CITIZEN SCIENCE PET PHOTOGRAPHY (6) COVID CHALLENGES



MOUNTAINS OF KITTENS NEED LOVING HOMES





After checking to see what supplies were most needed at the Burnaby SPCA, Derrek and wessley delivered bags of goodies for the animals.



Emily raised \$40 on her birthday, which she donated to the Vancouver SPCA!





Instead of presents for his fourth birthday, Jude asked his Friends for toonies. He collected \$44, which he donated to the Delta Community Animal Shelter. In Jude's words, "My friends helped me turn four, and I helped the animal shelter!"



giving our own pets plenty of care and attention! Naomi has made the most of staying home this year by spending extra time walking and playing with her puppy, Ryker.



fazi, Isabella and Viole organized a cupcake sale at their school and raised \$130 to help animals in Coquitlam!

NANAIMO SPEA \$ 1465

Cooper Shroton



After saving up money from chores and bottle returns, wen went to buy a toy he really wanted. At the checkout, a nice person behind him decided to pay for Dwen's purchase. So, Dwen paid forward the kindness and donated his money to the Campbell River SPCA.



Chelsea and Ella worked together to host a bake sale. raising \$110 for the Victoria SPCA.



Each year, Cooper raises money for the animals at the Nanaimo SPCA. This year he donated a whopping \$1,465. That brings his overall donations throughout the past several years to more than \$5,100! WDW!

When the Burnaby SPCA put out a call for donations of Cheez Whiz (it helps them in getting the animals to take their medications), Alivia answered. The animals were very thankful for this delicious donation!





Dr. Browning's grade 4/5 class at Nanaimo's Bayview Elementary participated in the BC SPCA's Cats in the Community workshop, learning about the pet overpopulation problem and what they can do to help animals. They then decided to hold a bake sale, and raised \$69 for the shelter.



Maëlle hosted a BC SPCA Treat Week party at her local grocery store in Trail, raising \$117 in just one day. But that's not all! Maëlle's baking

efforts throughout Treat Week resulted in a \$637 donation to help care for the animals.

PET PALS, HIGH PAWS OR LITTERBOX TO: BC SPCA KIDS CLUB 1245 EAST 7TH AVENUE VANCOUVER, BC V5T IRI





Violet and Beckett teamed up to help animals. pair donated their birthday money to the Kelowna SPCA.



Scotia Stimpson, 5, Richmond

To the BC SPCA,

Hi, I'm Ella, eight years old. I've donated my money from my birthday two years in a row to the Coquitlam SPCA.

From, Ella Clarke, 8, Port Moody





Letterbox (letters to the editor)

Dear BC SPCA,

Hi, my name is Reese. Last year for my birthday I went to the Kelowna SPCA. And for my birthday my mom got me a cat, her name is Lenny. I love *Bark!* and I hope when my magazine subscription ends my mom lets me get it again. There are so many cool stories to read and cool tips.

From Reese Boake, 11, Lake Country

P.S. Can you make the next Bark! about cats?

Thanks for your letter, Reese we hope you enjoy this issue, including the article about kittens and fostering!

COVID-19 and the BC SPCA

How the BC SPCA is helping animals and people during the COVID-19 crisis

he COVID-19 virus took us all by surprise and changed our normal patterns. The same is true at the SPCA. The BC SPCA still has to care for injured, abandoned and unwanted animals. Plus, carry out animal cruelty investigations. So, we've had to make some changes.

Cruelty investigations continue

Despite COVID-19, there are still animals in our

communities in trouble. BC SPCA cruelty investigators continue to respond to complaints of animal cruelty. So what's changed? On calls, investigators now use masks and personal protective equipment in order to stay safe.

On cruelty calls
investigator Kent
Kokoska wears
washable personal
protective equipment
(PPE) and a mask.





COVID Q & A

Q: Can I get Coronavirus from my pet?

A: It's highly unlikely. There have been no reports of cases where pets or farm animals have transmitted the virus to people. Just to be safe, sick individuals should limit their contact with pets. And always wash your hands before and after you pet a cat or dog.

