

The Fur-Bearers' 2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT



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WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear supporters,

A lot happened in the last year. Twenty years after losing our charitable status, The Fur-Bearers are once again a charitable organization. A global pandemic rocked our economy and society. Fur farms became a target of governments worldwide in response to the public health threats they represent. Canada Goose ditched new fur (and subsequently all fur), and numerous major brands and retailers went fur-free. We filed dozens of Freedom of Information requests and combed through thousands of pages of government documents, giving us new direction in protecting Canada's fur-bearing animals. We even saved two young deer: they were redirected from a film industry business to rehabilitators, and will now be released.

Between all of that, The Fur-Bearers continued working with communities to develop and implement coexistence solutions with wildlife, delivered educational content on fur, coexistence and other issues to hundreds of thousands of people, and so many other tasks and campaigns that are too numerous to list here.

I am proud of what The Fur-Bearers achieved in 2020-21. I've watched our organization evolve to a lean, compassionate, science-based association. We receive calls from across North America due to our educational materials; we are in the media once a week on average, speaking about coexistence, fur and other wildlife-related issues; our new scholarships program, available on our website, is helping create a generation of solution-oriented researchers, advocates and artists.

I am thankful to you for helping us achieve all this, and more. This Annual Report is a showcase of our last year, though many more activities can be found at TheFurBearers.com. I am proud of The Fur-Bearers, of what we've achieved, and honoured to be leading this organization. On behalf of the animals you've helped, thank you.



Lesley Fox
Executive Director



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 in the wild and in confinement through conservation, advocacy, research and education (C.A.R.E).

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 every fur-bearing animal coexists in their natural habitat, alongside society.

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 2020/2021 include:

Erin Ryan, President

Kitty Bourne, Vice-President

Camran Monsef, Secretary

Ingrid Katzberg, Treasurer

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

Lesley Fox, Executive Director

Marcy Potter, Director of Finance & Donor Relations

Michael Howie, Director of Communications & Advocacy

Contract support:

Sydney Schaffner, Social Media Coordinator

Aaron Hofman, Research Consultant

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

Dr. Kristen Walker

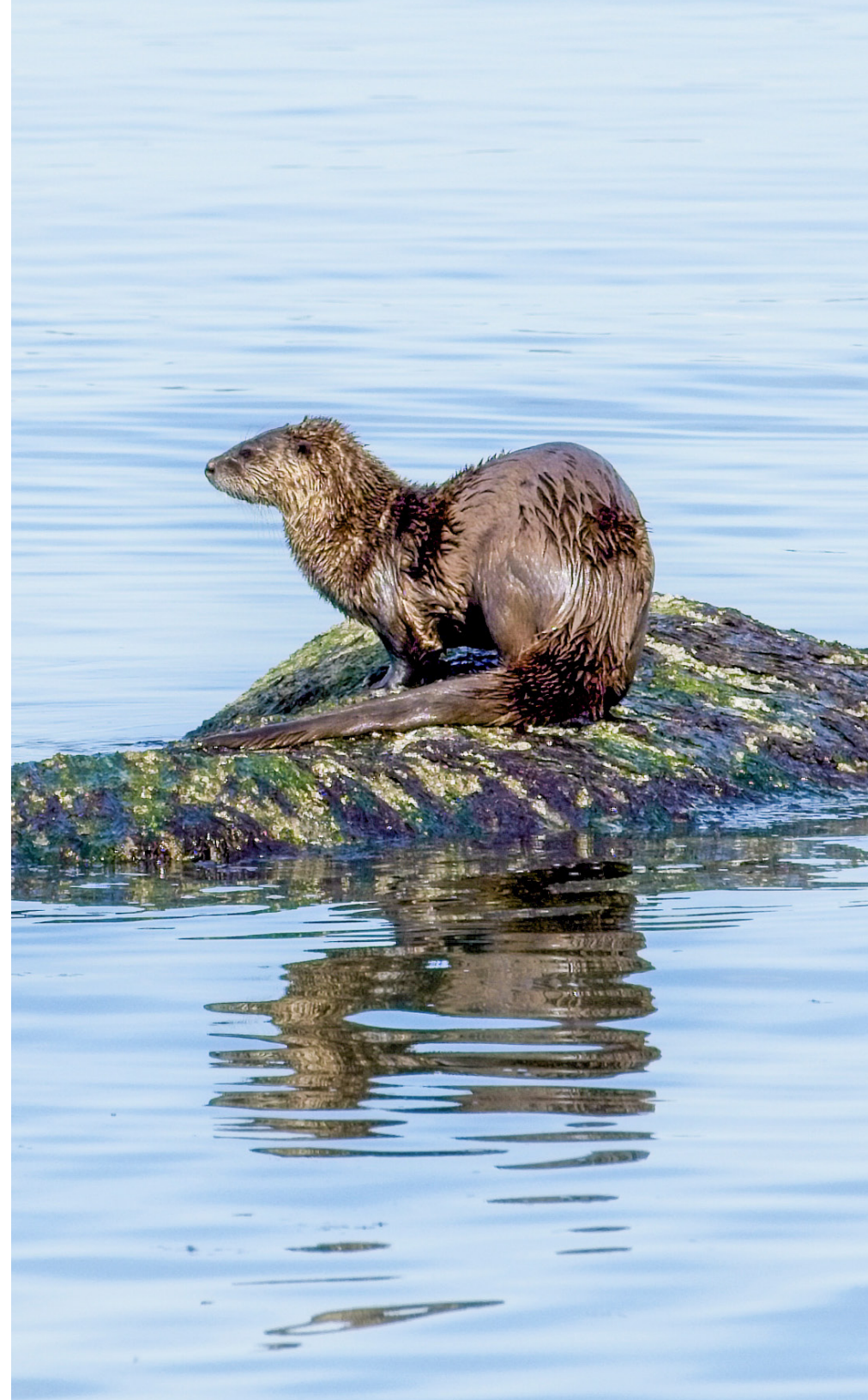
University of Calgary, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, 2011

