



Surf Scoters & Black Scoters - above, Anna's Hummingbird - below, photos Chris Whiting

by Sheila Ray

The season seems to have changed dramatically this year. It was summer and we were conserving water and being vigilant about fire and then we turned around, it was raining and the ponds filled up overnight. The woods have changed too. The warblers and vireos have mostly left; Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Dark-eyed Juncos are more numerous.

Birds migrate to where there is food and so many birds migrate to the coast. Ducks that have bred in the interior have to leave the frozen lakes, but they can find food and open water here. I record when I see the first Bufflehead, that cute little black and white duck, in the bay near my house. It is always around the 29th or 30th of October. That is also when the Goldeneyes return. The three types of Scoters; surf, white-winged and black are showing up along Vancouver Island. I used to see Surf Scoters commonly all winter here, but they seem to

be less numerous. Loons are returning, not in their iconic black and white plumage, but in a drabber gray.

Many birds stay here year round. The mergansers, both Common and Hooded nest here and stay all winter. The woodpeckers, flickers and sapsuckers stay, as do robins, Dark-eyed Juncos, and Pacific wrens.

The Rufous Hummingbirds have left, but not the Anna's. They have been quietly here all summer and now we notice them because their aggressive cousins have gone. How do they survive the winter? They eat spiders,



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sip at sapsucker holes and come to winter flowering plants such as Mahonia, as well as feeders. When the temperature drops to freezing or below, they go into a state of torpor and are able to slow their body functions down almost like hibernating.

Should we feed birds in the winter? During harsh winters it may help birds survive, but here, there is generally an abundance of wild food and mild winters. The most important thing seems to be keeping your feeders clean as they can contribute to the spread of disease. Stephen Kress, director of Audubon's Project Puffin, says safe bird feeding includes completely scrubbing out feeders with a 10 per cent non-chlorinated bleach solution at least a few times a year, and certainly between seasons. So keep your feeders clean and you are probably doing no harm and getting an opportunity to see birds at close hand.

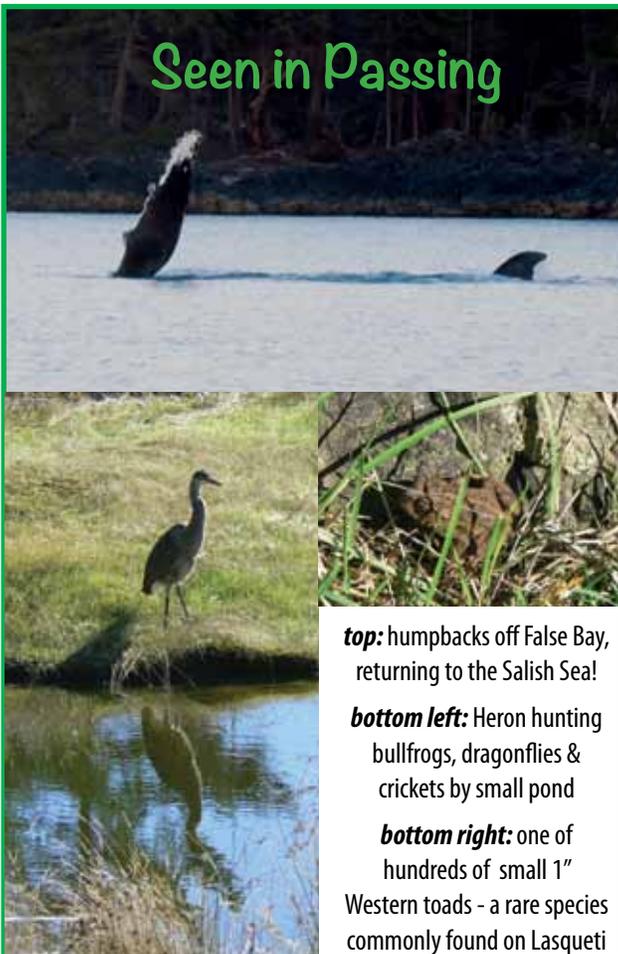
Winter is a great time for birding and we are so lucky to have lots of birds that stay. I really encourage everyone to record their bird sightings on <http://ebird.org>. You will be contributing to a huge worldwide database as well as improving your birding skills.



### Can you tell these birds apart?

All these ducks have white undersides! Above is the Goldeneye, with the white body and small white patch by its golden eye. Below is the Bufflehead, with the back of its head having the triangular white patch. The bottom is both the male and female Common Mergansers, a larger duck. The male has the very white body, and the female with the wild wispy red hair, in late spring, is left by the male to care for its chicks, while he goes off to play with other males.

**Golden Eye and Bufflehead by Chris Whiting,  
mergansers, heron and toad by Izzy Harrington  
Humpback whales by Laurence Fisher**



**top:** humpbacks off False Bay, returning to the Salish Sea!

**bottom left:** Heron hunting bullfrogs, dragonflies & crickets by small pond

**bottom right:** one of hundreds of small 1" Western toads - a rare species commonly found on Lasqueti



## Osland Reserve - Fencing results so far

by Sheila Ray

On September 1, Peter Johnston, Chris Whiting and I returned to the Osland Reserve to check on the two exclosures that had been established in March. As expected the water level of the wetland had dropped, animals were able to get around the end of the fence and some browsing was evident. However, there was an obvious difference between the vegetation inside and outside the fences and most of the trees, especially the taller ones, are doing well. We extended the fencing further into the wetland.

