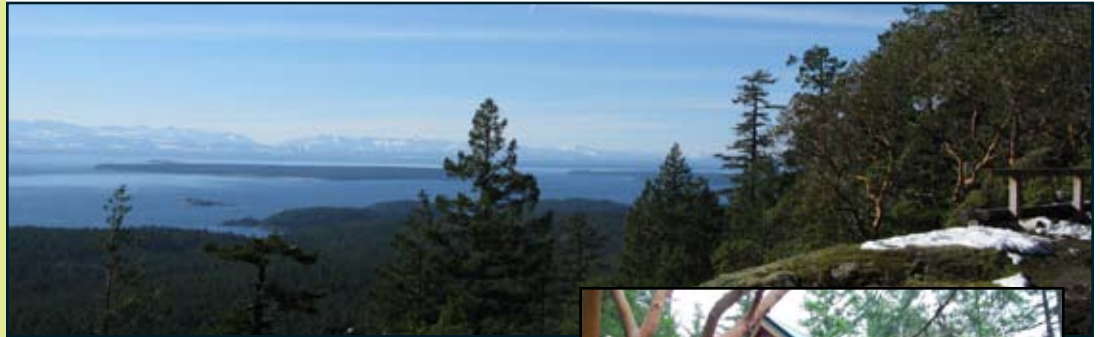




Spring 2011

PR PAWS

Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society



A spectacular view from Manzanita Bluffs; the new PRPAWS hut is one more fabulous reason to visit. Eagle Walz photos

Have you ever been to Manzanita Bluffs? If not, it's about time you go – and now there's one more reason to do so. PR PAWS has just completed the fifth hut in a series of eight (made possible by funding from the Island Coastal Economic Trust and equivalent value in volunteer man hours and other donations). This hut sits on the spectacular Manzanita Bluff in the Gwendoline Hills, the backbone of Malaspina Peninsula.

On Sunday, June 12th at 1:30 pm we will be having an official opening of the hut, and we welcome all to join us! About 900 hours have been spent building this hut and upgrading the Sunshine Coast Trail. The trail is now OPEN coming from Malaspina Road – come help us celebrate!

The hut at Manzanita Bluffs is similar to those we described in the last issue of the newsletter – it has a sleeping loft with a trap door, a picnic table, benches and counter inside, and a picnic table, firepit and benches outside. It is a great destination for a picnic if you are doing a day hike, or a place to lay your head if you are on a longer trek. There are two access points – from Malaspi-



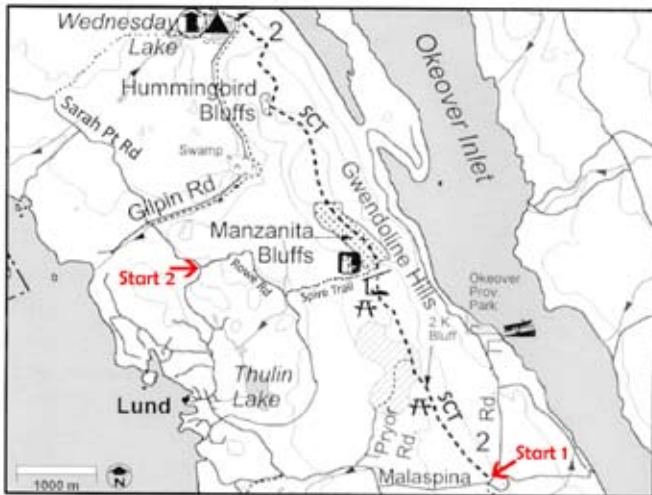
na Road on the SCT it is a two-hour hike with some good uphill, and some even better viewpoints. On this route you will go through a rhododendron grove (in bloom in spring), and intermittent old growth patches of Red Cedar and Douglas fir. The other access point is from Lund – from Rowe Road. Check out the map and trail description for more details on page 2.

