

COQUITLAM RiverWatch

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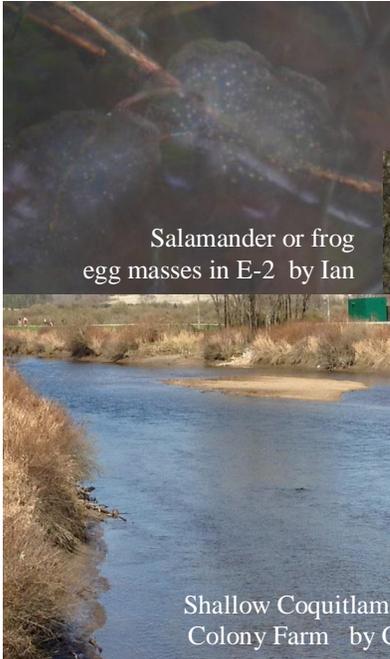
APRIL 2013

NEWSLETTER

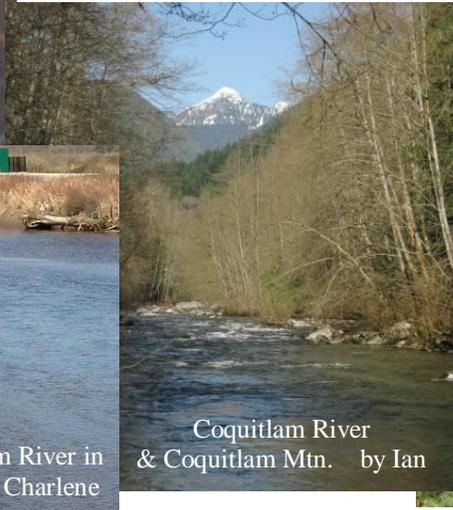
NUMBER 175



High Coquitlam River
in W-3 by David



Shallow Coquitlam River in
Colony Farm by Charlene



Coquitlam River
& Coquitlam Mtn. by Ian



Shopping cart on a sandy
beach in reach W-4 by Jeff



Bleeding heart
in E-7 by Ian

FINGERLING FESTIVAL

On Saturday, May 4 from 11am – 3 pm: The Port Moody Ecological Society will host its 22nd annual Fingerling Festival at their Noons Creek Hatchery and the Port Moody Skating Arena. Coquitlam RiverWatch will attend with our display. Children's singers, Bobs and Lolo, will be back by popular demand.

BC'S MOST ENDANGERED RIVERS FOR 2013!

Edited from the Outdoor Recreation Council's Press Release
This year marks the 21st annual "most endangered rivers"
release from the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC).

The Coquitlam River is on the Rivers to Watch in the year ahead. The Coquitlam has unfortunately appeared on this list many times - and once again, the major issue continues to revolve around excessive sedimentation, urbanization, but some progress is evident. For details see the ORC's website www.orcbc.ca The complete list includes: 1. Peace River, 2. Lower Fraser, and 3. Elk River. Rivers to watch Coquitlam River and Tamihi Creek.

\$150,000 IMPROVEMENTS AND STUDIES FOR THE COQUITLAM RIVER.

Work will be done to ensure a pond in the area of the Archery and Oxbow Restoration project doesn't dry up in the summer. The pond is frequented by coho fry that overwinter there. Thousands of trees will be planted along the river to provide shelter and shade for fish. Funding will also be provided to assess the risk and protect various species, including the Western Painted Turtle, the Red-legged Frog, the Pacific Water Shrew, owls and ungulates. To read more check out the Tri-City News website article at <http://www.tricitynews.com/news/202018681.html?mobile=true>

