

# BC BIRDING

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*The perennial question: Sharp-shinned or Cooper's Hawk? See page 25.*

**Publisher**

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An online subscription to this quarterly is a benefit of membership in the society (paper copy \$12 per year extra, to cover postage.) Members will also receive a copy of the annual journal, *British Columbia Birds*.

**About the BCFO**

Membership in BCFO is open to anyone interested in the study and enjoyment of wild birds in British Columbia.

BCFO objectives include: fostering cooperation between amateur and professional ornithologists, promoting cooperative bird surveys and research projects, and supporting conservation organizations in their efforts to preserve birds and their habitats.

**Membership**

See the website (<http://bcfo.ca>) for details, or write to the BCFO address given above under "Publisher."

**Annual Membership Dues**

General Membership (Canada): \$30

Junior Membership (Canada): \$20

U.S. and International Membership: \$35

**Newsmagazine Submissions**

To submit material to this publication, contact the Editor by email ([clive.keen@hotmail.com](mailto:clive.keen@hotmail.com)). Books for review should be sent to 10790 Grassland Road, Prince George, BC V2K 5E8.

Topics may include birding experiences, casual observations about bird behaviour, bird project reports, site guides, birding equipment, bird photography, trip reports (including overseas trips), and other subjects of broad interest to BC birders. Brief items are always welcome, but average submissions tend to be in the 400–1,000 word range. For longer submissions the normal maximum length is 1,500 words. Note that this is a newsmagazine rather than an academic journal, so formal reference lists etc are inappropriate.

Articles should be in plain text, either as the content of an email, or as an attachment (preferably Word). Photographs should be in mid-resolution jpg (preferably 1–4 MB, and sent as separate attachments, not embedded in text.

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### BCFO Event Dates

**March 10, 2021, 7:00 pm**

Zoom presentation by Alan Burger speaking on Antarctic Birds. Check the website ([bcfo.ca](http://bcfo.ca)) for finalized date and time.

**June 5–6, 2021\***

Two-day trip to Nakusp.

**June 25–27, 2021\***

Conference & AGM, Smithers.

\*Note that final decisions have not as yet been made on whether to go ahead with the AGM in the light of possible COVID restrictions. Updates will be given by email.

### Leucistic Tales

Photo right: John Gordon (Surrey) went to Sardis Park in Chilliwack to search for this well-documented resident leucistic Northwestern Crow (now demoted to American Crow). The bird was considered a local celebrity, and according to a nearby resident had been seen at the park for at least five years. Tales of leucism leading to an early demise might be false for at least this one individual.





## President's Message

*Marian Porter, Salt Spring Island*

Living on the west coast of the province can be rewarding for birders in the winter season, even after the excitement of fall migration and unexpected rarities associated with it give way to colder, wet weather. It is still worthwhile heading outdoors to observe and count our resident birds, especially in these times of COVID isolation, and this season has been exceptional for winter resident populations prone to irruptive movements.

### Christmas Bird Counts

An abundant conifer-cone crop plus unusually mild weather for many Christmas Bird Counts produced unusual results throughout the province. Many Interior counts had high species and abundance counts due to mild temperatures resulting in open water in lakes and flowing streams. High or record species counts for the province include 100 Mile House (45), Bella Coola (46), Dawson Creek (33), Kelowna (115), Kimberly (51), Parksville-Qualicum Beach (119), Sunshine Coast (99), Sooke (120), and Wells and Bowron Lakes (24). High numbers of winter finches were reported for Prince George, where 2,825 Pine Siskins were ten times the average total, and Whistler counted 1,050 Pine Siskins, representing 57% of the total number of birds for count day. Large flocks of siskins were a highlight for the Creston Valley count, the Sooke high species count was 6,632 siskins, and Pender Harbour had a high count of 1,322 siskins. They were the most abundant species on the Pender Island's count at 4,053. Dawson Creek had their highest total of Common Redpolls at 934, and Pine

Grosbeaks reached near-record numbers in Prince George. White-winged Crossbills were recorded for the first time for the Christmas Count on Salt Spring Island, and were a highlight of the Whistler, Sunshine Coast, Prince George, Broughton Strait, and Cranbrook counts. Abundance records for all birds were set for Peachland, with Chilliwack numbers increasing about 33% from last year and Pender Island's increasing 40% over the last three year average.

I applaud the efforts of the Christmas Bird Counts that overcame the difficulties of the 2020/2021 season and collected data while strictly observing COVID protocols, overcoming inclement weather conditions and in some cases, organizing Zoom meetings to replace the post-count gatherings. I would like to thank the compilers who submitted their results so they could be entered into our website for everyone to review, and value the summaries of this season's results compared to past years. I look forward to the next season when hopefully conditions may return to normal.

### Great Backyard Bird Count

A winter citizen science project very appropriate for COVID restrictions is the Great Backyard Bird Count, an international project held annually in mid-February and hosted by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Audubon and Birds Canada. Participants are encouraged to count birds near their homes and neighbourhood, nearby parks and trails. This

year I did feeder counts, walked my road and birded the local Tsawout First Nations Reserve.

### Varied Thrush Bonanza

The Tsawout reserve is a location I frequently visit, but on February 14 I experienced a day like no other. The second-growth Coastal Douglas Fir forest was blanketed in snow, and I had low expectations for a good bird list with the snowfall muffling the sounds of the resident winter birds I was used to finding. As I proceeded along the trail the flutelike song and low "chuk" calls of Varied Thrush could be heard all around me. I could also hear the full repertoire of calls I normally do not hear – short trills and a harsh churring I call the "machine gun sound" – and there was a tremendous amount of activity as they flew from the ground into the trees, onto the beaches, chasing other Varied Thrush throughout the forest. I was surrounded by the musical language of thrush. Wherever I detected Varied Thrush I noticed the snow had been scraped away from the base of mature conifers, with the bark scraped from the base of the trunk and the nearby mosses completely turned over in a green and brown jumble.

The circle route I take through the reserve is no more than several kilometres, and the walk home less than half a kilometre. I was able to count 120 Varied Thrush along this route, but they were so active and so numerous the number was an underestimate; the re-



serve and adjacent area could easily have contained several hundred. The forest was alive with them, their ethereal sounds drifting down from high branches where they were hidden by dark shadows and white snow as it fell through the trees. I have never experienced this number of Varied Thrush in one place in British Columbia; the total number of Varied Thrush counted on Salt Spring Island during the 2020 Christmas Bird Count totalled 194 when 213 party kilometres were covered. I had only experienced this abundance in the redwood forests of Marin County, California, where Varied Thrush can be found during the winter months.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology website describes the Varied Thrush winter range as extending from the southwest coast of Alaska to southern California, including Haida Gwaii and Vancouver Island, with the densest population on the southwest side, including Pacific Rim National Park. Varied Thrush experience irruption years where numbers peak every two to five years, and the unusual arctic out-

flow conditions may have contributed to the sudden influx of birds. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology Project Feederwatch found a two- to three-year cycle of abundance in most of the normal wintering range which may be related to important winter foods such as acorns, with severe winter weather also playing a role. The *Birds of the World* website reports that although acorns and berries are important, ground-dwelling arthropods, earthworms, snails and sowbugs found in leaf litter are also winter food. 86% of Varied Thrush in California redwood forests foraged on the ground, with the resulting disturbance more obvious with larger concentrations of birds. Varied Thrush are known to forage in loose flocks, with calling indicating aggressive interactions between individuals, creating the phenomenon I experienced during my Great Backyard Bird Count.

I will always remember the afternoon spent among so many of these beautiful, normally secretive birds and their haunting sounds every time I return to my neighbourhood birding patch.

### Zoom Presentations

The Zoom presentations continued with Larry Cowan speaking on his Peruvian birding adventure on February 17, and Alan Burger will be speaking on Antarctic Birds on March 10 at 7:00 pm Pacific Time. Many members enjoyed the Australian birding tour given by Gary Davidson in January. Please check our website for information on our upcoming Zoom presentations.

### Conference and AGM

The BCFO directors will make a final decision on our 2021 Smithers Conference and AGM during our board meeting in early March to enable participants to make or cancel their travel plans. My hopes are to bird with our northern members but we must comply with COVID regulations; please check our website after March 3.

*The Hawk Owl below was spotted in the Pineview area of Prince George in December 2020. Clive Keen photo.*

## Welcome New Members

**Kirsty Casey - Tumbler Ridge**

**David Fraser - Victoria**

**Janelyn Kotaska - Duncan**

**Hana Hermanek - Vancouver**

**Steven Hayward - Nanaimo**

**Michael Shepard - Victoria**

**Phil Henderson - Fort Langley**

**Susan Knoerr - Parksville**

**Narayana Howe - Ta Ta Creek**

**Milan Kerby - Rouyn-Noranda, QC**

**Aleksandra Djordjevic - Vancouver**

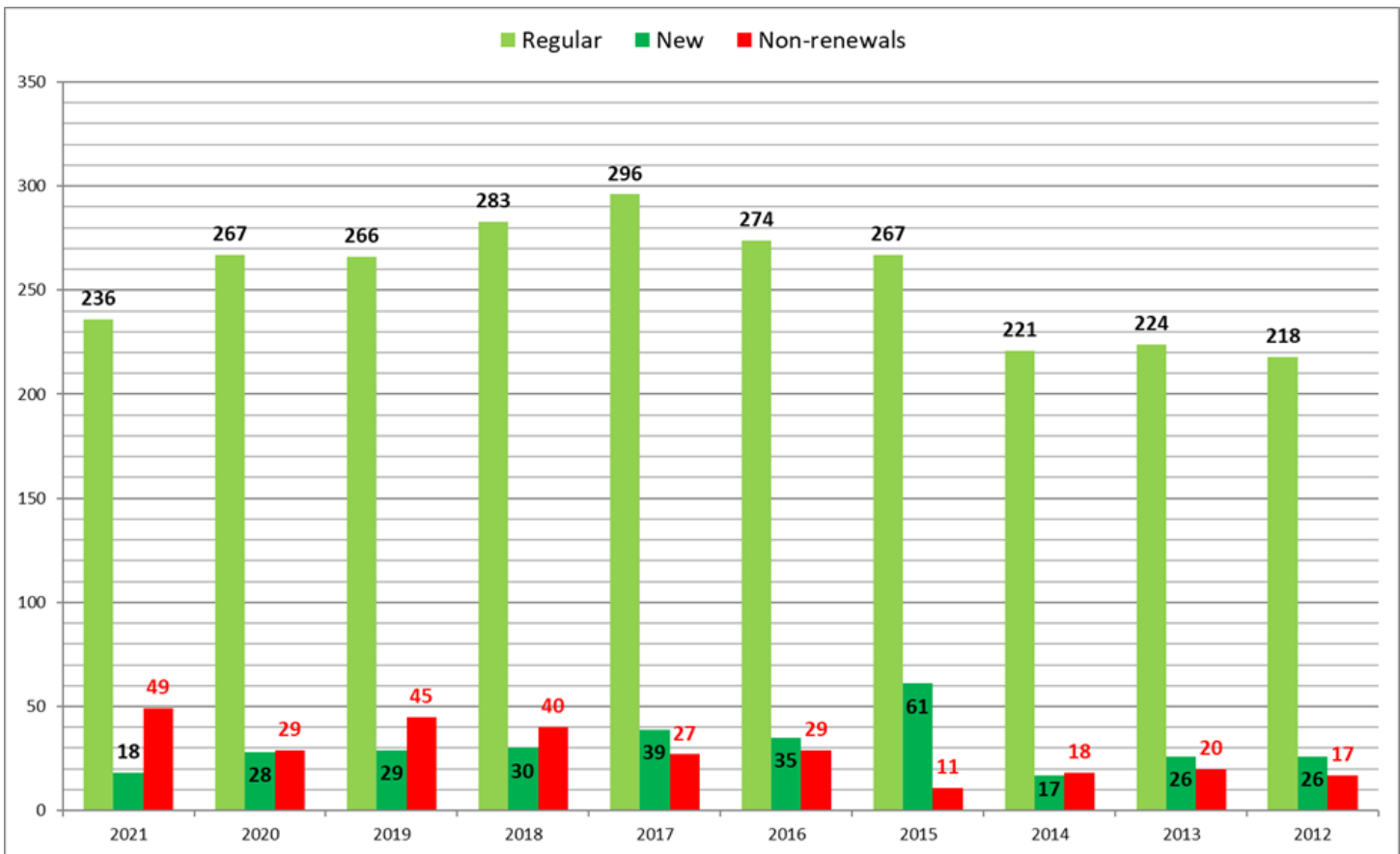
**Gretchen & Bob Whetham - Cranbrook**

**Liron Gertsman - Vancouver**





# Membership Report



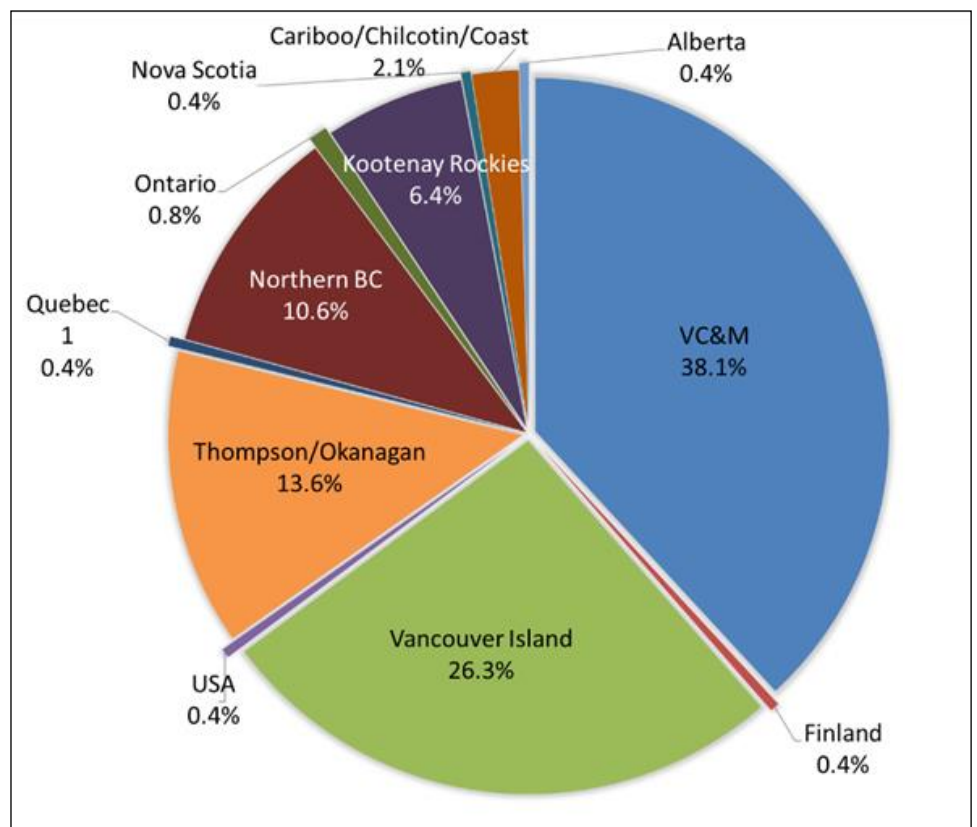
2021 membership to date is 236 compared to the end of February/20 at 242.

C/M/F = couples, male, female.

C/M/F 2019 vs 2020					
♂	♀	♂	♀		
11%	60%	29%		< 2020	
14%	60%	26%		< 2021	

New Renewal = new members who have renewed.

New Renewal 2020 to 2021	
2020 >	28
2021 >	16
To go >	12



Larry Cowan, Membership Secretary.

# BCFO 31<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE & AGM, June 25 – 27, 2021, Smithers, BC (to be confirmed)

## Registration Form

Name(s) .....

Address .....

Phone ..... Email .....

### Conference Registration

Maximum registrations: 100. Attendance is limited to BCFO members and accompanying spouses/family members. If spaces are available, non-members may join BCFO at the same time as they register for the Conference.\*

Full conference fee includes: Friday night Meet & Greet, Saturday & Sunday breakfasts, lunches and Saturday evening Banquet plus all field trips and talks.

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$195 /person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BCFO Young Birders \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$90 /person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Social events ONLY (Meet & Greet, and Banquet) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$75 /person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Membership fee for non-members \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$30.00 – single/family = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(see BCFO website for membership details)

Total registration fee(s) for the Conference = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be attending the Friday evening reception: Yes ..... No .....

Do you have any dietary requirements: Yes .... Requirement .....

### Waiver

All registrants for the conference and extension trip are required to complete the WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND RELEASE OF CLAIMS form. Forms will be made available at the AGM at the time of registering for the field trips.

Participation in the AGM is **not possible** without payment of applicable fee(s) by the registration date.

All fees are payable upon submission of this registration form. Please make cheque or money order payable to **BC Field Ornithologists**. If registering by mail, send your registration and payment to BC Field Ornithologists, P.O. Box 61670, RPO Brookswood, Langley, BC V3A 1K0.

## Pre-Conference Extension Trip to Terrace and Kitimat

### Date: June 22 to 25

Walter Thorne and Diane Weismiller will be our guides for the trip. Walter conducts a Breeding Bird Survey in the Kitimat region and the BC Coastal Waterbird Survey at MK Bay. He is the Northern Club's co-ordinator and is on the Education Committee of BC Nature, as well as a director of the Kitimat Valley Naturalist Club. Diane started birding in 1970 and has been the compiler of the Terrace Christmas Bird Count since 1973. She has conducted the local Kwinitsa Breeding Bird Survey since 1974.

