

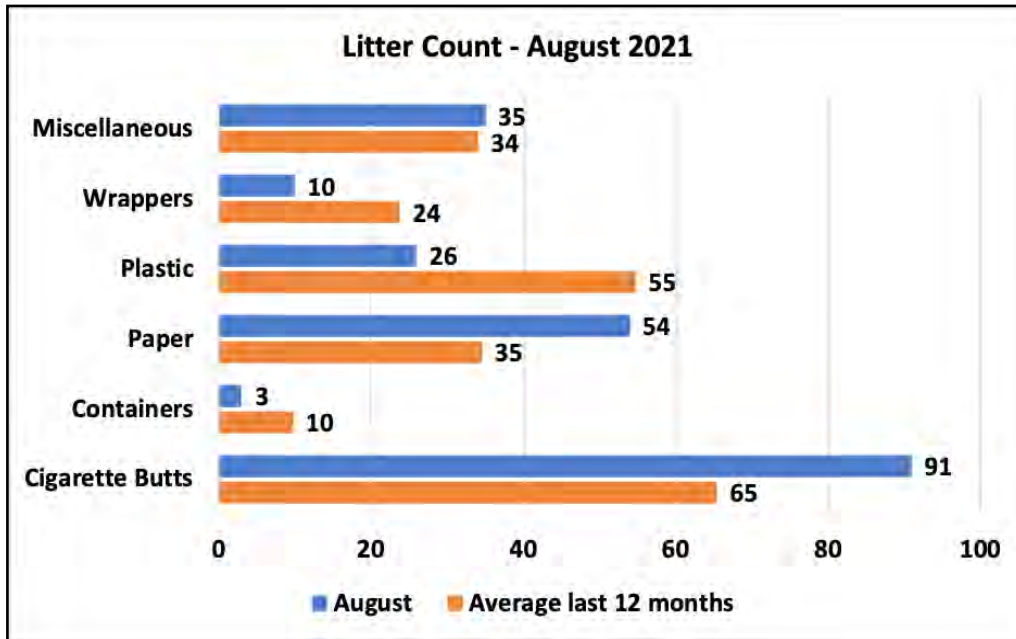


**Stoney Creek Trail Report  
No. 29 - August 2021**



The photo on the **Front Page** of the Bowl was taken on August 2nd, a 30° day. Designed to be a catchment for collecting street run-off, it looked like this when there had been no run-off to catch since the middle of June.

**Re: Litter:** I've been told that the City goes through approximately 200,000 **dog waste bags** a year. They are made of "OXO-biodegradable" plastic which breaks down *in the presence of oxygen*.



However, they do not compost well (too slow to decompose), nor will they degrade when buried such as in a landfill. As an alternative, the City is considering a **pit toilet system**. Your thoughts?

- 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

Below are three beautifully detailed **painted pebbles**. Anyone know the artist?



**Notes:**

I've given names to many places along the Trail so I can refer to specific locations. For reference, see Page 11.

Back issues available on request.



## Documenting the Dry Spell:



Top: a **Red currant** bush and a **Canada thistle** are showing the effects of drought. Smoking this **cigarette** may have put one person's health at risk, but the thoughtless habit of dropping butts everywhere in spite of tinder-dry conditions puts our Trail at risk.

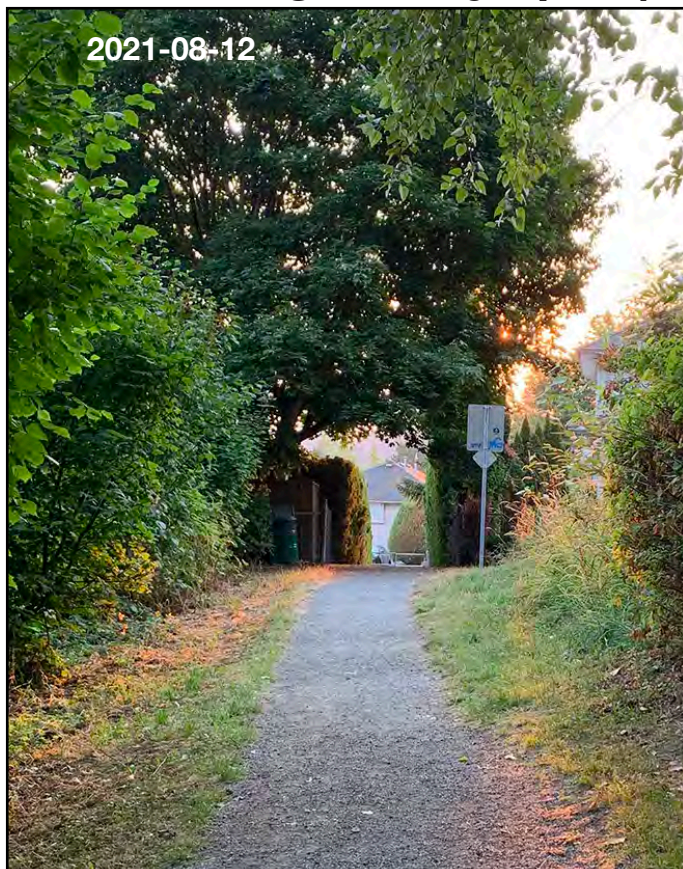
Middle: a juvenile **Vine maple**, planted on Hemlock Hill in 2018, is not doing too well but better than a sad little **Redcedar** that hasn't survived.



