



FIGURE 1

SEASON OF  
CREATION



## A HOME FOR ALL

### ACTION ACTIVITY

“All creatures have  
the same source as  
we have. ...

God wishes that we  
should succour  
them whenever  
they require it.”

- St-Francis

In this Action Activity Guide, there are 3 sections  
that support the theme of ‘A HOME FOR ALL’:

*1: Protect the homes and habitats of native species*

*2: Make your own home more eco-friendly*

*3: Help those without homes*



PROTECT THE HOMES  
AND HABITATS OF  
NATIVE SPECIES



MAKE YOUR OWN HOME  
MORE ECO-FRIENDLY



HELP THOSE  
WITHOUT HOMES

## PROTECT THE HOMES AND HABITATS OF NATIVE SPECIES

Canada is home to about 80 000 species, and sadly many are facing numerous threats to survival, habitat loss being the greatest threat to all life on Earth. Over 600 plant and animal species are protected under Canada's Species at Risk Act (SARA), yet half of the monitored species are in decline, and even some of those protected under SARA are failing to recover. Canada is committed to protecting at least 17 percent of terrestrial space and inland waters; however, this does not protect most of the habitats where most at risk species live.

Wildlife needs to live somewhere, just like the rest of us. We all need a place to call home. Every species needs to find food, mate, migrate and raise young for a population to survive. Climate change and the destruction and degradation of habitats basically impedes the survival of wildlife. Protecting and restoring natural habitats is one of the most effective ways to help (wwf.ca).



FIGURE 2



PROTECT THE HOMES  
AND HABITATS OF  
NATIVE SPECIES

**“All Canadians  
have a shared  
responsibility to  
protect species at  
risk and ensure  
healthy  
ecosystems for  
future  
generations”**

**Canada.ca**



FIGURE 3

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

#### INCREASE AWARENESS:

Increasing awareness in your community is always beneficial, with the hopes to increase enthusiasm and support. Education and knowledge are the foundations to inspire action.

Here are two simple ideas to start:

- Highlight one species each Sunday ‘Sunday Species’: bring awareness to their status, their habitat, their life cycles, their role and value to the ecosystem. This can be a quick PowerPoint presentation, a YouTube video, or even an informational poster in the common area.
- Organize an outing for your community, and/or the neighbourhood to a local green space, a natural habitat with a naturalist as a guide who can help

identify some species and unique features. An outing to an ecological / natural museum would be a great experience to learn from the exhibits and the experts.

#### GET INVOLVED:

Local organizations: A quick internet research will be able to reveal what community groups are already involved in protecting and preserving local (and national) green spaces. Join forces and offer your time and support to see how you can help them with their mission. Bring this information back to your own community and see if anyone else is interested to get involved to help the cause, maybe a letter writing or petition



**Canada Wildlife Act**

**The Act allows for the creation, management, and protection of wildlife areas for wildlife research activities, or for conservation or interpretation of wildlife.**

**The Species at Risk Act (SARA)**

**Prevents Canadian indigenous species, subspecies, and distinct populations from becoming extirpated or extinct, to provide for the recovery of endangered or threatened species and encourage the management of other species to prevent them from becoming at risk.**

**PROTECT THE HOMES AND HABITATS OF NATIVE SPECIES**

signing campaign could put some political pressure to evoke positive change.

**START A PROJECT:**

Is there an unused, unwanted paved area in your community? Create a greenspace by removing unwanted pavement and plant native species and watch how an ecosystem comes to life. Green Communities Canada has a ‘Depave Paradise’ project that can teach your group everything you need to know about depaving in a fun and safe way. They have been helping communities across Canada in 23 different cities rip up pavement and plant gardens, get inspired by some past projects here: [Projects | Depave Paradise](#) (depaveparadise.ca).

