



Chapter One: Formation of the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists and the first Twenty Years

This first chapter, written by Sheila Byers, is based on Barbara Black's 1988 manuscript. Barbara was tasked with writing the history of FBCN in 1988 through an Employment and Immigration Commission grant that was coordinated by Valentin Schaefer, then of Douglas College. Her account of the FBCN history focused primarily on the evolution of the administrative organization with highlights including camps, education, programs and publications. Conservation initiatives and people's biographies were a small component of Black's manuscript. Bev Ramey provided assistance with this chapter.

To set the stage for the formation of the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists (FBCN) a half century ago, we need to travel back further, to the end of the nineteenth century, when naturalists, mountaineers and outdoor enthusiasts first began exploring and documenting the flora and fauna of British Columbia. Many of them had academic interests in fields such as geology, mycology, botany, ornithology or entomology, and their encounters with the natural world in British Columbia were driven by a constant quest for learning. For these pioneer naturalists, field work and expeditions into the wilderness were a means of reinforcing and expanding their knowledge.

In 1890, a group of forty gentlemen decided to form the Natural History Society of British Columbia. Primarily professionals, these ambitious individuals wanted to encourage "a more organized approach to the study of the natural features of the province and [to provide] ... an independent auxiliary to the Provincial Museum, Department of Agriculture, Department of Mines and the Library of the Legislative Assembly" (Dr. V.C. Brink, 1987). This first "federated" body of Naturalists functioned for some 20 years, primarily from the then cultural-base of Victoria, until its dissolution at the time of the First World War. Local natural history societies were also forming around the province: the Vancouver Natural History Society (VanNHS) in 1918; the Victoria Natural History Society (VicNHS) in 1944; and the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club (NONC) in 1951.

The idea of forming a province-wide federation or council did not resurface again until 1957, when a meeting was held by Dr. Clifford Carl at the Provincial Museum in Victoria and the VicNHS established a Standing Committee of Federation. The value of "citizen scientists" in assisting with species observation and collection throughout the province was readily recognized by the Provincial Museum and academics.

In the meantime, as the 1950s and 1960s brought new concepts on conservation, ecology and managing the environment, so did the realization that human activities such as industry and development, and use of agricultural pesticides were at odds with the natural environment, noticeably impacting and destroying wildlife habitats. Rocket

science wasn't required to understand that wildlife and their habitat were in need of protection, with parkland designation providing one potential solution. People of wide-ranging educational backgrounds were now being attracted to the natural history societies, searching for a means of voicing their disapproval of human consumptive uses of the environment. Not just in BC but also globally, complacency towards management of the environment was evolving towards an ecological awareness. Nature had become political.

Three additional meetings were held in Vancouver (1958) and Victoria (1958, 1960). In June 1962, a spokesperson from the Ontario Federation of Naturalists visited BC and encouraged members of the VicNHS, the VanNHS, and the three naturalists' clubs in the Okanagan to form a Council of Naturalists. This idea was further promoted by David Stirling and Yorke Edwards of the VicNHS. Meetings followed in Vancouver (1962) and the Victoria Provincial Museum (1963), with the decision to hold the inaugural meeting of the federation in Kelowna in May 1963. The founding member clubs of the BC Nature Council were the three Okanagan naturalists' clubs (Central, North, and South), Cowichan Valley Naturalists, Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association, the VanNHS, and the VicNHS. Estimated total membership was 1555 people. The board members were: Dr. T.M.C. Taylor, Vancouver (president), Mrs. Lamoureux, Kelowna (secretary), Mr. Eric Garman, Victoria (treasurer) and Mrs. Gladys Soulsby, Victoria (newsletter editor).

The aims and objectives of the BC Nature Council in 1963 were:

1. To provide naturalists of the province of British Columbia with a potent unified voice in conservation matters;
 2. To help coordinate the naturalist activities of Natural History Societies and groups of similar interests;
 3. To aid in the formulation of Natural History Societies in British Columbia;
 4. To publish a periodical as an outlet for Natural History groups;
 5. To promote other activities of interest to naturalists of British Columbia.
- Examples of these are, sponsorship of summer camps for leaders; participating in Resources Conferences

The time was ripe for the formation of a provincial natural history society. The BC Provincial Government had just formed a new Department of Recreation and Conservation to meet increasing demands for both commercial and recreational uses of public lands. And there was a growing understanding among the general public of the impact of human activities on the natural environment. People of wide-ranging educational backgrounds--not just scientists--were now being attracted to the natural history clubs, seeing in them a way to voice their concern about human consumptive uses of the environment.

And yet many decision makers of the era persisted with the view that British Columbia's natural resources were inexhaustible. In 1964, the then Minister of Conservation and Recreation William K. Kiernan, declared that "No man who really knows BC could think, even in his wildest imagination, that BC will run out of wilderness for a century at least."

Naturalists, who were in the field and knew what was happening, did not agree. Over the next few years, the BC Nature Council and other affiliated groups pushed hard for stricter protections for provincial parkland. The BC Nature Council drew up two resolutions to define policy on parks: 1) that the primary purpose of a provincial park is the long term preservation of nature for the education and recreation of future generations, and (2) that immediate action be taken to do an inventory of the assets of the provincial parks. In 1965, the BC Nature Council had the gratification of witnessing the enactment of a new Parks Act. More importantly, it became a strong voice on conservation matters.

Parks were not the only concern of the new BC Nature Council. Names of its standing committees indicate the breadth of its activities:

- Summer Camp,
- Pacific Nest Record Scheme,
- Parks & Access & Protection,
- Land Management,
- Newsletter & Publicity,
- Threatened Species,
- Biocides & Pollution, and
- Club Affairs.

BC Nature Council to Federation of British Columbia Naturalists

Meetings of the BC Nature Council followed in 1964 in Penticton (AGM) and Victoria (FGM) with an announcement of a contest for a crest design for the Nature Council.



At the 1965 Kelowna AGM, the winning design was revealed: the raven, based on totems of the native peoples of BC, by Margaret Dean, a UBC third-year Zoology major. (Thirty years later, when the federation adopted the new operating name of BC Nature, and agreed to change the logo. A new logo designed by a Prince George firm was approved in 2007 and this is the logo in use today.)

In 1966, Peter Legg of Vernon (North Okanagan Naturalists) was tasked with preparing the necessary legal steps for incorporation and Dick Stace-Smith (Vancouver) was elected president for two years (Duncan AGM; Penticton FGM). At the Vernon AGM in 1967, Peter Legg reported that the Registrar of Societies had advised that incorporation could not be done under the name "Council", so the process moved slowly forward under the name "Federation of British Columbia Naturalists".

When the 1967 Fall General Meeting was held in Victoria at Thomas Francis Park Nature House (Freeman King's 'kids' will appreciate this location), the merits of incorporation were discussed, Vi Gibbard of Naramata reported on the Pacific Nest Record Scheme, and Dick Stace-Smith and Bert Brink reported on their meeting with

the Minister of Recreation and Conservation where they “expressed concerns about the status of many parks and proposed parks in the province”.

At the sixth AGM in Vancouver in 1968, the pros and cons of the values of incorporating as a federation were discussed yet again. Finally, at the FGM 1968 in Kelowna, motions were passed regarding membership within the Council for nonvoting associates and financial supporters, incorporation of the Council, and annual dues increases from 25 cents to 50 cents per member. At the seventh and final AGM held in Comox, incorporation as the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists was approved under the Societies Act. The draft constitution was accepted and registered on June 3, 1969, officially marking the end of the BC Nature Council and the beginning of the FBCN. The nine founding member clubs were:

- Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club,
- Comox-Strathcona Natural History Society,
- Cowichan Valley Natural History Society,
- North Okanagan Naturalists' Club,
- Prince George Naturalists Club,
- South Okanagan Naturalists' Club,
- Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association,
- Vancouver Natural History Society, and
- Victoria Natural History Society.

Elton Anderson

Elton Anderson served as FBCN president from 1971 to 1973; our foremost service award is named in his memory. Anderson's goals as president were to make FBCN “an effective force within the province...[to] work towards the creation of natural history clubs in all areas of the province...[to] devote considerably more time and money into producing a newsletter...[and to] employ a full-time executive secretary.” He travelled the province in his ‘Tin Tent’ (camper truck) enlisting new members and encouraging the formation of new clubs. Elton was widely recognized for his dedication to a number of causes and his uncanny ability to foresee the major environmental issues at an early stage and to bring the facts to the attention of those in government and industry responsible for policy. At the time of his death in 1975, he was engaged in a campaign to keep plastic pop bottles out of Canada.

Many of Elton Anderson's goals are now a reality. There are 53 BC Nature Clubs throughout BC, 57 volumes of the BC Nature Magazine have been published (including the seven earlier years of the BC Nature Council), a full-time Office Manager with a part-time assistant employed in our office; and, perhaps a bit late but none-the-less a national endeavour is now considering reducing use of plastics in our society.

The Elton Anderson Award was established in 1977 to recognize the service of a member of the Federation (BC Nature) who has emulated, to a profound degree, the dedication, devotion and energy exhibited by former President, Elton Anderson, to

further the Federation (BC Nature) across the province. See Appendix 3 for award recipients. In 1983 the Elton Anderson trophy was introduced, a carved wolverine by noted carver Arnold Mikelson (1922-1984). of White Rock.

Unifying a Provincial Voice through Regionalization

Convincing the local, disparate clubs to work together regionally was yet another challenge. To facilitate this, regional representatives were elected for the three primary concentrations of membership (Thompson-Okanagan, Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island) in 1971 and these representatives acted as coordinators for the clubs in their regions, stimulating regional activities and functioning as an intermediate structure between clubs and provincial directors. In 1974, the annual fall meetings for the Federation were replaced with regional meetings. "The point you had to get across to the members was that the Federation was our provincial voice and by having a unified voice we could have much greater effect on conservation problems", (Audrey Casperson, Regional Coordinator, Thompson-Okanagan, 1975-76).

In 1975, the Environment and Land Use Committee of the Provincial Government established seven integrated resource management regions where it would set up regional government offices; thereby decentralizing the existing Victoria-based headquarters. To maximize their awareness and involvement in provincial natural history issues, the Federation decided to adopt an administrative and functional framework similar to that of the Provincial Government. FBCN President Norman (Norm) Purssell decided to give regionalization a one-year trial with the Board of Directors including representatives or chairpersons of the seven regional councils, and the chairpersons being elected by the membership of the constituent clubs. A formal proposal for regionalization was presented by Frank Paul (1975) for review at the 1976 annual general meeting. At this time the regions, clubs and coordinators were:

Vancouver Island – 10 clubs, Neil Dawe
Lower Mainland – 7 clubs, Madelon Schouten
Thompson-Okanagan – 7 clubs, Audrey Casperson
Kootenay – 4 clubs, Bill Merilees
Cariboo – 1 club, Frances Vyse
Omineca-Peace - 4 clubs, Dietger Hollman
Skeena – 2 clubs, Cliff Weeks

Into the early 1980's, there was much 'to do' about the overall effectiveness of the regionalization model. Nonetheless, there was general agreement that the regionalization concept had a unifying effect by establishing a two-way flow between the FBCN Board and the regional coordinators. Regionalization enabled broader discussion of regional concerns and conservation matters with recommendations from the regional clubs being tabled at the annual meetings. As written by Barbara Black in 1988, FBCN knows that "Every effort must be made to facilitate communication in the Federation network, from individual members, to clubs, to regions, to the Federation executive".

Camps

As Barbara Black (1988) aptly expressed, “Federation camp, first a rare (1960’s), then an endangered species (1970’s), has now established itself as an enduring event (1980’s)”, In the mid 1960s, Freeman King (VicNHS) and Dr. Jim Bendell (BC Nature Council President) intelligently structured and administered educational programs for Junior and Senior Camps (respectively) to train participants as naturalists and conservationists and provide professional academic instruction in many disciplines of natural history. The first sponsored BC Nature Council camp, dubbed the Junior Audubon Camp, was held at the UBC Geology Camp in Oliver in 1964. As successful as the junior camps were, and as good as Dr. Bendell’s intentions were to train leaders in natural history, there was a distinct lack of interest on the part of adults with the result that in 1967 the entire camp utopia plunged into oblivion for another decade.

Then in 1977, Norm Purssell organized an exploratory backpacking trip to the Stein Valley high-country and in 1988 Bill Merilees, organized a field camp at Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta. These prompted a resurgence of field camps which continues to the present day.

Development of the summer camp process and structure continued to evolve under the direction of President Dick Stace-Smith. Leaving room for flexibility, he better defined the organizational roles and policies of the Federation relative to those of the member camps. With the assistance of Kay Beamish, the Camp Committee developed the camp guidelines for the benefit of sponsoring clubs, thereby establishing a cooperative effort and sense of continuity, regardless of changes to the Committee or the sponsoring clubs. Profits were split between the host club and the FBCN.

For more information, refer to Chapter 3. Outdoors with BC Nature Field Trips and Field Camps and Appendix 2. Camps – Field & Exploratory.

Education

The FBCN’s motto “*To Know Nature and to Keep it Worth Knowing*” encompasses two important functions of the FBCN: education (to know) and conservation (to keep it worth knowing). As such, where and how does the FBCN begin to educate its membership? In the 1970s, BC Nature Council was providing the basics: educational support materials necessary for the function of the Federation and its member club. At the time, public education was not at the forefront but rather a result of individual club efforts. Here’s a list of its educational materials:

- central list of speakers, films, visual aids and other program materials for use as a reference;
- a taped slide-talk: "The Face of British Columbia" by Yorke Edwards (1966);
- a kit to assist in the guidance and formation of new clubs (in part by Jim Grant, 1966);
- a sample constitution;
- suggestions for natural history activities;
- a Naturalist's Guide to the Victoria Region; and
- the BC Nest Record Scheme.

In 1973, Dr. Milt McLaren struck the first formal Education Committee with province-wide representation; but in the days before computers, communication and achievements were few and far between. Although centralized in the Lower Mainland, the 'fixed time-frame' approach of Al Grass and his Educational Services Committee formed in 1978 successfully tackled short-term projects such as publications and workshops. Then in the 1980s the Committee morphed into the Education and Recreation Committee. The reality at the end of the day is that education is the driving force behind all naturalists; it is just a question of degree. But perhaps more importantly, a primary responsibility of the Federation is not just to educate its members about natural history, but also the public at large; otherwise, conserving our natural resources for the long term will be an impossible task.

As for community education, President Jude Grass in the mid 1980s expressed it clearly: "keeping the public aware of conservation issues that relate to natural history is clearly our role in society." The Education and Recreation Committee needed to focus on developing a policy or program for school education and community extension programs, particularly when funding was problematic. Part-in-parcel with this promotion was the necessity of dealing with the sensationalisms associated with publicity while being vigilant of not compromising FBCN's reputation or credibility.

Dr. V.C. (Bert) Brink picked up the Education and Recreation Committee ball to examine the role of education in the Federation and identify a cause. All members of all clubs were involved in this philosophical process but this was no small task. Compiling objectives was not a problem but prioritizing them would be critical if goals were to be achieved. Several large symposia and conference events were organized, and supported by member clubs sponsored smaller events.

As aptly described by Dr. V.C. (Bert) Brink in 1980, "It is in becoming more knowledgeable about the outdoors...that we as naturalists find our common pleasures... Our attempt to know and to understand the natural world is the federation's most important role--in a world which, I believe, ever needs greater understanding and appreciation of natural values. There must be in our society common men and women who understand and appreciate these values if we are to adapt to the rapid change technologists are effecting."

Several FBCN cornerstone activities involved a sizable proportion of the membership and included observations of nature, which in today's words would be described as 'citizen science'. The Nest Record Scheme and the Christmas Bird Count were two such important activities. See full descriptions of Projects in Chapter 7.

The Education Committee recommended naturalist content in the school curriculum and acted as a consultant for government or other nature programs proposed for schools (e.g., Project Wild through the Fish and Wildlife Branch). Long-term goals of the Committee included the development of extension and community programs, and the increasingly popular 'short' one-day programs. The Serpentine Fen 'natural laboratory' and the Ecological Reserves Warden Program to monitor and maintain BC's ecological reserves are two examples in the 1970s and 1980s of FBCN public education and conservation programs. For more information, see Appendix 9 – Publications; and Appendix 11 which includes posters.

Symposia and Roundtables

The Federation and Education Committee sponsored large-scale events such as the symposia and roundtables. Symposia, often co-sponsored with other like-minded organizations or by related government departments, tackled broader subjects like threatened species and management of BC's natural resources. Roundtables usually focused on specific regional concerns and featured a 'pooling' of ideas rather than the development of a specific policy or plan. Symposia were advertised and open to the public, with admission charge as there were more up-front costs. Symposia publications including lectures and proceedings were produced and available as a further resource. These were a valued resource to naturalists and biologists, but appear to have had limited public impact. Roundtables generally did not include the public, rather government officials and certain FBCN members. There were no publications but often more immediate and direct action in the area of concern. Workshops held by FBCN were generally in conjunction with fall or annual general meetings. Examples of workshops included the need for wildlife sanctuaries in the Fraser River Estuary area; natural history leadership; and, sharing Nature with Children at Rath Trevor Beach. For more information, refer to Appendix 10 - Roundtables, Conferences and Workshops.

Conservation: A Major Commitment

Black's 1988 history described the conservation efforts made by naturalists as a backbone of the FBCN since the time of its formation. Their contributions, of course, were to protect and preserve the environment and the management of its natural resources. Black chose to expound on one such effort – that of Wildlife Management.

The need to manage wildlife was not recognized formally until the 1970s when it became apparent that immediate action was required to inventory BC wildlife of all

kinds, to assess the threats to their habitats and to assure some protection of these species from the increasing demands of the human population. Semantics immediately became problematic: What was 'wildlife'? The type of program initiated would depend on the definition. Historically the definition did not include the reptiles, amphibians and other undesirables of the animal kingdom (nor plants, for that matter). Wildlife originally denoted (at least in government) huntable species or game--animals integral to human survival and sustenance. Fish and Wildlife Branch (within the Ministry of Recreation and Conservation) and formally the Game Branch, grew out of this tradition. Bill Munro described the Fish and Wildlife Branch as being "conceived as an enforcement agency, born as a game agency, and raised as a wildlife management agency." Naturalists at the time, however, did not feel that the Fish and Wildlife Branch had yet reached the third stage of management.

