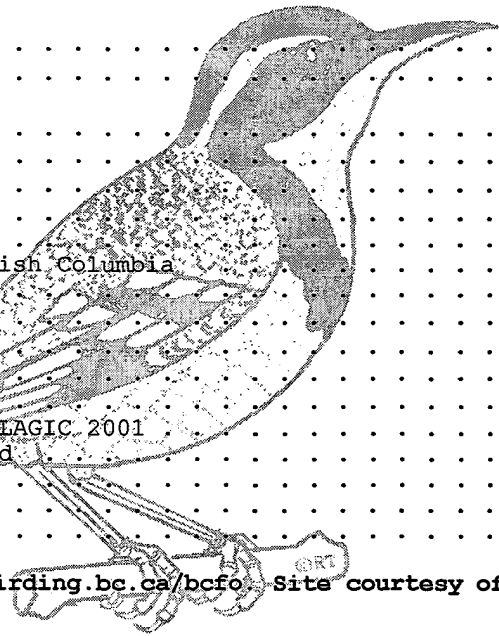


BC BIRDING

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
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Check Out BCFO Website at <http://www.birding.bc.ca/bcfo> Site courtesy of Kevin Slagboom.

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

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

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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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 British Columbia Field Ornithologists
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Send material for publication in any format to the editors. We especially welcome bird-finding information for our "Site Guide" series and any articles about birding experiences, preferably but not necessarily, in British Columbia.

Deadline for receipt of material for publication is the 15th of the month preceding the March, June, September & December issues.

Advertising rates available upon request.

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EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS

According to one of your editors this year is actually the start of the New Millennium. We are not certain which editor is actually correct but BCFO has now entered both the "new" millennia.

Did everyone have a good CBC? Although we did not have room in this issue to publish their reports we want to thank Adrian Leather and Jim Wisnia for forwarding us their CBC highlights. We also want to thank Kyle Elliott for putting us in contact with two of our new authors in this issue and for our next issue's site guide. We really do appreciate the assistance. Thanks go to Stephanie Hazlett for sending us the Vancouver Sun article. It is teamwork such as this which helps keep the organization going. Think about how you might be able to assist to keep us strong. Help is always required for the Annual Conferences, for birding trips, for encouraging membership, etc. The journal and the newsletter are always in need of articles, site guides, letters, and news. BCFO looks forward to hearing from you soon.

This issue has quite a mix of article types. Gail takes 'birding' to a whole new dimension and Linda provides a light-hearted look at some goose behavior. Gordon has written us a site guide for a little-birded area in the Fraser Valley. Kenneth sent us a short note on a Lark Sparrow observation and Al, whose interest is in food sources for a variety of birds, has given us some notes on the Red-breasted Sapsucker. Ken has compiled sightings lists for the annual Bird Watcher's Corner. Martin has gleaned, from a number of sources, upcoming events and news briefs. Larry has kindly allowed us to reprint an interesting new observation on murrelet nesting behavior. Hue forwarded us a note from the directors on voting rights and Bryan has provided both a President's Report and an exciting pelagic trip announcement (a great time was had by all on last year's trip so we hear). Finally, there are several reminders for this year's Annual Conference to be held in Dawson Creek. Make your plans to attend if you have not done so already. Mark and friends sent us a great letter offering assistance to attendees. Many thanks to everyone.

Last year we mentioned that Dannie Carsen had put together an event to get birders through the late winter birding blahs. He organized a Valentine's Day couples bird blitz - 6 am to noon. Entry fees went toward conservation efforts and

prizes were donations. Last year we won - this year not even honorable mention! Still it was a great way to get out and bird in February. Consider a February bird blitz as an event for your area.

Good Birding,
Andy & Marilyn Buhler

Missing Some Earlier Issues?

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"And a Good G'day t'ya".

Whenever I heard those words, I knew it could only be Tom Weston. The Australian accent and cheerful tone were unmistakable - the signal that a stimulating and pleasant conversation was about to begin. Tom came to British Columbia in 1984, joining his wife Inez, who had arrived two years earlier. The two had spent 35 years in Papua New Guinea, Tom working there, and both exploring the rich biological diversity of this island nation off the north coast of Australia. Tom's interest in birds, hiking and natural history began as a young lad in Australia, and continued in PNG and Canada. Inez's dedication to bird studies developed in PNG, no doubt triggered to some degree by her encounters with the spectacular birds-of-paradise. On their arrival in BC, they were quick to join local natural history groups on Vancouver Island and became active members of BCFO.

Tom and Inez were looking forward to this year's Annual Conference in the Peace River district and the extensions into northeastern and northwestern BC. But unfortunately, Tom passed away in early January, at the age of 81. He had achieved most of his life goals, including celebrating 80 birthdays, greeting the new millennium, climbing many mountains and observing more than his share of the world's birds. As a close personal friend, I will miss Tom, as I am sure many of you will. I am delighted that Inez will stick with her plans and will be with us in Dawson Creek on June 22.

In September some of our members will be exploring a section of our coastal marine waters that remain relatively unstudied by ornithologists. In the accompanying article, details are given for a BCFO pelagic birding trip off northern Vancouver Island. Ken Morgan and his CWS workers have been able to dedicate some of their seabird inventory time to the area, have mapped some zones of bird concentrations and have documented some exciting species for BC waters. Ken admits, however, that they have just scratched the surface.

Day access to these rich and sometimes unforgiving waters has always been a problem. There are few communities and limited fuel supplies anywhere near Cape Scott, Triangle Island and Goose Island Bank, so a birding trip on most conventional vessels would require at least two days on the water. But I have found a new, fast and state-of-the-art boat that has been made available to us. We can look forward to an interesting 10 hours at sea, intercepting and attracting many birds. And our chances of encountering 4 or 5 species of marine mammals are also good. One thing is certain: in early September the expected shearwaters, fulmars, storm-petrels, gulls and kittiwakes will be there. Hopefully, we will also see and take confirming photographs of something unexpected ... maybe even an albatross or *Pterodroma* from *Down Under*. Rare southern species have been identified during recent pelagic trips off California, Oregon and Washington. Why not BC? To bring us luck, I am dedicating this initial excursion to Tom Weston.

And a Good G'day to you, Tom.



Bryan Gates
BCFO President

DIRECTORS' NOTES

Apologies: In Volume 10, #4 (December 2000) issue we published an item on BCFO Post-11th Annual Conference Extension Trip Proposals. A majority of the work putting the logistics for these proposed trip options together was undertaken by Tony Greenfield. We did not give credit where credit was due in that issue. Thanks for your skills and effort Tony. It was appreciated by all, just not documented in the issue.

Members: Plan to attend the 11th Annual Conference in Dawson Creek and consider an extension trip to extend your birding pleasure.

Remember to study up on those Eastern Warblers!

SOCIETY NEWS

BCFO Policy on Voting Rights

Directors' Note submitted by Hue MacKenzie

The BC Field Ornithologists is incorporated under the BC Society Act. Under that act a membership in an organization is entitled to one vote only. This means that we may not have a family membership which confers voting rights on more than one person. That is why the Constitution and By-Laws were amended to drop the family membership category. Part 1(6) of our current By-Laws allows one vote per member.

The Directors, realizing that there was considerable confusion on this subject have adopted the policy that a *family* (i.e. the immediate family including all children under the age of 18) may become a *member* and membership will entitle them to the following privileges:

The membership will apply only to the immediate family including all children under 18 years of age who are *registered* with the Society;

The membership list of the Society will contain a single listing for the family which may include the names of all individuals in the family who wish to be *registered with the Society*;

The *member* family is entitled to *one vote* in Society elections and business matters. The person casting that vote must be *registered* with the Society; Only one person in a *member* family may hold an *elective office* at any one time.

