

# B<sub>C</sub> BIRDING

NewsMagazine of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists

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**PO Box 45507, Westside RPO,  
Vancouver, B.C., V6S 2N5**

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 Changhua Wild Bird Society, Changhua, Taiwan.

### Membership Dues

Please send membership requests or requests for further information to:

**Membership, PO Box 45507, Westside RPO,  
Vancouver, B.C., V6S 2N5**

### Annual Membership Dues:

General membership (Canada)	\$30.
Junior membership (Canada)	\$20.
U.S. and International Membership	\$35.

### Newsletter Submissions

Send material to the Editor at [jmryder@telus.net](mailto:jmryder@telus.net) (MS Word format preferred but not essential) or mail to BCFO at above address. Submissions may include articles about birding experiences, casual observations of bird behaviour, site guides, photos, and other topics of interest to birders, preferably but not necessarily in British Columbia.

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

### Advertising Rates

Full page: \$125 per issue or \$112.50 each for 4 or more issues  
Half page: \$75 per issue or \$67.50 each for 4 or more issues  
Quarter page: \$40 per issue or \$36 each for 4 or more issues.

**BCFO Website:** <http://bcfo.ca/>

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### COVER STORY

*Photographer : Laure Neish*

Point - Counterpoint: Two Calliope Hummingbirds briefly touch bills in a display between what appears to be an adult and a juvenile bird. Ages and sexes are still open to question!

### BRITISH COLUMBIA BIRDS

#### Needs submissions

.....of original manuscripts on wild birds in British Columbia. This is the journal of record for reporting rarities or range expansions, the general status of species, avian ecology and behaviour. We publish new observations on birds, or even a single bird. Suitable topics include distribution, abundance, extralimital occurrence or range expansion, reviews of status, banding, identification, plumage variation, moult, behaviour, feeding, breeding, habitat, ecological relationships, reviews, or history and biography of ornithology. Information for authors is available on the BCFO website at:

[www.bcfo.ca/journal-author-invitation.php](http://www.bcfo.ca/journal-author-invitation.php)

### BCFO RESEARCH GRANTS

BCFO encourages submission of proposals for financial assistance for bird surveys and other ornithological research. It also wishes to foster greater connections 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 BCFO's journal *British Columbia Birds*.
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 up to a \$1000 limit and within the financial strength of the organization will be considered, with any larger requests requiring approval at the AGM.
6. Applicants should obtain a copy of the grant policy and the application guidelines from a member of the executive before making a submission.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## SPRING IS SPRINGING

That spring is the season of renewal is a well-worn notion, but one that's hard for birders to avoid. After all, each spring brings new waves of migrants; songs not heard for nine months or more are once again filling the morning air. As daylight hours lengthen, our resident dickybirds and returning migrants are busy working to produce the generations that will continue the cycles of renewal. It's no surprise, then, that birders love spring: there's so much to enjoy, and so much to look forward to.

If it's spring for birds and birders, then it's also spring for BCFO, and on your behalf we're offering a host of new things to look forward to. We've got three new Two-Day Field Trips for Members; AGM planning is virtually complete; and registration forms are here in this copy of *BC Birding* and available to download from our website. Not only are we visiting a new location for our June 13-15 AGM this year, Pemberton, but we've also got a fantastic post-AGM Extension to Kamloops all ready to go, plus an "extended" Two-Day pre-AGM field trip to discover Lillooet's fabulous birds and wonderful people.

Also new this spring is our BC Young Birder Award. Welcoming new birders into the "tribe" is a perfect spring activity as the next generation of birders makes its presence felt and carries with it all the excitement of youth. Our plan is to solicit nominations annually, and up to three young birders will be inducted each year. You'll see from the talents and skills of our first three recipients that the standards are very high.

Our website has also been showcasing new features. For the first time, we are publishing the decisions of the Provincial Bird Records Committee within days of the committee's meetings. Along with short explanations of the reasons, each decision is supported by at least one picture of each species concerned. The feedback we've been receiving for our work here has been very encouraging.

Last but not least, you may have noticed that our newsletter *BC Birding* has evolved to become more of a news magazine with longer articles and information beyond news. It is a high quality publication.

Your directors wish you the best of the new birding season, and look forward to seeing many of you at Pemberton for an exciting AGM.

George Clulow, President



## Important Dates for the Pemberton AGM, 2014

**May 1:** Registration Deadline for Extension Trip and optional Thompson River Birding and Rafting

**May 30:** Sign up deadline for Lillooet, pre-conference 2-Day Field Trip taking place June 12– 13

**June 6:** Registration deadline for Pemberton AGM

**June 13 – 15:** Pemberton AGM

**June 15 – 19** Extension Trip, with  
**June 19** Thompson River Raft Trip

## EDITORS' NOTES

Phew -- finally finished putting it all together! This issue, a record 48 pages, is packed to the supercilium with upcoming events, notes and articles ranging from bullfrogs to hummingbirds to eagle versus loon, summaries of current science articles, messages of various kinds, Listers' Corner.... Only a very small space remains for me to fill. So I would like to draw your attention to the appeals for help that you will find in the following pages. We have requests for volunteers to take part in coastal monitoring (waterbird surveys, beached bird surveys), a survey of bird-window collisions, and a Barn Swallow conservation project. In fact, these are all conservation projects. They are important because when a species like Barn Swallow is declining (-76%, 1970-2009), or when millions of birds are killed each year as a result of human-related causes, such as collisions with buildings (including windows -- 16 to 42 million in Canada), we need surveys to provide the data upon which mitigation can be based. (And in this context, "0" is an important number too, because absence of birds -- alive or dead -- can be as significant as their presence.) So please consider helping with these projects, or with other bird monitoring efforts in your local area. My thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue.

June Ryder  
Editor



## DONATIONS

Thank you!

The Board of Directors is very pleased to acknowledge with thanks donations made by the following members during 2013 and up to press time in 2014. Your thoughtful contributions help to put your organisation in a healthy financial position to continue current programmes and pursue new initiatives. In time order of receipt:

:

2013

Ana Simeon  
(2 donations)  
Inez Weston  
Marian Coope  
Wendy Easton  
Carol Ann Botel  
Agnes Lynn

2013

Gwynneth Wilson  
Bill Stewart  
Ken H Morgan  
Nancy Flood  
Fred Simpson  
Dirk Pidcock  
Allan Jensen

2013

David Aldcroft  
Fred & Sue Bushell  
Don Wilson  
Jennifer & Brian Tayes  
David Schutz  
Michaela Waterhouse

2014

Ana Simeon  
Brian Self  
Michael Hoebel  
Gordon Hart  
Neil Bourne

Mike Fung,  
Treasurer

## **REMINDER:** BCFO 2014 Membership Renewals

Please note that the BCFO By-Laws (Part 1, Section 4) state that *"The annual Membership dues shall be payable on the first day of January. A member shall be considered in arrears if dues are not received by the first day of March and is no longer considered to be a Member in good standing."*

Is this hectic life we lead I'm sure renewing your BCFO membership has somehow slipped to the bottom of the pile. Please take a minute from reading this issue of BC Birding to fill out the "Renewal Reminder" either sent to you recently via email or in the post. Don't miss your chance to attend one of the "2-Day Field Trips" or the upcoming Pemberton Conference & AGM by letting your membership lapse. If you can't find a copy email me & I'll email you one or alternatively go to the BCFO website and printout a copy.

Thanks

Larry Cowan  
Membership Coordinator





## ***B.C. BIRDING NEWS BRIEFS***

*Compiled by Martin K. McNicholl*

### **Glenn Ryder Tributes**

The one-page tribute to Glenn R. Ryder by R. Wayne Campbell and Phil Henderson published in *B. C. Birding* 23(4):9, 2013 was also printed as an attachment to *Langley Field Naturalists Newsletter* December 2013, and as an insert in *Wildlife Afield* 9(2), "2012," with an announcement of plans by the Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies to publish a 100 page memorial issue of *Wildlife Afield* on Glenn's contributions to natural history knowledge in B.C. Glenn was the recipient of B.C.F. O.'s sixth Steve Cannings Award in 2012 and he was also an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Langley Field Naturalists.

### **Daphne Solecki's Latest Award**

Former Nature Vancouver and Nature B.C. President Daphne Solecki's many contributions to nature conservation have made her a very worthy recipient of several awards, most recently a B.C. Community Achievement Award on 25 April 2012 for introducing "over 10,000 children to the importance of nature, the value of their environment and the need to preserve it," causing Robert Bateman to comment that "British Columbia needs a few thousand more Daphne Soleckis." —based on J. McCall. 2012. *Discovery* 41:13.

### **Alison Bakker: Daphne Solecki 2012 Awardee**

Although showing children how to build various types of bird boxes is the most "birdy" of the activities for which Alison Bakker received the 2012 Daphne Solecki award, most of her other Nanaimo-Parksville area conservation and nature education contributions also benefit birds and their habitats. —based on Anonymous. 2012. *B.C. Nature* 50(4):8, 2012.

## **UPOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

*Compiled by Wayne C. Weber and Martin K. McNicholl*

The following meetings and other events are those that take place in BC and immediately adjacent areas or that potentially include information on birds that occur in BC. Information on additional meetings is listed in the bimonthly *Ornithological Newsletter* at [www.osnabirds.org.on](http://www.osnabirds.org.on) and on the BIRDNET website at [www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/ornithol/birdmeet.html](http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/ornithol/birdmeet.html).

For most meetings, festivals and other events, the related website is the main source of information, and registration can often be accomplished online as well. Wherever information can be obtained through a phone number or e-mail address, we have included these as well; if no contact information is listed, it can be assumed that none was provided by the organization, at least not before the date when this listing was compiled. It is usually not necessary to contact a particular individual, except for scientific meetings when one is interested in making a presentation. Names and contact information for individuals are listed whenever they are available.

### **EVENTS IN 2014:**

Mar. 1-April 21-- BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL, Qualicum, BC. For information, phone Robin Rivers at 1-866-288-7878 (in Greater Vancouver, 604-924-9771), e-mail [rivers@naturetrust.bc.ca](mailto:rivers@naturetrust.bc.ca), or check the festival website at <http://brantfestival.bc.ca> .

Mar. 13-16-- WINGS OVER WATER BIRDING FESTIVAL, Blaine, WA. For information, phone the Blaine Visitor Information Center at 1-800-624-3555, or e-mail [vic@cityofblaine.com](mailto:vic@cityofblaine.com), or check the website at <http://www.blainechamber.com/wow> .

Mar. 28-30-- OTHELLO SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL, Othello, WA. For information, contact the Grant County Conservation District, 6171 South Frontage Road East, Moses Lake, WA 98837 (phone 509-765-9618), or check the website at <http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org> .

April 4-6-- OLYMPIC BIRDFEST, Sequim, WA. For information, phone the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 360-681-4076, e-mail [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org), or check the festival website at <http://www.olympicbirdfest.org> .

April 11-14-- JOHN SCHARFF MIGRATORY BIRD FESTIVAL, Burns, OR (near the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge). For information, write the Festival at 484 North Broadway, Burns, OR 97220; phone (541) 573-2636; e-mail [info@migratorybirdfestival.com](mailto:info@migratorybirdfestival.com); or check the website at <http://www.migratorybirdfestival.com>. Registration is open.

16 APRIL--..ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, B.C. WATERFOWL SOCIETY, Reifel Refuge, Ladner, B.C. Contact: Kathleen Fry, B.C. Waterfowl Society, 5191 Robertson Rd, Delta, B.C., V4K 3N2; phone (604) 946-6980; email: [bcws@reifelbirdsantuary.com](mailto:bcws@reifelbirdsantuary.com); web-site: [www.reifelbirdsantuary.com](http://www.reifelbirdsantuary.com).

April 22-27-- AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION Annual Convention, Corpus Christi, Texas. For information, contact the American Birding Association office at 1618 West Colorado Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80904 (phone 1-800-850-2473 or e-mail [member@aba.org](mailto:member@aba.org) ), or check the ABA website at <http://events.aba.org/aba-convention-corpus-christi-texas> .

April 23-- ALEXANDER WILSON AND THE MAKING OF AMERICAN ORNIHOLOGY, Wesleyan University, [Middletown, Connecticut ] Contact: <http://www.Wilson200.owu.edu>.

April 25-27-- 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY, HAWK MIGRATION ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA, Braddock Bay, NY. For information contact Daena Ford or Julie Brown at [membership@hmana.org](mailto:membership@hmana.org); website: <http://www.hmana.org/event/hmanas-40th-anniversary-conference>.

April 25-27-- GRAYS HARBOR SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL, Aberdeen, WA. For information, contact the festival office at PO Box 470, Montesano, WA 98563 (phone 360-289-5048), or check the website at <http://www.shorebirdfestival.com> .

May 1-4-- BC NATURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, VICTORIA, hosted by Rocky Point Bird Observatory & Victoria Natural History Society. Detailed information is available at <http://rpbo.org/bcnatureagm.php> and [www.bcnature.ca](http://www.bcnature.ca). For inquiries contact BC Nature at [manager@bcnature.ca](mailto:manager@bcnature.ca) or (604) 985-3057; or [agm@rpbo.org](mailto:agm@rpbo.org) , or writing to RPBO at 170-1581 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC V8T 2C1.

May 4–10-- International Migratory Bird Week Events in Vancouver- details not available at print time: Please see <http://stanleyparkecology.ca/>

May 5-11-- 18<sup>TH</sup> annual WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES FESTIVAL, Invermere, BC. For information, contact the Pynelogs Cultural Centre, PO Box 2633, Invermere, BC V0A 1K0, phone 1-855-342-2473, e-mail [info@wingsovertherockies.org](mailto:info@wingsovertherockies.org) , or check the website at <http://www.wingsovertherockies.org> .

May 9-11-- 4<sup>th</sup> annual SKAGIT VALLEY BIRD BLITZ, Skagit Valley Provincial Park, BC (based at Ross Lake Group Camp). For information and to register, check the website at <http://www.hopemountain.org/programdetails.html?&programID=24> .. Inquiries may be made by e-mail at [info@hopemountain.org](mailto:info@hopemountain.org) or by phone at 604-869-1274. See p.29.

May 11-- WILDRESEARCH PELAGIC OUTING, Ucluelet & La Prouse Bank, B.C. Contact: Christine Rock, e-mail: [pelagics@wildresearch.ca](mailto:pelagics@wildresearch.ca); website: <http://wildresearch.ca/news/pelagic-trip/>.

May 15-18-- LEAVENWORTH SPRING BIRD FEST, Leavenworth, WA. For information e-mail [info@leavenworthspringbirdfest.com](mailto:info@leavenworthspringbirdfest.com) or check the festival website at <http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com> .

May 15-19-- MEADOWLARK NATURE FESTIVAL, Penticton, BC. For information, contact the Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Alliance, 113-437 Martin Street, Penticton, BC V2A 5L1 (phone 250-492-4422), or check the website at <http://www.meadowlarkfestival.bc.ca/okanagan/nature/festival/267-Home>

May 29-June 1-- 2014 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS & ANNUAL MEETING, WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, Newport, RI. Contact: Jameson (Jim) Chace, Dept. Biol. & Biomed. Sci., Salve Regina University, 100 Ochre Point Ave., Newport, RI 02841; phone: (401) 341-3204; e-mail: [jameson.chace@salve.edu](mailto:jameson.chace@salve.edu). For more information, check: <http://wos.salvereginablogs.com> .

June 6–8-- Mount Robson Bird Blitz – contact Gail Ross [gailross1@telus.net](mailto:gailross1@telus.net) for details and to register.

June 13-15-- BCFO AGM, Pemberton, BC: see pps. 11-14 for details.

June 13-16-- WASHINGTON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY Annual Conference, Yakima, WA. For information, check the WOS website at <http://www.wos.org/2014conference.html> . Online registration begins at 8:00 AM, March 30, 2014.

June 20-22-- MANNING PARK BIRD BLITZ, Manning Provincial Park, BC (based at Loneduck Campground on Lightning Lake). For information and to register, check the website at <http://www.hopemountain.org/programdetails.html?&programID=11>. Inquiries may be made by e-mail at [info@hopemountain.org](mailto:info@hopemountain.org) or by phone at 604-869-1274 See p.29.

July 31-Aug. 5-- INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BEHAVIORAL ECOLOGY, New York, NY. For information, check the website at <http://www.isbe2014.com/registration.html> or e-mail [ISBE2014@gmail.com](mailto:ISBE2014@gmail.com) .



Aug. 18-24-- 26<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, Tokyo, Japan. Contact: Erik Matthysen (e-mail: [erik.matthysen@ua.ac.be](mailto:erik.matthysen@ua.ac.be)) or Keisuke Ueda (e-mail: [keisuke@ioc26.jp](mailto:keisuke@ioc26.jp)) . The conference website is at <http://ioc26.jp> .

Aug. 26-27-- ORPHANED WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SOCIETY (OWL) OPEN HOUSE, Delta, BC  
Contact: OWL, 3800-72nd St, Delta, BC; phone (604) 946-3171; e-mail [owlrehab@dcnet.com](mailto:owlrehab@dcnet.com); website: [www.owl.Canada.org](http://www.owl.Canada.org).

Sept. 18-21-- WESTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION annual meeting, Arcata, California. Events will be hosted by the Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory near Arcata. For information, please contact C.J. Ralph at [cjr2@humboldt.edu](mailto:cjr2@humboldt.edu) (phone 707-499-9707) , or check the WBBA website at <http://www.westernbirdbanding.org/> .

Sept. 22-28-- 132<sup>ND</sup> STATED MEETING, AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, 84<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING, COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY & 32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MEETING, SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS, Estes Park, Colorado. The website can be found at <http://birdmeetings.org/aoucossco2014/files/aoucossco2014-poster.pdf> . For further details, contact Susan Skagen ([skagens@usgs.gov](mailto:skagens@usgs.gov)) or Sara Oyler-McCance ([sara\\_oylermccance@usgs.gov](mailto:sara_oylermccance@usgs.gov)) for information.

Sept. 24-28-- RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Emerald Beach Hotel, Corpus Christi, Texas. For information, contact Tom Langschied, local committee chair, at [thomas.langschied@tamuk.edu](mailto:thomas.langschied@tamuk.edu) or Kate Davis at [raptors@montana.com](mailto:raptors@montana.com) , or check the RRF website at <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/current-conference> .

Sept. 25-28-- BC NATURE FALL GENERAL MEETING, Salmon Arm. Contact: Betty Davison, BC Nature, Heritage Centre, 1620 Mt. Seymour Rd., North Vancouver, BC V7G 2R9; phone: (604) 985-3057; email: [manager@bcnature.ca](mailto:manager@bcnature.ca) ; website: [www.bcnature.ca](http://www.bcnature.ca) .

Oct. 8-12-- WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS annual meeting, San Diego, CA. Contact details yet to be announced, but check the WFO conference webpage at <http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php> .

