

FULFILLING A DREAM: The Feely Family Gift

Roberta and Tom Feely fulfilled a dream of Tom's father to protect a portion of their foreshore property at the mouth of the Trent River in Royston on Vancouver Island. They donated this parcel as an eco-gift to The Nature Trust.

"It will be protected in perpetuity—and that's what we want," said Roberta Feely.

Tom's father used to pasture cows there, but they don't any longer. The parcel has become an estuary with birds of all kinds coming and going as the tide moves in and out.

The 1.028 hectares (2.5 acres) form part of the Trent River delta and is environmentally sensitive land that provides habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. The intertidal wetlands and riparian areas of the Trent River are critical for a number of salmonids, including coho, and many bird species.

Estuaries are among the most productive ecosystems on earth and within BC are naturally rare, comprising only 2.3 percent of this province's coastline. This estuary is an important wintering area for waterfowl, particularly dabbling and diving ducks. Mallard and White-winged Scoters are the most frequently



Foreshore property boundaries at the mouth of the Trent River

recorded species. It is also a staging area for Brant in the spring. Of special interest are Marbled Murrelets during June and July, Caspian Terns in June and Northern Orioles in May and June.

Feely's Farm—Grassi Point Farm—is well known in the area. One of the first in Comox Valley it was started in 1889 by John Harwood. It was given Century Farm status in 1995—recognition that it's been continually farmed by the same family for all that time.

"Any time any owner talks about protecting ecologically sensitive land, it's always good news," said Nature Trust CEO Doug Walker. *"By donating the property to The Nature Trust it becomes part of a broader network of protected properties."*

The Feelys would like to encourage other land owners to consider eco-gifts. For more information on how you can make an eco-gift, please contact Doug Walker at 604-924-9771 local 230 or dwalker@naturetrust.bc.ca.

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OKANAGAN RIVER Project

The Nature Trust is working to acquire a 1.5-hectare (3.7-acre) property along the Okanagan River, one of the most endangered rivers in BC.

Channelization of the Okanagan River in the 1950s shortened it by half and now only 6 kilometres of natural habitat remains. The river supports one of only two remaining populations of sockeye salmon in the Columbia drainage. Twenty-six additional species of fish are found in the Okanagan system and together with the salmon they provide food for at least 137 other species of animals.

With the South Okanagan identified as a "hot spot" for species at risk, it is critical to conserve this riverside acquisition. Please help us to raise \$87,000 for this property.



HAIG-BROWN Celebrations

The Haig-Brown Institute, the Museum at Campbell River, the Greenways Land Trust and the Stewardship Centre for BC, working with a variety of partners and supporters including The Nature Trust, have created a one year program of events and activities focused on the 100th anniversary of the births of Roderick Haig-Brown and his wife Ann Elmore Haig-Brown. It honours the contributions of these exemplary British Columbians while encouraging the leadership and achievements of current generations who are inspired by BC's natural heritage, and, like the Haig-Browns, value community, culture, conservation and social justice.

Roderick Haig-Brown was a pioneering conservationist, writer of some 25 books, magistrate and fly fisher. His collections of essays and broadcasts concerning, in part, fly fishing and the natural world made him a strong voice of conscience in British Columbia and internationally. In later life, he was Chancellor of the University of Victoria

and advisor to many provincial, national and international conservation organizations and initiatives that helped shape the thinking of resource managers, conservationists and naturalists in BC.

Ann Elmore Haig-Brown was a conservationist, community activist, intellectual, librarian, and a strong advocate for women in transition. Together she and Roderick were the parents of four children in whom they instilled the social and environmental values they both professed so well.

As part of The Nature Trust's support for the Centenary, the Roderick Haig-Brown Learn to Fish program will be part of the Brant Wildlife Festival and a new sign will be posted on land owned by The Nature Trust at the Adams River in Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park highlighting the life of Roderick Haig-Brown (a director of The Nature Trust). For more information about the Centenary Celebrations, please see www.haigbrowninstitute.org/



Roderick Haig-Brown while fishing

HOW TO DONATE TO A CHARITY and Maintain Your Income

Many people are interested in donating to a charity but may not be able to do so without sacrificing their current lifestyle. Below is a possible solution to this problem.

