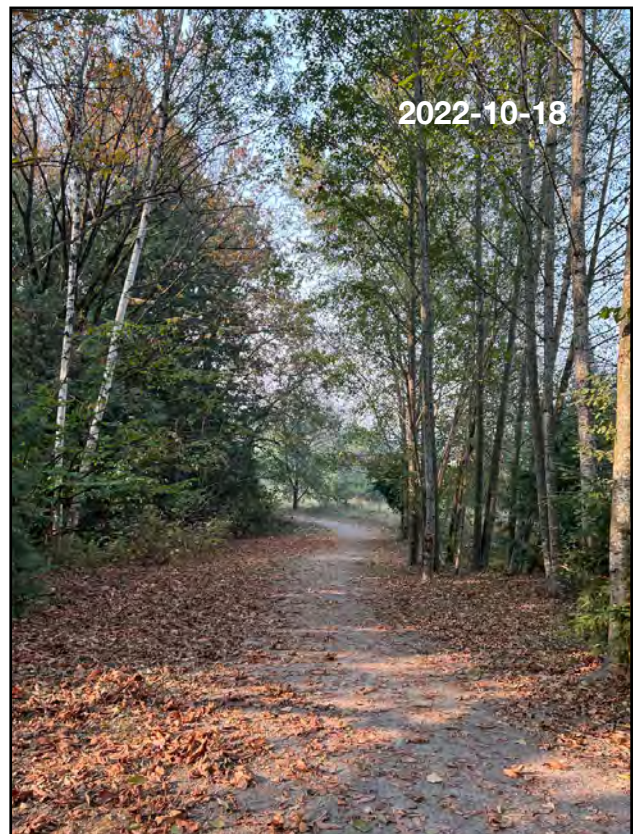
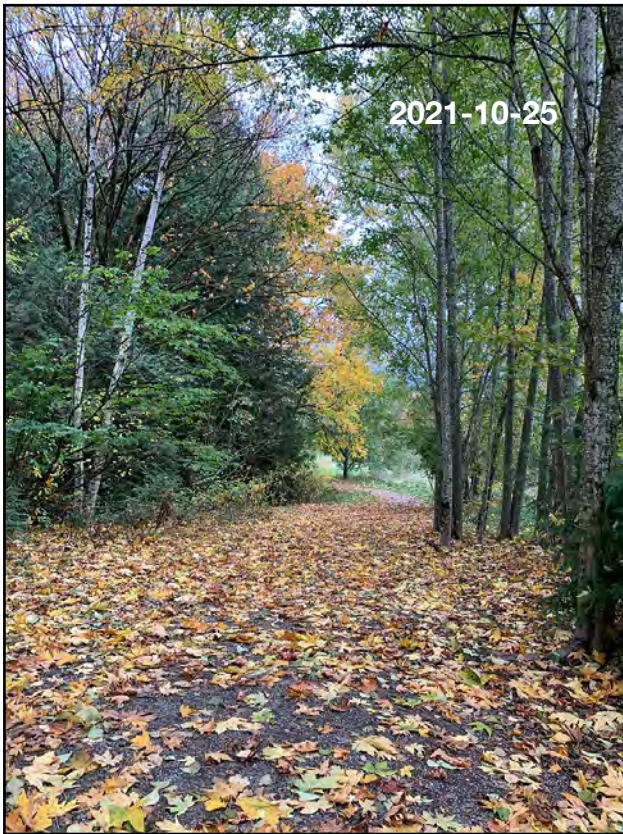




**Stoney Creek Trail Report
No. 43 - October 2022**

On the Front Page, a Hallowe'en-style grotesquerie on Hemlock Hill. With no significant rain for four months, the autumn leaves are turning brown rather than red or yellow. The long summer drought came to an end on the 21st. On the 26th, a welcome sight—in spite of a very low water level—salmon were seen making their way upstream to spawn.



