

# COQUITLAM RiverWatch

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NOVEMBER 2013

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 182

Great Blue Heron in Colony Farm by Mallee



Spring (top) & pink salmon (bottom) carcasses in W-4 by Jeff



Cutthroat trout caught & released under the Kingsway Bridge by Cody



Mushrooms on a tree in W-4 by Jeff



Earthstar mushroom in W-4 by Jeff



# OCTOBER RiverWatchers' REPORTS

## OCTOBER RAINFALL

Ian (W-1) Oct. 26

The River was clear and at a normal to low level. Slade Creek was clear and at a low level. The only birds seen were 2 robins. I saw lots of spawning salmon in the River and there were also many carcasses along the banks of the River.

Ian (W-2) Oct. 26

The River was clear above and below the gravel operations. It was at a normal to low level. The water level at the Galette gauge was .660 metres. Falacea (Fulawka) Creek (#4) was clear & very low. Mantle Creek (#6) was clear and low. Partridge Creek was clear and very low. Marquart Creek was clear and low. Goodyear Creek (#11) was clear and very low. No birds seen or heard, but there were lots of salmon. Spawning salmon were in the River throughout the reach. There were also lots of spawning salmon in the outlet of the Archery Pond and in the Upper Coquitlam River Park side channels. Adult salmon were even in the new enhancement area. To get into the new pond the salmon need to go through two culverts that are about twenty-five feet long.

Dave (W-3) Oct. 24

Three fishermen were at McTavish Park. I didn't see much litter at all. The parks were remarkably clean. The River was clear and at a normal level. Birds included towhees, juncos, crows and lots of gulls patrolling the river. There were fewer salmon this year than in the past but they appeared to be larger. The fish smell from the river was quite apparent. It was a beautiful fall day again. The River area was quiet with no one at Galette Park and only a few at McTavish Park. The south end of Hockaday is still a mess. There has been very little change for two years. The old chain link fence should be removed.

Mallee (W-8 & 9) Oct. 5

Although there were loads of cars in the parking lot, not many were walking in spite of the amazing 20 degree afternoon. I think they were mostly tending their community gardens. Or perhaps it was the cougar warning that was plastered along the trail. Garbage was minimal with just one cigarette butt on the trail and another eight pieces under the Mary Hill Bypass. The River was surprisingly low near the Millennium Bridge and clear. It looked to be no more than ten centimetres deep under the bridge. Some banks were exposed 100 metres up and downstream from the bridge but the water was clear. While there were only five ducks in one of the side channels, there were crows, gulls, robins, sparrows, and chickadees still about. There were still a few flowers blooming (red clover, dandelion) and I actually saw a bee on one of the dandelion flowers. There were still a few berries on some of the shrubs as well (soapberry and blackberry). I met a First Nation fisher heading to the mouth of the River after coho as I was watching a heron perched on a pipe over a channel. He said the birds was often there waiting for frogs and that the salmon were already on their way upstream.

Roger (W-9) Oct. 28

The fireworks stand was busy. Two boys asked me if I would act as their guardian so they could purchase some. They even offered me \$20 but I didn't take the bait. The River was high with a slack tide. Looked to be quite clear. I saw 6 people fishing. Most of the people fishing at the mouth had caught salmon – both coho and chum. Some looked a good size, about two to three pounds. All fishers said that they released the spawning fish. Birds included Northern Flicker, heron, Bufflehead, chickadees and gulls. Salmon were coming upriver. Disturbingly, another tree has been cut down in the wildlife management area near the mouth. This time, the tree was just upriver on the west side. It looked to be a fresh cut, done in a similar manner as the two recent cuts in the area. Metro Vancouver has been notified.

COQUITLAM LAKE



METRO VANCOUVER GATE  
1900 PIPELINE

OR CREEK

PRITCHETT CR.

GALETTE

CORTES

PATRICIA PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

LOUGHEED HWY.  
KINGSWAY

LIONS PARK

GATES PARK

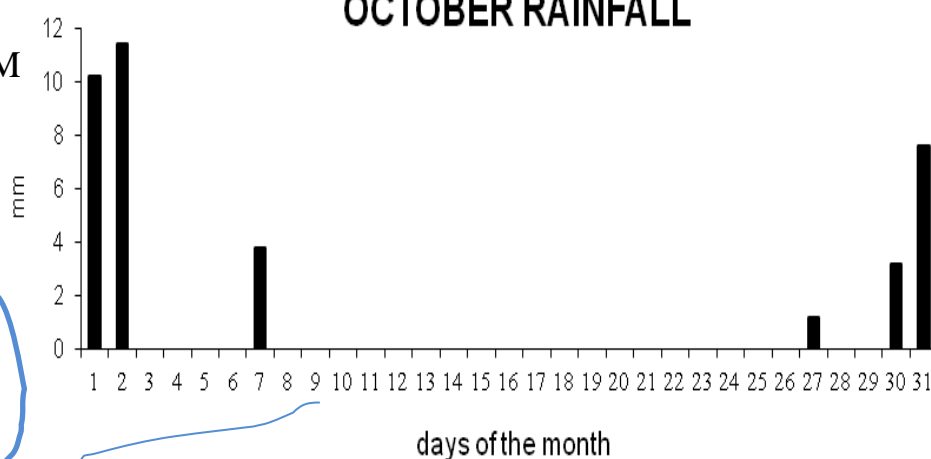
PITT RIVER RD. (RED BRIDGE)