Nov. 5-8-- 38TH ANNUAL MEETING, WATERBIRD SOCIETY & XIII CONGRESSO PARA EL ESTUDIO Y CONSERVACION DE LAS AVES EN MEXICO, La Paz, Baja California, Mexico.  
Website, [http://www.waterbirds.org/waterbirds-in-the-news/annual\\_meeting-2013](http://www.waterbirds.org/waterbirds-in-the-news/annual_meeting-2013) ; for details, contact the Local Committee Chairman, Felipe Chavez-Ramirez ([fchavez@gcbo.org](mailto:fchavez@gcbo.org)) .

#### **COASTAL WATERBIRD MONITORING WORKSHOP: MAY 31, 2014**

Bird Studies Canada is offering a free workshop to learn about BC waterbirds and Citizen Science monitoring programs, co-sponsored by the Delta Naturalists, Friends of Semiahmoo Bay and Nature Vancouver. This workshop will include an indoor classroom session and a guided walk to review the techniques to conduct Beached Bird and Coastal Waterbird Surveys. Everyone is welcome to attend, including those interested to volunteer or those already participating who would like some extra training. The workshop will be held Saturday May 31: 9:30-2:00pm, at Cammidge House in Delta. Pre-registration is required since spots are limited.

To sign up, contact Karen Barry ([bcprograms@birdscanada.org](mailto:bcprograms@birdscanada.org)) or at (604) 350-1988. Please dress for the weather and bring a bagged lunch and binoculars if you have them.

# The Reflective Birder #7

---

## See, Toldyer

*Clive Keen*

I was out birding with my son in very distant parts – a bit of Canada I'd never been to before. In the midst of a lot of fine viewing, including sights of a sparrow I'd never previously identified (it's weird how excited you can get about an LBJ) I spot a bird that is an old friend of mine. It was for me a pleasing, but not spectacular, sighting, so it was just about worth mentioning to my son. "Are you sure?" says he. "Oh, yes, no doubt, there's the..." (and here I go into boring descriptions of behaviour, plumage, jizz, etc.) "Ah, OK, if you say so," says he, and then spends quite a long time looking and taking photos. I don't bother, and most of the time he's doing this I'm looking elsewhere, because a month or two before I'd got a really nice photo of one of these birds. It had landed at close to minimum focusing distance on a branch nearby, and I'll surely never get a better sighting or photograph, even given a decade of careful looking.

We wander on, and I think nothing more about it. A day or two later, I'd almost forgotten about this part of the trip, though I was still abuzz about having seen a species of sparrow which most would have rolled their eyes over. But my son always uploads his sightings to eBird, and this had led to an email from the eBird moderator, one of the great panjandrumms of the birding world. The email says, with the utmost tact, that the sighting was an unusual one, and could more details be sent, preferably with a photograph?

Now at this point my son, who had read an earlier article of mine "What to Do When your Neighbour Reports an Eskimo Curlew in his Bird Bath" sends me an oops message. I'd explained, in that article, what one should do when a report is received of something ridiculous. Don't say: "You moron. Couldn't be!" Don't say "There's never been one of these sighted here in my lifetime. Go get your eyes tested!" No, what you do is disguise your mirth, explain that the sighting is unusual, and ask politely for evidence, expecting none

whatever.

So my son was well attuned to the nature of the sophisticated brush-off. Apparently he'd always had doubts about my ID, because he knew the area a lot better than me, and the bird wasn't supposed to be there. And, perhaps, he didn't really dwell on this, there's bound to be a point where his dad gets past his sell-by date.

So, says my son in his email to me, it must have been one of the more regularly spotted birds, and mentions an alternative from the birds perhaps more regularly seen in the area. In responding to the panjandrum, he admits this, and sends the least worst of his photographs, asking for a correct identification.

Shortly after, the birding world is told that a particular bird, never seen before in the region during the entire lifetime of that locally-based panjandrum, has been spotted and definitively photographed. The photograph, a bit fuzzy as it was, confirmed the fact.

Why am I telling you this? Because I feel smug? Yes of course. Why on earth should I waste such a brilliant opportunity? But there's also some more worthy conclusions from the lesson.

1. Take photographs, always, even if they aren't going to be prize-winners. If my son hadn't, his credibility would have taken a knock, and mine would have gone down the tubes shared with the rest of the pre-Alzheimer's brigade.
2. Be polite, even when you are really sure that you're being sold a crock of nitrogenous compound.
3. Be modest when you are right and they are wrong. Though in fact I WAS RIGHT AND THEY WERE WRONG. NYAH NYAH NYER NYAH NYAH.



## **BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE, JUNE 13-15, 2012, PEMBERTON, BC**

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will be held at the Pemberton Community Centre, located at 7390 Cottonwood Street, Pemberton, B.C. on the weekend of June 13-15, 2014.

This year there will be an option of either one flat rate for the Conference or a rate for those wishing to attend only the Saturday night Banquet and the Meet & Greet on the Friday night. The cost for just the banquet and the Meet & Greet will be \$75.00 per person **and this does not include field trips or any other meals**. Otherwise the price for the whole Conference will be \$175.00, and this will include all field trips, the Banquet, and the Meet & Greet on Friday night. The latter, will include cheese, meat and veggie platters; a no host cash bar will be open from 6:00 till 9:00. Meet & Greet, breakfasts and lunches both days, and the Banquet, will all be held at the Pemberton Community Centre.

### **Other Events:**

- ❖ Birding field trips on Saturday and Sunday mornings.
- ❖ Annual general meeting and technical presentations on Saturday afternoon at the Pemberton Community Centre.
- ❖ Guest speaker at the Banquet on the Saturday night.



### **Transportation & Accommodation**

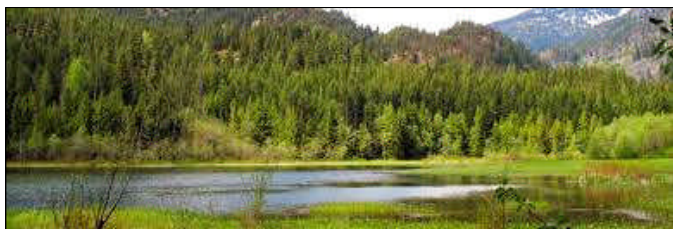
Transportation to the conference and accommodation are up to the individual(s) to arrange. Below is a link to local hotels.

<http://www.tourismpembertonbc.com/accommodation/>

### **Registration**

Conference fee for this year, **\$175.00 per person, includes all of the above**. Attendance is limited to BCFO members and spouses/family members. You may join BCFO at the same time as you register for the Conference.

**For information contact:** Wayne Diakow [wdiakow@shaw.ca](mailto:wdiakow@shaw.ca)



**NOTE:** For members receiving the NewsMagazine by Canada Post, a registration form is provided (as an insert) in this issue of BC Birding. Members receiving electronic copy: please download the registration form from the BCFO website at. <http://bcfo.ca/> .

# ***24~~th~~* ANNUAL BCFO CONFERENCE**

**June 13-15, 2014**  
**The Pemberton Community Centre**  
7390 Cottonwood St., Pemberton

## **CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

### **FRIDAY, June 13, 2014**

5:00 pm – 9:00 pm. **Registration & Social Hour at the Pemberton Community Centre, with guest speaker TBA**

### **SATURDAY, June 14, 2014**

5:15 am – 5:45 am **Breakfast at the Pemberton Community Centre**

6:00 am - 12:30 pm **Field trips**

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm. **Catered Lunch at the Pemberton Community Centre**

1:45 pm – 3:45 pm **Technical Session, Pemberton Community Centre**  
**TBA**  
**TBA**  
**TBA**

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm **Break with Coffee and Tea**

3:45 pm – 4:45 pm **Annual General Meeting at the Pemberton Community Centre**

4:45 pm – 5:15 pm **Director's Board Meeting at TBA**

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm **Social Hour at the Pemberton Community Centre, (Cash Bar).**

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm **Banquet at the Pemberton Community Centre**

8:30 pm – 10:00 pm **Guest Speaker – TBA**

### **SUNDAY, June 15, 2014**

5:15 am – 5:45 am **Breakfast at the Pemberton Community Centre**

6:00 am - 12:30 pm **Field trips**

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm. **Catered Lunch and Wrap Up, Pemberton Community Centre**

**After Conference:** Extension Trip starts

## **BCFO 2014 EXTENSION TRIP**

**NOTE: CUTOFF FOR REGISTRATION IS MAY 1st**

### **FROM SPRUCE TO SAGE WITH A SPLASH AT THE END**

**Kamloops, June 15 - 19, 2014**

**Leaders: Rick Howie & Cindy McCallum**

#### ***Introduction***

The Kamloops trip is designed to visit a variety of habitats in order to find a good cross-section of local birds. Efforts will be made to find some of the local specialties, a lot of which are the same as the south Okanagan specialties, but they are at the northern limits of their range and therefore less common. For coastal and northern birders, the species will be well-representative of the southern dry interior avifauna. Trip leaders will be Rick Howie, biologist and long-time local naturalist, along with biologist Cindy McCallum, former University of Alberta research coordinator for studies of American Redstart for many years.

#### ***Day 1, Sunday, 15 June      Travel Day***

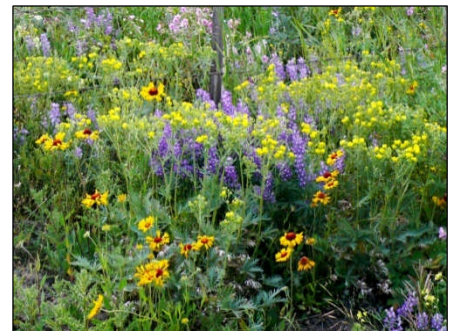
We will meet in Pemberton after lunch for a brief orientation. The afternoon will be spent driving to Kamloops (about 4 hrs.), with a possibility of some birding on the way. You may wish to do some shopping to lay in a supply of fruit, granola bars or other non-perishables and drinks that you could have available for all of the field days (we will supply bagged lunches). Night in Kamloops.

#### ***Day 2, Monday, 16 June      Greenstone Mountain - Tunkwa Lake - Savona Loop***

We will depart Kamloops early in order to pick up coffee and drive to the Greenstone Mountain Road. Our route up the mountain will take us past a productive small pond and up through Douglas Fir forests, a 10 yr old burn and into spruce/fir forests at 6400 feet - the highest point in the area offering superb vistas. Here we have chances for Hawk Owl as well as typical upper elevation species such as Three-toed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Hermit Thrush, Townsend's Warbler, Pygmy Owl and perhaps Spruce Grouse. From the mountain top, we will gradually descend to Logan Lake and thence northward to the Tunkwa Lake area. A great variety of waterfowl will be found along with a chance for Black Tern and Great Gray Owl. We will stop frequently at many habitats en route in attempts to maximize our variety. We will return to Kamloops for supper via Savona and Hwy 1, with opportunities for Lewis's Woodpecker and Swainson's Hawk. As energy permits in the evening, we will travel into the Lac du Bois country in search of Flammulated and Barred Owl, Poorwill, Sora and Virginia Rail. Night in Kamloops.

#### ***Day 3, Tuesday, 17 June      Paul Creek Drainage to Tranquille***

Another early morning departure will see us travel again into some upper level forests along the Hyas Lake Road east of Kamloops. We will attempt to be up there for the dawn chorus and then descend back down through Pinantan and past Paul Lake to Schiedam Flats. There are chances for Sandhill Crane and Great Gray Owl once again. From there we will head north into the Cold Creek drainage, hoping for Long-billed Curlew and a variety of other grassland species including the potential for Sharp-tailed Grouse away from their leks. We will ultimately descend along Paul Creek with its diversity of warblers and riparian species, through Kamloops and work our way to Tranquille with attempts for Chukar, White-throated Swift, Rock & Canyon Wren, Lark Sparrow and Lewis's Woodpecker. Prairie Falcon has nested on cliffs above the road to Tranquille but is unpredictable with no current eyries known. Dinner once again in Kamloops followed by a trip to Chuwels Mountain in an effort to scare up a Boreal Owl. Night in Kamloops.



*Grassland flowers in June*

#### ***Day 4, Wednesday, 18 June      Knutsford - Long Lake - Beaver Ranch Flats***

We could enjoy a more leisurely departure time, as this trip will provide an opportunity to explore some middle elevation grasslands as well as mixed fir/aspen forest, lakes and wetlands south of Kamloops. We will work our way through the grasslands around Knutsford to find Swainson's Hawk, Horned Lark and other grassland species. Sharp-tailed Grouse would be a long shot. We will make our way to the Long Lake Road through more grasslands and forest groves, ultimately looking for Williamson's Sapsucker and Great Gray



Owl as target species. Ultimately, we will descend to Stump Lake and Beaver Ranch Flats just north of Nicola Lake. Black Tern, Yellow-headed Blackbird and a nice variety of waterfowl should greet us here.

For those heading home, departure will be from this point.

For those planning to do the Thompson River Raft Trip, we will drive through Merritt to Spences Bridge and then to accommodations at the Kumsheen Resort near Lytton for showers and a dip in the pool. The views of the Thompson Canyon from the resort property are spectacular.

**Day 5, Thursday, 19 June      Thompson River rafting - Ashcroft to Spences Bridge**

This bonus opportunity is a chance for a scenic and occasionally thrilling journey down the Thompson River from Ashcroft to Spences Bridge. This will be a special trip organized just for us and accompanied by Bernie Fandrich, author, raconteur and founder of the rafting company many years ago. We will have opportunities to stop and explore in ways that are not possible if one was on a standard public trip. In fact, trips are no longer available on this part of the river except as specialist expeditions, so we will have it to ourselves. Placid drifts, bouncy white water, spectacular Black Canyon with nesting Golden Eagle and White-throated Swift and dramatic scenery all combine to make this a very special journey. Peregrine Falcon is a possibility. Nesting Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Oriole and Lewis's Woodpecker along with a variety of other common



*Thompson River near Black Canyon*

*JMR*

species will not add a lot to our trip list, but the history, geology and excitement of a river trip with the most professional rafting company in the province is truly special. The rafts are big and comfortable and motor-powered so you can bird without worrying about paddling. Depart for home from Lytton late in the afternoon or spend another relaxing night with superb dining, a glass of wine and hot showers

### ***Request for Nominations***

#### ***THE STEVE CANNINGS AWARD FOR B.C. ORNITHOLOGY***

In 2007, B.C.F.O. presented its first award for contributions to B.C. ornithology, now named *the Steve Cannings Award for B.C. Ornithology*, to Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan. Subsequent awards have been presented to David Stirling (2008), Madelon Schouten (2010), Dr. Jeremy Tatum (2010), .Ralph Ritcey (2011), and Glenn Ryder 2012..

The award recognizes contributions over a long period of time to ornithology in British Columbia in one or more of the following three categories: (1) research on bird biology and/or ecology, or detailed documentation of the avifauna of a portion of B.C.; (2) conservation of birds and/or bird habitats in B.C.; (3) public education about birds in B.C. The award is to be announced and, if possible, presented to the recipient annually during the banquet at the B.C.F.O. annual meeting.

***We request nominations*** from any B.C.F.O. member for candidates for future Steve Cannings Awards. Nominations should include at least a brief statement as to why the nominator(s) believe that the nominee is deserving of the award. Nominations should be sent in writing to Dr. Wayne C. Weber, Chair of the Steve Cannings Award Committee, either by mail to 51-6712 Baker Rd., Delta, B.C. V4E 2V3, or by e-mail to [contopus@telus.net](mailto:contopus@telus.net).

The recipient of a given year's award is recommended by a three-person Awards Committee (Richard J. Cannings, Martin K. McNicholl and Wayne C. Weber) and approved by the B.C.F.O. board. All nominees not chosen in a given year will be considered automatically in future years without requiring another nomination, but updates or expansions to previous nominations are welcome.

All nominations for the award will be gratefully received

# ANNOUNCING THE BC YOUNG BIRDER AWARD AND THE 2014 RECIPIENTS

BCFO is pleased to announce the inaugural recipients of the newly established BC Young Birder Award that welcomes talented young birders into the BC birding community and recognises their accomplishments, contributions to, and engagement with birds and birding in the province.

To be selected for a BC Young Birder Award, recipients must be 16 or under and have:

- exceptional observational and birding skills well beyond the 'novice' level
- shown substantive engagement in the activities of the birding community through their accomplishments, participation, and contributions
- been nominated and seconded by BCFO members

In alphabetical order, the 2014 recipients are:

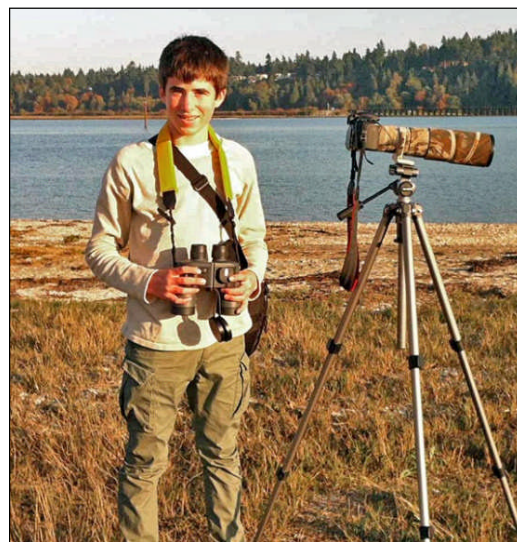
## Khalid Boudreau



Khalid is a grade 9 student from Burnaby who has impressive field identification skills. His facility for making correct identifications for difficult, confusing, and challenging species is exceptional for his age. He is also a very careful observer, and because he reads widely in the literature he knows when he sees something important. In the summer of 2012 while vacationing in the Chilcotin on Puntzi Lake, Khalid recognized the significance of his observation of unfledged young pelicans on a small island in the lake. He had made a significant discovery: the hitherto unknown second breeding location for American White Pelicans in BC. Khalid is also a BC Coastal Waterbird Survey participant.

Liron, 13, lives in Vancouver where he has been birding since age 6. He says he has *"been into nature pretty much since I could talk"*. An avid poster to several of our local birding forums, including "Birding in BC," he has posted over 800 items to date. Many of these are presentations of his bird photography, and others are responses to queries about bird IDs or advice on finding certain birds in the area. Liron's photos are not just a series of images, but always have informative accompanying text. Since the end of 2011 he has regularly entered sightings into eBird, and has submitted over 328 checklists, including the 100th million eBird submission, for which he was widely acknowledged and interviewed. He has been a very active volunteer for the Stanley Park Ecological Society for the past three years, participating in several types of bird surveys and making short presentations.

