



From left: TLC's Torrey Archer, Karen Iwachow, Trevor Goward, Frances Sloan Sainas and Dianna Stenberg at the Clearwater Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor. Photo credit Cathy Armstrong.

I must admit, I shrieked when I saw the first photos from the wildlife camera on TLC's Clearwater Wetland and Wildlife Corridor. When we installed the camera we had hoped to catch a glimpse of the wildlife frequenting the corridor for their spring and fall migrations, but I could never have dreamed we would see a female moose with her two offspring.

Location scouting and installing the wildlife camera was accomplished by Deertrails Naturalist Program participants during the inaugural session of the program in May. Designed to educate students and connect them with naturalists, the session saw 13 participants learn, explore, contemplate and share discoveries with peers and six expert naturalists. The setting, TLC's Clearwater Wetland and Wildlife Corridor and neighbouring Wells Gray Park, in addition to the incredible instructors, made this opportunity truly exceptional.

Adjacent to the 114 acres we protect in Clearwater runs 28 acres of ancient swamp and wildlife corridor which TLC is currently working to acquire. In this edition of the LANDmark you will read more about the Clearwater Ancient Swamp campaign, our first Deertrails Naturalist Program session, how one member's final gift has created a lasting legacy, and of course catch a glimpse of our ungulate visitors.

TLC's wildlife corridor in Clearwater is not the only TLC protected lands where you're likely to encounter such visitors. Over the spring and summer season we also witnessed evidence of ungulates on TLC's Fort Shepherd Conservancy Area in Trail.

Our visits to the property with local volunteers have continued to inspire; with reduced motorized vehicle traffic the wildlife and vegetation are flourishing.

We witnessed increasing evidence of use by mule deer, wild turkey, cougar, and elk. At our community info session in July it was moving to hear from locals about the impact the 2,300 acre conservation area has had on local residents. We would love to hear your stories of life on the land.

*Cathy Armstrong  
Executive Director*



TLC members and donors protect critical habitat for species including elk, which depend on Fort Shepherd Conservancy Area for food and shelter.



# Students and Experts Share Naturalist Knowledge

From the volcanic and glacial formations which shape the landscape of Wells Gray Provincial Park to the hair lichen required to sustain mountain caribou, the 13 participants of TLC's Deertrails Naturalist Program spent a week learning about biological diversity from six renowned experts in their respective fields. Lichenologist Trevor Goward, TLC founder and naturalist Briony Penn, ecologists Lyn Baldwin and Nancy Flood of Thompson Rivers University (TRU), volcanologist Cathie Hickson and forest ecologist Andy MacKinnon shared their expertise hoping to inspire the next generation of naturalists.

"I have always loved nature, but it wasn't until this program that I truly started to understand the interconnectivity of life in my own backyard. This program re-sparked my fascination with the natural world, and I left at the end of the week with a whole new appreciation for this beautiful place we live in," said Amber.

Students were well-trained in their own rights, most enrolled in post-secondary studies and some in graduate programs.

"The Deertrails Naturalist Program reminded me how to reconnect with the living world after so many years studying and analyzing conservation problems from behind a screen," said participant Beatrice.

TLC Staff and volunteers are currently planning next year's Deertrails Naturalist Program sessions. Given the volume of applications received for the 2019 program we are expanding in 2020 to include a session on Cortes Island featuring 1,033 acres of covenanted lands TLC protects. Those interested in attending the session as a student or volunteer can visit [www.conservancy.bc.ca](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca) or email [admin@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:admin@conservancy.bc.ca) for details. ■

*Dianna Stenberg*  
Deputy Executive Director



Forest ecologist, author and professor Andy MacKinnon leads students on a mycology walk through TLC's Clearwater Wetlands and Wildlife Corridor. Photo Torrey Archer



TRU Assistant Professor Lyn Baldwin leads students on a 5 km hike to Placid Lake through an old-growth forest of large western red cedars and Douglas-fir. Photo Karen Iwachow



Deertrails Naturalist Program students at a 6 a.m. bird walk with TRU Biology Department Co-Chairperson and Principal Lecturer Nancy Flood (center in black) at TLC's Clearwater Wetlands and Wildlife Corridor. Photo credit Dianna Stenberg.



