

BC Naturalists' Foundation Annual Report, May 2020

Submitted by president Bob Handfield

I am very sorry to report that the Foundation's vice-president, Tom Bearss, passed away in April of this year. Tom was an ardent supporter of BC Nature and the Foundation. One of his favorite Board tasks was to serve on the committee to review Club support grant applications – he very much enjoyed reading about the different projects being proposed by the local clubs and he wanted to spread as much money as possible to each of the applicants. Tom also liked to be involved in the review of the Foundation's endowment investments with our financial advisors. Tom will be sorely missed by so many.

Every year (in fact pretty much every month) we all get bombarded with requests to support various conservation organizations ranging from localized groups such as Georgia Strait Alliance to national organizations such as Nature Conservancy of Canada and probably close to one hundred groups in between. So why should you consider leaving a bequest to, or donating to, the BC Naturalists' Foundation? How are we different from the others? Let me try to answer that without disparaging any of the other fine groups, many of which I donate to myself.

First, the Foundation is about as close as possible to being an all-volunteer organization. We have no full time employees nor do we have even a quarter-time employee. We spend less than \$800 per year on administrative help. Secondly all of our grants stay in BC and are dispersed throughout the province so that the money is spent by local clubs on local projects. We listed the Club support grants given this year in the spring issue of this magazine but the table below is a quick reminder of the typical wide diversity of projects and geographic locations on which our funds are spent. There are over 50 local clubs from all over BC federated with BC Nature – however we can only support those clubs who actually file an application for funds. On average about 10-15 clubs per year submit an application for support of a local conservation project. We would love to see an increase in the number of applications.

Bat Conference – Coquitlam	Bat exploration - Langley
Thermal Imaging camera - Coquitlam	Presentation trailer upgrades - Lillooet
Pamphlet , Birds of Chilliwack area– Chilliwack	Invertebrate biodiversity – Terrace
Wetland restoration – Comox	Invasive species removal -Burnaby
Invasive crab monitoring – White Rock	New website development - Burnaby
Native plantings - Kamloops	Iona Island Bird Observatory -Richmond
Sandhill Crane monitoring – Fraser Valley	Mini-bioblitz kits - Langley

Our year-end financial statements for Dec 31, 2019 have just now had the review engagement completed and the preliminary conclusion is that the Foundation's assets at that date totalled just a few dollars shy of \$820,000 compared to \$732,000 at the end of 2018. This increase is a combination of increased donations and bequests and growth in the stock market. Since the onset of the COVID crisis the stock market has been in a state of turmoil so our current assets will be somewhat less although not

all of our assets are held in stocks. We would like to thank all of those supporters who have remembered the Foundation in their wills or otherwise have donated to keep our endowment growing.

The Foundation's growing assets have allowed us to increase the amount of funds disbursed each year in support of BC Nature and the federated Club projects. The amount disbursed for Club projects this year totalled \$17,250 plus the Foundation funded the two BC Nature scholarships for \$3,500. Since the Foundation's founding in 1991 we have disbursed \$233,000 in support of Club projects and BC Nature undertakings.