



To Our Valued Supporters,

Thank you to those who have contributed and supported the Wild Pacific Trail Society (WPTS) over the years. We have had a very exciting year with our education program reaching new heights and ongoing plans being conceptualized for the future. Among the highlights of 2022/2023 are:

◆ **Trail Naturalist Programs: 6,175 people interacted with 144 events**

Thanks to our Wild Pacific Trail Naturalists, **Josh McCullough and Laura Bonga**, and our thriving educational partnerships, our 2023 interpretive season was highly successful. We offered at least one event nearly every day during the summer.

Full-time programming commenced in June till the end of September, starting with our Lighthouse Discovery Tent and Guided Walks. The forest fires at Cameron Lake impacted road accessibility, reducing tourist visitation to Ucluelet. Their participation in our interpretive programs for the month of June was felt with lower numbers recorded. Once the main highway opened to vehicles, numbers soared with **100 or more meaningful interactions per day** at the booth and **up to 15 people on walks**.



## Guided Walks:

The variety of walks offered was astonishing this year, with topics for just about everyone and our educational partners were eager to be a part of the interpretive season.

**Wild Pacific Trail Free Interpretive Events August 2023**

UCLUELET, B.C.

Visit our Lighthouse Discovery Tent **Free**

(First lot on Lighthouse Loop) (Picnic Area Matterson Dr)

**10 am** Walks from Whale Parking Lot  
**10 am** Whale Lot Walks  
**10 am** Big Beach Walks  
**8:30 am** Whale Lot Walks

Walk & Booth SUNDAYS  
 Walk or Booth MONDAYS  
 Lighthouse 10-1pm Daily Booth TUESDAYS  
 Lighthouse 10-noon Daily Booth WEDNESDAYS  
 Walk & Booth THURSDAYS  
 Walk & Booth FRIDAYS  
 Walk & Booth SATURDAYS

**1** Ucluelet Map (LOCATION COLOUR KEY)  
**2** Kid-friendly activity **Build-a-Whale** At the Lighthouse  
**3** Whale Lot: 10-11am Guided Walk Every Thursday  
**4** Walk + beach tent til 1  
**5** 8:30-9:30am daily **Shorebird Guided Walk** Guest: Ian Cruickshank  
**6** Whale Lot: 10-11am Guided Walk  
**7** **WILD SAFE BC** 10-1pm: Lighthouse  
**8** **Salmon Trail Station** Lighthouse 10-1pm Every Tuesday Get your passport stamp  
**9** Kid-friendly activity **Whale Wednesday** 10 am to 12 pm LIGHTHOUSE BOOTH  
**10** **Talking Trees Walk**  
**11** **Tidepools or Big Beach Walk** Every Friday from Picnic Area Tides determine route. Plus:  
**12** **Parks Canada Outreach** 10 am-4 pm daily at Lighthouse Tent Whales, wildlife & living on the edge safely  
**13** **Talking Trees Walk**  
**14** Whale Lot: 10-11am Guided Walk  
**15** **THE SALMON TRAIL**  
**16** Orca skeleton  
**17** Activities with **raincoast EDUCATION SOCIETY**  
**18** **Parks Canada Outreach** 10 am-4 pm daily at Lighthouse Tent Whales, wildlife & living on the edge safely  
**19** How can we fly thousands of miles?  
**20** **Talking Trees Walk**  
**21** **SURFRIDER FOUNDATION** 10-1pm Lighthouse Booth  
**22** **THE SALMON TRAIL**  
**23** Kid-friendly activity **Whale Wednesday** 10 am to 12 pm LIGHTHOUSE BOOTH  
**24** 1 to 4 PM LIGHTHOUSE BOOTH Every Thursday  
**25** **Parks Canada Outreach** 10 am-4 pm daily at Lighthouse Tent Whales, wildlife & living on the edge safely  
**26** + **Shorebird Discovery tent**  
**27** + Our daily **Tree Booth** Why does this coast have the biggest trees?  
**28** Whale Lot: 10-11am Guided Walk  
**29** **Fishy Forests** How can fish feed forests?  
**30** Kid-friendly activity **Build-a-Whale** At the Lighthouse  
**31** No event