## Liron Gertsman



## Logan Lalonde



At age 13 Logan has already established himself as an active and familiar face in the Okanagan birding scene. He is well known for his sharp eyes, keen ears, and constant bird-related questions. Logan submitted close to 300 eBird checklists in 2013, and is a frequent poster on "Birding in BC". He regularly summarizes and posts on the birding activities of the Central Okanagan Naturalist Club and shares birding stories and photos from his local patch on his personal blog. An avid amateur nature photographer, he is one of the most active birders in the Okanagan, spending hours in the field each week.

Congratulations Logan, Liron and Khalid.

Each recipient receives complimentary membership in BCFO until age 16, and a formal plaque in recognition of their achievement.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR COASTAL MONITORING IN BC

If you enjoy observing waterbirds or walking your local beaches and are looking to gain new skills or participate in bird conservation, this opportunity is for you! The **BC Coastal Waterbird Survey** is suitable for intermediate to experienced birders and involves conducting monthly bird counts at sites on the second Sunday of each month. Surveyors should have good bird identification skills and own or have access to binoculars or a spotting scope. The **BC Beached Bird Survey** involves walking a specific beach during the last week of each month, looking for carcasses that have washed up on shore. No special skills are required and it's suitable for all ages. Volunteers are needed at numerous popular beaches around Greater Vancouver (e.g. Centennial Beach, Boundary Bay, False Creek, Spanish Banks, Locarno Beach, Kitsilano, Iona, Stanley Park, West Vancouver, Whytecliff and Deep Cove) and Greater Victoria (e.g. Roberts Bay, Swartz Bay, Sooke Basin, Gonzales Point, Ten Mile Point, Pat Bay, Ross Bay, Whiffen Spit, Bazan Bay) as well as in Nanaimo, Qualicum Beach, Comox, Tofino, Sunshine Coast, Gulf Islands and more northern locations.

For more information, please visit [BSC's website](#). If you are interested in participating in these programs or have any questions, please contact Karen Barry, BC Program Officer at [bcprograms@birdscanada.org](mailto:bcprograms@birdscanada.org) or 1-877-349-2473.

### ALSO FROM BIRD STUDIES CANADA:

Many thanks to all of our current volunteers! Since 2002, about 250 Beached Bird Survey volunteers have conducted over 3,000 surveys spanning 7,000 km of BC's beaches and reported 1,204 beached birds from 67 species. Since 1999, about 600 Coastal Waterbird Survey volunteers have participated in this program and over 19,000 individual surveys have been conducted.



# BCFO TWO-DAY FIELD TRIP TO THE SUNSHINE COAST,

Agnes Lynn

NOVEMBER 23-24, 2013

I have been enjoying the BCFO Two-day field trips, so I talked my husband into joining me on the Sunshine Coast trip last November. We had been to the area in the past but never stopped to actually visit Sechelt before this.

We were fortunate that Tony Greenfield, our illustrious leader, gave us suggestions on where to stay and to eat. Accommodations on these field trips are our responsibility, as well as meal costs. The price of \$10 for the field trip just covers administrative costs. It's a fantastic bargain when you consider several of our guides are professional trip leaders. So we settled into the Driftwood Inn, right on the water, Friday night and enjoyed a pleasant meal nearby.

A big plus to a November field trip is that we didn't have to start until 8:00 am on Saturday. We were able to pick up a number of birds right from our motel while we waited to get underway. A bonus was a copy of the Sunshine Coast Bird Checklist for \$1. Weather was typical west coast in November, not too wet or too cold. We were pleased to have several local birders join us. Tony even had some of them out scouting in advance for us so we could maximize our time.



Wide open vistas.....

Dave Lynn

We visited some places more than once because most of the spots are close together and the birds change with the tide. We started off just south of town heading for Mission Point at the mouth of Chapman Creek. We stepped out of our cars and picked up quite a few birds right off. The coastline is very open around Sechelt so you can generally see a good chunk of shoreline anywhere along the water. There were Harlequin Duck and Pelagic Cormorant close to shore. Common Goldeneye, Common Loon, Horned Grebe and Surf and Black scoter were a bit farther off. The Black Scoter are a treat for us as they are hard to find in Victoria. We walked

a short distance to reach the rocky beach. On our first visit, the tide was not low enough but on our return trip later in the day, we found Black Turnstones, and finally, the sought-after Rock Sandpiper. The birds were not very cooperative, but eventually a single Rock Sandpiper did show itself well enough that we knew we had found what we came for. That location is usually one of the most reliable on the coast for these birds over the winter, but birds don't read the guidebooks! Tony and his local birders worked hard to find that bird for us.



Birders at Roberts Creek jetty

Dave Lynn

A short distance farther south is the Roberts Creek Jetty, a good place for a sea watch. In the woodsy parking lot were Varied Thrush flipping over leaves, Ruby-crowned Kinglets darting about in the bushes, and Pacific Wren calling but playing peek-a-boo. Chestnut-backed Chickadees were a surprise as one would expect Black-capped. But it's the Chestnut-backed that are common throughout the Sunshine Coast. We heard Belted Kingfisher and Black Oystercatcher as we made our way out to the end of the jetty. An Anna's Hummingbird distracted folks. Glad to see it extending its winter grounds this far north. With the help of the local birders and their scopes, we found American Wigeon, Double-crested Cormorant, all three Mergansers, Pacific Loon and Red-necked and Western Grebe. We worked away at the Marbled and Ancient Murrelets. Hundreds of Ancient Murrelets stream by that point but they sure are hard to pin down for a decent look. Typically, they speed by, maybe plop down on the water and then dive just as they land. The Marbled Murrelets were more cooperative and we got better looks at them bobbing along. The locals gave us lessons on how to distinguish between the two as they flew along but it was a challenge to see them well. No one worried much about the gulls but, for the record, there were Glaucous-winged, Mew and a few California gulls, and I seem to remember one Bonaparte's somewhere along the way.



*Teresa Isabel Santos*

Another good birding location was Wilson Creek estuary. It's an area in transition with a marina crowding out the formerly excellent birding habitat. As

it's one of the few true mud flats on the Sunshine Coast, it previously attracted many rarities but habitat is now degraded severely. Birders are tolerated on the private property. There were lots of nice sparrows as we worked our way towards the water. Then there were Black Turnstone, Great Blue Heron and Bald Eagle. An American Dipper was the highlight as it popped up along the far shore. I think there was a Wood Duck but I got distracted trying to track down the two Hutton's Vireos that we could hear but never did see well. Apparently they are reasonably common around Sechelt. We also enjoyed the Golden-crowned Kinglets darting around as we walked back to the cars.

The Sechelt Marsh right in town was like a secret treasure. The trees around the edges isolate you from the town and the Steller's Jay thought so too. Red-winged Blackbirds abound. Mallards, Ring-necked Ducks and a single Coot were well fed. The locals confirmed what the habitat suggested: it was a great spot for migrant rarities - so worth remembering. The marsh also extends across a city street to give extensive vistas out across Porpoise Bay.

We made a couple of trips just out of town. First one was to Sargeant Bay Provincial Park. This provided a walk along a beach backed by a freshwater marsh, complete with a Virginia Rail calling. I missed the Hermit Thrush that some saw in the woods. Smuggler's Cove Provincial Park provided a very scenic walk through interesting

habitat that would be great for spring migrants, but it was quite quiet this time of year. Still worth the visit.

We were never far from town so we had leisurely lunches each day at restaurants rather than the usual bag lunches. Dinner was at our motel on Saturday evening and we all gathered so we could recap the day and further get to know each other and talk about our favourite subject.

Tony was available for all of Sunday but the complications of catching two ferries to get home meant that we had to leave shortly after lunch. I hope that they didn't see anything too exciting after we left!

If you plan to visit this area, check the Cannings' book "Birdfinding in British Columbia" for the section on the Sunshine Coast. I noted that Tony Greenfield had contributed to this part. We do thank him for his expertise and for spending the two days with us.

In total, I recorded about 60 birds but the group saw several more. All in all, a great mini-holiday for us. We are looking forward to the 2014 trips as well as the convention at Pemberton (where we'll catch up with our BCFO friends).



*Teresa Isabel Santos*

*Participants: Adrian Leather, Ann Gibson, Mary Taitt, Clive Keen, John Crawford, Ben Keen, Judy Latta, D Johnson, Catherine Barron, Agnes Lynn, Dave Lynn, Jerry McFetridge, Teresa Isabel Santos, George Clulow*



*Teresa Isabel Santos.*



# BCFO Two-Day Field Trips 2014

*Join with Fellow Members – Great Birding in Great Locations*

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## Lillooet

### Pre-AGM Trip

June 12 – 13, 2014

BCFO members know from our 2007 AGM that Lillooet is an amazing place to go birding. Many of us who missed that opportunity won't want to miss out in 2014. Hoped for species include: Dusky Grouse, Western Screech Owl, Red-naped Sapsucker, White-throated Swift, Long-billed Curlew, and Rock Wren, and all in a spectacular landscape. The trip will wrap up early afternoon on the 13<sup>th</sup>, giving everyone plenty of time to drive to Pemberton for the AGM opening 'Meet and Greet'.

**Leader:** Ian Routley  
Contact Vivian Birch-Jones  
**E-mail:** [vivianbj@telus.net](mailto:vivianbj@telus.net)  
**Tel:** 250 256 4062

## Creston Valley

May 31 – June 1, 2014

The spectacular Creston Valley during breeding season is the destination for this special trip. We will drive into areas normally closed to vehicles to cover more territory in our search for elusive species. Outstanding birding areas of the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, Duck Lake and Leach Lake, will be visited. Target species will include Clark's (very rare) and Western grebes, and BC's only breeding colony of Forster's Terns. Raptors, Bobolinks, flycatchers, warblers and waterfowl will round out a very exciting trip to the Kootenays. Expect about 100 species.

**Leader:** Peter McIver  
**E-mail:** [petermciver@hotmail.com](mailto:petermciver@hotmail.com)  
**Tel:** 250 365 1191

## Salmon Arm

August 30 – 31, 2014

If you kicked yourself for having missed the remarkable 2012 outing to interior BC's shorebird capital with Ted Hillary, we're now offering a second opportunity to visit the same locations in and around Salmon Arm Bay. Last time Ted and group saw 103 species including: American Golden Plover, Upland Sandpiper, and Hudsonian Godwit. We can't guarantee the same species this year, but who knows what else will show up?

**Leader:** Ted Hillary  
**E-mail:** [tedhillary@shaw.ca](mailto:tedhillary@shaw.ca)  
**Tel:** 250 832 5755



### How the Trips Work

BCFO two-day field trips are member-led, but participants make their own arrangements for accommodation, food and travel.

### Schedule

Day 1: am birding; pm birding, evening get-together (see below).

Day 2: am birding, pm optional birding.

**Carpooling** is encouraged. For the birding trips, carpooling will be arranged on the morning of Day 1.

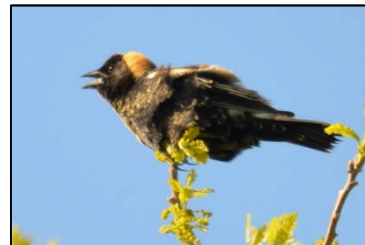
### Register in Advance

**Important:** Register at least two weeks in advance. E-mail or phone the trip leader with names and numbers of participants. The leader will give you specific details of when and where to meet. If needed, additional leaders may be recruited to keep group sizes small.

### Cost per Two-day Event

Members: \$10. per person  
Non-members: \$40\* (includes BCFO membership).

\*Note: BCFO general memberships are family memberships.



### The Social Side

At the end of Day 1, where possible, leaders will make arrangements for participants to meet for dinner at a nearby restaurant to recap the day, tally species seen, and confirm arrangements for Day 2.

### Photo Credits

Long-eared Owl: Ian Routley

Bobolink: Ken Simonite (The Internet Bird Collection).

## ANNA – A HUMMER IN WINTER

Laure Neish – text and photos

I was not going to be one of those people who hosted hummingbirds in the winter. I had seen some of the elaborate set-ups, starting back in 1998 when I drove to West Kelowna, B. C. to view an Anna's Hummingbird for the very first time. That year, I paid more attention to adding a tick to my bird species life list than to the peculiarities of keeping such a little sprite warm and fed, but a quick mental note forewarned me that it would involve hand-crafted box shelters, high-watt bulbs and other external heat sources. Sounded like work!

After seeing several other Anna's over the years in late fall, I wondered what all these hummingbirds were doing here in the southern interior anyway? Shouldn't they have moved south to a land of perpetual blossoms, or at least "toughed it out" in the mild coastal winters of the province? They had no hope of year-long survival, I thought, in the Okanagan Valley where the vagaries of weather could briskly swing a thermometer dial back to minus 13 C in early December.

Anna's Hummingbirds (*Calypte anna*) are one of four regular hummers in the province. The migratory summer species which visit the interior (Calliope, Rufous and Black-chinned) arrive *en masse* at feeders in May and stay to breed and raise young until the end of August or early September, when the last juvenile stragglers migrate south. Anna's are not known to be transient, instead staying faithful to a select home territory. A range map shows the species is dispersed as far south as Arizona and northwestern Mexico, then forms a narrow distribution band up through California and the coast of the Pacific Northwest. Southern British Columbia is at its northern limit.

According to anecdotes by local birders, numbers of Anna's Hummingbirds in the province have increased sporadically over the years, then skyrocketed in the past decade. *The Birds of British Columbia* by Wayne Campbell *et al*, documents the first confirmed identification of a wintering Anna's Hummingbird in Victoria back in 1958, with the first breeding record also on Vancouver Island in 1958. In the early 1970s, there were only a couple of places to find them reliably in and around Vancouver<sup>1</sup>. 1970 can be used as a benchmark since many of the major bird surveys also began that year. Evidence of this population explosion has been

graphed from Christmas Bird Count data on Environment Canada's - Status of Birds in Canada website: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/soc-sbc/oiseau-bird-eng.aspx?sY=2011&sL=e&sM=c&sB=ANHU> In the last few years, their range has spread up the Fraser Valley and into the interior of the province. In 2013, the species is currently booming throughout the western United States as well as in British Columbia. A range expansion is showing persistence in progress.

In the colder B.C. interior, there have been a handful of winter records in the 1980's and early 1990's at Kamloops, Merritt, Princeton and north to Clearwater<sup>2</sup>. There were two reports of people enticing birds indoors and offering illegal "room and board" for the winter. One was fed only sugar water and died by February. The other bird was given sugar water plus protein supplements and it survived the winter and was released the following spring. On both occasions, temperatures had dropped into the -20C range. On a

third occasion, when temps plunged to -19C, a regular Anna's failed to return to a feeder one morning which had been kept warm by a dedicated hostess. She had watched the bird daily for about a week. The assumption was that it became hypothermic and died.

The new-found success of the species is often attributed to the proliferation of people offering nectar feeders. But somehow that hasn't kept the three summer species from over staying their welcome. In the case of Anna's, they have some other survival tricks up their wing. It's well known that hummingbirds are one of

several bird species which undergo torpor - a short-term dormancy or hibernation where body functions slow dramatically to conserve energy. By minimizing body temperature and dropping their heart rate during the night, Anna's respiration and metabolic rate dip, using up fewer calories to maintain life. She doesn't starve while she sleeps. The species also seems quite adept at hunting for vitamin-rich protein meals of insects and spiders. This food digests more slowly and helps build and maintain fat reserves needed to survive the cold. If chickadees and nuthatches can survive a winter on an insect diet, why not a hummingbird?

I'm not exactly sure when our Anna's Hummingbird took up residence in the yard this year. We had seen an immature male during July and August, but when we



returned home from a two week holiday in September, he had been replaced by a female. On Sept.20, without much thought, I made the fateful decision to put out a new feeder and she just never left. In full breeding plumage, a male Anna's sports a full magenta helmet and gorget (throat feathers) of showy iridescence, while on the female, the pink is restricted to a triangular patch under her chin.

By Nov. 20, my obsession with checking hourly updates on the weather network had become a daily routine. After getting accustomed to days of balmy 9C degrees, the first fall cold snap was upon us in the Okanagan. The trend over the next few days predicted consecutive overnight lows of -10C. I didn't sleep well that night, anxious that I might not wake up early enough, even with the alarm set, to plug-in Anna's liquid life-line before dawn. I hadn't tested the cord yet to ensure it would really work and maintain a thawed solution. That first bitter morning, I tried to remember to breathe, as I stood near the window, waiting to see if Anna had survived the night. I blinked and suddenly, her vibrating shadow zipped out of the dim light to test out the feeder. It felt like a jolt of electricity had passed through me. I stood open-mouthed, sharing mixed emotions of relief and disbelief! The following morning, as I carried out the house-warmed feeder to plug in the cord, I felt the buzz of wings near the back of my head. She was already up and waiting. It was time to be more vigilant, paying careful attention to the time of her first feeding of the day. It was much earlier than expected. After a hiatus of 15 hours overnight without a drink, that first sip of morning energy was critical for her survival, and like a cup of coffee to get the day started, I wanted to warm it up for her. I added a smaller feeder out front under the carport. It was better protected from the elements, but only had a 1 cup capacity, hence was more sensitive to rapid freezing and turned slushy in a half hour. I rotated it with a twin feeder, thawing out one in



the house on the warming element of the stove, while the other was outside. The main feeder, a large glass cylinder on the deck, had a 4 cup capacity. Anna's choice of roost location during the night remained a puzzle, but it must have been close by for her to fly in at such low morning light levels. There were several stands of large cedars in neighbour's yards which might have offered good shelter.

Despite being immersed in the shortest days of the year, the coldness must have made them seem very long to an out-of-place hummer. Every time I looked out the window, she appeared embedded in the Saskatoon shrub. Her head pivoted back and forth, back and forth, like some kind of wind-up toy. She always seemed to be looking for something and my guess was a bug to augment her sugar diet. If I came outside in the yard, she might fly off a short distance, but she was very vocal. It was a handy way to check on her presence, by opening the patio door and just listening for her chitter sounds.

What a relief to welcome back moderating temperatures on Nov. 27 for the upcoming week. Now, I could leave the plugged-in feeder out all night rather than set my alarm. The car port feeder remained thawed in the mid-day rays of sunshine. With temperatures holding above zero (Celsius), Anna would now venture away from her stick world in the Saskatoon and spend more time on one of the highest perches in the centre of the hedgerow. Her glossy body shone like a splendid emerald green gem in the sunlight. At eye level with my kitchen view, I could watch her hawking for micro-bugs that entered her airspace. She would dart away, do a loop sometimes and zip back to the perch. I noticed her interest in the crevices along the front of the house, where I actually saw a spider emerge on one of the coldest days.

One day around lunchtime, I did my usual status check and could hear Anna pipping away in her insistent call note. She sounded agitated, as though there was a hawk or owl in the neighbourhood, so I looked around carefully, and even brought out my camera in anticipation. Suddenly, she darted out to intercept ANOTHER hummingbird near her feeder! It happened so fast that I never even had a chance to see what sex the other bird was. Earlier in the fall, I had seen a male and female together in the backyard but it was a short-lived friendship. The first question that came to mind was - "While I've been stressing about keeping 'my' Anna alive... how is this other bird managing?" especially during last week's cold spell without a feeder. They are tougher than I thought!

