

Yukon Warbler

Newsletter of the Yukon Bird Club – Spring 2003



Rusty Blackbird, 28 August 2002, Whitehorse, Yukon. Photo by Cameron D. Eckert

Yukon Bird Club Field Trips & Events - Spring 2003

April 12 - *Birds of the Yukon Territory* Book Launch (Beringia Centre 7 pm)

Join in the celebration of this wonderful moment in the Yukon's birding history. Enjoy a catered buffet, book signings, and a lavishly illustrated presentation.

April 16 – Waterbird identification workshop (Whitehorse Library 7 pm)

Get ready for spring birding! Cameron Eckert will host this hands-on identification workshop, exploring easy ways to identify an amazing array of divers, dabblers, and waders.

April 20 - Birdhouse Building (Swan Haven 1-5 pm)

Come help build bird habitat for our nesting songbirds! This family friendly event will see participants through the construction of bird houses using pre-cut kits. All welcome!

April 12-20 - Celebration of Swans (Several Locations)

The Celebration of Swans is a great way for bird-lovers to welcome in the spring. Events will include talks about swans, owl recovery programs, wetland conservation, and raptors; art shows; and the famed swan bus-tour.

April 22 - Bird Sketching 101 (Whitehorse Library 7 pm)

Why sketch birds? Sketching encourages us to look at birds with a focus on detail, thereby improving our identification skills. When done efficiently, it can be used as part of good record keeping to help make a definitive identification. And it is *fun*. Many of us have thought of sketching, but don't know where to start. Come and practice with some other novice sketchers and get useful tips from long-time field sketcher, Pam Sinclair.

Spring & Summer Field Trips

Dress for the weather, wear appropriate footwear, and bring binoculars. For more information call Wendy at 668-7572. Pre-register for longer distance trips as noted.

April 29 – *Shrike migration in the Takhini valley* with Lee Kubica. Meet at the Porter Creek Super A at 6:30 pm.

May 4 – *Tagish Birding Tour*. Helmut Grünberg guides this exciting day trip to Carcross. Bring lunch and meet at the SS Klondike at 9:00 am.

May 8 – *Schwatka Lake Beginners' Waterfowl Night*. Learn about waterbird identification with René Carlson. Meet at the SS Klondike at 6:00 pm.

May 10 – *International Migratory Bird Day - Spring Migration Count*. To participate in this annual "spring round-up" call Cameron Eckert at 667-4630.

May 14 – *Quartz Road wetland*. Enjoy an outing to this rich little wetland situated along the Yukon River right in Whitehorse with Cameron Eckert. Meet at the Feed Store parking lot on Quartz Road at 6:00 pm.

May 18 – *Cowley Lake waterbirds and more* just down the Carcross Road with Norm Barichello. Bring lunch and meet at the Carcross Corner at 10:00 am.

May 22 – *Schwatka Lake waterfowl* with René Carlson. Meet at the S.S. Klondike at 6:30 pm. Beginners welcome.

May 24 – McIntyre Creek bird songs and calls workshop. Tune your bird-song identification skills with Pam Sinclair. Everyone is welcome. Meet at the Porter Creek Super A at 7:30 am. (Yes, that is 7:30 in the morning!)

May 27 – Judas Creek migration hot spot with Jim Hawkings. A good chance you will see something unexpected! Meet at the S.S. Klondike at 5:30 pm.

May 30 at 5 pm to May 31 at 5 pm – Annual BIRDATHON. A conservation education fundraiser and an annual highlight of spring birding. Join the post-Birdathon barbecue at Wolf Creek Campground at 6:00 pm. For more information call Boris at 633-6404.

June 1 – Lake Laberge. Join Boris Dobrowolsky on this day trip to catch the last of the spring migrants. Bring lunch and meet at Porter Creek Super A at 8:30 am.

June 5 – Birds of Mary Lake. From grebes to songbirds, this evening outing with Wendy Nixon will explore the bird life at one of the most accessible wetlands in Whitehorse. Meet at the S.S. Klondike at 7:00 pm.

June 8 – Loons and Arctic Terns of Lewes Lake with Jeanette McCrie. Bring lunch and meet at the S.S. Klondike at 9:30 am and be prepared to walk a few kilometres if the road is rough.

June 15 – White Mountain & Atlin Road with Boris Dobrowolsky & Helmut Grünberg. This trip will explore rich songbird habitat in wetlands along the Atlin Road, and for those who want to hike to the alpine, a steep walk up and down White Mountain. Please pre-register for this trip by calling Boris at 633-6404. Bring lunch and meet at the S.S. Klondike at 8:00 am.

June 22 – Grey Mountain. Hike to the subalpine to search for Townsend's Solitaires and Golden-crowned Sparrows with Mary Whitley. Be ready to hike for about 4 hours. The flowers should be nice too! Bring a lunch and meet at the S.S. Klondike at 9 am.

June 24 – Summer at Hidden Lakes. Join Peter Sandiford on this outing to Hidden Lakes in Riverdale which offers a diverse mix of breeding waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and perhaps the odd raptor. Meet at the S.S. Klondike at 7:00 pm.

June 29 – Alpine birds and wild flowers on King's Throne with David Henry. This is a challenging hike to alpine habitat south of beautiful Kathleen Lake. Please pre-register for this trip by calling Wendy at 668-7572 (Whitehorse) or David at 634-2426 (Haines Junction). Bring lunch and meet at the Kluane Park Visitor's Centre at 10:00 am.

July 6 – Mount McIntyre. An alpine day trip with Mike Gill in search of ptarmigan, Blue Grouse, Dusky Flycatcher and Timberline Sparrow. Please pre-register for this trip by calling Mike at 633-8410. Bring lunch and meet at the SS Klondike at 8:30 am.

WEEKEND ON THE WING

Tombstone Park ~ June 6 - 8, 2003

For more information or to volunteer to help out, contact:
Dennis Kuch (dennis.kuch@gov.yk.ca), phone: (867) 667-8299
Yukon Parks, Department of Environment

YBC News & Notes

Yukon Bird Club AGM 2003

by Mary Whitley

A lively group turned out for the AGM on February 19, the highlight of which, at the close of the meeting, was a sneak preview of parts of the book "Birds of the Yukon". Thanks to Wendy Nixon and Pam Sinclair for bringing computer images and proofs for viewing. This is an exciting multi-year project that will culminate in the book launch in April 2003. Watch for announcements.

In an effort to "branch out" to other birding locations, field trips this spring and summer will go to some new spots like the Nordenskjold wetlands, and alpine locations such as White Mt., Grey Mt. and King's Throne. Look for the schedule in this issue of the Warbler and on posters and in ads around town this spring.

Our board this year is composed of Mary Whitley (president), Nancy Hughes (treasurer), Pam Sinclair (secretary), Wendy Nixon (field trips coordinator), Boris Dobrowolsky (Birdathon coordinator), Lee Kubica (checklist coordinator), Helmut Grünberg (sightings coordinator), Cameron Eckert (director for special projects), Valerie Graham (director at large), Jeannette McCrie (director at large). The position of events coordinator is open.

Helmut highlighted three species new to the Yukon in his report. They are Tufted Duck, Ruff and Siberian Blue Robin. The Bird Club has been involved with the planning of a brochure on the Beaver-LaBiche area of southeast Yukon soon to be released. We are also involved in the planning of a Biodiversity Forum planned for April 25 and 26. The Club financially assisted Ted Murphy-Kelly who runs the Albert Creek banding station near Watson Lake. He gave an interesting presentation in the fall on his results. Due to the yearly fundraising of our Birdathon, the Club is in a stable financial position. We look forward to introducing people from near and far to the birds of the Yukon over the coming year.

Skagway Bird Club Established

by Meg Hahr

Over the past few years, a core group of Skagway area birders has met periodically to talk about bird sightings, organize informal outings, and participate in national birding events such as Project Feeder Watch. More recently, the group generated sufficient interest among local community members and visiting Yukon birders to hold the first ever Skagway Christmas Bird Count (for complete Skagway CBC results check out the CBC website at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/). This successful event brought together 19 birders, including four from Whitehorse, who recorded 31 species during the count. Skagway CBC participants tallied 228 Chestnut-backed Chickadees, the highest count of any Alaska circle! In fact, twice as high as the next closest count! Buoyed by this strong showing in the CBC, Skagway birders decided it was about time that they formed a formal bird club and held regular meetings.