Pre-conference participants will be based in Terrace. Field trips will begin early on the morning of June 23, with the option of a dinner meeting.

Ferry Island is located in the Skeena River with park trails where we may find Black-backed Woodpecker, Merlin, Veery, Alder Flycatcher and a good variety of warblers including Magnolia Warbler. New Remo is a local birding hotspot on the Skeena River with waterfowl, shorebirds, a good variety of warblers and flycatchers including Alder and Least. Rusty Blackbird has been recorded, as well as Northern Goshawk. Exchamsiks River Provincial Park is 50 km west of Terrace with a short nature trail through old-growth Sitka Spruce forest and Kasiks Wilderness Resort is 5 km farther with lunch in old-growth forest. Lakelse Lake Provincial Park is another site with waterfowl which may

include Red-necked Phalarope.

The estuaries near Kitimat are rich in birdlife with the possibility of grizzly and whale sightings from the beach flats at Elmsley Cove. MK Bay, Kitimaat Village, Minette Bay and Magee Point are birding locations with many species of ducks, shorebirds, grebes and alcids including Long-tailed Duck and Marbled Murrelet.

Ross Lake Provincial Park near Hazelton will be a stop en route to Smithers. The lake has a wide variety of ducks, grebes, loons, gulls and shorebirds with the possibility of uncommon species such as Rusty Blackbird, Say's Phoebe, Townsend's Solitaire, and Golden Eagle.

# BCFO 31<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE & AGM, June 25 – 27, 2021, Smithers, BC (to be confirmed)

## Schedule of Events

**Location:** Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge & Conference Centre, 3251 East Highway 16, Smithers, B.C.V0J 2N0.

### Friday, June 25

5:00 PM to 8:30 PM – Registration and Social at the Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge, Cascade Room. Pick up your conference package, socialize with fellow birders and confirm your trip selections. There will be appetizers and a cash bar.

### Saturday and Sunday, June 26 & 27

**Breakfast:** 5:30 to 6:00 AM, prior to field trips (both days).

**Conference Field Trips:** 6:15 AM departures both days from the Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge

- Trip 1 - Hudson Bay Mountain
- Trip 2 - The Bluff Trails
- Trip 3 - Telkwa High Road to Tyhee Provincial Park
- Trip 4 - Harvey Mountain Trail
- Trip 5 - Pacific Wetland Trail
- (see next page for details)

**Lunch:** 12:00 to 1:00 PM (both days).

**Afternoon Speakers:** 1:00 to 2:30 PM, Saturday. Frank Doyle: *Status of Northern Goshawk Breeding Areas in the Skeena Region*; Curt Gesch: *Habitat restoration for birds on farmland*.

**Annual General Meeting:** 2:30 to 3:30 PM, Saturday. Field trip selection for the Sunday trips will occur after the AGM.

**Social Hour Cash Bar:** 5:30 to 6:30 PM, Saturday.

**Banquet:** 6:30 to 7:30 PM, Saturday.

**Banquet Keynote:** 7:30 to 9:00 PM, Saturday. Michael Kawerninski: *Birds of the Bulkley Valley*.

## Registration Process

### TO REGISTER FOR THE AGM/CONFERENCE

#### Via Regular Mail

Complete the registration form in this issue of *BC Birding* and mail it along with your cheque for payment to:

P.O. Box 61670  
RPO Brookwood  
Langley, BC V3A 1K0.

#### Via the BCFO Website (PayPal)

Go to the AGM/Extension Payments tab under the Events > Annual Conference drop-downs.

A fillable registration form is available for completion. *To pay for more than one registration*, simply make sufficient single payments for each person you wish to register.

### TO REGISTER FOR THE EXTENSION TRIP

#### Via the BCFO website

*Note: The only way to register for the extension trip is via the website.*

Payment may be made either by

cheque, or via the PayPal button.

Go to the *AGM/Extension Payments* tab under the *Events > Annual Conference* drop-downs. The fillable registration form will include the opportunity to indicate your desire to attend the pre-AGM Extension.

*To pay for more than one registration* via PayPal, simply make sufficient single payments for each person you wish to register.

*Online registration processes to be confirmed by email.*



## BCFO 31<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE & AGM, June 25 – 27, 2021, Smithers, BC

### Accommodation

#### Smithers

##### Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge

3251 East Highway 16, Smithers (250)  
847-4581 Toll Free: 1 877 737-8443

##### Stork Nest Inn

1485 Main Street, Smithers (250) 847-3831.

##### Capri Motor Inn

3984 Highway 16 West, Smithers (250)  
847-4226.

##### Sandman Inn

3932 Highway 16 West, Smithers (250)  
847-2637.

##### Smithers Guesthouse Hostel

1766 Main Street, Smithers (866) 430-4982.

#### Terrace

##### Holiday Inn Express and Suites

3059 Highway 16 East, Thornhill, Terrace (778) 634-3977

##### The Lodge at Skeena Landing

4035 Motz Road, Thornhill, Terrace (250) 638-0444

These two locations are convenient to the extension-trip guide residence.

### Conference Field Trips

#### Trip Selection & Waiver Form

Field trip selections for the morning of June 27 will be made during registration on Friday, June 26 at 5:00 PM. At the same time, you will be asked to complete your conference waiver form and review the BCFO Code of Ethics. Field trip selections for the morning of June 28 will take place after the AGM.

#### Where & When to Meet

Each trip departs at 6:15 AM, on both Saturday and Sunday, from the Prestige Hudson Bay Lodge.

#### Trip Leaders

Among the trip leaders will be Ken White, who has birded Smithers for 25 years in a 45-year history of birding internationally as well as in Canada. He has been involved with Christmas Bird Counts and conducted the local Breeding Bird Survey since 2004.

#### Hudson Bay Mountain

Alpine meadows are accessible on an easy hike from the T-bar at the base of the ski hill to Crater Lake where species such as Willow, Rock and White-tailed Ptarmigan as well as Gray-crowned

Rosy-Finch, Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur and American Pipit may be found. Below timberline will yield Clark's Nut-cracker, Spruce Grouse, Boreal and Mountain Chickadee, Pine Grosbeak, White-winged Crossbill and Hermit Thrush. Northern Goshawk and Golden Eagle are a possibility, with probable sightings of Mountain Goats and marmots. A wetland en route to the mountain will be checked for Blackpoll Warbler.

#### Harvey Mountain & Malkow Lookout Trails

The Harvey Mountain Trail in Babine Mountains Provincial Park is another option for high-elevation birds where subalpine meadows are accessible after 4 km of a 4.5-km-long trail. The Malkow Lookout Trail is 3 km long through aspen forest and farmland ending in mountain and valley views of the region.

#### The Bluff Trails

The field trip begins with a 500-metre boardwalk traversing a willow-thicket wetland rich in warblers such as MacGillivray's and Yellow Warbler as well as American Redstart and Common Yellowthroat. The trail ascends to an aspen forest with birds such as White-throated Sparrow, Least Flycatcher and Western Tanager. The trail ends up in mixed deciduous and

conifer forest with birds such as Magnolia Warbler, Cassin's Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Pacific Wren. The morning will finish with a trip to a wetland which will add Sora, swallows, more warblers and Red-winged Blackbird.

#### Telkwa High Road to Tyhee Lake Provincial Park

Discover Calliope Hummingbird and Lazuli Bunting en route to the park with a varied list of waterfowl and wetland species as well as Red-breasted and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Alder, Least and Dusky Flycatcher, and White-throated and Lincoln's Sparrow.

#### Pacific Wetland Trail

This trail offers an extensive list of warblers including Blackpoll and Tennessee Warbler, Northern Waterthrush and Yellow-breasted Chat. Sparrows include White-throated and Lincoln's with a wide variety of flycatcher including Willow, Dusky, Least, Alder and Olive-sided Flycatcher. The Riverfront Park on the Bulkley River is another destination that has recorded Northern Shrike, American Bittern, Sora, Red-eyed Vireo and Magnolia Warbler. A canoe trip could be organized for interested conference delegates on Sunday morning.

# BCFO

## Short Trips

*The following trip is currently planned, but is subject to future COVID restrictions. Readers are encouraged to suggest other trips, either to places you would like to go, or to spots in your area that would be of interest to other members. Ideas can be sent to any member of the executive, using addresses given on page 2.*

### Two Days: Nakusp June 5–6, 2021

**Leader:** Gary Davidson.

**Registration:** Marian Porter: 250-653-2043, [marianmporter@gmail.com](mailto:marianmporter@gmail.com).

#### Accommodation

The Lodge at Arrow Lakes: 1-800-663-0100. Accommodation should be booked for the nights of June 4 and 5.

#### Itinerary

Participants on this trip need to be willing to walk four to five km on level, even ground each morning. Three major locations will be visited plus others as appropriate at the time:

#### Brouse Loop Road

Saturday morning. Brouse Loop is a four-km loop walk through farms, along forest edge, and across two creeks producing a good mix of habitats including coniferous, deciduous, riparian and open hayfields. Bobolinks and Lazuli Buntings are quite common, with Mountain Bluebird a possibility.

#### Summit Lake

This is a one-to-two km walk through riparian and marshy habitat, depending on the activity of local beavers and the willingness of participants to get their feet

### How the Short Trips Work

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

The first day is all-day birding followed by an evening get-together at a restaurant to recap the day and tally species. On three-day trips, the second day is similar.

The final day is morning birding, with optional birding in the afternoon.

Carpooling is encouraged and will be arranged on the morning of Day 1.

Register at least two weeks in advance. The leader will give specific details of when and where to meet.

**Cost:** No cost to members; fee to non-members: \$30, which covers BCFO membership.

If you have ideas for a short trip, Marian Porter would be pleased to hear from you at [marianmporter@gmail.com](mailto:marianmporter@gmail.com).

wet. You will be rewarded with a rich variety of warblers, particularly Ameri-

can Redstart, Yellow Warbler and Northern Waterthrush. Veery can be found at this site and although Magnolia Warbler occurs here it cannot always be located.

#### Ferret Road Loop

Sunday morning. The Needles ferry crossing leads to the Ferret Road Loop on the west side of Upper Arrow Lake near the town of Edgewood. It is about a one-hour drive from Nakusp so an early start will be necessary. Similar but more productive than the Brouse Loop walk, more Bobolinks and Lazuli Buntings occur at this location with meadowlarks, Eastern Kingbird and possibly Clay-colored Sparrow, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Bullock's Oriole, plus many others. Those heading back to the coast can continue to drive directly from this location for about 90 minutes to Vernon.

*Below: Mike Yip of Nanoose Bay staked out King's Pond, Victoria, in the hope of spotting a Rusty Blackbird reported to be in the area. After an hour, and just about to leave, he found and photographed the bird below, right where he had parked.*





## Anyone for Tibet?

Lee Harding, Coquitlam

I'm thinking of a trip in May–June 2022 starting possibly at Chengdu, Sichuan, travelling in 4x4 vehicles up onto the Tibetan Plateau, past Qinghai Lake and across the plateau to Wild Yak Valley and back by a more southerly route. This rough outline is based on a 2020 trip by a Sichuan firm, although I know of at least one other Chinese company that would do, which I've used before. Their highlights included Silem's Rosefinch (rediscovered in 2012), Blue-eared Pheasant, Sichuan Jay, Snowy-cheeked & Plain & Giant & Elliot's Laughingthrushes, Sichuan Tit, White-browed Tit, Black Woodpecker, Goldcrest, Upland Buzzard, Saker Falcon, Eagle Owl, Przewalski's Finch, Tibetan Rosefinch, Tibetan Bunting, Tibetan Barbas and Buff-throated Partridge. They also photographed Snow Leopard, Lynx, Pallas's Cat, Grey Wolf, Brown Bear, Argali, Tibetan Gazelle, Blue Sheep, Red Deer, White-lipped Deer, Tibetan Antelope and Wild Yak. This was an 18-day trip.

I also would like to see Mt. Everest (from a distance), which would be an optional extension to the above, adding another week or so, but should also turn up several pheasants and monals. Since all the country borders are closed indefinitely, this is very iffy. Please let me know if you are interested, at:

[leeharding@shaw.ca](mailto:leeharding@shaw.ca).



## Anyone for Cornell's *Birds of America*?

The above photograph shows the full set of volumes of Cornell's *Birds of North America* now living at the home of Suann Hosie in West Vancouver. She now subscribes to the online Birds of The World, so the volumes are surplus to requirements. If any BCFO member would like them for free and can pick them up, just let Suann know at [suannhosie@gmail.com](mailto:suannhosie@gmail.com).

[www.audubon.org/news/why-leashing-dogs-easy-way-protect-birds-and-their-chicks](http://www.audubon.org/news/why-leashing-dogs-easy-way-protect-birds-and-their-chicks)

The importance of leashing dogs on the seashore.

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/bird\\_songs\\_interactive/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/bird_songs_interactive/index.html)

A fun guide to some common bird songs – just click on any of the illustrations.

[www.bird-sounds.net](http://www.bird-sounds.net)

A more comprehensive guide to bird songs.

[www.terrafauna.ca/sandhill-cranes](http://www.terrafauna.ca/sandhill-cranes)

This site seeks sightings within BC of Sandhill Cranes.

[timberfestival.org.uk/soundsoftheforest-soundmap/](http://timberfestival.org.uk/soundsoftheforest-soundmap/)

Recordings made in forests around the world, giving users a chance to go aural birding in cyberspace.

### Awful Bird Names

Facebook had a curious thread on awful bird names. The leading contender as of publication was *Fluffy-backed Tit-Babbler*. Can anyone beat it? An earlier request in this magazine for the best bird name came up a sizzler: *Superciliaried Hemispingus*.

### Happy Event

The world's oldest known wild bird is a parent once again. Wisdom, a Laysan Albatross, had returned to her nesting site on Midway Atoll in November, along with her mate Akeakamai. Wisdom soon laid an egg, and in late January it began to hatch. The chick emerged on Monday, February 1. Wisdom is approximately 70 years old, and she has likely hatched 30–36 chicks in her lifetime.

## Internet Moments

If you see any items on the Internet interesting to BC birders, send them in. Here are a few that caught the attention of members.

[www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/royal-albatross](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/royal-albatross)

A webcam following a Northern Royal Albatross nest in New Zealand.



## BC Bird of the Year 2020

The contenders for Kevin Neill's annual *BC Bird of the Year* competition were as follows:

- Prothonotary Warbler – May, Osoyoos
- Gray-tailed Tattler – June, Kitimat
- Curlew – Aug/Sep, Delta/Parksville
- Red-legged Kittiwake – Sept, Deep Bay
- Nazca/Masked Booby – Sept, off of Galiano Island
- Bell's Vireo – Sept, Saanich
- Little Blue Heron – Oct, Fraser Valley
- Red-backed Shrike – Oct, Powell River
- Prairie Warbler – Oct/Nov, Vernon
- Common Pochard – Nov/Dec, Victoria/Parksville
- Arctic Loon – Nov/Dec, Qualicum Beach/Sechelt

The proportions of votes cast are given below, with the Red-backed Shrike a decisive winner.

65%	Red-backed Shrike
15%	Common Pochard
10%	Bell's Vireo
3%	Prairie Warbler
3%	Nazca/Masked Booby
3%	Red-legged Kittiwake

Memories must have been short for the Gray-tailed Tattler not to get a single vote: the sighting was a Canadian first, and was something of a sensation at the time. Or perhaps too few people twitched for it, given the location.

Kevin is hoping for a Knysna Turaco to show up in Powell River in 2021.

*Andy Buhler (Vernon) would like to remind people of all the fun we've not been able to have because of COVID. This, he says, was tropical birding in Southern Ecuador on a good day.*



# Upcoming Meetings & Events

*Compiled by Wayne C. Weber, Delta*

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.

NOTE: Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many scheduled meetings and events for the next few months have been cancelled, gone virtual, or been postponed. Events that have not yet been cancelled could still be cancelled at a later date. Please be sure to check event websites before you plan to attend or register for any events. Also, note that you will not be able to attend events in the USA until the international border is reopened.

For most meetings, festivals and other events, the website is the main source of information, and registration can usually 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 on 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.

For a detailed listing of birding festivals all over North America, please check the Cornell *All About Birds* website at [www.allaboutbirds.org/birding-festivals](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/birding-festivals).

Mar. 19-21 – 19th ANNUAL WINGS OVER WATER NORTH-WEST BIRDING FESTIVAL, Blaine, WA. This will be a virtual event. For information, please check the website at [www.wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com](http://www.wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com) or contact Debbie Harger (phone (360) 332-8311; [dharger@cityofblaine.com](mailto:dharger@cityofblaine.com)).

Mar. 20 – First WESTPORT SEABIRDS pelagic birding trip of the year from Westport, WA. Westport Seabirds will be operating 25 trips this year from March through October. A detailed schedule of trips for 2021 can be seen at the Westport Seabirds website ([westportseabirds.com](http://westportseabirds.com)).

Apr. 22-25 – HARNEY COUNTY MIGRATORY BIRD FESTIVAL, Burns, Oregon (focusing on Malheur National Wildlife Refuge). This year's festival will be a virtual event. For further information, check the festival website at [www.migratorybirdfestival.com](http://www.migratorybirdfestival.com).

Apr. 24-30 – GRAYS HARBOR SHOREBIRD FESTIVAL, Aberdeen, WA. This year's event will be online only. For information, contact Glynnis Nakai, refuge Manager at the Grays Harbor NWR, at 360-753-9467, or check the website at [www.shorebirdfestival.com](http://www.shorebirdfestival.com).

Apr. 27-May 1 – ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL BIOLOGISTS OF BC annual conference. The 2021 conference will be a virtual event. For further information and to register, visit the APBBC website at [professionalbiology.com](http://professionalbiology.com).

