

Summer 2011 Newsletter



Sneak Peek

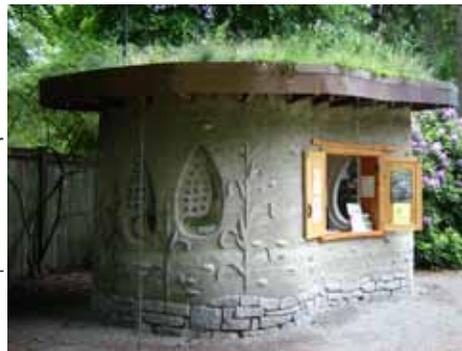
- Cool Wildlife Sightings 3
- Program Events 4, 5
- Restoring the Secret Bog 6
- Urban Waterways 7

SPES Staff Top 10 Park Favourites

The Stanley Park seawall is the most popular trail in all of Canada. At any moment on a sunny summer day, there may be over 2,000 people walking, running, riding on this perimeter path. But within Stanley Park's 400 hectares (1000 acres) of forest, foreshore, and wetlands, there are innumerable magical gems of natural and cultural delight. Hear what SPES staff have to say about some of their favourite places in Stanley Park:

1. Patricia Thomson, Executive Director

As inspirational as a Hobbit House, the Stanley Park Earthen Architecture in the miniature train plaza has its curved, reclaimed shutters spread wide open below its green toupe in the summer months. Fondly and appropriately called "the Cob House", this award-winning sustainable structure was built by the passion of some 4,000 helping hands, and features windows in the shape of corncobs. It is the first place to offer organic snacking in Stanley Park – the best popcorn in the City! Come snack, and know that you will be supporting SPES's educational programs!



2. Koren Johnstone, Volunteer Coordinator

On my walk to work at the Lost Lagoon Nature House, I sometimes stop to smell the blossoms or watch the aerial ballet of a hummingbird in the SPES native plant demonstration garden. With its 4-season design, the garden offers year-round discoveries, from the flame-red bark of the red osier dogwood in the dead of winter, to a variety of birds and beneficial insects in the warmer months. As a place to relax and learn about local native plants, it is well worth the visit!

Contact Us

Stanley Park Ecology Society
PO Box 5167
Vancouver BC V6B 4B2
www.stanleyparkecology.ca

School Programs: 604-257-6907
Public Programs: 604-718-6522
Conservation Progs: 604-681-7099
Co-Existing w/Coyotes: 604-718-6547
Stewardship Progs: 604-718-6547
Volunteers: 604-681-7099
Nature House: 604-257-8544

SPES Staff Top 10 Park Favourites, cont'd



9. Robyn Worcester,
Conservation Programs
Manager

Beaver Creek is one of only 3 remaining salmon streams left in Vancouver. Its cool, clear water, pools, riffles and woody debris make up a year-round home to coastal cutthroat trout (a species at risk in BC) as well as juvenile coho salmon. The meandering channel, cooled by overhanging riparian vegetation and rainforest trees such as bigleaf maple and western red cedar, is an oasis for both people and wildlife and my favourite place to visit in the summer.



10. Anita Georgy,
Interim School Programs
Manager

Beaver Lake is my favourite spot in the Park because it is so peaceful. There is an amazing stillness that falls over the water, when the only sound to be heard is the hum of insects. I also love to watch the incredible array of birds that call the lake home or are visiting - especially the ducklings in the spring!

3. Julie Sabau, Eco Ranger Coordinator

Of all the enchanting places in Stanley Park, the heronry is my favourite. Each tree here cradles dozens of nests for the provincially blue listed great blue heron. What a sight it is to look up and see herons tending nests and caring for their young, all of them seemingly unaware of the commotion below as people play tennis, and cars cruise by. The heronry is a fantastic example of coexistence, and of nature's ability to adapt.



