

The Elm Park Jack Newsletter – Crow Hole Edition



Open draws extended

A two-week extension has been granted to Kerrisdale club members, who may wish to continue to take advantage of an open draw into October.

Use of the club's online register will cease at the end of this month but a draw on Thursday, Oct. 1 will go forward to finish off the week. Be advised that there will be no open draw on Sunday, Oct. 4.

As well, open draws will also be offered on the two consecutive Saturdays on Oct. 3 and Oct. 10 before the greens will be closed for the season shortly after Thanksgiving. These extra games are all weather dependant.

In the absence of online registration, interested members and associate members can email their intentions to take in the following Saturday draws to Tom Berridge at suphinnakutnok@hotmail.com.



The problem with crows

The American crow is widely considered to be amongst the most intelligent of birds.

Wildbirdwatching.com also uses the adjectives resourceful and mischievous to describe this most common species of bird that can

be found throughout North America.

Crows are opportunistic feeders and will eat almost anything. During the nesting season, crows are known to prey on the eggs of songbirds and even their hatchlings. Given half a chance, the crow will also feed on small mammals and reptiles, as well as carrion.

However, the common crow is more likely to supplement its diet with insects, seeds, nuts, fruit, worms and, not surprisingly, on our improperly disposed of garbage. But in late summer, there appears to be other tasty morsels, imbedded in the lush green at Elm Park that tempts this remarkable bird.



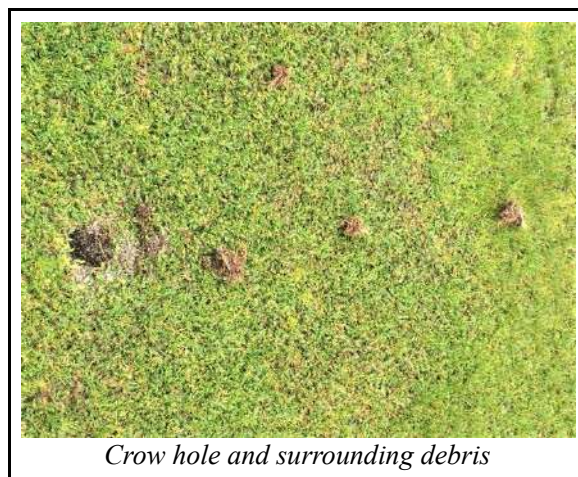
Chafer beetles, crane flies, or leatherjackets as they are commonly called, and many other insect pests are at their worst nuisance in late July and into August, when they emerge from their pupae stage and lay eggs in the ground soon after hatching. It is no surprise then that the damage to the green from hungry crows is at its greatest during that more than a month-and-a-half period that can even extend into the early days of September.

At its peak, many dozen destructive stabbings from probing beaks scar the finely cut Elm Park green each day. It is both a frustration and a trial for the greenskeepers to adequately repair the scores of holes found daily so that members can enjoy an afternoon of bowling.

What can be done?

Well, the short answer to that question is, very little. Mother Nature has its purpose and crows, no matter how you may feel about them, are quite simply taking advantage of an available food source that ensures their survival.

The best defence is to keep the green healthy and well maintained. What else is needed is a dogged determination to keep the crow holes filled so that the grass can regrow properly.



With that in mind, it would be useful for all club members to be familiar with the basics of Crow Hole Filling 101.

Although it's not rocket science, there is a proper way to go about filling potentially damaging holes to the green.

Firstly and most importantly, accumulate all the grass debris that has been torn out of the hole and tossed about the green by the assailing crow. Depending on the bird, the debris may have been thrown as much as three feet away from the site of attack

Once all the individual bits of excavated material have been collected, compress the loose grass material into a tight ball and pack it firmly into the bottom of the hole.

When the debris is sufficiently compacted in the hole as deeply as it can go, then proceed to fill the remaining cavity with clean sand, which is kept in a bucket in the tool shed for that very purpose.

When the hole is full, tap the sandy pile to the level of the grass so that it is even with the surrounding green.



The wrong way to fill a crow hole



Crow-hole filling is not as simple as it looks. An improperly filled hole will not stay together for long.

Poorly compacted debris will expand as it dries out and eventually push its way back to the surface of the hole along with the surrounding sand, which is easily displaced in the upheaval.

The messy mix of sand and sod debris in a loosely filled crow hole is also easy pickings for lazy crows, who will pull apart the insecure leavings easily in search of grubs.

Perfect attendance

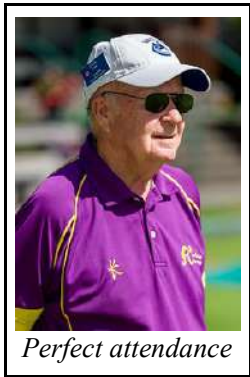
As the outdoor bowling season nears its end, time to thank the Kerrisdale members, who made this difficult year both possible and pleasurable.

A long distance thank you, of course, to our departed former treasurer David Smith, who got us successfully back on the green.

Thank you as well to David Goddard for keeping the greens sufficiently watered and mowed, and looking wonderfully green and healthy looking



throughout a season that saw minimal maintenance paid to it due to modest available funding.



Perfect attendance

A tip of the hat to the club monitors, including Alice Kwan and Peter Lee, who gave their time all summer so that Kerrisdale members could come out each week and enjoy the green.

To the many members, who followed the COVID protocols and took advantage of the weekly open draws, the club thanks you, too. Your participation made a crazy year feel almost normal.

And lastly to club member Don Young, who came out to nearly every available open session this summer, a virtual perfect attendance pat on the back to you.

We hope to see everyone back on the Elm Park green next season, when hopefully life returns to near normal. Until then stay safe.

PIBC hoping for late October return to play

The Pacific Indoor Bowling Club is awaiting word from Bowls BC on its submitted Phase 2 plan for returning to intra-club league play.

A positive response from the provincial body could result in the Little Mountain area indoor club holding regularly scheduled league games as early as the end of October.



Pacific Indoor

Once Phase 2 has gained approval, PIBC will charge a one-time annual membership fee of \$126, including GST, plus an additional \$20 for each individual league signed up for whether in the fall or subsequent spring seasons.



Here's to better days ahead