

BC BIRDING

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Members will also receive a copy of the annual
journal, **British Columbia Birds**.

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

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

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EDITORS' NOTES & NOTIONS

There are two ways of considering our BCFO membership. Either our members are not very observant (like the editors) or they are very considerate of the editors. We did not get one note or letter to pull us up short for getting some AGM dates wrong! Sorry people - mea culpa X2.

On to other things - members and directors rallied round for us. Suddenly, at the 11th hour, we had material for another full issue. Thank you!

This is the last issue which will reach you before the 12th AGM in Williams Lake so be certain to read the notices on the AGM, extension trip, morning bird trips, and the registration inserts. It should be another great get-together for BCFO birders from around our province and both your directors and several volunteers have been working hard to get everything ready for your enjoyment.

In this issue we have Director's Reports from Bryan and Glen, regular columns from Martin and Ken, articles from Bruce, Chris, Guy, Jeremy, Prue, and Tony plus swan and eagle survey results from Rick. Remember to check out the information on how to obtain a free issue of *The Wandering Tattler* and please read through the information on a great pair of binoculars and on some BC birding events. Also check for coloured inserts!

Bryan is proposing another pelagic trip for this September and has provided us with some specifics. It is a great opportunity to add some of those pelagic birds (and a few cetaceans) that seem to elude many birder's BC checklists.

At this year's AGM several directors will be reaching the end of their terms of office. Please consider volunteering for a position on the Board.

Please remember that at the 11th AGM your editors reported they would like to step down as editors of this newsletter. We suggested that our last issue as editors would be the June 2002 issue. We will have been editors for ten years when that issue goes to press and we feel that it may be time for some new blood, and possibly some new direction. Suddenly, the next scheduled issue is that June 2002 issue! We have not been trampled by a stampede of members offering to carry on the editorship. In fact we have not had a single offer! Surely there must be at least a couple of 'wanna be' editors out there. Do not be shy - the Board and the members are a great bunch of people. For ten years (40 issues) we have been able to provide a newsletter with a minimum of 20 pages per issue, four times a year. We do not write the material. We just incorporate your material, with a little judicious editing and a few select cusses, into the issue you receive each quarter.

Consider it!

Cheers, Andy and Marilyn Buhler

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



When was the last time you bird-watched? When was the last time you really watched birds?

Too often, it seems, we spend our time simply identifying a bird. We look for diagnostic morphological features, listen for sounds that are unique to a species, make a mental note, and move on to the next. Some people keep a simple list of species; others tally all individuals. But ornithology is the *branch of zoology dealing with the study of birds*. It is broader than simple identification. We as amateur and professional ornithologists should be spending more time with in-depth bird observations. We should be looking for signs of territoriality, watching the intricacies of courtship, identifying foraging methods and food preferences, noting habitat selection, and through bird behaviour contemplating how evolution has resulted in the magnificent diversity of birds that we enjoy today.

We should also be keeping notes about what we observe. There is great satisfaction in looking back over field notes gathered 20 or 40 years earlier, when we were all true amateurs. The mistakes we made are usually obvious, but at least the learning process was at work, and we can be smug about the fact that we now make fewer mistakes. It is this casual collection of facts that leads to a better and more satisfying understanding of our specialty.

I recall many years ago collecting a series of Surf Scoters for the then British Columbia Provincial Museum. They were diving in relatively deep water near the entrance to Bute Inlet. I was surprised to find that each was full to the throat with mussels - big mussels, shells intact. A rough meal, I thought. Then just last week I was watching a group of Common Goldeneyes through the scope as they fed in shallow waters near the mouth of the Oyster River. A bright, alternate plumaged male rose to the surface with a full-sized littleneck clam in its bill. The bird mouthed the clam for some time, dropped it repeatedly, dove quickly to recover it a few times, and then appeared to give up. However, moments later it or another male surfaced again with what was probably the same clam. No toying this time! Down the hatch it went. So what, you say? Well, the clam appeared to be about the same size as the bird's skull. I pictured myself trying to swallow a cantaloupe.

The next day the goldeneyes were diving for small shore crabs - another 'hard' meal - while nearby a Common Loon surfaced, tenaciously grasping a young salmon in its powerful bill. It looked like a coho 'grilse', about 12 inches long and clearly too big and fat for the loon. But was it too big? With time, repeated positioning and a little softening up, this 'monster' was swallowed whole. I surmised that this was about equivalent to you or me downing a 10-pound salmon.

Birds are fascinating creatures. When we think we know it all, new things suddenly come to light. Your personal discoveries of interesting facts will continue if you take the time to watch birds and keep records. Then, with the notes that you accumulate you can put together a short article for inclusion in *BC BIRDING*. Or you might even find that you have sufficient information to justify a short (or long) technical note for our journal, *British Columbia Birds*. Our editors will be delighted.

Go out and be an ornithologist!

Bryan R. Gates
President



DIRECTORS' CORNER

Your directors met on February 4th in Langley.

Martin McNicholl (editor of the Journal) provided an update on the progress of the Journals. In summary: membership should be seeing volumes 9 and 10 soon and progress is being made on volumes 11 and 12. Martin will be discussing with John Sprague the work needed to complete the journals. Approval was made for inclusion of two colour pictures essential to a report in one of the upcoming journal issues.

Discussion was held on the progress with the bird records committee. On going efforts are being made to come to an effective bird record system.

Bryan Gates briefed the board on the data storage controversy with Wild Bird Trust and the British Columbia government. Progress is being made. A request was made that any one having difficulty in accessing data maintained by the Wild Bird Trust should make a complaint directly to Wild Bird Trust - directed to the President, Patricia Banning-Lover.

Detailed plans were presented for the annual meeting to be held in Williams Lake June 7-9. Plans include outings, bird study programs and meetings. The extension will be heading into the Cariboo Country. Plans include use of two vans with accommodation at a resort on Punzi Lake. The committee is doing a great job and we are all looking forward to a great annual meeting and extension.

Draft financial statements for the fiscal year 2001 were presented and discussed. Revenue exceeded expenditures for the year. Directors were worried that there was still contingency liability in that the journals not published to date need to be budgeted for. Budgets were discussed and it was decided that there would be an allocation of \$1,500 for donations to projects for the 2002 year. Members are encouraged to submit proposals for funding for this and next year.

Plans were made for the promotion efforts for the year. A display is being arranged for the North American Bluebird Society meeting. Directors reviewed the brochure, a number of changes were proposed and changes will be incorporated with different ideas for future approval.

Discussion was made as to the replacement for the editor of BC Birding. A general request has been made to find a replacement for the Andy and Marilyn Buhler. The worst possibility would be that there would be no newsletter. We need an editor!

Hue MacKenzie provided an update on the Archivist Report for the year ended December 31, 2001. The directors appreciate the efforts that Hue has done to keep the important archives of our organization.

All the directors were pleased to hear that Jo Ann MacKenzie will accept the position of Vice President with expectation of being our president in the upcoming year. A request will be made for three new directors to be nominated for election at the annual meeting in Williams Lake.

The next meeting for the directors is being planned for May 5.

Glen Moores
Director

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

- March 6-10 2002 **BIRDS OF TWO WORLDS: ADVANCES IN THE ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION OF TEMPERATE-TROPICAL MIGRATION**, Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Contact: Peter P. Marra, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, Natl. Zool. Park, Washington, D.C. 20008, U.S.A.; phone (202) 673-4908 or Russell S. Greenberg, 7500 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, U.S.A.; phone (202) 673-4908.
- March 6-8 2002 **9th ALASKA BIRD CONFERENCE**, Fairbanks, Alaska. Contact: Nancy Dewitt, Alaska Bird Observatory, Box 80505, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706; phone (907) 451-7159.
- March 20-24 2002 **3rd 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 Dr., Arcata, CA 95521; phone (707) 825-1127.
- April 3-6 2002 **SOCIETY FOR NORTHWESTERN VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING** Hood River, Oregon. Contact: Cathy Flick, phone (509) 493-1195.
- April 11-14 2002 **83rd ANNUAL MEETING, WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY WITH ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS**, Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers, Florida. Contact: Jerome A. Jackson, Whitacker Center, Coll. of Arts & Sciences, Florida Gulf Coast Univ., 10501 FGCU Blvd. South, Ft. Myers, FL 33965-6565; phone: (941) 590-7157.
- April 12-14 2002 **12th ANNUAL BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL**, Lantzville to Rosewall Creek, B.C., including "big day" competition. Contact: Brant Wildlife Festival Office, 174 Railway St., Qualicum Beach, BC V9K 1K7; ph.(250) 752-9171.
- April 19-21 2002 **FIRST ANNUAL GREAT BLUE HERON FESTIVAL**, Pitt Meadows (new) Family Recreation Centre, 12027 Harris Road (just s. of the Lougheed Highway), Pitt Meadows, BC. Sat. April 20th 8-5pm ; Sun. April 21st 11-4 pm. Sponsor: Tourism Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows. Contact: (604) 460-8300 for tickets & info; (604) 463-0890 for info. Events include Butterfly Tea; Blue Heron 1-hour tours; Art Show; trade show; speakers; special demos; Big Day Bird Count; Wine and Cheese Mixer; Birds and Bikes; Birdsong Barbecue & Charity Auction for the Codd Islands Wetlands; and much more.
- May 9-12 2002 **FEDERATION OF B.C. NATURALISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Victoria, B.C. Contact for accommodation: phone (250) 721-8395 [no contact name indicated to date]; general information: Fed. B.C. Nat., #425-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9; phone (604) 737-3057.
- May 25 2002 **ANNUAL SOUTH OKANAGAN CRITTER COUNT**, Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park, will be held Saturday, May 25th. Anyone interested in participating can call either Brenda Thompson, (250) 764-4296, if they want to bird from the Kelowna end, or Eva Durance, (250) 492-0158, if they want to go from the Penticton side. The price for the count-up barbeque has not been set yet but will likely be under \$10 each. The same Summerland catering company as we have had in other years is being hired for the event.
- June 7-9 2002 **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE**, Williams Lake, B.C.: see registration material in this issue of B.C. Birding.
- June 13-16 2002 **NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY (NABS) 25th 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. Contact: Terry and Greg Tellier. email: t.tellier@shaw.ca, phone (250) 493-4634

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS (continued)

June 21-23 2002 **CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Ottawa, Ont. Contact (no name indicated): Canadian Nature Federation, phone: 1-800-267-4088.

**SOCIETY NEWS**

**British Columbia Field Ornithologists
Twelfth Annual Conference
June 7-9, 2002**

The 12th Annual Conference will be held at the **Bil-Nor Restaurant** in **Williams Lake, B.C.** on the weekend of **June 7-9, 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. Motels within walking distance to the Bil-Nor Restaurant are the Drummond Lodge Motel (1-800-667-4555), Lakeside Motel (1-800-663-4938) and the Valleyview Motel (250-392-4655). The Drummond Lodge Motel has offered preferred rates for BCFO members.

For information on campgrounds and other accommodations, please contact the Williams Lake and District Chamber of Commerce (ph: 250-392-5025, fax 250-392-4214, or email: wldcc@stardate.bc.ca)

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 while at the same time registering for the Conference.

