spread, or become a nuisance to other property. Invasive plant species certainly fits this definition and are subject to the bylaw."

The report estimates that in the past 5 years, Saanich's efforts to tackle the problem through education and control has engaged 473 staff hours, 4271 volunteers and $196,672, on average $39,334, annually. Despite these figures, the report recognizes the inadequacy in needed funding for more staff and public education and support to the volunteer work force .

Hence, the report recommends the adoption of the concept of the "*Corporate Strategy for Invasive Species Control*". It hopes that this will fulfill a wish list ("Vision") that, by 2008, through the use of brochures, posters and an educational website, there shall be visible evidence of voluntary private property participation and continued cooperation of the union with Saanich to achieve the goals.

Council has recently adopted the report and budgeted for it; the program is underway. Already, Saanich has orchestrated, with multiple funding sources, the Garry Oak Restoration Program (GORP) which is having an impact on ten or more sites. ***(Continued on the back page)***

Help Wanted

Garry oak acorn survey—trees for the future are at hand

Although the nuts are falling (from our Garry oaks), it is not too late to help with a survey of how nutty they are. (Nuts are the part that falls from the cup, which stays on the tree. Together, nut and cup comprise an "acorn".)

It will involve scoping several trees in your vicinity to determine how heavy an acorn crop each has and recording it on a form created by the US Forest Service in Olympia, Washington. It is available via a web site: www.fs.fed.us/pnw/olympia/silv/oaksurvey/oak.htm. This form may appear daunting to the amateur, since it requests a description of the ecosystem occupied by the trees. The intent is that each correspondent surveys the same trees each year, thus providing evidence of the regularity and geographic variability in crops.

For those wishing a "survey light" approach, try the following:

1. Select a tree and inspect it from 4 sides, dividing the crown into quarters: North, South, East and West. For each quarter, look (without selecting them) at 10 branch ends scattered throughout that quarter and record the number of limbs carrying at least 1 acorn. If nuts have fallen, use cups (careful looking will be required).
2. Keep a record of the location of each tree so that you can visit it in successive years. Eg: "123 4th St. beside driveway".
3. Note also the tree's diameter at 1.25 meters above mean ground level. Larger trees are more likely to bear fruit.
4. Send in your info to **Michael Meagher c/o GOMPS.**

Nuts for our Future:
While you are awash in nuts this year, consider collecting some for future re-planting in your vicinity. Rather than vacuuming them from the gutter, try to collect only sound nuts. Many may be infested with nut-loving weevils to whom the trees provide thousands of "Mother Earth" homes each good acorn crop. These weevils are born inside the nut and eat their way through the contents, which are meant by the tree to feed the embryo when the nut hits the ground. The weevils cause the nut to feel lighter and often somewhat fluted in cross section, rather than remaining smooth. Also, some enter via the cup at the base, leaving some crumbling "dust" at the hole. When they leave to spend the winter in the ground, the weevils bore through the shell, leaving a clean hole. So avoid "holey" nuts.

A quick check on separating good from infested nuts from each tree is to heft a few of various shapes and colours; sound nuts will feel heavier and should have a smooth shell. ***(Continued on Page 5)***

(Cont'd from Page 4) Before collecting nuts, contact **Rob Hagel at the Pacific Forestry Centre via 363-0600** to determine if a collection is coming from your area already. Rob has grown trees for years for public benefit, not for private sale, and he wishes to spread the benefit around. Once he receives your collection, he and crew will separate the good nuts from the bad so that no effort is wasted trying to grow empty ones.

If you are an admirer of squirrels, even the introduced Eastern grey version, worry not about depriving them of food. This year's crop is so heavy and widespread that they could not possibly cache or eat enough to need more. And if a few of the Eastern type should starve, our local squirrels and birds who are attacked by these invaders, would utter a loud cheer.—***by Dr. Michael Meagher.*** *See the Red Squirrel illustration on Page 2.*

GARRY OAKS FEATURE IN ART EXHIBITION

GOMPS board member, **Peter Allen** featured Garry oaks in his recent art show, ***Struck by Lightning***, held at the Victoria Multi-Cultural Centre. Prior to the show, **Briony Penn**, in an article in *Monday* magazine wrote about graffiti artist Allen as follows:

"It tells you a lot about the narrow subculture that I live in that I've never talked to a graffiti artist before. Nor have I ever met someone who has spent so much time drawing and studying oak trees and their long mythic history…..The remarkable energy persisting from that 13-year-old passion comes across in Allen's paintings…..Allen told me the family of urban artists which formed around (Hans) Fear became a support group to create a sense of place.

'We all felt displaced, with no connection to the concrete city. We wanted to fight this cold and dead place with creativity and magical characters. Oaks have long tradition of being sources of cultural inspiration.'" Allan told Penn that he has not been to art school, but has instead taken the "energy of the graffiti style and put it into traditional mediums like oils."

Peter says he has been painting walls without permission for 10 years. "Most places were behind warehouses, along train tracks and alleys. If you check my website www.geocities.com/xp3r and click on the face icon you will see my graffiti spray-painted murals…Graffiti artists believe concrete has no right to replace nature, so we take concrete back with art."

The illustration on the left is not one of Peter's but we hope he will find time to provide the occasional illustration for *The Leaflet*.

(*Continued from Page 3)* As things stand today, because the Noxious Weed Bylaw No. 8080 alludes to ivy, daphne, holly, etc., but does not list them specifically, it is open to the hassle of legal challenges of interpretation. Hence, Saanich is not aggressively pushing the issue, relying instead, on complaints being lodged at which time a "persuasion" letter is sent followed by a visit from the Tree Protection Officer. Neighbourly relations being at risk, few complaints are received; *that's where GOMPS comes in.* As a non-profit environmental organization, we can submit a list of offending property addresses to Council which is required to respond. *We would urge GOMPS-ers to do our thing (a relatively painless task) and send in relevant addresses to our directors who will take it from there.*------Gung Ho!

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City _____ **Prov** _____ **Postal Code** _____

E-Mail Address _____ **Telephone** _____

Membership Dues

☐ Individual $15

☐ Family $20

☐ Donation $_____

Mail to Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society, A-954 Queens Avenue, Victoria V8T 1M6

GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

November, 2004 **Vol. 11, No.2**

What value do you put on urban trees?

Let us hear from you about the monetary value you would place on the trees in your yard or on your street.

Arthur Plotnik, in *The Urban Tree Book* (Large paperback which can be ordered in by Bolen's, $29.00) estimates trees can increase the property value of your home by 15 per cent or more.

And there's more. A mature tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year. Trees clean the air and lock up carbon. Trees provide windbreaks thus reducing heating costs; they provide shade in summer and are effective sound barriers.

The Urban Tree Book, written in consultation with the Morton Arboretum, is not handy as a tree identification guide but is interesting in that it describes 200 tree species found in North American cities. It focuses on the charm of tree history, lore and facts.

"Trees are indicators of a community's health," according to American Forests, "While urban ecology is more complex than just tree cover, trees are good indicators of the health of an urban ecosystem. When trees are large and healthy, the ecological systems--soil, air and water--that support them are also healthy. In turn, healthy trees provide valuable environmental benefits."

Trees in our urban areas have not received the attention they deserve and are disappearing at an alarming rate. Decision-makers want everything evaluated, preferably in dollars and cents. So, in this connection, American Forests has developed CITYgreen software, a desktop GIS program that calculates the value of trees in urban environments. If there's a tree lover on your list and you want to order *The Urban Tree Book* from Bolen's quote #0812931033. *Cont'd. On Back Page*

In a Nutshell

Mike Meagher, on behalf of GOMPS, made a presentation to the **CRD** re a draft management plan which proposed to permit dogs off-leash in Francis/King and Thetis Lake Parks. He said dogs that run off-leash could deter many visitors, that little is known about possible health risks from feces and enforcement of responsible dog ownership is a problem. Staff was asked to rethink the regulations.

The Ecological Care and Restoration Events for November at **UVIC campus** include the annual Acorn Hunt; Cash in the Cuttings in which students collect and prepare cuttings of local native plants; Down With the UVIC Ivy League will rid swaths of exotic ivy which has invaded Mystic Vale and Go Wild, an inaugural volunteer planting event.

Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard proclaimed Sunday, Nov. 7 as **Tree Appreciation Day**. It's the 10th anniversary of this event being held at Cedar Hill Community Recreation Centre. About 500 trees and shrubs are being planted including donations by board member Pierre d'Estrube who along with Mike Meagher will attend the GOMPS booth.

After years of lobbying by various groups including GOMPS, Esquimalt's **Matson Lands** have been preserved through an agreement between Habitat Acquisition Trust, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Esquimalt and Mandalay Developments. The lands will be the property of HAT. Over time, management will include the rehabilitation of eroded meadow slopes and forested habitat heavily infested with alien species.

A Community **Green Map of Greater Victoria** has just been launched at City Hall. Created by the Common Ground Community Mapping Project, it will help you find your way to Garry oak meadows, locate flyways of migratory birds and much more. It will locate recycling depots, community gardens, organic shops and thrift stores. The Green map is a great idea and costs only $5.

South of the Border: Terry Domico, Conservation Biologist with the Puget Sound Biosurvey reports: "The Priority Species and Habitat Program of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Natural Heritage Program of the Washington Department of Natural Resources have both concluded Garry oak meadows and woodlands are now the most endangered upland habitat in the state. Of the over 1000 species of plants and animals known to be associated with Garry oak meadows, this is critical habitat for at least 68 of these species."

Sierra Legal Defence Fund has recommended to federal and provincial governments legal reforms to prevent further introductions of alien invasive species and to control those already present. The Defence Fund will continue to monitor this.

The Garry oak landscape known as **Oak Haven Park** in Central Saanich is receiving extra protection. The Land Conservancy and the Habitat Acquisition Trust are co-trustees of the 10-hectare property on Benvenito Road. A win for the oaks!

Salal is a beautiful addition to any garden

by Pat Johnston, Native Plant Garden Consultant

Salal (Gaultheria shallon) is an abundant, evergreen shrub with shiny, leathery leaves. It is most often found in the coastal forest under-story.

Salal is a beautiful addition to any garden, dry or moist, with a preference for shady conditions. In my dry Garry oak setting I have had some difficulty getting Salal established but with some initial tender care it is now doing fine. It likes to be well watered when first planted. Although somewhat slow growing in dry spots, Salal can expand to 5 metres if it's given moist humus soil and a cool place.

Salal flowers are white or pinkish and urn-shaped. These become delicious dark blue berries in the fall. I understand they make great jams and jellies!

Plant Salal to create an evergreen hedge. Pruning to the shape of your choice is no problem. I have seen Salal hedges along a driveway cut regularly to a height the owner could see over. Salal can also be planted with other shrubs (native or non-native) to create thickets. Thickets attract wildlife, particularly birds, butterflies and beneficial insects, as they provide food, shelter and nesting spots. Thickets also make good fences, screens and back drops for perennial beds.

Another benefit of growing Salal in your garden is the dark green long-lasting leaves favored by florists.

Cut Salal stems make stunning additions to flower arrangements.

Illustration by Peter Allen

Volunteers Wanted

For those of you interested in conserving the Garry oak ecosystem, volunteering to work with the Garry Oak Restoration Project (GORP), might be just what you are looking for.

GORP is a project sponsored by Saanich Municipality, the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society and the Restoration of Natural Systems at the University of Victoria. GORP is involved in restoring 10 Garry oak ecosystems sites in Saanich. We are looking for people interested in learning more about Garry oak ecosystems , working outdoors and meeting like-minded people. Work involves removing invasive species, spreading mulch and planting native plants. For more information visit our website at www.gorpsaanich.com or call 505-5600.

Continued from Page 1 --The Society of Arboriculture suggests four factors count in professional evaluation of trees and other plants. They are: **Tree size**-- Sometimes the size and age of a tree are such that it cannot be replaced; **The kind of Tree**: Tree values vary according to your region, the "hardiness" zone, and local conditions; Trees that are hardy and highly adaptable are most valuable. They require less maintenance/ they have sturdy, well-shaped branches and pleasing foliage. A professional will consider the condition of the plant; **Location**: There are functional considerations as well as aesthetic. All of these factors can be measured in dollars and cents.

And indeed, realtors are using trees on a property or in the neighbourhood as selling points. Just this week in the Real Estate listings one property is given a positive spin because it "overlooks a Garry oak meadow."

