

# Insights for Conservation from the Canadian Nature Survey

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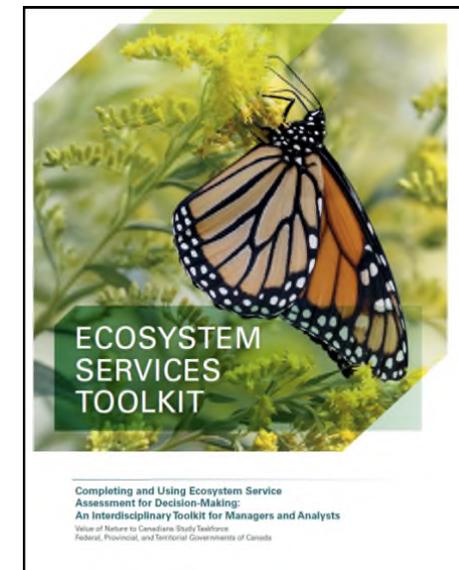
## 2012 Canadian Nature Survey:

Awareness, participation, and expenditures  
in nature-based recreation, conservation,  
and subsistence activities

Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Governments of Canada  
[www.biodivcanada.ca](http://www.biodivcanada.ca)

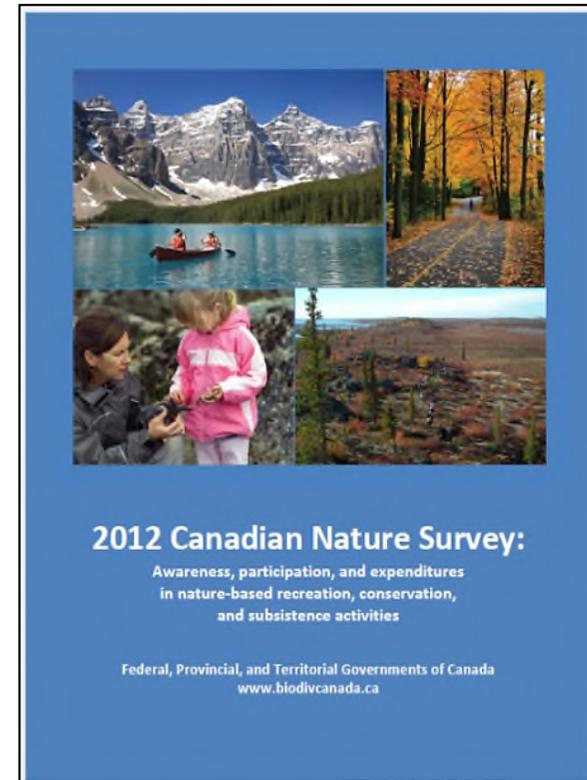
# Value of Nature to Canadians Study

- Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) *Value of Nature to Canadians Study* (VNCS) launched in 2009
- **Objective:** Develop knowledge and tools to better understand the social and economic values of nature to Canadians in support of government decisions
- **Outcomes:** 11 deliverables completed including:
  - The Canadian Nature Survey (2014)
  - The Ecosystem Services Toolkit (2017)



# 2012 Canadian Nature Survey

- First national survey of its kind in Canada in over 15 years
- Focused on awareness, participation and expenditures in nature-based recreation, conservation and subsistence activities
- Provides evidence about the significant contribution that nature makes to the national economy and individual Canadians' quality of life



# Questionnaire Design and Scope of Results

- “Fact-based” questions, not public opinion
  - Questions based on “observable behaviour” by respondents, i.e. ‘what did you do?’ or ‘what do you do?’
  
- Nationally representative sample
  - Approximately 24,000 Canadian adults responded
  - Offered in French, English and Inuktitut
  
- Results by province and territory
  - Enables sub-national and regional analysis
  
- Demographic information



# Topics Covered by the Nature Survey

- **Connection to nature:** awareness of biodiversity, ecosystem services, species at risk
- **Nature-based activities, in Canada, during previous 12 months:**
  - Rate of participation in more than 30 nature-based activities
  - Number of days per year < 20km from home and > 20km from home
  - Expenditures - transportation, accommodation, food, equipment, fees, supplies
  - Number of trips, typical duration, three main destinations
- **Experiences with human-wildlife interactions (conflicts)**



