

SPEAKING UP FOR NATURE

Annual Report 2015–16

“There is nothing so peaceful or satisfying as being outside amidst rocks, trees and water, or on trails and hearing birds, seeing animals, viewing the trees and gorgeous scenery of this super gorgeous country”

Arlene, Member since 1998



Grizzly by Catherine Fox



What an exciting year for nature!

This past year, members and supporters across the country raised their voices, and Nature Canada made sure they were heard! Dealing with a new federal government gave urgency to our advocacy efforts, and as you will read on the pages that follow, many of our efforts were successful with crucial reviews of environmental laws, stronger protection for parks, and action for species at risk. **Thank you!**

Nature Canada volunteers and staff spent even more time outside this year. For example, we are on the ground helping to conserve Purple Martins, Chimney Swifts, and Bank Swallows; we are working with Cree communities in James Bay to create a new protected area; we are protecting birds by keeping cats safe from roaming unsupervised, and we have expanded *NatureHood* — our program connecting people to nearby nature — to reach thousands more people.

Thank you to all our members for supporting Nature Canada’s work, it has been such a pleasure to meet and speak to so many of you over the past year. We can be proud of what we’ve accomplished together this year, and look forward to working even harder in the year to come!

Yours for nature,



Eleanor Fast,
Executive Director



Buffalo by Paule Hjertaas

“Working with Nature Canada to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy nature, like I did when I was a kid, is simply imperative to me. We only have one planet. We have a responsibility to take care of it. In the same way it takes care of us.”

Candice Batista, Eco-journalist & Women for Nature member

CELEBRATING OUR VICTORIES FOR NATURE

How is nature doing lately, you may ask. Every year it seems that there is more pollution, more destruction of wildlife habitat, and more climate change. Nature needs big wins every year just to stay ahead of the challenges.

Fortunately, the past year was a strong one for nature. Because of your support, Nature Canada achieved some solid wins.

Nature Canada has been working tirelessly behind the scenes in Ottawa for stronger environmental laws, and we were delighted in July when the federal government launched public reviews of key federal environmental laws such as the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, and *Fisheries Act*.

These reviews are perhaps the most significant opportunity in a generation for Canadians to participate and demand that the government bring forward stronger environmental laws. We are the leading Ottawa-based group advocating for strengthened environmental laws and look forward to raising nature’s voice on your behalf in these reviews.

Another conservation achievement this year was the rejection of the Northern Gateway pipeline/tanker project by the Federal Court. With our members’ support, Nature Canada and BC Nature worked hard to ensure that the Review Panel understood the risks and adverse impacts of oil tanker spills in Douglas Channel and Hecate Strait.

Now Nature Canada awaits the government’s decision on the TransMountain pipeline/tanker project, and are currently working with Nature NB to ensure that the Energy East pipeline/tanker hearings take into account the impacts of oil tankers on birds and whales in the Bay of Fundy.

Building on last year’s success of securing the transfer of 20,000 hectares of prairie grasslands at Govenlock, Saskatchewan, this year Nature Canada and Nature Saskatchewan joined forces with ranchers in protecting this unique ecosystem.

Hearing your concerns, Nature Canada, working with Ontario Nature and other partners, demanded stronger protection for nature in our national parks. We are delighted to report victory — legislation to protect the ecological integrity of Rouge National Urban Park was introduced into Parliament in June.



Hawk in Hayfield by Bill Allen



Barn Swallow by Bonnie Sitter

Nature Canada supporters played a key role last year in ensuring a brighter future for species at risk by signing our swallows petition and supporting our advocacy of species at risk protection. Dozens of species at risk, including Barn Swallows and Grizzly Bears, now have a brighter future given the new federal commitment to declare legal listings for species threatened or endangered based on the recommendations of the scientific advisory committee.

Canada's bird and cat populations are in trouble and Nature Canada and its partners are calling on Canadians to help keep them safe by keeping cats from roaming free. This "Keep Cats Safe and Save Bird Lives" awareness campaign will include a series of graphic novels to be penned by Margaret Atwood, the first was released in September 2016.

NatureHood, Nature Canada's program to connect Canadians to nature, continues to grow and expand across Canada to 14 urban communities across Canada from Sidney- Saanich, BC in the west all the way to Halifax, NS in the east. With your support, more than 14,000 Canadians have participated directly in *NatureHood* activities since its inception and we plan to more than double that number in the coming years.

Through *NatureHood* we offer free field trips to National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries to schools and clubs, provide bird banding demonstrations, stage wildlife migration parades and flap-a-thons, lead NatureBlitz events for families and Schoolyard *Nature-Blitzes* for K-8 students.

In this way, *NatureHood* promotes nature awareness at the local level focusing on children, families and new Canadians to develop a new generation of naturalists and citizen scientists.

