Nov 2026
ISSUE 379

BURKE MOUNTAIN NATURALISTS

Promoting Nature Awareness in Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody and beyond

Salmon Come Home Festival October 25, 2026

By Edie Kernighan

On October 25, 2026, BMN set up a display at the Salmon Come Home Festival alongside the Bat Team and Wondrous Tree Fellowship. Although rain was predicted for the day, we mostly were lucky with the weather, albeit it was a bit chilly.

BMN's main attraction was photo ops with Odi. We were kept busy all day as many visitors stopped by to learn about our club.

The Bat Team and Wondrous Trees both had wonderful crafts and stories and were mobbed all day.

A worthwhile event with many environmental groups in attendance. There was lots to do in spite of less fish than usual due to the low water levels in the streams. The food was great and coffee and hot chocolate warmed us up.

Thanks to all the volunteers who came out to help, to all the members who visited our displays and to the City of Coquitlam for sponsoring this event.



At the Salmon Come Home Festival. Credit: E. Kernighan



Learning about Burke Mountain Naturalists. Credit: E. Kernighan



The Bat Team and Wondrous Trees. Credit: E. Kernighan

Upcoming BMN Club Meetings

November Meeting (in person):
Presentation by Wildlife Rescue

Tues Nov 10, 7:30pm – 9:00pm
Como Lake United Church
535 Marmont St, Coquitlam
**See Announcements for detailed information*

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUES DEC 8 | 7:30 PM*
COMO LAKE UNITED CHURCH
535 MARMONT ST. COQUITLAM

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Burke Mountain Naturalists will be a brief session which will include approving the club's 2026 Financial Statement and electing the Executive Committee for the coming year.

**Please note that although the AGM begins at 7:30pm, there is much more going on that evening. Doors open at 7:00pm for the start of the silent auction and the book and bake sales which continue throughout the evening.*



BMN DECEMBER FUNDRAISER IS COMING UP – TUES DEC 8TH

BMN will hold our annual Silent Auction and Fundraising Evening on Tues December 8th. This year, the bulk of funds raised will be donated to the Wildlife Rescue Association located in Burnaby. (Don't miss BMN's Nov 10th club meeting when representatives from Wildlife Rescue will present a behind-the scenes view of their valuable work).

To make the Silent Auction a success, we need donated items that will attract bidders. Suggestions include nature-themed articles, handmade items, gift cards for local stores and services, gift baskets or other items that would be of interest to naturalists.

Or consider donating your time, talents and other services. In past auctions, we've had kayak and canoe trips, beginner photography lessons, shortcrust pastry making instruction and many more. Be creative! Please contact Edie Kernighan (ekernighan@gmail.com) to donate or for more info.

One of the biggest income generators at past auction evenings is the Baked Goods Table where people can snap up tasty treats to serve over the holidays. If you do some special baking (candies, loaves, cookies, bars, preserves, etc.) at this time of year, please make a bit extra to donate to the auction.

Please contact Kathy Leko (kleko@telus.net to donate).

Please note that HELP IS NEEDED TO SET UP THE AUCTION ITEMS, plus with a variety of other light jobs prior to the doors opening. If you are available from 6:00pm on, please contact Edie (ekernighan@gmail.com).

LOOKING FOR PHOTOS OF BMN ACTIVITIES

Ian McArthur is looking for photos of BMN activities in 2026. These photos will be part of the "The Year in Review" presentation at the December meeting. Please send photos to Ian at imcart@telus.net **before November 30**.

JOIN THE TEAM

BMN Seeks a Treasurer/ Bookkeeper

After many years, our Treasurer Edie Kernighan needs a well-deserved break, and BMN is looking for someone to take over the position. We will consider hiring a bookkeeper if no volunteer steps forward.

The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining our books and financial records throughout the year (using Excel, QuickBooks, PowerChurch or a similar program), monthly bank reconciliations and financial reports for executive committee meetings, paying invoices, issuing receipts, closing off the books for our fiscal year (September 1 to August 31), preparing the charity return for CRA (September), obtaining the GST rebate, among other tasks.

If you or someone you can recommend is interested in learning more about this position, please contact the executive committee at BurkeMtnNats@gmail.com.

JOIN THE BMN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE!

At our Annual General Meeting in December, we will elect BMN's Executive Committee for 2027. Two current members will be stepping down, thereby opening two Member-at-Large positions.