# Connection to Nature: Awareness of Key Terms

- **92%** aware of “**species at risk**”
- **76%** aware of “**biodiversity**”
- **69%** aware of “**ecosystem services**”
- High awareness levels associated with higher levels of engagement in conservation behaviours



# Connection to Nature: Ecosystem Services

- 77% are aware that biodiversity contributes to ecosystem services and provides life support and other important benefits to people
- 15% reported being directly affected by loss of an ecosystem service. Of those – here's how they were affected:
  - Emotional, psychological, or spiritual well-being 44%
  - Medical health 14%
  - Economic well-being 9%
  - Cultural heritage 8%



## Connection to Nature: Species at Risk

- Extent of voluntary direct involvement in, and support for, conservation actions for species at risk (SAR)
- 42% took some action to assist in the recovery of SAR, of these:
  - 24% changed their own practices to avoid impacts on habitat
  - 19% supported conservation agencies to educate people and protect habitat
  - 17% educated others directly about risks and how to help
  - 14% donated money to protect SAR accordingly



# Connection to Nature: Life Style Choices

- 50% reported choosing where they live partly to have access to nature
- 70% spent time outdoors within the previous 12 months in order to experience nature
- 57% reported choosing products and services that are more environmentally friendly than their competitors' products
- 47% traveled to experience more nature
- 45% reported adjusting their lifestyle to reduce their ecological footprint



