

Canadian Rockies

Calgary to Vancouver

Mon 18 June – Mon 02 July 2018



Rockies highlights (Clockwise from top left): Arctic Tern • Common Nighthawk • Yellow-headed Blackbird • Wilson's Phalarope • Great Grey Owl • American Three-toed Woodpecker • Photos © Chris Charlesworth/Limosa

**Report compiled by tour leader:
Chris Charlesworth**

Canada | Calgary to Vancouver**Leader:** Chris Charlesworth**Participants:** Paul & Angie Gavens, Keith & Cathy Radley, Martin Robinson, Dave & Linda Worrell.

Day 1, June 18 – At the arrivals hall of the Calgary Airport, I met five of the participants of this, the second Limosa Rockies Tour of 2018. We traveled the short distance to the hotel, where we met the other two folks on the tour, Paul and Angie. Some people were tired and headed straight to bed, while a few met in the lounge for a quick meal and a drink.

Day 2, June 19 – This morning was very pleasant in the Calgary area, with sunny skies and mild temperatures. We set out from our hotel, headed south to Frank Lake, along with the Calgary morning rush hour traffic. It didn't take long for the traffic to thin out and we sailed along Hwy 2 to High River, along the way spotting our first Red-winged Blackbirds, Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Swainson's Hawk. From High River we drove along Hwy 23 east towards Frank Lake, stopping at various ponds and puddles where we saw a nice assortment of waterfowl. There were Cinnamon Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Mallard, Gadwall, Redhead, Ruddy Duck and one or two Northern Pintail noted. A few waders such as Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Killdeer and Wilson's Phalarope were also observed. The first of many Savannah Sparrows we saw today popped up on fence posts. Once at Frank Lake we stopped just north of the lake to look for Black Terns, which we did find. Turns out later we'd see several Black Terns near the hide at close range. Western Meadowlark, Tree Swallow, Clay-coloured Sparrow, Eastern Kingbird and a Grey Partridge were all new additions as well. We walked along the lakeshore, admiring all the different species at quite close range. There were Forster's Terns hunting in the shallows, California Gulls loafing on a grassy island, Spotted Sandpiper creeping along the shore and best of all, a Sora, spotted by Linda, as it crept along a muddy shore right out in the open for an extended period of time! More waterfowl, including Canvasback, Lesser Scaup and Bufflehead made their way onto the day list, as did singing Marsh Wrens, obliging Marbled Godwits and several Willets. We were entertained by a number of Richardson's Ground Squirrels today and at one point several youngsters popped their heads out from a hole. As we walked towards the hide, I was a little worried when a school bus full of children beat us there. They were there to learn about nature, so we decided, even though the hide was a bit busier than usual, the kids were there for a good cause. A first year Bonaparte's Gull was a nice catch in the shallows near the hide, as were more good views of Marbled Godwits, American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Willets and Wilson's Phalaropes. A couple of Black-crowned Night-Herons flew past and were most likely the only ones we are going to encounter on the tour. In the distance, a couple of groups of American White Pelicans soared in the sky. I had heard a Nelson's Sparrow, a rather elusive species that hides in the long grass, so we went to try our luck at finding it. Luck was on our side, as the sparrow sat on the grass for scope views!

By now, it was time for lunch, so we headed back into High River where we ate at Smitty's. While we sat in the restaurant some of us were lucky enough to see a Merlin briefly perch atop a cottonwood. After lunch we poked around a pond near the parking lot where we found some Common Grackles and on the pond itself were two female-type Common Goldeneye. We spent the next hour or so exploring a side road that ran through the countryside. The habitat was agricultural with windbreaks of cottonwood trees interrupting the monotony. Perhaps the birds of the day were two Great Horned Owls that were roosting in one such windbreak. There was a fluffy fledged chick and, as spotted by Dave, a roosting adult that was quite camouflaged nearby. Swainson's Hawk was also nesting here, with one bird on a nest, while the partner screamed relentlessly at us from above. On fence posts we found Brewer's Blackbird, Western Kingbird and Vesper Sparrow. A White-tailed Jackrabbit was noted as it slowly hopped through a grassy field. We then followed dusty roads around Frank Lake, where we had excellent views of a pair of Horned Larks at the edge of a field. We walked through a grassy field, hoping to find Le Conte's Sparrow and we did, though the bird remained mostly hidden in the reeds. Cliff Swallows were flying around their nesting area beneath a bridge and, before we reconnected with Hwy 23, we saw a female Northern Harrier sailing above the long grass. The drive back to Calgary took about an hour and we saw several groups of American White Pelicans resting on a lake and in islands along a river. An Osprey was seen by some as it ate a fish on top of a lamp post. All in all, it was a very productive start to the trip.

Day 3, June 20 – After a lovely breakfast in Calgary, we headed west, following the Trans Canada Highway, towards Banff. We spent the day exploring the foothills north of Cochrane on a fantastic day with sunny skies and warm temperatures. After a quick pit stop in Cochrane, we made our way west to Grand Valley. Driving along the quiet country road produced some stunning Mountain Bluebirds feeding young in a nest box. At an open meadow there were several male Bobolinks singing and displaying in flight as we watched in the scope. The usual Savannah Sparrows were joined by Clay-coloured Sparrows and Chipping Sparrows today. A Dark-eyed Junco (a hybrid 'Oregon X Slate-coloured' bird) was seen very well as it sang from the pine trees nearby. It was joined Mountain Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch. A Yellow-rumped Warbler appeared, which turned

out to be a hybrid 'Audubon's X Myrtle' bird. At the next stop, a large, open pasture with plenty of fence posts for birds to sit on, we had some excellent sightings. We caught a glimpse of a Warbling Vireo, then a Great Grey Owl flew across the road a hundred meters or so away. We walked briskly down the road and found ourselves face to face with a majestic bird. It spent the entire 30 minutes or so that we watched it, sitting on a fence post, staring into the grass intently and readjusting his feathers in the late morning sun. While we watched the Great Grey Owl, an adult Red-tailed Hawk soaring over the trees across the meadow caught our attention. The hawk was being mobbed by angry Red-winged Blackbirds. We then headed over to Horse Creek Road where we spent the rest of morning in search of eastern forest species. We did quite well too. A male Cape May Warbler put on a great performance for us as he foraged close by at eye level in the trees. A little more frenetic was a male Tennessee Warbler, dangling from the branches overhead. We had stunning views of a male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker here and got great looks at both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. A female Purple Finch sat atop a dead tree and let us view at length through the scope.

It was about time to head for lunch so we returned to Cochrane and ate at Smitty's. After lunch, we headed back to Horse Creek, checking a marshy area for Le Conte's Sparrows. I could hear the Le Conte's singing somewhat far away and, with a little patience, one came into view and allowed scope looks. Later we'd see another Le Conte's Sparrow that sat in a bush quite close to us, for excellent scope views. Several Lincoln's Sparrows appeared to have food in their bills for young. The usual Clay-coloured Sparrows were regularly popping into view once again. A bright splash of yellow in the top of a willow turned out to be a male Yellow Warbler, in all his glory. Wilson's Snipes leapt up and down in the tall sedge grasses and a single Wilson's Phalarope rose up into the air out of the marsh. A female Green-winged Teal was joined by five fluffy little ducklings. Farther down the road we visited bog with stunted spruce trees. This area is often good for Alder Flycatcher and it proved to be so again today. We had one Alder Flycatcher posing for scopes for a few moments, then something bright orange flew overhead and almost caused mayhem. It was a male Baltimore Oriole. The oriole showed well, but didn't hang about for long, so it left us wanting more of this handsome bird. At our last birding spot of the day a male Downy Woodpecker was a nice catch amongst the aspens. Two Western Wood Pewees chased one another around, pausing now and then to let us obtain good views. A tiny Least Flycatcher was frustratingly flitty, never sitting for long on the same branch. A pair of Clay-coloured Sparrows was trying to fend off a marauding female Brown-headed Cowbird as she looked for a nest in which to dump her egg. A House Wren, a rather small, drab bird, makes up for all it lacks in plumage with its cheery character. To finish off this last birding session of the day, a male Baltimore Oriole arrived on the scene and let us look at him as much as we wanted, satisfying our previous craving to see more. We began the journey to Banff, which took us about an hour, arriving in time to have a shower, a little rest and a chance to enjoy the spectacular mountain scenery surrounding us, before heading to El Toro for a tasty meal.