A serious arctic front moved in on December 2. This was a going to be a supreme test of her survival and my renewed dread. It was time for some aggressive changes in the feeder set-up. Concerned about the fire-shock hazards of using heat lamps on the deck, I searched the internet for other easy ideas, and my husband went shopping for a 3-foot plumber's wire that's used to wrap pipes to prevent freezing. The test wrap of the glass cylinder came up short, so it was back



to the store for a 6-footer. We also changed the direction of the wrap. The thermostat now faced the glass at the top of the cylinder and the black wire wrapped around closely to the bottom margin which joined the plastic screw-on base. The last 6 inches came under the ports to end at the perch on the other side. I cut out a circle of insulating packing material and affixed it with red tape. I even opened up a packet of human hand-warmers and tucked one in between the base and the insulation. It offered a heat boost for several hours. Although the wires kept the cylinder thawed, it surprised me how vulnerable the base was to freezing, even only inches away. I was out on the deck every hour tipping the tank to check that the liquid would drip out of one of the ports and hadn't changed to a solid. Besides improving the circulation and keeping freezing at bay, it created a gummy mess on the deck! I boiled up a fresh pot of nectar with a stronger concentration of sugar. I enhanced the ratio to 1:3 rather than 1:4 parts sugar to water. Hopefully, this would improve the energy boost for Anna and would reduce the freezing point of the liquid. I noticed one day after changing the concentration that she spent several minutes at the end of the day wiping her sword-like bill up and down repetitively on different branches, perhaps to clean off the extra sticky residue.

By Dec. 6 the cold was perpetually miserable and she seemed weaker or more lethargic by the afternoon. I was worried, not feeling too hopeful she would see another sunrise. This was the third consecutive day that the daytime high was not much warmer than the frigid double-digit night lows. She spent longer times just hunkered in her backdrop of bare branches. Her back and forth head movements seemed to be limited and small in her hopeless search for insects. To aggravate the conditions, there was even a harsh breeze blowing in the backyard. She was puffed up in her tiny feather parka with a couple of white tufts untucked behind her wings. At one point, I was startled to see her perched on the small feeder which I had mistakenly put out on the deck. It had almost frozen solid in an hour. Oh dear! When I opened the door to remove it, her reflexes were much slower than her usual millisecond dive into the shrubs. Chastising myself for confusing her and allowing her to waste her energy, I vowed never again to put out the small feeders in this arctic weather. I waited five minutes for her to return to the heated feeder but she didn't for a long time and the time intervals in general seemed much longer. How does she stay alive?

The next day, I was surprised to see Anna fly past my office window and land in the neighbour's trumpet vine, bare as a seasonal skeleton, but still a protective tangle of branches. Tucked in behind a remnant leaf, she camouflaged well. But she only perched for a moment before doing a quick inspection buzz, touring the stalks and nearby wood pile for any protein bites. As the December sun moved around in its weak daytime arch, it lit up the protected little nook she had turned to for an hour. I was relieved that she had finally moved away from the chill of the deep shade she so often preferred in the backyard shrub.

Dec. 13 was Friday the thirteenth. As usual, I sat on the sofa with my coffee, watching to see what time Anna would show up today. Like clockwork, she arrived at 0742 hours. I went off to take care of personal business for the rest of the day and because it was mild out again, I didn't pay too much attention to feeder checks or hummer sightings. Saturday proved to



be swallowed up in chores and errands and I didn't see her at all. My anticipation was focused on Sunday, the day of our local Christmas Bird Count. I rose early to listen for owls that had been vocal in the past week. After three intense months of sharing our yard with Anna, surely she would reward me with a showing today and what a great addition she would be to the Penticton count! By 7:42, I was trying not to blink, staring at the feeder and holding my breath. By 7:52, the initial waves of disappointment came in a sigh and I started getting fidgety. By 8:02, I gave up hope. It was past time to get out in the field to search for other birds on count day. Sadly, I never did see or hear her again after Friday. I checked around her usual perches for a body without success. Either she had moved on to greener pastures or she had gone to the Great-Count-Circle-in-the-Sky. Although she looked perky on Friday, perhaps she had succumbed to a sugar overdose. I read later that a 1:3 mixture may damage the birds liver and kidneys. Previously, I had underestimated her will (and skill) to endure harsh conditions, but the stark reality that she was gone hit hard.

Dec. 17 - Postscript. The feeder was still plugged in, just in case, but the let down was over. After a morning out, I drove into the driveway and parked for a few minutes, watching a flock of goldfinches eating niger seed. With an abrupt entry to my reverie, a hummer materialised, perched on a branch in front of the car. It was a female. Noooooooo. Why couldn't she have been there on Sunday! The bird flew over to the empty perch where one of the smaller feeders had been positioned under the carport, then darted towards the backyard. I went into the house to check the deck feeder, but she wasn't there. In fact, I didn't see a hummingbird in the yard for the rest of the winter. It seemed possible that this female might actually be the *other* Anna's that frequented the neighbourhood. Or perhaps it was my Anna in a last hurrah, saying goodbye.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Cannings, pers. comm.

<sup>2</sup> Rick Howie, pers. comm..

## **A MARVELLOUS OBSERVATION – COMMON MERGANSER SWALLOWS BULLFROG!**

*Bill Merilees and David Thomson*

Major early studies of the diet of Common Mergansers (Bent, 1962; Bellrose, 1976) include the presence of amphibians very infrequently. Of the six major studies reported by Bellrose, only one listed amphibians at 0.8%. More recent single observations by naturalists posted on the internet (Danley, 2013; Milo, 2013; 'The Mightysnipe', 2005) indicate that mergansers, both Hooded and Common, may feed on frogs more regularly than the scientific literature indicates. This feeding activity appears to take place primarily during the winter months. The observation reported here took place January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at the Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Area in Nanaimo, B.C.

On this day, David Thomson and I witnessed the following. While we were walking along the dyke a lone male Common Merganser flew past us and landed on open water. Upon catching up to the area where this bird landed we noted two males squabbling over a largish prey item which we at first took to be a good sized fish. Suddenly, one of the birds lifted the prey into the air and began swallowing it head first. To our surprise, it was not a fish but a largish bullfrog, estimated to have a body length of about 8-10 cm! Gulp by gulp, the frog's body slowly passed out of sight. Our lasting and most memorable observation was of the frog's legs, briefly splayed high in the air, with its large webbed feet appearing as two large waving flags. (see sketch) After this, the last vestiges of the frog progressively disappeared into the bird's oesophagus.

The weather on this day was cool with a water temperature, (taken on the 28<sup>th</sup>) of 3.5 – 4\* C. At this time of year all amphibians would be expected to be in hibernation and therefore virtually comatose.

This observation raised a number of intriguing questions, especially, where and how was this frog located? It is assumed that one of the mergansers must have located it among the bottom sediments of the pond. At this location the water is about 2 metres deep and would have been covered with decaying water plants from the previous summer.

Our Buttertubs observation might not be as unique as it first appeared. Hooded Mergansers have been reported to eat bullfrogs on occasions (Danley, 2013; Mightysnipe, 2005; Costina, 2012). Mallory and Metz (1999) state that between 6 and 10% of this species diet is amphibian.

For the Common Merganser, video (Milo, 2013) taken February 15 and 16, 2013 (believed to be taken near Inavale, Nebraska?) shows a female Common Merganser swallowing two medium-sized bullfrogs. The caption further states that "in fact she ate about five large adults in one afternoon this week". This appears to be a bit of a stretch?

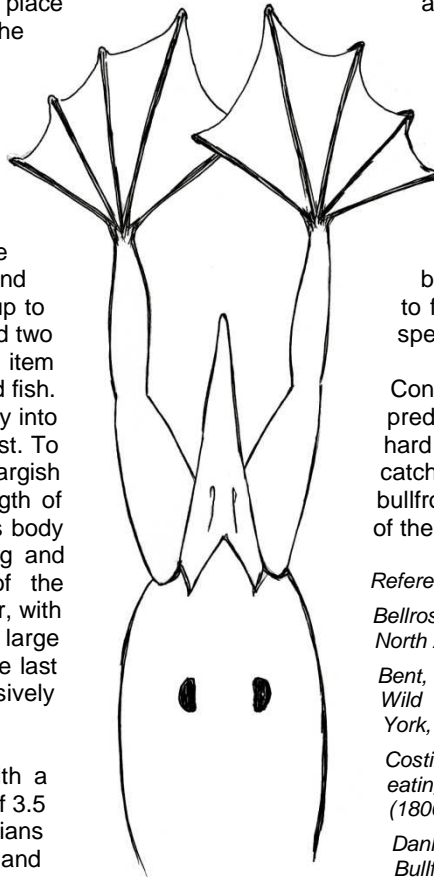
For the eight observations reported for both the Hooded and Common Merganser, seven took place during January and February, the other in July.

Bullfrogs hibernating under water must have access to oxygen rich water otherwise they would suffocate (Emmer, 1997). To satisfy this need they lie on the bottom of a pond or are only partially buried. This would make them vulnerable to foraging predators, a 'sitting duck' so to speak!

Considering the size, strength and strong predatory behaviour of a large bullfrog, it is hard to imagine a merganser of any species catching, subduing, let alone swallowing a bullfrog of this size during the warmer months of the year.

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## PIGEONS ARE ART CRITICS?!?

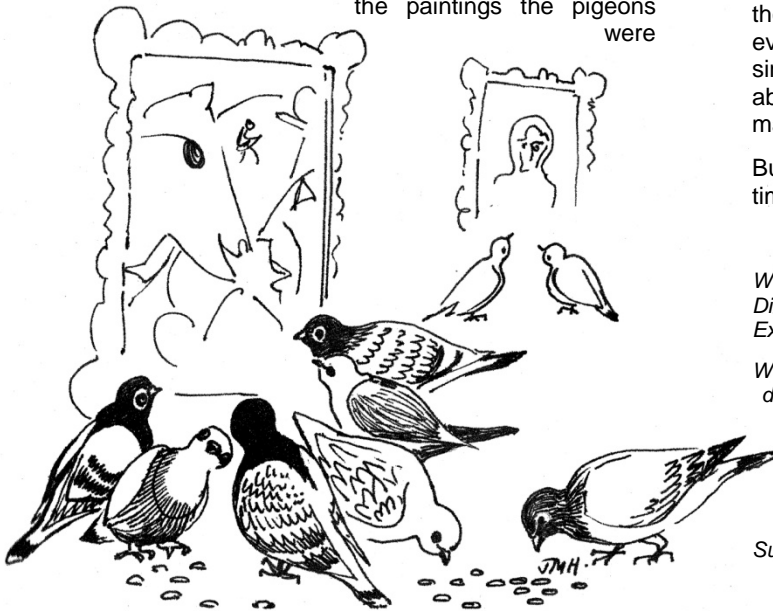
*The following report is not a spoof; honest!*

Rock Pigeons (*Columbia livia*) can distinguish paintings by Claude Monet (quintessential Impressionist) from those of Pablo Picasso (Cubist/Modernist)! And for an encore they have discriminated between Vincent van Gogh (Post-impressionist) and Marc Chagall (Modernist). They can also tell 'good' artwork from 'bad'. Indeed, they do almost as well as people (and, no doubt, a good deal better than the artistically illiterate).

Well, things are not actually quite as straightforward as that. The birds (three subjects) were shown one of a small number of paintings by each artist in paired trials. If the birds chose Monet (van Gogh) they were rewarded with food; if they chose the modernist, they got nothing. (Do I detect a slight prejudice here on the part of the experimenters?) After some time the Pigeons got the point. When shown new pictures by the same artists (ones they had never seen before), they chose the reward better than 80% of the time. Four human subjects, who were artistically illiterate, at least to the extent that they did not know the painters (university students), were similarly trained (though I doubt they were offered hemp seed as a reward) and scored nearly perfectly.

But now the interesting (and relevant) part. When the pictures were rendered in black and white, the pigeons still scored well. Further, when the pictures were partially obscured so that only part of the frame was visible, they could still separate the artists (so could the humans). Finally, the pictures were progressively blurred (using Photoshop to render the images with progressively larger pixels), and the pigeons' ability to discriminate then declined, but remained above the level of random choice even under severe defocusing. The humans' ability declined too, but not so quickly.

The point of all this was to study what aspect of the paintings the pigeons were



using for identification – do they use the same clues as humans? Apparently they do: it seems to be some combination of the object's linework and arrangement of solid components. Colour was not critical nor was the portion of the painting observed. But when the definition of the lines and blocks was degraded, so was recognition. Pigeons are not known to be habitués of art galleries, so some more general principle must be at work here. The researchers speculate that there is a convergence of higher visual cognition between birds and humans, and that this reflects selection pressures for survival during evolution.

But what about discriminating good from bad artwork? That sounds superficially like a different proposition. The researchers selected ten 'good' paintings and ten 'bad' paintings from amongst work submitted by a class of elementary school students. (The discrimination of 'good' and 'bad' was made by ten adults – only paintings on which all ten agreed in their judgments were used). Four Pigeons (different ones than before) were trained using some of the paintings in a manner similar to the artist test, then tested on fresh paintings. The pigeons again approached 80% successful discrimination. Furthermore, they maintained their ability when the picture size was reduced and when it was partially obscured. This time, however, grey-scale presentation hampered the birds, so colour evidently was of some importance to them. As before, degrading the image quality reduced recognisability. In a separate test, the birds demonstrated the ability to discriminate water colour from pastel sketches.

On the basis of these trials, the researchers speculate that the birds have some sense of the human construct of 'beauty'. I am very inclined to doubt that. The birds no doubt picked up reasonably successfully on whatever led the humans to classify the paintings as they did – whether it was line work style, complementarity of colour selection, or whatever, but their actions remained a trained response to an evidently distinctive set of visual stimuli. It sounds very similar to the artist test. To translate that into the very abstract concept of 'beauty' (which is, after all, culturally malleable) is a bit of a stretch.

But you might want to hire an informed pigeon the next time you set out to buy a piece of art!

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Watanabe, S. 2001. Van Gogh, Chagall and pigeons: picture discrimination in pigeons and humans. *Animal Cognition* 4: 147-151.

Watanabe, S. 2010. Pigeons can discriminate "good" and "bad" paintings by children. *Animal Cognition* 13: 75-85.

Summary by M.Church

Drawing by: Jenny Hards

### ... AND MUSIC CRITICS

Not only can Rock Pigeons be trained to discriminate visual art, they can discriminate musical composers. Actually, given their vocalisations, this sounds a bit more likely as a talent for any bird. Rock Pigeons have demonstrated the ability, after training, to discriminate Bach (Toccatas and Fugues) from Stravinsky (The Rite of Spring). Well, I doubt any creature could mix those up! Significantly, though, they then discriminated Buxtehude and Scarlatti (Baroque) from Eliot Carter and Walter Piston (moderns). Unfortunately, they thought Vivaldi was another bit of Stravinsky. (Actually, that's not so improbable.)

Watanabe and Sato have explored musical discrimination further using Java Sparrows (*Lonchura oryzivora*, also known as Java Finch and native to Indonesia, but a widely kept cage bird, especially in East Asia). Seven birds were trained to sit on a 'ready' perch while music by Bach or Schoenberg was played. Four birds were trained to respond to Bach by moving to a 'response' perch, where they received a food reward. Three birds were trained to prefer Schoenberg. To eliminate possible extraneous factors, all the music

was played by the same musician with the same instrument. Two birds proved untrainable. After training, fresh (previously unheard) pieces of music were introduced to the remaining five birds. Their ability to discriminate the composers varied from 60% to 100%, with an average of about 75%. This was followed by a new test using music by Vivaldi and Eliot Carter. The birds' overall performance was similar to that achieved in the initial test. Apparently, they can successfully discriminate Baroque from modern music.

It is perhaps not surprising that birds can discriminate music, but the demonstration remains a conditioned response to a repeated set of stimuli, the sort of trial in which many animals show consistent performance. It tests the birds' cognitive abilities but not, I suspect, any artistic appreciation.

Porter, D. and Neuringer, A. 1984. Musical discrimination by pigeons. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behaviour Proceedings* 10: 138-148.

Watanabe, S. and Sato, K. 1999. Discriminative stimulus properties of music in Java sparrows. *Behavioural Processes* 47: 53-57.  
Summary by M.Church

### JURASSIC "BIRD"

Well, not quite. The beast in question is *Anurognathus*, a pterosaur (meaning 'winged lizard') that flourished 150 million years ago. The pterosaurs, not to be confused with dinosaurs, were the earliest reptiles to master powered flight. It is the dinosaurs that gave rise to birds. Nevertheless, *Anurognathus* bears remarkable similarities with some modern birds in anatomy and, probably, behaviour. Its fossil remains were discovered 90 years ago in southern Germany. Good preservation made clear that the creature featured a short, broad head with large gape and eye sockets rotated to give partially binocular vision. It also had protruding bristles on its snout. Altogether, it seems to have been much like modern goatsuckers (*Caprimulgidae*; e.g., Common Nighthawk, Common Poorwill). But with a wingspan of up to 50 cm and length of order 10 cm (it was amongst the smallest of the pterosaurs), it appeared tailless, much like some modern swifts, an adaptation thought to increase in-flight manoeuvrability.

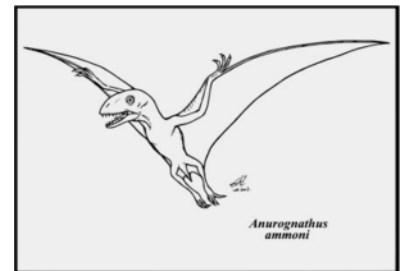
It has in fact been analogised with modern swifts, probably because of the similarity in size and diminutive tail (cf. Vaux's Swift; Chimney Swift). It has consequently been supposed that it earned its living by dashing about the sky to snaffle flying insects

('hawking'). It certainly was insectivorous: the large gape and pin-like teeth are evidence for that. But two clever investigators have now compared bone structure and strength in the fossil pterosaur with measurements made on modern birds and bats (bats? well, their body anatomy – particularly wing structure – is closest to that of *Anurognathus*). The wings and legs of *Anurognathus* prove to have been stronger than those of any of the contemporary animals tested. The researchers conclude that the animal in fact caught its prey by perching and watching, then launching forth to grab passing prey, like modern flycatchers and Caprimulgids (to be sure, these birds do also engage in hawking).

It seems then that nature has solved a functional problem (feeding) at least twice over by a remarkable convergence in both anatomy and behaviour, in different animal lineages, with a separation of more than 100 million years. Indeed, the apparent similarity between *Anurognathus* and the modern Caprimulgid birds is quite astonishing.