If you missed the last newsletter, be sure to check out details of the other huts – located at Fairview Bay, Rainy Day Lake, Rieveley's Pond and Mount Troubridge (a full log cabin). You can find information on our website, www.sunshinecoast-trail.com. When visiting the huts, please keep in mind that they are shared-use facilities, and be sure to pack out any garbage you bring in. Also, remember to sign the guest book – it helps us to estimate how many people are using the trail!

Are you interested in getting involved? See our "What's coming up" section on page 3. We are always looking for people who want to help build huts and clear trail, or provide financial support for various projects. Ω

Hike to Manzanita Hut in the Gwendoline Hills

Trail Location: From the bridge across Powell River follow Highway 101 for about 16 km north toward Lund to the Malaspina Road turnoff. Turn right onto Malaspina Road and proceed 1.4 km to a sharp right curve, where a gravel road branches off to the left. Park here and look for the trailhead of the Gwendoline Hills section of the Sunshine Coast Trail north of this junction. Follow the orange diamonds on the well-marked trail.



Trail GPS Coordinates: N 49°58.395', W 124°42.580'
Altitude: 175 m to 300 m
Hiking Time: 2-3 hrs
Distance: 5.3 km
Difficulty: Moderate, Level 3

Trail Description: The Gwendoline Hills Trail traverses an area which has been identified as Sliammon Treaty Settlement Lands. A few minutes after starting out you skirt an older cutblock and enter a grove of large old growth Douglas fir, which are several hundred years old. You might also notice birdhouses nailed up on some of the trees. The trail carries on through maturing second growth and then breaks out onto a rocky outcropping overlooking an immature forest.

At this point in time it still allows for a view of the Salish Sea (Strait of Georgia) and Savary Island in the middle distance. A bench with comment box invites you to have a water break, and to make an entry in the logbook. The trail keeps winding northward through second growth, and then forms a tunnel as it descends through what was Krompocker's cutblock. Where it levels out you will pass by an access trail (GPS: N 49°59.260', W 124°43.450') turning off to the left toward the end of Pryor Road and the Lund Highway. At the other end of the greened-up cutblock where the trail begins to rise toward 3 K Bluff, you will find another one of

the dozens of benches that Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society (PR PAWS) has built all along the Sunshine Coast Trail. This is Emil's Bench, in memory of Emil Krompocker, the logging contractor who bucked the mores of the times by leaving a generous sprinkling of old growth Douglas fir instead of wasting them as was the requirement a couple of decades ago. Apparently the trees were too big to take out, but loggers were told to drop the giants nevertheless. Emil said no. The trees continue to grow – his legacy to us.

The route ascends the southernmost of the Gwendoline Hills and you will see the recent logging on Island Timberlands private forestlands, and views of Okeover Inlet and the Bunster Hills. Then it drops down into the saddle between the hills, first passing through the Rhododendron Grove, then crossing a logging spur into the riparian zone of Gwendoline Creek, the headwaters of the Lund watershed. The trail follows the creek downstream and then swerves away to the north again, uphill along the edge of the new cutblock, now reaching the Spire access trail (N 49°59.954', W 124°44.084') from Rowe Road.

The trail to the hut crosses the 50th parallel at the Three Notch Fir and then angles up westward for another 15 minutes through a mixed forest of gnarly old growth fir and arbutus. When the trees thin out you will have arrived at Manzanita Bluff and the fifth hut that the PR PAWS volunteers have built with financial support from ICET for materials and transport. Please make an entry in the logbook to help us get a sense of the number of visitors using it, and enjoy it in good health and spirits. Manzanita Hut is a shared-use facility and its use is free. Please carry out your garbage. The rainwater in the barrel is not suitable for human consumption, but used as an emergency supply to douse fire. Do not make a fire in the fire season. On sunny days, sitting still on a bench will likely reward you with the flight of raptors close by. Your views are to the southeast: Vivian Rock, Harwood Island, and the west side of Texada Island, to the south and west: Savary, Denman, Hornby, Vancouver, and Hernando islands, with Major Rock and the lower Copeland Island tucked in just below you. The little lake visible in the Lund lowlands is Lund Lake. Trace the route of the water taxi as it plies the stretch of open water between Savary and Lund. Ω



Eagle Walz photo

(*for more SCT trail descriptions, see *The Sunshine Coast Trail*, by Eagle Walz).

