<u>Context:</u> Gabriola, creeks, swamps

<u>Citation</u>: Doe, Nick, Fish and babbling brooks, *SHALE* 24, pp.46–7, June 2010 (rev. Feb.25, 2012)

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Errors and omissions:

Note this is a revision of the original printed version.

Reference:

Maps showing the location of wetlands and watercourses on Gabriola are at: <u>http://www.nickdoe.ca/pdfs/Webp661.pdf</u>

Date posted:

February 25, 2012

Fish and babbling brooks—by Nick Doe

So far as I know there aren't any wild freshwater fish on Gabriola, and it's questionable as to whether there ever were,¹ but I came across an old surface-water usage report recently that says that at one time, two of the creeks on Gabriola had, or were stocked, with fish.

Of Goodhue Creek, which flows into and out (southeast) of the Commons Land, the report says: "Goodhue Creek inlet channel to Hoggan Lake is a spawning bed for Rainbow Trout."

Of Mallett Creek, which flows into Cox's Bay, it says, "Mallett Creek maintains a stocked population of Cutthroat fish."

Many of the old names of creeks and wetlands are falling out of use. In addition to the two above, the report mentions

<u>Brooks</u>: Castell, Dick, Ike (I. MacKay), Jacqueline (J. Sears), Martin, Pam, Wagg

<u>Creeks</u>: Eppler, Francesco, Hoggan, Jenkins, McLay (McClay), McCormack, Stoney (*formerly* Rock), South Road

<u>Springs</u>: Chapel (which is not Chapple), Chapple, Claude (C. Campbell), Darling, Easthom, Farrow, Fiddlehead, Harold, Lobo (Loraine & Bob Weir), Lucas, Pam (*aka* McCall), Rowson, Vicki (V. Larson), Wagg, Windecker

<u>Swamps</u>: Eppler, Ingeberg, McCormack, McGuffies, and Toadeye.

There was also on old maps Dicks Swamp (the Great Swamp) and Dutchmans Swamp (Eppler Swamp, *aka* Epps Pond). The little book, *Gabriola Island Place Names* by Aula Bell and Neil Aitken adds Atkinson Swamp and Descanso Creek. There are at least five creeks running into Degnen Bay. Two have names, Martin Brook and Wagg Brook. The other three I call Gray Farm Creek, Degnen Bay Road Creek, and Belvedere Farm Creek.

This long list of names is a testament to how important water was to the settler farmers. Francesco Creek (Brook), which flows in a northeasterly direction into Clark Bay from Harold Spring, was probably used by Spanish naval officers Galiano and Valdés to re-supply their ships, *Sutil* and *Mexicana*, with freshwater in 1792. ◊

¹ Tim Brown, who was born on the island, recalls fishing in Castell Brook as a boy.