

Marshnotes®



**BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY
WINTER 2013**

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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Circulation: 2,400.

Published four times a year.

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

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF MARSHNOTES

APRIL 15th, 2013

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Sanctuary Manager: Kathleen Fry
Gift Shop Manager: Varri Raffan
Reception: Laura Jordison
Biologist: Shanna Fredericks
Maintenance: David McClue

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 (60yrs +): \$3
School Groups: Special discounts; Pre-booking required.

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A 50th Anniversary Message

2013 marks the 50th year the British Columbia Waterfowl Society (BCWS) has managed the Sanctuary.

On March 13, 1963 our late father entered into a 30 year lease granting the use of part of our family's farm property and adjacent foreshore to the newly formed BCWS for the purpose of establishing a migratory bird sanctuary in the Fraser River estuary. The lease rate was one dollar a year.

This arrangement enabled the BCWS to secure additional funding and other forms of support from individuals, companies and organizations to create water control structures, nesting islands and other infrastructure to maximize the habitat value for waterfowl. In 1967, a Federal migratory bird sanctuary was declared over part of the farm, the lease area and additional offshore areas.

In 1972, the entire farm including the lease area was transferred to the Federal Crown. Along with the offshore marshes, these lands form what is now the Alaksen National Wildlife Area and the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary.

The continuation of the lease to BCWS as managers of the Sanctuary was one of the less known conditions of the transfer, and the tenure has subsequently been extended.

None of us had any idea how the Sanctuary would evolve over its first 50 years. We think our forebears would share the BCWS's and our immense pride in what the Sanctuary has become today.

To celebrate the first 50 years, a retrospective collection of photos and articles is being assembled for the next issue of Marshnotes.

In the meantime, we wish the BCWS every success as it embarks upon the next 50 years of stewardship of this very special place.

On behalf of the Reifel family,

George C. Reifel and Barney W. Reifel
BCWS Directors

About Our Covers

Front Cover: Copycat Pintails © Jim Martin
Back Cover: Red-tailed Hawk on Wigeon Kill © Laura Jordison

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Manager's Report

Happy New Year and all the best for 2013.

The Sanctuary in general benefitted from our unusual dry warm early fall, with the Hawthorne and Pacific Crabapple trees producing abundant food for the hundreds of American Robins, Cedar Waxwings and other interesting visitors such as the Evening Grosbeaks. Our Cork Oak tree just past the Warming Hut produced full-grown acorns for the first time in years. This unusual tree is more native to the drier climates of Spain and Portugal, so this summer's dry spell seems to have made a difference re: nut production.

Fall is when we clean up trails, get the Warming Hut firewood ready, and replace any bird feeders that have rusted or been chewed to death by squirrels. The goal is to generally tidy up the place so that there isn't too much disturbance required over the winter months. Visitors totalled 15,699 compared to the 16,704 last year at this time. We had some very busy days, with a record 1000 visitors October 8th, again on November 11th and 902 on December 30th.

In October, the Lesser Snow Goose flocks arrived and could be easily seen from Westham Island Road and the Tower. October is also a month of Northern Shoveler, American Coot, Northern Pintail and American Wigeon arrivals coinciding with the change in the weather. Some of the diving ducks such as the Bufflehead and Lesser Scaup did not arrive in big numbers until November, possibly waiting for the major changes in the weather.

Raptors always congregate here in the fall, and a banded juvenile Peregrine Falcon generated a fair bit of interest from August to November. Visitor Alan Moats was able to read the colour marker and band on this bird. Banded birds can be reported to the North American Bird Banding office through the website "<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/>". By doing so, Alan connected with the researcher in Seattle who had banded the bird "69U" May 18th as a chick or "eyess" on the 56th floor of the Washington Mutual Tower. There are several sites in Seattle where falcons use industrial or commercial structures to nest. Peregrine 69U disappeared from the Sanctuary for a few weeks in late October, as it was caught at Vancouver International Airport (YVR) and sent to Chilliwack for a "time out". Apparently juvenile falcons are less savvy around the airport, and it is a policy not to hurt them, but to catch and ship them away from YVR.



