

Field Trip Guide for Naturalists

Introduction

The *Field Trip Guide for Naturalists* is designed as a ready reference for leaders of day-long or longer field trips outside urban areas and for Boards of Directors of naturalist clubs. It is intended for use by leaders when planning and leading field trips and for Boards of Directors when setting up a field trip organization.

The guide includes check-lists for field trip leaders and trip participants and lists some of the factors which Boards of Directors should consider when they establish a risk management scheme for their clubs. This guide does not attempt to address the risks associated with cycling, boating or kayaking trips, which are not covered by BC Nature's liability insurance policy.

We suggest that directors and field trip leaders keep the guide handy and add to it from their own experience.

General Principles

The primary considerations for a successful field trip are:

1. The safety and wellbeing of the participants; and
2. The preservation of the area being visited.

With that in mind it is recommended that participants:

- Tread lightly: keep the number of plant samples to a minimum, refrain from taking disturbing animals, birds or other creatures and stay on roads or trails to the extent possible,
- Respect all signage and private property and be aware of local laws and regulations.
- Inform other users of natural areas of the need to practice these principles and, if necessary, ask them to modify their conduct.

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FIELD TRIP LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Planning the trip

- Learn about the area by studying maps and previous trip reports.
- Carry out a reconnaissance trip if the ground is unfamiliar.
- Measure distance and elevation changes to provide a difficulty rating and estimated trip duration when publishing details of the trip.
- Note any requirements for reservations, fee collections or trespass releases.
- Frame an emergency plan in case a participant is taken ill or is injured.
- A Wilderness First Aid course is highly recommended for trip leaders.

Before the trip begins

- Keep up to date with weather, fire hazards, closures, road conditions, ferry schedules and changes to park regulations.
- Keep a list of persons and agencies to contact to keep information current.
- Carry a map of the trip area, a First Aid kit and handbook and a cell phone, if possible, in addition personal essentials.
- Be prepared to indicate the estimated trip duration to potential participants.
- Choose a meeting place where it is safe to congregate.

At the meeting place

- Arrive early to direct participants to the parking area.
- Make introductions and distribute plant and bird lists when available.
- When all participants are assembled, explain the proposed distance, altitude gain, trail conditions and difficulty rating of the trip.
- Ensure participants are members of BC Nature and have signed the required annual "Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk" or the "Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims", as recommended, or other legally sound acknowledgement that they are aware they are participating at their own risk. If a club allows non-members to join in an outing, then the non-member must sign the "Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims" or other such stand-alone Waiver of Liability.
- Record a list of trip participants and emergency contact numbers.
- Make sure each participant has the minimum personal essentials:
Appropriate footwear (sturdy boots with ankle support), suitable clothing for any weather possible en route, water, food, sunscreen, insect repellent, personal medication (if applicable), personal first aid kit, noisemaker.
- Describe possible hazards that may be encountered, including local seasonal hazards such as ticks, rattlesnakes, etc.
- Explain trail procedures.
- Advise participants that if they get separated or lost they must stay where they are until they are found.
- Advise participants that they must stay with the group and ahead of the end-person unless the leader gives permission for them to separate.
- Arrange car pooling and describe club policy for reimbursing drivers.
- Make sure any questions are answered.
- Take a head count before starting out.

On the trail

- Designate an end-person to make sure no-one falls behind. The end-person must be prepared to stay behind with slow members of the group on the return leg if necessary.
- Set a pace that the slowest member finds comfortable and advise participants to speak out if the pace is too fast for them.
- Take rest stops as needed and make sure slower members have equal rest time.
- If there is a wide variation in pace within the group, divide participants into a fast and slow group with a leader and end-person for each.
- When traversing steep slopes with loose rocks make sure that no one below is in a position to be hit by a rock.
- When walking on roads minimize interference with vehicle traffic.
- Count heads periodically.
- The leader has the final word on any change of plan and has the responsibility to alter or even abort the trip if deemed advisable.

