

Conservation Science: The Next Generation

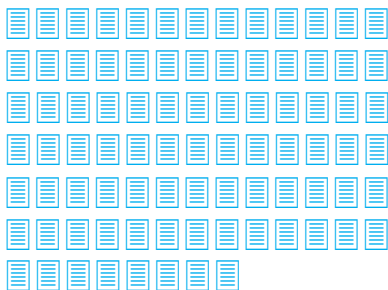


The impact of WCS Canada's W. Garfield Weston Fellowship Program 2009-2019

Photo: Yasmine Majchrzak



65 MSc & PhD
students received
funding



86 projects
funded



Students from
19 universities
received funding

WCS Canada's W. Garfield Weston Fellowship program has helped a new generation of scientists tackle some of the most important issues facing our planet. From climate change and biodiversity loss to the impacts of resource development, these bright young graduate students are bringing fresh perspectives to the threats facing our natural world.

Since 2009, our Fellowship program has supported 86 research projects looking at issues such as changing migration and seasonal adjustment patterns, road impacts, carbon storage, and new approaches to resource planning as they have sought to expand our knowledge of how to help wildlife.



Brian Cumming; Fellow: Cale Gushulak

A focus on key conservation opportunities

Our Fellowship program focuses on research in two key regions: The northern boreal mountains of British Columbia and Yukon, and the far north in Ontario. These are two of the most ecologically intact forest regions in the world and present key opportunities for cutting-edge conservation approaches. At the same time, there are many information gaps when it comes to understanding these big wild places, gaps our Fellows are helping to address.

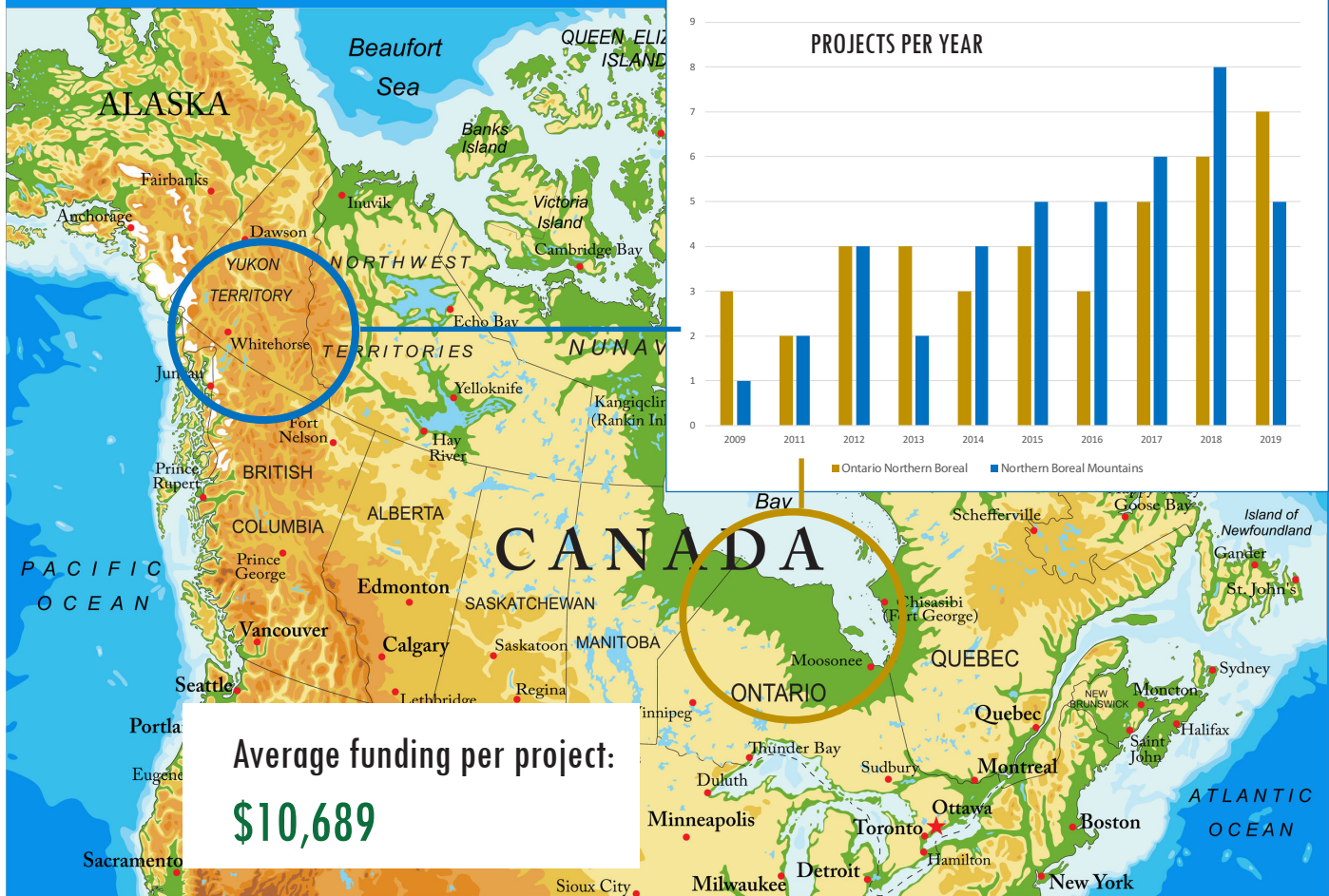


Photo: Julie Thomas



Effective conservation science, particularly under climate change, requires collaborations like this more than ever to ensure long-term partnerships that meet the needs of multiple stakeholder groups.