Peregrine 69U

Photo: Alan Moats

Speaking of raptors, the Canadian Wildlife Service has finished the necropsy report on the Barred Owl that died here in February 2012. This is a bird that was observed regularly over the winter, but was noticeably sick the day before it was found dead. Laurie Wilson reports that it died of avian tuberculosis, a disease that does occur in raptors, although it is more common in ducks and domestic poultry.

The honeymoon of rainless days from July onward ended abruptly October 13th, when more than 65 mm of rain fell in just three days, then continued heavy off and on for the rest of the 2012. Beavers were inspired with the abundance of flowing water and we have had a hard time keeping ahead of them and the rain. The ponds that had been shallow mudflats for the late summer and early fall have now been full to capacity since early November, with shorebirds generally abandoning the Sanctuary as a result.

One or two Saw-whet Owls were seen off and on since October, but by early December, we were seeing as many as 5, mostly along East Dyke. We map the location of these birds to better understand their needs. On December 19th, their habitat was adjusted a bit when gale force winds broke off many large Douglas Fir limbs along East Dyke. A couple of days later when the ice bombs were falling on cars on the Port Mann bridge, the same kinds of bombs of frozen snow were dropping on paths and their roost sites as well.

For most of December, the weather was mainly miserable, with nearly double the usual rainfall and nearly constant wind. A few brave and stoic birders scouted the place to prepare for the annual Christmas Bird Count, or to catch a glimpse of a Saw-Whet Owl, but most were mobbed in the parking lot by 500 Mallards and 9 noisy begging Sandhill Cranes.

.....Continued Page 6

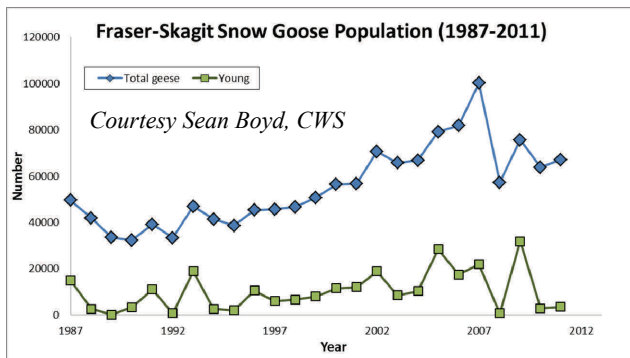
January 2013 Lesser Snow Goose Update



The Lesser Snow Goose is the logo of our Society, and one of the main reasons we have thousands of Sanctuary visitors in the fall. People seem fascinated and inspired by the ability of these showy white birds to migrate 5,000 km each spring and fall, and the ability of thousands of birds to move in unison from one area to another.

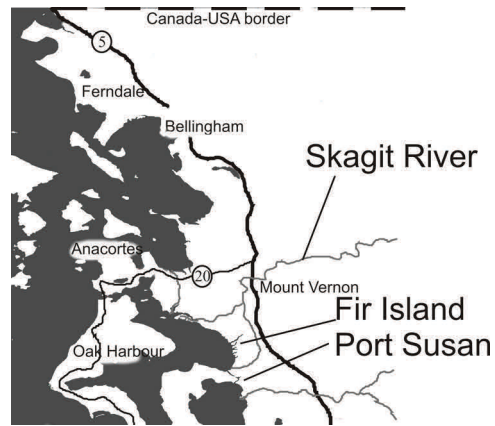
The Lesser Snow Goose nest on Wrangel Island, Russia, and migrate south in the fall, arriving in the Fraser River delta usually in early October. “Our” geese overwinter here in the Fraser River estuary and just south of the USA border in the Skagit River estuary in Washington, and are often referred to as the “Fraser-Skagit flock”. Other Wrangel Island Lesser Snow Geese winter in Central Valley, California, and pass through here in the fall.

