

# BC BIRDING

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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.

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**EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS**

Greetings all in the year 2000. This is the tenth year for BCFO as an organization. Thanks to everyone who has supported BCFO through volunteer efforts, by organizing AGMs, by leading trips, by working on the executive, by contributing articles and, yes, by maintaining your membership. Keep up the good work and lets see where we go in the next ten years.

As you will have seen this is a hefty issue. By early February we were working on about a ten page issue but Ken came through with the birding stats, Eva found time to write us an update on Farleigh Lake / Marron Valley, Rick got his swan and eagle count data to us, Christine sent in a light-hearted look at CBCs, Tony sent both a note and his usual President's Report, Martin sent in his regular columns and there were additional notices of festivals and events that just had to make this issue. Jim kindly offered BirdWord editors free use of some of his material on shade-grown coffee and so the issue grew... Enjoy!

Included in this issue as separate inserts you should find a registration form for the August Annual General Meeting to be held at UBC plus a Request for Accommodation form should you wish to stay at the Walter Gage Complex at UBC during the AGM. Attendees are responsible for arranging their own accommodations. However, a limited number of rooms have been blocked off for BCFO attendees at the university. Guest speaker will be Dennis Paulson, author of **Shorebirds of the Pacific Northwest**. Mark your calendars today!!!

Remember that memberships to BCFO are for the calendar year so please get your renewals in now if you have not done that already. Consider enticing some of your non-BCFO birding companions to join our organization - you know the benefits that you have gained from membership so be our ambassador and help make our membership roll grow.

As usual we would like to put in a plea for articles. Although this issue is large we do not have material for our June issue. We have not had any Site Guides sent in for quite a while. It would be great if our Lower Mainland (or other) members would send us in some guides prior to the AGM. You know all of your favorite spots but out-of-town visitors may not. Birders are well noted for assisting each other so how about making the visit of out-of-town members to the fall AGM more enjoyable by sharing a few good spots. Thanks!

We would also like to receive reports of unusual sightings, notes on bird behavior seen, articles on field ornithology, or whatever you think members might find interesting. Letters are always nice too. Let us know that somebody out there really is reading what we put on these pages - it's your newsletter! Good birding. Andy & Marilyn, Editors.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

by Tony Greenfield

While baseball statisticians do not make good baseball players, there is undeniably a strong correlation between keen field ornithologists who keep lists ('listers') and the amount of knowledge they have of species identification, phenology, ecology, behavior, taxonomy, and where to find both regularly occurring species, rarities and even birds new to the province or Canada.

Despite this positive correlation, 'listing' is seen in some quarters as a trivial, frivolous, obsessive activity practised by neurotics who would probably pierce their body parts if they were not chasing birds. This criticism can come from both sides of the spectrum -- from professional ornithologists with PhD's and tenure, to casual feeder watchers and the general public (who tend to view it with amusement). One of BCFO's newest members, a recent convert to active field ornithology, confessed to me that his wife understands his interest in birds, but cannot comprehend the concomitant activity surrounding the numbers.

Within BCFO there have been debates and policy decisions by the executive about the place of listing within our organisation. Some consider it unseemly to publish lists, whilst others recognize the strong relationship between the listers and the pursuit of knowledge of the avifauna of BC. I believe that BCFO, like the American Birding Association, has adopted a middle course, whereby the listers have access to their 'guilty pleasure' without pushing that perspective.

My musings about listing were stimulated by the recent death of Phoebe Snetsinger in a vehicle accident in Madagascar. Ms. Snetsinger was the leading incarnation of the world birder -- a 68 year-old lady from Missouri who had observed over 8400 of the world's 9700 plus bird species. Whilst the accumulation of such an enormous list demands an ascetic dedication to the task, and mucho dinero, it does not, of itself, produce any tangible knowledge -- it is merely a complex, fascinating, enjoyable and expensive game. However, it remains true that the explosive growth of world birding, whether the people involved are listers or not, has proceeded symbiotically with an exponential increase in the knowledge of exotic avifaunas, of the production of excellent new field guides, and an ever increasing awareness of conservation and environmental threats to vulnerable habitats and birds. The related ecotourism dollars are the best hope for preserving many of these unique and threatened places.

So, whether you are birding in Peru or Penticton, Mackenzie or Mexico and whether you keep a list or not, I wish everyone.....

*Good springtime birding.*



**EDITORS' NOTE:** For those wishing additional information on Phoebe B. Snetsinger there was an obituary article entitled "Most Successful Birder in the World" published in the Globe and Mail, November 30, 1999 page R11. In the newspaper article there is also mention that "Two articles by Ms. Snetsinger - Birding Planet Earth: 25 Years Later and Favourite Birding Places Around the World - are due to be published in the ABA's Birding magazine next year." The first "Birding Planet Earth: 25 Years Later" has been published in the February 2000 issue of **Birding**.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

by Martin K McNicholl

- March 6-9 2000 **19<sup>th</sup> VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE**, San Diego, California. Contact: Terrell Salmon, Department of Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology, University of California, 1 Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616; phone (530) 752-8751.
- April 2-8 2000 **RAPTORS 2000 : JOINT MEETING OF RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION & WORLD WORKING GROUP FOR BIRDS OF PREY**, Eilat, Isreal. Contact: Dr. Reuven Yosef, Otra Ltd., Box 9352, Tel Aviv, 61092, Isreal; phone +972-3-6384444.
- April 7-9 2000 **BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL 2000** - 10<sup>th</sup> annual. Contact: Brant Wildlife Festival Office, Box 327, Parksville, BC V9P 2G5; phone (250) 752-9171.
- April 26-29 2000 **COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 70<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**, Riverside, California. Contact: John T. Rotenberry, Department of Biology, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521, USA; phone (909) 787-3953.
- April 26-30 2000 **WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 81<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL MEETING JOINTLY WITH ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS**, Galveston, Texas. Contact: Dwight Peake, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, 103 West Highway 332, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566, USA; phone (409) 480-0999.
- April 28-30 2000 **OSPREY FESTIVAL**, Creston Valley, B.C. Contact: Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, Box 640, Creston, B.C. V0B 1G0; phone (250) 428-3260.
- May 1-14 2000 **WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES BIRD FESTIVAL** - 4<sup>th</sup> annual. Contact: WORBF, RR#2 - 1535-14<sup>th</sup> St, Invermere, BC V0A 1K0. See notice page 27 of this issue.
- May 10-14 2000 **GOLDEN WILDLIFE FESTIVAL OF BIRDS AND BEARS** - Contact: GWFBB, PO Box 1320, Golden, BC V0A 1H0; phone 1-800-622-GOLD. Website: [www.redshift.bc.ca/birds&bears/index.htm](http://www.redshift.bc.ca/birds&bears/index.htm)
- May 18-21 2000 **FEDERATION OF B.C. NATURALISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Osoyoos, BC. Contact: Osoyoos Desert Society [no address indicated]; (877) 899-0897.
- May 19-22 2000 **MEADOWLARK FESTIVAL**, southern Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys, BC. Contact: Meadowlark Festival, Box 20133, Penticton, BC V2A 8K3; phone (250) 492-5275. Website: [www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca](http://www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca)
- May 21 2000 **RETURN OF THE OSPREY FESTIVAL**. Contact: Wild Bird Trust of BC, #124 - 1489 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, BC V7T 1B8; phone (604) 924-2581.
- May 27 2000 **OKANAGAN MOUNTAIN PROVINCIAL PARK CRITTER COUNT** welcomes additional participants. To let the coordinators know you are coming please contact: Brenda Thompson (250) 764-4296 or Eva Durance (250) 492-0158.
- May 27-28 2000 **SALMON ARM GREBE FESTIVAL** - 4<sup>th</sup> annual. Contact: SAGF, PO Box 55, Salmon Arm, BC V1E 4N2; Ph (250) 832-5200. Website: [www.grebe.shuswap.net](http://www.grebe.shuswap.net)
- June 8-11 2000 **HAWK MIGRATION ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE**, Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania. Contact: Laurie Goodrich, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, 1700 Hawk Mountain Rd., Kempton, PA 19529-9449, USA; phone (610) 756-6961.

- July 5-9 2000 **WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 25<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING & 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**, Kern River Preserve, California. Contact: Bob Barnes, State Director Conservation Programs, Audubon California, Box 953, Weldon, CA 93283, U.S.A.; phone (760) 378-3044.
- Aug. 11-13 2000 **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Vancouver, B.C. Watch this newsletter for details, but mark your calendars now! Contact: Ev Miyasaki, e-mail bmiyasaki@home.com, phone (250) 656-8066.
- Aug. 14-20 2000 **118<sup>th</sup> STATED MEETING, AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, JOINTLY WITH BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION and CANADIAN SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY**, Memorial University, Saint John's, Newfoundland. Contact: to be announced.