# What do Knitted Socks have to do with TLC's Latest Legacy Gift?

Long-time TLC supporter, Maila Lehto, loved the outdoors, gardening and long walks with her dog, Toto. Maila worked hard all her life and this work ethic continued well into her senior years. In 2007, Maila came up with an idea for a fundraiser- knitting "Karma Socks"- which were sold to support TLC. These cosy, handmade socks warmed many pairs of chilly feet and TLC was grateful to be the recipient of her creative generosity!

This year TLC was honoured to be the beneficiary of a substantial bequest from Maila's estate. Maila's foresight and vision will have a significant and enduring impact for TLC, increasing the scope of our work, allowing us to protect more of the landscapes that meant so much to her.

As Maila's story demonstrates, we are strongest when we work together. At TLC we are grateful for every gift we receive, no matter the size, because we know, collectively, these gifts make a big difference! This year, in addition to Maila's bequest, TLC is grateful to be supported by several gifts from legacy donors throughout this beautiful province. From the mountain-wrapped valley of Creston to the sunny lakeshore of Kelowna to the seaside community of Cowichan Bay, TLC legacy donors have shown they care about the long-term survival of wilderness and wild communities.

Everyone has their own reasons to support TLC through legacy gifts but the love of nature from which they stem is often rooted in childhood discoveries. What is your first memory in nature?\* Whether it was a camping trip with your family, or watching tadpoles transform into frogs in a local pond, these early experiences germinate into a life-long love of the natural world. By planning ahead, we can all work together to preserve natural spaces - ensuring tomorrow's children are able to experience these magical moments too.

Maila Lehto, and all our legacy donors, shared a bond with nature and wanted to leave this world a greener, wilder place. Planned giving does more than protect land and vital ecosystems; by including The Land Conservancy of B.C. in their estate planning, donors are inspiring the next generation of naturalists to care for this precious planet through TLC's knowledge sharing and educational programs.

Maila Lehto envisioned a future where wild spaces remain protected. What will your green legacy be? ■

Lisa Cross  
Donor Relations Manager

*\*We would love to hear the memory that sparked your love of nature! Please email your stories to Lisa at [membership@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:membership@conservancy.bc.ca).*



## Outdoor Portrait Photography



**Presented by Karen Iwachow, TLC's Environmental Technician**

Learn tips and tricks on how to take beautiful portraits in nature using natural lighting. Dealing with shadows, dappled light and posing will be covered. No experience necessary, however knowledge of how to use your camera is required.



## Moss Walk

**Presented by Kem Luther, author of "Boundary Layer"**

Identifying mosses can seem daunting at first, so come learn in the forest from an expert! Common mosses, and hopefully rare ones too, will be identified and you will learn basic moss features to help you ID in the future. **Please remember your water bottle!**





# Protecting Clearwater Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor

By Dianna Stenberg  
Deputy Executive Director

To the south of 114 acres of pristine wilderness under TLC's protection in the Clearwater River Valley lies the Clearwater Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor. Comprised of 28 acres of ancient conifer-dominated wetlands, the parcel is a seasonal home and safe passage route for migratory mammals including grizzly bear, cougar, wolf and moose. These animals descend from the upland areas surrounding Battle Mountain each spring and cross the lowlands in search of a summer food supply.

The lush vegetation found in moist fens and streambanks such as those found on the Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor provide high densities of vegetation, important for both food and habitat cover. The property, currently privately owned, is also within the Interior Cedar-Hemlock, Thompson Moist Warm variant (ICHmw3) biogeoclimatic zone; the ICHmw3 zone contains the most productive forests in B.C.'s Interior and more tree species than any other ecological zone in the province. This large patch of old swamp forest is particularly rare and, according to naturalist and lichenologist Trevor Goward, is likely the "most ancient low-elevation forested ecosystem in southern Wells Gray Park and its vicinity."

Visiting the Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor in May with Trevor, I was amazed with the overt evidence of its use: black and grizzly bears left signs of strength on trees bearing large scars from their claws and in the great holes dug into the esker (the raised path or ridge along which the animals travel across wetlands). Swamp lanterns, also known as skunk cabbage, dotted the wetlands

like bright yellow beacons to the bears that had been enjoying the fragrant buds and leaves.

