



NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NEWSLETTER

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Homes for Birds

Birds can bring great joy and inspiration into our lives—soaring in the air, colourful feathers and beautiful songs. They are also an integral part of our ecosystems.

From the tiny Rufous Hummingbird and the majestic Bald Eagle to acrobatic Tree Swallows (pictured above by William Murdock), British Columbia has a wealth of birdlife. Over 300 species breed here. Many others migrate along the Pacific Flyway and stop off in BC for food

and shelter or spend the winter in our coastal waters. Birds spread seeds, pollinate flowers and some feed on insects and rodents. Birds have important roles in nature.

But like all living things, birds depend on clean water, fresh air and healthy land for survival and we have a special responsibility to conserve their habitats. It is critical that we conserve habitat for birds and all species for future generations. Turn the page to read more.

Priority 
Projects

Please see page 3 for an opportunity to support the Park Rill Creek property acquisition and page 6 for how you can leave a legacy to conservation with a future gift.

Homes for Birds (cont.)

Here are a few examples of conservation properties acquired by The Nature Trust of BC that provide homes for birds:

Boundary Bay south of Vancouver in Delta is an important stop for birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway, such as the Western Sandpiper. They eat insects and other small organisms on the mudflats as well as biofilm, a thin layer of nutritious slime on the sand. Biofilm is a collection of microorganisms that adhere to each other. During migration times the bird count in the bay may exceed 500,000.

Cowichan River Estuary on Vancouver Island is home to thousands of Trumpeter Swans each winter. This is quite extraordinary when you think that in the 1960s this species was almost extinct. Land conservation efforts including those by The Nature Trust have helped to ensure the survival of this beautiful bird.

Sheep Mountain along the Elk River in the Kootenays is noted for Golden Eagles and raptors such as Red-tailed Hawks due to a large ground squirrel population which keeps the predator/prey system healthy. It is also home to the blue-listed Lewis's Woodpecker.

Scout Island Nature Centre in Williams Lake features marsh, island, and lake environments and is a premier location for nature appreciation and education. On the migration path of hundreds of species of birds, it is a bird-watcher's paradise in the spring and fall.

McQueen Slough in the Peace River region is the only major body of water in the Dawson Creek area that supports waterfowl and other birdlife. It is a major feeding and resting area for migratory birds. Both Tundra and Trumpeter Swans visit the slough, as do Canada Geese. As many as 17 species of ducks utilize these wetlands, and their adjacent uplands have a wide variety of song birds and shorebirds.

Bird Congress

The 27th International Ornithological Congress is happening August 19 to 26 in Vancouver. The Vancouver International Bird Festival will be taking place the same week and The Nature Trust of BC is pleased to be involved. The festival offers bird-related walks, talks, exhibitions and lectures—and most are free. Visit www.vanbirdfest.com



Meadowlark in the South Okanagan (photo by William Murdock)



Scout Island boardwalk



Great Horned Owl at Boundary Bay (photo by William Murdock)

Park Rill Creek

We are working to acquire a 32.3 hectare (80 acre) property in the White Lake Basin in the South Okanagan. It features sagebrush steppe, grassland, broadleaf woodlands, wetlands, and rocky outcrops as well as Park Rill Creek which runs through the property. It provides habitat for the endangered Half-moon Hairstreak butterfly and other rare species such as Brewer’s Sparrow, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Painted Turtle and Blotched Tiger Salamander.

Thanks to the support of the BC Conservation Foundation, Gosling Foundation, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen through the South Okanagan Conservation Fund, we are almost halfway to our goal of raising \$1.15 million for acquisition, legal, start up and land management costs. Call us to donate at 604.924.9771 (or toll free 1.866.288.7878) or visit www.naturetrust.bc.ca.



Arrowsmith Woodland

The Nature Trust of BC would like to acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of the Porter family in donating a very special piece of land near Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island.

The Arrowsmith Woodland spans 19.4 hectares (47.9 acres) and features coastal Douglas-fir—some more than 400 years old. The property provides habitat for Roosevelt Elk, Cougar, Black Bear, and the blue-listed Red-Legged Frog. Annie Creek, which is a tributary of Fletcher Creek, flows through the southwest corner of the property.

“The Porter Family wishes to thank The Nature Trust of British Columbia for providing us with the means to conserve this coastal Douglas-fir property in perpetuity,” said Anne Porter.

Thank you to the Porters for leaving a legacy to nature by donating this amazing piece of land.



Tour of Park Rill Creek

Join us on June 2 for a walk on the Park Rill Creek property and learn what makes it so special. This event includes a presentation followed by a 20 minute guided tour. Bring good walking footwear and all weather clothing including hat and sunscreen. Refreshments will be provided. The cost is \$10 per person and registration is required. Sign up on our website or call us toll free at 1.866.288.7878. If you can’t attend but would like to donate to this project, visit www.naturetrust.bc.ca.