Day 4, June 21 – At 6 AM we met for a pre-breakfast outing to Vermilion Lakes, a great place for birds that just happens to be quite scenic as well. It was a lovely sunny morning and it stayed that way until lunchtime. Some of the highlights noted at Vermilion Lakes included a pair of Common Loons, a Pileated Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, Swainson's Thrush, Slate-coloured Fox Sparrow, Common Yellowthroats and a pair of Mountain Chickadees tending to a nest. Dave said, 'I think we saw a Northern Flicker in this tree several years ago', and within about five seconds, a male Northern Flicker came flying in and headed into a nest hole. Columbian Ground Squirrels and a couple of American Red Squirrels were about the only mammals we saw this morning. Once Martin had finished giving a crash course in photography to a young lady from Atlanta, we returned to Banff and had breakfast.

Post breakfast we headed for the Bow Valley Parkway, making our first stop at Muleshoe Picnic area. Here, next to the parking lot, we watched two different woodpecker nests about 150 feet apart. A pair of Pileated Woodpeckers tended to one nest, while Red-naped Sapsuckers tended to the other. As we made our way to Johnston Canyon, a Mule Deer was noted next to the road; upon arrival at the canyon, we found a Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel. As we hiked up the canyon we were entertained by several of these ground squirrels, which were constantly on the lookout for scraps to nibble on. A lovely little Pacific Wren sang its heart out for us, a species that was split from *Troglodytes troglodytes* not too long ago. An American Dipper whizzed up the fast flowing creek a couple of times and, once we reached the lower falls, we had a good look at this bird, creeping up the rocky slope next to the waterfall. Our first Cassin's Vireo was also added in Johnston Canyon. We had lunch in the café and just as we were settling up the bill, Dave spotted a Grey Jay out the window. We rushed out to find three Grey Jays being mobbed by two Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

On our way to Lake Louise we stopped at a roadside pullout to look at an Osprey nest high up on a pylon. Angie had spotted the big nest, which contained an adult bird, while the other adult sailed overhead. As a bonus we added Orange-crowned Warbler and a Wilson's Warbler too. At Lake Louise, it was heaving with people, but the stunning view was still breathtaking nonetheless. Cliff Swallows were nesting on the Chateau Lake Louise and we saw Violet-green Swallows flying over the parking area. To finish off the day we visited Moraine Lake, a very

picturesque place. A flock of ten or so Clark's Nutcrackers were a big hit with the group, as were two Harlequin Ducks, a male and a female. Thunder began to echo through the mountains and the sky turned black so we decided it was a good time to pack it in for the day. The drive back to Banff was a wet one!

Day 5, June 22 – We left our hotel after breakfast and headed for Cave and Basin. It was a cool and grey morning, but the sun poked through now and again and it was better than what had been forecast, so we were happy. At Cave and Basin we watched from the hide as a Virginia Rail trotted across a muddy spot, while Soras called in the background. A male Blackpoll Warbler foraged in eye level spruce trees right next to the boardwalk for several minutes. A Swainson's Thrush lurked in the trees while Willow Flycatchers sang their sneezy songs, fittingly from the tops of willow bushes. Out on the water were Ring-necked Ducks and Green-winged Teal. We left Cave and Basin and stopped next for a 'comfort break.' Poor Trevor, the name given to the step stool, was almost abandoned here, but luckily Dave spotted him, looking all lonely on the sidewalk and brought him back to the van. We then had a short visit to the Fenlands Trail, where we followed directions given to me by a friend, Richard, to exactly where an American Three-toed Woodpecker pair were feeding noisy young in a nest cavity. We spent the better part of half an hour watching the male and female come in to bring food to the very vocal nestlings. It wouldn't be many days until these little woodpeckers would be fledglings.

As we got comfortable for a bit of a drive for lunch in Golden, the skies opened up and it rained steadily for the entire journey. After lunch we set our clocks back one hour as we entered the Pacific Standard Time Zone, then we explored a bit in Beaver Valley. It was still raining, though fairly lightly, as we birded here. A Magnolia Warbler played hide and seek but most people managed at least a short view of this rather attractive species. Overhead, Black Swifts sailed by, some of them at quite a low altitude, alongside smaller Vaux's Swifts. Northern Waterthrush was also quite a nice catch in the Beaver Valley. We continued our trek west, stopping in at the Skunk Cabbage Trail. Rains were again light and at times nonexistent. Birds were quite active here and soon after arrival we were looking at a male Rufous Hummingbird, sitting atop a dead tree. Next, a Red-eyed Vireo showed quite well in the trees above us, then an immature male American Redstart showed off nicely. A Grey Catbird skulked in the underbrush, with a beak full of food for its nestlings, while a Veery was 'veery' nice to see and a lifer for most people in the group. High atop a tree, a male Varied Thrush sang his ethereal song. As we neared Salmon Arm, the rain became torrential, which doesn't happen often in the southern interior of British Columbia. We checked in at our hotel then went out for dinner at Boston Pizza.

Day 6, June 23 – After the previous day's rains, it was a lovely fresh morning today. We headed down to the wharf in Salmon Arm before breakfast, spending about two hours there enjoying the Western Grebes, Great Blue Herons, Ring-billed Gulls, Black Swifts, Peregrine Falcons, Bald Eagles, Ospreys and Wood Ducks that are found here. Walking to the end of the wharf gave us a good chance to see the grebes and Ospreys up close and personal. Swallows of all sorts darted by, including Northern Rough-winged, Barn, Tree and stunning Violet-green Swallows. While we were watching a Northern Flicker hopping about on the rocks near the shore, a commotion started amongst the swallows and an immature Cooper's Hawk arrived on the scene. This bird had significance because it was Dave and Linda's 1000th bird species! Congratulations on reaching the milestone.

After we had breakfast at the hotel, we made a quick stop to pick up 'supplies' at Shopper's Drug Mart, then carried on the Christmas Island Trail. It was a lovely walk along the trail with much activity from the birds. Common species included Song Sparrow, Willow Flycatcher, Red-winged Blackbird, Tree Swallows, and Common Yellowthroats. Other birds noted included a Sora, a Grey Catbird, Marsh Wren, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Greater Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper. An obliging Spotted Sandpiper was also a treat to see. We scanned through dozens of Western Grebes, eventually picking out a solitary Clark's Grebe. Amongst the masses of Ring-billed Gulls, I pointed out a sub-adult Mew Gull, while we had several American Herring Gulls here as well. Dave spotted a female Belted Kingfisher sitting on a post near the lake. We watched as she hovered, plunged into the water and emerged with a large fish (relatively speaking) that she struggled with for several minutes, before flying away with it dangling from her bill. Some drama played out on the waters of Shuswap Lake this morning as well, as two immature Bald Eagles teamed up to prey on a female Mallard and her tiny ducklings. The eagles swooped in dozens of times, forcing the ducks to dive underwater to avoid being caught. The ducks appeared to succeed and eventually the eagles gave up, much to our happiness. Moments later, an Osprey dove in and caught a small fish and immediately, up to four Bald Eagles were in hot pursuit of the Osprey, eventually making it drop its fish. All the while, Red-winged Blackbirds were dive-bombing the eagles, making for quite the spectacle.