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GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official newsletter of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

April, 2005

A COMMUNITY'S VISION IS REALIZED

Story and photo by Mary Anne Dieno

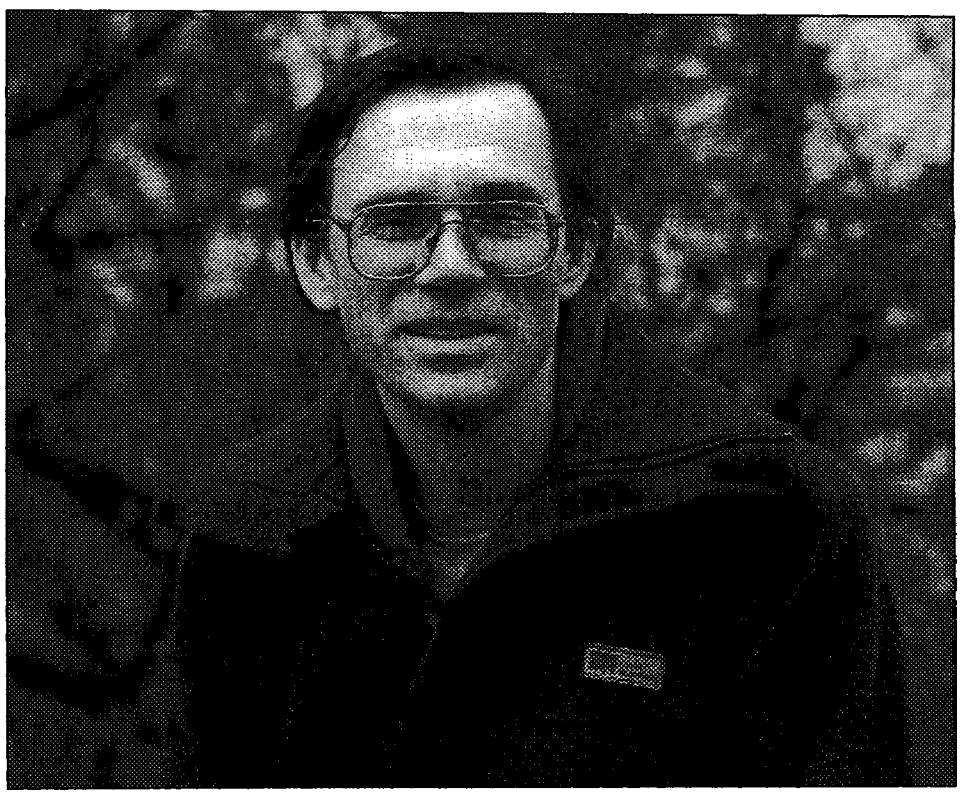
Hidden at the top of Ryan Hill road is a native jewel and an endangered habitat-one of only six untouched Garry oak meadows within the city of Victoria.

The city-owned lot, located near Hillside Mall, was the recent subject of heated debates between local residents and the city. The controversy began in October of 2004 when Marion Montgomery of 1444 Ryan Street spotted city surveyors on the rocky outcropping of the Garry oak stand adjacent to her home.

City councillors originally intended the front of the lot to be incorporated into the Greenways Plan-a means to connect the city through a network of cycling/walking paths. However, the creation of a greenway requires money and the city planned to survey the lot for its potential as a real estate development.

The city expected a profit of $176,000 from the sale, but for the residents, this was not an option they cared to support.

Local resident Ludo Bertsch organized the formation of a committee-the Oakland's Community Association-dedicated to preserving and defining the goals of each area of the ecologically sensitive space. The committee's vision and purpose was to produce a public park, install an educational plaque on the property illustrating the different native species and allow students and researchers the opportunity to study the inner workings of a Garry oak meadow.



Ludo Bertsch - Oakland's community resident and coordinator of Oakland's Community Association.

"We truly do *live in* a *special neighborhood..."*

"We wanted to create a profile of a successful preservation of a Garry oak meadow and show it off as an example that worked," says Ludo. The community had already chosen a name for the beloved meadow-Ryan's Haven.

As of January 27, 2005, the meadow has been taken off the city's /lfor sale" list. At the City of Victoria Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 27 at City Hall, CQuncillor Dean Fortin put forth the motion to save the space and convert it to a park. The City of Victoria Parks Division will work with the community in developing their vision of Ryan's Haven to make it a place where all can enjoy its beauty.

The community credits the successful outcome largely to the support of councillors Dean Fortin and Helen Hughes, who introduced the motion.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

The residents' contributions were also significant. According to Bertsch, "there were so many fabulous emails and letters. We truly do live in a special neighbourhood that we all care about./I

Now that the park is secured, donations and volunteers are needed to assist with the removal of invasive species and general tidy-up of the area. If you would like to help, make a donation, or stay informed about the progress of the park, please visit the Oakland's community website at www.blockcommunities.com or contact Ludo Bertsch at 592-0487.

STANDING THEIR GROUND

Story by Christine Feleki

Requests for the removal and pruning of Garry oak trees in 2004 were up 50 percent over the previous year according to Oak Bay municipal arborist Sean Novak.

Novak believes the high number is due to hot summer temperatures, and winter drought. These conditions have caused IJpop-off"- also known as sudden branch failure. Garry oaks need water during the spring-summer period to allow food creation and storage, expansion of crown, stem and roots, and to develop acorns and to protect against attacks by insects and disease. However, they are remarkably hardy and accustomed to frequent drought periods, so that weekly watering near lawns and flower beds will suffice to maintain them until fall rains commence. Over-watering may harm trees by weakening the roots and allowing root disease to flourish. Both seasons contribute to the phenomenon of pop-off.

Fifty-nine of the 153 permit requests last year were for the removal of the dead, dying, diseased and hazardous trees. The other 94 permits were for the pruning of Garry oak trees.

Novak also believes low interest rates may be a factor in the high permit numbers. "Oak Bay has seen an increase in larger homes." Larger homes mean larger building envelopes. "Garry oaks within the building envelopes are left unprotected," says Novak. The municipality still keeps track of the tree removals.

"I am guessing 15 trees have been removed for this reason," says Novak. He includes the 15 trees in the 59 removal permit requests. Keep in mind that Oak Bay does not consider anything less than 10 inches in diameter a "tree".

As for removals without permits, Novak says he has not heard of any.

In 2004, Saanich had 900 permit requests for all species of protected trees. Ron Carter, Saanich tree preservation officer, estimates since the 1993 Tree Protection Bylaw, several hundred oaks have been removed. "Not all of these oaks were protected ... but [they were] still [cut] under permit. Some were cut illegally."

Yet, for the several hundred removed, thousands have been saved because of the tree preservation bylaw. This is due to three factors: removal was refused, protection occurred during development, and many Garry oaks are designated as significant (heritage) trees.

Healthy Garry oak trees cut under permit are required to be replaced at a ratio of two to one. A few hundred replacement oaks have been planted in Saanich since 1993.

SAANICH/OAKBAY PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Saanich:

- ¥ Any removal or pruning requires a permit
- ¥ A permit is required anytime work is done in the root zone
- ¥ Trees in the building envelope are not always protected. It depends on the size of the lot.
- ¥ Urban areas need a permit
- ¥ Rural areas require no permit, untess chopping more than allowed on agricultural land
- ¥ All trees are protected along waterways, and some steep slopes.

Cut Down means to cut down, kill or remove a tree by any means and includes the topping of a tree and the removal of any branch or trunk of a tree having a diameter of more than 10 centimeters (3.9 inches).

Tree means any living, erect, woody plant which is:

i) five metres (16.3 feet) or more in height, or
ii) 10 centimeters (3.9 inches) or more in diameter, or
iii) a replacement tree planted pursuant to Section 16 of this bylaw
iv) a replacement tree planted as a condition of a permit issued under this bylaw.

Oak Bay:

- ¥ Any removal or pruning requires a permit
- ¥ Trees in the building envelope are not protected; however, the municipality still needs to be informed

Cut Down means to cut down, kill or remove a tree by any means and includes the topping of a tree and the removal of any branch or trunk having a diameter of more than 25 centimeters (9.84 inches) measured at 1.4 metres (4.5 feet) above ground.

Prune means to remove living or dead tree parts, which are greater than 10 centimeters (3.9 inches) but less than or equal to 25 centimeters (9.84 inches) in diameter, for a purpose consistent with promoting the tree s health and growth.

Tree means a living, erect, woody plant of the quercus garryana genus and species which is:

(a) 25 centimeters (9.84 inches) or more in diameter measured at 1.4 metres (4.5 feet) above ground; or
(b) A replacement tree planted pursuant to Section 10 of this Bylaw.

Source:
www.gov.saanich.bc.ca
www.district.oakbay.bc.ca

SPECIES RANKING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Story by Libby Peters

British Columbia has no specific endangered species act. While provincial legislation protects some vertebrate animals, there is little clarity regarding plants and invertebrates.

How are Species Ranked?

In order to establish species at risk, environmental specialists assign each species a global rank, a national rank, and a sub-national rank. In British Columbia, the Conservation Data Centre (CDC) in the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management assigns the provincial rank. These ranks are updated annually, and are based on an assessment of the following factors:

1. estimated number of existing occurrences of the species
2. viability of these occurrences
3. trend in population size, number of occurrences
4. overall estimated population size
5. geographical distribution
6. number of occurrences protected and managed
7. actual or potential threats facing the species or its habitat

In the ranking process a number of sources are consulted...

Each factor is given a score. The score for number of occurrences determines an initial rank from one to five, which is modified based on subsequent factors.

In the ranking process, a number of sources are consulted, including: formal inventories; research projects; status reports; surveys; bird counts; recorded sightings; museum specimen records; and communications with species experts, and biologists.

To simplify species ranks in British Columbia, three lists have been created: Red, Blue, and Yellow.

The Blue list includes species of concern that are not immediately threatened. The Red list includes species that have been designated as Endangered or Threatened under the Wildlife Act, or those that are extirpated, or candidates for such designation. The Yellow list includes all species not included on the Red or Blue lists.

How are Species Protected After Being Ranked?

Legal designation as Endangered or Threatened increases the penalties for harming a species. It may also enable protection of habitat for these species.

In the Forest and Range Practices Act of BC, special management guidelines and reserve areas may be assigned to species affected by forest or grazing practices on crown land.

Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada

In addition to the CDC ranking system, The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada has created a national listing of species at risk. COSEWIC was formed in 1977 in order to scientifically rank species independently from the government.

The international ranking system used by COSEWIC has been developed for over 30 years, originating from the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and is regularly refined.

COSEWIC's listing of a species has no legal consequence. It is instead used to draw official attention to species at risk in Canada.

SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEM RANKING METHOD

Blue List
List of indigenous species, subspecies and natural plant communities of special concern (formerly vulnerable) in British Columbia.

Red list
List of indigenous species, subspecies and natural plant communities that are extirpated, endangered or threatened in British Columbia. Red listed species and sub-species have- or are candidates for- official Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened Status in BC. Not all Red-listed taxa will necessarily become formally designated. Placing taxa on these lists flags them as being at risk and requiring investigation.

Yellow List
List of indigenous species and plant communities which are not at risk in British Columbia.

Species at Risk
An extirpated, endangered or threatened species or a species of special concern (vulnerable).

Endangered
Facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

Extinct
Species that no longer exist.

Threatened
Likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.

srmwww.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/toolintro.html
Ministries of Sustainable Resource Management and Water, Land and Air Protection
BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer

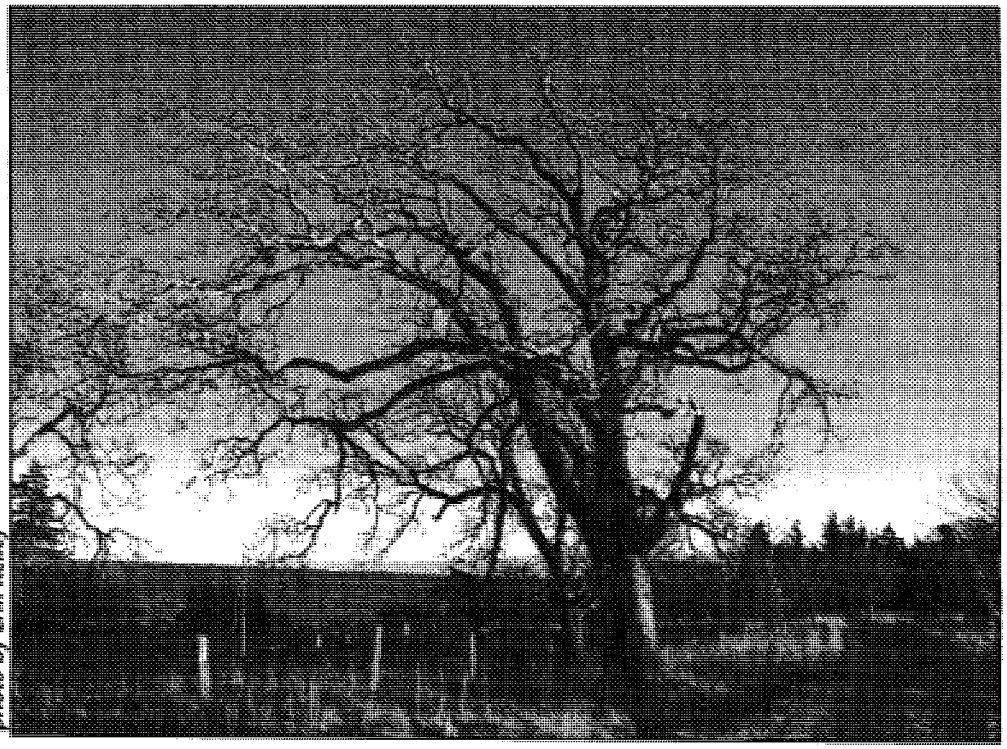


photo by Erin Kelley

A PROFILE OF A MEADOW

Story by Erin Kelley

Garry Oaks have been found in British Columbia since before the last ice age. Eastern gales have tickled the branches of the Garry oaks at Parry Bay for centuries. In 1790, the wind carried Spanish explorer sub-lieutenant Manuel Quimper to a vast field in the present day location of Taylor Beach in Metchosin, located in Parry Bay, between William Head prison and Witty's Lagoon.

While anchored in Parry Bay, Quimper recorded in his journal visits with native peoples who canoed out to his ship to trade camas bulbs for cast-iron rings and beads. The edible bulbs of camas were likely cultivated by the First Nations People at the Garry oak meadow adjacent to Taylor Beach.

In 1792, more Spanish explorers frequented the area. Galiano and Valdes, both in separate ships, were greeted by aboriginal people in three canoes. Galiano and Valdes traded a sheet of copper for some wool blankets. On their map of the south end of Vancouver Island, Taylor Beach was marked by rectangles representing villages.

