



SWAN LAKE
CHRISTMAS HILL
NATURE SANCTUARY



SUPPORTER SURVEY RESULTS

2021



SEMSEMÍ,E (SENĆOFEN) - Bumblebee (English) - *Bombus melanopygus* (Latin).
Photo: Cara Gibson

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional lands and waterways we work, learn and play, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary is zoned as a conservation area. It is a registered charitable organization run by the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society (Charity # 11920 7157 RR0001) that was established in 1975.

The lands and facilities are owned by the Corporation of the District of Saanich and two small parcels by Nature Trust BC. The Nature Sanctuary Society operates through a land management agreement with the District of Saanich.

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Message from the Board Chair & Executive Director

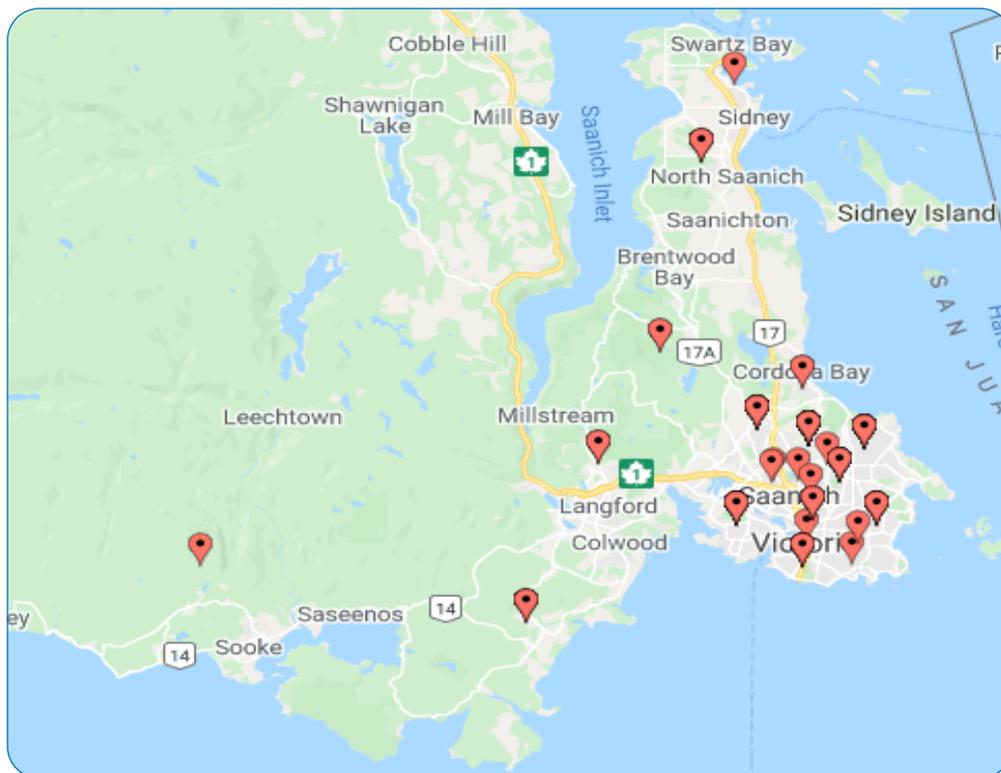
We are so grateful to the 164 participants who took the time between May 12 to June 10, 2021 to give us their feedback through our Supporter Survey. The survey was sent out via our e-newsletters (for volunteers and members) and also mentioned on our social channels and in person to visitors to the Nature House.

On balance, we were delighted to read resoundingly that folks feel that we are doing a good job achieving our mission and that our top priority should be site restoration. Additionally, there were many exciting ideas offered in the survey responses that have been especially beneficial to our 2022-2025 Strategic Planning process. We have prepared a high level summary here that protects people's privacy, but also shares the essence of the responses.

Thank you again for helping us to preserve this special place!

