

# Pacific Yews of Lasqueti Island

by Peter Cressey

In August last year I took the ferry to Lasqueti Island to meet resident Sophia Rosenberg who had kindly offered to show me some of the island's Pacific Yew trees. She had a list of four notable yew trees to visit, and with a few other people joining us we headed out for the afternoon.

As we made our way to each place, we were met by the owners who kindly welcomed us. There was a real sense of pride as they showed us their special trees.

The Pacific yew *Taxus brevifolia* can be elusive to find in the forest. If you don't know them you could easily walk right past. They do not compete for light with other trees, surviving in the understory of the forest, reaching heights of just 30-40', though even the smallest tree can be many hundreds of years old.

Being familiar with yews I had been intrigued to visit the island after reading about archeologist Dr Dana Lepofsky and her work with the local First Nations; the K'omoks, We Wai Kum, Halalt, Tla'amin and Qualicum. This work had shown that Indigenous occupancy on the island had stretched back 6000 years and that the original Indigenous name for the island was Xwe'etay, which means 'Yew Tree' in several Coast Salish languages.



Large Yew tree seen during a foggy day, photo Kathy Schultz

Standing beside the yew trees with their convoluted trunks and flaky red bark, thin like parchment paper, there is a distinct presence. Maybe it is the age of these trees, as they are so much older than the forest that surrounds them.

For each tree we find, we spend some time admiring it and chatting, then before we leave we thread a tape measure around the trunk and measure the circumference. One of the trees is 11' 3" around at breast height, making it close to the record size in Canada. Sadly, one of the other large old yews on our list was no longer alive, with no visible green foliage in its branches.

I had met yew trees before in my volunteer work on forest conservation and flora and fauna surveys in the Walbran Valley on Southern Vancouver Island. This experience had raised concerns about the obvious signs of their dwindling populations.

There have been other concerns voiced with the NGO the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listing the Pacific yew as 'Near Threatened'.

Because of their slow growth and the fact that they don't reach reproductive age until 60-80 years, the yew is often defined as being an Old Growth Forest dependent species.



Yew canopy, photo Kathy Schultz

The extensive clearcut logging of these forests and the current silviculture practice of short harvest rotations has resulted in the yew been eliminated from large parts of its former range. Climate change and the harvesting of yews in the 1980-90s for Taxol (an anti-cancer compound found in the bark, but now synthesized in the lab) has further added to these impacts.

The yew is an important plant for the coastal Indigenous Peoples, with many material, medicinal and spiritual uses (refer to Dr Nancy J. Turner’s work). With populations of yews on their territory becoming scarce, the Haida Nation now require logging companies to leave yews uncut, with a buffer of shade forest around them, a practice now being adopted by other coastal First Nations.

For there to be any provincial protection in B.C for the Pacific yew, the Province needs to recognize that there has been a drastic decline in their populations. The yew has long been considered a non-commercial ‘trash tree’ and consequently there is little hard data to inform government decisions. To address this problem I have been working for the last few years on a mapping project with Dr Jericho O’Connell developing a ‘predictive population model’ for the Pacific yew which will hopefully fill in this lack of data on their population.

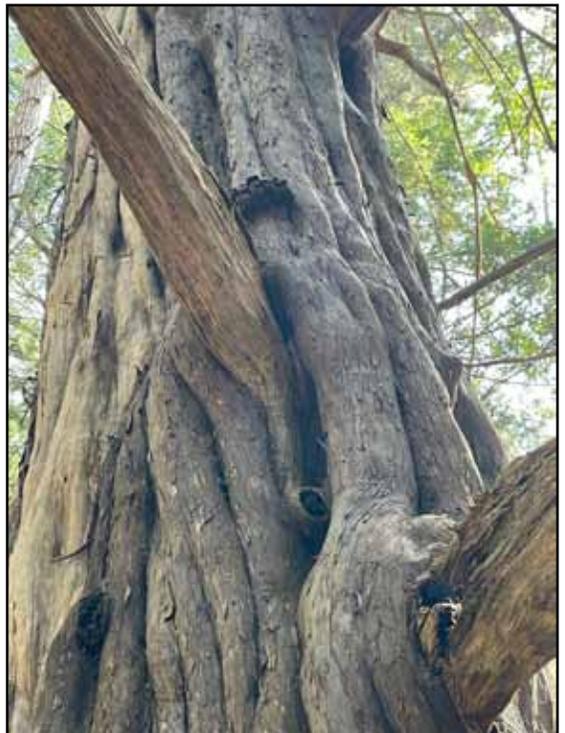
One of the memories that stayed with me after my visit to Lasqueti, and on nearby Jedediah Island, was the impact of the feral sheep population on the forest understory and the lack of regeneration of tree species. With the yew’s slow growth and late maturity, this would mean that the tree would be unable to maintain a viable population and that Xwe’etay - Yew Island - could in the foreseeable future have no yew trees.

