

BC BIRDING

Newsletter of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists

ISSN 1206-1611

Volume 14 Number 1 / March 2004



Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation

14th Annual BCFO Conference in Tumbler Ridge, June 25-27

In Tumbler Ridge, ornithologically speaking, east meets west. Two hundred eighteen (218) species have been identified in habitats from canyon bottoms to alpine tundra. East-west pairs like Mourning and MacGillivray's, and Townsend's and Black-throated Green warblers may be found in the same patches of forest and often need to be visually identified. All three species of ptarmigan occur, although they can be elusive. And the mystery of the precise route and magnitude of the Golden Eagle migration endures.

When the coal mines closed in 2000, the biggest housing sale in Canadian history drew retirees and those seeking a utopian mountain retreat. Fifteen fine hiking trails (including the Bullmoose Marshes Wetland Interpretive Area) have been built by volunteers over the past five years, and lead to alpine summits, waterfalls, caves, and now dinosaur tracks.

In 2000 two local boys found the first tracks while tubing in a creek below town. The Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation was formed, and in rapid succession a number of major palaeontological finds were made, including BC's first dinosaur bonebed. Palaeontologists in the newly established field station stress that birds are direct descendants of the theropod group of dinosaurs.

Tumbler Ridge is a warm and friendly community of under 3000, still coming to terms with its destiny as a unique destination. It promises a warm welcome to the BCFO.

Charles Helm



In This Issue

14th Annual BCFO Conference.....	1
President's Report.....	3
BCFO's 14th Annual Conference	4
Editor's Notes and Notions.....	5
Director's Corner	6
Internet Sources, News Briefs, New Members, Letters	7
Upcoming Meetings and Events	8
BC Birding News Briefs	9
Bird Listers' Corner	10
Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture (CIJV).....	12
BCFO and Changhwa Wild Bird Society	13
West Kootenay Bald Eagle Survey ..	14
BCFO Annual General Conference Extension Trip	15
Pelagic 2004 Announcement	15
Birding Hazards.....	16
From the Field	17
Birds of Tasmania?	17
British Columbia Bird Sightings	18
Authors in this issue	20

BCFO Officers and Directors

PRESIDENT

Ian Robertson
1525 - 200th Street, Langley, BC V2Z 1W5
604-530-1080 / res@quik.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Sandra Kinsey
9860 Alpine Drive, Prince George, BC V2N 5W7
250-963-8381 (phone/fax) / sjkinsey@direct.ca

PAST PRESIDENT

Jo Ann MacKenzie
15341 - 21st Ave., Surrey, BC V4A 6A8
604-538-1676 / motmot@telus.net

TREASURER

Glen Moores
P.O. Box 277, Brentwood Bay, BC V8M 1R3
250-812-1550(h) / 250-652-7072(w)
gmoores@islandnet.com

SECRETARY

Marilyn Buhler
#7 - 1700 Deleenheer Rd., Vernon, BC V1T 9S9
250) 260-7823 / brdrs@shaw.ca

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: Vacant

MEMBERSHIP

Rita Wege
718 Stanley Street, Nelson, BC V1L 1N5
250-354-1685 / rwege@telus.net

DIRECTORS

Richard J. Cannings
S11, C96, RR1, Naramata, BC V0H 1N0
250-496-4019 / 250-496-4049 (fax)
dickcannings@shaw.ca

Dannie Carsen
3332 Doncaster Drive, Victoria, BC V8P 3V8
250-595-2773 (phone/fax) / dcarsen@shaw.ca

Krista De Groot
2701-193 Aquarius Mews, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2Z2
604-435-0979 / krista.degroot@ec.gc.ca

Tony Greenfield
P.O.Box 319, Sechelt, BC V0N 3A0
604-885-5539 / greenfieldtony@hotmail.com

Andrew Stewart
3932 Telegraph Bay Road., Victoria, BC V8N 4H7
250-477-1328 / andy.stewart@shaw.ca /

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Phil Henderson
Box 615, Fort Langley, BC V1M 2R9
604-888-1571 / strix@uniserve.com

JOURNAL EDITORS

Martin McNicholl
4735 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1L3
604-294-2072 / sterna@telus.net

John Sprague
474 Old Scott Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2L7
250-537-0760 / sprague@saltspring.com

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Ted Goshulak
9578-212B St., Langley, BC V1M 1N4
604-888-0408 / tgosh@twu.ca

BC Birding, ISSN 1206-1611, is published four times a year by British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO), P.O. Box 8059 Victoria, B.C. V8W 3R7

A subscription to this quarterly is a benefit of membership in the society. Members will also receive a copy of the annual journal, *British Columbia Birds*. Membership in BCFO is open to anyone interested in the study and enjoyment of wild birds in British Columbia.

BCFO 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.

Membership Dues

Please send membership requests, or requests for further information, to

Membership
British Columbia Field Ornithologists
P.O. Box 8059, Victoria, BC V8W 3R7

Membership Dues:

Individual memberships\$25.00
Library subscriptions.....\$25.00
Junior memberships (age under 18).....\$18.00
U.S. and foreign memberships.....\$25.00 (\$US)

Memberships are for the calendar year.

Newsletter Submissions

Send material for publication in any format to the editor. Submissions may include bird finding information for our "Site Guide" series and any articles about birding experiences, preferably but not necessarily in British Columbia.

Please send newsletter submissions to

Phil Henderson (Editor, BC Birding)
Box 615, Fort Langley, BC V1M 2R9
604-888-1571 / strix@uniserve.com

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

Advertising

Advertising rates are available upon request.

BCFO Website

<http://birding.bc.ca/bcfo/>



President's Report

A special note of thanks regarding the Newsletter is where I would like to start. For several years extending up to our September 2003 issue, Sheila Mosher faithfully took the completed issues and organized the mailing to us, usually 200+ envelopes. Thank you, Sheila for a job well done. On the subject of our executive, I want to welcome Marilyn Buhler as our new Secretary, as of January.

In the September, 2003 Newsletter I mentioned that BCFO had been invited by the Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection to comment on "A Review of Options for Managing Falconry in British Columbia". In accepting this invitation on your behalf I became quickly aware of the potential difficulties of responding if presented by contributions from members with diametrically opposed views. The scenario of forwarding both majority as well as minority points of view was enough to make me reconsider. In the end only four members contacted me about the topic, and each forwarded their concerns. Since this may have been the first invitation of this sort, it was a learning experience. First, I apologize to those who did not see the notice buried in my report. Next time, we'll insert a special notice in the

Newsletter so the call for input will not be missed. Second, while the opinion of a 200+ member organization apparently packs some weight, my view is that a formal BCFO response does not preclude an individual response. A well argued individual response can frequently catch the attention of a government department. When member Guy Monty missed our notice, he wrote independently, drawing attention to other flaws in this report. Two notable ones were 1) that the practice of falconry involves in many cases the hunting of birds without a permit, and 2) that escaped birds do represent a threat to wild populations. One only has to recollect the recent headlines on the spread of diseases between wild and domestic animals and humans to appreciate this potential. Guy has spoken at length to Ministry officials on these two and other points. Thank you, Guy, for picking up where we left off.

