

Marshnotes®



**BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY
FALL 2019**

BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY

Managers of the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary Since 1963

- dedicated to the conservation and study of migratory waterfowl-

Marshnotes:

Editor: Kathleen Fry

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**The British Columbia Waterfowl Society,
5191 Robertson Road,
Delta, British Columbia
V4K 3N2**

Telephone: 604 946 6980

Facsimile: 604 946 6982

Website: www.reifelbirdsantuary.com

Email: bcws@reifelbirdsantuary.com

Submissions, articles, photographs and letters for publication may be sent to the above email and postal addresses marked for attention of Marshnotes Editor. Please include your telephone number or email and the Editor will contact you.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF MARSHNOTES

January 15th, 2020



*Planning a visit, but not sure if we are really busy?
We now send out a tweet from @ReifelSanctuary
when it looks like parking is going to be an issue.
That account is often inactive if not needed for this.*

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Gift Shop Manager:	Varri Raffan
Reception:	Susan Norris
Biologist:	Dan Dixon
Maintenance:	Rick Fast
Part-time Assistants:	Cynthia Crumley Kristina Breit

Hours of Operation: 9:00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. every day. The Sanctuary is wheelchair accessible.

Admission: Members:	Free
Non-Members:	Adults: \$5 Children (2-14 yrs) and Seniors (60 years +): \$3
School Groups:	Special discounts available; pre-booking is required.

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New Rules for Feeding Birds in 2020

Effective January 1st 2020, visitors will not be allowed to bring in their own supplies of bird seed. We have found it necessary to do this, not to make more money from our own Sanctuary bird seed sales, but to regulate what continues to be uncontrolled “bulk” bird-feeding in the Sanctuary and continued use of inappropriate foods. While we acknowledge how much our visitors enjoy feeding birds, with our increasing visitor use each year, these problems need to be addressed.

Bird seed offered to birds should be considered an extra “treat”. For the most part, we expect visitors to simply watch the birds. The Sanctuary is managed to provide natural habitats to meet the needs of these wild birds. When uncontrolled bird-feeding results in habitat destruction or disruption of the natural activities of birds, these negative impacts far outweigh the advantages of any food treats.

If you have concerns or wish to discuss this, please email me at kathleen@reifelbirdsanctuary.com.

Kathleen Fry, Sanctuary Manager

About Our Covers

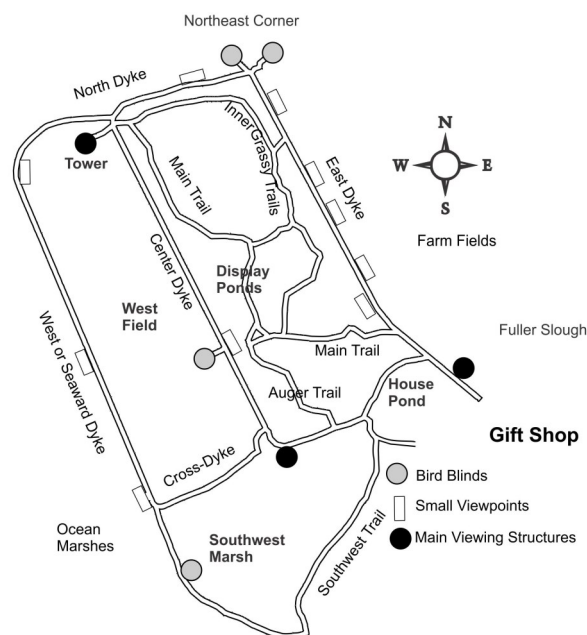
Front Cover: *Cinnamon Teal*
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Back Cover: *Red-breasted Nuthatch*
© **Peter Nielsen**

Editor's Note:

Please refer to the location map to the right to locate place names used in the Marshnotes articles.

Sanctuary Locations Map



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Kathleen Fry
Kathleen Fry
Varri Raffan

Manager's Report

Now that we are finally into fall, we can breathe a sigh of relief that cooler weather is here, the ducks are back from where they spent the summer, and the leaves are making vibrant colourful displays to brighten up the Sanctuary. Visitor use was normal in July (8830 people), and higher than usual in August (8781 compared to 7882 and 8264 of 2018 and 2017 respectively). September was much wetter than usual but visitor use was still about the same as in previous years (6101).

