



HAT Chat

Habitat Acquisition Trust

HAT's Gala Dinner February 25th at McMorran's Beach House

HAT is pleased to announce its Gala Dinner on February 25th at McMorran's Beach House. This Green Tie Dinner is HAT's premier fundraising event of the year, and we are pleased to be joined by such distinguished guests as keynote speaker **Ben Parfitt**, noted jazz guitarist **Rob Cheramy**, and 'A' News reporter **Erick Thompson**.

Other highlights include a silent auction featuring

"Ben will talk about the tremendous challenges that climate change poses to forest conservation."

unique items donated by local businesses, and the presentation of HAT's Conservation Legacy Award to **Andy MacKinnon**. Andy is best known for his work on the widely-used *Plants of Coastal British Columbia*, and through the many students that have attended Temperate Rainforest Ecology course in Bamfield.

Our keynote speaker, Ben Parfitt, is an award-winning journalist and author who has been writing on environmental issues in British Columbia for nearly 24 years. He has an abiding interest in the health of the province's forests and the many conflicts that have arisen over how BC's abundant natural resources are managed or mismanaged. Over the years, he has had many memorable

adventures including watching bears feed on salmon in a pitch-black forest on Haida Gwaii at 2 in the morning; tromping through forests above Cowichan Lake in search of elusive and extremely valuable matsutake mushrooms; and encountering more than a few unsavory characters in the province's waste disposal business.

Ben is a coauthor with Michael M'Gonigle of *Forestopia*:

A Practical Guide to the New Forest Economy, author of *Forest Follies: Adventures and Misadventures in the Great Canadian Forest*, and a winner of numerous national and provincial journalism awards for investigative features written for Vancouver's weekly news magazine, *The Georgia Straight*.

Ben will talk about the tremendous challenges that climate change poses to forest conservation, and the important role that forests play in storing carbon, and what we may have to be prepared to do in future years to ensure that forests do not become lasting sources of carbon releases.

Contact the HAT office for tickets or for more information- 250 995-2428, or visit www.hat.bc.ca.

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Island View Beach
Good Neighbours

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with Native Plants

HAT's New President

Restoring Millstream
Creek

Gala Dinner

*Tickets on
Sale Now!*

February 25th at McMorran's Beach House
Members \$60/Non-members \$70
live music ~ silent auction ~ keynote by Ben Parfitt
Contact (250) 995-2428 or www.hat.bc.ca



Great Coastal BC Natives for Containers

Full Sun

Stonecrop, *Sedum spathulifolium*,
S. oregonum, *S. divergens*
Nodding onion, *Allium cernuum*
Camas, *Camassia quamash*
Tiger lily, *Lilium columbianum*
Pearly everlasting, *Anaphalis*
margaritacea