After the trip

- Make sure all participants are accounted for.
- Complete an Incident Report if an accident has occurred (see list of requirements in Risk Management section).
- Make sure all vehicles are in running order and that the last vehicles leave together.
- Drivers may accept remuneration from riders on completion of the trip in accordance with club policy
- Invite comments and suggestions for future trips.
- Note any changes of procedure or equipment for future trips in the area.
- Prepare an article for the club newsletter with photos, if available.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS IN THE FIELD

Lost persons

- If a missing person has not been found after an immediate search, contact the RCMP by any means possible.
- Continue a more thorough group search based on the last known contact while waiting for help.
- The leader should attempt to maintain contact with both the main group and the search group.
- Maximize search and rescue activity before dark.
- The lost person should stay in one place to assist with relocation and build a shelter before dark.

Bears

A bear will defend itself, its young and its territory if it feels threatened. All bears are potentially dangerous and their reaction to any given situation cannot be predicted. Knowledge, alertness and good judgment can help you to avoid a life-threatening encounter.

- Hike with a group whenever possible.
- Stay in the open as much as possible. Avoid berry patches, animal carcasses and well-used bear trails.
- Be alert for signs such as fresh tracks, scat, trampled vegetation, diggings, overturned rocks and claw marks on trees.
- Bears will feel threatened if surprised so whistle, talk, sing or use a noisemaker when bears may be present.
- Do not take a dog into bear country. The sight and smell of a dog may provoke an attack.
- Never feed or approach any bear and never go near a cub. Avoid getting between a cub and its mother.
- Don't attract bears by improper food storage or poor clean-up
- Most bears will leave the area if they are aware of the presence of people but even loud conversation, singing, yelling and noise-makers may be ineffective, especially in dense bush or near running water.
- If you sight a bear keep your distance and make a wide detour. If you enter the range within which it feels threatened it may attack.
- Keep calm and do not run. Bears can run faster than a human and a quick movement may trigger an attack.
- Speak softly, back slowly away and avoid eye contact. Bears interpret eye contact as a sign of aggression.
- A bear rearing on its hind legs may just be trying to get your scent or focus his eyes on you. It does not necessarily pose a threat.
- If a bear is cornered it may charge and veer away, or jump forward, slam a paw on the ground and snort loudly. These are defensive types of behaviour and you should continue to back away.
- A bear can sometimes be diverted with a dropped pack allowing you to back off and make a safe retreat.
- Climbing as high up a tree as possible can put some distance between you and a grizzly bear. A larger grizzly may not be able to climb a tree, but it can still shake a tree with significant force. Black bears are good tree climbers.
- If a black bear acts aggressively towards you shout at it, make yourself look as large as possible by waving your arms and stamp your feet.
- It is extremely unlikely that you will be physically attacked by a bear. How to respond depends upon the kind of bear. Most experts recommend fighting back if it's a black bear – kick, punch and hit the bear on the face, nose and eyes. But if the bear is a grizzly, most experts recommend never fighting back. Most grizzly attacks are defensive and if you fight, that may confirm to the bear that you are indeed a threat. The bear, in turn, may intensify its attack.
- If a grizzly bear does attack you, drop to the ground and play dead. Pull your knees up to your chest to protect your vital organs and clasp your hands behind your neck to protect your face and neck. Wearing your pack can help shield your body. If the attack continues, experts recommend that you remain on your side in a fetal ball position with knees drawn up. On the other hand, some experts recommend that you lie face down with legs apart and cover your neck with your hands.
- Most leading bear authorities recommend bear spray as a last resort in the event of determined bear attack. Bear spray should be carefully used, following training to ensure it is used as recommended by the manufacturer, including

distance from bear and wind direction. Trip leaders may carry or use bear spray at their discretion. In no instance, should a leader discourage a participant who wishes to carry bear spray.

Cougars

- The number of encounters with cougars has increased in recent years.
- Cougars generally stalk from behind and may target any hiker who becomes separated from the group.