‘In the Zone’ also helps people transform outdoor spaces into healthy habitats by incorporating native plants that support native wildlife. They offer free gardening resources, a means to track your impact, and ways to connect with a supportive community that is part of the solution to habitat loss. [Your Garden Can Help Native Species Thrive](#) (inthezonegardens.ca)

**SUPPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT:**

The World Wildlife Fund has been helping Canadians make a difference for wildlife and nature through their Go Wild Community Grants. Through this funding, the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton received support for the ‘Carolinian Habitat Restoration and Public Education Project’. With the help of this grant, the Unitarian Garden project converted an overgrown, once traditional garden on top of a landfill into a functioning Carolinian wildlife habitat. Get inspired by watching this: [Garden Tour - July 2020 - YouTube](#).

The federal government offers funding through their ‘The Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP)’ for projects submitted by Canadians (individuals or community groups) that contribute directly to the recovery objectives and population goals of species at risk and that prevent others from becoming a conservation concern. Learn more here: [Habitat Stewardship Program for species at risk - Canada.ca](#)

- **Species at risk habitat is not being protected:**
- **84% of habitats with high concentrations of at-risk species are inadequately protected or not protected at all.**
- **Across Canada we are not protecting the wide variety of physical habitats that wildlife need:**
- **76% Habitat for species at risk is not being protected.**
- **Source: WWF.CA**

## EXAMPLES OF CANADIAN WILDLIFE SPECIES AT RISK

### Eastern Canada:

**Duck, Harlequin** (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) Eastern population.  
Special Concern status

**Wolverine** (*Gulo gulo*) Eastern population.  
Special Concern status

**Whale, North Atlantic Right** (*Eubalaena glacialis*).  
Endangered status

### Quebec/Ontario:

**Whip-poor-will** (*Caprimulgus vociferus*).  
Threatened status

**Whale, Beluga** (*Delphinapterus leucas*) St. Lawrence Estuary population. \*1  
Endangered status

**Water snake, Lake Erie** (*Nerodia sipedon insularum*).  
Special Concern status

### Prairies:

**Crane, Whooping** (*Grus americana*).  
Endangered status

**Owl, Burrowing** (*Athene cunicularia*). \*2  
Endangered status

**Bison, Wood** (*Bison bison athabascae*). \*3  
Threatened status

### Western Canada:

**Pika, Collared** (*Ochotona collaris*).  
Special Concern status

**Woodpecker, White-headed** (*Picoides albolarvatus*).  
Endangered status

**Sea Otter** (*Enhydra lutris*).  
Special Concern status

**Whale, Killer** (*Orcinus orca*) Northeast Pacific southern resident population. \*4  
Endangered status

### Arctic (Northern) Canada:

**Narwhal** (*Monodon monoceros*).  
Special Concern status

**Peary Caribou** (*Rangifer tarandus pearyi*). \*5  
Endangered status

**Curlew, Eskimo** (*Numenius borealis*). \*6  
Endangered status



## MAKE YOUR OWN HOME MORE ECO-FRIENDLY

Environmental action and caring for God’s Creation can be done in many ways. Our homes are a great place to start, by integrating environmentally friendly habits and practices into our everyday lives. Within our homes, there are countless ways to reduce waste, save energy, and create optimal healthy environments to live in. Collectively, we can make our communities more ecologically sustainable by reducing our household environmental footprint and uniting in our care for Creation. Since Canadians spend an average of 90% of their time indoors, this section will address ways to improve indoor air quality.



FIGURE 4



FIGURE 5



MAKE YOUR OWN HOME  
MORE ECO-FRIENDLY

**“Environmental action and caring for God’s Creation can be done in many ways... Collectively, we can make our communities more ecologically sustainable by reducing our household environmental footprint and uniting in our care for Creation”**

### PROMOTE ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING PRODUCTS

Indoor pollution is an environmental concern that poses health risks, mainly associated to, but not limited to, respiratory illnesses such as asthma. Many common commercial household cleaning products contribute to indoor air pollution ([Indoor Air Quality US EPA](#)). According to a study by the Canadian organization ‘Environmental Defence’ the levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) increase substantially inside a home after cleaning with toxic cleaning products [Toxic Cleaning Products - YouTube](#). VOCs are a group of thousands of chemicals which are released into the air from solvents found in many commercial products. Some common VOCs are: benzene, formaldehyde and toluene ([\(Volatile organic compounds - Canada.ca\)](#)). For more precise information, download this elaborate report: [TheDirtyTruth ENG.pdf](#)