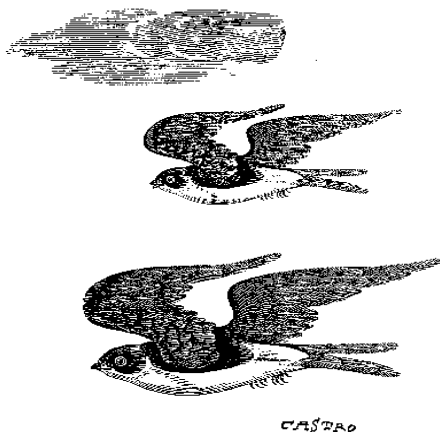
On the international front, the BCFO signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Changhwa Wild Bird Society, of Taiwan, Republic of China. As outlined elsewhere in this issue by Jo Ann Mackenzie and Simon Liao, this partnering Agreement encourages the respective organizations to exchange research information, support conservation issues, and provide field support when visiting each other's organization. Some of our members have already taken advantage of this opportunity by taking part in two separate natural history trips to Taiwan. It was during the second, this past November, that five of our members were present when the MoA signing took place in Changhwa. This Agreement reflects the fact that many BCFO members travel abroad and sometimes seek a more permanent link to their destinations. I hope many BCFO members can take advantage of this association, and perhaps it may

lead to links with other areas.

One of our organization's challenges over the last few years has been attracting major papers to our journal, *British Columbia Birds*. This is a challenge not just for us but other similar regional organizations. First, I want to thank those who have contributed both longer as well as shorter papers to our journal and newsletter. We need more. I suspect I am not the only one hoarding ornithological information which could be shared with a wider audience, and is using the excuse of being too busy! So, I want to encourage you to assemble that information, organize your thoughts on paper, and submit the results to our kindly editors. Second, I want you to badger your president, and your two journal editors (Martin McNicholl to Volume 12, and John Sprague from Volume 13 on) to get busy and implement their 'journal promotion plan'. This plan, developed by us in January, involves contacting virtually all the professional organizations in the province (universities, colleges, government agencies, environmental consultants, ngos) which might be involved in ornithological investigations, reminding them of our existence, and notifying them of the service our journal can provide in sharing information they have collected. We are currently assembling the information to be sent out, and will start the mail-out soon. While you can monitor the results over the next few years by reading the journal, I would encourage those of you who are interested not to wait and to join us with your ideas, your effort or both. You would be most welcome.

I look forward to seeing you in Tumbler Ridge in June.

Ian Robertson, President



"I think it's very brave of us to fly without a sky marshal."

From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



TUMBLER RIDGE

14th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BC FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

Conference Schedule

FRIDAY, June 25, 2004

7:00 - 9:00 pm	Registration – Community Centre, Tumbler Ridge, B.C.
7:00 - 9:00 pm	Social Hour – including slide presentation
9:00 - ??	Possible Owling Trip

SATURDAY, June 26, 2004 (Note: Breakfast and Lunch on your own.)

6:00 am	Morning Field Trips – depart from in front of Community Centre. Return by 11:00 am.
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Technical Session (pm) – Community Centre South Peace Bird Atlas Project - Year 3 Update – Mark Phinney, Louisiana-Pacific Canada, Dawson Creek The BC/Yukon Nocturnal Owl Survey – 5 years of data – Dick Cannings, BC Programs Coordinator, Bird Studies Canada, Naramata
2:00 - 2:30 pm	Break
2:30 - 3:45 pm	Technical Session (cont.) Bird Migration through Central BC – Vi Lambie, Mackenzie Bird Observatory, Mackenzie, B.C. TBA
3:45 - 5:30 pm	Annual General Meeting
6:00 - 7:00 pm	Social Hour – Community Centre
7:00 - 9:30 pm	Banquet – Community Centre Guest Speaker: Dr. Charles Helm, Tumbler Ridge

SUNDAY, June 27, 2004 (Note: breakfast on your own.)

6:00 am	Morning Field Trips - depart from in front of Community Centre. Return by 11:00 am
12:00 pm	Lunch & Annual Conference Adjournment , at venue to be confirmed

Please see page 15 for Extension Trip details.



Editor's Notes and Notions

It seems that here on the coast Spring is fast approaching and although the winged wonders, those feathered deities we faithfully worship, have not showed up in numbers, we are on the cusp of their presence: their welcoming calls, confused and broken songs and flashes of colour and contrast. Despite all the horrors of people and ecology that persist and foment near and far, the great wave of birds floods the north, filling all available spaces that will support them, and quite coincidentally and unwittingly (do only the Corvids have wit?) giving we wreckless, godful and godless humans distraction and focus.

On a few bright, warm days recently the Dark-eyed Juncos, American Robins, and House Finches broke into full song in Fort Langley, and that scourge of the bird world--the great success story--the European Starling, supreme opportunist and thief broke into our attic and stole insulation for its nest and soon to be itchy offspring.

I anxiously await the arrival of the migrants, especially the waves of Yellow-rumped (Audubon and Myrtle) Warblers that fill the trees, gleaning leaves and "flycatching" the recently emerged winged insects with brief forays from their perches and audible snaps of their bills. But that's a month away, and in the interim there may still be snow.

This year's Annual BCFO Conference in Tumbler Ridge should be another grand event in an area of the province that all southerners should experience. Come to that, people in all areas of BC should experience this area and all other areas of the province as there is indeed so much to see and to discover ornithological and otherwise. I've never been to Tumbler Ridge though I have been near it and I look forward to the visit, and to meeting members of BCFO and of TROG, the wonderful acronym for the Tumbler

Ridge Ornithological Group (Do they sell TROG T-shirts?) spearheaded by Dr. Charles Helm. Dr. Charles Helm will give a presentation on birds and bird-like creatures in the area present and past (cover photograph). Details of the general meeting are presented on the page opposite and information on the extension trip is presented on page 15.

Larry Halverson, of Parks Canada, sent along the article explaining the Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture of which BCFO is a signatory.

Jo Ann Mackenzie, BCFO's Past President and Simon Liao, BCFO member and founder of the Changhwa Wild Bird Society, explain the important alliance of these two groups.

Janice Arndt and Michael McMann present a summary of their surveys of Bald Eagles in the West Kootenay.

John Sprague, Editor of *BC Birds* (Vol. 13 onward) sent a note concerning a birder's run-in with the law, and this prompted the submission of similar stories by Dannie Carsen and Sandra Kinsey, and the formulation of a Birding Hazards column. If you have any such tales you would like to share please send them along for future editions.

This edition of the newsletter introduces a new column proposed and initiated by Linda Van Damme: *From the Field*. It is a venue for interesting field observations or any comments on or responses to them. Please send any notes and photographs to me.

Gary Davidson has agreed to send copies of his birding column which appears regularly in Nakusp's *Arrow Lake News*, and which, over the next year, will highlight birding experiences in Tasmania, Australia, where he and his wife Marie are living. The first installment is presented in this edition.

And of course, this issue presents the

regular contributions of the usual suspects: Martin McNicholl presents a summary of upcoming meetings and events, and news briefs of interest to BCFO members; Don Cecile presents a summary of recent bird sightings; and Ken Morgan presents instructions and details for submitting information for his annual *Bird Listers' Corner*.

Recently, the commanders of *Operation Ancient Murrelet in Reverse*, British Sea Power, those foliated and feathered musical purveyors of hopefulness, hopelessness, ships, airplanes, love, death, patriotism, nature and annihilation, returned to the west coast, played Vancouver and revealed a British Columbia connection beyond that of devout admiration for the Ancient Murrelet: Eamon, the intensely psychotic looking keyboardist and marcher, was born in Stewart.

Phil Henderson, Editor



Director's Corner

The first meeting of 2004 for the BCFO Board of Directors was held on January 11, 2004. As newest member on the Board it fell to me to write the report of this meeting.

