

# YUKON WARBLER

Newsletter of the Yukon Bird Club

Spring 2023



***Upcoming Field  
Trips and Events,  
Yukon Birdathon  
Pages 5-9***

***New Research on  
Swallows and  
Blackbirds  
Page 10***

**Honouring the Surfbirds on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the  
Yukon Bird Club - Page 3**

Photo: Lena Ware



# YUKON BIRD CLUB

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

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.

Membership fees are based on the Calendar Year (Jan 1 to Dec 31). The end of the year is a good time to renew your membership. If you have paid for multi-year memberships in the past and are unsure of your current status, feel free to contact us for clarification. If you receive a paper copy of "The Warbler" your mailing label will indicate the latest year for which your membership is paid up, i.e. 2022 or 2023.

## For more information contact:

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YBC Website: [yukonbirds.ca](http://yukonbirds.ca)  
Yukon Birds Facebook group:  
[facebook.com/groups/212509148852262/](https://facebook.com/groups/212509148852262/)  
YBC Twitter: [yukonbirds](https://twitter.com/yukonbirds)

## We want your birding photos and stories!

Thank you to all those who contribute the *Yukon Warbler*. To make a submission, write to [newsletter@yukonbirds.ca](mailto:newsletter@yukonbirds.ca)

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# The Yukon Bird Club Celebrates 30 Years with a New Logo

By Lena Ware with input from Cameron Eckert and Pam Sinclair.

Logo by local graphic designer Tedd Tucker.

The Yukon Bird Club is celebrating 30 years with a fresh new look. The Surfbird was the honoured bird of choice and here is why: The Surfbird is a true Yukon specialty. The Yukon is the only place in Canada where the surfbird nests and raises its young. This stocky gray shorebird spends its winters on the pacific coast from Alaska to Chile, yet the entire world's nesting range is limited to the Yukon and central Alaska. The Surfbird connects the Yukon to distant points on the globe as far as 18,000 km away.

The Surfbird lives an interesting dual life. In winter, large flocks dodge crashing waves on rugged rocky shores and pick marine invertebrates off the barnacle covered shorelines. They are often seen with other 'rock' pipers like the Black Turnstone, Rock Sandpiper and Black Oystercatcher. Surfbirds look so at home in the salty ocean spray, it is hard to imagine them seeking out mountain top nesting sites. Pairs inhabit stony alpine tundra on steep north facing slopes many hundreds of kilometres from the sea.

This peculiar and remote breeding habitat has thwarted curious birders and biologists. Surfbird nests are notoriously hard to find so there is still much to be learned about their basic breeding behaviour and ecology. The first written report of a Surfbird in the Yukon was one seen on May 27, 1924 (Carcross - A. Brooks and H.S. Swarth). The first documented nest in the Yukon (and Canada) wasn't until July 4, 1975, when a Surfbird chick was photographed in the Ogilvie Mountains by Robert Frisch. Frisch noted that "during display, surfbirds often plane and soar to heights at the limit of vision emitting chirruping song." Today, Tombstone Park is one of the best places to take a hike and look for these special birds.

The Surfbird is not the most bright and flashy of Yukon birds but it is a fitting representative.

Like Yukoners, Surfbirds make up a small global population of hardy creatures making

themselves at home in some of the most remote and rugged places on earth. The surfbird is a symbol of the club's commitment to the awareness, appreciation and conservation of all Yukon's birds. Please come celebrate the 30th year of the Yukon Bird Club by picking up your binoculars and joining us on a field trip! 🌿



Range Map: All ABOUT Birds

# Ode to the Surfbird

## In the voice of Robert Service

Poem generated by Lena Ware with the AI text generating software ChatGPT

In the rugged Yukon, wild and grand  
The Surfbird makes its lonely stand  
A shorebird small but bold and true  
In breeding range, so very few

From Alaska to Chilean coast  
They dodge winter's waves like shorebirds most  
On rocky shores, they forage and feed  
With Black Turnstones, their kind indeed

Yet in the Yukon's high terrain  
On north-facing slopes, they remain  
Their nesting habits, hard to trace  
Mysterious birds in a remote place

Tombstone Park, where the mountains rise  
Is where you'll find them, to your surprise  
Join us, let's take a hike and see  
These special birds, so small and free

The Yukon Bird Club's chosen bird  
A fitting symbol, that's the word  
For hardy creatures, remote and wild  
A small global population, but beguiled

So let's celebrate this special creature  
And our commitment that they feature  
To conserve all Yukon's feathered friends  
And enjoy the nature we defend 🌿



Photo: Lena Ware



Photo: Cameron Eckert



Photo: Braden Judson



# Spring Walks with Yukon Wildlife Viewing

## Dagay – swan walk

Bring your lunch to Kluane and enjoy a guided walk with Elder, Gùdia – Mary Jane Johnson. Learn about the dagay – swans of Jedali and enjoy a cup of hot tea and bannock at the end of the day. Warm layers and rubber boots are a must!

