

LASKEEK BAY RESEARCH

16

**LASKEEK BAY CONSERVATION SOCIETY
SCIENTIFIC REPORT, 2008 and 2009**

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Cover Photo: Ancient Murrelet family on the water
Taken by Jake Pattison

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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 program 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:

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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 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

The scientific work of the Laskeek Bay Conservation Society has been carried out each summer on East Limestone Island and adjacent islands and in the waters of Laskeek Bay since 1990. Much of the work has been conducted in collaboration with researchers and management agencies having ongoing interests in the ecology and conservation of Haida Gwaii. The research program is coordinated and directed by a Scientific 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 population monitoring of marine birds and marine mammals and ecological research on intertidal invertebrates, plants, and forest birds. 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. Research in Laskeek Bay focuses especially on the impacts of introduced mammals, including deer, raccoons and squirrels. The Society has recently initiated a program to record and eradicate alien plants on Laskeek Bay islands.

Our research program is designed to provide long-term information on the biology and ecology of Haida Gwaii ecosystems. Ongoing monitoring, using simple, standard techniques that enable 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 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 important in the context of global climate change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- BC Hydro
- Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment Canada)
- Coast Sustainability Trust
- Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site
- Gwaii Trust
- Maple Leaf Adventures & Bluewater Adventures
- Mountain Equipment Co-op
- Northern Savings Credit Union
- Northwest Invasive Plant Council
- School District #50 & The Community Links Program
- Science Horizons Program (Environment Canada)

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- Staff and volunteers at East Limestone Island
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- Researchers and Crew on Reef Island
- Haida Gwaii Watchmen for their hospitality during our visits to Skedans, Tanu and Hotsprings Island, for the great tours of the village sites and for their interest in our projects

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