M. Church

From a news item in *The Economist*, with liberal resort to Wikipedia. Illustration: Wikipedia



## **BALD EAGLE TAKES RED-THROATED LOON**

Max Gotz

On a stormy Saturday, 11 Jan 2014, I observed an adult Bald Eagle take an adult Red-throated Loon off the tip of the Iona South Jetty. I mention this because according to *Birds of North America* and other on-line sources, there are few reports of predation on adult Red-throated Loons, and none by Bald Eagles. There were at least eight of these loons at the tip, but individual birds were flying in or out of the area at irregular intervals so there were likely more.



Red-throated Loon

MH

Over a few hours, I observed an adult eagle make several unsuccessful attempts on a loon by pouncing from low flight (about 1 to 10 meters) as the bird surfaced. The loon would dive and the eagle would make tight circles over the area and pounce again

when the loon resurfaced. Also the wind was strong enough to allow the eagle to kite over a spot for a few moments at a time.

The actual snatch was obscured by waves, but I observed the eagle plunge behind the waves, disappear for a moment, and then fly up clutching a large bird. The eagle then flew toward me giving excellent views. The eagle held its prey by the neck and back and the loon was obviously dead. The head was clearly visible hanging limply; the entire underside was visible, and both sides of the wings as they flopped around half open in the wind.

As the eagle approached the jetty to land with the loon, two other adult eagles flew to intercept it. When the first intercepting eagle was about 10 m away, the eagle that had caught the loon dropped it in the water. The first intercepting eagle immediately dove to scoop it up and returned to perch on the rocks and began eating. The other intercepting eagle, and the eagle who caught the loon originally, then both landed on top of the pipe about 25 meters away from the robber eagle and watched it eat. After it had eaten for a few minutes it took off with the loon toward the North Jetty with the two other adults chasing it. An immature eagle then immediately flew in and perched at the exact spot where the adult had been eating.

*Ed's Note: Red-throated Loon is the smallest of the five loons, with average length of about 630 mm (25") and weight of about 1400 gm (3 lb) – very slightly bigger than a large duck, such as a Mallard*

## **CRESTON VALLEY BIRD FEST**

**Mark your calendars: May 9-11, 2014** for the Creston Valley Bird Fest. We have a super line-up this year: 11 birding tour leaders, 7 presentations, and 9 valley events. New tours this year are Raptors by bus, Eyeing Eagles by bus, Medicinal plant tour, and children's event at the Wildlife Centre. The presentations include keynote speaker Dave Quinn, CBC's outdoor adventure guy from Kimberley, Jim Lawrence's photography workshop, Batgirl Juliet Craig, and a couple of American boys talking raptors and eagles. More info: [www.crestonvalleybirds.ca](http://www.crestonvalleybirds.ca).

**Registration** starts March 1, on-line and at College of the Rockies, Creston campus. (Some events have limits.)

I've attached a picture of our Festival Art this year: Great Horned Owl by Bruce Paterson.

Thanks everyone. Hope to see you in Creston in May.

Tanna Patterson, Chair, Creston Valley Bird Fest



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE AVIFAUNA

A new analysis of the consequences of climate change recently published in the journal *Nature* presents a troubling outlook for the world's ecosystems, including the birds. Superficially, one might expect birds to weather climate change better than most creatures for they are the most mobile of all organisms, hence best able to move to where conditions are habitable. But they rely on much less mobile features of habitat, including food resources, for their survival that may not do nearly as well. Superimposed on human disturbance, this paints an unsettling picture.

Most climate change analyses have been couched in terms of expected change in global and regional mean temperature. A figure of +2°C has been widely discussed as a threshold beyond which there will be significant ecological and social consequences, and it is known that this threshold will first be surpassed in polar regions. The new analysis focuses instead on climate variability. It argues that because mean conditions vary from year to year, communities – floral, faunal and human – have some capacity to adapt to change, but that when the year-to-year variability moves entirely outside the range of historical variation, serious consequences may be expected. The idea is best expressed by a diagram (see below).

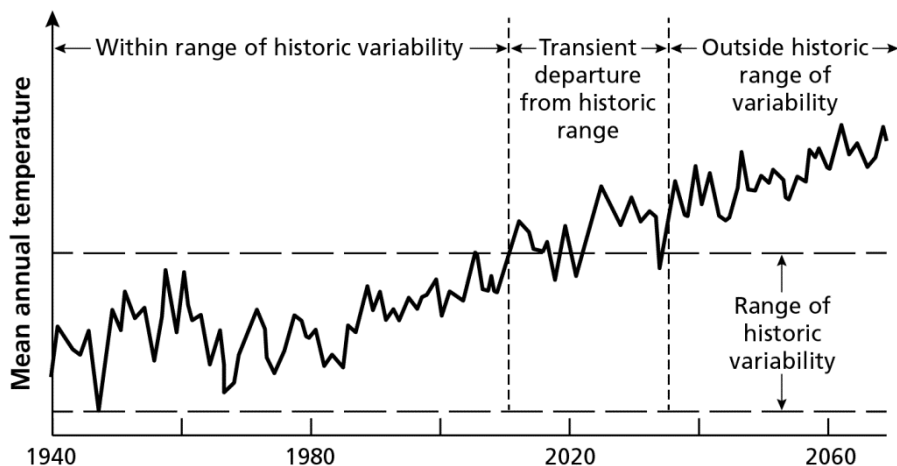
The researchers focused on two scenarios of future climate; one in which a concerted attempt is made to limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the atmosphere, beginning soon (known in the business as RCP45) and one in which no attempt is made (RCP85; the so-called “business-as-usual” scenario). Under these scenarios, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in 2100 will be 538 and 936 ppm respectively (we are currently just on the cusp of 400 ppm). The researchers made climate projections using the mean of 39 Earth System Models that simulate climate and climate change. This mean outcome tracks climate, including year-to-year fluctuations, over the past 150 years very well and so the mathematical models are then used to project

climate into the future with expected atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> loadings for the two scenarios. They find that climate passes entirely outside the range of historical fluctuations in the year 2069±18 years for RCP45 and in 2047±14 years for RCP85. Various tests show that their predictions are robust.

They analyse their findings more specifically for the world's biodiversity ‘hot spots’, most of which occur in the tropics (and in low-income countries least able to adopt mitigative measures for environmental protection). In these places, the ‘tipping point’ might occur as early as 2035 in the most extreme case. They also analyse prospects for individual groups of fauna in these hotspots. Under RCP45 they find, for terrestrial birds, an average ‘tipping point’ of 2063, and for marine birds, 2076. (For RCP85 it is 2042 and 2053: both sets of estimates have a range of variation induced by the different locations of the various hotspots).

Within the difference between the prospects for terrestrial and marine birds lies a critical lesson. It has been supposed that polar regions, which will experience the most extreme changes in actual climate, will be at greatest risk of ecosystem collapse, and that it will happen soonest there. But when one looks at year-to-year climatic variability – as in the present analysis – it turns out that the greatest natural variability lies in the temperate and polar regions and least in the tropics. So it is in the tropics where climate will soonest drift outside the range of historical variability, hence where significant climate-driven ecological disruption may first appear. Put another way, temperate and sub-polar organisms are expected to have a somewhat greater tolerance for change because they are historically adapted to greater inter-annual change. And it happens that, while the greatest avian diversity occurs in the tropics, most marine birds happen to be temperate and sub-polar species.

*Reference: Mora, C. and 13 others. 2013. The projected timing of climate departure from recent variability. Nature 502: 183-187.*  
Summary by M.Church



Black-legged Kittiwake

Alan Burger



## DOCUMENTING AND CONSERVING BARN SWALLOWS

British Columbia and the Lower Mainland are rich in natural diversity and birds are an important component of this diversity. However, many bird species have declined, even disappeared, from former suitable habitats. Much of this change has been documented by naturalists, with the objective of helping to conserve the area's biodiversity. One of Canada's formerly most common birds, the Barn Swallow, continues to decline. Breeding Bird Survey data from 1970 to 2009 indicate an overall decline of 76% and a decline of 30% from 1999 to 2009.

So you may wonder, what can I do to slow, stop, and reverse this change? I'll be the first to admit that it's not an easy problem to solve. However, I'm also an optimist and believe that each of us has the ability to take actions that can sustain and enhance our local biodiversity. This document outlines one such positive action, which I hope you will appreciate, and/or become involved with directly.

The goal is to obtain knowledge about the population and distribution of Barn Swallows and to encourage shared stewardship of the species and its habitat. This project will be undertaken from spring 2014 to fall 2015 and possible beyond. Its objectives are to:

- assess the status and distribution of Barn Swallows and their important habitats;
- conduct research to better understand their use of nesting sites to inform future stewardship actions;
- construct, monitor, and maintain nesting structures and educational signs in suitable habitats;
- collaborate with a diversity of partners to foster appreciation of the species and cooperation in conservation actions and long-term stewardship;
- strengthen conservation and stewardship activities around Barn Swallow habitats for the benefit of associated species of concern.

Actions associated with this project will focus on the Lower Mainland region of southwestern BC where Barn Swallows are most common.

However, the involvement of others elsewhere in BC is strongly encouraged. Achieving the project's goal and objectives will be a voluntary and collaborative effort.

To assess the status and distribution of Barn Swallows, surveys will be completed between April 15<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>, with a primary focus on June and July, the peak breeding period. Surveys will focus on suitable habitats. Baseline data (e.g., known nesting sites, historical observations) will be used to guide survey efforts. The number of areas surveyed will depend on available volunteer support. Surveys will be performed by walking, cycling or driving in suitable habitats, and likely involve some stand watches (point counts) at certain locations.

**Volunteers are being sought** to help coordinate or lead surveys, to lead nest-site enhancement and research, and/or to help with administrative tasks. Surveys will be conducted at least once per month, ideally with more surveys in June and July. Standard survey forms will be used and training will be provided prior to field work. Volunteers will be responsible for entering field data into an online database. Research will lead to a better understanding of the use of nesting sites by Barn Swallows and inform future stewardship actions. As such, **volunteers are being sought** to: monitor active nesting sites (e.g., number and location of nests, reproductive success); monitor the use of nesting sites where new nest structures have been placed; and document the location, distance travelled, and habitat being used at active nest sites.

Information collected through volunteer involvement will: contribute to recovery planning and implementation for Barn Swallow and other species of concern by government agencies and other stakeholders (e.g., under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*) and provide a basis for future monitoring and management actions to conserve and enhance Barn Swallows and their habitats.

This project is being conducted in collaboration with diverse partners, including the general public, naturalist groups, government agencies, public institutions, and private businesses.

**If you would like to find out more about this project, submit known nest and roost sighting information, be a survey and research volunteer, or help in any other way (e.g., inform others about the project), please contact me at [suncity28@gmail.com](mailto:suncity28@gmail.com)**

Greg Ferguson, Project Coordinator  
Registered Professional Biologist, B.Sc.



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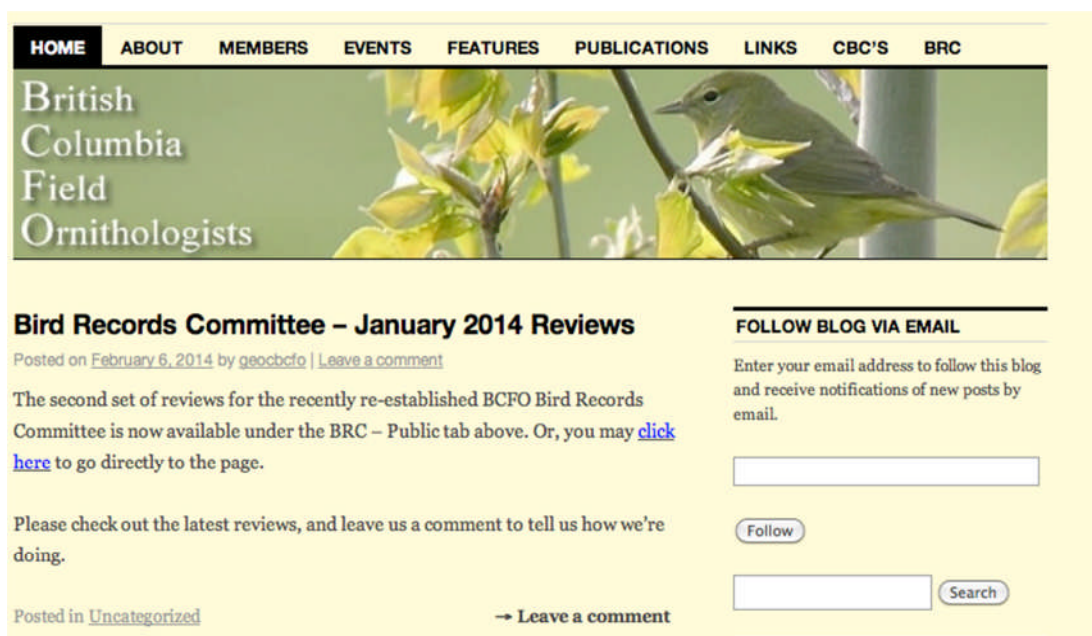
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The screenshot shows the BCFO website home page. At the top is a navigation bar with links: HOME, ABOUT, MEMBERS, EVENTS, FEATURES, PUBLICATIONS, LINKS, CBC'S, and BRC. Below this is a header image of a green bird on a branch with the text 'British Columbia Field Ornithologists'. The main content area features a post titled 'Bird Records Committee – January 2014 Reviews' with a sub-header 'FOLLOW BLOG VIA EMAIL'. The post text mentions that the second set of reviews is available under the BRC – Public tab and provides a link to go directly to the page. It also asks visitors to leave a comment. The 'FOLLOW BLOG VIA EMAIL' section includes a text input field for an email address, a 'Follow' button, and a search bar with a 'Search' button.

### !! ATTENTION VANCOUVER-AREA BIRDERS !!

May 4–10 is International Migratory Bird Week in Vancouver

Many special events are planned, including:

- David Sibley on his newly released Guide to Birds 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (April 29)
  - Birding Basics with George Clulow (May 5)
  - Presentation with Dick Cannings and City Bird announcement (May 10)
- (All three events will be at 7pm at the Downtown Public Library, Vancouver)

Other activities include: hummingbird banding, drawing for birders, bird taxidermy, seabirds in Burrard IBA, raptor workshop with Al Grass, Crows' film, and various bird walks in local parks. **For the complete schedule, check the Vancouver City and Stanley Park Ecology Society websites, but make sure that you find the 2014 information. (At time of writing, last year's schedules are still posted.)**



## SMELLING YOUR WAY HOME

How birds navigate during long-distance migration remains something of a mystery. In various tests some birds appear to use topography and may have to learn the route from older birds (see *Whooping cranes fly united*, this issue, p.33), some have been supposed to sense Earth's magnetic field (see *Bird Compass, part 2, BC Birding*, Sept.2012, p.11), and some are supposed to use infrasound (see *Pigeon Navigation: part 3, BC Birding*, March 2013, p.20). For nocturnal migrators, star navigation has long been proposed. But what do diurnally active pelagic birds do over the open, trackless ocean? In particular, how do those long distance wanderers, the Procellariiformes (i.e., albatrosses, petrels, and shearwaters), navigate the open ocean?

Light was shone on their ability by an experiment conducted on 24 Cory's shearwaters (*Calonectris borealis*) whose nesting colony is on Faial, the westernmost island in the Azores Archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean. The investigators selected 24 birds, 12 in each of 2010 and 2011. The birds were captured from their nests during egg brooding, and they were caught immediately after they returned from a foraging trip so that their motivation to find food would be low. (The birds normally fast for 6 or 7 days on the nest while brooding, while their mate departs to feed. Since said mate was not present, the egg from each nest was placed in an incubator).



Cory's Shearwaters

Each year, four birds were fitted with a magnet in a small box that was firmly attached to the bird's head: the magnet was about one-third stronger than Earth's magnetic field and was free to move in the box, so its varying field overwhelmed any Earth signal – the birds were rendered unable to use magnetic clues for navigation. Four birds were rendered unable to smell by treating their olfactory mucosa with a zinc sulphate solution that induced necrosis in the olfactory cells (the birds generate new cells after a few weeks), so they were deprived of a sense of smell. Four birds were 'controls' – that is, they were not subjected to any sensory deprivation. The birds were then carried

800 km east of their colony (more than 500 km east of the Azores islands) and released. Their trajectories after release were followed using GPS sensors strapped to the bird's back and recovered after the bird arrived home (2010), or via satellite-linked navigation sensors (2011). Winds in the period after release were dominantly from the north, northeast or northwest; that is, not from the direction to the Azores. Seventeen birds were successfully tracked after release.

The control birds made straight for home and arrived after at most 5 days. Similarly, the birds deprived of magnetic sense made for home, though they were a bit slower. The birds deprived of olfactory sense, however, flew seemingly randomly and not, on average, in the direction of the Azores. Some turned up in the Azores after weeks; one bird did not return home. There is evidence from their trajectories that, after finding the Azores islands, the birds proceeded using sight navigation, but the comparative behaviour of the groups strongly implies that, on the open ocean, the homing birds 'smelled' their way, and the olfactory-deprived birds failed to home because of loss of that ability.

It seems fairly clear from the set of the winds that the birds could not initially detect the odour of Faial, or even of the Azores islands. But it is known that different parts of the ocean do emit characteristic and spatially varying odours, the consequence of planktonic feeding activity – in particular dimethyl sulphide – and that these odours vary predictably from place to place. It is therefore proposed that the adult birds have developed an 'odour map' of the sea that tells them where they are, and that they navigate by this map. How they acquire such knowledge initially is not so clear (possibly through social learning on early foraging trips). Other species, notably homing pigeons, have also been shown to use olfactory clues for navigation, but they fly mainly over terrestrial topography where the range and variability of surface odours might be expected to be much more highly differentiated and stable. Whether by sea or by land, however, underlying the suggestion of odour maps is the necessity for the birds to possess a very subtle neural capacity to acquire and faithfully store spatial information. That capacity remains to be tested.

(You are no doubt wondering what happened to the eggs of those birds that did not return within a few days. The researchers ultimately slipped them into the nests of pairs whose own egg had failed to hatch, no doubt leaving one confused mate.)

Reference: Gagliardo, A., Bried, J., Lambardi, P., Luschi, P., Wikelski, M. and Bonadonna, F. 2013. Oceanic navigation in Cory's Shearwaters: evidence of a crucial role of olfactory clues for homing after displacement. *The Journal of Experimental Biology* 216: 2798-2805. doi 10.1242/jeb085738.

Summary by M.Church  
Photo: Marco Valentini (The Internet Bird Collection)



## SNIFFING FOR A MATE

Birds are thought to guide their actions mainly by visual and auditory senses; in comparison an olfactory sense has received little attention or emphasis. That may be because, for a long time, it was supposed that birds have no sense of smell. Definitely wrong! It is now realised that many birds have exceedingly sensitive olfactory organs and depend on them for such activities as food location and navigation. It turns out that, in some species, odour may also be important in mate selection.