### HOST A WORKSHOP:

Hosting a workshop would simplify the process of how easy and fun it can be to make your own cleaning products. Many of the ingredients required are common household items, like vinegar, baking soda, lemon, dish soap, hydrogen peroxide, rubbing alcohol, and essential oils. You can ask your community to donate some of the required ingredients or charge a small fee for the workshop. With the funds you can purchase in bulk and send all the participants home with their own new homemade cleaner. Leftover ingredients can be used to make cleaning products for the church itself. Take pictures and post on social media with the hashtag #naturalcleaning. Here are a few resources to get you started: [CleaningGuide.pdf](#) [27 Chemical-Free Recipes for DIY Spring Cleaning 5 DIY Cleaning Products to Save You Money -](#)

**HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION:**

People often tend to think it is better to use the remaining cleaning products that they already have before making a switch to products that are more environmentally friendly. However, intentionally releasing toxins in your home is never the right choice! Organize a hazardous waste collection and properly dispose of the products through your municipal hazardous waste recycling program. Make a flyer or poster with the information, including what products are accepted and when to bring them in. Be sure that your municipality is open and accepting drop offs before organizing your transportation.

**PROMOTE AIR-PURIFYING HOUSEPLANTS**

Our homes often accumulate airborne toxins (including VOCs) from various household sources such as furniture, wallpaper, detergents, glue, rubber, electronic equipment, printing inks, paints, varnishes, resins, and materials ([greenplantsforgreenbuildings.org](http://greenplantsforgreenbuildings.org)). NASA did a Clean Air Study titled '[Interior Landscape Plants for Indoor Air Pollution Abatement](#)' which measured the rate at which plants removed various toxins from the air. Every home will have varying amounts of different toxins and pollutants; however, the most common ones are trichloroethylene, formaldehyde, benzene, xylene, and ammonia. Here is a list of air-purifying plants and the toxins they are known to absorb ([zmescience.com](http://zmescience.com)):

- Garden Mum: Trichloroethylene, formaldehyde, benzene, xylene, and ammonia
- Peace Lily: Trichloroethylene, formaldehyde, benzene, xylene, and ammonia
- Dracaena: Trichloroethylene, formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene
- Snake Plant: Formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene
- Spider Plant: Formaldehyde and xylene
- Ficus/Weeping Fig: Formaldehyde and xylene
- Boston Fern: Formaldehyde and xylene
- Bamboo Palm: Formaldehyde and xylene
- Aloe Vera: Formaldehyde and benzene
- English Ivy: Trichloroethylene, formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene



FIGURE 6

Most likely, people already have some of these plants in their collection and will be interested to learn more about them. Here are some ideas to encourage your community to use air-filtering plants:

**PROMOTE THE PLANTS:** Make a brief presentation before or after Sunday service about the benefits of air-filtering plants; make a poster for the common area; or write a short article for the newsletter.

**PLANT EXCHANGE:** Provide a list of air filtering plants to your community and host a plant exchange. Come with a plant, leave with a new plant. Set a time and day and a table to display the plants.

**PLANT RAFFLE:** Ask for plant donations, perhaps some already exist in the church plant collection. You can sell tickets to raffle it off in a draw after service on Sunday. Proceeds can go towards the church, or towards buying new plants.

**PLANT SALE:** Purchase inexpensive plants as well as collecting donated plants and host a plant sale. All you need is a table and ideally some information on hand about air purifying plan.

## HELP THOSE WITHOUT HOMES.

Having a place to call home should never be taken for granted, as the safety and security one feels in their home is a privilege that not all Canadians have. There are many reasons a person can find themselves between homes. Whether it be women, often with children, escaping a domestic abusive environment, refugees fleeing to a foreign country to escape war or political upheaval, or due to a series of events and combination of problems, many people experience homelessness. When survival is your priority, environmental practices are the least of your concern. However, with a safe place to call home and a sense of security, the potential for positive change can grow exponentially in all aspects of life, benefiting not only the individuals but also the community at large. This section will focus on those who find themselves between homes and how we, as a community, can help them find the comfort and peace that every human deserves.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

There are numerous resources, groups and organizations that are already addressing this societal issue. A quick internet research will guide you towards them, reach out and ask how you and your community can help. Here are some ideas of what your community can offer:

#### **Bottle Collection:**

Bottle Collections are an easy way to reduce recyclable items ending up in landfills. To start collecting bottles, your community can: bring their empty bottles (cash recyclable) to the church on a specific day/week; a group can organize to pick them up from their homes; or members can facilitate a door-to-door campaign asking for bottles, with all the proceeds being donated to the organization.

