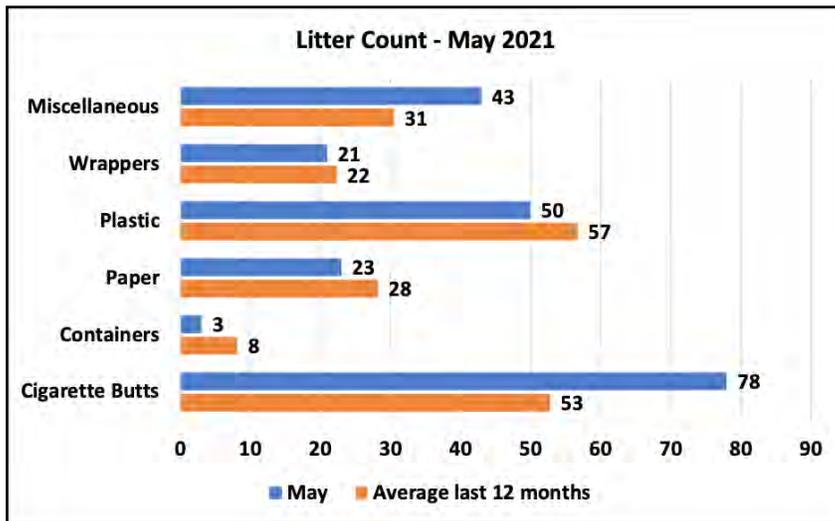


**Stoney Creek Trail Report
No. 26 - May 2021**

Monthly Litter Tally



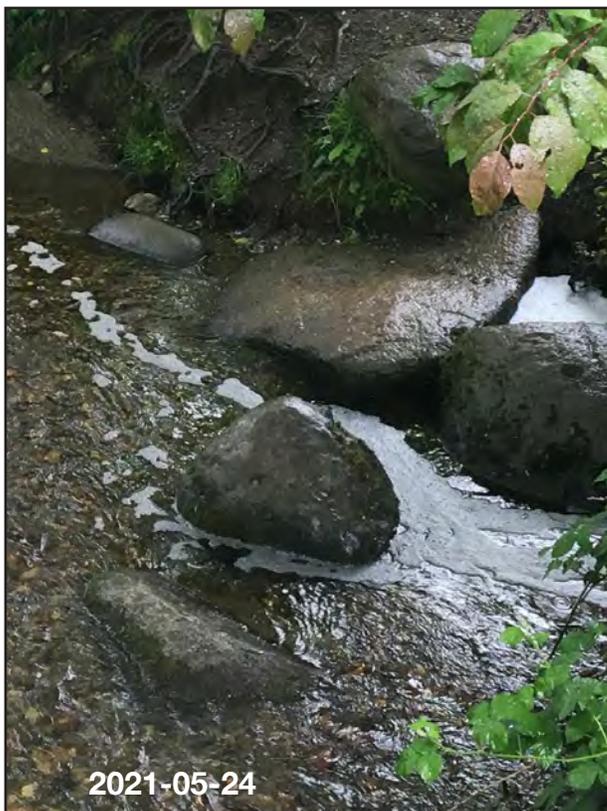
Recently, **Dale Taylor** of ARPSES was pleased to report that he saw an amazing number of salmon fry in Stoney Creek.

Dale also observed, unfortunately, the unnatural and all too frequent appearance of foam in the water (below left, taken at the Pond). This was most likely the result of vehicles being washed on local streets. The soapy run-off goes directly into the stormwater system that drains into the Creek. The detergent can cause algae to bloom, robbing the water (and fish) of oxygen.

