

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST

ISSN 1192-0270

Volume 2, No. 2

August 1992

CONTENTS

EDITORS' NOTES AND NOTIONS	2
UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS	3
SOCIETY NEWS	4
B.C.F.O. OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS	4
NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS	5
THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2) R. Jerry Herzig and Madelon Schouten	7
GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES	10
RACCOONS JEOPARDIZE QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S SEABIRD COLONIES	10
BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER W. Douglas Kragh & Wayne C. Weber	11
ANCIENT MURRELETS IN MALASPINA STRAIT Paul H. Jones	14
LETTERS TO THE EDITORS	16
ODE TO A CODE Eric V. Johnson	18

The **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST** is published four times a year by B.C. Field Ornithologists, P.O. Box 1018, Surrey, B.C., Canada V3S 4P5. A subscription to this periodical is a benefit of membership in the society. Members also receive a semi-annual journal, **BRITISH COLUMBIA BIRDS**.

British Columbia Field Ornithologist staff:

Editor(s) -- Andy & Marilyn Buhler
Bird-Lister's Corner -- Doug Kragh
Mailing & Distribution -- Hue & Jo Ann MacKenzie

Material for publication should be sent to the Editors (address page 4). We especially welcome bird-finding information for the "Site Guide" series and articles about birdwatching experiences, preferably (but not necessarily) in British Columbia.

Membership in British Columbia Field Ornithologists is open to anyone interested in the study and enjoyment of wild birds in B.C. Our objectives include fostering cooperation between amateur and professional ornithologists and promoting cooperative bird surveys and research projects, and supporting conservation organizations in their efforts to preserve birds and their habitats.

Membership dues: Individual memberships or library subscriptions, \$20.00; junior memberships (age under 18), \$10.00; Family memberships (2 or more persons at one address), \$25.00; U.S. and foreign memberships, \$20.00 (U.S.). Memberships are for the calendar year. For further information, or to join, write the Treasurer, B.C. Field Ornithologists, P.O. Box 1018, Surrey, B.C. V3S 4P5. Send material for publication (mail, phone, FAX, IBM WordPerfect discs) to the Editors at the address listed on page 4 of this publication.

EDITORS' NOTES AND NOTIONS

The British Columbia Field Ornithologist has new editors. Marilyn and Andy Buhler are amateur birdlisters having started about eight years ago in Sechelt. We started as recorders for a Christmas Bird Count and got hooked on birding and birders. We learned a lot from birders and other naturalists in the Sechelt Marsh Protective Society. The members were patient, helpful and willing to give that extra bit of knowledge needed to turn an 'LGJ' into an orange-crowned warbler, or a distant scolding call into a Bewick's wren. At Revelstoke this year we saw our first Clay Coloured Sparrow while attending the B.C.F.O. Annual Meeting. In usual birder fashion knowledgeable B.C.F.O. members helped us to locate the bird and offered their expertise in its field identification. Our thrill of a new bird was shared by the expert birders who reminisced about their last new bird. B.C.F.O. members are at all levels of birding expertise so notes, observations and comments of many types are welcomed. This is your newsletter. Help us to make it a great one.

Birders are great travellers so we need to know what has happened in your birding area recently. Is there something about to happen in your area which might interest fellow birders? What current issues are you aware of provincially, nationally or internationally which may have a positive or negative impact on field ornithology? Your input into this newsletter will enhance the scope of field ornithology and, we hope, will help to make the British Columbia Field Ornithologist the first newsletter reached for when you need to know what is happening birdwise in and around British Columbia.

Another of the interesting and helpful sections of this newsletter is its' Site Guides. We would like to present at least one Coastal and one Interior Site Guide in every issue. Do you have a special area or location which you normally check out for rarities or where you often seem to take visiting birding friends? May we enjoy this spot too so we can get a needed special bird? A well written site guide could provide benefits if your special area needs help in the future. Members familiar with a site guide area are more likely to rally to your assistance should the location become threatened. If a location just named road #22 was slated for development it might not hold much attention. However, if members had checked a British Columbia Field Ornithologist site guide and found that road #22 was one of the few places in B.C. where a birder might commonly find nesting bobolinks, more members would be willing to assist a cause with the site area birders. Send a Report or a Site Guide today.

Guidelines for writing a Site Guide for the British Columbia Field Ornithologist appear on page 10. Site Guides in issues to date:

SITE GUIDE LOCATION**AUTHOR**

Duck Lake, Creston, BC
 Blackie Spit, Surrey, BC
 McKinney Road, Oliver, BC
 Cowichan Bay & Duncan, BC
 Monck Provincial Park & Vicinity
 Princeton "Outback", BC

Gary S. Davidson
 Jo Ann & Hue McKenzie
 Richard J. Cannings
 Keith Taylor
 Wayne Weber
 R.J. Herzig, M. Schouten