Although most of our birds have finished nesting by July, there was continued nesting activity in the offshore Purple Martin boxes, perhaps representing later nesting by younger birds, or re-nesting by the same pairs that fledged young earlier in the summer. By the end of August approximately 50 of these birds were all in flight around the Sanctuary, spending part of the day congregating on the guy wires of the Coast Guard tower. During the July 6th bird survey, Kristina Breit was watching one of the Purple Martins picking some leaves of nearby trees along the dyke and carrying these over and in to one of the older nest boxes. There is some documentation but poor understanding of the leaf gathering activity. Normally most nest materials are just small twigs, dead grass and mud, but the addition of leaves is sometimes done by the male just before eggs are laid. According to the Purple Martin Conservation Society, the leaves may provide some insecticidal or temperature regulating function.



The "Phoebe Deck"

Photo: Kathleen Fry

Another insectivore being watched keenly for the past few months was a Black Phoebe. This is a new species for the Sanctuary. As most sightings have been at the same spot for almost three months now, we have assumed this is just one individual bird. Normally, this small black flycatcher species is much further south, breeding from Oregon southwards and wintering

down into South America. The bird here seemed to favour the vicinity of one viewing deck along East Dyke, a good spot to also see a Northern Waterthrush and a Wilson's Snipe. This area is also where a Vesper Sparrow was seen. This sparrow is also a new one for the Sanctuary bird checklist.

From the beginning of July until well into September a variety of shorebirds were making good use of the outer shallow ponds. Birdwatchers as usual spent many hours searching for the unusual ones that stand out in amongst flocks of more common species such as Western Sandpiper, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Long-billed and Short-billed Dowitchers. The over-large Marbled Godwits, the Wilson's Phalarope and Red-necked Phalarope as they dip and spin, the elegant Stilt Sandpipers and the brightly-coloured Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were the prize birds to spot this fall.

Sharp-tailed Sandpipers are easily confused with Pectoral Sandpipers as both species are about the same size, have the same slight droop to the bill and a lot of striping pattern on the back. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers are more uncommon as they are a Eurasian species, with only a few sightings each year here. Pectoral Sandpipers are more plentiful, but they certainly are not boring. The "Pectoral" part of their name is because of an inflatable air sac at the base of the throat of the males that is used in courtship displays. A description of these "Balloon Birds" is in "Alaska Bird Trails", a book about an ornithology expedition to the Arctic tundra in 1943¹. "Proceeding across the grassy flats, and passing to the upland tundra, we saw occasionally, floating in the air, a small feather balloon, which on closer inspection proved to be a Pectoral Sandpiper. This bird, strange as it may be to tell, inflates its throat even more than does a pouter pigeon. The enamored male flies upward for 40 or 50 feet, having first with air puffed out his throat to the size of an orange. He then floats slowly earthward with his wings aslant above his back like a butterfly, and his head thrown far back- a picture of utter abandon.....Another queer distinction of this aeronaut's antics is the booming sound he produces as the air is expelled from his inflated throat. This love call is uttered about 10 times in rapid succession, and is best rendered by repeating explosively the Eskimo name of the bird- "doom-doom-tag", in a clear, deep tone." If Pectoral Sandpipers did these displays here at the Sanctuary, nobody would even pay attention to any of the other shorebirds.

Throughout September, visitors were asking where the Sandhill Cranes had gone. They were following their busy social calendar and visiting other Sandhills in Delta. For most of July, we just had the 5 that were our resident pair, the 2018 colt "Louie" and 2 other young cranes. In August when they were joined by flocks of visiting birds, and there was lots of crane shouting going on, then even ours were missing for most of September. I found them in amongst a large flock of 59 cranes in corn stubble and pastures west of

Burns Bog. They are back now and brought some friends from this group. I predict that we will likely have a winter flock of 9 of these birds.