With this trend, a potential initiative could be a community study of the health of the yew tree population. This could lead to a project to regenerate the yews on the island - to propagate and plant yews, and protect them from browsing.

Thanks to Sophia, Aigul, Sonya, Bill and Carolyn, the yew hosts and the warm hospitality of Lasqueti Island.

For more information on the Pacific Yew Population Study

please contact: [friendsofcarmanahwalbran@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcarmanahwalbran@gmail.com)



Large, live Pacific yew seen during this survey, measuring 9’ 3” at breast height, photo Sonya McRae



Peter Cressey is a settler originally from England. He lives with his partner in Shirley BC where he makes his living as a furniture maker. He has been working as a volunteer for the protection of Ancient forests as an activist and as an organizer of community science projects for over 30 years.

left: red yew bark, photo Kathy Schultz

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# Drift Logs

by Norm Stacey

This article almost started writing itself during an unwarranted guilt trip decades ago when I was hauling gravel off our beach on the Schumach to spruce up the path to our cabin. While struggling to get the load over a minefield of slippery beach logs, and worrying about how many provincial and local bylaws I might be violating, it suddenly hit me: “Why am I feeling guilty about a few pails of gravel when this whole beach has been so damaged by drift logs?” But I parked it with all my other unactioned grievances until recently ran across an ambitious and detailed research study by Dr. Tom Reimchen and colleagues at the University of Victoria highlighting the destructive effects of drift logs on B.C.’s rocky shores.

Drift logs had previously been shown to have significant negative impacts on estuary, eelgrass, and coral communities. Prior to the UVic study, however, it seems the only evidence from rocky shores was a 1971 Washington State study that used nails embedded in intertidal rocks (to serve as proxies for attached invertebrates) and found that the majority were broken within a year due to log abrasion - suggesting why barnacle communities are greatly reduced in areas where logs are numerous.

Realizing the potentially devastating effects of beach logs, Reimchen’s group designed their study to answer four key research questions: 1 - how many drift logs are on the BC coast; 2 - have these numbers been increasing over the past century; 3 - how much are the logs moving due to tides and storms; and 4 - is there evidence they cause ecological damage?

To get a handle on log numbers, satellite imagery was used to examine 200 locations that covered more than 400 km of coastline on Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii. Extrapolating from their Vancouver Island data showing an average of almost 250 logs per km of shoreline, the researchers estimate there are between 450,000 and 840,000 logs on Vancouver Island shores alone. In 22 locations from southern Vancouver Island,



Drift logs on Schumach lands, photo N. Stacey

the majority of beached logs (59%) were a result of human activity (they had sawn ends), 17% were ‘natural’ (with attached roots), and 23% were ambiguous (neither roots nor saw cuts). Bizarrely, a quick and very amateurish survey of 160 logs on our Lasqueti beach yielded essentially identical results: 58% anthropogenic, 17% natural and 24% ambiguous. Try this on your favorite beach.

Unfortunately, drift log numbers have been increasing. Reimchen’s team used satellite imagery to compare current numbers with past numbers from 26 locations that had good pre-1925 archival images. On average, beached logs of all types increased over 500% during that time. Although one might expect the occurrence of ‘natural’ drift logs to be relatively stable over time, they surprisingly increased by over 6000% in the 19 study locations that had any natural logs in archival images. The authors suggest this increase might result partly from clearcut-induced landslides, in which case the true proportion of ‘naturally’ occurring beach logs would be less than 17%.

Perhaps the most powerful finding from the study is the degree to which beached logs are moved by tide and storm. By following tagged logs and examining sequential satellite images, Reimchen’s team found that over 50% of beached logs can move within a month and roughly 90% move within a year. Such high log mobility is consistent with the authors’ satellite imagery data showing that beach log accumulations even in remote areas such as the west coast of Haida Gwaii are comparable to those in areas of heavy industrial logging. Most significantly, it demonstrates that a beach log is not a

sedentary creature, but a highly mobile repeat offender that impacts different intertidal areas year after year after year.