### BC BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

**David Fowle** -Although best known for his contributions to science and conservation in Ontario, ornithological historians and bibliographers will also associate Dr. Charles David Fowle with B.C., where he studied Blue Grouse, Common Nighthawks and other species. Professor Emeritus Fowle's death on 16 October 1999 at the age of 79 ends a distinguished professional and avocational career, including as a President of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, a founder of the Nature Conservancy of Canada and as Chair (after "retirement") of the Ontario government's working group that prepared an important wildlife strategy in 1991 (based partly on Anonymous. 1999. *Seasons* 39(4):8).

**David A. Pearce** -BCFO member David Pearce passed away in Saanichton, B.C. on 30 Nov. 1999. Members who attended our 1995 annual meeting in Sidney may remember his computer software demonstrations, combining his computer consultant profession with his birding hobby. He co-ordinated Victoria's Christmas Bird Count and served on the board of the Victoria Natural History Society, including as Vice-President. That society awarded him their Distinguished Service Award on 24 November 1999, just a few days before his death (based partly on Anonymous. 2000. *B.C. Nat.* 38(1):26).

### SOCIETY NEWS

#### BCFO contributes to Nanaimo Estuary Study Group Project

submitted by Ian Robertson

The Board of Directors has approved \$750 for support of a year long study of the bird population of the Nanaimo River Estuary, coordinated on a volunteer basis by Bill Merilees with the field work conducted by BCFO member Guy Monty. In doing so, the BCFO joins eight other organizations comprising BC Environment, City of Nanaimo, Snuneymuxz First Nation, Nanaimo Port Authority, Nature Trust of British Columbia, Nanaimo Fish and Game Protective Association, Friends of the Environment Foundation (Canada Trust) and Nanaimo Field Naturalists Club contributing to the projects \$15,000+ budget. We look forward to completion of the project report (Fall 2000) which will be submitted to the Canadian Wildlife Service for publication. This contribution is consistent with the Board's recently approved "policy of budgeting \$1,000 per annum, or an amount otherwise affordable, for contribution to an individual or organization that is conducting research or acquiring habitat that is important to birds in British Columbia".

## BIRD-LISTERS' CORNER

by Ken Morgan  
1945 Lands End Road  
Sidney, BC V8L 5J2

Welcome to a new millennium of birding - this issue of Lister's Corner summarises the contributions from 44 listers (down 5 from last year). Normally, I let the area lists speak for themselves; however, this year I decided to highlight some of the efforts made by some of our regular contributors. For the entire ABA area, **Brian Scott** registered the largest increase over last year's total - 52 new species (= 5.7% of the 1999 ABA total). **Russ Tkachuk** found 12 new species for his Canada list; **Guy Monty** logged the highest number of new species (since last year) in 4 different areas: BC, Vancouver Island, the Vancouver checklist area and the Victoria checklist area (26, 17, 24 and 16 respectively); and **Lloyd Esralson's** Okanagan list increased by 12 species.

Since I re-activated this column a few years ago, I've wondered who was the overall "top lister" amongst those who regularly contribute. I mulled this over for a while wondering what would be the fairest way of determining this. Finally, I decided on the following: I would tally up each person's 1999 totals for what I call the 'core areas' (ABA, Canada and BC) and then add the total for one other area with the highest percentage of any area's total. The total species each person had seen in those 4 areas would then be summed and then divided by the grand total of all bird species found in the appropriate four areas. And the winner is: - **Jo Ann MacKenzie!** Jo Ann has seen 80.1% of a possible cumulative total of 2,439 species (ABA, Canada, BC + Vancouver checklist area). Husband **Hue MacKenzie** was a close second with 79.7% of the species seen in the same areas. **Dave Stirling** and **Hank Vanderpol** have observed 77.9% and 76.3% (respectively) of the possible 2,386 species from the core areas plus the Victoria checklist area. **Wayne Weber** and **Stephan Zarembo** were 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> having seen 75.6% and 74.4% of the total found in the core areas plus the Vancouver checklist area. **Eric Tull's** combination of the core areas plus Alberta represented 73.6% of a possible 2,427 species; and **Eric MacBean** followed with 71.3% of the core plus the Vancouver checklist area. **Audrey Viken** has seen 69.3% of the core area and Vancouver checklist totals and the tenth place lister goes to **Elsie Nykyfork**; Elsie has observed 69.0% of a possible 2,352 species from the core plus the Okanagan area. One wonders how many years in total these top 10 listers have put into the pursuit of birds!

As in other years, if a person's name appears below with an \* then the totals listed indicate the numbers of species submitted at the end of 1998 rather than 1999. Anyone with an \* for this reporting year will have their name dropped if they fail to send their totals in again next year.

Once again, I hope everyone has a great year of birding - see if you can beat the total numbers of new species that Brian, Russ, Monty and Lloyd observed in 1999!

Listing Totals To 31 December 1999  
A.B.A Area (917 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Stefan Zarembo	712	77.6	22 Mabel Crocker	556	60.6
2 Hank Vanderpol	700	76.3	23 Dick Cannings*	549	59.9
3 Jo Ann MacKenzie	696	75.9	24 Bryan Gates	544	59.3
4 Hue MacKenzie	691	75.4	25 Gary Davidson*	526	57.4
5 David Stirling	660	72.0	26 Aziza Cooper*	525	57.3
6 Wayne Weber	659	71.9	27 Martin McNicholl	515	56.2
7 Eric Tull	642	70.0	28 Ron Walker*	515	56.2
8 Mary Collins*	636	69.4	29 John Sprague	511	55.7

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
9 Russ Tkachuk	633	69.0	30 Don Wilson	510	55.6
10 Bob Morford*	611	66.6	31 Mike McGrenere	502	54.7
11 Eric MacBean	609	66.4	32 Andy Buhler	481	52.5
12 Audrey Viken	601	65.5	33 Marilyn Buhler	480	52.3
13 Peter Hamel*	599	65.3	34 Ken Taylor	454	49.5
14 Brian Scott	599	65.3	35 Laird Law	437	47.7
15 Steve Cannings*	597	65.1	36 Tom Gillespie	429	46.8
16 Elsie Nykyfork	595	64.8	37 Ken Morgan	421	45.9
17 Tony Greenfield	593	64.7	38 Eva Durance	403	43.9
18 Burke Korol*	593	64.7	39 Murray Brown	358	39.0
19 Keith Riding	586	63.9	40 Laurie Rockwell	311	33.9
20 Marika Ainley	574	62.6	41 Guy Monty	306	33.4
21 Lloyd Esralson	571	62.3	42 Jeremy Kim	257	28.0

ABA area species total (1999) provided by Brian Scott (from Tony White's newsletter)

### Canada (632 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Hue MacKenzie	510	80.7	23 Tony Greenfield	410	64.9
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	510	80.7	24 Lloyd Esralson	408	64.6
3 Peter Hamel *	506	80.1	25 Keith Riding	407	64.4
4 Mike Bentley	502	79.4	26 Brian Scott	404	63.9
5 David Stirling	479	75.8	27 Bryan Gates	401	63.4
6 Eric Tull	477	75.5	28 Burke Korol*	400	63.3
7 Marika Ainley	457	72.3	29 Aziza Cooper*	397	62.8
8 Wayne Weber	453	71.7	30 Gary Davidson*	396	62.7
9 Dick Cannings*	443	70.1	31 Eva Durance	376	59.5
10 Eric MacBean	443	70.1	32 Don Wilson	372	58.9
11 Stefan Zaremba	438	69.3	33 Peter Blokker	370	58.5
12 Mary Collins*	433	68.5	34 Tom Gillespie	368	58.2
13 Hank Vanderpol	433	68.5	35 Larry Cowan*	366	57.9
14 Audrey Viken	433	68.5	36 Ron Walker*	356	56.3
15 Martin McNicholl	432	68.4	37 Laird Law	350	55.4
16 Russ Tkachuk	431	68.2	38 Murray Brown	339	53.6
17 Mike McGrenere	426	67.4	39 Andy Buhler	325	51.4
18 Elsie Nykyfork	422	66.8	40 Marilyn Buhler	324	51.3
19 Barb Begg	418	66.1	41 Mabel Crocker	312	49.4
20 Ken Morgan	417	66.0	42 Laurie Rockwell	311	49.2
21 Allen Wiseley*	413	65.3	43 Guy Monty	305	48.3
22 Steve Cannings*	410	64.9	44 Jeremy Kim	257	40.7

Canada species total (1999) provided by Brian Scott (from Tony White's newsletter)

### British Columbia (484 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Mike Bentley	416	86.0	27 Brian Scott	342	70.7
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	414	85.5	28 Aziza Cooper*	341	70.5
3 Hue MacKenzie	412	85.1	29 Chris Charlesworth	339	70.0
4 David Stirling	409	84.5	30 Eric Tull	331	68.4
5 Wayne Weber	406	83.9	31 Elsie Nykyfork	330	68.2
6 Tony Greenfield	394	81.4	32 Laird Law	323	66.7
7 Dick Cannings*	390	80.6	33 Larry Cowan*	321	66.3
8 Hank Vanderpol	383	79.1	34 Andy Buhler	319	65.9
9 Peter Hamel *	379	78.3	35 Martin McNicholl	319	65.9

