



BC BIRDING

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

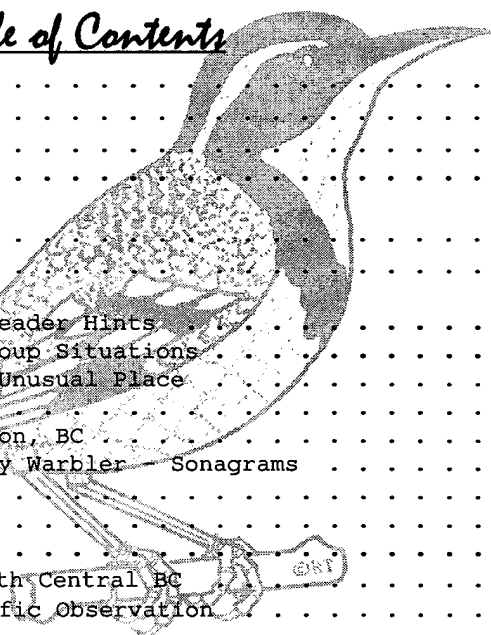
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A subscription to this quarterly is a benefit of membership in the society. Members will also receive a copy of the annual journal, **British Columbia Birds**.

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

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Send material for publication in any format to the editors. We especially welcome bird-finding information for our "Site Guide" series and any articles about birding experiences, preferably but not necessarily, in British Columbia. **Deadline for receipt of material for publication is the 15th of the month preceding the March, June, September & December issues.**

Advertising rates available upon request.

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Missing Some Earlier Issues?

BCFO still has a limited selection of back copies of both the annual peer-reviewed journal **British Columbia Birds** and this quarterly newsletter **BC BIRDING** available for sale. The prices (which include postage and handling) are \$8.00 for the journal and \$3.00 for the newsletter. Contact: Editors c/o PO Box 8059, Victoria, BC V8W 3R7

EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS

We hope that everyone is ready for the AGM. It should be another great one. We are only sorry that we are unable to go on the pre-AGM birding expedition into Alberta this year. Someone better take good notes and do us a writeup - **hint, hint!!**

After a couple of tense empty-basket months we suddenly received three unsolicited articles and two technical reports. Once again we are able to offer 20 pages filled with information and birding hints. Hue has provided very useful guidelines for group leaders and birders. Both Jo Ann and Al have given us informed looks at some chickadee behavior. Audrey lets us share her observations of crows and their idiosyncracies. Doug I. shows us how we might get to pin a name on that wheezy warbler flitting about in the verdant canopy. Larry reports on a pleasant birding trip he had just south of the border. Doug C. details a site just north of the border which may hold some surprises if birded more often. Jim relates the enjoyment he and others get from assisting in the monitoring of songbird migrants. Martin, ever vigilant in providing us with upcoming events, has provided us with another column on news briefs which we are certain will be of continuing interest to all members. Thank you one and all!

John Cooper sent us a complimentary copy of his report "Surveys of Selected and Traditional Black Tern (*Chilidonias niger*) Colonies in British Columbia in 1996" [*Colonial Waterbirds* 20(3): 574-581, 1997]. Several BCFO members were willing and able to assist in John's survey. It was a great opportunity for both amateur and professional naturalists to work together. When you see requests for assistance in future birding projects consider how you might be able to assist. Everyone gains in both knowledge and expertise in these cooperative ventures. [see Mugaha Marsh article in this issue]

Barb Miyasaki sent us a page from *Wetlander* Spring 1998 which discusses Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge. It is across the border 40 km from Creston and just west of Bonner's Ferry, Idaho. The wildlife area comprises 2,774 acres and that refuge is home to 230 species of birds. AGM participants might consider checking it out if they still have birding time after the AGM.

We must quit for now and get ready for our annual trip to the Okanagan Critter Count. Good birding and we hope to see many of you at Creston. Andy & Marilyn

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"And when the dawn-wind stirs through the ancient cottonwoods, and the gray light steals down from the hills over the old river sliding softly past its wide brown sandbars - what if there be no more goose music?" - Aldo Leopold

Of course we in BC are all familiar with this quotation as it appears on the frontispiece photograph of Volume 1 of **The Birds of British Columbia** by Wayne Campbell et al. However, I had always been bemused by the term "goose music" as I had never been able to appreciate the finer vocal qualities of our local flock of honkers - the Canada Geese.

After midnight on 18th April I stepped out to take the night air and immediately heard a flock of Greater White-fronted Geese flying overhead in the darkness. In the next five minutes there was a constant procession of flocks, some off to the east over the Sechelt Peninsula, some to the west over the Strait of Georgia, and some directly overhead. The call of these geese is phoneticised as "KAH-LAH-ALUCK", and that night with the sound of a few hundred of them honking in unison, and mellowed by the soft night air, I suddenly recognized the veracity of "goose music."

Not only was the music wonderful to listen to, but it was evident that every goose in every flock was singing in sheer delight at the happy prospect of winging north to the breeding grounds on this starry, moonlit night. I rejoiced with them.

Here on the Sunshine Coast the 60+ other spring migrants have all reappeared on schedule, and as this is written (14 May) we await only the perennial late arrivers - Common Nighthawk, Black Swift, Willow Flycatcher, Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo, and our recent colonizer of the local airport, Lazuli Bunting.

This is but one segment of the ever changing, ever fascinating, world of birds that keeps us glued to our binoculars!

We hope to see you at the Annual General Meeting in Creston. Until then,

Good springtime birding.

Tony Greenfield
BCFO President

BCFO NOTICE**MAPPING VOLUNTEER DESIRED**

Maps constitute an important feature of avifaunal papers and some distributional notes. However, many authors (especially the journal editor!) are not proficient at drawing maps of publishable quality. A volunteer with good artistic or cartographic skills is thus needed for the journal. The volunteer's task would be to convert a rough map prepared by an author into a map of publishable quality. The volunteer would not likely be called upon more than once or twice a year, and not necessarily every year. Although we cannot pay for preparation of such maps, the volunteer's effort would be fully acknowledged in the journal. If interested, please contact Martin K. McNicholl at 4735 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1L3 or phone (604) 294-9333.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