At their first official meeting on the 12th of February, the 12-member group selected officers and decided to call themselves the Skagway Bird Club. The first order of business was participation in the Great Backyard Bird Count (February 14-17, 2003). Most members were already looking forward to the GBBC and were hoping the mild weather would hold through the weekend. The club also discussed other activities they would like to sponsor such as field trips and guest speakers. The next Skagway Bird Club meeting is scheduled for Wednesday March 5th at 7pm at the Library. Club member and National Park Service biologist Meg Hahr will be giving a talk on owls and the meeting is open to the public. For additional information on the Skagway Bird Club or Skagway birding contact:

John McDermott (mcddyeya@aptalaska.net)
 Elaine Furbish (CEFMBK@aptalaska.net)
 Meg Hahr (meg_hahr@hotmail.com)

CANCELLED Yukon Protected Areas Strategy

by Peter Sandiford

After just three months in power, the Yukon Party has cancelled work on the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy (YPAS) indefinitely. The Yukon Party now threatens to revisit the fundamental principles of YPAS. This could mean an entire renegotiation of ideas that have endured with broad public support for almost 10 years. While some have voiced legitimate issues regarding how the strategy was being implemented, few disagree with the fundamental principles put forth in the original strategy documents of 1998.

The Yukon Protected Areas Strategy provides a framework for protecting representative portions of the Yukon's 23 ecoregions. It offered opportunities for public involvement and was respectful of Final Agreements and future land-use planning processes.

By cancelling YPAS, the Yukon now has the embarrassing distinction of being the only Canadian jurisdiction not moving forward with a formal protected areas strategy/plan. This regressive decision also marks the first platform promise to be broken by the Yukon Party and a reneging on a National commitment to complete a network of protected areas.

Why should birders care about the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy?

We are custodians of some of North America's last intact wilderness. Over 1 billion warblers are estimated to breed in Canada's boreal forests. And that's just one taxonomic group! Every year the birds that migrate through and breed in the Yukon face increasingly fragmented landscapes and impacted habitats. When planned carefully, protected areas networks and careful resource management outside of protected areas provide the basis for maintaining healthy and connected ecosystems.

It is important that we don't let the opportunity to create an effective and inspiring network of protected areas slip out of the view of our current government. Write a letter to Premier Denis Fentie or Environment Minister Jim Kenyon, to tell them what you think. For more background information, and draft letters that can be sent electronically visit www.wildcanada.net.



Yukon Christmas Bird Count Report – 103rd CBC

Marsh Lake-Yukon River – Dec 22, 2002

by Helmut Grünberg

A *small but dedicated group of birders braved the cold...* - Oops, it wasn't cold at all, so this standard line doesn't apply except that people who were birding along the Yukon River had to contend with a wicked wind howling down the river. With all that warm weather we set a new record for this Christmas Bird Count: 18 species plus 2 during Count Week (3 days before and 3 days after Count Day). The number of individual birds was 418. We had ten observers plus one feeder watcher. New to the count was Trumpeter Swan, with 3 adults and 3 juveniles just downstream of the Lewes Dam. Another new species was Red Crossbill, identified by Greg and Lee Kubica. Five Ruffed Grouse were observed during Count Week by Doug Phillips. Another nice sighting was that of a Mountain Chickadee by Cameron Eckert at its traditional location near the bridge. Boris Dobrowolsky and Helmut Grünberg found an American Dipper (not seen for a few years) in a creek near Lewes Marsh, thanks went to Thalina Tchulokwsky who had pointed them to this creek the day before. Somewhat surprising was the near lack of redpolls. A single one was found by Greg and Lee Kubica.

Jocelyn McDowell and Peter Heebink skied through the woods and found a respectable six species. Clive Osborne found nine species near feeders, as did Randi Mulder and Bruce Bennett along the sawmill road although they had jokingly complained about “setting a new low record”. The old Star Ranch Road (McClintock Valley Road) was surprisingly interesting this year with grouse, woodpeckers and finches. When darkness fell, Helmut Grünberg tried, probably for the 10th year, to find an owl, but success eluded him again. As usual, we had our lunch break in a nicely warmed up Swan Haven, courtesy of Bruce Bennett of the Wildlife Viewing Program. Thanks, Bruce. This was also a good time to exchange observations and stories and make plans for the afternoon. This year's Christmas Bird Count was again a very nice break in the dead of winter for all participants.

Whitehorse – December 26, 2002

by Jim Hawkings

With the well-above average temperatures we enjoyed throughout the fall, the Whitehorse Count was looking to be a good chance to notch some unusual winter birds. As luck would have it, 26 December was one of the coldest days of the winter to that point. The day was pleasant enough, with only a slight breeze, but fog over the extensive open water along the Yukon River made a challenge of the duck and dipper finding! There was very little snow on the ground, which made it easy for those who chose to get off the beaten track in hopes of finding a skulking grouse or Three-toed Woodpecker. Eleven hardy YBC members braved the unaccustomed cold and later gathered to share their tales of adventure over a potluck dinner at the Hawkings' residence (which was a resounding success; everybody had a great time thanks to our hosts Beth and Jim. - Ed.).

Twenty species were seen in total. In addition, two more species were seen during Count week: Three House Finches at Helmut Grünberg's and Barbara and Bob Studds' feeders downtown and an American Tree Sparrow. Strangely, there were fewer odd birds found than in most years. Highlights were a female Barrow's Goldeneye, which was only the third time for the Whitehorse Count; two female Common Mergansers; a lonely Dark-eyed Junco at a feeder near Schwatka Lake; and an adult Bald Eagle near Hidden Lakes. There were good numbers of Bohemian Waxwings but no Red-breasted Nuthatches, which have been fairly regular winter residents until this year. Only one American Dipper turned up, despite all the open water -- perhaps “because” of all the open water. Regular species which barely made an appearance (1 individual) were: Downy Woodpecker and Spruce Grouse. Thanks to all the participants, Cameron Eckert, Bruce Bennett, Randi Mulder, Helmut Grünberg, Boris Dobrowolsky, Jim, Lee & Adrian Hawkings, Lee and Greg Kubica, Mary Whitley, and especially to Wendy Nixon for doing most of the organizing prior to making good her escape to some real winter birding in New Zealand!

Watson Lake – December 28, 2002

by Ted Murphy-Kelly

It was Watson Lake's best turn out of birders this year with 21 participants. The day was a beautiful one with clear skies and no wind but the temperature never got up beyond -25C. The number of redpolls was noticeably down this year, but the Pine Grosbeaks were slightly up in numbers. The complete absence of White-winged Crossbills made the team of Ted, José and John, who hiked along the Albert Creek Road, quite lonely, but we managed to find a Ruffed Grouse and some Boreal and Black-capped Chickadees and a couple of Common Ravens. The team of Reiner and Ulla Rembe got lucky and found the Count's first Black-backed Woodpecker along the North Fire Break. Jenny Skelton had six Hoary Redpolls at her feeders and Ted Murphy-Kelly managed to hear a Boreal Owl calling along the Robert Campbell Highway just outside of town. The Watson Lake birders gave a good effort, and we all met for a pot luck dinner at Hollie and Ted's place afterwards to exchange stories and talk about birds missed. Thanks to participants: José ?, Michelle Beaulieu, Steve Beaulieu, Kevin Bremner, John Brett, Scott Cole, Gord Dumas, Renelle Guenette, Cora Kelly, Tara McGowan, Barb Millen, Edward(Ted) Murphy-Kelly, Hollie Murphy-Kelly, Reiner Rembe, Ulla Rembe, Amber Rudd, Dale Rudd, Sue Rudd, Jenny Skelton, Jason Strudwick, Lori Strudwick.

Haines Junction – December 28, 2002

by Suzanne Henry

Topping our count numbers this year were 121 Pine Grosbeaks, followed by 72 Common Redpolls, 62 Common Ravens, 58 White-winged Crossbills, 46 Black-billed Magpies, 44 Black-capped Chickadees and 21 Gray Jays. Numbers dropped off quickly from there to include 10 Boreal Chickadees, 6 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 4 Hoary Redpolls, 3 Dark-eyed Juncos, 6 Hairy Woodpeckers, 1 Downy and 1 Three-toed Woodpecker, 1 Ruffed Grouse and 1 Spruce Grouse. One American Dipper was seen on Pine Creek and two more outside the count area on the

Kathleen River. The most unusual sighting was an American Tree Sparrow at a bird feeder. A Northern Shrike was seen at a feeder the day before the count, but it eluded us on count day. Earlier in the week a Gyrfalcon and 50 Willow Ptarmigan were seen at Mt. Decoli. Twelve Trumpeter Swans were seen flying overhead on December 10, and one swan was swimming at the south end of Kluane Lake on December 20. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this year's Bird Count: Libby & Ken Anderson; Brenda & Terry Berezan; Libby & Claude Dulac; Millie Hall; Caroline and Bob Hayes; David, Suzanne and Liz Henry; Rita & Walter Jux; Brent Liddle & Wenda Lythgoe; Debbie Osborne, and Wolf Riedl.

