



BIRDING

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

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B.C. BIRDING is published four times a year by **British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO)**, P.O.Box 8059, Victoria, BC V8W 3R7.

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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Membership and Distribution:
Allen Wiseley

Membership Dues:

Individual memberships	\$25.00
Library subscriptions	\$25.00
Junior memberships (age under 18)	\$10.00
U.S. and foreign memberships	(US) \$25.00

Memberships are for the calendar year.

For further information, or to join, write to:

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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 AND NOTIONS

WOW! Where to start? Articles in this issue will speak for themselves in conveying the excitement, the camaraderie, the enjoyment, which all those who attended the Seventh BCFO AGM experienced. Still we would also like to add our thanks for all the time, effort, planning and organization which went into the AGM and Peace extension trip. Many busy people volunteered a lot of their time, expertise, and some even their holidays, to help ensure the success of these two ventures BCFO Officers and Directors, Prince George committee members, trip leaders, drivers, speakers, presenters, artists, helpers, and also the attendees themselves please know that your efforts made a difference and were appreciated. Thanks for a job well done.

Reports and minutes from the AGM have been published in this issue. Members sent us the bird lists and submissions relating to the AGM / Peace Extension so these have also been included. There is a reminder from Ken to start tallying your stats for next year's BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER. If you need some pelagics for your list check out the ad on page 20. Keith needs some photos. A quarterly question gets answered at the AGM. Diann sent us an interesting site guide for just south of BC's border. Jason writes with great enthusiasm about avocets nesting here in BC. He has undertaken a much more detailed study than we could present in the newsletter so he kindly wrote an account more suitable for this venue. Do not overlook the open letter to BCFO. Give us your thoughts on how we appear to non-members and how we might change our apparent image to allow those potential members to enjoy the benefits of this great organization.

Since we have again filled the 20 pages of this issue we would like to apologize to those writers who submitted material which could not be squeezed in this time. We have not forgotten you. Your articles remain prominently in our pending file. The bottom of the in basket still has submissions upon it your editors are happy!! Keep sending them in.

We have had a request to do a synopsis of the past seven AGMs for the benefit of members who have not been lucky enough to have attended them. Any takers? It has also been suggested that we put in a listing of new members to welcome them to our organization. We definitely welcome all new members and will try to get that column going in the new year. Next issue is the CBC listing issue so please save our phone bill and let us know, as soon as you know, the dates, contact persons and contact numbers. Our deadline is November 15.

Finally, we would like to personally thank Jack, Cathy and Nancy for all the extra miles they went for us so that we could see White Pelicans and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers here in BC. Now if we can just see some of those potential pelagics Capilano is offering in September we may actually make it onto the BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER BC lists next year.

President's Report

The smooth functioning of BCFO is dependent upon the volunteer efforts of numerous people who give of their time, expertise, and frequently their own dollars to make the organization work. It is also dependent upon the membership paying their subscriptions, writing articles for **B.C. BIRDING** and attending AGM's and field trips. The resulting symbiosis defines the success of our organization.

In this light, the gratitude of all members is due to the Prince George committee who volunteered, and subsequently organized, the smoothly run and enjoyable AGM on 13-15 June. Stand up Jack Bowling, Nancy Krueger and Cathy Antoniazzi!!!

At the AGM we lost three directors to mandatory retirement, and I would like to sincerely thank Marian Porter (past president), Lloyd Esralson (secretary), and Al Wiseley (membership secretary) for their years of devoted service to BCFO. Replacing these stalwarts are new directors Ken Morgan (a previous director back from retirement), Hank Vander Pol from Victoria and Prue Spitmann from Surrey (who volunteered after the AGM and is a director subject to executive approval at the next directors' meeting in September).

Once again thanks to all the directors for performing their duties so admirably at the AGM, and as always special thanks to Andy and Marilyn Buhler for their continued service to the organization in producing **B.C. BIRDING** so efficiently.

Good Birding.

Tony Greenfield, BCFO President 

British Columbia Field Ornithologists Seventh Annual General Meeting Esther's Inn, Prince George, BC, 14 June 1997

submitted by Brian Gates, BCFO Vice President

The Seventh Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO) was convened at 16:00 hrs on Saturday, June 14th, 1997 in Prince George, President Tony Greenfield in the chair.

Minutes

Following a welcoming statement and introduction of board members present, it was moved (R. Tkachuk) and seconded (A. Buhler) that the minutes of the 1996 AGM, as published in the 1996 **British Columbia Field Ornithologist** 6(3), be accepted. Carried. It was agreed that the minutes of the present meeting would be published in the next issue of **B.C. BIRDING** (the new official name of the newsletter).

Financial Report

Treasurer Everard Miyasaki distributed an audited Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the year ended December 31, 1996. The surplus for the year of \$938 and assets of \$7889 were both down marginally from 1995. A budget of \$7975 was forecast for 1997. Acceptance of this financial statement would be a decision for the board of directors at its next meeting.

Membership Report

In the absence of Membership Coordinator, Allen Wiseley, the report was read by Bryan Gates. The current membership of 196 is down slightly from the same period in 1996, but is expected to rise as renewals are received. A growth rate of 17 to 19 new members per year has been consistent for the past three years. An average attrition of 10% may be normal and small, but efforts to reduce this are recommended.

Suggestions for increasing membership were invited from the floor and included:

- ◆ wider advertising, and distribution of BCFO brochures at various natural history society meetings and through commercial nature/naturalists' shops;
- ◆ linking with biologists hired under Forest Renewal BC funding;
- ◆ reducing the cost of introductory membership;
- ◆ teaming with Federation of BC Naturalists and with Career Day programs
- ◆ news items in local media.

Newsletter Report

Marilyn Buhler noted that the **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST** had a new name, **B.C. BIRDING**, layout, and masthead. She thanked Russ Tkachuk for his graphic art work. It was also reported that a small amount of revenue had been brought in through several advertisements in the newsletter. Contributors were given thanks for their continued support in the form of letters, articles and site guides. She also reported that a limited number of newsletter exchanges have been undertaken in order to broaden our exposure. It was further reported that several site guides from previous issues of the newsletter had been published on an internet web page.

Journal Report

A lengthy status report was delivered to the meeting by Journal Editor Martin McNicholl. Final editing and formatting of volumes 5 and 6 continues, and work is now underway on volume 7. All members were encouraged to consider preparing papers for submission to the Journal.

President's Report


President Tony Greenfield expressed sincere thanks to all members of the Board of Directors, and especially Marion Porter, Allen Wiseley and Lloyd Esralson, each of whom has served for the maximum of six years. The continuing contributions of Marin McNicholl, and Marilyn Buhler and Andy Buhler toward our publications were acknowledged, as were the efforts of Wayne Campbell and other writers who successfully published volume three of **Birds of British Columbia**. Although a growing and satisfied membership remains as an important challenge, Tony expressed pleasure with:

- ◆ the new relationship between BCFO and the Wildbird Trust of BC;
- ◆ work toward a website for BCFO; and
- ◆ the enthusiasm shown toward this AGM and the field trip to the Peace River parklands to follow.