The odour arises from oil that is secreted by a 'preen gland'. Birds use this oil to coat their feathers, thereby maintaining feather condition – that's what they are doing when you see a bird preening. (The preen gland, formally known as the uropygial gland, is located dorsally at the base of the bird's tail, hence birds' frequent action of apparently stroking the base of their back with their bill.) Preen oil contains a number of volatile agents, including ketones and alcohols, that give rise to a characteristic odour that varies from species to species according to the particular chemical components in the oil. Within species, odour can vary in strength according to how productive of preen oil the bird is. Furthermore, within species, the proportional mixture of chemical elements in the preen oil varies between males and females and also within individuals of the same sex. These latter two factors might be interpreted as measures of an individual bird's condition and genetic quality, and the bird's odour might thereby become a clue useful in mate choice.

A study to test this idea has been carried out using a population of Dark-eyed Juncos (*Junco hyemalis*) in the Appalachian uplands of Virginia, U.S.A. Just before the breeding season, samples of preen oil were recovered from 22 males and 12 females. Subsequently, their nests were monitored to determine the number of offspring produced by the females, genetic success of the males (number of offspring born), the social success of the males (number of offspring raised to fledgling status – that is, survival after 12 days), and number of extrapair offspring in the male's home nest (of interest because, although Juncos form monogamous pairs, extrapair

couplings occur: it is for this reason that genetic success and social success of a male are different measures).

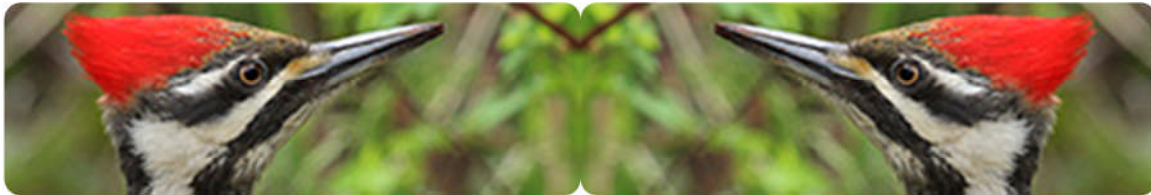
The investigators detected systematic differences between the gland oils of male and female juncos arising from varying proportions of the chemical components in their oil. Furthermore, these proportions varied somewhat from individual to individual so that a range exists in oil constitution and, therefore, in odour, from bird to bird. A junco can thereby detect degrees of 'maleness' or 'femaleness' amongst its conspecifics. Statistical tests showed that male genetic and social reproductive success are indeed correlated with odour. Interestingly, genetic success is predicted by the strength of ketones in the preen oil while social success is predicted by the alcohols. Assuming that the females can detect the resulting difference in odour, this opens the possibility that they may choose one bird for genetic fitness for reproduction and another bird for social fitness for rearing young. Perhaps here lies the basis for extrapair coupling behaviour in a socially monogamous species.

The amount of 'tail white' shown by male juncos has previously been correlated with reproductive success and in this study it was observed that those birds with less tail white suffered a greater number of extrapair young in their nest. Tail white is, then, a visual clue to overall reproductive fitness. No doubt the birds use other criteria as well.

Indeed, a feature of the study, common to many organismal and ecological studies, is that the relations uncovered, whilst statistically significant, remain highly variable. That is, there are many other influences at work (in this case, influencing mate choice, reproductive success) that cannot be controlled in field studies, leaving open the possibility that there are other explanations for the observed results. Until we learn to talk bird-speak we will not know for certain.

Reference: Whittaker, D.J., Gerlach, N.M., Soini, H.A., Novotny, M.V. and Ketterson, E.D. 2013. Bird odour predicts reproductive success. *Animal Behaviour* 86: 697-703. doi. 10.1016/j.anbehav.2013.07.025.

Summary and comment by M.Church



## WHOOPING CRANES FLY UNITED

Successful migration requires geographical knowledge. Birds acquire the knowledge they need in various ways. Some species migrate individually, so every bird must rely on an endogenous, genetically inherited program for timing and navigation. In a similar case, adults and young migrate separately – so the young must possess such genetically 'programmed knowledge'. Other birds migrate in family or large groups: are these birds also 'programmed' or is there a learning process involved?

An unusual opportunity to study this question arose in a population of Whooping Cranes (*Grus americana*) that has been established from captive-reared birds with a summering territory in central Wisconsin (some birds have strayed into Michigan) and a preferred wintering territory in Florida. Lacking migratory experience, the initial cohort of these birds was first led by a human-piloted ultralight aircraft. Researchers have studied the subsequent migratory paths of individuals and small groups to see how directly they move from summering to wintering territories and



back. The great advantage of studying these birds is that each is known individually, so its age and family relations are well established. The researchers can assess each bird's experience and can make inferences about whether the knowledge needed for successful

migration likely was innate, learned from parents (vertical learning), or learned from the social group (lateral learning). Their measure of migration skill was the magnitude of deviations from a straight-line path between summering and wintering locations.

The researchers observed that flight groups in which the oldest bird was 1 year old deviated, on average, by 97 km from the direct path, and a quarter of the birds wandered by up to 150 km, whereas 1-year olds travelling with older birds deviated on average by 64 km. As the age of the oldest bird in the group rose, the deviations became smaller such that, when the group leader was 8 years old, expected deviation was only 46 km. Some deviation is to be expected due to the effects of weather, especially wind, and indeed, the dominant displacement to the east of the direct line is consistent with the dominantly westerly wind field on the migratory route. The only significant explanatory variable for the birds' performance was the age of the oldest bird in the migratory group; family cohesion was not strongly detected. The researchers concluded that social learning, in which older birds impart knowledge over a number of years to the younger birds by leadership example, is the chief means by which the cranes establish and improve their migratory performance. The cranes must, however, possess some element of 'programming' for migration, for northbound flight groups consisting only of juvenile birds have been observed in spring and they succeed to arrive in the general region of their birth. Perhaps this phenomenon is one mechanism by which an expanding population spreads to colonise fresh breeding territories within the region of suitable summering habitat.

Mueller, T., O'Hara, R.B., Converse, S.J., Urbanek, R.P. and Fagan, W.F. 2013. Social learning of migratory performance. *Science* 341: 999-1002  
Summary by M.Church

Photo: A.Viduetsky, The Internet Bird Collection

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## Rare Bird Report Spring, 2013

(March 1 - May 31)  
From North American Birds

### British Columbia

by Chris Charlesworth



It was an active weather period for the Region. March temperatures were mostly below normal, with enough snow to keep snow packs topped up for the northern half of the province. Numerous showers fell over the southern half, and offshore waters were rather tempestuous, as the storm season continued with little abatement. April only showed grudging changes until the last week, when things started to warm up and dry out a bit, especially for the southeastern part of the province. The big change for the northern half came in May, with a rapid warm-up leading to a quick loss of the snow pack. However, a clipper during the third week of May generated a late season snowfall in the Fort Nelson area, a not uncommon occurrence. The southern half was not so lucky, as a warm start came to a quick as the jet stream along 49° N kept a constant parade of wet low-pressure systems moving across southern areas during the second half of the month. Offshore waters were unseasonably stormy through most of May.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

A rare sight anywhere in British Columbia, an ad. Ross's Goose appeared with a dozen Snow Geese on Reade Lake, a private cattle pond between Cranbrook and Kimberley in the Kootenays 29 Apr (Dianne Cooper). On the West Coast of Vancouver Island, 2 Ross's Geese were at Long Beach with Canada Geese 6 Apr (AD). Exceedingly rare in recent years, a male Tufted Duck was a great find on Reade Lake near Cranbrook 23-27 May (GR, DC). In the Peace River area, a male Black Scoter was a nice find at Big Lake near Chetwynd 12-20 May (EP). Rare but annual on lakes across the Southern Interior, single Long-tailed Ducks showed up at Kilpoola Lake, w. of Osoyoos, where a male was seen 16 Apr (DB et al.), and a female appeared at the Castlegar Sewage Ponds 3 May (Janice Arndt). An impressive count of 5 Yellow-billed Loons was made at Perrey's Beach near Comox on Vancouver Island 4 Mar (JJ); another was seen on Vancouver Island at the Englishman River estuary near Qualicum 30 Apr (Randy Dzenkiw). At Penticton, up to 2 Great Egrets were noted along the oxbows of the Okanagan River 13 May (Tanya Luszcz et al.). Increasingly common are sightings of White-faced Ibis. A single White-faced Ibis was photographed on Mandarte Island off the s. end of Vancouver Island 31 May (Ryan Germain). Also on the s. end of Vancouver Island, a dark-morph Swainson's Hawk flew over Swan Lake, Victoria 31 May (CS). A few Gyrfalcons lingered in coastal locations into Mar, with one seen at the Second Narrows Bridge, Vancouver 10 May (DT). Two Gyrfalcons, an ad. and an imm., were seen along Cole Rd. in Chilliwack in the Fraser Valley 22 Mar (RT).

A Pacific Golden Plover found at Robert Lake in Kelowna 3 May (RTo et al.) provides the first spring record for this species in the Okanagan Valley. Several Black-necked Stilts were reported throughout the province, with the 5 appearing at Reade Lake near Cranbrook 24 Apr being the first of the season (GB). Up to 5 were at Robert Lake by 8 May (MF). At Otter Lake near Vernon, an impressive 14 Black-necked Stilts were tallied 3 May (KF). In the Fraser



Robert Lake in Kelowna, British Columbia produced the Okanagan Valley's first spring record of Pacific Golden-Plover, photographed here 3 May 2013. Photograph by Amin Zargar.

Valley, one was found in farm fields in East Chilliwack 7 May (Janna Maljaars); and 3 appeared at the Fort St. John Sewage Lagoons 7 May, providing the first record for the Peace River area (EP). Two American Avocets that appeared at Robert Lake in Kelowna 30 Mar provide the earliest arrival date for this species in the province (CC et al.). In the Peace River area, an avocet was at Big Lake n. of Chetwynd 8 May (EP). Interior records of Willet are scarce, so one seen along the Columbia River at Revelstoke 26 May (RC) was of note. On the West Coast of Vancouver Island at Long Beach, a Willet was seen 23 Apr (Barry Campbell). At the Iona Sewage Ponds in Richmond, an Upland Sandpiper was seen by many 25-26 May (PJ, m.ob.). A Whimbrel seen at Robert Lake at Kelowna 6 May provides just one of a handful of records for this species in the Okanagan (RC, WW). In the Columbia Valley, about 15 mi s. of



This handsome Upland Sandpiper was seen by many at the famous Iona Island Sewage Ponds near Vancouver 26 May 2013. Photograph by Michelle Lamberson.



Revelstoke, a Whimbrel was seen 24 May (RC). In the Fraser Valley, a Hudsonian Godwit was seen in flooded fields along Banford Rd., Chilliwack 17 May (RT). Continuing the streak of rare birds this spring at Reade Lake near Cranbrook was a White-rumped Sandpiper seen 28-29 May (GB et al.). Two Dunlins molting into breeding plumage were at Robert Lake, Kelowna 4 Apr (JL, JG). Exceedingly rare in British Columbia in the spring season, a Stilt Sandpiper was at Reade Lake near Cranbrook 25 May (LVD).

At the Kelowna Landfill, 2 ad. Sabine's Gulls were discovered 29 Apr and remained until 3 May (RTo, RC, m.ob). An unprecedented flock of **100** Sabine's Gulls were seen on Arrow Lake in the Kootenays at Nakusp 23 May (GD). Perhaps the same flock, another 100 Sabine's Gulls were noted on Okanagan Lake in Kelowna at the mouth of Mission Creek 29 May (RTo). In the South Okanagan, an imm. Sabine's Gull was seen at Deadman's Lake near Oliver 29 May (Peter Lypkie, DB et al.). The usual smattering of reports of Franklin's Gulls came in from various interior locations, with 3 along Kootenay River Rd. near Creston 22 May (GB). Up to 5 were in a horse pasture along Road 22 n. of Osoyoos 18 May (TM), and up to 6 were along the shore of Okanagan Lake, Penticton 23 May (LN et al.). A first-cycle Kumlien's Iceland Gull was at Robert Lake, Kelowna 22-24 Mar (CC, CS et al.); another was in fields in Chilliwack along Banford Rd. 15 Apr (GG). An ad. Forster's Tern was seen at the mouth of Mission Creek, Kelowna 29 Apr (RTo); the first to visit Robert Lake, Kelowna was noted 30 May (KF).

## OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

An unbanded Burrowing Owl was found on the Sugarcane First Nations Reserve, e. of Williams Lake, 31 Mar (PR). After another irruption winter for Snowy Owls, up to 9 remained at Boundary Bay 13 Mar (SK). Ruby-throated Hummingbird is a Regional rarity, found with some regularity at only one location in the Peace Region, Johnson Rd. in Taylor Flats, where one was seen 31 May (PJ). In Vancouver, a male Calliope Hummingbird was seen displaying in Queen Elizabeth Park 28 Apr (JK). Two female Calliopes were watched as they

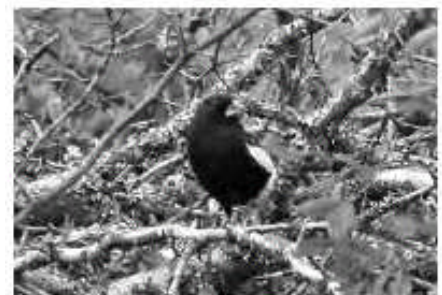
sparred with one another at Burnaby Mountain Park 8 May (DP). A Black Phoebe was seen at Comber's Beach near Tofino, Vancouver Island 24 Apr (AD, Karen Ferguson). Another was in the Fraser Valley at Abbotsford 28 Apr (RT). This spring produced three Loggerhead Shrike sightings, with the first being an ad. along Kosikar Rd. in Chilliwack 21 Mar (RT). Another was at Revelstoke 26 May (RC et al.), and the last was at the Squamish River estuary 27 May (Chris Dale). In North Delta, a Western Scrub-Jay was seen briefly at the corner of 95th Avenue and Grant Place 30 Mar (KL). A Blue Jay put in an appearance at Sardis in the Fraser Valley 19 Apr (GG). Canada's first **Citrine Wagtail**, first seen in early Nov 2012, remained through at least 25 Mar and was seen by thousands of birders during its stay in farm fields near Comox (Dave & Adele Routledge, m.ob.). Rare on the Lower Mainland, a Mountain Chickadee was a good find at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver 2 Apr (RL et al.); this apparently represents just the second record for this heavily birded park. A bird fitting the description of a Winter Wren was found along the Galloping Goose Trail in Victoria 24 Apr (v.r. IC). The bird was well documented with sound recordings of its call notes supporting the identification. Canada's first **Red-flanked Bluetail**, discovered in Jan, remained at Queen's Park in New Westminster until at least 20 Mar (Colin McKenzie, m.ob), also seen by numerous observers. In the West Kootenay town of Edgewood, a Northern Mockingbird was seen 24 May (JG). A Sage Thrasher, a rare visitor to coastal British Columbia appeared at Iona Beach Regional Park in Richmond 11 May (Paul Levesque). A Hermit Warbler visited Emory Creek Provincial Park near Hope 4 May (RT). The most commonly reported "eastern" warbler in the Vancouver area, a Palm Warbler was seen with a mixed flock of Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers at Richmond Nature Park 21-22 Apr (ST). Other Palms were at Nanaimo River Estuary, Vancouver Island 3-4 Mar (RCa) and atop Beacon Hill, Victoria 1 Apr (Alan MacLeod et al.). Rare anywhere in British Columbia away from the Peace River area, a female Black-and-white Warbler was seen along the Columbia River at Revelstoke 25



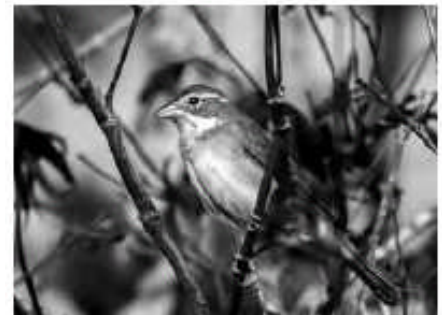
Ash-throated Flycatcher appears almost annually somewhere in British Columbia; this bird was photographed 23 May 2013 in the Fraser Valley at Agassiz. Photograph by Kevin Jones.



Frustratingly rare in British Columbia, this Black-throated Sparrow appeared west of Osoyoos 30 May 2013. Photograph by Dick Connings.



Very rare in the British Columbia interior, a male Lark Bunting was a fantastic find at Edgewood 21 May 2013. Photograph by Jeremy Gotten.



A Dickcissel entertained Vancouver birders during its stay of several days at Ladner 20-28 (here 22) April 2013. Photograph by John Gordon.

May (RC). A male Black-throated Sparrow was seen singing on the sage-covered benches w. of the town of Osoyoos 30 May (RC, DCa). Another



was at Hope Airport 12 May (RT). In the South Okanagan, a Sagebrush Sparrow appeared briefly with a mixed flock of migrant sparrows at Kilpoola Lake, w. of Osoyoos, 27 Apr (DB). A male Lark Bunting appeared in a grassy field near Edgewood in the West Kootenay 21 May (JG). In British Columbia, Lark Sparrows are rare away from the Thompson/Okanagan area, so one found at the Iona Sewage Ponds in Richmond 20 May (Margaret Butschler, m.ob.) was a noteworthy find. Wintering Harris's Sparrows lingered through into the spring period, with an imm. continuing into early Mar at a private feeder in East Richmond (JT). Another visited a feeder in Lardeau in the Kootenays 24 & 26 May (Marlene Johnston). On Vancouver Island, an ad. Harris's came to a feeder in Courtenay 21-26 Apr (*fide* Mike Yip). One of the more exciting finds of the period was a female Dickcissel at a feeder in Ladner 20-28 Apr (Douglas Bamford, m.ob.). As is often the case with extra-limital /unseasonable Dickcissels, the bird associated with a flock of House Sparrows and visited

several different properties in the neighborhood during its stay. A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was photographed at Johnston's Landing in the West Kootenays 19 May (Gail Spitler). Another, a second year male, was at Hope Airport 22 May (RT), where 2 Indigo Buntings accompanied a migrant flock of Lazuli Buntings 30-31 May as well (RT). At Salmon Arm, a Common Grackle was seen foraging on the lawn of a private residence 20 May (TH). A gorgeous male **Hooded Oriole** was photographed at a feeder in Powell River 13 Apr but was not seen again (Bob & Rita Valine). Two Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches entertained birders at Cecil Green Park at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver 24 Mar (BD). In the Okanagan, where Purple Finches are rare, a female found at Kalamoir Park on Kelowna's Westside 12 Mar remained until 17 Mar (CC, RTo et al.). A group of up to 10 Pine Grosbeaks at Burnaby Mountain thrilled Lower Mainland birders until at least 4 Apr (DT). The Brambling invasion of winter carried on into the spring period, with a male along

17th Avenue in Vancouver remaining through at least 29 Mar. At Saanich, on Vancouver Island, a male Brambling remained from Jan until at least 23 Mar (JG).

