

YUKON WARBLER

Newsletter of the Yukon Bird Club

Winter 2015



Cameron Eckert photo

Male Rock Ptarmigan moult later in spring than Willow Ptarmigan, and so they dust bathe to improve camouflage. This male was still looking fairly bright on a snowless mountain top near Whitehorse on 25 May 2015.



**Birdathon
honours
Helmut
Grünberg**

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**Trumpeter
family sets
up shop
at Yukon
Wildlife
Preserve**

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Yukon Bird Club



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

The Yukon Bird Club is a registered non-profit, charitable organization.

Membership fees

Individual	\$15.00
Family *	\$25.00
Senior/Student **	\$10.00
Institutional	\$50.00
Contributing	\$50.00
Supporting	\$100.00
Lifetime	\$200.00

* Family memberships cover two or more people living at one address.

** Also includes those for whom finances are limited.

Foreign members please pay by Canadian dollar or money order.

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We want your birding photos and stories!

Thank you to all who contribute to make the Yukon Warbler. YBCnewsletter@gmail.com

Our next deadline is March 31, 2016.

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Rare sightings reports

All sightings of rare or notable birds should be sent directly to the Sightings Coordinator:

yukonbirdclub@gmail.com



Tom Hince photo

Sabine's Gull is a very rare interior migrant; this flock of 55 on Tthe Ndu Lake, s. Yukon on 3 June 2014 was a welcome surprise for a group of travelling birders.

Yukon Sightings – Summer 2014

by Cameron D. Eckert

A late migrant **Brant**, well south of its breeding ground, was at Tthe Ndu Lake 6 June (CE). The coastal waters of Herschel Island-Qikiqtaruk is key summer habitat for moulting seaducks, and numbers were building in mid-June with 400 **Surf Scoters**, 200 **White-winged Scoters**, and 200 **Long-tailed Ducks** 22 June (CE); a sea-watch there 17 June recorded 25 **King** and 70 **Common eiders** as well as a male **Barrow's Goldeneye**, a first for Qikqitaruk, with 4 **Common Goldeneye** (CE). A **Pied-billed Grebe**, north of its range, at Gravel Lake was independently noted 6-7

June (CE; TH, PP), and 14-16 July (JJ); also north of its range was an Eared Grebe there 3&7 June (TH, PP). A pair of **Common Ringed Plovers**, just the 2nd Yukon record, was at Herschel Island-Qikiqtaruk 23 June (CE, RJ, SM). **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** is a scarce breeder on the Yukon's North Coast; 3 were at Herschel Island 22-23 June (CE, SM, RJ).

Low numbers of small mammal along the Yukon's North Coast meant lean times for jaegers; a **Long-tailed Jaeger** was observed eating cranberries at Herschel Island 14 June (CE, RJ, SM); and a flock of 13 Long-tailed Jaegers on the tundra there 16 June appeared to be foregoing breeding

(CE, RJ, SM); likewise, at Running River an incredible non-breeding flock of 48 Long-tailed Jaegers was seen 27 June (BD). Reports of **Sabine's Gull** included an interior migrant flock of 55 at Tthe Ndu Lake 3 June (TH, PP), and 3 at Watson Lake (JJ). Three **Caspian Terns**, casual in southern Yukon, were at M'Clintock Bay 17 June (JH). An impressive 140 **Arctic Terns** were reported from Tagish Narrows 15 June (SVD).

A southern Yukon **Common Nighthawk** survey counted 156 territorial birds 13-24 July (JJ). Breeding congregations of **Cliff Swallows** included a total of 550 at 3 locations

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White-throated Sparrow on Herschel Island

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around Haines Junction 4 June (BD, CE); 250 at Eagle Plains 5 June (TH, PP); 200 at Two Moose Lake 8 June (CE); 150 at Carcross, s. Yukon 17 July (DM); and 115 at Tagish 18 July (DM). A **Western Kingbird**, casual in the Yukon, was at Dezadeash Lake 2 June (TH, KK, AP, PP, MW).

Northern Wheatear is a wide-

spread breeder across central and northern Yukon; reports this season included 7 displaying males at Herschel Island where this species is casual, during 13-26 June (CE); and a family group of 5 on Surfbird Mountain 15 July (JJ).

A **White-throated Sparrow**, casual in the Beaufort Sea region, was at

Herschel Island 25-26 June (CE).

