



**Stoney Creek Trail Report
No. 32 - November 2021**

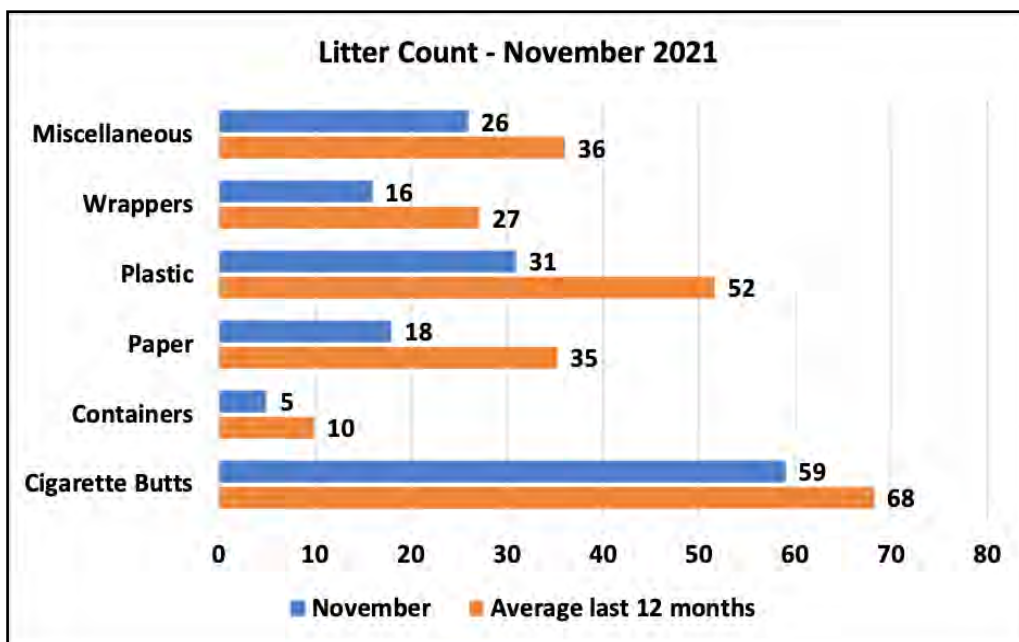
The aftermath of the recent **Atmospheric Rivers** has affected everyone who walks our Trail. My observations of the catastrophic deluge on the 14th. were published in the Special Edition which you would have received on the 19th. Since then, the Trail has suffered more damage. This report was put together mainly before the 28th, so the comments here do not take most the recent developments into account. I plan to document them in next month's Report rather than in another Special.

The **Front Page photo** shows a **Western redcedar** on the Straightaway. The cedars are among the tallest trees found along the Trail. This photo was taken last month and you can see that some of its foliage had already turned brown. This is not unusual. (More about this on page 4).



It has been reported that cedars are under stress and dying elsewhere because of drought. Not so here. The cooler temperatures and steady source of water from Stoney Creek keeps our trees in good condition.

There are **two cedar species** on the Trail. We have plenty of red cedars most of which are 'naturals' but only four yellow cedars which were planted on Hemlock Hill in 2018. From a distance, it's easy to distinguish one species from the other. The little red cedar on the left has a much different profile than the yellow cedar on the right.



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

Note: I've given names to many places along the Trail. See the "index" on Page 11. Back issues are available.

Signs of Autumn:



Top: the Parks crew has had plenty of work keeping the path blown clear of **autumn leaves**. The alders shed theirs first, then the maples and finally the cottonwoods. The leaves are a natural compost which will nourish everything growing in their vicinity.

Middle: there are many **Red-osier dogwood** shrubs planted behind the fence along the Straightaway. They do not take on autumn colours gracefully.



Bottom: left, the bare branches of this **Black hawthorn** planted on Hemlock Hill reveal its wicked thorns. Right: this **Pacific ninebark** also on Hemlock Hill produced many rich brown seedheads.

Featured Tree: the Western Redcedar:



BC's official tree, the Western redcedar, grows at elevations from sea level up to 1,190 m. The largest ones can be a thousand years old.

A Western redcedar has a shallow, wide-spreading, strong root system. Its buttressed base tapers to a pointed conical crown. Very shade tolerant, it retains its lower limbs except when in densely crowded stands. The branches of young trees curve upward. On older trees they swing downward near the bole, then sweep up again at their ends.

The leaves are small, scalelike and flattened. When crushed between the fingers, they have a strong but pleasant aroma. The foliage grows

in fanlike sprays, slightly drooping. The cones are clustered near the ends of twigs.

