



## ARMY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN 2005

### FOREWARD

(Andrew Bray)

This is a bumper edition of the Bulletin. There have been a number of AOS events stretching around the world. The major trip for AOS was Canada which at times was more like a survival course in sleep and food deprivation. The joy of the trip was the number of species seen. It was birding at the extreme limits but what results; it was easier to count the non-lifers for me! It is a trip anyone who went on will never forget. Whilst people who went on the Canada trip took lots of warm clothing but unpacked little of it, the converse is true for the French trip. We did not have enough warm clothing! It was rather cold; even the calor gas would not work on the first morning. The sight and noise of cranes however made it a spectacular morning. Our members seem to stretch even further. Keith Cherry reports on a trip to Ecuador and Anne Nason has provided articles from Africa and New Zealand, whilst Gerry Birch re-visits Nepal. Ken Wright takes a break from the Gambia and tells us of a trip to Senegal. Mark Easterbrook gives us a taste of Tunisia where I spent my summer holiday though my Spanish Sparrows was very disappointing compared to the species that can be seen. At home the Chairman raises a question about cats (well he did move). John Hughes has found time to track the elusive Quail on Salisbury Plain on top of his paper writing on Ascension. There are even more scientific papers to write after the trip to the Island in October. I am delighted to see new members joining the organised trips. I trust that reading about some of the trips might encourage more of you to participate in the future. If nothing else come to the AGM. Finally I would like to thank all the contributors.

*The photographs are subject to copyright of Gerry Birch, Andrew Bray, Keith Cherry, Tim Cowley, Roger Dickey, Anne Hason, John Stentiford, Mike Vincent, Rodney Walker & Colin Wearn.*



Editor with John Hughes (left) and Mike Vincent (right) on the descent to Letterbox (Ascension Trip)

## AOS VISIT TO THE WIRRAL - OCTOBER 2004 (80 Species)

(Rodney Walker)



In what is believed to be a first visit by the AOS, 3 intrepid southerners (Andrew Bray, David Vaughan and Roger Dickey) joined the Chairman late on Friday 29 October 2004 and after a healthy homemade stew, and an ale or two, bedded down for the night in Wybunbury.

Next morning the team set off for The Wirral arriving at RSPB Inner Marsh Farm (SJ305741) at 10am in time to face a full frontal sun just in the direction we wanted to look over the ponds! We were, however, rewarded with excellent sightings of Water Rail and Common Snipe whilst Gadwall and Pintail showed well. A couple of Whooper Swans landed on the lake in the midst of a group of Mute Swan just to confuse us. There were good views of Stonechat, Fieldfare, Redwing and Yellowhammer on the way back to the cars.

After a couple of hours we moved on to Heswall led by our local guide, Pauline. On the way we stopped to look out over the Dee marshes and the MOD range. A Marsh Harrier was working its way across the fields. We re-joined the Dee Estuary alongside the appropriately named Sheldrake Restaurant on Banks Road (SJ253815). The tide was coming in rapidly and all the birds had moved on! All we managed to do was to disturb a highly camouflaged bird photographer. So on we went to Thurston, the site of the Wirral Country Park (SJ237834). It was now lunchtime which was spent looking out over the Dee; a few Godwits and Curlews were picking their way along the shoreline. Suddenly a Sparrowhawk screamed low across the picnic site to keep us interested. The Country Park has its own garden bird hide which is always productive whatever the season. One of



the team was approached by a formidable recruiter to the RSPB who, unknown to the rest of us at the time, received a short, sharp rebuff from our colleague.

So, after lunch, we moved on to the north west point of The Wirral, Red Rocks (SJ203886), the scene of many a siting of unusual migrating birds and very close to Hilbre Island which can only be reached at low tide. We should have been at the rocks at high tide but missed it by minutes by which time the water was over a mile off this very shallow coastline!

But the bird list was growing fast great to see large flocks of Knot, Oystercatcher, Sanderling and well as some Grey Plovers. We our steps and called in at Parkgate as dusk approached. Here at certain year the water covers all the marshes over the banks. One can then see short-eared owls, crows and other catching voles and fieldmice as they flee the incoming water. This evening we were privileged to see 3 (both male and female) hunting along the marshes. What a wonderful sight they were. And it was then that the chairman came across the aforementioned RSPB recruiter to hear that she had been ignored by a young man from the AOS earlier in the day. Surely not!



and it was Dunlin as then retraced (SJ273789) times of the and comes up harriers, predators attempt to particular Hen Harriers

With such a special end of the birding day we set off across the peninsular to Ellesmere Port and the start of the Manchester Ship Canal. Here we dined at the Jabula restaurant – remarkably a South African eating hole with native fare and a splendid South African dance group from Liverpool.



The next day we set off early, north on the M6, to two special inland sites – Mere Sands Wood and RSPB Martin Mere. Mere Sands Wood is a combined lake and woodland protected area run by The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire. It was a grey and dank day but we added Mandarin Duck and Green Sandpiper before moving on to stare through the lifting mist across the ponds and fields of Martin Mere. As usual there was plenty to see including another Ring Tail, Golden Plover and Ruff. It also made a successful end to the trip. Lets hope the AOS will return to the North West before too long.

### Bird List

|                     |                            |                               |                              |
|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Great Crested Grebe | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>  | Common Snipe                  | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>   |
| Great Cormorant     | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> | Green Sandpiper               | <i>Tringa ochropus</i>       |
| Grey Heron          | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>       | Common Sandpiper              | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>    |
| Little Egret        | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>    | Great Black-backed Gull       | <i>Larus marinus</i>         |
| Mute Swan           | <i>Cygnus olor</i>         | Herring Gull                  | <i>Larus argentatus</i>      |
| Whooper Swan        | <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>       | Lesser Black-backed Gull      | <i>Larus fuscus</i>          |
| Greylag Goose       | <i>Anser anser</i>         | Black-headed Gull             | <i>Larus ridibundus</i>      |
| Canada Goose        | <i>Branta canadensis</i>   | Wood Pigeon                   | <i>Columba palumbus</i>      |
| Barnacle Goose      | <i>Branta leucopsis</i>    | Collared Dove                 | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> |
| Common Shelduck     | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>     | Green Woodpecker              | <i>Picus viridis</i>         |
| Mandarin Duck       | <i>Aix galericulata</i>    | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (H) | <i>Dendrocopos minor</i>     |
| Eurasian Wigeon     | <i>Anas penelope</i>       | White Wagtail                 | <i>Motacilla a. alba</i>     |
| Gadwall             | <i>Anas strepera</i>       | Pied Wagtail                  | <i>Motacilla a. yarrelli</i> |
| (Green-winged) Teal | <i>Anas crecca</i>         | Grey Wagtail                  | <i>Motacilla cineria</i>     |
| Mallard             | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>  | Meadow Pipit                  | <i>Anthus pratensis</i>      |



|                             |                             |                       |                                    |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Northern Pintail            | <i>Anas acuta</i>           | Goldcrest             | <i>Regulus regulus</i>             |
| Northern Shoveler           | <i>Anas clypeata</i>        | (Winter) Wren         | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>     |
| Common Pochard              | <i>Aythya farina</i>        | Dunnock               | <i>Prunella modularis</i>          |
| Tufted Duck                 | <i>Aythya fuligula</i>      | Stonechat             | <i>Saxicola torquata</i>           |
| Red-breasted Merganser      | <i>Mergus serrator</i>      | Common Chiffchaff     | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>      |
| Marsh Harrier               | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>   | Eurasian Blackbird    | <i>Turdus merula</i>               |
| Hen Harrier (M&F)           | <i>Circus cyaneus</i>       | Fieldfare             | <i>Turdus pilaris</i>              |
| European Sparrowhawk        | <i>Accipiter nisus</i>      | Redwing               | <i>Turdus iliacus</i>              |
| Eurasian Buzzard            | <i>Buteo buteo</i>          | Song Thrush           | <i>Turdus philomelos</i>           |
| Eurasian Kestrel            | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>    | European Robin        | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>          |
| Ring-necked Pheasant        | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>  | Long-tailed Tit       | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>         |
| Water Rail                  | <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>     | Coal Tit              | <i>Periparus [Parus] ater</i>      |
| Common Moorhen              | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>  | Great Tit             | <i>Parus major</i>                 |
| Eurasian Coot               | <i>Fulica atra</i>          | Blue Tit              | <i>Cyanistes [Parus] caeruleus</i> |
| Eurasian Oystercatcher      | <i>Haematopus stralegus</i> | (Black-billed) Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i>                   |
| Northern Lapwing            | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>    | Eurasian Jay          | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>         |
| Eurasian Golden Plover      | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>  | Rook                  | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>           |
| Grey (Black-bellied) Plover | <i>Pluvialis quatarola</i>  | Carrion Crow          | <i>Corvus corone</i>               |
| Knot                        | <i>Calidris canutus</i>     | European Starling     | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>            |
| Black-tailed Godwit         | <i>Limosa limosa</i>        | House Sparrow         | <i>Passer domesticus</i>           |
| Eurasian Curlew             | <i>Numenius arquata</i>     | Chaffinch             | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>           |
| Common Redshank             | <i>Tringa totanus</i>       | European Greenfinch   | <i>Carduelis chloris</i>           |
| Sanderling                  | <i>Calidris alba</i>        | European Goldfinch    | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>         |
| Dunlin                      | <i>Calidris alpina</i>      | Yellowhammer          | <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>         |
| Ruff                        | <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>   | Reed Bunting          | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>        |



(Pied Flycatcher)

### **THE SOMERSET GATHERING – 27 JAN 05 (and a Flyer for 2006)**

**(Roger Dickey)**

The second Somerset Gathering followed shortly after the Norfolk weekend and before the Continuity AOS trip to France. This year included a visit to Cheddar Reservoir followed by a walk through Shapwick and Meare Heath, Ashcott Corner and Ham Wall and then on to Kennard Moor just south of Glastonbury. Cheddar is a vast concrete nearly circular basin and like its more natural neighbours of Chew Valley and Blagdon, will usually produce something out of the ordinary,

blown in from the nearby Somerset coast or sheltering off the Mendips. This was not to be one of those days though and we were left attempting to confirm the previous day's report of 1,673 Coot, considered to be an under-estimation. The heaths produced their usual variety of wetland, farmland and woodland birds with good views of Marsh Harrier, Water Rail, Peregrine, Siskin and Redpoll and a plethora of ducks. Luck was again out at Kennard Moor, which had boasted up to 9 Short-eared Owls for most of the winter. It was useful to top up the lists with Kingfisher, Stonechats, and Little Egrets, but the owls remained down in the rhynes and refused to budge. A list for the day is attached.

So what of the 2006 Gathering? Further changes are planned, based on a number of factors. As each year goes by, I know the birding sites a little better and can set a programme to account for weather and vagrants. There are local birders, who are only spoken of in hushed tones, who know the place a damned sight better and can be induced, with the fermented juice of the apple, to show us where the birds are. Bridgewater Bay and the Parrott Estuary bring tears to a birder's eye with their muddy expanses and especially, a strong easterly wind off the Bristol Channel – and despite numerous coastal hides, remain unexploited. And perhaps more importantly, the chef has told me that as numbers keep growing, it is dinner or breakfast but not both! So the plan is this.... In 2006 there will be 2 days of birding over the weekend 25/26 Feb including Blagdon and Chew Valley Lakes on Saturday, followed on Sunday by lowland coastline and estuary around Steart, the restricted entry RSPB reserve of West Sedgemoor and the Levels. Accommodation can be arranged with me in Keinton Mandeville and in local trusted B&Bs on Saturday night. A meal will be arranged in my local pub on Saturday night and a running breakfast on Sunday. Contact details are on the Expeditions Programme.

### **THE FRENCH EXPERIENCE – 25-27 Feb 05**

(Roger Dickey)

The ingredients were all there for 2005's weekend of extreme birding by Continuity AOS (CAOS), the most aptly abbreviated militant wing of our genteel birding society. Sub-zero temperatures with blizzards, a mini-bus with no heating and fuse box with more improvised melting silver paper than fuses, a 24 hour difference between intended and booked crossing dates, over-extended lines of communication ('twixt birds and bars) and two officers navigating, only one with benefit of a map.