Observers: Susan Drury, Boris Dobrowolsky, Cameron Eckert, Jim Hawkings, Tom Hince, Jukka Jantunen, Ricky Joe, Kerry Korber, Craig Machtans, David McCorquodale, Sam McLeod, Lisa Pirie, Ann Powell, Paul Pratt, Ben Schonewille, Shyloh van Delft (SVD), Marg Watt.



Cameron Eckert photo

This subadult male Anna's Hummingbird seen in Whitehorse 5 (here) to 10 October 2014 established the Yukon's first record.

Yukon Sightings – Fall 2014

by Cameron D. Eckert

The Yukon Checklists needed an over-hall following an incredible fall season which saw the addition of a remarkable four new

species for the Territory. Fortunately, the new species came just in time to be included in the newly-revised Checklist of Yukon Birds. Birders interested in receiving a free printed or

digital copy of the new checklist can email yukonbirdclub@gmail.com.

A total of 3139 **Greater White-fronted Geese** along with 2074 unidentified geese were noted

Ruby-throated Hummingbird surprises

passing by Teslin Lake 22-31 Aug (JJ). An adult **Brant**, casual in fall in southern Yukon, lingered at Whitehorse 4-26 Oct (ph. CE, BD; JH). Also casual in fall in southern Yukon was a small dark **Cackling Goose** at Teslin 6 Sept (ph. JJ). Flocks of 500 **Canada Geese** and 1000 **Mallards** were at Nisutlin River Delta 14 Sept (BD, CE). The Whitehorse sewage ponds produced some notable waterfowl numbers with peak counts of 450 **Gadwall** 2 Oct (CE), 2000 **American Wigeon** 26 Sept to 10 Oct (CE, BD; JH); 1000 **Mallards** 10 Oct (JH), and 100 **Ruddy Ducks** 13-23 Sept (CE). **Black Scoters** is casual in fall in southern Yukon; 1-2 were at Whitehorse 1-21 Oct (CE, BD). A scan of Marsh Lake 26 Oct recorded 630 **Bufflehead** and 365 **Common Goldeneye** (JJ). A flock of 300 **Common Mergansers**, perhaps the largest recorded in southern

Yukon, was on Marsh Lake 9 Nov (CE). The annual Ptarmi-Trek up Montana Mountain produced 25 **White-tailed** and 1 **Willow ptarmigan** 21 Sept (BD, CE, AP, SVD). Unexpected was a winter-plumage White-tailed Ptarmigan on a roof top in downtown Whitehorse 13 Oct (ER). A **Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel** in Whitehorse 22 Sept (wd. CE) established a totally unexpected Yukon first. A **Great Blue Heron**, casual in southern Yukon, was at Carcross 16 Aug (WN). A southbound **Turkey Vulture**, casual in southern Yukon, was seen over Teslin Lake 24 Sept (JJ). **Golden Eagle** migration peaked at Teslin Lake with a count of 94 on 1 Oct (JJ). **Black-bellied Plover** is a rare fall migrant in southern Yukon; on 21 Sept, flocks of 30 and 28 were seen at Whitehorse (CE), and Teslin (JJ), respectively. A juvenile **Pacific Golden-Plover**, casual

in fall, was at Whitehorse 22-26 Oct (CE, BD; JH); while a juvenile **Lesser Yellowlegs** there 20 Sept (ph. CE, BD) was record late. **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** is a rare but regular fall migrant in the Yukon Southern Lakes region; this season 1-2 juveniles were at Whitehorse 20-23 Sept (CE, BD, SVD). An obliging juvenile **Red Phalarope**, casual in fall in southern Yukon, provided close viewing on the Yukon River at Whitehorse 15-16 Nov (RM; CE, SVD). The season's high count for **Parasitic Jaegers** at Teslin Lake was 4 on 31 Aug (JB, JJ). **Black Guillemot** showed poor productivity and further population declines at Herschel Island-Qikiqtaruk this season; a total of 29 ads, and 7 nests with just 7 live chicks were recorded at the colony in Aug (CE, SH, RJ, SM). Single **Horned Puffins** seen at Herschel Island 11
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This Ruby-throated Hummingbird, present 24 (here) to 26 August 2014, in the wilds 50 km n. of Beaver Creek, Yukon is astonishing given the extremely remote location, and that anyone would consider putting up a hummingbird feeder there. The narrower inner primaries and wider outer primaries help distinguish it from the very similar Anna's Hummingbird.
Kate Warrick photo

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& 15 Aug (CE) established the first records for the Territory. A **Black-legged Kittiwake**, casual in southern Yukon, was seen on Teslin Lake 9-10 Oct (JJ). Single **Sabine's Gulls**, casual in fall, were seen at Watson Lake 26 Sept (SD), and Teslin Lake 4 Sept (JB, JJ).