**Observers:** Gary Breault, Doug Brown, Dick Cannings, Russell Cannings, Ryan Cathers, Chris Charlesworth, Dianne Cooper, Adrian Dorst, Ian Cruickshank, Brent Daikow, Gary Davidson, Kyle Fitzpatrick, Michael Force, Gord Gadsden, Jeremy Gatten, Jim Ginns, Ted Hillary, Jukka Jantunen, Pablo Jost, Jeremiah Kennedy, Sandra Kinsey, Janna Leslie, Kevin Louth, Rob Lyske, Thor Manson, Laure Neish, Dan Peterson, Evan Pye, Phil Ranson, Greg Ross, Chris Saunders, Chris Siddle, John Tabak, Sharon Toochnin, Rick Toochnin, Ryan Tomlinson, Danny Tyson, Linda Van Damme, Wayne Weber.

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GULLS AT SUNSET

Photo-collage by  
Mark Haldas

## WHY DO BIRDS ENGAGE IN COOPERATIVE BREEDING?

Around 9% of birds (that would be about 900 species) engage in cooperative breeding, wherein three or more adults contribute to the rearing of young in a nest. The non-breeding helpers are usually close relatives (earlier offspring; siblings) of the breeding pair. Why would they do this?

It has been suggested that cooperative breeders are more often the target of interspecific brood parasitism (the situation in which a bird of a different species lays its egg(s) in the host bird's nest and leaves the host to rear the chick) than non-cooperative breeders. Breeding success of the victim species might be improved if breeding occurred in groups large enough to fight off the brood parasite.

Statistical evidence for this idea has now been offered. It turns out that most of the world's cooperative breeders are found in sub-Saharan Africa and Australasia; 63% of brood parasites breed exclusively in these regions, the largest group being cuckoos. And the world distribution of cooperative breeders (mostly passerines) is strikingly similar! In more detail, there is a strong coincidence between hosts of brood parasites and cooperative breeding in both southern Africa and Australia (two regions with sufficiently well-known avifaunas to mount the analysis). Why would this be the case?

The researchers put forward three hypotheses:

- (i) brood parasites might see in cooperative breeders the opportunity to maximize care for their young;
  - (ii) cooperative breeders may be obvious targets because of the activity generated by the group near the nest; and
  - (iii) cooperative breeders may be better able to defend their nests (which would favour cooperation as a defence against invading brood parasites).
- They tested these hypotheses by studying Superb Fairy-wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*), an Australian cooperative breeder, and the parasitic Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos (*Chalcites basal*), which make this fairy-wren their prime target.

It turns out that cuckoo chicks grow faster and have a greater chance of fledging when reared by groups of three or more fairy-wrens than if raised by a pair. This evidence confirms the first hypothesis. However, large fairy-wren groups are significantly less likely to be parasitized at all than small groups because they gang up to repel the invader from the nest so that it cannot deposit its egg. This undermines the second hypothesis. But this finding does support the third hypothesis. They defend the nest by making a distinctive alarm call associated only with the approach of a cuckoo (and not by any of a number of other threats observed by the researchers, including predatory birds and snakes), whereupon the group gathers and repels the cuckoo physically.

The researchers conclude that there is a reciprocal relationship between brood parasites and their hosts that positively encourages cooperative breeding. This cannot be the whole story, however, because cooperative breeding is also seen in some birds that are not subject to brood parasitism. Evolutionary advantage may also be gained by the group through the superior level of nest attendance that is possible in cooperative breeders. But brood parasitism must be an important factor, particularly amongst species that cope by attempting to repel the adult parasite from the nest.

### Reference

Feeney, W.E. + 9 others [cooperative researchers!]. 2013. Brood parasitism and the evolution of cooperative breeding in birds. *Science* 342: 1506-1508.

Commentary: C.N.Spottiswoode: How cooperation defeats cheats. *Ibid.* 1452-3.



Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo  
Wikipedia



Superb Fairy-wren, David Taylor  
The Internet Bird Collection



Superb Fairy-wren Pete Strauss  
The Internet Bird Collection

Summary by M.Church

## FLAP LIGHTLY

### (AND STAY CLOSE TO YOUR FRIENDS)

It has long been suspected that birds, such as geese, swans and cranes, that fly in V-formation or *en echelon* are gaining flight advantage by 'slip-streaming' their immediate leading neighbour. This suspicion has now been directly confirmed. A bird's wing (or an aircraft wing) is shaped so that air flows more rapidly over the upper surface than the lower one. The induced pressure difference is the lift that the wing experiences. But behind the wing there is a downwash as the rapidly moving upper surface air slows down and fills the space not occupied by the slower moving lower surface air. The strength of the downwash is just equal to the strength of the lift imparted to the wing. The trailing bird doesn't want to be there for it would then have to flap harder to overcome the downwash and maintain altitude. But air slips off the end of a bird's wing in a circular vortex in which air moves upward from below the passing wingtip toward the top. If the trailing bird can place its wingtip in that zone – which persists momentarily after the leading bird has passed – it gains free lift and has to work less hard. And that formation-flying birds do so position themselves is what has now been measured.

Military aviators and other pilots who fly in tight formation also know this trick. Fuel consumption in the following aircraft can be reduced by as much as 18%. (This is why the bombers in the old war movies always fly very close to each other and in formation.)

The proof was obtained by studying the flight of a flock of Northern Bald Ibises (*Geronticus eremita*\*), a species whose range formerly covered southern and central Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. It is, in fact, critically endangered, with a remaining wild population of about 500 resident birds in Morocco. However, captive-reared birds are being released in Austria and Turkey and these must be taught to migrate to Africa for the winter. They are initially led by a piloted ultralight

aircraft (actually, the researchers describe it as a 'powered parachute' – presumably an inflatable wing contraption). This gave researchers the opportunity to fit some of the birds with high precision GPS packs that recorded the body position and flapping motions of each bird. Recovering the recorders later and analysing the birds' relative positions and motions confirmed their lift-optimizing behaviour.

That the birds can do this (apparently intuitively) is quite remarkable. They must not only make minor adjustments in their flight position to follow their leading neighbour's movements, they must also adjust their flap timing to be slightly out of phase with their neighbour in order to get maximum advantage from the neighbour's vortex. (This is why a skein of geese in 'good flying trim' appears to flap in order down the line.) It's not (yet) known just how much energy they save, but it has been observed that pelicans have a lower flap rate and lower heart rate when flying in formation than when flying solo.

There are other questions. Formation-fliers are big birds. Is there insufficient advantage gained by smaller birds to make the effort of flight coordination worthwhile? Or does their generally more frantic flying performance simply make it impossible to effect the coordination? Ducks appear to be near the lower size limit of formation fliers and come in a variety of sizes; perhaps they should be studied closely.

*Portugal, S.J. and nine others. 2014. Upwash exploitation and downwash avoidance by flap phasing in ibis formation flight. Nature 505: 399-402.*

*Commentary by Muijres, F.T. and Dickinson, M.H. Fly with a little flap from your friends. Ibid. 295-6.*

*\*The Northern Bald Ibis is an interesting bird. It is a dryland bird; the only ibis that is not a wader.*

*Summary by M.Church*





## Bird Listers' Corner

### 2013 Lists

Welcome to the 2013 Listers' Corner. To familiarize everyone with the tables, the number under the “%” represents the percentage of an individual's total compared to the total species in that particular area/list. The “**incr**” column indicates an increase, if any, from their 2012 figure. An “**asterisk**” preceding a total indicates a number wasn't submitted for 2013. If a member does not supply a submission for two consecutive years the listing will be dropped. An individual in **red bold** print indicates a person who had the largest increase from the previous year. A name in *red italics* indicates the reaching of a significant plateau.

It should be noted **only** BCFO members for 2013/14 are included in this report. Submissions were received from 54 members one less than in 2012/13. There were three members new to Listers' Corner from 2012, Jim Ginns, Nathan Hentze and Michael Sather. All email and mailed submissions (4), provided an email address was known, were acknowledged. If you didn't get an acknowledgement, I didn't get your totals. Reminder emails was sent out mid January & February 1 to previous submitters.

**BC: MikeToochin** continues in top position. *Keith Riding* crossed the 400 mark, *Andy & Marilyn Buhler* reached 350 and *Janice Arndt* added 5 to achieve the 300 plateau. **Len Jellicoe** and **Lee Harding** added 12 to their respective totals.

BRITISH COLUMBIA - 510					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	466	Mike Toochin	91.4	1	465
2	442	Jo Ann MacKenzie	86.7		449
3	439	Dale Jensen	86.1		439
4	435	Sharon Toochin	85.3	3	432
5	430	Wayne Weber	84.3	2	428
6	426	Roger Foxall	83.5	1	425
7	423	David Stirling	82.9	1	422
8	422	Tony Greenfield	82.7	1	421

BRITISH COLUMBIA - 510					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
9	421	Brian Self	82.5	1	420
10	420	Carlo Giovannella	82.4	1	419
11	418	Lloyd Esralson	82.0	1	417
12	417	Brian Stech	81.8	5	412
13	416	Murray Brown	81.6	2	414
14	413	Val George	81.0	4	409
15	410	Dick Cannings	80.4	1	409
16	407	Mike McGrenere	79.8	2	405
17	404	Thor Manson	79.2	3	401
18	<b>402</b>	<b><i>Keith Riding</i></b>	78.8	3	<b>399</b>
19	400	Bryan Gates	78.4		400
20	399	Russ Tkachuk	78.2	1	398
21	398	Hank Vanderpol	78.0	3	395
22	397	Russell Cannings	77.8	2	395
22	397	Brian Scott	77.8	1	396
24	394	John Voos	77.3	1	393
25	393	Kevin Neill	77.1	6	387
26	391	Barbara Begg	76.7	1	390
26	391	Nathan Hentze	76.7		new
<b>26</b>	<b>391</b>	<b><i>Len Jellicoe</i></b>	76.7	<b>12</b>	<b>379</b>
29	390	Larry Cowan	76.5	1	389
30	382	Chris Charlesworth	74.9		382
31	378	Gary Davidson	74.1		378
32	371	Rand Rudland	72.7	1	370
33	369	Don Wilson	72.4	1	368
34	368	Ken Morgan	72.2		368
35	366	Laird Law	71.8	9	357
35	366	Bruce Whittington	71.8	2	364
37	358	Art Martell	70.2	2	356
38	356	Martin McNicholl	69.8		356
39	353	Gwynneth Wilson	69.2	1	352
40	350	Peter Blokker	68.6		350
40	<b>350</b>	<b><i>Andy Buhler</i></b>	68.6	1	<b>349</b>
40	<b>350</b>	<b><i>Marilyn Buhler</i></b>	68.6	1	<b>349</b>
43	328	John Sprague	64.3	1	327
44	323	Ken Taylor	63.3		323
45	320	Dorothy Copp	62.7	2	318
46	319	Ted Goshulak	62.5	4	315
47	307	Bob McKay	60.2	1	306
48	305	Peter McIver	59.8	4	301
49	301	Mike Mulligan (AB)	59.0	1	300
50	<b>300</b>	<b><i>Janice Arndt</i></b>	58.8	5	<b>295</b>
<b>51</b>	<b>299</b>	<b><i>Lee Harding</i></b>	58.6	<b>12</b>	<b>287</b>
52	275	Jim Ginns	53.9		new
53	223	Sandra Eadie (ON)	43.7		223



**ABA: Thor Mason** had the largest increase with 22 species pushing him over the 750 plateau. *Hank Vanderpol's* increase of 13 moved him from 4th to 2nd now only 5 short of *Roger Foxall's* list leading 780. Members reaching other plateaus were *John Vooys* (700), *Brain Self* (650), *Lloyd Esralson* (600) & *Rand Rudland* (550).

ABA - 981					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	780	Roger Foxall	79.5	3	777
2	<b>775</b>	<b>Hank Vanderpol</b>	79.0	13	<b>762</b>
3	774	Mike Toochin	78.9	1	773
4	768	Mike Mulligan	78.3	2	766
5	<b>758</b>	<b>Thor Manson</b>	77.3	<b>22</b>	<b>736</b>
6	737	Russ Tkachuk	75.1	1	736
7	722	Art Martell	73.6	11	711
8	711	Jo Ann MacKenzie	72.5	2	709
9	709	Dale Jensen	72.3	2	707
10	708	Dorothy Copp	72.2	5	703
11	<b>701</b>	<b>John Vooys</b>	71.5	5	<b>696</b>
12	699	Brian Stech	71.3	5	694
13	684	Wayne Weber	69.7	5	679
14	680	David Stirling	69.3	1	679
15	674	Sharon Toochin	68.7	2	672
16	662	Chris Charlesworth	67.5	5	657
17	655	John Sprague	66.8	2	653
18	<b>652</b>	<b>Brian Self</b>	66.5	5	<b>647</b>
19	648	Gary Davidson	66.1		648
20	644	Brian Scott	65.6	1	643
21	638	Andy Buhler	65.0	1	637
21	638	Marilyn Buhler	65.0	1	637
21	638	Dick Cannings	65.0		638
24	628	Gwynneth Wilson	64.0	1	627
25	627	Kevin Neill	63.9	4	623
26	623	Keith Riding	63.5	7	616
27	619	Don Wilson	63.1		619
28	615	Carlo Giovanella	62.7	5	610
29	611	Barbara Begg	62.3	1	610
30	610	Nathan Hentze	62.2		new
31	608	Tony Greenfield	62.0	1	607
32	<b>600</b>	<b>Lloyd Esralson</b>	61.2	1	<b>599</b>
33	587	Sandra Eadie	59.8	1	586
34	585	Peter McIver	59.6		585
35	584	Ken Morgan	59.5		584
36	579	Russell Cannings	59.0	3	576
37	568	Bryan Gates	57.9		568
38	567	Mike McGrenere	57.8	15	552

ABA - 981					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
39	563	Larry Cowan	57.4	1	562
40	<b>555</b>	<b>Rand Rudland</b>	56.6	16	<b>539</b>
41	541	Val George	55.1	1	540
42	530	Murray Brown	54.0		530
43	527	Laird Law	53.7	9	518
44	526	Martin McNicholl	53.6		526
45	510	Ted Goshulak	52.0	2	508
46	488	Bob McKay	49.7		488
47	472	Ken Taylor	48.1	1	471
48	463	Lee Harding	47.2	3	460
49	420	Janice Arndt	42.8	1	419
50	412	Peter Blokker	42.0		412

**Canada:** Most Vancouver listers added at least one species this year with the appearance of the Red-flanked Bluetail. **Roger Foxall** remains in top spot. For the second year running **Rand Rudland** had the largest increase with 16. *Peter McIver* was close behind with the addition of 12.

CANADA - 673					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	543	Roger Foxall	80.7	1	542
2	527	Jo Ann MacKenzie	78.3	1	526
3	504	Mike Toochin	74.9	1	503
4	490	Brian Self	72.8	1	489
5	488	David Stirling	72.5	1	487
6	485	Dale Jensen	72.1	1	484
7	481	Sharon Toochin	71.5	3	478
8	476	Russ Tkachuk	70.7	1	475
9	473	Wayne Weber	70.3	2	471
10	469	Dick Cannings	69.7	1	468
11	466	Thor Manson	69.2	11	455
12	463	Carlo Giovanella	68.8	1	462
13	459	Mike McGrenere	68.2	2	457
14	458	Murray Brown	68.1	2	456
14	458	Kevin Neill	68.1	4	454
16	456	Mike Mulligan	67.8	1	455
17	453	Keith Riding	67.3	2	451
18	451	Barbara Begg	67.0	1	450
19	449	Brian Scott	66.7	1	448
20	447	Len Jellicoe	66.4	8	439
20	447	Art Martell	66.4	1	446
20	447	Brian Stech	66.4	2	445
23	445	Russell Cannings	66.1	10	435
24	444	Martin McNicholl	66.0		444
25	443	Larry Cowan	65.8	1	442

CANADA - 673					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
25	443	Hank Vanderpol	65.8		462
27	441	Lloyd Esralson	65.5	1	440
27	441	John Vooy	65.5	2	439
<b>29</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>Rand Rudland</b>	65.1	<b>16</b>	<b>422</b>
30	434	Chris Charlesworth	64.5	4	430
31	433	Tony Greenfield	64.3	1	432
31	433	Nathan Hentze	64.3		new
31	433	Ken Morgan	64.3		433
34	420	Bryan Gates	62.4		420
35	413	Sandra Eadie	61.4	1	412
35	413	Gwynneth Wilson	61.4		413
37	410	Peter Blokker	60.9		410
38	409	John B. Sprague	60.8	1	408
38	409	Don Wilson	60.8	0	409
40	408	Gary Davidson	60.6	0	408
41	399	Andy Buhler	59.3	1	398
41	399	Marilyn Buhler	59.3	1	398
43	394	Laird Law	58.5	11	383
44	393	Janice Arndt	58.4	1	392
45	<b>387</b>	<b>Peter McIver</b>	57.5	<b>14</b>	<b>373</b>
45	387	Bob McKay	57.5		387
47	383	Ted Goshulak	56.9	3	380
48	378	Dorothy Copp	56.2	3	375
49	341	Lee Harding	50.7	8	333

**World: Keith Riding** increased his already list leading total by 591 putting him well over the 6,000 plateau. *Roger Foxall* surpassed the 5,000 mark and *Don Wilson* pushed past 2,500.