The purpose of the BMN Executive Committee is to set direction and provide governance for our club, and to deal with day-to-day club operations. The Committee meets via Zoom, usually on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 7pm - 8:00 or 8:30pm. We don't hold meetings in July and August so that we can enjoy the summer months. Much of the work and discussion between meetings is completed via email.

As a Member-at-Large you are free to take on as many, or as few, duties as you feel comfortable with. The position is a great way to learn more about how BMN operates and the challenges we face as an organization. And to provide your input!

If you are interested in putting your name forward for any position (especially as a Member-at-Large, but the Treasurer and Recording Secretary positions are also vacant), please email us at BurkeMtnNats@gmail.com.

To learn more about what is expected and what you can get out of joining the Committee, please contact Ian McArthur (imcart@telus.net) or Victoria Otton (svotton@gmail.com). You can make a valuable contribution to BMN, make some good friends, and you will likely enjoy being part of this team!

No experience is required.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS – Audubon Christmas Bird Count Saturday, January 2, 2026

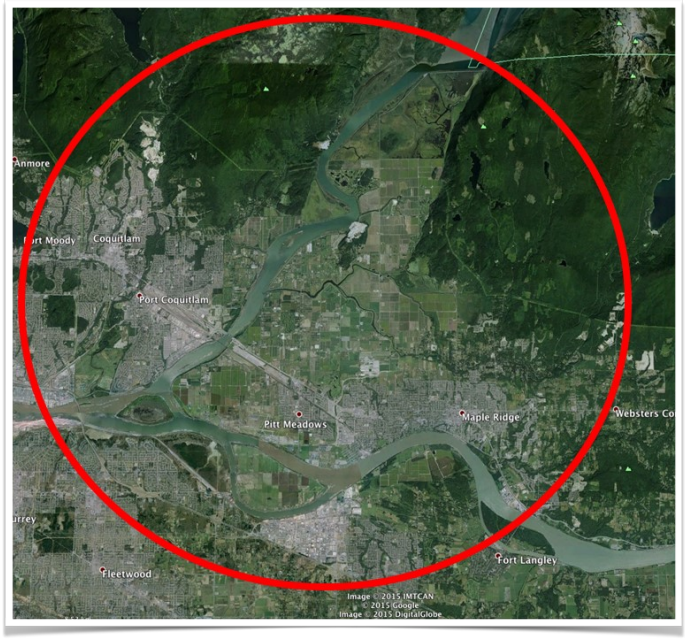
By Victoria Otton and Jennifer Tayes

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is the world's longest-running community science program. It's been running for over 125 years. BMN has been participating since 1990. Christmas Bird Counts are an opportunity to have fun, learn a bit about birding from good birders, and collect data that are used to track trends in wintering bird populations.



The most common species on last year 's Count was Cackling Geese. Join the Count and learn how to distinguish these from Canada Geese. CREDIT: Wayne McCallam

This year, the local portion of the 2026 Count will be held on Saturday January 2nd, 2027. Our official Count Circle encompasses the area within a 24 km diameter circle centered just to the west of Sheridan Hill in Pitt Meadows (see map). To cover this area, BMN teams up with birders in Pitt Meadows and our results are pooled and submitted to Bird Studies Canada (the organizer of the Canadian Audubon Count).



The official Count Circle is shown in red. Como Lake is not within the Circle, but birders who want a short and flat route have historically covered this route.

We're looking for two types of volunteers:

i. Field Counters who can join a small team of birders who travel along established routes, identifying, counting, and recording all birds seen and heard as they go, and

ii. Feeder Counters who record all the birds (species and numbers) at their feeders on the Count Day, usually just for about 2 hours.

On the Tri-Cities side of the Count, Team Leaders will guide 12 field teams. Below is a list of these routes, with distance covered (though some of the longer distances are cumulative distances, i.e., from when a team splits up into sub-teams to cover more area):

1. Moody Inlet (6 km)
2. Hoy/Scott Creeks (5 km)
3. Como Lake (1.5 km)
4. Colony Farm West (9.5 km)
5. Colony Farm East (7.5 km)
6. Pitt Riverfront (20 km)
7. Coquitlam River from the Red Bridge to Patricia (11 km)
8. Lafarge Lake and Coquitlam Town Centre (4 km)
9. DeBoville Slough (30 km)
10. Minnekhada Farm (7 km)
11. Minnekhada Park (4 km)
12. Upper Quarry Road (8 km)

As you can see from this list, teams go where the birds are! And the same thing happens on the east side of the Pitt River. Here, there are 10 teams that are sent off to hot birding sites like Grant Narrows, the Alouette Dykes, and Kanaka Creek.

