

Stanley Park Ecology Society

Mission

The Stanley Park Ecology Society is a community-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to encouraging stewardship of our natural world through environmental education and action.

SPES is dedicated to encouraging stewardship of the natural world by fostering awareness of the fragile balance that exists between urban populations and nature. Members, volunteers and staff create opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in the appreciation and preservation of parks, wild spaces and species through environmental education and outreach activities.

SPES celebrates the cultural diversity that strengthens our community and enhances our environment.



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Annual Report 2001-2002

Fostering awareness

of the fragile balance that exists between
urban populations and nature

President's Address

The Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) is a vibrant community-based charity dedicated to encouraging stewardship of our natural world through environmental education and action. SPES encourages stewardship of the natural world by fostering an awareness of the fragile balance that exists between urban populations and nature. Over the past year we have provided public programs for adults and families, school programs for elementary school children, and wildlife information and resources promoting coexistence between people and our wild neighbours. Because the Stanley Park Ecology Society believes that nature education should be available to everyone regardless of income level, our programs are all low-cost or no cost.

Since you have received this report you are probably familiar with at least one of our programs. I hope you enjoy learning more about our accomplishments over the past year, from the installation of Floating Island Habitats on Lost Lagoon to offering several hundred children an overnight camping experience with the Urban Camping Program.

Sincerely,

Brian Herrin

“Connecting People with Nature is essential in an urban environment because it is too easy for city people to have no idea just how dependent we are on the natural environment and its resources - there is nothing that we eat, wear, use or that otherwise contributes to our present and future existence that does not owe its beginning to the earth...”

Daphne Solecki, Advisor to the Board, on the importance of connecting people with nature.

Donors



2001-2002 Donors

Victor Cottingham
Hillary Haggan
Vernon Brink
Andrea Seale
Victoria Garland
Diane Urban
Dalyce Epp
Judy MacPherson
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Todd Croll

2001-2002 Grants

Vancouver Park Board
Vancouver School Board
Lower Mainland
Camping Bureau
Mountain Equipment Coop
Capers on Robson
Coe Lumber & Building Supply
Nats Nursery
BC Gaming Commission
Concord Security
Future Works Training
Government of Canada (HRDC)
Keith Lord Sport Fdn Fund held at
Vancouver Foundation
Labatt People in Action
Ministry of Water Land and
Air Protection
RBC Foundation
Tac Mobility
Telus Mobility
Telus
Margaret Haney Fund held at
Vancouver Foundation
BC Eteam
Global Forest Society
Adobe
Vancouver Natural History Society
Summer Career Placement
Student Summer Works
Sunflower Investments
Brothers Fund held at
Tides Canada Foundation
VanCity

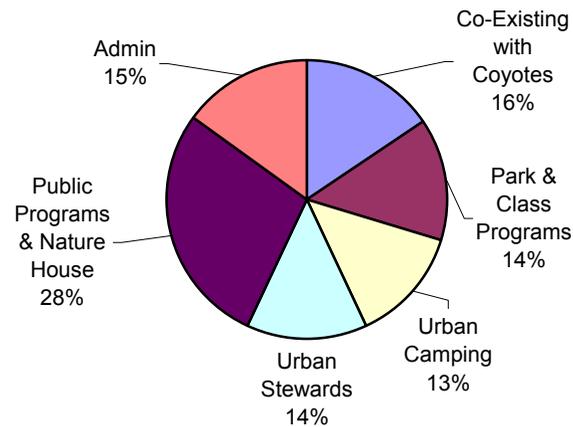
“We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.”

Norman Kennedy

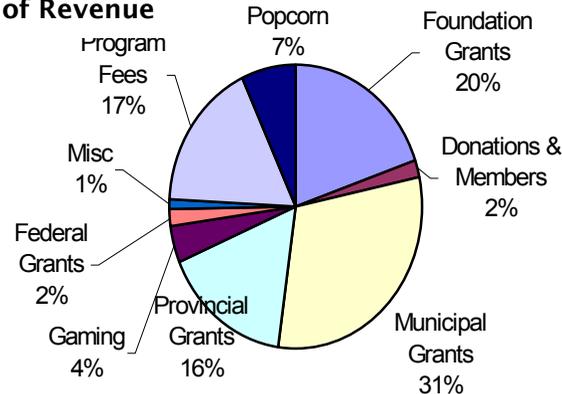
Thank you for investing in
your urban nature!

Financial Profile

Expenditures by Category



Sources of Revenue



* Audited financial statements available by request

The Stanley Park Ecology Society believes that nature education should be available to everyone regardless of income level, our programs are all low-cost or no cost. In 2001-2002 only 17 % of our expenses were recovered from program fees; the rest were raised through donations, grants and the fundraising efforts of staff and volunteers.

“My grade five class of thirty students was extremely fortunate to take part in ‘Urban Camping’ sponsored by the Stanley Park Ecology Society.

Thank you for your support of such a program. It truly makes a significant difference to the ways students learn best.

Thank you for the opportunity you have helped to create.”
Blair Martin,
Montroyal Elementary

“Volunteering with the Stanley Park Ecology Society reminds me of the important things in life.”

Board Member Judy MacPherson, on volunteering with SPES

2001-2002 Board of Directors

Brian Herrin , President
Suzanne Shilvock, Treasurer
Joslin Kobyłka, Director
Mary Anne Unruh, Director
John Gray, Director
Mike Mackintosh, Director
Diane Pellerin, Director
Judy MacPherson, Director
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James O’Connell, Director
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Advisors
Daphne Solecki, VNHS
Terry Walton, VPB
Todd Croll, Legal
Duncan Wilson,
VPB Commissioner



SPES Director Mike Mackintosh (l) and President Brian Herrin (r) investigate life under the bark of a wildlife tree at the Nature House.