Naturalists considered that all species be recognized as being of equal 'value', each having a right to its own existence beyond the needs of humans. In 1976, the Ministry of Recreation and Conservation announced a review of fish and wildlife management to which FBCN responded, "... for a long time we have felt the Branch has been dominated by a philosophy of management of wildlife for consumptive use only." The FBCN identified that a wildlife management plan should give equal consideration to both harvestable and non-harvestable species; that consideration be "given to the population status of each species together with the necessary habitat required for their existence and continued survival." The FBCN urged that reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals be considered wildlife on a legal basis and be offered protection. Even the BC Wildlife Federation, an organization which approves of the consumptive use of wildlife, in 1977 described the Fish and Wildlife Branch "as labouring under a primitive set of rules in both law and government policy"; yet, followed on by saying that "Non-game species...demand less close attention by management agencies...the fact that certain game species are being hunted demands that a higher level of management is afforded them." This concept that animals exist only for use by people, and that those 'more in use' merit the greatest attention, was distasteful for some naturalists, quickly separating the naturalists from the not-entirely naturalists.

The proposed Wildlife Management Plan was released in 1979 with a new philosophical concept included, thanks primarily to naturalists: a non-consumptive activity that encouraged people to view wildlife in their natural habitat. Naturalists were thrilled with the idea but quickly saw the necessity to establish specific viewing guidelines. They also were quick to point out the potential benefits of viewing to tourism, edging out the old argument that hunting brings in the largest recreational dollars. The FBCN felt strongly that the value of wildlife goes far beyond the dollar sign when including the possibilities for education, culture, and science.

The new Wildlife Act materialized in 1982. Naturalists were pleased with most of the provisions. The definition of wildlife was not as broad as they would have liked, but some bat, reptile and amphibian species had been included. A non-game department was established, along with a Habitat Conservation Fund (1981) to acquire and

enhance habitat for wildlife in BC. Funding still largely comes from surcharges on provincial hunting, fishing, trapping and guiding licenses and public donations

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Stace-Smith, R. (Dick). BC Naturalist, Vol 13, No 3, 1975, "Tribute to Elton Anderson".

Website with more information on the carver of the Elton Anderson Award, Arnold Mikelson (1922-1984). of White Rock. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Mikelson

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Chapter two: People of the Federation

by Bev Ramey, with assistance from Sheila Byers

Over our fifty-year history, it is the people of the Federation of BC Naturalists who shine through as our most important strength. The countless volunteers are the heart and life blood of our organization.

Outstanding individuals have contributed their skills, knowledge and time as presidents, but it is not only the presidents who have contributed substantially to our organization. The many members who have served on the board, as heads of committees, and club representatives also deserve our recognition and appreciation. Yet our strength lies much deeper, drawing on the hundreds of members who have contributed greatly over the past fifty years—members who have not served in a particular role on the federation, but who have supported and contributed a great deal of knowledge and enthusiasm for nature to their individual clubs. The federation is strong because of our member clubs, now totaling fifty-two (2020). Each club contributes with the knowledge and expertise of their local conservation and environmental issues through involvement in their community and then with willingness to share this more broadly with our provincial naturalist community. Member clubs give us strength by hosting and attending AGMs and FGMs, by organizing field trips, evening speakers and field camps, and generally by sharing their love and appreciation of nature.

Joining together, club members share their nature knowledge, support protection of natural areas, foster nature appreciation in local communities and in tandem strengthen our provincial organization.

It is therefore impossible to select specific individuals to specifically recognize in this chapter. With 6000 current members, and considering contributions over the past half century, it would be difficult to select a few out of the many individuals who have provided so much support to the Federation.

Instead, this chapter draws attention to the many contributions of our members that have been recognized and listed in the following five appendices of this history.

Appendix 3. Award Recipients: Listed by year, the individual citations for each of the award recipients can be accessed through the newsletters and magazines for the year of their award presentation. Newsletters and magazines are available online on the BC Nature website, through the log-in members only section.

Appendix 5. Naturalist Mentors: Naturalist mentors have been recognized in the magazine since 2016. Two are awarded with each quarterly magazine and their contributions included in the magazine.

<https://www.bcnature.ca/education/naturalists-as-mentors/naturalist-mentors-acknowledgments/>

Appendix 6. Presidents, Honourary Presidents: The names of presidents are listed along with the honorary presidents for the few years when that position existed.

Appendix 7. Outstanding Volunteers: This appendix provides an alphabetical listing of names of people who have been recognized in the newsletters and magazines for their contributions. For each individual, the page number is provided of their tribute in the BC Naturalist Newsletter or the BC Nature Magazine. In many cases, as our organization is fifty years old, the tribute is a Memoriam to the individual. For most names listed, a hyperlink is provided which will take you directly to a scan of the page in the newsletter or magazine of their tribute. This compilation shows the depth of volunteer support, as there are close to seventy individuals who have been recognized in the newsletters and magazines.

Appendix 13. Interviews with Past Presidents 1989 to 1998: Interviews with five past presidents are provided. With time, additional interviews will be added.

In conclusion, although this is the shortest chapter of the Federation's fifty-year history, the countless contributions from our members is of overarching importance.



Chapter three: Outdoors with BC Nature Field Trips and Field Camps

By Bev Ramey (with assistance from Susan Fisher, Jude Grass, Peter Ballin and Rick Gee).

For more details, refer to historical postings about locations of General Meetings and field camps on the BC Nature website. Our organization's legal name as it was founded is the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists and this is shortened to FBCN in this article. BC Nature was adopted as our operating name in 2005.

You do not have to go alone into the wilderness in order to experience the joy of nature. Camps and field trips organized by BC's naturalists' clubs have enabled several generations of members to share and communicate their experiences of the natural world. This bonding has been amplified by the creation of the Federation of BC Naturalists. Through the FBCN, we not only gain a bigger voice on conservation issues, we also gain more territory to explore.

The general meetings provide the formal vehicle for club representatives to meet together, yet perhaps it is the field trips offered by the host club that really draw us together. Speakers at the conference portion are well received and the topics are informative, but it is on the field trips that naturalists become friends and strengthen ties, while at the same time learning from the host club as they share their local natural treasures.

Early on, the FBCN adopted the practice of having member clubs host the general meetings, resulting in varied venues around the province. The local club takes great pride in showcasing their beloved natural areas and in sharing stories of how they helped protect the area, or contributed to land purchase. In some cases, the very land we explore was donated by a generous club member. The local naturalists' understanding of the seasonal features of the site and its history make for informative outings. The popularity of field trips shows through the large crowds that attend even the early morning birding, despite start times of 5:30 or 6:00 am.

It is not just elected board members and club representatives who attend the conferences. Typically, over a hundred other members attend as well. For example, the 1978 AGM in Williams Lake was attended by 130 people. The all-time attendance high was at the FBCN's 30th anniversary, the 1999 Qualicum AGM, which was organized in conjunction with Nature Canada: 236 people registered. More recently, the Salt Spring Island AGM in 2015 attracted 206 paying registrants, quite the challenge for the host club to arrange, given the limited venues and accommodation on the island.

If conferences and field trips bring us together in friendship, then field camps are the heart of BC Nature. The camps are based in locations throughout the province where we can explore, learn, and strengthen friendships, all while housed each evening in a diverse array of accommodation arrangements, unique to each site. Typically, we join together for meals, frequently organized by

volunteer caterers (such as members extraordinaire Pat Westheuser and Fiona Flook, who have provided tasty meals at seven field camps with much improvisation to fit the different venues).

Not only are the camps a great experience for us naturalists, but the camps (and AGMs and FGMs) often generate a surplus of funds which is split between the host club and BC Nature. This surplus arises even though registration fees are reasonably priced. Clubs put their funds to good projects. BC Nature uses its portion to fund the travel expenses of Club Representatives and Board members. In some years when several camps are offered, the surplus enables BC Nature to make contributions to one of its internally restricted accounts, such as a project or scholarships.

The importance of camps has been noted during all membership surveys and has been incorporated into strategic plans as goal statements (1998, 2010, and 2015) such as: “Expand on our high quality camps and field activities on a regular annual basis as a means of both nature education and fund-raising.” (p.9, The Next Five Years, BC Nature Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015)

Camps began under the BC Nature Council in 1964, first held at the UBC Geology Field Camp at Oliver. The first camp included a ‘Junior’ component, led by Freeman ‘Skipper’ King of the Victoria Natural History Society. Field camps continued for four years, but then had a ten-year hiatus until 1978, when Bill Merilees led a field camp at Waterton Lakes National Park (139 registrants). Since then, field camps have continued most years, with registration numbers from 20 to 70 participants. Here is a sampling of locations and some organizer and host club names:

- Nanoose Bay, with Bill Merilees,
- Elko near Kikomun Creek, with Bert & Ruth Brink and Helen Akrigg,
- Goose Spit (Comox Bay),
- Shuswap Lake, Elsie Nykyfork and North Shuswap Naturalists,
- Balfour (Kootenay Lake),
- Smithers, with Rosamund & Jim Pojar,
- Okanagan Lake with North Okanagan Naturalists,
- Victoria, based at UVic, with Victoria Natural History Society,
- Chilcotin’s Gaspard Creek, with Williams Lake Field Naturalists,
- Gardom Lake (Shuswap), Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society,
- Lac du Bois, with Susan Hammond, Karen Willies, and Kamloops Naturalists,
- Sunshine Coast with Pender Harbour & District Wildlife Society,
- South Okanagan, with Laure Neish and South Okanagan Naturalists,
- Central Okanagan with Pat Westheuser,
- Comox Valley with Betty Lunam,
- Princeton with Madelon Schouten and Vermilion Forks Naturalists,
- Alaska-Cassiar Highway bus tour, with Bill Merilees and others,
- Saturna Island, with Anne Murray and Bev Ramey,
- Williams Lake (Gavin Lake residential) with Fred McMechan and Williams Lake Field Naturalists),
- Okanagan (Kelowna) with Pat Westheuser and Central Okanagan Naturalists,
- Quadra Island, with Rolf and Heather Kellerhals,
- Eastern Washington Birding with Anne Murray and Eva Durance,

- Boundary Bay Winter Birding with Anne Murray,
- Lillooet Field Camp with Vivian Birch-Jones and Lillooet Field Naturalists,
- Saltspring Island with Nieke Visser and Saltspring Trail & Nature Club,
- Fraser Canyon, with Janne Perrin and Chilliwack Field Naturalists,
- Tofino, with Anne Gosse and others
- Harrison Lake with Janne Perrin and Chilliwack Field Naturalists, and
- Telegraph Cove Northern Vancouver Island with John & Heather Neville.

Bamfield Marine Station has been a popular venue, with about twelve camps beginning in 1987. Over the years, coordinators for this camp included Norm Pursell, Bert Brink, Helen Akrigg, Anne Murray, and Anne Gosse.

In 1977 the field camp offering was expanded to include “exploratory backpacking”. Organizers chose destinations that were being promoted as potential parks, and these camps increased awareness of each area’s natural values. Participants were typically responsible for their own gear and food and sometimes contributed to transport to remote areas. Destinations included:

- Stein River Valley (Norman Pursell 1977 and 1978),
- Redfern Lake (Northern Rockies) 1991,
- Spatsizi 1992, with organizer Ted Stubbs,
- Height of the Rockies 1993, with Bob Harris and Norm Pursell,
- Ilgachuz Mountains (West Chilcotins) 1994, with Bob Harris and Ted Stubbs,
- Atlin Lake (including rental of houseboats) 1995,
- Lorna Lake (Big Creek Provincial Park) 1996,
- Nonda Creek (Muncho Lake Provincial Park) 1996, with Ted Stubbs,
- Jarvis Lakes (Kakwa Provincial Park) 1998, with Ted & Pat Stubbs.

Exploratory camps were revived in 2008, when Bev and Bill Ramey organized backpacking trips to collect data for the BC Breeding Bird Atlas over five years to these areas:

- Snowy Protected Area,
- South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park,
- Big Creek Provincial Park,
- Kakwa Provincial Parks, and
- the Niut and Potato Range in the West Chilcotins.

For several years there was a Camp Coordinator, Committee and Registrar. For example, in 1993 Norman Pursell was Camp Committee Chair with members Helen Akrigg, Doreen Shaw, and Barbara Blow. In recent years the Camp Committee has been chaired by Heather Neville; the present chair is Harry Crosby.

For the enjoyment and friendship of members, and for the enhancement of our knowledge of nature, BC Nature is committed to continuing field camps, with the support of our member clubs, and to maintaining the excellent quality of its conferences (AGMs and FGMs) and field trips arranged by host clubs.



Chapter Four: Communication through Newsletters, Magazines, Website and Office

By Bev Ramey (with assistance from Susan Fisher, Jude Grass, Peter Ballin and Rick Gee)

Volumes of the BC Nature magazine back to 1969 can be viewed at the BC Nature website, member log-in, and then under Publications, click for the year(s) you wish to read. Similarly scanned copies of the journal, Cordillera, are posted. The Federation of British Columbia Naturalists is abbreviated as FBCN in this account and it remains our legal name. BC Nature was adopted as our operating name in 2005.

Since the beginning of FBCN the newsletter has been our steadfast educational publication. Over the past half-century, it has evolved from mimeographed sheets, to a typeset newsprint format, to a magazine with a colour cover. For the past two decades we have also benefitted from website outreach, and for the past seven years, a monthly eNews circulation. These have provided members with FBCN news including reports on conservation and education activities and nature accounts. Office staff have facilitated these connections for the past 35 years.

Newsletters– the beginning years

In 1963, the BC Nature Council appointed Gladys Soulsby of the Victoria Natural History Society as editor of its newsletter. That early beginning explains why in 2019 our magazine reached volume 57, while FBCN officially began only 50 years ago. Elton Anderson was editor from 1967 to 1975. Through the newsletter and his travels, he encouraged new members and formation of clubs around the province.

“*The Federation of British Columbia Naturalists newsletter*” had a masthead featuring logo, federation name, and mailing address. It was printed on 8.5” x 17” paper, folded in half to provide four pages and published quarterly. By 1975 it had expanded to eight pages, and had secured an ISSN number (International Standard Serial Number unique code for identifying publications) by 1976.

By 1980 the masthead title became *B.C. Naturalist* and its length increased to 16 or 24 pages. (The periods of “B.C.” were dropped in 1992 to yield *BC Naturalist*.) Content resembled our present-day magazine with FBCN news, conservation issues, articles about nature, reports on club activities, and information on upcoming meetings. During that era government staff often provided articles.

In the early years, “citizen science” observations conducted by our members for the BC Nest Record Scheme featured largely in the *BC Naturalist*. Begun in 1955 as a UBC project, the Nest Record Scheme was transferred to the BC Nature Council in 1966. Results of the bird nest record cards were documented annually in the *BC Naturalist* for close to 30 years, often requiring two to

four extra pages that were supported by the provincial museum. Volunteer Violet Gibbard of Naramata compiled the information, with assistance from R. Wayne Campbell (*BC Naturalist*, Vol 24, No 2; see also tribute to Violet by Dick Cannings in *BC Nature*, Vol 45, No 1). These annual tallies of nesting birds included names of contributors who provided more than 20 card observations. The extent of this project was huge: between 1968 and 1987 about 170 people contributed over 52,000 cards. These data were, of course, compiled by hand, as personal home computers did not yet exist. On Violet's retirement, Wayne Campbell noted that: "almost every article dealing with breeding birds in the Province has referred to the 50,000 or so cards Violet processed during her period as coordinator" (*BC Naturalist*, Vol 24, No 2). Documentation in the *BC Naturalist* continued for about a decade after Vi Gibbard's retirement and then moved to the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies, a non-profit organization based in Victoria.

Nature observations by members were also included in the newsletter during the 1980s to 1993 through the quarterly "Wildlife Atlases Progress Report," provided by the BC Provincial Museum (now Royal BC Museum). Other survey data were included, including the annual Christmas Bird Counts, Bird Blitzes, Swan Counts, and the Interior Eagle Count.

BCnature magazine no longer reports regularly on citizen science but it does from time to time include invitations for volunteers to contribute to such efforts led by other organizations. For example, when the five years of data collection for the BC Breeding Bird Atlas took place (2008 to 2012), BC Nature partnered with other organizations, led by Bird Studies Canada. Most of the volunteers in the field were members of BC Nature. Similarly, naturalists continue to provide the 'boots on the ground' for the annual Christmas Bird Counts. *BCnature* magazine recently called on members to contribute to the BC Annual Bat Count. We also encourage members to post photos and accounts to eFlora and eFauna and to iNaturalist.

Newsletter to Magazine

Jude Grass recalls that in the late 1970s when she first helped with newsletters, the text was pasted on large sheets of paper for printing. The 1980s and 1990s were the decades of newsprint. Jude became editor in 1982, a job she did for the next sixteen years. During that time the newsletter increased from four to six issues a year. Jude recalls that volunteers no longer did the paste-up: the final text was sent to the printing company for typesetting and layout. Club news grew to one or two pages titled 'Club Chat', and lengthened to six pages in 2005, with short newsy paragraphs provided by clubs. Duanne van den Berg coordinated Club Chat for several years, and then this duty was taken on by the office manager. The newsletter included a directory of the Board and Club Directors. (This information is now at the website.) The newsletter also included registration forms for camps, news on upcoming AGMs, FGMs, and conferences, and reports from the president and, occasionally, from regional coordinators.

During those decades the newsletter included recurring columns, such as:
"ptarmigan ptracks" by David Stirling on a wide range of natural history themes,
"The Enlichenment" by Trevor Goward on lichens, with philosophy and humour,
"Close-Up On Nature" and "Jerry's Rangers" by Al Grass on nature observations,
"The Gnat's Whiskers" by Bunny Ramsdin, a page of drawings and info for kids,
"Geotalk" by Jim Weston on geology,

“Haycock’s Herptiles” by Russ Haycock on amphibians and reptiles,
“Crossword” with nature theme by Betty Lunam, and
“Perspectives” by Eric Damer with wild ranging discussions of nature.