- 1) The early segment of the meeting was taken up with a presentation by Kevin Slagboom regarding the BCFO Web Site. Kevin currently hosts our site on his Birding BC web site. This is to continue but with an expanded presence devoted to BCFO. The purpose of the site will be to share information with our members and to attract new members. Another purpose of the site will be to encourage authors to submit manuscripts to our two publications, *British Columbia Birds* and *BC Birding*. The directors who will be liaising with Kevin are Dannie Carsen* and Andy Stewart*. If you have any suggestions or input for our web site please contact these two individuals.
- 2) Other business transacted at the meeting was to approve the purchase of liability insurance for our organization's field trips. Your Directors have also agreed to support the Coastal Waterbird Survey with a donation of \$1000.00. Many of our members participate in this survey, and we felt it worthwhile of monetary support.
- 3) The BCFO Library will be moving a small step closer to reality with a journal exchange with the Peregrine Foundation Library. They have a programme for exchanging their duplicate holdings for copies of other journals such as our journal *British Columbia Birds*. Krista De Groot is looking after the details of this exchange.
- 4) The upcoming Annual General Conference was also a major topic of discussion. There has been a lot of planning done already but a lot more to do. Glen Moores, Ian Robertson and Tony Greenfield are liaising with the birders in the Tumbler Ridge area and more details will be available by the time this newsletter goes to press. There will also be details of a post-conference extension trip.
- 5) The next directors' meeting will be a teleconference to be held on Wednesday, 10 March 2004. If there is any business you wish brought to the attention of the directors would you please contact Ian Robertson* to place it on the agenda.

* Contact information for the BCFO Officers and Directors is provided elsewhere in this issue.

Report submitted by Marilyn Buhler



Internet Sources

BCFO

<http://www.birding.bc.ca/bcfo/>

Alaska Bird Observatory

<http://www.alaskabird.org/>

Bird Studies Canada / Long Point Bird Observatory

<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/bscmain.html>

Birding in British Columbia

General interest information including bulletin board, checklists, rare bird alerts, book reviews, etc.

<http://www.birding.bc.ca/>

BIRDNET

Site of the Ornithological Council.

<http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/>

District of Tumbler Ridge

<http://www.district.tumbler-ridge.bc.ca/>

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/birds/>

Point Reyes Bird Observatory

<http://www.prbo.org/cms/index.php>

The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds, Seventh Edition

<http://www.aou.org/aou/birdlist.html>

The Condor

Online editions from 1899-2000. All articles available as DjVu's and PDF's.

<http://elibrary.unm.edu/condor/>

The Wilson Bulletin

Online editions from 1899-1999. All articles available as DjVu's and PDF's.

<http://elibrary.unm.edu/wilson/>

BCFO New Members since December 2003

Margaret Bryan

Judson L. Scovill

T. Fleming

Richard Knapton

Dr. Loys Maingon

BCFO Journal *BC Birds* Back Issues Available

Back issues of the BCFO's annual journal *BC Birds* are available from the British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO), P.O. Box 8059 Victoria, B.C. V8W 3R7. The price is \$8.00 for the most recent issue (Currently No. 10) and \$2.00 for earlier editions.

Letters

The following letter from past newsletter distributor Sheila Mosher, directed to former Secretary Dannie Carsen, was received by new BCFO Secretary Marilyn Buhler.

The Secretary BCFO

Dear Dannie

Glen Moores and his wife presented me with a lovely gift of a book on behalf of the BCFO for distribution of the newsletter. I really appreciate this thoughtful gift and wish to thank everyone involved. It was not an onerous task to send out the newsletters, and I was pleased to be able to contribute in some way to the BCFO.

I'm looking forward to being able to attend this years' AGM in June.

Sincerely,

Sheila Mosher



From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



Upcoming Meetings and Events

Compiled by *Martin K. McNicholl*

- Jan. 4-8 May 2004 **BIRDS ON THE BAY**, Boundary Bay. Talks and walks. See www.birdsonthebay.ca.
- March 17-21 2004 **69TH NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE & NATURAL RESOURCES CONFERENCE**, Spokane, WA. Contact information not yet announced.
- March 24-27 2004 **77TH ANNUAL MEETING, NORTHWEST SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION IN COOPERATION WITH SOCIETY FOR NORTHWEST VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY & SEVERAL OTHER GROUPS**, Ellensburg, WA. Contact: Allen Sullivan, phone (509) 963-2181.
- April 2-4 2004 **8TH INTERNATIONAL SEABIRD GROUP CONFERENCE**, Aberdeen, U.K. Contact: Alan Leitch, 2 Burgess Terrace, Edinburgh EH9 2BD, Scotland, U.K.
- April 2-4 2004 **BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL**, Parksville-Qualicum Beach. Contact [no individual named], 174 Railway St., Qualicum Beach, B.C. V9K 1K7, phone (250) 752-9171.
- April 4-11 2004 **INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON GALLIFORMES**, India. Contact: Mrs. Pat Savage, World Pheasant Assoc., phone +44(0) 1425-657129.
- April 22-24 2004 **ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS & WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETINGS**, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY. Contact: Scott A. Sutcliffe, 6300 Waterburg Rd., Trumansburg, NY 14886-9721; phone (607) 254-2424.
- May 5-9 2004 **74TH COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING**, La Crosse, WI. Contact: Eileen M. Kirsch, U.S.G.S. Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center, 2630 Fanta Reed Rd., La Crosse, WI 54603; phone (608) 781-6226.
- May 13-16 2004 **FEDERATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURALISTS 2004 CONFERENCE & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Vancouver. Contact: George Bangham (604) 731-7669.
- June 25-27 2004 **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 14TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE**, Tumbler Ridge, B.C. contact: Tony Greenfield, Box 319, Sechelt, B.C. V0N 3A0; phone (250) 855-5539 OR Glen Moores, Box 277, Brentwood Bay, B.C. V8M 1R3; phone (250) 652-7072.
- July 30-2 Aug. 2004 **18TH ANNUAL MEETING, SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY**, New York City. Mailing or phone contact not yet announced.
- Aug. 16-21 2004 **122ND STATED MEETING OF AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION & SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS ANNUAL MEETING**, Universite' Laval, Quebec, Que. Contact: Andre' Desrochers, Department des Sciences du Bois et de La Foret, Universite' Laval, Ste-Foy, QC G1K 7P4; phone (418) 656-2131, extension 2908.
- Aug. 23-27 2004 **19TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ZOOLOGY**, Beijing, China. Contact details not yet announced.
- Nov. 10-13 2004 **RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2004 ANNUAL MEETING**, Bakersfield, CA. Contact: Daniel E. Varland, Rayonier, 3033 Ingram St., Hoquiam, WA 98550, U.S.A.; phone (360) 538-4582.
- Aug. 13-19 2006 **24th INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, Hamburg, Germany. Contact details not yet announced.



B.C. Birding News Briefs

Compiled by *Martin K. McNicholl*

BIRD ENTHUSIASTS HONORED BY FEDERATION -In addition to presenting Gary Davidson with his previously announced Regional Recognition Award (see *B.C. Birding* 13(3):6, 2003), the Federation of B.C. Naturalists at their fall 2003 general meeting honoured two naturalist-conservationists whose contributions relate partly to birds. Marie Madsen of the Middelatch Field Naturalists has participated in Christmas and other bird counts in the Campbell River area, as well as monitoring eagle trees. Monitoring a bluebird trail and participating in Christmas and other bird counts constitute the ornithological component of Ralph Ritcey's contribution to the natural history of the Kamloops area -based on J. Best. 2003-2004. *B.C. Naturalist* 41(5):6.

AL GRASS PROFILED -One of B.C.'s most prominent and well-rounded naturalists, nature photographers and environmental educators, Al Grass, was profiled as "the bird man of Vancouver" in a *Vancouver Sun* article partly about him and partly about several recent extralimital bird sightings. Al, a B.C.F.O. member, was the founding President of the Langley Field Naturalists and is a significant contributor to the activities of the Burke Mountain Naturalists, Federation of B.C. Naturalists, Vancouver Natural History Society and Wild Bird Trust of B.C. -based primarily on S. Fralic. 2004. *Vancouver Sun* 23 Jan. 2004:B1 & B8 as sent by e-mail to Vancouver Natural History Society members by M. P. Gagel.