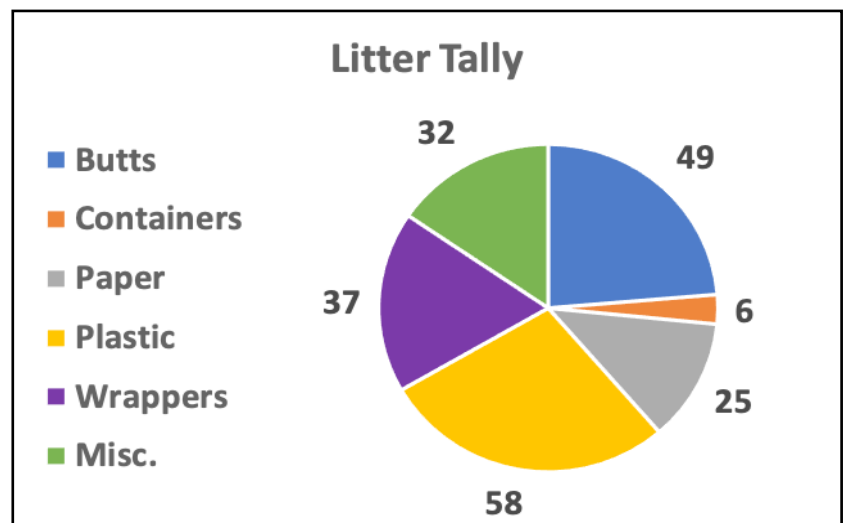
What a difference a drought makes: last year vs. this year



ARPSES members Rob and Dale hosted an information session on Thanksgiving Monday.

Broken Bridge news: sorry, no reply from the City.

ARPSES news: the fall salmon count has begun.



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

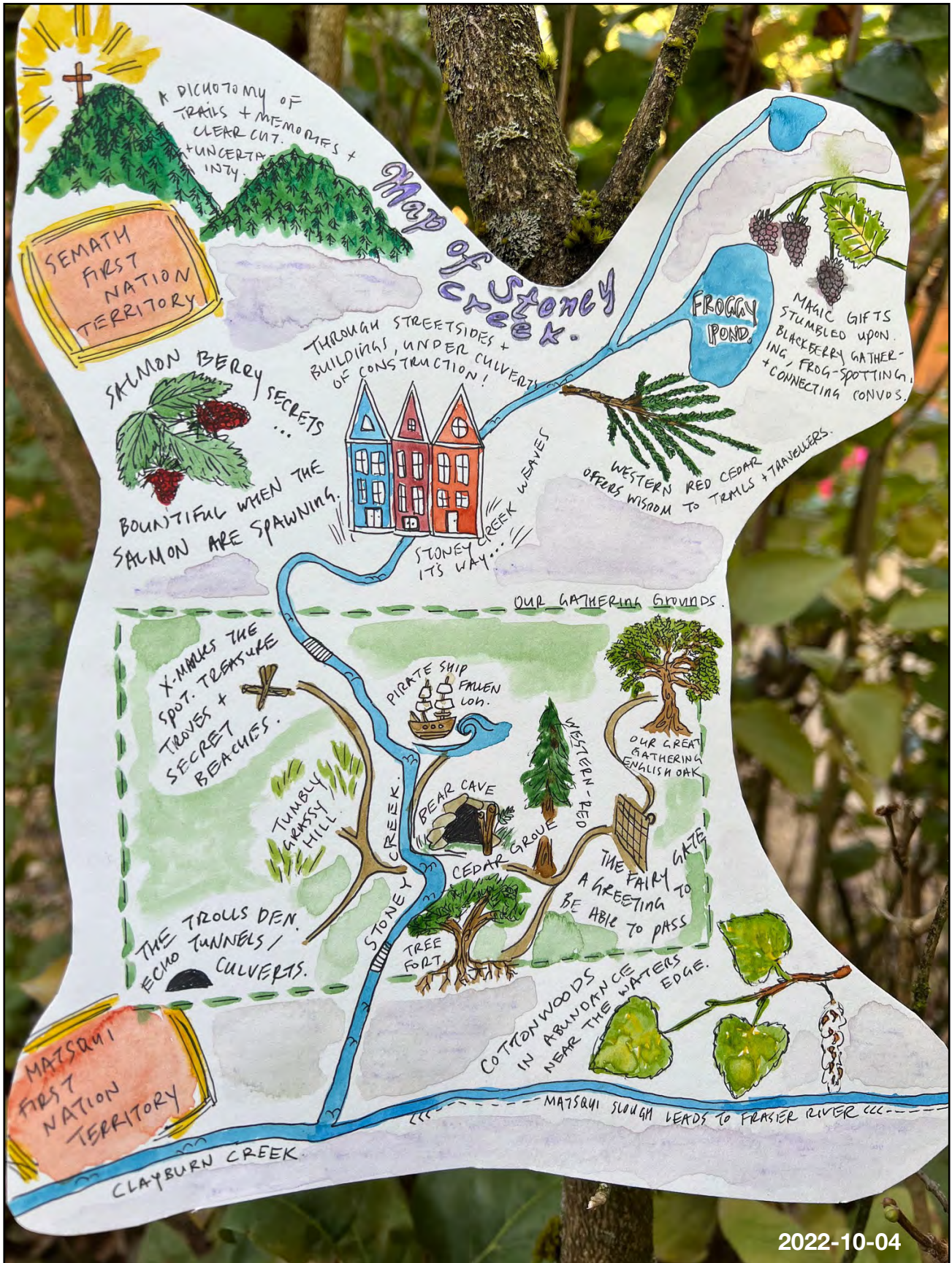
Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane

Plastic: doggy poo bags & scraps, plastic bags

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

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

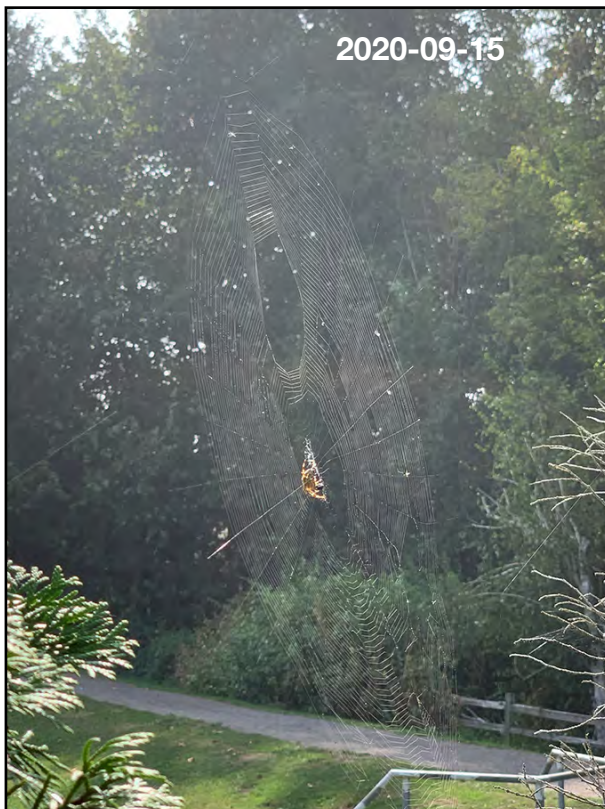
The Wild Wonder Flock of Forest Schoolers is back exploring this fall. One of their instructors drew this imaginative map showing the names the children have given to meaningful places along Stoney Creek (our Trail area is bounded by that dotted green line). I'll leave you to puzzle out the places on the map. One clue: the "Bear Cave" is a large red cedar in the Glade with a hollowed-out play area underneath.



A Common Trail Spider:

Cross orb-weavers (*Araneus diadematus*), also known as European garden spiders, are found across Europe and North America. They live in a variety of habitats, including forests, gardens and buildings where exterior lighting attracts flying insects. They are common along our Trail.

Their colours can range from light yellow to dark brown, but all have mottled white markings forming a cross on their abdomen. Adult females have large abdomens and range in length from 6.5 mm to 20 mm, while males are much smaller. The legs of orb-weaver spiders have seven segments and are specialized for spinning orb (circular) webs. The females build the webs; the males, once they reach maturity, do not make them.



The spider hangs head down in the center of the web. It hooks one of its claws to a signal line connected to the main orb waiting for a disturbance that signals the arrival of prey (usually flying insects). The prey is then quickly bitten and wrapped in silk before being stored for later consumption. The initial bite serves to paralyze the prey and render it harmless, while enzymes in the venom liquify the prey's internal parts.



The webs, which are built in a day, are perpendicular to the ground so they will trap flying insects. They usually have about 30 radial lines of silk which support cross-strands arranged in a spiral.