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
10 Audrey Viken	374	77.3	36 Marilyn Buhler	318	65.7
11 Bryan Gates	373	77.1	37 Laurie Rockwell	311	64.3
12 Gary Davidson*	368	76.0	38 Peter Blokker	308	63.6
13 Lloyd Esralson	368	76.0	39 Burke Korol*	308	63.6
14 Eric MacBean	365	75.4	40 Dannie Carsen	307	63.4
15 Keith Riding	365	75.4	41 Tom Gillespie	307	63.4
16 Mike McGrenere	364	75.2	42 Guy Monty	305	63.0
17 Barb Begg	363	75.0	43 Ken Taylor	303	62.6
18 Stefan Zarembo	363	75.0	44 Jerry Herzig	300	61.9
19 Russ Tkachuk	361	74.9	45 Murray Brown	298	61.6
20 Mary Collins*	359	74.2	46 Marika Ainley	293	60.5
21 Ken Morgan	355	73.3	47 Janice Brown*	293	60.5
22 Steve Cannings*	350	72.3	48 Eva Durance	286	59.1
23 Bob Morford *	347	71.7	49 Kim Herzig	278	57.4
24 Val George	346	71.5	50 Allen Wiseley*	256	52.9
25 Ron Walker*	343	70.9	51 Jeremy Kim	253	52.3
26 Don Wilson	343	70.9			

British Columbia species total (1999) from Wayne Campbell (Pocket Checklist of BC Birds)

### Alberta (394 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Eric Tull	336	85.3	11 Bryan Gates	208	52.8
2 David Stirling	283	71.8	12 Peter Blokker	173	43.9
3 Burke Korol*	251	63.7	13 Aziza Cooper*	158	40.1
4 Hue MacKenzie	244	61.9	14 Tony Greenfield	148	37.6
5 Audrey Viken	243	61.7	15 Larry Cowan*	138	35.0
6 Martin McNicholl	241	61.2	16 Eric MacBean	133	33.8
7 Jo Ann MacKenzie	239	60.7	17 Don Wilson	129	32.7
8 Wayne Weber	235	59.6	18 Ken Morgan	122	31.0
9 Peter Hamel *	230	58.4	19 Brian Scott	122	31.0
10 Dick Cannings*	208	52.8	20 Jeremy Kim	48	

Alberta species total (1998) provided by Burke Korol

### Vancouver Island (387 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 David Stirling	322	83.2	9 Dannie Carsen	256	66.1
2 Hank Vanderpol	315	81.4	10 Wayne Weber	252	65.1
3 Bryan Gates	312	80.6	11 Jo Ann MacKenzie	246	63.6
4 Barb Begg	311	80.4	12 Hue MacKenzie	245	63.3
5 Mike McGrenere	307	79.3	13 Guy Monty	243	62.8
6 Aziza Cooper*	300	77.5	14 Jeremy Kim	217	56.1
7 Tom Gillespie	277	71.6	15 Lloyd Esralson	161	41.6
8 Ken Morgan	264	68.2	16 Burke Korol*	115	29.7

### Queen Charlotte Islands (250 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Peter Hamel *	227	90.8	3 Val George	125	50.0
2 Ken Morgan	129	51.6	4 Bryan Gates	74	29.6

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



## Vancouver Checklist Area (406 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Jo Ann MacKenzie	333	82.0	11 Bob Morford*	259	63.8
2 Hue MacKenzie	331	81.5	12 David Stirling	239	58.9
3 Wayne Weber	325	80.0	13 Bryan Gates	232	57.1
4 Eric MacBean	322	79.3	14 Don Wilson	220	54.2
5 Stefan Zaremba	301	74.1	15 Guy Monty	199	49.0
6 Keith Riding	300	73.9	16 Chris Charlesworth	191	47.0
7 Lloyd Esralson	298	73.4	17 Aziza Cooper*	186	45.8
8 Dick Cannings *	283	69.7	18 Burke Korol*	170	41.9
9 Audrey Viken	282	69.5	19 Jeremy Kim	92	22.7
10 Larry Cowan*	275	67.7			

Vancouver Checklist Area species total (1998) provided by Martin McNicholl

## Victoria Checklist Area (353 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 David Stirling	310	87.8	9 Wayne Weber	233	66.0
2 Hank Vanderpol	305	86.4	10 Andy Buhler	224	63.5
3 Bryan Gates	303	85.8	11 Marilyn Buhler	222	62.9
4 Barb Begg	299	84.7	12 Jeremy Kim	210	59.5
5 Mike McGrenere	294	83.3	13 Guy Monty	175	49.6
6 Aziza Cooper*	274	77.6	14 Lloyd Esralson	129	36.5
7 Tom Gillespie	264	74.8	15 Burke Korol*	104	29.5
8 Dannie Carsen	254	72.0			

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

## Okanagan Valley (319 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Steve Cannings*	295	92.5	15 Peter Blokker	236	74.0
2 Mary Collins*	289	90.6	16 Hue MacKenzie	236	74.0
3 Dick Cannings*	280	87.8	17 Jo Ann MacKenzie	233	73.0
4 Denise Brownlie	276	86.5	18 Tony Greenfield	222	69.6
5 Chris Charlesworth	276	86.5	19 Laird Law	196	61.4
6 Elsie Nykyfork	276	86.5	20 Audry Viken	191	59.9
7 Gwynneth Wilson	275	86.2	21 Lloyd Esralson	187	58.6
8 Don Wilson	262	82.1	22 Bryan Gates	186	58.3
9 Laurie Rockwell	256	80.3	23 Russ Tkachuk	175	54.9
10 Wayne Weber	251	78.7	24 Aziza Cooper*	172	53.9
11 Gary Davidson*	245	76.8	25 Dannie Carsen	170	53.3
12 David Stirling	239	74.9	26 Guy Monty	122	38.2
13 Eva Durance	238	74.6	27 Jeremy Kim	60	18.8
14 Burke Korol*	238	74.6			

Okanagan Valley Checklist Area species total (1999) provided by Gwynneth Wilson

## Princeton Area (251 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Jerry Herzig	239	95.2	3 Bryan Gates	87	34.7
2 Kim Herzig	226	90.0			

Princeton Area species total (1999) provided by Jerry Herzig. Boundaries 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
1 Wayne Weber	238	80.7	4 Burke Korol*	127	43.1
2 David Stirling	198	67.1	5 Guy Monty	77	26.1
3 Gary Davidson*	182	61.7			

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

## Sunshine Coast (280 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Tony Greenfield	252	90.0	4 Guy Monty	70	25.0
2 Russ Tkachuk	225	80.4	5 Burke Korol*	45	16.1
3 Wayne Weber	136	48.6			

Sunshine Coast species total (1999) provided by Tony Greenfield

## West Kootenay Area (285 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Gary Davidson*	262	91.9	4 Hue MacKenzie	168	58.9
2 Burke Korol*	216	75.8	5 Wayne Weber	175	61.4
3 Jo Ann MacKenzie	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
1 Laird Law	246	91.8	4 Chris Charlesworth	158	59.0
2 Cathy Antoniazzi	242	90.3	5 Wayne Weber	111	41.4
3 Don Wilson	190	70.9	6 Bryan Gates	91	34.0

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

## Creston Valley Area (265 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Burke Korol*	179	67.5	3 Jeremy Kim	29	10.9
2 Wayne Weber	128	48.3			

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

## Washington State (454 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Wayne Weber	354	78.0	7 Lloyd Esralson	212	46.7
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	342	75.3	8 Guy Monty	126	27.8
3 Hue MacKenzie	337	74.2	9 Bryan Gates	125	27.5
4 David Stirling	254	55.9	10 Eric Tull	115	25.3
5 Eric MacBean	234	51.5	11 Jeremy Kim	38	8.4
6 Keith Riding	227	50.0			

Washington species total (1999) provided by Wayne Weber

## North Pacific Pelagic Waters

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
1 Mike Bentley	56	5 Bryan Gates	41
2 Ken Morgan	54	6 Peter Hamel*	39
3 David Stirling	43	7 Eric MacBean	29
4 Jo Ann MacKenzie	42		

## Shade-Grown Coffee - Part 1

by Jim Williams

5239 Cranberry Lane  
Webster, WI 54893

Your simple morning cup of coffee has ceased to be simple. It has moved from basic regular or decaf to ecological and economical nuances which give an entirely new flavor to the pot. One of these flavors involves birds, and so we offer this overview of the issue of shade coffee and the opportunity it presents for you, as a consumer, to make a difference.

Focusing on our concern for birds, coffee grown under a shady canopy of trees helps those bird species which summer in North America and winter in the tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean by providing them with foraging habitat. The trees which shade the coffee harbor insects and other food items used by these birds.

