



The Nature Trust of British Columbia

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Natural Legacy

A newsletter on how
The Nature Trust
works to conserve
ecologically significant areas
in British Columbia

Issue #17 — Summer 2002



WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER — ENDANGERED



Rare forested-dune lands secured on Savary Island

In February 2002, The Nature Trust secured a half interest in 147 hectares (363 acres) of land on Savary Island. Savary Island is located in the northern Gulf Islands approximately 30 kilometres northwest of Powell River.

Tom Lester, Executive Director of The Nature Trust, says, "This is truly a significant conservation achievement. It will ensure the unique and sensitive forested-dune complex on Savary Island, and its associated rare plant communities and insects, will be protected for future generations of British Columbians to enjoy."

The purchase was made possible through significant contributions from the federal and provincial governments through the Pacific Marine Heritage

Legacy Fund and the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative. In addition to donating funds for the purchase, The Nature Trust also facilitated a complex series of negotiations on behalf of its partners which resulted in the successful acquisition of the Savary Island property.

The forested-dune complex on Savary Island has long been viewed by various governments and private conservation groups as a priority area requiring conservation. Hence, the acquisition by The Nature Trust is a critical step in saving this rare part of British Columbia's natural

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Forested Dunes: This special ecosystem is home to a number of endangered and vulnerable plant communities and insect species.

Savary Island waterfront property donated to Trust

Dick Whittall and John Nichol, two long-time residents of Savary Island, have generously donated an ecologically significant five hectare (12-acre) waterfront property on the island to The Nature Trust under the federal government's eco-gift program.

The property has over 400 metres of spectacular waterfront and contains some of the last remaining stands of old growth Douglas fir and mature Western Red Cedar on the island.

This property was originally acquired by Dick Whittall and Elizabeth Nichol in order to protect valuable waterfront from development. Mrs. Nichol passed away in 2000.

Commenting on the donation, Dick Whittall said, "Both John and I have been very interested in conserving this land on Savary Island as it represents a unique part of the island's natural heritage. We were delighted to work with members of

The Nature Trust staff to ensure that this land will be conserved forever."

John Nichol said, "I know that Elizabeth would have been very pleased that we have been able to save this land for future generations to enjoy."

The Whittall/Nichol property lies adjacent to the other recently acquired parcel on Savary Island. Their land formed a critical part of The Nature Trust's strategy to acquire the larger area.



A Savary Treat: Beautiful Savary Island shows off its glory on an equally spectacular west coast day. This property, donated by Dick Whittall and John Nichol, two island residents, was instrumental in the negotiations to acquire 147 hectares (363 acres) of forested-dune land.

400 hectares (988 acres) in size and characterized by gently sloping terrain, with a moderate slope or high sand cliffs near water frontages. The vegetation consists primarily of second-growth, mixed coniferous forest, inter-mixed with open grass-dominated benches and sand dunes.

This acquisition provides one of the best examples in Canada of an intact coastal-dune eco-system. Along with the dunes is a unique sequence of plant communities including beach, dune meadow and older forest. There are examples on the property of four Red-Listed (endangered or threatened) and one Blue-Listed (vulnerable) plant communities associated with the dune environments. In addition, there are nine uncommon plant species, and one Blue-Listed species of moss that have been recorded on Savary Island.

Discussions with B.C. Parks are now underway to develop a long term management plan for the area.

