

Annual Report 2011



Wildlife Preservation Canada

RECOVERY ■ CONSERVATION ■ KNOWLEDGE

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Charitable Registration Number 89171 0535 RR0001



Letter from the Executive Director

In keeping with Wildlife Preservation Canada’s ambitious Conservation Strategy, we dramatically increased our conservation commitments to existing and new Canadian species thanks to the support of existing and new donors. While our largest commitment continues to be the eastern loggerhead recovery program in Ontario, WPC more than doubled its species recovery project expenditures in Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Alberta and BC.

Our Ontario Freshwater Turtle Nest Predation Mitigation efforts have been expanded to include the endangered spotted turtle, as well as mark-recapture studies and conservation genetics research for the spiny softshell and snapping turtles. Since 2005 over 4,700 turtle hatchlings have made it safely into Lake Erie to begin the next stage of their lives.

We added the piping plover and Oregon spotted frog to our conservation portfolio in 2011 – a pilot captive rearing project with the endangered Atlantic population of piping plover and a captive breeding and headstarting program for the critically endangered Oregon spotted frog in B.C.

In addition to our commitment to science-based species recovery programs, WPC continues to

be committed to building conservation capacity through: the unique Canada’s New Noahs training and field experience program, now in its 21st year; providing work placements and internships to young Canadian scientists; and supporting Canadian graduate student’s field research with at risk species. In addition to the New Noah program, in 2011 we provided hands-on-field experience and internships to 19 young scientists, as well as supporting the field research of five graduate students.

This year, Alec Monro stepped down as President after faithfully leading the organization for seven years and we welcomed Chris Boynton as the new WPC President. In recognition of Alec’s leadership and commitment, we established the H. Alec B. Monro Award for Conservation Excellence.

As a supporter of WPC, you can be proud of our accomplishments thanks to your commitment to our shared mission to save species from extinction. Sadly, the number of species in need is growing, but happily, with your continued support, so is our capacity to answer their call for help.

Elaine Williams

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION CANADA

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Elaine Williams

Established in 1985, WPC is a non-profit organisation (Reg. #89171 0535 RR0001) dedicated to saving critically endangered animal species from extinction.

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Wildlife Preservation Canada is a lean, hands-on organization based in Guelph, Ontario. Since 1985, WPC has worked to save critically endangered species both in Canada and around the world - species whose numbers are so low that a great deal more than habitat protection is required to recover them.

Wildlife Preservation Canada believes that extinction is forever. The loss of any one species can damage the web of life, resulting in unexpected environmental changes that impact other species, including our own. Without urgent action, these irreplaceable animals will be gone forever.

Wildlife Preservation Canada is the only independent, national, non-profit charitable organization in Canada that focuses exclusively on the active recovery of critically endangered wildlife by utilizing both applied scientific knowledge and practical hands-on recovery tools such as captive breeding, reintroductions and translocations. WPC is also the first non-profit organization to be the lead in implementing a Species Recovery Action Plan under Section 11 of the federal government's Species at Risk Act - for the eastern loggerhead shrike in Ontario.

Professional training, scientific field research, captive breeding, reintroduction, population management, habitat stewardship, public education and community involvement - WPC uses each of these important tools to pull species from the brink of extinction. Species such as the Mauritius kestrel, pink pigeon and echo parakeet would be extinct today if it were not for WPC and its sister organizations. We are increasingly applying what we learned overseas to endangered species recovery efforts in Canada.



In addition to WPC's involvement with species recovery, a special priority is building Canada's conservation capacity by training young scientists to create a network of skilled professionals who will drive conservation efforts in Canada and around the world for decades to come. This is done through our Canada's New Noahs training program and the Canadian Collection - a program that supports dedicated Canadian conservation graduate students undertaking applied research with risk species.

Wildlife Preservation Canada was established in 1985 by the late author and naturalist, Gerald Durrell, and is primarily funded through individual, foundation and corporate donations. Any government funding we receive is directed to restricted program activities.