A *member* family is entitled to receive one copy of each Society publication (currently *BC BIRDING* and *British Columbia Birds*).

All *registered* individuals in the *member* family are entitled to participate in non-voting activities of the Society. Each participant must pay the applicable registration or participant fees when registering for meetings, field trips and other events.

If two people in a family wish to vote and/or hold elective office in the Society, each must have a separate membership.



BC BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

Smith Receives Speirs Award -Canada's most prestigious award for contributions to ornithology, the Doris Heustis Speirs Award, was presented to James Neil Munro ("Jamie") Smith during the 2000 annual meeting of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists in Newfoundland. Jamie's award recognizes his long-term studies on Song Sparrows and Brown-headed Cowbirds, as well as his contributions to teaching and conservation. -based on K. Martin as adapted by A. J. Erskine. 2000. *Picoides* 13(2):22.

Hummingbird Fares Better Than Towhee -The latest compilation of "significant encounters" of birds banded in North America (J. B. Dunning, Jr. 2000. *North Amer. Bird Bander* 25:105-110) includes two entries from B.C. An adult female Rufous Hummingbird banded at Rosewell Creek Hatchery by J. Cam Finlay in 1991 was retrapped at Goldstream Park in 1997, when she was at least seven years old. An adult female Spotted Towhee banded at Sequim, Washington in February 1997 perished less than a month later when killed by a cat "near" Vancouver Island.



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

- March 28-30 2001 **SOCIETY FOR NORTHWESTERN VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING**, Victoria, BC. Contact: Elke Wind [no address given] phone: (604) 732-7954].
- April 3-6 2001 **INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE "INTERACTIONS BETWEEN FISH AND BIRDS: IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT"**, University of Hull International Fisheries Institute, Hull, UK - for further information contact Dr I. G. Cowx, International Fisheries Institute, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX, United Kingdom, Telephone: (44) 1482 466421, Fax: (44) 1482 470129, Email: i.g.cowx@biosci.hull.ac.uk
- April 3-7 2001 **NAAG 2001 - THE TENTH NORTH AMERICAN ARCTIC GOOSE CONFERENCE**, Quebec, Quebec. Contact: Gilles Gauthier, phone (418) 656-5507 or Jean-Francois Giroux, phone (514) 987-3000, ext. 3353.
- April 6-9 2001 **BRANT FESTIVAL 2001**, Parksville-Qualicum Beach, BC. Contact: Brant Festival Office, Box 327, Parksville, BC V9P 2G5; phone: (250) 752-9171.
- April 18-21 2001 **COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 71ST ANNUAL MEETING**, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Contacts: Kathy Granillo, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 78103, USA; phone (505) 248-6818 OR Dr. Deborah M. Finch, Rocky Mountain Research Station, 2205 Columbia SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, USA; phone (505) 766-1046.
- May 3-6 2001 **WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING**, Fayetteville, Arkansas. Contact: Doug James, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, USA; phone (501)575-6364.
- June 22-24 2001 **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' 11th ANNUAL CONFERENCE**, Dawson Creek, BC. Contact: Hank VanderPol (250) 979-0363 rhvander@home.com or Ev Miyasaki (250) 656-8066 emiyasaki@home.com. See notices this issue.
- Aug. 15-18 2001 **119th STATED MEETING, AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**, Seattle, Washington. Contact: Kai Fujita, Conference coordinator, Ornithology, Burke Museum, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195-3010, USA; phone (206) 616-9322.
- Aug. 2001 **ANNUAL MEETING, SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGY**, Seattle, Washington during AOU meeting [exact date not yet announced]. Contact: Kai Fujita, Conference coordinator, Ornithology, Burke Museum, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195-3010, USA; phone (206) 616-9322.
- Nov. 5-8 2001 **PRAIRIE GROUSE TECHNICAL COUNCIL BIENNIAL MEETING**, Woodhouse, Oklahoma. Contact: Russ Horton (405) 364-7142 or Stephanie Harmon (918) 581-7458 extension 229.
- Aug. 11-17 2002 **23rd INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, Beijing, China. Contact: Professor Xu Weishu, Secretary-General of the 23rd Congress, Beijing Natural History Museum, 1-1-302, Beijing Science and Technology Commission Apt., Balizhuang, Haidian District, Beijing 100037, China; phone +86-10-6846-5605.

BIRD-LISTERS' CORNER

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

Welcome back once more to Lister's Corner. Thirty-eight contributors submitted their lists - thank you one and all. For the second year in a row, the number of people who sent me their lists was down. Perhaps this is a signal that only a small proportion of the BCFO members actually keeps lists and that this article doesn't serve the interest of the community at large. If you have any suggestions on how to improve the column or other comments (please keep them polite!) forward them directly to me or to the Buhlers.

In less than 24 hours I will be winging my way to a week away in Kauai, Hawaii. As it seems like I have a 100 other things to do before I go, I am simply going to let the numbers speak for themselves, rather than trying to quickly throw together some sort of analysis - e.g., whose list grew the most over the past year. As is always the case, if a * appears directly after a person's name, then the totals listed are those that were submitted for the year 1999 rather than 2000. Anyone with a * after their name will be dropped from the lists if they fail to send their totals in again next year. A # following a name indicates that although they sent me a form for the year 2000, they didn't update all listing regions - the number shown represents the number of birds seen within that particular area by the end of 1999.

Once again, I hope everyone has a great year of birding.

Listing Totals To 31 December 2000

A.B.A Area (918 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Stefan Zaremba	712	77.6	22 Martin McNicholl*	515	56.1
2 Hank Vanderpol	706	76.9	23 Ron Walker#	515	56.1
3 Jo Ann MacKenzie	696	75.8	24 Don Wilson	512	55.8
4 Hue MacKenzie	692	75.4	25 Mike McGrenere#	502	54.7
5 David Stirling	661	72.0	26 Andy Buhler	489	53.3
6 Wayne Weber	659	71.8	27 Marilyn Buhler	488	53.2
7 Eric Tull*	642	69.9	28 Chris Charlesworth	485	52.8
8 Russ Tkachuk	636	69.3	29 Ken Klimko	459	50.0
9 Eric MacBean	612	66.7	30 Ken Taylor*	454	49.5
10 Brian Scott	611	66.6	31 Laird Law	443	48.3
11 Audrey Viken	601	65.5	32 Larry Cowan	432	47.1
12 Elsie Nykyfork*	595	64.8	33 Tom Gillespie*	429	46.7
13 Tony Greenfield	594	64.7	34 Ken Morgan	425	46.3
14 Keith Riding*	586	63.8	35 Murray Brown	410	44.7
15 Marika Ainley	575	62.6	36 Eva Durance*	403	43.9
16 Lloyd Esralson	573	62.4	37 Peter Blokker	392	42.7
17 Mabel Crocker	569	62.0	38 Laure Neish	391	42.6
18 Dick Cannings	561	61.1	39 Guy Monty	331	36.1
19 John B. Sprague	556	60.6	40 Laurie Rockwell	313	34.1
20 Bryan Gates	553	60.2	41 Rand Rudland	277	30.2
21 Bill Cutfield	550	59.9			

ABA area species total (2000) provided by Brian Scott

Canada (632 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Hue MacKenzie	510	80.7	22 Keith Riding*	407	64.4
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	510	80.7	23 Bill Cutfield	406	64.2
3 Mike Bentley*	502	79.4	24 Bryan Gates	402	63.6
4 David Stirling	479	75.8	25 Larry Cowan	394	62.3
5 Eric Tull*	477	75.5	26 Peter Blokker	385	60.9
6 Marika Ainley	457	72.3	27 John B. Sprague	377	59.7
7 Wayne Weber	454	71.8	28 Eva Durance*	376	59.5
8 Eric MacBean	449	71.0	29 Don Wilson	376	59.5

Canada (632 species) cont.

