

# Connecting People with Nature



*Cedar walk, approximately 1905. City of Vancouver Archives.*

## Celebrating 125 Years of Stanley Park

On September 27, it'll be 125 years since Stanley Park was officially protected as a public park for "the use and enjoyment of peoples of all colours, creeds, and customs, for all time" as Governor General Lord Stanley later decreed upon its dedication in his name. Designating the area as a public park would be the very first act of a newly formed Vancouver city council, at a time when Vancouver was home to just 2,600 inhabitants.

On that day Mayor David Oppenheimer spoke to a crowd gathered at Prospect Point, where he announced that "art will unite with nature in making this the finest park on the continent." As park historian Sean Kheraj remarks, "Oppenheimer and other early park advocates saw a natural landscape in need of a helping hand."

Attitudes towards nature at the end of the 19th and into the early 20th centuries brought about a heavy-handed style of park management to control those non-human natural forces to "maintain the appearance of undisturbed wilderness."

Much of the effort would go towards maintaining an idealized vision of a coastal north-western coniferous forest, dominated by the giant western redcedars and Douglas firs we've come to identify Stanley Park with. So dearly were these conifers valued that great strides were taken to ensure they would be protected from fire, insects and disease. Deciduous species, especially red alder, would be removed regularly as they symbolized change, and did not fit the timeless and undisturbed aesthetic that park managers and visitors strived for. Trees that had been infected by insects or disease would be felled, burned and replaced with the more resilient and iconic Douglas fir.

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### Free Tickets!

As a special membership perk, SPES members can attend **Theater Under the Stars'** summer performances on **July 6 & 7** for free.

Pre-registration is required.

Find out more on page 7, including how you can get your hands on a SPES membership!

# Celebrating 125 Years, cont'd...

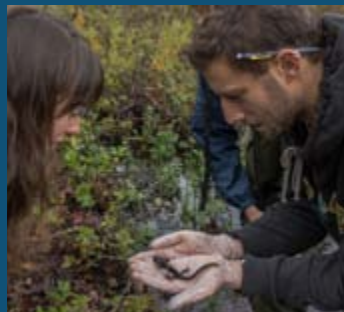
# A Future Vision for Beaver Lake



Gateway to Stanley Park, 1890. City of Vancouver Archives.



Driveway in the Park, 1917. City of Vancouver Archives.



Surveying for salamanders. Photo by Michael Schmidt.



Deer mouse measured and released during small mammal survey. Photo by Michael Schmidt.

Great expense would be paid to ensure that firefighting infrastructure would be laid through the entirety of the Park. As Kheraj notes, “this perspective might seem extraordinary to contemporary park tourists and admirers who today value Stanley Park as an untouched natural environment, unaware of the enormous, but largely concealed, human effort that has gone into managing the production of this landscape.”

This style of management continued largely un-phased until a fateful December day in 2006, when wailing winds would change the fate of Stanley Park forever, falling 10,000 trees and testing the beliefs and attitudes locals held for the beloved jewel of Vancouver. While major windstorms had raged through Stanley Park in 1934 and 1962, none had felled as many trees in modern history as in 2006.

What followed was an outpouring of public support and collaboration with government, researchers and the community, including SPES, to help guide the destiny and rebirth of

a brand new forest management plan and a more natural Stanley Park. Now, a new era of Park management has emerged in place of the heavier-handed invasive management style of the last century.

SPES’ 2010 report, *State of the Park Report on the Ecological Integrity of Stanley Park* (SOPEI) significantly influenced Vancouver Park Board’s current *Stanley Park Ecological Action Plan*. By incorporating research, education and community stewardship into the operational management of the Park, we seek to understand and respect the dynamic forces, both human and natural that work to maintain this temperate rain forest ecosystem, while continuing to uphold Oppenheimer’s vision to “make this the finest park on the continent.”

Learn more about Stanley Park’s environmental history in Sean Kheraj’s new book, *Inventing Stanley Park: An Environmental History*, or check out [www.seankheraj.com](http://www.seankheraj.com).

**Dan Straker, Urban Wildlife Coordinator**

## Summer Celebrations in Stanley Park

To celebrate 125 years of Stanley Park, SPES is organizing a number of initiatives this summer, including a large community BioBlitz and a mural project at the Nature House.