Election of Directors

The membership was advised that the remaining directors (Greenfield, Gates, Miyasaki, Bowling, McNicholl, and Tkachuk) had each agreed to stand for reelection. It was moved (B. Gates) and seconded (K. Morgan) that Hank Vanderpol be nominated for election. Carried. Hearing no additional nominations from the floor, it was moved (M. Buhler) and seconded (P. Spitman) that the slate of Bowling, Gates, Greenfield, McNicholl, Miyasaki, Tkachuk and Vanderpol be elected. Carried. Two positions remain vacant on the Board. Appointments will be considered by the new Board.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 16:50 hours. 

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
 Year Ended December 31, 1996

	1996	1995	Budget 1997
REVENUES			
Memberships	\$ 5,751	\$ 5,713	\$ 5,625
AGM Fees	2,389	5,390	2,250
Interest and other Income	86	489	100
	<u>8,226</u>	<u>11,592</u>	<u>7,975</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Postage	3,189	1,464	2,000
Printing	2,148	3,300	2,800
AGM Facilities and Services	1,625	4,272	2,250
Stationery	181	423	200
Professional Services	--	600	--
Advertising	--	72	200
Miscellaneous	145	441	200
	<u>7,288</u>	<u>10,572</u>	<u>7,650</u>
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>\$ 938</u>	<u>\$ 1,020</u>	<u>\$ 325</u>

BALANCE SHEET At December 31, 1996

	1996	1995
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 7,659	\$ 7,225
Receivables	230	700
	<u>\$ 7,889</u>	<u>\$ 7,925</u>
LIABILITIES & MEMBERS' EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Payables & Accrued Liabilities	\$ 2,800	\$ 4,850
Deferred Revenue	1,076	--
	<u>3,876</u>	<u>4,850</u>
Members' Equity		
Accumulated Surplus		
Opening Balance	3,075	2,055
Surplus for the Year	938	1,020
	<u>4,013</u>	<u>3,075</u>
	<u>\$ 7,889</u>	<u>\$ 7,925</u>

1997 - 1998 Field Weekends and Tours

at • C A P I L A N O C O L L E G E

PELAGIC BIRDING WEEKEND

With ornithologists Tom Plath and Mike Force, travel to Ucluelet to spend a full day birding off the west coast of Vancouver Island from Swiftsure Banks to Barclay Canyon.

Many of the species of birds that you'll observe live and migrate only in the open ocean waters off our coast. The likelihood of finding rare species on this trip is very good.

September 27-28, 1997

Cost: \$250 (*subject to change*). Registration must be completed by September 18. Please book early.

VICTORIA BIRDING WEEKEND

Victoria boasts an abundant, diverse and rare collection of wintering and migrating birds. With ornithologist and wildlife technician Tom Plath, visit the richest birding spots in and near Victoria.

The weekend's primary focus will be on field identification and bird behaviour of migrating birds of prey, songbirds and shorebirds. You'll also learn about conservation issues and observe a Canadian Wildlife Services bird banding program.

September 13-14, 1997

Cost: \$150 (*subject to change*)

TRINIDAD and TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago are the naturalist's perfect winter getaway! These islands just off the coast of Venezuela are an excellent introduction to tropical ecosystems. They boast more birds per square mile than anywhere in South America and have an incredible array of flora and other fauna. Call **Great Expeditions** at (604) 257-2040 for details.

January 30 - February 8, 1998

AND MORE!

Bird Identification Workshops ... Bald Eagle Float Trip ... Hawks, Eagles & Owls Field Day ... Call Cacilda Tang at Capilano College Continuing Education, (604) 984-4901 for a free program brochure or specific itineraries.

(604) 984-4901

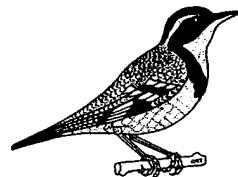


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UPCOMING EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

- Sept 25-27 1997 **FEDERATION OF BC NATURALISTS FALL GENERAL MEETING**, Creston, BC.
Contact: Art Gruenig, Rocky Mountain Naturalists, Box 791, Creston, BC V1C 4J5 or phone Heather Neville (250) 364-0460 or (250) 352-9954.
- Sept 28-30 1997 **Fish and Wildlife Research and Management: applying emerging technologies**. Organized by the Canadian Soc. of Environmental Biologists. To be held in Edmonton, AB. Contact: John Lilley phone/fax (403) 464-5238 by or before September 12, 1997.
- Oct 2-4 1997 **WESTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING**, Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Pahrump, NV. Contact: Ken Voget, 1500 N Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV, USA; ph (702) 646-3401.
- Oct 23-25 1997 **RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT OF COWBIRDS IN EASTERN AND WESTERN LANDSCAPES**, Sacramento, CA. Contact: Michael Morrison or Linnea Hall, Dept. of Biological Science, California State Univ., Sacramento, CA 95819, USA; ph (209) 267-1840/(916) 278-6573.
- Oct 29- Nov 2 1997 **COLONIAL WATERBIRD SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING**, Lafayette, Louisiana. Contacts: Jay Huner, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Box 44650, Lafayette, LA 70504, USA; ph (318) 482-5239 or Carroll Cordes ph (318) 266-8653.
- Oct 30-Nov 1 1997 **RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING** Savannah, GA. Contacts: Michelle Pittman or Fran Aultman, Div. Continuing Education & Public Service, Georgia Southern University, Box 8124, Statesboro, GA 30460-8124, USA, phone (912) 681-5555.



Bird List for the Seventh BCFO AGM

submitted by Jack Bowling

Following is a summary of the 125 species of birds seen during the B.C. Field Ornithologists Annual General Meeting held at Prince George June 13-15, 1997.

Common Loon	Ring-billed Gull	Hermit Thrush
Red-necked Grebe	California Gull	American Robin
Eared Grebe	Black Tern	Varied Thrush
Western Grebe	Rock Dove	Cedar Waxwing
American White Pelican	Mourning Dove	European Starling
Double-crested Cormorant	Barred Owl	Solitary Vireo
Great Blue Heron	Short-eared Owl	Warbling Vireo
Canada Goose	Common Nighthawk	Red-eyed Vireo
Green-winged Teal	Black Swift	Orange-crowned Warbler
Mallard	Vaux's Swift	Yellow Warbler
Blue-winged Teal	Calliope Hummingbird	Magnolia warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Rufous Hummingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Belted Kingfisher	American Redstart
American Wigeon	Red-breasted Sapsucker	Ovenbird
Ring-necked Duck	Downy Woodpecker	Northern Waterthrush
Barrow's Goldeneye	Hairy Woodpecker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Bufflehead	Three-toed Woodpecker	Common Yellowthroat
Hooded Merganser	Northern Flicker	Western Tanager
Common Merganser	Pileated Woodpecker	Chipping Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Clay-colored Sparrow
Osprey	Western Wood-Pewee	Savannah Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Fox Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Alder Flycatcher	Song Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk	Willow Flycatcher	Lincoln's Sparrow
Northern Goshawk	Least Flycatcher	Swamp Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Hammond's Flycatcher	White-throated Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Dusky Flycatcher	White-crowned Sparrow
American Kestrel	Tree Swallow	Dark-eyed Junco
Merlin	Violet-green Swallow	Bobolink
Spruce Grouse	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird
Ruffed Grouse	Bank Swallow	Western Meadowlark
Virginia Rail	Cliff Swallow	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Sora	Barn Swallow	Rusty Blackbird
American Coot	Black-billed Magpie	Brewer's Blackbird
Killdeer	American Crow	Brown-headed Cowbird
Greater Yellowlegs	Common Raven	Purple Finch
Solitary Sandpiper	Black-capped Chickadee	Red Crossbill
Spotted Sandpiper	Red-breasted Nuthatch	White-winged Crossbill
Long-billed Curlew	Winter Wren	Pine Siskin
Common Snipe	Mountain Bluebird	Evening Grosbeak
Bonaparte's Gull	Swainson's Thrush	House Sparrow

--- the above list does not include the Rose-breasted Grosbeak or Pied-billed Grebe that Wayne Campbell saw near Hixon on his way to Prince George Saturday.

