



2010 Annual Report

Habitat Acquisition Trust



Dear Friends,
HAT is a local land trust, and what a locality we have to work in. From the Great Beaver Swamp on Galiano Island to the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt in Sooke, our region is naturally majestic, beautiful, and diverse. We are fortunate to live in the midst of such natural beauty, but we must also work to ensure that the values that make this place special are protected into the future.

There are many mysteries yet to be explored. What, for instance, is the role of the Blue-grey Tailedropper in our forests? This small, endangered slug has only been found on southern Vancouver Island in Canada, and its habitats and habits are still poorly understood. Studies done in Oregon state suggest that the slug may play a role spreading beneficial mycorrhizal fungi spores. HAT is launching a stewardship program to conserve known habitats for this slug, and expand our knowledge about its habitat needs and range.

On Mayne Island, we were happy to help the Mayne Island Conservancy Society establish their first covenant – HAT’s first on the island as well. Mayne Island has less protected area than any other southern Gulf Island, but the work of Mayne islanders hopes to change that – and the Horton Bayviary covenant is the first step.

On Vancouver Island, we continue to work with private and public landowners to conserve land. Covenants are an important part of HAT’s strategy to help landowners conserve habitat on their property forever. This year HAT signed 2 new covenants protecting 11 hectares of mixed forest and rocky outcrop in perpetuity. Part of signing a covenant means enforcing the terms and condition if needed. That is why HAT was vocal when off-road vehicle enthusiasts challenged the covenants on the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt.

However, some important properties must be acquired to preserve their ecological value. That is why HAT is helping the Highlands Stewardship Foundation in their campaign to save Mary Lake. Mary Lake is a 107 acre bridge between the two largest park systems on the Saanich Peninsula. Conserving the Mary Lake property will protect an important wildlife corridor that will help ensure that species can migrate to new habitats – a critical component to any species’ survival, especially as our climate changes.

Thank you for joining us this past year. We hope that you will join us again next year and in the future.

Sincerely,
Adam Taylor, Executive Director &
Geoff Huber, President

Geoff Huber



Adam Taylor



Annual General Meeting

December 15th at 7:00 pm

Swan Lake Nature House

Presenter: Dave Fraser

Wall Lizards to Wolverines: BC's Conservation Challenges



Join us for HAT's Annual General Meeting and a special presentation by David F. Fraser Scientific Authority and A/Coordinator, BC Conservation Data Centre, Ministry of Environment for a look at conservation from a B.C. perspective, from the pattern of species collapses, climate change and changes in demographics we have a number of challenges that we need to keep in mind when setting our conservation agenda.

Refreshments and snacks will be served.

Free. Please consider renewing your membership at the door

Board of Directors

Geoff Huber - President
Jennifer Eliason - Vice President
Andrew Harcombe - Treasurer
Stephanie Hazlitt - Secretary
Karen Yearsley - Member at Large
Marvin Eng
Bruce Pendergast
Anne Piazza
Christine Pritchard
Sylvia von Schuckman
Scott Dalen (Ex-officio Student Board Member)

Staff

Adam Taylor - Executive Director
Todd Carnahan - Land Care Coordinator
Brandy Patterson - Outreach & Fund Development Coordinator
Wendy Tyrrell - Covenants & Acquisitions Coordinator
Laurie Parker - Outreach & Education Coordinator

Contractors

Michael Brinsmead
Christian Engelstoft, MSc, RPBio
David Manning
Kristiina Ovaska, PhD.

Volunteers

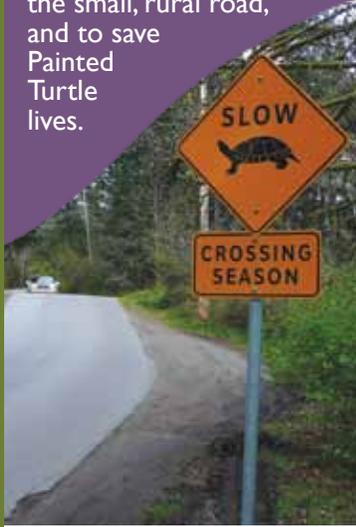
Charlie LeRoss
Lyndis Davis
Thora Illing
Gord Warrenchuk

Committees

Frank Arnold
Andy MacKinnon
Anne Piazza
Carmin Cadrin
Glenn Harrington
Peter Trotsky

2010 Highlight: Western Painted Turtle Road Signs

Each year on Beaver Lake Rd, adult and hatchling Painted Turtles are being killed as they cross the road that lies between their nest and the lake where they will spend most of their lives. HAT and District of Saanich worked together to install road signs during crossing season. The goal is to slow drivers down on the small, rural road, and to save Painted Turtle lives.