The Lesser Snow Geese from Wrangel Island Russia are here in the Delta now, but have not yet been using the fields around the Sanctuary very consistently. Snow Goose researcher Dr. Sean Boyd from the Canadian Wildlife Service reports that there was a very successful nesting season on Wrangel Island and we may see a much larger and widespread wintering population this year compared to recent years. In early 2020 a winter flock estimate will be done, so stay tuned for more information in the next Marshnotes.

From mid-summer onwards we generally start annual pruning back of vegetation and fixing up our facilities in preparation for the fall and winter. This year, a few fences and a broken ramp to a blind were replaced, all the buildings at the entrance were freshened up with a coat of paint and a new cedar fence was built around the picnic area. Even the firewood shed, which is now probably the oldest structure in the Sanctuary, was given a good cleaning, as hundreds of mud wasps have used the rafters over the years. Mud wasps or "Mud Daubers" build a tube of mud to contain each egg and the larvae lives in this until its pupates for the winter and emerges from it in the spring as an adult wasp leaving slightly broken up blobs of clay that detach and fall over everything below. They are a benign insect in spite of this minor housekeeping problem, living off nectar and honeydew, insects and spiders.



The Sage team at work

Photo: Kristina Breit

On August 1st, volunteers from the Sage Foundation came out to help us remove English Ivy that has taken over a wooded area between the Inner Grassy Trail and the Northeast Corner. English Ivy vines strangle trees and dominate the understory to exclusion of

(..... /continued on page 6)

New Sanctuary Staff

This summer we had a couple of vacant staff positions to fill and we thank everyone that expressed an interest in these jobs.

Cynthia Crumley is now our part-time assistant in the Gift Shop on weekends and will be a new face in the admissions window.

Many thanks to Nicole Lamarche who has helped us in the above position for the past year or so. Best wishes now that she has graduated and moved on to a new job.

Rick Fast started this summer with us as a part-time maintenance staff and will be around the entrance fixing up and cleaning up our facilities. The wildlife will probably ensure that this is an endless job.

Christmas Bird Count Dates

Each year, the Audubon Christmas Bird Counts are held all across North America, usually between December 14th and January 5th. If you would like to help collect bird population and distribution data by joining one of these counts, contact the local coordinator(s) below to learn more about what is involved and to join a team for the day in question. For example, the Sanctuary lies in the Ladner Count area, so connect with Jude Grass for more information. The areas below are just some of the westernmost count areas of the Lower Mainland. There are also counts in Abbotsford, Pitt Meadows and many locations all over BC. For an updated list of all the counts in BC and their dates, visit the BC Field Ornithologist website page (<https://bcfo.ca/cbc-20142015-test/>).

Ladner Count:
December 21st, 2019
Contact Jude Grass
604-219-2043
judegrass@shaw.ca

Vancouver Count
December 14th, 2019
Contact Colin Clasen
colin@naturecanada.ca

White Rock Count
December 28th, 2019
Contact Gareth Pugh
gareth@intergate.ca

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other species. Our team was on their hands and knees painstakingly untangling it from the Salmonberry and unwinding it and prying it off the bark of the large stately Alders and Paper Birches in that area. This will probably be required every year.

Visitors may have noticed that we are trying a new trail surface material in part of East Dyke. Seeking a solution for the increasing presence of raised Douglas Fir roots along East Dyke, we consulted an arborist from BC Plant Health Care who noted a couple of things. It would damage the trees to remove these major roots. Douglas Firs have shallow roots and have many roots under the path. In some seasons East Dyke has a lot of traffic on it, compacting the soil around these roots, and making it hard for the trees to get the nutrients (and aeration) they need. These elevated roots may be the response of the trees to these problems. The suggestion was to bury the exposed roots with something that would not compact as much as gravel or topsoil and would also provide a cushion over the roots. With this in mind, we have tackled a few short sections of this trail for a special treatment. The material we are using instead of gravel is a composted bark mulch, and it feels like it has a cushioning effect, even with only a shallow layer of this added to the surface. We will be adding more of it gradually over the winter to build up the elevation.

