

Marshnotes®



**BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY
SUMMER 2016**

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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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF MARSHNOTES

October 15th, 2016

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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 yrs +): \$3

School Groups: Special discounts available; pre-booking is required.

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2017 Sanctuary Calendar

2017 will be the 14th year that the British Columbia Waterfowl Society has produced a calendar with images submitted by our membership. Once again, we ask for contributed photographs of Sanctuary subjects for consideration for the upcoming 2017 Calendar.

Please send only your favourite top 5 images by
SEPTEMBER 11th, 2016.

We can receive submissions in the form of jpeg files on disc or as 4X5 or 5X7 printed photographs. Please leave your images at the Sanctuary Gift Shop for the attention of Varri Raffan.

A special thanks is due to Tony Crowther who has helped us to put together and print the calendar for the past 13 years.

August Trail Closures

In the last two weeks of August, the outlet pipe along the North Dyke will be repaired by Ducks Unlimited Canada.

The work will require the closure of public access to the following trails while machinery is working: the North Dyke eastward from the tower to the NE corner bird blinds; and the section of the inner grassy trail that runs parallel to the North Dyke.

A Note From The Editor

Note that the most useful photos for Marshnotes are those featuring birds of the three months covered by that edition. The best approach is to send thumbnails or reduced images or links to posted images. See page 2 for my email and the next deadline. Kathleen Fry

About Our Covers

Front Cover:

Male Sandhill Crane © Eric Rossicci

Back Cover:

Four-Spot Skimmer Dragonfly © Robbin Whitbread

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Bird Highlights

Bird highlights for April, May and June 2016 were compiled from reports by visitors, members, staff and volunteers. We thank you all for contributions towards the weekly species lists. We invite visitors to record their sightings in our "Bird Sightings Log Book" which is located on the side deck of the Gift Shop. If you would like to check what has been reported recently please refer to the "Weekly Bird List" on the front window of the Gift Shop. More unusual species for the week are underlined in red.

In April nesting is prevalent and a good time to view shorebirds and warblers as they pass through on their way north to nest. However this spring didn't turn up many varieties or big numbers of the latter. This could have been due to the stretch of good weather we had. This would have made it easier for birds to pass through and not get held back by inclement weather. Out of 91 species recorded for the month, new arrivals included Cinnamon Teal, Redhead, Western Sandpiper, Mew Gull, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Western Meadowlark and Brown-headed Cowbird.



Brown-headed Cowbird

Photo: Bert Sharpe

April 3 – April 9

The first Common Yellowthroat of the spring was seen on the 3rd. On the 7th we were still able to locate one juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron. The flock of Greater White-fronted Geese are still being spotted and have risen in number to 20. On the 8th a Peregrine Falcon was seen and on the 9th the first Brown-headed Cowbird showed up. With nesting season under way we start to notice an increase of Northwestern Crows. They watch closely for songbirds to give away their

nest site when taking food to their young, and are one of the worst predators of songbirds. Many Mink are noticeable right now as they peruse the trail edges and waterways in search of eggs from the nests of ducks and geese. It is not unusual to find late broods of ducks into June and even early July, as some have re-nested due to mink predation. This week, the last of the wintering Trumpeter Swans moved out on their way north. They will be back in November.



A Mink with a duck egg

Photo: Bert Sharpe

April 10 – April 16

The 10th was the last spring sighting record of the Black-crowned Night Heron. Common Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Common Raven and Belted Kingfisher were 4 other species that disappeared off the weekly list. At this time we are down to only a handful of Dark-eyed Juncos, White-crowned Sparrows, Golden-crowned Sparrows, American Coots and Fox Sparrows as they are now heading to their breeding grounds and summer homes.

April 17 – April 23

This active week, ending with 72 species, was busy with new spring arrivals. The first male Cinnamon Teal seen in the South West Marsh was on the 22nd. On the morning of the 23rd at the front gate a Wilson's Snipe was spotted. The first hatch of Mallard ducklings, along with a Redhead, a Peregrine Falcon, a Hairy Woodpecker, several Cackling Geese and a large flock of Greater White-fronted Geese were all present on the 23rd.