Let's consider a woman, Mary Jones, aged 65 who has a \$500,000 portfolio made up of interest-bearing investments (GICs, Bonds, term deposits, etc.) earning 4.50%. With this portfolio, she generates a gross income of \$1,875 a month. Assuming she is in a 43.7% tax bracket, this provides an after-tax income of \$1,056 a month.

Alternatively, Mary could purchase a single-life annuity that would generate \$2,928 a month (gross), or \$2,554 a month in after-tax income. While this income is significantly higher than the current income from her fixed-income portfolio, on her death, there is nothing left for her estate or for charity.

To alleviate the concern of leaving nothing upon death, Mary could purchase a \$680,000 life insurance policy with level premiums (i.e. the premiums will never increase) for the remainder of her life. In this scenario, she would continue to receive an after-tax income of \$1,100 a month (about the same income as she receives today) but leave a larger estate (\$180,000 more). A portion of the proceeds could be distributed to her beneficiaries (children, etc), and another portion of the proceeds could be donated to charity.

In addition, Mary could increase her after-tax income today while leaving behind \$500,000 upon her death.

There are two ways to structure the insurance policy:

1. Designate the charity as the owner and beneficiary of the insurance policy. All premiums would be treated as a charitable donation today, substantially increasing her after-tax income by further reducing taxes. In addition, a reduction of taxes could reduce any Old Age Security clawback.
2. Maintain ownership of the policy and name the charity as the beneficiary. In this case, the insurance premiums would not be tax-deductible, but the insurance proceeds on her death would generate a sizable charitable donation. It should be noted that gifts made in the year of death can be claimed against 100% of income in that year. If the credit exceeds the income, the gift can be carried back and claimed in the immediately preceding year (prior to the year of death). Any gift that cannot be claimed in those two years will expire.

The advantage of purchasing a single life annuity and life insurance is that it allows Mary to maintain or increase her income today and benefit a charity tomorrow. Once this strategy is in place, her income and the estate benefit are known.

Clay Gillespie is Vice President of Rogers Group Financial. He can be reached at cgillespie@rogersgroup.com or 604-732-6551.

IN CELEBRATION OF Dr. Vernon (Bert) Brink

Robin Wilson, Chair of The Nature Trust

I am saddened to share the news of Bert Brink's passing in November at the age of 95. He was a long time Director and later Director Emeritus of The Nature Trust. I will miss his keen insight and passion for conservation.

I first met Bert in 2004. He was very quiet during a meeting and then offered some insightful comments that guided the discussion in a new direction. He encouraged all of us around the table to consider aspects we hadn't before thought of. I found his knowledge, particularly of the grasslands of BC, encyclopedic. Yet, he was also eager to share and never made me feel uncomfortable about not knowing as much as he did.

I recall a story Dick Richards, a past chair of The Nature Trust, told about Bert's communication skills: "I always found him to be a fountain of knowledge and so kind to me, a poor, scientifically uneducated businessman. I'll never forget asking him a question about sagebrush at the White Lake Ranch in the South Okanagan. He demonstrated his 10 minute answer with pieces of brush, and then asked if that was sufficient detail or should he continue!"

Bert was tireless in his pursuit of causes he believed were very important. He was a leading voice in the BC conservation community to conserve the Fraser River, protect the Interior's grasslands and establish a Provincial Park in BC's Chilcotin region. He worked for decades to accomplish key goals. And with his passing he continued to carry on



Bert Brink

his life's work by requesting that people donate to The Nature Trust (and other conservation related organizations). Bert dedicated his life to combining a love of science with a deep respect for the natural world. He will be missed.

BRINK/MCLEAN GRASSLAND Conservation Fund

In 2007 I received the Brink/McLean Grassland Conservation Fund award, which financially assisted my first year of graduate research. I was very pleased to receive this award, which honors Drs. Bert Brink and Alistair McLean whose careers have had tremendous impacts on the conservation of BC's natural history and particularly grassland ecosystems.

