



2015 Annual Report

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY

Helping Wildlife Recover

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British Columbia Gaming Branch



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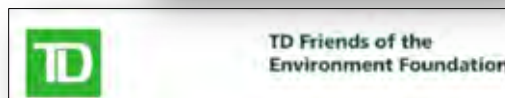
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MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY

Helping Wildlife Recover 2015 Annual Report

The Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS) thanks all of our generous contributors for helping us continue wildlife rehabilitation and conservation efforts in 2014/15. These selfless contributions allowed for this year's programs to proceed.

We appreciate the support of the MARS board of directors, staff, contractors and our many volunteers. Without you this could not have been possible.



Jo-Anne Johnson photo.

SPECIAL THANKS: We wish to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia. The Province of BC was our second largest contributor and supported a large portion of our 2014/15 education program on wildlife protection and conservation awareness.

BC Hydro (Bald Eagle Festival), Comox and Strathcona Regional Districts (thanks Brenda), Corporation of the City of Courtenay and the City of Campbell River also continue to be strong supporters of MARS. Other contributors included Art Martell (Comox Valley Nature), My Tech Guys (hosting our web site and providing tech support), Affordable Custom Framing and Art, Donna Hunter, Avalanche Pub, Backdoor Gallery, and BC Wildlife Federation. Support was also received from: Wendy Kotilla YER, Connie Schaad Face Painting, Viktor Davare, Blue Owl B&B (Denman Island), Boston Pizza, Cheri Lamb, Brooklyn Elementary School, Bruce Cousens (Purple Martin Recovery Program), Carol Forrester, and Chris Hansen. Thanks to the Campbell River Salmon Foundation, Campbell River Logger Sports, Comox Valley Newcomers Club, Comox Valley Paddlers Club, Comox Valley Stroke Recovery Group, Continual Palingenesis, Campbell River Environmental Committee, Campbell River Tim Hortons, Crown Isle Thrifty's, Dan Bowen (Project Watershed), Dave Stevens, Ecole Phoenix Middle School, Epicure Shelly Aby (Schorno), Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society, Feathers in BC, Filberg Lodge, First Student Transport, Folder, Grape Expectations, Miracle Beach Elementary, North Island Distance Education School, North Island College, The Raptors, Gerry Powers (Owls of BC), Sean Gorman (Music Bingo), Park Café, Norm Snihur (helicopter support), Outback Nursery, United Way of Toronto, Photo Tech-foto source, Interfor, Western Forest Products, Quality Foods, WestJet, all contributed to MARS events in some way.

Publicity came from 97.3FM The Eagle Radio, Comox Valley Record, Comox Valley Echo, Campbell River Mirror, Campbell River Courier Islander, CTV-Gord Kurbis, CHEK NEWS – Dean Stoltz and Shaw Cable.

The Wickaninnish Inn/Point Restaurant, WestJet and Harbour Hideout Vacation Rental continue to help with our raffles. Pacific Coastal Airlines donated transport of injured wildlife, and BC Ferries gave free passage for wildlife rescue.

Help from Veterinary Hospitals was amazing (as usual) and included Phoenix Rising Veterinary clinic, Van Isle Veterinary Hospital, Shamrock Veterinary Clinic, Sunrise Veterinary Clinic (**thanks Stacey!**), Puntledge Veterinary Clinic and North Island Veterinary Hospital.

Others that helped us in some way include Greenways Land Trust, Guenter Brothers, Holiday Bliss Botanicals by Dana Hook, Hornby Eagle Group Projects Society, Island Silver Sands Cottages, James Bavis, Jamie Edwards Personal Real Estate Corp, Jeanine Bond (Ducks Unlimited), Kathy Campbell, Kinnikinnik Child Care Centre, Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens, Larry Aguilar (Potter), Laurie Ulm, Liz Aldridge Lynda Hodgkinson, Mary-Anne Peterson, the Maritime Heritage Centre, Mid-island Racing Pigeon Society, Mip Yip (Vancouver Island Birds), Mishi, Nystar Myra Falls Ltd., RBC Blue Water Project, Remax, Ripple Rock and Gem Club, Scotia Bank, The House of Now, Team Teluscares, White Spot, and Shoppers Drug Mart.

Seasmoke "Sail with the Whales", Sharon and Lewis, Silpada Jewelry (Lois and Peter Beck-Millman, South Hollow Gallery & Leapenhi Paper, St. John Ambulance Society, Stella Swanson, Sophie and Karen, Steph Nathan and Terry Thormin (Comox Valley Nature), Strathcona Wilderness Institute Society, Sue and Kird Sunby, Theresa Knight, Vi Fitness for Women, Water Pure and Simple, We Wai Kai Nation, Westin Bayshore, and Woofy's have helped MARS.

Fund Raising / Silent Auction Donors included: 40 Knots Winery, Alan Cornwall (photographer, Allan Gray, Amu O'Dell, Andrea, Beth Nichol, Bill McDonald (Spirit Flutes), Bob Mathieson and Jane Rothmund, Carter Powell, Cheri Lamb, Comox Valley Dodge, Dana Hook, Den (Vivid Works), Dianne McNally, Diane Weir, Dianne Pollock, Done Creative, Ed Brooks (Backdoor Gallery), Gavin Livingstone, Heather Corbitt (Fabric Art). Ian Moule, I-Hos Gallery, Inge McArthur, James Bavis, John and Diana Scott, John turner, Julie Geremia, Julie (Mada Mim's Whims), Mid Island Gifts, Mielke Lily Van Orden, Mishi, Moxie' Bar and Grill, Peter Demmer, Peter Shostack, Robert McLennan, Roy Hancliff, Ruby Simrose, Sharon Hubbard, Tammy Vollinger, Viktor Davare, Xyla Scott and Zita Kenny.

Several (297 by our count) anonymous donors and those who cared enough to contribute also helped us out but are too numerous to mention. Every little bit helps to contribute to a lot.

Steve Harding of Timberwolf Tree Service was always on standby to scale a tree to rescue an injured bird for us.

We apologize if we inadvertently missed any donors.



Mike Ashe Photo

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS) officially opened its doors in 1995 and recorded a wildlife case load of **102**. Since 1995, we've received **7,931** animals with an average of **417** annually. Our case load increased dramatically until 2001 before leveling off to between 400 and 500 animals each year, but in 2014 our case load rose dramatically to **710**. Since 2001 we have averaged **448** injured animals per year (table 1).