University of British Columbia, PhD in Animal Welfare, 2010

Portland State University, MSc in Biology, 2005

San Diego State University, BSc in Biology, 1999

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ABOUT US

Allison Render

McGill University (J.D., Gold Medallist, 2015)

Carleton University (B.Jour., Hons., 2011)

Amelia Porter

Registered Professional Biologist (RPBio) (College of Applied Biology)

Canadian Environmental Practitioner (EP) (ECO Canada),

MSc in Environment and Management, 2014, Royal Roads University

BSc in Ecology, 2009, University of Guelph

David Stanford

University of Leicester, PhD Student, Department of Criminology

Carleton University, Canada - Norman Paterson School of International Affairs-

Masters Certificate in International Critical Infrastructure Protection, 2011

Coventry University, MSc Disaster Management, 2010

Brunel University, MA Intelligence and Security Studies, 2006

Fordham University, Postgraduate Diploma - Humanitarian Assistance, 2006

Kings College, London, BA (Hons) - War Studies, 2005

Matthew Brown

University of Alberta, BSc Chemical Engineering

Osgoode Hall, JD Candidate

Chelsea Greer

University of Calgary, MSc Candidate in Critical Animal Geography, current

University of British Columbia, BSc in Applied Animal Biology, 2016

Capilano University, Human Kinetics Diploma in Exercise Science, 2013

Christina Carrières

University of Victoria, BSc Biology, Environmental Studies

College de Sherbrooke, Registered Veterinary Technician

Dr. Chris R. Shepherd

Oxford University, PhD

THE YEAR IN REVIEW



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Overview

Over the past year, the primary goals of The Fur-Bearers were to improve our financial health, update our processes to increase proficiency and efficiency and deliver our programs and campaigns. An overview of our progress follows.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted numerous aspects of The Fur-Bearers' work. A few items of significance include:

- Fur farms. Discovery of mink being highly susceptible to the pandemic SARS-CoV-2 virus, the global response, and three British Columbia fur farms showing positive test results resulted in The Fur-Bearers creating partnerships with the BC SPCA, infectious disease specialists, Humane Society International - Canada, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.
- Events and festivals cancelled. Educational efforts and programs at events across British Columbia and Canada were cancelled due to the pandemic, resulting in a drop in public presentations. However, Zoom technology allowed us to continue in-classroom education, webinars, and other events online.
- Donations were impacted. In-store donation boxes and other, similar revenue sources were ineffective; some monthly donors were required to cancel/postpone donations as a result of the personal impact of the pandemic.



