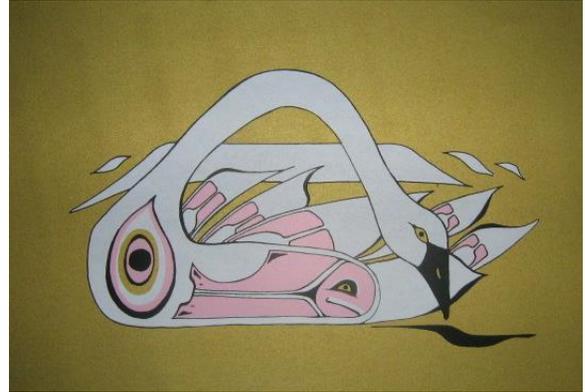


Comox Valley Naturalists Society

March 2020 Newsletter



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About This Issue

This issue of the newsletter has a theme: birds and birding in the Comox Valley. Art Martell gives us an account of the 100-year history of our Christmas Bird Count, Krista Kaptein updates her article from 2016 on the K'omoks Important Bird Area, Steph Nathan's article from 2016 tells the history of the swan count, Bruce Moffat informs us about short-haul migrations, and Betty Brooks amuses us with old names for birds. Enjoy the issue!

President's Corner

Things to Do on Your "Stay-cation"

By *Jim Boulter*

As I write this (March 16), Annette and I are halfway through a 2-week "stay-cation," a stay-at-home vacation from work and the regular daily activities we are accustomed to: no shopping, going out in public, chasing down CVN things, or going to work, in our case. The term "self-isolate" just seems so negative.

The first flu-like symptoms came on March 8, and after the usual 2 or 3 day lag, we both were sick. Although assured that it was not COVID-19, our doctor recommended a 2-week isolation period to prevent transmission to others. He told us to watch out for worsening conditions, which applies to all sicknesses, but otherwise "take 2 aspirins and call in 2 weeks".

Our first week was not enjoyable, what with the sniffles, sneezing, and fevers, but that is why we call it a "dis-ease". Now that we are starting to feel better, the

stay-cation is quite nice, like a long string of quiet spring Sundays. We live in a low-key neighbourhood, but we can still usually hear traffic on the parkways and busier roads. Not now though. Few cars seem to be moving on the roads, as there are likely few places to go. For our part, we have no intention of taking the car out until we are through the 14 days.

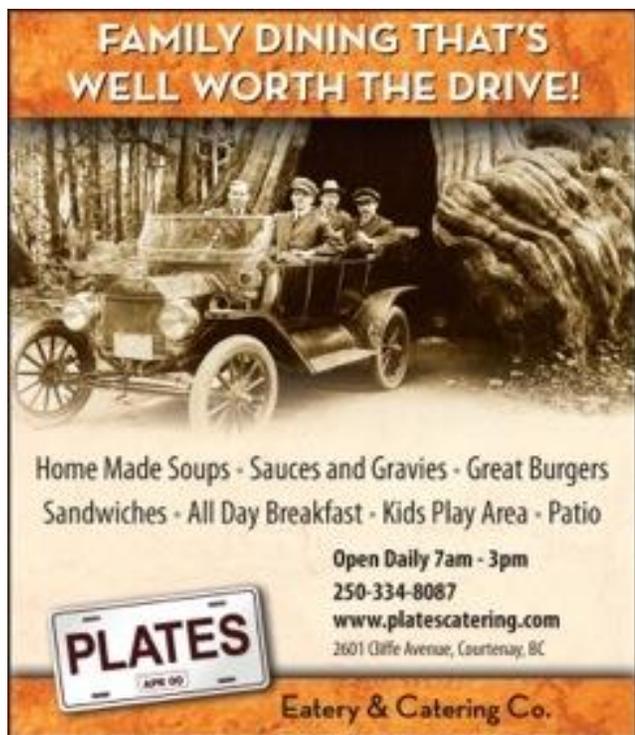
As early adopters of the 2-week rule, we decided to do a few things we would like to do, but have never seemed to find the time for. We listed the ones we could think of and wrote them down so that we could return to the list as this thing progresses. I would suggest you do the same thing when your turn for a stay-cation comes around.