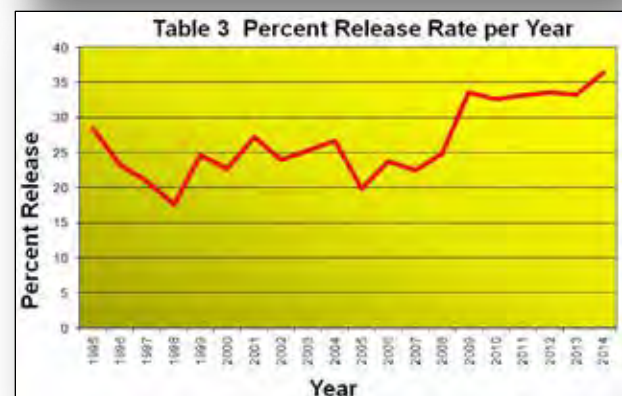
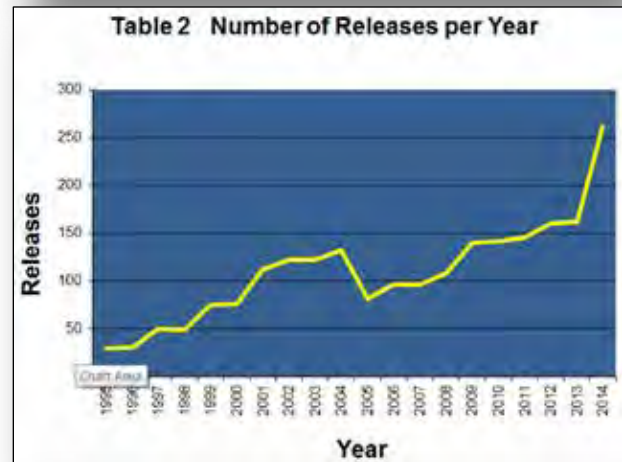
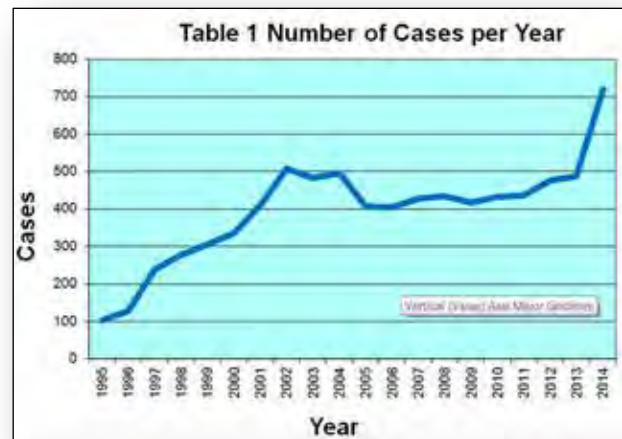
Since 1995, we have expanded our mandate to include an active education component, and more recently we have been involved in greater amounts of conservation issues as well as research and monitoring. This important work helps educate the public and improve land management.

In 2014, we received **710** injured animals (118 different species), **262** cases were released back to the wild (37% release rate) (tables 2 and 3). While this may not seem to be a high release rate, the base case level includes animals received DOA and animals that succumbed to injuries very shortly after we received them. Unfortunately many of the rest have serious injuries that rendered them unable to survive in the wild. From 1995 to the end of our 2014 fiscal year, MARS has released **2,188** animals back to the wild; including **70** Bald Eagles.

One of the many important functions that MARS accomplishes is our contribution to recovery of species of interest (yellow listed) species at risk (blue listed) and endangered species (red listed).

During our 2014 fiscal year we received **47** (yellow listed) Bald Eagles. The red and blue-listed species we treated included **4** Great Blue Herons, **1** Ancient Murrelet, **4** Barn Owls, **8** Northern Saw-Whet Owls, **7** Western Screech Owls, **8** Northern Pygmy Owls, **4** Little Brown Bats, **1** Sandhill Crane, and **1** Marbled Murrelet. To learn more about red and blue listed species and ecosystems on coastal British Columbia, check out the fact sheets on: <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/factsheets/>

During our 2014 fiscal year, MARS staff included Maj Birch as Manager, Reg Wescott Supervisor of Wildlife Care, and Allison Morrison and Courtney Verbrugge as part time administration assistants. Maj has phased out of direct animal care and more into conservation and public outreach, while Reg is taking on most of the responsibility for wildlife care and public education.



In 2013, with mixed emotions, we were bequeathed over \$300,000 from the estate of Michelle Woodrow. Michelle was passionate about wildlife and a long-time friend of MARS. This generous donation was placed into a reserve fund. In 2014 we spent considerable effort looking at appropriate properties for a new MARS site. We are currently leasing a portion of Maj Birch's (the founder of MARS) property and Maj wishes to retire in two years....so we have to move. As well, we have completely outgrown our current site and have no with room to expand. In preparation for expansion to a new lot, a site tour in November 2014 of the SPCA Wild ARC rehabilitation centre in Metchosin was conducted by several MARS volunteers. The staff of Wild ARC were extremely helpful and gracious with their time. Further planning of building design and property layout concepts was conducted in January 2015.

After looking at several properties, in January we settled on two adjoining lots (11 acres) off the old island highway and Williams Beach Road. It will be a major challenge to have a new facility operational in two years. A workshop of MARS volunteers was held March 2105 to develop the new-MARS plan for access and building placements. Final property plans can be seen in Appendix 1.

Sandy Fairfield has reduced her activities with MARS with the writing of her popular "MARS Moments" newspaper column. Rene Jorgenson assisted with this for a short period. Maj has kept the tradition going by continuing to write, and submit a number of topical columns. Pearl McKenzie and I have also written columns. Sandy has also stepped back from her classroom presentations. Maj has also stepped up with this activity, but we are looking for a retired school teacher or biologist to volunteer for this activity.

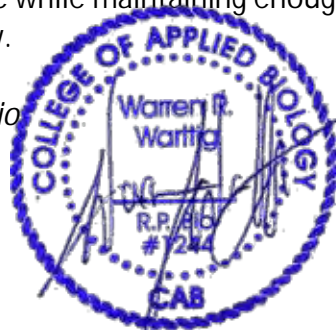
We had to sell one of our vehicles due to its age and condition (it basically gave up "the ghost"). We are on the lookout for a donated replacement van in good condition.

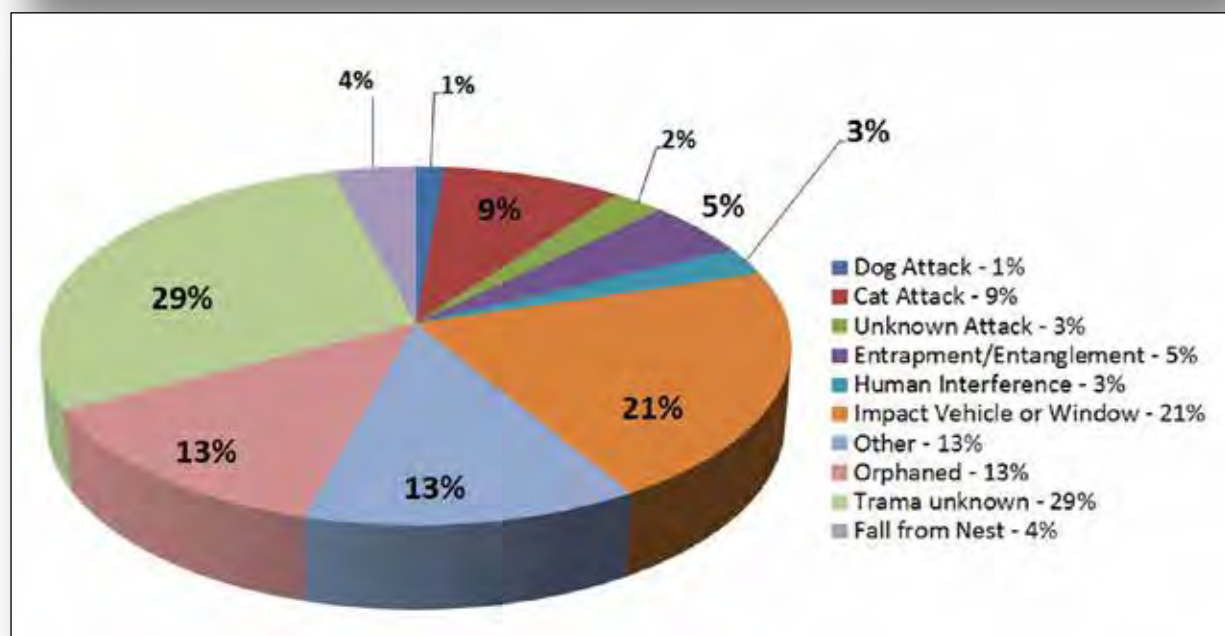
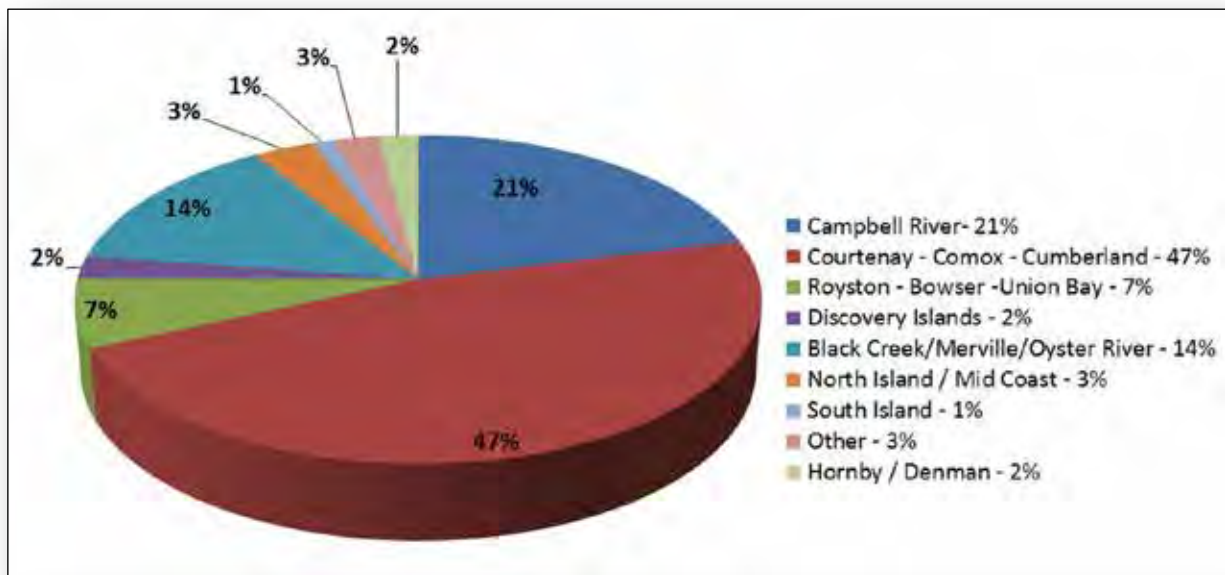
From our tracking records, volunteers at MARS contributed **7,726 hours** of their time in our 2014 fiscal year. This is only what volunteers have submitted; the actual volunteer time is likely much higher. For example, our local veterinary clinics contribute an incredible amount of time.

