



THE
FUR-BEARERS
2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM THE **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



On behalf of all of us at The Fur-Bearers, I am pleased to present the annual report for our fiscal year, April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020.

Perhaps the single biggest highlight of this past year was that we submitted our application for charitable status!

As you may remember, Revenue Canada (now Canada Revenue Agency) annulled our status in 1999 because they believed we were spending more than the allowed 10% of our revenue on advocacy campaigns. The loss of our status hurt us deeply, as it prevented us from issuing tax receipts to our donors and limited our ability to apply for grants.

However, due to a court ruling, the arbitrary limits on advocacy have been lifted – making us eligible for charitable status. Our application is still pending (and now delayed due to COVID-19) but we are hopeful that once granted, it will create new financial opportunities for The Fur-Bearers and our work to protect animals.

In addition to applying for charitable status, our team made great progress this past year working with the provincial government in BC. Whether it is speaking out against fur farms, or advocating for non-lethal measures for coexistence, we are having important conversations with political leaders and are finally seeing some changes. We also saw a dramatic increase in the readership of our blogs and increase in podcast downloads! These educational efforts go a long way to increase awareness and raise the profile of our organization.

I would like to congratulate our staff, volunteers, board and board of advisors for a job well done. This past year once again demonstrated what can be achieved when we work together for the animals.

All the best for 2020!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lesley Fox', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lesley Fox

Executive Director

OUR MISSION

To protect fur-bearing animals in the wild and confinement through Conservation, Advocacy, Research and Education (CARE).

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.
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VALUES STATEMENT

🐾 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.





THE BOARD

Our Board of Directors volunteer their time to steer The Fur-Bearers towards a sustainable future. They help to ensure our organization has the adequate resources, proper governance and policies to advance our mission:

PRESIDENT

Kitty Bourne

VICE-PRESIDENT

Erin Ryan

SECRETARY

Anne Carchesio

TREASURER

Ingrid Katzberg

DIRECTOR AT LARGE-

Camran Monsef

THE STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lesley Fox

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Marcy Potter

DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATIONS

Michael Howie

ADVISORY BOARD

The Fur-Bearer's Advisory Board helps to provide scientific advice and guidance regarding our many projects and campaigns. We would like to recognize and thank the following individuals for contributing their expertise on an ongoing basis to help further the protection of fur-bearing animals:

Alison Render

David Stanford

Kristen Walker

Matt Brown

Amelia Porter

Christina Carrières

BY THE NUMBERS

119,849

Blogs read (up 49.5%)

33,304

Podcast downloads (up 87%)

5,500

Wildlife coexistence door hangers distributed

11,000

Individual leaflets, brochures and other literature distributed

201,223

Website visitors

52+

Mentions by the media (not including syndication)

70,000+

Social media followers



SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS



MAKE FUR HISTORY

It's a great time to be fur-free. More and more fashion designers and companies are shifting away from fur including Prada, Macys and Bloomingdales – all whom announced fur-free policies this past year. Also, in 2019, Buckingham Palace made the announcement that Queen Elizabeth II will no longer wear new outfits made with real fur. This shift in values, coupled with advancements in textile design, can only strengthen public support for our work to protect fur-bearing animals.

ADVOCATING FOR FUR TRAPPING TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

While The Fur-Bearers want an end to trapping, we can save lives today by instituting common sense upgrades to trapping policies in Canada's provinces and territories (where wildlife and trapping issues are managed) to protect family pets and even children. A major first step would simply be signage for area residents or visitors that dangerous traps are set and baited in the area. The Fur-Bearers has been working with the BC Wildlife

and Habitat branch on trap regulation reform. This has been a long and drawn out process, but because of our persistence, the BC Fish and Wildlife division is finally considering making warning signed mandatory under BC's trapping regulations. We hope to see some changes this year.

CANADA GOOSE TO FACE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (US) COMPLAINT

A complaint against Canada Goose Holding Inc.'s advertising practices was filed in September 2019 on behalf of The Fur-Bearers, Social Compassion in Legislation (SCIL) and Voters for Animal Rights.

Submitted by Richman Law Group in New York, the complaint outlines the terminology used by Canada Goose in their marketing materials, including the claim that they use fur that was humanely sourced.

In response to Canada Goose's decision to not buy new fur, we have withdrawn this complaint.

A large photograph of a beaver in a pond. The beaver is in the foreground, facing right, with its head and front paws visible. It is surrounded by water and some reeds. The background is a dense thicket of reeds and grasses, slightly out of focus. The overall scene is a natural, wetland environment.