MARCH RiverWatchers' REPORTS

Carole & Lyn (W-4) Mar. 27

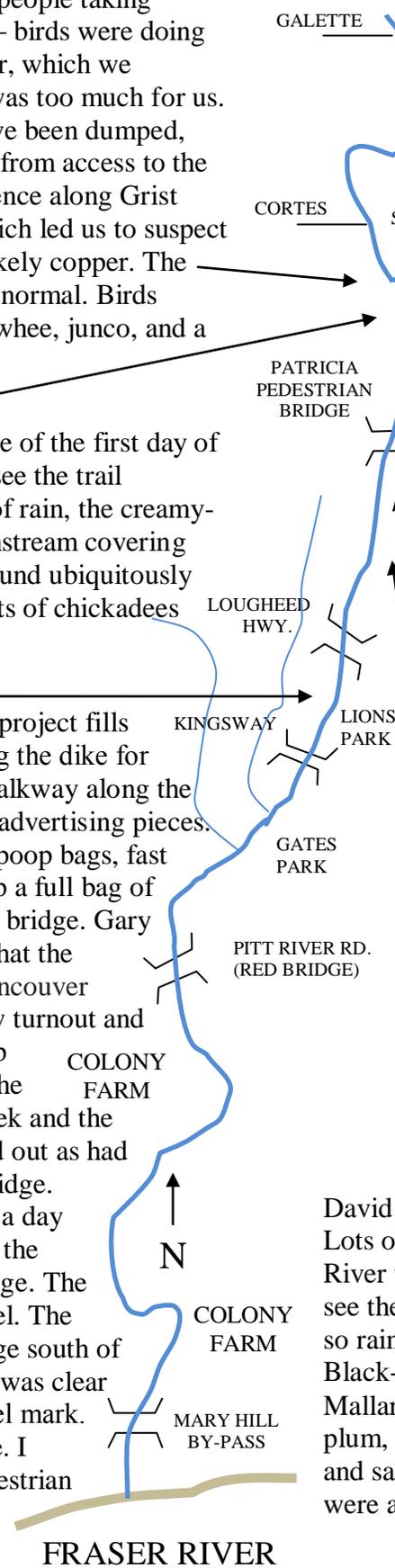
The trail was busy on this day with people taking advantage of the beautiful weather – birds were doing likewise! There was also more litter, which we disposed of, but the large package was too much for us. It seemed a strange area for it to have been dumped, right by the trail, but some distance from access to the road – just south of the end of the fence along Grist Channel. The cable was empty, which led us to suspect it had been stripped of any metal, likely copper. The River was cloudy and the level was normal. Birds included Brown Creeper, robins, towhee, junco, and a pair of Mallards in Grist Channel.

Mallee (W-4) Mar. 3

Plenty of people (48) took advantage of the first day of sunshine in a week. It was great to see the trail absolutely litter free. After a week of rain, the creamy-green Coquitlam River roared downstream covering more of the bank than usual. The sound ubiquitously infiltrating the entire route. I saw lots of chickadees about, but didn't see much else.

Murray (W-6) Mar. 24

As the new Burleigh Walk housing project fills up, we'll see a lot more people using the dike for family activities. A picture of the walkway along the dike is one of the developers major advertising pieces. I picked up a half bag of garbage – poop bags, fast food coffee cups etc. Also picked up a full bag of wet clothes left underneath the train bridge. Gary at Riverside Fly & Tackle advised that the recent cleanup sponsored by the Vancouver Surfrider Foundation had a very low turnout and it was evident by the lack of cleanup along this Reach. Good to see that the homeless camp between Maple Creek and the Wilson power line had been cleaned out as had camps underneath the Kingsway Bridge. I could have spent the better part of a day cleaning up the garbage dumped on the gravel bar below the pedestrian bridge. The River was clear and at a normal level. The River measured 2 meters at the gauge south of the Lougheed Bridge. Maple Creek was clear and about 8-10" below the high level mark. Lots of debris caught up in the grate. I noticed some robins around the pedestrian bridge and a few ducks in the side channel north of the bridge.



Susan (E-4) March
Susan was not able to do her regular walk, but she was able to give a list of wildlife spotted throughout the month in this reach. Birds included robins, towhees, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Song Sparrows, juncos, Pine Siskins (hordes of them!!), Varied Thrushes, nuthatches, flickers, Downy Woodpeckers, Hairy Woodpeckers, Pileated Woodpeckers (a pair hopefully nesting by the lower pond), Goldfinch, Bushtits, Tree Swallows, Sharp-shinned Hawk, eagles, raven, Anna's Hummingbirds, Rufous Hummingbirds, cormorant (on an upper pond), Great Blue Heron, Wood Ducks, and Common Mergansers. Eastern grey squirrels were around and a lone coyote was beside the lower pond at mid-day, plus a pack often heard howling at night. A beaver was observed swimming near the lodge. One day in the late afternoon, I saw a bobcat sauntering across the path beside the lower pond. It was a very large one, at first thought it was a cougar, but the bob-tail was evident.

David & Myrna (E-5) Mar. 1
The River was running very high, very silty, and fast. There was no wildlife out and about, everybody was hunkered down. It was interesting to see the power of nature.