Lighthouse: 10-1 daily Lighthouse: 10-1 daily Lighthouse: 10-12 daily Amphitrite Lighthouse: Booth Days Lighthouse: 10-1 daily

Funded by donations to the Wild Pacific Trail Society. Thanks to our partners: REDD Fish Restoration, Ucluelet Aquarium, Strawberry Isle Marine Research, Raincoast Education Society, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve & WildSafe BC.

- **Talking Tree Walk** (Lighthouse Loop) -Attendees explored the surprising life of trees and how they communicate, grow, and move.
- **Stellar Bog Walk** (Bog Trail) - Provided an opportunity to showcase a different side of the rainforest and how sensitive this woodland bog environment is.
- **Big Beach Walk** - High tide walk above Big Beach exploring its natural wonders. In September had Photo Fridays-a sunset walk capturing its beauty with one's camera.



- **Birding Walks** (Lighthouse Loop) - Ranged from Eagles-birds of prey, Bats & Owls-night fliers, & Shorebirds-importance of beach/mud flats in their migration.

Local Bird Expert **Ian Cruickshank**, was a monthly special guest, bringing his spotting scope to allow participants to watch and learn about the fascinating world of birds. Having a high-quality experienced bird naturalist on hand at these events is always well received.

Ucluelet's bird species diversity is tremendous with a variety of birds living here and migrating throughout the year. Hosting a birding festival or being a part of the Tofino Shorebird Festival are opportunities to be explored.





## Discovery Tent Programs:

Our Discovery Tent had complete occupancy for the entire Summer 2023 -a first for us!!!!

- **Build-A-Whale** – Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society hosted their exciting interactive program at the Lighthouse multiple times throughout the summer. Their hands-on activity was a huge draw and attracted crowds. Whale biology, anatomy, evolution, and conservation issues through the use of real Orca bones are taught.
- **WPTS Booth** – Rotating topics were presented every month at the Discovery Tent in static displays and with WPTS Naturalists who spoke on daily topics such as Talking Trees, Featured Birds of of the month, Carnivores and Whales. Learning was facilitated through the use of props and field guides. Our new skull collection (bear, wolf, sea otter, eagle, owl, and brown bat) captivated audiences.



Photo: Build-a-Whale Interactive Display care of Strawberry Island Marine Research Society

## ◆ Educational Partnerships:

Our education partners are amazing and truly enhance the trail experience for our visitors and locals alike. Year after year, we have organizations requesting to return to this incredible outdoor classroom, eager to connect with and provide educational outreach to trail users.

## Partner Walks & Booths:

Highlights of our partner's educational offerings:

- **Raincoast Education Society:** Outreach each week on a variety of ocean/forest topics. Total Interactions: 675 Interactions
- **WildSafeBC:** Did outreach booths-educated the public about preventing wildlife interactions. Total Interactions: 290 Interactions
- **Redd Fish Restoration:** Salmon Trail Station and Fishy Forest Walks-public learned about salmon, their habitats and role in ecosystems. Weekly booth and bi-weekly walks were popular with trail users. Total Interactions: 39 Participants on Fishy Forests Walks, 547 Salmon Trail Station Interaction, for a total of 586 Interactions



Photo: Redd Fish Restoration-Discovery Tent



### Partner Walks & Booths (continued):

- **Surfrider Pacific Rim:** One day of outreach, highlighting the impact of plastics in the ocean. Total Interactions: 20 Interactions
- **Ucluelet Aquarium:** Always a crowd favourite, intertidal exploration held weekly over the summer at Big Beach. Opportunity to offer more tidepool walks if staffing permits.