### BioBlitz

Join SPES on August 24 & 25 to work alongside scientists and the community at a 24 hour science relay to seek, identify and record as many species as possible. Our first BioBlitz in 2011 saw over 20 professional scientists and a legion of 1000 citizen scientists exploring Stanley Park in a quest to identify and record every species of flora or fauna they could find in 24 hours. After a long day and night of diligent surveying, 395 species of plants and animals were identified, 152 of which were never before recorded in Stanley Park. Highlight events included a beach seine at Lumberman’s Arch, hummingbird banding in the Rose Garden, bat mist netting near the seawall and acoustic owl surveys around Beaver Lake. This year we aim to have even more community

members join us in discovering the wonders in Stanley Park.

### Nature House Mural Project

Our Public Programs Team will be beautifying the Stanley Park Nature House this summer. Once featuring five murals on its bay doors, a flood in 2005 destroyed the artwork on the Nature House leaving it bare and colourless ever since. In a collaborative effort, we will bring together a soon to be named artist, the Vancouver Park Board, community members, youth and a variety of local organizations to create artwork that will serve as inspiration for new murals that will in turn coat and enliven the Nature House once more.

Check our website, or join us on facebook and twitter to get the latest on event details and to see how you can get involved.

**Brian Titaro, Conservation Technician & Krystal Pyke, Public Programs Manager**

In 1995 an environmental consulting company submitted a report to the Vancouver Park Board recommending that immediate action be taken to deepen Beaver Lake, particularly to support fishlife, such as salmonids. Their research found that the lake was undergoing rapid infilling mainly due to the introduction of invasive water lilies introduced in the late 1930’s. They surmised that if no actions were taken, the lake would be lost in approximately 20 years.

Now, 18 years later, the lake is in fact drying up before our eyes, but a new plan is underway that will help ensure it remains a wetland habitat allowing for greater biodiversity. A particular focus will be to ensure the future health of coastal cutthroat trout, a Species at Risk in BC. If cutthroat trout can survive in the lake, a strong diversity of other wildlife will also be supported. The remnant population of this species in Stanley Park is clinging to life in their last strongholds, Beaver and North Creeks.

Those of us who visit the lake on a regular basis have witnessed its extra rapid decline in recent years. Floating mats of dense water lily roots are so prevalent that they have now connected to the shore while red alder trees have already begun establishing themselves. Despite the

resident beavers’ best efforts to dredge areas of the lake, many wetland dependent species have already become extirpated from the Park. Pacific chorus frogs (a type of tree frog), western painted turtles, red-legged frogs and rough-skinned newts are just a few species that are no longer found in the Park.

In the face of a changing climate and an uncertain future for our species and ecosystems, a rare, naturally occurring wetland in the heart of a major metropolitan city is indeed significant to the biodiversity of our region. Only time will tell how important it will be to preserve this refuge of wet habitat for rare species such as the blue dasher dragonfly or the American bittern. Even common species, which are becoming more rare with increasing urban pressure, find safe harbour in Beaver Lake, or the “little lake” (Ahka-chu so named by Coast Salish people). First Nations people have used the lake and its riparian areas as a place to collect medicinal plants for millennia. This is one of the few places in the Lower Mainland where they could gather Labrador tea and bog laurel.

In January 2011, the Park Board approved the Stanley Park Ecological Action Plan, which called for hiring a consultant to devise a remediation plan for the lake. Aqua Terra Environmental Ltd., Northwest Hydraulic Consultants, Lees + Associates and other partners have joined together to begin the process of gathering information, researching methodologies and devising a series of options for what to do with the lake. Over the spring and summer months they will research plans that will then undergo a public consultation process and be brought to the Park Board in late 2013.

Please stay tuned for more information and opportunities to provide input on the future vision of Beaver Lake by visiting [www.stanleyparkecolgy.ca](http://www.stanleyparkecolgy.ca).

**Robyn Worcester  
Conservation Programs Manager**



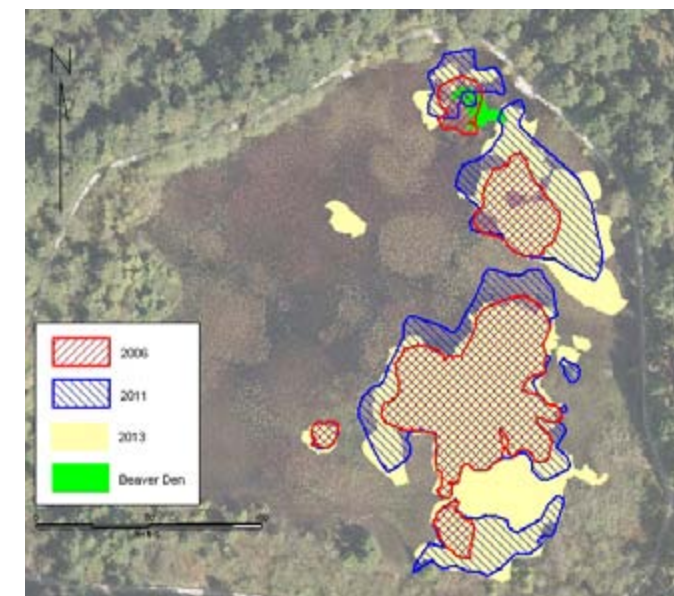
Beautiful but invasive water lily. Photo by Michael Schmidt.