Lightning strikes

- Watch for any significant build-up of massive cumulonimbus clouds which are the main source of lightning, heavy rains and high winds.
- If you hear thunder or see lightning you are at risk of being struck. The presence or lack of rain is not a reliable indicator.
- When there is a risk of a lightning strike stay off high places and open slopes and also avoid trees.
- If exposed in a high risk area insulate yourself from the ground with anything available such as a pack. Alpine meadows provide good insulation underfoot but a dry talus slope with its many air pockets can also provide good insulation.
- If someone is struck by lightning, immediately check them for injuries. Victims are not dangerous to touch.
- If the victim has no pulse or respiration, administer CPR right away.
- Cardiac arrest is the main cause of death from lightning strikes. Other injuries can include vision and hearing loss, tinnitus (ears ringing), memory loss, confusion and cardiac arrhythmia. Serious burns are uncommon.

FIRST AID AND SURVIVAL

First Aid and Injuries

It is strongly recommended that all persons planning to lead field trips take a Wilderness First Aid course. Whenever possible a qualified first aid person should participate in the trip. If there is an injury during a trip take the following steps:

- Secure the site and prevent further injury to the victim and others.
- Evaluate the victim's condition and decide whether outside help is required.
- If outside help is required and a cell phone is available within service range, call 911. Alternately, and in most instances, send at least two persons for help with the firm command, "you and you – named- , go for help and report back to me." Be certain that they can provide a clear account of location, condition of the victim and number in the group.
- Make the victim as comfortable as possible and provide shelter.
- If a cell phone cannot be used, send at least two people with coinage and details of the victim and situation to find a telephone. At least one should wait at the phone to act as a communication link. Ensure that at least one person returns to the incident scene and advises the trip leader that help is on the way.

Accidents in the Field

- Check for hazards and if possible, remove, to ensure no further accidents occur.

- If there is a lack of response from an injured person immediately use the ABC Rule.
- **ABC Rule:** Check Airway/Breathing/Cardio. Make sure the airway is open and free of debris, apply rescue breathing and begin CPR. The incident leader should ask if anyone has had training in CPR. If there is no pulse, weak pulse or if you are uncertain, CPR is better than rescue breathing alone.
- Control any heavy bleeding.
- Record the time of the accident, the nature of the accident, the condition of the victim and the type of first aid applied.

Treatment of Shock

- Correct the cause of the shock.
- Apply the **ABC Rule**; keep the victim flat unless they have a breathing or heart problem; keep them warm and comfortable.

Heat Stroke

- Caused by dehydration, the victim's skin may become hot and dry and the victim may become unconscious.
- Provide shade, loosen or remove victim's clothing, sponge or wet down victim especially groin, armpits and behind neck and fan victim.
- Check temperature and continue cooling until normal.
- Do not give fluids unless conscious and do not give drugs.

Heat Exhaustion

- Caused by a loss of electrolytes and inability to dissipate heat. Symptoms include fatigue, faintness, dizziness and nausea leading to vomiting.
- Make the victim rest, give fluids with electrolytes if possible (e.g. Gatorade), keep victim cool as for heat stroke.

Frostbite

- Frostbite occurs when the upper surface of the skin becomes frozen. The victim may not notice because of the resulting loss of sensation. The affected area turns white and a tingling sensation may be experienced.
- To treat frostbite slowly warm affected area and keep body warm. Never rub snow on affected area.

Hypothermia

- General cooling of the body's core temperature to the point where it can no longer generate its own heat. Get victim into warm dry environment, remove wet clothing, protect from further heat loss and feed warm liquids (but not alcohol)

Survival

- As soon as it is evident that the survival of the group has become an issue, stop, consult those with appropriate skills and plan a survival strategy which takes account of the terrain, the weather and the situation.
- Communicate the plan to the group and stick to the plan.
- Take steps to prevent falls, hypothermia, frostbite and interaction with dangerous wildlife.
- Consider whether to build an emergency shelter.

- Keep the group informed about progress to avoid panic and keep up morale.

Hantavirus

Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) is a deadly disease transmitted by infected rodents through urine or droppings. Humans may contract HPS if they breathe in the aerosolized virus.

- Avoid coming into contact with rodents or their burrows.
- Disinfect and air out cabins before using them.
- Do not pitch tents near rodent droppings, burrows or woodpiles.
- Avoid sleeping on bare ground.

