



Upcoming Events

- **September 27, 2020** – [World Rivers Day](#) – Join in an event near you or host your own club event.
- **January 31, 2021** – Club Support Grant Deadline (with a link to the foundation page on our current website) which will be after you set up the new form for download.
- **May 2021** – AGM 2021 – Hosted by Vermilion Forks Naturalists – Princeton. Details to come in the Winter 2020 BCnature Magazine.

September 2020



Carnivorous Sundew plant. Photo by Mel Coulson.

Roberts Bank Terminal 2 (Project RBT2) Petition

Dear BC Nature Members:

Estuaries are areas where fresh water from a river or stream mixes with the salt water of the sea. These are among the most fertile environments on earth! Estuaries support a remarkable abundance of life including microscopic plankton, invertebrate, fish, birds and mammals. When we protect an estuary we protect one of our richest resources.

About 80 percent of the natural functioning and biodiversity of the Lower Fraser River and Estuary has already been lost to industrial and port development. Recent projects such as the Fortis Tilbury LNG Facility and the Vancouver Airport Marine Terminal and Fuel Receiving Facility have contributed to this decline.

The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's Roberts Bank Container Terminal 2 Project RBT2 is a significant hit on the remainder. The Fraser River and Estuary is at a tipping point, with further industrialization in general and port development at Roberts Bank in particular risking its eventual demise.

We are therefore reaching out to you, the BC Nature membership to ask you to sign this new House of Commons petition, whose aim is to stop the Roberts Bank Container Terminal 2 Project.

This new e-petition (click the button below to sign), sponsored by MP for Nanaimo–Ladysmith Paul Manly, was opened for signature on September 2 2020. In just a few days it is already garnering huge support. When Parliament resumes MP Manly will be presenting the petition to the House of Commons. It calls on the Government of Canada to:

- recognize the ecological importance of Roberts Bank,
- preserve its wetlands and surrounding waters,
- protect the wildlife that depend on it and,
- to deny approval for the RBT2 project.

Why are we asking you to take action?

The RBT2 project threatens the Fraser Estuary. Roberts Bank is among the most significant and important wetland habitat on the BC West Coast. Roberts Bank is recognized for its biodiversity, as a wetland of international significance, a globally significant important bird area, a crucial stopover on the Pacific Flyway and a vital connection of the food web for fish, birds and marine mammals across the North Pacific Ocean.

The RBT2 project is an environmental disaster that:

- puts at risk millions of migratory shorebirds, which rely on the Roberts Bank coastal wetlands as a critical food source.
- could result in the collapse of the Western Sandpiper species.
- risks breaking the chain of the migratory Pacific Flyway, reducing the availability of food at this key stopover site.
- jeopardizes the annual migration of the Western Sandpiper, with knock on effects in the USA and Central and South America.
- risks further decline in salmon stocks, with juvenile salmon relying on Roberts Bank as they transition from river to ocean.
- threatens the already endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales and their habitat.
- destroys an important crab fishery.
- puts other wildlife at risk.
- further increases air, light and noise pollution from port operations.
- Causes more traffic chaos and congestion from huge increases in port truck traffic.

This shipping infrastructure is one of the reasons Birdlife International has already identified the Lower Fraser River and its Estuary an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area in Danger.

The threat to the ecological function of the estuary in providing food to shorebirds is what concerns the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network when they say *“Protecting the Fraser River Estuary is critical for shorebirds both locally and throughout the entire hemisphere”*. And this is why they are calling for *“...alternative solutions for port expansion in the Vancouver area that help maintain the value of the Fraser River Estuary as a site of Hemispheric Importance for shorebirds and other wildlife”*

Please sign now (click the button below) and help us to protect the Lower Fraser River and Roberts Bank the very crucible of the Estuary.

Sincerely,

Roger Emsley, BC Nature Liaison and Co-chair on the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 project
James Casey, Co-chair
Harry Crosby, President

SIGN THE PETITION

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) Job Posting



BC Nature is seeking a part-time coordinator to manage the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) Caretaker Network in British Columbia. The IBA program monitors and conserves a network of more than 11,000 of the world's most important places for birds and biodiversity. Please find the job posting on the button below, as well as in your BC Nature Fall 2020 Magazine, coming to your mailboxes soon. Please submit a cover letter and resume to manager@bcnature.ca by **October 1, 2020**.

IBA JOB POSTING

Club Support Grant Application is Now Available

The BC Naturalists' Foundation and BC Nature provide a limited number of grants to member naturalist clubs to facilitate projects related to the objectives of BC Nature. The BC Naturalists' Foundation contributes funds to BC Nature for club support grants. Please email complete applications (find below) to manager@bcnature.ca.

CLUB SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Royal BC Museum Seeks the Public's Observations

As British Columbians enjoy their back yards, spectacular parks and wilderness areas during the long days of summer, the Royal BC Museum invites them to add their observations on nature to the [COVID-19 Collecting For Our Time project](#).

[The project](#), which launched in April 2020, asks British Columbians to share the stories of their experiences during the pandemic.

"This project, an open invitation for all BC residents to participate in the museum process, highlights the perspectives of ordinary people living through extraordinary times," said Royal BC Museum CEO Prof. Jack Lohman. "As a museum of human and natural history, we welcome British Columbians to share their experiences of nature during the pandemic."



Scientists have recently coined the phrase "[the anthropause](#)" to describe the global slowdown in human activity (especially travel) during the pandemic.

