

# BC BIRDING

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of membership in the society.  
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journal, *British Columbia Birds*.

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

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

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**EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS**

Another year has flown by. We hope that most of you got more accomplished in 2001 than we did! Still, it was an interesting year with a great AGM and extension up North and a 'swell' pelagic down South. We got lifers on both venues and if that pesky WHWO had stayed and made an appearance for us we would have had a really classy #500 (ABA) species. Well, maybe next year!

This December issue, like that in 2000, is a 28 pager. It took a bit of pummeling to get this issue to follow the 'rule of four' but with a few extra pictures and two pages provided by the editors we finally did get it to behave. Enjoy!

We were asked earlier this year for a list of BCFO published site guides so it made this issue. The President and a Director both got us reports for this issue, Martin and Ken have supplied their regular columns. The CBC listings made it. David sent a note with a question and Ron sent a sighting from his area. Bill the adventurer tells of travel and pelagic sightings. Linda, who entertained us with her goose story, has gone 'out on a limb' again as she discusses bird feeders. Russ kindly wrote up a report on the pelagic and has even supplied a watercolor. John encourages us all to head North for our holidays as there is so much to see, do and enjoy up there. Doug has followed a special birding route around Trail and gives us a guide to the bounties. Bob Morse has recently published 'A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington' which we review in this issue.

What we could not fit in this issue was a welcome to all of the new members who have joined since our June listing. You are most welcome and we hope you get much enjoyment, information and camaraderie out of your membership. We also could not include all of the e-mail changes we have received since the directory went out. Sorry! However, as most of you know ... 'those who were @home.com are now probably @shaw.ca'. Please do send any changes in your membership information to the membership secretary as early as possible so that we can keep as current as possible. That way your publications and notices will not go astray.

Next June the Annual General Conference will take place in Williams Lake. There are several notices, scattered through this issue, which will give you a flavor for the AGC and in the March issue we will provide you with all the information we have at that time.

Look for an insert in this issue. Ken needs your listing stats so that he can compile the **BIRD LISTERS' CORNER** for March. We know that several of you have done remarkably well this year. How about writing us a quick note so we can let members know the challenges, the help, and the thrills you had during 2001?

Remember that BCFO will need new editors next year. Consider it! Seasons Greetings. A&M

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Volunteers are infinitely better than appointees. Volunteers willingly put themselves into a position of dedication and trust. They donate their time and expertise. And they relax knowing that they are doing their part to keep others, or an organization such as BCFO, progressive and strong. Appointees, on the other hand, although they may do a good job, may do it somewhat begrudgingly and without pride.

BCFO runs entirely on the help of volunteers. The editors of our newsletter, the editor of our technical journal, the executive, the directors, and all those who assist in any way have all stepped forward. None is paid for services. Far from it! In fact, these people often incur travel and out-of-pocket expenses, their only rebate being a receipt for charitable donation that can be used as an income tax deduction.

We need volunteers...now...before your directors have to take action to appoint someone to do the essential tasks that keep this organization running. After 10 excellent years of editing and assembling **BC BIRDING**, Andy and Marilyn Buhler have decided to take a well-deserved break. Similarly, Dr. Martin McNicholl (who I am happy to say is recovering well from a serious illness) has indicated that this will be his final year as editor of **British Columbia Birds**. They must be replaced, as must at least two of our directors whose maximum terms of six years expire in 2002. The board would prefer that volunteers fill these positions. Feelers are out and some good candidates are on the horizon. But we may still need you, so please consider it. This is your chance to move BCFO in the direction that you feel it should take.

There can be no doubt that our Annual Conference at Dawson Creek, and the extension into the Fort Nelson region was a great success. Turnout was far above expectations, and those who participated truly learned and enjoyed. Although thanks have been extended to most of those who organized the events, Tony Greenfield is to be thanked for his excellent job with the initial planning the Fort Nelson extension. With a vote of confidence given during the Dawson Creek proceedings, your directors are already busy with plans for the 2002 conference and extension, this time at Williams Lake. Plan to be there.

And plan to be part of another pelagic birding trip out of Port MacNeill next September. This year's trip was somewhat affected by strong westerly winds. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the benefits of a fast boat and encountered many birds. Everyone I have spoken with agrees that the waters off the north coast of Vancouver Island need annual exploration, so we will be going back in 2002.

Bryan Gates, President



President and several of the Directors at the Dawson Creek AGM, 2001

## DIRECTORS' CORNER

### Directors' Corner -- or the Executive at work in September and October

This brief piece summarizes the deliberations and decisions reached at two recent Directors' meetings: September 2 in Langley, and October 28 in Sidney. Because the recorded minutes of the meetings comprise 14 pages, I have been very selective, and hopefully, not too biased.

The big items have been budget, the Bird Records Committee, and the 2002 Annual Conference. Our balance is healthy (\$29,560), but it does not reflect the costs of printing volumes 9 and 10 of *British Columbia Birds* (about \$3,000 each). Our treasurer has reminded us that under the statute which covers non-profit organizations, we should not be accumulating too large a balance. He has asked us to propose projects and events for us to support, keeping in mind the goals of BCFO.

At the AGM, the membership not only voted to retain the Birds Record Committee, but indicated a strong interest in reviving it as an active entity. Brian Scott was delegated to implement this decision, and has communicated with several former members. They support this initiative, but indicated that it must be done in co-operation with Wayne Campbell. (Subsequent to the October 28 Directors meeting, there were discussions with Wayne Campbell, which indicated support for a collaborative effort. These are being pursued.)

The 2002 Annual Conference will be held in Williams Lake, June 7-9. A preliminary notice of that meeting is printed in this newsletter. While BCFO is handling most of the details, the active interest and participation by the Williams Lake Field Naturalists has been most welcome. Most of the directors are involved in some aspect of the planning. More details will appear in the March newsletter.

In spite of meetings in both September and October, this is an unusual frequency and an attempt has been made to conduct more business by e-mail. For example, the next Directors' meeting (in Langley) will be February 4.

Other news:

While an orderly transition of editors of *British Columbia Birds* will take place over the next few years - Dr. Martin McNicholl will edit our journal through the 2002 issue, to be succeeded by Dr. John Sprague, there is as yet no identified successor to Andy and Marilyn Buhler, who have edited *BC BIRDING* for many years. Is there a frustrated editor out there waiting to be asked? If so, please give us a hint.

Ian Robertson, Director



## SOCIETY NEWS

## JOURNAL EDITOR'S REPORT 2000-2001

As noted in Jo Ann MacKenzie's report of the 2001 AGM (*BC BIRDING* 11(3):5-7, 2001), I was unexpectedly unable to attend the 2001 AGM, and since I was in a coma in Burnaby General Hospital was also unable to send a Journal Editor's report to that meeting. Thus, I am now providing one in print to the entire membership.

The mailing of *British Columbia Birds* 8, 1998 in late 1999 meant that for the first time we were working on the current year's volume, albeit only for one month. Unfortunately, no subsequent journal issues have been published, partly because of a shortage of material (especially of major papers) and partly because your journal editor experienced a series of more urgent obligations, combined with a series of unfortunate events. In addition to the field projects that pay my bills, my quarterly tasks of editing book reviews and preparing literature abstracts for *North American Bird Bander* and ongoing tasks for the Birders' Section of the Vancouver Natural History Society and the Langley Field Naturalists, our house was flooded in late October 2000, and the work required to remove everything from the basement (including a dozen full book shelves, five filing cabinets and several desks) and back again wiped out virtually all "spare" time in November. Moreover, my library remains in considerable disarray to this day, frequently resulting in long delays to simple editing tasks while I search for a misplaced book or journal issue. On top of that, much of my time in late August to October 2000 was occupied with providing editorial comments on draft chapters of the Vancouver Natural History Society's revised birdfinding guide and much of March and April 2001 with writing an introduction to a forthcoming book on the birds of Manitoba. Then, from early June until early July 2001, I spent exactly one month in Burnaby General Hospital, at first in a coma, and then recovering from it. Finally, the heap of mail that greeted my return from hospital contained the galley proofs of the Forster's Tern account for *Birds of North America*, a project that occupied much of my time for about a dozen years.

We aim to include in each issue one major paper, followed by four notes, six book reviews and a quiz bird feature. However, I am willing to deviate from those numbers if the feature paper is long enough, as was done with volume 8. Also, Alvaro Jaramillo, has not sent a quiz bird feature since 1994, and does not respond to enquiries as to whether or not he wishes to continue to write them. Although this feature is desirable, I have no desire to hold back an issue to wait for one. If anybody wishes to take on this role, please let me know.

Our most significant problem is a shortage of feature papers. Two are on hand, both requiring considerable work before being ready for publication. If the authors accept proposed editorial changes, these will appear in volumes 9 and 10 (1999 and 2000), but that still leaves us short for volume 11 (2001), and soon volume 12 (2002). At least three possibilities have been offered, and a few others mused about, but they have yet to be submitted.

At the time of writing, three shorter notes have been finalized, and are already in volume 9 (1999). These are on blackbirds by Tessa N. Campbell, a B.C.F.O. Bird Records Committee report by Gary S. Davidson and a note on Flammulated Owl by Kenneth G. Wright. One more note has been edited, and awaits author approval, while ten others await editing or are still under review. If all of these are published, they are sufficient to complete the notes sections of volumes 9, 10 and 11 and start volume 12, but I would prefer to have a few more on hand to have volume 12 well under way.

Book reviews on hand are sufficient to fill volume 9 (1999) and half-fill volume 10 (2000). Many thanks to reviewers Gary R. Davidson, Eva Durance, Stephen R. Johnson, myself, Chris Siddle, David Stirling, Bruce Whittington and Allen N. Wiseley for completing their assessments of these volumes, and to Alan Burger, John M. Cooper, Nancy Flood, Bryan Gates, Al Grass, Tony Greenfield, Larry Halverson, Sylvia Pincott, Michael Price, Peter Sherrington, Chris Siddle, Mary J. Taitt and Wayne C. Weber for either accepting review copies of books to review or offering to review books (or in one case a

CD) that they had acquired otherwise. I would appreciate receiving their reviews as soon as possible - all but one have been more than a year in coming. The reviews by Greenfield, Halverson and Weber are voluntary, and therefore not obligatory, but we owe the publishers reviews of all the rest, as we received review copies for them. The arrival of nine of these 13 outstanding reviews would bring us up to date. I have also sent out invitations to two potential reviewers to review two other books received.