April 24 – April 30

The initial report of a Blue-winged Teal for this spring was on the 24th which was 12 days earlier than last year's report. On the 25th we noticed the first hatch of



Wilson's Snipe

Photo: Bert Sharpe

Canada Geese and 49 Cackling Geese were found in the inner display ponds for just one day. On the 30th the first Black-capped Chickadee family was seen moving about with fledged young. A Short-eared Owl was observed at the southwest corner of the West Dyke. Caspian Terns are now being heard in flight over the Sanctuary. Other highlights for the week included Sora, Bank Swallows and Cliff Swallows.

May is the best month to see young waterfowl and some songbird species. Looking back to past editions of Marshnotes there is a diverse selection of between 35 to 40 species of birds that have nested at the Sanctuary. A few warblers and flycatchers are still present. Some early molting waterfowl are now being noticed. A total of 90 species recorded for May 2016.



Cackling Geese

Photo: Kathleen Fry

May 1 – May 7

There is a noticeable decline in diving ducks at this time of year. On the 1st, a Least Sandpiper was seen, and on the 2nd a pair of Cinnamon Teal was spotted in the Southwest Marsh. A single Osprey was seen as it flew low over the Gift Shop. Three Turkey Vultures were seen circling over the field behind the newly improved picnic area. Only 4 species of Warblers

were located this week and there were not many of each. In previous years we have been able to locate 7 species in this same time frame. The last spring sighting of a White-crowned Sparrow was on the 3rd. On the 4th a Peregrine Falcon was seen checking out the selection of shorebirds in the West Field.

May 8 – May 14

A male Black-headed Grosbeak which has a strong exaggerated song much like an American Robin was found along the East Dyke. This is a bird that you usually hear before you see them up on the tree tops. They are about 7 inches in length and have a wedge shaped beak which enables them to crack large hard seeds along with insects and berries. A brood of 5 young Ring-necked Pheasants were spotted on the 10th.

On the 11th near the end of the East Dyke a Bullock's Oriole was observed. Although Bullock's Orioles do nest in our area we don't often see many of them. The best time to look is from May to August. On the 13th and 14th a Spotted Sandpiper, Mourning Dove and Wood Duck ducklings were seen. The last spring report of Varied Thrush at the Sanctuary was in this week, but at the same time we had the first sightings of Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo and Wilson's Warbler.

May 15 – May 21

A female Virginia Rail with 3 young was found on the 15th. Locating Virginia Rails is always a treat, especially when you find them with young. Their young are very small and totally black. The first brood of Gadwalls hatched this week. Shorebirds were good this week, with 9 different species being seen and the Wilson's Phalarope being the highlight. Through the shallow inner Display Ponds and Southwest Marsh approximately 23 Blue-wing Teal were reported. Lesser Scaup, Warbling Vireo, Cackling Goose and Barn Owl were other good sightings for this week which ended with a total of 72 species.

May 22- May 28

We had excitement this week when the nest of the resident pair of Sandhill Cranes hatched. The first egg was laid on the afternoon of April 23rd and the second egg was noticed in the morning of April 27th and may have been laid the night before. After over a month of incubation, one egg hatched on May 24th and the second on the 26th. Unfortunately the second colt did not survive, but the first colt is doing very well.

...../continued Page 6

(...../continued from page 5)



Two Crane colts May 26th Photo: Janet Thompson

Along the East Dyke visitors have begun to notice adult Brown Creepers carrying food heading into an opening in the bark of a tree. Brown Creepers build a hammock style nest which is constructed from twigs then lined with feathers, leaves and lichens, usually in a dead or dying tree. On the 24th a Western Wood-pewee (Flycatcher family) was spotted. With a pale belly, dark back, no eye ring and two white wing bars this bird is far from showy. On the 25th a Hermit Thrush was found along the driveway. This small thrush has a distinctive white eye ring, black spotted under parts, a rufous tail and in my opinion has one of the most attractive songs of the forest.

June 2016 had a total of 88 species recorded. June is the moulting month. As young waterfowl grow in their flight feathers the adult birds are also going through an annual moult and look very scruffy as they enter into "eclipse plumage".

May 29 – June 4

The top 10 birds for this week were Cinnamon Teal, Turkey Vulture, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Wood-pewee, Warbling Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pacific Wren, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak and Bullock's Oriole. A second brood of 9 Virginia Rails were found along one of the inner grassy trails.