The plan was to visit northeast France, particularly the lakes to the east of Paris, Fontainebleau Forest to the south, and finish on one of the coastal reserves. Le Lac



(Breakfast at 11am once the gas had thawed)



(Cranes flying out from the lake)

Du Der-Chantecoq is the northernmost of the Champagne lakes and its attraction is in the variety of habitats around its 4, 800 hectare shores. The target species here were Cranes and White-tailed

Eagle but with a chance of Rough-legged Buzzards and any of the European woodpeckers. Having driven all night, waking to the dawn calls from large skeins of Common Cranes was just reward. The lake hosts huge numbers of wildfowl including Bewick's Swans and Great Egret but it was views of Black Woodpecker and close views of 5 x Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers which were particularly memorable. A Common and Rough-legged Buzzard obligingly flew together allowing good comparisons but it wasn't until late in the day when the group managed to track down the last remaining juvenile White-tailed Eagle on the lake. Chris Furse from RNBWS sketched throughout and long after most of us had lost the use of our fingers to the cold.

Following a night in the cheap, functional, but surprisingly comfortable Formula 1 hotel in Nemours, the group embarked for the extensive woodlands of Fontainebleau. A total of 25 species was almost immediately started, as the group listened to Middle Spotted Woodpecker and then realised that we were between the territories of two pairs. The views were close and prolonged, justifying in the eyes of most, its vote as bird of the tour. Freezing weather did not promote too much avian activity and the group were fortunate to see Marsh and Willow Tits, and particularly, Crested Tits in typical coniferous habitat. Despite Bob Hayward alerting most of nearby Paris to the presence of a traumatised Firecrest, most of us welcomed the change from considerable numbers of Goldcrests. Great Spotted Woodpeckers were also common but only a fleeting glimpse of a Black Woodpecker completed the woodland total.

Thick snow and further blizzard conditions delayed the departure of our unheated mini-bus but did not prevent a rushed visit to the Reserve at Marquenterre [www.marcanterra.fr](http://www.marcanterra.fr) on the Somme estuary. This site is worth looking at again for those visiting the northern coast of France, especially in autumn, and is only 90 minutes from Calais. 250 hectares of fresh and brackish lagoons, sand-dunes, water-meadow, marsh, reedbeds and pinewood produce vast numbers of duck and waders but is best visited on a rising tide!

The mini-bus died as we left the Eurotunnel train. With more of the engine in the back of the bus than under the bonnet and two happy but greasy RLC officers looking righteously smug, the journey was concluded in Aldershot. But not before, as is now tradition, the next year's venue is named. 2006 sees CAOS in the Rieselfelder near Munster for marshland, and the Sauerland for woodland birds, over the long weekend of 27 – 30 April. What could possibly go wrong?

Thanks go to all who took part especially Richard Seargent who booked and drove the mini-bus and Bob Hayward whose idea to compress 5 days into three, gave us so much fun, Geoff McMullen for being the woodpecker when we needed the Middle Spot and Mark Easterbrook for the recording to guarantee it.

Guide used for the area was: The Birdwatching Guide to France North of the Loire – J Crozier – Arlequin Press – 2003. Highly recommended with good maps and routes.

### **THE FRENCH EXPERIENCE – 25-27 FEB 05 – THE LISTS**

|                     | Le Lac Du Der Chantecoq | Fontainebleau Forest | Marquenterre Reserve |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Little Grebe        | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Great Crested Grebe | X                       |                      |                      |
| Cormorant           | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Cattle Egret        |                         |                      | X                    |
| Great Egret         | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Grey Heron          | X                       |                      | X                    |
| White Stork         |                         |                      | X                    |
| Mute Swan           | X                       |                      | X                    |

|                           | Le Lac Du Der Chantecoq | Fontainebleau Forest | Marquenterre Reserve |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Whooper Swan              |                         |                      | X                    |
| Bewick's Swan             | X                       |                      |                      |
| Greylag Goose             | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Shelduck                  |                         |                      | X                    |
| Mallard                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Gadwall                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Pintail                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Shoveler                  | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Wigeon                    | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Teal                      | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Pochard                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Tufted Duck               | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Goldeneye                 | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Smew                      | X                       |                      |                      |
| Goosander                 | X                       |                      |                      |
| Red-breasted Merganser    |                         |                      | X                    |
| White-tailed Eagle        | X                       |                      |                      |
| Red Kite                  | X                       |                      |                      |
| Hen Harrier               | X                       |                      |                      |
| Rough-legged Buzzard      | X                       |                      |                      |
| Common Buzzard            | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Sparrowhawk               |                         | X                    |                      |
| Kestrel                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Peregrine Falcon          | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Pheasant                  |                         | X                    |                      |
| Moorhen                   |                         |                      | X                    |
| Coot                      | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Common Crane              | X                       |                      |                      |
| Oystercatcher             |                         |                      | X                    |
| Lapwing                   |                         |                      | X                    |
| Curlew                    | X                       |                      |                      |
| Whimbrel                  | X                       |                      |                      |
| Black-headed Gull         |                         |                      | X                    |
| Herring Gull              | X                       |                      |                      |
| Common Gull               | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Yellow-legged Gull        |                         |                      | X                    |
| Woodpigeon                | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Collared Dove             | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Black Woodpecker          | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Green Woodpecker          | X                       |                      |                      |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker  |                         | X                    | X                    |
| Middle Spotted Woodpecker |                         | X                    |                      |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | X                       |                      |                      |
| Skylark                   | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Water Pipit               | X                       |                      |                      |
| Meadow Pipit              | X                       |                      | X                    |
| Grey Wagtail              |                         |                      | X                    |
| Pied Wagtail              | X                       |                      |                      |
| Wren                      | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Dunnock                   |                         |                      | X                    |
| Robin                     | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Wheatear                  | X                       |                      |                      |
| Stonechat                 | X                       |                      |                      |
| Song Thrush               | X                       |                      |                      |
| Redwing                   |                         | X                    |                      |
| Fieldfare                 | X                       |                      |                      |
| Blackbird                 | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Goldcrest                 | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Firecrest                 |                         | X                    |                      |

|                 | Le Lac Du Der Chantecoq | Fontainebleau Forest | Marquenterre Reserve |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Great Tit       | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Blue Tit        | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Crested Tit     |                         | X                    |                      |
| Willow Tit      | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Marsh Tit       |                         | X                    |                      |
| Long-tailed Tit | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Nuthatch        | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Treecreeper     |                         | X                    |                      |
| Magpie          | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Jay             | X                       | X                    |                      |
| Rook            |                         |                      | X                    |
| Carrion Crow    | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Starling        | X                       |                      | X                    |
| House Sparrow   | X                       |                      |                      |
| Tree Sparrow    | X                       |                      |                      |
| Chaffinch       | X                       | X                    | X                    |
| Brambling       | X                       |                      |                      |
| Greenfinch      | X                       |                      |                      |
| Bullfinch       |                         |                      | X                    |
| Reed Bunting    | X                       |                      |                      |
| Yellowhammer    | X                       |                      |                      |

Occasional sightings on route while everyone else slept, and in the tunnel, have been omitted.

### **EXERCISE WESTERN TANAGER IN WESTERN CANADA (14-28 May 2005)**

(Tim Cowley)

Introduction. WESTERN TANAGER was the brainchild of Tim Cowley (TC) and Richard Seargent in 2003. Both had previously exercised at the British Army Training Unit Suffield in south-east Alberta and when, in 2003, TC was fortunate enough to be posted there for 30 months, it provided the convenient means to organise an AOS lead expedition. Unfortunately due to work commitments Richard was unable to take part in the exercise. Apart from being an opportunity for the AOS to explore a region of the world that few of its members appeared to have explored before, WESTERN TANAGER was important for TC for another reason, it was the first valuable chance that had presented itself for him to organise an expedition since being kidnapped in 1995, whilst carrying out a recce for an abandoned 1996 AOS expedition to Colombia, South America. The expedition was always going to be difficult and require both dedication and a sense of humour. This was due to the time required at each site and the distances between locations that were of most interest to birds. This forced the team to purchase food on the move and to use commercial accommodation or TC's quarter. Camping and self-catering were not practical options for a two week expedition of this kind.

Aim. The aim of the expedition was to break new ground for the AOS by visiting an area of North America that few had visited previously, with the challenge of visiting as many of the available habitats as possible in a two week period.





### Expedition Team

Lt Col Roger Dickey (RD)

Maj Andy Bray (AB)

Maj Hilary Nash (HN)

Capt Tim Cowley (TC)

Exped Leader

Dave Pentelow (DP)

WO1 Pete Amphlett (PA)

WO1 Norman Trigg (NT)

WO2 Mark Easterbrook (ME)

### **DAY 1 – 14 May 2005 (Calgary to Salmon Arm, via Banff and Lake Louise)**

TC met the remainder of the team at Calgary Airport on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2005 and then immediately embarked on the start of a 7,375 km journey. The aim of the first day was to head west along Route 1 to Salmon Arm in the Rockies, with a few detours on the way to look for mountain species. It is almost inevitable in foreign countries that the first day will produce a reasonable list of new or interesting species but this day produced some real surprises!

We had not travelled far from the city of Calgary before TC started to point out some of the features. As we approached the Jumping Pound junction, TC mentioned that just beyond the junction there was a small pond which was a good site for Trumpeter Swans in spring. Passing under the road, we were able to then look back at the pond, where to our surprise there were 4 swans! Pulling over on to the hard shoulder, we were able to confirm that the birds were 4, very late, immature Trumpeters on their flight north. Scanning the small pond we were able to find amongst some of the familiar wildfowl many of the North American ducks: American Wigeon,



Blue-winged Teals, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked ducks, Canvasbacks, Common Goldeneye, Barrow's Goldeneye and Buffleheads. Amongst the ducks there were also several Eared and Horned Grebes, as well as 8 Wilson's Phalaropes gently picking insects from the pond's surface.

A few miles further along Route 1 we took our first detour, along Sibbald Creek. Sibbald Creek is a quiet road about 40 kms long, partly metalled and partly graded track. At the junction we found yet

more wildfowl on another small pond and our first Redheads and Red-winged Blackbirds. Heading south, then west, we scanned the fences and tree tops as we drove, quickly finding Mountain Bluebirds, American Kestrels, Tree Swallows and a Grey Jay. A Red-naped Sapsucker darting into a bush brought about a short stop, which also produced a male Myrtle subspecies of the Yellow-rumped Warbler. Before reaching the end of the track we had also added Great Blue Heron, Osprey and Common Merganser to our list. We had also found our first mammal species: Hoary Marmot and Common Muskrat.

We joined Route 1 for one junction and then turned onto the Route 1A. At Seebe the Bow River is dammed and just above the dam we found an unexpected Western Grebe. A few miles further on we came to the small community of Exshaw, well known amongst local birdwatchers as a winter site for Grey-crowned Rosy-Finches. Not that we expected to see these high altitude finches in May but the garden bird-tables are always worth checking and we were rewarded with our first hummingbird for the expedition, a female Rufous Hummingbird. Exshaw is dominated by a large industrial plant, which spoils the view as you enter the Rockies but the wildlife appears to have accepted the human presence and on a nearby pool we found a Belted Kingfisher and Red-necked Grebes. Within a kilometre of the site we also found a group of more than 30 Bighorn Sheep grazing by the roadside.

With the afternoon passing quickly we pressed on to Harvey Heights, close to Canmore and the entrance to the Banff National Park. Harvey Heights is a great place for looking for tolerant mountain species, which can be found in the gardens of this tiny community set in woodland, especially in winter. The heights did not let us down and we had good views of Pine Siskins, Dark-eyed Juncos, a brilliant male Rufous Hummingbird, American Robins, American Crows, a Hairy Woodpecker, Brown-headed Cowbirds and a male Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler. We were also scolded by a very angry Red Squirrel.

We entered the Banff National Park and headed towards Lake Louise, via Routes 1 and 1A, with another detour to Minniwanka Lake, where we saw summer plumaged Common Loon and Northern Diver! En route we saw White-tailed Deer and 2 Northern Harlequin Ducks. The real stars were 7 Harlequin Ducks on the Bow River between Highway 93 and Lake Louise.