- June 13-14, 1998 **Strathcona Park Bird Search.** The Strathcona Wilderness Institute will hold the 8th Annual Strathcona Park Bird Search on June 13-14. The main centre of activity will be in the Buttle Lake area but other areas of the park are available for birders, snow and accessibility permitting. Participants will receive a checklist and results as well as a free campsite June 13th. Anyone interested in participating please call Betty Brooks. phone/fax (250) 337-8180.
- June 19-21, 1998 **BCFO ANNUAL MEETING,** Creston, BC. We hope to see many members at this annual get-together. Come prepared to assist and to have a great time.
- June 25-28, 1998 **NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY 21st ANNUAL CONFERENCE,** Regina, Saskatchewan. Contact: Sandra Ewart, 2818 Sinton Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 1K3; phone (306) 584-2582.
- July 23-30, 1998 **SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING,** Ft. Royal, Guadeloupe, French West Indies. Contact: Dr. Rosmarie Gram, 13 East Rosemont Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301, U.S.A.
- Aug 1-4, 1998 **SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGY SCIENTIFIC & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,** Vancouver, BC. Contact: Connie Smith, Department of Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6, phone (604) 291-5618.
- Aug 19-22, 1998 **TWENTY-SECOND INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS,** Durban, South Africa. Numerous field trips to various parts of southern Africa are planned in addition to scientific program. Contact Secretary-General Dr. Aldo Berruti, 111 Blair Atholl Rodd, Westville 3630, South Africa.
- Sep 25-27, 1998 **WESTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION 73rd ANNUAL MEETING,** Marconi Conference Center, Marshall, California. Contact Kay Loughman (510) 841-7428 or Ken Burton (415) 669-1847.
- Sep 29-30, 1988 **SECOND INTERNATIONAL BURROWING OWL SYMPOSIUM,** Ogden, Utah (in conjunction with Raptor Research Foundation meeting). Contact: Geoff Holroyd, Canadian Wildlife Service, Room 200, 4999-98 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2X3, phone (403) 495-8089.
- Sep 30-Oct 4, 1998 **RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING,** Ogden, Utah. Contact: Carl D. Marti, Department of Zoology, 2505 University Circle, Weber State University, Ogden, UT 84408-2505, U.S.A; phone (801) 626-6172.
- Oct 21-26, 1998 **COLONIAL WATERBIRD SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING,** North Miami, Florida. Contact to be announced.
- Mar30-Apr 2, 1999 **COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING,** Portland, Oregon. Contact to be announced.
- June 10-13, 1999 **WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 80th ANNUAL MEETING,** Waterville, Maine. Contact: to be announced.
- Aug 13-16, 1999 **AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION 117th STATED MEETING,** Cornell, N.Y. Contact: to be announced.

B.C. BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

The following are brief news items concerning BC birds and/or birders/ornithologists that I thought likely to be of interest to BCFO members.

The Birds of British Columbia honoured -The first three volumes of **The Birds of British Columbia** have been selected for the 34th annual list of "Outstanding Academic Books," published by *Choice*, a publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries (Stuart Foster of *Choice* personal communication to Berit Kraus of UBC Press 17 October 1997, copied to "sponsors, participants and supporters" of the four-volume project by R. Wayne Campbell 19 November 1997).

Gray-headed Chickadee restored to checklist -Although the 7th edition of the **American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds** was due to be published before you read this [but reportedly delayed until summer], the AOU's Committee on Classification and Nomenclature have published a few changes (*Auk* 115:280, 1998) invoked since the latest (41st) supplement. That of most interest to BC birders will be the return of the English name Gray-headed Chickadee for *Poecile cinctus* instead of Siberian Tit, the name used in the 6th edition. Although not recorded in BC, this primarily Asian species breeds locally in Alaska and Yukon Territory.

Wandering pelican and other band encounters -The latest compilation of "significant" band encounters in North America (J.B. Dunning, Jr. 1997. *North American Bird Bander* 22:133-138) includes a Stum Lake-banded American White Pelican found dead about 3600 km. to the southeast in Louisiana, a Lake Louise, Alberta-banded Harlequin Duck sighted on Hornby Island, Creston-banded Ospreys caught in Mexico and found dead at Shuswap Lake at 8 and 7-years of age respectively, a Laugavals-banded Peregrine Falcon found dead about 690 km. south in Washington, and a Kamloops area-banded Burrowing Owl striking high tension wires about 375 km. south in Washington.

Burger chairs Pacific Seabird Group -Alan Burger of Victoria, a BCFO member, was elected Chair-Elect of the Pacific Seabird Group at their 24th annual meeting in Portland, Oregon in January 1997. Tony Gaston of Ottawa was elected the BC representative at that meeting, when Gail Davoren of Victoria received the best student paper award for a presentation on Rhinoceros Auklets (Anonymous. 1997. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 117:3). Burger became Chair at the Group's 25th annual meeting in Monterey, California in January 1998 (Anonymous. 1998. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 123:1). Brett Vanderkist of Simon Fraser University received that meeting's best student oral presentation award for a presentation on Marbled Murrelets.

Miklos Udvardy -Avian biographer Miklos D.F. Udvardy, a professor at U.B.C. from 1952 to 1968 and Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, died in Sacramento, California on 27 January 1998 (Anonymous. 1998. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 123:7).

Butler to Head Colonial Waterbird Society -BCFO member Rob Butler of the Canadian Wildlife Service was elected Vice-President of the Colonial Waterbird Society at its annual meeting in Lafayette, Louisiana in October 1997 (P.C. Frederick. 1988. *Colonial Waterbird Society Bull.* 21(1-2):10-13). The Vice-President of that society is also President-Elect, assuming the Presidency two years after election.

Martin to Head Society of Canadian Ornithologists -In a recent mail ballot, Kathy Martin of the Canadian Wildlife Service and U.B.C. was elected Vice-President/President-Elect of the Society of Canadian Ornithology (Anonymous. 1998. *Picoides* 11(1):inside front cover). Other BC board members are Fred Cooke, Tom Dickinson (Treasurer), and Nancy Flood (Membership Secretary).

Some "Be's" for Birding Leaders: Group Leader Hints

by Hue MacKenzie
15341 - 21 Avenue
Surrey, BC V4A 6A8

- **Be Prepared.** Know the area you intend to visit (unless everyone going with you knows that it is an exploratory trip). Alert the participants to any special conditions (wet or cold weather, rough trails, steep climbs, etc.). If passports, entry fees or special equipment is needed, inform everyone in advance of the outing. Know in advance who will be on the outing with you.
- **Be Specific.** Give clear instructions on where and when to meet. Inform participants about essential details such as where you are going, if they should carry lunch, if border-crossing ID is needed, how long the trip will last, fees or other costs involved, etc.
- **Be Alert.** Does anyone in the group have special needs (such as hearing, sight or physical limitations) which you can (or can not) accomodate? During the trip is any unforeseen problem developing? Watch for potentially dangerous situations and be ready to change appropriately. If the weather is deteriorating it may become necessary to cancel or completely revise your trip.
- **Be Prompt.** Be on time at the meeting place. Start the outing within a few minutes of the announced time. Habitually late people will soon learn to be on time. End the trip at the announced time unless the entire group are willing to split up with some carrying on and the others leaving.
- **Be in Control.** Keep the group together and do not permit people to "take the lead" as they may flush birds that the other participants would like to see. Call for silence when it is needed and ask talkers to stay behind the main party so the others can hear the birds and your comments.
- **Be Patient.** Some people need more help than others. Give them your support without ignoring the needs of others in the group. Occasionally you will encounter a participant who is "difficult". Never lose your temper. Do not allow the person to rattle you.
- **Be Fair.** Give all participants your attention and never allow anyone to monopolize your time. Help confused beginners. Ask the more experienced participants to help beginners. Make sure that everyone hears you when you see, and comment on, anything of special interest.
- **Be Flexible.** Remember that you may make an occasional error. Also remember that the person disagreeing with your ID may be looking at a different bird. If conditions are poor or birds are few, listen to suggestions for alternative locations.
- **Be Confident.** You will never know everything about birds but nobody else will either. In most cases you will know as much as anyone who is with you. If you have a more experienced person along, ask them for help if you need it, but only if you need help.
- **Be Friendly.** Some people may be hesitant to ask questions or make comments. Encourage everyone to actively participate and to ask for help when they need it. Some may not wish to be "active participants". If so respect their wishes and let them enjoy the outing in their own way.