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Sept. 18-20, 1992 WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS ANNUAL MEETING, Sunnyvale, Calif. (near San Jose). Field trips include a Monterey pelagic trip and visits to Rodeo Lagoon/Hawk Hill, the San Francisco Bay NWR, Palo Alto Baylands, and coastal San Mateo County. For information, write to San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 90025.
- Sept. 22-26, 1992 NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD SYMPOSIUM, Estes Park, Colorado. For information, contact Dr. Tom Martin, Coop. Fish & Wildlife Unit, Dept. of Biol. Sciences, Univ. of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.
- Sept. 25-27, 1992 MALHEUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE FALL BIRDING WEEKEND, sponsored by Oregon Field Ornithologists. Accommodations and meals available at Malheur Field Station. For information, contact Sheran Jones, 0785 SW Ventura Court, Tigard, OR 97223 (phone 503-246-5594).
- Oct. 2-4, 1992 AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION AND ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS joint conference, Connecticut College, New London, CT. For information, contact Dr. Robert Askins, Box 5416, Dept. of Zoology, Connecticut College, New London, CT 06320.
- October 4, 1992 BCFO FIELD TRIP, co-sponsored by VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY. A brief visit to Esquimalt Lagoon, followed by a longer visit to East Sooke Regional Park, to observe fall migration of birds of prey. Meet at 8:30 A.M. at the parking area next to the bridge at the north end of Esquimalt Lagoon. Bring a lunch; the trip will conclude by 3:00 P.M. For details, phone leaders Mike McGrenere (658-8624) or David Allinson (478-0457).
- Oct. 15-18, 1992 FALL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FEDERATION OF B.C. NATURALISTS, Kimberley, B.C. For details, phone the FBCN office at 737-3057.
- Oct. 23-25, 1992 WESTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION annual meeting, at the Motte Rimrock Reserve near Riverside, Calif. For information, contact Barbara Carlson, Biology Dept., Univ. of California, Riverside, CA 92521 (phone 714-657-3111).

SOCIETY NEWS

THE BCFO MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN in May and June was quite successful; our membership has increased from 214 in late May 1992 to 305 at present. Sincere thanks are owed to **Prue and Bernie Spitmann, Allen and Helen Poynter, Shirley and John Dorsey, and Cliff Shannon**, who each stuffed and mailed out 200 or more promotional packages.

We welcome our many new members, and we hope that you will enjoy our publications and our activities, and will continue to support us in future.

BACK COPIES OF BCFO NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE -- Many of our new members have asked whether back copies of the **BCFO Newsletter** (predecessor to the **B.C. Field Ornithologist**) are available. The answer is yes! If you would like a set of the four 1991 issues of the Newsletter, please send a cheque or money order for \$8.00 to Hue MacKenzie, 15341 21st Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4A 6A8, with a short note of explanation, and we will send your copies as soon as possible. All members joining before November 1, 1992, should receive all 1992 publications.

The 1991 issue of **British Columbia Birds** (which still has not yet been mailed!) will also be for sale separately, and we will let you know the price in the next **B.C. Field Ornithologist**.

BCFO FIELD TRIPS -- Please note the first BCFO field trip, to be co-sponsored by the Victoria Natural History Society on October 4. Details are in the list of **UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**. We plan to sponsor up to 6 field trips per year, in various top birding spots around the province. Look for the notices in future issues of the **British Columbia Field Ornithologist**.

A MORE DETAILED REPORT ON BCFO'S 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING has been delayed until the next issue. It will include the minutes of the Annual General Meeting and a listing of the bird species seen on the field trips.

BCFO OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS, 1991-1992

President:	Douglas Kragh	(phone 464-4441)
Vice-President:	Wayne Weber	(phone 597-7201)
Secretary:	Tom Hanrahan	(phone 464-3744)
Treasurer:	Gary Kaiser	(phone 940-9477)
Directors:	Lloyd Esralson	(phone 581-4736)
	Rick Howie	(phone 578-7542)
	Marian Porter	(phone 531-5747)
	Michael Shepard	(phone 388-4227)
	Allen Wiseley	(phone 477-4593)
Editors:	Andy & Marilyn Buhler	
	1132 Loenholt Road	
	Victoria, BC V8Z 2Z6	(phone 744-2521)
	WORK phone 387-1014 & FAX 356-9937	

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PELAGIC BIRDING TRIPS FROM WESTPORT, WASHINGTON on October 10 and 11, 1992. Only October 11th still had openings at press time. The cost is \$59 (U.S.) per person. For further information, or to make reservations, write T.R. Wahl, 3041 Eldridge, Bellingham, WA 98225, or phone (206) 733-8255.

A pelagic trip from Ucluelet, B.C. is also scheduled for October 10, 1992. For details, contact Swiftsure Tours, 1241 Broad St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 2A4 (phone 388-4227).

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH is a continent-wide program, operating since 1987, which is designed to measure changes in numbers of birds visiting feeding stations. It is organized in the U.S. by the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University, and in Canada by the Long Point Bird Observatory. Project FeederWatch developed from the earlier Ontario Bird Feeder Survey (1976-1988), which showed that trends in bird numbers at feeders parallel those on Christmas Bird Counts and are useful in measuring population changes. Project FeederWatch now has over 8000 participants across North America, including over 1000 in Canada. Participants pay a small annual registration fee to help finance the cost of data analysis, and they receive a semi-annual newsletter which reports the latest results.

Participants do not need to be expert birders, as long as they can identify the species common in their yards. Observers record the peak number of each species seen at their feeders during two-day periods, every second week from November to April. The results document the percentage of feeders visited by each species, the average abundance, and changes in these values between and within seasons. Among the species whose numbers change markedly between years are Pine Grosbeaks, Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins, and Evening Grosbeaks, but even non-migratory species may fluctuate significantly. Long-term data should help to detect the reasons for such changes.

To take part in Project FeederWatch, write the Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario N0E 1M0. FeederWatch data may be obtained for a small retrieval fee from D. Tessaglia, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850, U.S.A.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE B.C. NEST RECORD PROGRAM, please remember to mail your completed nest record cards for 1992 by October 1, if at all possible, to: Margaret Harris, P.O. Box 10, Penticton, B.C. V2A 6J9 (phone 492-8958).