From *The Spectator*, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



BIRD-LISTERS' CORNER

By Ken Morgan

Welcome to Bird-Listers' Corner. First of all, please accept my apologies for not writing this article in time for the December 2003 issue (Vol. 13, # 4). What was my excuse? Well....I was on a month-long birding tour of Australia and New Zealand. Of course by missing the deadline for submitting the article meant that nobody received their 2003 listing form. However, with this issue of *BC Birding*, you will at least now be able to report your hard-earned totals. I know that this is becoming very repetitive to all of the long-time listers, but unfortunately it is necessary to repeat the "Listing Rules" for first time listers. The totals I am requesting you submit represent the total number of bird species you have seen in a Listing Area (LA) throughout your entire life - not just the total number that you saw in 2003. To allow Bird-Listers' Corner to continue reporting on a calendar year basis please send me your totals seen **ONLY** up to 31 December, 2003.

Each year I attempt to provide the most accurate total number of species that have been found within each of the LA's. Having recently purchased software to keep track of my sightings (AviSys, ver. 5 and Shawneen Finnegan BirdArea) it was very straight forward to find the accepted totals for six LA's (World, ABA, Canada, BC, Alberta and Washington). For the remaining 11 LA's I used the same totals as presented in *BC Birding* March 2003 (Vol. 13, #1). When you look at the accompanying listing form you will see a column labelled "**Accepted Total (if different from what is listed)**". That space is provided for contributors to send me the most up-to-date totals for individual LA's if I have presented the wrong species number. I really do rely on contributors to keep me informed, so when you are filling out your form, PLEASE let me know if I have reported the wrong total species for a particular LA.

Last year, I challenged all contributing listers to see who could make the biggest percentage increase in the various LA's. Although a handful of listers were totally confused by the method that I used, I am once again challenging listers to see who had the best "Listing Year". (Oh ... by the way, did I mention that I was also in Brazil in 2003?) Because it's much easier for someone who has seen only a few species in a LA to greatly increase the number of new species, compared to a person who has seen almost all species in that LA, I plan on reporting the increase in 2003 as a percentage of the number of species the person had NOT seen in a particular LA (as of the end of 2002). For each LA the **Percentage Increase (% INCR)** is calculated as follows:

$$\% \text{ INCR} = \frac{\text{Number of New Species Observed in the LA (between 01/01/03 \& 31/12/03)}}{\text{Number of Species Remaining to be Seen in the LA (to 31/12/02)}} \times 100$$

And as a final comment (or is this another challenge?) I might even try to think up a way to see who made the most significant changes to their lists in the past year. If you have any suggestions, please send them to me.

Thanks for your continued support and interest in Listers' Corner.



Listing Areas

1) World Total	9838
2) ABA area	927
3) Canada	638
4) British Columbia	482
5) Alberta	403
6) Vancouver Island	387
7) Queen Charlotte Islands	250
8) Vancouver Checklist Area	406
9) Victoria Checklist Area	362
10) Okanagan Valley Checklist Area	329
11) Kamloops Checklist Area	295
12) Sunshine Coast Checklist Area	288
13) West Kootenay Checklist Area	313
14) Prince George Checklist Area	283
15) Creston Valley Checklist Area	283
16) Washington State	475
17) North Pacific Pelagic Waters	

Listing Rules



Determine the total number of species you have observed in each Listing Area (LA) up to the end of 2003.



For LA's 2, 3 and 4 (ABA, Canada, BC) include all land and water bird species including marine species seen out to the two hundred (200) nautical mile (approx. 370 km) limit.



For LA's 6 through 9, 12 and 16 include all terrestrial as well as marine species that you have seen but only out to five (5) nautical miles (9.6 km) from land.



For LA 16 (North Pacific Pelagic Waters) include only those species that you have seen no closer than five (5) nautical miles from land, north of the Tropic of Cancer (23°27'N) and south of the Bering Strait. For this LA you can count species seen beyond the 200 nautical mile limit. Birds that can be included in this list are: loons, grebes, albatrosses, fulmars, shearwaters, gadfly petrels, storm-petrels, frigatebirds, tropicbirds, pelicans, boobies, cormorants, geese, ducks, phalaropes, skuas, jaegers, gulls, kittiwakes, terns, and alcids - misguided passerines, etc. cannot be counted.



Phone-in totals will NOT be accepted. I will only include totals that reach me by April 30 2004.



Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture (CIJV)

Bird species in British Columbia and Alberta are getting a helping hand from a diverse group of people. Landowners, conservation organizations, governments, First Nations, universities and industry groups from forestry, mining, hydro and the cattle ranching sectors are working together for the birds through the Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture. Aimed at bird species in the south and central interior of BC and the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, the Joint Venture is taking a landscape approach to its efforts - addressing the stresses on the habitats that support birds and other wildlife. Their vision is of a landscape that supports healthy populations of birds, maintains biodiversity and fosters sustainable resource use for communities within the region. This kind of stewardship is a keystone of the newly proclaimed Species at Risk Act and was recently endorsed by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.

The Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture was officially launched in Kamloops on November 28, 2003. Representatives from a wide variety of organizations: BC Cattlemen's Association, BC Field Ornithologists, BC Hydro, Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service), Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Tribal Council, Lignum Ltd., The Nature Trust of BC, South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program, University of BC Centre for Applied Conservation Research, BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, BC Grasslands Conservation Council, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Federation of BC Naturalists, The Land Conservancy of BC, The Nature Conservancy of Canada, Parks Canada Agency, and Teck Cominco Ltd. gathered to affirm their commitment to partnership-based conservation efforts in the Canadian Intermountain region and celebrate recent CIJV successes.

BC Field Ornithologists is well represented – BCFO member Wayne Weber sits on the board and BCFO Director, Krista De Groot of the Canadian Wildlife Service, organized the joint venture startup and did an excellent job in coordinating the CIJV's Biological Foundation and Prospectus.

For more information contact Silke Neve Silke.Neve@ec.gc.ca

Larry Halverson



CIJV representatives in Kamloops.
(BCFO President Ian Robertson is third from right, back row.)



British Columbia Field Ornithologists and Changhwa Wild Bird Society

During 2003, the BC Field Ornithologists were pleased to welcome five new members from the Lower Mainland's Taiwanese community. The five are experienced birders, and want to learn more about the birds of BC. Four attended the 2003 Annual Conference in Radium Hot Springs, and two went on to the post-conference extension to Goldenwood Lodge.

In his "President's Report" in the September issue of BC Birding, incoming President Ian Roberson expressed a desire on behalf of the Board "to continue encouraging our international links" begun with our Taiwanese members. To that end, during a birding trip to Taiwan, a Memorandum of Agreement was drawn up and signed on November 18, 2003, in Changhwa, Taiwan, Republic of China, partnering BCFO and the

Changhwa Wild Bird Society. The signatories were Liao Ming-Huei, Director of the Changhwa Wild Bird Society, and Jo Ann MacKenzie, Past President, BCFO. The event, which took place at a supper hosted by the CHWBS, was witnessed by BCFO members Dale Jensen, Simon Liao, Hue MacKenzie, Viveka Ohman, Hank VanderPol, several CHWBS members, and members of the press. The Memorandum of Agreement simply states that the British Columbia Field Ornithologists and Changhwa Wild Bird Society would like to be partners, for: A. Exchange of research information; B. Support of conservation issues; and C. Providing field support when visiting each other's areas.