QUESTION FOR THE QUARTERLY

Almost a year ago we received a clipping which stated "A seabird that nests every year on a remote Scottish island has gone into the record books as the longest-living wild bird in the world. The female fulmar is more than 50 years old." The question posed to us was "Do we have any similar records of aged birds in BC?" We had trouble finding an answer but during Wayne Campbell's AGM presentation we heard him say 6% of Glaucous-winged Gulls die within 4 years but there was one record of a BC GWGU living for 32 years and 4 months.

Peace Extension to the BCFO AGM

June 15-18, 1997


submitted by Jack Bowling

The following birds comprising 131 species (plus one identified to genus) were seen or heard conclusively by 34 observers during the three-day field trip to the BC Peace region of northeastern British Columbia, June 15-18, 1997.

This trip occurred immediately pursuant to the Annual General Meeting of the B.C. Field Ornithologists held in Prince George, BC June 13-15, 1997. The 125 species detected on the AGM weekend have been listed separately.

Common Loon	Spotted Sandpiper	Orange-crowned Warbler
Pied-billed Grebe	Common Snipe	Yellow Warbler
Horned Grebe	Franklin's Gull	Magnolia Warbler
Red-necked Grebe	Mew Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)
Eared Grebe	Ring-billed Gull	Black-throated Green Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	California Gull	Palm Warbler
Trumpeter Swan	Herring Gull	Blackpoll Warbler
Canada Goose	Black Tern	Black-and-white Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Rock Dove	American Redstart
Mallard	Short-eared Owl	Ovenbird
Northern Pintail	Common Nighthawk	Northern Waterthrush
Blue-winged Teal	Calliope Hummingbird	Connecticut Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Belted Kingfisher	Mourning Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Gadwall	Hairy Woodpecker	(Brassey Creek area)
American Wigeon	Northern Flicker	Common Yellowthroat
Canvasback	Western Wood-Pewee	Wilson's Warbler
Redhead	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Canada Warbler
Ring-necked Duck	(heard only)	(heard only)
Greater Scaup	Alder Flycatcher	Western Tanager
Lesser Scaup	Least Flycatcher	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
(includes LESC x RNDU male)	Eastern Phoebe	Chipping Sparrow
Surf Scoter	Tree Swallow	Clay-coloured Sparrow
White-winged Scoter	Violet-green Swallow	Savannah Sparrow
Common Goldeneye	Bank Swallow	Le Conte's Sparrow
Barrow's Goldeneye	Cliff Swallow	(heard only)
Bufflehead	Barn Swallow	Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Red-breasted Merganser	Gray Jay	(heard only)
(at Swan Lake)	Blue Jay	Fox Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Black-billed Magpie	(heard only)
Bald Eagle	American Crow	Song Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Common Raven	Lincoln's Sparrow
Northern Goshawk	Black-capped Chickadee	Swamp Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Red-breasted Nuthatch	White-throated Sparrow
(near Boundary Lake airstrip)	House Wren	Dark-eyed Junco
Red-tailed Hawk	Marsh Wren	(Slate-coloured)
Rough-legged Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Red-winged Blackbird
(near Clayhurst)	Swainson's Thrush	Yellow-headed Blackbird
American Kestrel	Hermit Thrush	Brewer's Blackbird
Merlin	American Robin	Common Grackle
falco sp.	Varied Thrush	Brown-headed Cowbird
(Peregrine or Prairie)	Cedar Waxwing	Baltimore Oriole
Ruffed Grouse	European Starling	Purple Finch
Sora	Solitary Vireo	Red Crossbill
American Coot	Warbling Vireo	White-winged Crossbill
Killdeer	Philadelphia Vireo	Pine Siskin
Lesser Yellowlegs	Red-eyed Vireo	Evening Grosbeak
Solitary Sandpiper	Tennessee Warbler	House Sparrow

Peace Extension to BCFO AGM (continued)

General itinerary: Day 1 (June 16)- Beatton Park; Boundary Lake; then south through Clayhurst to Dawson Creek. Day 2 - Road 201; Swan Lake; McQueen Slough. Day 3 - Heritage Highway; Brassey Creek. The eastern influence is obvious in the above list. The surprise birds were the Red-breasted Merganser on Swan Lake, and the Rough-legged Hawk near Clayhurst. Nice to see that the 12 or so-year jinx of the Boundary Lake Broad-winged Hawk has been broken. We fought the weather the first two days - wind on Monday, and rain on Tuesday - but had fine weather for the last day on the Heritage Highway section. I would urge anyone who has never traveled to the BC Peace district to do so. It offers much for both the birder and interested tourist. Must sees for me are Boundary Lake, McQueen Slough, Road 201/Swan Lake, the Feller's Heights area (stunningly beautiful terrain), and the Brassey Creek area. I would also like to further explore the Clayhurst area. I saw my first-ever natural Cliff Swallow nesting site on the cliffs adjacent to the north side of the Clayhurst Bridge over the Peace River. As far as we could tell, the swallows were not nesting on the nearby bridge but only on the cliff face. The Ubiquitous Award goes to Pine Siskin; hard not to see several dashing around at every turn. Lifers for me included Connecticut Warbler at Feller's Heights (a *LOUD* song), and Sharp-tailed Sparrow at McQueen Slough (a *faint* song). A good time was had by all. 

AGM Birding Highlights & Lowlights

courtesy of Cathy Antoniazzi


Highlights

- ◆ first P.G. checklist June record for Double-crested Cormorant (at Tabor Lake).
- ◆ first sighting of year of Broad-winged Hawk by crew returning from Willow River Demo Forest field trip Saturday. Your chances are better of winning the lottery than sighting one of the very few Broad-wings in the P.G. area.
- ◆ second checklist record of Willow Flycatcher on the Sunday Fort George Canyon field trip; Cathy and Nancy found two there later in the afternoon.
- ◆ the downy young rail at Vama Vama Marsh was brownish and likely a Virginia Rail but could not be confirmed since Soras were also in the marsh. This would have been the first breeding record for Virginia Rail for the checklist area.
- ◆ second Cooper's Hawk sighting of the year. This species seems to be increasing in the checklist area although still rare.
- ◆ the seven Long-billed Curlews at Vanderhoof on Sunday comprised the highest single-location tally yet for the P.G. checklist area.
- ◆ Also on the Vanderhoof trip were 50 Bald Eagles at Corkscrew Creek near Nulki Lake, mostly immatures. This is a high number for the location and season.