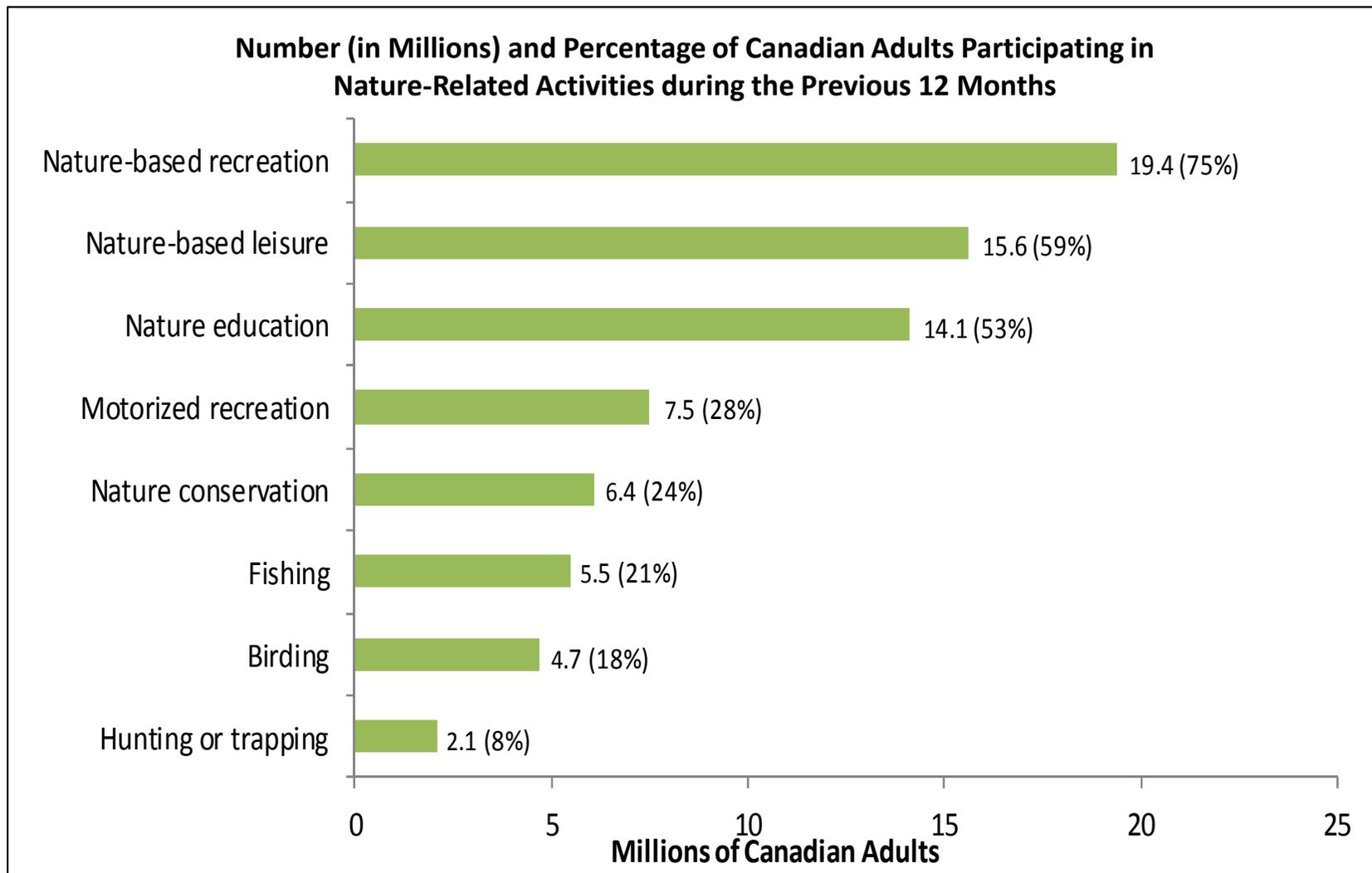
# Nature-Based Activities

➤ 89% of Canadian adults participated in at least one of these nature-based activities over the previous 12 months

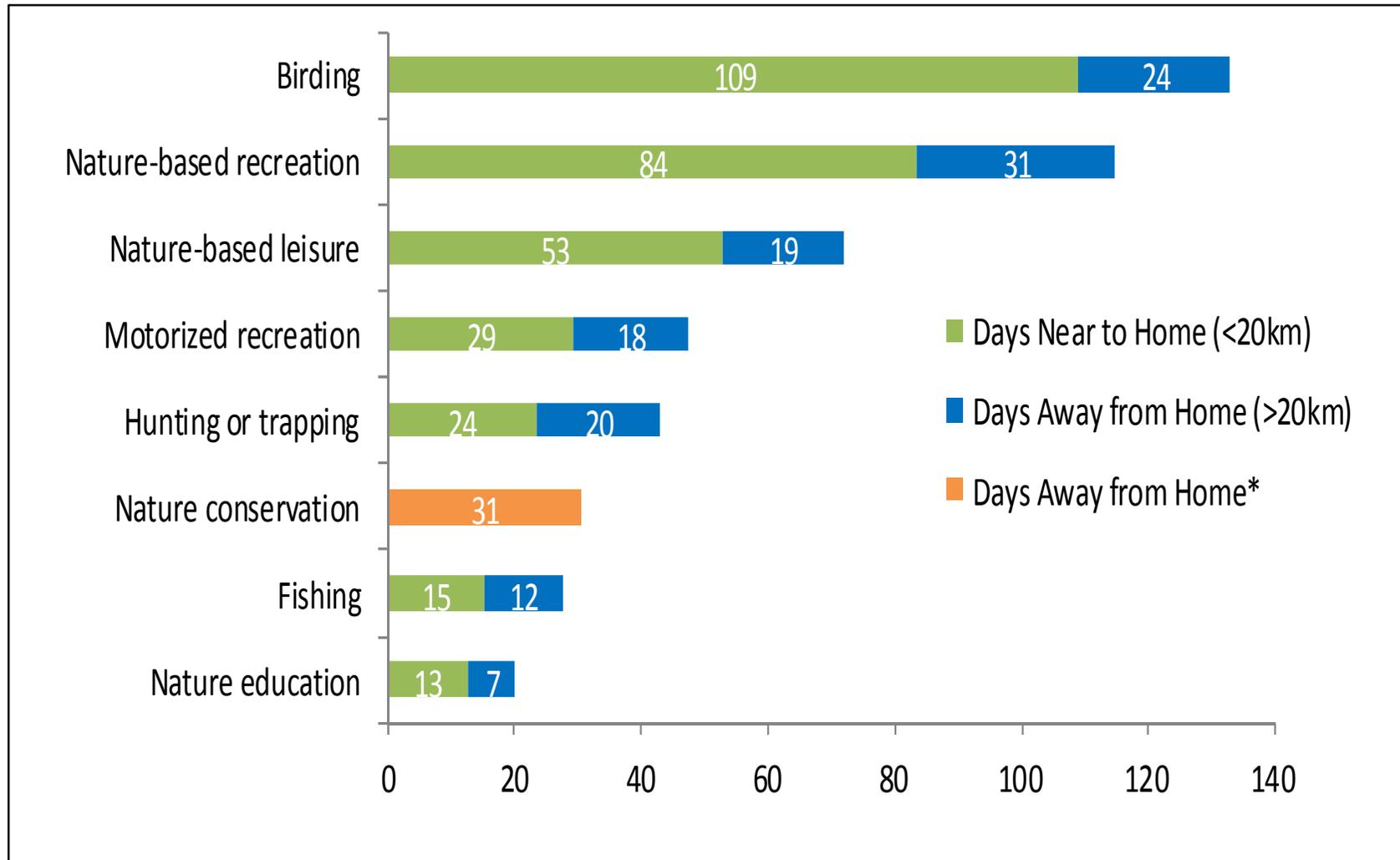
- Nature-based Recreation
- Nature-based Leisure
- Nature-based Education
- Nature Conservation
- Birding
- Hunting and Trapping
- Fishing
- Motorized Recreation