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Year End Highlights

After years of implementing several cost-saving measures, we are seeing the results. These measures included reduced mailings (postage/paper), changing software, staff working remotely (office and related costs), reduced staffing related expenses (one employee going part-time, eliminating a position, moving to expert contractors on as-needed basis, such as for legal services, graphic design, legislative analysis, etc.).

Most significantly, we received our charitable status in November 2020. This announcement resulted in one of our most successful winter newsletters of all time, generating \$12,344.25 in revenue.

The Fur-Bearers also have worked at length with our software partners at Salsa Labs to ensure that year-end summary tax receipts will be issued to all Canadian donors in early 2022 for the 2021 calendar year. As a result of attaining charitable status, The Fur-Bearers are also now eligible for a number of grants. We developed a comprehensive spreadsheet of these opportunities and will continue to pursue them.

We worked hard to support our people and develop our processes to increase proficiency and efficiency, including updates to our website, infrastructure and recruitment of two more advisory board members: wildlife rehabber, Christina Carrières and scientist Chris Sheppard.

We were also pleased to officially update our website with newer software and design elements, refine our logo with graphic designer Michelle Lee, and create an About Us video with Inder Nirwan (check it out at **TheFurBearers.com**).



LIVING WITH WILDLIFE

The Living With Wildlife campaign and programs are designed to reduce negative encounters with wildlife, assist communities in creating and implementing coexistence solutions, and provide ongoing education. Below are program highlights from the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Stash Your Trash

The Fur-Bearers created a microsite, StashYourTrash.ca, to assist in reducing animal deaths and suffering by providing specific information about managing wildlife attractants. The website has resources for homeowners and municipalities and links to The Fur-Bearers and other sites.

As part of the roll out of this site and resources, The Fur-Bearers utilized radio advertising (BC-specific), social media advertising and promotion, as well as a parody, animated music video.

Supporting Beaver Coexistence

The Fur-Bearers provided scholarship funding to the Beaver Institute for Ontario-based road ecologist Kari Gunson; the Beaver Institute program is a comprehensive course on beavers, flow devices and other non-lethal methods of coexistence. Kari is almost finished the program - way to go, Kari!

Chris Holtslag of VanIsle Wetlands had a busy year, helping communities across Vancouver Island coexist with beavers after receiving Beaver Institute training via The Fur-Bearers' scholarship and completing his program in 2020. His work in Port Alberni was featured by local media.

This scholarship program was detailed (along with two other scholarships being offered) and creation began in 2021; the programs are now available online at **TheFurBearers.com**.

Additionally, our popular Coexisting With Beavers booklet was translated to French by professional translator Nathalie Thompson and made available freely on our website.



LIVING WITH WILDLIFE

UBC Bear Research Group

Four students in the University of British Columbia's Applied Biology program (self-titled The Bear Research Group) worked with The Fur-Bearers and other advising stakeholders to identify public perception of black bears, and the public perception of enforcement and mitigation strategies used in relation to black bears.

The students, supervised by Dr. Kristen Walker, interviewed numerous experts and stakeholders, often with the assistance of The Fur-Bearers, then created an online public survey. The data was reviewed by the group and presented to stakeholders. Their key findings included that the majority of participants did not view bears as threats, relocation and 'less aversive' management options were preferred, participants believe enforcement of bylaws is needed, and more detailed programs need to be established moving forward. A full report can be read at TheFurBearers.com. Such work is vital to preventing negative encounters with wildlife and identifying socially-acceptable solutions.

