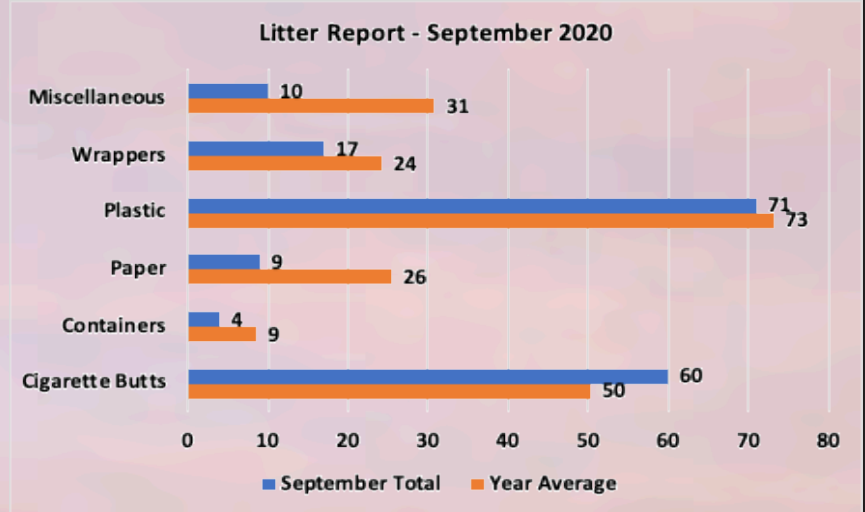


Stoney Creek Trail Litter Report

September 2020



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

Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane

Plastic: doggy poo bags & scraps, plastic bags

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

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

Bateman Park, September 7th, 6:30 AM



Big Wind! This blanket of leaves near the soccer pitch is the result of the big wind on the afternoon of the 8th.

A warm outflow wind, gusting to near 70 km/h, scattered leaves, twigs, and small branches everywhere. The dry air from the Interior had a strange effect on many leaves: they turned upside down! However, the sky was very clear—until forest fire smoke arrived from the south later in the day.

