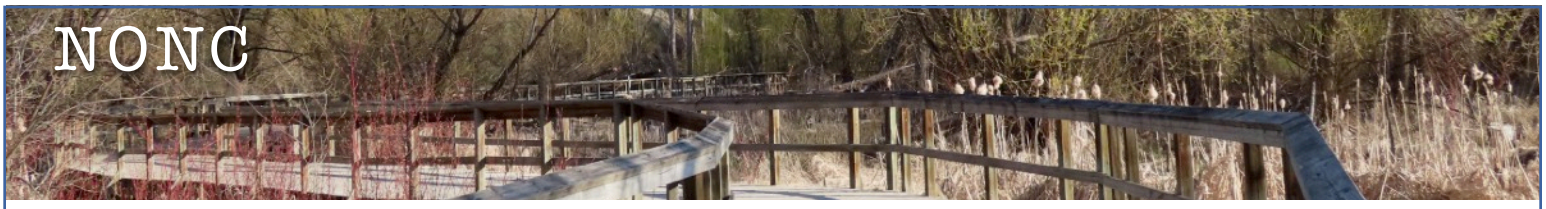
NEWSPACKET

Journal of the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club

March 2026
75th Anniversary
1951-2026

Song Sparrow



North Okanagan Naturalists' Club (NONC)
P.O. Box 473
Vernon, B.C. V1T 6M4
Website
www.nonc.ca
Email
naturevernon@gmail.com

NONC acknowledges the presence of the traditional, ancestral and unceded lands of the Syilx and Secwépemc peoples who have resided here since time immemorial. We recognize, honour, and respect the Syilx / Secwépemc lands upon which we live, work, and play.

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Vice-President	Michelle Gregoire 250-308-2838
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Newspacket is printed by Wayside Printing in Vernon. Thank you Wayside!

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Contact the following if you have questions.

BC Nature	Eric Kowalski 604-600-6725
Bluebird Trails	Margaret Mackenzie 250-542-2712
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Christmas Bird Count	Don Cecile
Conservation	Harold Sellers 250-307-3543
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Hummingbird Banding	Louise Breneman 250-542-4050
Nature Walks	Ruth Drennan 250-309-5896
Newsletter	Harold Sellers 250-307-3543
Speakers	Bruce Tattersall 778-874-4614
Swan Lake	Michelle Gregoire, Joyce Heard, Robert Hettler, Eric Kowalski, Laurel MacDonald, Margaret MacKenzie, Marnie Williamson
Swan & Eagle Count	Norbert Maertens 250-503-8790 & Rod Drennan 250-545-4999
Trips	contact the club
Website & Social Media	Laura Barker 519-532-6600

Annual Membership Dues:

Couple/Family	$55
Single	$38

see nonc.ca

Club News & Notes

Our latest new members are Teresa Cleveland, Vicki Graham, Mary Nan Lawrence, Robert & Joanne Miller, Mark Stevens, and Li YingJun. Welcome!

BC Nature will hold its AGM in Kamloops on May 22-24. Details of activities, such as field trips will be available soon in the *BCnature* magazine and other communications from BC Nature and NONC.

The is an opening on the BC Nature board for a director-at-large. If you are interested and want to know more, contact Harold Sellers at NONC.

The NONC Facebook Group continues to grow and now has over 4,300 followers!

Last month we mentioned that NONC had received serval grants for various projects. As a reminder, they are:

- Continuing our stewardship and restoration efforts at the Swan Lake Nature Reserve
- Installing a Motus Wildlife Tracking Station at the Alan Brooks Nature Centre
- Professional biologists looking at the potential of Cools Pond and the Crane Road Park/Jordan Nature Reserve for man-made painted turtle nesting sites

There will be upcoming opportunities for NONC members to help with cleanup and planting projects at Swan Lake. Watch your e-mails from NONC.

The Motus station should be installed in August-September by Birds Canada. In the near future we'll have an article explaining Motus.

Associated Environmental Inc. has been contracted to do the turtle nesting sites study.

Listening to Place — Kalamalka Park BirdWeather

A place-based exploration of sound, birds, and the early onset of birding. (Recognize the signs.)

by Rob Buchanan

Editor's Note: also see Rob's initial article about BirdWeather in the January 2026 Newspacket
Resource: www.birdweather.com

Introduction: Why Listen at Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park?

Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park stretches across more than 3,200 hectares along the northern edge of Kalamalka Lake in British Columbia. It sits at a meeting place of ecosystems: forest, grassland, and rocky lakeshore sliding into one another, creating a landscape busy with ecological conversation. Over 130 bird species move through the park each year, from year-round residents to migrants tracing invisible pathways across the Okanagan Valley.

Many of us notice birds visually, a yellow warbler flashing through shrubs, a hawk's shadow passing overhead, a flicker of movement in the canopy. Sound tells a different story, one that continues long after we've gone inside, long after daylight fades, and long before the sun returns. Listening reveals patterns that sight alone often misses, who wakes first, who calls only under certain conditions, and when the seasonal chorus begins to shift.