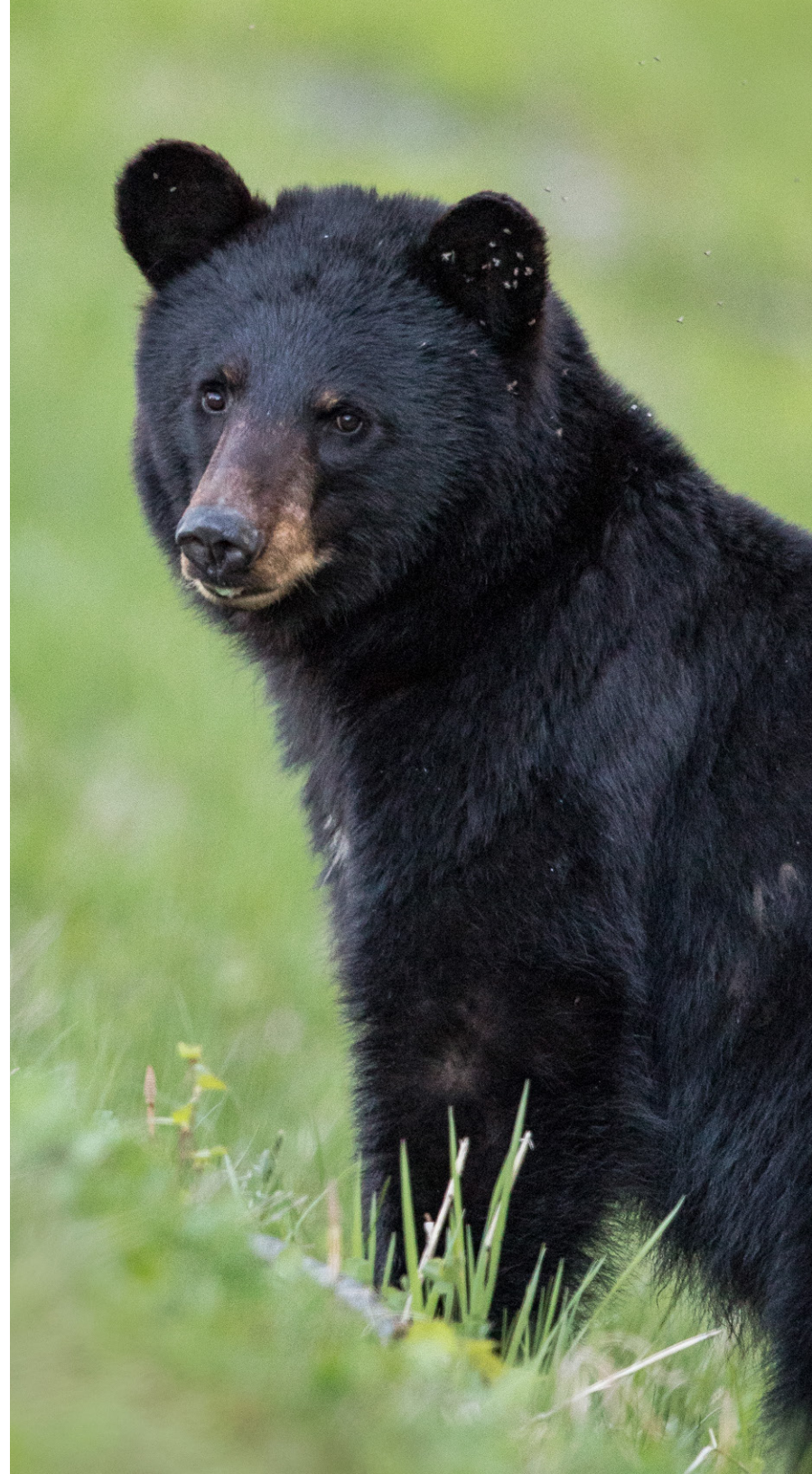
Ongoing Outreach

The Fur-Bearers' work didn't slow due to COVID-19; rather, it simply adjusted. We distributed thousands of bear awareness door hangers across British Columbia, including with the assistance of Rotary Club of Maple Ridge and two residents. With the support of City Councillor Pete Fry, we prompted the City of Vancouver to begin the process of a well-defined wildlife feeding bylaw and spoke to support poison (rodenticides) bans in various municipalities.

A coyote literature review was conducted by volunteer Chelsea Greer, which will help individuals and communities identify existing science on coexistence and their important ecological role.

A Wildlife Wednesday video series was introduced on our social media platforms, which helps educate people on individual fur-bearers in Canada, as well as coexistence methods.

We continue to lobby for change within the BC Conservation Officer Service, including submitting to the Police Act Review board. We continue to seek independent, third-party oversight, which will increase transparency for the public, create a safer opportunity for complaints to be investigated, and rebuild public trust with the policing agency responsible for the deaths of hundreds of animals every year.



MAKE FUR HISTORY

The programs and campaigns related to ending the commercial fur trade in Canada conducted by The Fur-Bearers are part of our Make Fur History campaign. The following are highlights from within this campaign in the last fiscal year.