June 5 – June 11

A sign that we have come into the quiet viewing months of summer is when the Sunday bird walk comes back with a list of only 38 species, while in other months they generally have an average of 52 species. A female Hooded Merganser, a Belted Kingfisher and 2 Great Horned Owls were located. The owls were pointed out by a mob of crows that were

dive bombing the owls trying to get them to move along. To catch a glimpse of the Great Horned Owls, early morning visitors should check out the trees around the picnic area first and then down to the northeast corner. Remember to listen for a ruckus from the crows.

June 12 – June 18

Non bird reports this week included Raccoons feasting in the cherry trees, a few mink running across trails in search of a meal and lots of Coyote scat especially along the outer grassy trails. On the 16th 8 Green-winged Teal were spotted. Although we have them year round, most of them have taken off by now to breed in northern Alaska and Canada. An Eastern Kingbird with its distinctive white band across tail tip was seen south of the Observation Tower. Northern Harriers are now appearing on the weekly species list. They have been busy nesting and didn't need to go very far to do so. Their nests are constructed among bulrush, cattail, reed grass and sedges of the marsh. The actual nest is compiled of vegetation and built in a platform style over shallow water or on the ground.

June 19 – June 25

Young families of Cedar Waxwings, Downy Woodpeckers, Spotted Towhees, Bullock's Orioles, Purple Martins, Barn Swallows, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Black-capped Chickadees are being noticed by visitors throughout the trails. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Belted Kingfisher were both seen over the House Pond on the 19th. On the 23rd a Sora was reported. On the 23rd a Marbled Godwit was also found among a flock of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs at the south end of the West Field.

June 26 – July 2

As early as this week we are starting to see the return of shorebirds as they make their way back from northern nesting grounds. Greater Yellowlegs and Lesser Yellowlegs, Dunlin, Western Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers and Wilson's Phalarope were all reported mainly from the south end of the West Field. In most shorebird species the first to return from the north are usually failed breeders with no young to raise. On the 29th the Belted Kingfisher reappeared at the House Pond and an Osprey was seen over the front entrance gate. Cinnamon Teal, Eastern Kingbird and Purple Martins are still being reported.

Text: Varri Raffan
Gift Shop Manager

Tending the Gardens

The “Garden Ladies” who tend to the beds around the Washrooms and Museum have generated an excellent show of constantly changing flower blooms this year, as usual.

Arlie Darby, Irene Banack, and Barbara Warrick have managed the flower gardens around the building for about 15 years now, and every year people comment on how showy the beds are, and how they seem to transition seamlessly through the seasons. A careful observer, though, would note that the three young-at-heart gardeners come every Sunday morning to inspect the beds and water them through the summer months. They spend whole work days every now and then digging up and storing bulbs, bringing in new topsoil or bedding plants, putting away some the plants that need to “sleep” for the winter, and tidying up pathways and flagstones.

I asked Irene how this all began, and she said that she couldn’t remember exactly, but they came across

Norm Hill, another one of our dedicated volunteers (now deceased more than ten years now) who liked to keep the grounds neat and tidy and the workshop in good working order. Norm was down on his hands and knees planting little daffodils in the garden between the Ladies and Men’s washroom doorways, and they asked if they could help. Somehow this led to them bringing in some new plants and taking over the management of the gardens in very short order.

Irene does not have a garden at home any more and neither do the other ladies. Instead, they have adopted our gardens and tend them as their own and we thank them very much!

Photo below: Barbara, Arlie and Irene in 2011.



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

Photos: Varri Raffan
Gift Shop Manager

Recent Renovation Projects



During

Last fall, the washroom facilities were completely redone from the floors on up and including external and internal pipes, fixtures and walls. The faucets, toilets and hand-dryers are now touch-less, in that sensors operate them. There is now a baby changing station in the Ladies' washroom and an additional stall was also created there by taking up some of the adjacent inner hall space. In the Men's washroom, new more water-efficient urinals have made for a cleaner smelling washroom. The project improvements were designed through the architectural firm of Bruce Carscadden. Xaris Construction was the successful bidder and completed the work in September and October last fall.

