LINC Lasqueti Island Nature Conservancy

Newtletter - Volume 36, Autumn 2026

Arbutus: From Stress to Stewardship

words by Andy MacKinnon and photos by Norm Stacey

Arbutus (*Arbutus menziesii*) is Canada's only broadleaf evergreen tree. (With the exception of three larch (*Larix*) species, which are deciduous conifers, all of our country's other trees are either broadleaved and deciduous, or needle- or scale-leaved and evergreen.) And arbutus is such a welcome part of our landscapes here in southwestern BC, that we sometimes forget that its range in Canada is just a narrow, low-elevation band along southeastern Vancouver Island, the southern Gulf Islands, and a little bit of the mainland. It can be found as far north as Quadra Island and Discovery Passage, and occasionally shows up further west (such as the head of Nootka Sound).

It's a small to medium sized tree, generally 5–20m (rarely to 30m) tall. The stems are usually single, sometimes several from near the base, with heavy gnarled branches. While it's not a very tall tree, arbutus is often a massive one. BC's Big Trees Registry (bigtrees.forestry.ubc.ca/) lists BC's biggest arbutus as a mere 22.9m tall, but with a diameter at "breast height" (1.37m) of more than 2m, and a canopy (tree crown) spread of 21.3m. Young bark is a distinctive greenish colour, and smooth; mature bark is brownish red, peeling in papery strips (Figure 1); the oldest bark is grey brown, rough, and not peeling.

The leathery, oval leaves are 7–15cm long, dark shiny green above, whitish green below, and hairless. They're arranged alternately on the branches. In general, last year's leaves turn colour





Figure 1. (left) Mature, peeling bark catching some rays.
Figure 2. (right) Arbutus berries starting to ripen.

and fall off in summer, and the current year's leaves remain on tree – hence, evergreen.
The white flowers are urn-shaped, characteristic of the Ericaceae (Heath Family) to which arbutus trees belong. (They're cousins to salal and huckleberries, for example.) The flowers are 6–7mm long, grouped in large, conical, many-flowered clusters ascending at the branch tips. These large flower clusters perfume the springtime air with the fragrance of buckwheat honey. Fruits are orange-red berries, with a fine pimply or granular surface, ~1 cm across, in drooping clusters (Figure 2). Their texture is mealy, but the berries are popular with overwintering birds.

Arbutus prefers dry open forests, sunny rocky slopes, bluffs, and shores. It's often found with Douglas-fir, Garry oak, and bigleaf maple. This makes sense: BC represents the northern end of this species' distribution, a range that extends south to southern California (San Diego County). Over most of its range, arbutus basks in warmer, drier climates than ours: here, it seeks out the warmest, driest habitat.

This was a good strategy at the time when most of our arbutus trees began their lives. But arbutus is a long-lived tree, and many of our big arbutus trees established 250-300 years ago. And now our planet is warming. Over the last century, mean annual temperatures on BC's coast have increased more than 1°C. And over the last few decades, this has been accompanied (some years) by extended summertime drought. (Mean annual precipitation hasn't changed much – summers are drier, and winters wetter, with the winter rains arriving in more intense storms.)

Arbutus is generally a drought-tolerant tree. It has deep, spreading lateral roots that can alter their structure to become flatter (more wing-like) to access water in bedrock fissures. It also possesses a highly efficient vascular system, and like many Heath Family trees and shrubs, uses water very conservatively. This makes arbutus a relatively drought-tolerant tree. Yet even a species as wonderfully resilient as arbutus is increasingly challenged by our warmer, summertime-drier climate.

Warmer temperatures and longer summertime droughts stress our trees. And stressed trees – like stressed people – are more susceptible to disease. In southwestern BC we've observed increased mortality in western redcedar, Douglas-fir and arbutus.

What's injuring and killing our arbutus trees? Part of it may relate to the exclusion of fire (indigenous burning and wildfire) from our



Figure 3. A) B) C) Diseased Arbutus trunks.



Figure 4. Defoliated arbutus, an all-too-common sight these days. Climate change, drought, disease, or a synergistic combination?

ecosystems. Frequent, low-intensity fires: reduce the encroachment of faster-growing conifers, which compete with arbutus; burn up dead organic matter, which may reduce incidence of fungal pathogens; and generally reduce the chance of larger, more destructive fires.

But researchers have also documented a number of fungi that cause leaf blights, wood decay, cankers and root rot on arbutus (Figure 3). These seem to be native species of fungi – i.e., not some virulent, introduced pathogen. These fungi have co-existed with arbutus for millennia. But as the trees are increasingly stressed, the fungi are gaining the upper "hypha".

