



**Stoney Creek Trail Report
No. 67 - October 2024**

On the front cover, a **Grand fir (*Abies grandis*)** seedling, a species new to Stoney Creek Park. It is one of a large number of new arrivals on the east side of the Straightaway. If it survives, it could grow to a height of 70 m or more.

Index

Page 3: [Tree Planting](#)

Page 6: [Creek Critters](#)

Page 7: [Sphinx Moth](#)

Page 8: [Trail Dogs](#)

Page 10: [Odd & Ends](#)

Page 11: [Charts](#)

The big event this month was the tree planting bee. It was sponsored by the **United Church Earth Stewards (UCES)**, who raised funds to purchase the trees and also arranged for volunteers to plant them. The UCES is a non-profit, volunteer initiative by members of the mid-Fraser Valley United Churches. It was formed in 2018 to discuss ways to support recycling, the interurban rail project, and watershed protection. They decided one of the best ways to help the environment was by planting trees. Over the years, they've

enjoyed working with the City, having held a number of events to raise funds which were then donated to Abbotsford Parks, Recreation and Culture (and to Lytton as well). Trees for Willband and Fishtrap Creek parks were planted previously and now 400 have come to Stoney Creek Park, for a total of 1300 so far.

At 10 AM on Saturday the 5th, the UCES volunteers gathered at a tent set up near Bridge 3. The morning's activity began when **Alex Hyde**, Natural Areas and Trails Coordinator, introduced them to the project and talked about the trees to be planted.



Tree Planting Event: 1/3

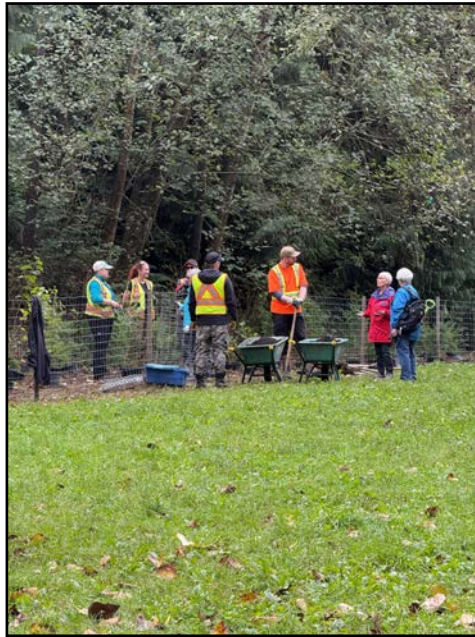


Preparation for the event had actually begun two days earlier when workers from the Natural Areas and Trails team used a self-propelled tiller and a chain saw to clear out a mass of blackberry brambles growing along the east side of the Straightaway, from near the Coachstone entrance down almost to Bridge 4. The bared patch of ground was about 150 m long and 2 m or more in width.



After the bushwhacking was finished, another one-man machine (a self-propelled auger) was used to drill “pot holes” in the ground, while posts and fencing were erected along the west side of the soon-to-be-planted area.

Tree Planting Event: 2/3



Due to climate change, ecosystems are shifting northward as rising temperatures alter growing conditions. A few of the planted tree species were chosen to take this into account. However, most are native to our area.

Pots containing the seedlings were set in position ahead of time, ready for the volunteers to plug them into the ground. Alex gathered the volunteers, over three dozen adults and Scouts, to explain where and how the planting was to be done.



Each seedling had to be removed from its pot and the soil rubbed off its outermost roots so they would be exposed to fresh soil. The trees were then placed carefully upright in the holes. Compost was shoveled on top where needed. The whole operation was completed by noon.

Tree Planting Event: 3/3



The selection and location of each species was based on the site characteristics (topography, exposure, and moisture regime). The new trees are numerous and close together, but it is expected that up to 40% may not survive.

Some of the new trees, Mountain hemlock, Ponderosa (Yellow) pine, and Sitka spruce (above), are exotics from adjacent climate zones (i.e. the Southern Interior). Not shown is the Lewis' mock-orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) a shrub in the Hydrangea family.



Trees like these, Douglas fir, Vine maple and Paper birch, can be found in the Park already. Other species that were planted but not shown here are Red elderberry, Western redcedar and Pacific crabapple.