Scat marked our path. Trevor taught us how to determine the sex of a moose from their dry, pellet-like droppings: male bulls have round pellets while females produce more cylindrically-shaped waste. After hiking across the wildlife corridor, TLC staff and Board Chair Frances Sloan Sainas were pros at making the identification. While moose are strong swimmers within days of birth, it was easy to understand why they would prefer to traverse across the dry corridor of the esker rather than through the wet ancient swamp in the cool spring temperatures. Come the summer heat, they may be found enjoying a cool dip in TLC's wetlands to the north or in neighbouring Wells Gray Provincial Park.

TLC's goal is to ensure the safe passage of wildlife along this corridor in perpetuity. With support from donors, we have successfully focused recent campaigns on congruous networks of greenspace. This conservation requires foresight; protecting large swaths of land at risk of development, like the Clearwater Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor, guarantees wildlife the ability to move freely from one habitat to another in their natural migration for years to come. ■

*You can help reach TLC's goal of raising \$99,000 to protect of the Clearwater Ancient Swamp and Wildlife Corridor by donating at [www.conservancy.bc.ca](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca), calling 1-877-485-2422 or mailing your gift today. Donations are eligible for 2019 charitable tax receipts.*

TLC's wildlife camera in Clearwater catches a moose enjoying the wildlife corridor in May, just weeks after TLC staff and Deertrails Naturalist Program participants set up the equipment to document the corridor's visitors.



# Deertrails Naturalist Spotlight: Sara Wickham

**E**lected by acclamation this fall, Sara Wickham is the newest member of TLC's volunteer Board of Directors. Her interest in TLC stems from attending the Deertrails Naturalist Program and experiencing the charity's dedication to providing opportunities to foster place-based connections.

"The lessons I learned while taking the program deepened my connection to place and strengthened my relationship with the natural world," Sara replied when asked about the Deertrails Naturalist Program. "The knowledgeable and passionate leaders showed me how important it is to preserve wild spaces. I am forever grateful to The Land Conservancy for facilitating Deertrails and for all the work they do to protect natural habitats."

Sara is a PhD student at the University

of Waterloo. Her research tests the hypothesis that in B.C., historical Indigenous land management techniques (specifically trading and transplanting) have influenced the range-wide dispersal of culturally important plant species, thus affecting patterns of biodiversity across the province. This research is informed by genetic techniques and analysis, which can discern between natural and intentional dispersal events. Sara feels that although the "wilderness" is often considered a pristine landscape, free from human influence, there is compelling evidence that displays how humans steward biodiversity. It is her hope that this research may contribute to that narrative and provide evidence for historical land use.

In the past, Sara has done research to inform restoration efforts in Helliwell



*Sara Wickham, a participant in TLC's Deertrails Naturalist Program, is now a volunteer Board member after an inspiring week with TLC in Clearwater. Photo Karen Iwachow*

Provincial Park on Hornby Island and led research in the Great Bear Rainforest and Barkley Sound. ■

*Join the Board of Directors for TLC's Annual General Meeting on September 21 at Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary at 1 p.m.*



TLC's inaugural session of the Deertrails Naturalist Program included 13 students from Canada and USA. Photo credit Karen Iwachow.



# Visitors From Around the Globe

TLC's Peggy and Nicolas Abkhazi, who did not have children of their own, always said their garden was their child. We now call it the garden that love built... and it truly is that, but it is also the garden that love maintains. We are immensely fortunate to have the care and attention of on-site volunteers, and behind the scenes financial donors to keep this legacy alive. People who love to garden, but are downsizing, people who love people and are looking for a place to contribute their knowledge and customer service skills, people who love the idea of a heritage garden still available for visitors to see, people who realize the value a garden brings to a neighborhood and the cost to maintain it. All these forms of love and care are present at Abkhazi Garden, and we depend upon them.

Over 50 volunteers annually contribute over 3,000 hours of their time to keeping Abkhazi Garden a place of beauty. Although we do not have an automated visitor tracking system, volunteers on shift have recorded more than 10,000 visitors in each of the past two years, from all over the world. Many are gardeners themselves, who make a point of searching out interesting garden spaces to visit, and who do

not leave disappointed. Many are tourists who appreciate a nearby attraction to enjoy a peaceful walk or a delicious afternoon tea. Some are even Ambassadors! We have had the pleasure of developing a relationship with the Ambassador of Georgia to Canada after he read of "The Garden That Love Built" in his Tblisi newspaper before his posting to Canada. He has since visited twice, expressing his great appreciation for the care taken to maintain the garden and preserve the name and history of Prince Nicolas Abkhazi.