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
9 Dick Cannings	448	70.9	30 Tom Gillespie*	368	58.2
10 Stefan Zaremba	439	69.5	31 Ron Walker	360	57.0
11 Russ Tkachuk	435	68.8	32 Chris Charlesworth	355	56.2
12 Hank Vanderpol	434	68.7	33 Laird Law	354	56.0
13 Audrey Viken	433	68.5	34 Murray Brown	352	55.7
14 Martin McNicholl*	432	68.4	35 Ken Klimko	351	55.5
15 Mike McGrenere	428	67.7	36 Mabel Crocker	326	51.6
16 Elsie Nykyfork*	422	66.8	37 Andy Buhler	325	51.4
17 Ken Morgan	419	66.3	38 Marilyn Buhler	324	51.3
18 Barb Begg	418	66.1	39 Guy Monty	323	51.1
19 Brian Scott	415	65.7	40 Laurie Rockwell	308	48.7
20 Lloyd Esralson	411	65.0	41 Rand Rudland	263	41.6
21 Tony Greenfield	411	65.0	42 Jeremy Kim*	257	40.7

Canada species total (1999) provided by Brian Scott

British Columbia (484 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Mike Bentley*	416	86.0	24 Larry Cowan	340	70.2
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	414	85.5	25 Eric Tull*	331	68.4
3 Hue MacKenzie	412	85.1	26 Elsie Nykyfork*	330	68.2
4 David Stirling	409	84.5	27 Laird Law	328	67.8
5 Wayne Weber	407	84.1	28 Guy Monty	323	66.7
6 Tony Greenfield	395	81.6	29 Andy Buhler	319	65.9
7 Dick Cannings	391	80.8	30 Martin McNicholl*	319	65.9
8 Hank Vanderpol	385	79.5	31 Marilyn Buhler	318	65.7
9 Audrey Viken	374	77.3	32 Peter Blokker	315	65.1
10 Bryan Gates	373	77.1	33 Murray Brown	308	63.6
11 Lloyd Esralson	371	76.7	34 Dannie Carsen*	307	63.4
12 Eric MacBean	369	76.2	35 Tom Gillespie*	307	63.4
13 Mike McGrenere	369	76.2	36 Laurie Rockwell	305	63.0
14 Russ Tkachuk	366	75.6	37 Ken Taylor*	303	62.6
15 Keith Riding*	365	75.4	38 Jerry Herzig*	300	62.0
16 Stefan Zaremba	365	75.4	39 Marika Ainley	293	60.5
17 Barb Begg	363	75.0	40 Eva Durance*	286	59.1
18 Ken Morgan	355	73.3	41 John B. Sprague	285	58.9
19 Brian Scott	354	73.1	42 Kim Herzig*	278	57.4
20 Val George	348	71.9	43 Bill Cutfield	264	54.5
21 Don Wilson	348	71.9	44 Jeremy Kim*	253	52.3
22 Chris Charlesworth	347	71.7	45 Rand Rudland	230	47.5
23 Ron Walker	347	71.7			

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	10 Peter Blokker	175	44.4
2 David Stirling	283	71.8	11 Tony Greenfield#	148	37.6
3 Hue MacKenzie	244	61.9	12 Larry Cowan	138	35.0
4 Audrey Viken	243	61.7	13 Eric MacBean#	133	33.8
5 Martin McNicholl*	241	61.2	14 Don Wilson	129	32.7
6 Jo Ann MacKenzie	239	60.7	15 Ken Morgan	122	31.0
7 Wayne Weber	235	59.6	16 Brian Scott#	122	31.0
8 Bryan Gates	222	56.3	17 John B. Sprague	61	15.5
9 Dick Cannings	208	52.8	18 Jeremy Kim*	48	12.2

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 Wayne Weber	252	65.1
2 Bryan Gates	317	81.9	10 Guy Monty	251	64.9
3 Hank Vanderpol#	315	81.4	11 Jo Ann MacKenzie	246	63.6
4 Barb Begg	311	80.4	12 Hue MacKenzie	245	63.3
5 Mike McGrenere	309	79.8	13 Jeremy Kim*	217	56.1
6 Tom Gillespie*	277	71.6	14 Larry Cowan	174	45.0
7 Ken Morgan	264	68.2	15 John B. Sprague	165	42.6
8 Dannie Carsen*	256	66.1	16 Lloyd Esralson	161	41.6

Queen Charlotte Islands (250 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Ken Morgan	129	51.6	3 Bryan Gates	74	29.6
2 Val George	125	50.0			

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	335	82.5	10 Dick Cannings	283	69.7
2 Hue MacKenzie	331	81.5	11 Audrey Viken	282	69.5
3 Wayne Weber	326	80.3	12 Ken Klimko	282	69.5
4 Eric MacBean	325	80.0	13 David Stirling	241	59.3
5 Lloyd Esralson	303	74.6	14 Bryan Gates	232	57.1
6 Stefan Zarembo	302	74.4	15 Don Wilson	225	55.4
7 Keith Riding*	300	73.9	16 Guy Monty	215	53.0
8 Larry Cowan	288	70.9	17 Chris Charlesworth	209	51.5
9 Brian Scott	285	70.2	18 Jeremy Kim*	92	22.7

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

Victoria Checklist Area (363 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 David Stirling	310	85.4	8 Wayne Weber	233	64.2
2 Hank Vanderpol	308	84.8	9 Andy Buhler	224	61.7
3 Bryan Gates	305	84.0	10 Marilyn Buhler	222	61.2
4 Barb Begg	300	82.6	11 Jeremy Kim*	210	57.9
5 Mike McGrenere	296	81.5	12 Guy Monty	182	50.1
6 Tom Gillespie*	264	72.7	13 Lloyd Esralson	131	36.1
7 Dannie Carsen*	254	70.0	14 Larry Cowan	124	34.2

Victoria Checklist Area species total (2000) provided by Bryan Gates

Okanagan Valley (319 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Chris Charlesworth	287	90.0	14 Laure Neish	234	73.4
2 Dick Cannings	282	88.4	15 Jo Ann MacKenzie	233	73.0
3 Gwynneth Wilson	280	87.8	16 Tony Greenfield#	222	69.6
4 Denise Brownlie*	276	86.5	17 Laird Law	199	62.4
5 Elsie Nykyfork*	276	86.5	18 Lloyd Esralson	192	60.2
6 Don Wilson	275	85.3	19 Audry Viken	191	59.9
7 Laurie Rockwell	262	82.1	20 Bryan Gates	186	58.3
8 Wayne Weber	251	78.7	21 Russ Tkachuk#	175	54.9
9 Peter Blokker	245	76.8	22 Dannie Carsen*	170	53.3
10 David Stirling	239	74.9	23 Guy Monty	158	49.5
11 Eva Durance*	238	74.6	24 Larry Cowan	153	47.9
12 Hue MacKenzie	236	74.0	25 John B. Sprague	123	38.6
13 Bill Cutfield	234	73.4	26 Jeremy Kim*	60	18.8

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 Chris Charlesworth	114	45.4
2 Kim Herzig*	226	90.0	4 Bryan Gates	87	34.7

Princeton Area species total (1999) provided by Jerry Herzig

Kamloops Checklist Area (295 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Wayne Weber	246	83.4	4 Don Wilson	91	30.8
2 David Stirling	198	67.1	5 Guy Monty#	77	26.1
3 Chris Charlesworth	156	52.9			

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

Sunshine Coast (282 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Tony Greenfield	253	89.7	4 Wayne Weber	136	48.2
2 Russ Tkachuk	232	82.3	5 Larry Cowan	83	29.4
3 Rand Rudland	202	71.6	6 Guy Monty	70#	24.8

