

# President's Report

## 2022 AGM - April 28, 2022

It seems that the last year for, Nature Vancouver, and perhaps for all of us has been the feeling of never quite knowing where we are. With the rapid distribution and wide acceptance of vaccines last year, by summer it seemed that we were moving beyond Covid. Then, in the fall we were set back by the Delta variant followed by Omicron appearing at the beginning of December.

Throughout this, Nature Vancouver managed to survive and even thrive. Thanks to the technical and artistic wizardry of Denis Laplante, joined by Lyndsey Smith in November 2021, the weekly e-News continued to serve as our connection to what was going on. As has been the tradition, its informative role was continually enriched with stunning photographs provided by Nature Vancouver members, as well as inspiring poetry.

Similarly, the weekly Thursday night Zoom presentations, hosted by Denis, Laura, Selina, Harvey and myself not only provided educational talks but those little boxes of our faces on the screen served as a weekly reminder of fellow members as well. Most presentations have been recorded and posted on YouTube. What a gallery of topics they offer for us to view as we wish. A great deal of thanks is due to Section Leaders; Joan, Colin, Teresa & Denis and, for general programs, Laura, Donna and Caroline, who have all lined up interesting speakers for the presentations. Also, thanks must go to Ron Long for the popular March photography contest.

Fieldtrip resumption edged closer as the summer progressed under the careful stewardship of Janet Snell and Bill Kinkaid. A September meeting of twenty past and future trip leaders, all masked, kick-started the initiative when participants carefully discussed and debated policies and procedures and then went on to commit to lead trips – the first since March of 2020.

The fall saw preparation for the Nature Vancouver Christmas Bird count, meticulously organized by Colin Clasen and tabulated by Peter Candido. Despite a torrential atmospheric river event the morning of the count, over a hundred individuals slogged out in the rain to resume the tradition after a one-year hiatus.

At the year's end, an invitation from the Vancouver Parks Board, to join in the removal of Scotch Broom and Himalayan Blackberry led us to start the restoration project at New Brighton Park. The Parks Board's initial expectation of Nature Vancouver assisting only in a minor way was turned around by the onslaught of activity with Nature Vancouver and local volunteers carrying

out not only all the invasive removal and native species planting in the park, but also on the adjacent Port of Vancouver property.

Resumption of in-person Thursday night meetings was an ongoing goal throughout the fall which was set back with the highly transmissible Omicron variant. Despite this a dedicated group of talented volunteers including Denis, Teresa, Angela, and Joan, among others met several times to do trial runs allowing two Thursday night meetings to occur.

Two weeks ago on April 14<sup>th</sup>, we had our first Zoom / In-person hybrid meeting with Dr. Kieran Cox giving a very interesting talk remotely to both Zoom and Unitarian Centre attendees and then just last Thursday, Ed Alverson travelled from Eugene, Oregon to become the first presenter since 2020 to speak at the Unitarian Centre to a live audience.

The last year also saw a range of conservation initiatives, the biggest focus being opposition to the proposed building of a second shipping terminal at Roberts Bank, known as Roberts Bank Terminal 2 (RBT2). Nature Vancouver (as did many of our members and other naturalists and scientists) submitted reasons against this expansion to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, then wrote letters to the Prime Minister and Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Honourable Omar Alghabra, Minister of Transport. This topic was circulated several times to our members and continues to be featured on our website, so if you have not written to the politicians, please check the website information and take the time to do so. It is important!

On the provincial level we continued to encourage the provincial government to buy out Imperial Metal's mineral rights in the Skagit / Manning donut hole which was successful in January of this year, a huge step forward, following the ban of logging in the area last year. Nature Vancouver also lobbied at the provincial level for the ban of rodenticides.

Nature Vancouver participated in a Nature Canada initiative calling on the Prime Minister to ensure the government prioritizes the protection and recovery of nature during this session of parliament, and individual members followed up, contacting local MPs for improved environmental policies.

The annual journal, Discovery (Volume 49) was successfully published and mailed to members in late November. You can also check out copies of all issues of Discovery, dating back to 1972 at the Nature Vancouver website: <https://naturevancouver.ca/publications/discovery/>

We had losses of dear and inspirational members. Last year two former board members and prodigious leaders, Daphne Solecki and Daniel Overmyer passed away, while this year we lost

Louise Irwin, Cathy Aitchison, and Bill Fairbank. All were long time members who will be missed.

Finally, I would like to thank all the board members; Adele, Angela, Bev, Caroline, Colin, Donna, Janet and Joan and Laura, who have given so much to Nature Vancouver over the last year. Their stewardship and thoughtfulness are a priceless resource that cannot be overstated. Thank you all!

The past year has been a year of challenges and accomplishments thanks to the commitment and abilities of a wide number and range of volunteers. We continue to hope that Covid can be put behind us and look forward to the future with confidence because of our volunteers and our flexibility to meet future challenges and take each day as it comes.