### Photos: Big Beach -Intertidal Exploration

- **Pacific Rim National Park Reserve:** Weekly outreach at Discovery Tent in July from 1-4pm and in August from 10am-4pm with a range of topics from CoastSmart to whales and shorebirds. Total Interactions: 853 Interactions







Photos: Parks Canada

Booth & Mara (Redd Fish) leading a Fishy Forest Walk



### Total Partner Interactions: 2448

We look forward to continuing our partnership and collaboration with all of our education partners to share our synergy and resources. It is truly amazing what we can accomplish together!

## Interpretive Programming & Events Statistics

Figure 1: June Numbers of Participants vs Events. We had a total of **926 Interactions in June**. The highway fire closures impacted our numbers greatly.

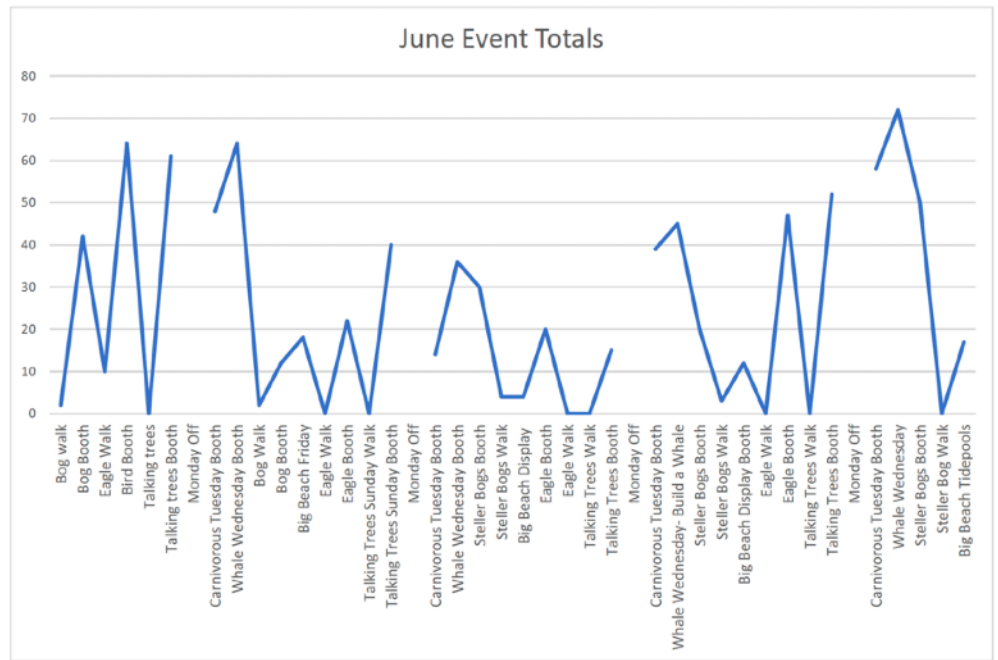
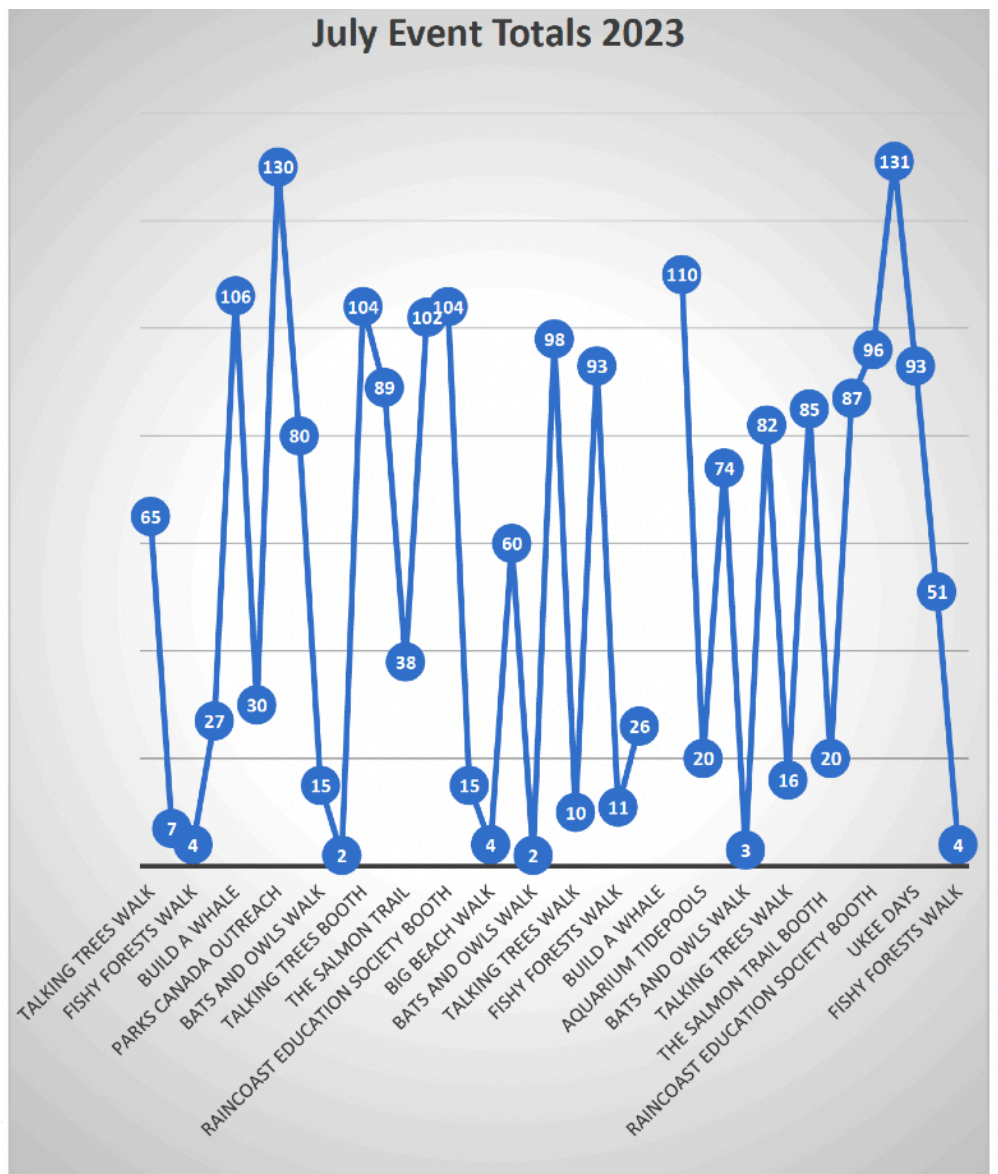