Sunshine Coast species total (2000) provided by Tony Greenfield

West Kootenay Area (285 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Jo Ann MacKenzie	178	62.5	3 Hue MacKenzie	168	58.9
2 Wayne Weber	175	61.4	4 David Stirling	141	49.5

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

Prince George Checklist Area (274 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Laird Law	249	90.9	5 Wayne Weber	111	40.5
2 Cathy Antoniazzi	246	89.8	6 Bryan Gates	91	33.2
3 Don Wilson	190	69.3	7 John B. Sprague	66	24.1
4 Chris Charlesworth	158	57.7			

Prince George Checklist Area species total (2000) provided by Cathy Antoniazzi

Creston Valley Area (265 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
1 Wayne Weber	128	48.3	3 Don Wilson	68	25.7
2 Bryan Gates	125	47.2	4 Jeremy Kim*	29	10.9

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	357	78.6	8 Chris Charlesworth	190	41.9
2 Jo Ann MacKenzie	344	75.8	9 Guy Monty	187	41.2
3 Hue MacKenzie	337	74.2	10 Larry Cowan	177	39.0
4 David Stirling	254	55.9	11 Ken Klimko	171	37.7
5 Eric MacBean	234	51.5	12 Bryan Gates	125	27.5
6 Keith Riding*	227*	50.0	13 Eric Tull*	115	25.3
7 Lloyd Esralson#	212	46.7	14 Jeremy Kim*	38	8.4

Washington species total (1999) provided by Wayne Weber

North Pacific Pelagic Waters

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
1 David Stirling	60	6 Jo Ann MacKenzie	42
2 Lloyd Esralson	59	7 Bryan Gates#	41
3 Ken Morgan	57	8 Eric MacBean	29
4 Mike Bentley*	56	9 Guy Monty	26
5 Val George	56		

Not-Birding

by Gail Spitler
RR #1, S4, C16
Kaslo, BC V0G 1M0

Not-Birding is the field activity engaged in by most birders of looking or listening intently and then saying "Oh, that's not a bird." This is not always said aloud; many try to suppress such overt evidence of *Not-Birding*. Late summer and early fall is the peak time of year for *Not-Birding*. In the months previous the birder's eyes and ears have become finely tuned instruments for bird detection. The slightest leaf movement is noticed, the quietest *tchep* registered. However, by late August many birds are gone. Stragglings migratory warblers give only faint call notes. The year round residents are taciturn and give forth with either abbreviated or terribly inept versions of their spring song. The birds that are present seem to prefer to be deep within bushes, shrubs and trees. These long periods of avian inactivity are perfect for *Not-Birding*.

My *Not-Bird* list continues to grow each year. I will soon need a computer program to keep track on my *Not-Bird* sightings. There are several major classes of *Not-Birds*. One class is composed of stationary inanimate objects (*Inanimati staticus*). The first family in this class is known as tree attachments (*Arbor attachii*): cones, dead leaves, and twigs make up the majority. These are often seen as you scan a location. Suddenly you spot a figure on a tree limb. The heart quickens. Your brain registers "unusual jizz, what's this?" Binoculars are quickly swept into the viewing position. Then the brain says, "Oh, just a _____". The blank can be filled in with pinecone, twig, or leaf. I have noticed that occasionally birders complete the sentence as "Oh, just a robin" which actually is not in the genre of *Not-Birds*. Another member of the inanimate object class includes tree parts extending vertically from a body of water or along its edge (*Arbor erectium*). How many gray tree limbs stuck in pond or lakeshore have you tried to morph into Great Blue Herons? Closely related to *Arbor erectium* is the group *Arbor rubicus*, tree branches rubbing on other tree branches producing any number of bird song fragments.


A second class is composed of non-stationary inanimate objects (*Inanimati mobilis*). In most of British Columbia, a common member of this group is the falling leaf, particularly substantial leaves like those of the cottonwood tree. They are heavy enough to produce movement of the lower leaves, which alert that corner of the eye that birders exercise and nurture. They can also produce a short, dry rustle that piques the ear. Moving water is another great *Not-Bird*. I have found that small rivulets that run across rocky strata are particularly productive auditorially.

Another class is composed of animate objects (*Animatus nonaviati*). The most common member of this class is the squirrel. The Red Squirrel does a great Belted Kingfisher imitation. However, I find the chipmunk to be far more interesting and devilishly deceiving. On more than one occasion I have patiently spished a chipmunk out of the rocks. Dragon flies are marvelous *Not-Birds*. Whether singly or in pairs they can emit the most alluring avian-like sounds composed of buzzes or chips. The heavier members of the dragonfly group can also induce eye corner alerts by bending small twigs and leaves. Butterflies and bees also tend to be eye corner attractors. Of course, domestic chickens are also included in this class although not the truly glamorous members.

Not-Birding can be either a day or night activity. Some people find that the dark provides many more opportunities for truly creative *Not-Birds*. In the animate object class, distant barking dogs are excellent *Not-Owls*. In the inanimate class, the automobile seems to provide many avian-like sounds especially on gravel roads. The birder drives down the road with his/her head protruding from the open car window. Suddenly they screech to a stop and jump out, hands cupped behind their ears. After some moments they shrug and get back in the car only to repeat the drama again farther down the road. Tree stumps are popular inanimate nighttime sightings. Usually large stumps really belong on the *Not-Bear* list rather than the *Not-Bird* list.

There is a classic tale told by many a *Not-Birder*. It has been repeated so often amongst birding circles that it has reached the level of urban avian myth: For several

nights in a row John and Sally could hear an owl calling near their home. At least it sounded somewhat like an owl. They asked their friend, neighbour and fellow birder, Paul Gillian if he had heard the bird. He had not but would start listening for it. Determined to track down the bird, they made a tape recording of the unusual call. They were not sure that it would respond to its taped call but they were going to give it a try. They played the tape for several nights in a row with no response from the mystery bird. In fact, it seemed to have stopped calling altogether. Then at 11:30 on a Friday night they heard the call again. John and Sally grabbed their tape recorder, raced outside and played the call back. The bird responded! They moved in the direction of the sound and played the tape again. Again the bird called back. The process was repeated several times until John and Sally were sure that they were within 50 feet of the bird. The sound came from a bushy area just ahead of them. Then Paul struggles through the bushes, his tape recorder in hand, playing the same call. The perfect *Not-Bird* moment when the birder becomes the *Not-Bird*.


Happy Birding and *Not-Birding*. 

A Westerly Record of Lark Sparrow in British Columbia

by Kenneth G. Wright
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Lillooet, BC V0K 1V0

While birding on a dry Ponderosa Pine bench just east of Lillooet in the semi-arid Fraser Valley I encountered a pair of Lark Sparrows on 23 May 2000. I was alerted to the presence of the sparrows by their distinctive *melodius* song. The weather was hot (~26°C) and sunny with little or no wind at the time of the sighting (0930 PDST).

The sparrows appeared to be foraging for insects or seeds on the open ground amongst clusters of bunchgrass. They were at the base of a steep ponderosa pine-dominated slope (335m elevation) at the end of Pine Ridge Road (50°41'N, 121°54'W) which lies immediately northwest of the Lillooet Airport. All further attempts to relocate the sparrows at the initial observation site failed to produce anything as well as searches in other peripheral areas. This observation may be west of the regular extent of the species' range in British Columbia and thereby these birds may have been merely vagrants.

The common name comes from the sparrow's memorable song, resembling that of the lark family. As usual, the scientific name has a more specific and functional description, *Chondestes grammacus*, translating to 'grain eater with striped head'. 

Correction: The new RBA is for the whole Okanagan, not for just Kelowna as stated in the previous issue. Thank you Chris.