The SPES Board of Directors is made up of a group of individuals with diverse backgrounds from teaching, to biology, accounting and marketing. They volunteer with SPES united in the goal of connecting urban people with nature.

Public Programs

Public Programs consist of a wide range of activities from interpretive displays at the Nature House and at community events to children's programming such as **Nature Story and Craft**, **Discovery Walks** for adult participants and **Wildside Walks** for ESL students. What all these programs share is the goal of first, raising awareness of the natural world, then helping participants build knowledge and develop skills empowering them to integrate environmental stewardship into their lives.

"I have and will continue to recommend this immensely enjoyable, educational, and accessible tour to others!"
Cathy Maniwa, on ESL Wildside Walks.

Volunteers play a key role in our public programs. Volunteers assist with monitoring species in the Park, are trained as volunteer naturalists to assist the public at the Nature House and roam the Park as **EcoRangers** sharing stories and information about wildlife during the summer months.

This year volunteers donated over 3300 hours of time to public programs.



Eco Rangers are roving Nature Interpreters; they function as a critical link between the public and the Park's wildlife, interpreting the wild species and spaces found in Stanley Park so that visitors may better understand and appreciate the natural world.

Co-Existing with Coyotes Program

SPES plays an important role in helping the public coexist with urban wildlife. Resources such as signs, multilingual brochures and on-line materials, as well as public presentations and an information phone line, help urbanites adjust to the presence of coyotes in the city or troubleshoot conflicts with other urban wildlife.

As part of the **Co-Existing with Coyotes** program this year, an educational presentation was developed called **Coyotes 101**. Coyotes 101 provides important safety information about coyotes in an engaging and entertaining manner to groups of 300-500 children, ranging in age from kindergarten to grade seven. This year, 15,000 students from 45 Lower Mainland schools participated in the SPES elementary school coyote awareness program.



This year Co-Existing with Coyotes handled 800 inquiries from our phone line and distributed 25,000 brochures in 6 languages throughout in the Lower Mainland.

"I learned that you have to look big, mean, and loud if you see a coyote coming towards you. Thanks again for telling us stories and doing activities. It made the whole thing interesting, and we learned at the same time."

Grade 6 student at Thunderbird Elementary

School Programs

The **Urban Stewards** program creates in-depth opportunities for city children to engage in active environmental projects at their schools and in their communities. Through a sustained series of cross-curricular lessons, children develop an awareness of local ecology, leading to an awakening sense of responsibility for the environment at large.

This year-long program culminates in an environmental stewardship project that empowers students to effect meaningful change in their local neighbourhood and share their success through community outreach activities.

This year Urban Stewards students, with the help of volunteers and community partners, built and planted four floating island habitats as their stewardship project. The islands offer the birds of Lost Lagoon a safe place to nest away from the busy trail, and offer refuge from predators, human traffic and pets.

“My class realized they are able to make a difference in their community and the environment.”
J. Huttunen, teacher, Carnarvon



Floating Island Habitats were created by this year’s Urban Stewards students and were installed on Lost Lagoon with the help of Park Board staff.



The Native Plant Garden, situated adjacent to the Nature House, was dedicated to Victor Cottingham in recognition of his unyielding commitment to the garden and the Nature House as a volunteer.

Each year 8 million visitors come to Stanley Park. The Nature House and the many environmental education programs offered to the public by SPES help Vancouver residents and visitors alike discover the natural wonders hidden in the park.



Last summer, the layout of Nature House was redesigned to focus on the ecosystems found in Stanley Park. A 10th Anniversary plaque for Nature House was unveiled at the Volunteer Appreciation Party. The plaque commemorates the combined efforts of the Vancouver natural History Society, Vancouver Park Board and Stanley Park Ecology Society, in the creation of the Nature House in 1992.

“The Nature House is WONDERFUL!!! Thank you!”
Nature House Visitor

School Programs

School programs engage children from kindergarten to grade 7 in the discovery of nature through hands-on activities that inspire inquiry about ecosystems and their creatures.

Connecting children with the natural world develops their desire to protect and conserve the environment. Programs are offered both indoors and outdoors and complement the Ministry of Education's curriculum.

Programs range from 1.5 hour introductions to nature in **Park** and **Classroom** programs to a 2-day immersion in the natural side of Stanley Park in our **Urban Camping** program. In our most in-depth program, **Urban Stewards**, the learning experience extends over the entire school year with lessons provided every two to three weeks.



"You've planted a seed and I'm starting to see a great deal of growth."

S.Coffin, Gr. 6/7 teacher,
Thunderbird Elementary



Children learn about west coast ecosystems with activities such as 'forest soup'.



Pond-dipping at Beaver Lake.



Activities such as knot tying, shelter building and tent set up help Urban Camping participants build confidence in the outdoors.

Today's children are tomorrow's environmental stewards. At SPES, we are preparing them for that challenge with engaging, hands-on programs about our urban nature.

Since the **Urban Camping** program made its debut in 1998, over 2200 children in grades 5-7 have camped overnight in Stanley Park. The majority of students who participate in the program have never been camping before and are thrilled with this introduction to the outdoors.

In this unique 2-day program, students and their teachers, many of them from inner city schools, come to the park to learn low impact camping skills, participate in hands-on environmental education and explore the West Coast Rainforest. In addition to introducing students to a new world of camping, the program also engages them in team building and leadership development.

"This program made it financially feasible for many students to have their first camping experience. This program offers a unique opportunity for students to gain a deeper understanding and connection with the British Columbia outdoors."

D. Adams, teacher, Tyee Elementary