THE B.C. BEACHED BIRD SURVEY could still use some additional volunteers to survey shorelines for bird carcasses, especially in the Queen Charlotte Islands and northern mainland coast. If interested, please contact the coordinator, Dr. Alan Burger, at 270 Trevlac Place, RR 3, Victoria, B.C., V8X 3X1 (phone 479-9833). Another progress report on this project is planned for the next issue.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PACIFIC FLYWAY PROJECT: SHOREBIRDS-- In 1988, the Point Reyes Bird Observatory initiated the Pacific Flyway Project to determine the status and prospects of shorebirds in wetlands of the Pacific Flyway in Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Baja California. Relying mostly on volunteers, to date we have conducted censuses of shorebirds in coastal wetlands stretching from Arctic Alaska to Baja California, and as far inland as Idaho, Great Salt Lake, and eastern New Mexico. To extend the project further, we need additional volunteers to conduct censuses at important wetlands (holding at least 1000 shorebirds) in British Columbia, other than the Fraser Delta/Boundary Bay or Tofino areas, or persons to organize other volunteer census takers. We would also like to hear from persons who are willing to share past census data to add to a flyway-wide database that may possibly reveal trends in shorebird numbers over time.

For more information, please contact: Pacific Flyway Project, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970, USA. (phone, (415) 868-1221; FAX, (415) 868-1946).

THE CANADIAN LAKES LOON SURVEY, coordinated by the Long Point Bird Observatory, began as an Ontario project, and was expanded to a nation-wide survey in 1990. Its aims are to monitor Common Loon breeding populations across Canada; to assess the effects of acid precipitation and of human disturbance on loon breeding success; and to measure changes in habitat quality, using loons as an indicator species. Although reports were received from 827 participants across Canada in 1990, only 19 of them were from B.C., and many more B.C. observers are needed.

Volunteers are asked to check lakes (often the lake where they have a summer cottage or cabin, or one they visit often) for loon activity, including whether loons are present, set up a territory, hatch eggs, or fledge chicks. Repeated observations on the same lake, year after year, are especially valuable. The most important observation periods are during nesting and chick-rearing (roughly from early June to late August). An annual newsletter is sent to all observers in the fall, with results from the survey and summaries of other loon research.

For further information, write the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey, Long Point Bird Observatory, PO Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS -- Yes, it's not that long until Christmas! Once again, we plan to publish a list of dates and phone numbers of organizers of as many B.C. Christmas Bird Counts as possible in a later issue this fall. If you are the organizer or compiler of a Christmas Bird Count, please send us this information by November 1 so that we can include it. (See the October 1991 issue.)

If you would like to start a new Christmas Bird Count this year, please contact Dick Cannings for advice at 3007 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1Z7 (phone 734-9489). Dick writes summaries of results in **American Birds** and the **B.C. Naturalist**. Recommended dates next winter are Dec. 17, 1992 to Jan. 3, 1993.

THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2)