Some "Be's" for Birders: Etiquette in Group Situations

by Hue MacKenzie
15341 - 21 Avenue
Surrey, BC V4A 6A8

- **Be Considerate** of those around you. Avoid blocking their view when you are trying to see a bird. If you are tall, let shorter people stand in front of you. Pushing ahead of others is both rude and inconsiderate. Clothing which is white or a similar light colour can be like a beacon when you are in front of someone else. Try colours which do not reflect strong sunlight.
- **Be Quiet.** If you want to talk when your fellow birders are trying to hear a bird, get away from the group and speak in a low voice. One of the worst habits is telling everyone around you how well you saw the bird while others are still trying to get a look at it. Some types of clothing are very noisy no matter how quiet you try to be; choose materials which produce as little noise as possible when you move your arms. If this is not feasible, avoid excess movement when others are trying to hear a bird. When the leader asks for silence, be quiet.
- **Be Still.** If a group is trying to hear a bird, it can be very frustrating to have one or several people shuffling or walking around - especially on a gravel surface. If the group is trying to see the bird you will not gain any friends if you flush it by moving at the wrong time. Rapid movement or pointing at a bird can frighten it off. Let the leader decide if pishing, squeaking or use of a tape is appropriate.
- **Be Helpful.** You can be helpful in many ways: to the leader, by being a responsible member of the group and by being cooperative; to your fellow birders, by being considerate of their needs; to beginners, by quietly helping them without disrupting the group.
- **Be Patient.** If you cannot see or hear a bird immediately, look at people around you and determine where they are scanning. Quietly ask someone who has been successful to help you. Give the leader your attention while he/she is describing the call or the bird's location.
- **Be Realistic.** A good leader will attempt to ensure that every member of the group sees every bird, or at least hears it. However, there are times when even the best leaders cannot achieve these results, so accept the fact that you will miss some birds. Keep improving your skills and you will hear and see more birds. If you become sufficiently skilled you will enjoy birding much more and will soon be able to help others.
- **Be Kind.** If you are a competent birder you will usually identify birds correctly. Sometimes others will make mistakes but they will not appreciate being mocked or being loudly corrected. If you are certain they are wrong, speak to them and point out quietly why you feel they made a mistake. They may point out some ID feature you did not know about. If they are wrong and refuse to accept your correct identification, leave it alone. It is their loss, not your's.
- **Behave** responsibly at all times. It will be appreciated and others will respect you.

EDITORS' NOTE: Thanks, Hue, for these thoughtful and timely guidelines. We will all enjoy birding more and will certainly become better birders if we heed your practical and common sense instructions.

Black-capped Chickadee Caches Food in an Unusual Place

by Jo Ann MacKenzie
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On 24 October 1997, a Black-capped Chickadee, *Poecile atricapillus*, was observed clinging to, and probing, a wet hiking shoe which was hanging inverted on an umbrella-type clothes line. Subsequent investigation revealed that the bird had cached an unshelled black oil sunflower seed snugly into the base of the shoe's tongue.

Many Parids cache food, usually seeds (Smith 1991). Black-capped Chickadees store most food in fall, primarily in October and November (Odum 1942). Food is usually stored in cracks and crevices in vegetation, often wedged on the undersides of branches or hidden in dead leaves still hanging from trees (Petit et al. 1989). Unnatural sites such as under roof shingles, and in gutters and drainpipes have been utilized.

The dark grey, rough-textured shoe secured upside-down on the clothes line may have been mistaken for a tree branch or leaf cluster. The selection of this unusual caching place may have been due to a scarcity of more appropriate sites. Although chickadees typically shell sunflower seeds before caching them in some areas (Petit et al. 1989), this seed was left intact, as is typical of chickadees in some populations (Margaret A. McLaren personal communication to Martin K. McNicholl 19 January 1998).

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- Smith, S.M. 1991. **The Black-capped Chickadee: behavioral ecology and natural history.** Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.

A Chattering of Chickadees?

by Al Grass
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Forward

In days of yore, people were much more creative in creating collective terms for groups of birds. Thus, we have a *covey* of quail, a *gaggle* of geese, a *murder* of crows and a *Parliament* of owls. Try as I might, however, I could find no such term for chickadees (although I cannot believe that one does not exist - chickadees are too beloved for such an omission to be possible). I am tentatively proposing a collective term, "a *chattering* of chickadees."

On July 20, 1997 at Burnaby Lake Regional Park a "chattering" of at least 20-25 Black-capped Chickadees was observed roaming through the foliage of a large black locust (*Robinia* sp.) tree. The birds gave the distinct impression of being excited, and could be seen maneuvering themselves into various positions (eg. hanging up-side-down) that allowed them to probe the undersides of leaves. Closer inspection showed that they were in fact "picking" at a peculiar growth on the undersides of the leaflets (Figure 1). The bladder-like structures proved to be the galls of an insect called the "honey-locust pod gall midge" (*Dasineura gleditschiae*). Opening some of the galls revealed several whitish "maggots" per gall - these were what the chickadees were chattering about.

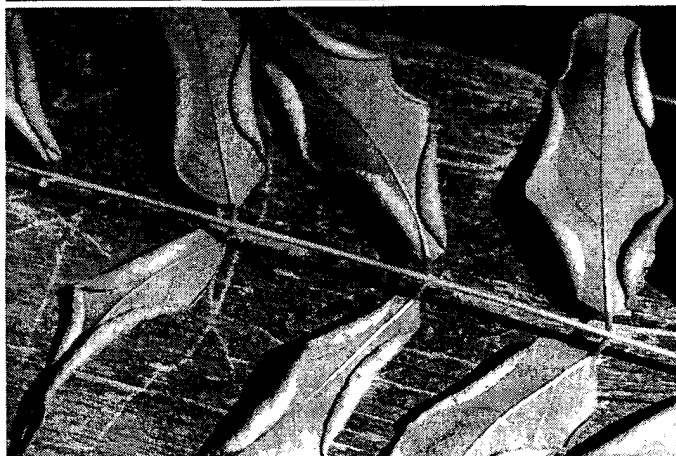


Figure 1. Chickadee-attracting galls on black locust. Photo by Al Grass

The adult midge is described as, "a tiny black fly that causes unsightly galls on honey-locust (*Gledistia* spp.) trees" (Fisher et al. 1991:222). This midge is also commonly found on black locust (*Robinia* spp.). Both *Robinia* and *Gledistia* are tree form members of the pea family (Fabaceae). Interestingly, another authority describes this insect as a "small orange gnat." Apparently in spring the fly lays her eggs on newly developing leaves, feeding maggots cause the galling. There are multiple generations of about three weeks duration.

