



# Northern Spotted Owl Breeding Program

Fall/Winter 2017 Update

## Chick E has a Name!

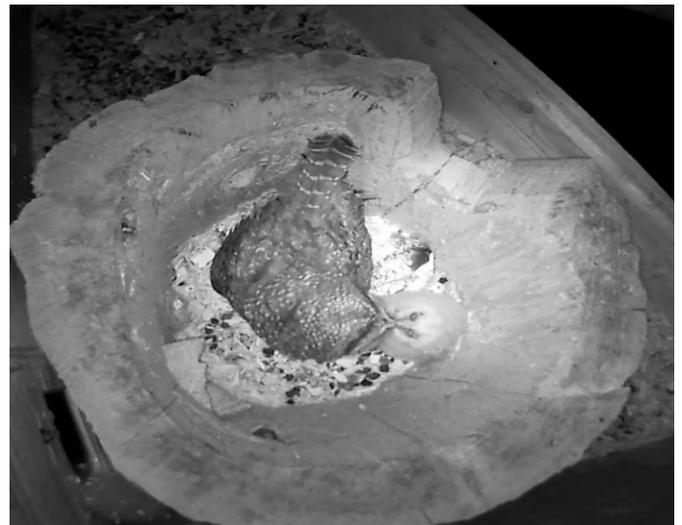
After many months of deliberating and dozens of great suggestions from our Instagram and Facebook followers, we narrowed down the name for 2016 Chick E to just two: Elliott and Emory. Elliott was the most suggested name on social media and reminds us of Elliott State Forest, an old growth forest in the state of Oregon that is home to wild Spotted Owls. The name Emory comes



from Emory Creek in the Fraser Canyon here in British Columbia. Historically this creek was once occupied by Spotted Owls.

Although both names had Spotted Owl related namesakes, the vote was overwhelming

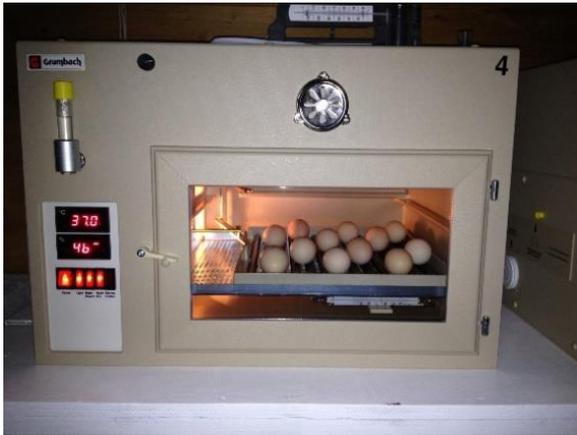
ly in favor of one of the two names. So, we are happy to officially announce that the first ever second generation Spotted Owl born in captivity is ELLIOTT! Elliott will soon be incorporated into the Breeding Program once a mate becomes available for him. We don't know what the future holds, but if all goes well, Elliott's future offspring will be released into the wild and contribute to saving this species from extirpation in Canada.



## Live Streaming Nest Cameras

We have partnered with the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) this year to live stream some of our nest cameras during the 2017 Breeding Season. The feed will be publicly accessible through FWCP.ca and will feature Scud and Shania. Shania was the first Spotted Owl born into the Northern Spotted Owl Breeding Program and she and her mate Scud produced the very first second generation of captive bred Spotted Owl in 2016. We are hopeful that they will produced more chicks this year and we want you to follow this family with us! We are very excited to share the images from our night vision capable nest cameras (thanks TD Friends of the Environment) with all of our followers 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the duration of the breeding season. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for an exact launch date and link to the cameras!