Many thanks to those B.C.F.O. members and others who have helped the progress of the journal by submitting manuscripts, agreeing to undertake book reviews, reviewing manuscripts, and/or sending us copies of photographs. Ken Morgan and Mary Taitt have continued to serve on the Editorial Board, with each manuscript being reviewed by one of them. Each manuscript is also assessed by one other reviewer, each of whom will be acknowledged in the appropriate volume. Andy and Marilyn Buhler continue to serve as Production Editors, getting each issue into final format and through the printing process. We hope to keep them busy this winter by getting back on schedule!

-Martin K. McNicholl, Editor, *British Columbia Birds*



**British Columbia Field Ornithologists  
Twelfth Annual Conference  
June 22-24, 2002**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will be held at the **Bil-Nor Restaurant**  
in **Williams Lake, B.C.** on the weekend of **June 7,8,9, 2002.**

**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. A list of accommodations will be provided with the Conference registration form in the March issue of the newsletter.

**Registration:**

The Conference fees are:

Conference only (includes all events except banquet)	\$30
Banquet only	\$25
Conference and banquet	\$55

Attendance is limited to BCFO members and spouses/family members. You may join BCFO at the same time as you register for the Conference. Please refer to the front page of this issue for membership fees.

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**Registration forms will be provided in the March 2002 issue of BC BIRDING.**

## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

- Feb. 20-24 2002 **PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP 29<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**, Santa Barbara, California, including field trips to the Channel Islands. Contact: Harry Carter, U.S. Geological Survey, 6924 Tremont Road, Dixon, CA 95620; phone (707) 678-0682 or Sarah Fangman, Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary, 113 Harbor Way, Santa Barbara, CA 93109; phone (805) 884-1473.
- March 6-10 2002 **BIRDS OF TWO WORLDS: ADVANCES IN THE ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION OF TEMPERATE-TROPICAL MIGRATION SYSTEMS**, Washington, DC. Contact: Peter P. Marra, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC. 20008, USA; phone (202) 673-4908 or Russell S. Greenberg, 7500 Flower Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912, USA; phone (202) 673-4908.
- March 6-8 2002 **9<sup>th</sup> ALASKA BIRD CONFERENCE**, Fairbanks, Alaska. Contact: Nancy Dewitt, Alaska Bird Observatory, Box 80505, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706; phone (907) 451-7059.
- March 20-24 2002 **3<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS IN FLIGHT CONFERENCE: A WORKSHOP OF IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION**, Asilomar State Park Conference Center, Monterey, California. Contacts: Terry Rich, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709; phone (208) 373-4043 OR C. J. Ralph, Redwood Sciences Lab., USFS, 1700 Bayview Drive, Arcata, CA 95521; phone (707) 825-1127.
- April 11-14 2002 **83<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL MEETING, WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY WITH ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS**, Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers, Florida. Contact: Jerome A. Jackson, Whitacker Center, College of Arts and Sciences, Florida Gulf Coast University, 10501 FGCU Boulevard South, Ft. Myers, FL 33965-6565; phone: (941) 590-7157.
- June 7-9 2002 **12<sup>th</sup> Annual General Conference of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO)** will be held at Williams Lake, BC. Contacts: Hank VanderPol, (250) 979-0363, email: rhvander@home.com ; Sandra Kinsey, (250) 963-8381, email: aa068@pgfn.bc.ca ; or Ev Miyasaki, (250) 656-8066 email: emiyasaki@home.com. See additional information in this issue.
- June 13-16 2002 **NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY (NABS) 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY** celebration and annual general meeting, Penticton, BC. Hosted by the Southern Interior Bluebird Society. Complete registration and schedule available on the web site: [www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org). Contact: Terry and Greg Tellier. email: [t.tellier@shaw.ca](mailto:t.tellier@shaw.ca), phone (250) 493-4634
- Aug. 11-17 2002 **23<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, Beijing, China. Contact: Professor Xu Weishu, Secretary-General of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress, Beijing Natural History Museum, 1-1-302, Beijing Science and Technology Commission Apartment, Balizhuang, Haidian District, Beijing 100037, China; phone +86-10-6846-5605.
- Sept. 24-30 2002 **3<sup>rd</sup> NORTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, a joint meeting of **AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**, **COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**, **RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION** and **SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS**, New Orleans, Louisiana. Contacts: Dr. Thomas W. Sherry, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Organic Biology, 310 Dinwiddie Hall, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 70118; phone (504) 865-5191 or Dr. Kimberly G. Smith, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AK 72701; phone (501) 575-3251.



**BC BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS**

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

**Vaseaux Lake Banding** -Those of us who assisted Rhonda Milliken with banding operations during her 1994-1998 Vaseaux Lake Bird Observatory are pleased to learn that banding efforts there have resumed after no activity in 1999 and 2000. The Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance is responsible for the current initiative, with Todd Hunter directing the banding and counting activities of volunteers. -based on D. Cannings. 2001. *BirdWatch Canada* 17:11-12.

**Okanagan Chats** -Attendees at the Oliver AGM of B.C.F.O., who participated in the census of several "Okanagan specialties" organized by Dick Cannings, will be pleased to learn that efforts to locate Yellow-breasted Chats "this year" (presumably 2001) revealed 36 singing males and 11 nests, with six adult males, one female and 15 nestlings being banded. The increase from the recent maximum of 19 singing males per year resulted from the co-operation of the Osoyoos and Penticton First Nations in permitting access to their lands. An information booklet on the chats and fencing of riparian habitat are helping to keep the Okanagan population viable. -based on C. Bishop. 2001. *Birdwatch Canada* 17:14.

**Baillie Fund Grants** -B.C. projects awarded Baillie Fund grants in 2001 included Osprey nest monitoring in the West Kootenays by Nelson Naturalists and migration monitoring projects at Mackenzie and Vaseux Lake. -based on Anonymous. 2001. *Birdwatch Canada* 17:18.

**Philippa Sheppard Doubly Awarded** -The Society of Canadian Ornithology selected Philippa ("Pippa") Sheppard of B.C.'s Simon Fraser University as one of two winners of best student presentation awards during the August 2001 American Ornithologists' Union / Society of Canadian Ornithology meeting in Seattle, Washington. Philippa was also one of 87 students selected for Marcia Brady Tucker Awards to help defray expenses for transportation to the meeting -based on two news notes by Anonymous. 2001. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 144:2-3.

**B.C. Students Receive Travel Grants** -of 87 "outstanding" students awarded Marcia Brady Tucker Travel Awards to the 119<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union in Seattle 15-18 August 2001, four were from B.C., all from Simon Fraser University. In addition to Philippa Sheppard (mentioned above) for her studies on wintering Dunlin, the awards were to Matthew Evans for studies on brood-rearing habitat selection by Barrow's Goldeneye, Carina Gjerdrum on parental provisioning in Tufted Puffins and Katrina G. Salvante on hormonal control of egg production -based on Anonymous. 2001. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 144:2-3.

**Heronry Abandoned** -Salt Spring Island's McFadden Creek Heronry, the focus of much energy by the Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia, was abandoned during 2001 after being invaded by Bald Eagles. -based on Butler, R. W. 2001. *WBT (Wild Bird Trust) Wingspan* fall 2001:5.





## Port McNeill Pelagic

by Russ Tkachuk  
P.O. Box 132  
Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W0

On Saturday, 8 September 2001, 36 BCFO members gathered in Port McNeill to go on a pelagic trip. Our intention was to go around Triangle Island at N 50° 51.800', W 129°4.833', located approximately 56 km west of the northern tip of Vancouver Island. Triangle Island has the world's largest colony (approximately 1,000,000) of Cassin's Auklets, BC's largest colonies of Tufted Puffins and Common Murres, and is the breeding site of many other seabirds. Horned Puffin has been sighted in the area. Accordingly, the Triangle Island area is of much interest to birders, as it offers the chance of seeing many seabirds and the opportunity of seeing rare bird species.

The Naiad Explorer was chartered for this pelagic trip, as it has the speed and capability to cover the long distances to get to Triangle Island. The Naiad Explorer is different from the usual craft that BCFO has used in the past. It looks like a very large rubber inflatable Zodiac, but actually is a 55-ft rigid aluminum boat that can hold up to 48 people. Because of its hull design the Naiad Explorer can handle rough seas. Powered by twin 750 hp diesels, it cruises at approximately 30 knots and has a top speed of 40 knots. The Naiad Explorer controls ocean spray very well. In spite of the rough seas and high winds we encountered, this was the first time that the author was not soaked by ocean spray during a pelagic trip. The excellent spray control was due to the protruding tubular-fenders set around the upper and leading edges of the boat.

The trip started at approximately 0730 hrs. At first we encountered fog. Then the wind picked up and cleared the fog but caused the sea to become rougher. In several hours, at N51°10.187', W127°51.919', when we had only covered approximately 43% of the distance to Triangle Island, the swell became 10-15 ft high, and the wind had increased to 30 knots with gusts of 40 knots. Unfortunately, we could not continue on to Triangle Island under these conditions, so we turned around and headed back towards the east.

It was much smoother as the boat travelled with the wind and, when we noticed a large flock of birds to the north, we were able to travel to their location. The flock turned out to be a feeding frenzy of approximately 1000 Sooty Shearwaters, 400 Rhinoceros Auklets and some Common Murres. The swimming auklets looked like long chocolate-brown skeins scattered amongst the cloud of blackish-colored flying shearwaters - a great sight!