Forest Bathing

What do the Japanese know that we don't?

"Shinrin-yoku" (Japanese for "forest bathing") takes its inspiration from a popular Japanese practice of walking through the forest to benefit from the therapeutic effects of breathing air enhanced by the flora's presence.

A forest bathing trip involves a visit to a forest area for the purpose of relaxation and recreation by breathing in phytoncides, which are released by trees. These trips were first proposed in the 1980s and have become a recognized relaxation activity in Japan. Since forests occupy 67% of the land in Japan forest bathing is easily accessible.

According to a public opinion poll conducted in Japan in 2003, 25.6% of respondents had participated in a forest bathing



*Nestled in a draw at the head of a creek in the Gwendoline Hills, this Coastal Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and its 23 siblings, are a remnant of the original forest of the region. They are approximately 600 years old, having an average diameter of 6 feet at breast height. They are capable of providing nesting sites for the endangered Marbled Murrelet upon their broad branches.*

Monty Tyrwhitt-Drake
cutline; Eagle Walz photo

trip, indicating its popularity in Japan. Moreover, forest bathing is possible in similar environments throughout the world. What place could be better than British Columbia and the Sunshine Coast Trail?

It was also reported that citrus fragrance found in forests affects the human endocrine and immune systems as analyzed by the measurement of urinary cortisol and dopamine levels. So, forest bathing may have beneficial effects on human immune function. These findings suggest that forests may have anticancer effects by enhancing human natural immunological activity. These findings also encouraged a hypothesis that people living in areas with higher forest coverage may show lower mortality due to cancers.

Need we say more? Think of all those fairy tale characters who went for a walk in the woods. They knew of the health benefits. Now we know too! Ω

What's Coming Up?

In Town



PR PAWS' Annual General Meeting is coming up on **Thursday, June 9th** at 6:30 pm at the Recreation Complex. Come join us!

All members (new and old) welcome.

In the woods



Don't miss the grand opening of the hut on Manzanita Bluffs on **Sunday, June 12th** at 1:30 pm!

Guided hike leaves Malaspina trailhead at 10:30. Rides (partway) are available from Okeover Park for less experienced hikers; meet at 12:00. To get to the trailhead, follow the SCT signs down Malaspina Road.



We will soon be starting work on huts at Elk Lake and TinHat Mountain. Want to help? Contact Eagle at 604-483-9565 or prpaws.bc@shaw.ca.

facebook

We're on Facebook! Search for PRPAWS and join the group. You will be kept informed of any upcoming events, meetings, new trail work that is being done.

www.sunshinecoast-trail.com

President's Message



Here at PR PAWS we are thankful for the kind words and support that many community members have expressed about the building of the huts on the Sunshine Coast Trail.

The growing chain of huts is complemented by facilities and services provided by eateries, stores, B&Bs, hotels, and campgrounds that enrich the experiences of hikers coming from near and far.

The huts are proving to be popular with visitors and locals, including families, who enjoy the destinations they can reach in an hour or two. They have a picnic and then return home again, all the richer for all the marvellous sights, scents and sounds they experienced along the way. Ω

ORUG Update

Representatives of the Outdoor Recreation User Groups (that includes PRPAWS) have been working on improving access in the Powell River backcountry. This remains a work in progress; we look forward to resuming work once snow is gone from the mountains.

In the meantime we have been collecting data for a map that will show all the trails in our region. The trails will be categorized according single- or multi-use, and whether they are officially recognized or informal paths. They have been GPSed accurately in the field over the winter and are currently being gathered on one single map. In the future a hard-copy map will be printed and sold at outlets in the community. This map will also be available online so that people can crop and print specific sections to take on their outings. Ω

Thank you to these sponsors who contributed to the printing of this newsletter. If you would like to support PR PAWS by featuring your business in a future issue of PR PAWS' newsletter, please contact newsletter editor Emma Levez Larocque at 604-487-1945.

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