Western redcedar bark is stringy and a light cinnamon-brown on young trunks, gray on old trees. The wood is soft, stable and splits easily. It's not very tough, but can remain sound for more than 100 years because of its resistance to decay and insect damage.



The **Western redcedar** is called Tree of Life by first nations peoples living along the coast of British Columbia. They have traditionally used it in many ways. Large logs were carved into totem poles and hollowed out to make huge ocean-going canoes. The logs were also split into wide planks and used in building large wooden structures. The bark from young trees was used to make baskets, ropes, blankets, mats, clothing, and thatch.



Because Western redcedar is so stable and weatherproof, it can be found in a wide variety of products. In house construction: siding, shingles, doors and window frames, and interior finish. For watercraft and other outdoor applications: utility poles, fenceposts, piling, paper pulp, clothes closets and chests, caskets, crates, boxes, beehives, rain gutters, and fish-trap floats.

Market conditions have caused the Western redcedar to become one of the most valuable trees in BC's forests, thus it is heavily harvested. The logging of old growth trees has become very controversial.

In late summer, brown branches called flags can usually be seen throughout the canopy. Flagging is a tree's normal renewal process, the shedding old foliage. Winter winds and

rain blow and wash the dried parts from the tree. By spring, it looks clean and green again.



Aside from its droopier profile, other distinguishing features of the yellow-cedar are its pointier, more prickly leaves and their rather sour smell when crushed.

Interesting Sights:



Top: this giant **Douglas-fir** just south of Bridge 5 is the tallest tree in the Park. Its chest-high diameter is 1.75 m. Calculated by formula, its height is at least 50 m. Right: you can clearly see the top of this tree when you are up on Hemlock Hill.



Middle: left, here's another towering evergreen, a **Western hemlock**. This tree and several smaller ones clustered near the top of the hill give the name to this section of the Trail. All have the distinctive drooping top. Right: on a salmon survey, ARPSES volunteer **Rob Moynahan** is holding a dead male coho. It had fertilized some eggs but there was still some 'milt' left in it. More ARPSES activities will be featured in the December Report.



Bottom: Damage to this bag dispenser was repaired within hours of being reported! **Kudos to the City** for giving close attention to our Trail. We are fortunate that on the 22nd, Arbor Pro workers, contracted to the City, began work on a dam to keep the very much changed Creek off the path. Restoration has begun far sooner that was expected.

Dogs on the Trail:



Porscha is a purebred Doberman, 2½ years old. **Magnum** is a Doberman Chesapeake Retriever cross, nine years old.

“I have had both of them since they were eight weeks old. Porscha came from Alberta and Magnum is from Langley.

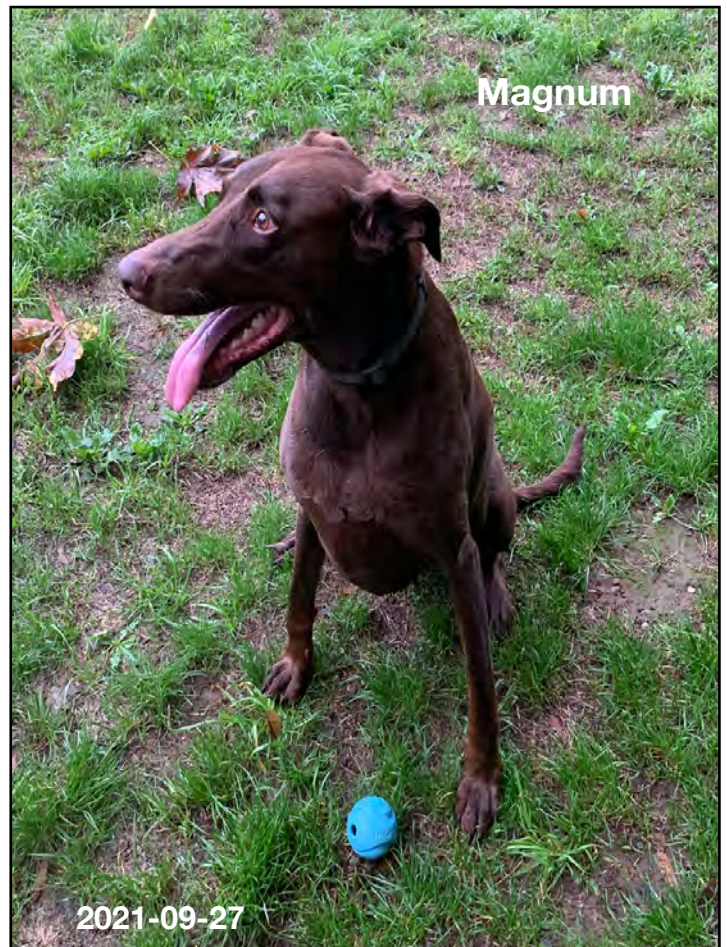
“They are ball obsessed! They are a very active breed so they need lots of exercise. Magnum loves to swim. There isn’t much they do not love to do.

