

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

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.