Please register in advance so we can plan appropriately and share additional information about this remote, day-long event. Visit [yukon.ca/swans](http://yukon.ca/swans) for a link to the EventBrite registration page.

**Date:** Saturday, May 13

**Time:** 12 noon to 4 pm

**Location:** Burwash Landing. Meet at the Kluane Museum of History.

**Cost:** Free



## Shorebird walk

Move over swans, it's shorebird time! The shores of Swan Haven boast much more than swans and ducks. Sandpipers and snipes, yellowlegs and godwits, birder Jukka Jantunen will sort it all out during a short walk and talk. Rubber boots are recommended.

Please register in advance so we can plan appropriately. Visit [yukon.ca/swans](http://yukon.ca/swans) for a link to the EventBrite registration page.

**Date:** Sunday, May 14

**Time:** 10 to 11:30 am

**Location:** Swan Haven Interpretive Centre, Marsh Lake

**Cost:** Free



Photos: Courtesy of Yukon Government

## Field Trips & Events 2023

All are welcome!

4061-4th Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 1H1

Email – yukonbirdclub@yukonbirds.ca / Web – yukonbirds.ca

### Spring

Friday 28 Apr: Carcross – The annual **Dusky Grouse Nares Mtn hike** with Joel Luet. Meet at the gazebo opposite Montana Services 6:30pm. Sturdy footwear. (3 hrs)

Sat 29 Apr: **Bird Banding 101!** Meet at 1 pm at Swan Haven for a Society of Yukon Bird Observatories bird banding talk and demonstration. *#learntobird*

Sat 29 Apr: Tagish – **Early spring migrants** with Shyloh van Delft. Meet at Tagish Bridge rest area at 10am. (2 hrs) *#learntobird*

Wed 3 May – **Litter pick-up at Quartz Road wetlands** (and maybe some birds too!) with Sean Munro. Meet at Boston Pizza Parking lot 6pm. (1 hr)

Fri/Sun 5-7 May: Faro – Birding the **Crane and Sheep Festival**. View thousands of migrant cranes over the birding paradise of Faro. Meet at the Campbell Regional Interpretive Centre for information and events.

Sun 7 May: **Shorebirds of Swan Haven** with Environment Yukon. Meet at 10 am at Swan Haven. Expert birder Jukka Jantunen will sort out the diversity from godwits to peeps. Rubber boots are recommended. (2 hrs)

Tue 9 May: Explore the **bird rich Yukon Wildlife Preserve** with Jake Paleczny and friends. Meet 6pm. Entrance fee \$13 for non-members of YWP (2 hrs). *#learntobird*

Thurs 11 May: **Quartz Road Marsh spring birding** with Lena Ware. Meet at Boston Pizza Parking lot at 5:30 pm. (1.5 hours) *#learntobird*

Sat 13 May: **Millennium Trail stroller-walk** for parents & young ones (under 2) with Shyloh van Delft. Meet at the SS Klondike at 9:15am.

Sat 13 May: Burwash Landing – Learn about the **Dagay (swans)** of Jedalj on a walk with a Kluane First Nation Elder. Bring lunch, warm layers, and rubber boots are a must! Meet at the Kluane Museum of History in Burwash Landing 12pm (4 hrs). Hosted by Yukon Environment.

Sun 14 May: Carcross – Enjoy a **bird walk around Nares Lake** and Carcross with Dan Patterson & Syd Cannings. Meet 10am at the gazebo opposite Montana Services. (2.5 hrs)

Tue 16 May: A **scenic #learntobird bird walk** along Eagle Bluff with Syd Cannings. Meet at the Eagle Bluff parking lot (Range Rd at Whistle Bend Way) at 5:30 pm. (1.5 hrs)

Wed 17 May: Haines Junction – **Spring migration** at the scenic lagoons with Julie Bauer & Terry Skjonsberg. Meet at the sewage lagoons at 6pm. (2 hrs) *#learntobird*

Thurs 18 May: **Judas Creek Migration Spectacular** with Jim Hawkings. Meet at the SS Klondike at 5:30pm, or Marsh Lake Community Centre at 6:15pm. (3.5 hrs)

Sat 20 May: Dawson – **Spring birds of the Klondike** with Greg Brunner & Cynthia Hunt. Meet at Henderson's Corner west entrance at 8am. (2 hrs)

Sat 20 May: **Family birding at McIntyre Marsh** for parents & kids (12 & under) with Shyloh van Delft. Meet at the gazebo on the Fish Lake Rd at 9:30am. 16 spots available; to reserve email [yukonbirder@gmail.com](mailto:yukonbirder@gmail.com).