Mayo – December 29, 2002

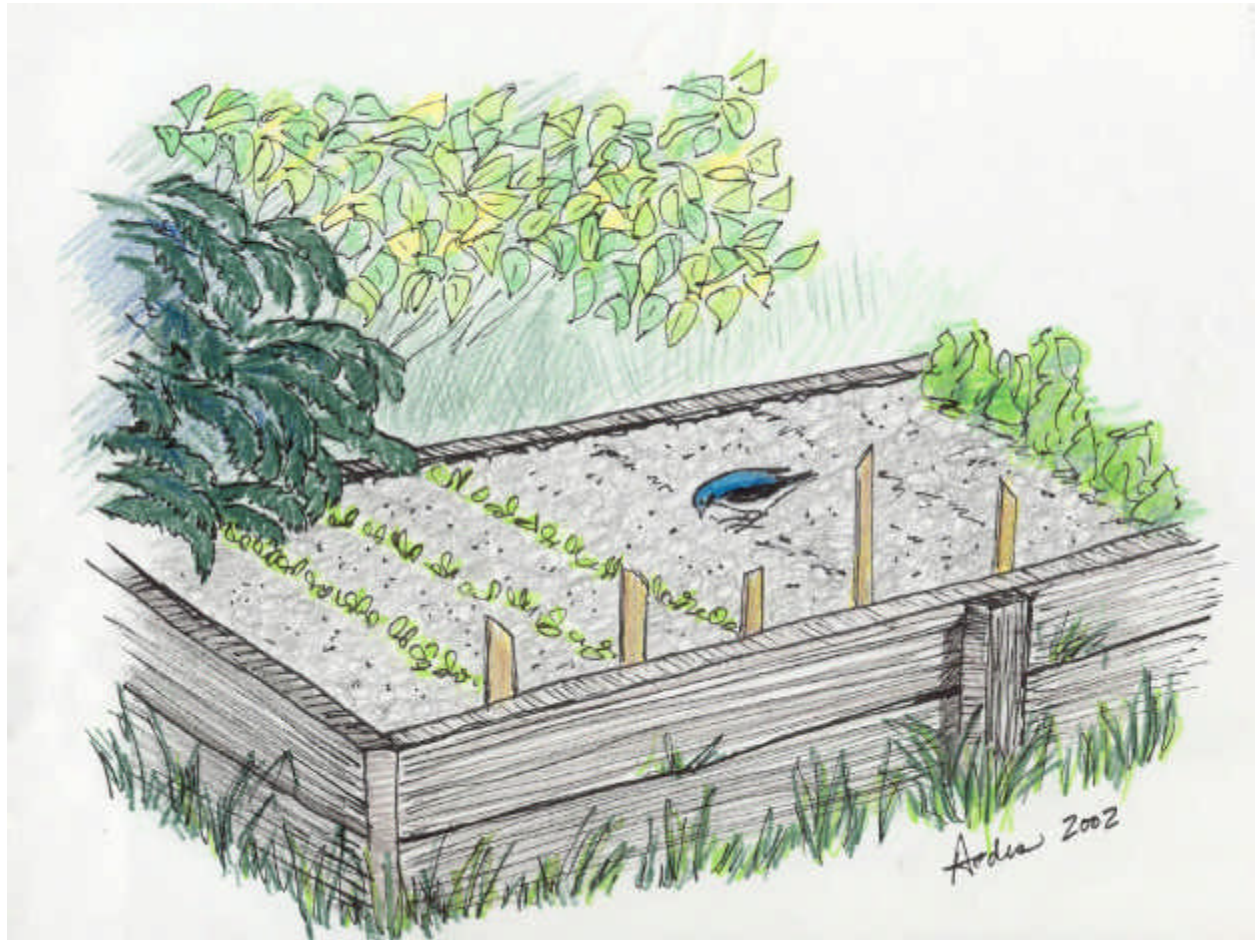
by Mark O'Donoghue

We had a beautiful day for the count, with temperatures ranging from -24 to -19 C, a light north wind, and partly cloudy. We had 2 field crews who skied, walked and snowmobiled, 4 feeder watchers, and 1 owling crew. The addition of 2 dedicated bird feeders really upped our total number of grosbeaks this year. We counted 12 species, which, for us, is high. Highlights were an American Dipper in the open water in the Mayo River below the powerhouse, 2 Boreal Owls hooting at night, and lots of crossbills. I've checked below the powerhouse for dippers each CBC for the past 5 years, and this was the first I've seen there. There's a lot more open water this year with a stretch of several hundred metres instead of the usual small open spot right at the outlet. This is our first good spruce cone crop for 3 years, and there are White-winged Crossbills everywhere. My count is certainly a minimum count, because I was counting them in an area of dense spruce, and I'm sure there were more. One of our feeder watchers heard a pair of Great-Horned Owls a few days before the count, but not on count day. A thank you goes to all the participants that joined Mark O'Donoghue: Shann Carmichael, Jean Gordon, Ina Mae Klippert, Marsha McDonald and Simone McDonald.

Siberian Blue Robin in Dawson City a first for mainland North America

by **Aedes Scheer and Cameron D. Eckert**

The following account by the first author describes the amazing occurrence of a male Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane* at Dawson City, Yukon on June 9, 2002. A discussion by the second author follows.



I was in my house and my husband, Norm Carlson, was outside getting ready to mow the lawn. Norm saw a bird hopping in our raised garden bed picking at freshly planted seeds and transplanted vegetables. Its unusual colouration caught his attention. Norm came in to have me look at the bird. While retrieving my field guides, I could see the bird clearly through the windows. It was noticeably blue even from a distance.

Once outside we observed the bird more closely. Both of us were able to walk around three sides of the raised bed and the bird was quite tolerant of us

coming within 5 to 6 feet of it, let alone me clumsily dropping the field guides at one point. It would hop and flutter to maintain some space between us but it was intent on pecking at the moist dirt and tiny plants. It was blue over the top of the head and over the back, with black cheek patches or thick streaks of black over the cheeks, black along the wings through to the tail, and white from the underside of the beak to the throat and abdomen. There was no sign of orange, brown, or rusty coloured feathers. The colouration was solid without any flecks of white or grey. The

markings were quite simple in solid blue, black, and white. Later I checked the colour as I remembered it against my acrylic paints and the blue was most like ultramarine to a cerulean blue. While observing the bird I did try to measure its length against the row markers in the garden and the marker closest to the bird's length was roughly 6 inches. The bird was approximately the size of a Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, which is commonly found in Dawson City.

We were able to watch the bird for 10 to 15 minutes but possibly as long as 20 minutes. We decided that we should photograph the bird and left the garden to find a camera. We could find cameras but no film. When we returned to the garden the bird was gone.

I was unable to find any birds that matched the one we saw using "Birds by the Dempster Highway" (Frisch 1987), the "Field Guide to the Birds of North America" (National Geographic Society 1999), and "The Birder's Handbook"

(Erhlich et al. 1988). Peterson's (1990) field guide for Western Birds did have a bird that closely matched the one we were looking at. It was listed as a Siberian Blue Robin and I was annoyed that the book did not supply a map of the bird's range. Then I noticed that the bird was listed under the section "Strays from Asia". After the bird had flown away I emailed as many people I could think of who know anything about birds as I wondered if this bird might be more common than indicated in the book.

We spoke to all our neighbours and showed them my diagrams and the picture in the field guide but we were not notified about any other sightings.

Neither my husband nor I are true birdwatchers. We are, however, trained in biology and commonly make detailed observations in our work. I am a recreational entomologist and wild mushroom enthusiast and make use of my field guides and other resources frequently.



Discussion

With only one previous North American record (a 1st spring female at Attu Island, Alaska on May 21 1985 [Gibson and Kessel 1992, 1997]), the Siberian Blue Robin at Dawson City was an epic rarity. Its nearest breeding grounds, on the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia, are about 4,300 km west of Dawson (Flint et al. 1984). The Yukon Bird Records Committee reviewed Aedes Scheer's description and sketches and considered many other "blue" birds. Casting the net widely, closely related species such as Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*, and Black-throated Robin *Luscinia obscura*, as well as Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*, Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*, Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena*, Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*, Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens*, Cerulian Warbler *Dendroica cerulea*, and Blue-and-white Flycatcher *Cyanoptila cyanomelana* were all easily ruled out based on plumage and behaviour (see Flint et al. 1984; Lekagul and Round 1991; National Geographic Society 1999). Further, Aedes' wonderful paintings serve very well to substantiate the bird's identification. The image of a Siberian Blue Robin hopping about in a garden

patch in Dawson was particularly vivid and illustrated behaviour appropriate for the species. The recent addition of Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* to the Canadian checklist (Bain and Holder 2001) also shows the value of a good field sketch. The timing of the Siberian Blue Robin's occurrence in Dawson seems consistent with a probable spring over-shoot from the Bering Sea region. The potential for birds to travel from the Bering Sea to the Dawson area was previously demonstrated by a Red-legged Kittiwake *Rissa brevirostris* found dead at Fortymile on 15 October 1899 (Grinnell 1909; Museum of Vertebrate Zoology – Berkley specimen #4909).