The spider hangs head down in the center of the web. It hooks one of its claws to a signal line connected to the main orb waiting for a



Trail Spiders (continued):

After mating, the female lays hundreds of eggs into a sac nearly her own size. The sac is covered in brown silk and durable enough to protect the baby spiders while they over-



winter. The average female can live up to twelve months; however, most of them die after laying eggs in the fall. The males are often eaten by the females after mating.

The spiderlings naturally have to fend for themselves when they hatch out in the spring. After emerging from their egg sacs, the young orb weavers begin to disperse by extruding thin strands of silk from their spinnerets. These strands catch a breeze and lift the extremely light spiderlings into the air. In this manner they sail long distances, eventually landing in a new environment where they begin the next stage of their lives.

The Crowned orb-weaver is a reclusive creature and only bites humans if cornered or otherwise provoked. The bite is slightly unpleasant but quite harmless to humans. The orb-weaver will respond

to danger by vibrating rapidly in its web until it becomes a blur, presumably to confuse the predator.



Another spider web that you may see at this time of year is that of the **American Grass spider** (*Agelenopsis oregonensis*).

This spider is a funnel weaver. It builds a web in the form of a horizontal sheet with a funnel-like tube at one edge. The web is not sticky.

The spider lies in wait in the tube and when a flying insect hits the web, the spider uses its speed to run out and capture its prey. Its venom—which is harmless to humans—paralyzes the prey, which is then pulled back into the tube to be eaten.

In British Columbia, 893 species of spiders have been identified!

Trail Dogs:



“**Meirah** (Jumeirah) is a 9½-year-old blue merle Border Collie. Her full name means “beautiful” in Arabic. I got Meirah locally just after we lost our Jack Russell terrier. The timing was wrong for another dog but she was a perfect one.

“The smooth-hair dog (below) is **Millie**. She is 21 months old, also a blue merle, but Irish bred, hence the smoother coat. I got Millie from a working Border Collie farm up country. Her mom’s line is Irish, her dad’s a Canadian line.

“Meirah competes in flyball and Millie is still learning the sport. Both dogs herd sheep a couple of hours a week for fun. Both dogs move when I move, always my shadow. They love playing ball and playing with each other. We are in the park daily.”



Green Exercise: Walking the Lower Trail Northward (Part 1)



At the starting point, looking north, with Bridge 4 just behind you (see Page 12)



Sadie's bench is down at the corner. The Creek is on your right



This walk begins just north of Bridge 4, one of the two that were destroyed by extremely high water in the Creek last November. This broken bridge thus acts as a barrier dividing the Trail into two parts. Hemlock Hill is the upper (southern) section, while this walk is along what could be called the lower (northern) section. The Trail is not looking its best: when these photos were taken, there had been virtually no rain for four months.



Viewed from in front of Sadie's bench, Bridge 3 is ahead



Leaving Bridge 3, you will be heading down the Straightaway



Green Exercise: Walking the Lower Trail Northward (Part 2)



Along the Straightaway, you pass the Nursery Trees on the left.



That's Jordan's Sequoia tree right ahead. Bridge 2 is around that far corner



The severe drought has parched the grass, tree and shrubs. Fortunately, the Creek flows from an aquifer, so the juvenile salmon in the Creek have survived. Walking along this section, you will pass three entrances/exits to the Trail. The first comes in from Coachstone Way at the far end of the Straightaway (Photo 6). The second one is along a path and through a gate coming from the soccer pitches (Photo 7).



From Bridge 2, you can look west toward the soccer pitches



Turning right (north) at Bridge 2, you go past Joplin's bench. Bridge 1 is just around that bend.



Green Exercise: Walking the Lower Trail northward (Part 3)



Bridge 1 will take you northeast into the Bowl area



On the right, the Bowl, a favourite ball-fetching area for dogs



The third entrance is a walkway coming in from Hearthstone Court. It is on your right as you leave the Bowl and start along the stretch beside the Dog Corral (Photo 11). There is, of course, another access point via Bridge 0 coming from the parking lot. Arriving at Bridge 0, you will have descended about 18 m over a distance of .6 km. Next month, I will show the walk along this section of the Trail, but in the opposite direction.