The Benthic Macroinvertebrate Study

Another important event this month was the second survey of the tiny critters in the Creek, the first one having been done at the end of July following the infamous foam spill. (Macroinvertebrates are what the salmon fry will feed on after they hatch early next year.)

The survey was done on the 15th under the supervision of **ZoAnn Morten** of [Pacific Streamkeepers](#). Thanks to ZoAnn for a very thorough training exercise in the Glade, and to the volunteers **John Eno, Doug Gosling, Quirien Mulder, Kate, Neal Mutadi** and **Dale Taylor** for their assistance.

The results of the exercise are encouraging. They indicate that the numbers of Stoney Creek invertebrates are still out of balance but recovering nicely. A report of the results is posted in the [Features section](#) of the Website.



Stonefly nymph (larva)
(about 8 mm long)

Sphinx moth

The **One-Eyed Sphinx** (*Smerinthus cerisyi*) is a very large moth with a wingspan of up to 9 cm. It is named for the large, dark spots that resemble eyes on its hind wings. This unique feature serves as a form of mimicry, helping to deter predators by making the moth appear larger and more threatening when it spreads its wings. When resting, the moth tucks its hind wings under its forewings, which have a complex pattern of brown and gray tones, blending perfectly with tree bark and leaves. This camouflage provides additional protection from predators.



Like other sphinx moths, the One-Eyed Sphinx is a strong and agile flier with the ability to hover much like a hummingbird. Being nocturnal creatures, adults are attracted to lights at night, making them more visible to humans. They are rarely seen during the day, except when it's cloudy or overcast.

Last month this 6-cm-long green caterpillar, the larva of a One-Eyed Sphinx, had positioned itself in plain sight on a fence post on the Straightaway. It is notable for the distinctive horn-like projection near the front of its thorax (middle body section).

While the larvae feed mainly on the leaves of willows, cottonwoods and aspens, the adults do not eat, relying instead on fat reserves built up during their larval stage. They focus on reproduction rather than feeding and have a relatively short lifespan.

The One-Eyed Sphinx has adapted to different climates and is widely distributed across North America, from the Arctic to the northern United States. It can be found inhabiting a variety of environments including forests, wetlands, woodlands, and even urban areas.



Trail Dogs



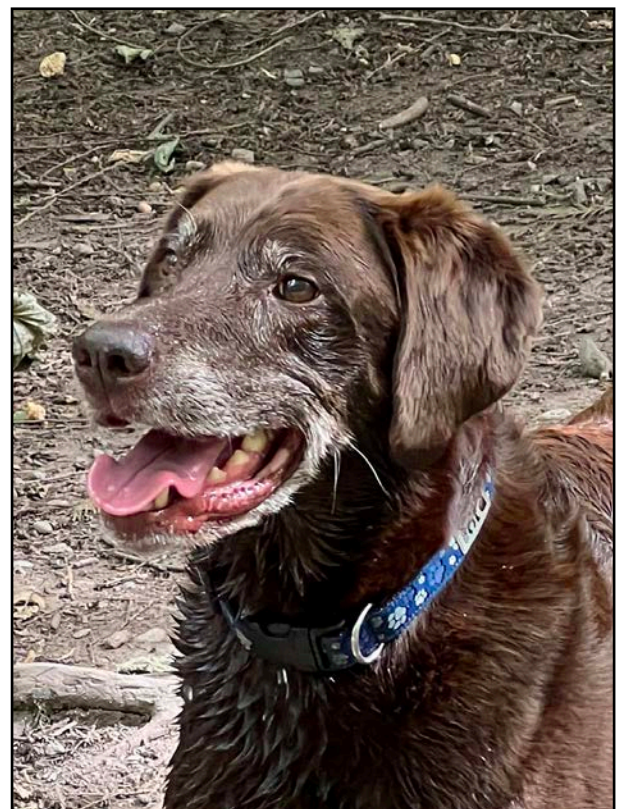
His sister Jersey is his favourite playmate and the only other dog whom he truly loves.

When Koda isn't chasing his ball, swimming or exploring the trail, he's spending quality time with Grandpa, often curled up on the couch during their cherished moments together.

