On December 15th 2006, hurricane force winds blasted through Stanley Park and significantly changed the forest as we once knew it. Most of the trees near Prospect Point buckled under the pressure and areas like the beloved lush forest surrounding Cathedral Trail were reduced to piles of fallen trees. An estimated 10,000 trees fell throughout Stanley Park, leaving few areas unaffected. This urban forest has been admired by millions of people from all over the world and has served as a classroom for thousands of people wanting to learn about nature. To see the destruction was heartbreaking for many, but it was not devastating to the forest ecosystem.

Forests are dynamic. We watch them change over the seasons and from year to year, but it is harder to see the entire lifecycle that lasts 250 years and more. Events such as this storm reset the clock to regenerate naturally, the infant forest we can expect will look very different and induce changes that will be seen for generations. If the forest is allowed to regenerate naturally, the forest we can expect will look very different than what existed before the storm. The new forest will rebound with deciduous shrubs and trees that will temporarily replace the lofty conifers. These new plants support an explosion of wildlife that find food and shelter in the dense foliage. The only successional stage higher in the diversity of plant and animal species is the Old Growth stage of the forest.

To keep Mother Earth happy, please recycle this newsletter when finished. Thank you for reading!

Seeing the Forest Through the Trees

“To see the destruction was heartbreaking for many, but it was not devastating to the forest ecosystem”.

Robyn Worcester
Urban Wildlife Program Coordinator

continued on page 2...
BC, many of which are threatened with extinction. The web of life in the forest links all living and non-living things, and none of the components are superfluous. Some species will likely be displaced from their former homes: animals such as owls, bats and flying squirrels that once inhabited the older parts of the forest may no longer find these areas suitable.

However, even days after the storm, forest birds such as woodpeckers were seen taking advantage of their newly created habitat. Others, including many species of songbirds, hawks, and rodents will also benefit from the recent clearings and will likely take up residence in these areas. Even the bald eagles that lost their nest at Prospect Point have adapted to the change. This pair began rebuilding a nest in one of the few remaining trees in the area immediately following the storm.

In our lifetimes, we will never again see the forest as it was before the storm, but we will certainly see the rebounding of life and renewal of our beloved Park.

Brett Horton
President, Board of Directors

The theme of this newsletter is "Rebirth after the Windstorm" and I think that it is most fitting that Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) is also going through a rebirth.

In November, the board and staff came together to set a strategic plan with a new vision, mission, and goals for the organization. Notably, this meeting took place on the same day as the first in the series of storms that reshaped Stanley Park and ultimately will reshape the Stanley Park Ecology Society.

Our strategic plan starts with a Vision (the broad ideal that underlies Stanley Park Ecology Society’s reason for being):

We envision Stanley Park as a worldwide model representing harmony between nature and people, where informed communities are inspired to make choices that support healthy ecosystems.

We then establish our Mission (what we do to help make the Vision a reality):

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

From our Mission, we identify our Goals (targets by which our objectives and program initiatives are based):

1. Be a recognized leader in organizing, executing and fundraising for education, research and conservation initiatives in Stanley Park.

2. Preserve and restore the ecological health and biodiversity of Stanley Park’s ecosystems.

3. Deliver education programs centered on the ecology of Stanley Park that actively engage people and encourage behaviour that respects the natural world and fosters conservation action.

4. Undertake research in collaboration with others that provides the basis for informed decisions for our education and conservation initiatives.

5. Operate an effective, innovative, and fiscally responsible organization.

Our new strategic plan focuses us on how best to help in Stanley Park’s rebirth, but also forces us to look beyond the immediate needs. I am very proud of the work by staff and board to create this clear new direction for the Stanley Park Ecology Society, and I truly look forward to seeing it implemented in action.
Windthrow

Lisa Bourdages
Environmental Educator

Windthrow – the uprooting and overthrowing of trees by wind – is a forest ecosystem disturbance. Forest ecosystem disturbances lead to forest succession. Forest succession defined as the unidirectional change in the make-up of an ecosystem where competing organisms respond to and change their environment, can result in a climax forest, such as Stanley Park. Climax forests (almost completely coniferous in composition) take many years to become what they are, due partly to forest ecosystem disturbances.

Although disturbances such as windthrow can give rise to forest succession and opportunity for competing species to thrive, they may also lead to risk factors such as fire, monocultures (growth of only a single type of species within an area), insects and disease. Ultimately, these factors may have more impact than the initial disturbance event.

In British Columbia, windthrow is a natural phenomenon affecting all forests. Hundreds of hectares of trees are blown over every year in pristine wilderness and along cutblock boundaries, roadways and pathways. Natural systems are not static; nor immune to the effects of weather, disease or pests. They change according to constraints that act upon them.