This interest grew from a simple question:
What would it look like to listen to Kalamalka continuously, not as a birder passing through with binoculars, but as a steady presence, a quiet ear that never sleeps?
That question would eventually lead to sensors, datasets, and more questions than answers.

A Growing Curiosity

I didn't begin as a birder. Birds were part of the background, pleasant but indistinct, until my work with Awaken Nature Education pulled me into closer attention. Learning in community has a way of doing that.

Brent Bonin, a former colleague and dedicated bird enthusiast, nudged me into noticing. Co teaching an introductory birding course forced me to slow down, to look twice, and to ask questions I hadn't known existed. That was followed by walks with the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club and the generous guidance of Norbert Maertens, who helped reveal layers of ecological story I had been walking past for years. On one winter walk, Norbert pointed out an Snow Bunting, a bird that breeds in the high Arctic and migrates south to places like the Okanagan for the winter, a reminder that even familiar trails are part of much larger, seasonal journeys.

Around the same time, *The Sounds of Life* found its way into my reading, opening the door to bioacoustics, the idea that ecosystems can be understood through listening. My curiosity expanded further as I began learning about bats and acoustic identification. Nights that once felt quiet suddenly revealed hidden flight paths and high frequency conversations, audible only with the right tools and attention.

Then, by complete accident, I noticed a small BirdWeather ad while scrolling through Facebook. A quick message of curiosity turned into a conversation with Tim Clark, the founder, who generously offered to send a PUC for educational use. Learning that BirdWeather could also be adapted for bat detection felt entirely consistent with the spirit of this work, curiosity leading somewhere unexpected and useful.

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Listening to Place continued

That same curiosity driven approach also shaped the development of **www.OE-Map.ca**, the Outdoor Experience Map, a community-based platform designed to help educators, students, and community members discover local learning sites, monitoring projects, and knowledgeable mentors. The Kalamalka BirdWeather station is shared on OE-Map, allowing others to find the station, explore its data, and see how listening projects like this connect into a broader network of place-based learning across the Okanagan.

Somewhere along the way, the shift happened. I became a person who felt uncomfortable leaving the yard without binoculars, which is, of course, a well documented early symptom of birding.

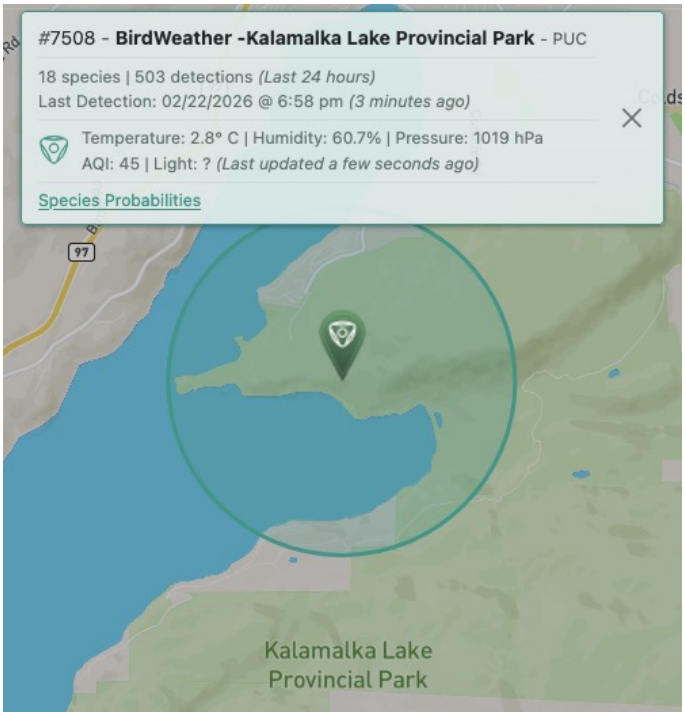

Figure 1 : The location of the BirdWeather Processing & Upload Controller (PUC) beside Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park, providing spatial context for the acoustic data presented in this report.

How BirdWeather Works

Listening Without Being There

To listen continuously, a BirdWeather Processing and Upload Controller (PUC) was installed near the park. The unit pairs an outdoor microphone with onboard processing that listens day and night. It also collects data on temperature, pressure, and humidity.

Audio is not stored as long recordings. Instead, the system captures short sound snippets when acoustic thresholds are exceeded. These clips are uploaded automatically and compared against large libraries of known bird vocalizations using machine learning models. When a match is made, the system records a species name, timestamp, probability and confidence scores, and a link to the audio clip.

The station hears only what reaches that specific point, sound shaped by slope, vegetation, wind direction, and proximity to water. It does not represent the entire park. It represents the acoustic life of one listening place.

Interpreting Detections and Uncertainty

BirdWeather detections are probabilistic rather than definitive. Each identification includes measures of probability and confidence that reflect how strongly the model associates a sound with a given species and how certain that classification is given available data.