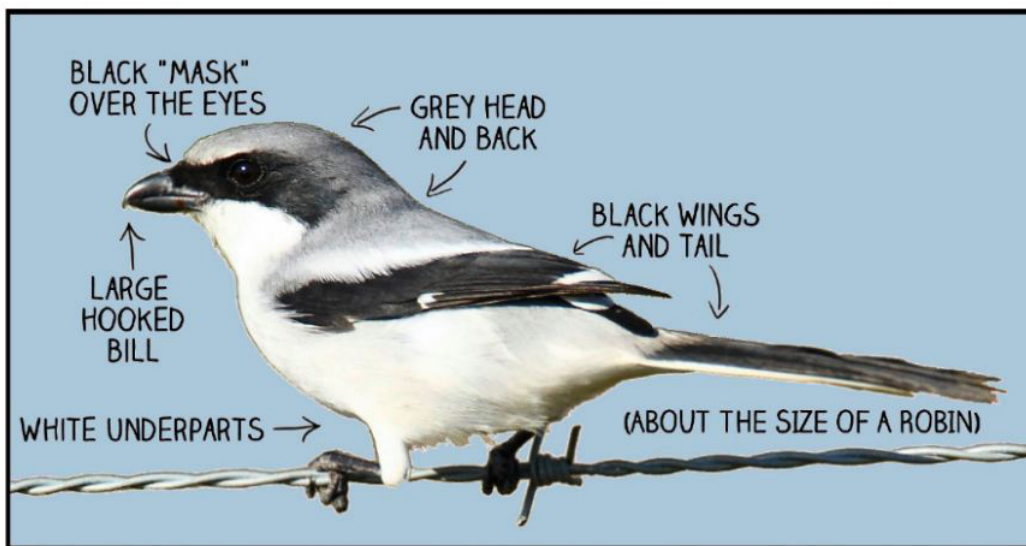
WPC, with the support of donors like you, has supported significant scientific advances with over 30 endangered species in Canada and around the world, from birds to foxes to lemurs to turtles. You are vital to helping us save animals from extinction. Thank-you.



Eastern Loggerhead Shrike Recovery

WANTED ALIVE

EASTERN LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE



Wildlife Preservation Canada has been the lead non-governmental organisation responsible for coordinating and implementing the recovery of the eastern loggerhead shrike in Ontario since 2003. The ultimate goal of any recovery program is to increase the wild population to self-sustaining levels. The Eastern Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Program consists of several components to reach that goal - wild population monitoring, captive breeding and release, research, habitat stewardship and community outreach and involvement in the recovery.

Although considered a songbird, the robin-sized shrike hunts like a raptor, catching amphibians, small reptiles and mammals, and even other songbirds to supplement its mainly insect diet. Its unique habit of impaling prey on the thorns of woody shrubs, usually hawthorns, and barbed wire has gained it the nickname “butcher bird.” Once plentiful in Canada, the eastern loggerhead shrike now numbers only a few dozen in the

wild in just a handful of locations in Ontario and Manitoba.

A migratory species produces special challenges. Our recovery team made several important discoveries in 2011, and continued to build their knowledge of what it takes to save this unique bird.

How can we build the population?

Since this program began, we have bred and released over 600 birds to the wild from our field breeding and release aviaries. With our partners at the Toronto Zoo and our newest partners at the African Lion Safari and Mountsberg Raptor Centre at Mountsberg Conservation Area - Halton Conservation, we maintain a captive breeding population. 93 fledglings were produced in 2011 and 21 young were released. We retained a large number of the young for our breeding population for the future. Almost half of our population was composed of birds who



were becoming too old to breed. The retained young from 2011 will provide an infusion of young breeders that can produce large numbers of young for the next 8 - 10 years and enhance the genetic integrity of our breeding population.

Where do they go?

Loss of habitat in Canada is not the only reason our shrikes are in decline. Something else seems to be happening, either during migration or on their wintering grounds. The problem is, other than “south”, no one knows exactly where they go every autumn!

For years, we’ve been banding our Canadian shrikes so they can be easily identified. For the first time, in 2011 we received word of two confirmed sightings from helpful birders in the United States, one in Delaware, the second in Virginia Beach, VA, in the photo at right. Both included good photographs showing clearly visible bands, confirming that these are indeed shrikes which spent the summer in Ontario. This information, along with our continued use of geolocators, will help us determine their migratory path and wintering grounds, and gives us a basis to work with conservation authorities in the U.S. to find and address the causes of their population decline.

Are they coming back?