Something happened after the last Spanish explorers visited the native peoples living at Taylor Beach: the village mysteriously disappeared in a matter of 60 years. After Fort Victoria was established, Governor James Douglas authorized the construction of a road from Fort Victoria to Metchosin.

Following the construction, Walter Grant, an early settler to the island, wandered amongst Garry oaks at Taylor beach, awestruck by remains of a defensive settlement. Grant recorded in his journal the site as a,

"...vestige of some ancient ,encampment which an antiquary of enthusiastic imagination might call a very proper agger or valIum [fortification], with its...ditch or fossa. The agger is somewhat worn down, but the fossa is clearly discernible some 12 feet in depth and 15 in breadth..."

Coincidently, Walter Grant is believed to have introduced Scotch Broom-a major threat to Garry oak ecosystems-to Vancouver Island, in the 1850's. Little did Grant know that broom would become an invasive species which would eventually infest over ten percent of Vancouver Island. Broom grows dense thickets which overtakes native vegetation; as a result, Garry oak ecosystems cannot survive.

One can wander in the shade of the Garry oaks today much the same way Grant did 150 years earlier. Known as archaeological site DcRv12, only the remnants of several burial cairns stipple the meadow. Cairns are piles of boulders which marked the gravesite of individuals. Even though the cairns are on private land, they are protected by the federal government.

In the 1960s, archaeological excavations at a defensive site similar to Taylor Beach demons'trated that the sites dated before the 1780s, proving the sites were not built to defend against Europeans.

The Garry oak meadow at Taylor Beach was once the site where warring nations lost lives, and later the site of the first trade negotiations between the native people and Europeans. Today sheep roam between the cairns, while families walk their dogs along the beach. The Garry oak meadow at Taylor Beach has witnessed the evolution of our history-stories far too easily forgotten.

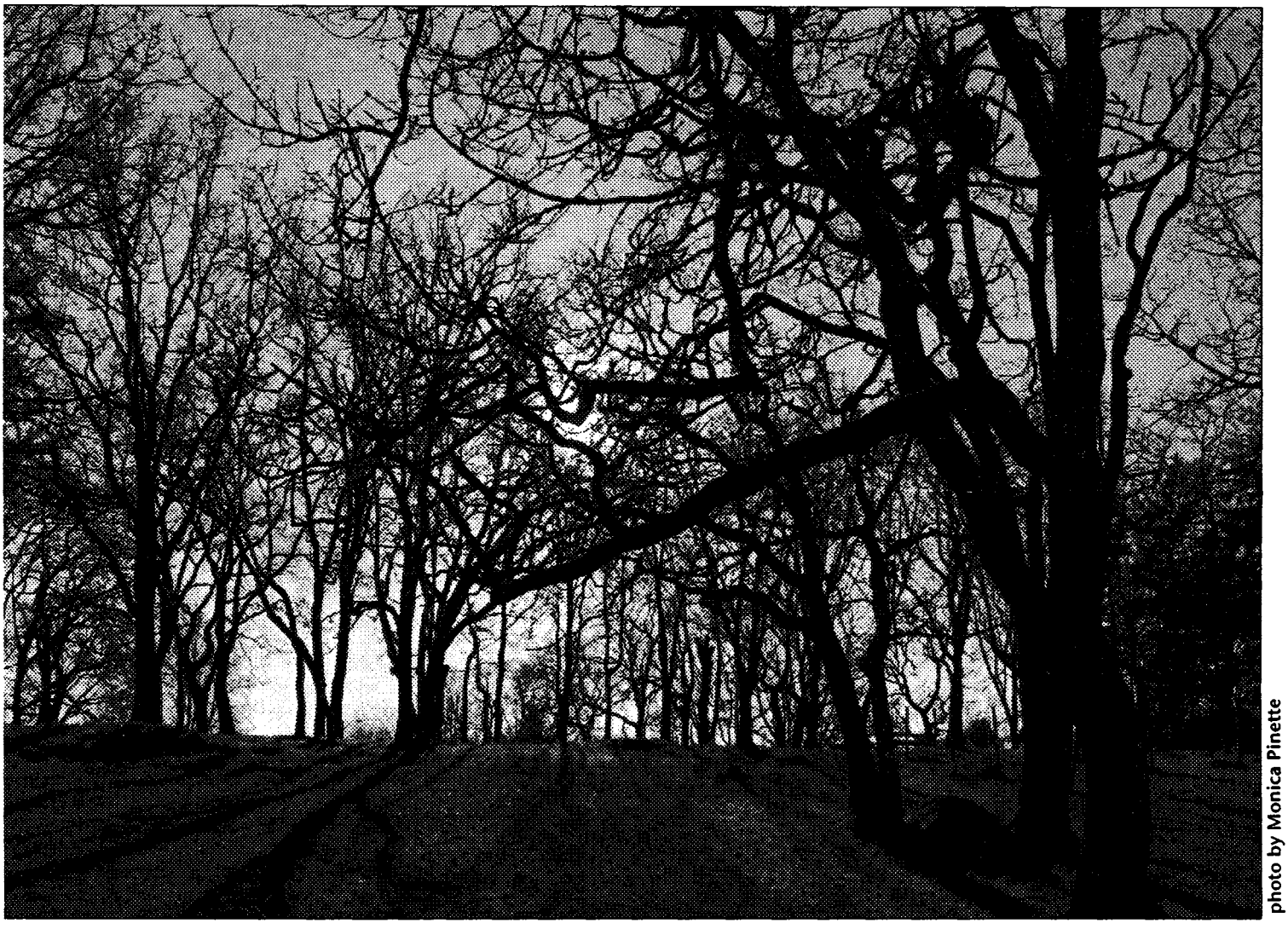
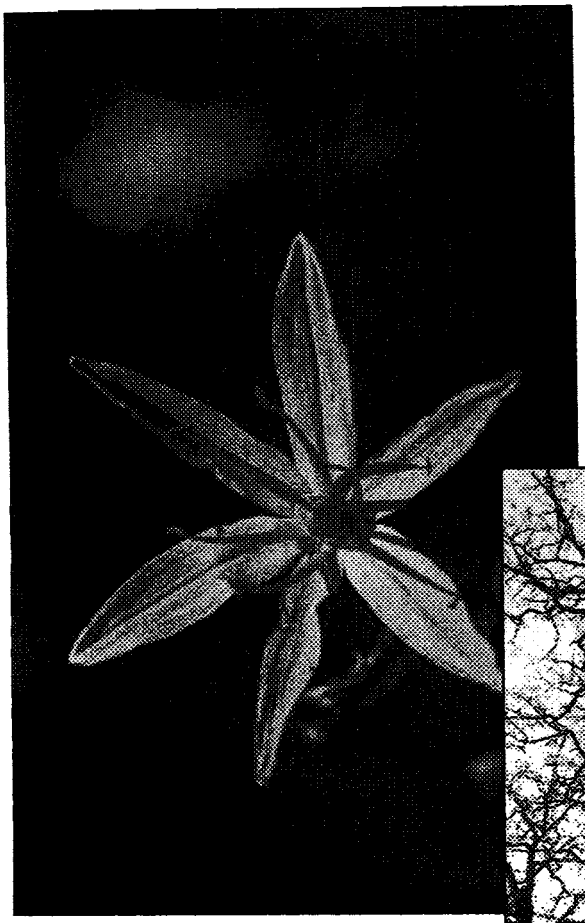


photo by Monica Pinette

photo by Erin Kelley

photo by Erin Kelley

Garry oak meadows in
the Greater Victoria area.



Camas starts to flower at the end of March or middle of April.

Professor Brenda Beckwith stands in a Garry oak meadow at the University of Victoria

A lone Garry oak stands in a field at the University of Victoria.

NOT JUST A PRETTY LILY

Story and photos by Shaylee Booty

There is one vegetable out there that you won't *find* at your local grocery store. Why? Maybe because some think it is just a pretty flower and are unaware of its nutritional value. This vegetable, one of the most beautiful lilies that share in the Garry oaks ecosystem, is Camas. The blue flowers we see blanketing Beacon Hill park in the spring are also a tasty vegetable.

Common camas - Camassia quamash, and tall camas - Camassia leichtlinii, are wild flowers found in Garry oak ecosystems. They share the same ecological requirements as the oaks, a rainy spring and dry hot summer. They are quite versatile though, and can be found in locations from marshy bogs to dry mountain tops. Camas starts to grow in the rainy season and you can see them above ground in April and May.

Camas bulbs were a staple carbohydrate for the First Nations on Vancouver Island, says Brenda Beckwith of the University of Victoria.

Beckwith moved here seven and a half years ago from Sacramento, California to study camas with Dr. Nancy Turner at the University of Victoria. She focused her thesis on the important relationship between ecology and social systems at two levels: first, the tangible and intricate relationship camas has with the Garry oak ecosystem and second, what it meant for camas as a whole. She used botany and ecology combined with anthropology to tell the story of the camas landscape incorporating history. "By studying plants with cultural links, we can learn about these ecosystems and how they functioned with people," said Beckwith.

Beckwith salvaged plants from what is now the Costco parking lot for her studies at the Government House, where she grew tall camas in cold frames. She began with 270 plants and after five years, ended with 320. She was able to record that these plants can produce both sexually and asexually and their bulbs can split up to 11 times- if they are in proper soil and have enough energy. "How they can do that in one year, to me is just phenomenal," said Beckwith.

She also studied how camas was grown and prepared and the importance it had to the Salish Natives. She discovered·how the landscapes have changed over time and wanted to know why camas had nearly lost its dietary role in the 1940's. The most important

"By studying plants with cultural/inks, we can learn about these ecosystems and how they functioned with peop/e."

discovery of camas was the role it played in the lives of the Salish people. They used to cultivate and harvest it as a vegetable. Active maintenance of the soil and select harvesting would result in rapid growth and productivity and the Garry oak meadows were beautiful and luxurious.

"That's what's going to hurt the Garry oak ecosystems, is not managing them,"said Beckwith.

Camas was more than just a vegetable, beds were often passed down through generations. It brought families and communities together with festivals and was important in trade and potlatching.

Beckwith continues to research and work with preserving camas meadows. She hopes to grow camas again in the future - in cold frames maybe - but it is a dream to have a field or meadow of her own.

AGING OAKS

Story and photo by Paul Jacobs

As Michael Meagher bends over to inspect his seedlings at the Pacific Forestry Centre, he notes that several are two or three times larger than others the same age. This hardly surprises him, though. The first thing Meagher has learned about determining the age of a Garry oak by its size is that you can't tell the age of a Garry oak by its size.

Meagher has been measuring and counting rings of Garry oaks for more than five years. He began searching for a correlation between size and age simply because people want to know how old their trees are. Although one may never truly know how old a living oak is, he hopes that his research will allow people to make an accurate estimate of age range.

Unfortunately he has to wait until an oak is cut down in order to collect data. Because the wood is so hard and dry, other methods of establishing age cannot be used. Taking a core sample with a hand-driven auger is nearly impossible and Meagher doesn't have access to a power auger.

Among the first trees he studied were two stumps within 50 metres of each other at the Royal Jubilee Hospital. The first one was under a metre across and 350 years old. The second, though slightly larger, was only 125 years old.

"That certainly got my attention," says Meagher. Almost three times older, the smaller tree could conceivably be the mother of the other.

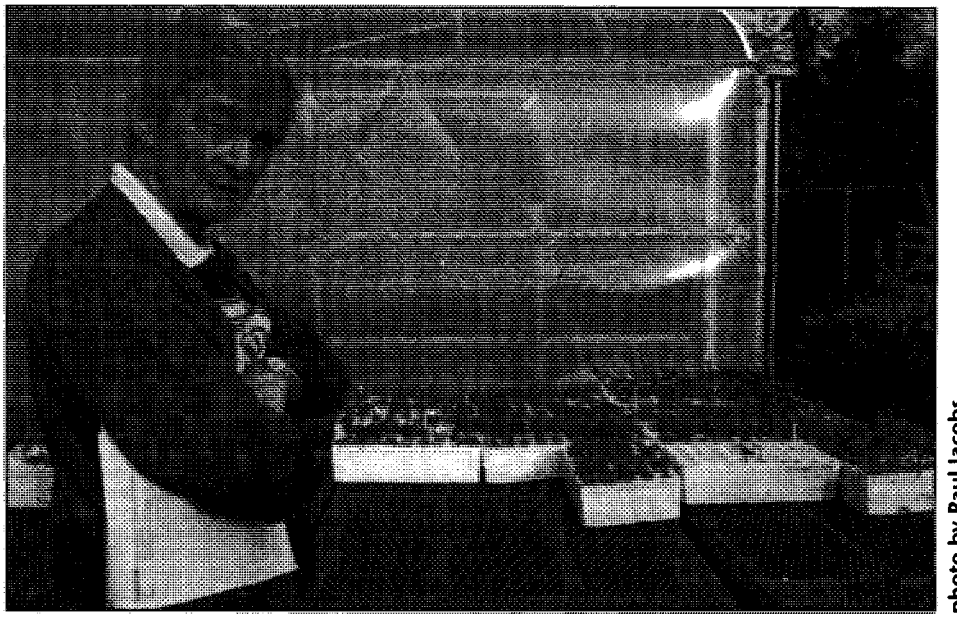


photo by Paul Jacobs

Dr. Michael Meagher proudly exhibits the seedlings growing outside the greenhouse at the Pacific Forestry Centre.

The size and growth of a Garry oak depends on the depth and quality of the soil and how much moisture it receives. Competition is also a factor: other trees will affect the rate of growth.

