Five Years of Co-Existing with Coyotes

Rob Boelens, Urban Wildlife Specialist

Board and Provincial Ministry of Environment, as the SPES operated Co-Existing with Coyotes program completed another year of reducing conflict between people, pets and coyotes. Residents have seen SPES employees in action using non-lethal coyote deterrents in their yards and on their streets, seen us present Coyote Preparation Workshops to more than 50,000 elementary school children, seen our permanent signs in more than 100 neighbourhood parks, picked up one of the 80,000 brochures we have distributed and have been among the thousands who have spoken to us in person and on the phone.

But Vancouver residents are not the only ones asking and learning about the SPES operated and developed program. City, Provincial and State governments across the continent are looking at the Vancouver born philosophy of removing any individual coyote that poses a risk to human safety, and doing our best to ensure that coyotes do not develop those tendencies, by providing residents and targeted audiences with the information and continued....

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Special AGM event

BC to the Beautiful GALAPAGOS: Global Bridges

Join naturalist-photographer Danny Catt for an inspiring evening of stunning images on a journey from tropical islands to the polar ice cap.

Discover BC’s connections with the Amazon, Galapagos and Iceland!

Wednesday, Oct 18th

(See page 6 for details)
audiences with the information and skills they need to safely respond to an urban coyote.

Our resources, materials, and programs have been used as templates in places as far away as Tampa Bay and Arizona and have made headlines in media as distant as the Washington Post and on the BBC.

The program also provides a very local response to neighbourhoods that are experiencing an increased concentration in coyote sightings. The coyote is tracked and non-lethal deterrents are used, for the most part, to quickly convince the coyote to either leave the area or behave more discreetly. The program shares its 5th year anniversary with another 5 year milestone. The last time a child was bitten by a coyote in the Lower Mainland was 5 years ago, in July 2001.

**Did You Know...**

Coyotes are active in urban areas across North America and often make use of roads, golf courses and residential areas in their wandering.

At one point in the last 20 years, coyotes are likely to have been in each and every neighbourhood in the Lower Mainland?

Part of co-existence is to ensure coyotes maintain their natural fear of people and do not adapt to urban settings and behave in such a way that puts human safety at risk?

Vancouver residents have used the following methods to successfully deter coyotes from their neighbourhoods:

- LOUD and aggressive sounding shouts
- Noisemakers including banging pots, pans or juice tin and coin or pebble shakers
- Throwing of objects such as small stones, tennis balls
- Aggressive gestures and pursuit with mops, hockey sticks, brooms, etc.

Another important element of deterring is not inviting!

Remove or limit the following coyote attractants from your neighbourhood:

- Accessible garbage
- Yard fruit
- Outdoor pet food
- Rodent habitat – neglected yards, sheds, & vacant lots

Coyotes that have these experiences consistently are generally quick to change their behaviour. If coyotes are not responded to, or ignored in residential areas, they are likely to remain there.

Call (604) 681-9453 for situation specific advice.

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**VNHS Books On Sale!**

**Stanley Park: Wilderness on the Doorstep**

Natural History Society’s new book on Stanley Park, *Wilderness on the Doorstep* is on sale now!

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!

Cost: $23.00 (includes GST)

Call (604) 718-6523 to purchase your copy!
**Bird Brains**

People have been fascinated by birds for thousands of years. Read each clue and try to guess the answers!

1. Don’t count your ____ before they hatch, or else you’ll end up relying on something before it really happens!
2. Many centuries ago, members of royalty would place these live birds into pie crusts. When the “pie” was cut at a banquet, the birds would fly out! A nursery rhyme is based on this history.
3. “Water off a ____ ____” refers to something that doesn’t bother a person.
4. This is a sacred bird in legends all over the world. A great Persian King, Kai Kavus, was said to have attached these birds to his throne to make it fly! Today, this bird is the symbol of our southern neighbours.
5. When we’re cold, we can find these bird bumps on our skin! A famous Mother bird of this kind is a symbol of many children’s tales.
6. This bird loves to sing its own name. Scientists recently discovered that when a dangerous predator walks by, this bird adds more “dees” to the end of its song!