Low probability or confidence scores do not necessarily indicate an incorrect detection. Overlapping calls, wind, insects, distant traffic, and partial or atypical vocalizations can all influence classification. Some species are also less well represented in training datasets or vocalize infrequently, increasing ambiguity.

For this reason, individual detections are interpreted

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Listening to Place continued

cautiously. Ecological meaning emerges not from any single clip, but from patterns over time repeated presence, seasonal consistency, shifts in dominance, and changes in daily timing.

Figure 2: The BirdWeather device

What the Station Actually Hears
The Soundscape as Community
BirdWeather does not record abundance, exact population size, or comprehensive coverage. It records vocal activity, who announces themselves, when, and how often. Loud or repetitive callers appear more frequently, while quiet or rarely vocal species may pass unnoticed. Wind, rain, insects, or human noise can mask biological sound. Absence of detection is not absence. Over time, however, these snippets accumulate into patterns.

Table 1. Top 25 Most Detected Bird Species
1 Cedar Waxwing
2 Common Raven
3 House Sparrow
4 House Finch
5 Ring-necked Pheasant
6 Black-billed Magpie
7 Northern Flicker
8 Black-capped Chickadee
9 Great Horned Owl
10 American Robin
11 Dark-eyed Junco
12 Common Nighthawk
13 Townsend's Solitaire
14 American Goldfinch
15 Pine Siskin
16 California Quail
17 Pygmy Nuthatch
18 Eurasian Collared-Dove
19 Hairy Woodpecker
20 Canada Goose
21 Ring-necked Pheasant (group)
22 Mourning Dove
23 Red-breasted Nuthatch
24 Evening Grosbeak
25 Pileated Woodpecker

Interpretation
The top 25 detections illustrate how the Kalamalka soundscape is shaped by behaviour, season, and sociality rather than simple abundance. Highly vocal and flocking species such as Cedar Waxwing, Common Raven, House Sparrow, and House Finch account for a large proportion of detections, reflecting how group size, call frequency, and movement patterns amplify acoustic presence. Other regularly detected residents, including chickadees, flickers, magpies, and nuthatches, contribute a steady, familiar background to the park's winter soundscape. In contrast, species such as Great Horned Owl and Townsend's Solitaire appear less frequently but remain ecologically significant, reinforcing that silence does not imply absence.

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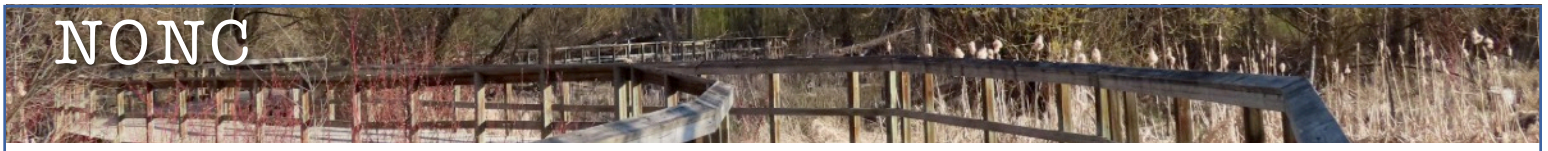

Listening to Place continued

Together, these patterns highlight both the strength and limitation of acoustic monitoring: they capture how birds participate in the soundscape, not simply how many are present, offering insight into the diverse strategies species use to persist across seasons and place.

Interpreting Migration Through Sound
Not Just North–South
Acoustic monitoring reveals migration as a pattern of appearances, disappearances, and shifting dominance rather than a single dramatic event. In this dataset (July 21, 2025 → January 21, 2026), 105 species were detected. Only 16 were present in every month, while 35 appeared in only a single month.
Figure 6 illustrates these staggered presence windows for the 50 most frequently detected species, showing migration not as a single wave, but as overlapping arrivals, departures, and periods of persistence.

Recognizing different migration strategies: latitudinal, elevational, nomadic, or food-driven helps prevent over-simplified interpretations of BirdWeather data. A species may be present but silent, passing briefly through, or shifting elevation rather than latitude.

Monthly richness peaked in August and reached a low in December, consistent with summer breeding diversity transitioning into a winter soundscape dominated by fewer, more consistently vocal species.

Shifts in Understanding
What surprises me most is not just what the data reveals, but how listening itself continues to reshape my relationship with Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park. The park feels less like something I pass through and more like something I am quietly in conversation with. Sound reveals persistence through winter, subtle movement within seasons, and ecological roles that visual encounters alone tend to overlook.

Listening over time shifts the focus away from certainty and toward patterns. It encourages patience, letting meaning accumulate rather than chasing individual moments, and a certain humility about what can and cannot be known from any single listening point.

I listen more now. I still love the outdoors. I also know a bit more about birds than my family has any interest in hearing about, which has resulted in a standing dinner table policy limiting bird related commentary to just a few peeps. This, too, feels like an important lesson in restraint and in listening.