With additional funding from Canadian Wildlife Service and the provincial Forest Science Program I began a Master of Science degree in the fall of 2007 at Simon Fraser University. The main objective of my research is to understand the relationships between grazing livestock and the ground nesting birds that share their habitat. In particular, I am examining how grazing affects the plant community and reproductive success of sparrows in the Cariboo-Chilcotin near Williams Lake.

To do this we locate Vesper Sparrow

nests to see how many young they successfully raise each summer. Nest searching is best done shortly after dawn when the birds are most active. Getting up this early and experiencing various wildlife ranging from insects to bears is a common and very rewarding experience. We also try to catch and colour mark the breeding pairs to see if they survive the winter to breed again. In the fall we can compare the nests and vegetation between grazed and ungrazed sites to see how the two habitats differ ecologically. This information will assist wildlife managers at the Canadian Wildlife Service and other agencies with important landscape level conservation decisions.

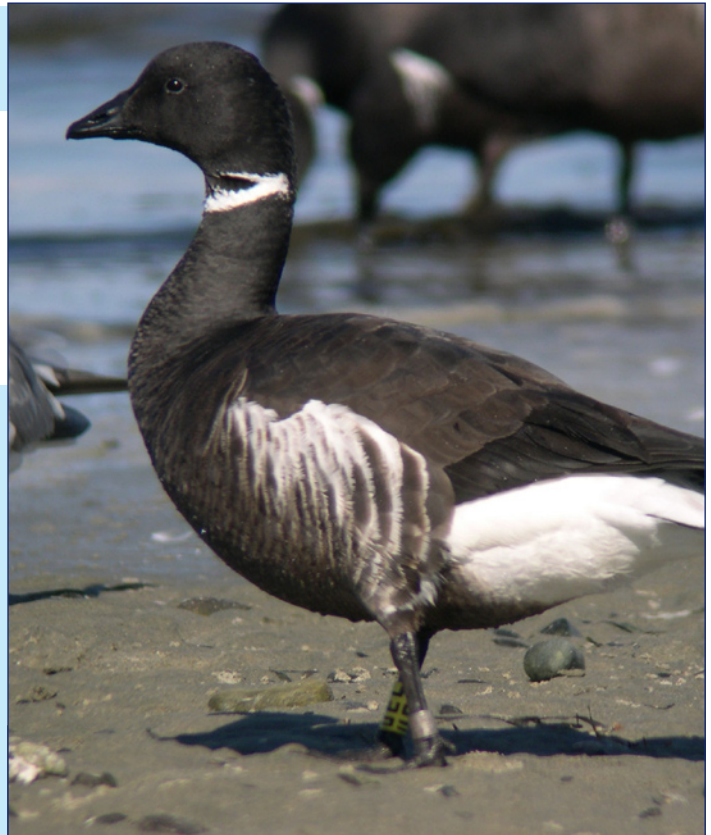
I would like to thank The Nature Trust of BC for supporting my work and for their work in promoting conservation throughout the province.

Pat Robinson



Vesper Sparrows (photos by Natalie Arseneau)

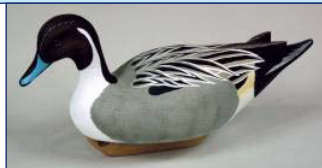
2008 Brant Wildlife Festival



Join us for the 18th Brant Wildlife Festival on Vancouver Island in March and April. This annual festival celebrates nature, particularly the return of the Black Brant goose as they rest on beaches midway between their wintering areas in Mexico and their nesting grounds in Alaska. Activities include eco-tours, nature photography, music and even a big day birding for teams that like to get up at 5 a.m.!

For 16 years the festival was spearheaded by the Mid Island Wildlife Watch Society (MIWWS). In recent years, MIWWS had been challenged to secure the financial and human resources necessary to operate the festival. In June 2006, MIWWS members dissolved the society and transferred the assets to The Nature Trust. The 2008 Brant Wildlife Festival is being coordinated by The Nature Trust of British Columbia in association with the Canadian Wildlife Service, the BC Ministry of Environment and Ducks Unlimited Canada. We would also like to thank the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund for providing assistance through the Wildlife Viewing Network.

