

The Fur-Bearers

2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT



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Welcome

It is with great pride and deep gratitude that I present to you The Fur-Bearers' 2022-23 annual report.

Refining and creating focus for our campaigns to maximize and measure impact were priorities through the last year. Our communication and advocacy tools are growing in efficacy, and we're seeing an increase in participation from supporters across Canada. We continue to excel in the arena of media, with an average of eight media mentions per month, and exceptional growth in the reach of our social media channels.

Our educational programming is accelerating, with our door hanger program growing by leaps and bounds, annual scholarships generating more interest, and excitement surrounding the activity and colouring book initiated in our last fiscal year.

The Fur-Bearers team itself continues to strengthen, with each individual bringing unique, polished skills to the table. This directly translates to impact in communities and for animals across Canada, and builds our capacity to move our mission forward.

Fundraising strategies developed through the fiscal year are benefiting The Fur-Bearers. Online 50/50 raffles, a silent

auction, Giving Tuesday, and the time-honoured Christmas Tree for the Animals are proving to be successful. To all those who support us through fundraising - thank you!

As a result of the growing support and public awareness achieved through the aforementioned campaigns and strategies, our long-term campaigns to end commercial trapping and fur farming are gaining momentum. By targeting communities and stakeholders with our practical educational tools, we are helping to change the way the public views and interacts with wildlife and nature.

I'd also like to thank our volunteer board of directors and board of advisors for their ongoing commitment and support.

This annual report serves as a testament to our collective efforts and it's a celebration of our victories, big and small. Everything achieved by The Fur-Bearers, for the animals, begins with supporters like you. Thank you.

Lesley Fox
Executive Director
The Fur-Bearers



About Us

The legal name of our society is The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals, although we do business as The Fur-Bearers.

The purposes of the Society are:

1. to protect the environment by preserving urban and rural ecosystems and the wildlife therein;
2. to advance education by:
 - (a) developing and delivering training, courses, seminars, workshops and conferences that promote the welfare of animals; and
 - (b) conducting, commissioning and disseminating research related to the welfare of animals;
3. to uphold the administration and enforcement of animal welfare laws by:
 - (a) monitoring the practices of commercial fur farms and other commercial operations using fur-bearing animals to determine compliance with relevant laws; and,
 - (b) identifying infractions by monitoring and reviewing publicly accessible information and through tips from the public; and
4. to do all such other things as are incidental and ancillary to the attainment of the foregoing purposes and the exercise of the powers of the Society.

Mission Statement

To protect fur-bearing animals through conservation, advocacy, research, and education.

Values

We believe that:

- **Fur is not a commodity.**
- **Coexistence with fur-bearing animals is possible and nonlethal solutions to human/wildlife conflicts are effective.**
- **Fur-bearing animals are a part of a healthy Canadian environment.**
- **Education and open, respectful and positive interactions will bring about sustainable change.**
- **Repeatable, reviewed and ethical science should be the basis for solutions.**

Our Values

Respecting Individuals: We strive for a world where non-human animals are respected and acknowledged as individuals.

Solution-Oriented: We believe that all problems must be met with solutions, not complaints alone.

Credible: Our actions and statements will be backed by science, research, and with an understanding of their implications.

Habitat: We recognize that in order to protect fur-bearing animals in the wild, we must protect their habitat.

Compassion: To achieve a more compassionate Canada, we must lead with compassion – even with those who disagree with our values and mission.

Vision Statement

A world where humans and wild animals coexist peacefully.



About Us

Governance

The Fur-Bearers is governed by a volunteer board of directors who help provide strategic direction, uphold fiduciary and legal responsibilities, manage organization risks and establish organization policies.

Our board of directors for 2022/2023 include:

Erin Ryan, B.Sc, M.Sc, President
Ingrid Katzberg, Vice-President
Charly Jarrett, Treasurer
Anne Carchesio, Secretary
Dr. Elisabeth Ormandy, At Large

In addition to the above, a volunteer Advisory Board provides ongoing expertise regarding our campaigns, communications and projects. These individuals include:

Dr. Kristen Walker, PhD
Allison Render, J.D.
Alison Cuffley
Amelia Porter, MSc., RPBio
David Stanford, PhD Candidate
Matthew Brown B.Sc., JD
Chelsea Greer, B.Sc., MSc. Candidate
Christina Carrières, RVT, CWR
Dr. Chris R. Shepherd, PhD

Staff

To implement board directives, The Fur-Bearers has a staff that includes:

Lesley Fox, Executive Director
Aaron Hofman, Director of Advocacy and Policy
Michael Howie, Director of Communications
Marcy Potter, Director of Finance & Donor Relations
Sydney Schaffner, Social Media & Communications Coordinator

More details on our board of directors, staff, contractors and advisory board can be found at www.TheFurBearers.com.