Our Board of Directors, Special Events Committee have shown an incredible team effort that is not often seen in volunteer organizations. Our adopted educational birds are popular at many public events that we attend. The dedication and the quality of work of our volunteers and staff, is inspiring.

From Facebook we received donations from people all over the world; many of the donations were small, but the sheer number cumulated to a substantial total. Donations are our single biggest funding source (thanks all!). Our next biggest challenge is to move forward on, and complete a move in two years to our "new-MARS" site while maintaining enough funding for our wildlife care. Please donate generously to this new legacy.

*Warren Warttig, RPBio
President*







Recovering Bald Eagle by volunteers Sandy Royer and Jackie Chamberlain



Recovering Bald Eagle by Reg Wescott, Sandy Royer photo

CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the Society is Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS)
2. The purpose of the Society is:
 - a. To rescue, transport, rehabilitate, and release ill, injured, orphaned, or oiled wildlife.
 - b. To educate the general public about wildlife issues through lectures, displays, workshops, reports and publications.
 - c. To contribute to the knowledge and understanding of wildlife by participating in research, and sharing that information with wildlife organizations and the general public through meetings, seminars, conferences, reports and publications.
 - d. To conserve and protect wildlife and promote conservation of wildlife habitat.
3. Upon winding up or dissolution of the Society, the ordinary resolution authorizing such winding up shall specify that any remaining assets belonging to the Society shall be distributed to a registered society having objectives similar to those of the Society, after all debts have been paid, or a provision for payment made. This provision is unalterable.

MISSION

To conserve and protect native wildlife and its natural habitat through education and rehabilitation.

GOALS

To reduce suffering of wildlife, often affected by human influences and educate the public about their effect on nature and how to reduce that impact.

OBJECTIVES

Provide a safe, stress-free environment for wildlife to recover. To contribute to the knowledge and understanding of wildlife by participating in research and sharing information with wildlife and professional organizations and the general public through meetings, lectures, displays, workshops, seminars, conferences, reports and publications.

PHILOSOPHY

We are a non-profit organization. Our energy is totally directed towards rehabilitation and education, and the funding for those endeavors. We abide by all governing laws and regulations under which we operate. MARS holds permits from federal and provincial governments that allow us to rescue, keep in captivity and care for wildlife.

The intensive care unit (ICU) at the centre and outdoors pens are off-limits to the public due to permit restrictions and because wildlife become stressed around people. We endeavor to maintain high standards of care and ethics and to work cooperatively with many related organizations.

We strongly advise against keeping any wildlife species as pets and make every effort to ensure that all wildlife patients remain wild. We work closely with several local area veterinarians and receive many referrals from the SPCA. Before admitting any case, every effort must be made to resolve the situation (e.g. reunite fledglings with their parents). We are not a relocation service for nuisance animals.

We are primarily concerned with treating those animals which are in distress due to human related activities (e.g. car, cat, oil). Human intervention (picking up fledglings off the ground) is discouraged and return to the parent should be immediate. Where it can be determined, we will not interfere with animals in distress due to a natural process (e.g. natural predator/prey interactions).

The responsibility of care of domestic animals falls under the jurisdiction of the Veterinarian Act. Therefore, we cannot accept or attempt to diagnose problems concerning domestic animals, accept them for treatment, housing, or try to find homes for them. This includes chickens, peacocks, domestic ducks and pigeons.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014/15

Warren Warttig – President Warren.Warttig@Interfor.com Registered Professional Biologist (RPBio) Interfor Corporation. 3811 Mitlenatch Drive Campbell River, BC V9H 1J7 Home 250-926-0001 Work 250-286-5168	Maureen Woodruff – Treasurer moeart@shaw.ca Bookkeeper, Pateman & Company 1137 Sand Pines Crescent, Comox, B.C. V9M 3V3 Home 250-339-4752
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Robert McLennan Robert.mclennan9@gmail.com Trainer/Adult Educator 203-1695 Comox Avenue Comox, BC V9N 3J2 Cell 250-465-2578	Jason Houston jason.houston2@gmail.com 1560 Schelderup Place Comox, BC V9N 3J2 Cell 306-596-2265 House 250-339-5255
Megan Burns mhmburns@gmail.com GIS Specialist, Interfor corp. 690 Colwyn Street, Campbell River, BC V9W Home: 250-895-0229 Work: 250-286-5170	Allison Morrison, gak@shaw.ca Retired Consultant 245 Inverness Road, Courtenay, BC V9N 9S6 Home: 250-335-2261 Cell: 250-702-3636

Full time Staff: Maj Birch and Reg Wescott

Part Time Contract: Allisson Morrison: March 1- May 31
Courtney Verbrugge: June 2 – Dec 15



REHABILITATION SUMMARY

Animal Care Statistics

Passerines	392
Raptors	115
Waterfowl	67
Terrestrial Mammal	70
Marine Mammal	18
Shorebirds	37
Game Birds	8
Amphibian/Reptile	1
Other	2

Total: 710

Total Species 118

Disposition

Released	115
Transferred/Released	47
Deceased/ Euthanized/DOA	325

TOTAL: 487

**Educational
Ambassadors: 6**



Recovering Bald Eagle - Photo by Sandy Royer

Final disposition statistics excluding dead on arrival, invasive species and feral animals:

- **42 %** released
- 26 % euthanized
- 32 % died

Ministry of Environment require euthanasia of invasive and feral animals, these animals are also excluded from these survival statistics

CONSERVATION REPORT

PARKS, CV Regional District – The Comox Valley Regional District contributed \$1,000 funding to MARS to remove a heavy brush infestation from the Tsolum Spirit and Headquarters Townsite. Two of our new volunteers (Kade and Ana) started work of cleanup of Park trails. There have been several Parks visits for maintenance with new volunteers

Wendy Kotilla's "Youth and Ecological Restoration" (YER) group was present at our AGM and gave a Great Blue Heron study and presentation. We applied for funding from TD-Friends of the Environment Foundation for the Heron study and sought support from YER, the Comox Valley Conservation Strategy, Comox Valley Nature, the Comox Valley Regional District and Town of Comox for development of Brochures and placement of Signs along the shorelines of our estuary on beaches where harassment of these species occur.