In the early afternoon, at N51°2.442', W127°50.337' we sighted a large Humpback Whale. It put up a spectacular show for us, as it breached the water for at least 10 times, coming down with dramatic water splashes. Several times, it cleared the water completely, did a back flip on coming down and smacked the water hard both with its long (15 ft?) flippers and tail flukes! The result was dramatic geysers shooting up for 20 ft, accompanied by a loud bangs that sounded like cannon shots. The pelagic trip was worthwhile just to see this acrobatic whale.

The day had been relatively quiet as far as sightings of rare birds were concerned, but this changed at 15:59 hrs, when a Leach's Storm-Petrel was sighted at N50°56.860', W127°49.517'. Everyone had a good look at this white-rumped dark bird. This was a life bird for many participants, and thus was watched intensely as it flew closely by on the port side, with that graceful, swooping and fluttering swallow-like action.

We returned to Port McNeill at 16:50 hrs. We had had a good day of birding and watching the Humpback Whale. There was general agreement that we were interested in trying this trip again next year. Perhaps then the weather will be kinder so we will reach Triangle Island and get to see all those Horned Puffins and albatross species?



Leach's Storm Petrel  
by - Russ Tkachuk

**Bird Species Seen<sup>1</sup> During the BCFO Pelagic Trip, September 2001.**

Pacific Loon	Harlequin Duck	Mew Gull
Common Loon	Surf Scoter	Herring Gull
Red-throated Loon	White-winged Scoter	Glaucous-winged Gull
Red-necked Grebe	Hooded Merganser	Black-legged Kittiwake
Northern Fulmar	Common Merganser	Common Murre
Buller's Shearwater	Bald Eagle	Pigeon Guillemot
Sooty Shearwater	Black Oystercatcher	Marbled Murrelet
Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel	Solitary Sandpiper	Cassin's Auklet
Leach's Storm-Petrel	Spotted Sandpiper	Rhinoceros Auklet
Brandt's Cormorant	Western Sandpiper	Belted Kingfisher
Double-crested Cormorant	Red-necked Sandpiper	Northwestern Crow
Pelagic Cormorant	Red Phalarope	Common Raven
Great Blue Heron	Pomarine Jaeger	Wilson's Warbler
American Wigeon	Bonaparte's Gull	Red Crossbill
Northern Pintail	Sabine's Gull	

**Mammal Species Seen During the BCFO Pelagic Trip, September 2001.**

Humpbacked Whale  
 Stellar's Sea lion  
 Dall's Porpoise  
 Harbor Porpoise  
 Pacific White-sided Porpoise

<sup>1</sup> Thanks go to Bryan Gates for arranging the pelagic trip and for helping the author in preparing the species lists, and to Bill and Tyson McKay for efficient and cheerful captaining and crewing duties.



**The Naiad Explorer**

## Listing of Published BCFO Site Guides

compiled by Andy and Marilyn Buhler

**Format is: Title. Year, Volume(Issue): Pages**

- Site Guide: Duck Lake, Creston, BC. 1991, 1(2): 10-12  
Site Guide: Blackie Spit, Surrey, BC. 1991, 1(2): 12-15  
Site Guide: McKinney Road, Oliver, BC. 1991, 1(3): 11-13
- Site Guide: Cowichan Bay and Duncan, BC. 1992, 1(4): 10-12  
Site Guide: Monck Provincial Park and Vicinity, BC. 1992, 1(4): 13-16  
Site Guide: Princeton "Outback", BC. Part 1. 1992, 2(1): 7-9  
Site Guide: Princeton "Outback", BC. Part 2. 1992, 2(2): 7-10  
Hawk Ridge, BC. 1992 2(3/4): 15-17  
Site Guide: Hecate Strait. 1992, 2(3/4): 17-19  
Site Guide: Island View Beach. 1992, 2(3/4): 20-23  
Site Guide: Lower Sunshine Coast. 1992, 2(3/4): 24-29
- Site Guide: Shoemaker Bay, Port Alberni, BC. 1993, 3(1): 14-16  
Site Guide: Vernon area hotspots. 1993, 3(2): 8-11  
Site Guide: Lighthouse Park, West Vancouver, BC. 1993, 3(3): 9-11  
Site Guide: Fort St. John area. 1993, 3(3): 16-17
- Site Guide: Merritt - Kamloops on Highway 5A. 1994, 4(1): 9-12  
Site Guide: Kelowna Area. 1994, 4(2): 11-13  
Site Guide: Martindale Valley, Southeast Vancouver Island. 1994, 4(3): 10-13  
Site Guide: Whistler / Pemberton area. 1994, 4(4): 12-15
- Site Guide: Chichester Bird Sanctuary, Kelowna, BC. 1995, 5(1): 12-13  
Notes on Birding the Grand Canyon of the Stikine and Telegraph Creek, BC. 1995, 5(3): 8-12  
Site Guide: Birdfinding Guide to the Dawson Creek area. 1995, 5(4): 8-10
- Site Guide: Birding in the Quesnel area. 1996, 6(1): 15-18  
Site Guide: Colony Farm Regional Park. 1996, 6(2): 5-10  
Site Guide: Douglas Lake Country in a wet year. 1996, 6(3): 14-16
- Birding the La Biche River, Yukon. 1997, 7(1): 7-9  
Birding the Liard River area, British Columbia. 1997, 7(1): 11-12  
Site Guide: Lakelse Lake. 1997, 7(2): 12-16  
Site Guide: Salt Creek Recreation Area. 1997, 7(3): 13-15
- Site Guide: Maplewood Flats Conservation Area. 1998, 8(1): 9-11  
Birding the Creston Valley. 1998, 8(1): 14-15  
A stroll around the knoll. 1998, 8(2): 15-16
- Site Guide: Squamish Estuary. 1999, 9(1): 16-19  
Site Guide: Esquimalt Lagoon, Victoria, BC. 1999, 9(3): 10-12
- Site Guide: Nanaimo River Estuary. 2000, 10(4): 22-25
- Site Guide: Cheam Lake Wetlands Park. 2001, 11(1): 14-15  
Site Guide: Blackie Spit and White Rock Waterfront. 2001, 11(2): 11-13  
Site Guide: Circle Tour of the Cranbrook-Kimberley Area. 2001, 11(2): 17-20  
Site Guide: Alaksen National Wildlife Area (CWS grounds). 2001, 11(4): 10-11  
Site Guide: Trail area. 2001, 11(4): 22-23

**Currently required site guides:**

Williams Lake area (e.g. Scout Island, out toward Anaheim region, etc.) before 2002 AGM.



**SITE GUIDE: Alaksen National Wildlife Area (CWS grounds)**

by Kyle H. Elliott  
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Adjacent to the Reifel refuge is the portion of Alaksen NWA operated by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). This area has many of the similar birds as Reifel, but is particularly good for migrating songbirds and certain winter passerines. These grounds are open 9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. weekdays (excluding national holidays) although entrance at other times is possible under certain circumstances, such as Christmas Bird Counts or when accompanied by a CWS employee. Upon entering the grounds, birders must make a request for a permit from the main desk. While Reifel is intended for human visitors, the CWS portion of the wildlife area provides a wild area for animals free from disturbance. For this reason it is illegal to harm or remove anything here, including blackberries.

**DIRECTIONS**

Travel out toward Reifel refuge, but rather than turning to the left at the Alaksen NWA gate on Robertson Road, continue ahead through the gate around a sharp bend to the left and park in the visitors' parking lot (gravel) on the left side. Continue down the road on foot, between two large rows of cedars, and enter the largest red building. The main office is upstairs, where a visitor's pass can be obtained.

**BIRD SPECIES**

Many of the birds expected at Reifel also occur here. Although they are not fed as at Reifel, the larger area and lack of exploration by birders makes this area very attractive for birding: anything is possible!

From the main office, walk back towards the visitors' parking lot. Scan below the cedar trees for owl pellets. Where there are many pellets Barn or Northern Saw-whet Owls can sometimes be seen overhead. These trees have also attracted nesting Hutton's Vireos and Rufous Hummingbird.

The back of Fuller's Slough is visible from both the employee's and visitor's parking lot, attracting many species of ducks, including Hooded Merganser and Ring-necked Duck.

From the visitor's parking lot, birders can either head down a gravel road towards the storage barn or back towards the entrance gate. The cultivated fields along either road attract Snow, Canada and, more rarely, Greater White-fronted Geese, as well as many dabbling ducks. A few shorebirds, such as Greater Yellowlegs, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper and Long-billed Dowitcher use these fields in migration; small numbers overwinter.

A dyked gravel road runs parallel to the entrance road, on the left side when walking from the visitors' parking lot. The brambles along the entrance road attract Cedar Waxwing in summer and sparrows, such as Golden-crowned, White-crowned, Song and Fox, in winter. Both Harris's Sparrow and Brambling have been seen here. The gravel road, meanwhile, is excellent for migrants. Waves of Wilson's, Yellow-rumped, Yellow and Macgillivray's Warblers, Western Tanager and Black-headed Grosbeak move through in spring. In winter, this is a good area for Downy Woodpecker, Bushtit, the sparrows mentioned above and Pine Siskin. After about 1 km., the road leaves the Alaksen NWA. The large wooded area here is good for Varied Thrush, Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglet in winter. A Great Horned Owl usually nests in the vicinity, and can often be seen throughout the year. Scan the Fraser River for Red-throated Loons in the channel and Black-bellied Plovers on logs and islets.

The gravel road that leads in the opposite direction from the visitors' parking lot, towards the storage barn, can also be walked. It leads immediately over a slough that harbours many ducks, especially Common Mergansers. After the slough you can either proceed through the gate to the storage barn, or to the right and around the dyke. Either route

ends you up at the same place. The long grass around the barn has produced Northern Mockingbird and Eastern Phoebe in summer while a pair of Cooper's Hawk has nested in the large deciduous trees that line the road after the barn. The compost pile opposite the barn can have Varied Thrush, rare for the island, in winter. Barn Owls nest in the storage barn, and can be seen year-round roosting in the trees around the barn. Listen for mobbing songbirds.

