There are several sure signs of fall; Halloween stuff in Costco in August, back to school ads for game consoles, and the sudden availability of ferry reservations even on weekends. For everyone at FBSES, fall brings an increased pace of work vital to our fish.

You may have seen some Fanny Bay volunteers doing strange things to some pretty flowers in Steele and Ackinclose creeks in our area, and Deep Bay Creek. They are tearing out yellow flag-iris, *Iris pseudacorus,* which despite the fact that you can buy it at nurseries, is bad for streams it infests. It outcompetes cattails, sedges and rushes with its thickets of tall, strong plants with sword like leaves and those showy flowers on top of heavy matted roots that can block small streams like ours and make things difficult for salmon fry. Too much wood debris isn’t good either, especially in culverts and little Apple-Cherry creek, near the firehall, got some TLC from the FBSES, and PDQ, too.

While your neighborhood salmonid enhancement volunteer is a fine fellow or girl, leaping tall buildings at a single bound, etc., they can’t do everything. We get help from some equally committed folks at Project Watershed. Dan Bowen and Jennifer Sutherst of the group told us at a recent talk why they’re important to us; they plant the good stuff in the estuaries and shorelines that our fry need to hide in and feed around. Bowen told us that they are planting and restoring the eelgrass, saltmarshes and kelp beds from Oyster river to Annie Creek including our faves in the FB area from the Tsable river to McNaughten creek. Part of the reason for the talk was to learn from us and get our co-operation and they have that. When a fry or smolt heads out into the estuary he’s looking for that eelgrass and kelp and he needs to find it before something finds him. Their website is [www.projectwatershed.ca](http://www.projectwatershed.ca)

Benthic macroinvertibrates are what we all call bugs for short, but in the streams, fry and smolts call them breakfast, lunch and dinner. FBSES volunteers are always willing to learn some new tricks, and we picked up some in a lecture and lab with Registered Profession Biologist Dave Clough recently. After a class session featuring a slide show of stoneflies, caddisflies, riffle beetles and mayflies, and more, with their legs, (many), antennas, tails, gills, and feelers it was time to go out into Rosewall Creek and find all of the above. You do this by walking up a stream with a very fine small net and turning over rocks underwater—this is best done in pairs—and then examining what you catch in the net with a strong magnifier. And there they are, gourmet bugs for salmon. Stream health

Finally, unless you have tickets now, one big fall event on September 29th, the Pacific Salmon Foundation dinner in Courtenay is out of reach. The dinner will be the 14th annual, and the tickets, auctions and raffles generated $41,000 in 2017 for Comox Valley salmonid enhancement groups. FBSES president Judy Ackinclose has been involved in all of them, the last eight as chairperson.

[www.fbses.ca](http://www.fbses.ca)