

BC & AB Tour

This summer we are going to tour BC & Alberta, visit old friends and RV acquaintances and also visit those colleges that purchase Jen's legal textbooks, and those that don't. Because of this "business trip" agenda, I'm changing the format of our blog; rather than a day-to-day description to more of highlight-based one.

I hope it works and I hope you enjoy the change.

We left Vancouver Island via BC Ferries on Thursday June 6. We enjoyed breakfast on one of the newer ferries to the Duke Point/Tsawwassen run. Here we are coming into the ferry slip.



After three sales calls at colleges in and around Abbotsford, we were back on Hwy 1 heading for Hope, BC at the east end of the Fraser Valley. We stayed in Hope a couple of years ago in a regular RV park, but decided this trip to try the RV park right on the Fraser River in downtown Hope. We were very pleasantly surprised and will stay here again for sure.



I didn't try it, but can you make out the steep path to the sandy beach in this picture?





The next day, Friday June 7, we headed north through the Fraser Canyon, one of our favourite drives. If you are in a hurry, take the Coquihalla Hwy; if you aren't then the Fraser Canyon is definitely the way to go.

We stopped along the way and made coffee and by lunchtime, we were close to Lytton, Canada's hot spot in the summer. We ate our lunch in a small park overlooking the confluence of the mighty muddy Fraser and clear blue Thompson rivers.



At Cache Creek, where Hwy 1 heads east towards Alberta, we stayed on Hwy 97. After gassing up just at the north end of town, I suggested to Jen that we drive back to Dairy Queen for an ice cream. Standing in line waiting our turn, I noticed the price of a DQ ice cream cone: \$3.97!! I pointed this out to Jen who also thought the price was outrageous. We walked out of the store and back to the rig.

At 100 Mile House, we pulled into Save-on Foods and bought a small tub of Whiskey Dark Chocolate Truffle ice cream. In Ali, each armed with a spoon, we devoured our ice cream treat.

By mid-afternoon we arrived at my old chum's place, backed into our parking spot, and started catching up with Colin and Mary. It's been 2 years since we were last here; the forest fires last summer put the kybosh on

any visit last summer.

We're here for at least a week, so if anything really exciting happens, I will write about it.

Okay, it is Friday June 15 and we are off to the farm market in 100 Mile. When we are on the road, we really miss the Errington farm market where we pick up salad greens and veggies that last us the entire week. Well, we were in luck this morning – a small organic farm, just up the road from where Colin & Mary live, were at the farm market. So we're good for another week of salads.

The weather was warming so I suggested a walk around the Marsh. A paved path circles the marsh/lake. Along the way, this caught my eye.



Here's Jen under the sign board at the highway end of the loop.



Wildlife Viewing

100 MILE MARSH is situated along a major waterfowl migration flyway. The sanctuary provides rest and food for migrating Trumpeter Swan and Herring Gull during spring and fall flights. Canada Geese nest here, as well as several DIVING and DABBLING ducks. Each summer most adult ducks and geese MOLT - loose their flight and body feathers. For 6 weeks they are flightless until new "flight" (tail & wing) feathers replace the old. Preening ducks are a common sight at a marsh. Oil "urophygial" glands in the rump are important in waterproofing ducks. The duck passes its bill over its rump to squeeze out oil and wipes it over the feathers. Songbirds are abundant at the marsh. Watch for colourful Red Winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Watch too for the myriad of insects and aquatic vertebrates, essential to marsh life as food for the many birds.

DABLERS

Shallow water dwellers, dip up to soft vegetation. Dabblers rise directly off the water on "take off" so have a larger wing span than the divers. Examples: Gadwall, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Cootails, Wigeon, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, and Wood Ducks.

BEAVER

LARGEST RODENT in North America, build LODGES where they store their winter supply of food. Logs and sticks. Made of intermingled branches and plastered with mud to protect against water freezing and predators like wolf, wolverine, or lynx. These lodges consist of one main living compartment. Each lodge has an entry and exit. Both underwater. Logs from over 100 m away from the pond are slid down trails incident to the south end of the marsh to the pond. September is lodge building time, in fall beaver are busy harvesting and storing the winter's food.

