

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST

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CONTENTS

EDITORS' NOTES AND NOTIONS	2
UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS	3
Cumulative Listing of SITE GUIDES 1991/92	4
SOCIETY NEWS	5
1992 BCFO Annual General Meeting: Report	6
1992 BCFO Annual General Meeting: Minutes	8
BCFO Officers & Directors	10
Christmas Bird Count Contacts	11
Authors in this issue	12
NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS	13
HAWK RIDGE B.C.: BCFO/VNHS Joint Fieldtrip 1992	15
SITE GUIDE: Hecate Strait	17
SITE GUIDE: Island View Beach	20
Guidelines for Site Guides	23
SITE GUIDE: Lower Sunshine Coast	24
LETTERS TO THE EDITORS	30
ODE TO A CODE -- Identities Revealed	32

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 will 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

Send material for publication (mail, phone, FAX, IBM WordPerfect files on discs) to the Editors (name, address & phone no. page 10). 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 member-ships (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.

EDITORS' NOTES AND NOTIONS

Seasons Greetings!! Shortly after we put out the last issue of British Columbia Field Ornithologist, we (your editors) went on a quick birding/camping trip to Southeastern Arizona. Not the best birding time for Arizona but we had fun and we saw nineteen lifers plus many seldom seens. However, upon arrival back to Victoria we checked the local Rare Bird Alert line to find that there had been 22 cattle egrets here the week before our return. Fortunately some were still around and on November 7th, within about an hour, we saw a Snowy Owl down from the Arctic, a Tropical Kingbird which had wandered up from its more normal range in Mexico, and two cattle egret who had strayed up from their central California/Oregon range just to savor the grasshoppers on a Victoria dairy farm. Why travel to Arizona anyway when Victoria welcomes all these avian tourists? Now we must get them all glued down so they are here for the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) which is fast approaching.

Check page 11 for a listing of CBC's in your area and get involved in one. Terry Root in his introduction to Atlas of Wintering North American Birds: an Analysis of Christmas Bird Counts has a few notes of interest about CBC's. He states that at the inception of the CBC in December 25, 1900, there were only 27 persons reporting. Those persons only censused 26 localities, two in Canada and the rest through 13 U.S. states. Toronto that year recorded 4 birds in 5 hours while Keene, NH had only 3 birds recorded over 3 hours. By 1986 there were 1,504 count sites in an area covering the US, most of Canada, and sites in Middle & South America, Bermuda & the West Indies. Numbers of species noted have risen in similar fashion! All you feeder-watchers don't forget to get your data in to the compilers during count week also. Every little species counts.

D.V. George, A. Greenfield and B. Whittington have prepared super SITE GUIDES for several coastal areas in this issue. Now we need you Interior Types to tell us about a few of YOUR special sites. We know the sites are out there. Check out the GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES on page 23, put pen to paper and lets hear about those great birding sites of the Bulkley Valley, the Cariboo, the Peace River, the Kootenays, the Okanagan, the Thompson, the Shuswap, the Fraser Valley or wherever YOU live and love to bird!

David Allinson has written a great article about "...the first of hopefully many joint BCFO field trips [which] was recently held on Vancouver Island with the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) during the peak of the hawk migration. We hope that in the new year we will be able to have several more of these joint ventures." Send us your suggestions. Send us some reports also of your trips, birding news around B.C. (or further), technical titbits, poetry, letters, or anything which is suitable for publication and of likely interest to birders and members of BCFO. Write them today! Don't procrastinate - write right now, quick before you forget!

We send thanks also to the members who took the time to enter our "Ode to a Code" contest. You will find a listing of Eric Johnson's CODES and his answers on page 32 of this issue. We have included a few references useful for obtaining CODES for B.C. birds. Have a happy holiday season, a prosperous New Year and good birding 1993.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Dec. 17, 1992 to
Jan. 3, 1993 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS. See pages 11 and 12 of
this issue.
- Jan. 1993 LOWER MAINLAND BALD EAGLE COUNT, coordinated by
B.C. Ministry of Environment. For information,
contact Dave Dunbar, B.C. Ministry of Environ-
ment, 10334 152A Street, Surrey, B.C. V3R 7P8
(phone 582-5200). The exact date was not known at
press time; probably about January 10.
- Jan. 17, 1993 SWAN AND EAGLE COUNT, THOMPSON-SHUSWAP-OKANAGAN
VALLEYS. If interested in participating, please
contact Rick Howie, Site 15, Comp. 48, RR 3,
Kamloops, B.C. V2C 5K1 (phone 578-7542).
- Feb. 2-6, 1992 TRUMPETER SWAN SOCIETY annual meeting, Courtenay,
B.C., in conjunction with "A Celebration of
Swans" featuring viewing opportunities, art show,
and children's events. For information, write
Trumpeter Swan Conference, Box 3222, Courtenay,
B.C., or phone Barbara Sedgwick at 335-0064.
- Feb. 9-13, 1993 PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP annual meeting, Seattle,
Washington. For details, contact Lora Leschner,
Washington Dept. of Wildlife, 16018 Mill Creek
Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98012 (ph. 206-774-8812).
- Mar. 6-10, 1993 AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION REGIONAL CONFER-
ENCE, Grand Island, Nebraska, featuring field
trips to see Sandhill Crane, goose, and duck
concentrations, Greater Prairie Chickens, and
Sharp-tailed Grouse. For details, write ABA
Conference 93, P.O. Box 6599, Colorado Springs,
CO 809354-6599, or phone 800-835-2473.
- Apr. 2-4, 1993 BRANT FESTIVAL, Parksville-Qualicum, featuring
Big Day birding competition, wildlife art show,
children's activities. For information, contact
Brant Festival 93, PO Box 99, Parksville, B.C.
V9P 2G3, or phone 248-4117.
- Apr. 13-18, 1993 COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY CENTENNIAL MEETING,
Sacramento, California. For details, contact Dr.
Michael Morrison, Dept. of Forestry and Resource
Management, Univ. of California, Berkeley, CA
94720 (phone 510-642-5344).
- Apr. 29-May 1, 1993 WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY annual meeting,
University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario. For
information, contact Dr. Alex Middleton, Zoology
Department, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ont.
N1G 2W1.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS (Continued)

- Apr. 30-May 2, 1993 B.C. FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 3RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Ucluelet, B.C. For details, see announcement on page 5 in this newsletter.
- May 13-16, 1993 FEDERATION OF B.C. NATURALISTS annual meeting, Vancouver. For details, write the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, 321-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9, or phone 737-3057.
- May 23, 1993 OKANAGAN BIG DAY CHALLENGE. For details, contact Dick Cannings, 3007 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1Z7 (phone 734-9489).
- May 29, 1992 BIRD BLITZ, OKANAGAN MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK. Help document the birdlife of this large but relatively little-known provincial park. Field trips will be led by members of the Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club. For information, contact Eileen Dillabough, 2319 Pandosy Street, Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1T4 (phone 862-8254).
- June 4-6, 1993 OREGON FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS annual meeting, Malheur Field Station, near Bend, Oregon. For details, contact Tim Shelmerdine, 6873 SW Montauk Circle, Lake Oswego, OR 97035 (phone 503-620-5105).
- June 8-13, 1993 AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION annual meeting, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska. For details, contact Dr. Edward C. Murphy, Inst. of Arctic Biology, Univ. of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK 99775-0180 (phone 907-474-7154).
- July 22-25, 1993 CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION annual meeting, Vernon, B.C., hosted by the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club. Registration kits available by Jan. 15, 1993. For information, write the Secretary, North Okanagan Naturalists' Club, P.O. Box 473, Vernon, B.C. V1T 6M4.

SITE GUIDE LOCATIONS 1991/92**AUTHORS**

Duck Lake, Creston, BC	Gary S. Davidson
Blackie Spit, Surrey, BC	Jo Ann & Hue MacKenzie
Mckinney Road, Oliver, BC	Richard J. Cannings
Cowichan Bay & Duncan, BC	Keith Taylor
Monck Provincial Park & vicinity, BC	Wayne Weber
Princeton "Outback", BC	R.J. Herzig & M. Schouten
Hecate Strait, BC	D.V. (Val) George
Island View Beach, BC	Bruce Whittington
Lower Sunshine Coast, BC	A. (Tony) Greenfield

SOCIETY NEWS

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 (three issues).

The 1991 and 1992 issues of **British Columbia Birds**, when published, will also be available for sale separately. We will update you in a future **British Columbia Field Ornithologist**.

BCFO FIELD TRIPS -- 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**.

THE 1993 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of BCFO is being planned for the first weekend of May (April 30 to May 2) in the Ucluelet-Tofino area of Vancouver Island. Present plans are to include a pelagic trip as well as land-based field trips in the Long Beach area. Please mark your calendar now! Further details and registration forms will either be included with the March 1993 **B.C. Field Ornithologist**, or sent out as a separate mailing.

SUBMISSIONS FOR BCFO LOGO -- In response to our repeated requests for suggestions for a logo for BCFO, we have now received four submissions of possible designs for a logo, with one or two more promised. The BCFO directors are currently considering these submissions. Many thanks to those of you who sent in suggestions, and we hope to decide on a logo for the society soon!

MEMBERSHIP LIST -- We hope all of you have now received a copy of the September 1992 membership list. We tried our best to make it accurate, but at least one gremlin crept in. For those members who use institutional addresses (e.g. universities or government offices), the first line of the address was not printed, but the second line was. In other words, your street address is included, but not the name of your university or government department. We apologize for this, and we will include a list of corrections in the next issue.

Members joining after November 1, 1992, are considered members for 1993, unless you specified that your dues were for 1992. You do not automatically receive a copy of the membership list, but you may obtain one by sending a cheque for \$2.00 (payable to BCFO) to Hue MacKenzie, 15341 21st Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V4A 6A8.

SINCERE THANKS to Hue and Jo Ann MacKenzie, who continue to do an outstanding job of stuffing and mailing the **B.C. Field Ornithologist** (with occasional help from Prue and Bernie Spitzmann), and to Marian Porter, who stuffed and mailed the 1992 membership lists.

