

Annual
Report
2023

Raincoast Education Society





- 03 Words from our ED
- 04 Mission & Aim
- 05 Research Overview
- 06 Research Projects
- 07 West Coast Ambassador Program
- 08 Raincoast Institute
- 09 Speaker Series
- 10 Youth Programming
- 11 Community Outreach
- 12 Financial Overview
- 13 Our Team
- 14 Our Impact
- 14 Supporters & Partners

Table of Contents





Message from the Executive Director



2023 was an exciting year for the RES during which we continued to broaden the reach of our educational programming. We welcomed two new Field School Coordinators, Hannah Richards and Derek Zandvliet and are looking forward to a full schedule of programming in Tofino, Ucluelet, Ahousaht and Bamfield. We take our mandate to serve our regional community to heart!

On the adult education front our winter Speaker Series is in full swing and we've been thrilled to see old friends and new ones too zooming in from all across BC (and even as far away as Yukon and Alberta). The West Coast Ambassador Program is gearing up for yet another year, and we are looking ahead to a full slate of Raincoast Institute Courses in 2024, many of them already booking up. Birds, Seaweeds and Mushrooms are returning and this year we are adding two new courses: Marine Mammals and Marine Invertebrates!

Our research and monitoring activities continue on as well, and we are eagerly anticipating the first couple of peer-reviewed papers to come out of our work with Black Oystercatchers and Western Sandpipers over the last several years. We are also expanding our collaboration with BC Nature to conduct marine bird surveys in Hesquiaht Harbour this spring, a first for us!

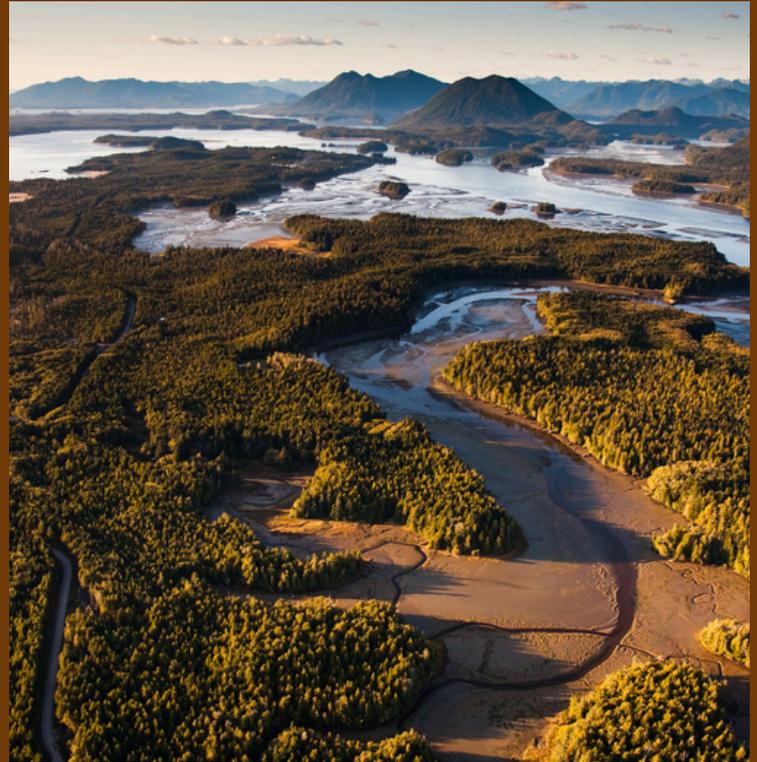
On a final note, I am proud to share that as of 2024 the RES is a Living Wage Employer. The strength of our organization has always been our staff and we firmly believe that the more we can invest in our people, the more they will invest in us and help accomplish our mission, uphold our mandate, and continue to make a meaningful contribution to the community we are all a part of.

MARK MAFTEI
Executive Director

Our Mission

“To shape an environmentally sustainable future for the Clayoquot and Barkley Sound region through education and community stewardship.”

We seek to accomplish our mission by delivering a broad range of high-quality educational and research programs, such as field school, speaker series, summer camps, school programs, events, and research programs focused on the natural environment, cultures, and communities of the Clayoquot and Barkley Sound region.



Our Aim

Our aim is to enable citizens within and beyond the Clayoquot and Barkley Sound region to participate knowledgeably, effectively and responsibly in the work of shaping this future for our region and for our planet.

We work with a broad range of public, private and community institutions and agencies, both within and beyond the region, to establish and maintain a high-caliber education and research network and to reflect a wide range of perspectives in all of our educational and research activities.