Just past the Bowl and the Hearthstone entrance, the Dog Corral



At the north end. Bridge 0 on the left and Bateman Road ahead



Unusual Items:

Here are some items of interest seen along the Trail.



Whose testing kit?



Herbicide notice



Repaired bridge ramp



Pleasant surprise



New sign



Painted rock

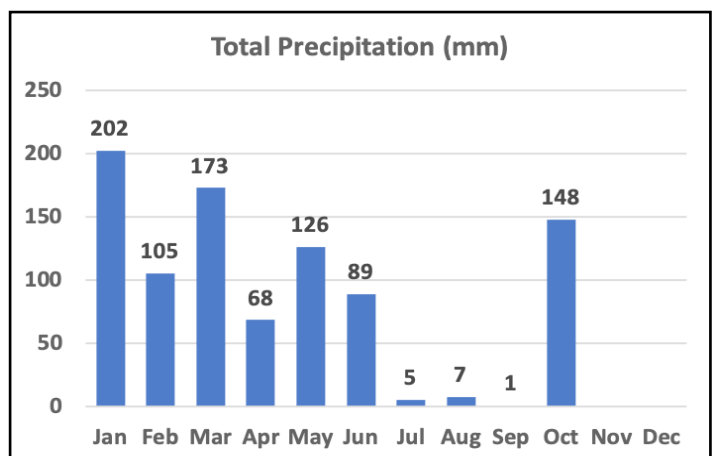
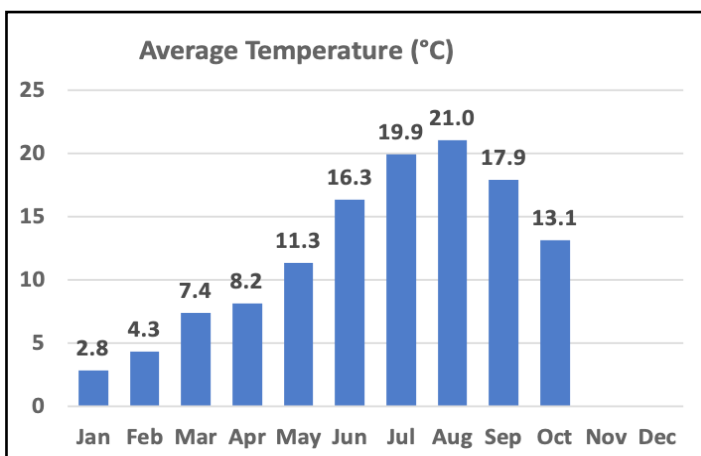
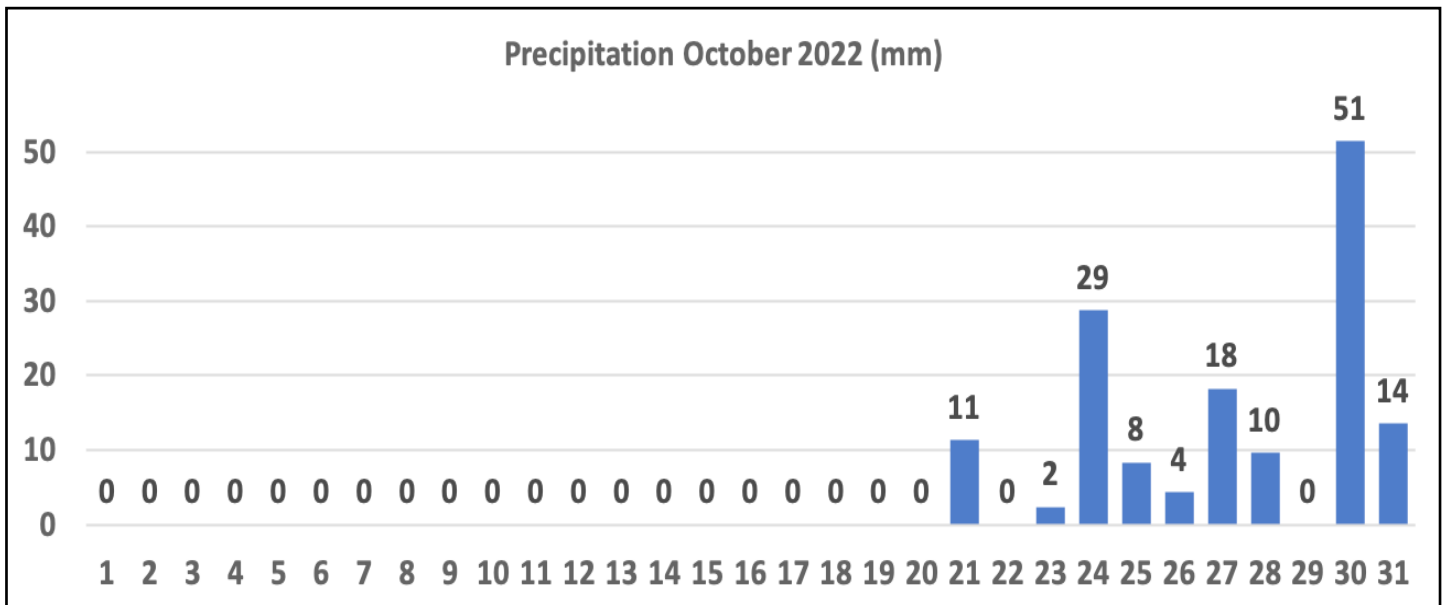
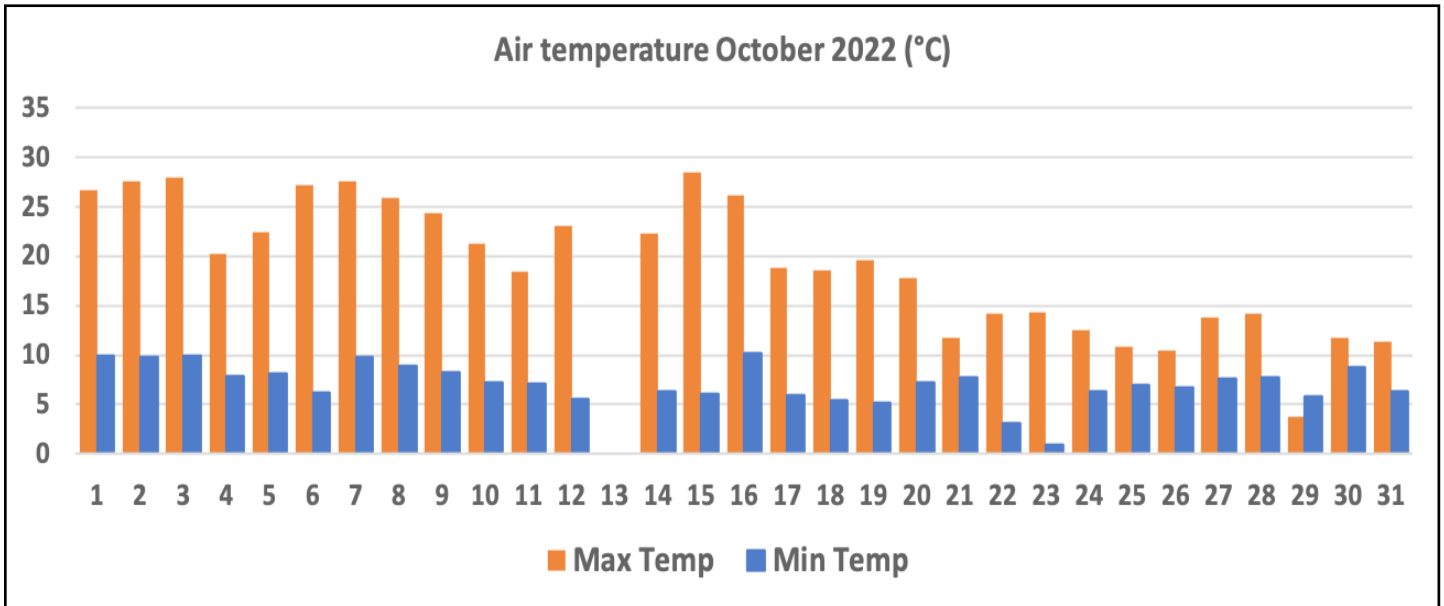