Future Directions: Listening Longer, Listening Together
Continued monitoring opens opportunities to notice long-term patterns, seasonal change, and shifts in how communities of species move and respond over time. Future expansions could include additional local stations, weather data, trail cameras, and other accessible community science tools.

Conclusion: Listening as Practice
Listening to Kal Park through sound reveals a living system shaped by time, behaviour, and season, one that continues to move, adapt, and respond whether we are paying attention or not. For me, this work reflects a personal evolution, from a "meh" birder to attentive listener. Perhaps this is simply the stage of life that includes binoculars, greying hair, and the occasional mid-day nap. Or perhaps it is something equally good: learning to listen.

Owl see ya next time. — still listening.
Rob Buchanan

March into Spring and Enjoy

by Roseanne Van Ee

MARCH'S increasing hours and intensity of sunlight warms the Earth and brightens the sky — wildlife stirs and spectacular sunrises and sunsets are seen.

Although you most likely won't see any bears yet, they are starting to shake their slumber. Two little squirrel-size baby cubs are born to mature females biannually in January while momma snoozes. They snuggle up, nurse and saunter out from their dens with mom on warm spring days once they reach puppy dog size.

Adult bears lose 40% of their body weight while hibernating and emerge from their dens voraciously hungry. Thankfully, their favourite spring foods consist of nutritious bulbs and shoots, grass, dandelions, and insect larvae. They may even dig up a few rodent families.

Cougars are active all year long wintering on wind-packed slopes or lower in the valley, usually following deer herds. They are rarely seen, but in March they tend to follow packed trails leaving large cat tracks.

Spring sets off a frenzy of coyote mating. Listen for the nighttime serenades of coyotes yelping followed by falsetto howls.

Wildlife attacks make people wary of wilderness travel, but put into perspective that attacks are so extremely rare that they even hit the news. Far more people are injured by domestic dogs or killed in vehicular accidents. Familiarize yourself with bears, cougars and other local wildlife to appreciate their biology and behaviours, and to know safety precautions. Most wildlife are hungry now, so please don't leave any food or compost out. They can find their own food in the wilderness.

March is a good month for evening "owl prowls", too. Rodents run around on top of the snow escaping the carbon dioxide laden subnivean (under snow) environment. Owls are attracted to the easy pickings. These magnificent birds are vociferously calling in hopes to attract mates and establish their territories. Males court females by supplying them with food and furs (rodents). But, not all owls hoot — some screech, whistle or make other odd calls. Join a birding friend, the Naturalist Club or get an owl sound recording to become familiar with the calls.

above: Great Horned Owl and owlet (H.Sellers)

Spring's intense sun warms tree bark triggering beetle eggs to develop into larvae and awakening other insects over-wintering under the bark. Woodpeckers can hear the juicy critters move and are often seen and heard actively drilling holes or tearing loose bark to feast.

Chickadees, and other winter resident birds, are checking out nesting cavities and having a heyday

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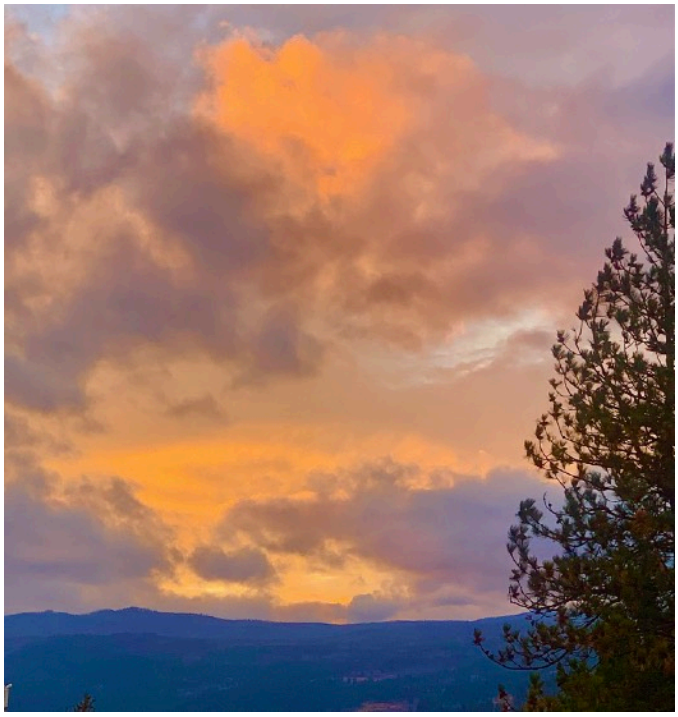
March into Spring continued

heralding the return of spring.

The combination of daylight hours increasing through March along with unstable weather patterns — sometimes sunny and warm offset by cooling trends with rain or snow-laden clouds — create dramatic lingering sunsets. Up at Silver Star the "Alpen Glow", or the warm pink sunset's reflection over the Monashees to the East, creates a spectacular evening show.