To answer their last question - whether drift logs damage intertidal species - the UVic researchers measured barnacle abundance within and beside small rock crevices that would provide protection from log abrasion. Small barnacles were more abundant outside crevices in the low and mid intertidal, but more abundant inside crevices in the high intertidal, where log abrasion would be most severe. And this effect was far more pronounced for large (i.e. older) barnacles, where exposed abundance was similar to crevice abundance in the low intertidal, but only 10-20% of crevice abundance in the mid and high intertidal (see Figure opposite).

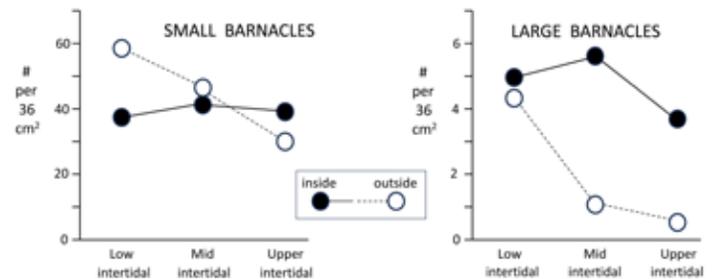


problem, you can read Dr. Reimchen's study in full here (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/maec.70054>) and in popular format here (<https://www.sciencenewstoday.org/they-look-harmless-but-new-research-shows-beach-logs-are-quietly-destroying-an-entire-ecosystem>), or you can simply hear him talk about it here (<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.7011107>).

And I hope the next time you're walking one of Lasqueti's beautiful though battered shores, you'll pause to consider the strange irony that the BC government could fine or even imprison you for littering on the beach, yet imposes no penalties for the widespread ecological damage logging companies continue to inflict on our intertidal communities.

Why might this be of importance? Because sessile (permanently attached) rocky intertidal invertebrates such as barnacles and mussels not only are direct food sources, but also create interstitial spaces harboring a host of smaller prey species (amphipods, isopods, snails, various worms, etc.). To quote from Reimchen's study, repetitive removal of these once abundant food sources through "ongoing log abrasion has significantly degraded intertidal communities across most rocky shores in western Canada. This degradation likely has cascading negative effects on both aquatic and terrestrial species that depend on these habitats for foraging".

If you'd like to find out more about this serious and widespread yet strangely neglected conservation



**Figure Legend.** Average densities of small and large barnacles inside crevices (*protected*) and on flat rock immediately outside the crevices (*exposed to log abrasion*). Barnacles were sampled at three levels of the intertidal zone at 14 rocky beach locations on Southern Vancouver Island. Redrawn from Andresen EP, Marchant MG & Reimchen TE. 2025. *Marine Ecology* 46: e70054 (<https://doi.org/10.1111/maec.70054>)

### Update on Viking Way, Land Acquisition Campaign

1ha beside the French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve is home to a Great Blue heron colony which produced 51 chicks 2023-2025 and is active again in 2026. Conserving the land protects the heron colony and the critical ecosystems of the Nature Preserve.



Property owner is willing to sell and the Regional District has agreed to manage the land as part of the Nature Preserve. The BC Parks Foundation will consider hosting a crowdfunding campaign if community support is demonstrated.

Letters supporting the land acquisition provided by MP Gord Johns, MLA Stephanie Higginson, City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, Nanaimo & Area Land Trust, Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute & BC Conservation Foundation (to date).

### April 13<sup>th</sup> 1:30-3pm GREAT BLUE HERON & COASTAL WILDLIFE SCREENING EVENT & SILENT AUCTION

Featuring photos & videos by wildlife photographers

Berwick Theatre, 180 Jensen Ave E., Parksville

Adult Admission by Donation - Children Free (Seating first come basis)

DONATE  
- [saveestuarylandsociety.ca](https://saveestuarylandsociety.ca)



Holly Haul volunteers



finding Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria*



One holly bush - four cutters, 3 underneath

*by Charlene Lloyd, Stewardship Coordinator*

## Stewardship on Lasqueti Island: Holly Haul

The Holly Haulers were at it again! On Sunday, November 9th a crew of eight volunteers tackled the remaining holly within a large wetland on the Point Young Conservation property. English holly *Ilex aquifolium* was once planted intentionally around homes and gardens. Over time, birds have carried its seeds far beyond those original sites, allowing holly to establish in forests and wetlands where it doesn't belong. Left unmanaged, it forms dense evergreen thickets that quietly change how these ecosystems function—blocking light, altering soil conditions, and crowding out native plants.