Fallon Lindsay, Board Chair

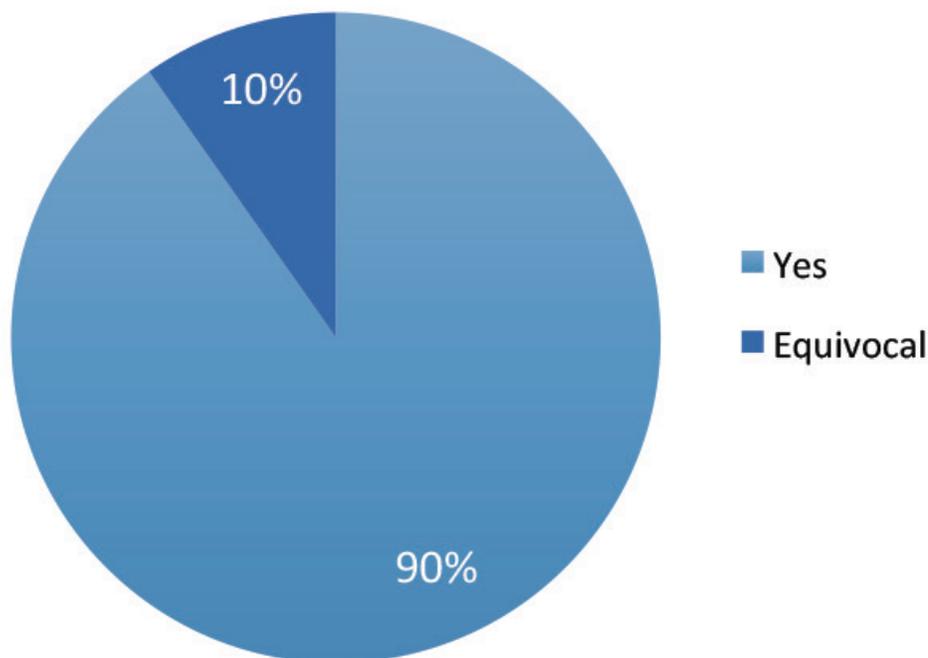
Cara Gibson, Executive Director



Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary 2021 Supporter Survey participation map from postal code data.
One additional supporter was from just north of Courtenay (not pictured).
(Data from 'You & Your Support - Question 3 - Please submit the first 3 digits of your postal code so we can identify which communities connect with the Nature Sanctuary.')

Question 2.

We aim to be a leader in the stewardship of healthy, diverse ecosystems and to provide an urban sanctuary that brings people and nature together. Do you feel we are successful at carrying out this mission? Why or why not?



Of the 16 equivocal responses, supporters seemed most concerned about dated signage on the grounds and how many dogs they feel they see regularly.

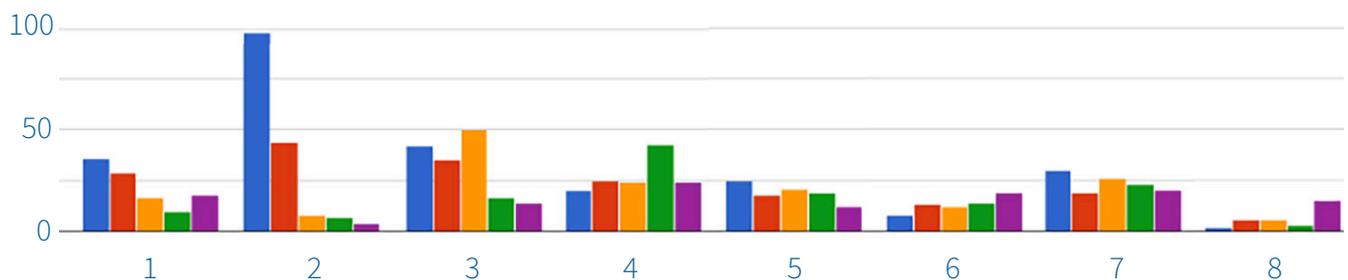
Key takeaways:

The Nature Sanctuary is achieving its aims overall. Some respondents felt that better signage and more enforcement of the Saanich conservation bylaws on site would be improvements.

Question 3.

Which of the following do you believe are the most mission-aligned ways to carry out our work in 2021? (Please rank your top 5)

- 1 Working to acquire additional land around Swan Lake and Christmas Hill
- 2 Actively restoring Swan Lake and Christmas Hill ecosystems
- 3 Nature education for children up to age 13
- 4 Nature education for youth and adults (14+)
- 5 Providing a natural space for recreation
- 6 Providing opportunities for volunteering
- 7 Public outreach campaigns to increase nature conservation
- 8 Providing space for events



Key takeaways:
 Supporters believe that actively restoring the Nature Sanctuary ecosystems is a critical first priority for 2021.
 Education for children, youth & adults were listed as next priorities.

Question 4.

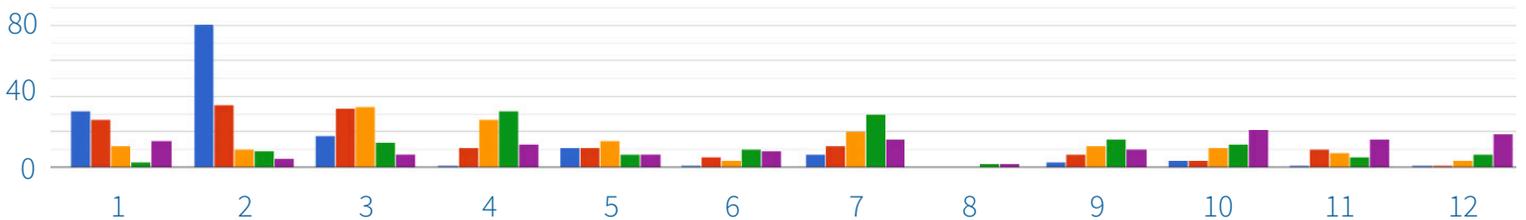
Do you have any other comments about Nature Sanctuary work for the coming year?

