

British Columbia Chapter

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

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A colleague of mine was recently called to be an expert witness to describe the environmental effects of a proposed development. They spent months preparing for their testimony to ensure



their science was sound, would clearly support their findings, and was delivered in a manner that the audience (the court) would understand the complex ecological processes that had been investigated.

At the conclusion of the hearing, my colleague expressed a number of feelings. They felt substantial pride in being able to contribute their expertise and strong research findings to inform a controversial project. They also felt substantial fatigue due to the constant battle against money and power when the science clearly showed detrimental environmental effects anticipated if the proposed action proceeded.

Let's face it, this is an all too often scenario in our profession; money vs. the environment. I know, I know, that is an oversimplification of a very complex situation, but constant economic growth is a foundation of the society we live in, and BC's natural resources are increasingly at conflict with such growth. Trying to find balance between conflicting values presents our profession with numerous challenges.

My job is filled with such challenges. From trying to understand when environmental changes are having a detrimental effect on a species' population, to communicating this to decisionmakers who have economic responsibilities. I feel incredibly

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[from page 1 Report from the President]

lucky that I am employed in a field that I feel passionate about and embrace these challenges, but admit that it can be frustrating and fatiguing at times.

Such challenges are part of the reason why I am a member of, and volunteer my time to The Wildlife Society. The camaraderie and support I find in being able to interact with YOU, helps me to remember that I am not alone in my fight seeking a balance between environmental impacts and the wildlife I care so much about. The Wildlife Society also provides me a more powerful voice to share our collective knowledge and assist Federal, Provincial, and local governments, as well as the public and other organizations, with science-based information to consider in their wildlife and habitat management decisions. Without groups like ours representing wildlife conservation and management, they would not have similar access to our knowledge and experience and I would not have the support I need to keep doing my job to the best of my ability.

If you value our society and the personal interactions and support it offers as much as I do, please take a moment to consider how you could get more involved. Think about what contribution you might make, and please know that even an hour a month can help to strengthen our society. As example, I am pleased to welcome Becky Cadsand to our newsletter team. Becky stepped up with a fantastic new idea and will take the lead on reporting out on new BC literature. We are going to implement this new idea and are confident this will be of interest to members. Thank you Becky!

Our group is only as strong as the volunteer contributions it receives...so please take two minutes right now and send me an email at jscottyaeger@gmail.com; together we'll find a contribution that excites you and fits within your time budget.

Thanks, and let's together all keep fighting the good fight.

JOBS in the **BCTWS**: [new quarterly announcement]

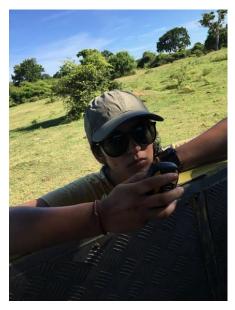
We're recruiting— Newsletter Editor. We need one (or more) volunteers to assist with review and compilation of the quarterly newsletter. Join the newsletter team and help the executive service chapter membership by contributing to, compiling, and reviewing the newsletter. Training provided. Please contact BC.TWS@google.com to inquire on specifics.

Activities from the UBC Wildlife Coexistence Lab - Aisha Uduman

As a Master's student in the UBC Wildlife Coexistence Lab, I've always been drawn to interdisciplinary research trying to address pressing issues of our time. How do we balance poverty alleviation and economic development, while allowing for coexistence with species competing with humans for habitat and potential prey? That's how I ended up studying human-wildlife conflict, a global phenomenon and a leading cause of large carnivore decline. Locally in B.C., human-carnivore conflict occurs with black bears, cougars and wolves - but my research is 13,000 km away in Sri Lanka, where conflict between cattle herders and the endangered Sri Lankan leopard (the terrestrial apex predator) will likely escalate unless we intervene in an appropriate way.

To understand the complexities of studying interactions between large carnivores and livestock farming communities, I believe we must address *both* the social and ecological aspects of the issue. One part of my work aims to identify predictor variables and their relative influence on resulting 'conflict' (level of livestock depredation by leopards) – specifically, native prey abundance, cattle density, husbandry techniques and distance to forest cover. Using tools such as remote camera traps, GIS and structured surveys, we can analyse these variables and identify potential conflict 'hotspots', thus informing the prioritization of limited resources available for conservation. Another part of my work aims to address the social aspect, using surveys to measure attitudes towards 1) leopards, and 2) willingness to adopt different mitigating husbandry practices against predictor variables such as sociodemographics, cattle demographics, limitations, costs, knowledge and experience. What we may hypothesize as being an intuitive relationship (e.g. those that bear more direct costs from losing livestock will have negative attitudes towards leopards) may not be true in this local context, illustrating the need to include this aspect into more human-wildlife conflict research and let the results speak for themselves.

The results can be used to inform and make recommendations to local cattle herders and dairy cooperatives, and guide researchers and policy-makers on practices needed to ensure stable leopard populations. However, this project is relevant beyond the confines of Sri Lanka's small land area. Regardless of where conflict is taking place, be it on Vancouver Island or the Ruaha landscape in Tanzania, results and lessons learned from each context can help guide future research in coexisting with carnivores in increasingly shared landscapes.



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Aisha Uduman

Activities from the UBC Wildlife Coexistence Lab (continued)

I believe this is crucial, long-term research that must be conducted across global landscapes. For coexistence to occur, we cannot prioritise humans over animals or vice versa, but must study practical ways to accommodate them both. Some advice I can give after my time in Sri Lanka: Appreciate that no two sites are the same (even within a small region, within a small country) and lean on local participants and those with expertise for help navigating these complex nuances and attitudes. It takes years, even decades, to fully understand a system and its biological communities, but large carnivores simply do not have decades to spare!

Please get in touch or follow my work through the following platforms:

Email: aisha.uduman@gmail.com Twitter: @aisha_uduman Blog: aishauduman.wordpress.com





WHAT YOUR EXECUTIVE HAS BEEN UP TO MARCH—JUNE

- We want to highlight the one or two most important policy related topics for BCTWS to engage in the next two years, and are reaching out to the members. Email us if you have ideas. tws.bc.chapter@gmail.com
- The Board wants to make Mentoring a priority, offering it at all levels via the Newsletter, Meetings, and Social Media.
- We have begun to plan the next Annual Meeting: Spring 2020 in Prince George which has a robust student chapter that is interested in taking the lead.
- We are reaching out to members regarding the Annual Meeting in Spring 2021
 Thompson Rivers University which is starting a student chapter seems like a great option.
- Alex Ritz will summarize a number of webinars that might be of interest to membership to present in newsletter or via social media.

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/bc_tws/

Twitter: @bc_tws

Facebook: https://ww.facebook.com/wildlifesocietyBC/

Introducing the Board & Committee Chairs

Agnès Pelletier

Agnès, originally from France, is our new Student Director, and she has been involved with TWS since 2010. She strives to provide mentoring and networking opportunities to students so that they can reach their goals in the wildlife field. To this end, she facilitated the creation of two student Chapters: at Trent University and the University of Winnipeg. She is a Leadership Institute alumna (class of 2013) and considers that many of her professional successes are due to people she has met through the organization.



From her undergrad to her M.Sc., she worked on large mammal species, first in captive Asian elephants and Amur tigers, studying their social and play behaviours, and then in wild mammals, researching prey preferences of African predators, and migration patterns of humpback whales.

She conducted her Ph.D. at Trent on population genetics of American black bears, and assessed translocation scenarios for genetic rescue purposes. After graduating, she moved to Winnipeg to work on the behavioural mechanisms of the transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease in mule deer and white tailed deer. She taught university biology courses and developed an environmental consulting business through which she supported the development of a monitoring program for climate change for the Ebb and Flow First Nation in Manitoba. She is now working as a wildlife biologist for the B.C. provincial government, and remains involved in snow leopard conservation in Kyrgyzstan through her project with the NGO Objectif Sciences International.

Meet our Members—Want to continue networking between conferences? Do you like knowing who your fellow BC TWS members are? Send a summary (~ 300 words) and a photo to: BC.TWS@google.com with "Meet our Members" in the subject line.



Common yellowthroat *Geothlyrpis trichas* by Mike Ohurtsov



Townsend's vole Microtus townsendii by David Shackleton



Giant Green Anemone *Anthopleura xanthogrammica* Royal British Columbia Museum ©, photo by Brent Cooke



Red legged frog Rana aurora by Val George



Green turtle Chelonia mydas by Brian Klinkenberg

Provincial Project Snapshot—how you can share your research from the past, now, or proposed, with members. Or you can state why BC wildlife are important to you. Send a summary of (~ 300 words) to: BC.TWS@google.com with "project snapshot" in the subject line.

PROVINCIAL PROJECT SNAPSHOT: Fisher (Pekania pennanti) Den Box Project—Larry Davis

Fishers are the largest obligate cavity user in North America and their dependence on cavities in large, old trees to provide secure denning spaces makes them vulnerable to habitat changes that affect the supply of suitable trees. Trees with the specific characteristics needed for fisher dens are typically rare in the forested landscapes of British Columbia, and changes resulting from forest-harvest activities, hydro-electric development, insect infestations, and large-scale fires have decreased the supply of these trees. Fishers have been blue-listed (S2S3) in British Columbia for almost 30 years, with few actions taken to improve their status. Tools that can temporarily lessen habitat impacts are needed to help improve conservation outcomes for this species, particularly in areas where natural cavities are determined to be exceedingly rare.

Suitable den trees have large internal cavities (25 – 30 cm diameter) with narrow entrances (5 cm wide) that allow female fishers to enter but exclude larger predators including male fishers. To address these requirements, I designed an artificial den box constructed of two plywood layers sandwiched around rigid foam insulation. The internal diameter of the boxes is 25 x 25 cm with a 7 x 12 cm entrance leading to the 70 cm deep cavity and a sloping lid helps the structures shed precipitation.

Over 2014 to 2019, I hung 55 den boxes on trees at approximately 3 m from the ground in the Central Interior of British Columbia. I monitored the structures over the 5 years using trail cameras, hair-snaggers, and visual inspections of box interiors. Fishers used nine of the 55 den boxes for reproduction at least once, and some of these were used more than once, for a total of 13 incidences of reproductive use. We observed an average of 1.7 kits per box, and recorded several female fishers reusing den boxes within a single reproductive denning season (April – June). Project videos (e.g., females and kits using boxes) can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSCwl2j1AJxbzMbD7-6XJHQ.

We hung boxes in landscapes where we knew fishers to be present and where the supply of den trees was not thought to be limiting. The next steps to assess the use of den boxes as a conservation tool is to test the structures in landscapes where the supply of den trees is thought to be limiting the growth of fisher populations. Funding for this project was provided by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, and the Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia. For additional information on the den box project and habitat management for fisher in BC, visit https://www.bcfisherhabitat.ca/ —Larry Davis, MSc, R.P. Bio. Davis Environmental Ltd.



Larry Davis

The Mentoring Program by the B.C. Chapter of TWS How to Navigate Grad School

By Paul M. Lukacs, University of Montana TWS Student Chapter Advisor Posted on April 10, 2017



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In graduate school, students sometimes feel lost since the path to completion can seem very long. Graduate education is very different than undergraduate education. University programs carefully lay out undergraduate curricula and few decisions are left to the student – complete the courses in good standing and you graduate. On the contrary, very little is defined in graduate school – producing something novel is required. Students typically enter grad school after having done very well in undergrad, often being one of the top handful of students in their class. In graduate school, formerly top students become average among their peers. A lack of defined direction combined with being just one fish in the pond can make grad school very daunting. Setting clear goals for yourself can help guide you through the process and keep you focused on the end result, even when it feels like it's a long way off.

- 1. Set personal goals for graduate school. Personal goals should be things that you want to achieve to set yourself up for a successful future. These should not be about your thesis or dissertation, but bigger picture goals. In which fields of conceptual theory do you want to build a strong foundation? What skills would you like to possess when you graduate? What is your end game? Try not to lose sight of your broader goals while you are counting willow stems or attempting to deploy those last two radio collars.
- 2. Set goals for deliverables in your research. Early in your program, develop a timeline for when you plan to complete your proposal, field work, publications, or other requirements for your research. It can be very helpful to set goals for writing your introduction and methods sections early in your graduate program to get those off your plate. Revisit your timeline each semester to ensure that things are progressing. Reconsider timing if needed, but avoid using the flexibility of grad school as an enabling factor for procrastination.
- 3. Be mindful of how other people's goals interact with your goals. All of the people you interact with in graduate school will have their own goals: faculty, agency personnel, funders, and other students. Some of their goals will help you produce a stronger thesis, others are merely a distraction from graduation. Reward yourself when you achieve a goal. When you check a goal off your list, take some time to get back outside and remember why you chose wildlife biology. This is especially true for those of us in biometrics who could easily lose focus on real critters or be swayed by income potential in related fields. Setting goals for yourself in graduate school can help provide a clear path toward graduation and a successful career. Goals do not need to be complicated or earth-shattering, simply writing two paragraphs a day for a semester will produce a thesis.

This article originally appeared in the <u>TWS Biometrics Working Group</u>'s <u>April 2017 newsletter</u>

Jobs and Opportunities

1. Post-doctoral Fellow In Terrestrial Mammal Applied Ecology, University of Victoria and InnoTech Alberta. The Applied Conservation Macro Ecology Lab, a partnership between InnoTech Alberta (Albertaâs R&D Agency) and the University of Victoria, is accepting applications for a post-doctoral fellow who will be based in Victoria and co-supervised by Dr. Jason T Fisher in the School of Environmental Studies, and Dr. Brad Anholt in the Biology Department.

The Fellow will help execute the *Wildlife CAMERA Project*, a 4-year research project examining the effects of landscape change, climate change, landscape management, and predator control on mammal communities across western Canada's boreal forest and mountain chains. The project capitalizes upon substantial existing data from several landscape-scale camera arrays, offering opportunities for quick early publications. We are deploying several additional camera arrays to capture gradients of change and management. The PDF will help the project PIs design and execute the project, provide scientific oversight, create innovative questions, conduct statistical analyses, and write multiple scientific publications. The PDF will play a mentorship role for a team of Ph.D. and M.Sc. students working on similar questions, and will collaborate with other academics (at UBC and elsewhere), government, and industry researchers.

Density estimation using spatial-recapture modelling will weigh heavily in analysis, so we are seeking someone with experience in Bayesian hierarchical analysis, preferably with experience in SCR. Nonetheless the questions we ask are diverse and will span individual behavior, species activity patterns, species co-occurrence, predator-prey and competition relationships, and community ecology. Examples of past and ongoing research can be found at http://jasontfisher.ca.

The candidate will have exceptional demonstrated analytical skills using R (and preferably software for implementing Bayesian analysis), a well-rooted knowledge of mammal ecology, an interest in applied science, and ability to work across academia and other sectors. The position is for one year, with an extension for a second year pending success in the first. The salary is \$65,000 / yr, and the applicant is expected to apply for external funding to help support the position (though the position is not contingent upon success).

Please provide a CV, two of your best publications, names of three references, and a statement (1-page maximum) of short- and long-term career goals. Position open until filled. Submit your inquiries or application to Jason.fisher@innotechalberta.ca. The ACME Lab strongly believes that diversity generates the best science, so encourages inquiries from scientists of all backgrounds and orientations.

- 2. Biology Sessional Instructor Fall Semester- Columbia College. Sessional Instructor to teach Biology Labs in the University Transfer and Associate Degree Programs. Qualifications: •Master's degree in Biology •Experience teaching Biology at another post-secondary institution •Demonstrated success in innovative or student-centered teaching techniques •Excellent interpersonal skills •Experience in teaching a diverse student body. This part-time sessional position will commence in September 2019 and will end in December 2019. \$2,573 per Lab for a Master's degree holder and \$2,872.30 per Lab for a PhD holder. Submit a cover letter and resume consolidated into one PDF or Word document. Applications should be saved under the first and last name and sent to careers@columbiacollege.ca Application Deadline: July 7th, 2019.
- 3. National Council for Science and the Environment 2020 Annual Conference January 6-9, 2020 | Washington, D.C. CALL FOR PAPERS/POSTERS/SPPED TALKS. DEADLINE 12 JULY.

The NCSE 2020 Annual Conference engages more than 800 leaders from the sciences, education, government, policy, business, and civil society to foster a dialogue across these sectors on environmental policy and decision-making with the use of science. The Annual Conference program includes presentations by the leading experts and sessions that spotlights new research, innovation, and the power of collaboration through partnering. Attendees will join meaningful conversations, network with peers, and make vital connections.

TO REGISTER & FIND OUT MORE https://www.ncseglobal.org/conference

4. The Environment, Society, & Policy Group (www.espg.ca) University of Ottawa (Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics) is seeking applications for a 12- month (with possible extension) Postdoctoral Fellowship to work on research projects on environmental change and Arctic Shipping. Dr. Jackie Dawson, Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair in Environment, Society, and Policy, will supervise the position jackie.dawson@uottawa.ca. ESPG is an interdisciplinary research group conducting policy-focused research in partnership with government (including Inuit government), industry, and Arctic communities. The Postdoc will work with other team members on various projects including development of a survey of ship operator weather data needs. The successful candidate should have strong interpersonal skills, be able to work effectively as part of a

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BOOKS and ARTICLES

BC Wildlife, Conservation or Management Issues, and Projects, Posters, & Publications by our members

WE WANT YOUR RESEARCH!

The BC TWS is excited to launch a new section in our newsletter and website where we highlight some of the research being done by our own TWS members. Just published an article and looking to promote your work? Send it in! Maybe you're in the initial stages of a project and have a poster or progress report that you would love some feedback on? We would love to share that too.

We hope this will be a place where researchers can promote their work and all members can get connected and stay on top of the innovative and important wildlife work being done in our own backyard. Whether you're studying Wolverines or Pacific Wrens, If you have research you're excited about—we want to share it! For more details or to submit your work, Please contact Becky Cadsand, who will be coordinating the lit section, through our central email: tws.bc.chapter@qmail.com.

Below are examples of research publications that two Board Members shared to provide some inspiration.

Agnès Pelletier et al. *Delineating genetic groupings across homogeneous landscapes in black bears* https://agnespelletier.weebly.com/uploads/4/2/0/6/42068325/pelletier_2012_delineating_genetic_groupings_across_homogeneous_landscapes_in_black_bears.pdf

Pat Baird et al.— A Remote Marking Device and Newly Developed Permanent Dyes for Wildlife Research https://www.academia.edu/39087235/A_Remote_Marking_Device_and_Newly_Developed_Permanent_Dyes_for_Wildlife_Research



coniferousforest.com



natgeokids.com



Remote dye machine-P. Baird



Dyed California least terns—P. Baird

Wildlife Habitat Engagement—Summary

Rod Davis and Bill Harrower

We are part way through the BC Government's engagement process for improving wildlife and habitat management. The BCTWS was honoured and excited to be included as a stakeholder in this process. Past President Rod Davis has been leading the BCTWS efforts on this project with help from President-elect Bill Harrower. The formal engagement process consisted of a two-day workshop held in January 2019, and then two-rounds of engagement on each policy theme through a total of 12 webinars held in March and April. Webinars were divided into a series of policy themes that had been established at the workshop. These included: Funding; Wildlife Planning and Objectives/Wildlife Habitat Management; Data, Information and Knowledge; Decision-making for Wildlife and Habitat; Stakeholder Engagement; Achieving Desired Outcomes. Either Rod or Bill attended each webinar and participated fully to make sure the input we received from a survey of members, taken at the outset, was heard by government. The process is currently quiet as government prepares a report summarizing the issues and recommendations received from the process which is expected to be made public by the end of June.

Generally, we have been pleased with the process. The work seems to move forward, and we can see how the contractors and government staff are working to incorporate and improve the process and develop the ideas put forth by stakeholders, including your input from the BCTWS. We have developed a set of recommendations from both the input we received and from what we learned during the process these include:

For Funding

- Prepare a comprehensive business plan and Treasury Board Submission supporting a significant budget increase for core ministry program implementation.
- Create a new mechanism in partnership with key funding partners to coordinate conservation, management, and restoration investments.
- Establish an independent endowment which would strategically plan and fund important research priorities.
- Investigate new voluntary mechanisms to collect funds (e.g., licence plate program, outdoor equipment tax, point of sale donations); 2) Investigate new resource development fees addressing impact mitigation and compensation; 3) Review resource rents related to hunting, guiding, trapping, ecotourism, etc.