Why would a forest like Stanley Park, filled with towering strong trees be affected by windthrow? It’s a great question! There are many factors that contribute to windthrow. A tree has many parts: the trunk, branches and the peak or crown of the tree. Imagine walking down the street holding your umbrella on a blustery day. Then, all of a sudden, a big gust of wind blows our umbrella inside out! That’s what the crowns of big trees are like; they catch the wind and can make the tree crash to the forest floor.

Another factor that can lead trees to topple in big storms is how tall the trees are. In Stanley Park, we have some gigantic trees including Douglas Firs, Hemlocks and Cedars which have various strengths. Some trees are stronger than others, withstanding 150 km/hr winds!

So what do we do? Well, when hurricane force winds blow in, once every 50 to 100 years, like December 15, 2006, we call them catastrophic storms, and there isn’t much we can do about those except hope for the best. Endemic storms, on the other hand, that blow in on occasion, can be managed to minimize windthrow.

No one can control the weather. However, we can rest at ease knowing our forests are naturally resilient, will regenerate, and can be replanted.

Environment lovers Lisa Bourdages and Rachelle Delaney are dwarfed by a huge root mass of a wind felled tree.

DID YOU KNOW?

1) Trimming extra-height tree crowns
2) Planting wind hardy Douglas Fir trees
3) Spiral pruning tree boughs to let wind pass through

A Bald Eagle carries a branch to its new nest above Merilees Trail

One of six fallen heron nests on Beach Avenue

Call for Urban Wildlife...

We seek more information on nest sites and locations for significant species of wildlife in the city!

Help us monitor our Urban Wildlife by reporting their locations (addresses, GPS coordinates or detailed descriptions) to:

Urban Wildlife Program Coordinator
coyotes@stanleyparkecology.ca
604-681-WILD

Urban Wildlife Updates

Robyn Worcester
Urban Wildlife Program Coordinator

BALD EAGLES

Of the four Bald Eagle nests in Stanley Park, the three residing in old growth trees survived the windstorm. The nest tree at Prospect Point fell, but the industrious pair of eagles has already begun building a new nest.
Your Guide to Our...

**spring 2007 nature programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EcoWalks</strong></td>
<td>Venture into Stanley Park on a two-hour guided walking tour with a naturalist or local expert. Walk themes and leaders vary. Every Sunday at 1 pm. $10 public, $5 members/students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>Stanley Park’s Natural Towers Join interpreter Steven Neumann to investigate Stanley Park’s highrises — trees! Explore them from their basement roots to their penthouse tree-tops.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Ivy Busters <em>(for details, see page 5)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>Renewal of the Forest Renowned botanist Terry Taylor will look at Spring renewal of the Park’s native plants, with emphasis on the effects of storm damage on this new growth. How will vegetation of the Park respond to the winter storms?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>Birding in Stanley Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 25</td>
<td>Stumped: The Life of Dead Trees How can a “dead” tree come back to life? Join naturalist Murray Lashmar to explore the complex community of plants and animals that inhabit dead or dying trees still standing and fallen within the forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>April Fools: Camouflage &amp; Mimicry in the Forest Prowl the forest with Nature Interpreter Andrew Scott in search of insects that have perfected an astonishing array of fool-you-looks &amp; behaviours. Check out how some insects pretend to be what they’re not and why they do it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Ivy Busters <em>(for details, see page 5)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 15</td>
<td>The Small World of the Forest: Mosses, Liverworts, &amp; Lichens Biologist Terry McIntosh strolls through Stanley Park’s various plant communities examining often overlooked little organisms that add colour and diversity to the forest. Explore their unique roles in the ecosystem, and their very different microhabitats. Discover how these ancient organisms survive and thrive in our modern world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>Birding in Stanley Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 29</td>
<td>Tales The Trees Tell In celebration of Arbour Day, Vancouver Park Board arbourist Bill Stephen tours us through a diverse selection of native and exotic trees of Stanley Park. Bill can read stories in the limbs and trunks the way few others can.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Look for This Icon!**

EcoWalks Ideal for ages 7-up!

Entertaining afternoon with skilled nature interpreters!

Programs start at the **Dining Pavilion** located South of the Stanley Park Bus Loop

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**Women, Wildflowers and Willows**

**Historical Stories of Flowers & Women of Vancouver**

May 5, 2007 1 pm – 3 pm

Nature and human history are intertwined on this special Garden Walking tour led by Jolene Cumming. Stroll the pathways of the gardens of Stanley Park and hear fascinating tales about local women from our past and their diverse relationships with Vancouver’s plant life.

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**Venue Rental**

Venue Rental facilities available on the second floor of the historic Stanley Park Dining Pavilion. For Events, Meetings, Workshops, Parties, and Presentations within the heart of Stanley Park! Downtown Vancouver only minutes away & Stanley Park is right outside the door!

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For more information, call 604.257.6908
**WANTED IVY BUSTERS**

2nd Saturday of each month

Stanley Park Needs your Help -- Aliens are Taking Over!!!

