

BEYOND Birds, Bats and Frogs!

Where can you find birds, bats, frogs and many other wild creatures just a short distance from downtown Squamish? At a recently completed 13-acre conservation project in the Squamish estuary.

“By protecting this land from urban development and sustaining the biodiversity, this property will provide values as a wetland,” said Doug Walker, CEO of The Nature Trust, “including water filtration, wildlife habitat, open space and greenway corridor, and opportunities for the community to enjoy nature in its backyard.”

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is pleased to announce the acquisition of this land along Cattermole Creek between the recently established Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area and the District of Squamish. Partners include Ducks Unlimited Canada, CN, District of Squamish, BC Trust for Public Lands and Capilano University.

The Squamish estuary property has been acquired for a number of conservation purposes including:

- ◆ to protect important bird habitat with 207 species identified using the estuary,
- ◆ to provide habitat for species such as coastal tailed and red-legged frog, Pacific water shrew and Townsend's big-eared bat
- ◆ to protect property with excellent estuarine values which have been effective in the rehabilitation of Howe Sound,
- ◆ to provide a buffer to the new Wildlife Management Area and
- ◆ to provide public access for students at Capilano University to study ecology and the community to enjoy trails and learn from information kiosks.

“The Nature Trust acquisition is a great example of how people can work together to benefit the future of the community,” said Casey Dorin, Capilano University's dean of Howe Sound and Tourism programs. “Hats off to that organization and to all its partners for ensuring that this land will be preserved forever and for all to enjoy.”



Squamish Estuary

The Nature Trust Campaign

Sustaining Nature for Future Generations



You can help sustain nature for future generations

See Page 2

IMMEDIATE Priorities

Okanagan River

- ◆ valued for riparian habitat
Fundraising Goal \$87,000

Slocan River

- ◆ property valued for habitat for birds
Fundraising Goal \$250,000

Heart of the Fraser property IV

- ◆ valued for fish and wildlife habitat
Fundraising Goal \$132,000

Land Management

- ◆ caring for a treasured area of BC
see pages 4 & 5

The Nature Trust Campaign

Sustaining Nature for Future Generations

Keeping the land's immune system healthy will ultimately keep human beings and our wild neighbours healthy, too.

Land conservation is one of the most effective tools we have to sustain BC's biodiversity. For over 37 years, The Nature Trust of BC has been leading the way by acquiring ecologically significant land and then managing it to ensure it is resilient to change.

In order to meet our commitment to sustain nature for future generations, we have launched a major fundraising initiative to raise \$15 million. Visit our website for more ways to become part of the solution www.naturetrust.bc.ca



Heather Holden, Campaign Chair

"I have given my largest personal gift to this campaign because I know nature needs our help. I hope you will join me and others who also want to be part of the solution. I would like to share with you a story about a loving family who lost their son and are creating a legacy gift in his memory as part of our campaign (see page opposite)."

Dr. Heather Holden is a Wealth Advisor with ScotiaMcLeod. She has a varied background with a PhD from the University of Waterloo in the field of satellite remote sensing—she used statistics and modelling to analyze change in coral reef health from space. She worked as a professor at the National University of Singapore before moving to Vancouver in 2003. In 2005 Heather was elected to the Vancouver Park Board and served as Chair in the first year of her term. She is a Director of The Nature Trust of BC.



If you would like to donate in memory of someone or in honour of a special milestone (birthday, retirement, anniversary, wedding), we would be happy to send a card acknowledging your support.

You can donate via credit card with a one time or monthly gift. You can consider a pledge over a number of years to make your donation manageable. We would be happy to discuss options with you.



Our Tony, 1957-2006

By Dick and Peggy Cartledge

The Tony Cartledge Fund of The Nature Trust of BC is a living legacy to our son. Tony will always have a special place in our hearts. We are focused now on taking this positive step in loving memory of him. It helps our healing.

Tony's love of nature defined him. The Nature Trust of BC Conservation Youth Crews will continue Tony's love for nature, and his efforts to conserve which were formed by his creative improvisations.