From here, the rest of the walk is on the dyke. In spring, the trees throughout Alaksen, but especially those adjacent to the river, can be alive with migrants including Pacific-slope and Hammond's Flycatchers, Warbling, Cassin's and Red-eyed Vireo, Wilson's, Yellow-rumped, Yellow and MacGillivray's Warblers, Black-headed Grosbeak and Western Tanager. Mountain Bluebird and Townsend's Solitaire have been seen.

Summer can be slow, possibly because forests here are mostly fragmented, allowing easy access for the many Brown-headed Cowbirds. However, all five common swallows and Rufous Hummingbirds nest on Westham Island.

In winter, look for Golden-crowned, White-crowned, Fox, Song, Lincoln's, Swamp (rare, look in foreshore marshes) and White-throated (fall) Sparrows. Mixed species flocks may have wintering Yellow-rumped or Orange-crowned Warblers in addition to Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, both kinglets and Bushtit. Check fir branches overhanging the dyke for Northern Saw-whet Owl.

The dyke leads for 1-2 km. downstream before veering off to the left. At this point, scan the Fraser River for Red-throated, Common (uncommon) and Pacific (April-May) Loon, Western, Red-necked and Horned Grebe, Snow Goose (scan marshes and listen), Double-crested, Pelagic and Brandt's (rare) Cormorant on pilings, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Long-billed Dowitcher, Dunlin and Black-bellied Plover (shorebirds are on islets or logs in river). The marshes have Common Yellowthroat in summer and Marsh Wren year-round. Swamp Sparrow is very rare.

The last stretch of the dyke is excellent for raptors, including Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon and Short-eared Owl. Both Great Horned and Barred Owl have nested in the woodlot at the end of the road.

At the end of the road, a footpath leads back, via another, conifer-strewn, dyke. This path is the best area for Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper and Red-breasted Nuthatch. The slough on the left is excellent for Virginia Rail - over 14 have been heard at once on Christmas Bird Counts. American Bittern nests in the copse in the middle. Soras also occur in summer. Please avoid harassing these birds with tapes or by entering the slough. The slough on the opposite side is a good area for Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal. The only way back is along the entrance road.



### **The Rites of Spring and Some Questions**

by David Stirling  
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While seeking early spring flowers on the slopes of Mt. Tolmie I noticed a group of twelve Northwestern Crows busily pecking in a patch of newly laid bark on the side of one of the macadamized paths. They were working a strip of pulverized bark about four meters long and a half meter wide. "They must have found some good pickin's", I thought. I moved closer. As one they all looked up. A row of a dozen crows with false mustaches. There was Charley Chaplin, Adolph Hitler and Colonel Blimp. A comical sight. They were gathering nesting material, short pieces of fibrous Redcedar bark. It is not unusual to see birds gathering nesting stuff but a row of a dozen crows, beaks stuffed with bark fibres? Is aromatic Redcedar bark a preferred nesting material? Is it a natural parasite repellent?



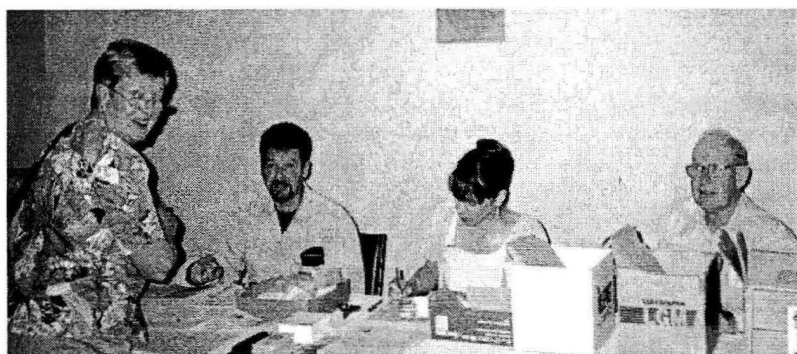
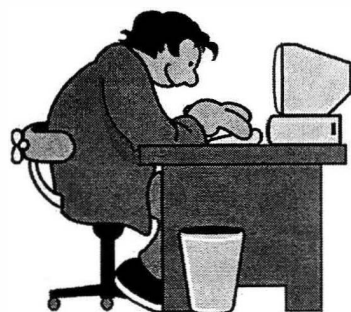
# Season's Greetings to all

*from*

*the newsletter editors,  
the journal editor,  
the BCFO President*

*and*

*the Directors.*



Jo Ann, Brian, Meredith, Ken - AGM registration desk



Swapping bird stories, AGM 2001



Marie & Sheila - extension tour desk



Some of the 'Kelowna Krew', AGM 2001

## A Penthouse Feeder, and a Savvy Squirrel

by Linda Timbs  
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*In Nature there are neither rewards nor punishment...there are consequences.*  
FROM: "Some Reasons Why" / by Robert Greene Ingersol, (1833-1899)

The Summer of 2001 is fast drawing to a close. Time has fluttered by, as quickly as our avian friends now busy themselves gorging, and packing their bags for a long flight south. Another season passes, and in honour of same, I have a tale to share. It is a story of despair and delight, one which will remind us all of the awesome power of Mother Nature -- her fickle character, and her amazing ability to make us both laugh and cry.

Perhaps readers, you will recall early Spring warnings of black bear waking early and looking for any convenient 'fast-food outlet'. 'Timbfield Manor', (our pet name for home and garden), took a major hit, despite our following the 'Bear Beware' measures. Bad Bear Bert's cousin had a temper tantrum finding our outdoor larder empty, and took it out on any and all feeder structures he could find. He was eventually captured, and transferred to a more suited job-site. Last we heard, he was slinging hamburgers, at the Manning Park Lodge. Boo-Boo, a motherless cub hung around for a couple of weeks, becoming ever more frail with the passage of time. She was eventually captured, and humanely sent to Bear Heaven.

Gordon, my husband, thoroughly frustrated with years of ursine carnage, decided that he was going to fashion the one and only TRULY BEAR PROOF feeding station in the entire universe. For two weeks he collected advice from various authorities on the subject - (Conservation Management, Proprietors of local Bird Stores, and the like), and all were extremely helpful to him, as he bared his soul about our dilemma. The next two weeks were spent with Gordon, tossing and turning in bed, appearing pre-occupied, looking through me when I spoke, ...and finally, cloistering himself away in his office "Working, and needing to be left alone to think!" He emerged, smiling, with THE BLUE PRINTS in hand.

The entire month of June was spent at 'Revy's', 'Home Depot', 'Smith's Sheet Metal', and 'Marcel's Welding', purchasing about \$300.00 worth of needed supplies. Materials included a 15-foot 3-inch wide cast iron pipe, with hooks welded onto it (delivered to our home, it was that heavy!), six bags of concrete, pulleys, ropes, various nuts, hooks, bolts, snaps, and the sheet metal required for the roof. For an entire month, I lost my husband to a basement full of enough equipment to rebuild the entire house!

The big day finally arrived! We had rounded up a few dubious neighbours to help hoist the massive structure into a four foot deep hole, lined with a heavy duty garbage pail. The 'station' was now outfitted with roof, and rope pulley-system. Ropes were tied to trees and fences to secure the pole in a level position. Then Gordon and I loaded rock filled cement into the hole up to ground level. We surrounded same with decorative rock to encourage garter snakes to continue to visit us (they have made a come-back after a five year absence from our yard.)

The next step was my adventurous climb 40 feet above ground level to cut back a few hanging branches of our hemlock trees in order to discourage Douglas and Eastern squirrels from jumping onto the roof and accessing the feeders. We still do provide feed for the squirrels and ground feeding birds at specially designed feeders strategically placed in the yard.

While all of this activity was going on many curious birds and squirrels came by for a look-see, trying to decipher the meaning of our inane behaviour. Within a week, each of the four lines on the station had different feeders suspended from them -- offering a choice of nyger seed, black sunflower seed, suet cake, and a mixture of peanut, and raw sunflower seed bits. We were rewarded for our efforts by the visitations of a more varied, and certainly a larger, number of birds than we had ever seen in all our years of feeding. A couple of bear came by, snorted, and left! Believe me, WE WERE FEELING VERY SMUG!!

Gordon's design allows for easy cleaning and filling. Seed stays dry, as it is protected under the canopy of the sheet metal roof. Rejected, and fallen seed is cleaned up by the ground feeders and the Douglas squirrels (who, showed no interest in trying to access the penthouse feeders!)

AND THEN, ...the unthinkable happened!

Ebony showed up! 'EBONY' - Super Eastern Squirrel, educated early in life at 'Montesquirrelly School' for gifted Tree Mammals, moved on to obtain a Phd. in Engineering at 'S.F.U' (Squirrels in Flight University). In her spare time she volunteers for the paratroopers. She showed up and made it clear she wanted a piece of the action at Tower Central. In her obviously pregnant state, this squirrel jumped at least 12 feet from some dangling hemlock branches onto the Station's roof, and bounced off dropping another 13 feet into the ivied tree stump below. OUCH!! She appeared to be unharmed, but quite angry and embarrassed, and decided she needed to take time to regroup!

After reviewing manuals on the engineering of flight and mechanical design, she spend a few days examining the problem from different view points in our yard -- the fence, the trees, the fountain. On her second jump she was successful. There she was, hanging upside down, her little tootsies firmly gripping the top of a dangling feeder, her snout buried in the feeder's outlet.

Not to be outdone by 12 ounces of fluff with a rudder tail, I went back up the tree, and cut back branches 30 feet above the roof level of the station, or at least 50 feet above ground level. It was about this time, I recognized I was losing whatever mind I had left. I actually believed I heard EBONY snickering, as she watched my antics from another tree. Within a week, she was back, now post-natal. It quickly became apparent to us that she had done further research. She decided that without a parachute, she would be foolish to do anymore 'Hemlock Bungie Jumping.'