There will always be threats to nature, but with your support Nature Canada will continue to raise nature's voice and protect and conserve the wildlife and wild places we all love. It's been a strong year, but we recognize there's much more to do and look to you, our members for your continued kindness and support.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to nature!

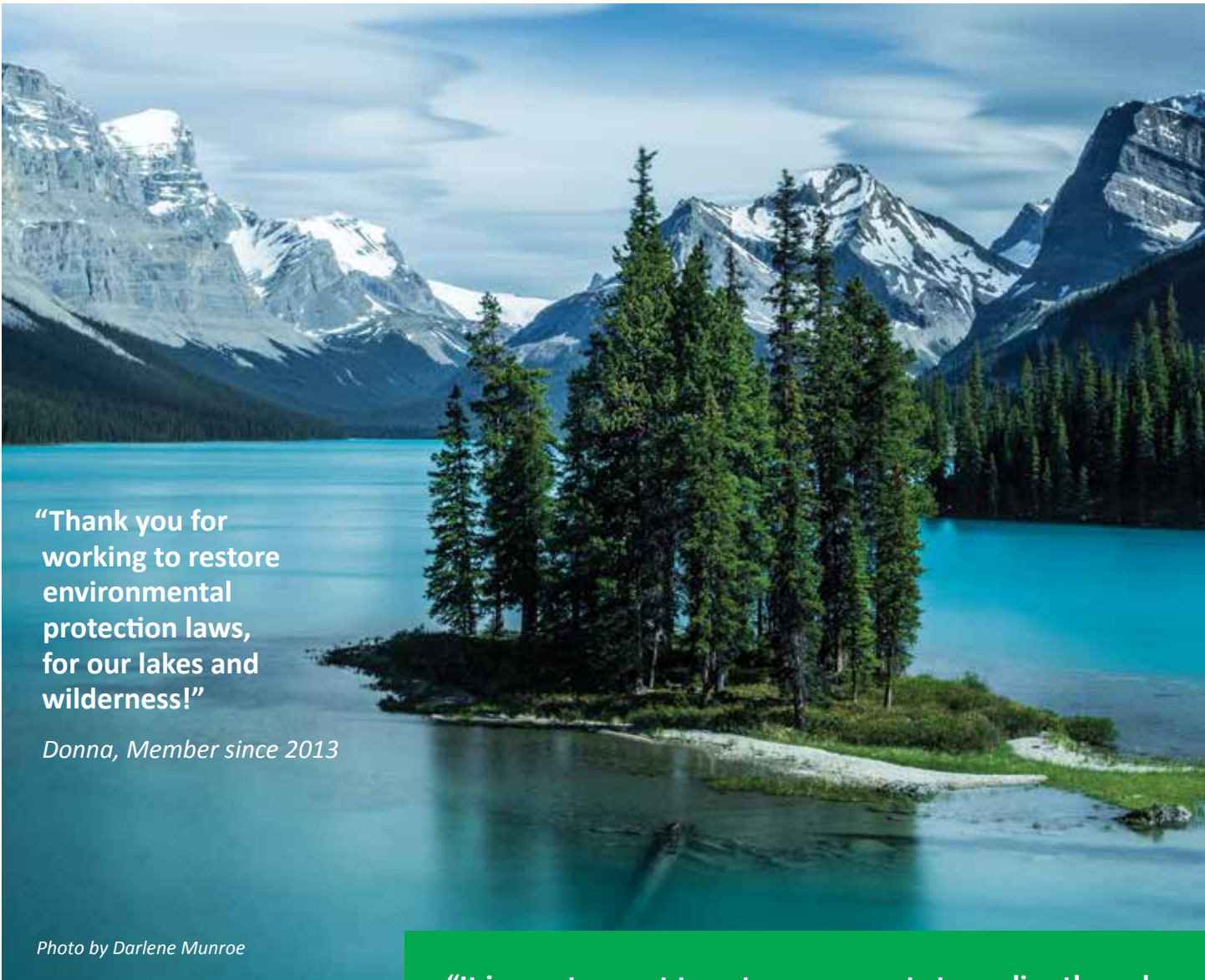


"Nature's future, our future, requires us to collaborate, innovate, and lead. We are working together to sustain biodiversity and heart-felt connection to nature across this great country."

*Prof. Ann Dale and Dr. Brenda Kenny
Women for Nature co-Chairs*



Families participating in our Lower BC Mainland NatureBlitz



“Thank you for working to restore environmental protection laws, for our lakes and wilderness!”

Donna, Member since 2013

Photo by Darlene Munroe

“It is most urgent to get governments to realize the value of keeping nature undeveloped. I am so glad to support Nature Canada presenting at environmental hearings!”

Bruce and Sandra, Guardian of Nature monthly donors and Members since 2001



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Nature Canada Directors with Pimlott Award winners, Robert Bateman and Anne Murray