Q: Can pets get COVID-19?

A: The risk appears extremely low. Considering the millions of pets worldwide that live with people, only a few cats and dogs have shown symptoms.

Q: Can we still walk our dog?

A: Absolutely. But please practice physical distancing and stay two metres away from other people. We also recommend keeping dogs leashed, to avoid unnecessary contact with other people.

SPCA community animal centres temporarily closed

At the pandemic's beginning, all SPCA shelters closed to the public. Yet, we still had lots of animals. Some staff were allowed to come in to feed, clean and care for the animals. But with no adoptions in the early days, many animals went to foster families.







Bark!



In Vancouver's downtown eastside, pet food is distributed to homeless people with pets though the BC SPCA's Charlie's food Bank program.

Foster homes to the rescue

The SPCA reached out to our volunteer foster families and they jumped at the chance to help. Currently, there are more than 600 animals in foster care (see fostering story, pages 6 and 7). Most are kittens.

COVID and quarantine

Just to be safe, when animals first came into our shelters from suspected COVID homes, they were kept isolated for 14 days. Luckily, COVID-19 does not seem to transfer to pets like it does between people. However, it's still important for all of us to wash our hands both before and after petting someone's dog or cat.

Helping those in need

Right from the start of the pandemic, the BC SPCA set up two emergency programs to help pets from people affected by COVID-19:

1. Emergency boarding

For people who have COVID, the SPCA offers emergency kenneling for their pets. We also made space in our shelters to care for pets from over-worked health care workers and for pets from other vulnerable people.

2. Pet food banks

The pandemic caused many people to lose their jobs. To help low-income people with pets, the SPCA set up pet food banks across B.C. People generously donate pet food and cat litter. The supplies are brought to food banks or handed out directly by the SPCA. So far more than 20,000 kilos of pet food and supplies have been donated.

Your action! If your family is able, consider donating unopened bags or cans of dog or cat food (cat litter too) to your local shelter. For locations visit spca.bc.ca/locations.

Adoptions, with a twist

BC SPCA adoptions are now online. People fill out adoption applications through the SPCA's website. Staff show the animals via video and you make an appointment to meet the animal at the

shelter. This system has allowed us to continue to adopt animals, even at the height of the pandemic.

Adoption action! See animals available for adoption at spca.bc.ca/adopt.

Shelters now open!

As Canada begins carefully reopening, so are BC SPCA community animal shelters. The big difference is we are practicing physical distancing by limiting the number of people inside.

You can set up a meet and greet online to speak to SPCA staff about the animal you want to adopt.

We also have lots of hand-washing stations and frequent

cleaning of all hightouch areas. We strongly recommend visitors wear masks.



Wild ARC

COVID has been challenging for Wild ARC, the BC SPCA's wildlife

rehabilitation centre. Spring is the

busiest season with lots of injured and orphaned wild animals. The centre takes in hundreds of birds, raccoons, deer and more. The staff is working long hours keeping up with their care while still practicing physical distancing and safe practices. Check out the latest Wild ARC stories at facebook.com/bcspca.wildarc.



four siblings are awaiting their furrever home.

Momma and baby take a catnap.



a mountain of kittens

Summer is the peak of kitten season. It's the time when pregnant female cats give birth, usually to 4-6 kittens. They're so adorable!

Community cats

Unfortunately, many of these kittens are born to unowned "community" cats. These cats (and their adult offspring) don't have people to care for them. As a result, most are not spayed or neutered. Community cats greatly contribute to pet overpopulation.



Maybe she's the neighbour's cat?

Community cats are usually afraid of people and will run and hide. If the mom acts friendly, she might be a neighbour's cat. Look for a collar or perhaps an ID tattoo in her ear. If you see one, she has likely snuck away to have her kittens in a quiet, secluded spot. As long as the cats look healthy, don't disturb them. Take a photo and ask neighbours if their cat is missing. You can also put up posters. If you can't find the cat's guardian, call the SPCA.