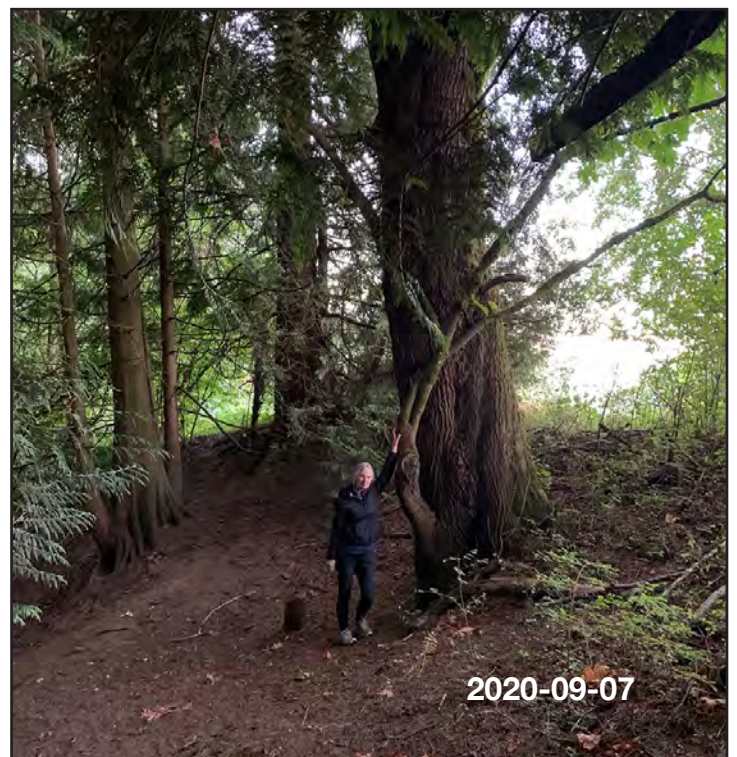
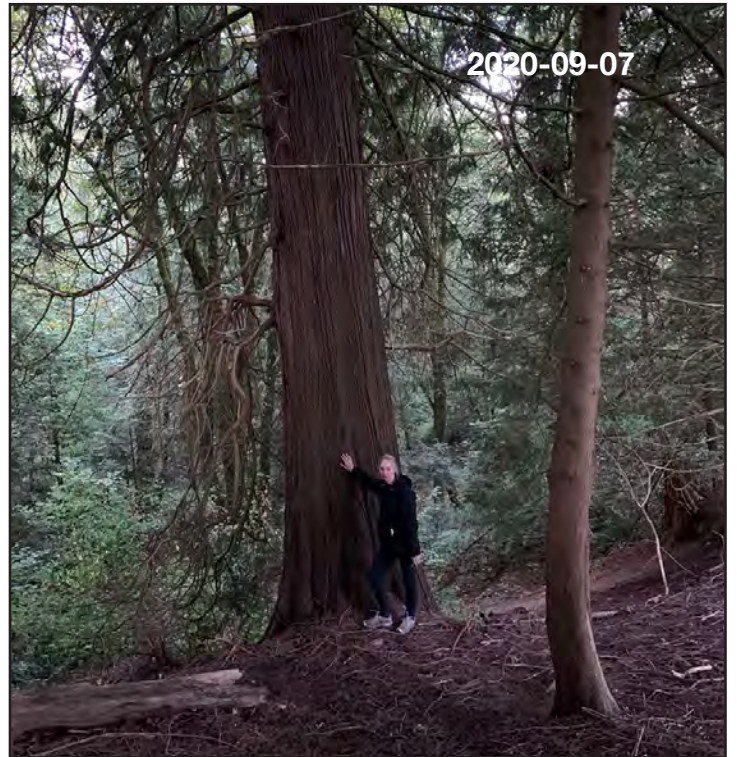
Surprisingly, although the trees still had all their summertime leaves catching the wind, there were no blow-downs.

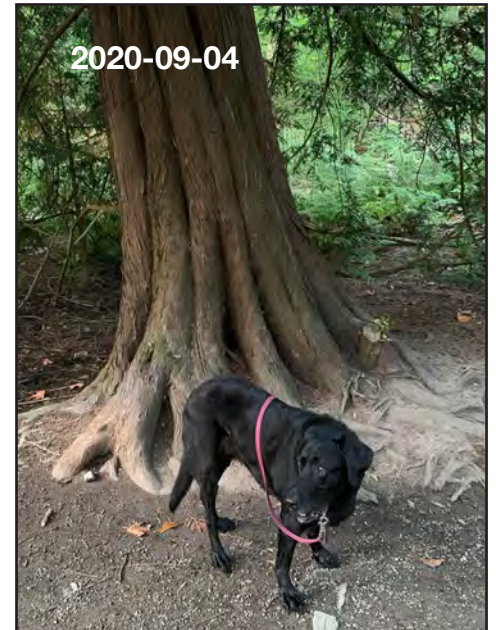




Big trees! On the left, at the south end of the trail, this towering western hemlock gives the name to Hemlock Hill.

Below, Sharon with a western redcedar and a bigleaf maple. These trees are at the lip of the ravine, close to the trail. Down in the ravine there may be even bigger trees.





Above, Sharon shows the scale of an old red alder tree near Bridge 4. A red alder of this age and size is unusual. Most red alders along the trail die and fall down (or are blown down) when younger than this one. On the top right, a black cottonwood on the Straightaway.

That's Sadie standing beside "Cedric," a redcedar with distinct buttresses south of Bridge 4.

Near Bridge 3, this foot-thick trunk from a tree that fell several years ago is far too big to be that of a bitter cherry, native to BC. Its identity remains a mystery to me.



Red alder trees grow rapidly and are generally short-lived. Here are two that blew down in big wind some years ago, probably due to having shallow roots because there is so much moisture in the soil near the creek.