Move now to the supermarket, aisle eight, right-hand side, coffees and teas. Ignore the coffee in the big round cans. It is not shade grown, period. Most of it is of the Robusta family or hybrids, grown in open sunny areas where their bountiful crops mature quickly, generally at the expense of flavor, among other things.

When we talk shade coffee we are talking about beans of the Arabica family, slower to mature, richer in flavor. You will grind these beans at home. (Some shade coffee is available ground for use.)

Can you find shade coffee beans in the supermarket? Maybe, maybe not. You're more likely to find them in a specialty coffee shop, at a food co-op, or by mail from a source savvy about the issues.

New hybrid coffees can be grown in full sun. They grow faster there, and from a comparable number of plants often produce a larger crop. This growing method, however, requires more fertilizer and pesticide than does shade coffee. The economics are different as well, sun coffee is a commodity sold by the farmer at prices he cannot control.

Coffee traditionally was grown in the shade, protected by a canopy of native trees. This coffee matures at a more leisurely pace. Think of the two cups of coffee on a typical day, the hastily consumed cup as you rush in the morning, the relaxed cup after dinner: Sun coffee and shade coffee.

Shade coffee requires less fertilizer, less pesticide, less herbicide. It offers better, more fully developed and subtle flavors. Coffee that is slow to grow and slow to ripen, better converts its starches to sugars. This coffee can be marketed as a specialty product, providing the farmer a higher return for his efforts. That farmer also grows the crop with a smaller financial investment if he must buy less agricultural chemicals and need not clear forest to create crop land.

If birds had thumbs, shade-grown coffee would get two thumbs up. Ornithologists writing in many journals over the last few years have documented the importance of shade coffee habitat in the increasingly deforested landscape of Mexico and Central America.

"Up to 10 billion birds summer in the temperate forest of North America, then fly south to winter in Latin America," says author Mark Pendergast in the book *Uncommon Grounds, the History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World*.



"During the decade 1978-1987, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Breeding Bird Survey showed an alarming decline in neotropical migrants, ranging from one to three percent annually. Although there may be other factors involved," he says, "it is alarming that shade-grown coffee was declining at precisely the same time...."

Pendergast says that birds, insects, and other animals abandon coffee grown in the open as an ecological desert, citing information from Russell Greenberg of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center.

"The (Central American) plantations that provided great birding were those in which coffee is grown in the shade, beneath an overstory of trees that provide protective cover from excessive sunlight," said John Kricher of the Department of Biology at Wheaton College in Massachusetts, writing for Birding magazine about his own recent visits to that area. Of a sun coffee plantation in Panama, Mr. Kricher said, "there were birds but far fewer species than in any of the surrounding habitats."

As long ago as 1932, the value of shaded coffee plantations to birds was noted. Ludlow Griscom, ornithologist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and at Harvard, visited Guatemala that year, and reported that coffee plantations there, all shaded then, were inhabited by a wide range of bird species.

Progress caught up with many of those shady sanctuaries. It was called coffee *technification*, the change to sun-flooded fields, chemically enhanced. This was promoted widely by the United States as a way to help developing countries make economic progress.

Today, the U.S. Agency for International Aid, the World Bank and its affiliate the Global Environmental Fund, are correcting past mistakes, helping to develop shaded farms and organic growing methods.

Making this change back to shaded coffee plantations and farms is not simple. Even the definition of the term shade is complex. How much shade is required to grow shade coffee? How high must the overstory be? What species of trees are best? If you are marketing shade coffee, and charging the premium price that the market presently sees, just how do you define the product? What is shade coffee?

The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center has copyrighted the term 'Bird-Friendly' for coffee, and promotes strict criteria as a model for labeling shade-grown coffee: recommended minimum of 10 species of shade trees, no more than 70 percent of the tree species *Inga vera*, minimum shade cover at noon of 40 percent, minimum height of 33 feet for the backbone trees in the growing area, some shorter and taller trees mixed in, limited pruning of shade trees, non-removal of epiphytes (plants growing in the trees), and, where possible, maintenance of road and stream buffer areas.

Is this a universally accepted set of standards? No. When I was seeking information for this article, Alan Krohnke, son of Alyce Krohnke, a member of Minnesota Birding Network, responded from his viewpoint as a partner in a Minneapolis wholesale coffee business.

"The shade-coffee story is incredibly complex," he said, "and the coffee industry is at loggerheads over it."

"There are coffees that are certified shade-grown by the Smithsonian and other certified boards that are less bird-safe than non-certified regular and organic coffees. It makes sense to support any variety of shade-grown (coffee) and the conversion of sun crops to shade crops," he said, "instead of declaring only the coffee from virgin farms as politically correct to consume."

"We support shade growing," Mr. Krohnke said, "because the cup quality of the coffee is superior, and it is the only sustainable way to produce true specialty coffee."

Beyond flavor and friendliness to birds, there are other issues.

Is the coffee marketed by a farmer cooperative or, more specifically, is it fair-trade coffee? This sales structure gives the grower some control over prices, thus providing a better income.

Is the coffee organic? Is it ecological coffee? A sustainable crop?

And who defines these terms?


It is possible, you see, to buy coffee that is double or triple labeled - bird-friendly, fair-traded, organic coffee. Not to mention regular or decaf and maybe touched with hazelnut or amaretto, too.

Pour yourself another cup, and stay tuned. The issue rapidly has come a long way, and has a way to go. And a raw egg in the pot (my mother's trick for clarifying coffee) is not going to help here.

In the meantime, there is little question that shade coffee is good for the birds. You as consumer simply need search out the product. Ask questions about where the coffee comes from and how it is grown. A little education here will help you make a decision and alert merchants to the desire of the marketplace for clear standards and product broadly available.



Watch the media for more information. The Minneapolis Star Tribune has offered stories and comment on the issue. The Atlantic Monthly had a story in August about shade coffee. National Public Radio is paying attention. The Washington Post wrote about the issue late this summer. A very detailed discussion of shade coffee, its history, and the issues is scheduled to appear in the February 2000 issue of *Birding*, the magazine of the American Birding Association. This comprehensive presentation is recommended reading.

Coffee provides an extraordinary opportunity for those of us who drink it to help birds on a daily basis. Our simple cup of coffee now offers goodness as well as pleasure. 

[Jim Williams, editor of *Minnesota Birding*, works for the American Birding Association and Birding. This article has been reproduced from *Minnesota Birding*, newsletter of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union and is used here with permission.]

**And for some closing thoughts...**

"... if enough consumers speak up, we can make a difference... With each cup we could be toasting the warblers, toucans, and other diverse life that relies on tropical forests."

Dan Evans, past executive director of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, in *OBSERVER* (publication of PRBO), Spring 1997

"Not just a cup, but a just cup."

Paul Katzeff, roastmaster at Thanksgiving Coffee Company

"Nobody wants a double tall skim latte over the dead body of a hummingbird. The model [for shade-grown coffee] would be as successful as dolphin-free tuna."

Ellen Goodman, nationally syndicated columnist, January 1999

## Birds of Farleigh Lake and Marron Valley, 1997 - February 10, 2000

by Eva Durance  
Box 5039  
Penticton, BC V2A 8L8

In the December, 1996 issue of BC Field Ornithologist, I published a list of the bird species I'd found breeding in, inhabiting year round, or passing through the area west of Penticton where I have lived since 1991. The following is an update of that information to the present including some changes in common species occurrences or numbers since 1996. I have repeated the basic information on the area for readers who do not have a copy of the first article.

The records are primarily from my 5.3 ha property on Farleigh Lake Road (FLR) 14 km west of Penticton off Green Mt. Road (GMR) which leads towards the Apex Ski Resort. I have also included species seen in Marron Valley (MV) just to the south off Green Mt. Road where I run regularly and where I've had a six-box bluebird trail for the past two years. The elevation of the area is from 700-800 m.

Farleigh Lake Valley is a narrow 2-km-long strip running generally east-west with the 60-year-old reservoir/lake at the western end. Marron Valley is wider and runs generally north-south with hay fields on the western side and knapweed and toadflax-degraded sagebrush-bunchgrass on the east. My property is on the north side of Farleigh Lake Valley at the eastern end with about 0.8 ha of level farmland and the rest steep Ponderosa pine-bunchgrass and scree slopes with Interior Douglas fir and tall juniper (*J. scopulorum*) on the upper reaches.

The two valleys contain a variety of habitats: Ponderosa pine-bunchgrass on the lower, south-facing slopes, Ponderosa pine-Interior Douglas fir on the higher and on north-facing slopes, the lake itself which is shallow and rather weedy and comes from a beaver-dammed creek to the west, a few aspen and cottonwood groves in Marron Valley, and thick riparian vegetation along Shatford Creek (SHC) and Shingle Creek (SC) by Green Mt. Road.

Since both valleys border and are partly in the Penticton Indian Reserve #1, there is little development. Farleigh Lake (FL) has 19 of 25 sites built on (rural residential/hobby farms) and Marron Valley's northern end has one ranch and one Reserve dwelling.