For example, Arbutus canker (*Neofusicoccum arbuti*) is the most common canker on our arbutus trees. It cases sunken, blackened cankers on the main stem. A healthy arbutus tree may not be infected by this fungus or, if infected, the tree may be able to overgrow the canker with callus tissue. In a stressed tree, multiple cankers may develop, which can 'girdle' smaller stems, causing water stress, crown (canopy) dieback and sometimes mortality.

Similarly, the most common fungi causing leaf blights on arbutus can partially or entirely defoliate stressed trees (Figure 4). This has also been documented to cause tree mortality.

So, what can we do to save our arbutus trees? The root cause of the problem (no pun intended) is stress caused by a warming climate compounded by increased summer droughts, caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. We should all do our part to reduce these emissions. But more immediately, and more locally, we should do what we can to reduce the stress on our arbutus trees. Don't drive any heavy equipment (including automobiles) over their root zone – this will compact the soil, and could physically damage the roots. Arborists caution against routinely watering arbutus trees, but in times of extended drought, it can't hurt to provide a single deep watering. Clearly, this is an impractical strategy for most arbutus trees. But if you have a few favourite arbutuses on your property, give them a drink during extended droughts. And if your favourite arbutus has severely cankered limbs, these can be removed by pruning in the dormant season (winter), to reduce further spread.

And it may not help, but it couldn't hurt, to give an arbutus tree a hug. ●

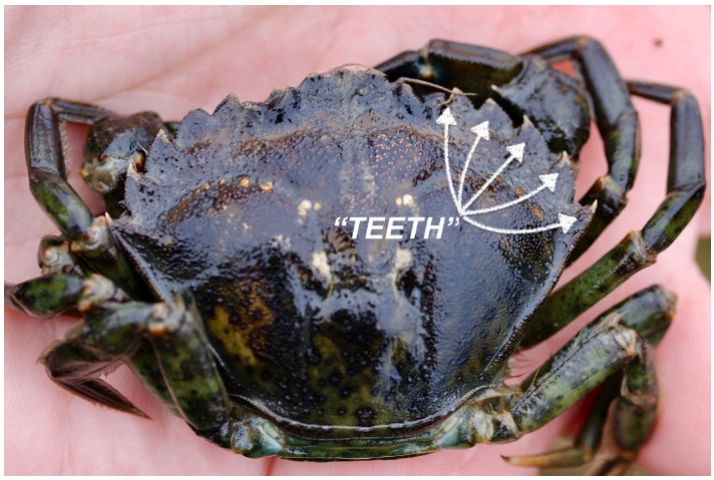
Non-Native Introduced Species Encountered on a Walk to Marine Island

words by Peter W. Sorensen, Spring Bay Road

Increasing global commerce and travel has led to a huge number of non-native species being introduced to our waters and lands either by accident or on purpose. Many of these species have become invasive, meaning that are recognized as being destructive in some way although exactly how is often open to debate. In this article I address the question of how many species have been introduced to our part of the Salish Sea and what their effect has been?

To answer, I searched the scientific literature, government and nongovernmental websites, and several books. Although I identified 49 species of marine organisms that hail from other waters, most are poorly understood, and only one is presently designated as invasive in B.C.: the European Green Crab, *Carcinus maenus* (Figure 1). This species is native to the Atlantic and Baltic Sea but is now found on nearly every continent. Although small, it is aggressive and eats most organisms smaller than itself including native crabs, shellfish, worms, fish, and other Green Crabs. At many locations, it is associated with collapses of shellfisheries and eelgrass ecosystems. A removal effort is now underway to our south in Washington where 2.8 million crabs have been removed. Meanwhile, a smaller effort is underway in Bella Bella, where Heiltsuk fisheries for Manila clams are in decline. European Green Crabs have been reported at many other locations in B.C. such as the Victoria area and near Saltspring. This crab is identifiable by its small size (less than 10 cm), 5 teeth across each side of its carapace, two lines of yellow dots behind its eyes, and blotchy green-brown colour (Figure 1). If encountered, it should be reported (aispacific@dfo-mpo.gc.ca). For more information, please see 'Invasive Species: European Green Crab' on pp. 6-7 of LINC's Autumn 2024 Newsletter (issue #30).

