

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2015 Nominee Profile

Andrew Fall, Lasqueti Island

Category:	Individual
Project:	Facilitating community engagement
Nominator(s):	Sheila Harrington

Project Description:

Andrew Fall is a community champion, researcher and facilitator who helps Lasqueti residents make informed decisions about social and environmental issues affecting life on the island. Over the past two years, he has been pivotal to achieving community engagement on three issues.

Andrew was instrumental in the Powell River Regional District's decision to postpone their bylaw for a proposed North Island 911 service for one year to allow for public consultation to review options for fire, health and public safety with fewer environmental and economic impacts.

Andrew was a lead organizer for an Occupy the Sabine event in 2014, bringing together 40 boats and 170 people. He also engaged with the provincial MLA to object to proposed coal transport through the Sabine Channel that could pollute the Salish Sea and create health and safety issues.

Andrew also played a key role with the Ministry of Transportation and a private landowner to maintain public access to Tucker Bay, the only deep water public access on the east side of the island. Andrew conducted research and provided a background paper to the provincial government on the historical use of the road and marine access area.

Andrew's strengths lie in bringing people and research together to build support for projects and initiatives that preserve the environment and the Lasqueti way of life.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Denman Opposes Coal, Denman Island

Category:	Group
Project:	Advocating against the Raven Coal Mine Project
Nominator(s):	Perri Gorrara

Project Description:

Denman Opposes Coal is a group of residents opposed to the proposed Raven Coal Mine Project and its potential impact on air and water quality, marine habitat, property values, local economy and quality of life on the island.

In collaboration with groups such as Coal Watch, Comox Valley Water Watch Coalition, Raven Revolt Coalition and other organizations, the 10 to 15 members have advocated since 2009 against the project through the joint public review processes, by engaging concerned citizens through traditional and social media and by contacting public officials.

Denman Opposes Coal has facilitated public resistance to the Raven Coal Mine Project and has gathered over 700 signatures from Denman Island residents to support their efforts.

The group promotes a number of projects focused on community sustainability, environment and economy. The projects include a film, letter-writing campaigns as well as maintaining a Facebook page. The members also engage with the people of Denman Island on environmental and economic sustainability issues at the annual croquet tournament, the open-air table at the Denman Island Saturday Market and the fall Blackberry Faire and Parade.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Gabriola Land and Trails Trust, Gabriola Island

Category:	Group
Project:	Protecting lands and trails for ten years
Nominator(s):	Judith Graham

Project Description:

The Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (GaLTT) was established in 2004 “to secure, develop and sustain a network of parkland and trails on Gabriola Island for the benefit of the public, and to preserve sites of environmental, historical and social importance.”

Over the last decade, GaLTT has worked closely with community, other organizations, and governments to protect five ecologically important properties. In 2010, GaLTT acquired the legal ability to hold covenants, and to negotiate trail licences with landowners. GaLTT now holds or co-holds three covenants and has issued twelve trail licences (one since removed). GaLTT has forged an important new conservation tool for British Columbia land trusts through its work with American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts to establish BC’s first covenant on land owned by a US citizen.

Every two weeks, GaLTT leads work parties to establish and maintain trails, build boardwalks to protect wetlands, and manage invasive plants. In 2014, 65 individuals put in 385 hours of work. GaLTT’s series of guided walks has encouraged local use of trails and expanded people’s knowledge of local ecology.

GaLTT encourages and supports invasive species removal in cooperation with others, including the Lions’ Club, the Gabriola Commons, and the Gardening Club. GaLTT also loans specialized tools to support landowner efforts to clear invasive plants. GaLTT also supports stream protection through the Gabriola’s Streamkeepers who map and monitor Gabriola’s streams, hold public workshops on stream restoration techniques, and work with local teachers and children.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Grant Scott, Hornby Island

Category:	Individual
Project:	Helping rebuild the Purple Martin population
Nominator(s):	Conservancy Hornby Island

Project Description:

For more than 15 years, Grant Scott has been dedicated to the recovery of Western Purple Martins. The largest of the North American swallows, Western Purple Martins were almost extirpated from British Columbia by the mid-1980s due to habitat loss. Grant has donated materials and built, monitored and maintained nesting boxes. As a result of his efforts, there are now 30 nest boxes around Hornby Island, and the number of Western Purple Martins nesting on Hornby Island has increased from zero to about 40 birds. The population on Hornby makes a significant contribution to the bringing back these birds from near extirpation on the BC coast.