**REPORT ON BCFO'S 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
REVELSTOKE, B.C., JUNE 5-7, 1992**

The second Annual General Meeting of British Columbia Field Ornithologists took place from Friday, June 5 to Sunday, June 7, 1992 at St. Francis Church hall in Revelstoke, B.C. A total of about 110 members and guests of BCFO attended; the weather, scenery, and birding were superb, and everyone had a great time. The scheduled field trips produced 133 bird species, some of which were "life birds" for some of the participants.

The program began at 8:00 P.M. on June 5 with an outstanding illustrated presentation by John Woods, former Chief Park Naturalist of Mt. Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, entitled Ecology of the Columbia Mountains. John explained how the physiography and climate of the Columbia Mountains determined the distribution of plants and animals, and helped to set the scene for the following days' field trips.

The Saturday morning field trips on June 6 began at staggered times (4:30, 6:00, and 8:00 A.M.) to accommodate members' varying propensities for arising early. These trips visited a number of localities in the local Revelstoke area including the Mount Revelstoke summit road, the Skunk Cabbage Trail, Revelstoke airport and the adjacent river flats, the municipal sewage ponds, and the Columbia Valley south of town. All the groups were treated to a tasty pancake breakfast put on by Parks Canada staff and the Friends of Mt. Revelstoke & Glacier near the old Revelstoke ski hill.

On Saturday afternoon, the BCFO business meeting was held. Members approved a by-law amendment to establish family member and junior member categories, and voted in a new 9-member board of directors. Members also heard six presentations on current bird research in B.C. by a variety of speakers. Following the "paper session" was a short directors' meeting at which the officers for 1992-1993 were decided. A social hour and cash bar at 6:00 P.M. was followed by the annual banquet in St. Francis Church Hall. A highlight of the meeting was the banquet speaker, Rick Howie of the B.C. Parks Branch in Kamloops, speaking on Owl Research in the B.C. Interior. Rick lived up to his reputation as a top-notch speaker, and managed to be both informative and highly amusing while relating the recent history of owl research in the southern interior, including especially work on Burrowing, Flammulated, Saw-whet, and Boreal Owls.

Sunday, June 7 featured two all-day field trips, one to Rogers Pass and Glacier National Park, and another up the Big Bend Highway to the Downie Creek area. A half-day field trip in the immediate Revelstoke area was also held for those who could not attend one of the all-day trips. Finally, the BCFO Records Committee under Chairperson Gary Davidson held an organizational meeting on Sunday afternoon, although only four of the members were able to attend.

B.C. Field Ornithologists are extremely grateful to the Friends of Mt. Revelstoke and Glacier and to the staff of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, who looked after more than 80% of the work of organizing the meeting, and did a marvellous job of it. Indeed, it seemed like the whole town of Revelstoke went out of their way to welcome us.

REPORT ON BCFO'S 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Continued)

Among the Friends, Park staffers, and other Revelstoke residents who helped in various ways with making arrangements for the meeting, leading field trips, etc., we would especially like to thank Lea Altena, Roger Beardmore (Park Superintendent), Arne Chaddock, Cathy Cuthiell, Alan Dennis, Pat Dunn, Myles Flaig, Hilary & Orville Gordon, Janice Jarvis, Janet Littlejohn, Mas Matsushita, Vivian Mitchell, Jackie & Michael Morris, Diane Murphy, Doug Powell, Ellen Tremblay, George & Diane Winingder, and John Woods. To anyone whose name may have been inadvertently omitted from this list, we also appreciate your efforts -- it was a wonderful meeting!

**LIST OF SPEAKERS
BCFO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
JUNE 6, 1992**

Sydney Cannings	The B.C. Conservation Data Centre as related to birds
Chris Siddle & Gary Davidson	Status of the Lewis' Woodpecker in B.C.
Ellen Tremblay	Waterfowl use of the Upper Arrow Reservoir at Revelstoke
Les Gyug	The Biophysical Inventory of Mt. Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks: Birds
Dave Huggard	Effects of logging practices on Three-toed Woodpeckers
Doug Powell	Rare Birds of the Revelstoke Area

**LIST OF BIRDS OBSERVED ON FIELD TRIPS
BCFO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
JUNE 6 AND 7, 1992**

Compiled by John G. Woods

John, the Editors' have to apologise! We received your carefully compiled list of the 133 bird species seen during two days of very pleasant field trips at the B.C.F.O Second Annual General Meeting in Revelstoke in June 1992. The listing was typed, spell checked, formatted and neatly printed in draft BUT ... we ran out of space in this issue. We have had to defer it to the next issue.

Eleven species seen during the B.C.F.O. field trips were species considered rare in the Revelstoke area. Two of these, Clark's Grebe and Virginia Rail, were first records for the Revelstoke area -- a benefit of many eyes and interested birders. We know that some of the birds recorded were lifers to birders attending the B.C.F.O. Annual General Meeting. Perhaps someone from the Revelstoke area would like to do us a SITE GUIDE for the area so that members who missed the meeting can enjoy the great birding which you provided to those who were able to attend.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
MINUTES OF 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
REVELSTOKE, B.C., JUNE 6, 1992**

1. CHAIR

President Doug Kragh chaired the business meeting. Marian Porter served as Secretary in the absence of Secretary Tom Hanrahan.

2. WELCOME

Doug Kragh welcomed all the attendees and thanked the many volunteers who contributed to the success of the meeting, especially the Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier and the staff of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks.

3. BY-LAW AMENDMENT

Doug Kragh introduced an amendment to the BCFO by-laws to permit the establishment of new membership categories for family members and for junior members. It was explained that a family membership would have two votes at meetings, but would receive only one copy of publications; junior members would have the same privileges as other members, but must be less than 18 years old. Doug announced the intention of the directors to set family membership dues at \$25 and junior membership dues at \$10 for the rest of 1992, compared to the regular membership dues of \$20.

Gary Kaiser moved the adoption of the by-law amendment, and it was passed unanimously by the members present.

4. BCFO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Gary Davidson announced that the directors had appointed a provincial Bird Records Committee, with himself as chairman. The other members are Jack Bowling, Chris Siddle, Dick Cannings, Wayne Weber, Hank Vander Pol, and David Stirling. The committee planned to have an organizational meeting the next day, June 7th, and hoped to begin operations shortly thereafter.

Rick Howie asked how this Records Committee would relate to the Royal B.C. Museum. Gary replied that Wayne Campbell had been invited to join the committee, but had not yet decided whether he wished to be a voting member or an ex officio member. Gary Kaiser noted that Wayne was now employed by the Ministry of Environment on a two-year secondment.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Acting Treasurer Wayne Weber handed out a brief Treasurer's Report to the members. The current bank balance (savings account plus chequing account) was \$4853.32. Wayne noted that this balance was high because no issues of the journal had been printed yet. This amount also did not include most of the revenues or expenses of this year's annual meeting. He noted that, as we had based our registration fees for the meeting on an attendance of about 75 people, whereas actual attendance was over 100, we should make a substantial profit on the meeting.

MINUTES OF 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Continued)

It was suggested that in future, financial reports should be based on the preceding calendar year, ending on December 31st, so that a complete accounting could be given.

6. REPORT ON NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL

Wayne Weber, who is currently editing both the newsletter and the journal, reported on both. The newsletter is currently about 2-3 months behind schedule; the first issue for 1992 should be mailed out within weeks. The first issue of the journal will be called the December 1991 issue, but will not be ready for mailing for at least 1-2 months; much of the material for the second issue has already been assembled.

Wayne made a plea for someone to take over as newsletter editor, and explained that it was never his intention to serve as editor of both -- it is too big a job for one person. He thanked the many members who had sent in material, and noted that the publication delays were mainly because of a lack of time to work on editing, and not a shortage of material. Chris Siddle has agreed to serve as Associate Editor in charge of seasonal bird reports for the journal, which should be a great help.

If possible, a new newsletter editor should reside in the Lower Mainland, which would allow coordination with the membership secretary and the current printer and volunteer mailing crew (Hue and Jo Ann MacKenzie). Wayne offered to continue providing lists of upcoming events and society news, which forms a significant part of each newsletter issue.

In response to a question, it was explained that the newsletter frequency was quarterly (4 times a year), while the journal was to be semi-annual (twice a year) except for 1991, which would have only one issue.

7. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Vice-President Wayne Weber, who is also acting as membership secretary, reported that BCFO membership had reached 208 individual members plus 6 library subscriptions. A major membership drive was underway, and Wayne requested help in mailing out promotional packages. A total of between 800 and 900 people are on the list for the membership drive, and it is hoped that we would gain at least 100 new members as a result.

8. FIELD TRIPS

In response to a question from the floor, Doug Kragh and Wayne Weber replied that BCFO had decided to undertake a limited program of field trips around the province, and that Michael Shepard was preparing a proposed list of field trips. BCFO does not wish in any way to duplicate or compete with the activities of local natural history clubs, and it is felt that the best approach would be to co-sponsor each trip with a natural history club, and to use the occasion to promote membership for both BCFO and the local club.

MINUTES OF 2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Continued)**9. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

Brian Self took over the chair for the election of new directors. He announced that 9 persons had indicated a willingness to serve as directors for 1992-1993: Lloyd Esralson, Tom Hanrahan, Rick Howie, Gary Kaiser, Doug Kragh, Marian Porter, Michael Shepard, Alan Wiseley, and Wayne Weber. As the by-laws state that there shall be not less than 7 nor more than 9 directors, the slate of 9 was elected by acclamation.

Doug Kragh welcomed new directors Lloyd Esralson and Rick Howie, and thanked retiring director Mike Force for his contributions.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

John Woods announced that raffle tickets for the Black Scoter painting were still available; the winner was to be announced at the banquet. [The eventual winner was Mike McGrenere of Victoria.] He also announced that a total of 111 species of birds had been seen on the day's field trips.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The business meeting was adjourned at about 3:30 P.M.