For more information, visit www.brantfestival.bc.ca. To register, call Robin Rivers at 1-866-288-7878 ext. 226 or 604-924-9771 (in the Vancouver area) or e-mail rivers@naturetrust.bc.ca



Vancouver Island Woodcarvers present
the 18th Brant Festival Wildlife Woodcarving Competition and 11th Canadian Fish Carving Championship

Pre-show seminar
 More than \$6,000 in prize money and awards.

Saturday, April 5, 2008 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Sunday, April 6, 2008 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Parksville Community Centre
 \$5.00 to attend both days

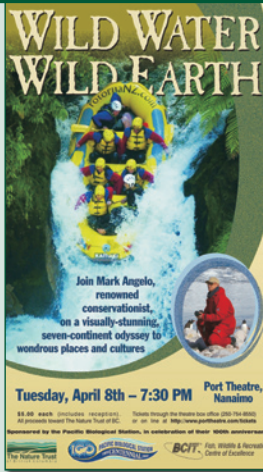
Visit www.thebrant.ca for more details.

Schedule at a Glance

- Rusty Joerin's "Brant-The Talkative Sea Goose Interpreted" in Parksville March 1 to 30
- Community Gathering at the Old Train Station in Qualicum Beach on March 8
- Herring Spawn Tour in Parksville on March 9
- Wetlands and Wineries Eco Tour by Pacific Rainforest Adventures on March 14
- Nature Photography with Andrew Klaver in Qualicum on March 15
- Nordic Nature Walk on March 16
- Hamilton Marsh Easter Tour in Qualicum on March 22
- Buttertubs Marsh Nature Walk in Nanaimo on March 22
- Roderick Haig-Brown Learn to Fish at Spider Lake on March 29
- Walk or Ride Treasure Hunt on March 30
- Wetlands and Wineries Eco Tour by Pacific Rainforest Adventures on April 4
- Big Day Bird Count in the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve on April 5
- Cannor Nursery Garden Fair in Parksville on April 5
- Seeking a Balance Tour on April 6
- Voices of Nature children's concert at the Port Theatre in Nanaimo on April 10
- Eagle Release in Errington on April 12

See www.brantfestival.bc.ca for other events.

UPCOMING events



Wild Water, Wild Earth by Mark Angelo

Sponsored by the Pacific Biological Station in celebration of their 100th anniversary
Tuesday, April 8, 2008
at the Port Theatre in Nanaimo,
\$5.00 includes reception.
Tickets available at
www.porttheater.com/tickets
or by calling 250-754-8550.
Proceeds to The Nature Trust

Sustainability Speakers Series

Brian O'Sullivan will speak about the power of wind on April 15 at 11:45 a.m. at SFU Harbour Centre in Vancouver. Register by calling Robin Rivers at 1-866-288-7878 or 604-924-9771 (in the Vancouver area).

Wings Over the Rockies

Nature Trust East Kootenay Conservation Land Manager Rob Neil will be hosting a walk on the Hoodoos property with geologist Bill Ayrton (pictured below) and biologist Trevor Kinley on Saturday, May 10 at 10 a.m. Register by calling the festival at 1-888-342-9464. Visit www.wingsovertherockies.org for details.



Meadowlark Festival

Join Nature Trust South Okanagan Conservation Land Manager Carl MacNaughton for a number of events from May 15 to 19. Visit www.meadowlarkfestival.com for details.

Wild Festival for Youth

The Nature Trust of BC is the title sponsor of the 2008 Wild Festival for Youth in Kelowna on June 6, 2008. For a decade, this event has been promoting sustainability and environmental education in the BC Interior and encouraging children to connect with nature. Activities will include a "Learn to Fish" Program at a local pond with the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, a hiking adventure with the Regional District of the Central Okanagan, and bird box building and painting with the Ogoopogo Rotary Club.



Boundary Bay Clean Up

Join us on Saturday, June 7, to remove debris from this ecologically sensitive area (pictured below) which supports many types of waterfowl and shorebirds during spring and fall migration. See our website for details closer to the date.



