

SOUTH MORESBY

FALL
1984

New Federal Government continues push for National Parks in South Moresby ; B.C. Gov't must make first move

The fate of the southern sixth of the Queen Charlotte archipelago has long been a political football. Many federal politicians have joined the fight to save this still natural area, world famous for its unique biology and wildly beautiful scenery.

In 1980, Ian Waddell, Vancouver-Kingsway M.P. for the N.D.P. presented a private member's bill calling for establishment of a South Moresby National Park. Although it never came to a vote, it gained 'in principle' support from a majority of the House members including the Conservative Opposition under Joe Clark.

In the spring of 1984 Charles Caccia, Minister of the Environment during the last days of the Liberal Government, proposed that the Federal Government cooperate with the B.C. Government to establish two National Parks in the region. Tony Brummet, B.C. Minister of Lands, Parks and Housing, never replied. Insiders say he did not want to play ball with the outgoing Liberals.

In June, M.P. Gary Gurbin, who was shadow minister of environment at the time, outlined the Conservative position in a letter to Islands Protection Society, the Queen Charlotte environment group championing the South Moresby cause. He said,

"... I would like to confirm that the area is viewed as a unique and sensitive natural ecological system that deserves respect and protection, and we feel a 'Canadian' responsibility... In short, the Federal Progressive Conservative Party, if in a position to do so following a federal election, would be prepared to actively participate with the British Columbia Government in the establishment of a 'Park' at South Moresby."

Conservationists are asking the new Minister of the Environment, Suzanne Blais-Grenier to follow-up on this pre-election promise.

Cabinet trip to Moresby 'a disaster'





Five B.C. Cabinet Ministers, including Tony Brummet, chairman of the Environment Land Use Committee, visited South Moresby last June. Weather dampened their experience. A tour by helicopter midst the clouds and fog gave them only glimpses of the area's splendour.

Their one-day boat trip into South Moresby was a disaster. They missed the giant old-growth trees, going ashore only at Rose Harbour and Talunkwan Island—sites of former industrial activity.

Tom Waterland, Minister of Forests wrote "this looks like a 'clear-cut' decision to me" in the ship's log. He subsequently approved the controversial cut blocks on Lyell Island just south of Windy Bay, one highly visible from the proposed National Marine Park.

Notably absent on the trip was Claude Richmond, Minister of Tourism. With tourism fast becoming the backbone of the Queen Charlotte economy, Islands Protection Society asks that he visit South Moresby before helping decide its fate.

**(Above); WINDY BAY's
resplendent old growth
is surrounded by clearcuts
as logging progresses
unchecked**

**(Right); A logging
truck hauls away
another load of
virgin timber on
LYELL ISLAND**



HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF SEABIRDS AND RAPTORS IN CANADA



PEALE'S PEREGRIN FALCON
The fastest bird in the world

Biologically Unsurpassed

One hundred km off British Columbia's coast is Canada's most isolated island group, the Queen Charlottes. At their southern end is South Moresby, a naturalist's paradise. Upwelling, nutrient-rich currents; warm mist-filled air from the open Pacific; and isolation combine to make it the Canadian Galapagos.

far inland, perhaps to nest in the mossy branches of the mature forest canopy several miles from shore.

With the abundant seabirds, it is not surprising that over 1/3 of Canada's rare and endangered Peale's Peregrin Falcons nest on the South Moresby cliff faces. Murrelets



ANCIENT MURRELET with the two eggs she lays in old growth forest floor burrows



Here, life carries on at an intensified pace. Primarily because of a lack of land predators like fox and mink, seabirds, who spend most of their life on the open ocean, find the needed haven to nest. Nesting habitat, especially for the burrow nesters, is not common on the Canadian coast. Ancient Murrelets and Cassin's Auklets temporarily occupy sites on the seaward-facing slopes of the old-growth forest in South Moresby every spring.

More than 30% of B.C.'s nesting seabirds need South Moresby. This includes 3/4 of all the Ancient Murrelets, 2/3 of the Tufted Puffins, 1/3 of the Storm Petrels, and 1/2 of the Cassin's Auklets. Just last spring a new colony was discovered on the steep slopes of Ramsey Island, right next to Hot Spring Island. With over 15,000 nesting pairs it is the largest colony of Ancient Murrelets in South Moresby.

The biology of these birds is still relatively unknown. One seabird species, the Marbled Murrelet, found around South Moresby in large numbers, hides its nests so well that no one has ever found one. At dusk the birds fly

Incomplete surveys show Darwin Sound in South Moresby to have the second highest Bald Eagle nesting density in the world. The abundance of food and undisturbed old-growth nesting trees make such densities possible. The area is frequented by other raptors, including a subspecies of Saw-whet owl unique to the Queen Charlottes.

Only seven species of land mammals are indigenous to the Islands. These include the world's largest black bear, golden pine martin, river otter, short-tailed weasel, wandering shrew and two kinds of mice. Isolated development has made them different from their mainland cousins in both size and colouration.

Many of the 42 freshwater lakes have their own uniquely evolved stickleback fish. The countless bays and inlets are washed by 27-foot tides and crashing seas from the most powerful storms that arise in the Pacific.

This 1600 km. shoreline, dotted with 138 islands, is indeed a biological paradise of awe and mystery.

IS IT ENOUGH?

In November of 1974, 500 residents of the Queen Charlotte Islands signed a petition requesting a moratorium on development in South Moresby so that the South Moresby Wilderness Proposal could be fully studied by government, industry and public alike.

Since that time the support for preserving South Moresby has grown to include hundreds of organizations representing hundreds of thousands of members. Here are some of the supporters.

Alberta Wilderness Association;
B.C. Native Brotherhood; B.C. Wildlife Federation; Canadian Ass'n of Smelter and Allied Workers Union; Canadian Nature Federation; Confederation of Canadian Unions, B.C. Council; Elsa Canada; Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C.;
Federation of B.C. Naturalists;
Federation of Ontario Naturalists;

Friends of the Earth; Friends of Ecological Reserves of B.C.; Graham Island East Coast Farmers Institute; Haida Nation; Islands Protection Society; National and Provincial Parks Ass'n of B.C. and Canada; NDP Provincial and Federal caucuses; Northern Trollers Ass'n; Ottawa Field Naturalists; Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C.; Pacific Seabird Group; Progressive Conservative Caucus of B.C. and Canada; Prince George Naturalist Club; Pulp and Paper Woodworkers of Canada, Local 4; Queen Charlotte City and Skidegate Landing Advisory Planning Commission; Queen Charlotte Islands Tour Operators Ass'n; Saskatchewan Federation of Naturalists; Sierra Club of Ontario and of



BALD EAGLES gather to wait for salmon



GOLDEN PINE MARTIN—Unique to the Queen Charlotte Islands

Western Canada; Simon Fraser University Student Society; Tourism Industry Ass'n of Canada; United Fisherman & Allied Workers Union; World Wildlife Fund

BEST CANDIDATE FOR CANADA'S FIRST NATIONAL MARINE PARK



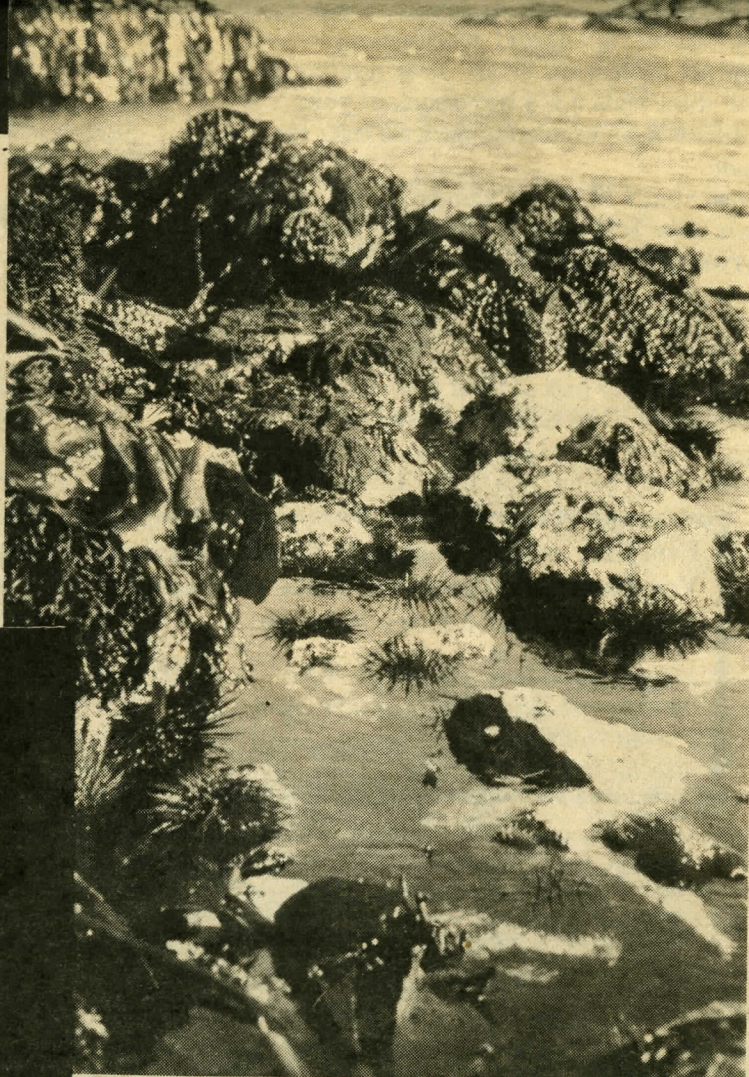


(Above;) Underwater view of kelp forest in current-swept channel

(Left;) Kelp forest at ebb tide

(Right;) Lush intertidal zone exposed during ebb tide

(Below;) Colourful Nudibranch frequent the subtidal zone



A NEW KIND OF PARK

40% of Canada is under water. Most of this "land" is on the continental shelf, part of the 200 mile offshore extension of Canadian jurisdiction.

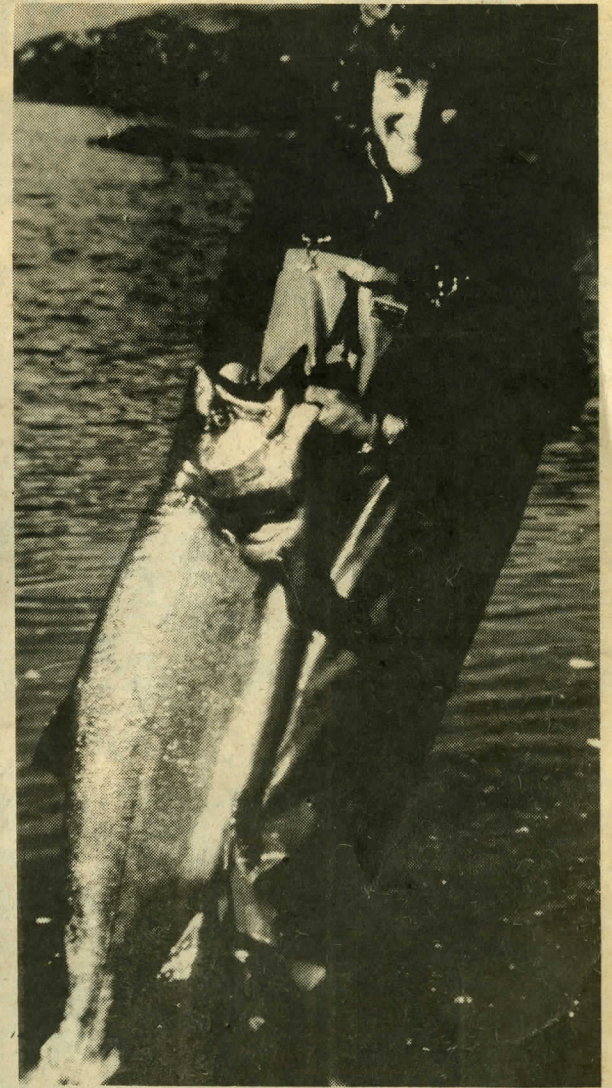
Surprisingly, there are no National marine parks to protect outstanding examples of these "landscapes" in the existing national parks system. Recognising the need, Parks Canada has almost completed a policy for creating such parks.

9 of the 48 national regions in Parks Canada's classification scheme are marine. South Moresby straddles two of these Marine Regions. Before South Moresby can become Canada's first National Marine Park, a federal provincial agreement and a special agreement with the Haida on a joint management regime must be reached.

1985
National Parks
CENTENNIAL
CONSERVE OUR CANADIAN
WILDERNESS



(Above) Landing on HOT
SPRING ISLAND

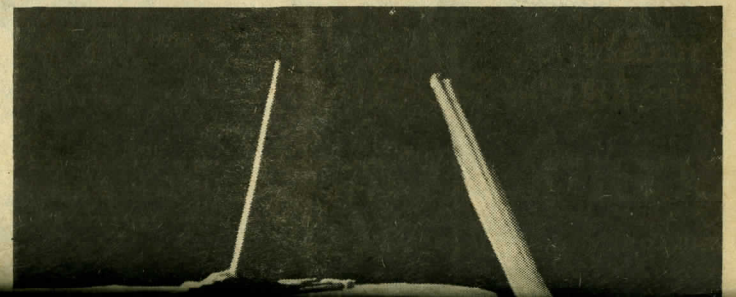


(Above, right) Salmon is
caught in DARWIN SOUND

SOUTH MORESBY *CRISIS* ALERT

It is disconcerting that reports from our contacts in Victoria indicate that the Provincial Government is leaning towards classifying South

their decision. Your sustained participation is needed to shift the balance towards preservation. South Moreby is an issue of provincial



South Moresby as a Forest Recreation Area. This is a new buzz phrase for Multiple Use, which would allow logging, mining and development-as-usual, really no protection at all. It is not the park which thousands upon thousands of concerned Canadians have worked so hard for over the last decade.