(left) Re-fitting new external pipes Photo: Kathleen Fry



Before



After



Before



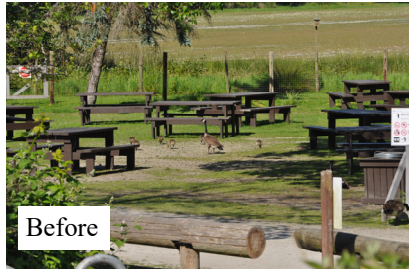
After

Changes in the Men's washroom (top row) and Ladies' washroom (bottom row)

Photos: Varri Raffan



Before



Before



After

Picnic lawn last winter (top left), summer 2015 (bottom left), and after the project (above) Photos: Varri Raffan

This spring, we followed up the washroom upgrades with the long-needed restoration of the lawn in the nearby picnic area. The area for many years has been settling to form a poorly-drained basin, catching and holding the winter rains for months. So much of the grass had died that it was not recovering in the summer.

The repairs were contracted out to Albert Goertzen, a local landscaping contractor. The new lawn is the result of the re-shaping of the area, the addition of topsoil and sand, drainage ditches and pipes, and new grass sod. It was finished in the first week of April. Because of the nature of new sod, we needed to keep people off it for a month and give it lots of water, but the grass rooted well and appears to be doing well. Many thanks for everyone's patience, particularly during April, when we could see visitors longing to be out on the fenced-off lush new lawn. It was a relief to everyone to start cutting this grass and to open the area for visitor use on Mother's Day. The first visitors on the grass were some Canada Geese.

On a smaller scale, we are enjoying arranging potted plants in the new planter box installed in front of the Gift Shop for Mother's Day. It serves as a replacement for an old fence in that spot that had become a wasp haven in recent years.



During

Re-working the basin area

Photo: Kathleen Fry



The new planter box

Photo: Kathleen Fry

Jeepers Creepers– Watching the Birds of the Bark



Cryptic Brown Creepers *Photo: Jim Martin*



Second Nest Site *Photo: Peter Neilsen*



Brown Creeper Eggs *Photo: Dan Dixon*

The Brown Creeper is a year-round but inconspicuous bird here, being almost an exact match in colour to the bark of our Douglas Fir trees. The photo to the left features two Brown Creepers on either side of a crevice in the bark that turned out to be their nest throughout May this year. On May 1st, the Sunday Bird Walk went past the nest tree and Istvan Orosi noticed Brown Creepers carrying somewhat unwieldy straws and small sticks in behind a large slab of loose bark. Because of its location, we decided to let the birds keep their secret for as long as possible and to keep it from widespread visitor knowledge. As mentioned in Varri's article, this species nearly always picks a dead tree with loose bark as the site for a carefully-engineered nest. Once they manage to get sticks into this narrow space to make some support scaffolding, the nest material is then arranged to form a deep cup for the eggs.

This is an intriguing small bird, so a few of us would sometimes sit for a while on a bench near the nest to watch procedures. Incubation is thought to be 13-17 days and the nestling phase 14-20 days, according to most references.

On May 6th, when we knew the bird was briefly off the nest, we were able to see six small white eggs delicately spotted with rust by very carefully inserting a faint and very tiny flashlight on a cable. After watching the two birds over many days, we thought perhaps one bird was doing most of the incubation. One bird looked slightly smaller and lighter in colouring than the other and most likely was the female. During incubation, the female would be on the nest for up to 25 minutes, then the male would bring it some food. The second bird often landed a few trees down, gave a short call, and the nest-tending bird would slip off for a brief rendezvous and receive some food then return to the nest. The first time we saw this, we were a bit confused because it looked like the bird was begging like a young bird, so it was enlightening to find that William Tyler recorded these feeding rituals in Creepers pairs way back in 1914.

On May 11th, another auspicious use of the flashlight showed that the eggs were starting to hatch. From then on there were constant food runs into the crack with both parents bringing insects such as crane flies, spiders and sticky-looking cocoons and mystery life forms. In an attempt to document and identify some of the food items, a small Polaroid Cube camera was thumbtacked to the bark about 15 cm above the crevice to video a few parent bird trips in with food. I would say that they did not like the presence of this tiny black camera, as the resulting video showed the incoming bird, with beak full of flies or spiders, halting its approach to the nest entrance, then flying off.

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In Memoriam



Robert D. Harris

A past Director and one of the 14 signatories to create the British Columbia Waterfowl Society in 1961, Dr. Robert (Bob) Harris passed away June 28th at the age of 96 years in Delta.