Lowlights

- ◆ a big raspberry for missing the Wood Ducks at Cottonwood Island Park near downtown P.G.; high water prevented adequate snooping.
- ◆ a bad weekend for Spruce Grouse: two tiny Spruce Grouse chicks hopelessly trying to revive a road-killed mother on Highway 16E Saturday; a fox carrying a Spruce Grouse in its mouth on the way to Fort George Canyon Sunday.

For all those longing for a Black-backed Woodpecker on the weekend, a nest was found the next day not far from the Eagle Burn on the Bowron Loop Sunday trip!

On behalf of all the organizing committee, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the weekend festivities. We learned a lot from our excellent technical session speakers; had Wayne Campbell regale us on his vision of the future of birds in B.C. and how we BCFOers could fit in; ate some great food; AND DID SOME GREAT BIRDING!!! Looking forward to next year. 

BCFO Peace River Extension

15-18 June 1997

by Tony Greenfield

PO Box 319

Sechelt, BC V0N 3A0

BC has the sixth most diverse avifauna among all the 62 states and provinces of North America, with only the southern tier of states; Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico and Florida, having recorded more species. BC's total is about 472 species (and growing), and about 5% of these are birds that can only normally be found in the Peace River region. By a fortuitous stroke of cartography, the north-eastern corner of BC is east of the Rocky Mountains and includes that portion of the Boreal Plains or Prairies where many "eastern species" reach their western limit against the Rockies. BC is the only state or province that encompasses both the eastern and western avifaunas of North America within its boundaries, and therein lies the significance and allure of the Peace to BC birders.

When the Peace extension to the AGM was proposed, the directors of BCFO had no idea how many people might be interested, or even how many people might attend the AGM in Prince George. We believed that with members already in Prince George, with leaders supplied, and with a low cost, there would likely be enough participants to run the trip. As is turned out, the interest was phenomenal and 34 people made the trip.

After various logistical considerations the trip was made with three rented passenger vans and two private vehicles. The vehicles departed Prince George about 3 pm on Sunday, 15 June (after the AGM) and returned there about 7 pm on Wednesday, 18 June. BCFO supplied leaders/drivers, transportation, and three night motel accommodation. The price was an astoundingly low \$175 for the 3½ days, or approximately what one would pay per day in US dollars for a birding trip with a commercial bird tour operator. The low price merely reflects that BCFO was covering only the hard costs of transportation and accommodation, and not such expensive items as leaders wages and expenses, advertising, and of course, profit.

The first day of the trip dawned sunny and blue in Fort St. John, and we headed for our first destination - Beatton Provincial Park on the east side of Charlie Lake. As we parked the vehicles at the park entrance we noticed a fox den with four bright-eyed youngsters just meters away. Beatton Park proved somewhat disappointing because a brisk Peace River wind rustled the well-named trembling aspen forest that dominates here. Birds were frustratingly hard to see among the millions of rustling leaves. However, we quickly became accustomed to the songs of such abundant Peace birds as Least Flycatcher, American Redstart, and White-throated Sparrow. Other species seen or heard here were Blue Jay, Eastern Phoebe, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird, and Canada Warbler. Few birds were visible on Charlie Lake as the wind whipped the surface into whitecaps.

At midday our next stop was on the northern edge of Fort St. John. Once again, the wind curtailed effective birding but good views were obtained of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker excavating a nest cavity and a Blue Jay being harassed by belligerent Warbling Vireos. From there we proceeded to Cecil Lake, a few kilometers east of Fort St. John. This lake is frequently the summer home of the biggest Eared Grebe colony in the province but we were frustrated by high water which prevented any access to the lake viewing spots.

Our fourth and final destination of the day was the Boundary Lake area - so named because the BC-Alberta border bisects the lake. Boundary Lake is one of the famed locations of BC birding, on a par with Iona Island, Boundary Bay, Creston, Road 22 in the

Okanagan, or the Haines Road. Part of this fame relates to the years 1983-86 when the location became associated with the presence of a then near mythical BC bird - Broad-winged Hawk. Prior to the mid-80's, almost no one had seen a Broad-winged Hawk in BC and Boundary Lake (specifically the sarcastically named "Boundary Lake International Airport") became a mandatory stop for birders hoping to see the species. I made a number of trips there but never did see that bird at that location.

On 16 June 1997, however, 34 members of BCFO stopped at a grassy meadow just before the now defunct "Airport" at likely looking habitat for Le Conte's Sparrow. Although the sparrow remained elusive, we were treated to two raptors that chose to appear at the same moment. One was quickly identified as a male Northern Harrier and then the cry went up "*Broad-winged Hawk on the left hand tree-line*". Fortunately the bird perched on the edge of an aspen copse and we were treated to fine views of its stubby-winged profile and its black and white banded tail.

As a sign of the times, this was the second mass viewing of Broad-winged Hawk by BCFO members in three days, since Jack Bowling had conjured one up on an AGM field trip, east of Prince George, two days previously!

Boundary Lake was unequivocally the most popular birding spot of the entire trip and it is a fantastic bird hotspot. The lake itself is covered with a wide variety of water-birds including hundreds of ducks of fifteen species, Eared Grebe, Black Tern, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Wilson's Phalarope. In the reedy margins Sora called, Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds were nesting, Marsh Wrens churred, Swamp Sparrows sang, and most likely Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows lurked (although we did not see or hear this species on that day). Also at Boundary Lake we were treated to virtual arm's length views of Palm Warbler, a mis-named muskeg specialist, on its breeding grounds, and a Northern Goshawk. What a variety of species and special birds at this one location!

On making a late getaway from Boundary Lake, the leaders were faced with a dilemma - how to get to Dawson Creek? To compensate for the lack of an actual advance scouting of the route in this remote corner of the province there were only vague, half-forgotten rumours of a Clayhurst Ferry to port us across the mighty Peace River. After quizzing a local about the whereabouts of this mythical mode of transportation we were informed, with some obvious amusement and much to our embarrassment, that the Clayhurst Ferry was replaced by a modern bridge "*about ten year ago*". Oh well! During this drive everyone saw a pair of Short-eared Owls, and the participants of one vehicle saw an unidentified large falcon - either a Prairie or Peregrine.

After a short night in our Dawson Creek motel, we were back on the road the next morning at 5 am. The first stop was Road 201, a farm road on the edge of Swan Lake and just inside the BC-Alberta border. Here we had good looks at such species as Mourning Warbler, Baltimore Oriole, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. We then visited Swan Lake Provincial Park where a late and rare male Red-breasted Merganser, plus a flock of Double-crested Cormorants were unexpected.

By this time it was raining quite heavily and we decided to adjourn for a while to Pouce Coupe for caffeine loading. This led to an interesting scene in the Pouce Coupe cafe when 34 optically-laden birders descended on a mom and pop operation. Comments such as "*usually we only have four customers on Tuesdays*" and "*we do not have ANY baked goods on Tuesdays*" were heard.