Her new approach was a bottom-up system. I watched totally awe struck, as she shimmed her body up the main pole to the level of the welded hooks, backed herself against the pole, hung onto the hooks with her toes, and chewed her way through the rope until...WHAM...a feeder hit the ground, and it was feast time at Timbfield Manor!

The next day we were at 'Revy's', (again), buying reinforced, plastic covered steel wire, which we used to replace all of the existing rope. Gordon attached a four way cut baffle made from light, easily bent sheet metal, to the main pole using a metal clamp.

EBONY, forever tenacious, made four more attempts from ground up, but each time she slid off the low placed baffle. She now eats from the Squirrel Feeders! Ebony's off-spring, at least three that we know of, have been in our yard frequently, each one eyeing the 'Great Tower in the Sky'. My husband and I are secretly worried that they are learning to sky dive, or hang glide, at a private school. If you hear a great deal of yelling, involving unprintable language wafting its way from Canyon Springs, you will know our nightmare has materialized.

Meanwhile, a close friend, who has a lot of experience with 'roughing it' off the beaten path, asked us a couple of days ago, "Have you ever tasted squirrel stew?" Hmmm, -- now there's a thought.....!

P.S. If any reader is crazy enough to want to undertake this project, I would be happy to send along Gordon's blueprints, with written instructions on how to fit all the bits together.

**EDITORS' NOTE:** This article, sent to us by Linda Timbs, appeared earlier in the year in the Burke Mountain Naturalists' newsletter. Reprinted here, with slight editing, with permission from the author.





## The Hypothetical Bird

by Bill Heybroek  
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This is a story that goes back a few years, in fact back to the summer of 1970 when four of us in two tiny boats undertook a trip that to many seemed like pure insanity. They may well have been correct for what we wanted to do was to circumnavigate the Queen Charlotte Islands. Starting from, and ending in, Comox on the east coast of Vancouver Island. The distance would be around 2000 kilometres altogether, much of it on open ocean and portions of it out of sight of land altogether.

We had started on June 28, myself and a partner in a sixteen foot Boston Whaler with a 65 horse outboard for power. The other pair were in the 'big' boat which was a seventeen foot inboard-outboard powered runabout. By July 3 we had made it to Henslung Cove on Langara Island, then a remote fish camp for commercial trawlers, today a busy luxury sport fishing destination that costs multi-bucks to stay at. We had made it safely to Prince Rupert in sea conditions ranging from calm (rarely) to very rough open ocean with high seas (often). Attempting to cross over the northern portion of Hecate Strait to the Charlottes we were caught in a violent southeaster and had to crawl in to Qlawdzeet Anchorage on Stephens Island where we had a two day gale wait. Finally we made it across to Masset passing on the way Butterworth Rock where flocks of gulls, petrels and other seabirds abounded. In mid-strait the waves were huge, possibly up to fourteen feet in height, which slowed us considerably. However, we made it safely across in good order and the following day saw us navigating along the northern shoreline of Graham Island to Haslung Cove. Again many seabirds.

We left Langara at five A.M. on the fourth hoping to make it down to Skidegate Inlet by afternoon. The first portion of our adventure on the Charlotte's west coast was about to begin.

Out of Parry Passage we turned southwards on glassy seas with a big swell, the cloud deck almost to the waterline and a slight drizzle welcoming us to the west coast. The 'Misty Isles' are well named. As we approached Fredrick Island the south-east wind started up, a bad sign. The wind gradually increased and the seas got rougher and rougher as we crept along. The last ten kilometres to Hippa Island took us nearly an hour and by then we knew that we had finished for that day. Looking for a safe anchorage we poked into Nesto Inlet where we finally anchored at the edge of a large kelp bed. During the rest of the afternoon and that night the wind howled around the shores of Nesto causing us much anxiety as we feared that our anchors would not hold and that we would be blown on to the rocks. However, they did hold and by morning the wind had died. It had been a scary episode.

Coming out of Hippa Passage after leaving Nesto Inlet behind we were relieved to see that the wind on the open ocean had switched to the north-west, usually a good weather omen on our west coast.

Ahead we could see a series of bold headlands sweeping into the sea with moderate surf breaking on the countless rocks and reefs in this area. It is a spectacular coastline to see but requires careful navigation by the marine charts to avoid some of the hazards. We passed Kunakun Point, then Kindakun Point and finally Hunter Point before the coastline opened up into the expanse of Cartwright Sound with Marble Island ahead. Around here we began to notice seabirds. First just a few then more and more as we moved southwards. There were guillemots, Ancient and Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets along with a few Tufted Puffins.

A few kilometres further on we ran into hundreds and hundreds of Sooty Shearwaters and even came close to three Black-footed Albatross which were new to me and a surprising find this close to land. Further on yet the Tufted Puffins grew increasingly noticeable plus we also saw a Northern Fulmar and several Fork-tailed and Leach's Petrels. This was a pelagic birder's paradise indeed. Fortunately my buddy was running the boat at this point for I

just happened to look towards the distant shoreline when I spotted a chunky seabird flying rapidly toward us. It was black and white and at first I thought it was a murre but as it passed overhead I noticed the huge coloured beak. It was a Horned Puffin. I was surprised because before the trip I had boned up on what seabirds we might encounter. Using the current Birds of Canada (Godfrey 1966) as my reference I had noticed that the Horned Puffin was listed as hypothetical in occurrence so this was a wonderful sighting for me. As puffins often do, this particular bird made a wide arc and flew back over us giving us a clear view of it and leaving us with no doubt in our minds of what it was. Although we saw lots of other Tufted Puffins and other birds, the sighting of the Horned Puffin was a solitary event. We never saw another one.

Leaving the vast congregation of seabirds behind we continued our journey ending up back home in Comox Harbor seven days later after some exciting boating including a seven hour crossing of Hecate Strait at midpoint in very big seas. A fabulous adventure.

To finish off this little narrative I should add that a dozen years after the Queen Charlotte Island trip I happened to be in the same boat with the same partner when I saw yet another Horned Puffin. This one we spotted as we rounded Cape Cook near Solander Island off the northwest coast of Vancouver Island. As was the case with the first sighting this was a lone bird briefly seen amongst many other Tufted Puffins in that vicinity. Although these curious birds are now known to be regular but uncommon visitors to the outer coast and have even been known to breed it still gives me a 'kick' to think that I found a 'hypothetical' bird a long time ago.



### Notice

#### **BCFO Annual Conference June 7-9 2002 - Williams Lake**

Next year's annual conference will be held in Williams Lake, the first for BCFO in the Cariboo. The location, like much of British Columbia, is on or near the boundaries of a variety of different biogeoclimatic zones, each with their own distinctive avifauna. While Williams Lake itself is within the Interior Douglas-fir zone, the radius of our field trips will include the bunchgrass, sub-boreal pine spruce, and sub-boreal spruce zones. Proposed extensions will expand this coverage. Beyond this macro perspective, the rolling topography has resulted in an area of highly productive and numerous wetlands, and the forest ecology has produced considerable opportunities for cavity dwelling wildlife.

What about the birds? A wide array of waterfowl, marsh birds, songbirds, woodpeckers, and raptors should contribute to a lengthy bird list. The Williams Lake bird checklist includes the following nesting and frequently occurring early summer species: White Pelican, Sprague's Pipit, and Flammulated Owl.

The venue will be the Bil-Nor Restaurant (site of this year's Federation of B.C. Naturalists' AGM). There are nearby motels, which will be listed in the March newsletter along with a preliminary conference syllabus and speakers. Plans for field trips and an extension are already in progress. The registration fee will be \$30 and the banquet fee \$25. We hope to see as many of you as possible in Williams Lake, June 2002.

Ian Robertson  
Director

## Come and Camp on the Marge of Lake Lebarge ...

by John B. Sprague  
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What, another article about the Yukon, Dempster highway and Northwest Territories? Yes, to convince you to go! It is a naturalist's dream, beautiful, fascinating, and FUN! Russ Tkachuk gave great guidance in his article (*BC BIRDING* 9(3):18-19, 1999), and Alan MacLeod followed with more advice and a bird list (*BC BIRDING* 11(3):17-20, 2001).

### Planning

- Memorize the articles by Russ and Alan. Get the books they recommend, and also consider Grünberg (1994)<sup>1</sup>, and *The Milepost*<sup>2</sup> (\$35, with km-by-km guidance from northern B.C.). If you like, borrow my copies. Write or search the web for Yukon and NWT tourist bureaus.
- Russ and Alan were right, leave southern B.C. in mid-May to catch most of the birds. To reach Inuvik, plan a return trip on the Dempster sometime during May 25 to June 15. In past years, the Mackenzie River ferry has started from May 24 to June 6, average June 1, with the Peel ferry a day earlier. (The NWT tourist office in Dawson City is best for late-breaking news on ferries.) Until mid-June, you should have few biting flies. Try to arrange enough time. We enjoyed dawdling for 5+ weeks, but you could have fun in half that. In all, we covered 9,700 km; the Dempster alone is 740 km one way.
- For a flexible schedule, be prepared to camp. Motels are cheaper in May, so you might treat yourself going north, then camp when returning. In Dawson City, nice cabins were \$79 in late May 2000, but \$109 in June (and sold out). Inuvik hotels were \$164! (Chuk Park is a nice campsite in south Inuvik, with another rather cramped one in town.)
- Be a tourist as well as a birder. See the fascinating historical spots and museums in the Yukon. You MUST see the Frantic Follies in Whitehorse. Dawson City is a colourful, feisty town, so look around. See the horrible destruction from placer mining. Stop and get the feel of towns like Fort McPherson. Explore Inuvik, see the indoor gardens, learn about utilidors, and look over the tundra-buggies down by the docks.
- There is an excellent mechanic (Bob) at Carmacks. Also repairs at Eagle Plains and in the bigger towns. Whitehorse is a busy modern city with everything you could want.