Cougar on Arrowsmith Woodland property



Kitsumkalum Lake South, Skeena

A Land Manager's Travel Journal

Acquiring properties is the first step in land conservation, but equally important is caring for the land.

Carleton MacNaughton, our Interior & Coastal Mainland Conservation Land Manager, makes an annual journey across BC. He visits Nature Trust properties in four different regions.

“British Columbia is a big, amazing province with a wonderful variety of geography and habitats. Each summer and fall, I pack up my truck and head out to check on our conservation properties in four regions. This past year I clocked 10,000 km as I travelled from the Lower Mainland to places like Kitsumkalum Lake in the Skeena, Worth Marsh in the Northeast, and Chilanko Marsh in the Cariboo. My trips are filled with Nature Trust moments. One of my favourites was observing Grizzly Bears at Alice Arm Estuary.”

Carleton completes on-the-ground projects and determines work that needs to be undertaken in the future. Here is a snapshot of the regions and a few highlights from his 2017 field visits. This work is made possible by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, the Province of BC, and many individual supporters.

The Northeast Region features plateaus, plains, boreal forests, wetlands and lakes. Here you will find the iconic Peace River and Liard River.

In July, Carleton travelled to the Northeast and visited Dunlevy Creek. “I removed small conifer trees to prevent ingrowth in old field habitat. This will keep the field open for grazing by wildlife, such as elk and deer. It was good to find a heavy crop of wild strawberries, which would provide a great food source for many species, including bears.”



Omineca

The Omineca Region encompasses a large portion of northern BC, with a diversity of landscapes ranging from broad flat pine forests to rugged peaks of the central Rocky Mountains.

“While at the Cranberry Marsh/Starratt Wildlife Management Area, I had a chance to see the new boardwalk. This is a popular place for the local community to visit. Then it was onward to the Nechako River where I removed invasive Hawkweed. Invasive plants are one of the most significant threats to habitat.”



Cranberry Marsh/Starratt Wildlife Management Area, Omineca



Lakelse Lake, Skeena

Skeena

The Skeena Region has a highly varied landscape, characterised by mountainous terrain, interspersed with large plateaus, a multitude of lakes and several large rivers.

“At Kitsumkalum Lake South and Lakelse Lake I picked up bags of garbage. It’s disturbing what people will dump into nature, everything from tires and picnic tables to plastic bottles.”

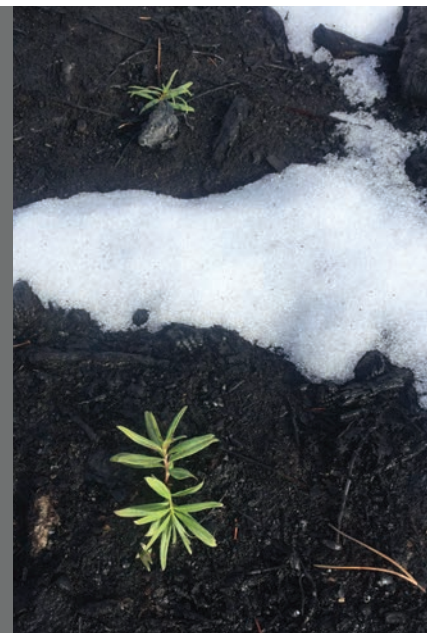
Accessing remote sites such as Alice Arm Estuary requires a lot of planning to ensure that access and activities are performed safely. You have to be ready for all kinds of conditions. Timing of access is also important, as stream crossings need to be coordinated with the tides, which greatly influence river levels in the estuary. “I practically live in my gum boots.”

Cariboo

The Cariboo Region features diverse landscapes ranging from coastal inlets to the vast dry grasslands of the Chilcotin Plateau to the interior rainforest of the Cariboo Mountains.

“Due to the fires that swept through the area, and the resulting closures, I had to postpone my usual summer field trip to the Cariboo until October. We were quite lucky the only Nature Trust property impacted by fire was Tautri Creek.” To reach the property Carleton had to walk 10 km, followed by a 2 km walk around the property and a return trip of 10 km. “Even though most of the trees had burned, it was amazing to see small plants such as fireweed already starting to grow up through the snow.”

Carleton inspected a number of perimeter fences recently installed to exclude cattle from the conservation areas at Chilcotin Lake and Marsh and Chilanko Marsh, and planned access and locations for fencing to be installed in 2018. He also visited the Scout Island Nature Centre in Williams Lake to take in the wonderful boardwalks, paths and interpretive displays maintained by our stewardship partners, the Williams Lake Field Naturalists.



Plants growing at Tautri Creek, Cariboo



Salmon River Estuary

Estate Planning Is for Everyone

What does estate planning actually mean? Estate planning is just making sure that your assets pass to the next generation in the most efficient and tax effective manner possible.

The Government of Canada has a good estate planning checklist. You can go to www.canada.ca and search for the estate planning checklist.