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE CAMPAIGN

SAVING CANADA'S BEAVERS

Beavers across Canada are often trapped, killed or drown because some people consider them to be a "nuisance". The Fur-Bearers has been working to get beavers the respect they deserve by championing their benefits as a keystone species, and by offering non-lethal solutions to managing flooding associated with beaver dams or blocked culverts.

In 2019, The Fur-Bearers offered a scholarship to Chris Holtslag of Vancouver Island so he could obtain training at The Beaver Institute. The Beaver Institute™ provides education that advances beaver management to public and private landowners experiencing beaver conflicts, supporting scientific research, training mitigation professionals, and raising public awareness of the beaver's critical role in restoring wetland ecosystems.

As part of his training, Chris learned how to use non-lethal methods to resolve human-beaver conflicts. This year, Chris hopes to complete the practicum component of the course, and then will launch his own consulting company to promote coexistence with beavers in Western Canada.

The Fur-Bearers hopes to continue to further develop our scholarship program to provide educational opportunities for individuals, particularly municipal staffers, across Canada.



BEAVER BOOK

The Fur-Bearers released a very important publication to help end beaver trapping. *Beavers: Coexistence Strategies for Municipalities and Landowners*, is a 24-page booklet that features an overview of the important role beavers play in ecosystems, how municipalities and landowners can utilize in-field solutions to protect infrastructure and an extensive list of scientific references. A limited print run of the book was made possible and presented at the Union of BC Municipalities conference in September 2019 in part due to a grant from A Seed of Change. A French version will be coming soon.

BEAVER BELIEVERS IN BELLEVILLE

Your support saved lives in the Ontario community of Belleville.

After a beaver was found suffering in a leg-hold trap, residents of Belleville discovered the city was contracting a trapper to kill so-called “nuisance” beavers. They reached out to The Fur-Bearers for help. Working together, we sought the expertise of Skip Lisle, an international beaver coexistence expert and inventor of the Beaver Deceiver. He travelled to Belleville to install two flow devices and teach City staffers the basics of coexistence.

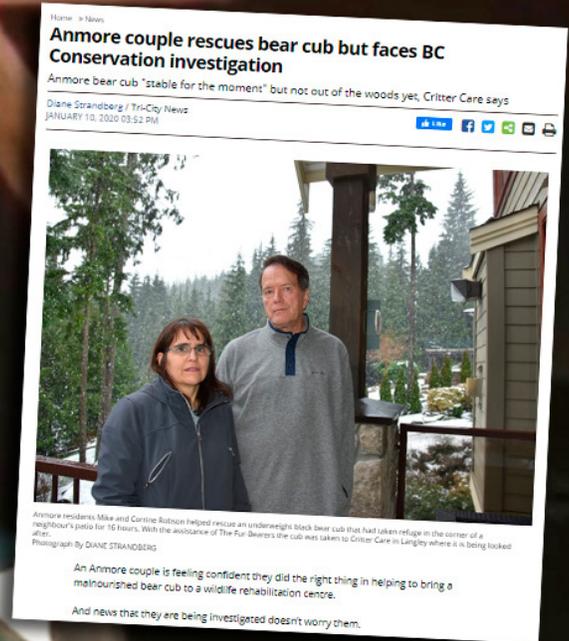
The Fur-Bearers’ involvement in this project was made entirely possible by your donations. We are also happy to announce that recent video footage captured by Doug Knutson (Windswept Productions) showed that one of the two beaver families saved has given birth to a litter of kits.



The flow device installed by Skip Lisle in Belleville with your support (below) eliminated the need for trapping of beavers at the oft-blocked culvert.



This bear cub was given a second chance thanks to compassionate residents and your ongoing support of The Fur-Bearers.



BABY BEAR RESCUED

In early January 2020, The Fur-Bearers responded to a call regarding an orphaned bear cub in need of help. With support from an Anmore, B.C. based couple, our experienced staff member and former wildlife rehabber, Marcy Potter, transported the bear cub to a permitted bear cub rehabilitation facility, Critter Care Wildlife Society. The incident captured the attention of conservation-minded residents and the local media.

MEETING WITH MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Our Executive Director, Lesley Fox and awesome attorney, Arden Beddoes met with BC Minister of Enviro, George Heyman, Chief Conservation Officer, Doug Forsdick and Director of Wildlife and Habitat, Jennifer Psyllakis. We talked about how we can restore public trust in the Conservation Officer Service and stop the needless deaths of urban black bears in BC. There is a lot of work to do but your concern for wildlife was loud and clear.