Single **Northern Saw-whet Owls**, casual in fall in southern Yukon, were at Teslin Lake 22 & 23 Sept (ph. JJ). Two new hummingbird species for the Yukon were a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** at a remote location 50 km north of Beaver Creek 24-26 Aug (ph. KWa); and an **Anna's Hummingbird** at Whitehorse 21 Sept to 10 Oct (CE, PS; CK; m.ob.). American Kestrel migration peaked at Teslin Lake with a tally of 75 on 11-12 Sept

(JJ). A **Steller's Jay** in Watson Lake 27 Oct through the season (WA, SD) established the first record for se. Yukon, and the first record of the interior subspecies *Cyanocitta stelleri annectens*. **American Crows** continue to increase in southern Yukon; 33 were at Watson Lake 4 Sept (SD). A family group of 7 **Northern Wheatears** (1 adult female, 6 juveniles) established the first confirmed breeding record for Herschel Island 7 Aug (CE, SH). A late **Townsend's Solitaire** was at Carcross 11 Nov (CE, DP). **American Robin** migration produced an interesting paradox this season whereby a fallout in downtown Whitehorse in late Sept to early Oct (e.g. 200 on 3 Oct), suggested a strong migratory movement; whereas relatively low numbers recorded on

migration watches just 130 km to the east at Teslin Lake through the season indicated otherwise. An adult male **Harris's Sparrow**, casual in southern Yukon, was at Whitehorse 12 Oct (KWi). A male **House Finch**, casual in southern Yukon, was seen a different locations in downtown Whitehorse 3&4 Oct (KP; CE). An impressive tally of 9,454 **Common Redpolls** was recorded at Teslin Lake 12-24 Oct (JJ).

Observers: *Wayne Addis, Julie Bauer, Susan Drury, Boris Dobrowolsky, Cameron Eckert, Shannon Harvey, Jim Hawkings, Jukka Jantunen, Ricky Joe, Cam Kos, Robbie Mackay, Sam McLeod, Wendy Nixon, Dan Patterson, Adam Perrier, Kathy Postill, Elkie Reinauer, Pam Sinclair, Shyloh van Delft (SVD), Kate Warrick (KWa), Keith Williams (KWi).*

Finally - boreal owls in our nest box

by Betty Sutton

In 2012 we installed a Boreal Owl nest box on the south side of our property, high up in a tree. Each Spring for the next two years there was lots of interest by Northern Flickers ... rat-a-tat tating on the box but I don't think they actually nested. But, we noticed no owl activity.

This past Spring, 2015, towards the end of May, I was searching the grounds of our 1.5 acres for new wild flowers. We had been having an incredibly warm Spring, and lots of new varieties were popping up. So, late on this evening, close to dusk, I was trudging grid like in my quest for new growth flowers and I looked up ... and ... looking down at me from the opening was an adult Boreal Owl.

Wow, finally it was being used. I was so excited. I ran in the house to get my husband, Paul ... Dragged him out of the house in his slippers, thru the woods to the spot and it was still there, intently staring down at us ... owl like, head on one side.



Over the next couple of weeks, I was there daily having a visit with the owls. As the little ones were big enough to sit and look down I had many conversations with them and one morning there were actually two siblings in the hole sitting side by side, one a little larger than the other

staring down at me.

We had lots of visitors that came to see the owls, and sometimes they were rewarded with a glimpse. Most times actually.

They were definitely the highlight of my Spring. The last sighting was June 15. Fledged.



lone Christensen photo

Leucistic (partial albino) White-crowned Sparrow.

Snow birds in July

by lone Christensen

"lone, I have snow birds in my yard, what are they doing here this time of year?"

A call from my good friend Ruth at Bear's Paw Quilts who credits me with far more expertise as a Birder than I deserve. Yet even I know that Snow Birds in July are a most unusual occurrence. I hustled down to her shop to see photos she had taken of these mysterious birds. Yes they did look like Snow Birds, time to call in the troops. I sent out an ID request to some real birders, with pictures, and the answer came back.

"They most likely are partial albino White-crowned Sparrows."

I hustled up to where the birds had been seen and sure enough there they were and they were part of a flock of resident White-crowned Sparrows. There were two of them and it was interesting to see how they used the white stones in the yard as a means of camouflage.

I went mad with my long lens and shot over 90 photos of the little guys. They seemed to be accepted by their nest mates and all happily fed together around the feeder.