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**Freaks of Nature: What’s In a Name**

Our names reveal much about family history, our culture and our origins. Many insects’ names can tell us about the habits and activities of a specific species. A water strider skims along a pond’s surface. A whirligig beetle spins rapidly before descending beneath the water’s surface. Some insects’ names, however, tell us more about the people who named them than the creatures themselves.

The earwig is an excellent example of insect-naming gone wrong. Let’s look at where a little knowledge and a lot of fear has taken us in the past.

The common earwig gained its name from an ill-deserved reputation. It was thought that these insects were bent on laying eggs inside the human ear. It may seem strange to us that a harmless and beneficial creature could evoke such apprehension, but people unfamiliar with the habits of earwigs were fearful of these insects.

At a time when fashion popularized the periwig, people did not consider bathing to be healthy. To an earwig, a sweat soaked wig on a night stand was an excellent source of moisture. To the wearer of the wig, the earwigs were laying in wait to stealthfully climb in to the ears (and brains) of the unsuspecting victim! The last thing insects would want to eat is a human brain. Earwigs generally consume decaying plant matter, slug and snail eggs, aphids and other garden pests. They are also superb parents, looking after their young and defending them from predators.

For added perspective, the people who named the earwig also believed that dragonflies would sneak up on the unsuspecting sleeper and sew their lips shut! That is why many dragonflies still bear the name “darners”, which means “one who sews”. It’s funny how the human imagination and the unknown can produce monsters, that, when examined closely, become beautiful insects.

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Article and illustration by Andrew Scott, a Nature Interpreter who was recently featured on the cover of 24 Hours newspaper.

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**BAMBOO-ZLED BY T-SHIRTS**

For a limited time, SPES will be selling Eco t-shirts made from bamboo. Our summer staff have been suited up with these friendly fibre t-shirts and we’ve been so excited about it that we’d like to share this soft, breathable fibre with you! Bamboo is an ecologically friendly fibre because the plant requires little water to grow and no chemicals are used during the clothing production process. Bamboo also has the natural ability to wick moisture away and biodegrades naturally over time.

Call (604) 718-6522 how to acquire a Friendly Fibre t-shirt or visit our traveling Nature Wagon for a direct purchase. The cost of these fabulous fibres is $20 including taxes and all proceeds go to SPES. Thank you for helping to further our goal of using friendly fibres for a friendly future!
Your Guide to our...

fall 2006 nature programs

Programs above start at the Dining Pavilion located East of the Stanley Park Bus Loop

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.

We’re on the move!
Look for our Nature Wagon tent in 2nd, 3rd Beaches, Beaver Lake, and the Stone Bridge on:
- August 17-20, 24-27, 31,
- September 1-3
- and Most Saturdays!

Birding in Stanley Park
Join naturalist and bird watcher 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.

Superbugs Fun Walk
Ideal for families, kids (7-up) and everyone else looking for an entertaining afternoon. From high jumpers to deep divers, insects have some amazing abilities that will shock and amaze you! Hop into this trip with insect enthusiast, Andrew Scott.

Ivy Busters

Walk on the Wildside of Stanley Park
Join interpreter Noah O’Hara for an intriguing exploration of giant trees, eagles’ nests, and First Nations culture found throughout Stanley Park.

The Trees of Stanley Park
Walk the trails and garden paths of Stanley Park with biologist David Cook to see examples and learn interesting features of native and newly-introduced trees.

Birding with Cathy Aitchison

Walk on the Wildside of Stanley Park
Join interpreter Noah O’Hara for an intriguing exploration of giant trees, eagles’ nests, and First Nations culture found throughout Stanley Park.

World Habitat Day Walk in Stanley Park
Enjoy a stroll with biologist David Cook and learn how keystone wildlife species in the park relate to each other and how they have adapted to and taken advantage of a close association with humans.

Creatures of the Night Walk - SPES Members Night (7, 8, & 9PM)

Creatures of the Night Walk (7, 8, & 9PM)

Arrivals & Departures
October is a transition time in Stanley Park as the last of our summer birds leave for the south and winter birds arrive from the interior and north. Join birder Cathy Aitchison to look for late warblers, early ducks and year-round residents as we walk around Lost Lagoon.

Creatures of the Night Walk (7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9, 9:30PM)

Look for This Icon!