May 10-16 – WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES FESTIVAL (23rd annual), 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 [www.wingsovertherockies.org](http://www.wingsovertherockies.org).

May 20-24 – 24th Annual MEADOWLARK NATURE FESTIVAL, Penticton, BC. The schedule of events and registration should be available soon; please check the festival website at [meadowlarkfestival.ca](http://meadowlarkfestival.ca).

June 1-July 7 – NORTH AMERICAN BREEDING BIRD SURVEY. This long-established program, supervised by the Canadian Wildlife Service and US Fish & Wildlife Service, is for experienced birders who are skilled at identifying birds by songs and calls as well as by sight. It involves running a roadside survey route once every year during June or very early July. There are several “vacant” (i.e., unassigned) routes in various parts of BC. If you are interested, check the Canadian Wildlife Service website at [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/bird-surveys/landbird/north-american-breeding/overview.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/bird-surveys/landbird/north-american-breeding/overview.html), which includes further details and has contact information for the CWS staff in charge of the program.

June 25-27 – BC FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING in Smithers, BC. For details, visit our website at [bcfo.ca/2020-annual-conference-smithers-june-26-28](http://bcfo.ca/2020-annual-conference-smithers-june-26-28). If the decision is taken to go ahead, registration will open later this spring.

Sept. 10-12 – PUGET SOUND BIRD FESTIVAL, Edmonds, WA. For information and to register (starting Aug. 1), check the festival website at [www.pugetsoundbirdfest.com](http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.com) or contact Jennifer Leach at the City of Edmonds Parks Dept. (phone 425-771-0227), or email her at [jennifer.leach@edmondswa.gov](mailto:jennifer.leach@edmondswa.gov).

Oct. 8-14 – RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION annual meeting, Boise, Idaho, USA. For further details, visit the society website at [raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/upcoming-conferences](http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/upcoming-conferences).

Nov. 1-5 – 28TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY. This will be a virtual conference. For information, visit the website at [twconference.org](http://twconference.org).

Dec. 14 to Jan. 5 (2022) – CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS. For information on dates of counts and contact information for count organizers, check the BCFO website in November and December.



# Leucism & Albinism

*Rand Rudland, Halfmoon Bay*

First of all, let's be clear on some definitions. Albinism is a genetic deficiency resulting in failed melanin production whereby the body is unable to produce any colouration in skin, hair, feathers, bills or eyes. Birds with albinism have

the body. This would be better termed a "pied" or "piebald" individual.

There are a few downsides of standing out in the crowd as an all-white or pied individual. It may, for instance, be harder to find a mate if colour plays an important role in mate selection as in many bird species.



*Anna's Hummingbird and Dark-eyed Junco photographs by Rand Rudland.*



Melanin is also an important structural component of feathers, so the lack of melanin makes feathers more prone to physical damage and may reduce insulative properties or alter the flight dynamics of damaged wing feathers. The

These photos of one of the Halfmoon Bay birds show the persistence of dark colouration of the eye, bill and primaries. Although not visible, the feet and legs are also dark.

I could not find a list of Canadian records, but a site for USA white hummingbirds detailed around 60 sightings of either albino or leucistic hummingbirds of various species over the 2018-2020 time period.

pale or white feathers and eyes, along with pink bill and exposed skin – from the colour of the blood showing through the pale skin. Leucism, producing leucistic individuals, is also a genetic variant with a loss of colouration in skin, hair and feathers, but not the eyes. Whereas albinism is more often an all-or-none phenomenon, leucism is a spectrum of melanin deficiency ranging from a few white feathers or small patches of white, to an entire lack of pigmentation in all integumentary structures excluding the eyes. The Dark-eyed Junco in the photo to the right exhibits incomplete leucism, with scattered patches of white feathers over much of

question is still out on whether or not these colouration differences significantly impact survival. Predatory birds, for instance, may rely more on shape and movement than colouration in their prey selection.

The Sunshine Coast has been visited by at least three leucistic Anna's Hummingbirds in late 2020 into 2021 with one reported from downtown Sechelt as well as two (or more) individual birds in Halfmoon Bay.





# Siskins, Salmonella, and Feeders

Carlo Giovanella, Surrey

Pine Siskins are well known for having extreme fluctuations in their population numbers, and a major irruption has been in evidence across the Province over the last year. Those who provide birdseed in their yards have been noticing many puffed up, lethargic siskins that hang around the feeders, often reluctant to move. These birds are sick and dying, apparently infected with *Salmonella*.

Because this pathogen is passed through feces, it seems reasonable that it is being spread (like COVID) by close association of the birds at feeders. The phenomenon has been discussed on chat groups, newspapers, talk radio interviews, and even TV news. In almost every instance, people are being urged to regularly and scrupulously clean their feeders, or remove them completely. The implication is that bird feeding is a major cause of siskin mortality. However, the relative role of feeders in effecting the mortality is probably not that simple, and other factors may also be important, and maybe even more so. Every irruption must be followed by significant die-off; otherwise siskins would be our most abundant songbird, all of the time!

*Tweeters* (a Washington State birding list-serve out of Seattle) recently had an extended discussion on the *Salmonella*/feeder thread, with most participants urging the removal or frequent cleaning of feeders. In response, a

Washington veterinarian with direct experience in the matter wrote a very thoughtful and informative post in which he cautions against jumping to unsupported conclusions. His posting is copied here, with his permission — please have a careful read. The practice of feeding birds might possibly not be a prime culprit responsible for the extensive mortality of siskins. Feeding may be more a case of providing palliative care for birds that are doomed because of other factors.

**Posted to Tweeters, January 5, 2021**

*Hello Tweeters,*

As a veterinarian who treats wildlife, I would like to weigh into the conversation concerning *Salmonellosis* in sick and dying siskins and other finches. I have done more than my share of attempting to treat (always futile) and euthanization of these sick birds.

Important fact – *Salmonella* is a natural and normal inhabitant of the gastrointestinal tracts of almost all birds, reptiles and amphibians. These bacteria do little or no harm to a healthy individual and perhaps may be beneficial.

Do feeders play an important role in the transmission of *Salmonellosis*?

There are so many variables, it is difficult to sort them all out. Why is it the case that some individuals who rarely clean their feeders report no cases of sick finches while others who clean and bleach their feeders every day report many cases? Why are these cases seen

mostly in winter? Why finches and not chickadees, nuthatches or woodpeckers? Does the finches' habit of staying at a feeder for long periods contribute? Are finches more susceptible to *Salmonella*? Are feeders really the source of overwhelming *Salmonella* infections? Do sick siskins get sick elsewhere and then gravitate to feeders because of the easy food supply?

Winter is a tough time for all wildlife, especially the very young who haven't quite figured out how to make a living and the very old. A missed meal during cold wet weather could mean a downward spiral. It is impossible to identify a mildly sick bird because prey animals hide any sign of weakness until they can't anymore. Those fluffed birds camped out at your feeder are dying and likely cannot be helped.

Since every bird already harbors *Salmonella* bacteria, it is my opinion (and JUST an opinion!) that the birds that are dying from *Salmonellosis* almost always have some pre-existing condition that makes them more susceptible to the disease. They may be malnourished, weak, unable to stay warm, or have some other concurrent disease. The *Salmonella* takes over in these situations and causes death. Our own bodies contain billions of beneficial *E. coli* bacteria but if these organisms are in the wrong place at the wrong time they can cause a serious infection.

So, what about feeders as a cause of dying birds? Maybe, but I believe we may save more birds by feeding them especially during the torrential rains we are experiencing or when snow covers the ground. Again, this is controversial and there appears to be no right or wrong answer. Should we thoroughly clean our feeders? Definitely: fungal and other pathogens as well as *Salmonella*, lurk in feeders. The frequency of cleaning is up to you.

I hope this has been food for thought. Definitely a lot of unanswered questions.

Dave Parent, DVM, Freeland, WA



*Photo left: it is indeed a Pine Siskin, but a leucistic individual, spotted in Prince George.*

# Telltale East Kootenay Tails

*Daryl Calder, Cranbrook*

*Compelling* is an adjective used to describe interest, attention or admiration in a powerfully irresistible way. Birding during the first six weeks of 2021 easily fit this definition.

## The Icterid

Back in January, rare-bird reports indicated that a particular Icterid was sighted near a feeder at Fort Steele. One afternoon, with no trouble at all, we found the “stretched” blackbird with a keeled tail, perched in a tangle of willow and wild rose near a house with reliable feeders. The Common Grackle exhibited the most distinctive trait of Icterids, a strong straight, pointed bill.

The musculature controlling the opening and closing of the bill is modified in the Icterids (Meadowlark, Cowbird, Blackbird, Grackle and Oriole), allowing them to open their bills with great strength. In a behaviour known as *gaping*, the birds insert the bill into a substrate (soil, vegetation, mud, bark) and forcibly open it. This creates a hole that allows the birds to reach food otherwise hidden and inaccessible to other passerines. Many experts consider gaping the main reason why Icterids have been so successful.

Our bird is likely an example of range expansion spreading to the west. In recent years, Common Grackles are regularly found in the back alleys of Fernie.

## The Divers

During a walk on the St Mary Prairie, between Kimberley and Cranbrook, a small group of naturalists wanted to take a look at the “Big Crack.” It seems that, at one point, the St Mary River, which drains the Purcell Mountains to the West, and joins the south-flowing Kootenay River at Fort Steele, has altered its course. Here, it swings across its floodplain, colliding with the base of a great thickness of glacial till. Now, the prairie edge is threatening to collapse, exhibiting some daunting fissures several metres back from the cliff edge.

Three diving ducks foraged in a clear pool directly below us. As expected, Common Goldeneyes simultaneously dove and popped back up at

regular intervals. Due to the water clarity and aided by binoculars, we could easily see their behaviour beneath the surface. Quickly diving 1–2 metres, with great agility they probed the bouldery river bed, working their way upstream as a team. The guide book offered “These medium-sized diving ducks with streamlined bodies and short tails search for aquatic invertebrates and small fish.” But, the grey, fan-shaped tail seemed crucial in several respects. From the way that the buoyant birds returned to the surface, nimbly avoiding floating ice rafts, and the ability to remain submerged as they twisted and turned to follow the irregular bottom, suggested that this powerful appendage must not be underestimated.

Later, from the shoreline, we observed about twenty goldeneyes and three nearby American Dippers diving and reappearing. Now it is possible to visualize the underwater activity with greater appreciation.

## The Mimic

Anxious to add a new species to our list, we attempted to observe a rare bird reported in the Cranbrook suburb of Jim Smith Lake. For several days, one

of the Mimic Thrushes (Starlings, Mockingbirds and Thrashers) regularly returned to a yard with active feeders. On our second attempt, while walking in the vicinity of the sighting, we heard a harsh, dry, chak chak chak chak behind us. Quickly reversing our steps and preparing the binocs, a Northern Mockingbird perched on the tip of a small Western Larch in plain view. It soon dropped out of sight into Barberry shrubs on the south side of a residence. The homeowner, a pleasant lady, appeared on the north side, curious about our behaviour. Of course, we explained the circumstance which, luckily, sparked her interest. She snuck around to the Barberries and got an excellent glimpse of the handsome bird as it flushed into a nearby Aspen.

Many of the most dramatic examples of recent changes in bird distributions involve human influence. With increases in winter bird-feeding and berry-producing shrubs, species such as Northern Mockingbird, Tufted Titmouse and Northern Cardinal have expanded their ranges to the north and west. This bird flipped its long, distinctive tail nervously, and soon flew away with rather slow, steady wingbeats. Since then, temperatures have dropped well below normal for ten days. We must hope that it can tolerate these conditions, avoiding any number of hazards including predation by the Northern Shrike.

Curiously, another neighbour had taken a short video of the unfamiliar bird around Christmas. Eventually this video found its way to someone who provided a positive ID and it was submitted to our CBC compiler.

Fortunately the case was strong enough to enable the mockingbird to earn a position on the Count Week list.

## The Raptor

A large, dark bird has been seen with increasing frequency in February. Many majestic Golden Eagles are migrating along the Rocky Mountains on



their way to the arctic treeline. It is often difficult to distinguish between it and the somewhat similar Bald Eagle. A white band in the black-tipped tail of juveniles, tail length, bulging secondaries, relatively small head and soaring with a slight dihedral, solidifies the ID. Golden eagles expertly read the topography, searching for thermal updrafts so that they can travel great distances while conserving energy by soaring. Here, the mountains are favourably oriented for migration, adjacent to the semi-open Rocky Mountain Trench. Where a major west-flowing tributary stream cuts through the range creating a gap of several kilometres (Bull River, Wild Horse Creek etc), the updraft effect is interrupted and the eagles lose elevation. Here, the birds must locate a fresh set of thermals, providing us with several excellent viewing locations.

Usually found alone or in pairs, they favour partially or completely open country. One of the largest, fastest and most athletic raptors in North America, they capture prey on or near the ground. With excellent vision, they locate prey by soaring, flying low over the ground or hunting from a perch.

Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation volunteers perform annual raptor migration counts during spring and fall. This data contributes significantly to an understanding of the life cycle, and to the amazement of watching Golden Eagles. To learn more about RMERF go to [www.eaglewatch.ca](http://www.eaglewatch.ca).

### The Owl

In the East Kootenay, it's not often that one can see any bird perching on hydro lines in mid-winter. This little guy, not much larger than a House Sparrow, can grasp the cold wire, remain unobtrusive and wait for prey to approach. A rounded head, fluffy body and long tail is the unmistakable silhouette of the Northern Pygmy Owl. Usually they perch inconspicuously within the tree canopy, tooting monotonously. Sometimes small birds such as hummingbirds, wrens, warblers, jays, chickadees and blackbirds will create a ruckus as they scold and mob the diurnal bird-hunter. A pair of spots on the back of the neck may help to fool attackers or mobbers into thinking this owl is watching them.

Northern Pygmy Owls eat insects, dragonflies, chipmunks, lizards and birds, some as large as a Northern Flicker. If they find extra food, they

may cache their prey in tree cavities or impale it on a thorn similar to shrike behaviour. Most owls have asymmetrically placed ears as well as flattened facial discs around the eyes. Both adaptations enhance hearing. Pygmy owls lack these features; this may be an outcome of their diurnal habits and greater reliance on vision. Depending on such variables as temperature, snow characteristics and food availability, this small, aggressive predator makes elevational migrations, moving up and downslope.

Watch and listen carefully; don't forget to read the tail.



## Briefing 1

Summary by M. Church, Vancouver

### Curious Scientists

*Science*, a magazine published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, is one of the world's most authoritative journals of science. The topics on its pages help define what is considered to be important in science. One of the ways in which this influence is exercised is for the journal to announce, every December, what it considers to be the year's most important scientific achievements. The leading result in 2020 is a no-brainer – the development of vaccines against COVID-19. But in the extended list of ten important new results we also find “birds are smarter than you think” – that they are capable of conscious reflection on their observations and stimuli, and taking deliberate decisions about how to respond.

The claim that this is a novel finding is based on two papers that appeared in *Science* during the year, one on the anatomy of pigeon brains, and one on cerebral activity in Carrion Crows during a perception task. Prior opinion that birds are not thinking creatures has been based on the small size of their brains and on its apparently rudimentary structure. In mammals, conscious thought and decision-making are located in the cerebral cortex; birds do not have a cerebral cortex, but an apparently more primitive “pallium.” As for brain size, we know that this is largely

offset by the tight packing of neurons such that birds possess as many or more neurons than many mammals and can process information and make decisions remarkably quickly (see “Birdbrain, eh?”, *BC Birding*, December, 2016), as they must, for example, to fly rapidly through dense bush. And we know that birds modify their behaviour on the basis of learned experience (for example, learning an efficient migration strategy (see “Age and Skill Trump Youth and Strength,” *BC Birding*, June, 2015), that they can plan for uncertain future advantage (“Ravens Out-think Preschoolers”, *BC Birding*, December, 2018), and even think in terms of probabilities (see “Need a Statistician? Hire a Parrot”, *BC Birding*, June, 2020). That they are consciously thinking creatures hardly seems like a major breakthrough.

One of the new papers has closely examined the pallium of a homing pigeon – a domesticated Rock Pigeon – using new techniques for observing soft tissue structure. The researchers detected for the first time an arrangement of neurons similar to that in the mammalian cortex. Birds evidently are neurally equipped to reflect on experiences just as mammals are. In the second study, crows were trained to respond by pecking a screen for “yes” or “no” after exposure to a light flash of varying intensity – some very faint or absent. At the same time, their brain activity was monitored and showed that the crows were engaging in considered decisions about what they thought they had seen (or not). Both studies return useful information for avian anatomists and students of bird behaviour, but it all seems scarcely to add up to an unprecedented breakthrough in science.

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# Birding Yunnan, China

Lee Harding, Coquitlam

My brother Jeff Harding and I figured out the basic parameters of biodiversity expeditions in 2008 when planning a photo safari in Africa:

The guide and driver must commit to being up before dawn, in the field at first light, and remaining in the field until after dusk. Meals should be managed within this framework.

If the words “luxury” or “gourmet” appear anywhere in a company’s literature or correspondence, that will be the last they hear of us. We do not mind a nice hotel occasionally as long as it fits into the above framework.

This has served us well in trips to Africa, Peru, Borneo and Argentina and it worked well again in 2013 in Yunnan, China.