When Meagher examined a stump at Saint Michael's University School, he observed a sudden increase in the tree's growth about a century ago. This coincides with the building of the school. Meagher theorizes that the grounds may have been watered and fertilized and competition eliminated.

In the meantime, Meagher recognizes that much more research is required and continues to compile statistics on Garry oaks. Though he realizes that an accurate estimate of a Garry oak's age may not be possible, he hopes that his findings will at least allow people to make an educated guess at how old their tree could be.

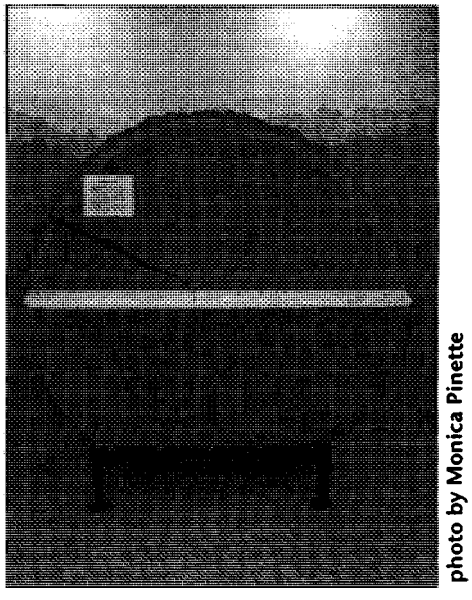


photo by Monica Pinette

The lifespan of this Douglas Fir, can be measured by how close or far apart each ring is from year-to-year.

It is with great sadness that we must tell you Jerri Lee has died. She was one of our directors and the able editor of our newsletter. We will miss her positive and pleasant personality.

Production team
Editors: Paul Jacobs, and Libby Peters
Design & Layout: Christine Feleki, MaryAnne Dieno, and Shaylee Booty

Students from the Western Academy of Photography have worked to produce this newsletter for the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society.

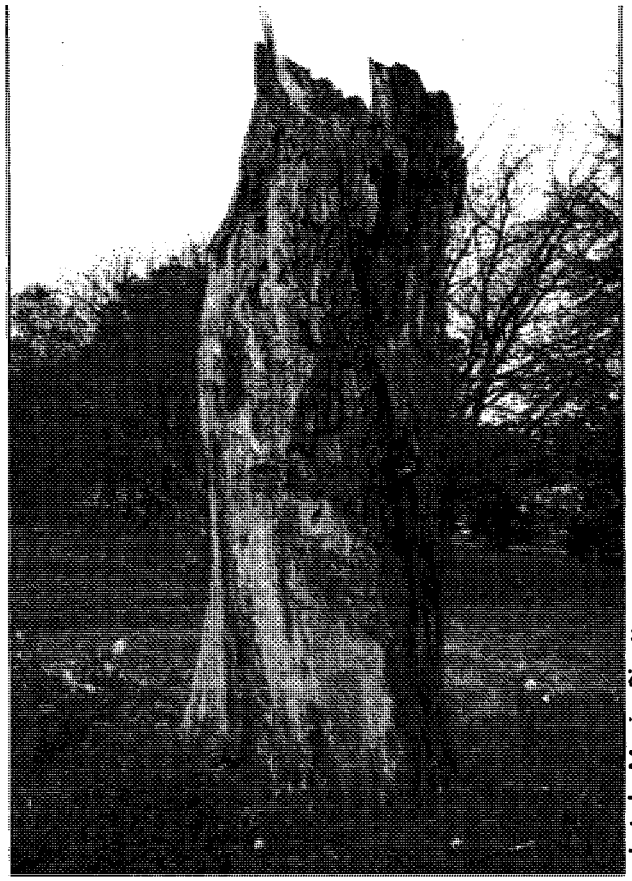


photo by Monica Pinette

Nature trees are an important aspect of sustaining habitat in Victoria. Protected trees are distinguished by small yellow woodpecker signs posted on their trunks. Dying trees are cut down to tall stumps and holes are drilled in appropriate spots to encourage decomposition. Eventually it becomes a thriving ecosystem for birds and insects.

This tree in Beacon hill park is a splendid example of an established nature tree.

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GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

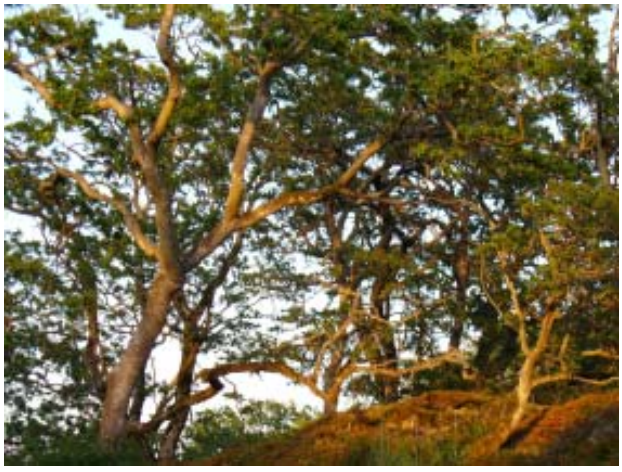
Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Volumn 13 No. 1. June 2006

When Is An Oak Tree “A Tree?”

By Dr. Michael Meagher, RPF Ret.

Our local landscape is dominated by Garry oaks, most of which were growing before Europeans arrived. GOMPS records indicate that about **20% of them are being lost per decade** in the urbanized areas to increasing land use for houses, businesses, roads, and to farming. Also, we see few young trees occurring to replace those lost because of our concept of gardens and neat landscaping. We have been advocating for some years the need to both protect the trees we have, as well as establish the future “urban forest”.



Evening oaks, photo by H.Gibbard

GOMPS has reviewed local tree-protection bylaws for consistency and effectiveness in protecting Garry oaks and other valuable trees. Of the 12 local jurisdictions, ten have such bylaws permitting protection of valuable trees, including Garry oaks. But protection begins only when the target species achieves “tree” status. Most commonly, stem diameter at 1.4 meters above ground is the height at which tree diameter is measured, and most laws stipulate a diameter of 10 cm. before a tree is a “tree”. Two jurisdictions, so far, list 25 cm. as the critical size, although Oak Bay is revising its size downward to 10 cm. after residents pressed for a size more likely to prevent it becoming known as “Oakless Bay” in future, following presentations by GOMPS last June. Victoria leads the change to more-protective laws by protecting “tree seedlings”. A “tree seedling” of Garry oak, Arbutus, Pacific dogwood or Pacific yew is a minimum of 50 cm. and a maximum of 5 meters tall.

I have been measuring and counting oak stumps for a few years to determine their age vs. size, hoping to provide a better answer to the regular queries re tree age, or limit on tree size. Extrapolations from my data gave an estimate of 45 to 65 years, averaging 55 years, for a Garry oak to reach 25 cm. diameter. Measurements at Rocky Point in Metchosin by Ze’ev Gedalof of the University of Guelph show that it may take 87 years to reach 10 cm. diameter! That means a person born in the same year as an oak would likely be a grandparent before the oak was “a tree”!

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

GOMPS organised and established a plantation of Garry oaks in the Quadra Street/Highway 17 interchange in February of 1994 with the encouragement and cooperation of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. Its collaboration was headed by Jean Anne Wightman, Landscape Architect, then a member of GOMPS. Height and diameter data collected this fall on 46 trees revealed that NONE reached the 10-cm diameter threshold – after 12 years in the ground; probably tree age 14. The largest found was 6 cm in diameter, meaning that it may require 5-8 more years for the largest tree to become "a tree". These "**non-trees**" were planted in cultivated ground and surrounded by some mulch at planting, then kept generally free of weeds for a few years, but were not irrigated, so they faced conditions similar to those under which our current oak forest developed. For more detail on this project, see the article "The Quadra Overpass Garry oak Plantation" in this issue.

Oaks planted by homeowners and given more-tender care likely would grow faster, but we should remember that our local oaks have developed a growing pattern based on survival, which is necessitated by our regular summer droughts, rather than early height growth. Most early growth is directed to establish an extensive root system, rather than a tall stem. This factor means that a continual effort by all local jurisdictions is needed to establish the next generation of oaks, so that our grandchildren can enjoy the privilege of seeing spring expressed through the overhead canopy of our handsome Garry oaks - and collect nuts in the fall to begin establishing the next tree generation for **their** grandchildren.

Our society has made an effort, particularly in the later part of the year, to be pro-active rather than reactive, in the efforts that we make to save the Garry oak ecosystems that are so threatened. Since the establishment of the Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team (GOERT), we have been most frequently involved with attempts to save the Garry oak trees that are the "flagship" species of the ecosystem and are, in themselves, the only habitat for some 40 of the numerous species of insects that are found on them. Although not the most endangered species in the ecosystem, the trees are the most obvious and pervasive one, the most important component of the local urban forest. Garry oaks and rock outcrops set the scene for the uniquely attractive appearance of the greater Victoria area.

Managing Our Urban Forest

By Hal Gibbard & Dr. Michael Meagher

The objectives of the urban forest management practices and bylaws must be clearly defined before any rules or regulations can be drafted which are intended to achieve those objectives. To do otherwise will only lead to bylaws, which, in the long term, will be piece-meal and ineffective, so we could lose the valued tree component of our urban environment and species at risk. The following is a draft of some ideas for a "generic" set of tree protection bylaws.

- Maintain, in perpetuity, the valuable urban forest.
- Preserve and perpetuate the rare and "keystone" species in their normal habitat, or at least in their normal area of distribution (Coastal Douglas-fir Zone). Particularly important in this area are Garry oaks, arbutus, Pacific yew, Pacific dogwood, trembling aspen, cascara, Pacific crab-apple, and black hawthorn.
- Protect individual significant trees, including those selected for size, age, or species, which are so important to the character of our communities and contribute so much to our aesthetic amenity.
- Protect and maintain the species of trees that provide the only habitat for native species of flora and fauna, especially those listed by the Conservation Data Center of B.C. as being at some level of risk (primarily Garry oaks).
- Incorporate these objectives in the planning and development process by providing a clear, generic bylaw, which informs and promotes the objectives consistently throughout the region and by zoning accordingly (see comments below).
- Recognize the necessity of recruitment of young trees for the perpetuation of the urban forest, and particularly of species at risk, by protecting small trees and creating a diversity of ages in the trees so there is not a large gap when the older ones die out. (At the moment, in areas with Garry oak, when the existing ones go there will be a period without them of about a human generation before there are more big ones.)

Protect individual significant trees, including those selected for size, age, or species...

- Protect trees during construction by defining "protected root zone" in such a way as to recognize both the biological and site variability needs of trees while being practical in application and enforceability.
- Areas not now covered by such legislation should develop this capability now.
- Re-examine either the definition of "building envelope", or be more creative in defining the degree of protection afforded species at risk found in it.
- Penalties should be significant enough that they are a deterrent, not just an added cost of doing business in a big project.

The bylaws protecting trees will not preclude the need for pruning, or even removal, of hazardous trees. However, the word "hazardous" must be defined with care and the actual condition of the tree reported, as such, by a Certified Arborist.

Tree Preservation Bylaw, City of Victoria - A Brief History

By Cory Manton, Tree Preservation Officer, Parks Division, City of Victoria

Beginning in 2004 council began to hear requests from private citizens and community groups regarding the lack of tree preservation afforded under the Bylaw developed in 1999. In January 2005 City Council received a presentation and report from the Parks Division staff on the issues and options related to a new Tree Protection Bylaw. Parks Staff met with Parks, Recreation and Community Services Advisory Committee; Environmental Advisory Committee; Advisory Design Panel; Heritage Advisory Committee; Neighborhood Land Use Committee; and Urban Development Institute for review and comment.

In May 2005 staff reported back to council and received approval to amend the Tree Protection Bylaw and hire a Tree Preservation Officer.

The revised Tree Preservation Bylaw has incorporated the recommended changes for the preservation of public and private protected and significant trees. On December 15 2005, City Council adopted Tree Preservation Bylaw 05-106.

Some of the significant changes in the new Bylaw include:

- Increase in the number of species of trees protected
- Defining the location of a tree, with regards to a building envelope, using the trunk
- Defining tree damaging activities and associated significant penalties
- Defining a “protected tree seedling”

Modeled after Saanich Tree Preservation Bylaw with addition of Big Leaf Maple tree over 60 cm dbh, and Pacific Yew, Arbutus, Garry Oak and Pacific Dogwood seedlings protected at 50 cm in height

The entire Tree Preservation Bylaw can be found at www.city.victoria.bc.ca/trees.
A summary of the Bylaw is available as a brochure at the Parks Yard 100 Cook St.

Camas, photo by H. Gibbard

The Quadra Overpass Garry Oak Plantation

By Pierre d'Estrube'

For the past year or two GOMPS has been contemplating the drafting of a model tree preservation by-law to be available as a template for municipalities of lower Vancouver Island. We have already contributed informational input to bylaw drafting committees of Saanich, Victoria and Oak Bay.

In an attempt to present convincing evidence to bylaw drafters re the pressing need for a drastic revision of these figures, especially for the protection of slower growing and threatened species (ex: Garry oaks, arbutus, yew), our hard working secretary and forester, Dr. Mike Meagher, undertook the measurement of oaklings of known age grown in a near-natural, non-irrigated habitat. Two such sites are to be found at the McKenzie interchange and Quadra Street exit of Highway #17.

This latter regeneration demonstration landmark was achieved through the vision and efforts of Jean-Anne Whitman, landscape architect and energetic member of GOMPS (formed in 1992). She was working in conjunction with the Ministry of Transport and Highways' Environment Branch, Roadside Development. Excerpts from her extensive documentation of the project indicate that "the plantation is being used to assess the growth and health of Garry oak seedlings and to evaluate the use of seedling protection tubes." The operation coincided with the Legacy Tree Planting Project for the Commonwealth Games.