Biodiversity is at the heart of ecosystem health. Native plants support complex food webs—from soil organisms and insects to birds and mammals. In wetlands and moist forest areas especially, diversity matters. These places often act as refuges during dry summers and periods of stress. When holly takes over, it reduces habitat variety and limits opportunities for native regeneration. By removing holly, we begin to reopen space for plants like salmonberry, June plum, Oregon grape, and young conifers to return—species that are better adapted to local conditions and far more supportive of wildlife.

Just as importantly, stewardship supports people too. Working together on the land builds connection—to place and to one another. Holly removal is physical, sometimes challenging work, but it's also deeply grounding. Thanks to Betsy, Izzy, James, Wendy and Bruce, Tracy and Grant, for putting in a few hours of elbow grease to help with this project, and to Suzi for providing a delicious lunch. These work parties are integral to ensure our protected areas remain healthy. The goal is to support a future where ecosystems are diverse, resilient, and able to adapt to ongoing change.

## Restoration on Lasqueti Island: Learning from Refuges of Biodiversity

Restoration on Lasqueti Island often begins not with heavy equipment or grand plans, but with noticing what's still quietly holding on. It's about paying attention to the places where life persists despite pressure and change, and asking what those places can teach us. Rather than simply repairing what's been damaged, restoration here is about supporting the natural processes that allow ecosystems to survive, adapt, and thrive.

One of the most useful ideas guiding this work is the concept of refuges of biodiversity. These are the small, sometimes overlooked places that offer protection from browsing, disturbance, or extreme conditions. On Lasqueti, they show up in familiar forms: an old cedar stump soft with moss, a rocky outcrop where deer and sheep rarely tread, a narrow crevice sheltering a stubborn plant, or a nearby island ringed by wind and salt.

***Stumps and fallen logs may look like leftovers from another era, but they are bustling with life. They hold moisture through dry summers, store nutrients, and create safe starting points for seedlings trying to establish beyond the reach of hungry mouths.*** Fungi, insects, mosses, and lichens flourish there, building the foundations of forest recovery. Rocky outcrops and crevices play a similar role. Their shallow soils and awkward footing naturally limit grazing, allowing native plants to persist where the surrounding forest floor has been stripped bare. Nearby islands, too, tell an important story. Because many were less accessible to introduced grazers, they often retain richer and more intact plant communities, offering valuable clues about what healthy systems can look like.



Sitka Bumble bee with pollen, photo Izzy Harrington

# Lasqueti’s Bumble Bee Project

by Ken Lertzman

We have 800 bee species in Canada and 500 in BC. There are 46 species of Bumble Bees native to North America (north of Mexico) and 32 native Bumble Bee species in British Columbia—making BC a hotspot of Bumble Bee diversity. How many Bumble Bee species do we have on Lasqueti? Let’s find out!

The purpose of LINC’s Xwe’etay/Lasqueti Bumble Bee Project is to document the diversity of bees on Lasqueti Island and its surrounding offshore islets, with a focus on Bumble Bees. The landscape of Lasqueti is diverse, presenting different kinds of habitats from both old and young dry Coastal Douglas-Fir Zone forests, to wetlands, coastal bluffs, homesteads and gardens. We hope to explore the different bees present in different parts of the island, in different kinds of habitats, and how the species vary over the season. We are using the on-line natural history platform iNaturalist to record photos of bees and the iNaturalist community (and software) to help with species identification. In this project we hope to engage the Lasqueti community broadly in using iNaturalist to learn about and document bee diversity.

You can find out more about the project, including videos and other resources on bee ecology and identification on the LINC website:

<https://linc.lasqueti.ca/xweetay-lasqueti-bumblebee-project/>

You can check out the project’s iNaturalist page at:

<https://inaturalist.ca/projects/xwe-etay-lasqueti-bumble-bee-project>

90% of flowering plants require an animal pollinator to reproduce, and reproduction is often limited by the delivery of pollen between male and female flowers. In British Columbia one third of our bird and mammal species have pollinator-dependent fruits and seeds as an important part of their diet. In southern BC, bees make 70-90% of the flower visits. Because of these networks of ecological connections, pollinators in general, and bees in particular, are what ecologists call “keystone species”.