I had been birding in China several times before and wanted to go to a real hotspot for birds and other wildlife, and to get away from the crowds, flat lands and pollution of eastern China. We chose the “Three Parallel Rivers” UNESCO World Heritage site in Yunnan near the borders of Tibet and Myanmar. UNESCO describes it thus:

*Consisting of eight geographical clusters of protected areas within the boundaries of the Three Parallel Rivers National Park, in the mountainous north-west of Yunnan Province, the 1.7 million hectare site features sections of the upper reaches of three of the great rivers of Asia: the Yangtze (Jinsha), Mekong and Salween run roughly parallel, north to south, through steep gorges which, in places, are 3,000 m deep and are bordered by glaciated peaks more than 6,000 m high. The site is an epicentre of Chinese biodiversity. It is also one of the richest temperate regions of the world in terms of biodiversity.*

Wanting to savour the approach, we took a circuitous route. We flew to Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan. We spent a day there before flying to

Pu’er, where a Collared Owlet was hooting in the airport and we met our guides and driver. Our tour company, Wild China ([www.wildchina.com](http://www.wildchina.com)), had arranged for a bird guide to accompany us for the whole trip, and a local guide and driver for each of three regions: (1) the lowland forests in the far south bordering Vietnam on the east, Laos to the south and Myanmar to the west; (2) the Gaoligong Mountains farther north along the Myanmar border; and (3) the heart of the Three Parallel Rivers on the edge of Tibet.

## Pu’er–Xishuangbanna

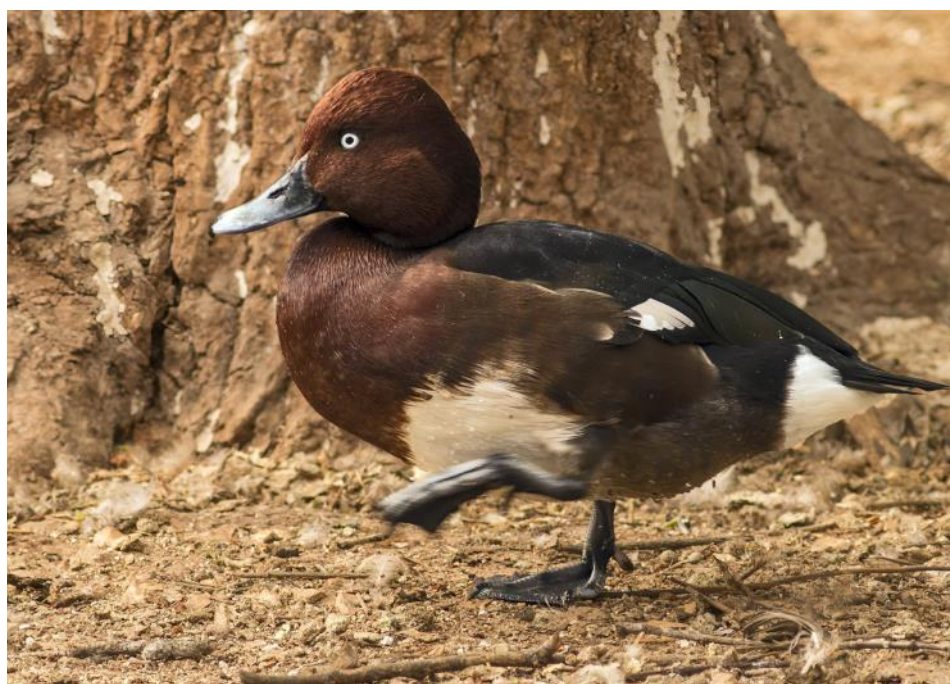
From Pu’er we drove down, down and down into the hot, humid tropical forest along the Mekong River, stopping often for birding along the way (77 species in Pu’er and en route). Our first destination was Xishuangbanna, where China’s only wild elephants live. The people there are Dai (or Thai), one of two dozen non-Han Chinese ethnic groups of Yunnan. The nearby Menglu Tropical Rainforest is huge, with walking bridges over creeks and trails through a gallery forest of giant trees, filled with birds and flowers. It and the Caiyanghe Natural Reserve, Mengyuan Nature Reserve and Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve turned up 37 more species. They

included Verditer and Hill Blue Flycatchers, Pin-striped Tit-babbler, Buff-throated Babbler, Banded Bay Cuckoo, White-crowned Forktail, White-rumped Shama, Long-tailed, Chinese Grey and Burmese Shrikes, Blue-winged Leafbirds, Asian Palm-swifts, Asian Barred and Collared Owlets, Oriental Magpie and White-tailed Robins, Crimson and other sunbirds and multiple species of white-eyes, bulbuls, taylorbirds, flowerpeckers, laughingthrushes, drongos, fantails, prinias, barbets, fulvetas and munias. Half a dozen Asian Openbills (a kind of stork) were a special treat because they are extremely rare in China.

## Gaoligongshan

Our next region to explore was the Gaoligong Mountains along the border with Myanmar in the Nu Lisu Autonomous Prefecture. This is one of the Three Parallel Rivers UNESCO sites. To reach it, we flew to Dali, a lovely little city on pristine Erhai Lake in the Bai Autonomous Prefecture where we met another local guide with a van and driver and drove west following the route of the famous Burma Road (remnants of which could still be seen). We crossed the Mekong River and then the Salween River. The Salween River, locally called the Nu Jiang (Nu River), is home of the Nu (after whom the river is named) and Lisu peoples. We went up a mountain as far as our two-wheel drive vehicle could go and stayed in the

*Ferruginous Pochard, Lashihai. All photos by Lee Harding.*





Baihualing guest house at about 1,600 metres elevation.

This is a key logistical point: Many national parks and national or regional nature areas have guest houses used mainly by officials and visiting scholars, but they are available for birders at very modest prices. But one cannot find them on-line and the tour companies do not seem to know about them. They would have put us up in a local hotel far from the natural areas, incurring additional travel and transaction time and costs. Knowing about them from previous trips, I asked the tour company to look into them, and we were accommodated.

We had been planning to stay longer, but left after only two days and 63 species (scimitar-babblers, mesia, fulvettas, yuhinas, barbets, liochlas) because our two-wheel vehicle could not go higher into the mountains where the rare pheasants are; and because a rare gibbon species I wanted to see was reported at Nankang, a more southerly section of the Three Parallel River UNESCO site.

At about 2,100 m elevation, Nankang is in montane rhododendron forest. Besides the rare gibbon, which has since been described as a new species, we counted 79 mostly new bird species including minlas, minivets, cutias, blue-tails, fulvettas, finchbills, bulbuls, sunbirds and the Beautiful Sibia.

### Dali and Lijiang

We returned to Dali and after a day of birding on Cang Shan (Cang Mountain: 14 new species), where a pair of Lady Amherst's Pheasants ran across in front of us, we headed north to Lijiang. It is a lovely town of mostly Naxi people who

since ancient times have directed fresh spring water through a network of stone channels throughout the town. Every day they briefly close a stone gate, causing the channels to overflow and clean the city. Two bridges in the town are so old, they are said to have been crossed by Kublai Kahn's army in 1253. We saw 25 species en route.

### Towards Tibet

A nature reserve just outside of town, Lashihai, was filled with waterfowl, including Bar-headed Geese and Common Cranes. Continuing northwest, we reached the Yangtze River, which here is called the Jinsha Jiang (Jinsha River), at Shigu where the river turns back on itself and flows north.

We followed it down to Tiger-leaping Gorge in a deep cleft between the Bai Ma and Jade Dragon Snow Mountains. Tina's Guesthouse perched on a ledge overlooking the gorge. We saw 41 bird species, counting those en route. New birds of the gorge included a Streak-throated Scimitar-babbler, Brown-winged Parrotbills and Daurian Jackdaws.

### Tacheng

Retracing our route just a bit, we followed the Jinsha Jiang north, upriver to Tacheng, where we planned to study a rare species of monkey. At stops en route we saw 25 new species including Grey-backed Shrikes, Plumbeous Water-redstarts, Black-throated Tits, Green-backed Tits, Silver-throated Tits, bulbuls, minlas, fulvettas and yuhinas. Before heading up to the high country, we walked a few kilometers up a creek, where we saw White-browed Fulvettas and Elliott's and Black-faced Laughingthrushes, among a dozen other species.

The guesthouse at the Bai Ma (White Horse) Snow Mountain Nature Reserve, at about 2,800 m elevation, where we studied Yunnan Snub-nosed Monkeys (and published a paper later) was plain outside but luxurious inside. There were mountain birds including Yellow-throated Buntings, White-browed Fulvettas and Chestnut-vented Nuthatches.

### Shangri-La

Continuing north, we left the Jinsha Jiang, climbed a high pass, crossed a corner of Xijiang (Tibet Autonomous Region) and came to Napa Hai (Napa

Lake) at 3,300 m. It is a wetland/wet meadow complex where Tibetans graze yaks and we saw a herd of wild boar. We got one of our target birds, the Black-necked Crane, and 24 other species including Black Storks, waterfowl, shorebirds, hawks, Himalayan Griffons and White-tailed Eagles. We stayed in a quaint, old town, shown as Deqen in Google Earth, formerly Zhongdian, but prettied up and re-named Shangri-La to attract western tourists. The nearby Songzalin Lamasery (a monastery with a resident Lama), the largest outside of Tibet, overlooks a marsh full of birds.

As a day-trip from Shangri-La, we took a bus to Bitai Hai (Bitai Lake) Scenic Area at 3,545 m and then Shudu National Park at 3,700 m. At the latter were about 50 more Black-necked Cranes, waterfowl, White-tailed Eagles, Grey-crested Tits, Eurasian Wrens (split from Winter Wrens), Chinese White-browed Rosefinches and Plain Mountain-finches: 15 new species all together.

This concluded our formal tour and we flew back to Kunming but, with our bird guide, we birded a few days around there, visiting the Kunming Botanical Garden (7 new species), Leopard Valley (26 species), Xiji Scenic Mountain Reserve (25 mostly new species one day and 12 more the next), Xiang Shui Valley Falls (7 species including White-crowned Forktails, which we had seen at Xishuangbanna but is a neat bird and was great to see again) and Xiji Mountain Temple (22 species).

In all, we identified 237 bird species in 18 days (18 February to 8 March). Yunnan was fun and free of the congestion and pollution of eastern China, with wonderful people who were interested in and friendly to foreigners.

*Top: Silver-eared Mesia, Cangshan.*

*Below: Red-billed Scimitar-Babbler.*





# Revenge of the Yellow-jackets

## Ancient Avian Trackfinding

Charles Helm, Tumbler Ridge

Deep in the mountain wilderness near Tumbler Ridge, on a steep forested slope above a remote canyon, there is an enchanting rock surface. It shows signs of an ancient British Columbian bird that lived 120 million years ago – a type of bird that no one has previously recorded, perhaps that no one has dreamed of. However, this site gives up its secrets reluctantly, and is hostile to outsiders. In fact, it is jealously guarded by a tiny but ruthlessly efficient army. Alas, for the time being, this foothills fortress is best regarded as impregnable....

2015 was a vintage year for dinosaur tracksite exploration in the Tumbler Ridge area. I had noted that one of our rivers, flowing out of the mountains, passed through progressively younger rock layers, from Triassic to Cretaceous. The valley bottom was useless, but the deeply incised tributaries flowing from the foothills to the valley had the potential for good exposures of large rock surfaces that might contain tracks. I had managed to arrange an afternoon a week off work, and would study topographical maps, compare them with geological maps, and then use Google Earth, in order to identify a creek or canyon worthy of an afternoon of exploration. One by one, the creeks were ticked off, and many, if not most, yielded dinosaur tracks. These were faithfully photographed and documented. In some cases, we even managed to get helicopters to long-line important track-bearing slabs to our palaeontological museum in Tumbler Ridge.

Along came Bryan, a great locum, to help me run my medical practice for a couple of summer months. I let him know what I was up to, and he seemed interested. His real passion was fishing, and I suggested that on one afternoon we head for a creek in search of fossil tracks, and leave our fishing gear where we had to ford the river. This enticement proved irresistible, and the deal was clinched.

The creek we were targeting flowed through 120 million-year-old rocks of



the Gething Formation. This was significant, because the same formation was exposed in the Peace River Canyon, and this was where significant dinosaur tracks had been found in the 1920s, and avian tracks in the 1980s. At the time these had formed only the third report of Mesozoic bird tracks, and were considered to be some of the oldest global evidence of birds. The tracks were named *Aquatilavipes swiboldae*, and it was concluded that they were made by a sandpiper-like shorebird. Those sites are now inundated under the Peace Canyon Dam, but many specimens were salvaged. We knew, therefore, that we had a fair chance of finding fossil tracks by entering Gething Formation sediments.

We cycled in, fording the river with our mountain bikes, as the bridge shown on Google Earth was no longer present. We left our fishing gear and then cycled another four kilometres of an old road-bed, covered in knee-high vegetation, to

where it intersected the creek. We proceeded to walk up beside the creek, noting how the canyon deepened, the result of the creek following a syncline. On either bank were near-vertical rock walls with large bedding-plane exposures. We found lots of petrified wood, and some nice rippled surfaces, an indicator of good preservation. Disappointingly, these were all totally devoid of fossil tracks. A bit frustrated, we continued to the top end of the canyon. Nada. We prepared to turn back, but decided to carry on for just a little while longer to be quite sure there were no more rock surface exposures. Then things suddenly changed for the better as we noted something up to our left as documented in my trip report:

“Then about 700m from our starting point, and as the rock exposures were beginning to peter out, we saw another slab above us (perhaps 20 metres above creek level) and climbed up to it. Tridactyl prints were immediately apparent. These were small and medium sized. We were struck by the extreme divarication angle and suspected these were bird tracks. We were able to remove a thin overlying layer and dirt to expose a few more tracks, at which point ten were evident; one trackway of five tracks, two of two tracks each, and a single track, as well as other suspicious indentations which may represent single digit impressions.”

It can be very difficult to distinguish

Photo top: Crossing the river. Below: The tracksite, viewed from below.







*Avian track, with fingers for scale.*

bird tracks from theropod dinosaur tracks (not really surprising, as birds in fact are dinosaurs, and are an evolutionary offshoot of theropods). One of the best indicators is the angle between the digit impressions (the “divarication angle”), which is typically significantly larger in bird tracks. In this case the angle between the outer digits was around 125 degrees, strong evidence for these being avian tracks (see above). Furthermore, they were of impressive size, some being more than 9 cm long and as much as 13 cm wide, with a long pace length of around 30 cm. This suggested a long-legged avian trackmaker. No fossil avian tracks of this size had previously been reported from British Columbia.

In summary, we appeared to have identified a significant new tracksite, probably containing tracks of at least one previously unknown Cretaceous bird taxon. Needless to say, we were excited. Encouraged by our discovery of further tracks by removing just a bit of surface debris (see right), we talked about returning with brooms and brushes. Perhaps we would be able to expose a substantial rock surface, showing long extensions of the trackways. At that time my knowledge of photogrammetry was rudimentary, but I tried to obtain suitable photos, which were later used by palaeontologist Dr Richard McCrea to generate a photogrammetry image for the Tumbler Ridge Museum.

We began our return journey in good moods. Then I heard a loud and anguished cry of “Ouch” behind me, and saw Bryan trying to scratch his back. I thought he had got caught up in nettles

or thorns, and went to help him. Instead, I saw a bunch of tiny yellow-jackets attached to him, and could hear an ominous buzzing sound. It seemed we were being punished for having broken the spell of the sacred avian tracksite.

Five years earlier, while working on the trails at the Bull-

moose Marshes as he expressed a desire to catch some fish. That is when I knew we were out of the woods. Between catches of Arctic Grayling, I examined his back and counted at least nine sting sites.

Despite this setback, we showed Dr McCrea and Dr Lisa Buckley, the Tumbler Ridge Museum palaeontologists, our photos and presented our trip report. Within days they mounted a second expedition, taking with them my friend Paul, who had a summer job with the museum. His job was to haul in a bucket of latex, so that a replica of the tracksite could be made. This time the yellow-jackets were primed, and ready to exact further revenge. As the group approached the tracksite Paul got stung four times, and they had to beat a hasty retreat.

No one has been back there since then. Bee-keeper outfits have been suggested, but would probably get torn to shreds in the alders and forest. The unofficial name remains “Ninestling Creek.” We thought of changing it to “Thirteen-sting Creek,” and altering the name over time according to how many stings had been received. The idea was voted down, as it was noted that a continually evolving name for a creek might be frowned upon by some.

Unfortunately, we seem since then to have entered a “once-bitten, twice shy” phase, or, more precisely, a “when

birding area, I had tried to show a bunch of yellow-jackets who was boss. I got stung a few times, and half an hour later was in the Emergency Room, receiving epinephrine. Five years of allergy shots had followed, which had probably (but not definitely) reduced my chances of another generalized and potentially fatal reaction. Bearing this in mind, I suggested to Bryan that we get out of the area, rapidly, while I watched him closely for any signs of a reaction.