Attendance: About 100 members and guests

Marian Porter
Acting Secretary, BCFO

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 Loenholm Road	
	Victoria, BC V8Z 2Z6	(phone 744-2521)
		WORK phone 387-1014 & FAX 356-9937

B.C. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DETAILS, 1992/93

This listing of Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) in B.C. is published as a service to BCFO members who would like to take part in CBCs in their local area or nearby areas. It includes all counts done in B.C. last winter with the name and telephone number of the organizer(s) and the scheduled date, if known at press time. We apologize for any errors in these details. Send your corrections to the editors so we can improve the listing for next year.

Best of luck to everyone for the 1992 Christmas Bird Counts!

LOCALITY	DATE	ORGANIZER(S)	PHONE NO.
Bamfield	JAN 2	Alan Burger	479-9833
Bowen Island	JAN 3	Allan Shatwell	947-2133
Burns Lk.-Francois Lk.	???	Garry Boos	695-6416
Campbell River	DEC 19	Heather Asplin	923-4112
		or Howard Telosky	923-2183
		or Stan Paterson	285-3337
Chilliwack	DEC 19	Gladys Brown	858-4032
Comox	DEC 20	Phil Capps	339-2708
Cranbrook	DEC 27	Greg Ross	489-2566
Creston	JAN 3	Bob Purdy	428-3554
Deep Bay	???	Phil Capps	339-2708
Duncan	JAN 2	Derrick Marven	748-8504
Fauquier	Jan 2	Ruth Bumpus	269-7481
Fort St. James	JAN 2	Joanne Vinnedge	996-7357
Fort St. John	???	Anne Magusen	???
Galiano Island	DEC 26	Mike Hoebel	539-2003
Golden	???	Ellen Zimmerman	???
Grand Forks	DEC 29	Joan Grant	442-2261
Kamloops	DEC 19	Rick Howie	578-7542
Kelowna	DEC 19	Brenda Thomson	764-4296
Kimberly	DEC 19	Mildred White	427-3605
Kitimat	DEC 19	Dennis Horwood	632-2004
Ladner	DEC 27	Jude Grass	520-3706
Lake Windermere	DEC 26	Ian Jack	347-9615
Masset	DEC 19	Margo Hearne	626-5015
Nakusp	JAN 3	Gary Davidson	265-4456
Nanaimo	DEC 20	Peter Van Kerkoerle	245-2530
Oliver-Osoyoos	DEC 28	Syd Cannings	721-0338
		or Joan King	495-6907
Parksville-Qualicum	DEC 20	Terri Martin	752-1285
Pender Harbour	???	Tony Greenfield	885-5539
Pender Islands	DEC 19	Mary Roddick	629-3308
Penticton	DEC 27	Steve Cannings	492-2303
		or Dick Cannings	734-9489
		or Anthia Bryan	492-0312
Pitt Meadows	JAN 3	Wilma Robinson	465-5207
Port Clements	DEC 18	Margo Hearne	626-5015
Prince George	DEC 20	Nancy Krueger	563-7896
Prince Rupert	???	Robin Weber	627-1129
Princeton	DEC 30	Madelon Schouten	295-7078
		or Jerry Herzig	295-7384

B.C. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DETAILS, 1992/93 (Continued)

LOCALITY	DATE	ORGANIZER(S)	PHONE NO.
Revelstoke	DEC 19	Bob Brade	837-7054
			or 837-7531
Rose Spit	DEC 17	Margo Hearne	626-5015
Salmon Arm	DEC 19	Frank Kime	835-8537
Saltspring Island	???	Glen Moores	537-4306
Shuswap Lake	DEC 20	Rick Howie	578-7542
Skidegate Inlet	DEC 20	Margo Hearne	626-5015
Smithers	DEC 27	Rosamund Pojar	847-9784
		or Jane Hoek	846-9231
Sooke	DEC 20	Michael Shepard	388-4227
Squamish	DEC 19	Jim Wisnia	898-2000
			or 980-5116
Sunshine Coast	DEC 19	Tony Greenfield	885-5539
Terrace	DEC 26	Diane Weismiller	635-6984
Vancouver	DEC 20	Cathy Aitchison	685-7460
Vaseux Lake	JAN 2	Dick Cannings	734-9489
		or Steve Cannings	492-2303
Vernon	DEC 20	Phil Ranson	545-7135
Victoria	DEC 19	David Pearce	477-2664
Wells Gray Park	DEC 27	Helen Knight	587-6532
West Kootenay	???	Hazel Street	359-7426
Whistler	DEC 30	Max Gotz	932-7247
			or 682-5248
White Rock	JAN 3	Else Holzken	531-8901
		or Jack McCrae	538-1901
Williams Lake	JAN 3	Anna Roberts	392-5000
Yoho National Park	???	Rob Scoble	343-6324

AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE:

David Allinson 478-0457

An avid and active birder, David Allinson is vice-president of the Victoria Natural History Society and is a self-proclaimed "raptor-holic".

D.V. (Val) George 635-4751

A birder since his teens, Mr. Val George has been a frequent ferry traveller and pelagic bird observer on the northern coast of B.C.

A. (Tony) Greenfield 885-5539 (H) 885-3971 (W)

Former president of the Sechelt Marsh Protective Society, Tony Greenfield has been an active birder on the Sunshine Coast for over 20 years.

Bruce Whittington 652-1529

An active birder, Bruce Whittington writes a regular birding column for a Victoria paper & also operates The Field-Naturalist, a store specializing in optics, books and other supplies for naturalists.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A delayed production of earlier issues of the **British Columbia Field Ornithologist** means that we will not be able to complete four separate issues before the start of 1993. In order to partially fulfil our obligation to our 1992 membership we have made this final issue of 1992 a double issue. Volume 2, Number 3/4, the last issue of 1992, contains twice the usual number of pages. We hope to be back on track next year with four issues, one per quarter. In order to fulfil this mandate we ask that members contribute articles, Site Guides, and other writings on an ongoing and timely basis so that we, the editors, can wrestle the publication into shape in a regularized manner. Materials for submission should reach the editors by or before the last week of the month preceding the issue month (March, June, September & December). Thanks for all materials to date and keep them coming.

ATLAS OF BREEDING BIRDS OF ALBERTA AVAILABLE -- The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Alberta, summarizing a project which involved more than 1000 volunteers between 1987 and 1991, has just been published by the Federation of Alberta Naturalists. The Atlas is 400 pages long, with a page size of 9-1/2" by 12", and includes detailed distribution maps and colour photos for 250 breeding bird species. It also includes a detailed bibliography and a history of ornithology in Alberta.

Copies may be ordered from the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, Box 1472, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N5, for \$51.36 (\$45 plus \$3 shipping charges plus G.S.T.). Please make cheques and money orders payable to the Federation.

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 Canada by the Long Point Bird Observatory. There is a small annual registration fee, which helps to cover data analysis costs; participants receive a twice-yearly newsletter. To take part in Project FeederWatch, write the Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario N0E 1M0.

For more details, see the announcement on page 5 of the August 1992 issue of the **B.C. Field Ornithologist**.

THE B.C. BEACHED BIRD SURVEY is still interested in recruiting 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, 270 Trevlac Place, RR 3, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X1 (phone 479-9833). A progress report on the Beached Bird Survey will appear in the next issue of **British Columbia Field Ornithologist**.

LOWER FRASER VALLEY RAPTOR SURVEYS -- The Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks, Lower Mainland Region, is recruiting observers for two raptor survey projects planned for early 1993. Both will cover the Lower Fraser Valley east to Langley and Maple Ridge. They are as follows: [see next page]

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Continued)

1. **RED-TAILED HAWK NEST SURVEY** -- This is planned for January and February 1993. The object is to locate as many Red-tailed Hawk nests as possible while the trees are leafless; later, observers will be asked to check whether each nest is currently active.
2. **OWL SURVEY** -- This survey will cover all owl species, and is planned for March and April 1993, when most owl species are vocal. It is intended to generate information on the numbers and distribution of different owl species, and on possible nesting locations.

If you are interested in either project, please contact Tom Plath, B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks, 10334 152A Street, Surrey, B.C. V3R 7P8 (phone 582-5287). The information on raptors will be used in evaluating development plans, and may help in protecting breeding localities.

STRAIT OF GEORGIA BRANT SURVEY -- The Canadian Wildlife Service is coordinating a Brant survey of spring staging areas along the Strait of Georgia. The object of these is to identify key staging areas, determine the timing of migration, and possibly to detect changes in numbers from year to year. In addition, thousands of Brant have been banded with coloured, coded leg bands, which can be read in the field. This makes it possible to tell which migration and wintering areas are used by birds from specific breeding areas.

Volunteer observers to make counts of Brant between late February and late May, and to read band numbers by telescope, are needed. The east coast of Vancouver Island is generally well covered, but additional observers are needed to cover staging areas in the Lower Mainland, the west coast of Vancouver Island, and the Queen Charlotte Islands. If you can help, please contact Neil K. Dawe, Canadian Wildlife Service, Site 12, Comp. 4, RR 1, Qualicum Beach, B.C. V0R 2T0 (phone 752-9611).

A report on results of the Brant survey for 1991 was published in the **B.C. Naturalist** for May 1992 (pages 10-11).

WINTER SEABIRD TRIPS, WESTPORT AND ANACORTES, WASHINGTON -- A winter pelagic trip off Westport, Washington is scheduled for January 16, 1993. Weather may be inclement and cancellation is quite likely, but January and February trips in 1991 and 1992 produced Laysan Albatross, Red-legged Kittiwake, and Thick-billed Murre, as well as commoner species.

Winter seabird trips in the San Juan Islands, leaving from Anacortes, are also scheduled for January 16 and 17, 1993. Trip cancellation is much less likely in these protected waters. Birds likely to be seen include Yellow-billed Loon, Black Oystercatcher, Surf-bird, Rock Sandpiper, and Ancient Murrelet.

For information on trips from either Westport or Anacortes, please contact Terence R. Wahl, 3041 Eldridge, Bellingham, WA 98225, U.S.A. (phone (206) 733-8255).