Sun 21 May: **Birding the Takhini Salt Ponds** with Shyloh van Delft & Ulrich Trachsel. Meet at the corner of the Alaska Hwy & Elk Road at 10am. (1.5 hrs) *#learntobird*

Tue 23 May: **Peak migration** at Quartz Road wetlands with Kirsten Wilcox. Meet at Boston Pizza Parking lot at 5:30 pm. (1.5 hours)

Thurs 25 May: Birds of the **Millennium Trail** with Jenny Trapnell. Meet at the Whitehorse Fish Ladder 6:00pm. Wheelchair accessible. (2 hrs) *#learntobird*

Sat 27 May: Mayo – **A spring bird walk** with Mark O'Donoghue. Meet at 5-Mile Lake campground at 8:30am. (3 hrs)

Sun 28 May: McIntyre Creek **Birdsong Workshop** & eBird primer with Pam Sinclair. Meet at the Porter Creek Super A at 7:30am. (3 hrs) *#learntobird*

*The Helmut Grünberg –*

## Yukon Birdathon!

Friday-Saturday, May 26-27 (5pm to 5pm)

*Sharing the passion – a conservation fundraiser!*

For more info – [yukonbirds.ca/birdathon/](http://yukonbirds.ca/birdathon/)





All are welcome!

4061-4th Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 1H1

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## Summer

Mon 29 May: **Almost summer** at Quartz Road wetlands! Enjoy this family-friendly bird walk with Jim Hawkings. Meet at Boston Pizza Parking lot at 5:30 pm. (1.5 hrs)

Fri-Sun 2-4 June: **Tombstone Weekend on the Wing!** Hosted by Friends of Dempster Country & Yukon Parks at Tombstone Campground (Dempster km 72). See northern specialties – Surfbird, Smith's Longspur, and Northern Wheatear. For more info email tombstonecentre@gmail.com

Sat 3 June: **Annie Lake bittern quest** with Tracy. Meet at South Access Rd rest area on AK Hwy at 8:30am or Annie Lake Rd turnoff at 9am. (2hrs)

Tues 6 June: **Explore the forest and ponds along McIntyre Creek** near Yukon University with Katie Aitken. Some steep hill climbing. Meet at student parking lot 6:30pm. (2 hrs) *#learntobird*

Sat 10 June: **Breeding bird season** at McIntyre Creek wetland with Tracy. Meet at the gazebo on the Fish Lake Rd at 6pm. (1.5hrs) *#learntobird*

Tue 13 June: **A summer bird walk** at Paddy's Pond with Jenny Trapnell. Meet at Skky Hotel parking lot at 5:30 pm. (1.5 hrs) *#learntobird*

Wed 21 June: Dawson – **Magical solstice birding** under the Midnight Sun with Sebastian Jones. Meet at the SS Keno at 6pm. (2 hrs)

Sun 23 July: **Baby birds abound** at Versluce Meadows with Pam Sinclair. Ducks, grebes, swallows, warblers, and more! Meet at the Porter Creek Super A at 9am. (2 hrs) *#learntobird*

Sun 30 July: **Dragonflies of Hidden Lakes** with Syd Cannings. Dragonflies, birds, and biodiversity! Meet at the SS Klondike at 1pm. Wear rubber boots, or water shoes. (3 hrs)

## Fall

Sat 5 August: Teslin – **Early fall birding** at Teslin Lake Bird Observatory with Ted Murphy-Kelly. Meet at the Teslin Lake campground at 8am, and follow the signs to the banding station. *#learntobird*

Sat 12 August: **Fall birding** at the Yukon Wildlife Preserve with Jake Paleczny and friends. Meet at 10:45am. (2 hrs) \$13 entrance fee. *#learntobird*

Sun 17 September: Teslin – **Fall migration at the Teslin Lake** Bird Observatory with the Yukon Bird Club. Meet at Teslin Lake campground at 8am.

Wed 22 November: **What's on the river?** A lunch-time stroll across the Rotary Centennial foot-bridge with Jim Hawkings and friends. Meet at the Fish Ladder at 12 pm. Dress warmly! (1 hr)

14 December to 5 January. **Yukon Christmas Bird Counts!** All are welcome – beginners, feeder-watchers, and seasoned field birders! Be part of a North American-wide bird monitoring and conservation program. To organize a count in your community email yukonbirdclub@yukonbirds.ca

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*Come birding with the*

## Yukon Bird Club!

- ✓ **Field trips & events throughout the Yukon**
- ✓ **Informative newsletter – *Yukon Warbler***
- ✓ **Twitter – yukonbirds**

**For more information or to join contact –**

Yukon Bird Club, 4061-4th Avenue, Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 1H1  
Email – yukonbirdclub@gmail.com / Web – yukonbirds.ca

*Yukon Bird Club field trips & events are free, and visitors and non-members are welcome!*



# 2023 Birdathon – Mark your calendars!

By Jenny Trapnell

## Feature Birder - Alex Oberg

The 38th annual Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon will take place from Friday, May 26 at 5 p.m. to Saturday, May 27 at 5 p.m.

Held during the peak of spring migration, the 24-hour birdfest is a fun event, whether you are a beginner or an expert birder. The goal: to observe and identify as many bird species as you can!

Participate as an individual, group or family or sponsor this year's Feature Birder, Alex Oberg (see article). It's a great chance to discover the birds in your backyard, your neighbourhood and nearby hotspots.