I met with John Deal RPF, RPBio of Western Forest Products Inc. in Campbell River and arranged for a sponsorship of a Bald Eagle Rescue workshop in Northern Vancouver Island communities to train residents in remote areas on handling injured animals and getting them to MARS. The date to be determined when enough people indicate interest in participating. Equipment for wildlife transfer will be purchased, and a half day training program will cover safety and handling. A Species at Risk presentation for WFP employees was offered as well employing our ambassador birds.

I submitted wildlife mortalities for studies by MOE and others. Species of special concern include several species of bats where there is monitoring a deadly fungus called White-nose syndrome. For Western Screech Owls, DNA samples are used for a study we participated in 1996. We received a recently deceased Marbled Murrelet fledgling from Tofino of which Environment Canada was interested in completing an autopsy (not a lot is known about fledgling survival). We participated in annual Swan counts, and banded Western Screech Owls prior to release back to the wild. I met with Lidako Szabo, assistant curator of the UBC Beaty and talked about a new raven DNA study. We submitted wood ticks from the animals we receive to Ontario for an ongoing Lyme disease study.

David Stapley of the Comox Valley Conservation Strategy presented at our AGM. I attended meetings at City of Courtenay about Tree bylaws, and Invasive plants and attended a "Comox Valley State of the Environment" report presentation with other conservation groups. The fall consisted of Strategic planning around the Nature without Borders 2 meetings and an urgent roundtable concerning the health of our Watershed.

We announced that the Heron Study was now completed and sent copies to all who supported us with letters. Wendy Kotilla was granted \$500 towards the cost of the Heron Study this summer. CVEC meeting held discussions of the constitution and a decision was made to restructure the CVEC. Several meetings were held over the year.



Recovering Muskrat - Photo by Sandy Royer

Russ Cannings from the Comox Valley Naturalists talked about his book co-written with his father (Dick Cannings). I presented 2014 Swan Festival and Swan count information at a birding workshop held at Filberg Center hosted by CVNS and Bird Studies Canada. Swan counts are held every Tuesday from November to end of March. The numbers are lower than in previous years.

I met with Dan Bowen from Project Watershed/ Estuary Working Group to do a video of the estuary. They wanted Eagle information with me, Heron info from Ian Moul, and Swan info from Art Martel. Dan presented information of their Blue Carbon Project that sequesters carbon by planting eel grass and kelp in our estuary.

I met with Mack Laing from the Heritage Society and a consultant (Shane Hartman) to discuss a very exciting vision of finding strength in numbers. One conservation group may have little impact, but combined with other groups within the community can be a strong force for what we provide cumulatively to a community. We provide workforce, volunteer hours, in-kind labour and services and gifts. We provide the community with environmental protection that include clean streams, fish in the rivers, wildlife viewing opportunities, nature hikes and parks preservation. We plan to approach the Comox Valley Economic Development Society for financial support to encourage Conservation Tourism within the community.

Maj Birch - Manager

MANAGERS' REPORT

2014 was a busy year for MARS as we attempted to deal with the many aspects of a growing society. Having successfully completed our Gaming Branch Audit with only a few minor items to address we were confident to welcome the new year despite a poor turnout at our big fundraiser – the Bald Eagle Festival in Campbell River (due to a snow storm). Bring on 2014 – we had money in our foundation account; we were ready to begin the task of finding a suitable property and were beginning to realize the MARS Strategic Plan.

There were lots of meetings this year: MARS Board of Directors, Website committee, Special Events/fundraising planning meetings of upcoming events (e.g. Walk for Wildlife/Earthday, Open House, Music Bingo, Trumpeter Swan Festival) plus all of the other community events that we participate in, and (of course) CR Bald Eagle Fest (that includes a Photo Contest). There were expansion committee and safety committee meetings, plus strategic planning sessions for Standards of Care and Policy discussions. There were Website/Social media meetings, site visits for potential properties, meetings with possible stakeholders and realtors.

Several volunteers attended the Wildlife Rehabilitators Network of BC (WRNBC) AGM and Wildlife Conference in Parksville hosted by North Island Wildlife Recovery Association (NIWRA). Sandy R, Jackie C, Diane S, Reg and I attended the two day conference and Necropsy workshop. Pearl, Julie and John took advantage of NIWRA Tour of facility. There were great presentations all weekend with Sylvia Campbell Presenting on Succession Planning (of particular timely interest). It gave lots of tips on the direction to go with our own plans.



Recovering baby Barn Owl - Photo by Sandy

After a struggle with our WEBSITE being down with slow-to-load issues (plus other contract issues) we entered into a relationship with Continual Palingenesis who contacted Bob Wells (MYTECHGUYS) to provide new password access.

Sue Sundby (our new website volunteer) along with Peiter Vorster (a consultant) held a meeting with other volunteers interested in Social Media and the Website. Plans were implemented to change the look of the website and make it more mobile friendly.

Following an Eagle 97.3 FM Radio interview there was a great photo of our new Mascot in radio station with the DJ (Rick) behind the microphone. This was posted to Eagle FM's Facebook page to seek public input on a name for our new mascot. We received many name suggestions on their FB page and on ours following the show. The name chosen for the new Mascot's was PHOENIX, which was determined in April at our Open House 2014.



Photo by Robert G Palmer

Annual – OPEN HOUSE – This was a well-attended event with lots of volunteers and public. 760 people attending and \$6000 was raised. There was good representation from conservation groups which included the Comox Valley Conservation Society (CVCS), Tsolum River, CV Nature, and Ian Moul, RPBio with a Heron Study Project display.

Events – Starting in the spring, MARS participated in numerous community events beginning with “River Never Sleeps” event at Rosewall Creek Hatchery, followed by the House of Now event, Girl guides and Sparks event, Toastmasters CR event, Arden School event, Cumberland Village Market, Kitty Coleman and Woodland Gardens events. Our big summer raffle begins in order to coincide with the events listed above. This raffle is a major source of funding for our wildlife care.

JUNE Events – Courtenay Fish & Game, CR First Nations Science Fair, CR Rock & Gems Show, Pentecostal Church & Coop day at Simms Park, YER anniversary, CR Volunteer centre, BC Liquor Store ticket sales, and Courtenay Elementary.

July Events – Canada Day Lewis Park, Little Red Church, VI Musicfest, Euphoria Summer Day Camp, Kingcome Inlet Youth Conference, Quality Foods Ticket sales, SPCA Day Camp, Kinnikinnick Summer Day Camp, Downtown Courtenay Market Day, LCB ticket sales Courtenay and Ironwood Senior Centre. August 2014 Events – SPCA Camps, Miracle Beach Park, CR Loggers Sports, Comox Nautical Days, CVEX Fall Fair, and Strathcona Wilderness Institute.

September - Music Bingo October 2014 Foggy Mountain Fair – Cumberland, November Swan Fest & Photo contest was very poorly attended, probably due to beautiful weather and the Christmas Parade. There is still interest to continue with this event. December was dominated by the Aviva Insurance voting campaign and although we were not successful in our bid to win \$100,000 to build a flight pen we did manage to gain quite a bit of recognition and awareness.