Once aware of the scope of the issue, I took a walk around Marine Island to see what non-native species are found there. Approaching Maple Bay, I encountered a muddy bay (Figure 2A) covered with Japanese eelgrass, *Nanozostera japonica*, a non-native species which was accidentally introduced with the Pacific Oyster in 1920s (Figure 2B). Unlike the native eelgrass, *Zostera marina*, the Japanese species is smaller and deciduous, and considered a “noxious weed” in



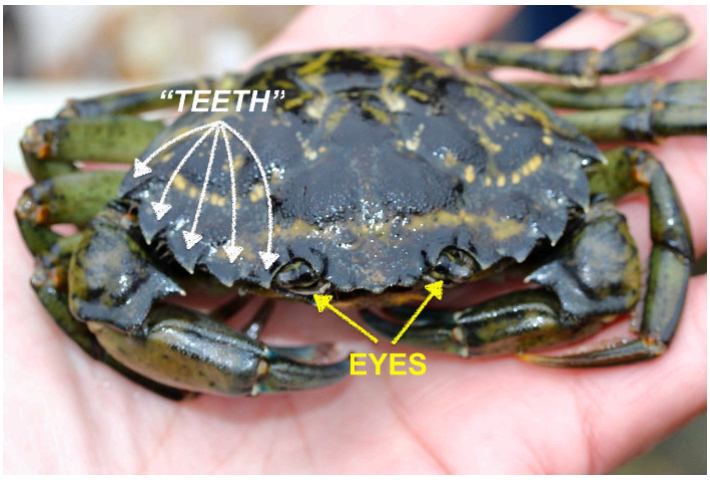


Figure 1. A) B) The European Green Crab. Photos by Dr. Nick Wong, Invasive Species Council of BC (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/videos/green-vert-eng.html)



Figure 2. A) Marine Island at low tide from Maple Bay with eel grass bed in the foreground. B) Introduced Japanese mud snails (arrows) in the Japanese eelgrass bed. Photos by the author.

Washington because it negatively impacts shellfish. Interspersed amongst the eelgrass were many small (1-2 cm long) Japanese mud snails, *Batillaria attramentaria*, along with a few native snails and sand dollars (Figure 2B). Mud snails are notable because they consume large quantities of detritus and bacteria, while displacing native snails. The effects of this activity are also a concern because native eelgrass beds are important nurseries for fish and other organisms, and differ greatly from those present before settlers arrived.

Walking past the mudflat and along the tombolo, I encountered a reef of Pacific Oysters, *Magalanna gigas* (Figure 3A) extending all the way to Marine Island. The reef is dominated by countless 2-10 cm Pacific Oysters, many attached to each other. I also saw a few native Olympia Oysters, *Ostrea lurida*, scattered high on rocks. Under the Pacific Oysters is a vast, diverse and seemingly healthy ecosystem with a few dozen species of small crabs, native green and brown seaweeds, various snails, barnacles, and isopods (Figure 3B). Overall biodiversity and productivity is high. I was surprised to learn that the Pacific Oyster was introduced by oyster farms in the early 1900s to supplement the native Olympia Oyster, which apparently was being overfished. Pacific Oyster sprat (young) were imported to the Pacific Northwest along with a variety of "hitchhikers" as packing material including the Manila Clam, *Ruditapes philippinarum*, and several other species.

The Pacific Oyster grows three times faster and to a much greater size than the Olympia Oyster so it is highly valued and the subject of a large commercial aquaculture business (30 million dollars/yr). It filters 3 times more water than the native oyster (50 gallons of water a day) and forms expansive reefs which displace the Olympia Oyster reefs. Pacific Oysters are "ecosystem engineers", meaning they create entire ecosystems (reefs) that favour their existence. Almost certainly this non-native ecosystem has changed the ecology of the Salish Sea and Lasqueti enormously.

Walking past the oyster reef, I encountered another intertidal ecosystem, a gravel bar. Digging into the gravel, I found a vast community of various native worms, crabs and numerous mollusks. Remarkably, of the half dozen clam species I encountered, the dominant species is the Manila clam, a species also introduced with the Pacific Oyster. It is now the most sought after mollusk. The Manila Clam grows and matures very quickly and can be harvested sustainably in a year and is highly valued, along with two other introduced species, the Dark Mahogany Clam (*Nuttallia obscurata*) and the Softshell Clam (*Mya arenaria*) and approximately half a dozen native species. Ironically, the Manila Clam is now threatened by the European Green Crab. Although productive and valued both economically as well as ecologically, this ecosystem has changed greatly since it was first exploited by the First Nations who feasted on Fat Gapers (*Tresus capax*) and other native species as evidenced by the

