



BC BIRDING

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

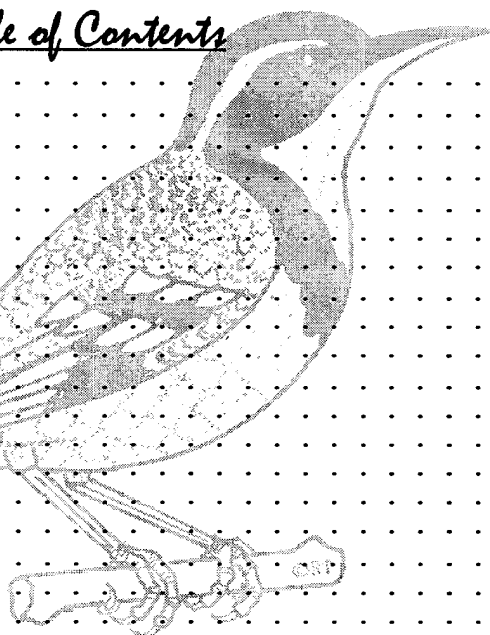
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A subscription to this quarterly is a benefit of membership in the society. Members will also receive a copy of the annual journal, **British Columbia Birds**.

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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EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS

Regular readers will notice a difference in this issue - it's longer. Longer issues will not be our usual practice but because el Niño seems to be found in close association to the House of Y2K this month, well...! Actually member's response to our appeal for articles for the December issue was great and we had a couple left over. We received a few unsolicited items. We asked for, and received, a Site Guide complete and on time. The BCFO Bird Records Committee needed to respond to a Xantus's controversy. So who do we insult by not publishing their input in this issue, the members, the Board, or the other contributors? As generous editors we added eight extra pages and published the lot. Enjoy - it's back to twenty pages next quarter!

Remember the BCFO AGM is coming in June. We will be needing at least three new directors to replace those who will not be standing for re-election. Are you willing to serve? Do you know of someone who might wish to serve? Please send your nominations, in writing, to Ken Morgan (address in Board Box on left) ASAP. Nominations must have the signed approval of the person being nominated.

So what do we have for you in this issue? Gary explains the Xantus's story, Nina details a Great Blue Heron success story on Salt Spring Island, Eric relates a cautionary tale about accidentals, Jim and Nancy provide us with a great Site Guide for the Squamish Estuary, Ken presents the listing stats and Rick tallies up the swan and eagle counts, Martin sends us snippets from the news, Betty requests some volunteers to help with the Strathcona Bird Search and Wayne asks for volunteers to assist with the British Columbia Nest Record Scheme, and Andy looks at life on the ledge. Lots of good material to get your head around.

We hope that all 1996 and 1997 members have received their journals by now. Our thanks go to Martin for his efforts in getting us caught up.

The BCFO membership form is now up on the web courtesy of Kevin Slagboom. Send prospective new members to Kevin's BCFO home page where they can click on Membership Application and print themselves a copy. Mail in the copy. It does NOT get sent direct to us on the web. The web site is found at: <http://birding.bc.ca/bcfo/membership>. Let us know what else you might like to see up there. Good Birding. Andy & Marilyn, Editors.

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 **B.C. 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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I trust that everyone appreciated the arrival of Volumes 6 and 7 of British Columbia Birds. I suggest that you read again the Editor's Acknowledgments and Comments on page 24 of Volume 6 and page 22 of Volume 7 which indicates the complex process and the range of people involved in producing a peer-reviewed journal. It is also timely to thank our editor, Martin McNicholl for bringing these excellent publications to fruition, and as Martin points out, we are now almost on schedule (for the first time in the history of British Columbia Birds). Well done, Martin!

At the AGM in June, BCFO will be losing two or three directors, and two or three members of the Bird Records Committee. I encourage all members to consider putting their name forward for one or both of these positions. If you think you can contribute to BCFO please seriously consider this.

Recently, the BCFO Bird Records Committee ruled on the Xantus's Hummingbird that appeared in Gibsons in November 1997. With a vote of five in favour of acceptance and two against, the bird does not meet the standard for admittance to BCFO's list of BC birds. This has set off a flurry of comment and debate in the media, from the Globe and Mail, to CBC radio, local newspapers, the internet, the birding and non-birding community and listers and non-listers.

Many BCFO'ers will understand the logic of the process, but other people are lost in the mechanics of rare bird record committee decision-making. This is not the place to debate this issue, but in the meantime I would refer anyone with an interest to a well-reasoned e-mail from Wayne Weber on Tweeter's web-site located through the following URL: (<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~dvictor/index.html>).

While on the topic of Bird Record committees, and checklists, I am concerned about the disarray of this process in British Columbia. We now face the reality of different organisations with differing checklists and differing standards of acceptance. Other species that will be subject to rulings in the near future include a controversial Crested Caracara. We should work to resolve this present impasse.

Politics aside, the birds of the Sunshine Coast are starting to exercise their vocal chords in this early February. Already heard singing are Winter Wren, Hutton's Vireo, Song Sparrow and Red-winged Blackbird. The Rufous Hummingbirds, Tree and Violet-green Swallows, and Yellow-rumped Warblers are winging northwards and we await their arrival with the usual anticipation.

Good springtime birding,
Tony Greenfield

BCFO Ninth Annual General Meeting

Members are cordially invited to attend the British Columbia Field Ornithologist's Ninth Annual General Meeting

to be held in

Oliver, British Columbia

from 18-20 June 1999.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

DATES AND/OR CONTACTS OF SEVERAL CONFERENCES HAVE BEEN CHANGED FROM THOSE ANNOUNCED INITIALLY. THOSE LISTED HERE ARE THE MOST RECENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE.

- March 23-26 1999 **SOCIETY FOR NORTHWESTERN VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY & NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**, Ashland, Oregon. Contact: Don Major, Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology, Suite B-175, 4820 Yelm Hwy. SE, Olympia, WA 98503, phone (541) 754-4705.
- March 30 -
Apr 3 1999 **COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 69th ANNUAL MEETING**, Portland, Oregon. Contact: Erick G Campbell, BLM, Box 2965, Portland, OR 97208, phone (503) 952-6382.
- May 9-13 1999 **BIRD STRIKE '99, FIRST COMBINED MEETING OF BIRD STRIKE COMMITTEE U.S.A. & BIRD STRIKE COMMITTEE CANADA**, Richmond, BC. Contact: Bruce McKinnon, Transport Canada, Safety & Security, Aerodrome Safety Branch, 330 Sparks St, Place de Ville, Tower C, Ottawa, ON K1A 0N8; phone (613) 990-0515.
- May 13-16 1999 **CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION/FEDERATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURALISTS CONFERENCE**, Qualicum Beach, BC. Contact: Betty Lunan, Arrowsmith Naturalists, c/o J Parkhouse, 906 Royal Dornoch Drive, Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 1C9; phone (250) 338-6055.
- June 3-6 1999 **WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 24th ANNUAL CONFERENCE**, Anchorage, Alaska. Contact: Theodore G Tobish, Jr, 2510 Foraker Drive, Anchorage, AK 99517, ph (907) 248-2153; Robert E Gill, Jr., NBS, Alaska Research Center, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503, ph (907) 786-3514; or Stanley E Senner, Box 102264, Anchorage, AK 99510-2264, ph (907) 278-8012.
- June 4-6 1999 **MOUNT ROBSON 12th ANNUAL BIRD BLITZ**. Expect a tally of at least 100 species. For full details please contact: Nancy Kruger (250) 563-7896 or Gail Ross (250) 563-1017.
- June 5-6 1999 **STRATHCONA PARK BIRD SEARCH**. For participation, checklist, or information contact: Betty Brooks phone/fax (250) 337-8180, or email ejbrooks@mars.ark.com.
- June 10-13 1999 **WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 80th ANNUAL MEETING**, Waterville, Maine. Contact: W Herbert Wilson, Department of Biology, Colby College, Waterville ME 04901, phone (207) 872-3432.
- June 18-20+ 1999 **BC FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST'S 9th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Oliver, BC. Start planning now to attend this major BC birding event. Always a great time. Contact: Glenda Ross (250) 493-7500 or Margaret Holm (250) 496-4049 for details. Check this issue for an insert giving additional information.
- July 29-
Aug. 5 1999 **SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING**, Santo Domingo, Dominion Republic. Contact: Kate Wallace [no address given]; phone (809) 238-5345.
- Aug. 5-7 1999 **ENDANGERED SPECIES: 1999 ANNUAL MEETING, SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS**, Montreal, Quebec. Contact: Gilles Seutin, Department of Geography, McGill University, 805 Sherbrooke West, Montreal, PQ H3A 2K6.

B.C. BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

Albino Hummingbird Visits Victoria -A six-page compilation of known records of albinism in hummingbirds includes a record of an "all white" bird "with pink bill and legs" and dark eyes reported by J. Cam Finlay from "Cordova" [sic: Cordova], Bay, Victoria 16-19 June 1998 (E. Womack. 1998. supplement to *Hummingbird Hotline* #51).

Wandering & Elderly B.C. Birds -In his latest compilation of "Significant Encounters," of banded birds, J. B. (Barny) Dunning (*North Amer. Bird Bander* 23:89-92, 1998) includes two American White Pelicans banded as nestlings in B.C.'s only colony at Stum Lake in 1991 and 1992. Both died of botulism at California's Salton Sea about 2200 km. to the south-east in the fall of 1996 when four and five years old. A gosling Canada Goose banded along the lower Pitt River in 1982 survived 14 years until found dead in nearby Burnaby in 1996. A nestling Osprey banded at Kootenay Lake in 1987 was eight years old when trapped and released there in 1995. Another Kootenay Lake nestling banded in 1990 had wandered about 220 km. southeast to Harrison, Idaho, when captured and released at six years of age in 1996. A nestling Barn Owl banded at Delta in November 1983 was close to home [not about 2000 km. northwest as stated] when found dead in Ladner on 18 January 1996.