You can join a team on either side of the Pitt River, and you don't need to be a good birder – what is really needed are people with sharp eyes! The expert birders on your team will take care of the identification.



It was a rainy Count last year, but field teams kept smiling. CREDIT: John Saremba

To be a Field Counter, choose a route close to home, or try something new and further afield! If you live within the Count Circle, you can participate from your home as a Feeder Counter.

If you are interested in joining or leading a survey team on the Pitt Meadows side, please contact Jennifer Tayes at jtayes@shaw.ca.

If you want to join a team on the Tri-Cities side, please contact Victoria Otton at svotton@gmail.com.

Feeder Counters on either side of the Pitt River should contact the same ladies.

If you want to chat to get more info, send Victoria a text at 778-960-5776 to arrange a call.

Everyone and their families and friends are welcome to participate! If you've participated in the past few years on a Count, you'll be contacted this year to ask if you're available again. Please spread the word!

New this year!! With BC's new permanent Daylight-Saving Time, sunrise in Coquitlam won't be until 9:06am on January 2nd, so there's never been an easier Count Day for sleepyheads!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BMN CLUB MEETING (in person): An Evening with Wildlife Rescue

Tues Nov 10, 7:30pm – 9pm

Wildlife Rescue, located on the shore of Burnaby Lake, began in 1979 when a group of dedicated nature lovers saw that no one was working to help wildlife affected by human activity in urban areas. Since then, Wildlife Rescue has become Western Canada's busiest wildlife rehabilitation centre, working with professional wildlife rehabilitators and volunteers to provide temporary refuge and care to birds, bats, and other wildlife in distress. Come and hear of all the wonderful work this organization does.

Wildlife Rescue has been chosen to receive a share of the proceeds from our December 8th Silent Auction and Sales.

Held at Como Lake United Church, 535 Marmont St, Coquitlam.

Como Lake United Church's Annual Christmas Marketplace

Sat Nov 14, 9:30am to 2:30pm

The Marketplace will host a wide selection of goodies, baking, hand-turned wooden gifts, jewellery, jams, jellies and preserves, and silent auction items…. just to name a few! Stop by the Tea Room for a relaxing break over tea, coffee, and delicious baked goods.

Come and support the Church where BMN holds our public meetings. BMN will have a presence there.

Held at Como Lake United Church, 535 Marmont St. Coquitlam.

There is underground parking (enter from the lane behind the church, which can be accessed off Marmont or Gatensbury) and ample street parking.

SFU United Way Two-Day Book Sale

Wed Nov 18, 9am – 6pm and Thurs Nov 19, 9am – 3pm

The Burnaby Campus Book Sale features a wide variety of books, from academic treatises on mung beetles to travel books to fiction to children's books, cooking, Lit, Political Science … from Aristotle to Zane Grey. The prices are unbeatable – $2 a book! Only $1 for children's books! Do all your Christmas shopping in one stop!

Many BMN members volunteer at the Sale. Volunteers are greatly appreciated, and receive free parking at the campus and a free tea or coffee from Renaissance Coffee. Volunteer for an hour or as long as you wish. It's loads of fun!

Donations of books, LPs, CDs, DVDs, and board games are welcomed. Contact Jeff Rudd, jeff_rudd@sfu.ca for more information about volunteering or donations, or see the website here.

Held indoors in the North Concourse of the Academic Quadrangle.

Hyde Creek Hatchery's Free 'Annual Salmon Return' Tours

Sat Nov 21, 9am – 2pm

This is an opportunity for all ages to view returning salmon up close, tour the urban Hyde Creek Hatchery, and learn about the local watershed lifecycle. Volunteers from the Hyde Creek Watershed Society will lead family-friendly tours lasting about 20 minutes. There will be excellent views of spawning salmon in nearby Hyde Creek.

Hyde Creek Hatchery is located at 3636 Coast Meridian Rd in Port Coquitlam. There is only limited parking at the hatchery, and it is strongly recommended that if coming by car, you park at the nearby Hyde Creek Recreation Center (1379 Laurier Ave) and walk the short distance upstream to the hatchery.

For more info, see the Hyde Creek Watershed Society's website.

Deadline for the December BMN Newsletter

Thurs Nov 26

Have something of interest to share? Have you taken a walk or hike recently? Send us a couple of paragraphs about your outing along with two or three photos. Others will enjoy reading about your adventure.

Please submit your brief articles or photos to the Editor at BMNnewsletter@gmail.com.