- Catch up on your reading. If you have downloaded a number of books and "want to reads" into your devices over the years, now is a good time to sort out which ones are still interesting and which can be dumped. Or look for other reads or join an on-line book club.
- Write real letters to the family, friends and especially your grandkids. Our 12-year-old granddaughter asked me last year to be her pen-pal, and we have exchanged three or four letters since that time. All you need is a book of stamps, and the ability and willingness to walk to the closest mailbox.
- Take a virtual tour! Do you have a favourite museum or a bucket-list site you want to visit? There are probably dozens of video clips for almost any site you can think of. We have spent so much time doing this when we plan our vacations to new places that it sometimes seems like déjà vu when we finally get there.
- Get outside, as if we have to suggest that to our members. The width of a road provides plenty of social distancing, although you have to be careful on those narrow forest trails. Walking in large groups is not recommended, and carpooling is definitely out of the question, but fresh air and forest bathing are good

for the soul. And you can store the images of the forest up so that you can use them for your meditation.

- Meditate for an hour daily. I used to do a lot of meditating in my 30s. I wonder why I stopped it.
- Watch the birds. Our sundeck overlooks a riparian strip about 12 meters wide that borders a tributary of Piercy Creek, and there are always birds there. I cannot hear most of their calls, but I can watch them interact with each other and different species, and the southern exposure is great for sunbathing.
- Spring cleanup! You know how there's always something to do in the back 40, well now is the time. If you are like me, your workshop and storage areas could do with thinning out and tidying up. We raked some leaves a few days back and I have taken to checking our bulbs and bushes for new growth. Camas is up 3 inches, and fawn lily leaves all out. Can the flowers be far behind?
- Make summer plans. One set of friends just bought a travel trailer, another set are planning their once-very-3-year trip to Nova Scotia by trailer.

Well, enough with the list. Time to check out the bulbs and maybe a short walk around the neighbourhood, maybe as far as the mailbox.



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The Comox Christmas Bird Count 1919 to 2019

A Century of Citizen Science

By Art Martell

This past December, 62 participants spent the day identifying and counting 25,592 individuals of 105 species of birds on the Comox Christmas Bird Count, a tradition in the Comox Valley since 1919. In fact CVN originated in a discussion after the Christmas Bird Count of 1965 as the founders were relaxing after tallying up the day's efforts.

The Christmas Bird Count began on Christmas Day 1900 with 27 dedicated birders at 25 locations in the United States and Canada. The Christmas Bird Count is now North America's longest-running Citizen Science project with counts happening at over 2000 localities throughout the Western Hemisphere. The information collected by thousands of volunteer participants forms one of the world's largest sets of wildlife survey data. The results are used by conservation biologists and naturalists to assess the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. A long-term perspective is vital to inform strategies to protect birds and their habitats, and help identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

The first Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in the Comox Valley was run by Allan Brooks, alone, on 24 December 1919. Theed Pearse conducted a count in the same area on 1 January 1923 and continued to conduct and compile counts most years through 27 December 1959. The counts were run from the Condensory Bridge in Courtenay, along the river to its mouth, and along the shoreline through Comox to the base of Goose Spit. It was normally done by a single party of one or two people who covered 16 km on foot and took seven hours.

Since 1961 the Comox CBC has been run in the standard 24 km circle, which includes the original 1919-1959 count area. The Comox CBC circle is centered on the old Comox Post Office, has the standard diameter of 24.1 km and is divided into 13 count areas. The number of participants increased steadily from 1961 to the mid-1970s and has been about 40-60 annually since then.

The record from the early Comox CBCs gives us a picture of the bird life in the region when the area was still dominated by farms and forests and the human population was only a fraction of what it is today. Theed Pearse noted in 1946:

In 1917 there was little more than a fringe of settlement along the coast line. Since then nearly all the forest has

been removed, and a deciduous growth, chiefly willow and alder, has taken its place. There has been quite a lot more land cleared, but nothing to compare with the area denuded. Settlement still remains along a fringe, if rather wider than previously.

Since then the human population of the Comox Valley increased steadily, with a significant expansion of suburban development, and it has been rapidly losing its sensitive ecosystems, including older second-growth forests and seasonally flooded agricultural fields.

A total of 121 species of birds was reported on the Comox CBC from 1919 to 1959. An average of 52 species was recorded per count, about half of that recorded on the much larger Comox CBC today, but similar to the number of species recorded by a single team.