Chatty and full of personality, Koda knows how to make his presence known, especially when it's time for daily treats, one of his favorite parts of the day. Koda is more than just a pet—he's the love of our lives, he's been my steadfast companion through all of life's ups and downs. Together, we've formed a bond that's unbreakable, and Koda continues to bring warmth and joy into our lives every single day.

Koda is a 10½-year-old German Shorthaired Pointer/Labrador mix. He has been a beloved member of our family since he was just eight weeks old. Born on March 28th, Koda was bought off Kijiji for \$500 and he's been the best investment of my life. With his boundless energy and joyful spirit, Koda's love for life has filled our days with companionship and laughter.

Koda is a true adventurer at heart. The highlight of his day is heading to Stony Creek Trail, whether it's with his mom or his grandpa. With a ball in sight, he's off and running, showcasing his athleticism and playful nature. Taking a swim in any water that he can find is also something he would never pass up.



Trail Dogs

Jersey, a soon-to-be two-year-old Silver Lab, is the perfect embodiment of fun, energy, and unconditional love.

Born on December 28th and brought home from a breeder in Kelowna, our Chunky Monkey has been an incredible addition to our family. With her spunky personality and unique behavior, Jersey has breathed life and joy into every moment, transforming the lives of our family.

Whether she's chasing after her brother Koda, following him wherever he goes, or eagerly awaiting treat time, Jersey's enthusiasm for life is contagious.

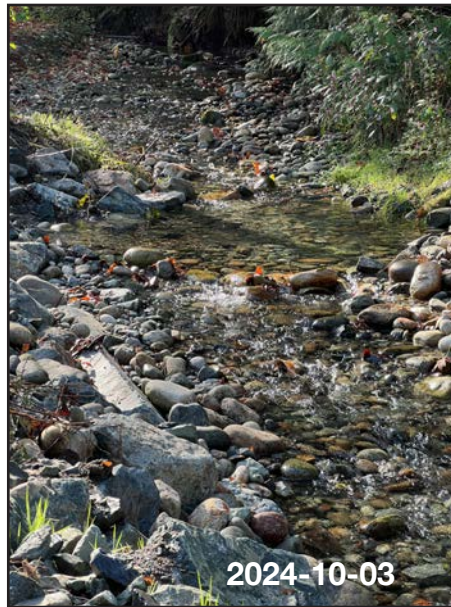
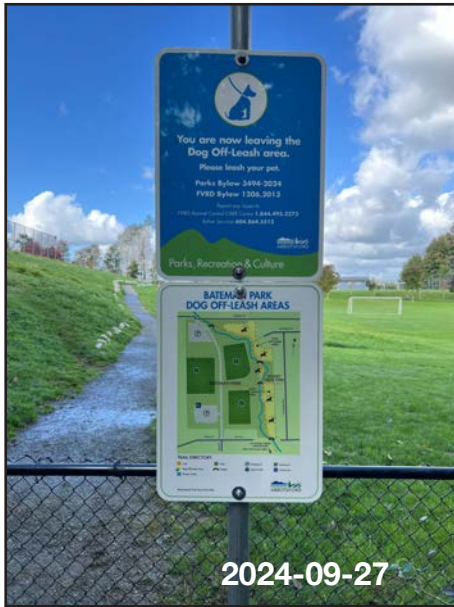


She loves kisses, cuddles, and toys, and her playful nature shines through with every wag of her tail. And when it comes to food, Jersey's boundless love knows no limits—she'll devour anything that's offered!

Jersey has been more than just a pet; she's been a source of comfort, laughter, and pure happiness. Her spunky charm and loyal heart have filled our lives with so much joy. Whether on the Trail or relaxing at home, Jersey's presence is a constant reminder that a loyal companion—and a lot of love—can change everything.