EcoWalks
Ideal for ages 7-up!
Entertaining afternoon with skilled nature interpreters!
For Walk themes browse pages 4-5.

Bamboo T-Shirts for Sale!
See page 3.

Annual Mushroom Walks
Sunday, Oct.15, 2006
10 AM & 1 PM
Departs from the Dining Pavilion
Join renowned botanist Terry Taylor to be dazzled by the incredible variety of mushrooms in Stanley Park.
Ivy Busters

Oct 14
Stanley Park Annual Mushroom Walk  (2 Walks - 10AM & 1PM)
Come to this entertaining and instructive walk with renowned botanist Terry Taylor and be dazzled by the incredible beauty and diversity of mushrooms you’ll find in Stanley Park.

Oct 22
Rainforests of the World  Using Stanley Park forest as an example of a Coastal Temperate Rainforest, biologist David Cook will compare it with other types of rainforest around the world.

Oct 29
Birding with Cathy Aitchison

Oct 29

Nov 5
Feathers, Forests and Foreshoes  Curious about swan songs and Harlequin romances? Want to dabble in ducks or dive right in? Wade into waterfowl with naturalist Murray Lashmar.

Nov 12
A Stroll in Beaver Lake  Why are wetlands important and why are they under threat? Walk with biologist David Cook to learn the basic ecology of wetlands.

Nov 18
Ivy Busters

Nov 19
Spring Feathers in Winter  Did you know that ducks wear their breeding plumage in the winter? Join birder Cathy Aitchison on an easy walk to understand why and practice your I.D skills on ducks and other waterfowl.

Nov 26
Birding with Cathy Aitchison

Nov 26

Dec 3
The Edge of Winter  Looking for ideas on how to get through the winter? Join naturalist Murray Lashmar and find out how other animals and plants do it.

New

Birding & EcoWalks now depart from the Dining Pavilion, located east of the Stanley Park bus loop.

WANTED

IVY BUSTERS
2nd Saturday of each month (except Nov)*
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!

Fall IVY BUSTERS Events:
Sep 9, Oct 14, Nov 18*
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 sanctuary. We look forward to seeing you here...

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

NEW CREATURES OF THE NIGHT WALKS
We’ll design a customized nature walk or historical tour for your group. Just ask us!
Bookings: 604.718.6522
The Greatest Ivy Pull Ever!

SPES Stewardship Assistant Michelle Gaudry

Over the course of August 14th to August 17th, SPES Ivy Busters was assisted by 600 international students who were visiting Vancouver to compete in the JCC Maccabi Games (Olympics for Jewish teens). In addition to the actual competitions, each student was required to take part in a “Day of Caring and Sharing”. 600 of the participating students fulfilled that requirement as an Ivy Buster, helping SPES to restore native wildlife habitat by manually removing alien invasive English Ivy from Stanley Park.

Ivy Busters is a popular and well-recognized program developed by SPES that coordinates community stewardship events for a wide variety of school and youth groups, corporate business as well as the general public. Among other noxious weeds, Stanley Park is currently invaded by an estimated 50 hectares of English Ivy (the equivalent of 50 soccer fields). Individual tendrils of ivy may grow an additional metre per year, effectively choking out indigenous vegetation, decreasing biodiversity, and diminishing food and habitat for native wildlife.

The Maccabi Ivy Pulls were a great success! Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan attended an event, welcomed the students, and recognized the significance of their involvement in this stewardship initiative. Media crews from CTV, CityTV, 24 hrs, Fairchild News, and M Channel were also present. We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the crew leaders who helped coordinate the events; your patience, enthusiasm and ivy expertise was greatly appreciated.

The involvement of the Maccabi participants has increased the total number of SPES Ivy Busters to 1415 since 2005, contributing a total of 3,154 volunteer hours of stewardship. Public can join the restoration efforts on the second Saturday of each month: Visit www.stanleyparkecology.ca for details.

EcoRangers are out in force...

Noah O’Hara, EcoRanger Coordinator

...and out to enforce, that visitors to Stanley Park have the best experience possible. Through education and interpretation, EcoRangers this summer engaged over 2 million guests’ curiosity about the cultural and natural significance of our globally-recognized park and worked to promote positive human-animal encounters.

