

Stoney Creek Trail Report No. 73 - April 2025



On the front page, a photo of **lichenized fungi**. These species, belonging to the genus *Cladonia*, can be seen every year at this time on one of the top rails of the Dog Corral fence. They are very small, the tallest being perhaps 1 cm. Chances are that most trail walkers would not notice them. The ones in the back row are **Trumpet cups** (*Cladonia fimbriata*); those in the foreground, nestled in a bed of moss, are **Powderhorn cups** (*Cladonia coniocraea*).

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A **lichen** is a fungus and an alga living in a symbiotic partnership. The fungus provides the structure, protection and moisture, while the alga has chlorophyll and provides the nourishment. They live so closely together that they function as a single, tough and slow-growing organism.

(As a matter of interest, another genus of *Cladonia*, called *reindeer lichen*, is the primary food source for caribou in our arctic and reindeer in northern Scandinavia).

In the photo on the right, volunteers are preparing for the **macroinvertebrate study** which was done in the Glade last week. The full results will be published next month. To learn more, see the [ARPSES website](#).

Snow Survey Results: As of April 1st, our Lower Fraser basin is at 85% of normal. This is 16% more than a month ago and 22% more than April 1st last year. There is not much chance that this will improve. We'll have to guess whether there will be another drought this summer. The gutting of the NOAA by the current US administration will significantly degrade its long-range climate prediction capabilities which is used by Canadian agencies like the BC Environment Ministry.

The litter tally on the Charts page is lower than usual because I was without my trusty scooter for a month. I'm pleased that it's now running better than ever with its new motor, and I'm 'back on duty.' **Thank you to the anonymous trail walkers who helped keep the trail clean in my absence!!**



Your invitation: [Attend the May 31st Potluck Fundraiser sponsored by the United Church Earth Stewards.](#)

New growth (1/4):



Clockwise from the top: new buds and last year's winged seed pods on the Amur maple at the Bowl; the leaves and buds on the same tree about a week later (their wonderful aroma will come when it warms up); a Black cottonwood catkin (from a female tree); a Himalayan blackberry (look closely to see the thorns); and Red alder leaves.

Below: Look carefully into Sadie's Pool and you will see salmon fry. It's an ideal location for them: a side channel with a steady flow of fresh water not as swift as the main stream—and tree roots to hide under. They will stay in the creek until next year.



New growth (2/4):

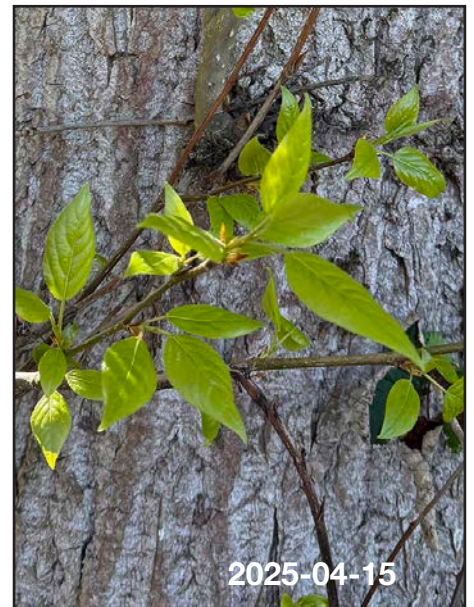


Clockwise from the top: beside the Bowl, buds on the Trail's only Golden-twigg dogwood, and another bud on the same shrub about a week later; a Wavy bittercress in bloom; a complex Red elderberry bud; and a Purple dead-nettle, a member of the mint family, near the Hearthstone entrance.

Bottom: near Bridge 6, these beautiful Trilliums make an appearance every year. However, they are not visible from the Trail, so you would probably never notice them on your walk.



New growth (3/4):



Clockwise from top left: a Salmonberry in a Dog Corral vestibule; a Bigleaf maple and a Cottonwood beside the Bowl; a Skunk cabbage near Bridge 5; a Periwinkle on Hemlock Hill, a White Icicle currant and a Red-flowering currant; and a Vine maple near the Latimer Street entrance.



New growth (4/4):



Top: escaped from a back yard on Hemlock Hill, a clump of Bistort; new leaves on the little Red oak; on the Straightaway, Oyster mushrooms on a dying Alder tree.