Insect pollinators around the world are in decline, largely because of habitat loss, land conversion, introduced parasites, and climate change. 28% of North American Bumble Bees are facing some degree of extinction threat. In coastal British Columbia, the Western Bumble Bee used to be common and is now listed as “threatened” under the Species at Risk Act. But there are recent records of it near Lasqueti – wouldn’t it be nice if it is hanging on here!



Some bees found on Lasqueti:  
 on grape, Feb 10, 2022  
 on red-flowering current  
 on brassica  
 on hyacinth  
 Photos K. Lertzman & I. Harrington



# Common pollinators of BC's South Coast

## Bumble Bees

Social (have queens + workers) Nest in existing cavities (in ground, or bird houses)



L to R: orange-rumped, yellow-fronted, yellow-faced, Vancouver, and fuzzy horned bumble bees  
*Bombus melanopygus*, *B. flavifrons*, *B. vosnesenskii*, *B. vancouverensis*, *B. mixtus*

Have you seen this bee?

The western bumble bee (*B. occidentalis*) is endangered: is she in your garden?

## Hairy-Belly Bees

Solitary, mostly cavity-nesters  
Chubby black or metallic bees



## Bees with Pollen Pants

Solitary mining and sweat bees, ground-nesters  
Skinny, variable size, some metallic



## Other visitors

Flies, wasps, butterflies, birds: less common than bees, but anything that visits flowers can pollinate, and some of these visitors also provide pest control!





Biodiversity on Lasqueti photo Gordon Scott

## New Trail at the Osland Reserve

It is a delight to be able to safely traverse the mountainside at the Osland Reserve without trampling on numerous plants, insects and amphibians. Two groups of volunteers spent a day digging and cutting to create a loop trail up and back down Cook Mountain. In December a group of eleven volunteers started the new loop trail up, and in February another group completed the trail. Many thanks to Duane West for his leadership on the trail route, Chris and Sue Rowe for their expert tree clearing, and the rest of the crew: Charlene Lloyd, Wendy Schneible, James Schwartz, Gordon Scott, Izzy Harrington, Bruce Grant, Jordan Leighton, Hilary Duinker, Donald Gordon, Peter Johnston, Elizabeth Eppich, Vicky King, Betsy Williamson, and woofers Alex.

These observations lead to one of the hardest questions in restoration: what are we trying to restore to? Lasqueti's landscapes are not frozen in time. They have been shaped by thousands of years of Indigenous stewardship, followed by rapid and dramatic changes brought by logging, settlement, and introduced species. There is no single "correct" baseline waiting to be rediscovered. Instead, restoration becomes an exercise in judgement—aiming not for a snapshot of the past, but for ecosystems that function well, support diversity, and are resilient enough to face an uncertain future.

Values matter in these decisions. Supporting native biodiversity, protecting water and soil, and increasing resilience to climate change are all part of the picture. So is the recognition, long held by Indigenous land stewards, that healthy ecosystems are dynamic and tended through relationship, not neglect. Community values—care, learning, responsibility to future generations—also shape how restoration unfolds on Lasqueti.

Natural history offers essential guidance. By observing where native plants still persist—on stumps, rocky sites, or islands—we gain insight into the conditions they need to survive. These refuges help inform restoration planning by highlighting which species to prioritize, where protection from herbivory may be necessary, and how landscape features influence recovery. They also remind us that small-scale actions, like retaining woody debris or protecting rocky habitats, can have outsized ecological benefits.

Ultimately, restoration on Lasqueti Island is a process of learning, adapting, and collaborating. By grounding our efforts in local natural history, clear values, and respect for past and present stewardship, we can set thoughtful goals that support biodiversity, ecosystem health, and a lasting connection between people and place.



Above: December Trailbuilders, Below: February trailbuilders, photos Charlene Lloyd



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# What Are Old-Growth Forests Really Worth?

by Cedar Morton

In BC, old forests are part of everyday life. We walk through them, harvest from them, and rely on them in ways that are often felt rather than measured. Timber is one obvious product forests provide, but it is only a small part of what intact old-growth ecosystems do for us.

A few years ago, I worked with colleagues on a small pilot study on Vancouver Island, near Port Renfrew, to explore a simple question: What happens when we account for the broader range of benefits old-growth forests provide—not just the value of the logs they produce?