Taverner (1926:343) notes, "The [Black-capped] Chickadee's food is 68 percent insect and 32 percent vegetable. The former comprises eggs, larvae, chrysalids and small insects, largely weevils, and includes some of the worst ... crop pests." He adds (p. 342), "few birds are more useful to mankind than the chickadee."

To the long list of "useful" tasks performed by the Black-capped Chickadee, we may now add, as a predator and natural control on the honey-locust pod gall midge.

A literature search did not uncover any direct references to the Black-capped Chickadee preying on the larvae of *Dasineura gleditschiae* (Diptera).

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BCFO Eighth Annual General Meeting Creston, BC 19-21 June 1998

Have you been to a BCFO AGM before? This will be the eighth AGM for the British Columbia Field Ornithologists. Each has been slightly different but all have been very enjoyable. We have had AGM's in Delta, Revelstoke, Tofino, Kamloops, Victoria, Manning Park, and Prince George. This year we visit the Kootenays and the spectacular Creston Valley. Make this YOUR year to come to the AGM so you can enjoy the great birding, excellent speakers, and wonderful camaraderie that BCFO events are known for. Make this YOUR year to get involved with this exciting, province-spanning, birding organization. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Creston in 1998.

Townsend's Warbler and Black-throated Gray Warbler Similar Songs, Differing Sonagrams

by Douglas Innes
2267 Stewart Avenue
Courtenay, BC V9N 3J1

Imagine it's spring. You are in a coniferous forest on eastern Vancouver Island. A song in the canopy attracts your attention. You crane your head up, binoculars at the ready, and strive for a glimpse of the hidden singer. However, no matter which way you alter your line of sight, the singer remains hidden from view. Will you not get a chance to identify the bird? The song tells you that it is a warbler and, from the buzzy quality, it might be either a Townsend's Warbler or perhaps a Black-throated Gray Warbler. If you do not have a warbler expert at hand to assist you with your identification, you might resort to perusing one of your bird guide books.*

Your bird guide book will probably suggest, with some form of phonetic rendering, that the songs of these warblers are buzzy or wheezy. This phonetic rendition will assist with regards to the pattern of the song and can define whether the sound units are heard as one or two notes or are more complicated. What can be of further help when trying to determine what elusive bird is singing is a depiction of the song - a sonagram. Sonagrams display the sound units on paper in a graphical form, thereby enabling visual analysis. In a sonagram, the pitch of one sound unit is observable by its position relative to other sound units. It will be apparent as being higher, lower, or about the same pitch. Because variations of songs do occur (Catchpole, 1995), it is always preferable to use a sonagram of the song recorded for the species from your particular location.

I thought it might be of interest to readers to show two such sonagrams which depict a buzzy song of a Townsend's Warbler (Figure 1) and a buzzy song of a Black-throated Gray Warbler (Figure 2) and to give an analysis of each with an explanation of the delivery of the songs.

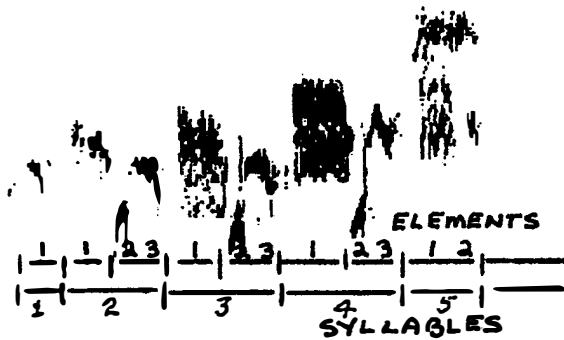


Figure 1: Townsend's Warbler

Sonagrams show distinct parts, or sound units (Catchpole, 1995). The smallest sound unit, represented by a single mark, can be called an element or a simple syllable. A more complicated syllable will consist of two or more elements. A comparison of the complicated syllables #3 and #4 of figure 1, and complicated syllables #2, #3, and #4 of figure 2 reveals some similarities. The larger looking elements in these syllables appear quite similar. They are

Both songs represented by the sonagrams were collected in eastern Vancouver Island. Similar songs can be heard in suitable habitat from Victoria to Campbell River. Each song is stereotypic of what one might expect regarding pattern and, once the pattern and rhythm are learned, one will find them to be species specific. Usually any variation might be the addition or deletion of one of the sound units but not the introduction of a new sound entity.

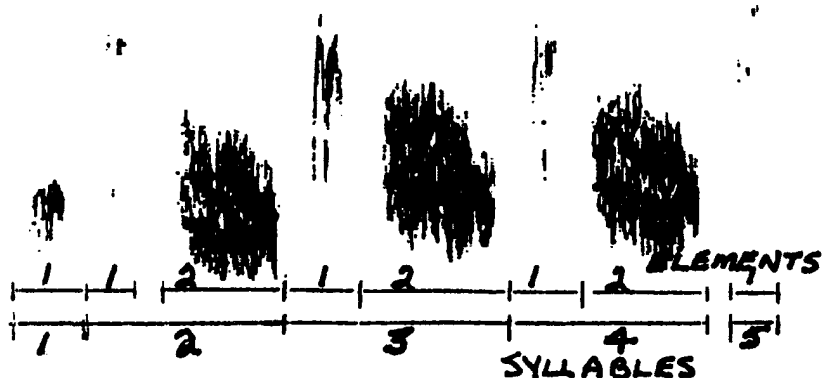


Figure 2: Black-throated Gray Warbler

delivered with a buzzy quality. A closer look at syllable #2 in figure 1 shows the second element closely follows the first element, but at a slightly lower pitch. This difference in pitch is so slight that it may not be discernable by ear but it does have an effect on the sound of the complete syllable. It sounds like a short inflection at the end of the first element. My phonetic rendering of this syllable is the word *buzz-y*, with a heavier stress on the *buzz* than on the *y*. The *buzz* part sounds drawn out in its delivery.

This complicated syllable is repeated three times in this song, with the pitch remaining the same. The song ends with a sibilant sounding element at a higher pitch than the preceding syllables. My phonetic rendering of the whole song is *buzz-y, buzz-y, buzz-y, buzz*. The beginning element of this song is part of a syllable. Syllable #2 is not quite as fully developed in delivery as are syllables #3 and #4.

Consider now syllable #2 in figure 2, the Black-throated Gray Warbler. This syllable starts off with a small element well separated from the buzzy second element, and it is delivered at an obviously higher pitch with a short weak accent. The second, more strongly stressed element, is heard to follow immediately after the first sound. The pitch of this second element is lower. The difference in pitch of these two elements is significant and the syllable is heard as a two-noted, high-low, combination. This syllable is repeated three times. The song finishes with the first element followed by a second element, sibilant in sound and at a higher pitch. My phonetic rendering of this song is

y y y y, buzz
buzz, buzz, buzz,

Each song, because of the differences in stress of delivery, position of elements, and pitch relative to position, has developed its own rhythm. Learning to visualize and identify these rhythms should be of help in distinguishing which secretive warbler is singing.

The sonagrams used in this article were produced by the National Sound Archive, Wildlife Section, London, England, using the Voice Identification RT - 1000m, a real-time digital sound spectrograph.

