

nature

FALL 2014

Your Action Report for the Supporters of Nature Canada



SPECIAL
75TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION

Nature Canada at 75

When you turn 75 (or perhaps you already have!) what will you wish for?



Here are our top ten wishes. Did any of these make your list?

1. You enjoy good health
2. You look back on a lifetime of accomplishments
3. You are wise
4. You are respected
5. You enjoy family time
6. You celebrate with good friends
7. You remain passionate about things important to you
8. You relish learning something new
9. You are both optimistic and concerned about the future and want to do something about it
10. You wake up every day filled with energy and enthusiasm

Well, Nature Canada just turned 75. Here's a look at how we are doing in fulfilling our top ten wish list so far, at 75 years young:

1. Good Health

Nature Canada is vital, robust and fiscally responsible, with a history of success and a strong national network of members and supporters.

Then: A long, distinguished history

Since 1939, we have been:

- *Canadian Nature*, a nature magazine (1939–1948)
- The Audubon Society of Canada (1948–1961)
- The Canadian Audubon Society (1961–1971)
- The Canadian Nature Federation (1971–2004)
- Nature Canada (2004–2014 onwards)

With the support of our membership, the energy of our volunteers and the leadership of our Board and staff, we have helped protect over 63 million acres of parks and wildlife areas in Canada and the countless species that depend on their habitat.

Now: A unified, integrated voice for nature

We are a vibrant, healthy organization with five effective and successful programs: **NatureWatch**, **NatureVoice**, **NatureCaretakers**, **NatureHood** and **NatureNetwork**. We work to keep you, our members and supporters, informed and involved on issues that are important to you and your families. We treasure every single gift we receive and we are transparent and accountable to you. We take care each and every day to ensure we spend your investment in ways that achieve crucial and inspiring victories for wild species and their habitats in your area and across Canada.



Grizzly female and cub

2. Accomplishments

Nature Canada continues to win victories for embattled species across Canada.

Then: The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)

In 1977, Nature Canada played a lead role in establishing a system for listing the status of endangered, threatened and at-risk species in Canada. We also insisted on including an action component with each review and have been firm when government has attempted to back off their commitments.

Now: Important Bird Areas (IBAs)

With our partner Bird Studies Canada, Nature Canada has established a network of over 600 Important Bird Areas in Canada. And, we have recruited passionate volunteer NatureCaretakers



in more than 240 IBAs. Your gifts help us support these "citizen scientists" as they monitor, record and provide data on the health of bird species in the most critical conservation pockets in Canada.



3. Wisdom

Nature Canada translates the knowledge we gain into practical, achievable action to protect Canada's most precious places.

Then: Establishing the South Moresby National Park Reserve in 1988

After years of work and a cross-country caravan in 1986, we are now able to enjoy a spectacular new national park, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve.

Now: Rouge National Urban Park

With the support of our members and partners, we were instrumental in convincing the federal government to create Canada's first urban national park in Toronto's Rouge Valley. We continue to put your gifts into action and work to ensure that a strong law is enacted by Parliament and that proper policies are in place to protect and restore the ecological health of Rouge Park and the species that live there.

4. Respect

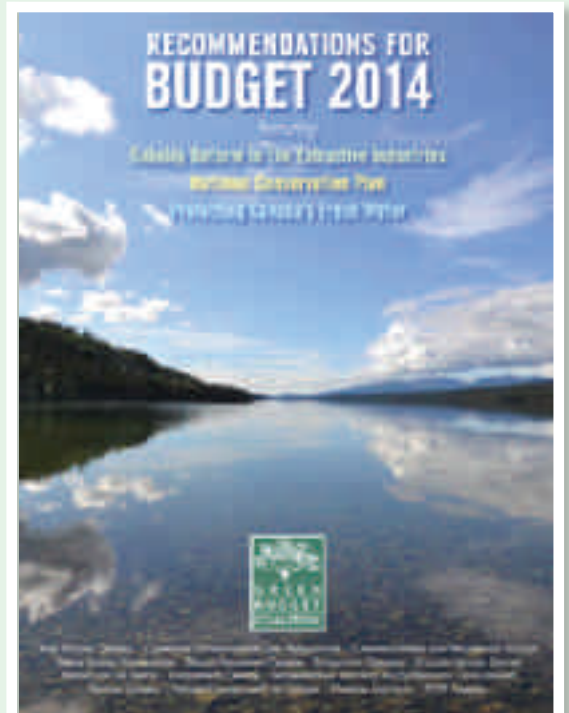
Nature Canada's voice is respected and heard by our local, provincial and national leaders.

Then: Green Budget Coalition

In 1999, we pulled all of Canada's major environmental groups together to present a unified request that the federal budget invest in nature conservation. Over the years, our coalition has won a number of major financial victories for nature.