Fortunately the rain ceased whilst we waited for mom and pop to deliver multiple orders of coffee and toast, and we headed east again to look for Le Conte's Sparrow in some meadows. Once again, that elusive sparrow evaded us but we did see a variety of birds

including a Tennessee Warbler coaxed out of the bush by Arnold Skei and his trusty tape recorder. An unidentified hummingbird at a feeder was thought most likely to be a Calliope, though the provincially-rare Ruby-throated is to be looked for in this area.

After a siesta at the motel, in the late afternoon we visited the well-known Dawson Creek birding spot - McQueen Slough. This productive Prairie wetland produced many species of ducks, five species of Larids including Franklin's Gull, Common Grackle, and Swamp Sparrow. Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was heard along the boardwalk but could not be coaxed into view.

The third and final day of the trip again saw us on the road by 5 am as we headed south of Dawson Creek to the Heritage Highway. The morning was very chilly and overcast but the magic of the tape recorder finally pulled an irate Ovenbird out to the forest edge where it allowed leisurely views of this commonly heard, but rarely observed, bird. The next stop was for a staked-out Connecticut Warbler that did not disappoint. Connecticut Warbler is an uncommon bird across its entire range and can be hard to find so this was an excellent bird to see. It was a new species to most of the participants. Further down the Heritage Highway a black spruce muskeg produced Black-pollled Warblers and a singing Fox Sparrow.

From there we backtracked to the Brassey Creek Road where we tried again, without success, for Le Conte's Sparrow, but did hear a singing Philadelphia Vireo. The top of this road is a known location for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher but they were not at their expected spot. Even so some members of the party did observe one about a kilometer down the road. Tennessee Warblers were abundant in this dry pine-aspen habitat.

We left the top of the Brassey Road just as huge thunder clouds built in the sky. Luckily the heavens opened after we were back on the blacktop of the Heritage Highway. A final stop at a wet grassy meadow at last produced a heard-only Le Conte's Sparrow for some participants.

After this we made a fast drive back to Prince George, stopping only to admire the tumbling majesty of Bijoux Falls as we recrossed the Rocky Mountains.

The Peace extension was BCFO's first multi-day field trip and I think was an ornithological and social success. Most of the Peace speciality birds were seen or heard (exceptions were Upland Sandpiper and Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers). For the 34 participants it was a great opportunity to visit a unique region of BC, to see its special birds, and to share some time together. BCFO also learned some lessons which we hope to capitalize on when we organize future trips - **so let us know where you want to go!**



AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

Diann MacRae

Diann is the author of **A Birder's Guide to Washington**, Vice-chairman of the Hawk Migration Association of North America and a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Ornithological Society.

Jason Weir

Jason, an avid birder for six years, is interested in conservation and protection of endangered species. His love of birds is leading him to become a zoologist majoring in ornithology and taxonomy. One of his future goals is to study the endangered Hawaiian Honey Creepers.



Site Guide: Salt Creek Recreation Area

by Diann MacRae
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Bothwell, WA 98021

Guns of war that were never fired to defend were once the dominant force at Salt Creek, then called Fort Hayden. In the 1940's, Fort Hayden was one of several heavily camouflaged, bomb-proofed military installations bordering our inland waters. The gun batteries at Fort Hayden helped guard the entrance to Puget Sound, the Canadian naval base at Esquimalt, and the Victoria, British Columbia harbour.

In 1949, Clallam County purchased the property for gentler purposes, recreation. Now, the Turkey Vultures that methodically cross the Strait of Juan de Fuca each fall are the joining force between Salt Creek and Vancouver Island. You have read about this very cosmopolitan vulture population before, but many other interesting birds await explorers to the Salt Creek area. [Eds' Note: see Volume 7, number 2]

The Salt Creek Recreation Area includes the Salt Creek Estuary with its sandy beaches and marsh; Tongue Point, which is now campground, playing fields, and picnic area bordering rich tidepools; and 1,184 foot (360 m) Striped Peak, with hiking trails meandering through deciduous-conifer forests. The area is bordered by two small, scenic bays, Crescent to the west and Freshwater (also a county park) to the east. It is an interesting and varied area in which to bird. Turkey Vultures congregate here in large numbers in the fall, most having just made the 13 plus mile overwater journey from Vancouver Island, Canada. Alcids and sea ducks are found along the rocky shores of the strait, and marsh and land birds abound in the estuaries and forested areas.

Salt Creek Park has 90 campsites (no electric or water hookups, no reservations). Some are closely spaced in a large, open meadow looking out on a gorgeous, panoramic view of the strait and Canadian mountains to the north; others in a windswept, forested area with a fair amount of room and privacy. River otters and seals can be seen around the undulating mats of seaweed and driftwood, and a Great Blue Heron usually rides on top. Dolphins, Orcas, and California sea lions can occasionally be seen further offshore. Heermann's and Bonaparte's Gulls are common in late summer and early fall.

The campground hosts the usual northwest chorus of songbirds. Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Chestnut-backed and Black-capped Chickadees are common, and each campsite is guaranteed to have a resident Winter Wren scolding the transient occupants. Band-tailed Pigeons, Belted Kingfishers, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Common Flickers, Swainson's Thrushes, Solitary Vireos, and several warblers have also been seen.

Tongue Point is a Marine Life Sanctuary. The extensive kelp beds make this one of the top skin-diving spots in Washington State. At low tides, one can walk out on the rocks of Tongue Point, view the tide pools teeming with brittle stars, keyhole limpets, and giant green anemones, and see the birds in a better perspective. Ruddy Turnstones, Rock Sandpipers, Surfbirds, and Wandering Tattlers can often be seen on the rocks; Black Oystercatchers nest there. Harlequin Ducks, Surf Scoters, Double-crested and Pelagic Cormorants, Common Murres, Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros Auklets, and other alcids are seen regularly in the water offshore from fall to spring.

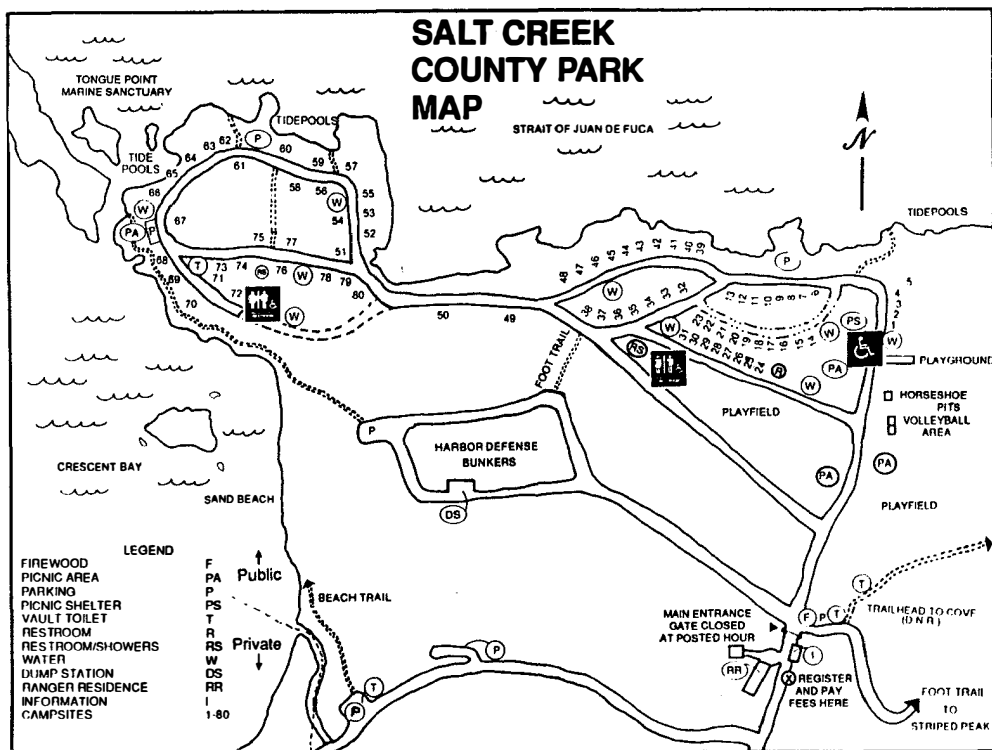
Striped Peak is a pleasant 2.5 mile hike from the campground. Forest birds such as Black-throated Gray Warbler, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Steller's Jay might be seen and heard along the trail from May through summer. The view from the top