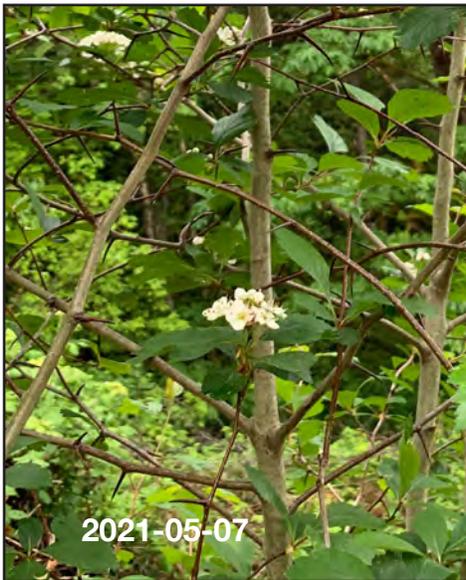
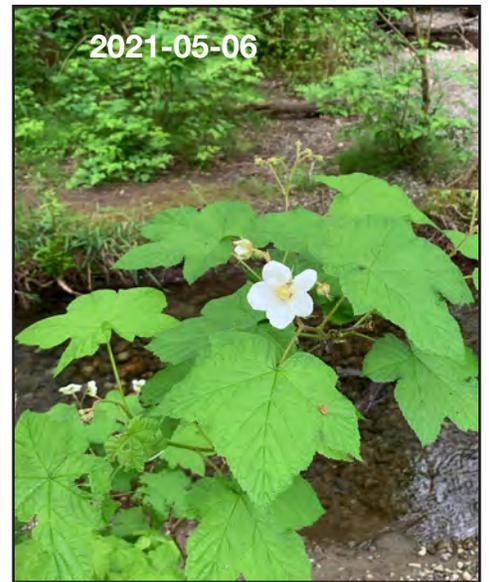
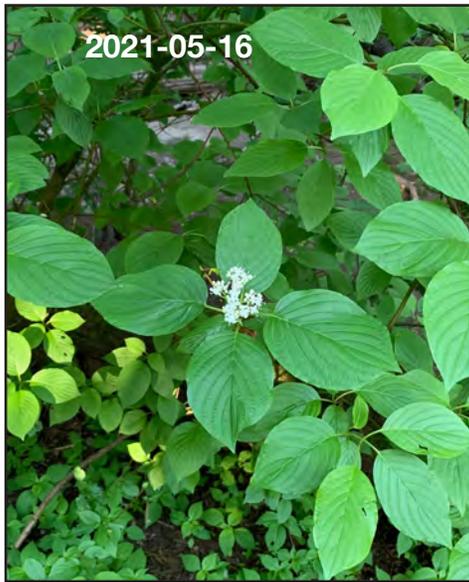
- Miscellaneous: clothing, glass, chewing gum, balls & fragments, etc.*
- Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane*
- Plastic: doggy poo bags & scraps, plastic bags*
- Paper: tissues, napkins, receipts, newspaper, cardboard, etc.*
- Containers: bottles, coffee cups, cans, juice boxes, bottle tops*

It's too much to expect neighbours to regularly use commercial car washes, so here are some suggestions: 1) choose a non-toxic, phosphate-free detergent. 2) instead of washing on the driveway or street, do it on a patch of lawn or gravel which will filter the soapy water as it soaks into the subsoil. 3) empty the bucket of leftover soapy water into a sink or toilet.

On a more positive note, May is the month when the **Amur maple trees** near the Bowl produce a mass of unremarkable blossoms that have a remarkable aroma.



New growth of shrubs and trees: We have much to report because most plants produce their flowers in May, making them much easier to identify.



Top: **Red-Osier dogwood**, one of many planted along the Straightaway. Next, two members of the rose family: the **Salmonberry** and the later-blooming **Thimbleberry**.

Middle: two more members of the rose family, the **Hawthorns**. This thornless one (left) bloomed profusely on the Straightaway beginning in late April. The other variety, the well-armed **Black hawthorn**, was just beginning to bloom by the second week. If you can find it (look for the thorns), let me know.