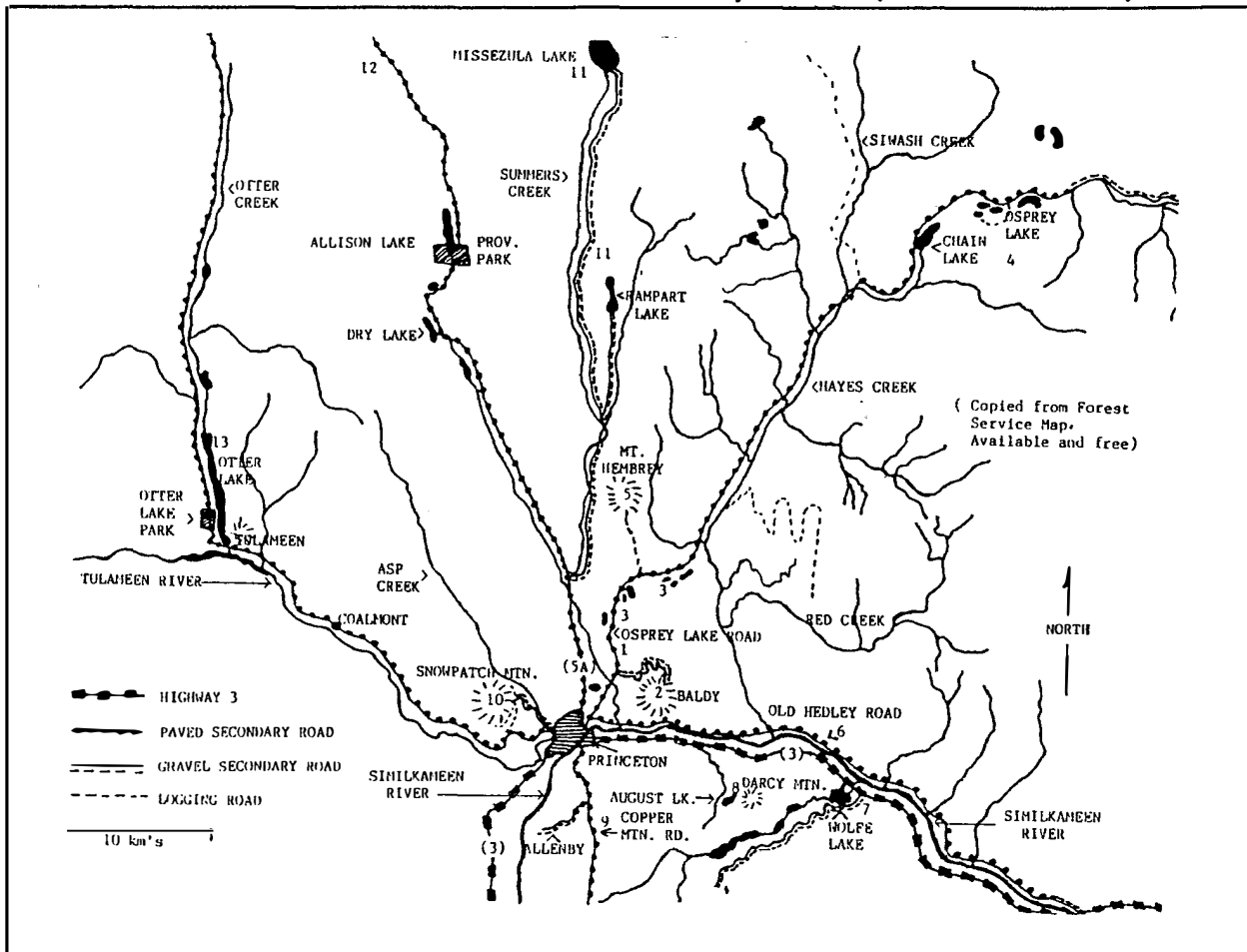
by R. Jerry Herzig and Madelon Schouten

5. **MOUNT HEMBREY ROAD** -- Returning from Chain and Osprey Lakes toward Princeton, a separate trip can be made on the Mount Hembrey road. Heading north, this road winds through aspen forest initially, changing into mixed deciduous/coniferous forest. Some of the largest ponderosa pines can still be found here. Ruffed Grouse, Blue Grouse, Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, and a host of passerines may be expected here. This is an excellent area for observing both spring and fall warbler migrations. Tennessee and Magnolia Warblers have been observed here; in 1991, a Great Gray Owl was reported here. (In all, there are at least 5 records for Great Gray Owls in the Princeton area.) The road swings east, and ultimately rejoins the Osprey Lake road at Trehearne Creek. This is a very rough road (with many deadfalls after the 1990/91 winter.) It is a good place to see black bears, deer, moose, and possibly bobcats, lynxes, and cougars. The area just discussed lies in the path of a major migration route for Sandhill Cranes; occasionally, small groups stop at Separation Lakes.
6. **OLD HEDLEY ROAD** -- This is a historical route by which the early settlers travelled. It meanders between the Similkameen River and the rocky bluffs of the Thompson Plateau. This road is a relaxing alternative to Highway 3, on the opposite side of the river, on the way to the Okanagan. Common Ravens nest on a dome-shaped mountain just outside the Princeton town limits. Great Blue Herons, Common Merganser, Harlequin Ducks, and other birds frequent the river. A small population of California Quail has become established in the Hayes Creek valley. A feeding station at km 11 on the road supports up to 28 individuals. Quail have also moved up the Hayes Creek canyon to where the creek meets the Osprey Lake road. The mixed habitat along the Old Hedley Road ensures a great variety of bird species. In winter, watch for Northern Pygmy-Owls perched alongside the fallow fields. The road joins Highway 3 at Sterling Creek, and one can return to Princeton on the main highway with stops at Wolfe Lake (7) and August Lake (8).
7. **WOLFE LAKE** -- Access to this lake is not well marked. Approximately 15 km west of the Similkameen River bridge on Highway 3, start looking for the sign for Wolfe Lake and some advertising billboards. There are two options for access to the lake. On the east side of Wolfe Creek, a well maintained gravel road runs for 12 km to a Transport Canada transmitter on top of the mountain. After crossing the cattle guard, look for a grassy area to park, which provides access to the lake. The other access to the lake is on the west side of the creek, and a gate lets you into a rough road that follows the creek to the lake. It is possible to hike around the lake. At a log cabin on the south end of the lake, a ladder bridge crosses the creek and a trail leads back to the road on the east side

THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2, cont.)

of the lake. This area is excellent for warblers and other woodland species in the spring and summer, waterfowl in the fall, and Northern Pygmy, Great Horned, Northern Saw-whet, and Long-eared Owls. It is possible to drive on the east side road to get to the higher elevation species such as Boreal Chickadee, Northern Goshawk, Red and White-winged Crossbills, and Pine and Evening Grosbeaks.

8. **AUGUST LAKE** -- Continuing west on Highway 3, watch for the sign to the Princeton Golf Course. Turn left at the Princeton Campsite on Highway 3, and head south. Just off the highway are the sewage lagoons, a good spot in the spring for Wood Ducks and Common Snipe. Beyond the golf course, you will see a sign for Darcy Mountain Road -- excellent birding, but requires more time. Stay on the Willis Creek Ranch Road to get to August Lake. The ponds in the fields on the left are good for ducks and shorebirds. August Lake lies in an open area, with a powerline crossing the lake. This lake is very good for waterfowl and shorebirds, and is a staging area for swallows in the fall. The area east of the lake had a pair of nesting Williamson's Sapsuckers in June and July of 1991.
9. **COPPER MOUNTAIN ROAD** -- Just east of Princeton on Highway 3, turn south just beyond the R.C.M.P. station. This road also gives access to the sewage lagoons if you turn left at the wood plant. Following Copper Mountain Road for 5 km, turn to the right on Allenby Road. This road takes you to the site of the old Copper Mountain Mine concentrator. The buildings have all been removed, but various trees and shrubs were left behind by the people who lived there, making for a variety of habitats. The tracks have been removed from the old railroad right-of-way, giving easy walking access to much of the area, and overlooking a large area of sagebrush and old tailings ponds. This area is excellent for seeing deer and elk. Turning back to the Copper Mountain road, continue south and you will see a series of ponds on both sides of the road that provide habitat for Soras, Virginia Rails, American Bitterns, and Marsh Wrens. The road ends at the Similco Mines open pit mine.
10. **SNOWPATCH MOUNTAIN** -- This is the Princeton ski resort area. The local cross-country ski association has developed a system of trails that, in summer and fall, provide access to alpine and subalpine habitats. Rosy Finches, Common Redpolls (winter), Pine Siskins, Cassin's Finches, Chipping Sparrows, Western Tanagers, Townsend's Solitaires, Western and Mountain Bluebirds, Hermit, Swainson's and Varied Thrushes, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, and all three vireos can be found here. Common Nighthawks nest on the rocky ledges near the gulch. Several species of small raptors can be found year-round.

THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2 cont.)**Princeton Site Guide Area Map**

- 11/12. MISSEZULA LAKE ROAD, HIGHWAY 5A TO MERRITT**-- Although birding in these areas will not be very different from other nearby areas, it should be noted that both Tundra and Trumpeter Swans can be found at Dry Lake in the fall. The Missezula Lake road passes through varied habitats and is definitely worth exploring.
- 13. TULAMEEN ROAD, OTTER LAKE**-- The road to Tulameen is one of the most scenic routes in the area. Narrow and winding, it gives a wonderful view of this mountainous region. Flammulated Owls have been recorded in the ponderosa pine forest at about 7.5 km from Princeton. There are a number of marshes, small lakes, and ponds in the valley. This area has not been well scouted by birders and might surprise the adventurous. Chestnut-backed Chickadees, not found anywhere else in this area, have established a beachhead at Tulameen. Tundra Swans winter in small numbers on Otter Lake if the weather is mild. Otter Lake Provincial Park is worth visiting, but busy on the weekends. The Otter Lake road eventually rejoins Highway 5A just south of Aspen Grove, from where one can return to Princeton or continue on to Merritt.

THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2 cont.)

CAUTION: Take care when birding in the bush during hunting season. All the areas described are open to hunting. Please be alert and wear brightly-coloured clothing.

Rattlesnakes have been found in areas close to Princeton, along the Similkameen River, so please watch your step.

The authors of this site guide can be contacted either by letter or by telephone for up-to-date information.

R. Jerry Herzig (phone 295-7384)
P.O. Box 925, Princeton, B.C. VOX 1W0

Madelon Schouten (phone 295-7078)
Site 19, Comp. 12, RR 1, Princeton, B.C. VOX 1W0

GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES

Site Guides should be about 2-3 pages in length. They should include a map (hand-drawn is fine) with distances to viewing areas clearly indicated from the starting point. Landmarks and terrain should be noted, along with the birds seen in season. Any unusual or special species should be given and a local contact person is always helpful information. Hazards and closed areas should also be indicated so that we may all experience safe birding. Items of historical or geological interest along the route should also be noted. Many birders are interested in a broad range of natural history areas and it is nice to be able to stimulate the grey cells while patiently and quietly awaiting the (possible!?) appearance of an elusive lifebird

RACCOONS JEOPARDIZE QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S SEABIRD COLONIES

Raccoons, introduced onto the Queen Charlotte Islands in the 1940s as a source of natural fur supply, have thrived and spread throughout many of the islands. These animals present a hazard to eggs, hatchlings and nesting adult seabirds.

"Derek Masselink, a wildlife biologist who recently completed a three-year study on the Queen Charlotte raccoons, said the animals now look upon seabird breeding season as a bonanza. Typically, the raccoons reach into the burrow, grab the adults and bite their heads off. They then often ignore the adult carcass and dig the eggs out.

Also, with ancient murrelets, which fly in at night in great numbers, Masselink has documented the raccoons going into a killing frenzy, killing and killing without eating any of the carcasses."

"... the ancient murrelet, is facing a situation where one or two raccoons could easily wipe out 50 per cent of the entire world population, putting the very survival of the species at risk."
(from an article by Richard Watts, Times-Colonist, 22 August, 1992)

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER

The listing totals on the following pages, for National Parks, Provincial Parks, & local checklist areas, are based on the Listing Report Forms returned to Doug Kragh, plus some totals phoned in to the authors. Another Listing Report Form will be sent out with the next issue of the B.C. Field Ornithologist. Thereafter, we will continue to send out Listing Report Forms once a year, and print a few pages of listing totals in every second issue. We hope this will be satisfactory to everyone.

Several reports were submitted of lists for local areas around Vancouver. Space constraints on the BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER required they be held for a later issue. List totals published here were received between September 1991 and January 1992.

NATIONAL PARKS

LIST	PERCENT	BIRDER	ADDRESS
PACIFIC RIM NATIONAL PARK (254 species)			
167	66	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
YOHO NATIONAL PARK (206 species)			
179	87	Rick Howie	Kamloops, B.C.
125	61	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.

PROVINCIAL PARKS

GOLDEN EARS (135 species)			
70	52	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
MANNING (206 species)			
124	60	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
100	49	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
98	48	Jo Ann MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
MIRACLE BEACH (160 species)			
159	99	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
MITLENATCH ISLAND (126 species)			
110	87	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
MOUNT ROBSON (168 species)			
120	71	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
117	70	Cathy Antoniazzi	Prince George, B.C.
MOUNT SEYMOUR (116 species)			
83	72	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER (cont.):**LOCAL CHECKLIST AREAS**