Sea thrift, *Armeria maritima*

Shade to part shade

Deer fern, *Blechnum spicant*
Maidenhair fern, *Adiantum*
pedatum

Dull Oregon grape, *Mahonia*
nervosa

False Solomon's seal
Smilacina racemosa

Alumroot, *Heuchera*
glabra, *H. micrantha*

Fringecup,

Tellima grandiflora

Piggy-back plant,

Tolmiea menziesii

Pacific bleeding heart,

Dicentra formosa

Wintergreen,

Gaultheria ovatifolia

Hooker's fairybells,

Disporum hookeri

Maidenhair

spleenwort, *Asplenium*
trichomanes

Sun to part shade

Sword fern,

Polystichum munitum

Evergreen huckleberry, *Vaccinium*
ovatum

Kinnikinnick, *Arctostaphylos uva-*
ursi

Western red columbine, *Aquilegia*
formosa

Wild strawberry, *Fragaria*
chiloensis, *F. vesca*

Piggy-back plant, *Tolmiea*
menziesii

Pacific bleeding heart, *Dicentra*
formosa

Wintergreen, *Gaultheria ovatifolia*

Hooker's fairybells, *Disporum*
hookeri

Maidenhair spleenwort, *Asplenium*
trichomanes

Sun to part shade

Sword fern, *Polystichum munitum*

Evergreen huckleberry, *Vaccinium*
ovatum

Kinnikinnick, *Arctostaphylos uva-*
ursi

Western red columbine, *Aquilegia*
formosa

Wild strawberry, *Fragaria*
chiloensis, *F. vesca*

Sweet gale, *Myrica gale*

Red flowering currant, *Ribes*
sanguineum

Vine maple, *Acer circinatum*

Contained Beauty

-Jennifer Eliason, HAT's Vice President

Many native plants are suitable for container plantings, giving you opportunity to highlight the beauty of your favourite natives, or to create a small wildlife-friendly oasis on a balcony. Bringing plants into the “living rooms” of our yards – the balconies, patios, doorways – provides for up close and personal interaction with the textures, scents and other subtleties that may be lost in the larger



palette of a garden bed. While there is nothing really natural about potted plants, you will be creating habitat for these plants. As you begin this gardening adventure, consider the natural habitat of the plant or plants you want to feature in your container garden. Consider where the pot will be placed. If you have a full exposure balcony or a deeply shaded front porch, this will limit the choice of plants. If you have particular plants in mind, think about where they grow. Deep, moist soil sites? Dry rocky pockets? You will need to do your best to mimic these conditions for your potted plants.

The pot: Choose a container that is large enough to support the growth of your native plant selection for several years and consider the home turf of your selected plants. A grouping of plants generally found growing in small pockets of gravelly soil will not need a big deep pot. Make sure the container has a hole (or several) in the bottom (unless you are creating a bog garden!). Gravel or a few shards of broken pot at the bottom will ensure the water can flow through the drainage holes with ease.

The dirt: The soil mix is important. While “potting mix” is readily available at garden centres, it is often a lightweight peat-based mix that is great for one season use whilst growing petunias and supplementing with fertilizers. For long term container planting projects, you need a richer mix, with some real soil or perhaps a healthy dose of compost. Drainage is key, so include perlite, sand, etc. Forest dwellers, like ferns, prefer soils with ample organic material (compost, leaves). A couple of handfuls of organic fertilizer won't hurt, either.

Remember plants in pots will tend to dry out faster than their counterparts in the ground. Keeping plants in saucers in the dry season, utilizing drip irrigation, mulching and having the appropriate soil mix will all help minimize water needs. Use only mild natural fertilizers, such as compost tea, fish fertilizer or liquid kelp. Add leaf mulch and/or compost annually. I generally top dress my containers each spring with a mix of leaf mulch and compost or Sea Soil, and the occasional dose of coffee grounds for plants that like acidic soil (which I have several of near my back door, a handy alternative to the compost bin).

The easy going nature of many of B.C.'s native plants shines though even in container gardening. They really don't demand much, and will grow and bloom happily for years in their pots. Larger plants may need to be re-potted or planted out into the garden after several years.

Plant Selection: Many bulbs, ferns, perennials and small shrubs will adapt to life in a pot. Vigorous shrubs, such as elderberries (*Sambucus* spp.), willows (*Salix* spp.), mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) and Nootka rose (*Rosa nootkana*) will quickly fill a pot with their root systems and do not perform well in containers. As with all gardening, there is a bit of trial and error involved, so be willing to experiment.



Welcome Geoff Huber, HAT's New President

If Geoff's face seems familiar, it's probably because you've seen him before - perhaps as the MC of HAT's Chris Frye Benefit Concert or in his earlier role as HAT's Outreach and Education Coordinator. Despite leaving the staff in 2007 to join the Federal Government as an Environmental Technician, he couldn't stay away from HAT. Just a year later he joined the board, bringing his experience as a staff member to the board decision making process. This year, the board confirmed Geoff as HAT's new president, where he will help guide the organization in the year ahead. Geoff has BSc in biology from the University of Victoria, as well as an Environmental Technology Diploma.



