

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2019 Nominee Profile

C'tasi:a -Elder Geraldine Manson, Gabriola Island Local Trust Area

Category: Individual

Project: Celebrating nineteen years of knowledge holding and sharing

Nominator(s): April Vannini and Gloria Filax

Project Description¹:

Snuneymuxw Elder Geraldine Manson (C'tasi:a) is nominated for her continued work over the past nineteen years working as a volunteer with the Gabriola Historical and Museum Society (GHMS). Geraldine is well-versed in the land of Gabriola as she holds the knowledge passed down from her ancestors and oral history that gave her understanding about Snuneymuxw and Coast Salish territory.

Since 2000, Elder Manson began working with the GHMS as a knowledge holder and spiritual guide on the Museum's Truth and Reconciliation initiatives, collaborating with GHMS on exhibit displays, and provides tours on the site and teaches about the importance of petroglyphs. She has also dedicated her time to being a liaison of understanding for Gabriola residents to understand the importance and sacred significance of ancestors and sites within the Gabriola Island Trust Area.

Elder Manson's relationship with all organizations, committees and groups throughout Gabriola is grounded in the wisdom shared with her through traditional teachings and protocol. These teachings support ways of learning together in a mutual respectful and collaborative process. Elder Manson has also been working with many community groups to share knowledge on how to work collaboratively with Snuneymuxw, and how to respect, acknowledge and honour the unceded territory on which we live today. Some other organizations she has also worked with are the Gabriola Arts Council, Truth and Reconciliation Speaker Series, and Vancouver Island University. She also provides opening blessings and welcome at Gabriola events, which connect residents of Gabriola to Snuneymuxw land and waters.

¹ Information based nominee's submission to 2019 Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award program.

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2019 Nominee Profile

Mark Bottomley (the Styrophobe), Lasqueti Island Local Trust Area

Category: Individual

Project: Reducing Marine Pollution in the Salish Sea

Nominator(s): Lasqueti Island Stewardship Award Committee

Project Description:

Mark Bottomley (the Styrophobe), was nominated for his work to reduce marine pollution in the Salish Sea, a project he launched in August 2018. Since this time, Mark has donated his time and resources to collect Styrofoam and plastics from over 50 kilometers of shoreline on Lasqueti Islands and surrounding islands several days a week. Bottomley purpose built a boat to collect and transport plastic debris, and he is currently working on a machine that will shred plastic for reuse, and to transport the product more efficiently to disposal facilities.

Mark's commitment to removing Styrofoam and plastics that endanger marine and bird species has built awareness of the project in the community. Tla'amin Nation and qathet Regional District have expressed support for his efforts. Mark communicates his efforts to community members through YouTube videos and pictures of what he finds. His nominator mentions he has inspired islanders to re-think their shopping habits, and increased awareness of our need for new methods of plastic disposal.

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2019 Nominee Profile

Andrew Simon, Galiano Island Local Trust Area

Category:	Individual
Project:	Creating a “living field guide” on Galiano Island
Nominator(s):	John Reynolds

Project Description¹:

Andrew Simon was nominated for his volunteer work with the Biodiversity Galiano project (www.biogaliano.org). Biodiversity Galiano, which Simon initiated in January 2016, is a community-based initiative to document the flora and fauna of Galiano Island. To date, more than 2,000 species have been documented, represented by more than 10,000 occurrence records contributed by 150 people. Simon has worked with dozens of experts to critically review and annotate these observations, integrating them into a database with historical records that acts as a comprehensive inventory of the island’s biodiversity.

Since its inception, the project has engaged island residents and organizations across a broad cross-section of the community, through activities that incorporate natural history studies, the arts, and even music. Simon has written dozens of articles in local media and organized more than 50 community events, including two major BioBlitzes in partnership with local conservancies. He has also reached out beyond Galiano Island, working with Valdes Island Conservancy and Mayne Island Conservancy, as well as with Lyackson First Nation and other communities in the broader region.

Simon is preparing to formalize the results of the project, in collaboration with over 30 research scientists, to be published in the Biodiversity Data Journal in January 2020.

The nominator describes that this project represents an unprecedented effort to comprehensively document the biodiversity of one of the southern Gulf Islands and will provide a critical baseline for understanding the future impacts climate change. Simon’s latest initiative aims to extend the reach of the project beyond borders, networking biodiversity projects throughout the Salish Sea (www.salishseabiodiversity.org).