Park and Route detour to our first or Great several Flickers but Ducks on 93 and

At Lake Louise we looked for the Nutcrackers that are normally picked up easily in the car park but not this day. The team moved to the front of the hotel, in the hope that they may be on the lawns without success. We took the track that follows the lake shore and we could hear a distant Northern Pygmy-Owl and the eerie calls of Varied Thrushes but no nutcrackers. To our surprise we found 2 Common Porcupines on the hotel lawns and, the greatest surprise of all, a Northern Hawk Owl perched at the top of a tall conifer next to the hotel. As we watched the owl we heard news of a female Grizzly Bear and her two cubs not too far away. Within a few minutes we had joined about a dozen people, treated to the sight of the mother bear and her 2 three-year old cubs searching for food in a mountain meadow.

Clark's

As the light faded we grabbed a snack and continued our journey into the early hours of the morning. While the co-driver, ME, snored his way to Salmon Arm, RD kept TC amused from the back seats.

## **DAY 2 – 15 May 2005 (Salmon Arm to Vancouver Island)**

The real aim of Day 2 was to get to Victoria on Vancouver Island. But not before checking out Shuswap Lake at Salmon Arm. In August 2003, TC had seen a Clark's Grebe at Salmon Arm and wanted to see if another bird could be found. Clark's Grebe is a scarce bird in Western Canada.

In spite of the late night, everyone was up early and keen to get on with the birding. At the lake we could see that there were more than 150 large grebes, but in the nearest 3 birds we could see that there was a Clark's Grebe with 2 Western Grebes. The birds were so close to each other that we could compare the two species side-by-side. This large lake, with a flotilla of house boats, is a good spot to stopover and we were able to enjoy many species in the early morning sun, including 8 Bald Eagles, 4 Ospreys, a Red-tailed Hawk, 2 Pied-billed Grebes, 4 Wood Ducks, a Cinnamon Teal, American Coots, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gulls, Violet-green Swallows and various blackbirds (Red-winged, Yellow-headed and Brewer's).

Continuing on Route 1 we headed through the Rockies to Hope and then across the coastal plain to the Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal, pausing only briefly for the odd bird, petrol or food. We did manage to get good views of a group Turkey Vultures moving along a ridge and several smaller birds, including Western Kingbird, Yellow Warbler and Song Sparrow.

At the ferry terminal we had about 30 minutes to check out the shoreline and bays created by the causeway to the terminal. Glaucous-winged Gulls were scavenging around the terminal and perched on the street lights. Along the shoreline we could see more than 500 Great Blue Herons and amongst the flocks of birds on the water we could pick out 200 plus Surf Scoters, several White-winged Scoters, a single Black Scoter, a Greater Scaup, several Buffleheads, a Pacific Loon, 2 Common Loons and several grebes, while a White-crowned Sparrow hopped between the boulders where we sat. Once we had boarded the ferry a Black Oystercatcher was also found.

The ferry departed the terminal and headed out across the Straits of Georgia. As it did so the wind and rain turned against us. In spite of the weather we saw some great birds with over 360 Pacific Loons (which resemble pale headed Black-throated Divers), several Pelagic Cormorants, 3 Greater Scaup and 2 large California Sea Lions before we entered the narrow passage between the coastal islands, known as Active Pass. The turbulence of the tides in this narrow pass makes it a good place for auks and marine mammals. Dotted on the rocks or swimming in the sea we found more than 30 Harbour Seals. In the water were about 15 Pigeon Guillemots, 2 Common Murre, more than 20 Rhinoceros Auklets and 6 Mew Gulls. We also encountered our first definite North-Western Crows, which live along this part of the Pacific Coast, and 3 more majestic Bald Eagles.



Once off the ferry we headed south towards Victoria, choosing not to pursue a local rarity en route, the Eurasian Skylark. Instead, we used the remaining light to look for Anna's Hummingbirds at Swan Lake. Swan Lake is a pretty, little park that would be a good place for a short visit. We found a mixture of water and woodland birds, including Green-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, American Wigeon, Cedar Waxwings, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ravens, Swallows (Barn, Tree and Violet-green), 2 superb male Common Yellowthroats, Spotted Towhees, a pair of shy Black-headed



Grosbeaks, a Western Wood-peewee, four Marsh Wrens, a Bewick's Wren and 3 Anna's Hummingbirds, including a stunning male that posed and glistened in the setting sun.

### **DAY 3 – 16 May 2005 (Victoria and Duncan environs)**

The day started badly with drizzle as we walked the harbour wall at Ogden Point at 0650 hrs. A few birds had not been put off by the conditions and we had good views of Black Oystercatcher, Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, Rhinoceros Auklets and Glaucous-winged Gulls. Unfortunately no Wandering Tattler, which this location does turn up with some regularity.

We moved on to the nearby Clover Point, but the rain only got worse. Clover Point had most of the species that we had seen at Ogden Point, but in greater numbers, plus a Marbled Murrelet, several ducks (including at least 4 Harlequin Ducks, 30 Surf Scoters, a White-winged Scoter and 2 Mallards), 8 North-Western Crows and 4 wet little Savannah Sparrows. Soaking wet, we moved on.

On the way around the coast we stopped briefly and found a *streptopelia* dove species perched on a telephone wire. It looked and acted like a Eurasian Collared Dove, which is exactly what we thought the bird was and we moved on. It was not until we spoke to local birder Derrick Marvin in Duncan that we discovered that this species is a major rarity for the Island. Unfortunately no one had taken any detailed notes of the bird that could definitely rule out a Barbary Dove, which is also a major rarity for the Island.

After a café stop to dry out and warm up, we arrived at one of Victoria's highest points and a natural migrant spot, Mount Tolmie. Within minutes of our arrival, we found a flock of more than 21 Western Tanagers passing through the trees at the top of the hill and we were able to get great views of the handsome males with their smart black, yellow and red plumage. A male Cooper's Hawk also performed an aerial courtship display over the neighbouring gardens. We explored the narrow tracks that circle the top of the hill, passing through lightly wooded and open areas. This proved to be an excellent spot for small birds with 2 more Anna's Hummingbird, a Brown Creeper, several Warblers (Orange-crowned, Townsend's, Wilson's, Yellow), 4 Chestnut-backed Chickadees, 2 Bushtits, several Sparrows (Chipping, Golden-crowned) and several other species already seen at Swan Lake.

The weather improved as it approached midday at Mount Tolmie and we moved to the coast again to look for Hooded Merganser. Esquimalt is an attractive spot, the road running between a long beach and large lagoon. This is a good spot for the introduced Mute Swans, with more than 10 present. Amongst more than 100 roosting Glaucous-winged Gulls were 9 Caspian Terns. On the sea 8 Red-breasted Mergansers bobbed up and down but unfortunately the Hooded Mergansers had eluded the team again.

We turned our backs on Victoria and headed north towards Duncan and our rendezvous with local birder and expatriate Derrick Marvin. En route we stopped over at the Goldstream Provincial Park to look for American Dipper and Stellar's Jay. The former was found on the stream next to the car park however the latter required a walk to the Visitor's Centre, which caused a delay but the opportunity to see other birds including 2 Red-breasted Sapsuckers, several Winter Wrens, a

Swainson's Thrush, a California Quail, a Purple Finch and, for some lucky observers, a Pileated Woodpecker.



In Duncan, we met up with Derrick at Tim Horton's, a coffee and doughnut café chain that became a firm

favourite with the team! Derrick had agreed to take the team to two of his local spots: Hillcrest Road and Curry Creek Road. These are wooded areas dissected by tracks and power-lines, which provide access and borders. We spent a couple of hours at Hillcrest Road using Derrick's invaluable knowledge of local bird calls and the area to track down Band-tailed Pigeon, Hammond's Flycatcher and MacGillivray's Warblers. At Curry Creek Road we were able to get good views of Olive-sided Flycatcher, along with American Goldfinch, Northern Flicker and another Red-breasted Sapsucker.

#### **DAY 4 – 17 May 2005 (Duncan to Tofino and the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve)**

We returned to Curry Creek Road, without Derrick, at 0610hrs on a cold morning to look for Pacific-slope Flycatcher and Black-throated Grey Warbler. We heard at least one of the former but were unable to find the bird hiding deep in the wood. We were also able to hear Ruffed Grouse displaying but these too proved difficult for most of the group to see, never mind identify. As the sun slowly started to break through, we found an adult Great Horned Owl and large owl roosting close to the edge of a woodland block, which gave everyone great views of these large and impressive owls.

At 0900hrs we moved back to Hillcrest Road but the flycatcher and warbler still proved impossible, although we did find 9 Band-tailed Pigeons, 2 Rufous Hummingbirds, a Red-tailed Hawk, a Black-headed Grosbeak and 2 chipmunks.

After an hour we departed and headed for Tofino mid way up the west coast of the Island. The route took us through forests and over mountains before passing over the ridge and down towards the Pacific Coast. A Sharp-shinned Hawk put in a brief appearance; we also saw 2 Bald Eagles, several Turkey Vultures and DP caught a glimpse of Northern Pygmy-Owl, which moved on when we braked.

We arrived at the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve at about 1630hrs - in the rain - and headed for Wickaninnish, where a Yellow-billed Loon had been reported and where we hoped to see some migrating seabirds. We were able to definitely identify 30 plus Pacific Loons and 4 Common Loons. A large loon with a bold chequer-board back was found but its bill could not be seen at all against the sea in the poor light, perhaps indicating that it was the rare visitor as we could see the dark bills of the 4 Common Loons. Regardless, we concentrated on those birds that we could see well and watched a trickle of more than 60 Sooty Shearwaters, mostly heading north, along with a Sabine's Gull, 25 plus Common Murre, 3 Pigeon Guillemots, 8 Marbled Murrelets and 2 Rhinoceros Auklets. Closer inshore we watched a Red-necked Grebe, several Pelagic Cormorants, at least 25 White-winged Scoters, 2 Black Scoters, a Surf Scoter, a Harlequin Duck and a Sea Lion. While on the beach were 4 North-Western Crows, 2 Black Oystercatchers, our first Western Gull amongst the numerous Glaucous-winged Gulls and a flock of 80 plus Sanderling containing 9 Dunlin.



A brief stop at Grice Bay proved disappointing with a single Spotted Sandpiper. We then visited Radar Hill, on the advice of Derrick Marven, to look for Blue Grouse. When we arrived at the small hill, only 126 metres above sea level, close to the sea it looked like an unlikely spot to see this bird but it proved to be successful and we located a female on the hillside above the first car park. The bird was



quite tame and slowly walked within a few meters of the group.

Our final stop was at Chesterman Beach, just south of Tofino. This sandy beach backed by woodland and gardens can be good for migrating shorebirds. On this occasion the beach was quiet, with a small flock of Sanderlings and 2 Semi-palmated Plovers, however overhead an immature Bald Eagle chased an Osprey and two Caspian Terns patrolled the edge of an offshore island. In the woodland and gardens nearby we find a Stellar's Jay and a Fox Sparrow that did not mind the rain.

#### **DAY 5 – 18 May 2005 (Tofino pelagic and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve)**

The one chance for the team to have a lie in, as we did not have to be at the jetty to meet our pelagic boat until 0800hrs. To our disappointment it was still raining and when we reached the public jetty and met local birders George Bradd and Adrian Dorst it looked doubtful that we would ever get onboard our boat. After about an hour's delay the Captain of the boat eventually decided to take the trip, as the sea swell appeared to have stabilised at about 2 metres. The delay had not been a total disaster as we had good views of a Bonaparte's Gull and 2 Western Gulls roosting with the 40 plus Glaucous-wings. We also spotted a Lapland Longspur (Bunting), which was a lifer for international birder George Bradd.