“**Magnum** is a barker — a pretty anxious guy — so I think most of it is fear-based. He is also particular about which dogs he chooses to interact with and like, but he LOVES Porscha and is sad when she isn’t with him. I think she is like a therapy dog for him and her confidence has definitely made him a little less anxious.

“**Porscha** is a typical girl and only does things if there is something in it for her, lol! She has a HUGE prey drive and will kill things if she can catch them.



“We have recently moved back to the area and now Magnum is back at the park he grew up in — which he remembered right away of course!”



More Trail Dogs:



Cricket is a rehomed 9½-year-old German Pinscher.

“Her favourite thing is sleep, I think, because she’s getting older. She really likes kids! She loves to search for small game when we are on walks. I’d call her a little too ‘prey driven.’ That’s why she’s usually on the leash.

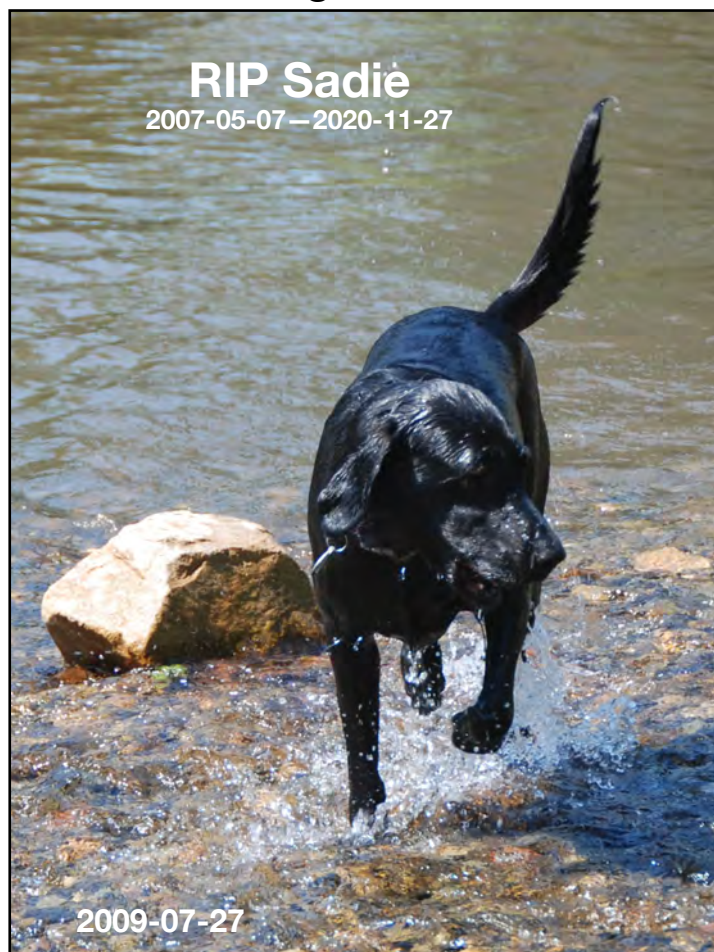
“She’s been a good dog, but she’s been having some neck issues which cause her to yelp when she wakes up. This doesn’t happen all the time, but seems to happen more as we get closer to winter.”

“**Jinx** is a five-year-old Alaskan Klee Kai who loves to check out all of the ‘peemail’ at Stoney Creek Park. We just found him by chance in the paper from a breeder in Alder-grove four years ago when my daughter told us she wanted a mini-husky.

“He is super attached to his mom and never lets her out of his sight! He has his favourite rocks to sit on along the trail and knows how to “leave it” until he’s told “it’s OK!!” to eat the treat in front of him. Jinx loves to quietly and gently ‘Howl Talk’ when he’s communicating his thoughts with people. He truly knows how to carry on a conversation!”



A Memorial Page:



“**Moose** was a rescue purebred pug. He absolutely loved his frequent walks at Stoney Creek. He was such an optimist. Everyone he met could be a source of treats and he would turn those beautiful brown eyes upward in entreaty. He was often rewarded. If not, he would move on to the next — after all, he was a pug. He was also an “old soul” and not easily excitable, just a solid happy old man. He was my safe harbour in times of turmoil, my constant companion. During his 14th year he became blind, deaf and tired, and started to have seizures. On August 16, at 3:00 PM I helped him cross the “Bridge” to his safe harbour where I am sure he is still enjoying his walks, seeing the creek and trails, hearing the squirrels and, yes, turning on the Moose charm for those forbidden extra treats once again. RIP sweet Boy.”