Continued on page 6

Quadra overpass, October 1995, photo courtesy BC Ministry of Transportation

Quadra overpass July 2005, photo by P. d'Estrube'

Continued from page 5

The site preparation included stripping, burying, and tilling the sod, blanketing the site with landscape cloth, and then covering it with bark mulch to keep back weeds.

On the 19th of February, 1994, volunteers planted 211 Garry oak seedling "plugs", grown the year before by Rob Hagel of Forestry Canada's Pacific Forestry Centre. These were inserted into holes dug through the mulch and cloth with a tablet of Bestgro fertilizer placed in the bottom. Some 80% were shielded with protective tubes; the rest were flagged for comparison. Each seedling was numbered and staked.

Three periodic, detailed inspections followed: 11/Mar/94; 19/April'95, and 20-26/Oct/95. Data were recorded as to height, number of growth whorls and plant's health or pathology. The report makes recommendations to overcome some of the shortcomings of the experiment. There has been no follow-up reporting since the third monitoring in 1995. However, in subsequent years, photos and view-scanning movies have been taken of the area. There seems to have been a considerable loss over time from adverse elements of nature (wind, rodents), and damaging human "stewardship" (ie. misuse of "weed-eaters") - as confirmed by the following data taken in the fall of 2005 after 12 years of growth. Careful measurements taken by Dr. Meagher showed the following:

- of the originally planted 211, 126 remain (40% loss)
- trunk forking below dbh, (the measurement standard in most tree bylaws), makes reaching the 10 cm dbh limit problematic
- the tallest specimen was 3.7m
- the biggest diameter measured at *ground level* base was 10cm
- the biggest dbh were 3 specimens at 6cm

Extrapolations from these figures show that, if a dbh of 25cm were required to qualify as a "tree", for protection most would have to be at least 55 years old; if the dbh were 10cm it would need 25 years of growth.

Armed with such compelling evidence, GOMPS seems to have helped arouse a new appreciation of and concern for, regeneration. Hence a new by-law category is emerging: "the protected tree seedling". A seedling is defined as measured, not by dbh standards, but as a height of 50cm (1 1/2 ft) above ground level but less than 5m (16.4 ft.). This concept is applicable to the threatened slow-growing Garry oak, dogwood, arbutus and yew. The City of Victoria's new Tree Preservation Bylaw includes this innovation.

As for Jean-Anne's original intent to measure the efficacy of tube protection, unfortunately the aforementioned adverse factors limited the exercise to "impressions", namely: that the tubes offered some degree of protection and accelerated height growth. But whether in the long run, height is gained at the possible expense of girth and stability, was not determined.

In a parting shot of her report, Jean-Anne notes: "Letting the people of the Province know about programs such as this would be an important step in strengthening the relations between the public and the Ministry. By erecting a concise, easy to read sign beside the highway or in the area, we could easily and effectively communicate our dream of having stands of Garry Oaks along our highways, to the public. If it included recognition of GOMPS, it would also give a sense of partnership and appreciation to the volunteers who worked on the site, encouraging them to participate in future plantings."

Native flowers beside Garry Oak, including Camas, Spring Gold, Sea Blush, Shooting Star and Blue-eyed Mary - au naturel. Photo by Mike Meagher

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The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Volume 14, Number 1 February 2007

"CENTENNIAL" GARRY OAKS PLANTED

By Dr. Michael Meagher, RPF Ret.

To honour the Centennials of both Saanich and Oak Bay in 2006, GOMPS promoted the planting of oaks to both Councils, beginning in 2004. We appeared once at Saanich's Centennial Planning Committee, but had fuller discussions with Oak Bay officials, particularly to pursue possible funding for our suggestion of planting 100 trees each. Regrettably, we were not successful in Oak Bay, but Saanich "ran with" our suggestion and obtained funding from BC Hydro's Green Fund to purchase 100 Garry oaks. They were planted November 5th by the public on the Cedar Hill Golf Course, with Mayor Frank Leonard and Councillor Jackie Ngai, Chair of the Parks Committee, officiating (photo in the Times-Colonist Nov. 6th). (Note to any golfers: they are planted in areas difficult - but not impossible - to hit with a ball. Kindly be kind.)

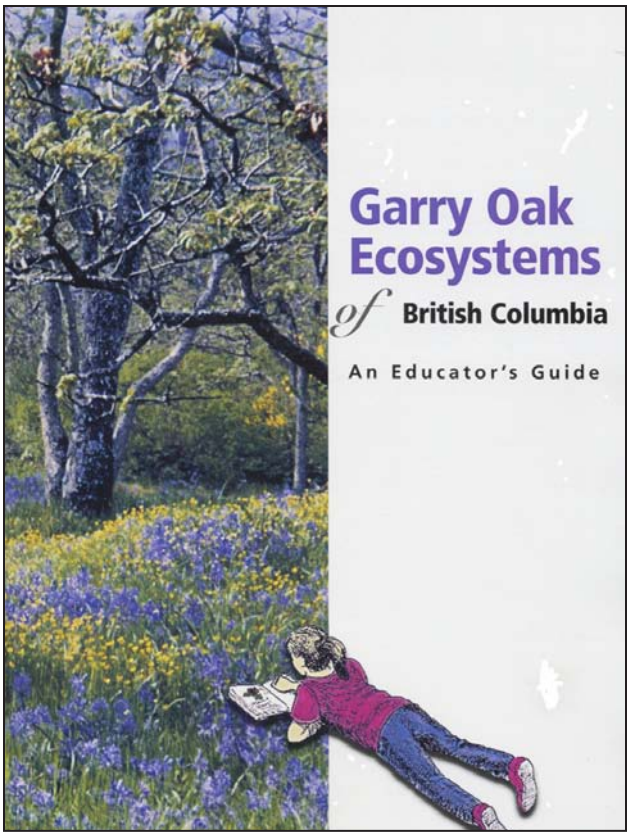
GOMPS and Carol Davies of the Oak Bay Green Committee planted one tree – our Centennial Garry oak - beside Oak Bay's Brighton Walkway on November 21st. We were joined quickly by the interested residents of the house behind the tree, who appreciated their oaks and our concern for their municipal forest's future. Plans for a similar planting of our tree in Saanich at the Fire Hall on Vernon Road have been delayed by the recent spate of strong storms, floods and fallen trees, but it should occur soon.
Neither tree will be marked by a plaque to reduce threats of theft and complications with maintenance, but each will be noted on municipal records.

We urge members to publicise these events as a way to encourage further Garry oak planting for the future of our grandchildren - and their grandchildren.

Planting of Centennial oaks are, from left: Dr. M. H. El-Lakany, H. El-Lakany (son), both volunteers, and Dr. Pierre d'Estrube', GOMPS Founding Member and Past President. Michael Meagher photo.

A Guide to teaching about Garry oak Ecosystems

By Nathalie Dechaine, Environmental Education Officer, District of Saanich



Education is often touted as being a key tool to protect Garry oak ecosystems and each and every one of us can contribute by bringing awareness to the people that reside and recreate in the range of these threatened ecosystems. But you don't have to blaze the path alone; the Educator's Guide is here to help!

This publication is a recommended resource for BC school curriculum from kindergarten to grade 8, but the Educator's Guide has activities suitable for groups of various ages that work in the field, or inside. It contains background information about Garry oak ecosystems, hands-on activities to learn experientially about these endangered places, graphics to reproduce and contact information for relevant organizations, and restoration sites.

Wild BC of the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund manages the Educator's Guide. They can arrange workshops for a group that includes an orientation to the Educator's Guide, a primer on Garry oak ecosystems, and training on how to facilitate the activities in the resource. Contact WILD BC to place an order for an Educator's Guide or to express interest for one of their workshops at:

Phone: (250) 356-7111
email: wild@gov.bc.ca
website: http://www.hctf.ca/wild.htm

The camas shoots and spring-gold blooms are just around the corner, which means the Garry oak ecosystem's showiest season is not far behind. The Educator's Guide can help you to show off the rocky knolls, woodlands, coastal bluffs and meadows that will soon be alight with a riot of colour. With your Guide in hand, bring your friends, family, staff, CEO or a local community group out to see what makes this region so special.

Garry Oak Ecosystems of British Columbia: an educator's guide is a joint production of The Corporation of the District of Saanich, Wild BC, the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, BC Region, the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, and the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk. A great number of local people gave their special skills and talents to its production.

"HANGING ON TO PARADISE: An Illustrated Anthology of Community Visions in Prose and Poetry" by the Fairfield Community Association.

By Hal Gibbard

"Hanging on to Paradise," ISBN 0 9781176 0 3, is a small book, published in 2006, by the Fairfield Community Association. It celebrates their well-loved community through prose, poetry and picture. As it says in the preface, it "captures the best of our feelings but is tinged with the realization that we are merely hanging on to paradise".

There are two articles of special interest to GOMPS members: "A Plea for the Urban Forest" by Hal Gibbard, and "A Stewardship Success Story: Wilma Green and Maddisson Green" by Sylvia von Schuckmann.

The "plea" is the essence of a bulletin circulated to GOMPS members in January of 2006, with specific pleas to municipalities removed. It is applicable to all urban areas throughout the range of Garry oaks, not just those in Fairfield or even the City of Victoria.

Sylvia's article is the story of how "a community has cared for and protected a small, but well loved green space in the Gonzales neighborhood".

We suggest that you might enjoy reading these two articles, one with a warning of looming problems of loss followed by an example of a successful venture in restoration. Purchase a copy for $20 from the Fairfield Community Place, 1330 Fairfield Road [call 382-4604], Barbara Julian (592-9340), or many of the Victoria bookstores, or borrow one from the library.

Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Annual General Meeting

Dr Richard Hebda

Curator of Botany and Earth History at the Royal British Columbia Museum

will speak on

Climate Change "From Past into Future"

Please join us on

Wednesday, March 14, 2007 at 7:30 pm,

Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

3873 Swan Lake Road

Tree Protection in Central Saanich

Dr. David Boag is a director of GOMPS who lives in Central Saanich. He has involved himself in his own community, as we all should, as well as assisting with the objectives of GOMPS. He sent the following letter to Mayor and Council when the question of tree protection had surfaced yet again.

Mayor Jack Mar and Council
District of Central Saanich,
1903 Mt. Newton Cross Road,
Saanichton, BC V8M 2A9

Re: Recommended changes to the Central Saanich Tree Protection Bylaw (No. 1403)

Dear Mayor Mar and Councillors:

We are fortunate in Central Saanich to have a "Tree Protection Bylaw" but I am concerned about its inadequacy in a number of areas. Having seen The City of Victoria's new "Tree Protection Bylaw 05 – 106" which addresses a number of my concerns about the weakness of our Bylaw (No. 1403) on the subject, I would like to make some suggestions for strengthening it.

My major concern is the lack of any means for retaining protected tree species on private property over time when there are no requirements for their ultimate replacement, i.e. the nurturing of young trees. Our bylaw makes it illegal to remove any of the protected species (Garry Oak, Arbutus, and Pacific Dogwood) based upon their diameter at breast height (more than 25 cm). Victoria's new bylaw makes it illegal to destroy any of these three protected species plus Pacific Yew based not on diameter but on height (more than 50 cm). In so doing they are acknowledging the need for individual replacement over time of those considered of "significant heritage and landmark value" as well as "protecting trees on private property from unnecessary harm and removal".

Moreover, Victoria's bylaw also protects specimens of Western Red Cedar, Big-leaf Maple, and Douglas Fir on private property which have diameters (dbh) in excess of 60 cm as well as any growing on a steep slope or within 15 meters of a watercourse.

The bylaw in Central Saanich covers only three tree species. I suggest we follow Victoria's lead and include Pacific Yew, particularly in view of its present role in herbal medicine (tamoxifen).

Central Saanich also has a list of "Significant Trees" within the Municipality that includes all native species and many exotics. This list needs to be updated and, in my view, expanded.

In the light of the very strong sentiments raised over the loss of Brentwood Bay's street side trees, such a change to add further protection to our native and exotic species may be well-accepted by the district's residents.

Yours sincerely

D. A. Boag

About a month later, the Municipality simply officially acknowledged that they had received his submission and Council referred it to their 2007 Strategic Planning Workshop for further discussion. So far, a positive action on the part of a citizen that got a positive response. The next step will be watched for.

OAK BAY'S NEW TREE BY-LAW: A TESTAMENT TO CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Dr. Michael Meagher

The impact of seemingly-small acts on a community was never better illustrated than in Oak Bay, starting in the spring of 2005. A handsome European beech tree was felled by the lot's owner under provisions of the extant law, which protected only Garry oak. Neighbours were surprised that such a statuesque tree could be removed so easily and began organizing residents to improve tree protection, including contacting GOMPS.

We were surprised to learn that the current Tree-Protection By-Law's provisions protected Garry oaks ONLY when they reached 25 cm. in stem diameter! That made their law, and Sidney's, the worst among all local tree laws due to the likely age of trees that size (See Garry Oak Leaflet Vol. 13, No. 1, June 2006). Hence our "Oakless Bay" comment during our June, 2005 appearance at Oak Bay Council meeting when the topic of the need to protect urban trees was considered. The passion (not often associated with Oak Bay) expressed by speakers to the Council carried several residents to the formation of the Oak Bay Green Committee, which held further events to sustain and broaden support for better tree protection. GOMPS suggested principles re tree protection and management to Oak Bay staff and commented further when the Draft By-Law was presented to the appropriate Committee, prior to its submission to Council.