Thank you Simon and Peter

For the past 6 years, HAT has benefited tremendously from the guidance, experience, and expertise of Peter Lewis and Simon Philp on HAT's board. For the past 2 years Peter and Simon served as our Treasurer and President respectively. Simon has also revealed that he and his family are moving to Seattle to take a new position with HSBC Bank. We wish him all the best, though we are sad to see him leave Victoria.

Restoring Millstream Creek and our Spirits

There's something special about doing physical work outside with others in a forest of moss and fern covered maple trees. The smell of musty fallen leaves fills your nostrils, fresh cool air brings pink to your cheeks and the background burble of rushing water in Millstream Creek reassures your ears. With all senses alive, twenty volunteers came together to give their time, physical energy, enthusiasm, laughter and thinking on Sunday Oct 18th, 2009. A native plant restoration event took place at Atkins Avenue in Langford and organized through HAT with Todd Carnahan and the Millstream Good Neighbours Project, the Canadian Earth Institute and Anne Piazza, Climate Champion of HSBC.

Being connected with each other AND with nature, makes conversations friendlier, laughter easier, and we think better about all species while the work unfolds magically. In four hours, a four foot pile of daphne and periwinkle was cut and removed; a ten by twenty foot Himalayan blackberry patch was chopped down to mulched with cardboard

and chipped trees; and one hundred native plants were added to the properties backing on Chan Creekside Park. Now that is efficiency.

Add to this, a detailed and colourful explanation about the area systems by Todd Carnahan to start the day and a salmon barbecue wrap up. Could it get any better? Yes. Two weeks later in the same area a coho salmon was seen spawning - we can make a difference.

Beth Cruise is the Executive Director of the Canadian Earth Institute



THANK
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- Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program
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- Alula Biological Services

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- Centre for Sustainability
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PRIVATE DONATIONS

Donations from individuals are very important to HAT's sustainability. We truly appreciate the support of our members and donors;

it is this support that enables us to keep HAT operating day-to-day. To make it easier for donors, HAT has established a **monthly giving program** and accepts monthly giving through VISA, Mastercard, AMEX, and direct deposit.

HAT bringing Good Neighbours project to Island View Beach

Island View Beach, nestled on the Cordova Shore waterfront and sheltered by James Island, is popular with dog walkers, picnickers, and bird watchers. Though many are struck by the natural beauty of the place, few realize the ecological treasure this small park harbours. At first glance, the sparsely vegetated sand dunes and saltwater marsh may not appear special. Yet these habitats are two of the rarest ecosystems in our region, and are found almost nowhere else in BC.

In fact, this small park is home to at least 4 federally-listed endangered species and many other provincially-listed species. This includes the Sand-Verbena Moth and its host plant the Yellow Sand-Verbena, which are both endangered, and the poorly-named Common Nighthawk and the insulana sub-species of the Common Ringlet butterfly (both provincially red-listed, and candidates for endangered species listing).



Small parks do not support the same level of diversity as large protected areas. Little buffer exists to protect small parks from threats like changing water runoff patterns that result from development, or the encroachment of invasive species. House pets and pests, such as house cats and stray dogs, take a heavy toll on wildlife, particularly birds. Pollutants, fertilizers, and pesticides change the basic chemistry native species have adapted to. Without support, the rare species of Island View Beach are in danger of being extirpated altogether. This has already happened to the endangered Streaked Horned Lark, a former resident of the park. The challenge is find ways to support and buffer the park's ecosystems that are affordable and sustainable.

HAT is currently seeking funding to bring our award-winning Good Neighbours outreach strategy to the communities adjacent to Island View Beach Regional Park. Though public outreach events, and focused landowner contact, HAT will inform and engage local landowners to help them become stewards of the natural area adjacent to the park. HAT outreach staff will consult with residents on land management techniques that will help to maintain the extraordinarily sensitive ecosystems and work with landowners to find appropriate land uses that protect both dune and saltwater marsh habitats, while maintaining current agricultural and recreational uses.

If you live in the Island View Beach area or Central Saanich, and wish to find out more about the project, please contact Todd at the HAT Office (250 995-2428, or hatmail@hat.bc.ca).

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