We spotted three of our captive-reared birds returned to Ontario in the spring of 2011. One of these birds successfully bred in the Carden area with a wild female and produced at least three young. This is our first returning bird where we utilized an alternative release approach called hacking. The bird was bred at the Toronto Zoo in 2010, and released at our site in Carden, after acclimatising for a period of time. We now know these birds can successfully migrate, return and contribute to the wild population.



ELISE ENDERS

A shrike spotted in Virginia with leg bands clearly visible.

In 2011 only 21 wild breeding pairs were confirmed in Ontario, along with 22 reported singles. It is hoped that these singles will pair up and produce young in the future. With only 21 confirmed wild pairs, the captive breeding and release program continues to be a vital component of the recovery effort to prevent this species’ extirpation from Canada.

Every year the shrike recovery program makes progress in our efforts to save this songbird. It is a continual learning process. The information and knowledge we have gained this year will be used to guide our actions for the future.

Follow the blog at www.wildlifepreservation.ca

Wildlife Preservation Canada is forever grateful for the ongoing dedication and enthusiasm of field interns, birders, volunteers and local landowners. Without their support and involvement, these recovery activities would not be possible. Other project partners include: The Harold Crabtree Foundation; Boisset Family Estates; Bird Studies Canada; Environment Canada; Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Couchiching Conservancy, Toronto Zoo; African Lion Safari; Mountsberg Raptor Centre at Mountsberg Conservation Area - Halton Conservation, and over 250 landowners!



Freshwater Turtle Conservation



Ashley Leifso, with the WPC freshwater turtle team, releasing a snapping turtle after marking for later identification.

Tortoises and freshwater turtles are among the most endangered species of animals. Of the estimated 300 species of tortoises and freshwater turtles in the world, the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Red List Authority suggests that at least 40% - possibly more than 60% - of them are in imminent danger of extinction. Over the last 10 years, declines of more than 30% have occurred in some Ontario populations.

Wildlife Preservation Canada supported Ryan Bolton's research on five freshwater turtle species nesting along a beach of an Ontario provincial park since 2005. Past Canada's New Noah Christina Davy continued his work in 2011, and continued to implement mitigation techniques to protect the nests and eggs of the threatened species.

Christina and her team marked hundreds of turtles returning to the area and the data collected will provide an estimate of the size of the turtle

Spiny softshell. Note the flat, soft shell.

populations at the site. Turtles are marked with notches on the outer "checker board" ring of their shells, called scutes. By notching unique combinations of scutes, the turtles can then be identified. This works well for hardshelled turtles like blanding's and snappers, but softshell turtles shells, which are indeed soft and rubbery, would be damaged by this. However, funding this year provided for PIT technology, similar to the microchip inserted in pets which can then be scanned, to be utilized in the spiny softshell. We can now collect data to estimate their threatened populations as well.

Our support this year also allowed the team to develop genetic markers for spiny softshell and snapping turtles, which will be used to investigate population connectivity. Very little is known about the genetics of these two species and these markers will help to answer important questions for conservation and management.

Over 800 eggs were collected from nests, to incubate and hatch in a safe environment. Over 700 hatchlings were produced, marked and released at the nest sites, bringing the total to over 4,000 hatchlings released to begin their life journey and contribute to the diversity of the freshwater lakes.

Follow the blog at www.wildlifepreservation.ca.





Canada's New Noahs

Ffion Cassidy of Winnipeg, Manitoba, joined the illustrious group of Canada's New Noahs in 2011 when she was selected from exemplary candidates from across the country. Wildlife Preservation Canada launched this unique ten-month program in the conservation and management of endangered species over 20 years ago to fill a missing component of conservation education in Canada.

Canada's New Noahs field training component is conducted on the island of Mauritius, off the coast of Africa. There are only nine surviving native bird species on the island which exist in alarmingly small populations. However, intensive conservation management has contributed to tremendous successes in saving the Mauritius kestrel, echo parakeet and pink pigeon from certain extinction.

Oregon Spotted Frog

The Oregon spotted frog has the unhappy distinction of being one of Canada's most endangered organisms, and is on the brink of extirpation from Canada. It is now found only in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, where it is believed that perhaps 300 breeding individuals remain.