COLONY FARM

MARY HILL BY-PASS

FRASER RIVER

N



Susan (E-4) Oct. 31 **Oxbow Side Channels**

The reach was very clean. The side channels were clear and at a normal level. Birds included Black-capped Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Mallards, and Hooded Mergansers. I also saw many spawning chum salmon were in the side channels. Birds also seen this month along this reach included Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Song Sparrows, towhees, goldfinches, Anna's Hummingbirds, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpeckers, flicker, Steller's Jays, crows, Great Blue Heron, and kingfisher.

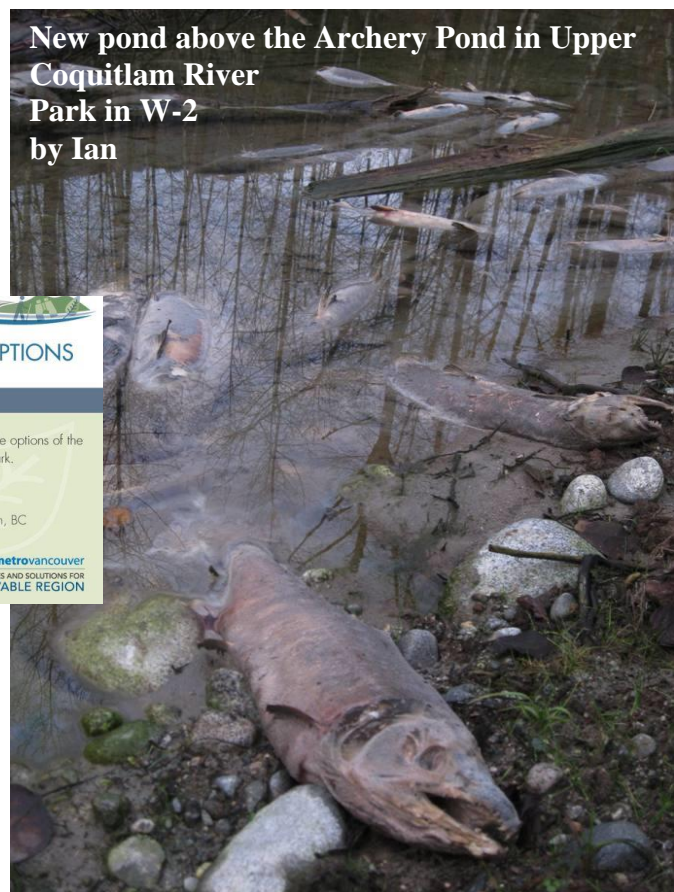
Susan (E-3) Oct. 31

It has been a really great year for salmon. There were quite a few pinks earlier in the month, but that run is finished now. The spawning chum salmon are thick. People are nearly always gazing down at them in wonder from the Patricia Pedestrian Bridge. In that area, there were dozens, and every gravelly patch along the River has its share. Lots of smelly dead ones too. The strangest one I saw had fireworks stuffed in its belly. A new way to serve salmon for Halloween? A troop of Scouts/Guides cleaned up this reach a few days ago. They did a great job! The River was clear and at a normal level. Birds included Black-capped Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, kingfisher, Common Mergansers, Great Blue Heron, and gulls.

David (E-5) Oct 2

The trail was very quiet, no people in the dog off leash park and two cars in the parking lot. The trail was quite clean. The River was up slightly from normal as the recent rains have been a big boost. While the water was cloudy it looked fairly natural. Good to see the water level in the River up. The bank continues to erode just north of the dog off leash park. The roots of some trees are now exposed; soon a few trees may topple. Birds included Northwestern Crow, Northern Flicker, Black-capped Chickadee, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The chickadees and kinglet were in a small foraging group, fun to watch. I could only see one salmon from the Patricia Walking Bridge as the water was quite murky. It appeared to be a chum. Snowberry berries stood out near Lougheed Highway, ferns were quite noticeable and also invasive ivy.

**New pond above the Archery Pond in Upper Coquitlam River Park in W-2 by Ian**



Colony Farm Regional Park  
**SHEEP PADDOCKS TRAIL OPTIONS**  
**OPEN HOUSE**

Please join us for an open house on the future route options of the Sheep Paddocks Trail in Colony Farm Regional Park.