David & Myrna (E-5) Mar. 29
Lots of people were out enjoying the sunshine. The River was clear and at a normal level. It was nice to see the River clear. The early part of the month was so rainy and there was so much silt. Birds included Black-capped Chickadee, North-western Crow and Mallard. Indian plum, bitter cherry and salmonberry were all in flower.

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MARCH RiverWatcher's REPORTS

Ian (W-1) Mar. 31

A truly beautiful day! The lumber that had been dumped last month was gone. It was probably burnt in the two fire pits close by. The River was clear and the level was normal for this time of year. Slade Creek was clear and flowing at a low level. The only wildlife I saw was a Belted Kingfisher. The recently logged power line on Burke Mtn was very visible. Lily of the valley and bleeding heart were starting to come up.

Ian (W-2) Mar. 31

The River was clear above and below the gravel operations. It was at a normal level. The water level at the Galette gauge was .735 metres. Logs and debris had piled up against the Galette gauge rack. Falacea (Fulawka) Creek (#4) was clear & flowing low. Mantle Creek (#6) was clear and barely flowing. Partridge Creek was clear and flowing. Marquart Creek was cloudy and flowing. Goodyear Creek (#11) was clear and flowing. There has been some work done around Mantle Creek. Gravel has been moved around and it looked like water had crossed the road and caused some erosion on the other side. Even though the level of Mantle Creek was low near the road, it looked like it was flowing more higher up. Birds included raven, Belted Kingfisher, Mallard, Varied Thrush, and Spotted Towhee. I also heard some frogs. A Rotary Screw Trap has been installed south of Partridge Creek. Another one of the foot bridges in UCRP has been taken out. I don't know why this is happening. I cut down some invasive Scotch broom that was growing around the Archery Pond. Hopefully this will help keep it under control. Salmonberry and huckleberry bushes were getting leaves and flowers.

Dave (W-3) Mar. 31

Lots of people at McTavish and Galette Parks and 2 people on the trail between the two. There was also a fly fisherman in waders in the river at McTavish Park. The River was high with all the rain we have had but not as muddy as I expected. Not much debris in the River either. Birds included the usual gulls, crows, juncos, and Varied Thrushes. A lone eagle remains near Galette and one hummingbird over the river at McTavish. There are an unusually large number of Steller's Jays this spring. First sunny days in some time and it was very pleasant. Little litter compared to other times because fewer people have been out in the parks and on the trails. The trees are budding and the greenery is starting. The parks are getting a lot of use, especially from younger people. The weather has been wet and the trail is muddy and slick. The rusty outflow near Galette Park was quite noticeable.

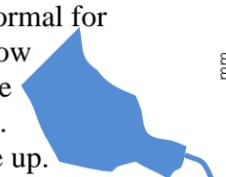
Jeff (W-4) Mar.16

The river was at a medium level and very silty. Indian Plum and skunk cabbage were in bloom, horsetails and bleeding heart coming up and knotweed was sprouting. With the heavy rain, all the outfalls had good flow and the Maple Creek well was running. The trail was well used for a rainy day with 36 people, 9 dogs off leash, and 1 dog on. Birds included crows, gull, Varied Thrush, woodpecker and others.. Stakes marked "Clearing line" have appeared on the Cooper property at the north end of Gabriola, running from Gabriola to David Avenue. Several trees on the riverside of the line have been tagged by Diamond Head Consulting. New power poles have been installed along the part of the Trans Canada Trail between the two branches of Gabriola. The developer hopes to start work on the property by the end of June. I managed to check the river level and water quality on 28 days this month. The river was silty to very silty 10 of those days, cloudy on 4 days and clear on 14 days. River level was medium to high on all the silty days and low to medium on all days the river was clear.

Charlene & Roger (W-8 & W-9) Mar. 31

Absolutely fantastic weather over the last 24 hours. We saw 10 dogs on lease and only 2 off leash. The River was very low and clear. There was lots of riverbed exposed from the Millennium Bridge to the Fraser River. A strong current was ripping at the confluence of the Coquitlam and Fraser Rivers. Bird activity included Bald Eagles, hawk, finch, Bufflehead, chickadee, geese, gulls, Mallards, heron, sparrow, and robins. Buds are forming on the trees and horsetail shoots are coming up. Bleeding heart, daffodils, cherry blossoms and blue bells were flowering. We saw multiple snakes along both reaches.