The new By-Law (4326) was adopted on August 21, 2006. New features are inclusion of Arbutus, Pacific yew, and Western Dogwood, as well as Garry oak, with BASAL diameter greater than 10 cm. or height above 2 metres. Also, any tree of diameter greater than 60 cm., and any listed as "Significant", under covenant, a replacement tree, or "to be retained" on a development permit are protected. The "Significant Trees" list (Schedule "B" of the By-Law) includes two Garry oaks, two Pacific Yews and one Arbutus to date. Root-zone determination, always a contentious issue, may be determined following inspection by Municipal staff or by formula , which should lead to better survival of affected trees. Finally, tree protection on building lots over 1500 square metres will require certification by Municipal staff. While minimal tree size is not as desirable as Victoria's new law, which protects trees of protected species 2 meters tall, it is a big improvement on its predecessor.

In Oak Bay, "when a tree falls" the residents hear it - passionately. Well done!

THE ROLE OF THE CITIZEN-NATURALIST: A WORKSHOP

- Speakers from the Sierra Club, HAT and other conservation groups
- Discussion about the "why, how and where" of habitat preservation
- Species counts in Porter Park: plants, trees, birds, insects, moss, fungi, micro-organisms

Saturday, March 31st, 10 am – 4 pm
1330 Fairfield Road, Fairfield Community Place

Information and pre-registration by March 19th: 1330 Fairfield Rd., 382 4604 or 592-9340
$25.00 Lunch, book and other reading materials included (a non-profit workshop)

GOMPS Advises North Saanich

By Hal Gibbard

The involvement of GOMPS began in early May of 2006, when a resident of North Saanich contacted us with concerns about the Garry oak trees, near the corner of Mills Road and West Saanich Road, that seemed to be in imminent danger of removal or drastic pruning by the developer. This unfortunate event seemed to them to be something that was more than just coincidental, in that it seemed to be driven by the combination of the developer of the subdivision, the Victoria Airport Authority, and the Municipality. Also, one or two of the biggest trees listed in the Tree Protection By-Law (No. 935) Schedule "D" as "Significant Trees" were actually on Municipal land, so what was the connection with the developer? They therefore sought our advice and support to try and save these Garry oaks, which they had assumed were protected by the North Saanich Tree Protection Bylaw and listed officially as Significant Trees. Some of them are also on the Big Tree List of the provincial Conservation Data Centre. They include the 9th and 10th largest known Garry oaks. The actual trigger seemed to be the appearance of machinery working on site and the "Hazardous Tree" notices posted on the tree trunks.

Another resident also alerted the Garry Oak Recovery Team (GOERT), who then sent an email to the Mayor and Council with a list of qualified arborists and requested another opinion. They also included information on the values of Garry oaks and other relevant information.

The Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society (GOMPS) carried out a series of communications with North Saanich residents, municipal staff, including speaking at the Council meeting in June, the developer, the Victoria Airport Authority, the Tree and Hedgerow Committee, and the Heritage Advisory Commission. We met on site with both the Aborist and the developer to review the Arborist's recommendation for each tree and suggest alternatives to topping, where possible. These communications (mostly e-mail and telephone) continued throughout this exercise until August 15/06. It was our hope that this could become a "win-win" situation, with relatively minor alterations to the work already commenced. It was hoped that the magnificent old oaks could be saved while satisfying the requirements of the authorities and the developer.

The threatened oak grove at Mills Road and West Saanich Road. Hal Gibbard photo.

A recent visit found that the emergency access road through the grove has been paved, despite recommendations that it be porous so the roots could get water from any precipitation. Presumably, if it remains only emergency access, it would only be driven over in rare circumstances. As yet, it does not appear that any significant tree work has been done.

We completed our effort with a written report to those involved in early November of 2006. Stay vigilant, folks!

2006 GYPSY MOTH SURVEY : RESULTS AND 2007 WORK PLANNED

Following surveying and operations in 2005, baited traps were placed in over 20 areas to reduce laying of fertile eggs and assess the extent of the 2007 population of this dangerous, introduced pest. Traps are baited with **pheromones**, a chemical known to attract males to sexually-active females. Depending on the number of traps set out, they can be used to survey population levels or reduce the number of mating males, thus reducing fertile eggs for the following year.

The highest trap count of males (39) occurred near Courtenay, followed by Salt Spring Island (35), Sidney (20) and Victoria south of Cedar Hill Golf Course (32). Actions recommended for 2007 are: **Courtenay:** aerial spray of Bacillus thuringiensis "k"**,** since high trap counts have been found for 3 years, and the area is about 400 ha. with limited ground access, this will preclude ground-based control.

- **Sidney:** "Mass trapping", meaning 64 to 99 traps/acre or 372 to 2,331 traps/hectare. This equates roughly to placing one trap in every front yard and one in every back yard of every city lot within the trapping grid
-
- **Victoria** south of Cedar Hill: Ground spray + mass trapping at 372 to 2,331 traps/hectare
-
- **Colwood** (7 males trapped): mass trap near most males trapped and monitor margin near single trapped moth.

Readers may obtain further information from Peter Hall, Provincial Forest Entomologist, at 250-387-8742 or via peter.hall@gov.bc.ca. but, first go to http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/gypsymoth/

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www.garryoak.bc.ca

GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Volume 14, Number 2 August 2007

Reference Sites: Garry Oak Meadow Gems

Gore Park, Brentwood bay. f hook photo August 6, 2007

Rattlesnake Plantain, Goodyera oblongifolia *f hook photo August 6, 2007.*

The following article is, we hope, the first of a series of articles about the remaining gems in the Garry Oak ecosystem. If you have an oak meadow that is your personal favourite, that others would like to see or that others should see, please send us the story of your place.

Photos are welcome but not necessary.

Vegetation in a Central Saanich Municipal Park (Gore Park), which includes a Garry Oak Ecosystem.

By David Boag, June 2007

In 1992 I came to live on Amwell Drive in Central Saanich, a subdivision created in the early 1980s adjacent to Gore Park, about half of which is a Garry oak meadow.

I became fascinated with this beautiful ecosystem but soon learned that it lacked its potential glory as it had become infested with a number of exotics (particularly perennial shrubs and grasses). Most damaging for its ecosystems were broom and orchard grass on the meadows and shrub daphne and ivy in the surrounding forest, mainly because of the overshadowing effect on the ground vegetation. In 1994 I was given permission to begin removing the invasive broad-leaved perennials and, with the help of a neighbour, tackled the broom first because of its impact on the flowering native species (mainly bulbs and annuals) associated with the rocky outcrop areas.

It is now 13 years later and, although we continue to remove young broom plants that have germinated from a past reserve of seeds, the native flora has come back in all its glory under the oaks.

To date we have identified in Gore Park 9 species of trees, 23 species of shrubs, and 78 species of herbaceous wild flowers (a list begins on page 7). We still need to identify the grasses, sedges, mosses and lichens, but that will require a more competent botanist.

With each year that passes, there appears to be an ever-increasing surge of colour that expands in area covered as spring flowering occurs in the meadow.

Satin flower, Sisyrinchium douglasii *in Gore Park, April, 1976 J. E. Lort photo*

DANGEROUS DAPHNE

By Dr. Michael Meagher, RPF Ret.

All gardeners and nature restorers should be aware of the danger in Daphne laureola ("Spurge laurel), which is increasingly common in our parks and corners of our gardens. It is an evergreen shrub that thrives in shade and can form a complete understorey, suppressing most plants and removing habitat for native plants and animals.

All parts of this plant contain a chemical called mezerin that can cause medical problems. A Material Safety Data Sheet for Mezerin lists the potential effects on some people, but we are concerned that these are not well known and that gardeners, children and workers may be at risk. The danger is recognized by Worksafe BC (formerly the Workers' Compensation Board), which has labeled it a "Toxic plant". See: www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/bulletins/toxic_plants/assets/pdf/tp0601.pdf.

Daphne produces small fruits (drupes) that are spread by birds, or which may entice a person to eat some, perhaps causing inflammation of the mouth, tongue or throat, and perhaps breathing difficulty. Some people have died after eating the fruit. If it is ingested drink plenty of water or milk, but DO NOT induce vomiting, which can double the negative effects of mezerin as it travels up your esophagus and mouth.

People removing it should follow the Worksafe instructions and wear protective clothing, gloves, goggles and a mask, since mezerin volatilizes when leaves are crushed or stems broken. If possible, laying it to mulch naturally may be the safest treatment of cut or pulled material. If cutting is used, cut just below ground level to reduce sprouting. If you must remove from your property, DO NOT carry it in your vehicle's cab, as the fumes may cause medical distress, such as breathing problems. These precautions are recommended to prevent you developing a reaction in time, even though you have escaped any ill effects to date; allergies can require years of exposure to be expressed.

If you are in doubt of the identity of plants invading your property, take a sample carefully to your local Parks office for an opinion and instructions for safe control methods.

A further caution: some floral arrangements may contain Daphne. If you see it, point out its danger to the vendor and encourage your friends to refuse such offerings until Daphne is no longer used.

Biodiversity and Ecosystems

By Hal Gibbard, March 31, 2007

"Though the organisms may claim our primary interest, when we are trying to think fundamentally we cannot separate them from their special environment with which they form one physical system. It is the systems so formed which, from the point of view of the ecologist, are the basic units of nature on the face of the earth" (A. G. Tansley, 1935). He is said to have first published the word "ecosystem". It is still these "units" that we must continue to preserve and perpetuate. Outside of artificial environments (think zoos and gardens), this is the only way the "organisms" can survive.

Early in my career I learned, both through being taught and through experience, that we humans are messing with the bits and pieces of ecosystems without applying the needed knowledge of the importance of the inter-connections and interdependence of the components. Most present value systems, including some religions, say that humans are given dominion over the earth and all things on it. That is, that all things are under the control of humans and/or for their benefit, but this edict comes without sufficiently detailed directions to be helpful. Today we realize this is "anthropocentric" thinking. That is, that all things are under the control of humans and/or for their benefit. With this well-intentioned assumption, we have "managed" (or ignored) the earth's surfaces and air, but with frequently wrong or incomplete knowledge of consequences. Most of the ills of this planet are of our own making. Currently, due to the shortsightedness inherent in using financial cost-benefit analysis to judge the best way to manage the natural resources, we are facing global climate change. The very term "resources" underscores our anthropocentricity by implying they are there just for human use. Human civilizations have destroyed their environment before*, and animals too on a relatively small scale, to the point of self-destruction. The essential difference now is that our populations, our civilizations, and our impacts are now global in scale. We absolutely must become "ecocentric" in all our planning and actions. Even in such fundamentals as human population growth, in terms of both numbers of humans and their consumption (footprint). It will be to no avail if we reduce our footprint sizes but continue to increase the number of footprints at an ever-increasing rate. Our concept of "progress" must very quickly change if it is to lead us to survival.

The concept of carrying capacity** for animal populations, an old one for zoologists or even farmers, must now be acknowledged and implemented for the creatures we call humans --- those at the very top of the food chain. As with some animals, we can shift some of the barriers to population growth, but there is always a final barrier that cannot be raised or avoided. The implications of this for humans were recognized by some, and published, back in the '60s***, but still today there are many people who do not grasp this concept. News and events reported recently, in the Times Colonist, had a letter of the maximum size allowed by editorial policy saying that one of the authors who had predicted serious problems arising from overgrown populations was obviously wrong because the problems have not occurred; at the same time, a tiny news item was buried inside which announced that thousands of people were starving to death in yet another African country. This testifies to the denial of facts while, in the same issue, reporting many places where it is already happening. Currently, we are drastically lowering our carrying capacity, mostly through self-inflicted climate change and local practices such as land clearing, monocultures, over harvesting, and soil depletion.

Many of us have long observed, with concern, the loss of species and the importance of biodiversity. This concentration on saving species, although they are the building blocks of ecosystems, must change to a focus on the larger ecosystems that sustain those species and, ultimately, all life on earth. For example, the Canadian Species At Risk Act supports

the identification and listing of species at risk, followed by Recovery Plans for them, but it is much harder to find support to protect their habitat that underpins the ecosystem they require. This includes such habitat considerations as the required size, total area and connections between suitable habitats for perpetuation of the inhabitants and sustainability of the ecosystem. Recovery plans based on individual species plans would take a very long time (there are currently 119 official species at risk in Garry oak ecosystems alone), so they can only arrive at their defined goal of restoration when nearly all the plans for the inhabitants of the ecosystem are completed. For example, we are still struggling with the definition of what constitutes “essential habitat” for the satisfaction of the Species at Risk authorities, making it very difficult to restore “sustainable ecosystems”.

We now have a fairly good understanding of many individual species and the importance of biodiversity in strengthening ecosystems. We also know how to stop destroying the habitat with pollution. We are now even quickly learning techniques of restoring ecosystems, including the Garry oak ecosystems (e.g., the Restoration of Natural Systems program at the University of Victoria). These techniques do include restoring species and some habitat, which is an important aspect of ecosystems but, without restoring and protecting the entire habitat, how can the many species at risk in a Garry oak ecosystem be preserved and protected?

The students of today will not reach positions of power or influence for quite a few years, while it is clearer each month that time is now of the essence. Current leaders, at all levels, must be convinced to act now, and the actions must be based on sound science, not just on emotional or popular appeal.