Of 61 responses, 12 were, “Keep up the good work!” The other 49 responses ranged from wanting the South Wharf to be rebuilt (as it was a favourite suntanning spot) to increasing the number of opportunities for volunteerism or donation.

Question 5.

What do you think will be the most important aspects of our work and mission in the next 2-3 years? (Choose your top 5.)

- 1 Working to acquire additional land around Swan Lake and Christmas Hill
- 2 Actively restoring Swan Lake and Christmas Hill ecosystems
- 3 Nature education for children up to age 13
- 4 Nature education for youth and adults (14+)
- 5 Providing a natural space for recreation
- 6 Providing opportunities for volunteering
- 7 Public outreach campaigns to increase nature conservation
- 8 Providing space for events
- 9 Mental health support through nature connection
- 10 Advising public and community organizations on conservation
- 11 Raising funds for environmental protection
- 12 Nature Sanctuary represented at community events



Key takeaways:

Supporters believe that actively restoring our ecosystems is a critical first priority for the near term. Education, acquiring land & public outreach were listed next.

Question 6.

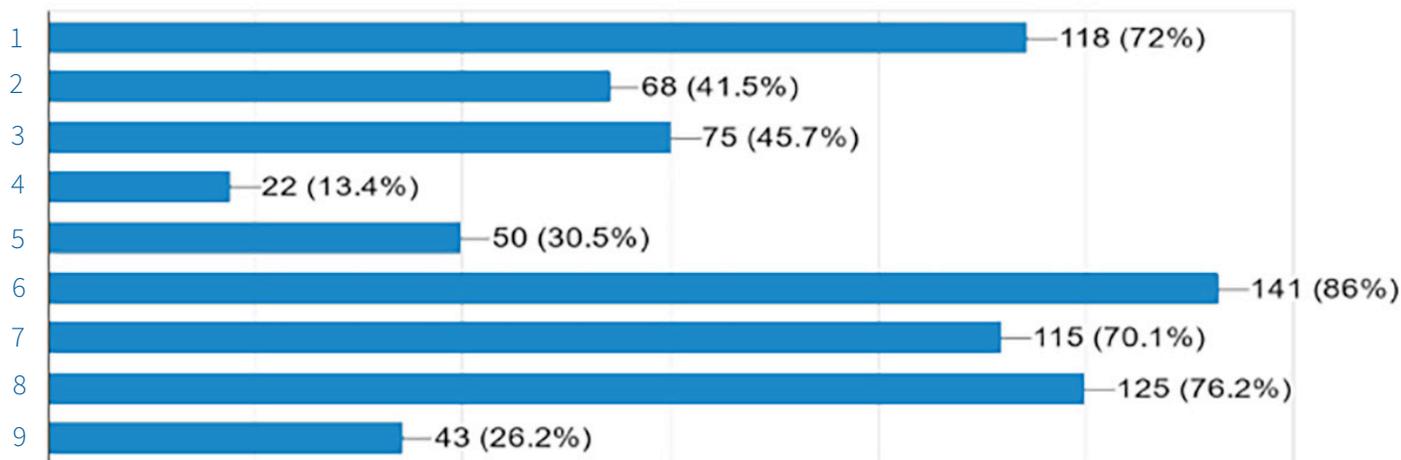
Other comments about important aspects of our work in the next few years.

Of 51 responses, six were focused on the lake and wetland restoration. The other 45 responses ranged from wanting Indigenous-led programming to increasing our emphasis on fundraising.

Question 7.

Which of the following Nature Sanctuary programs or services have you used in the past? Select all that apply.