Beaver Lake covered by water lillies. Photo by Andre Chan.



Mallard duckling on Beaver Lake. Photo by Liron Gertsman.

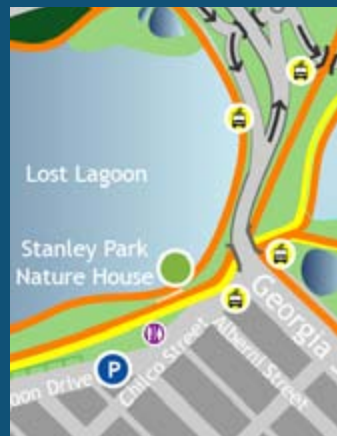


Map of the rapidly changing floating islands of Beaver Lake. The 2006 islands are drawn from orthophotos while the fast expanding 2011 and 2013 islands were field mapped by SPES staff and BCIT students.

# SPES Nature Programs

# Summer 2013

stanleyparkecology.ca/events  
604-718-6522



**Nature Programs**  
Meet at Stanley Park Nature House on Lost Lagoon, under the viewing plaza at the north end of Alberni Street.

Weekends 10 am-4 pm  
Summer Hours  
June 29-Sept 1  
Tues-Sun 10 am - 5 pm



**Birthday Parties**  
Exciting, educational, and hands on birthday adventures for kids. Includes 1.5 hour guided activities & 1.5 hour party room.

For more information:  
programs@stanleyparkecology.ca  
604-718-6522

<p><b>Pre-registration recommended for nature programs:</b></p> <p>programs@stanleyparkecology.ca 604-718-6522</p>	<p><b>Weaving with Invasive Species</b></p> <p>Have a fun time learning how to crochet English ivy vines into bio netting that will be used in restoration projects in Stanley Park.</p> <p>(Drop in for a free program)</p> <p>Sat &amp; Sun, June 1 &amp; 2, 11 am-1 pm &amp; 1:30-3pm</p>	<p><b>Dragonfly Tales</b></p> <p>Ever wonder about what life looks like from the eyes of a dragonfly? Among the first creatures on earth to take flight millions of years ago, learn how special adaptations make these ancient hunters perfect survivors.*</p> <p>Sun, June 2, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Birds of a Feather</b></p> <p>Stanley Park is full of visitors in the summer, including the feathered kind. Join us for a two-hour easy walking exploration to learn about bird identification and behaviour. (Participation by donation)</p> <p>Sun, July 28, 9:00-11:00 am</p>	<p><b>Life at the Beach</b></p> <p>Where do beach crabs come from? How does seaweed hold on without roots? Head down to Lumberman's Arch beach to uncover the incredible world of intertidal plants and animals. (Drop in for a free program)</p> <p>Sun, August 4, 11 am-3 pm</p>	
<p><b>Surprising Shoreline</b></p> <p>Explore a world of waves and constant change on an intertidal adventure. Discover the amazing creatures, like otters and crabs, that live in this unique environment and the creative ways they survive. (Age 6 yrs +, by donation)</p> <p>Sun, June 9, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>		<p><b>Wonderful Wetlands</b></p> <p>Fresh water is essential for a healthy and happy life. Explore the freshwater ecosystems of Stanley Park and learn about amazing creatures like beavers and salamanders that rely on these special streams and wetlands.</p> <p>Sun, June 16, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>		<p><b>Stumped: The Life of Dead Trees</b></p> <p>How can a "dead" tree come back to life? Explore the complex forest community of plants and animals that inhabit standing and fallen, dead or dying trees. You'll be surprised at who lives under the stump.*</p> <p>Sun, August 11, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Living on the Edge: Fragmented Forests</b></p> <p>On the edge of the city and isolated from other forests, learn how plants and animals survive in Stanley Park. Learn about the challenges of fragmented forests and their management.*</p> <p>Sun, August 18, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>
<p><b>Create a West Coast Garden</b></p> <p>Create habitat in your garden and encourage local birds and butterflies to visit as you promote a healthy ecosystem. Learn how to incorporate native species and see the benefits these hearty local plants provide.*</p> <p>Sun, June 23, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Birds of A Feather</b></p> <p>Spring has sprung and the baby birds are testing out their wings. Join us for a two-hour easy walking exploration to learn about bird identification and behaviour. You might even catch a glimpse of a first time flyer here in Stanley Park. (Participation by donation)</p> <p>Sun, June 30, 9-11 am</p>	<p><b>Stanley Park History 101</b></p> <p>Celebrating its 125 birthday this year, Stanley Park has an incredibly rich history. From mystery and romance to forestry, protests and play, get a glimpse of what has happened here over the last 125 years on this easy walking tour.*</p> <p>Sun, July 7, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Birds of a Feather</b></p> <p>Are you seeing birds that don't quite look like the others? Join us for a two-hour easy walking exploration to learn about behaviour and identifying adult birds from juveniles. (Participation by donation)</p> <p>Sun, August 25, 9:00-11:00 am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stanley Park BioBlitz</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>August 24-25, 2013</b></p> <p>Help SPES survey what lives here in Stanley Park during this amazing, activity packed 2-day event. Get up close with birds, mammals, wetlands and more!</p> <p>Join us for free educational walks, workshops and hands on surveys. No experience necessary.</p> <p>For a full list of BioBlitz programs visit <a href="http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca/events">www.stanleyparkecology.ca/events</a></p>	
	<p><b>Stanley Park's Eagles</b></p> <p>Soaring high above this beautiful city, the iconic eagles are getting ready to leave their nests. Come learn about these graceful predators that call Stanley Park home. (Participation by donation)</p> <p>Sun, July 14, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Beavers, Brooks and Bogs</b></p> <p>Discover why unique places like streams, bogs and wetlands like those around Beaver Lake are such an important part of the local ecosystem, providing clean water, a safe place to call home and great neighbours.*</p> <p>Sun, July 21, 1:30-3:30 pm</p>	<p><b>*Nature Program Fees:</b></p> <p>\$5 for SPES members, children and seniors. \$10 for non-members</p> <p>For information about membership, see page 7.</p>		