Bottom: The moss on this **Broadleaf maple**, normally bright green and sprouting small ferns, is crispy dry. A strong, gusting wind on the 12th brought down many leaves, twigs and branches, such as these from the big **Cottonwood** near Bridge 1.



## Documenting the Dry Spell (continued):



**Above:** the sun rises on a hot (39°) day at the Latimer Street entrance. **Below:** tinted by wildfire smoke, the afternoon sun cast unusual **pink patterns** in shady places. And a Bigleaf maple “helicopter” seed in the trailside grass.





## Documenting the Dry Spell (continued):



Above: three more views of totally **parched grass** in open areas that don't benefit from moisture and shade along the Creek.

Middle: it was surprising that **damp spots** could still be seen in many places early in the mornings. This trailside **trickle of water** south of Bridge 4 shows that ground water persists even after seven weeks without rain (photo taken at 39°). And all the while, Stoney Creek "just kept rollin' along."

Below: **rain** was never so welcome! On the morning of the 7th, a red alder and the corkscrew willow could be seen, dripping wet. However, as the graph on page 10 shows, it was a temporary reprieve. Less than 17 mm of rain has fallen since then.



## The Willow Tree:



So far, I have identified three species of willow tree growing along Stoney Creek Trail: the native Pacific and Hooker's willows, and the exotic Chinese willow on Hemlock Hill.

On this page: the **Pacific willow** that overhangs Bridge 1. Its catkin and leaves are shown below.

The willow is related to the poplar, aspen, and cottonwood. It grows mainly on moist soil in cold and temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere. The Pacific willow is one of our largest native willows, but most species (alpine and arctic) are low-growing or creeping shrubs.

Willow roots are tough, large and tenacious. They

can spread widely and are very aggressive in seeking out moisture. Willow leaves grow alternately on slender branches and are typically elongated, but may also be round or oval. In colour, the leaves show a variety of greens, ranging from yellowish to bluish colour. Willows are among the earliest plants to leaf out in spring and the last to drop their leaves in autumn.





## The Willow Tree (continued):



Left: a much smaller **Hooker's willow** on the downstream side of Bridge 3.

A willow tree can be either male or female, each having a different kind of flower (catkin). Unlike those of the cottonwood, willow catkins do not hang down.

Willow hardwood is lightweight and pliant, but weak. Common uses are for baskets, crates, furniture, carvings, and other small specialty wood items. It is the wood of choice for cricket bats. The sap is a natural source of the pain killer, salicylic acid. (Aspirin pills are made from a synthetic version which is easier on the stomach).

The Stó:lō (Stah-lo) people used willow wood to make bows. For their fishing lines and various types of nets, they peeled the

bark and split the inner tissue into thin strands which were then twisted into long ropes.

Below: on the left, a **Hooker's willow catkin**, and the unusual **Corkscrew willow** growing on Hemlock Hill. (The knife is 6 cm in length).

The Corkscrew willow, also known as the Chinese willow, is an ornamental tree with contorted branches, twigs and leaves. It is a cultivated variety native to China and Korea. All are clones from a female tree: they cannot be propagated by seed as their catkins are sterile.