Please refer to the front page of this newsletter for membership fees.

A Registration Form is provided in this issue of *B.C. BIRDING* as an insert.

The registration deadline is April 30, 2002.

For information contact:

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See page 27 of this issue for AGM field trip information.



BC BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

Martin K. McNicholl

Editor of our journal, Martin was presented with an Honorary Life Membership in the Langley Field Naturalists in December 2001.

F.B.C.N. Awards -as mentioned in the September 2001 installment of this compilation, Daphne Solecki of Vancouver was awarded the Federation of B.C. Naturalists' highest recognition, the Elton Anderson Award during the federation's May 2001 annual meeting (B.C. Birding 11(3):3, 2001). More details of that award and others presented during 2001 are summarized by J. Best (B.C. Nat. 40(1):20-21, "2002" [actually published in 2001]). Club Service Awards given during the Fall 2001 meeting in White Rock for work concerning birds were to Lesley Keith for numerous contributions to the Squamish Estuary Conservation Society, including co-ordination of local Christmas bird count and eagle watch projects, to David, John and Vi Lambie for their contributions to fish and bird projects of the Mackenzie Nature Observatory, notably monitoring of Neotropical migrants at Mugaha Banding Station, to the Osprey Survey Team [Emilie Fanjoy, Elaine Moore, Larry Prosser and Rita Wege] of the Nelson Naturalist Club for monitoring 110 Osprey nests, and to Greg Ross of the Rocky Mountain Naturalist Club for monitoring a bluebird trail, compiling a Christmas bird count, organizing a "Little Big Day" event, working on the East Kootenay Bird Checklist, and several other more general and non-bird contributions.

Fraser River Estuary I.B.A. -Photographs of the dedication of the Fraser River estuary "IBA" [Important Bird Area] during the fall of 1991 appear in B.C. Nat. 40(1):30, "2002" [actually 2001].

Provincial awards -At least two of eight recent recipients of recent provincial environmental stewardship awards are known for contributions to ornithology in B.C. Wilma Robinson, known for efforts to protect Sandhill Crane nesting habitat in Pitt Meadows, was awarded for her efforts at habitat preservation in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge, while B.C.F.O. member Madelon Schouten of Vermilion Forks Naturalists Club received an award for unspecified contributions. -based on Anonymous. "2002." B.C. Nat. 40(1):30 in turn based on an earlier Vancouver Sun report.

From Sandra Kinsey -Ryan Tomlinson, of Kelowna, was fortunate to be one of the six young people selected to attend the week-long Doug Tarry Young Ornithologists' workshop in early August at Long Point Bird Observatory, Ontario.



EDITORS' NOTE: Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. passed away on 11 December 2001 in Bedford, Texas, at the age of 94.

**BCFO Extension Trip 2002
Puntzi Lake - West Chilcotin**

Going to the 12th Annual General Conference? Be certain to consider the BCFO extension trip into a great area of our very diverse province. It will be three days of good birding, great camaraderie, and a view of an area seldom visited by a majority of BC birders. See page 13 of this issue for further particulars and be prepared to add Puntzi Lake 'lifers' to your birding lists.

The Hottest (Big) Day Of The Year!

by Guy Monty

Stn. A, PO Box 2205
Nanaimo, BC V9R 6X6

Of all the stupid things that birders do, and there are plenty to chose from, the 'Big Day' is the king of bad ideas! For those of you fortunate enough to have never heard of this, a 'Big Day' is a type of marathon, where a group or team of birders attempts to identify as many species as possible in a set period of time. Most big days take place from midnight to midnight, but can be shorter, depending on the rules of the game. I say game, because the 'Big Day' is where birding leaves behind all traces of a simple hobby, or citizen science, and heads straight into the world of competitive sports. Again, what are we thinking?

The most popular 'Big Day' in British Columbia is the Big Day Birding Competition held every April as part of the Brant Festival. In this event, teams of three to five birders start at 10:00 pm on Friday and attempt to see as many birds as possible by 3:00 pm on Saturday. The area is from Lantzville to Deep Bay, and it's not uncommon for teams to rack up 500 kilometers as they race up and down [Vancouver]Island. By 2:00 pm some teams are near exhaustion, wandering around a deserted beach somewhere in Nanoose muttering to themselves about phantom alcids, while others are attempting to find out just how fast a rented van can travel on the backroads above Parksville. "One more bird, one more bird..." is the chant often heard this late in the game. And until you have tried one of these lunatic contests, you will never understand just how frustrating it can be to try and find 'one more bird'! Although the number of species seen at a Brant Festival Big Day can top 110 species, many teams will have seen close to 100 by 10:00 am, and then spend the rest of the day trying to break that magic 'century' mark. Most won't. Out of the 20-25 teams that take part each year, there are rarely more than 3 or 4 teams that break the 100 species mark.

The American Birding Association, an organization for birders from all over the world, publishes a booklet once a year that lists the top big days for every state and province in North America, by month. Traditionally, most big days are run in the spring, because that is when the birds are most vocal, and migration is in full swing. But there is a certain lure to the challenge of seeing how many birds you can find in the depths of winter, say in January or February. It takes real skill and determination to find birds at this time of year, and a score over 100 is something to be proud of. The one month of the year though, that is often left blank, is August. August is a tough one. There are plenty of birds around; the neo-tropical birds are still quietly skulking around in the forests, shorebirds and raptors are migrating south, and the first winter ducks are just beginning to arrive. Yet they are all nearly silent, and most seem to disappear after 9:00 am!

This summer John Brighton and I decided that we would do a big day the third week of August. The record for British Columbia was only 45 species, a cinch to beat. We focused on southeast Vancouver Island, from French Creek to Victoria. Because owls are essentially mute this time of year, we decided that birding only between 5:00 am and 8:00 pm would suffice. Our first bird was a cranky Winter Wren at 5:20 am at Colliery Lakes Park in Nanaimo. And our last species ticked was a flock of Red-necked Phalaropes off of Esquimalt Lagoon in Victoria at 7:49 pm. The highlight of the day though was seeing an enormous flock of Common Nighthawks working an ant hatch near Southgate! We should not have stopped to watch, as we had already ticked the nighthawks at around six that morning, but wow! There must have been 250 birds swirling around above the parkway! What kind of birder wouldn't stop for a look? The answer, a birder on a 'Big Day'.

So, was this attempt to set a new record for August fun? Yes, for the first four hours it was loads of fun. Then it became a tortuous endurance test. Did we break the record? Yes and no. After rushing madly around Nanaimo and Parksville in the morning, walking over 10 kilometers in the process, we ended up with 103 species by noon. At 2:30 when we headed south from the Cassidy Airport, we ticked #107, a smart looking male American Kestrel. In the next five and a half hours we managed to find only 13 more species, to bring us to a grand total of 120 species. We had it! We had set a new record for August. But I have never had to work so hard in my life. After the first couple of hours, it was as if the birds had simply vanished. The hotter it got, the fewer birds we found, and the harder it became to concentrate. By the time we hit Cassidy, we considered

taking our 107 species and heading for home. It was hot, sweaty, and the birds were all well hid. But we pressed on, and it took a full week to recover from it. At some during that week, we heard that a team in the Okanagan had set a new record for a British Columbia 'Big Day' in August. They had seen 140 species. All that work, all that time, and some birders from the interior beat us by 20 species! So was it worth it? No way! It was just too much stress, wear and tear, and it really wore us out. Never again! I am going to bird slowly, and enjoy the few species I pick up along the way from now on. And when I pick up the 'Big Day' report that says the September record for British Columbia is only 120 species

Hmmmmmm, wait a minute



That Other August Big Day Report!

by Chris Charlesworth
725 Richards Road
Kelowna, BC V1X 2X5

Yesterday (August 24, 2001), Ryan Tomlinson, Russell Cannings and I did a big day in the Southern Interior of BC. August big days can go either really well or very badly. Ours, for the most part, was good. We started out on Beaver Lake Road and headed to Vernon via Dee Lake Road. Birding along this route was slower than we would have liked. We missed a few targets, but you can't get them all. We then headed for Salmon Arm, which was a huge success! After that we drove straight to Kelowna and birded Robert's and Alki Lake, another success. Then it was off to the South Okanagan for the evening. We didn't add many southern specialties, but did get a few things we had missed throughout the day. We started at 5:30 AM and finished at about 9:00 PM, covering about 500 km. Here's the list:

Birds Seen on this Big Day

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Common Loon | 34. Semipalmated Plover (Salmon Arm) | 65. Downy Woodpecker |
| 2. Pied-billed Grebe | 35. Killdeer | 66. Hairy Woodpecker |
| 3. Red-necked Grebe | 36. Greater Yellowlegs | 67. *THREE-TOED WOODPECKER |
| 4. Eared Grebe | 37. Lesser Yellowlegs | (1 male at km 11.8 on |
| 5. Western Grebe | 38. Spotted Sandpiper | McKinney Rd - Oliver) |
| 6. *AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN | 39. Semipalmated Sandpiper | 68. Northern Flicker |
| (1 at Vaseux) | 40. Western Sandpiper | 69. Pileated Woodpecker |
| 7. Great Blue Heron | 41. Least Sandpiper | 70. Olive-sided Flycatcher |
| 8. Canada Goose | 42. Baird's Sandpiper | (4 on Dee Lk Rd) |
| 9. Wood Duck | 43. Pectoral Sandpiper | 71. Western Wood-Pewee |
| 10. Green-winged Teal | 44. *RUDDY TURNSTONE | 72. Willow Flycatcher |
| 11. Mallard | (Kelowna and Salmon Arm) | 73. Hammond's Flycatcher |
| 12. Northern Pintail | 45. *SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER | 74. Pacific-slope Flycatcher |
| 13. Blue-winged Teal | (2 at Roberts Lake and | (1 at Vaseux) |
| 14. Cinnamon Teal | 1 at Salmon Arm) | 75. Say's Phoebe |
| 15. Northern Shoveler | 46. Long-billed Dowitcher | 76. Western Kingbird |
| 16. Gadwall | 47. *STILT SANDPIPER (Salmon Arm) | 77. Eastern Kingbird |
| 17. American Wigeon | 48. Wilson's Phalarope | 78. Tree Swallow |
| 18. Redhead | 49. Red-necked Phalarope | 79. Violet-green Swallow |
| 19. Common Goldeneye (Salmon Arm) | 50. *FRANKLIN'S GULL | 80. Northern Rough-winged Swallow |
| 20. Bufflehead | (1 imm. at Salmon Arm) | 81. Bank Swallow |
| 21. Hooded Merganser (Salmon Arm) | 51. Bonaparte's Gull (Salmon Arm) | 82. Cliff Swallow |
| 22. Common Merganser | 52. *MEW GULL (Kelowna) | 83. Barn Swallow |
| 23. Ruddy Duck | 53. Ring-billed Gull | 84. Gray Jay |
| 24. Turkey Vulture | 54. California Gull | 85. Steller's Jay |
| 25. Osprey | 55. Herring Gull | 86. Clark's Nutcracker |
| 26. Bald Eagle | 56. Black Tern (Roberts Lake) | 87. Black-billed Magpie |
| 27. Northern Harrier | 57. Rock Dove | 88. American Crow |
| 28. Swainson's Hawk | 58. Mourning Dove | 89. Common Raven |
| 29. Red-tailed Hawk | 59. Common Nighthawk | 90. Black-capped Chickadee |
| 30. American Kestrel | 60. Vaux's Swift | 91. Mountain Chickadee |
| 31. Ruffed Grouse (Dee Lk Rd) | 61. Belted Kingfisher | 92. Boreal Chickadee |
| 32. California Quail | 62. Lewis' Woodpecker | (Beaver Lk and Dee Lk Rd) |
| 33. American Coot | 63. Red-naped Sapsucker | 93. Red-breasted Nuthatch |
| | 64. *WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER | 94. White-breasted Nuthatch |
| | (2 at km 11.8 on | (McKinney Rd) |
| | McKinney Rd - Oliver) | 95. Pygmy Nuthatch |