Afterwards, come share your birding adventure at the post-Birdathon BBQ potluck, starting at 6 p.m. at Rotary Park. Everyone welcome!

There will be prizes for most species seen, youngest and oldest birders, family teams, enviro-birders (fossil-free birding), and new Birdathoners.

Through pledges and donations, the Birdathon is the main fundraiser for the Yukon Bird Club, supporting everything from this newsletter to field trips, and research and education grants.

Stay tuned for more details at [yukonbirds.ca](http://yukonbirds.ca), and on Facebook, Twitter and local media.

The Yukon Bird Club is pleased to announce that Alex Oberg has been selected as the Feature Birder for this year's 38th Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon.

Born and raised in Whitehorse, Oberg says he has enjoyed spending time in nature most of his life.

He remembers duck-hunting at a young age with this father,

noticing the diversity of wildlife and birds in the wetlands and marshes around them.

There was also lots of camping each summer.

Asked when he found one species that 'sparked' his love of birds, he recalled the many river trips he had with his parents. "I was always delighted to see a Kingfisher flash across the river," he said.



Whitehorse birder Alex Oberg, (shown top right), has invited his wife Maki (top centre) and his two sons to help him carry out his role as this year's Feature Birder in the Yukon Bird Club's 38th annual Birdathon.

Photo: Alex Oberg



Now a full-time chef, and father of two, Oberg has become a keen birder in his spare time. He says it's a nice way to unwind at the end of the day. "It's good to slow down and pay attention to the natural world around you," he said.

As well as birding "close-to-home" in his Porter Creek neighbourhood, his favorite spots include the bluffs overlooking the mouth of McIntyre Creek. He also likes to go up Fish Lake Rd and explore the ponds along the Copper Haul Rd.

Oberg took part in his first Birdathon last year. "I thought it might be a good way to find more birds as quickly as possible and to meet more people who share similar interests," he said.

One of the most exciting and rarer sightings he had was a Western Tanager at the Marsh Lake Campground.

Since then, he's become one of the top ten Yukon birders reporting his sightings on eBird, a popular on-line checklist and birding website. "eBird is a great way to keep track of everything I've seen," he said, adding: "It's also prompted me to get out and see more birds."

Armed with a new scope, this year's Feature Birder hopes to exceed his 2022 tally of 60 species with support from his wife Maki and two sons.

"I feel honoured to be selected for this role," Oberg said. "When I



**Alex Oberg takes some time after work to check out a Northern Harrier flying over the Yukon River near the Millennium Trail in Whitehorse.**

Photo: Jenny Trapnell

told my family, I said I wanted them to come along and help me."

His goal for this year's Birdathon: 70 species "or more."

Oberg's strategy is to explore hotspots near town. "We might take a bit of an epic journey out to the Yukon Wildlife Preserve – that's a great place to see lots of birds."

Good luck to Alex Oberg and this family, and happy birding, everyone! 🌿



**This year's Feature Birder in the Yukon Birdathon, Alex Oberg, says birding is a good way to "slow down and pay attention to the natural world".**

Photo: Jenny Trapnell



# The Barn Swallow, Bank Swallow and Rusty Blackbird in Yukon's Agricultural Landscape

By Maria Leung (Wild Tracks Ecological Consulting) and Donald Reid (Wildlife Conservation Society Canada)

Growing food in Yukon looks different than southern parts of Canada. Our farms tend to be smaller and closer to wild lands, and more apt to benefit from the pest control and pollination offered by native species. With this in mind, we have recently published a set of Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) for Species at Risk on Agricultural Lands in Yukon. This includes three species of birds, - Barn Swallow, Bank Swallow and Rusty Blackbird, - along with the Little Brown Bat and four species of Bumble Bees. In producing the BMPs document, we had the opportunity to gather insights on nesting Barn Swallows, map Bank Swallow colonies, and locate Rusty Blackbirds close to or within farmlands. We share some of our observations on these birds for this issue of the Yukon Warbler.

The Barn Swallow is unusual for a Species at Risk, in that it is so closely associated with human habitation. All the nests we found were on human-made structures, though these structures were diverse. We found two within 1 m of the ground: one underneath a transport truck trailer, and another under a deck. We also had a couple high on the rafters above 6m in very large outbuildings. One nest was built on a pair of bar clamps, another on a breaker box, and several were



built on wood walls or supports. More than half of nests were constructed inside buildings, and a few pairs benefited from the potential warmth of light fixtures by placing their nests there. Barn Swallow nest sites were usually warmer than ambient temperatures and almost always under the cover of a ceiling or roof. All properties with more than one Barn Swallow nest were situated close to water, including lakes and wetlands.

Barn Swallows showed little interest in the wooden nest cups or the covered wooden platforms that we provided to give them



more sites to nest. We only found one partial Barn Swallow nest out of 20 nest cups and none using platforms. However, a pair of Say's Phoebes and a pair of American Robins did nest on the platforms. A farmer had better success. After a year of tolerating a Barn Swallow nest on an outside window blind, the farmer removed the nest and

installed a wooden platform next to the blind. The Barn Swallows have now been using the platform for a couple of years.