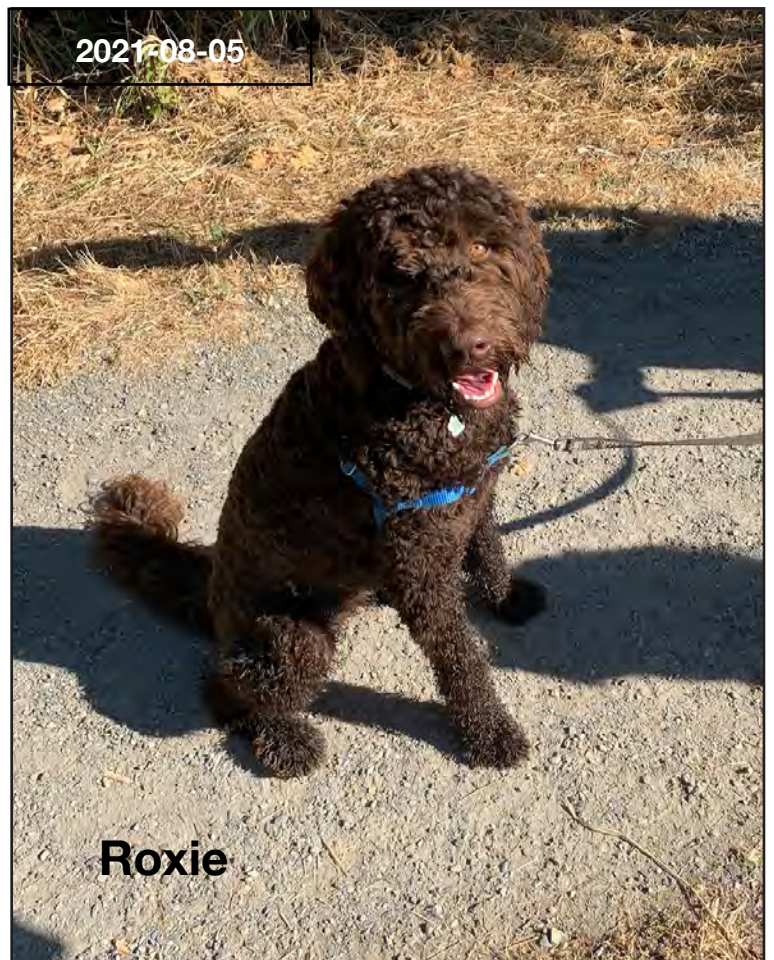


## Dogs of the Month:



**Lacey** “is a 14-year-old Golden Doodle, but a kid at heart. She comes from Victoria from a litter of eight. She was an active Saint John Ambulance therapy dog until Covid. She visited seniors and students at UFV. She loves people and treats.”

**Roxie** is a nine-month-old Golden Doodle “who comes from Mission. She is full of energy and loves finding other dogs to chase and loves running in the grassy areas. She has quickly learned the park regulars that carry dog treats!”