4. Greg Ferguson, Stewardship Coordinator

Approaching Cathedral Trail from the Stone Bridge I'm welcomed by sounds of bubbling water from skunk cabbage laden water bodies. Bright sunlight warms me as I make my way into one of the many blowdown areas from 2006. I'm awed by the massive root masses that surround me. In the distance a bald eagle calls from its nest in the remaining old growth forest. If diversity is on your 'to see list' at Stanley Park, I'd highly recommend a walk down Cathedral Trail.

5. Roger Keyes, Public Programs Manager

Many times I have sat at the crossroads of Lover's and Squirrel Trails on a bench dedicated to Romeo, a kind and gentle man, the plaque tells me. Marveling at the incredible forest surrounding me, I sit still. On a sunny day, the light filters through the Douglas-firs and soothes the passerby as the barred owl asks, "Who cooks for you?"... It is paradise. In front of Romeo's bench once rose a mighty cedar, seemingly invincible. Then the windstorm of 2006 laid it low that howling night. Prostrate now, it is hardly "dead" but home to a variety of creatures and new plants as it enters the next stage in its existence as a nurse log for a forest yet to come.

6. Brian Titaro, Conservation Technician

Nothing beats the beach in the summer, but not all beaches are created equal! Third Beach, in my opinion, is the shining star of beaches in Stanley Park. It's not as accessible as Second Beach but that means it's never as crowded! On top of that, it offers great swimming, unobstructed views of the mountains and is sheltered by the towering cliffs of Ferguson Point.



7. Phil Dubrulle, Co-Existing with Coyotes Program Coordinator

My favourite place in Stanley Park is the halfway point of Siwash Rock trail. I enjoy its tranquility and wide open views of the western beaches, Vancouver Island and West Vancouver. From this vantage point, you can watch ducks and other sea birds patrolling the shoreline. Turning around 180 degrees has you looking uphill through a blowdown area that is truly a remarkable example of forest succession and rejuvenation.

8. Krystal Pyke, Environmental Educator

Between Third Beach and Prospect Point is Merilees Trail where there is an amazing bald eagle nest that I love to sit and watch. I like to spot the young eagles around the park, too. They don't have the white head and tail like the adults yet so they are a little trickier to spot. I wish I could soar over the park like an eagle; it would be an amazing view!



Cool Wildlife Sightings in Stanley Park

Transient Orcas

On the morning of May 11th, a pod of orcas were spotted heading past Stanley Park into Burrard Inlet. It is rare for orcas to come so close to the city. Researchers from the Vancouver Aquarium confirmed that this pod was a group of transient whales. Transients roam the ocean in search of larger mammalian prey like seals and dolphins unlike the resident whales which feed mainly on fish. The pod apparently followed the seawall into the harbour and this amazing photo was shot by a local tug boat dispatcher who headed out on the water to see them.



Photo by Dave Price

Northwestern Salamanders

Since the fall, SPES staff and volunteers have been sampling fish using minnow traps in Beaver Lake and its surrounding tributaries. In March, when we went to check the traps in Beaver Creek, we were surprised to find two male northwestern salamanders in our trap. Although the egg masses of this species are commonly found in Beaver Lake and in the small ponds around the miniature train area, the adults are rarely observed as they are mostly terrestrial and only come to ponds in early spring to breed.



Photo by Peter Woods

Plume Moth

There was a rare visitor to the Stanley Park Nature House at Lost Lagoon this spring. Photographer and naturalist Peter Woods who has documented many interesting invertebrates in the park over the years, captured this beautiful photo. This twig-like creature is called a plume moth (*Emmelina monodactyla*). It has a wingspan of 18-30 mm and its favourite foods include bindweeds such as the invasive morning glory plants. It is an introduced European species in North America.