# Nature-Based Activities: Participation



# Nature-Based Activities: Days Spent Participating



# Nature-Based Activities: Expenditures

- Canadian adults spent \$40.4 billion dollars in Canada in the previous 12 months

	Total by all Canadians age 18+	
	\$million	%
<b>Nature-based Recreation</b>	\$14,457	36%
<b>Nature Education</b>	\$3,077	8%
<b>Nature-based Leisure</b>	\$6,223	15%
<b>Birding</b>	\$537	1%
<b>Motorized Recreation</b>	\$6,099	15%
<b>Hunting &amp; Trapping</b>	\$1,803	5%
<b>Fishing</b>	\$2,169	5%
<b>Nature Conservation</b>	\$6,043	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,410</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Nature Conservation: Canadian Spending on Conservation Organizations

- 19% paid membership fees or donated to nature conservation organizations, totalling an estimated \$874 million
- More money spent on conservation organizations when information is obtained through:
  - Personal experience: Annual average of \$237 vs. \$153 otherwise
  - The conservation organizations: Annual average of \$234 vs. \$119 otherwise
- Monetary support for conservation organizations was lower for Canadians who reported that they received nature-related information from:
  - “No one”: annual average of \$56 vs. \$194 otherwise
  - The government: annual average of \$132 vs. \$225 otherwise



# Nature Conservation: Volunteerism

- 10% were a member of at least one nature or conservation organization
- 13% of Canadians volunteered in nature conservation activities away from their residence during the previous 12 months
  - Involvement remained stable (59%) or increased (25%) over the past five years
- Participation in conservation activity days away from home was higher for Canadians who received nature-related information from scientists and from teachers or other educators



# Nature Conservation: Barriers to Volunteerism

➤ For those who didn't participate in voluntary conservation, why not:

- Lack of time 47%
- Not aware of an opportunity 32%
- Personal Choice 31%
- Personal health 14%
- Unable to get to places where I could 8%
- Other 7%



# Nature Conservation: Demographics on Voluntarism

- Of those who participated in volunteer nature conservation away from their residence:
  - Gender split varies only by 1%
  - Household income not a clear indicator
  - Age: highest participation is from those 45-54 (25.2%). Under 25 and over 65 participate significantly less (less than 10%)
  - Residence Urban: 72.6%; Residence Rural 27.4%
  - Education: highest participation from those with college and university bachelors (60.8%) followed by high school diploma (18.4%)
  - Immigrant/1<sup>st</sup> generation Cdn: 31.5%; 2<sup>nd</sup> generation + 68.5%



# Human-wildlife interactions: Conflict Incidence and Actions Taken

- Nationally, 22% indicated an incident of threat to safety from wild animals
  - Fewer in NL, QC, MB and AB; most in YT, NT, and NU
  - 26% of incidents where housing recently expanded into natural areas
- Nationally 25% reported damage to property from wild animals
  - More in PE, NS, NB, ON, and MB
- 69% of cases involved a small mammal e.g. skunk, raccoon, groundhog
- The same individual can have taken more than one action, however
  - 36% affected took no action
  - Less than 10% reported taking action to kill animals
  - All other options were adaptive responses