#### **Can Food Drive:**

If non-perishable food is needed, the same principle as a bottle collection would apply.

#### **Collective Meal Prep:**

Most churches have great kitchens, put them to good use by having a sandwich making event, a soup cook off, or a pasta fiesta.

Regardless of the name of the event, assure

that the details (what, where and when) have all been confirmed prior so that the homecooked meals are needed and well received at the right time.

#### **Clothing Collection:**

Some shelters may have specific clothing requests based on their needs and seasons. Set a date to deliver and ask your community to clean out their closets. Take pictures and post on social media with the hashtag #cleanoutclosets.

#### **Used Furniture Collection:**

If a shelter has a specific need for a piece of furniture, make a poster in the common area or an announcement in the newsletter, and help organize the transport. Example: If a shelter needs a dresser, ask your community if anyone has an old dresser that they no longer need which could be donated. Take pictures and post on social media with the hashtag #helpingothers.

#### **Fill a Purse:**

The gift of a purse filled with personal necessities brings a sense of hope and dignity to women and youth in crisis. 'Fill a



FIGURE 7



HELP THOSE  
WITHOUT HOMES

**More than 235,000 people in Canada experience homelessness in any given year, and 25,000 to 35,000 people may be experiencing homelessness on any given night.**  
[www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)  
Jan2021

Purse' events are a growing movement that is supporting women's shelters and crisis centers across all of Canada. Your church can join the movement, by hosting a 'Fill a Purse' event and collecting new or gently used purses or backpacks and filling with toiletries, sanitary products, coffee gift cards, lip balm, brush, comb, hand sanitizer, soap, shampoo/conditioner, toothbrush, floss, wallet, gum, Kleenex, small calendar, notepad, pen, whistle, flashlight and add a special touch like a scarf or gloves.

Need help organizing the event? Fill a Purse for a Sister Campaign is a charity organization that will be running from September 1 to December 1, 2021, that provides guidance for groups to become 'community leads' in supporting women's shelters and crisis centers across the country.

Learn more by visiting [www.fillapurseforasistercampaign.ca](http://www.fillapurseforasistercampaign.ca)

- **One in 10 women is very or extremely concerned about the possibility of violence in the home. In addition, 8% of Canadians reported that they were very or extremely concerned about the possibility of violence in the home.**
- **This percentage was higher for women (10%) than men (6%)**
- **[www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca) April2020 Impacts of COVID-19 ([statcan.gc.ca](http://statcan.gc.ca))**
- **. 6,000+ women and children sleep in shelters on any given night because it is not safe at home. [Canadian Women's Foundation](http://Canadian Women's Foundation)**



FIGURE 8

## PHOTO CREDITS

FIGURE 1: <https://pixabay.com>

FIGURE 2: Whale, North AtlanOc Right (Eubalaena glacialis) - Marianna Hagbloom, Anderson Cabot Center at the New England Aquarium

FIGURE 3: Sea Otter : Gerald and Buff Corsi © California Academy of Sciences

FIGURE 4: <https://unsplash.com/>

FIGURE 5: <https://pixabay.com>

FIGURE 6: <https://unsplash.com/>

FIGURE 7: homeless Jesus in front of Saint James Church in Montreal

FIGURE 8: <https://pixabay.com/>

### **SPECIES AT RISK PHOTOS:**

Whale, Beluga <https://unsplash.com/>

Owl, Burrowing <https://unsplash.com/>

Bison, Wood <https://unsplash.com/>

Whale, Killer : Gerald and Buff Corsi © California Academy of Sciences

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