Except for those noted, all the following additions to the previous list were seen on my property. I have added another category to my previous ones, that of common winter resident: c-wr. Note too that the "b" in my original species list refers to "breeding in area confirmed"; I incorrectly had this coded as "br".

---

c- common resident

c-mig - common, but in migration only

uc - resident, but seen infrequently (once or twice/year at most); may breed here, but not confirmed

uc-mig - uncommon (not every year), only in migration

wr - winter resident

r - rare, seen only once or twice in nine years here

h - heard only

b - breeding in area confirmed

sp - spring s - summer f - fall w - winter yr - year round

**A. 'New' Species 1997-Feb. 2000****One sighting only:**

- AWPE (3, FL) - 25/9/98  
 RUGR (1, FLR) - 15/2/98  
 PIWO (1 fem. above house) - 24/2/97  
 LEWO (1, SC, 2 miles east) - 5/8/98 - b?  
 LEFL (1, hedge) - 17/6/98  
 WAVI (1, riparian, SHC) - 2/7/99  
 COYE (1, hawthorn shrub by house) - 23/5/97  
 NAWA (1, hedge) - 13/6/99  
 CORE (flock, FL) - 15/11/99  
 (1, with AMGO at feeders) - 1/2/2000 -- still present at time of writing

**More than just one year's sighting:**

- NOHA (1 juv. MV) - 29/9/97  
 (1 fem. MV) - 23/4/98: possibly an uc-mig  
 MERL (pair) - 17/6/98 and 20/3/99 and into early fall both years: this pair appears to have taken up breeding residence above the property across the road from me, though no evidence of success so far  
 VASW (15-20. flying over property) - 13/5/97: seen for first time, but then found they nest in cottonwoods about .8 km away on SC  
 BCHU (1 male, first time, at feeder) - 24/7/97: by 1998, well established as a breeding species with one pair at my place and a couple more pair at a neighbour's 1 km away  
 RCKI (2 fem. in orchard) - 16/10/97  
 (1 male above house) - 27/4/98  
 (1 male in pines above house) - 27/4/99  
 (1 male, 1 fem. above house) - 29/4/99; possibly a c-mig I missed in earlier years  
 BHGR (pair in home orchard) - 26/6/98  
 (imm., FLR) - 6/7/99  
 BOWA (100, flying over FL) - 27/1/98  
 (60, riparian, SHC) - 30/12/99  
 YRWA (1 each time) - 20/9/97, 29/9/97, 10/10/97; 21/5/98, 26/5/98; I now think this species to be an c-mig that I somehow missed other years

**B. Additional sightings of uncommon and rare species from previous list:**

- TUSW (4 on lake) - 15/11/97; may be an "uc-mig" as I'm not on the lake and depend for sightings on lakeside neighbours  
 AMWI (1 pair, 3 imm. on FL) - 15/11/97; only second record, still "r-mig."  
 HOME (1 male, 5 fem. on FL) - 15/11/99 & 17/11/99; only second record, still "r-mig"  
 BAGO (1 pair) - 1/4/98: only second record, still "r-mig"  
 OSPR (1, MV) - 5/10/97; first record for area since 16/4/92  
 (1, MV) - 23/4/98; unusual to be in this area as no nesting records for Marron Lake, the closest large body of water in these valleys; may be flying across ridge to east from Skaha Lake in Okanagan Valley; "r-uc non-resident"  
 BAEA - amended from "uc, yr" to "c-wr" from regular sightings over past three years  
 GOEA - amended from "r,s" to "c, b, yr" from regular sightings over past three years and evidence of breeding in MV  
 SSHA - amended to "uc, b, sp-f" from "uc,b,sp-s" from sightings and view of pair in aerial fight with RTHA on SC in breeding season  
 COHA - amended to "uc, sp-f" from "uc, sp-s"  
 RLHA - amended to "c-wr" from "r-wr"  
 CAQU - significant increase in overall numbers in past 3-4 yrs (mild winters?) from an average of 12-15 to 40-50 birds  
 DOWO - amended from "uc-wr" to "c-wr" from consistent presence of pair at feeder for past three years

**B. Additional sightings of uncommon and rare species from previous list: (cont.)**

HAWO - amended from "uc, w-sp" to "c, b, yr"

AMRO - amended from "c, b, sp-f" to "c, b, late w-f"

AMPI (WAPI in first article: 2 flying over) - 24/9/97; second sighting, "r-mig"

GCKI (4, pines above house) - 15/2/98; second sighting, "uc-mig"

OCWA ( 1 each time) - 23/5/97, 20/9/98; may be an "uc-mig" rather than "r-mig."

LZBU - amended to "c, b, sp-f" from "uc, sp-f"

SCJU - amended to "c-wr" from "r-wr"; one or two almost every winter at feeder in past three years

PIGR (1 fem. FLR) - 2/12/98; second sighting, "r-mig"

EVGR - amended to "uc-c, b, late w-f" to "uc-c, b?, late sp-f"



The BC Coastal Waterbird Survey began with a fabulous start in 1999, thanks to many interested and energetic birders along the coast of British Columbia! The BC Coastal Waterbird Survey is a new regional program, developed by Bird Studies Canada in partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Service. The Survey, through a network of volunteers, regional organizers, naturalist groups, government agencies, and non-government organizations, aims to monitor waterbirds in coastal areas of British Columbia.

There are now over 200 Coastal Waterbird Survey sites in British Columbia! Survey sites currently extend from Rocky Point at the southern tip of Vancouver Island, to Rose Spit at the northern tip of the Queen Charlotte Islands. New participants are still coming out of the woodwork and joining this team of waterbird monitors every month. We welcome all participants to this new, important and exciting survey!

If you are interested in joining the BC Coastal Waterbird Survey please call our new Bird Studies Canada, BC Programs, toll-free number 1-877-349-2473 (BIRD)! Or you can contact me, Stephanie Hazlitt, the BC Coastal Waterbird Survey Coordinator, at: Bird Studies Canada, BC Programs, 5421 Robertson Road, RR1, Delta, British Columbia, V4K 3N2; (telephone) 604-940-4696; (email) stephanie.hazlitt@ec.gc.ca.





## 2000 Interior Swan Count

by Rick Howie  
 Site 15, Comp 48, RR#3  
 Kamloops BC V2C 5K1

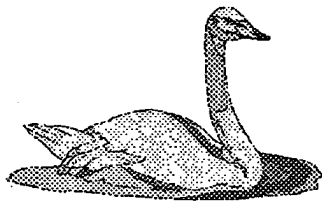
### Foreword

January 16, 2000 marked the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Interior Swan count and the first count of the new millennium, depending upon your view of when this wonderous event actually occurs. Sixty-one members/friends of eight naturalist clubs with the Federation of BC Naturalists tallied traditional areas in the Thompson, Shuswap, Okanagan, Nicola and Nicola drainages. **The totals were 51 Tundra Swans, 258 Trumpeter Swans and one Mute Swan for a grand total of 310 birds.**

An exciting addition to the count this year is a renewed effort by naturalists in the central part of the province. The Prince George naturalists have been counting Crooked River for over a decade but we have not summarized those results. The inclusion of some additional count locations gives us a better picture of that area. In order to avoid confusing the trend data already established for the southern interior count, I am going to maintain a separate section to deal with the central interior and build an evolving picture of that area. I am going to see if the historical counts for the Crooked River are available and build those into the report format for a more complete picture. **The grand total for the central interior was 109 Trumpeter Swans.**

### Discussion

The tally of 51 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, all but six of the birds were in various places throughout the Shuswap - Okanagan Valley, with only two being on the South Thompson River and four in the Nicola Valley. Juveniles comprised only 6% of the population which is well below the 17-29% range that has been recorded over the period of the count. The 10 year average for juveniles during the period 1973-83 was about 26%.



At 258, Trumpeter Swan numbers were virtually identical to the 1999 total of 256 and equaled the 1996 total of 258, but still down from the 1998 total of 452. Juveniles comprised 15.7% of the population which is above last year but below the average of 21% that we have come to expect. In 1998, the juveniles comprised 19% of the total.

The 21 Trumpeters at Savona were well below past high counts, but the Nicola Valley swans were well up over past years, clearly due to the open water available this year. Swan numbers on the South Thompson River were down by 60 birds over last year, so perhaps some departed for the open waters of Nicola lake. The 155 birds on the river was the lowest population since 1990 when 176 were noted.

The east Shuswap and Okanagan numbers of Trumpeters were up over last year but the Tundra numbers dropped in the same area. Some overlap of counting along the Shuswap River gave mixed results so numbers in that area may be a little on the high side. A new count area up the Eagle River by Dick Mann and family found few swans but fills a gap in the coverage area which is well appreciated.

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. A second Mute Swan was reported in the South Okanagan about one week after the count but was not found on count day.