# Human-Wildlife Interactions: Conflicts

- Incidences common but not prominent
  - Mostly involving small mammals considered nuisances (relatively low danger)
- Most affected people chose either no action or an adaptive action
  - Suggesting a general preference for adaptive action rather than eradication
- Increased awareness of nature-related issues is associated with more adaptive responses to wildlife conflicts, such as:
  - Followed authorities recommended safety procedure
  - Fenced-off or protected property
  - Use less poison
- Suggests opportunity to reduce incidences of conflict and improve conservation outcomes
  - Through increased outreach/education of homeowners especially in rural and developing areas, focusing on awareness and adaptive behaviour



# Results and Implications for Conservation

- Awareness of central concepts and issues is very high, and confirmed as factors in lifestyle choices
- The vast majority of Canadians 18+ participate in nature-based activities for non-commercial, personal enjoyment – extensively
  - Make significant financial and time commitments to do so
  - Both ‘close to home’ and ‘away from home’, so traditional metrics like “trips to participate” and “parks attendance” are overlooking the majority of activity
- Conflicts with wildlife tend to be minor and handled humanely
- The ‘constituency’ of potential conservation partners in the public is much larger and broader than has traditionally been recognized



# 2012 Canadian Nature Survey

## More Detail is Available

- **Survey report** contains a wealth of additional data and analysis, available at: [www.biodivcanada.ca](http://www.biodivcanada.ca)
- Canadian Nature Survey **Public Use Microdata File** available for further analysis, available at: <http://donnees.ec.gc.ca/data/managementoversight/systems/canadian-nature-survey-2012/>



# ANNEX



# Activities Surveyed in Detail in 8 Categories

Nature-based Recreation	Hiking, walking in natural areas, backpacking, climbing, caving, geo-caching, horseback riding; cycling, mountain-biking; camping in tents; non-motorized water and beach activities; alpine skiing, snowboarding; cross-country skiing, snowshoeing; golfing
Nature-based Leisure	Photographing or filming nature in general; gardening or landscaping with plants; reading or viewing nature-focused media; picnicing and relaxing in nature
Nature-based Education	Attending nature festivals, retreats, workshops, lectures about nature; visiting a farm, ranch, or maple sugarbush for agritourism experinece
Nature Conservation	Voluntary: restoring natural habitat or urban green spaces; cleaning up shorelines, rivers, lakes, or roadsides; monitoring or assessing species or habitats; teaching about nature, giving guided nature walks; managing conservation organizations; providing food and shelter for wildlife; conserving or enhancing a natural setting
Birding	Watching, monitoring, photographing, filming, and/or feeding wild birds
Hunting and Trapping	Hunting waterfowl, game birds other than waterfowl, small game mammals, large game mammals, other wild animals – for personal, non-commercial use
Fishing	Fishing, including catch and release (freshwater or saltwater), includes all types of fish and shellfish – for personal, non-commercial use
Motorized Recreation	Motorized recreational vehicle use on land (ATV, snowmobile, etc.); Motorized recreational vehicle use on water (motorboat, motorized personal watercraft, etc.)

# National Biodiversity Priorities: Federal-Provincial-Territorial Collaboration

Longstanding collaboration by Federal, Provincial, Territorial (FPT) governments on biodiversity at all levels, e.g.:

- *Canadian Biodiversity Strategy* (1995)
- *Biodiversity Outcomes Framework* (2006) to support implementation of Strategy
- *Canadian Ecosystem Status and Trends* (2010)
- *Canadian Nature Survey* (2014)
- *2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets for Canada* (2015)
- *Invasive Alien Species Recommendations* (2017)
- *Ecosystem Services Toolkit* (2017)



# Ongoing: “Nearby Nature” Behaviour in *Households and the Environment Survey*

- Set of questions developed and included in Statistics Canada’s bi-annual *Households and the Environment Survey* starting 2011
- Fact-based data (not opinions)
- Statistically representative of Canadian *households* in all provinces (but not territories)
- Questions allow us to keep tracking selected aspects of CNS about:
  - Feeding, sheltering, watching birds (home and away)
  - Nature-based outdoor activities close to home
  - Presence of/ use of parks and green spaces (home and away)
  - Voluntary nature conservation activities (with group and alone)