The Year In Review



Campaign Highlights

BC Wolf Cull

The British Columbia government has spent \$8.2 million killing 1,708 (from 2015 to 2022) wolves as part of a caribou recovery strategy. The Fur-Bearers has vehemently opposed this killing program, and in our 2022-23 fiscal year challenged it publicly in a number of ways:

- Utilizing the Freedom of Information process, The Fur-Bearers obtained documents that show the disturbing realities of the cull program. This included details of aerial gunning and killing of wolves, and trapping and collaring wolves to be used as 'Judas' animals (who lead the agents back to their pack, only to see them killed).
- Worked with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Animal Alliance, Pacific Wild, and others to spotlight the BC wolf cull through early 2022.
- Submitted formal complaints to the Ministry of Land, Water and Resources Stewardship over its monitoring of the province's 2021-22 wolf cull.
- Partnered with mixed-medium animal artist Sarah Ronald to develop an animated advertisement sharing the story of Nadia, a wolf identified in government documents who was collared, tracked, had her family unit killed, and was herself killed by agents weeks later. This was distributed and seen by hundreds of thousands of BC residents via digital advertising and displayed as a static image on buses in the Capital Regional District (Victoria).
- Published numerous blogs, op-eds, and received media coverage from multiple platforms regarding the wolf cull and our calls to action.



Campaign Highlights

Fur Farming

The Fur-Bearers saw mink fur farming end in British Columbia in 2021, and the work to end the inherently inhumane practice across Canada has continued. Recent census data shows that as of 2021 there were 79 mink fur farms and 18 fox fur farms remaining in Canada. This is down significantly compared to the previous census conducted in 2016, when there were 194 mink fur farms and 39 fox fur farms.

In our last fiscal year, The Fur-Bearers:

- An official government petition to end fur farming in British Columbia, organized by The Fur-Bearers, was presented in the BC legislature in April 2022. Over 5,000 British Columbians signed the petition!
- Developed and made available a toolkit for advocates to help them speak to their Member of Parliament and call for an end to fur farming nationally. This toolkit was also translated to French.
- Launched an annual review of fur farming related research, published on our website.
- Utilized the Freedom of Information process to show that Nova Scotia fur farms accessed \$99,380,834 through public funding programs from 2013-18.
- Published a new report, *Fur Farming in Canada: Towards a Post-Fur Future*. This report, which was printed, bound, and mailed to government and elected officials, includes an overview of the fur industry and the harms it causes in Canada across sectors. Importantly, this report also highlighted numerous success stories from around the world of fur farmers transitioning into non-animal related businesses and thriving. It is continuing to be shared as a guiding light of how Canada can move forward and end fur farming forever.



Campaign Highlights

Black Bear Coexistence

Hundreds of black bears are killed every year by the BC Conservation Officer Service (BC COS); these killings are often a result of behaviour created by poor attractant management practices of individuals in communities. In the summer of 2022, The Fur-Bearers developed and released the inaugural Deadliest Communities for BC Black Bears program.

- Using Freedom of Information requests, we developed a stats table that shows the number of black bears killed by the BC COS, sorted by community.
- This list was made public, and residents were encouraged to find out where their community ranked on the list.
- The Top 5 Deadliest Communities became a successful article on our website, and generated meaningful media interest (over a dozen original articles, plus significant distribution through syndication of community news outlets).
- Geo-targeted advertising, offering our free black bear coexistence door hangers, focused on the communities in the Top 5 Deadliest list. Overall statistics for door hangers is available on page 14, however over 400 were distributed in British Columbia communities during our active campaign.
- The program will continue to grow: increased analytics and use of Google advertising (and Ad Grants), grant-dependent surveys to identify success of programs, and new, digital educational materials will make an impact moving forward.
- In addition to the Top 5 Deadliest Communities, The Fur-Bearers advocated for black bears by filing a formal complaint over the number of young black bears killed by the BCCOS, and called for the Auditor General to audit the BCCOS over this and other ongoing concerns. The province's black bear response guidelines were also challenged due to the killing of underweight bear cubs.