To address this concern, WPC launched a husbandry program to reintroduce Oregon spotted frogs into the wild at various life-stages, including egg mass, tadpoles and metamorphs. During our first year, egg masses were collected from the wild and over 500 tadpoles were reared in captivity at the Greater Vancouver Zoo. As a result of the cool summer the tadpoles metamorphosed later than anticipated and were too small to be released in the fall. They were overwintered to be released in the spring.

WPC's multi-year commitment to this project

The Canada's New Noah program has contributed a legacy to conservation in Canada. Our 2011/12 Canada's New Noah, Ffion Cassidy, is the first New Noah hailing from Manitoba. Kendra MacDonald, of Prince Edward Island, our 2010 New Noah returned from her adventures to work with the Piping Plover team in Nova Scotia; Christina Davy continued work with freshwater turtles; and Tara Imlay managed the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Program during Species Recovery Biologist Jessica Steiner's maternity leave.

Graduates of the program express their boundless gratitude to WPC and you, our supporters, by supporting the aims and goals we share in their commitment to conservation throughout their careers.

will see a ramping up of production in future years, including studying habitat use and head-starting success, which will rely on radio-telemetry data from captive-reared frogs released into the wetlands.

Follow the blog at www.wildlifepreservation.ca





Burrowing Owl Recovery



ALAN WILSON

With fewer than 1,000 breeding pairs of this prairie species remaining in Canada, the burrowing owl is listed as endangered. The Canadian Wildlife Service predicts that, unless its declining population trends are reversed, the burrowing owl will be extirpated within a few decades. Since 1995 Wildlife Preservation Canada has been bringing its expertise to the recovery efforts of the burrowing owl across the Canadian prairies. In 2006, WPC's Aimee Mitchell helped introduce and compare our soft-release methods pioneered in Saskatchewan to the British Columbia Burrowing Owl Recovery Program and in 2007, the soft-release technique was adopted by the team.

It was a banner year for the reintroduction program in British Columbia in 2011. Not only did they see the largest number of owls produced in the field, but the program continues to expand

in many positive ways.

The first piece of exciting news was the continued increase in the number of returns to B.C. The first owl to return this season arrived at the new and expanding release site in the South Okanagan. Soon after, more owls returned with a total of 19 owls returning from migration.

More great news is that even though only 89 burrowing owls were released in 2011, those owls along with the returns produced 39 nests filled with 259 offspring, the most offspring produced in the field since the start of the program!

With such great accomplishments in the field, the B.C. recovery team would like to thank the entire field team and volunteers, as well as Wildlife Preservation Canada and its supporters, who helped make this possible.

Follow the blog at www.wildlifepreservation.ca



Piping Plover

Despite ongoing conservation efforts since it was first listed as endangered in 1985, Atlantic Canada's piping plover population has shown few signs of recovery. The piping plover nests only on beaches, where it lays its eggs in a small hollow scratched out of the sand. Apart from habitat loss, one of the biggest threats to the plover's survival is the activities of humans or their pets on the beach. Even if these activities don't destroy the relatively unprotected eggs, they often cause the parents to abandon the nest.

In co-operation with New Brunswick's Magnetic Hill Park and Parks Canada, Wildlife Preservation Canada supported Kendra MacDonald to develop protocols suitable for Atlantic conditions through an experimental captive rearing and release program using abandoned wild eggs.



The team was able to collect five eggs from abandoned nests, which were successfully incubated at the Magnetic Hill Zoo. The five chicks were moved to the release pen where they learned to forage successfully before being released. Further breeding and release efforts will build on the accomplishments of this pilot project.

Swift Fox

Our largest success story is the return of the swift fox to the Canadian prairies from which they had disappeared in the early 1930's. Thanks to the releases of 942 foxes between 1983 and 1997, the 2005/6 census stated, "this continued growth indicates that this is the most successful reintroduction of a nationally extirpated carnivore to date." While now listed as threatened, population censuses for the swift fox to determine their presence, numbers, and/or a decrease or stabilization over time are important steps to helping this little housecat sized fox.

Cynthia Moehrensclager, who has been involved with the reintroductions and 2005/6 census, continued her work in 2011. Researchers utilize a mark-recapture technique where a swift fox is marked upon first capture, then the history of recaptures for individual animals are used to approximate how many other animals were not

actually caught.