Red alders are easy to identify because of the white splotches on their trunks: they are colonized by many kinds of lichen. Two common ones are the white crustose (crusty) lichen and the pale green foliose (leafy) lichen shown here.

The alder is a valuable tree, not only for commercial hardwood, but also for its rare ability to add atmospheric nitrogen to the soil: it hosts nitrogen fixing bacteria in nodules on its roots. In addition, its nitrogen-rich leaves form a nutritious compost for other plants.



Early signs of Autumn:



This maple leaf is definitely worn out!



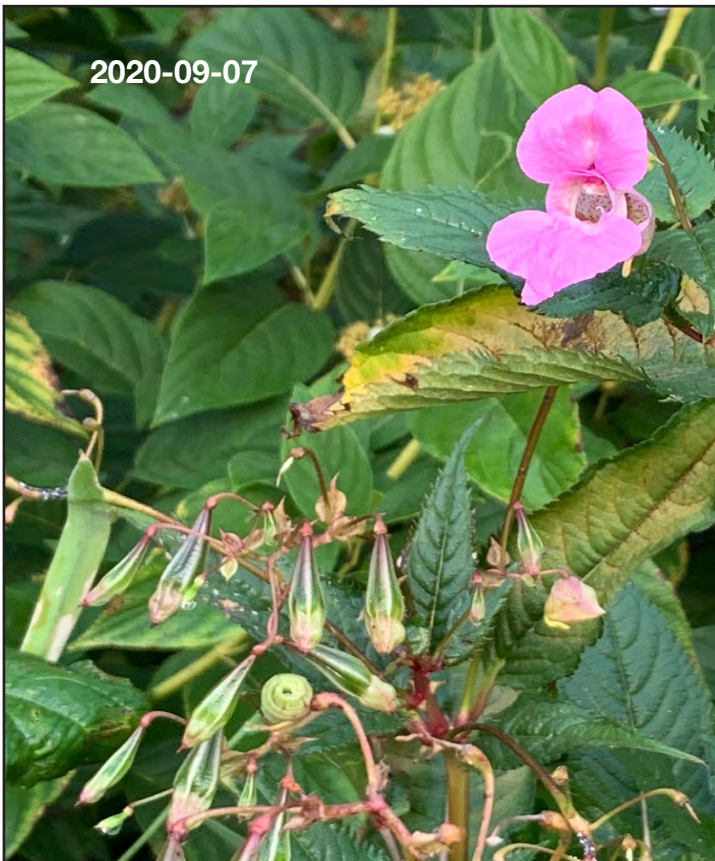
The hawthorn leaves are binary—either red or green



Bigleaf maple whirlybird seeds are ready to fly.

The seed pods on the Himalayan balsam will explode if touched, throwing seeds for many metres. No wonder this invasive plant spreads so rapidly.

This unusual item, a sheet web, was made by a sheet web weaving spider, such as a Grass Spider.



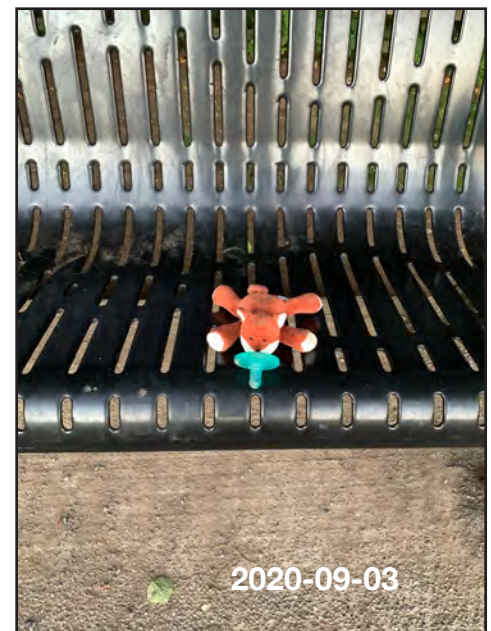
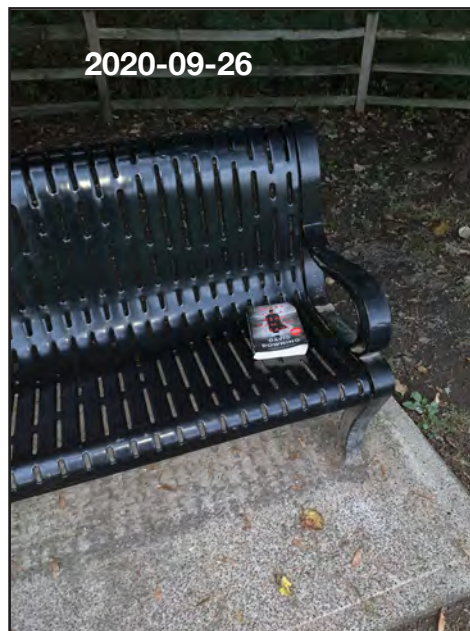
Right: The vine maple stump at the base of Cedric, twice vandalized, has again made a comeback (see photo on page 4).