2023 Research Overview

The RES is actively involved in a number of scientific research and monitoring projects in Clayoquot and Barkley Sound. Our work in this field may sometimes go under the radar, but it's an important part of our mission. As a regional organization, our priority has always been to learn more about our local environment and use that information to raise awareness and promote stewardship. Much of our work over the last several years has focused on collecting baseline data that can be used to assess the health of our marine ecosystem. Whether it's learning more about what salmon in Barkley Sound eat in the summer or what kinds of birds congregate in the Tofino Mudflats in the winter, the idea is to target gaps in data or knowledge and collect information that can inform conservation and management decisions.

Since 2020, we have been collaborating with the Juanes Lab at UVic on The BC Adult Salmon Diet Program - the first scientific attempt to assess how the diet of Coho and Chinook salmon differs between seasons and between regions up and down the entire BC coast.

Birds have always been of particular interest to us here at the RES. One of our most productive ongoing collaborations is with BC Nature, an organization leading the way identifying areas of special ecological importance and pushing for their conservation and appreciation. With generous financial support from their team, we have been able to conduct several multi-year efforts to survey marine birds all around Vancouver Island. The data we collect directly informs how areas of conservation priority are assessed and helps provide updated information on populations and distribution that can help us better understand how various species are trending over time.



2023 Research Projects

Marine Bird Surveys:

Surveyed Barkley Sound to assess diversity and abundance of marine birds in the fall. This work applies the same protocol we employed over multiple years in Queen Charlotte Strait and is already being used by our partners at BCNature to update estimates for a number of key species in the region.



Salmon Diet Study:

Collected 129 coho and chinook salmon stomachs which will be analysed by researchers at UVic to reveal how diet varies between years and between areas at sites all along the BC coast.



we also submitted three papers for peer-review detailing our work on:

- Black Oystercatcher diet in Barkley Sound (accepted).
- Western Sandpiper migration in the Tofino Mudflats (accepted).
- Seabird surveys in Queen Charlotte Strait (in press).



2023 WCAP



Our long-running *West Coast Ambassador Program* aims to build a strong and healthy community, encourage a positive attitude, and foster responsible citizenship while improving community relations between visitors and local businesses. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, we transitioned from strictly online courses to a combination of in-person (80%) and virtual (20%) sessions.

During spring, these 2 to 3-hour evening sessions welcomed regional residents of all ages and backgrounds to participate in this educational, engaging, and free initiative to expand their knowledge of both Clayoquot and Barkley Sound and increase their participation in our communities.

In response to the constantly evolving environmental and economic landscape, our courses provided participants with local information and covered important topics such as seasonal concerns, regional hazards, and coexisting with wildlife.

In 2023, we were happy to hold the "Small-Town, Big Picture: Tofino" course at the historic Monks (Načiks) property, a time capsule of Tofino's past.

Course Name	# of Sessions	# Attending
Small Town Big Picture Tofino	5	66
Small Town Big Picture Ucluelet	9	60
Coastal Rainforest Ecology	6	73
Marine Ecology	6	75

www.raincoasteducation/wcap



2023 Raincoast Institute

In 2023, we offered three Raincoast Institute courses: Birds of the West Coast, Seaweeds of the West Coast, and Mushrooms of the West Coast. Each weekend field course provided participants with a holistic understanding of our diverse ecosystems, and offered hands-on, outdoor-based learning experiences.

In May, Birds of the West Coast explored the exceptional birding opportunities along the Pacific Flyway, emphasizing the region's significance during spring and fall migrations.

In June, Seaweeds of the West Coast introduced participants to the world of coastal seaweeds, covering biodiversity, collection, identification, foraging, and the relationship between seaweeds and people.

In October, Mushrooms of the West Coast delved into the realm of west coast fungi, addressing their role in forests, essential collection and identification methods, and practical aspects such as edibility, medicinal properties, and culinary uses.