Left: the Trail's only Twinberry honeysuckle can be seen below The Forks.

Bottom left: a little bit of Pincushion moss growing on a fence rail (some maple flowers have fallen on one end).

Below: a busy little Furrow bee on a dandelion on Hemlock Hill. So far, it's been a little too cool for many other kinds of insects to be out foraging.



It would be nice to see these “eyesores” tidied up, but they won’t be due to Riparian Area regulations as explained on the following pages.



Riparian Areas:

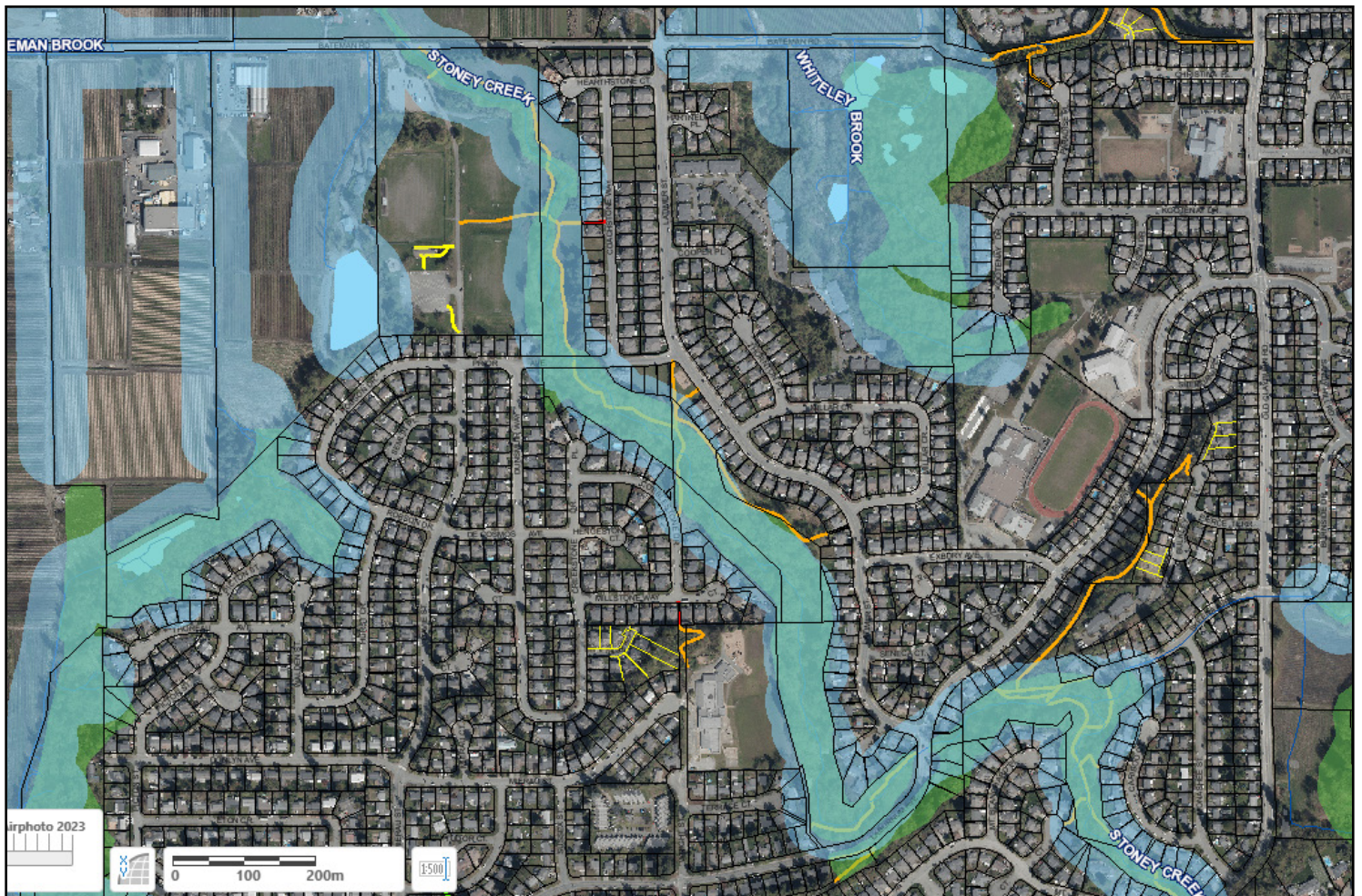
A Riparian Area is a zone of specified size bordering a stream, lake or wetland which has been set aside for the protection of fish habitat. It is important for several reasons:

- it provides habitat for wildlife;
- its vegetation slows and filters runoff water before it reaches the creek;
- it moderates water temperature (particularly important for salmon);
- it stabilizes the stream banks.