We headed for lunch at the Sandbar where we sat on the patio and enjoyed the sunshine, food and presence of Western Tiger Swallowtails. Then we visited Peter Jannink Nature Park where the highlight was watching a number of Western Grebes at close range, with a couple of birds doing their mating dance, running side-by-side on the water. Among the swallows, we found a Bank Swallow, then had our first looks at House Finches. Dave and Linda saw a Water Vole, but it would not reappear once the rest of us came to look. It was time to head for

Kamloops so we followed Hwy 1 west to Chase, where we made a quick pit-stop, then made it to Kamloops just before 6 PM. We had a very nice dinner this evening at Earl's.

Day 7, June 24 – Our first stop this morning was at Safeway where we picked up lunch to go. We then headed N.W. of town to the Lac du Bois Grasslands where we spent a glorious, sunny day. Our first target of the morning was Burrowing Owl and we saw two adults and three youngsters near their burrow amongst the sagebrush, which was a very nice way to start the day. Various sparrows were about including Clay-coloured, Vesper and Chipping sparrows, as well as lovely Western Meadowlarks and a Mountain Bluebird or two. We passed by several little ponds this morning, each one with a different selection of ducks and grebes. There were Lesser Scaup and Ruddy Ducks on most ponds, while on some were Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Cinnamon Teal, Ring-necked Ducks and a couple of female Barrow's Goldeneyes. One pond had two gorgeous Black-necked Grebes, that were most likely nesting nearby. On Lac du Bois itself, were several Red-necked Grebes, some of which had tiny chicks alongside. Also in the Lac du Bois area, we enjoyed scope views of a tiny male Calliope Hummingbird atop the bushes. Cedar Waxwings, Willow Flycatchers, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Marsh Wren were also in attendance. At a patch of aspens we spent time admiring a Red-naped Sapsucker, House Wren, Dusky Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Northern Flicker, Mountain Bluebird and American Goldfinch! A Swainson's Hawk sailed overhead, followed by a mobbing Tree Swallow.

We had a picnic lunch at Isobel Lake, which was very enjoyable. After lunch we took a stroll around the little campground, finding Chipping Sparrows, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Hammond's Flycatcher, a female Western Tanager and Red-breasted Nuthatches. The highlight, however, was a Northern Pygmy Owl that we watched for nearly half an hour as it called from the low branches of a fir tree. It was hot and we were 'knackered' so we made our way back to Kamloops a little earlier today, then later headed out for a delicious meal at an Indian buffet.

Day 8, June 25 – From Kamloops we followed the rather scenic Hwy 5A towards Merritt, past lakes, ponds, grasslands and rolling hills. Our first stop was at Separation Lake, a place Martin was especially fond of. I agree, the area is beautiful and very photogenic. It was cool and breezy here this morning, as it often is, but that didn't stop us from enjoying the birds. There were Say's Phoebe, Mountain Bluebird, Wilson's Phalarope, Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Ducks and Vesper Sparrows, amongst others. A Marsh Wren was watched at close range as it built its nest in the reeds. Raptors were fairly numerous including Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, American Kestrel and Bald Eagles. As we continued along, I spotted a white tern flying over the south end of Shumway Lake. We pulled off and upon inspection it was an Arctic Tern, quite a rare species for this part of the world. The tern put on a nice show as it fed in the strong wind over the lake. Next, at Stump Lake, we scoped an assortment of nesting birds including Red-necked Grebes and Pied-billed Grebes most notably. Overhead, Black Swifts darted by, aided by the strong winds. Our next stop, along Planet Mine Road, was quite productive as we found two active nests of Lewis's Woodpeckers. These lovely, pink, grey and green woodpeckers, put on a great show as they foraged for food for their young. We stopped for a short time at Beaver Ranch Flats where the usual waterfowl and grebes were present. What was interesting here, was a Northern Raven that was raiding nests and carrying eggs out into the grassland where it would eat them. The eggs were most likely those of American Coots. At Quilchena we had a short stop to use the facilities at the general store, then we found a picnic table on the shores of Nicola Lake to have lunch.

After filling up with gas in Merritt, we headed across the Okanagan Connector and pulled up into my driveway about an hour and a half later. Cindy, my wife and my son Carsen were waiting for us at the door. Cindy had coffee and tea ready for us, while Carsen was excited to see all the new people. We spent quite some time here, enjoying the birds that were coming in to my feeders. Most interesting perhaps were the hummingbirds. There were several each of Rufous, Calliope and one or two male Black-chinned Hummingbirds that came in to feed. At the seed feeders, Cassin's Finches and Pine Siskins were busy, along with the odd Brown-headed Cowbird and Chipping Sparrow. At the suet, both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches came in to feed. Overhead, an Osprey, only the second I'd ever seen from the yard, circled with a small fish in its talons. A pair of Hairy Woodpeckers made an appearance and our first Pacific-slope Flycatcher and Spotted Towhee were also in the garden. It had been a successful visit! We carried on across the W.G. Bennett Bridge into Kelowna where we spent the next two nights. We had a carnivorous dinner at Montana's Ribhouse, joined by Cindy and Carsen.

Day 9, June 26 – Before breakfast, we visited Sutherland Hills Park along Mission Creek. We'd hoped to find a roosting Western Screech Owl, but the bird was not in its usual roost. The visit was still quite successful as we saw our first California Quail, a bird sitting in a cottonwood tree, calling. We also found Pygmy Nuthatch, a bird that can be found in Canada only in the Okanagan Valley and adjacent valleys in the southern interior of BC. The park seemed full of Grey Catbirds and we also saw quite a few Cedar Waxwings. Again, the male Calliope Hummingbird, or one of his descendants, that has been hanging out atop a cherry tree was there. We caught a rather brief glimpse of a Black-headed Grosbeak here this morning, but we wanted more! We enjoyed nice views

of Red-eyed Vireo, Spotted Towhee and Nashville Warbler too. At Robert Lake we saw Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, Wilson's Phalarope and the usual Killdeer. Ducks were about in good numbers, with Redheads, Barrow's Goldeneye, Lesser Scaup, Cinnamon Teal and Ring-necked Ducks, amongst others. At one point, a Virginia Rail wandered right out into the open for a moment. Swallows of all the local species were identified at Robert Lake, while another highlight was watching Western Bluebirds foraging from posts and phone wires.

After picking up lunch we made our way up Hwy 33, east of Kelowna and got stopped for 15 minutes or so by roadworks, but we were soon birding along Goudie Road. In a little patch of tall cottonwood trees we watched a Bullock's Oriole for several minutes. Also seen briefly along Goudie Road were Nashville and MacGillivray's Warblers. We pushed on to Sun Valley Road, stopping to call for a Barred Owl. The Barred Owl answered from the forest, but did not venture out to investigate us. As a consolation prize we had a male Lazuli Bunting, as well as Mountain Chickadee, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Chipping Sparrow, while a Cooper's Hawk came in to check out what was going on. We had lunch along McCulloch Road at the Nordic Cross Country Ski area. It was cool and breezy in the shade, but quite warm out in the sun. A Red-naped Sapsucker kept us entertained as we ate lunch. The sapsucker was feeding young in an aspen near the picnic table. Once lunch was over we checked in on a little wetland area where we had our only Olive-sided Flycatcher of the tour. Other birds here included Wilson's Warbler, Willow Flycatcher and a surprise visit from about eight Common Nighthawks that sailed low over the shrubbery as they caught insects.