¹ Information based nominee’s submission to 2019 Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award program.

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2019 Nominee Profile

Saturna Community Club Recycling Centre

Category: Organization

Project: Forty-four years of recycling services

Nominator(s): Priscilla Zimmerman

Project Descriptionⁱ:

Saturna Community Club Recycling Centre was nominated for continuous recycling services to the island for over forty-four years. The Recycle Centre and Free Store provides a valuable service by enabling islanders to recycle and repurpose a vast array of products. It also provides a social gathering point, and supports people in being actively involved in recycling and reusing.

At Saturna recycle they've researched "outside-the-box" recycle streams and are working with corporate programs to recycle items such as pens, pencils, highlighters and markers, water filters and printer and toner cartridges. The Store provides opportunities for fellow islanders to educate each other, children and youth, and visitors on various recycling matters. Currently, the Store operates with thirty-five volunteers (10% of the islands population), and one paid staff member.

Through its forty-four year history, hundreds of people have volunteered with the Recycle Centre and Free Store, and huge amounts of waste have been diverted from landfills.

ⁱ Information based nominee's submission to 2019 Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award program.

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2019 Nominee Profile

Thetis Island Nature Conservancy Society

Category: Organization

Project: Land acquisition and conservation efforts Fairyslipper Forest Nature Reserve

Nominator(s): Tatiana Nemchin

Project Descriptionⁱ:

The Thetis Island Nature Conservancy Society (ThINC) was nominated for the land acquisition and conservation efforts it has completed over the past seven years, and especially for the protection of the Fairyslipper Forest Nature Reserve. ThINC is the first conservation organization on Thetis Island, which is almost entirely privately owned.

Fairyslipper Forest Nature Reserve is 41 acres of Douglas-fir and Arbutus forest, named for the beautiful Fairyslipper Orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*) which blooms there in the spring. In January 2018, ThINC completed the purchase of the Reserve with support from 140 Thetis Islanders, along with Islands Trust Conservancy, the Cowichan Community Land Trust, Sitka Foundation, the Gosling Foundation and the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Penelakut representatives are participating with ThINC and the ITC in developing the management plans for nature reserves on Thetis Island.

ThINC has delivered nature education programs to hundreds of Thetis Islanders and members of the general public. ThINC operates a Nature House during the summer months, staffed by summer students and volunteers, The Nature House had over 800 visits in 2018.

ThINC runs a number of stewardship citizen science-based programs including a Community Bat Program, a Western Screech Owl Nest Box Program, Forage Fish Monitoring and Species at Risk Watch. ThINC has actively promoted conservation covenants and other conservation tools on private land. All programs and land acquisitions are funded by private donations, grants from various governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, and by program fees.

ⁱ Information based nominee's submission to 2019 Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award program.

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Islands Trust

2019 Nominee Profile

**Sara Steil
North Pender Island
(Posthumous)**

Category:	Individual
Project:	Special 2019 Community Stewardship Award for Lifetime Achievement
Nominator(s):	Trust Programs Committee

Project Description:

Sara Steil was a force for conservation on the Pender Islands. She was a founding member of the Pender Islands Trust Protection Society and an active contributor to land use decision making through numerous North Pender Island Local Trust Committee public processes. She contributed to Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) development and was a champion for the Islands Trust mandate to “preserve and protect” the islands.

Sara was also an active member of the Pender Islands Conservancy Association. In 2009, Sara and her husband Richard (Dick), protected their land through the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) by placing a conservation covenant on their land title. Their conservation covenant is a lasting legacy for North Pender, protecting 1.4 hectares (3.5 acres) of coastal Douglas-fir forest and a portion of the shoreline of Gardom Pond. Their wetland in Steils' Woods Covenant is home to amphibians and visiting Great Blue Herons. Wild strawberry and western trilliums fill in spaces on the forest floor between tall firs, cedars and maples.

Sara also worked passionately to preserve and protect the marine environment. She was an active member of the Pender Island Power and Sail Squadron and for more than 20 years she educated boaters about the nature value of the marine environment and ways to steward it. Part of this work included contributing to the Pleasure Craft Pollution Prevention program. Additionally, she volunteered to inventory forage fish beaches to confirm spawning habitats for these small fish that form a critical component of the marine food web.

Sara’s work, passion, and commitment have left a lasting legacy for the preservation and protection of Pender Island.