- 1 Annual Native Plant Sale
- 2 Nature education for children
- 3 Nature education for adults (native plant workshops, classes at senior facilities)
- 4 Nature education through a school or business
- 5 Volunteer program
- 6 Nature House for visiting and bathroom
- 7 Nature House Gift shop
- 8 E-news and volunteer newsletter
- 9 On-line videos or education events



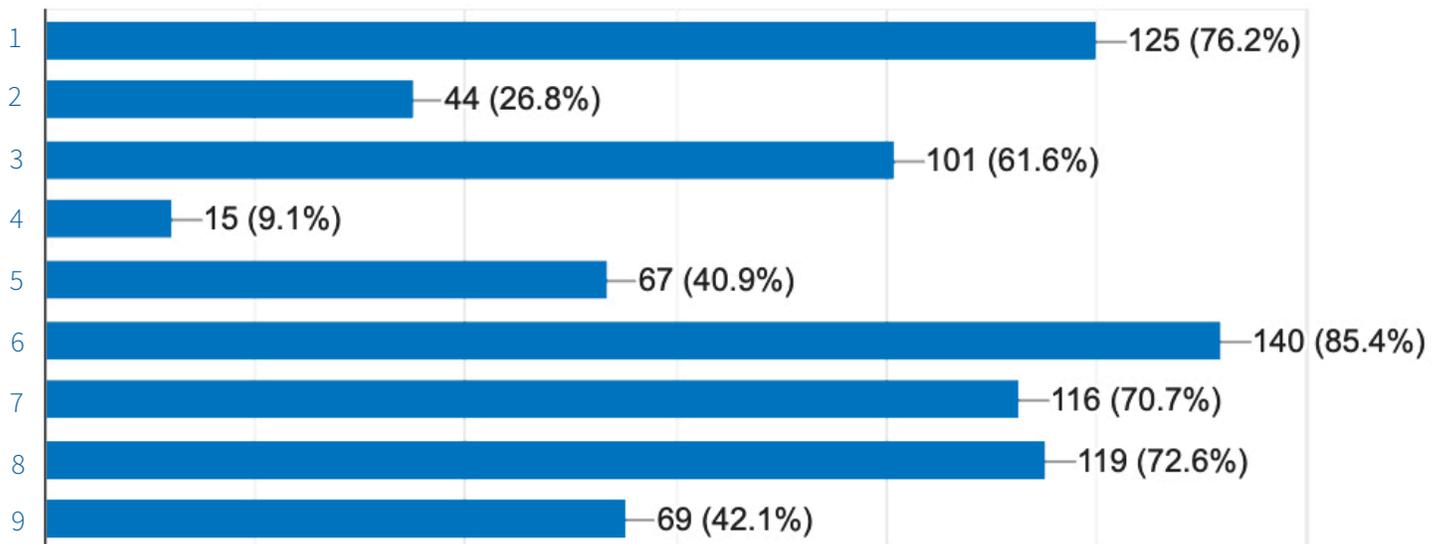
Key takeaways:

Visiting the Nature House is our most used service, followed by our e-newsletters, the Annual Native Plant sale and the Nature House Gift Shop.

Question 8.

Which of the following Nature Sanctuary programs or services do you see yourself using in the future? Select all that apply.

- 1 Annual Native Plant Sale
- 2 Nature education for children
- 3 Nature education for adults (native plant workshops, classes at senior facilities)
- 4 Nature education through a school or business
- 5 Volunteer program
- 6 Nature House for visiting and bathroom
- 7 Nature House Gift shop
- 8 E-news and volunteer newsletter
- 9 On-line videos or education events



Key takeaways:

Visiting the Nature House is likely to be our most used service in the future, followed by the Annual Native Plant sale, our e-newsletters and the Nature House Gift Shop.

Question 9.

We'd like your valued input on the future of the Nature Sanctuary. What offerings or improvements would make your experiences at the Nature Sanctuary even better over the next 5-10 years? (e.g. opportunities to volunteer on advisory groups, offering more arts and cultural nature programming opportunities.)

People shared so many incredible ideas with us! Many comments centred around increasing the number and types of volunteer opportunities at the Nature Sanctuary, the number and types of adult educational instruction (courses about fungi, seasonal updates about what is visible on site, and guided tours around the grounds came up several times), as well as offering Indigenous-led programming, and other arts and cultural events. Another common theme was accessibility, particularly, respondents wrote that they would like to see railings added to steep parts of the lake loop trail, and the Nature House open on weekends and holidays for access to the bathroom.

Many supporters commented about the importance of discouraging dog owners from bringing pets, including improved signage and enforcement of bylaws. Finally, there were suggestions for updating or improving building and trail infrastructure, including re-building the South Wharf.