There were many tiny frogs and toads hopping everywhere and for some reason, clinging to the fences. We checked the five nest boxes. Unfortunately one nest had been abandoned with sixteen unhatched eggs inside, but the other three had remains of nesting material, egg shells and membranes, so they probably had families of Wood ducks or Hooded Mergansers.

**right**-young toad,  
**mid-right** - chorus/pacific tree frog  
**far right** photos show contrast from growth inside the fencing and outside which has been grazed by feral sheep



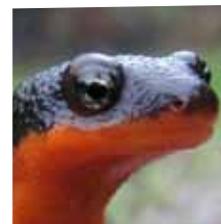
## Western Red Cedar

*Parksville, Nanaimo and Lasqueti are seeing the “devastating loss of cedar trees” and is pinning the blame on summer droughts. Dry weather does not agree with western red cedars, B.C.’s official tree. They fare best in cool, wet environments. That is why we are seeing dead and stressed trees on southern Vancouver Island and the east side of the Island, where moisture has been in short supply this summer. Western red cedars may live more than 1,000 years. Some giants can stand close to 200 feet (60 metres) tall.*

*B.C. has the world’s largest stock of standing western red cedar. It grows from northern California to Alaska. In B.C., it is found mainly on Vancouver Island, the mainland coast and a wet belt in the Shuswap area. (Carla Wilson, Times Colonist, Sept 12, 2018)*

**editor’s note:** Standing dead trees offer habitat for birds, insects and other wildlife. “Cedars can live for hundreds of years in an “almost dead” state, with very little foliage, and they play an important role in the forest community, as can cedar snags.” Ken Lertzman

**Your support for the mission and work of the Lasqueti Island Nature Conservancy (LINC) is much appreciated. Thank-you very much for your membership and past donations.**



go to [www.lasqueti.ca/linc](http://www.lasqueti.ca/linc) to find out more or visit our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/LINCBC>

# Salish View

Salish View is a LINC project to purchase 28-acres of rocky bluff habitat and a rare old-growth Douglas-fir forest next to Squitty Bay Provincial Park. We are nearing our goal of acquiring public ownership of some of Lasqueti's most beautiful natural heritage. Salish View will be open to all with easy access provided by a safe public trail through old growth trees to one of the most spectacular marine views in the Salish Sea.

This summer LINC sponsored three Lasqueti Garden Tours, a dozen Salish View Hikes, and the Midsummer Night Dream dinner and auction. Combined with two grants, donations and pledges, the total amount raised for Salish View is \$168,000. The community support has been tremendous! **We need \$82,000 by mid-December 2018 to complete the purchase. If you have been waiting to make a donation, now is the time. If 300 people donated \$300, we'd raise \$90,000!**

It's not very often small communities like Lasqueti have the opportunity to preserve a property with so many natural amenities for public benefit. Salish View offers stunning 270-degree vistas of our marine environment, an easy walk through an old growth forest, helps protect the ecological integrity of Squitty Bay Provincial Marine Park and a salmon stream, and importantly, mitigates climate change. In a time of rapid change, population growth and development, and dwindling ecological integrity you can do something to help our community and the natural world!

## New Grant Opportunity

If you send a donation to the Islands Trust Conservancy, dedicated to the Lasqueti Acquisition Fund, they will match it up to \$4500, in addition to the \$12,500 they have received from generous donors so far toward this Lasqueti project.

[www.islandstrustconservancy.ca/donate/give-now/](http://www.islandstrustconservancy.ca/donate/give-now/) or call 250-405-5186. Or donate to LINC by cheque, e-transfer: [linc@lasqueti.ca](mailto:linc@lasqueti.ca), on-line at CanadaHelps, or by donating appreciated securities tax free.

**We have less than 90 days to raise the remaining funds. Please consider making a generous donation to Salish View today.**



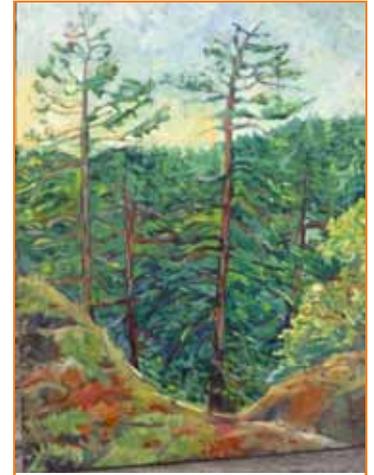
Thank you!!



We are  
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grateful to all those fine people who offered up their homes for view during the highly successful Lasqueti Homestead and Garden Tours!

We raised \$5500 for the project, and we are deeply grateful to Wendy Schneible and Annie Carrithers for their wonderful organizing!



Donations were made from the sale of these and other paintings at the Art Centre this summer

Left - Ridge Light, by Silke Seiler, Above - Middle Bluffs, Darlene Olesko; Lower Right - Georgia Strait Evening, Rene Corbett

Thank you!!

We were astounded at the generosity of those who helped with the Midsummer Night's Dream dinner, auction and dance! All these wonderful volunteers are listed on our website. We are also so grateful to the donors and purchasers of the auction items! Thanks to all these, and the Save an Acre donors, we raised \$20,000 at this event! Thanks to you, we are much closer to our goal of hiking up to Salish View and watching the wonders of nature in a place that will be protected in perpetuity.