There are some noticeable changes in numbers of some common species over the last century, based on the Comox CBCs. Numbers of many species of ducks (American Wigeon, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Surf Scoter, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser) and waterbirds (Red-necked Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant) have increased significantly. Numbers of Western Grebe have decreased significantly but that may be due, at least in part, to a shift in feeding areas.

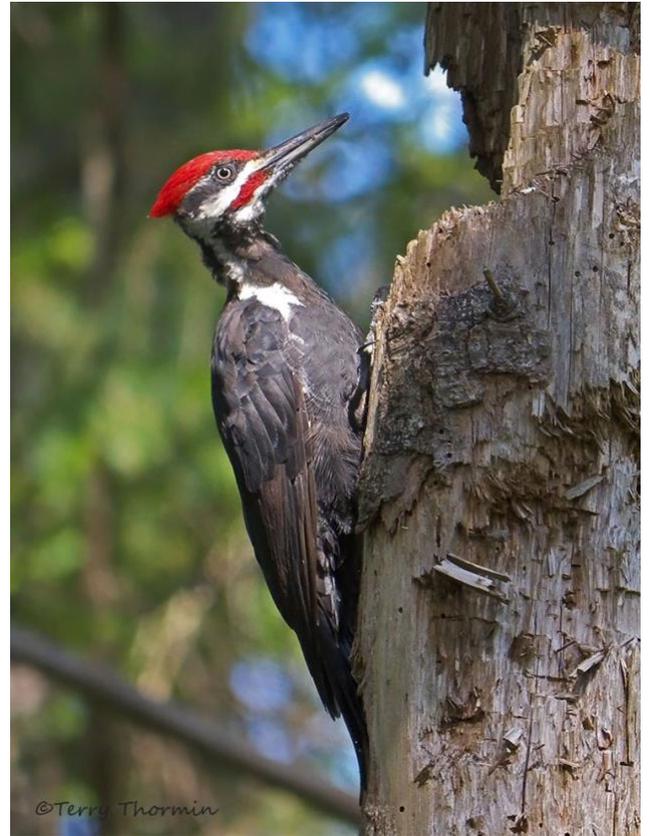


Red-necked Grebe.

Photo: Terry Thormin

Woodpeckers (Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker) have increased significantly as have wintering sparrows (Spotted Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco). Likewise Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch have increased significantly. This suggests an increased concentration of wintering birds in the Comox Valley with a decrease in forest and agricultural lands

and an increase in suburban habitats and bird feeders. Similarly, Red-winged Blackbird and Brewers Blackbird each show a significant positive trend and winter in large numbers in the Comox Valley.



Pileated Woodpecker.

Photo: Terry Thormin

A few species—Gray Partridge (1959), Western Bluebird (1936), Crested Myna (1938), Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (1931, 1933)—were recorded on the early CBCs but have never been recorded on CBCs since then. However, several species that were rare or uncommon on the early Comox CBCs are regular today:

- A Canada Goose was recorded in 1932. Following the introductions on Vancouver Island there are a few records from late 1960s and early 1970s and a steady increase since then.
- Ring-necked Ducks were reported in 1930 and in 1966 but have been recorded regularly since 1977.
- Bald Eagles were recorded in low numbers on the early CBCs. Vast numbers of eagles had been killed under the bounty system on the coasts of British Columbia and Alaska in the early 1900s and Theed Pearse observed in 1946 that, in the Comox Valley, Bald Eagles "have never recovered from the

iniquitous bounty of some twenty years ago". Bald Eagles have now increased significantly.

- Red-tailed Hawks and Merlins were uncommon on the early CBCs but have also increased significantly. The increase is similar to that shown by Bald Eagles, and may also reflect populations recovering from previous declines caused by environmental contaminants.
- Northwestern Crows were much more common than Common Ravens on the early CBCs but have now decreased significantly while Common Ravens have increased significantly.
- European Starlings were first recorded in the Comox Valley on 21 December 1951 and were recorded on the Comox CBC in 1953, 1954, and 1957. They increased through the mid-1990s and have since decreased.
- House Finches were wintering on the coast by the mid-1950s and were first reported in the Comox Valley in 1954. They were recorded on the Comox CBC in 1956 and 1957 and are now common residents in the Comox Valley.
- White-crowned Sparrows (1927, 1942) and Golden-crowned Sparrows (1951, 1953, 1954) were both uncommon on the early Comox CBCs but both are now regular on the Comox CBCs.