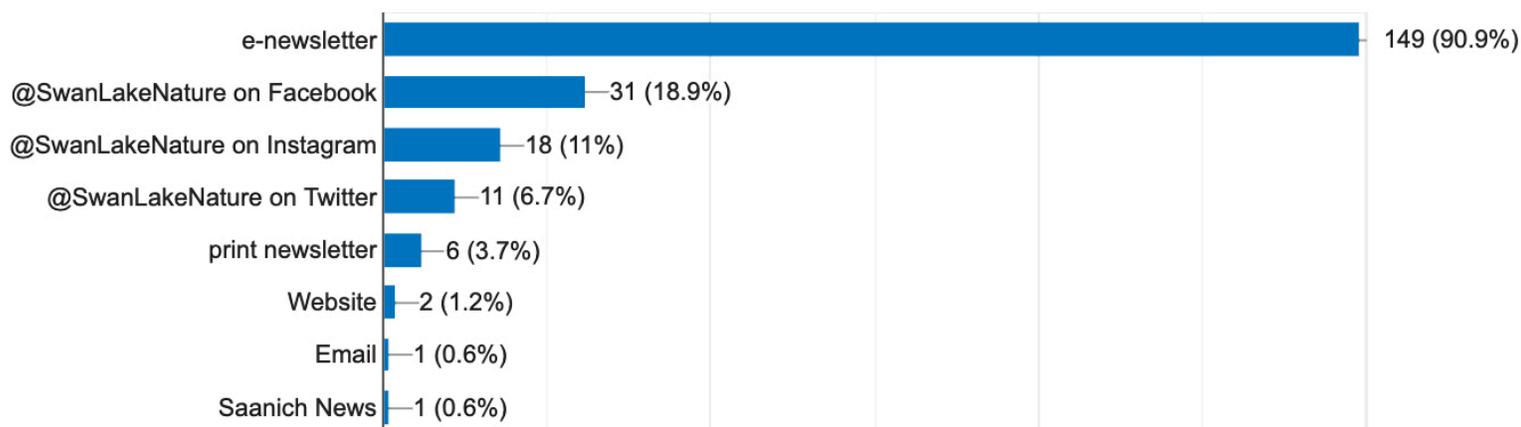
Key takeaways:

There are a lot of different kinds of adult education that are recommended for us to expand into, particularly Indigenous-led programming.

Many supporters felt that improving signage would help to reduce dog visitation and jogging traffic on the boardwalk while simultaneously increasing the educational value of the Nature Sanctuary.

Question 1.

What is your preferred method of receiving updates about the work at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary?
(Check all that apply.)



Key takeaway:
E-newsletters are preferred!

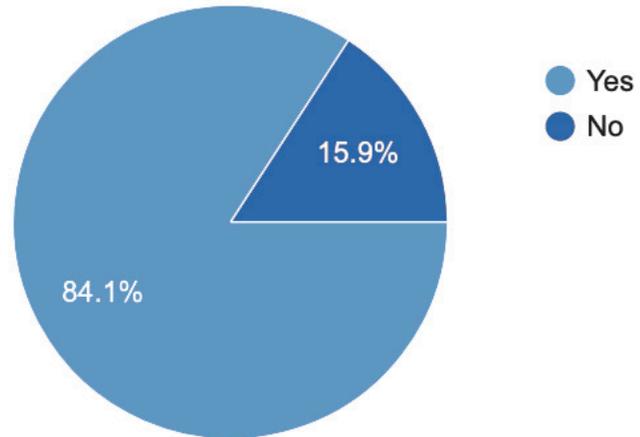
Question 2.

Other comments about preferred communication?

Of 27 responses, six expressed their love of Julia's e-newsletters - they are terrific!! Five respondents expressed mistrust and / or distaste for social media altogether. The remaining responses ranged from adding a new information kiosk on the lake loop trail to expressing a preference for coming in to the Nature House to learn what is happening on site directly from staff.

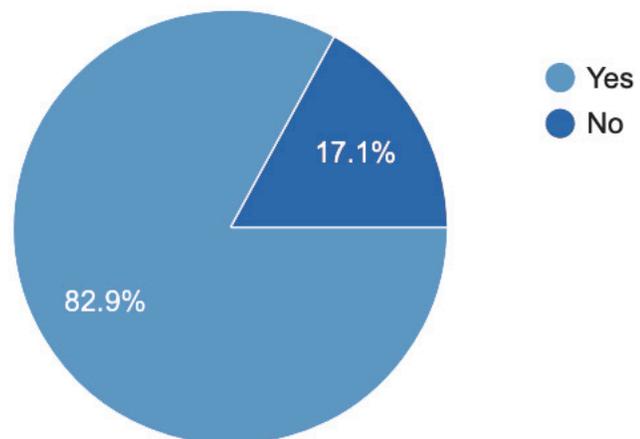
Question 3.

Do you regularly read Nature Sanctuary e-news?



Question 4.

Do you feel well informed about what is happening at the Nature Sanctuary?



Key takeaways:
Supporters are regularly reading our e-news and feel well informed.