In 1998 an editorial board was established and publication again went quarterly. The newsletter focused on content themes for a few issues, organized by guest editors. In the year 2000 the newsletter transformed from newsprint to white paper magazine. From 2003 to 2010, the magazine was headed by paid contractor, Dawn Hanna, who acted as editor and also handled the design. In 2003 our motto, “To Know Nature and to Keep It Worth Knowing” was added to the masthead.

Through that decade the magazine included some standard features. “Your Federation is Working for You” covered letters written by the Conservation Committee and the responses it received; this feature also reported on meetings attended by FBCN representatives. Almost all issues included a president’s message, sometimes under headings such as “RavenTalk” or “President’s Perch.” The names of Board members and club representatives were included in the directory portion of the newsletters. The number of volunteers involved over the past half century is truly impressive, but far too many to name in this account. The list of our 20 past presidents is also too lengthy to mention here, but is available on the website, as an appendix of the historical account.

In 2007 the new BC Nature logo was incorporated in the masthead design and name for the magazine became “*BC nature*”. In 2009 the space between the BC and nature was deleted to give *BCnature*. In 2010 the BC Nature office manager, Betty Davison, took on coordination and design, a job which she continues to do. Also in 2010 our logo was shortened to the direct “Know Nature and Keep It Worth Knowing”. Colour burst forth on the cover in 2012. The present day magazine of 32 to 36 pages includes about five pages of ads scattered throughout, similar in proportion to the ads included in the 24-page newsletter of the 1980s.

As I researched this article, I frequently found myself distracted by articles in the old newsletters and magazines. After years and even decades, the back issues of our publications remain entertaining and informative. May our publications continue to have this appeal for readers.

Cordillera

For five years, beginning in 1994, FBCN published a full-colour journal, Cordillera, with Frances Vyse as volunteer managing editor. Although the journal published articles with broad appeal, the FBCN lacked the funds and personnel to sustain such an ambitious publication. After full consideration the journal was terminated in 2000.

Office and Staffing

Office staff have enabled consistent communication, and contributed to the newsletters/magazines, communications with members, other organizations, and government agencies, in addition to supporting the Board and Club Directors. Elton Anderson recognized this need for a hub for communication and spearheaded a “Drive for Office” in 1974. Yet it wasn’t until 1983 that a part-time paid office secretary, Adeline Nicol, was hired. Adeline worked initially from her home in Langley and then from a small desk in the corner of the Outdoor Recreation Council office in

Vancouver. Adeline's title soon became Executive Secretary, with full time hours. In 1994, the position was renamed Office Manager, with Frieda Davidson hired, followed by Leslie Ann Drummond in 1996. By this time the office had relocated to 1367 W Broadway, Vancouver, in space leased from Sport BC. Maria Hamann was hired in 1999 and provided good grounding for our activities for a decade. We offered free space in our office to the newly formed Young Naturalists Club of BC under the leadership of Daphne Solecki, beginning in 2004. The Young Naturalists Club is now known as NatureKids BC. We were forced to move when Sport BC relocated to Richmond in 2007. Our search for new office space fortunately landed us in a park. Now we are happily located at the base of Mt Seymour Provincial Park, North Vancouver, in the Parks Heritage Centre, through arrangement with the Elders Council for Parks in British Columbia, and with support from BC Parks. We continue to provide shared office space to NatureKids BC.

Since Maria Hamann's retirement in December 2009, Betty Davison has ably facilitated communications from our office. Betty has also taken on the duties of magazine coordination; she also assists the Elders Council for Parks in British Columbia for one day a week. Although digital communication has facilitated correspondence and discussion, it has also expanded the demands of the job. The office receives anywhere from 50-100 email a day! Given the increased workload, in 2019 BC Nature hired a part-time office assistant, Natalia Pisareka.

Website and eNews

FBCN's first website went live in 1998. It has gone through periodic updates and at least five makeovers in the ensuing years. For the past decade, the website has been coordinated through the office.

As the key portal to our organization, the website provides information on our conservation and education activities and projects, upcoming naturalist events such as AGMs, FGMs and camps, plus contact information for all clubs around the province. A volunteer from the Communications Committee now helps to keep all this information current.

The website includes a page on our partner organization, the BC Naturalists' Foundation, where it reports on activities. The BC Naturalists' Foundation, a separate society closely linked to BC Nature through appointment of its Directors, receives donations and bequests, on which the interest earned is dispersed annually to support BC Nature and its clubs' projects.

The website links to our project, Nature Guide (also known as Nature Knowledge or *Wildlife Viewing Guide*), began in 2011. *Nature Guide* describes natural attractions throughout the province with interactive map. This material has been compiled through contractors with information provided by local naturalists. (<https://bcnatureguide.ca/>) Another project link at our website connects to our joint project with Bird Studies Canada, coordinating the volunteer caretakers for the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). For those who haven't viewed, it is on the BC Nature website, under 'Nature Knowledge', 'Wildlife Viewing Guide', or head directly to: <https://bcnatureguide.ca/>

Since 2012, another digital communication, the monthly BC Nature eNews, reaches all members who provide their email addresses. It includes current BC Nature news, plus information provided by other organizations, often with a conservation focus, and website links for additional information, and for job postings. Members can suggest to the office items for posting.

Communication through the next Half Century

Definitely digital communication works well throughout the great distances of our province, although many feel overwhelmed by the volume of emails they receive. When that happens, as it does frequently for office staff, board, and committee members, as well as club executives, it is time to plan for some outdoor time – the best antidote for digital overload.

Could any of the nine founding clubs and the Board members who signed the society papers in 1969 have imagined that we would grow as an organization together with such expansive communication capabilities? Can we today picture how our organization will change and evolve over the next half century? In the next fifty years, will our wildlife, conservation lands, and marine protected areas be able to withstand the press of population growth, pollutants, and climate change? How can we as a naturalist organization continue to improve our communications for the struggles and challenges of the next half century?



Chapter Five: Conservation, a Fifty Year History

By Bev Ramey, with editorial assistance from Susan Fisher, Peter Ballin, Jude Grass and Rick Gee.

Throughout, the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists is shortened to FBCN or to the current operating name, BC Nature. All FBCN correspondence related to conservation can be viewed at the BC Nature website, bcnature.ca: log-in as a member, then click Archives. Originals are stored at the archives of the University of Victoria.

Conservation has always been at the core of BC Nature. Education comes first with “Know Nature” followed by the conservation focus, “Keep it Worth Knowing”. That’s our organization’s motto. If we don’t know nature, we cannot act to conserve it. As Joni Mitchell described so well in her song, “you don’t know what you’ve got, ‘til it’s gone”.

Over half a century, many dedicated and knowledgeable naturalists have given their time to BC Nature’s education and conservation initiatives. The following account highlights a few achievements, grouped under eleven headings:

- Return It
- Resolutions
- Resource Management
- Conferences, Roundtables and Advisory Committees
- Brochures and Posters
- Projects
- Park Creation and Land Trusts
- The Dark Years
- Success at the Local Government Level
- A Lesson Learned – Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Conservation
- Energy, Climate Change and Entering the Courtrooms

Return It

An early and successful BC Nature campaign was for legislation for “Returnable and Standardized Bottles and Cans”. In 1968, BC Nature representatives presented this recommendation to the government; they also engaged in public discussions and leaflet distributions. In response to the complaint from stores that they would have to sort many tall bottles, FBCN suggested standardized pop bottles similar to the returnable beer bottles. Success! The Litter Act, passed in 1970, required a two-cent deposit on every beer or soft drink container sold. This may seem a small accomplishment, but those who have recently travelled in the UK may have noticed the contrast: the UK has not yet

required a return deposit on bottles and cans and many natural areas are littered with beverage containers. All British Columbians can be grateful for this successful campaign, undertaken in the very early years of BC Nature.

Resolutions

Since the formation of the Federation of BC Naturalists, resolutions have played an important role in increasing awareness, developing policies, and presenting conservation issues to government. Approved resolutions were submitted to governments; follow-up replies were recorded and reported at the next AGM. Resolutions over the past 50 years provide a good historical record of the issues on which our organization has focused. (You can read these resolutions at the BC Nature website under: Conservation – Resolutions: *FBCN Policy Manual 1988*, for the early resolutions, the *FBCN Resolution Manual 1988-1994*, and *Resolution Manual 1995 – to the present day*.)

In its first four decades, FBCN considered large numbers of resolutions: 19 in 1972, 23 in 1976, and the all-time high of 31 in 1993. Not surprisingly, the AGMs stretched over an entire day during those years. In the past decade the number of resolutions has decreased to fewer than five and the AGMs have become manageable in a half day.

Resource Management

The last three decades of the 20th century saw good conservation advances in land and water management, with growing scientific, public and even government recognition of the importance of maintaining natural systems. These were successful years: we had good communication channels with government. Senior government staff often attended our annual and fall general meetings. Key topics included:

- Management for non-game wildlife species, including a halt to predator control, and specifically a ban on use of poison bait and the notorious compound 1080 (successful in 1998).
- Forest management concerns saw briefs submitted in 1960s and 1970s on Wilderness, Old Growth Forests, Reservoir Clearing before Flooding (Mica Reservoir), and Identified Wildlife (2004).
- Support for the Agricultural Land Reserve (1970s) and retention of farmland from industrial/urban development.
- Mining was at times a focus, including Uranium Mining; our resolutions on uranium mining (1978-80) ultimately resulted in a seven-year moratorium and then a legislated ban (2008). FBCN called for regulations to prohibit strip mining and 'cat roads', as well as mandatory land reclamation following mining (1981).
- Poisoning of lakes in the mid-1970s was halted. Lakes were being poisoned to remove native 'trash' fish, so named at the time as they were regarded to have no value for angling.

- FBCN opposed ocean salmon farms and presented to the Panel on Sustainable Aquaculture.
- FBCN was instrumental in establishing the BC Endangered Species Coalition (1994-2000) and then promoting the federal Species at Risk Act (2003). We are still urging enactment of a provincial Species at Risk Act.

Conferences, Roundtables and Advisory Committees

Conservation issues have been publicized through resolutions, briefs and letters, while conferences, workshops and roundtables have provided education about the issues. These discussions, sometimes in partnership with other environmental groups, brought naturalists and academics together with senior government staff.

In the 1960s and 1970s, FBCN championed the values of the Fraser River Estuary and Boundary Bay and raised public awareness about the importance of the Pacific Flyway. (This campaign continues today with opposition to the second terminal at Roberts Bank and the importance of the Fraser River Estuary Important Bird Area.)

In 1975, FBCN organized “The Need for Sanctuaries in the Fraser River Estuary”, a conference led by some of our province’s most influential naturalists: Barry Leach, Dick Stace-Smith, Bert Brink and Jude Grass. FBCN went on to found the Fraser River Coalition, which held subsequent conferences, one in 1977 and a second in 1987. FBCN presented a brief on “Protecting the Fraser River Delta” to governments in 2005 (prepared by Anne Murray). All these efforts have helped to secure designation of several provincial Wildlife Management Areas in the lower Fraser River.

We sponsored conferences, and workshops on other topics, including: Threatened and Endangered Species (1981 and 1984), Bits and Pieces Symposium on the natural diversity of our province (1987), Old Growth Forests (1990), and Land for Nature through which at least 16 workshops were held around the province in the 1990s. Most of these conferences and workshops resulted in publications that further made known concerns and recommendations. In addition, many of the AGMs and FGMs have featured a conservation theme, helping to spread awareness and action.

BC Nature representatives have further influenced conservation policy through participation in Advisory Committees organized by government, including:

- Forest Land Use Liaison Committee 1970s (co-chair Dick Stace-Smith)
- Agriculture-Wildlife Advisory Committee 1990s (first named Problem Wildlife Committee) through to 2000
- Kemano-Nechako (long-time advocate June Wood), through the Rivers Defense Coalition (1987-1995) and then promoting environmentally responsible management of the Nechako through to the present day,
- Off Road Vehicles (long-time volunteers Joan Best and Bev Ramey), with letters dating back to 1960s, and at least ten different resolutions over the decades. In 2014 legislation finally required a visible numbered decal or plate.
- Wetlands Stewardship Partnership 1990s onwards, and

- Several regional committees on LRMPs (Land and Resource Management Plan) and PAS (Protected Areas Strategy) in the 1990s resulted in provincial park establishment.

Brochures and Posters

FBCN provided nature education through brochures and posters, with aim to conserve sensitive natural areas. Our brochures included: “Fraser River Estuary”, “Wildlife Viewing in Regions of Province”, and “Sea-bird Survival”. Two posters were produced on endangered plants and birds (1970s). In the 1980s we produced posters highlighting three types of fragile landscapes: Wetlands, the Alpine, and Grasslands. FBCN also published policy papers on Grasslands (2000) and Marine Protection (2001).

Projects

BC Nature undertook several conservation projects, supported by educational stewardship materials, through paid professional contractors that were hired with the help of outside funding. BC Nature oversaw these projects, which typically supported and extended the work of local naturalist clubs by providing outreach and hands-on activities. In several cases, the contractor provided the final ‘professional packaging’ for the naturalists’ observations (citizen science field records). This ‘professional packaging’, nowadays often electronic, ensures observations made by naturalists are usable by government resource agencies. Major projects included:

- Wildlife Watch, late 1980s, with contractor April Mol
- Land for Nature, 1990 to 1998, beginning with contractor Nora Layard
- Living by Water, 1997 to about 2005, when it grew to the national level under Nature Canada, with contractors Clive Callaway and Sarah Weaver (Kipp)
- BC Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), 1996 to the present day (with Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada). Volunteer Anne Murray has provided ongoing oversight; current contractor Krista Kaptein supports 50 volunteer caretakers overseeing most of BC’s 82 IBAs, and
- Wildlife Tree Stewardship (WiTS), 2001 to about 2010 (volunteers Ron Speller and Jude Grass; contractors Kerri-Lynne Wilson, Ian Moul and Lisa Scott).

Park Creation and Land Trusts

The 1990s were the heyday of park creation, with extensive public involvement through government-sponsored land use and resource management planning committees, with representatives from a range of public and industrial interests. Provincial parkland doubled in area from 5.7% of the province in 1990 to about 12% by 2001.

FBCN contributed directly to the establishment of at least 12 Provincial Parks. Our first office manager, Adeline Nicol, was a key figure in the effort to create the Stein Valley Nlaka’pamux Heritage Park. Another important park advocate was Bert Brink, whose

efforts to establish the South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park dated back to 1937. Naturalists have been strong supporters of Ecological Reserves and the Friends of Ecological Reserves. Several BC Nature members serve as volunteer Ecological Reserve Wardens. Naturalists contributed to establishing three National Parks within BC and we continue efforts to establish the South Okanagan/Similkameen National Park Reserve and to expand National Marine Parks off the BC coast.

Many individual members and local clubs within the federation have supported Land Trusts in BC, locally and provincially, through contribution of private lands, donations and membership on Land Trust Boards.

Throughout the 1990s, there were many occasions for celebration. When each new park was established, there would be a media event, with politicians announcing their good news and conservation groups, including FBCN, sharing in the celebration. Sadly, times have changed: in the present decade, we are more likely to meet up with conservation groups at public hearings or at legal challenges in court than at celebrations for new parks.

The Dark Years

The 1990s era of government enlightenment was unfortunately followed by cuts to budgets and staff, from the late 1990s through the first decade of this century. Reduced staff in the 2000s and different political priorities saw deterioration in communication with government. Meetings with politicians became difficult to arrange and rarely occurred. Even our letters went unanswered or received only superficial replies. In recent years we have seen signs of gradual improvement, both provincially and federally.

In response to government budget cuts, BC Nature organized the “HELP MELP” campaign from 1998 to 2001 to restore funding to provincial environmental management, parks and forestry research. “MELP” stood for the then named provincial Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. A coalition of 52 conservation and nature organizations from “A to Z” (with the Z for the Zeballos Fish and Game Society) participated in this campaign. Although initially successful, it floundered with the changing government in 2001. The early 2000s were the years at both the provincial and federal levels, where environmental legislation was weakened, monitoring reduced, and budgets for long-term scientific biological research were slashed. Government staff who remained were not free to engage with the public and media.

In 2001, the provincial government cut all provincial park interpretation programs. BC Nature campaigned to reinstate park interpreters, without success. In response, from 2004 through 2010, we directly employed summer interpreters, hired through job creation programs and with on-site support from the private Park Facility Operators. In 2008, at the peak of this BC Nature program, 37 summer park interpreters provided programs in 23 Provincial Parks, with an estimated 133,000 people attending. By 2010,

government reduced support for this program. At the 2010 FGM the Club Directors voted to terminate our involvement unless government provided some support; that support did not materialize.

Success at the Local Government Level

By contrast, during the years that BC Nature's communications with senior governments deteriorated, many natural history clubs established good communication with their local and regional governments and were able to protect important natural areas.

During the 1990s, contract biologists employed through BC Nature's Land for Nature project worked with local clubs around the province to document key natural areas, then provided municipal and regional governments with this documentation and rationale to protect the sites. In addition, workshops enabled clubs to pursue constructive means for protecting these areas.

Naturalists familiar with their local landscapes are able to advocate knowledgeably for the protection of environmentally sensitive natural areas, including many wetland and grassland sites. These were often smaller areas overlooked by the high-profile campaigns to protect large wilderness tracts. Many of these smaller parks protected through the Land for Nature campaign now serve as important corridors connecting larger protected areas, providing critical habitat for species at risk. Local naturalists' clubs have been successful in these endeavours because the value of well-documented local knowledge from community residents is powerful. Local clubs also offer important ongoing stewardship roles for these natural areas as volunteer wardens and caretakers, advisory committees members, or through hands-on restoration and enhancement activities. Ongoing vigilance and involvement of this kind has been essential for conservation.

An example of a successful local conservation initiative was led by the Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association, one of the nine founding clubs of the Federation of BC Naturalists in 1969. The club formed with the specific purpose of persuading government to dedicate a park surrounding Thetis Lake, just outside of Victoria. The Club had arranged with local government to take on management of the area in 1958. But it would take until 1975 for the area to finally obtain park status, after which the club disbanded. The Capital Regional District Parks took over park management in 1993.