Taiwan has a population of 24 million people on an island only 10% larger than Vancouver Island. The Changhwa Wild Bird Society is the oldest such society in Taiwan, having

been founded by Simon Liao in 1991, the same year that BCFO began. The Board consists of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and 15 directors. There are about 2200 members, of which some 300 can be considered "active." Annual membership fees are the equivalent of C\$44.00. Most of the income is used for conservation. Members lead bird outings for the public, for the purpose of promoting appreciation and education about Taiwan's wild birds and the need to preserve them and their habitats. These outings are mostly bus trips, for which the participants pay a small fee. The CHWBS organizes the very popular annual Gray-faced Buzzard-Eagle Bird Fair; more about this event in a future edition of BC Birding.

We look forward to ongoing co-operation between our two groups.

*Jo Ann MacKenzie
and Simon Liao*



West Kootenay Bald Eagle Survey

In 2003, Michael McMann and Janice Arndt monitored all known breeding territories of Bald Eagles between Balfour and Castlegar in the West Kootenay. Of seven pairs, five successfully raised at least one young to fledging or near-fledging age. Our observations reveal a range of breeding-attempt outcomes and provide anecdotal information on hunting techniques and prey items.

Three nests are on the West Arm of Kootenay Lake between Balfour and Nelson. The first, near the community of Long Beach, was discovered this year during monthly Osprey monitoring by Elaine Moore and Janice Arndt. This nest fledged two young in mid-July. The second nest, near Kokanee Creek Provincial Park, has been active for several years. In late June, it held one chick, but by mid-July it was apparent that the nest had collapsed. Janice and her family canoed to the site and discovered the large eaglet dead beneath the nest tree, along with the remains of the nest and several prey items including Rainbow Trout, Northern Pike-minnow (squawfish), and a completely dessicated, uneaten American Coot. A third nest, near Seven Mile Point, was suspected for some time based on observations of adults but was only located in mid-July when the two young had already ventured onto nearby branches. One of the adults brought a fish to the calling and flapping juveniles while observers watched from a canoe nearby.

Three nests along the Kootenay River below Nelson have been monitored for many years. The nest on the island at Grohman Narrows Provincial Park fledged a single young in 2003 despite noise and disturbance throughout the spring and summer from heavy machinery just outside the park. A

pair of eagles has attempted to nest several times below Corra Linn Dam; in 2000 the adults abandoned the nest for unknown reasons and in 2001 the nest fell. The pair rebuilt in 2003 but apparently did not lay eggs. The third nest on this stretch of the Kootenay River, on Gold Island, has been successful each year at least since 2000; this year it fledged two young.

The seventh nest within our survey area is on the Columbia River at Castlegar. It was notable in 2003 for two reasons: three young were fledged from the nest, and one young first left the nest on July 1st, an early date for our region. Campbell *et al.* (1990) reported that of 425 nests with young found in B.C., only 13 (3%) contained three young.

Keeping an eye on the eagles allowed us to witness a few variations to their usual hunting techniques which normally involve fishing, pirating an Osprey's catch, or attempting to capture coots and ducks. Michael observed an adult bringing an unidentified downy passerine chick to the Grohman Narrows nest. Later in the season, he watched the male of the Gold Island pair initiate an attack on a ¾-sized Canadian Goose. The young goose was about 100 m from a flock of eight other young and four adults. The male eagle tried to dive and grab the young goose but each time the goose would submerge just out of reach. The eagle continued swooping but never entered the water beyond its lower legs. After approximately a half dozen attempts by the male, the female eagle moved in and tried the same maneuvers. It appeared they were trying to keep the young goose from coming up for air. The goose surfaced and, after evading more dives by the female eagle, finally reached the main flock. Both eagles raked away from the flock of geese

as soon as the young one rejoined them. Almost immediately after the goose hunt the male eagle dove into the water after something else, likely a fish, and went in up to its neck. It rose out of the water, made a couple of flapping shakes with its wings to shed water, and flew off with empty talons. Michael has seen eagles enter the water like this for both fish and coots before, and speculated that the Gold Island pair may have been unwilling to plunge so deeply for a goose and risk a difficult struggle with such a large prey item. Similarly, Janice observed an adult eagle swooping on a trio of River Otters in the West Arm last fall. On the second pass it appeared that one of the otters surfaced just as the eagle reached it, and yet the eagle failed to attack the otter, as if realizing that it would be too big to handle in the water.

**Janice Arndt and
Michael McMann**

Campbell, R.W., N.K. Dawe, I. McTaggart-Cowan, J.M. Cooper, G.W. Kaiser, and M.C.E. McNall. 1990. The birds of British Columbia. Vol. 2: Nonpasserines, diurnal birds of prey through woodpeckers. Royal British Columbia Museum in association with Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service. Victoria, BC.



BCFO Annual Conference Extension 2004

Moberly Lake-Fort St. John

The western part of the Peace River country is a natural complement to the conference location in the eastern foothills of the Rockies. Moberly Lake is nestled in some dry hills just north of Chetwynd. A nice mixture of trembling aspen and white spruce around the lake provides some tremendous riparian birding. We will visit Moberly Lake Provincial Park on the southern shore of the lake before driving east to the Peace plateau. If weather permits, our explorations will take us to Del Rio, a fabled spot for deciduous forest birds which is an hour east of Moberly Lake. Our extension trip will end in Fort St. John where we will visit Charlie Lake and Beatton River Park, an area of aspen mixed with stands of birch, lodgepole pine and spruce, to complete our list of exciting species for the Peace River.

Mark Phinney, a biologist involved with compiling data for the South Peace Bird Atlas, will be advising us in our search for interesting birds. Moberly Lake has regularly produced Black-and-white Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird and numerous vireos and flycatchers. The Del Rio area has great diversity with possible Yellow Rail, Le Conte's and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Connecticut Warbler and other deciduous birds. Charlie Lake and the Beatton River Provincial Park offer a tremendous variety of Peace specialties such as Cape May, Canada, and Bay-breasted Warbler.

We will be leaving Tumbler Ridge in late afternoon Sunday, June 27th to travel first to Moberly Lake, where we'll stay in a lakeside location. We hope to target interesting birds in riparian woods along the scenic lakeshore. Accommodations include rustic lakeshore cabins with wonderful views.

Dannie Carsen



Moberly Lake

Master and Commander - Pelagic 2004

Once again, Bill Mackay will be Master and Commander of *Naiad Explorer* as we set out for open waters off the north coast of Vancouver Island. BCFO's **Pelagic 2004** is set to go, in the speedy, 55-ft whale watching boat out of Port McNeill. This will be our fourth annual excursion to find the hardy marine birds that ply our coastal waters and feed in the cold, rich upwellings of the Japan Current. If you have missed this trip in previous years, this is your year to join us. And if you have been with us in the past, you will probably want to go again. There are always chances to find new birds when offshore.

We will climb aboard at **0700h on Saturday, September 18, 2004** for another 10 intensive hours on the ocean. **Note that this is the weekend after the long Labour Day weekend; thus less traffic and fewer chances of ferry waits.** And this year we are not asking you to plan to stay over on the Sunday in case of bad weather on Saturday. We will hit the water on Saturday regardless. With many years of experience, Captain Mackay knows that *Naiad Explorer* will not be weathered-out. With luck, we will again get out to Triangle Island and beyond, perhaps 50 to 70 nautical miles off the north tip of Vancouver Island. But even if the weather is marginal we will search the more protected inside waters, where shearwaters, storm-petrels, jaegers, various gulls and alcids can be found. Albatrosses and fulmars sometimes venture inside as well. Our prime target will be the seabird hotspot off Triangle Island, and we will try to get close to shore at Triangle. With luck and perfect weather, we could possibly return via the intriguing Cook Bank.

With 40 to 50 species recorded in the past, dock to dock, and Humpback Whales, Gray Whales, Killer Whales, Dall's Porpoises and Northern Sea Lions added for excitement, we know you will enjoy this outing.

The Plans for 2004:

Dates: Arrive Port McNeill by Friday, September 17 or in time for a **7 AM Saturday, September 18 departure from Mackay Whale Watching on the waterfront at Port McNeill.**

Cost: \$125 per BCFO member, \$100 for student members in high school or younger, and \$150 for non-members. (The extra \$25 for non-members includes full 2004 BCFO membership).

Transportation and accommodations:

Your responsibility. Convenient is the **Haida Way Motor Inn** (250-956-3373). Tell them you are with the BCFO trip. A good alternative is the **Dellwood Motel** (250-956-3304). Camping facilities and B&Bs are available in and around Port McNeill.

To Register:

Demand is always high. To be fair to those who receive this newsletter late, APPLICATIONS MUST BE SENT BY SNAIL MAIL AND MUST BE POSTMARKED MAY 1st OR LATER. Include your name, telephone number, email address and a cheque or money order for the correct amount. Make the cheque payable to Bryan Gates and mail to:

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

You will be required to sign a BCFO liability release form. The *Naiad Explorer* and Mackay Whale Watching are fully insured for group travel.

Laysan Albatross, Flesh-footed Shearwater and the very rare Short-tailed Albatross are still on our wish list. And maybe both puffins and a Thick-billed Murre will be close to Triangle Island. Lets go looking.

Bryan Gates - bgates@pacificcoast.net



Birding Hazards

John Sprague prompted confessions of “birding and the law” with a submission of an e-mail he received from an associate in Ontario which appeared on the OntBirds listserver. This prompted a couple of others to join in and their notes are included here as well. I suspect there are many more similar tales. If you have any you are willing to reveal, please send them to the editor.

Today, Dean DiTommaso and I walked Bird Island Pier in Buffalo, in search of the recently reported Willet. Bird Island Pier starts at Squaw Island and runs south, parallel to the NY shore and 200 yards out. It crosses under the Peace Bridge (the bridge between the US and Canada) and continues for a total one-way length of about 1.5 to 2 miles. We were a little beyond the very end of the pier, studying the Willet for some five minutes, when three Buffalo Police Officers walked up to the end of the pier. One drew his gun and shouted to us, “Put your hands in the air and walk slowly toward us! He then repeated his demand. We left our scopes where they were and did as ordered.

Apparently, someone reported that two people were filming the Peace Bridge. Obviously, we were not but is that a crime? (Rhetorical question.) We eased their concerns very quickly after providing ID and telling them what we were doing. Nevertheless, they told us that we had to go back to the beginning of the pier with them because there were people there who wanted to talk to us. Upon returning to the start of the pier, we noticed about 8 vehicles, mostly Buffalo P.D. but also the Border Patrol and perhaps some unmarked vehicles. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard was patrolling the water keeping an eye on us during the entire affair. All told, there were probably 15 law enforcement personnel involved. We were also told that the FBI was on the way. After waiting some 45 more minutes, they requested to search my vehicle. Since I wanted to get out of there and

continue birding on this fine weather day, I let them. Finally, they decided we could go. But first, we had to go through the TV interview - Channel 7.

The Border Patrol gave me a card, suggesting that birders phone them when they are going to be out on the pier or anywhere near one of the international bridges. Obviously, you don't have to do this since you have every right to bird but it could save you some hassle.

Willie D'Anna
Betsy Potter
Niagara Falls, N.Y.

They didn't come at me with guns drawn, but the border patrol were certainly checking us out on High Lonesome Road near the Mexican border out of Bisbee, Arizona. We had parked our car on a birdy section of road and were greatly enjoying the Phloxes, Flycatchers, Jays, and Towhees when a helicopter flew over, quite low. Then in the distance I could see the border patrol coming at quite a clip. He showed up, was very polite, but warned us to stay away from the culverts under the bridges, that's where suspected drug porters often hid. Apparently there were a few folks who happened upon one early one morning and died full of uzi holes.

In parting, I mentioned I'd like to take his picture, but he wouldn't allow it. I also thought out loud it would be nice

if he didn't run down that 6' rattler 50 feet further up the road and he allowed he would watch for it.

All in a day's birding on the border.

Dannie Carse

Laird and I were at Cottonwood Island parking lot in Prince George “several” years ago, when a police car drove up to check us out. From the road the scope and tripod looked like a rifle. Only one car and only one policeman.

He was very polite (of course, he was Canadian) and it wasn't until after a few minutes that we found out why he came over to talk to us.

Sandra Kinsey



From the Field

Ravens in Winter

Never missing an opportunity to exploit a food source, ravens were observed this winter in the Creston Valley digging up vole nests. Now, a lot depends on the farmer. In the autumn when timothy fields are not re-swathed and baled, the surplus hay provides good cover and nesting material for meadow voles. Ravens methodically work over a field by walking, stopping, cocking their head as if to listen, then digging with their powerful bills through the snow. Piles of dark discolored straw litter the otherwise stark, snowy field. When an active nest is discovered a raven does its “jumping-jack” dance before poking its head into the hole to consume its prey.

Butcher Birds

Northern Shrikes have the grand reputation for impaling their prey on barbed fence-wire or the sharp thorns of hawthorn trees. On several occasions this winter, I have observed shrikes caching and retrieving voles in among the dry cattails in the marshes of the Creston Valley.

Linda Van Damme, Creston Valley

Birds of Tasmania?

It's been about a month since we arrived in Tasmania, and time I reported on some of the local birds. It's late summer here in the southern hemisphere, so as you are awaiting the arrival of the spring birds, I'll be seeing birds leaving in the coming weeks. Migration here isn't as pronounced as it is in B.C.; the winters aren't particularly cold, so most birds don't really need to leave to find food. But a few families, mostly insect eaters, will go a bit further north.

So far I have found birding here to be fairly hard work! There aren't nearly as many species here as in mainland Australia, and the populations of many species doesn't seem to be particularly large. There have been times when a walk through some pretty good-looking habitat has produced very little. The official checklist of Tasmanian birds contains just a little over 200 species, and about half of these are water birds. The Australian checklist has about 900. This leaves only about 100 woodland species. By the end of the year I should know those birds pretty well!

Birders that come to Tasmania come

largely for the endemics. The island of Tasmania has 12 species that occur nowhere else in the world. Most of the 12 are fairly common and not hard to find. We had seen them all within two weeks of arriving here. This weekend I saw 10 of them on a two-hour walk. There are two species which can cause birders a little trouble: the Forty-spotted Pardalote and the Scrubtit. The pardalote is actually quite rare; it is estimated that only about 3500 exist. Their strong affinity for one particular type of tree, however, does make their location somewhat predictable. And like any rare bird, the good locations are well known to birders. We have visited three of these well known locations and found the bird each time. All the pardalotes, and there are three species in Tasmania, are small birds that glean insects from the foliage of trees. For some annoying reason they seem to prefer to do their gleaning near the tops of the trees! Their small size, and the great height to which their preferred trees grow, makes pardalote identification a challenge at times. The highly sought-after Forty-spotted, is the least conspicuously

marked, and therefore the hardest to identify. Patience, and a neck that can withstand looking skyward for prolonged periods, seem to be the secrets to pardalote success.

The second potentially troublesome endemic, the Scrubtit, is not as rare, but probably harder to find. Unlike the pardalote, it does not favour one tree, but is found throughout the rainforests. There doesn't seem to be any “well-known” specific locations for this bird. Scrubtits spend a lot of their time foraging on, or near the ground, often amongst fairly dense undergrowth. Even when one is around, they can be very hard to find, and if you do find one, getting a good look can be a problem. The problem is made worse by the presence of a similar species, the Tasmanian Scrubwren, which is similar, both in appearance and habitat preference. Almost all of the “Scrubtits” I have found so far, have turned out to be scrubwrens instead!

Gary Davidson, Tasmania



British Columbia Bird Sightings

From droughts to floods, fire to ice - British Columbia experienced all the extremes this season. A strong ridge of high pressure held off the coast until the first week of September. As a result, storms were directed across northern sections. During the first weekend of the month, a 90-minute deluge hit the Fort Nelson area resulting in cars floating down the streets. Meanwhile the parched southern quarter of the province's interior sections was going up in smoke as numerous wildfires consumed both forests and some unfortunate adjacent urban areas. The ridge began to weaken the first week of September providing enough moisture to allow fire fighting crews to finally gain an upper hand on the blazes. The autumn storm season began mid-October as a series of powerful storms barreled onto the coast, overflowing previously parched reservoirs and squelching any lingering fires. Following two weeks of Pacific storms, the flow turned more northerly and cooler air enveloped most of the province which lingered through most of November. The Yukon experienced a fairly typical fall with most species departing on schedule and winter conditions sweeping the territory by mid to late November.

Abbreviations: P.G., Prince George; R.M.B.S., Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary, Ladner; R.P.B.O., Rocky Point Bird Observatory, Victoria; *field notes submitted.

Loons Through Waterfowl

An ad. and an imm. Red-throated Loons were at Penticton, 17-20 Sep (FW, LN et. al.) for a very rare Okanagan occurrence. Northern Fulmars washed ashore in Oct, both alive and dead, suffering from starvation and dehydration. Six live birds were found on Long Beach 19 Oct (AD et. al.) and 40 birds were turned in to the local bird rehab centre. Severe ocean conditions may have prevented the birds from feeding. From a cruise boat, south of Hecate Strait, seabirds were encountered with highlights that included: 750 Northern Fulmars, 500 Sooty Shearwaters, 4 Pink-footed Shearwaters, 40 Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels and a single Laysan Albatross 8 Aug (TS, ShM). A pair of Double-crested Cormorants bred successfully in the Creston Valley W.M.A. for the first time (LVD) and Tofino had its highest count ever with 360 on 28 Nov (AD). Interior outliers included singles from: Wardner 16 Oct (PD), Castlegar 7-18 Aug (EB) increasing to 3 on 3 Sep (EB). Cattle Egrets were noticeably absent except for 6 at Nelson 10 Nov (JG). Likely the same Black-crowned Night-Heron that was at Vaseux in Jul was there again 13 & 17 Aug (RJC, AB). An imm. White-faced Ibis was first located at Boundary Bay 18 Sep (KL) then in a ditch in Delta 20 Sep (RTo) and finally in Langley 27 Sep (fide RTo) for a 2nd Vancouver area

record. A very early ad. Emperor Goose, seen in overflight with Snow Geese in Delta 12 Oct (RTo, CI), provided the lower mainland with its first record in five years. The only Ross's Goose of the season was a single at Creston 25 Sep (LVD, PMc). An ad Rock Ptarmigan was a rare find on Grouse Mtn. 21 Nov (ph. LM).

Whooping Cranes!

The Region's first confirmed record of Whooping Cranes was furnished when a pair was discovered near Prince George last summer. The pair continued their movement along the Fraser R. to Dome Cr. 10 Aug (RZ) and finally on to the McBride area 2228 Aug (DT, vt. JS, ph. GS). During this time, there were a number of sightings that would suggest the following flight path: 30 Jun6 Jul Prince George area; 7 Jul7 Aug Fraser R. to Dome Cr.; 713 Aug Dome Cr. to McBride; 14-28 Aug McBride area (Figure 1). Since these birds were unbanded, it was not possible to establish their origin or their life-history, although one would assume that they are part of the Wood Buffalo N.P. flock. This occurrence leaves more questions than answers, such as: why would a pair of ad. Whooping Cranes arrive in British Columbia when others are still tending to chicks? Assuming they experienced a failed nesting attempt, where was that attempt made? What are the chances that these birds actually arrived during spring migration and thus had a chance to seek out new breeding sites?

Shorebirds and Gulls

One of the Region's Pacific Golden-Plover hotspots, Tofino, furnished 6 on 8 & 10 Oct (AD) and a late individual was present there 23 Oct (AD). American Avocets are casual visitors to the south coast in fall, three birds remained at the Serpentine R. mouth 9-30 Nov (JA). Rare away from the Peace R. area, a juv. Hudsonian Godwit was at R.M.B.S. 14 Sep (IP) and another was in Tsawwassen 23 Oct - 2 Nov (PC et. al.). Vancouver area's 12th and 13th records of Red-necked Stint were both from Boundary Bay: an alternate ad. 7 Aug (GLM); and a juv. 30 Aug & 3 Sep (dagger RTo, JF). Vancouver area's 8th record of White-rumped Sandpiper was a basic ad. at R.M.B.S. 18 Sep (RTo). Single juv. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were at Viaduct Flats, Saanich 23 Sep (GLM) and Tofino 17 & 23 Oct (AD). Single juvenile Ruffs were at Boundary Bay 13 Sep (MTo, STo) and Courtenay 22-26 Sep (AM, NM et. al.). As Fulmars were washing ashore, Adrian Dorst noticed small numbers of Red Phalaropes were in inshore waters with one at Tofino's airport 19 Oct, 3 at Tofino 20 Oct, and 4 at Long Beach 22 Oct. A Little Gull was sighted in Comox 11-12



Sep (JF, NH, GLM et. al.) for a first local record. The only interior report of Mew Gull was a single bird at Castlegar 3 Aug (EB). Very rare in the Region, an ad. Vega Gull was in Duncan 24 Nov (DM). An ad. Slaty-backed Gull was found at the Cumberland Landfill 29 Nov (*JF) and later relocated 6 Dec (*JF) at the Cumberland STP, another ad. was in Delta 2-30 Nov (RTo). The only interior Sabine's Gull was a single seen flying over Kelowna's floating bridge 15 Sep (RJC).

Alcids through Flycatchers

A Crested Auklet furnished the 2nd provincial record when discovered at R.P.B.O 5 Sep - 17 Oct (ph. JJ, AR et. al.). It was often in the company of Rhinoceros Auklets between Pedder Bay and R.P.B.O. Northern Pygmy-Owls were fairly conspicuous in the c. interior suggestive of a widespread southward/downslope movement (fide JB). A **Spotted Owl**, one of few remaining in Canada, was in Jericho Park 30 Sep (ph. HD et. al.) for an extraordinary Vancouver record, the most recent surveys conducted, found fewer than 10 birds in the province. A hummingbird that was visiting a Royston feeder, s. of Courtenay, was finally confirmed as an ad. male Rufous Hummingbird 29 Nov (ph. AM et. al.) for one of very few Nov records for the Region. Rare in the lower mainland, an imm. Lewis's Woodpecker was in Delta 30 Aug (RTo, JF). A pair of White-headed Woodpeckers were at the W. end of Green Lake, s. Okanagan, 6 Aug (RaC, CaC). A record-late Willow Flycatcher was at R.P.B.O. 15 Oct (JJ, JG). Vancouver's first Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was an imm. at R.M.B.S. 1 Oct (RTo, MM). An imm. male **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, first found in Tofino 24 Aug (JW), was relocated in Ucluelet 2 Sep (BSI). A Tropical Kingbird was in Ucluelet 23-24 Oct (BSI), and later in Tofino 12-13 Nov (AD), where this species is almost annual.

Swallows through Warblers

An imm. Eurasian Barn Swallow in Delta, provided a first Vancouver area record 1-4 Nov (dagger, RTo). An ad. Western Scrub-Jay was in Ladner 19 Oct - 30 Nov (DK, et. al.). A Rock Wren discovered on Mt. Albert Edward provided one of few modern Vancouver Island records 21 Aug (JF, NH, AM). Almost annual, a Red-throated Pipit was at Boundary Bay 13 Sep (RTo). Rare in the Okanagan, a Tennessee Warbler was banded at Vaseux 10 Sep (BL, SO). Nashville Warblers rarely wander to Vanc. I., yet one was in Duncan 21 Sep (DM). An ad. male Chestnut-sided Warbler provided a new addition to the West Kootenay checklist area at Creston, 6 Sep (LVD). A Palm Warbler was in Vernon 4 Oct (CS), where this species rarely occurs.

An imm. Blackpoll Warbler was a rare sight in Richmond 26 Sep (RTo, JO, TK). A window-killed Ovenbird was picked up near Victoria 1 Sep (JH, ph. MN) and sent to the University of Victoria. A Wilson's Warbler was very late in Nakusp 18 Nov (GSD).

Tanagers through Finches

An imm. or female Western Tanager remained very late at R.M.B.S. 10-30 Nov (ph. JI et. al.) and was joined by a second bird 20 Nov (JI). More often seen in spring, an imm. Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Kelowna 29 Sep (CC) and furnished the latest Okanagan record and an imm. Female was in Richmond 26 Sep (JO, TK). An ad. Brewer's Sparrow, thought to be of the interior race, was found in Duncan 9 Nov (DM). A Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was found at Viaduct Flats, Sidney 10 Oct (fide CSa). An ad. male Brambling was in North Vancouver 20 Nov (RB).

Contributors

(subregional editors in **bold-face**): John Anderson, Marc-André Beaucher, Ed Beynon, Andy Bezener, **Jack Bowling** (Prince George, weather summary), Roger Burrows, Peter Candido, Richard J. Cannings, **Chris Charlesworth** (Kelowna), Carol Currie, Ralph Currie, **Gary S. Davidson** (Kootenays), Peter Davidson, Al DeMartini, Boris Dobrowolsky, **Adrian Dorst** (Tofino-Ucluelet), Jamie Fenneman, Jeremy Gatten, Jane Hansen, Nathan Hentze, Corina Isaac, Jukka Jantunen, Diane Kehoe, Kevin Knight, Todd Kohler, Barry Lancaster, Maria Ledergerber, Sheila McCartan, Peter McIver, Mitch Meredith, **Guy L. Monty** (c. Vancouver I.), Art Morgan, Norma Morton, Laure Neish, Mark Nyhof, Steve Ogle, Jason Osterold, Ilya Povalyaev, **Mark Phinney** (Peace River), **Phil Ranson** (Cariboo), Chris Saunders, Tom Schooley, Chris Siddle, Pam Sinclair, Mike Toochin, **Rick Toochin** (Vancouver), Sharon Toochin, Linda Van Damm, Fred Waite, Jackie Windh.

*Compiled by **Donald G. Cecile***



Authors in this Issue

Janice Arndt

Janice Arndt grew up near Toronto and early on developed a fascination for the natural world. She made her first bird list at age 8. She became more serious about birding while at university, after spending part of a summer break banding birds at Long Point Bird Observatory. Janice has worked as a wildlife biologist in Ontario and New Brunswick and currently has a writing contract with the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program in Nelson.

Gary Davidson

Gary Davidson, Nakusp's resident birder and pre-eminent British Columbia birder has taken a teaching position in Hobart, Tasmania where he and his wife Marie will live for a year. Gary has contributed bird records from throughout BC. Before moving to Nakusp he explored the Fort Nelson area and co-authored an important paper on the birds of the Fort Nelson area with Tony Erskine in 1976. His contributions in Nakusp and beyond have significantly added to our knowledge of the birds of BC. [Editor]

Larry Halverson

Larry Halverson was born in the spring of '48. He weighed 7lb.10oz. His mother and dad loved him. Larry has always liked the outdoors and could often be found bent over, observing some little critter. It only seemed natural that he pursued a degree in zoology. Upon graduating, he worked for the Canadian Wildlife Service studying wolves. Then in 1972 he moved to the Columbia Valley to work as a Naturalist for Kootenay National Park. Larry is the co-founder of Wings Over the Rockies Bird Festival and is currently on the board of directors for the Canadian Intermountain Joint Venture, one the newest North American Bird Conservation Initiatives. He has an incredible network of contacts and is often called upon as an advisor and consultant in the communication, science, education and technology fields. He is the recipient of a Governor General's award and medal for his service and contributions to Canadians and his community.

Charles Helm

Charles Helm is a South African-born family physician who came to Canada in 1986. The Helm family has lived in Tumbler Ridge since 1992. He is Vice President of the Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation, and has been involved in the discovery and exhibition of local dinosaur material. He has written two books on Tumbler Ridge, with two further books scheduled for publication in 2004. He has had an interest in birding since teenage days and worked with Wild Bird Trust of BC to compile the Tumbler Ridge bird checklist.

Simon Liao

Simon grew up on a farm in Changhwa County, Taiwan. His childhood contact with birds was limited to herding the family's flock of domestic ducks. Many years later, Simon and his young son visited a coastal wetland for the boy's school project on birds. Simon admits that in those days, he knew almost nothing about wild birds, and decided to learn. He founded the Changhwa Wild Bird Society, becoming Executive Secretary and then President. Later, he was elected President of the Wild Bird Federation of Taiwan, and then Vice Chairperson of the Asia District of BirdLife International. He moved to the Vancouver area in 2002, and joined BCFO a year later. Besides birding, Simon's

particular interest is in conservation of birds and their habitats, and encouraging international cooperation for conservation. Last year, Simon founded the International Taiwan Birding Association as a bridge between Taiwan and Canada. Simon is President of the ITBA; Jo Ann MacKenzie is Executive Secretary.

Jo Ann MacKenzie

Jo Ann's interest in creatures of the wild began in very early childhood in Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A. At about age 2, she tried to persuade a neighborhood squirrel to eat walnuts from a spoon. Some 30 years later, her interest focused on birds. She became active in the birding section of the Toronto Field Naturalists and the Ontario Bird Banding Association. Jo Ann and husband Hue moved to the Vancouver area in 1983, and were soon leading field trips for the Vancouver Natural History Society and the White Rock and Surrey Naturalists. They were founding members of BCFO in 1991. Jo Ann was elected to the Board of Directors in 1999, serving as Secretary for 3 years, and President for 1 year, retiring in June, 2003.

Michael McMann

Michael McMann was raised in Oregon where he flew American Kestrels and a Red-tailed Hawk in falconry at fourteen years of age. He received Canadian citizenship in 1975 and led two expeditions to the arctic for Gyrfalcons and two survey/capture expeditions to the B.C. coast for Peale's Peregrines, the latter sanctioned and monitored by B.C. Fish and Wildlife Birds and Endangered Species Department. He has participated in Peter Sherrington's Rocky Mountain Golden Eagle Surveys, compiled a two year raptor nesting survey for the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, and produced a photo display of the Osprey nest sights for their interpretive centre. Michael is a long time member of the Nelson Naturalists. He initiated a small owl / kestrel nest box trail on property owned by the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and continues to monitor it with other naturalists.

Linda Van Damme

Linda is an avid naturalist who has had a lifelong interest in birds. She served as a regional editor to "The Birds of British Columbia" atlases and was a contributing writer to Volume 4. Possessing a great passion for nest finding, she has participated in the BC Nest Record Scheme since 1979 and co-authors the annual report. Her documentation of birdlife in the Creston Valley led to the publication of the first comprehensive bird checklist for that region. Seldom without her camera, Linda enjoys wildlife photography and uses her images for public slide presentations and birding courses.



Dannie Carsen

Moberly Lake, northern BC
(See BCFO conference extension
trip details, page 15)