New RBA for the Okanagan Valley

The Okanagan Valley now has a rare bird alert hotline. Chris Charlesworth states: "I have been struggling away to make this happen for almost a year and now finally it's going ahead. With sponsorship from the Tumbleweed Nature Store (67 Front Street) in Penticton, the Okanagan Valley Rare Bird Alert will begin operation on October 26, 2000. The number will be 250-491-7738."

Red-breasted Sapsucker Wells*

by Al Grass
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Burnaby, BC V3N 1T3

Neat rows of small holes drilled into the bark of a tree are a sure sign that a sapsucker has been busy. The wells (as the holes are called) shown in the photograph** were drilled into the bark of a European weeping birch (*Betula pendula*). Well-known for their fondness of birches, sapsuckers also utilize a variety of other trees. The following is a list of tree species where Red-breasted Sapsucker wells have been recorded (ALG, *Pers. obs*):

Apples -- both Pacific Crab and domestic	Hemlock, western -- common (WH.BGCZ)
Aspens -- Red-naped Sapsucker observed	Hemlock, mountain -- common (MH.BGCZ)
Birches -- western white, European weeping	Maple, bigleaf -- young specimens
Cottonwood -- young specimens	Rowan (European Mountain-ash), Sitka
Cascara -- not uncommon	Mountain-ash
Douglas-fir -- young specimens	Willow -- <i>Salix lasiandra</i> , <i>Salix</i> , Sp.
Elderberry -- one record	

The question is, "Do sapsuckers feed only on sap?"

Sapsuckers are highly specialized woodpeckers with 'brush-like' tongues. In other words they brush the sap out: the bill isn't used like a soda straw for drinking sap. Sap flows only for a limited time of the year -- what then? The sapsucker uses a variety of feeding strategies:

- Consumes sap - by tapping wells.
- Consumes inner bark - quite commonly.
- Probes into bark cracks for insects, etc.
- Scales trees such as spruces to uncover insects, etc. (e.g. Three-toed Woodpecker)
- Excellent flycatcher, especially when termites and carpenter ants are flying. Also catches beetles and moths on the wing.
- Feeds on berries - e.g. red huckleberry, salal.

Summary

Sap consuming habits of sapsuckers are fairly well known. Other feeding strategies appear to be less well understood. Naturalists are encouraged to record their observations to further our appreciation of these most interesting woodpeckers (in our area the Red-breasted Sapsucker).

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- Martin, et.al. *American Wildlife and Plants*. 1950. Dover, New York.

* Reprinted from Burke Mountain Naturalists Newsletter, November 2000 by permission of the author.

** Photograph did not accompany the article sent to us and was not received by our publication deadline.



AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

Gordon Gadsden

Gordon has been birding since age ten and birding has remained his favorite activity of his many outside activities. His favorite haunt is certainly Cheam Lake, though, he says, any place in the world will do. Gordon presently works for Fraser Valley Regional District Parks on his way toward a career in Resource Management.

Al Grass

Al has worked as a Park Naturalist for BC Parks, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks for some 25 years. He is the author of a wide variety of publications including *The Birds of Golden Ears Provincial Park* and co-author of *Exploring the Outdoors*. His ornithological interests include raptors, uses of native trees and shrubs by birds and woodpecker feeding habits.

Gail Spitler

Gail has been birding since the late sixties but birding got more focused after her early retirement from UBC in 1989 when she moved to her "little piece of paradise" in Johnsons Landing in the West Kootenays. Retirement has meant a lot more time for birds and *Not-Birds*. She writes occasional birding articles for the local press, is compiler for the Lardeau CBC, and the moderator for the internet chat group *wkbirds*.

Linda Timbs

Linda, an R.N. for 20 years, retired in 1991 to devote her time to environmental issues. She is a member of the Burke Mountain Naturalists' and The British Columbia Natural History Society Birding Division. This year, her garden was nominated as 'Best Nature Garden' by the city of Coquitlam. In 1997, she earned 'Gold' in Douglas College's 'Naturescape Programme'. Her writing, light-hearted and amusing, owes much to her great sense of humour and to the amount of time she spends observing birds both in her yard and in their natural habitat.

Wright, Kenneth G.

Ken has been birding since childhood. He is researching Harlequin Ducks in the Chilcotin and Strait of Georgia, British Columbia. Ken is also especially interested in alpine and grassland birds.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

EDITORS' NOTE: We received this very kind letter from Mark Phinney and members of the Timberline Trail and Nature Club. Thanks to all of you from BCFO for your thoughtfulness.

Hi all. The local naturalist group, Timberline Trail & Nature Club, wanted to be sure the BCFO membership is aware that the Timberliners are keenly anticipating the upcoming AGM. Timberline members will be available for any sort of general assistance, such as shuttling people between the local airport and accommodations, showing people around town, etc. We encourage BCFO members to arrive a day or two early and/or stay a little later to explore the area more thoroughly. If some people have 'dipped out' and missed birds on their hit list during the AGM, we'll do our best to track down the target birds if the unlucky members want to stick around for an extra day.

For more info, contact any of the following:

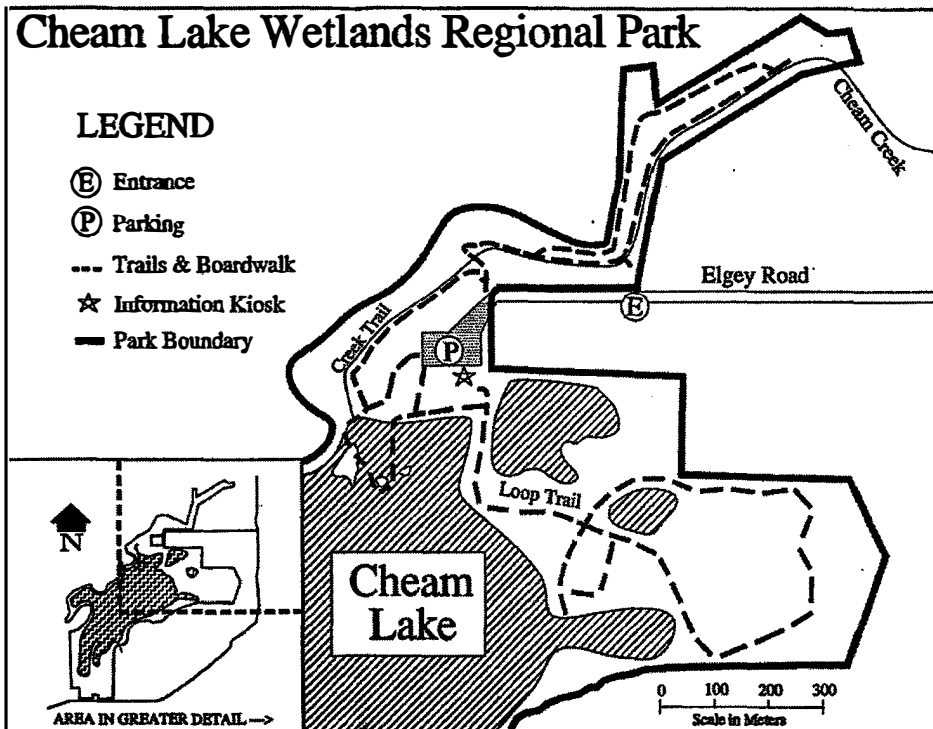
<i>Mark Phinney</i>	<i>(250) 843-2318</i>
<i>Meredith Thornton</i>	<i>(250) 782-7680</i>
<i>Walter and Ellen Schoen</i>	<i>(250) 782-4485</i>

Also FYI - Dawson Creek can be reached by flying directly in on Air Canada/Central Mountain Air (small plane, via Prince George) or by flying to Fort St. John on Canadian (or what's left of it) and driving about an hour south, or by flying WestJet into Grande Prairie and driving an hour west (remember Grande Prairie will be an hour ahead of Dawson Creek at that time of year). Greyhound bus and old-fashioned driving are options as well.