Birds

May 5-7

\$330/person



Mushrooms

October 6-8

\$300/person

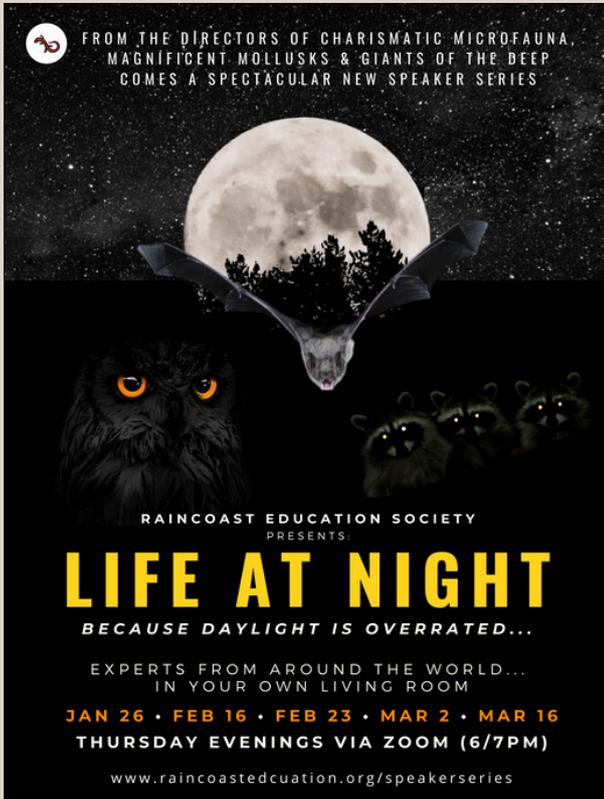
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Seaweeds

June 16-18

\$300/person

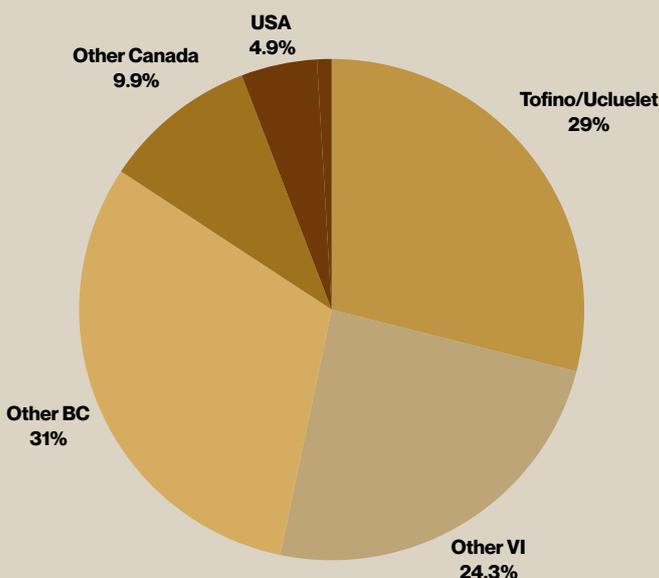
2023 Speaker Series



In this captivating series, we delved into the mysteries of the nocturnal world, unveiling the extraordinary adaptations of creatures thriving in environments devoid of light.

Throughout the spring, our engaging speaker series invited attendees from near and far to explore the hidden lives of creatures, both familiar and fantastic. Expert speakers from around the world provided insights into creatures such as moths, bats, raccoons, and owls. In 2023, we took this series one step further to cover the night sky above and the cosmos beyond (twice!).

Our series brought world-renowned scientists into the living rooms of hundreds of participants.



SPEAKERS

Dr. Suzanne MacDonald: *Urban Raccoons in Canada*
Dr. Melanie Anderson: *Moth Antenna on a Smelling Drone*
Dr. Stephanie Monty: *Galactic Archaeology*
Dr. Merlin Tuttle: *The Magical World of Bats*
Dr. James Duncan: *Owls: A Short Tale about Long Ears*

540 PEOPLE TUNED IN



2023 Youth Programming

Field School

Field School is one of our best known and loved programs. Our educators work with all of our local students K-7, in both Tofino & Ucluelet Elementary Schools.

In 2022 we added Ahousaht and in 2024 have plans to add Bamfield. *(something about location being a barrier to regularity or something)*

Field School Outings:

Tofino: 58

Ucluelet: 57



Youth Camps

Over the 2023 summer months we offered day camps in both Tofino and Ucluelet. Children ages 6 to 12 were welcome to join in on the fun. This year we held two camp weeks in each community: Ocean Camp was all about learning and exploring living things in the sea. Forest Camp encouraged campers to discover the wonders of the forest and hone in on their survival skills.

Outdoor Adventure Camp Summary:

Tofino Creative Creatures:	20
Tofino Eco Heroes:	20
Ucluelet Creative Creatures:	20
Ucluelet Eco Heroes:	17



2023 Community Outreach

Beach Seines

Our instructors and summer staff organized multiple Beach Seine demonstrations at the beach front of Tofino Sea Kayaking. Over the summer months we welcomed the public to come get their hands wet as they held and observed species of the eelgrass ecosystem. This free, hands-on drop in taught community members the importance of eelgrass habitat and their benefits to the environment.



