

DIVERSITY OF NATURE NEWSLETTER



A DoN student scuba diving at Cranberry Cove. Photograph by Nicolas Winkler.

A note from the directors...

We established the idea for Diversity of Nature in 2020, during a pandemic, and amid growing unrest over the inequalities faced by Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) in our society. We knew we had to do *something* to help, and wondered what roles we could take in fighting discrimination as PhD students.

We realized that in addition to being students ourselves, we are also teachers. We felt the best way we could elevate other BIPOC individuals, especially youth, would be to share our knowledge and love for science.

It has been just over a year since we created the Diversity of Nature program, and the incredible energy, joy, and learning we've experienced is beyond our wildest dreams. What originally started as a vision for a short summer camp has evolved into much more: we now feel like we are part of a wonderful community of BIPOC learners of all ages. Our programming has extended to exciting workshops led by our BIPOC scientist peers from around Nova Scotia, and our network of participants and leaders continues to grow.

We are so grateful to our local and national community for coming out (or coming online!) to participate in science activities with us.

What our participants have brought to the program inspires us to continue pursuing our own dreams.

We're looking forward to another year of exciting programming with all of you!



With our sincerest thanks,
*Melanie D. Massey &
Suchinta Arif*

*Co-Directors and Co-Founders
of Diversity of Nature*

ONE YEAR OF DON, A TIMELINE:

This year, we have reached over 300 students, parents, and teachers from across Canada!

August 2020

DoN is created!



Fall 2020

We lead a BIPOC in STEM panel run by SuperNOVA, speaking to hundreds of students & educators from across Canada!



Spring 2021

Our first online workshops start. We fill three requests for the "Seeing Yourself in Nature" scientific illustration workshop, with youth and adult learns from across Canada.

Summer 2021

The fun really begins as our first in-person event - SCUBA DIVING! - is led by Hunter Stevens.



Students learn about Fish Dissection from Aaron Judah and spend an amazing day at the Discovery Centre!

Unity Cooper leads a nature walk in the beautiful Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lake Wilderness area!



We conclude this summer with our two Field Expedition Sessions! Words cannot describe how incredible the participants were.



We also published several scientific papers about BIPOC in science, which you can access at www.diversityofnature.com/science

MORE PICTURES FROM OUR 2020-2021 ADVENTURES...



A SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED MAKE DON A SUCCESS!

We have had the incredible privilege of working with a number of talented and generous individuals, units, and organizations across Canada. We are so grateful to all those who have supported us during this journey.

Our Workshop Leaders

Zonghua Ai (Botany, Plant Medicine, Fun with Fungi)
Unity Cooper (Conservation of Nova Scotia's Natural Areas)
Leah Creaser (Mi'kmaq Culture, Traditional Knowledge & Medicines)
Shanukie Embuldeniya (Plant Pigments and Chromatography)
Aaron Judah (Fish Form, Function, Evolution, and Ecology)
Hunter Stevens (Scuba Diving/Exploring the Marine Environment)

Behind-the-Scenes Contributors

Taylor Hersch (Grant Writer Extraordinaire)
Ruth Riley (Incredible Faculty of Science Dingle Intern)

Donors and Support

Canada Service Corps
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
Clearwater Cares
Dalhousie Department of Biology

- Special thank you to faculty and staff, including: Erin Bertrand, Aaron MacNeil, Chris MacNeil, Sophia Stone, and Derek Tittensor

Dalhousie Faculty of Science

- Special thank you to the Office of the Dean, as well as Jocelyn Adams and Alison Crepinsek

Dalhousie School for Resource and Environmental Studies
Ecology Action Centre
Imhotep's Legacy Academy
SuperNOVA at Dalhousie

- Special thank you to Hil Hamilton and Caitlin MacPhail

Nova Scotia Bird Society
Ocean Bridge and Ocean Wise
Ocean Frontier Institute
The Marine Environmental Observation, Prediction and Response Network

- Special thank you to Allison Saunders

ProjectDAL Supporters
Society of Canadian Ornithologists
WISEAtlantic



WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR 2021-2022?

For Summer 2022, we are hoping to hold our field expedition **overnight** at the Deanery Project (Lake Charlotte, Nova Scotia)! With the overnight camp format, we will be able to make the learning experience even more authentic and hands-on. The focus on outdoor learning will be emphasized, and we will broaden our workshops to include things like a birding trip and kayaking.

We aim to continue our community workshops **monthly** (or more). As the winter chill sets in, we will have a mix of indoor and outdoor activities, including exploring venues like the Natural History Museum.

We also want to remind all students and participants of our **promise for ongoing mentorship**. As people who have spent the better part of our lives in school (and taught at the University level many times!), we know what it is like to apply for University. We invite DoN members to reach out to use for help on their University and scholarship applications! For those of you who are graduating and attending university next year, feel free to get in touch with us if **you would like to become a workshop leader!**

*Don't forget...
the future of DoN involves you.*

As we look to the 2021-2022 year of programming for Diversity of Nature, we want to hear what *you* want to see! Are you a parent or a student who wants to try more outdoor, guided hikes? Perhaps you are someone who would like to learn a tricky lab technique, or compete with your friends in an engineering design contest. Maybe you want to learn about edible plants and how to make them into jam this winter...? The possibilities are endless!

Let us know what kind of STEM programming will inspire you, because DoN is all about serving our community. You can shoot us a message through our website at **www.diversityofnature.com**, or you send an email to melanie.massey@dal.ca.