HAWK RIDGE, B.C.

David Allinson
3444 Karger Terrace
Victoria, B.C. V9C 3K5

A full blown hawkwatch, monitoring hawk migration in British Columbia you say? When I arrived in B.C. some two years ago, I thought I'd left the joy of hawk migration behind me in Eastern Canada. However, as word of good numbers of Turkey Vultures and other species trickled in from East Sooke Regional Park on southern Vancouver Island, I soon found myself embroiled in a newly discovered spectacle. When the season ended, the fall hawkwatch of 1991 had yielded thirteen species of raptor. Highlights included both an adult and immature Broad-winged Hawk, 1000 Turkey Vultures, Northern Goshawks, Golden Eagles, and a one weekend tally of eleven species of raptor.

The first of hopefully many joint BCFO field trips was recently held on Vancouver Island with the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) during the peak of the hawk migration. If our data from the last couple of years is any indication, the last week of September through the first week of October can produce up to 1500 individual raptors on a single day from the East Sooke Park region, some 30 minutes south and west of Victoria.

October 4, 1992 dawned cool, clear, and calm for some twenty birders who began the day birding at popular Esquimalt Lagoon. The lagoon is a federally and provincially managed waterfowl migration sanctuary. Bounded by the Royal Roads Military College and the Esquimalt Naval Base, the lagoon is only 15 minutes from downtown Victoria. Last year, a drake Tufted Duck overwintered in the lagoon, and provided many local and visiting birders an excellent look at the increasingly "common" rarity in British Columbia.

As expected, the waters off-shore from the Royal Roads produced Western Grebe, Harlequin Duck, Bonaparte's Gull, and Rhinoceros Auklet. The lagoon itself provided us with looks at Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and Black-bellied Plover. A stop halfway down the causeway of the lagoon yielded a single American Pipit. Finally, and proving that one should never overlook common species, co-leader Mike McGrenere pointed out a well worn Eared Grebe at very close range. Many of us had passed over this bird with a cursory glance, assuming it to be a Horned Grebe. Before we left the lagoon, we managed to tally an impressive 52 species (not bad for one and a half hours of birding!).

We departed for East Sooke Park at 10:00 am, and drove for about 20 minutes, meandering through the farm fields of Metchosin. No doubt these same fields are used by migrating hawks as their own "road" south. Arriving at the Aylard Farm entrance and parking lot on the east side of the park, we faced a 15 to 30 minute walk (depending

HAWK RIDGE, B.C. Continued

on one's keenness) to the lookout above Beechey Head overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Coincidentally, the Capital Regional District (CRD) had a park programme on that day emphasizing the hawk migration with a display in the parking lot and signs to the lookout. We could see 55 Turkey Vultures from the parking lot already kettling and gaining altitude.

I had sold many in the group on the previous weekend's tally of 12 species, including an immature Broad-winged Hawk and 1000 Turkey Vultures, so I was hopeful that our trip would be equally memorable. Happily, we were not to be disappointed. Our final total for the day included 7 species of raptor and 135 individuals. We managed to count 92 Turkey Vulture, 6 Bald Eagle, 22 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2 Cooper's Hawk, 13 Red-tailed Hawk, a single immature Golden Eagle, and a female American Kestrel. The lower individual numbers indicated that most of the birds seen the previous weekend had indeed crossed over the strait to the Olympic Peninsula in upperstate Washington. Nevertheless, our group managed to discern many individual hawks and Turkey Vultures migrating out over the strait. Obviously, a combination of factors, in particular the clear weather and calm south-west winds, had allowed them to safely migrate over the 15 mile crossing. The following weekend I managed to add a fourteenth species of raptor to the hawkwatch with a locally rare Rough-legged Hawk.

Interestingly, the hawkwatch has also yielded good numbers of other migrants such as Band-tailed Pigeon, Vaux's Swift, thrushes, and warblers. Six species of woodpecker have been recorded, including the locally rare Lewis' Woodpecker. Unfortunately, our field trip missed out on a Vancouver Island rarity by only 30 minutes. A Clark's Nutcracker was seen right at the Beechey Head hawk lookout by Mike Shepard. However, we did manage to record 75 Band-tailed Pigeon, 65 Vaux's Swift, a single Red-breasted Sapsucker, 8 Yellow-rumped Warbler, one Townsend's Warbler, and 10 Red Crossbill. Entomology-birders may also be interested to note that we watched a locally rare Monarch butterfly departing out over the Strait of Juan de Fuca!

Having an experienced birder, former VNHS president, and co-leader like Mike McGrenere on this well attended field trip made matters all the easier. The final species count for the day revealed that we had seen or heard 74 species.

I'll close with an open invite to all BCFO members to come to East Sooke Park and Victoria for the spring or fall hawk migration in 1993. Our spring count is limited to smaller numbers of birds, but has managed to record 12 species. Myself, & the co-sponsoring Western Institute of Global Studies (WIGS), & the Victoria Natural History Society are always open to new suggestions for observation locales and any data that has been collected. We still have a lot to learn about the dynamics of this hawk migration, and that for me is what is so exciting about participating in the East Sooke Park hawkwatch. Directions to 'Hawk Ridge' appear on the next page.

HAWK RIDGE, B.C. ContinuedDETAILED DIRECTIONS TO 'HAWK RIDGE', B.C.

From the Patricia Bay Highway (#17), follow McKenzie Ave. west to the Trans Canada Highway (#1). Turn right here and follow signs to Sooke-Colwood / 1A exit. Take this exit and you are now on Sooke Rd. (also called Old Island Highway). Continue on Sooke Rd. and turn left at the Metchosin Rd. intersection. Take Metchosin Rd. and turn right at Happy Valley Road. Now watch for and take the first left which is Rocky Point Rd., and follow it to just past Matheson Lake Park Rd. where the road veers sharply right, becoming East Sooke Rd. This road will then take you on a winding path through the Becher Bay Indian Reserve. Look for Becher Bay Rd. on your left. Turning left take Becher Bay Rd. to its terminus at the Aylard Farm parking lot of East Sooke Regional Park. Take all valuables with you or lock them in the trunk of your car as thefts have unfortunately occurred in the parking lot. Find the "main" trail near the entrance of the parking lot (look for gate) and hike up following signs to Cabin Point and Beechey Head. Continue "straight", avoiding signs on your right to Babbington Hill and "Petroglyphs" on your left, until you reach the junction signs for Coast Head and Beechey Head. Follow sign to left reading "Lookout, Coast Head, and Coast Trail". Soon you will see the Lookout sign on your right. Clamber up the rocky trail some 50 meters and sit back and enjoy the spectacle above. Best times are between late August and late October from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. ◀

SITE GUIDE: HECATE STRAIT

Mr. D.V. (Val) George
4904 Gair Avenue
Terrace, B.C. V8G 2K2

The BC Ferries trip between Prince Rupert and Skidegate on the Queen Charlotte Islands offers what is probably the most comfortable pelagic birding you're likely to find. The whole trip is only about 170 km with about 100 km of it in pelagic waters. As well as seeing a variety of truly pelagic species, birders who are from the more southern areas of the province can expect to see several other species which they will only infrequently see elsewhere.

The summer months are best for birding. The birds are usually more abundant and conditions for observing are likely to be better. Hecate Strait is subject to quite violent storms. Storms can occur at any time of year, but do so with some regularity in late fall and winter. Summer weather is usually much more pleasant.

The most common of the pelagic species are Sooty Shearwater & Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel. Crossings of the Strait at any time of year will produce numbers of these two. In summer months, Sootys may be present in thousands; several dozen Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels can sometimes be counted in June and July. Other months will not produce large numbers of these 2 species, but some can always be seen so long as the seas are not too rough for observing.

SITE GUIDE: HECATE STRAIT Continued

Other shearwaters you may see occasionally are: Short-tailed (may not be uncommon but are difficult to distinguish from the much more abundant Sooty Shearwaters unless light conditions are near perfect), Buller's, Pink-footed, and Flesh-footed (I've see the last once in about three dozen crossings). Leach's Storm-Petrels are common off the North Coast of the province in summer, but are rarely seen in Hecate Strait - they normally feed further offshore. However, you will see one or two on every two or three crossings. Northern Fulmar is another species that is unpredictable, but several dozen can sometimes be counted in fall months.

Alcids are the other common birds both in Hecate Strait and sometimes in the inshore waters at both ends of the ferry trip. Pigeon Guillemot and Common Murre are common species near land, with the latter observable anywhere during the crossing. In more open waters, Rhinoceros Auklet, Cassin's Auklet, and Ancient Murrelet can sometimes be quite common. There are large breeding colonies of these species on the coasts adjacent to the ferry crossing. Again, summer months are the best times to see them, both because of their greater abundance then and the fact that the sea and light conditions usually make them easier to identify. Tufted Puffins are sometimes seen, in their distinctive breeding plumage in summer or in their more sombre winter dress in fall.

You'll usually see a few loons during the trip, both offshore and in the littoral areas. All four species are present in Hecate Strait at various times of the year. In particular, Yellow-billed Loons are regularly sighted in late spring and early summer months.

Gulls, of course, are always present. As well as the more common species, Sabine's Gulls are sometimes seen on migration, and Black-legged Kittiwakes are common in the waters close to the Queen Charlotte Islands.