The Siberian Blue Robin, placed on the Yukon checklist between Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* and Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, brings to 288 the total number of species documented in the Territory (Eckert et al. 2001). In addition, this is the first documented record for Canada (Birders Journal 2002) and mainland North America (American Ornithologists' Union 1998).

Original citation: Scheer, A., and C.D. Eckert. 2002. Siberian Blue Robin in Dawson City a first for Canada and mainland North America. *Birders Journal* 11(5):183-184.

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Siberian Blue Robin follow-up

The Canadian checklist of birds is produced by Birders Journal based on decisions by Territorial and Provincial bird records committees. The following note was published in Birders Journal in response to questions that one reviewer had about the Siberian Blue Robin in Dawson City.

A sight record of a Siberian Blue Robin was reported in the Yukon by Scheer and Eckert (2002). One reviewer had reservations about the record, noting that the observation was of an apparently adult male (unusual in vagrants) and lacked mention of tail shivering behaviour that is frequently exhibited by Siberian Blue Robins in Asia. Cameron Eckert provides the following response:

“I will offer some thoughts in response to concerns about behaviour and age of the Siberian Blue Robin in Dawson, and explain why the Yukon Territory Checklist Committee accepted the record.

Behaviour: The detail on the tail shivering behaviour was not noted by Aedes who wrote that the bird “would hop and flutter”. However, other aspects of behaviour that were described for the Dawson bird are consistent with Siberian Blue Robin (i.e., a ground bird). A small detail not included in the article is that the bird was seen about 70 metres from the banks of the Yukon River, which is also consistent with Siberian Blue Robin (“often beside rivers”). The strength of the record lies mainly in the visual description and paintings.

Sex: The reviewer did not take issue with the sex of the bird, but for the sake of addressing all points I will note that there is apparently no strong sex pattern (male versus female) among vagrant Asian passerines to Alaska in spring and summer. Spring and summer records of males include Dusky Warbler, Narcissus Flycatcher, Red-flanked Bluetail, Stonechat, and Yellow-breasted Bunting. Spring/summer records of females include Asian Brown Flycatcher, Siberian Blue Robin, Red-flanked Bluetail, and Yellow-breasted Bunting.

Age: We also considered that a subadult male would be more likely. There is a strong pattern of subadults among vagrant Asian passerines to Alaska in spring and summer. However, there is at least one example of a species that has a male subadult plumage, for which an adult male has been recorded (Yellow-breasted Bunting). It seems notable that most records of males and females listed by Gibson and Kessel (1992) that were aged as subadult were based on collected birds

(e.g., Narcissus Flycatcher, Siberian Blue Robin, Red-flanked Bluetail).

We felt that the Dawson record of Siberian Blue Robin could not be excluded based on apparent age since; i) adult males of other vagrant species, although less likely, are not unprecedented and certainly not impossible, ii) while the drawings show an apparent adult male, the Dawson bird may in fact have been a subadult male. We do not have the benefit of a specimen. For example, the photo of the subadult male Narcissus Flycatcher from Alaska looks very close to an adult male. Was it aged in the field, or by the photo, or after it was collected? These details are rarely included in the published reports, iii) if we assume that the bird was an adult, then early June seems exactly the right time for it to show up in Dawson.

In summary, we know that people will have concerns about accepting this record based on the lack of a photo or specimen. In this case, the observer very strongly and honestly documented the sighting without consulting the literature. We would have preferred a feather-by-feather description and more details on behaviour, but when I look at Aedes’ paintings I see a Siberian Blue Robin with no confounding details to suggest otherwise. We do not expect the American Ornithologists’ Union to accept the record as they do not accept sight records. The Yukon Territory Checklist Committee’s policy is to accept well documented sight records based on field descriptions and sketches but otherwise lacking photos, recordings or specimens. I do not believe that we can reject this record without rejecting the acceptance of sight records in general. The details and evidence for the Siberian Blue Robin are thoroughly presented and made available for everyone’s consideration. This is a great achievement for any birder, especially Aedes and Norm who are not familiar with the culture of bird documentation.”

In the absence of a national checklist committee, our [Birders Journal] policy is to include a species on the List of Canadian Birds if a record of it has been accepted by a provincial or territorial committee. We [Birders Journal] add Siberian Blue Robin to the Canadian Checklist between Bluethroat and Northern Wheatear.

Notes on a dark Tree Swallow at Marsh Lake, Yukon

by Cameron D. Eckert



On May 29, 2002 Michael Svoboda and I stopped in to check the Marsh Lake marina following the Yukon Bird Club outing to nearby Judas Creek. An all-dark swallow perched on an overhead wire caught my eye. It flew from the wire to join a foraging flock of Tree Swallows *Tachycineta bicolor* and then returned to the wire and perched beside a female Tree Swallow. It was clear that the dark bird was also a Tree Swallow. Its topsides appeared blackish with a hint of iridescent blue, while its undersides appeared fairly uniformly dark slate grey. Its dark grey throat still appeared paler than its face with the crisp line typical of a Tree Swallow. It appeared to be a male. In terms of behaviour, it spent less time flying than the other swallows suggesting that it may have been

stressed. It frequently “gapped” at the female. Although its feather wear looked normal thus hinting at possible melanism, it is also possible that this bird was soiled by soot. The nearby restaurant at the marina was gutted by fire a few years ago, and it may have roosted or attempted to nest in part of the old building. There was no opportunity to capture the bird for a close inspection. This Tree Swallow further illustrates the importance of adequately documenting rare species; an all-dark swallow feeding over Marsh Lake is not necessarily a Purple Martin *Progne subis*!

Original citation: Eckert, C.D. 2002. Notes on a dark Tree Swallow at Marsh Lake, Yukon. *Birders Journal* 11(6):246.

A follow-up note by Chris Siddle

In the last issue of *Birders Journal* (Vol 11, No 6) Cameron Eckert published a note about a Tree Swallow with blackish underparts seen at Marsh Lake, Yukon, May 29, 2002. I saw a very similar Tree Swallow at the north sewage lagoons near Fort St. John, BC, on May 21, 1985. This bird was in adult male plumage with iridescent greenish blue upperparts. However, instead of white underparts, it had dark flat black underparts, somewhat darker than the underparts of the Yukon bird as they appear in Eckert's photo. The bird was accompanied by a normally plumaged adult male, and I was able to view both birds through

binoculars at a few metres' range when they perched on the top strand of a barbed wire fence. Eckert speculated that the Yukon bird had become soiled by soot from a nearby gutted building. The Fort St. John bird's feathers appeared entirely healthy, though black. The underparts looked sooty but only because they lacked shine. A quick check of *The Birds of North America* account of the Tree Swallow (No. 11, 1992) and of A.C. Bent's *Life Histories of North America Flycatchers, Larks, Swallows, and Their Allies* (1942) failed to reveal any instances of abnormally dark plumages in this species.

A white Downy Woodpecker at Haines Junction

These photos are of a leucistic male Downy Woodpecker which frequented a Haines Junction bird feeder through the fall. The observer, Wolf Riedl wrote; “For several months in the fall of 2002 I had a white Downy Woodpecker visiting my suet log at my home in Haines Junction. Unfortunately a neighbour who is not fond of squirrels caught the woodpecker in a rat trap by his feeder by mistake and it died there.” Leucistic birds are also known as “partial albinos” as they lack normal pigmentation

and appear white. This Downy Woodpecker’s dark eye, red nape patch, and black spotting on the wing showed that it had some pigmentation. Pure albinos are completely white with pink eyes, legs and bill. There are numerous Yukon records of other species showing albinism and leucism including Northern Pintail, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Herring Gull, Lesser Yellowlegs, Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak, and Common Redpoll.



The leucistic male Downy Woodpecker: photos by Jim Hawkings (left) and Wolf Reidl (right).



This adult **Sabine's Gull** put in an appearance on 18 June 2002.