Photo by Mark T. White

Anna's Hummingbird nest

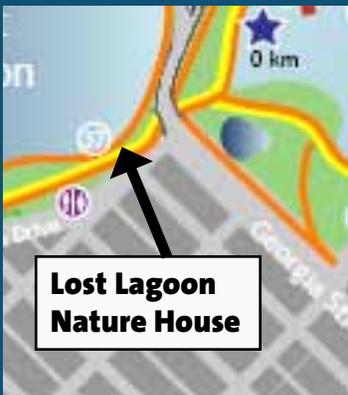
For the last several years, a pair of Anna's hummingbirds have built their nest in a larch tree near the biofiltration wetland on Lost Lagoon. This year, local naturalists and photographers documented the nest building and incubation of eggs at this spot. The female was seen adding lichens and tiny twigs to her nest as well as weaving spider webs into the structure to bind it together. Unfortunately, perhaps due to the severe spring weather, it is not believed that this nest was productive.

Summer 2011

All Discovery Walks meet at the Stanley Park Nature House at Lost Lagoon unless otherwise indicated.

\$5 Members / Seniors / Children;

\$10 Non-members



The Nature House

Located on the southeast shore of Lost Lagoon, at the foot of Alberni Street underneath the viewing plaza, the Nature House is open weekends September to June from 10 am to 4 pm. During July and August the Nature House is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Birthday Party in the Park!

SPES offers educational, entertaining parties for kids of all ages:

Choose themes of Forest Explorers / Nature Arts / Mysteries of the Marsh ...

For more information:

604-718 6522

Sun, June 12 9:00 – 11:00 am	Twenty Million Years of Rock and Roll Rivers, millions of years old, dumping sand, silt and clay while dinosaurs roamed the earth formed Stanley Park. Join Geologist David Cook on a walk along the Stanley Park seawall at low tide as he reveals cigar-shaped concretions in sandstones and other features formed by mighty forces of crustal subduction. Special Meeting Location: Parking lot at Third Beach Concession. Turn right at the Tea House.
Sun, June 19 1:30 – 3:30 pm	Forging a Forest Stanley Park's forests are a quilt of first, second, and more recent growth cycles. City arborist Bill Stephen will show management strategies in regions of old growth, past plantations, and restoration zones of the 2006 hurricane winds. See where strategic thinning is underway. Please note Meeting Location: Parking lot by the Hollow Tree
Sun, June 26 9:00 – 11:00 am	Birds of a Feather Join naturalist and expert bird watcher Cathy Aitchison for a two-hour walk to explore Stanley Park's varied and beautiful bird life. Participation by donation.
Sat, July 2 10:00 am – 12:00 pm	The Young Naturalists' Club of Stanley Park (see sidebar)
Sat, July 2 11:00 am & 1:30 pm	Beaver Tales Parks Canada's exciting new theatre troupe, Beaver Tales, will perform on the Nature House Plaza. Join the wacky antics of Justine Beaver and Fingers the Raccoon for some tail-slapping fun as they bring to life Canada's national parks and historic sites. Free and fun for all ages.
Sun, July 3 1:30- 3:30 pm	Celebrate Canada! Celebrate Nature! Nature unites this great land like nothing else! It defines and binds our identity from the Maritimes through the prairies, over the Rockies to the beautiful West Coast. On this walk, Environmental Educator Krystal Pyke and local historian Jolene Cumming highlight the roles that forestry, leisure, and ecology play in Stanley Park, the Province, and country.
Sun, July 3	Children's Weekend at the Nature House Come learn all about eagles. Help build an eagle's nest in the Nature House! Drop in: Activities and games will be going on. Great for kids of all ages!
Sun, July 10 1:30 – 3:30 pm	Great Blue Herons These magnificent avians have nested in the park at least since the 1920's. They have had their challenges: wind storms, an urban environment, raccoon and eagle attacks. On this herony tour we will see the young birds entering the life cycle of the Great Blue Herons. See what the Stanley Park Ecology Society is doing to be their welcoming and helpful neighbours.
Sun, July 17 1:30 – 3:30 pm	With Glee: The Stanley Park Mash! The diversity of vegetation is the foundation of the temperate rainforest. It provides habitat for countless critters, and medicines, food, tools, and shelter for humanity throughout the ages. On this walk, learn to identify common plants that you never knew were there.
Sun, July 24 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Evolution and Stanley Park Evolution plays a key role in what you see around you. The mutations and deviances it creates shapes what nature is and what it might become. Join VCC Science Instructor, Maria Morlin, for this fascinating walk through an evolutionary history of Stanley Park.