In winter, the geese feed in the farmland of Ladner and Westham Island, marshes offshore of the Sanctuary, and fields of the adjacent Alaksen National Wildlife Area. Delta farmers and wildlife agencies work together through the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust to provide similar green grassy cover to feed on in the farm fields of Westham Island and western Ladner.



In the Skagit Wildlife Area in Washington State they feed in similar farm habitats and marshes at Fir Island and Port Susan, southwest of Mount Vernon. In mid-winter, most of the Fraser-Skagit geese relocate to the Skagit River estuary. In spring, we see the whole population again as they move northward.

The Snow Geese were in the news this fall when large flocks spent much of November feeding on the nutrient rich grasses of school playing fields in Richmond. This tendency to use school grassy areas started in 2008 and has continued off and on, with some years being more of a problem than others. Because of the damage to the grass and the fecal content left on the fields, the birds are now actively scared from these school yards.



Snow Goose Wintering Areas in Skagit County, Washington

This population of the Lesser Snow Goose is of high interest to scientists conserving migratory bird populations and who track the factors that influence their survival across the habitats of Canada, the United States and Russia. On Wrangel Island, Lesser Snow Goose nesting success is greatly influenced by the weather and will likely be affected by long-term changes to the climate in the Arctic. When the geese arrive in the fall, we can sometimes guess whether the population is on the rise just from the percentage of young.

A formal complete count using photos of flocks taken from the air is done every mid-winter to give an annual index of the Fraser-Skagit population (left). Dr. Sean Boyd reports that the recent mid-winter count showed was slightly down from last year (70,000), with about 69,000 geese this winter distributed between the Fraser and Skagit estuaries, and 18-20% young.

(Continued from page 4)

The Sandhill Crane flocks are always interesting to observe at this time of year. From mid-September, flocks grew from 17 to 38 birds by October 1st. For all of October, 38 or 39 birds were seen every day with 43 seen October 21st. Between November 4th and 10th, these high numbers dropped down to just the 9 birds which are currently wintering here. During peak numbers, the crane flocks roosted at night near the tower, and could be seen loafing and preening in West Field during the day. We could see at least five family groups and the two marked birds (the one wearing a now defunct satellite transmitter and colour bands, and the one banded by the Hancock Wildlife Center in Surrey). Both marked birds seem to depart with the large flocks in early November, presumably migrating south as far as California for the winter, as the Satellite-banded bird was tracked there before the batteries died on the apparatus. In this next year, we should see both of these developing pair bonds.

The remaining 9 cranes have taken to digging up the front lawn by the house. At first we thought they were digging for overwintering sand wasp pupae, but to our surprise, they have dug up several turtle nests, and now seem somewhat fixated about finding other nests. The front lawn with its underlying layer of soft sand seems ideal for turtle nests. It would be better to have the native Painted Turtle doing this, but in June, we protected a newly made Red-eared Slider turtle nest, and Aimee Mitchell from BC Environment installed a soil temperature monitor. The plan was to watch it to see if it hatched. The Sandhill Cranes, however, dug all around this area, found two other nests, argued about me confiscating some exposed eggs, and just recently were seen gleefully excavating and flinging bits of sod and shell everywhere over by the apple trees. They have now dug up 4 nests and probably some spring flower bulbs, too!



Red-eared Slider Embryo Photo: Aimee Mitchell

Red-eared Slider turtles are not thought to nest successfully this far north, but results of our local nest monitoring seem inconclusive. One egg rescued from the cranes had a fairly well developed embryo, but the nest we protected was dug up December 3rd, and those eggs were rotten.

The Year 2012 ended with a bit of a reprieve in the weather and a startling increase in visitors and Northern Saw-whet Owls (8!) between Christmas Day and New Year's Day and into the first week of 2013.