This sub-adult **Black-tailed Gull** on 4 June 2002 – a first for NWT and a remarkable find anywhere in North America



This adult **Glaucous-winged Gull** on 21 June 2002 was one of four seen from May through September.

Rare gulls in Inuvik, Northwest Territories

Photos by Bruce Mactavish

Inuvik was the place to be for rare gulls in the summer of 2002. In between bird surveys in Mackenzie River Delta, Bruce Mactavish found an amazing variety of rare gulls in Inuvik. In addition to these sightings, an adult Ring-billed Gull seen on 8-27 August 2001 brings to 11 the total number of gull species known to have occurred in Inuvik. For a complete account refer to; Mactavish, B. 2002. My summer vacation at the Inuvik Dump. *Birders Journal* 11 (5): 188-195.



This adult **California Gull** on 1 June 2002 remained for four days when it was joined by a second adult.



This second-summer **Slaty-backed Gull** photographed on 31 July 2002, was present through 8 August.

Field Notes: *Observations from the field*

Please send sightings to Helmut Grünberg, 807 Wheeler St., Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 2P8. Include details such as date, location, number of birds, sex and age, and observers' names. Highlight interesting observations and include descriptions of rare species. Please send sightings according to the following seasonal schedule: Spring (March 1 - May 31), Summer (June 1 - July 31), Fall (August 1 - November 30), Winter (December 1 - February 28). All reports are sent to the Canadian Wildlife Service for inclusion in the Birds of the Yukon database.

RARE BIRD ALERT!

Alerting other birders quickly to the presence of a rare bird helps ensure that the sighting is documented, and is a great way to share a special find. If you see an unusual bird, call Cameron Eckert (667-4630) or Helmut Grünberg (667-6703).

Fall 2002 (August/September/October/November)

Towards the latter part of the season, the Yukon experienced record warm weather and a stark lack of snow cover through the fall and into winter. These conditions, apparently driven by a combination of El Nino and an unusual mass of warm water sitting in the Gulf of Alaska, resulted in late records for numerous waterbirds but appeared to have little effect on songbird migration.

Lake Laberge hosted a single **Red-throated Loon** on 4-8 October (CE), and single **Pacific, Common,** and **Yellow-billed Loons** on 27 October (CE). Three **Pacific Loons** at the south end of Lake Laberge on 24 November lingered there through the season (BD,CE). A **Yellow-billed Loon** was on Marsh Lake near Judas Creek on 7 November (BD,CE). An impressive **2800 Canada Geese** were tallied at Shallow Bay, Lake Laberge 13 September (HG). Noteworthy **waterfowl** observations at the Whitehorse sewage lagoons included 460 **Canada Geese** on 16 September (CE), 120 **Gadwall** on 17 September (CE), a male **Eurasian Wigeon** on 4 September (CE), 1200 **American Wigeon** on 31 August (HG), 2000 **Northern Shovelers** on 20-22 August (HG), 700 **Lesser Scaup** on 28 August (CE), a female-type **Harlequin Duck** on 12 August (HG), a male **Black Scoter** on 6 August (DC,HG), 600 **Bufflehead** on 19 September (HG), and 51 **Ruddy Ducks** on 16 September (CE).

Raptors seen along the Teslin and Yukon River between Johnson's Crossing and Carmacks on 15-21 September included 61 **Bald Eagles**, seven **Northern Harriers**, 23 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, three **Northern Goshawks**, one **Red-tailed Hawk** and two **Peregrine Falcons** (MG). Two **Northern Harriers**, one light-morph western **Red-tailed Hawk**, and five light-morph **Rough-legged Hawks** were moving south along Lake Laberge on 4 October (CE). An immature **Peregrine Falcon** was present at the Whitehorse sewage lagoons from mid-August through mid-September (CE;HG). A **Golden Eagle** was seen at the Morley River on 22 October (MG). Large numbers of **Willow** and **Rock Ptarmigan** were noted in the Wheaton/Watson River watersheds on 8 August (ROEL). Ptarmigan seemed scarce in the Blackstone Uplands along the Dempster Highway in early November: On 4 November, a **Willow Ptarmigan** was noted at Chapman Lake, and nine **Rock Ptarmigan** were at North Fork Pass (CE,PS). A large group of **American Coots** at the Whitehorse sewage lagoons through September produced record high counts of 102 on 12 & 21 September (CE). **Sandhill Crane** migration was noted along the lower Teslin and Yukon Rivers to Carmacks with 100 on 18 September, 300 on 19 September, 200 on 20 September, and 500 on 21 September (MG).

Shorebird migration was well-documented at the Whitehorse sewage lagoons during August and September with a total of 25 species observed, which is normal for this location. Highlights were 28 **Wilson's Phalaropes** on 5 August (HG), a **Black Turnstone** on 11-13 August (HG), 18 **Stilt Sandpipers** on 14 August (HG), two **Red Phalaropes** on 22 August and one on 31 August (HG), single adult **Sanderlings** on 22 & 27 August (HG;CE), two juvenile **Buff breasted Sandpipers** on 9 September (HG), and one on 12 September (CE), and a juvenile **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** on 19 September (HG).

Whilst wandering the Wheaton/Watson River watersheds, a **Wandering Tattler** was watched at about 1500 m (5 000 ft) in a rocky tributary of the Watson River on 8 August (RE). A first-winter **Glaucous-winged Gull** was at the Whitehorse landfill on 28 August (CE). **Glaucous Gull** numbers peaked with a count of 10 at the Whitehorse landfill on 19 October (CE).



Left: An adult **Thayer's Gull** with faded wing tips on 28 August, 2002 in Whitehorse. Photo by Cameron Eckert.

Below: An adult **Red-breasted Sapsucker** on 21-22 September 2002 in Hillcrest provided the Yukon's first fall record, and was the first one photographed (video taped) alive in the Yukon. Photo by Ray Marnoch



Six **Great Horned** and two **Boreal Owls** were heard on a Teslin/Yukon River trip on 15-21 September (MG). A group of five **Short-eared Owls** was noted in alpine habitat above Fish Lake near Whitehorse on 28 September (KG,GP). Seven were observed along the Haines Highway, B.C. on 15 November (BD,YS). A female-type **Rufous Hummingbird**, rare in the Yukon, was reported from Whitehorse-Valleyview on 9 August (SB). A single **Pileated Woodpecker** was noted at Watson Lake on 29 October (LA).

Northern Shrikes were scarce this fall with two reports of a single each near Lake Laberge on 13 September (BD,HG) and near a Whitehorse feeder on 29 November (HG). **Varied Thrushes** were on the move along the Teslin River with 18 tallied on 15-19 September (MG). The first migrant **Lapland Longspurs** reported was a flock of 80 in Whitehorse on 4 September (CE). Three **Bank Swallows** at the south end of Lake Laberge on 4 October established a record late date (CE).

Varied Thrushes were on the move along the Teslin River with 18 tallied on 15-19 September (MG). An apparent family-group of 6 **Cedar Waxwings** (1 adult, 5 juveniles) in Whitehorse on 8-10 October were right on cue for a crowd of bird biologists in town for the Partner's in Flight meetings (m.ob.). That sighting combined with a summer observation of a single **Cedar Waxwing** in Whitehorse on 1 July (CE) suggested local breeding. This species is rare in the Yukon. The first migrant **Lapland Longspurs** reported was a flock of 80 in Whitehorse on 4 September (CE). A flock of 30 **redpolls** at Gravel Lake, central Yukon on 5 November included at least 15 **Hoaries** and five **Commons** (CE,PS).



The occurrence of an adult (left) **Cedar Waxwing** with five juveniles (right) on 8-10 October 2002 in Whitehorse suggested a family group. Photographed here on 8 October by Cameron D. Eckert.

Observers: Lorne Armstrong, Susan Barth, Dannie Carsen, Boris Dobrowolsky, Cameron Eckert, Robb Ellwood, Mike Gill, Helmut Grünberg, Kris Gustafson, Gerry Perrier, Wolf Riedl, Pam Sinclair, Yammy Stote.

Winter 2002/03 (December, January, February)

The Yukon has been breaking weather records and setting bird records this winter. Most of the action has been on the lakes through early winter, but some interesting songbirds were observed as well. Unusual waterbird observations seemed to slow as lakes eventually froze up. A notable movement of departing ducks and swans was observed as Lake Laberge froze in early January. The only cold snap was in late January as temperatures plunged to about -38C in the southern Yukon. At this time some of the rare songbirds seemed as though they were barely hanging on.