Summer Live! (July 8, 9, 10)

Celebrate Vancouver's 125th birthday over 3 full days in Stanley Park. SPES will be at the Brockton greens with games, activities, and nature explorations for the whole family. Food, entertainment, art, recreation, and 3 concert stages full of day and evening entertainment.

For details,

<http://www.celebratevancouver125.ca/2011/01/summer-live-july-8-9-10-2011>

SPES Nature Programs

Sun, July 24 7:00 - 9:00 pm	Bats are Beautiful Learn about bats living in Stanley Park and SPES conservation programs. A short slideshow about these mysterious nocturnal creatures is followed by a walk outside to see bat habitat and a bat colony. Participation by donation. Pre-registration required by July 22: 604-681-7099 or conservation@stanleyparkecolgy.ca Location: Stanley Park Dining Pavilion.
Sat, July 30 11:00 am & 1:30 pm	Beaver Tales Parks Canada's exciting new theatre troupe, Beaver Tales, will perform on the Nature House Plaza. Join the wacky antics of Justine Beaver and Fingers the Raccoon for some tail-slapping fun as they bring to life Canada's national parks and historic sites. Free and fun for all ages.
Sun, July 31 9:00 - 11:00 am	Birds of a Feather Join naturalist and expert bird watcher Cathy Aitchison for a two-hour walk exploring Stanley Park's varied and beautiful bird life. Participation by donation.
Sat, Aug 6 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	The Young Naturalists' Club of Stanley Park (see sidebar)
Sun, Aug 7 1:30 - 3:30 pm	Eagles Day in Nature House Check out the progress of the bald eagle nest we are building in the Nature House and go for a guided walk with local eagle aficionado, Dalyce Epp. Of the 18 eagle nests that Stanley Park Ecology Society's volunteers monitor, most are active nearly year round. On this walk, visit the site of eagle activity and discover fascinating facts about their lives.
Sun, Aug 14 1:30 - 3:30 pm	All Bugged Down: Stanley Park's Secret Bog Join VCC Science Instructor, Maria Morlin, for a stroll near to Stanley Park's little known bog near Beaver Lake. Meet carnivorous plants. Learn how bogs and wetlands fit in forest ecology.
Sat and Sun Aug 20, 21	Bioblitz! See below.
Sun, Aug 21 1:30 - 3:30 pm	State of the Park: Ecological Integrity In 2010, SPES released a groundbreaking report on the condition of the diverse habitats of Stanley Park. The report compiled a bio-inventory of the park's flora and fauna and identified areas of concern in the park's various ecosystems. Join Krystal, SPES Environmental Educator for a tour of areas and issues highlighted in the report.
Sun, Aug 28 9:00 - 11:00 am	Birds of a Feather Join naturalist and expert bird watcher Cathy Aitchison for a two-hour walk exploring Stanley Park's varied and beautiful bird life. Participation by donation.
Sun, Sep 4 1:30 - 3:30 pm	The Perfect Storm Biologist David Cook tours us in the forests of Stanley Park where the storm of 2006 was most destructive. After 5 years, we will see how managers can influence the pace of nature's recovery as well as guide it towards what we require as users of the forest. Special Meeting Location: Parking lot at Third Beach Concession. Turn right at the Tea House.
Sun, Sep 11 1:30 - 3:30 pm	The Rainforest Cafe Fast food or ten course meal? Explore forest plants that west coast First Nations peoples used for food and resources.