We boarded the boat with  
of the top seabird watchers in the  
headed out of the harbour,  
4 Greater Scaup as we did so.  
the sanctuary of the inner harbour  
conditions worsened but we  
fortified by seasickness  
Soon 70 plus Sooty Shearwaters  
careering past the  
boat. A steady stream of Pacific  
Common Loons also flew past,  
dozens of auks preferred to flutter  
distance or to dive under the  
get out of our path. Some, like



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braving the cold, driving rain and strong winds out on deck, while most remained under cover in the warmth of the boat, with its large windows. After an hour or so the Captain announced that the sea swell was at 3.8 metres and that he was making the decision to return to more sheltered coastline, as we were obviously not going to ask him to turn back no matter how severe the weather conditions. This was a massive disappointment, as there was the potential to see whales and some exciting seabirds in this area, including albatrosses, but the weather was so severe that the birds would have to pass by very close, if we were going to see them. We turned towards the coast and navigated our way around several of the smaller islands and along the inlet. This proved to be a good alternative and we were rewarded with a Stellar's Sea Lion at the first island that we visited and 2 fantastic Wandering Tattlers at the second island, which was also home to a rare Sea Otter. We also saw 2 Harbour Seals and a Harbour Porpoise. On another large rocky island we found a small colony of Brandt's Cormorants and along the shoreline of the inlet a lonely Brandt Goose and 7 Whimbrel.

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Back at the jetty we met up with George Bradd again and he took us to his home, so that we could get access to the Tofino mudflats, which are well known as a shorebird migration spot. We were late in the season but still fortunate enough to find 11 Western Sandpipers and a Long-billed

Dowitcher, along with the more familiar Black-bellied (Grey) Plovers and Whimbrel, plus 4 Bald Eagles and Raccoon searching out crabs.

George had also agreed to show the group a spot where he had seen Wandering Tattlers recently and where we might get to see the birds from a steady base. We returned to Wickaninnish, only this time after a quick look at the offshore rocks and inshore waters we headed south through the tall, moss draped forest of conifers. We were lucky and saw two pairs of these great waders at different locations. We also found 3 Band-tailed Pigeon, a Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a Fox Sparrow and Banana Slugs *Ariolimax columbianus*, although for such great coniferous woodland the number of species was disappointing.

With the weather still drizzling, we headed for the Long Beach Sewage Lagoon, which consists of two small pools surrounded by forest. As we approached the lagoons, George warned the team that about fifty per cent of the time he encounters a Black Bear at this site and told us to be cautious. Sure enough the large old, jet black bear of the Vancouver Island subspecies (*U. a. vancouveri*) was in the corner of the first pool. The bear watched the group and we waited to see what he would do from a distance of about 40-50 metres. The bear sat for about ten minutes, then walked slowly into the forest, where we hoped he would remain until after we had gone. At the pool we were able to get good views of an Osprey at its nest, a Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal and another Stellar's Jay.



Time was getting on and we had to head back to Tofino, to see if we could locate a Pacific-slope Flycatcher. A brief stop at Tofino Airport produced a Killdeer and a Bald Eagle. George took the team to a narrow, inconspicuous track close to his home. The track lead through dense forest, with thick undergrowth and this time we were lucky to get the flycatcher calling and feeding high, silhouetted against the sky. Varied Thrushes were also calling all around us and we walked the track slowly but only those at the front of the group were lucky to grab a glimpse of this bird. An American Robin was also at this site.

#### **DAY 6 – 19 May 2005 (Tofino to the Okanagan Valley)**

An early morning start saw the team heading back across the Island to Nanaimo and back to the mainland. The rain did not abate for most of the journey, so we pressed on to Parksville, on the east coast of the island before we made our first stop. At Parksville we explored the Allsbrook Road/Little Mountain area and the Parksville Bay Community Park. At the former we found 3 Vaux's Swifts, a Rufous Hummingbird, 2 Chestnut-backed Chickadees and a Townsend's Warbler. At the park there were more than 20 Canada Geese, but no Cackling Goose that had wintered at the site, plus 8 Bonaparte's Gulls and more than 50 Glaucous-winged Gulls.

A short drive and we were at Duke Point Ferry Terminal, near Nanaimo, where we boarded the ferry back to Tsawwassen. The crossing from this terminal is less productive, as it does not travel through Active Pass, however the team found 3 Common Tern, along with several gulls, auks, cormorants and loons.

Once back on the mainland we headed for Boundary Bay, another site for shorebirds. There were relatively few shorebirds and those that were present were too far away to identify. A Marsh Wren

showed well and there were several swallow species (Barn, Tree and Northern Rough-winged), 5 Northern (Hen) Harriers and a terrapin species.

In the late afternoon we headed for the Rockies. At Hope, the western gateway to the mountains, we pulled over in to the Hunter Creek Rest Area, our last chance to find a Black-throated Grey Warbler, sadly we had to settle for a group of 20 plus Vaux's Swift and a Swainson's Thrush.

From Hope we took Route 3 to Osoyoos, concentrating on the road or resting, few birds were observed along this leg. A brown phase of the Black Bear and the Black-tailed race of the Mule Deer were seen close to the road. Just south of Keremos, and about 30 minutes from Osoyoos, we took the Nighthawk Road south towards the Canada/USA Border Point. In total darkness, with the windows down we drove the road, listening for a Nighthawk, as the name suggests. To our surprise the bird we actually heard was a Common Poorwill. The team debussed and we found the bird perched on a fence post by torchlight. Amazingly the bird remained on its perch and everyone was able to get a good view.

### **DAY 7 – 20 May 2005 (Okanagan Valley)**

An early start saw the team grabbing an early morning breakfast at Tim Horton's, where clearly the staff were more tired than the team but it was not long before we were birding Road 22, north of Osoyoos in the Okanagan Valley, an important wine producing area in Canada.

A scan of the grassy fields produced 7 superb displaying male Bobolinks, 4 Wilson's Snipe and many Savannah Sparrows. A walk south along the canal bank at this site, past fields, beaver ponds and marsh, produced some excellent birds, including: 6 Ospreys, an American Kestrel, 6 Wood Duck, 2 Ring-necked Duck, 5 California Quail, 13 Mourning Doves, 3 Cliff Swallows, a House Wren, 4 Marsh Wrens, 2 Western Kingbirds, an Eastern Kingbird, a Say's Phoebe, a Lark Sparrow and an American Beaver.

We then visited two other locations that are close by: the Ecological Reserve and Harold King's garden, which are home to several local species. At the former we were lucky to see at least one Canyon Wren, 2 Rock Wrens, 3 White-throated Swifts, 3 Western Bluebirds, 2 Lazuli Buntings, a Western Meadowlark and a stunning male Bullock's Oriole. At Harold's garden we saw a female Calliope Hummingbird, the smallest North American bird, and several Yellow-bellied Marmots.

The remainder of the morning we spent along Camp McKinney Road, which heads up into the forested hills on the eastern side of the valley. This road too is well known for localised species. Noteworthy birds at this site include a Long-billed Curlew, 2 fleeting Lewis' Woodpeckers, a Red-naped Sapsucker, 4 Grey Flycatchers, 2 Mountain Chickadees, 3 more Western Bluebirds, 2 Cassin's Finches and 2 Yellow-pine Chipmunks.

We continued north to Oliver, where we stopped at the northern end of River Road to watch a cracking male Black-chinned Hummingbird and a pair of Calliope Hummingbirds. Between Oliver and Okanagan Falls, along the shore of Vaseau Lake we found an immature Golden Eagle and another superb Bullock's Oriole. At Okanagan Falls we turned east again and drove up into the conifer covered hills along Shuttleworth Creek and up to an area known as Browning Creek. The area was fairly quiet for birds, with only a few woodland birds, including our first Ruby-crowned kinglet. It was however more productive for mammals and we saw a very obliging Coyote in the middle of the track, a Red Squirrel, a Colombian Ground-Squirrel and a White-tailed deer. On our way back down Shuttleworth Creek we stopped at an area of burnt forest and found 2 Hairy Woodpeckers, a Spotted Towhee and another Black Bear.

The team continued north of Okanagan Falls and then took the White Lake Road to 3 Gates Farm, which had been territory to a pair of Western Screech-Owls. Unfortunately the owls were not showing and we later discovered that the owls did not breed in 2005. This is also a great spot for hummingbirds and while we were there we were able to see four species within just a few metres: Anna's, Black-chinned, Calliope and Rufous. We also had good views of Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, Black-headed Grosbeak, House Finch, Western Tanager and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

In the late afternoon we headed south back to Osoyoos, stopping briefly at Vaseau Lake to hear Sora and to see a Golden Eagle and Yellow Warbler. We then tried another site for Western Screech-Owl until it was too dark to go anywhere other than bed.

### **DAY 8 – 21 May 2005 (Okanagan Valley to Waterton Lakes National Park)**

At 0530hrs we were already at Vaseau Lake, looking for rails. It was not to be, but we did see a pair of Bullock's Orioles, several Marsh Wrens, 3 Red-necked Grebes and a Common Loon. We quickly moved on and returned to Shuttleworth Creek, hoping that an early morning visit would be more productive and we were right. Within the first 2 kms we found 4 Clark's Nutcrackers and a Warbling Vireo. In the following 3 kms we found another Lark Sparrow and 2 Say's Phoebe at a ranch. At 12.5 kms from the main road there is a fork in the road and this proved to be a great place in the morning, with a male Williamson's Sapsucker, 3 Grey Jays, a Stellar's Jay, a Hammond's Flycatcher, 2 Black-capped Chickadees, an 'Oregon' Dark-eyed Junco and several warbler species (MacGillivray's, Orange-crowned and Audubon's Yellow-rumped). A little further up the hill we discovered another male Williamson's Sapsucker, a Pileated Woodpecker (heard), a Northern Flicker, 2 Downy Woodpeckers, a Dusky Flycatcher, a beautiful Cassin's Vireo, a Hermit Thrush, 2 Pine Siskins, and several warblers (including Townsend's).



Our last stop in the Okanagan before heading towards Waterton in Alberta was to explore the first 5 kms of the Camp McKinney Road again, in an attempt to relocate the Lewis' Woodpeckers. The woodpeckers could not be found this time but we did find a colony of more than 20 Bank Swallows and a family of 6 Great Horned Owls roosting in close proximity.

We wound our way east out of the Okanagan Valley along Route 3. Our first stop was at Mt Anarchist, where TC had recently seen a

Pygmy Nuthatch prospecting a nesting cavity amongst the pines but the bird had moved on. A number of birds were still at the site, despite the development that was going on, including a Red-naped Sapsucker, 2 Cassin's Finches and Vesper Sparrow. The latter is normally a grassland bird and this bird may have been lost.

58 kms east of Osoyoos the team found 2 Lewis' Woodpeckers, which have the unusual habitat for a woodpecker of fly catching, and this time everyone was able to see the birds well. 2 Clark's Nutcrackers were also at this spot.

10 kms east of Salmo a bird on a small roadside pond caught the driver's eye and at last we had found a male Hooded Merganser. The little pond also hosted 5 Barrow's Goldeneye, 3 Lesser Scaup and a Belted Kingfisher.

The team stopped briefly at Stagleap Provincial Park, at the top of the pass, for a team photograph, before descending towards Creston. TC was determined to try and find a Varied Thrush along this section of the road and eventually one was found, a male calling from the top of a tree. Telescopes were quickly unloaded and everyone was able to see the beautiful thrush out in the open. Only a few kilometres along the road we encountered another brown Black Bear. Probably 3 years old, it allowed us to drive within just a few metres of it, as it grazed on dandelions.

It was getting late in the day by the time we reached Cranbrook and probably the last chance that we would get to make a reasonable stop for a little birding and a meal. We stopped for a few minutes at Elizabeth Lake on the western side of the town and watched more than 30 Black Terns hawking over the marsh. On the open water were 2 Pied-billed Grebes, a Cinnamon Teal and 5 Ring-necked Ducks.

The journey from Cranbrook to Waterton took the team through the Crowsnest Pass, in ever fading light. The setting sun making the mountains look impenetrable and cold. Once past the Crowsnest Pass, we headed down into the foothills, until we reached Pincher Creek and turned south towards the Waterton Lakes National Park. A Short-eared Owl crossed the road in our headlights. A long legged, short tailed, short eared mammal also crossed the road and was quite likely a Bobcat. It was well into the early hours of the morning by the time that we reached Waterton, where we came across a Red Fox cruising the empty footpaths, and it was straight to bed to grab a few hours sleep.

#### **DAY 9 – 22 May 2005 (Waterton Lakes National Park to Ralston (BATUS))**

Dawn at the Marquis Hole in Waterton Lakes National Park, east of the Rockies, was cold and windy. As a result the only birds that we could hear were Red-eyed Vireo, Chipping Sparrow and Ruffed Grouse, although none showed themselves. We quickly moved on to the Hay Barn but the conditions were no better and we moved on to the Maskinonge viewpoint. At the lake there were ducks keeping tight to the shore, Black Terns being tossed around in the air, while on the far side of the lake 2 Sandhill Cranes and a shy Moose provided the real excitement.