Millikin Elected Bander Secretary -Rhonda Millikin of the Pacific and Yukon Region of the Canadian Wildlife Service was elected Secretary of the Western Bird Banding Association during their 1998 annual meeting at Marshall, California in September 1998 (Anonymous. 1998. *North Amer. Bird Bander* 23:105).

Wintering Trumpeter Swans vs. Agriculture -Numbers of swans wintering in the Comox Valley have increased in recent years, whereas the depleted estuarine vegetation on which they normally feed has not recovered sufficiently to support them. Thus, the swans are increasingly feeding on agricultural crops, putting them in conflict with local farmers (Anonymous. *Globe & Mail* 6 Aug. 1998:[p.?], extracted in *Toronto Field Nat.* 479:26, 1998).

Gerry Bennett -Those members whose interests lie primarily in "birdfinding" and bird listing will be saddened to learn of the recent death of Gerry Bennett, editor of *Birdfinding in Canada*, the first attempt at a country-wide newsletter on this topic (C. Rogers. 1999. *Ont. Bird Band. Assoc. Newsletter* 44(1):2).

Henri Ouellet -Another recent death was that of Dr. Henri Ouellet, successor to W. Earl Godfrey as Curator of Ornithology at the National Museum of Natural History within the National Museums of Canada (C. Rogers. 1999. *Ont. Bird Band. Assoc. Newsletter* 44(1):2). Henri was best known for his research on Gray Jays and for studies that contributed to the "splitting" of Bicknell's Thrush from Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Butler Honoured -Dr. Robert W. Butler of the Pacific and Yukon Region of the Canadian Wildlife Service was given one of five awards for public service by the Alumni Association of Simon Fraser University on 4 February 1999 (Interview with Rob on CBC Vancouver's afternoon show of 4 February 1999).

Ed Sing -Vancouver area birders recently lost one of their more active participants with the death of Edward Chan Sing of Burnaby (Announcement by Al Grass at Vancouver Natural History Society Birding Section meeting of 4 February 1999).



Bird Records Committee

by Gary Davidson

PO Box 294

Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0

There has been much discussion around the birding world lately concerning the Xantus's Hummingbird. The question on everyone's mind is "how did it get here?" The record has now been reviewed by the Bird Records Committee. The committee consists of seven members distributed geographically around the province. When reports are received by the chairperson, copies of all relevant material is made and circulated to the members. The members have a month to review the records in the package and reply to the chairperson. During this first round of voting, members are free to consult with other authorities, but not with other members of the committee. If more than two of the members vote not to accept a record, then the record is classified as "NOT ACCEPTED". If fewer than two members vote not to accept, then the record is ACCEPTED. If exactly two members vote not to accept then a second round of voting is initiated. This time the chairperson copies all members' comments from the first vote and circulates them to the committee. Having read each others comments, members vote again.

There are generally three possible reasons for a non-acceptance vote. Firstly, members might feel that the bird has simply been misidentified, (this is actually quite rare). Secondly, members might feel that the report itself is simply not convincing, that is, the information does not categorically rule out other possibilities. This is by far the most common reasons for non-acceptance. The third reason is when the question of origin is concerned. This is by far the most difficult to deal with. The Xantus's Hummingbird falls into this category. On the first round of voting, two members voted for non-acceptance. A second round was conducted with again two dissenting votes. In the committee's seven year existence this is the first time that a second vote has not resolved the issue. At this point the Xantus's Hummingbird record goes into an "UNDECIDED" category.

For a non-migratory bird to suddenly appear so far from home, was apparently a bit much for two of our members to accept. Some have suggested that Hurricane Nora could have been the conveyance by which the bird got here. Nora was in late September, the bird was not reported out of range until it appeared in Gibsons in November. Where was it in the interim? Furthermore, Nora did not blow strong north winds all the way to Canada. One member's comment could accept that the hurricane theory could blow a hummingbird well up into California, but what about the other 2000 km?

So what happens to the record now? As the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation asked me, "is there an appeal process?" The record can be reviewed again if any new information comes to the attention of the committee. Anyone is welcome to submit their views on the issue to me. If any new information is received I would be glad to circulate it to the members. Is anyone aware of other extra-limital records of this species? Is anyone aware of any research into storm-blown birds that might affect this decision? Will there be future records of this species north of its range in the fall?

At this time, I would like to acknowledge Jack Bowling for his contributions to the committee. Jack, one of the original members of the Bird Records Committee, will be stepping down later this year. His comments were always insightful and obviously well researched. Thanks Jack.



The McFadden Creek Heron Rookery

by Nina Raginsky
272 Beddis Road
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2J1

The Waterbird Watch Collective (WWC) was formed in 1994 to monitor and document water bird populations around the coast, lakes and ponds of Salt Spring Island. The WWC is proactive in conservation and has ongoing programs to educate the public and lobby all levels of government on local conservation issues surrounding coastal wildlife and habitat quality.

The WWC is run on a volunteer basis and currently has over 180 participants. Each participant receives a field kit that includes background information on local conservation issues, instructions for recording sightings, and a listing of resources such as species checklists, reference books and contact persons. A quarterly newsletter summarizes the inventory results and informs participants of local conservation concerns regarding the coastal birds and ecology.

Participants record sightings on a daily, weekly or intermittent basis, depending on their commitment and schedules. The sightings are entered into a database and summarized by species (or species group), location and season in a series of charts and maps. In the first two years of the collective over 20,000 sightings were recorded. The WWC is also active in the monitoring and protection of water bird breeding sites. The Great Blue Heron, Black Oystercatcher, Bald Eagle and Osprey all breed on Salt Spring Island. Each nesting site has been mapped and individual members of the collective monitor the sites during the breeding season. The location and success rate of all of the nest sites have been entered into a GIS database.

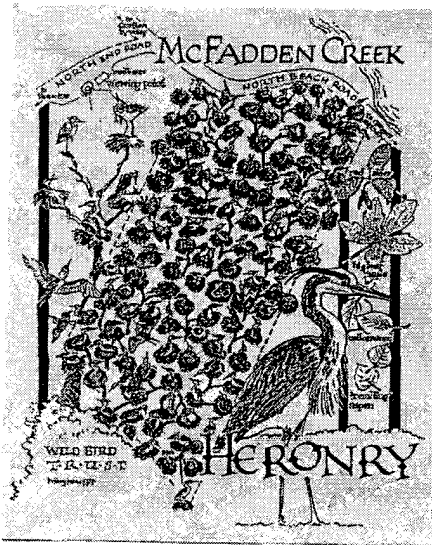
A main focus of the WWC is on public education and raising local awareness of coastal conservation issues. The WWC had educational programs in the schools and organizes and sponsors conservation experts to come and present talks for the general public. The three local public elementary schools have been organized to "adopt" the three Black Oystercatcher nests on the Island and the local high school and middle school have been involved in the protection of local heronries and their coastal feeding habitat.

The WWC has initiated several programs to protect local waterbird nest sites including land acquisition, monitoring and posting of signs at the sites, "adopt a nest" programs and articles submitted to the local papers. In conjunction with the Wild Bird Trust and Islands Trust Fund, the WWC has had a successful fund raising campaign to raise money for acquiring a property on the Island that contains the largest heronry in the southern Gulf Islands and has the first Globally Important Bird Area (IBA) designation in B.C.

The WWC acts as advocates for the coastal birds on their Island. Members of the WWC are kept informed of local conservation issues and organized in lobby efforts to insure the protection of the birds and their habitat. The baseline data they are collecting can be used as a tool to monitor changes in the coastal ecosystem. Areas critical to birds can be identified and methods to protect them incorporated into the local community plan. A review of provincial scale databases of bird distribution has shown that they are too crude to identify the sites of local importance. The participation of the community in collecting this kind of site specific resource information will become increasingly important as government funding for data collection diminishes and the need for coastal zone management increases. The success of the Waterbird Watch Collective can serve as a model for other coastal communities to build on.

The McFadden Creek Heron rookery [on Salt Spring Island] contains 124 nests in a stand of trembling aspen, fir, cottonwood, maple and alder situated on 12.5 acres of mixed forest and wetlands. This is the largest colony in B.C. It is the first globally important bird area (IBA) designation in B.C.

Great Blue Herons remain year round in the Strait of Georgia, though they disperse from their nesting areas after the young have fledged. Standing over three feet high, they have a wingspread of about six feet. Great blues are known to eat frogs, snakes, cockles, crustaceans and small mammals, but their primary food is fish, especially three spine stickleback, blenny, sculpin, shiner perch, and flounder. They return to their nest area in February and begin courtship displays and nest-building. By late March or early April, the herons lay two to six eggs, and incubate them for 28 days. Nestlings fledge in July, and parents continue to feed them for two or three more weeks. The first year is difficult for young birds; typically sixty to seventy percent of summer fledglings die during the next winter, along with ten percent of adults.



Because of the amount of food young herons require, access to nearby fishing grounds is as essential to breeding success as is the rookery itself. The shallow bottoms at McFadden Creek Estuary adjoining the mouth of McFadden Creek and the adjacent shoreline are "fast food restaurants" for the overworked heron parents. The maintenance of wild vegetation on the uplands adjoining the heronry and the streamside forests along McFadden Creek are also very important to the continuing success of the rookery.

Frequently seen standing motionless in the shallows of lakes, ponds and tidal shorelines, the coastal Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias fannini*, has been an integral part of the Strait of Georgia fauna. Unfortunately, very little habitat is left on Salt Spring Island that satisfies the nesting and feeding requirements of these grand birds. Being colonial breeders, most nesting herons are very sensitive to human disturbance. They like to build nests in trees that are at least 50 feet tall. From early February, when courtship begins, until mid-August, when the young leave the nest, colonies should be protected from disturbance. A buffer zone of three hundred metres around nest trees, protection of wetlands and other feeding areas within one kilometre of the colony, and preservation of alternate nearby nesting habitat are recommended.