A reminder to everyone that people should be on their best birding behavior near roosting Northern Saw-whet Owls, as we do not like to see disputes between visitors or people causing birds to vacate their favourite roosts due to real or perceived camera harassment. A couple of years ago, we were forced to construct a fence to keep people out of one of the Holly trees favoured by these small owls. Their roost locations were mapped in early 2011, with one fir bough having consistent use for almost three months that year. This site is being used again this year, making us wonder if individual birds are true to the same site or even the same tree branch from year to year, particularly during the colder part of mid-winter. In the fall, they might be less site-specific and move around a fair bit between roosts, as suggested in an interesting fall research project in the New York area. (Note the website below.)

Here's hoping for excellent birding in 2013!

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

Reference websites to explore:

http://frg.org/wamu_camera.htm, the website of the Falcon Research Group banding nestling falcons on the Washington Mutual Tower in Seattle. They have a live camera feed from the nest in the spring.

<http://www.bcreptiles.ca/turtles/redearslider.htm>, the BC Ministry of Environment summary website about Red-eared Sliders.

http://www.battaly.com/banding/telemetry/150_4048/, the website from a Saw-whet Owl Research Project near New York, where the movement of individual Northern Saw-whet Owls between their night-time hunting areas and their daytime roosts were mapping over several months using radio-telemetry.

Notice to all Members
BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY

The Bylaws of the Society provide for the election of six (6) Directors by the Society membership in addition to the appointment of six (6) Directors from Stakeholder groups.

The six elected Directors each serve a two year term, with three to be elected at each Annual General Meeting.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held at

7:30 p.m. on April 16th, 2013

in the Lecture Hall at

The George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary

5191 Robertson Road, Ladner British Columbia

The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to advise the membership that three incumbent Directors

Douglas B. Ransome
Barney W. Reifel
Ken I. Thompson

will be seeking re-election for a further term.

If you wish to nominate a candidate for election as a Director at the Annual General Meeting, please complete the nomination form which, in addition to the candidate's written consent, must include a written nomination by two Society members in good standing.

Nomination forms are available at the Sanctuary.

No member may nominate more than one candidate in any one year.

A family membership constitutes one vote at the meeting.

Please deliver the completed nomination form, by mail, fax or in person

by **4:00 p.m. Sunday, March 17th, 2013** to

The Secretary, British Columbia Waterfowl Society,
5191 Roberston Road, Delta,
British Columbia V4K 3N2

Fax: 604 946 6982

If there are any further nominations received by the deadline, a list of all candidates will be posted at the Sanctuary.

Bird Highlights

October at the Sanctuary is when we see larger numbers of Lesser Snow Geese arriving from Wrangel Island, Russia. The Trumpeter Swans also show up from their breeding grounds in Alaska and Northern British Columbia. This October 94 species were recorded.

September 30 – October 6

The Sunday September 30th 10:00 am birding walk listed Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup and American Pipit, all first records for the fall. The American Pipit is not commonly found at the Sanctuary. Pipits are the size of a sparrow with a streaked breast, dark legs and a thin beak. When walking it habitually bobs or swings its tail. At this time of year they migrate to the southern United States and into Guatemala from their summer breeding grounds in Eurasian and North American tundra and mountains. October 4th our first Northern Saw-whet Owl was spotted. October 5th Evening Grosbeak and Hermit Thrush were reported. Sandhill Crane numbers have jumped from last month's high of 17 up to 38 birds this week. This week there were 74 species.

October 7 – October 13

A Rough-legged Hawk was spotted this week. This big bodied hawk with broad long wings can be identified by pale underneath, square black wrist patches and white tail with a black band at the tip. The name Rough-legged is appropriate as its legs are feathered to the toes. Shorebird species diversity has really diminished and all that are left are Greater Yellowlegs, Long-billed Dowitchers, Dunlin and a few Black-bellied Plovers offshore. A Northern Shrike was found out along the grassy seaward dyke, where we see the majority of Sanctuary Shrike sightings.