With the weather so poor in the exposed areas, the team headed up into the mountains to Cameron Lake, getting good views of a Merlin as we drove past the Bear's Hump and up the Akamina Parkway. At Cameron Lake it was raining and cold. Half of the group stayed around the lake car park, the other half followed TC up a kilometre or two of the Summit Lake Trail. Few birds were active but the views of 4 Varied Thrushes, a Grey Jay, several Winter Wrens and at least one Chestnut-backed Chickadee (a local Alberta species) were worth the extra effort.

We returned to Waterton for a late breakfast, packed and headed, in better weather, to the Red Rock Canyon. This is a good sight for Townsend's Solitaire but not this time. We did see several good Alberta species including Cassin's Finch, Townsend's Warbler, Stellar's Jay, a few observers saw a Boreal Chickadee and we also saw a Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrel.

The last stop was to return to the Waterton townsite and Cameron Falls area. Close to the falls we found a further 8 Cassin's Finches, 3 Pine Siskins and a Red-naped Sapsucker. As we departed Waterton and passed the impressive Prince of Wales Hotel, 2 Vaux's Swift flew over Linnet Lake. Waterton is the only known breeding site for this species in Alberta.

The team headed north-east on Route 5 towards Mountain View and then on to Stirling. We had only just crossed the boundary of the Waterton Lakes National Park, when a Red-tailed Hawk chased a smaller Broad-winged Hawk across the road.



Soon after we pulled off the highway and explored the tracks around Mountain View for Bobolinks, which can be quite close to the road at this site but none were found. The small ponds, however, held a Barrow's Goldeneye, Cinnamon Teals, and Red-necked Grebes. Between Mountain View and Cardston we encountered our first Swainson's Hawk of the expedition.



At Stirling we visited the lake. It was so windy at this prairie lake that the team had to shelter by the side of the viewing platform but the birding was worth it, with 3 species of gull, 8 species of waders and 11 species of waterfowl, including: Franklin's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Willet, Marbled Godwit, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Ruddy Duck and Northern Pintail.

From Stirling we continued our way north-east to Taber, where there is a large lake visible from the

highway. A short track leads to a point which overlooks a small island used by American White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, gulls (California, Franklin's and Ring-billed) for breeding. The lake was alive with birds, Common and Black Terns quartered over the heads of Western, Red-necked and Eared Grebes, and wide variety of ducks, including a female Hooded Merganser.

From Taber we took the Route 3 almost to Bow Island before turning north on to Route 879. This quiet back road produced a small group of Pronghorn, an antelope and the second fastest land mammal in the world, and close to the river a male Baltimore Oriole flashed across the road. At Route 524, we turned east and every one was able to get a good view of a Vesper Sparrow and a sought after Burrowing Owl, before finally turning north again and following a dirt track to Suffield, then on to TC's quarter in Ralston for the night.

### **DAY 10 – 23 May 2005 (Brooks environs and Dinosaur Provincial Park)**

Another early start and a few minutes birding around TC's quarter, which has a garden list of 115 species, produced a Least Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Mourning Dove, Pine Siskins and an unexpected Red-naped Sapsucker. The latter a garden first for TC.

One of the area's top local birders, Ben Velner, joined the team and we departed west along Route 1 towards Tillebrook, a wooded campsite and a bird magnet in the middle of the open prairie. On the way we saw a pair of Loggerhead Shrikes that were nesting close to Ralston, 2 Chestnut-collared Longspurs, a Coyote and a rather unexpected bird, a late Rough-legged Hawk perched on a telegraph pole.

At Tillebrook the team met more of Alberta's birdwatchers, who had held their Big Bird Day in the area the day before. Small birds were flitting through almost every tree from tiny Ruby-crowned Kinglets and warblers (Tennessee, Yellow and Yellow-rumped), to Baltimore Orioles, secretive Grey Catbirds and Brown Thrashers. On the ground Common Grackles, Mourning Doves, Swainson's Thrushes, Chipping and Clay-coloured Sparrows searched for food. Close to the entrance to the site Ben found another unexpected bird, a Townsend's Solitaire, which we had missed at Waterton.

From Tillebrook we moved on to Inter Lake, by the side of the west bound carriageway at Brooks. This small pond held some great birds with 4 species of tern (Black, Caspian, Common and Forster's), 7 species of duck (including 2 male Hooded Mergansers and 7 Bufflehead) and 3 species of grebe (Eared, Red-necked and Western).

Driving the short distance south from Brooks to Kinbrook Island Provincial Park we passed the nest of a Ferruginous Hawk, with two adults present. At Kinbrook we searched the campsite trees, headed out part way along the causeway and covered the marsh area, finding 47 species including 2

gulls, 2 terns, 3 grebes (inc Horned), 7 waterfowl, American Coots, 3 flycatchers, 5 warblers (inc Blackpoll and Wilson's), 6 sparrows (inc Lincoln's), Grey Catbird, Baltimore Oriole and Western Tanager.

We then headed towards the south end of Newell Lake, with Black-necked Stilt and Wilson's Phalaropes en route. At Lake Newell we found a local speciality migrant, 12 Red knot accompanied by more than 100 Black-bellied Plovers.

The next stop was the lake at Kitzum and the neighbouring lakes west of Highway 36. At Kitzum there was a single flock of over 1,500 Black-bellied Plovers, which contained another 61 Red Knot and a Ruddy Turnstone. Also at Ferruginous Hawk, Northern Wilson's Phalaropes, Spotted Willets, a Killdeer and two very American Bitterns, either courting. As we arrived at the western ponds and light started to deteriorate. In we still managed to find some birds, including 2 Black-crowned 6 waterfowl, 9 waders (inc Baird's Least Sandpiper, and a Dowitcher Bonaparte's Gulls and a White-Rabbit.



the site a Harrier, Sandpipers, visible or fighting. the weather spite of this interesting Night-Heron, Sandpiper, sp), 3 tailed Jack-

In the late afternoon the team headed north past Duchess to the Dinosaur Provincial Park (DPP), finding 2 Long-billed Curlews at the Duchess Dam. DPP is an important site for dinosaur remains, for which it has been declared a World Heritage Site, and a great example of the North American Badlands. On this occasion we concentrated our efforts on the campsite area Cottonwood trees, which can be good for migrants. The poor weather had affected the passage and there were few birds apart from the sparrows (Chipping, Clay-coloured, House, Lark and Vesper) and one of the local specialities that we could hear, a Rock Wren. It was not until we had departed the park and were heading back towards Patricia that we saw one of the more spectacular local birds, 2 Prairie Falcons hunting over the fields.

Continuing to Highway 884 and then south towards Suffield Base and Ralston, the team pulled over on to a deserted track on TC's patch and found a male McCown's Longspur amongst the Chestnut-collared Longspurs, Vesper Sparrows and Horned Larks. Just north of the Base another Prairie Falcon flew across the road and circled briefly before disappearing.



## **DAY 11 – 24 May 2005 (Manyberries, Pokowki and Suffield)**

In the early morning the team met up with Ben Velner again and went south of Medicine Hat to the Manyberries area, where some of the best patches of Alberta prairie remain. As soon as we arrived at the area we found Pronghorns and an American Badger. Our goal was to find a Sage Grouse, which was always going to be difficult as there are few and the leks were over. We found several of the other local birds as we drove closer to a traditional lek site, including displaying Sharp-tailed Grouse, Ferruginous Hawks, Marbled Godwits, Willet, Sprague's Pipit and Mountain Bluebirds. At the site we were surprised by the good number of Brewer's Sparrows in the area, another local species, and, as if to order, four large male Sage Grouse flew into the lek site. The birds remained for a few minutes, then flew towards the vehicles, before doubling back and flying away from us. Once again our luck had held out and we had been treated to a fantastic sight of these magnificent birds. With so much success it was time to move on to another important local site, Pokowki Lake.

En route to Pokowki we found a Loggerhead Shrike close to the road, as well as 3 Great Horned Owls and 3 more Ferruginous Hawks. At Pokowki the weather was windy and cold. The low water levels had concentrated the waterfowl and some of the waders quite close to Highway 885. Soras could be heard on both sides of the highway but only one showed itself. A White-faced Ibis flew in from the west but dropped out of sight before everyone could get on to it and despite our efforts it could not be relocated. A more obliging Forster's Tern crossed the highway several times and gave good views of its wing plumage. The team moved to the reservoir and marsh to the west and found better numbers of waders, including Semi-palmated Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plovers, a Short-billed Dowitcher amongst a group of Dowitchers sps, a Dunlin which is a local rarity, Semi-palmated Plovers and American Avocets. The team also found several gulls, Black Terns, blackbirds, an American Bittern and a Black-crowned Night-Heron.

In the late afternoon the team returned to Medicine Hat and then on to the sewage lagoon at Suffield village. This little site is often good for close views of common species and a regular site for migrating American (Buff-bellied) Pipit. Unfortunately only DP was able to get on to the expedition's only American Pipit. The remainder had to make do with several duck species, blackbirds, Killdeer, Marsh Wren, Sora and Savannah Sparrows.

## **DAY 12 – 25 May 2005 (Medicine Hat environs and Cypress Hills)**

Another early morning meeting with Ben Velner and a dawn chorus at Police Point Park in the city of Medicine Hat. This is probably the most watched area in the region and visited almost daily by Ben. The group spent quite a long time trying to glimpse a Yellow-breasted Chat and although two were heard, neither bird was prepared to come out of the dense bushes. Later in the morning an early Common Nighthawk flew over the park. Of the 52 species that we found at the site in a couple hours, the highlights included: American White Pelicans, 4 tern species (Black, Caspian, Common and Forster's), a Broad-winged Hawk mobbing a Great Horned Owl, 28 Cedar Waxwing, 3 Baltimore Orioles, House Wrens, Least flycatchers and 2 White-tailed Deer.

Ben bid farewell to the team and we moved on to the West Ridge in Medicine Hat. Recent tree clearance at the site had removed the trees formerly used by a Provincial rarity, the Indigo Bunting. Sadly the birds could not be located. The few birds that were found included a Lazuli Bunting, 2 House Finches, a Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

The latter part of the morning and early afternoon were spent in the Alberta part of the Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, an unglaciated plateau of boreal foothills surrounded by grassland, less than one hour from Medicine Hat. By now many in the team were starting to feel the accumulative

effect of sleep deprivation and the pace started to slow after ME started enquiring about ebay details to auction his telescope and tripod. As a result we concentrated on the main sites in the park. The two lakes, Elkwater Lake and Reesor Reservoir, produced most of the commoner duck and gull species, as well as Common Loon, Ospreys, Double-crested Cormorants and American White Pelicans. 5 Mountain Bluebirds were found close to the nest boxes along the road between the two lakes. The campsite beyond Reesor Reservoir held several passerine species, including a pair of American Redstarts, at least 2 'Pink-sided' Dark-eyed Juncos, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 3 Black-capped Chickadees and 3 Pine Siskins.

It was late afternoon by the time the team arrived at Medicine Hat's Sparrow Trail, as it is known locally and on the internet, on the outskirts of the city. This dirt track through farmland and various grass types has produced more than 10 species of sparrows in a single day for some lucky observers. Early morning would have been ideal but there are only so many mornings in a two week expedition. On this trip we found 5 species of sparrow including the local Grasshopper Sparrow, plus Brewer's, Clay-coloured, Savannah and Vesper. 2 Grey Partridges were also at the site.

The team headed back to Ralston via the Spring Box Road, which forms the southern boundary of the Suffield Training Area. Many sparrows, larks and longspurs could be seen along the fence wires and tracks. A pair of Ferruginous Hawks nesting close to the road gave good views and 3 Common Nighthawks gave poor views from the rear as they flew north-west.

The final stop of the day was a return visit to the Burrowing Owl nest site on Highway 524, south of Suffield. One bird was out in the open, allowing everyone the time to have a good look at this great little owl.