Predators of Barn Swallow nests included Black-billed Magpie, deer mouse and domestic cat. A family

Photos: Maria Leung





**Predators: Black-Billed Magpie and Deer Mouse**

Photos extracted from videos taken with motion sensor cameras (Maria Leung)

of magpies depredated at least four nests at one property. A deer mouse visited a nest on three successive nights, consuming all three eggs. A domestic cat regularly checked out nestlings at one nest, and shortly before the nestlings were about to fly, it dislodged the nest and feasted on the whole brood.

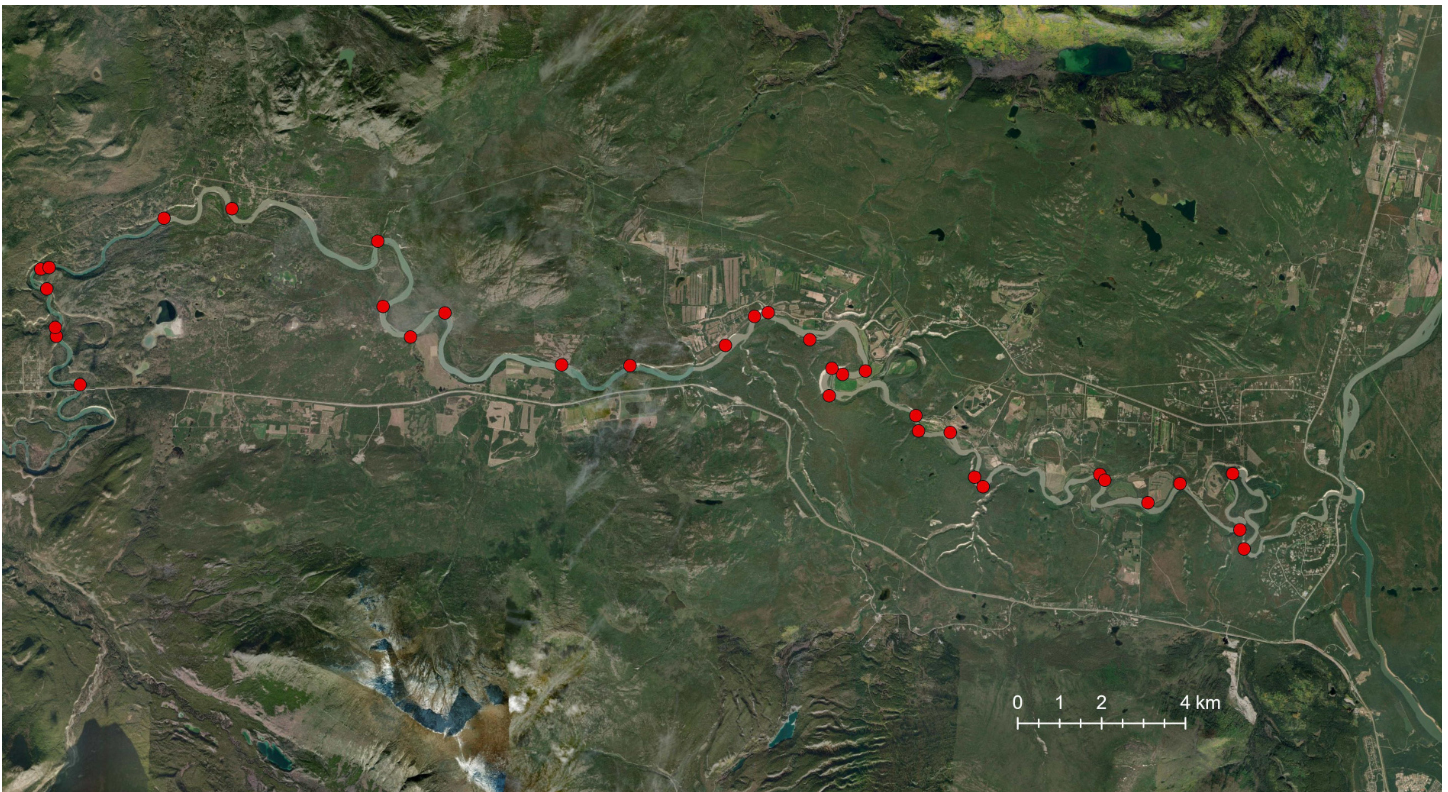
On the basis of clutch size and number of fledglings, the productivity of Barn Swallows in Yukon is similar to other populations in North America. As with further south, we found that some Barn Swallows in Yukon fledged second broods. This was a surprise, given that double brooding in

passerines is rarely reported at this northern latitude. The few pairs in Yukon that did raise a second brood did so in quicker succession than Barn Swallows in British Columbia. This makes sense since the availability of their food, flying insects, is more compressed in time. In the north, we have fewer days warm enough for the insects to fly, but our daily foraging periods could be longer because of our longer daylight. Details of the Barn Swallow study are available at this link ([bit.ly/3LIUlfV](http://bit.ly/3LIUlfV))

As for the other aerial insectivorous bird in our study, the Bank Swallow, we counted over 30 colonies along the 60 km stretch of Takhini River immediately upstream of the Yukon River. Many colonies are located close to

**Map of Bank Swallow Colonies**

Image provided by Maria Leung





farmland. Using the index developed by Canadian Wildlife Service (Sinclair et al. 2021) to estimate number of Bank Swallows based on number of bank burrows, we estimate that more than 4200 Bank Swallows inhabit this portion of the river during breeding season.

