



BEYOND PROFITS

Alumni and faculty members from the Department of Biological Sciences have founded a number of successful non-profits. With science and scientists at their core, these non-profit organizations aim to work respectfully with diverse community groups, engage youth in conservation, support life-long learning about the importance of biodiversity, develop imaginative solutions to problems of sustainable resource use and conservation of the natural environment, be guided by Indigenous groups in combining traditional knowledge with western science, and make science more inclusive.

These societies illustrate how biologists and members of the broader community can make a difference in the world by engaging with these initiatives or building their own and show how a foundation in biological sciences can be a springboard for those wishing to make a difference in the world.

Source: Markus Spiske



Rob Butler

Rob Butler was a member of the fledgling group of ecologists at SFU in the 1970s. They launched the lunchtime seminar series *Les Écologistes*, which has run continuously in the 45 years since. After completing a MSc degree at SFU under the direction of Dr. N.A.M. Verbeek, Rob worked at the Canadian Wildlife Service, beginning as an Interpretive Guide, and rising to become a Research Scientist. Rob 'adopted' The West Coast Whale Foundation in 2001, which was established in 1981 and is one of B.C.'s oldest environmental NGOs. Rebranded as The Pacific WildLife Foundation, Rob gave it the tagline 'Objective Science for Conservation'. Under his leadership, its mission expanded greatly to encompass all aspects of British Columbia's coastal and marine environments.

Pacific WildLife Foundation

Founded in 1981, the mission of the Pacific WildLife Foundation is to inspire conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems through scientific inquiry and education. The programs supported by the Foundation fall under four main themes.

Building Knowledge:

Projects include investigations on the ecology of West Coast Transient Killer whales, use of iNaturalist to document the species found in BC parks, and study of migratory shorebirds to guide their conservation.

Supporting Habitat Conservation:

Projects include the mapping of the distribution of the marine mammals and birds of the northern Salish Sea, the documentation of the recovery of humpback whales on the BC coast, and the study of the sites used by large and small whales in the North Pacific Ocean.

Enhancing Access:

The headquarters of the Pacific WildLife Foundation is a floating marine field station in Port Moody, set up to support university teaching and research.

Enhancing Awareness:

Projects include Nature Culture, a series of public lectures and films aimed at embedding nature into culture and an Annual Marine Mammal symposium bringing together researchers, students, whale watching companies, and engaged citizens.





Erin Udal

Erin Udal received her BSc in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from SFU in 2010 and returned to receive her teaching certificate in 2019. During her undergrad degree, she worked on pollinator conservation projects with Dr. Elizabeth Elle's lab, gaining hands-on experience in field and lab work. After graduation, Erin worked for the Environmental Youth Alliance for 7 years, creating conservation programming using her background in native pollinators. This rewarding experience brought science and public education together, and included citizen science, urban habitat restoration, and beekeeping. Erin's passion for educating young people about bees brought her into many Vancouver classrooms before she headed to Northern BC, where she worked both in the classroom and with Farm to School BC (F2SBC), a provincial non-profit working on promoting food literacy in our school system. Erin now works on Vancouver Island with F2S-BC and sits on the Executive Committee of the Native Bee Society of BC.

Native Bee Society of British Columbia

Native Bee Society of BC (NBSBC) was formed in 2019 as a collective of native bee researchers, artists, land managers, conservation practitioners, and enthusiasts working to promote the conservation of native bees in British Columbia. The development of this non-profit society is successfully growing in outreach and program delivery after just 3 years, leading collaborative, community, and science-based actions that support native bees and other wild pollinators through art, education, and research.

Values of NBSBC

- **Diversity:** We protect and restore diverse habitats for pollinators. We promote diverse ways of knowing and multicultural, cross-disciplinary approaches in our work.
- **Accountability:** We use a transparent, evidence-based approach to inform our practices and commit to ongoing learning as new knowledge arises.
- **Decolonization:** We commit to working towards mitigating historic and ongoing injustices against humans and non-humans that have taken place on this land.
- **Collaboration:** We cultivate connections between people and organizations to amplify the impact of bee and pollinator conservation initiatives.
- **Inclusivity:** We commit to fostering a safe and welcoming environment for all who have a passion for supporting and protecting native bees.