Cool evening air slides downhill into the valley while warmer March air rises. These temperature inversions fill the valley with fog creating beautiful



morning sunrises and sunny, blue daytime skies up on the mountains. In March, these inversions thankfully usually rise or "burn off" by mid morning. Hooray for spring!

Illustrations:
(left) Sun shining over a valley inversion, Roseanne Van Ee photo
(above) A dramatic March sunset, Roseanne Van Ee

If anyone has any fresh cuttings from Weeping or Corkscrew Willow trees or branches they can spare for the Beavers in care at Interior Wildlife Rehabilitation Society please contact Michelle at michelle@ufocanada.ca. She will arrange collection and transport. These Beavers eat a lot!

Watch this great video!
https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.7034692

INTERIOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SOCIETY

Best Practices for Bee Hotels in Alberta

Developed by the Alberta Native Bee Council 2020
info@albertanativebeecouncil.ca
www.albertanativebeecouncil.ca

Editor's Note:
With the imminent arrival of Spring, those among us who have made bee hotels need to be aware that cleaning and maintenance are now necessary. For those considering a bee hotel, this article — even though it is from Alberta — should be very helpful. We reached out to the Native Bee Society of BC and they also recommend resources at www.xerces.org.

What Are Bee Hotels?
Bee hotels (also known as solitary bee nesting boxes or bee condos) are manmade structures that provide nesting materials for tunnel nesting bees like leaf cutter or mason bees. A range of nesting materials can be found in different bee hotels - some hotels include blocks of wood with holes drilled in them, while others pack in paper straws, bamboo, or reeds. Regardless of the materials used, bee hotels are intended to support the life cycle of solitary tunnel nesting bees described below.

As shown on the following page, tunnel nesting bees emerge from nest cells in the spring or summer (1). Upon emerging, the bees find partners to mate with (2). The female then builds lines of nest cells in any suitable tunnel she can find, such as hollow or pithy stems, paper straws, reeds, tubes, or old beetle tunnels in wood. She constructs the nest cells out of leaves, mud, or other natural materials, and provisions each cell with food (pollen and nectar) (3). She lays an egg in each cell before sealing it off and continuing onto the next (4).

The egg develops into a larvae (5), which consumes the food, turns into pupae (6) and typically emerges as an adult the following year (1).

Do Bee Hotels Benefit Bees?
This might sound like a crazy question, given that bee hotels are designed to provide nesting materials for tunnel nesting bees. However, the jury is out on whether bee hotels are actually beneficial to our native bee species - they may even be harmful! Researchers studying bee hotels have found that solitary wasps and non-native bees utilize bee hotels more than native bees do1! Further, some bee hotels encourage the spread of disease, pests and predators and therefore may have a net negative impact on bees.