By the time we reached the river crossing, he was clearly feeling better,

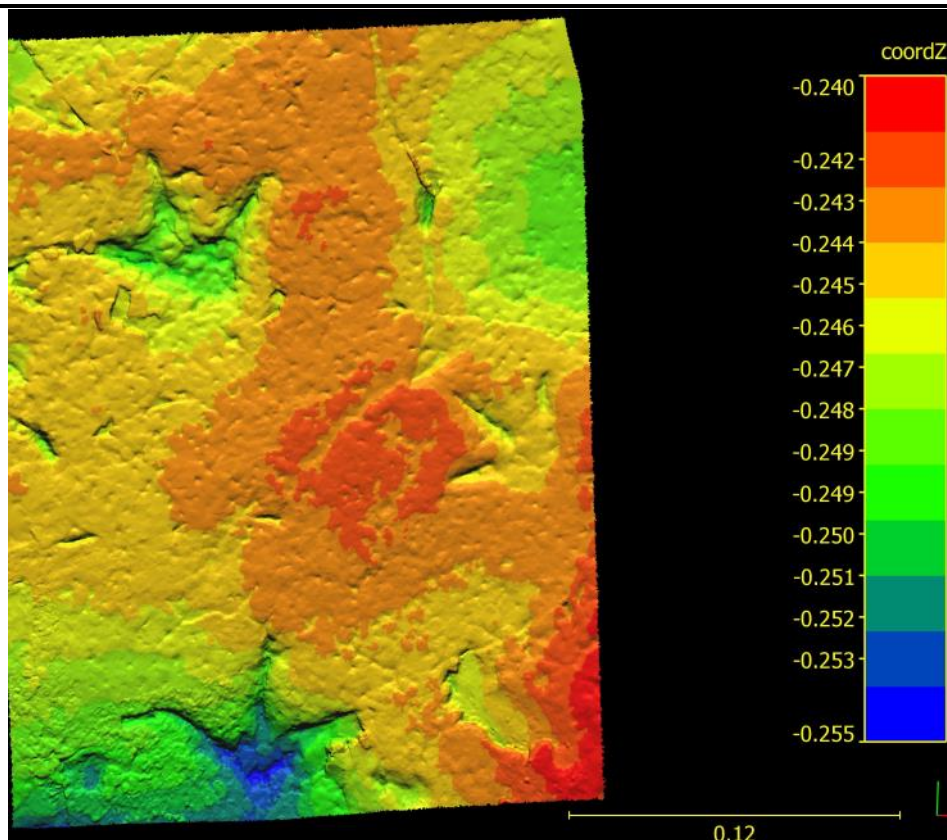
*The lighter area at the bottom has been brushed clear of debris, exposing more tracks; arrows indicate three tracks in a trackway. Characteristic “intoeing” of tracks toward the midline can be seen.*





your friends get stung repeatedly, and you are allergic, don't be an idiot" phase. But I sometimes dream of that site, guarded by its yellow-jacketed army, and I am sure that someday, folks more intrepid and less allergic than me will take up the cause, equipped with brooms, latex or silicon, and perhaps an Epipen or two. I hope that they will do justice to one of British Columbia's spectacular wilderness tracksites, and advance our knowledge of our province's ancient birds. And I know that although I have been forced to wave the white flag and surrender to the yellow-jackets, there may be no other place on earth where I can examine a few maps, grab a mountain bike, put on my hiking boots, and go out and discover an avian tracksite during a half-day off work.

However, there may be a loophole. Yellow-jacket numbers, it is said, are decimated by the first heavy frost, and those that survive become lazy and show little ambition. Perhaps, in the fall, if we have an early frost but late snow, then we can mount an expedition in relative safety. The river crossing might be a bit bracing, but oh well. Who knows, perhaps late October will be the time when we finally are able to outsmart the enemy?



*Photogrammetry colour mesh of two of the avian tracks, courtesy of the Tumbler Ridge Museum.*

## Briefing 2

*Summary by M. Church, Vancouver*

### Island Biogeography and the Birds

"Island biogeography" is a theory invented in the 1950s to explain the variation in animal species richness on islands. It rests on two well-known regularities: that species richness increases as the area considered increases, and that species richness declines as the isolation of a habitat (distance from a similar patch) increases. The theory has been hugely influential, but some important aspects have remained little investigated, namely the effect of rates of *in situ* speciation and extinction on the island, and the specific effect on species diversity of human colonization of the island. By incorporating historical records and molecular phylogenetic data of island birds, the authors of the present work have been able to overcome these problems by reconstructing

histories of individual species' occurrence on particular islands.

An important first decision, however, was that – at least for birds – individual islands are not the appropriate basic study unit, but archipelagos are. An archipelago is a group of relatively closely situated islands, commonly sharing a similar earth history and contemporary environment. Birds may easily fly between them. The authors sampled 41 island groups worldwide, varying from the Canary Islands, close by the African coast and Lord Howe Island, adjacent to Australia, to Tristan da Cunha, an oceanic island on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, and Rapa Nui (Easter Island) in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, both thousands of kilometres from anywhere else. They notably avoided the world's largest collections of islands, Indonesia and the Caribbean Antilles, where multiple island hops allow birds to move and mix readily over large distances, making specification of "area" and "isolation" criteria difficult. The age of the study islands is also important. It might influence contemporary bird populations through the

cumulative influence of time on local speciation and extinctions. In the study set, it varies from less than a million years (the Cocos, or Keeling, Islands, a recent volcano in the Indian Ocean near Java) to greater than 60 million years (the Seychelles, Indian Ocean near Africa), the latter spanning a significant fraction of the history of the avifauna.

Altogether, 491 species were recorded, of which 90 included genetic data. These records showed, not surprisingly, that the total number of bird species increases with island area, by about 20× as area increases from 5 km<sup>2</sup> to 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> (i.e., 1000×). The number of colonization events contributing to this expansion increases by about 10×. In contrast, the number of species and number of colonizations both decline, on average, by about a third as distance to the nearest mainland increases from 5 to 5,000 km (but data become very sparse after 2,000 km).

Speciation events can be of two types. "Cladogenesis" is the splitting of an ancestral species *in situ* into two (or more) different species, while "anagenesis" is the evolution of a spe-



cies isolated on an island to become different than its mainland ancestor. The authors found that anagenesis increases with increased island isolation while cladogenesis increases on larger, more isolated islands. Isolation is an obvious factor. Island size is significant in cladogenesis because it increases the possibility for sub-populations to become geographically isolated from each other whence, eventually, reproductive isolation. Two-thirds of species native (i.e., non-immigrants) to the studied archipelagos were found to have arisen by anagenesis.

This study has relevance far beyond what it reveals about birdlife on oceanic islands. With the proliferation of people, human settlements and land use across the continents, remaining patches of natural habitat become islands in a sea of agricultural and urban landscapes. The oceanic data strongly affirm the theory of island biogeography, which thereby becomes an increasingly valuable tool for predicting the outcome for bird populations as the area of natural habitat units – basically, woodland and native prairie – continues to decline, and separation between similar units continues to increase. It is relevant, as well, to the assessment of residual alpine environments as climate change increasingly leads to isolation of individual peaks in a formerly continuous alpine landscape.

### References

Valente, L. + 10 others, 2020. “A simple dynamic model explains the diversity of island birds worldwide,” *Nature* 579: 92-96.

Triantis, K.A. & Matthews, T.J. 2020. “Biodiversity theory backed by island bird data,” *Nature* 579: 36-37 (A commentary on the above article).

## Briefing 3

Summary and comment by M. Church,  
Vancouver

### Bird Foundry

Most biodiversity is found in the tropics, including tropical mountains. One might quickly conclude that is because distinct ecological niches and resources for life are most abundant there, en-

couraging high rates of development of new species. But evidence to test such a conjecture has been difficult to assemble. Key evidence would be direct information on the antiquity of many individual species. The best evidence is a phylogenetic key for some order of organisms: a chart of who is related to who and when each species arose, commonly displayed as a branching tree. Such a chart has now been assembled for the suboscine passerines.

Who's that? Passerine birds are perching birds, ones with three toes forward, one back to facilitate perching on twigs and branches. They come in two flavours: *oscine* and *suboscine*. The principal distinction is a differently constructed syrinx: a bird's sound producing organ – different than a human larynx (“voice box”). Consequently, oscine birds are much better singers. Most suboscine birds are New World tropical (i.e., neotropical) birds, meaning that they mostly live in tropical South America. In North America, suboscine birds are represented by the tyrant flycatchers (Family Tyrannidae).

The phylogenetic key is based on 1,287 suboscine species (of which 1,306 species are known, so nearly the entire group). It reveals exactly the reverse of what one might have expected: the neotropical birds have only moderate speciation rates. Many members of the group emerged in the Early to Mid-Miocene Epoch (23 – 13 million years ago). In comparison, North American birds derive from the late Miocene and Pliocene epochs (7 – 2.5 million years ago), and even into the Pleistocene (less than 2 million years ago). The impoverished Old World suboscine birds (all tropical species) are even more stable than the neotropicals.

Hence it appears that the high diversity of tropical species is due not to high rates of speciation, but to stability of species in a relatively stable environment. Over a long period, a

cumulatively large number of species comes to coexist. The wide variety of ecological niches characteristic of tropical forests is undoubtedly a significant factor influencing this outcome.

In contrast, the suboscine fauna of the extratropical New World – from Mexico northward – becomes increasingly impoverished northward. The southern high Andes and parts of the Caribbean similarly have relatively few suboscine species. (The Caribbean would seem to be a glaring anomaly: the situation possibly has to do with the tectonic history of the region.) However, speciation rates are highest in North America and the Caribbean. It seems that speciation flourishes where opportunity is afforded by relatively low peer group competition, and suitable habitat exists. In summary, environmental factors, including temperature, precipitation, precipitation stability, and elevation are better predictors of speciation rate than is current population diversity.

In North America, the present-day suboscine foundry (so to speak), the stage will have repeatedly been swept almost bare by the severe climate of the Pleistocene glaciations and, in Canada, by the presence of the ice. Hence, perhaps, the proliferation of recently founded flycatchers of frustratingly similar appearance.

### Reference

Harvey, M.G. + 20 others. 2020. “The evolution of a tropical biodiversity hotspot,” *Science* 370: 1343-1348.

*Most of the 1,000+ species of suboscines, like this Great Kiskadee, are in South America.*



# Featured Species No. 13

Adrian Dorst, Tofino

## Rock Sandpiper *Calidris ptilocnemis*

**Status:** Rare fall transient and winter visitor. Casual in spring.

As its name indicates, this bird frequents the rocky shore, though very occasionally it may be seen on sandy beaches. The Rock Sandpiper is closely related to the Purple Sandpiper of the Atlantic, which is very similar in appearance but has been recorded only once in British Columbia. When seen on our coast, the Rock Sandpiper is often in the company of other dwellers of the rocky shore – Surf-birds and Black Turnstones.

Rock Sandpipers breed in extreme eastern Siberia, the Kuril and Commander Islands off the Kamchatka Peninsula, and the Pribilof Islands. In North America, the species breeds in western Alaska as well as the Aleutian archipelago. Those birds breeding on islands tend to be year-round residents, but birds on the Alaskan mainland migrate south along the coast as far as northern California. In British Columbia, Rock Sandpipers are considerably more common on the north coast than on the south coast. *The Birds of British Columbia* considers it a “fairly common to locally very common” migrant and winter visitant on the north coast, while it is an “uncommon to locally common migrant and winter visitant” on the south coast.

In our west coast region, this bird can be elusive. This is partly due to the inaccessibility of much of the coast. The first documented occurrence was on 9 August 1968 at Tzartus Island in Barkley Sound. *Birds of Pacific Rim National Park* listed 6 records for our region. By late 2016, there was a total of 38 records in 22 separate years, not a large number for a period covering over four and a half decades, though this partly reflects the paucity of observers. Of those 38 sightings, 26 were made during the fall migration period and 6 in winter. There were 8 sightings in October, 10 in November, 5 in December, 4

in January, and 2 in February. Both August and September have a single record. Only the months of April, June, and July have no records at all.

That there have been no sightings in April is particularly curious as this is the month when most Rock Sandpipers are believed to pass through in spring. Indeed, spring sightings are remarkably rare, with only six records. One of those involved a sighting on Trevor Channel in Barkley Sound on 30 March 1985. Another March record involved a bird that overwintered in Tofino Harbour from 30 November 2007 to 27 March 2008. Sighting also occurred on 21 March 2015 and 24 March 2016. The only record of a bird in breeding plumage involved a bird seen on Cleland Island on 9 May 1996.

Paulson mentions high counts in winter outside our region: 70 birds at Victoria on 27 January 1953; 50 at Ocean Shores, Washington, on 26 March 1977; and 90 at Chain Islets, BC, on 27 December 1980. The highest count ever recorded in Victoria was 82 birds on 6 May 1974. Records from the 1980s, however, showed a decline in these southern latitudes.

In our region, the largest flock seen to date contained 20 birds, recorded at Green Point on 3 January and 1 March 1976. We also have a record of 17 birds at Tofino Inlet on 4 October 1972, and 10 birds at Green Point on 22 November 2014. Flocks containing 6 birds were recorded four times: at Cleland Island on 5 January 1989, at Long Beach on 21 January 2001, at Carmanah Point on 1 January 2002, and at Green Point

on 24 March 2016.

There are three subspecies in North America and one in eastern Asia. Both *C. p. tschuktschorum* and *C. p. couesi* are believed to migrate to British Columbia and Washington. Only close-up photos are likely to resolve the issue of which subspecies visit our shores.

Although Rock Sandpipers are far from common in our region, when this bird is specifically searched for in the right season, one can sometimes get lucky. On the central west coast, accessible locations may be found at the south end of Long Beach, at Green Point, and at the north end of Chesterman Beach. Rock Sandpipers should be looked for among flocks of Surf-birds and Black Turnstones. At Green Point and at Chesterman Beach, the best time is at high tide, when birds are resting.

A food-habit study from stomach contents near Vancouver, BC, during the nonbreeding seasons showed the diet, in order of importance, to consist of Acorn Barnacles (*Balanus spp.*), filamentous algae (*Ulothrix sp.*), and limpets (*Littorina spp.*)

### Note

This is an extract from Adrian Dorst's *The Birds of Vancouver Island's West Coast*, UBC Press, which covers 360 species in its 550 pages. The book can be ordered at [ubcpress.ca](http://ubcpress.ca).

*Rock Sandpiper photo by Adrian Dorst.*





## Identification Tune-up No. 1

### Sharpie or Coop?

The fellow below landed on a tree in front of the editor's house just as this edition was being prepared, and it helpfully stuck around long enough for a decent photograph to be taken. Sixty Pine Siskins, some Common Redpolls,

plus all the usual suspects at the bird feeder station, seemed to hold its interest for quite a long time, though it didn't have any luck.\*

Next came the usual question: is it a Cooper's Hawk or Sharp-shinned?

Perhaps you can tell straight away, having seen many, but it is more likely that you ran through a list of features before deciding – or are still not sure.

If you made a decision, let us know how you came to it, naming as many distinguishing features as possible. Different people focus on different things,

and not just the ones mentioned by David Sibley. A compilation of the answers will be given in the next edition.

If you have any other photographs suited to an ID Tune-up, send them in, to make this a regular feature. Good photographs of dowitchers and other shorebirds, empids, scaups, vireos and hybrids, are well suited to an ID Tune-up, as are fuzzy photographs of less-difficult birds which retain just enough clues for a confident ID.

\*It did, two days later, reducing the Siskin population.



## Ornithology Rules No. 7

### Foster's Rule

Foster's Rule states that animals on islands tend to become either dwarfs or giants, depending on the resources available. It's sometimes called "The Island Rule." The rule has certainly proved its worth with mammals, the most famous case being the Pygmy Mammoths that once lived on small islands. It has been found to apply to quite a range of mammals, including hippopotamuses, sloths and deer, but there has not been much support for the notion that it applies to birds.

Aaron Veale, an enterprising undergraduate student at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, wants to change that. He has studied the sizes of island passerines, which have high rates of dispersal and can be found in many unique island habitats. He analyzed the masses of species endemic to either islands or continental regions around the world and argues that he can demonstrate clear support for Foster's Rule in passerines. He will be presenting his findings in a poster presentation shortly after publication of this news-magazine.

Foster's Rule was first formulated by L. van Valen in 1973 based on the study by mammalogist J. Bristol Foster in 1964, which had compared 116 island species to their mainland varieties.

Still to come: Schmalhausen's, Jarman's and Bell's rules.



## Bird Photographers' Corner

John Gordon, Surrey

### Some Thoughts on Composition

#### Using Negative Space

The use of negative space is often overlooked in bird photography. The technique can be a very powerful storytelling tool, working in subtle ways to draw the viewer into the frame.

It's not uncommon when photographing with long lenses to crowd the subject within the frame. What might be appropriate for submissions to a bird guide and magazines etc may not always be the best way communicate one's vision.

Below is an example of a close-up used in a popular bird guide of Pacific Northwest birds.

Although a close-up image could be technically perfect, it may often lack context; not all situations call for close-up treatment. Many of my seasoned birding friends (some really well seasoned) tell me they prefer to see at least some background information that gives the subject matter a sense of place that includes clues to habitat and other information. Photographs depicting some or all of those criteria can be one of the most difficult forms of bird pho-



tography. Most photographs posted on social media lack this important factor.

How about the image above? The Band-tailed Pigeons are clearly identified and so are ripening Red Elderberries the birds are feeding on. There's the story right there. A close-up may have worked too but it wouldn't have shown a flock feeding. Did the image hold your attention for more than three or four seconds? If so, then consider the

image successful.

If the photographer can transport the viewer, albeit just for a brief moment, that's all the maker of the image can hope for, especially nowadays when thanks to social media and non-stop streaming services we are all on image overload.

Unlike the painter who begins with a blank canvas, the bird photographer often has to deal with the opposite: messy backgrounds, branches in front of the subject, and a host of other challenges. The photographer needs to bring order to the composition. Using negative space is one such technique.

Recently on a visit to Surrey's Blackie Spit I was drawn to the strange colour to the water. At first I thought it was an algae bloom, but on closer inspection it turned out to be a torrent of duckweed that had been released from farmers' ditches following days of rain. A flock of thirty-plus American Coots were feeding on the floating carpet of weeds. I had never seen so many coots in one place. I also made some close-up shots of Common Loons chowing down on crabs. None of those shots really worked out very well.