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 96. Brown Creeper (Beaver Lk) | 112. Yellow Warbler | 127. Dark-eyed Junco |
| 97. House Wren | 113. Yellow-rumped Warbler | 128. Red-winged Blackbird |
| 98. Winter Wren | 114. Townsend's Warbler | 129. Western Meadowlark |
| 99. Golden-crowned Kinglet | 115. MacGillivray's Warbler | 130. Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| 100. Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 116. Common Yellowthroat | 131. Brewer's Blackbird |
| 101. Western Bluebird | 117. Wilson's Warbler | 132. Brown-headed Cowbird |
| 102. Townsend's Solitaire | 118. Western Tanager | 133. House Finch |
| 103. Swainson's Thrush | 119. Black-headed Grosbeak | 134. Red Crossbill |
| 104. American Robin | 120. Lazuli Bunting | 135. Pine Siskin |
| 105. Gray Catbird | 121. Spotted Towhee | 136. American Goldfinch |
| 106. Cedar Waxwing | 122. Chipping Sparrow | 137. Evening Grosbeak |
| 107. European Starling | 123. Clay-colored Sparrow | 138. House Sparrow |
| 108. Cassin's Vireo | (Salmon Arm) | 139. Solitary Sandpiper |
| 109. Warbling Vireo | 124. Vesper Sparrow | 140. White-throated Swift (Vaseux) |
| 110. Orange-crowned Warbler | 125. Savannah Sparrow | |
| 111. Nashville Warbler | 126. Song Sparrow | |



Chestnut-sided Warbler on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia

by Chris Charlesworth
725 Richards Road
Kelowna, BC V1X 2X5

While conducting bird surveys in transmission corridors on the Sunshine Coast in southwestern British Columbia on June 15, 2001, I was surprised to discover a male Chestnut-sided Warbler singing, as if on territory, from a small patch of young red alders. The site was about 1.8 kilometers south of the Halfmoon-Carlson (Crowston) Forest Service Road north of Sechelt. The bird was also seen by Doug Brown and later in the day by local birders Tony Greenfield, Arnold Skei, John Newell and Russ Tkachuk. The bird sang constantly, even while foraging and was last seen and heard in the corridor on July 6 by Wayne Campbell.

Several colour slides were obtained on June 16th by Chris Charlesworth. These have been deposited as B.C. Photo No. 1882 in the Wild Bird Trust Wildlife Data Centre in Victoria (see Campbell and Stirling 1972).

It is difficult to mistake a male Chestnut-sided Warbler for any other species, especially in breeding plumage. However, I did take field notes as follows: white underparts, broad chestnut sides, bright golden cap and distinct facial pattern. The warbler's song was strong and emphatic, unlike any other warbler song on the Sunshine Coast.

The Chestnut-sided Warbler is considered very rare in summer and accidental in autumn on the southwest coast of British Columbia, being recorded sporadically from May 28 to September 29 (Campbell et al. 2001). The Sunshine Coast record coincided with several other sightings of single birds reported in the summer of 2001 from Pitt Meadows, Victoria and the Okanagan Valley. My observation represents the first record for the Sunshine Coast (see Greenfield 1997).

I am grateful to B.C. Hydro for permission to publish this record and to Wayne Campbell and Chris Siddle for editorial comments.

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Summary of Raptors Observed along Pennask Lake Road

by Jeremy V. Kimm
2369 Terrace Place
Shawnigan Lake, BC V0R 2W0

The following is a summary of raptors observed by Jeremy V. Kimm and Jason Kimm along Pennask Lake Road, north of Merritt, on April 16 and 17, 2000. Locations are provided by kilometers, measured from the junction of Highway 5a and Pennask Lake Road. Most observations were made from a car, though in a couple of cases careful study was made of the bird to ensure correct identification. Where possible, sex and colour phase were noted.

Raptors were well in evidence during the two days, though of the six species observed, three (Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Rough-legged Hawk), were represented by single sightings.

April 16, 2000

Km 0.5	American Kestrel
Km 0.7	American Kestrel
Km 0.8	Northern Harrier
Km 4.3	Red-tailed Hawk (2)
Km 4.3	Northern Harrier (3)
Km 4.5	Northern Harrier
Km 4.6	Red-tailed Hawk
Km 4.7	Red-tailed Hawk
Km 5.5	Northern Harrier
Km 6.9	American Kestrel
Km 7.1	Northern Harrier
Km 8.3	American Kestrel

April 17, 2000

Km 3.5	Osprey
Km 10.6	Red-tailed Hawk
Km 11.9	American Kestrel (pair)
Km 13.0	Red-tailed Hawk
Km 15.2	Northern Harrier (male)
Km 15.4	Rough-legged Hawk (dark)
Km 15.9	Northern Harrier (male)
Km 16.6	American Kestrel (male)
Km 16.9	American Kestrel (male)
Km 17.8	Northern Harrier (male)
Km 18.1	Bald Eagle
Km 18.4	American Kestrel
Km 18.9	Red-tailed Hawk
Km 21.4	American Kestrel (pair)
Km 23.8	Red-tailed Hawk (2)



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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Birders,

I am sad to report that Mildred White of Kimberley passed away on Sunday, December 16 at the age of 85.

Mildred was one of the leading naturalists in the East Kootenay for many years, and an inspiration to many others. She was loved and admired by everyone that knew her. She will be greatly missed in the B.C. birding community, and especially by her many friends in the East Kootenay. The following remembrances by Ruth Goodwin will be of interest to anyone who knew Mildred. -Wayne C. Weber

Remembering Mildred White

Mildred's daughter, Cathy, and son-in-law, Al, advise that Mildred had requested that there be no memorial service. As a community of naturalists we will want to honor her. What a huge job! Ron Walker called her Mighty Mouse, short in stature but enormous in spirit. We all will be remembering our adventures with Mildred, all that she has taught and shared with us about her love for birds or flowers or bugs or rocks or landscape or mushrooms or clouds or butterflies... She was a generous lady whose personal integrity was recognized by all who worked with her over the years as she embraced the motto of the BC Naturalists, to know nature and to keep it worth knowing.

At the Rocky Mountain Naturalist annual Christmas dinner, Mildred seemed healthy and well. Apparently, she had begun to experience some stomach problems. Tuesday, she was hospitalized with a blockage in her intestines. When I last saw her on Thursday, she looked well and was pleased with the care she was receiving. Many of you know that Mildred has been involved with the Kimberley District Hospital for years in many different capacities, from Board member to Auxiliary volunteer. Cathy advises that on Friday her condition began to deteriorate. The specialist care that was required was not available locally. Saturday evening she was transferred by air ambulance to Calgary.

If you would like to send your regards to the family, Cathy and Al Young live at 878 Rotary Drive, Kimberley V1A 1E6. There is also a son, Terry, who lives in Kimberley as well. Cathy said that I could also include their phone number, 427-4784, if you would like to call.

Remembering Mildred, I just filled the feeders in the yard, and as the nutcrackers scolded me, I thought of Mildred. I walked the dog. Mildred and Willow were great friends and Willow enjoyed nothing more than going out with Mildred for the day. She would curl up beside her and put her head in Mildred's lap, anticipating the long scratch as we drove about looking for this and that. Mildred was known to often burst into song or to recite a poem as we shared the pleasure of naturalists. It will be a year of remembering the pleasure of having known Mildred. -Ruth Goodwin



FREE COPY OF THE WANDERING TATTTLER:

NEWSLETTER OF THE VANCOUVER NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY'S BIRDING SECTION

The Vancouver Natural History Society's Birding Section has been publishing its own monthly newsletter, *The Wandering Tattler*, ever since Jude Grass started it in 1978. This newsletter includes articles on almost all aspects of birding: behaviour, optics, field trips, conservation, humorous anecdotes, site guides and much, much more! A regular feature is the 'Noteworthy Sightings' which summarizes Lower Mainland Rare Bird Alert reports in recent months and 'What's Happening' which summarizes upcoming birding field trips and events.

The *Tattler* runs from September through May and is available at the Vancouver NHS Birders' Nights for \$1 or by mail subscription for \$14. We encourage all BCFO members to subscribe or submit an article by emailing the Distribution Editor Laura Jordison at tattler@relaxism.com or phoning (604) 940-8501. We will give a complimentary copy of *The Wandering Tattler* to anyone interested in subscribing, so that they can decide if this is a worthy investment.



BCFO EXTENSION 2002 PUNTZI LAKE - WEST CHILCOTIN

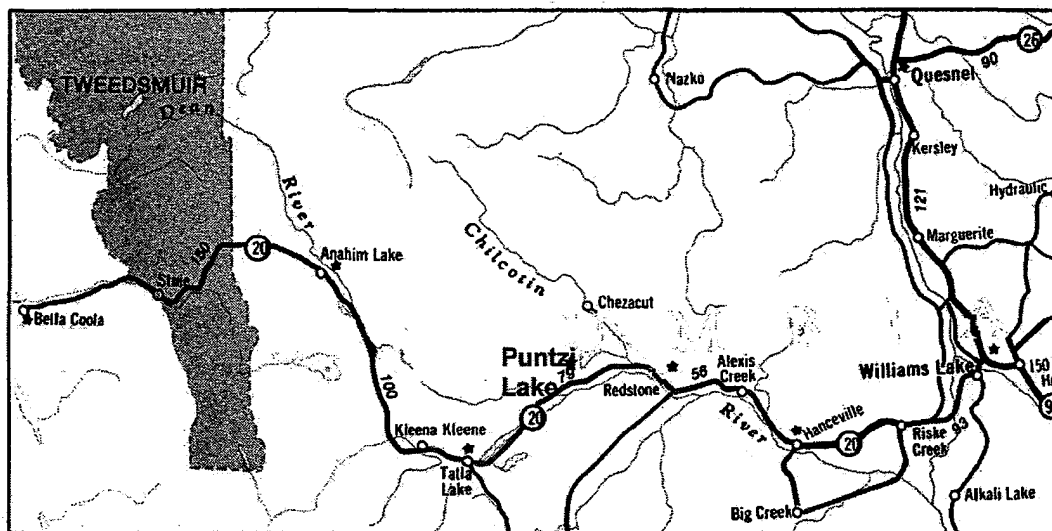


Saddle up folks! We are going for a rustic ride out through the rolling hills, grasslands and wetlands to the edge of the Chilcotin Plateau! We will tour along Highway 20 (the Freedom Highway) west of Williams Lake passing Riske Creek, Farwell Canyon, Hanceville, Alexis Creek, and on to Puntzi Lake. Day trips further west to famous Chilanko Marsh, the Tatla Lake area and up into the nearby mountains will allow us to explore a number of different habitats. We will absorb the ambiance of these wide open spaces as only birders can do, with careful and vigilant straining of eyes and ears, ever alert for the sight or sound of birds and other wildlife! Roger Clevis draws an evocative portrait of this land: "Moulded by volcanoes, the land is remarkable for its rivers, hoodoos and grasslands, its jagged mountains, deep lakes and its ice fields. The grizzlies, caribou, wild sheep, mountain goats, moose and deer still run free". This memorable trip will centre around Puntzi Lake, about 160 km west of Williams Lake along Highway 20, which is paved all the way.