I am grateful for the review of this paper by Marian Innes, Art Tinney, Ann Richardson, and Martin McNicholl.

Literature cited:

Catchole, Clive, K. and P.J.B. Slater, *Bird Song*, 1995. Cambridge University Press.

EDITORS' NOTE: * Readers interested in the appearances of sonagrams (or sonograms as they may sometimes be spelled) should take a look at a copy of either the 1966 or 1983 editions of:

A Guide to Field Identification: Birds of North America / Chandler S. Robbins, et al

These field guides may be better known to some as the "Golden Guides" and both of them include sonagrams for a number of bird species.

Bird vocalizations may be used in conjunction with plumages to help sort out some hybrid identifications. Check our BCFO Journal:

Innes, Douglas W. and Marian Innes. 1995. Plumage and songs of a putative hybrid between Hermit and Townsend's Warblers found in the Alberni Valley, Vancouver Island. *British Columbia Birds* 5:12-14.

A WASHINGTON BIRDING EXPERIENCE

by Larry Cowan
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A group of seven people was scheduled to participate in the Vancouver Natural History Society (VNHS) Mid-March bird outing to the Yakima area of Washington State. This outing is becoming an annual trip to sample the dryland birds of south central Washington. Two of the group set out on Thursday with the other five leaving Saturday morning. The Saturday morning group, travelling in two vehicles, started out in an overcast that turned to a driving rain then to snow as we climbed into the mountains. We stopped at North Bend, Washington, 22 miles [35.4 km] from the summit of Snoqualmie Pass for a bite to eat and to plan the day's birding.

This would prove to be the furthest we would get on this attempt. While brunching in North Bend the group was informed the Pass had been closed until further notice. A vote was taken and it was decided to scrub the trip and try again next month.

The trip was re-scheduled for the weekend of April 19, 20 and 21 with five people making the trip this time. The itinerary for the weekend was to bird the Vantage Highway - east from Ellensburg, over the Columbia River then on to the Tri-Cities area of southern Washington. We planned to stay Saturday and Sunday evenings in Kennewick. On Sunday local birders Bill and Nancy LaFramboise of Richland had graciously consented to be our guides. On Monday we would head home and en route try to find the elusive White-headed Woodpecker (WHWO) and other Ponderosa Pine habitat birds in an area north west of Yakima.

We left bright and early Saturday morning April 19 and again rendezvoused in North Bend for brunch. After this short stop it was on to Ellensburg. From here we headed East along the Old Vantage Highway that runs north of I-90 from Ellensburg to Vantage travelling through dry sage habitat, that we hoped, would afford us the opportunity to see Sage Thrasher and other sage species. Many ravens, kestrels, and a pair of Mountain Bluebirds were seen along the road before our first stop at the Quilomene Wildlife Area. This stop was immediately productive with the sound and sight of a singing Sage Thrasher. Simultaneous to the spotting of this species, a Loggerhead Shrike popped onto a fence post nearby to look for prey. Western Meadowlarks and White-crowned Sparrows were in abundance at this and many other locations.

Our next stop was on old corral on the south side of the Highway. Here we saw Say's Phoebe, Vesper and Brewer's Sparrows, and soaring high overhead an immature Golden Eagle. A singing Rock Wren was observed on a rock bluff on a short stop near Vantage.

On the trip south to our evening destination of Kennewick, several Long-billed Curlews were seen in flight.

Sunday dawned sunny but *VERY WINDY*. At 7:00 am local guides, Bill and Nancy LaFramboise along with another local birder Dennis Rockwell, meet us at our hotel. The group cannot thank them enough for the great day of birding they were to treat us too.

After exchanging a few social pleasantries we set out for our first target bird, the Burrowing Owl. A short drive was all it took. It was amazing how close we could approach this bird using our vehicles as blinds. Our next stop was for a dark morph Ferruginous Hawk that had been recently spotted near a nest on a high-tension tower north of Richland. The nest was there but no hawk. Having another location to try for this species later in the day we moved on.

Next birds to sight were Sage Sparrow and Horned Lark. Our attempts to locate

Grasshopper Sparrows proved fruitless due in part to the high winds. Many in the group had not seen "tumble weeds" in action but by the end of this day they had experienced dodging a few. No amount of their pleading for a "prairie souvenir" could get me to strap one to the top of my vehicle.

Rattlesnake Hills, northwest of Posser was our next destination. En route to this area we had great views of a soaring Swainson's Hawk. Also along the way we sighted Say's Phoebe, Horned Lark, Brewer's Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike and the ever-present Western Meadowlark. Our end destination in the Rattlesnake Hills was an old homestead at the head of a coulee where we hoped to find Gray Partridge and a nesting pair of Great Horned Owls. As we approached the end of this road we sighted a spring arrival Western Kingbird with a second seen at the end of the road. The pair of Great Horned Owls did not disappoint. Periodic harassing by Black-billed Magpies enabled us to see them flying on several occasions. The Gray Partridge proved tougher to locate but we did finally see groups of two and three birds.

The day was passing quickly so it was suggested we drive back towards Richland to Webber Canyon for another try for the Ferruginous Hawk. Along the way a short stop at a rock bluff afforded a scope view of a Prairie Falcon sitting on its nest in a small cavity in the rocks. Arriving at the first area at Webber Canyon we had a brief view of a Ferruginous Hawk disappearing over the Canyon wall. This was not a good enough view for most so we headed up a side road to see if we could locate the bird. We did not relocate it but we did see a Chukar.

With our day of birding rapidly coming to its end we decided to make our last stop the Yakima River Delta between Richland and Kennewick. It was a fitting end to a great day's birding. We managed to get very good views of three American Avocet, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, a Bank Swallow and a Forster's Tern. Over dinner the group and one of our guides, Nancy LaFramboise (Bill had to go to work) wondered how tomorrow could top this great day of birding.

Monday dawned sunny with the high winds of Sunday gone. At breakfast we decided to make another attempt for the Ferruginous Hawk then head for the Wenas Campground northwest of Yakima, a reliable location for the White-headed Woodpecker.

Our Monday morning quest for the dark phase Ferruginous hawk this time was successful. We found it about a mile [1.6 km] north of the nest sight we visited on Sunday. We hoped this was a good omen for the rest of the day. With this bird behind us we made the journey north towards Yakima. Along the way we viewed several Osprey tending nests and hunting. A short stop for brunch in Selah then on to the spot known as the Wenas Campsite (This is northwest of Yakima).

We spotted our first of many Western Bluebirds on the drive to Wenas. After the pavement ended a few streams had to be crossed covering the road in various places but these did not pose any problem.

Once at the campsite we spotted several Townsend's Solitaires and more Western Bluebirds, but no White-headed Woodpeckers. We drove farther up the road until we came to a stream we couldn't cross. We spent about half an hour scouting this area and found a Red-naped Sapsucker, Mountain Chickadees, and a White-breasted Nuthatch. Still no WHWO. We agreed to return to the campsite and play a tape to try to attract it. On arriving back at the site we got out of the car to sight a small group of Pygmy Nuthatches flitting around in a nearby tree. We played the tape and off to our left caught a glimpse of a dark bird at the base of a tree. Finally our WHWO, a female, moving from tree to tree. She stayed near the base of most trees she visited, feeding on insects. We had the good fortune to watch her for five minutes or so.

