



Peninsula Streams Society Newsletter November 2021

Hello firstname!

Well, it's safe to say that fall has arrived. This week's "atmospheric river" event has many of our streams and rivers overflowing their banks, with the effects far-reaching. We hope everyone is staying warm and dry, and feel for our neighbours and friends who are dealing with flooding, stranding and evacuations. We're planning to send out a special newsletter within the next few weeks regarding the flood and its impacts and opportunities.

As the rivers flow and the last leaves fall, volunteers and staff are hard at work with beach and streamside clean-ups, planting native plants, and surveying beaches for forage fish eggs. To get involved, please complete our [Volunteer Interest Form](#) This form lets you indicate what kind of volunteer opportunities and which watersheds you're interested in.

This newsletter highlights:

- 2022 Memberships on sale now!
- 3 Beach Clean-ups at Bazan Bay, Pat Bay Beach and Cadboro Bay
- Bowker Creek Salmon Spawning Habitat Restoration
- All Buffleheads Day Celebration
- Graham Creek Stick Jams removal
- Hospital Creek Estuary Shoreline restoration
- Colquitz Creek Clean-up and salmon count
- Read our [new blog post](#) about restoration of Goward Springs!

Thanks for following along! We hope you enjoy reading about what we have been up to over the last couple months.

Wishing you a wonderful and safe fall,

~The Peninsula Streams Society Team
Ian, Francesca, Kyle, Carmen and Katrina

P.S. If you'd like to support our efforts to restore our vital creeks and marine environments, please consider a [monthly donation](#)

2022 Memberships Available Now!

Renew or join us now and your membership will be good until December 31, 2022!

Our annual membership is still at the pre-pandemic rate of only \$10 (\$5 for students). Plus, you'll be added to our insurance for volunteer work parties. Our website membership page makes sign-up fast and easy - just click the red button below.

Help to build our network of watershed protectors throughout Greater Victoria by becoming a member. Your membership matters because it shows the grassroots support we have in our community. This helps us when we apply for grants or other funding. This means more money for our local restoration projects. Becoming a PSS member is one simple way to have a meaningful positive impact.

Become a Member today

BEACH Clean-ups

Pat Bay Beach Clean-up

On Tuesday, a concerned citizen alerted us to the presence of debris washed up on Pat Bay Beach, resulting mainly from a derelict boat that had overturned in the recent storm. We quickly mobilized a crew of almost 20 volunteers to clean up the beach the following day, on Wed. Nov. 17th.

The derelict boat in question had been run aground for several weeks, and after the last storm had begun to break apart. The beach was littered with boat pieces, chemical containers, lots of diesel soaked Styrofoam and other garbage.

Thank you to our volunteer crew who responded and helped out at the last minute. Thank you also to Fickle Fig who came by with hot coffee and delicious pastries for our volunteers! The community coming together was really heart-warming.

Thanks to TD Friends of the Environment Fund, Sitka Foundation and World Wildlife Federation for supporting our BEACH Program, which includes beach clean-ups and forage fish monitoring~!



Bazan Bay Beach Clean-up & Reay Creek Park Planting

We had almost 30 volunteers out to help with our beach clean-up last weekend (Sat. Nov. 13th) on Bazan Bay. Concurrently, we had a small group of volunteers planting tree seedlings in Reay Creek Park. Reay Creek flows into Bazan Bay.



Cadboro Bay Beach Clean-Up

The end of October brought rain, wind, and waves to our local shorelines, resulting in piles of logs and garbage washing up on beaches. Among the debris that washed up at local beach Cadboro Bay were two live-aboard sailboats. The unfortunate vessels were toppled over sideways and run aground, spilling their contents across the beach - including suitcases, chemicals, fibreglass, household items, oil, and gas. Peninsula Streams staff and volunteers moved quickly on Tues. Oct. 26th to get the debris off the beach, where one of the owners came to salvage what he could.

It is critical to address washed-up boats as soon as possible, especially as many beaches in the area, including Cadboro Bay, serve as spawning habitat for Surf smelt forage fish. Forage fish are an important food source for hundreds of marine and coastal animals!

With stormy weather forecast for the fall and winter, make sure your belongings or moorages are securely fastened and weather-ready!