RISK MANAGEMENT - DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Development of an effective field trip organization

- It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure that the club has an effective organization in place for the planning, scheduling and leadership of any field trips which are specifically authorized by the club. These should be clearly distinguished from trips which may be undertaken by club members as individuals for which the club will not be responsible.
- One individual should be designated to coordinate the field trip organization and to implement the club's field trip policies.
- Both the Directors and the field trip coordinator (if designated) should take steps to satisfy themselves that field trip leaders have basic outdoor skills and experience in the areas where they propose to lead field trips.
- The Board of Directors should ensure that the club publishes its policy for field trip procedures and makes it available to its field trip leaders. The policy should include a description of the recommended "Informed Consent & Assumption of Risk" form, and/or the recommended "Release of Liability & Waiver of Claims" form, or other legally sound form, authorized for use by the club and the procedures to be used to ensure that trip participants have signed the form.
- BC Nature recommends that non-members wishing to participate in any outing join the club as a "Day Member" with payment of a nominal fee and that they read and sign the Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims Agreement or other such stand-alone Waiver of Liability.
- The Board of Directors should arrange for the details of any field trips authorized by the club to be published with sufficient information so that prospective participants can judge whether it is appropriate for their experience and physical ability. Prospective participants who may not be suited for a particular trip will then be dissuaded from participating before they make arrangements to travel.
- It is recommended that the Board of Directors introduce a system of rating trips for difficulty to help prospective participants to decide whether a trip is suitable (See Appendix A – Rating Field Trips for Difficulty)
- Publication of field trips should be accompanied by a general cautionary statement alerting prospective participants to the potential hazards of hiking in British Columbia. A sample statement is set out below:

Be prepared for the weather in the trip area. It is often very different from where you live. Depending on the destination and season, bring suitable clothing including boots with good ankle support, raingear and a hat. Also bring food, plenty of water and insect repellent and sunscreen when appropriate. A basic First Aid kit is also recommended.

Avoiding negligence

The Board of Directors must ensure that any member it designates to be responsible for field trips, whether directly or indirectly, makes decisions based on experience, competence and sound judgment. This will reduce the possibility of accidents and injuries to occurring or of allegations that responsible individuals have shown negligence in their decision making.

The use of Informed Consent and Release of Liability forms

BC Nature recommends that all club members sign annually the “Informed Consent & Assumption of Risk” form. This is also the form that a parent/guardian should sign for a minor (person under 19 years). For more strenuous or trips of longer duration, BC Nature recommends that each participant sign the “Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims” form, which would be specific to that trip. By signing one or other of these forms the participant acknowledges that they are aware of and have considered the possible risks of personal injury, death, property damage or financial loss that could result from the activity.

The role of liability insurance

- Liability insurance is only one defense against damage suits brought against the club and its members if there is an accident on a field trip or work party organized by a club. Insurance is not a substitute for sound management of field outings, including proper trip records and use of waivers. The first line of defense must always be awareness of the need for safety. Whether you are a club director, a trip leader or merely a participant in a field trip, there is always the possibility that you as well as your club could be held responsible for causing an accident which might have significant consequences for a trip participant. Any one of you can be sued for causing physical damage, consequent loss of livelihood or property damage.
- BC Nature’s insurance scheme provides liability insurance of up to \$2 million per occurrence for claims related to bodily injury or property damage, when such claims are made against the club, or one or more of its directors, officers, members, designated volunteers and employees.
- BC Nature’s insurance scheme also provides insurance of up to \$1 million for claims made against directors and officers of clubs arising from errors and omissions made by them. It would be unfair to expect members to serve in these positions of responsibility without making sure they have this type of protection.
- In the event that a claim is made against the club or one of the parties listed above, BC Nature’s insurance company is likely to get involved at an early stage to protect its interests. One of the first questions it will ask is whether the activity in question was covered by the policy. The insurance company has stated that coverage is for “naturalist activities” such as: field trips, outings, walking, hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, camps (residential and tent), meetings and banquets. It is not until an actual claim is made that this description will be put to the test. The insurance company has clearly stated the following activities are not

covered by the liability insurance policy: bicycling, canoeing or kayaking. The insurance company could however provide additional coverage for one of these activities for a particular outing, at additional cost. Travel in your own vehicle is not covered by BC Nature's liability insurance, as your automobile insurance provides that coverage.