Now: The Voice of Science

With the support of our members, Nature Canada continues to responsibly advocate on behalf of nature with all levels of government. We bring the voice of science to environmental assessments, and we are leading the fight today at the Trans Mountain pipeline hearings. Recently, Ottawa's highly respected Hill Times newspaper chose us as the #1 environmental NGO lobbying group, and Charity Intelligence ranked us the best advocacy NGO in Canada.



5. Family time

Nature Canada coordinates the national **NatureNetwork**, a vibrant community of provincial and local nature groups made up of keen nature lovers who look after nature on the ground in their communities.

Then: An Expanding Network

We began with a magazine in 1939. With a shared love of nature, many Canadians found

a sense of belonging in our community. On our 50th anniversary, we had 20,000 affiliate members in 131 clubs from coast to coast to coast.

Now: Our Network Continues to Grow

25 years later, on our 75th anniversary, our network is thriving with 100,000 affiliate members in 375 clubs. Every day, new nature enthusiasts are learning what members like you have known for years: being in nature is good for your heart, mind and soul!



6. Friendship

Nature Canada's friends include leaders in the environmental cause, and we celebrate our successes with them.

Then: Mabel's story

In the 1930s, Mabel Frances Whittemore inspired a generation of leading environmentalists including Robert Bateman and Don Chant, and her story inspires us still.

"As a family, we are proud and honoured that our grandmother's legacy helped create the Nature Canada of today. 75 years later, her dream of connecting kids with nature lives on through Nature Canada's vibrant initiatives."
Ian Davies, grandson, Whittemore family



Mabel Frances Whittemore

Now: Incubator of Inspiration

We have a strong and vibrant history of women leaders. Julie Gelfand, former President of Nature Canada, is the Parliamentary Commissioner of the Environment. Caroline Schultz, former Conservation Director, is now Executive Director at Ontario Nature. And our **Women for Nature** initiative is unifying a whole new community of conservation trailblazers.

"We all need peace and quiet, beautiful natural places to be our touchstones and to replenish our souls. A walk in nature does that for me. Also, just knowing we have natural places and wildlife is satisfying."
Diane Griffin, Board Member, Former Board, retired Deputy Minister of Environment and Energy for Prince Edward Island, and Founding Member of Women for Nature

women for nature

To learn more about **Women for Nature**, and to get to know the amazing women involved, visit www.womenfornature.ca. If you or someone you know would be a good fit for our **Women for Nature** initiative, please contact Jodi at jjoy@nature-canada.ca or 1-800-267-4088 extension 239.



Greater Sage-Grouse

7. Passion

Nature Canada is a passionate voice for nature, leading the charge on the most pressing environmental issues of the day.

Then: Acid Rain

Nature Canada played a major role in the foremost environmental crisis of the 80s—acid rain. We were founding members of the highly successful Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain, which became the country's largest environmental coalition, bringing a powerful and united voice to demand reductions in acid rain emissions. Collaboration, building coalitions and partnerships have always been crucial parts of our philosophy.

Now: Grasslands

Canada's Grasslands are one of the most threatened ecosystems on the planet. We've already lost 70% of our native grasslands and the species that live there are disappearing. Populations of the Greater Sage-Grouse have plummeted 98% in the last 25 years, and we can now literally count the ones left. Without continued action from Nature Canada and our supporters, they are at risk of extinction in Canada.

8. Education

Nature Canada continues to pioneer new ideas to save nature.

Then: An Early Warning about Climate Change

In 1984, Nature Canada published a major article called "The Greenhouse Effect." That's right: 30 years ago, we were talking about global warming and its risks to nature conservation!



Now: NatureHood

Our **NatureHood** project inspires citizens to seek out wildlife in 'urban nature', learning in engaging ways how human actions are connected to local species, our environment and our health. If we are to win the battle to restore nature, we must be active in Canada's cities—where most Canadians live. Your gifts help us connect kids and nature lovers of all ages to nature at their doorstep.



Bird Day Fair



9. The Future

Nature Canada deeply appreciates those special donors who, through legacy gifts, will help us protect nature forever.



Then: Reginald Whittemore's Legacy

Nature Canada began when Reginald Whittemore created a legacy for his wife Mabel Frances, a tireless advocate for nature, focusing especially on connecting children to the wonder and magic of nature.

Now: Nature Forever and the Whittemore Legacy Circle

Today, over 180 cherished members are part of our Nature Forever legacy program, including 80 who are part of the Whittemore Legacy Circle. Each one has made a promise to preserve and protect our magnificent natural heritage so that nature can be explored and adored by future generations.

"There is simply nothing more magical to me than helping a child experience the magic and wonder of nature. By remembering Nature Canada in my Will,

I know that my gift will inspire curious imaginations for generations and generations to come." – *Barbara Vengsboel, BC*

"Nature and the environment was important to our son, Charles. He was taken from us too soon, but his impact lives on because he remembered Nature Canada in his Will. We visit the bench that bears his name, watch the birds, and we feel we are keeping our promise to Charles. And he is keeping his promise to the natural world." – *Bill and Natalia Labatiuk, AB*

"The love of nature is one of my fundamental and life-long values. By leaving a gift in my Will to Nature Canada, that value can live on in the work this wonderful organization does. When thinking about a gift in my Will to Nature Canada, I wanted to take care of my family first. I was delighted to see that after doing that, I could leave a legacy for nature too." – *Ian Davidson, Former Executive Director*

We would love to hear from you if you would like to have a confidential discussion about how you can protect nature forever with a gift in your Will. Please contact Jodi at jjoy@naturecanada.ca or **1-800-267-4088 extension 239**.