A stop in the boreal forest near Big White Ski Village was quite productive. We saw a pair of Boreal Chickadees here, which is an uncommon and sought-after species of the high elevation and northern forests. A Varied Thrush pair hopped back and forth across the road, both with food in their bills. We saw several Hermit Thrushes and a Slate-coloured Fox Sparrow was great to see. Wilson's Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Dark-eyed Junco were also in attendance. Up at Big White Village itself we visited a chalet that has bird feeders and this is where we saw our first Steller's Jays. Also visiting the area were Mountain Chickadees and several Yellow Pine Chipmunks. We paused to take in the lovely distant view of the Monashee Mountains before beginning our descent and returning to Kelowna for dinner.

Day 10, June 27 – Leaving Kelowna after breakfast, we drove south, stopping first at a park near Summerland. After a lot of searching, Keith and Cathy spotted a roosting Western Screech Owl in a cottonwood next to the lake. Another quick stop along Hwy 97 next to some cliffs gave us the opportunity to watch over a dozen Rocky Mountain Goats through the scope. A Peregrine appeared, chased some swallows, then perched on the cliffs. A quick drive past the SS. Sicomous Paddle Wheel boat yielded cries of 'stop!' as some members of the group wanted a photo of the historic boat, which used to carry passengers across Okanagan Lake before the bridge opened. Out on the lake were Common Loon and Red-necked Grebe. We picked up lunch at Safeway and carried on south to White Lake Road, stopping in the sagebrush near the lake to look for some speciality birds. Along the way we saw California Quail very well, manoeuvring the van just right so people could open the door next to the quail and get a photo of the bird on a fence post. At White Lake the usual Western Meadowlarks and Brewer's Blackbirds were common. It didn't take long to spot a Sage Thrasher, one of the area's most sought after species. The thrasher was singing his sweet song from the top of the sagebrush as we watched through the scope. We scoped a pair of Burrowing Owls down on some flats before carrying on with our journey.

After our productive visit to White Lake, we passed through Okanagan Falls and bounced up the Shuttleworth Creek Forest Service Road. We headed for a heavily wooded gully where we ate our lunch. After lunch we investigated two groups of loudly begging baby woodpeckers. The first noisy 'beggars' led us right to the nest of Red-naped Sapsuckers, while the second turned out to be American Three-toed Woodpeckers, with both adults feeding the young. Continuing the nest theme, a pair of Williamson's Sapsuckers was busily feeding young in a cavity I had located with the first Rockies group three weeks earlier. I tried my Barred Owl call, once again. This time, a bunch of angry robins alerted us to the chance there could be an owl in the area. I spotted the owl up in the larch trees and called the group to come closer. The Barred Owl let out an impressive series of hoots as we watched. This sighting, for some, would rival the Great Grey Owl for bird of the trip. On our way down the road, we stopped at a scenic viewpoint up the valley towards Skaha Lake to the north. A Lewis's Woodpecker and a gorgeous male Lazuli Bunting kept us entertained here, as did one or two Yellow-bellied Marmots. We drove south to Osoyoos, through miles of vineyards, then we headed out to dine at the Wildfire Grill.

After dinner we gathered once again, this time for some nocturnal birding. Almost as soon as we crossed the cattleguard onto Kilpoola Lake Road, I spotted a Long-eared Owl sitting in a snag. Next, we stopped where the first group had found a family of young Northern Saw-whet Owls. I could hear a Common Poorwill calling nearby, one of our target species for the evening. We saw the poorwill on the gravel road and approached it with our flashlight trained on it. The poorwill allowed us to get within five feet of it, giving amazing views and photo-ops. We soon left the poorwill be and I could hear the hissing of fledgling Northern Saw-whet Owls. It took some effort through mud, branches and mosquitos, but several of us did see a chocolate brown baby saw-whet owl sitting in

the underbrush. We were not finished yet, as farther up the road we stopped to listen for the low pitched hooting of the rare and elusive Flammulated Owl. The owl called and after some searching we had views of it on a branch in a Ponderosa Pine, where we watched the small owl fly from tree to tree in the spotlight. This was our ninth and final species of owl for the tour. We returned to Osoyoos rather tired, but excited nonetheless.

Day 11, June 28 – It was a sunny morning as we emerged from the hotel. We found Martin, who had been down at the lake this morning taking some photos. He said he'd found an owl and wanted us to check it out. He showed me the back of his camera and there it was, a plastic owl sitting on top of a pylon at the marina! Our first stop this morning was at the cliffs at Vaseux Lake. Here, we had lovely views of a Rock Wren as it bounced from boulder to boulder at the base of the towering cliffs. A Lewis's Woodpecker also provided entertainment, as did a Lazuli Bunting. One or two Bighorn Sheep peered at us from the top of the cliff, a new mammal for our list. Down on Vaseux Lake we scoped 15 American White Pelicans on a sandbar at the north end, then they flew in formation to the south. We tried some more cliffs on Allendale Road with high hopes of finding Canyon Wren. Unfortunately the Canyon Wren had other plans, though we did get great views of low flying White-throated Swifts here, as well as a pair of Western Bluebirds feeding young in a box. Yellow-bellied Marmots provided some great entertainment and the catch-phrase 'what a nice bottom' was created here as one marmot welcomed another. Before we left we added one more sparrow to our list, and an attractive one at that, the Lark Sparrow. At Inkaneep Provincial Park we spent about half an hour during which time we had scope views of a singing Yellow-breasted Chat and we had our best views yet of a Black-headed Grosbeak male. A pair of Bewick's Wrens appeared with a spider in one bird's bill. A male Black-chinned Hummingbird sat atop a cottonwood sapling.

We had lunch in Oliver and then made our way up McKinney Road to an area of pine trees where Grey Flycatcher can be found. There was a flurry of activity here this afternoon and we did get great views of the flycatcher in addition to several other species including White-breasted Nuthatch, Pygmy Nuthatch, Townsend's Solitaire, Western Tanager, Western Wood-Pewee, Vesper Sparrow and Nashville Warbler to name just a few. Still needing Canyon Wren, we made for 'The Throne' - a cliff at the north end of Osoyoos Lake. A hike through the 'desert' ended at the cliffs where we did eventually see a couple of Canyon Wrens entering a nest cavity with food. Also seen here was another Rock Wren, an adult Peregrine up on the cliffs and more low-flying White-throated Swifts. To finish off what had already been a 'birdy' day, we stopped at Road 22 to scan the marshes and hayfields. There were several Bobolinks frolicking over the fields, while in the wetlands were Cinnamon, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teals, Ruddy Ducks and more. American Goldfinches posed to have their photos taken here and a Wilson's Snipe leapt up out of the marsh. Yellow-headed Blackbird was added to the day list and a Bald Eagle sat near its nest in a tall cottonwood. We had dinner this evening at Campo Marina and, as usual, it was scrumptious.