— Emily Chenery, University of Toronto Scarborough (PhD candidate)



Photo: Jeremy Brammer

Photo: Amelia MacDonald



Field observations are not just the basis of scientific knowledge; they are the foundation of natural history — the intimate knowledge of organisms in their environment. Increasingly, students in biology are becoming detached from the species and the ecosystems they study. By supporting students in the field, the Fellowship has helped to remedy that detachment.

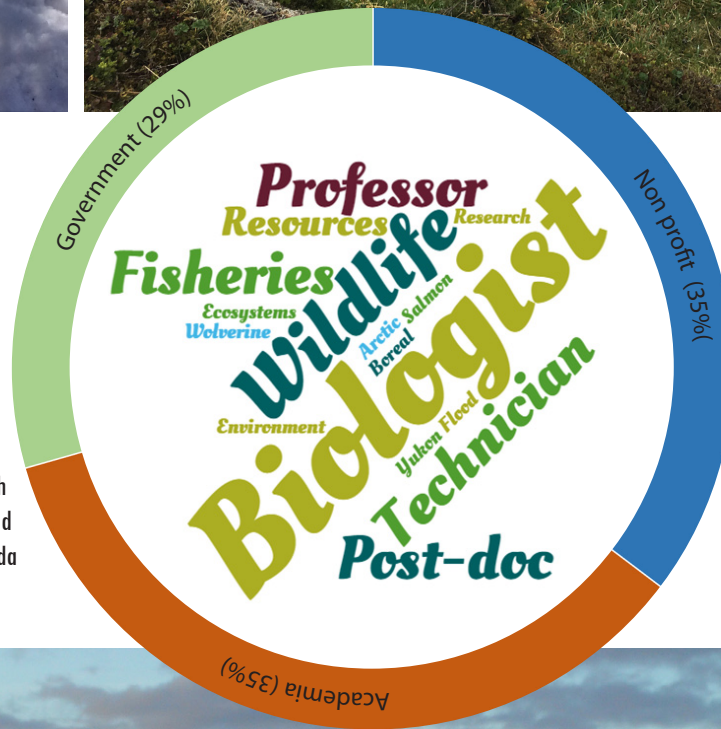
Dr. James Shaefer, Professor at Trent University and supervisor of two recipients of the Weston Fellowship



Photo: Yasaman Shakeri

The experience writing a grant proposal, a budget, and delivering on a proposed objective is absolutely invaluable to young scientists like myself.

— Gretchen Lescord, Postdoc with
Laurentian University and
WCS Canada



Where are they now?

After graduation our alumni have gone on to do further research as PhDs and postdocs, while others are making a difference in government and with NGOs.

Learning about WCS Canada's initiatives has lent optimism to my view of Canadian conservation efforts, and has provided inspiration for the kinds of research I could pursue in my future studies.

— Samantha Morin, Trent University (MSc Candidate)