That pilot study, completed in 2021, focused on a landscape many coastal residents would recognize: highly productive forests, strong tourism and recreation use, and increasing conflict over remaining old growth.

The purpose of our work was not to reduce forests to dollar figures. Rather, it was to correct a long-standing imbalance in how decisions are made. When only timber value is counted, we systematically undervalue the living systems that sustain us.

When we expanded the accounting beyond timber to include carbon storage, recreation and tourism, non-timber forest products, and education and research, the results revealed that even in an area with an active for-



Old growth forest on Lasqueti, photo Valeria deRege

est industry, keeping old-growth forests standing produced greater overall economic benefits than logging them. The results were primarily driven by increases in carbon storage and recreation/tourism from increased conservation.

That early work raised an important follow-up question: Was this result unique to Vancouver Island, or would it hold elsewhere in the province?

To find out, we expanded the analysis to the Prince George and Okanagan Timber Supply Areas.

These landscapes differ markedly from Vancouver Island in climate, forest

type, fire history, and local economies. They also experience much higher wildfire risk, which adds complexity to any discussion about forest benefits and long-term management.

Using forest growth and disturbance models coupled with economic valuation, we compared current forestry practices with several scenarios that increased protection of old-growth forests, including one where all old growth was left unharvested. We then estimated the economic value across the same set of ecosystem services over the next 100 years.

Once again, the results were clear.

In both regions, protecting old-growth forests produced higher overall economic benefits than business-as-usual logging, even after accounting for lost timber revenue.

The main driver was carbon.

Old-growth forests store exceptionally large amounts of carbon in living trees, dead wood, and deep soils. When these forests are logged, much of that carbon is released into the atmosphere, contributing to climate change. While young forests grow more quickly, it can take centuries for a logged landscape to rebuild the carbon stocks of intact old growth—if it ever does.

Using Canada’s official estimate of the social cost of carbon (a measure of the damage avoided by keeping carbon out of the atmosphere), we found that carbon storage alone outweighed timber losses in every protection scenario we examined. Over a century, fully protecting old-growth forests in the two study areas resulted in tens of billions of dollars more value for British Columbians than continuing with current practices.

These estimates are conservative. They included only a subset of ecosystem services since we did not attempt to quantify several others that matter deeply to BC communities, such as water regulation, flood mitigation, biodiversity, cultural values, and spiritual connections to place.

The studies also looked honestly at some challenging trade-offs. While the overall advantages to society were clear, increased old-growth protection did reduce jobs and GDP tied directly to timber harvesting, and these losses were not fully offset by gains in forest-related tourism employment. A study limitation is that some proportion of individuals employed in timber harvest sector would move to other jobs, which was not accounted for in our modelling.

Given uncertainty about future fire disturbance under climate change, we also tested higher fire rates. Carbon losses increased sharply, especially in the Okanagan. This highlights an important point: protecting old growth is only part of the solution. The adverse impacts of fire can be minimized by forest management that aims to restore more natural wildfire disturbance, including prescribed burning practiced for millennia by First Nations, and maintaining deciduous trees within the landscape mosaic, such as trembling aspen, which is less fire-prone compared to conifer plantations. These efforts should aim to retain old-growth forests and large trees, which store the highest carbon



old-growth forest on Lasqueti, photo Gordon Scott

Old-growth forests quietly perform important services we rely upon that cannot be replaced once lost. The Vancouver Island pilot study showed this clearly in a coastal context. The follow-up work in the interior confirmed it under very different ecological and economic conditions. Together, they point to a simple conclusion: when we account for what old-growth forests actually provide, keeping them standing is not just an ecological choice—it is a practical economic one.

**Read the full reports here:**

Port Renfrew pilot study summary report (2021) <https://ancientforestalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Economic-Value-of-Old-Growth-Summary-Web.pdf>

Port Renfrew pilot study full technical report (2021) <https://ancientforestalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Economic-Value-of-Old-Growth-Report-Web.pdf>

Interior BC study summary report (2025) [https://www.essa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/The-Economic-Value-of-Old-growth-Forests-in-BC\\_20250331.pdf](https://www.essa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/The-Economic-Value-of-Old-growth-Forests-in-BC_20250331.pdf)

Interior BC study FAQs and methods updates (2025) [https://www.essa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/The-Economic-Value-of-Old-growth-Forests-in-BC-FAQ-Methods-Update\\_20250331.pdf](https://www.essa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/The-Economic-Value-of-Old-growth-Forests-in-BC-FAQ-Methods-Update_20250331.pdf)