Bob spent his working career as a wildlife biologist. He was an unflagging supporter for the creation and development of this Sanctuary, both in his role as Director of our Society, and also as a biologist working for the section of the Federal Government's Ministry of Environment known as the Canadian Wildlife Service. He was very helpful in the coordination of efforts between our Society and the Canadian Wildlife Service when the Sanctuary and the balance of the Reifel family's lands on Westham Island were transferred to federal ownership and new agreements needed to be put in place to suit all parties.

Bob lived in Ladner for many years, then spent part of his retirement years on Vancouver Island, only to return to Ladner in recent years. He is survived by his wife, five children, 5 grandchildren, and one great grandchild. He kept in touch with the Sanctuary staff and Directors over the years, and was very pleased to have one of our commemorative benches put here in his honour in 2013.

(continued from page 10)

The bird came back and forth several times, checked out the camera, and finally entered the crevice after much nervous fluttering. The camera was retired.

Visitors started to really notice the activity in and out of this crack in the bark in late May as the parent birds were delivering many small loads of food, but also coming out of the nest carrying faecal sacs from the nestlings to keep the nest clean. Nearly every small songbird species likes to remove the faecal material from a nest. It was interesting to note that the adults each had a favourite spot to wipe their beaks clean of its white load.

We hoped to catch some views of fledgling Brown Creeper chicks leaving the nest around May 27th, but we must have just missed them, because first thing in the morning the nest was empty!

On May 29th, along the inner trail a second Brown Creeper nest was started on a small dead Oak sapling. Although the construction seemed as diligent, this piece of bark was not as big or as firmly attached to the tree as the first nest, and all the material on the downward side disappeared after only 10 days. It may have been destroyed by something like a crow, squirrel, or even strong winds.

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

Manager's Report

Visitor statistics show 23,234 people entering the trails in April, May and June, almost identical to last year's attendance. For the past 4 years, we have had hot rain-less summers from May to September, but it has been both a relief and a curse this year to see the more usual pattern of alternating periods of wet cool days and hot dry periods. This general pattern allows for the grass to survive and a showy assortment of wildflowers to grow along the trails but it also encourages rapid growth of blackberry hedges and cattail, so we've been kept busy keeping trails and views clear.

For those wanting to know more about trailside flowers in the Sanctuary, we have posted some labelled photos on the Gift Shop window, and there will soon be a page on our website to help identify berries, flowers, and trees along our trails. In the meantime, here is a brief summary of some of the common species of flowering plants right now. Although we call them wildflowers, most are exotic species that are naturalized in BC.

Daisies and Lupines (various species) bloom early and are almost finished now. The Mayweed or False Camomile is the plant currently making big pillowy beds of small white daisy-like flowers along trails in the center pond system. All along open sunny trails there are patches of Peavine, with its climbing vines and big showy pink blossoms, which turn to pods when flowering is finished. Its relative, the Tufted Vetch, has much finer smaller dark purple blooms, and a large patch is present along the narrow path downhill from the Fred Auger Cairn. In marshes, you can see pinkish-purple spires of Purple Loosestrife. This is an invasive species, but beetles released here have been serving as a biological control.

Some flowers are just coming into bloom. The large upright stems topped with a golden flame-shaped cluster of small flowers are Goldenrod and the showy blossoms will last until September. Purple Asters are just starting and have small mauve daisy-like flowers with yellow centers. There are also Russian Thistle and Bull Thistle all along some trails. The flowers of these very prickly plants turn into silky dandelion-like seedheads, a favourite food of American Goldfinches. One of my favourite native wildflowers is Silverweed, and it has been interesting to observe the Sandhill Cranes honing in on this plant as well. Pacific Silverweed was until recently classed as a member of the *Potentilla* family, but is now known as *Argentina anserina* subspecies *pacifica*. Each plant has a

network of small red runners and edible roots. It has small buttercup-like flowers and compound leaves that are green on the top surface and silvery-white on the underside. It grows in wetlands and needs moisture, so we see more of it when we have cool wet summers or at least some rain during the summer.



Goldenrod (above) and Silverweed (below).

Photos: Kathleen Fry



At time of writing, we have just installed quite a few reminders for visitors to not pick any of the flowers, berries and other plants of the Sanctuary. Although we may clear away some vegetation to maintain trail access and views, the plant communities around the Sanctuary are important year round to the birds, and the regulations prohibit removal or damage without permission.