Day 12, June 29 – Heading west from Osoyoos, our first stop this morning was at the Nighthawk Border Crossing. Here, in the sagebrush we had nice views of several Brewer's Sparrows, as well as Lark Sparrow, Western Kingbird at its nest on a phone pole and several Western Meadowlarks. Our travels took us through Keremeos, where we had a quick pit-stop, then on to Princeton where we picked up lunch. From Princeton we headed into Manning Provincial Park and stopped in at the 'Beaver Pond'. A short walk here provided us with sightings of Yellow Warblers, Lincoln's Sparrows and Common Yellowthroat, as well as a nice variety of dragonflies. We then visited Manning Park Lodge where we had lunch while Clark's Nutcrackers swooped about looking for scraps. Also mooching were Brown-headed Cowbirds and several furry little Columbian Ground Squirrels. We took a drive up the Alpine Meadows Road, where I hoped we just might have a chance at finding a Sooty Grouse. At our first stop, as soon as I opened the door of the van, I could hear the deep resonating hoot of a Sooty Grouse. It took some bushwacking and some patience but I found the Sooty Grouse, a male, hooting from inside a large coniferous tree. All of the tour participants clambered up the hill and eventually we all saw the grouse. Other birds noted at the same place included Hermit Thrush, Townsend's Warbler, Warbling Vireo and Dark-eyed Junco. We turned around at a scenic viewpoint where we added yet another squirrel to our large list, the Cascade Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel. On our way back down towards the highway, I spotted a female Sooty Grouse in the grass with a few tiny babies, so now we had all seen a male and a female Sooty Grouse quite well. Trying to find a Red-breasted Sapsucker or Chestnut-backed Chickadee, we took the Gibson Pass Road, where we found a sapsucker, except it was a male Red-naped Sapsucker. Steller's Jay was also present here. The day was getting on so we had to leave Manning Park and continue west. We followed the maze of freeways and highways ending up finally in Richmond at our hotel. We had dinner at Stanley's Grill in the ice hockey rink.

Day 13, June 30 – This morning was about the only time on the tour that the rain affected us. We donned our rain jackets and waterproofs for a walk in Lighthouse Park in West Vancouver. Birds were a little less active than usual, most likely due to the damp start to the day. We had great views of a Pacific Wren that blasted out its song from the top of a tree stump. Swainson's Thrushes sang their ethereal songs from the rainforest, while

Black-capped Chickadees, Western Tanagers, Spotted Towhees and a Black-headed Grosbeak all made appearances for the day list. Down at the lighthouse we had a couple of Anna's Hummingbirds come in to feeders alongside Rufous Hummingbirds. Bald Eagles patrolled the shore and we saw one or two Pelagic Cormorants fly past. A Douglas's Squirrel was high in the firs above us. We picked up lunch and took it down to the beach at Ambleside Park where we ate outside, despite a light rain. We were entertained by Glaucous-winged Gulls and Northwestern Crows that were searching for scraps. Out on the water were more Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants. A Great Blue Heron fed along the shore, allowing Martin to creep closer and get good photos. Harlequin Ducks showed nicely as they fed in the water and just to make the 'Brits' feel at home, I showed them two Mute Swans on the little pond nearby.

Since we still needed a Red-breasted Sapsucker, we headed up to the cross country ski area at Cypress Mountain where we suddenly found ourselves amidst a rather thick fog. We started off on the trail and soon I could hear the loud begging of young woodpeckers. We followed the noise, which led us right to the nest cavity of a pair of Red-breasted Sapsuckers that were busily feeding the chicks. Our last stop of the day was at Maplewood Flats, where we searched for Black-throated Grey Warbler to no avail. We did, however, see other species here including Downy Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, Pelagic Cormorant, Pigeon Guillemot, Osprey and a young Hooded Merganser. We headed back to our hotel in Richmond and headed out for dinner at the Keg for our final evening meal together as a group.

Day 14, July 01 – Our final morning in Vancouver started out cool and breezy at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty. Several new species were seen here including Black Oystercatchers, Caspian Tern, Greater Scaup, and Surf Scoters. We had excellent views of Harlequin Ducks as they loafed and fed close to shore. Hundreds of Great Blue Herons congregated on the flats as the tide began to go back out. After a short pit stop in Tsawwassen we headed for the Reifel Bird Sanctuary on Westham Island in Ladner. At Reifel, we were bombarded by the usual mass of Mallards, Canada Geese, House Sparrows and Feral Rock Doves that sit and wait by the entrance. Farther into the park we began to encounter other species such as Wood Ducks, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal and Gadwall. We came around a corner and saw several large lenses pointed in one direction. I knew it must be the local Sandhill Cranes and, sure enough, there were two adults and two chicks wandering around in the grass. We sat in an old hide for a little bit, enjoying Tree Swallows coming in to feed young in boxes. A couple of Purple Martins also made an appearance here. For a second, a female Anna's Hummingbird fed at a flower in front of the hide, while some Cedar Waxwings posed nicely as well. Out in the marshes we found Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats, Red-winged Blackbirds and the like. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs posed side by side for comparison and one adult Long-billed Dowitcher was found. A flock of Western Sandpipers made several passes around the ponds, but never did land unfortunately. Two Bushtits were nice to find along the trail past the outer ponds. A lingering Trumpeter Swan was a nice surprise to see and one I had not expected to find at this location. We headed for lunch at Moxie's then made one last stop before the trip was over, at the Iona Sewage Treatment Plant. We added some day birds here, but didn't add anything else to the trip list. We headed for the airport in the late afternoon, said our goodbyes and that was the end of a very productive and enjoyable trip from Calgary to Vancouver.

Systematic list of species recorded (Total bird species recorded by group = (223))

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Common throughout.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Noted on pond at Ambleside Park in West Vancouver and under bridge to Westham Island, in Ladner.

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator*

One at Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

Seen quite well at Salmon Arm and at the Reifel Refuge.

Cinnamon Teal *Spatula cyanoptera*

Encountered at Frank Lake, ponds along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops, Stump Lake, along Hwy 5A between Merritt and Kamloops, Robert Lake in Kelowna and near Osoyoos, Road 22.

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*

Found at Frank Lake and Grand Valley Road in Alberta, as well as Salmon Arm, Lac du Bois Road, Stump Lake and Road 22 near Osoyoos.

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Sighted in Alberta at Frank Lake and in British Columbia at Stump Lake near Kamloops.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Found at Frank Lake in Alberta, and at a number of wetland locations in British Columbia.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Noted at Frank Lake, Salmon Arm, Separation Lake near Kamloops, and the Reifel Refuge near Vancouver.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common throughout.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

We saw pintails at Frank Lake and along ponds on Grand Valley Road near Cochrane in Alberta, and in B.C., we saw two at the Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Found at Grand Valley Road near Cochrane, Vermilion Lakes in Banff, Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops, White Lake and at Reifel Refuge near Vancouver.

Canvasback *Aythya valisineria*

Just two at Frank Lake in Alberta.

Redhead *Aythya americana*

Noted at wetlands throughout including Frank Lake, Salmon Arm, Beaver Ranch Flats along Hwy 5A, Robert Lake in Kelowna and at the north end of Vaseux Lk.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

First noted at Cave and Basin in Banff. Seen later at Salmon Arm, Lac du Bois Road, Beaver Ranch Flats, Separation Lake, Stump Lake and Robert Lake.

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

Several at Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty south of Vancouver.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Fairly common and seen on most lakes and ponds.

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*

Pair seen on Moraine Lake near Banff. Later, seen at Ambleside Park and at Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

Quite a few seen from the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty, south of Vancouver.

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*

Lovely little ducks, found several times at places like Frank Lake in Alberta, ponds along Lac du Bois Road, Separation Lake and Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty near Vancouver.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

In Alberta, found at Frank Lake and at ponds along Grand Valley Road.

Barrow's Goldeneye *Bucephala islandica*

Found at ponds and lakes on Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops, as well as at Robert Lake in Kelowna and White Lake near OK Falls.

Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus*

Tallied at Salmon Arm and at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver.