Although some 30 years of climate change are already inevitable due to past and ongoing mistakes, it is still possible to eventually halt destruction of our global ecosystem-- at least, in scientific and technical terms. What is now essential is the social and political commitment to do so. Each individual person can contribute to this “sea change” in our definition of progress through political and social involvement, and I do not refer to any particular political party. We can all, individually and as families, communities or organizations, do our bit to shrink our footprints. We can each vote and otherwise convince our politicians that huge and rapid changes are required --- even if it costs money and our current concept of “standard of living” must be redefined. We can each help others to understand, and distinguish between, scientific facts and popular beliefs so that real changes can be made. Significant changes are not evident in programs offered so far, merely reductions in the impact of new structures and vehicles.

Remember, the existing things are what got us in trouble, and the number of impacting people and their footprints are still growing at an increasing rate globally. There will have to be “retrofit” action as well and voters do not want to give up or change what they already have, even if there will be economic gains in the long run, to say nothing of their own, and their progeny’s, well-being. Bold leaders must make strong decisions, based on the most complete science available and each of us must be prepared to make changes in our lives so we can become sustainable.

These thoughts should not discourage, but inspire, motivate and give direction in stopping the damage and rebuilding for the future, even as we in GOMPS are trying to do for the Garry oak ecosystem. The Garry oaks and associated species in our local Victoria flagship ecosystem are symbolic of the difficulties and challenges in the much larger system we call earth.

“Think globally and act locally” expresses well our focus on Garry oak ecosystems as a microcosm of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem vitality. All people in the area, including GOMPS members and friends, can contribute to global recovery by acting locally in the defense and restoration of our ecosystem of the future.

Notes:

* See “A Short History of Progress” by Ronald Wright, 2004, a book which grew out of the Massey Lectures of that year.

** “Carrying capacity” can be defined as: The maximum density of particular animals that any habitat can sustainably support, known as the “saturation point”. Environmental factors that limit further growth are “limiting factors” or barriers. In most animals, the final limiting factor is usually food and/or water. Some barriers can be moved or avoided through a number of means, depending on the particular barrier (e.g. hibernation, migration, etc.), but there is always a final, or limiting, barrier that cannot be moved. Populations that grow beyond the limiting factor usually crash. Humans are more adept at adapting (moving the barrier) but are not immune to that final limiting factor. Pollution is drastically lowering the carrying capacity of the whole range of mankind through climate change, some parts of the globe more and faster than others. What limiting factor will come into play first will vary in different parts of the world. Most bets are on climate changing the availability of food and/or water, the two being interconnected. The concept of carrying capacity first came to my attention in Aldo Leopold’s book “Game Management” which was published in 1932, and it still has not been widely applied to humans.

*** See “The Population Bomb” by Paul Ehrlich, 1968, and “Limits to Growth” by the club of Rome, 1972, and “The Population Explosion” by Paul and Anne Ehrlich, 1990.

Citizen-naturalists & Identification Experts Needed For Next Bioblitz!

The Fairfield Community Association has received a Special Projects Grant from the City of Victoria to count species in different locations over the next 2+ years. Our next count will be in an area of **Beacon Hill Park**, covering “Deer Lake”, the hill itself — woodland/meadow— and the Dallas Road shoreline from Horseshoe Bay west to Fonyo Beach.

Time and date: Noon Saturday, October 6th until noon Sunday, October 7th.

We follow the bioblitz process as described in **E.O. Wilson**’s book ***The Creation: an Appeal to Save Life on Earth***, as it has been followed in various locations in Canada, the U.S., and other countries over the past few years. To find out more google “**bioblitz**”, and visit the “**Encyclopedia of Life**” website: www.eol.org.

Whether your interest is trees, birds, tidepool life, bugs, mosses, pond life or whatever, we need lots of volunteer citizen-naturalists — please get your count forms on-site Saturday afternoon, October 6, or Sunday morning, October 7, or by e-mail from: cafe@fairfieldcommunity.ca.

Information: Barbara at 592 9340

GARRY OAK MEADOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MARCH 14, 2007, SWAN LAKE – CHRISTMAS HILL NATURE CENTRE

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**: 7:35 pm. Seventeen Members present.
2. **Agenda**: Adopted as presented.
3. **Minutes of AGM, March 22, 2006:** Correction re email address for Martin Anderson. "Adoption" **motion:** Corey Manton/Wally Lee: approved.
4. **President's Report:** Some parts highlit by President Hal Gibbard: assistance re registered oaks near Victoria Airport, Falaise Park protection, etc. **Received** as presented.
5. **Business from President's Report: No discussion.**
6. **Treasurer's Report**: Presented by Treasurer Tom Gillespie. Income: $1499.43; Expenses: $1991.41; Expenses exceeded income by **$491.98**. **NB:** $2000 held for the 1999 UVic Symposium Proceedings printing, plus $500 in the Jerri Lee Memorial Fund, will be donated to GOERT for publication of Handbooks for the public once Tom receives a request from GOERT. Louise Goulet promised to contact Tom. NB: Canada Revenue (www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tax/charities/jrt-e.html) has issued new requirements re Registered Charities to the effect that the agency's name and web address must appear on all receipts. Tom is aware of this change and will comply.
   Membership: 61 in 43 households. **Adoption:** Wally Lee/Martin Anderson; **approved**.
7. MOTION: (Tom Gillespie /Michelle Gorman): Gomps donate $300 to Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary. **Approved.**
8. MOTION (Judith Carder/Martin Anderson): GOMPS donate $50 to ECONEWS. **Approved**.
9. **Business from 2006 AGM:** Our Newsletter or the "Did You Know?" brochure could be handed out when GOMPS members visit householders or neighbourhood groups to assist with their concerns. Some might join**.** Louise Goulet noted that GOERT's listserve is available for GOMPS to publicise its activities via www.goert.ca.

10: **New Business**:

a. Work load and Constitutional constraints. Hal Gibbard had prepared the "Notice of Intent to GOMPS Members at AGM March 14, 2007" (distributed to all present). It outlined the problems faced by the Board: small core dealing with increasing requests for assistance, constraints in the Constitution (available at the AGM) and complications in easy replying due to voice mail and need for privacy of persons receiving our calls. Discussion covered: reducing the number of Directors to increase operability – or increasing the number to increase interest via involvement, and holding General meetings during the May-September period (per our Constitution) to educate the public

and maintain contact with Members. Corey and Michelle can suggest speakers for such events. Re changes to the Constitution: any changes must follow Schedule B of the BC Societies Act.

b. MOTION (Shirley d'Estrubé/Michelle Gorman): ***Insofar as certain changes in how we achieve our purposes, and there are personnel, administrative and workload problems that have become evident, it is therefore the wish of this meeting of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society be authorized to make recommendations for administrative and procedural changes, which may, in turn, require changes to our Constitution and By-Laws. The Membership will be kept informed as much as possible."*** **Approved.**

11. Election of Officers: Remaining for 2 years: Hal Gibbard, Tom Gillespie, Pierre d'Estrubé, Martin Anderson, David Boag and Mike Meagher. No nominations from the floor or volunteers. Current Board acclaimed.

12. Adjournment: 8:20 pm: Corey Manton/Shirley d'Estrubé: Approved.

PROGRAM: Dr. Richard Hebda, BC Provincial Museum, presented an illustrated talk on "Climate Change: From Past to Future". He covered temperature patterns and effects predicted by a United Nations Panel of Experts on precipitation, snowpacks and glacial erosion, sea levels, and storm strength and frequency.

Generally, temperatures will rise – more quickly and strongly in mid-to-high latitudes - , storms will increase in strength and frequency, water supplies will shrink and become more unreliable and current crops will suffer in "traditional" locations. By the year 2080, under the "worst case" scenario, native animals and plants will be under increasing stress in current locations, but lands further north or at higher elevations MAY open to colonization. Western red cedar will be a "loser", while Garry oak may be a "winner" via expanded areas of suitable climate through central BC and north-western Alberta. Thus, protecting EVERY area of Garry oak and associated species is VITAL to retaining genetic variation likely needed to expand their ranges as climates change. Experimental plantings of Garry oak and other species should be started NOW to determine their performance as climates change and to constitute repositories of gene pools under threat.

Several questions were raised during and after Dr. Hebda's address that indicated Members' concerns. Richard was presented with an honorarium, consisting of a GOMPS card and a photograph of a Garry oak meadow in bloom taken by Mike Meagher.

Gore Park - Plant species present (* = introduced)

Trees

Pseudotsuga menziesii **- Douglas fir**
Abies grandis **- Grand fir**
Taxus brevifolia **- Western yew**
Thuja plicata **- Western red cedar**
Alnus rubra **- Red alder**
Acer macrophyllum **- Big leaf maple**
Arbutus menziesii **- Arbutus**
Quercus garryana **- Garry oak**
Cornus nuttallii **- Western flowering dogwood**

Shrubs and Small Trees

Gaultheria shallon **- Salal**
Vaccinium parvifolium **- Red huckleberry**
Linnaea borealis **- Twinflower**
Lonicera ciliosa **- Orange honeysuckle**
Symphoricarpos albus **- Common snowberry**
Holodiscus discolor **- Ocean spray**
Amelanchier alnifolia **- Saskatoon**
Oemleria cerasiformis **- Indian plum**
Rosa gymnocarpa **- Dwarf rose, Baldhip rose**

Rubus parviflorus - **Thimbleberry**
*Rubus discolor** - **Himalayan blackberry**
Rubus ursinus - **Trailing blackberry**
*Cytisus scoparius** - **Scotch broom**
Ribes sanguineum - **Red-flowering currant**
Salix hookeriana - **Hooker's willow**
Cornus stolonifera - **Red-osier dogwood**
Rhamnus purshiana - **Cascara**
Paxistima myrsinites - **Falsebox**
Mahonia nervosa - **Dull Oregon-grape**
Mahonia aquifolium - **Tall Oregon-grape**
Philadelphus lewisii - **Mock-orange**
*Daphne laureola**- **Spurge daphne**

Wildflowers
Trillium ovatum - **Western trillium**
Erythronium oregonum - **White fawn lily**
Allium acuminatum - **Hooker's onion**
Allium cernuum - **Nodding onion**
Brodiaea coronaria - **Harvest brodiaea**
Brodiaea hyacinthina - **Fool's onion**
Camassia quamash - **Common camas**
Zigadenus venenosus - **Meadow death-camas**
Fritillaria lanceolata - **Chocolate lily**
Lilium columbianum - **Tiger lily**
Sisyrinchium douglasii - **Satin flower**
Calypso bulbosa - **Fairy slipper**
Corallorhiza maculata - **Western coralroot**
Corallorhiza striata - **Striped coralroot**
Goodyera oblongifolia - **Rattlesnake plantain**
Spiranthes romanzoffiana – **Ladies' tresses**
*Rumex acetosella** - **Sheep sorrel**
Montia parvifolia - **Small-leaved montia**
Claytonia perfoliata - **Miners lettuce**
Stellaria crispa - **Crisp sandwort**
Stellaria calycantha - **Northern sandwort**
Silene douglasii - **Douglas' campion**
Cardamine oligosperma - **few-seeded bittercress**
Sedum spathulifolium - **Broad-leaved stonecrop**
Lithophragma parviflorum - **Small-leaved woodland star**
Heuchera glabra - **Small-flowered woodland star**
Ranunculus occidentalis - **Western buttercup**
Aquilegia formosa - **Red columbine**
Delphinium menziesii - **Menzies' larkspur**
Sanicula crassicaulis- **Pacific sanicle**
Lomatium utriculatum - **Spring gold**
Prunella vulgaris - **Self-heal**
Rhinanthus minor - **Yellow rattle**
Collinsia parvifolia - **Blue eyed mary**
Mimulus alsinoides - **Chickweed Monkey - flower**
*Taraxacum officinale** - **Dandelion**
Microseris borealis - **Apargidium**
*Lactuca muralis** - **Wall lettuce**
Achlys triphylla - **Vanilla leaf**
Dodecatheon hendersonii - **Broad - leaved shooting star**
Plantago lanceolata - **Ribwort**
Galium aparine - **Cleavers**
Plectritis congesta - **Sea blush**
Monotropa uniflora - **Indian-pipe**
Pteridium aquilinum - **Bracken fern**
Polystichum munitum - **Sword fern**
Polypodium glycyrrhiza - **Licorice fern**

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS

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www.garryoak.bc.ca

GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Volume 16, Number 1 October 2009

Come Celebrate With Us

GOMPS
17 Years of Service to the Garry Oak Ecosystem

"Nuts about oak" Shawn Meagher, 2 ½ years old, delivers his nut collection. *See page 3 for growing instructions.*

Friday, October 16, 2009 — 7:30pm to 9:30pm
Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 West Burnside Rd.

Speakers:

Paul Gareau — "GOMPS & Garry Oak Surveys"

Evelyn Hamilton — "Climate Change & the Garry Oak Ecosystem"

Light refreshments — Old, new, and potential members and guests welcome.

Join us — Meet or renew acquaintance with long-time members; Learn about GOMPS' early activities; Update yourself on recent activities; Provide advice to newer members.

Please let us know if you will be coming so we can plan for numbers. Email to:
mmeagher@pfc.forestry.ca

Urban Forest Planning Begun

GOMPS began urging the creation of Urban Forest plans in 2003 (see GOMPS Leaflet Volume 10, numbers 3 and 5 for articles by Hal Gibbard) to properly appreciate and manage local tree cover, especially Garry oaks and other native species. Doing so would rationalise their management over the long term and provide habitat for the many local species that assist in maintenance of habitats and the remarkable visual aspects of our vicinity.