Spring will still be lingering on the plateau while the warmer days of summer approach. We can expect to see a great variety of bird life along Highway 20 and at Puntzi Lake: many species of waterfowl; shorebirds; Mountain Bluebird; Horned Lark; Say's Phoebe; Empidonax flycatchers, notably Alder and Pacific-slope; Long-billed Curlew; Sharp-tailed Grouse; Prairie Falcon; Rock Wren; Lazuli Bunting; Vesper Sparrow; American White Pelican and 'la piece de resistance', Sprague's Pipit.

We will be leaving Williams Lake on Monday, June 10th. It's a birding trip so naturally the trip will leave early! We will then slowly bird our way to comfortable, shared accommodations at Barney's Lakeside Resort at Puntzi Lake for the nights of June 10th and June 11th. We will be returning to Williams Lake in the late afternoon of Wednesday, June 12th. All meals, from Monday lunch through to Wednesday lunch, are included in the price of \$300, as is accommodation and van transportation. Please bring a water bottle in anticipation of hot days, warm clothing for the cool mornings, and any favourite snacks for the daily outings. If you require a special or vegetarian diet please indicate those requirements on the registration form.

Please contact Laurie Rockwell (250)494-7558, hardrock@vip.net; or Sandra Kinsey (250) 963-8381, aa068@pgfn.bc.ca, for further information or clarification.



Bird Notes From Big Bar Lake

by Martin K. McNicholl
4735 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC V5G 1L3

Plans to hold BCFO's 2002 annual general meeting in Williams Lake in June prompted me to put a few bird notes on record from Big Bar Lake, northwest of Clinton, in case any members are seeking potential sites to visit in the vicinity before or after the meeting. During a brief visit to the west coast by my sister, Sigrid Zueff, Kevin Young proposed that we go on an overnight camping jaunt. From the greater Vancouver area, we headed north on 27 August 2000 along Highway 99 and the Duffey Lake Road through Lillooet, then headed north along Highway 97 to Clinton and northwest from there along a bumpy, gravel road to a camp site at Big Bar Lake. We camped at a site overlooking the lake, leaving in early afternoon the next day.

We had several avian visitors to our campsite on both days. Gray Jays surprised us by their absence on the 27th, but two appeared the next morning, eagerly accepting some peanuts offered to them. Two or three of their cousins, American Crows, were around on the 27th, while five to ten Common Ravens were around both days. Two or three Barn Swallows were also around our camp site both days, and flocks of four to six Mountain Chickadees visited briefly both days. Larger groups of Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers, Dark-eyed (Oregon) Juncos and Pine Siskins also visited our camp sites both days, as well as nearby areas. Three Cedar Waxwings flew over us on the 27th and four Red Crossbills on the 28th.

During a pre-breakfast walk on the 28th, I heard some Hairy Woodpecker-like calls along a trail off the south edge of the campground. I peered with and without binoculars in the direction of the calls without being able to see the caller, but soon a yellow-capped head appeared from the other side of a low stump, revealing that the caller was a Three-toed Woodpecker, not a Hairy. Although I had seen several of these woodpeckers previously, mostly in Alberta, this was the first time that I had heard one call, adding to the unexpected delight of seeing one here. After peering back at me briefly, the woodpecker began pecking for his breakfast, and I returned to our camp site for mine.

While we were having breakfast, a park official arrived with a canoe that Sigrid had arranged to rent the previous evening. Soon, we were paddling around the lake, getting closer views of one of two Common Loon adults that we had seen and heard on the lake several times that morning and the previous evening. One of the loons fed a large chick several times in our vicinity. While in the canoe, we also saw two female Hooded Mergansers on the lake, heard a Sandhill Crane calling from a boggy area near the western end of the lake, and saw a female Belted Kingfisher in the same area.

We ended our visit with a walk along the northwestern edge of the lake. In addition to several species encountered earlier, we flushed a female Ruffed Grouse with a brood of at least four downy chicks and saw a Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker as we progressed around the edge of the lake, then at a bog off the western end of the lake found two female or eclipse male Green-winged Teal, another female Hooded Merganser, at least two Common Yellowthroats, a Spotted Towhee and several Song Sparrows.

The variety of birds encountered during our brief August visit suggests that Big Bar Lake is well worth including on any birding visit to the 'Cariboo Chilcotin' area of British Columbia.



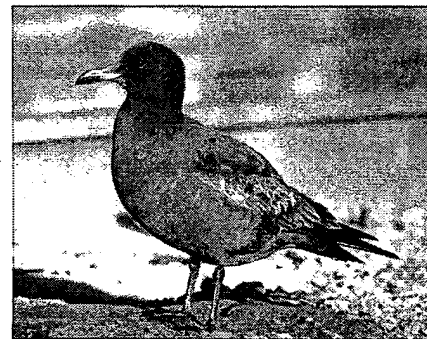
Heermann's Gull - A Good Winter Find!

by Prue Spitman
14951 - 24th Avenue
South Surrey, BC V4P 1N9

The morning of November 7, 2001 marked a routine start to our regular waterbird survey of White Rock beach, conducted monthly under the auspices of Bird Studies Canada. It was a pleasant day with sunshine still dominating the sky despite the threat of billowing clouds drifting in from the horizon. A light breeze dusted the sea yet failed to raise more than a gentle ripple. There were, however, some worrying patches of glare beginning to shade the water's surface.

Dodging the usual assortment of walkers and joggers, we moved along the promenade, pausing occasionally to record mixed parties of loons, scoters, grebes, seaducks and several species of shorebirds. Nearing the pier we were dismayed to see a wild flurry of gulls swirling around the head of a misguided soul as she offered up a bucket of bread crumbs. Glumly surveying this unwanted hive of activity we attempted a half-hearted tally; after all, this motley crew of beach scavengers had interrupted our count of 'real' birds!

Disdain changed to delight as we spotted a distinctive, very dark, almost crow-sized juvenile gull jostling gallantly through the teeming rabble of glaucous-wings and ringed-bills for its share of the spoils. My husband Bernie cranked up the 'scope's power for a closer look and we soon realized the bird in question was a first-winter Heermann's Gull, *Larus heermanni*. We have been involved in this survey since 1994 but this was a personal 'first' for us and we were pleased to add a new species to our all-time count total. Several days later, after checking the status of Heermann's, we realized that it was also a very good winter find!



Luckily the bird settled in and many seasoned birders were able to add the species to their winter lists for the first time. On December 7th, we again surveyed the White Rock beach and easily relocated the bird as it loafed on the railtracks amidst other gulls. Half-an-hour later we were surprised to find the bird standing on a grassy verge not five feet behind us, without a modicum of fear. It had become alarmingly tame and we worried then of its survival chances.

'Our' bird remained in the area long enough to star in the White Rock Christmas Bird Count on December 30th (a count 'first') and obligingly stayed around for some bleary-eyed listers on January 1, 2002 after which it mysteriously disappeared and has not been seen since.

Though Heermann's Gull may be expected as a fall visitor at certain prime sites in the Lower Mainland, at best its status only peaks to 'uncommon' on the Vancouver checklist from early August to the first week of September. In any event, the bird would not normally be looked for at White Rock, Crescent Beach or Blackie Spit at any season.

By mid-November the species becomes 'casual' and there are no records at all for Vancouver in December. This bird was in fact only one day shy of tying the all-time late winter occurrence for Heermann's Gull in the Vancouver area, that of an adult bird seen in Tsawwassen, January 2, 1969 (Crowell and Nehls - *The Birds of British Columbia*, Volume II, Wayne Campbell, et al).

Note: There is a delicious irony here; had we been birding merely for leisure, this tiresome band of beach-bums would likely not have received a second glance! There's a lot to be said for the value of methodical bird surveys.

(Thanks to Kyle Elliott and Rick Toochin for checking through all recent sightings reports) [EDITORS' NOTE: Thanks to Jo Ann MacKenzie for the photo.]



"I Didn't Do It for the Image ..."
An Interview With David Sibley

by Bruce Whittington
347 Millstream Lake Road
Victoria, BC V9B 6H5

David Sibley has had only a short time to relax before he speaks, and he works on a foccaccia sandwich while he makes a few notes. I pose a couple of tentative questions, a beginning, but abandon the tactic, to allow him to prepare. The anticipatory murmur in the lobby is drifting now into the lecture theatre, and, a few minutes later, we follow.



Sibley takes the stage, armed only with his voice, and a quiet composure. He talks, mostly about his books. His two most recent books have been twelve years in the making. The first, a field guide, has been done entirely by himself. Six *thousand* paintings, twelve years, plus another fifteen or so, planning. He hoped he might reach perhaps 50,000 birders interested enough in the book to buy it. In its first year, it has sold 600,000 and is still going strong. For his new book, a guide to bird behaviour, Sibley has recruited a team of authors, experts in their fields. But all of the illustrations, and the overall editing of the work, are Sibley's. I pull myself back from my astonishment, and make some notes.

He is not, as you might expect, a professional ornithologist. Sibley and his brother were introduced to birding by their father, who is a professional ornithologist. Many family outings, predictably, were directed at birds, and with their youthful eyes and ears, the two quickly learned to identify many species. "By the time we were in our teens," he says, "we were much better birders than our father."

When Sibley has finished his prepared comments, he invites questions from the audience. Hands shoot up, and although most of the people are birders, they want to know more about David Sibley. His favourite bird, they learn, is the Long-eared Owl, nowhere common, and a master of camouflage. If he is a self-taught artist, whose work inspires him? He has a great respect for the work of the Swedish bird artist, Lars Jonsson. The audience, I realize, is interviewing David Sibley, and I make more notes.

Sibley pursued a college education, but dropped out after a year and a half, and headed out on the road to watch birds. Living, alone, in a van for months at a time, and stopping "wherever I could park for free", he immersed himself in birds and their ways. When asked why he decided to abandon his education to become a peripatetic birder, Sibley says, "Well, I didn't do it for the image . . ." "It was," he says, as though he has only now realized it, "just exactly what I wanted to do with my life." Will he relax a little now, with these books finished? "I'm working on three more books", he explains, "and I've also started talking to people about some bird song recordings I'd like to do."