Celebrating Generations of Conservation Gala Honouring George Reifel

Mark your calendars for our second Gala fundraising dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel in Vancouver on October 8. For ticket information, call Robin Rivers at 1-866-288-7878 or 604-924-9771 or visit our website.

A RARE GIFT

What Do You Give a Man Who Has Everything?

97 TREES!

When renowned scientist Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan turned 97, The Nature Trust wanted to give him a different type of birthday gift. Ninety-seven trees were planted in his honour at the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary in Victoria in November. Councillor Vicki Sanders attended as Acting Mayor of Saanich.

Tree planters included Nature Trust Directors Jim Walker and Rod Silver as well as CEO Doug Walker, staff from The Nature Trust and Swan Lake Nature Centre in addition to volunteers and local community members (including 3 year old twins).

"We are delighted to plant these Douglas fir, black cottonwoods and cedars to improve the habitat at the sanctuary," said CEO Doug Walker.

The Douglas fir were planted on the upland slopes on the south side of Swan Lake as that is a drier site but not one which would support Garry oaks. The black cottonwoods were planted along a recently restored stream bank. The roots of the cottonwoods will armor the banks against erosion. And once a shade canopy is established by the maturing cottonwoods, the invasive canary grass which clogs the stream will be suppressed. Cedars were planted in a shaded area which already had cedars planted several years ago. These trees will enhance the future grove. The whole area was once covered in forest so additions to tree cover will provide more diverse and complex habitat for wildlife and birds.

Dr. McTaggart-Cowan combines both scholarship and dedication to conservation. Raised in BC and educated at UBC and the University of California in Berkeley, he has established an international reputation as a researcher, advisor to business and government, and an active participant in wildlife conservation. Titles, honours, and a lengthy publication list all testify to his lifelong dedication to learning and the natural world. Dr. McTaggart-Cowan has been a Director of The Nature Trust since 1977 and is now a Director Emeritus.



Site Manager Willie Macgillivray with Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan and Councillor Vicki Sanders

The Nature Sanctuary consists of marshy lowlands surrounding Swan Lake and oak-forested highlands of Christmas Hill. It provides good habitat for many bird species and small mammals. Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary is a nature education centre created to foster an understanding and appreciation of nature through direct experiences. The Nature Trust acquired 2.4 hectares of land at Swan Lake in 1976 to help with the establishment of the sanctuary.

A partner on the project was ERA Ecosystem Restoration Associates which provided nursery raised tree stock. ERA works with forward-looking communities, ethical companies, and local governments to identify opportunities and implement programs to restore degraded ecosystems and enhance their capacity to play a role in climate change mitigation.



Rain Garden Applications

The Nature Trust has established an endowment fund to support community rain garden projects. This project addresses the environmental and economic advantages of getting stormwater back into the ground, as well as the desirability of raising citizen awareness and supporting local initiatives. Thanks to our donors, the Rain Garden Fund will generate up to \$5,000 for a project or projects in 2008. All streamkeeper groups in Greater Vancouver are eligible to apply for grants (see www.naturetrust.bc.ca/scol_grants.php for application form). It is desirable, but not required, that the applicant streamkeeper group enlist the cooperation of one other volunteer community group such as a local church, public school parent advisory council, or co-op housing residents' council. Proposed rain gardens must be located on public property such as ditches, boulevards, medians, community centres, schools, etc. or property owned by private non-profit organizations such as co-op housing developments, service clubs, churches, etc. The deadline for applications is April 25, 2008.

SCHOLARSHIP Recipients

Robert Gray

Robert Gray is the recipient of the 2007/2008 Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan Scholarship in Environmental Studies. Robert is a consultant fire ecologist with over 25 years experience in fire history and fire effects research, prescribed fire, fuel management, and wildfire suppression. His undergraduate degree is in Forest Resource Management with an emphasis on fire science and forest ecology from the University of Montana.

Robert has recently returned to university, starting a Master's degree at the University of Victoria. His thesis is a study of the persistence of critical stand structure attributes in historically frequent fire regimes—most notably snags. Field study will take place pre- and post-burn on a number of ecosystem restoration prescribed burns in southeastern BC, northwest Montana, and central Washington.



Robert Gray counted at least 9 external scars in this 256-year-old Scot's pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) in northeast Mongolia.