LIST	PERCENT	BIRDER	ADDRESS
CRESTON (250 species)			
163	65	Linda Van Damme	Nelson, B.C.
KAMLOOPS (270 species)			
250	93	Rick Howie	Kamloops, B.C.
187	69	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
NORTH OKANAGAN (277 species)			
200	72	Elsie Nykyfork	Vernon, B.C.
148	53	Lloyd Esralson	Surrey, B.C.
OKANAGAN VALLEY (306 species)			
273	89	Mary Collins	Vernon, B.C.
271	89	Richard Cannings	Vancouver, B.C.
248	81	Chris Siddle	Vernon, B.C.
246	80	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
231	75	Gary Davidson	Nakusp, B.C.
230	75	Laurie Rockwell	Summerland, B.C.
225	74	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
216	71	Jo Ann MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
213	70	Hue MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
208	68	Doug Kragh	Port Coquitlam, B.C.
208	68	Elsie Nykyfork	Vernon, B.C.
202	66	Tom Plath	Richmond, B.C.
189	62	Mike McGrenere	Victoria, B.C.
179	58	Linda Van Damme	Nelson, B.C.
165	54	Danny Tyson	North Vancouver, B.C.
152	50	Chris Sandham	Victoria, B.C.
PEACE RIVER AREA (271 species)			
252	93	Chris Siddle	Vernon, B.C.
164	61	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
150	55	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
143	53	Jo Ann MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
PRINCE GEORGE AREA (214 species)			
205	96	Cathy Antoniazzi	Prince George, B.C.
QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS (222 species)			
188	85	Peter Hamel	Toronto, Ont.
107	48	Richard Cannings	Vancouver, B.C.

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER (cont.):**LOCAL CHECKLIST AREAS**

LIST	PERCENT	BIRDER	ADDRESS
REVELSTOKE AREA (241 species)			
133	55	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
SUNSHINE COAST (232 species)			
220	95	Tony Greenfield	Sechelt, B.C.
116	50	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
VANCOUVER (364 species)			
312	86	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
307	84	Mike Force	Vancouver, B.C.
297	82	Jo Ann MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
297	82	Doug Kragh	Port Coquitlam, B.C.
293	80	Hue MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
285	78	Tom Plath	Richmond, B.C.
278	76	Danny Tyson	North Vancouver, B.C.
269	74	Rick Tyson	North Vancouver, B.C.
267	73	Richard Cannings	Vancouver, B.C.
266	73	Stefan Zaremba	Burnaby, B.C.
259	71	Audrey Viken	West Vancouver, B.C.
250	70	Lloyd Esralson	Surrey, B.C.
248	68	Mike McGrenere	Victoria, B.C.
227	62	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
VANCOUVER ISLAND (366 species)			
306	84	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
277	76	Barbara Begg	Sidney, B.C.
271	74	Mike McGrenere	Victoria, B.C.
246	67	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.
236	64	Chris Sandham	Victoria, B.C.
209	57	Doug Kragh	Port Coquitlam, B.C.
202	55	Rick Howie	Kamloops, B.C.
198	54	Hue MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
197	54	Jo Ann MacKenzie	Surrey, B.C.
182	50	Danny Tyson	North Vancouver, B.C.
VICTORIA AREA (331 species)			
295	89	David Stirling	Victoria, B.C.
267	81	Barbara Begg	Sidney, B.C.
258	78	Mike McGrenere	Victoria, B.C.
235	71	Chris Sandham	Victoria, B.C.
230	69	Wayne Weber	Victoria, B.C.
WEST KOOTENAY (284 species)			
248	87	Gary Davidson	Nakusp, B.C.
222	78	Linda Van Damme	Nelson, B.C.
175	62	Chris Siddle	Vernon, B.C.
163	57	Wayne Weber	Delta, B.C.

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER (cont.):**ADDITIONAL AREAS WITHIN B.C.**

ABOVE 1500 METRES ALTITUDE IN B.C.

93 Mike McGrenere Victoria, B.C.

NICOLA DRAINAGE BASIN

185 Wayne Weber Delta, B.C.

100 MILE HOUSE AREA

175 Laurie Rockwell Summerland, B.C.

PRINCETON AREA

196 Jerry Herzig Princeton, B.C.

160 Madelon Schouten Princeton, B.C.

SQUAMISH AREA

195 Peter Axhorn Sooke, B.C.

YARD LISTS

117 Barbara Begg Sidney, B.C.
 90 Elsie Nykyfork Vernon, B.C.
 68 (18 mos. only) Jerry Herzig Princeton, B.C.
 64 David Stirling Victoria, B.C.

ANCIENT MURRELETS IN MALASPINA STRAIT

by Paul H. Jones

Despite an overcast day, visibility out toward Malaspina Strait from Middle Point on the Sechelt Peninsula is excellent. At 8 A.M. there is a high tide, and the sea is flat. There is no wind. The higher reaches of Texada Island, above the 300 metre mark, are obscured by cloud.

At 8:10 A.M. I make a sweep of Middlepoint Bight and count 26 Marbled Murrelets, most of them in pairs, very busily feeding in the tide line on the north side of the Bight. I can also see one Common Loon, five Buffleheads, eight Barrow's Goldeneyes, three Glaucous-winged Gulls, and five Mew Gulls.

At 8:35 there are 28 Marbled Murrelets visible, with 14 of them all together, not in a line but milling about, busily feeding. By 10:15, however, there are no longer any Marbled Murrelets in the Bight. When I look out toward Texada Island, I can see strings of birds flying low over the water, in small flocks of 10 to 20, all going north up Malaspina Strait. Visibility is still excellent. The birds show up dark against the smooth water on this side of Texada Island. They are about 2 km out from shore, making their way along Bjerre's Shoal, a formerly hot fishing haunt. I estimate there are at least 100 birds moving north per minute. I watch the strings going north for a full 15 minutes. There is no end, it seems, to

ANCIENT MURRELETS IN MALASPINA STRAIT (cont.)

the movement. I notice also that there are a few Marbled Murrelets flying north with the strings of birds I am unable to identify. I can tell these are "MMs", as I call them, because of their characteristically fast flight in pairs and singles.