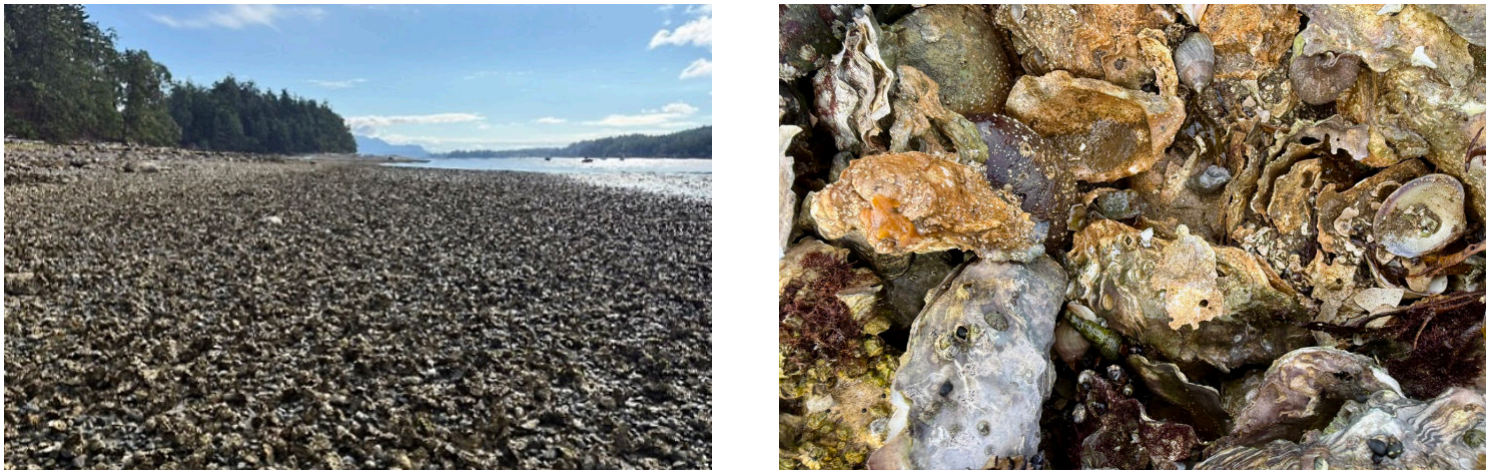


Figure 3. A) Marine Island Pacific oyster reef. B) Close-up of the ecosystem created by the reef. Photos by the author

middens in Maple Bay.

Walking on, I reached the rocky intertidal ecosystem that rings Marine Island. Here, many dozens of species from numerous phyla cling to the rocks for dear life. In addition to dozens of native species, I found introduced Red Algae (*Chandria dasyphylla*) and small Blue Mussels (*Mytilus sp*.). The latter is interesting because it reflects an unusual type of "invasive" – a hybrid. Both Atlantic and Mediterranean Blue Mussels have been introduced and hybridized with the native Pacific mussels. This system would appear to be relatively intact.

In sum, it's unfortunately evident that many dozens of mollusks, crustaceans, higher plants, sponges and algae have been introduced to the Salish Sea and become established across broad regions of it including Marine Island. While most of these fit the biological definition of invasive (they have established and displaced native species), only the European Green Crab is officially deemed "invasive". Presumably this is because it has no known economic value, because other non-natives that are commercially valuable (*e.g.* Pacific Oyster and Manila Clam) have not been labelled invasive, even though they obviously have changed ecosystems and displaced native species. Ironically, they are now threatened by the European Green Crab. Fortunately, the Green Crab has not yet been reported on Lasqueti. Clearly, Lasquetians would be well advised to keep watch for this species, report and remove them when spotted, and do what they can to prevent new introductions. Educational material and an advisory at the dock might be a good idea.