In 2005, following federal and provincial legislation, the Abbotsford City adopted the Streamside Protection Bylaw. It was required to protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development by ensuring that a **Qualified Environmental Professional** (QEP) conducts a science-based assessment of proposed activities.

Stoney Creek's riparian area extends 50 m from each bank. Within this zone, disturbing vegetation or water flow—and removing fallen trees or branches—is only permitted under special circumstances.

In the map below, the green area underlying the blue denotes the 'Sensitive Habitats' where Increased levels protection, as well as compensation, are required if disturbances occur there. Environmental consultants become involved when disturbances are proposed, helping to define the protection zones and appropriate methods of protection.



We're lucky...

It's good that we live in a city that is serious about the taking care of the environment. Abbotsford has been stepping up in many ways when it comes to sustainability, climate action, and protection of the natural world around us.

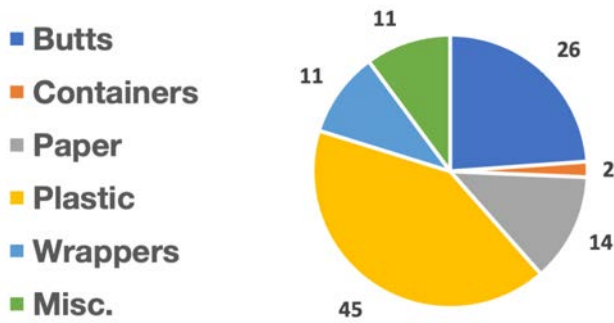
The city follows a system called ***natural asset management*** which makes use of natural features such as forests, wetlands, creeks, aquifers, and green spaces to help manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and purify water—instead of depending entirely on expensive infrastructure. They use setbacks called ***Streamside Protection and Enhancement Areas*** (SPEAs) to figure out how far buildings and roads need to stay from streams and wetlands.



Riparian areas are protected by three layers of regulation: the federal Fisheries Act, the provincial ***Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*** (RAPR), and municipal bylaws. The end result is the network of “green zones” along the many creeks, streams and rivers in the city, each playing a crucial role in keeping water clean and ecosystems healthy.

Abbotsford is showing that it's possible to grow as a city while still protecting the natural environment we all enjoy and depend on.

Litter Tally April 2025



Total litter items = 109

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

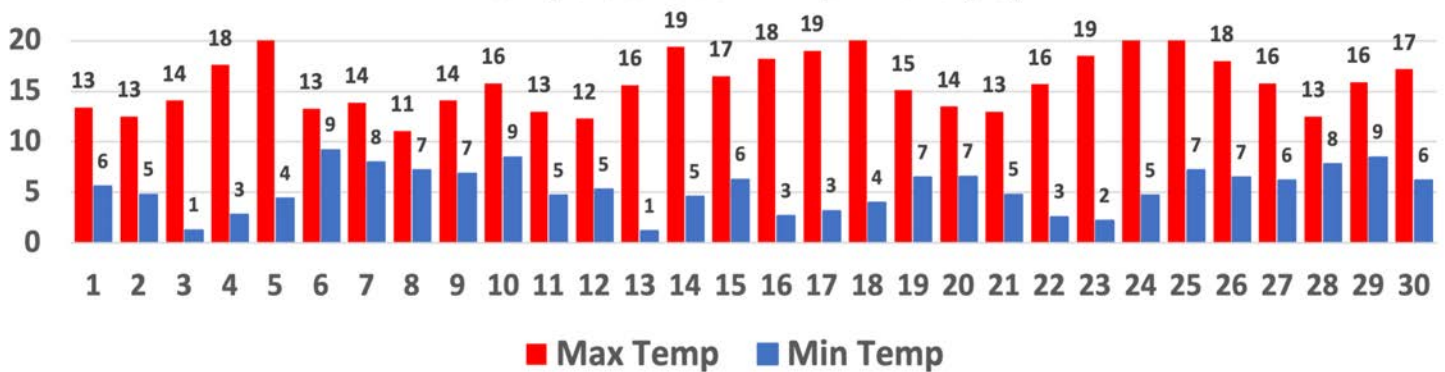
Paper: tissues, napkins, posters, newspaper, receipts, cardboard, etc.