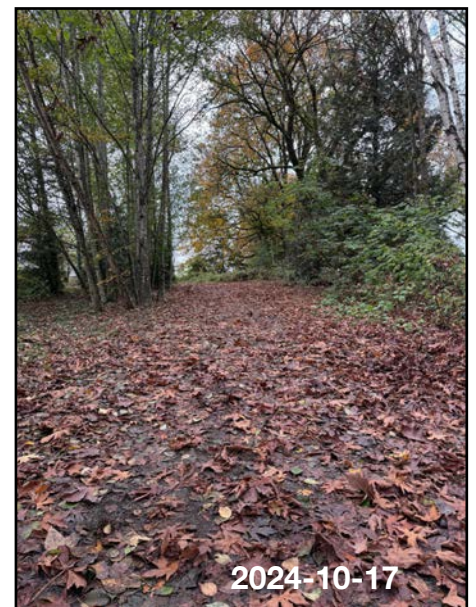
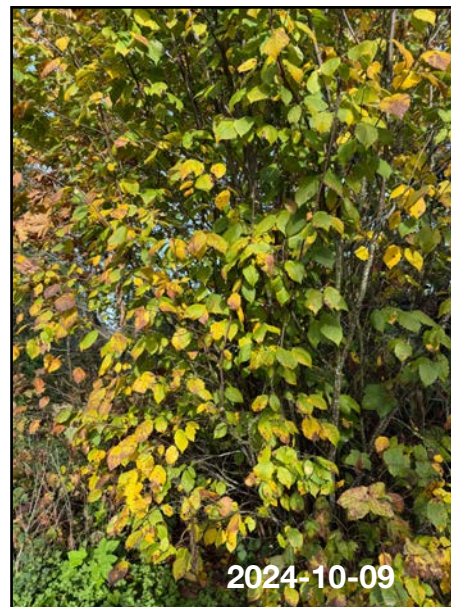
Odd and Ends



Top: new Trail signs, which many dog owners will choose to ignore 😞 A good sign: above Bridge 5, the Creek behaved well after the first big rainfall this month (107 mm).

Middle: views of the last two Bridge 5's, 13 years apart.

Bottom: signs of autumn: a Bigleaf maple, a Beaked hazelnut and a huge carpet of maple leaves hiding the path on Hemlock Hill.



More Odd and Ends



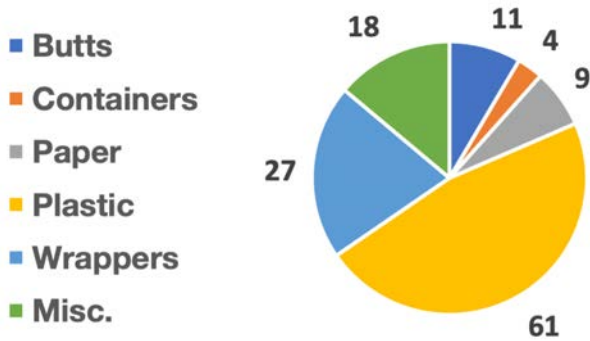
Top: there are still traces of unnatural foam in the Creek. More sad news: wet rot fungus on the big redcedar near Bridge 5. The ramp handrails are the finishing touch on new Bridge 5.

Middle: Axis surveyors came to double-check the location of the new bridge. An odd item: a derelict pail.

Bottom: A welcome sight: migrating Chum salmon have taken advantage of the rain-swollen Creek.



Litter Tally October 2024



Total litter items = 130

Containers: bottles, bottle tops, cans, coffee cups, lids, juice boxes.

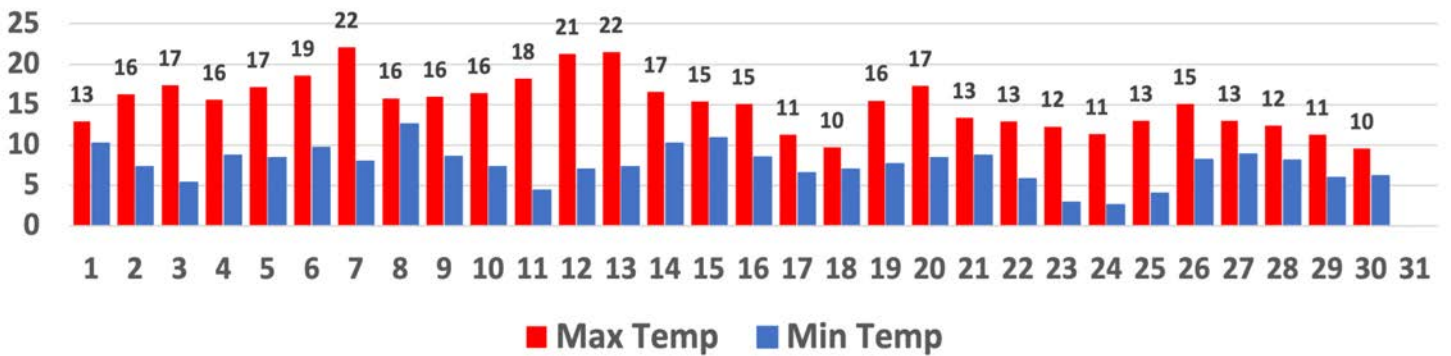
Paper: tissues, napkins, posters, newspaper, receipts, cardboard, etc.