SITE GUIDE: Cheam Lake Wetlands Park

by Gordon Gadsden
42398 Adams Road
Chilliwack, BC V2R 4K9

Cheam Lake Wetlands is a fairly new park under the Fraser Valley Regional District. It is situated in Popkum, 20 minutes east of Chilliwack. Drained to accommodate marl mining for a period of 40 years, it was then converted back to its original state in 1992. A few artifacts from the mining process can be seen on display at various points in the park. Now that the park is restored and recovering from the mining, Cheam Lake wetlands are quickly becoming a popular place to hike, picnic, and especially, to bird watch.



To get to Cheam Lake Park, take Highway #1 to exit #135 for Bridal Falls and Agassiz. There, get on to Highway #9 towards Agassiz. Not more than 0.5 km down Highway #9, you will come to an intersection. Take a right at the intersection onto Yale Road East. Follow the road for about 2.5 km until you come to Elgey Road on your left. Follow Elgey Road directly into Cheam Lake Park's parking lot.

The Park is about 250 acres in size (including the lake) and consists of two main trails and a floating walkway. The map on the kiosk at the parking lot will direct you towards the Loop Trail down by the lake, and the Creek Trail that

follows Cheam Creek. Be sure to concentrate your birding efforts on the Loop Trail and the floating walkway, but don't forget the Creek Trail if time permits. Trails, park information, and an outdated bird list are available in the form of brochures at the kiosk.

Cheam Lake is open from 8:00 am until dusk so early morning birders or nighttime owlers will have to park at the gate and walk in. Be advised that car thieves may operate in this area, so keep valuables locked out of sight and use an anti-theft device.

As mentioned, Cheam Lake is quickly becoming popular for birdwatchers because its varied habitats provide a good variety of different bird species. The total number of species on record up to this point is 148 species. The most common birds expected to be seen year round vary from Hairy Woodpeckers, Purple Finches, Belted Kingfishers, Common Snipe and Pied-billed Grebes. For this article I will use my own records from the lake to discuss the species and the seasons in which they are most likely to be seen.


Late April and into June is the time to see the 'regulars' returning to their breeding sites and to catch birds passing through on spring migration. The lake and surrounding marsh area are noisy at this time since the Eastern Kingbirds, Marsh Wrens and Red-winged Blackbirds compete to be the loudest in the marsh. It is always a treat to watch a Marsh Wren as he builds his multiple nests. Watch for him on the cattails getting a beak-full of fluff. There are always a good number of Green Herons in May and they are almost a guaranteed sighting right until September. Sora and Virginia Rails are an uncommon, but yearly, sighting throughout the summer. Over the water the swallows show up in large numbers before they disperse to their nesting areas. All species can be seen

including the odd Bank Swallow and, once last May, a Purple Martin was seen in the flocks of swallows. The waterfowl always seem to get sparse as the spring ages, but watch for Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal passing through on migration. The deciduous-dominated forest brings the promise of warblers, vireos, and the chance to test your identification skills on the much-dreaded Empidonax flycatchers. Though not many warbler species seem to stay and nest at the park, during migration you can see Yellow Warblers in reasonable numbers, with Wilson's, Black-throated Gray, MacGillivray's, Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped Warblers rounding out the list. A Tennessee Warbler was also reported last spring, so keep your eyes peeled in the mixed flocks. You can not miss the Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos once they start singing to protect their territory. The flycatchers are on their way through too. Hammond's Flycatcher seems to be the only species that does not stay to nest. Pacific-slope, Willow and, last summer, two pairs of Least Flycatchers were recorded with nests. Other birds worthy of mention for this period include Barred Owl, Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, Band-tailed Pigeon, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Swainson's Thrush. There is also a chance of sighting an American Bittern.


Once into July breeding activity can be observed at its peak. Probably one of the most popular sights is to watch the Eastern Kingbirds feeding their young and protecting their nests from anything that flies by. Other birds which can be commonly seen at their nests or feeding young are Western Wood-Pewees, Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Cedar Waxwings, American Goldfinches, Purple Finches and Yellow Warblers. Other birds to watch for at this time are Western Tangers, Black Swifts and, on occasion, an occasional Osprey hunting over the lake.

Mid-August and into early October seems to produce a greater variety of migrants going south. Make sure you get out at this time. The rarities on record include Solitary Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Northern Shrike, Gray Catbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Red-necked Grebe, and Lewis's Woodpecker. Along with the rarities you can expect to again shake your fist and shout your frustrations at the Empid flycatchers (at this time they usually refuse to disclose their identities with calls) and a good number of fall-plumaged warblers mixed with the easily identified ones. Black-throated Gray along with Townsend's Warblers seem to be in higher numbers during fall migration. Virtually all birds seen during the summer can be seen at this time as well so anticipate 40+ species in an average birding walk.

From fall right through to early spring seems to be a rather quiet time at the lake. The waterfowl come back in decent numbers and among the usual crew keep an eye out for Greater White-fronted Geese and Eurasian Wigeon. Anyone looking for a Dipper can expect to see one in the creek from the Creek Trail. Among the mixed flocks of Golden-crowned Kinglets, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, watch for a Brown Creeper. Large flocks of Pine Siskins are frequently seen, plus a few types of sparrows with Lincoln's and Golden-crowned Sparrows joining the White-crowned and Song Sparrows.

If you have any questions about the park and birdwatching, I can be reached on my work cell at (604) 793-6327, or leave a message at the Fraser Valley Regional District Parks Office at (604) 702-5077. I hope you come soon to enjoy what Cheam Lake has to offer. Please leave me a note in the comment box with your bird sightings and comments! 

GUIDELINES FOR SITE GUIDES

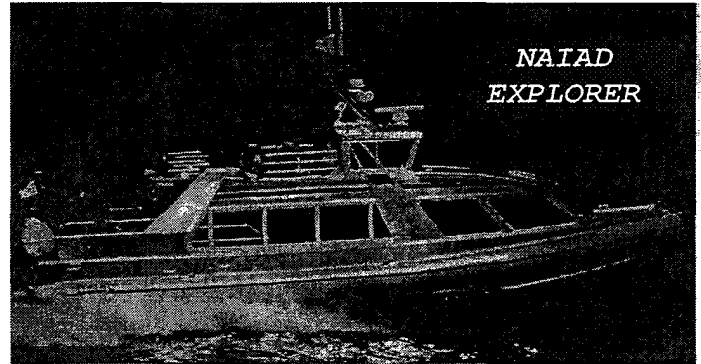
Site Guides should be about two to three pages in length. They should include a map (hand-drawn is fine) with distances to viewing areas clearly indicated from the starting point. Landmarks and terrain should be noted, along with the birds seen in season. Any unusual or special species should be given 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. 

**Tie a Chinstrap to Your Birding Hat - PELAGIC 2001
Don't Miss Out On This One!!!**

BCFO is embarking on a whole new approach to pelagic birding in British Columbia.

On September 8, 2001 we will welcome 35 of our members on board the *Naiad Explorer* at Port McNeill, B.C., on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island. Then we head northwest in a hurry ... at about 28 to 30 knots. That's fast! Twice as fast as the boats used in our Pelagic 2000 trip out of Ucluelet. In fact, *Naiad Explorer* is capable of speeds to 37 knots. So, even though we will start on inside waters, we should have no problem getting 40 or more nautical miles offshore, weather permitting.