A Lesson Learned – Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Conservation

The conservation files of the past 50-years of BC Nature show, sadly, the same story over and over again: battles are won, but then the underlying issues, which have never gone away, rear up once more. For example, even in designated parks, issues such as boundary adjustments, inappropriate land uses (e.g. pipeline crossings), or proposals

such as new ‘fixed-roof accommodation’ continue to arise. The lesson? If naturalists want an area protected in perpetuity, continued vigilance will be required!

Major industrial developments that naturalists thought had been defeated have also resurfaced. We celebrated in the early 1980s when the Site C dam proposal was turned down by the Public Utilities Commission, only to have this proposal resurface with construction approved in 2014. Despite further review, the dam was approved, and construction began in 2018. A second example is the Manning/Skagit “donut hole”. While naturalists were waiting for the Skagit Environmental Endowment Fund to negotiate purchase of the old mineral claim, the area was partially logged; now there is a new application for further mineral exploration.

Energy, Climate Change and the Courts

FBCN activism on energy issues dates back to 1976, when our organization presented a brief on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline at the Berger Hearings. At the time, this was an anomaly: our primary focus was improving land and wildlife management and protecting natural areas. In recent years, however, BC Nature’s Conservation Committee has taken a stronger stand on energy development proposals. Site C has been just one of several energy-related development proposals in the 21st century, that caused the Federation to broaden its conservation focus. In 2002, naturalists and other groups managed to defeat the proposed Sumas 2 Power Generating Plant proposal. We have also addressed a number of other energy development proposals: environmental impacts of coalbed methane extraction (including in the Princeton area); shale fracking to extract oil and natural gas and develop Liquefied Natural Gas for export; Independent Power Projects; wind farms; port expansion in the Lower Mainland; and the Enbridge Northern Gateway and the Trans Mountain expansion pipelines.

The old strategies of letter-writing, meeting with government officials, and public mobilization have not been effective for these complex issues. So, in 2012, BC Nature took the major step of engaging in legal action to oppose the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline to Prince Rupert; the proposed pipeline was finally turned down in 2016. This legal engagement was made possible through the extensive *pro bono* contributions of UVic’s Environmental Law School and now CELL (Pacific Centre for Environmental Law and Technology). BC Nature Presidents and Board have followed the legal process closely and decided to continue this work through similar actions with the Trans Mountain Pipeline.

Conclusion

Over the past half century, BC Nature has succeeded in increasing public and political awareness and in protecting important natural areas. This work has for the most part been enjoyable: sharing our knowledge of the natural environment and acting on our passion for protecting nature. Gathering data to support our recommendations, writing

letters, briefs, and resolutions, organizing and speaking up at meetings and hearings have been satisfying and worthwhile activities. Of course we have been disappointed with the outcome of some campaigns. And we have learned that as soon as one conservation issue is resolved, another will pop up, and at the same time we must watch over areas seemingly protected. There is no end to this work. But, as naturalists, we have been able to ease our disappointments and regain our energy with a walk in a forest or grassland or along a quiet shore; we have been able to re-energize for the struggle by reflecting on the value of conserving biodiversity and of providing a voice for nature.

Chapter updated October 2019



Chapter six: Education

Written by Bev Ramey with assistance from Marg Cuthbert and Sheila Byers.

Education is the core of BC Nature. Education is the "Know Nature" in our motto. If we do not know nature, then there isn't much hope that we will be able to "Keep it Worth Knowing". Education is the first clause in BC Nature's constitution, and two additional clauses cover the means of communication to foster education. The fourth and last clause of the constitution focus on conservation (the "Keep it Worth Knowing" part of our motto). Here are the three clauses with a basis in education:

- *Foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of our natural environment, that it may be wisely used and maintained for future generations,*
- *Encourage the formation and cooperation of natural history clubs throughout BC, and*
- *Provide a means of communication between naturalists in BC.*

Education to increase awareness, appreciation and understanding of nature relies on a variety of means of communication. Through the fifty-year history of BC Nature many styles of communication have remained the same; however, electronic means have entered the tool kit in the past twenty years.

Several of the chapters of the BC Nature History describe aspects of education, indicating how firmly rooted education is throughout our activities. This chapter highlights those educational components, including field camps, general meetings, symposium, conferences, projects, publications, office communication, support for youth, club projects and electronic communication.

An Education Committee was struck by the BC Nature Council in the early years (1973 under Milt McLaren), followed by the Education Services Committee in 1978 under Al Grass. By the 1980s the Education and Recreation Committee was led by Bert Brink with a broadened purpose of not only educating its members, but also the public, land managers and politicians. Education efforts have continued through to the present day.

Fields Camps and General Meetings

Since 1977, BC Nature has offered field camps (getting out and about in nature) in most years. Even as far back as the 1960s, the BC Nature Council offered camps. The field camps, usually hosted or co-hosted by a local club, have provided amazing opportunities and outdoor venues to learn about nature in British Columbia through knowledgeable local naturalists, while exploring the diversity of BC's ecosystems. The one-on-one communication or small groups that takes place outdoors in field camps is the most powerful form of nature education and has

remained a constant throughout our history. Field camps also foster camaraderie between fellow naturalists, thereby leading to further sharing of natural history knowledge province-wide. See *Appendix 2. Camps - Field and Exploratory* for a listing of camp locations through the years, most with the host club named.

Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and Fall General Meetings (FGMs) at first naming do not seem an educational offering, but these general meetings usually include a conference portion with speakers and field trips, some including daylong field trips in advance of the general meeting. Similar to field camps, these conferences have provided great opportunities to learn about nature throughout BC. See *Appendix 1. AGMs & FGMs Locations, Host Clubs, Themes*.

Symposia, Conferences, Publications and Meetings as a Means to Link Conservation and Education

The Education and Recreation Committee organized several large symposia, roundtables, conferences and workshops through the 1980s and 1990s. See details in *Appendix 10: Roundtables, Conferences and Workshops*, which provides a description of the approximately twenty such conferences that were organized during that era, plus the additional sixteen workshops organized through the Land for Nature Program. Themes typically provided education focussed on a conservation topic, such as Endangered Species, Natural Diversity, Provincial Land and Water Use Strategy, Grasslands and Marine Protected Areas.

Many of the large conferences, or smaller symposia and workshops resulted in publication of the proceedings. See *Appendix 9. Publications*, which provides an annotated twelve-page listing of the several Federation of British Columbia Naturalists (FBCN; now BC Nature) publications. In addition, publication of books was supported, such as *Attracting Backyard Wildlife* (1990) by Bill Merilees.

Some of the workshops were held as part of an AGM conference, usually involving an extra day of speakers and field trips. These conferences, symposia and roundtables often included other nature-based organizations and were open to interested public. Government land managers attended, so these events were also a means to highlight and expand nature knowledge around conservation issues for land managers. Such specifically-themed workshops, roundtables or conferences have not been independently organized since 2004, but fortunately the conference-themed portions of the AGMs and FGMs, arranged by local clubs, have continued to provide education on natural history topics through to the present day.

Further to highlighting the intrinsic link between education and conservation, the Education and Recreation Committee, together with the Conservation Committee, endeavored to schedule bi-annual meetings with elected officials. The aim of those meetings was to broaden the politician's awareness of nature and land management issues. Usually the well-thought-out agenda covered about five key topic areas, often including the subjects of resolutions passed at the AGMs. Senior staff attended together with the politician(s). There was a hiatus in such meetings during the 2010s as politicians became less willing to meet, but moving into the 2020s, BC Nature is again trying to arrange such meetings.

Posters

BC Nature produced educational posters to highlight Species at Risk. The first poster was produced in 1977, titled "LOOK...ENJOY...LET THEM BE". This poster showed endangered BC plants and was distributed free to all schools in BC and to other youth organizations (15,000 full colour copies were distributed). The poster was coordinated by the FBCN, the Alpine Garden Club and the Vancouver Natural History Society (VanNHS; now Nature Vancouver). The success of that poster soon led to a second poster, "LOOK...LISTEN...BE CONCERNED", which showed full colour photos of threatened birds. In 1980 a poster on the Vancouver Island Marmot was produced. This was followed by a series of three posters drawing attention to "Fragile Habitats". The first two fragile habitat posters were produced with the VanNHS and showed Alpine Flora (1984) and Endangered Wetlands (1987). This was followed in 1996 by the "Interior Grasslands: Limited and Unique".

Projects

The FBCN and its clubs have been involved since the 1970s with citizen science projects (although not then labelled as such) where members contributed to the BC Nest Record Scheme and to annual Christmas Bird Counts. The BC Nest Record Scheme, coordinated by BC Nature for over two decades, documented annual findings in our newsletters as described in *Chapter 7. Projects*.

Land for Nature was an important project during the 1990s and is also described in detail in Chapter 7. It had a large educational component, helping local clubs identify their key local natural areas with documentation appropriate to enable governments to designate these areas for protection. Sixteen publications arose from that project, listed in the *Appendix 9. Publications*, with educational titles such as: *Tools and Mechanisms for Preserving Green Space*, *Incorporating Natural Areas in Community Planning in the East Kootenay*, and *Understanding Municipal Environmental Planning, Squamish*.

The Project chapter describes the several educational projects organized and administered by the FBCN (BC Nature). Not all projects were directed specifically towards member naturalists. Some projects reached out beyond the naturalist community to increase public awareness of nature. For example, a component of the project "Living by Water", offered workshops to realtors to raise awareness that development of lake front properties was damaging the lakeshores. Another outcome of The Living by Water project was the production of pamphlets and an illustrated book; both were written for anyone living beside a lake or wetland to show how to live in harmony with water. This project was so successful that it went national.

"Wildlife Tree Stewardship" is another example of a project that reached out to the broader public through signs posted on snags to advertise the value of the 'snag' as a wildlife tree for cavity nesters.

Chapter 7. Projects describes the following projects, all of which had major educational focus:

- BC Nest Record Scheme and present-day BC Breeding Bird Atlas (with Bird Studies Canada and other partners)
- Land for Nature (initially named Land for Wildlife)
- Living by Water
- Wildlife Viewing
- Naturescape (with the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation)
- Conservation Action Marketing Program
- Ecological Reserve Wardens (gathering together with Friends of Ecological Reserves)
- BC Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) (with Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada)
- Wildlife Tree Stewardship (WiTS)
- Park Naturalists in BC Parks
- BC Nature Guide (Harnessing Nature Knowledge), web based

The above projects (and note that the IBA caretakers and the BC Nature Guide both still continue), had a broad range of educational components, including:

- improving observational skills through recording data over time,
- workshops and field trips,
- publications,
- dramatic presentations and skits,
- bringing interested naturalists together to share and learn from each other,
- increasing awareness about natural areas for the general public, and
- increasing knowledge and planting skills associated with building wildlife friendly gardens in the backyard and beyond.

Newsletter, Magazine and Office

Throughout the fifty-year history of BC Nature, educational materials have been shared through our *BCnature* magazine: originally printed as mimeographed sheets, followed by a typeset newsprint newsletter, then black and white magazine, and nowadays with a cover in full colour. These are described in *Chapter 4. Communications through Newsletters, Magazines, Website and Office*. The newsletters often included theme-focused education columns. Chapter 4 also describes the five years of production during the mid-1990s of the provincial natural history journal, *Cordillera*.

Another aspect of communication covered in Chapter 4 was the “Drive for Office” in 1974, to establish an office and eventually to staff it with a full time office manager. Office staff have been essential to communication, sharing of educational materials amongst members, facilitating arrangements for field camps and promoting conferences and general meetings.

Electronic Communication

New ways to communicate nature knowledge and connect with other naturalists have been enabled through electronic communication. BC Nature’s first website went live in 1998. The website appearance has improved through several technological upgrades; modifications continue and the use of social media is expanding. Each club of BC Nature has its own subpage on the website, which

provides highlights of the local club's activities, information on how to join and a link to the club's own website. A separate website is dedicated to the BC Nature Guide (Harnessing Nature Knowledge) that provides locational map and the site's natural history information on over 400 local natural areas throughout BC. The guide is supported by interactive maps and written for the general public or visiting naturalists. <http://bcnatureguide.ca/>

Electronic communication has enabled monthly eNews circulation to all interested members from about 2012 onwards. Many links are provided in the eNews for nature events, including those of member clubs, plus activities of other groups and agencies.

Connecting with Youth

Connecting with youth has been an ongoing interest, dating back to the time of the BC Nature Council which offered summer camps for "junior naturalists". Yet it wasn't until the 1990s that BC Nature encouraged the formation of the Young Naturalist Club (now NatureKids). BC Nature has provided office space to NatureKids since the mid-2000s. See *Chapter 8. Formation of NatureKids BC* for further information.

BC Nature has provided financial support for youth since 1999 through contributing cash awards annually to the twelve Regional Science Fairs throughout BC, at both the junior and senior levels. Local clubs are encouraged to mentor students with their projects, help with judging and attend the Regional Science Fair awards ceremony. In 2019, all twelve regions in BC had a BC Nature club representative attending to present the junior and senior awards. An article and photo description are included annually in the *BCnature* magazine.

In 2005, a scholarship was created in memory of Rene Savenye, and then in 2019 a second scholarship was established in memory of Bert Brink. BC Nature members who are students, or members who have student relatives, are eligible when enrolled in studies in the biological fields. The Savenye Scholarship is awarded annually to an undergraduate and the Brink Scholarship, to a graduate student. Names of past recipients are listed in *Appendix 4. Scholarship Recipients*.

Supporting Club Projects

Hands-on projects are another means of supporting education in the outdoors, such as restoration activities, nature trail improvements and building nest boxes for birds and bats. BC Nature, in partnership with the BC Naturalists' Foundation, provides grants annually to support club projects, dating back to the early 1990s. The Foundation provides an annual grant to BC Nature to support these educational projects. Most of these projects include countless volunteer hours contributed by club members with hands-on activities outside in nature; or, through the production of educational materials for the public such as brochures on birds, butterflies or plants. To see a full listing of club projects supported over the years, refer to Appendix 12 or to the Foundation's subpage on the BC Nature website at: <https://www.bcnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Grants-Update-2019.pdf>

Present-day Education Committee

The Education Committee was revitalized in 2013, with a new terms-of-reference and annual work plan. The Committee connected with all the member clubs through an online survey to learn about their nature educational offerings and to better understand how BC Nature could support them. The Education Survey Report in 2014 showed that many of the clubs were producing brochures and field guides, offering walks, talks, school programs and scholarships, as well as participating in school science fairs.

The Education Committee initiated a recognition of naturalist mentors in 2016 through the *BCnature* magazine, where two naturalist mentors are highlighted in each of the quarterly *BCnature* magazines. Naturalist mentors are personally acknowledged at both the AGMs and FGMs with the presentation of a certificate of appreciation. The Committee has drafted a "Toolkit for Naturalist Mentors" and a "Getting Outdoors Tips for Teachers" that is posted on the BC Nature website. Here's the link for the Toolkit:

<https://www.bcnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/BC-Nature-Naturalist-Mentor-Kit.pdf>

The Education Committee has also promoted communication and participation of member clubs by requesting that each club appoint an education liaison to the committee. The purpose of the club liaison is to ensure that BC Nature is kept informed of the club's nature education efforts, promote sharing of ideas, needs and points of view. NatureKids BC now participates on the Education Committee to share those youth clubs' accomplishments and needs.

Education IS the core of BC Nature not only because it is embedded in the Society's constitution but because all of our members thrive on the magnificent beauty and wonder of nature in all of its glorious diversity. Members innately **want** to "*Know Nature*" and **strive** to "*Keep it Worth Knowing*".

March 2020



Chapter Seven: Projects

Written by Bev Ramey, with editorial assistance by Susan Fisher. Some of the major project descriptions have been authored by a lead person with that project; their name is noted at the start of that project description.

BC Nature has undertaken several special projects in order to serve our mission – to "Know Nature and Keep it Worth Knowing." Projects typically support and extend the work of local naturalist clubs by achieving measurable results on the ground, providing public education, involving members in hands-on activities, and promoting greater awareness of nature. Often projects provide the final "professional" packaging for citizen science, ensuring that the data provided by naturalists will be taken seriously by governments and land agencies.

Projects are funded through grants received from outside agencies, foundations, and donors. Contractors are hired to complete the tasks. Projects are overseen by the volunteer BC Nature Board or a sub-committee. The number and type of projects depend on the time and capability of the volunteers to administer them, and on the availability of grants. Some projects are administered jointly with other non-profit organizations, thus strengthening our networks of working relationships. Some projects are specific to a geographic region, while others cover the entire province. Some have a short duration; others have extended over many years.

This chapter surveys the major projects that BC Nature has undertaken. There have also been many smaller projects, often involving partnerships, as follows:

- BC Wildlife Watch,
- publication of Wildlife Viewing Brochures for several regions of the province (2013 through 2015 and which have been refocused into the current website-based *BC Nature Guide*),
- Ecological Reserve Wardens Gathering held in 2003 in Kamloops and organized with Friends of Ecological Reserves,
- the three poster series to increase awareness of fragile landscapes (Alpine, Wetlands, and Grasslands), and
- the Naturescape program in the late 1990s, which aimed to train naturalists as ambassadors in their communities for wildlife-friendly gardens.

The longest-running project with other partners has been the Christmas Bird Counts. Since 1954, BC naturalists' clubs have been involved in the counts, which take place across North America. In Canada, the counts are currently coordinated and tallied by Bird Studies Canada. In 1968, eight naturalist clubs in

BC participated. By 2015, about 35 clubs participated in the Christmas Bird Counts, and growing.

Major projects will now be described in more detail. These are:

- BC Nest Record Scheme and present-day BC Breeding Bird Atlas (with Bird Studies Canada and other partners)
- Land for Nature (initially named Land for Wildlife)
- Living by Water
- Conservation Action Marketing Program
- BC Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) (with Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada)
- Wildlife Tree Stewardship (WiTS)
- Interpretation in BC Parks
- BC Nature Guide (Harnessing Nature Knowledge)

BC Nest Record Scheme

The Nest Record Scheme, or “Pacific Nest Record Scheme” as it was first known, began in 1955 as a UBC student project under Drs. M.D.F Udvardy and M.T. Myres. It was designed as an ongoing process to gather data for ornithologists, government personnel, academic researchers, and naturalists. Initially it included eleven American states, as well as B.C. and the Yukon. In 1966, Dr Jim Bendell, then President of the BC Nature Council, transferred the program from UBC to the Council.