A **Yellow-billed Loon** was seen on Lake Laberge on 12 December (BD,HG). This was one of five first winter records for the Yukon. **Yellow-billed Loons** winter along the Pacific coast from Alaska to southern B.C. Two **Pacific Loons** were seen on Lake Laberge on 1 December (BD,CE,HG), another first winter record. Pacific Loons winter along the Pacific coast from Alaska to Central America (Mexico). In early December, several unidentified loons were observed at Lake Laberge and at Tagish (BD,CE,HG).

There was an amazing number of **Trumpeter Swan** sightings with 13 birds (five adults and eight juveniles) observed on the Teslin River at Johnson's Crossing on 3 December (HG), seven juveniles on Lake Laberge on 4-16 December (BD,HG), one adult at Tagish on 9 December (HG), 12 flying overhead at Haines Junction on 10 December (LHo), and six (three adults and three molting juveniles) on the Yukon River downstream of Lewes Marsh on 21-22 December (HG;CE). Trumpeter Swan is casual in winter in the Yukon. They winter near the Pacific coast from central B.C. to Washington. Similarly, a few **Tundra Swans** were noted including two adults on Fox Lake on 1 December (BD,CE,HG), a juvenile on Lake Laberge on 12 December (BD,HG), and three (one adult, two juveniles) on Lake Laberge on 16 December (HG). Tundra Swan is also casual in winter in the Yukon. It winters from extreme southern B.C. to California. As more lakes froze up in the southern Yukon, several groups of unidentified swans were reported flying south with nine migrating south in formation at cruising altitude over the Yukon River in Whitehorse-Riverdale (RE), seven adults flying south along the Yukon River in Whitehorse on 1 January (CE), and six flying across the Alaska Highway at the Yukon River bridge (PdR); please note that six **Trumpeter Swans** were identified near the last location only about ten days earlier. One swan was swimming at the south end of Kluane Lake on 20 December (LHo), and twelve were seen at the Yukon River bridge in Whitehorse on 8 January (reported by LL).



Two of the seven juvenile **Trumpeter Swans** at Lake Laberge in December 2002. Photo by Helmut Grünberg

Although **Mallards** winter in small numbers at very few locations, this winter four males were seen on Lake Laberge on 1-16 December (BD,CE,HG), an unprecedented 102 were counted on the Teslin River at Johnson's Crossing on 3 December (HG), 12 were at McIntyre Creek wetlands on the Whitehorse CBC on 26 December, and up to 30 were counted there on 18 January to 22 February (HG). A domesticated-type male **Mallard** was joined by a female wild **Mallard** at the Takhini Hotsprings Pond in late fall and stayed throughout the winter (KH,BK,DK). A female-type **Northern Pintail** that didn't seem to be able to fly very well was seen at Jackfish Bay, Lake Laberge on 1 December (CE,HG). This was only the second winter record. Northern Pintails winter from central B.C. to Central America. A flock of up to 13 **Lesser Scaup** was noted on Lake Laberge on 1-24 December (BD,CE,HG); one male lingered at Carcross on 9-19 January (BD,HG, BeS). There had been only one previous winter record. Lesser Scaup winter from extreme southern B.C. to Central America. Up to 3 **Long-tailed Ducks**, were at Lake Laberge on 1-24 December (BD,CE,HG). This was the first winter record. They normally winter along the Pacific coast from Alaska (Aleutians) to central California. Up to 4 female or immature **Bufflehead** were seen near Carcross on 2 December to 9 January (BD,CE,HG). The **Bufflehead** is casual in winter. It winters along

the Pacific coast from Alaska (Aleutians) to Central America. A female **Barrow's Goldeneye** was seen on Lake Laberge on 7-12 December (BD,HG); another female (or the same?) was on the Yukon River near the Yukon River trail in Whitehorse on 26-31 December (JH,LHa,AH;HG,BD). The Barrow's Goldeneye is casual in winter in the Yukon. It winters along the Pacific coast from Alaska to central California.



Two views of an immature **Golden Eagle** at the Tagish Dump on 3 January 2003. Photos by B. Dobrowolsky.



An immature **Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk**, a Yukon winter first, on the North Klondike Hwy near Burma Road on 24 December 2002. Photo by Helmut Grünberg.

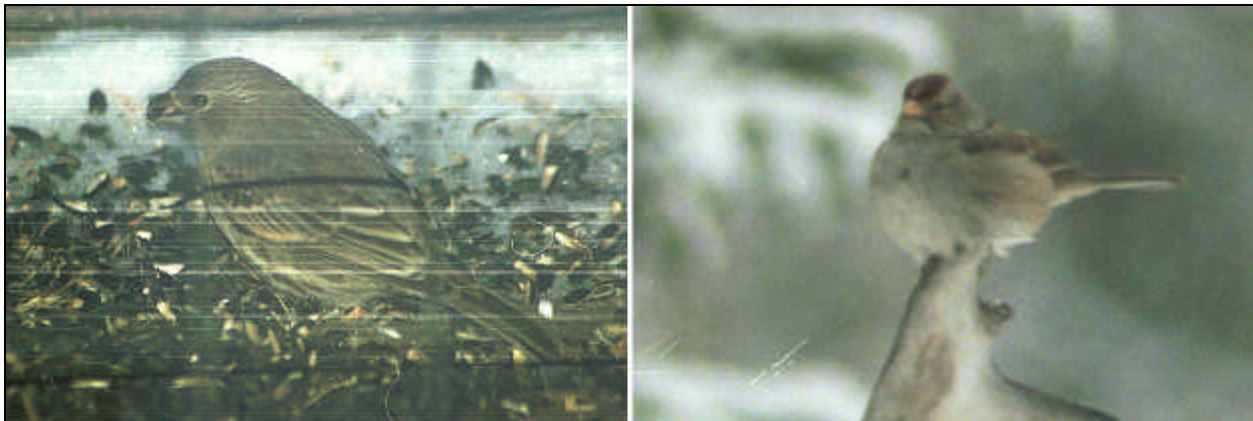
An early male **Northern Harrier** was spotted in Whitehorse on 23 February (BB,RM). One could assume that this was a very early migrant (usually in April in the southern Yukon. It normally winters from northwestern B.C. south, actually not that far from the southern Yukon. A **Red-tailed (Harlan's) Hawk** was seen along the North Klondike Highway near Burma Road on 23 December (KO,CM). With the aid of photos, it was determined to be an immature dark-morph bird on 24 December (HG). This was the first winter record in the Yukon The Harlan's subspecies winters inland only, from southern Nebraska to Texas. Single immature **Golden Eagles** were seen at Rabbit's Foot Canyon in Whitehorse on 24 December (BD), at the Tagish dump on 3 January (BD,YS), and at the Takhini Hot Springs on 4 February (LC). The Golden Eagle is only casual in winter in the Yukon. It winters from central B.C. and northern Alberta south to Mexico. A **Gyr Falcon**, an interesting raptor at any time of the year, was seen at Mt. Decoli near Haines Junction on 26 December (BH,CH). The Gyr Falcon is one of few raptors that occur in the Yukon and other northern areas year-round.

A large flock of 50 **Willow Ptarmigan** was seen at Mt. Decoli near Haines Junction on 26 December (BH,CH). An adult **Herring Gull** was seen on Lake Laberge on 1 December (BD,CE,HG). This was the first winter record in the Yukon. Herring Gulls winter along the Pacific coast from Alaska (Aleutians) to Central America (also inland from southern B.C. south). An adult **Glaucous Gull** was seen on Lake Laberge on 1 December (BD,CE,HG), and an adult was seen flying south along the Yukon River in Whitehorse on 31 December (CE). Another **Glaucous Gull** was reported in Silver City, Kluane Lake on 14-15 January (LHo,JS), and one (perhaps the same?) at the Destruction Bay dump on 16 January (MF). There were only two previous winter records. Glaucous Gulls winter along the Pacific coast from Alaska (Aleutians) to Washington. Several large unidentified gulls were seen at Lake Laberge on 1 December as well (BD,CE,HG).

It looks like another good year for **Boreal Owls**; they started calling in the Cowley area in early winter (BB,RM,RR) and were heard through the winter in the Pilot Mountain subdivision (BM *et al.*). A **Boreal Owl** was noted during the Watson Lake Christmas Bird Count on 28 December (TMK-compiler), and two each were reported on 29 December from the Mayo Christmas Bird Count (MOD) and from Whitehorse- Hillcrest (PS). On a glorious moon-lit windless evening, five were calling and another one was seen in the beam of a flashlight along with five **Great Horned Owls** on 13 February (BD,HG). Usually they are not reported till late February. A **Black-backed Woodpecker** was seen during the Watson Lake Christmas Bird Count on 28 December (TMK-compiler).