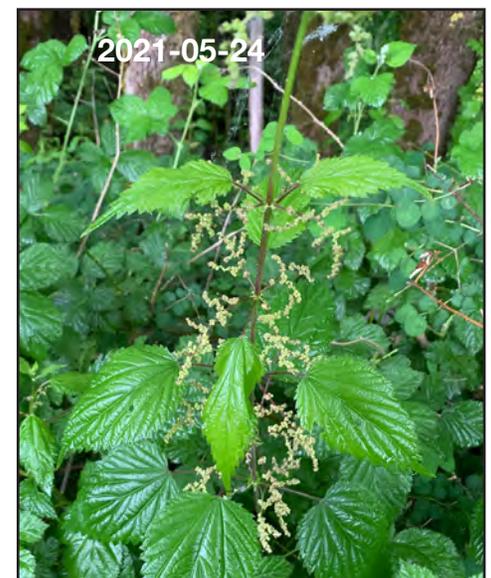
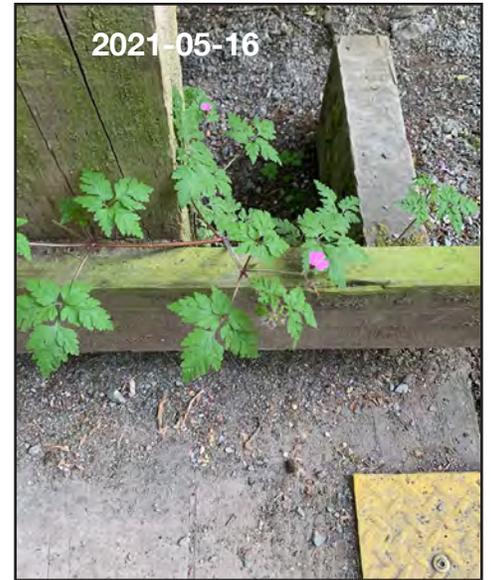
Bottom: the evergreen **Douglas-fir** and **Western hemlock** produce silky-soft needles on the tips of their twigs.

More new flowers:

Right: a **Meadow buttercup** at the north end of Bridge 4. This rather spindly species can often be found with its cousin, the Creeping buttercup, which greatly outnumbers it in the Park. The pink **Herb-Robert**, a common species of geranium, can also be seen at one end of Bridge 4.

Middle: near Bridge 3, a **Large-leaved avens** and an **Indian plum**. The plum bloomed so early that it has already produced berries which will gradually turn a dark blue.

Below: up on Hemlock Hill, a planted **Yellow-cedar** stands “up to its knees” in **Creeping buttercups**; catkins on the unusual **Corkscrew willow**; and tiny drooping flowers on the **Stinging nettle**.



More new growth:



Top: up on Hemlock Hill, this little **Red oak** has managed to survive under dominating hazelnut and cedar trees. On the Straightaway, this **High-bush cranberry**, surrounded by blackberries, was unnoticed until it bloomed. Even though this **Cascara tree** near Bridge 4 was toppled by wet snow last winter it has managed to bloom lying down.



Middle: a comparison of the leaves of the invasive **Creeping buttercup** (left) and its taller-growing cousin, the **Meadow buttercup**.

Bottom: at the center of the photo can be seen a cluster of **Pacific lampreys**. They have appeared occasionally this month in the shallows below Bridge 1. Their spawning habitat is similar to that of the salmon.