Campaign Highlights

Coyote Coexistence

Coyotes have adapted to living in urban spaces, working around the impacts people have on ecosystems and landscapes. Sensationalized media posts, outdated myths, and simple misunderstandings of behaviour keep coyotes an animal some communities react to with fear. Fortunately, many solutions to prevent or mitigate negative encounters exist, and The Fur-Bearers ensures these are well heard. A constellation of outreach, advocacy, legal challenges, and education have helped communities accept the principles of coexisting with coyotes. Through our last fiscal year, The Fur-Bearers:

- Distributed 864 coyote coexistence door hangers to volunteers across Canada and the United States.
- Targeted communities in British Columbia where coyotes and people or pets were having negative encounters, primarily caused by feeding.
- Participated in a legal challenge with Animal Justice and Coyote Watch Canada against the Ontario government for allowing a coyote killing contest in Belleville, Ontario.
- Created an action to allow residents to call for an end to trapping in Ottawa, Ontario.
- Approximately 8,378 unique individuals read our top three coyote articles through the fiscal year.



Campaign Highlights

Humane Education & Outreach

The Fur-Bearers' work doesn't exist in a vacuum; it is through connection with communities that makes much of it possible. These highlights from our fiscal year outline some of our successes in our humane education and outreach campaign:

- Conducted a survey of BC municipalities to understand how they interact with / engage with wildlife issues. This survey was published and made available to participants and the public on our website.
- Awarded two scholarships in our Arts & Science Scholarships program (Caroline O'Connor and Tammy McClennan, whose projects look into perceptions of coyotes, and a video project highlighting the ecological benefits of beavers).
- Awarded our Beaver Institute Scholarship to Eva Hartmann.
- Welcomed articles from volunteers on subjects like endangered species, rabbit care in the wild and domestic species, animal profiles, and more.
- Presented virtually and in-person at BC SPCA kids camps and other outreach events.
- Regular contributions on topics of wildlife coexistence to *Global Vegan Magazine* began.
- Partnered with University of British Columbia as a community organization for a Human-Wildlife Conflict course, in addition to providing guidance throughout a Directed Studies course for a UBC student studying black bear coexistence.

Clements Awards

The Clements Awards was created to highlight the outstanding work of the many wildlife advocates and animal lovers in Canada; in honour of long-time directors and leaders of The Fur-Bearers, George and Bunty Clements, these awards are presented to celebrate those who have followed in their footsteps as advocates for fur-bearing animals in Canada.

The 2022 Clements Awards Honourees were:

Outstanding Artist - Sarah Ronald
Outstanding Documentary - Taimoor Choudhry
Outstanding Media - Paul Johnson, Global
Outstanding Organization - Animal Justice
Outstanding Leadership - Lesley Sampson
Outstanding Research & Education - Dr. Kristen Walker
Owen Patterson Advocacy Award - Dr. Jan Hajek
Acknowledgments: City of Winnipeg

See more at TheFurBearers.com/Clements.



Strategic Plan Review

The following is an overview of how The Fur-Bearers met stated priorities and objectives from our 2022-23 Strategic Plan.

Engagement

Provide amazing service and experience for our donors and supporters.

- Switched our Constituent Relationship Manager (software responsible for tracking donors, accepting and managing donations, sending out communications via email, etc.) to Keela. This service houses its servers in Canada, and has provided outstanding customer service to The Fur-Bearers thus far

Expand and strengthen our donor base.

- Created multiple acquisition tools that funnel readers of our web content and social media users to receiving our eNewsletter and donation appeals.

- Expanded our Fox Box giving program and developed a strategy for future engagement in retail environments and online.

Broaden public awareness of the organization and our work.

- Numerous digital campaigns have connected the public to conservation, advocacy, research, and educational efforts throughout the year. Examples include our BC wolf cull campaign (page 7), black bear coexistence campaigns (page 9), and geo-targeted responses to wildlife-related issues in communities.

Implement the tree (pyramid) of engagement to allow diverse ways of contributing to our mission.

- We have actively utilized the engagement tool to invite greater participation through social media, fundraising, volunteering, and advocacy.