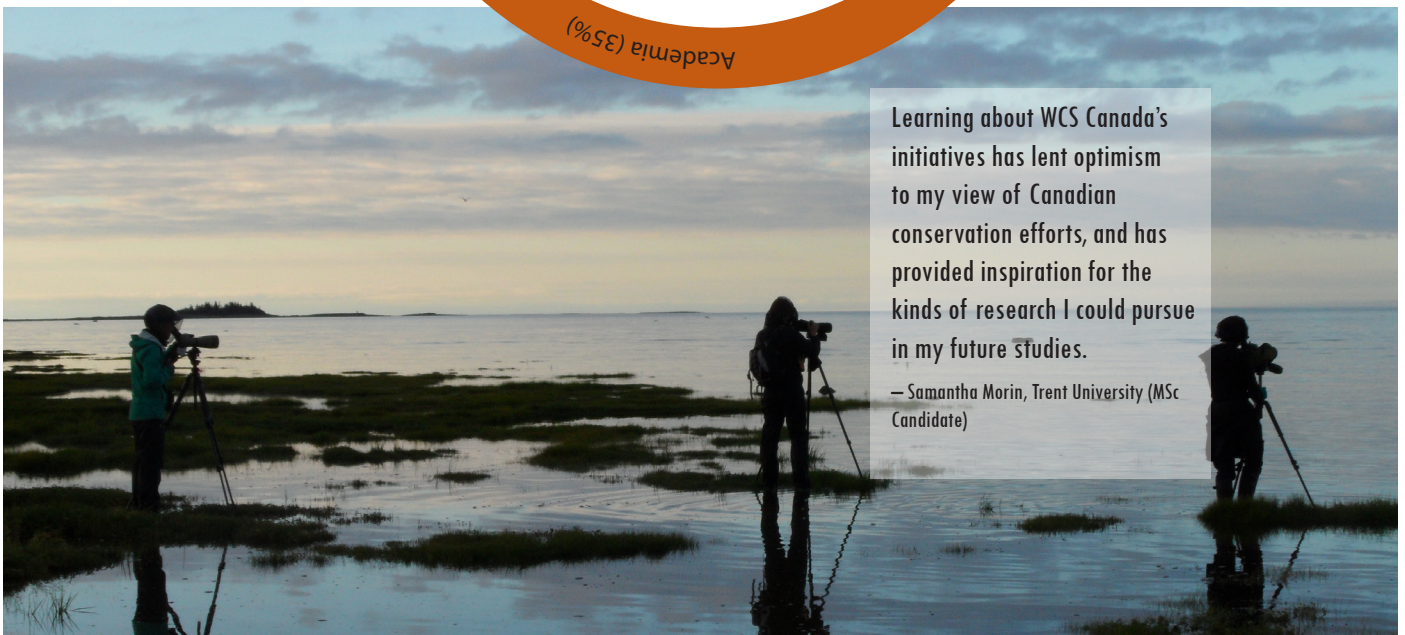


Photo: Allie Anderson

A wide focus

Research projects supported by our Fellowship program have explored a wide range of conservation challenges and ecological issues.

Photo: Amelia MacDonald



Through the Fellowship, my grizzly bear telemetry project has succeeded in bringing evidence through to multiple conservation measures. For example, we broke ground on a southeast Highway 3 connectivity plan. In 2019 the Ministry of Transport invested \$6.3M for the first wildlife crossing—a bridge replacement and engineered wildlife underpass—with five more structures to be transformed into wildlife underpasses and fenced in 2020 . . . Such investment signals the profound influence of collaborative and rigorous evidence created through my quantitative research program in generating meaningful change for wildlife and people.

— Clayton Lamb, Postdoc at University of British Columbia and University of Montana, 2020 Liber Ero Fellow

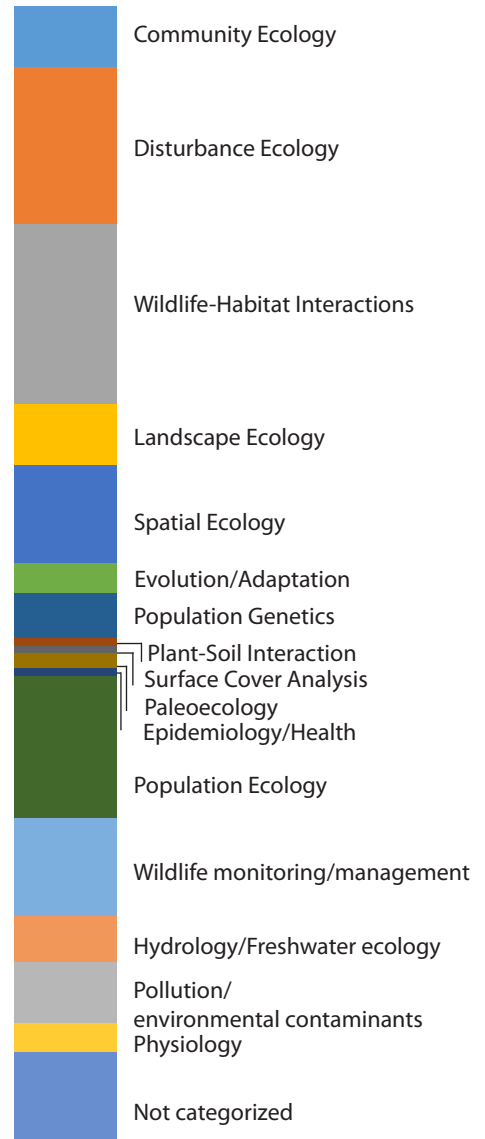


Bird Photo: Alex Sutton

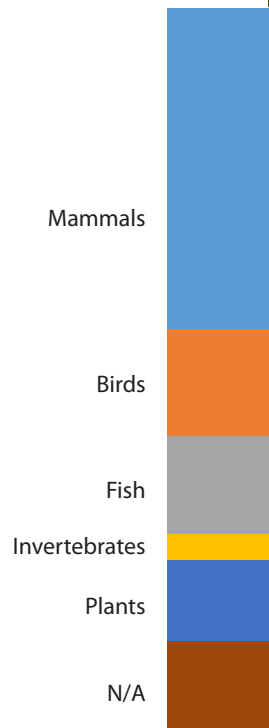
Lab Photo: Justin Johnson

Photo: Kirsten Reid

Ecological Issue



Focal species



The fellowship has allowed me to discuss my ongoing research with top scientists within my field, and receive feedback from people who have knowledge and expertise on boreal forest ecology. This Fellowship has helped to boost both my personal self-confidence and clout when disseminating pertinent information to both the public and other scientists.

— Rachael Derbyshire, Trent University (PhD candidate)