Question 5.

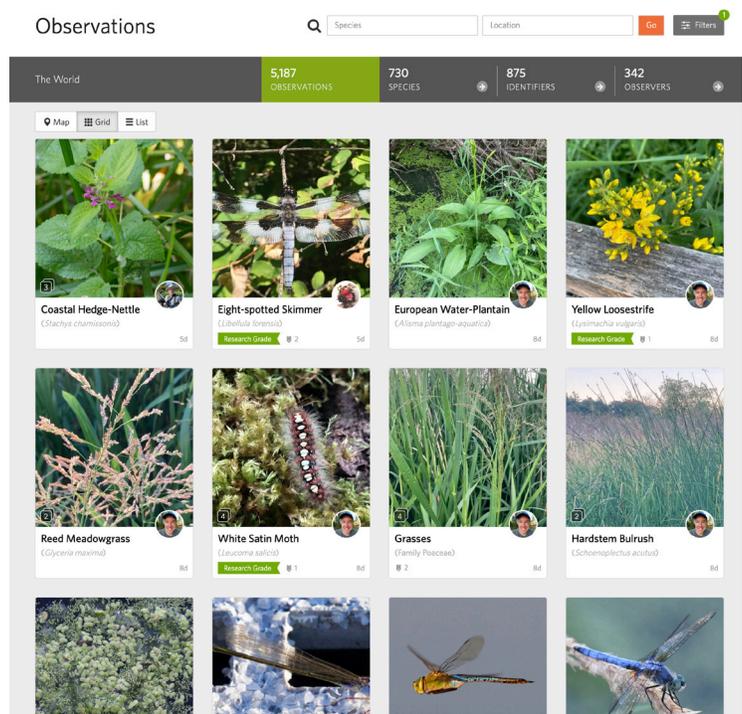
Do you have suggestions for items or content you would like to see included in our e-news or do you have suggested improvements for communications? (e.g. interviews or nature conservation tips.)

Of 90 responses, 28 people expressed an interest in learning more conservation and restoration tips for their own backyards, 20 respondents thought the e-news is great as is, and eight wanted to hear more about the animals and plants on site. The remaining comments ranged from starting a television show to offering a text alert about our e-news to more regular updates about the issues that the Board is facing.

Key takeaway:

Supporters are keen to learn more about the ecology and restoration of the Nature Sanctuary and how it relates to their home.

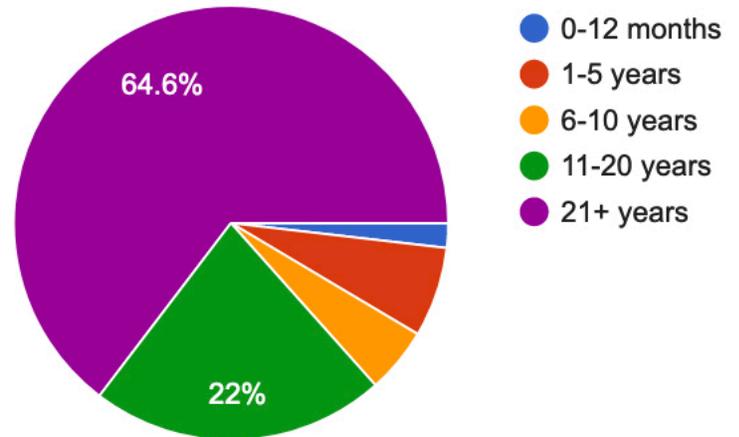
Native bird and plant photo galleries are available on our website: <https://www.swanlake.bc.ca/conservation/native-plants/native-species/> and for the latest sightings on the Nature Sanctuary grounds visit our iNaturalist project: https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?project_id=67238



Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary iNaturalist Project. Some recent site observations screencaptured on 2021/07/05.

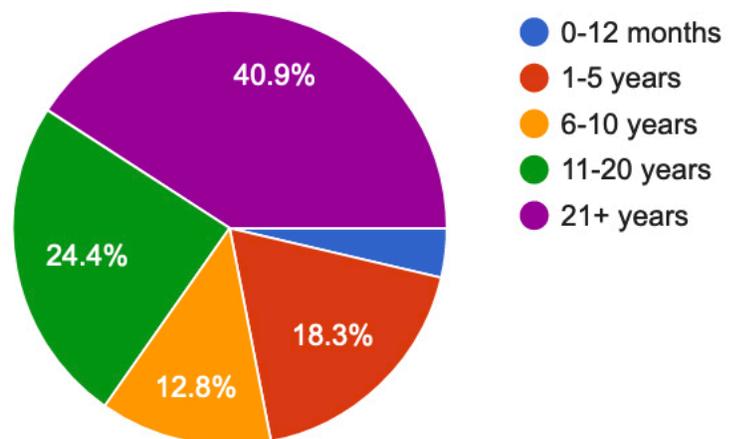
Question 1.