After the talk, and the signing of many books for birders in the lobby, Sibley is whisked away for a brief visit with Victoria bird artist Fenwick Lansdowne, whose work he admires. His day winds down finally when he joins a small group for a pub supper. He orders a Coke, and the conversation does not stray very far from birds.

It is now 7:30 in the morning, and, thirty-two days after September 11th, an airliner has crashed in the Borough of Queen's, New York. David Sibley has already been on the phone to his wife, who is at home in Massachusetts, with their two young sons. Sibley,

who is in the middle of his third North American tour to promote his two landmark bird guides, does not know whether he will be able to board a plane to Texas the next day, or if he even wants to. This is David Sibley, family man, and American citizen.

But we pile into the car, for a protracted trip to Swartz Bay. Sibley has seen almost all the birds there are to see in North America, but still he is keen to find some birds, perhaps learn something new about our western species. At Clover Point, he studies the Thayer's Gulls, making notes in his book while peering into the scope. He teaches me about recent research on gull hybrids in Kamchatka. A little further along, a half dozen murrelets appear, close to shore. "Marbled Murrelets, in close," he says, as they dive. "Ancient Murrelets," I blurt out, cringing at my impudence. "You're right!" he says, as they pop up again; Sibley is delighted, and I resume breathing.

We make another stop to look for a Victoria specialty, Sky Larks. As we walk a tractor road in a fallow field, a cock pheasant flushes across our path, calling. "That's one that a lot of people corrected me on", he says. "In my book I said both the male and female call, but in fact the female doesn't." He is answering questions I haven't even asked. What else is wrong with the books? "Well, there are a couple of little things," he allows, "but not much, thankfully."

About a dozen Sky Larks oblige us, but only just. Sibley perseveres, however, and manages to get a look through the scope, which is no mean feat. He is not one to pass up an opportunity. Introduced over a hundred years ago, the Sky Larks, he says, may now have evolved to become so different from their English forebears that they are now "native". This coming together of recreational birding and ornithology, I realize, is a big part of what drives the man.

We board a busy Remembrance Day weekend ferry, Sibley to relax, and enjoy some famous ferry birding, and me to ask questions. As we enter Active Pass, now designated an Important Bird Area, we see large numbers of gulls. Sibley comes to life, his binocular following one gull, then another; Bonaparte's, Mew, Western hybrid, and there's a California

His birding is fluid, and efficient, and effortless, even with thousands of birds in Active Pass. "There are two Herring Gulls here," he calls, "How common are they here?" There are Thayer's Gulls, too, identified on the wing at 60 kilometers per hour. Common Murres and Pacific Loons flop out of the ferry's way, and there is a late Heerman's Gull. In a gap between the wheeling flocks of gulls, Sibley, the touring author, lowers his binocular and asks, "Are you going to do a formal interview?"

No, I realize, I am not. To ask more questions seems almost an intrusion. At this point in his life, at least, David Sibley is ineluctably immersed in the world of birds, and his work. This is, I think, who he is, a remarkable individual, and he is doing just exactly what he wants to do with his life.



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.

Off to the Wind-Whipped Waters!

BCFO's second pelagic birding venture out into the Pacific Ocean off the northern tip of Vancouver Island has now been arranged. Members will be invited again this year to board *Naiad Explorer* in Port McNeill for an all-day trip in search of what are certainly some of British Columbia's most challenging and exciting birds to see and study.



The trip is scheduled for **Saturday, September 7, 2002**, to depart from **Mackay Whale Watching in Port McNeill**. We want to board the sleek and speedy 55-foot *Naiad Explorer* at **0700h sharp**, and head directly toward Triangle Island and beyond. Late morning and afternoon westerlies can be a factor in those waters in early September. They somewhat limited our travels last year, but participants came home satisfied enough that virtually all want to try it again. This year our strategy is to beat the winds by getting away earlier, running full out to get well offshore (stopping along the way only for exceptional birds

or marine mammals), then chumming and searching the 'best' waters for a few hours. We can then run back with the wind at our stern and look for the in-shore species that we may have passed in the morning. With any luck, the seas will remain calm all day, but don't forget your rain gear and warm clothing.

There were more than 20 people who registered too late for the 2001 trip and were disappointed. Because this newsletter takes longer to get to those of you in the more remote parts of the province, we have decided that **applications will be accepted only on May 1 and later**. In this way, everyone has an equal opportunity. The first **33 members** to register will be guaranteed a position. A standby list will be kept to fill cancellations. You will be notified of your position, so **please include you phone number and email address with your application**.

The cost will be the same as last year - **\$125 per member, \$100 for student members in high school or younger**. The cost includes 10 hours on the water, and coffee, juices, warm soup and sandwiches on board. A **cheque** must be mailed **after May 1 and before July 31, payable to Bryan Gates** and addressed to:

Bryan Gates, President BCFO
3085 Uplands Road
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6B3

Participants should arrive in Port McNeill on Friday, September 6 and be prepared to stay through Sunday, September 8 in case we are weathered out on Saturday. **Accommodations will be your responsibility**. Two choices include the **Haida Way Motor Inn (250) 956-3373** and the **Dellwood Motel (250) 956-3304**. Book well in advance. Camping facilities are available in and around Port McNeill.

As with all BCFO field trips, you must be prepared to sign a liability release form. The *Naiad Explorer* and MacKay Whale Watching are fully insured for group travel. More details about the boat can be found in *B.C. BIRDING*, March 2001 (Vol. 11, No. 1).

Bryan R. Gates, President
bgates@pacificcoast.net



Fort Nelson Extension**25-28 June 2001**by Tony Greenfield
P.O. Box 319
Sechelt, BC V0N 3A0

After another very successful AGM in Dawson Creek, 34 BCFO members departed intrepidly from Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway for a five day extension to the Fort Nelson area, a further 500 kms up the highway. Dawson Creek is in the Boreal Plains ecoregion of BC, an extension of the Prairies, with its aspen parklands, potholes, wheatfields and grain elevators. Immediately north of Fort St. John the landscape changes to a predominantly white spruce forest interspersed with black spruce muskegs. This is the Boreal Black and White Spruce biogeoclimatic subzone. The area east of Fort Nelson is also known as the Fort Nelson Lowlands.

Most of the 'Peace specialty' bird species, particularly the so-called 'Eastern' warblers were duly recorded at the AGM in Dawson Creek. As expected Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers were not reported there, and these two species became the main target species for the extension as they are regular in the Fort Nelson area.

About an hour after leaving Mile 0, our first stop was at Charlie Lake, just north of Fort St. John. This is always a productive birding spot, but maybe less so since the local municipality saw fit to pave a diverse, adjacent wetland at the head of the lake to create an RV park. On the morning of 25th June we recorded 33 species in a little over an hour, with a flock of 1000+ Franklin's Gulls wheeling noisily overhead, truly giving the impression that we were on the Prairies.

Twenty minutes after leaving Charlie Lake the Extension got off to a dream start when sharp eyes spotted a Great Gray Owl roosting on a fencepost right beside the highway. Leisurely views of this spectacular Northern icon were obtained by everyone.

Pink Mountain at Mile 140, is halfway between Dawson Creek and Fort Nelson. The mountain itself, an outlier of the Northern Rockies, is visible from the Alaska Highway but requires a side trip of 20 kms up a steep, rough, switchbacking road. The weather and road conditions were deemed to be satisfactory for making the trip and we later thanked ourselves for taking the time and effort to do so. Pink Mountain, elevation 1787 metres, affords access to alpine habitat, and all three ptarmigan species have been recorded there. Once in the alpine the 34 participants fanned out over the tundra-like mountaintop to try and locate a ptarmigan. Luck was with us, and a pair of Rock Ptarmigan were discovered close to the road, and once again everyone had great views of this sought-after species. Other birds seen here were typical alpine/sub-alpine species: - Horned Lark, American Pipit, Hermit Thrush, Dark-eyed Junco and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Our first destination on Day 2 was the Fort Nelson Community Forest where we found a variety of warblers including Magnolia, Tennessee, Yellow-rumped, Black-and-White, American Redstart and Ovenbird. The star however, seen by most, was an immaculate male Bay-breasted, observed at eye-level. Other species seen here were Rose-breasted Grosbeak and a flock of White-winged Crossbills. Close to the gate we had observed a Pileated Woodpecker nest in an aspen, with three large and very noisy young. Before we left an even noisier scene developed as a Pine Marten appeared, with obvious designs on the young birds. Amazingly, the marten proceeded to stretch out on a short branch in front of 34 people, and just lay there for five minutes. The adult Pileated now set up an even more strident harangue to try and drive off the predator while making short aggressive flights in the direction of the marten. Eventually it was successful, as the marten thought better of tangling with that fearsome Pileated bill, and departed for easier prospects.

Our next stop was at the airport where a previously reported Upland Sandpiper obliged and made a number of people very happy. A pair of Sandhill Cranes were also present. Before lunch we visited a mixed forest, riparian habitat by the Muskwa River,

and in addition to various warblers we had good views of another sought after species - Philadelphia Vireo.

In the afternoon our first destination was Parker Lake, just north of Fort Nelson, at Mile 310. To our great delight sharp eyes detected a single SABINE'S GULL flying with the many Bonaparte's - a vagrant species in this area, and one of the least likely species we ever expected to record on this trip. Then we drove north to Kledo Creek Provincial Park at Mile 336, traditionally a good location for Bay-breasted Warbler. We were hindered here by a rainstorm, and the habitat has been somewhat depleted by recent logging of the adjacent white spruce stands. However, we eventually found the warbler high in a tall balsam poplar.

That night in Fort Nelson, Mike and Sharon Toochin who were birding independently in the area, arrived to announce they had discovered an unbelievable species at the airport. Thus, early the next morning, 34 BCFO'ers plus Mike and Sharon, were lined up at the chain link fence by the control tower at Fort Nelson airport, where much to our chagrin, when we needed silence, Navcan had a large jet idling noisily away on the runway. Despite this, the combined eyes and ears of the gathered assembly eventually managed to relocate a species that few ever expected to see in BC - a SPRAGUE'S PIPIT. Initially it was high in the sky, performing its flutter flight and singing its tinkling Canyon Wren-like song. Then it dropped to the ground into some medium length grass, beside the runway, and immediately in front of us. We managed to locate it in the grass, and telescopes gave us partial views of its head. At this point murmurs of frustration inspired Elise Rudland to knock on the door of the airport control tower which was only a few metres away ... and that is how one of the most unlikely scenes in BC ornithological history unfolded ... 36 birders standing on a balcony of the Fort Nelson airport control tower staring down with scopes and binoculars at a SPRAGUE'S PIPIT. Thanks Elise, and thanks also to the air traffic controller who no doubt bent a few rules to allow this to happen.

In mid-morning we made the short drive to the Fort Nelson sewage lagoon. What birding trip would be complete without a trip to the sewage lagoon? The one kilometre road into the lagoon was vegetated either side with aspen and willows and it was here in this unlikely spot, that a striking male Cape May Warbler made an appearance and was well seen by almost everyone.