## Getting Ready for Breeding Season



*It takes a lot of hard work to ensure all the incubators are ready for eggs!*

As the 2017 Breeding Season quickly approaches, we are all busy at the breeding facility preparing for what we hope to be our most productive season yet! Every January we prepare our incubation and hand-raising room by taking an inventory of what we have on hand, making a list of what we need and, of course, cleaning! During artificial incubation, it is critical to maintain a sterile environment for the precious owl eggs. We start by removing all of the parts of the incubators and thoroughly disinfecting them at least three times. This can be quite a time-consuming endeavor as we have six incubators and each one has many small, delicate pieces. We also disinfectant all the smaller pieces of equipment that we use during the breeding season, in addition to cleaning all of the surfaces in the entire building, including the ceiling! All of this cleaning helps to reduce the chance of bacteria contaminating one of the eggs. All of this cleaning, sterilization, and inventory must be completed before mid-February. We spend the last few weeks of February before the arrival of eggs ensuring all equipment is functioning properly. This means we calibrate the temperatures in each incubator to determine the “hot” and “cold” spots in the incubator. This allows us to determine which sections inside the incubator is most ideal for the eggs that are to arrive in early March through to April! This year, after the generous donations we received last spring during our first ever “Adopt an Egg” campaign, we have added a new, exciting piece of equipment to our arsenal: The Egg Buddy. This will allow us to monitor the embryo’s beating heart within the egg. This will come in handy during the late stages of incubation when the chick is so large inside the egg that it takes up so much space that we can’t see anything when we shine a light on it. We were also able to

purchase three new digital thermometers that can be programmed to send a text message of the temperature reading to each staff member to ensure the incubators are operating well. Each device is also set up to send text alerts when the detected temperature falls out of a pre-determined range. This is crucial to the survival of the egg and chick during potential power outages or equipment failures as it allows the staff to act immediately to fix the problem.



*The Egg Buddy will allow us to monitor a chick's heartbeat as gets close to hatching time.*

## Breeding Centre Tours

During the months of October through to January we welcomed over 100 visitors for an exclusive tour of the Breeding Centre.

As a thank you for their support, we had groups from FWCP, the Provincial Government, and 1800-Shredding stop by for a tour. It was a great opportunity for us to meet our partners as well as show them exactly how their funds were being put to use.



*We welcomed a wide variety of groups for both private and public tours this past fall! Here's Forrest posing with FWCP representatives. SMILE!*

We opened our doors to the public for the very first time and received overwhelmingly positive responses from the local community (thanks in part to an article in the Langley Times). There was so much demand that we added four more tours to accommodate the interest. Each tour was limited to a maximum of eight people and was led by one of our Spotted Owl biologists. The limited number of spaces on each tour allowed us to connect with everyone on a more personal level and share our

passion for the work we do here. Understandably, it seemed like everyone's favourite part of the tour was seeing the owls! On a few occasions, we were even lucky enough to hear some of the males calling, which was exciting as so few people have heard that typical 4 note "hoo who who hoooo" in person. The rain tried to put a damper on the tours, but armed with rubber boots and rain coats, we didn't let the weather stop us!

Although we were careful to conduct these tours in a way to minimize the disturbance to the owls, we will not be hosting any more tours until after the breeding season is over. Keep an eye out on our Facebook page or email us to sign up for our mailing list if you'd like to know when we are offering tours this coming summer!

## Adopt an Owl and FundScrip

We recently launched two new fundraising campaigns at the end of 2016 that will be ongoing throughout 2017. The first of which is our "Adopt-an-Owl" campaign, which gives you the option of choosing which Northern Spotted Owl to adopt and selecting one of three donor packages, starting at \$25. With each package, you will receive a personalized adoption certificate and biography and photo of your chosen owl. Higher levels of adoption include email updates about your owl throughout the year as well as a private tour of the facility. These symbolic adoptions not only help to provide food for the owls, but also help us to engage with the community and share more of each individual owl's story. If you are interested in adopting one of the Northern Spotted Owls, send us an email!

Our second campaign involves over 200 retailers from across Canada. FundScrip is a well-established fundraising program in which supporters pay for their shopping

(everything from gas and groceries, to restaurants, gifts, and more!) using gift cards bought online from FundScrip.com.

All you have to do is enter our invite code **V2Z GTU** and select which gift cards to purchase. They'll arrive in the mail in about a week and when you spend them, the retailer will donate a



percentage of the purchase to the Northern Spotted Owls! This is a great campaign that we are excited about as it allows our followers to support the Program for almost zero out of pocket expense (just the cost of the stamp!). Head over to Fundscrip.com, use our invite code, and start shopping!

