



Okanagan Similkameen
Stewardship Society

2020-2021 Annual Report

We gratefully acknowledge that our stewardship initiatives take place on the traditional unceded territories of the Syilx Okanagan people- the first stewards of these beautiful lands.

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THANK YOU

We are very grateful to our funding partner, members, donors, and volunteers without whose support our projects would not be possible:



SOUTH OKANAGAN
CONSERVATION FUND



2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Alyson Skinner	Executive Director
Lia McKinnon	Stewardship Biologist
Valerie Blow	Stewardship Officer
Michelle Stanley	Stewardship Officer
Amy Wagner	Field Technician
Neve Carlile	Field Technician

MISSION

Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship exists to support local residents in voluntary conservation, stewardship and enhancement of important habitats within the communities of the Okanagan and Similkameen valleys.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our entire 2020-2021 fiscal year was marked by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which shaped many of our activities over the course of the year. As fewer faces and open spaces became a province-wide mantra, many people ventured outdoors into nature and found some comfort there. As local landowners found themselves home more, we received many inquiries from past direct-mail campaigns wanting to become more involved in wildlife habitat stewardship.

While the pandemic meant we could not employ as many summer field interns as in past years, and it put a damper on community events and planting parties, we were able to continue working one-on-one at a distance with landowners, wildlife habitat stewards and the like. While a year like no other, we still celebrated many successes, planted many trees and shrubs and completed many habitat enhancement projects.



OUTREACH

In the absence of in-person workshops and community initiatives, we took our workshops online. We now have a library of seven snake, bird, and owl specific workshops available for local residents to take as their schedule allows and over 600 people had taken advantage of this prior to March 2021. Also on our website, we developed a more intuitive resource landing page and gave our multi-lingual snake stewardship materials a much needed update.

In a partnership with Penticton Public Library, OSS supported development of Birding Backpacks and helped the library kick off this initiative with a virtual Beginner Birding workshop. The Birding Backpacks are starting to take flight throughout the Okanagan through the Okanagan Regional Library lending program as well.

Community newsletters were another tool OSS used in order to maintain momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic. We reached out to local residents about wildlife conservation and stewardship within Apex Mountain, Kaleden, Okanagan Falls, Naramata, Oliver, Anarchist Mountain as well as Vernon through community-based newsletters and targeted outreach.

Further, our FunFactFridays and other Social Media reached up to 5,000 people each week.



ਬੀ ਸੀ ਦੇ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਅੰਦਰੂਨੀ ਭਾਗ 'ਚ ਸੱਪਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੱਤ ਕਿਸਮਾਂ ਹਨ। ਸਿਰਫ ਨਾਰਦਰਨ ਪੈਸੇਡਿਕ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਹਿਰੀਲਾ ਸੱਪ ਹੈ।



ਸੱਪਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਹਮਣਾ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਚੋ:

- ਉੱਚੇ ਘਾਹ ਜਾਂ ਖਿਲਾਰੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਥਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਬੁਟ ਤੇ ਪੈਂਟ ਪਹਿਨੋ।
- ਮਲਖੇ ਦੇ ਢੇਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਸੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਲੰਘੋ, ਨਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਟੱਪ ਕੇ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਸੱਪ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।
- ਅਜਿਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਥਾਂ 'ਚ ਹੱਥ ਨਾ ਪਾਓ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਵੇਖ ਨਾ ਸਕੋ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉੱਥੇ ਸੱਪ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।
- ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਸੱਪ ਨਾਲ ਛੋੜਛਾੜ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ, ਇਹ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਡੰਗ ਮਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਇਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਰੇ 'ਚ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰੇ।
- ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ ਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਕੱਲਾ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਿਓ।
- ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਥਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ (ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ, ਖੇਡ ਦੇ ਮੈਦਾਨ 'ਚ), ਤਾਂ ਘੱਟੋ ਘੱਟ ਉੱਥੇ 3 ਮੀਟਰ ਦੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਓ, ਅਤੇ ਜੇਕਰ ਸੱਪ ਉੱਥੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਤੁਰਨ ਲੱਗ ਪਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ 'ਤੇ ਨਿਗੂ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਕੋਂਜਰਵੇਸ਼ਨ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ 1-877-952-7277 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਘੱਟ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਡੰਗ ਮਾਰਨ 'ਤੇ:



1. ਉਸ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਪ ਦੀ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਕਰ ਦਿਓ, ਪਰ ਸੱਪ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਰਕਤਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਘੱਟੋ ਘੱਟ 3 ਮੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਦੂਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਗੂ ਰੱਖੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਉਸ ਪਾਸੇ ਵੱਲ ਨਾ ਚਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ।
2. ਉਸ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਰੱਖੋ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪਥਰਾਹਟ ਨੂੰ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰੋ।
3. ਉਸ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੇ ਸਰੀਰ, ਪਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਤੋਂ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਡੰਗ ਲੱਗਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਅਜਿਹੇ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਬਸਤਰ ਉਤਾਰ ਦਿਓ ਜੋ ਅੜਿੱਕਾ ਬਣਦੇ ਹੋਣ।
4. ਜਿੰਨੀ ਛੇਤੀ ਹੋ ਸਕੇ ਹਸਪਤਾਲ ਪਹੁੰਚੋ ਤੇ ਉੱਥੇ ਅਗਾਊਂ ਹੀ ਫੋਨ ਕਰ ਦਿਓ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਉਹ ਸੱਪ ਦੇ ਡੰਗੋਹੋਏ ਪੀੜਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕਰ ਸਕਣ।

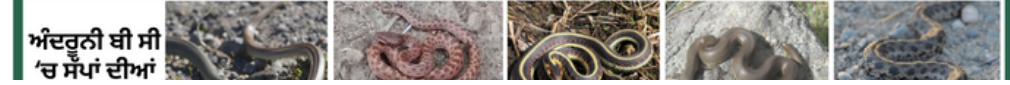


ਯਾਦ ਰੱਖੋ ਕਿ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ ਦਾ ਡੰਗ ਲਗ ਭਗ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਜਾਨਲੇਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਦੇ ਕਦਾਈਂ ਹੀ ਲੰਬੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਲਈ ਨੁਕਸਾਨਦੇਹ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

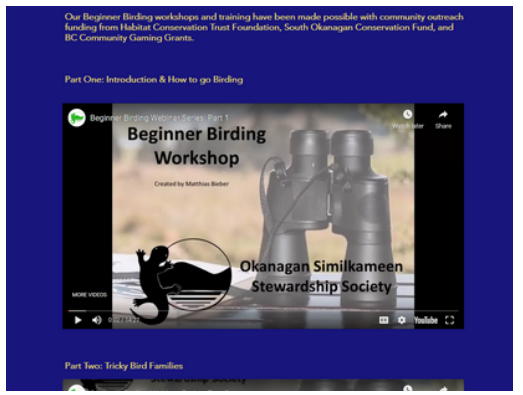
- ਇਹ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ:**
- ਸੱਪ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਨਾ
 - ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਚੁਸਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਨਾ/ਕਰਨਾ
 - ਜ਼ਖਮ 'ਤੇ ਕੱਟ ਲਾਉਣਾ/ਲਹੂ ਦੇ ਵਹਾਅ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਕਣਾ

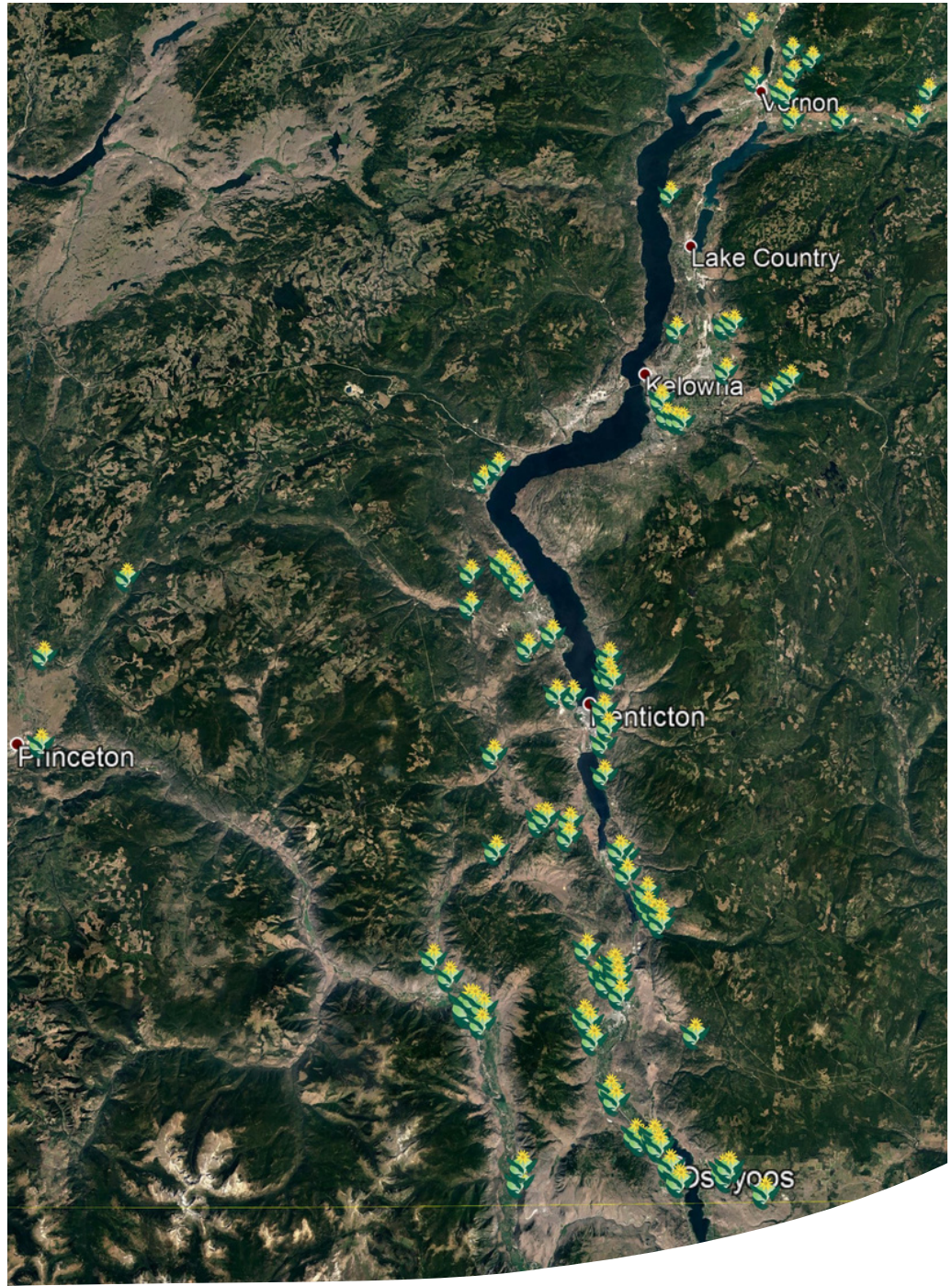
GOPHER SNAKES VS RATTLESNAKES

<p>ਜ਼ਹਿਰੀਲੇ ਨਹੀਂ</p>  <p>ਛੋਟਾ ਸਿਰ, ਅੱਖਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਅਕਸਰ ਗੂੜ੍ਹੇ ਰੰਗ ਦੀ ਪੱਟੀ ਬਣੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।</p> <p>ਪੁਛ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ 'ਚ ਗੰਢ ਵਰਗਾ ਕੁੱਝ ਵੀਨਗੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ।</p> <p>ਪਤਲਾ ਭਰਾ ਸਰੀਰ ਜਿਸ 'ਤੇ ਗੂੜ੍ਹੇ ਰੰਗ ਦੇ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਆਇੰਟਕਾਰ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ।</p> <p>ਗੁੱਟ ਬੈਸਿਨ ਗੋਫਰਸਨੇਕ</p>	<p>ਪੁਛ ਇੱਕ ਗੰਢ ਜਿਹੀ ਜਾਂ ਛੋਟੇ ਬਟਟ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲ 'ਚ ਸਮਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।</p> <p>ਚੌੜੇ, ਤਿਕੋਣੇ ਸਿਰ ਵਾਲਾ ਜਿਸਦੀ ਪੁੱਟ ਸ਼ਾਪਸ਼ਟ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ।</p> <p>ਗੂੜ੍ਹੇ ਭਰੇ-ਹਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਹਰੇ-ਸਲੇਟੀ ਰੰਗ ਦਾ ਸਰੀਰ, ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ ਲਾਲੀ ਜਿਹੇ ਰੰਗ ਦਾ • ਪਿੱਠ 'ਤੇ ਗੂੜ੍ਹੇ ਚੱਕਰ ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਚਾਰੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਚਿੱਟਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਚੱਕਰ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।</p> <p>ਨਾਰਦਰਨ ਪੈਸੇਡਿਕ ਰੈਟਲਸਨੇਕ</p>	<p>ਜ਼ਹਿਰੀਲਾ ਹੈ</p> 
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ਅੰਦਰੂਨੀ ਬੀ ਸੀ 'ਚ ਸੱਪਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ





LANDOWNER CONTACT

We contacted 375 landowners by direct mail. Unlike in previous years, the COVID-19 pandemic meant we needed to choose methods of contact that were not face-to-face.