With this in mind, the museum is asking people to consider two major questions: Since the pandemic reached British Columbia, what are you seeing in nature that's changing? What has been your personal experience of nature during the pandemic?

To answer these questions, people can use the project's online submission form.

[ONLINE SUBMISSION FORM](#)

Will you Write to your Local Media about Making Room for Nature in the Throne Speech?

Next Wednesday, September 23rd, Parliament re-opens, and MPs will gather in Ottawa to vote on the Speech from the Throne. The Speech will lay out the federal government's priorities and vision for moving Canada forward as we address the many challenges imposed by COVID-19, the economic recession and moving to a healthier sustainable future.

Already, some news reports are saying nature and the environment could be overlooked.

Now is a key time for all of us to ensure local media are showing that Canadians want nature to remain a priority.

With your help, between now and September 23rd, we could have media outlets across Canada shining a light on the call for the federal government to build back better with nature at the heart of a green and

inclusive recovery.

Media will be carrying stories of the upcoming opening of Parliament. Will you submit a letter to the editor in your local paper to explain why nature should be included in the Throne Speech before next Wednesday?

Attached is a document with key bullet points, suggested tone, and tips for submitting a letter to the editor. This is a great way to elevate this important issue in the public eye while bolstering your organization's brand as a champion for nature.

Please email amurphy@naturecanada.ca if you plan to reach out and place a letter in your local news outlet.

NATURE CANADA TEMPLATE

Summer Adventures: Submitted by BC Nature members



In August's edition of the newsletter, we asked you to send in some of your COVID-safe summer adventures. Here are a few adventures sent in from BC Nature members!

"The Stanley Glacier hike is a spectacular landscape with abundant wildflowers, hoary marmots, pikas, ground squirrels, chipmunks, waterfalls and of course the glacier. Takakkaw Falls (photo to the left) is always beautiful as is the surrounding area including the confluence of the Yoho and Kicking Horse rivers. A 'singing-in-the-rain' Swainson's Thrush near the falls was a highlight."

– Jane Potter, *Calgary*

"A very interesting trip the Bulkley Valley Naturalists did in early August was a canoe trip to Hidden Lake,

a 1.5 km long local lake between Smithers and Houston that features a large wetland at its north end. The lake is noted for its carnivorous sundew plants (photo above). Of the two species found locally, the ones at Hidden Lake are the great sundew (*Drosera anglica*) which has an elongated, oblong leaf. What looks like dew on the photo is actually a sticky fluid containing digestive enzymes which traps insects and gradually breaks them down so they get the additional nutrients they need in order to flourish in wet, acidic soils.

We also came across the larvae of [this remarkable water skiing insect](#)! It is called a water lily leaf

beetle. At first we thought they were bat droppings on the lily pad leaves but then we noticed they were moving! [Click here for an article about the water lily lead beetle.](#) The wonders of nature never cease to amaze!"

– Mel Coulson, *Bulkley Valley Naturalists*

"We're supposed to stay home or in our communities as much as possible. So, we're very lucky that in Vernon, the North Okanagan Naturalist Club, leads Saturday morning nature hikes through a variety of natural areas. They're free to attend and open to anyone interested. We've been through grasslands, forests, spectacular hilltops, subalpine and more just in the last few weeks. Various naturalists host these. So, if you're coming to Vernon, please join us!

Check the schedule at **NONC.ca**. The Facebook site is full of fabulous bird and other wildlife photos, plus photos of the hikes."

– Roseanne Van Ee, *North Okanagan Naturalists Club*

"I have been busy all summer removing or destroying invasive alien plants such as Scotch Broom, Gorse, Toadflax and Daphne from the Tixen reserve of the local Tsawout First Nation. I have also been busy documenting some of the rarer plants that thrive there, such as fleshy Jaumea, beach morning glory, beach carrot and silky beach pea. Have collected seeds of the morning glory and beach carrot for propagation at the local rare plant nursery. Contorted pod evening primrose seems to have been extirpated, but we are trying to reintroduce it."

– Bryce Kendrick, *Victoria Natural History Society*

Old Growth Rally in Campbell River



In British Columbia, at least 500 soccer fields of irreplaceable big tree habitat are logged every day. On August 12th, activists from Courtenay, Comox, Quadra Island, gathered in Campbell River to take a stand against old-growth logging and ecosystem destruction. passersby honked in support as they drove by. Way to go, activists!

Photo: Rod Burns.

Rainy Day Resources

Articles:

- [Conservation of Black Bear Dens on Vancouver Island](#). 2020. BC Forest Practices Board, Complaint Investigation.
- [Hiding Without Cover? Defining Elk Security in a Beetle-Killed Forest](#). 2020. Lowrey et al. J Wildlife Mgmt.
- [Influences of Personality on Ungulate Migration and Management](#). 2019. Found and Cassady St Clair. Frontiers Ecol Evol.
- [Spatial patterns and rarity of the white-phased 'Spirit bear' allele reveal gaps in habitat protection](#). 2020. Service et al. Ecol Solutions and Evidence 1(2).

Digital media:

- [Paper Beats Plastic? How to Rethink Environmental Folklore](#). Leyla Acaroglu.
- [The New Urgency of Climate Change](#). Al Gore.
- [The Dangers of a Noisy Ocean – and How we can Quiet it Down](#). Nicola Jones.
- [How to Turn Climate Anxiety into Action](#). Renee Lertzman.

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