### Preparation

- Take field guides to mammals and northern flowers. You might see everything from short-tailed weasel to wolves and grizzly. We saw 27 species of mammals. In May, black bears in northern B.C. and Yukon come to the roadsides and rejoice in the luscious dandelions and early grass. The roads have spectacular banks of flowers starting in late May.
- Take some warm clothes. We wore sweaters and wool hats to bed in May, in a northern B.C. camp. Lakes will have some ice. In June, it could also be hot during the day.
- Fill your gas tank at each opportunity in the north. The next station might be closed early or sold out. Take a small can of gas, just in case. You need *good* tires for the Dempster, and two spares on wheels would reduce anxiety. We met a traveller who, in one day, had four flats on his trailer and two on the truck -- severe logistical grief and waste of time! (We only had two flats during the trip.)
- Make certain the car ventilation system is in good shape. If the Dempster is dry, there will be incredible clouds of dust. To reduce fall-out inside the car, close the windows and pressurize the car by blowing in air from outside. When you meet a truck the road disappears, so slow down and turn off your ventilation until it clears. We could have used air conditioning on several 25° days when the sun heated the closed car. If it rains, the Dempster will be mud and your car will look like a chocolate bar.

Routes

- Try B.C.'s Cassiar highway. Some parts are lonely and rough but interesting, with lots of bears. The Alaska highway from Dawson Creek through the Yukon is so well-paved that it can be dull driving despite the scenery. By June, it has convoys of giant motorhomes towing SUVs. Forget Alaska, the Yukon and Dempster will be more fun and cheaper.
- Drive the "top of the world" highway west from Dawson, a great trip if you are waiting for ferries. The Yukon part is breath-taking, then corner through Alaska and turn south on the Haines highway, along Kluane's mountains. Continue to Chilkat Pass, only 1065 metres high but alpine tundra. On June 1 there was knee-deep snow, lots of goofy Rock Ptarmigan, Blue Grouse with weird calls, and others. These go on your B.C. list!
- You could continue south to Haines, Alaska, an honest scenic town. From there it is a short ferry ride to Skagway. Bypass its souvenir shops (for the passengers of cruise ships), then drive the White Pass, one of the famous gold rush routes to the Yukon.
- In Inuvik, ask at the tour company beside the igloo church, about day-trips to Tuktoyaktuk. It costs \$259 because of the one-hour flight, but is a genuine introduction to this vibrant Inuvialuit village on the arctic coast. If you can afford it, stay overnight in Tuk to get more birding time. I shall never forget the lifer Hoary Redpolls almost at our feet, and the Lapland Longspur singing as it fluttered down in display and nearly landed on our shoulders. There are also trips from Inuvik to Herschel Island, depending upon weather, to view muskoxen and exotic birds.

Camping

- Government campsites are good. In the Yukon, buy tickets ahead at a tourist outlet. Or camp anywhere. You might find a solid turnoff, but our most memorable lonely sites were just off the road, once on a wide shoulder. Do not drive onto tundra because the damage will last for decades and besides, you will get stuck. Camp on a hill, and wake occasionally to see the sun go around the horizon. Carry water because isolated sites do not supply it -- there are no wells in permafrost and river water will be silty. We camped in a minivan with a simple bed -- get screened windows.
- Try the campsite "on the marge of Lake Lebarge" just north of Whitehorse. Sam McGee was cremated here, in Robert Service's famous poem. On the way in, notice Mom's Bakery, and stop in the morning for a muffin and a chat with Tracie, the local bird expert.

Birding

- Of course you will check out little lakes and hot spots as you encounter them on your trip. In Whitehorse, go up Haeckel Hill and try nearby McIntyre River valley. For Swan Lake (recommended) phone Helmut Grünberg in Whitehorse for detailed directions.
- On the Dempster, follow advice from the books, Russ, and Alan. They list great places in the Ogilvie Mountains. Climb for White-tailed Ptarmigan, but I think they all moved to Baffin Island; probably Russ saw the last ones in 1999. You can also seek white-tails at Carcross (south of Whitehorse) at the mountain-top on the old mining road (ask locally). The elusive bird will stay hidden but it is a thrilling drive and hike.
- From km 85 to 100 on the Dempster, stop from time to time by brushy tundra and listen for Smith's Longspur singing on territory. Stop at exactly km 158.0 and look west, to see if the Gyrfalcons have a nest again on the face of the castle-shaped crag.
- Check any distant white objects on the Dempster. Eventually you will find those most graceful flyers, Long-tailed Jaegers. They are naive and approachable, and might be walking around the tundra looking puzzled, as if they misplaced something.

So make up your mind to go! And have fun!



<sup>1</sup>Grünberg, Helmut 1994. Birds of Swan Lake, Yukon. Keyline Graphic Design, Whitehorse.

<sup>2</sup>The Milepost 2001. Morris Communications Corp., Augusta, Georgia. [1-800-726-4707]

## BIRD-LISTERS' CORNER

by Ken Morgan  
c/o the Institute of Ocean Sciences  
P.O. Box 6000  
Sidney, BC V8L 4B2

Hello all bird-listers - this is your annual reminder to start looking for all those misplaced checklists, note-books, scraps of paper, etc., in order to tally up your regional bird lists. Hopefully events that took place in the past year, such as the Nocturnal Owl Surveys or the Barkley Canyon Pelagic Trip, served to boost many of your life-lists.

In order to help those who are new to this column, the following briefly summarises the "rules". I am requesting listers to send me (using the accompanying form) the number of species that they have seen in each of the listing areas, throughout their life up to the end of 2001 (not just within the past year). The column labelled "**Accepted Total (if different from what is listed)**" is for contributors to provide me with the most up-to-date total for an area. If you notice that the number I have listed after each area is wrong, please let me know the correct total. The totals that I present here are those that were printed in *BC BIRDING* (March 2001, Vol. 11, #1).

The following lists the areas that are to be considered for the calendar year 2001. Once again, I have bowed to membership pressures and have added one more category - **World Total** - that should separate hardcore listers from the weekend tickers. As with previous years, I will only accept lists that reach me by the end of January (2002) - please send me (by post or email) your totals as soon after the January 1<sup>st</sup> as possible. Phone-in totals will NOT be accepted.

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

Listing Areas

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) ABA area (918) <sup>1</sup>                       | 10) Princeton area (251) <sup>9</sup>                 |
| 2) Canada (634) <sup>2</sup>                         | 11) Kamloops Checklist area (295) <sup>10</sup>       |
| 3) British Columbia (484) <sup>3</sup>               | 12) Sunshine Coast Checklist area (282) <sup>11</sup> |
| 4) Alberta (395) <sup>4</sup>                        | 13) West Kootenay Checklist area (285) <sup>12</sup>  |
| 5) Vancouver Island (387)                            | 14) Prince George Checklist area (274) <sup>13</sup>  |
| 6) Queen Charlotte Islands (250) <sup>5</sup>        | 15) Creston Valley Checklist area (265) <sup>14</sup> |
| 7) Vancouver Checklist area (406) <sup>6</sup>       | 16) Washington State (454) <sup>15</sup>              |
| 8) Victoria Checklist area (363) <sup>7</sup>        | 17) North Pacific Pelagic Waters                      |
| 9) Okanagan Valley Checklist area (319) <sup>8</sup> | 18) World Total (9808) <sup>16</sup>                  |

<sup>1</sup> = ABA area species total (2000) provided by B. Scott.

<sup>2</sup> = Canada species total (2001) from Birders Journal (list of Canadian birds).

<sup>3</sup> = BC species total (1999) from Wayne Campbell's Pocket Checklist of Birds.

<sup>4</sup> = Alberta species total (2000) from ABA Big Day and List reports.

<sup>5</sup> = Queen Charlotte Island species total (1996) provided by P. Hamel.

<sup>6</sup> = Vancouver Checklist area species total (2000) provided by M. McNicholl.

<sup>7</sup> = Victoria Checklist area species total (2000) provided by B. Gates.

<sup>8</sup> = Okanagan Valley Checklist area species total (1999) provided by G. Wilson.

<sup>9</sup> = Princeton area species total (1999) provided by J. Hertzog.

<sup>10</sup> = Kamloops Checklist area species from checklist by R. Howie (1994).

<sup>11</sup> = Sunshine Coast species total (2000) provided by T. Greenfield.

<sup>12</sup> = West Kootenay area species total based on checklist by G. Davidson (1998).

<sup>13</sup> = Prince George Checklist area species total (2000) provided by C. Antoniazzi.

<sup>14</sup> = Creston Valley Checklist area species total based on checklist by L. Van Damme ('96).

<sup>15</sup> = Washington State species total (1999) provided by W. Weber

<sup>16</sup> = World species total (2001) from Omnilist website

([www.birdwatching.com/software/birdlists/omnilistinfo/html](http://www.birdwatching.com/software/birdlists/omnilistinfo/html))

EDITORS' NOTE: Please see yellow insert this issue for rules, areas, and reporting form.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a report of a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and two prints from an 8 mm video tape. The bird was observed at Stuiie on the Atnarko River in the Bella Coola Valley. The location is approximately 60 miles by river from tidal flats.

After sifting through back-numbers of 'Birders Journal', I see that Sharp-tailed Sandpipers turn up most Septembers at Reifel and Iona.

In September the Atnarko River is littered with thousands of decaying, spawned-out pink salmon remains - much to the delight of the local grizzly and black bears, Bald Eagles, Common Ravens, Northwestern Crows, California, Glaucous-winged and a few Mew Gulls. One gets used to the pungent odour!

**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in juvenile plumage  
September 19, 2001  
on a gravel bar in the Atnarko River, Bella Coola Valley, BC.**

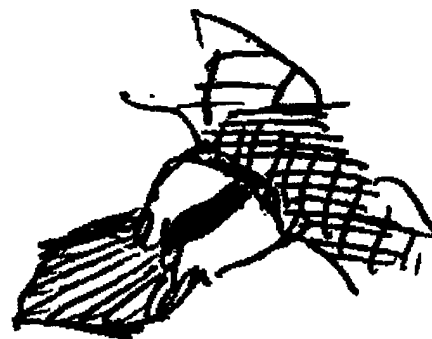
With my first sighting at a distance I took this bird to be a Pectoral Sandpiper. On a closer approach to 25 feet there was revealed the lack of sharp contrast between chest and belly plus a very noticeable white, wide supercilliary stripe extending well back behind the eye.