Single **Northern Shrikes** were seen in Haines Junction on 27 December (CD,LD), in Whitehorse-Riverdale on 6 January (AS), and at Horse Creek, Lake Laberge area on 24 January to 21 February (KO). The Northern Shrike is seen annually in winter in low numbers. It winters from southern Alaska south to southern Oregon and inland through southern Canada and the northern U.S. Although present in low numbers on most rivers and creeks, **11 American Dippers** were counted at open stretches of the Takhini River along the Kusawa Lake road on 26 February (HG) Single **American Robins** were seen in Whitehorse-Riverdale on 10 December to 5 January (RE); two were seen here in early January (EK), and one was feeding along the Yukon River below the dam on 23 February (HG). Single **American Robins** were also reported in Whitehorse-Wolf Creek on 9-12 January (MC), Whitehorse downtown 24 January (HG) and Whitehorse-Hillcrest on 29 January (RI).

Sparrow sightings included single **American Tree Sparrows** (casual in winter) in Whitehorse on 27 December (HG) and on the Haines Junction CBC on 28 December (WR); an immature **White-crowned Sparrow** (casual in winter) at Pilot Mountain near Whitehorse through February (BM;BD,HG and others); three **Dark-eyed Juncos** (rare in winter) on the Haines Junction Christmas Bird Count on 28 December (WR), one at Shadow Lake near Whitehorse through February (DR,SR) and one regularly at a Schwatka Lake feeder in Whitehorse (BD,CG,HG).



Left: One of three **House Finches** that wintered at downtown Whitehorse feeders by Helmut Grünberg.
Right: An immature **White-crowned Sparrow** at Pilot Mountain on 26 December 2002 by Boris Dobrowolsky.

Three female-type **House Finches** (casual in the Yukon) were seen at two Whitehorse downtown feeders all winter from 24 December on (HG,BaS,BoS, BD). They seemed to barely survive the -38C cold spell: They were sitting in the bushes and shaking themselves (looking “plain cold”), sitting nearly motionless on the seeds in the feeder and had several frosted areas on their feathers (mostly over the eye and on the lower back). **Hoary Redpolls** have been scarce this winter. Nonetheless, the Haines Junction Christmas Bird Count reported four on 28 December (DH-compiler); six were seen during the Watson Lake Christmas Bird Count on 28 December (TMK-compiler), and one was reported from the Mayo Christmas Bird Count on 29 December (MOD).

Observers: Bruce Bennett, Marie Carr, Lisa Christensen, Boris Dobrowolsky, Claude Dulac, Libby Dulac, Cameron Eckert, Robb Ellwood, Marcia Flumerfelt, Cora Grant, Helmut Grünberg, Adrian Hawkings, Jim Hawkings, Lee Hawkings (LHa), Bob Hayes, Caroline Hayes, Katie Hayhurst, David Henry, Suzanne Henry, Liz Hofer (LHo), Rob Ingram, Ernie King; Birch Kuch, Dennis Kuch, Larry Leigh, Randi Mulder, Ted Murphy-Kelly (TMK), Mark O'Donoghue (MOD), Katie Ostrom, Clay Martin, Bob Murkett, Katie Ostrom, Wolf Riedl, Rene Rivard, Paul de Ruiter, Don Russell, Sharon Russell, Peter Sandiford, Aron Senkpiel, Josie Sias, Yammy Stote, Barbara Studds (BaS), Bob Studds (BoS), Betty Sutton (BeS).



Winter settles in at Rock Island Lake on 5 November 2002. Photo by Cameron D. Eckert

Four letter codes for Yukon bird species

Four letter codes are commonly used by birders as an alternative to writing out full species names when recording field observations. The following table lists 4-letter codes for the 288 species which have been documented in the Yukon as of fall 2002. When using codes it is critical to ensure that the same code is not used for different species. While some codes are intuitive (e.g. ARTE = Arctic Tern), others are not as they are designed to avoid confusion between species that would have the same code (e.g. TRUS = Trumpeter Swan; TRES = Tree Swallow).

RTLO	Red-throated Loon	SWHA	Swainson's Hawk	WISN	Wilson's Snipe
PALO	Pacific Loon	RTHA	Red-tailed Hawk	WIPH	Wilson's Phalarope
COLO	Common Loon	RLHA	Rough-legged Hawk	RNPL	Red-necked Phalarope
YBLO	Yellow-billed Loon	GOEA	Golden Eagle	REPH	Red Phalarope
PBGR	Pied-billed Grebe	AMKE	American Kestrel	POJA	Pomarine Jaeger
HOGR	Horned Grebe	MERL	Merlin	PAJA	Parasitic Jaeger
RNGR	Red-necked Grebe	GYRF	Gyrfalcon	LTJA	Long-tailed Jaeger
EAGR	Eared Grebe	PEFA	Peregrine Falcon	FRGU	Franklin's Gull
WEGR	Western Grebe	RUGR	Ruffed Grouse	LIGU	Little Gull
DCCO	Double-crested Cormorant	SPGR	Spruce Grouse	BOGU	Bonaparte's Gull
GREG	Great Egret	WIPT	Willow Ptarmigan	MEGU	Mew Gull
GBHE	Great Blue Heron	ROPT	Rock Ptarmigan	RBGU	Ring-billed Gull
BLVU	Black Vulture	WTPT	White-tailed Ptarmigan	CAGU	California Gull
TUVU	Turkey Vulture	BGSE	Blue Grouse	HERG	Herring Gull
BEGO	Bean Goose	STGR	Sharp-tailed Grouse	THGU	Thayer's Gull
GWFG	Greater White-fronted Goose	SORA	Sora	ICGU	Iceland Gull
SNGO	Snow Goose	AMCO	American Coot	LBBG	Lesser Black-backed Gull
CAGO	Canada Goose	SACR	Sandhill Crane	SBGU	Slaty-backed Gull
BRAN	Brant	COCR	Common Crane	GWGU	Glaucous-winged Gull
TRUS	Trumpeter Swan	BBPL	Black-bellied Plover	GLGU	Glaucous Gull
TUSW	Tundra Swan	AGPL	American Golden-Plover	SAGU	Sabine's Gull
WODU	Wood Duck	PGPL	Pacific Golden-Plover	BLKI	Black-legged Kittiwake
GADW	Gadwall	SNPL	Snowy Plover	RLKI	Red-legged Kittiwake
EUWI	Eurasian Wigeon	SEPL	Semipalmated Plover	ROGU	Ross's Gull
AMWI	American Wigeon	KILL	Killdeer	IVGU	Ivory Gull
MALL	Mallard	AMAV	American Avocet	CATE	Caspian Tern
BWTE	Blue-winged Teal	GRYE	Greater Yellowlegs	ARTE	Arctic Tern
CITE	Cinnamon Teal	LEYE	Lesser Yellowlegs	BLTE	Black Tern
NSHO	Northern Shoveler	WOSA	Wood Sandpiper	TBMU	Thick-billed Murre
NPOW	Northern Pintail	SOSA	Solitary Sandpiper	BLGU	Black Guillemot
GWTE	Green-winged Teal	WILL	Willet	ANMU	Ancient Murrelet
CANV	Canvasback	WATA	Wandering Tattler	RODO	Rock Dove
REDH	Redhead	SPSA	Spotted Sandpiper	MODO	Mourning Dove
RNDU	Ring-necked Duck	UPSA	Upland Sandpiper	GHOW	Great Horned Owl
GRSC	Greater Scaup	WHIM	Whimbrel	SNOW	Snowy Owl
TUDU	Tufted Duck	HUGO	Hudsonian Godwit	NOHO	Northern Hawk Owl
LESC	Lesser Scaup	BATG	Bar-tailed Godwit	NPOW	Northern Pygmy-Owl
KIEI	King Eider	MAGO	Marbled Godwit	GGOW	Great Gray Owl
COEI	Common Eider	RUTU	Ruddy Turnstone	LEOW	Long-eared Owl
HADU	Harlequin Duck	BLTU	Black Turnstone	SEOW	Short-eared Owl
SUSC	Surf Scoter	SURF	Surfbird	BOOW	Boreal Owl
WWSC	White-winged Scoter	REKN	Red Knot	NSWO	Northern Saw-whet Owl
BLSC	Black Scoter	SAND	Sanderling	CONI	Common Nighthawk
LTDU	Long-tailed Duck	SESA	Semipalmated Sandpiper	RUHU	Rufous Hummingbird
BUFF	Bufflehead	WESA	Western Sandpiper	BEKI	Belted Kingfisher
COGO	Common Goldeneye	LIST	Little Stint	YBSA	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
BAGO	Barrow's Goldeneye	LESA	Least Sandpiper	RBSA	Red-breasted Sapsucker
HOME	Hooded Merganser	WRSA	White-rumped Sandpiper	DOWO	Downy Woodpecker
COME	Common Merganser	BASA	Baird's Sandpiper	HAWO	Hairy Woodpecker
RBME	Red-breasted Merganser	PESA	Pectoral Sandpiper	TTWO	Three-toed Woodpecker
RUDU	Ruddy Duck	SHAS	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	BBWO	Black-backed Woodpecker
OSPR	Osprey	DUNL	Dunlin	NOGO	Northern Flicker
BAEA	Bald Eagle	STIS	Stilt Sandpiper	PIWO	Pileated Woodpecker
NOHA	Northern Harrier	BBSA	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	OSFL	Olive-sided Flycatcher
SSHA	Sharp-shinned Hawk	RUFF	Ruff	WWPE	Western Wood-Pewee
NOGO	Northern Goshawk	SBDO	Short-billed Dowitcher	YBFL	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
BWHA	Broad-winged Hawk	LBDO	Long-billed Dowitcher	ALFL	Alder Flycatcher