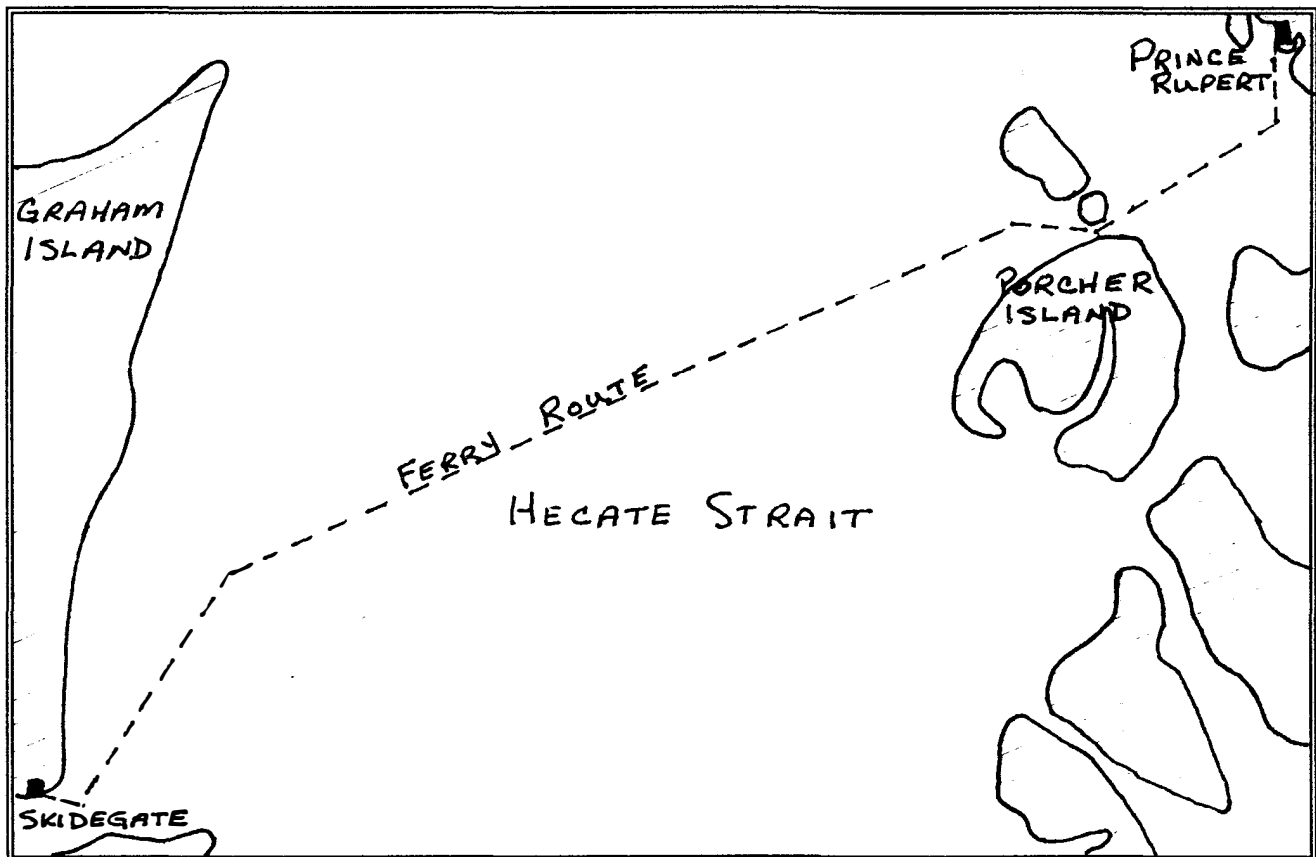
Two species of interest to those of us who spend most of our time either on land or not far from shore are Red Phalarope and Pomarine Jaeger. Although not common, these two species are not infrequently seen migrating through Hecate Strait. In contrast, two numerous birds in season are White-winged Scoters and Oldsquaws.

Birds listed here are those the ferry traveller can reasonably expect to see, given the appropriate season & observing conditions. Other, more rare, birds are obviously possible, including some rare pelagic species and alcids. Since this is a considerably more northerly location than most sites where pelagic birding is done, it is not unreasonable to expect that some rarities might occur that would not be seen elsewhere, for example, Alaskan alcids.

Though birds are the major interest to the naturalist crossing Hecate Strait, marine mammals sometimes provide a bonus. Harbour and Dall's Porpoises are frequently seen. You'll sight Orcas every two or three trips, and larger whales, Gray and sometimes other species are possible.

SITE GUIDE: HECATE STRAIT

The Queen Charlotte Islands ferry sails regularly from Prince Rupert on the mainland and from Skidegate on the Islands. In July and August it goes six times a week in both directions; in other months there are a lesser number, but still several a week. The normal trip duration is about six hours. However, especially in winter, Hecate Strait can get very rough with twenty to thirty foot swells. Very occasionally, the weather causes cancellation, but more normally in rough conditions the ferry does go but can take up to fifteen to twenty hours to cross. Obviously, such crossings are not good for bird watching, so if that's your main reason for the trip, you'd best postpone it. Most trips though are very pleasant, very relaxing, and very rewarding for birders not accustomed to seeing pelagic and North Coast species. ◀



SITE GUIDE: HECATE STRAIT FERRY CROSSING

DELKATLA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Margo Hearne has sent the editors a brochure on the Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary at Masset. This 719 acre site on Haida Gwaii, the Queen Charlotte Islands, boasts almost 140 bird species in season but it is currently threatened. For further information regarding the Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary write to:

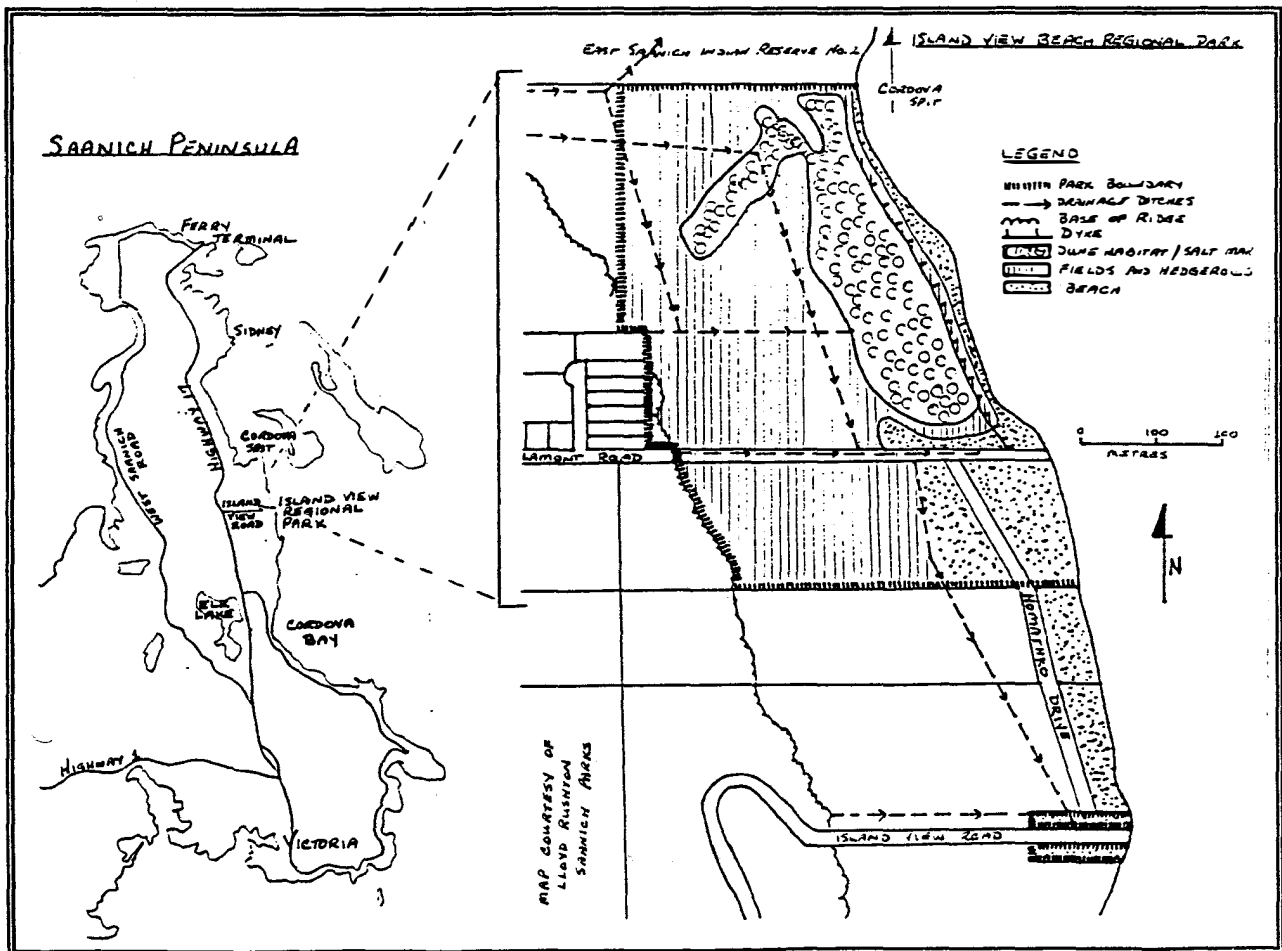
Village of Masset
P.O. Box 68
Masset, B.C. V0T 1M0

SITE GUIDE: ISLAND VIEW BEACH

Bruce Whittington
 1974 Hovey Road, RR#3
 Saanichton, B.C. V0S 1M0

Where in Canada can you, in a few hour's birding, see both Short-eared Owl and Oldsquaw? Bald Eagle and Lincoln's Sparrow? Red-throated Loon and Common Bushtit? None are rare birds; most are common in places. But there are few places where it is possible to see all six, and many more, on a morning walk. One place where it is possible is at Island View Beach and Cordova Spit, on the Saanich Peninsula north of Victoria.

Island View Beach is the geological offspring of the several ice sheets which covered southern Vancouver Island as recently as ten thousand years ago. The ridge which runs north and south to the west of the beach was laid down as glaciomarine sediment in the ice ages, and rose as the land rebounded after the weight of the ice was removed. Thousands of years of wave action since then have eroded the ridge, depositing the sediments along the shore and further north to give Cordova Spit its classic shape.



SITE GUIDE: ISLAND VIEW BEACH

SITE GUIDE: ISLAND VIEW BEACH (Continued)

For birders, the appeal of this area lies in the mix of smaller habitats which are found within it. The waters offshore attract thousands of seabirds in the fall and winter. Shorebirds use the beaches in migration. Passerines breed in the dunes, thickets and abandoned farm fields behind the beach, and others return here each fall to spend the winter. Both diurnal and nocturnal raptors hunt in the fields and hedgerows as well.