Found a litter of kittens?

If you come across a litter of kittens with no mother cat in sight, here is what to do: With your parents, check that they are in a safe, protected spot. You might find them under some stairs, in a shed or tucked in some hay in a barn. This is normal. Watch from a distance to see if the mom comes back with food. Wait at least two hours. If the mom does not come back, call the BC SPCA's animal help line at 1-855-622-7722.



Moms take good care

Mother cats are good caregivers to their kittens. Early on, kittens drink their mother's milk to get all the nutrients they need to grow up healthy and strong. Mom also helps to socialize her kittens so they learn how to act properly with other cats. Kittens do best if they can stay with their mom until at least eight weeks of age.

Are they sick or injured?

If any of the kittens (or mother cat) appear injured or have goopy stuff coming from their eyes or nose, you need to act. These cats may need medical help. Call 1-855-622-7722 for instructions.





Kitties may need the occasional bath until their self-grooming habits kick in.

Tiny tummies need to be fed small amounts, but often!

Fostering rescued kittens!

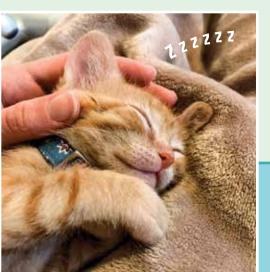
ometimes very young kittens are found abandoned. These fragile kittens need special care. Keeping young kittens at a shelter is not ideal, so SPCA staff look for volunteer foster families. Depending on their age, nursing kittens need to be bottle fed every 2-3 hours, day and night. Kittens are fed a special kitten milk replacer. The formula has special nutrients just for cats. You can't feed cow's milk or human infant formula to kittens.



Kittens grow up fast

Kittens are born with their eyes closed. In about two weeks, their eyes open. By just four weeks, they can "wobble" walk and start to explore their surroundings. Finally, at about eight weeks, they start to look like mini versions of adult cats.

These kittens' foster family set up a safe "pitch" so they could play a game of Wobbly-Soccer - go team!



Fostering kittens

Interested in becoming a foster family? Contact your local SPCA to see if they need help. Staff offer training and provide supplies. You provide the love and care! Learn more about fostering by watching our foster video at spca.bc.ca/foster.



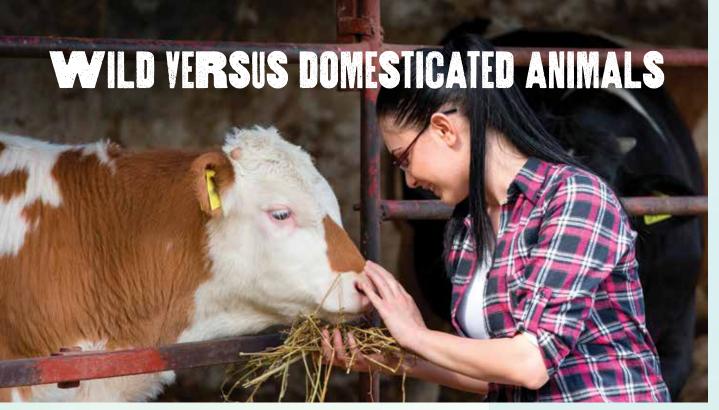
Finding new homes

Once the kittens are older than eight weeks, they can be spayed or neutered. The next step is finding homes. Since there are more kittens in rural and northern parts of the province, many kittens in BC SPCA care are transferred. They arrive in urban areas like Victoria or the Lower Mainland where there are lots of people looking to adopt.

Adopt a kitten!

Summer is the purr-fect time to adopt a cat! Check out all the animals up for adoption at the BC SPCA at spca.bc.ca/adopt.





e can all think of animals that have been domesticated. Pets like dogs, cats and rabbits. Or farm animals including chickens, pigs, cattle and sheep. There are also those who help people – working animals such as horses, donkeys and even camels.

WHAT MAKES AN ANIMAL DOMESTICATED?