Common Merganser (Goosander) *Mergus merganser*

Brief views at Quilchena on Nicola Lake and at Mission Creek in Kelowna.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Abundant at Frank Lake. Also seen at a number of BC wetlands including those on Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops, Separation Lake and Robert Lake.

California Quail *Callipepla californica*

Quite common, especially in suburban areas and agricultural areas of the Okanagan Valley.

Sooty Grouse *Dendragapus fuliginosus*

Two along Manning Park's Alpine Meadows Road. One was a male hooting up in a tree, and the other was a female with several youngsters in the grass.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Introduced. Seen at Frank Lake in Alberta.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Also introduced. Pheasants seen at Salmon Arm and at Osoyoos at Road 22.

Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) *Gavia immer*

Noted at Vermilion Lake and Cave & Basin in Banff, at Nicola Lake, Separation Lake, and Okanagan Lake in Penticton. Other sightings made at fast speed as we traveled along highway.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

First at Salmon Arm, then at ponds on Lac du Bois Road. Also we saw several nesting birds at Stump Lake, near Merritt and we saw them at Robert Lake in Kelowna.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Found at Salmon Arm. Also at Lac du Bois near Kamloops. Several nesting pairs at Stump Lake on Hwy 5 between Merritt and Kamloops. Also on Okanagan Lake in Penticton.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Nesting colonies at Frank Lake near Calgary, Beaver Ranch Flats on Hwy 5A, Separation Lake, ponds on Lac du Bois Road and at Robert Lake near Kelowna.

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*

Found at Frank Lake and at Salmon Arm, both nesting areas for this elegant species.

Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii*

One seen well, alongside Western Grebes for comparison, at Christmas Island in Salmon Arm.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Quite a few seen at Frank Lake in Alberta.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Small numbers in flight at Frank Lake, Alberta.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

Common throughout, with highest count of all at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

Seen at Frank Lake, then later we saw 15 or so resting on a sandbar at the north end of Vaseux Lake.

Pelagic Cormorant *Leucocarbo pelagicus*

Seen in the distance at Ambleside Park in West Vancouver. Later better views obtained at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver and at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*

Encountered at Frank Lake and at pond on Grand Valley Road in Alberta. In BC, found along the coast at Ambleside Park, West Vancouver and at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Common in the British Columbia interior and in the Vancouver area.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Common around larger lakes such as at Frank Lake, Salmon Arm, Osoyoos Lk, and Road 22. Several nests seen on roadside telephone poles as well.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Two soaring overhead along Hwy 5a between Kamloops and Merritt, to the north of Shumway Lake.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*

Immature along shore at Salmon Arm and another east of Kelowna along Sun Valley Road.

Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

In Alberta we saw harriers at Frank Lake, as well as along Grand Valley Rd and Horse Creek Rd.

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Common sight throughout tour, especially near larger bodies of water.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*

Common through Alberta portion of tour, with sightings at Frank Lake, Grand Valley Road and Horse Creek Road. In BC, noted in grassland areas along Lac du Bois Road and at Separation Lake.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

Common throughout and seen nearly every day. Standard buteo/buzzard in this part of the world.

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola*

Sightings at Cave and Basin in Banff and in Kelowna at Robert Lake.

Sora *Porzana carolina*

Visuals at Frank Lake in Alberta and at Road 22 near Osoyoos.

American Coot *Fulica americana*

Fairly common in wetland areas throughout.

Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*

Two adults and chick at Reifel Refuge in Ladner, south of Vancouver.

Black Oystercatcher *Haematopus bachmani*

Several at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*

Small numbers at Frank Lake.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*

Quite a few at Frank Lake and nearby ponds.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*

Common throughout in open country.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*

Very nice sightings at Frank Lake.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*

Small numbers at Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One lone adult at the Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

Great viewing of many at Frank Lake. Also seen at Horse Creek Road, Separation Lake and Robert Lake.

Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata*

Found at Frank Lake, Horse Creek Road in marshes, and at Road 22, near Osoyoos.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

Found in ones and twos throughout tour at lakes, streams and ponds.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*

One at Salmon Arm, feeding in pool alongside trail to Christmas Is.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

A few at Frank Lake in Alberta and at the Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata*

Four counted at Frank Lake in Alberta.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*

A few early migrants detected, at Salmon Arm, Separation Lake and at the Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

One at Frank Lake in Alberta.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan*

Very common at Frank Lake where they nest.

Mew Gull *Larus canus*

One subadult at Christmas Island at Salmon Arm.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

Fairly common throughout, especially in the Salmon Arm area where there is a nesting colony, though this year's high water appears to have flooded the colony once again.

California Gull *Larus californicus*

Numerous at Frank Lake. A small flock passed by us as we ate our lunch at Nicola Lake, near Merritt. Also seen at Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens*

Common in Vancouver.

American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*

Just a handful seen, all in Salmon Arm.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Found at the Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty, south of Vancouver.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

One at Shumway Lake, along Hwy 5A between Kamloops and Merritt. This species is a rarity anywhere in British Columbia interior.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*

Quite a few seen at Frank Lake in Alberta. Two on log booms at Salmon Arm, a local rarity.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Several foraging over marshes at Frank Lake.

Pigeon Guillemot *Cepphus columba*

One, seen by some, in the distance at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver.

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Common throughout in cities and towns.

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Numerous in Kamloops / Okanagan and Lower Mainland areas.

Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura*

Fairly common in Kamloops and Okanagan areas.

Flammulated Owl *Psiloscoptes flammeolus*

One heard and briefly seen in pines along Kilpoola Lake Road, west of Osoyoos.

Western Screech Owl *Megascops kennicottii*

One roosting next to the lake at Okanagan Lake Provincial Park, near Summer-land.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*

Adult and youngster roosting in hedgerow along country road, north of Frank Lk.

Barred Owl *Strix varia*

Heard along Sun Valley Road, east of Kelowna and one seen well in larches along Venner Meadows Rd, east of Okanagan Falls.

Great Grey Owl *Strix nebulosa*

Stunning sighting on fence post in meadow along Grand Valley Road near Cochrane.

Northern Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium gnoma*

One seen well at Isobel Lake near Lac du Bois, in the Kamloops area.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

We saw two burrows, one at Lac du Bois near Kamloops, and the other at White Lake, near Okanagan Falls. Both burrows were attended by two adults.

Northern Saw-whet Owl *Aegolius acadicus*

A couple of fledglings seen in thick vegetation along Kilpoola Lake Road, near Osoyoos.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One atop dead tree at dusk along Kilpoola Lake Road near Osoyoos.

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*

Great sighting as several nighthawks foraged over wetland area along McCulloch Road in the daytime. This area is S.E. of Kelowna.

Common Poorwill *Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*

One seen very well along Kilpoola Lake Road, near Osoyoos.

American Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*

Found in Rockies at Beaver Valley, and in interior of BC at Stump Lake and Salmon Arm.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*

Found at Beaver Valley, near Rogers Pass, along Hwy 1. Also found at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk near Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, and in Vancouver at Ambleside Park and the Reifel Refuge.

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatilis*

Found near towering cliffs. We saw them overhead at the cliffs near Vaseux Lk, as well as at 'The Throne' near Osoyoos and cliffs along Allendale Lake Rd near OK Falls.

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*

Male seen at Chris's feeders in Peachland. Also seen at Inkaneep Provincial Pk, near Oliver.

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*

At feeders at lighthouse keepers place in Lighthouse Park, West Vancouver. Also at feeders near entrance to Reifel Refuge in Ladner.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*

One atop a dead tree at Beaver Valley near Rogers Pass was our first encounter with this snazzy little hummingbird. Later seen at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk, near Revelstoke, Chris's feeders in Peachland, feeders at the Manning Park Lodge and feeders in Lighthouse Park in West Vancouver.