In the afternoon we revisited Parker Lake in hopes of locating Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, or Palm Warbler, before heading up to Mile 326 and turning north on the Liard Highway towards the Northwest Territories. Stops were made at various ponds and beaver dams looking for Rusty Blackbird - to no avail - but Bohemian Waxwing was a nice addition to our list. It was at the Bohemian Waxwing location that an extraordinary event unfolded - a series of loud cracking noises from the bush on the other side of the road, followed soon after, by a giant aspen crashing to the ground uncomfortably close to the group. Given that the day was dead calm, the chance of this happening at the exact moment when our group was standing right there must be infinitesimal. Perhaps about the same chance as being at the Fort Nelson airport when a Sprague's Pipit shows up!

The fourth day had been planned for a visit to the alpine at Stone Mountain Provincial Park at Mile 400 of the Alaska Highway. However, BC Parks had recently locked a gate at the bottom of the road to prevent the poaching of caribou and that meant a long hike. A call to BC Parks redirected us to similar habitat on the Nonda Creek Road at Mile 428. At a microwave tower atop the mountain a wintry wind was howling, but our group spread out again, and within an hour we had recorded a group of three Willow Ptarmigan, American Pipit, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire and Northern Harrier. On the descent through the sub-alpine zone sharp ears detected a different sounding thrush and an intensive effort produced convincing sights and sounds that this was indeed a GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, another species not expected on this trip. The same stop also produced Blackpoll Warbler and American Tree Sparrow. Before this trip no-one was aware of the Nonda Creek Road as a birding destination, but if Gray-cheeked Thrush proves to be regular there, it may well be the most accessible location in the province for the species. On the return

journey two more Great Gray Owls were spotted in a meadow just north of Fort Nelson, to conclude a very successful day.

The Extension officially ended in Fort Nelson, but most of the group birded their way back to Dawson Creek the following day. The consensus was that this was a highly successful and enjoyable trip. The birds were great, with most of the target birds, such as Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers, Upland Sandpiper, Rock and Willow Ptarmigan, and Great Gray Owl being found. The trip was highlighted by the stunning rarity, Sprague's Pipit, the unexpected Sabine's Gull, and the Gray-cheeked Thrush which constitutes a significant extension of the known range of this species in BC. On the negative side of the ledger, the two species, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Connecticut Warbler, that have frequently been the bane of BC birders, eluded us once again. A total of 118 species were observed on the trip.

Apart from the birds, this was a great group of people to travel with. Special thanks are due to leader Bryan Gates, to van drivers Bryan Gates and Rand Rudland, to Mike Toochnin for his skill in spotting the Sprague's Pipit and sharing it with us, and to Elise Rudland for working her magic with the control tower.

Having ventured as far as Mile 428 on the Alaska Highway, it now seems logical for BCFO to contemplate a visit to even further northern destinations. Haines Road, the Yukon, the Dempster Highway, Herschel Island anyone?

AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE

Chris Charlesworth

Chris, a member of the Central Okanagan Naturalists Club, has been birding in the Okanagan for about 7 years. He has lead many groups birding in the area and welcomes calls from interested visiting birders.

Tony Greenfield

Former president of the BCFO, Tony has been an active birder on the Sunshine Coast, and around the province, for over 20 years.

Jeremy Kimm

Bio not received by publication deadline - Jeremy was probably out chasing raptors.

Martin K. McNicholl

Martin, our present Journal editor, has had an interest in birds from early childhood. An author or co-author of over 200 publications, and board member of 28 organizations, Martin continues his work as an ornithological field researcher.

Guy L. Monty

A native of Washington State, Guy emigrated to Canada in 1990. Since then, he has lived at varied locations in B.C. as diverse as the Sunshine Coast, Ootsa Lake in the Central Interior, and all over Vancouver Island, working as a logger, ranch foreman, wildlife technician, and birding guide.

Prue Spitman

Prue first became interested in birds during her childhood in England. She and her husband Bernie are now retired and pleased that work no longer impedes their pursuit of birding. Until recently, Prue was a Rare Bird Alert operator for the Vancouver Natural History Society.

Bruce Whittington

Bruce, a very keen birder, is the current president of the Victoria Natural History Society and is also executive director of the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT).

2002 Interior Swan Count

prepared by Rick Howie, 8 February 2002

Foreword

January 13, 2002 marked the 29th annual Interior Swan count. Ninety-seven members / friends of ten naturalist clubs affiliated with the Federation of BC Naturalists tallied traditional areas in the drainages of the Thompson, Shuswap, Okanagan, Nicola, Kootenay, Columbia, Slokan, Crooked, Stuart and Nautley Rivers. The totals were 178 Tundra Swans, 692 Trumpeter Swans and one Mute Swan and 18 unidentified for a grand total of 889 birds.

In order to avoid confusing the trend data already established for the southern interior count, I am going to maintain separate sections to deal with the central interior, southern interior and West Kootenays.

Southern Interior

The total number of all species in the southern interior count area was 687 birds. This is well below the highest count which exceeded 1000 birds, but it is nonetheless a very respectable total. It is possible that generally mild weather around the interior did not push as many Trumpeters swans south this year, allowing more Tundra Swans to winter on the South Thompson River.

The tally of 178 Tundra Swans was an increase over past years, but nowhere near historic high counts that have exceeded 600 birds. Juveniles comprised 14% of the population which is within the 6-29% range that has been recorded over earlier periods of the count. The ten year average for juveniles during the period 1973-83 was about 26%.

Trumpeter Swans totaled 490 birds. Juveniles comprised 13% of the population which is below the average of 21% that we have seen in past years.

The 18 unidentified birds on the Shuswap River were likely Trumpeter Swans but both species are possible there, so the observers were appropriately cautious in their identification.

The lone Mute Swan on Nicola Lake is a resident bird that has been in the Nicola Valley for a few years now, but often vanishes or becomes hard to find during most winters.

Water Levels and Other Habitat Comments

Water levels in the South Thompson River were close to the long-term average and icing conditions were not limiting in any way. The number of birds on the river was not significantly above average.

Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		MUTE	TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv		
A	0	0	11	0	1	12
B	0	0	2	0	0	2
C	87	9	92	15	0	203
D	3	0	103	20	0	126
E	1	0	56	2	0	59
F	0	0	14	2	0	16
G	6	0	56	9	(+18 unid. Swans)	89
H	2	0	54	8		64
I	33	8	15	5	0	61
J	0	0	6	0	0	6
K	0	0	3	0	0	3
L	0	0	7	3	0	10
M	11	6	0	0	0	17
N	10	2	7	0	0	19

O	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q	0	0	0	0	0	NC
R	0	0	0	0	0	0
S	0	0	0	0	0	0
T	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	153	25	426	64	1 (+ 18 un)	687

Central Interior Counts

Eight naturalist club members conducted the central interior tally with three areas being counted this year. They were from Prince George to the Nautley River, the Crooked River and the Stuart River. 188 Trumpeters were located with 169 adults and 19 immatures making up the count. The 11% juveniles seems low.

Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
C-A			38	0	38
C-B			15	1	16
C-C			116	18	134
Totals			169	19	188

West Kootenay

Two people tallied the Slocan River and part of the Kootenay River to tally 14 Trumpeter Swans. Thirty-six percent were juveniles, but with the small total numbers and brief history for this count, it is difficult to place this figure into a trend context.

Results by Area

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
K-A					NC
K-B	0	0	0	0 (partial count)	0
K-C					NC
K-D					NC
K-E	0	0	0	0	0
K-F	0	0	9	5	14
Totals	0	0	9	5	14

See pages 25-26 for area descriptions and participants.

2002 Interior Eagle Count

prepared by Rick Howie, 13 February 2002

Forward

On January 13, 2002, 97 members of 10 interior naturalist clubs (FBCN affiliates) conducted an eagle count in conjunction with the annual swan count. They tallied traditional areas in the drainages of the Thompson, Shuswap, Okanagan, Nicola, Kootenay, Columbia, Slocan, Crooked, Stuart and Nautley Rivers. The totals for all areas were 249 Bald Eagles (166 adult, 83 immature), 16 Golden Eagles (15 adult, 1 immature) and four unidentified for a total of 269 birds of both species. In 2001, we had 243 individuals of all species. The following summary will be discussed by broad geographic areas.

Southern Interior

In the southern interior 228 Bald Eagles (147 adults, 81 sub-adults) were tallied along with 16 Golden Eagles (15 adult, 1 sub-adult) and four unidentified for a total of 248 birds. In 2001, we had 178 Bald Eagles, which was the highest count to date, and ten Golden Eagles for a total of 238 birds.

The sub-adults comprised 35.5% of the Bald Eagle total which is within the range of 20-38% that we have noted over the first six years of counting. The one sub-adult Golden represented 6% of the total, and these numbers have varied from 0-33% over the years, with sub-adults seldom being reported.

The Bald Eagle count seems to be on an upward trend which is encouraging and consistent with a general increase in the populations in the west.

1995(116)	1997(116)	1999(156)	2001(178)
1996(164)	1998(163)	2000(168)	2002(228)

Again, some areas were not counted this year, which I am sure would have put us to a new record high if they had been surveyed. I also know of other eagle concentrations which have gone uncounted to date and I am sure that if we wanted to embrace a larger group of eagle watchers, we could expand our knowledge considerably. Conditions for spotting Golden Eagles seemed generally much better than during some years. I suspect the wide-ranging nature of this species during the winter combined with variable surveying conditions make it difficult to obtain consistent data.

Results by Area

AREA	BALD EAGLE		GOLDEN EAGLE		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
A	12	5	0	0	17
B	0	0	0	0	0
C	11	14	3	0	28
D	8	9	1	0	18
E	4	5	0	0	9
F	1	0	0	0	1
G	2	0	0	0	2
H	22	1	0	0	23 +1 unidentified
I	12	11	2	0	25 +1 unidentified
J	9	2	0	0	11
K	7	0	0	0	7
L	0	1	0	0	1
M	12	8	0	0	20
N	11	5	0	0	16
O	3	7	0	0	10
P	10	1	2	0	13
Q	0	0	0	0	NC
R	13	2	7	1	23 +2 unidentified
S	10	10	0	0	20
Totals	147	81	15	1	248

Central Interior

The central interior counts tallied 12 Bald Eagles (11 adults, 1 sub-adult) and no Golden Eagles. Nine percent juveniles is below the range noted for more southern wintering populations. As more counts and information is received from these areas, more comments about trends will be possible, and comments are welcomed from the Prince George surveyors.

Results by Area

AREA	BALD EAGLE		GOLDEN EAGLE		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
C-A	8	1	0	0	9
C-B	1		0	0	1
C-C	2	0	0	0	2
Totals	11	1	0	0	12

West Kootenay

The survey area was somewhat smaller this year than last, but eight adult and one sub-adult Bald Eagles were tallied. This total will undoubtedly be exceeded in subsequent years.