Remove alien invasive plants smothering our native vegetation!

Meet at the Stanley Park Dining Pavilion at 9:00 am sharp until noon. Bring plenty of water and wear solid footwear. Don’t let showers dissuade you; we’ll be here rain or shine!

**Spring IVY BUSTERS Events:**

Mar 10, Apr 14, May 12, Jun 9

Spread the word... bring your family and friends; participants will receive discounts for our EcoWalks.

Parking passes and refreshments will be provided.

Thank you for helping to preserve Stanley Park’s status as a wildlife refuge. We look forward to seeing you here...

For more information, visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca or call (604) 718-6522

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**Women, Wildflowers and Willows** *(for details, see page 4)*

**Climate Change and Stanley Park** *(National Forest Week)* Join biologist David Cook in using Stanley Park as our classroom as we learn how this unique forest dealt with major changes in climate over the last few thousand years. Speculate how the Park might adapt or be adapting to current and future changes.

**Ivy Busters** *(for details, see sidebar)*

**Celebrating Wild Mothers on Mother’s Day** Join Urban Wildlife Specialist Robyn Worcester to explore the busy mothers (and fathers) in Stanley Park. Visit the Great Blue Heronry, a Bald Eagles’ Nest, and track down other wildlife mothers hard at work.

**Native Plants: From Stanley Park to Your Front Yard** Kirsty Robbins leads this walk to explore the theme of native plants. We will learn about many of the fascinating native plants found within Stanley Parks coastal temperate rainforest and discuss ideas and resources for designing and creating your own native plant garden habitat.

**Birding in Stanley Park**

**Ethnobotany: Edible Native Plants from Historic Cultural Perspectives** Ficus Chan takes us on tour of nature’s bounty. While native plants are protected from picking from Parks, it is food for thought to know that there is a veritable supermarket of edible wild greens as well as materials for canoes, rope, diapers and dyes in the diversity and richness of the forest.

**Intertidal Exploration** *(Canadian Environment Week)* Strap your boots and join biologist David Cook in exploring the Intertidal seashore - the intermediate zone between the marine and land worlds. Discover how these animals and plants have developed special means to live and survive in the harsh world of the ebb and flow of tides.

**Friend or Foe: A Look at the Relationship Between Herons and Eagles** Join Urban Wildlife Specialist Robyn Worcester to explore the Great Blue Heron colony and visit a Bald Eagles’ Nest. Discuss the tumultuous relationship between these two birds and look closer at the habitats they occupy.

**Habitat, What’s That?** *(Father’s Day)* Room with a view, waterfront property, high rise apartment or temporary accommodation? Naturalist Murray Lashmar shows you what wildlife naturalists look for when they’re checking out real estate possibilities.

For more information, visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca or call 604-718-6522
SPES Strategizes in Restoration Planning

Patricia Thomson
Executive Director

Park staff have been working diligently and at double capacity for weeks to re-open roads and trails and to remove still-dangerous leaning trees. On-the-ground assessing is matched by a flurry of activity in information gathering and strategizing behind-the-scenes. As a Park Partner for almost 20 years, SPES is actively involved at numerous levels in the complex planning of the Stanley Park Restoration. We are working to provide important information on threatened species and ecologically sensitive areas, and are joining the twice-weekly VPB Restoration Team staff meetings to ensure regular and up to date communications:

The Vancouver Park Board’s Stanley Park Restoration Team is tasked to develop principles and process around the recovery and restoration of the park’s wind damaged areas. The restoration plan will involve damage and hazard assessments, procedure choices, safety programs, resources required, and strategies for implementation. The group will also consider the community’s vision for the damaged areas of the park.

An 8-member Steering Committee composed of geotechnical engineering (to help address issues of drainage and slope stability particularly in the Prospect Point area), forestry and ecological experts drawn from the academic, consulting and industry fields will advise the staff team. Specific experts are augmenting as advisors on a diversity of considerations including fire risk, invasive plants, and future windthrow mitigations.

SPES holds a key seat on the complementary Stakeholder Committee which also provides input to the staff team. Other stakeholders include Squamish First Nation, Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, Vancouver Natural History Society, Tourism Vancouver, Parks Canada, and BC Society of Landscape Architects.

SPES is the point-organization for individuals who wish to volunteer stewardship help in the months ahead, and will take the lead role in education legacies around the windstorm event.

As trails are systematically re-opened, and further stages of the recovery work unfold, check:

www.stanleyparkecology.ca and www.vancouver.ca/parks

For more up-to-date information, as well as community input opportunities.