Impact

Collaborate with decision-makers and regulators to improve outcomes for fur-bearing animals.

- Reports developed by The Fur-Bearers in this fiscal year, including Towards A Post-Fur Future, and the BC Municipalities Wildlife Survey, were sent to appropriate political and bureaucratic officials.

Develop highly-effective communications, tools, and campaigns.

- See highlights from campaigns and programs.

Use judicial system to uphold animal welfare.

- Participated in a legal challenge to the Ontario government regarding a coyote killing contest.

Develop, refine, and continue to document effective methods of measuring our impact.

- The new CRM (Keela) allows for a great look at fundraising-related data and key performance indicators (KPI).

- All web content is connected to a Google Analytics 4 (GA4) property, allowing for in-depth insights.



Strategic Plan Review

- *Urchin Tracking Modules (UTMs) are utilized to allow for insights into success of communication tools, mediums, and platforms.*

- *Survey tools are being utilized to create baseline information for campaigns, programs, and fundraising tasks, allowing for greater measurement long-term.*

Collaborate with academic partners to advance research and evidence-based problem solving.

- *We teamed up with University of British Columbia students to support research into wildlife coexistence (see page 9), and regularly guest lectured in a “Human-Wildlife Conflict” program.*

Sustainability

Invest in our people to ensure a healthy and sustainable staff and the ability to recruit and retain.

- *We brought two contractors onto the team as staff. These individuals had already worked with the organization and greatly contributed to our 2021-22 fiscal year.*

- *Internally, we continue to speak to mental health, a work-life balance, and real-world expectations of staff. This includes the introduction of flex-hours and a collaborative effort to ensure team members are utilizing benefits, vacation time, and so on.*

Build organizational capacity through collaboration with internal stakeholders and members, and review and enhance policies, systems, and processes.

- *All internal policies were reviewed, several updates, and multiple new policies initiated and implemented, surrounding data security, privacy, workspace safety, and so on.*

Ensure financial health through diversified revenue and donor base.

- *The switch to the Keela CRM allows for a greater look at our incoming revenue and donations, as well as our overall donor base. New KPIs are being monitored, and both passive/active acquisition tools implemented on our website and social media profiles.*

Ensure governance excellence through strategic board recruitment, orientation, and development.

- *New tools for prospective and existing board members are scheduled for development and implementation of Q1 of our next fiscal year, incorporating this goal as a long-term achievement.*



By The Numbers

61,793

Blog views
(169 per day!)

132,211

Podcast downloads
(362 per day!)

2.74 million

Facebook Reach
(14,145 shares)

710.1

Hours of YouTube viewed
(31 straight days worth!)

96

Media mentions
(8 per month!)

272,382

Instagram Reach
(13.43% avg. engagement rate)

35

Freedom of Information
requests filed (1.5 per month!)

5,859

Door hangers distributed
(488 per month!)

3,702

Twitter retweets
(10+ per day!)



With Gratitude

Grants

Whole Foods Community Fund
Elizabeth Thunstrum Charitable Fund
Calgary Foundation
Grant MacEwan Nature Protection Fund at Calgary
Foundation
Gift Funds Canada Foundation
Vancouver Foundation/Greygates Foundation
BC SPCA
Ranjana Basu
Kuperman Family Foundation

Silent Auction Donors

Carol Kelpin
Lucy Kovaliv
Nectar Yoga Retreat
Zazou Salon & Academy
Myra McCloy
PlantX
Vessi
Diane Marcotte
Batch
Nice Shoes
Cynthia Heine
Michael Howie
Herbaland
In Partnership Dog Training
Pepper the Cat
Summerhill Pyramid Winery

Salt Legacy
MILA Plant-Based
Wilderdog
Vancouver Christmas Market
Butchart Gardens
Arts Club Theatre Company
Batch Skincare
Alex Taylor
Evo Car Share
Earth Rated
Pacific Coastal Airlines
Chateau Victoria Hotel & Suites
McGill-Queen's University Press
Michelle and Martin
The Burrow Restaurant
MeeT Restaurants
Bulging Gift Baskets Vancouver
Ocean Village Resort
Rocky Mountain Books
Level Ground Coffee
Champions Martial Arts Academy
Elate Cosmetics
Cotton Auctions & Appraisals
Bonus Bakery
Phil Gregory
Ecojot
Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
Wild Coast Perfumery



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