Calliope Hummingbird *Stellula calliope*

A male along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops with subsequent sightings at Chris's feeder in Peachland, Sutherland Hills Park, White Lake Road and at the feeders at Manning Park Lodge.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*

Found at Salmon Arm, as well as at Tsawwassen Ferry Jetty.

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*

Two pairs nesting along Planet Mine Road along Hwy 5A, near Stump Lake. In the Okanagan, we saw Lewis's Woodpecker at Vaseux Lake cliffs as well as at viewpoint on Shuttleworth Creek Road.

Williamson's Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus thyroideus*

Pair feeding young in larch along Venner Meadows Road, near Okanagan Falls.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius*

One seen well along Horse Creek Road, near Cochrane, AB.

Red-naped Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus nuchalis*

A pair tending a nest at Muleshoe Picnic area in Banff. Also noted in forests along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops and at McCulloch Road, S.E. of Kelowna. One noted in wetland area near Manning Park Lodge.

Red-breasted Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus ruber*

At Cypress Provincial Park, near Vancouver, we saw this species, in the mist, tending to its nest.

American Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides dorsalis*

We saw a pair nesting next to the trail at Fenland in Banff and another pair was along Dutton Creek Road near Okanagan Falls.

Downy Woodpecker *Dryobates pubescens*

One along Horse Creek Road, near Cochrane and another at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver.

Hairy Woodpecker *Leuconotopicus villosus*

Two came in to my front yard along Trepanier Creek in Peachland as the group was visiting.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*

Common throughout. All seen were of western 'Red-shafted' race.

Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*

Pair nesting in a cavity in an aspen next to parking lot at Muleshoe Picnic Area near Banff. Also in Banff, we had a Pileated make an appearance early in the morning at Vermilion Lakes.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

One at the marshes along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane. Several in the interior, with sightings at Planet Mine Rd, near Merritt and at Separation Lake, closer to Kamloops.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A Merlin was seen from the restaurant we had lunch at in High River. Also one seen eating prey in a tree near the shore in Salmon Arm. Another was at the cliffs near Vaseux Lake.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Two seen along the foreshore in Salmon Arm. one on cliffs along Hwy 97 near Summerland and an adult on 'The Throne' near Osoyoos.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*

Fairly common in open areas of the southern interior of BC, where we saw them at Lac du Bois Road grasslands, Separation Lake, Robert Lake, and Road 22, to name a few locations.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*

Nice views near wetland area along McCulloch Road in the forests, S.E. of Kelowna.

Western Wood Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*

Fairly common throughout wherever riparian forest habitat present. Horse Creek Road, Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk, Lac du Bois Road and Road 22 just a few of the many locations we saw this species.

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii*

Quite common in heavily vegetated wetland areas. We found Willow Flycatchers at Vermilion Lakes and Cave and Basin in Banff, Salmon Arm, the McCulloch Rd Cross Country Ski area near Kelowna and other spots.

Alder Flycatcher *Empidonax alnorum*

Seen well at edge of boggy area along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane.

Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus*

Found in aspen woods along Horse Creek Road and one singing in a stand of aspens on Lac du Bois Road.

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii*

Found at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk near Revelstoke and along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops.

American Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri*

Noted in aspens along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops.

American Grey Flycatcher *Empidonax wrightii*

Very limited range in Canada. We found one or two this year at km 10 on Camp McKinney Road, the same location the first Grey Flycatcher was ever found in Canada in 1987.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis*

One seen quite well at Chris's garden along Trepanier Creek in Peachland.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

Seen at Frank Lake, then quite a number in the Okanagan Valley in open areas.

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

Fairly common throughout, especially on fence lines.

Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii*

One seen quite well along trail at Johnston Canyon in Banff.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*

Seen often, with first encounters along Horse Creek Rd and Grand Valley Rd near Cochrane, AB. Also noted at Vermilion Lake and Cave and Basin in Banff, and in BC interior, noted at a number of locations.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*

Found at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk, Salmon Arm at Christmas Island Trail, Sutherland Hills Park in Kelowna and at Maplewood Flats in North Vancouver.

Grey Jay *Perisoreus canadensis*

Canada's national bird was seen at Johnston Canyon and the Fenland Trail in Banff. In BC, seen at Big White Ski Village near Kelowna and in Manning Park along the Alpine Meadows Road.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*

Several at Big White Ski Village near Kelowna and one or two in Manning Park.

Black-billed Magpie *Pica hudsonica*

Common throughout, except in Vancouver area where magpies are absent.

Clark's Nutcracker *Nucifraga columbiana*

We watched a flock of nutcrackers foraging at Moraine Lake, near Banff. Later, we saw them again at the Manning Park Lodge where they are happy to take handouts.

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*

Common throughout, except in Vancouver area, where replaced by Northwestern Crow.

Northwestern Crow *Corvus caurinus*

Abundant in the Vancouver area.

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

Common throughout.

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*

Quite common and seen most days, usually in deciduous low elevation forests.

Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapilla*

Common throughout. A few locations we found them at include Salmon Arm, Sutherland Hills Park, Inkaneep Provincial Park and Lighthouse Park.

Mountain Chickadee *Poecile gambeli*

Common in coniferous forests, but absent from Alberta, east of the mountains, and absent from Vancouver.

Boreal Chickadee *Poecile hudsonica*

Two noted in upper elevation coniferous forest near Big White Ski Village, S.E. of Kelowna.

Horned (Shore) Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Two seen quite well along road east of Frank Lake.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Found at Salmon Arm, Separation Lake, Stump Lake, Robert Lake and Road 22.

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*

Common throughout.

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*

Common throughout.

Purple Martin *Progne subis*

Seen at the Reifel Refuge and at Iona Sewage Ponds in Vancouver area.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Fairly common throughout.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common throughout.

American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

Common throughout, especially near bridges under which they nest.

American Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*

Seen at Reifel Refuge near Ladner, on our last morning of birding.

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*

Seen well along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane and in the forests along Lac du Bois Road near Kamloops.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*

Noted at Horse Creek Road near Cochrane, at Vermilion Lk, near Banff, along Lac du Bois Road and near Kelowna at Big White.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*

Found at the cliffs at Vaseux Lake and at the cliffs of 'The Throne' near Road 22, Osoyoos.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*

After some searching we saw at least one on the cliffs at 'The Throne' near Osoyoos.

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris*

Little denizens of the reeds, we encountered Marsh Wren several times at locations including Frank Lake, Salmon Arm, wetlands on Lac du Bois Road, Separation Lake and at the Reifel Refuge.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*

Two at Inkaneep Provincial Park near Oliver.

Pacific Wren *Troglodytes pacificus*

Found at Johnston Canyon in Banff, and in Vancouver at Lighthouse Park.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*

We had just two sightings of House Wren, with one along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane, AB and the other along Lac du Bois Road in Kamloops.

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*

Seen at Sutherland Hills Park, Kelowna and Camp McKinney Road near Oliver. Usually in Ponderosa Pines.

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*

Common in coniferous woods throughout.

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*

One at Chris's place on Trepanier Creek in Peachland and another at km10, Camp McKinney Road, Oliver.

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*

Just one creeper seen, amongst the gigantic trees at Lighthouse Park in West Vancouver.

Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*

Seen along boardwalk at Skunk Cabbage near Revelstoke, at Salmon Arm, and at Sutherland Hills Park in Kelowna, as well as at Road 22 and Inkaneep Provincial Park in the South Okanagan.

Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus*

Two in the sagebrush at White Lake near Okanagan Falls. Numbers exceptionally low in Canada, with just a few pairs each year in the Okanagan.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Abundant throughout.

Varied Thrush *Oxoreus naevius*

Lovely birds, noted at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk near Revelstoke and at Big White Ski Village near Kelowna. Heard other locations as well.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*

Pair seen along fence at Robert Lake in Kelowna. Also seen at White Lake near Okanagan Falls, and at cliffs on Allendale Lake Road, also near Okanagan Falls. Seen on hike to 'The Throne' near Osoyoos too.

Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*

Found in Alberta along Horse Creek Road and Grand Valley Road close to Cochrane, and in BC at grasslands of Lac du Bois Road, Separation Lake and at White Lake.

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*

Two at km 10 on Camp McKinney Road, near Oliver.

Veery *Catharus fuscus*

Good views of Veery obtained at Skunk Cabbage Boardwalk near Revelstoke.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*

Found at Vermilion Lake and at Cave & Basin in Banff. Seen in BC at a number of woodland locations.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*

One or two at Big White Ski area near Kelowna, and at Manning Park along the Alpine Meadows Road.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*

Common to abundant throughout.

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus*

Dipper was seen at the lower falls at Johnston Canyon, in Banff.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common in cities and towns throughout.

Purple Finch *Haemorhous purpureus*

Female-type along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane.

Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii*

Found at Lac du Bois Road, and at feeders at Chris's place on Trepanier Creek in Peachland.

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*

Though common in the area, only seen at Salmon Arm, Road 22 and in West Vancouver at Maplewood Flats.

American Goldfinch *Carduelis tristis*

Fairly common throughout, at locations including Salmon Arm, Robert Lake, Rd22, and Inkaneep Provincial Park, to name a few locations.

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus*

Common throughout in pine forests.

Slate-coloured Fox Sparrow *Passerella schistacea*

One seen quite well at Vermilion Lakes in Banff.

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*

Common throughout, especially in wetland areas.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*

Found along Grand Valley Road, near Cochrane, at Vermilion Lakes in Banff and at Beaver Valley near Rogers Pass. Also seen in Manning Park at the Beaver Pond.

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*

Encountered a number of times, at such locations as Vermilion Lakes in Banff, Ambleside Park in West Vancouver and Cypress Provincial Park, in North Vancouver.

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*

Found along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*

Common throughout. Most seen were of western 'Oregon' race, though we saw one or two hybrid Oregon x Slate-coloured race birds in the foothills.

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*

Common in open fields, especially those around Frank Lake in Alberta.

Nelson's Sparrow *Ammodramus nelsoni*

One seen at Frank Lake.

Le Conte's Sparrow *Ammodramus leconteii*

Found at Frank Lake and along Horse Creek Road near Cochrane, AB.

Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*

One singing bird near the US border along Nighthawk Road, west of Osoyoos.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*

Common throughout.

Clay-coloured Sparrow *Spizella pallida*

Several in Alberta at Frank Lake and in areas N.W. of Cochrane. In BC, we saw a couple of Clay-coloured Sparrows on the Lac du Bois grasslands, Kamloops.

Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*

Rare and local in sagebrush habitat. We saw a couple of Brewer's Sparrows close to the US border along Nighthawk Road, west of Osoyoos.

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus*

Fairly common and first noted in dry agricultural areas near Frank Lake. In B.C., common at Lac du Bois grasslands, White Lake Road, and the Nighthawk Border Crossing.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*

First sighting was along Allendale Lake Road near Okanagan Falls. Other Lark Sparrows noted at Nighthawk Road border crossing, west of Osoyoos.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*

Our first towhees were at Chris's place in Peachland, along Trepanier Creek. Others were at Sutherland Hills Park in Kelowna, Okanagan Lake Provincial Pk, Lighthouse Park.

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*

One watched through the scope at Inkaneep Provincial Park near Oliver.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*

Abundant at Frank Lk in Alberta. Also numerous at Salmon Arm and around Road 22 in Osoyoos.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

Found in large hay field along Grand Valley Road, near Cochrane, AB. Also seen at Road 22 near Osoyoos.

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*

Common throughout in open grassland areas, including Frank Lake, Lac du Bois Road, White Lake Road, and the border crossing at Nighthawk Road.

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*

Several on tour, all in the Okanagan area where we found them at Goudie Rd, east of Kelowna, White Lake Road, the Cliffs at Vaseux Lake.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*

A couple of males seen in the foothills near Cochrane, along Horse Crk Rd.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*

Common throughout, especially in wetland areas.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*

Common throughout.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*

Common throughout.

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*

One or two seen around city of High River, near Frank Lake.

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis*

A few noted as we traveled through the Rockies at locations like the Beaver Valley, Cave and Basin, and Skunk Cabbage Trail.

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina*

One or two seen well in the foothills near Cochrane, AB.

Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata*

One seen along Bow Valley Parkway in Banff.

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla*

One at Chris's place along Trepanier Creek in Peachland, and another was at Sutherland Hills Park, Kelowna.

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*

Heard at a number of locations, but this elusive species was seen at just two places, Chris's place on Trepanier Creek in Peachland and along Goudie Road, east of Kelowna.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*

Fairly common in marshy areas throughout.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*

Found at Beaver Valley near Rogers Pass and at Skunk Cabbage Trail near Revelstoke.

Cape May Warbler *Setophaga tigrina*

Male along Horse Creek Road, near Cochrane, AB.

Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia*

Nice views in Beaver Valley near Rogers Pass.

American Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*

Common throughout in deciduous woods.

Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*

Male at Cave and Basin in Banff.

Myrtle Warbler *Setophaga coronata*

One or two in the foothills along Horse Creek Rd near Cochrane.

Audubon's Warbler *Setophaga auduboni*

Common throughout tour.

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*

Heard several times, but seen just once along the Alpine Meadows Road in Manning Provincial Park.

Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*

Seen along Bow Valley Pkwy in Banff, at Lake Louise, Big White Ski area, and Lighthouse Park.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*

A male at Chris's place on Trepanier Creek in Peachland, then fairly common in coniferous woodlands in BC.

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*

Found at Sutherland Hills Park in Kelowna, Inkaneep Provincial Park near Okanagan Falls and near Vancouver at Lighthouse Park.

Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena*

Our was a male along Sun Valley Road, east of Kelowna. Other sightings, all in the Okanagan, were at the cliffs at Vaseux Lake, Shuttleworth Creek Road, 'The Throne' and Allendale Lake Road.

MAMMALS

Eastern Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*

Douglas's Squirrel *Tamiasciurus douglasii*

American Red Squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*

Yellow-bellied Marmot *Marmota flaviventris*

Cascade Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus saturatus*

Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus lateralis*

Richardson's Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus richardsonii*

Columbian Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus columbianus*

Yellow-pine Chipmunk *Tamias amoenus*

Least Chipmunk *Tamias minimus*

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*

White-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus townsendii*

Coyote *Canus latrans*

Harbour Seal *Phoca vitulina*

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*

Mule Deer *Odocoileus hemionus*

Rocky Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*

Bighorn Sheep *Ovis canadensis*

American Water Vole *Microtus richardsoni*

BUTTERFLIES

Common Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*

Western Tiger Swallowtail *Papilio rutulus*

Cabbage White *Pieris rapae*

Checkered White *Pontia protodice*

Clouded Sulphur *Colias philodice*

Melissa Blue *Plebejus melissa*

Western Tailed Blue *Cupido amyntula*

Large Heath (Common Ringlet) *Coenonympha tullia*

Common Alpine *Erebia epipsodea*