## Native Plants

Q'uxmin – Indian Consumption Plant  
or Wild Celery

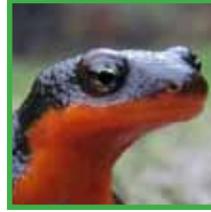


Q'uxmin on Protection Island, photo Nancy J Turner

*This species is commonly known in English as Indian consumption plant and among Hul'q'umi'num' speakers generally only by its Hul'q'umi'num' name. It is a small herbaceous perennial that grows in dry, open, often pebbly to sandy areas at low to middle elevations. It has yellow flowers that develop into small, flat fruits that resemble rolled oats and are usually thought of as "seeds." It occurs in southwestern British Columbia south to southern Oregon. (from <https://plants.hwulmuwqun.ca/plant/quxmin-desert-parsley/>)*

**Nancy Turner:** "You can eat the young greens. If you have a cold or a cough, people would take one of the seeds and just chew it and put it under your tongue. I do that all the time. I never get colds. You can plant some of the seeds, and try some of them. Kim Recalma-Clutesi would tell you all about them because they have them up at Qualicum as well. They're also ceremonial. There's the smudging of them. The smoke is said to be the food of the salmon people. So in the first salmon ceremony, they burned q'uxmin. There's stories about it. You can read about q'uxmin in *Saanich Ethnobotany*, or in *Luschim's Plants*."

## LINC's Upcoming Events



March 22, Spurge Purge  
-meet at IO at Collins

May 2, Birding with  
Pierre Geoffray location and time TBA

May 31, LINC AGM - 11 am  
Judith Fisher Centre

## Did You Know?

Basking Sharks in the Salish Sea: Bushnell, K.P. (2025). Basking sharks in the Salish Sea and greater Northeast Pacific. *Emerging Issues in the Salish Sea*, Issue 11, C.R. Elliser (Ed.). Salish Sea Institute, Western Washington University.

[https://cedar.wvu.edu/salish\\_pubs/43/](https://cedar.wvu.edu/salish_pubs/43/)

*For around thirty million years, basking sharks *Cetorhinus maximus* have filter-fed on plankton across Earth's ocean. They once gathered in aggregations of hundreds (some estimate thousands) on the west coast of Vancouver Island, and individuals were common throughout the Salish Sea until an eradication program sponsored by the Canadian government in the 1950s-60s drove the species to near extinction. This paper provides an overview of the historical population data and changing cultural attitudes toward basking sharks in the Salish Sea and greater Northeast Pacific and lays out the possibilities for conservation and recovery.*

*As a "poster child for shifting baseline syndrome" (McPhie 2024), basking sharks have largely been erased from cultural memory on the west coast of North America. There is evidence that community members, particularly those who spend time on the water, can play a key role in their recovery.*

Kelly Bushnell

# Seen In Passing



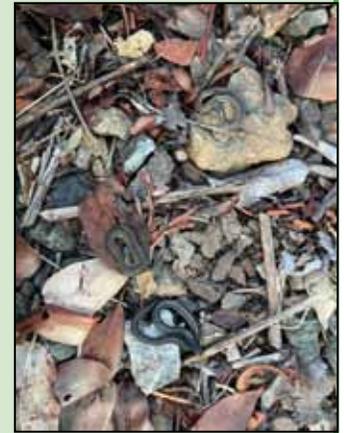
Alder catkins: these are males that release pollen in February, photo Izzy Harrington



View for you from the top of Mystic Ridge, photo Gordon Scott



arbutus with healed sapsucker wells, photo Charlene Lloyd



Snakes: a common sight under the artificial cover objects used for monitoring reptiles - two of Lasqueti's three garter snake species, (Northwestern (top two, *Thamnophis ordinoides*) and Terrestrial (bottom one, *T. Elegans*) photo Charlene Lloyd



Rustgills and Gyms in December, photo Izzy Harrington



Mock Orange in bloom, a good plant for pollinators photo Izzy Harrington



Trumpeter Swans in December, photo Izzy Harrington



first bumble bee Feb. 23 2026, *Bombus melanopygus*, black tailed/orange rumped, photo Izzy Harrington



Do you want to volunteer or donate to help conserve and steward nature on Lasqueti? Contact [linc@lasqueti.ca](mailto:linc@lasqueti.ca) for further information

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