Domestication is a long process of selectively breeding animals for certain desired traits useful to people. To get the docile cows we have today, for example, it took thousands of years of only breeding animals showing calmness around people. The same is true for all domesticated animals. **We have changed them over time to be dependent on us.** This makes domesticated animals different from their wild cousins.

THE THREE Bs: BRAINS, BODIES AND BEHAVIOUR

Besides being calm around people, there are other traits that separate domesticated animals from their wild counterparts. Over time, domesticated animals' brains and bodies change. This in turn affects their behaviours.





BODY CHANGES

Let's compare the bodies of a farm pig and a wild boar. Farm pigs are larger and have long, lean bodies. Wild pigs are shorter and have much more hair. They are much more aggressive, too. And their teeth and snouts are bigger. This allows wild pigs to live in nature and hunt for their food. Farm pigs live in protected barns and food is provided – the ability to survive in the wild has been bred out of them.

SHRINKING Brains

Over time, domesticated animals have ended up with smaller brains. Horse brains are 30 per cent smaller than wild horses. Same for cats. A domesticated pig's brain is 35 per cent smaller than a wild pig. How come?



The brains of domesticated animals are

less well developed in certain areas. For example, the part of the brain that detects smell is much smaller in farm pigs.

Why? Wild pigs need a highly developed sense of smell to find food. Meanwhile, farm pigs are fed by people. Over time, the smelling part of their brains got smaller and smaller because it wasn't used.

BRAIN IMAGES ARE FROM: A DYSFUNCTIONAL SENSE OF SMELL: THE IRREVERSIBILITY OF OLFACTORY EVOLUTION IN FREE-LIVING PIG, EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY, 2013/11/13.





OU**R R**ESPONSIBILITY

People have a responsibility to provide for all of the needs of domesticated animals. After all, domesticated animals are no longer equipped for survival like those in the wild. Our responsibility is to ensure animals in our care receive the Five

Freedoms of animal welfare so they are healthy, happy and can thrive.

DANGER DETECTION

Other parts of the brain are also smaller in domesticated animals. For example, areas that detect danger. In the wild, animals are constantly on alert. As a result, a big part of their brains are devoted to danger detection. This is why pet rabbits abandoned in the wild become easy targets of predators

like coyotes, owls and eagles. Pet rabbits don't recognize danger as well as wild rabbits who evolved to live amongst predators. This is also why wild animals, like elephants and frogs, don't do well in captivity. They evolved to live in complex ecosystems.



Domesticated animals never fully mature like their wild relatives. They tend to look and act more babylike. They have larger eyes. Smaller teeth. Wider skulls and shorter snouts. Big eyes and flat faces make them appear cuter to people.

Think of pugs or Persian cats. Yet, these qualities also make them prone to suffering health issues.



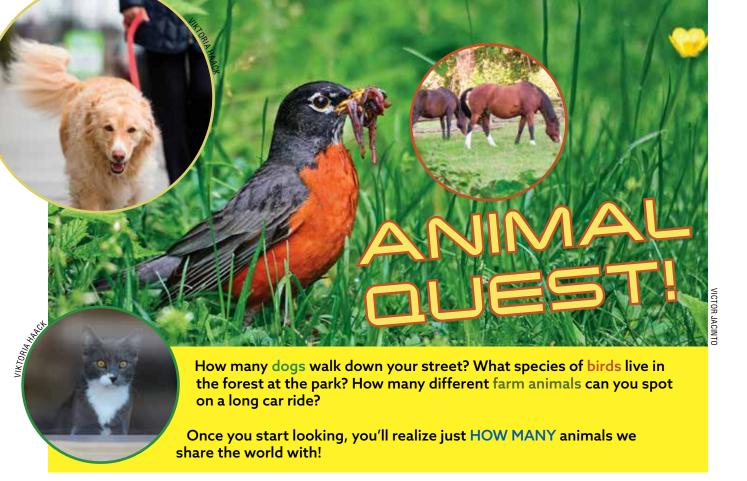


WHAT ARE THE FIVE FREEDOMS?