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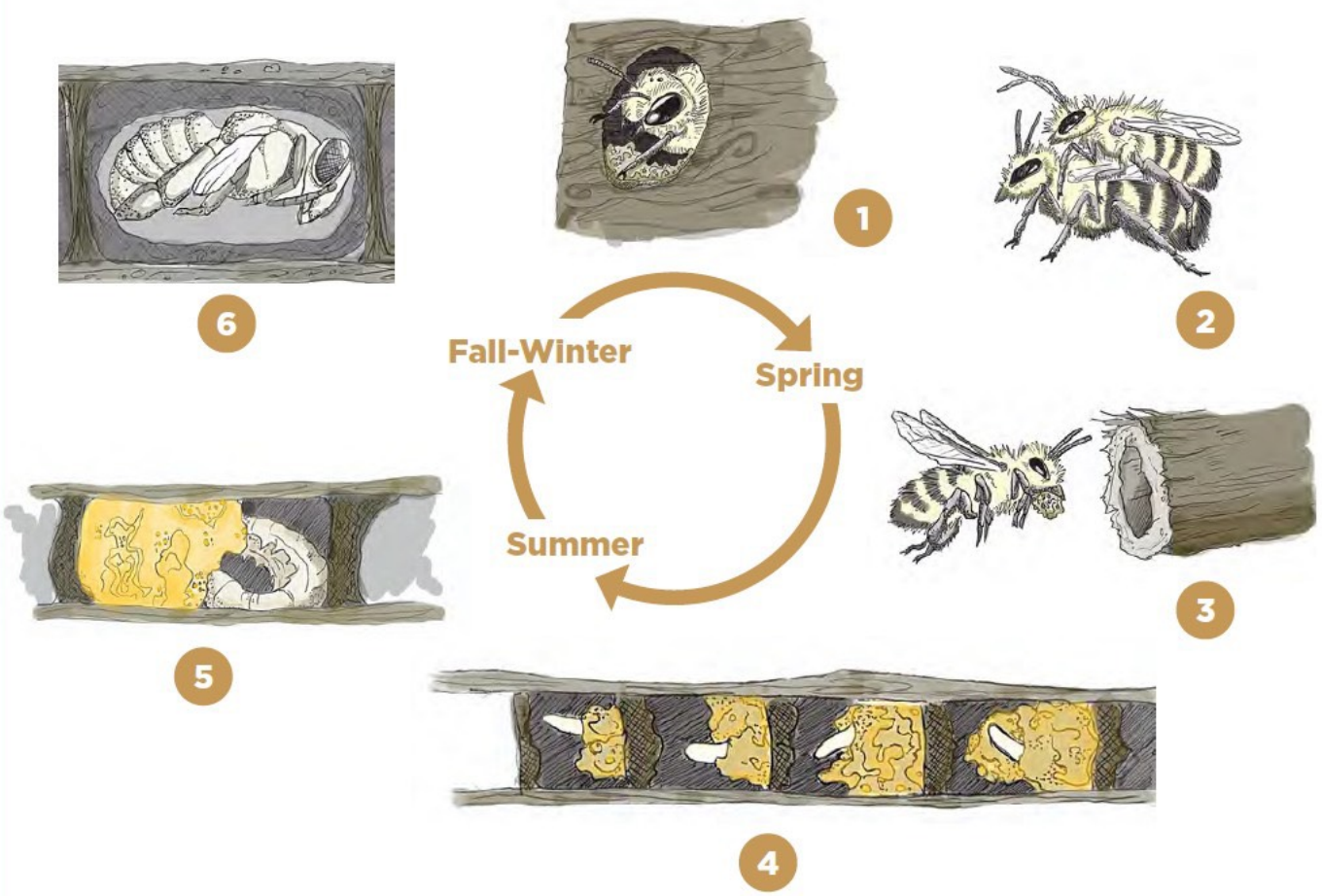
Below: Two types of tunnel nest: a wooden block and a stem bundle (right, being sealed by a mason bee). The wooden block can be predrilled and washed to maintain nest hygiene. The stem bundle must be disposed of and replaced. Courtesy of www.xerces.org Photographs by Matthew Shepherd (L) and Mace Vaughan (R).

Bee Hotels continued

Life Cycle of Tunnel-Nesting Bees



1) Tunnel-nesting bees emerge from nests created the previous year. Mason bees emerge in early spring. Leafcutter bees emerge in summer.
2) The bees mate in the spring (*Osmia* species) or summer (*Megachile* species).
3) The females construct their own nests by selecting a new cavity.
4) Inside the cavity, the bees divide the tunnel into brood cells one at a time starting at the back of the cavity. Each cell is provisioned with enough pollen to feed one larva. An egg is laid on each pollen mass before the cell is sealed using mud, plant resins, leaf pieces, or flower petals. For each successive cell, the female bee collects more pollen and lays an egg until the cavity is filled. The end of the tunnel is almost always "capped" with mud, plant resins, leaf pieces, or flower petals.
5) The eggs hatch into small larvae that eat the pollen provisions through the summer.
6) They pupate and overwinter as pre-pupae or as adults. A few species have two generations within one summer. They will go through this process twice per year.

Bee Hotels continued

Should I Build a Bee Hotel?

If your goal is primarily education regarding tunnel nesting bees and their life cycles, then a bee hotel can be a great, kid-friendly tool. If your goal is conservation of native bees then there are less expensive and more effective ways to accomplish this. Planting a diversity of native wildflowers that bloom throughout the season is almost always the best thing you can do to support healthy native bee populations. Another simple strategy is to let nature 'build' bee hotels by allowing a bit of wildness into your yard or garden. A decomposing stump or hollow stemmed plants left standing can provide excellent nesting sites for bees. If you do build a bee hotel make sure you clean it annually and review the information in this brochure, which we will update as new research is published.

Should I Purchase Bee Cocoons?

The Alberta Native bee Council does not recommend purchasing bee cocoons for release as a beneficial practice for native bees. The are two primary species available for purchase: the blue orchard mason bee (*Osmia lignaria*), a species native to Alberta and the alfalfa leaf cutter bee (*Megachile rotundata*), a non-native species. Introducing be cocoons that originated elsewhere can facilitate the spread of disease, introduce maladapted genes into local populations and increase competition for food with native bees.

Design

There are countless bee hotel designs available for purchase or DIY building. Some of these designs are better than others. Please follow the following best practices when choosing a design:

- Keep your bee hotel small to minimize disease transfer.
- Ensure tunnels are at least 5.5" deep and closed off on the back to prevent predators from sneaking in.
- Ensure tunnel diameter is between 1 and 10 mm to facilitate the needs for the variety of native bees that nest in these tunnels.
- Ensure tunnels are greater than 1 mm thick.
- Ensure tunnels are made from a natural material that is breathable.
- If possible, space tunnels 3/4" apart especially for hotels that have a flat entrance. This helps the females to quickly find the right tunnel. Select a design that is easy to clean. See the 'Maintenance' section for more information.