Trap Awareness Campaign

We regularly hear from members of the public, government officials and elected leaders that they aren't aware that trapping takes place in their community, or that trapping is legal.

The Fur-Bearers directly addressed this through billboard and radio advertisements in British Columbia, as well as web-based ads across Canada, showing residents that trapping of wildlife and domestic pets does happen, and that they can make a difference by learning more on our website. We'd like to thank Niagara Action for Animals for their financial support of this advertising campaign!

We also developed a trapping brief, which provides an overview of trapping activities, legalities and related issues in British Columbia. This brief has specific requests regarding setbacks of traps from publicly accessible trails, ID tags on traps, and warning signs. A copy was sent to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and the executive staff at the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. We have received information from the Ministry that some progress can be expected in the coming months.

Canada Goose Dropped New Fur

The latest news is that Canada Goose is going completely fur free - but in 2020, the notorious outerwear company announced a 'fur recycling' program. This initiative would have seen them not buying new furs (coyote skins) and only using furs that were returned to the company by past purchasers. Whether this program's lackluster performance in the public eye contributed to the ultimate decision in 2021 for the company to go fur free is unknown.

The Fur-Bearers remain active in a U.S.-based class action suit regarding Canada Goose and their past marketing practices.



MAKE FUR HISTORY

Fur Farming

The global response to intensive mink farming was swift as it grew apparent that mink were susceptible to, and could pass back, the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic virus. In Canada, very little changed, despite three fur farms in British Columbia being quarantined due to the presence of the virus.

The Fur-Bearers created a BC Fur Farm report, which explored the social, political, health and economic impacts of fur farming, as well as potential solutions. A copy was sent to all MLAs. We'd like to thank Aaron Hofman for writing the main draft of this report!

Over 30 Freedom of Information Act requests were filed, the majority of them relating to fur farming. The information we unearthed was presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries at multiple meetings with government officials, including BC Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham.

A national online House of Commons petition was launched with Member of Parliament Nathaniel Erskine-Smith. The petition (e-3096) to prohibit fur farming in Canada garnered 7,738 signatures nationally and was presented in the House of Commons in June, 2021. We continue to work with Members of Parliament to address fur farming at the national level in Canada.

Numerous opinion-editorials co-authored with Dr. Jan Hajek, an infectious disease physician at Vancouver General Hospital, were published, tackling the public health risks associated with fur farming.

Executive Director Lesley Fox was quoted routinely in the last year by numerous media outlets regarding fur farming, including filming a segment for 'Real Fur', a documentary premiering in autumn 2021.

Polling and Partnerships

The Fur-Bearers worked with numerous groups and individuals to commission a poll on trophy hunting and the wolf cull. Research Co. found that 87 percent of those polled disagree with hunting or trapping wolves to increase ungulate hunting opportunities, 90 percent disagree with killing wolves for fur, and 91 percent disagree with killing wolves for 'recreational' purposes. More on this and other partnerships and initiatives that were part of the Make Fur History campaign can be found online at TheFurBearers.com.



OUTREACH & ADVOCACY

Clements Awards Online

Laughter, tears and community were in abundance among the 70+ attendees at the virtually-held 2021 Clements Awards and Celebration. The live event, hosted by The Fur-Bearers on Friday, February 28, 2021, is an opportunity to recognize outstanding achievements in the protection of fur-bearing animals in honour of long-time directors and leaders of The Fur-Bearers, George and Bunty Clements.

Without question, the dynamic duo would be proud of those who came together for this event. Check out the winners on the next page!

We hosted our first ever online silent auction as part of our 2020 Clements Awards & Celebration, raising over \$6,500. We'd like to send a HUGE thank you to those silent auction donors:

Great Bear Chalet
Grinning Goat
Vegan Supply
Good Rebel
Plant Faced Clothing
Cotton Auctions Port Coquitlam
Tony Joyce Photography
Nezza Naturals
Meowbox
Very Good Butchers
Jean Fox & Jane Ray

Planted On Bowen Island
Vancouver Mysteries
Karen Fahrlander Photography
Vancouver Island PyroArt Designs
Melissa Carr
Kinglet Collective

Everything Wine
Corkor
Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
Whitelotus Design Jewelry
Absolute Pilates
1Up Games



Bunty (L) and George holding a popular bumper sticker made in the 1960s.