The Conservation Youth Crew Program is a perfect fit for remembering Tony. Tony helped and worked with autistic children in Delta. Later he worked for the Prince George Brain Injured Society. In Dick's own words, *"Tony certainly was not lily-white by any standards, but he sure helped a lot of people through some tough times."*

Tony was happiest when he was working outdoors. He collected windfalls which he dragged down to his house where he had a stump set up to chop the harvest into logs and

kindling. He was warmed twice; when he gathered and chopped the wood, dried and stored it; again when he sat on his big kitchen chair by his black iron potbelly stove. The little stove and Tony glowed peacefully in those moments.

Tony's house, a winterized Atco trailer, was snuggled among the trees on his 10-acre woodland property near Prince George. Inside were a big friendly sitting room/kitchen, a bedroom, and a storage room. He took great pride in his home.

Tony made a stave fence surrounding a vegetable garden which was also a source of fresh herbs to supply the kitchen. A friend gave him a small flower garden. He made a flagstone pathway through the garden. He took pride in his home. In the autumn of 2000 we visited Tony; his homestead was well cared for. A creative guy, he did so much with so little; he improvised in a creative way with whatever nature provided.

Tony was vibrant and human; he wrestled with his own troubles in life. He was loved.



In Honour of Loved Ones

The Nature Trust is pleased to receive gifts in honour of loved ones. Jane McLennan, Connie Graham and Sheila Ross have joined Hilary and Patrick Oswald, Leadership Giving, in donating to the Campaign in honour of Hume McLennan, John and David Graham. Hume, John and David loved the coast of BC and were passionate boaters. The Nature Trust greatly appreciates these memorial gifts to conserve our treasure of a province.



CARING for the Land

There is an assumption that conservation land can look after itself but that is not the case. Land acquisition is the first step. But then we must turn our focus to management.

Pressures on conservation properties include climate change, invasive weeds introduced from other locations, intentional or unintentional damage such as cutting trees, and unauthorized use by people and animals such as cattle and fire suppression which encourages forest encroachment on the grasslands. In order to maintain and enhance what nature can provide, land management is critical.

The job is both complex and critical. At The Nature Trust we begin with a detailed 5-year land management plan for each property outlining how we will care for it in relation to other conservation projects in the vicinity.

Land management involves habitat restoration, providing community education and undertaking on-the-ground work such as wildlife monitoring, invasive weed removal and access management. This is done in collaboration with all levels of government, First Nations, many other conservation organizations and various stewardship groups.

The Nature Trust has three regional Land Managers based on Vancouver Island, the South Okanagan and the East Kootenay. Their time is divided between administration and field work. Administrative work includes meetings with other conservation groups

and municipal governments, and involvement on regional conservation programs. Field work includes overseeing the summer Conservation Youth Crews, introducing people of all ages to Nature Trust properties such as Scouts, naturalist groups and wildlife festival participants. One of the advantages of having a regional presence is that the manager can respond quickly to local issues.

The Nature Trust is completely committed to maintaining the conservation integrity of the land entrusted to us for future generations.



Left to right: Ivar Larson, Nature Trust Director Carmen Purdy holding donation of \$5,000 from Carl Larson Enterprises Ltd., Lance Larson and Land Manager Rob Neil.



Rob Neil, R.P. Bio, is a habitat conservation biologist with 28 years of operational experience in fish, wildlife, wildlife habitat, forestry and range management. He brings extensive experience in the areas of Forest Ecosystem, Regional Habitat, Fisheries, Planning and Habitat Conservation. Rob's duties as East Kootenay Conservation Land Manager encompass being The Nature Trust local representative in the Kootenays, coordinating all aspects of site management including preparation and execution of ecologically based Management Plans, and supporting local community and outreach activities.



Carl MacNaughton

"I am a fifth generation South Okanagan resident. My grandparents were farmers, ranchers, orchardists and naturalists. I grew up in a rural area hiking, camping and learning all about local plants and animals. I studied environmental science at Royal Roads in Victoria and then volunteered with wildlife biologists to gain practical experience. In 1998 I was hired as an assistant to the South Okanagan Conservation Land Manager and shortly thereafter took over the role."