### Water Levels and Other Habitat Comments

Water levels in the South Thompson River were 0.6 metres above average for the month of December and 0.7 metres above for January period. These levels are the second highest ever

recorded since we began conducting counts in 1976. 1995 showed the highest December level at 1.0 metres above average, and by January, the level had dropped to about 0.8 metres above average.

While a more careful analysis will be the subject of a separate report, it appears that over the years, our lower counts coincide with two key habitat conditions. The most obvious and potentially most critical is the extent of ice cover on the river. Clearly this is the case for other rivers and lakes as well. As shore ice extends out into the main channel on the South Thompson River, shallow foraging areas become unavailable and swans are forced to move well before the entire river is frozen. However, warmer water flowing from Little Shuswap Lake maintains open water along the first few kilometres of the river even in cold winters and swans often move to the area near the village of Neskain.

This year, open water prevailed and I suspect that the additional water depths caused some foraging areas to be out of reach. Mean December and January water levels have been well above average since 1995. However, it may be simplistic to suggest that this is the only reason for lowered numbers of swans. We really have no quantitative measure of forage availability at any water levels, so this along with other factors need to be examined. Yearly trends in forage production are also unknown at this time.

Unfrozen lakes and ponds around Kamloops were attracting birds during December, as was the Nicola Valley, so perhaps birds were dispersed when cooler weather arrived, and they moved south as still waters began to freeze. Incidentally, there were at least 75 Trumpeter Swans in fields around Chilliwack during December and one wonders if they originated from the interior, or moved up the valley from coastal wintering groups. There were also about 100 Trumpeters just west of Clearbrook in early February, but again, they may move inland from the coast.

As always, a number of interesting questions remain as riddles for us to seek answers to.

#### Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		MUTE	TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv		
A	4	0	27	1	1	33
B	0	0	2	0	0	2
C	2	0	9	1	0	12
D	0	0	45	4	0	49
E	0	0	67	25	0	92
F	0	0	6	2	0	8
G	17	3				20
H	9	0	16	0	0	25
I	0	0	23	0	0	23
J	8	0	0	0	0	8
K	0	0	0	0	0	0
L	0	0	21	0	0	21
M	0	0	0	0	0	0
N	6	0	0	0	0	6
O	0	0	7	2	0	9
P	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q	0	0	0	0	0	NC
R	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	0	0	0	0	0	NC
T	2	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>310</b>

### Central Interior Counts

Eleven naturalist club members conducted the central interior tally and three areas were counted this year. They were from Prince George to the Nautley River, the Crooked River and the Stuart River. 109 Trumpeters were located with 90 adults and 19 immatures making up the count. The 21% juvenile population compares favorably with past numbers noted for the southern interior wintering population. Knowing the breeding locations for the different wintering groups could lead to interesting speculations about the relative environmental / nutritional conditions that these birds are exposed to while trying to raise families.

The Crooked River count was noted as being low at 29 birds with more extensive icing conditions than normal recorded for the river. Randy Rawluk counted the Stuart River and tantalized us with the comment that he did not reach the mouth of the Tachie River. So perhaps an even larger count will come from his area next year!

### Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
C-A			40	4	44
C-B			27	2	29
C-C			23	13	36
<b>Totals</b>			90	19	109

### 2000 Interior Eagle Count

On January 16, 2000, 61 members of eight interior naturalist clubs (FBCN affiliates) conducted an eagle count in conjunction with the annual swan count. This year saw the addition of counts from the central interior as 11 members participated, largely from the Prince George Naturalist Club.

In the southern interior 168 Bald Eagles (120 adults, 48 sub-adults) were tallied along with four Golden Eagles (3 adult, 1 sub-adult). The 1998 totals were 163 Bald and 13 Golden Eagles.

The sub-adults comprised 28% of the Bald Eagle total which is within the range of 20-38% that we have noted over the six years of counting. The one sub-adult Golden represented 25% 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 160s which we have noted in other years. There is some rather consistent results as noted from these figures over the years:

1995 - 116  
 1996 - 164  
 1997 - 116  
 1998 - 163  
 1999 - 156  
 2000 - 163

Again, 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 30 km north of my house which routinely attracts about 15-20 eagles, but goes uncounted because the river does not harbour swans which has been the prime purpose for our daily outing. As well, I received a report of nearly 50 eagles along the Shuswap River which were not seen on count day.

The snowy conditions made spotting of Golden Eagles difficult, as many are likely seen hunting high on ridges or perched on cliff tops and so forth. Improved viewing conditions will undoubtedly boost the count again next year.

#### Results by Area

Area	Bald		Golden		Total
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
A	15	9	0	0	24
B	5	5	0	0	10
C	4	2	0	0	6
D	1	2	0	0	3
E	10	5	0	0	15
F	4	0	0	0	4
G	4	0	0	0	4
H	6	0	0	0	6
I	6	2	1	1	10
J	11	3	0	0	14
K	2	0	0	0	2
L	0	0	0	0	0
M	14	7	0	0	21
N	12	2	1	0	15
O	8	5	0	0	13
P	10	2	0	0	12
Q	0	0	0	0	NC
R	7	3	1	0	11
S	0	0	0	0	NC
T	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>172</b>

#### Central Interior Counts

The central interior counts tallied 16 Bald Eagles (11 adults 5 sub-adults) and no Golden Eagles. 31% juveniles is within the range noted for the southern wintering populations. As more counts and information is received from these areas, more comments about trends will be possible, and comments are welcomed from the Prince George surveyors.

#### Results by Area

Area	Bald		Golden		Total
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
C-A	10	3	0	0	13
C-B	1	1	0	0	2
C-C		1	0	0	1

[Editors' Note: Area Descriptions and Participants on page 21 are for both 2000 counts]

**2000 Swan and 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 and Big Shuswap Lakes
G	Tappen to Sicamous - Shuswap Lake
H	Sicamous to Enderby - Shuswap River, Mara Lake
I	Peachland to Osoyoos and 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 Lake
P	Osoyoos - Sterling Creek along Similkameen drainage
Q	Adams Lake
R	Kettle River - Christian Valley
S	Merritt to Spences Bridge
T	Kamloops to Nicola Lake - Hwy. #5a
C-A	Prince George to Nautley River
C-B	Crooked River
C-C	Stuart River

**Participants****Kamloops Area**

Willy Haras, Rick Howie, Eric McAlary, Andy Raniseth, Syd Roberts, Des & Louise Rice

**Shuswap Area**

Doris Kime, Frank Kime, Sandrina Rathbone, Phil Rathbone

**Vernon Area**

Carolyn Allen, Kay Bartholomew, Alice Beals, Peter Blokker, Mary Collins, Candis Eikermann, Phil Gehlen, Phil Jones, Peter Mayfield, Ernie McNaughton, Harry Nash, Joyce Nash, John Quirk, Shirley Quirk, Jeff Spedding, Jinny Stewart.

**Kelowna Area**

Joan Burbridge, Chris Charlesworth, Bill Cutfield, Elke Fischer, Walter Fischer, Nancy Johnstone, Nettie Overhoff, Ryan Tomlinson, Judy Toms, Don Wilson, Robin Yellowlees.

**South Okanagan Area**

Thea Adams, Dick Cannings, Eva Durance, Freda Easy, Jim Ginns, Stanny Harding, Holly Johnston, Kathryn McCourt, Lee McFadyen, Laure Neish, Celia Patendon, Laurie Rockwell, Glenda Ross

**Princeton Area**

Jerry Herzig

**Nicola Valley**

Wayne Weber

**Kettle River**

Bruce Morgenstern, Pearl Morgenstern.

**Prince George - Nautley River**

Helen Antoniazzi, Jack Bowling, Dan Dunlop, Jamie Fenneman

**Crooked River**

Sandra Hepburn, Christine Jones, Sandra Kinsey, Laird Law, Nancy Muirhead, Laurie Savard

**Stuart River**

Randy Rawluk 

## THE LOON-ACY OF COUNTING BIRDS IN WINTER®

by Christine Scott  
1664 Passage View Drive  
Campbell River, BC V9W 6L3

It was January 2 of the year 2000 - the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. In Campbell River, birders have participated for the past 25 years. This marked the event's 100<sup>th</sup> national anniversary and 50,000 North American birders would spend one winter's day counting birds.

Long before sunrise, I met my team at the first of a dozen waterfront parks. A neophyte naturalist, I came well prepared: thermos of spiced tea-slash-rum, plasticized lunch, rubberized binoculars, thermal underwear, Gore-tex parka, gumboots and vinyl-clad bird books.

Counting birdies in a raging monsoon is quite an adventure. One should expect tough slogging when told to wear rubber from head to toe. Personally, I find yellow slicks more befitting a deep sea halibut-hunter than a land-locked lark lubber. When our fearless leader took the spotting scope and tripod out of her 4x4, and wrapped it in plastic, I knew we were into some serious ornithology.

By 8:21 a.m. we stared into an ebony ocean and 3-metre swells. My binoculars were soaked - they still slosh; the rain accelerated to monsoon intensity. Still, imbued with a fragile spirit of hope and adventure, I sang, "Come out little birdies, wherever you are!"