Placement

Place the solitary bee hotel securely on a structure that will not move (e.g., a shed, garage, fence post, etc.). Situate the front of the bee hotel so that it is south or east facing, and shield it from rain, wind and direct afternoon sunlight. Placement near large visual landmarks can help foraging bees navigate back to their nest.

Maintenance

All bee hotels require maintenance. Unnatural aggregation of nesting resources in a bee hotel can facilitate spread of disease and pests. If your bee hotel uses tubes, insert paper liners or dispose of tubes once the bees have emerged. Clean the inside of tunnels with a pipe cleaner and a mild bleach solution. Bee cocoons can also be removed from tunnels that come apart. Wear a dust mask, long sleeves and gloves. Remove cocoons in the fall and discard any discoloured or compromised cocoons. Place cocoons in a box or container that has a 0.5" diameter exit hole. Put the container in an unheated garage or other sheltered area for the winter and then transfer outside in the spring. Wash the tunnels with a mild bleach solution.

For great information for B.C. bee enthusiasts, visit Native Bee Society of British Columbia https://www.bcnativebees.org/

Watching for our disappearing wildlife, Part 2

by Ben van Drimmelen, Director, BC Nature
January 15, 2026

TWICE per year, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) meets to discuss and evaluate the status of Canadian wildlife species.

I reviewed the wildlife species assessments results for just those species in BC that have been made extinct, eliminated from the province or endangered. The depressive (as opposed to impressive) list is enclosed for your info.

I've started such a matrix; below is how it might look. I've included probably-extirpated species because member clubs would get VERY EXCITED if one of their members found a remnant population. The list would continue with endangered species as well.

To determine the member clubs with potential occurrences, I've cast the "net" a bit wide, including buffer clubs that are likely to be near, rather than within, the expected range of each species.

A suggestion is that their members look up how to recognize each species that is listed for their area and then keep a special eye open whenever they are doing field trips. If they see what they suspect is an endangered or an "extirpated" creature, take a photo and report the observation by email to the Conservation Data Centre at the CDC team.

Editor's Note: Ben's list is quite extensive, so I have made it into a multi-part series. In this issue we look at HERPTILES.

Species (Extirpated or Endangered only)	***BCN member clubs with potential occurrences***	***Habitat***
Pacific gophersnake (*catenifer* spp)	Nanaimo, Salt Spring	Rock, sparsely vegetated rock
Pygmy short-horned lizard	South Okanagan	Semiarid plains to high mountains: sagebrush, bunchgrass, pinyon-juniper woodland, openly spaced pines. Usually it occurs in open, shrubby, or openly wooded areas with sparse vegetation at ground level.
Desert nightsnake	Oliver-Osoyoos, South Okanagan	Extremely hot and rugged slopes. During summer, deep under rock debris to escape the extreme heat, but emerge with evening cooling.
Sharp-tailed snake	Victoria, Salt Spring	Pastures, meadows, oak woodlands, broken chaparral, edges of coniferous or hardwood forests and shrubby rabbitbrush-sagebrush. Most active in rainy season; retreats underground during dry periods. Generally found under logs, rocks, fallen branches, or other cover.

Disappearing Wildlife continued

Northern leopard frog	Rocky Mountain	In or near permanent water with rooted aquatic vegetation (springs, slow streams, marshes, bogs, ponds, canals, flood plains, reservoirs, and lakes). In summer, inhabit wet meadows and fields.
Oregon spotted frog	Vancouver, Abbotsford-Mission, Burke Mountain, Delta, Langley, Chilliwack	Highly aquatic, avoiding dry uplands. Occurs in vegetated shallows or among grasses or sedges along the margins of streams, lakes, ponds (including those behind beaver dams), oxbows, springs, and marshes.
Western tiger salamander	West Kootenay, Central Okanagan, South Okanagan, Oliver/Osoyoos	Tiger salamanders inhabit almost any terrestrial habitat as long as it includes the required aquatic breeding habitat, such as a lake, reservoir, permanent and ephemeral pond, or stream pool. They range from warm lowlands to high mountains and spend much of their lives in rodent burrows in deep-soiled grasslands. Breeding sites are variable, from very alkali temporary pools to permanent lakes.

Photographs courtesy of BC Reptiles & Amphibians
www.bcreptilesandamphibians.ca
(right) Pygmy short-horned lizard
(lower right) Desert nightsnake
(lower left) Western tiger salamander

Part 3 will be in the next issue.

NONC in the 1950s

NONC's history has been documented from the founding in 1951 until 1969. The club is seeking a volunteer willing to take on a project to bring the history up to today by using club files and newsletters. Contact us!

It's very interesting to look back to the early days. Enjoy these notes from 1951 to 1959.

December 12, 1951 - At the inaugural meeting a draft constitution was adopted .. And thus our Club was born. The annual membership fee was set at .50 for junior members and $1.50 for adults… Lastly it was suggested that meetings be held "…on the first Wednesday of each month during the winter season".