- The insurer will make sure that the activity was sanctioned by the club. The word "sanctioned" means that the club must in some way have approved of the activity in question, either by publicizing it as a club sponsored event or because the organizer routinely organizes activities of that type.
- It is important to emphasize that BC Nature's insurance is liability insurance only. It is not a substitute for or a supplement to your regular medical or accident coverage, whether inside or outside Canada, for which you are individually responsible.

Incident report

The Board of Directors and the designated field trip coordinator should make sure that full details are recorded for any incident which results in personal injury or property damage. It is recommended that the following information be recorded

- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident, including trip description and specific details
- Name of injured person and contact details
- Details of injury or property damage
- Details of treatment (first aid) given and by whom
- Comments by injured person
- Name and contact information of supplier of treatment
- Description of trip
- Name and contact details of trip leader
- Report by trip leader
- Witness names and contact details

Incident report to be signed by trip leader and club executive and mailed to BC Nature office as soon as possible.

APPENDIX A – RATING FIELD TRIPS FOR DIFFICULTY

Trips involving a significant element of hiking can be classified by distance, duration, altitude gain and difficulty rating. Such a system can help members to decide whether they are sufficiently fit and have the right equipment to safely enjoy the trip.

Distance and duration

The trip leader is responsible for estimating the distance to the destination and the overall duration of the trip. It is customary to add one hour for a lunch break to the estimated times for day trips when publishing these details.

Altitude gain

If the trip involves more than one ascent and descent the cumulative altitude gain should be published.

Difficulty ratings

Easy: These trips follow trails which may have some short uphill/downhill sections. They have a good walking surface and good clearance from overhanging and side branches. There are no navigational difficulties on these trails. Light hiking shoes are generally sufficient, or even running shoes if the trail is dry.

Moderately difficult: These trails have moderate slopes with switchbacks and generally solid trail surfaces. Some rough sections and creek crossings may be encountered. There may be a few minor navigational difficulties due to side trails. Elevation change may be 200 to 300 metres. Light hiking boots with ankle support are strongly recommended.

Difficult: Trails may be narrow with long uphill and downhill sections. Some sections may have a rough, uneven surface with rocks and tree roots protruding. Other sections may have a loose surface requiring care to avoid slipping. Trails may follow the fall line of a slope rather than having switchbacks across the slope. Running water may have eroded the trail. Wading of shallow creeks may be required. Some sections present significant navigational problems such as a poorly defined route. Elevation change may be 500 to 600 m taking 4 to 5 hours. Boots with good ankle support and a more aggressive tread are required for these trips.

Very difficult: Trails may have long steep, rough sections with loose and uneven footing. The trail may be poorly-defined with little or no prepared walking surface and fallen trees on the trail. Branches and vegetation may be dense. There may be long sections involving significant navigational hazards due to the poorly-defined route and reduced visibility due to unfavourable weather. Elevation change may be 1,000 m taking 5 to 6 hours. Hiking boots with good ankle support and aggressive tread are essential. A walking stick may help with balance.

APPENDIX B – EQUIPMENT AND GEAR

First Aid kit

Suggested contents of a trip leader's basic First Aid kit:

- Band-aids and moleskin (duct tape can substitute for the latter)
- Pain-killer
- Triangular bandages
- Adhesive tape and tensor bandage
- Safety pins
- Tweezers
- Splints
- Folding scissors
- Compresses
- First Aid handbook

Personal essentials for day trip

- Appropriate footwear (sturdy boots with ankle support)
- Suitable clothing for any possible weather in the trip area
- Water and food
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Personal medication (if required)
- Personal first aid kit
- Noisemaker

Other possible gear

- Guidebook, topographic map and compass
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Pocket knife
- Waterproof matches/lighter and fire starter (candle or flattened wax carton)
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Large orange garbage bag
- Whistle
- Strong cord
- Small folding saw
- Needle and thread
- Duct tape
- Water purification tablets or equipment
- Cell phone (if functional in the trip area)

Repair kit

- Needle and thread
- Scissors/knife
- Wire, duct tape, rubber bands, cord
- Shoe-laces
- Cloth patches
- Spare parts and tools appropriate to the trip, e.g. spare ski tip

Clothing

In every season, provide for layering.