The bird appeared tired. When flushed it circled around and landed again at water's edge close-by. In flight it showed a conspicuous black-and-white rump.

It was possibly feeding on the masses of blow-fly maggots crawling on gravel from the numerous dead, decaying, spawned-out pink salmon.

Two neighbours, Karl and Stefan Himmer, both experienced birders, observed the bird later the same evening. A search the next day failed to relocate it.

Ron Mayo, Bella Coola, BC



Sketch of rump seen in flight



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, juvenile

### B.C. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DETAILS 2001/2002

This listing of Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) is published as a service to BCFO members who would like to take part in CBCs in their local area or further afield. The listings provide count date, contact name and telephone number. This information also appears on the BCFO website at - <http://birding.bc.ca/bcfo> - courtesy of webmaster, Kevin Slagboom. A **DNA** indicates that the Date was **Not Available** at press time. Data were accurate as known to the Editors on 19 November 2001. Please check with the area organizers for any late-breaking changes. Additional Washington counts and contacts (with contacts' email addresses) may be found at the Washington Ornithological Society website: <http://www.wos.org/WACBCs.htm>

Locality	Date	Organizer(s)	Phone No.
Abbotsford / Mission	29 Dec 2001	Lynn Miller	(604) 826-3839
Bamfield (accommodation can be arranged at the Marine Station)	18 Dec 2001	Anne Stewart      Home # Work #	(250) 728-3469 (250) 728-3301
Bowen Island	30 Dec 2001	Allan Shatwell	(604) 947-2133
Castlegar / Trail (WKN)	5 Jan 2002	Gary Lelliott	(250) 365-1161
Chilliwack	22 Dec 2001	Annabelle Rempel	(604) 823-6549
Comox / Courtenay	16 Dec 2001	Barbara Sedgwick	(250) 335-0064
Cranbrook	29 Dec 2001	Mildred White	(250) 427-3605
Creston	27 Dec 2001	Sheila Reynolds	(250) 866-5453
Dawson Creek	29 Dec 2001	Mark Phinney	(250) 843-2318
Deep Bay	28 Dec 2001	Barbara Sedgwick	(250) 335-0064
Duncan	29 Dec 2001	Derrick Marven	(250) 748-8504
Fauquier	DNA	Ruth Bumpus	(250) 269-7481
Fort St. James	29 Dec 2001	Joanne Vinnedge	(250) 996-7401
Galiano Island	29 Dec 2001	Mike Hoebel	(250) 539-2003
Golden	27 Dec 2001	Ellen Zimmerman	(250) 348-2225
Kamloops	16 Dec 2001	Rick Howie	(250) 578-7542
Kelowna	15 Dec 2001	Chris Charlesworth or	(250) 765-6048 (250) 718-0335
Kimberley	5 Jan 2002	Mildred White	(250) 427-3605
Kitimat	15 Dec 2001	Dennis Horwood	(250) 632-2004
Ladner	23 Dec 2001	Jude Grass      Work # Home #	(604) 432-6393 (604) 520-3706
Lake Windermere District	26 Dec 2001	Larry Halverson	(250) 342-3305
Lardeau	27 Dec 2001	Gail Spitler	(250) 366-4601
Lillooet	29 Dec 2001	Ken Wright	(250) 256-4702

Locality	Date	Organizer(s)	Phone No.
Masset	DNA	Margo Hearne	(250) 626-5015
Mackenzie	29 Dec 2001	David Lambie	(250) 997-6876
Mayne Island	15 Dec 2001	Doreen Tamboline	(250) 539-2730
Nakusp	5 Jan 2002	Gary Davidson	(250) 265-4456
Nanaimo (date set last June!!!)	30 Dec 2001	Guy Monty ✱ GOLD STAR	(250) 754-4635
Nelson	15 Dec 2001	Rita Wege	(250) 354-1685
Oliver / Osoyoos	29 Dec 2001	Tom Ethier or Joan King	(250) 496-4171 (250) 495-6907
Parksville / Qualicum	15 Dec 2001	Will Lemon	(250) 757-2387
Pemberton / Mt. Currie	27 Dec 2001	Karl Ricker	(604) 938-1107
Pender Harbour	19 Dec 2001	Tony Greenfield	(604) 885-5539
Pender Islands	15 Dec 2001	Mary Roddick	(250) 629-3308
Penticton	16 Dec 2001	Dick Cannings	(250) 496-4019
Pitt Meadows / Maple Ridge	30 Dec 2001	Kees Vandenberg	(604) 463-8743
Port Alberni	DNA	Sandy McRuer	(250) 723-5436
Port Clements	DNA	Margo Hearne	(250) 626-5015
Prince George	16 Dec 2001	Cathy Antoniazzi	(250) 562-2845
Prince Rupert	DNA	Robin Weber	(250) 627-1129
Princeton	27 Dec 2001	Madelon Schouten	(250) 295-7078
Quesnel	22 Dec 2001	Adrian Leather	(250) 249-5561
Revelstoke	15 Dec 2001	George Winingder	(250) 837-3655
Rose Spit (tide & weather permitting)	DNA	Margo Hearne	(250) 626-5015
Salmon Arm	26 Dec 2001	Frank Kime	(250) 835-8537
Saltspring Island	DNA	Nancy Braithwaite	(250) 537-9335
Saturna Island	DNA	Harvey Janszen	(250) 539-5150
Shuswap Lake / Park	20 Dec 2001	Rick Howie	(250) 578-7542
Skidegate Inlet / Sandspit / Queen Charlotte Islands	DNA	Margo Hearne	(250) 626-5015
Smithers	27 Dec 2001	Rosamund Pojar	(250) 847-9784
Sooke	22 Dec 2001	Jack McLeod	(250) 642-5369
Squamish	15 Dec 2001	Jim Wisnia	(604) 898-2000
Sunshine Coast	15 Dec 2001	Tony Greenfield	(604) 885-5539



Locality	Date	Organizer(s)	Phone No.
Terrace	DNA	Diane Weismiller	(250) 635-6984
Vancouver	16 Dec 2001	Adrian Grant Duff	(604) 263-7957
Vaseux Lake	1 Jan 2002	Dick Cannings	(250) 496-4019
Vernon	16 Dec 2001	Phil Gehlen or Mary Collins	(250) 524-8053 (250) 524-5673
Victoria	15 Dec 2001	Dannie Carsen	(250) 595-2773
Wells Gray Park	DNA	Trevor Goward	(250) 674-2553
Whistler	18 Dec 2001	Karl Ricker	(604) 938-1107
White Rock and Surrey	30 Dec 2001	Viveka Ohman or Ian Robertson	(604) 531-3401 (604) 530-1080
Williams Lake	16 Dec 2001	Anna Roberts	(250) 392-5000
Interior Swan-and-Eagle Count	13 Jan 2002	Rick Howie	(250) 578-7542

**\*\* WASHINGTON STATE BORDER AREAS \*\***

LOCALITY	DATE	ORGANIZER(S)	PHONE NO.
Bellingham	16 Dec 2001	Joe Meche	(360) 738-0641
Everett	15 Dec 2001	Mary Teesdale	(360) 734-9077
North Cascades	14 Dec 2001	Bob Kuntz	(360) 424-9099
Oak Harbour / Whidbey Island	15 Dec 2001	Bob Merrick	(360) 678-3161
Padilla Bay	29 Dec 2001	Kraig Kemper	(206) 789-9255
San Juan Ferry (Anacortes to Sidney)	19 Dec 2001	Jim Duemmel	(360) 733-3448
Sequim-Dungeness	17 Dec 2001	Bob Boekelheide	(206) 681-4867
Skagit Bay	30 Dec 2001	Art Campbell	(206) 783-2449

**AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE**

Thanks to all of the following for contributing to this issue of the newsletter:

Doug Cooper  
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Bryan Gates

Bill Heybroek  
Ron Mayo  
Martin McNichol

Ken Morgan  
Ian Robertson  
John B. Sprague

David Sterling  
Linda Timbs  
Russ Tkachuk

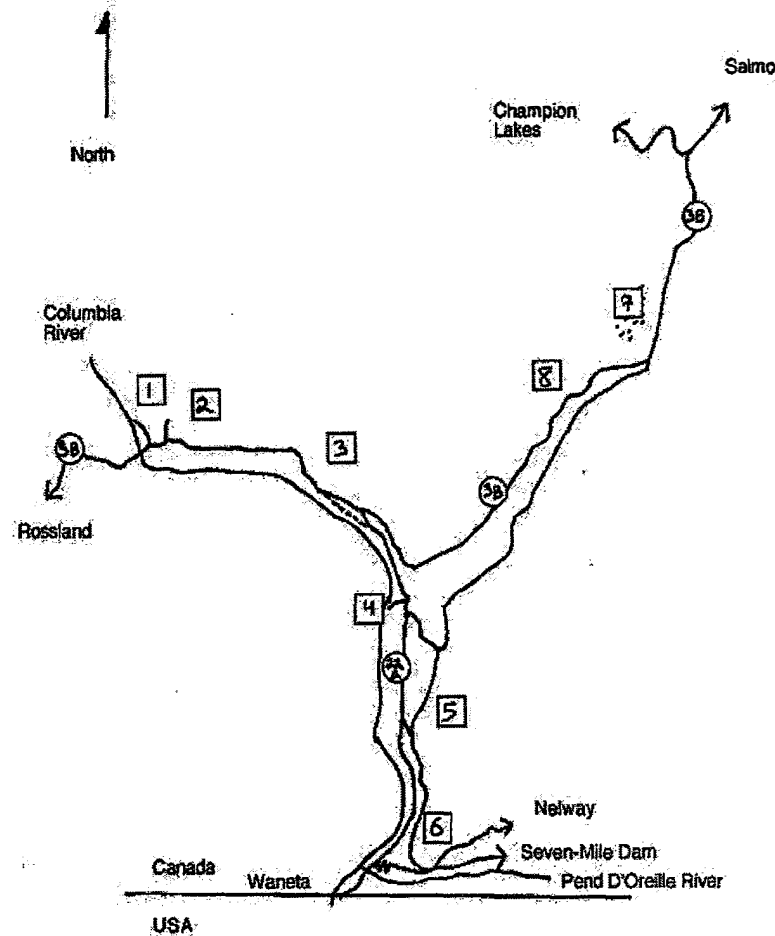
## SITE GUIDE: Trail Area

by Doug Cooper  
20436 97 A Avenue  
Langley, BC V1M 2K1

Trail is located in south-central part British Columbia in an area known as the West Kootenay, a region that features heavily in the mining history of the province. Although not a place that would immediately spring to mind when thinking of birding hot spots, a surprising variety of habitats can be found within a few kilometres of the city centre.