-Carl MacNaughton
South Okanagan Conservation
Land Manager for 10 years



Tom Reid is an avid outdoorsman and Gulf Islander who has worked for The Nature Trust for over 10 years. He started as a contractor on Vancouver Island, BC Conservation Crew Coordinator and now as the Vancouver Island Conservation Land Manager. Prior to The Nature Trust he worked with the Ministry of Environment conducting fish habitat and water quality assessments. He holds a degree in Geography and History from Simon Fraser University as well as an applied science diploma in Fish and Wildlife Management from BC Institute of Technology.



Come to the **BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL**

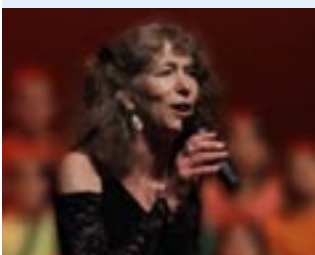
The Nature Trust is coordinating the 2009 festival which runs from March 6 to April 26 in Parksville, Qualicum Beach and Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. This community celebration of nature highlights the return of Brant geese as they rest and feed during their migration to their nesting grounds in Alaska. Fun and informative events for all ages include wildlife viewing, marsh walks, big day birding, nature photography and Voices of Nature concert. Visit www.brantfestival.bc.ca for details or call 604-924-9771 (in Vancouver area) or 1-866-288-7878.

Festival sponsors include BC Ministry of Environment, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and the Lohn Foundation. Event sponsors include Beach Acres, Quality Foods, and TimberWest.

The 19th Annual Brant Festival Wildlife Woodcarving Show and 12th Annual Canadian Fish Carving Championship will take place in Parksville on April 4 and 5. Visit www.thebrant.ca for details.

Be Inspired by **VOICES OF NATURE**

Lead by singer/songwriter Holly Arntzen and producer/songwriter Kevin Wright, the Artist Response Team (ART) communicates environmental messages through music, art, and live events. ART created Voices of Nature with the mission to inspire people to take action to conserve our environment. ART and The Nature Trust have teamed up to produce projects where Voices of Nature school music programs and community concerts support conservation initiatives such as the Brant Wildlife Festival. The messages are for young people to get outside and enjoy nature, learn more about local habitats and wildlife, and get healthy working to restore and protect endangered species.



You can join us at concerts around the province including the Port Theatre in Nanaimo on April 23.

Kelowna **WILD FESTIVAL FOR YOUTH**

The Nature Trust is very proud to be sponsoring the Wild Festival for Youth. For a decade, this program has been promoting sustainability and environmental education in the BC Interior and encouraging children to connect with nature. (<http://wildfestival.peregrinesociety.org>)

"We join Robert Bateman in his commitment to help youth become passionate about the environment by providing them with first hand experiences in nature," said Deb Kennedy, Development and Communication Manager. *"By knowing their wild neighbours these children will become more caring about their neighbours."*

Wild Festival for Youth is part of Robert Bateman's Get to Know Program (www.gettoknow.ca) which is designed to encourage young Canadians to spend more time outdoors.



WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES Festival

Join our East Kootenay Land Manager Rob Neil and our naturalist friends for a tour of the Hoodoos on May 9. For a true BC experience, visit www.wingsovertherockies.org or contact 1-888-342-9464 for details.

OKANAGAN Food & Wine

Please mark May 30 to join us at the Delta Grand in Kelowna when Culinary Team Canada will delight your palate with food and wine from the Okanagan.

Get Your Hands **DIRTY**

Join us for a clean up on Boundary Bay June 6th. No special skills are needed, just a desire to make a difference by picking up plastic and other debris on the foreshore. Visit www.naturetrust.bc.ca or call 604-924-9771 for details.



Burrowing Owl

A CONSERVATION STRATEGY for the South Okanagan

By Dr. Geoff Scudder, Nature Trust Director

The South Okanagan is a hotspot in BC for species rarity and richness, with many species of federal and provincial conservation concern. The majority of these are associated with the imperiled or vulnerable ecosystems.

In an effort to plan for the health of ecosystems, wildlife, air and water within the South Okanagan, the Regional District of the Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) has committed to collaborating with environmental partners to develop a regional approach to biodiversity conservation and work toward coordinated biodiversity conservation and ecosystems protection.