Other Meetings: multiple walks thru properties, Timberwest, fundraising, BOD, Ducks Unlimited, Jim Matthew, NEW MARS Expansion, OCP, CVEC, teleconference, Special Events/Fundraise WBN, Jill Hatfield, Ron M. Septic, Applied for funding to Lush Cosmetics fund, HCTF discussions. Friends of MARS held a 65th Birthday dinner for me at Salmon Point. Then to Hornby & HEGPS, where I met EKF, Mishi Donna and Booni Barb. Then my god daughter and Diane held another BD party for me – it was a weeklong celebration. Whew! Thank you all for making it very special.



Recovering baby Heron - Photo by Sandy Royer

Manager's Report 2015 Since January: I have attended nine Volunteer meetings and orientations, five website meetings, three Expansion Committee meetings, nine Fundraising meetings, six Board meetings, 17 Swan counts, written four Mars Moments, made nine presentations, and met with donors and multiple Conservation (CVEC, CVNS, CVCS) groups. There were also assorted promotions for MARS meetings, and meetings with staff and volunteers concern training, policy, planning.

My duties have taken me to Smithers, Hornby Island, Bute Inlet (Mountain Goat inventories), and Quadra Island. We have been actively looking for a Volunteer coordinator, an education coordinator, and someone who can do PR media releases. I continue to schedule new volunteers orientation, classrooms, events, and complete PR as well as seek funders. I am ready to retire but there is still much to do before MARS is able to stand on its own and "Spread its Wings". I look forward to my new role with Education, Outreach and Conservation and wish our new Executive Director the very best as she assumes her new position with all the challenges ahead. I will continue to support her and MARS as they focus on the NEW MARS property.

Maj Birch, Manager¹



¹ In Memory of: Thora Fleming, Jean Hudson, Laurel Delgatty, Grant Shaw, Jean Huson, Barbara Sedgwick, and Diana Malloff.



Recovering Western Saw Whet owls - Photo by Sandy Royer



Recovering Bald Eagle by volunteers Sandy Royer and Jackie Chamberlain

REHABILITATION REPORT

This has been an extremely busy year and patient numbers have been the highest in my nine years at MARS. There doesn't seem to be any particular reason as to why this is so.

We saw an inflated number of finches with eye conjunctivitis. This is a contagious disease of birds first seen in Eastern North America 30 years ago but is now common in the west. We have a high success rate treating this. Another situation of concern this year was Myiasis (a parasitic maggot infestation of a live animal) in nestling song birds. Birds on admission appeared as healthy nestlings, but after a period of time would start to appear weaker. During that time a swelling would appear on neck or wrists, and shortly after the larvae would appear. We had no success with treatment and found through research that it is a feather follicle maggot, likely infected in the nest before arrival at the centre. WildArc sees this situation yearly in the south. I will do more research to come up with precautionary protocol in case we see it again next spring.

Our success with deer this year was 0% as all fawns succumbed to disease or illness. Fawn appeared well at an evening feeding and were found deceased in the morning. A Provincial Pathologist was called in and necropsies were performed. Results varied from bacterial infections to bovine *e. coli*. Hygiene may have been an issue, as staph infection was likely carried by humans on skin. Contamination has been found in dried milk replacers by rehabbers in previous years so a decision was made to use fresh human grade goat milk as base for all mammal formulas. All possible precautions will be taken this year to prevent this in the future.

We rescued and treated many young raptors this spring/summer. All of the owls, hawks and falcons have been successfully released, including two barn owls that were facility favourites.

With the help of Steve Harding (Timber Wolf Tree Services) we returned one young Bald Eagle to the nest. Several were fostered by foster eagles Curly and Daddy at the Orphaned Wildlife centre and several were raised in small groups at North Island Wildlife Rescue Association. These birds will be banded at those facilities before returning here for release.

We had some problems with student schedules this year due to cancellations. We were down to one summer student through the busiest part of summer. Our wonderful volunteers stepped into the breach and we pulled through. In general, the summer student program has gone well. We have had a great batch of students who have done high quality work during their six weeks, while experiencing an abnormally high case load.



Recovered Great Horned Owl - Photo by Sandy Royer

This fall / winter we have seen a wildlife trend towards large numbers of small statured juvenile owls (western screech, northern saw-whet, northern pygmy). These owls are getting into trouble perhaps in their short migration to winter habitat. We can tell that these are first year owls due to the fact first year feathers glow pink under black lights. All small owls received are checked for phosphorescence; in the past two months almost all owls received we're first-year naive animals.

My favorite patient last year was of course case number 531, his number means little but his name is already famous, the fabulous Mr. Sawyer. Sawyer had a severely damaged right wing with no chance of repair. His was assessed for disposition and medical stability, thru this process he was deemed suitable for the ambassador program. He had his right wing completely amputated. After his recovery we began his habituation to humans and his training for his life as an ambassador. He has been a hit at every presentation attended.

And of course, we cannot forget our two new Western Screech Owl ambassadors who arrived from Smithers safely. Several of the volunteers and I went to Vancouver to receive the new ambassadors, they are happily settled into their new homes and have begun training for their life in public.

Safety is always job number one and this summer and we have had very few safety issues. One incident needed mentioning is a needle stick injury. A summer student accidentally put a needle in the trash instead of the appropriate sharps container. When the trash was removed, a volunteer was stuck twice in the finger. This incident happened in the Isolation Building where there was no sharps bin. We have since purchased one for that area. The volunteer attended her doctor and I believe received a tetanus shot and that no further problems have arisen.

Reg Westcott, Supervisor of wildlife Care



Recovered Barred Owl - Photo by Sandy Royer

PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORT

Visitors and Tours of MARS – During the year we received the following groups: The Red Hats Club, NIC Biology students, Hornby Island Pilgrimage (HIP Trip), Boys & Girls Club, Work Experience Program for Autistic Youth, BC Wildlife Federation – Go Wild Program (about 40 participants), RBC for their Blue Water Project and SHAW TV “Did you Know?” program. Also visiting were new volunteers in training, a few family tours and Wendy Kotilla with her Youth and Ecological Restoration Group (who were beginning their 10th year of work at MARS)

Events – MARS staff and volunteers were involved in planning for Earth Day and took part with the Walk for Wildlife. At the Campbell River Museum “Animals Among Us” event, Ernie was the soul of our Mascot and Reg brought ambassador Brinley. There was a poor turnout but we are establishing a relationship with the CR Museum for future events. There were numerous summer events beginning with River Never Sleeps at the Rosewall Creek Hatchery, Girl guides and Sparks, Toastmasters Campbell River, Cumberland Village Market, Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens, Ripple Rock and Gem Show, Newcomers Club (with 75 women in attendance) and the Sierra Club on Quadra Island.

I had the opportunity to be part of the 9th Annual Youth Conference at Kingcome Inlet with Warren Warttig, RPBio, Interfors senior planning biologist. It was an invaluable experience where we connected with youth in this remote First Nations village, learned about their customs and culture and talked about what jobs they might consider in creating their futures.

Tracy Anderson, “Save our Shearwaters” Program of Kuaui Hawaii, joined us.

Schools – Thank you to Rene Jorgenson for her help with elementary school programs. Presentations were made to: Arden School, Hornby Island School, Cortez Island School, Elder College (Eagles workshop), e-Blend (home-schooling) and we spent time with a NIC photojournalist student discussing MARS’ roles and challenges.

Summer Student Volunteers (Interns)

During the spring and summer of 2014, we welcomed Sarah, Shanny, Annie, Ashlea and Kristina, Melissa, Amy, Rachel & Kate. They were a great bunch of hard workers. As summer student volunteers, these young people gain invaluable ‘hands on’ experience to add to their scholastic knowledge. We recruited, via skype, a new winter intern from Germany. Pascal arrived in November 2014 departing end of February 2015.