Landowners were contacted about a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat including for California Bighorn Sheep, snakes riparian areas and shoreline stewardship, wetlands, and our delicate interior grasslands and shrub-steppes.

WILDLIFE HABITAT STEWARDS

We welcomed an additional 11 new Wildlife Habitat Stewards in 2020-2021 and now support 110 Wildlife Habitat Stewards in the conservation and management of 2042 hectares (5046 acres) of important wildlife habitats in the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys.

HABITAT RESTORATION

By the Numbers

21 sites enhanced
2000 native trees & shrubs planted
1534 kg garbage & invasive plants removed

Planting with the Purtons

Chris and Sandra Purton had a pasture that was looking for a new purpose. It had once been grazed by horses and later held a large market garden, but had most recently been sitting fallow, waiting for a new lease on life.

This fall, the Purtons helped OSS plant the first 500 native trees and shrubs into what will one day become a towering riparian forest. We were entertained while planting by many praying mantises. The large green or tan praying mantis that you often see in the Okanagan in the summer and fall were in fact introduced back in 1937 to control grasshoppers! There is a native species of mantid in the Okanagan but it is very rare and hard to spot. Other highlights from the week included hairy and downy woodpeckers feasting on mullein seed-heads, a kingfisher calling from the surrounding trees, and a sharp-shinned hawk chasing the woodpeckers.

Coldstream Creek

While planting up on a high bank along Coldstream Creek before Thanksgiving, OSS staff and volunteers received visits from some quail, several spawning Kokanee salmon, and even a curious, salmon-hungry young black bear!

More than 200 native trees and shrubs such as red-osier dogwood and trembling aspen were put in the unused fallow hay field in order to improve the riparian forest along the creek for local wildlife. In addition to all the plants, two nest boxes were also installed in cottonwood trees by the creek to help endangered Western Screech-owls.



HABITAT RESTORATION

Eneas Creek Corridor

Following our very successful restoration project with Okanagan Crush Pad along Eneas creek, we have begun to build a community of stewards along the creek. In 2020-2021 we worked with 5 different land stewards to protect and enhance over 1.5km of Eneas creek.

Projects included, helping landowners with invasive plant management plans. Fencing livestock out of the creek, replanting native vegetation in areas where it was needed, and managing invasive plants within our planted areas to give our native plants a chance to thrive.

Wetlands and riparian areas are particularly important in the dry Okanagan climate. These areas have lush growth and are very important to many of our wildlife species both common and endangered. Eneas creek provides habitat for at least 4 species at risk; lewis's woodpeckers, gopher snakes, tiger salamanders, and spadefoots. An endangered yellow-breasted chat was also seen on one of the stewarded properties.

Communities of stewards like the one along Eneas creek are important because they help to amplify one another's effects. Each owner may only have a small portion of the creek but together they are creating an important corridor. A large stretch of shady creek, that helps keep water temperatures cool for fish and native wildflowers provide for native pollinators.

This year we have a big project planned in Cawston with Mount Boucherie Winery and we are already in the process of creating a community of stewards there too!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Please refer to the 2020-2021 financial statements prepared by Grant Thornton, available on our website at: www.osstewardship.ca/financialstatement



WHAT WE DO

Provide assistance and support to landowners as stewards in conservation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitats on their properties while maintaining other land use practices such as agriculture and eco-tourism.

Provide information, assistance and advice about local species and spaces including tailored habitat assessments prepared by our local biologists.

Develop best management practices and management plans for coexisting with wildlife on your property.

Develop projects, such as native plant enhancement, shoreline fencing, and invasive plant management to enhance wildlife habitat in our communities.

Work cooperatively and collaboratively in the delivery of our projects and activities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Learn about local species and spaces at www.osstewardship.ca/resources

Become a steward:
www.osstewardship.ca/stewards

Support our stewardship work by making a donation, becoming a member or signing up as a volunteer at www.osstewardship.ca