- Windbreaker and warm jacket
- Rain gear and gaiters
- Gloves and mitts
- Toque or hat
- Shorts and long pants
- Spare socks and underwear
- Vest and sweater
- Spare shirt or blouse
- Thermal underwear

Food storage tips

The following guidelines were developed with bears in mind but should work well with most other animals, the possible exceptions being mice and squirrels.

- At some distance from your tent, find a tree with a branch that is about 6m from the ground, about 10cm in diameter at the trunk and about 2.5cm at the point where you will hang your food. The hanging point should be about 3m from the trunk as well as 3m from any other point.
- Place the food in a sack.
- Throw a line over the branch at a point where the branch will support the sack, pull the sack up towards the branch to a height of at least 4m from the ground and secure the rope to the tree to hold it in place.
- It is a good idea to store soap, toothpaste and cosmetics with the food.
- Food lost to animals is your responsibility. When it is safe to do so, clean up any food scattered by animals.
- Be aware of health hazards such as hantavirus, West Nile fever, beaver fever, ticks, etc.,
- Keep your campsite clean.
- Lock food in the trunk of your car or safely out of reach.
- Don't cook, eat or store food in your tent. Consider a vegetarian diet to avoid meat odours.
- Dispose of dish water in accordance with park regulations, if applicable. Screen grey water for food particles which are treated as above, then scatter water over a wide area.
- Sleep at least 30 metres from cooking area and food cache and if possible, upwind of it.
- Cook at least 30 metres away from your tent and leave oven mitts, aprons, etc. in the cooking area. If you get food splatters on clothing wash it and keep it away from the your tent.

CLUB - INFORMED CONSENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT

WARNING!
By signing this document you will waive certain legal rights, including the right to sue. Please read carefully.

DISCLAIMER

This is a binding legal agreement. As a Participant in the programs, activities and events of the _____ Club and the Federation of BC Naturalists, the undersigned acknowledges and agrees to the following terms:

The _____ Club and the Federation of BC Naturalists and their respective directors, officers, committee members, members, employees, volunteers, participants, agents and representatives (collectively the "Organization") are not responsible for any injury, personal injury, damage, property damage, expense, loss of income or loss of any kind suffered by a Participant during, or as a result of, any program, activity or event of the Organization, caused by the risks, dangers and hazards associated with the programs, activities and events of the Organization.

DESCRIPTION OF RISKS

I am participating voluntarily in these activities, events and programs of the Organization. In consideration of my participation in the programs, activities and events of the Organization, I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the risks, dangers and hazards associated with or related to any such programs, activities and events of the Organization and may be exposed to such risks, dangers and hazards. The risks, dangers and hazards include, but are not limited to, injuries from:

- a) Field trips, outings and nature walks;
- b) Bird counts and watching;
- c) Road cleanup and restoration work;
- d) Animal attacks, including but not limited to, bears, cougars and snakes;
- e) Bites from insects, including ticks with possibility of leading to Lyme Disease;
- f) Extreme weather conditions which may result in heatstroke, sunstroke, hypothermia, frostbite, or lightning strikes;
- g) Inhalation of viruses or infections including but not limited to, Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome;
- h) Executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques including climbing and hiking;
- i) Vigorous physical exertion;
- j) Grass, turf and other surfaces including bacterial infections and rashes;
- k) Falling to the ground due to uneven, slippery, steep, rocky or irregular terrain or surfaces;
- l) Failure to properly use any piece of equipment or from the mechanical failure of any piece of equipment;
- m) Spinal cord injuries which may render me permanently paralyzed; and
- n) Travel to and from activities, events and programs.

