

## President's Report 2018 - 2019

Another year has gone by, and again *Nature Nanaimo* members can look back on a very successful year of activities and meetings. Meetings have featured talks on topics ranging from astronomy, fungi and eel grass to tailed frogs, marmots and climate change. We have enjoyed excursions on a similarly wide range of topics, e.g., birds, animal rescue, plant phenology, intertidal marine animals and fossils. We obtained funding to build Purple Martin nest boxes to aid in the recovery efforts for this species led by the Georgia Basin Ecological Assessment and Restoration Society (<http://www.georgiabasin.ca/puma.htm>), and we participated in maintenance work led by the Friends of Buttertubs.

Activities were initially coordinated by a small steering committee, and now by an Executive committee consisting of the following members:

Staffan Lindgren, President

Doug Fraser, Vice-President

Paul Courtin, Treasurer

Jim Smith, Secretary

Michael Stebbings, Secretary/Treasurer, Executive Director, Club Representative

Lance Nordstrom, Director, Membership

Dan Haslam, Director-at-Large

Sari Saunders, Director-at-Large

Karen MacDowell, Director-at-Large

Allan Hawryzki, Consultant

Lindsay Dealy, Web Master

In addition a number of members participated in the organization and implementation of projects and outings. This year, several members are stepping away from their positions, e.g., I am handing over the reins as President to someone else, but staying on as Director. It is critical that members step up to participate to ensure the longtime viability of *Nature Nanaimo* as any one person can only hold a specific position for four years (two terms). There are four key positions on the Board. The President chairs Board meetings and the AGM, and engages in various other projects. In my case I have mainly contributed with blogs and managing the Nature Nanaimo Twitter account. The Vice-President serves as back-up to the President in the role as Chair, and also serves as Nominations Chair. Our current VP, Doug Fraser has also led the event organization, e.g., finding speakers and organizing more complex outings (see below). He is also handling most of our e-mail inquiries and the Facebook Page. The Secretary

records minutes at Board Meetings and the AGM and puts together agendas. The Treasurer manages our financial affairs, including budgeting. The best way to engage with the Board is to join as Director-at-Large in order to “learn the ropes”. A Director helps out with miscellaneous tasks as their time, expertise and interests allow. For example, Lindsay Dealy serves as our web master as her work takes her out to sea for stretches of time. She also manages our Instagram account. In addition, Directors can participate in various committees focused on specific tasks, e.g., social events, fund raising, projects. We therefore hope that you consider standing for office. It is not an onerous undertaking if we have a strong team working together. As one of our Board members has resigned due to personal circumstances, we desperately need new blood on the Board.

Two major milestones have been reached. We now have a new logo thanks to the efforts of Sari. The logo features the flower of *Lotus pinnatus*, which in Canada is mainly found at Nanaimo’s Harewood Plains. In addition we are now officially incorporated as the **Nanaimo Nature Society** with the BC Registries and Online Services thanks to the efforts of Dan and Michael. We also extend a thank you for the generous assistance of our solicitor Mr. Sucha Ollek for assistance with our Constitution and Bylaws.

We had two fantastic social events, a Christmas pot-luck party generously hosted by Michael and Bonnie Stebbings in their home, and a picnic at Wildwood in June. We hope to make these annual events.

Our Facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/naturenanaimo/>) is enjoying a lot of traffic with some posts reaching 1,000 views, and it is a great resource for staying current with Nature Nanaimo activities. For those of you who do not want to join social media, our webmaster is working hard to keep our website ([www.naturenanaimo.ca](http://www.naturenanaimo.ca)) current. Lindsay also manages our Instagram account (<https://www.instagram.com/naturenanaimo/>), which has over 400 followers. Our Twitter (@NatureNanaimo) account is less active, which perhaps reflects the age distribution in the club. Finally, as a member in good standing, you will get notification of upcoming events via e-mail ([naturenanaimo@gmail.com](mailto:naturenanaimo@gmail.com)) to ensure that you don’t miss any of our exciting and fun activities.