(which one can also drive to) is excellent with the Strait of Juan de Fuca stretching out to the north. Bald Eagles nest along the shoreline below. Trident submarines, huge cargo boats, military launches from both Canada and the U.S., yachts, and oil tankers all frequent the strait. Geese, ducks, and cormorants fly by in long skeins during the fall - a passing parade worth watching.

The Salt Creek Estuary is a good spot to see Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Belted Kingfisher, and Osprey. Coho salmon, cutthroat, and steelhead all use the creek for spawning. There is a small parking lot belonging to the park just before Crescent Beach. Half of Salt Creek, which empties into Crescent Bay, is park owned and half is privately owned and not open to the public.

The county road parallels the low dunes of Crescent Bay beach, where there are good views from the roadside or from a car. There is a charge to walk the private beach although we have never seen anyone around to collect (however, the park ranger does advise respecting the signs to keep off). Numerous wintering ducks arrive at the bay in late summer and early fall including Oldsquaw; Harlequin Duck; White-winged, Surf, and occasionally, Black Scoters; mergansers; plus Common, Red-throated, Pacific and, rarely, Yellow-billed Loon. Grebes and several species of gulls are also found here. Check the beach to see shorebirds during migration and sometimes a family of deer ambling along.

The Olympic Vulture Study's raptor monitoring site at Salt Creek Park will begin its sixth year this September. To date we have censused over 5,500 Turkey Vultures which have passed over the strait from south Vancouver Island, British Columbia to the northern Olympic coastline in Washington State. The majority arrive between September 25 and October 10. Along with the Turkey Vultures, twelve other species of raptors have been recorded plus a variety of song and seabirds.



To reach the Salt Creek Recreation Area follow US 101 west from Port Angeles, keeping right at SH 112 (to Joyce), for 13.7 miles. Turn right at Camp Hayden Road and follow the road 4.2 miles to the campground. To reach Crescent Bay and the Salt Creek estuary, continue on to Camp Hayden Road about 0.3 mile past the campground entrance. Hiking trails to Striped Peak and along the shoreline start from the campground. Everything is well signed.

There is a wealth of territory to explore and bird within an hour or so of Salt Creek. The Salt Creek area is backed by the Olympic National Park just a few miles to the south. A main entrance, Hurricane Ridge, is accessed by a 17 mile scenic highway out of Port Angeles. Birds such as Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Northern Goshawk, American Kestrel, rosy finches, and crossbills are all apt to be seen. Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge is also less than an hour's drive to the east and plays host to Peregrine Falcons, numerous species of marine birds and waterfowl, and large wintering flocks of Black Brant.

An hour and a half to the west on SR 112 is Neah Bay, home to the Hakah Indians for 2,500 years. In August the largest Indian festival on the Olympic Peninsula, Makah Days, is held. In the spring flights of thousands of Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Sandhill Cranes and a variety of other migrants can often be seen heading north. Gray whales are also seen in large numbers as they head north to their summering areas. The northern Olympic Peninsula coast is truly a wonderful place to explore.

NOTE: Diann requests information on TUVU sightings in the study area which includes Georgia Strait, Puget Sound, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The date, time, weather and observed activity would be appreciated. See Diann's address at head of above article. Thank You. EDS



Bird List for the Salt Creek Recreation Area

by Diann MacRae

Common Loon	Red-tailed Hawk	Northern Flicker
Yellow-billed Loon	Rough-legged Hawk	Pileated Woodpecker
Pacific Loon	Golden Eagle	Pacific-slope Flycatcher
Red-throated Loon	American Kestrel	Tree Swallow
Western Grebe	Merlin	Violet-green Swallow
Red-necked Grebe	Peregrine Falcon	Barn Swallow
Horned Grebe	Ring-necked Pheasant	Steller's Jay
Eared Grebe	Ruffed Grouse	American Crow
Pied-billed Grebe	Black-bellied Plover	Common Raven
Brown Pelican	Killdeer	Black-capped Chickadee
Double-crested Cormorant	Black Oystercatcher	Chestnut-backed Chickadee
Brandt's Cormorant	Greater Yellowlegs	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Pelagic Cormorant	Black Turnstone	Brown Creeper
Great Blue Heron	Sanderling	Winter Wren
Snow Goose	Western Sandpiper	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Brant	Dunlin	Swainson's Thrush
Canada Goose	Bonaparte's Gull	American Robin
Mallard	Heermann's Gull	Varied Thrush
Northern Pintail	Mew Gull	American Pipit
American Wigeon	Ring-billed Gull	European Starling
Harlequin Duck	California Gull	Solitary Vireo
Black Scoter	Herring Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Surf Scoter	Glaucous-winged Gull	Rufous-sided Towhee***
White-winged Scoter	Common Tern	Savannah Sparrow
Common Goldeneye	Common Murre	Song Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Pigeon Guillemot	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Common Merganser	Marbled Murrelet	Dark-eyed Junco
Red-breasted Merganser	Rhinoceros Auklet	Red-winged Blackbird
Turkey Vulture	Tufted Puffin	Brewer's Blackbird
Osprey	Rock Dove	House Finch
Bald Eagle	Band-tailed Pigeon	Pine Siskin
Northern Harrier	Rufous Hummingbird	American Goldfinch
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	
Cooper's Hawk	Red-breasted Sapsucker	
Northern Goshawk	Downy Woodpecker	

*** now Spotted Towhee

Great Birding at Avocet Marsh

by Jason Weir
3048 Quail Crescent
Kelowna, BC V1V 2A1

Forty American Avocets, four Caspian Terns, and a Peregrine Falcon have made this spring a most exciting year for birding at Avocet Marsh.

It all began last fall when I heard from the local birding club that one or two American Avocet pairs had nested in British Columbia at the north end of the Glenmore Valley, Kelowna. An avocet would be a lifer on my lists so, with determination, I vowed it would be the first new species I would encounter the following year. Luck turned my way when, in early February, my family packed up and moved to Quail Ridge which is situated ten minutes from the biggest marsh in the Glenmore Valley.