I then noticed a Great Blue Heron hunting in the thick carpet of duckweed. I knew from experience that this is something I might never witness again. An opportunity not to be missed. I placed the heron using the Golden

*This close-up picture was chosen specifically to illustrate a non-breeding Least Sandpiper, published in A Complete Guide to Birds of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest.*





Ratio of the frame to act as a visual anchor. The difference in tones draws the eye creating tension with the frame; the heron then becomes the centre of interest.

Using my 24mm–3000mm Nikon P1000 I had the option of many different compositions, something that would not be possible shooting with a fixed-prime 500mm or 600mm lens. The 200mm–500mm on my D500 could have worked but it would still have been too restrictive compositionally. I could have zoomed in but I already have numerous images of herons flying or feeding and some great shots of their courtship rituals. I decided to use negative space to render my vision.

The light was soft, the sun barely penetrating the clouds, the colours muted. I decided to meter off the bright mudflats and underexpose, causing the heron to be silhouetted. I made sure the bird was looking in to the frame from left to right, a ploy to entice the viewer to wander around the image and then back to the heron. The technique works



so well because in Western culture we are accustomed to read from left to right. Placing the heron in the bottom left encourages the viewer's eye to nat-

urally roam around the image as if reading a book.

"It's never too late to be composed."

## Briefing 4

Summary by M. Church, Vancouver

### Another Silent Spring

Only this time, the tables are turned. While Rachel Carson's famous book documented the loss of birds and bird song because of chemical contamination of the environment, this silent spring is about the reduction in human noise due to the coronavirus pandemic of spring, 2020, and what the birds did about that. Documentation comes from San Francisco and environs where, in urban areas, ambient noise levels – chiefly traffic and aircraft noise – are characteristically three times louder than in nearby rural areas, where noise is dominated by wind. Not so during the mandated shutdown of human activity in the spring of 2020: both urban and rural noise declined – the urban noise so much (about 7 dB) that it was only fractionally greater than rural. The decline in traffic was the major factor. For example, the number of vehicles crossing the Golden Gate Bridge fell by more than two-thirds from the 2019 level to that of 1954.

What did the birds make of this?

Researchers recorded the male territorial songs of White-Crowned Sparrows, birds common in both urban and rural habitats in California. This bird's song consists of a whistle followed by a trill, the character of which defines various local dialects. Recordings were made at the Presidio in downtown San Francisco and at rural sites in Marin County, immediately north of the city. Similar recordings had been made at the same sites in 2015 and 2016, so that direct normal/pandemic time comparisons could be made. In the pandemic spring the urban birds immediately began to sing with reduced loudness (about 4 dB down), allowing them to access lower sound frequencies and enabling more complex trills. Without a comparable reduction in background noise, rural birds did not modify their songs.

The "Lombard effect" is the phenomenon whereby a speaker or singer adjusts the loudness of their voice in order to maintain audibility over background noise. Typically, sound frequency is raised too. The transformation of the urban sparrows' song well exceeded the Lombard effect. In the pandemic spring a bird's song could be detected at twice the distance of the pre-pandemic recordings, despite the softer song. This result has immediate

implications for the birds' welfare. With songs carrying farther against the reduced background noise the bird has the opportunity to control a larger territory. That could mean greater resources, increased chance of mating, and production of more robust offspring. In resource-poor city streets, it could also simply mean a better chance of survival.

Considering this situation in reverse – that is, thinking of the birds in an increasingly noisy city (for example, imagining 2019 versus 1954) it is clear that simple noise pollution may have a significantly deleterious effect on the life of individual birds, hence the health of populations of urban birds. Apparently, the pandemic has not been bad news for every creature.

### Reference

Derryberry, E.P., Phillips, J.N., Derryberry, G.E., Blum, M.J. & Luther, D. 2020. "Singing in a silent spring: Birds respond to a half-century soundscape reversion during the COVID-19 shutdown." *Science* 370: 575-579.

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# Gone Fishing

Chris Siddle, Vernon

## The November List

One activity that has so far seen me through the COVID pandemic is listing birds by the month, the objective being to beat my previous personal records for the North Okanagan region as defined by eBird.

Monthly listing adds a shine to the first of the month, setting it apart from all the other days that can seem repetitive under self-imposed isolation. My previous November record (2015) to beat was 104 species, a puny total when compared to the monthly totals coastal birders can accumulate, but not bad for the Southern Interior.

### November 1

Morning coffee and backyard. I added juncos, including the male with the white streaked auriculars, House Sparrows, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, a Northern Flicker, California Quail, House Finches – 10 species before leaving home.

Breakfast over, I headed to Vernon's Polson Park, familiar to BC twitchers who had travelled here for the errant Prairie Warbler. Fewer than ten Prairies had ever been seen in BC. Local birder Glen Goerzen discovered this bright yellow species. While on lunch break on October 27 he had spotted it along the pathway at the park's south in the deciduous trees along Vernon Creek. Lots of birders had seen the Prairie either on Friday, October 30 or Saturday, October 31. However, many birders failed to locate the very elusive bird.

Gary Davidson joined me at the Park. He had driven two and half hours from Nakusp, but after a morning of scanning the brush we had to admit defeat. However, I was able to add to my list Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Marsh Wren, White-throated Sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, and Virginia Rail, all easy to find in November.

After Gary left, I drove to O'Keefe Pond, northeast of Vernon. Among the Mallards were all five common *Aythya* species: Redheads, Canvasbacks, one Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaups, and Lesser Scaups, both goldeneyes, a Ruddy Duck, Buffleheads and my first un-

common species, two juvenal White-winged Scoters. Across St. Anne Road from the pond in the harvested corn field were 17 Trumpeter Swans grubbing among the harvested corn stalks. During the past decade this corn field has become a traditional spring and fall stopover site for both Trumpeter and Tundra Swans.

Along Otter Lake Road a Hairy Woodpecker flying over a remnant fringe of Ponderosa Pines was a bonus, saving me hours of searching forest for this declining species.

Otter Lake rewarded me with Ring-billed Gulls, Herring Gulls, and 500 Canada Geese, as well as a raft of 51 Common Mergansers. Large assemblies of Common "Mergs" are a feature of valley-bottom North Okanagan lakes in November. Up to three-four thousand, mostly males, have gathered some years on Swan Lake to fish and to swim in long files, males rising to flap their wings even as they continue to stream along the surface with hundreds of closely packed companions. I call these communal displays "parades."

The marsh at Otter's north end rewarded me with a Long-tailed Duck. Long-tails are even scarcer as Okanagan valley migrants than are White-winged Scoters.

A Wilson's Snipe flew low over the marsh. This was another "good" bird, since 99% of our summer's snipe migrate south, leaving a tiny, very local winter population in unfrozen ditches and stream margins.

I ended November 1 with 54 species.

### November 2

At Silver Star Mountain Resort COVID restrictions had tightened security in an already crammed place with little public space. The Knoll is a reliable area spot for Steller's and Canada Jays and Pine Grosbeaks. At the foot of the mountain a side-road rewarded me with a Northern Shrike. However a 40 km drive to Rawlings Lake northeast of Lumby was almost a wasted effort, as thick fog shrouded the lake. I managed to spy three Gadwalls and a Northern Shoveler along the shore.

On my way home I stopped at the north end of Kalamalka Lake where alongside hundreds of Canada Geese were my first Horned Grebes, Glaucous-winged, and California Gulls, another N. Okanagan species especially abundant in November. New total: 65.

### November 3

I added Common Loon, Western Grebe, and Red-necked Grebe by scanning Swan Lake from its east side. Lochdale Road near the North Okanagan Rowing and Dragonboat Club is a public location but a bit distant from the shore. A good scope is a necessity. Revisiting Otter Lake I picked off a Cackling Goose and Hooded Mergansers. A flock of 45 Red-winged Blackbirds at Swan Lake was my last addition for the day. New total: 71.

### November 4

I revisited fog-free Rawlings Lake. My main targets were Eared Grebe, Snow Goose, and Tundra Swan. Eared Grebes breed at Rawlings Lake, the size of the colony between 50–200 pairs, depending upon the emergent vegetation available. The spring of 2020 had been a poor time for the grebes with persistent high water drowning the bulrushes among which the grebes build floating nests. By November only a few birds remain on the lake, the bulk having migrated weeks earlier, but it was easy to pick out five grebes at my first stop. A party of Snow Geese and a Tundra Swan rounded out my visit. Back at Kalamalka Lake I added an Iceland (Thayer's) Gull, the final new bird.

### November 5

Swan Lake Nature Reserve Park was good for a Rough-legged Hawk, American Tree and White-crowned Sparrows, while at nearby Goose Lake I found two Killdeer and the drake Eurasian Wigeon Jack VanDyk had found the day before. By now the law of diminishing returns had taken hold and I would have to visit special locations and habitats to winkle out additional species. Total: 80.

### November 6

Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park preserves the most accessible valley bottom Ponderosa Pine/Douglas-fir forest near Vernon. Today's visit rewarded me with multiple White-breasted and Pygmy nuthatches, a Townsend's Solitaire, a Varied Thrush, thirty Cedar Waxwings feeding on juniper berries, and a dozen Red Crossbills. Finally I stumbled upon a Great Blue Heron at Kirkland Beach Park.



### November 7

My first day with only one new species: thirteen Bohemian Waxwings at Head-of-the-Lake. Total: 88.

### November 8

Luck was with me at Okanagan Landing where both a Cooper's and a Sharp-shinned hawk harassed sparrows trying to feed in weeds. A surprise Barred Owl roosted among some Siberian Elms. The pine-Douglas-fir hillside forests of Adventure Bay produced Mountain Chickadee, Western Bluebird and Clark's Nutcracker. Six new species so late in the month were very pleasing, raising my total to 94. By now I had found all the easier species and the law of diminishing returns was in operation.

### The Rest of November

On the 8th I was walking our dog at the BX Dog Park when a Pileated Woodpecker flew over. Two days later my second visit to Polson Park pathway turned up a very late Wilson's Warbler and a Pacific Wren. I added a young Mew Gull that had been an off-and-on visitor to the North Okanagan. Birder Scott Thompson phoned me that afternoon from the Commonage where he had a shorebird that was keeping its distance. I suspected a Dunlin which can be one of our very late migrants and so it turned out to be when I had it in my scope.

The next morning along Kalamalka Lakeview Road south of town, a young Peregrine Falcon perched on a boulder. Falcons in general are high on my list of favourite birds of all time so this made November 12 special for me. The Peregrine took off, perhaps to try its luck among the many potential prey items flying around the nearby landfill.

On the late afternoon of November 14 at a blackbird pre-roost gathering, among the hundred Red-wings were two Brewer's and a lingering Yellow-headed blackbird as well as a Short-eared Owl. An hour later in the gathering darkness 100 metres from home a Northern Pygmy Owl was prominently outlined in a bush against the post-sunset glow.

From the 19th to the 22nd I searched systematically for birds missing from my list, turning up a Spotted Towhee and a Northern Goshawk along sections of Vernon's Grey Canal trail, three Red

-breasted Mergansers near a parade of Common Mergansers on Swan Lake, an American Dipper along the Shuswap River, a Pine Siskin (absent from the area until late November), and a Great Horned Owl.

The month's final bird, number 111, was in a hawthorn along the Polson Park pathway on November 26. Lisa VanDyk noticed a small shape disappear into the bush, and drew her husband's attention to it. Initially Jack thought it was the Hermit Thrush that had been in the area in late October. I arrived by coincidence, looked at the bird's tawny face and upper breast and wondered if it could be a very late Swainson's Thrush. The opinion of a couple of friends I emailed my photos to finally helped to crush my skepticism – yes, the bird was a Swainson's Thrush, and my last new November bird.

Birds that I missed but that other birders found in the North Okanagan included Wild Turkey, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Canyon Wren, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Cassin's Finch, and Prairie Warbler.

### Final Tally

My final total was 111 species. That most ponds didn't freeze this year was just a matter of luck. In fact, the relatively balmy weather probably helped me a great deal. So did an unusually high number of days of nice weather – maybe not all perfectly sunny, but with cloud high enough that the motivation-sapping depressing gloom of "valley cloud," when the North Okanagan is socked in, was largely absent.

The mild weather also played against me to some extent. Never before in November have I run into so much habitat disturbance by work crews.

Brush removal and the burning of "ingrowth" in Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park closed some of the best remaining local Ponderosa Pine forest. At Okanagan Landing a long, thick hedge, a sparrow magnet, disappeared overnight. Elsewhere, a couple of trails crossing private land were closed.

Enforced COVID-idleness caused more people than usual to visit some of my favourite birding sites. This was not much of a problem except the morning two middle-aged men wanted to throw things at the Okanagan Landing gull roost to see the birds fly. They refrained when I loudly but politely asked them not to. Ok, maybe not so politely. I was there first and my scope and camera carried lenses longer than theirs. My tripod bespoke of a seriousness of intent that their little phones clearly lacked.

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*Below: Another of Mike Yip's Rusty Blackbird shots. See page 10.*



## BCFO Listers' Corner

### 2020 Lists

**NOTE:** If a total is not supplied for two consecutive years the listing will be dropped.

**Tables:** % compared to total species in area list; **incr** increase from 2019; \* preceding number indicates total not submitted; **Red bold** indicates largest increase from the previous year; *Red italics* indicates a significant plateau or other significant increase.

Welcome to the 2020 BCFO Listers' Corner. It was an extraordinary year with travel bans leading to many lists not changing or with minimal increases. Submissions were received from 57 members, one less than 2019. *Liam Ragan* was the only new member to Listers' Corner.

**BC:** **Rosemary Clapham** was best adding 17. Husband *Paul* added 10 reaching the 350 mark. *Wayne Weber* passed the 450 mark by adding 9. *Ken Willis* had an increase of 52 over two years.

BRITISH COLUMBIA - 532					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	486	Mike Tootchin	91.4	3	483
2	461	Sharon Tootchin	86.7	4	457
3	456	Dale Jensen	85.7	6	*450
4	454	Tom Plath	85.3	3	*451
5	<b>451</b>	<b>Wayne Weber</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>442</b>
6	449	Roger Foxall	84.4	4	445
7	446	Dan Tyson	83.8	2	444
8	442	Carlo Giovanella	83.1	2	440
9	441	Peter Candido	82.9	3	438
9	441	Melissa Hafting	82.9	5	436
9	441	Brian Stech	82.9	10	*431
12	439	Michael Force	82.5	4	435
13	438	Val George	82.3	6	432
13	438	Brian Self	82.3	3	435
15	434	Guy Monty	81.6	1	*433
16	432	Kevin Neill	81.2	3	429
17	428	Tony Greenfield	80.5		428
18	424	Mike McGrenere	79.7	4	420
19	414	Dick Cannings	77.8		414
20	413	John Vooy	77.6	2	411

BRITISH COLUMBIA - 532					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
21	412	Larry Cowan	77.4	1	411
21	412	Keith Riding	77.4		414
23	405	Len Jellicoe	76.1		405
23	405	Bryan Gates	76.1	1	404
25	404	Chris Charlesworth	75.9	2	402
25	404	Hank Vanderpol	75.9	4	400
27	*403	Nathan Hentze	75.8		403
28	401	Russ Tkachuk	75.4		401
29	399	Barbara Begg	75.0	1	398
30	396	Rand Rudland	74.4	9	387
31	388	Gary Davidson	72.9	2	386
32	384	Quentin Brown	72.2	1	383
33	379	Eric Tull	71.2	4	375
34	376	Don Wilson	70.7	2	374
35	*373	John Chandler	70.1		373
36	372	Laird Law	69.9	5	367
36	372	Monica Nugent	69.9	4	368
38	370	Ken Morgan	69.5		370
39	369	John Gordon	69.4	8	361
40	366	Gwynneth Wilson	68.8		366
41	365	Bruce Whittington	68.6		365
42	362	Art Martell	68.0		362
43	360	Ben Keen	67.7	1	359
44	351	Andy Buhler	66.0		351
44	351	Marilyn Buhler	66.0		351
46	<b>350</b>	<b>Paul Clapham</b>	<b>65.8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>339</b>
47	340	Josh Inman	63.9	2	338
48	<b>335</b>	<b>Ken Willis</b>	<b>63.0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>*283</b>
49	333	Peter Boon	62.6	4	329
49	333	John Sprague	62.6		333
51	328	Ted Goshulak	61.7	2	326
52	325	John Hodges	61.1	2	323
53	<b>324</b>	<b>Rosemary Clapham</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>307</b>
53	324	Dorothy Copp	60.9	1	*323
55	*318	Neill Vanhinsberg	59.8		318
56	314	Janice Arndt	59.0	1	313
57	*310	Lee Harding	58.3		310
58	307	Krista Kaptein	57.7	10	297
59	*300	Mike Mulligan	56.4		300
60	299	Kathryn Clouston	56.2	4	295
61	*276	Eric Newton	51.9		276

**Canada:** **Paul Clapham** had the largest increase at 10. *John Gordon* & *Wayne Weber* were next with 7. *Ken Willis* joined the list at 365.