## Introducing Stanley Park Eco-Stewards!

SPES' stewardship program known as **Ivy Busters** has had a name change, and **Stanley Park Eco-Stewards** is now the new name.

Thanks to the many name ideas from staff and volunteers and congratulations to **SPES volunteer, Kat Code**, whose suggestion won her a Whole Foods gift certificate and a SPES membership.

Interested in getting involved with a volunteer team that works to restore wildlife habitat in Stanley Park? To find out more, visit [www.stanleyparkecology.ca](http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca)

## Upcoming Stanley Park Eco-Stewards events are scheduled for:

- Sat, June 8, 10 am-1 pm
- Sun, June 16, 12:30-3:30 pm
- Sat, July 13, 10 am-1 pm
- Sun, July 28, 12:30-3:30 pm
- Sat, Aug 10, 10 am-1 pm
- Sun, Aug 25, 12:30-3:30 pm

To register, contact: [stewardship@stanleyparkecology.ca](mailto:stewardship@stanleyparkecology.ca) or 604-718-6547

# Photo Contest Winners

From Douglas squirrels to skunk cabbage, and seawall bike riders to towering totem poles, close to a hundred shutterbugs snapped and submitted more than 600 images as part of SPES' inaugural photo contest that ran from April 6-14.

The contest was judged by Vancouver-based wildlife photographer & National Geographic Explorer Paul Colangelo, Juno award-winning musician Ben Worcester of Said the Whale, and entrepreneur and award-winning blogger (Miss 604) Rebecca Bollwitt.

SPES is very grateful to the many local photographers who took part in our first ever photo contest and made it such a great success.

The winners of SPES' 2013 photo contest are:

## Youth category:

1. Zachary Fedder: Grooming goose
2. Iain Reid: Beaver Lake in the evening

## Nature category:

1. Peter Robertson: Great blue heron
2. Shannon O'Grady: Red-winged blackbird

## Places category:

1. Chen-Yu Chen: Siwash Rock
2. Susan Marks: Nine O'Clock Gun

## People category:

1. Francis Lai: Young girl in front of a sunset
2. Andy Luk: Spring day on the Seawall.

Thanks to our sponsors for generously supporting the contest: The Fairmont Waterfront, Fairmont Pacific Rim, Times Square Suites, Fish House in Stanley Park, the Teahouse in Stanley Park, Prospect Point Café, CPG Systems Inc. and Stanley Park Brewery.

You can view all the submitted images at: [www.stanleyparkecology.ca/photo-contest](http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca/photo-contest).