October 14 – October 20

As mentioned in the previous *Marshnotes* I was going to leave a hummingbird feeder up to see if we could attract an Anna's Hummingbird. Well, we have one female that frequents the feeder on most days. If she stays over the winter it will be a first for the Sanctuary. Two or three Evening Grosbeaks are reported again at the north end of the east dyke. These birds are appropriately named as they have a very large heavy cone shaped beak with which to crack seeds. The males have an overall yellowish look while the females are grayer. They both sport distinctive white patches visible on their black wings when in flight.

October 21 - October 27

The first fall Trumpeter Swan was seen this week. On the 21st sixteen Greater White-fronted Geese flew over the Sanctuary. On the 24th there was a late sighting of a single Barn Swallow flying south over the Gift Shop. Larger flocks of northern ducks (Northern Pintail, Northern Shovelled, American Wigeon and Mallard) are showing up now, especially noticeable in Robertson Slough on most mornings. This slough provides good shelter and a protected roosting area for them until they get their bearings and disperse around the Fraser Delta. Other highlights for this week were Wilson's Snipe, Cinnamon Teal, Canvasback, Barred Owl and Barn Owl.

November is a great month for viewing a variety of birds of prey. Total count of species for the month of November was 89.

October 28 – November 3

The large flocks of Sandhill Cranes are still with us, but will be flying south soon. The elusive Sora and Virginia Rails were both seen this week. The Sora was off the seaward dyke in the marsh and the Virginia Rail was spotted along the East dyke. Large numbers of Bufflehead and both Common and Hooded Mergansers are now showing up. Also large numbers of robins are everywhere feeding heavily on the ripe English Hawthorne berries. Not having a lot of insects and worms at this time some birds rely on these berries for winter food. Hopefully they don't get into a batch of fermented berries and get tipsy, which does happen. When berries stop growing and air born yeast spores and microscopic bacteria feed on the sugars in the fruit, organic compounds such as alcohol are produced.

November 4 – November 10

This was the week that 7 owl species were present. Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Barred Owl, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl and Northern Saw-whet Owl were all seen. On my way to work on the 9th, 5 power poles before the front gate, I spotted a Snowy Owl perched on top. Two crows were giving it a hard time. That sighting couldn't be counted for the weekly list as it was not in the Sanctuary. Luckily later that day at the south end of the Sanctuary one was spotted flying by. This week had a total of 81 species recorded. A few other birds of note were Pine Grosbeak (November 5th), Evening Grosbeak, Ring-necked Duck, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Shrike and White-throated Sparrow. Between the 4th and the 9th, the greater majority of the Sandhill Cranes departed, presumably for more southern wintering grounds. Nine birds remain.

November 11 – November 17

Every year we have a handful of Evening Grosbeak sightings. This fall we had a flock of up to 30 of them. The Anna's Hummingbird is still around the house feeder. Using a high powered spotting scope from the observation tower 7 Snowy Owls were seen out on the marsh on November 11th. As last year, Boundary Bay is once again having another good year for viewing Snowy Owls.

November 18 - November 24

November 22nd along the center dyke 3 Common Redpolls were sighted. This time of year we have fewer American Goldfinches which look very different from their summer plumage. In breeding season the males are bright lemony yellow with a black cap. In the winter they lack the black cap and only have a hint of yellow around their head and neck. The wings and tail look blackish with buff markings. The females remain much the same throughout the year. High counts of 40 Northern Flickers were seen this week. Other highlights for this week were Purple Finch, Wilson's Snipe, Barred Owl, Merlin and Northern Shrike.

November 25 – December 1

Eighty two species were reported this week. Around the songbird feeders you will notice a lot of Dark-eyed Juncos. Check them out to see if you can spot a Slate-colored Junco which is a variant of the Dark-eyed Junco. The Slate-colored appears overall gray lacking the contrast between the head and back but still has a light colored belly. The Sibley Field Guide of Birds of Western North America mentions that 1 in 200 Juncos are Slate-colored. November 26th a female Kestrel and a juvenile Northern Goshawk were reported. Other highlights for this week were Ruddy Duck, Brewer's Blackbird, Barred Owl and Common Redpolls.