All animals in the care of people need to be provided the Five Freedoms:

- 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst, means providing fresh water and proper food.
- Freedom from pain, injury and disease, means taking animals to the vet when they are hurt or sick.
- 3. Freedom from distress, means ensuring animals are not being abused or under constant stress.
- Freedom from discomfort, means making sure animals have a safe, comfortable environment to live.
- **5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being,** means allowing animals to exercise, play and do normal behaviours like grooming and exploring.





To get started you need:

- Notebook or clipboard (to keep lists and descriptions)

- Binoculars (optional)



Quest tip:

00000000

You can keep your animal quest to a simple count ("bird," "dog" and so forth), or try to be specific ("American robin" or "golden retriever"). If you don't know the type of animal you're looking at, draw it or take a photo.





Here are some ideas of animals to look for:

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

More than half of Canadian households have a cat or dog. Have you ever noticed just how many pets live near you?

Look for dogs walking on leash, playing at dog parks or relaxing at home on the deck or grass. See cats exploring backyards, looking out windows or sleeping in a patch of sun.

ON THE FARM

Depending on where you live, farm animals can be spotted on car rides. Look out for horses, cattle, sheep, llamas and goats. Hmm... why do you almost never see pigs, turkeys, chickens or dairy cows out in fields?

IN THE WILD

Head into the woods, or even your own garden. Look for birds who come to the ground to feed (robins, towhees, thrushes), tree trunk birds (woodpeckers, flickers, nuthatches) and small song birds (finches, sparrows, chickadees).

You may likely see squirrels. Perhaps even a deer, raccoon or a skunk. See if you can find 10 different insects crawling and flying.



2. Read your book aloud to your animal.

3. When you are done reading, or your pet decides to leave, add an entry to your log. Have your parents initial each time so you can remember how much you've read.

Ready to get started? Print off your log sheet at spca.bc.ca/learn-at-home.

Hmm... what to read, what to read?

There are lots of great animal-themed stories out there. Here are three of our favourites:

Belly Rubbins for Bubbins: The Story of a Rescue Dog by Jason Kraus (Bubbins, LLC)

Bubbins' life hasn't been easy. This

senior pit bull spent 10 years living outdoors being neglected, and now waits hopefully at the shelter for a loving home. Will Bubbins finally get the love and belly rubs he wants and deserves?

Gwen the Rescue Hen by Leslie Crawford (Stone Pier Press)

When a tornado allows an egglaying hen to break free of her cage, she can finally spread her wings. After dodging all kinds of danger, she meets a boy named Mateo. Together the new friends learn about all the things chickens like to do when they have the chance... and Mateo has a special surprise for Gwen the hen, too.

Don't have a pet of your own? Practice your reading using a stuffed animal - or LOTS of stuffed animals!

Manatee Blues by Laurie Halse-Anderson (Kids Can Press)

While visiting the Gold Coast Rescue Center in Florida, Brenna learns

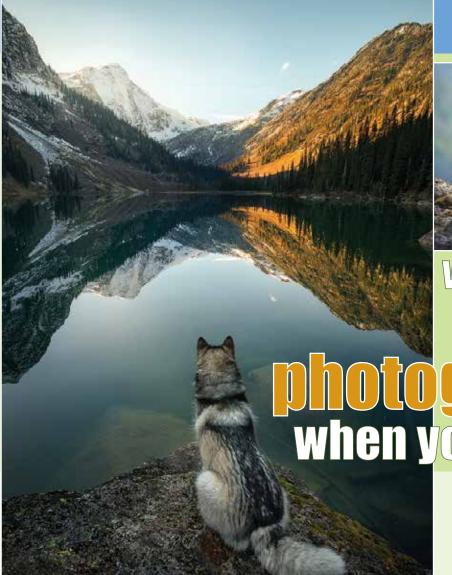
that manatees are in danger, and the centre is running out of money to help them. Can Brenna save the centre - and the manatees?