Plastic: dog waste bags & shreds, other items made of plastic.

Wrappers: candy wrappers, foil, cellophane.

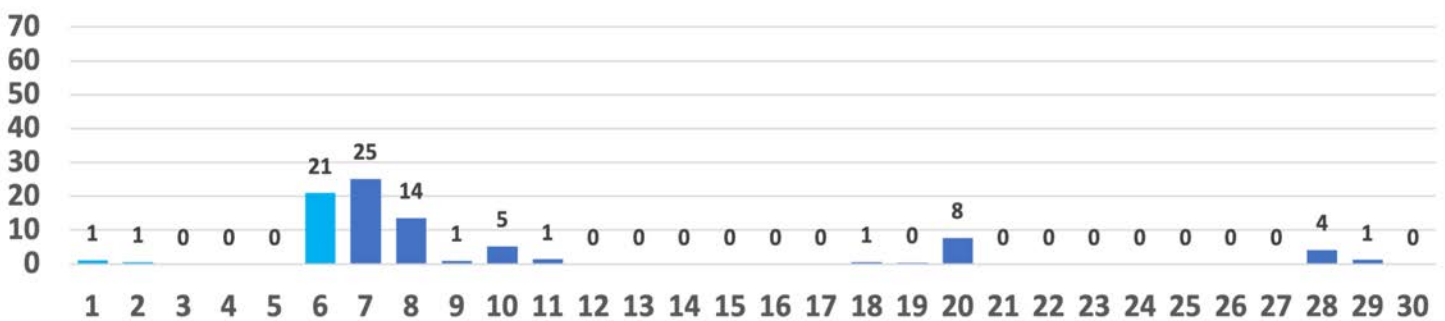
Miscellaneous: clothing, glass, chewing gum, dog balls & fragments, etc.

Air temperature at YXX April 2025 (°C)



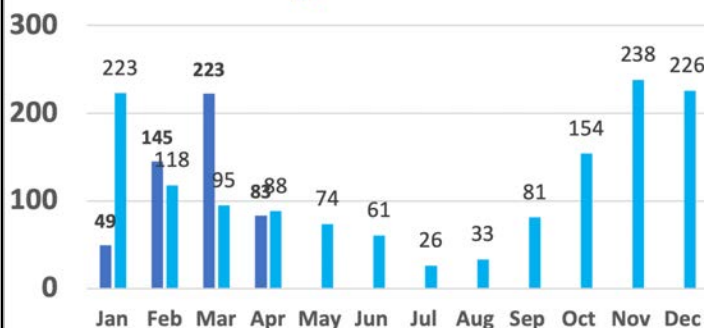
Precipitation at YXX April 2025

Total = 83.2 mm



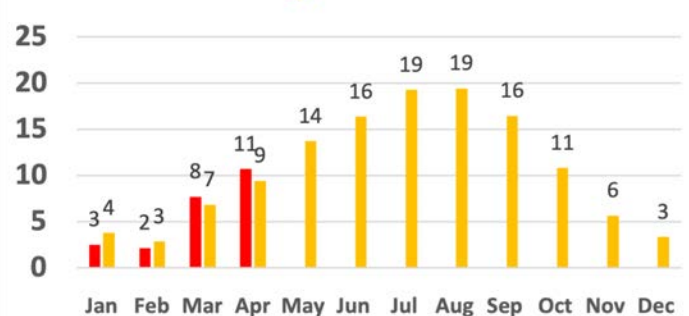
Precipitation in 2025 (mm)