By mid-April the first American Avocets had been seen in Kelowna foraging along Okanagan Lake. With excitement, I mounted my mountain bike, loaded my backpack with scope and field guides and left for my first trip to Avocet Marsh. Upon arriving I found a 100 acre (forty ha) alkaline lake-like marsh dotted with numerous islands. It was just another marsh that most people would consider worthless. A closer glance through my scope, however, made the world of difference. To my surprise and delight I spotted my first avocet ever. Astonished, I proceeded scanning the rest of the lake. Avocet after avocet passed before my eyes with all their regal elegance until a total of 20 checks followed my note book entry. Rushing home I phoned the Kelowna birder, Denise Brownlie to report my lucky find. She was just about as excited as I was because my sighting of 20 avocets had been the highest ever recorded in the valley and in British Columbia. With renewed interest I continued to visit the marsh, each time making a new record of avocets. On April 27th there were 34 Avocets and by May 6th over 37 avocets were present and I had found the first four nests. One week later, on May 13th, a total of 15 nests were found scattered on just about every island on the south half of the marsh.

On the 19th of April I heard the sickening news that the Kelowna Landfill Site which is located on the north end of the marsh had bought the acreage, which included the marsh, the year before, with plans of using this site as an extension of the landfill. A worker at the dump informed me that within five years they would begin filling in the marsh with garbage. I was horrified! How could such an important breeding site, the site of the only colony of avocets in British Columbia, be used for a garbage dump? I later found out that Avocet Marsh used to be double its current size. Prior to 1966, the marsh, which at that time was called Alki Lake extended northward for quite some way but in 1966 the northern half fell victim to the new Kelowna Landfill Site. In their book, **Birds of the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia**, the Cannings state, "*This locality was one of the richest breeding grounds for marsh birds in the Okanagan...it now supports a virtual monoculture of foraging Ring-billed Gulls.*"¹ However, that very year on the southern half of what remained of Alki Lake two pairs of avocets bred, each producing three young. These were the first breeding records for the Okanagan and the second and third for all of British Columbia. Prior to this the avocet was classified as a casual spring transient in the Okanagan.² In a short ten years since 1987, the Okanagan population has increased from a mere four adults to forty.

Furious that such an important marsh should have such a dreary future, I took it upon myself to visit the site three times a week for the next three months, spending a total of 45 hours divided among 30 visits. During each visit I would count the number of avocets as well as other unique birds and list the other species seen. Such records can become the ammunition used to convince local government authorities of the importance of preserving such sites. I still remember the time I provided one of the dump's personnel a

look at the avocets through my scope. He was rather shocked and responded by saying, "I thought this slough had only mallards and gulls on it." The fact is that people often do not realize the importance and diversity of birds present at "worthless sloughs." Birders who take carefully documented notes of the species seen at a wetland can go a long way to preserving these priceless and diminishing habitats.

A whole barrage of other birds frequented the marsh during Spring migration. Large numbers of many interior duck species, as well as numerous Bonaparte's Gulls and waders may be seen. Waders such as Baird's, Pectoral, Least, Western, and Semipalmated Sandpipers should be looked for, especially during the August / September Fall migration. Keep an eye open for such species as Dowitchers, Red-necked Phalaropes and Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plovers. I saw a few rare and casual species here this spring. April 29th brought an immature Snow Goose to the marsh. Half a month later a pair of Caspian Terns circled about and then left until June 30th when another, or the same pair, came back, landed in the water and stayed for 45 minutes. On May 28th I was photographing a group of avocets when they suddenly scattered. Bewildered at their sudden dash I looked up just in time to see a Peregrine Falcon soar past after it had taken a dive at the avocets.

The earliest Okanagan record of a Wilson's Phalarope was broken when I observed a female on April 27th, six days earlier than the 1976 record of May 3^d at White Lake. By May 12th, 14 phalaropes had arrived and a nest of four eggs was discovered on June 6th. The eggs had hatched by June 26th and on July 8th two groups of three chicks each were seen. Approximately 30 Wilson's Phalaropes frequent the marsh and are reason alone to have this site fully protected. Also a tiny colony of ten Eared Grebes are nesting. They began nesting June 16th and by July 17th the first nest had completely hatched and one egg from each of three other nests had hatched. Four of the five nests were within 10 ft (3 m) of each other.

Apart from avocets, phalaropes and grebes, Avocet Marsh hosted an assortment of other nesting species. About ten pairs of Canada Geese nested this year. In addition to Mallards, the nests of Blue-winged Teal and Lesser Scaup were discovered. Three American Coot, two Spotted Sandpiper, and a Killdeer nest were also found.

By May 28th the first clutch of five avocet chicks had all hatched. Chicks of this species are highly independent from the moment of hatching. No more than four days after hatching chicks of this clutch were straying up to 250 ft (76 m) from the parents and were eating on their own. Late hatching dates occurred around July 1st with the average of 48 hatching date records coming out around the 9th of June. On June 5th I photographed an egg as it was in the process of hatching. The chick had pecked a tiny hole about three millimetres in diameter and was pecking at the inside of the shell. Occasionally it would poke its bill out of the hole revealing the egg tooth. Again on June 10th I came across another clutch of four eggs all of which were in the process of hatching.

Overall, 19 avocet nests were found and 85-90 eggs were present. About 20 of these eggs never hatched or were broken and of those that did hatch, a high fatality rate apparently reduced their numbers considerably. However, overall they have had average success this year.

The status of American Avocets in the province must be considered threatened with extirpation due to the extremely localized breeding and environmental threats of the landfill site. Unless this marsh is protected we might as well regretfully say goodbye to the presence of our aristocratic looking avocets.

1. Cannings, Robert A.; Cannings, Richard J.; Cannings, Sydney J. 1987. **Birds of the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia**. Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, B.C., pg. 41.
2. Ibid. pg. 166.



EDITORS' NOTE: Wetland nomenclature is varied and includes such terms as bogs, fens, lakes, marshes, ponds and sloughs. "Avocet Marsh" is Jason's personal appellation for what remains of a wetland geographically known as Alki Lake. In this article we have retained the term marsh for this wetland as the Cannings in **British Columbia: a Natural History** (page 266) mention that "In simple terms a marsh is simply a shallow lake...". We are informed that discussions around various aspects of Okanagan wetlands management and conservation are currently being undertaken.

**List of Species Seen
at Avocet Marsh and Land-fill Site Since February 1997**

by Jason Weir

Eared Grebe*	Ruddy Duck^	Glaucous-winged Gull
Great Blue Heron	Red-tailed Hawk^	Glaucous Gull
Snow Goose	Golden Eagle	Caspian Tern
Canada Goose*	American Kestrel^	Black Tern
Wood Duck	Peregrine Falcon	Common Nighthawk
Green-winged Teal	Sora^	Tree Swallow^
Mallard*	American Coot*	Violet-green Swallow*
Northern Pintail	Killdeer*	Bank Swallow^
Blue-winged Teal*	American Avocet*	Rough-winged Swallow^
Cinnamon Teal^	Greater Yellowlegs	Barn Swallow
Northern Shoveler^	Lesser Yellowlegs	American Crow
Gadwall*	Solitary Sandpiper	Common Raven
American Wigeon	Spotted Sandpiper*	European Starling*
Canvasback	Least Sandpiper	Vesper Sparrow^
Redhead^	Long-billed Dowitcher	Savannah Sparrow*
Ring-necked Duck	Wilson's Phalarope*	Song Sparrow^
Greater Scaup	Red-necked Phalarope	Red-winged Blackbird^
Lesser Scaup*	Bonaparte's Gull	Yellow-headed Blackbird^
Common Goldeneye	Ring-billed Gull	Brewer's Blackbird^
Barrow's Goldeneye	California Gull	American Goldfinch^
Bufflehead	Herring Gull	

NOTE: The asterisk (*) indicates documented breeding.
The triangle (^) indicates probable breeding.