Violet (Vi) Gibbard, of Naramata, volunteered to organize and coordinate the nesting data. Within two years, the unwieldy geographic range was reconfigured to create regional nest record schemes in each of the eleven ‘Pacific’ states; the BC operation was named the BC Nest Record Scheme.

Volunteer naturalists recorded on standard cards their observations of bird species, number of eggs or young in nest, success of fledglings, description of nest and surroundings. Vi Gibbard coordinated the program for two decades, during which her dedication never faltered. Each year in early spring, she would mail out blank cards to participants and then gather completed cards at the end of the summer. As Dick Cannings noted in a tribute to her in 2007, “Violet was an ideal role model for the scheme, contributing more than 100 cards each year herself, filled in with incredible detail.” The results of the nest record cards were documented annually in the *BC Naturalist* from 1966 to 1986, with the information often two pages in length, compiled by Vi, with assistance from R. Wayne Campbell. (See *BC Naturalist*, vol 24, #2 and *BCnature*, vol 45, #1).

The scope of the scheme was extensive. Between 1968 and 1987 over 52,000 cards were contributed with about 170 annual contributors. All this data was compiled by hand, for personal home computers did not yet exist. In 1973 the

operation centre for the Nest Record Scheme moved from UBC's Cowan Vertebrate Museum to the Provincial Museum of BC (now known as the Royal British Columbia Museum), with staff member R. Wayne Campbell coordinating it there in his capacity as Curator of Ornithology until 1997. When he retired from the BC Government's Wildlife Branch, he continued to coordinate the BC Nest Record Scheme and brought the card records to a newly formed non-profit organization, the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies.

Vi Gibbard continued her volunteer secretarial position until 1986. Her role was filled first by Margaret Preston and later Margaret Harris. Nest data contributors continued to increase. For example, in 2006, there were 10,800 cards contributed by 259 naturalists (*BCnature*, vol 45, #4).

The data collected through the BC Nest Record Scheme cards contributed greatly to understanding of the breeding birds of our province, with respect to changes in breeding status, potential environmental impacts, species management plans; they provided the basis for many research papers and several major publications. As Wayne Campbell commented in FBCN's 1988 history, "the many naturalists, especially those who have been faithful card fillers for almost twenty years, are contributing to the understanding, conservation and protection of birds and their habitats." On Violet's retirement, he acknowledged her significant contribution: "In fact, almost every article dealing with breeding birds in the Province has referred to the 50,000 or so cards Violet processed during her period as coordinator" (*BC Naturalist*, vol 24, #2).

The Nest Record Scheme cards contributed most of the information and mapping component on breeding for the four-volume *The Birds of British Columbia*. Bird Studies Canada summarized that work as follows:

The four-volume series was conceived in 1972 by Wayne Campbell and Ian McTaggart-Cowan, and originally planned to be an atlas until 1981, at which time it grew to encompass much more information. Wayne Campbell began acquisition and transfer of data in 1972, and over the next 13 years all available specimen records, literature, notebooks and field diaries of collectors and naturalists and hundreds of thousands of observations by birders were compiled. Neil Dawe joined the project in 1978, Gary Kaiser and Michael McNall in 1980, John Cooper in 1981 and Andrew Stewart joined in the later volumes. Ian McTaggart-Cowan was also instrumental in helping the project to completion. There were other contributing authors. The 4,600 people who contributed observations are listed by name in Volume 3 page 559 onwards and the 3,629 who contributed to Volume 4 are listed by name, page 723 onwards. Wayne Campbell was chairman and coordinator of project. The four-volume series took 29 years to produce. Volumes One and Two (the non-passerines) were printed in 1990, Volume Three (Passerines,

Flycatchers through Vireos) was printed in 1997 and Volume Four (Passerines, Wood-Warblers through Old World Sparrows) in 2001.

The BC Ministry of Environment provided a grant to BC Nature in 2006 to copy the cards (85,000 two-sided cards) from the beginning of the Nest Record Scheme up to 1997, the year the cards were removed from the provincial museum. With the grant from the Ministry, BC Nature arranged for the cards to be digitized so that the information could be readily available to relevant agencies and to the public. Jeremy McCall coordinated this project, completed in August 2007. Digital copies of the cards were provided to the Ministry of Environment, Royal BC Museum, Bird Studies Canada and on disc to anyone interested. (*BCnature*, vol 46, #3). Digital copies can still be requested through the BC Nature office.

The BC Nest Record Scheme, with its data extending back to 1955, and the four-volume *Birds of British Columbia* have served as major sources for the new online *BC Breeding Bird Atlas*. Through the leadership of Bird Studies Canada, the *BC Breeding Bird Atlas* was initiated in 2008 as a five-year project to document breeding birds in BC. Once again, many naturalists volunteered hours of their time to record observations of breeding bird evidence, descriptions of breeding and nesting location, and confirmation of breeding success and young fledged. The compilation of this recent data, including species accounts, distribution maps, photographs and other materials, is available as an online publication. BC Nature was a partner in this project, participating through Anne Murray, our representative on the BC Breeding Bird Atlas Steering Committee, led by Bird Studies Canada. The Steering Committee included provincial and federal environment staff and, among others, representatives from BC Field Ornithologists and from the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies.

***Land for Nature* 1990 to 1998**

Land for Nature supported naturalist-led conservation efforts in two major activities. The first thrust was to identify, through local naturalists' knowledge, the ecologically rich, often low-elevation habitats, located within and close to communities. These low elevation habitats are important for biological diversity, yet they have sometimes been overlooked by other environmental groups whose focus has been large wilderness areas. The "close to home" habitats were often those that naturalists knew best. The second thrust of Land for Nature was to enable naturalist clubs to pursue constructive means to protect these areas. We did this through professional communication with relevant decision-makers and by forming local partnerships through forums and workshops.

The Land for Nature Project (initially called Land for Wildlife) had its beginnings in 1990 with a round-table discussion in the South Okanagan that served as a catalyst for conservation and nature education of club members. Contractor

Nora Layard coordinated that round table, and she recalls how it led to something bigger:

Bert Brink and Dick Stace-Smith approached me saying that they had \$5000 from the BC Naturalists' Foundation and what could I/we do with it to further conservation given the current government climate and planning opportunities. They had been very pleased with the South Okanagan Round Table and wanted more of them. After thinking about it and based on my previous work/knowledge, I pitched the idea to them of a province-wide/club-wide project that could address the newly announced Parks Plan '90 initiatives, with the idea of more round tables. So, we went from there. We contacted all regional coordinators and clubs to ask for involvement and one by one they came on board. (personal communication, 2013)

Nora next organized the "Vancouver Island East Coast Shoreline and Adjacent Wetlands Workshop" (1991). Then FBCN co-hosted a major conference entitled "Habitat Enhancement Activities in BC" (1991). The pace was quickening: Nora received two grants that allowed the FBCN to support the Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society in organizing another major public conference, "Endangered Species and Habitat Enhancement in BC" (Symposium on the Status of British Columbia's Threatened and Endangered Species and Their Habitat - 1991), and to support the Dunsmuir II Land Use Conference. Nora worked with the Kamloops Naturalists Club to organize "Endangered Spaces Project: Land for Nature in the Kamloops Area" (1991).

The 1990s were the opportune decade for BC Park establishment. Provincial parkland doubled in size from approximately 6% to 12% of the province. Governments consulted with the public, asking for views on which areas to protect. This was the decade of the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE), Parks Plan 90s, Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs), and the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS). The achievements of the Land for Nature project in compiling a science-based inventory of important natural areas and presenting this information in a professional manner to governments were timely and productive. At the 1993 FBCN AGM, the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks announced that funding would be provided to Land for Nature. He stated that his government's "commitment recognizes the important knowledge-based conservation advocacy role of British Columbia's naturalists and the specific accomplishments of Clubs involved in the Land for Nature Project to date" (*BC Naturalist* vol 40, #2).

Not only were the 1990s the decade for establishing parks on Crown lands, but major funding was also committed to acquire private lands. For example, the Lower Mainland Nature Legacy Program added nearly 2000 hectares of parkland to the Regional Park system in 1995. Land Trusts made significant purchases of private lands during the 1990s. Thus the lowland habitats identified by

naturalists, with their ecological values well documented, were ready to move forward for protection.

Specific initiatives of Land for Nature to identify natural habitats, are summarized in the titles of its 16 publications in the following table:

Publications of Land for Nature

- *The Roles of Conservancies and Education in Preserving the Natural Features of the South Okanagan, British Columbia. Report of the South Okanagan Round Table – Abstract and Recommendations.* 1990.
- *Identifying and Protecting Sensitive Shoreline and Adjacent Wetland Habitat on the East Coast of Vancouver Island, BC.* 1991.
- *Endangered Spaces Project: Land for Nature in the Kamloops Area. A Report of the Endangered Spaces Workshop – Summary of Presentations and Discussions.* 1991.
- *Tools and Mechanisms for Preserving Green Space.* Proceedings from the Land for Nature Forum. 1992.
- *Environmentally Important Sites in the Greater Vancouver Regional District: Nominated by Naturalists for Protection and/or Special Consideration.* 1992
- *Preserving Biodiversity and Unique Ecosystems of the Okanagan-Similkameen Region.* 1993.
- *Land for Nature in the Okanagan-Similkameen Region: Report to the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks Integrated Management Branch.* 1993.
- *Ensuring Livability in Greater Victoria. Proceedings of A Forum to Establish Partnerships for Natural Areas Conservation.* 1993.
- *Incorporating Natural Areas in Community Planning in the East Kootenay.* 1994.
- *Tools and Mechanisms for Protecting Ecologically Sensitive Areas. Proceedings of the Nanaimo Land for Nature Forum.* 1994.
- *Understanding Municipal Environmental Planning.* 1996.
- *Greenways I: Implementing Greenways in British Columbia: Exploring Options.* 1996.
- *Proposed Program Development for Land for Nature, FBCN: Developing Land for Nature's Core Expertise.* 1997.
- *What Colour is Your Green(way)? Proceedings of the What Colour is Your Green(way)? Conference.* 1997.
- *Environmentally Important Sites and Streams on the Sunshine Coast.* 1998.
- *Important Natural Areas and Streams of Squamish.* 1998.

A summary of each Land for Nature publication appears in Appendix 9 - Publications. The information gathered was uneven in terms of inventories and descriptions, depending on the area, but overall a great deal of the information collected did help with the establishment of protected areas. In addition, the data on rare species was provided to the newly formed provincial Conservation Data Centre.

The second thrust of Land for Nature--to enable naturalists to pursue constructive means to protect these areas--was achieved by communicating with relevant decision makers and by forming local partnerships through forums and workshops. Several round tables and workshops were held, with participation from all levels of government, naturalists, consultants, and politicians. As Nora Layard recalls:

We worked hard to create events that would bring together government with the clubs to increase club visibility and credibility. These were the Round Tables, enhanced and with a focus on providing input to government planning. But they were also designed to encourage members to understand the incredible opportunities at that time. I remember feeling like I was an ambassador for the times--bringing good news to the clubs but being met with a deep lack of understanding about government planning processes and how to get things done and protected. A lot of my job was education in that way. (personal communication 2013)

The round tables and workshops focused on ways to improve land stewardship, including outright purchase, covenants, greenways, and landowner contact. These workshops served to foster new ideas amongst land managers and enabled naturalists to advocate for land conservation. It is difficult to quantify the benefits of these workshops and discussions, but in general, the themes from the Land for Nature workshops in the 1990s are now part of the everyday language and tools of land trusts and land managers, especially at the municipal and regional levels.

In 1994 FBCN co-sponsored the "Stewardship '94" forum, together with eight other organizations. Focus was on the voluntary conservation of nature on private land, with two themes: "Revising the Land Ethic" and "Caring for the Land."

Financial support to hire contractors to facilitate Land for Nature came through grants from the Provincial Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks, GVRD, Vancouver Foundation, Vancity, Environmental Partners Fund - Canada Trust, Employment & Immigration Canada, and the BC Naturalists' Foundation. By 1992 Nora Layard had left the project; she was succeeded by three other lead contractors.

In 1995 the annual budget for the Land for Nature project was bigger than FBCN's operating budget. At least 14 subcontract staff worked on this project. Excellent work was achieved, but managing such an extensive budget with several contractors overextended the capabilities of FBCN's volunteer board to exercise effective financial oversight. Poor management meant that work on projects and payment of contract staff ran ahead of the grant funds in hand, with the unfortunate outcome that by 1998 the Land for Nature project ended in debt. FBCN was responsible for paying contractors with no grant funds available, so FBCN, with some assistance from the BC Naturalists' Foundation, had to cover a deficit of approximately \$50,000. Thankfully, FBCN volunteers stepped forward to complete remaining contract work.

FBCN had learned a hard lesson about financial management. Since 1998, the FBCN (now BC Nature) has firm work contracts and an entrenched policy that project contractors will not conduct work until grant funds are in hand. Looking beyond this internal financial management lesson to the conservation of natural habitats, the outcome of Land for Nature activities in the 1990s was excellent in terms both of protected areas established in perpetuity and increased awareness and tools to foster land stewardship into the twenty-first century. The work, of course, is not complete. For example, some of the Goal 2 areas identified during the Okanagan-Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan and the 1000 hectares of Fraser Lowlands identified in 1998 are still awaiting protection.

In summary, Land for Nature achieved several important goals:

- 1) It focused interest on protecting key lowland habitats close to residential populations, including estuaries and shorelines on SE Vancouver Island; natural areas on the Sunshine Coast and Squamish with focus on riparian areas; Fraser Lowlands from Vancouver to Hope; South Okanagan Similkameen sensitive habitats; and Kamloops natural areas.
- 2) It gave local naturalist clubs the skills and confidence to speak up about conservation issues and to work in partnership with local governments.
- 3) It promoted greater appreciation and awareness of the important role of natural areas on the urban fringe, especially among municipal and regional government planners.
- 4) It encouraged the partnership of several groups in the South Okanagan in 1990, now the very effective South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program.
- 5) It began discussions towards the Living by Water project, which continued as a FBCN project through the early 2000s and was subsequently adopted by Nature Canada and extended Canada wide.
- 6) It supported the Squamish Eagle Watch.
- 7) It initiated landowner contact and created support for stewardship by private landowners, an approach that is now successfully undertaken by several conservation initiatives and Land Trusts.
- 8) It encouraged public donations to land acquisition for nature through Land Trusts. (A recent example was the 2009 bequest from Lillian May Hayden

to FBCN, earmarked for Land for Nature to purchase natural habitat in Southern Vancouver Island area, which enabled BC Nature to contribute substantially to private land acquisition through three Land Trusts. See *BCnature* vol 48, #3)

Living by Water (1997 to 2007)

This project summary was written by Sarah Weaver (Kipp). Further information can be found in the Summer 2002 and Spring 2004 issues of BC Naturalist.

In 1997 Sarah Weaver (Kipp) and Clive Callaway asked the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists (now BC Nature) to act as lead partner for the Living by Water Project. The Federation agreed to this, as the project goals and objectives--protection and restoration of riparian habitat and water quality--were consistent with our mandate. The project mission was “working towards healthier human and wildlife habitat along the shorelines of Canada.”

Over the next eight years the Living by Water Project was a major initiative of the Federation. Sarah and Clive continued to act as principal contractors to the federation and developed the project. Anne Murray played a major role as President of the Federation during the time when the project was expanding significantly. Anne was involved in the National Steering committee as well. Both Jeremy McCall and Bev Ramey, during their terms as presidents of FBCN, also guided the project.

A key feature of Living by Water was that it was community-based. This meant that we relied on local community groups and local governments to promote our products and services to the primary target audience, waterfront residents. This resulted in many community workshops and media stories about what came to be known as “shoreline stewardship.”

Another key feature was the “conservation marketing” approach. The project differed from other environmental projects in that it carried out needs assessments of shoreline residents and then customized materials and services to meet these needs. At the same time, we endeavoured to communicate the environmental messages that the project was built upon. Conservation marketing combined business marketing, social marketing, and environmental education to help foster behaviour change. Shoreline residents were encouraged to protect and restore riparian habitat first, to help protect their property values, and second, to protect fish and wildlife species.

While Living by Water was aimed primarily at shoreline residents, materials were developed for many “intermediary” audiences – local government elected officials, municipal planners, realtors, property inspectors, and community non-government organizations.

A strategic planning process was carried out in 1998/1999 to define the project and to lay the groundwork for partners in other parts of the country to become involved. The resulting document, *Making it Happen – A Strategic Approach to the Living By Water Project 2000-2005*, guided regional partners in their Living by Water program and product development over the next five years.

Core resources developed by the Living by Water Project in British Columbia included a 144-page handbook (*On the Living Edge – Your Handbook for Waterfront Living*); brochures and posters; display panels; a workshop program for shoreline residents that included PowerPoint presentations on a variety of topics such as shoreline erosion, landscaping, recreation, water quality; workshops for municipal planners, realtors, property inspectors, and local government elected officials; a home-site assessment program, which trained evaluators to give shoreline residents feedback about their properties; a “Shoreline Ambassador” program; a manual to help community groups create events around shorelines to help profile the importance of shorelines; and children’s materials for use by educators.

These resources were shipped throughout the province to various community groups and local governments. In turn, these groups and agencies ran their own programs or used Living by Water materials to support work they were already doing. In some cases, Living by Water ran “train the trainer” workshops to help develop capacity in other organizations.

Living by Water had a presence at many conferences throughout Canada, with the co-founders making presentations on various aspects of the project. In particular, people were interested in the tools that were being used to engage communities, in the concept of conservation marketing, and in how the project was including climate change in its approach.