In most cases, estate planning means having an updated Will, Power of Attorney and Representation Agreement (healthcare directive). Having these documents will allow your personal affairs to be taken care of in the case of incapacity or death.

Next, you want to make sure that you have considered the tax implications of your estate. In simple terms, it is like you sold all your assets the day before you died. Thus, any tax implications of the sale of an investment or asset are almost the same upon death or on a sale. It is important to realize there are provisions to allow the tax to be deferred if the assets are passed to a spouse (and in some limited cases dependent children).

The only additional government tax is called probate (BC residents). If your estate is less than \$25,000 there are no probate fees, between \$25,000 and \$50,000 the fee is 0.6% and over \$50,000 the fee is 1.4%. You would want to structure your investments to reduce probate fees as much as practically possible.

Giving to charities such as The Nature Trust of British Columbia can be a very effective way of reducing taxes now and also upon your death. Any funds given to a charity will allow you to reduce your taxes because of the charitable receipt from the donation.

If you plan on giving funds to a charity, you should consider

giving securities (stocks, mutual funds, etc.) that have a capital gain because you will get the charitable receipt for the full amount donated and the capital gains on the donated security will not be taxed. If you have mutual funds that have gone up in value, it is much more effective for you to give the mutual funds “in-kind” as a donation instead.

If you have an old life insurance policy that you’re considering cancelling, you may want to look into giving this to a charity instead. If the charity owns the policy and you continue to make the payments, these payments are considered a charitable deduction.

If most of your estate is going to a charity upon your death, then you will want to analyze the tax implications of this strategy. Charitable donations can be made in the year of death (through the Will or direct beneficiary designation) and can be carried back one year if necessary. We have seen many cases where charitable donation receipts go unused. Typically, you would want to see if you can give some of your assets to the charity ahead of time (also making sure you do not run out of money).

This article is meant to give a brief overview of legacy planning and how it intertwines with charitable giving. But by no means is this an exhaustive list and you need to review your personal situation to design your personal charitable giving and estate planning strategy.

Clay Gillespie is the Managing Director of RGF Integrated Wealth Management Ltd. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of RGF Integrated Wealth Management, which makes no representations as to their completeness or accuracy.

Brant Wildlife Festival

The Nature Trust of BC is working with community organizations on the 2018 Brant Wildlife Festival which runs March 19 to April 28.

The festival celebrates nature, especially Brant geese as they stop to rest and feed on the shores of Parksville and Qualicum Beach during their migration to their northern nesting grounds. Events include wildlife viewing, nature camps for kids, a bioblitz and more.

The Nature Trust is hosting Dr. Holly Middleton who will be speaking about the fascinating behaviour of waterfowl on April 14. Tickets are \$10 and available by calling 1.866.288.7878 or e-mailing rrivers@naturetrust.bc.ca. Visit brantfestival.bc.ca for details.



Meadowlark Festival

Join The Nature Trust of BC's Carl MacNaughton and Nick Burdock for a McIntyre Bluff/nʔaylntn Hike on Friday, May 18 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. as part of the annual Meadowlark Festival. Enjoy a spectacular view and learn about conservation holdings, a variety of flora and fauna, and the cultural significance of this site as you hike to one of the Okanagan's best settings. Visit www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca for details.

Fall Gala

Mark your calendar for our annual Fall Gala on October 2 at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. This event includes our latest conservation accomplishments, musical entertainment, fine dining, and silent and live auctions. Proceeds will benefit our land conservation work across British Columbia. Tickets are \$225 per person and sponsored tables and other sponsorship opportunities are available.

To reserve your spot or for more details, contact Elvira Romanchik at eromanchik@naturetrust.bc.ca or call 604.924.9771 ext. 222.



The Best Way to Give

Monthly giving is an efficient and easy way to help sustain The Nature Trust of BC's land conservation work. With a small monthly commitment you can make a big difference. To sign up, please call 1.866.288.7878 or visit www.naturetrust.bc.ca

"I make a monthly unrestricted contribution to The Nature Trust of BC because it is an easy way to support the conservation of nature and it allows the staff to allocate the funds to the greatest need."

—Rob Butler, PhD, Director, The Nature Trust of BC



STAFF UPDATE

New Staff



The Nature Trust is pleased to welcome Elvira Romanchik to the role of Communications & Events Assistant. Elvira brings 15 years of experience working in design, communications and event planning. Her love for nature and a strong belief in the important of sustainability and protecting the natural world are the core reasons she is delighted to have joined the Nature Trust team.

Corporate Donations

We are very grateful to the companies, who are investing in our land conservation work. Their gifts come in many ways such as:

- Matching employer-employee gifts
- Third party fundraising programs
- Event sponsorship
- In-kind auction items

If you would like to learn how your company can help The Nature Trust of BC, please contact Deb Kennedy at 604.924.9771 ext. 231 or debkennedy@naturetrust.bc.ca

"We are grateful for the efforts of The Nature Trust of BC in ensuring the legacy of our natural land." —BC Plant Health Care Inc.

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