A Rare Birds of British Columbia Calendar is planned for publication. This is not possible, however, without the generosity of those who will photograph the birds that occur throughout the 1997 birding year. Seven colour photos will be required. This project has been contemplated personally, but assistance by any British Columbia bird-oriented organization is most welcome as a colour publication can be expensive. As it is possible that the calendar may not make a profit (especially in its first year), those who submit photos must be aware that they may not receive payment. The offshoot of the calendar is to generate an increased awareness in the importance of photographing British Columbia's rare birds. Photographs must be of the actual vagrants recorded in British Columbia in 1997.

Send photographs to:

BC Calendar
#406 - 3363 Glasgow Ave.
Victoria, BC V8X 1M5

Thank you, Keith Taylor

BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER

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

It's that time again - time for listers to start thinking about tallying up their regional bird lists. As a result of the Prince George AGM field-trips and the very successful extension field-trip to the Peace River district, there must be quite a few BCFO members with greatly improved life lists (my own BC list jumped by 18 species!). So, please help make this column a success - plan on sending me your area totals no later than 31 January 1998.

I did not hear any REALLY STRONG objections to last year's listing rules, so I assume that all of you listers were relatively content with my "Listing Rules". For the few who complained about splitting the previous BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER between two issues of **B.C. BIRDING** (Volumes 7(1) and 7(2)), I have Marilyn Buhler's promise that our editors will try hard to squeeze all of the lists into a single issue.

For the benefit of new members, new listers or those of us with really bad memories, the following lists the areas that will be considered and the "rules of the game". I have made a small rule change (more species can be counted in area # 15), and I've added three areas to the list. Space permitting, I will still consider including a few additional areas, PROVIDING you include either a reference to a published checklist or you provide a detailed description of the boundaries.

I have tried to present the most recent species count for some of the areas (**in bold**). Please notify me when you submit your lists if any of the numbers are inaccurate.

Listing Areas:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Canada (623) | 11. Northern Boreal Mountains EP |
| 2. British Columbia (468) | 12. Taiga and Boreal Plains EP's
(two EP's combined) |
| 3. Vancouver Island (387) | 13. Vancouver Checklist Area (364) |
| 4. Queen Charlotte Islands (250) | 14. Victoria Checklist Area (331) |
| 5. Coast and Mountains EP
(excluding Vancouver Island and
the Queen Charlotte's) | 15. N. Pacific Pelagic Waters |
| 6. Georgia Depression EP | 16. Okanagan Valley (317)
(Cannings Checklist Area) |
| 7. Southern Interior EP | 17. Sunshine Coast (265)
(Greenfield Checklist Area)* |
| 8. Central Interior EP | 18. Princeton Checklist Area (239)* |
| 9. Southern Interior Mountains EP | |
| 10. Sub-boreal Interior EP | note: EP = Ecoprovince |

* see **B.C. BIRDING** 7(2) for description of these two areas.

Listing Rules

All totals represent the number of birds you have observed in each area up to the end of 1997.

- ◆ For areas 1 and 2 (Canada, BC) tally all species including those seen out to the 200 nautical mile (approximately 370 km) limit.
- ◆ For areas 3 and 4 (Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlottes) count all species including those marine species seen no more than 5 nautical miles (9.6 km) from land
- ◆ For areas 5 through 12, use the Ecoprovince boundaries shown on the accompanying insert. For more detailed maps, see pages 59-145 of **The Birds of British Columbia** (Campbell et al. 1990). For the marine regions of areas 5 and 6, include only those marine species seen within 5 nautical miles of land.

- ◆ For area 15 (North Pacific Pelagic Waters) include only those species that you have seen no closer than 5 nautical miles from land, north of the Tropic of Cancer (23° 27'N) and south of the Aleutian chain. For this area, you can count species seen beyond the 200 nautical mile limit (unlike ABA rules). Birds that can be included in this list are: loons, grebes, albatrosses, fulmars, shearwaters, gadfly petrels, storm-petrels, frigatebirds, tropicbirds, pelicans, boobies, cormorants, geese, ducks, phalaropes, skuas, jaegers, gulls, kittiwakes, terns, and alcids - misguided passerines, etc. cannot be counted.

Phone-in totals will NOT be accepted. I will only list those totals that reach me by, or before, 31 January, 1998. If I do not receive a listing form on time, I will re-print the totals from the previous year. If a person does not submit a form for two (2) consecutive years, he or she will be dropped from the list.



An Open Letter to the BCFO

We recently returned from a great trip to Prince George for the BCFO annual meeting including the extension trip to the Peace River area. None of us were members of the BCFO and we were concerned that the meeting would be very scientific and well beyond our interest. But the opportunity to visit a new area and see birds we had never seen before with birders who were very experienced, was a strong motivator to participate in the meeting and go on the extension. We decided if we kept quiet and stayed in the background, no one would realize what novices we truly were! We soon realized there were a variety of levels of experience and our concerns were needless. In our van, we definitely were the neophytes; none of the other birders came away with 21 life birds! Time and again the experienced birders were very helpful, not to mention patient, making certain everyone got to see the bird of the moment.

We thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of the meeting including the paper presentations. Although we don't share an environmental focus in our day-to-day working lives as so many of the members do, we are keenly interested in birding. Awareness of birds and their habitat has also sparked a more general interest in the natural environment. We not only look at the birds but also native plants and wildflowers and butterflies. And we are becoming more educated about environmental issues which are impacting bird and wildlife habitat. It was interesting to listen to Wayne Campbell, the keynote speaker, talk about how he felt it would take more of a grass roots movement in the future to influence government and industry to be more environmentally responsible. Well, we think we're at the grass roots level and there are probably many more people like us out there who are not quite sure how to lend a voice. Could it be that there are others who think that the BCFO is an organization for professional ornithologists only?

We want to say THANK YOU to the organizers for all their hard work. We don't know all of the names of those responsible but we're aware that it takes a lot of energy and co-operation by a number of people to make a successful event. We especially want to say thanks to Bryan Gates (our van driver) who drove a mere 3800 km in seven days all the while maintaining good humor, spotting birds and keeping us on the road! Thank you also to the other two leaders on the extension, Tony Greenfield and Jack Bowling as well as the leaders of the field trips in Prince George. Without a doubt, the trip exceeded our expectations with great birds, fabulous scenery, pretty good weather and the camaraderie of fellow birders. Enclosed are our cheques for membership to the BCFO.

Sincerely,
Lorna Wood, Patti Parish and Gail Mireau

