

**Building an effective endangered species education program:  
process, content, and benefits to conservation**

**Gareth Thomson**

Education Director, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Calgary-Banff Chapter  
< [gthomson@cpawscalgary.org](mailto:gthomson@cpawscalgary.org) >, Ph: 403-678-0079

This workshop will draw upon a decade of experience in designing education programs that strive to increase understanding, change attitudes and values – AND elicit positive action from students that aid conservation efforts and help protect endangered species. Such education programs can access hitherto untapped funding, add to an organizations' prestige and scope of activity, and materially contribute to conservation efforts. As a case study we will examine the steps involved in the development of a CPAWS' successful endangered species education program, which includes a conservation-oriented Action Challenge for students as a key activity. This participatory, hands-on workshop will be useful both to experienced educators looking for ideas that they might use to enhance their existing program, and to those considering the addition of some kind of school-based education program to their organization.