May 2019 Flyer column

Depending on when and where you read your Flyer, online or on paper, you may have a week or two to plan where you want to be on Sunday, May 5. That would be 8425 Berray Road, the home of Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement society and the event will be The River Never Sleeps, FBS’ annual open house event. This year will have a record number, 45 exhibitors. You remember 45’s don’t you? Other records may be broken, like old 78’s, but in a nice way, like last years’ attendance of 632, or oysters barbie’d, opened and eaten, or coho smolts carried down to Rosewall Creek by the cutest bucket brigade in the world. If you’re younger than 33, all of these numbers may make no sense at all, but you’ll still have fun. See more information and no more phonographic content on our full page ad here in the Flyer. And we’ll see you Sunday.

Weather you remember it or not, February was wet and March dry, April some of both, and spring is here on the Island. Mother Nature came through it all about as well as she usually does. We can tell you that because the early returns from the society’s three counting stations are running even with last years’ and most of the years previous. On Cook Creek, 262 wild coho smolts had left our Relic Channel rearing ponds for salt water by mid-April. At Wilfred Creek’s fence and on Mud Bay Creek, the numbers match 2018’s so far. Stream life like caddis fly nymphs, a fish food, red legged frogs, a native species, and cutthroat trout also get caught and counted. At Wilfred, that counting operation this year is centered around a new welded aluminum fence built for FBSES by Carlisle Services on Holiday Road, and the Wilfred Creek Boys have a big shout out for Chester there. Still at Wilfred, the 750,000 pink eggs we received from the Quinsam River DFO hatchery have become fry and hightailed it for sea. 72,500 of them went by special delivery in our bubbler buckets from the hatchery direct to FBSES members Roger Chayer and Sandra Martindale’s place on Wilfred Creek, close to the estuary. The idea is being tried to see if it increases survival.

At Rosewall Creek, ponding is well underway. Even though our new brood stock fry go into our many fibreglass tanks, it’s ‘ponding’ because ‘tanking’ was already taken. Fish eggs hatch on a schedule determined by Accumulated Thermal Units—for chum, it’s how many days in cold water it takes to reach 900 or 1000 ATU. Because fish do their own thing, our first batch of chum fry were ‘buttoned up’ (had completely absorbed their egg sacs) at 731 ATU this year and so all 2680 early risers now have their own pond. Ponding time is like summer on the island— an endless flow of new house guests, but ours go into water filled tanks, not the spare bedroom. About 40,800 chum will be raised and released and the coho who started later will be right behind them but will stay longer. Expect all kinds of fascinating detail about what we do at FBSES when you read the Flyer, and come and see us on Sunday, May 5 between 10 and three. Or visit Wednesday or Saturday mornings, or at fbses.ca

(Caption material for 7084.jpg)

The first chum fry of 2019 leave a small floating enclosure for their new home. Supervising are from left, hatchery co-managers Jens Johansen and Rosemary Sparham, FBSES president Judy Ackinclose, and member Janet Haigh.