Grant also liaises with others who are working on Purple Martin recovery in British Columbia and has welcomed George Stonehouse as a co-volunteer on his nesting box project. Thanks to Grant's efforts, Hornby Island residents and visitors can enjoy the acrobatics and throaty gurgling song of the Western Purple Martins from April to August when the birds begin their migration to Eastern Brazil.

In recent years, Grant has also invited numerous experts to Hornby Island to speak on environmental topics. He also writes monthly articles for community newsletters about the natural world, including Western Purple Martins.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Gabriola Rescue of Wildlife Society (GROWLS), Gabriola Island

Category: Group

Project: Protecting wildlife and promoting awareness of wildlife habitat for 23 years.

Nominator(s): Liz Ciocea

Project Description:

Since being founded in 1992 by Darlene Mace and Michelle McMillan, the Gabriola Rescue of Wildlife Society (GROWLS), has been dedicated to the rescue of ill, injured, abandoned or disabled wildlife, and to the preservation of natural wildlife habitat on Gabriola and Mudge Islands. GROWLS is a registered charity with over 75 members, of whom a small core are trained to act as First Responders to assist the community with wildlife emergencies. GROWLS receives over 200 calls per year on its 24-hour help line for wildlife emergencies or questions about island wildlife.

GROWLS also promotes wildlife awareness at community events, provides school presentations and puppet shows, develops and posts wildlife awareness signs, writes monthly newspaper articles, and provides an informative website. GROWLS' Rescue & Introduction to Wildlife Course has trained volunteers to be hands on rescuers and provided an appreciation of island wildlife. This course is free of charge and 100 islanders have participated. GROWLS has also undertaken special projects such as BC Frogwatch and wetlands, inventorying eagle perch trees and Bald Eagle nests on Gabriola Island, using GPS and photographs. In 2010, GROWLS hosted the Wildlife Rehabilitators Network of BC's Annual General Meeting and continues to network with rehabilitation, wildlife and environmental agencies.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Jan Kirkby, North Pender Island

Category:	Individual
Project:	Supporting ecosystem conservation for 25 years
Nominator(s):	Pender Island Trust Protection Society

Project Description:

Over the last 25 years, Jan Kirkby has volunteered her time and expertise to support conservation of sensitive ecosystems in the Islands Trust area.

As a volunteer, Jan played a major role in the evaluation of thousands of hectares throughout the Islands Trust area, including dozens of properties on the Pender Islands, some of which have become important protected areas. In addition to contributing scientific information, Jan has inspired others to care about sensitive ecosystems and energized community efforts to secure funding and donations for land conservation.

Jan has volunteered her efforts, time, and scientific knowledge in diverse ways. She has been Chair for the Focus Group on Environmental Development Permit Areas for North Pender, member for two terms on the North Pender Advisory Planning Commission; Director of the BC Field Naturalists for more than a decade, President of the Pender Island Field Naturalists, Chair of the Pender Islands Conservancy Association, and she played key roles in the acquisition of Medicine Beach and Brooks Point as protected areas on the Penders.

As a professional, Jan inventoried and assembled much of the ecosystem information that underpins and informs land use decisions and conservation efforts on the Trust Islands, and she encouraged and helped landowners, communities, planners, and decision-makers to use this information to protect important habitats. As part of her work as a biologist with the provincial and federal governments, Jan provided leadership for the creation of ecosystem inventories and maps in the Trust Area. Jan also co-authored several publications that advance conservation efforts such as the *Green Bylaws Toolkit for Conserving Sensitive Ecosystems and Green Infrastructure*.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Keats Island Fire Equipment Group, Keats Island

Category:	Group
Project:	Building Community Capacity in Emergency Response
Nominator(s):	Susan and Graham McLaren

Project Description:

Keats Island Fire Equipment Group (KIFEG) is a neighbourhood initiative focused on promoting self-reliance and protecting the natural environment and property from fire on the island.