Love in the Forest

Mia Haab
School Programs Manager

Ahh, spring. Strolling through Stanley Park in springtime, you’ll hear the romance of birds singing, bees buzzing, and squirrels chattering. This must be the season of forest love. But wait! On closer inspection, what’s this? Bald eagles are dive-bombing each other! Squirrels are scampering wildly through the treetops! The blackbirds have their red wings in a flap, and the male bullfrogs are holding each other’s heads under water. What kind of a dating scene is this?

When we humans want to find a good-looking partner to mate with, we dress up, we wear cologne, we dance like fools, and we give sweetheart’s roses and chocolates. Not so in the animal world. Pacific treefrogs actually risk being eaten by ribbiting love songs at the top of their little lungs from the treetops. Douglas squirrels engage in noisy mating chases, where females and males call and chase each other in excitement.

Sometimes, it’s the males who do all the flirting. Male bald eagles engage in spectacular aerial displays of diving and circling, and if the female is impressed, she will join him in flight – to mate together for life. Red-winged blackbird males get an advantage as they age, the older males chasing the younger males away. When a male blackbird spots a girl he likes, he crouches, sings loudly, and flutters his wings dramatically. Peacocks cry loudly to warn other males away, and then pretend to peck at food on the ground. When the peahen joins in to search for food, the peacock stops play-acting and proudly displays his beautiful tail to woo her into having his eggs.

Jealousy can be as green as the treetops in our Park. Female starlings sabotage the nests of girls they suspect their husbands of adulterating with. Male blackbirds almost always help to defend their sweetheart’s nests – unless they suspect her of cheating. Big male bullfrogs show smaller males who’s boss by holding their heads underwater for a time – so that dejected smaller frogs resort to hiding at the edge of the pond and surprising females at the last minute.

And you thought human dating was complicated! This spring, I’m certainly not dive-bombing anybody... I think I’ll just spritz on some cologne and hope for the best.
As Stanley Park, the heart of Vancouver, heads into a period of re-growth, many individuals and groups are stepping forward to lend a hand. You too can share a role in helping to heal the Park. As a member and valued friend of the Stanley Park Ecology Society, we know you care deeply for Vancouver’s urban forests and wildlife. Many of you have already expressed concern for the future of Stanley Park through emails, letters, phone calls and donations, but we still need more help.

The Stanley Park Ecology Society’s expertise and close connections with the Park’s diverse wildlife and complex ecosystems have proven invaluable throughout the Vancouver Park Board’s restoration planning process. We need your help to continue serving as an important voice for Stanley Park’s natural wonders.

Staff and volunteers are dedicated to:

- Building community stewardship activities to mobilize volunteers in the areas of mapping, wildlife monitoring, invasive plant removal and habitat restoration
- Delivering current information on the restoration process through accessible public programming and web-based communications
- Creating engaging education programs that accommodate the new face of Stanley Park, and continue to allow us to connect with more than 30,000 school-aged children annually

WE NEED YOUR HELP!
We are very proud of our contributions to the Stanley Park clean-up and restoration process, but the reality is that if we are to continue impacting positive change in the revitalization of Stanley Park, we need your help!

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR
Join the Green Giving Circle. For as little as $5-10 a month, you can make a big difference! Please email lorraine@stanleyparkecology.ca to receive a copy of the registration form. Cumulative tax receipts will be issued at the end of the year.

SEND A ONE-TIME GIFT
Show your support with a monetary gift towards our education, conservation and research efforts.

ADOPT-A-NEST
Give the perfect present to a family member, co-worker or friend, or just treat yourself by giving back to wildlife which share space in our urban parkland. Contact nests@stanleyparkecology.ca or 604-681-9453 for more info.

VOLUNTEER
Join a dynamic and diverse team of enthusiastic individuals in a wide variety of exciting and fulfilling volunteer opportunities. Contact vols@stanleyparkecology.ca for more info.

BUY TICKETS TO “PLAYING FOR THE PARK”
Join the fun on April 22nd (Earth Day) at this family concert benefiting our public education and stewardship programs. Featuring local children’s entertainers, Bobs & Lolo and Will Stroet, tickets are sure to go fast! Please email lorraine@stanleyparkecology.ca for more information.

Spread the word about the Stanley Park Ecology Society! Tell your friends to visit our website, encourage people to become members, add a blurb about us in newsletters or e-lists that you are affiliated with! Help us continue to build the Stanley Park community!

For more information on how you can lend a hand, visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca

Thank you for your ongoing support!
Members Enjoy:
• Discounts on Eco Walks, Family Programs and Events
• Seasonal activities calendar and our quarterly newsletter
• Voting privileges to help SPES enact ecological stewardship in Stanley Park
• Special perks & promotions from community partners
• Free preview nights on Christmas Bright Nights and the Halloween Ghost Train

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 Lost Lagoon Nature House, Vancouver’s only ecological interpretive centre, welcoming over 15,000 visitors each year
• Wildlife monitoring, habitat restoration and biodiversity conservation in Stanley Park

Thanks also to:
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