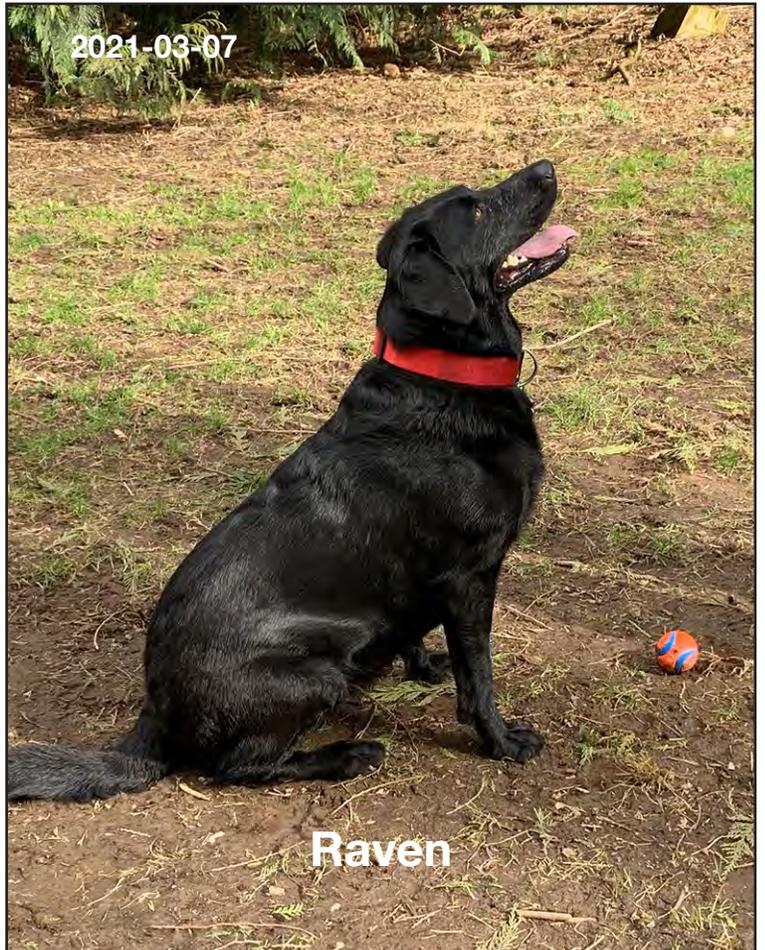
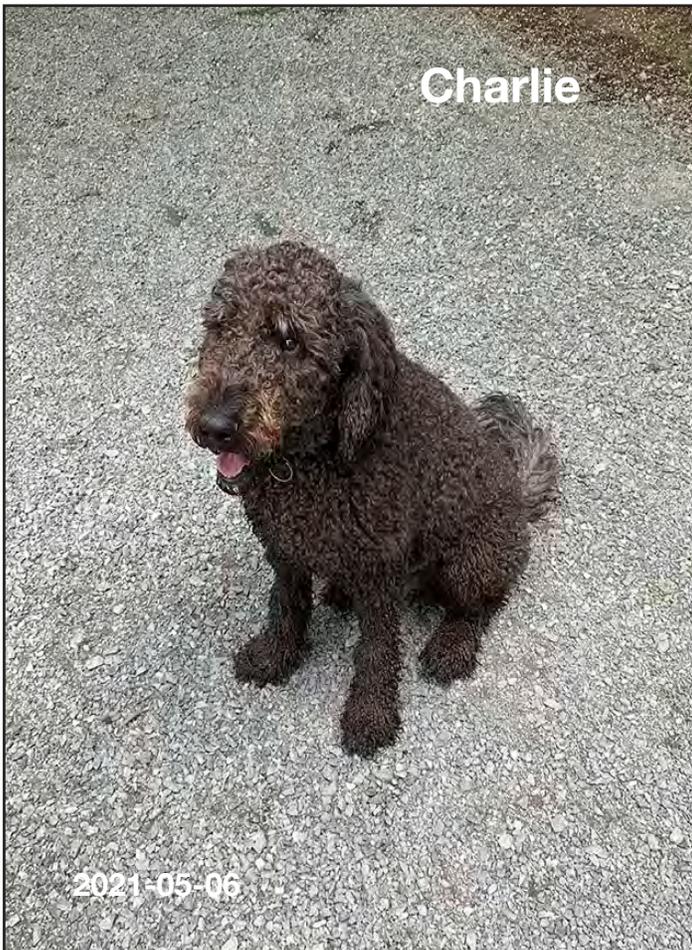
Dogs on the Trail:



Blue is a seven-year-old French bulldog. “He has been on a journey with his family, moving from Ontario to Washington, then to Abbotsford. Blue is a social butterfly and it’s sometimes difficult to tell which he enjoys best on the Trail, meeting people or dogs.”

Charlie is a friendly three-year-old Golden Doodle. “At the Park, he loves to meet new dogs and their owners, and play chase-me, especially if he’s stolen another dog’s ball. Fortunately Charlie’s owner has mastered ‘bribe psychology’ with a handful of treats in order to retrieve the pilfered toys.”

Raven is a very energetic American-type Labrador Retriever. “She begs to be on the trail every single day, in any weather. She will be five years old in October and shows absolutely no sign of ‘middle age.’”



