



Annual Highlights for 2008-2009

Program development and operations

- This year, GOERT established four new site stewardship programs for key species at risk sites. As the coordinating body, GOERT was able to successfully fundraise, bring partners together, and provide resources, tools and expertise to launch these programs.
- Funding from the Ministry of Environment (\$125,000) enabled us to leverage more than \$400,000 from other funding sources.
- GOERT increased the proportion of funding from non-government sources in 2008-2009, and is working on further diversifying its sources of funding.
- The GOERT office moved in June to Courtney Street at Government Street; we are now operating independently as a registered society and have completed our charitable status application. We hope to become a federal charity in 2009.

Recovery planning for species and ecosystems at risk

- Created and maintained GIS and rare species and sites databases for recovery planning, in partnership with the Conservation Data Centre, Parks Canada and local governments.
- Developed multi-species action plans, and single-species management plans or recovery strategies for a total of 39 species at risk.
- Worked with several land trusts and conservancies as well as staff from the Ministry of Environment, Environment Canada and Parks Canada to ensure landowner contact for species at risk is coordinated and effective.

Outreach and landowner contact

- This year the GOERT Outreach Program created new materials for targeted outreach and improved existing materials, and met with governments, organizations and the public to increase stewardship of species at risk on non-federal lands.
- More than 160 landholders (private & corporate) with species at risk on their land were successfully contacted, including several landowners who were contacted about surveys by Conservation Data Centre staff.
- 52 species at risk surveys completed on private, corporate and municipal lands.
- Ten local governments were contacted about species at risk in their jurisdiction; three species at risk workshops held for local government staff.
- Corresponded or met with Beecher Bay First Nation, Songhees First Nation, Tseycum First Nation, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, and Sencot'en Alliance about Garry oak ecosystems and species at risk.

- Held a workshop for Cowichan Tribes First Nation that was attended by approximately 50 students, teachers, land managers and elders.
- Met and corresponded with developers and local governments on tree protection bylaws, development proposals, Official Community Plans, and power transmission line and road developments, providing information on how to protect Garry oak habitat and species at risk.
- In response to neighbourhood sightings from Dec '08 through Feb '09 of presumed-extirpated western bluebirds, 6 nestboxes were quickly installed in two City of Victoria parks. Nearby community members and school students were notified.
- Native Plant Propagation Guidelines for more than 75 plants completed and available on our website www.goert.ca. Eleven invasive species and 12 species at risk accounts added to stewardship field manuals, also available on our website.
- The Garry Oak Gardener's Handbook won a national citation from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects. The publication was very popular and an additional 5500 copies of an expanded second edition were printed at the end of March.
- The development of a Compendium of Garry Oak Restoration is in progress, with the first draft of this complete resource on Garry oak ecosystem restoration expected in 2009-2010.
- Worked with partners at the Royal BC Museum to produce an interactive online grass identification key, anticipated to be in operation later in 2009.
- Sixth annual Garry Oak Ecosystems Research Colloquium held in February was a success, with more than 70 attendees from BC, Ontario and the United States.