In developing a management plan, consideration will be given to the unique nature of the forest dunes, its sensitivity to disturbance, and to the needs and interests of the local community. *



Pacific Estuary Conservation Program and BC Hydro protect more Salmon River Estuary habitat

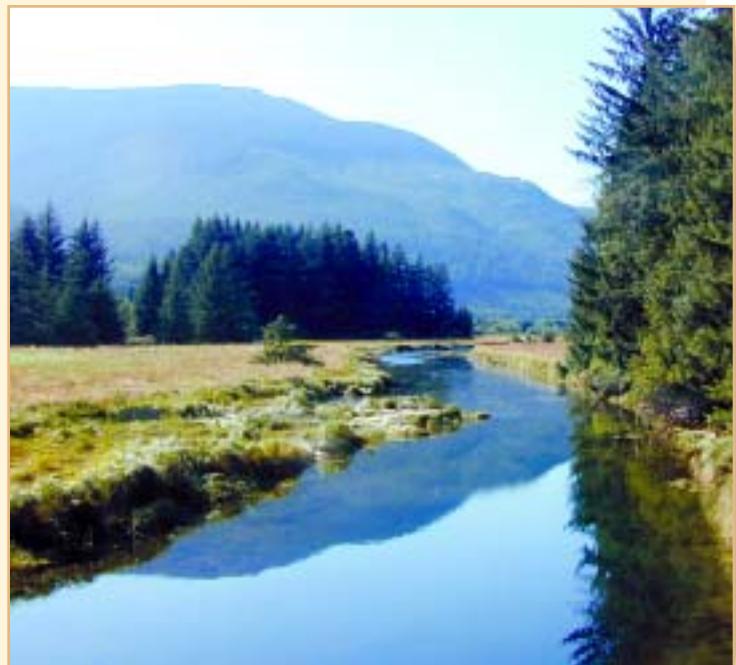
Led by The Nature Trust of British Columbia and Ducks Unlimited, the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program announced the purchase of an additional 46 hectares (114 acres) of critical habitat in the Salmon River Estuary. The Salmon River is located approximately 90 kilometres north of Campbell River on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

In addition to funding provided by The Nature Trust and Ducks Unlimited, the Salmon River habitat acquisition was assisted by significant grants from The Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, BC Hydro's Coastal Restoration Program and Environment Canada's Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative. This new purchase adds to the existing 59 hectares (146 acres) of Salmon River estuary habitat previously acquired by The Nature Trust and its partners.

The Salmon River supports runs of six species of Pacific salmon, as well as sea-run cutthroat. This latest land purchase secures critical salmon-rearing habitat within both the Salmon River estuary and the adjacent floodplain. The acquisition of these lands, consisting of tidal sloughs and mature coastal forest habitat, ensures permanent protection of a network of corridors for fish and other wildlife to reach the upstream portions of the Salmon River watershed.

The Salmon River Estuary also provides crucial resting habitat to thousands of waterfowl during the spring and fall coastal migrations. It is home to Trumpeter Swans, Roosevelt Elk, Bald Eagles, Great Blue Herons and Marbled Murrelets.

Efforts to acquire this property began in 1980 with initial negotiations led by former Nature Trust Chair, Bert Hoffmeister. Now, 22 years later, patient work by The Nature Trust and Ducks Unlimited has resulted in securing a parcel that Doug Janz—regional Wildlife Section Head for the Ministry of Water, Lands and Air Protection—describes as “essential to the long-term conservation of salmon, migratory



Sultry Salmon: The Salmon River is named well; its estuary supports all six main species of salmon on the west coast, as well as Cutthroat trout.

waterfowl and other wildlife in the Salmon River Estuary.”

Over the next year, The Nature Trust staff will develop a land-management plan in consultation with the Hamalata Treaty Society prior to establishing a long-term lease for the property with the province. “We look forward to working with The Nature Trust to ensure the significant ecological and cultural values of these lands are sustained,” said Chief Ernest Hardy of the Comox Indian Band. Future habitat enhancement activities on-site will be overseen by The Nature Trust’s Tim Clermont, Land Manager for Vancouver Island. *

Scudder, Speer and Walker new Board directors

The Nature Trust has recently appointed three new directors to its Board.

Dr. Geoff Scudder, former Head of the Department of Zoology at the University of British Columbia, was appointed to the Board in December. Dr. Scudder is one of Canada's foremost zoologists, with research interests in biosystematics—the study of how life arranges itself over time—and biodiversity analysis, as well as in the ecology and evolution of aquatic insects. Dr. Scudder has served on numerous boards and committees, including Acting Chair of the Canadian Biodiversity Science Board.