In surveying ponds of varying sizes (0.1 to 2.5 ha) and riparian retention, we encountered over 50 species of birds, including waterfowl, and shorebirds as well as passerines. Rusty Blackbirds showed no preference for size of water body, but we only found breeding pairs at ponds that had some riparian retention and some component of conifer trees in that riparian. Records of Rusty Blackbird nests suggest that most are constructed in conifer trees near water.

Our observations and evidence from literature converged onto a few major

BMPs that are particularly valuable for sustaining the Barn Swallow, Bank Swallow and Rusty Blackbird. One is ensuring that wetlands and riparian habitats are maintained and, where these are on public land, do not become privately owned. The many insects that emerge out of water, including some annoying biting ones, are a primary source of food for swallows. Another is avoiding the use of pesticides wherever possible. Pesticides reduce the availability of insect food associated with water and upland fields, and the health of birds can be compromised by consuming insects subjected to

pesticides.

We have found that many of the beneficial practices, that we documented from the literature and our own field work, are already happening in Yukon. The document, available at this link ([bit.ly/41Sr9ZF](https://bit.ly/41Sr9ZF)), is a guide both to keeping what is already working well, as well as improving our stewardship. Our story map, which includes photos of BMPs on Yukon farms, videos and an interactive map of the Bank Swallow colonies, is available at this link ([bit.ly/3p0XEWZ](https://bit.ly/3p0XEWZ)).



Photo: Maria Leung

*We are grateful for all the farmers and landowners for giving us access to their properties and sharing their observations. We also thank Growers of Organic Food Yukon, Yukon Agricultural Association, and Agriculture Branch of Yukon Government for providing logistic help. This project was funded by The Weston Family Foundation, and the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change (Habitat Stewardship Program).* 🌱



# Marsh Lake CBC Trend-Through-Time



Photo: Jukka Jantunen

By Clive Osborne

Here's a short summary of observations made on the Marsh Lake Christmas Bird Count throughout its history. This is the third Yukon Count to be summarized in this way (Trend-through-Time); the Whitehorse and Haines Junction Counts were featured in the Spring 2021 and 2022 Warbler newsletters respectively. Table 1 reports the data for counts that were conducted for 40 years from 1979 to 2019 inclusive.

The data reported in the Maximum, Minimum and Mean columns below the header of Table 1 is numbers of birds per party (observer group) hour. This statistic allows the data to be comparable among years and, if one chooses, among other Counts. The downside of using this statistic is that not all participants have an equal opportunity to observe a species occupying limited habitat within the Count circle (e.g., open water habitat, landfill site). For these species, the statistic generally decreases as the number of participants increases.

The spreadsheet used to create this table shows a more in-depth picture of population changes. We see an assemblage that is typical of a northern boreal forest winter; well represented by Corvids (ravens and jays), grouse, woodpeckers, chickadees and nuthatch, and finches. The Count, established by the late Dr. Helmut Grünberg, is in the heart of the Southern Lakes geographical area with its preponderance of human infrastructure. Farms, roads and recreational subdivisions have yielded quite a checkered landscape with plenty of edge habitat providing for a diverse

avifauna. There is usually open water within the Count circle at the outlet of Marsh Lake and at the Lewes River Control Structure and there are numerous active bird feeders at year-round residences. Where limited habitat in winter serves to concentrate waterfowl and songbirds, so the raptors are sure to follow. 🌿