Louise Pedersen, Fundraising & Communications Specialist



Youth, winner: Zachary Fedder.



Nature, winner: Peter Robertson.



Places, winner: Chen-Yu Chen.



People, winner: Francis Lai.

# BECOME A SUPPORTER

## Get your membership!

Together we can **make a real difference to nature and wildlife** in Vancouver's urban wilderness, Stanley Park, and help people of all ages in our community to enjoy the natural world.

Purchase your SPES membership through our secure online membership store.

[www.stanleyparkecology.ca/membership](http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca/membership)

The benefits include a special invitation to Theater Under the Stars' two select summer performances in Malkin Bowl in July, and 20% off food at Prospect Point Cafe and Stanley's Bar & Grill in Stanley Park, and much more.



Photo by Brian Grover.

If you prefer to phone us or have us send a membership form by mail, call 604-718-6523.

## Thanks to our Supporters and Partners



This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Federal Department of the Environment.  
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier du Gouvernement du Canada agissant par l'entremise du ministère fédéral de l'Environnement.

## Theater Under the Stars

SPES members can once again enjoy a night - or two - of fantastic, free entertainment under the stars in Malkin Bowl, thanks to Theater Under the Stars.

July 6: Legally Blonde  
July 7: How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying

Pre-registration is necessary. Call 604-718-6523 or [sponsors@stanleyparkecology.ca](mailto:sponsors@stanleyparkecology.ca) to reserve your ticket.

## Thank You

SPES relies on the generous support of individuals and organizations whose financial support help us to continue our longstanding commitment to environmental education, stewardship and conservation in Stanley Park.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our most recent donors:

Gwynneth Foulds  
Christopher Hammel  
Hemmera  
Spencer Chandra Herbert  
Jennifer Herkt  
Stephen R. Hogarth  
Jill Johnstone, Sarah Olinski  
Dave Second & Amy Adams  
through Tides Canada  
Foundation, Telus  
Agnes Thomson  
The Fairmont Waterfront

# SOUNDS OF SUMMER



White-crowned sparrow.  
Photo by Robyn Worcester.



Swainson's thrush.  
Photo by Peter Woods.

If you venture far enough away from the hustle and bustle of the bus loop and the Vancouver Aquarium you'll be rewarded with the sweet songs of the birds that inhabit Stanley Park's forests during the summer months.

Here are a couple of familiar songs you might hear while exploring the trails this season.

## White-crowned sparrow

What it sounds like: A whistling introduction followed by a jumble of whistles and a buzz or trill near the end. A simple mnemonic to help is: "more, more cheezies, please"

Where to find it: Along the seawall singing from the trees and on the edge of the seawall itself.

## Swainson's thrush

What it sounds like: This song doesn't come with a helpful mnemonic but is unmistakable when you hear it. The song has a flute-like sound that spirals upward. The call is a sharp "whit" that is often described like the sound of a water drop falling.

Where to find it: In the interior forest of the park, around Beaver Lake or west of the Causeway often high up in the trees.

**Brian Titaro, Conservation Technician**

## The Amazing Outdoor Classroom

The climate is definitely changing - the climate of nature awareness, that is. More and more teachers and parents recognize the importance of connecting kids with nature, and this year our school programs department is stretching to meet the demand for field teaching in Stanley Park. In fact, this spring we will see almost twice as many students as we had anticipated.

Not only does educational, health and scientific research tell us time in nature is good for kids, the kids tell us that too. Our goal is to help them fall in love with nature, so they will spend more time in it for their own benefit and grow up to protect it.



Duck by Vivian, grade 4, Vancouver.

We recently received some heartfelt thank-you cards from students who participated in our Mysteries of the Marsh program. Here are a few tidbits of what they said:

*"I have never seen this many animals in one place before (except the zoo)! I will try to help the earth!"* Gulia

*"If I was an animal, I would probably want to live in Stanley Park."* Jacob

*"I was amazed by how much wildlife there was - I saw four eagles, two eastern grey squirrels, a beaver dam, a wood duck, two blue herons, a raccoon and many songbirds."* Matthew.



Squirrel by Miko, grade 4, Vancouver.

**Anita Georgy, School Programs Manager**

## Contact Us:

Stanley Park Ecology Society  
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Vancouver BC V6B 4B2  
info@stanleyparkecolgy.ca  
stanleyparkecolgy.ca  
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SPES promotes awareness of and respect for the natural world and plays a leadership role in the stewardship of Stanley Park through collaborative initiatives in education, research and conservation.

To get the latest news, follow SPES on Facebook and Twitter @StanleyPkEcoSoc.