

On the front page: students from nearby **Thomas Swift Elementary** participating in the Nature Kindergarten program. A key focus of the program is fostering environmental stewardship. The school runs two Nature Kindergarten classes, each with 20 students.

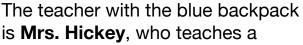


On Friday morning, May 30th, the Nature K classes joined together to pull out invasive Himalayan balsam plants, a scourge along much of the Trail. Learning about invasive plants is a small part of learning how to care for the land. After they had finished for the day, they gathered on the Trail to explore and play before walking back to the school.

The following Monday, June 2nd (when this photo was taken), Mrs. Baerg and Mrs. Nicholls took their Nature K students back to this spot, a gravel bar just downstream from Bridge 5, to learn about and look for macroinvertebrates.

Here is one of their finds ->





Nature Grade 1 class at Thomas Swift. She is reminding the students about safe boundaries during their exploration time, and how to move safely through the creek since it is a

sensitive habitat. Standing near Mrs. Hickey is Mrs. Baerg. Not shown is Mrs. Nicholls, who kindly provided me with this information. The other adults are Educational Assistants that work at the school. There were also many parent volunteers helping that day.



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A trail walker's dog retrieved several unusual items from the creek. They were small bundles of yellow fabric each holding pieces of wood and a finger-sized piece of turmeric. Can anyone can tell us more about them?



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#### **Reporting Pollution in the Creek**

On the 17th, I received an email from a long-time trail walker who had noticed foam streaming down the creek at Bridge 6 and sent me this photo. (The firefighting foam fiasco last July has caused trail users to be very sensitive to this kind of thing).

In this case, the foam was very likely the result of the rainfall on the previous day. We can expect to see foam whenever there is rain after a long dry spell.

Still, please let me know if you notice anything unusual in the creek. I'll pass the information along to others who want to stay updated. It would also helpful to include photos, since smartphone cameras typically geotag them with location data.



The Provincial Emergency Program should always be informed. If you witness a pollution incident in Stoney Creek, please make a note of the exact location (GPS coordinates, if possible) and report it immediately to PEP by calling their 24-hour emergency number: 1-800-663-3456

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If you wish to examine the pollution in more detail, here's some guidance:

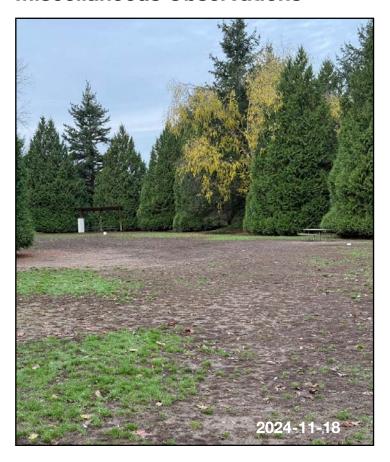
Natural foam in creeks and rivers is usually caused by dissolved organic matter. Rain can carry these organic compounds and other materials from the land into the water, increasing foam formation.

Natural foam can range from off-white to brown, depending on the amount of organic matter. It often has a fishy or earthy odour and is usually light and fluffy, not sticky. Natural foam tends to dissipate quickly when the conditions that created it change. It's usually harmless and even beneficial to the ecosystem.

However, if the foam is bright white, slimy, and has a strong, unusual odor, it is probably a sign of pollution from detergents, chemicals, or other human-made sources. Look for unnatural colours, persistence, a perfumy or rotten egg smell, or an oily sheen.

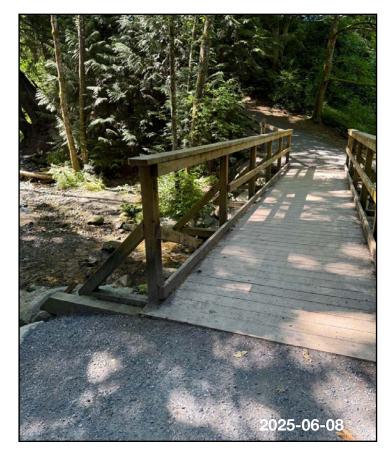
Remember the difference: fluffy/earthy vs. sticky/smelly

# **Miscellaneous Observations**



The turf in the Dog Corral is healing very nicely.





Parks & Trails quickly took care of two damage issues.



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#### **Insects**



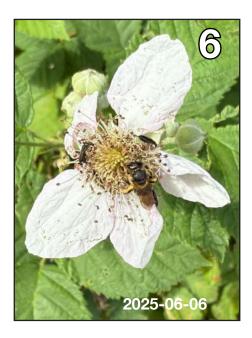




- 1: Spittlebug's foam 'shelter' on a stinging nettle;
- 2: Flower beetle on a Pacific ninebark flower cluster;
- 3: Whitetail skimmer on trail gravel;
- 4: California darner on Reed canarygrass;
- 5: Honey bee on a Himalayan blackberry flower;
- **6: Mining bee** and **Flower beetles** on a Himalayan blackberry flower;
- **7: Fuzzy-horned bumble bee** on a Cutleaf blackberry flower.