Please indicate how long you have lived in the Greater Victoria Area.



Question 2.

Please indicate how long you have been a visitor, member, supporter, donor or program participant at the Nature Sanctuary.



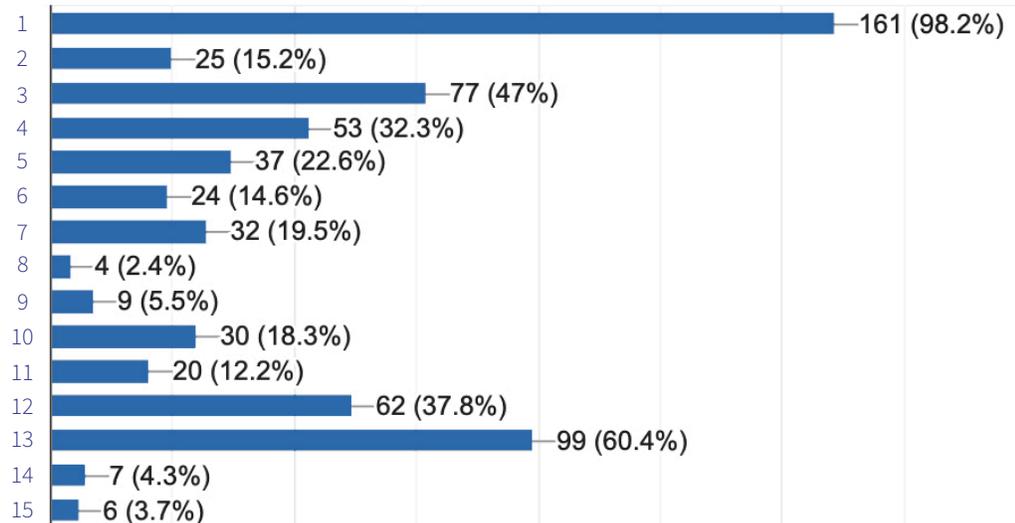
Key takeaways:

Most survey respondents have lived in Victoria for 11+ years (87%) and 65% of respondents have been associated with the Nature Sanctuary for that same time.

Question 4.

Please identify any/all of the ways that you interact with the Nature Sanctuary. (Check all that apply)

- 1 Visitor
- 2 Regular donor
- 3 Occasional donor
- 4 Current society member
- 5 Past society member
- 6 Current volunteer
- 7 Past volunteer
- 8 Current board member
- 9 Past board member
- 10 Children's program participant (pre-K, homeschool etc)
- 11 School program participant (teacher/parent)
- 12 Adult program participant (native plant workshop, seniors programs, other)
- 13 Native Plant Sale customer
- 14 Facility Renter
- 15 Community partner
- 16 Other



Key takeaway:
Most respondents were visitors, and / or Native Plant sale customers, and / or occasional donors.

Question 5.

Other comments about how you are involved at the Nature Sanctuary.

There were 56 responses with people sharing anecdotes of their rich relationships with the Nature Sanctuary - from happy former staff and volunteers, to daily walkers and avid birdwatchers.



Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary native plants. All photos: Terry Morrison.

Question 6.

Are you interested in learning more about ways you can volunteer or donate (including legacy giving or fundraising campaigns) or join as a member? Please add your name, email or phone number and indicate your area of interest.

Of 51 responses, 17 people wrote that they already knew about these programs or that they were not interested in being contacted. The remaining 34 respondents left their contact information - thank you!

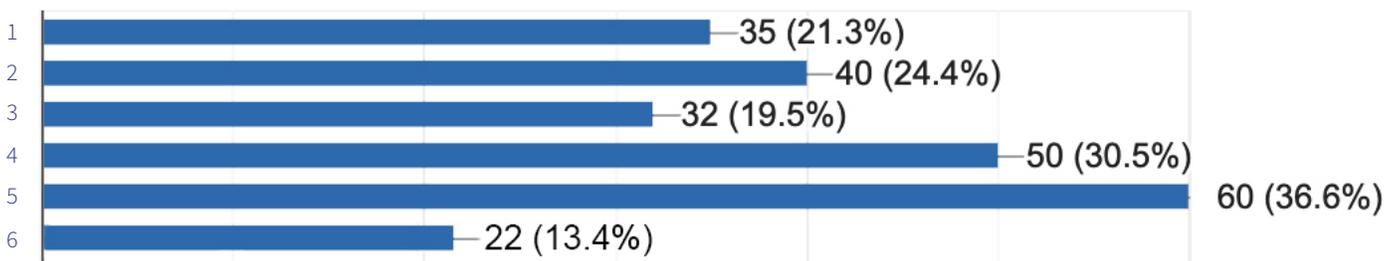
Key takeaways:

We are lucky and grateful to have such an engaged and supportive community that really values the Nature Sanctuary and actively wants to help to conserve and restore these lands and water.