Scott and Amy Wilson

Scott and Amy Wilson

Scott and Amy Wilson are recipients of the Bert Hoffmeister Scholarship in Forest Wildlife.

Scott grew up in Calgary where he received a Bachelor of Science at the University of Calgary with a double-major in zoology and ecology. Amy also graduated from the University of Calgary with a botany major. After graduating, they undertook field work including studies of bird migration along the coast of Maryland and on behavior and population ecology of Mexican Jays in Arizona.

In 2001, Amy and Scott moved to Vancouver for their Master of Science degrees at UBC. They stayed on for their doctoral work. Scott's PhD thesis focuses on the potential impacts of climate change on rock ptarmigan and white-tailed ptarmigan in the southern Yukon. Amy's PhD thesis is on the population genetics of island populations of song sparrows across the Pacific Coast. During their PhDs they have also been collaborating with the Calgary Bird Banding Society on projects focusing on migration ecology of neotropical migrant songbirds in the Osa Peninsula in Costa Rica.

They plan to graduate in the summer of 2008 and beginning in the fall, they will pursue post-doctoral work at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. After post-doctoral work they hope to obtain university faculty positions.



KUDOS...

Kudos to the Lake Windermere Rod & Gun Club (photo on left, Darlene Thomas and Rob Neil of The Nature Trust) and Sparwood & District Fish & Wildlife Association (photo on right, left to right, Kent Petovello, Rob Neil, Lorne Cook, Dave Keller) for their support towards a third five-acre property on Wigwam Flats. This acquisition will contribute significantly to one of the most important wildlife sites for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer and white tailed deer in the East Kootenay.

A BIG PICTURE APPROACH To Conservation

The Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia is providing \$30,000 to The Nature Trust to help fund research into a big picture approach to conservation in BC.

The Nature Trust Project Coordinator Leanna Warman explained, "One of the reasons the East Kootenay was chosen as the study area for this pilot project was that it has high species richness, with over 215 species at risk. These species include Badger, Northern Leopard Frog and Nuttall's sunflower."

Chair of the Real Estate Foundation Barry Brown-John said, "The Governors agree with The Nature Trust that managing conservation lands within the broader context of the surrounding landscape is the most sustainable course of action."

It is crucial to have a big picture approach to conservation. Generally, individual or adjacent parcels of land are managed for conservation in isolation without the benefit of knowing the most effective role of each parcel for biodiversity conservation in a broader landscape context. Without this context, it is not possible to determine if current management activities carried out by The Nature Trust and other conservation organizations are appropriate for conservation of regional biodiversity. It is essential that there is a coordinated strategy to ensure



Cheryl Kathler, Governor of the Real Estate Foundation, and Leanna Warman that the conservation of the unique biodiversity found in the East Kootenay Trench will be successful.

Partners on the project include the BC Ministry of Environment and other organizational partners of the East Kootenay Conservation Program.



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of British Columbia

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DONORS



Karen and I had a memory of Telegraph Cove's charm from the distant past. When I saw an ad for the Thanksgiving Ecotour, we responded and invited two of our grown children to join us. It was a great time for all! Ann and Nathan enjoyed every part of it as did Karen and I. Such keeners, we even stayed on an extra day for a grizzly bear trip! Many thanks to The Nature Trust for this wonderful opportunity which has enriched our ongoing family life.

Dirk Pidcock in Kaslo, BC

Thank you to Natural Gifts Seafoods in Nanoose Bay on Vancouver Island for donating 10% of proceeds in December to The Nature Trust.

NEW Directors



Ross Beaty is a geologist and mining entrepreneur with more than 35 years of experience in the international minerals industry. He founded and serves as Chairman of Pan American Silver Corp., Northern Peru Copper Corp. and Global Copper Corp. He helped create the Beaty Biodiversity Centre at the University of British Columbia which incorporates a biodiversity museum and research centre.



Doug Christopher is the President of Montrose Development and G&B Estates. He has over 25 years of experience in the investments industries and real estate, and oversees a growing portfolio of investment assets. He is a Director of the Vancouver Club and the ZLC Foundation.