Some Reading

Harbo, R.M. 2022. Whelks to Whales: coastal marine life of the Pacific Northwest. Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, B.C. (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/profiles-profils/europeangreencrab-crabevert-eng.html) ●

Invasive Species Everywhere

words by Norm Stacey

In addition to Green Crabs, we should be watching for an invasive reptile, the Common Wall Lizard (*Podarcis muralis*). *Podarcis*, native to Europe, was introduced to BC in 1970 when 12 lizards were released from a private zoo in Saanich. Today, the population is approximately 900,000 and ranges from Metchosin to Campbell River, the lower mainland and Powell River. Islands are not immune, as populations are established on Saltspring and Denman. Wall Lizards eat insects, spiders, slugs, and fruit, and likely are serious competitors of native Northern Alligator Lizards as both utilize the same habitats. This CBC article highlights the problem (https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/european-wall-lizard-vancouver-island-spreading-9.7373080) and this site (https://bcreptilesandamphibians.ca/common-wall-lizard/) provides information on identification and what to do if you find a Wall Lizard. ●

LINC's Wildlife Cameras

words and tables by Charlene Lloyd



Figure 1. Wildlife camera image, Point Young/ Camas Flats boundary

After more than a year of moving wildlife cameras around various BC Parks Foundation properties on Lasqueti Island, we are starting to get a better sense of who is using these lands.

The cameras were moved every few weeks to capture different areas of each property. Sometimes they were placed near a busy watering hole and produced hundreds of images; at other times they were positioned along a rarely used trail where little activity was recorded. This approach has given us an interesting picture of where the action is, but because locations and sampling periods varied, the results should not be treated as reliable data for comparing populations or estimating abundance.

Over the next year, we plan to leave the cameras in more consistent locations for longer periods. This will allow us to begin looking for patterns over time and provide more useful information about how wildlife is using particular habitats and movement routes.

So, what have we seen so far? Sheep (Figure 1) made up approximately 75% of recorded observations (Table 1), followed by deer (10%) and people (7%). Birds (songbirds, ravens, eagles, and geese) accounted for about 2%, with additional observations of dogs, raccoons, cats, and even a few river otters. These numbers don't represent the actual proportions of wildlife on the properties—they reflect what happened to pass in front of a camera—but they do highlight some interesting patterns.

For example, cameras set up around the exclosures at Mount Trematon Nature Reserve show a different distribution of species - over 68% of recorded observations were deer and 24% sheep (Table 2). Repeat observations (animals grazing for extended periods in front of the camera) were removed from these data. Another camera has been placed in a more open area at Mount Trematon to ensure variation in habitat is not contributing to the noticeable difference in species distribution.

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Property	Species Captured								
	Sheep	Deer	Human	Bird	Dog	Raccoon	Cat	Otter	Total
Marine Island	0	15	6	2	0	3	1	3	**30**
Mystic Ridge	39	7	6	0	2	3	4	0	**61**
Point Young	506	71	32	21	13	3	2	0	**648**
Camas Flats	220	14	17	2	6	1	2	0	**262**
West Trematon	24	4	12	0	0	7	0	0	**47**
Grand Total	**789**	**111**	**73**	**25**	**21**	**17**	**9**	**3**	**1048**
% of Total	**75.3**	**10.6**	**7.0**	**2.4**	**2.0**	**1.6**	**0.9**	**0.3**	**100.0**

Table 1. The number of each species photographed over the past year at BCPF Properties using three wildlife cameras moved throughout the properties.

Species Captured	Quantity	% of Total
Deer	192	68.1
Sheep	67	23.8
Human	14	5.0
Raccoon	3	1.1
Bird	3	1.1
Cat	2	0.7
Bat	1	0.4
Grand Total	**282**	**100**

Table 2. The number of each species photographed from three wildlife cameras May-September 2026 near exclosures at Mount Trematon Nature Reserve May-September 2026.

The information from the cameras can also help guide stewardship. Knowing where animals are regularly travelling or gathering can help us identify important movement corridors, habitat features, and areas where disturbance may need to be minimized. Observations of people, dogs, and other domestic animals can help us understand where recreational use overlaps with wildlife habitat. Over time, this information can contribute to decisions about trail placement, habitat restoration, invasive species management, wildlife corridors, and ways to reduce disturbance in sensitive areas.

Perhaps one of the most useful things the cameras provide is a reminder that these protected properties are active landscapes, even when we don't see anything during a walk. A trail that appears quiet to us may be an important route for wildlife after dark, while a seemingly ordinary patch of forest may become a gathering place for animals at certain times of year.

As we continue monitoring, the goal is to move from simply seeing what is there toward understanding how these places are being used—and using that knowledge to make thoughtful, informed stewardship decisions. In this way, a few strategically placed cameras can become another tool for helping us care for the remarkable diversity of life sharing Lasqueti's protected lands. ●

Our Native Cactus

words by James Schwartz

Visitors to BC's west coast who hike our rocky ocean bluffs are often surprised to find low mats of a dangerously sharp-spined cactus - the Brittle Prickly Pear (*Opuntia fragilis*). The Prickly Pear's genus, *Opuntia*, with about 129 recognized species, is the largest in the cactus family, which in turn has over 1,700 species, all native to the Americas. *Opuntia fragilis* can be found in nearly every Canadian province and U.S. state and is the most cold tolerant of all cactus species. It rarely grows higher than 20 cm (8 inches), and forms large compact mats of fleshy, very spiny, rounded segments connected by fragile joints. These segments easily detach (hence the name "*fragilis*"), allowing a plant to spread when its barbed spines cling to passing animals.

