



# YOUR VOICE FOR NATURE

## Annual Report 2016–17



**“I want my grandchildren to be able to see and appreciate the incredible beauty of nature.”**

*Peter from Ontario,  
Member since 1997*



### Making a difference!

Together we’ve made a difference for nature! I am so proud of Nature Canada’s work this year — including the solid conservation successes you will read about in the following pages, our stunning Nature Ball raising funds for *NatureHood*, and the thousands of children we have helped connect to nature.

It’s also been a year of beginnings with Nature Canada’s new 2017–2020 Strategic Plan setting clear and ambitious goals for us to work towards in the themes of speaking up for nature, promoting nature as part of the Canadian identity, and growing Nature Canada’s community of nature lovers. Other exciting beginnings this year include our new Important Bird Areas Local Action Fund that will make a big difference for bird conservation across the country, and our *Keep cats Safe and Save Bird Lives* program now getting into high gear!

Thank you to all our members for your continued support of Nature Canada’s work as together we work tirelessly to protect the nature we love.

Yours for nature,

Eleanor Fast,  
Executive Director



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**“We say protect nature like it’s something separate from us, we are nature, we are part of wilderness, we must protect nature to protect mankind.”**  
*Gisele from Ontario, Member since 2003*

# CELEBRATING OUR VICTORIES FOR NATURE

## BARN AND BANK SWALLOWS PROTECTED

Thank you for raising your voice! After many years of delay, Barn and Bank Swallows were finally listed as threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*. Hundreds of our members sent letters or signed our petition to Environment Minister Catherine McKenna — and she has listened. Now, the process of preparing recovery plans begins. As your voice for nature, Nature Canada will be keeping a watchful eye to ensure that governments act quickly and meaningfully to stop the precipitous decline of these once ubiquitous birds. Nature Canada will also continue to press governments to take conservation action on other species of Swallow, including the Purple Martin, which is showing worrying signs of population decline in Eastern Ontario and Southern Quebec.

## CATS AND BIRDS

Your support is keeping cats safe and saving bird lives! Thanks to our program:

- 1,500 owners have pledged to keep their cats indoors or under control, keeping those cats safe;
- A resulting 24,000 bird lives have been saved; and
- Two municipalities, Montreal and Peterborough, have passed new bylaws helping to keep cats safe and save bird lives.

In March 2017, Nature Canada honoured the City of Calgary with its inaugural Safe Cats Safe Birds Municipal Award in recognition of Calgary’s Responsible Pet Ownership bylaw. This award aims to raise the profile of Canadian municipalities that make an important contribution to bird conservation through their pet bylaws.



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## ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF ROUGE NATIONAL URBAN PARK PROTECTED

Thanks to your support, Nature Canada is delighted that legislation to protect the ecological integrity of Rouge National Urban Park was enacted by Parliament in June. Many nature and environmental groups contributed to this victory; Nature Canada was pleased to lead the way in Ottawa.

## LOCAL BIRD CONSERVATION ACTION FUND LAUNCHED

In early 2017, Nature Canada and Bird Studies Canada jointly launched an action fund that provides local organizations with grants to engage more people in protecting Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). The IBA Local Action Fund will help to coordinate local actions to help protect, restore or enhance biodiversity and ecosystem integrity within threatened IBAs. Among the first 12 projects funded across Canada were: protecting the endangered Roseate Tern on “The Brothers” Island off Nova Scotia; stewardship of coastal Vancouver Island bird habitats by indigenous “Nature Guardians”; and conservation of an IBA near Churchill on Hudson Bay by Nature Manitoba.

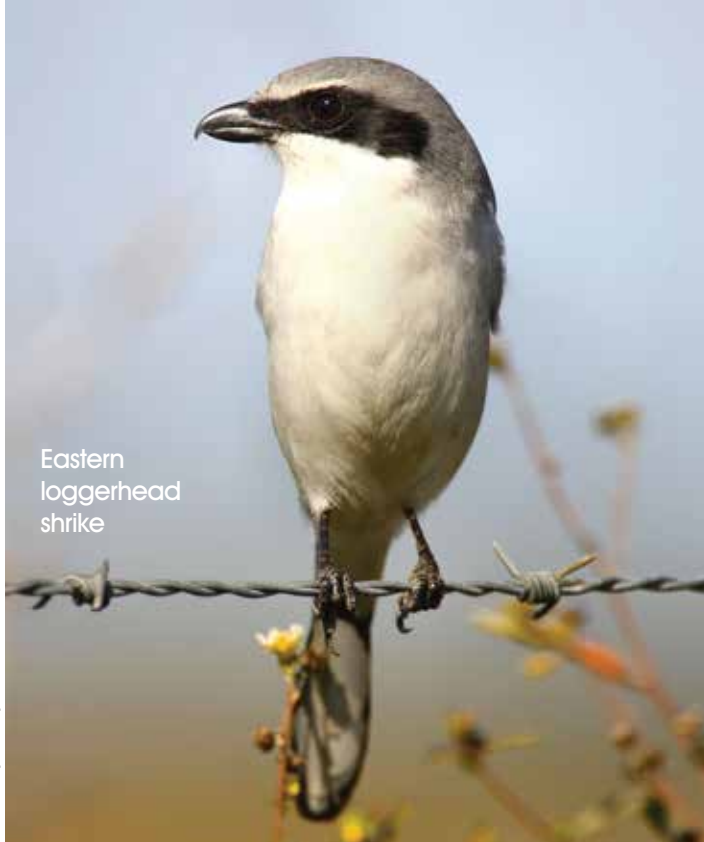
**“Protecting nature means we are protecting the air, water and lands for our very survival as a species.”** Terry, AB, Member since 2001

## PROGRESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REFORM

In June, the federal government committed to specific reforms of environmental laws. Success is much closer on key Nature Canada proposals such as:

- Bringing back protection of all fish habitat, not just habitat that supports fisheries;
- Establishing a single federal agency to conduct impact assessments of development projects such as pipelines, and minimizing the role of the National Energy Board in such assessments;
- Eliminating rules that restrict public participation in impact assessments and ensuring that the public can ask questions during hearings; and
- Addressing cumulative adverse effects of development through strategic and regional impact assessments, and better science and data about ecosystems.

Nature Canada will continue to advocate for stronger environmental legislation as the various bills wend their way through Parliament in 2017/2018.



Eastern loggerhead shrike

© Larry Kirtley



Nature Blitz Regina  
School Ottawa

© Sam Nurse

## GROWING THE NATUREHOOD

Our *NatureHood* program continues to grow, connecting kids to nearby nature in 14 cities across the country. This past year, in thanks to funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada, *NatureHood* connected over 14,000 kids and families to nature in collaboration with our 13 regional partners through 246 public events and outreach to 177 school classes. In addition, hundreds of educators have received our materials to share with their networks.

Nature Canada’s inaugural Nature Ball which featured *Women for Nature* Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau and Margaret Atwood raised significant funds in support of *NatureHood*.

It has been quite a year for Nature Canada — and we have YOU — our members to thank for it! You have raised your voices alongside us and the rest of Canada is listening. **Thank you for your commitment and dedication to nature!**



**“We must continue striving to protect our beautiful but fragile ecosystems.”**

*Patricia, NL, Member since 2000*

**“We have become disconnected. But we can’t continue to exploit nature without consequences. I’m a monthly donor because my regular support means Nature Canada can get more people involved in nature, in making citizens and governments more aware of the importance of nature.”**

*Gordon, QC, Guardian of Nature and member since 1997*



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