Stanley Park BioBlitz! (August 20 and 21)

A BioBlitz is a citizen science event that enables the public, volunteers and professional biologists to come together to inventory as many species of flora and fauna as possible in a given period of time. Enjoy educational displays for the whole family, and opportunities to contribute to surveys. Stay tuned to the SPES website for specific information!

The Young Naturalists' Club of Stanley Park

This monthly event is a chance for children (with their parents) to enjoy two hours of nature exploration. Activities include hiking, games, wildlife observation, outdoor art, and more! Presented by the Stanley Park Nature House at Lost Lagoon and the Young Naturalists' Club of BC, please call 604-718-6522 for more information or to sign up. Drop in and check us out!

Parks Day! (July 16)

Celebrate the centennials of Parks Canada and BC Parks in Stanley Park. SPES will be at the Brockton greens with games, activities, and nature explorations for the whole family. Food, entertainment, art, recreation, and a concert stage full of entertainment. Bus, bike, or walk in for this busy festival.

For details, www.parksday.ca



Special Request Tours

Do you have a family gathering, a day camp group, or just want a personalized eco-tour?

Call for a personalized tour by a qualified and experienced nature interpreter:

For more information:

604-718 6522

Restoring the Secret Bog

By: Robyn Worcester, *Conservation Programs Manager*



The carnivorous round-leaved sundew plant only lives in bogs.

During the Beaver Lake Environmental Enhancement Project (BLEEP) in the 1990's, students from Capilano College conducted the first surveys of the bog. They found that the bog contained unsanctioned trails which had negative impacts such as the compaction of sphagnum moss and the matting of the shrub layer, as well as positive effects of creating light openings that allowed for the growth of sundew plants. The students reported that the bog was disappearing due to encroachment by terrestrial species such as trees and shrubs.

The State of the Park Report for the Ecological Integrity of Stanley Park (SOPEI) released by SPES in 2010 indicated that sections of the bog are still intact, but remain at risk of disappearing due to the influx of

There is a small but important habitat in Stanley Park that is in jeopardy of disappearing thus reducing the biodiversity of the Park. The secret bog located on the south shore of Beaver Lake is a remnant of a larger bog that once existed prior to developments, such as the Causeway and perimeter trails in the early 20th century. This fragile habitat is one of only two in Vancouver and contains unique plant species such as Labrador tea, bog laurel and the carnivorous round-leaved sundew.



The blue dasher dragonfly has been observed at the Beaver Lake bog and is a species at risk in BC. (Photo by Peter Woods)

small trees and other terrestrial plants such as salal. The SOPEI report recommends that an inventory of the bog be completed and that restoration and maintenance activities be undertaken to prevent this rare habitat from disappearing. In 2009, SPES staff created three small restoration test patches to see if sundew growth would increase with the removal of competing salal and Labrador tea. After a couple of growing seasons, it seems that the test patches have been successful and have helped improve conditions in those areas.

In January 2011, the Vancouver Park Board approved the Stanley Park Ecological Action Plan, written by Park Board staff in cooperation with SPES and created as a result of the SOPEI report. The plan included the restoration of Beaver Lake's bog and the installation of a boardwalk. At the meeting, 12 year old Young Naturalist Club member Maja Webber, spoke in support of the plan. She told the Board how she had gone to Beaver Lake and its neighbouring bog a long time ago, and still had an extremely strong tie with the bog. She said she would like for other children to have the same opportunity, and that is why she is passionate about restoring this site. Along with Maja, representatives from the Camosun Bog Restoration group expressed interest in helping out with the restoration efforts.

Since that meeting, SPES staff have met with Park Board staff, Maja, and the Camosun Bog Restoration group to plan the restoration process which will begin early this summer. In May, Maja also applied for and won a Vancouver Foundation Generation Green Award (GGA) to help fund the initiatives.

By early summer SPES aims to undertake an inventory of the bog including photo documentation so that we can begin the restoration work in July and August. Planting and transplanting of native species will be undertaken by work parties composed of Young Naturalists and SPES community volunteers including members of the Camosun Bog Restoration group.