Kingcome First Nations Youth Fair

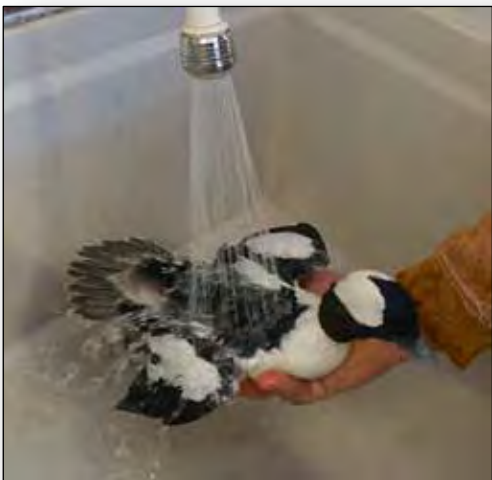


Education Website/Social Media – Thank you to Sue Sundby, our new volunteer website developer. During the year, Sue worked with Pieter Vorster, of Continual Palingenis, to align our website with mobile (cell phone) access. We also continued to direct more traffic to our webpage as outlined in the social media strategy developed with funding from the Vancouver Foundation. Sandy Royer enhanced our social media (Facebook) with numerous photos of wildlife in our care at MARS. Lynda Hodgkinson and John Turner both contributed comments to Facebook pages and Dianne Pollock added postings for Twitter followers.

MARS Staff and Volunteer Education: MARS caregivers met to review Standards of Care. Allison Morrison prepared a final report. A conflict resolution workshop was held in February 2015 for MARS volunteers.

Ambassador/Educational Birds – During the past year, MARS applied to the Ministry of Environment for new MARS' ambassadors including two western screech owls (Kenni and Lanni) and a northern saw whet owl (Sawyer), from Northern Lights Wildlife Society in Smithers.

Maj Birch - Manager



FUNDRAISING AND SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Another year has gone by and MARS has continued to carve a path through our community by way of the numerous events we attend and the ones we host.

In early April, 2014, Open House surpassed our wildest hopes and welcomed approximately 760 people to view our facility. Once again we sold plants and books along with regular MARS merchandise and the public was very generous giving MARS proceeds of just over \$4500.00

Toward the end of April during Earth Week, we hosted the Walk for Wildlife but unfortunately due to the weather and several other conflicting events, this did not fare very well and only brought in \$840.00. Consequently, the committee decided to put the Walk on the shelf for the time being and embark on the task of coming up with a different type of fundraiser which would appeal to the public. Also on this day, MARS had a booth at the Earth Day event at Lake Trail School and together with a percentage of proceeds donated from April Bencze from her sales and MARS merchandise, we made \$200.00.

Our next venue was in May at the Kitty Coleman Art and Bloom Festival and it was the start of our spring & summer raffle. MARS had a booth at Cumberland Market Days as well and between the two nearly \$3500.00 was raised with the majority attributed to the Art and Bloom Festival and this was an increase of \$1000.00 over the previous year. In June MARS participated in the Courtenay Fish and Game Protective Association outdoor show for two days and the income realized was almost \$2500.00 and MARS was also invited to a one day event at the 1st Nation Band Hall Science Fair in Campbell River and received a \$250 honorarium. Donations, raffle ticket & merchandise sales equaled \$85.00.

Also in June MARS was invited to attend a two day event hosted by the Campbell River Ripple Rock Gem & Mineral Club and this two day show brought in a total of just over \$700.00. Reg & an ambassador bird finished out the month in front of the Courtenay Liquor Store engaging the public and informing them of the work MARS does.

MARS was in attendance at Canada Day and the total funds raised were just over \$1600.00, most of which was from the sale of raffle tickets. Next we attended a "first time" event for MARS at the Little Red Church Sunday Market in Comox. This was not a very lucrative venue but a good chance to attract and educate a new audience. We were also present for Courtenay Market Day and we sold raffle tickets at a few other venues around town.

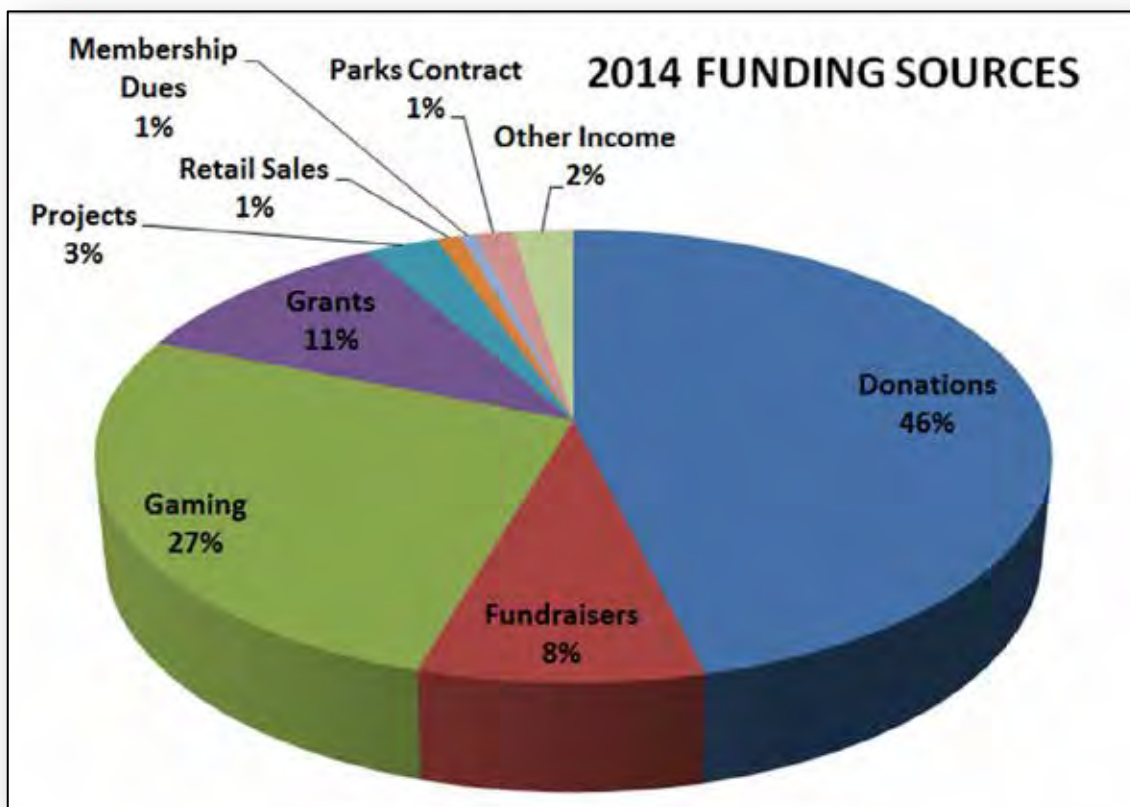
On August 2nd, 3rd and 4th we attended Nautical Days and the sale of raffle tickets did extremely well. On August 8th, 9th and 10th, MARS staff and volunteers raised money for MARS as timekeepers for the logger sports competition at the Salmon Festival in Campbell River. This is an exciting event enjoyed by all. MARS spent three days at the CV Fall Fair & Exhibition and sold most of the raffle tickets we had left, bringing in \$1700.00.

Our raffle finally came to an end at the fall Kitty Coleman Art & Bloom Festival held August 30th, 31st and September 1st. The long-awaited raffle draw took place and there were some very happy people when they found out they had won the beautiful prizes. Ticket sales brought in a total of \$20,000.00. We also had \$330.00 from sales and donations.