AREA	BALD EAGLE		GOLDEN EAGLE		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
K-A					NC
K-B	6	1	0	0 (partial count)	7
K-C					NC
K-D					NC
K-E	0	0	0	0	0
K-F	2	0	0	0	2
Totals	8	1	0	0	9

Area Descriptions (for both Swan and Eagle Counts)

A	Merritt to Douglas Lake
B	South Thompson River - Kamloops Lake east to Hwy. #5
C	South Thompson River - Hwy. #5 to cement plant
D	South Thompson River - cement plant to Pritchard
E	South Thompson River - Pritchard to Chase
F	Chase to Anglemont - Little and Big Shuswap Lakes
G	Tappen to Sicamous - Shuswap Lake
H	Sicamous to Enderby - Shuswap River, Mara Lake
I	Peachland to Osoyoos and USA border
J	Mabel Lake
K	Enderby to Mabel Lake - Shuswap River
L	Kamloops Lake to Savona
M	Kelowna Area - Okanagan Lake
N	Vernon Area - Okanagan Lake
O	Sterling Creek - Princeton - Allison Lake
P	Osoyoos - Sterling Creek along Similkameen drainage
Q	Adams Lake
R	Kettle River - Christian Valley
S	Merritt to Spences Bridge
T	Kamloops to Nicola Lake - Hwy. #5a
C-A	Prince George to Nautley River
C-B	Crooked River
C-C	Stuart River
K-A	Columbia River - Castlegar - Trail area
K-B	Kootenay River - Castlegar to Nelson
K-C	Kootenay Lake - Nelson to Kokanee Creek Park
K-D	Kootenay Lake - Kokanee Park to Balfour
K-E	Slocan River - Shoreacres to Lemon Creek
K-F	Slocan River - Lemon Creek to Slocan City

Participants for both Swan and Eagle Counts**Kamloops Area**

George Gardner, Willy Haras, Rick Howie, Wayne Jennings, Janet Killoran, Eric McAlary, Andy Raniseth, Syd Roberts

Shuswap Area

Claudette Carlson, Eileen Fogarascher, Mr. & Mrs. Griggs, Doris Kime, Frank Kime, Marg MacDonald, Dave MacDonald, Rolland Melhaupt, Mr. & Mrs. Noakes, Archie Phillips, Joan Phillips, Mr. & Mrs. Robinson, Lillian Smiley, Vi Spencer

Vernon Area

Kay Bartholomew, Peter Blokker, Candis Eikermann, Carol Faudrey, Carey Faudrey, Phil Jones, Terry Lodge, Daphne Manning, Peter Mayfield, Pat McAllister, Virginia McLean, Ernie McNaughton, Bob McVicar, Chuck Pecor, John Quirk, Shirley Quirk, Peter Springer.

Kelowna Area

Howard Braun, Chris Charlesworth, Bill Cutfield, Cecil Dillabough, Elke Fischer, Walter Fischer, Trevor Forder, Rick Gee, Alice Hargreaves, Don Latta, Judy Latta, Nettie Overhoff, Ryan Tomlinson, Judy Thoms, Hugh Westheuser, Pat Westheuser, Gwynneth Wilson

South Okanagan Area

Grace Andrade, Charlie Duncan, Eva Durance, Freda Easy, Rae Fowler, Jim Ginns, Bev Harding, Kathryn McCourt, Donna McDermat, Lee McFadgen, Arlene Reid, Pat Reid, Laurie Rockwell, Glenda Ross

Sicamous - Enderby Area

Dick Mann, Miki Mann, Sheryl vanDusen

Princeton Area

Eileen Logan, Trish Reid, Madeline Schouten, Paul Wylie

Lower Nicola Valley

Cathy Crack, Dave Crack

Upper Nicola Valley

Wayne Weber

Kettle River

Bruce Morgenstern, Pearl Morgenstern

Prince George - Nautley River & Stuart Rivers

Helen Antoniazzi, Dan Dunlop, Todd Heakes, Nancy Krueger

Crooked River

Ivan Cartwright, Medea Curteanu, Sandra Hepburn, Laird Law

West Kootenays

Sharon Lelliott, Gary Lelliott



B.C. Field Ornithologists 12th AGM
Saturday/Sunday Morning Field Trips - June 8/9, 2002

1. Field Trip to Horsefly Bay on Quesnel Lake *(This field trip will leave at 6 am.)*

Horsefly Bay lies near the west end of Quesnel Lake, on the edge of the interior wetbelt. The Horsefly River drains into the bay, and the resulting estuary marshes and riparian bottomland are bordered by Cedar, Hemlock and Spruce forests. The Bay is a dramatic departure from the central Cariboo grasslands. Resident birds include Steller's Jay, Winter Wren and Chestnut-backed Chickadee. June sees the arrival of Magnolia Warblers and American Redstarts. This is an area with great potential but has had very little birding coverage.

2. Field Trip to Becher's Prairie and Farwell Canyon *(This field trip will leave at 6 am.)*

Becher's Prairie and Farwell Canyon are located west of Williams Lake near Riske Creek on Highway 20. The route will traverse a variety of bird habitats including interior Douglas-fir forest, open grasslands, and numerous small ponds and riparian areas. Avian species which may be observed include Lewis's Woodpecker, White-throated Swift, Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Long-billed Curlew, plovers, godwits, phalarope, White Pelicans, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Marsh Wren, Horned Larks and Mountain Bluebirds. The trip should supply observations of abundant waterfowl species as well as an Eared Grebe nesting colony. An extra bonus may be the chance to view a herd of California bighorn sheep.

3. Field Trip along the Dog Creek Road *(This field trip will leave at 6 am.)*

This trip will provide birding opportunities at several stops on the Dog Creek road between Williams Lake and Dog Creek. We will stop at a few lakes near Springhouse to view waterfowl. At the Reidmann Bird Sanctuary at Alkali Lake pelicans, grebes, ducks and geese may be observed. Lewis's Woodpecker and Long-billed Curlew may be seen in the grasslands further along. At a stop at a higher elevation overlooking the Fraser River buteos and eagles can be expected. Descending into the valley at Dog Creek we will check out species in the valley bottom and along the cliffs; possibilities include Prairie Falcon, Peregrine Falcon and species of flycatchers, warblers and sparrows.

4. Field Trip to Walker Valley *(This field trip will leave at 6 am.)*

Walker Valley is a small valley extending north from the 108 Mile Ranch subdivision northwest toward Lac La Hache. The valley has extensive ponds and wetlands, and most of the warm aspect slopes are grasslands. Upland areas are forested with Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine and aspen. Part of the valley is adjacent to the 108 Ranch subdivision and forms part of the protected 'greenbelt' for the Ranch. Birds are plentiful in the valley and local birders have listed over 80 species. Field trip participants can expect to see nesting Black Terns and Eared Grebes, Eastern Kingbirds, Mountain Bluebirds, Western Tanagers, and many species of waterfowl and warbler. Sandhill cranes are often seen feeding in the wetland areas. The dry Douglas-fir and lodgepole pine forests around the valley are home to various woodpeckers and flycatchers, grouse and other species. Participants will leave Williams Lake at 6 am and meet at the Heritage Centre entrance for the 108 Mile Ranch subdivision on Highway 97 (about 50 minutes of traveling time). The entrance is signed on the highway, and has a parking area and washroom. The field trip leaders will meet you at the parking lot and take you to Walker Valley.

**For all four trips the field trip participants should arrive back
in Williams Lake at about 11 am.**

Scout Island Nature Centre

For participants coming to Williams Lake early, birding at the Scout Island Nature Centre is recommended. With the variety of habitats and migration of several bird species at this time of the year through the Williams Lake River Valley there should be opportunities to enjoy birding along the trails of the Nature Centre.



BIRD-LISTER'S CORNER

by Ken Morgan

And the Gold Medal goes to.....the Okanagan!

Welcome back to Lister's Corner. This year 46 contributors submitted lists - this increase in participation reverses a 2 year trend of declining submissions. Perhaps there is more interest in listing than what had been suggested. Thank you contributors.

So...what was I going on about regarding the Okanagan receiving the Gold Medal? In the spirit of the recent Olympic Games, I decided to see what area was **Best Birded**. For each area (excluding World totals) I calculated the average percentage of birds seen based upon the top 4 reported numbers. And the Okanagan area scored highest (87.7%) followed closely by BC (86.9%). Although this crude measure is filled with many biases (e.g., locations of several of BC's top birders, birding destination targeted by many, etc.,) I did find the exercise enlightening. It suggested that many areas are very well birded whereas others (e.g., the Queen Charlotte Islands, Kamloops, and the West Kootenay areas) receive far less attention. Sure, you can argue that it is difficult and expensive to travel to the Charlottes, but why are some other areas so poorly explored? I have my own views on this, but I would love to hear yours. Why not send your thoughts to the editors? They are always pleased to print letters from our membership.

In less than 24 hours I will be heading to Santa Barbara, California to attend the annual Pacific Seabird Group meeting. Although the week will be spent primarily inside, I have signed up for a field trip to find California Condors! And in April, I head down to Texas for another week - this time strictly birding. Having never birded in Texas (nor most other states) I expect to significantly increase my ABA total this year. And so, here's a challenge. I challenge all listers to rack up the biggest percentage increase in ONE area. The winner will be announced a year from now. The prize? The admiration and respect (and perhaps even some jealousy) of all your fellow listers.

Regular contributors may have noticed that I did not carry forward totals for those individuals who contributed last year but either forgot to send me their lists or they did not report on some of the areas they included last year. In previous years, I have carried forward those orphans but I have elected not to do so any longer. If a person doesn't send me their totals, their numbers from the previous report will not be listed.

One final comment - several areas including Princeton (especially), the Charlottes, West Kootenays and Creston Valley may be dropped next year if there aren't a few more contributors. So, if you feel passionate about seeing those areas in this article and as of yet have not sent in totals for those same locations, please do so next year.

Have a great year birding!

Listing Totals To 31 December 2001**World (9808 species)**

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Hue MacKenzie	3816	38.9	Laird Law	1343	13.7
Jo Ann MacKenzie	3813	38.9	Bryan Gates	1311	13.4
David Stirling	3610	36.8	Eric Tull	1270	12.9
Keith Riding	2915	29.7	Don Wilson	970	9.9
Ron Walker	2893	29.5	Andy Buhler	858	8.7
Stefan Zaremba	2670	27.2	Marilyn Buhler	856	8.7
Mike Tootchin	2578	26.3	John Sprague	815	8.3
Dick Cannings	2537	25.9	Wayne Weber	726	7.4
Barbara Begg	2330	23.8	Val George	712	7.3
Ken Taylor	1349	13.8	Ken Morgan	560	5.7

A.B.A Area (918 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Mike Tootchin	752	81.9	Bill Cutfield	557	60.7
Stefan Zarembo	712	77.6	Don Wilson	551	60.0
Hank Vanderpol	710	77.3	Barbara Begg	548	59.7
Jo Ann MacKenzie	700	76.3	Martin McNicholl	518	56.4
Hue MacKenzie	693	75.5	Ron Walker	516	56.2
David Stirling	663	72.2	Chris Charlesworth	503	54.8
Wayne Weber	660	71.9	Ken Klimko	501	54.6
Eric Tull	644	70.2	Andy Buhler	500	54.5
Russ Tkachuk	638	69.5	Marilyn Buhler	500	54.5
Eric MacBean	615	67.0	Ken Taylor	456	49.7
Audrey Viken	601	65.5	Laird Law	452	49.2
Keith Riding	599	65.3	Larry Cowan	445	48.5
Tony Greenfield	596	64.9	Murray Brown	444	48.4
John Kalman	585	63.7	Ken Morgan	434	47.3
Marika Ainley	580	63.2	Laure Neish	406	44.2
John Sprague	579	63.1	Dannie Carsen	397	43.2
Dorothy Copp	577	62.9	Peter Blokker	392	43.1
Mabel Crocker	574	62.5	Rand Rudland	370	40.3
Lloyd Esralson	574	62.5	Guy Monty	364	39.7
Dick Cannings	561	61.1	Randy Rawluk	324	35.3
Bryan Gates	558	60.8	Laurie Rockwell	314	34.2
Avg. = 78.3%					