Apart from maintenance and mowing of vegetation along trails, many of the benches and picnic tables are being repaired, and along the eroded shorelines, bank repairs have been underway all spring. Many kudos to Dan Dixon and our particularly energetic volunteer Kristina Breit for working away at bank repairs along the Southwest Trail and along the main trail through Display Ponds. The photos on the next page show a

section of the Display Pond shoreline restoration project that was finished this spring. It is along the main trail just around the corner from the big sign kiosk. A few winters ago, we noticed considerable bank soil had been eroded (as much as a meter in from the previous shoreline) and blamed the actions of beavers dragging harvested trees over natural soft shorelines with no rock reinforcement.

To reclaim some of the land there, log cribbing was put in place, the area backfilled with a mix of gravel and small rock, then topped with load of topsoil over many months. It has now been planted with some small willows and seeded to a Coastal Restoration mix of grasses and other low plants.

The past three months are the main hatching and rearing months for the Sanctuary's birds, and every year brings new insights. Waterfowl nesting has been about normal, although we seem to have fewer Wood Duck and Gadwall broods this year, and most birds have been moulting most of June and July. All along the trails from late May onward, there were signs of successful songbird nests. Purple Martins still seem to want to nest in their old nest box as in the past few

years, but this summer they were also observed perching on the new structure a few times. Birds of prey nests seem to have been quite successful this year, as juvenile Cooper's Hawk calls were quite noticeable in June, at least two juvenile Great Horned Owls have been seen, and there seem to be juvenile Red-tailed Hawks calling recently out near the front gate.

The highlight of the nesting season so far, though, came from our resident pair of Sandhill Cranes. The resident pair appeared much more focussed this year, and laid eggs a little later in April after making a concerted effort to scare away all but three of the non-breeding gang. As long-term members might know, the pair has not been successful in raising a chick for the past four nesting seasons. The table on Page 14 shows dates (and fates) of the crane nest since 2010.

This year, the two eggs hatched three days apart. The first chick or "colt" spent its first day wobbling about the island, but by the second day, it went for its first swim and followed the female over to the shoreline and trails for some fresh air, exercise and food.

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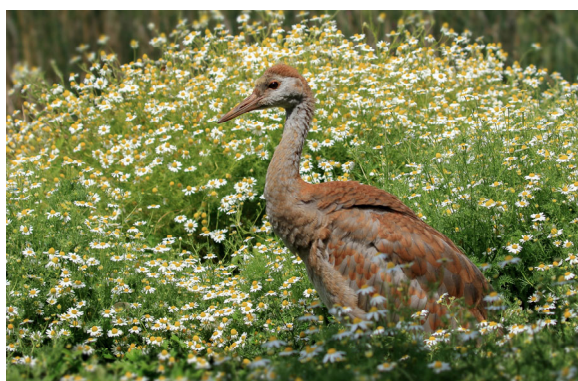
The same shoreline before and after the restoration project in Display Ponds

Photos: Kristina Breit

(continued from page 13)

By the time the second chick arrived, this first colt was well-coordinated and full of energy. Observers witnessed the younger colt being attacked and pushed into the water by its older sibling. Although it was back sitting next to one of the parents at closing time, it was not there the next morning. I think that the few Sandhill Cranes that successfully raise two chicks must manage to lay eggs that hatch almost on the same day so that there isn't a critical difference in development between colts at the nest. Sibling violence hasn't usually been the problem at the Sanctuary nest, as something always seems to happen to the eggs so that there is only one colt.

Our remaining 2016 colt grew strong and healthy, and it spent most of June and July exploring all parts of the Sanctuary under the guidance of its parents. By August 1st, at 10 weeks, it was almost the same height as its parents and making tentative flights. On that day, however, something happened to disrupt the crane family, leaving the parent birds searching and calling for the colt well into the evening and the next morning. It has still not been located, but the odds are against a good outcome now. Although a colt this age might find some food on its own, and possibly escape small predators such as mink with short flights, it would normally rely upon its parents for certain foods, predator protection, social contact, and warmth at night well into the winter months. Its fate is unknown, and this development has been very disappointing.