CANADA - 691					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	556	Roger Foxall	80.5	3	553
2	537	Tom Plath	77.7	10	*527
3	520	Mike Toochn	75.3	3	517
4	512	Michael Force	74.1	3	509
5	506	Dan Tyson	73.2	2	504
6	504	Eric Tull	72.9	1	503
7	503	Sharon Toochn	72.8	3	500
8	498	Brian Self	72.1	2	496
9	497	Dale Jensen	71.9	7	*490
10	491	Wayne Weber	71.1	7	484
11	484	Kevin Neill	70.0	3	481
12	482	Peter Candido	69.8	3	479
13	479	Carlo Giovanella	69.3	2	477
14	478	Mike McGrenere	69.2	4	474
14	478	Russ Tkachuk	69.2		478
16	474	Dick Cannings	68.6	2	472
17	467	Brian Stech	67.6	8	*459
18	466	Keith Riding	67.4	3	463
19	460	Len Jellicoe	66.6		460
20	459	Rand Rudland	66.4	6	453
21	456	Barbara Begg	66.0	1	455
21	456	Chris Charlesworth	66.0		456
21	456	Larry Cowan	66.0		456
21	*456	Mike Mulligan	66.0		456
25	455	Hank Vanderpol	65.8	5	450
26	454	John Voos	65.7	2	452
27	448	Art Martell	64.8		448
28	*447	Nathan Hentze	64.7		447
29	444	Monica Nugent	64.3	3	441
30	439	Tony Greenfield	63.5		439
31	437	Ken Morgan	63.2		437
32	427	Bryan Gates	61.8	2	425
33	426	Quentin Brown	61.6	1	425
33	*426	John Chandler	61.6		426
35	424	Gwynneth Wilson	61.4		424
36	423	Don Wilson	61.2	3	420
37	420	John Gordon	60.8	7	413
38	419	Sandra Eadie	60.6		419
38	419	John Sprague	60.6		419
40	416	Gary Davidson	60.2	2	414
41	411	Josh Inman	59.5	2	409
42	403	Janice Arndt	58.3	1	402
43	400	Andy Buhler	57.9		400
43	400	Marilyn Buhler	57.9		400
45	399	Laird Law	57.7	2	397
46	391	Ted Goshulak	56.6	1	390
47	381	Dorothy Copp	55.1		*381

CANADA - 691					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
48	380	Paul Clapham	55.0	10	370
49	375	John Hodges	54.3	2	373
50	*374	Neill Vanhinsberg	54.1		374
51	365	Ken Willis	52.8		new
52	359	Peter Boon	52.0	4	355
53	*352	Lee Harding	50.9		352

**ABA (Continental):** Rand Rudland had the largest increase with 17. Gary Davidson & Melissa Hafting had the next largest one year increases at 7 & 6 respectively.

ABA (Continental) - 1,015					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	804	Hank Vanderpol	79.2	2	802
2	792	Mike Toochn	78.0	1	791
3	787	Roger Foxall	77.5	2	785
4	*778	Mike Mulligan	76.7		778
5	740	Russ Tkachuk	72.9		740
6	728	John Voos	71.7	4	724
7	724	Art Martell	71.3		724
8	723	Brian Stech	71.2	9	*714
9	721	Dorothy Copp	71.0	2	*719
10	720	Melissa Hafting	70.9	6	714
11	716	Dale Jensen	70.5	5	*711
12	713	Eric Tull	70.2	3	710
13	710	Sharon Toochn	70.0	2	708
14	691	Chris Charlesworth	68.1	6	*685
15	689	Dan Tyson	67.9		689
16	672	Brian Self	66.2	1	671
17	669	Peter Candido	65.9	2	667
18	666	Gary Davidson	65.6	7	659
19	*655	Nathan Hentze	64.5		655
19	655	Keith Riding	64.5		*652
21	649	John Sprague	63.9		649
22	644	Dick Cannings	63.4	2	642
23	641	Andy Buhler	63.2		641
23	641	Marilyn Buhler	63.2		641
23	641	Kevin Neill	63.2	2	639
26	632	Gwynneth Wilson	62.3		632
27	631	Don Wilson	62.2		631
28	626	Barbara Begg	61.7	1	625
28	626	Carlo Giovanella	61.7	1	625
30	624	Mike McGrenere	61.5	6	*618
31	620	Monica Nugent	61.1	2	618
32	615	Tony Greenfield	60.6		615



ABA (Continental) - 1,015					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
33	611	Len Jellicoe	60.2		611
34	597	Sandra Eadie (ON)	58.8	2	595
35	588	Ken Morgan	57.9		588
35	<b>588</b>	<b>Rand Rudland</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>571</b>
37	575	Larry Cowan	56.7		575
38	572	Bryan Gates	56.4	1	571
39	562	Laird Law	55.4	1	561
40	558	Val George	55.0	4	554
41	*546	John Chandler	53.8		546
42	539	Clive Keen	53.1		540
43	526	Josh Inman	51.8	1	525
44	520	Ted Goshulak	51.2	1	519
45	*466	Lee Harding	45.9		466
46	449	Paul Clapham	44.2	5	444
47	441	Janice Arndt	43.4		441
48	421	John Hodges	41.5	2	419
49	405	Peter Boon	39.9	4	401

**ABA + Hawaii:** Rand Rudland had the largest increase with 32. Gary Davidson improved by 7.

ABA + Hawaii 1,120					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	848	Mike Toochin	75.7	1	847
2	830	Roger Foxall	74.1	2	828
3	*791	Mike Mulligan	70.6		791
4	776	Art Martell	69.3		776
5	768	Sharon Toochin	68.6	2	766
6	763	Eric Tull	68.1	2	761
7	762	Dale Jensen	68.0		*762
8	752	John Voos	67.1	2	750
9	742	Wayne Weber	66.3	2	740
10	<b>673</b>	<b>Gary Davidson</b>	<b>60.1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>666</b>
11	672	Gwynneth Wilson	60.0		672
12	664	Kevin Neill	59.3	2	662
13	649	Monica Nugent	57.9	2	647
14	648	Barbara Begg	57.9	1	647
14	648	Carlo Giovanella	57.9	1	647
16	642	Don Wilson	57.3		642
17	<b>633</b>	<b>Rand Rudland</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>601</b>
18	624	Mike McGrenere	55.7	2	622
19	612	Larry Cowan	54.6		612
20	606	Ken Morgan	54.1		606
21	586	Val George	52.3	4	582
22	582	Bryan Gates	52.0	1	581
23	580	Josh Inman	51.8	1	579

ABA + Hawaii 1,120					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
24	571	Laird Law	51.0		571
25	568	Clive Keen	50.7		569
26	541	Ted Goshulak	48.3		*542
27	475	Janice Arndt	42.4		475
27	*475	Lee Harding	42.4		475
29	470	Paul Clapham	42.0	5	465

**World:** Nigel Mathews had the biggest increase with 305 pushing him over the **6,000** mark. Roger Foxall had the second highest with 146 missing the 6,000 plateau by 3, next year maybe !

WORLD - 10,589					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	7,747	Keith Riding	73.2	92	7,655
2	<b>6,008</b>	<b>Nigel Mathews</b>	<b>56.7</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>5,703</b>
3	<b>5,997</b>	<b>Roger Foxall</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>5,851</b>
4	5,451	Mike Toochin	51.5	1	5,450
5	4,934	Peter Candido	46.6	1	4,933
6	4,838	Sharon Toochin	45.7	3	4,835
7	4,808	Eric Tull	45.4	40	4,768
8	4,689	Art Martell	44.3		4,689
9	4,035	Brian Self	38.1	32	4,003
10	*3,600	Mike Mulligan	34.0		3,600
11	3,584	Rand Rudland	33.8	7	3,577
12	3,576	Laird Law	33.8		3,577
13	3,374	Dale Jensen	31.9		*3,400
14	3,371	Brian Stech	31.8	92	*3,279
15	3,352	Dorothy Copp	31.7	78	*3,274
16	3,280	Barbara Begg	31.0	4	3,276
17	3,234	Hank Vanderpol	30.5	1	3,233
18	3,224	Dick Cannings	30.4	1	3,223
19	3,196	Val George	30.2	8	3,188
20	2,947	Gary Davidson	27.8	7	2,940
21	2,786	Don Wilson	26.3	47	2,739
22	*2,778	Nathan Hentze	26.2		2,778
23	2,433	Michael Force	23.0		2,434
24	2,406	Josh Inman	22.7		2,431
25	2,397	Andy Buhler	22.6		2,397
25	2,397	Marilyn Buhler	22.6		2,397
27	2,385	Ken Morgan	22.5		2,385
28	2,384	Sandra Eadie	22.5	1	2,383
29	*2,359	Lee Harding	22.3		2,359
30	2,321	Chris Charlesworth	21.9	63	*2,258
31	2,212	Monica Nugent	20.9	89	2,123
32	2,120	Bryan Gates	20.0		2,120
33	2,112	Paul Clapham	19.9	3	2,109



WORLD - 10,589					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
34	*2,062	John Chandler	19.5		2,062
35	1,851	Rosemary Clapham	17.5	10	1,841
36	1,695	Mike McGrenere	16.0	26	1,669
37	1,665	John Hodges	15.7	1	1,664
38	1,650	Larry Cowan	15.6		1,650
39	1,602	Tony Greenfield	15.1	1	1,601
40	1,536	Ben Keen	14.5	52	1,484
41	1,228	Wayne Weber	11.6	5	1,223
42	1,053	Ken Willis	9.9	79	*974
43	1,044	Peter Boon	9.9	1	1,043
44	1,036	Clive Keen	9.8		new
45	1,011	Kevin Neill	9.5		1,011
46	951	John Sprague	9.0		951

**World Families:** *Josh Inman* joined the list at 16<sup>th</sup>.

World Families 248					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	232	Peter Candido	93.5		232
2	231	Roger Foxall	93.1	1	230
3	224	Eric Tull	90.3		224
4	221	Mike Toochin	89.1		221
5	217	Brian Self	87.5		217
6	215	Art Martell	86.7		215
7	213	Sharon Toochin	85.9		213
8	209	Laird Law	84.3		210
9	208	Rand Rudland	83.9		213
10	202	Barbara Begg	81.5		202
11	180	Ken Morgan	72.6		180
12	178	Sandra Eadie	71.8		178
13	175	Paul Clapham	70.6		175
14	168	Rosemary Clapham	67.7		168
15	*167	Keith Riding	67.3		167
16	165	Josh Inman	66.5		new
17	*160	Lee Harding	64.5		160
18	145	Bryan Gates	58.5	3	142
19	*143	John Chandler	57.7		143
20	124	Kevin Neill	50.0		124
21	119	Larry Cowan	48.0		119

**North America:** As defined by the ABA.  
**Rosemary Clapham** had the largest increase at 12. Two members, *Wayne Weber* & *Josh Inman*, added their totals too this year's listing.

North America 2086					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	1,630	Brian Stech	78.1	11	*1,619
2	1,612	Dorothy Copp	77.3		*1,612
3	1,479	Mike Toochin	70.9	3	1,476
4	1,471	Roger Foxall	70.5	2	1,469
5	1,430	Keith Riding	68.6	3	1,427
6	1,346	Art Martell	64.5		1346
7	1,176	Rand Rudland	56.4	8	1,168
8	1,141	Wayne Weber	54.7		new
9	1,120	Barbara Begg	53.7	5	1115
10	1,081	Eric Tull	51.8	3	1,078
11	1,051	Gary Davidson	50.4		1,051
12	1,042	Monica Nugent	50.0	2	1,040
13	994	John Hodges	47.7	2	992
14	968	Laird Law	46.4	1	967
15	856	Larry Cowan	41.0		856
16	*853	John Chandler	40.9		853
17	811	Kathryn Clouston	38.9	3	808
18	761	Josh Inman	36.5		new
19	758	Paul Clapham	36.3	7	751
20	*708	Ted Goshulak	33.9		*708
20	708	John Sprague	33.9		708
22	698	Sandra Eadie	33.5	2	696
23	680	Krista Kaptein	32.6	6	674
24	669	Rosemary Clapham	32.1	12	657
25	*612	Lee Harding	29.3		612

**AOS North (AOU):** As defined by the ABA.  
**Rand Rudland** upped his total by 8 and *Krista Kaptein* by 6.

AOS North (AOU) 2,160					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	1,396	Art Martell	64.6		1,396
2	<b>1,204</b>	<b>Rand Rudland</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,196</b>
3	1,184	Dick Cannings	54.8	2	1,182
4	892	Larry Cowan	41.3		892
5	<b>680</b>	<b>Krista Kaptein</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>674</b>

**US Lower 48 :** Three members joined the listing.

Lower Forty Eight US - 933					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	681	Wayne Weber			new
2	662	Mike Toochin			new
3	637	Eric Tull			new
4	551	Dick Cannings	59.1		551

**US “minus” Hawaii:** *Mike Toochin* joined the list in first place at 759. One other birder, *Ken Morgan*, also joined the list.

United States (minus Hawaii) - 1,007					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	759	Mike Toochin	75.4	new	
2	672	Art Martell	66.7		672
3	665	Eric Tull	66.0	new	
4	606	Gary Davidson	60.2		606
5	434	Rand Rudland	43.1	3	431
6	409	Larry Cowan	40.6		409
7	379	Ken Morgan	37.6	1	378

**ATPAT: Laird Law** had the best increase at 57 with **Dick Cannings** only one back with 56. *Rand Rudland* joined the list in 9<sup>th</sup>.

All Ticks Provinces And Territories - 5,263					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	3,033	Eric Tull	57.6	3	3,030
2	2,975	Roger Foxall	56.5	4	2,971
3	1,921	Dick Cannings	36.5	56	1,865
4	1,789	Wayne Weber	34.0	5	1,784
5	*1,703	Mike Mulligan	32.4		1,703
6	1,498	Dan Tyson	28.5	3	1,495
7	1,485	Janice Arndt	28.2	1	1,484
8	1,273	Barabara Begg	24.2	1	1,272
9	1,259	Rand Rudland	23.9	new	
10	1,258	John Sprague	23.9		1,258
11	1,256	Laird Law	23.9	57	1,199
12	1,102	Josh Inman	20.9	2	1,100
13	986	Sandra Eadie	18.7		986
14	914	Brian Stech	17.4	10	*904
15	911	Larry Cowan	17.3	1	910
16	*812	John Chandler	15.4		812
17	760	Dorothy Copp	14.4	1	*759

**NMT:** This category has shrunk over the past few years. **Janice Arndt** edged out *Mike McGrenere* this year by 3.

Non-Motorized Transport				
#	2020	Name & location	incr	2019
1	316	Mike McGrenere - Victoria	4	312
2	169	Janice Arndt - Nelson	7	162
3	115	Barbara Begg - Sidney		115
4	115	Larry Cowan - Pitt Meadows	2	113

**BC Winter: "Winter" - Dec/Jan/Feb to Dec. 31, 2020.** **Wayne Weber** showed the best improvement with 5.

B.C. Winter List - Dec / Jan / Feb					
#	2020	Name	incr	2019	
1	312	Dan Tyson	1	311	
2	308	Mike Toochin	2	306	
3	301	Tom Plath		*301	
4	276	Wayne Weber	5	271	
5	248	Carlo Giovanella	4	*244	
6	228	Larry Cowan		228	
7	210	Paul Clapham	4	*206	
8	194	Eric Tull	2	192	
9	138	Janice Arndt		138	

**Canada Winter:** Two joined this list.

Canada Winter				
#	2020	Name	incr	2019
1	312	Tom Plath		new
2	309	Mike Toochin	2	307
3	256	Eric Tull		new

**Alberta:** No changes.

Alberta - No Change!

ALBERTA - 425					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	364	Mike Mulligan	85.6		364
2	360	Eric Tull	84.7		361
3	323	Hank Vanderpol	76.0		323
4	276	Melissa Hafting	64.9		*276
5	273	Tom Plath	64.2		*273
6	248	Wayne Weber	58.4		248
7	*244	Chris Charlesworth	57.4		244
8	241	Roger Foxall	56.7		241
9	235	Dan Tyson	55.3		235
10	222	Bryan Gates	52.2		222
11	220	Gary Davidson	51.8		220
12	215	Monica Nugent	50.6		215
13	214	Dick Cannings	50.4		214
14	214	Len Jellicoe	50.4		214
15	208	Josh Inman	48.9		208
16	190	Larry Cowan	44.7		190
17	185	Tony Greenfield	43.5		185
18	184	Mike Toochin	43.3		184
19	181	Dale Jensen	42.6		*181



**Yukon Territory:** One new lister, *Mike Toochin*, joined in 15<sup>th</sup>.

YUKON TERRITORY - 333					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	172	Dick Cannings	51.7		172
2	166	Tony Greenfield	49.8		165
3	155	Eric Tull	46.5		155
4	142	Roger Foxall	42.6		142
5	126	Laird Law	37.8		126
6	123	Gary Davidson	36.9		123
7	113	John Sprague	33.9		113
8	112	Rand Rudland	33.6		112
9	109	Wayne Weber	32.7		109
10	106	Art Martell	31.8		106
11	102	Brian Self	30.6		102
12	91	Dan Tyson	27.3		91
13	86	John Hodges	25.8		86
13	80	Dale Jensen	24.0		*80
15	80	Mike Toochin	24.0	new	
16	64	Dorothy Copp	19.2		*64
16	64	Brian Stech	19.2		*64
18	53	Paul Clapham	15.9		53

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES - 302					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	189	Laird Law	62.6		189
2	180	Eric Tull	59.6		180
3	155	Tony Greenfield	51.3		155
4	133	Rand Rudland	44.0		133
5	129	Janice Arndt	42.7		*129
6	105	Roger Foxall	34.8		105
7	98	Brian Self	32.5		98
8	97	Barbara Begg	32.1		97
9	86	Mike Toochin	28.5		86
10	84	John Sprague	27.8		84
11	71	Art Martell	23.5		71
12	70	Paul Clapham	23.2		70
13	70	Rosemary Clapham	23.2		70
14	*64	Lee Harding	21.2		64
15	54	John Hodges	17.9		54
16	53	Gary Davidson	17.5		*53
17	52	Wayne Weber	17.2		52
18	40	Dick Cannings	13.2		40

**Yukon-NWT-Nunavut :** The species total has been corrected from last year. Three have joined the list, *Laird Law* in 2nd, *Tony Greenfield* in 3rd & *Rand Rudland* in 5th.