White-crowned Sparrow. *Photo: Terry Thormin*

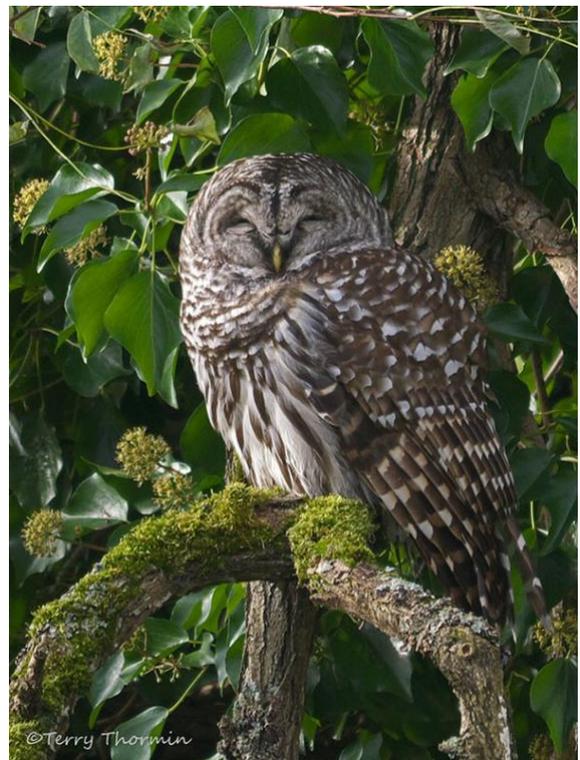
- Red-winged Blackbirds were uncommon on the early CBCs but have increased substantially and are now regular residents in the Comox Valley.

Several additional species that were not recorded 1919-1959 are also regular today:

- Trumpeter Swans were seldom seen in the Comox Valley in the first half of the 20th century. They were

first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1963 and have increased significantly.

- Rock Pigeons were not recorded on the 1956 Check list – birds of Comox and District. Although they were resident in the Comox Valley, they were not recorded on the CBC until 1973, and have increased significantly since 1976.
- Eurasian Collared Doves have been wintering in the Comox Valley since at least 2010 and were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 2012. They are currently common residents in the Comox Valley.
- Anna's Hummingbirds were not confirmed wintering in B.C. until 1959. They were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1973 and currently winter regularly in the Comox Valley and appear to be increasing.
- Barn Owls were known as a resident only on the Fraser River delta in 1946. They were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1988 and are currently uncommon residents in the Comox Valley.
- Barred Owls were first recorded on the coast of B.C. in 1966 and were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1992. They are currently common residents in the Comox Valley.



Barred Owl. *Photo: Terry Thormin*

- Bushtits were reported nearby at Miracle Beach in 1953 and were recorded as rare on the 1956 Checklist. They were first recorded on the Comox

CBC in 1962 and are currently common residents in the Comox Valley.

- Marsh Wrens were not recorded on the 1956 Checklist. They were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1967 and are currently uncommon residents in the Comox Valley.
- Brown-headed Cowbirds were not recorded on the 1956 Checklist. They were first recorded on the Comox CBC in 1970 and are currently uncommon in winter in the Comox Valley.

The efforts of the many dedicated citizen scientists over the past century allow us to see the changes that have occurred in the birdlife of the Comox Valley and form a basis for measuring the changes that will occur in the future. At the same time, the Christmas Bird Counts provide enjoyment of nature and friends for those who volunteer on the counts. Whether novice or experienced, all are welcome to participate.

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The K'omoks IBA

Our Important Bird Area

By Krista Kaptein

This is an updated version of Krista's article from the March 2016 newsletter.

The Comox Valley is known as a special place for nature, and one recognition that acknowledges this abundance is the designation as an internationally recognized Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA). The K'omoks IBA includes the Comox Valley, Baynes Sound, Lambert Channel, Denman Island, and Hornby Island. The K'omoks IBA is within the traditional territory of the K'omoks First Nation, and is the second most important IBA in BC for over-wintering waterbirds.

The IBA program, initiated by BirdLife International in the 1980s, is a network of thousands of sites across the world that have been identified as critically important for the conservation of birds. Within BC, the IBA Program is a major province-wide stewardship project of BC Nature, together with national partners Birds Canada and Nature Canada. More information on the IBA program is at <http://www.ibacanada.ca>.

