

BC BIRDING

Newsletter of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists

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John B. Sprague - "Top Birders"



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

Following are some brief descriptions by Tony Greenfield of field trips that conference attendees enjoyed June 26 and 27.

MOUNT SPIEKER

Leader: Joan Kerr

Attractions: alpine species

One of the main attractions of Tumbler Ridge is the opportunity to drive directly to areas above treeline. This allows access to ptarmigan habitat for many people for whom this is normally a difficult place to reach. Consequently, hopes were high on the Saturday morning as a large contingent of BCFO'ers drove into the mountains. This group was not disappointed as a White-tailed Ptarmigan was located very close to the tower atop Mt. Spieker and well seen by all, though it could not be located on the following day. Other alpine/sub-alpine species observed were Blue Grouse, Horned Lark, American Pipit, Pine Grosbeak and 7 species of sparrows.

please see AGM Field Trips, page 12

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

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.

Since November, 2003, BCFO has maintained an official partnership with the Changhwa Wild Bird Society, Changhwa, Taiwan.

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
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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

Upon reviewing some of the more recent President's Reports to get an idea on what to say today, I am daunted by the task. But the Varied Thrush on the cover of BC Birding reminds me of my walk this morning when I heard one sing. That's why I'm here. For the birds.

As the Board has not met face-to-face yet since the Annual General Meeting in Tumbler Ridge, I remain Acting President until the Board convenes and chooses the new Executive. This will happen in October. Nonetheless, the Board has not taken the whole summer off. We had a brief meeting via teleconference call in early September.

As with every AGM we say goodbye to familiar faces on the Board and welcome new faces. Stepping down from the Board are Krista De Groot, Dannie Carsen, and Marilyn Buhler. Thank you for all you have done for the BCFO. And to Wayne Diakow, Jim Ginns, and John Vooy, welcome.

I was disappointed to not be able to attend even a portion of this year's Annual Conference in Tumbler Ridge. I gather it was lots of fun, of course, and you even learned something in the process. Tumbler Ridge was thrilled to have us. We were thrilled to be there. New species were found for the Tumbler Ridge checklist area, always a rush. Charles Helm, our local coordinator in Tumbler Ridge, was unfailing, tireless and unfazed by the shifting in the Board. Thank you to all the Tumbler Ridge volunteers / town who helped make this weekend possible.

My sincere thanks go out to the rest of the Board members for jumping in and taking on the various tasks required to run the Conference in light of my absence. Marilyn Buhler, to whom I left all responsibility for

the conference; to Dick Cannings and Bryan Gates (a former Board member) for chairing and MC-ing. Give thanks also to Dannie Carsen, Rita Wege, Glen Moores, Ian Robertson, and Tony Greenfield for helping organize and run the conference.

Especially, I would like to thank all of you for attending the Annual Conference. You made it a success.

I hope some of you will return to Tumbler Ridge. There's still a lot more birds and country to see!

Elsewhere in this newsletter you can read submissions describing the various activities of the weekend and the Extension. The people, the birds, the places.

An opportunity is coming up in October for all members to put their two-cents worth into the future direction of the BCFO. The last few years we have been so busy with organizing the annual conferences and extensions, it's time we stopped and had a look at ourselves. Are we going where we want to go? An informal afternoon is being

organized for Saturday, October 16 in Naramata (near Penticton in the Okanagan). More details of this event are on Page 9. I hope to see some of you there.

If you are unable to attend this event, and you live in the Lower Mainland, do attend the 2004 Canada Taiwan Bird Fair at the Vancouver Public Library on the same day (see notice on page 10).

In the meantime, grab that chance to get out birding, talk to someone new about the study and enjoyment of wild birds and the environment, and offer your help to our organization.

Sandra Kinsey, Acting President



"Oh sod this for a lark. Come on, kids, let's go to McDonald's."

From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



Editor's Notes and Notions

By all accounts the 14th Annual General Conference in Tumbler Ridge was a smashing success. For this issue of *BC Birding*, Tony Greenfield submitted a brief description of field trips and list of birds observed. Bryan Gates provided a list of birds observed on the extension trip, between Moberly Lake and Fort St. John. John Sprague and Jo Ann Mackenzie submitted photographs of the outdoor and indoor events. These contributions provide those who couldn't make it (myself included) with some idea of just what it was we missed.

I would like to thank Marylin Buhler for presenting a brief Newsletter Editor report at the conference on my behalf.

Sandy Ayer, who lives in Calgary, submitted an interesting article with photographs on the birds of the Twin Lakes area in the Okanagan. Martin McNichol provided the always interesting and important list of upcoming events and newsworthy items. John Sprague pokes the big balloon of AOU illogic and elsewhere presents a plea for submissions to *BC Birds*. Gary Davidson once again gives us a taste of birding down under and offers advice for the avoidance of chunder. Andy Stepniewski recalls a portion of his 2002 northeast BC birding trip. Don Cecile's list of summer bird sightings is, as always, very interesting. Marylin Buhler contributed the Minutes of the AGC and Glen Moores contributed the 2003 financial statement.

As Acting President, Sandra Kinsey presents the *Presidents Report* and is temporarily overseeing our organization. Four BCFO members have stepped forward as Directors (page 8) to fill the gap of the valued Directors who have moved on.

On a somber note, Ken Morgan has decided to cease producing *Listers' Corner* because of negative feedback and complaints about its production (see page 18). The efforts to produce such a list are considerable and directly consume one's spare time. We must all remember that those serving in any capacity in the

BCFO organization are contributing their own time and are doing the best job possible under demanding time constraints. Criticism is fine but it must be constructive and respectful. Actions and processes are seldom as simple as they seem. I know many people look forward to this yearly compilation and I hope that someone will take it over to keep it going. I also know that Ken did not make this decision lightly, and I thank him for his past efforts which are appreciated by many.

And this all reminds me of one of this summer's birding highlights, which occurred earlier this month on Texada Island. While driving back from the south end of the island we rounded a corner to witness several Turkey Vultures and Common Ravens take flight from a deer carcass in the middle of the road. We pulled over and watched for about half an hour as slowly the birds returned; first the Turkey Vulture, then a raven, until soon there were four Turkey Vultures and two ravens at the dusty diner. The ravens were raucous and vocal, sometimes chasing one another away. The Turkey Vultures took it all in stride and seemed, in comparison to the ravens, proper gentlemen or gentlewoman.

Our two sets of family vacations this summer — both BC road trips — were each punctuated by the appearance of American White Pelicans. During a brief stopover with friends at Green Lake (near 70 Mile House) on July 12th, on our way back from our northern jaunt, five American White Pelicans flew west over the lake, almost causing me to spill my beer. At the end of our coastal islands jaunt, as our ferry left Saltery Bay just south of Powell River, a lone American White Pelican appeared from the east, flying low over the water whereupon reaching the ferry dock it proceeded to circle above the parking lot in what was seemingly a slow and arduous attempt to salvage a weak thermal from the expansive pavement. For these sightings I'm not accepting any spiritual connotations, but I'm revelling in the notion of luck.

Another interesting event was the spotting of what appeared to be a Turkey Vulture on our drive back to Chetwynd from a family outing at Moberly Lake on July 1. By the time my Brother-in-law pulled the truck over, the bird had disappeared over a north ridge and did not re-appear. I cannot think of what else the bird could be. Did anyone else see a Turkey Vulture in the area this summer?

Okay, the most spiritual birding experience this summer was the brief visit to Parker Lake, 7 old time miles west of Fort Nelson. On a brief evening stop, I said hello to my old bird friends with whom I visited so many early mornings long ago. I happily offered up bare skin to the hungry mosquitoes who graciously sucked my blood while the Bonapartes Gulls and Black Terns dashed above the lake. "Thank you, dear mosquitoes," I said, then got the hell out of there before I was eaten alive and it was too dark to negotiate the rutted muddy road off the highway which, thankfully, remains much the same as it was 20 years ago.

This brings me to one official beef (or bison in you're in the northeast). It concerns the construction of the straight, paved Alaska Highway and other new, improved highways around BC: there is no room to pull off. What the heck is a birdwatcher to do when he or she spots something of interest? The highway masterminds now leave only about 1 meter of shoulder. Gone are the days of wide shoulders, when the road was in some areas indistinguishable from the ditch. So, I beg the government of BC to invest a few hundred million dollars in widening the shoulders of highways throughout this fair province to facilitate the education of naturalists of all ilk and further our knowledge of species' distributions and abundances.

Phil Henderson, Editor



**British Columbia Field Ornithologists
Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting, 26 June 2004
Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia**

1. Call to Order.

Director Dick Cannings called to order the Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists (BCFO) at 16:15 and welcomed those present.

2. Minutes of the 2003 Annual General Meeting.

The meeting was held 21 June 2003 in Radium, BC. Secretary Marilyn Buhler read the minutes that had been published in the September 2003 issue of *BC Birding*.

Motion: To approve the minutes as read; by Bryan Gates, seconded by Dannie Carson. CARRIED.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes.

None.

4. Treasurer's Report.

Director Dannie Carson presented the report on behalf of Treasurer Glen Moores.

The Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the year ended December 31, 2003 showed revenues for the year as being \$25,915; expenditures \$20,250; with a surplus for the year of \$5,664.

The Balance Sheet, at December 31, 2003, showed a Liabilities and Members' Equity total of \$41,244

Motion: To accept the Treasurer's Report; by Dannie Carson, seconded by John Neville. CARRIED.

5. Membership Report.

Secretary Marilyn Buhler read the report for Rita Wege.

To date, membership stands at 253 (up from 234 at the same time in 2003) with 5 Institutional memberships.

Membership expiry date is now printed on the newsletter mailing label and renewal notices go only to those who haven't renewed. Membership may now be paid for more than one year at a time and many members have taken advantage of this new convenience.

A Membership List for 2003 was distributed with the September 2003 newsletter, and another list is planned for September 2004. As well, a "Welcome" list of new members is published in each issue of the newsletter.

6. Newsletter Report.

Secretary Marilyn Buhler read the report for Phil Henderson, editor of *BC Birding*.

The newsletter is a considerable amount of work, but rewarding work, and it is made easier by the contributions of knowledgeable and enthusiastic members. Phil would like to thank Ian Robertson for convincing him to take on this challenge.

Phil wished to thank all who have contributed to the newsletter and to encourage you to continue to do so. He would like to see members who have not contributed an item for the newsletter to send something along, or to get in touch with him to discuss an idea. If you have any ideas for, or criticisms of, the newsletter in general, please let Phil know. He would also like to acknowledge the help of Ted Goshulak for looking after distribution of the newsletter.

7. Journal Reports.

Editor of volumes 4 to 12 of *BRITISH COLUMBIA BIRDS*, Martin McNicholl presented his report.

Volume 10 was mailed to members in September 2003, the second journal volume of that year. Thanks to Marilyn and Andy Buhler for the final formatting, and to Rita Wege in sorting out the mailing list.

The receipt of the most delinquent of the book reviews allowed Martin, at long last, to turn the book review section over to John Sprague. He also now has potential manuscripts to edit for all remaining slots for volumes 11 and 12.

However, we won't get back on schedule until John Sprague receives more manuscripts for him, Ken Morgan, Mary Taitt and external reviewers to consider for publication. Martin has two manuscripts in preparation for them to consider. Please join me in keeping them busy.

Current editor of *BRITISH COLUMBIA BIRDS*, John Sprague presented his report.

Progress on volumes 13 and 14 is worse than disappointing. To date there are two notes and three book reviews.

In January, President Ian Robertson prepared a plan, to invite papers from academics and others. In May, John produced a shortened version of the guide for authors, as part of an information package for sending to potential authors. John recommend going through with this, to get the journal going. We need suggestions from BCFO members, of good candidates to receive this package.

John also had several other suggestions for the board to consider in support of the journal.

8. President's Report.

Due to work pressures Ian Robertson has actually resigned as President of BCFO. He has written a Past President's Message. It was



read by Director Dick Cannings.

Ian expressed regret at missing this year's annual conference. He thanked Sandra Kinsey (acting president) and Marilyn Buhler for taking up the slack in looking after finalizing the many details of the annual conference. He also thanked Dick Cannings and Bryan Gates for MC'ing the many conference elements, and Glen Moores, Jo Ann MacKenzie, Dannie Carsen, and Rita Wege for their organizational support. A huge thanks is also due to Charles Helm and his team in Tumbler Ridge for being on site and able to respond to last minute problems.

In the past year there has been a smooth transition in the editorship of the newsletter, *BC Birding*, from Marilyn and Andy Buhler to Phil Henderson. Our journal, *British Columbia Birds*, had Volume 10 delivered and Volumes 11 and 12 are nearing completion. This journal is still challenged to attract sufficient manuscripts. We need to implement the journal promotion plan that we have conceived, and that can be kicked off with submissions from you, our members.

As was reported in *BC Birding*, our society went international this year with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between BCFO and the Changwha Wild Bird Society, based in the Republic of China. The realization of this agreement was based on the work of many people, but particularly Jo Ann MacKenzie and Simon Liao.

Ian also thanked the Board and members for their support and wished those present at the annual conference all the best.

Motion: To thank Ian Robertson for his contribution to the organization while in the position of President; by Jo Ann MacKenzie, seconded by Bryan Gates. CARRIED.

9. Election of Directors.

Jo Ann MacKenzie presented the slate of nominees for 2003 – 2004.

Standing for election for a 2 year term:

Dick Cannings, Penticton (r)
Wayne Diakow, Richmond
Jim Ginns, Penticton
Sandra Kinsey, Prince George (r)
John Vooy, Abbotsford (r) = standing for re-election

These candidates were declared elected by acclamation.

Completing the first year of a 2 year term and not standing for re-election at this time:

Tony Greenfield, Sechelt
Glen Moores, Brentwood Bay
Andrew Stewart, Victoria
Ian Robertson, Langley

Motion: Expression of thanks to Krista de Groot, Dannie Carsen and Marilyn Buhler for their work on the Board of Directors; by Tony Greenfield, seconded by Hue MacKenzie. CARRIED.

10. Other Business.

- a) **Pelagic Trip.** Bryan Gates reported that the BCFO pelagic trip in September 2004 is sold out and has a waiting list. This has proven to be a very successful and popular event.
- b) **Other Field Trips.** Bryan Gates brought the meetings attention to a notice of a trip to Africa being organized by the Victoria Natural History Society. It is advertised in our June 2004 newsletter and a similar venture might have fund raising and field trip potential for BCFO.
- c) **Electronic newsletter.** A question was asked regarding putting the newsletter out electronically. This is not in the immediate future, but a show of hands indicated that about half of the approximately 45 members present would be interested in receiving the newsletter electronically. This will be something for the Board and editors to consider.
- d) **Motions.** *Motion: An expression of thanks to the whole Tumbler Ridge organizing committee; by Andy Buhler, seconded by Nettie Overhoff. CARRIED.*

11. Adjournment.

Motion: To adjourn; by Roger Foxall, seconded by Bryan Gates. CARRIED

Dick Cannings adjourned the meeting at 17:10.

- **Marilyn Buhler**, Secretary, BCFO
26 June 2004

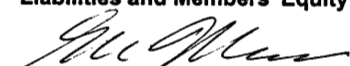


British Columbia Field Ornithologists
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
For the year ended December 31, 2003
(Unaudited)

	2003	2002
Revenue		
Membership	\$ 6,929	\$ 5,679
Conference extension	9,420	9,445
Conference fees	3,805	3,315
Donations	4,515	5,221
Field Trips	315	208
Advertising	75	225
Interest	849	781
Miscellaneous income	6	23
	<u>25,915</u>	<u>24,897</u>
Expenditures		
Conferences extension	5,666	7,209
Conference facilities	3,108	2,996
Printing	1,604	1,475
Postage	2,053	1,247
Donations	1,880	1,800
Travel	4,574	3,923
Stationery	100	40
Miscellaneous	5	246
Future Printing of Journal	1,163	1,500
Bank charges	97	118
	<u>20,250</u>	<u>20,556</u>
Surplus (deficit) for the year	<u>\$ 5,664</u>	<u>\$ 4,341</u>

Balance Sheet
December 31, 2003

	2003	2002
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash in banks	\$ 40,564	\$ 35,047
Receivables	679	587
Total Assets	<u>41,244</u>	<u>35,635</u>
Liabilities and Members' Equity		
Current liabilities		
Deferred revenue	\$ 2,626	\$ 1,776
Accounts payable	473	-
Prepaid memberships	700	-
Future payable	4,022	6,100
	<u>7,821</u>	<u>7,876</u>
Members' Equity		
Balance, beginning of the year	27,758	23,417
Net earnings for the year	5,664	4,341
Balance, end of the year	<u>33,423</u>	<u>27,758</u>
Liabilities and Members' Equity Total	<u>\$ 41,244</u>	<u>\$ 35,635</u>


Glen Moores, Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Page 1.



New Directors

Dick Cannings, Penticton

I was born and raised in the Okanagan, in a family keenly interested in natural history. This early involvement in birds, bugs and plants led me to a university education in zoology, including a BSc degree from the University of British Columbia and a MSc from Memorial University of Newfoundland. After having lived away from the valley for the last 25 years, I have now returned to what has always been home, and am now working as a consulting biologist in Naramata. I work half-time for Bird Studies Canada, coordinating BSC programs in British Columbia and organizing Canadian Christmas Bird Counts and the British Columbia Owl Survey.

Six summers as a Park Naturalist in my university student years gave me a broad knowledge of the ecology of British Columbia. This knowledge was deepened through my 15 years as Curator of the Cowan Vertebrate Museum at the University of British Columbia. That position not only gave me a tremendous opportunity to learn more about my favourite subject--birds--but also gave me experience in teaching ecological field methods and natural history to university students. I still teach a field ecology course for UBC every year, held in such diverse places as Costa Rica, Arizona and the Yukon. My main research interest is the breeding biology of birds, particularly small owls.

I have produced regular radio items on natural history themes for CBC and taught continuing education courses on birding and nature. I've also led about 50 natural history tours to destinations around the world, particularly in the New World tropics. I have written three books: *The Birds of the Okanagan Valley*, *British Columbia*

with my brothers Sydney and Robert Cannings; *British Columbia: A Natural History* with Sydney Cannings, and most recently *The BC Roadside Naturalist*. *British Columbia: A Natural History* won several awards in 1996, including the Bill Duthie Booksellers Choice Award for best book published in British Columbia, the Canadian Science Writers' Book Award and the Lieutenant Governor's Silver Medal for best book on the history of British Columbia. We have expanded four sections of *British Columbia: A Natural History* and published them as separate, smaller, soft-cover books: *The Geology of British Columbia*, *Life in the Pacific Ocean*, *The World of Fresh Water* and *Mountains and Northern Forests*.

Wayne Diakow, Richmond

I really was influenced by my father who enjoyed birds while he was growing up in the Drumheller area of Alberta. He used to take my brothers and I out as small children in and around Vancouver where we grew up. He always pointed out birds to us. When I was 21, I started taking the hobby seriously and have been an avid birder ever since (I am now 51). Over the past 20 years, my brother and I have enjoyed yearly trips to the Okanagan see some of our wonderful B.C. birds. I have also been lucky to bird in exotic places such as Mexico, Trinidad, all over the U.S. and Canada, and to the island of Attu (if you want to call that exotic).

I joined the BCFO in its inaugural year. I am part owner of a company involved in the forest industry in BC, and also part owner of a Richmond based software company. I have been a director of the BC Waterfowl Society since 1986.

Jim Ginns, Penticton

Jim is a retired mycologist/plant pathologist. He worked in Agriculture Canada (now Agriculture and Agri-food Canada) at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. He was on the Council of the Ottawa-Field Naturalists for a few years and was on the Publications Committee.

Jim moved to Penticton after retiring in 1997, and joined BCFO in 1998.

Sandra Kinsey, Prince George

I'm a field biologist. I've done bird surveys for a living for the past 12 years. It's seasonal. In the winter, we often travel overseas to what else?.....bird! I've been birding seriously for over 20 years. I like going into unknown areas and documenting the avifauna present; "pioneer birding", I call it.

I've been a BCFO member for a long time; since inception, I think.

John Vooy, Abbotsford

John has been a member of BCFO since 2001. He was an active birder in both Ontario and BC in his teens and twenties, and managed the Surrey CBC for several years in the 1960s. Schooling and family life then interrupted his birding, but he took it up again with a flourish in 2000 (making up for lost time!). He taught Geography and History in the public school system for seven years and since 1979 has been a Bible and Theology professor at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford.



Internet Sources

BCFO

<http://www.bcfo.ca>

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/>

Life Histories of North American Birds

A.C. Bent's series published online.

<http://birdsbybent.com/>

Master Guide to the Warblers of Canada

Site produced by the Gov't of Canada and Gov't of Alberta featuring summary accounts of all the warblers plus links to excellent photographs of living birds and skins. Also includes quizzes.

<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/warblers/index.htm>

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 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.

British Columbia Birds

Notes and papers.

Our technical journal is badly in need of significant birding observations. Publication is being held up. The Directors and editor have started a program to contact potential authors, but meanwhile, your notes on rare birds and similar subjects are welcome. Please contact friends who have things that should be recorded, reviews of a species, etc. This is the best place to get these observations recorded for the future.

If in doubt, contact the editor. He can also provide instructions on format. His contact points are given near the front of this newsletter and in the membership directory.

Book reviews

If you would like to review books that come in to the journal, please let the editor know the topics that interest you. Sometimes we also get recordings. You get to keep the book or CD.

The journal could also make use of black and white drawings or photos to liven up the cover and pages.

John Sprague, editor vol. 13+

Membership Directory

A privacy act came into being in January which prohibits organizations such as BCFO from publishing members' personal information without their permission. This has resulted in the temporary postponement of the distribution of our membership directory. The directory will be sent with December's newsletter. Please contact Rita Wege, BCFO Membership, **if you do not want** your name, address, e-mail, etc. to appear in the directory. If we do not hear from you, your name and contact information will be included in the directory.

Future Directions Workshop BC Field Ornithologists

Saturday, October 16, 2004

Lunch at 12:00 noon (\$10.00)

Workshop 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm (free)

Naramata Centre, Naramata, BC

The BCFO Board is inviting all members to a workshop on the future direction of BCFO. Topics will include new and future projects, contributions, newsletter, journal and other items of concern to BCFO.

For those coming from out-of-town, accommodation and some meals are available at Naramata Centre at a modest price. Contact below for more information. Payment (to BCFO) will be due on arrival.

An indication of your attendance and wish for accommodation would be appreciated by October 1 to **Dick Cannings at dickcannings@shaw.ca** or (250) 496-4049 or **Sandra Kinsey at sjkinsey@direct.ca** or (250) 963-8381

Request for digital images of BC Birds

Do you have a good digital image of a BC Bird? The BCFO is encouraging members to submit digital photographs that can be used on our website. We can't compensate you for the use of your image but we will acknowledge the photographer. We can also reduce the resolution of your digital photo to discourage people from copying it off of our website. Please submit your image, along with a suggested caption, the image date, & location to

andy.stewart@shaw.ca

BCFO Web Address changes

Please note, and update your bookmarks, that the new BCFO web address is

<http://www.bcfo.ca>



Upcoming Meetings and Events

Compiled by *Martin K. McNicholl*

- Oct. 16, 2004 **2004 CANADA TAIWAN BIRD FAIR.** 3rd Annual Canada Taiwan Bird Fair, Saturday, Oct. 16, 2004 Vancouver Public Library, 350 W. Georgia St., Vancouver. 11 a.m.– 5 p.m; Opening Ceremonies, slide presentations, videos, bird art, prizes, music, exhibits. Grand prize: Ticket to Taiwan. On-going; photographic display, “Enchanting Taiwan”, Oct. 16–30. For details, please see website: <http://www.canadabirdfair.org>
- 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.
- 2005 **123RD STATED MEETING OF AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS’ UNION**, Univ. of California-Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, Calif. Dates & contact details not yet announced.
- 2005 **SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING**, Halifax, N.S. Dates & contact information details not yet announced.
- Aug. 13-19 2006 **24th INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, Hamburg, Germany. Contact: IOC 2006, Institute of Avian Research, An der Vogelwarte 21, 26386, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.
- Oct. 2006 **4TH NORTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS**, Veracruz, Mexico. Exact dates & contact details not yet announced.

B.C. Birding News Briefs

Compiled by *Martin K. McNicholl*

Merilees Honored by VNHS -Bill Merilees, a well-rounded general naturalist who has contributed substantially to ornithology in British Columbia, received one of two Honorary Life Memberships in the Vancouver Natural History Society in April 2004. Bill, a former VNHS President, was recognized for leading more than 50 field trips and for his numerous notes, articles and books on the flora and fauna of several parts of B.C. as well as Australia -based on J. Rawsthorne. 2004. *Discovery* 33:8-9.

Self & Crampton Also Awarded -Most of the 2004 awardees of the Vancouver Natural History Society probably participate in at least some birding activities and/or help birds through efforts to conserve their habitats. Two more directly connected with birds were Cynthia Crampton and Brian Self. Brian was a recent chair of the Birding Section, leads numerous birding outings, participates in numerous bird surveys and publishes articles and notes on birds, one of which (on a fishing kestrel) will appear in *B.C. Birds* 11, “2001.” Cynthia coordinates all VNHS field trips, but is most familiar to birders as the cheerful coordinator of post Christmas Bird Count dinners -warming us up and filling our tummies so that we can endure Brian Self’s challenging bird identification quizzes -based on J. McCall. 2004. *Vancouver Nat.* 6(2):4-5.

FBCN Awards Durance -Eva Durance’s many contributions to conservation and natural history in the Thompson-Okanagan were recognized during the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists’ annual general meeting in Vancouver in May 2004 with a Regional Volunteer Award. Watch future issues of *B.C. Birds* for another book review by Eva. -based on J. Best. 2004. *B.C. Nat.* 42(2):8 & 29.



William Goldstone -Aviculturist William (Bill) Goldstone passed away on 1 July 2004 after generously contributing time and expertise to the B.C. Waterfowl Society, B.C. Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited (Canada), Pitt Waterfowl Management Association and Western Pheasant and Waterfowl Society. -based on Anonymous. 2004. Marshnotes summer 2004:11.

Canada Geese No Longer Cackle & Fox Sparrows Stay Together For Now -Most of the substantive decisions by the American Ornithologists' Union's Committee on Classification and Nomenclature published in their "Forty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American birds" published in The Auk 121:985-995, 2004 relate to species that do not occur in British Columbia. However, one change will add a species to the life lists of most birders who have spent much time along the coast: Canada Goose has been spit into Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*) and Canada Goose (*B. canadensis*). Cackling Goose consists of five former Canada Goose races, two of which, the Aleutian Canada Goose (*B. h. leucopareia*) and Cackling Canada Goose (*B. h. minima*) occur regularly in B.C. Canada Goose now consists of seven larger races. The committee also recognized the Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) photographed at Goldpan Provincial Park, B.C. on 6 June 1977 (J. McDonald. 1997. Birders['] Journal 6:162-163) as adding a new species to the North American list and agreeing with the decision of the B.C.F.O Bird Records Committee on its validity (G. S. Davidson. 1999. B.C. Birds 9:16).

Changes to species documented within British Columbia are:

Previous Name	Current Name
Canada Goose, <i>Branta canadensis</i>	Cackling Goose, <i>Branta hutchinsii</i> & Canada Goose, <i>Branta canadensis</i>
Rock Ptarmigan, <i>Lagopus mutus</i>	Rock Ptarmigan, <i>Lagopus muta</i>
White-tailed Ptarmigan, <i>Lagopus leucurus</i>	White-tailed Ptarmigan, <i>Lagopus leucura</i>
Mongolian Plover, <i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	Lesser Sand-Plover, <i>Charadrius mongolus</i>
Spotted Sandpiper, <i>Actitis macularia</i>	Spotted Sandpiper, <i>Actitis macularius</i>
Spoonbill Sandpiper, <i>Eurynorthynchus pygmeus</i>	Spoon-billed Sandpiper, <i>Eurynorthynchus pygmeus</i>
Yellow Wagtail, <i>Motacilla flava</i>	Eastern Yellow Wagtail, <i>Motacilla tschustchensis</i> & at least one other species, not known to occur in North America

Other changes considered but not resolved were the lumping of the two North American magpie species into one species, re-lumping of Bicknell's and Gray-cheeked thrushes, splitting of Yellow Warbler into two species and splitting of Fox Sparrows into two to four species. A proposal to change the English name of Bank Swallow to its European name (Sand Martin) was rejected.

Sealy New AUK Editor -Spencer G. Sealy, originally from Saskatchewan, but at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg since the early 1970s was recently appointed the Editor of The Auk, North America's most prestigious ornithological journal. (Anonymous. 2004. Auk 121:996). Spencer's B.C. connection is considerable, as his Ph.D. thesis was on alcids in the Queen Charlotte Islands and he has published extensively on them and on other B.C. birds, including Pygmy Nuthatches and Hermit and Swainson's thrushes. He has served B.C. Birds as a referee.



AGM Field Trips cont.

A single Black Swift was noted adjacent to Perry Falls, and this is the most northerly known nesting location in the world for this species.

Mammals seen included Grizzly, Hoary Marmot, Mountain Goat and Fox.

A total of 39 sp was seen at this location over the two outings.

BRASSEY CREEK

Leader: Mark Phinney **Attractions: Eastern species in a low elevation mixed forest**

This very birdy habitat produced a wide variety of passerines, including all 4 vireos, including Philadelphia, 5 flycatchers including Yellow-bellied, and 14 spp. of warbler including such desirable "Eastern" species as Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Black & White, Ovenbird, Connecticut, Mourning & Canada.

Perhaps the highlight was the staked out Connecticut Warbler which restlessly flew around the assembled group rarely settling for more than a few seconds. A staked out Cape May Warbler was present atop its expected spruce tree on both days.

56 sp of birds were noted plus a variety of mammals including moose, elk, fox, black bear & coyote.

MURRAY RIVERSIDE & BULLMOOSE MARSHES

Leader: Charles Helm **Attractions: wetland & forest species**

The trip began with the sighting of a gull overflying downtown Tumbler Ridge as the group assembled. Consensus on this bird favoured a California Gull.

A wide variety of sp were seen, reflecting the diversity of habitat types visited. A total of 13 warbler sp were noted including Cape May, Black & White, Ovenbird and Mourning.

69 sp were totalled including 60 on the first outing.

DINOSAUR TRACKS

Leader: Janet Proos & Melanie Dame **Attractions: Dinosaur footprints**

30 sp of birds were noted including American Dipper, Northern Waterthrush & Northern Pygmy Owl.

Tony Greenfield

AGM Species List (106 species)

Common Loon	Swainson's Thrush
Mallard	Hermit Thrush
American Wigeon	American Robin
Bufflehead	Varied Thrush
Barrow's Goldeneye	European Starling
Common Merganser	Cedar Waxwing
Sharp-shinned Hawk	American Pipit
Red-tailed Hawk	Tennessee Warbler
Merlin	Orange-crowned Warbler
American Kestrel	Yellow Warbler
White-tailed Ptarmigan	Magnolia Warbler
Blue Grouse	Cape May Warbler
Ruffed Grouse	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Sora	Townsend's Warbler
Spotted Sandpiper	Black-throated Green Warbler
Solitary Sandpiper	Black and White Warbler
Wilson's Snipe	American Redstart
California Gull	Ovenbird
Northern Pygmy Owl	Northern Waterthrush
Rufous Hummingbird	Connecticut Warbler
Black Swift	Mourning Warbler
Northern Flicker	Common Yellowthroat
Pileated Woodpecker	Wilson's Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Canada Warbler
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Western Tanager
American Three-toed Woodpecker	Chipping Sparrow
Hairy Woodpecker	Brewer's Sparrow (Timberline)
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
Alder Flycatcher	Fox Sparrow
Least Flycatcher	Song Sparrow
Hammond's Flycatcher	Lincoln's Sparrow
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Swamp Sparrow
Eastern Phoebe	White-throated Sparrow
Western Wood Peewee	White-crowned Sparrow
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Clay-coloured Sparrow
Blue-headed Vireo	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Warbling Vireo	Dark-eyed Junco
Philadelphia Vireo	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Red-eyed Vireo	Red-winged Blackbird
Gray Jay	Brown-headed Cowbird
Steller's Jay	Baltimore Oriole
American Crow	Pine Grosbeak
Common Raven	Purple Finch
Horned Lark	Red Crossbill
Tree Swallow	White-winged Crossbill
Bank Swallow	Pine Siskin
Barn Swallow	Evening Grosbeak
Cliff Swallow	House Sparrow
Black-capped Chickadee	
Boreal Chickadee	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	
Winter Wren	
House Wren	
American Dipper	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
Townsend's Solitaire	



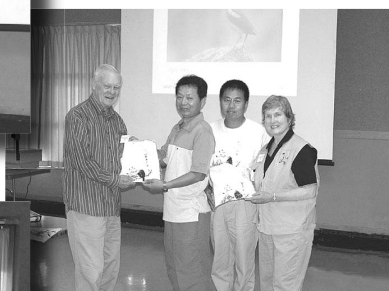


John B. Sprague

Wu Ten-Di, Dr. Charles Helm



**Dannie Carson,
Wu Ten-Di,
Simon Liao**



**Hue MacKenzie,
Wu Ten-Di,
Simon Liao,
Jo Ann MacKenzie**



**Mayor of Tumbler Ridge, Wu Ten-Di,
Simon Liao**



**Simon Liao,
Wu Ten-Di,
Krista DeGroot,
Dick Cannings**

Jo Ann MacKenzie



BCFO Extension Tour: Moberly Lake - Fort St. John, B.C. (June 27-30, 2004)

Bird List

Canada Goose	45	Least Flycatcher	32	Clay-colored Sparrow	10
Gadwall	2	Hammond's Flycatcher	1	Savannah Sparrow	23
American Wigeon	14	Eastern Phoebe	3	LeConte's Sparrow	7
Mallard	22	Eastern Kingbird	1	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	2
Blue-winged Teal	3	Blue-headed Vireo	3	Fox Sparrow	4
Lesser Scaup	9	Warbling Vireo	13	Song Sparrow	1
White-winged Scoter	30	Red-eyed Vireo	11	Lincoln's Sparrow	24
Bufflehead	8	Gray Jay	13	Swamp Sparrow	20
Common Goldeneye	14	Blue Jay	1	White-throated Sparrow	62
Barrow's Goldeneye	12	Black-billed Magpie	31	Dark-eyed Junco	8
Hooded Merganser	1	American Crow	81	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	10
Common Merganser	2	Common Raven	23	Red-winged Blackbird	42
Ruddy Duck	1	Tree Swallow	12	Rusty Blackbird	1 (juv)
Ruffed Grouse	7	Violet-green Swallow	2	Brewer's Blackbird	10
Common Loon	5	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	3	Common Grackle	5
Pied-billed Grebe	5	Bank Swallow	40	Brown-headed Cowbird	45
Great Blue Heron	1	Barn Swallow	2	Baltimore Oriole	6
Osprey	1	Black-capped Chickadee	24	Purple Finch	2
Bald Eagle	3	Boreal Chickadee	6	White-winged Crossbill	1
Northern Harrier	3	Red-breasted Nuthatch	10	Pine Siskin	14
Northern Goshawk	1	House Wren	4	Evening Grosbeak	4
Broad-winged Hawk	2	Marsh Wren	2	House Sparrow	2
Red-tailed Hawk	6	Winter Wren	1		
American Kestrel	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	TOTAL - 120 SPECIES	
Yellow Rail	1 (h)	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	Note: The sequence followed is that of the	
Sora	4	Swainson's Thrush	50	latest revision of the <i>Checklist of Birds of North</i>	
American Coot	30	Hermit Thrush	12	<i>America</i> by the AOU.	
Lesser Yellowlegs	5	American Robin	35		
Solitary Sandpiper	6	European Starling	6		
Spotted Sandpiper	11	Cedar Waxwing	19		
Wilson's Snipe	12	Tennessee Warbler	14		
Franklin's Gull	40	Orange-crowned Warbler	8		
Bonaparte's Gull	3	Yellow Warbler	33		
Ring-billed Gull	3	Magnolia Warbler	5		
California Gull	1	Cape May Warbler	1(h)		
Black Tern	6	Bay-breasted Warbler	1(h)		
Rock Pigeon	2	Yellow-rumped Warbler	23		
Barred Owl	1(h)	Black-throated Green Warbler	7		
Common Nighthawk	6	Blackpoll Warbler	3		
Calliope Hummingbird	25	Black and White Warbler	9		
Belted Kingfisher		American Redstart	29		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	27	Ovenbird	13		
Hairy Woodpecker	3	Northern Waterthrush	36		
American Three-toed Woodpecker	4	Mourning Warbler	1		
Northern Flicker	11	MacGillivray's Warbler	6		
Pileated Woodpecker	1	Common Yellowthroat	8		
Olive-sided Flycatcher	2	Wilson's Warbler	1		
Western Wood-Pewee	1	Western Tanager	4		
Alder Flycatcher	4	Chipping Sparrow	13		

Mammal List

Bat spp.
 Snowshoe Hare
 Woodchuck
 Red Squirrel
 Gray Wolf
 Black Bear
 Moose
 Elk
 Mule Deer
 White-tailed Deer

Compiled by *Bryan Gates*



Birding Twin Lakes, B. C.



Twin Lakes, looking south

H. D. Ayer

Twin Lakes lies 12 km southwest of Kaleden, and about 2 km east of highway 3A, in B.C.'s Okanagan Valley. The "lakes" actually consist of one small (about 1 km long), serpentine lake. Just beyond the lake's eastern shore rise 150 m cliffs with talus-laden slopes that give way, to the south, to grassy range land and gently-sloping forested hills. To the west, the hills become steeper, culminating in the high rocky cliffs that overlook the golf course on the north (and narrowest) end of the valley.

Widely-spaced Ponderosa Pines dominate the drier and steeper slopes, sometimes seeming to grow out of the rock itself. Between the trees, grasses, saskatoon berry bushes, sagebrush, and other hardy plants predominate. Closer to the lake, and on the gentler slopes, the pines are mixed with Douglas-fir, and the underbrush is thicker and more varied. Cottonwoods, aspens, willows, other deciduous trees, and a very few reeds share the lakeshore with the conifers. Houses and summer cottages ring the lakefront and hillsides to the north, east, and south, but most

homeowners have left much of the original vegetation intact. This idyllic setting (powerboats are prohibited) was once a dude ranch, and some of the original ranch buildings can still be seen on the north shore of the lake.

While my parents-in-law, Stan and Molly George, were living in Twin Lakes B. C. (1990-spring 2004), I had eight opportunities to bird the area—all of them in mid-summer, and most of them in mid-July. Please bear in mind, though, that I'm not an expert by any means, and that all of my Twin Lakes birding has taken place in the context of family vacations whose attendant responsibilities limited me to mostly furtive early-morning sorties and to what I could see in or from Stan and Molly's former property at the north end of the lake. Hence my list of sightings adds up to a mere 94 species (see appendix). Nevertheless, the pleasure my observations have brought me can't be quantified, and I invite you to join me now on a typical morning's birdwalk.

Waking at around 6:00 a.m., I walk out onto the deck (of 172 Twin Lakes Road) and savor the utter tranquility

of the lake, hoping that a Common Merganser, a Common Loon, or a Barrow's Goldeneye will cruise by to shatter the looking-glass reflection of the surrounding hills. Perhaps a plunging Osprey hunting carp in the shallows will jolt me into full wakefulness. At any rate, I spend a few minutes watching hummingbirds at the feeder that Molly has hung from the eaves. The hummers are mostly Rufous and Calliopes, but one hot day around lunchtime Molly called out "There's a different-looking hummingbird at the feeder, Sandy!" It turned out to be my life Black-chinned.

I don't linger long, for time is short, and there's so much to see, so I give the nearby trees and bushes a quick scan for such possibilities as Bullock's Oriole, Cassin's Finch, Red Crossbill, Red-naped Sapsucker, or Say's Phoebe. Then, ignoring the swallows on the hydro wires (there's a better place to observe them further on), I walk south along Twin Lakes Road to the sounds of some of the shyer birds, such as Steller's Jay, Spotted Towhee, Western Wood-Pewee, and sometimes, in the distance, Clark's Nutcracker. I give the strip of forest at the foot of the tumbled rock below the cliff-face a quick once-over, but I don't expect to see much this early in the morning because the eastern cliffs lie in shadow until almost noon. This stretch has, however, produced Western Bluebird and Nashville Warbler (another lifer) later in the day. Once I reach the top of the hill, where Westview Road angles off from Twin Lakes Road (.7 km from my starting point), I look over the lake again and check the tops of the trees below me in the hope of seeing one of my favourite birds, the Western Tanager, or perhaps a Bald Eagle or an Osprey.

I continue to follow the main road as it curves sharply to the east, revealing



cultivated meadows and another narrow valley (that leads about 5 km to White Lake, another local birding hotspot). On evening family walks we'll often hear Common Nighthawks here and see White-tailed Deer grazing—perhaps the same ones that visit Molly's garden for a midnight snack. I glance at the half-dead Ponderosa pine in the middle of the uppermost field and hope for a return visit by the Pileated Woodpecker that I once saw land on it (actually, any Pileated Woodpecker will do!)

Twin Lakes Road now descends gently away from the lake, and I watch the boulders on the shoulder to my right for signs of the family of marmots that I've seen here on previous visits. They seem to delight in taunting coyotes to within striking distance and then diving into their holes at the last second. Ruffed Grouse sometimes shelter under the trees at the base of the talus on the left side of the road, and in 2003 I discovered a Western Kingbird nest on a power pole at the bottom of the slope, where the road starts to bend south again.

Just ahead (1.5 km) the road divides, heading east to Highway 97 as White Lake Road and west to the south end of Twin Lakes as Eastview Road (unsigned). I call this junction "Bunting Corner" because I saw my first-ever Lazuli Bunting here and have never failed to find at least one singing male (usually on a hydro wire) in all my visits to the spot. I head neither east nor west, but south across the road, down a bank, and



Bunting Corner

H. D. Ayer

into a lush stream-watered ravine. As I do, I recall my favorite birding experience at Twin Lakes. It was the summer of 1991, my wife Diane had just bought me *Birds of the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia*,¹ and I'd found the book so helpful that I decided to call Dick Cannings, one of the authors, for some tips on birding the southern Okanagan. I ended up talking with his father, Steve, who taught me, over the phone, how to attract songbirds by imitating the call of a Northern Pygmy Owl. I put my tooting to the test in the ravine the next morning and ended up flushing my life McGillivray's Warbler.

The stream attracts many other birds as well, including Veery, various flycatchers, and Red-naped Sapsuckers. With this in mind, I stopped by Bunting Corner again briefly on the morning of 14 August 2004 just to see what I could scare up without actually going down into the ravine. My owl-call imitation (so I'd like to think) attracted a pair of Cooper's Hawks, a family of Lazuli Buntings, a Vesper Sparrow, and a Cassin's Vireo.

In any event, after twenty minutes or so I force myself to move on (I could happily spend the whole morning here). As I climb out onto the roadway again, I look skyward, recalling the afternoon in July 1994, when, near this spot, I caught sight of a Golden Eagle being pursued by a Cooper's Hawk that was, in turn, being pursued by an American Kestrel.

Heading west along Eastview Road, I scan the sagebrush-covered slopes to my left for sparrows. So far I've only managed to see Vesper Sparrows here, but there must be Brewer's Sparrows in the vicinity. Bank Swallows occasionally nest in the steeper and sandier slopes of the hillside. Since this isn't a particularly productive stretch, I move quickly past the turnoff for Grand Oro Road



H. D. Ayer

Looking northwest from the junction with Grand Oro Road

(2 km) and make for the junction with Sagewood Road (2.8 km), where Eastview Road turns north towards the lake.

The sagebrush and pine habitat along this stretch often holds both Western and Mountain Bluebirds. I look for them on the hydro wires along the road, where they roost in the company of finches, and Tree, Northern Rough-winged, and Violet-green Swallows. I once observed a Merlin here (they're rare in summer in the Okanagan)² as it skimmed the tops of the sagebrush in an attempt to panic a songbird into flushing.

As the road turns abruptly west, following the lakeshore the vegetation becomes denser and avian activity increases. Here I've seen most of the species that occur on the north side of the lake, and I keep hoping for a repeat appearance of the Evening Grosbeaks and Vaux's Swifts that I've seen here on a couple of occasions. My wife's uncle and aunt, who used to live at this end of the lake, have seen flying squirrels on summer evenings in the pine trees near shore. They've also encountered rattlesnakes, and I keep this in mind as I slip down the embankment to my left and make my way through the underbrush to the shore of a large pond just south of the road.

I look for the female Barrow's Goldeneyes with ducklings that often forage on the pond, and keep my eyes peeled for Belted Kingfishers and Great Blue Herons. Turtles also inhabit the



pond, and I scan the shore, hoping to see them sunning themselves, hoping not to hear the “plop” that tells me that I’ve spooked them. Here again, I make sure to look up as well as out, for once, through an opening in the trees near the shore of the pond, I happened to see an Osprey challenging what I thought was a Red-tailed Hawk. The “hawk,” on closer observation, appeared to be much larger than the Osprey, large enough to be, yes, a Golden Eagle!



Looking west to the end of Eastview Road

Returning to the road, I follow it to where it dead-ends into the fenced-off grazing land on the west side of the lake (3.5 km). Here a short gravel road leads north to a boat-launching ramp and the only publicly-accessible stretch of beach on the whole lake. I take advantage of the fact to make a panoramic scan of the south end.

I then climb the fence and enter the range land.³ Which way to go? Once, on the more densely-wooded slopes just south of the dead end, I encountered a small flock of Blue Grouse. One of them flushed, and, flying just above the sagebrush, barely managed to escape a Golden Eagle that pursued it at top speed from its perch higher up on the hill. Another time I went part-way up the slope in front of me, followed a deer track into the more arid part of the hillside, and promptly stumbled upon a pair of Common Poorwills.

This time I decide to head north through the pasture at the foot

of the western slope. I flush Western Meadowlark after Western Meadowlark, all the while scrutinizing the pines for Pygmy Nuthatches and my favorite of all the birds of the Okanagan—Lewis’ Woodpecker. I stop at the mixed coniferous forest at the north end of the lake (4.5 km.) and pish for Mountain Chickadees before calling it a day. Then, picking my way through a short stretch of dense woods to the north beach (the beach along the waterline is public property), I head home to Stan and Molly’s place.

Since my parents-in-law now live in Penticton, I can, of course, no longer make a complete circuit of the lake. This doesn’t bother me in the least, however, for anyone can spend a delightful morning birding the Twin Lakes area without going near

the north beach (or the west side of the lake, for that matter). Indeed, on every return visit I add new species to my Twin Lakes list, and I hope to increase my total to 100 within the next couple of years.

If you don’t yet include Twin Lakes in your Okanagan birdwatching itinerary I hope you’ll decide to give it a try; and if you see a summer bird that’s not on my list, or if you just want to chat about birding the area, please feel free to e-mail me (address below).

H. D. (Sandy) Ayer
(sayer@auc-nuc.ca)

(Endnotes)

¹ Robert A. Cannings, Richard J. Cannings, and Sydney G. Cannings, *Birds of the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia* (Victoria, B.C.: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1987).

² Ibid., 136.

³ You’ll need to get permission from the landowner (local people will be able to direct you to the owner’s house) to enter the rangeland beyond the fence.

Birds of Twin Lakes

Canada Goose	American Crow
Mallard	Common Raven
Barrow’s Goldeneye	Tree Swallow
Hooded Merganser	Violet-green Swallow
Common Merganser	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Ruffed Grouse	Bank Swallow
Blue Grouse	Cliff Swallow
Common Loon	Barn Swallow
Pied-billed Grebe	Black-capped Chickadee
Great Blue Heron	Mountain Chickadee
Osprey	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Bald Eagle	House Wren
Cooper’s Hawk	Western Bluebird
Red-tailed Hawk	Mountain Bluebird
Golden Eagle	Townsend’s Solitaire
American Kestrel	Veery
Merlin	American Robin
California Quail	Gray Catbird
Killdeer	European Starling
Solitary Sandpiper	Cedar Waxwing
Spotted Sandpiper	Nashville Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Yellow Warbler
Rock Pigeon	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Mourning Dove	MacGillivray’s Warbler
Common Nighthawk	Western Tanager
Common Poorwill	Spotted Towhee
Vaux’s Swift	Chipping Sparrow
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Vesper Sparrow
Calliope Hummingbird	Song Sparrow
Rufous Hummingbird	Dark-eyed Junco
Belted Kingfisher	Black-headed Grosbeak
Lewis’ Woodpecker	Lazuli Bunting
Red-naped Sapsucker	Red-winged Blackbird
Downy Woodpecker	Western Meadowlark
Hairy Woodpecker	Brewer’s Blackbird
Northern Flicker	Brown-headed Cowbird
Pileated Woodpecker	Bullock’s Oriole
Western Wood-Pewee	Cassin’s Finch
Willow Flycatcher	House Finch
Dusky Flycatcher	Red Crossbill
Say’s Phoebe	Pine Siskin
Western Kingbird	American Goldfinch
Eastern Kingbird	Evening Grosbeak
Cassin’s Vireo	House Sparrow
Warbling Vireo	
Red-eyed Vireo	
Steller’s Jay	
Clark’s Nutcracker	
Black-billed Magpie	



BIRD-LISTERS' CORNER

Welcome to what could be the final edition of Bird-Listers' Corner. In 1996, in what must have been a moment of insanity, I volunteered to resurrect this column. Bird-Listers' Corner had last appeared in June, 1994 and the Board of Directors felt that it was time for someone to breathe life back into it. It wasn't because I was a fanatic lister at the time; I volunteered to take on the responsibility simply because someone needed to do it.

Over the course of writing the article for the last 8 years, out of what I thought was a necessity, I established various 'rules' with regards to the submitting of records. One rule that I have always insisted upon is that contributors are to submit their numbers either via snail mail or by email. Phone-in totals would not be accepted. The reasons for that rule should be obvious – far too many people, who by their nature tend to leave things to the eleventh hour, would have either called me on the last day, or perhaps well after the cut-off date and insisted that their records should still be accepted no matter how

late they were. I have always resisted the suggestion to allow phone-ins because I believe that as adults, we all have to meet deadlines. Is a minimum of 5 or 6 weeks inadequate time for contributors to update their yearly totals and get those results to me? I for one did not think that this expectation was all that onerous. Recently however, I was told that if I had softened up my "sergeant-major sounding orders" and allow phone-ins perhaps more people would be inclined to contribute to Listers' Corner.

This same person then went on to complain about the fact that I hadn't made the effort to call people (including said person) who had submitted records but were not on my email list (or they didn't have email) in order to find out whether or not they had included Crested Myna in their totals. Believe it or not, writing this column actually does take up a fair amount of my 'spare' time.

Anyway, because of this 'final straw' and other complaints I have received over various aspects of the column, it

appears that I have not been meeting the needs or the expectations of the listing contingency of the BCFO. After giving it considerable thought, I have decided it is time to step aside and hopefully someone else will take over Bird-Listers' Corner. If not, this will be the last of this column.

Despite the negativity that a few people have expressed with regards to this column, for the most part I have enjoyed the job. It has not only provided me with opportunities to get to know more BCFO members, it has also forced me to become a better birder (in order to compete with others). Therefore, I am truly hoping that somebody will be interested in taking over this job. If that is you, please get in touch with Phil Henderson, Newsletter Editor or one of the Directors.

As a final comment, I would like to thank all of you who have supported this column over the years.

Ken Morgan

Fables about Counting Exotic Species

Ken Morgan's annual tabulation of birders' achievements is always interesting. This year he added a bit about a listing-rule of the American Birding Association, which had been pointed out by Hank Vander Pol. The ABA says that if an exotic bird (1) becomes established in North America, (2) is recognized by ABA as established and therefore countable, (3) subsequently disappears from North America, then (4) it is no longer countable by people who saw it while it was established and recognized.

In other words, ABA says that history

should be rewritten, a la history records in the novel 1984. The bird never existed here. You never saw it. The bird did not sit in its nest and raise young. You never saw the immatures that grew up and raised families. Or if you prefer, ABA says "Oops, we made a mistake many years ago when we declared that this bird was established here, now we think, you know, that it was not, like, really and truly established, it just looked that way, and we guess sort of, like, we were misled".

Now there is some sense to this rule. Let us say that half-a-dozen

Venezuelan Leaf-cutter Parrots escape from cages in Victoria and find each other and start getting personal. They make a living by stealing rhododendron leaves from local gardens, and they also gobble up the widely- advertised February flowers around Victoria. They manage to raise families for a couple of generations. ABA watches them but is not convinced they are established. Then comes a cold winter and all the parrots die with symptoms of astonishment. ABA was right, these birds did not manage to establish themselves.



But there are other situations. It is often fruitful to examine the logic of something by creating extreme scenarios, based on exactly the same facts but stretched a bit. I proceed with this.

Let us say that several saucy crested black birds from Asia, with the name of Yournah, get loose in Vancouver. They find some neat bridges to nest under, and a never-ending source of french fries in dumpsters behind McDonald's restaurants. They reproduce for 50 generations over 100 years and spread across the city, even into the sacred boulevards of West Vancouver. Long ago, the ABA declared that they were established as a North American species. New members of BCFO go on field trips and follow the rascally creatures with telescopes and solemnly make pencil-marks in small books. Some advanced members pull out a machine and record the latitude, longitude, altitude, hours and minutes, temperature and humidity.

Then a smaller strident black bird with no crest, originally from Europe and named Sparling, spreads west from its eastern start, and reaches Vancouver. It grapples with the Yournah for control of the bridges. It chases other birds away from the dumpsters. Clearly, the ecological balance has shifted, even in West Vancouver. The Yournah has less and less success nesting. It cannot satisfy its craving for junk food. It dwindles. The last American members of the species die after being pecked by Sparlings.

Is it right to say that the Yournah never established themselves here, even though they multiplied for 100 years? Is it right to say that birders never saw them while they were thriving as a declared ABA resident? I say "no" to both questions. The way it should be is this ... ABA should have a set of firm, demanding and cautious requirements that must be satisfied before an exotic

bird is declared established. (Indeed, those are just the kind of rules they have.) Once the declaration is made, it should stick. The bird was established, even if it dies out later (probably as the result of changed conditions).

To further examine the logic of all this, let us look at a parallel scenario. There lives in West Vancouver, a rare but ancient native species called the Beautiful Blue Blackbird. It has always been there, and although rare, has maintained its populations at the same level since Simon Fraser first banded and censused the species in 1808. However the arrival of the Sparlings results in severe competition for favoured nest-cavities with a view of the water. Soon all the nest sites are full of Sparlings playing boom-boxes at full volume. The B.B.B., a quiet native bird, dies off. Now, does the ABA declare that the B.B.B. was never established here, and is not countable on the lists of people who saw it? If not, why not? The logic would be the same as for the Yournah -- a species was clearly established, ecological conditions changed (competition), and the species disappeared under those new conditions.

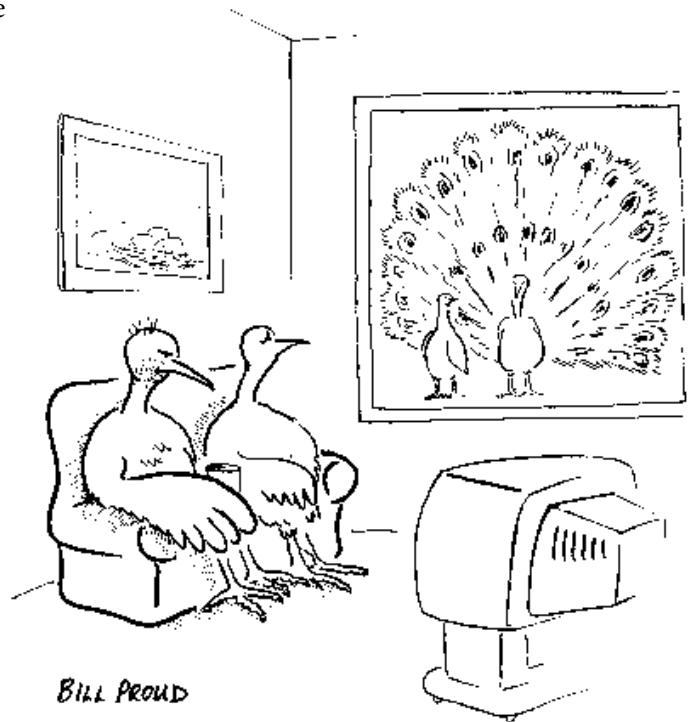
Then there is the Morgan scenario. What if the Yournah disappeared from all of its former range in Asia? It was extinct. But wait a minute, let us say it was still thriving in Vancouver. Should ABA say it was extinct because it was no longer in its native range? Should ABA say it never existed in Asia and is no longer countable on the world list of people who saw it there?

Should ABA say it is not established in North America because it is not a living species elsewhere?

And what if some B.B.B.s escaped from zoos in South America and established large populations there (with views of the water) just after they died out in West Vancouver? Is the B.B.B. still countable on North American lists? South American lists? What if South American B.B.Bs were introduced to the Sunshine Coast and thrived there for 50 years? What if this re-introduced species died out on the Sunshine Coast after that 50 years? If the re-introduced B.B.B. is countable after 50 years, please state clearly why the Yournah is not countable after 100 years.

Some consistent, rational rulings please, from learned Records Committees. You can probably see that this observer does not believe in erasing history.

John B. Sprague



From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



North to Northeast in British Columbia

In 2002, Ellen and I birded in British Columbia. We visited most of the major biomes in the province and ended the year with 334 species of birds. On our main trip in May-early June, we spent four days in the boreal triangle east and north of the Rocky Mountains. This part of B.C. between 56 and 60 degrees latitude N, lies due north of Yakima, Washington, our home. We found it exciting to go north and experience an “eastern” avifauna. The trip log that follows is mostly from sites along the southern 330 miles of the Alaska Highway. As we were traveling this highway from north to south, Mile “Zero” of the Alaska Highway in Dawson Creek is at the end of this report.

Why “Eastern” birds due north? It has to do with a belt of mixed forest, especially Trembling Aspen and White Spruce, stretching in Canada from the southeast to the northwest. This zone of mixed forest, and the associated understory plant communities, extends northwest from Manitoba to the southeastern Yukon, and includes northeastern B.C. Thus, a number of “eastern” bird species, invade northeastern B.C., including some boreal elements and all but one of “MacArthur’s Warblers.” Robert MacArthur, in a classic study on community ecology (1950s), showed that five warblers found in the same boreal forest tract (Cape May, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Bay-breasted), really weren’t sharing the same niche in the forest. MacArthur found each species foraged in

different parts of the spruce trees. These species also employed different foraging strategies in these trees.

DAWSON CREEK. 6-8 JUNE, 2002. We were headed to Dawson Creek in steady rain. Exhaustion overtook us here, so we checked into a motel and slept soundly for much of the afternoon. After pizza and beer, we made a visit to McQueens Slough, a prairie pothole lake on the outskirts of town. I was pleased to see The Nature Trust of British Columbia was a major sponsoring organization for this preserve. Here, we were treated to hundreds of Black Terns, flying about high in the sky over the lake and marsh in unison, chattering as they went. On the water were loads of dabbling and diving ducks.

At dusk, we were at the south end of Swan Lake, in hopes of hearing a Yellow Rail. This spot is pretty much at the northwestern edge in the species’ range. We listened from several points on the periphery of the marsh for an hour with no luck in hearing the rail, so we set off back to Dawson Creek, arriving back after 1 am, having enjoyed a very long day, indeed.

The next morning, June 7th, Mark Phinney, Dawson Creek wildlife biologist and bird expert, met us at McQueen’s Slough. Within a few moments, he picked out a singing Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow, his earliest local sighting by one day. We set up the scope for this very obliging individual. Whoever said sparrows were drab was not thinking of this beautiful species,

with bright orange-buff hues and striking head and back stripes, and bizarre sizzling song. We then queried Mark on the whereabouts of certain other species, especially Connecticut Warbler and Le Conte’s Sparrow. He departed for start work and as it was still fairly early, we set out in search of the Connecticut Warbler.

Mark suggested we try the dense Trembling Aspen woodlands along Brassey Creek, southwest of Dawson Creek. En route, we noted it was becoming breezy, a bad omen, plus the morning prime time was waning. Along Brassey Creek, we heard at several stops staccato songs, which we took for Connecticut Warblers. On visual check, all suspect Connecticut transformed into Ovenbirds. After three or four such embarrassing calls, plus one involving a Northern Waterthrush (after which, shame compelled me to offer turning in my binoculars), we called it quits.

On the way back to Dawson Creek, we stopped several times where Mark had had LeConte’s Sparrows the past week. It was definitely windy, so our luck was poor. At one stop, I briefly saw a Le Conte’s and Ellen and I both heard it utter its odd, insect-like buzz.

Reading later that afternoon on the birds of the area, we discovered that the Ovenbird is one of the most common warblers in these aspen woods, followed by the Connecticut. But, where was the Ovenbirds Ivy League cousin? We don’t know, except we were quite sure they were not cohabiting with



their more southerly relatives on this day. That evening, I re-read the “Birds of British Columbia” account on the Connecticut Warbler and learned that the most reliable site for our target was the Trembling Aspen woodland near Swan Lake, and precisely those near Tupper. It so happened we went to that area after supper to search (again) for the elusive Yellow Rail. From the end of Road 203 on the south side of Swan Lake, we gained permission from a staff member of Ducks Unlimited to walk out to the sedge flats where the rails are often noted. Even with rubber boots, we found the water too deep, and had to retreat, rail-less (except for the ubiquitous Sora). A couple more Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrows were singing here, though. A bit of a detour brought us past aspen woodlands near Tupper that seemed to have the characteristics suitable for Connecticut Warbler: mature trees, with a low shrub layer plus a high cover of herbaceous vegetation. I received clearance (and encouragement) from Ellen for a return visit in the morning.

Very early on the morning of the 8th, I left the Ramada Hotel room to pack the car. To my surprise, there was a LeConte’s Sparrow singing in wet, rank grassland not 100 metres from our room door! I called Ellen; then with a scope, we had fine views of this close relative of the Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Then, it was on to Swan Lake for another Connecticut Warbler search.

Twenty minutes later, we reached the mature aspen woodlands just west of the Alberta border, which I took to be the prime habitat for the

Connecticut Warbler. We stopped a half-dozen times and heard nothing to inspire us to traipse into the woods. Then, we hit pay dirt. From the car, not far from the entrance to Swan Lake Provincial Park, I heard a song suspiciously reminiscent of a Connecticut Warbler. But, after having goofed more than three times the previous day, I was reluctant to get too enthused. So, we donned our rubber boots and set off into the wet woods. It turned out the singing by this bird carried farther than we imagined; it was at least several hundred meters to the site. From that point, we listened to the object of our search while it duetted with a neighbouring Connecticut some several hundred metres off to the south. It was clear this was no Ovenbird, nor even a Northern Waterthrush. But, it easily took us another 30 minutes until the warbler descended from the tall canopy to a lower perch where we could discern its fieldmarks. This is indisputably a classy bird because of its rarity, famous long distance migration, and elusive behaviour. Upon inspection, though, it is definitely a dinghy relative of it’s more crisply patterned relatives, the Mourning and MacGillivray’s Warblers. I took stock of the habitat here. It appeared to me to have a dense grass cover, which Mark asserted was not good for Connecticut. This left me worrying the Connecticut Warbler’s habitat is more threatened than we realize. This aside, we departed, feeling triumphant.

Our final foray in the Dawson Creek region was a Broad-winged Hawk search. Mark suggested driving the gravel road north

from the Louisiana-Pacific mill on the bench above the Pine River. We made stops at half-kilometre intervals for about 10 kilometres. I hooted my best Barred Owl rendition. Though many birds responded with agitated calls, none were of the Broad-winged variety. We tallied a number of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Least Flycatchers, Ovenbirds, Tennessee Warblers, American Redstarts, White-throated Sparrows, Blue-headed Vireo, and even a few Black-throated Green Warblers.

We then headed west out of the Peace region, having had a great birding and natural history experience.

Andy Stepniewski



British Columbia Bird Sightings, Summer 2004

Hot, dry weather ruled across the Region through the whole period with only a few minor showery breakdowns courtesy of a strong ridge of high pressure.

Brown Pelicans were more prevalent than they have been since the fall of 1999 with near record numbers along the west coast of Vancouver Island. Exciting finds in the way of breeding birds included the discovery of a Black Swift nest near Whistler, and the return of breeding Sandhill Cranes on the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

LOONS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A remarkable inland concentration of loons was discovered on Hodder L. 6 Jun (ph. GR, TT) with 1100 Pacific Loons, 25 Common Loons and 3 Yellow-billed Loons. Very rare in summer, a Yellow-billed Loon was on Slocan L. near Silverton, 21–22 Jun (EB). A **Manx Shearwater** furnished a 3rd Regional record 20 Jul (†MLPR) when seen from a cruise ship in Hecate Strait. This summer, American White Pelicans were found north and east of their usual summer loafing areas with: 18 over McBride on 1 Jul (CL); 4 on Eaglet L. 2 Jul (CA) and then 12 there on 13 Jul (MA); 30 on Carrier L. 8 Jul (KG, RD) and an astounding 145 there on 15 Jul (DW, SS). Perhaps at least some of these birds are failed nesters from Chase Lake ND, where a mass abandonment occurred in early Jun (www.enn.com). The numbers of summering pelicans in the Creston area had also grown to more than 200 (LVD) which may or may not be related to the Chase L. abandonment. Brown Pelicans staged a good invasion with singles: at Carmanah Point 2 Jun (RR); at Clover Point, Victoria 27 Jun (BB, MGS) and an impressive 77 flew by Carmanah Point 27 Jun (JH, BG, JE) with another 29 on 28 Jun and 27 on 29 Jun. and a single at Metchosin 25 Jul (DA, JJ). Were it not for the impressive invasion of Brown Pelicans, the 3 birds found in the Vancouver area in late Jul would have been thought to pertain to the same individual.

Very rare in summer, a few swans lingered on Vancouver I.: an imm. Tundra Swan, present since spring, remained in Comox through the period (NH, JF); an ad. Trumpeter Swan furnished the first summer record for the Nanaimo area as it remained at Nanoose Estuary through the entire period (GLM, et. al.); an ad. and an imm. Trumpeter Swan was in Comox 14 Jul (GLM). Although no breeding was confirmed, a pair of Ring-necked Ducks provided the first summer record for the Nanaimo checklist area as they spent the summer in Buttertubs Marsh (GLM, et. al.). Broad-winged Hawks were, until fairly recently, only known to nest in the Peace R. area. One of their best strongholds away from traditional

nesting in the ne. has been the Prince George area where this summer 3 pairs were found (*fide* JB). One nest was discovered on the w. side of Tabor L. 20 Jul (TN, JW, DW, ph. TZ) which contained 3 chicks. Several nests of Sandhill Crane were discovered ne. of Port Hardy 7–11 Jul (PL, MGS) which provided the first confirmed nesting on Vancouver Island in 63 years. Single ad. Hudsonian Godwits were: at Carmanah Point 2 Jun (ph. JE); Oyster Bay 4–5 Jun (ES, BBr); and Tsawwassen 12 Jun (RT, JF, et. al.). Sandy Island, off the e. coast of Vancouver Island, has recently been recognized as a great shorebird location; it now holds one of the region's high counts for Ruddy Turnstone with 26 there on 17 Jul (GLM). Of the three phalarope species, Wilson's is the rarest to be found on Vancouver Island, thus it was notable that a female was present in Victoria 6 Jun (RS). The returning pair of Black-necked Stilts at T'kumlups marsh were finally discovered incubating 11 Jun (BD, WD), by this time two years ago, hatching had already occurred which suggests there was likely an earlier failed attempt since the birds had been present since 6 Apr (CR). On 6 Jul there were 3 chicks present (RR, SR). Unfortunately, the nesting pair at Alki Lake, Kelowna was less successful: the birds were incubating a nest with three eggs in mid-Jun (RyT) but there was insufficient water and as such the birds abandoned the nest and the site, however this does constitute the first breeding attempt for the Okanagan, and one of only three for the province. A high count of 10 Upland Sandpipers was recorded near Fort St. John 1 Jul (FG, KA). Edye Pass, on the Skidegate-Prince Rupert Ferry is a known staging area for phalaropes, surveys conducted on 5 Jul (PH, MH) produced 8000 birds whereas the same area produced a record-high **28,714** on 8 Jul (PH, MH).

TERNs THROUGH FINCHES

An ad. Forster's Terns was at Iona I., Richmond, where very rare (MT, ST, et. al.). Although Cassin's Auklets breed on Cleland Island, near Tofino, they are rarely seen near shore. This summer a few birds were seen in the vicinity of the island: 1 on 19 Jun; 6 on 9 Jul; 3 on 10 Jul; 11 on 1 Jul; (all AD) and 2 were seen off Victoria, from the M.V. Coho, 18 Jul (RS). Accidental along the south coast, 4 Tufted Puffins were seen from the Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal 19 Jul (BS, PS). Although White-winged Doves are almost annual, one was discovered along Brooks Peninsula, a remote and uninhabited stretch of coastline along the w. side of Vancouver I. 12 Jul (ph. JC). This peninsula is considered by many to be a potential vagrant trap but it is so rarely visited by birders. Flammulated Owls are essentially restricted to the Okanagan Valley and Thompson Basin, yet a pair was heard calling

up Mause Creek, near Cranbrook 3 Jun (DN) where considered accidental. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found in Jordan River, sw. coast of Vancouver I. 30 Jun – 1 Jul (CSa, DR, GLM). An Alder Flycatcher was at Grant Narrows Dyke 14–18 Jun (CG et. al.) where very rare; another singing male was in Lavinton 12 Jun (DGC). An Ash-throated Flycatcher was at Half Moon Bay, Sunshine Coast, where considered casual 18 Jun (ph JJ, AR). A Western Kingbird, rare along the west coast, was on Gabriola Island, 3 Jun (LJ). An Eastern Kingbird was as far west as it could get in Tofino 10 Jun (GB). Purple Martins have a very limited distribution along the extreme south coast and along the east coast of Vancouver I. A pair of females at the Salmon River Estuary in Sayward was at the northern edge of their range 8 Jun (MGS). The region's largest colony, in Maplewood, has grown substantially thanks to the work of volunteers. The recently re-built nesting boxes produced record numbers this year with 49 pairs and 163 fledglings (*fide* DMA). Hopefully this level of success will continue and may lead to more sightings and perhaps breeding colonies in new locations. A Western Scrub-Jay was in Squamish 23 Jun – end of period (MD, ph. GD). A Black-billed Magpie was at Cheewhat Beach, w. coast of Vancouver I. 21 Jun (JH) and another was in Vancouver 16 Jul (MM). A Black Swift nest was discovered 26 Jul – end of period (PL) at Brandywine Falls Provincial Park, near Whistler. This constitutes one of very few nests ever recorded in the Region. Calliope Hummingbirds are very rare spring visitors to the coast. A male was discovered in Langford 12 Jun (DA) and furnished one of few Victoria records.

A single Rock Wren, found singing near the summit of Mt. Cain, 24 Jun (PL), adds to the growing evidence that Rock Wrens are now more widespread on Vancouver Island. There is, as of yet, only one confirmed breeding record for the island. House Wrens are annual in the Vancouver area but nesting is very rare such as the pair that nested in Delta 1 Jun – end of period (RT, et. al.).

A Veery was found singing at Grant Narrows Nature Dyke Trail 14–20 Jun (CG, et. al.) where very rare. A Northern Mockingbird was singing at the Salmon River Estuary, Sayward 28–29 Jun (GLM); two were seen near Tofino 19 Jun (GB, AD); one in Sooke 26 Jun (RS); a singing male in Kelsey Bay 28–29 Jun (GLM, TR); and one on Triangle I. 9–14 Jul (LS). A Sage Thrasher was found singing near White Lake in the south Okanagan, 1 Jul (RJC, RC). A Brown Thrasher was near Salmon Arm 21 Jul (†TH), if accepted, this constitutes the first Jul record for the region and the 19th regional record. Victoria's second record of Ovenbird, but first live record, was of



a singing male on Mount Newton 10 Jun (SM, DA); another was at Nelson 11 Jun (JA). An ad. male Chestnut-sided Warbler was at Camosun Bog, Vancouver, 17–20 Jun (CA, ph. PC). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was a banding highlight at Rocky Point Bird Observatory 18 Jul – end of period (JM, AN, et. al.) for a first local record. There are only a handful of records for Vancouver Island. A young male Rose-breasted Grosbeak that had just flown the nest was rescued from the middle of the road at Willow River 50 km ene. of Prince George 6 Jul (ph. CB) and furnished a first local breeding record. A singing ad. male Indigo Bunting was in Cheam Wetlands, Chilliwack 11 Jul (IO). There are only a handful of records for the Vancouver area, and almost all of them are in Jun. A Black-throated Sparrow was in West Vancouver 15 Jun (ph. JW). A Male Lark Bunting was at Scotch Creek, near Salmon Arm 4 Jun (†TH) and the same or perhaps another male was later in Summerland 17 Jul (IC). Although there are numerous summer records of Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch on Vancouver Island, no nesting had ever been confirmed. This summer, 6 ads. and 2 recently fledged young were found on Mt. Myrah, Strathcona Park, 25 Jul (GLM, JL).

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Birds of Tasmania - 4

As the weekend approached, I knew that either I was going to get a lot of lifers on Saturday, or it would be the longest day of my life! I was going on a pelagic trip, out into the great Southern Ocean, in the middle of winter! As we waited on the dock for the skipper to ready the boat, I watched with great trepidation as the waves, and the swells and the wind continued to stir up the water. But I was ready. I had taken two Kwells, the local over-the-counter anti-nausea medication, plus I had taken two ginger tablets, which according to the Tasmanians, is all you really need. We set off shortly after 0700 and headed eastward into the open sea. The wind blew strongly, it rained on and off, and the swells were as high as the boat; I began to wonder if I'd made a big mistake! But an hour into the trip, all stomach contents remained where they belonged and my confidence took a big jump. And then the birds started to come, and they came in numbers!

My first lifer of the day was a Shy Albatross, followed closely by a Buller's Albatross. Yellow-nosed and Black-browed Albatross were soon added to the list. Common Diving-Petrels were common but very difficult to get a good look at. They dive frequently and are often obscured from view by the intervening waves. Fairy Prions became more numerous as they delicately flew above the surface of the water. The first Southern Giant-Petrel of the day looked so bulky that one would have thought flight might be impossible, but fly they did, effortlessly! They were soon joined by a few Northern Giant-Petrels. Great-winged Petrels were quite common, whereas Grey and White-headed Petrels were seen in just ones and twos. A lone Sooty Shearwater passed by, the only shearwater we saw that day. Cape Petrels, with their black and white

checkered backs were easily identified, even by those making their first foray into southern hemisphere waters.

When the trip leader announced the arrival of a Campbell's Albatross, I was confused. I had studied for this trip, but nowhere in my studies had I encountered such a species. The leader explained that the "splitters" had been at work, and this was a new species, separated from the Black-browed. And we weren't done with the albatross yet! Before the day was done we added Wandering Albatross and Southern Royal Albatross. What a day it was! Seven species of albatross; four petrels; two giant-petrels; a diving-petrel; a prion; and a shearwater. Fourteen lifers for me, and I wasn't sick!! Actually, if we include the mammals seen: Orca, Humpback Whale, Southern Right Whale, and Australian Fur Seal, then the lifer count is even higher.

In November the season will have changed, a whole new batch of lifers await me, where do I sign up?!

Gary Davidson

Editor's Note:

For images of the birds mentioned in Gary's articles, please visit the Australian Bird Image Database at <http://www.aviceda.org/abid/>



Authors in this Issue

Sandy Ayer

Biographical info. Sandy Ayer (sayer@auc-nuc.ca) became a serious birdwatcher in 1988, while living in Regina, SK. His article "The Joys of Urban Birding: Regina's A. E. Wilson Park." *The Blue Jay* 58 (December 2000): 168-77, describes his discovery of a surprisingly productive birding hotspot just out his back door. Sandy, his wife Diane, and their children Adam and Hannah, now live in Calgary, where Sandy serves as co-director of the library of Alliance University College/Nazarene University College/Canadian Theological Seminary. His biggest birding thrill since moving to Calgary in June 2003, was adding to both his life and yard lists the Boreal Owl that crashed into his neighbor's living room window last September (see "A Close Encounter with a Boreal Owl." *The Blue Jay* 62 (June 2004): 71-73.

Don Cecile

Don has been an active birder for 17 years. He first became interested in birds when he was hired as a park naturalist at Point Pelee National Park. Don also has a keen interest in bird photography. Having been a coastal birder upon his arrival from Ontario, he now resides in Vernon, where he writes B.C. seasonal bird summaries for the magazine *North American Birds*.

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]

Brian Gates

As a Past President of BCFO, Bryan Gates continues with efforts to increase membership and encourage conservation of our wildlife resources. He organizes and leads tours, including our annual pelagic birding trip off the north coast of Vancouver island. He is a Registered Professional Biologist, now retired from work with the province of BC, but continues to consult. For 15 years he has led birding and natural history tours to such places as Baja California, Central America, Southern Africa, Alaska, Washington, Arizona, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Newfoundland. In January 2005 he will make his third journey to Africa, this time leading a group from Victoria, his home town.

Tony Greenfield

Tony Greenfield has been recording birds on the Sunshine Coast since 1971. He was a founder member of BCFO and served as President 1996-99. He was re-elected to the executive last year and values the opportunity of being involved in the future direction of BCFO.

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.

Ken Morgan

Ken has birded on and off since his pre-teens but seriously since his mid-twenties. He is interested in all birds but is most passionate about pelagic seabirds. Ken did his graduate work on forest bird/habitat relationships in Nova Scotia, but almost since his first job with the Canadian Wildlife Service has worked on seabirds. He has been an employee of CWS for 14 years and has written or co-authored over 40 scientific papers on birds.

John Sprague

John Sprague is a former professor of zoology who has lived on Salt Spring Island for 10 years. He is at the last gasp of a final contract from Environment Canada (statistical analysis of toxicity testing). After that he plans to sit and count ducks, and be a missionary for our journal.!

Andy Stepniewski

A recent recruit to BCFO from near Yakima Washinton, Andy, a self-professed avid naturalist, was actually born and educated in Canada. After graduation from UBC he was the Parks Naturalist for some years