Yukon - NWT - Nunavut - 373					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	205	Eric Tull	55		*205
2	204	Laird Law	55		new
3	196	Tony Greenfield	53		new
4	173	Dick Cannings	46		173
5	170	Rand Rudland	46		new
6	109	Wayne Weber	29		109

**Washington:** Dan Tyson had the highest increase with 3.

WASHINGTON STATE - 518					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	413	Wayne Weber	79.7	1	412
2	344	Melissa Hafting	66.4		*344
3	<b>338</b>	<b>Dan Tyson</b>	<b>65.3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>335</b>
4	327	Mike Toochin	63.1		327
5	311	Brian Self	60.0		311
6	303	Tom Plath	58.5		*303
7	286	Hank Vanderpol	55.2		*286
8	265	Roger Foxall	51.2		265
9	256	Keith Riding	49.4		256
10	252	Brian Stech	48.6		*247
11	236	Dale Jensen	45.6		*236
12	232	Dorothy Copp	44.8		*232
13	232	Eric Tull	44.8		232
14	231	Art Martell	44.6		231
15	224	Larry Cowan	43.2		224
16	195	Josh Inman	37.6	3	192

**Alaska:** Mike Toochin joined the list in first place.

ALASKA - 537					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	<b>315</b>	<b>Mike Toochin</b>	<b>58.7</b>		<b>new</b>
2	217	Eric Tull	40.4		217
3	183	Wayne Weber	34.1		183
4	163	Bruce Whittington	30.4		163
5	151	Monica Nugent	28.1		151

**Vancouver : Rosemary Clapham & John Gordon** both had top one year increases of 12. *John's* increase catapulted him over the 300 plateau. *Roger Foxall* pushed past the 350 mark.

VANCOUVER AREA - 430					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	379	Mike Toochin	88.1	1	378
2	365	Dan Tyson	84.9	2	363
3	360	Carlo Giovanella	83.7	2	358
4	359	Brian Self	83.5	2	357
5	359	Wayne Weber	83.5	3	356
6	358	Sharon Toochin	83.3	new	
7	356	Tom Plath	82.8		*356
8	351	<b>Roger Foxall</b>	81.6	3	348
9	350	Keith Riding	81.4	3	347
10	348	Peter Candido	80.9	7	341
11	343	Quentin Brown	79.8	4	339
12	332	Brian Stech	77.2	3	*329
13	331	Larry Cowan	77.0	1	330
14	331	Melissa Hafting	77.0	12	*319
15	313	John Voos	72.8	3	310
16	*311	John Chandler	72.3		311
17	310	Paul Clapham	72.1	9	301
18	307	<b>John Gordon</b>	71.4	12	295
19	294	<b>Rosemary Clapham</b>	68.4	12	282
20	294	Kevin Neill	68.4		294
21	288	Dick Cannings	67.0		288
22	284	Monica Nugent	66.0	5	279
23	*279	Neill Vanhinsberg	64.9		279
24	*277	Ted Goshulak	64.4		277
25	264	Ken Willis	61.4	11	*253
26	235	Bryan Gates	54.7		235
27	234	Don Wilson	54.4		234
28	231	Josh Inman	53.7		238
29	212	Eric Tull	49.3		212

**Vancouver Island : Kevin Neill** improved by 14 pushing him over the 300 plateau. *Guy Monty* passed the 350 mark with a two year improvement of 19.

Vancouver Island - 388					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	365	Mike McGrenere	94.1	7	358
2	360	<b>Guy Monty</b>	92.8	19	*341
3	351	Barbara Begg	90.5	1	350
4	349	Bryan Gates	89.9	10	339
5	324	Mike Toochin	83.5	4	320

Vancouver Island - 388					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
6	316	Bruce Whittington	81.4		316
7	309	<b>Kevin Neill</b>	79.6	14	295
8	296	Tom Plath	76.3	13	*283
9	288	Ken Morgan	74.2	1	287
10	287	Wayne Weber	74.0	9	278
11	286	Eric Tull	73.7	6	280
12	278	Art Martell	71.6		278
13	271	Dan Tyson	69.8	2	269
14	270	Roger Foxall	69.6	2	268
15	262	Krista Kaptein	67.5	10	252
16	234	Kathryn Clouston	60.3	9	225
17	212	Larry Cowan	54.6		212
18	207	John Sprague	53.4	1	206

**Victoria : Monica Nugent** was top gun with a gain of 17. *Kevin Neill* had the second best improvement with 15.

Victoria Area - 362					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	350	Mike McGrenere	96.7	6	344
2	336	Barbara Begg	92.8	1	335
3	334	Bryan Gates	92.3	13	321
4	304	Bruce Whittington	84.0		304
5	283	<b>Kevin Neill</b>	78.2	15	268
6	275	Neill Vanhinsberg	76.0	4	271
7	269	Eric Tull	74.3	7	262
8	267	Wayne Weber	73.8	8	259
9	249	Tom Plath	68.8	7	*242
10	235	Keith Riding	64.9		235
11	229	Dan Tyson	63.3	3	226
12	177	Larry Cowan	48.9		177
13	173	<b>Monica Nugent</b>	47.8	17	156
14	*169	Neill Vanhinsberg	46.7		169
15	*131	Ted Goshulak	36.2		131

**Okanagan : Larry Cowan** had the best one year improvement of 14 while *John Voos* two year gain of 31 pushed him over the 250 mark. *Michael Force*, one of the top five listers, had an increase of 9.

Okanagan Valley - 332					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	327	Chris Charlesworth	98.5	6	321
2	310	Dick Cannings	93.4		310
3	310	Gwynneth Wilson	93.4		310



**Okanagan Valley - 332**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
4	298	Don Wilson	89.8	1	297
5	<b>294</b>	<b>Michael Force</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>285</b>
6	276	Mike Toochin	83.1	1	275
7	271	Hank Vanderpol	81.6	3	268
8	271	Wayne Weber	81.6	4	267
9	265	Gary Davidson	79.8	3	*262
10	260	Dan Tyson	78.3		260
11	<b>255</b>	<b>John Vooys</b>	<b>76.8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>*224</b>
12	235	Tom Plath	70.8		*235
13	235	Keith Riding	70.8	6	*229
14	234	Tony Greenfield	70.5		234
15	224	Laird Law	67.5	4	220
16	193	Bryan Gates	58.1		193
17	189	Brian Stech	56.9		*189
18	<b>188</b>	<b>Larry Cowan</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>174</b>
19	175	Eric Tull	52.7		175
20	*163	Neill Vanhinsberg	49.1		163
21	162	Dorothy Copp	48.8		*162

**North Pacific Pelagic Waters**

#	2020	Name	incr	2019
1	199	Michael Force		199
2	136	Mike Toochin		136
3	105	Ken Morgan		105
4	<b>87</b>	<b>Tom Plath</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*86</b>
5	78	Bruce Whittington		78
6	72	Art Martell		72
7	71	Kevin Neill		71
8	49	Monica Nugent		49
9	45	Bryan Gates		45

**Peace River Area - 272**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	245	Laird Law	90.1		245
2	228	Tom Plath	83.8		*228
3	209	Tony Greenfield	76.8		209
4	207	Mike Toochin	76.1		207
5	184	Bryan Gates	67.6		184
6	<b>182</b>	<b>Wayne Weber</b>	<b>66.9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>180</b>
7	165	Dan Tyson	60.7		165
8	155	Larry Cowan	57.0		155
9	128	Dorothy Copp	47.1		*128
9	128	Brian Stech	47.1		*128

**West Kootenay:** All that submitted totals for 2020 improved. **Wayne Weber** had the best improvement with 14.

**West Kootenay Area - 313**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	296	Gary Davidson	94.6	3	293
2	264	Janice Arndt	84.3	3	261
3	<b>196</b>	<b>Wayne Weber</b>	<b>62.6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>182</b>
4	*144	Lee Harding	46.0		144

**Creston Valley Area - 303**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	193	Gary Davidson	64		*193
2	176	Janice Arndt	58		176
3	142	Wayne Weber	47		142

**Prince George:** Wayne Weber had the best increase at 24. *Laird Law* widened his lead over *Cathy Antoniazzi* by two with an increase of 5.

**Prince George Area - 297**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	<b>281</b>	<b>Laird Law</b>	<b>94.6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>276</b>
2	278	Cathy Antoniazzi	93.6	3	275
3	*214	Nathan Hentze	72.1		214
4	193	Don Wilson	65.0		193
5	168	Dan Tyson	56.6		168
6	144	Larry Cowan	48.5		144
7	<b>134</b>	<b>Wayne Weber</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>110</b>
8	133	Gary Davidson	44.8		*133

**Manning PP - 206**

#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	155	Mike McGrenere	75.2		155
2	141	Melissa Hafting	68.4		*141
3	125	Wayne Weber	60.7		125
4	111	Dan Tyson	53.9		111
5	<b>110</b>	<b>Brian Self</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>108</b>
6	91	Larry Cowan	44.2		91
6	*91	Neill Vanhinsberg	44.2		91

**Fraser Valley:** Too clarify the FV listing. The boundaries have been changed to match the eBird "Fraser Valley Region". **Wayne Weber** showed the best increase at 7. *John Vooys* & *John Gordon* both added 4 to their totals.

Fraser Valley - 318					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	256	John Vooys	80.5	4	252
2	248	Dan Tyson	78.0		249
3	214	Wayne Weber	67.3	7	207
4	164	Larry Cowan	51.6		164
5	158	John Gordon	49.7	4	*154

Blackie Spit (Vanc) - 236					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	186	Wayne Weber	78.8		186
2	183	Dan Tyson	77.5	1	182
3	130	Brian Self	55.1	7	123
4	121	Larry Cowan	51.3		121
5	*101	Neill Vanhinsberg	42.8		101

Sea & Iona Islands (Vanc) - 300					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	292	Mike Toochin	97.3	5	287
2	280	Tom Plath	93.3	4	*276
3	245	Dan Tyson	81.7		245
4	244	Wayne Weber	81.3	4	240
5	182	Larry Cowan	60.7		182
6	*170	Neill Vanhinsberg	56.7		170

**Westham & Reifel Islands :** *Mike Toochin & Tom Plath* joined the list in 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Westham & Reifel Islands (Vanc) - 280					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	228	Wayne Weber	81.4	1	227
2	225	Mike Toochin	80.4		new
3	215	Tom Plath	76.8		new
4	211	Dan Tyson	75.4	1	210
5	161	Larry Cowan	57.5	1	160
6	*149	Neill Vanhinsberg	53.2		149

Semiamhoo Peninsula (WA) - 245					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	230	Carlo Giovanella	93.9	2	228
2	221	Roger Foxall	90.2	6	*215
3	216	Dan Tyson	88.2	1	215

City of Pitt Meadows - 229					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	205	Wayne Weber	89.5	1	204
2	201	Larry Cowan	87.8	2	199
3	*121	Neill Vanhinsberg	52.8		121

**Comox Valley :** *Kathryn Clouston* improved her total by 7. *Guy Monty* joined the listing in 4th.

Comox Valley - 319					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	259	Art Martell	81.2		259
2	*244	Nathan Hentze	76.5		244
3	236	Krista Kaptein	74.0	2	234
4	235	Guy Monty	73.7		new
5	227	Kathryn Clouston	71.2	7	220

Salt Spring Island - 239					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	188	Ren Ferguson	78.7	1	187
2	174	John Sprague	72.8	1	173
3	134	Marian Porter	56.1	3	131
4	114	Wayne Weber	47.7		114

**Sunshine Coast :** *Wayne Weber* had the biggest change with 7. Close behind were *John Hodges & Rand Rudland* at 6 & 5 respectively.

Sunshine Coast - 307					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	283	Tony Greenfield	92.2	1	282
2	272	Rand Rudland	88.6	5	267
3	263	John Hodges	85.7	6	257
4	257	Russ Tkachuk	83.7		257
5	180	Dan Tyson	58.6	1	179
6	145	Wayne Weber	47.2	7	138

Haida Gwaii - 190					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	134	Mike Toochin	70.5		134
2	108	Bruce Whittington	56.8		108
3	97	Laird Law	51.1		97
4	79	Krista Kaptein	41.6		79
5	*78	Mike Mulligan	41.1		78
6	56	Keith Riding	29.5		56



**New this year** we feature three new categories. eBird Regions, Year Lists for 2020, & ARDAT (All Regional Districts Added Together) put forth by Wayne Weber whose data was used.

YEAR LISTS					
Vancouver - 350					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	269	Melissa Hafting	76.9		
2	265	Mike Toochn	75.7		
3	261	Roger Foxall	74.6		

eBird Metro Vancouver - 401					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	261	John Gordon	74.6		
1	261	Keith Riding	74.6		

British Columbia - 532					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	326	Keith Riding	93.1		
2	289	Mike Toochn	82.6		
3	205	John Hodges	58.6		

Sunshine Coast - 307					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	201	John Hodges	57.4		

**ARDAT (All Regional Districts Added Together)**  
This new listing is the sum of all eBird Regional Districts for British Columbia. It is based on data for BCFO members who use eBird and have a public profile. Members who do not use eBird are also welcome to submit their totals.

*Wayne Weber - "There are at least 8 additional birders with ARDAT lists of over 1,800, so good luck on increasing these totals in 2021!"*

eBird - All Regional Districts Added Together - 8,465					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
1	4,179	Wayne Weber	49.4		
2	3,829	Dick Cannings	45.2		
3	3,750	Michael Shepard	44.3		
4	3,422	Guy Monty	40.4		
5	3,322	Chris Charlesworth	39.2		
6	3,300	Dan Tyson	39.0		
7	3,262	Chris Siddle	38.5		
8	2,896	Liron Gertsman	34.2		
9	2,812	Brian Self	33.2		

eBird - All Regional Districts Added Together - 8,465					
#	2020	Name	%	incr	2019
10	2,801	Keith Riding	33.1		
11	2,661	John Reynolds	31.4		
12	2,428	Dave Fraser	28.7		
14	2,300	Nathan Hentze	27.2		
15	2,090	Krista Kaptein	24.7		
16	2,029	Peter Candido	24.0		

eBird Regions				
Region	2020	Name	+	
Capital (RD)	184	Liam Ragan		
Comox/Strathcona	247	Krista Kaptein		
Metro Vancouver	359	Brian Self		

The remaining listings are for areas with 1 or 2 submissions, grouped where possible, by the BC Tourism Zones.

Vancouver Coast & Mnt.	2020	Name	+	2019
Abbotsford	218	John Voos		218
ATMAT (Vanc) **	2,438	Carlo Giovanella		new
Colony Farm RP	171	Larry Cowan	1	170
Cypress PP	93	Brian Self		new
Iona	278	Mike Toochn	4	274
Iona	261	Sharon Toochn		new
Nathan Creek	80	Ted Goshulak	5	*75
Powell River	77	John Hodges		new
Reifel	226	Brian Self	1	225
Richmond + Sea & Iona	304	Mike Toochn	6	298
Richmond + Sea & Iona	291	Tom Plath		new
Trinity Western U Campus	*154	Ted Goshulak		154
Vancouver CBC Circle	309	Dan Tyson	1	308
Vancouver Winter	234	Carlo Giovanella	4	230

**\*\* ATMAT - All The Months Added Together**

Vancouver Island	2020	Name	+	2019
Nanaimo District	302	Guy Monty		new
Nanaimo	233	Peter Boon	21	212
Saturna Island	102	Tony Greenfield		102

Kootenay/Rockies	2020	Name	+	2019
Columbia Valley	*127	Bryan Gates		127
Mt. Robson PP	148	Laird Law		148
Revelstoke	150	Wayne Weber		150
Yoho NP	124	Wayne Weber		124

Cariboo/Chilcotin	2020	Name	+	2019
Williams Lake Area	160	Bryan Gates		160



Thompson/Okanagan	2020	Name	+	2019
Kamloops	258	Wayne Weber	2	256
Nicola Watershed	256	Wayne Weber	2	254
Princeton	110	Larry Cowan		110
Princeton	90	Bryan Gates		90

NBC	2020	Name	+	2019
Gwaii Haanas NP	87	Bruce Whittington		87

USA	2020	Name	+	2019
Idaho	214	Wayne Weber		214
Montana	207	Eric Tull		207
Montana	*205	Wayne Weber		205

Other	2020	Name	+	2019
ABA(c) Photographed	655	Brian Stech	14	*641
BC / Alaska	543	Mike Tootchin	1	542
NA + Hawaii	814	Josh Inman		new
Over 1,500m	113	Mike McGrene	1	112
Over 1,500m	106	Wayne Weber		106
World Photographed	2,352	Brian Stech		new

A reminder, there are other opportunities for your listings with categories not encompassed by BCFO Listers' Corner. These include the **American Birding Association** and **Canadian Listers' Corner**.

<http://www.neilyworld.com/neilyworld/listerscorner/listers-corner.htm>

I would like to thank all those who submitted their totals for this article. Wishing everyone continued good birding in 2021.

Larry Cowan

*Photo, top: A Bushtit photographed by John Gordon (Surrey) in Boundary Bay.*

*Photo, right: A juvenile Northern Goshawk photographed by Mike Yip (NanOOSE Bay) in the Spider Lake area, Central Vancouver Island.*