COQUITLAM LAKE



METRO VANCOUVER GATE
1900 PIPELINE

GALETTE

CORTES

PATRICIA PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

LOUGHEED HWY.
KINGSWAY

LIONS PARK

GATES PARK

PITT RIVER RD. (RED BRIDGE)

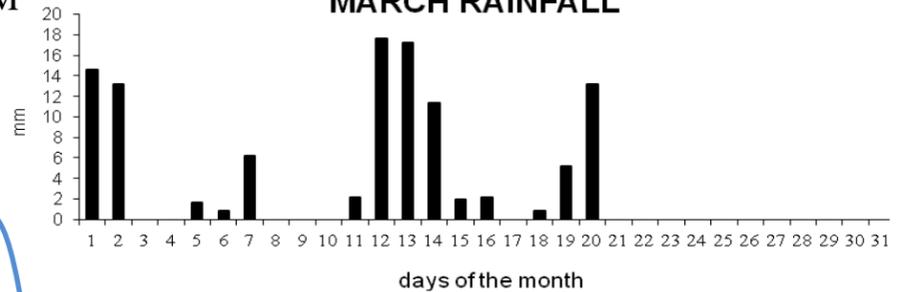
COLONY FARM

MARY HILL BY-PASS

FRASER RIVER



MARCH RAINFALL



David (E-2) Mar. 21

The trail was very quiet, most people near the beginning, nobody at the falls. Somebody had piled rocks in a number of places at the falls. Crazy mountain bike jump on the off shoot trail that goes up to the top of Oxford Street. Mountain bikes are creating mud pits on the trail and some of the jumps are on the dangerous side. The trail was clean but muddy. The Crystal Falls area was clean. The River was clear and at a normal level. Birds included American Robin, Dark-eyed Junco, and Common Raven. A bear was not actually seen but reported by two other walkers about 10 minutes down the trail, never did see it. Salmonberry was in flower and in one warm, sunny spot huckleberry was in flower.

Murray (E-3 north) Mar. 8

The reach was very clean and might have been the beneficiary of a river cleanup on the previous Sunday. However, this area is usually quite clean with the exception of a few homes in the River Springs subdivision that border on the riparian area dumping their garbage. I picked up a 1/3 bag of garbage. Despite relatively little rain in the last 4-5 days, the River was clear and at its normal level for this time of year. BC Hydro is likely controlling the level of Coquitlam Lake. The River looked really good. Must be the great work of controlling the siltation into the River by the aggregate guys. Funny however having come across murky water early Tuesday March 5th morning while down fishing only to have it start clearing up within half an hour. I noticed a lot more water running through the siphoning pond and right back into the River rather than being diverted to the Oxbow Lake and side channels. It's quite possible that the grate leading into the lake is getting plugged and needs to be cleaned up. However, there was still a decent flow in the channel. I saw a few Mallards on the siphoning pond.

Murray (E-3 south) Mar. 21

Very quiet this morning despite pretty decent morning weather. Very little garbage – mostly around the Patricia Bridge and the paved pathway leading to the bridge. Only about a 1/4 bag of garbage. The River was cloudy and at a high level. This was due to heavy rains earlier in the week. I talked to a fisherman later along this Reach who advised that the River was clear above the gravel pits. I heard a couple of ducks but couldn't see them.

David Mouteney (E-6) Mar. 12

The River was very silty and at a high level. The River looked like cream coloured coffee, silt, silt and more silt. Hate to sound like a broken record but something needs to be done! Birds included American Robin, Varied Thrush, Dark-eyed Junco, European Starling, and North-western Crow. Indian Plum was leafing out. Not a lot of people were out and about, but lots of birds, especially at Gates Park.

Ian (E-7) Mar. 31

The River was clear and flowing at a normal level. Maple & Scott Creeks appeared to be clear and flowing. The level in Reeve Slough was back to normal, but the water seemed quite stagnant. Birds included Hooded Mergansers, Bushtits, raven, Red-winged Blackbirds, Song Sparrow, Mallards, Spotted Towhees, chickadees, crows, and robins. I saw a garter snake and heard a few more. The springtime is a great time to see garter snakes along this reach. As you walk along the trail, you will hear them move from the trail and into the underbrush. Hooker's fairybells were starting to come up and I saw my first bleeding heart flower of the year. The understory in the riparian area is becoming very green, but the trees are still looking very bare. Morning glory has started to come up in an area where the invasive plants were removed.