1. Furthermore, I am aware:
- a) That injuries sustained can be severe;
 - b) That I may experience anxiety while challenging myself during the activities, events and programs;
 - c) That my risk of injury is reduced if I follow all rules established for participation; and
 - d) That my risk of injury increases as I become fatigued

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

2. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate, I agree:
- a) That I do not know of any medical condition I might have that could possibly make it unwise from me to participate in the club's activities, events or programs, including but not limited to heart conditions;
 - b) To freely accept and fully assume all such risks, dangers and hazards and possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from my participation in such activities, events and programs;
 - c) To forever release the Organization from any and all liability for any and all claims, demands, actions and costs that might arise out of my participation in the activities, events and programs of the Organization.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

3. I acknowledge that I have read this agreement and understand it, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and representatives.

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant (19 years and older)	Date
(OR) Printed Name of Parent or Guardian	Signature of Parent or Guardian	Date

**CLUB RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS AND INDEMNITY
AGREEMENT (FOR THOSE 19 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER)**

WARNING!

By signing this document you will waive certain legal rights, including the right to sue. Please read carefully.

1. This is a binding legal agreement. As a Participant in the programs, activities and events of the _____ Club and the Federation of BC Naturalists, the undersigned acknowledges and agrees to the following terms:

Disclaimer

2. The _____ Club and the Federation of BC Naturalists and their respective directors, officers, committee members, members, employees, volunteers, participants, agents and representatives (collectively the "Organization") are not responsible for any injury, personal injury, damage, property damage, expense, loss of income or loss of any kind suffered by a Participant during, or as a result of, any program, activity or event, caused in any manner whatsoever including, but not limited to, the negligence of the Organization.

Description of Risks

3. I am participating voluntarily in these activities, events and programs of the Organization. In consideration of my participation in the programs, activities and events of the Organization, I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the risks, dangers and hazards associated with or related to any such programs, activities and events of the Organization. The risks, dangers and hazards include, but are not limited to, injuries from:

- a) Field trips, outings and nature walks;
- b) Bird counts and watching;
- c) Road cleanup and restoration work;
- d) Animal attacks, including but not limited to, bears, cougars and snakes;
- e) Bites from insects, including ticks with possibility of leading to Lyme Disease;
- f) Extreme weather conditions which may result in heatstroke, sunstroke, hypothermia, frostbite, or lightning strikes;
- g) Inhalation of viruses or infections including Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome;
- h) Executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques including climbing and hiking;
- i) Vigorous physical exertion;
- j) Grass, turf and other surfaces including bacterial infections and rashes;
- k) Falling to the ground due to uneven, slippery, steep, rocky or irregular terrain or surfaces;
- l) Failure to properly use any piece of equipment or from the mechanical failure of any piece of equipment;
- m) Spinal cord injuries which may render me permanently paralyzed; and
- n) Travel to and from activities, events and programs.

4. Furthermore, I am aware:

- a) That injuries sustained can be severe;
- b) That I may experience anxiety while challenging myself during the activities, events and programs;
- c) That my risk of injury is reduced if I follow all rules established for participation; and
- d) That my risk of injury increases as I become fatigued.

Release of Liability

5. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate, I agree:

- a) To the best of my knowledge, I do not have any medical condition, including heart problems, which would make it unwise for me to participate in activities;
- b) To assume all risks arising out of, associated with or related to my participation;
- c) To waive any and all claims that I may have now or in the future against the Organization;
- d) To freely accept and fully assume all such risks and possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from my participation in such activities, events and programs; and
- e) To forever release the Organization from any and all liability for any and all claims, demands, actions and costs that might arise out of my participation in the activities, events and programs of the Organization, due to any cause whatsoever, even though such risks, injuries, loss, damage, claims, demands, actions or costs may have been caused by the negligence or breach of any duty of care of the Organization.

Acknowledgement

6. I acknowledge that I have read this agreement and understand it, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and representatives.

Name of Participant (Please Print)

Signature of Participant

Date