To participate as a volunteer in the project, please contact vols@stanleyparkecology.ca.

Why are bogs so important?

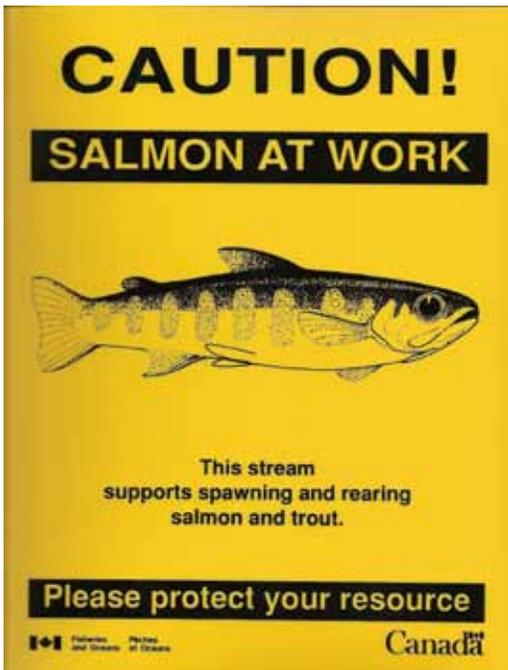
Over 50% of the earth's wetlands are bog ecosystems, yet they are internationally considered threatened (International Mire Conservation Group, 1984). On the global scale, bogs are tremendously significant as carbon sinks, and act to mitigate climate change. In 2007, at a meeting organized by the "Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), it was concluded that investments in conservation and restoration of peatlands (ie sphagnum bogs) can be up to 100 times more cost effective than other carbon sequestration measures." (Ahmed Djoghla, Executive Secretary of the CBD. Source: UN Press Release, 2007)

Peatlands cover less than 3% of the earth's surface. Their destruction is responsible for 10% of the world's greenhouse gases. Peatlands filter 10% of the world's fresh water. As other habitats are destroyed, peatlands become increasingly important habitat for rare and endangered species. (Ibid)

Bringing back the wild to our urban waterways

By: Brian Titaro, *Conservation Technician*

With the warm summer weather in full swing, the natural wonders of Stanley Park flourish. The salmonberries are in bloom, the mason bees are out of their cocoons and the red-winged blackbirds are singing at Lost Lagoon. Even in the chilly waters of Beaver Creek, young salmon are swimming around the gravel, hiding behind rocks, under logs and among aquatic plants. However, these coho salmon didn't start their lives in Beaver Creek; they started in aquariums in classrooms across Vancouver. These salmon are part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Salmonids in the Classroom program (www.salmonidsintheclassroom.ca). This program, piloted in 1982, is designed for students to learn their larger role in the community and that the decisions they make today will impact future generations.



Every January the DFO distributes aquariums and coho eggs to over 30 classrooms in the City of Vancouver. Throughout the spring, the eggs transform into alevin and eventually fry as the students monitor water conditions and feed their small salmon until it's time to release them into one of the three remaining salmon streams in Vancouver. For coho fry, that stream happens to be Beaver Creek in Stanley Park!

This year SPES has taken a strong role in this fantastic program taking place in the park. School Programs staff piloted their own program to complement the DFO's wherein they help students release their fry, perform a stream survey, learn about aquatic invertebrates and the threats that the coho fry must surpass in Beaver Creek, and perform a sing along with a spawning salmon puppet! The program was a tremendous success as we delivered 9 programs to over 200 students and helped release over 450 salmon fry into Beaver Creek!

While the City of Vancouver was historically home to 50 salmon bearing streams, this program designed for students reinforced to SPES Environmental Educators that it is never too late to make a lasting difference. So this summer, take a walk down Ravine Trail and gaze into the clear waters of Beaver Creek and see if you can spot a young coho darting beneath the shadows of the overhanging trees. And keep in mind that the actions we all perform today can go a long way in bringing back the wild to our urban water ways.

