

LASKEEK BAY RESEARCH

**12**

**LASKEEK BAY CONSERVATION SOCIETY  
ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT, 2002**

July 2003

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ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT, 2002**

**Edited by**

**ANTHONY J. GASTON**

July 2003

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*Box 867, Queen Charlotte City, B.C. V0T 1S0, Canada*

Suggested citation: Gaston, A.J. (ed.) 2002. Laskeek Bay Research 12. Laskeek Bay Conservation Society, Queen Charlotte City, B.C.

## LASKEEK BAY CONSERVATION SOCIETY

**The Laskeek Bay Conservation Society** is a volunteer group based in the Queen Charlotte Islands. The society is committed to increasing the appreciation and understanding of the natural environment through:

**Sensitive biological research that is not harmful to wildlife or its natural habitat**

**Interpretation and educational opportunities for residents of and visitors to the Queen Charlotte Islands**

Since 1990, the Society has operated a field research station at East Limestone Island and is carrying out a diverse long-term monitoring, research and interpretation programme in the surrounding islands and waters of Laskeek Bay. We actively involve volunteers from our island communities, many other locations in British Columbia, as well as from overseas. For further information contact:

Laskeek Bay Conservation Society  
Box 867, Queen Charlotte City, British Columbia, Canada V0T 1S0  
Phone/fax (250) 559-2345; E-mail <laskeek@island.net>

## **BACKGROUND**

The goals and objectives of the Society are:

1. *To undertake and support research and long term monitoring of wildlife populations of the marine and terrestrial ecosystems of Haida Gwaii, especially the Laskeek Bay area.*
2. *To provide opportunities for non-scientists, especially students and local residents of Haida Gwaii, to participate as volunteers in our field season programs, and to offer training to impart necessary field research skills.*
3. *To promote better understanding of the marine and terrestrial ecosystems of Haida Gwaii, especially the Laskeek Bay area, by providing information to youth, local residents, and to the public in general in the form of publications, meetings and exhibits.*
4. *To promote the conservation of native species and to develop public awareness of the changes caused by introduced species to Haida Gwaii.*
5. *To support and assist other programs aimed at providing better knowledge, management and conservation of ecosystems on Haida Gwaii.*

## INTRODUCTION

This year (2002) marked the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the Laskeek Bay Conservation Society's volunteer field programme at East Limestone Island, Haida Gwaii. Concentrating mainly within the Laskeek Bay area, the Society's programme includes biological monitoring and research, interpretation for visitors and learning opportunities for students and volunteers.

The scientific work of the Society is carried out in collaboration with researchers and management agencies having ongoing interest in the ecology and conservation of Haida Gwaii. The research programme is directed by a Science Advisory Committee that works closely with the Society's Board of Directors to develop research that is relevant to the conservation needs of Haida Gwaii and consistent with the goals of the society. Research activities include marine bird and marine mammal population monitoring, studies of intertidal invertebrates, plants and forest birds. In addition, the Society is a participant in the Research Group on Introduced Species, an umbrella organization devoted to studies of exotic species in Haida Gwaii and their impact on indigenous ecosystems. This research focuses especially on the impact of introduced mammals, including deer, raccoons and squirrels on the islands.

The overall aim of the Society's research programme is to provide long-term information on the biology and ecology of Haida Gwaii ecosystems. Ongoing monitoring, using simple, standard techniques that allow year-to-year comparisons to be made, and allowing the direct participation of volunteers, is the cornerstone of the Society's approach. By monitoring a variety of indicator species in the ocean, inter-tidal and terrestrial ecosystems, we can obtain an overall measure of their health. Because marine waters may be subject to cyclical or directional changes operating at the scale of decades, such observations become most valuable when they are tracked consistently over many years. Such long-term monitoring is becoming increasingly pertinent in the context of global climate change. In addition, the possibility of offshore oil developments in Hecate Strait makes the Society's long-term data on marine birds especially pertinent. In the event that such developments were to proceed, our information on population status and trends would be vital for monitoring both short-term and long-term impacts.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Laskeek Bay Conservation Society is a non-profit volunteer-run organization, and could not operate without the generous support from a wide variety of groups and individuals. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of all our supporters and apologize to any we may have inadvertently omitted from this list:

**The society gratefully acknowledges the generous financial support provided by:**

- Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada (National Wildlife Research Centre, Ottawa)
- Ecoaction and Science Horizons Programs of Environment Canada
- Gwaii Trust Society
- W. Alton Jones Foundation
- Mountain Equipment Co-op
- Forest Renewal BC
- South Moresby Forest Replacement Account
- Weyerhaeuser
- Canadian Nature Federation
- Haida Gwaii Museum
- Parks Canada
- Air Canada
- Habitat Conservation Trust
- Calgary Zoological Society
- British Columbia Gaming Commission

... as well as numerous other small business and private donors.

We also thank the following individuals or groups who gave generously to the Society in many different ways:

- Tony Gaston, Jean-Louis Martin and other members of the Science Advisory Committee for valuable advice and guidance through the field season.
- Graeme Ellis for providing us with a camera and film to document Orcas.
- Crew and guests of the vessels Island Roamer and Maple Leaf for generously supporting our project with their visits, purchase and donations.

- Nathalie Macfarlane at the Haida Gwaii Museum, for continuing to provide a venue to promote the Society's work.
- Barb Rowsell, RGIS coordinator, for generous help whenever required.
- All the artists who donated works for our successful "Art of Limestone" exhibit.
- LBCS directors for their time and effort in maintaining and developing funding, the field camp, and the scientific and educational projects.
- Kevin Borserio and all the students of Project Limestone, Gordon McMahon and the G.M. Dawson School, and Erin Sinclair and the Living and Learning School students.
- All of the volunteers who participated in the Limestone Island camp, purchased t-shirts, made donations, or helped out in town.

Finally, thanks goes to the owners, staff and crew of South Moresby Air Charters, s/v Anvil Cove, and m/v Tana Bay for their professional services in transporting gear and people from Queen Charlotte City to Limestone.

**SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 2002**

Dr. Anthony Gaston (Chair, marine bird specialist)

*Canadian Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Research Centre, 100 Gamelin Blvd., Hull,  
Quebec K1A 0H3*

Dr. Jean-Louis Martin (introduced species, terrestrial birds)

*Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, CEPE, Route de Mende, BP 5051-34033,  
Montpellier-Cedex, France*

Kathy Heise (marine mammals)

*Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, 6270 University Blvd.,  
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4*

Dr. Tom Reimchen (Haida Gwaii ecosystems, fish)

*Dept. of Biology, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, V8W 3N5*