### **DAY 13 – 26 May 2005 (Ralston to Cold Lake)**

An early departure from Ralston saw the team, less PA who returned to Germany, heading virtually 300 miles due north to Cold Lake. The drive produced a good variety of species from the roadside, with many ducks, waders, hawks, Northern Harriers, Raven, American Crows, Black-billed Magpies, swallows, larks, sparrows, blackbirds, cowbirds, meadowlarks, Pronghorns and Mule Deer. Highlights included several Sharp-tailed Grouse, a Loggerhead Shrike and 4 Upland Sandpipers.

Three stops en route, at Gooseberry junction of Highways 41/600 and some excellent waders. More than were at Gooseberry Lake, a large between Consort and Czar. This plus Semi-palmated Sandpipers, Baird's Sandpiper, 100 plus which most were Wilson's but at Red-necked, 50 plus American 5 Pectoral Sandpipers. At the Highways 41 and 600 the alkaline covered in more than 1,000 Red-necked Phalaropes, with several sandpipers along the shoreline (2 Baird's, 1 Least, 8 Pectoral and 2 Semi-palmated).



Lake, the Czar, produced 4,000 waders alkaline lake included 2,000 1,000 plus phalaropes of least 5 were Avocets, at least junction of lake was

The team arrived at Cold Lake mid afternoon and met local birder, Ted Hindmarch, who took the team straight to the town's small beach, to check the gull flock. Amongst the Ring-billed Gulls, an



Immature American Herring Gull and, in the nearby gardens, 7 Purple Martins at a purpose built nest box.

We then moved west, stopping at the Twp Road 634 marsh and finding a Sora and Cooper's Hawk. Continuing west along Highway 55 we passed through Rat Lake Flats, picking up 14 Sandhill Cranes and 6 Greater White-fronted Geese. Around La Corey and Crane Lake area we visited several gardens. The first gave the team close views of a nesting Pileated Woodpecker and our first White-throated Sparrow. The second produced even more new birds with 3 totally unexpected Harris Sparrows, a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird and a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak. From the garden we could view a flock of waders, containing 8 American Golden Plover, 2 Semi-palmated Plover, a Killdeer, 2 Least Sandpipers and more than 20 Semi-palmated Sandpipers. The third garden had been a good site for Evening Grosbeaks but not this time, however, the team did get good views of a White-breasted Nuthatch, another White-throated Sparrow and more than 20 Chipping Sparrows.



The late afternoon was spent around Ethel Lake and the Primrose Highway. The fen at Ethel Lake is a well known local site for Yellow Rail, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Le Conte's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow and Sedge Wren. Nelson's and Le Conte's Sparrows were seen well, as was a Sandhill Crane. A Sedge Wren was heard calling but could not be located. The Yellow Rails could be heard from at least 3 positions, two of which were within a few metres of the road. These birds call from an open area of the marsh, covered by an aquatic grass that lies close to the surface of the shallow water. A habitat that you would imagine should be relatively easy to see any bird as it moves around. Of course this is not the case, the Yellow Rail is an easy bird to hear and narrow down to one or two square meters of grass but the birds are well concealed and apparently able to move without disturbing the grass at all. TC watched the group with amusement, he had pursued a bird for 90 minutes in a tiny area of the marsh in 2004 and it was only when he headed for the road that a bird flew for 7 metres from his feet and disappeared again. That bird had been Ted's first Yellow Rail in 10 years of local birding! Although the birds had only just arrived at the site and therefore not thought to be breeding, no one wanted to distress the birds, instead the group contorted their bodies and telescopes to get a different angle of their patch of grass but these very vocal birds did not show. Travelling along the northern shore of Ethel Lake the team came across a Bald Eagle and an American Beaver. We then turned north and followed the Primrose Highway all the way to the boundary of the Canadian Forces Range. This flat area of various woodlands and ponds is full of birds and a great place to be at dawn. In the setting sun we were lucky to see a Moose do a u-turn back into the forest, 2 Solitary Sandpipers, 2 Spotted Sandpipers and hear a Hermit Thrush. Driving south, on our way to Cold Lake, we started to pass many White-tailed Deer and at 2245hrs TC collided with a large adult when it bolted from the darkness. The animal was fortunately dead from the impact but had caused a great deal of damage to the minibus' radiator and headlights. With the help of two local passers-by and a taxi, most of the team returned to the hotel while TC waited until 0130hrs to be recovered. Unfortunately the recovery truck also hit a large owl (Great Horned or Barred) before dropping TC at the hotel.

## **DAY 14 – 27 May 2005 (Cold Lake to Edmonton, via Elk Island National Park and Beaverhill Lake)**

The last full day's birding was full of potential, with help from Richard Klauke and Ted Hindmarch, the area's top birdwatchers. TC met the team, Richard and Ted for breakfast at 0530hrs and briefed everyone on the transport problem. Richard and Ted generously offered to take the team out for the morning. NT volunteered to help TC with the minibus in the meantime.

By noon the team had added a long list of birds, or second sightings, to the expedition account, including: Ruddy Turnstone, Boreal Chickadee, Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, vireos (Blue-headed, Philadelphia and Red-eyed) and warblers (Bay-breasted, Black-and-white, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Cape-May, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia and Palm). TC and NT had managed to acquire a replacement minibus and, having thanked Richard and Ted for their invaluable help, the team headed west towards Edmonton.

Our first short stop was to return to one of the gardens that we had visit the day before, in the hope of seeing the Evening Grosbeaks. The Grosbeaks remained elusive, however, we were able to hear Ovenbirds calling and see another White-breasted Nuthatch and Ruby-throated Hummingbird, plus a 'Slate-coloured' Dark-eyed Junco.

Our next stop was the Elk Island National Park, where we had good views of both American Bison subspecies (Plains Bison and Wood Buffalo), American Beaver, Common Goldeneye, Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers. We then explored two flat farmland areas west and south of nearby Beaverhill Lake. At the former, around Twp Road 520, we located a high flying flock of over 300 plovers, probably American Golden but make out any Buff-breasted amongst them. At the latter site, Amisk Creek, we tolerated the mosquitoes to identify a Stilt thanks to keen eyed ME and a billed Dowitcher amongst the waders and blackbirds.



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## **DAY 15 – 28 May 2005 (Edmonton to Calgary)**

With all of the hard work done, the last morning was to be a morning to experience just a small number of birds that can be very difficult to see if you do not have the local knowledge and this morning we would be going out with Edmonton's 'OWLER 1' himself, Ray Cromie and his banding friend Trevor. Ray is a dedicated owl bander and conservationist. On a warm, sunny morning with Ray and Trevor, the team were given the opportunity to handle Great Grey and Northern Saw-whet Owl owlets and to hand feed a wild female Hawk Owl. A real privilege for everyone! Add to that a female Northern Goshawk, a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak, more Eastern Phoebes, hummingbirds and 35 American Golden Plovers, and we had finished our expedition on a high note and could relax on our way to Calgary Airport and the business class flight to London.



## **Conclusion**

The 15 days of birding had taken the team through the most diverse habitats in Western Canada and produced a list of bird sightings that had exceeded all predictions. Not everything had gone strictly to plan, the weather had been frequently against the group, especially on the pelagic trip and there had been a few omissions from the list which might surprise some (Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs and Golden-crowned Kinglet), while we had remarkable good fortune at other times (Grizzly Bear, Trumpeter Swans, Hawk Owls, Sage Grouse, Wandering Tattler, etc). All in all the team saw 267 bird species, heard a further 5 species, and saw 31 mammal species in two weeks. Ideally this expedition would have taken place over 3 weeks, if participants were able to secure the time away from work, and TC put the team under great pressure and at times a relentless pace to achieve so much in only two weeks. The expedition did prove that this region of North America, which is often ignored by British birdwatchers, can be exciting and rewarding.

## **EX WESTERN TANAGER BIRD AND MAMMAL LISTS**

### **Notes:**

The following points should be noted:

- H = Heard (with the number of birds following when recorded).
- + = More than or at least
- c = Circa
- NC = Not Counted
- P = Possible (with the number of birds following)

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# EX WESTERN TANAGER BIRD LIST

| SER | NAME   | 14  | 15   | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23   | 24  | 25 | 26  | 27  | 28 |
|-----|--|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|----|-----|-----|----|
| 1   | <b>Pacific Loon</b> <i>Gavia pacifica</i>                      |     | 361+ | 1   | 30+ | 27+ | 20+ |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 2   | <b>Yellow-billed Loon</b> <i>Gavia adamsii</i>                 |     |      |     | P1  |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 3   | <b>Common Loon</b> <i>Gavia immer</i>                          | 1   | 2    |     | 4+  | 13+ |     |     | 1   | 2   |      |     | 1  |     |     |    |
| 4   | <b>Pied-billed Grebe</b> <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>            | 1   | 3    |     |     |     |     |     | 2   |     |      |     |    |     | 1   |    |
| 5   | <b>Horned Grebe</b> <i>Podiceps auritus</i>                    | 5   | 2    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1    | 2   |    |     |     |    |
| 6   | <b>Red-necked Grebe</b> <i>Podiceps grisegena</i>              | 2   | 2    |     | 1   | 1   |     |     | 3   | 5   | 6    |     | 2  |     | 4   |    |
| 7   | <b>Eared Grebe</b> <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>                 | 3   |      |     |     |     |     |     |     | 4   | 5    | 20+ |    |     |     |    |
| 8   | <b>Western Grebe</b> <i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>          | 1   | 150+ |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2   | 4    |     |    |     |     |    |
| 9   | <b>Clark's Grebe</b> <i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>               |     | 1or2 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 10  | <b>Sooty Shearwater</b> <i>Puffinus griseus</i>                |     |      |     | 60+ | 72+ |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 11  | <b>American White Pelican</b> <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i> |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     | 3   |      |     | 11 |     |     |    |
| 12  | <b>Double-crested Cormorant</b> <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>   |     |      | 2   |     |     |     |     |     | 44+ | 3    |     | 7  |     |     |    |
| 13  | <b>Brandt's Cormorant</b> <i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>    |     |      |     |     | 20+ |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 14  | <b>Pelagic Cormorant</b> <i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>        |     | 2    | 7   | c10 | 11+ | 2   |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 15  | <b>American Bittern</b> <i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>           |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2    | 1   |    |     |     |    |
| 16  | <b>Great Blue Heron</b> <i>Ardea herodias</i>                  | 2   | 504+ | 4   |     |     | 2   | 1   |     |     |      |     | 5  |     | 1   |    |
| 17  | <b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b> <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>  |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2    | 2   |    |     |     |    |
| 18  | <b>White-faced Ibis</b> <i>Plegadis chihi</i>                  |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      | 1   |    |     |     |    |
| 19  | <b>Turkey Vulture</b> <i>Cathartes aura</i>                    |     | 2    | 3   | 3   |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 20  | <b>Greater White-fronted Goose</b> <i>Anser albifrons</i>      |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    | 6   |     |    |
| 21  | <b>Canada Goose</b> <i>Branta canadensis</i>                   | 15+ | 21+  | 12+ |     |     | c20 | 46+ | 10+ | 30+ | c21  | 20+ | 12 | 71+ | 32+ |    |
| 22  | <b>Brant</b> <i>Branta bernicla</i>                            |     |      |     | P15 | 1   |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 23  | <b>Mute Swan</b> <i>Cygnus olor</i>                            |     |      | 10+ |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 24  | <b>Trumpeter Swan</b> <i>Cygnus buccinator</i>                 | 4   |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |    |     |     |    |
| 25  | <b>Wood Duck</b> <i>Aix sponsa</i>                             |     | 4    |     |     | 1   |     | 6   |     |     |      |     | 1  |     |     |    |
| 26  | <b>Gadwall</b> <i>Anas strepera</i>                            | 5   | 20   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 10+ | 115+ | NC  | 2  | 20  | 2   |    |
| 27  | <b>American Wigeon</b> <i>Anas americana</i>                   | 3   | 1    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 9    |     | 4  | 12  | NC  |    |
| 28  | <b>Mallard</b> <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>                       | 3   | 20+  | 22+ |     | 12  | 8   | 11  | 2   | 14+ | 14   | NC  | 6  | 9   |     |    |
| 29  | <b>Blue-winged Teal</b> <i>Anas discors</i>                    | 6   | 1    |     |     |     |     |     |     | 7+  | 11   | NC  |    | 16  | 10+ |    |
| 30  | <b>Cinnamon Teal</b> <i>Anas cyanoptera</i>                    |     | 1    |     |     |     |     |     | 1   | 6+  | 6    | 10+ |    |     |     |    |
| 31  | <b>Northern Shoveler</b> <i>Anas clypeata</i>                  | 1   | 1    |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 20+ |      | NC  |    | 22  | NC  |    |