Peter Speer was also appointed to the board of The Nature Trust in December.

Speer was a former partner at the accounting and management firm Pricewaterhouse-

Coopers, and has extensive experience in auditing private- and public-sector enterprises. He has also sat on numerous community boards, includ-



Dr. Geoff Scudder



Peter Speer

ing that of the Vancouver Symphony Society. He is also a trustee of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Jim Walker was appointed to the board in April. Walker is known for his expertise in wildlife management and land-use management. He's held several senior positions with the provincial government, including Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, and Director of Wildlife.

Jim was a leader in developing a number of major provincial initiatives, including the Forest Practices Code, the Urban Fish Strategy, the Grizzly Bear Strategy and the Protected Area Strategy. *



Jim Walker

ety of community initiatives, such as the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, as well as for the disabled children's riding program of the Southlands Riding and Polo Club in Vancouver.

For 27 years, Oswald worked tirelessly as an experienced fundraiser for the United Way of the Lower Mainland, where he encouraged donors to give at consistently higher levels, and where he established a successful, annual planned-gift program.

Kip Woodward, Chair of The Nature Trust, said, "Patrick has a proven track record. Additionally, he brings with him a new perspective to the organization, which will build on the historical success-

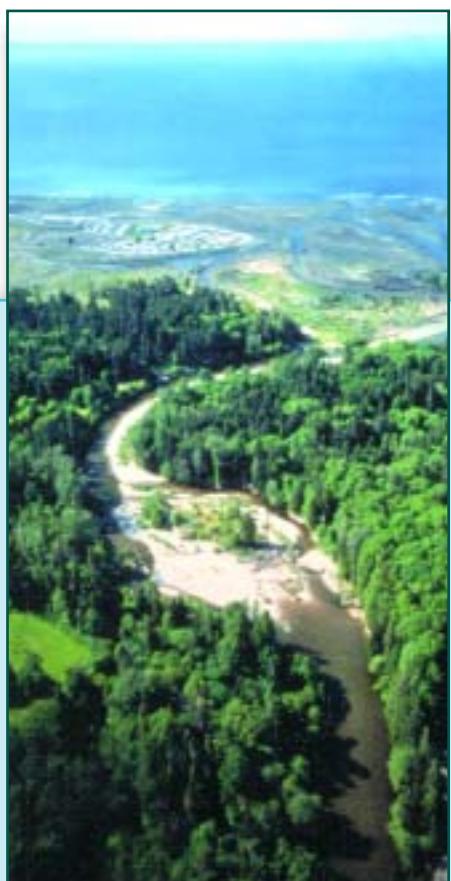


Patrick Oswald

Experienced fundraiser joins The Nature Trust

Patrick Oswald has been appointed to The Nature Trust as Manager of Planned Giving and Major Gifts.

One of Canada's foremost fundraisers, Oswald's work in this field began in the 1960s, when he raised money for a vari-



Down to the sea it slips: The Englishman River has become a high priority for fish-habitat rehabilitation.

Englishman River conservation efforts expanded

In a unique partnership with local, provincial and federal government agencies and other conservation organizations, The Nature Trust is expanding its conservation efforts on the Englishman River, one of the premier river systems on Vancouver Island.

The ultimate goal of this partnership is to conserve the Englishman River and to restore its salmon and steelhead fisheries to historical levels. When combined with the recently designated Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area (WMA), this will create a 40 kilometre conservation corridor of ocean, beach, estuary, creek, river, natural falls and forest-land habitats that is protected in perpetuity. Such a habitat-conservation corridor would be unparalleled in BC.

From its headwaters to its estuary, the Englishman River has seen dramatic changes over the past century.

Extensive logging, along with other industrial and residential development within the watershed, has negatively impacted a variety of fish species. Steelhead and Coho salmon, once abundant, are now on the endangered-species list for the Englishman River. The significant decline in local fish populations has resulted in The Pacific Salmon Foundation designating the Englishman River as one of several high-priority river systems in British Columbia requiring fish-habitat rehabilitation.