Due to the increase in human population over the past two decades, and the consequential upland logging, construction of houses and roads, and human use of the shoreline, several heron rookeries on Salt Spring Island have been abandoned. There remain only 8000 coastal Great Blue Herons from Alaska to California. With your help the McFadden Creek Heronry will flourish and remain productive for many more years.

Presently, there is a fund raising project for the McFadden Creek Heronry maintenance. A programme called "Winging It", which takes people on seasonal birding tours, mushroom walks and a variety of hiking trails. We also visit four artists' studios exclusive only to this tour. We visit a goat and sheep cheese farm, a wildflower honey farm and an organic seed and garlic farm. We also visit the largest native plant nursery in the Pacific Northwest and many other exciting spots. For more information on the "Winging It" tours contact Nina (address and telephone number at the end of the article).



We hope that you will have a chance to view the heronry when you come to Salt Spring Island. A beautiful interpretive sign is just being made and will be installed by the time the herons return to court and breed in February.

Any further information on the Waterbird Watch Collective, McFadden Heronry, or birding on Salt Spring Island can be obtained from the author: Nina Raginsky, 272 Beddis Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2J1.



EDITORS' NOTES: Nina reports that the generous people of Salt Spring Island have raised \$104,000, Islands Trust Fund have donated \$14,000 and, just recently, the Wild Bird Trust contributed the final \$135,000 toward the final purchase the property. Future monies raised by Winging It will go toward stewardship and maintenance of the property. Funds raised by the Great Blue Heron Food Bank will be administered by the Water Bird Watch Collective for use in additional heronry conservation issues.

For a great overview of the Great Blue Heron in BC's coastal areas members would enjoy reading **The Great Blue Heron: a natural history and ecology of a seashore sentinel**, by Robert W. Butler, 1997, published by UBC Press, Vancouver, BC.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors,

In the December issue of BC Birding, there were enjoyable articles on pelagic birding by Russell Tkachuk and Andy Buhler. A couple of pieces of advice might be added to that in the articles.

The last paragraph of the Buhler article listed good preparations for a pelagic trip: book early, warm waterproof clothing, appropriate food, study of the birds ahead of time. There is another thing. Both Russell and Andy refer to rough water, with some of the birders looking "a bit greenish". My advice is do not try to be a hero -- take a FULL dose of seasickness pills at the correct time before the trip.

Lois and I did a trip out of Monterey, California in November, a month after the Buhler expedition. We had fewer exotic species, but still had great albatrosses, dolphin schools, etc. We also had some really big seas. One man in a Victor Emmanuel group went to the rail within ten minutes and spent the remaining five or six hours leaning over the side or huddled on a seat. A few others were unhappy for the last part of the trip. Not much fun. Since I get motion sick in the back seat of a car, I had taken a slight overdose of pills well before the trip, and had lots of fun, not a trace of seasickness.

The other advice if you are heading for Monterey is to book your hotel well ahead of time. Sometimes there is space, but sometimes the town is full.

John B. Sprague.
Salt Spring Island

PS: Of more interest in the newsletter would be an explanation of just what the heck the records committee was up to in rejecting the Xantus's Hummingbird.



EDITORS' NOTE: Thanks for your letter John. You, and other members, will be pleased to see that Gary Davidson, BCFO Bird Records Committee Chairman, has provided us with an article on page 6 of this issue which addresses the Xantus's Hummingbird quandary. Tony also notes some additional concerns in his President's Report.

Creative Birding

Eric MacBean
2498 Kings Avenue
West Vancouver, BC V7V 2C6

*Such tricks hath strong imagination
That, if it would but apprehend some joy
It comprehends some bringer of that joy.
(Midsummer Night's Dream, V)*

Most BCFO members will surely be familiar with *Tyrannus verticalis*, our Western Kingbird, a familiar sight on fences in the interior. Few of us, however, in the Vancouver area at least, have had the good fortune to meet its southern cousin, *Tyrannus melancholicus*, the Tropical Kingbird, a bird aptly named, for though common enough and widespread in tropical America, it visits BC only by rare accident, seldom indeed in the Lower Mainland.

At a distance, these two yellow-bellied, gray-headed flycatchers appear almost identical. A closer view separates the white-edged black tail of the Western Kingbird from the notched, plain dark brown tail of its cousin. With such distinctive markings, it should be easy to make the correct identification at close quarters, should it not?

For whatever reason, I was never able to follow up on any of the infrequent reports of the tropical variety in BC. When I finally did see one (a pair in fact) it was in southern Texas, on the Mexican border, near Brownsville. Fortunately, on that occasion, I was with an experienced local birder who could point out both the physical characteristics and the vocalization, which, alone, distinguishes it from a Couch's Kingbird. Almost exactly a year later, last October, in fact, my opportunity to see this bird in BC at last came with an unconfirmed report of one seen in an orchard by Boundary Bay.

With no great optimism, the following afternoon I drove down to the foot of 96th Street on the bay, though I felt sure that by then the bird would have flown to wherever rare bird do fly, or else it would be an incorrect sighting. However, as a pathological lister, I could hardly pass up the opportunity of a possible BC and Canadian lifer. To my surprise, almost immediately I found a bird answering the description of a *Tyrannus* perched on top of an apple tree in clear view from the dike. Certainly it was a yellow-bellied, blue-headed bird which, in typical flycatcher fashion, made periodic sallies in search of insects, returning each time, not just to the same tree but to the same branch, from which every field mark was clearly visible through my scope as it sat, silhouetted against the sky.

But it was the tail that now drew all my attention. There was no doubt about it. That tail had a definite notch in it, and, moreover, it was a tail on which I could see no white edging. It was there, right in front of me, *Tyrannus melancholicus* at last, and at the moment, the greatest bird in the world.

So far, so good, but I was now in a quandary. To confirm this sighting, I needed either a camera or an experienced witness. The first I had left at home, for in my pessimism, I had never really expected to get a photographic opportunity like this, and rather to my surprise, there were no other birders at the spot. In fact, the place was deserted, excepting one elderly gentleman standing further along the dike, gazing across the bay. Experienced or not, he was my only possibility of a witness.

With some hesitation, I approached and asked if he would mind coming to look at a rather unusual bird. With equal hesitation he agreed, after I had explained that this might be a real rarity and I would like him to see it also, so that he might confirm the features I had noted. I pointed the bird out to him and asked him to look at it through

my scope. He peered at it a few moments before remarking, "Nice looking bird. What is it?"

"I think it might be a Tropical Kingbird, come here all the way from Mexico."

"Is that so? Can't say I've seen one before."

I asked him if he would describe what he could see (I had seen enough TV courtroom dramas to know better than to lead the witness).

After some deliberation he remarked, "Looks a bit like a robin with a yellow front."

Good, the yellow front would do for a start. "Anything you know about its tail?"

"Well, no," (puzzled) "looks like just an ordinary tail."

Throwing legal niceties aside, I asked whether the tail had any kind of a notch.

"Well, I guess it does have a bit of a notch, doesn't it? What did you say it was?"

"I'm almost sure it's a Tropical Kingbird," I proudly replied, adding with breathless anticipation, "do you see any white edges to the tail, or is it just plain?"

After several long looks came the answer I had been waiting for. "No, can't say I see any white there. What did you say it was?"

"It's a TROPICAL KINGBIRD for sure!" I almost shouted with relief and asked if he would mind giving me his name so that I would have some support in my discovery. A suspicious hesitation replaced his former co-operation. No doubt he suspected me of some nefarious plot to use his evidence to put a stop to a golf course he had planned for the area. Perhaps he was not supposed to be there at all and (although he looked a little elderly for this, but one never knows) was meeting someone else's wife.

I explained that our birding committee had some very skeptical members who would never accept my uncorroborated report, and in the end, if a little grudgingly, he gave me his name and phone number. We chatted for a while longer, while the bird watched us as we watched it, in between its regular sallies up into the air, always returning to the same spot. When finally, after another half hour, he said that he must go, I realized that I had reached the moment of truth when it was my duty to spread the word on my cell phone in the car. After all, I now had a witness, experienced or not, and surely there could be no doubt about this bird. A Canadian lifer! IT MUST BE. This cannot be my imagination now. Yet... maybe I should check my field guide first. I had a feeling that my Texas kingbirds were a more brilliant yellow - maybe just a local variation.

I set off for the car, and then, at the last moment, before I reached it, a real birder, complete with binoculars, in the person of Stefan Zarembo, arrived on the scene.

"It's here," I called out triumphantly. "At least," I added circumspectly, "I'm pretty certain it's a Tropical."

Stefan returned to the orchard with me; within two minutes he quietly crushed all my hopes with the laconic "It's a Western."

"It can't be," I replied. "Can't you see the notch in its tail?"

"Maybe it has a few tail feathers missing, but it also has white edging; watch it when it flies."

With glum apprehension I watched the bird fly, again and again. Still I could see not one white edging. Then at last, for no apparent reason, it landed on a different tree, this time with a dark background, and there, to my chagrin, I saw quite clearly a thin white edge to the black tail. As a last half-hearted defense, I tried to argue that if a Western Kingbird had the appearance of a notched tail, then surely and elderly tropical might turn white at the edges, as I have done, and would surely do so were I to mistake Boundary Bay, BC for Brownsville, Texas. This observation was met with the silent contempt it merited. My trip was in vain, my hopes of a new Canadian lifer gone. I returned to my car, weighed down by that sense of defeat, all too familiar to those of us unfortunate listers whose sought-after quarry has, at the last moment, eluded them.