The waterbirds are inky little corks bobbing up and down. The expectation is to identify them before the surf crashes over - a five-second window of opportunity. A fellow birder crowed, "There's a female Red-breasted Merganser!" I wiped the slush from my face and secretly despised him for knowing both the species AND the gender.

Try identifying a kinglet in a shrub; that's not a bird, that's a speck! Give me a Great Blue Heron any day; with a respectable 52-inch wingspan, that's a bird I can count.

Through bog and fog, over hill and dale we traipsed, a merry little band of four birdlovers out counting birds on a mid-winter's day. At one point, we slogged into a quagmire of squishy moss-mud that spilled into our gumboots. Somebody was intent on finding a rare Ring-necked Duck! I wanted to ring someone's neck right there on the spot.

While attempting to navigate a mud-filled creek, I finally wiped out. Ankles aflame and knee-caps skinned, I valiantly carried on. In my whole life, I'd never been so cold and wet and the tea-slash-rum definitely saved my life. In a perverse way, the storm's fury added to the excitement.

And so it came to be, on that deluge called a day, that our brave team of birders recorded all the birds in our subdivision. Every chirp and quack and tweet was duly noted by our avian accountant. At day's end everyone gathered, soaked to the bone and exhausted from the day's bird-battles. Giddy with excitement, we tallied birds, talked birds and toasted birds as each team recounted their day's highlights.

Birders recited adrenalin-fueled tales of a Peregrine Falcon engaged in an all-out food-fight with a Red-tailed Hawk over a hapless wigeon. Rare avian species strutted their stuff: one group spotted an albino American Robin. An extraordinary 'Buffleye' was seen -- a hybrid of Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye.

On this one day, our small community in Campbell River identified 96 species and tallied 19,481 individual birds. I felt exhilarated and healthy and very bird-smart - proof that fresh air can really rev up the dopamine.

With shredded cheeks and swollen hands, I sloshed home after another tortuous birding expedition. Will I go again? You can count on it. From December 14, 2000 till January 5, 2001, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count will celebrate its 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary! And we wouldn't want to miss that wonderful day, so fight on, bird people, fight on!

### AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

#### Eva Durance

Eva is an avid birder, a farmer, and a technical writer in natural sciences, agriculture, and environmental topics.

#### Tony Greenfield

President of the BCFO, Tony has been an active birder on the Sunshine Coast for over 20 years.

#### Rick Howie

Rick, a naturalist with many years of birding experience, has contributed to much of our knowledge about the Flammulated Owl in BC.

#### Ken H. Morgan

Ken started birding as a youngster in Ontario. Although he only birded off-and-on in his teens, he now 'birds' seriously as a biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service with a primary interest in seabirds.

#### Christine Scott

Christine is a nature writer, wildflower photographer and bird enthusiast. A former elementary teacher and newspaper journalist, she now pursues a rigorous agenda of nature walks, ocean kayaking and park exploration. She writes a weekly nature column from her home in Campbell River.

### British Columbia Nest Record Scheme

The BCNRS, a permanent research project of WBT Wild Bird Trust of BC, is again asking bird watchers to fill in cards for each nest or brood they find this summer. The cards include information on the size of the clutch or brood, when each egg was laid, when the young hatched and fledged, and other important ecological information. Over the 40+ years that the nest records inquiry has been in operation, facts on the long-term breeding biology of birds in the province has been well established. It is the single most important volunteer program in British Columbia.

The 1999 nesting season was a record-breaker. Nearly 10,000 cards were submitted by well over 500 nest finders. Many naturalists made a concerted effort to revisit nests to determine productivity as well as continue the task of monitoring nesting colonies and nests of birds of prey.

If you want to participate in this worthwhile endeavour, nest cards, with an instruction booklet, can be obtained by writing:

**BC Nest Records Scheme**  
P.O. Box 6218, Station C  
Victoria, BC V8P 5L5

A copy of the 1999 annual report, with additional instructions, is available free-of-charge on request.

## Lower Mainland Site Guides

Over the last nine years we have published a few Site Guides to areas around Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. Out-of-town visitors to this August's Annual General Meeting may like to review some of these Guides as a way to supplement their birding enjoyment before or after the meeting. We hope that Vancouver and Lower Mainland members will either update some of these guides or will be willing to send us some Guides to other interesting and birdy places.

Site Guide: Blackie Spit, Surrey BC 1(2):12-15, 1991

Site Guide: Lighthouse Park, West Vancouver BC 3(3):9-11, 1993

Site Notes: Good Birding on Bus #351 5(2):12-13, 1995

Site Guide: Colony Farm Regional Park, Coquitlam / Port Coquitlam BC 6(2):5-10, 1996

Site Guide: Maplewood Flats Conservation Area, North Vancouver BC 8(1):9-11, 1998

Site Notes: A Stroll Around the Knoll, Surrey BC 8(2):14-16, 1998

Site Guide: The Squamish Estuary, Squamish BC 9(1):16-19 1999

Nearby areas you might also wish to check out:

Site Guide: Cowichan Bay and Duncan BC 1(4):10-11, 1992

Site Guide: Island View Beach, Saanich BC 2(3/4):20-23, 1992

Site Guide: Lower Sunshine Coast BC 2(3/4):24-29, 1992

Site Guide: Martindale Valley, Southern Vancouver Island BC 4(3):10-13, 1994

Site Guide: Whistler / Pemberton area BC 4(4):12-15, 1994

Site Guide: Esquimalt Lagoon, Victoria BC 9(3):10-12, 1999

We know everyone attending the Annual General Meeting this August will have a great time of birding, camaraderie, and the sharing of knowledge, experiences and ideas. Please put pen to paper or fingers to a keyboard and share the enjoyment with those who are unable to attend the AGM in person. Our in-basket eagerly awaits all of your submissions. Thanks!

## GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES

Site Guides should be about two to three 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.

**Lost, Missing or Strayed** -- Could anyone having an address, phone number or e-mail for an I. Hestholm please contact the Membership Secretary or have that member contact same. Thanks. Russ Tkachuk, Membership Secretary, PO Box 132, Robert's Creek, BC V0N 2W0. Phone (604) 885-8867. e-mail: rtkachuk@dccnet.com.



### Coastal Hutton's Vireo

by Tony Greenfield  
PO Box 319  
Sechelt, BC V0N 3A0

Hutton's Vireo occurs as a resident species in a narrow strip along the entire Pacific coast from northern Baja California to the southern half of Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast. It also occurs disjunctly in the mountains of central America from Arizona to Guatemala.

Like John, I have always considered the species to be a Strait of Georgia specialty. Contrary to popular opinion, the bird is surprisingly common on the lower Sunshine Coast i.e from Gibsons to Egmont, but one would never know this from actual sightings, as most records are of 'heard' birds. For many years I thought the species departed from the Sunshine Coast in the winter as I rarely saw or heard the bird in the early winter. This picture has changed now that I know it can be located in November and December, by determined 'pishing'. (Thanks to Doug Brown - a consummate 'pisher'). At this season it is usually encountered at the shrub level, in loose association with mixed flocks of kinglets and Chestnut-backed Chickadees. It frequently responds enthusiastically to 'pishing', coming in close and chattering at the intruder. During the months of November and December I have only ever heard the song of Hutton's Vireo twice.

On the Sunshine Coast the song of this species is a seriously boring and monotonous, endlessly repeated, series of 'zuweep' and 'zweer' notes. These vocalisations emanate from the canopy of second growth Douglas Fir and Western Red Cedar trees - the dominant ecosystem of the lower elevations of the Sunshine Coast. Conversely, I have never heard these notes uttered from the shrub level where the birds occur in the early winter.

Hutton's Vireo is truly the harbinger of spring on the Sunshine Coast. It is our earliest songster of the year. My first records are usually in the period 21-30 January, almost always on warm, sunny, still days. In some years it can be heard as early as the 5th, eg. 5<sup>th</sup> January 1987 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 1993. At the other end of the year, the only time I have ever heard the song of this vireo in December was on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1996. That was the year of the great coastal snowstorm when the Strait of Georgia littoral was buried in a metre of snow between Christmas and the New Year. On the Sunshine Coast it snowed for three days with maximum daytime temperatures of -3°C. On the 30<sup>th</sup> the sky cleared, the temperature rose and a general thaw began, with snow slumping from the treetops. I went for a walk along the road at the foot of my driveway and the first sound I heard that day was the 'zuweep' of a Hutton's Vireo. For all the world, that sound hit me with the full force of the symbolism of the dove with the olive branch returning to Noah's ark after the Biblical flood.