December can be a little more of a challenge for our visitors as the weather can be cool, rainy and windy. The birds are still around although some may be a bit more tightly hidden. The species count for December 2012 was 90.

December 2 – December 8

Up to 6 adult Black-crowned Night Herons have been seen regularly at the Sanctuary. Usually you can count on them being seen across from the Warming Hut but now we find one roosting on the opposite side in the Cherry Tree between the office and the Warming Hut and one or two in the tree overhanging the house pond behind the house. Five Canvasbacks were spotted on December 2nd.

Usually an interior species two female Pine Grosbeaks were spotted at the Sanctuary on December 3rd. Apart from the November sighting this year, November 2006 was the last sighting of a Pine Grosbeak at the Sanctuary. Belted Kingfisher, Eurasian Wigeon, Swamp sparrow and Purple Finch were a few other birds of note for the week.

December 9 – December 15

A miserable week of heavy rain and cooler temperatures kept attendance down. Fewer visitors lead to fewer bird sightings. Even so 6 species of owls, 7 species of hawks and 18 species of waterfowl were still present. One highlight on December 9th was the sighting of 2 Ruddy Ducks spotted near the viewing platform. The male Ruddy Duck is a small diving duck with a blue beak, a stiff upturned tail and a white cheek and chin patch. The female (below) is more brown. This duck is sometimes a parasitic nester, laying eggs in the nests of other ducks such as Redhead and Canvasback. This week had 73 species.



Female Ruddy Duck

Photo: Sue Cartman

December 16 – December 22

Both the Lesser Scaup and Greater Scaup were spotted this week. These two species are difficult to tell apart. In good light at close range the Greater Scaup has a greenish gloss to the head. The Lesser Scaup is more dark purple on the head. Another way to distinguish them apart is by the head of the Lesser Scaup which comes to more of a point. A good place to view them is from the wooden viewing platform looking west up the channel. Fourteen to sixteen Evening Grosbeaks are still around. This has been a year with a high count of Evening Grosbeaks at the Sanctuary. They have also stayed much longer than previous years. The Anna's Hummingbird is still showing up at the house feeder. An American Bittern was spotted flying out along the marsh from the tower on December 22.

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December 23 - December 29

December 23rd 5 Saw-Whet Owls were found. On the 28th a Swamp Sparrow was spotted along the west dyke. Also on the 28th a flock of 12 Red Crossbills were seen alongside the north dyke. The last record of a Red Crossbill at the Sanctuary was in February 2008. Crossbills literally have their mandibles crossed. The lower mandible bends upward and the upper mandible bends downward. They are usually seen in flocks in coniferous trees where they feed on the seeds of conifer cones using their unique beaks to pry out seeds.

We invite visitors to record bird sightings in our Bird Sightings Log Book located on the side deck of the Gift Shop. We post the weekly species list summary on the

front window of the Gift Shop, with the more unusual sightings underlined in red.

Text: Varri Raffan, Gift Shop Manager

References:

- The Birds of Canada** by W. Earl Godfrey
- The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western North America** by David Allen Sibley
- Peterson Field Guide Western Birds** by Roger Tory Peterson
- 100 Birds and; How They Got Their Names** by Diana Wills
- Marshnotes (BCWS Archives)**
- whatbird.com**

Top Birds of the Sanctuary in 2012

Total species observed in the Sanctuary in 2012: 171 species

2012 Bird of the Year: Cassin’s Finch

January Common Redpoll	February Herring Gull	March Cassin’s Finch	April Yellow-headed Blackbird
May Ruff	June Bullock’s Oriole	July Bohemian Waxwing	August Sora
September Chipping Sparrow	October White-throated Sparrow	November Pine Grosbeak	December Swamp Sparrow

Text: Varri Raffan, Gift Shop Manager, with assistance from Brian Self.