Our trip was deemed a rousing success at this point and we headed across country to Ellensburg where we would pick up I-90 for our journey home. The trip across proved as rewarding as our trip to Wenas. We were lucky enough to spot another WHWO, a male this time and at even closer range. Other highlights were a Blue Grouse and a Rough-legged Hawk.

All in all one of the best outings I have personally participated in. One member of the group recorded 23 lifers with another having seen 18. It will be tough to top this trip next year but we will try. Keep your calendars open for next year's trip.

A Stroll Around the Knoll

by Doug Cooper
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Langley, BC V1M 2K1

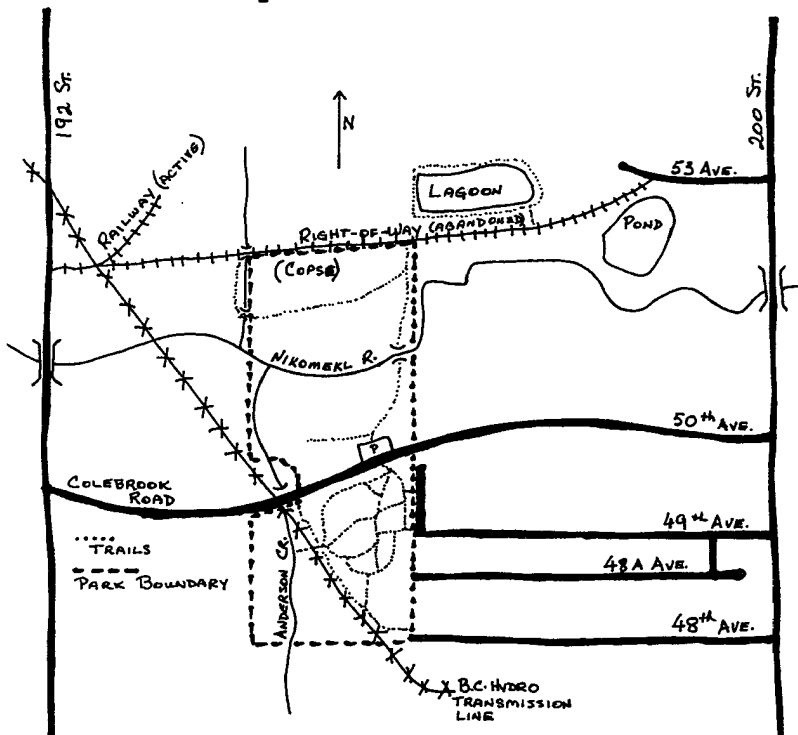
When my children were quite small, I found a pleasant way to combine child-care and birding was to take one of them with me out for a walk to Hi-Knoll. The neighbourhood became quite familiar with the sight of me, and one of the children in either Snuggli or backpack, heading off down the avenue on a birding walk. The children became known as the "bird-watching babies".

Hi-Knoll park is located in east Surrey at the Surrey-Langley border. It straddles Colebrook Road between roughly 194th and 198th Streets. If one is approaching from 200th Street, one would turn west on 50th Avenue just as 50th becomes Colebrook Road. The park boundaries are outlined on the accompanying map [page 15]. It seemed logical to me to include the north side of the Nikomekl flood plain across the river from Hi-Knoll and the waterfowl reserve to the north and east as well as Brydon Lagoon because they form a birding continuum with the park proper. The land for the park was donated to the Municipality of Surrey by the Skelton family on the condition that it not be developed. A monument uphill from the small picnic area bears the following inscription: "This land known as Hi-Knoll Park is dedicated to the people of Surrey (in trust) in memory of the pioneer families of British Columbia to preserve as created by nature and inherited unspoiled, both from the native people and wildlife, to remain for the enjoyment of people and wildlife, for ever. Doris Kathleen Skelton, Sept. 6, 1974."

Visitors to the park would best park in the small parking lot on the north side of Colebrook Road at approximately 196th Street. The choice then is to either cross the road to the south and enter the forest or head north to the meadows and flood plain.

If one crosses the road, after carefully checking both ways for speeding motorists, one finds the trail heads up an incline. The borders of this trail are where the first Erythronium lilies appear in the spring, usually in March. Two species are present in the park, the white fawn lily (*E. Oregonium*) and the pink fawn lily (*E. revolutum*). The forest is made up of second growth trees, mostly alders, cedars and a few taller conifers. It has a wide variety of native flowers and shrubs. There is evidence of old logging activity. Some of the very broad stumps still show slots where early loggers placed spring-boards in order to fell the trees.

Map of Hi-Knoll Area



The east border of the park is adjacent to 196th Street in Langley and along the forest edge Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees can nearly always be seen and heard. This is a good area for Evening Grosbeaks in winter and spring with noisy flocks often being present in the treetops or swooping down to visit a feeder at a house across the street. Western Tanagers can be seen here in the spring. Bewick's and Winter Wrens are often singing in the area and both types of kinglets are not uncommon. Varied Thrushes are found here in the winter. A pair of Downy Woodpeckers have used a tall spar in the south-east corner of the park for a sounding pole and they can be seen eating the fruit of the red-fruited elderberry bushes that grow along the edge of the forest. Flocks of Bushtits also frequent the forest edge and I have found one of their amazing nests down near the creek.

Red-winged Crossbills have been recorded here once. I used to see a lot of Rufous-sided Towhees here but now I see only Spotted Towhees.

In the spring deeper in the forest Black-throated Gray Warblers can be heard (and seen if one is prepared to crane one's neck) high in the forest canopy. Townsend's Warblers have also been seen here. Pacific-slope Flycatchers can occasionally be seen and more frequently be heard. Great Horned Owls may be heard hooting at night. Hairy Woodpeckers and Brown Creepers are not uncommon.

The south-west border of the park is made up of the Hydro high-voltage transmission lines right-of-way and a small creek known to some as Anderson Creek. Part of the right-of-way is a sandy meadow and Ring-necked Pheasants can be both seen and heard there. In the spring and summer White-crowned Sparrows sing from what seems like every third treetop. The right-of-way then slopes down to the north-west to the creek valley. The slopes and the valley are summertime home to many Swainson's Thrushes, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Willow Flycatchers and several species of warblers (Common Yellowthroat, Orange-crowned Warbler, Wilson's Warbler and Yellow Warbler). I have observed in this area a flycatcher, probably Willow, feeding juvenile Brown-headed Cowbirds. At a small man-made pond Green Herons may sometimes be flushed. Red-eyed Vireos nest in the area and one can hear them singing most of the summer months. Transient Golden-crowned Sparrows may be seen as they move through. The lucky birder may even spot an occasional Osprey eying salmon when they spawn in the creek.

If one goes (carefully again) back across Colebrook Road to the north one discovers a grassy slope and meadow which look upon the Nikomekl flood plain. The Nikomekl is not more than a creek during the dry days of summer but several weeks of steady winter rains will cause it to flood its banks and form a temporary lake of several acres. Sometimes, when the flood plain is full, a Bald Eagle may be spotted perched in a tall spar here as it surveys the flocks of waterfowl which congregate below.