Average: 2019-2024

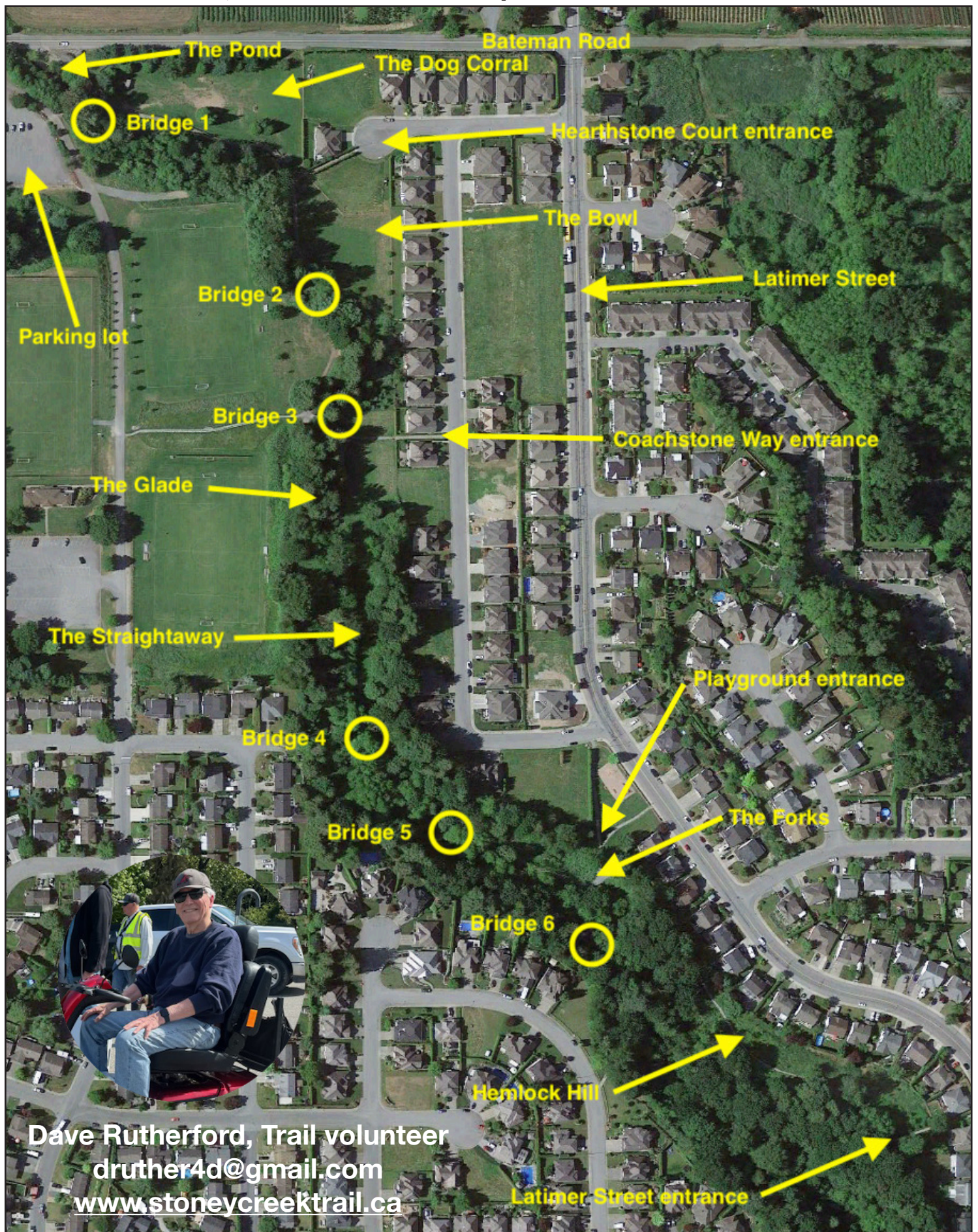


Average Temperatures in 2025

Average: 2019-2024



For convenience, I use these custom place-names:



You're invited to our annual Tree Planting Fundraiser

With Guest Speaker **Robyn Curtis**
of the Chilliwack Rotary Climate Action Group
Topic: Climate Conversations and Transformation



Date and place: Saturday, May 31/25

Trinity Memorial United Church
33737 George Ferguson Way, Abbotsford

Pot Luck Supper at 5:00 pm. followed by Robyn Curtis talk at 7:00 pm.
(Come for one or both!) This event includes a Silent Auction
and is by donation, with all funds raised to be used
to purchase trees for planting in city parks.

For further information, email donald15@telus.net

Sponsored by United Church Earth Stewards