If you like Manatee Blues, check out more chapter books from the **Vet Volunteers series!**

Why read to animals?

Pet's often find our voice soothing and relaxing. It's also a great way to spend time with them. It's nice for you too, because our pets don't interrupt or correct us. What more could you want in a reading buddy?!





Jack and Viktoria on one of their many adventures together.

Want to be an animal photographer you grow up?

Viktoria Haack is a professional photographer whose work includes pet portraits and nature landscapes. We talked to her about her career, her volunteer work with the BC SPCA and what it takes to get great pictures of our furry friends.

What made you decide you wanted to be a photographer?

I have always loved art and anything visual. When I moved to a small island in the UK there wasn't too much else to do so I picked up my camera and started photographing the red squirrels on the island, the nature around me and my daughter and dog. I was hooked! Can you share a little bit about your professional background?

I studied art before doing a degree in art history/ anthropology (the study of human society). I worked for a nature conservation organization before moving to Canada 12 years ago. I then began taking photos professionally and at the same time I worked for the BC SPCA as an animal care attendant.

You volunteer time taking pictures for the BC SPCA. Why did you want to do this and what do you enjoy about it?

I started taking photos for the BC SPCA when I worked as an animal care attendant. I realized how important it was to capture images that would tell an animal's story and show their personality so that they had a better chance of capturing the hearts of people



Careers With Animyls









who may become their adoptive parents. It is the animal-human connection that I love capturing the best.

Can you tell us about a special animal in your life, now or when you were growing up?

I have been lucky enough to have had a few animal companions but I will tell you about my most recent family member. His name is Jack and he's a three-vear-old Alaskan malamute (@jack_ thewolfskin on Instagram). As a puppy and teenager, he was very rambunctious and difficult. He has been worth all the work and love we have put into him. He is becoming better behaved by the day. He makes a fantastic friend for adventures out with my camera and into the mountains: I can't imagine not having him beside me every day!

What is your favourite part of photographing animals?

I love how unpredictable they are! You never know what they will do and you have to be ready for anything.

What is the most challenging thing about photographing pets compared to other subjects?

You have to work with animals, you can't tell them where to stand and how to pose like a human. It's about finding out what motivates them and working with them to get the images.

Can you share some tips for kids who want to take great pictures of their pets?

The most important thing is to know what motivates your pet: Is it treats? Toys? Praise? Use these to help you get your pet's attention and get them into a good position. Choose a location that is safe for you and your pet with no distractions (even though a dog park can be safe, there may be too many distractions for your dog to be able to get their attention properly). Try to get down to your pet's eye level. Make the shoot short and fun for your pet so they don't get bored.

Viktoria also shared her pet photography tips in a special video! Find it on the BC SPCA's Official YouTube Channel.

PET PHOTO CONTEST

Think you can capture the pawfect picture of a pet? Get that camera clicking and send us your best shot! Our favourite photo that demonstrates one or more of Viktoria Haack's tips will be featured in the next issue of Bark! magazine.

Email your entries using the subject line Pet Photo Contest to kids@spca.bc.ca. Please include your name, age and city.



This contest is open to Bark! readers ages 13 and under and closes August 31, 2020.





Can you imagine a world without birds?

Their behaviours, songs and colours enrich our lives. Not to mention birds help keep the ecosystem in balance by dispersing seeds and pollinating plants. Plus, they help keep the insect population from exploding. Unfortunately, bird numbers are declining and scientists need your help to discover why.

Have fun and help birds

Birding isn't just fun. Spotting birds, and reporting what you see, lets scientists know the health of ecosystems. Birds, like people, need clean air and water. They also need food without pesticides and poisons. And a safe place to live and raise their young. Protecting birds helps people and the planet. But how do you report what birds you see?

Collecting bird data

Bird scientists examine bird data from around the world. They learn where and when birds migrate. They examine the data from year to year to find out if bird populations have been harmed by events like climate change, loss of habitat or pesticide use. But how do scientists collect all this bird data? A lot comes from citizen scientists - like you!