Below: the birdhouse at the Nursery Tree did not disappear (as reported last month). It was just well hidden, out of sight behind that cottonwood tree.

Below, right: Yours truly (that's a litter bucket) and Sadie on the new bench in the alder grove south of Bridge 3.

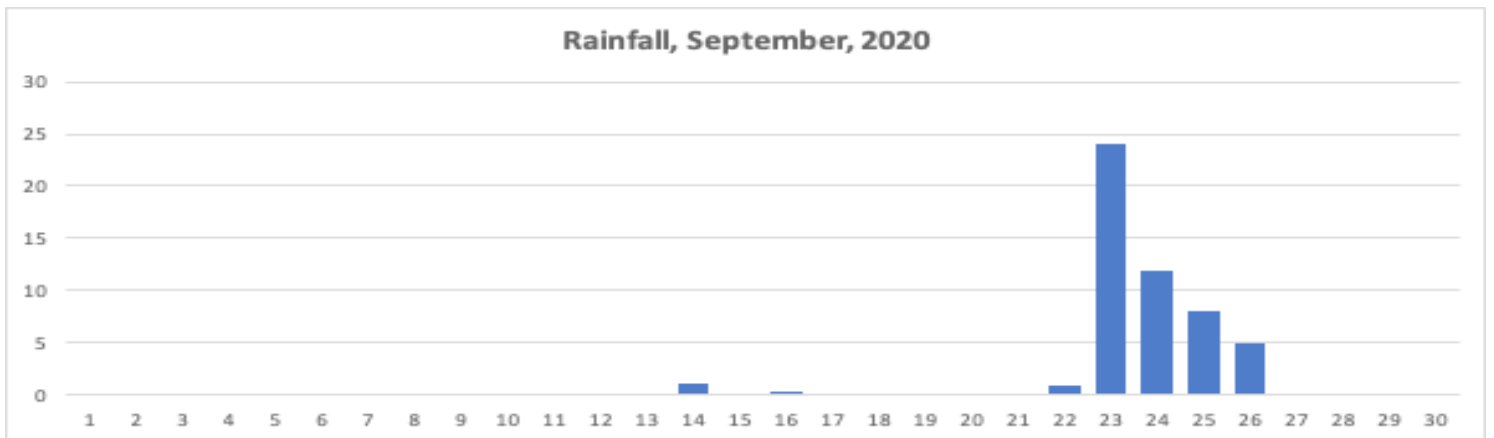


Three unusual items that showed up: a seafood bag, a book, and a baby soother.



Rainfall report: The month of September was very dry up until the 23rd, when it rained 24mm (an inch) overnight—and that much again in the next three days. The total rainfall for the month was 51.7mm compared to August’s 43.7mm and July’s 50.1mm.

The photos show the erosion at the Forks at the south end of the Trail. The path on Hemlock Hill still contains deep grooves, while on other parts of the Trail where pedestrian traffic is heavier the signs of erosion have pretty well been eliminated.



Dave Rutherford
Trail volunteer