Current Projects

Bowker Creek Salmon Spawning Habitat Restoration



September was a busy month in the field restoring salmon habitat! The Friends of Bowker Creek and Peninsula Streams got their hands dirty in the mud and rain to create salmon egg incubation habitat using gravel within a section of Bowker Creek. Smooth river cobblestone was also used to fortify the eroding banks.

In February 2022, 30,000 pre-hatch or "eyed" chum eggs will be placed in incubators in the gravel as a population 'kickoff', with resultant fry migrating to the ocean in April!

The project has been a dream of local residents, with its completion marking one more positive step towards healthy urban stream habitat for salmon and trout!

All Buffleheads Day



The Bufflehead duck returns to Roberts Bay (Sidney) in mid-October every year on a predictable schedule. This small, punctual duck is a delight to see as it overwinters in the Greater Victoria region, feeding and socializing.

This year's All Buffleheads Day on Sat. Oct. 16th, hosted by the Friends of Shoal Harbour (FOSH), was a success, with over 70 people and activities such as a scavenger hunt, bufflehead viewing, and a forage fish egg surveying demo done by Pen Streams staff!

Keep an eye out for the adorable Bufflehead duck this winter in the nearshore waters!

See more photos and a longer write-up on the Friends of Shoal Harbour website [here](#).



From left to right: Happy dog, Member of Parliament, Elizabeth May, Member of the Provincial Parliament, Adam Olsen and the Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia enjoy a chat before the official proceedings begin. Photo Credit - Rick Searle



Farrell Boyce and Elaine Ethier (encouraged by Bob Peart in the background) perform a celebratory song for the Buffleheads :) Photo Credit - Rick Searle

Graham Creek Work Party

Jam-up in Graham Creek! With increased fall stream flows bringing twigs and broken branches downstream, the creek got a little plugged up with multiple stick jams. These jams can prevent cutthroat trout from migrating upstream to their spawning grounds and often benefit from being removed.

We had a great turnout of thirty volunteers on Sat. Oct. 2nd to remove the jams and pull up invasive blackberries and ivy. If you notice any build-ups of plant debris/garbage in any stream, let us know (location and send a photo of the stick jam, if you can).



Our volunteers forming a human chain to remove stick jams from Graham Creek, to minimize trampling and impact on the riparian plants and soil. Photo Credit: Francesca Loro

Hospital Creek Estuary Shoreline Restoration

A new project has begun! As erosion and degradation of Hospital Creek estuary and beach have increased, Pen Streams staff and volunteers in partnership with Coastal Collaborative Sciences, have begun working on a marsh restoration project. This includes stabilizing the shoreline planting native plants, building terraced structures, nourishing the beach, and building a goose exclosure to keep hyper abundant geese and waterfowl out and allow plants to recover. All of these actions are to promote the aggradation of sediments and seaward growth of the marsh.

Many species, including juvenile salmon, rely on productive marsh habitats for rearing and foraging. However, because agriculture and development have destroyed well over 70% of brackish marsh and estuary habitats in Victoria, focusing our care and attention on the Hospital Creek marsh is much needed! This project will also help to inform the level of impact hyper-abundant geese populations are having and actions for recovery for future restoration projects in our area.



Colquitz Creek Clean-Up and Salmon Count

It was a spooky Halloween event at Colquitz Creek, but not for trick-or-treating related reasons. The Oct. 30th clean-up along the banks of Colquitz revealed very low counts of salmon in the water, without a clear reason why.

Thirty volunteers came out in the October sun to clean up garbage on streambanks and roadsides, collecting about half a tonne of trash. However, during the 2 hour workparty, only one salmon was spotted!

This year, Colquitz, Craigflower, and Millstream Creeks all have record low salmon returns. In previous years, there would have been at least 50-60 fish.



Local Landowner Restores Backyard Stream and Inspires a Watershed Community

Did you know that many members of our Greater Victoria community have the potential to take on meaningful restoration projects on their own property? However, restoration can be an intimidating prospect, as it involves more than simply digging out some invasive plants. So, how do community members transform a backyard space into a habitat for native critters? One great example is the collaboration between Rico Soto, a local landowner and long-time stream steward, and Peninsula Streams to create coastal cutthroat trout spawning habitat in his own backyard brook. [Check out our new blog post](#) to find out more...

Thanks for reading this far~! We hope to see you in the field soon.



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