Commissioned in April 1999, this sleek all-aluminum vessel is 17 metres long (55 feet), powered by twin 570 HP Caterpillar diesels, and is licensed to carry 48 passengers. We will keep the numbers to 35 so that everyone has plenty of elbowroom and ample opportunity to see all birds. This vessel was built in Vancouver, based on a design of *Naiad Inflatables* of New Zealand. Superficially, she looks like a rigid-hulled inflatable, but is constructed entirely of aluminum, including the buoyancy tubes. Built for whale watching, she is also used for crew transport and as an auxiliary Coast Guard and medivac vessel on northern Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland. Fifteen or more observers can watch from the open upper deck behind the wheelhouse and another 10 to 15 from the open lower deck aft. Those who want a break from the wind and sunshine can watch comfortably through the full windows in the forward observation lounge, where vinyl side windows roll up for open, unobstructed viewing and photography.



The boat will be ours for ten hours. Ken Morgan and I are working with the Captain on a route and destinations. We will seek-out a number of promising seamounts and submarine canyons north and west of northern Vancouver Island, including some of the following: Goose Island Banks, the shelfbreak southwest of Triangle Island, the Delwood Knolls, "banjo" seamount, and Cook Bank. Zones of upwelling in these areas have attracted interesting seabirds during Ken's Canadian Wildlife Service inventory programs, including Flesh-footed Shearwater and Short-tailed Albatross. Further offshore, Cook's and Mottled Petrels have been recorded. However, this will be the first organized pelagic trip to this area, so who knows what we may find. Rest assured, the more common pelagic species will be there.

Proud owners and operators of the *Naiad Explorer*, Bill and Donna MacKay, will be our hosts for the day. Bill will have the latest official marine charts on his on-board computer, as well as all of the latest electronic navigation, communication, PA and safety equipment. Donna will use her small galley space to serve coffee, a hearty soup and rolls. Nevertheless, it will be a long day, so you are advised to bring a lunch, and wear rubber-soles shoes and warm clothes - it will be about 10°C cooler on the water than on the land.

At this stage, I need a show of interest. The first 35 people to commit to this trip will be registered. Latecomers will be placed on a waiting list. The cost is yet to be finalized, but we hope to keep it below \$135 per person. Additional costs to you will include transportation to Port McNeill and back (a 6.5-hour drive from Victoria, 5 hours from Nanaimo), and accommodations for one and probably two nights - September 7 and 8. If we are weathered-out on September 8, we will hold over to September 9. Negotiations for a reasonable group rate at a local motel are underway.

To enter your name on the list, contact me, Bryan Gates, by:
phone: (250) 598-7789; email: bgates@pacificcoast.net
Or mail at: 3085 Uplands Road, Victoria, BC V8R 6B3

As with all BCFO field trips, **you will be required to sign a BCFO Liability Release form.** *Naiad Explorer* and her owners are fully insured for group travel. Bryan Gates, President

Rare Nests of Marbled Murrelets Discovered

Larry Pynn
c/o Vancouver Sun

Despite uncovering unusual nesting sites, scientists caution the find is an anomaly.-IP

The Canadian Wildlife Service and SFU have been studying the Marbled Murrelet since 1991. In 1999, Michelle Egin showed off a three-week-old chick, the first ever to be hatched in captivity.

After a decade of searching the province's coastal rainforests, scientists have discovered two rare nests of the Marbled Murrelet -- a threatened seabird previously thought to nest in B.C. only on old-growth conifers -- on a cliff ledge and in an alder tree. But scientists caution that the two nests on the Sunshine Coast are still anomalies in B.C. and must be compared against the 95 murrelet nests found to date on the mossy limbs of old-growth conifers. "They're two interesting nests," Fred Cooke, chair of Simon Fraser University's Centre of Wildlife Ecology, said Thursday in an interview. "But it's still a very small proportion of the total. They still clearly require old-growth trees. I wouldn't change that message." Ron McLaughlin, a consulting wildlife biologist to Weyerhaeuser who's been involved in the research from the start, said industry is optimistic that the nests show murrelets to be more adaptable than previously thought. But he agreed the forest industry cannot use the findings to support greater clear-cutting of old-growth stands in murrelet habitat. "Industry is guardedly optimistic. But no one holds out any great hopes that because we found one nest in an alder and one on the ground that that's where they're all nesting."

Despite the murrelet's threatened status, the B.C. government continues to allow clearcut logging of the bird's Sunshine Coast nesting grounds. Current policy does not allow for setting aside specific murrelet habitat except in areas already off-limits to logging -- either because the stands are currently uneconomic to harvest or because of environmental concerns such as steepness or protection of wintering deer habitat. "We're behind the eight ball in terms of getting these areas protected," said Dave Dunbar, an environment ministry biologist, who suspects the continuing studies will show more protection is needed. Researchers from the Canadian Wildlife Service and SFU have been studying the murrelet -- on the Sunshine Coast, and more recently at Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island -- since 1991.

The stubby little seabird is considered threatened because it uses declining old-growth forests as nesting areas. Researchers in helicopters last summer tracked an adult bird fitted with a transmitter to a nest on a mossy cliff edge in the Theodosia Valley. It was the first murrelet ground nest found south of Alaska. Researchers tracked another bird to a nest on a large mossy limb of an old alder tree located in a mixed-stand forest in Toba Inlet north of Desolation Sound. It is believed to be the first time in North America that a murrelet has been found nesting in a deciduous tree. The murrelet pair nesting on the cliff ledge successfully fledged a chick from an egg, while those in the alder tree did not, for unknown reasons.

McLaughlin said the two nests are consistent with the murrelet's logic in choosing old-growth coniferous forests -- the presence of a mossy platform sufficiently large to serve as nest. He noted Weyerhaeuser suspended a heli-logging operation last summer on the Sunshine Coast at Jim Brown Creek on the north side of Powell Lake after researchers found a nest beneath the flight path. The company returned to the site later in the year, after the murrelet nesting season was over. The helicopters used by researchers are smaller than the heavy-lift models used in logging. Researchers also try to keep a minimum 100-metre distance from nests, and do not make the sort of repeated all-day flights typical of heli-logging operations. To researchers' knowledge, no murrelet has abandoned its nest because of a research helicopter. "We're really conscious of the fact we're flying the biggest predator they've ever seen," graduate student Russell Bradley said. "We try to keep our distance."

Long-standing research on the Marbled Murrelet on the Sunshine Coast was expanded last year to Clayoquot Sound, where there is less logging. Cooke said the annual research budget exceeds \$800,000 -- 80 per cent from government, 20 per cent from the forest industry. Research will continue for at least two more years. McLaughlin said industry is

funding the research because it wants to ensure a scientific basis for any government restrictions on logging to protect murrelet nesting. "We're putting up big bucks. Our attitude is, let's let the birds tell us what habitat they need for nesting."

The research is also showing that 83 per cent of adult murrelets survive to the next year, with the males handling most of the feeding duties after the chick is hatched. Nesting can occur to 1,000 metres elevation, often on steep north-facing slopes in small patches. Whether that's the habitat they prefer or whether little else remains for them is still under study. The size of B.C.'s population of Marbled Murrelets is unknown, but an estimated 3,000 feed in the waters of Desolation Sound. The bird's size is somewhere between a robin and a pigeon. Its back feathers are brown with white speckles, becoming mottled on the chest -- the marble in the murrelet -- fading to white on the belly.

EDITORS' NOTE: Reprinted from the Vancouver Sun, 12 January 2000 with permission of the author and the Vancouver Sun. Thanks to Stephanie Hazlitt for alerting us to this article.

**British Columbia Field Ornithologists
Eleventh Annual Conference
June 22-24, 2001**

The 11th Annual Conference will be held at the **George Dawson Inn** in **Dawson Creek, B.C.** on the weekend of **June 22-24, 2001.**

Events:

- Reception on Friday evening
- Birding field trips on Saturday and Sunday mornings
- Annual general meeting and technical presentations on Saturday afternoon
- Banquet on Saturday evening

Transportation & Accommodation:

Transportation and accommodation are up to the individual(s) to arrange. Rooms at the George Dawson Inn are offered at the corporate rate depending on availability.