Christine Rock

Christine Rock is a wildlife biologist concerned with species at risk monitoring and recovery. While an MSc candidate in the Centre for Wildlife Ecology at Simon Fraser University, Christine Rock co-founded the Vancouver based NGO, WildResearch. WildResearch's mission is to build, train, and educate a community that contributes to conservation science. WildResearch broadened her understanding of leadership, fundraising, and building a strong community of like-minded people. Since her NGO experience, Christine has worked for government agencies and for the private sector. She has conducted field work in British Columbia, Alberta, Nunavut, and Northwest Territories. Christine is currently working as an Ecosystems Biologist on Haida Gwaii for the BC Provincial Government. In her spare time, she is working to further our understanding of the Black Swift, a cryptic and understudied federally Endangered bird species.



WildResearch

WildResearch was founded in 2010 by a group of six biologists, including graduate students from SFU's Biological Sciences Dept. (Samantha Franks and Christine Rock). WildResearch's mission is to build, train, and educate a community that contributes to conservation science. The non-profit group develops innovative and impactful citizen science programs that support the collaboration of scientists with members of the public who have a passionate interest in conservation. WildResearch members are trained in key skills in conservation science research, allowing them to conduct their own research programs and contribute to WildResearch's programs.

WildResearch established a long running program that is still active today: the Iona Island Bird Observatory (IIBO) in Richmond, located on an important stopover site for many migratory bird species. Volunteers are trained to monitor and band migratory and resident songbird populations. School group visits to IIBO provide a hands-on experience that directly connects visitors with these songbirds. Past WildResearch programs have included the Nightjar Monitoring Program to collect data on this poorly studied species and a Butterfly Monitoring Program partnered with the BC Butterfly Atlas to document butterfly biodiversity in BC. There was also an annual pelagic seabird trip to view bird species rarely seen from shore. Current programs include the BC Marsh Monitoring Program, the Western Sandpiper Program, and the Urban Raptor Monitoring Program.

In addition to these programs, WildResearch offers a wide variety of training opportunities such as winter bird identification walks, career and resume building workshops and public talks from local biologists. These events help to build a strong community among WildResearch like-minded members.



BEYOND PROFITS

The founders, their SFU affiliations,
and the non-profit societies they founded

Airmid Institute

– Dr. Kelly Ablard

(PhD supervisor: Dr. Gerhard Gries)

www.airmidinstitute.org

Mission: Protecting medicinal and aromatic plants for future generations

Arctic Eider Society

– Dr. Joel Heath

(PhD supervisor: Dr. Ron Ydenberg)

www.arcticeider.com

Mission: Indigenous-driven solutions for thriving communities

Alaska Whale Foundation

– Dr. Fred Sharpe

(PhD supervisor: Dr. Larry Dill, Professor Emeritus)

www.alaskawhalefoundation.org

Mission: Ensuring the long-term health of marine mammals and coastal ecosystems

Canadian Black Scientists Network

– Dr. Maydianne Andrade

(UG supervisors: Dr. Bernie Roitberg, Professor Emeritus; Dr. Larry Dill, Professor Emeritus)

www.blackscientists.ca

Mission: To elevate, make visible, celebrate, and connect Black Canadians in Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM) across sectors.

Native Bee Society of British Columbia

– Sarah Johnson (PhD supervisor:

Dr. Leithen M’Gonigle)

– Erin Udal (Undergraduate supervisor: Dr. Elizabeth Elle)

www.bcnativebees.org

Mission: To protect and promote British Columbia’s native bees and other wild pollinators for their critical role in maintaining a healthy environment

Pacific Megascops Research Alliance

– Toby St. Clair

(MSc supervisor: Dr. Leah Bendell);
Jeremiah Kennedy (BSc supervisor: Dr. John Reynolds)

www.pacificmegascops.org

Mission: To collaborate for the future of BC’s coastal owl

Pacific Wildlife Foundation

– Dr. Rob Butler

(MSc supervisor: Dr. Nicolaas Verbeek, Professor Emeritus)

www.pwlf.ca

Mission: To inspire conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems through scientific inquiry and education

Take a Stand: Youth for Conservation

– Dr. Alison Kermode

Professor Emerita, Department of Biological Sciences, SFU

www.takeastandforconservation.com

Mission: To inspire, motivate, and empower youth to protect and conserve the environment

Watershed Watch Salmon Society

– Dr. Craig Orr

(PhD supervisor: Dr. Nicolaas Verbeek, Professor Emeritus)

www.watershedwatch.ca

Mission: A science-based charity working to defend and rebuild B.C.’s wild salmon

WildResearch

– Christine Rock

(MSc supervisor: Dr. David Green);
Dr. Samantha Franks (PhD supervisors: Dr. Dov Lank; Dr. Ron Ydenberg)

www.wildresearch.ca

Mission: To build, train, and educate a community that contributes to conservation science