Although considered rare or endangered in some localities, and in spite of being easily displaced by surrounding plants, Prickly Pear in the gulf islands are common enough to be classified as a species of least concern for conservation. It is often found along sunny, south facing, dry oceanside bluffs, growing in rock crevices or on gravely or broken shale slopes. On Lasqueti the Prickly Pear is a protected species in the provincially-owned Lasqueti Ecological Reserve, which stretches from Lasqueti's western shore up

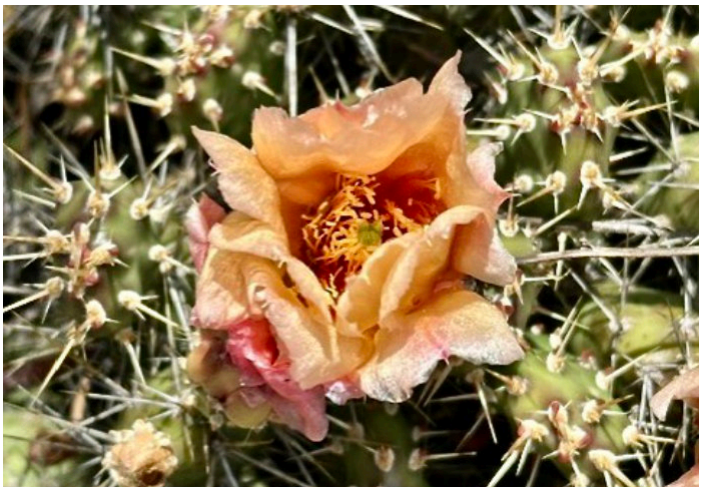


Figure 1. Prickly pear cactus blossom. Photo by Duane West



Figure 2. Potted prickly pear cactus. Photo by the author.

the lower slopes of Mount Trematon. It is also abundant on the small islands surrounding Lasqueti Island where it is thought to have spread by pieces either falling into the sea or being carried there on the coats of foraging otters.

Although difficult to spot much of the year, in later June and into July some plants produce large, frilly, showy yellow blooms from fruits growing out of mature segments (Figure 1). Once these flowers are pollinated by insects, seeds set inside new fruits which with time become the cactus pads.

The Prickly Pear, like all cacti, is a succulent, with many adaptations that reduce water loss in a dry habitat. The spines are actually vestigial leaves that sprout in small clusters from the *areoles*, vestigial branches that bud from the detachable segments, which in turn are modified, water-storing stems. In addition to these structural modifications, cacti have specialized photosynthetic biochemistry enabling them to photosynthesize during the day, but take in carbon dioxide only at night, when lower temperature and higher humidity results in lower water loss.

Opuntia species were cultivated at least 8,000 years ago in Mexico and our local species had many uses in native Salish culture. Its spines were used as needles and fish hooks and, when carefully prepared, it could be used for nutritious food, medicines and a dye fixative. Many of today's larger colonies can be found next to, or near, old native village sites.

For any interested in growing these easy-care and somewhat unusual plants, LINC has access to a quantity of prickly pear cactus segments preserved from a property on Lasqueti which we will give out by request. Easily started by setting them out in appropriate sights on dry exposed bluffs, or in loose gravelly soil in a container, they will gradually take root and expand (Figure 2). Remember that this cactus has extremely sharp, barbed spines, so is not suitable where there are young children or frolicking pets. ●

Conservation of Jenkins Creek Valley

words by Gordon Scott

The BC Parks Foundation recently announced the purchase of two conservation properties in the Jenkins Valley, the 140-acre Jenkins Creek property and the 190-acre Jenkins Bay tract. Jenkins Creek, one of only three salmon streams on Lasqueti, rises and flows across these two properties and through a narrow valley between the Lasqueti Ecological Reserve and a large section of Crown Land before emptying into Jenkins Bay. Mature forest typical of the Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem blankets the valley sides and provides shade, structure and nutrients to Jenkins Creek, that in turn support the creek's aquatic ecosystem.