Living by Water materials were first developed in British Columbia for shoreline residents in this province but the market soon expanded. The Federation, under the guidance of Sarah and Clive, signed partnership agreements with partners in other provinces so that eventually, by 2001 there were Living by Water Project offices in Edmonton (for Alberta), Regina (for Saskatchewan and Manitoba), and Manotick (for Ontario). Many materials were also employed by agencies in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. For example, the “Waterfront Living” and “Coastal Living” brochures and the “Shoreline Makeover” poster were printed in various editions – including a French edition – for Atlantic Canada. Materials were provided on a “printing cost recovery” basis, so that some key resources, such as the brochures, were reprinted many times. A number of US agencies employed Living by Water Resources and contributed to the cost recovery fund. In 2003 Nature Canada (then the Canadian Nature Federation) took over national responsibility for the Living by Water Project. A national steering committee was struck and Nature Canada took responsibility for the Living by Water website.

Living by Water was supported by a wide range of sponsors, including federal agencies (Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Environment Canada; Health Canada; Energy and Natural Resources Canada; Millennium Partnership Program) and provincial agencies (Ministry of Environment; Fisheries Renewal BC). In addition, private foundations contributed to the project (Real Estate Foundation of BC; Friends of the Environment Foundation; McConnell Foundation; Vancouver Foundation).

The grant from the Millennium program in 2000 enabled a number of creative initiatives. Precipice Theatre of Banff was engaged to develop an educational play about shoreline stewardship. This play was subsequently taken “on the road” and toured 40 communities in Alberta and British Columbia, with the entire tour coordinated by the BC office. The co-founders went on a speaking tour in many communities in Alberta and BC to talk about the importance of healthy shorelines. We also developed the Shoreline Ambassador program to encourage shoreline action on the part of individuals. Included in the program were certificates for people who did take action. The certificates were useful in two ways: they harnessed the marketing power of “rewards” and they gave us measurable indicators of success.

In 2006 the Federation received funds to explore the impacts of climate change on shorelines in the Thompson-Nicola-Shuswap area of the Interior. This pilot project focussed on exploring ways of adapting to the impacts of climate change; like other Living by Water activities, it was community-based. Several communities in the Interior became engaged in discussing the impacts of climate change, and well-attended forums were held in both Kamloops and Salmon Arm.

Evaluation of project outcomes suggests that the project had significant impact. The interest in other regions of the country for the products and services meant that the project went national; offices in other areas are still implementing parts of the project. Shoreline stewardship initiatives have been taken on by many community groups, using Living by Water resources and its legacy. Over 300 realtors participated in a training program to help them understand shoreline stewardship principles. All 5,000 copies of the BC edition of *On the Living Edge* were distributed, as well as tens of thousands of brochures and posters. The book was adapted in three versions for other provinces. The Ontario edition is sold out; the Alberta edition went into a second printing, and the Saskatchewan/Manitoba edition is nearly out of print. In total, 22,500 copies of the book were printed, making it a Canadian best seller. In addition, the Alberta edition was adapted for the City of Edmonton; and the resulting book *Living Beside Urban Lakes* was distributed to residents around storm water lakes in Edmonton.

While these quantitative indicators show that the reach of the project was significant, it is harder to measure its success in protecting and restoring riparian habitat. Certainly, when the project started, the word “riparian” was virtually

unknown in all but limited technical circles. Now, there is much more widespread knowledge of not only the term but also the importance and sensitivity of riparian shore lands, both freshwater and coastal. Shorelines are under huge development pressure everywhere, and in many areas riparian habitats have been significantly altered. Anecdotal feedback would suggest that the Living by Water Project has helped slow the spread of that degradation.

The major lessons we learned from the Living by Water Project's approaches were incorporated into a manual on conservation marketing (see following section). We also learned some other lessons about how to manage a conservation project:

- Maintain a core focus and ensure that core objectives and results are achieved before stretching to new initiatives and objectives. The project over-stretched itself by starting many initiatives, and providing support from the BC office to three other offices nationally.
- Explore ways that core project objectives can be achieved over time, even though core funding is a challenge to obtain, and funders discourage repeated requests from the same project. In the case of Living by Water, new initiatives had to be developed in order to maintain project continuity and to respond to community demand for products and services.
- Explore the dynamic balance between contractors and volunteers. The majority of the Living by Water Project accomplishments were carried out by the project founders, as contractors to the Federation. Although they volunteered considerable time over the many years of the project, the responsibility for the project was held mostly by contractors rather than by Federation volunteers. Consequently, when the contractors decided to move on to other things, the energy for Living by Water could not be sustained.

Conservation Action Marketing Program

This project summary was written by Sarah Weaver (Kipp).

The conservation marketing approach that the Living by Water Project employed was of considerable interest to other groups. The lessons learned were incorporated into a manual on conservation marketing. The manual's introduction lays out the challenge of this work:

We in the conservation sector are often involved in activities aimed at influencing human behaviour. Yet, not surprisingly, most of us come from a background in ecology, biology, geography or similar disciplines – rather than the human behaviour disciplines! We know the biological and ecological consequences of the human behaviour we wish to influence – such as species at risk, threatened habitats, deteriorating water quality, and a changing climate. However, our knowledge about influencing human behaviour may sometimes come more from desperation, and the

desire to do something, rather than nothing. So, we propose brochures, posters, signs, newsletters. We hope that by giving people information, this will be enough to change their behaviour. But, behaviour change is much more complex.

The Conservation Action Marketing manual incorporated many of the lessons that Living by Water learned along the way. It includes information on planning, identifying measurable results, evaluation, tools for understanding audience needs, and the 4 “P”s of marketing – product, price, place, and promotion. The manual also includes tips on effective writing and plain language and a small number of case examples. It is available online through a link on the BC Nature website, under Appendix 9 – Publications, and title, “From Science to Action: Strengthening Your Effectiveness in Conservation Outreach and Behaviour Change”

<http://www.bcnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Conservation-MarketingHandbook-2010.pdf>

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) – An ongoing project 1996 - Present

This project summary was written by Anne Murray and Krista Kaptein.

What is the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) Program?

The global Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) program aims to identify, protect and monitor a network of vital habitats for the conservation of birds and biodiversity around the world. The program was established in Canada, including British Columbia, in 1996. IBAs are identified using a set of standardized criteria developed by BirdLife International, a global alliance of more than 120 conservation organizations. While approximately 25% of the area within BC's network of 82 IBAs is formally protected, many sites are under pressure from actual and potential anthropogenic or natural events happening within or adjacent to their boundaries.

The national representatives of BirdLife International in Canada are Bird Studies Canada (BSC) and Nature Canada (NC; formerly Canadian Nature Federation). BC Nature works with the provincial office of BSC to deliver the program within BC. Our goal is the long-term conservation of birds that depend on BC's IBAs. In recognition of the increasingly important role of citizen scientists in achieving conservation goals, our primary focus since 2006 has been on building and supporting a volunteer-based IBA Caretaker Network.

Background History of IBA Program in British Columbia

The Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas Program began in the mid-1980s in response to the European Economic Community's request for a list of critical bird

habitats requiring protection. BirdLife International, with headquarters in Cambridge, UK, was launched from the International Council for Bird Preservation, an organization founded in 1922. North America joined the program in 1996, with funding in Mexico, USA and Canada from the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC), part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Canadian Wildlife Service researcher, Dr. Robert Butler, learned about the program in England and enabled its introduction to Canada. The first steps in BC were to determine which locations qualified for designation as IBAs, under the internationally-determined criteria; a preliminary list was prepared by Moira Lemon of Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) in October 1996. Bird biologists and leading figures in BC's birding community, together with other interested birdwatchers, gathered to discuss which sites should be included, the merits of each location, and what data was available. BC Nature members were also invited to contribute suggestions for potential sites. In all, 269 possible sites were brought forward for consideration. Once whittled down, a list of nominated sites was submitted to the national coordinators and eventually 84 sites were found to have sufficient data to meet global or national criteria in at least one category. These sites were subsequently approved as BC's IBA sites. The list was reduced to 82 when three Vancouver Island sites were amalgamated into the new, larger K'omoks IBA.

In 2000, the National IBA Program was given a Nature Legacy 2000 grant of \$1.25 million over two years as part of the government's Millennium Partnership Program that saw \$10 million shared by Canadian Nature Federation, World Wildlife Fund, Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Ducks Unlimited for wildlife-related work. This Millennium grant provided funds for staff to coordinate the fledgling IBA Program in each province and to set up the Community Action Fund (CAF) to support grass-roots work at individual sites. Barry Booth was hired to run the BC IBA Program in fall 1999, and he amazingly managed to spin out two years of funding into three years of work. He wrote conservation plans for sixteen IBAs and also developed the local projects, including working with shellfish growers in Baynes Sound on a best practices manual for co-existing with marine birds; a stewardship project with the Stelat'en First Nation at Fraser Lake; and a Seabird Survival outreach pamphlet distributed in southern Vancouver Island and Salish Sea where there are five IBA. We spent \$50,000 on 12 Community Action Fund projects in BC and developed many good partnerships with other groups. Many IBAs around BC were involved including South Okanagan, Squamish Estuary, Tofino, and Laskeek Bay on Haida Gwaii. These activities set the stage for future IBA activities in the province.

After the Millennium Grant ran out, the national partners were unable to fund the provincial coordinators for some years, so the IBA Program went dormant. In late 2006, Anne Murray of BC Nature and Peter Davidson of BSC decided to reinvigorate the program by taking a network approach to the 84 sites. Funding for the technical work of conservation planning was difficult to find. Furthermore, we felt that developing individual conservation plans for each IBA was too slow to

protect IBAs and their birds, in the face of many threats to their habitat. A new, five-step approach was put forward. Top priorities were updating the IBA site summaries and writing site summaries for those that were missing. We also proposed identifying a knowledgeable birdwatcher, researcher, or interested local resident to be a volunteer Caretaker for each site, and to build the network of knowledge needed for conserving these far-flung and often, little-visited, IBAs. Subsequent steps were to work towards greater stewardship and protection of the sites, and to make the IBA Program better known. All this was to be done on minimal funds so that the program could continue in perpetuity without the boom-and-bust cycle of major grants.

The IBA Caretaker Network

The idea of using local Caretakers or stewards was based on BirdLife International's site support groups, such as Denmark's Caretaker Network. Caretakers are the "eyes, ears and hands on the ground," a vital resource in a large diverse province with many coastal sites, some of which are very remote. Caretakers work on their own or with others, with the minimum requirement of an annual site visit where possible (some sites are extremely remote) and an annual report on the status of the birds and habitat at their site. Some Caretakers and their helpers go much further, doing everything from conducting bird surveys to designing signs, speaking up for conservation, or organizing bird festivals. The BC IBA Program, a partnership of BC Nature, Bird Studies Canada, and Nature Canada, was the first in Canada to institute an IBA Caretakers' Network; the concept spread across the country from 2009.

Our IBA Team – past and present

BC Nature IBA staff

The hiring by BC Nature of Krista Englund as IBA Coordinator in 2008 ensured the smooth and successful operation of the BC IBA Program for the next six years. She was responsible for recruiting, training, and coordinating the network of over 50 IBA Caretakers. She conducted meetings, talks and workshops, wrote newsletters and magazine articles, liaised with the national offices of Nature Canada and Bird Studies Canada, and ensured good communications between all partner organizations. Krista's positive, cheerful, and persistent approach to the IBA Coordinator role was critical to the success of the Caretaker Network, and set the scene for those who followed in her footsteps.

James Bradley joined the Team to help with site summary updates, and he took over from Krista Englund as IBA Coordinator in July 2014. Student assistant, Shanna Sinclair helped in summer 2014. James retired due to personal circumstances.

The IBA Coordinator position was then taken in 2015 by Krista Kaptein, a long-time BC Nature member and volunteer, based in Courtenay, Vancouver Island. Krista is an experienced birder and was an early adopter of e-Birding. She continues the role of coordinating the BC Caretaker Network as well as all IBA communications for BC Nature, and helps on the IBA Technical Committee during evaluations of IBA boundaries, bird populations, etc. During the last few years, Krista has travelled throughout BC conducting workshops, meetings and eBird counts, particularly in Haida Gwaii, northern mainland BC, the west coast of Vancouver Island and the Okanagan. Krista has streamlined the production of the annual IBA reporting process, writes regular articles in the BC Nature magazine and produces the regular BC IBA newsletter.

Budgets and work plans for the year are formulated in discussions between Krista and Anne Murray, the BC Nature Volunteer Liaison, according to grant opportunities and IBA Caretaker needs. Krista prepares grant applications and follow-up reports. She also implements the work schedule, with Anne providing occasional advice; members of the IBA Technical Committee (see below) are available for discussion as necessary. Krista reports to BC Nature at the Annual General Meeting and Fall General Meeting and via articles in *BCnature* magazine and IBA Report.

Krista has done a great job of fund-raising. Since 2014, the project has received grants from a number of sources: ongoing annual “core” funding from BC Gaming; an annual grant since 2015 from the McLean Foundation; several grants for specific projects from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, BC Field Ornithologists, and The Columbia Basin Trust; three years of funding through Nature Canada Local Action Fund for outreach to Coastal First Nations Guardian Watchmen; and one year of funding through Nature Canada Public Engagement fund for IBA Engagement Organizing.

Krista also assists individual IBAs with fundraising for local projects, particularly in the South Okanagan, where a working group of volunteer Caretakers has developed around a cluster of IBAs.

BC Nature IBA Volunteer Liaison

Anne Murray has been BC Nature’s volunteer liaison to the IBA Program since the initial meetings about IBAs in the late 1990s. An experienced birder, and a past-president of BC Nature, her duties involve hiring the IBA Coordinator; ensuring work plans and budgets are in place annually; reviewing grant proposals written by the IBA Coordinator; speaking at events related to IBAs and serving on the IBA Technical Committee. She also shares the role of IBA Caretaker for the Fraser River Estuary site with two other Caretakers.

Bird Studies Canada Staff

BSC’s Peter Davidson worked on the IBA Program, among other responsibilities, from 2006 to 2013. He continues to occasionally contribute his experience from

work with BirdLife International in Asia and Africa. He led the formation of the IBA Conservation Team (now the IBA Technical Committee) to ensure a strong scientific foundation for site summary updates.

Karen Barry joined BSC's IBA staff in 2009, coordinating BSC's citizen science counts of beached birds and coastal waterbirds. As well as providing technical expertise and access to her network of bird monitoring volunteers, she initiated outreach to municipalities and regional districts, through Real Estate Foundation grants, encouraging them to incorporate IBAs into local planning. She moved on to other work in 2014.

BSC staff, David Bradley, James Casey and Graham Sorenson are all now involved in work in Important Bird Areas, including Fraser Estuary IBA, and the Long-billed Curlew and Haida Gwaii seabird colony projects. BSC was a very active partner in the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) held in Vancouver in August 2018. James and Graham organized an important full-day field trip for a diverse group including BirdLife International staff, government officials, potential funders, and birding community members.

The IBA Technical Committee

To increase the technical knowledge of the project's members, ex-Canadian Wildlife Service senior advisors Dr. Art Martell and Dr. Rob Butler were invited to join the IBA Conservation Team in September 2011. Rob retired from the team in 2015 as he was involved in the Salish Sea Marine Atlas, among many other projects. The voluntary donation of expertise by these two highly-regarded scientists is much appreciated by everyone in the program. This team is now referred to as the IBA Technical Committee and consists of Dr Art Martell, Krista Kaptein, Anne Murray, George Clulow of BC Field Ornithologists, and for BSC, David Bradley, Graham Sorenson and James Casey. Regular meetings enable the data and science behind site summary updates and boundary revisions to be thoroughly assessed before changes are sent into the national BSC office.

IBA Caretakers

Most critical to success are the 60 volunteer Caretakers and their helpers who care for BC's 83 IBAs. We could certainly not have operated the BC IBA Program without them. Many hundreds of hours have been devoted to IBA activities, including monitoring, stewardship, awareness-raising, festivals, designing and erecting signage, leading walks, giving talks, and engaging in conservation-related activities. Caretakers report annually in December on their activities, through a standardized form, collated by Krista Kaptein. Some of the Caretaker Network activities are listed below.

Since the re-invigoration of the IBA program in 2006 and the establishment of the Caretaker Network, there have been numerous successes:

- Supporting and increasing the capacity of 60 Caretakers, who have been matched with over 85% of our IBAs since 2008, to expand monitoring, outreach and stewardship in their IBAs
- Updating online site summaries for IBAs that face imminent conservation pressures, including IBAs on the south coast and in the Southern Interior, to demonstrate that these IBAs continue to be conservation priorities
- Incorporating IBAs into local government planning documents such as Official Community Plans (e.g. Cowichan Valley Regional District and Hornby Island in 2012) to ensure that the IBAs are considered in local land use decisions
- Increasing local awareness of IBAs through the distribution of regular IBA eNews and newsletters to hundreds of people across BC, and the distribution of hundreds of brochures at community events and festivals across BC each year
- Positioning interpretive and identification signs in more than 30 IBAs across the province, with funding from Nature Canada's TCC grant, MEC, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, and other sources
- Conducting outreach about IBAs to federal, provincial, regional, and local government staff working in environmental departments, and to other charitable environmental organizations and land trusts (enabled by several Mountain Equipment Co-op [MEC] grants)
- Planning in the South Okanagan, bringing together a big group of partner agencies and organizations (enabled by grants from Environment Canada); results already include beautiful new signs for the IBAs, increased understanding of the IBA Program locally, bird monitoring, and the construction of a bird-viewing structure
- Increasing the protected areas within some of our highest profile IBAs, including the establishment of Wildlife Management Areas in Fraser River Estuary IBA, several South Okanagan IBAs, and Chehalis River Estuary IBA, a new provincial park in Chilcotin Junction IBA, as well as the purchase of private conservation lands in several South Okanagan IBAs, protection of Scott Islands marine national Wildlife Area, the forthcoming South Okanagan Similkameen National Park Reserve and Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve
- Assisting with the expansion of the Caretaker Network and IBA program to all provinces across Canada

- Working on northern IBAs, along the same lines as the site summary updates and action planning processes that have been so successful in the Okanagan (enabled by Mountain Equipment Co-op [MEC] community grant in 2014)
- Developing Coastal First Nations Guardian Watchman outreach projects on Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii
- Updating boundaries for IBAs to accord with latest information on bird populations.