A good place to start is Gyro Park (1), located a few blocks upriver from the bridge that carries Highway 3B east across the Columbia River, and on the opposite shore from Cominco, world's largest lead and zinc smelter. The towering smokestacks suggest why the local hockey team, world amateur hockey champions in 1939 and 1961, is named the Trail Smoke Eaters. Walking a few hundred metres down the riverside path, one encounters several small coves that can harbour various waterfowl and shorebirds, including once a migrating flock of American Avocets, but more commonly such species as the Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs or Spotted Sandpipers.

Returning to Highway 3B, turn left and head east. A potential stop a few hundred metres along on the left is up the access road to the local landfill (2) to check on a large colony of Bank Swallows that nest in the sandy bank above the landfill. Common Ravens, Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures can often be seen riding the thermals above the hillside. Continuing east on 3B, turn right off the highway on Old Waneta Road across from Waneta Plaza. Along this road (3), in late spring, check the branches of a group of Poplar trees for signs of nesting Bullock's Orioles.



Where Old Waneta Road meets Highway 22A (also known as Waneta Road), turn right and head south on 22A. Slightly more than one kilometre along Hwy 22A (4), turn right into Beaver Creek (also known as Kiwanis) Park. The creek usually hosts American Dippers, and the small delta at the mouth of the creek might show foraging shorebirds or loafing waterfowl such as Red-breasted Mergansers or Harlequin Ducks.

Returning to Highway 22A, again head south passing through an area known as Columbia Gardens. Vesper Sparrows often perch on the fence posts either side of the road, while Mountain Bluebirds and Tree Swallows compete for the numerous nest boxes. Lark Sparrows have historically nested in the area. Solitary Sandpipers have been spotted at a small pond (now bulldozed nearly out of existence) at the northeastern edge of the small industrial park on the left side of the road. The wooded slope to the east of the industrial park is good for a variety of songbirds such as Nashville Warblers. Past the small airport on the right is a farm where Say's Phoebes can reliably be found around the outbuildings.

Five hundred ~~metres~~ ~~past~~ the airport on the left is a road (5) signed for the Seven Mile hydroelectric dam, one of several dams along the Pend d'Oreille River, a major tributary of the Columbia. This road heads uphill and meets Upper Columbia Gardens Road. Turn right at the intersection and take this road as it passes under rocky slopes that are home to Rock Wrens and marmots. After a kilometre or so turn right at the junction with the Waneta-Nelway Road (6). Western Kingbirds traditionally nest behind a transformer on one of the nearby power poles. The fields and south-facing slopes of this area are excellent habitat for early spring wildflowers. Common wallflower, rare and local to B.C. in the Pend d'Oreille valley, according to George Whitehead, a late Trail resident and amateur field botanist, may be found here in May and June. Lazuli Buntings and both Western and Mountain Bluebirds frequent the area.

At the west end of one of the fields, set in a beautiful grove of Ponderosa pines, is a small cemetery for early residents of the Pend d'Oreille valley. One Lilian Wray is buried here, and her gravestone tells she lived for 106 years, from 1892 to 1998, nearly spanning three centuries.

One can continue east on the Waneta-Nelway road into the Canadian portion of the Pend d'Oreille valley and on to the small border crossing of Nelway, but east of the Seven-Mile dam the road has been compromised by a washout (although a truck or rent-a-car can apparently still traverse it). At the Nelway end of the road is tiny Lomond Lake. Although recently the victim of some surrounding agricultural improvements, it still hosts a variety of ducks and grebes. Bobolinks and migrating Sandhill Cranes have been found in the bordering fields. In 1996 a lone male Lark Bunting was spotted in the fields alongside Highway 6 just north of the Nelway border crossing.

For those not interested in pursuing the Waneta-Nelway Road option, head back north along the Seven Mile dam road to its connection with the Upper Columbia Gardens Road. This road takes a short jog to the right near a small feedlot and becomes the Old Fruitvale Road, passing by hobby farms and a small vineyard on its way through the small town of Fruitvale to eventually end at Highway 3B. Turning right (east) on 3B and proceeding a few hundred metres, one reaches fields on the left leading to a marshy area (7). Bobolinks are possible in the meadows and Wilson's Phalaropes in the stream flowing west through this marsh. Travel further east a short way on Highway 3B to reach a turnoff heading north to Champion Lakes Provincial Park. Here forest birds such as Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers are possible. (The Nelway area can be reached by continuing east on Highway 3B through the town of Salmo and turning south on Highway 6.)

Turning around and heading back west on 3B will return you to the city of Trail via Fruitvale. Just past the bend in the road in the centre of Fruitvale where Highway 3B crosses the railroad tracks, there is a place on the left (south) side of the road where one can stop and scan the ponds of the Fruitvale sewage treatment plant (8) for ducks. (Someday a dedicated birder will write a volume titled "Sewage Treatment Plants I Have Known and Loved.")

Gary Davidson of Nakusp maintains and makes available a West Kootenay Bird Checklist. I would like to thank to Gary, Linda Van Damme and Kay van Wijk for their helpful comments on and additions to the guide. Useful maps include the relevant 1:50 000 topographical map (Rossland-Trail, 82F/4) and the Arrow and Kootenay Lake Forest Districts Forest Recreation map put out by the BC Ministry of Forests.

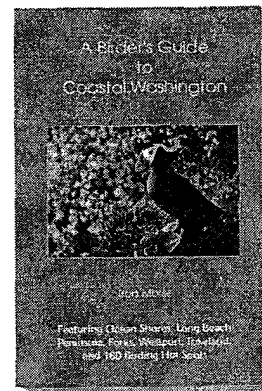
I was first introduced to the pleasures of birding around Trail in the early 1980s by Maurice Ellison. Maurice lived all his life in Trail and was an avid birder, keeping meticulous notes for more than fifty years, from the 1930s to the mid-1980s. He must have done the above circuit a thousand times, and recently my twelve-year old son Daniel and I had a wonderful time following in his footsteps in preparation for producing this guide. I would like to dedicate this Trail Site Guide to the memory of Maurice and his diminutive but doughty wife, Ronnie.



## Book Review

***A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington*** / Bob Morse. 2001. US\$18.95.  
[ISBN: 0964081008]

Abundant, clear and accurate maps; excellent color photos; birder-friendly format; quality production - all of these apply to Bob Morse's new ***A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington***. This 260 page Guide, covering the outer coast of Washington from Cape Flattery to the Columbia River, is well organized, very readable, and sufficiently descriptive to make it both informative to the birder and interesting to the visitor.



The Pacific Coast of Washington is a draw to birders and this new guide expresses Morse's passion for the area. The guide, Bob's fifth book on birding, draws not only upon his thirty years of birding the Northwest but also upon his careful garnering of knowledge and expertise from many leading birders and photographers of the area.

It had been at least a dozen years since my wife and I last birded the Washington coast so that was to be our destination this year. We heard of ***A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington*** mere days before we set out and were fortunate to receive a copy to accompany us. It was an excellent resource. We 'discovered' Neah Bay/Cape Flattery (still one Tufted Puffin there), La Push (lots of Brown Pelicans), the Quinault Rain Forest Nature Trail and its historic Lodge, to name only a few spots. Maps were clear and easily read, stated distances seemed accurate (the use of highway milepost references was most useful since our vehicle is kilometre-gauged), a table of driving times was great for planning daily excursions, the locations to explore (over 160) gave variety to the birding and added interest to our vacation. We had not recently read much about Washington State so we found the information included on geography and climate, coastal habitats (with great color photos), coastal birding organization contacts, and links for tides and maps to be very informative. The inclusion of camping and accommodation information was especially valuable to us as tourists. It was also useful to have the seasonal checklist but the inclusion of Washington coast target species, with descriptions and color photos, was an unexpected bonus.

If we had any quibble with the publication it would only be that it did not extend its range to include Dungeness, Ediz Hook, Salt Creek, and any other inside coast spots known only to local Washington birders. As we are close northern neighbours we were aware of a few of these great spots but birders arriving from the East might be unaware of them. However, since one of Bob Morse's previous publications (out of print but incorporated into ***A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington***) was limited just to Ocean Shores and, since he has now opened up the whole outer coast to birders, perhaps he has yet another Guide to come in a few years?

***A Birder's Guide to Coastal Washington*** has been very thoughtfully and professionally prepared and we feel it would be a welcome and very useful addition to any birder's library.



Reviewed by: Andy and Marilyn Buhler, co-editors, **BC BIRDING**. December 2001

Available through book stores, local Audubon societies, or directly from R.W. Morse Co. (360) 943-8600. For additional information see website [www.birdingcoastalwa.com](http://www.birdingcoastalwa.com) or send Bob Morse an e-mail at [rwmorse@home.com](mailto:rwmorse@home.com).