Yet, driving home, ruefully contemplating the wreckage of my day, I realized that were it not for the arrival of Stefan at that critical moment, I might well have broadcast my shame across the Vancouver birding community, the ignominy too awful to imagine. Henceforth I resolved always to heed the excellent advice which I read recently on difficult-to-identify birds. BE CAUTIOUS AND CONSERVATIVE IN YOUR IDENTIFICATIONS. In effect, if you want a bird to be a particular species, call a quick time-out; you may be in danger of losing your objectivity; advice which surely applies to all of us whose eyes see only what the mind wishes to create. Especially so for those whose eyesight is not as keen as it was fifty years ago.

Perhaps, too, I could now understand what William Shakespeare meant by strong imagination apprehending some joy. No doubt he had just been informed by Anne that the Red-breasted Flycatcher he had seen outside their Stratford cottage was only a hyper-active English Robin.

Still, I wonder at times whether, somewhere out there, an old man, whose name I have lost, is sitting by the fireside on a cold wet evening regaling his grandchildren how he once saw the fabulous Tropical Kingbird on an apple tree at Boundary Bay.



OKANAGAN SITE GUIDES REVIEW

The BCFO AGM will be held in the lower Okanagan this year. You might wish to review some of our previous Site Guides to the Okanagan and its surrounds. These include: McKinney Road in Oliver 1(3):11-13, 1991; Princeton "Outback" pt.1 2(1):7-9, 1992 & pt.2 2(2):7-10, 1992; Kelowna area 4(2):11-13, 1994 & 5(1):12-13, 1995; Vernon area 3(2):8-11, 1993; and, if you go via Kamloops or Merritt, we have done some Site Guides for those too. Do you know of any other great birding locations which we have not yet showcased in our ongoing Site Guide series? We know there are still many excellent locations within BC which have not been written about in **BC BIRDING**. Why not help out your fellow birders and tell us about them?

GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES

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



1999 Interior Eagle Count

by Rick Howie

Site 15, Comp. 48, RR#3

Kamloops, BC V2C 5K1

On January 10, 1999, 53 members of six interior naturalist clubs (Federation of BC Naturalist affiliates) conducted an eagle count in conjunction with the annual swan count.

156 Bald Eagles (119 adults, 37 sub-adults) were tallied along with seven Golden Eagles (six adult, one sub-adult). The 1998 totals were 163 Bald and 13 Golden Eagles.

The sub-adults comprised nearly 24% of the Bald Eagle total which is within the range of 20-38% that we have noted over the five years of counting. The one sub-adult Golden represented about 14% of the total, and these numbers have varied from 0-33% over the years, with sub-adults seldom being reported.

The Bald Eagle count was encouragingly up towards the 160's which we have noted in other years. Some areas were not counted this year, which I am sure would have put us to a new record high if they had been surveyed. I have also heard of some other eagle concentrations which have gone uncounted to date and I am sure that if we wanted to embrace a larger group of eagle watchers, we could expand our knowledge considerably. For example, there is a slaughterhouse about 30km north of my house which routinely attracts about 15-20 eagles, but goes uncounted because the river does not harbor swans which has been the prime purpose for our daily outing.

As well, I have not made a proper effort to involve the clubs from the Kootenays, which may lack swans but will have eagles. So, as a challenge, I will suggest that we think of ways of obtaining new information about eagles from places that we do not necessarily survey for swans. People could phone in counts from other areas, so if you have contacts in far flung places, why not give them a call for next year?

Results by Area

Area	Bald		Golden		Total
	Adult	juv	Adult	juv	
A	3	3	0	0	6
B	0	0	0	0	0
C	5	0	0	0	5
D	3	2	0	0	5
E	6	7	0	0	13
F	10	2	0	0	12
G					NC
H	5	0	2	0	7
I	6	1	1	1	9
J	0	0	0	0	0
K					NC
L	2	0	0	0	0
M	18	4	0	0	22
N	17	1	0	0	18
O	11	6	0	0	17
P	8	6	0	0	14
Q	0	0	0	0	0
R	23	5	3	0	31
S					NC
T	2	0	0	0	2

1999 Interior Swan Count

by Rick Howie

Site 15, Comp. 48, RR#3

Kamloops, BC V2C 5K1

Forward

January 10, 1999 marked the 26th annual Interior Swan count as 70 members of seven naturalist clubs with the Federation of BC Naturalists tallied traditional areas in the Thompson, Shuswap, Okanagan, Nicola and Nicola drainages. The totals were 79 Tundra Swans and 256 Trumpeter Swans and 1 Mute Swan for a grand total of 336 birds.

Discussion

The tally of 79 Tundra Swans continued the recent trend of much-reduced numbers with most of the birds that wintered on the South Thompson River being replaced by Trumpeter Swans. This year, 62 of the birds were in various places throughout the Okanagan Valley, with only 17 being on the South Thompson River.

In 1999 juveniles comprised 19% of the population which is within the lower portion of the 17-29% range that has been recorded over the period of the count. The ten year average for juveniles during the period 1973-83 was about 26%.

Trumpeter Swans dropped to 256 birds from the 1998 total of 452 and virtually equaled the 1996 total of 258. Juveniles comprised only 11% of the population which is well below the average of 21% that we have come to expect. In 1998, the juveniles comprised 19% of the total.

The 16 Trumpeters at Savona were well below past high counts, but Okanagan valley swans were well up over past years. The lone Mute Swan on Nicola Lake is a resident bird that has been in the Nicola Valley for a few years now, but often vanishes or becomes hard to find during most winters.

Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		MUTE	TOTAL
	Adult	juv	Adult	juv		
A	0	0	5	0	1	6
B	0	0	2	0	0	2
C	6	0	59	11	0	76
D	8	3	46	5	0	62
E	0	0	83	11	0	9
G						NC
H	0	0	6	0	0	6
I	9	0	0	0	0	9
J	8	0	0	0	0	8
K						NC
L	0	0	16	0	0	16
M	33	12	0	0	0	45
N	0	0	0	0	0	0
O	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q	0	0	0	0	0	0
R	0	0	0	0	0	0
S						NC
Totals	64	15	227	29	1	336

Swan & Eagle Count Area Descriptions

A	Merritt to Douglas Lake
B	South Thompson River - Kamloops Lake east to Hwy.#5
C	South Thompson River - Hwy.#5 to cement plant
D	South Thompson River - cement plant to Pritchard
E	South Thompson River - Pritchard to Chase
F	Chase to Anglemont - Little & Big Shuswap Lakes
G	Tappen to Sicamous - Shuswap Lake
H	Sicamous to Enderby - Shuswap River, Mara Lake
I	Peachland to Osoyoos & USA border
J	Mabel Lake
K	Enderby to Mabel Lake - Shuswap River
L	Kamloops Lake to Savona
M	Kelowna Area - Okanagan Lake
N	Vernon Area - Okanagan Lake
O	Sterling Creek - Princeton - Allison Lk.
P	Osoyoos - Sterling Ck. along Similkameen drainage
Q	Adams Lake
R	Kettle River - Christian Valley
S	Merritt to Spences Bridge
T	Kamloops to Nicola Lake - Hwy 5a

Swan & Eagle Count Participants

Kamloops Area

Jo Chipperfield, Mary Ellen Grant, Willy Haras, Rick Howie, Wayne Jennings, Eric McAlary, Andy Raniseth, Syd Roberts and four docents from the Kamloops Wildlife Park (UCC students)

Shuswap Area

Sandy and Phil Rathbone

Vernon Area

Kay Bartholomew, Mary Collins, Phil Gehlen, Phil Jones, Terri Lodge, Sharon Long, Don McLean, Ernie McNaughton, Marjorie Nichol, John Quirk, Shirley Quirk, Ginny Stewart.

Kelowna Area

Joan Burbidge, Denise Brownlee, Margaret Bryan, Chris Charlesworth, Bill Cutfield, Elke Fischer, Walter Fischer, Rick Gee, Betty Greenwood, Bill Greenwood, Nancy Johnston, Nettie Overhoff, Judy Thoms, Don Wilson, Gwynneth Wilson, Robin Yellowlees.

South Okanagan Area

Steve Cannings, Eva Durance, Stanny Harding, Kathryn McCourt, Laurie Rockwell, Glenda Ross, Jim Shaver.

Princeton Area

Jerry Herzig.

Nicola Valley

Wayne Weber.

Kettle River

Bruce Morgenstern, Pearl Morgenstern.

Prepared: 20 January 1999



SITE GUIDE: THE SQUAMISH ESTUARY

by Jim Wisnia and Nancy Ricker
c/o Capilano College
2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5

The Squamish Estuary is a must for all birders, especially for those of us living in the Lower Mainland area! It is located at the head of Howe Sound just one hour's drive north on Highway 99 from Vancouver (40 minutes north from Horseshoe Bay). The scenery is magnificent - a steep-walled fjord with the sheer granite face of the Stawamus Chief and the sharp-faceted peak of Mt. Garibaldi on its east side and the tantalizing glaciated peaks of the Tantalus Range to its west. These spectacular vistas provide a backdrop for a variety of habitats, including deep marine waters, rivers and streams with their riparian vegetation, sloughs, intertidal mudflats, saltwater marshes, meadows, mature spruce and mixed forests of the coastal western hemlock zone and freshwater wetlands. Consequently, a diversity of birds is common to this estuarine area at almost any time of the year, a fact which has not been appreciated by many birders. There are 207 species on the 1997 checklist, with additions in 1998 of: Swainson's Hawk, Long-billed Curlew and Palm Warbler.