Canada (634 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Hue MacKenzie	511	80.6	Bill Cutfield	414	65.3
Jo Ann MacKenzie	511	80.6	Lloyd Esralson	413	65.1
David Stirling	482	76.0	Larry Cowan	410	64.7
Mike Tootchin	481	75.9	Bryan Gates	408	64.4
Eric Tull	479	75.6	Don Wilson	388	61.2
Marika Ainley	464	73.2	Peter Blokker	385	60.7
Wayne Weber	454	71.6	John Sprague	385	60.7
Eric MacBean	453	71.5	Murray Brown	384	60.6
Dick Cannings	448	70.7	Laird Law	363	57.3
Stefan Zarembo	442	69.7	Rand Rudland	360	56.8
Russ Tkachuk	440	69.4	Guy Monty	359	56.6
Martin McNicholl	436	68.8	Ron Walker	359	56.6
Hank Vanderpol	435	68.6	Andy Buhler	342	53.9
Audrey Viken	433	68.3	Marilyn Buhler	342	53.9
Mike McGrenere	428	67.5	Mabel Crocker	334	52.7
John Kalman	427	67.4	Brian Stech	334	52.7
Barb Begg	426	67.2	Dannie Carsen	332	52.4
Ken Morgan	420	66.2	Laure Neish	313	49.4
Keith Riding	419	66.1	Laurie Rockwell	309	48.3
Tony Greenfield	415	65.5			
Avg. = 78.3%					

British Columbia (484 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Mike Tootchin	432	89.3	Don Wilson	359	74.2
Jo Ann MacKenzie	421	86.9	Ken Morgan	356	73.6
Hue MacKenzie	418	86.4	Guy Monty	353	72.9
David Stirling	412	85.1	Chris Charlesworth	352	72.7
Wayne Weber	407	84.1	Murray Brown	347	71.7
Tony Greenfield	401	82.9	Ron Walker	347	71.7
Dick Cannings	391	80.8	Andy Buhler	338	69.8
Hank Vanderpol	389	80.4	Marilyn Buhler	338	69.8

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT (cont)
Bryan Gates	385	79.5	Laird Law	338	69.8
Russ Tkachuk	384	79.3	Eric Tull	331	68.4
Keith Riding	377	77.9	Dannie Carsen	328	67.8
Eric MacBean	375	77.5	Peter Blokker	326	67.4
Audrey Viken	374	77.3	Rand Rudland	326	67.4
Lloyd Esralson	373	77.1	Martin McNicholl	325	67.1
Barb Begg	372	76.9	John Vooy	321	66.3
John Kalman	371	76.7	Marika Ainley	315	65.1
Mike McGrenere	369	76.2	John Sprague	311	64.3
Stefan Zarembo	368	76.0	Ken Taylor	310	64.0
Larry Cowan	361	74.6	Laurie Rockwell	306	63.2
Ken Klimko	361	74.6	Bill Cutfield	299	61.8
Val George	360	74.4	Randy Rawluk	255	52.7

Avg. = 86.9%

Alberta (394 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Eric Tull	340	86.3	Laure Neish	220	55.8
David Stirling	284	72.1	Dick Cannings	208	52.8
Mike Toochin	257	65.2	Guy Monty	176	44.7
Audrey Viken	243	61.7	Peter Blokker	175	44.4
Martin McNicholl	241	61.2	Larry Cowan	139	35.3
Jo Ann MacKenzie	239	60.7	Don Wilson	129	32.7
Wayne Weber	235	59.6	Ken Morgan	123	31.2
Bryan Gates	222	56.3	John Sprague	84	21.3

Avg. = 71.3%

Vancouver Island (387 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
David Stirling	324	83.7	Ken Morgan	266	68.7
Hank Vanderpol	321	82.9	Wayne Weber	252	65.1
Bryan Gates	318	82.2	Hue MacKenzie	246	63.6
Barb Begg	315	81.4	Jo Ann MacKenzie	246	63.6
Mike McGrenere	312	80.6	Larry Cowan	178	46.0
Dannie Carsen	271	70.0	John Sprague	174	45.0
Guy Monty	268	69.3	Lloyd Esralson	162	41.9

Avg. = 82.6%

Queen Charlotte Islands (250 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Ken Morgan	134	53.6	Bryan Gates	74	29.6
Val George	125	50.0	Chris Charlesworth	58	23.2

Avg. = 39.1%

Vancouver Checklist Area (406 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Mike Toochin	345	85.0	John Kalman	288	70.9
Jo Ann MacKenzie	338	83.3	Dick Cannings	284	70.0
Hue MacKenzie	334	82.3	Audrey Viken	282	69.5
Eric MacBean	327	80.5	David Stirling	241	59.4
Wayne Weber	326	80.3	Bryan Gates	235	57.9
Keith Riding	309	76.1	Don Wilson	229	56.4
Lloyd Esralson	305	75.1	John Vooy	223	54.9
Stefan Zarembo	304	74.9	Guy Monty	221	54.4
Larry Cowan	291	71.7	Chris Charlesworth	213	52.5
Ken Klimko	290	71.4	John Sprague	106	26.1

Avg. = 82.8%

Victoria Checklist Area (362 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
David Stirling	312	86.2	Mike Toochin	237	65.5
Hank Vanderpol	310	85.6	Wayne Weber	233	64.4
Bryan Gates	306	84.5	Guy Monty	221	61.0
Barb Begg	303	83.7	Lloyd Esralson	131	36.2
Mike McGrenere	299	82.6	Larry Cowan	126	34.8
Dannie Carsen	261	72.1			

Avg. = 85.0%

Okanagan Valley (319 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Chris Charlesworth	291	91.2	Tony Greenfield	228	71.5
Dick Cannings	283	88.7	Laird Law	206	64.6
Don Wilson	279	87.5	Ken Klimko	198	62.1
Laurie Rockwell	266	83.4	Lloyd Esralson	194	60.8
Mike Toochin	258	80.9	Audry Viken	191	59.9
Wayne Weber	254	79.6	Russ Tkachuk	188	58.9
Bill Cutfield	252	79.0	Bryan Gates	186	58.3
Peter Blokker	251	78.7	Dannie Carsen	175	54.9
Laure Neish	242	75.9	Guy Monty	167	52.4
David Stirling	239	74.9	Rand Rudland	163	51.1
Hue MacKenzie	236	74.0	Larry Cowan	158	49.5
Jo Ann MacKenzie	233	73.0	John Sprague	131	41.1

Avg. = 87.7%

Princeton Area (251 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Chris Charlesworth	114	45.4	Bryan Gates	87	34.7

Kamloops Checklist Area (295 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Wayne Weber	250	84.7	Guy Monty	102	34.6
David Stirling	198	67.1	Don Wilson	91	30.8
Chris Charlesworth	156	52.9			

Avg. = 59.8%

Sunshine Coast (286 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Tony Greenfield	258	90.2	Wayne Weber	136	47.6
Russ Tkachuk	236	82.5	Chris Charlesworth	104	36.4
Rand Rudland	212	74.1	Larry Cowan	83	29.0

Avg. = 73.6%

West Kootenay Area (285 species)

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

Avg. = 58.1%

Prince George Checklist Area (274 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Laird Law	251	91.6	Bryan Gates	91	33.2
Don Wilson	190	69.3	Larry Cowan	82	29.9
Chris Charlesworth	157	57.3	John Sprague	68	24.8
Wayne Weber	111	40.5			

Avg. = 64.7%

Creston Valley Area (265 species)

NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Wayne Weber	128	48.3	Guy Monty	92	34.7
Bryan Gates	125	47.2	Don Wilson	68	25.7
Avg. = 39.0%					

Washington State (454 species)

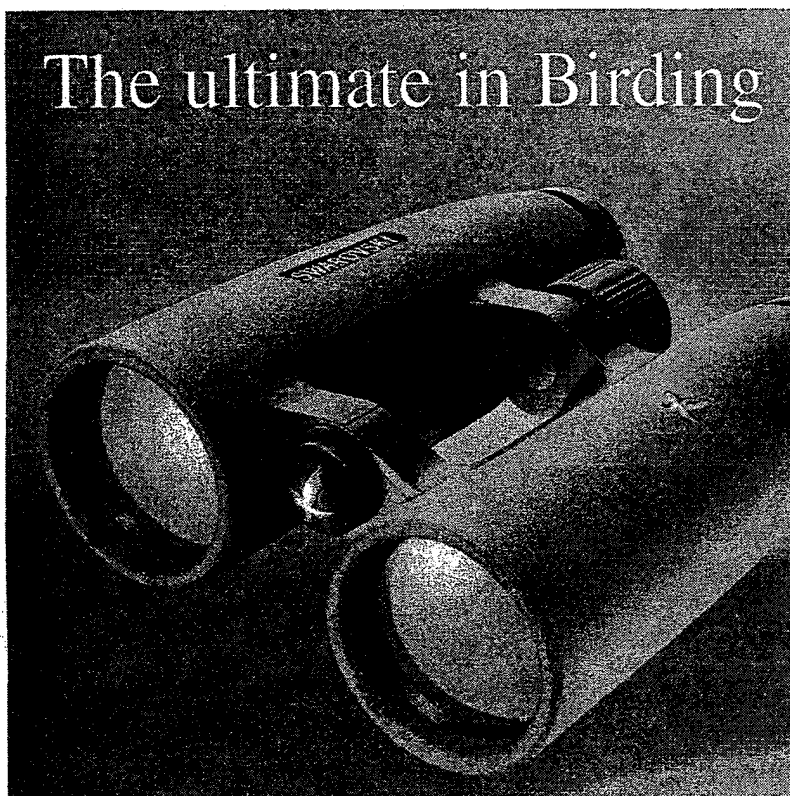
NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT	NAME	TOTAL	PERCENT
Wayne Weber	358	78.9	Lloyd Esralson	213	46.9
Jo Ann MacKenzie	346	76.2	Guy Monty	204	44.9
Hue MacKenzie	340	77.3	Chris Charlesworth	190	41.9
Mike Toochin	308	67.8	Ken Klimko	181	39.9
David Stirling	254	55.9	Larry Cowan	178	39.2
Keith Riding	243	53.5	Bryan Gates	125	27.5
Eric MacBean	234	51.5			
Avg. = 75.1%					

North Pacific Pelagic Waters

NAME	TOTAL	NAME	TOTAL
David Stirling	60	Jo Ann MacKenzie	48
Lloyd Esralson	59	Bryan Gates	41
Ken Morgan	58	Guy Monty	38
Val George	56	Eric MacBean	29
Mike Toochin	55		



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