**Table 1: Number of Birds Observed per Party-Hour for the Marsh Lake Christmas Bird Count from 1979-2019.**

	No. of Years Observed	Max.	Min.	Mean
Number of Participants	40	17	4	8
Number of Party Hours	40	25.3	3.0	15.8
Number of Species Reported		18	9	15
Pine Grosbeak	32	17.75	0.12	5.57
White-winged Crossbill	25	15.23	0.08	3.92
finch sp.	1	3.80	3.80	3.80
Common Redpoll	23	17.26	0.04	3.54
Boreal Chickadee	40	10.33	0.25	2.63
Common Raven	40	5.90	0.19	2.23
redpoll sp.	16	9.26	0.13	1.69
Black-capped Chickadee	36	3.80	0.08	1.57
Red Crossbill	6	3.67	0.15	1.27
duck sp.	1	1.10	1.10	1.10
Black-billed Magpie	39	2.88	0.12	1.01
Gray Jay	40	2.00	0.10	0.67
Bohemian Waxwing	9	1.09	0.05	0.51
crossbill sp.	8	2.30	0.05	0.48
merganser sp.	1	0.46	0.46	0.46
Willow Ptarmigan	1	0.37	0.37	0.37
chickadee sp.	11	0.84	0.04	0.29
Goldeneye sp.	4	0.67	0.08	0.28
Black-backed Woodpecker	1	0.27	0.27	0.27
Trumpeter Swan	1	0.26	0.26	0.26
Spruce Grouse	23	1.33	0.04	0.25
Evening Grosbeak	1	0.21	0.21	0.21
Common Merganser	22	0.67	0.04	0.20
Hoary Redpoll	9	0.33	0.05	0.16
ptarmigan sp.	2	0.15	0.12	0.14
Common Goldeneye	16	0.33	0.04	0.13
Hairy Woodpecker	19	0.37	0.04	0.12
Ruffed Grouse	12	0.71	0.04	0.12
Red-breasted Nuthatch	10	0.25	0.06	0.12
Mountain Chickadee	11	0.36	0.04	0.12
Merlin	1	0.11	0.11	0.11
Am. Three-toed Woodpecker	26	0.33	0.04	0.11
American Dipper	16	0.48	0.04	0.11
Downy Woodpecker	12	0.22	0.05	0.11
Northern Goshawk	5	0.14	0.08	0.11
Gray-crowned Rosy Finch	1	0.10	0.10	0.10
Dark-eyed Junco	11	0.27	0.05	0.10
hawk sp.	3	0.15	0.05	0.10
Barrow's Goldeneye	2	0.10	0.09	0.09
woodpecker sp.	8	0.15	0.04	0.09
Great Horned Owl	2	0.10	0.08	0.09

Continues on page 14



Table 1 continued

	No. of Years Observed	Max.	Min.	Mean
Bufflehead	1	0.08	0.08	0.08
Bald Eagle	7	0.11	0.04	0.08
Northern Hawk Owl	6	0.15	0.04	0.07
grouse sp.	4	0.08	0.04	0.06
Am. Tree Sparrow	1	0.05	0.05	0.05
Canvasback	1	0.05	0.05	0.05
Golden Eagle	1	0.05	0.05	0.05
Ring-necked Duck	1	0.05	0.05	0.05
passerine sp.	1	0.04	0.04	0.04

## Enticing Chickadees

By Cat Millar

Sometimes when my husband or I walk out our front door, there is a chickadee sitting in the branches of the trees surrounding our parking area with a beeline visual on us. We don't even make it as far as the stairs before this chickadee is buzzing around making its presence known. This chickadee is flying Mission Peanut.

A couple of years ago I tried to entice a chipmunk to hang around the yard by setting out peanuts and after several weeks discovered that a nuthatch had been flying away with the goods. Eventually, all I had to do was walk outside with a peanut in my hand – and that crazy nuthatch would come and grab it. It started hanging upside down from our eaves waiting for us to come outside. It expected the same delivery service from my husband and even followed us when we went for walks!

Our nuthatch didn't return last spring and we missed all the fun so I decided to try using my novice peanut skills with the chickadees. Fortunately, there was a young bossy boreal more than eager to have all the peanuts for itself who had no hesitation hopping onto my hand if that's what it took. Seeing this behaviour, other chickadees including black capped started landing on my fingers to grab their fair share. One really good day, I had six chickadees lining up to take turns – it was a whirlwind!

Now that it's spring we will sadly put the bird feeder away for the summer as we live in bear country – but that doesn't stop us from sneaking secret peanuts to our dedicated patrons! 🌰