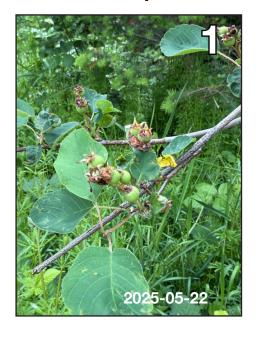




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## Flora Developments 1/2







- **1:** Berries forming on a **Saskatoon** bush—a shrub in the rose family;
- **2: Lady fern** fiddleheads will be graceful when they mature;
- **3: Artist's conk**, this bracket fungus will live for many years;
- **4: Common fieldcap**, which could be mistaken for a poisonous mushroom;
- **5: Black hawthorn** berries are edible, but guarded by thorns:
- 6: A Yellow cedar's new branches are bright yellow;
- **7: Hybrid rose**—an escapee from a back yard.









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## Flora Developments 2/2





1: Purple Foxglove (Digitalis purpurea), is lovely but toxic due to containing digoxin (a.k.a. digitalis). Its speckles attract pollinating insects, especially bumble bees.

2: Hawksbeard (Crepis capillaris) looks like a miniature dandelion because they are both in the Aster family.



2025-06-24

3: There seems to be an unusually large crop of these invasive plants this year: blue Herb-Robert (Geranium robertianum) and yellow Creeping buttercup (Ranunculus repens).

**4:** Another invasive, **Hedge Bindweed** (*Calystegia sepium*), sometimes called Morning Glory, starts blooming this month.

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### A Dog!



**Baby** is a six-year-old "Frenchton," a mix of French Bulldog & Boston Terrier. We bought her from a friend/private breeder in Rosedale/Chilliwack.

Baby especially loves spending time stretching her legs in the Dog Corral, followed by walking the trail and taking in all it has to offer!

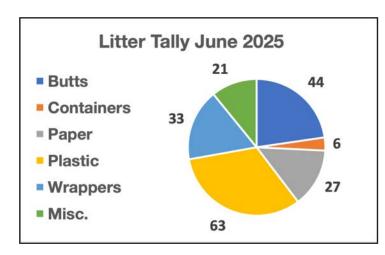
Another favourite of hers is "pup cups" — whipped cream in a cup.

When she's excited, she races around in circles over & over — we call it zoomies.

This is the first time I've been able to feature a dog in months. I do have photos of 30 more, but their owners have not contacted me....



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#### Total litter items = 194

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

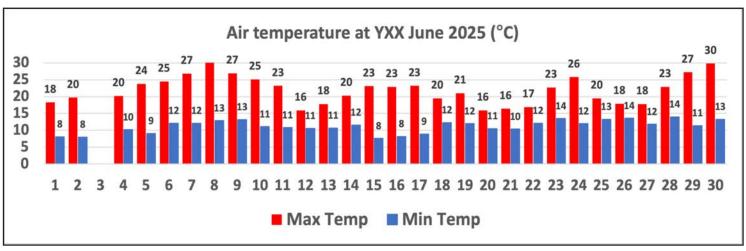
**Paper:** tissues, napkins, posters, newspaper, receipts, cardboard, etc.

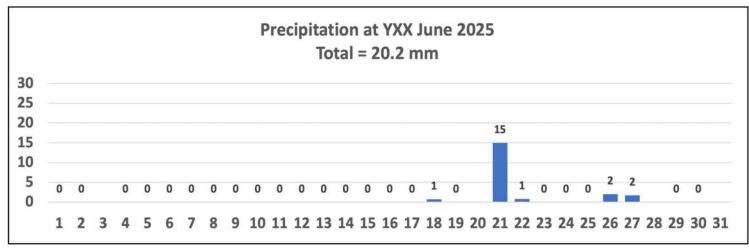
Plastic: dog waste bags & shreds, other items

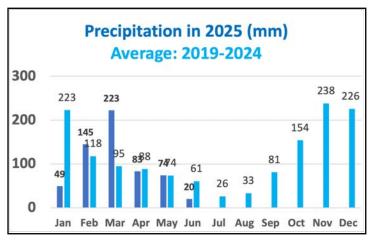
made of plastic.

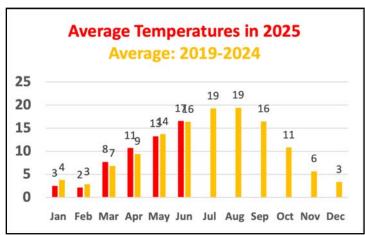
Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane.

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









# For convenience, I use these custom place-names:

