

# BC Nature Fall 2019 General Meeting & Conference

## PRESENTATIONS



**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3**

> Thursday Evening Presentations

### 1. Pinecone Burke Provincial Park Slideshow

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**Speaker: Ian McArthur, BMN President**

In this slide presentation, Ian McArthur will show photos of Pinecone Burke Provincial Park. He will share some of his stories and photos of easy-to-get-to locations, and from his multiple backpack trips into the more remote areas.

The Burke Mountain Naturalists was formed in 1989 by local residents who called for protection of critical habitat areas including the local mountain slopes referred to as Greater Vancouver's "backyard wilderness", now Pinecone Burke Provincial Park. It was this advocacy work of BMN's founders that lead to our club's name.

Note: Join Ian who will be leading the field trip [Pinecone Burke Provincial Park Hike](#) on Sunday morning.

## 2. What Do We Know About BC Bats?

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### **Speaker: John Saremba, BMN Bat Team Coordinator**

Join John and discover the biology, characteristics and interesting features of this unique group of wildlife species. John will share insights gained from citizen-science based research about bats in the Tri-Cities and Pitt Meadows area. This research has been conducted to prevent bat mortality due to climate change and to complement work done by bat consultants and biologists. In addition, a variety of innovative devices will be displayed that have been used to enhance roosts and habitat for maternity bat colonies. Hear how the efforts of a small but dedicated group of volunteers has resulted in the development of a comprehensive stewardship program and creation of strategic alliances with a wide range of agencies and stakeholders to promote bat conservation.

Note: Join John who will be leading the field trip [BMN Bat Stewardship Projects at Colony Farm Regional Park](#) on Friday afternoon.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

> Friday Morning Presentations

## 1. The Story of Sandhill Cranes in the Pitt Polder

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**Speaker: Myles Lamont, RPBio, Principal of *Terra Fauna Wildlife Consulting***

They're described as iconic, statuesque and living dinosaurs. We're good at describing them, but not so good at protecting them. Of the three subspecies of Sandhill cranes in our province, the ones found in the Fraser Valley are poorly understood and their numbers are dismal: an estimated ten pairs are all that is known in the Lower Mainland yet early Europeans wrote of flocks of thousands, and the birds figure prominently in early Katzie First Nation culture. Myles Lamont is a professional biologist with a special interest in resident breeding Sandhill cranes. His presentation will describe what little is known about breeding distributions, population size, and migration pathways for the different subspecies in BC. Our local Sandhill Cranes face some unique challenges, including wayward golf balls! Myles runs the *Sandhill Crane Sightings* web page ( [www.cranesightings.com](http://www.cranesightings.com)) for people to record their observations for his research.

Note: Join the members of the Alouette Field Naturalists who will be leading a field trip [Pitt Polder Ecological Reserve Walk](#) on Friday afternoon.

## 2. Wet It and They Will Come – Frogs!

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### Speaker: Aleesha Switzer, Biologist with the Fraser Valley Conservancy

Canada's most endangered amphibian lives right here. The population of Oregon spotted frogs declined with loss of the shallow floodplains that once characterized the Fraser Lowlands. *Rana pretiosa* is the Latin name for this species, meaning "precious frog" and that is the name taken by a program aimed at their restoration. Biologist Aleesha Switzer works on the **Precious Frog Project** (see [preciousfrog.ca](http://preciousfrog.ca)) at the Fraser Valley Conservancy, and she will give us an update on frog conservation in the Fraser Valley. Aleesha's passion for biology and environmental education has come from spending time with the frogs, salamanders, birds, snails, and plants in such a way that has allowed her to truly experience the joy nature can bring. She will share how she maintains optimism and hope for the future of the Precious Frog, other species at risk, and humanity.

## 3. iNaturalist – Drag n' Drop Species Inventories

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**Speaker: Professor John Reynolds, Chair of COSEWIC**

Everyone knows about eBird and how it has changed birding. Many birders add photos to their checklists to share with everyone else. But now there's an app for documenting all taxa, not just birds. *iNaturalist* is a way to identify and document all species of plants, animals, and fungi, and anyone with a smartphone can be a citizen-scientist. Or you can simply monitor what others are seeing on your home computer at

[www.iNaturalist.ca](http://www.iNaturalist.ca). John Reynolds is a BMN member (oh, and he's also the Chair of the *Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada*) who is promoting *iNaturalist* to inform everything from the ranges of species in Canada to their conservation status. In this presentation, John will enthuse about the possibilities that *iNaturalist* holds for getting insights into the wonderful natural diversity in BC. He will also promote a collaboration with UVic's Brian Starzomski and BC Parks to use *iNaturalist* to document biodiversity in provincial protected areas (see [inaturalist.ca/projects/bc-parks](http://inaturalist.ca/projects/bc-parks) )

Note: Join John who will be leading the field trip [Species Identification Using iNaturalist at Golden Ears Park](#) on Friday afternoon.

**> Friday Evening Presentations**

**1. How People Can Make a Park: BMN and Pinecone-Burke Provincial Park**

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**Speaker: Mark Haddock, founding member of the Burke Mountain Naturalists**

The history of BMN and Pinecone-Burke Provincial Park are intertwined. In 1989, BMN was formed and creation of this ‘backyard wilderness’ park quickly became a dream. The area had always been valued by the Katzie people, and with the arrival of Europeans, the focus shifted to logging and mining. Two dedicated Coquitlam residents, John Cashore (who later became Minister of Parks in the 1990s) and environmental lawyer Mark Haddock spear-headed the campaign for protection as a provincial park. The Western Canada Wilderness Committee became involved when proposals arose to log the Upper Pitt Valley. Rallies and public outcry led eventually to Pinecone-Burke being protected in 1995 along with other areas in The Lower Mainland Legacy program of the BC Government of the day. Mark Haddock was there every step of the way and he will re-count the triumphs of that time.

Note: Join Ian McArthur who will be leading the field trip [Pinecone Burke Provincial Park Hike](#) on Sunday morning.

## **2. BC Nature - Celebrating Our 50 Years of Achievements**

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**Speaker: Bev Ramey, BC Nature Director**

Bev Ramey will cap off the evening's anniversary celebration by providing highlights of BC Nature's last 50 years. From the early days in 1969 when the Federation of BC Naturalists (BC Nature's legal name) was incorporated, and there were only a handful of nature clubs, to the growth of 53 clubs today a lot has happened!

There are sure to be some good memories and even a laugh or two shared as we reflect back over the 50 years.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5**

**> Saturday Morning Presentations 9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

(NOTE: These three presentations will be running concurrently with the Saturday morning field trips. Registration is not required.)

**1. Rat Poisons Can Harm More Species Than Just Rats: Assessing the Risk to Urban Owls in North Vancouver**

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**Speaker: Kate Fremlin, RPBio and PhD Candidate, Simon Fraser University**

The newest poisons to deal with rat infestations are much more toxic than the older warfarin-type poisons. The problem however is that these “second generation rodenticides” are also more toxic to wildlife and pets if they consume poisoned rats.

Wildlife biologist and environmental toxicologist Kate Fremlin was approached by concerned North Vancouver community members and the Elders Council for Parks in BC to provide them with more information. Hear what Kate’s study found and what she reported back to the Elders Council and to the District and City of North Vancouver.

**2. LOOK UP....WAY UP! VANCOUVER'S BIG TREES**

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*Last updated July 23, 2019*



**Speaker: Ira Sutherland, PhD Candidate, Dept of Forestry, UBC**

If you were raised watching 1960s children’s TV, the phrase “Look up... waaay up” means only one thing: giants! But the giants today are the remnants the old-growth forest that once covered the Metro Vancouver area. The trees that grew in this region were of monumental size, possibly the tallest trees on Earth.

Ira Sutherland is an avid hunter of big trees. He has searched the local forests, parks and schoolyards for the remaining giants and catalogued his finds in his online Big Tree Guide ([www.vancouverbigtrees.com](http://www.vancouverbigtrees.com)). Big trees and the historical dynamics of BC forests are the focus of Ira’s PhD research at UBC. If Ira can’t be outdoors with giant trees, his next favourite thing to do is to tell others about old-growth forests using film, photography, and story-telling.

### 3. Leave It To Beavers - Nature's Ecosystem Engineers

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**Speaker: Ted Lightfoot, Naturalist, Sculptor, Photographer and Beaver Conservationist**

What’s the best way to restore freshwater wetlands? Leave it to the beavers!

No one is a bigger fan of nature’s engineers than Ted Lightfoot. Ted is a beaver expert and educator who promotes the importance of beavers to salmon, to orcas and to us. His project showcasing how beavers could rehabilitate a wetland ecosystem at the headwaters of West Creek in Langley earned him Langley’s 2018 Environmental Hero Award.

After his presentation, meet Ted in the Golf Club’s parking lot to view the displays in his Beaver-Mobile, the trailer he towed on his epic cross-Canada “Beep for the Beaver” educational tour during Canada’s 150th year.

>Saturday Evening Keynote Address

## **Citizen Science & Bird Conservation Success Stories: Far More Than Just Bird-Watching**

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**Keynote Speaker: Dr. David Bradley, Director (British Columbia), Bird Studies Canada**

When citizen scientists head outdoors with binoculars slung around their neck to enjoy spotting birds and report their observations to research scientists, big things can happen! Each year, tens of thousands of volunteers share their energy, skill, and bird sightings through Bird Studies Canada's research and monitoring programs, and the result is bird conservation success stories. Dr. David Bradley will lead us through some of these stories, and tell us how the naturalist community has played a meaningful role.

David has been birding for as long as he can remember. Following an undergraduate degree at UBC when he birded all along BC's South Coast, he studied bioacoustics of tropical birds in Costa Rica and New Zealand for his MSc and PhD before starting at Bird Studies Canada. Now he is back in BC, and gets out birding whenever he can!

*Speakers may be subject to change. Updates will be posted to the web site.*