Unable to contain my curiosity, I launch my Davidson dinghy and make the long row out to the Shoal. (I have been on the Shoal yesterday on a warm-up for the first ever Pender Harbour Christmas Bird Count, to be held fifteen days hence.) When I start out, the wind is blowing from the west at about six knots. By the time I am out on the shoal, some 25 minutes later, I have run into a stiff southeasterly, and the waves are bouncing me up and down. I know that I am on the Shoal proper when I can see the whole of Merry Island through the Thormanby gap.

At first, I see only four or five pairs of Marbled Murrelets fly between me and Middlepoint Bight, now a long way off. I whistle the shrill "keer" call of the murrelet, and instantly the last two birds splash down into the chop. I stop rowing, turn the boat, and stare toward Texada Island.

A flock of about 35 Bonaparte's Gulls, flying in a close formation about 30 metres up, goes over me silently toward Pender Harbour. These, I know, are not what I have seen from shore. Then, in close succession, I am fortunate to see four flights of murrelets (which I am certain are not Marbled Murrelets) go by me at close range. Each formation of birds is flying about 3 metres off the water. There are no white patches on the back.

Instead, the birds have a smoke-gray cast to their feathers, but the birds are going by too quickly for me to be able to see any facial markings. Their flight is deliberate, not rotational, as with Marbled Murrelets, and not as fast. They fly higher over the water than Marbled Murrelets. Two of the flights end with splashdowns not far from my dinghy. I leave the ones which are downwind from me and row into the wind to try to catch a good look at the ones upwind. But I am unlucky; the birds see me coming, and take off upwind and swing away to the north in a close formation.

While I am out there in the wind and waves, I am circled five times at very close range by a Brandt's Cormorant. Is it looking for a place to land, or does it think I might offer it some fish? Before I leave the Shoal, I see five Common Murres, three of them flying. One of them flies straight at me when I whistle the Marbled Murrelet "keer" call, suggesting that they, like the Bonaparte's Gulls, use the Mms to tell them where the fish are.

On December 9th, I go out to visit Dick Cannings at the University of B.C.'s Cowan Vertebrate Museum. I look carefully at the skins of both Marbled and Ancient Murrelets in summer and winter plumage. Clearly, the birds I have seen are Ancient Murrelets, which breed in the Queen Charlotte Islands, and often winter in calmer inland waters. My estimate is that more than 2000 Ancient Murrelets have gone north through Malaspina Strait on December 8, 1991, with perhaps 200 Marbled Murrelets.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

FROM: Harold Ritland, Seattle, Washington

TO REVELSTOKE -- THE LONG WAY

I think that I probably drove the most miles to get to the June BCFO convention at Revelstoke -- 12536 total miles from Seattle, the last 1828 miles (2925 kilometers) in Canada. A central focus was the ABA convention in Mobile, Alabama, preceded by Arizona and Texas, and followed by northern Wisconsin and the Black Hills and all the places in between.

I entered Canada in Saskatchewan, from the northeastern corner of Montana. I stayed in many of Canada's magnificent Provincial Parks - - in Moose Mountain, Shamrock and Cypress Hills in Saskatchewan, in Writing-on-Stone, Waterton Lakes (a National Park) and Lundbreck Falls in Alberta, and in campgrounds in the Kootenay National Park and at Martha Creek in British Columbia.

Aside from the birding experiences, the most memorable Canadian site was the Bashed-in-Face Buffalo Jump in southwestern Alberta. The scenery, the history, and the visitor facilities are all outstanding.

IMPRESSIONS FROM A TRAVELLING BIRDER

What are my impressions from my travel through southern Canada? Mainly, three:

1. The great diversity of wildfowl in the prairie potholes. A small pond might have a dozen birds, but four or five species. The bigger ones have more birds but more species, with only a few of each. Apparently there is a sort of territoriality which discourages more than one pair of a given species (except probably for mallards).
2. The lifestyle of the McCown's Longspur. Most dry country birds are reasonably tolerant of variations in their chosen environment. Baird's Sparrows need good shortgrass prairie, Lapland Longspurs are in most dry prairie, and Horned Larks are everywhere there is a gravel road. However, McCowan's Longspurs seek only the most desolate, overgrazed, desiccated prairie. (I saw them in Alberta in the southeast corner and also southwest of Milk River.)
3. The adaptability of the Robin. Many birds are rather habitat specific (eg McCowan's Longspur) -- that is one of the attractions of birding. The Robin, however, is everywhere -- from backyards to remote prairies, from coastal forests to mountain meadows, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic tree line. What is it about this bird that makes it so flexible?

(Editors' Note: Thanks for the comments Harold. We're pleased to note that the BCFO Annual Meetings are attracting international and local members. See you again next year and good birding.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

FROM: Ron Walker, Christina Lake, B.C.

In January, I was making up a report on our Boundary Naturalist Christmas Count and noticed someone had reported ten Bobwhite near Midway, B.C. I just grinned and crossed them off along with the four Lesser Goldfinches and 150 Savannah Sparrows. Nonetheless, I checked with the area captains. The Lesser Goldfinches turned out to be Pine Siskins, and the Savannah Sparrows were House Finches. The team captain for the Bobwhite report thought it was ridiculous, but checked anyway. He said the two old gentlemen who made the report gave him a believable description. He said that he would check on it the first chance he got. A month ago, he phoned me and confirmed the report.

On April 15th, I called on the two gentlemen to see for myself. They told me that Bobwhite had first showed up during the summer of 1990. Since then, they have seen them regularly, and as many as 24 at one time. They also said they saw newly hatched young that grew to adults last year. While I was standing talking to them, two Bobwhite began to call. It did not take long to find four adult Bobwhite.