The Jenkins Bay property includes over one km of undeveloped coastline featuring numerous wind-sculpted and gnarled Coastal Junipers. The Jenkins Creek property was acquired from Bruce Fleming-Smith and Domena Diesing who retained a small homestead site. Al Gaensbauer was the owner of the Jenkins Bay property and had long expressed interest in seeing his property protected from future development or logging. Al had a light touch on the land, building a small and very unique house and cabin on the property along with a small garden. After a rare moss was discovered in 2009 on his property, Izzy and I started talking with Al about the different ways he could accomplish his goal of conserving his property.

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Figure 1. Jenkins Creek Valley. Image source/ for more information go to: https://bcparksfoundation.ca/updates/more-than-330-acres-conserved-connecting-1-000-acres-of-protected-land-in-the-salish-sea/

Unfortunately, Al passed while these discussions were occurring, but fortunately his heirs honoured his wishes and sold the property to the BC Parks Foundation for conservation purposes. I didn't know Al well but I recognized his old-school ways and fierce independence when I watched him hoist his Trapper Nelson pack filled with provisions onto his back, hop on his motorcycle and scoot off down Weldon Road to his Jenkins Valley homestead. I think he would be happy to know that Jenkins Valley, it's forests and streams, will be conserved. ●

Book Review: Plants of the Pacific Coast

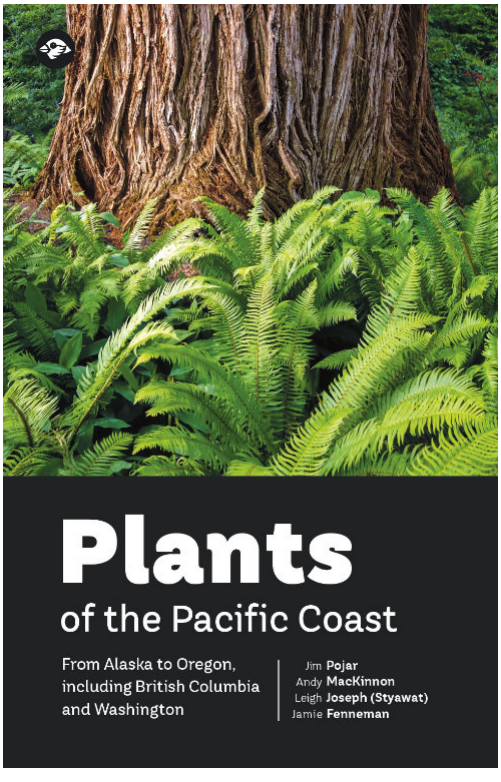
(from Alaska to Oregon, including British Columbia and Washington)

by Jim Pojar, Andy MacKinnon,Leigh Joseph (Styawat), and Jamie Fenneman

review by Ken Lertzman

The Plants of Coastal British Columbia, by Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon (and a group of co-authors) was published by Lone Pine Press in 1994 and quickly became a necessary and beloved part of every naturalist's library. It brought together in a field portable format more information about the ecology, distribution, ethnobotany, and botanical characteristics of our flora than had been available previously. Full disclosure – I was a (small) part of that project and it was both great fun and tremendously rewarding. However, for many years it has been clear that an update was needed: botanical names had changed and issues like climate change and invasive species had taken on greater importance.

Finally, 32 years later, in Plants of the Pacific Coast (PPC), we have a book that is not just an update to the old book, but a completely redone volume that was begun from scratch. It is about the same practical size (dimensions and pages – 530) as the old book, but doesn't include mosses and lichens, focussing its attention on vascular plants. Like the previous book, it is lavishly illustrated with excellent photographs and line drawings, plus range maps and extensive discussion of each plant,



including not just botanical descriptions, but habitat preferences, ecology, and ethnobotany.

In addition to Pojar and MacKinnon, the book is authored by Leigh Joseph/Styawat and Jamie Fenniman. Joseph is a member of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) First Nation, an author and ethnobotanist, and an Assistant Professor of Geography at SFU. Jamie Fenniman is a Comox-based botanist with broad expertise in the plants and ecosystems of BC. We've featured a review of his book on wetland plants in a previous issue of the LINC newsletter. When I asked Andy MacKinnon what he would most like to see highlighted in a review, he said one of the main points was the ethnobotanical contributions: "I think that the 1994 version of our book was pretty ground-breaking in its time for the ethnobotanical material (Thanks Nancy Turner!) In this new book, that material is contributed by a First Nations scientist and SFU professor."