MARS was present at the Quadra Island and Black Creek Fairs with net proceeds of just over \$800.00 from the two combined. Our next event, on the last day of September was our very popular and very successful Music Bingo with a burger & a brew and a silent auction. This was our second year hosting this fun filled evening, testing our musical prowess and bidding on our favourite auction items. This was very successful once again and with a very generous anonymous donor matching funds, we realized proceeds of over \$9000.00. Great work by the fundraising committee as well as other MARS members.

The Foggy Mountain Festival in Cumberland was a new venue for MARS and although we didn't raise much in the way of funds, it gave us the opportunity to speak to a different community and familiarize them with what we do.

In November The House of Now which provides holistic healing and health and wellness practices had an open house and fundraiser for MARS. Also in November MARS hosted the Trumpeter Swan Festival. There was a lot going on that day including the Santa Claus parade which necessitated us starting the event quite early. We had hoped to have a lot more attendees but managed to do fairly well with our silent auction, bake table and a grant from the CVRD. The committee decided to look at hosting a different event in 2015.



In December MARS was present at Sunrise Veterinary Clinic's Open House and Woofy's Pet Store photos with Santa, receiving donations from both. MARS also had a table at the Black Creek Christmas Fair which unfortunately did not prove to be very lucrative.

In January 2015 MARS had a fundraising strategy planning session where we discussed what has worked best for us in the past and how to come up with new ideas to raise a substantial amount of money to put toward a new facility as well as keep the centre running on a daily basis.

In late January after a long search MARS found a property big enough to encompass our envisioned expansion but unfortunately we fell a little short of the asking price. The expansion group who had been working hard on this acquisition met with the Special Events committee (formerly fundraising committee) to discuss ways to acquire the funds needed to complete the property purchase. Letters were sent to corporations asking for their help. We started a raffle in the hopes of making a good portion of the needed funds through ticket sales.

On February 16th we took part in a ceremony celebrating the acquisition of the property where we will build The New MARS.

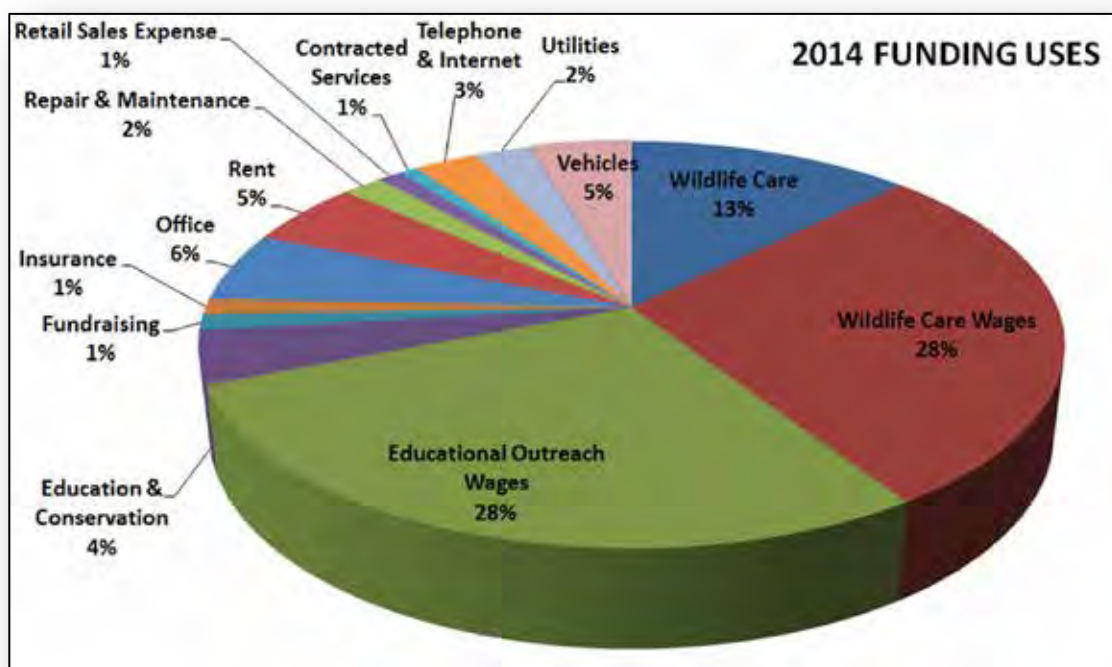
The committee then began planning for the 10th annual Bald Eagle Festival held on February 21st at the Maritime Heritage Centre in Campbell River. We didn't have as many people as we had hoped but all in all it was a good turn-out and everyone enjoyed themselves. The kids loved the face painting and they also took particular interest in a quiz requiring them to find the answers to questions and earn letters that would make up the answer to the quiz.

The live birds are always a huge hit and The Raptors were well represented as were F.E.A.T.H.E.R.S. in B.C. parrot club and of course MARS with our ambassadors.

The photo contest entries were very impressive. There are some very talented photographers out there.

Our Special Events committee is small but mighty and they have done a phenomenal job preparing for and working at the MARS events which as you can see, are many throughout the year. Thank you to MARS staff for all their help and to the volunteer members who make it all happen.

Lynda Hodgkinson Chair, special events committee



CONSTRUCTION REPORT

There was not much in the way of construction projects in 2014 other than an upgrade and renovation of the ICU building; but I believe that this low level of construction activity is about to change, as we now have our newly purchased property and we have two years to get a new MARS wildlife rehabilitation centre up and running. We have had a crew come out to do some broom bashing that made a great start. Jo Stiles and her husband Ian came with their Bobcat and Flailed broom and alder at least 3 times.

Warren surveyed and marked out the property, Maj marked trees to be saved. Wendy Kotilla came with her youth to do some tree planting along with Maj. Jason and Shana as well as Reg and Nathan helped with the burning. All broom and alder piles that were stacked are now burned.

I cleared out a trail to the well on the new property and around the old well house on Lot 3. Maj said we will have to make a plug for the well top. I went to Cumberland Cement to price one out and they don't make them like that anymore, so I had to fabricate one.

Reg and I put together a bunk bed in the bunk house for the extra summer students. We also made a moveable duck pen.

John Turner Chair, Construction Committee

Red tailed hawk, photo by John Deal



Wood Duck - Photo by Jim Smith

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

MARS BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2014/15 Fiscal Year

The following Board members were elected for a two year term at the 2014 Annual General Meeting held on May 25th, 2014 at the Merville Community Hall and will complete their term next year in 2016:

- Julie Hunt
- Laurie Ulm
- Warren Warttig
- Maureen Woodruff
- Megan Burns
- Pearl McKenzie

During the year Allison Morrison was appointed an "ex officio" member of the MARS Board of Directors at a Board meeting held in October 2014. Although this designation meant that Allison was unable to make formal motions or vote on motions, she has been a very active and valued contributor to the Board. Allison resigned from the Board in May of 2015 when she accepted the position of Executive Director of MARS.

Board members regret the loss of TaraLee Houston, and Jason Houston, who were elected to the Board in 2013 and left in November 2014 due to pressing work and educational commitments. We thank them for their contribution to MARS.

The following Board members, who were elected in 2013 and finishing their term this year, have indicated that they are willing to continue to serve as directors on the Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society Board for a two year term to end in 2017.

I nominate:

- Robert McLennan
- Kaleena Singleton
- John Turner

I also nominate two people who are new to the MARS Board but have been very active on the Special Events Committee for many years:

- Paul Jackman
- Lynda Hodgkinson

If elected, Paul and Lynda will complete their term in the spring of 2017.

Pearl McKenzie, Chair of the Nominating Committee



Common Mergansers Feeding - Photo by Rob Owen



Black Oyster Catcher - Photo by Robert Dugas

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS
YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2015
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Engagement Letter	1
Financial Statements	2
Tax Return	3
Trial Balance and Adjusting Entries	4
Letters	5

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
Financial Statements
Year ended February 28, 2015
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Notice to Reader
Statement of Financial Position
Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets
Notes to Financial Statements

NOTICE TO READER

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS) as at February 28, 2015 and the statement of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended. We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements and, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

The Treasurer of the Society is an employee of this accounting firm.