This year we are also trying something new to address the needs of Barn Swallows. For years, the small blind on the seaward side of Southwest Marsh left has been showing its age and is now unsafe and will be taken down. We boarded it up a couple of years ago, but did not remove it because of its ongoing attraction as a nest site for several Barn Swallows. Assuming that it is the layout and texture of the rough cut cedar beams and the shelter against rain and wind provided by the walls and roof that works for the birds, we have copied just those critical components (and no floor or doors) and have installed a "Barn Swallow Fort" to act as a replacement nest site for swallows in the area. It was pre-built at the workshop, taken apart and floated in pieces to the tip of the island across from the old blind then reconstructed. The old blind will be removed soon and a lookout is planned for there. We are also working with some very creative students from the UBC School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture to develop alternatives to our traditional viewing structures that may suit the birds as well.

Text: Kathleen Fry, R.P. Bio.,
Sanctuary Manager



Pre-assembly of the Swallow Fort

Photo: Kathleen Fry



The old blind (left) and the re-assembled Swallow Fort
Photo: Kathleen Fry

References:

1. Brandt, Herbert, 1943. *Alaska Bird Trails*.
Published by The Bird Research
Foundation, Cleveland Ohio

Bird Highlights

July 2019 species list ended with 90 different birds observed. When referring to our Sanctuary checklist for birds "Found on most Visits" there is a total of 91 species so we were very close to a full roster. July is always a quieter month to spot birds as most of them have moved north to breed.

June 30 – July 6

Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Western Wood Pewee, Pacific-slope Flycatcher and Wilson's Phalarope were seen on the 30th. Pied-billed Grebe, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher made a reappearance on the weekly list after being away for a couple of months. The 8 Marbled Godwits, first spotted on June 26th, now number 10 birds being seen in the West Field. July 3rd an Eastern Kingbird was reported. Black Swifts were located on the 7th. Black Swifts are best viewed from May to September. They are a bit bigger than a swallow with longer wings, a triangular bill with a broad gape all making them built to capture insects on the wing (referred to as "hawking"). They hunt high up for light-weight insects that have been pushed up with air currents. On a cloudy day they hunt lower down as the insects are pushed closer to the ground with the low pressure system.

July 7– July 13

Our 10:00am public Sunday morning bird walk was lucky to have a view of a Pileated Woodpecker as it flew over Fuller Slough. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Long-billed Dowitchers, Dunlin and Western Sandpipers are already returning from their northern breeding grounds. July 9th staff noticed 1 adult Barn Owl and 2 owlets quietly roosting in one of our Barn Owl nest boxes. We did occasional spot checks on them but by the middle of August they had moved out. The Belted Kingfisher has been popping up throughout the waterways hunting for small fish. When in flight they often call with a very loud dry rattle. Three good areas to watch for them fishing in the summer are the House Pond, along the channel paralleling the center dyke and at the beginning of Robertson Slough.

July 14 – July 20

We ended up with 70 species making the weekly list. As in most years we get an early return of one Black-crowned Night-Heron and in this year it was on the 17th. This bird could well have been here before as it knew where the prime fishing area is located, just above the outflow pipe located in the east corner of Fuller Slough. Around the picnic area in recent mornings the Great Horned Owl family have been very photogenic posing in the Alder trees. Later in the day we tend to find them perched in trees along the Inner Grassy Trail. Between the harassment and scolding from crows and robins, who would both like to see these predators move on, it is hard for an owl to

catch a nap. On July 20th a Black-headed Grosbeak and Bullock's Oriole were both located. Both of these birds are seen between May and August. The last Rufous Hummingbird was observed this week. They have already begun their migration to Mexico for the winter.

July 21 – July 27

This year we only came across one family of Gadwall. A female and her 5 chicks were found early in the week and looked to be near 3 weeks old. They had obviously been doing a good job of keeping themselves out of sight. A strange sight reported this week was of an adult Yellow Warbler feeding a young Brown-headed Cowbird. Apparently the nests of Yellow Warblers are the most commonly used by this freeloaded nester. Once Brown-headed Cowbirds lay their eggs they move on and leave the Yellow Warbler or some other unsuspecting bird to raise their offspring. On the 26th one American White Pelican was spotted flying over the estuary. It could have been heading to Stum Lake (also known as "Pelican Lake") near Williams Lake. This area has the only nesting colony in British Columbia. Also on the 26th along the Centre Dyke a male Western Tanager was found. The males have a red head, black back, wings and tail. Their neck, belly and rump are yellow. Female Western Tanagers, as in many species, are more subdued in color with olive green above and yellowish belly. The main reason females are more subdued in their coloring is to blend in to their surroundings when sitting on a nest. Take a female Mallard for example: she has more earth tones in her feathers and will blend in to the nearby grasses when incubating her eggs. Birds that made the week's highlight list were Great Horned Owl, Barn Owl, Western Tanager and Northern Rough-winged Swallow.