The Volunteer Corner

Special Thanks To:

- ◆ Our regular Sunday birding team of Mary Taitt and Brian Self, as well as Jim Martin, Murray McDonald, Istvan Orosi, and Karl Pollak for helping host visitors on busy weekends.
- ◆ The Canucks “Live to Give” volunteers that came out October 8th to do trail maintenance.
- ◆ Special thanks to Bill Topping for helping in the Museum Sunday mornings all fall.
- ◆ New volunteers Jeremy Watkins, Peter Holmes and Karl Christie for the Saturday bird surveys and many other tasks.

- ◆ Eric Rossici, Eileen Axford, and Justin Malkonin, for bagging seed and filling bird feeders.
- ◆ Our fall newsletter mailout team of Jim Marsh, Eric Rossici, Eileen Axford, Laura Jordison, and Jim Martin.
- ◆ Su Langlois and Vera Maceluch for helping with the Saturday surveys.
- ◆ As always, the team of Arlie Darby, Irene Banack, and Barbara Warrick for the beautiful flower gardens around the Museum and washrooms.

Volunteers Wanted For:

- ◆ Hosting visitors along trails on busy weekends. Please sign up at the Sanctuary Office 604-946-6980 or talk to Kathleen.

Ladner Christmas Bird Count 2012 Results

The Ladner BC/Washington Christmas Bird Count, held on Sunday December 23rd was very successful, with 146 species seen on count day. Highlights included Spotted Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Bohemian Waxwing, Swamp Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll, all species which are rare and not seen every year. The 146 species total makes the Ladner CBC the top count in Canada again, followed by Victoria (136 species, December 15th). Last year Ladner and Victoria tied for the top Canada spot with 140 species each.

This year's count had 7 owl species (Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Barred Owl, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, and the Northern Saw-whet Owl.) The Point Roberts Team did an excellent job of recording the Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Marbled Murrelets and Ancient Murrelets, all of which are sometimes hard to get on count day. The count also recorded high numbers (53) of wintering Anna's Hummingbirds. If anyone would like a copy of the final tally of species, by area, please contact me.

The team covering the George Reifel Bird Sanctuary, Alaksen NWA and Westham Island submitted the team high of 97 species and a record high of 131 Bald Eagles. Thanks to Mary Taitt, Team Leader for coordinating the teams and getting the good count. At the Vancouver Landfill, they recorded 746 Bald Eagles and over 27,150 Glaucous-winged Gulls plus one rare Glaucous Gull.

The day was cloudy with just a few showers (and a very high tide at Boundary Bay), and there were 90 birders out there and more than 20 people at home counting backyard birds at feeders. Sandor Gyamati of the Delta Optimist provided great coverage both before and after the count. Larry Pynn of The Vancouver Sun ran a story after the count, as did Delta Cable (which aired on Delta Magazine the week of Jan 13th). Special thanks to the BC Waterfowl Society for use of the lecture hall for the post count tally and for the assistance from staff.

Jude Grass, Count Coordinator

Why be a Member?

As a Member, you receive the following benefits:

FREE admission to the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary 365 days a year.

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.

Provide support for like-minded organizations who are working on waterfowl-related projects.

Enclosed is my cheque or VISA/Mastercard number for:

SINGLE Membership: **\$25**

FAMILY Membership: **\$50**

LIFE Membership: **\$500**

Donation (tax deductible)

VISA Mastercard

VISA or Mastercard # _____

Expiry Date: _____

Name: (Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms.) _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code _____

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

Telephone: 604 946 6980 Fax: 604 946 6982

Website: www.reifelbirdsanctuary.com

BRITISH COLUMBIA WATERFOWL SOCIETY

5191 Robertson Road, Delta, British Columbia V4K 3N2



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Red-tailed Hawk on American Wigeon Kill © Laura Jordison