This November, we will attract international visitors attending the Garden Tourism Conference to be held in Victoria. A presentation on "The Garden That Love Built" is a feature on day two of the conference. Whatever their reasons, visitors continue to find their way along Fairfield Road to where the legacy of Nicolas and Peggy Abkhazi is lovingly preserved.

Abkhazi Garden survives through the support of volunteers and donors. If you are interested in financially supporting this heritage site, please contact Lisa Cross, TLC's Donor Relations Manager, at [membership@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:membership@conservancy.bc.ca). ■



The Ambassador of Georgia, His Excellency Konstantin Kartavradze, presented TLC with a \$10,000 donation in support of the legacy bearing the Abkhazi name. Photos Morgan Cross



The Ambassador hosted a reception in May at Abkhazi Garden, marking the National day of Georgia. Guests included friends of Nicolas and Peggy and Garden volunteers.



Susan Shortill is TLC's Abkhazi Garden Site Manager. If you are interested in becoming an Abkhazi Garden volunteer, please contact Susan at (250) 479-8053 or [sshortill@conservancy.bc.ca](mailto:sshortill@conservancy.bc.ca).



## Deadheading & Seed Collecting

**Presented by Jo Wyld, Abkhazi Garden Head Gardener**

What is the purpose of deadheading in your garden, and what tools do you need to accomplish this? Walk and talk on site with Jo and find out. Jo will also discuss seed collecting. Remember to dress appropriately for weather and wear comfortable footwear. **Please bring your own gardening gloves and favourite secateurs!**



## Wreath Making

**Presented by Jo Wyld, Abkhazi Garden Head Gardener**

Join Jo as she guides you through the steps to creating your own festive wreath. Our hands-on workshop will use garden inspired, mixed natural foliage to honour the change from Autumn to Winter. Participants will create their own 12 to 14 inch take home wreath. This is an outdoor workshop so please dress appropriately for the weather.



# Honouring Founding TLC Member

September marks the beginning of terms for TLC's Board of Directors. This year we are happy to welcome Sara Wickham to our team of volunteers. Given her enthusiasm for science and conservation, I look forward to working with her in the coming months.

This month is also the end of terms for three long-time volunteers on the Board: Fred Newhouse, Briony Penn and Frances Pugh. Fred and Frances were elected to the Board in 2010 and 2009, respectively. After a decade of service, through difficult times and spectacular successes, they have remained steadfast proponents for conservation.

A writer, researcher, broadcaster, journalist, lecturer and artist, founding TLC Member Briony has contributed more to the conservation movement than I could ever list in one LANDmark article. She has been an advocate for the organization and its conservation efforts for 22 years. Without her determination and thoughtfulness the organization would not be what it is today. I am thankful that Briony will remain an active TLC Member and a teacher with the Deertrails Naturalist Program.

On behalf of TLC Members, the Board and I have created the *Briony Penn Endowment Fund* in her honour.

Held with the Victoria Foundation, the fund will to be used to support TLC's naturalist educational programming.

Thank you Fred, Briony and Frances for your service and commitment to protecting biodiversity in B.C. with TLC.

*Frances Sloan Sainas  
Board Chair*



Briony Penn (right) with Sara Wickham, the newest member of TLC's Board, at Placid Lake during the Deertrails Naturalist Program.

Photo Cathy Armstrong

A meeting of naturalists in Wells Gray Provincial Park to develop TLC's Deertrails Naturalist Program. Back row from left to right: Karen Iwachow, Briony Penn, Trevor Goward, Conan Webb, Ian Cruickshank, Andrew Simon and Adam Huggins. Front row from left to right: Hannah Carpendale, Purple (the Australian Shepherd), Cathy Armstrong and Torrey Archer. Photo credit Curtis Bjork.

## TLC Board of Directors

Mel Lehan ■ Fred Newhouse ■ Briony Penn  
Francis Pugh ■ Lori Roter ■ Fran Sloan Sainas ■ Marika Smith  
Andrew Stewart ■ Jeff Ward ■ Tom Watson ■ Sara Wickham

TLC is honoured to be the recipient of donations in the memory of:

**Robin W. Edwards, Neil Erickson, Peggy Konkin,  
Alan Littler, Ron McMullen and Jim Prentice**

*To remember your loved one with a special gift call 1-877-485-2422*