Another example of why birding is such fun and can provide so much joy.

Down the gullet!

by lone Christensen

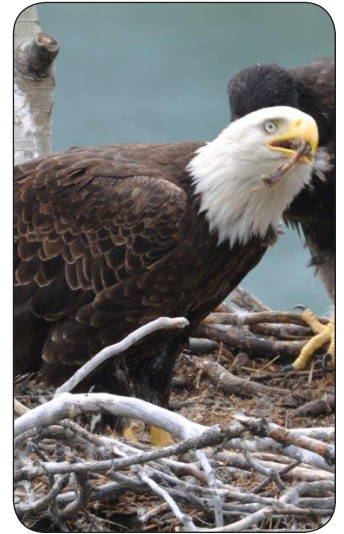
One of the Bald Eagle nests I frequent each summer always has something interesting going on. This year was no exception. It is an easy nest to observe and still be well away from the birds themselves.

This year I observed a year old sibling in the area and judging from all the happy chatter going on between it and the bird on the nest I felt sure it must have been one of their chicks from last year.

But it was the day the female was doing some house keeping around the nest that was fascinating. The two young ones were well grown and were only week away from fledging. They were not that interested in the cleaning process, but when Mom found a nice bone interest was peeked in one sibling and it came over to see what was going on.

I think the photos tell the story better than words.

Both the young eaglet and I were shock when Mom aligned the bone and it slid down her gullet. I can only hope she had lots of gravel in her gizzard to grind it all up. Amazing what birds can do. All part of the fun in being a bird watcher.



lone Christensen photos

Bald Eagle chokes back a bone.

YBC EVENTS

The Yukon Bird Club was busy with events over the Spring and Summer at the MacBride Museum. lone Christensen, long time Yukoner, Photographer and Birdwatcher delighted visitors and locals alike with talks and slideshows from May until September. Five talks in all. Birds of Spring, Summer and Fall & Winter.

2nd Annual YBC Potluck Dinner and slideshow.
Hellaby Hall - Thursday 21 Jan. 2016, 6-9 pm.

Bring something to eat and up to 10 pictures from the past year to share with everyone. We have full use

of the kitchen so you can plan to use stove/oven if need be. We will have a computer and large TV for the slide show. Bring your pictures on a USB stick or the like. There will be lots of time to socialize with fellow birders -- both the ones you know and those you don't. This is also a good time to get your 2016 membership if you haven't paid it already.

This event was very well-received last year and we hope for an even bigger turnout this year.

People can phone Betty (633-2312) or Jim (668-2639) for further details.



Jim Hawkings photo

YBC President Cameron Eckert addresses the crowd at Helmut Grünberg's celebration of life at Robert Service Campground. This well-attended event was combined with the 2015 Birdathon post-event gathering.

2015 Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon

This year's Yukon Birdathon, held on 29-30 May, sported a new name. As most of you will know, it now bears the name of our dear friend Helmut Grünberg who sadly passed away in February.

Helmut was a pillar of the Birdathon since its inception, consistently rounding up the most sponsors, raising the most money, and placing near or at the top of the list in terms of number of species sighted in the 24-hour event. His birdathons were epic affairs without exception. He would carefully plan his itinerary to get the most species, allowing himself and his weary companions just enough sleep in the wee hours of Saturday morning to be semi-functional until the closing bell at 5 pm.

In recent years he embraced

"enviro" birdathoning: He would stash canoes and bicycles in strategic locations during the days preceding the big event, so that he could hit all the right spots without using a drop of fossil fuel. This was no mean feat as he focussed a major part of each Birdathon in the area of Swan Lake, his favourite haunt. Swan Lake, as those who have been there know, is a good distance from downtown Whitehorse, and is hard enough to get to and from by car or truck, let alone under human power. He may not have burned any fossil fuel, but he sure burned some calories! Helmut put everything into his Birdathons as one could clearly see by his drooping eyelids at the post-event gathering each year.

In keeping with Helmut's long-

standing contributions to the Birdathon, the post-birdathon BBQ at Robert Service Campground doubled as a celebration of his life. There was an open invitation to anyone who knew him to attend. And they did – the head count was over 80 at one point. Refreshments were served and many stories exchanged informally.

After, there was a chance for everyone to hear from those who wished to say a few words about Helmut. This made for a very warm and uplifting series of tributes to a man who obviously touched many people in the community with his generous and friendly spirit. It seemed that everyone felt this low-key community event was a good way to remember and pay tribute to Helmut. Thanks are due to Helmut's good friend

Helmut embraced enviro birdathoning

Betty Sutton, who did an enormous amount of work to plan and prepare for this celebration.