The BC IBA Program is an important and worthwhile program for BC Nature: it has been well-supported and funded by members and the Board, and it has gained increased attention nationally and internationally.

Wildlife Tree Stewardship WiTS

This project summary was written by Ian Moul.

The Wildlife Tree Stewardship (WiTS) Program evolved out of the federal and provincial governments' Great Blue Heron and Bald Eagle inventory and monitoring programs. Herons and eagles, both top predators in the food chain, are considered excellent indicators of environmental health. In an effort to understand the habitat needs of herons and eagles, between 1987 and 1995 biologists with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Ministry of Environment, and several forest companies worked together to catalogue nearly 200 heron colonies and over 3,000 eagle nest sites on Vancouver Island and the southern Gulf Islands. (Refer to *BC Naturalist* Volume 33 No 6 for beginning of BC Bald Eagle Registry.)

The inventories provided crucial data for the writing of Section 34 of the Provincial Wildlife Act, which includes protection of heron and eagle nests.

Section 34 of the Provincial Wildlife Act states that: A person commits an offence if the person, except as provided by regulation, possesses, takes, injures, molests or destroys

- (a) a bird or its egg,
- (b) the nest of an eagle, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, osprey, heron or burrowing owl, or
- (c) the nest of a bird not referred to in paragraph (b) when the nest is occupied by a bird or its egg

The Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program was created as a multi-agency partnership supported by the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Ministry of Environment, BC Hydro, the Community Mapping Network; coordination was provided by the Federation of BC Naturalists, beginning in 2001. The WiTS

project was overseen by volunteer FBCN executive, Ron Speller, with contract staffer, Kerri-Lynne Wilson. Inventory and monitoring of heron colonies and eagle nest trees were seen as critical steps in preventing the loss of nest trees during land development. The original purpose of the WiTS program was to maintain a database and online atlas that pooled nest records from government, industry, conservation/naturalist groups, and the public. Thus the Community Mapping Network was an essential partner. Many volunteer naturalists were enlisted to provide information on the eagles' nesting, and training sessions were provided on how to enter the data. At one point there were as many as 200 volunteers submitting nest observation records into the Atlas and database. Data entries by volunteers were ground-truthed by professional biologists.

Jude Grass took over as volunteer executive liaison from Ron Speller in 2007, and has been assisted by volunteer Bev Ramey. Contract staffer Ian Moul took over from Kerri-Lynne Wilson in 2008.

As far as was logistically possible, with consideration for sensitive information and land-owner privacy, information in the database and atlas was to remain free and available to any user. As of 2013 the WiTS Atlas has nest location information for 4,430 nest sites along with 14,173 linked nest observation records. Ian Moul authored reports for FBCN describing and mapping Bald Eagle Nesting Results for nine areas on Vancouver Island and the Southern Gulf Islands (available at BC Nature's website, under "Projects"):

- Capital Regional District
- Oyster River to Menzies Bay
- Deep Bay to Little Qualicum River
- Comox Valley
- Saturna Island
- Mayne Island
- City of Nanaimo
- Cowichan Valley Regional District
- Regional District of Nanaimo

In 2005-2006, a feasibility study for the South Okanagan and Lower Similkameen valleys indicated there was interest and opportunity for the program to expand into this region, although it was clearly recognized that the wildlife focus would shift to cavity-nesting species at risk. In April of 2006, the program officially expanded to include the South Okanagan-Similkameen through contract staffer Lisa Scott. Activities were also initiated in the Fraser Valley. In 2009 the Okanagan-Similkameen program expanded to include the Central Okanagan and Princeton, thus encompassing two regional Districts. Volunteer naturalists have contributed their observations and nesting information, largely focused on four cavity-nesting species: Western Screech-Owl, Lewis's Woodpecker, White-Headed Woodpecker, and Williamson's Sapsucker. The number of volunteers has ranged annually from 11 to 20 people.

In recent years, the WiTS program on the coast has not been able to secure operating funds. Typically, granting agencies will not fund monitoring and inventory of species not listed as being at risk; it is also difficult to secure repeat funding for a continuing program. Most contemporary bird inventory programs focus on large-area, long-term trend analysis. The WiTS observation records, which focus on specific nest sites and the relationship with local area land development, do not mesh well with senior government programs; nonetheless, they remain very important at the level of local government planning.

The Okanagan-Similkameen WiTS program has found a strong footing with Species at Risk that utilize wildlife trees, and it functions in concert with federal and provincial government habitat protection and species recovery objectives. As the name Wildlife Tree Stewardship suggests, much of the emphasis of the WiTS program has been working with property owners and managers to protect wildlife trees and surrounding habitat. Community education has been extensive, and there is indeed interest in cavity-nesting birds.

The WiTS Bald Eagle inventory on Vancouver Island and, to a lesser extent, in the Lower Mainland, has helped make municipal governments more aware of the legal requirement to protect eagle nest trees; the inventory has also increased awareness of nest locations. Efforts continue to increase awareness that it is important to have several nest trees in an area, together with a group of "perch" trees near the nest tree. There continues to be high public interest in bald eagle nest trees.

Over the years, through both the nest tree monitoring program and during presentations at many festivals, the WiTS program has introduced and promoted conservation principles to thousands of British Columbians. The data collected by stewardship volunteers and maps provided by the WiTS program have helped local governments create bylaws and development permit areas specific to protecting nest trees. WiTS contracts have also worked with local governments to add policy that goes beyond the nest tree to consider perching trees as having a heritage designation and protection. The WiTS program is identified in the Provincial Develop with Care publications as a resource for information on nest trees.

***Park Interpretation in BC Parks* 2004 to 2010**

BC Nature coordinated park interpreters in several BC Parks for seven years, between 2004 and 2010. Interpretation had been an integral part of provincial parks dating back to 1957, and it had been the responsibility of government to provide it. Many park visitors recall memorable family experiences camping and participating in programs offered by park naturalists. Park interpretation programs have extensive benefits: they attract visitors to parks, engage young learners, promote environmental stewardship, and foster healthy, active lives in the outdoors. Park interpretation generates tourism dollars through longer stays and repeat visits, and is a source of community pride and shared citizenship.

But in summer 2002, the provincial government cut funding for all park interpretation. FBCN, together with member clubs, responded by writing letters, attending meetings, and partnering with similar-minded organizations to provide stronger advocacy. Despite all our attempts to urge the government to reinstate park interpretation, it refused to do so. Then, early in 2004, BC Nature took a major step, with support from Park Facility Operators, the private companies that operate the campgrounds and day use areas of BC Parks. FBCN directly hired summer student interpreters through the federal government's job creation program. The Park Facility Operators played a major role in this initiative by ensuring site safety and by providing work space, supplies, daily supervision, and wage contributions. BC Nature coordinated park interpreters for seven years, through the volunteer commitment of executive member Bev Ramey, assisted by BC Nature office managers Maria Hamann and later Betty Davison, with respect to payroll and countless other details. Contract staff assisted in later years with office coordination and contributed much to the program, including Lara Tisseur (2008), Sonya Reznitsky (2009), and Victoria Alleyne (2010). The support from Gail Ross, a BC Parks staff member, was critical to provide training to the interpreters, and to monitor program content and mentor the park naturalists throughout the summer, including site visits.

Thousands of people participated in program delivery. For example, in 2008, the 37 interpreters delivered programs in 23 Provincial Parks with an estimated 133,000 people attending. In 2010, 21 interpreters delivered programs in 14 provincial parks involving 93,000 people; an additional 49,000 people visited nature houses at Goldstream, Rath Trevor, Miracle Beach, Kokanee Creek, and Shuswap-Scotch Creek.

The following table details the number of summer interpreters hired, through Service Canada, through the provincial government's Conservation Corps, and with direct grants from the provincial government. The table shows the increasing support to the program from the province through to the sixth year, including staff support within BC Parks and direct grants from Ministry of Environment. By the seventh year, the provincial government's contributions

decreased and the Conservation Corps program, which had provided fully funded positions, was cancelled.

Park Interpreter Positions Coordinated by BC Nature

	# of Service Canada students	# of Cons Corps positions	MoE Grant to BC Nature + positions	BC Parks Staff support	Service Canada \$ contributions	PFO top-up to wages (3)
2004	6				\$21,000	\$12,000
2005	10				\$40,000	\$17,000
2006	11	12	\$40,000 - 3	partial	\$51,000	\$24,000
2007	17	12	\$40,000 - 5	full-time	\$61,000	\$30,000
2008 (2)	14	16 (\$180,000)	\$70,000 - 7	full-time	\$46,000	\$38,000
2009	14	10 (\$92,000)	\$10,000	full-time	\$68,789	\$33,122 (3)
2010	17	-	\$30,000 - 3	contract	\$76,000	\$40,000(3)

Notes: (1) Table does not include extensive "in-kind" donation of volunteer time by BC Nature.

(2) In 2008 Service Canada had less money to disburse and accordingly approved fewer positions.

(3) Park Facility Operators fully funded a few positions, plus provided space, supplies, sometimes vehicles, and accommodation.

Despite the positive reception of these interpretation programs over the seven years that BC Nature provided coordination, we had always seen our role as a temporary "stop-gap" measure, largely to ensure continuity, and in anticipation that the provincial government would once again commit adequate and long-term funding. BC Nature recognizes the value of the park interpretation program being coordinated by government to ensure continuity of quality programs, training and site visits, and integration through all aspects of park planning and operation.

Thus, it was disheartening when the government's funding commitment to interpretation was greatly reduced for summer 2010. Then at the 2010 FGM, BC Nature Directors indicated that unless adequate government support could be provided, BC Nature's efforts were no longer sustainable and could not be continued. The situation looked positive at that time. Then Premier Gordon Campbell promised funding for park interpretation during his speech to the Union of BC Municipalities. The Minister of the Environment, Barry Penner, when he spoke to BC Nature's Fall General Meeting, announced that interpretation programs would be reinstated. Unfortunately, with a new BC premier early in 2011, the promise was not kept. A few Park Facility Operators have continued to run nature programs on their own, such as at Goldstream, Rath Trevor, Miracle Beach, Alice Lake, Sasquatch, Manning, Wells Gray, and Lac Le Jeune.

BC Nature continues to advocate for a park interpretation program funded by BC Parks. The level of minimum funding for park interpretation was considered by BC Nature's Board at the 2010 FGM. The recommendation was that a minimum of \$275,000 would be required over each of 5 years. But this figure is a minimum: ideally the delivery of park nature programs warrants a commitment of at least \$1

million annually to provide longer-term positions to enable spring and fall programs and outreach in communities.

Reports describing the programs delivered and the staffing can be downloaded from BC Nature's website. Reports cover 2008 to 2010; the 2010 report also includes a discussion of the role of park Interpretation in meeting provincial goals. See Appendix 9 where the reports can be opened through a link.

<https://www.bcnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Appendix-9.-Publications.pdf>

BC Nature Guide <https://bcnatureguide.ca/>

This map-based website guide to nature viewing sites throughout the province has been prepared to help enrich residents' or visitors' experience when travelling throughout British Columbia. Work on this project began in 2014. A contractor compiled the nature information area by area with the assistance of local nature clubs. This website has been built gradually. The priority has been to include sites that are easily accessible by vehicle, along main roads and highways, including car and ferry routes. Hiking trails and destinations are being added. For each site, the viewer can zoom in to gain detailed nature information, location, and map-based directions to the site.

BC Nature's contractor on this project is Krista Kaptein. Her work has been assisted by contractor Bill Kinkaid.

Chapter updated October 2019



Chapter Eight: Formation of NatureKids BC, originally formed as the Young Naturalists Club

Written by Daphne Solecki

Background

In common with most naturalist organisations in Canada, the BC naturalist community became concerned with the fact that their members were aging and that younger, more vigorous members were not being recruited. Perhaps the biggest change between the first naturalist clubs and those that exist today is that early naturalists were surrounded by nature – they just stepped outside on to the doorstep and there it was. Nowadays, the great majority of the population lives in an urban environment and the natural world is hard to find without some guidance.

In the early 1960s, the BC Nature Council organized field camps specifically for junior naturalists; unfortunately, these “Junior Audubon Camps” continued for only a few years. Into the 1970s, the early FBCN camp organizers endeavoured to include families with young children. There were flourishing young naturalist clubs in Vancouver and Victoria in the 1970s and many of today’s active naturalists and scientists were involved in those programs. By the 1990s, FBCN’s efforts resurged to bring junior naturalists back into the forefront.

During Jude Grass’s term as President (1991-1993), the FBCN executive was holding discussions within the Young Naturalist Committee. Daphne Solecki, FBCN Vice President (while also President of VNHS), served on that Committee along with Rob Butler, Robin Owen (VNHS) and Nancy Baron (Vancouver Aquarium).

At this time various other initiatives around the province demonstrated an interest in encouraging the growth of young naturalists. In 1991 Al Grass, well-known for his *Close-Up on Nature* articles in the BC Naturalist Newsletter, decided to start speaking for *Jerry the Moose* in a regular column by way of introducing subjects specifically for children. Al encouraged young Earth Explorers to join Jerry’s Rangers. In 1992, a “young naturalists group” had been formed in Revelstoke by Debby Robinson. There was word of a new nature magazine published out of Nanaimo (1993), called *Get Wild*, that was aimed primarily at children and of a children’s magazine called *In S.Y.N.C.* published by the Shawnigan Young Naturalists Club (1996).

In 1993, Rob Butler proposed that the FBCN create a young naturalist program based on the youth program of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK, Europe’s largest conservation organization with over one million members). Their youth program, the Young Ornithologists’ Club (now known as RSPB Wildlife Explorers), has been in

existence since 1965; the Junior Bird Recorder's Club from which it evolved had formed even earlier, in 1943.

The aim of the proposed Young Naturalists' Club (YNC) would be to develop a younger generation of naturalists who are both knowledgeable in natural history and ecology, and prepared to take action on behalf of the environment. The FBCN highlighted the formation of a Young Naturalists' Club as one of its strategies in the 1998 Strategic Plan. So, once again, the FBCN struck a Committee with the purpose of establishing a Young Naturalists' Club.

Action

For various reasons, however, this initiative stalled until the Vancouver Natural History Society (now Nature Vancouver) decided to act on behalf of all FBCN clubs to develop a program for young people. The VNHS plan, however, was not to try to organize the Club entirely on its own, but rather to be open to other partners. By doing so, the opportunities of reaching every area of the province would be greatly increased. Where there were FBCN clubs, they were invited to recruit leaders to start a local YNC, which would be supported, to a greater or lesser degree, by the adult club. In the many areas of the province that were not served by an FBCN club, VNHS wanted to provide the opportunity for every young person, urban or rural, with a group or as an individual, to join. By linking up with existing programs, duplication would be avoided.

As a trial run to establishing a YNC, VNHS started up a local family program called 'Step into Nature' in 1997. Coincidentally, Al Grass transitioned his BC Naturalist Magazine column from *Jerry the Moose* and his Earth Explorers to *Nature Corner* and finally, perhaps in anticipation of things to come, he renamed his column *The Young Naturalist Explorer* (1997).

The Young Naturalists' Club of British Columbia was finally launched in the spring of 2000 by a working group of VNHS members - Karen Buschert, Carole Grupe, Diane Lepawsky, Muren Schachter and Daphne Solecki (Chair). Monica Belko joined the group through the BC government's E-Team initiative (Environmental Youth Team Eco-Ed). From 2000 to 2015, Monica was the production editor for NatureWILD Magazine.

An announcement was made in the BC Naturalist Magazine that the VNHS had launched the first issue of the YNC Magazine, NatureWILD. Then VNHS President, Jeremy McCall, ranked the founding of the YNC among one of the most important achievements of the VNHS, and appealed for members to support the fledgling organization because, "if VNHS is to have a future, it will be with younger members of the community". Al Grass, as a show of his lifelong commitment to the education of young naturalists, began a column called *Ask Al*; one that has been ensconced in the NatureWILD Magazine since that first issue in 2000.

As it happens, the delay in getting the YNC off the ground--though frustrating at the time--was actually fortuitous, because the launch coincided with the growth of electronic communication. Without the ability to communicate with leaders and members by email

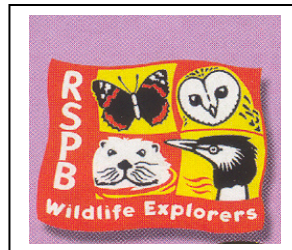
and to make the YNC known via the website, the organization would never have grown as quickly as it has.

Progress

In 1995, Daphne visited the RSPB headquarters at Sandy, in the United Kingdom. The RSPB was very generous with help, advice and materials and an invitation to make use of everything that could be adapted to BC's local conditions: without further permission! YNC has made full use of this generosity, starting with adapting their logo. The YNC logo was created by Claudette Poirier originally in black and white, and a later version was adapted to colour by Andrew Frank.



YOC



RSPB Wildlife Explorers



YNC



YNC

The YNC also adapted the main elements of the RSPB's program – outdoor explorations and activities, action awards and a magazine - which evolved into

1. Monthly Explorer Days (field trips);
2. Action Awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold) for activities involving nature study, sharing knowledge with others, outdoor exploration and community action; and,
3. NatureWILD, the only quarterly publication for children with a focus on BC nature and the environment.

To this day, the YNC executive remains in touch with the RSPB and they continue to provide assistance on an *ad hoc* basis. Also to this day, from home base, the province-wide YNC program supports the YNC Leaders (who run local Explorer Days) with training in First Aid and stewardship opportunities, in addition to services for members such as NatureWILD magazine, Action Awards, Passports to Nature, and accessories (caps, T-shirts, etc.), not to mention all the administration, fund raising, and staff.

A Home Base for Developing the Membership

The first local YNC for families with children 5 – 14 years of age was inaugurated in the spring of 2000 with a children's event at Van Dusen Gardens. The first YNC on Vancouver Island was launched in Nanaimo in the same year. When funds permitted,

the YNC employed a part-time Membership Assistant to assist the YNC Coordinator and by 2005 the position of part-time Membership Assistant was securely established. Jane Shoemaker was hired and FBCN made space in its 1367 West Broadway office location to house the fledgling YNC. The sharing of space worked well, and when FBCN was forced to move due to closing of the West Broadway offices, then FBCN President, Bev Ramey, worked closely with Daphne and YNC to find an alternate, suitable joint office space.