OUTREACH & ADVOCACY



Recipients of the 2021 Clements Awards (and Courage & Leadership certificates). From top left, clockwise: Brad Gates, Ellie Lamb, Jessica Scott-Reid, Joshua Katcher, Luci Cadman, Marc Bekoff, Corrinne and Mike Robson, Tricia Sharpe, Tony Joyce, Mayor Sharie Minions, and Councillor Pete Fry.

2020 Clements Awards Winners

Outstanding Advocacy: Ellie Lamb

Outstanding Artist: Tony Joyce

Outstanding Innovator: Joshua Katcher

Outstanding Media: Jessica Scott-Reid

Outstanding Organization: North Shore Black Bear Society

Outstanding Leadership: Pete Fry

Outstanding Research & Education: Marc Bekoff

Outstanding Municipality: Port Alberni

Outstanding Community in Action:

Fox Aid PEI

Lifetime Achievement Award: Brad Gates

Three additional Courage & Leadership Awards were presented to:

Corinne & Mike Robson

Tricia Sharpe

Rest Q Animal Sanctuary

OUTREACH & ADVOCACY

Fur Free Alliance

The Fur-Bearers renewed our support with the Fur Free Alliance, an international coalition of over 40 animal welfare groups working to end the commercial fashion fur trade. Our coalition has seen much success this past year including actions in the Netherlands to close fur farms, the release of undercover footage of fur farms in Poland, a fur farm ban in France and the announcement from Israel to ban the sale of fur.

Events

Though the pandemic ended all our in-person events, we managed to participate in a variety of online events, including:

Nerd Nite Victoria - Beaver, the eco-hero
May 20, 2020

Busy as a Beaver with the Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre
June 26, 2020

Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre
Talk by The Fur-Bearers “Wild Neighbours”
Sept 16, 2020

Canadian Animal Law Conference
September 11-13, 2020

Lesley Fox presented alongside lawyer, Alex Ciccone for a panel on Creating Caring Communities: Leveraging municipal tools to help animals

Animal Justice Academy
January 25 – March 5, 2021 (we recorded two sessions and participated in a live panel discussion)

Week 1: The State of Animals Exploited for Fur and Other Textiles
Week 3: Getting Political at the Local Level

Paw and Order Podcast
Guest speaker Nov 11



BY THE NUMBERS

114,563

Blogs Viewed

New blogs are created weekly, providing fresh content, perspective and educational material.

101,080

Podcast Downloads

Our podcast brings experts, advocates and policymakers to the ears of our supporters.

34,008

YouTube Views

The most popular video platform globally, YouTube helps us to spread our educational messages effectively.

6,194

Twitter Followers

Twitter continues to be a strong tool for communicating news and political updates, particularly within specific regions and topics.

3,775

Instagram Followers

Instagram's investment with in-app video has opened new doors for communicating our messages, and we're seeing significant growth.

71

Media Mentions

With an average of more than one media mention per week, we are able to quickly respond to issues and keep our messaging in front of Canadians.

39

Freedom of Information Act Requests

FOI requests inform campaigns, advocacy actions and more. The volume of requests we have filed has grown, and assisted in bringing about change.



BECOME A MEMBER

For individuals who are interested in becoming more involved in our work, The Fur-Bearers offers two classes of membership: voting and non-voting.

Voting Member

To be eligible to be a voting member, an individual must complete a minimum number of ten annual volunteer hours. After completing the minimum number of volunteer hours, an individual is eligible to apply to the board in writing to become a voting member. An application for voting membership can be found at TheFurBearers.com/join-us. Along with the application, prospective voting members must include payment of the \$100 annual membership fee.

After an application for voting membership is submitted, it will be brought before the board for consideration. The board may accept, postpone, or refuse an application for voting membership.

Once accepted, to maintain their membership, voting members are required to pay an annual membership fee of \$100 when due and payable.

Please note: both the number of required volunteer hours for eligibility and the annual membership fee are set by the board and are subject to change. You can email your application to info@TheFurBearers.com.