The South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) has agreed to take the lead and develop such a strategy over the next 18 months. Many of the partners within the SOSCP will be working towards a technical analysis and strategy recommendations, including Environment Canada, the provincial Ministry of Environment, The Nature Trust of BC, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance, local government representatives and the SOSCP Program Manager.

It is anticipated that this conservation strategy will be guided by some of the results from the recently completed report on the status of biodiversity in British Columbia, *Taking Nature's Pulse*. In particular, this report concluded that the three main ecosystems in the South Okanagan, namely the Bunchgrass, Ponderosa Pine, and Interior Douglas fir zones were either imperiled or vulnerable, in the case of the latter zone. Low-elevation grassland communities, that are concentrated in these three zones, are the rarest land cover type in the province.

Studies have shown that ecosystem conversion from

urban/rural development and agriculture has seriously impacted these grassland communities, and the species therein. The cumulative impacts of human activities have resulted in the loss of ecosystem resilience, and there has been a significant loss of connectivity in the ecosystems. This loss of connectivity will limit the ability of species to shift their distributions in response to climate change, and is one of the foremost issues that will need to be addressed in the biodiversity conservation plan for the valley.



Launching the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Left to Right: Charlotte Sanders (Osoyoos Indian Band), Carl MacNaughton (The Nature Trust), Grant Furness (BC Ministry of Environment), and Dan Ashton (RDOS Chair).



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DONOR Testimonials

Corporate Giving Appreciated

Our special thanks to Ian Bryce for donating 10% of the sale of his Natural Gift Seafoods during the month of December to The Nature Trust.

Thank you to Alexander Holburn Beaudin & Lang LLP for choosing The Nature Trust as one of their charities to support as part of their e-cards this holiday season.

We would like to acknowledge Whole Foods in West Vancouver for donating 10 cents to The Nature Trust for each bag that was re-used.

In Lieu of Presents

"In lieu of exchanging Christmas presents, Sheila and I have for many years donated to an environmental organization of the other's choosing. We've given to many different worthy groups. This year, coincidentally we both chose The Nature Trust and specifically the Okanagan River project. The area has particular significance for us as both of us lived in the Okanagan at one time and we often return to visit, usually to bird. This last spring we stayed near Oliver and had a wonderful time looking for birds along the Okanagan River and around Vaseux Lake."

—Kathryn Feeney and Sheila Howard

A Lasting Gift

"My wife and I are birders living on Vancouver Island. We wanted to name a non-profit organization as a potential beneficiary in our Wills and decided on something relevant to our interests. We have visited several ecologically important areas on Vancouver Island that were acquired by The Nature Trust (TNT) so we know they are active locally. We wanted a BC focused organization and one that had been in existence for long enough to establish a history of sound management. We especially appreciated the scientific basis of TNT activities and have been impressed with TNT website information and our personal contact with their staff."

—Rhys Harrison

If you know of an organization that would like to help raise money for The Nature Trust or like us to give a presentation, please contact Robin Rivers at 604-924-9771 ext. 226 (Vancouver area), toll free 1-866-288-7878 ext. 226 or e-mail rrivers@naturetrust.bc.ca

A WIN-WIN Situation

The Nature Trust is celebrating the completion of a covenant on Smith Bog near Fort St. John with Northern Lights College, the owner of the property.

The bog occurs in the centre of the property and is bound by lodgepole pine, willow and trembling aspen. Moose, deer, rabbits, coyotes, red squirrels and red-backed voles are found in the area. Black-capped chickadees, ravens, and bohemian waxwings make their home there as do other birds. Northern Lights College will be undertaking research on the land and students will complete monitoring. It's a win-win situation for the environment and for education.

The Fort St. John campus of Northern Lights College is located on the north edge of the city, adjacent to the Fish Creek Park and Community Forest. The campus serves more than 1,800 students each year, enrolled in a variety of programs including Business Management, Early Childhood Education, and the revamped Land and Resource Management program with three new options: Land Administration, Land Agent and Land Reclamation.



Black-capped chickadee (Photo: Tom Middleton); Cloud Berry at Smith Bog