Some of the factors to be dealt with in a "Strategic Plan" are:

- Setting of goals and objectives for this urban forest
- Inventory : trees and ecosystems
- Recognising the priority of listed endangered species
- Committing to the importance of selected native species
- Identifying the degree of variability in both species and age structure to achieve the above goals and objectives
- Determining pest control principles and strategies
- Establishing an Action Plan, including priorities
- Establishing time-lines for implementation
- Estimating costs and the required budget for implementation

Starting from such an informed perspective would facilitate further inventory of habitats, species, ecosystem health and remedial measures, such as removal of invasive species and replacement of lost trees with those best-suited to the site.

When the goals and objectives are agreed to, then each municipality can develop some of the tools required to achieve the objectives of their plan, such as Tree Protection Bylaws, Regeneration and Replacement Plans, Maintenance Schedules, projected budgets, etc. Some municipalities already have one or more of these tools, but without objectives and strategic direction, they may not measure up to the task. These tools must address both the problems of the preservation of existing trees and of the recruitment of replacements. There are many communities without a tree canopy, so consideration should be given to expanding the existing forest, particularly the Garry oaks where they used to cover the whole area. Initiatives and incentives must be included to deal with that major part of the forest that is on private land so that it does not die out, leaving only scattered islands of trees on municipal properties.

Recently, both Victoria and Saanich have formed advisory groups to address the status of their urban forests and draft recommendations for a management plan. GOMPS' representative in the Saanich group is Hal Gibbard, and in Victoria it is Mike Meagher. Both have produced draft recommendations that have been discussed at public meetings and now are being reviewed by staff prior to advancing to the Councils for further discussion and possible adoption. Internet directions: Consult "*Victoria – Publications & Reports*: type "Urban forests" in the "SEARCH" box then select "*Urban forests master plan*". For Saanich, use the "SEARCH" option on the home page, type "urban forest" and select "*Urban Forest Strategy*".

Following these initiatives, GOMPS might continue urging other governments to "join the club" of jurisdictions recognizing and managing their urban forest for the long-term appreciation of, and benefit to, their residents and visitors.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

www.hat.bc.ca/projects/ufsi.htm Urban Forest Stewardship Initiative

Nuts About Oaks:
Acorns in a Bumper Crop Year

... in the years after the First World War, Louis-Hubert Lyautey, Maréchal de France, ...Resident General of Morocco under the French (was) told that the Moroccan Atlas mountain range, which stretches from Agadir to the Mediterranean, had once been covered by a cedar forest. He ordered it replanted at once. His civil servants objected that such old-growth forests took millennia to establish. Lyautey replied briskly: 'That, gentlemen, is why we shall start immediately.' (J. Roberts, *Mythic Woods*, 2004)

Let's take advantage of this year's abundant crop of acorns to begin replanting our Garry Oak forest ***immediately***. Here are the instructions from the Native Plant Propagation Guidelines on the GOERT website, http://www.goert.ca/propagation_guidelines/trees/quercus_garryana

Seed Propagation

Flowering Time: February to May

Fruit Ripening Time: Late summer

Seed Collection Time: September to October

Crop Intervals: Two to three years

Number of Seeds per Kilogram: 165 - 225

Seed Viability: Empty or insect damaged seeds common

Fruit and Seed Collection and Extraction: Ripe acorns are best collected by hand-picking into picking bags (Banerjee et al., 2001) or by tapping off branches with a bamboo pole onto tarps. Avoid collecting mature fallen acorns to which the caps are still attached. Separate insect-damaged from sound seeds by presence of bore holes, and by floating off unsound acorns in water.

Seed Storage: Seeds should be sown as soon a possible in the fall. If storage is necessary it should be for as short a time as possible. Store under moist conditions in a refrigerator (do not freeze) until sowing. Fresh acorns germinate rapidly under warm moist conditions. Soaking in water for one to several days improves germination (Jebb, 1995; Buis, 1996).

Fruit/Seed Dormancy and Treatment: No dormancy exhibited, thus no treatment required.

Outplanting Characteristics and Requirements

Seedlings can take 10 or more years to grow to 1 m in height. If possible, plant seed where they are intended to grow because seedlings do not transplant well.

Garry Oaks, Fire, and Regeneration

Fire is historically a major factor in the Garry Oak ecosystem, whether naturally occurring or set by aboriginal people to maintain Camas meadows and grazing for deer and elk. Evidence from dendrochronology (history written in the growth rings of trees) and other sources indicates that fires happened every 5 to 7 years, keeping shrubs and conifers out of the meadows while mature oaks were protected by their thick bark. Young oaks probably had their tops killed or severely damaged by some of the fires but, as the photo on the top right shows, burnt trees can regenerate from their roots. The picture is of a stand of small Garry Oaks in Beacon Hill Park, burnt in a grass fire in the summer of 2008. They did leaf out this spring but the healthier leaf crop is that at the base of the stand.

The picture on the bottom left is of a group of Garry Oaks in Mount Stephens Park. Their trunks grow in a frequently-seen pattern, a circle, bases touching. One theory has it that they regenerated from the roots of an older tree that once stood in the middle, and that it's one of the most common patterns for Garry Oak regeneration.

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Phone: 250-383-3427
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GOMPS

The Garry Oak Leaflet

Official Newsletter of the
Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Volume 17, Number 1 February 2010

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, March 10, 2010 — 7:30pm to 9:30pm
Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 West Burnside Rd.

Speaker:
Brenda Costanzo — Garry Oak Meadow Plants in Your Garden

Brenda is the Senior Vegetation Specialist with the BC Ministry of Environment. She has been involved with the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team since its initiation, and was co-chair of the Plants at Risk Recovery Implementation Group from 2004-2009. She is also a member of the Restoration and Management RIG, and is currently working on a chapter (Native Plant Propagation and Supply) for the Garry Oak Restoration Compendium being drafted by the Recovery Implementation Group.

Brenda has a M.Sc. in Biology and her background is in plant taxonomy, native plant identification, herbaria curation, and native plant gardening. She is a co-author with April Pettinger of *Native Plants in the Coastal Garden: A Guide for Gardeners in the Pacific Northwest* published in 2002. Over the years she has taught many native plant gardening courses and presented numerous public talks on gardening with native plants. As well, she designed and installed the first phase of the native plant garden at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary in 1985. Her first love has always been gardening, and she is currently working on her yard to integrate native plants into the landscape, including Garry oaks and associated species.

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GOMPS' "TEENAGE" BIRTHDAY PARTY

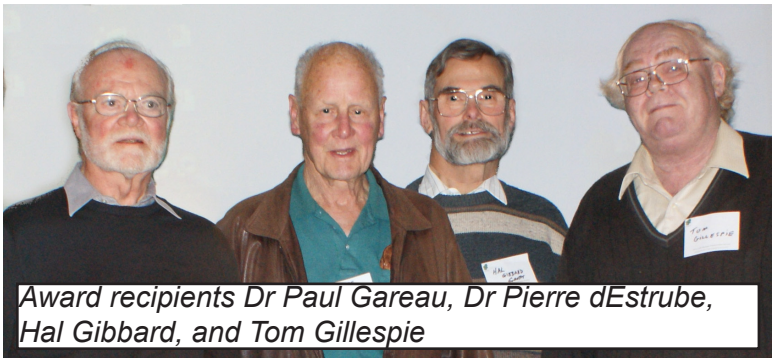
GOMPS celebrated its 17TH Birthday Party on October 16th, 2009 to connect with old, and maybe new, Members and recognise its accomplishments. Twenty-five Members and guests enjoyed a presentation by Dr. Paul Gareau on his role in organising and monitoring the Garry oak inventory project from 1994 to 2001. The purpose was to record the number of Garry oaks per property in the four "core" municipalities: Oak Bay, Victoria, Esquimalt and Saanich, to provide a basis of assessing their distribution and assist governments in planning their management. Each municipality provided maps of properties that volunteers, after training on recognizing Garry oaks vs. other species, used to record the presence, number and relative size (trees under 10 cm. in stem diameter at breast height vs. larger) of Garry oaks visible from the street. The importance of including the "small" trees was to indicate any newer generations that could succeed the prominent mature trees – those most admired, but due to fail, or be removed by our management preferences for other features – in the next decades. Although differences in skill level and interpretation of protocols led to somewhat-inconsistent records, this program showed clearly that Garry oaks are clustered, rather than spread evenly, and that few young trees could be seen from the street, likely indicating that our landscape could change drastically by 2050 or 2100 if efforts to establish a young forest did not commence soon. An arborist familiar with the situation in Oak Bay (home to thousands of Garry oaks) stated that 600 of that species had failed or been removed for housing, etc. in the preceding decade. The maps were offered to their source municipalities, some of which used them to create a level in their inventory for consultation during rezoning and building applications. More recently, they can assist these governments in formulating better tree-protection laws and Urban Forest plans.

Speakers Paul Gareau and Evelyn Hamilton with GOMPS board members Fred Hook, Pierre d`Estrube, Hal Gibbard and Tom Gillespie

Our second speaker was Evelyn Hamilton, B. C. Ministry of Forests and Lands, addressing "Climate Change and Garry Oak's Future". She reviewed the evidence: increasing average (and high summer) temperatures, decreasing glacier and arctic sea ice levels, - where the impacts are stronger than in our latitudes – more-serious forest fires and, especially in BC, devastation by pests, such as the mountain pine beetle. High-elevation areas will be strongly affected, resulting in displacement northward of native species such as Alaska cypress and mountain hemlock. They created the forest background during the Winter Olympics at Whistler and Cypress Bowl. She outlined the likelihood of further impacts by invading organisms, such as insects and drought-tolerant plants and the need to adapt our land-management practices to withstand the increasing stresses on our landscapes. In general, Garry oak should be among the better-adapted species in this future landscape, increasing the need for a concerted program of growing and planting our only native oak species.

During the refreshment break we enjoyed drinks and “nibblies” supplied gratis by Starbucks at the Tillicum Centre, as well as holding a draw for items, contributions from several sources - in particular CDs of all GOMPS Newsletters from the first issue, and others. One special item, a cartoon donated earlier by Adrian Raeside, depicting the too-frequent fate of Garry oaks in urbania (removal), was auctioned, drawing a $200 bid by Hal Gibbard. **Many** thanks.

That was followed by presentations of Certificates of Appreciation to Founding Members Dr. Pierre d’Estrube’, Tom Gillespie and (in absentia) Dr. Briony Penn, plus Dr. Paul Gareau and Hal Gibbard. All had been approved (some deception was involved) at the previous Board meeting.



Award recipients Dr Paul Gareau, Dr Pierre dEstrube, Hal Gibbard, and Tom Gillespie

New Certificates of Appreciation to be Awarded at GOMPS 2010 AGM:

Dave Lock: He is President and Treasurer of the Mt. Tolmie Conservancy Association.

Volunteers began to remove broom, blackberry and Ivy from the park in 1994 and formed the MTCA in 1995. Since then the park has been cleared of mature broom and replanted with nearly 3000 Garry Oaks and 1000 shrubs. Dave brought his students from Oak Bay High School to join in the project and he still includes students in removal of regenerating broom seedlings and does much on his own, carrying on from Eric Redekop and Paul Gareau, over 15 years later.

GOMPS will recognize Dave for his ongoing commitment to the goals of Garry Oak preservation.

Ludo Bertsch: Is the leader of the Oaklands Community Association’s Ryan Greenway initiative.

RYAN STREET GREENWAY PROJECT

From the legislature March 2008: “R. Fleming: I rise today to recognize a wonderful community project underway in my constituency of Victoria-Hillside. I’m referring to the Ryan Street greenway project. The Ryan Street greenway is a project to enhance an undeveloped road allowance. This neglected area still boasts an impressive stand of large, mature Garry oak trees, some of which are a century old or more.

The new greenway will connect to Ryan Hill park, which is the city’s newest neighbourhood park preservation area. This park and the greenway are designed to showcase the unique ecosystem, indigenous to the southern island, of arbutus trees, Garry oak, camas and other wild vegetation. This was the ecosystem that Songhees and Esquimalt people lived off for thousands of years.”

GOMPS would like to recognize the OCA and Ludo Bertsch for carrying out this important project.

Garry Oaks On Savary Island

The northernmost occurrence of Garry oak is on Savary Island, situated at the head of Georgia Strait, west of Lund. But do not look for a stand of impressive trees; only 7 small trees exist under a canopy of Douglas-firs on the north slope at the eastern end of the Island. They were found a few years ago by Drs. Julian and Kathy Dunster while developing a management plan of the Island for the residents. They had found reference to these oaks in “The Ecology of Savary Island” by R. S. Sherman and published 1931 in “Museum and Art Notes” (pp. 3-13) of the “Art, Historical and Scientific Association” in Vancouver.

Savary Island’s northeast-southwest orientation has created a catch/deposit target for wind-blown sand anchored by a granitic bluff at the eastern end. Sherman stated: “This point of rock (“Green’s Point”) has kept the sands of Savary from being swept away by the tides.” Residents have named 2 areas “Sahara” and “Kalahari” deserts, emphasizing the power and influence of the prevailing winds! The rest of its 5-mile length is mainly a series of sandy benches paralleling the southern shore near the west end, variable land due to wind reworking the sand in the middle, and old dunes nearer the eastern end. Such land is better suited to Arbutus, which occurs widely. One Arbutus near the top of a dune, but protected from wind by Douglas-firs, Sherman felt “..is doubtless a thousand years old.” It was near yews “of unusually large girth” and other large broadleaved and coniferous trees common on more-favourable Coastal sites. Sherman found also some natural meadows among the benches; flowers listed are familiar to many of us that enjoy Garry oak meadows’ spring displays, including Spring Gold, Wooly Sunflower, Chocolate Lily, Shooting Star and Death Camas.

Portions of the Island were logged in the 1900s and several cabin sites were surveyed along the southern shore, but no record exists of Garry oaks in that area.

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