For Wildlife Planning and Objectives/Wildlife Habitat Management

- Create regional wildlife advisory boards with a mandate to review local priorities and issues advising both regional decision-makers and provincial policy. A provincial council reporting to the minister would have representatives from each regional advisory board and well as other key stakeholders.
- Perform a systematic review of strategic-level land use planning to update wildlife and habitat objectives, addressing new priorities, cumulative impacts of development and land use, and climate change impacts; 2) Implement landscape planning processes to integrate conservation objectives for biodiversity with other land uses.
- Enact new legislation which puts wildlife and habitat conservation on an equal footing with other resource values (i.e., oil and gas, logging).

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- Reunify responsibility for wildlife and habitat management under one ministry with cleer mandates for wildlife management and habitat conservation.
- Government must: 1) review management and habitat conservation programs considering changes necessary
 for resilience to climate change; 2) Effect the necessary funding and staffing needed to review and implement
 climate change resilience strategies.

Data, Information, and Knowledge

- Improve funding to improve the accessibility, usability and interpretability of data to the public for publicly accessible data repositories
- Establish a wildlife and habitat science centre responsible for developing strategic information needs and coordinating funding, with representation from government, First Nations, academia, and key stakeholders.

For Achieving Desired Outcomes

• Establish a monitoring and evaluation program which will track and report on such things as management actions, wildlife and habitat condition and trends, climate change impacts, program expenditures, etc.

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team, have experience with interdisciplinary research methodologies and approaches, and at least a basic understanding of climate change and/or the Arctic shipping sector. Excellent English written communication skills are essential as well as a basic track record of peer-reviewed publications and scientific presentations. Experience in basic descriptive statistics and/or GIS skills would be considered assets. Start date is September 2019 and salary is in the range of \$50,000 annually with benefits. Please review the UOttawa steps and policies to becoming a Postdoctoral Fellow to ensure your application meets UOttawa criteria. Applications should include an academic CV and cover letter and be sent to Megan Ihrig, at mile-rig@uottawa.ca no later than July 29th, 2019. Please note that only short-listed applicants will be contacted.

5. Postdoctoral Research Associate – Estuarine Food Web Modeling -Department of Marine & Coastal Sciences Rutgers University - modeling of estuarine food web dynamics. Dr. Olaf Jensen's lab on the New Brunswick campus and will join a large, multi-institutional team within the Coastal Waters Consortium. The research focuses on understanding potential differences in food web organization and energy flow between oiled and unoiled sites and along a salinity gradient in natural and restored salt marshes in the aftermath of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The candidate will be responsible for developing quantitative food web models that incorporate information from field surveys and diverse sources of diet information, including analysis of stomach contents, stable isotopes, and fatty acids. Additional duties include helping undergraduate students conduct independent research projects, and presenting and publishing research results. Funding is available for up to two years. This is a one-year appointment with the expectation that it will be renewed for an additional one-year increments (two years total), contingent upon satisfactory performance.

Requirements: Ph.D. in ecology, fishery science, or another relevant field is required. Preference will be given to applicants (1) with demonstrated expertise in predator-prey, food web, or ecosystem modeling, (2) who can code efficiently in R or Matlab, and (3) who have a strong publication record. The candidate should have excellent oral and written English language communications skills. The position will remain open until filled with a preferred start date of July 1, 2019. For questions, please contact: Olaf Jensen (olaf.p.jensen@gmail.com) To apply, please submit cover letter, CV, and contact information for three references at: https://jobs.rutgers.edu/postings/91204



Kettle Valley Railway by Kari Medig



Kootenay National Park by Kari Medig

The BC Chapter's Plans for the Coming Months

- ♦ Sharing members' research via our new Literature section
- Engaging students at all B.C. colleges and universities in the BC Chapter of TWS
- Outreach on a personal level to get new members involved. (e.g. the TWS Giveback Program)
- Making the BC Chapter a major advocate for BC wildlife and habitat
- ♦ Begin planning our next annual meeting for 2020

SAVE THE DATES! Our 2nd & 3rd Annual Meetings will be in early spring 2020 & 2021

How to contribute to the BC Chapter and help direct its evolution

Members and Former Members —Here is your chance to provide guidance to the Executive for where we want the BC Chapter to head. Included with this newsletter is the Program Framework of what ideas the Executive had. Please take time to read it and provide any comments to tws.bc.chapter@gmail.com with "guidance "in the subject line

TWS—BC Chapter Email: tws.bc.chapter@gmail.com