IN MEMORY of VICTOR

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of SPES friend and longtime volunteer, Victor Cottingham. Victor served as a volunteer with our organization from 1993 to 2006. Specifically, he served as a nature interpreter and a resident plant expert in charge of the care and propagation of plants at the Nature House. With his love and knowledge of the plant world, Victor was a favourite with many park visitors who came to seek out his sage advice on garden and house plant care. In 2003, Victor was awarded an honorary membership for his outstanding support of SPES, and later was granted several awards for his exceptional achievements as a volunteer. At the age of 82, he singlehandedly installed a native plant garden next to the path by the Nature House (it is to this day referred to as 'Victor's Garden'). He finally 'retired' as a volunteer at the age of 83. As our longest serving volunteer, and with his patience, strong work ethic and generosity, Victor was the backbone of the Nature House for many of its formative years. He will be missed by many, not just at SPES, but throughout our community.



...promotes awareness of and respect for the natural world by providing a leadership role in the stewardship of Stanley Park through collaborative initiatives in education, research and conservation.

SPES Members Enjoy:

- Discounts on Discovery Walks, Family Programs and Events
- Seasonal activities calendar and our quarterly newsletter
- Special perks and promotions from community partners
- Free preview nights on Christmas Bright Nights and Halloween Ghost Train plus Theatre Under the Stars

SPES Membership Supports:

- School and Public Programs helping more than 30,000 children and adults to discover nature each year through hands-on stewardship adventures
- The Stanley Park Nature House at Lost Lagoon, Vancouver's only ecological interpretive centre, welcoming over 15,000 visitors each year
- Wildlife monitoring, habitat restoration and biodiversity conservation in Stanley Park

Canada Helps! Donating to the Stanley Park Ecology Society has never been easier, thanks to CanadaHelps! Simply click the "Donate Now" icon on our website, www.stanleyparkecology.ca.

CanadaHelps provides secure service for monthly or one-time gifts. Tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$30.

YES! I Want To Contribute!

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 Postal Code _____ Phone _____
 E-mail _____

All information will be kept confidential according to the Personal Information Protection Act.

Payment Method

- Cheque Visa Mastercard

Card Number _____
 Expiry Date _____
 Cardholder _____

Cheques are payable to:
 Stanley Park Ecology Society
 PO Box 5167
 Vancouver, B.C. V6B 4B2 Canada

I Want to Become A Member

- Family (\$40) Individual (\$20)
 Junior <19 (\$15) Senior/Volunteer (\$15)

- This is a renewal membership
 Send newsletter by e-mail; or
 Send newsletter by post

My Gift Is Enclosed

- \$20 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

I Want to Make A Monthly Donation

I authorize the following monthly credit card donation to the Stanley Park Ecology Society:

- \$10 \$15 \$25 \$ _____

SPES is a registered charity #11916 6890 RR0001. Charitable Tax Receipts issued for donations of \$30 or more

We THANK OUR RECENT DONORS AND PARTNERS



Collette Foundation Charitable Fund of
 Tides Canada Foundation



Keith Lord Sports Foundation Fund held at the Vancouver Foundation

Thanks Also To Recent Donors:

The Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, Times Square Suites Hotel, FB2 Films Inc, Mark Busse, Delta Suites, Mary Landell, ethical bean coffee, Global Lifestyles Canada Inc, Leanne Dospital, Frances, Gary and Cathy Nayedley, Joan Guido, Happy Planet, Best Buy.



Prospect Point Cafe and Stanley's Offer Stanley Park Ecology Society members **20% OFF** full service dining (excludes liquor)

20% off purchases at the Stanley Park Gift shop (Prospect Point) featuring unique Canadiana, gifts and souvenirs. Not valid on postcards or film

Valid until Sept 30, 2011

for more information:
www.prospectpoint.ca/dining
 604-669-2737
www.stanleybar.ca/dining
 604-602-3088