

## ***Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program***



# **Islands Trust**

## **2015 Recipient Profile**

### **Saturna Island Marine Research and Education Society, Saturna Island**

<b>Category:</b>	Group
<b>Project:</b>	Marine research and education
<b>Nominator(s):</b>	Priscilla Zimmerman

#### **Project Description:**

The Saturna Island Marine Research and Education Society (SIMRES) is a volunteer organization that brings together marine researchers, educators and individuals to increase public awareness about the marine life of our Pacific region and to enhance understanding of the relationship between human activity and the ecosystem in the Salish Sea.

The group was established in 2012 following a community-based economic development conference on the island. While the group received start-up funding from the Saturna Island Community Club, Saturna Island Lion's Club and the Capital Regional District, it is supported mostly by community funding and through educational events.

One of the projects organized by SIMRES is the Saturna Environment Awareness or SeaTalks, a series of interactive presentations and workshops by researchers, scientists, local experts, divers, marine conservationists, interpreters, film makers and photographers on a range of marine life topics.

Since 2012, SIMRES has delivered over 15 SeaTalks, two major symposia and a number of workshops with organizations such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Vancouver Aquarium, University of Victoria, Ocean Networks Canada, Washington's Center for Whale Research and University of British Columbia.

The group has installed two hydrophones at East Point to allow researchers to monitor underwater sounds and study marine mammal communication and know when whales are in the area. In collaboration with an Internet provider, Orcas Online, SIMRES is able to provide online streaming of the hydrophone data to use for both research and as a communication and public outreach tool.