The book itself is gorgeous, with over 900 maps and illustrations and 1,300 colour photographs representing more than 700 species. In addition to the individual species descriptions, there is more general material at the plant family level, more material on First Nations culture and interactions with plants, and series of short essays on various topics such as big trees/old trees, mycoheterotrophy, and glacial refugia. If you liked the previous book, you will love this one

The book is a great example of socially conscious publishing. Plants of the Pacific Coast is published by CanScience Books, which is an imprint of Talk Science to Me Communications Inc. Talk Science is a Canadian company based in Victoria, a Certified Women Business Enterprise, a CGLCC certified 2SLGBTQi+ owned business, a Certified Living Wage Employer, and they contribute a portion of their revenue to the South Island Indigenous Reciprocity Trusts. ●

Latest and Upcoming Events

Past: on Friday October 30th, at the Arts Center: LINC, together with the LCA Reconciliation Committee and the Arts Council, presented a talk by Dr. Chelsea Armstrong on the profound effects of Indigenous forest gardening on Pacific Northwest ecosystems. Dr. Armstrong is Associate Professor in the Department of Indigenous Studies at SFU and a leading researcher in Indigenous cultivation practices. On Saturday, the 31st Dr. Armstrong led a walk through a native crabapple orchard at Faren's (Doug & Penny's) at the south end.

Upcoming: Last weekend in November: LINC will be sponsoring a visit by Spencer and Rachel Greening who will talk about their new book "Gyetk: Coastal Fusion and Ancestral Knowledge from a Ts'msyen Kitchen". Date, time and location will be announced soon - in the meantime, here's a taste of what the Greenings will be talking about: https://hashilthsa.com/news/2026-09-08/first-nations-cookbook-fuses-traditional-pacific-northwest-coast-knowledge-and .

In case you missed it, LINC's website now has a text and audio interview of Donald Gordon talking about his long friendship with Johnny Osland and how Johnny came to donate his land to the Islands Trust Conservancy (https://linc.lasqueti.ca/osland/).

LINC's annual fundraising appeal is now underway. If you'd like to support local conservation and stewardship on Lasqueti, you can donate through our website, via CanadaHelps, or by sending us a cheque*.

Stay tuned for upcoming talks, walks and events coming up in the new year by following us and becoming a member.*

*Details on the last page of this newsletter.

Seen In Passing



Western Eyed Sphynx Moth (Smerinthus ophthalmica) mating. This sphynx or hawk moth is common at porch lights. Larvae are large, commonly called hornworms for the large spike at their posterior, and feed on willows and poplar (Populus species).
Photo: Sophia Rosenberg.



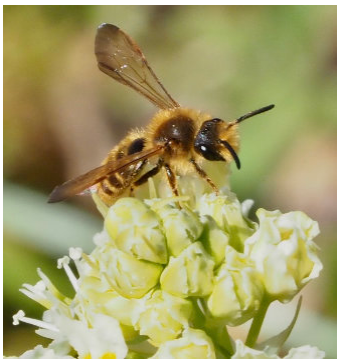
Young Sharp-tailed Snake (Contia tenuis), a rare find on Lasqueti, as we are at the northern limit of its range that extends south to the central California coast. Seldom seen as it spends almost all its time underground or beneath cover.
Photo: Charlene Lloyd.



Northern Alligator Lizard (Elgaria coerulia) basking on an old tarp. In Canada, these live-bearing lizards are found only in SW BC and Vancouver Island and spend much of the year hibernating. Famous for their ability to autotomize (drop) their tails when attacked or handled.
Photo: Norm Stacey.



Calcium carbonate tubes of serpulid worms on a beached buoy. Serpulids are annelids, like earthworms and commonly called 'fanworms' because of the fanlike structure they extend from their tube for feeding and respiration.
Photo: Norm Stacey.



Death Camas Miner Bee (Andrena astragali) on Death Camas (Toxicoscordium venenosum). This solitary bee lays its eggs in soil burrows, feeds almost exclusively on Death Camas and appears to be the only bee able to tolerate the plant's potent toxin, zygazine.
Photo: Ken Lertzman.



Vancouver Island Bumble Bee (Bombus vancouveriensis), by far Lasqueti's most common bumble bee, is a ground nester like the miner bees but, rather than being solitary, lives in small colonies consisting of a queen, workers and drones.
Photo: Ken Lertzman.

LINC Lasqueti Island Nature Conservancy

Help conserve and steward nature on Xwe'etay/Lasqueti, share your wildlife stories and photos, and join in on our events

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