BMN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Water Quality Monitoring Projects

Sun Nov 29, 9am – 10am

The usual day for these sessions is the last Sunday of the month, but the date is weather dependent. Check with the leaders for meeting places, dates and times.

New volunteers are welcome! Monthly monitoring is done concurrently at two locations:

Como Lake – contact: Lori Austin at lorikaustin100@gmail.com .

Lost Lake and Mundy Lake in Mundy Park - contacts: Chris and Evelyn Thomson at ecco@telus.net.

BMN CLUB MEETING (in-person): Annual General Meeting and Silent Auction

Tues Dec 8, 7pm – 9pm

This is the annual fundraiser evening for BMN. This year, the bulk of the proceeds will be donated to the Wildlife rescue Association of BC. For details, please see the information in this newsletter.

In addition to the silent auction, bake and book sales, BMN will hold its Annual General Meeting. This is a brief session in which officers for the coming year are elected. There is always room for new faces on the Executive Committee!

The AGM will be followed by Ian McArthur's annual "The Year in Review" presentation, a highlight of the year, showcasing BMN events from throughout 2026. If you have photos of BMN events, please send them to Ian at imcart@telus.net before November 30.

Held at Como Lake United Church, 535 Marmont St., Coquitlam.

2026 Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

Sat Jan 2, 2027

Our local Count is called the 'Pitt Meadows Count', and the organization of teams to cover areas on both sides of the Pitt River will soon begin. If you've participated in the past, you'll be contacted again this year; if you've never participated in a CBC, but want to, please email BurkeMtnNats@gmail.com or Victoria Otton (svotton@gmail.com) for more information. More details are available in this newsletter.

Join the 40th Year of 'Project FeederWatch'

Nov 1 – Apr 30

If you feed wild birds over the winter, this is an easy and interesting way to track who comes to your feeder, and to contribute to a dataset of bird distribution and abundance across Canada and the USA. For a donation to Birds Canada (any amount, and tax-receipt-able), you can record bird visitors online and compare what you see from year to year. Project FeederWatch is a joint program of Birds Canada and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Count birds at your feeders for science! For more information, go to feederwatch.org.

See the BMN website for more events!

COLUMN: Nature and Feeder Watch

Contributions by Mark Johnston, Des Hughes and Victoria Otton

Nature Watch - Some Special Sightings – Mark Johnston, Buntzen and Lafarge Lakes

On Wednesday, September 16, I was sitting, having my lunch, at North Beach at Buntzen Lake. As I was looking out at the lake, I happened to notice something in the water near the west shore. At first, I thought it might be a Canada goose or two; earlier, when I had been walking along the east side, I had seen waterfowl on the water. As I watched, I soon decided the "something" was not waterfowl; it began to take on an elongate shape. My next thought was that it was a small log, but its drift seemed a bit fast for the rather negligible current. After another moment or two of puzzlement, I finally recognized the object for what it was: a black bear! As I continued to watch, it swam across the lake, probably not more than twenty metres offshore, from the west to the east side. I had a "front row seat" to observe the swim. I didn't see the bear climb out of the water, but I'm guessing it made landfall somewhere just before the fenced-off tunnel-entrance area. I have seen a bear swim once before, but not for such a length. This bear moved at a very steady pace and quite smoothly across the lake.

More recently, on Wednesday, October 28, in the afternoon, I was walking counterclockwise around Lafarge Lake and was approaching the bench beside the planted maple tree at the northwest corner of the lake. A young woman was sitting on the bench; she was wearing headphones and looking down at her phone. Just as I reached the bench, I heard a loud croaking and looked up to see a glaucous-winged gull flying toward me and a great blue heron in pursuit. It was the heron that was making all the noise. Just as the gull began an upward trajectory to clear the bench, it opened its beak and released what I now saw to be an eight-inch trout. The fish fell immediately back of the woman on the bench and hit the ground with a loud slap. The woman didn't show any indication that she had noticed any of this play out. I imagine she would have, though, had the gull released the fish a split-second sooner. In that case, the fish would have landed squarely on her head! It was a remarkable scene!

Nature Watch - Tuesday Morning Walks – Des Hughes, Pitt Meadows



Eagle at Hopcott Farms, Pitt Meadows. Credit: Des Hughes



Heron on the trail by Osprey, Pitt Meadows. Credit: Des Hughes



A Second Heron on the trail by Osprey, Pitt Meadows. Credit: Des Hughes

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Project FeederWatch is a joint program of Birds Canada and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Count birds at your feeders for science! For more information, go to feederwatch.org.