As for the nuts and bolts of the 2015 Birdathon, there were just under 20 people who actively “birdathoned” this year. A total of 141 species were sighted, slightly down from last year’s 154 and 143 in 2013. As in recent past years this total has been propped up considerably by birders spending time in southeast Yukon, where a number of species reach the northwestern edge of their range (e.g. Magnolia Warbler, American Redstart, Western Tanager, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow).

Topping the list for number of species seen (111) were Jukka Jantunen and his weary Albert Creek Bird Observatory team of Julie Bauer, H el ene Dion-Phenix and Francis Bordeleau-Martin. Second were Shyloh and Toren van Delft at 103 species,

followed closely by veteran Cameron Eckert and Feature-Birder Ted Murphy-Kelly with 99.

We had 3 people participate in the Enviro-birding category, i.e. they did not use fossil-fuel vehicles during the birdathon. Easily topping the list here was Boris Dobrowolsky with 68 species, while Pam Sinclair had 53 and Jim Hawkings 39.

The Birdathon is a fundraising event and this year seems to have been quite successful. As of December we have raised over \$2,600 for the conservation and education activities of the Yukon Bird Club and Yukon Conservation Society. Leading the fundraising pack were Shyloh and Toren van Delft, Adam Perrier, and Mary Whitley. For YBC this event is our major source of operating funds and we thank all the participants and the many sponsors who continue to support us.



Shyloh van Delft photo

The birdathon was renamed the Helmut Gr nberg Yukon Birdathon this year to honour the activist and birder who passed away in February.



Jim Hawkings photo

Participants in this year’s Judas Creek field trip on 21 May were treated to a smorgasbord of shorebirds and waterfowl at the mouth of Judas Creek. Note the clever mix of warmish upper layers and summer footwear. The weather on the beach was fabulous this year – meaning people stayed until they had seen enough rather than staying until they were frozen too much by the cold wind off the ice.



Jake Paleczny photo

Trumpeter Swan family lounges in the magnificent early fall setting of the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, Aug. 31, 2015.

Trumpeters nest at wildlife preserve

by Jim Hawkings

Wild Trumpeters have set up shop at the Yukon Wildlife Preserve. Founded in 2004, the Preserve is a 700-acre non-profit facility located just 30 km northwest of Whitehorse, Yukon, whose mission is: "To promote knowledge and foster appreciation of arctic and boreal ecology through the creation of a centre of northern education, conservation and research excellence."

In practice it offers a "unique wildlife viewing property featuring 11 species of northern Canadian mammals in their natural environment." Many tourists, as well as local residents, come there for opportunities to view and photograph such iconic animals as moose, caribou, muskox, elk, thinhorn sheep, mountain goats, and lynx.

Visitors can wander at their leisure through the area, safely viewing these animals, many in very natural surroundings. The Preserve also boasts a fabulous wetland which has become a well-known local hotspot

for waterfowl and other waterbirds such as grebes and shorebirds – as well as hosting the Preserve's two moose.

In recent years there have been occasional Trumpeter Swans dropping in to visit during spring and fall migration, and the Preserve has also rehabilitated a few swans in its holding facilities.

Spring 2015 was a landmark, however, as a pair of Trumpeters settled in, built a nest, and successfully raised 3 or 4 cygnets, all in plain view of the many visitors.

Jake Paleczny, Director of Programming and Education at the Preserve, is a birdwatcher and he watched with interest as this pair progressed through nest-building, incubation, and rearing their family.

He noted that even when the cygnets were flying and the wetland began to freeze up a bit in late September, the family kept returning from time to time until the open water froze up entirely in early November. He also noted that the adults

were somewhat wary during nesting, incubation, and early brood-rearing, but the cygnets eventually learned to ignore visitors walking by on the Preserve's adjacent roadway.

Yukoners are well-acquainted with swans in migration, especially Trumpeters, from the spectacular spring migration areas located south of Whitehorse at Marsh Lake and Tagish Lake, and other locations.

During the nesting season, however, they are a bit harder to come by. Whitehorse is actually located in a bit of a no-man's land between the breeding range of the Rocky Mountain Population, which generally nests to the north and east, and the Pacific Coast Population, which nests to the south, west, and northwest. Over the years both populations have expanded, coming closer and closer to Whitehorse from seemingly all directions.

