

# NOYSTER RIVER ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

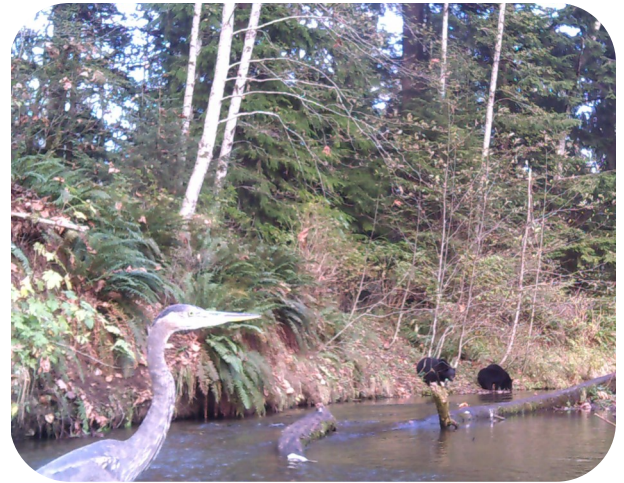
FALL 2024



Fall/winter is upon us. Many people feel sad as summer season ends. There are also many of us who find that autumn brings a world of new discoveries.

Our hatchery is very busy during the fall salmon spawn. We count salmon coming into our system, sort the species and the males and females, retain the amount we need for eggs and milt, and release the rest. From there we fertilize the eggs and place them in incubators. When the eggs hatch we feed the fry until they are at a desired size and release them into the river.

Anytime throughout the year Bear Creek Nature Park is a great place to visit. To me the park feels alive and magical. There is always a chance to see animals - bears, deer, beavers, otters, birds, and even snails, slugs and snakes. The latter are especially youngsters' favourites! And at this time of year you may be lucky enough to witness salmon spawning. Take advantage of the many trails in the park along the riverside channels. Look for information signs and if you don't have time to read them, take photos and read them later.



**Wildlife in the park take advantage of the plentiful returning salmon.** Photo: Jim Loring

The fall/winter season is also the time we start communicating with DFO Education Advisors regarding the Stream2Sea Program and our involvement with some schools. We always look forward to provide Coho salmon eggs to these schools where the students will watch them hatch and grow to be fry. We have had great feedback over the years saying that raising the salmon babies then participating in the field trip to release the babies and explore the park has been the most enjoyable outing of the year.

Thanks once again to everyone involved.

Phil Bolin  
ORES Education Director



**ORES volunteers and visiting YER youth seining the river for salmon.** Photo: Graham Hilliar

## Hatchery Manager's Report Fall 2024

**Pink Salmon:** 298,500 Pink salmon fry were gradually released from the hatchery through early April, and this fall we will have around 320,000 eggs in incubation. 8,200 fish returned to our side channels, and the Pink return in the river is estimated at 50,000 fish.

**Chinook Salmon:** 6,000 Chinook salmon fry were released into the #2 side channel in mid July. The estimated Chinook return this year is less than 100, but we have reached our goal of 60,000 eggs for incubation.

**Coho Salmon:** 40,000 Coho smolts were released into the #1 side channel in April. Another 22,000 Coho fry were released mid-May into Raven Channel, and 19,000 were released into the hatchery area, as the Raven Channel needs work to get water flowing in the upper reaches in the dry season. About 4,500 Coho have returned to the river so far, of which 1,400 came up our channels. The final numbers will be higher.

**Chum Salmon:** 312,000 Chum fry were released in May into the lower reaches of our side channels. So far we have no accurate count on the Chum return.

**Other Activities:** 1) We added another round tank for holding brood Chinook at #2 trap. 2) A new Chum rearing pond was built in the lower reaches of our #1 channel. Before it is ready for the fry, we need to install a perimeter fence, and also a predator net along with its support posts.

Thank you to all volunteers for your hard work and dedication. It is you as volunteers that make this all possible.

Lyle Edmunds  
ORES Hatchery Manager



**Partially completed Chum rearing pond, with Finn on the lookout for fish.** Photo: Karen Wade

In the summer of 2024 ORES created a new side channel in the "Connolly Channel". This was to enable ORES to have rearing space lower in the system for Chum fry, one of the four species of Pacific Salmon that ORES enhances on the Oyster River. Prior to this project the Chum fry were raised in channel #2 farther upstream, which required the volunteers to transport the Chum fry by buckets and truck to the lower part of system closer to the mainstem of the Oyster River for release. The new channel will provide less handling of the fry and when it is time to release them the metal screens will be lifted allowing free passage for the fry to start their journey to the ocean. This project was made possible through the generous support from: SEP, CVRD, SRD, PSF and funds from the Connolly Family. Special thanks to our ORES volunteers for their countless hours of work along with our hatchery manager Lyle Edmunds and the contractor, Current Environmental.

Maureen Ritter  
ORES President

## Fishy Adventure: My Time at ORES

My journey with the Oyster River Enhancement Society began unexpectedly. A simple request from my supervisor to accompany him to the hatchery led me into a world of fish, friendship, and fascinating work. At first, the whirlwind of brood sorting, spawning, and egg taking was a bit daunting. Everyone seemed to know each other and the routine. As I continued to attend, I realized this was the perfect introduction to the organization.

ORES offers a unique opportunity to learn by doing. From driving tractors to sorting fish, there's something for everyone. Lyle, the hatchery manager, embodies the spirit of the organization by encouraging volunteers to try their hand at various tasks. These experiences enhance skills and foster a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose.

Beyond the technical aspects of fish rearing, ORES is a hub for engaging conversations and knowledge sharing. The informal gatherings around the woodstove in the cabin provide a space for discussions on everything from fish to local history. These interactions have enriched my understanding of the organization and its impact on the community.

If you're looking for a rewarding volunteer experience, I highly recommend joining ORES. Whether you can commit to weekly volunteer mornings or occasional visits, your contribution will be valued. Simply visit the ORES website, fill out a membership form, and dive into the world of fish conservation.

Elan Downey  
ORES Membership Coordinator

[WWW.OysterRiverEnhancement.org](http://WWW.OysterRiverEnhancement.org) [Find us on Facebook](#)

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Tax-deductible donations can be made via e-Transfer to [orestreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:orestreasurer@gmail.com)



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I wish to apply / renew my Membership in the Oyster River Enhancement Society

<b>Individual</b> (\$20/yr) _____	<b>Family</b> (\$30/yr) _____	<b>Corporate/Group</b> (\$200/yr) _____	<b>Life Membership</b> \$500 _____
# Yrs ____ x \$20 = _____	# Yrs ____ x \$30 = _____	# Yrs ____ x \$200 = _____	
Donation Amount: _____			
Total Enclosed: \$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am available for Volunteer Work** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return or mail to:** Oyster River Enhancement Society, PO Box 93, Black Creek, BC V9J 1K8

Membership form and payment available on Website; also payable by e-Transfer to [orestreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:orestreasurer@gmail.com)

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