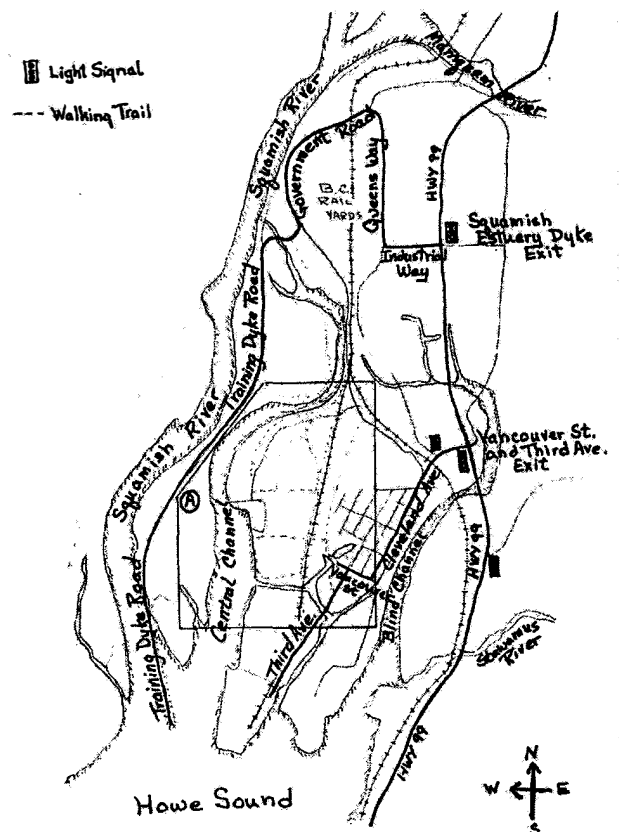
The late fall salmon runs of the Squamish River and its tributaries attract one of North America's largest congregation of wintering Bald Eagles - best viewed in December and January. Excellent views of Trumpeter Swans and a variety of ducks can be seen on most any winter day. In summer, many Band-tailed Pigeons and Red Crossbills frequent the tree tops of many of the spruces on the south side of Meadow Loop. Sometimes Great Horned Owls are spotted in the mature spruce forests and Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawks are perched near the tops of old tree snags near the margin of mature forests and open meadows. Peregrine Falcons which nest on the face of the Chief sweep down for occasional sightings.

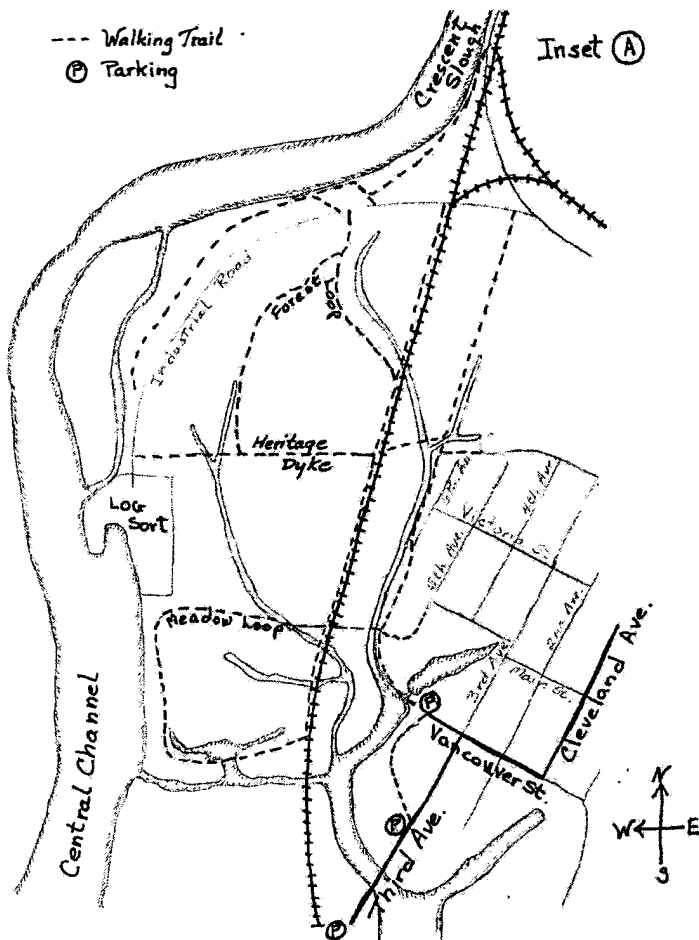
There are three easy access points to the estuary: Vancouver Street, Third Avenue and Squamish Estuary Dyke. (See map and insert.)

Vancouver Street: From Highway 99 (heading north) and at the second light signal, turn west (left) onto Cleveland Avenue, the main road into downtown Squamish. At the end of Cleveland Avenue, turn right onto Vancouver Street and proceed about one and a half blocks to road's end. A wooden trail map sign marks the way onto the estuary trails. Some parking is available at this point, but you may wish to park adjacent to the Howe Sound Inn and Brew Pub at the corner of Cleveland Avenue and Vancouver Street.

Third Avenue: One short block (half block) before Vancouver Street ends, turn left onto Third Avenue. Continue south (straight) across a narrow bridge to various estuary viewpoints, on both the right and left-handed sides of the road where parking is also available.

Squamish Estuary Dyke: From Highway 99, proceed 1.5 kilometres north of the Cleveland Avenue traffic light until you reach the next traffic signal for Industrial Way (Squamish Industrial Park). Turn west (left if coming from Vancouver). Continue to the end of Industrial Way and then turn right (north) onto Queens Way. At the end of Queens Way turn left onto Government Road. Cross the railroad





tracks and continue 1.3 kilometres, arcing back to the south. Look for the estuary (dyke) access sign and turn right onto a gravel road that leads to the dyke road. Turn left and travel 4 kilometres through the estuary to the mouth of the Squamish River and the deep marine waters of Howe Sound.

WINTER

This season is the time to view the Bald Eagles and maybe even participate in the annual count held usually on the second Sunday of January! Usually about 1500 to 2500 Bald Eagles congregate in December and January to feed on the salmon which migrate up the rivers to spawn and die in the gravel shallows. Hundreds of these birds can be seen perched in big old cottonwood trees along the river or soaring on thermals above the mountain ridges.

Trumpeter Swans almost always can be found resting and feeding in the lower reaches of the Squamish River or in Crescent Slough and the northern part of Central Channel.

Common Mergansers, Common and Barrow's Goldeneyes and Bufflehead in the tens also frequent and feed in the Squamish River, along with Glaucous-winged Gulls which often fight for salmon bits discarded by the seals. Mew,

Herring, Ring-billed and Thayer's Gulls may be seen along the river or near the Log Sort area on the east side of Central Channel. California, Bonaparte's, Western and Glaucous Gulls along with Surf Scoters occasionally are spotted in the waters of Howe Sound and Central Channel.

Double-crested Cormorants occasionally fly up or down river but usually are in large numbers on pilings or log booms near the south end of the Training Dyke. Pelagic Cormorants, Common and Red-throated Loons, Horned Grebes, Western Grebes and sometimes Red-necked and Pied-billed Grebes can be observed in Howe Sound and Central Channel waters.

Hundreds of Mallards and Canada Geese, many American Wigeons and fewer Green-winged Teals abound, especially in the meadows surrounded by dykes as seen on the Meadow Loop and, at high tide, south of the forest loop. Northern Pintails, Greater and Lesser Scaups, and sometimes Canvasback, Gadwall, Oldsquaw, Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers and Ruddy Ducks can be found in a variety of habitats - ranging from deeper waters in several of the channels to marshy delta waters and the damp meadows.

Killdeer and Spotted and Western Sandpipers probe the muds along the banks of many of the channels for food. The Belted Kingfisher often can be heard emitting its static electric call as it flies about these areas. A dozen or more Great Blue Herons may stoically stand along the edge of the Central Channel opposite the Log Sort. Nearby, Northern Shrikes have been spotted in small, shrubby-like trees.

Winter is one of the best times to find an owl in the Squamish Estuary. Occasional sightings of Western Screech, Great Horned, Northern Saw-whet and Northern Pygmy Owls are made, and there has been at least one report each for Barred and Snowy Owls.

Woodpeckers frequent the forested areas. The Red-shafted Flicker, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers usually are seen on a daily basis. Pileated Woodpeckers and Red-breasted Sapsuckers are less often viewed. Smaller passerines such as Creepers and Red-breasted Nuthatches may be found searching for food on the bark of older trees, while Black-capped Chickadees and Golden-crowned Kinglets almost always are heard, if not seen, calling and feeding from tree to tree. Flocks of 30 to 100+ Pine Siskins chatter as they flit from alder tree to alder tree while Chestnut-backed Chickadees less often are heard or seen. In marsh and delta regions, Brewer's and the occasional Red-winged Blackbirds are found.

Watch for Dark-eyed Juncos, Spotted Towhees, Varied Thrushes and Winter Wrens in the shrubs or on the ground in forested areas or in the bushes along the dykes. Song Sparrows and sometimes White-crowned or Golden-crowned Sparrows, plus American Robins can be observed.

Last, but not least by any means, numerous Northwestern Crows, many Steller's Jays and some Common Ravens can be both heard and seen in many areas of the Squamish Estuary during winter months. European Starlings and Rock Doves are ever present.

SPRING

This season beckons the arrival of the warblers (Yellow, Orange-crowned, Yellow-rumped, Townsend's, MacGillivray's, Common Yellowthroat, and Wilson's) and of sparrows (Savannah, Song, White-crowned, Golden-crowned and sometimes Chipping and Lincoln's). Vireos (Cassin's, Hutton's, Warbling and/or Red-eyed) occasionally are spotted among the new leaves of the alders. Red-winged Blackbirds return to marshy areas, along with occasional Yellow-headed and Brewer's Blackbirds. Western Meadowlarks and finches (Purple and House) are both heard and seen, and Rufous Hummingbirds are especially busy where the salmonberry bushes grow.

Almost all the ducks observed during winter are present in spring; however, the relative numbers of each often increase. Wood Ducks, Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teals, Northern Shovelers, and Ring-necked Ducks arrive. Even the Greater White-fronted Goose sometimes may be found in delta and meadow areas.

Considerably fewer Bald Eagles as well as other hawks or falcons are seen at this time of year. However, the occasional Osprey or Golden Eagle flies overhead along with the more common Northern Harrier gliding effortlessly across meadows and deltas at low tide in search of food.