Figure 2: July Event Totals. We had **2094 Interactions in July**, double the numbers in comparison to June.





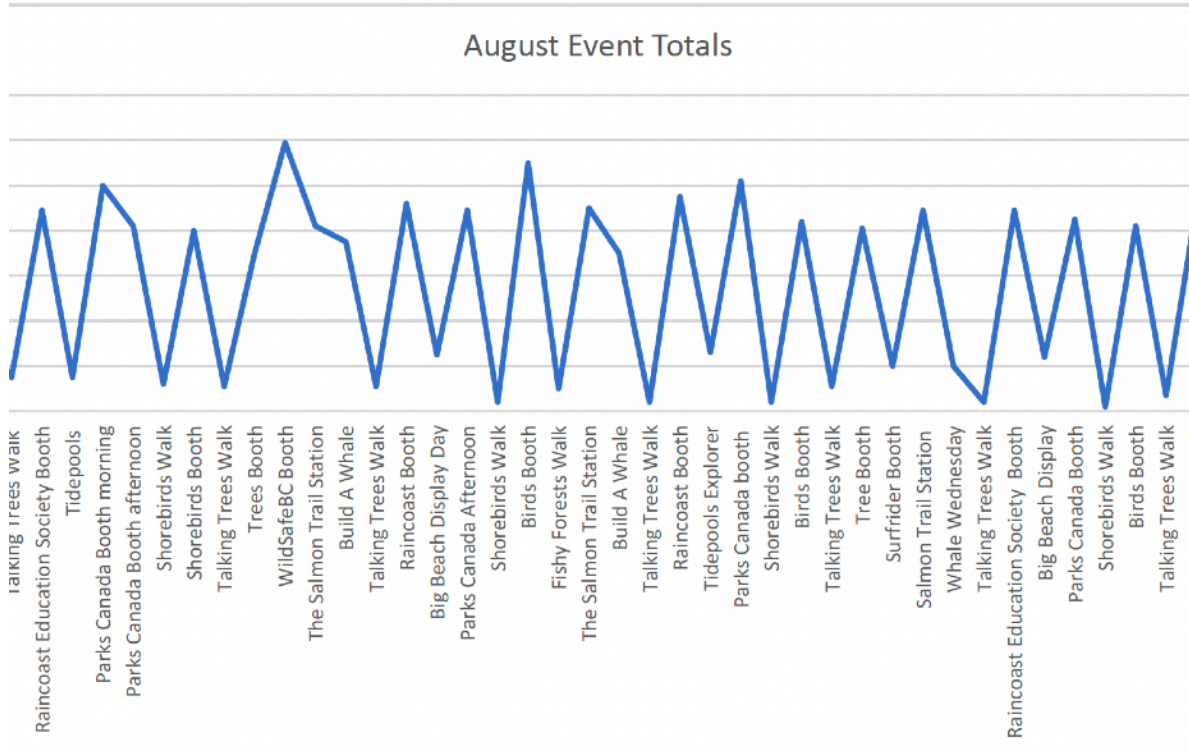


Figure 3: August Event Totals.  
 We had **2319 Interactions in August.**

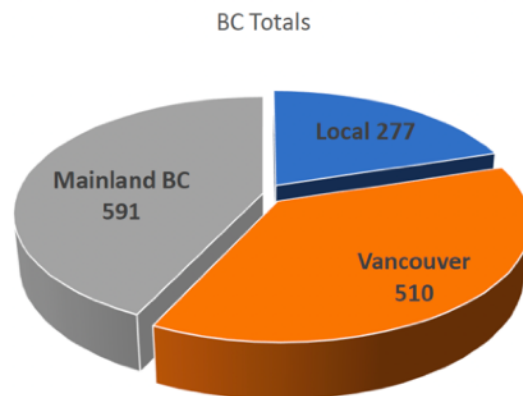
Overall, we had a **total of 6,175 Interactions** at our Discovery Tent and on Guided Walks.  
**Interactions totals for all partners: 2,448**

**within BC we recorded 1,378 significant interactions, see below for breakdown..**

- **Locals: 277**
- **Vancouver: 510**
- **Mainland BC: 591**

**Canada (Outside BC): 249**

**Other Nationalities (USA, Europe, Other): 1,002**





### ◆ Special Events:

Special Events in 2022 and 2023 consisted of **WHALE FESTIVAL** guests, **UKEE DAYS** booth and local naturalist **Silva Johansson** returned to deliver the epic story of the tragic shipwreck that inspired the creation of the Amphitrite Lighthouse each month. We also hosted **Phil Hood** with the historical society and **PRAS** presented a **Cultural Heritage Fair** (numbers not recorded).

Andy MacKinnon, bestselling co-author of “Mushrooms of BC,” has always had a strong turnout at his events-100 people attended his last Wild Pacific Trail mushroom talk. He also donated training time for our staff as part of a course.



Photo: Andy MacKinnon – Mushroom Talk on the Trail

### Education Opportunities:

Having a roving naturalist present on the Trail continues to provide a valuable service. This season, Josh and Laura helped many people, from map orientation to questions about parking, the local fauna and flora, to other aspects of the Trail.