### **Vice President**

It has been a pleasure this past year, acting as the VP of Nature Nanaimo. In only our second year of operation we were able to offer a wide range of interesting and informative outings as well as hosting many great presenters at our regular monthly meetings. Members had a chance to learn about a wide range of important and fascinating topics from Climate Change and the endangered Vancouver Island Marmot to Fungi and Astronomy. Meetings have been very well attended, with 50 - 90 members and non-members enjoying the excellent talks. Most public meeting have started with a brief presentation on club business, and a “Nature Nugget” on a topic of (usually) local interest. We purchased a sound system to ensure that everyone can hear the speakers clearly, and we now have our own projector as well. We owe a big thank you to the Nanaimo Branch of the Federation of Canadian Artists, who generously allowed us to use their projector during the start-up year.

Doug also helped organize many of the outings and arranged carpooling when possible to help reduce our carbon footprint 🌱. Some of his favourite experiences of the year were: our trips to Botanical beach to explore life in the tidal zone; enjoying the birds and plants of Paradise Meadows; touring and

learning about the history and conservation efforts of the Cowichan Garry Oak Reserve; as well as our any nature rambles followed by lively discussions over pub lunches and our successful efforts to build Purple Martin nest boxes. Doug looks forward to a new set of learning experiences and conservation efforts as our club continues to pursue our mission in the years ahead.

### **Executive Director**

Since relinquishing the full-time secretary/treasurer role on the Board last year, Michael has been acting as Executive Director / office manager to facilitate the decisions of the Board. He did this by looking after those many little jobs required to make things run smoothly, from chairing the Hospitality Committee for the Christmas Party and summer BBQ to recruiting volunteers, to job training for the treasurer's job while he continued to provide oversight of the accounting procedures. He also acted as chief negotiator for the amalgamation of the Friends of Buttertubs.

### **Club representative**

As the Nature Nanaimo's representative on BC Nature committees this past year Michael has been at meetings of the Vancouver Island Region, and at meetings of the Province-wide Club Representatives meetings at the AGM and FGM.

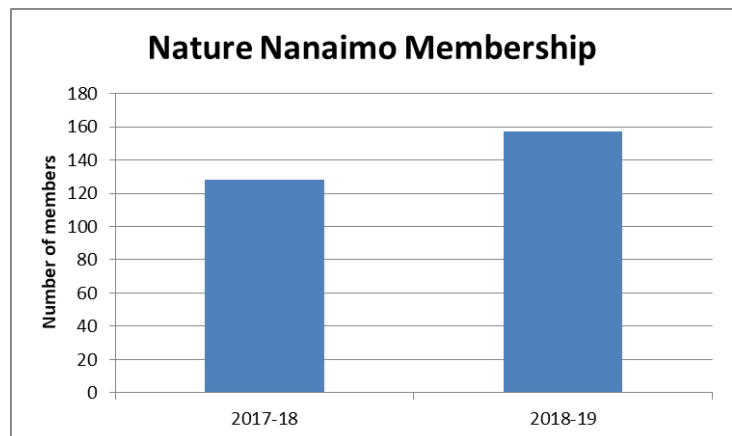
The regional meetings, chaired by John Neville, enabled by utilizing a conference-call format in an effort to reduce the carbon footprint and eliminate unnecessary travel, have been informative and useful to introduce our club to the wider naturalist community. They discussed many topics and concerns of mutual interest and shared ideas about potential speakers and outings. Inter-club events have also been facilitated.

The Province-wide BC Nature meetings have been largely about the consequences of upgrading the management practices and procedures used by BC Nature as they modernise their business operations and re-write their by-laws.

Michael has been seconded to the BC Nature Finance Committee to assist in this area.

### **Nature Nanaimo 2019 AGM – Membership Report**

Membership in Nature Nanaimo increased from 128 members in the first year of operation (2017-18) to 157 this past year (2018-19). As of August 31, 2019, there were 49 individual memberships (including 1 student member) and 49 family memberships with 2 or more members for a total of 98 memberships. While membership numbers are encouraging, there is still a



need for more volunteers from the membership to step up and help with organizing club activities and to serve on the board of directors.

Staffan Lindgren, President

Nature Nanaimo