A group of neighbours in the Eastbourne area started KIFEG in 2009 in order to acquire fire suppression equipment and train islanders on its operation. Since then, KIFEG has grown, adding resources for emergency equipment (defibrillator, crutches and first aid kits) and organizing community training on emergency resuscitation (CPR).

KIFEG involves the community in all aspects of training, equipment handling and fundraising. The group receives financial and equipment donations and benefits from volunteer support including labour to build a fire shed, and support for hosting fundraising events.

Professional emergency firefighters and Wildfire BC commended the group for its effective handling of the 2012 fire at Keats Camp.

The group has received grants-in-aid from both the Sunshine Coast Regional District and the Eastbourne Cottagers' Association.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Marguerite Lee, Salt Spring Island

Category:	Individual
Project:	Supporting farming for 40 years
Nominator(s):	Ron Hawkins

Project Description:

For almost 40 years, Marguerite Lee has volunteered to support farmers and food security on Salt Spring Island.

Marguerite has volunteered for the Salt Spring Fall Fair for 39 years, been a director of the Salt Spring Island Farmers' Institute for 17 years and was instrumental in the creation of the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society, which she has chaired for eight years. For the last two years, Marguerite guided community efforts to create a perpetual farming legacy for Salt Spring: Burgoyne Valley Community Farm. This 62 acre farm project, created in 2013 by the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust, protects some of the best agricultural land on Salt Spring Island.

From the first idea, until the first farmer's shovel hit the soil, Marguerite promoted the concept of a community farm. With the assistance of her board members, she brought people together, found funding, sought legal advice, arranged discounts with suppliers, shared the idea at community events, and planned the garden design. Her commitment has transformed the community vision into reality. Burgoyne Valley Community Farm on Salt Spring Island has already rented all its plots: 96 small plots rented to families and four larger acreage plots rented to farmers who need land to grow food but cannot afford it. One third of an acre is gardened by Salt Spring Island Community Services to provide food for their food bank and other programs. There is a strong sense of community around the site and gardeners and farmers are mentoring each other.

This successful project is already being replicated in the Islands Trust Area. The Burgoyne Valley Community Farm was used by Hornby Island residents as a template for their own community gardens and rented acreage for farmers.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Richard Bauer, Lasqueti Island

- Category:** Individual
- Project:** Volunteering for 40 years
- Nominator(s):** Dazy Drake

Project Description:

Richard Bauer is a volunteer community steward on Lasqueti Island, a self-reliant community that prides itself on living close to nature. From digging foundations for a community-built health centre to setting up the stage for the annual arts festival, Richard's commitment to his island community is evident in many projects.

For nearly 40 years, Richard has been a low-profile but willing and reliable member of the community who can be called upon to help in any project that enhances the quality of life on Lasqueti island.

When the community of Lasqueti was protesting the increase in coal transport through the Sabine Channel next to Lasqueti, Richard volunteered to make signs and support the marine protests. Richard is known for offering his services before being asked and for not expecting anything in return.

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2015 Nominee Profile

Watercliff Farm, Gabriola Island

Category:	Group
Project:	Promoting sustainable agriculture
Nominator(s):	Joood Heather

Project Description:

Watercliff Farm is a 0.6 hectare permaculture farm that has been feeding and educating Gabriola Island residents for three years. Permaculture focuses on farming regeneratively and building natural resiliency, in a way that builds ecosystem health rather than degrades it.

As one of a growing number of permaculture farms in British Columbia, Watercliff Farm demonstrates that permaculture is a sustainable and long-term viable way of growing food and making a living. The Campbell family leases the land to Watercliff's farmers at no cost. The farm has employed and fed the two farming families year round, while providing an organic produce box program for a further 25 families from May to October. Surplus food is sold locally through the weekly farmer's market, to local island restaurants, and on-site once a week during the growing season.

Watercliff Farm reaches out to the broader community by holding workshops and "farm days" which have given more than 150 volunteers, and workshop participants a chance to learn about the philosophy, principles and methodology of permaculture farming, while meeting people with similar interests. The farm also participates in the annual Gabriola Island Fall Homes and Gardens tour and Island Arts Festival, and has hosted two concerts. By acting as a model for sustainable food production, Watercliff Farm encourages other islanders to grow their own food, without resorting to the use of harmful chemicals and soil-depleting farming methods.