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Comments from teachers:

- "They're really pumped"
- "You related very well"
- "Thanks so much"

Comments from students:

- "Forest walk! Ya!!"
- "This is the best part of class"
- "Want to stay out longer"



Kanaka KEEPS Watch

KEEPS Education Programs

The 2019 programming year is in the books, and those books say that we had 5,784 participants this year. The relative lack of returning salmon this fall caused us to modify our fish fence programs somewhat, as we added in items such as forest walks to Rainbow Bridge along with minnow trapping along the way. The Stewardship Center hosted fall programs as well, including an evening program for Girl Guides in September. We also continued with our bear education programs at several schools.



Examining juvenile coho salmon at Rainbow Creek on October 28th.



The students make a curious discovery at Riverfront, November 7th.

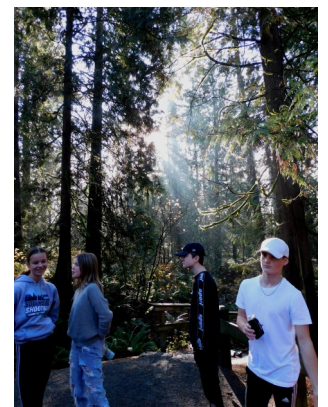


Fish fence program, November 19th.

Samuel Robertson

Year 14 of perhaps the greatest partnership known to man kicked off in September, and off we went with our monitoring of Spencer Creek at the usual spot in Albion Park. As per previous years, students visited the fish fence as well as the 104th Avenue fishway on Spencer Creek. We have also been examining various coniferous trees, and how climate change is impacting certain species.

Right: a sunny mild autumn afternoon in Albion Park, November 13th.



Did you know?

The fish fence operation enables us to collect brood stock without having to disturb salmon on the spawning beds.



The fish fence is removed for the year, December 17.

Hatchery Happenings

This fall and early winter season has definitely been something of an enigma, with a wet September leading up to a November that saw only 135.6mm of precipitation at the hatchery weather station, as compared to the monthly average of 284. While this was going on, the fish simply didn't show up; that is, until early November and even then it wasn't spectacular. Despite that, as of the New Year 300,000 and 75,000 chum and coho eggs respectively are incubating at the hatchery, and this includes 7,000 for classroom incubators for schools from Mission all the way to Vancouver. Outside in the rearing ponds are approximately 30,000 coho fingerlings that will overwinter there as are their counterparts throughout the watershed. As always, HUGE thanks to our volunteers!

Return of the Salmon 2019

Despite the rain, 400 visitors took in the Maple Ridge fall classic at the fish fence.



Left to right: Jonathan aka Dr. Death; the view from here; chilling with one of our chums.

Habitat Project

Funding from the Pacific Salmon Foundation along with engineering support from Fisheries and Oceans Canada allowed us to address a serious erosion issue that was threatening the fish fence access road. So far, so good.

Left to right: January 3, 2019; the new project on September 16th; dealing well with high water November 18th.



Grin and bear it

The bears continued to be news, as a high number of sightings and encounters this year in certain areas of Kanaka Creek Regional Park led us to embark on an ambitious awareness and education effort along with Metro Vancouver staff. While as many as 11 resident bears were in a relatively small area, we are pleased to report that we did not have a serious incident.



Clockwise, from top left: and there goes the snow fencing, courtesy of Dufus July 25th; water sports on September 4th; fiddler on the roof September 23rd; family gathering August 28th.

Stewardship Center Open Houses



Left to right: Astronomy event, August 18th; Peak to Creek October 6th; Cool cats and canines December 1st.

Kanaka Education and Environmental Partnership Society

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About our organization: KEEPS was formally incorporated as a Society in December of 1998. Since then, we have been involved with a wide variety of activities including habitat monitoring and restoration, GPS mapping, and of course public education and awareness. The aging Bell-Irving Hatchery was rebuilt in 2013 and the Kanaka Watershed Stewardship Center is now our headquarters.

Today, KEEPS consists of our Board of Directors and general membership, as well as a part time Coordinator and Administrator. We also retain a Program Interpreter to implement our education programs.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER? Check out www.keeps.org and hit the Volunteer tab.

What happened?

If you thought salmon returns were down in Fall 2019, you were right. Kanaka had only about 500 coho and 1,000 chum return this year, which is perhaps 25 percent of normal. The chum escapement was saved somewhat due to a later timed modest surge of 3 year old fish, that would have escaped the negative ocean conditions that we believe affected the remainder of the run.

Clockwise, from top left: chum arriving in early November; a solitary pink salmon; coho at the fish fence; a sea run cutthroat trout patrols opportunistically in search of eggs.

Upcoming Events!

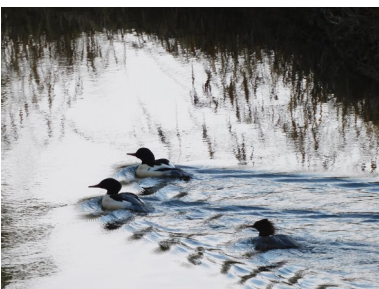
Kanaka Center Open Houses, February 16, March 29, May 10, June 14 all 1-4PM

Ridge Meadows Earth Day: April 18

Goodbye Chums: April 26

Other events will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

Photo: A little floatilla near Rainbow Bridge.



Did you know?

Kanaka Creek chum salmon can return to spawn at age 3, 4 or even 5. Did you also know that they can naturally hybridize with pink salmon?