Raw trapping data from 29 field assistants over a 16 year period has become key to answering questions raised and needs to be recoded from original field data books. Answering the questions with this recoded data can profoundly affect the understanding of this population's health.





Thank You!

Wildlife Preservation Canada is pleased and honoured to recognise the following donors whose outstanding generosity has made our critical conservation activities possible. WPC is grateful to the thousands of other donors and volunteers who contributed throughout the year. We apologise if we have mistakenly omitted your name.

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(\$150,000 or more)

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The following joined our monthly giving program in 2011.
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Kat Robbins



WPC Financial Highlights *

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES AND CHANGES TO FUND BALANCES Year ended December 31, 2011

	General Fund 2011 \$	Restricted Fund 2011 \$	Internally Restricted \$	2011 \$	Total 2010 \$
REVENUE					
Individual Donations	101,540	40	137,055	238,635	126,278
Foundation Donations	4,985	89,557	--	94,542	81,320
Special Event	27,954	--	--	27,954	33,842
Federal government grants	73,414	279,809	--	353,223	297,413
Provincial government grants	27,756	111,026	--	138,782	155,158
Other grants	12,000	--	--	12,000	--
Other Income	14,070	--	--	14,070	7,215
Investment income	1,915	--	--	1,915	--
	263,634	480,432	137,055	881,121	701,226
EXPENSES					
Project Implementation	54,185	55,018	--	109,203	110,545
Conservation grants	59,130	354,290	--	413,420	376,532
Grant Expenses	27,984	42,890	--	70,874	68,005
Administrative and fund raising	70,670	50,905	--	121,575	89,164
Special Event	7,403	--	--	7,403	8,153
Web Development	--	32,101	--	32,101	--
	219,372	535,204	--	754,576	652,399
Excess (Deficiency) of revenue					
	44,262	(54,772)	137,055	126,545	48,827
Fund balances,					
beginning of year	182,312	35,498	62,734	280,544	231,717
Transfers between funds	8,137	19,274	(27,411)	--	--
Fund balances, year end	234,711	--	172,378	407,089	280,544

Notes:

1. The General Fund reports unrestricted revenue available for any purpose. The General Fund records all general revenues. This Fund records expenses that the Board has allocated from the General Fund to mission related activities such as species recovery programs, professional training and education, as well as administrative operating and fund raising expenditures associated with the general management and maintenance of the Organisation.
2. The Restricted Fund consists of funds available for spending that are restricted by the donor.
3. The Internally Restricted funds are to be used to assist with the cash flow requirements of the organization, as deemed appropriate by the Board. The Gerald Durrell Fund for Wildlife was created to continue the conservation work of Gerald Durrell, and can be allocated to projects which fulfil that mandate. The Futures Fund was created based on a decision by the Board to allocate 50% of any revenue surplus in excess of budget to the Futures Fund annually. The first funds were deposited in 1998. The Bequest Fund was created in order to allocate bequests in excess of \$10,000 to this fund, to be brought into the annual budget to fund conservation programs over a five year period. Fifty percent of bequests over \$100,000 will be permanently endowed.

*For a complete set of the audited financial statements prepared by Robinson Lott & Brohman, please call (519) 836-9314 or e-mail us at admin@wildlifepreservation.ca



Get the latest updates and join the conversation!



Wildlife Preservation Canada on facebook provides you with the opportunity to meet our community. Or, read the Blogs at www.wildlifepreservation.ca for exciting news from the field and our biologists.

5th Annual Run Wild with Wildlife Preservation Canada!

On Sunday, October 14, do your part to save our planet's endangered wildlife by supporting the Run Wild team. Register as a runner or walker and encourage your friends to join you in walking or running the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront 5K, Half-Marathon or full Marathon. Or, sponsor one of our Run Wild team members online at www.torontowaterfront-marathon.com and receive an instant tax receipt.



Wildlife Preservation Canada
invites you to our

Annual Auction

Join us for an evening of refreshment, delicious food, exciting guest speakers and – of course – your chance to bid on and win fabulous auction prizes. All proceeds go to support Wildlife Preservation Canada programs to save critically endangered animal species.

Wednesday, October 10, 2012
Evening begins at 6 pm
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To purchase tickets or for more information please call
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Wildlife Preservation Canada

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