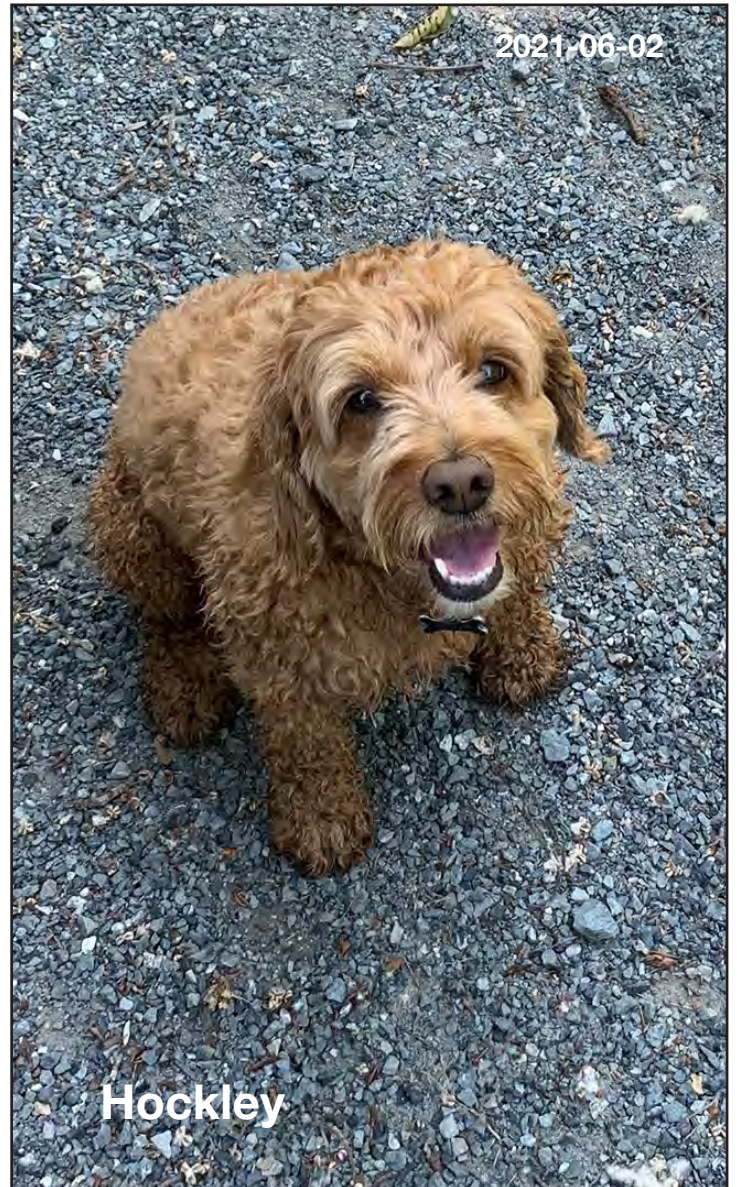


## Dogs of the Month (continued) :



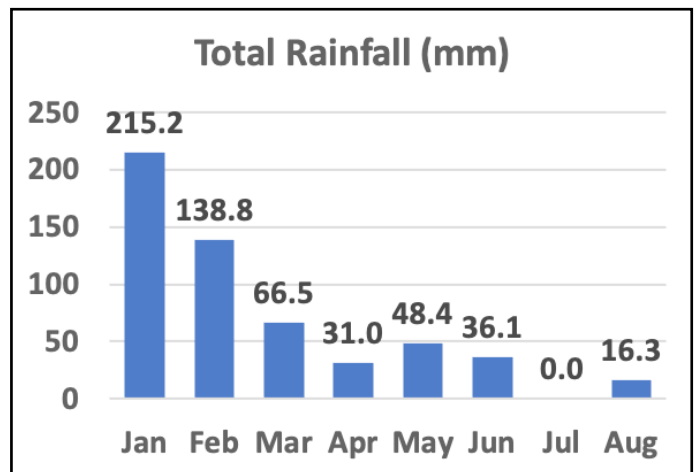
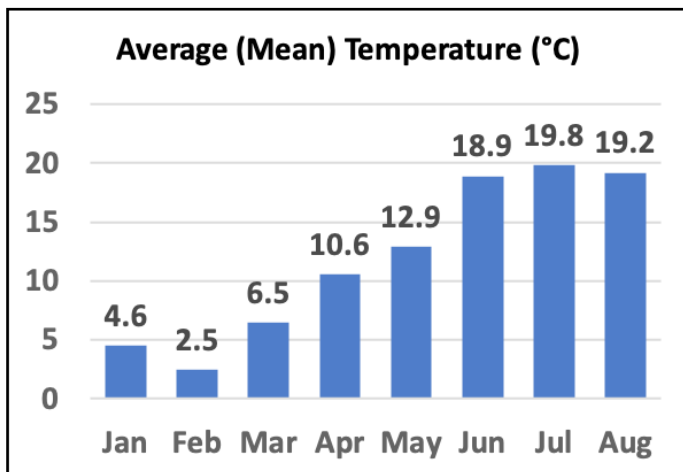
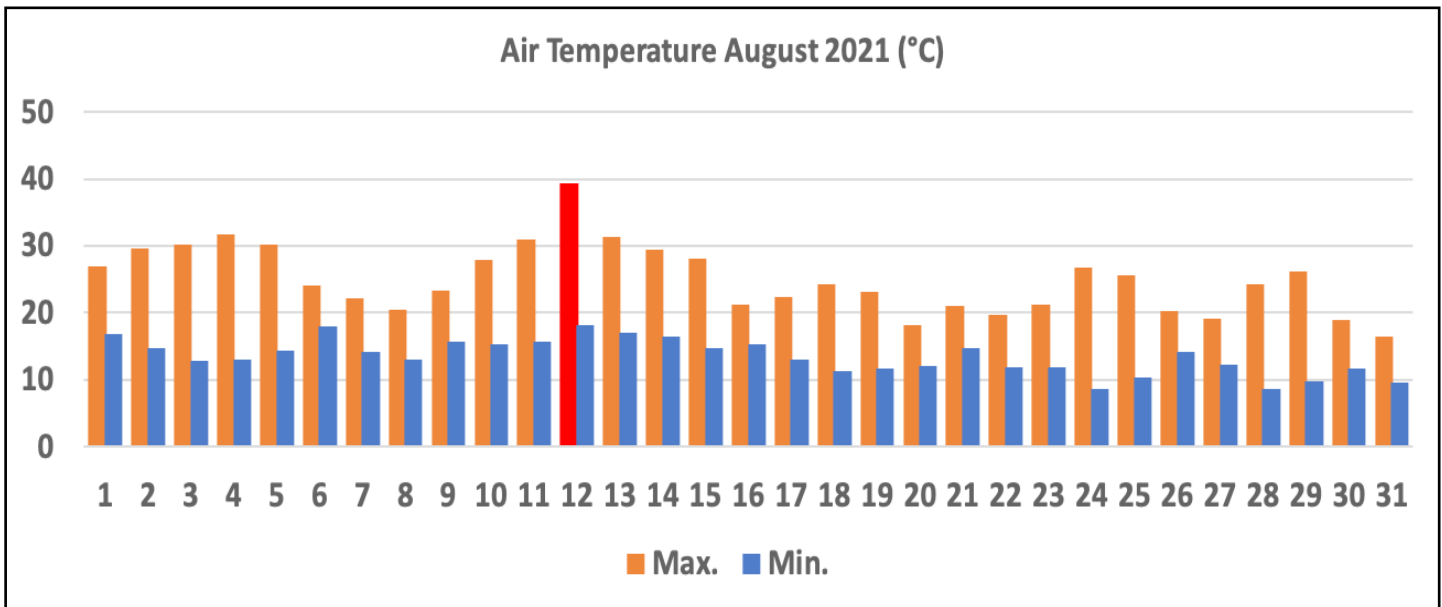
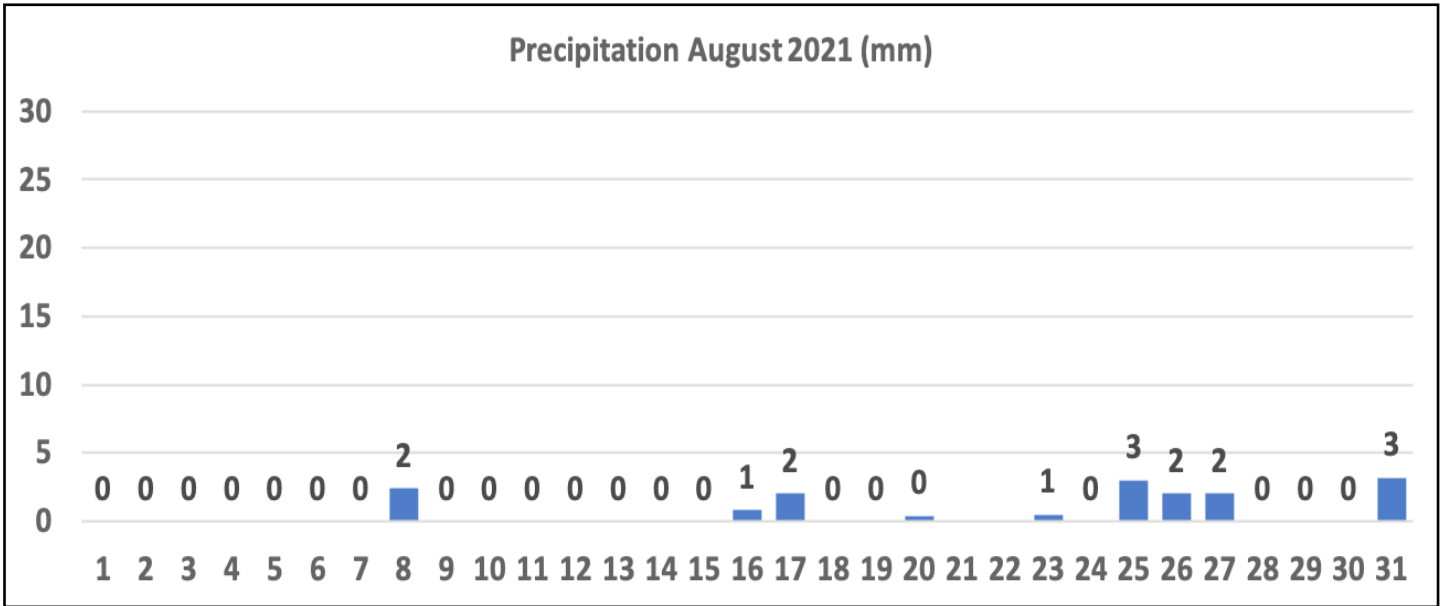
**Jasper** and **Hockley** are Cockapoos, ten and eight years old respectively. “I got them both from the same breeder in Ontario who specializes in Poodle crosses.

“Jasper likes to socialize with people while Hockley is very much a ball dog. They don’t have many particular habits, though Jasper seems to have an uncanny ability to find every person who has treats in their pockets while on walks, and Hockley aggressively snuggles with you by head butting and lying on top of you when he’s excited and wants something.”





**Weather comments** (data from YXX): The stretch of 53 days without rain — June 15th to August 6th — greatly surpasses the previous record of 38 days set in 1961. We also set a record high daily temperature of 39.4° on the 12th. Surprisingly, the rainfall of only 8.1 mm (1/3 of an inch) on August 7 was a record for that date.





For convenience, I use these custom place-names:

