“Water is so commonplace, you’d think we would have it figured out by now. Actually, scientists continue to be baffled by its behaviour and properties. We can all agree that water is essential, beautiful, and powerful, but it is also, according to researchers...very odd!

Forming the blue arteries of the Earth, water is capable of awesome force and elusive subtlety. It drives turbines to generate electricity. It is essential to the Earth’s atmosphere and determines our weather. It corrodes metals, carves out canyons, flattens mountains, forms beaches, floats whales and water bugs, bursts pipes and grows flowers. Water flows through all living beings. In its pure form, it is colourless, odorless, tasteless and chemically neutral. But it is the hidden qualities of water, basic to life itself, which are most intriguing. Consider its quirky characteristics:

- Water is the only natural substance that is found in all three states - liquid, solid (ice) and gas (steam) - at temperatures normally found on Earth.

“Water vapour gets together in a cloud. When it is big enough to be called a drop, it does.” - Kids On Science

“The formula for water is H₂O. Is the formula for an ice cube, H₂O squared??” - Lily Tomlin

Water, Water Everywhere? 2
Kids’ Korner 3
Winter 2006 Nature Programs 4
The Green Way to Give 5
Membership 6
It absorbs and releases heat slowly (and so moderates the Earth’s climate).

- It has a high surface tension, which explains why bugs can walk on it. Through capillary action, it rises up from the roots of plants into their tissues (up to hundreds of feet in some trees!)

- Water extinguishes fire, yet its individual components – hydrogen and oxygen – incite flames.

- Water is known as the ‘Universal Solvent’ because it dissolves more substances than any other liquid. This allows cells in our body to dissolve our food, carry nutrients and wastes and lubricate joints and mucous membranes. Our early life begins in the watery world of our mother’s womb.

- Liquid water expands when it freezes and forms a solid lighter than itself. The formation of a floating ice layer allows aquatic life to exist under it in the winter.

Water, although it behaves like no other substance on the planet, has a deceptively simple structure: two hydrogens are bound to one oxygen to form a ‘V’. However, scientists say the physical and chemical properties of this compound, H2O, are astonishingly complex. Many of this shapeshifting substance’s unique, life-giving properties are a result of its chemical structure, especially the intricate and mysterious dance of its hydrogen bonds.

Amazingly, we are blessed with the same water supply found on Earth since the dawn of time. The water we consume so copiously in our morning showers was the same raining down on dinosaurs in the great primordial forests. For eons, powered by the sun, water vapour has been rising from the oceans, lakes and streams, to be transformed into rain or snow and falling back to earth in a perpetual purifying cycle. And water, in all of its quirks, existed eons before the very life forms that were to depend on it for their survival!

We can truly be thankful for water and its peculiarities as they ensure our very existence on this planet. So in this rainy season, let’s get out and celebrate water, and honour it as one of Nature’s greatest miracles!

Venue Rental

Social gathering or professional working in a relaxed atmosphere. Events, Meetings, Trainings, Parties, and Presentations within the heart of Stanley Park!

A 1000-square foot meeting room on the second floor of the historic Stanley Park Dining Pavilion.

Downtown Vancouver is only minutes away and Stanley Park is right outside the door!

For more information, call 604.257.6908

Water, Water, Everywhere?

- The earth is 70% covered by water, but less than 1% is available for human use.
- Australia is the world’s driest inhabited continent, having the least runoff and 70% desert.
- It takes about 150,000 litres of water to make a family car.
- Only 1% of household water usage is for drinking. The rest goes on lawns, showers, etc.
- A household toilet flushes about 150 litres of water per day.
- A continuously dribbling tap wastes 600 litres of water per day.
- Garden mulching reduces evaporation by 75%.
- An average garden sprinkler uses 1000 litres per hour.
Looking to keep your family interested and engaged while walking through Stanley Park? Instead of reaching for a bag of seeds to feed the ducks or raccoons, try one or more of the following Ten-minute Family Field Trip ideas, guaranteed to foster family fun while you learn about the forest.

Hunt for Treasure!
Embark on a collection-free scavenger hunt, looking for signs of...
- seasons
- animal movements
- adaptations
- relationships between living things

Scour the forest floor for seeds that blow in the wind, hitch rides on animals, spin like helicopters, and travel inside other creatures. How many different kinds of traveling seeds can you find?

Imagine and Create!
On a rainy day, imagine yourselves as raindrops and make up stories about where you’ve come from and where you’ll end up.

Pack a few sheets of paper and crayons, then take rubbings on different surface like tree bark and leave to explore the textures of the forest.

Tune In!
Create a sound map: first, sit quietly with a paper and pencil, and take note of as many sounds as you can. Then draw yourself in the middle of the page and map out where the sounds are coming from around you. Draw symbols to represent the sounds or try spelling out the noises they make.

Pretend you’re an insect and take a miniature hike along a log, either with a magnifying glass or by stooping down to ground level. What would travel be like as a very small creature?

Raindrops Pop

Why do the raindrops fall from the sky?
And where does the water go, when the puddles run dry?
Why does the stream leave, in the middle of the heat?
And where does the river flow, when the sun starts to beat?

Rain falls from the sky, leaving puddles on the ground.
Rain comes from clouds that are too heavy to get around.
Rain washes the streams and into the sea;
It washes over Earth, bringing life to plants and trees.

