



Tour de Terre 2024

Sunday, April 21 --- 1 to 4 pm

The islanders hosting the tour have graciously opened their gates today to show and tell about caring for their properties as land stewards, and gardening with nature, top of mind.

What is stewardship all about? [Read](#) a short blog post by GaLTT's Nature Stewards program coordinator, Ken Gurr: galtt.ca/on-being-a-nature-steward

Northwest

856 Canso Road (*Host: Leah*)

A favourite on last year's tour, the landholder loves native plants and animals and has worked extremely hard to ensure as much native vegetation as possible remained undisturbed when their home was brought onto this 3/4 -acre property. They are also keeping up with removing invasive species with attention to nurturing the smaller, delicate plants found on the forest floor.

1085 Pat Burns Avenue (*Hosts: Duncan & Ruth*)

This beautiful 0.65-acre, ocean-view bluff property has a significant amount of native habitat and well-tended areas of wildlife friendly, non-native habitat. Providing for mason bees is an important consideration. The undisturbed, natural area covers about 50% of the property. The landholders are actively working to restore areas impacted by invasive plants.

1280 Honeysuckle Lane (*Host: Howard*)

This 5-acre, roughly rectangular property at the end of Honeysuckle Lane, is on gently sloping tableland sitting above the Barrett Road slope (and Whalebone beach). It is truly an ecological oasis, and at risk of being fragmented should the province's gravel quarry designation next door stay in place. (See: galtt.ca/honeysuckle-woods)

The land features: the original home, heirloom orchard trees and rhododendrons, and almost 4-acres of a mature coastal Douglas fir forest community with a varied and healthy understory, and a magnificent old growth wildlife tree – perfect for owls.

Centre

1610 Hess Road (*Hosts: Kathi & David*)

In the heart of the island's geologic syncline topography, this beautiful 7.4-acre property is largely undisturbed, native habitat with a healthy forest understory, and significant biodiversity values. Approximately one acre of the property adjacent to the house is fenced and contains a vegetable garden, lawn, and a mixture of native and non-native plants. There is also a small pond within the fenced area which is popular with birds and provides habitat for frogs.

East-southeast

3090 George Street (Host: Yarrow)

Most of this 8+ acre property close to Silva Bay (*Kalaich'menup*) is on flat to gently sloping ground dominated by a maturing mixed conifer-deciduous forest. Western redcedar is the dominant conifer with significant amounts of Douglas-fir, some grand-fir, red alder and Bigleaf maple. The landholder is intimately familiar with the physical and natural features of the land and has spent many hours removing invasive plants and rehabilitating disturbed areas.

The property is connected to large, forested and ecologically diverse properties to the north, south, and west. Western screech owls have been frequently observed. Currently, GaLTT is helping Yarrow with her goal of registering a conservation covenant.

2921 Bevmaril Crescent (Hosts: Brad & Carol)

The landholders of this one-acre oceanside property took care in clearing their property for built structures and left unfenced portions in a natural state. There is a significant amount of native habitat and well-tended garden areas of wildlife friendly, non-native habitat. In combination, the native and wildlife-friendly portions cover about 60% of the property area.

2015 Blueback Circle (Hosts: Alex & Jan)

Another favourite from last year's tour, this sloping property has been lovingly restored to a beautiful natural state of rocky outcrop, Coastal Douglas fir habitat and woodland thanks to the care and respect for this habitat by these Nature Stewards. A huge overgrowth of Himalayan blackberry was removed allowing native plants and tree seedlings to take hold. In areas where the previous owners had pressure-washed all the moss off the sandstone, Alex carefully reseeded and restored the moss growth and is adding new plants including young Douglas fir and Garry oak.

Many thanks to our Tour de Terre Hosts—and to you for participating.

Please consider volunteering or making a donation to GaLTT to support programs like Nature Stewards. It's easy! Visit galtt.ca and click on the "donate" button.

Do you have a property that has natural habitat features of at least 30% or more of your land? **Join GaLTT's Nature Stewards program** as part of this international effort and consider making a voluntary pledge to conserve and enhance as much natural habitat as possible on your property. It's our community's citizen-led conservation program to save space for nature, to share and nurture the land for all living things, including us.

Pick up a Nature Stewards brochure and other helpful info at any of the tour properties or visit galtt.ca/naturestewards.

Coast Salish Peoples have lived on Gabriola and throughout these Salish Sea "gulf islands" for thousands of years. Today, we are learning how to "Indigenize" our thinking and relationship with our natural world and the deep interconnections First Nations have always maintained with culture and nature.

We are honoured and grateful to live in the territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.