The air over the meadow in summer is often full of swallows darting hither and thither as they glean the insects. Northern Shrikes may be seen patrolling the bank in the winter. On the north side of the meadow is a copse of trees between the meadow and the old BC Electric Interurban Railway right-of-way. For two summers running a male Lazuli Bunting has been seen along its northern edge. Nashville Warblers are a possibility here as well. A Great Horned Owl has been seen roosting deep within this stand. Once I recovered an owl pellet here which contained not only the leg bone of a bird, but also an attached band. After some investigation it was determined that the band (and presumably the accompanying leg) had belonged on a late-lamented racing pigeon.

There is a more extensive marshy area to the east of the park on both sides of the river. A few tall trees scattered through the marsh are often used by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks. The border of the marsh and the old railroad right-of-way is a good spot for Common Yellowthroats and Marsh Wrens. Lincoln's Sparrows have been seen here in the fall. North of the marsh is Brydon Lagoon. The lagoon is quite deep and is popular with diving ducks, especially in the winter. It is a good place to Hooded Mergansers as well as Canvasback, Ring-necked Ducks and Pied-billed Grebes. There are Wood Duck nesting boxes here and for several years females with ducklings have been observed. It is also another location to try for Green Heron. Belted Kingfishers can often be seen perching on the power lines that border the lagoon.

At the farthest eastern edge of the flood plain just prior to 200th Street is another small pond that is always good for waterfowl. Gadwall and Cinnamon Teal have been seen there. One May I recorded a female Red-necked Phalarope and a pair of Wilson's Phalarope. If the water level is low, muddy shores are exposed and shorebirds such as Greater Yellowlegs, Common Snipe, both dowitchers, and Baird's Sandpipers are possible. Also possible in the fall are American Pipits.

This is quite an "under-birded" area. There are undoubtedly many more species of birds to be seen than I have listed here so come on out and take your own 'Stroll Around the Knoll'. I'm certain you will not be disappointed.

Attention All Nest Finders

The 1998 nesting season is upon us! Already, in late March, Great Horned Owls were on eggs, Anna's Hummingbirds have fledged young, Mountain Bluebirds were inspecting nest boxes, and magpies were conspicuous by their absence.

The **BC Nest Record Scheme**, now in its 43rd year, is the longest running co-operative effort between naturalists, student, and biologists to gather information on the breeding biology of birds in the province. If you would like to participate in this important activity, and record information on nests, eggs, and young found in BC, please contact the address below for nest cards and an instruction manual.

BC Nest Records Scheme
P.O. Box 6218, Station C
Victoria, BC V8P 5L5
Phone/Fax (250) 477-0465

Thank you,
Wayne Campbell

MUGAHA MARSH - SONGBIRD MIGRATION IN NORTH CENTRAL B.C.

by Jim Tuck
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July 26, 1997. As the last bird of the day is released, the five of us, Lambies, Tucks, and Rhonda Milliken, sit back with sighs of tired contentment. It is early afternoon of our second day of the 1997 fall season and we have just finished the busiest day ever at Mugaha Marsh. Finished banding and measuring birds, that is. There's still afternoon and evening observations and the inevitable daily summaries and data proofing yet to do, plus some minor adjustments to the nets. The day that began at 5 am won't really be over until after dusk at about 9 pm.

Since 1994, local volunteers under the direction of Canadian Wildlife Service biologist Rhonda Milliken have monitored spring and fall songbird migrations in the Rocky Mountain Trench near Mackenzie BC. On the surface, the program may seem to have little chance of success, but dig a little deeper and you'll find a story of learning and enthusiasm in an improbably rich habitat. And, of course, there are lots of birds.

The Rocky Mountain Trench at Mackenzie, 190 km north of Prince George, is a 15 km wide valley angling from southeast to northwest along the west flank of the Rocky Mountains. The Trench separates the Rockies to the east from the Omineca Mountains and Nechako Plateau to the west and is an aerial highway for western migrant birds entering the boreal forest. The Rockies at this point are comprised of fairly low, heavily eroded peaks, more reminiscent of the older mountains of eastern North America than of the picture book Rockies to the south. The low mountains and the Peace River Gap, the only river level break in the Rockies north of Mexico, combine to form a clear low elevation avenue for northwest bound eastern migrant birds to enter the north central part of BC.

The separation between eastern and western species and subspecies gets a bit fuzzy here. That Sapsucker you hear drumming on the dead aspen branch may be Red-breasted, Red-naped, Yellow-bellied, or ... something in between? Mainly elevation and song separate the slate colored Fox Sparrow that breeds in the valley bottom from the red Fox Sparrow of the alpine fringes. And does that Yellow-rumped Warbler have the yellow chin of Audubon's, the white of Myrtle or is it sort of "cream colored"?

Songbird monitoring activities at Mackenzie consist of one-kilometre long transects at three sites: Gagnon creek; Chichouyenily creek (Chico for short, as most people here can't say it properly either); and Mugaha marsh. The transect trails are walked near dawn twice weekly throughout the spring and fall migration periods, from late April to early June and from late July to early October. Along the transects, all birds seen or heard within 50 metres of the trail are recorded by species. Age, sex and behavior are recorded when possible. The transect information is supplemented by a capture and banding site at Mugaha marsh. The program at Mugaha marsh operates through the fall migration period and is intended to provide additional information on age and sex ratios of fall migrants as well as information on the size, weight and condition of birds near the beginning of their journey southward.

The site at Mugaha marsh is in the upper part of the annual drawdown zone of Williston Reservoir. WAC Bennett Dam, on the reservoir, provides hydroelectric power for much of the province. Water levels on the reservoir fluctuate 10-20 metres annually, with low water in the spring and high water in the fall, just the opposite of natural lakes. Most of this drawdown zone is exposed mud or sand at low water and wave swept shallows at high water, but Mugaha is at the head of a sheltered bay that was a mix of forest and wetland before the creation of the reservoir. The area is now a rich combination of

shallow open water, sedge wetland, and riparian shrubs that provides a home for a diverse array of bird species from Common Loons to warblers, sparrows, and blackbirds.

Two species of warbler, American Redstart and Northern Waterthrush, are particularly abundant at Mugaha marsh in late summer. Their high numbers and the fact that many of these birds are heavily molting and have very low fat reserves is causing us to speculate on the role that Mugaha and similar sites play in the biology of these species. Is Mugaha a sort of staging area, where these birds come to complete their pre-basic molt and prepare for the journey south? If so, how long do individuals stay here and where do they come from?

We don't have answers to those questions yet, but we are starting to provide data to fill some of the holes in the limited knowledge of the birds of this part of the province. None of us locally are specially trained bird experts, but we are enthusiastic learners and have lots of questions. We are having fun and we hope that we are helping to increase the awareness of the environmental values in the local area, especially with regard to our feathered summer songsters.