August ended with a very impressive total of 117 different bird species. This number consisted of 112 that are on the Sanctuary checklist in the category of "found on most visits", 4 were under the list of "not seen every year" and 1 that wasn't on the Sanctuary checklist at all.

July 28 – August 3

Some of the noteworthy bird sightings in this week were Ring-necked Duck, California Gull, Common Raven, Solitary Sandpiper, Eastern Kingbird, Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Bullock's Oriole and Mourning Dove. Visitors will notice at this time of year on some of the trails we post signs saying "No Berry Picking". As berries ripen it is tempting to pick them but here at the Sanctuary everything is literally for the birds. Ducks and geese will crane their necks up to pick the low hanging berries while Cedar Waxwings, American Robins,

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Red-winged Blackbirds and European Starlings will pluck them from atop the bushes. Come late Fall when the berries dry up the inner seeds will then provide a good food source for many songbirds throughout the winter. A single Mourning Dove was spotted on the 3rd. The now more common Eurasian Collared-Dove seems to have taken over the foraging areas of the Mourning Doves.

August 4 – August 10

A big selection of shorebirds and a variety of warblers helped make up the 86 species on this week's list. A second Black-crowned Night Heron showed up on the 4th. August 7th was the first sighting ever of a Black Phoebe for the Sanctuary. This species will be the 297th species for the checklist. It was first spotted in brush on the right bank of Fuller Slough, just above where the first Black-crowned Night Heron was found. In the Flycatcher family, the Black Phoebe, as its name indicates, is mostly dark gray to black and has a white belly. It is always found near water perched low in order to catch insects just above the water's surface.

It was an encouraging sight to find 28 Barn Swallows which were mostly young birds, perched along the deck and railings of the Warming Hut on the 8th. To me it was a positive sight to see that many young



Black Phoebe

Photo: Peter Nielsen

swallows in just that area. Barn Swallows according to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) are now listed as a "Threatened Species". Having the ability to have 2 broods, hopefully successfully each spring, might help in keeping their numbers from declining farther. But it will be a difficult come back, with less habitat due to modern farming techniques, fewer open barns than before, loss of insects due to use of pesticides. Even parasites such as mites can affect the nest and nestlings, sometimes forcing swallows to abandon them. August 8th 2 Osprey were spotted as they flew over and 3 Solitary Sandpipers were observed digging in a muddy patch in the ditch between the farmland and East Dyke. On the 10th Bank Swallows, Northern Rough-winged Swallows and 1 juvenile White-crowned Sparrow were found.

August 11 – August 17

Shorebird viewing still remains very good. Highlights from the shorebirds were Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope and Red-necked Phalarope. The Black Phoebe has now relocated and seems to have found a great insect hunting ground around the 3rd wooden viewing deck of the East Dyke. As a couple of members were patiently waiting to find the Phoebe a Red Crossbill appeared. They have been seen in the past in this August but definitely are more likely to be seen in the winter. The male is dull red with blackish wings and tail. If you can get your binoculars on his face you will notice its upper and lower mandibles (which make up the beak) are crossed over each other. This unique crossed beak when inserted in to a pine cone forces and holds apart the scales of the cone while they insert their tongue to lift out the seed. A Sora was observed on the 11th and a male Ruddy Duck on the 14th. An exciting view of a Great Egret on the 15th as it flew eastward over the Sanctuary, might even be the same bird we had visiting in May. Nashville Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Red-necked Phalarope, American Kestrel and Black-headed Grosbeak were other bird highlights for this week.

August 18 – August 24

The Great Egret must have made a u-turn after being seen flying eastward on the 15th because it was seen fishing in Robertson Slough throughout this week. The following birds were new early fall arrivals, Cackling Geese, American Coot, Stilt Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, Lincoln's Sparrow and Northern Waterthrush. Usually after a day or two of rain like we had on the 20th and 21st you can expect to see some new birds that either get pushed in by the weather system or hold up while waiting out the bad weather before continuing their journey. This might have been



Great Egret Photo: Eva Hoffman
Editor's note: Notice the small fish hook in its feathers.

the situation for the Stilt Sandpipers that was found on the 22nd at the north end of the West Field. The next day we had good views from the back deck of the Gift Shop of 5 Stilt Sandpipers feeding in the House Pond. The first view of an American Coot was on the 21st in the West Field. We can find American Coot from August to May at the Sanctuary but June and July they will be nesting on the lakes in the BC Interior.

August 25 – August 31

American Wigeon have been off the sightings list since middle of July but this week we notice a few in the ponds. Greater White-fronted Geese are also returning from their summer nesting grounds in Alaska and the Western Arctic of Canada. Glaucous-winged Gull is the species of gull that we can count on seeing pretty much every day of the year, but in this week we also had Mew Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls. When we first noticed these other 2 species there were dozens of them circling together in no semblance of order. They were actually catching insects on the fly. I'm surprised they didn't collide with each other knocking themselves out of the sky. In the summer flying ants such as carpenter ants hatch from their nests and make their way up in the air which in turn attracts the opportunistic seagulls.

A female Yellow-headed Blackbird was located among a flock of Red-winged Blackbirds on the 31st. Cinnamon Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Green-winged Teal are all present this week. Teal are small ducks measuring in length from 14"-17" compared to a Mallard of 20"-28" long. The Black Phoebe and Northern Waterthrush are still present, along with Turkey Vulture, Sora, Western Tanager and Nashville Warbler all making the highlight list for the week.

September is a good time of year to watch for flocks of Sandhill Cranes foraging in the harvested fields of potatoes, barley and corn throughout Ladner and Westham Island. Northern waterfowl and Lesser Snow Geese usually make an appearance in the Fraser Delta at the end of the month. September 2019 had a total of 117 species.

September 1 – September 7

Northern Shovelers are one of the waterfowl species that have just migrated back into the area. You might have noticed Northern Shovelers swimming together in a circle, sometime dozens of them at a time. This circular action creates a vortex in the water which in turn brings up food from the bottom to the top where they can easily sift through it. Dark-eyed Juncos have been away since the last week of April, while the White-crowned Sparrows and Golden-crowned Sparrows have been gone since the middle of May but in this week they all reappeared and will be in the area throughout the winter. Best viewing area for these and other songbirds is usually around the bird feeding stations. Typically when a rare bird visits the Sanctuary they are only seen for day or two before they move on, but surprisingly the Black Phoebe is still being spotted at the 3rd wooden deck on the right along the East Dyke. We now have reports of 2 Northern Waterthrush in that same area on the 5th. Wilson Snipe, Hutton's Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Lincoln's Sparrow, Osprey and Pied-billed Grebe (the star of our front cover for the 2020 Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary Calendar), were 6 highlights from the week's list of 80 species.



Yellow-headed Blackbird Photo: John Whitmore

September 8 – September 14

September 8th Stilt Sandpipers are found in the West Field. This field with shallow water is where you will find the best shorebird viewing. On the 14th a Hermit Thrush was seen along the Center Dyke. Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks and Red-tailed Hawks are all present. Red-tailed Hawks are the most common hawks seen throughout the year in the Lower Mainland. On your daily commute you will probably notice them perched on a fence post or atop a street light along the highway. The adult Red-tailed Hawks have a brick red tail. Cooper's Hawks and Sharp-shinned Hawks will be the ones that are horrifying your songbirds at the feeders in your

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backyards. Being very agile and good flyers they hunt well through trees and bushes as they attempt to catch songbirds on the wing.

September 15 – September 21

The new fall arrivals included American Bittern, Barred Owl, Merlin, American Pipit, Pine Siskin and yet another new bird (#298) for the Sanctuary Checklist, a Vesper Sparrow which was reported on the 18th along the East Dyke. September is my favorite month, not just because it is the beginning of fall, but you can find a crossover of species from the summer and the beginning of a diverse selection of birds moving south for the winter. With 80 species recorded in this week alone we are well on the way to a busier time of year.

September 22 – September 28

On the 22nd a Red-breasted Sapsucker was seen at the end of East Dyke on the 22nd. Yes, the Black Phoebe is still popping up in the same area. Migrant waterfowl from the north are now present in a lot of the waterways. You can tell the new arrivals as they are very skittish and burst into flight as soon as a person appears along the trail. Of course hunting season also makes them very wary and rightly so. On the 24th we had a report of a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at the south end of the West Field and the next day 2 birds were found in the same area. Mostly juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpipers migrate over the Aleutian Archipelago from Arctic Siberia down the Asian side of the Pacific Coast then head east to Australia and New Zealand for the winter. Being such an infrequently sighted bird they are highly sought after by a lot of birders because there are not many found along our side of the Pacific Coast. Another bird, although not so rare but a good find, was the White-throated Sparrow on the 27th. The long awaited return of the Northern Saw-whet Owl happened on the 22nd and it was again seen on the 28th. Both sightings were along the East Dyke which is the best area to locate Northern Saw-whet Owls and Great Horned Owls.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

Photo: Melissa Hafting

The first flock of 45 Lesser Snow Geese appeared on the 28th. Larger numbers will be moving in around the middle of October and will stay through November and December.



Chickadee on Amanita mushroom Photo: Don McKinnon

Assemblages of Birds

In the past I have shared a few group names for birds. Here are a few more I hope you enjoy.

Wedge of Swans
Wave or Squall of Snow Buntings
Skein of Geese (in flight)
Pod of Pelicans
Murmuration of Starlings
Jubilee of Eagles
Gatling or Descent of Woodpeckers
Gaggle of Geese (on the ground)
Coven of Vultures
Charm of Hummingbirds
Bugle of Cranes
Aristocracy of Waxwings

Text: Varri Raffan
Gift Shop Manager

On a Sad Note

Long-time member Roy Hamaguchi died at the age of 84 in early October. Roy provided our Society with excellent front cover photos for Marshnotes for many years. He was a retired engineer, but an avid photographer who ventured from the Arctic to the Antarctic and had his work featured in many magazines and on a Canada Post stamp. In 2008, Roy and decoy artist Ted Yesaki had their photographs and carvings featured in "Wild Birds", a cooperative book project published through the National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Center in Burnaby. In his biography in this book, he said "Photography, especially of birds, requires immense patience. Since birds have the ability to fly away. I had to learn to wait quietly, for hours sometimes, for the bird to return."

Roy will be missed by many.

The Volunteer Corner

Special thanks to:

- ♦ Mary Taitt for leading our regular Sunday Bird Walk.
- ♦ Jim Martin, Brian Self and David Bruce for helping visitors along trails.
- ♦ Justin Makonin, Eric Rossicci, Eileen Axford and Dave McClue for bagging seed and filling bird feeders.
- ♦ Our summer newsletter mailout team of Eileen Axford, Eric Rossicci, Su Langlois and Debbie Carr.
- ♦ Brian Self, Nicole Lamarche and Kristina Breit, and for their assistance with our bi-weekly Sanctuary Bird Surveys.

Volunteers needed:

- ♦ Sanctuary visitor hosts on busy weekends over the winter. As you may have noticed, we have many visitors interested in owls, so if you would like to share your knowledge, come out and volunteer at a roost site.
- ♦ Museum host for Sunday mornings.
- ♦ Helping with bird surveys every two weeks.

For more information, ask at the Gift Shop or visit our website. www.reifelbirds sanctuary.com and explore the Volunteer page.

Please leave your name and contact information at our office 604-946-6980 or send me an email.

Kathleen (kathleen@reifelbirds sanctuary.com.)

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

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For providing us with many of their excellent brochures

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With your support, the British Columbia Waterfowl Society is able to:

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Please mail to **British Columbia Waterfowl Society**
5191 Robertson Road, Delta BC V4K 3N2

Telephone: 604 946 6980 Fax: 604 946 6982
Website: www.reifelbirds sanctuary.com

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