DIVERS

Dive to the bottom to feed, make their nests in vegetation directly over the water or close to it. Their big paddle-like feet are used to help them take off by pushing over the surface of the water to assist takeoff. Hinge their webbed fingers to clear the water. Examples: Canada Duck, Lesser Scaup, Hairy's and Common Goldeneyes, Buff Orinot, Ruddy Ducks, Black Scaup, Harlequin Ducks, Goldeneyes.

BC Environment

British Columbia Wildlife Watch is a Ministry of Environment, Lands Parks program designed to promote viewing opportunities within British Columbia. The protection of Wildlife and their habitat and a positive, safe experience for the viewer are the primary objectives of this program. Many local communities, other agencies and public conservation groups are involved. For more information contact the BC Environment Office in Williams Lake at 398-4530.

During our walk, we'd seen a sign board with Centennial Falls park on it. We decided to go have a look—someplace new in 100 Mile where we haven't been.

At the top of the trail to the falls was this sign.



We walked down the trail; wild roses were everywhere.



A short distance later we walked beside the falls. At the bridge crossing the river below the falls I took this picture and the video.



Back at Colin & Mary's, we were invited for dinner Friday night (15th). As always we had an enjoyable dinner and chatted at length. We were mildly disappointed as Elliott, #2 son was supposed to be visiting this weekend. Unfortunately for us, his visit was cancelled at the last minute.

Saturday morning (16th) we departed for Clearwater. Before we left I took the opportunity to take some pictures. Here are Colin & Mary:



We drove south out of 100 Mile and turned left onto Hwy 24 to Little Fort. I was not looking forward to the 11 km, 8% hill that we have only driven up (in 2nd gear, and 1st gear closer to the summit). We've never gone down this hill.

Just when it was time for a coffee, the rest area overlooking Lac Des Roches appeared.



What a beautiful view. We got out the lawn chairs and sat admiring the view. But all too soon, we started to cook so back in the van and back on the highway.

We pulled into Janet & Dave's just before 2 p.m. and plugged in. Yes, we made it down the hill!

It's great to see them both; it's been 3 years. How time flies!

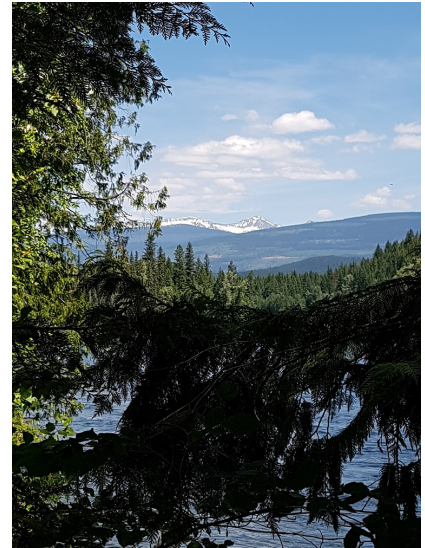
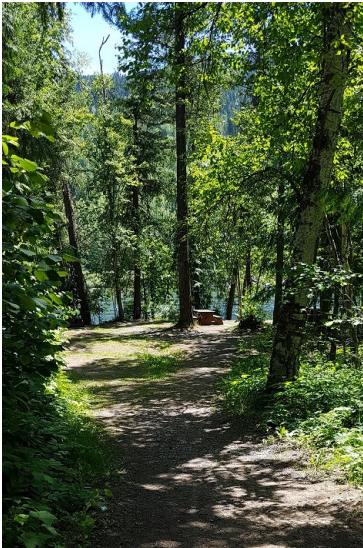


Saturday night, after our dinner, we joined Janet & Dave in their home. It was after 11 p.m. when we said good night. What a great couple.



Sunday morning Jen and I headed into Clearwater just to have a look around. On the way back we stopped at North Thompson Provincial Park.

We walked down to the picnic tables by the river and shared our chocolate croissant that we had picked up at the grocery store. Not too bad; I knew I should have bought 2!



Tomorrow, Monday June 18, we're heading for Paul Lake Provincial Park, in the hills just north of Kamloops. I'm not sure how long we'll stay as I have some college business to attend to in Kamloops in the next few days.

Check back in a few days to see where we go next.