



Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre

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2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

2023 was a year of change and transition. Jane Kiltnei, volunteer ED and chair of the board, retired after 12 years with the Centre. During the early years we were a project under the Cowichan Land Trust. In June of 2019 we became a separate non-profit organization. Larry Lenske, treasurer, also retired in 2023. We are thankful for their hard work and dedication.

Alison Adamson, who was hired as Administrative Coordinator at the end of November 2022, was promoted to Office Manager in 2023 due to the heavy workload she had undertaken. A lot of behind the scenes work took place organizing and consolidating computer files from individual computers to a central server.

RESTORATION PROGRAM

Anna Scouten, Restoration Coordinator, with funding from the Pacific Salmon Foundation organized eight restoration events at Fish Gut Alley for Elementary and High Schools Students and the general public. Together 220 people participated – students, teachers and volunteers put in 396 put in 396 volunteer hours to remove 830 pounds of invasive species, mainly English Ivy, from 1150m² and plant 425 plants over 950m² including Douglas-fir, Grand fir, Western redcedar, red flowering currant, salal and more.

At the end of this busy and productive year Anna took on a full time position with SD79. We thanked her and wished her well in her new position. We are grateful she continues to be supportive of CENC.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

We welcomed back Madeline Southern as Education Co-ordinator.

Many school groups came through the centre including this visit from Cowichan Preschool for our Estuary Explorers Program. Volunteer Kathryn Currie pictured here holding the red squid.



SUMMER CAMP

Summer camps were full and well received, supported by Alison.

EVENTS

In January we held an event to recognize our amazing volunteers. Pictured are Dorothy Marshall, Kathy Coster, Gail Mitchell, Judy Wilson, receiving certificates of appreciation.

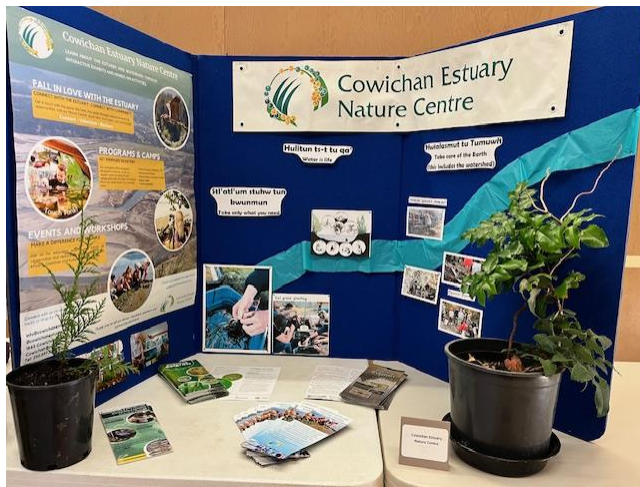


In February, Aquarist Louisa Varco gave an aquarium orientation to staff, volunteers and board members.

The March 23 AGM was followed by speaker Jillian Dunic on Seagrass as a model to understand stressors.

On April 23rd we celebrated Earthday and our 11th B'Earthday with cake, crafts, games and a sing-along with the Muddy Buddies.





We travelled with our booth to many community events. In January we attended the Volunteer Fair at Shawnigan Lake Community Centre.

On June 26th we joined in the Koksilah Watershed Community Meet and Greet at the HUB

August 27th our booth and volunteers participated in the Lower Cowichan River Clean-Up organized by the Cowichan Watershed Board.

October 21 we hosted an outdoor event at the Centre with three elders/knowledge holders: T'awahwiye, (Mena Williams), Genevieve Singleton and Hwiemtun (Fred Roland), who spoke on the cultural significance of the estuary,

OTHER

Ken Backer gifted us with a powerful microscope for getting up close to plankton and other tiny creatures.



We held a workshop for Board members, Staff and volunteers to set down our core values.

Cowichan Estuary Nature Centre - Purpose Statement:

Nurturing estuary stewardship through inspiring experiences

Our Core Values:

Q'ushintul

We walk together side by side with Cowichan Tribes and with a deep respect for the cultural significance of the Cowichan Estuary

Curiosity

We inspire curiosity and connection to the estuary's ecosystem

Integrity

We build integrity and respect for each other in all that we do

Reciprocity

Our relationship within nature and community is reciprocal

Citizen Stewardship

We support a wholistic approach to resilient stewardship and advocacy

Learning

We believe in continuous learning, past, present and future, with gratitude for our place

Diversity and inclusion

We are welcoming and appreciate that everyone has a unique perspective and that including them all makes us stronger