Much of this attractive area is, fortunately, protected as Island View Regional Park. To reach the park, drive east on Island View Road from the light at Highway #17 (the Patricia Bay Highway). Drive as far as you can go, and park in the lot at the beach. A small area around the boat launch ramp is park, but the main body of the park lies a few hundred metres to the north. The strip north of the boat launch ramp is private property, except for the parking area and a trail to the park. The property owners, however, are cooperative and the public is not discouraged. The beach below the high tide line is, in theory, public property. However, because the shoreline has shifted with the sands, even the lawyers are uncertain about who is entitled to do what where!

The park's northern boundary abuts the East Saanich Indian Reserve. Walk this area at your own discretion; there is nowhere to ask permission at this point.

Island View is a place for winter birding. In the waters of Cordova Channel off the beach, look for four species of loons: Common Loons are regular, and Red-throated Loons sometimes feed only a few feet off the beach. Pacific Loons are regular through the winter, and increase in numbers greatly in late winter and spring. Yellow-billed Loon is a possibility in winter. Red-necked and Horned Grebes are the most common, with Western being rather erratic here, and Eared Grebe quite uncommon.

Sea ducks are abundant. Surf and White-winged Scoters are common, and this is one of the best places in Victoria to see Black Scoters. Barrow's Goldeneye may be among the Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead, and Oldsquaw can be heard gabbling further out. Red-breasted Mergansers are common, and Greater Scaup can be found also. Harlequin Ducks are present, usually near the north boundary of the park.

Back from the beach, the park offers a good mix of fields crisscrossed with rows of old fenceposts, and ditches. Watch for Northern Shrikes on these posts, and on the many hawthorn trees in the hedgerows. Northern Harriers are regular in winter, and Short-eared Owls appear most years. These two species can sometimes be flushed from the fields west of the main trails, but don't get trapped by the many drainage ditches. In the rainy season even the fields are too wet to walk. Island View is a good spot also for Peregrine Falcons and Red-tailed Hawks. Bald Eagles are often seen perched in the snags along the ridge.

SITE GUIDE: ISLAND VIEW BEACH (Continued)

In the thickets, look for Lincoln's Sparrows among the Song Sparrows and Rufous-sided Towhees. Ruby-crowned Kinglets like the hedgerow at the north boundary of the park. In the fields, wintering Western Meadowlarks and Savannah Sparrows may be joined by American Goldfinches.

In the spring, these same fields produce most of the expected migrants, but more unusual birds have been seen; a Mountain Bluebird was found here one year. Returning breeders include Common Yellowthroats, White-crowned Sparrows, and Tree Swallows, which use the nest boxes provided for them by the Esquimalt-Saanich Pony club.

Along the beaches watch for peeps and other sandpipers; Ruddy Turnstone has been seen here. Beginning in March, Brant congregate to feed on the eelgrass in the sandy shallows. There are good opportunities to see many species of seabirds in either of their alternate or breeding plumages.

As summer comes on in earnest, Island View Beach gets less interesting for the birder. Seabirds have gone, passerines are quiet, and the beach is noisy with your families of *Homo sapiens*. It's a good time to move along to Cordova Spit, which will be discussed a little later on. However, if there are no revellers on the beach, perhaps an evening of owling would be in order. Barred Owls have been seen in the thickets near the parking lot. Great Horned and Western Screech-owls live in the woods on the ridge, and Barn Owls may possibly come down from their hunting territories in the Martindale Valley, west of the ridge.

In late summer, the south bound shorebirds are moving, and Cordova Channel offers several species of alcids. Pigeon Guillemots are common, and Rhinoceros Auklets can number in the hundreds. Marbled Murrelets may be seen in both basic and alternate plumages.

Late summer is a good time to look for gulls; I have seen eight species at once on a sandbar just off the beach. Heerman's Gulls can often be found here, but are more likely at Cordova Spit. Island View Beach and Cordova Spit are also good bets for Ring-billed Gull, uncommon in the Victoria checklist area.

As the warm days of fall descend on Island View, look for migrants, especially along the drift logs behind the beach. American Pipits are sometimes found, and Horned Larks are not unexpected. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings are uncommon but regular. Often in fall, good numbers of Northern Flickers can be found here, in all manner of pure and hybrid plumages.

Cordova Spit is made of all the sediments washed along the beach at Island View. It offers some very good birding opportunities, but access is not as good as at Island View Beach. Most of the spit is part of the East Saanich Indian Reserve. Many band members do not mind birders, but you may be approached to explain your presence.

SITE GUIDE: ISLAND VIEW BEACH (Continued)

Access by road is at the east end of Mt. Newton Cross Road. It is sometimes possible to ask permission at the band office on the way in. Another option is to go to the KOA Campground (which leased land from the band) and ask if you can park in their parking area. The owners used to be very friendly, but they have been a little reluctant in recent years. Some birders park beside the road and walk in through the campground.

If time permits, you can also walk the beach from Island View Regional Park. The northern third of the spit is designated as municipal park and is of course open to the public.

Cordova Spit can be hot or cold. Most of the same species found at Island View can be expected here, too. Other interesting records include White-faced Ibis, Upland Sandpiper, and Bar-tailed and Hudsonian Godwits. Common Nighthawks sometimes nest on the spit.

In spring and fall shorebirds may be numerous in the lagoon at the base of the spit, and along the beach at the outlet of the lagoon. Try to be there on a rising tide. The end of the spit can be good in fall for larks, and in winter sometimes flocks of Black-bellied Plover and Dunlin are among the dunes.

Cordova Channel is an excellent spot for seabirds as it changes with the tides, and the quieter beaches here can offer good looks at shorebirds and gulls.

Both Cordova Spit and Island View Beach also have interesting beach/dune plant communities. Look among the grasses and drift logs for Yellow Sand-verbena and Beach Morning-glory. Cancer-root is an interesting plant which is a parasite on members of the composite family.

Mudflats and mixed woods, seashores and salt marsh, these two areas have much to offer the visiting birder. At any time of the year, except high summer, the birding can be excellent and makes Island View Beach and Cordova Spit well worth a visit. ◀

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 & quietly awaiting the (possible!?) appearance of an elusive lifebird.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST

A. (Tony) Greenfield
P.O. Box 319
Sechelt, B.C. V0N 3A0

The Sunshine Coast (SC) is a blessedly scenic stretch of coastline on the east shore of the Strait of Georgia. It stretches 80 kilometers from Langdale ferry terminal in the south to Earls Cove ferry terminal in the north (driving time about 1.5 hours). Langdale is a 35 minute ferry ride north from Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver, and Earls Cove is the departure point for a 50 minute ferry trip en route to the upper Sunshine Coast centred on Powell River (This article does not deal with the upper SC).

The Sunshine Coast affords panoramic views of the Strait of Georgia, and 30 kilometers away across the Strait a 250 kilometer long silhouette of Vancouver Island mountains. "Behind" the coast-line is the inland waterway comprising Sechelt, Salmon, Narrows and Jervis Inlets. This spectacular fjord scenery climaxes in the pristine wilderness of world famous beauty spot, Princess Louisa Inlet. The mountains surrounding these fjords rise to 3000 meters.

The area has a basically Mediterranean climate of dry, sunny summers and warm, wet winters. Snow is a rarity at sea level. The resultant vegetation grades from a dry Douglas Fir-Arbutus association at sea level, through to mountain hemlock, yellow cedar, balsam and sub-alpine fir at high elevations, with extensive alpine areas of bare rock and snowfields.

Based on 21 years of fieldwork by the author and compilation of reliable sightings by other birders, the SC checklist now stands at 253 species (Nov. 1992). The annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) produces 95-100 species and "Big Days" in April and September also yield 95-100 species.

Despite the closeness of the lower Mainland there are some significant differences in the avifauna. Black-capped Chickadee went unrecorded by the author for the entire decade of the '80s, and Bushtit has been recorded only four times. Dunlin and Sanderling are also virtual rarities owing to lack of both mudflats and sandy beaches. Conversely, the area is notable for its large and reliable wintering flocks of rocky shorebirds -- Black Oystercatcher, Black Turnstone, Surfbird and Rock Sandpiper.

Many of the birds of the SC can be seen in non-specific locations. Loons, grebes, cormorants, ducks, gulls and alcids might be seen anywhere along the coastline. Similarly raptors, woodpeckers, flycatchers, vireos, warblers, Western Tanagers, sparrows and finches are present in forests, gardens and clearings along the length of the SC. Bald eagles are common along the coast, except in fall.

Bearing this in mind, the following locations are the birding hotspots of the SC based on numbers, variety of species & rarities.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST (Continued)Wilson Creek Estuary

This is the SC's premier location along with Mission Point (less than one km away). To find the estuary turn left (towards the ocean) off of Highway 101, 22 km from the Langdale ferry. Park at the foot of Field Road (a new shopping mall & GM dealership are on the upper side of the highway here) and walk in 50 meters toward the water. A path leads around the north side of the estuary and, in 250 meters, brings you to the beach. The whole area should be carefully checked for birds at all seasons -- water, beaches, mudflat, creek & bushes. The beach fronting the Strait of Georgia is the second best location for the rocky shorebirds, which are more reliably seen at Mission Point. The best time to visit Wilson Creek is winter for ducks & rocky shorebirds, summer/fall for shorebirds and spring/summer/fall for passerines.

The estuary is tiny, but encompasses the only mudflat on the east side of the Strait of Georgia between Pender Harbour and the Fraser Delta. Consequently, in spring & fall it attracts a regular flow of migrant shorebirds. Numbers are tiny compared to the Vancouver area but eleven species are regular and five irregular, with Whimbrel and Stilt Sandpiper among the latter. For regular shorebirds a low tide which exposes the mudflat is required. The rocky shorebirds might be found on all except high tides.