May 7, 1952 - …at this meeting James Grant reported on an eastern Starling nesting near Kalamalka Lake, probably the first record for the Okanagan.
Membership had risen to 33 persons.

November 9, 1953 – At this meeting a resolution was passed stating that open season for the California Quail was not justified in 1952 and 1953 and requested that these birds be protected throughout the Salmon Arm and North Okanagan electoral areas. It also mentioned that the quail were virtually extinct in the Okanagan Valley north of Oyama.

December 2, 1953 – The Club's first newsletter was produced and circulated before this meeting.

February 2, 1955 – A speaker at this meeting began a discussion on the 'merits' of the European Starling! Dr. Ross predicted that within 10 years starlings would be "very numerous and annoying".

March 2, 1955 – Speaker Peter Tassie gave a lecture in the bird series on Grouse and spoke of the Blue grouse commonly called the 'fool hen' and the sharp-tailed grouse incorrectly referred to as a prairie chicken.

1955 – A summary of Club activities was presented and paid up membership showed 42 members. The annual Christmas Bird census from the previous December indicated the largest number of birds seen (6,000 individuals) from 59 species, a record for the area.

October 5, 1955 – At this meeting the first recording of the suggestion to have a 'nature observations' section added to the monthly membership meetings. This was the idea of Mrs. Tassie and this tradition has continued to present day.

March 31, 1956 – Considerable planning was done for the May field day and dinner with the request made that the Rev. A. C. Mackie be invited as guest speaker.

October 30, 1956 – … the speaker at the next meeting, Mr. Carl Naughton of Oliver, is referred to as "co-partner in rattlesnake hunting with Rev. Mackie". At that meeting he brought along "many pickled specimens of snakes and other reptiles, and a live skink".

November 7. 1957 – It was reported in the Vernon Daily News that 600 people attended the first Audubon Screen Tour film. It was described as a 'masterpiece of colour photography' and the topic was wildlife of the Pacific Coast from Mexico to Puget Sound.

December 1958 Christmas Bird Census – A record number of birds – 6750, and a record number of species – 75, were observed at this year's event with 18 observers participating.

NONC CALENDAR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

NONC monthly meetings are held in the Emerald Room at The Schubert Centre for Seniors, 30th Ave., in downtown Vernon. No entry fee. Members and non-members welcome. Coffee and cookies served!

Wednesday, March 4, 7:00 pm: Carrie Nadeau speaking on Local Restoration Projects 2025: A peak into the science

Wednesday, April 1, 7:00 pm: Speaker to be announced.

75th Anniversary Special Event: Thursday, May 21 at the Coldstream Hall. Details to come.

SATURDAY NATURE WALKS

Join us Saturdays at 9:00 am. Visitors welcome. Dress for the weather. If trails are icy, bring cleats. Hiking poles are very helpful on hilly and rough trails. We do a lot of birdwatching, so bring binoculars if you have them. No dogs please.

DR 1 & 2 are generally suitable for almost anyone, of any age. However, if you have issues of mobility and/or stamina, you should speak to the leader before attempting.
DR 1 Easy — Suitable for most people. Mostly paved or good-surface path, fairly level with some gentle climbs.
DR 2 Moderate — Suitable for most walkers and hikers with no mobility or endurance issues. May have longer distance with steeper hills and switchbacks, some uneven and rough path.

March 7 – 9am DR 2-plus
Join the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club for a walk on the Top of Middleton Mountain. Meet at the trailhead parking on Mt. Ida Drive, adjacent to Emerald Views Strata, 900 Mt Ida Drive. Note: long steep climb ascending the hill. Contact Harold at hikerharold@gmail.com

March 14 - 9am DR 1
Join the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club for a walk on the Corral Trail in Kalamalka Provincial Park. We will walk about 90 minutes, to enjoy the view across Cosens Bay and then return. Meet at the Red Gate parking lot on Kidston Road. Contact Susan at supepghat@hotmail.com

March 21 – 9am DR 1
Join the North Okanagan Naturalists" Club for a walk on the Salmon Trail in Lumby. Take Hwy 6 and as you enter Lumby turn right onto Faulkner Ave and then right onto Bessette St to the parking lot at the trail entrance. Contact Norbert at nmaer10s@gmail.com

March 28 – 9am DR 1
Join the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club for a walk in East Vernon, DeRoo Rd to Hartnell Rd and back. Take DeRoo Road off East Vernon Road and meet at end of DeRoo Road. Contact Jean at Jean.amatt@gmail.com

April 4 - 9am DR 2
Join the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club for a nature walk on Middleton Mountain Trails beginning at the Kal Beach parking lot, off Husband Rd. Meet at the east end of the parking lot, by the trailhead sign. Walk to include Neumann's Trail (a steep climb up and then back down) and Creed Loop and then return. Contact Harold at hikerharold@gmail.com