With any luck this pair will return to nest in subsequent years and continue to delight and educate visitors to the Preserve.

Count	Date	No. of field observers	No. of species observed	No. of birds observed
Whitehorse (WH)	26	42	33	4135
Haines Junction (HJ)	20/12	24	21	1521
Watson Lake (WL)	26/12	24	14	278
Tagish (TA)	21/12	21	20	591
Carcross (CA)	21/12	14	17	307
Takhini – Laberge (TL)	27/12	13	15	397
Dawson (DC)	21/12	13	1	161
Kluane N.P. (KL)	27/12	10	18	468
Marsh Lake (ML)	21/12	9	18	449
Johnson's Crossing (JC)	26/12	7	11	137
Teslin (TE)	14/12	4	19	386
Marge of Lk. Laberge (LB)	14/12	2	12	121
Mayo	29/12	2	10	420
Tombstone (TS)	27/12	2	4	18

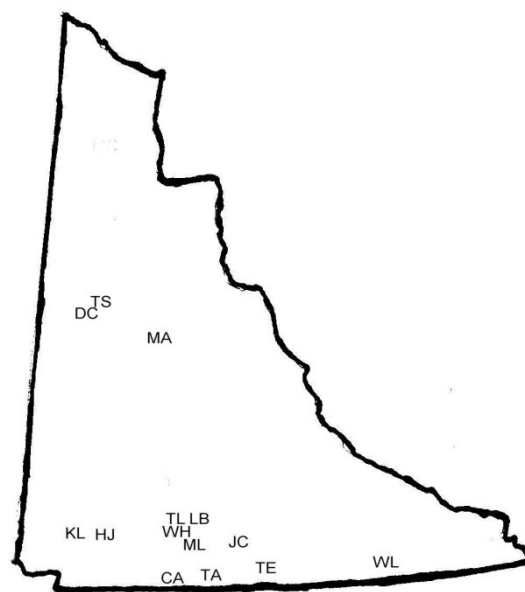


Figure 1. Locations of 2013 Yukon CBCs

Table 1. Summary of Yukon Christmas Bird Counts

Yukon's Christmas Bird Counts 2014

by Clive Osborne

Twenty-fourteen was a dynamic year for the annual Christmas Bird Counts in Yukon. Fourteen counts were conducted with 2 new counts being established, 1 on the marge of Lake Laberge and the other in the Tombstone Mountains area. There were several sightings of unusual species for this time of year and there were numerous high counts for other species. This article summarizes the information collected from all 14 Yukon Christmas Bird Counts in 2014 as posted to the Audubon Society's website, the official sponsor of the Christmas Bird Count throughout North America. A total of 9389 birds comprising 47 species were counted by 193 participants from the first counts on December 14 to the last count on December 29.

The location of the counts is shown in Figure 1 and the counts are summarized in Tables 1-3.

Unusual sightings where a species was observed in only one count were: Bohemian Waxwing (216 - Whitehorse), House Sparrow (70 - Whitehorse), Pine Siskin (8 - Carcross), Rock Pigeon (6 - Whitehorse), White-tailed Ptarmigan (5 - Carcross), American

Species	No. of Birds	Rank
Common Raven	2872	1
White-winged Crossbill	1417	2
Common Redpoll (redpoll sp)	1134	3
Pine Grosbeak	1119	4
Black-capped Chickadee	510	5
Boreal Chickadee	362	6
Black-billed Magpie	289	7
Red Crossbill	237	8
Gray Jay	229	9
Bohemian Waxwing	216	10

Table 2. The top ten most abundant species over all counts.

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Top 10 most widespread species

Species	No. of Counts
Boreal Chickadee	14
Common Raven	13
Pine Grosbeak	13
Common Redpoll	13
Black-capped Chickadee	13
Gray Jay	13
Black-billed Magpie	10
White-winged Crossbill	9
Dark-eyed Junco	9
Ruffed Grouse	8

Table 3. Top 10 most widespread species as determined by the number counts on which they were observed.

Robin (3 – Whitehorse), Rusty Blackbird (3 – Whitehorse), American Crow (2 – Watson Lake), Snow Bunting (2 – Watson Lake), Common Loon (1 – Whitehorse), Golden Eagle (1 – Whitehorse), Sharp-shinned Hawk (1 – Teslin), Stellar Jay (1- Watson Lake), Fox Sparrow (1 – Whitehorse) and

Lincoln Sparrow (1 – Tagish).