The Dog:

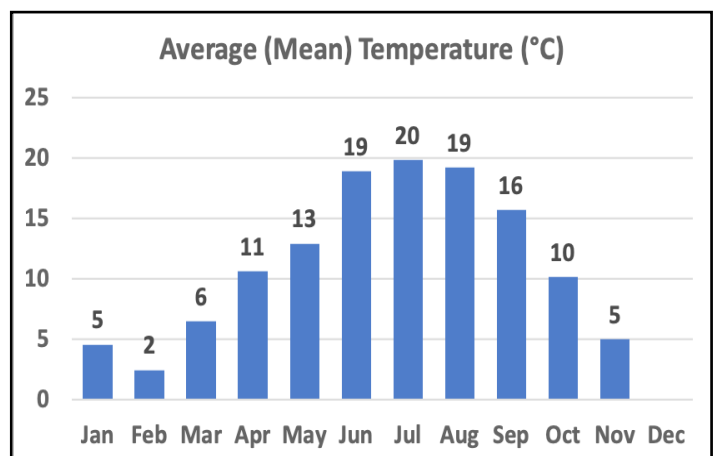
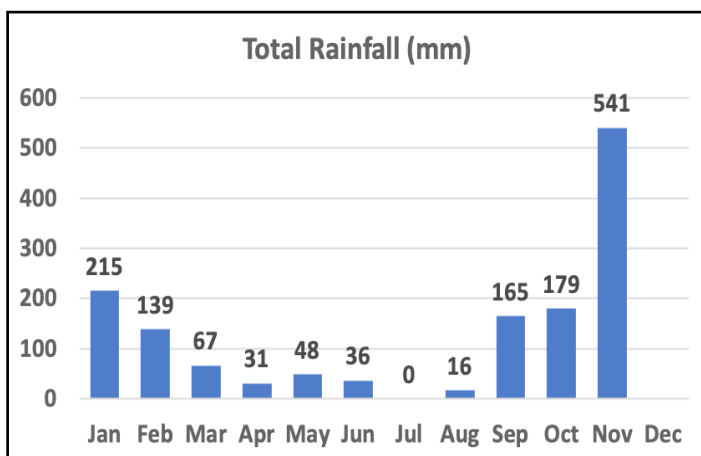
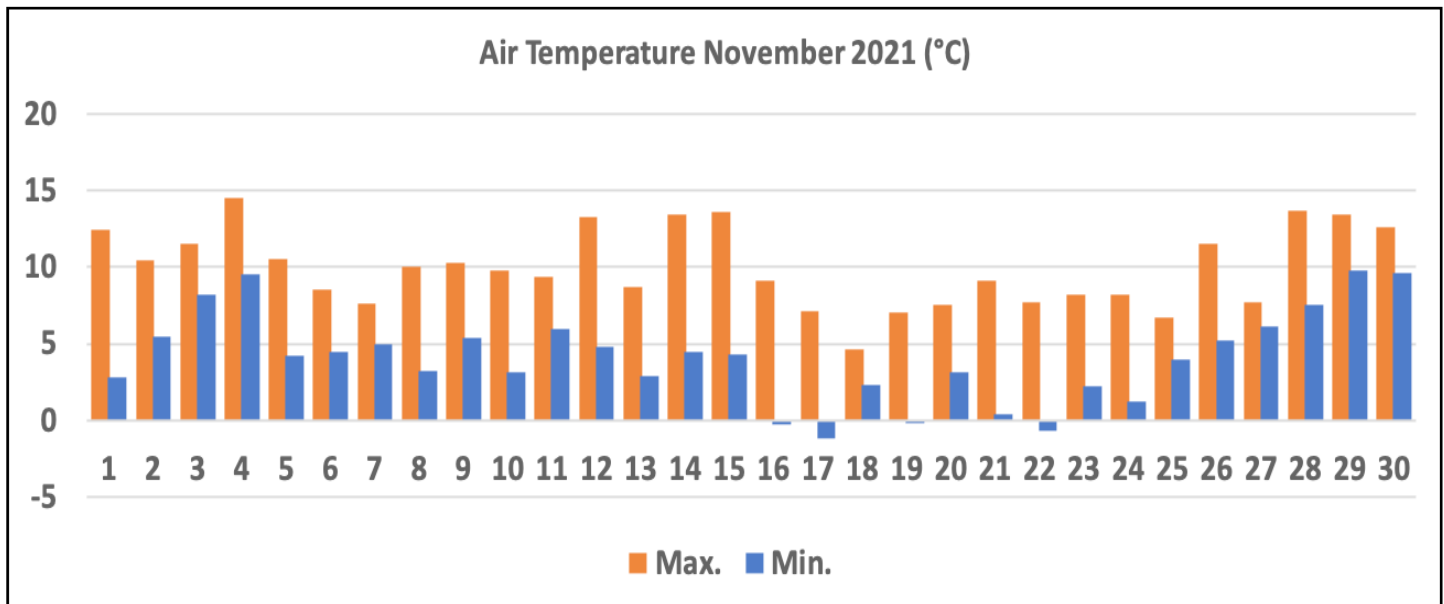
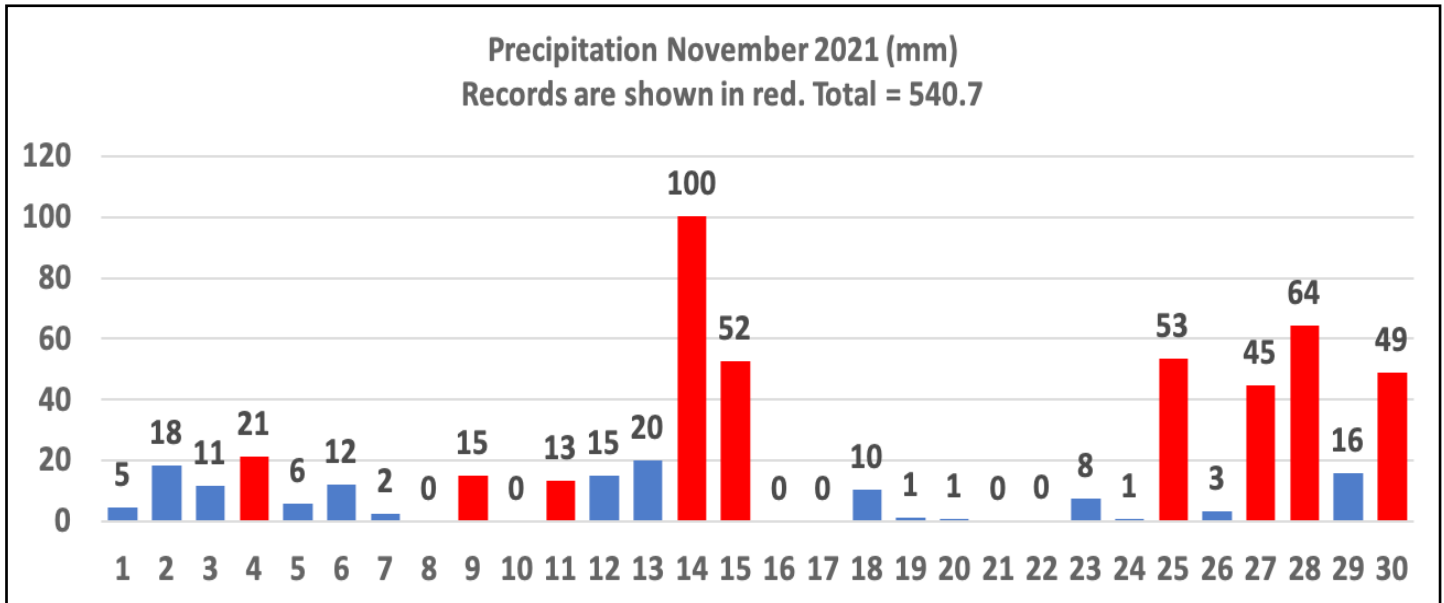
The truth I do not stretch or shove
When I state that the dog is full of love.
I’ve also found, by actual test,
A wet dog is the lovingest.

Ogden Nash

Sadie, a purebred American Labrador, was born in Merritt and came to Abbotsford at the age of six weeks. Stoney Creek Trail was her second back yard. She was always eager for a game of fetch or a swim, going full-tilt at whatever she did. She had a tail-wag for everyone and enjoyed going for walks or riding in the car, but was happiest when she was wet.



Weather comments (data from YXX): The month's weather can be described in two words: Record Rainfall. 173mm (6.8 inches) fell in 72 hours over the Nov.14th weekend, and 230 mm in the final week. Amazingly, our Coho have come back to spawn after the first two rainstorms. Their eggs surely have been washed away, but hopefully they will try again. **In view of all hazards the salmon have to contend with, please help their eggs to survive by keeping your dog out of the creek for the next three months.**



For convenience, I use these custom place-names:

