

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Nature Conservancy of Canada, Earth Rangers and SFI Want to Make Life Less Scary for Amphibians at Halloween and All Year Round**

**OTTAWA, ON** — Slimy, slithery creatures take centre stage at Halloween, but they fascinate children all year round. Kids are onto something because these animals are important to the health and biodiversity of Canada's forests. That's why the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is proud to support important conservation research on amphibians and their habitat led by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and the Earth Rangers' School Assembly Program, which leverages kids' love of nature — even the slimy and slithering kind.

"Amphibians have been declining worldwide for nearly two decades, and little is known about the causes of these declines," said Peter Kendall, Executive Director of Earth Rangers. "SFI's support of this important research and of our School Assembly Program helps increase students' understanding of the key role amphibians play in forest ecosystems, and inspires optimism in our children for what's possible when we all work together to protect the environment."

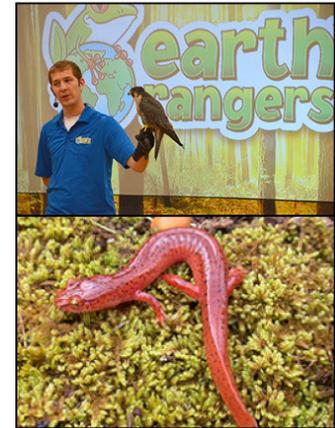
Through the power of live animal demonstrations and exciting audience interaction, the Earth Rangers cross-Canada school tour helps students learn about the importance of protecting and conserving biodiversity, while highlighting important conservation initiatives across Canada. This year's show features, among other topics, an engaging look at NCC research sponsored by SFI into vernal pools.

Vernal pools are temporary water bodies that form during periods of high precipitation or spring snow melt. They provide important habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species of concern, including frogs, salamanders and other amphibians. A key feature of vernal pools is the absence of fish, which means amphibians' eggs don't get eaten. An SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant is supporting research in these important ecosystems, in partnership with the NCC and Kenauk Canada.

The vernal pools are on the Kenauk Nature property, 140 km west of Montreal. This vast territory also contains working forests. Kenauk is a great example of how forests can provide multiple values focused simultaneously on conservation, recreation and economic productivity. Kenauk Canada is an SFI Program Participant.

"With Halloween around the corner, the school year is well underway, and I'm so impressed that Earth Rangers is on track to make more than 800 school presentations in 2016. Engaging youth on biodiversity issues, like species of concern in vernal pools, is a key part of the SFI mission and central to our partnership with Earth Rangers," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

The Kenauk research project features cooperation between academic institutions, forest managers and conservation groups, and presents an exceptional learning opportunity as these organizations share their findings publicly through workshops, reports and outreach. "Study results will play a key role in improving understanding of the important vernal pool ecosystems in North American deciduous forests, including the Kenauk Reserve, and responsible forest management in these ecosystems," said Caroline Gagné, Project Manager at NCC.



**Top: Birds of Prey** Photo: SFI  
**Bottom: Spring salamander**  
Photo: John Wilson, courtesy of  
Nature Conservancy of Canada



For this project NCC has partnered with SFI Program Participant Kenauk Canada, Institut des Sciences de la Forêt tempérée, Centre d'enseignement et de recherche en foresterie de Sainte-Foy, and Centre GEOTOP, Université du Québec à Montréal.

**About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.** The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) stands for future forests. SFI® is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting forest sustainability and supporting the links between sustainable forests and communities through grant programs, carefully targeted research, direct leadership of critical initiatives, and partnerships that effectively contribute to multiple conservation objectives. Forests certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard cover more than 113 million hectares. Millions more hectares benefit from the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard. SFI's Forest Management, Fiber Sourcing and Chain of Custody Standards work to ensure the health and future of forests. Through application of these certification standards, SFI's on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber [board of directors](#) representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at [sfiprogram.org](http://sfiprogram.org).

### **About Earth Rangers**

Earth Rangers is The Kids' Conservation Organization, dedicated to educating children and their families about biodiversity, inspiring them to adopt sustainable behaviours and empowering them to become directly involved in protecting animals and their habitats. Earth Rangers' School Assembly Program is a dynamic, fun and interactive presentation for grades 1-6. The program features live Animal Ambassadors like Timber the Pine Marten who demonstrate their natural behaviours and connect with children to promote a deeper understanding of environmental science. Earth Rangers reaches over 800 English and French schools annually from coast to coast, educating and inspiring the next generation of environmental leaders. For more information visit [www.earthrangers.org](http://www.earthrangers.org). Join Earth Rangers [www.earthrangers.com](http://www.earthrangers.com).

### **About the Nature Conservancy of Canada**

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the nation's leading land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain. Since 1962, NCC and its partners have helped to protect more than 2.8 million acres (over 1.1 million hectares), coast to coast. The Government of Canada's Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP) is a unique public-private partnership led by the NCC. To date, \$345 million has been invested in the NACP by the Government of Canada to secure our natural heritage. Additionally, more than \$500 million in matching contributions has been raised by NCC and its partners. Learn more at [natureconservancy.ca](http://natureconservancy.ca).

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