Date: Thursday, November 7, 2013  
Time: 4 pm – 8 pm, Presentation at 7 pm  
Location: Poirier Library, 575 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, BC

metrovancouver  
SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR  
A LIVABLE REGION



# OCTOBER RiverWatches' REPORTS

Jeff (W-4) Oct. 24

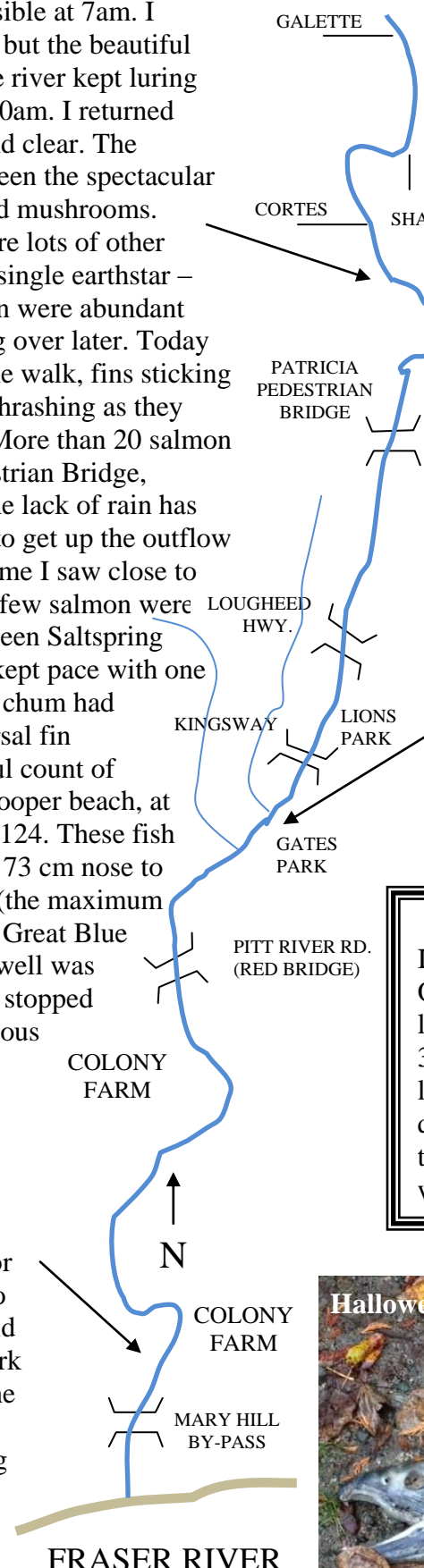
It was a clear morning with stars visible at 7am. I intended to go only a short distance but the beautiful weather and the joy of travelling the river kept luring me on until I reached Patricia at 7:40am. I returned close to the river, which was low and clear. The dominant themes this month have been the spectacular run of clear dry weather, salmon and mushrooms. Amanitas have been plentiful as were lots of other varieties of mushroom, including a single earthstar – a puffball with a fringe. Pink salmon were abundant early in the month with chum taking over later. Today there were salmon along much of the walk, fins sticking out of the water and splashing and thrashing as they made their way up shallow riffles. More than 20 salmon were visible from the Patricia Pedestrian Bridge, flashing their sides occasionally. The lack of rain has made it extremely difficult for fish to get up the outflow to Grist Channel. Last year at this time I saw close to 100 salmon in Grist, today none. A few salmon were swimming up the side channel between Saltspring and Dunkirk and, without trying; I kept pace with one salmon for about 30 feet. One large chum had two pink tags just forward of its dorsal fin reading '018'. I made a fairly careful count of carcasses between Saltspring and Cooper beach, at the north end of the reach, totalling 124. These fish seem large to me, a typical one was 73 cm nose to fork and weighed more than 10 lbs (the maximum on my scale). Birds seen included a Great Blue Heron and gulls. The Maple Creek well was running which was a relief as it had stopped working at least 3 times in the previous 10 days.

Roger (W-8) Oct. 28

It was very exciting to see two bobcats in the Home Farm north of the Millennium Bridge. I watched them along with a park employee for about ten minutes. They appeared to be "hanging out". The employee said that he had never seen one in the park before. A coyote was also seen in the Home Farm but closer to the highway. It appeared to be pouncing on prey. The River was high with a slack tide. Looked to be quite clear. Bird activity included hawk, heron, junco, and gulls.

Ian (E-7) Oct. 25

5 people were along the River enjoying the amazing return of salmon and some were very interested to know more about the salmon when I talked to them. The River was clear and at a low level. Maple and Scott Creeks appeared clear and flowing. Salmon were seen in both of these creeks near the confluence with the Coquitlam River. Birds included gulls (at least 40), kingfishers, Great Blue Herons, Wood Ducks, and Mallards. There were lots of spawning salmon in the River and some were splashing around while others were just resting. There were also many salmon carcasses and it looked like a mix of chum and pink. It had not rained for 2 weeks, so most of the salmon were waiting for higher flows to move up the creeks and side channels.



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**Daily Water Quality Checks by Jeff**  
 I checked the river every morning in October. The river was at a medium level on October 1, high October 2 and 3, medium October 4 through 10, then low for the rest of the month. Water quality was cloudy the first 3 days of the month, coinciding with the high water, then clear through October 31.



Halloween salmon by Susan