Fortunately, space in a BC Parks original Ranger home, repurposed for planning staff, became available. The FBCN was able to enter into an agreement with the Elders Council for Parks in British Columbia and move into the “Heritage Centre” at the base of Mount Seymour Provincial Park. The FBCN invited YNC to share this space and both organizations relocated to the Heritage Centre in March 2008. FBCN (now BC Nature) has continued to support YNC financially by providing office space, as well as ongoing administrative assistance through computers, telephone, summer student assistants and other helpful administrative measures.

The arrangement is mutually beneficial for the two organizations with close proximity enhancing the communication between the youthful energy of YNC and the mentoring/naturalist expertise of BC Nature, especially from its member clubs in communities throughout BC. In addition, YNC has had the opportunity to hold its fall and spring general meetings as part of BC Nature’s AGMs and FGMs. Space, publicity and other provisions have generously been provided by the BC Nature host clubs.

By 2006, membership in YNC had grown to 24 clubs throughout the province; by 2015, the number of YNC Family Clubs had reached 31. Recruitment of new members and volunteer leaders requires ongoing effort to continuously reach out to new young children, as the older children grow ‘out’ of the YNC and move on to other activities. Often the children’s parents are the volunteer leaders of the YNC local clubs, and so recruitment of replacement leaders must also be addressed.

In 2007, acknowledging that there were far more children in BC than could ever be reached through family YNCs, a new program for elementary schools was initiated – Nature Clubs in Schools – coordinated by Kristine Webber and supported by generous grants from government and business.

Becoming a Registered Charity

In spite of its tremendous growth and province-wide coverage during the early years when Anne Murray (1998-2002) and Jeremy McCall (2002-2006) held the FBCN’s presidency position, the YNC remained somewhat insecure financially. Support from FBCN with free office space and administrative assistance was a big help and for the most part, the VNHS successfully obtained grants to operate and maintain the YNC programs and publish NatureWild. Grants, however, were not always forthcoming or consistent in their generosity. Over the years, the FBCN provided YNC with several small grants to help maintain programs but it became clear to Jeremy in 2004 that for technical reasons, the experience of erratic grant funding provoked the need for a

change in focus; the YNC needed to become its own society and registered charity sooner rather than later.

In 2006, the decision was made to become a separate registered charity. Part of the reason was economic – through internal competition YNC might hamper either Nature Vancouver or BC Nature in their own fund-raising efforts. The first YNC Directors were Rob Butler, George Bangham, Eva Nagy, Jeremy McCall, Anne Murray, and Daphne Solecki.

The Directors quickly went about the business of writing the constitution, establishing the by-laws and the special relationship between BC Nature and the Young Naturalists' Club of BC.

**Special Relationship Between BC Nature and the Young Naturalists' Club of BC
2006**

The special relationship between BC Nature and the YNC is recognized in the YNC Constitution as follows:

"The Young Naturalists' Club of BC Society is affiliated with the Federation of BC Naturalists [BC Nature] and is committed to supporting the objectives of the Federation. This section is unalterable in accordance with the Society Act of British Columbia."

By 2012, BC Nature approved a reciprocal statement that in words makes explicit the assistance that BC Nature had been providing to YNC, especially since opening up its office space to share with YNC in 2005.

**BC Nature Support for Young Naturalists' Club of BC
2012**

1. BC Nature recognizes the Young Naturalists' Club of BC as the youth arm of BC Nature and engages to support and strengthen the YNC by all mutually agreed methods.
2. BC Nature will appoint an Executive Committee member as liaison to YNC to ensure good communication and invites YNC to do the same.
3. BC Nature recognizes YNC financially with a line item in the budget.
4. BC Nature encourages its member clubs to assist their local YNC in whatever ways are possible.

Today (2015)

There are over 31 regional family-based YNCs and another 30 Nature Clubs in Schools located throughout BC, serving well over 2000 children in any given year plus their parents and teachers. In addition, there are individuals and libraries that subscribe to NatureWILD.

Until 2008, Daphne volunteered her time to coordinate the YNC with the help of a part-time office and membership assistant. Originally operating out of Daphne's dining room,

office space provided by BC Nature in 2005 at the West Broadway location was where the first part-time staff person for YNC was housed. At the Mount Seymour Heritage Centre office, the position of a part-time YNC Coordinator was then created in 2008 as a step towards ensuring a stable future for YNC and a smooth transition when the current volunteer Coordinator retired. Jennifer Swanston was hired as YNC Coordinator to oversee the running of the organization, supervising YNC membership services and finances, assisting YNC leaders and maintaining the website.

In 2011, the YNC Coordinator position was split into two: the Executive Director position was defined to oversee the administration of the YNC, including communications and fundraising; the Clubs Coordinator position was defined to support the ever-growing network of volunteer YNC Leaders across the province. These positions are in turn supported by the Office and Membership Coordinator. All positions are part-time – three days a week. In 2015 the Executive Director is Kristine Webber, Clubs Coordinator is Tammy Keetch, and Membership & Office Coordinator is Karina Russell. Daphne Solecki was recently made an Honorary President of the Young Naturalists' Club of British Columbia. In 2015 the name of the society was changed from the Young Naturalists Club of British Columbia to NatureKids BC.

Future

NatureKids BC is unique in Canada in having initiated the first province-wide network of young naturalists' clubs. By providing support to local volunteer club leaders we hope that the clubs will continue to thrive and not fade away when a current leader leaves, as has happened in the past.

Alberta, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have adapted the BC program to their regions and interest has been shown by some other provinces. Nature Canada is currently interested in working on a young naturalist program and has cited British Columbia as a good model. In the not-too-distant future, NatureKids BC would like to see the establishment of a young naturalists' network from coast to coast to coast.

We are always looking to the future for ways to grow and improve the program – for instance, finding ways to continue serving children who are moving out of our program as teenagers, but are still too young for more adult-based BC Nature Clubs.

NatureKids BC has established an important link that strengthens the web of naturalist clubs throughout BC with the umbrella BC Nature organization.

Chapter written 2015

(Note that in 2015 the society's name was changed to NatureKids BC and that in 2016 Kristine Webber retired as executive director. Louise Pedersen was hired and headed NatureKids BC for the next three years.)



Chapter Nine: BC Naturalists' Foundation Formation

Written by Bev Ramey and Elisa Kreller, with editorial assistance from Bob Handfield.

Formation of the Foundation

The BC Naturalists' Foundation was formed by members of the Federation of BC Naturalists (FBCN) at its 1990 AGM, to receive donations and bequests to further the work of naturalists in BC. Reflecting on its formation, Dick Stace-Smith commented:

The Foundation was truly the brainchild of Joe Lotzkar. While he was serving as President of the FBCN (1987-88), he became convinced of the long-term value of establishing a Foundation as a major fundraiser for the FBCN. He looked upon it as an endowment that would not be created immediately but, over time, would be in a position to be of great help to the FBCN. At the time, I was Past President of the FBCN and Joe asked my assistance in setting up a Foundation. I worked with him and Bert Brink in our initial efforts to get the Foundation established.

The founding Directors of the Foundation were: Joe Lotzkar, Richard (Dick) Stace-Smith, V.C. (Bert) Brink, Yorke Edwards and Peter Legg. The purpose of the Foundation is: "To promote the preservation of the natural environment for future generations through conservation, education and research projects."

Joe Lotzkar described its formation:

The vision of a Foundation for the FBCN is becoming a reality. While awaiting word from Revenue Canada regarding charitable organization status, directors have been busy setting up logistical and organizational details. An initial meeting was held with the Vancouver Foundation to manage a portion of the FBCN Foundation endowment. It is anticipated that the Foundation will be fully operational by the Fall. . . Naturalists are encouraged to think about how the Foundation can work for them and conversely, about how they can support the Foundation. The Foundation will initially support the ongoing activities of the FBCN, and it is hoped that with the growth of the Foundation, funding will become available for club projects. (1991)

On July 6, 1990 the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists' Foundation was incorporated provincially under the Society Act and soon after was registered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) as a charity. Its initial designation was as a charitable organization. Several years later, CRA changed the Foundation's designation to public foundation.

A public foundation provides donations to a charitable organization that directly manages programs. This change in designation appropriately reflected how the Foundation uses its investment income to fund charities (primarily BC Nature and its member clubs) who in turn directly oversee the use of the funds in projects that align with the Foundation's mission.

In 2003 the Foundation's name was simplified, legally, to BC Naturalists' Foundation. The Foundation appreciates the legal help provided by Ross McCutcheon.

Governance

The governance of the Foundation is closely linked to BC Nature. BC Nature's Board of Directors appoints the members of the Foundation and nominates the Directors of the Foundation. Like BC Nature, the Foundation strives to have a Board whose Directors represent all regions of the province. Dick Stace-Smith described in 1999 the thoughts of the founding Directors:

In preparing our by-laws, we did recognize the need for continuity of Directors. We advised every potential director that we approached that we were looking down the road many years, and hoped that they would be prepared to serve several terms. This was done on purpose because we felt that a Foundation was not just your regular society – it should have a long-term view where continuity is important. This statement is not in the by-laws, but it has been the vision of the Foundation from the beginning.

Relationship between the Foundation and the Federation

In 2001 the BC Naturalists' Foundation Directors and the executive of the Federation of BC Naturalists met jointly to determine ways to work closely together to achieve a "fully seamless and integrated approach".

Again in 2009 a joint meeting was held to discuss the future of the Foundation. The role of the Foundation and its Constitution and By-Laws were reaffirmed, as recorded in the notes from that meeting:

The Foundation is an entity autonomous from the Federation but inextricably linked to it by shared goals and by the power of the Federation to appoint members to the Foundation and nominate Directors. The Foundation provides a permanent vehicle to fund enduring and tangible projects to promote the preservation of the natural environment for future generations through conservation, research and education projects.

Agreement was reached on improving the visibility of the Foundation and the working relationship between the Foundation and the Federation, including these principles:

- The President and Treasurer of the Federation, or their delegates, be members and Directors of the Foundation, and that a Foundation Director be a member of the Federation's Board.
- The Foundation use the mailing address and phone contact of the Federation.
- The annual fall fund raising appeal of the Foundation and the Federation be joint. This serves to present the message to membership that both organizations work to support each other and at the same time reduces mailing costs.
- The Foundation and the Federation meet annually to review grant applications and disbursements with at least two representatives from each attending.

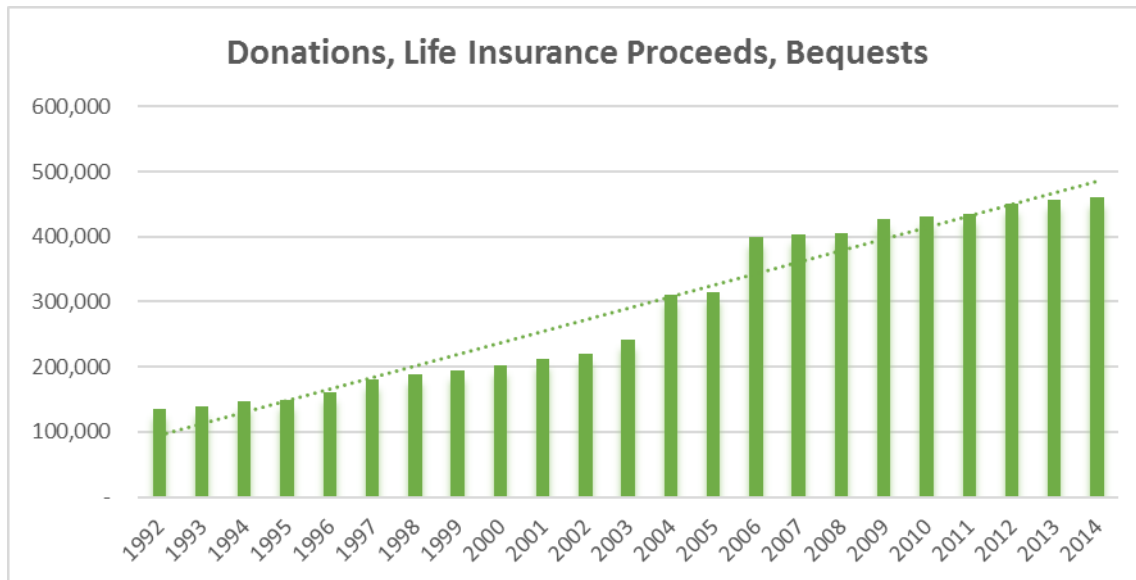
Since this agreement was reached, a joint fundraising appeal to members of BC Nature has been made each fall in a seamless manner. The joint appeal also serves to reduce costs for each organization. The review of Club Support Grant applications by a committee with representatives from both the Foundation and BC Nature of applications for Club Support Grants also works well. Both organizations are proud of the support offered in this way to member naturalist clubs.

Donors to the Foundation

Since inception the Foundation has benefitted from many generous donors. A major impetus to establish the Foundation arose when the late Katherine Sherman of Victoria bequeathed a major portion of her estate in 1991. She was a keen naturalist, a strong supporter of the FBCN, and had attended some of the early camps that were organized by the BC Nature Council, the forerunner of the FBCN.

The Foundation and the naturalist community appreciate greatly the several major donors who have made substantial contributions as bequests, planned giving or donations over the past twenty-nine years. Ongoing annual donations from many members of BC Nature are also appreciated. The Foundation grows stronger because of you.

The following chart was compiled in 2014 to highlight donations received from inception, showing the steady climb of the Foundation's capital.



Since 2014, donations and bequests have continued to grow the Foundation's funds, which in 2019 has now reached well over \$700,000. This amount is well off the top of the chart compiled in 2014. In addition to this capital, the Foundation has disbursed more than \$214,500 to support naturalist club projects.

The Foundation would like to recognize the generous donations of BC Nature members who have passed on, leaving substantial bequests or donations to the Foundation. These include: Katharine Sherman, Joe Lotzkar, Richard (Dick) Stace-Smith, Pauline and Peter Legg, Eva Mary Bene, Iris Griffith, Living by Water Project, Marjorie Clark, Lucy Hack, Katherine (Kay) Beamish, Edna Patricia Robinson, Almelda (Melda) Buchanan, Richard (Dick) Irving Greyson, Norman (Norm) Purssell, Joan Heriot, Gerard Bloem, Howard Telosky, Rolf Kellerhals, and Ursula Easterbrook.

Many BC Nature members continue to make substantial donations and have done so over several years during the joint BC Nature – BC Naturalists' Foundation annual appeal. About 250 members have donated, including substantial donations received from: Nancy Braithwaite, Lyndis Davis, Louise Irwin, Bob Dyer, Fred McMechan, Glen and Margaret Carlson, Frances and Alan Vyse, Pat and Hugh Westheuser, Joyce Manary and Boudi Van Oldenburgh, Stephen Partington, and Elizabeth Greenwood, as well as clubs donating in memory of one of their members passing.

Since its formation 29 years ago, BC Nature members' contributions have helped the Foundation grow its capital to over \$700,000. During that time the Foundation has been able to disburse \$214,500 to support naturalist club projects. The funds disbursed come from investment earnings on the contributed capital.

Capital and Investments

At incorporation the Foundation decided to invest a significant portion of its capital with the Vancouver Foundation and a total of \$191,598 was permanently transferred to the Vancouver Foundation's Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF). The Vancouver Foundation annually disburses the CTF's average annual investment earnings net of fees to all of the unitholders of this fund.

The remaining major portion of the Foundation's funds are invested and managed by a professional investment firm, working under the direction of the Foundation's investment policy. This policy provides for a balance between equity and fixed income investments.

For year-end 2018 Financial Statements, the Foundation's total assets with the investment firm are \$506,681. This is made up of \$383,435 in the Endowment Fund (donations and bequests) and \$121,708 in the General Fund (investment earnings). Note that these totals are in addition to the capital held with the Vancouver Foundation.

Foundation Grants to BC Nature

The BC Naturalists' Foundation supports BC Nature and its member clubs by providing annual grants that meet the Foundations' purposes: "To promote the preservation of the natural environment for future generations through conservation, education and research projects."

Since 1991 the Foundation has provided \$214,500 to a wide variety of projects to restore natural areas, to improve appreciation of the natural environment and to help communities better connect with nature. Each year, a portion of the earnings on investments is donated to BC Nature for grants to support Club Projects, or at times the projects of BC Nature. Since the Foundations' inception in 1990, it has provided grants to about 110 club projects. In addition, over the years grants have been provided to directly support BC Nature projects, most recently the Foundation has funded both the BC Nature scholarships awarded annually and provided a one-time grant for BC Nature to conduct an organization review.

All donations, bequests and planned giving are invested and it is the earnings from these investments that fund the grants. In this way the amount of grants available annually from the Foundation gradually increases. In 2012, the annual grant to BC Nature for club projects was in the order of \$9,000. By 2019 the annual grant has risen to about \$18,500. Refer to website description and listing of annual grants at: <https://www.bcnature.ca/bc-naturalists-foundation/>

Examples of specific club projects supported by the Foundation include:

- nature trails, viewing areas, and signage
- sensitive habitat signs
- bird and wildlife checklists

- bird banding
- bird identification courses
- birding trail map
- bird nesting boxes
- inventories of natural areas
- shoreline atlas
- bioblitzes
- special events to celebrate nature
- restoration and planting projects
- conferences and workshops on habitat protection
- environmental outreach
- webcam on osprey nest
- connecting children to nature
- nature centre facilities and programs.

The Future

The Foundation continues to encourage donations and bequests to increase its capital and thereby increase its capacity to make grants for the conservation and nature education projects. The Foundation grows stronger due to the many naturalists who have and who continue to make donations to grow its capital.

Chapter updated October 2019.

Presidents of the BC Naturalists' Foundation

1990 – 1994: Joe Lotzkar
 1994 – 1997: Jude Grass
 1997 – 2003: Frances Vyse
 2003 – 2009: Jeremy McCall
 2009 – 2012: Bob Dyer
 2012 – 2016: Bev Ramey
 2016 – 2020: Robert (Bob) Handfield