Registration:

The conference fees are:

Conference only (includes all events except banquet)	\$25
Banquet only	\$25
Conference and banquet	\$50
Non-member surcharge	\$25

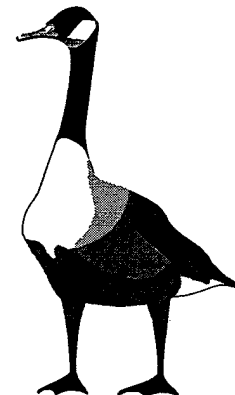
A registration form was provided as an insert in the December issue.

The deadline for registration is May 1, 2001.

For information contact: Hank VanderPol (250) 979-0363 email: rhvander@home.com
Ev Miyasaki (250) 656-8066 email: emiyasaki@home.com

GOOSE ON THE LOOSE

by Linda Timbs
1345 Corbin Place
Coquitlam, BC V3B 7E8



A warm day back in May of 2000 encouraged me to take an early morning walk to the local 'Safeway' grocery store to pick up a few items. The store is not far from my home, and 'Tootsie Toyota' wouldn't suffer from a 'garaged sulk' too badly!

As habit dictated, I did my usual sprint about La Farge Lake, binocs at the ready, checking for unusual birds. I saw nothing to lay an egg over, but there would be other days, and future challenges to cackle about.

Many of the readers may remember the massive, ongoing upheaval at the 'Safeway' store, located at the corner of Lougheed Highway and Westwood Street during the Spring and Summer months of 2000, during their renovations. Saws buzzing, wires snaking from ground to roof-top, fenced 'Hard Hat Only' areas, and mass confusion within the store, all contributed to utter frustration trying to locate various items.

On this particular day, mass chaos still abounded, as I sauntered across the parking lot at about 0930. All the other stores in the immediate area were open and parking was at a premium. I smiled at my wisdom of going-it carless, then gritted my teeth, as I prepared myself to enter the din of 'Safeway'.

Suddenly, I caught sight of a large feathered mass, engaged in a clumsy ballet, whilst tapping at a window, and making odd murmuring noises. It appeared to be a Canada Goose. On closer inspection, it was a goose displaying amorous goose behaviors toward his own reflection in the store front window of a very posh interior decoration shop. It was very obvious, that as far as this chap was concerned, it was love at first honk. I watched as he ran about the parking lot ripping out potted 'for sale' herbs and depositing them in neat piles, as an affectionate gesture toward his newly found love. His frustration grew, as she made no attempt to respond.

Concerned for the bird's safety, I spoke to the store Manager, who informed me they had called the S.P.C.A., which felt they could not be of assistance. The employees ended up closing the door, as the goose was running in and out, probably confused as to where his Sweetie was hiding. Car and truck drivers, as well as pedestrians, expressed concern for Sir Galahad, but none chose to take the initiative to get involved, or be of aid to myself.

Having decided his chosen beloved was either a dead-beat, or belonged to some sort of an elitist feather group, the goose decided to step into 'Safeway' with me trying to act in a casual fashion, as if this sort of thing was a daily event, all the while trying to devise a rescue plan as I ambled behind him, amid gesturing, snickering onlookers.

Appropriately, (in a rather bizzare fashion!), the goose had entered the store through the 'BYRD CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' ENTRANCE ONLY'. Once inside, stopping for a look around, he blasted his way over to the Deli Department, presumably in search of spinach and alfalfa sprout pate. Then, amid noisy and disgusted honks, he zoomed by the poultry area, landing atop a bin of fresh asparagus going for \$5.99/lb! Much to my horror, he made himself to home, and snapped his way through a goodly amount, while the Produce Manager looked on, aghast.

By this time, I had been asked by several shoppers if the goose was MY pet! I left one fellow thoroughly bewildered, as I tried to jokingly explain that he was my GUIDE GOOSE; ...as I had no sense of direction or smell, and unfortunately my guide got out of the wrong side of the nest this morning.

Our last stop was in front of the Pharmacy Department. A young pharmacy tech., eager to be of assistance, asked if he could help. "Oh yes", I said. "Sir Galahad requires a refill of his 'Viagra' prescription!"

Following the goose back out into the parking lot, which was much busier than before his store escapade, I decided I had to act. Isolating him in a garden plot, I took off my light weight nylon jacket, and threw it over his entire body, including his head, thus rendering him sightless. Quickly, but gently, I picked him up, my arms wrapped about his torso. I then carried him, choosing the quietest route I knew, toward La Farge Lake. We made quite a sight; me talking soothingly to him, while his orange legs dangled and swayed with my every step. I was stopped by a police car. The Officer questioned my intentions. Having learned that one NEVER jokes with a Police officer, I decided it wouldn't be in my best interest to ask him if he had ever had Roasted Goose, with orange pineapple stuffing. So, I gave him the straight goods, and prayed I'd have time to get to the lake before the Ambulance Crew showed up to deal with me.

It was a rare and thrilling feeling; hugging that warm, feathered body close to mine, his heart beating like a drummer on 'speed'. Not once did he struggle, honk, hiss or bite.

At the water's edge, having removed his covering, I gently examined him for any sign of injury to wings, feet and legs, neck, beak, and was relieved to see that he had not injured himself in his morning adventure.

Sir Galahad required coaxing to swim into the lake, but upon seeing a Mother Mallard and her chicks, very close to us, he decided to take up a position at the end of her line of babes. Mrs. Mallard quickly led her family to the far side of the lake, with Goosie taking up the rear, and I, having decided the crisis was over, tip-toed backward away from the lake, and up the embankment, intent on getting back to my chores. However, when I turned around, I was deafened by the loud angry protests of, (you guessed it), MY goose! He flew out of the water, made a quick bee-line to my side, and plopped himself down on the side-walk, and began to Goose Step, obviously determined to be my 'Guiding Blight'!

I was beginning to feel the way I imagined Conrad Lorenz must have felt, during his 'Imprinting' experiments. However, there was absolutely NO WAY, I was going to get into the water with this darned goose! So, feeling rather foolish, I began to sing softly, "COM, COM, COM", as Dr. Lorenz had many years ago with his goslings. It worked! I was able to lure my friend back to the water's edge. But would he stay?

The Good Lord was with me that day, as, just as I was about to turn to attempt an escape, a large flock of Canada Geese slid across the watery runway in their usual clumsy fashion, and settled on the far side of the lake. Galahad, turned, took one last long look at me, amid out of tune honking. I swear he was saying, "Hey Babe, it was fun while it lasted, but the party is over!" With that parting shot he flew off to join his other comrades. I watched for a few minutes, feeling both a sense of exhilaration and relief, then left the lake to finally get on with my day.

Now, whenever I see 'BYRD CONSTRUCTION' signs around the Lower Mainland, I chuckle to myself and think of Sir Galahad: the goose that stepped fearlessly and without safety gear, through the 'Construction Workers' Door Only', displaying all the characteristics of an experienced, (albeit, SILLY) site Manager.

British Columbia Nest Record Scheme (BCNRS)

The nesting season has arrived. We are again inviting naturalists to join us in recording information on breeding birds in BC.

The BCNRS is now the largest and most heavily used nest record scheme in North America. Over the past two decades it has been the major source of breeding information for the four-volume set of Birds of British Columbia and will continue to provide new information on the distribution and biology of birds locally and provincially.

If you want to participate in this worthwhile endeavour please contact the address below for nest cards and an instruction booklet. We can also send you a copy of our 2000 nesting season report.

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