LEFL	Least Flycatcher	SBRO	Siberian Blue Robin	CCSP	Clay-colored Sparrow
HAFI	Hammond's Flycatcher	NOWH	Northern Wheatear	BRSP	Brewer's Sparrow
DJFL	Dusky Flycatcher	MOBL	Mountain Bluebird	LASP	Lark Sparrow
EAPH	Eastern Phoebe	TOSO	Townsend's Solitaire	SAVS	Savannah Sparrow
SAPH	Say's Phoebe	GCTH	Gray-cheeked Thrush	LCSP	Le Conte's Sparrow
WEKI	Western Kingbird	SWTH	Swainson's Thrush	FOSP	Fox Sparrow
EAKI	Eastern Kingbird	HETH	Hermit Thrush	SOSP	Song Sparrow
NSHR	Northern Shrike	DUTH	Dusky Thrush	LISP	Lincoln's Sparrow
BHVI	Blue-headed Vireo	AMRO	American Robin	SWSP	Swamp Sparrow
WAVI	Warbling Vireo	VATH	Varied Thrush	WTSP	White-throated Sparrow
PHVI	Philadelphia Vireo	EUST	European Starling	WCSP	White-crowned Sparrow
REVI	Red-eyed Vireo	YWAG	Yellow Wagtail	GCSP	Golden-crowned Sparrow
GRAJ	Gray Jay	RTPI	Red-throated Pipit	DEJU	Dark-eyed Junco
STJA	Steller's Jay	AMPI	American Pipit	LALO	Lapland Longspur
CLNU	Clark's Nutcracker	BOWA	Bohemian Waxwing	SMLO	Smith's Longspur
BBMA	Black-billed Magpie	CEDW	Cedar Waxwing	SNBU	Snow Bunting
AMCR	American Crow	TEWA	Tennessee Warbler	RBGR	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
CORA	Common Raven	OCWA	Orange-crowned Warbler	BHGR	Black-headed Grosbeak
HOLA	Horned Lark	NAWA	Nashville Warbler	LAZB	Lazuli Bunting
PUMA	Purple Martin	YWAR	Yellow Warbler	RWBL	Red-winged Blackbird
TRES	Tree Swallow	MAWA	Magnolia Warbler	MEAD	meadowlark sp.
VGSW	Violet-green Swallow	CMWA	Cape May Warbler	YHBL	Yellow-headed Blackbird
NRWS	N. Rough-winged Swallow	YRWA	Yellow-rumped Warbler	RUBL	Rusty Blackbird
BANS	Bank Swallow	TOWA	Townsend's Warbler	BRBL	Brewer's Blackbird
CLSW	Cliff Swallow	PAWA	Palm Warbler	COGR	Common Grackle
BARS	Barn Swallow	BBWA	Bay-breasted Warbler	BHCO	Brown-headed Cowbird
BCCH	Black-capped Chickadee	BLPW	Blackpoll Warbler	BAOR	Baltimore Oriole
MOCH	Mountain Chickadee	BAWW	Black-and-white Warbler	BRAM	Brambling
CBCH	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	AMRE	American Redstart	GCRF	Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
BOCH	Boreal Chickadee	OVEN	Ovenbird	PIGR	Pine Grosbeak
GHCH	Grey-headed Chickadee	NOWA	Northern Waterthrush	PUFI	Purple Finch
RBNU	Red-breasted Nuthatch	MOWA	Mourning Warbler	HOFI	House Finch
BRCR	Brown Creeper	MGWA	MacGillivray's Warbler	RECR	Red Crossbill
WIWR	Winter Wren	COYE	Common Yellowthroat	WWCR	White-winged Crossbill
MAWR	Marsh Wren	WIWA	Wilson's Warbler	CORE	Common Redpoll
AMDI	American Dipper	CAWA	Canada Warbler	HORE	Hoary Redpoll
GCKI	Golden-crowned Kinglet	WETA	Western Tanager	PISI	Pine Siskin
RCKI	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	ATSP	American Tree Sparrow	EVGR	Evening Grosbeak
BLUE	Bluetthroat	CHSP	Chipping Sparrow	HOSP	House Sparrow

19 May/01 - Partridge Creek Farm				
1 Great Egret !!! in breeding plumage		23 AMGP	20 TRGS	2 WCSP sing
1 GWEG		12 LEYE	8 VGSW	10 DEJU sing
6 CAGO		1 SOSA sing	4 CLSW	80 LALO
50 AMWI + Wood Frog call's		1 SPSA	1 BOCH	2 RWBL
200 MALL		6 LBDO	1 TOSO	1 RUBL
30 GWTE		3 COSN	3 SWTH	2 PIGR
30 NOPI		30 MEGU	2 HETH	2 WWCR
1 MALLxNOPI ♂ (MALL head, NOPI butt)		10 HERG	2 VATH	
1 COME	10 NOFL	1 GLGU	8 AMRD, incl: 1 vigorously chasing GRAS	
1 NOHA	6 HAFL sing	1 GHOW call' at night	2 AMPI	
1 AMKE	4 SAPH	1 BEKI	10 YRWA	
1 RUGR red morph male	3 GRAJ	6 YBSA		
6 SACR	4 CORA	2 HAWD ♂♂ copulating; nest 4' up in live aspen @ edge of riparian forest, 30' tall tree - ♂ entry.		
		1 ATSP sing		
		1 SAVS sing		

These field notes feature a variety of important details such as date, location, species seen, numbers of each, plumage, behaviours (e.g. singing, calling), breeding activity, habitat, unusual species (e.g. the Yukon's first Great Egret; a hybrid Mallard x Northern Pintail), and noteworthy non-birds (e.g. Wood Frog).

YUKON BIRD CLUB

Promoting awareness, appreciation, and conservation of Yukon birds and their habitats

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For more information contact:

Yukon Bird Club, Box 31054, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada, Y1A 5P7
Email: YBC@yknet.yk.ca

Yukon Bird Club Web Site:
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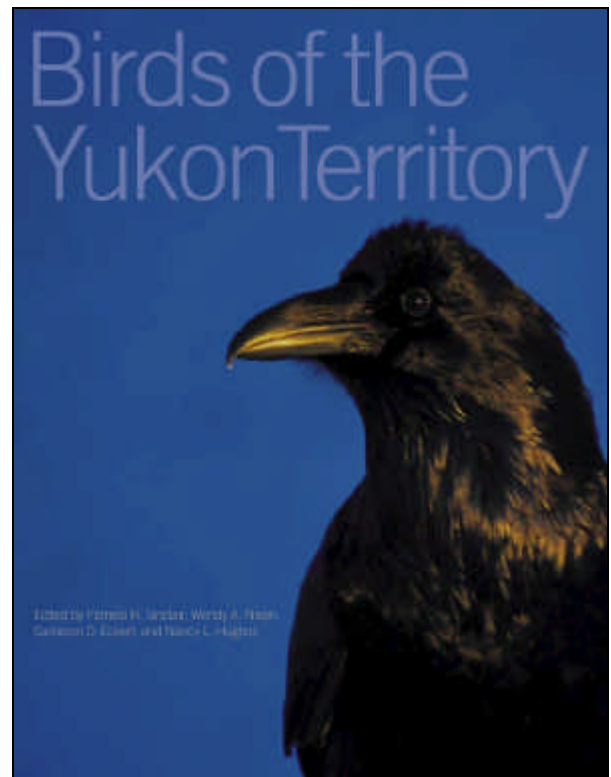
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For more information about the *Yukon Warbler* or back-issues contact:

Cameron Eckert, 1402 Elm Street
Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 4B6
Phone: 867-667-4630
Email: ceckert@yknet.yk.ca