

# The road to recovery

BY RIKKI MACCUISH  
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**Badgers are quick and nocturnal, but just because we don't see them often doesn't mean they're not out there—that is, unless the species becomes extinct altogether.**

On Jan. 28 Richard Klafki, a Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Master of Science in Environmental Science student, was featured in a documentary that aired as part of the Knowledge Network's "The Leading Edge" series. The vignette, one of three that premiered in this year's first episode, was about Klafki's research on this elusive member of the weasel family. Klafki, who has also done research with fishers and wolverines, had originally been approached by his professor at TRU to do his Master's on badgers.

Klafki, who is originally from Golden, B.C., is now mainly working out of 100 Mile House researching badgers in co-operation with the Ministry of Transportation to learn how to protect the endangered species.

Badgers have a noticeable white stripe that runs down the top of their head from the tip of their nose to their

shoulders, and are named for the black cheek patches, or "badges", located in front of their ears. They're burrowing creatures that make their home in grasslands and they have been seen at Sun Peaks. Unfortunately, due to road development and extermination there are thought to be fewer than 300 badgers left in British Columbia.

Klafki says he's known of sightings of badgers at Sun Peaks and mentions that ski runs actually create habitat for them.

"The ski runs are really like these temporary grasslands," he says, adding that the badgers' main sources of food, ground squirrels and marmots, also inhabit the area.

Roger Packham, a senior ecosystems biologist for the Ministry of Environment, agrees.

"The clearing of ski runs could provide better habitat for ground squirrels and marmots to occupy, therefore it could be considered an enhancement."

Around this time of year, Klafki points out, badgers will start to come out more often after going into common states of torpor—similar to hibernation—throughout the cold

spells in the winter, and will usually start having babies in April and May.

Klafki's current research focuses on preserving the dwindling badger populations by examining where they cross the road—the most common cause of mortality is being hit by oncoming vehicles—and coming up with alternate routes for them such as culverts underneath.

According to Klafki, badgers, whose only natural predators are black bears and cougars, are quite shy, and will avoid humans if possible. He denies the common assumption that badgers are aggressive.

"I've handled and live-trapped a lot of badgers and other than the odd one that's hissed at me from its burrow they'll just run and try to get under ground to get away from you," he says.

Researchers are always looking for more information on badger sightings and Packham encourages anyone who has spotted one of the quick creatures to report their finding.

To report a badger sighting visit [www.badgers.bc.ca](http://www.badgers.bc.ca) or call the Badger Hotline of Artemis Wildlife Consultants at 1-888-223-4376.

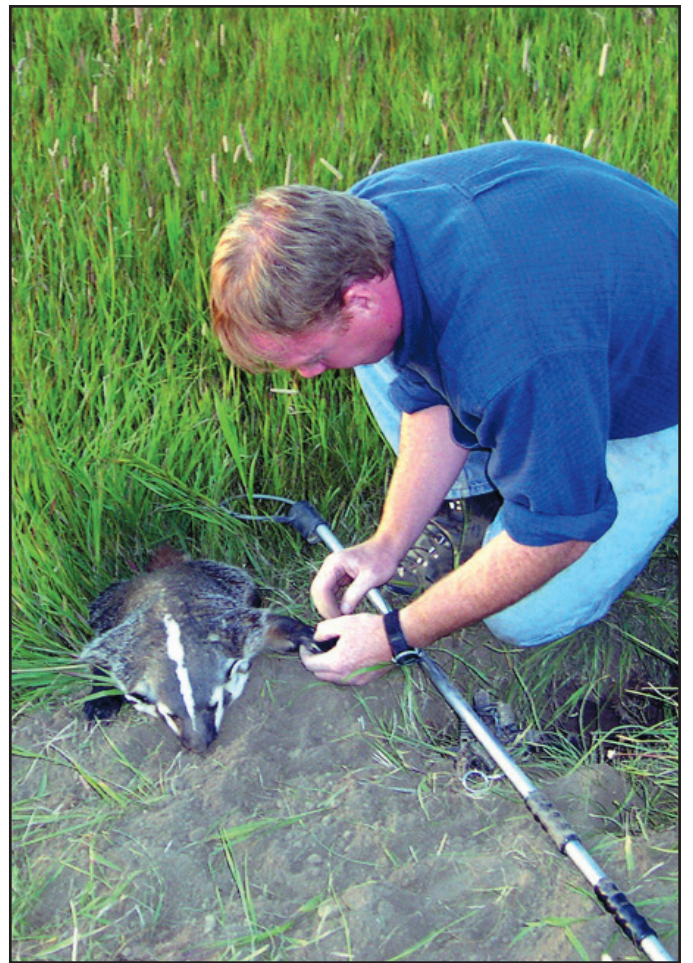


PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED  
Richard Klafki, a Masters of Science in Environmental studies student at Thompson Rivers University, tags a badger during research near 100 Mile House. Klafki is studying the animal's habits in order to help preserve the endangered species.

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## Kookaburra begins

One of Sun Peaks' newest developments, the Kookaburra Lodge, will soon be under construction.

The Kookaburra Lodge is a development of Australian architect Jim Farrell and his family—including his son Paul Farrell, who is currently at Sun Peaks developing the project—and will contain luxury apartment accommodation suitable for longer stays, as well as eight commercial spaces. Construction is set to begin in April, when the weather turns warm.

The Farrell family has over 30 years of experience in the development industry and has managed projects ranging from high-rise to high-profile sporting facilities and resort accommodation.

Paul Farrell says the long-term accommodation is set to be sold out for stage one of development by the summer.

With a creekside location across from the Sports Centre, and overlooking the 18th fairway at the golf course, the Kookaburra Lodge will feature the typical Sun Peaks village Tyrolean-style architecture, but Farrell says they've worked on some of the "finer details for a design that's creative and modern but still embraces the character of the village as a whole." The building will also feature lofted timber ceilings in the top-level suites, energy saving and environmentally sensitive and sustainable features, superior perimeter insulation, and cold roof design features.

Construction is planned to be complete for the 2008/2009 winter season. For more information visit [www.kookaburralodge.ca](http://www.kookaburralodge.ca)

## Lyons take the Georgie

Last month two Kamloops businesses shared a prestigious gold Georgie Award.

The Georgies celebrate excellence in home building, and Lyons Landscaping Ltd., with help from an associate company, Inside Out Home and Garden Design, won gold for the Best Single Family Landscape Design. The 16th annual Georgie Awards celebration hosted some 800 guests at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver on Feb. 8.

"The competition this year was fierce with lots of great entries in the 49 categories," Doug Wittal, president of the Kamloops branch of the Canadian Home Builders Association, said in a press release.

Lyons Landscaping, which landscaped the Delta Sun Peaks and private residences at the resort in previous years, also took home two Keystone awards in October, for best landscape design, and best creation of a unique feature or room interior.

"This is the first time entering these awards," Colin Lyons of Lyons Landscaping Ltd. says about the Georgie Awards. "The projects we completed at the (Sun Peaks) mountain are very comparable in calibre and if we had known about the Georgies back then I would have entered them."

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