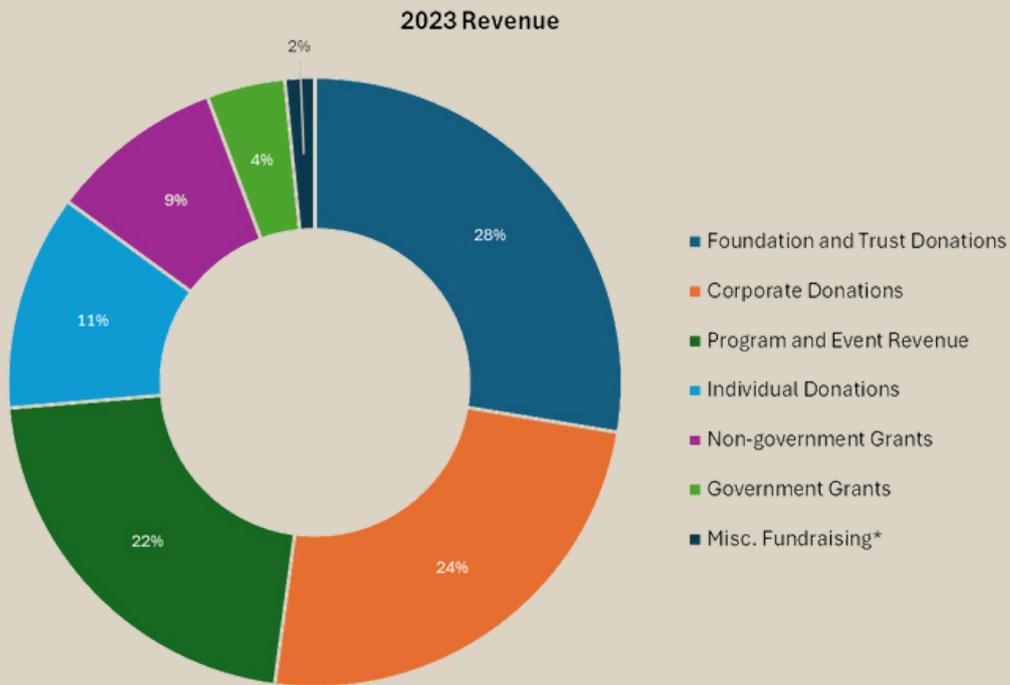
Plankton Tuesdays

Though you may not always see them, plankton are out there and some will become a feast for tiny fish or giant whales. This summer we encouraged community members and visitors to come observe plankton up close and learn more! Every Tuesday during the summer, we set a pop-up stand in the breezeway next to Ocean Outfitters with plankton samples and microscopes.

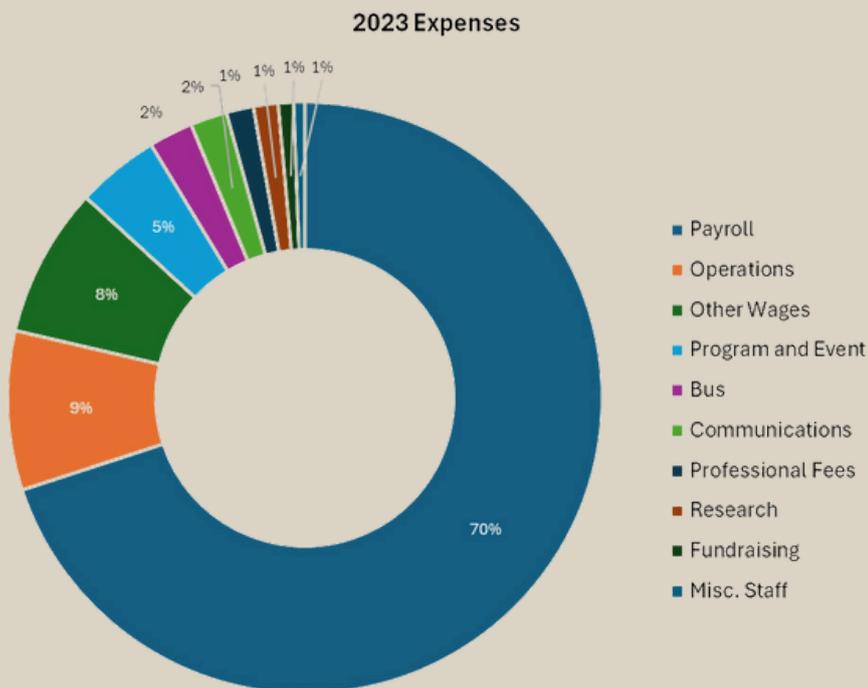
Wild Pacific Trail

The Wild Pacific Trail is one of our region's finest opportunities for locals and visitors alike to connect with nature. Our staff have been working in collaboration with the Wild Pacific Trail Society to offer informal interpretive programming along the trail, helping people learn more about the local ecosystem.