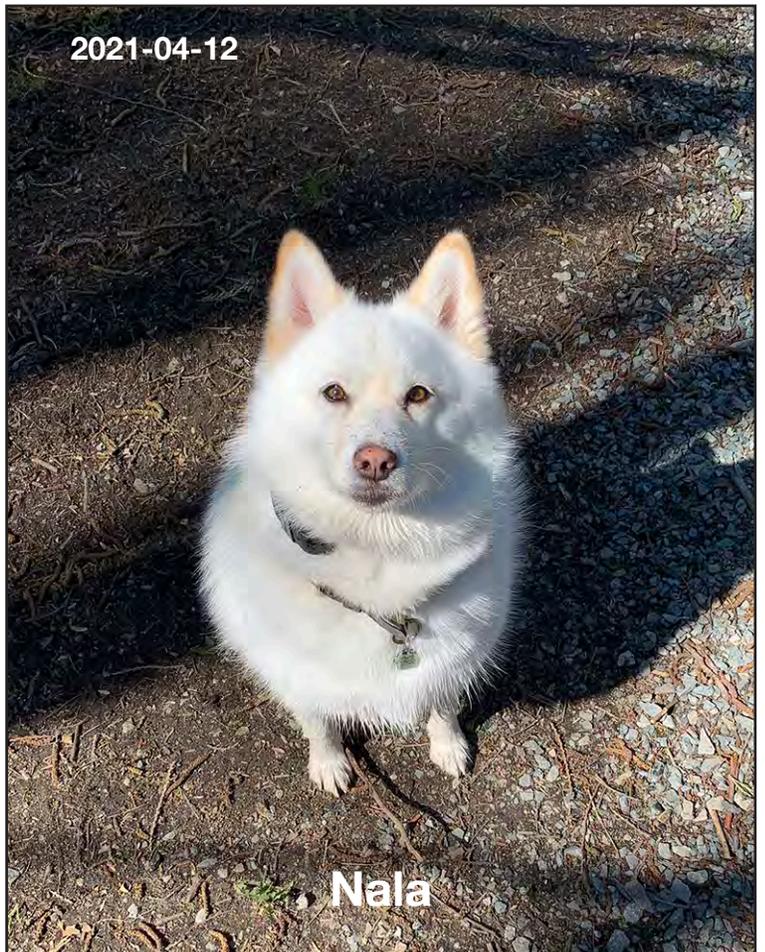
More dogs:



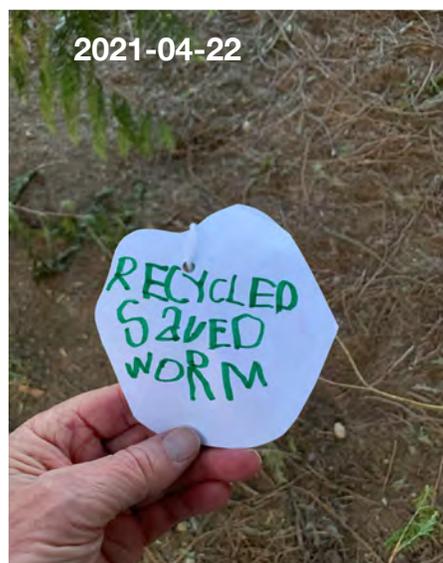
“**Tasha** is a three-year-old Pudelpointer, which is a versatile hunting breed that originated in Germany in the late 1800’s. Finding and retrieving birds is Tasha’s favorite job. She can be a handful at times but she loves to snuggle.”

“We adopted **Stella** in 2017, when she was only seven months old. She is the sweetest, funniest girl and makes us laugh every day. She is a Boxer mix, very loving and well behaved, but we could do without the counter surfing!”

Nala is a 3-year-old rescue Pomsky (Pomeranian Husky mix). Originally from Alberta, “she became our baby girl at the age of four months. You can meet her almost every-day frolicking on the trail and engaging with passers-by for good scratches and love.”



Better mentioned late than never: for a couple of days last month these cards, made by the **Wild Wonder** pre-school class, could be seen dangling from the lower branches of The Twins cedar trees:



The inscriptions on the cards gave us an insight into the pre-schoolers' wonderful "curriculum." Here are a few:

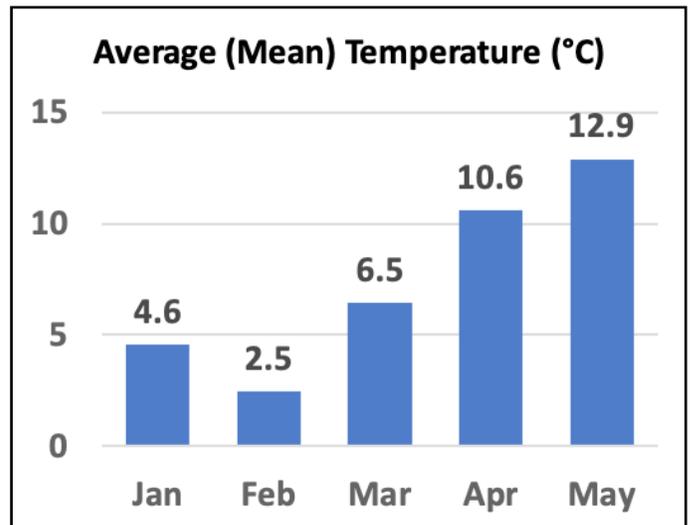
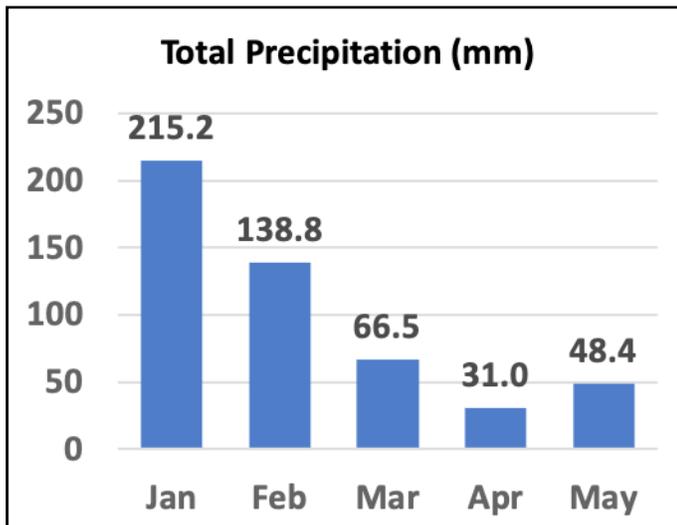
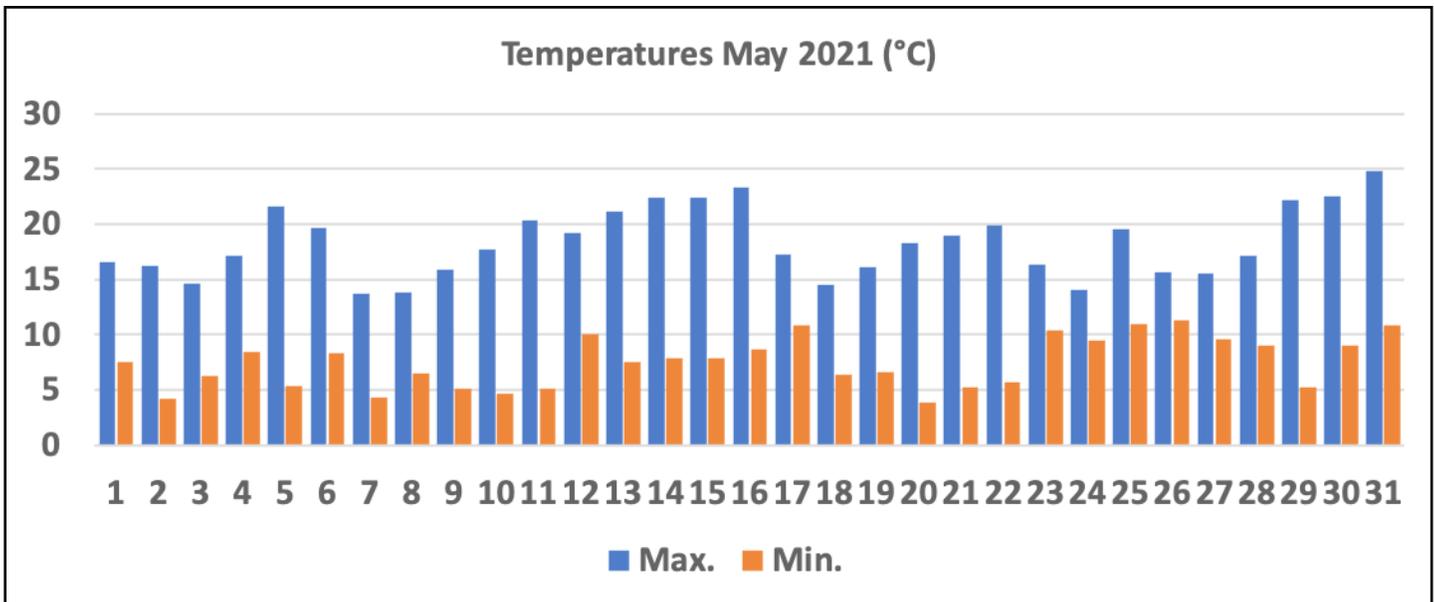
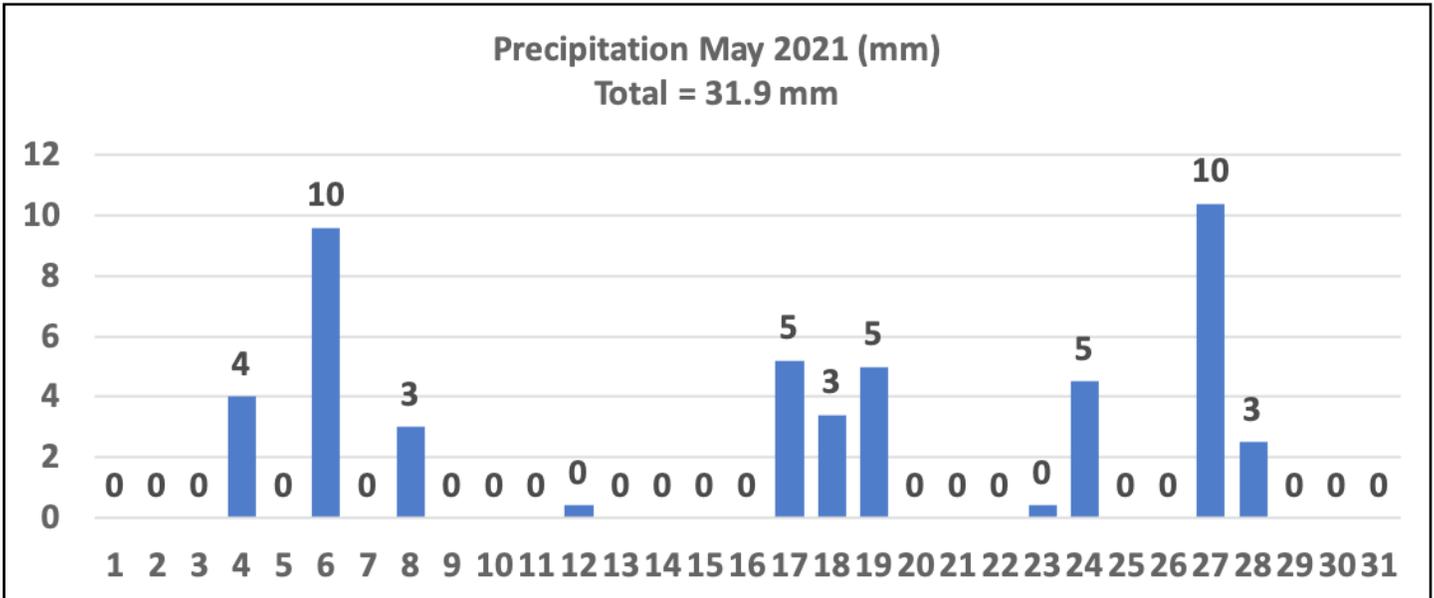
- "Evelynn plants flowers"
- "recycled saved worm"
- "Deklan turns the lights off"
- "walked to the park instead of driving"
- "picked up garbage at the playground"
- "careful not to waste water"
- "composted food scraps"
- "recycled juice boxes and other things"
- "Heath and Olias helped their mimi recycle garbage food scraps to their chickens instead of the garbage"
- "Brooklan feeds the birds, planted flowers this week and helps water the garden and always remembers to put garbage in the garbage."

To be consistent with the theme, the class removed the cards after a couple of days.

Another Painted Pebble Festival? On May 3rd, all these pebbles suddenly appeared along the edges of the Trail up on Hemlock Hill. Several are still there.



Weather data from YXX: Think this has been a chilly month? You're right! Weather data for the last eight years shows that we've hit record low daily temperatures ten times. The mean (average) temperature was two degrees cooler than in May 2020.



For convenience, I use these custom place-names:

