

BC BIRDING

Newsletter of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists

ISSN 1206-1611

Volume 15 Number 4 / December 2005



Laurie Savard

A total of 20 Barn Owl nestlings were banded at 4 nests on Vancouver Island in 2005. Courtenay, May 6, 2005.

The Vancouver Island Barn Owl Inventory Project – A First Year Update

Early in 2005, the BC Field Ornithologists society embarked on an exciting new project to inventory Barn Owl roosting and nesting sites on Vancouver Island and the surrounding Gulf Islands. There are two populations of Barn Owls in Canada, a relatively small population in southern Ontario that is listed as “Endangered” by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), and a considerably larger population in southwestern British Columbia. The BC population is listed as “Special Concern” by both COSEWIC and the BC Conservation Data Centre (BCCDC). For the most part, the BC population is restricted to the lower mainland and Fraser valley, and to southeastern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Two Barn Owl inventories have occurred for the lower mainland population, with the most recent occurring in the early 1990’s. However, there has never been

please see Barn Owl, page 14



In This Issue

The Vancouver Island Barn Owl Inventory Project.....	1
BCFO Officers and Directors; BCFO Information.....	2
President's Report.....	3-4
Internet Sources.....	4
Editor's Notes and Notions.....	5
Benjamin Zephaniah's <i>Talking Turkeys</i>	5
16th Annual General Conference.....	6
BCFO Research Grant, New Members, Bird Quiz.....	7
Upcoming Meetings and Events, BC Birding News Briefs	8-9
Bird Records Committee and Data Management in BC: A Time to Ask Questions.....	10
Permit Fees and Bird Banders	11
AGC Field Trip Report: Nanaimo Area.....	12
AGC Field Trip Report: Qualicum - Deep Bay	13
VI Barn Owl Project cont.	14-15
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	16
Christmas Bird Counts	17-18
BC Bird Sightings	19-20
Authors in this issue	21
Advertisements.....	22-24



BCFO Officers and Directors

PRESIDENT

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

PAST PRESIDENT

Ian Robertson
1525 - 200th St., Langley, BC V2Z 1W5
604-496-4019/250-496-4049 (fax) / ian@robertsonenvironmental.com

VICE PRESIDENT

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

TREASURER

Brian Self
3082 West 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6K 2V2
604-732-7128 / brianself@telus.net

RECORDING SECRETARY

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

DIRECTORS

Kevin Bell

1302 Sunnyside Drive, North Vancouver, BC V7R 1B1
604-980-9085

Wayne Diakow

9840 Waller Court, Richmond, BC V7E 5S9
604-275-2753 / wdiakow@shaw.ca

Jim Ginns

1970 Sutherland Road, Penticton, BC V2A 8T8
250-492-9610 / ginnsj@telus.net

Tony Greenfield

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

Brian Self

3082 West 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6K 2V2
604-732-7128 / brianself@telus.net

Andrew Stewart

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

John Vooyo

3721 Nicola St., Abbotsford, BC V2T 4Z9
604-850-3757 / mvarts@shaw.ca

MEMBERSHIP

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

ARCHIVIST

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

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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

JOURNAL EDITORS

Past issues:

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

Future issues:

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

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Ted Goshulak

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

LIAISON, CHANGHWA WILD BIRD SOCIETY

Jo Ann MacKenzie

15341-21 Avenue, Surrey, BC V4A 6A8
604-538-1676 / j.a.mackenzie@telus.net

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.

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. A brief biographical sketch (5--100 words) should accompany the article if the editor does not have a recent version or you wish to change it.

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://www.bcfo.ca>



President's Report

Winter has arrived here in Prince George. The bird feeder has suddenly become a popular place with frequent visits from Black-capped Chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and a Hairy Woodpecker. The Pileated Woodpecker is heard occasionally but isn't coming to the feeder yet.

For the last several years we have had a full complement of woodpeckers in our yard, ever since the mountain pine beetle invasion started, actually. The most notable new visitors were the American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers. The Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers increased in numbers. We live in a forested area outside city limits, surrounded by mature Lodgepole Pine and some White Spruce, Trembling Aspen, cottonwood and Douglas-fir. The pines are dead or dying.

This fall, however, much of the pine forest has disappeared under the teeth of the feller-buncher. The temperatures are too warm for November. Perhaps it is a combination of these two factors that is causing the decrease in our woodpecker numbers.

The BCFO Board met recently. I am pleased to report all board members

were in attendance. Dick Cannings has agreed to be Vice-president and Brian Self has agreed to be Treasurer. Thank you both for taking on these additional responsibilities. It is much appreciated.

In other meeting business, the date and location for next year's conference has been set. It will be in Kelowna July 14 to 16, 2006. Please mark this on your calendars. The Board felt it necessary that the President attend the Annual Conference, hence the July date. I work in the field conducting breeding bird surveys so I am not available for June meetings. This will be my last year as President and BCFO Board member. My six years are up. You can look forward to a May or June meeting in 2007.

I enjoy July birding. The young birds have left or are ready to leave the nest. Parents are busy feeding the youngsters. So, even if we don't hear quite as much singing as we do in

June, the birds are still out there moving around. Also, the high elevation sites are accessible in July. The birds' activity cycle is just a bit later than down in the valleys, and the species composition is different. See page 6 of this newsletter for more details



Laird Law

on the AGC.

I hope other people who have difficulty attending June meetings, such as school teachers, students and other surveyors, will take advantage of the timing of next year's conference.

Is there interest in having a Young Birders component to next year's Annual Conference? I've read about how successful the American Birding Association conferences are with this module. I'd like to see it happen here in British Columbia.

Also, at this recent Board meeting, the matter of an annual BCFO Award was discussed. Wayne Weber made a presentation, pointing out a motion for such an award that was carried in the 1990s, and the support given at the Future Directions workshop last year in Naramata. Wayne will strike a committee of BCFO members, draw up the terms of reference and present them at the next board meeting. Thank you Wayne for persisting with this project.

In his December, 2003, President's Report, Ian Robertson started a paragraph with "I want to bring up an uncomfortable subject." I would like to say something similar.

I want to bring up a sensitive issue.



Laird Law



President's Report cont.

For a number of years now, the Board has been pressured from the membership to get our Bird Records Committee going again. The Board has spent hours discussing this issue. A few BCFO members were willing to be on the committee. But NO ONE wanted to chair the committee. We were at a stalemate. Now, this fall, the BCFO has been invited to sit on the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies bird records committee. The BCFO has been calling for such a committee for several years. Two other BC organizations with bird record committees have been invited to sit on the committee: they are the Vancouver and Victoria Natural History Societies. There's lots of baggage associated with this issue, but let's remember two things: BC wants and needs a bird records committee, and no one is perfect. Sometimes it takes a team to make something happen.

It is Christmas Bird Count time again! This is a great time to socialize, bird, mentor, and introduce birding to non-birders and the public. It is also an excellent opportunity to point out how necessary it is to have a healthy planet.

Marilyn and Andy Buhler have compiled the list of Christmas Bird Counts in British Columbia and in parts of Washington. Thank you Marilyn and Andy. And thank you to CBC compilers for submitting their dates. You can find the schedule on page 17 of this newsletter and on the web at www.bcfo.ca.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

May the birds be with you.

Sandra Kinsey, President

Internet Sources

BCFO

<http://www.bcfo.ca>

Alaska Bird Observatory

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

Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies

<http://www.wildlifebc.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/>

Bird Source

Audobon's and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's interactive bird information site, featuring "eBird"

<http://www.birdsource.com/>

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/checklist/index.php3>

SORA: Searchable Ornithological Research Archive

Search and retrieve online publications from The Auk (1884-1999), The Condor (1899-2000), Journal of Field Ornithology (1930-1999), North American Bird Bander (1976-2000), Pacific Coast Avifauna (1900-1974), Studies in Avian Biology (1978-1999), Wilson Bulletin (1889-1999). All articles are available as DjVu's and PDF's.

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



"I'm worried that we won't make it to Christmas."

From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



Editor's Notes and Notions

Christmas is just around the corner and with it the joys of family, friends, seasonal music, food, drink and Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs). Contributors to this issue have given that extra effort to ensure that this publication reaches you earlier than usual, which is actually the time all issues should reach you, but never mind that, and recall the Spirit of Christmas. The main point here is that it is helpful to receive the dates of the Christmas Bird Counts before the counts occur.

Huge thanks go to Marilyn and Andy Buhler, past Editors of this publication, who compiled the impressive list of Christmas Bird Counts. What else is in this issue? Read on. Paul Levesque describes the Vancouver Island Barn Owl Project; Wayne Diakow announces the preliminary details of next year's Annual General Conference; Martin McNicholl keeps us abreast of meetings and news; Bruce Whittington offers thoughts on matters of storage and access for BC's ornithological data (responses are welcome); Andy Stewart brings us up to date on banders and permit fees, and presents summaries of field trips from August's AGM; Joyce Henderson contributes an interesting observation of a rare migrant; and Don Cecile's presents his roundup of bird sightings for the summer of 2005.

While trapped indoors, banging the keyboard and cursing the ever-diminishing sharpness of the print on the computer screen, I was pleasantly surprised by the appearance of a fine and feisty avian distracter, a tiny male Ruby-crowned Kinglet. After retrieving a spider from under the eaves, the kinglet chattered angrily while hopping between branches of the hydrangea. Of course he wasn't angry at me, he was angry at the tenacious and handsome little fellow he saw reflected in the window. He even flashed his brilliant ruby crown. I thought that I ought to dissuade him from expending so much energy on an imaginary foe but it suddenly occurred to me that it's almost Christmas, and I don't want to spoil anyone's fun.

Have a great Christmas.

Phil Henderson, Editor

Talking Turkeys

Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas
Cos turkeys jus wanna hav fun
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked
An every turkey has a Mum.
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas,
Don't eat it, keep it alive,
It could be u mate an not on yu plate
Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.

I got lots of friends who are turkeys
An all of dem fear christmas time,
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans destroyed it
An humans are out of dere mind,
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys
Dey all hav a right to a life,
Not to be caged up an genetically made up
By any farmer and his wife.

Turkeys jus wanna play reggae
Turkeys jus wanna hip-hop
Can yu imagine a nice young turkey saying,
"I cannot wait for de chop?"
Turkeys like getting presents, dey wanna watch christmas TV,
Turkeys hav brains an turkeys feel pain
In many ways like yu an me.

I once knew a turkey called Turkey
He said 'Benji explain to me please,
Who put de turkey in christmas
An what happens to christmas trees?'
I said, 'I am not too sure turkey
But it's nothing to do wid Christ Mass
Humans get greedy an waste more dan need be
An business men mek loadsa cash.'

Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas
Invite dem indoors fe sum greens
Let dem eat cake an let dem partake
In a plate of organic grown beans,
Be nice to yu turkey dis christmas
An spare dem de cut of de knife,
Join Turkeys United an dey'll be delighted
An yu will mek new friends FOR LIFE.

- Benjamin Zephaniah

from *The Faber Book of Christmas* (Simon Rae, ed., Faber and Faber, London, 1996)
but check out Benjamin's web site at <http://www.benjaminzephaniah.com/>



KELOWNA

**British Columbia Field Ornithologists
Sixteenth Annual General Conference
July 14-16, 2006**

BCFO is very excited to announce that it have finalized the date and location for its 2006 Annual General Conference and Extension. The location will be Kelowna, BC and the dates will be July 14-16, 2006. The possible extension we are trying to arrange would be Cathedral Lakes for July 17-19, 2006.

Kelowna is a wonderful area to bird with a variety of habitats, from desert floor and marshes to high elevation mountains, plus some excellent opportunities for owling. Cathedral Lakes is our planned extension, but we do not have 100% confirmation on that location yet as we need to verify available accommodation. If that happens we will be visiting one of the most wonderful places, and gorgeous alpine country, in all of BC.

We are planning to hold the Conference at the UBC Campus in Kelowna and if that is your choice to stay, accommodation and meals will be extremely reasonable, particularly at the height of tourist season in the Okanagan.

Naturally there are also myriad hotels & motels to choose from if that is your wish. We will have the final information in our March newsletter, so stay tuned.

Wayne Diakow, Conference Coordinator



BCFO RESEARCH GRANTS

BCFO encourages submissions of proposals for financial assistance for bird surveys and other ornithological research. It also wishes to foster greater connection between applicants and the society. Potential applicants are reminded that

1. requests for funding must be for planned, rather than completed, projects.
2. under normal circumstances, applicants should be, or be willing to become, members of BCFO.
3. projects and their results are to be reported in either BCFO's journal, BC Birds, or the BCFO Newsletter.
4. in order for BCFO directors to give a timely response to project proposals, deadlines for submission are January 1 and July 1.
5. all reasonable requests will be considered within the limits of the society's financial strength.



Bird Quiz: Canadian Warblers

Who was an online British Music Magazine referring to in the following description: "Bonkers Canadian turkey-necked warbler . . ."?

A recent reviewer described Orenda Fink's *Invisible Ones* as "the kind of record Canadian warbler _____ might have made if she'd stopped moping over ex-boyfriends and picked up her backpack." Fill in the blank.

What BC warbler starts its jumble of excited notes with a sharp "chip"?

BCFO NEW MEMBERS SINCE LAST ISSUE

Art Martell, Courtney
Derek Ebner, Calgary
Lori Henry, Vancouver
Dirk Pidcock, Kalso



"By 'eck, that's a good cup of tea."

From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.



Upcoming Meetings & Events

compiled by *Martin K. McNicholl*

- February 15-19 2006 33rd ANNUAL MEETING, PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP, Girdwood, Alaska. Contact: Varena Gill, U.S. Fish & Wildl. Serv., MMM, 1011 E. Tudor Rd., MS 341, Anchorage, AK 99503, phone (907) 786-3584, e-mail gill@fws.gov.
- February 27-March 2 FIRST SHOREBIRD SCIENCE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE 2006 MEETING, Boulder, Colorado. Contact: Rick Lancot, USFWS-MBM, 1101 E. Tudor Rd., MS 201, Anchorage, AK 99503, phone (907) 786-3609, e-mail richard_lancot@fws.gov.
- March 2006? SOCIETY FOR NORTHWESTERN VERTEBRATE BIOLOGY ANNUAL MEETING, Olympia, Washington. Dates, exact location and contact details not yet announced.
- May 4-7 2006 FEDERATION OF B.C. NATURALISTS SPRING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Comox Valley, Vancouver Island. Exact location and contact details not yet announced.
- August 13-19 2006 24TH INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, Hamburg, Germany. Contact: IOC 2006, Institute of Avian Research, An der Volgelwarte 21, 26386, Wilmsheaven, Germany.
- August 23-26 2006 4th NORTH AMERICAN DUCK SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP, Bismarck, North Dakota. Contact: Mike Johnson, phone (701) 328-6319; e-mail mjohnson@state.nd.us.
- September 1-3 2006 9th SEABIRD GROUP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, location and contact details not yet announced.
- October 3-7 2006 4TH NORTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS –JOINT MEETING OF AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS, COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS, WATERBIRD SOCIETY & WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY WITH MEXICAN HOSTS, Veracruz, Mexico. Additional ornithological societies may also participate. Contact: Charles M. Francis, National Wildlife Research Centre, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0H3; phone (613) 998-0332; e-mail charles.francis@ec.gc.ca OR Jose Luis Cantara e-mail jlalcant@colpos.mx.

B.C. BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS

Compiled by Martin K. McNicholl

Lank Chosen for Inaugural Lecture –Simon Fraser University Professor David B. Lank was chosen to give the inaugural Katma Lecture at the 75th annual meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society in Arcata, California in June 2005. His Katma Lecture was “Too many Peregrines cause problems: neglected influence of danger management on life history of their prey,” an appropriate topic to launch an award to be given to “the author(s) of an outstanding paper published in *The Condor* or *Studies in Avian Biology* that offers unconventional ideas or innovated approaches backed by a well-reasoned argument.” –based on Anonymous. 2005. *Ornithol. Newsletter* 167:1-2).

Ban on Lead Sinkers? –When I was Chair of the Canadian Section of the International Council for Bird Conservation (now Birdlife Canada) and a Trustee of The Loon Fund, an issue that received considerable attention was the hazard that lead sinkers posed to loons and waterfowl, as well as predators/scavengers (especially Bald Eagles) that prey on birds sickened by lead or scavenge on their carcasses. I was thus pleased to learn that Environment Canada has “proposed a regulation that would prohibit the sale, import and manufacturing of lead sinkers and jigs in Canada” (Anonymous. 2005. *Nature Alberta* 35(1):5).



Overgrown Bills –Overgrown and unnaturally crossed bills have long been documented as an unusual but regularly occurring aberration in birds. However, unusually large numbers of birds with broken, crossed, hooked and sickle-shaped bills have been noted since 2003 in southwestern B.C., California, Oregon and Washington, especially in Red-tailed Hawks. Bud Anderson is documenting the phenomenon with the hope of determining the cause and would appreciate reports of sightings of such birds, with photos if possible. Please send them to him at Falcon Research Group, Box 248, Bow, WA 98232, phone details to him at (360) 757-1911 or e-mail them to him at bud@frg.org. –based on Anonymous. 2005. Nature Alberta 35(1):5 & C. M. Anderson. 2005. Hawk Migration Studies 30(2):22.

Song Sparrow Researcher Awarded –Amy Wilson of U.B.C. was among the recipients of 2005 American Ornithologists' Union Research Awards for investigations on "Patterns and processes of intraspecific divergence in insular populations of Song Sparrows." –based on Anonymous. 2005. Ornithol. Newsletter 167:2-3.

Myna Officially Extirpated –The latest (46th) supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union's Check- list of North American birds (R. C. Banks et al. 2005. Auk 122:1026-1031) contains only two changes that affect the B.C. list. The extirpation of Crested Myna from North America in February 2003 is recognized officially. "Black-backed" Wagtail (*Motacilla lugens*), recognized as a species separate from White Wagtail (*M. alba*) since 1982, has been "lumped" back into that species as a distinct race (*M. alba lugens*).

New B.C. bird list –The Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies has published a new 20 pp. list of B.C. birds, with names current to those in the 46th A.O.U. supplement mentioned in the previous news item. The new list is available for \$10.00 from the centre at Box 32128, 3651 Shelbourne St., Victoria, B.C. V8P 5S2.

Schouten Leads Surveyors –Princeton's Madelon Schouten was honoured by Bird Studies Canada recently for being the first Canadian to have completed 100 Breeding Bird Surveys. Ms. Schouten was presented with a Robert Bateman book in appreciation for her efforts. She currently conducts six BBS routes in southwestern B.C. each year. –based on announcement in Bird Studies Canada's e-mail news of 30 Sept. 2005.

Bird Studies Canada Hires New B.C. Projects Coordinator –The 14 October/05 issue of Bird Studies Canada's e-mail news includes an announcement that Peter Davidson has been hired to replace Tasha Armenta (nee Smith) as coordinator of the B.C. Coastal Waterbird and Beached Bird Survey and B.C. coordinator of other Bird Studies Canada projects. Peter has worked in Asia for eight years after obtaining a M.Sc. degree from England's University of East Anglia. He attended the November/05 meeting of the Birding Section of the Vancouver Natural History Society and will no doubt be making the rounds of various B.C. naturalist clubs in the near future.

A Time to Ask Questions

In June of 2001, I wrote to the board of BCFO, and subsequently spoke at the AGM, urging this organization not to disband its provincial bird records committee. I was concerned because at that time, a new organization (now known as the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies) had positioned itself to take over the role, and yet was in the midst of a dispute over ownership of a significant number of bird observation records.

What has happened since that time? The data ownership dispute has not been resolved. The Biodiversity Centre was formerly allied with Wild Bird Trust, but there is no longer any reference to WBT on the Biodiversity Centre web site.

In a recent proposal, the Biodiversity Centre has moved to establish a provincial records committee, and has requested that representatives be appointed to sit on a records committee, from BCFO and the Vancouver and Victoria Natural History Societies.

Such an initiative would seem to be a good thing, but birders and other naturalists remain quite strongly divided about whether they should, as individuals, support the Biodiversity Centre, and whether their naturalist organizations should do so. In considering the facts that are available, I personally find that important information is missing. Before any decision can be made, I believe it is important for all naturalists to consider the following list of questions:

1. Why has the dispute over data ownership not been resolved in the past four years?
2. Wild Bird Trust was previously formally involved with this project. Is it still involved, and if not, why not?

3. The Canadian Wildlife Service and the BC Ministry of Environment share responsibility for wildlife in this province. What is the level of formal government support for this proposal?
4. The BC Nest Records Scheme was begun by the University of British Columbia, and was transferred (with the approval of the FBCN) to the care of the Royal BC Museum. The Biodiversity Centre now claims to operate the BC Nest Records program. Who gave the centre this mandate?
5. Is there any formal support or representation from the Royal BC Museum? The universities and colleges in British Columbia? The bird banding projects?
6. The two largest naturalist clubs in the province have been invited to participate, but not any of the other clubs. Why? It would seem logical to invite the participation of the Federation of BC Naturalists, which represents all these clubs, as well as members at large. Why has FBCN not been invited?
7. Many naturalists (including BCFO members) reported difficulty accessing data from the Biodiversity Centre. Have these problems been addressed?
8. Will people who request data be able to access raw data, or will they be given data only in a form dictated by the operators?
9. Some of the individuals named on the Biodiversity Centre web site as supporting the Centre were not asked if their names could be used. Are there other "supporters" in the same category?

There may be answers to some or all of these questions. If there are, then BCFO and its members would have

more solid ground on which to base a decision to support this initiative. Without answers, making a decision, for or against, would be foolish.

There is no question that BC needs a provincial repository for observations contributed by all naturalists, regardless of their affiliations, and in all fields of natural history. It also makes sense that any system ought to be standardized across all fields, so that dragonfly records were treated with the same careful scrutiny as sightings of Xantus's Hummingbirds.

Such a data repository (and perhaps it is the one proposed at the Biodiversity Centre) should be guided by a multilateral steering committee which would oversee all matters related to mandate, operation, ethics, privacy, access to data, and funding. No single organization should be in a position to unilaterally make such decisions, or to unilaterally determine the makeup of the steering committee.

The establishment of such a project carries with it a fearsome workload, and significant costs. I believe that it can be done, however, and could receive substantial outside support, if it was established as a transparent collaboration which allowed input from all stakeholder organizations in the province. At present, BCFO (on behalf of its members) is being asked to support an initiative that is not being operated in this way.

I have urged the BCFO board to assess the present proposal very critically, and I urge individual members not to submit records to this project until a good many questions have been answered.

Bruce Whittington

Editor's Note

Views expressed in Bruce's article do not necessarily reflect those held by BCFO Directors and members.



Ministry of Environment Agrees to Eliminate Permit Fees for Bird Banders.

On February 14, 2005, BCFO President, Sandra Kinsey, wrote the Honourable Bill Barisoff concerning the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection's (now Ministry of Environment) practice of charging for provincial permits related to bird banding. Under the provincial *Wildlife Act*, a permit is required to capture wildlife in British Columbia. In the case of birds, most species fall under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and are therefore the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada. However, a small number of bird species are classed as "non-migratory" and consequently fall under the jurisdiction of provincial governments. These include all birds of prey (i.e. owls, hawks, falcons, eagles), the Corvids (i.e. crows, jays), *Pelicaniformes* (i.e. cormorants, pelicans), upland game birds (i.e. grouse, ptarmigan), and the blackbirds.

The Canadian Wildlife Service Bird Banding Office in Ottawa (see http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/nwrc-cnrf/migb/bbo_e.cfm) coordinates all banding activities in Canada and issues permits to qualified individuals. These federal permits are issued free of charge, as are all of the numbered bird bands. However, in the case of the non-migratory birds listed above, an additional provincial capture permit is also required in order to legally band these species. The rub for banders, universities, and banding stations in British Columbia was that this permit was costing \$110.00/year. The BCFO argued that this fee was patently unfair and failed to recognize the contribution that banders were making to the collective scientific understanding of birds and bird populations in this province. The practice of charging a fee for these permits was also out of step with the federal government and adjacent

jurisdictions (i.e. Alberta and Yukon) which issues all related permits free of cost. Moreover, this policy ignored the fact that the vast majority of banders were volunteers who paid all, or most, of their costs out of pocket.

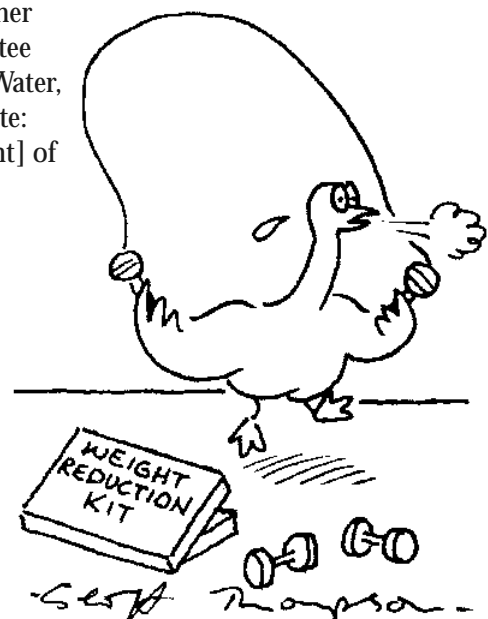
On June 16th, Assistant Deputy Minister Nancy Wilkin wrote President Kinsey to inform our society that the Ministry had agreed with our submission and hence forth these fees would be eliminated, subject to the following three conditions:

1. The applicant must hold a permit from the Canadian Wildlife Service Bird Banding Office to conduct banding activities in Canada;
2. The banding activity must be undertaken by a non-profit organization or an individual volunteer (i.e. it cannot be "for profit"); and
3. The data collected from banding of non-migratory birds in British Columbia must be made available to the public through the Canadian Wildlife Service Bird Banding Office, or another organization, and the permittee must notify the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection [Note: now Ministry of Environment] of the location of that data.

Ms. Wilkin's letter went on to state that provincial capture permits were still required and that it was only the fees that were being waived. In other words, banders are still required to hold a valid provincial permit to capture and band non-migratory bird species in British Columbia. Banders need also be aware that most provincial wildlife permitting has been centralized under the Permit and Service Authorization Bureau located in Victoria. All permit applications related to the British Columbia *Wildlife Act* are now made through this office (see <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/pasb/>).

All in all, this was a very successful lobby by our organization and stands as an excellent example of how the BC Field Ornithologists society can advocate for its members, and for the British Columbia birding community in general.

Andy Stewart



"Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fit."

From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.

Field Trip Reports: BCFO Annual General Conference, August 2005, Parksville

Nanaimo area field trip led by Guy Monty 27 on Aug 2005 (13 participants)

First stop was at **Dumont Marsh**, a small wetland located between Parksville and Nanaimo. The following species were recorded: Northern Flicker, Wilson's Warbler, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Swainson's Thrush, Hammond's Flycatcher, Band-tailed Pigeon, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Common Raven, Mallard, American Coot, Cedar Waxwing, Great Blue Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, Barn Swallow, Marsh Wren, Dark-

eyed Junco, Downy Woodpecker, and Steller's Jay.

At **Buttertubs Marsh** we recorded Rock Pigeon, Band-tailed Pigeon, Pied-billed Grebe, European Starling, Mallard, Wood Duck, Red-winged Blackbird, House Sparrow, Osprey, Least Sandpiper, **Green Heron**, American Robin, House Finch, Bewick's Wren, Song Sparrow, Warbling Vireo, Marsh Wren, Great Blue Heron, Violet-green Swallow, Barn Swallow, Common Yellowthroat, Canada Goose, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Raven, Purple

Finch, Orange-crowned Warbler, **Black-throated Gray Warbler**, Pine Siskin, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, and **Virginia Rail**.

At Cedar near the **Crow & Gate Pub** we saw **Black Duck**, Yellow Warbler, House Sparrow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Turkey Vulture, Merlin, Rough-winged Swallow, and Sharp-shinned Hawk.

At the **Nanaimo estuary** area we saw Belted Kingfisher, European Starling, Green-winged Teal, Savannah Sparrow, Glaucous-winged Gull, Barn Swallow, Least Sandpiper, Pine Siskin, Western Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Double-crested Cormorant, Common Merganser, Great Blue Heron, Common Raven, Cliff Swallow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northwestern Crow, White-crowned Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, American Goldfinch, Canada Goose, Cooper's Hawk, Steller's Jay, Mallard, **Peregrine Falcon**, Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Spotted Towhee, Bewick's Wren, California Gull, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bald Eagle, Mew Gull, and Killdeer.

At "Rock City" in **Nanaimo** we recorded California Quail, House Finch, Steller's Jay, Bald Eagle, Turkey Vulture and **Anna's Hummingbird**.

For a trip total of 74 bird species.

Andy Stewart



Andy Stewart



Qualicum - Deep Bay field trip led by Jamie Fenneman on 28 Aug 2005 (14 participants)

At **Columbia Beach** we recorded Glaucus-winged Gull, Black Oystercatcher, Black-bellied Plover, Northwestern Crow, Bonaparte's Gull, Great Blue Heron, Mew Gull, Black Turnstone, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Marbled Murrelet, Surf Scoter, Belted Kingfisher, Common Raven, Western Sandpiper, Northern Flicker, **Lark Sparrow**, Lincoln's Sparrow, Merlin, Rock Pigeon, Savannah Sparrow, House Finch, Bewick's Wren, and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

At the **Big Qualicum Hatchery** site we recorded Red-breasted Sapsucker, Song Sparrow, Bewick's Wren, Cedar

Waxwing, Great Blue Heron, American Robin, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Winter Wren, Belted Kingfisher, Brown Creeper, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, House Finch, European Starling, **Barred Owl**, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Band-tailed Pigeon, Steller's Jay, Spotted Towhee, Common Yellowthroat, Black Swift, Hammond's Flycatcher, and Pacific-sloped Flycatcher.

At **Deep Bay** we recorded Double-crested Cormorant, Northwestern Crow, Red-necked Grebe, White-winged Scoter, Common Murre,

Pelagic Cormorant, Common Tern, Turkey Vulture, Pacific Loon, Pigeon Guillemot, Bonaparte's Gull, White-crowned Sparrow, Rock Pigeon, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Phalarope, Black Turnstone, Great Blue Heron, Purple Martin, **Franklin's Gull**, Brown Creeper, Marbled Murrelet, Common Loon, Black Oystercatcher, European Starling, Canada Goose, Common Yellowthroat, and House Sparrow.

For a trip total of 56 species

Andy Stewart



Mariika (Marianne) Ainley

Barn Owl (continued from page 1)

a comparable inventory on Vancouver Island. With increasing development pressure in this latter region and existing conservation concerns, it was decided that an inventory of Barn Owls on Vancouver Island would fill an important information gap.

Given the size of the study area, and the fact that most Barn Owls occur on private lands, this inventory would require the involvement of our members, private landowners, and the general public. The first steps were to assemble existing knowledge and then to get the word out on this inventory project. We first gathered all of the pre-existing Barn Owl data we could find for this island region, principally from the BCCDC, Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM), published sources, and from local naturalists, including our members. The second step was to set up a project website which would be a critical information conduit between the project and the public. This website contains some basic information on owl biology, nesting habits and, most importantly, provides a point for

people to report Barn Owl sightings, roost sites, and nests. If you haven't yet visited this website, please check out the link posted on the BCFO's main webpage or go to: www.bcfo.ca/projects/barnowl/index.php

In addition to the website, over 200 "wanted posters" were put up on bulletin boards and at various farm and feed supply stores. These posters were intended to get the word out to private land owners, especially the farming community, where most of the unknown owl sites were believed to be located. The final steps were to engage the media and this begun by sending a press release to virtually all of the local media outlets. This worked very well and generated no less than 16 newspaper articles, of which five were feature articles, including a full-page article in the Victoria Times Colonist. There was also a five minute interview on CBC Radio's "On the Island".

We also contacted 18 conservation groups including Provincial and Federal agencies informing them about this project. A number of these groups

distributed this information through their list servers and/or included the information in monthly newsletters. New reports of Barn Owls soon started to flow in, with many noting that they had first heard of the project through either the media, our notices, internet searches, naturalist articles or simply word of mouth.

Some Early Results

The Vancouver Island Barn Owl project received 48 reports via the project webpage and another 18 reports through phone calls and e-mails. Sixteen of these reports turned out to be misidentified sightings of Great Horned or Barred owls. The remaining 50 Barn Owl reports were credible sightings or reports of historic or recent Barn Owl roost and nest sites; seven of these reports were of previously unknown sites which we later determined to be active nest sites. Two reports were from new geographic areas not previously reported for this species (i.e. Port Alberni valley and Denman Island).

In total, 15 active nest sites were confirmed, with five each in the Victoria and Comox valley areas, three more in the Cowichan valley, and two in the Nanaimo - Parksville area. An additional four sites were identified where nesting was suspected but could not be confirmed. The project also identified four historical nest sites which had not been recently active but still seemed viable. Eleven new roost sites with recent sign (white wash or pellets) were also identified. The nestlings at four of the active nests were banded, these 20 Barn Owls may provide important data on dispersal and longevity when encountered in the future.

Public interest in the project generally exceeded expectations and the level of support from landowners was very



The land owner at this previously undocumented site reported that this cement silo had been used as a roost site by Barn Owls since the early 1980's. Alberni Valley, February 20, 2005.





Paul Levesque

Some roost and nest sites show decades worth of accumulated bone and pellet fragments and at this roost was up to 10 cm thick. Courtenay, March 9, 2005.



Paul Levesque

Six young Barn Owls successfully fledged from this Saanich Peninsula nest in 2005. Saanich, April 29, 2005.



Naturalists have installed many nest boxes in Vancouver Island barns over the years, these two boxes were installed by Doug Innes in a barn in Courtenay. Paul Levesque is seen counting nestlings.

encouraging. Many property owners expressed interest in having nest boxes installed or conducting other stewardship initiatives to encourage or maintain these owls.

Plans for 2006

With the initial success of our first year behind us, we expect to make even greater progress this coming year. Beginning in February 2006, all of the sites we identified last year will again be checked, including a few we missed in 2005. Additional attention will be focussed on some on the Gulf Islands, which require more field checking; the most notable being Salt Spring, Galiano, and Denman islands. BCFO members are encouraged to report any and all Barn Owl observations and are welcome to assist with the field work. Please feel free to contact Paul Levesque if interested in participating this coming year. In closing, we would like to give a special thanks to our project sponsors: The Victoria Foundation, Public Conservation Assistance Fund, BC Conservation Data Centre, and Bird Studies Canada (Baillie Fund).

Paul Levesque, Project Biologist

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was observed by Don Cecile and Joyce Henderson on October 8, 2005, on the mudflats in Salmon Arm where the Salmon River enters Shuswap Lake. The bird continued feeding in the mud as Don and Joyce approached to within 4 metres.

The first record of Buff-breasted Sandpipers in Salmon Arm Bay was on Aug 22, 2004. Approximately 14 birds were observed between Aug 22 and Sept. 25, 2004 with the highest number, nine, observed on Aug 25. At least 10 Buff-breasted Sandpipers visited the Salmon Arm mudflats between Aug 22 and Oct 8, 2005 with the highest number being five on Sept. 11 (as noted by Don Cecile). Oct. 8 is the latest that a Buff-breasted Sandpiper has been seen in BC (Campbell *et al.* 1997).

The Buff-breasted Sandpiper breeds in the Arctic and winters in the interior of Paraguay and northern Argentina. Campbell *et al.* (1997) report that migrants are rare in spring and that they occur more frequently in the fall, in small numbers. The flock of nine seen on Aug. 25, 2004 was significant as Campbell *et al.* (1997) note that the largest flock reported in the province contained eight birds.

Joyce Henderson

References Cited

Campbell, R. W., Dawe, N. K., McTaggart-Cowan, I., Cooper, J. M., Kaiser, G. W., and McNall, M. 1997. *The Birds of British Columbia*, Vol. 2, page 204. UBC Press, Vancouver.



Buff-breasted Sandpiper on the mud flats near the mouth of the Salmon River on Oct 8th 2005.



B.C. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DETAILS, 2004/05

This listing of Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) is published as a service to BCFO members who would like to take part in CBCs in their local area or in nearby areas. It includes the organizer(s) name and contact information plus the scheduled date. This information also appears on the BCFO website courtesy of webmaster, Kevin Slagboom.

A *DNA* indicates that the contact information is valid but the *Date* was Not Available at press time. Check with the area organizers for any late-breaking changes.

Count Name / Location	Date	Coordinator	Telephone	e-mail
Abbotsford / Mission	31-Dec-05	Lynn Miller	604-826-3839	lynnmelvinmiller@hotmail.com
Apex-Hedley	16-Dec-05	Eva Durance	250-492-0158	edurance@vip.net
Bamfield	16-Dec-05	Anne Stewart	250-728-3301	astewart@bms.bc.ca
Bridestville	30-Dec-05	Sherry Linn	250-495-7891	
Bridge Lake	26-Dec-05	Wendy Marshall	250-593-2327	marshalls@bcinternet.net
Broughton Strait	DNA	Bob Waldon	250-974-2281	birdbook@island.net
Burns Lake / Francois Lake	27-Dec-05	Judith Kleger	250-695-6585	jude@cyber-solutions.ca
Cache Creek / Ashcroft	24-Dec-05	Karl Ricker	604-938-1107	
Campbell River	30-Dec-05	Ed Silkens	250-286-1495	esilkens@oberon.ark.com
Cawston	29-Dec-05	Lee McFadyen	250-499-5404	mariposaorg@hotmail.com
Chilliwack	17-Dec-05	Janne Perrin	604-796-9182	djperrin@uniserve.com
Comox	18-Dec-05	Art Morgan	250-335-0565	canbirdinbc@aol.com
Cranbrook	17-Dec-05	Greg Ross	250-489-2566	gross@shaw.ca
D'Arcy Devine	16-Dec-05	Dan Cummings	604-452-3453	
Creston	27-Dec-05	Sharon Laughlin		slscat@kootenay.com
Dawson Creek	02-Jan-06	Mark Phinney	250-843-2318	badgreenbird@pris.bc.ca
Deep Bay	28-Dec-05	Art Morgan	250-335-0565	canbirdinby@aol.com
Duncan	01-Jan-06	Derrick Marven	250-748-8504	marven@shaw.ca
Fauquier	DNA	Ruth Bumpus	250-269-7481	
Fernie	17-Dec-05	Bob Livsey	250-423-6699	naturebob@telus.net
Fort St. James	28-Dec-05	Joanne Vinnedge	250-996-7401	Vinnedge, Joanne ENV:EX
Galiano Island	31-Dec-05	Mike Hoebel	250-539-2003	mhoebel@telus.net
Golden	27-Dec-05	Ellen Zimmerman	250-348-2225	ellenzim@rockies.net
Harrison	28-Dec-05	Denis Knopp	604-858-5141	bcwild@uniserve.com
Hecate Strait	DNA	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	
Kamloops	18-Dec-05	Rick Howie	250-578-7542	r.howie@shaw.ca
Kaslo	30-Dec-05	Dirk Pidcock	250-353-7539	edensong@netidea.com
Kelowna	17-Dec-05	Chris Charlesworth	250-718-0335	c_charlesworth@avocettours.com
Kimberley	28-Dec-05	Greg Ross	250-489-2566	gsross@shaw.ca
Kitimat	30-Dec-05	April MacLeod	250-632-3977	aprilmac@monarch.net
Ladner	27-Dec-05	Jude Grass	604-538-8774	judegrass@shaw.ca
Lake Country	14-Dec-05	Trevor Fordor	250-765-4082	trevorfordor@okrestore.com
Lake Windermere District	26-Dec-05	Larry Halverson	250-342-3305	larryrh@telus.net
Lardeau	27-Dec-05	Gail Spittler	250-366-4601	spittler@direct.ca
Lasquetti Island	20-Dec-05	Sheila Ray		sheilara@island.net
Lillooet	26-Dec-05	Ian Routley	250-256-4062	ianrout@telus.net
Little River / Powell River ferry	31-Dec-05	Guy Monty	250-248-8881	glmonty@pocile.com
Logan Lake	23-Dec-05	Bert Parke	250-523-9935	bparke@ocis.net
Lower Howe Sound (West Van, Bowen Island, Gambier Island)	28-Dec-25	Loys Maingon	604-886-3854	maingon@uniserve.com
Mackenzie	DNA	David Lambie	250-997-4033	dlambie@telus.net
McBride	18-Dec-05	Elsie Stanley	250-569-2596	stanley8@telus.net
Masset	27-Dec-05	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	
Mayne Island	17-Dec-05	Doreen Tamboline	250-539-2730	



Count Name / Location	Date	Coordinator	Telephone	e-mail
Merritt	DNA	Wayne Weber	250-377-8865	contopus@telus.net
Naden Harbour	DNA	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	
Nakusp	02-Jan-06	Gary Davidson		gsd37@yahoo.ca
Nanaimo	28-Dec-05	Bill Merilees Colin Bartlett	250-758-1801 250-390-3669(w)	bmerilees@hotmail.com --
Nelson	17-Dec-05	Rita Wege	250-354-1685	rwege@telus.net
Oliver - Osoyoos	31-Dec-05	Doug Brown	250-495-6164	douglasbrown01@yahoo.ca
Parksville / Qualicum Beach	18-Dec-05	Sandra Gray	250-248-5565	saninerr@shaw.ca
Pemberton	15-Dec-05	Hugh Naylor	604-892-6402	
Pender Harbour	21-Dec-05	Tony Greenfeld	604-885-5539	greenfeldtony@hotmail.com
Pender Islands	17-Dec-05	Michael Pitt	250-629-6850	
Penticton	18-Dec-05	Dick Cannings	250-496-4049	dickcannings@shaw.ca
Pitt Meadows, included Maple Ridge, Coquitlam / Port Coquitlam	02-Jan-06	Pitt Meadows - Mike Buckingham; Tri Cities - Mike Griffin	604-467-4901 604-942-5326	mbucky@lightspeed.ca no email for Mike Griffin
Port Alberni	DNA	Sandy McRuer	250-723-5436	smcruer@shaw.ca
Port Clements	DNA	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	
Prince George	18-Dec-05	Cathy Antoniazzi	250-562-2845	canton@pgonline.com
Prince Rupert	DNA	Robin Weber	250-624 3207(w)	rweber@citytel.net
Princeton	2 Jan-06	Madelon Schouten	250-295-7078	
Quesnel	01-Jan-06	Adrian Leather		ade016@quesnelbc.com
Revelstoke	17-Dec-05	George Winingder	250-837-3655	geowin@telus.net
Rose Spit	DNA	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	
Salmon Arm	17-Dec-05	Frank Kime	250-835-8537	fkime@jetstream.net
Saturna Island	DNA	Harvey Janszen	250-539-5150	hpjanszen@saturnacan.net
Shuswap Lake Park	20-Dec-05	Rick Howie	250-578-7542	r.howie@shaw.ca
Skidegate Inlet	17-Dec-05	Peter Hamel	250-626-3585	peter@birds sanctuary.org
Smithers	DNA	Jane Hoek	250-846-9231	4139hija@bulkley.net
Sooke	26-Dec-05	Denise Gubersky	250-642-3996	dgubersky@telus.net
Squamish	18-Dec-05	Grant & Marcia Danielson	604-898-9420	myd123@telus.net
Sunshine Coast	17-Dec-05	Tony Greenfeld	604-885-5539	greenfeldtony@hotmail.com
Terrace	26-Dec-05	Diane Weismiller	250-635-6984	dweismilleer@telus.net
Vancouver	18-Dec-05	Adrian Grant Duff	604-263-7057	a-grantduff@shaw.ca
Vanderhoof	02-Jan-06	Karen Krushelnick	250-567-9579	Karen.Krushelnick@gems3.gov.bc.ca
Vaseux Lake	27-Dec-05	Dick Cannings	250-496-4049	dickcannings@shaw.ca
Vernon	18-Dec-05	Phil Gehlen	250-542-8053	philip_gehlen@telus.net
Victoria	17-Dec-05	Ann Nightingale	250-652-6450	motmot@shaw.ca
Whistler	14-Dec-05	Mike Thompson	604-932-5010	redpath@telus.net
White Rock & Surrey	02-Jan-06	Viveka Ohman	604-531-3401	ohmanv@hotmail.com
Williams Lake	18-Dec-05	Phil Ranson	250-398-7110	ranson1@telus.net

South of the border.....further information on the Washington Ornithological Society web site (<http://www.wos.org>)

Count Name / Location	Date	Coordinator	Telephone	e-mail
Bellingham	18-Dec-05	Joe Meche	360-738-0641	joemeche@aol.com
North Cascades	16-Dec-05	Bob Kuntz	360-856-5700x368(w)	robet_kuntz@nps.gov
Padilla Bay	17-Dec-05	Steve Aslanian	360-435-9493	aslanian@whidbey.net
Port Angeles Ferry	18-Dec-05	Scott Atkinson	206-406-2306 (cell)	scottratkinson@hotmail.com
San Juan Islands Archipelago	18-Dec-05	Barb Jensen	360-378-3068	skylark@rockisland.com
Seattle	31-Dec-05	Seattle Audubon Society	206-523-8243x80	adams@seattleaudubon.org
Sequim / Dungeness	19-Dec-05	Bob Boekelheide	360-681-4076	rivercenter@olympus.net
Tacoma	17-Dec-05	Faye McAdams	253-942-9233	zest4parus@hotmail.com
Toppenish NWR	18-Dec-05	Andy Stepniewski	509-877-6639	steppie@nwinfo.net



British Columbia Bird Records: Summer 2005

† documentation/field notes received; ph. photographed; vt. videotaped.

A westerly jetstream carried the storm track across southern BC through most of June. It then moved northward bringing mainly soggy weather through the northern half while the south dried up. Neither Biblical deluges nor freak snowstorms were reported so widespread nesting failures are not expected.

Abbreviations: † documentation/field notes received; ph. photographed; vt. videotaped.

Loons through Shorebirds

An observer aboard a cruise ship provided an impressive sample of pelagics 16 kms wsw of Carmanah Point 2 Jul (BB): 1000+ Black-footed Albatross; 5000+ Sooty Shearwater; 5000+ Northern Fulmar; 500+ Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, one Laysan Albatross and another Laysan was 20-30 kms w of the Queen Charlotte Islands 27 Jun (BB). American White Pelicans are rare along the south coast with 2 ads. found flying nw. from Tsawwassen toward Vancouver Island (RTo, CI) other displaced individuals involved an unusually high number of 112 on Swan L. in the Peace R. area 27 Jun (CC et. al.). Brown Pelicans were again prevalent along the coast but most noteworthy were the sightings of single immatures in the Lower Mainland: White Rock Pier 9 Jul (GP et. al.); Steveston Jetty Tip 10 Jul (JI, IS) and Iona and Sea Island 16 Jul (MN et. al.). A Eurasian Wigeon was exceptionally late at Forest Grove 20 Jun (TG). The Okanagan's first mid-summer Broad-winged Hawk came from Naramata 6 Jul (RJC). Very rare in the s. interior, an ad. Ferruginous Hawk was seen gliding over the sage at Douglas Lake Ranch 26 Jun (RTo, CI), a location where nesting has previously been suspected. Rare in the Kootenays, a single Band-tailed Pigeon was at Kaslo 12-14 Jun (MS). A small established population of Eurasian Collared Doves in Cawston may be the source for the following sightings: a single in Squamish (ph. GD, MD, et. al.) and a pair in Kelowna 7 Jul (CC). With an exploding continental population, it is not surprising that records of White-winged Dove are on the increase in the province with the province's 8th record from Stamp Falls P.P., Port Alberni 7-13 Jun (VG, ph MY et. al.) although it is surprising that 7 of these records are from Vancouver Island. A Barn Owl was captured near 150 Mile House that was identified as a female with brood patch suggesting it may have nested in the area 31 Jul (□ & PR).

Yellow-billed Cuckoos are being seen with increasing frequency in recent years with a single at the n. end of Osoyoos L. 3 Jul (JJ). A Long-eared Owl was a wonderful addition to a yard list in Nakusp 1 Jul (GSD). Common Poorwills, rarely encountered away from the Okanagan, Similkameen watersheds, yet one was near Cranbrook 3-4 Jun (GR). A pair of White-headed Woodpeckers spent the summer on Anarchist Mountain, east of Osoyoos where

they were suspected of nesting (□ & RCa). Yellow Rails are extremely local in the province from a few scattered locations in the Peace R. area, 2 were at Valleyview, a new location, n. of Dawson Creek 15 Jun (JG). Pacific Golden-Plovers are very rare anywhere away from the coast but one such bird found its way to Dawson Creek on the very odd date of 27 Jun (JG). The only report of Black-necked Stilts was of 6 from Little R. e. Vancouver I. DATE (NH). Through the period, at least 3 pairs of Avocets attempted to nest at Roundup Lake, n. of Riske Creek with 2 pairs being successful raising a total of 5 chicks to fledging (PR). This constitutes the most northerly breeding occurrence west of the Rockies. Very rare in the interior, a Willet was at the Lavington Wetlands, East Kootenays, 11 Jun (†DN et. al.). Many Upland Sandpipers were found in the Peace R. area this summer with the greatest concentration of 5 pairs near Valleyview 28 Jun (JG, MP). At a prime location for Hudsonian Godwit, observers were surprised to find a Marbled Godwit, at the Fort St. John sewage ponds, that was joined by a more expected White-rumped Sandpiper 2 Jun (TT, GR). Almost annual in occurrence, an ad. Red-necked Stint in alternate plumage was found on the Iona Island Sewage Ponds 2 Jul (ph. RTo). Of the now 23 records for the province, more than half are from late Jun- early Jul when adults are readily detectable. Mew Gulls are very rare in summer in the Peace R. area with a single near Dawson Creek 13 Jul (JG). A record count of 657 Caspian Terns came from Tsawwassen 19 Jul (RS). Arctic Terns are casual in spring and fall along the Georgia Strait with 2 ads. seen from the Tsawwassen Ferry 30 Jul (GLM) another pair was unexpected at McQueen's Slough 27 Jun (CC et. al.). Very rare in the region, 4 ad. Forster's Terns were at Beaver Ranch Flats just n. of Merritt 26 Jun (RTo). Spring migrant Least Flycatchers are rare but regular along the south coast with individuals at: Pitt Meadows Nature Dyke 4 Jun (RTo, CI); Brunswick Point 12-18 Jun (BG et. al.) and Grant Narrows Nature Dyke Trail 9-12 Jul (IO). A Blue Jay was a very unexpected summer sighting in Manning P.P. 18 Jun (LC). While travelling along the Trans Canada Hwy, a fortunate birder had the province's 8th Western Scrub-Jay fly by near Vancouver 23 Jul (†RTo). Common Ravens virtually never make the headlines but 2



pure white juvs. descendants from normally coloured ads. at Brisco, Kootenays, were seen throughout Jun (BM, ph. GS). Increasingly rare in the s. Peace, a pair of Mountain Bluebirds were near Muskeg L. 9 Jun (JG). Almost annual in the Lower Mainland, a Veery was along the Grant Narrows Dyke Trail 2 Jun (JD); and very rare in the Peace R. area a single was near Boudreau L. 20 Jun (JG). An unprecedented mini-invasion of Gray Catbirds took place in the Peace R. area with at least 6 individuals including: a single near Pouce Coupe 10-24 Jun (MP); a single w. of Chetwynd 19 Jun (CA, NK); and a pair near Chayhurst 19 Jun (SK, LL). Some of these catbirds remained into July with 3 near Clayhurst 12 Jul (MB). Sage Thrashers were found in good numbers this year in the s. Okanagan with 3 locations and at least 8 adults involved. Three nests were discovered at White Lake; young successfully fledged from 2 of the nests by 28 Jul (RCa). Casual in the province, a Brown Thrasher was found at Johnson's Landing 3 Jun (ph. GS). Very rare in the province, especially away from the s. interior, a Loggerhead Shrike was at Sea Island 15 Jun (TP), and another was w. of Osoyoos 24 Jul (DB), a more expected location. There are only a dozen sightings for the Vancouver Checklist area. A Tennessee Warbler was at MacIntyre L. Kootenays on the rather unusual date of 5 Jul (GSD, CS). An ad. male Northern Parula was heard singing in Tsawwassen 17 Jun (RTo, CI) for a 7th provincial record, this time period of late May to mid-Jun is the best 'window' for finding passerine rarities. Magnolia Warblers are very local in the Kootenays with 3 singing males at Summit L. 4 Jun to early Jul (GSD) and a singing male at Brouse 15 Jun to early Jul (GSD). Casual anywhere in the province, a basic-plumaged male Chestnut-sided Warbler was at the Cheam Wetlands 22-23 Jul (GG et. al.). The province's 4th, and in as many years, Prothonotary Warbler was an ad. male in Creston 14 Jul (†TM). Connecticut Warblers showed signs of local increase with 9 males singing at Feller's Heights near Dawson Creek DATE? (MP). A male Yellow-breasted Chat remained on territory well n. and w. of its range in Williams Lake 2-26 Jul (PR), for a first local record. Lazuli Buntings occasionally wander to the south coast and have even nested on s. Vancouver Island but the first record for n. Vancouver I. was of a singing male e. of Nimpkish L. 12 Jun (MGS). This species has readily responded to global warming as it continues to be found both farther north in the interior. A male Scarlet Tanager was discovered by casual birders on Bowen I. 30 Jul-1 Aug (PD, BD) but when they went to get their camera, the bird had disappeared. It was later seen by others in the neighbourhood providing the province with its 3rd record. Casual in the province, a male Dickcissel put on quite a show in the Balmoral area just w. of Salmon Arm. The bird was a very prolific singer and

entertained birders from 14 Jun – 17 Jul (ED, ph. DGC, et. al.) and was not seen following the cutting of the hayfield. Clay-colored Sparrows are very rare on the coast yet one managed to make its way to Somenos Marsh, Duncan, 19 Jun (CSa). A few wayward Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were noted on the w. coast with singles: at Carmanah Point Lightstation 26 Jun (JE) and at Port Alberni 17-19 Jun (vt. BJ et. al.).

Compiled by Donald G. Cecile

7995 Wilson-Jackson Rd., Vernon, British Columbia V1B 3N5 (dcecile@telus.net)

CONTRIBUTORS (subregional editors in bold-face): David Allinson (Victoria), Cathy Antoniazzi, (c. interior), Mike Bentley, Jack Bowling (weather summary), Doug Brown, Richard J. Cannings (s. Okanagan), Russell Cannings, Larry Cowan, Ed Dahl, Grant Danielson, Marcia Danielson, Gary S. Davidson (Kootenays), Joe Denham, Bob Dicer, Pam Dicer, Jerry Etzkorn, Jeremy Gatten, Gordie Gadsden, Valerie Geist, Barry Gibbs, Tom Godin, Neil Hughes, John Ireland, Corina Isaac, Jukka Jantunen, Bill Joyce, Sandra Kinsey, Nancy Krueger, Laird Law, Thor Manson, Bob Mitchell, Guy L. Monty, Mike Newey, Dean Nicholson, Istvan Orosi, Glenn Petersen, Mark Phinney (Peace River), Phil Ranson (Cariboo), Gary Rosenberg, Greg Ross, Chris Saunders, Gabe Senger, Michael G. Shepard, Ian Sheppard, Gail Spitler, Marilyn Sturtz, Richard Swanston, Thede Tobish, Rick Toochin (Vancouver), Mike Yip.

Note:

Interesting bird sightings can be sent to following sub-regional editors who will compile and submit the information to Don Cecile (dcecile@telus.net)..

Jack Bowling	Prince George area	jbinpg@shaw.ca
Gary Davidson	Kootenays	gsd37@telus.net
Adrian Dorst	Toho-Ucluelet	adorst@island.net
Phil Ranson	Cariboo	philr@pacificcoast.net
Guy Monty	central Vancouver Island	gmonty@poecile.com
Mark Phinney	Peace R. area	badgreenbird@pris.bc.ca



Authors in this Issue

Joyce Henderson

Joyce moved from the Queen Charlotte Islands to Salmon Arm in 1964. Her interest in birds was sparked in the mid seventies when she lived in Kenya for a year with her family and became fascinated with the variety and behaviour of the birds in their yard in the Kenya Highlands. Since then travelling with a pair of binoculars has always enriched her travels. A long time member of the Shuswap Naturalists, Joyce has taken part in a weekly census of the birds in the Salmon Arm Bay and the Christmas bird counts. She participate in the Bird Studies Canada feederwatch programme. The field trips at the BCFO annual meetings have always been highlights of her BC birding experiences.

Paul Levesque

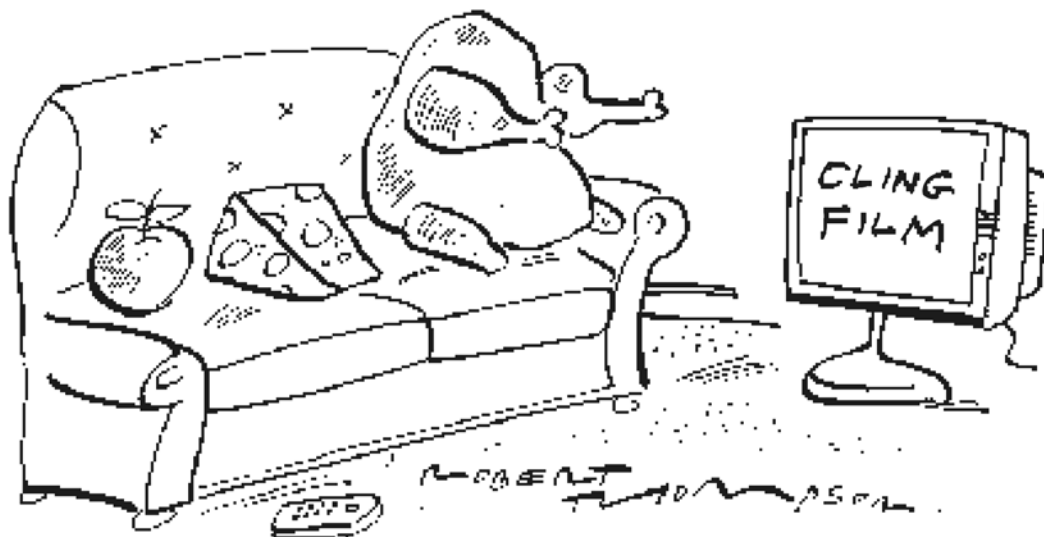
Although Paul finds all bird species fascinating, he admits that no group can capture and hold his attention like raptors. Searching for *Accipiter* nests, banding Saw-whet Owls or checking barns for “sign” are a few of his favourite ways to spend a day. He has been actively involved with Rocky Point Bird Observatory since 1998 and has served as a director since 2000.

Andy Stewart

Andy is a registered professional wildlife biologist and is employed with the BC Conservation Data Centre in Victoria. He has been a member of the BC Field Ornithologists for the past 10 years and is currently on the board of directors.

Bruce Whittington

Bruce Whittington is a BCFO member, and Honorary Life Member of the Victoria Natural History Society, who began contributing bird sightings to the BC Provincial Museum in 1981. He works as a freelance writer, and naturalist for Holland America Lines in Alaska. His book, *Seasons With Birds* was published in 2004 by TouchWood Editions in Victoria.



From The Spectator, London; Courtesy CanWest News Service.

TOURS FOR NATURALISTS

ARIZONA IN FEBRUARY

16-26 February 2006 (11 days)

Cost \$1990 (dbl occup) from Phoenix

An introduction to the landscapes and life zones of Arizona. We will experience many of the state's most beautiful and famous destinations including **The Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly, the cactii gardens of Saguaro National Park & the Red Rocks of Sedona.**

Join us for a winter escape to the blue skies and desert landscapes of Arizona.

ALASKA HIGHWAY & NAHANNI

12-19 June 2006 (8 days)

Cost \$2190 (dbl occup) from Dawson Creek, BC

There are a few mythical highways in the world and the Alaska Highway is incontrovertibly one of them. At Mile 310 we will turn east off the Alaska Highway for a side trip to Fort Simpson, NWT, the base for explorations of fabled **Nahanni National Park**. We have a charter flight planned into the park, with lunch at the incomparable **Virginia Falls**.

YUKON & DEMPSTER HIGHWAY

19-29 June 2006 (11 days)

Cost \$2400 (dbl occup) from Whitehorse

The Yukon is a fabled land whose very name evokes images of wilderness and a frontier populated by colourful characters. The heart of our adventure is the drive up the **Dempster Highway from Dawson City to Inuvik, and a flight to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean**. The Dempster is the only road in Canada extending north of the Arctic Circle. Along its route we cross two mountain ranges, traverse wild river valleys, muskeg, tundra and the mighty Mackenzie River. At latitude 66N we cross the Arctic Circle, and enter the Land of the Midnight Sun.

THE SUNSHINE COAST FOR NATURALISTS

17-21 July 2006 (5 days)

Cost \$1520 (dbl occup) from Vancouver

The Sunshine Coast exemplifies the best of coastal BC, where the temperate rainforest meets the blue of the Salish Sea in a confusion of magnificent fjords and green islands. Our base is the stunning **West Coast Wilderness Lodge (all meals included)**. Four separate cruises include **Princess Louisa Inlet, Jedediah Island & a sunset cruise**.

SOUTHERN UTAH

20-29 September 2006 (10 days)

Cost \$1990 (dbl occup) from Las Vegas

Planet Earth contains an infinite variety of landscapes, but in southern Utah random geologic events have conspired to create rare, unexpected and beautiful consequences. The mighty Colorado River, aided by the arid erosion cycle, has waged battle across the eons with the sandstone strata and fashioned landscapes so unique and bizarre that they are more redolent of an extra-terrestrial origin. **We visit The Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef NP, Valley of the Gods, Arches National Park, Canyonlands NP, Monument Valley, Zion Canyon and more .**

Leader: TONY GREENFIELD

WHISKEYJACK NATURE TOURS

BOX 319, SECHELT, BC, V0N 3A0

Tel: 604-885-5539, E-m: tony@whiskeyjacknaturetours.com

Full details & itineraries at website: www.whiskeyjacknaturetours.com

BC reg#34425



BIRDS OF PANAMA

24th Oct – 4th Nov 2006: Migration Season
WHISKEYJACK NATURE TOURS
 BC reg#34425

Little Cuckoo



Panama is one of the most famous birding destinations in the world. In an area one twelfth the size of British Columbia can be found over 900 species of birds. There are legendary birding destinations such as Pipeline Road & Achiote Road (both of which we visit).

This fully escorted tour, with leader Dr. Rand Rudland, is based at the Canopy Tower Ecolodge in Soberania National Park, and in El Valle de Anton at the magical Canopy Lodge, located in an extinct caldera and designed by birders for birders. Local guides such as Carlos & Danilo can “whistle in” most of the local species.

Collared Aracari



COST: From Panama City CAD \$3875 (sharing)
 Single Rooms - limited availability CAD \$3475

GROUP SIZE: Maximum 10 guests

MEALS: all included

FULLY ESCORTED: Leader - Dr. Rand Rudland

CONTACT: Whiskeyjack Nature Tours

P.O. Box 319, Sechelt, BC, V0N 3A0

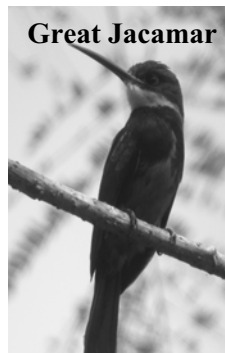
Phone: 604-885-5539 Fax: 604-885-2904

E-mail: tony@whiskeyjacknaturetours.com

Website: www.whiskeyjacknaturetours.com

(All photos by R. Rudland, Panama 2005)

Great Jacamar



Long-tailed Tyrant



Up to 300 species of birds are possible, as well as many monkeys, sloths and other rainforest mammals. Blue Morpho butterflies, and others, abound. Frogs and toads can be heard, and often seen with a little searching. Snakes are occasionally seen, but encounters are extremely rare. Rainforest flora is vibrant and varied.

Some of the species we expect to see include **Blue Cotinga, Great Potoo, Bare-crowned Antbird, Black-crowned Antpitta, Lance-tailed Manakin, White-headed Wren, Long-billed Starthroat, White-throated Crake, White Hawk, Orange-chinned Parakeet, Orange-bellied Trogon, Golden-hooded Tanager** & a variety of **motmots, toucans, woodcreepers & puffbirds**. The multitudes of colour & song will keep your eyes & ears on edge for the entire tour.

For mammal enthusiasts, **Howler & White-faced Capuchin Monkeys, Agouti, 3-Toed Sloth, White-nosed Coati, and Anteater** are likely.

Blue-grey Tanager



Slaty-tailed Trogon





Flamecrest

Birding in TAIWAN

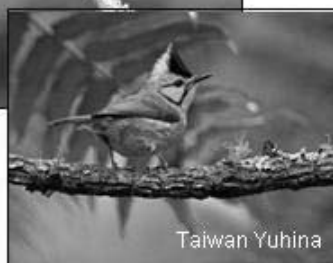
To Portuguese sailors in the 16th century, it was *Ilha Formosa*, "Beautiful Island," because of its forested beauty. Taiwan still has beautiful forested mountains. Taiwan could also be called a "land of smiles", because of its friendly people.

Collared Bush Robin, Formosan Whistling-Thrush, Steere's Liocichla, Taiwan Barwing, White-eared Sibia, Taiwan Yuhina, Yellow Tit, Flamecrest, Formosan Magpie, White-whiskered Laughingthrush, and the elegant **Swinhoe's** and **Mikado Pheasants** are 12 of Taiwan's 15 generally recognized endemics. There are also many endemic sub-species such as Black-browed Barbet and [Taiwan] Hwamei. Other birds include Malayan Night-Heron, Pheasant-tailed Jacana and Collared Finchbill. On our November trips, we see the globally threatened **Black-faced Spoonbill**. **Fairy Pitta** is present only during the breeding season. In May, we also visit Lanyu Island, with 6 bird specialties of its own, including an endemic sub-species of Ryukyu Scops-Owl.

Taiwan is a safe country, with good infrastructure, a strong conservation movement, classic mountain scenery, friendly people, wonderful food, and much to offer visitors.

Come with us to enjoy the birds and culture of Taiwan!

Taiwan Barwing



Taiwan Yuhina



Black-faced Spoonbill

NEXT TRIPS:

2006: May 1–13, for endemics, Fairy Pitta and Lanyu Island

November 6 –15, for endemics and Black-faced Spoonbill



Fairy Pitta

PRICE: May (13 days): From Vancouver: \$4900 (sharing); \$5400 (single)
From Taipei, Taiwan: \$3800 (sharing); \$4300 (single)
November (10 days): From Vancouver: \$3950 (sharing); \$4450 (single)
From Taipei, Taiwan: \$2850 (sharing); \$3350 (single)

GROUP SIZE: 10 participants, with 2 leaders, Simon Liao and Ten-Di Wu.

CONTACT: Jo Ann MacKenzie, 15341 – 21 Avenue, Surrey, BC, V4A 6A8,
j.a.mackenzie@telus.net tel: 604-538-1676, or
Simon Liao, simonliao0624@yahoo.com.tw, Taiwan

INTERNATIONAL TAIWAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION



Yellow [Taiwan] Tit

www.birdingintaiwan.com



**Good birds, good food,
good friends!**



Golden-headed Cisticola