| SER | NAME   | 14 | 15   | 16   | 17  | 18  | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22  | 23 | 24  | 25  | 26 | 27 | 28 |
|-----|--|----|------|------|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|
| 32  | <b>Northern Pintail</b> <i>Anas acuta</i>              |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 20+ | 1  | NC  |     | 13 |    |    |
| 33  | <b>Green-winged Teal</b> <i>Anas crecca</i>            |    | 1    |      |     | 1   |    |    | 2  |     |    | NC  | 2   |    | 2  |    |
| 34  | <b>Canvasback</b> <i>Aythya valisineria</i>            | 3  |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 4   |    |     |     | 8  | 2  |    |
| 35  | <b>Redhead</b> <i>Aythya americana</i>                 | 3  |      |      |     |     |    |    | 2  | 3   | 13 |     | 2   | 8  | 1  |    |
| 36  | <b>Ring-necked Duck</b> <i>Aythya collaris</i>         | 19 | 1    |      |     |     |    | 2  | 5  | 11+ |    | 5+  | c16 |    | 6  |    |
| 37  | <b>Greater Scaup</b> <i>Aythya marila</i>              |    | 4    |      |     | 4   |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 38  | <b>Lesser Scaup</b> <i>Aythya affinis</i>              | 10 | 4    |      |     |     |    |    | 4  | 10+ |    | c10 | 4   | 25 |    |    |
| 39  | <b>Harlequin Duck</b> <i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i> | 7  |      | 4to9 | 1   |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 40  | <b>Surf Scoter</b> <i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>      |    | 200+ | c30  | 1+  | c16 |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 41  | <b>White-winged Scoter</b> <i>Melanitta fusca</i>      |    | c20  | 1    | 25+ |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 42  | <b>Black Scoter</b> <i>Melanitta nigra</i>             |    | 1    |      | 2+  |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 43  | <b>Bufflehead</b> <i>Bucephala albeola</i>             | 28 | 20+  |      |     |     |    |    |    |     | 7  |     | 4   | 7  | 3  |    |
| 44  | <b>Common Goldeneye</b> <i>Bucephala clangula</i>      | 3  |      |      |     |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     | 1  | 1  |    |
| 45  | <b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b> <i>Bucephala islandica</i>   | 3  |      |      |     |     |    |    | 5  | 1   |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 46  | <b>Hooded Merganser</b> <i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>   |    |      |      |     |     |    |    | 1  | 1   | 2  |     |     |    |    |    |
| 47  | <b>Red-breasted Merganser</b> <i>Mergus serrator</i>   |    |      | 8    |     |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 48  | <b>Common Merganser</b> <i>Mergus merganser</i>        | 2  | 6    |      |     |     | 2  | 2  |    |     |    |     |     |    | 1  |    |
| 49  | <b>Ruddy Duck</b> <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>            | 1  |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 1   | 5  | 13+ | 2   | 3  |    |    |
| 50  | <b>Osprey</b> <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>                 | 5  | 4    | 1    | 1   | 1   |    | 8  |    | 2   |    |     | 2   | 3  |    |    |
| 51  | <b>Bald Eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>      |    | 13   | 2    | 4   | 7   |    |    |    |     |    |     |     | 1  | 1  |    |
| 52  | <b>Northern Harrier</b> <i>Circus cyaneus</i>          |    |      |      |     |     | 5  | 1  |    |     | 1  | 1   |     | 4  |    |    |
| 53  | <b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b> <i>Accipiter striatus</i>    |    |      |      | 1   |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 54  | <b>Cooper's Hawk</b> <i>Accipiter cooperii</i>         |    |      | 1    |     |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     | 1  |    |    |
| 55  | <b>Northern Goshawk</b> <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>      |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |    |    | 1  |
| 56  | <b>Broad-winged Hawk</b> <i>Buteo platypterus</i>      |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 1   |    |     | 1   |    |    |    |
| 57  | <b>Swainson's Hawk</b> <i>Buteo swainsoni</i>          |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 1   | 3  |     |     | 5  |    |    |
| 58  | <b>Red-tailed Hawk</b> <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>        | 1  | 2    | 1    |     |     | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1   | 2  |     | 2   | 9  |    |    |
| 59  | <b>Ferruginous Hawk</b> <i>Buteo regalis</i>           |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    |     | 3  | 6   | 3   | 1  |    |    |
| 60  | <b>Rough-legged Hawk</b> <i>Buteo lagopus</i>          |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    |     | 1  |     |     |    |    |    |
| 61  | <b>Golden Eagle</b> <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>           |    |      |      |     |     |    | 2  | 1  |     |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 62  | <b>American Kestrel</b> <i>Falco sparverius</i>        | 4+ | 1    |      |     |     | 2  | 1  | 6  |     | 1  |     | 3   |    | 1  |    |
| 63  | <b>Merlin</b> <i>Falco columbarius</i>                 |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 1   |    |     |     | 1  |    |    |
| 64  | <b>Prairie Falcon</b> <i>Falco mexicanus</i>           |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    |     | 3  |     |     |    |    |    |
| 65  | <b>Grey Partridge</b> <i>Perdix perdix</i>             |    |      |      |     |     |    |    |    | 2   |    |     | 2   | 1  | 2  |    |

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|-----|--|----|-----|----|------|----|----|----|----|-----|-------|-----|----|-------|------|----|
| 66  | <b>Ring-necked Pheasant</b> <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>     |    | 5   |    |      |    | 1  |    |    | 2   | 4     |     | 1  |       |      |    |
| 67  | <b>Ruffed Grouse</b> <i>Bonasa umbellus</i>                |    |     |    | 1    |    |    |    |    | 1H  |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 68  | <b>Sage Grouse</b> <i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>        |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       | 4   |    |       |      |    |
| 69  | <b>Blue Grouse</b> <i>Dendragapus obscurus</i>             |    |     |    | 1    |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 70  | <b>Sharp-tailed Grouse</b> <i>Tympanuchus phasianellus</i> |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       | c15 |    | 3     |      |    |
| 71  | <b>California Quail</b> <i>Callipepla californica</i>      |    |     | 1  |      |    |    | 5  |    |     |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 72  | <b>Yellow Rail</b> <i>Coturnicops noveboracensis</i>       |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | 3H    |      |    |
| 73  | <b>Sora</b> <i>Porzana carolina</i>                        |    |     |    |      |    |    | 2H |    | 1   | 1H    | 5   |    | 2     |      |    |
| 74  | <b>American Coot</b> <i>Fulica americana</i>               | 2  | 20+ |    |      |    |    |    | 2  | 7+  | c25   | 15+ |    | 5     |      |    |
| 75  | <b>Sandhill Crane</b> <i>Grus canadensis</i>               |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    | 2   |       |     |    | 15    |      |    |
| 76  | <b>Black-bellied Plover</b> <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>    |    |     |    |      | 2  |    |    |    | 3   | 1600+ | 8   |    |       |      |    |
| 77  | <b>American Golden Plover</b> <i>Pluvialis dominica</i>    |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | 8     | 300+ | 35 |
| 78  | <b>Semi-palmated Plover</b> <i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i> |    |     |    | 2    |    |    |    |    |     |       | 2   |    | 2     |      |    |
| 79  | <b>Killdeer</b> <i>Charadrius vociferus</i>                | 1  | 1   |    |      | 1  | 3  | 1  | 2  | 2   | 5     | 6   | 2  | 2     | 1    | 1  |
| 80  | <b>Black Oystercatcher</b> <i>Haematopus bachmani</i>      |    | 1   | 9  | 2    | 1  |    |    |    |     |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 81  | <b>Black-necked Stilt</b> <i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>      |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    | 2   | 8     |     |    |       |      |    |
| 82  | <b>American Avocet</b> <i>Recurvirostra americana</i>      |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    | 20+ | 11    | 10+ |    | 52+   | 1    |    |
| 83  | <b>Solitary Sandpiper</b> <i>Tringa solitaria</i>          |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | 2     | 1    |    |
| 84  | <b>Willet</b> <i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>           |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    | 2   | 7     | 4   | 2  | 1     |      |    |
| 85  | <b>Wandering Tattler</b> <i>Heteroscelus incanus</i>       |    |     |    |      | 6  |    |    |    |     |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 86  | <b>Spotted Sandpiper</b> <i>Actitis macularia</i>          |    | 1   | 1  | 1    | 1  |    | 2  | 4  | 5   | 5     | 2   | 4  | 2     | 2    |    |
| 87  | <b>Upland Sandpiper</b> <i>Bartramia longicauda</i>        |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | 4     |      |    |
| 88  | <b>Whimbrel</b> <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>                   |    |     |    |      | 42 |    |    |    | 7   |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 89  | <b>Long-billed Curlew</b> <i>Numenius americanus</i>       |    |     |    |      |    |    | 1  |    |     | 2     |     | 1  | 2     |      |    |
| 90  | <b>Marbled Godwit</b> <i>Limosa fedoa</i>                  |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    | 4+  | 1     | 11  |    |       |      |    |
| 91  | <b>Ruddy Turnstone</b> <i>Arenaria interpres</i>           |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     | 1     |     |    |       | 3    |    |
| 92  | <b>Red Knot</b> <i>Calidris canutus</i>                    |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     | 73    |     |    |       |      |    |
| 93  | <b>Sanderling</b> <i>Calidris alba</i>                     |    |     |    | 110+ |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | P     |      |    |
| 94  | <b>Semi-palmated Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris pusilla</i>     |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       | 25+ |    | 2000+ |      |    |
| 95  | <b>Western Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris mauri</i>             |    |     |    |      | 11 |    |    |    |     |       |     |    |       |      |    |
| 96  | <b>Least Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris minutilla</i>           |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     | 1     |     |    | 3     |      |    |
| 97  | <b>Baird's Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris bairdii</i>           |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     | 8     |     |    | 1000+ |      |    |
| 98  | <b>Pectoral Sandpiper</b> <i>Calidris melanotos</i>        |    |     |    |      |    |    |    |    |     |       |     |    | 13+   | 1    |    |
| 99  | <b>Dunlin</b> <i>Calidris alpina</i>                       |    |     |    | 9    |    |    |    |    |     |       | 1   |    |       |      |    |