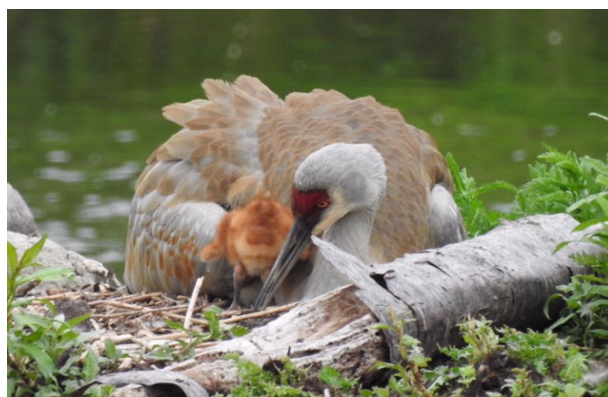
Crane colt on July 31st Photo: Pascale Charland

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

Dates and Fates of Crane Eggs 2010 to 2016

Year	1st egg	2nd egg	Status
2010	Laid May 1st, Hatched May 31st Survived to Adult	Laid May 4th, Hatched June 2nd Disappeared by June 4th	#1 is part of Sanctuary gang, "Junior"
2011	Laid Apr. 16th Hatched May 15th Drowned (Kathleen rescue**)	Laid April 18th, Hatched May 17/18th. Survived to Adult	#2 is part of Sanctuary gang, "Poxy"
2012	Laid Apr. 20th Hatched May 19th	Laid Apr. 22nd Never hatched	#1 Found dead in shrubbery at 14 days, may have been killed by mink
2013	Laid Apr. 9th? Predated	Laid Apr. 13th Hatched May 13/14th	#2 Died at 8 days old, autopsy showed infection of egg egg yolk sac
2014	Laid April 9th, Hatched May 10/11th, drowned (Dan rescue*)	Laid April 12th, Hatched late May 11th,	#2 Found dead in ditch north of island at 19 days old, of unknown cause
2015	Laid Apr. 2nd Abandoned or predated Apr. 9th	Laid Apr. 4th Abandoned or predated Apr. 9th	No young even hatched
Three other eggs in other locations incubated for just one day laid Apr. 25 & 28th, May 11th.			
2016	Laid April 23, Hatched May 24th	Laid April 26/27, Hatched May 26th Disappeared by May 27th	#1 Grew strong and fast, but disappeared August 1st at 69 days.

* staff have tried to rescue drowning chicks twice unsuccessfully



First Sandhill Crane colt trying to see the second colt under the adult female crane. Photo: Janet Thompson

The Volunteer Corner

Special Thanks To:

- ◆ Kristina Breit for her unflagging help with the shoreline reconstructions this spring and early summer.
- ◆ Our regular Sunday birding team of Mary Taitt and Brian Self, as well as Jim Martin, Istvan Orosi, Susan Norris, Emma Turgeon, and David Bruce for helping host visitors along the trails.
- ◆ Justin Malkonin, Eric Rossicci, and Eileen Axford for bagging seed and filling bird feeders.
- ◆ Our spring newsletter mailout team of Emma Turgeon, David Bruce, Yvonne Michels and Jim Martin.
- ◆ The team of Arlie Darby, Irene Banack, and Barbara Warrick for all the garden work.
- ◆ Ivy Whitehorne, Kristina Breit, Alicia Elgert, Nicole Lamarche, Connie Sui, Tanjot Chahil and Eric Lotto who have continued to help with bird inventories.

- ◆ Our ongoing needs for upcoming months are for trail maintenance and cattail work parties and weekend hosting of visitors. Visit our website page www.reifelbirdsanctuary.com/volunteers.html.

For more information or to confirm volunteer times for these opportunities, please phone our office 604-946-6980 or send me an email.

Kathleen (kathleen@reifelbirdsanctuary.com.)

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

Why be a Member?

As a Member, you receive the following benefits:

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Quarterly issue of the BCWS publication "Marshnotes".

A 10% discount on purchases in the Sanctuary Gift Shop.

Membership in one of British Columbia's most respected conservation organizations.

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

Staff, maintain and expand facilities at the Sanctuary for the benefit of its visitors and members; provide interpretive and education programs, including guided tours for organized groups of all ages; contribute towards important scientific research on waterfowl to determine their life cycle needs for survival; and provide support for like-minded organizations who are working on waterfowl-related projects.

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