BC CONVERSATION OFFICER REPORT RELEASED

With support from The Fur-Bearers and in partnership with Raincoast Conservation Foundation, and the Environmental Law Centre (ELC) at the University of Victoria, a report was released about the BC Conservation Officer Service. The report was written to "propose law and policy reforms that would enhance wildlife management by increasing the accountability of the BCCOS as a whole and reducing the unnecessary killing of wildlife by conservation officers."

The report draws from various media accounts, comparisons from other Canadian jurisdictions, and frequently from The Fur-Bearers' court cases against the COS.

A copy of the report was delivered to the Chief Conservation Officer, Doug Forsdick and was also hand-delivered to George Heyman, Minister of Environment & Climate Change Strategy.





WOLVERINE STUDY FUNDED

Protecting wolverines can be very difficult as it is hard for land managers to know where they might be. But thanks to a research project with funding from The Fur-Bearers, it may become easier to keep safe Canada's mysterious and largest member of the weasel family.

Using an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drone, researchers will be able to map out habitat without disturbing wildlife. Then, with the first sweep of data, they'll be able to more closely identify maternal den sites. With this information in hand, land managers can close sections of habitat around wolverines to give them the best chance at survival and rearing young in the wild.

PROTECT WILDLIFE AND STASH YOUR TRASH!

Food and other attractants are the foundation of most conflict humans create with wildlife. To help support communities to co-exist, The Fur-Bearers launched "Stash Your Trash". It is a hashtag and online action so animal lovers and proclaim their support and share it with others. The website features useful information

about attractants and coexistence, and stickers and doorhangers for those who want to remind their neighbours of the role they play in keeping wildlife and people safe.

This campaign program was developed in response to the tragic number of bears killed in British Columbia in recent years due to conflict. While we strongly oppose the lethal tactics used by the Conservation Officer Service in response to the presence of bears and their past hesitation to use all their enforcement tools, we do recognize that the core issue remains attractants.

Our hope is that by showing residents what managing attractants means in an easy-to-digest format with regular reminders online and in their neighbourhoods that the human behaviour leading to conflict can change. We're also exploring how to encourage some competition between communities to get even more people involved and participating with #StashYourTrash. To learn more about this program and how to get involved just visit www.StashYourTrash.ca!

HUMANE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Raising awareness about fur farms, trapping and wildlife coexistence comes in many forms. For The Fur-Bearers, we educate the public about these issues through our podcast, blogs, community events, face-to-face gatherings and presentations.

HIGHLIGHTS

Defender Radio: The Podcast for Wildlife Advocates and Animal Lovers is the online radio show of The Fur-Bearers. Since its inception, the show has hit an impressive 100,000 downloads in total!

The podcast is interview-based, bringing experts like Dr. Mark Bekoff, Dr. Adrian Treves, Lesley Sampson, Camille Labchuk, and even Green Party of Canada leader Elizabeth May, right to our supporters. Get more details at TheFurBearers.com/podcast.

IN THE MEDIA

Throughout 2019-2020, our work to promote fur-bearing animals was mentioned 52 times in media outlets across the country including:

Global News, BC

Castanet, BC Interior

Tri-City News

Pique News Magazine

Langley Advance Times

Narcity

Revelstoke Review

CTV Vancouver

PlanetFriendlyNews.com

Vancouver Sun

Daily Hive

Chilliwack Progress

Aldergrove Star

CFAX Radio 1070

Vancouver is Awesome

Victoria News

Delta Optimist

CityNews 1130

Kelowna Now

Penticton Western News

Squamish Chief





EVENTS

To promote our work to protect fur-bearing animals, we attended several community events across Canada, including:

London VegFest London, ON

Union of BC Municipalities Trade Show

Vancouver Convention Centre East

Bear Day, North Vancouver, BC

VegFest Guelph, Guelph, ON

Alberni District 74th Fall Fair, Port Alberni, BC

Pride Vancouver, Sunset Beach, Vancouver, BC

Vegtoria, Victoria, BC

Car Free Days West End, Vancouver, BC

City of Coquitlam's Human/Wildlife Coexistence Seminar, Evergreen Cultural Centre, Coquitlam, BC

Children's Animal WellFair, Science World, Vancouver, BC

VegExpo, Vancouver Convention Centre West, Vancouver, BC

Veggie Fest Hamilton, Hamilton, ON

Canadian Federation of Humane Society Conference, Montreal, QC

Cochrane Ecological Institute, Wilderness, Wildlife and Human Interaction Conference, Cochrane, AB

University of British Columbia
Compassionate Conservation Course
Presentation by Lesley Fox



Supporters of all ages make our work for wildlife possible!



The Fur-Bearers

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