Question 7.

If you are a current member, or thinking about becoming a member, which of the following would bring greater value to your membership?

- 1 Additional discounts from likeminded, sustainable local business
- 2 More options to engage in virtual programs
- 3 Extended Nature House hours
- 4 More opportunities to learn about environmental sustainability from Nature Sanctuary staff
- 5 No changes are needed
- 6 Other



Key takeaway:

Most respondents are happy with their membership and would like more opportunities to learn from staff.

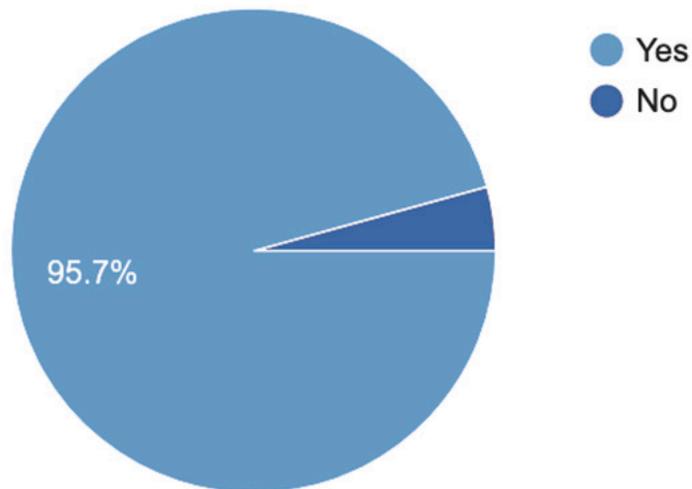
Question 8.

Other comments regarding membership value.

Of 27 responses, six wrote that they were pleased as is and the remainder expressed a range of thoughts - that they were members not for the perks, but rather to support the Nature Sanctuary. A couple of folks wrote that they had not realized that membership was a possibility!

Question 9.

We really cannot thank you enough! Do you feel that your contributions to the Nature Sanctuary are recognized appropriately and in a timely fashion?



Question 10.

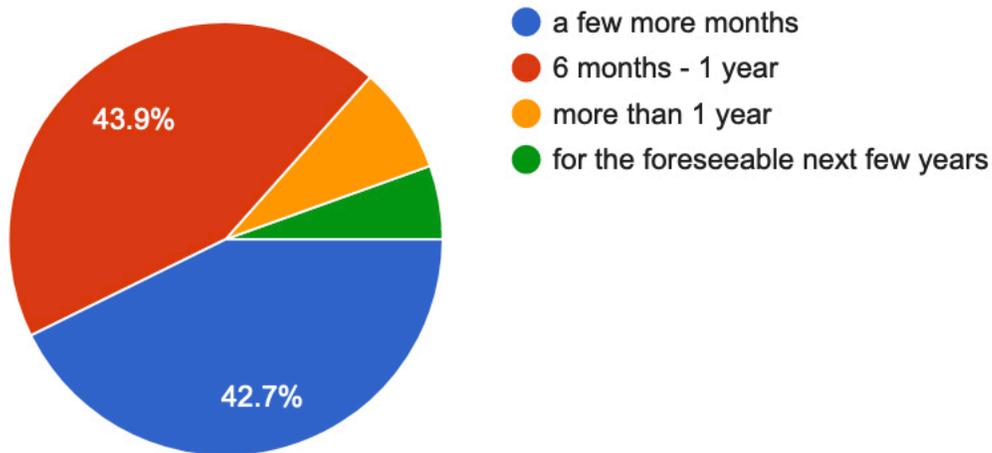
Other comments regarding recognition of your contributions.

Of 31 responses, 13 people stated that nothing needs to change. Other responses ranged from being grateful for handwritten thank-you notes to a suggestion that the Board do follow-up thank-yous to donors.

Key takeaway:
Most respondents are happy with how their contributions are acknowledged.

Question 11.

How long do you believe COVID-19 will place limitations on our ability to gather in groups of more than 10 people indoors?



Key takeaway:

The majority of respondents (87%) see COVID affecting our ability to gather indoors for less than a year.

This disease has been, and continues to be, a challenge for our organization. Thank you for your patience, understanding and support as we continually work to adapt appropriately.



Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society

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