

park builder

David Stirling

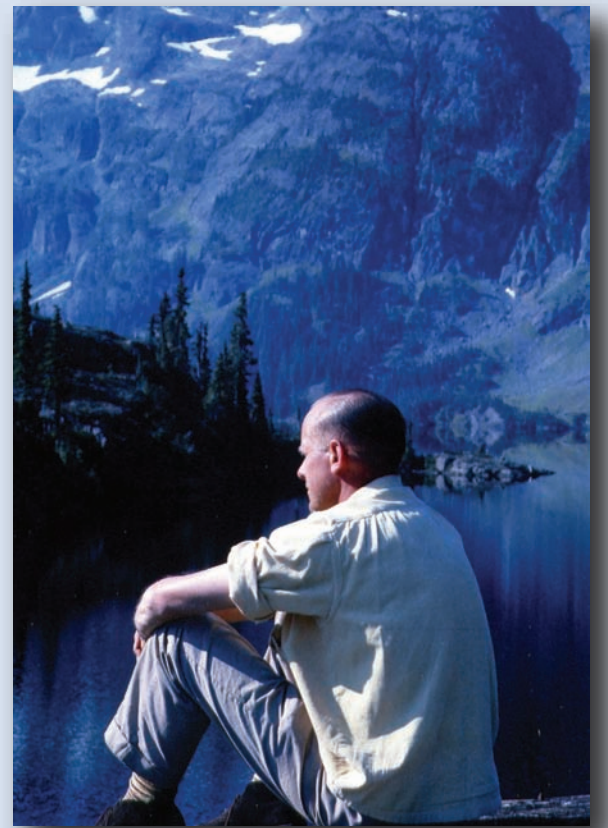
b. 1920

Stirling was hired in 1959 by Yorke Edwards, who started the first nature interpretation program in British Columbia Parks. Stirling's first year with Parks was a park naturalist's summer at Miracle Beach. Nature interpretation soon became very popular with the public. In the next few years, programs were operating in Shuswap (now Scotch Creek), Mt. Robson and Kokanee Creek. Stirling was now in charge of the field programs which included hiring and supervising seasonal staff, setting up training courses and gathering materials for the interpretation programs. A "Lone naturalist", a one person interpreter show, was started in several smaller more remote parks. An interpreter in a camper-van serviced three Okanagan parks. At that time, parks field employees were exclusively male. Stirling hired the first female park naturalists - Betty Brooks and Norma Morton. Many of these seasonal interpreters went on to become leaders in the realm of natural science. The success of nature interpretation in British Columbia prompted other organizations to start their own programs. Stirling assisted with the establishment of visitor centres at locations such as Swan Lake, Saanich and Piper's Lagoon (Nanaimo). He gave presentations to many diverse groups and institutions such as natural history societies. After twenty five years in parks, Stirling retired to devote his time to organizing and leading international wildlife tours.



Above: David hard at work

Background image: Volcanic peaks in Mt. Edziza Provincial Park



Affiliations and Awards:

BC Field Ornithologists:

Award for Ornithology

Victoria Natural History Society

Distinguished service award.

First Honorary Life membership.

Queen's Golden Jubilee Canada

Visit Medal.

Interpretation Canada

Award of Merit

Parks:

Miracle Beach

Shuswap (Scotch Creek)

Mount Robson

Top right: Reflections on Nature