## A Frigid December

Tis the season to puff up and stay still, and the Spotted Owls have been doing just that to stay warm and conserve their energy. The arrival of prolonged snow and -10 temperatures this December was a bit of a surprise for everyone here at the breeding facility, including the owls! Each owl has a favourite sheltered spot to hunker down when the temperature drops and the snow starts to fly. By fluffing up their feathers to trap body heat they are able to keep toasty warm during a cold stretch. This gives them an extra cute appearance, especially in the morning when they are getting sleepy and ready to relax for the day. We pay extra attention to each owl during daily observations to ensure everyone is looking healthy and well fed. At this time of year, it pays off for bonded pairs to have a cuddle buddy to sit close to and enjoy the snowfall!



*Shakkai and Einstein aren't sure what to make of all this snow!*

Freezing temperatures overnight meant that the breaking and thawing of water dishes was required daily to ensure the owls had a drinking source if needed. While bringing food platforms indoors during the day helped to make sure a warm dinner was provided later that evening. Morning checks and nightly feeds were lengthened to accommodate fumbling with frozen locks on feeding hatches and enclosure doors. Pipes and hoses freezing meant no running water in our office, and buckets of water had to be carried to the rodent facility. The

beautiful snowy landscape and clear skies definitely made up for the extra effort needed this winter to maintain our facility and care for the owls!

## A Big Thank You to Our Partners

We would like to thank the Province of British Columbia, BC Hydro, Innergex Renewable Energy Inc, and the Land Bases Investment Strategy., for their continued financial support to help maintain the core functions of the breeding program and help ensure that the best care possible is afforded to the owls on a daily basis.

We also want to thank Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program that continued its support for a second year of our internship program as well as providing resources to make our nest cameras accessible to the public through their website (FWCP.ca). These night vision cameras would not have been possible without the financial support of TD Friends of the Environment. Thank-you.

We also welcomed and thank our new financial supporter, 1800-Shredding (@1800Shredding on Facebook), which will continue to hold “Shred-a-thons” in our community throughout the year and donate some of the proceeds to our Program. Be sure to check out their Facebook to find out when there will be a Shred-a-thon in your neighbourhood.

We want to thank Buckerfields in Abbotsford has kindly donated premium dog food for the last three years, which is an important component of the diet fed to the rodents at the breeding facility. This source of protein ensures that each rodent is fed a healthy diet, which means that the owls have optimal nutrition as well. We also thank Mountain Equipment Co-op which has offered an allowance so that we can buy some new gear. Grouse Mountain has also continued their financial support in providing veterinary care for the owls over the last ten years! Thank you!

And as always, thank you so much to our wonderful, dedicated volunteers! We appreciate all of your hard work and dedication to the Program. We couldn't do it all without you!

And of course, a big thank you to all of our followers and supporters that have kindly donated funds, adopted an owl, purchased Gift Cards, and joined us at our pub night fund-raiser.

Without everyone's kind support, this breeding program would not exist. Your support energizes us to do the very best for the Spotted Owls and helps us maintain our determination to recovery the species. Thank you.

We are in the processing of seeking more partners and donors, so if you are interested in working with us by providing product donations, in-kind service support, or financial support, contact us!



## Links to Check Out

1. A brief video introduction to our Program and facility in Langley, BC.

<http://www.tinyurl.com/j5j26jy>

2. *Saving the owls in Langley* by Dan Ferguson of the Langley Times

<http://www.langleytimes.com/news/400295201.html>

3. Support the Owls on FundScrip. Enter the invite code **V2Z GTU**

[www.fundscrip.com](http://www.fundscrip.com)

4. Follow all the action during breeding season by accessing our LIVE nest cameras 24/7.

[www.fwcp.ca](http://www.fwcp.ca)

Check [facebook.com/nsobreedingprogram](https://www.facebook.com/nsobreedingprogram) for updates

Contact us

[nsobreedingprogram@gmail.com](mailto:nsobreedingprogram@gmail.com)