HAT intern Kimberly House found the first Western Painted Turtle in Central Saanich. A season highlight was the first Sharp-tailed Snake found since 1951 along Elizabeth Ridge on North Pender Island. Only after years of concerted search effort was this historic record reconfirmed by HAT. Reports from the public continue thanks to excellent media coverage of native turtles, snakes, and now slugs. The Blue-Grey Taildropper joins HAT's list of slow species we are helping in the race against extinction.

Cordova Shore Good Neighbours

HAT's award-winning Good Neighbours Project focused on the Islandview neighbourhoods of the Saanich Peninsula in 2010. Community outreach in the watersheds of Tetayut (Sandhill) and Noble Creek resulted in over 40 landowners visited and 28 Land Care Agreements signed. Five public education events at Island View Beach and two streamside planting demonstrations involved hundreds of residents and beach visitors in conservation activities and learning about the rare habitats of the area. Events co-hosted with CRD Parks, Peninsula Streams, and SeaChange included native plantings, eelgrass mapping, beach clean ups, and ethnobotanical tours with Tsawout First Nation representatives. Media stories about ongoing restoration efforts to recover the clam beds of Saanichton Bay invited thousands of upstream landowners to become part of the solution. Two conservation covenant opportunities were identified through project contacts, and the Tsawout Nation adopted HAT's Gardening with Native Plants guide as the reference document for any development projects proposed on Tsawout Lands. HAT's Good Neighbours Project will focus on the Witty's Lagoon and Bilston Creek area in 2011.

-Todd Carnahan

Stewardship Programs

Helping people understand and act to protect ecological values

Habitat Stewardship for Species at Risk

HAT's successful efforts to help endangered species through the federal Habitat Stewardship Program continue to expand. New occurrences of Sharp-tailed Snake and Western Painted Turtle have been confirmed again this year as the public becomes aware and concerned about our rarest species through HAT's outreach campaign. Dozens of landowners invited our biologists to their land for private and confidential assessments, and we provided detailed recommendations where the species were found. Staff made presentations to municipal staff and local groups to encourage conservation actions like turtle crossing signs and protecting turtle nesting sites. Turtles surfaced in the Bilston Creek area and

Land Conservation

Acquiring and managing lands and covenants to protect significant natural values

Conservation Planning

While land continues to be developed or cleared for resource extraction, land conservation is a high priority that requires strategic planning in order to be effective. In 2007, the Government of Canada, in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), announced a major investment in land conservation called the Natural Areas Conservation Program to help non-government organizations secure ecologically sensitive lands. This year NCC, in collaboration with conservation partners, completed the Salish Seas Natural Area Conservation Plan (NACP) which defines top priority sites for protection within our region on a broad scale. HAT recognizes the need to further define a plan that is specific to our region. Drawing from the Salish Sea NACP, the HAT Conservation Plan will allow us to distinguish HAT's unique role in local preservation by identifying key focal habitats and parcels for protection within the CRD Region. HAT staff and Land Committee will be working to complete the Plan in 2011.

Covenants

Conservation covenants are one of the most cost effective land preservation tools available to private landowners wanting to ensure the natural features of their property are protected forever. HAT, in partnership with other conservation partners, currently holds 24 covenants that are providing permanent legal protection for over 1,650 hectares (4,000 acres) of land in the Capital Regional District. These covenants encompass private and public lands, and include Havenwood Park in Colwood and Langford, Oak Haven Park in Central Saanich and Matthews Point Regional Park on Galiano Island. (Please refer to our website for a complete map of our covenanted lands.)

In order to uphold our commitment to managing our conservation covenants, HAT implements an annual covenant monitoring program to ensure that the habitat values on each of its properties are maintained. We are pleased to report that in 2010, all of our covenants continue to provide protected habitat and corridor values to our region. This year has been a very productive year for new conservation covenants at HAT! We were able to complete and register two additional covenants – the Horton Bayviary Nature Reserve on Mayne Island - in partnership with Islands Trust Fund and Mayne Island Conservancy in addition to over 9 hectares of private land in Sooke! Finally, we are currently negotiating three new covenants for the New Year, and continue to field interesting inquiries.

Acquisitions

HAT is involved as a supportive partner in an exciting and ambitious new acquisition project being led by the Mary Lake Conservancy! The Save Mary Lake Campaign is hoping to raise \$4.4 million dollars to acquire 107 acres of endangered Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem in the District of Highlands for public parkland. The property provides crucial habitat for mammals such as deer, otter, fish birds and a variety of amphibians and reptiles, as well as a diverse array of plant species. If protected, the Mary Lake property will provide a crucial wildlife corridor between Gowlland Tod Provincial Park and Thetis Lake Regional Park.