What is citizen science?

Citizen science is research done with the help of public participation. It can involve recording observations, reviewing data, monitoring nature and much more. Getting your help increases the amount of data that scientists couldn't gather on their own.



Getting started as a citizen scientist

There are lots of bird-related citizen science projects you can participate in. Some of the most popular programs are annual bird counts. Bird lovers go out on scheduled days each year to count every bird they see (usually in winter).

A group called Birds Canada has lots of citizen science bird programs. Examples include the Great Backyard Bird Count, Bird-Friendly Schools and Project FeederWatch. Plus they have a youth guide to birding, all at birdscanada.org.





Birding apps for your phone

Another great way to learn about birds and help collect data is through phone apps.

Start a "life list" using eBird eBird (Android/iPhone – free)

People who love birds keep track of all the different ones they have seen and where. It's called a "life list." eBird is designed to help you record your bird sightings. The data is then shared with North American bird groups. **eBird** works together with the app **Merlin**.



More great bird apps: Audubon Birding (Android/iPhone – free), BirdsEve (Android/iPhone - free) and iBird Pro (Android/iPhone - fantastic app, but costly)







Birding





What bird is that? Use Merlin Bird ID

(Android/iPhone - free)

You see a bird but have no clue what species she is. Now what? The free **Merlin Bird ID** app helps you find the answer. The app asks you five quick questions, or you can take a photo of the bird with your phone. You can also use it to listen to bird calls and see awesome bird photos.



Can you name this bird? These water birds blend into marsh grasses and are hard to spot. Listen for their loud "pumper-erlunk" call at dusk when they get active.



Often you hear a bird's song but can't see the bird. Like the willow flycatcher. This acrobatic bird is often hard to see but has a unique call.

BirdNET to the rescue! Launch the app and hold your phone out to record the song. Once you have about a 10-second sample, press "analyze." In a few moments, up pops the name and picture of the bird. Pressing on the bird image takes you to more info about that bird. Tip: Flip your phone upside down and point it towards the song. The microphone will pick up the sound better.



Become a bird photographer!

Part of the thrill of spotting a bird you have never seen before is capturing a photo. Lots of Kids Club-age kids are great nature photographers. Adam Dhalla from Cognitlam, B.C. takes fantastic bird photos! See samples on his Instagram feed.





BC SPCA Learn at Home



Animals are fun and fascinating and can teach us so much!

Over the years, we've shared all kinds of activities through Bark!, our summer camps and youth workshops.

Now, we've gathered our favourites, created some brand new ones, and put them all in one spot for animalloving kids.

It's called BC SPCA Learn at Home - and it's your place to explore the

world of animals and how YOU can make a difference. Take action from your living room, your kitchen, your backyard and beyond.

Get started today at spca.bc.ca/learn-at-home.





BC SPCA in-person summer camps have gone virtual!

Join us for access to videos, live streams and plenty of hands-on and outdoor activitiesall about animals. Check out **BC SPCA Summer Sessions** at spca.bc.ca/camp.



Join the BC SPCA Kids Club today! You'll receive a Bark! magazine subscription. posters, a fun welcome package and e-Kids Mews!letter.

Name:	Telephone:	Birth Date:	
Address:	_ City:	_Province:	_Postal Code:
School:	_ Email:	0 0 0 0 0	
○ Yes, you can email me e-Kids Mews!letter and other BC SPCA Kids Club updates		600	Join the Kids Club
○ Savings! Two-year membership (\$25) ○ One-year membership	(\$15) O Cheque payable to BC SPCA		TODAY! FILL OUT THIS FORM AND MAIL IT TO:
Or by credit card O Amex O Visa O Mastercard Signature:			BC SPCA Kids Club
Number:	Expiry Date:		1245 East 7th Avenue Vancouver, BC
Name on Card:		0 0 0 0 0	V5T 1R1
Parent or Guardian's Name:		0 0 0 0 0	or sign up online at spca.bc.ca/kibsclub.



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