The Pacific Salmon Foundation, the province's major charitable protector and advocate for Pacific salmon resources, has prepared a rehabilitation plan for the riv-

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— Englishman: continued from page 3

er and is now prepared to provide significant funding for fish-habitat restoration and enhancement. Preservation of riparian habitats and forestland buffers will be essential to ensure current habitat restoration efforts are successful to rebuild local fish populations.

Over the past 20 years, The Nature Trust has worked with other conservation partners to acquire key estuary and riparian woodlands along the Englishman. Indeed, most of the estuary is owned by The Nature Trust, and serves as a critical part of the WMA. Directly upstream of nearby Top Bridge Park lies more than 520 hectares (1,285 acres) of riparian and

forested uplands that are for sale.

A key objective of the Englishman River Conservation Strategy is to secure more riparian habitat along the river. These habitats contain old-growth Douglas fir, as well as mixed coniferous and deciduous forests, which help buffer the Englishman River by providing important food, shade, and cover for salmon and other fish species, as well as providing flood protection and bank stability, along with regulating runoff.

The diversity of the riparian woodlands found along the Englishman River also provide good roosting and nesting sites for a wide variety of birds including the Northern Goshawk and the Great Blue Heron, as well as a variety of wood-

peckers and sapsuckers. This area acts as a corridor and transitional area which allows Black Bear, Cougar, Black-Tailed Deer and Roosevelt Elk safe access to the river and valuable food resources. Species at risk which are known to use the Englishman River corridor include: Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Turkey Vulture, Roosevelt Elk, Townsend Big-eared Bat, Water Shrew, Red Legged Frog, Coastal Cutthroat Trout, Steelhead, Coho Salmon and Chinook Salmon.

The Nature Trust is taking the lead role in launching a campaign with its partners to raise funds to aid in the acquisition and management of key riparian habitat along the Englishman River. ☀

The Nature Trust of British Columbia

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Chairman of the Board

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How To Help The Nature Trust of British Columbia

The Nature Trust is a charity (#10808 9863 RR000) dedicated to conserving areas of ecological significance in British Columbia, a province of remarkable natural diversity far exceeding that of any other in Canada. Sixty-two percent of Canada's forest types, and 75% of the country's bird and mammal species, inhabit British Columbia.

Our Legacy: In 1971, the Federal Government granted \$4.5 million to The Nature Trust, and the income is used to conserve areas of ecological significance in the province. The Nature Trust and its partners in conservation have invested more than \$45 million since 1971. This money has secured 141 acquisitions over 17,000 ha (42,000 acres) and an additional 41,000 ha (101,000 acres) under Crown tenure. All of this British Columbian land is strategically located environmentally, thus creating a legacy of grassland, marsh, forest and mountainous lands that protect the plant and wildlife species they nurture.

Our Work: We identify important areas of the province—alone or in co-operation with individuals, groups or government—then acquire key lands through gift or purchase. We then lease the land under 99-year agreements for nominal charges to government or private agencies on condition the property is preserved and protected as a site of ecological interest—and we retain ownership to ensure this is so. We also encourage private and government sectors to set aside important areas as well. The Nature Trust encourages public use of our lands, where it's consistent with our objectives.

Donations: We make it as easy as possible for you to work with us. Our funds come from a variety of sources, primarily from the donations of individuals, foundations, corporations and governments—people like you who also see the importance of our work. We maintain *The Nature Trust Open Fund* at the Vancouver Foundation; please call us for details. Of course, it's easiest to make donations directly to us, by cheque or by credit card—*Visa*, *American Express* or *MasterCard*—simply by phoning us (604-924-9771) and providing information for your tax receipt. If that is a long-distance call for you, please use our toll-free number, 1-866-288-7878 (1-866-28TRUST), or write to our address.



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