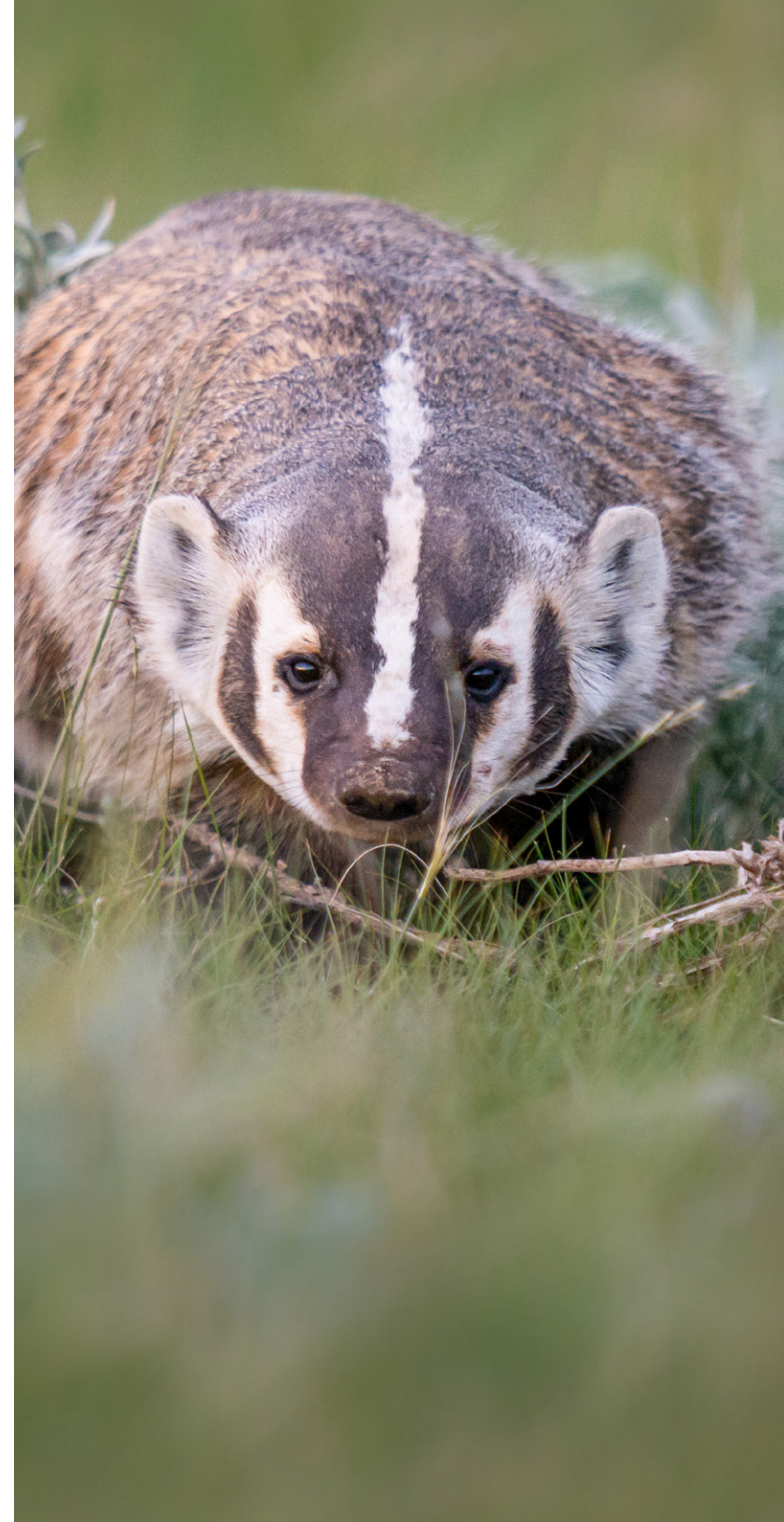
Non-Voting Supporting Member

Individuals and organizations can become non-voting supporting members. To become a non-voting supporting member an individual or organization must apply to the board in writing. An application for supporting membership for individuals, and an application for supporting membership for organizations can be found at TheFurBearers.com/join-us. Along with the application, prospective supporting members must include payment of the \$5 annual membership fee.

After an application for supporting membership is submitted, it will be brought before the board for consideration. The board may accept, postpone, or refuse an application for supporting membership.

Once accepted, to maintain their membership, supporting members are required to pay an annual membership fee of \$5.

The amount of the annual membership fee is set by the board and is subject to change. You can email your application to info@TheFurBearers.com.





The Fur-Bearers

TheFurBearers.com • 604-435-1850