DEADLINE for the next BMN Newsletter
Thursday, November 26, 2026
Send articles to: bmnnewsletter@gmail.com

Welcome to New Members

By Brian Wormald (Membership)

We are very pleased to welcome the following new members to the club. Please look out for them at the next meeting or hike and extend your own personal welcome.

Port Coquitlam

- **Dominique Leclair** (13 October)

Burke Mountain Naturalists Membership (JANUARY TO DECEMBER)

Please email BurkeMtnNats@gmail.com for more information on our Student Membership option. We want to hear from you!

☐ $33 for an individual ☐ $40 for a Family Membership

☐ NEW! Post-Secondary Student Membership — $10

Our activities include:



- hiking
- bird watching and surveys
- invasive plant removal parties
- bat monitoring and conservation field trips
- nature walks
- attending local environmental/community events with informative displays
- monthly public meetings, except over the summer, with a guest speaker (most invited presentations are available on our YouTube channel)
- publishing 10 monthly digital newsletters (except over the summer)
- BC Nature quarterly magazine, Nature BC.

Please check our Events Calendar to see what's coming up!

MEMBERSHIP BE PURCHASED/RENEWED:

- Online at: https://www.burkemountainnaturalists.ca/membership/
- using Interac®, a credit card or Paypal®, under the tab named **"Get Involved"**.
- Mail a cheque to BMN, P.O. Box 52540, R.P.O. Coquitlam Centre, Coquitlam, BC V3B 7J4

If you are contemplating switching to "electronic" payment, we urge you to use eTransfer in preference to PayPal. It's easier AND saves your club money. There are NO charges incurred for you OR the club for these bank transfers.

BMN is a registered non-profit society with charitable income status.

Name(s): _____
(Family adults at the same address)

Name(s): _____
(Family children under 19)

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

The Burke Mountain Naturalists was formed in January 1989 and is a member club of BC Nature (formerly Federation of BC Naturalists).

BMN is a registered non-profit Society with charitable income status.

Our objectives are:

- to promote the enjoyment of nature
- to foster an interest in, and an appreciation of, our environment
- to promote the accessibility and maintenance of natural areas, particularly local areas
- to actively pursue the conservation & preservation of the natural world

President: Ian McArthur, imcart@telus.net (604.939.4039)

Vice President: Brian Wormald, brian@wormald-online.com (604.537.3717)

Treasurer: Edie Kernighan, ekernighan@gmail.com (604.937.0958)

Past President: Phillip Buchan, pbuchan@mac.com (604.329.5537)

Recording Secretary: Vacant

Members-at-Large: Laura Dupont (lauradupont@shaw.ca), Elaine Golds (elaine.golds@gmail.com), Kathy Leko (kleko@telus.net), Victoria Otton (svotton@gmail.com), Jeff Rudd (rudd@sfu.ca), Helen Howes (helenhowes@shaw.ca), Sebastian Thomas (sebastian.thomas02@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary: Brian Wormald, brian@wormald-online.com (604.537.3717)

BC Nature Club Representative:

Victoria Otton, svotton@gmail.com (604.937.5379)

Education and Conservation Committee:
burkemtnnats@gmail.com

Nature and Feeder Watch:

Liz Thunstrom, elizabeththunstrom@telus.net (604.939.9571)

BMN-Friends of DeBoville Slough Committee:

2fodbs.bmn@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Michelle Andersen, BMNnewsletter@gmail.com

Newsletter Design: Catherine Ho, catherineymho@icloud.com

BMN Publications: 10 newsletters a year (except July and August)

"Discover Nature in the Tri-Cities" 2015, (40 pages) a children's nature guide; available on our website (40 pages) and from local libraries

Natural History Brochures: Miller Park Ravine, DeBoville Slough, Riverview Lands, Coquitlam River Corridor

Bird Brochures: Minnekhada Regional Park and Area, DeBoville Slough, Como Lake, The Herons of Colony Farm and our checklist for the Colony Farm Park birds

Plant Brochures: Colony Farm, DeBoville Slough

Wildlife Inventory of the Shoreline Park System: 1994, (121 pages) is available on our website

Our Backyard Wilderness: A Park Proposal, by Mark Haddock, 1992, (23 pages, plus appendices) available at Coquitlam Poirier Library

The Riverview Hospital Site: "Respecting Its Past, Realizing Its Future", by Elaine Golds, Victoria Otton and Lori Austin (2004), 26 pages available on our website.