If you would like to visit us for a day or two, or volunteer to work at Mugaha for a longer period, please contact one of the following:

Vi Lambie	(250) 997-6876	or	lambiedav@cnc.bc.ca
Cynthia Tuck	(250) 997-3824	or	tuck@perf.bc.ca
Derek Connelly	(250) 997-4001		

The Crow's Christmas Buffet: An Unscientific Observation

by Audrey J. Viken
1292 Jefferson Avenue
West Vancouver, BC V1T 2B1

Soon into the New Year I thaw out my bucket of kitchen scraps (Christmas detritus that cannot go into the compost) and take it to a long, sawn log on the beach, a bird banquet table. I ladle out the mess and retreat to my vehicle to await my guests. Sometimes, as this year, they take their time arriving so I amuse myself scanning the sea and shore for waterfowl, counting and identifying, recounting and watching and musing in general. The usual stuff of self-entertainment. A half-hour passes with a few odd distant sightings, then, approaching on the right, a small flock of black birds, flapping resolutely. Northwestern Crows. Seven, following the shoreline. Soon they will see the spread out buffet and the feasting-frenzy will begin.

But no, they pass on by! Another invitation? Better peckings elsewhere? Suddenly one bird makes an abrupt U-turn and alights on a log three meters from the feast table. It studies the spread with one eye, then the other, giving a harsh double-caw. "Hey, you guys, come back. Look at this!" But his mates have flown on without a backward glance. "Hey, this is good, I tell you", he caws pleadingly to the rapidly diminishing black dots in the distance. He thrusts himself into the air and flaps furiously in a vain effort to catch up. "Hey, wait up you guys, will you listen to me! #^!<*-~'>," as he, too, disappears up the beach where he joins his gang foraging in the newly washed-in seaweed five hundred meters away.

Seven minutes pass. A couple of Glaucous-winged gulls fly by a bit offshore, failing to notice my offering. Then, from the clutch of crows up the beach, first one then the whole troop fly determinedly and directly to the spread-out feast, perch on divers vantage points at varying distances from the table; looking, assessing, discussing the implications. Suddenly, one crow braver than the others, or hungrier, flits in and flies off with a large glob of food, two buddies in hot pursuit. Among the remaining crows a consensus seems to be reached. This, apparently, is not a trick, or worse, a trap. No one has been pounced upon. Nor been shot. All swoop in, grab bill fulls and withdraw to consume immediately or cache secretly until later. In the meanwhile, the activity has attracted the attention of other crows. They appear from all directions and the numbers swell quickly from seven to ten, twenty, thirty-five, fifty. Then the gulls appear. Great ruffians. Two. No hesitation here. Jostled out, the smaller crows retreat closely, watching the greatest part of their feast being gobbled up by ever increasing numbers of gulls; three, ten, then fifteen, and soon only a few soggy bits of the mess remain, welded to the log by frost. The gulls leave.

The crows linger, pondering the vicissitudes of life; a few peck hopelessly at the cracks in the log before flying off in twos and fours, expecting perhaps that another feast might somehow materialize beneath them. After all, if it could happen once...

You have guessed, no doubt, that some of this discourse is fiction. I did not actually hear those crow words nor was I privy to those crow thoughts. This little bit of whimsied observation, however, illustrates a marked behavioral difference between crows and gulls which is striking enough to leave me doing my own pondering. Are the crows cautious and hesitant because they have come to suspect malicious intent? They have, after all, long been objects of persecution. Does their distrust of anything "too good to be true" translate into behavior of beneficial survival value? By hesitating those few moments when they could have "scoffed the lot" they lost a great opportunity for full stomachs on a bitterly cold day. Are their suspicions rewarded often enough to make canny assessments worthwhile and calculated risks of loss justified? Perhaps it is nature's way of spreading out the largess. After all, gulls are opportunistic feeders as well, and the maxim "He who hesitates is lost" is possibly just as valid for the survival of a species as is caution and cunning. Would the gulls have been more wary if the crows had not been there first to give it the once-over? Certainly, both crows and gulls, our common urban scavengers, are numerous enough to attest to the overall success of both strategies; the study and assess of the crows, and the dive in and gorge of the gulls. And, most puzzling, the initial spotter left a very tempting opportunity for food to rejoin his cohorts. Could he not trust his own judgement? Was it gang loyalty? After ignoring the exhortations of the spotter of my offering all that time, what was "said", what was the nature of the communication that caused the crows, after seven full minutes, to arise as one and fly directly and purposefully to the banquet table as if to settle an argument once and for all? I wonder...? "Where are you, Grey Owl*, just when I need your special expertise? ...Dr. Dolittle?"

EDITORS' NOTES: * "Grey Owl (1888-1938) was the Indian name of Archibald Stansfeld Belaney, an adopted Ojibway who gained fame as a wildlife writer and lecturer... Belaney was born in Hastings, England. He moved to Canada at the age of 18 and became a guide in northern Ontario. In 1907, he joined a band of Ojibway Indians, who later adopted him and gave him the name Grey Owl". World Book Encyclopedia -- we had mis-remembered who he was.

If readers wish to learn about corvid behavior we list three books which we have enjoyed and which may tempt your own reading palates:

Bird Brains by Candace Savage (1995);
Ravens in Winter by Bernd Heinrich (1989);
Ravens, Crows, Magpies and Jays by Tony Angell (1978).

AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

Doug Cooper

Doug, a family physician, lives with his family in Langley. He was introduced to the pleasures of birding by the gift of a pair of binoculars in the early 1970s. Too much of his birding these days is of the "accidental" variety.

Larry Cowan

Larry, an avid birder since 1989, has had a lifelong interest in birds. A member of the Burke Mountain Naturalists and the Vancouver Natural History Society, Larry currently is on the Birding Committee for VNHS and is also one of the people responsible for the running of the Vancouver Bird Alert.

Al Grass

Al has worked as a Park Naturalist for some 25 years; currently he is stationed at the Vancouver District, N. Vancouver. His ornithological interests include raptors, uses of native trees/shrubs by birds and woodpecker feeding habits.

Doug Innes

Doug, a member of the Comox-Strathcona Natural History Society, has had a lifelong interest in birding. Currently his interest centres around bird photography and the recording of nature sounds, especially bird sounds.

Hue N. MacKenzie

Hue MacKenzie birded for many years with the Ottawa Field Naturalists. He and Jo Ann are active members of the White Rock and Surrey Naturalists and the Vancouver Natural History Society.

Jo Ann MacKenzie


Jo Ann has been an avid birder for over 25 years. She and husband Hue moved to the Lower Mainland from Ontario in 1983. Jo Ann teaches birding classes for the White Rock & Surrey Naturalists and she enjoys birding anywhere, anytime!

Jim Tuck

Jim is a forester/naturalist who lives in Mackenzie, BC. He participates in a variety of local birding activities and is particularly interested in alpine birds and Empidonax flycatchers.

Audrey J. Viken

Audrey has enjoyed birds since her childhood on an Alberta farm. The casual interest became more serious twenty years ago when she learned of the organized community of bird watchers and became involved in conservation efforts to conserve bird habitat. At that time she joined the Vancouver Natural History Society and the ABA and began travelling to far-off places in search of birds.



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