HAT owns and manages the Matson Conservation Area as a demonstration site for best land management practices in urban natural areas. Several residents of Swallows Landing have joined the volunteer group working on the long term restoration of the property. The condo owners and many others from the area contributed over 100 hours of invasive plant removal in 2010. Staff led several workshops this year including a Jane's Walk hosted by the Township of Esquimalt. HAT established an ongoing group of conservation volunteers from the House of Friends Baha'i Membership. The number of resident deer has climbed alarmingly to at least 6 individuals from two first seen in 2008, and an otter family has adopted our naturescaped garden planted four years ago near the viewing platform.

- Wendy Tyrrell

Education Programs

Helping youth begin a life long love of nature

Green Spots: Growing Minds in Outdoor Classrooms

There are many benefits to outdoor learning for students, but not enough opportunities. To create more opportunities for outdoor, nature learning, HAT helps schools establish native plant gardens that can be used as outdoor classrooms on school grounds. In 2010, HAT worked with and established gardens at KELSET Elementary, Glanford Middle, Saltspring Elementary and Middle Schools, and South Park Elementary.

Goldstream Chums

Each year, thousands of Chum salmon return to the Goldstream River to spawn and die in a cycle that has fueled coastal forests, wildlife, and First Nations people for thousands of

HAT is helping the Highlands Stewardship Foundation save Mary Lake. 107 acres of Douglas-fir forest, creeks, and wetlands, the Mary Lake property is a vital link in the largest wildlife corridor on the Saanich Peninsula.

Go to www.savemarylake.com to learn more & purchase your square metres!



2010
Highlight:
Campaign to
Save Mary Lake

THANK YOU to everyone who has supported HAT in the past year

Alula Biological Consulting
Barraclough Foundation
BC Hydro
Coastal Capital Savings
CRD Parks
Ms Davis
District of Central Saanich
District of Saanich
Evergreen - Walmart
Government of Canada:
-Environment Canada:
- EcoAction
- Habitat Stewardship Program
-Summer Jobs Canada
Horne Coupar Barristers & Solicitors
Maclsaac & Maclsaac
Ms Mansfield
Mountain Equipment Coop
Outdoor Club of Victoria
The Pinch Group at Raymond James
Province of British Columbia
Provincial Employees
Community Service Fund
Public Conservation Assistance Fund
RBC Blue Water Foundation
RLC Park Services
Royal Roads University
Continuing Studies
Shell Environmental Fund
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Thrifty Foods
Town of View Royal
Vancity Credit & Savings
Victoria Foundation
Victoria Natural History Society

PRIVATE DONATIONS

Donations from individuals are very important to HAT's sustainability. We truly appreciate the support of our members and donors; it is this support that enables us to keep HAT operating day -to-day. To make it easier for donors, HAT has established a **monthly giving program** and accepts monthly giving through VISA, Mastercard, AMEX, and direct deposit.

years. Since 2002, HAT and “Goldstream Chums” sponsors have provided free programs for school children with experienced naturalists so that the next generation of stewards can witness and understand one of the great natural spectacles in the world. In 2009-2010, the Goldstream Chums program provided:

- Over 5,000 students from 250 classes free school programs;
- Since 2002, over 35,000 students have been able to experience the salmon with funding through Goldstream Chums program.;
- *Thank you* to the 20 local businesses that support this program.

Partnership Projects

Working with the conservation community to build capacity and increase communications.

Conservation Connection Forum

Each year, HAT brings together the Capital region’s conservation community at the Conservation Connection Forum. The Forum provides local conservation groups, government, and businesses an opportunity to share ideas, catch up on projects, and learn from each other’s successes. In 2010 HAT celebrated the 10th Annual Forum at Royal Roads University.

- Over 100 people representing over 30 local conservation organizations attended
- 7 local MLAs and MPs, and Green Party leader Elizabeth May participated in a question and answer session with attendees
- *Thank you* to Vancity and Royal Roads Continuing Studies Department for supporting the Forum



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Blue-grey Taildropper. Photo Kristiina Ovaska



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HAT’s office is moving to 827 Broughton St Jan 1.

The HAT newsletter is printed on 100% post consumer recycled paper.



Habitat Acquisition Trust is incorporated under the Society Act of BC and is a Registered Charity BN 88962 6545 RR0001