



Tiffany's beloved pet cockatiel, Lady Earl Grey  
Photo by Tiffany

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: TIFFANY

**How did you first get involved with VARC, and how long have you been volunteering?** When I was a kid, my family adopted a cockatiel, and I currently have two of them. After I finished my undergrad at UBC, I wanted to find someplace to volunteer, and I thought it would be great if I could be involved with birds to connect with and understand my pets better. By chance, I came across VARC's website, and I've been volunteering here since 2015.

**Tell us a little about your role as a volunteer?** I began as a Scribe with data entry, then progressed to banding and extracting birds. Right now, I mostly do net extractions as I enjoy the walks in the field (I have a desk job), and each bird in the net is another puzzle to solve - it's really satisfying to get one out!

What do you like about volunteering at VARC? I have a love/hate relationship with waking up early to volunteer. I enjoy my sleep but being in the field at dawn surrounded by birdsong, and the fresh air makes me feel like I'm in a magical place, and that makes it worth it. I've learned a lot about birds from VARC, which I cherish, and I enjoy being around people who care about birds and their habitats.

**Why do you care about birds?** Birds are indicators of the health of our natural and urban ecosystems on local and global scales. They are charming to

observe for people of all ages and demographics, so they are an attractive way to engage people to understand nature and the positive or negative consequences of our actions on the world.

**What would you like other people to know about birds?** There are simple actions that can have significant positive impacts towards reducing bird deaths, such as reducing window strikes and keeping your cat indoors.

**What would you like other people to know about VARC?** Being able to hold a bird in the hand is an incredible way to learn about them and why a healthy variety and size of habitats is so important. The Bird Monitoring and Banding workshop is a great introduction to understanding bird populations and how our research contributes towards scientific data that can be used towards conservation efforts, and you get a chance to hold a bird!

**What do you like to do when you are not at the banding station?** When I have free time, I like to read, catch up on my TV shows, and eat good food with friends.

**Tell us a little more about yourself?** I love to travel, and although I don't usually get a chance to go on birding-focused trips, I'll be scoping out the local birds and wildlife whenever I have the chance! I want to learn better photography skills, and I enjoy taking photos of landscapes and wildlife.

Tiffany's beloved pet cockatiel, Bonbon  
Photo by Tiffany