Most of the counts reported record high numbers for some species: Whitehorse (Mallard -75, Common Raven – 2209, Common Merganser – 6, Bald Eagle – 39, American Dipper 15, Hoary Redpoll – 6, House Sparrow – 70); Haines Junction (Ruffed Grouse – 20, Dark-eyed Junco – 54); Carcross (White-tailed Ptarmigan – 5, American Three-toed Woodpecker – 5); Dawson (Mallard – 4); Kluane N.P. (White – winged Crossbill – 262, Common Redpoll – 130); Mayo (Boreal Chickadee – 45); Tagish (Common Goldeneye – 38, Willow Ptarmigan – 40, Gray Jay 32, Mountain Chickadee 21, Red – breasted Nuthatch – 10, Dark – eyed Junco – 6, Pine Grosbeak – 195); Takhini – Laberge (Bald Eagle – 2, Red – breasted Nuthatch – 6, Red Crossbill – 56, White-winged Crossbill – 81); Teslin (Dark – eyed Junco – 22); Johnson’s Crossing (Trumpeter Swan – 46, Mallard 9); Watson Lake (Gray Jay – 25).

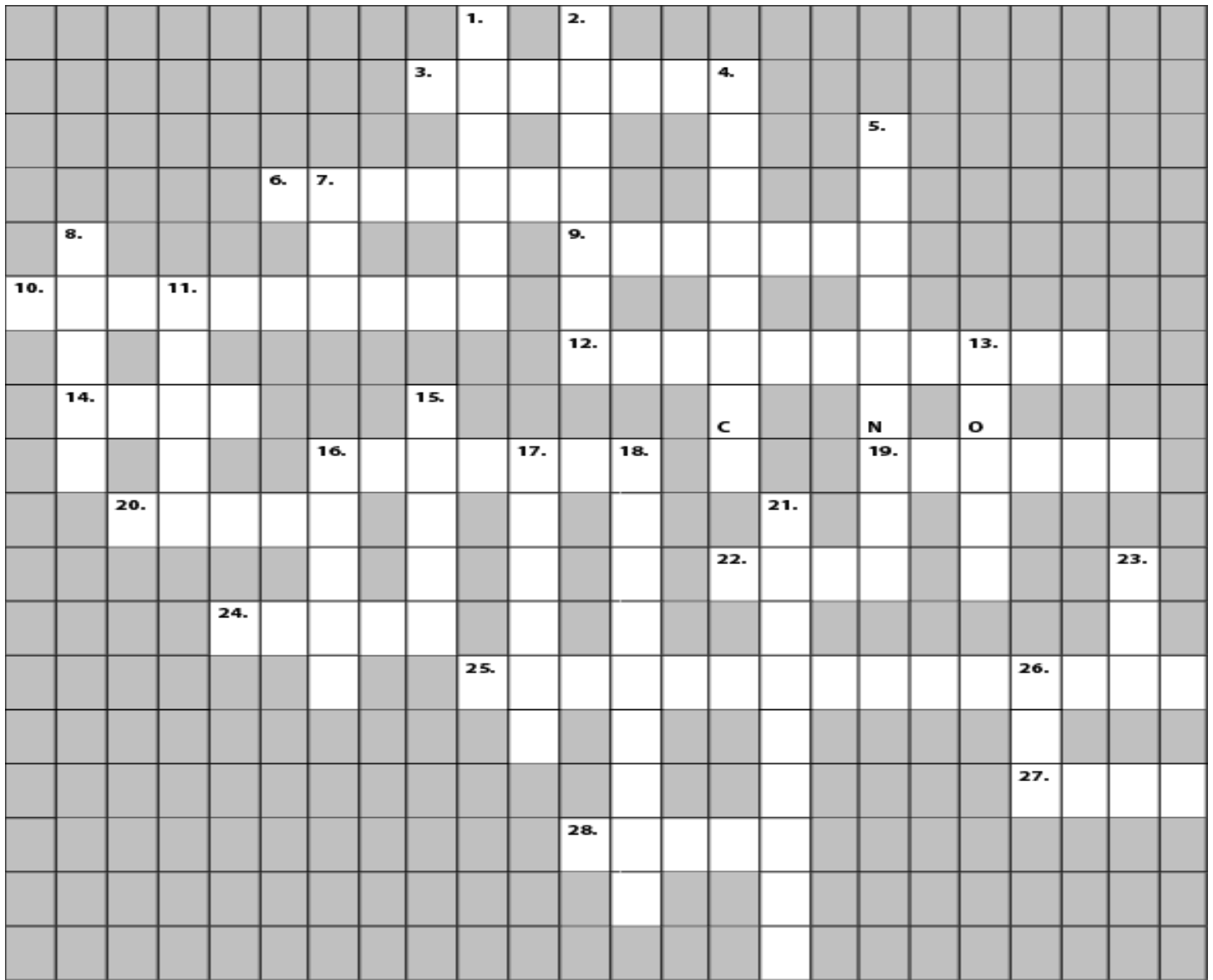
A couple of counts reported record low numbers for some species: Dawson (Common Redpoll – 22) and Tagish (Common Redpoll – 17).