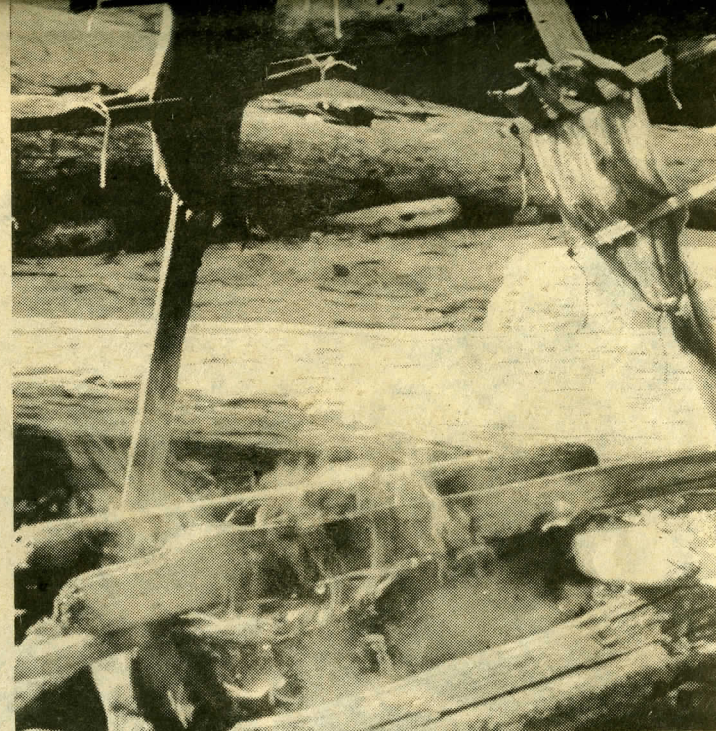
Now South Moresby stands at the edge of destruction. It is our last chance to bequeath it as an essentially natural area of diverse and rare beauty, to the following generations. Our children need its 800-year-old trees, abundant wildlife, marine life, bird populations and continuous Haida culture as part of their priceless heritage.

We cannot allow South Moresby to fade from being a major public issue. We are at the most critical turning point; politicians are now making

national and international importance. We will not give up. Do you want to look back if a decision to log and mine the area is made thinking "If only I had taken the time to write a letter (yes another letter) and had given a few dollars (yes another few dollars) to help. Thank you, signed IPS Directors

Islands at the Edge

Islands at the Edge by Islands Protection Society with forward by Jacques Cousteau, celebrates the unique and beautiful South Moresby region. The flora, fauna and Haida legacy are richly portrayed in photographs and paintings. The case for preservation is strongly made. 125 colour illus. 11" x 8½", 160 pp. \$29.95 cloth. Pub. Douglas & McIntyre. Order form below.



Salmon barbeque 'Indian-style'

Everyone must help protect South Moresby and its priceless national heritage. You have an obligation to make your opinion known. Your voice does make a difference. Send a letter today to:

Honourable Tony Brummet, MLA
Minister of Lands Parks and Housing
Parliament Bldgs.
Victoria, B.C. V8X 1X4

and to:

Honourable Suzanne Blais-Grenier, MP
Minister of the Environment
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0H3

This newspaper was produced in cooperation with **Islands Protection Society (IPS)** Box 688, Queen Charlotte City, B.C. V0T 1S0, and the **National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada (NPPAC)**, Suite 313-69 Sherbourne St., Toronto, Ont. M7A 3X7. IPS provided photos from the collection used to produce *Islands at the Edge* and the NPPAC provided generous financial assistance.

All donations from this appeal will be shared with IPS and NPPAC and spent in a cooperative effort to save South Moresby.

I want to help save **SOUTH MORESBY ISLAND!** Enclosed is my tax deductible donation of \$..... to help carry on the committee's educational work.

I wish to buy a copy of "Islands at the Edge." Enclosed is \$29.95

Name (Please PRINT):

Address:

Prov.:..... Postal code:

Please return to; Western Canada Wilderness Comm.,
% O. R. C., 1200 Hornby street, Vanc., BC. V6Z 2E2

PROPOSED

SOUTH MORESBY PARKS