WORLD - 10,233					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
<b>1</b>	<b>6,434</b>	<b>Keith Riding</b>	63	<b>591</b>	<b>5,843</b>
2	<b>5,170</b>	<b>Roger Foxall</b>	51	300	<b>4,870</b>
3	*4,942	Nigel Mathews	48		4,942
4	4,782	Jo Ann MacKenzie	46.7	204	4,578
5	4,729	Mike Toochin	46.2	100	4,629
6	4,304	Art Martell	42	8	4,296
7	4,026	David Stirling	39		4,026
8	3,864	Sharon Toochin	38	82	3,782
9	3,743	Peter McIver	37	136	3,607
10	3,567	Mike Mulligan	35	23	3,544
11	3,299	Ken Taylor	32	1	3,298
12	3,186	Barbara Begg	31	17	3,169
13	3,150	Dick Cannings	30.8	1	3,149
14	3,112	Hank Vanderpol	30.4	10	3,102

WORLD - 10,233					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
15	3,072	Dale Jensen	30.0	22	3,050
16	2,892	Brian Self	28.3	4	2,888
17	2,888	Laird Law	28.2	38	2,850
18	<b>2,621</b>	<b>Don Wilson</b>	26	139	<b>2,482</b>
19	2,438	Val George	23.8	274	2,164
20	2,379	Dorothy Copp	23.2	285	2,094
21	2,319	Brian Stech	22.7	282	2,037
22	2,300	Rand Rudland	22.5	227	2,073
22	2,300	Brian Scott	22.5	244	2,056
24	2,117	Lee Harding	21	117	2,000
25	2,036	Ken Morgan	19.9	13	2,023
26	2,010	Nathan Hentze	19.6		new
27	1,933	Gary Davidson	18.9	3	1,930
28	1,827	Sandra Eadie	17.9	2	1,825
29	1,789	Chris Charlesworth	17.5	369	1,420
30	1,590	Bryan Gates	16		1,590
31	1,526	Tony Greenfield	14.9		1,526
32	1,305	Larry Cowan	12.8	2	1,303
33	1,260	Andy Buhler	12.3		new
33	1,260	Marilyn Buhler	12.3		new
35	950	Kevin Neill	9	4	946

**Okanagan Valley: Chris Charlesworth** remains at the top of the list. **Gary Davidson** managed to add 5 to his total.

OKANAGAN VALLEY - 342					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	310	Chris Charlesworth	90.6	2	308
2	304	Dick Cannings	88.9	2	302
3	296	Gwynneth Wilson	86.5	2	294
4	295	Russell Cannings	86.3	4	291
5	289	Don Wilson	84.5		289
6	272	Peter Blokker	79.5		272
7	270	Mike Toochin	78.9	1	269
8	264	Bob McKay	77.2	1	263
<b>9</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>Gary Davidson</b>	76.3	<b>5</b>	<b>256</b>
10	259	Hank Vanderpol	75.7		259
11	258	Wayne Weber	75.4		258
12	247	Jim Ginns	72.2		new
13	242	David Stirling	70.8		242
14	234	Jo Ann MacKenzie	68.4		234
15	232	Tony Greenfield	67.8		232
16	221	John Vooy	64.6		221
17	218	Laird Law	63.7		218

OKANAGAN VALLEY - 342					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
18	215	Lloyd Esralson	62.9		215
19	203	Nathan Hentze	59.4		new
20	193	Bryan Gates	56.4		193
21	177	Brian Stech	51.8		177
22	168	Larry Cowan	49.1		168
23	162	Dorothy Copp	47.4		162

**Vancouver:** Russ Cannings had the highest increase with 9. *Brian Stech* was close behind with an increase of 8.

VANCOUVER AREA - 408					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	370	Mike Toochn	90.7	3	367
2	356	Jo Ann MacKenzie	87.3	3	353
3	348	Brian Self	85.3	2	346
4	344	Wayne Weber	84.3	1	343
5	343	Carlo Giovanella	84.1	3	340
6	338	Keith Riding	82.8	5	333
7	334	Lloyd Esralson	81.9	1	333
8	332	Roger Foxall	81.4	5	327
9	316	Larry Cowan	77.5	1	315
10	313	<i>Brian Stech</i>	76.7	8	305
11	306	John Voos	75.0	2	304
12	286	Dick Cannings	70.1		286
13	255	<i>Russell Cannings</i>	62.5	9	246
14	253	Kevin Neill	62.0		262
15	245	David Stirling	60.0	3	242
16	235	Bryan Gates	57.6	1	234
17	234	Don Wilson	57.4		234

**Washington:** Wayne Weber added 2 species to move him to the 400 plateau. **Dorothy Copp** added 10 to her list followed closely by *Brian Stech's* 9.

WASHINGTON STATE - 503					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	400	<i>Wayne Weber</i>	79.5	2	398
2	349	Jo Ann MacKenzie	69.4		349
3	318	Mike Toochn	63.2	1	317
4	275	Hank Vanderpol	54.7		275
5	268	Dick Cannings	53.3		268
6	264	John Voos	52.5	2	262
7	257	Roger Foxall	51.1		257
8	254	David Stirling	50.5		254
9	252	Keith Riding	50.1	1	*251
10	235	Lloyd Esralson	46.7		235
11	234	Dale Jensen	46.5		*234
12	226	Bob McKay	44.9		226

WASHINGTON STATE - 503					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
13	224	<i>Dorothy Copp</i>	44.5	10	214
14	221	<i>Brian Stech</i>	43.9	9	212

**ATPT:** The list grew from 11 to 14. Best increases were **John Sprague** with 26 & *Sandra Eadie* with 24

(Ticks) All Provinces & Territories					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	2,950	Roger Foxall		5	2,945
2	2,156	David Stirling		1	2,155
3	1,858	Dick Cannings		1	1,857
4	1,695	Wayne Weber		2	1,693
5	1,288	Janice Arndt			new
6	1,265	Barabara Begg		3	1,262
7	1,185	Gary Davidson			1,185
8	1,161	<i>John Sprague</i>		26	1,135
9	1,081	Bob McKay			new
10	1,057	Laird Law			new
11	969	<i>Sandra Eadie</i>		24	945
12	866	Brian Stech		8	858
13	773	Larry Cowan		1	772
14	756	Dorothy Copp		4	*752

**Alberta:** Mike Mulligan managed to add 6 to his already list topping total. *Len Jellicoe* inched closer to the 200 mark.

ALBERTA - 419					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	356	<i>Mike Mulligan</i>	85	6	350
2	314	Hank Vanderpol	75	2	312
3	286	David Stirling	68		286
4	*252	Russ Cannings	60		252
5	241	Martin McNicholl	58		241
5	241	Roger Foxall	58		241
7	240	Jo Ann MacKenzie	57		240
8	235	Wayne Weber	56		235
9	222	Bryan Gates	53		222
10	216	Gary Davidson	52		216
11	214	Dick Cannings	51		214
12	197	<i>Len Jellicoe</i>	47	2	195

**Northwest Territories:** Laird Law remains number one with *Gary Davidson* joining the list at 53.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES - 324					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	176	Laird Law	54.3		176
2	153	Tony Greenfield	47.2		153
3	148	David Stirling	45.7		148
4	133	Rand Rudland	41.0		133

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES - 324					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
5	105	Roger Foxall	32.4		105
6	98	Brian Self	30.2		98
7	97	Barbara Begg	29.9		97
8	86	Mike Toochin	26.5		86
9	84	John Sprague	25.9		84
10	64	Lee Harding	19.8		64
11	53	Gary Davidson	16.4		new
13	52	Wayne Weber	16.0		52
12	40	Dick Cannings	12.3		40

**Vancouver Island:** Hank Vanderpol had the largest increase at 7. Larry Cowan passed the 200 mark by adding 4 to his total.

VANCOUVER ISLAND - 388					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	348	David Stirling	90		348
2	338	Barbara Begg	87		338
2	338	Mike McGrenere	87	1	337
4	334	Bryan Gates	86		334
5	330	Hank Vanderpol	85	7	323
6	315	Bruce Whittington	81		315
7	301	Mike Toochin	78	1	300
8	286	Ken Morgan	74		286
9	261	Wayne Weber	67.3	3	258
10	260	Roger Foxall	67.0		260
11	250	Jo Ann MacKenzie	64		250
12	202	Larry Cowan	52	4	198

**Peace River:** Russ Cannings had the only increase for this list with 8.

PEACE RIVER AREA - 272					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	244	Laird Law	90		244
2	217	Russell Cannings	80	8	209
3	209	Tony Greenfield	77		209
4	203	Mike Toochin	75		203
5	193	Jo Ann MacKenzie	71		193
6	184	Bryan Gates	68		184
7	164	Wayne Weber	60.3		164
8	163	David Stirling	59.9		163
9	153	Larry Cowan	56		153
10	144	Lloyd Esralson	53		144
11	128	Brian Stech	47		*128

**Victoria:** Larry Cowan increased his total by 16 thanks to the Sydney AGM.

VICTORIA AREA - 362					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	331	David Stirling	91		331
2	323	Barbara Begg	89.2		323
3	322	Mike McGrenere	89.0	1	321
4	320	Hank Vanderpol	88	7	313
5	316	Bryan Gates	87		316
6	303	Bruce Whittington	84		303
7	259	Mike Toochin	72		259
8	238	Wayne Weber	66	1	237
9	163	Larry Cowan	45	16	147
10	141	Lloyd Esralson	39		141

**North Pacific Pelagic Waters:** Mike Toochin remains the leader at 115 & added an impressive 8 to his total.

**Russ Cannings** had the highest increase at 10.

NORTH PACIFIC PELAGIC WATERS					
#	2013	Name	incr	2012	
1	115	Mike Toochin	8	107	
2	101	Ken Morgan		101	
3	79	Russell Cannings	10	69	
4	77	Bruce Whittington		77	
5	70	Kevin Neill	6	64	
6	68	David Stirling	1	67	
7	65	Val George		65	
8	63	Lloyd Esralson		63	
9	58	Jo Ann MacKenzie		58	
10	45	Bryan Gates		45	

**Non-motorized Transport:** The list grew again this year. Mike McGrenere still holds a commanding 32 species lead over Dick Cannings.

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORT					
#	2013	Name & location	incr	2012	
1	275	Mike McGrenere - Victoria	9	266	
2	243	Dick Cannings - Penticton	11	232	
3	173	Ken Wright - Lillooet	9	*164	
4	151	Janice Arndt - Nelson	2	149	
5	131	Peter Blokker - Vernon		new	
6	111	Barbara Begg - Sidney	10	101	
7	106	Jim Ginns - Penticton		new	
8	75	Lee Harding - Coquitlam	19	56	
9	71	Larry Cowan - Pitt Meadows		new	
10	53	Ted Goshulak - Langley	3	50	



**Yukon Territory:** Dick Cannings still holds down first place with **Tony Greenfield** again adding one to his total.

YUKON TERRITORY - 313					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	172	Dick Cannings	55		172
2	<b>160</b>	<b>Tony Greenfield</b>	51	<b>1</b>	<b>159</b>
3	150	David Stirling	48		150
4	142	Roger Foxall	45		142
5	123	Gary Davidson	39		123
6	112	Rand Rudland	36		112
7	109	John Sprague	35		109
8	102	Brian Self	33		102

**Manning PP:** Mike McGrenere & Bob McKay both added 1 to their lists.

MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK - 206					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	<b>153</b>	<b>Mike McGrenere</b>	74	<b>1</b>	<b>152</b>
2	125	Wayne Weber	61		125
3	123	Dick Cannings	60		123
4	110	Jo Ann MacKenzie	53		110
5	101	David Stirling	49		101
6	<b>98</b>	<b>Bob McKay</b>	48	<b>1</b>	<b>97</b>
7	90	Larry Cowan	44		90

SEA & IONA ISLANDS (Vanc)					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	276	Mike Tootchin		2	274
2	244	Keith Riding		2	242
3	237	Wayne Weber		2	235
4	204	Lloyd Esralson			204
5	179	Larry Cowan		1	178
6	167	Dick Cannings			167

**BC Winter:** Covers life BC "Winter" period sightings (Dec/Jan/Feb) with a total to Dec. 31, 2013. **Mike Tootchin** remains in top position with **Lee Harding** adding 30 to his total.

B.C. Winter List - Dec / Jan / Feb					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	285	Mike Tootchin		2	283
2	225	Russell Cannings			225
3	215	Larry Cowan		2	213
4	127	Bob McKay			new
5	118	Janice Arndt			118
6	<b>112</b>	<b>Lee Harding</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>82</b>

**Prince George:** Laird Law remains in top spot but **Cathy Antoniazzi** inched closer adding two to her total. **Nathan Hentze** joined the list in 3rd place.

PRINCE GEORGE AREA - 297					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	272	Laird Law	92	1	271
2	<b>269</b>	<b>Cathy Antoniazzi</b>	91	<b>2</b>	<b>267</b>
3	209	Nathan Hentze	70		new
4	190	Don Wilson	64		190
5	*187	Russell Cannings	63		187
6	151	Peter Blokker	51		151

**West Kootenay:** Janice Arndt had the largest increase at 8 with **Peter McIver** adding 6 bringing him to the 250 mark.

WEST KOOTENAY AREA - 313					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	280	Gary Davidson	89	2	278
2	<b>250</b>	<b>Peter McIver</b>	80	<b>6</b>	<b>244</b>
3	<b>241</b>	<b>Janice Arndt</b>	77	<b>8</b>	<b>233</b>
4	185	Jo Ann MacKenzie	59		185
5	182	Wayne Weber	58		182

I'll leave the analysis of the balance of the lists to you the readers.

WESTHAM & REIFEL ISLANDS (Vanc)					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	223	Wayne Weber			223
2	194	Lloyd Esralson			194
3	176	Keith Riding		1	175
4	157	Larry Cowan		1	156
5	<b>147</b>	<b>Dick Cannings</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>142</b>

BLACKIE SPIT (Vanc)					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	192	Jo Ann MacKenzie			192
2	183	Wayne Weber			183
3	114	Larry Cowan		2	112
4	<b>91</b>	<b>Dick Cannings</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>80</b>

SUNSHINE COAST - 304					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	276	Tony Greenfield	91		276
2	<b>253</b>	<b>Russ Tkachuk</b>	83	<b>1</b>	<b>252</b>
3	244	Rand Rudland	80		244
4	136	Wayne Weber	45		136

Mt. Robson PP					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	145	Dick Cannings			145
2	<b>139</b>	<b>Laird Law</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>133</b>
3	120	David Stirling			120

CRESTON VALLEY AREA - 301					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	213	Peter McIver	71	1	212
2	<b>174</b>	<b>Gary Davidson</b>	58	<b>5</b>	<b>169</b>
3	142	Wayne Weber	47		142

Plan on joining the Pemberton AGM "Post Conference Field Trip" to the Kamloops Area and hopefully add your total to this list for 2014.

KAMLOOPS AREA - 306					
#	2013	Name	%	incr	2012
1	255	Wayne Weber	83		255
2	<b>201</b>	<b>Gary Davidson</b>	66	<b>9</b>	<b>192</b>
3	198	David Stirling	65		198

Princeton Area					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	95	Lloyd Esralson			95
2	91	Larry Cowan			91
3	90	Bryan Gates			90

Salt Spring Island					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
<b>1</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>Karen Ferguson</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>158</b>
2	158	John Sprague		1	157
3	114	Wayne Weber			114

Over 1,500m					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	112	Mike McGrenere			112
2	106	Wayne Weber			106

City of Pitt Meadows					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
<b>1</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>Wayne Weber</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>200</b>
2	190	Larry Cowan			190

Revelstoke Area					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
<b>1</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>Russell Cannings</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>185</b>
2	150	Wayne Weber			150

Haida Gwaii					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	106	Bruce Whittington			106
2	97	Laird Law			new

Semiamhoo Peninsula (Vanc)					
#	2013	Name		incr	2012
1	220	Carlo Giovannella		3	217
2	<b>197</b>	<b>Roger Foxall</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>192</b>

The remaining listings are for areas with single submissions, grouped by Tourism Zones as set out by BC Tourism. This should be of assistance in determining which lists to consider tracking while travelling to destinations around the Province.

Northern BC		2013	Name	+	2012
Gwaii Haanas NP		81	Bruce Whittington		81

Cariboo/Chilcotin		2013	Name	+	2012
Cariboo Plateau		122	Michael Sather		new
Williams Lake Area		<b>160</b>	<b>Bryan Gates</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>138</b>

BC Rockies		2013	Name	+	2012
Columbia Valley		123	Bryan Gates		123
Yoho NP		124	Wayne Weber		124

Thompson/Okanagan		2013	Name	+	2012
Nicola Watershed		252	Wayne Weber		252
North Okanagan		253	Peter Blokker	2	251

Vancouver Island		2013	Name	+	2012
Clover Point (Victoria)		*199	David Stirling		199
Comox Valley		241	Nathan Hentze		new
Miracle Beach PP		159	David Stirling		159
Mitlenatch Island PP		110	David Stirling		110
Pacific Rim NP		175	David Stirling		175
Saturna Island		102	Tony Greenfield		102

Vancouver Coast & Mnt.	2013	Name	+	2012
Abbotsford	202	John Voos	7	*195
City of Richmond	285	Mike Toochin	2	283
Colony Farm RP	163	Larry Cowan	3	160
Derby Reach RP	97	Ted Goshulak	1	96
Garibaldi PP	73	Mike McGrenere		73
Iona Island	263	Mike Toochin	2	261
Nathan Creek Dyke	68	Ted Goshulak	1	67
Trinity Western U Campus	149	Ted Goshulak		149

Other	2013	Name	+	2012
ABA Birds Photograph'd	517	Brian Stech	73	444
North America	1,589	Mike Mulligan		new
World Families	190	Barbara Begg		new

Members are reminded there are other opportunities for listing their totals not encompassed by BCFO Listers' Corner. These include the American Birding Association and the Neily World Canadian Listers' Corner.

I would like to thank all those who submitted their life totals for this article. Wishing everyone continued good birding in 2014. I hope to see many of you at the BCFO AGM and Conference in Pemberton this coming June.

Larry Cowan



MH



## PARTICIPANTS NEEDED – Birds and Windows study

Collisions with windows are considered to be one of the largest sources of direct human-caused mortality for birds in North America. An estimated 25 million birds are killed annually in collisions with buildings in Canada (Machtans et al. 2013) and 365-988 million in the U.S. (Loss et al. 2014). Most collision-related mortality occurs during the daytime at residential buildings and homes because they are one of the most common and widespread building types. Published estimates rely heavily on data collected from Eastern North America during the migratory period (Loss et al. 2014, Machtans et al. 2013). Therefore, western species and populations are being overlooked due to a lack of data collected in the West (Loss et al. 2014) and in particular, west of the Rocky Mountains.

We have an opportunity to fill some of these gaps by participating in a study run by University of Alberta student, Justine Kummer. **We need participation** by all and any homeowners/residents of buildings regardless of whether you regularly (or have ever) have collisions at your home/residence. Entries of “zero” are just as important as entries that document collisions.

Please go to the Birds and Windows website, sign up and participate for as long as you can! <http://birdswindows.biology.ualberta.ca/>

Krista De Groot, Landbird Biologist  
Environment Canada/Environnement Canada  
Canadian Wildlife Service/Service canadien de la faune

## Assistance Requested

Between 1923 and 1927 the British Columbia Ornithologist's Union produced 4 Volumes of a journal called “*The Migrant*”. I have located Volumes 1 and 2 but have been unable to locate Volume 3 (No's 1-3) and Volume 4 (No. 1). The Royal B.C. Museum Bird Biographies list 24 articles from the “*The Migrant*” but these are missing from their files. An extended search of other possible repositories has failed to locate these historic ornithology records.

### **Does anyone know where these journals can be referenced?**

Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Bill Merilees [bmerilees@hotmail.com](mailto:bmerilees@hotmail.com) 250 758-1801

### COVER STORY

#### RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

*Photographer: June Ryder*

Most of the redwings at the Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary are relatively tame and easy to photograph. This one took flight as I clicked the shutter – with a surprisingly interesting result.