Species observed during count week but not counted on count day were: Spruce Grouse, Northern Shrike (Haines Junction), Great Horned Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatch (Carcross), Northern Goshawk, Great Horned Owl (Mayo) and Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker (Teslin).

Raven award presented



Under the watchful eye of director Shyloh van Delft, YBC president Cameron Eckert presents Carcross birder Dan Kemble with several books as part of the 2015 Raven Award. The presentation was made in Carcross prior to Dan’s annual Dusky Grouse field trip on 24 April. **Jim Hawkings photo**



Across

- 3. Found only in Florida, is part of the Crane family
- 6. There are 10 varieties of this songbird found in the Yukon
- 9. The distinctive coloration of this diving duck
- 10. Large-headed duck that abruptly vanishes and re-surfaces as it feeds
- 12. Distinguishing feature of this medium sized finch found in the Yukon
- 14. Large duck of Arctic coastal waters
- 16. This sparrow is best identified by the fine streaks on its buffy chest.
- 19. This bird stands perfectly still, believing you won't see it if it doesn't move.
- 20. Identifying color on the head of this sparrow.
- 22. What you put in your feeder.
- 24. This feature provides camouflage for this Thrush
- 25. Ashy gray with lemon yellow plumage identifies this Thrush
- 27. Woodpecker's tool for getting bugs.
- 28. Nesting material for Magpies.

Down

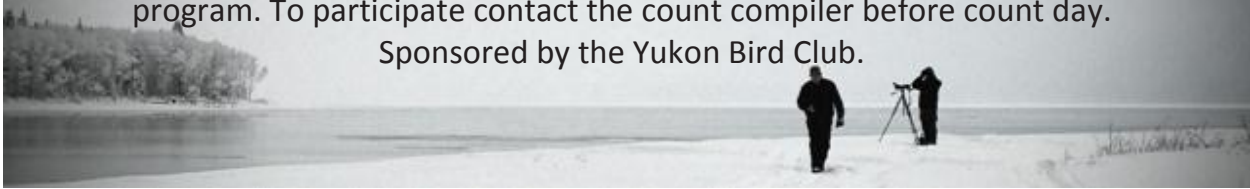
- 1. This loon uses this (which is part of their name) as part of their courtship display
- 2. May be the most familiar of all wild birds.
- 4. These tiny active birds sometimes overwinter in the Yukon.
- 5. Identifying feature of this Blackbird.
- 7. Part of what attracts Cedar Waxwings in the fall.
- 8. Same as 24. across, but this bird is one of 19. across.
- 11. This bird has been described as "a Sparrow, dipped in raspberry juice."
- 13. Large flocks of these birds can be seen and heard in our skies in spring and fall.
- 15. Largest North American Owl.
- 16. One of the smallest and most common Flycatchers.
- 17. Lives on live fish and can dive into water to catch them.
- 18. Can be distinguished by their sharp electric "peent" call.
- 21. Dependant on populations of budworms.
- 23. This causes the distinctive whirring sound of 18 down when it dives.
- 26. How Sandpipers walk.

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Yukon Christmas Bird Counts – 2015

All are welcome – beginners, feeder-watchers, and seasoned field experts! Enjoy winter birding as part of a North American-wide bird monitoring and conservation program. To participate contact the count compiler before count day.

Sponsored by the Yukon Bird Club.



Marge of Laberge – Wednesday 16 December

Compiler – Cameron Eckert

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Compiler – Dan Kemble

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Skagway, AK – Saturday 19 December

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Tombstone Territorial Park – Sun 27 December

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Mayo – Tuesday 29 December

Compiler – Mark O'Donoghue

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Phone: 867-996-2529

New Christmas Counts are welcome! To organize a Christmas Bird Count in your community contact yukonbirdclub@gmail.com to get started!

For more information contact:

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YBC Website: yukonbirds.ca

Yukon Birds Facebook group: [facebook.com/
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