A record number 36 volunteer EcoRangers began in June with an intensive 5-day training program that included Stanley Park’s cultural and natural history, public speaking, and interpretation skills. This all proved useful to the EcoRangers when trying to explain how the different aspects of visitors’ interests fit into the ecosystem and balance of nature.

The interpretation training also proved useful to the keen EcoRangers who took up the cause of educating visitors who erringly (if most often unknowingly) feed wildlife. This select force, known as the Raccoon Rangers, focused an increased presence at Prospect Point and Lost Lagoon. Here, in recent years, raccoons have become highly aggressive with guests to the park. Scratches and bites have been documented. Armed with water guns filled with vinegar (a benign but unsettling substance for the raccoons’ taste), Raccoon Rangers aim to teach raccoons that approaching guests is not appropriate behaviour. At the same time, it gives the EcoRangers opportunity to educate the public about the dangers of getting too close and the disservice it does to the animals’ health.

Kudos goes to our four EcoRangers – John Yip, Alston Bonamis, Joey Chisholm, and Caroline Cheng – who, with their multilingual backgrounds and awareness from the media were instrumental in reuniting an elderly gentleman with his very relieved family. The gentleman had been reported missing in the news for the past two days.

Thank you, John, Alston, Joey, and Caroline for showing kindness and getting the elderly man appropriate care on one of the hottest days of the year. You are community heroes!
In the midst of a dark forest... a face-to-face encounter with some inhabitants of the shadow... could change your life FOREVER...

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT WALKS

Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays @ the Halloween Ghost Train

- Thursday, Oct. 5th
  SPES Members Night
  Walks at 7:00, 8:00 & 9:00 pm

- Friday, Oct. 6th
  Walks at 7:00, 8:00, & 9:00 pm

- Saturday, Oct. 7th
  Walks at 7:00 & 7:30 pm

- Thursday, Oct. 12th
  Walks at 7:00, 8:00, & 9:00 pm

- Oct. 13th through Oct. 28th
  Walks at 7:00 & 7:30 pm
  8:00 & 8:30 pm 9:00 & 9:30 pm

Don’t miss this GREAT opportunity to walk with some of the most elusive night creatures in Stanley Park.
Great for families, children, teens, and adults!

Special AGM event

BC to the Beautiful GALAPAGOS: Global Bridges

During the past 25 years naturalist, photographer and world traveler Danny Catt has explored and photographed the people, landscapes, and wildlife of more than 40 nations around the globe. Join him for an evening of music, images, and tales from his most recent explorations of South America and the European north.

Come experience and learn about the connections we have with the magical Galapagos Islands, mysterious Amazon River basin, and the stunning landscapes of Norway & Iceland.

Prepare to be surprised!

Wednesday, October 18th
7:30PM - 8:30PM
Stanley Park Dining Pavilion ballroom

Cost: $10 (includes annual membership privileges at a reduced fee)
SPES Members free.
Refreshments provided.

Together we’re cleaning up Coal Harbour

The Stanley Park Ecology Society staff and volunteers would like to invite YOU to join our team.

This year join thousands of Canadians who, by removing aquatic debris, will help keep our nation’s waterways clean and safe for wildlife in the 2006 TD Canada Trust Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup.

There will be a short orientation where we will hand out supplies and then walk as a group to Coal Harbour. The cleanup will be from 1:15 to 3:15 pm.

Sign up for our team at www.vanaqua.org/cleanup (enter your email address and password, register for a cleanup and sign-up for ‘Coal Harbour’!)

For more information, contact Noah O’Hara at (604) 257-6909 or email at ecoranger@stanleyparkecology.ca (put shore cleanup in the subject line).

See you there!

Saturday, September 23rd
12:30 pm
Upper floor Stanley Park Dining Pavilion
(entrance off the parking lot)

Our very own EcoRanger Angels!
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

Did You Know:

This year, SPES School and Urban Camping programs reached almost 4,000 students throughout the Lower Mainland. That’s something to quack about!

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

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

Card Number: __________________
Expires: __________________
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 ($30) ☐ Individual ($15)
☐ Junior <19 ($7.50) ☐ Senior/Volunteer ($10)

☐ Check here if this is a renewal membership
☐ I would prefer to receive my newsletter by email.

MY GIFT IS ENCLOSED:

☐ $20 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $ ______

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.