10. Energy and Enthusiasm

Our members remain committed and passionate voices for nature right across the country. And what connects us all is a love of nature. Here are just some of your voices, ringing out in celebration of our 75th anniversary:



"One morning in late spring I was walking in the park, when I noticed two rusty red spots at the top of the hill—2 tiny foxes. I stopped to watch them. The male would push a little pinecone down the hill and chase after it, catch it when it bumped a tree, then run back up and repeat again. Over and over. His sibling watched admiringly. Then I heard a bark—the vixen called them to lunch. I like to think that my great-grandchildren will still be able to enjoy such wonderful nature moments." – *Barb, ON*

"Sitting on the rocks with my arm around my young daughter, looking out at the lake to see her dad and brother in the canoe, and sharing this amazing experience with her, my heart opened to all the beauty and wonder around us. It was a moment of perfect contentment. Filled with so much joy and gratitude, I don't think I could have been happier. I remember recording the event in my journal as if it was an epiphany—the clarity of a moment of pure joy. I am still remembering 25 years later." – *Paula, BC*

"When life is crazy and we are rushing around, it's nice to wake up and listen to the birds in the trees, the squirrels chattering, and watch deer have a snack in our yard. To take a deep breath and smell the fresh air—it's an automatic stress reliever!" – *Victoria, AB*

What's Happening Right Now

Add Your Voice and Welcome Eleanor!

Nature Canada is thrilled to welcome Eleanor Fast as our new Executive Director. Eleanor's passion for nature sprouted as a child exploring the coastline in rural England, blossomed while doing field research in Tanzania and continues to thrive as a part of her daily life with her two children. Eleanor and her family have been camping in every province and enjoy great adventures in Canada's rugged wilderness as much as they enjoy exploring nature in the park at the end of their street. You can read more about Eleanor's expertise and leadership at www.naturecanada.ca.

You'll soon be receiving a special invitation to connect with Eleanor directly at our upcoming town hall event. She is keen to listen to your voice, hear your ideas and connect with dedicated members like you.



Eleanor Fast

Your Nature Canada Calendar!

Thank you to all our members who submitted photos for our 75th anniversary contest. Not surprisingly, the photos of you enjoying nature are breathtaking, and the stories you shared of how your lives are enriched by nature are vivid and wonderful. We can't wait to share our 75th anniversary calendar with you as a special way to commemorate this occasion. Watch for it in your mailbox in November!

Thank you to our judges for sharing their time and talent in choosing our photos. And thanks as well to our photo contest sponsors including Nikon, Parks Canada, Copper Cayuse Outfitters and Terra20!

Your Gifts in Action

Your support of Nature Canada is being put to work on important environmental issues right now.

We are currently participating in the **Trans Mountain** pipeline hearings, bringing real science and the voice of nature to the proceedings. Nature Canada has serious concerns about the enormous risks that come with this massive project to expand a 1,156 km pipeline and ship oil sands crude from Edmonton into Vancouver harbour. Your gifts so far have allowed us to collect our evidence, finalize our written testimony and submit it to the hearing. Thank you for adding your voice!

Your gifts are still at work in Canada's **Grasslands**, one of the most threatened ecosystems on the planet. We are working to create Govenlock National Wildlife Area, an area of federally-owned land that is 85% native grassland and includes critical habitat for at least 13 species at risk including the Greater Sage-Grouse, Swift Fox and Burrowing Owl.

We are deeply concerned with the recent news that our ability to cross-examine the evidence provided by the oil and gas industry will be severely restricted. With your continued support, we will bring the voice of science to the table.

Finally, members like you provide vital support to our ongoing nature education programs. Hundreds of kids and document critical species in our Important Bird Area at Lac Deschenes in Ottawa. Your support helps connect kids to nature in their **NatureHood!** And with more support, we can expand this amazing program into five other communities.

You are also helping us better understand the recent sharp decline in **Purple Martin** populations in Ontario (diving from about 25,000 in 2005 to less than 15,000 today). Your gifts are funding an urgent, time-sensitive research project where the migrating birds are outfitted with a tiny GPS tag, allowing scientists to track them with incredible accuracy. Your continued support will help us record and monitor the data being collected so we can make sound, science-based recommendations to help protect and increase the Purple Martin population. Your gifts to Nature Canada fund a variety of innovative and critical projects like this.



Bio Blitz at Mud Lake

Thank you for your gifts! Thank you for raising your voice for nature!



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