



Protecting Important Bird Areas

Nature Canada supporters help safeguard millions of migrating birds

Significant pressures are threatening one of Canada's most important bird areas. But your support is helping turn the tide for millions of migrating birds on the Pacific Coast.

The Boundary Bay - Roberts Bank - Sturgeon Bank Important Bird Area (IBA) is a major stop-over on the Pacific Flyway and one of Canada's top bird areas. The site, just south of Vancouver, British Columbia, is vitally important for millions of wintering and migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Its habitats support more than 333 species, some rare and endangered.

Unfortunately, this area is largely unprotected and faces significant pressures from increasing urbanization, shipping traffic, invasive species and intensified agriculture.

To counter these threats, Nature Canada supported the Birds on the Bay Festival. With programming stretching over several months, volunteers and 40 partner organizations raised the IBA's profile and helped restore its wetlands and shorelines.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Nature Canada is working hand-in-hand with local conservationists across Canada to protect Important Bird Areas. Our *Communities in Action* program has helped over 100 grassroots IBA site support groups, facilitated more than 150 on-site projects, developed 150 conservation plans, and cultivated a superb voluntary stewardship network to monitor bird populations, restore habitats and educate communities from coast to coast.



Celebrate, Educate, Protect!

Nature Canada protects and conserves wildlife and habitats in Canada by engaging people and advocating on behalf of nature. With strategies based on sound science and passion for nature, Nature Canada effects change on issues of national significance, including bird conservation, wilderness protection, species at risk and national parks.



Northern Pintail



Trumpeter Swan

Species Need Boundary Bay

Dunlins, Mallards, Northern Pintails, American Wigeons, Trumpeter Swans, Western Grebes, and Western Sandpipers are just some of the many species that depend on the rich habitats of Boundary Bay.



Western Grebe
Photos: Shutterstock

Species Spotlight

Vital Signs

Common name: Bowhead Whale

Latin name: Balaena mysticetus

Status: Special Concern

Size: Bowhead whales have enormous bow-shaped skulls and can grow up to 20 metres in length.

Lifespan: Among the longest-lived of any wild vertebrate species on earth, Bowheads live up to 200 years.

Bowhead Whale Facts

- Bowhead whales spend their entire lives in the Arctic.
- Bowheads are capable of breaking through thick sea ice thanks to their large heads and powerful bodies.
- Bowheads have no teeth – they feed by swimming with their mouths open and straining zooplankton out of the water with their baleen plates.
- Bowheads can leap entirely out of the water.

Bowhead Success!

Vital Habitat Protected

As an endangered species, Bowhead whales need extremely careful management to ensure their survival. Nature Canada congratulates the Government of Canada, the community of Clyde River and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated for taking an important step towards their protection. The recent establishment of Ninginganiq National Wildlife Area on Baffin Island protects the single most important habitat for the bowheads.



Please note our NEW ADDRESS



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Renew Your Membership for 2009

If you haven't had a chance to renew your Nature Canada membership for 2009, please take a few moments to update your membership today. Your support is the best way to make a difference.

For more news and commentary about nature, the environment and our conservation efforts visit the Nature Canada blog at: naturecanadablog.blogspot.com

Connecting Kids to Nature



Parks and People program helps foster the next generation of environmental stewards

Kids and the outdoors seem like a natural fit. Unfortunately in today's fast-paced world, many children are growing up with little opportunity to experience nature first-hand. That's where Nature Canada's Parks and People program comes in.

Operated in partnership with Parks Canada, and run by volunteer naturalists across the country, Parks and People has introduced the wonders of nature to more than 60,000 children since it began. Grants of up to \$5000 have been awarded to 28 local projects. Initiatives include learning activities such as outdoor talks, guided hikes and habitat monitoring and restoration.



Photos: Shutterstock

"This is an experience everyone should have."

~ 15-year-old Ontario student

"When you watch these children become lost in their own world, you realize what an incredibly valuable experience this is for them."

~ Maria, group leader

"Thank you for teaching me so much about marine and plant life... Thursday was the first day I had ever held a crab."

Erin, age 10

"Thank you for showing us that bugs and trees are very important."

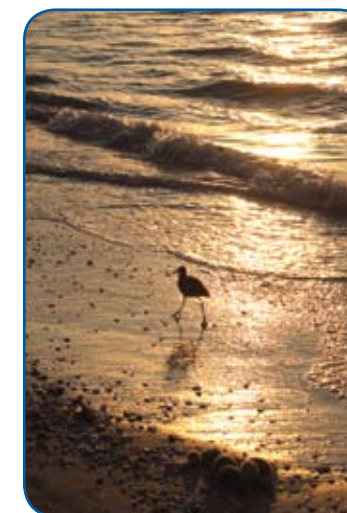
~ Ann, age 7

Nature Nuggets

Strange but true facts about nature



Blue Jay feathers are not actually blue. Blue is not a pigment birds can produce - the Blue Jay's colouration is all caused by refraction and reflection of light.



Got snot? Roberts Bank, BC, does. And that's good news for the Western Sandpiper. Each spring, virtually the entire population touches down here to feast on "biofilm" a mucous-like mix of micro-organisms that stick to the mud and won't wash away with the tide.

Photos: Shutterstock

Close to the Heart

Patricia Dray pledges to protect the natural beauty of the country she loves, today and tomorrow. "I've always loved nature, and there's nothing like the Canadian wilderness," says Patricia. So when it came time to consider the type of legacy she'd like to leave her loved ones, she wanted a gift that would have lasting value. "The environment never depreciates!" she says. "I wanted my legacy to represent what matters most to me, so I've chosen to include Nature Canada in my will."

"This is the asset that I want to leave my loved ones - a beautiful and healthy environment. It's a gift that I know will serve them in perpetuity."

As a long time member of Nature Canada and a Whittemore Legacy Circle member, Patricia's decision to make a bequest was an easy one. "Nature Canada shares my principles and values. Not only do they do everything possible to protect biodiversity in Canada, but they also educate young people - helping them change the way they think about nature and giving them practical strategies to be more green."

Patricia urges other nature lovers to consider a bequest gift. "By leaving a legacy to Nature Canada, you can continue to lead the way on environmental issues and keep investing in the future of Canada. Canadians have so much to be proud of, and protecting a country that possesses such beauty will be integral to the quality of life of future generations."



Patricia Dray