Palmer Clayton Matthews LLP
Chartered Accountants

Courtenay, B.C.
May 25, 2015

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
FEBRUARY 28, 2015
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Gift Cards	\$ 555	\$ 251
Foundation account	841	308,746
Petty Cash	40	100
General Accounts	60,509	53,765
Gaming Accounts	12,594	26,352
Restricted Project Funds	6,000	3,738
GST Receivable	-	1,068
Source Deductions Receivable	-	336
	<u>80,539</u>	<u>394,356</u>
CAPITAL ASSETS	<u>447,801</u>	<u>67,013</u>
	<u>\$ 528,340</u>	<u>\$ 461,369</u>
<u>LIABILITIES</u>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Short Term Debt	\$ 30,000	\$ -
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,157	1,000
GST Payable	8,676	-
	<u>40,833</u>	<u>1,000</u>
<u>NET ASSETS</u>		
CAPITAL ASSETS	447,801	67,013
UNRESTRICTED ASSETS	32,864	87,617
INTERNALLY RESTRICTED ASSETS	<u>6,842</u>	<u>305,739</u>
	<u>487,507</u>	<u>460,369</u>
	<u>\$ 528,340</u>	<u>\$ 461,369</u>

Approved by the Board

 Director
 Director

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2015
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

PAGE 1 OF 2

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
	<u>Total</u>	
REVENUE		
Licensed Gaming Revenue	\$ 20,410	\$ 15,285
Provincial Gaming Grants	35,000	70,000
Specified Corporate Donations	22,375	4,000
Fundraising	17,401	8,842
Other Grants	6,000	16,675
Sales Retail	1,980	1,739
Contract Revenue	4,603	2,940
Membership Dues	1,222	1,780
Interest Income	3,502	1,342
Donations	95,606	74,825
Special Donations - Bequest	1,000	303,001
	<u>209,099</u>	<u>500,429</u>
IN KIND		
In-Kind Labour	122,412	84,896
In-Kind Services	20,613	68,572
In-Kind Materials	5,885	4,185
	<u>148,910</u>	<u>157,653</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 358,009</u>	<u>\$ 658,082</u>

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2015
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

PAGE 2 OF 2

EXPENDITURES	2015	2014
	Total	Total
PROGRAM		
Education	\$ 5,370	\$ 14,220
Fundraising	2,223	2,303
Conservation	1,876	2,831
Repairs and maintenance	3,184	2,913
Vehicle operating	7,911	10,059
Volunteer expenses	2,788	3,262
Wages and benefits	97,951	94,698
Wildlife Care	21,932	22,793
	<u>143,235</u>	<u>153,079</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE		
Accounting and legal	2,458	3,997
Amortization	8,213	9,085
Courses and fees	699	828
Insurance	2,139	2,046
Property taxes	400	888
Office	5,157	3,469
Rent	9,000	9,000
Subcontracts	1,403	4,316
Telephone	4,947	2,926
Utilities	4,310	2,930
	<u>38,726</u>	<u>39,485</u>
IN KIND		
In-Kind Labour	122,412	84,896
In-Kind Services	20,613	68,572
In-Kind Materials	5,885	4,185
	<u>148,910</u>	<u>157,653</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>330,871</u>	<u>350,217</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES	27,138	307,865
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>460,369</u>	<u>152,504</u>
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 487,507</u>	<u>\$ 460,369</u>

MOUNTAINAIRE AVIAN RESCUE SOCIETY (MARS)
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

1. ACCOUNTING POLICY

Property and Equipment and Amortization

Property and equipment are recorded at cost and are amortized using the diminishing-balance method at the annual rates indicated in Note 2. Property and equipment acquired during the year are amortized at one-half the normal annual rates.

2. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

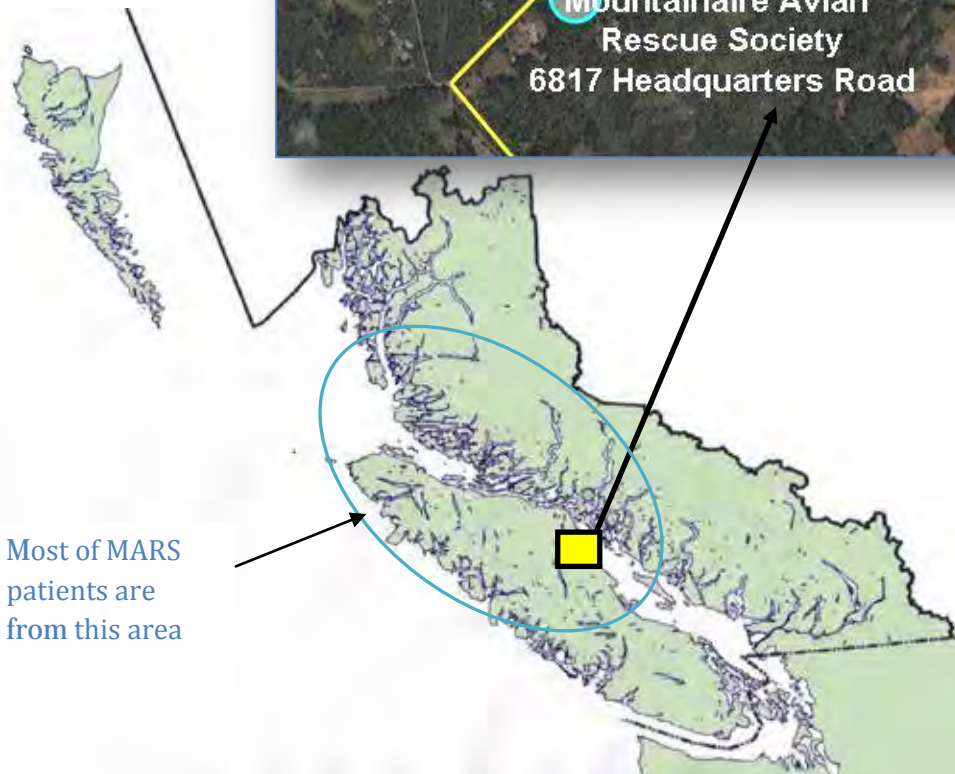
	<u>2015</u>			<u>2014</u>
	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net</u>
Land	-	\$ 389,500	\$ -	\$ -
Buildings	4%	53,805	13,735	42,585
Furniture and Equipment	20%	28,535	14,251	16,426
Vehicle	30%	7,483	6,887	1,917
Trailer	30%	13,791	11,320	4,325
Mounted Birds	5 yrs.	4,400	3,520	1,760
		<u>\$ 497,514</u>	<u>\$ 49,713</u>	<u>\$ 67,013</u>

APPENDIX 1 – PROPERTY DESIGN OF NEW-MARS 2017





DIRECTIONS TO MARS



Most of MARS
patients are
from this area

Please find my cheque enclosed for my membership: Membership Category: Individual \$15, Senior/Student \$10, Family \$25

Plus an additional donation for a total Amount of: \$

Mail to:

Mountainaire Avian Rescue Society - 6817 Headquarters Road - Courtenay BC - V9J 1N2

Tax Receipt Requested?	Yes	No	(Receipt cannot be issued for membership fees)
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Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard[illegible]

A one time charge of: \$ _____

A monthly charge of: \$ _____ (I may cancel this authorization at any time with written notice)

Signature: _____

Name:	
Address:	
City & Postal Code:	
e-mail:	
Phone Number:	

All information will be kept within MARS and NOT made available to anyone else without your written permission.

Please call (250) 337-2021 if you have any questions