The various gulls still abound; however, Mew, Ring-billed, California and Thayer's are less often spotted while Glaucous-winged Gulls predominate. Caspian Terns may be seen swooping above the mouths of the Central Channel and Squamish River.

Swainson's and sometimes Hermit Thrushes, American Robins and American Pipits are both heard and seen on most any day. Cedar Waxwings arrive, singing in their high-pitched cricket-like call, while feeding on twinberry along Meadow Loop Trail while Vaux's Swifts, with their typical fast flight pattern, may dart high above your head. Black Swifts are erratic and only are observed in some years.

Sightings of woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, Bushtits, kinglets (Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned), crows, ravens and Steller's Jays are common and many of the swallows (Tree, Violet-green, Northern Rough-winged, and Barn) return.

SUMMER

Most species of birds observed in the spring also are present in the summer; however, because the foliage is more lush and the leaves of the deciduous trees darker green, it becomes a challenge to see many of these birds. The songs help guide you to the bird's location or allow for identification of the species.

More obvious are Turkey Vultures which peruse the marshy deltas for food, the opportunistic Brown-headed Cowbirds which parasitize the nests of other birds, and the flycatchers (Willow and Pacific-slope) which call from willows and alders. Less obvious and less common are many of the other flycatchers (Olive-sided, Western Wood-Pewee, Hammond's, and Eastern Kingbird), Marsh Wrens, Cassin's Vireos and American Pipits.

There is still a good variety of ducks during summer, but scaup (Greater and Lesser), Harlequin Duck, Oldsquaw, Canvasback, Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead and Surf Scoter no longer are seen. Summer records of owls are lacking. There also is only one record of many other birds for this season: Red-throated Loon, American White Pelican, Green Heron, Trumpeter Swan, Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler, Black Scoter, American Kestrel, Stilt Sandpiper, Common Murre, Marbled Murrelet, Western Kingbird, Bewick's Wren, Hutton's Vireo, and American Redstart.

Summer however is an excellent time to look for sandpipers. Killdeer call from open areas while Spotted, Least and Western Sandpipers are the most common forms probing in the muds and marshy deltas at low tide. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Long-billed Dowitchers and Baird's Sandpipers may occasionally be spotted.

Summer is still a great time to bird in the estuary!

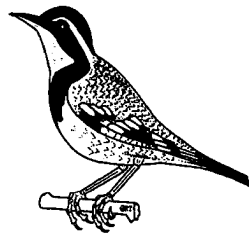
FALL

Fall is a beautiful time to bird, but also a time to easily be distracted. The golds and apricot colours of the deciduous trees are magnificent and form a wonderful contrast to the dark greens of the coniferous trees and of the mosses and liverworts in the area.

Fall migrations mark the arrival of certain species and the departure of others. Many of the ducks absent during summer months now return, while the flycatchers and most of the swallows have disappeared! Most other species, from sea birds to passerines as described for the other seasons still occur, but sometimes in greater or lesser numbers.

For a checklist of birds for the Squamish Estuary, send a legal-sized self-addressed envelope to the Squamish Estuary Conservation Society (Box 1274, Squamish, B.C., V0N 3G0) or ask for one at the Howe Sound Inn and Brew Pub at the foot of Cleveland Avenue. Monthly bird counts are held in the Squamish Estuary. For 1999, meet at the Howe Sound Inn and Brew Pub on days and times as follow:

7 Mar.	8:00 am	8 Aug.	7:00 am
11 Apr.	7:00 am	12 Sep.	7:00 am
2 May	7:00 am	3 Oct.	8:00 am
13 Jun.	7:00 am	7 Nov.	8:00 am
4 Jul.	7:00 am	5 Dec.	8:00 am



Bird Searching in Strathcona Park

by Betty Brooks
1630 Seaview Road
Black Creek, BC V9J 1J5

Imagine waking up in your tent at Ralph River campsite to the sound of tapping and, on sticking your head out of the tent, discovering a Three-toed Woodpecker, a bird seldom seen on Vancouver Island! It was a great way for Ken Wright to start the 8th Annual Strathcona Park Bird Search. After hearing that we had recorded five Harlequin Ducks at Ralph River on the 1997 count Ken*, a Harlequin researcher, decided to take part in the 1998 count which was held June 13-14. Regardless of the fact that no Harlequins turned up, it was an exciting weekend.

Soon after the woodpecker episode, the Ralph River team watched a female Barrow's Goldeneye flying around a nest cavity on the dead top of a tree in the campground. Although there is no official record of this species nesting on Vancouver Island, it obviously breeds in Strathcona Park and probably has done so for many years. Later in the day Ken and Dave Ingram managed to climb to an active Northern Goshawk's nest on the bluffs near Lupin Falls. The nest held two young. For the past several years, the goshawk research team have been monitoring the nest. Seven species of warbler were seen during the weekend but individual numbers were lower than usual except for yellow-rumps. The Thelwood Creek area at the south end of Buttle Lake was productive as usual with a Northern Pygmy Owl calling, Cedar waxwings and a Black-headed Grosbeak. On the 1997 count Jamie Fenneman spotted a Lark Sparrow in this area.

The 1998 count had the second highest number of species (72) since the counts began in 1991. Eighty species were recorded in 1992. Of the 168 birds recorded in the Park, 106 have been seen on the eight counts. This a respectable number considering that much of the Park is inaccessible and still under snow in June.

Other highlights of past years have included Golden Eagle ('97), Cinnamon Teal (92), Caspian Tern ('97), and 30 Pine Grosbeaks ('96). Strangest of all was the Red-tailed Tropicbird whose remains were found by Park Rangers and identified by birders on the 1992 count. It became a Canadian record. Strathcona Park also holds the first breeding record on Vancouver Island for Three-toed Woodpecker (B&A Brooks '88). Specialities at other times of the year are Trumpeter Swan (wintering), Sandhill Crane (fall migration), Marbled Murrelet (nesting), Hermit Thrush (nesting), Nashville Warbler (spring migrant), Rosy Finch (resident) and White-tailed Ptarmigan, a resident Vancouver Island subspecies.

The Strathcona Wilderness Institute holds annual counts in the Park, usually during the first half of June. This year's count will be held June 5-6, 1999. Most birding activity takes place in the Buttle Lake and Paradise Meadows areas. New participants are welcome, especially those with birding experience. Strathcona Park bird checklists are now available for anyone interested and may be obtained at the Field Naturalist store in Victoria. For further information contact Betty Brooks, telephone/fax: (250) 337-8180 or email: ejbrooks@mars.ark.com.



EDITORS' NOTES: *Betty mentions that Ken has an interest in Harlequin Ducks. Well, he is so interested that, with Trudy Chatwin, he has been "Romancing the Harlequin". Check out Wright, Kenneth & Chatwin, Trudy. 1998. *Cordillera*, Winter 1997 4(2):36-42 for a feature article discussing their research.

Note also that Betty Brooks is a Director of the Strathcona Wilderness Institute and, in 1991, she initiated the Strathcona Bird Search.

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER

by Ken Morgan
 1945 Land's End Road
 Sidney, BC V8L 5J2

This issue of Lister's Corner summarises the highest number of contributions (from 49 individuals) since the column was renewed three years ago. Of the 49, 14 (nearly 30%) submitted their records via email - obviously that new feature helped boost the number of contributions. Although four listers from last year didn't send me their '98 totals, there were 16 new contributors. I am very encouraged by the growth of submissions and I hope that means that I have found a satisfactory variety of listing areas.

I received two questions about the listing form - apparently there was some confusion about what I meant by the column labelled "**Accepted Total (if different from what is listed)**". That column was created so that listers could provide me with the correct species total for an area if it was different from what I had listed. Each year I try to present the most up-to-date information on the number of species in all areas and I rely heavily on BCFO members to keep me informed. So, if in the future when you are submitting your totals, you notice that I have given the wrong total for an area, please inform me by using the right-hand column. Another contributor asked whether Hecate Strait was considered to be part of the area I call "**North Pacific Pelagic Waters**" - the answer is "Yes". Any pelagic species of bird, seen further than five nautical miles from land, south of the Aleutians and north of the Tropic of Cancer, may be counted.

Eight contributors suggested 14 additional areas, ranging from the entire world to areas of B.C. above 1500 meters. With the exception of Yoho National Park, I elected not to include the suggestions. Although this may seem arbitrary, due to space restrictions I decided to limit the number of areas reported, rather than imposing something like a "50 or 60% rule". I feel it is more important for everybody to have a chance to display their totals, rather than restricting the lists to only the birding elite.

If a person's area total is followed by an * this indicates that the total listed is for 1997 rather than 1998. Anyone with an * will have their name dropped from the lists if they forget to send their totals again next year. Happy listing!

Listing Totals To 31 December 1998

A.B.A Area (911 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Stefan Zaremba	709	77.8	Keith Riding	558	61.3
Jo Ann MacKenzie	695	76.3	Dick Cannings	549	60.3
Hank Vanderpol	694	76.2	Brian Scott	547	60.0
Hue MacKenzie	690	75.7	Mabel Crocker	544	59.7
David Stirling	658	72.2	Gary Davidson	526	57.7
Wayne Weber	657	72.1	Aziza Cooper	525	57.6
Eric Tull	638	70.0	Ron Walker	515	56.5
Mary Collins	636	69.8	Bryan Gates	513	56.3
Russ Tkachuk	627	68.8	Derrick Marven	508	55.8
Bob Morford	611	67.1	Don Wilson	508	55.8
Eric MacBean	604	66.3	Mike McGrenere	502	55.1
Peter Hamel	599	65.8	K. Taylor	447	49.1
Audrey Viken	599	65.8	Laird Law	436	47.9
Steve Cannings	597	65.5	Ken Morgan	416	45.7
Burke Korol	593	65.1	Eva Durance	405	44.5
Tony Greenfield	591	64.9	Murray Brown	344	37.8
Elsie Nykyfork	569	62.5	Laurie Rockwell	309	33.9
Lloyd Esralson	568	62.3	ABA area species total (1998) provided by Burke Korol		

Canada (628 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Hue MacKenzie	507	80.7	Steve Cannings	410	65.3
Jo Ann MacKenzie	507	80.7	David Allinson	406*	64.6
Peter Hamel	506	80.6	Tony Greenfield	406	64.6
Mike Bentley	492	78.3	Keith Riding	404	64.3
David Stirling	476	75.8	Lloyd Esralson	403	64.2
Eric Tull	476	75.8	Burke Korol	400	63.7
Wayne Weber	453	72.1	Brian Scott	398	63.4
Derrick Marven	452	71.9	Aziza Cooper	397	63.2
Marika Ainley	450*	71.7	Gary Davidson	396	63.1
Dick Cannings	443	70.5	Bryan Gates	396	63.1
Eric MacBean	435	69.3	Eva Durance	373	59.4
Mary Collins	433	68.9	Don Wilson	370	58.9
Audrey Viken	431	68.6	Larry Cowan	366	58.3
Stefan Zarembo	431	68.6	Tom Gillespie	365*	58.1
Hank Vanderpol	427	68.0	Ron Walker	356	56.7
Mike McGrenere	426	67.8	Laird Law	349	55.6
Elsie Nykyfork	421	67.0	Murray Brown	320	50.9
Russ Tkachuk	419	66.7	Andy Buhler	318	50.6
Allen Wiseley	413	65.8	Marilyn Buhler	315	50.2
Barb Begg	411	65.4	Laurie Rockwell	302	48.1
Ken Morgan	411	65.4			

Canada species total (1998) provided by Burke Korol

British Columbia (475 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Mike Bentley	414	87.2	Ron Walker	343	72.2
Jo Ann MacKenzie	412	86.7	Aziza Cooper	341	71.8
Hue MacKenzie	410	86.3	Val George	341	71.8
David Stirling	409	86.1	David Allinson	339*	71.4
Wayne Weber	405	85.3	Brian Scott	333	70.1
Tony Greenfield	392	82.5	Chris Charlesworth	331	69.7
Dick Cannings	390	82.1	Elsie Nykyfork	325	68.4
Hank Vanderpol	380	80.0	Eric Tull	325	68.4
Peter Hamel	379	79.8	Laird Law	322	67.8
Audrey Viken	373	78.5	Larry Cowan	321	67.6
Bryan Gates	372	78.3	Andy Buhler	316	66.5
Gary Davidson	368	77.5	Marilyn Buhler	314	66.1
Mike McGrenere	364	76.6	Burke Korol	308	64.8
Lloyd Esralson	363	76.4	Tom Gillespie	304*	64.0
Keith Riding	361	76.0	Laurie Rockwell	300	63.2
Stefan Zarembo	361	76.0	K. Taylor	298	62.7
Barb Begg	360	75.8	Jerry Herzig	297	62.5
Eric MacBean	360	75.8	Janice Brown	293	61.7
Mary Collins	359	75.6	Eva Durance	292	61.5
Ken Morgan	355	74.7	Dannie Carsen	290*	61.1
Derrick Marven	351	73.9	Guy Monty	279	58.7
Steve Cannings	350	73.7	Murray Brown	275	57.9
Bob Morford	347	73.1	Marika Ainley	261*	54.9
Don Wilson	347	73.1	Allen Wiseley	256	53.9
Russ Tkachuk	344	72.4			

British Columbia species total (1998) provided by Burke Korol

Alberta (394 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Eric Tull	329	83.5	Derrick Marven	203	51.5
David Stirling	283	71.8	Aziza Cooper	158	40.1
Burke Korol	251	63.7	Bryan Gates	150	38.1
Audrey Viken	243	61.7	Tony Greenfield	148	37.6
Hue MacKenzie	240	60.9	Larry Cowan	138	35.0
Jo Ann MacKenzie	236	59.9	Eric MacBean	133	33.8
Wayne Weber	235	59.6	Brian Scott	122	30.9
Peter Hamel	230	58.4	Ken Morgan	121	30.7
Dick Cannings	208	52.8	Alberta species total (1998) provided by Burke Korol		

Vancouver Island (387 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
David Stirling	322	83.2	Ken Morgan	264	68.2
Hank Vanderpol	314	81.1	Wayne Weber	252	65.1
Bryan Gates	312	80.6	Hue MacKenzie	244	63.0
Barb Begg	310	80.1	Dannie Carsen	239*	61.8
Mike McGrenere	307	79.3	Jo Ann MacKenzie	239	61.8
David Allinson	300*	77.5	Guy Monty	226	58.4
Aziza Cooper	300	77.5	Lloyd Esralson	161	41.6
Derrick Marven	291	75.2	Burke Korol	115	29.7
Tom Gillespie	272*	70.3			

Queen Charlotte Islands (250 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Peter Hamel	227	90.8	Val George	125	50.0
Ken Morgan	129	51.6	Bryan Gates	74	29.6

Queen Charlotte Islands species total (1996) provided by Peter Hamel

Vancouver Checklist Area (364 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Jo Ann MacKenzie	328	90.1	Larry Cowan	275	75.5
Hue MacKenzie	324	89.0	Bob Morford	259	71.2
Wayne Weber	324	89.0	David Allinson	258*	70.9
Eric MacBean	315	86.5	David Stirling	238	65.4
Stefan Zaremba	295	81.0	Bryan Gates	230	63.2
Lloyd Esralson	292	80.2	Aziza Cooper	186	51.1
Dick Cannings	283	77.7	Guy Monty	175	48.1
Audrey Viken	279	76.6	Burke Korol	170	46.7

Victoria Checklist Area (353 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
David Stirling	310	87.8	Tom Gillespie	260*	73.7
Hank Vanderpol	305	86.4	Dannie Carsen	237*	67.1
Bryan Gates	303	85.8	Wayne Weber	233	66.0
Barb Begg	298	84.4	Andy Buhler	209	59.2
Mike McGrenere	294	83.3	Marilyn Buhler	207	58.6
David Allinson	282*	79.9	Guy Monty	159	45.0
Derrick Marven	281	79.6	Burke Korol	104	29.5
Aziza Cooper	274	77.6			

Victoria Checklist Area species total (1998) provided by Bryan Gates

Okanagan Valley (316 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Steve Cannings	295	93.4	Eva Durance	239	75.6
Mary Collins	289	91.5	David Stirling	239	75.6
Dick Cannings	280	88.6	Burke Korol	238	75.3
Chris Charlesworth	278	88.0	Jo Ann MacKenzie	232	73.4
Denise Brownlie	276	87.3	Hue MacKenzie	231	73.1
Elsie Nykyfork	274	86.7	Tony Greenfield	219	69.3
Gwynneth Wilson	271	85.8	Laird Law	196	62.0
Laurie Rockwell	256	81.0	Audry Viken	191	60.4
Don Wilson	253	80.1	Bryan Gates	181	57.3
Wayne Weber	251	79.4	Lloyd Esralson	175	55.4
Gary Davidson	245	77.5	Aziza Cooper	172	54.4

Okanagan Valley Checklist Area species total from checklist by Cannings et al. (1995)

Princeton Area (250 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Jerry Herzig	238	95.2	Bryan Gates	81	32.4

Princeton Area species total (1998) provided by J. Herzig. Boundaries have been expanded to include area between 49°00'N to 50°00'N and from 120°00'W to 121°00'W (Herzig 1999)

Kamloops Checklist Area (295 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Wayne Weber	228	77.3	Burke Korol	127	43.1
David Stirling	198	67.1	Guy Monty	77	26.1
Gary Davidson	182	61.7			

Kamloops Checklist Area species total from checklist by Rick Howie 1994)

Sunshine Coast (277 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Tony Greenfield	250	90.3	Wayne Weber	136	49.1
Russ Tkachuk	223	80.5	Burke Korol	45	16.2

Sunshine Coast species total (1998) provided by Tony Greenfield

West Kootenay Area (285 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Gary Davidson	262	91.9	Jo Ann MacKenzie	174	61.1
Burke Korol	216	75.8	Hue MacKenzie	167	58.6
Wayne Weber	178	62.5			

West Kootenay Area species total based on checklist by Gary Davidson (1998)

Prince George Checklist Area (268 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Laird Law	243	90.7	Derrick Marven	130	48.5
Cathy Antoniazzi	242	90.3	Wayne Weber	111	41.4
Don Wilson	190	70.9			

Prince George Checklist Area species total (1998) provided by Cathy Antoniazzi

Creston Valley Area (265 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Burke Korol	179	67.5	Wayne Weber	128	48.3

Creston Valley species total based on checklist by Linda Van Damme (1996)

North Pacific Pelagic Waters

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
Ken Morgan (98)	54	Bryan Gates	41
David Stirling (98)	43	Peter Hamel	39
Jo Ann MacKenzie (98)	42	Eric MacBean	29

Mt. Robson Provincial Park

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
Cathy Antoniazzi	126	Laird Law	129
David Stirling	120	Wayne Weber	54

Manning Provincial Park

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
Mike McGrenere	137	Keith Riding	95
Wayne Weber	125	Larry Cowan	70
Jo Ann MacKenzie	109	Burke Korol	36
David Stirling	101		

Mitlenatch Island Provincial Park

NAME	TOTAL
David Stirling	110

Pacific Rim National Park (254 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
David Stirling	175	68.9	Aziza Cooper	130	51.2
David Allinson	169*	66.5			

Pacific Rim National Park species total (1997) provided by David Allinson

Mount Revelstoke & Glacier National Parks (183 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Burke Korol	74	40.4

Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks species totals based on the checklist by Gyug et al. (no date)

Yoho National Park

NAME	TOTAL
Wayne Weber	125



EDITORS' NOTE: These numbers have gone through several word processors, various e-mail programs, two typists, one cut-and-paste 'artist', and at least two editors, neither of whom has seen the other's final printed copy. Sooo ... if you notice any typos or dyslexic numbers please let us know and we will print correction(s), if any, in the June issue of BC BIRDING. Thanks for your understanding.



AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE**Betty Brooks**

Betty became 'turned on' to birds at the age of seven after an older cousin gave her a gift subscription to **Canadian Nature**, a children's magazine featuring bird paintings of Allan Brooks. In 1971 Betty and her husband Allan (Jr.) founded the Pender Island Field Naturalists Club and organized CBCs there for 10 years. Active in many capacities, Betty has undertaken numerous bird counts and surveys. In 1991 she initiated the Strathcona Bird Search.

Eric MacBean

Eric says he was "... introduced to birding when I went to Newfoundland in 1952 to work as Medical Officer, serving South Coast Outports from a 40' cruiser...". Although there was a hiatus while later working and raising family in Ontario, Eric came to BC in 1975 and, with a family grown was able to reindulge himself. He only developed into a lister when, after a major illness, he found it a great motivation to get up and about again.

Nancy Ricker

Nancy teaches biology at Capilano College and during the past several years has participated in the monthly Squamish Estuary bird counts.

Nina Raginsky

A painter, photographer, conservationist, educator, activist and naturalist, Nina was a founder of the Waterbird Watch Collective on Salt Spring Island. She has been very involved in the conservation and protection of the McFadden Creek heron rookery on Salt Spring Island.

Jim Wisnia

Jim teaches at the North Vancouver Outdoor School near Brackendale. He also is an active member of the Squamish Estuary Conservation Society and is the coordinator of the monthly bird counts in the Squamish Estuary.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA NEST RECORDS SCHEME**

submitted by R Wayne Campbell

Join the growing number of volunteer researchers and contribute valuable information on the breeding biology of birds throughout British Columbia by sending in nest cards to the BCNRS. This system was established in 1955 by graduate students at the University of British Columbia. Today it is operated by the Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia and jointly supported by the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, industry, and provincial and federal governments. The BCNRS is the longest-running cooperative program in the province and it is the largest and most active nest record program in the country.

1998 was our best year ever! Over **500 participants** submitted nearly **7,000 cards** representing over **240 species**. And nearly 25% of the province was covered with south-eastern Vancouver Island, the Creston and Okanagan Valleys, Cariboo-Chilcotin region, Peace River area, and the Queen Charlotte Islands best represented. Again, we are encouraging naturalists and citizens to record information on nests and broods they find during their travels around the province in 1999. Prior experience is not required. All participants will receive a copy of the 1999 annual BCNRS report. A "How To" Nest Record Scheme Manual and a copy of the 43rd Annual Report (1998) are still available to new participants.

If you want to contribute to this important project please request cards from:

BRITISH COLUMBIA NEST RECORDS SCHEME


P.O. Box 6218, Station C
Victoria, BC V8P 5L5

Life on the Ledge - The Video

reviewed by Andy Buhler

Peregrine: wandering, traveller, wide ranging - and so the Peregrine Falcon "... has rivaled Osprey and Raven as one of most widely distributed birds in world; has reached to ends of earth except Antarctica."¹ Yet by the late 1960's the Peregrine Falcon was "... largely reduced almost worldwide, and extinct as nesting bird in U.S. west to Pacific coast except for a few pairs in s. Rockies; seen in most of U.S. only in winter or in migration; by 1971 almost entire nesting population in N. America limited to Canada, Alaska and Baja, California."¹ What had happened? By now we all know that pesticides, especially DDT, played an integral role in that decline. "DDT affects the falcon's ability to reproduce, often by preventing the female from laying eggs. Even if she does produce eggs, they may have thin shells which crack easily, or the embryo within the egg may die ... By the mid-1960s, there were no breeding Peregrine Falcons in Ontario."² For a time things looked very bleak for the Peregrine as for other raptors. However, during the last two decades there have been increasing glimmers of hope for falcon recovery. People of vision and dedication have been slowly reintroducing the Peregrine in areas of the country where they formerly nested. However, there is a twist. Rather than reintroducing the captive-bred falcons to natural cliffs and bluffs where the fledgling falcons would quickly fall prey to such predators as Great Horned Owls, the falcons are reintroduced into urban habitats, away from their usual predators and close to abundant supplies of food (e.g. Rock Doves), - on tall bridge structures and on high ledges of tall building.

So begins the story of "Life on the Ledge", a nesting-year in the life of Toby (a five-year-old male) and Alberta (a three-year-old female) and their eventual brood of four, Marco, Abby, Ridge and Windwhistler. The 45 minute video is excellent. Much of the video has been compiled and professionally edited from footage taken with a strategically placed monitor camera. Since the camera had been mounted near the nest site prior to the arrival of the adult birds, what viewers see on film is the falcon's real home life, undisturbed by the near presence of humans. The dialogue is informative and the narration is clear, yet unobtrusive, which adds to the overall enjoyment of the video.

Alberta displays admirable maternal qualities right from the laying of her first egg until the final flight of her brood. She, and Toby when allowed, protect the eggs and chicks from excess heat, from inclement weather, and from harassment by other birds. A few weeks after the chicks hatch they claim the ledge as theirs, relegating the parent birds to deliverers of food. Because the camera allows us such an intimate view of the young birds, when Marco hops out of the nest box and can not climb back in, we actually urge him to try harder. When Abby finds lunch 'a bit lively' we chuckle at her antics. When Ridge stands at the edge of the ledge we get queasy. When Windwhistler needs an extra boost of confidence we are there cheering him on. We see the chicks actually sharing prey, preening each other, and even bedding down beside each other at night when almost fledged. We observe mutual bill tapping given as a friendly greeting plus dead-pigeon-stomping while they practice future hunting skills. We learn many things we had not previously known about Peregrine Falcons. And we learn them, not through dry book learning but, by getting close up and personal with the falcons on the film. The video is available for a \$30 donation from: **The Canadian Peregrine Foundation, 112 Merton Street, Suite 300, Toronto, ON M4S 2Z8.** We would heartily recommend that anyone - birders, raptor-holics, or closet naturalists - try to see this interesting, educational, and close-up visual experience of a Peregrine Falcon family's "Life on the Ledge". 

1. Terres, John K., 1996, *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds.*
2. The Canadian Peregrine Foundation, 1998, *A Student's Guide to Ontario's Endangered Wildlife : Peregrine Falcon Unit.*



The Canadian Peregrine Foundation (CPF) has created a number of products, all of which are available as gifts in exchange for a donation (tax receipt available on request) to the Foundation. Shipping charges are additional to the minimum donation. Current products include:

- 1/ "Life on the Ledge" is a fully narrated 45 minute colour video documenting the 1998 nesting season in Etobicoke, Ontario. [see review page 27 of this issue]. It is available for a minimum donation of \$30.00.
 - 2/ The CPF hat is a blue, 100% cotton baseball-style cap with the Canadian Peregrine Foundation logo embroidered on the front. It is available for a minimum donation of \$16.00.
 - 3/ The CPF t-shirt is white, with the CPF logo embroidered on the front. It is made of preshrunk 100% cotton and comes in sizes large (42-44) and extra large (46-48). Available for a minimum donation of \$18.00.
 - 4/ The CPF pin is a small oval pin, 2 cm X 1.6 cm and features a gold and white peregrine silhouette on a black background with The Canadian Peregrine Foundation written around the edge. It is available for a minimum donation of \$6.00.
 - 5/ A subscription to *Talon Tales*, the official newsletter of the CPF published quarterly is available for a subscription price of \$25.00 for 1 year (\$45 for 2 years). This newsletter is a great way to remain in touch with the lives and sagas of urban peregrine families in various Ontario cities.
- A Student's Guide to Ontario's Endangered Wildlife : Peregrine Falcon Unit is also available and it is an excellent training resource. For additional information check out the **Canadian Peregrine Foundation** website at: <http://www.peregrine-foundation.ca>. or contact **The Canadian Peregrine Foundation**, 112 Merton Street., Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario M4S 2Z8.
Phone: (416) 481-1233 Fax: (416) 481-5872 Charitable Registration #88516 0549 RR0001

Peregrine Falcon Television Documentary A Winner

"**Peregrine Falcon Soars off Endangered Species List**": From web sites, birding magazines, and now an award-nominated television documentary, we learn the good-news details of the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon from an all-time low of 324 nesting pairs in North America in 1975 to the estimated 1593 pairs successfully nesting in 1998.

In March (watch for listings in your area), Shaw Cable's excellent half-hour documentary on the re-introduction of the Peregrine Falcon to the Okanagan Valley will be shown on national television. Robert Bateman and Kelowna birder Cec Dillabough are among those who share the screen with falcon chicks and a variety of adult falcons. This dramatic film will undoubtedly have a long life as a resource for elementary and secondary teachers, and an inspiration for all naturalists involved in conservation projects.

Will some of the seven young peregrines who survived to fly south last fall return soon to Kelowna, and one day be the first to nest in the Okanagan since 1959? Stay tuned. One thing certain: Environment Canada has recently approved a \$26,000 grant to carry the project for a second year, ensuring that more peregrine chicks will be television stars as they prepare for first flights from the 13th-storey roof of the Landmark Square II building in Kelowna.

EDITORS' NOTE: In early December Morningstar Enterprises in Kelowna invited Marilyn and I, as BCFO editors, to view the pre-screening of Shaw Cable's Return of the Peregrine Falcon Documentary entitled "**Return to the Valley**". Since we could not attend in person we asked birders from the Okanagan to attend and they gave us the above report. Anyone interested in purchasing the video of this BC reintroduction of the Peregrine Falcon can contact Morningstar Enterprises Inc., 212-1708 Dolphin Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 9S4. Phone (250) 861-9474, Fax (250) 861-7090. The price suggested in **The Peregrine Press** 2(1):1 is \$29.95 + tax.