So where did they come from? No one in Midway knew anything about them. Since the location of the Bobwhite was within a few hundred metres of the U.S., I crossed the line and talked to the local ranchers. They told me that two ranchers, Bob Heneman and Charles Miller, who live near Curlew, Wash. have been raising Bobwhite for release into the wild for several years. Apparently, some of those released near the border have escaped into Canada.

What I need to know is -- can I count them for my B.C. list?

(EDITORS' NOTE: Perhaps Gary Davidson, Chairman of our Records Committee, can offer an opinion on this one!)

COMPUTERIZED RECORD KEEPING

Have you ever considered automating the documentation or updating of your bird sighting records? Various database management packages have been customized by users to create their own programs and commercial software is available as dedicated lister programs. One journal advertises 6 programs:

AVEFORMES	AviSys	Bird Brain v2
Bird Count+	BirdBase 2	DATAHAWK v2

If you use a program which you find especially good, please let us know about it. Perhaps in a future issue we can print your experiences in order to assist other members make more informed choices when they decide to automate their bird lists and sighting documents.

ODE TO A CODE

or
Look What They've Done
to my Song(birds)

(with apologies to Robert Service & Ogden Nash)

by Eric V. Johnson

*The computer, it seems, is an answer to dreams;
it helps us in all that we try.*

*But, Oh! Woe is me! How cruel it can be
when it comes to my friends that can fly.*

*For convenience, they say, we must now put away
all the names we so carefully learned,
and substitute newer, with letters far fewer;
just four are what each bird has earned.*

*The rules are quite rigorous, making a vigorous
effort to make all birds fit
in a scheme that denies to each one that flies
a nomen that's worthy of it.*

*Alpha codes, they are termed, and from what I have learned,
they are most unpronounceable things
that when spoken as words, make noises absurd
of the names of our creatures with wings.*

*If today you insist on preparing a list
of the birds you have seen on a trip,
why, it's RCKIs and COGOs and GCKIs and NOBOs,
and was that duck really a WHIP?*

*In this evil scheme, there's a bird called a WEME
and an egret who's known as a GREG;
and if redpolls had known of the name they now own
they would never have hatched from the egg!*

*There is trouble, to boot, between condor and coot,
because CACO would fit them both fine.
So the latter's a CARC, you'll find him in a park,
and all CALC's are in zoos at this time.*

*To make matters worse (and taxonomists curse)
there are some relations implied;
but the dove's no DOVE, and to even think of
a wren as WREN makes me cry!*

*Now, limpkins don't LIMP, and one sounds like a wimp
when its name is transmuted to LISP;
and there's TUDUs and TUPUs and CAGUs and TUVUs,
and what in the world is a WISP?*

*There's a BUFF and a NOPO, an AMRO, a BOBO,
a MERL and a MELT and a PROW;
a GRAT and a KEWA, a COTE and a HEWA,
a MODO, a PISI, a SPOW.*

*And so now every bird is a four-letter word
and I doubt that I'll ever forgive
the computer technician who made that decision;
no, not for as long as I live.*

*So you keep your new names, I refuse to play games
with the birdies that sit on my fence.
You keep your FLOWS and your HUGOs and SNOWs,
and I'll stick to names that make sense!*

REPRINTED with permission of:
North American Bird Bander
April-June 1991

How many of the CODES in this ODE can you identify?

Send your guesses to the Editors.

Next issue we'll list the CODES and name the winners.
Sorry, we have no prizes; but you will experience the thrill of
being ranked 'up there' with an elite group of your fellow
COMPUTO-ORNITHO-CRYPTOGRAPHERS (COOCs).

LOGO needed for BCFO

If any of our members has artistic talents (or even a good idea for a logo, accompanied by a rough sketch), please submit a design or suggestion to Vice-President Wayne Weber, 51-6712 Baker Rd. Delta, B.C. V4E 2V3. We need something distinctive and attractive to use on our publications, letterhead, etc.

AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE:**BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER**

by W. Douglas Kragh and Wayne C. Weber
1547 Angelo Avenue, Port Coquitlam, B.C. V3B 1C8 (Kragh) and
51-6712 Baker Road, Delta, B.C. V4E 2V3 (Weber)

THE SITE GUIDE: THE PRINCETON "OUTBACK", B.C. (Part 2)

by R. Jerry Herzig and Madelon Schouten
P.O. Box 925, Princeton, B.C. VOX 1W0 (Herzig) and
Site 19, Comp. 12, RR 1, Princeton, B.C. VOX 1W0 (Schouten)
J.Herzig (295-7384) : M.Schouten (295-7078)

ANCIENT MURRELETS IN MALASPINA STRAIT

by Paul H. Jones
P.O. Box 35068, Station E
Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4G1

RACCOONS JEOPARDIZE QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S SEABIRD COLONIES

by Richard Watts
Times-Colonist Newspaper
Victoria, B.C.

Excerpts taken from an article written by staff reporter
Richard Watts in the Times-Colonist (22 August 1992)

ODE TO A CODE

by Eric V. Johnson
Biological Sciences Department
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

REPRINTED with permission of:
North American Bird Bander April-June 1991

ARTICLES PLANNED FOR THE NEXT ISSUE:

ODE TO A CODE -- Responses and Answers
REPORT ON BCFO'S 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING -- Sorry for the delay.
LIST OF BIRDS SIGHTED AT BCFO'S 2nd AGM -- in Revelstoke, B.C.
SITE GUIDES: Write them up ASAP
LISTING REPORT FORM -- for Bird-Lister's Corner
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT CONTACT LIST -- Keep us posted & up-to-date