Misc. Fundraising: fundraising revenue, merchandise sold, reward program



Payroll: allowances, employer taxes, wages and salaries, WorkSafeBC premiums

Operations: dues and licenses, internet and phone, liability and directors insurance, merchant fees, office, liability and directors insurance, rent

Other wages: contract wages, honorariums

Bus: bus insurance, bus fuel and repair

Communications: marketing, web and software

Research: research, travel

Fundraising: fundraising, merchandise

Communications: marketing, web and software

Misc. Staff: professional development, staff/intern/board appreciation

Our Board

Our board is comprised of five dynamic local residents who reflect a range of educational backgrounds, experiences, and expertise in natural and social sciences, non-profit governance, and education.

- Kira de Leeuw: Learning Facilitator
- Dennis Morgan: Business Owner
- Albert Shepard: Former Museum Curator, Outdoor Educator
- Tom Stere: Tofino Coast Guard & District of Tofino Councillor
- Colin Zacharias: Certified Mountain Guide, Risk Management Consultant



Our Staff

Our staff are passionate, dedicated & reflect a diverse set of skills & backgrounds!

Executive Director: Mark Maftai

Operations Coordinator: Tam Belliveau

Communications Director: Sarah Timberlake

Field School Coordinators: Sophia Lloyd-Jones
& Savahhah Lincez

Summer Interns: Kate Metcalfe, Lauren Mitchell, Makayla Lintot



Our Impact Over the Years



Youth Educated

10,631



Hours of Adult Education

4,562



Field School Trips

802



Summer Interns

52

@raincoasteducation



likes/followers

3K / 3.3K

@raincoasteducated



posts/followers

1090 / 4,314

@raincoastfieldschool



posts/followers

826 / 799

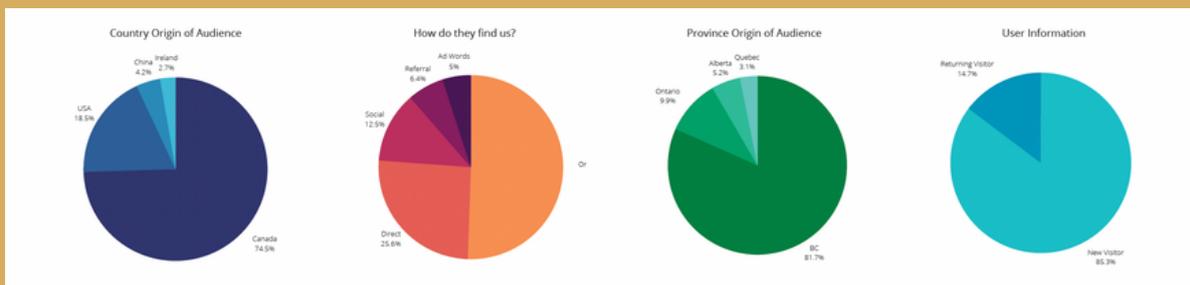
@raincoasted



posts/followers

424 / 721

www.raincoasteducation.org Site Analytics



Sponsorship & Partnership Opportunities

The Raincoast Education Society would not exist without the generous support of our community donors and partners. The Raincoast Education Society operates as a registered Canadian charity, the donations made by community individuals and corporations support 55% of our total operating costs. We are incredibly grateful for those that have decided to join us in our efforts to educate people about Clayoquot and Barkley Sound's old-growth forests, streams, shorelines, and waters, and maintain our region as one of the most ecologically rich landscapes on the planet.

Please consider becoming one of our supporters. Visit our website for more information or to donate. Have questions? email: info@raincoasteducation.org or visit www.raincoasteducation.org

Supporters & Partners

- Anne Marie Gaston Foundation
- BC Nature
- Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
- Coop Tofino
- Coop Ucluelet
- Common Loaf Bakeshop
- District of Tofino
- District of Ucluelet
- Eco Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Jamie's Whaling Station
- Long Beach Lodge Resort
- Nature United
- Nature Trust of BC
- Pacific Coast Airlines
- Pacific Sands Resort
- Paddle West Kayaking
- Parks Canada
- Redd Fish Restoration Society
- Remote Passages
- Service Canada BC
- Thornton Creek Hatchery
- Tribal Park Allies
- Tofino Long Beach Chamber
- Tofino Sea Kayaking
- Tofino Time
- Tourism Tofino
- Tourism Ucluelet
- Tuff City Radio
- Ucluelet Aquarium
- Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce
- Ucluelet PAC
- Westerly News
- Wild Pacific Trail Society