The Wilson Creek estuary is the location on the SC for rare passerines. The list of rarities is as follows:

Ash-throated Flycatcher	Rock Wren
Say's Phoebe	Harris' Sparrow
Western Kingbird	Snow Bunting
Eastern Kingbird	Western Meadowlark
Horned Lark	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Purple Martin	Pine Grosbeak
Mountain Chickadee	Lesser Goldfinch

Lesser Goldfinch is the rarest BC bird in the SC checklist. It was observed for two days (22-23 Oct. 1983) by the author and Katie Angermeyer. Coincidentally, the late Brian Kautesk also observed a Lesser Goldfinch in Vancouver on the same date.

Other rare but regular late summer species here are Green-backed Heron, Franklin's Gull and Mourning Dove.

(Author's Note: This estuarine area is under threat of development by the Sechelt Indian Band. A marina and condos are contemplated. If this happens the area will cease to exist as a birding locale.)

MISSION POINT

Less than one km past the last stop, Highway 101 emerges to run alongside the ocean. Immediately on reaching the ocean, pull off to your left and park. This is Davis Bay. Mission Point is a shingle spit at the mouth of Chapman Creek and is reached by walking south along a sandy beach for 200 meters.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST (Continued)

Mission Point is the location for wintering flocks of Black Oystercatcher, Black Turnstone, Surfbirds and Rock Sandpiper. The four species commingle, with frequently, hundreds of Turnstones and Surfbirds, up to 50 Rock Sandpipers and up to 50 Oystercatchers. Turnstones, surfbirds and oystercatchers are present irregularly from July on but Rock Sandpipers are not reliable before November. The winter flock of these four species stabilizes in November and from then until mid-April the birds are very reliable at this location. They are probably present here 100% of winter days, but do not spend the whole day here. The best time to visit is low tide (birds will not be present at very high tides). If you visit and the birds are not present, return later, and you may be lucky.

Mission Point is also an excellent location to observe loons, grebes, cormorants (3 species) & sea ducks. Twelve species of Larids have been recorded and, in winter, there is usually a large flock of gulls here. Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot and Marbled Murrelet are frequently present, Rhinoceros Auklet is possible in late summer, and Ancient Murrelet in November/December.

The birds resting on the spit can be on either side of the creek. If you wish to closely observe those on the south side, backtrack to Highway 101 for 200 meters, take the first road to the right (directly past the bridge) and then right again. Park at the end of the road (do not block driveways) and walk alongside Chapman Creek for 50 meters which will bring you to the spit.

HEAD OF PORPOISE BAY/SECHELT MARSH

Turn right off Highway 101 in Sechelt at the only traffic light in town and proceed one km along Wharf Road. This will take you past the Sechelt Marsh on your left, with the tidal head of Sechelt Inlet, known as Porpoise Bay, on your right.

Sechelt Marsh is a small pond with an abundance of Mallards and a passing variety of other ducks such as Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, Redhead and Canvasback. Other rarities have appeared here including American Bittern, Sora and Green-backed Heron. The surrounding trees and bushes can be good for passerines of many species.

Porpoise Bay has many species of water birds in winter, and the muddy head of the bay is good for shorebirds in summer & fall (at low tides).

PORPOISE BAY PROVINCIAL PARK

Turn right off Highway 101 in Sechelt at the only traffic light in town and proceed about 1 km along Wharf Road. Bear right following the park directional sign. Travel along Sechelt Inlet Road for about 5 km (east side of Porpoise Bay) until you see the park sign on the left-hand side of the road. Drive toward the water and park in the day use parking areas near the beach.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST (Continued)

The mature forest here is good for the 5 common species of woodpeckers plus other birds of similar habitat such as Red-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper. Varied Thrush can be common in winter with warblers and vireos (Black-throated Grey Warbler and Hutton's, Solitary and Warbling Vireos) commonly found in spring.

The most interesting habitat in the park is the area around the estuary of Angus Creek. The mudflats here are good for small numbers of shorebirds in summer and fall. The grassy area has produced Lapland Longspurs in September/October, the cattail marsh periodically contains Marsh Wren and has yielded the SC's only Swamp Sparrow (Oct. '91). During the summer it is full of Common Yellowthroats, and Virginia Rail are year round residents. The rails sometimes call voluntarily, but can be induced to call either with a tape, a reasonable impersonation of their call, or miscellaneous other noises.

Angus Creek which flows through the Park and has an easy trail running beside it, should be searched in winter and spring for American Dipper.

WAKEFIELD CREEK

Three km north of Sechelt on Highway 101 is the Wakefield Inn. This old hostelry has excellent lunches and beautiful views. You can also watch passing water birds. Immediately past the Wakefield Inn on your left will be a short cul-de-sac. A variety of marine species including the common alcids can be observed from the beach here. This has proved to be the best location for two of the SC's avian spectacles. In August/September/October watch for migrating flocks of Common Terns. If they are present there is a good possibility of seeing a Parasitic Jaeger and some thrilling aerobatics performed by the terns and the pursuing jaeger. There have been days in winter when up to 2500 Murrelets have been counted, including many Ancient Murrelets.

SMUGGLERS COVE PROVINCIAL PARK

Twelve km past Sechelt and one km beyond the community of Halfmoon Bay, Brooks Road leads off to the left. Smugglers Cove Provincial Park is at the end of this road (about 3 km from the highway). It is signposted from the highway.

At the Park a trail (about 800 meters) leads through old growth, second growth and deciduous timber, past two swamps and a salt water cove to a rocky, arbutus covered headland on Welcome Passage.

The forest is excellent for many species in spring and summer, notable Hutton's Vireo, Black-throated Grey Warbler and Red Crossbill. All three coastal Empidonax species can be heard and maybe seen, from this short trail (Willow, Hammond's and Pacific-slope Flycatcher) and Olive-sided Flycatcher and Western Wood Pewee are also possible. Virginia Rails reside in the swamps, and Ruffed Grouse are sometimes encountered on the trails.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST (Continued)

Having walked to the end of the trail you will be at Welcome Passage. Either by observing from the trail end, or by scrambling over the rocky, mossy and arbutus covered bluffs to your left, you can scan the rocks for birds of the rocky shore (turnstones, surfbirds, oystercatchers) or the water for alcids (Murrees, Pigeon Guillemots and Marbled Murrelets). Harlequin Ducks are also found here.

TETRAHEDRON PLATEAU

This is the mountainous area behind Sechelt, and contains the highest peaks in the immediate area -- Tetrahedron (1,900 m), Panther Peak (1,866 m) and Mt. Steele (1,800 m). The area is accessed by logging roads* and then well defined trails to the summits of Mt. Steele and Panther Peak. These trails are cross country ski trails in winter. Four beautiful mountain cabins are located strategically throughout the plateau, and are available for free use. A map of the area, the access roads, and trails can be obtained from the Ministry of Forests office in Sechelt.

The area became noteworthy in 1987 when the author went out into these mountains looking for White-tailed Ptarmigan and discovered that, in fact, Rock Ptarmigan were breeding here. All of these mountains have very restricted alpine areas and the birds were easy to find in June, July and August. Males, females and downy young were present. Tetrahedron and Panther Peak are visible peaks from many places in Vancouver and it was ironic that many Vancouver birders had never seen this species, believing it only occurred in Northern BC.

Other notable species occurring in the Tetrahedron area are Rosy Finch (above timberline), Goshawk, Grey Jay, Three-toed Woodpecker (nested in snags at Gilbert Lake 1991), Pine Grosbeak and Mountain Chickadee (recorded once).

The Tetrahedron is recommended to not only birders, but anyone looking for relatively easy alpine hiking, overnight cabins, and stunning views of the Coast Range mountains.

(* Logging roads are restricted access and rough two wheel drive).

CAREN RANGE

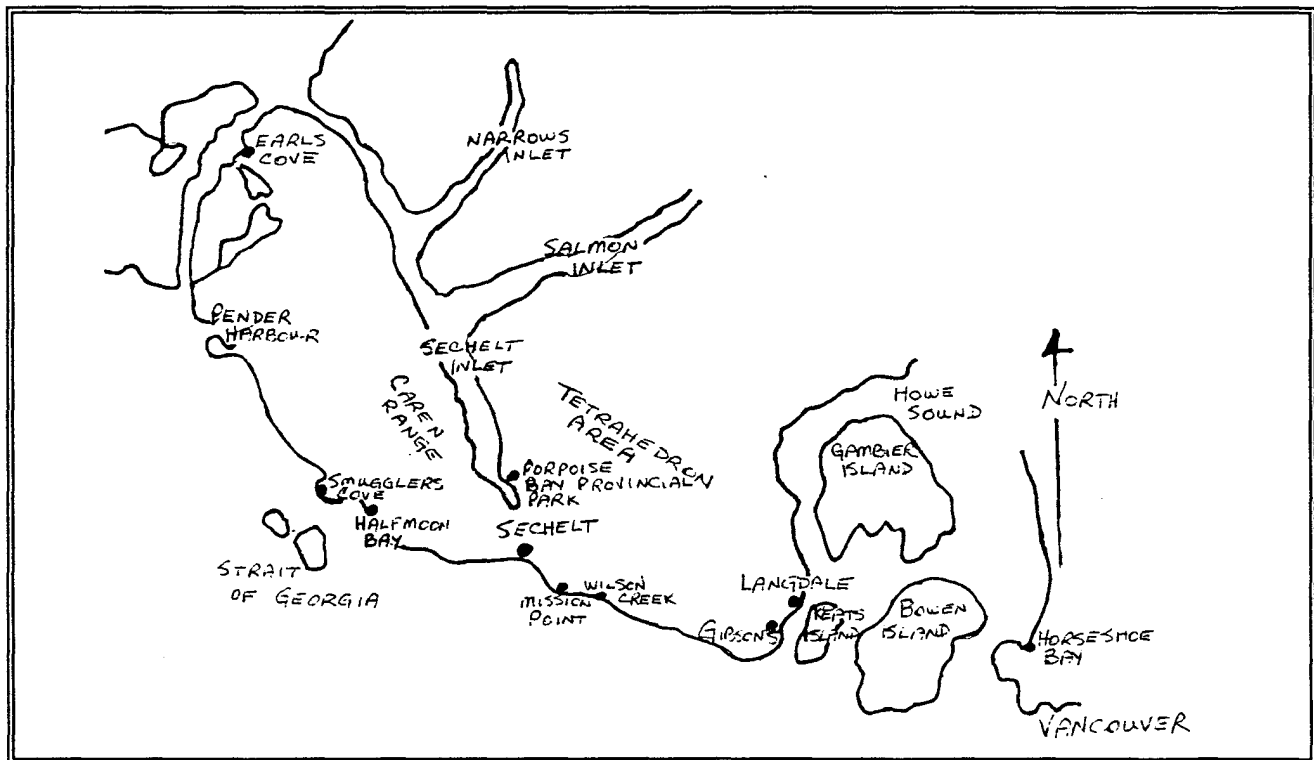
The other accessible mountain area on the SC is the Caren Range. This is reached by a logging road that leaves Highway 101 about 10 km north of Sechelt and 500 meters before the turnoff to Halfmoon Bay. Follow the main logging road up the mountain (rough two wheel drive), ignoring all left and right hand sideroads. At 12 km the road divides and you may go left or right. The left hand road gives superb views of the Strait of Georgia and Vancouver Island, whilst the right hand road yields spectacular views of Sechelt and Narrows Inlets, and the Coast Range mountains.

SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST (Continued)

The Caren Range has achieved recent fame after some of the oldest known trees in Canada were found here. A yellow cedar stump was aged at 1,736 years and many other ancient cedars exist. There are some beautiful old growth stands of yellow cedar, hemlock and balsam. The remnant area is threatened with logging.

Ornithologically, the Caren Range is notable for a large colony of Marbled Murrelets. In midsummer the birds are extremely active from about 4:15 am to 6:00 am with much coming and going, circling, calling ("keer, keer") and flying into the old growth. Despite concerted effort, no nests have yet been located, though it appears certain the birds are nesting here.

Other species that might be located on the Caren Range are Three-toed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Black and Vaux's Swift, Blue Grouse and Turkey Vulture. Lyon Lake and its surrounding old growth is a prime location for a symphonic performance by the ethereal Hermit Thrush.



SITE GUIDE: LOWER SUNSHINE COAST

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

For a checklist of SC birds, including seasonal abundance, write the author at his address given above (\$.50 each or 3/\$1.00). Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. For further information on birds or locations call:

Tony Greenfield	885-5539 (home)
	885-3971 (work)
Arnold Skei	885-1929

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

In our last issue of BCFO Ron Walker wanted to know whether he could count Bobwhite, seen and reported on a local Christmas bird count, on his B.C. list. Gary Davidson, Chairman, BCFO Birds Record Committee writes to clarify the conditions that must be met in order to list a released species. Thanks, Gary. (Eds.)

CAN YOU COUNT THE BOBWHITE ?

Mr. Walker's question [in the last issue] is indeed an interesting one! Can he count the Bobwhite? No, at least not yet!

Before released species can be considered wild, (and countable), they must establish themselves as a viable population. Until recently, the ABA (American Birding Association) rules stated that such a population could be considered viable after a period of ten years. But this rule has now been changed. Although the ten year rule was satisfactory for some species, for others it was quite inadequate. Species such as parrots, for example, which can live for many years, might easily maintain their numbers for ten years with minimal breeding success. But as soon as the original releases, or escapees, began to die off, so would the species. A new, more theoretical, definition of "viable" has been established. So before Mr. Walker can count the Bobwhite, the following conditions must be met:

- a) the population is more-or-less contiguous, that is not just a scattering of isolated pairs or individuals;
- b) the population is large enough to withstand normal amounts of accidental mortality and nest failures;
- c) sufficient numbers of offspring are being fledged to increase or maintain population numbers;
- d) the population is not directly dependent on man's support.

Clearly, these new rules make it much more difficult to declare that exotic species have become established. Some research and documentation would be required to determine that conditions (a), (b), and (c) have been met. Condition (d) cannot be met by the Bobwhite in question, as long as the ranchers continue to release additional birds.

EDITORS' NOTE: On page 116 of The Birds of Alberta by W. Ray Salt and Jim R. Salt. Hurtig Publishers 1976, the authors provide a few interesting notes about early attempts at introduction of Bobwhite into Alberta. They provide some examples of what Gary has stated above about the provision of a viable population. Bobwhite were introduced into Alberta in 1907, 1929 and in the 1930's but all seemed to disappear shortly thereafter. A nesting bird was found in 1969 but it left its nest and did not return. In 1974 several were shot from a covey of about twenty birds, large enough numbers to suggest successful nesting, "... but the origin of the birds is uncertain." Escapees from zoos or from birds released for hunting dog training sessions may have produced the 1969 & 1974 sightings.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

From: Denise Brownlie, Kelowna, B.C.

With the help of a Victoria checklist, and also the AOU Master Checklist which came with my AviSys (Version 2.0) birding software in August '92, the "Ode to a Code" has assisted me to become an entry-level COOC. But in the name of all that flies, or swims, what is a MELT? Am I missing something obvious? I look forward to your list of the CODES. Also, I understand that there does exist a reference list for all the code names. Could you print it, please?

Another question: the AOU checklist from my software prints "Roadside Hawk" between "Gray Hawk" and "Red-shouldered Hawk". If this is really "Hawk, sp." (as on the CBC checklists), I wonder why it is the only "sp." included. A check of some 30 field guides and reference books has been no help. Please tell me what this "Roadside Hawk" is all about!

Thank you for all your work in producing the **British Columbia Field Ornithologist**. The site guides alone would be worth the price of membership.

(EDITORS' NOTE: Thanks for your letter, your ODE TO A CODE guesses (32 correct!!!), your requests and your words of encouragement. See **ODE TO A CODE -- SOME NOTES** for a short discussion of the CODE sources. Regarding your hawk request, "Hawk, sp.", given on your CBC checklist, is a category used when the CBC recorder(s) have seen what they know to be a hawk during the count period but, for whatever reason, they were not able to accurately identify it. Those "Hawk species" may have been seen on a roadside but they are NOT the Roadside Hawks as listed in your AviSys program. According to Clark, W.S & B.K. Wheeler in A Field Guide to Hawks: North America, 1987 [Peterson Field Guide Series #35], pg 52, "The typical Roadside Hawk is a small, long-legged, and long-tailed buteo accidental in lower Rio Grande valley of Texas." Your software should correctly list "Roadside Hawk" (Buteo magnirostris) as an accidental (A) species.)

From: Blake Maybank, Armdale, Nova Scotia

An interesting challenge. I've used many of the codes as an atlasser, and find them convenient to use when taking notes in the field. Notwithstanding, I sympathize with the poet, and rarely use the abbreviations in casual speech, although I confess that RODO and MODO are creeping into the vernacular in Nova Scotia, with HUGO not far behind. ... Here is my solution, and I confess I had to browse my AOU 6th checklist to come up with a few.

(EDITORS' NOTE: It was great to receive your letter giving the first confirmed sighting of the **B.C. Field Ornithologist** way over in Nova Scotia. The range of this new species is definitely expanding. You get top marks for promptness & for your 33 correct answers! WHIP seemed to whip everyone, but Eric Johnson did say "... was that duck really a WHIP?" While Eric's poetry did not give a specific CODE for the REDpoll he mentions, he had felt most sorry for the HOary. Thanks for letter & comments. ODE answers on page 32.)

A KEY TO THE CODES IN THE ODE: as given by author Eric V. Johnson

RCKI = Ruby-crowned Kinglet	NOPO = Northern Pygmy-Owl	
COGO = Common Goldeneye	AMRO = American Robin	
GCKI = Golden-crowned Kinglet	BOBO = Bobolink	
NOBO = Northern Bobwhite	MERL = Merlin	
WHIP = White-cheeked Pintail	MELT = Melodious Laughing-thrush	
WEME = Western Meadowlark	PROW = Prothonotary Warbler	
GREG = Great Egret	GRAT = Gray-backed Tern	
HORE = Hoary Redpoll	KEWA = Kentucky Warbler	
CARC = Caribbean Coot	COTE = Common Tern	
CALC = California Condor	HEWA = Hermit Warbler	
LISP = Lincoln's Sparrow	MODO = Mourning Dove	
TUDU = Tufted Duck	PISI = Pine Siskin	
TUPU = Tufted Puffin	SPOW = Spotted Owl	
CAGU = California Gull	FLOW = Flammulated Owl	
TUVU = Turkey Vulture	HUGO = Hudsonian Godwit	
WISP = Wilson's Storm-Petrel	SNOW = Snowy Owl	BUFF = Bufflehead
DOVE = Dovekie	OU = Ou	LIMP = Limpkin
WREN = Wrentit	IIWI = Iiwi	SORA = Sora

ODE TO A CODE -- SOME NOTES

A recent CODE list for B.C. vertebrates is to be found in: Cannings, R.A. and A.P. Harcombe (eds.) 1990. The Vertebrates of British Columbia: scientific and English names. Royal B.C. Museum Heritage Record #20; Wildlife Report #R24. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture and the Ministry of Environment, Victoria, BC. The CODES for non-bird vertebrates have been developed from their scientific names. However, according to the Heritage Record introduction, the bird CODES relate to the common English names & were modified from an earlier work: Klimkiewicz, M.K. and C.S. Robbins. 1978. "Standard abbreviations for common names of birds." North American Bird Banding 3(1):16-25. Sorry, we can not print out all CODES because of copyright and space restrictions. Check with your local library. You might also check your bookstore for the checklist: Traveller's List of British Columbia Birds. prepared by Fraser, D.F. and Eric L. Walters. This checklist provides CODES for 470 BC birds (to July 1990) and uses CODE rules as set out by Campbell, R.W. & A.P. Harcombe in Wildlife Report #R-11, (1985).

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