

Galiano Naturalists

Meeting Minutes December 13, 2004

Present were: Jerry Azevedo, Cathy Holahan, Mike Hoebel, Brian Mitchell, Ken Millard, Libby McClelland, Keith Erickson, Nathan Gaylor.

To the mournful drone of the school custodian's vacuum cleaner and the rumbling of someone's stomach, the Naturalists got straight to business...

1. "Species of the Month" project: Just to keep everyone a little off balance, Pam and Nate switched months. Nate's woodpeckers is now slated for the January issue; Pam's "Natural Mysteries" is pushed back to February. Someone had the brilliant idea of tacking a single "Natural Mystery" onto the end of each regular article, starting in March. Approved. Pam's article will generate interest and introduce the concept, and we'll include this new mini-feature in subsequent submissions to the *Active Page*. Whether Ralph will charge us extra for that is anyone's guess. Jerry tried to move the meeting along, but Mike wouldn't let us leave this topic until he heard a commitment to write the March article on frogs. Fearing he'd never get dinner, Keith volunteered. And then we had to actually talk about frogs for awhile. Red-legged frogs = good; bullfrogs = evil. Someone asked how bullfrogs would get to the island, and Mike said that people pack them around, and the conversation stopped a moment while each of us contemplated the image of a bullfrog tucked under a tourist's arm or of two legs sticking out of a backpack. But the native (good) frogs are under pressures other than bullfrogs escaping from French restaurants. Mike claimed they are the canary in the mine, so there's some uncertainty whether March's article will be about frogs or canaries.
2. "Galiano's Natural Areas Brochure" project: We're at the stage of the project where people will probably start talking to each other. Keith brought two nice maps, at slightly different scales, on 11x17 paper. The art committee was thinking about 9x16 paper. Several people did origami, and Jerry brought up the budget. The meeting notes are rather scattered, but I believe a few things were decided (tentatively, with reservations): we will use 11x17 stock and fold once in half and then in thirds; we have a list of images we want to have in the brochure and we have a January 10th deadline for getting photos (posters have gone up around the island calling for photos for some unspecified purpose); everyone should review the text and make comments; the art committee is getting advice from Donna M on layout; Keith is willing to do the mechanical layout work in Illustrator; Libby is to get the blurb from Parks and Rec for the shoreline access; people outside the GN who contribute materials, time, or lucre will be credited; the GN should have a logo; and did someone mention the budget?
3. "Bones Festival" project: Cathy introduced the group to Bone Bob, the Bones Festival mascot, who will be featured in Festival ads and posters. Brian said it looked like a refugee from a steakhouse. Food metaphors tend to figure prominently in these dinner-hour meetings. (I should interject at this point that Brian lost all credibility early on when he confessed that Louise had been baking sweets all day, yet he left the house without stuffing a few dozen cookies in a paper sack and bringing them to the meeting. It's not like Louise would have known. She was fast asleep by then.) When the guffawing stopped, Cathy was able to report that she has been gathering bones from as far away as Sidney. The hall is rented for February 5th. Volunteers are still needed: to move a skeleton from the north end on the day of the Festival; to prepare sweets and tea/coffee; to find some taxidermy examples to

show side-by-side with the bones; to dress in a Bone Bob costume and greet guests on the day of the Festival. Please contact Cathy at x2574 if you can do any or all of these things. And on a final note, we heard rumor that a beaver has been buried somewhere on Galiano and that a couple of Naturalists have been placing long-distance phone calls to a swami in India to find out where (which is silly, since our island has plenty of spiritualists and mystics). If the swami can't help, we plan to send a few of the rowdier Young Naturalists out with shovels to look for it.

4. "Nature walks" project: The only scheduled walk is up the Mount Galiano trail on January 2nd. Meet at the Lord Road trailhead at 10 AM. (Public service message: Note that the Galiano Conservancy is having a walk on their Cable Bay interpretive trail on New Year's Day at 2 PM, followed by a potluck.)
5. "Sunday Drawers" project: Hanging on the line until sometime in January (TBA).
6. "Christmas Bird Count" project: Mike is organizing teams for monitoring 21 areas on the island on December 28th. Call him at x2003 to sign up. Even if a person can't join one of the teams, information from backyard feeders and other data, especially on the day of the count but also for a week before and a week after, would be helpful. Mike reminded the group that the original Galiano Naturalists, formed in 1989 and disbanded some years later when most of the members turned the attention to topiary, sponsored the first Galiano Christmas bird counts, so it's fitting that the latest incarnation of the Naturalists should carry on the tradition. On a related note, Mike mentioned the BC Nest Records Scheme. This venerable program, which provided the raw data for the multi-volume "Birds of BC", is in disarray at the moment, with internal squabbles over who owns the records (the image that springs to mind is of two bespectacled ornithologists in field coats tugging at a nest record card while beating each other with rolled up copies of "Birder's World"), but perhaps by spring all this will be sorted out and we can get involved in some nest monitoring.
7. "Web site" project: Mike again volunteered to put together a site for us on Gulfnet and asked what should be there. People said, "Lots of stuff." Specifically? A logo, for sure. We need a logo. It's absolutely imperative we have a logo. And other stuff.
8. "Traveling Expert" project: No report yet. Probably a springtime project.
9. Other business:
 - Western bluebird stewards – Jerry reported that one Naira Johnstone (a real person) showed up on Galiano with a half dozen nest boxes and boundless optimism for the return of the western bluebird, last seen nested on Mount Sutil in the mid-90s. If only they had nest boxes. And someone to monitor them. The Galiano Conservancy will be putting up a few boxes on their property on Mount Sutil. Our group agreed in principle to help put up the boxes and monitor them on Mount Galiano if the Galiano Club gives permission. It's remotely possible that we could combine this activity with our scheduled walk on the 2nd.

Monitoring the "anecdotal trail" – Keith said that the Galiano Conservancy is looking for volunteers to help monitor the trail at their restoration project near Cable Bay. This would involve walking the trail four times a year and making notes and taking photos. He said the GCA would be putting together the protocol soon and would report back when they're prepared for volunteers.

Drawings for the interpretive trail – Again from Keith: that same trail will be used as an

interpretive trail, with a simple black-and-white brochure for visitors. He asked whether anyone would be interested in doing line drawings of various plants and animals for the brochure. He looked pointedly at a couple of the Sunday Drawers in the room, and one of these, whose last drawing of a mushroom looked like Groucho Marx in drag, slinked out of the room, and that ended the meeting.

10. Next meeting time and place: MONDAY, January 10th at 1 PM at the Activity Center.

Corrections and comments to:

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