BC has more than 80 designated IBAs, and the K'omoks IBA is one of the most important in BC. Bird species that trigger the IBA designation here include Trumpeter Swan, Harlequin Duck, Iceland (Thayer's) Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Mew Gull, Great Blue Heron, and Peregrine Falcon. The numbers of Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Western Grebe, and Red-necked Grebe also exceed IBA thresholds in some years.

Volunteer K'omoks IBA Caretaker Art Martell and other community members are involved in many monitoring, conservation, and outreach efforts in the IBA. The IBA is recognized in some Official Community Plans. Members of CV Nature have been conducting standardized bird monitoring for five decades, including the Christmas Bird Count since 1961, Spring Bird Count since 1976, and weekly Trumpeter Swan Count since 1990. Volunteers also have been doing monthly surveys for the British Columbia Coastal Waterbird Survey since 1999 and the British Columbia Beached Bird Survey since 2002. All these counts strengthen the importance of the K'omoks IBA designation.

In 2017 the BC IBA Program received funding from the IBA Local Action Fund of Nature Canada and Birds Canada for a multi-year project to work with First Nations Guardian Watchmen throughout coastal BC. First Nations Guardian Watchmen monitor and protect

lands and waters on First Nations' territories along the coast. The project goal was to work to identify shared bird conservation issues and lay the groundwork to integrate bird monitoring into current Guardian Watchmen stewardship programs.

The project began with engaging the K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen in waterbird stewardship of the K'ómoks IBA. The K'ómoks Guardians work with many local stewardship groups, educational institutions, and government departments, for environmental monitoring, mapping, surveys and more.

K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen Supervisor Cory Frank is a key part of arranging the activities, which to date include several boat surveys around the waters of the IBA with K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen and CVN volunteers; a workshop in bird identification and monitoring; and development of bird identification resources specific to the K'ómoks IBA.

Information on the IBAs in BC is at <http://www.bcnature.ca/projects/iba/>. For further information contact iba@bcnature.ca.

29 Years of Swan Counts

By Steph Nathan

This article is a reprint from the March 2016 newsletter, with minor updates.

This year is the 29th anniversary of the Comox Valley Trumpeter Swan Count. We are the only place in BC that has a regular swan count with information going to Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Pacific Flyways statistics. The Comox Valley is a globally significant wintering bird area. Data from our counts is an important contribution to understanding overall population trends and is used to implement management plans for Trumpeter Swans within the Pacific Flyway and throughout North America.

Habitat restoration, genetic studies, biological data collection, banding, migration studies, and mortality research are the programs currently being implemented in the Comox Valley.

The Trumpeter Swans have a tumultuous past, being hunted to near extinction by the late 1800s. Both the USA and Canada passed laws with stiff penalties for poaching Trumpeter Swans in 1917. Thanks to these laws we still have Trumpeter Swans.

Once the swans started eating crops, the farmers became concerned. They had been told that 10 swans could eat

as much as a cow. By January 1990 there were over 1000 swans in the Comox Valley. So, in effect, the farmers were feeding 100 freeloading cows that also damaged their fields by compacting the soil and digging holes.

The Canadian Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited Canada, BC Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries and Food, along with local farmers, cooperated on a comprehensive Trumpeter Swan Management Project which started in the Comox Valley 1991.

The Trumpeter Swan Count also started in the 1991-1992 season. The goal was to figure out just where and when the Trumpeter Swans, Tundra Swans, the occasional Mute Swan, plus 5 kinds of geese frequented the fields. We started with 40 counters making up 15 teams to count 21 areas covering the open farm lands from the Oyster River to Fanny Bay. Counting takes place from the last week of October until the last week of March at 10:00 Tuesday mornings. After the count we've gone for coffee at a local restaurant to socialize and report the morning's counts. To date we have had six coordinators of the swan count. To my surprise, Ernie Stefanik and I are the only two still alive.



Trumpeter Swans.

Photo: Terry Thormin

Over the years the swans have moved around depending on the crops, the water table, and the hazing practices of the individual farmers. To start with, Graeme Fowler of DUC had a team of SPCA rescue dogs that like to herd. He trained them to herd swans and geese out of areas where they were not welcome. This may have looked strange to onlookers, but was quite effective in training the swans to stay clear of those fields, including the grass next to the tarmac at Comox Valley Airport.

Forty-five gallon drums and barrels placed upside down on posts at regular intervals were placed in larger fields to interrupt the landing areas of the swans. Trumpeter Swans are the largest waterfowl on the continent, and, like a 747 jet, need a large area to take off and land. When their landing approach was interrupted, the birds tended to skip that place and go somewhere where landing was easier.

Other hazing methods included electronic avian deterrents, bangers and crackers shells, flash tape, pennant flags, black flags, decoys, and air horns, and all worked to different degrees. In the end, they were too labour intensive for the result achieved. Rather than using deterrents, DUC has used cover crops and lure crops to try to attract swans to certain fields.

Feeding behaviours were analyzed in the first two years of the program to correlate habitat with use by swans. In the fall, swans mainly eat in vegetable fields. They love corn and potatoes, and like many of us they go for foods with the highest sugar available first. As the winter progresses, swans start preparation for their spring migration by eating in grass fields with a diet higher in protein. Italian Rye Grass seems to be the favourite spring food, supplementing rhizomes and tubers from the intertidal zones.

Driving around the Comox Valley you may have noted flashers or other things hanging from the hydro lines in opened areas. These were the idea of one of our local Hydro workers after he had been called out to several bird strikes which caused power outages. Digging through his truck he came up with this invention of a short length of rope and a piece of plastic pipe, which he hung from the wires in high bird contact areas. The hanging pipes made the wires appear larger so the birds could see them and avoid the wires and sure death. His method is now widely used for this purpose.

Our highest count was on February 5, 2008 with 2906 Trumpeter Swans. The past few years our numbers have been dropping, with the potato fields on Knight Road gone, replaced with grass. Plus the swans have been arriving to major flooding and stopped just long enough

to catch their breath before continuing to drier fields down-Island.

The Trumpeter Swan is a hallmark in history with its recovery being remarkably fast going from 'critically endangered' to 'least concern' classification on the endangered species list. Such a success story is rarely found in conservation with species recovery.

Our swans are coming from Northern Alaska's Brooks Range, north of 60th parallel. This area is now available to them because of global warming where thousands of new acres vastly increase the nest areas. Historical nesting areas include Cook Inlet and nearby Prince William Sound. From there to the Comox Valley is the same distance as from here to Toronto.

If any of you are interested in joining our swan count, please contact the current coordinator listed in About the Society at the end of this newsletter.

Short-Haul Bird Migrations

By Bruce Moffat

What springs to mind when you hear about bird migration? I conjure up images of far-off places that birds are coming from or going to on a long journey to breed and raise their young, to take advantage of habitat with nesting and food resources—like world travelers, including our Trumpeter Swans, that cover great distances; and Rufous Hummingbirds which become well known “snowbirds” that make our backyards their destination in summer after wintering in Mexico.

For centuries people guessed badly what happened to birds when they would disappear, only to reappear at another time. Aristotle is said to have theorized that summer Redstarts annually transform themselves into Robins in winter. My favorite idea, documented in a wood-block print from 1555, was that some birds disappeared to the bottom of local lakes to sleep for the missing season. The print shows fishermen pulling up a net-load of hibernating swallows from a lake. In truth we simply did not know.

Some of our feathered friends don't actually migrate very far. Some are on “short-haul” migrations that result in them travelling distances much shorter than their long haul migration cousins. These migrations are short, mid-range, and in some cases altitudinal.

At the time of writing this in February, a few of our local birds that are low in the Comox Valley, hanging out at our feeders, will head for the hills come spring. Varied

Thrush, Juncos, Robins, Hermit Thrushes, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Fox Sparrows, and Golden-Crown Sparrows are all harder to find near sea level in the summertime. But take a hike after the snow clears in Paradise Meadows, or head to the North Island area, and voila, there they are!



Fox Sparrow in a blackberry bush. *Photo: Bruce Moffat*



Steller's Jay, Paradise Meadows. *Photo: Bruce Moffat*

During my first bird count up-Island I was surprised to see a large number of Varied Thrush in the forests along the road. They had all but left the valley weeks before from what I could see. Here was a mid-range migration in progress, no big jump to the Arctic for them, they were just heading a little further north to better food sources and less competition.



Varied Thrush in snow. *Photos: Bruce Moffat*

Not all do head for the hills. Some, like the Common Loon, make the jump from inland lakes to the ocean in winter. Some folks lose track of the beautiful loons they see on the lakes and don't make the connection with the drab waterbirds they see in the winter months. Here it is not just the plumage that changes, but eye and bill colour can change at the same time. Here is a comparison of an adult Common Loon in summer on a freshwater lake with one on the ocean in November.



Common Loon in summer, in freshwater. *Photo: Bruce Moffat*



Common Loon in November, Deep Bay. *Photo: Bruce Moffat*

Not to be confused with migration, there can be seasonal movements and daily movements as well. Seasonal movements are best exemplified by our Bald Eagles. Many travel around their territory with the regular patterns of food availability. Northern rivers filling with early salmon runs will draw hundreds of eagles north but not until they have had their fill of herring in Baynes Sound in March and midshipmen fish in April. Then in fall as the northern rivers freeze up and our local rivers swell with salmon again, back they come.

The largest daily movement is a twice-daily event in the Lower Mainland, although it happens here to some extent also. In Burnaby's Still Creek area there are several thousands of crows (estimated at 20,000 in winter 2019) that roost each night and that travel out to the beaches from Horseshoe Bay to Tsawwassen every morning. This short haul allows them favorable sleeping conditions during the night and highly productive foraging during the day. Here is a shot taken in the Still Creek area a few years ago as the crows arrived.



Crows in evening, Still Creek, Burnaby. Photo: Bruce Moffat

So if you are wondering where those birds have gone next season, put away your fishing nets.

A Bird By Any Other Name

By Betty Brooks

Here are some of the strange and colourful old names of birds, along with their current standard* names. The first group were mentioned in our October general meeting:

- Lutescent warbler → Orange-crowned Warbler
- Black-capped warbler → Wilson's Warbler
- Holboel's grebe → Red-necked Grebe
- Red-backed sandpiper → Dunlin
- Purple sandpiper → Rock Sandpiper

There have also been many other local names that were used by hunters, fishermen and others:

- Shy poke → Great Blue Heron
- Helldiver → Western Grebe
- Kiss-me-quick → Marbled Murrelet
- Butterball → Bufflehead
- Bluebill → Scaup
- Cannie → Canvasback
- Wavie → Snow Goose
- Honker → Canada Goose
- Willow grouse → Ruffed Grouse
- Hooter → Blue Grouse
- Duck hawk → Peregrine Falcon
- Pigeon hawk → Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Chicken hawk → Cooper's Hawk
- Marsh hawk → Northern Harrier
- Sparrow hawk → American Kestrel
- Jenny wren → House Wren
- Wild canary → Yellow Warbler
- Snow bird → Dark-eyed Junco
- Snowflake → Snow Bunting

* Bird names in English have been standardized by a project of the International Ornithological Congress. See <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>.



Yellow Warbler.

Photo: Terry Thormin

Upcoming CVNS Activities

General Instructions for Field Trips

- All field trips are club events and reserved for members only, unless otherwise stated. Typically, one walk each month is open to the public.
- Meet either at the carpooling location or the trailhead 10 minutes before the specified time, unless otherwise announced. Carpooling locations are usually the former Thrifty's location in downtown Courtenay or the Courtenay Country Market on Highway 19A north of the city.
- Participants are responsible for their own safety.
- Walks typically take at least 2 hours.
- Wear clothing and footwear suitable for the conditions.
- Bring water and a snack (or lunch for longer trips).
- No dogs please.

Schedule

This information reflects planning as of our publishing date and is subject to change. For general club activities, watch for the latest information and additional details in the President's weekly announcements and on the website.

To be notified of the activities of a special interest group, contact the Group Leader and ask to be added to the group's contact list.

Sunday, March 22: Puntledge River, south side, from the dam down. Meet at the former downtown Thrifty's at 09:00 for carpooling. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Sunday, March 29: "No pub to no pub", Oyster River Nature Park to Salmon Point. Meet at the Courtenay Country Market at 09:00 for carpooling. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, April 4: Campbell River, Haig Brown House to dam and back. Meet at Courtenay Country Market at 09:00 for carpooling. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Sunday, April 5: Birding walk. Destination and time TBA. Leader: Kelly Kline.

Saturday, April 11: Tsolum Flats, fawn lily and trillium walk. Meet in the parking lot of Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds at 09:00. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, April 18: Cumberland Marsh, historical Chinese village to Japanese village. Meet at the former downtown Thrifty's at 09:00 for carpooling. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, April 25: Ripple Rock hike. Meet at the Courtenay Country Market at 09:00 for carpooling. Pack a lunch. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, May 2: Rosewall Creek Provincial Park. Meet at the former downtown Thrifty's at 09:00 for carpooling. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, May 9: Quadra Island. Plan to be on the ferry from Campbell River leaving at 09:30. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Saturday, May 16: Hornby Island, Helliwell Park. Plan to be on the ferry from Buckley Bay leaving at 09:00. Leader: Loys Maingon.

Reminder for Field Trip Leaders

All field trip participants who are not CVNS members must sign our Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement before participating.

About the Society

Website

<http://comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca>

General Email Address

coordinator@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca

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Board of Directors

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BC Nature Director: Randal Mindell

(cvnsshoreline@gmail.com)

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Wetlands Restoration Director: Karen Cummins

Director at Large: John Nielson

Group Leaders and Other Volunteers

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Botany: Jocie Brooks (cvnbotany@gmail.com)

Shoreline: Randal Mindell (cvnsshoreline@gmail.com)

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 Conservation: Loys Maingon
 Garry Oak Restoration: Loys Maingon
 Airpark Restoration: Frank Hovenden
 Environmental Heritage and Culture: Gordon Olsen
 (coordinator@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)
 Swan Count: Ernie Stefanik, Krista Kaptein
 (ernie.stefanik@gmail.com)
 Comox Valley Conservation Partners liaison: Karen Cummins
 Speakers Planning: David Innes
 Bursary Committee: Kathleen Wilkinson
 (cvnbursary@gmail.com)
 Tree of the Year Committee: Cathy Storey, Fred Newhouse
 Coffee Committee: Judy Chrysler, Kelly Kline
 Website: David Orford (Advisor: Isabella Erni)
 (site_info@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)
 Facebook: Jillian Jones (cvnaturefacebook@gmail.com)
 Newsletter Advertising: Kathie Woodley
 Newsletter Editor: David Orford (Advisor: Sharon Niscak) (newsletter@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca)

Constitution and Bylaws

Available in PDF form on this web page:
<http://comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca/about-us/>

Membership

Includes membership in BC Nature.

Membership form (including the Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement) is available at meetings and on the website.

Fee: \$30 per year per adult or family (2 adults plus children 16 and under)

Pay at general meetings, on the website using PayPal, or mail a cheque payable to Comox Valley Nature to:
 CVNS Membership Secretary
 Box 3222
 Courtenay BC, V9N 5N4

Membership runs for the calendar year, and is considered lapsed 90 days after year end. Lapsed members are removed from the CVNS and BC Nature membership lists.

Change of address, phone number or email: Please advise the Membership Secretary.

Meetings

Monthly general meetings are held on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Florence Filberg Centre, 411 Anderton Avenue, Courtenay.

June meeting: Potluck at a member's house.

No general meeting in July, August, or December.

Bird meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Filberg Centre Sorooptimist Lounge, Courtenay. For information or to be included on the birding group list, send email to cvnbirds@gmail.com. Birding walks are held weekly, most on Thursday mornings, and once per month on a Sunday.

Botany meetings: Second Monday of the month at a member's home, 12:00 p.m. An email is sent prior to the meeting to confirm location and topic.

Botany walks (weather permitting) precede or follow the meeting and are also scheduled at other times. To be included on the botany group list, send email to cvnbotany@gmail.com.

Newsletter

The newsletter is published 3 times per year (March, June, and November). The full-colour version is emailed in PDF form to all members on the email list, and a few printed copies (black and white) are available at general meetings and in the CVNS outbox in the Evergreen Lounge at the Florence Filberg Centre.

The newsletter depends on your contributions. Please consider contributing an **article** or **note** on any topic of general interest to other members such as natural history, conservation activities, trips, unusual sightings, or a book review. **Photos** are also appreciated, either with a story or stand-alone. You can send your contribution by email to newsletter@comoxvalleynaturalist.bc.ca.

We would appreciate receiving articles by the first day of the publication month. All articles are subject to editing.

NatureKids

CVNS has a cooperative relationship with NatureKids Comox Valley, a separate nature club for children which is part of the NatureKids BC organization. For more information, see <http://www.naturekidsbc.ca/>.

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