Photos: Cat Millar

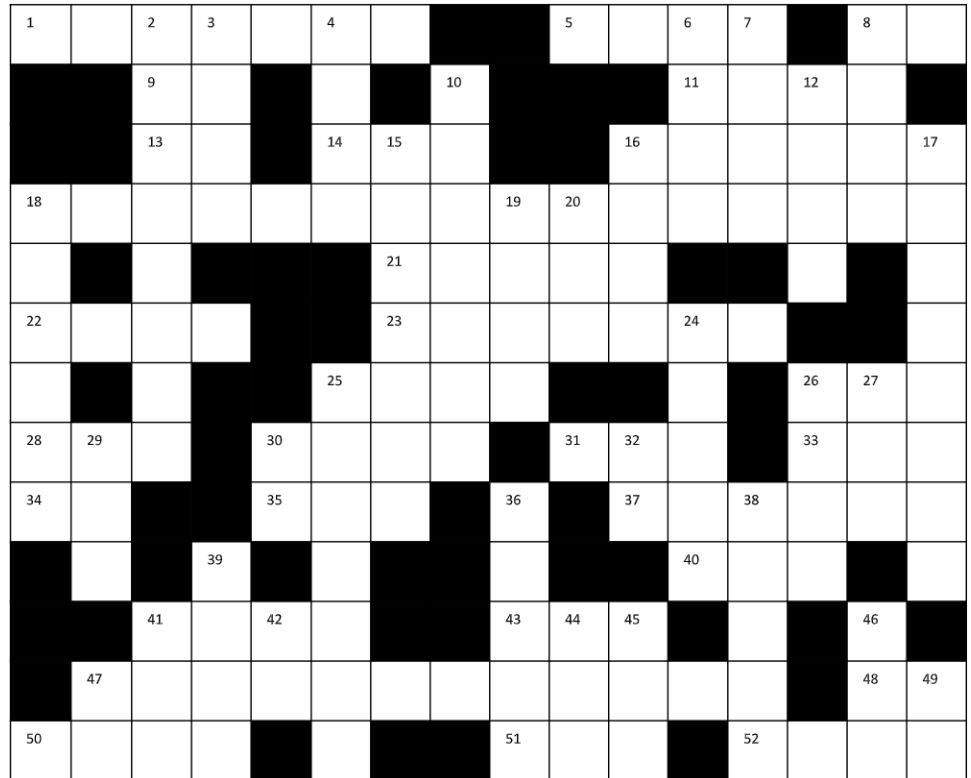


# We have our crossword back: Thanks Jeremy!

By Jeremy Baumbach

## ACROSS

1. "Water rushing through canyon"
5. What swans do at M'Clintock Bay
8. Direction from Mayo to Burwash Landing (abbrev.)
9. Latin for "that is" (abbrev.)
11. Leaning tower, or misspelled fast food
13. About
14. Where some birds and snowbirds go in the winter (abbrev.)
16. April income tax task
18. A perambulating bird that can't keep a secret?
21. A human species of pigeon?
22. Description of an eagle's kill site
23. The Yukon is graced by two species of this tiny bird
25. See 15-D
26. The centre of things, as in location of mental wellness service provision in some Yukon communities
28. Sound made by wowed birder
30. The Alder Flycatcher is best identified by this
31. Opposite of 8-D
33. A shout, or informal opposite of being a spring chicken
34. Direction from Watson Lake to Dawson City (abbrev.)
35. Not trans
37. Eat hungrily
40. What compost piles do
41. Bug protection
43. Birding is as much an \_\_\_ as a science
47. Avian springtime drummer
48. This might be alluring in bird or human (slang)
50. It could serve as a blind
51. Used to attach 50-A to the



ground

52. With 36-D and "ned", a woodland hawk

## DOWN

2. Yukoners' favourite airline
3. Requirement
4. Birders are \_\_\_ed to windy and cold conditions
6. Landform attractive to birds
7. Angle one's head up for a better view of a hawk
8. Birding helps keep me \_\_\_
10. What a bear might be doing on a hot day
12. Good long underwear material for birders
15. With 25-A, unexpectedly early arrivals in Whitehorse this year
16. A frustrating time of year for novice birders
17. Bird-a-thon's namesake
18. Walmart dabbler
19. Too much good habitat for birds in Whitehorse is \_\_\_\_\_
20. Add an "a" for a garment

24. Bird known for the fluffy stuff under its feathers

25. A bird dog

26. Bird call in the night

27. Inuit knife

29. Bird calling in the night

30. A US state, or a silent chuckle (abbrev.)

32. Neither 2-D nor 46-D are intended to be an \_\_\_ for the companies

36. With 52-A, a woodland hawk

38. Tasty morsels for many predators

39. Characteristic of bird bander movement

41. With 1-A, one of the First Nations on whose traditional territory Whitehorse is located

42. It comes after "e"

44. Fish eggs

45. Action to remove 51-A

46. Sponsor of the McIntyre Marsh Bird Banding Station

47. Concerning (abbrev.)

49. As opposed to "off"

# Crossword puzzle solution

K	W	A	N	L	I	N		R	E	S	T		S	W			
		I	E		N		P			P	I	S	A				
		R	E		U	S	A			F	I	L	I	N	G		
W	A	N	D	E	R	I	N	G	T	A	T	T	L	E	R		
I		O				S	T	O	O	L			K		Ü		
G	O	R	Y			K	I	N	G	L	E	T			N		
E		T				P	I	N	E			I		H	U	B	
O	O	H			S	O	N	G		M	A	D		O	L	E	
N	W				C	I	S		S			D	E	V	O	U	R
	L		D		N			H				R	O	T			G
			D	E	E	T			A	R	T		L			E	
		R	Ü	F	F	E	D	G	R	O	U	S	E			D	O
T	E	N	T		R				P	E	G		S	H	I	N	

## Yukon Warbler back issues online!

By Jim Hawkings

For a treat, why not browse our huge collection (over 50) of electronic Yukon Warbler issues stretching back to the beginning of the Yukon Bird Club in 1993! Each issue entry on the list has a short synopsis of articles to help you find items of interest. You can download any of them to enjoy at your leisure. There is a lot of interesting history here!

See <https://yukonbirds.ca/warbler/>

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