When the sun beats down, in the heat of the day,
The water on the earth starts to evaporate away.
It rises to the sky, back to where it began
The water cycle flows from the earth and back again.

Song and lyrics by Lorraine Toor, SPES Director of Development and Lolo of ‘Bobs and Lolo’.

For a list of upcoming shows visit www.bobsandlolo.com

Good Book


Canadian Websites on Water:

Greater Vancouver Regional District
www.gvrd.bc.ca/water

Interactive Activities & Games
eckid.ca

Here are a few water conservation tips that will help us protect this precious resource:

- Conduct a search for leaky faucets and dripping taps
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap for a cold drink
- Don’t keep water running while brushing your teeth
EcoWalks

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/student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Program Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>The Edge of Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 9</td>
<td>Ivy Busters (for details, see page 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 17</td>
<td>Annual Winter Solstice Walk in Stanley Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>Waterfowl Watch*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Ivy Busters (for details, see page 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Rainforests of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Birding in Stanley Park (see above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Hidden Ecology of the Winter Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Ivy Busters (for details, see page 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Valentine’s Nature Walk – Ducks in Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Birding In Stanley Park (see above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>Stanley Park’s Natural Towers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Birding in Stanley Park

Join naturalist and birdwatcher Cathy Aitchison for a 2-hour tour in Stanley Park to identify migratory and resident birds and learn bird watching skills. Last Sunday of every month at 9 am. By donation.
The Green Way to Give Presents for All Occasions

Lorraine Toor
SPES Director of Development

The giving season is year-round at the Stanley Park Ecology Society. As a community-based, not-for-profit organization, we depend on our members, sponsors, staff and volunteers to support the many important educational and stewardship programs we deliver in Stanley Park and around the Lower Mainland.

Last year, more than 762 community volunteers participated in projects and programs that connected nearly 30,000 individuals with nature. Whether you are interested in the mysteries of mushrooms, intrigued by the world of insects or captivated by the beauty of the west coast rainforest, the Stanley Park Ecology Society is the community's key to unlocking the wonders of the natural world.

Working together with the community, we help develop an understanding, appreciation and sense of respect for the natural world, and we need your support. Now is the time of year when many people are making a wish list, and checking it twice, and the Stanley Park Ecology Society wishes to continue sharing the beauty of the urban environment with generations to come. Please join us this season with a charitable gift in support of our education programs and stewardship efforts.

Perfect Presents for All Occasions

Become a Member
Share the numerous park perks and programs with your friends or family by making them a Member of SPES. Members receive special discounts on all EcoWalks, Family Programs, special events, quarterly newsletters, and perks from our community partners such as 20% discount off admission to Vancouver Aquarium.

Be a Monthly Donor
Support SPES by joining the Green Giving Circle. Through easy and convenient credit card transactions you can contribute automatic monthly donations and save paper, time & effort while ensuring the continued support of SPES and its programs.

Stanley Park: Wilderness in our Backyard
Be mesmerized by "nature just steps from the busy downtown streets and sidewalks of Vancouver, BC. From evergreen forests to marshy wetland to rocky seashore", skim the pages of this guidebook to uncover plants and wildlife living in Stanley Park! Partial proceeds support SPES and its programs.

Cost: $23.00 (includes GST)

Visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca or call us at (604) 257-6908 for information.

Eco Friendly Gift Idea

- Winter Sale - 20% Off Bamboo T-Shirts

Celebrate winter in style with your very own chemical-free manufactured eco-friendly bamboo T-shirt. A unique gift for your special someone. Proceeds promote environmental awareness and stewardship initiatives at SPES.

Sale Price: $15 (includes taxes)
Call (604) 681-7099 and pick up your bamboo T-shirt today!

For more information, visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca or call (604) 718-6522
SPES Thanks Its Sponsors & Donors

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BC Hydro

Thanks also to:
Stephan Rivard
Graham Rodwell
Citizens Bank of Canada

Canadian Tire
Concord Security
Point Group
Brett Horton
Patricia Thomson

Bright Nights Preview
SPES Members Ride FREE!
Dec. 4, 5, 6
6pm - 9pm
Stanley Park Miniature Railway
Bring your SPES membership card

Bright Nights at Stanley Park
3-10pm daily
(closed Christmas Day - Dec. 25)
The Vancouver Park Board and the BC Professional Fire Fighters’ Burn Fund have together created nights of magic and illumination in the middle of wondrous Stanley Park.

Adult: $7.45
Kids & Youth (2-18), Seniors (65+): $4.45

Bright Nights Info line (604) 257-8531
Call (604)280-4444 or visit www.ticketmaster.ca for advance tickets

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 20,000 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

YES, I Want to Contribute!

NAME _____________________________
ADDRESS ____________________________________________
CITY __________________ POSTAL CODE ______________
PHONE _______________ EMAIL _______________________

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

PAYMENT METHOD

☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

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

☐ Family ($30) ☐ Individual ($15)
☐ Junior <19 ($7.50) ☐ Senior/Volunteer ($10)

☐ I would prefer to receive my newsletter by e-mail

MY GIFT IS ENCLOSED:

☐ $20 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $ ______

☐ Check here if this is a renewal membership

I WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER

I WANT TO MAKE A MONTHLY DONATION

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

☐ $10 ☐ $15 ☐ $25 ☐ $ ______

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