During peak times on the Trail, with limited locations designed to accommodate trail interpretation, it was difficult to effectively engage and speak to large groups of individuals. WPTS programming would also benefit from a covered gazebo area with sliding walls to keep the area dry when hosting stationary events. These are areas of consideration for the Trail Society.

A challenge identified is outdoor tour companies (with no permits), are using the Trail for free while making a profit. If permits were in place, the District would be able to monitor tour groups, control their size, and ensure established parameters are in place and enforced (guidelines such as leave no trace and no harvesting practices).



◆ Environmental Stewardship:

Our mission of “Inspiring through Nature” is evident throughout our messaging and programming; encouraging others to learn about, and be inspired to connect, appreciate, preserve, and protect this incredible coastline.

With the popularity of the Wild Pacific Trail and increase in trail users, there are more incidents of people venturing off the path, climbing trees, damaging tree roots and vegetation and harming marine life in tidepools. Public awareness of the impact off leashed dogs have on the environment and wildlife is key for co-existence.

WPTS aim is to ensure that these sensitive areas are protected and to conserve the ecological integrity of the Trail and surrounding area. Responsible and sustainable trail use will help preserve the Trail for the enjoyment of others for many years to come.



Photos: Trail Inhabitants  
Black-Tailed Deer, Black Bear  
and Round-leaved Sundews



### ◆ Crow's Nest

Oyster Jim finished his second "Crow's Nest" located at the North end of the Artist Loops bringing a little hidden treasure to the Trail.



### ◆ District of Ucluelet/Trail Maintenance:

The Trail Society is appreciative of the ongoing support we receive from the District of Ucluelet staff and Council. We value this relationship, and their support continues to be instrumental in bringing our projects into fruition.

For the past 3 years, the District of Ucluelet has overseen the maintenance of the Trail with Jason Mussell and Wanda McAvoy (Public Works and Parks) taking the lead. We thank them for working in partnership with us on this world class trail.

The Trail would benefit from regular ongoing graveling to maintain trail surface and prevent exposure to tripping hazards such as tree roots. When not maintained to a level suitable for the number of users, it can become a liability issue.

### ◆ Local Fundraising Efforts:

The Clayoquot Biosphere Trust has provided us with grant funding for our Ancient Cedars Voice Box (details below) which we are grateful to receive, helping us to bring a new element of learning to the Trail.

A huge thank you to Tourism Ucluelet for their grant and to Black Rock Oceanfront Resort for their donation, towards our upcoming interpretive signage project for the Ancient Cedars loop. Tourism Ucluelet has also provided funding to cover the cost of printing our Trail brochures allowing us to increase our scope of distribution beyond the District to supply Tofino, Port Alberni, and Nanaimo Tourism Centres. We value having their support and recognition of the work that we do.

### ◆ New Interpretive Signage

The Trail Society is working on Ancient Cedars interpretive sign series that will highlight the old growth ecosystem and convey these ancient trees' cultural bio-diverse uniqueness via four interpretive signs to be designed and installed on the Ancient Cedars Trail. A voice box with audio content that is reflective of the Nuu-chah-nulth culture and language and the ancient and continued interconnections between the local landscape, the ocean, and First Nations culture will also be placed on this section of trail. We are grateful to the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ elders and teachers for sharing traditional wisdom on these projects, offering priceless contributions and insight.







◆ Education Centre:

The Trail Society's board of directors continue to develop plans for a Wild Pacific Trail Centre. The Centre would offer a centralized location to offer indoor and outdoor educational programs, be a welcome/information centre, provide classrooms, administration office space and amenities.

We look forward to continuing our visitor education at the Lighthouse in 2024. While the Society would love access to the new Amphitrite House, we will not be involved in running a coffee shop planned by the District. We value a strong working relationship with the District keeping the public informed and respectful of the natural treasure that the Trail offers to thousands.

Thank you to the many volunteers, donors, partners, and community members who support the Wild Pacific Trail and make our programs thrive!

Sincerely,

Wild Pacific Trail Society