Plastic: dog waste bags & shreds, other items made of plastic.

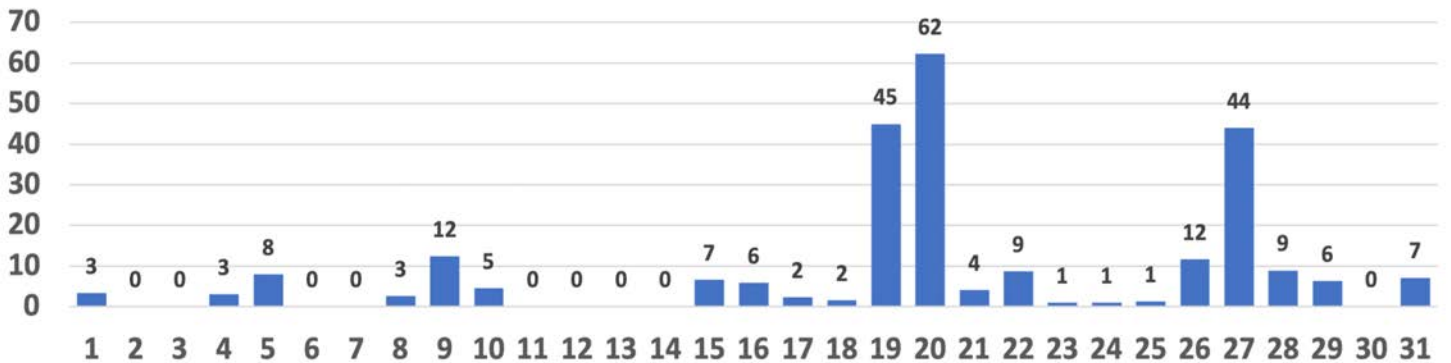
Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane.

Miscellaneous: clothing, glass, chewing gum, dog balls & fragments, etc.

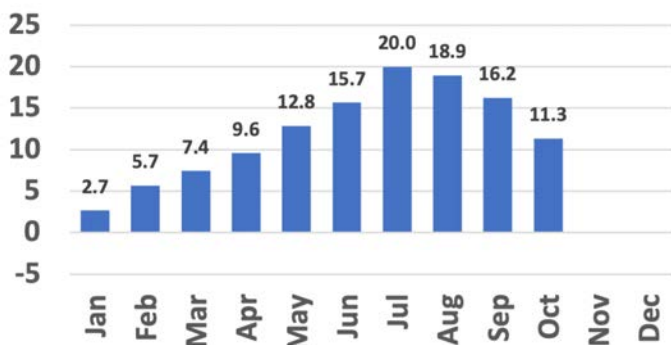
Air temperature at YXX October 2024 (°C)



Local Precipitation October 2024 (mm)

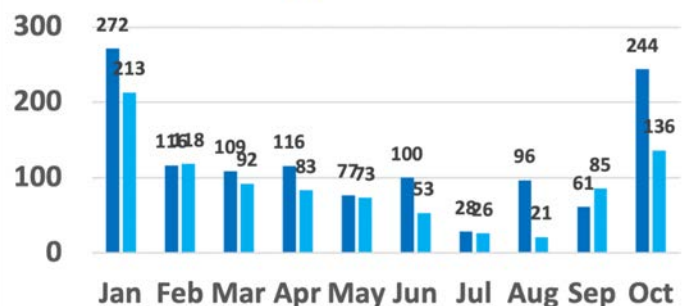


2024 Mean Temperatures (°C)



Precipitation in 2024 (mm)

Average: 2019-2023



For convenience, I use these custom place-names