So, Hutton's Vireo can be heard singing from the first few days of the year, more commonly from late January, and with a peak from February to May. It continues to be heard through the summer until vocal activity drops off considerably at the end of September. Campbell, et al, in "The Birds of British Columbia" conclude that the data is inconclusive, but that "...part of the population is probably migratory". On the Sunshine Coast there is an increase in vocal reports in late August and September and this may suggest a southward movement through the area. It is occasionally heard in October, but in 30 years of recording on the Sunshine Coast, I have only once heard it's song in November (4th November 1995 - 'zweer'.)

An analysis of CBC and BBS data (see "The Birds of British Columbia - Volume 3" for a short summation of this) shows that numbers of Hutton's Vireos are consistently higher on the Sunshine Coast than elsewhere around the Strait of Georgia in both winter and the breeding season. I attribute these high numbers to the prevalence of advanced second growth forest on the Sunshine Coast, the apparent preferred habitat of the species in BC, and the warm, south and west facing slopes that characterise the area.

One other aspect of Hutton's Vireo that intrigues me is the virtually identical appearance of this species and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. I cannot think of two other totally unrelated species that so closely resemble each other.

**EDITORS' NOTE:** Response to John Neville's letter on Hutton's Vireo in *B.C. BIRDING* 9(4), Dec. 1999

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

**WANTED** -- Audubon Christmas Bird Count Volumes for the 80<sup>th</sup>, 81<sup>st</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> Count Years published by the National Audubon Society during 1980, 1981 and 1982 respectively. Russ Tkachuk -- Telephone: 604-885-8867 or email: rtkachuk@dccnet.com

**A RESPONSE** to John Neville's letter in *BC BIRDING* 9(4):12 December 1999 concerning the call(s) of our coastal Hutton's Vireo has been provided by Tony Greenfield and is to be found on page 25 of this issue.

**Dear fellow BirdWorders,**

As you may have heard, Arnold Small passed away earlier this week. Arnold was an author, a well-respected teacher, an extremely skilled photographer, an entertaining and informative lecturer, an international bird-tour leader, and a mentor to many, many birders -- in California and elsewhere. He was also one of the founders of the American Birding Association and its second President (1976-1979). Arnold was 73 years old.

You may want to check the short tribute to Arnold that's on the ABA website: <http://www.americanbirding.org/newsbullet2.htm>

You may also wish to read Don Roberson's wonderful remembrance of Arnold: [http://montereybay.com/creagrus/Arnold\\_Small.html](http://montereybay.com/creagrus/Arnold_Small.html)

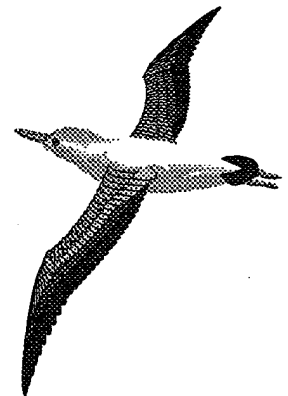


[**EDITORS' NOTE:** As editors of a birding-related newsletter we were invited to join a BirdWords list-serve. The note above was sent to subscribers by Paul J. Baicich, Editor, *Birding* and we thought our members might find it newsworthy.]

### BCFO PELAGIC BIRDING TRIP - 2000

submitted by Bryan Gates

The Board of Directors has agreed to arrange a one-day, late summer pelagic birding trip for BCFO members, to leave from Ucluelet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Plans are now underway with Canadian Princess, with a tentative date set for September 23-24, 2000. Optional dates of the weekend before and the weekend after the tentative date will be considered and will depend on boat availability. The final date will be confirmed and announced as soon as possible. The 8- to 9-hour trip will leave early on the Saturday morning, weather permitting, or early on Sunday morning if we are weathered-out on Saturday. Participants must therefore be prepared to over-night in Ucluelet on the Friday and Saturday nights, although the Saturday night reservations could be cancelled if we are successful on Saturday.



The cost for the boat trip itself will be approximately \$110 per person, and participants will be responsible for their own transportation and accommodations. We recommend car-pooling and may be able to give some guidance with accommodations. Our objective is to follow an offshore course set by Ken Morgan, based on his lengthy experience with pelagic bird surveys off our coast. Ideally, we will extend 45 or more miles offshore, will reach Barclay Canyon and may intercept commercial fishing fleets. Participation will be limited to approximately 30 people, depending on availability of boats. Non-members can participate by joining BCFO in advance. If you are interested please contact me (Bryan Gates) at (250) 598-7789 or by email at: [Bgates@pacificcoast.net](mailto:Bgates@pacificcoast.net)



**Wings Over the Rockies Bird Festival 2000****May 7-14, 2000**

submitted by Larry Halverson


**Robert Bateman is coming to Wings 2000!**

Canadian artist and conservationist Robert Bateman will share in the celebration and excitement that has become the hallmark of the Wings Over the Rockies Bird Festival. Join us as we welcome our Festival Patron and introduce him and his wife Birgit to the beauty and diversity of the Columbia Valley.

**Wings 2000 Builds on Migration Theme**

In recognition of the millennium, we are celebrating our connections. Inspired by the distances and differences spanned by migrating birds, the 'Wings' bird festival has broadened it's horizons this year. The linkage between the human communities of the Upper Columbia River and the wetlands that sustain the abundance of life around us has always been central to 'Wings'.

Coming home to one of the longest systems of continuous wetlands in North America, the fourth annual Wings Over the Rockies Bird Festival offers a chance to explore a multitude of bird habitats. Choose from over 70, high quality, creative and educational events to enjoy with your family. Discover the world of birds through activities such as; guided nature walks, Columbia River floats, Voyageur Canoe trips, teepee camping, horseback riding in the grasslands, art exhibits, evening presentations, workshops, Bird Fair, Children's festival, Wings 2000 Gala Banquet featuring Robert Bateman, Birdathon, Silent Auction and much more... Walk in the wilderness with experts to see osprey, eagles and lots of waterfowl. Float on the river or visit local hot springs while participating in British Columbia's longest bird festival. This year our festival has joined a coalition of six other nature festivals in BC (Osprey Festival, Kelowna Endangered Species Children's Festival, Silver Star Mountain Wildflower Festival, Grebe Festival, Festival of Birds & Bears, the River Speaks and the Meadowlark Festival) to recognize and support shared goals. Let your nature interests migrate around the province!

For information call toll free: 1-888-933-3311 or local: (250) 342-3210 fax: (250) 342-9221  
Address: RR4 #2 1535 14 St. Invermere, BC V0A 1K0  
e-mail: wings@adventurevalley.com Homepage: www.adventurevalley.com/wings 

**Parks Canada Research Adventures**


submitted by Larry Halverson

Explore the Canadian Rockies in a new and exciting way. Now you have a rare opportunity to take in the beauty of the Rockies while making a personal contribution to the ecological health of our treasured wild lands. Learn about bears, birds, biodiversity and more. Parks Canada Research Adventures invites you to head behind the scenes with expert scientists and park wardens to experience professional research in action.

Call Good Earth Travel for details.

Phone: (403) 678-9358 or toll free (888) 979-9797 Fax: (403) 678-9384

E-mail: info@goodearthtravel.com

Website: www.worldweb.com/ParksCanada-Yoho/adventur.html 

## First Annual British Columbia Nocturnal Owl Survey

submitted by Dick Cannings

BC Program Coordinator for Bird Studies Canada

Birders are invited to participate in a new survey of owl populations in British Columbia. The BC Nocturnal Owl Survey will monitor trends in owl populations through road-based methods similar to those used in the Breeding Bird Survey. Because of their nocturnal habits, owl populations have not been surveyed effectively by any large-scale program in North America. Recent pilot studies undertaken by Bird Studies Canada and other groups in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario have shown that owl populations can be monitored using volunteer-based surveys of calling birds.

Participants will need to do only one survey of a route per year. Routes will consist of 10 stops positioned 1.6 km apart along secondary roads. At each stop the observer will simply listen for two minutes and note any owls heard. Each survey will therefore take only about 45 minutes (once you have got to the starting point), so two or more surveys could be done in a single night. Another bonus for participants is that they can choose their own routes (though you have to stick with them once chosen) and you are not allowed out in bad weather! We also have a pumpkin rule in that the surveys must be done before midnight, so no one should fall asleep at the wheel on some remote mountain road.

No tape playback will be used, since it is very difficult to standardize and significantly lengthens the amount of time spent at each stop. Pilot projects elsewhere have shown that many owl species are calling enough in early spring to allow sufficient detection for population analysis. We may have optional playback methods next year if we feel they are necessary to monitor species such as Western Scree-Owl and Barred Owl, which are less vocal than other common owls such as the Northern Saw-whet and Boreal Owls.

Participants will receive an annual newsletter and tax relief for travel expenses incurred during the survey. I would like to thank the British Columbia Field Ornithologists for funding the initial mail-out for this program. If you are interested in taking part in this exciting new survey, contact:

Dick Cannings, BC Programs Coordinator  
Bird Studies Canada  
S 11, C 96, RR#1  
Naramata, BC V0H 1N0

email: [cannings@vip.net](mailto:cannings@vip.net)  
phone: (250) 496-4049

Happy Owling