Tree down

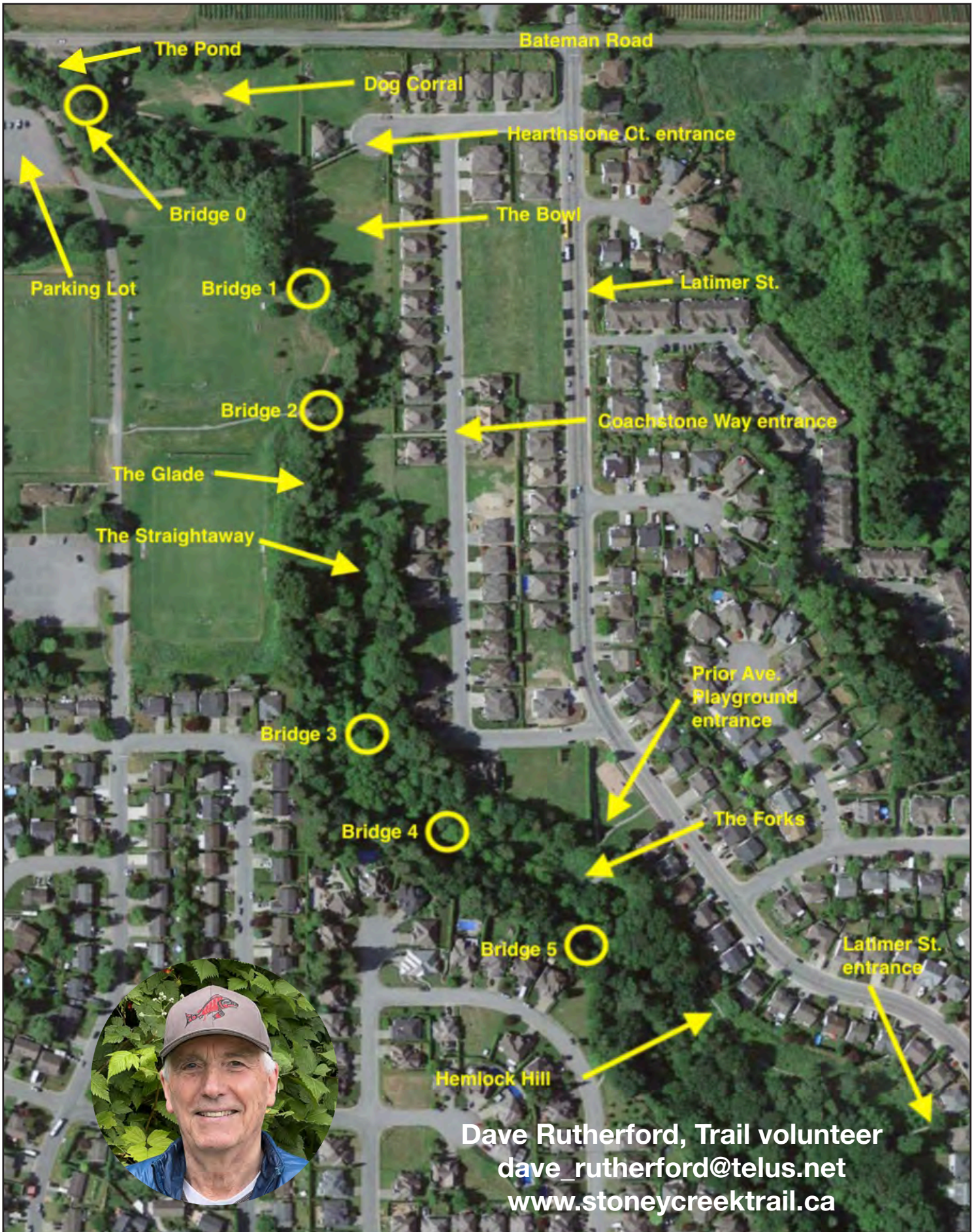


Coho spawner

What a month! On the 18th, and for the following three days, smoke pollution from wild fires reached **three times** the acceptable limit. Then relief—on the 21st the air cleared, the **drought ended** and we had about as much rain that day as we'd had over the previous four months. **Now what?** The US authority (NOAA) predicts a 75% chance that the La Niña effect, which gave us the warmer, drier summer, will persist for a third year in a row (very unusual), giving us a cooler, wetter winter. Be ready for more extreme weather!



For convenience, I use these custom place-names:



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