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| 100  | <b>Stilt Sandpiper</b> <i>Micropalama himantopus</i>         |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       | 1   |    |
| 101  | <b>Short-billed Dowitcher</b> <i>Limnodromus griseus</i>     |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    | 1    |     |       | 1   |    |
| 102  | <b>Long-billed Dowitcher</b> <i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>  |    |     |      |     | 1   |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 102a | <b>Dowitcher sp</b> <i>Limnodromus sp</i>                    |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     | 2    | 1  | 7    |     |       |     |    |
| 103  | <b>Wilson's Snipe</b> <i>Gallinago delicata</i>              |    |     |      |     |     |     | 4  |     | 2    | 3  |      |     |       | 1   |    |
| 104  | <b>Wilson's Phalarope</b> <i>Steganopus tricolor</i>         | 8  |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      | 16 | 12+  |     | 105+  | 1   |    |
| 105  | <b>Red-necked Phalarope</b> <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>        |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    | P2   |     | 1000+ |     |    |
| 106  | <b>Sabine's Gull</b> <i>Xema sabini</i>                      |    |     |      | 1   |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 107  | <b>Franklin's Gull</b> <i>Larus pipixcan</i>                 |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     | 7+   | 3  | 10+  | 3   |       |     |    |
| 108  | <b>Bonaparte's Gull</b> <i>Larus philadelphia</i>            |    |     |      |     | 1   | 8   |    |     |      | 3  |      |     |       | 2   |    |
| 109  | <b>Mew Gull</b> <i>Larus canus</i>                           |    | 6   | 1    |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 110  | <b>Ring-billed Gull</b> <i>Larus delawarensis</i>            |    | 50+ |      |     |     |     |    |     | 20+  | 16 | 5+   | 30+ | 10+   |     |    |
| 111  | <b>California Gull</b> <i>Larus californicus</i>             |    | 1   |      |     |     |     |    |     | 140+ |    |      | 1   |       |     |    |
| 112  | <b>American Herring Gull</b> <i>Larus smithsonianus</i>      |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     | 1     |     |    |
| 113  | <b>Western Gull</b> <i>Larus occidentalis</i>                |    |     |      | 1   | 7   |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 114  | <b>Glaucous-winged Gull</b> <i>Larus glaucescens</i>         |    | 21+ | 160+ | 30+ | 83+ | 70+ |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 115  | <b>Caspian Tern</b> <i>Sterna caspia</i>                     |    |     | 9    | 2   |     |     |    |     |      | 1  |      | 1   |       |     |    |
| 116  | <b>Common Tern</b> <i>Sterna hirundo</i>                     |    |     |      |     |     | 7   |    |     | 4    | 4  |      | 2   |       |     |    |
| 117  | <b>Forster's Tern</b> <i>Sterna forsteri</i>                 |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      | 1  | 1or2 | 1   |       | 1   |    |
| 118  | <b>Black Tern</b> <i>Chlidonias niger</i>                    |    |     |      |     |     |     |    | 30+ | 37+  | 4  | 10+  | 3   | 12    | c10 |    |
| 119  | <b>Common Murre</b> <i>Uria aalge</i>                        |    | 2   | 1    | 25+ | 17  | 4   |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 120  | <b>Pigeon Guillemot</b> <i>Cephus columba</i>                |    | c15 | 2    | 3+  | 20+ |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 121  | <b>Marbled Murrelet</b> <i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>      |    |     | 1    | 8+  | 17  |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 122  | <b>Rhinoceros Auklet</b> <i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>        |    | 20+ | 71+  | 2+  | 3   | 1   |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 123  | <b>Band-tailed Pigeon</b> <i>Columba fasciata</i>            |    |     | 1    | 9   | 3   |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 124  | <b>Eurasian Collared/Barbary Dove</b> <i>Streptopelia sp</i> |    |     | 1?   |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 125  | <b>Mourning Dove</b> <i>Zenaida macroura</i>                 |    |     |      |     |     |     | 13 | 4   |      | 8  |      | 9   |       |     |    |
| 126  | <b>Great Horned Owl</b> <i>Bubo virginianus</i>              |    |     |      | 2   |     |     |    | 6   |      | 2  | 4    | 1   |       |     |    |
| 127  | <b>Northern Hawk Owl</b> <i>Surnia ulula</i>                 | 1  |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     | 3  |
| 128  | <b>Northern Pygmy-Owl</b> <i>Glaucidium gnoma</i>            | 1H |     |      | 1   |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 129  | <b>Burrowing Owl</b> <i>Athene cinicularia</i>               |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     | 1    |    |      | 1   |       |     |    |
| 130  | <b>Great Grey Owl</b> <i>Strix nebulosa</i>                  |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     | 3  |
| 131  | <b>Short-eared Owl</b> <i>Asio flammeus</i>                  |    |     |      |     |     |     |    | 1   |      |    |      |     |       |     |    |
| 132  | <b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b> <i>Aegolius acadicus</i>        |    |     |      |     |     |     |    |     |      |    |      |     |       |     | 3  |

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| 133 | <b>Common Nighthawk</b> <i>Chordeiles minor</i>               |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |    | 3  |    |    |    |
| 134 | <b>Common Poorwill</b> <i>Phalaenoptilus nuttallii</i>        |    |      |      |      |    | 1   |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 135 | <b>Vaux's Swift</b> <i>Chaetura vauxi</i>                     |    |      |      |      |    | c24 |     |    | 2  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 136 | <b>White-throated Swift</b> <i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>       |    |      |      |      |    |     | 3+  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 137 | <b>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</b> <i>Archilochus colubris</i>  |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 1  | 2  |
| 138 | <b>Black-chinned Hummingbird</b> <i>Archilochus alexandri</i> |    |      |      |      |    |     | 2   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 139 | <b>Anna's Hummingbird</b> <i>Calypte anna</i>                 |    | 3    | 2    |      |    | 1   | 1   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 140 | <b>Calliope Hummingbird</b> <i>Stellula calliope</i>          |    |      |      |      |    |     | 10+ |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 141 | <b>Rufous Hummingbird</b> <i>Selasphorus rufus</i>            | 2  |      | 1    | 2    | 1  |     | 1   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 142 | <b>Belted Kingfisher</b> <i>Ceryle alcyon</i>                 | 1  | 1    | 2    |      |    |     | 1   | 1  |    |    |    | 1  |    |    |    |
| 143 | <b>Lewis' Woodpecker</b> <i>Melanerpes lewis</i>              |    |      |      |      |    |     | 2   | 3  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 144 | <b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b> <i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>     |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    | 2  |    |
| 145 | <b>Red-naped Sapsucker</b> <i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i>        | 1  |      |      |      |    |     | 1   | 1  | 1  | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |
| 146 | <b>Red-breasted Sapsucker</b> <i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i>        |    |      | 3    | 1    |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 147 | <b>Williamson's Sapsucker</b> <i>Sphyrapicus thyroideus</i>   |    |      |      |      |    |     |     | 2  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 148 | <b>Downy Woodpecker</b> <i>Picoides pubescens</i>             |    | 1or2 |      |      |    |     |     | 2  |    | 1  |    | 3  |    | 1  | 1  |
| 149 | <b>Hairy Woodpecker</b> <i>Picoides villosus</i>              | 1  |      |      |      |    |     | 2   |    |    |    |    |    |    | 4  | 1  |
| 150 | <b>Northern Flicker</b> <i>Colaptes auratus</i>               | 2  |      | 1    | 1    |    | 2   | 6   | 4  |    | 5  |    | 2  |    |    |    |
| 151 | <b>Pileated Woodpecker</b> <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>          |    |      | 1    |      |    |     |     | 1H |    |    |    |    | 1  |    |    |
| 152 | <b>Olive-sided Flycatcher</b> <i>Contopus cooperi</i>         |    |      | 1or2 | 1to2 |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 153 | <b>Western Wood-pewee</b> <i>Contopus sordidulus</i>          |    | 1    |      |      |    |     |     | 2  |    |    |    |    | 1  | 1  | 2  |
| 154 | <b>Least Flycatcher</b> <i>Empidonax minimus</i>              |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    | 4  |    | 4  | 5  |    |    |
| 155 | <b>Hammond's Flycatcher</b> <i>Empidonax hammondii</i>        |    |      | 1    |      |    |     |     | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 156 | <b>Dusky Flycatcher</b> <i>Empidonax oberholseri</i>          |    |      |      |      |    |     |     | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 157 | <b>Grey Flycatcher</b> <i>Empidonax wrightii</i>              |    |      |      |      |    |     | 4   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 158 | <b>Pacific-slope Flycatcher</b> <i>Empidonax difficilis</i>   |    |      |      | 2    | 1  |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 159 | <b>Eastern Phoebe</b> <i>Sayornis phoebe</i>                  |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    | 2  | 2  |
| 160 | <b>Say's Phoebe</b> <i>Sayornis saya</i>                      |    |      |      |      |    |     | 1   | 2  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 161 | <b>Western Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>            |    | 1    |      |      |    |     | 3   |    | 1  | 10 | 1  | 2  |    |    |    |
| 162 | <b>Eastern Kingbird</b> <i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>              |    |      |      |      |    |     | 1   | 1  |    | 4  |    | 3  |    |    |    |
| 163 | <b>Loggerhead Shrike</b> <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>           |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    | 2  | 1  |    | 1  |    |    |
| 164 | <b>Blue-headed Vireo</b> <i>Vireo solitarius</i>              |    |      |      |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    | 4  |    |
| 165 | <b>Cassin's Vireo</b> <i>Vireo cassinii</i>                   |    |      |      | 1    |    |     |     | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 166 | <b>Warbling Vireo</b> <i>Vireo gilvus</i>                     |    |      |      |      |    |     |     | 2  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |



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|-----|--|-----|-----|----|-----|----|----|------|-----|------|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|
| 167 | <b>Philadelphia Vireo</b> <i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>                  |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     |    | 1H |    |
| 168 | <b>Red-eyed Vireo</b> <i>Vireo olivaceus</i>                           |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     | 1H   |    |     |     |    | 1  |    |
| 169 | <b>Grey Jay</b> <i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>                           | 1   |     |    |     |    |    | 1    | 3   | 1    |    |     |     | 2  |    |    |
| 170 | <b>Stellar's Jay</b> <i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>                        |     |     | 1  | 3   | 1  | 1  | 1    | 2   | 1    |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 171 | <b>Clark's Nutcracker</b> <i>Nucifraga columbiana</i>                  |     |     |    |     |    |    |      | 6   |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 172 | <b>Black-billed Magpie</b> <i>Pica hudsonia</i>                        |     | 2   |    |     |    |    |      | 2   |      | 2  |     | 8   | 15 | 4  |    |
| 173 | <b>American Crow</b> <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>                      | 6   | 3   |    |     |    |    | 7    | 9   |      |    |     | 4   | 49 | 6  |    |
| 174 | <b>North-western Crow</b> <i>Corvus caurinus</i>                       |     | 3   | 17 | 26+ | 3  | 4  |      |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 175 | <b>Common Raven</b> <i>Corvus corax</i>                                | 4+  | 3   | 1  | 2   |    |    | 3    | 5   |      |    |     |     | 3  | 2  |    |
| 176 | <b>Horned Lark</b> <i>Eremophila alpestris</i>                         |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     | 3    | 4  | 35+ | 6   | 16 |    |    |
| 177 | <b>Purple Martin</b> <i>Progne subis</i>                               |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     | 7  |    |    |
| 178 | <b>Tree Swallow</b> <i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>                         | 12+ | 15+ | 2  |     |    | 4  |      | 1   |      | 5+ | 4   | 11+ | 13 |    | 2  |
| 179 | <b>Violet-green Swallow</b> <i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>              |     | 21+ | 3  |     |    | 4  | 2    | 2   |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 180 | <b>Northern Rough-winged Swallow</b> <i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i> |     |     |    |     |    | 6  |      | 4   |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 181 | <b>Bank Swallow</b> <i>Riparia riparia</i>                             |     |     |    |     |    |    | 1or2 | 20+ |      |    | 1   | 1   |    |    |    |
| 182 | <b>Barn Swallow</b> <i>Hirundo rustica</i>                             |     | 4   |    |     |    | 4  | 9    |     | 1    | 2  |     |     | 6  |    | 1  |
| 183 | <b>Cliff Swallow</b> <i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>                   |     |     |    |     |    |    | 3    |     |      | 2  | 50+ |     | 1  |    |    |
| 184 | <b>Black-capped Chickadee</b> <i>Poecile atricapillus</i>              |     |     |    |     |    |    |      | 2   |      |    |     | 7   |    | 2  |    |
| 185 | <b>Mountain Chickadee</b> <i>Poecile gambeli</i>                       |     |     |    |     |    |    | 4    | 1   |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 186 | <b>Chestnut-backed Chickadee</b> <i>Poecile rufescens</i>              |     |     | 4  |     | H  | 2  |      |     | 1or2 |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 187 | <b>Boreal Chickadee</b> <i>Poecile hudsonicus</i>                      |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     | 1    |    |     |     |    | 2  |    |
| 188 | <b>Bushtit</b> <i>Psaltiriparus minimus</i>                            |     |     | 2  |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 189 | <b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b> <i>Sitta canadensis</i>                   |     | 1   | 1  | 2   |    |    | 2    | 2   |      | 2  |     | 3   |    |    |    |
| 190 | <b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b> <i>Sitta carolinensis</i>               |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 191 | <b>Brown Creeper</b> <i>Certhia americana</i>                          |     |     | 3  |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 192 | <b>Rock Wren</b> <i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>                           |     |     |    |     |    |    | 2    |     |      | 1H |     |     |    |    |    |
| 193 | <b>Canyon Wren</b> <i>Catherpes mexicanus</i>                          |     |     |    |     |    |    | 1or2 |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 194 | <b>Bewick's Wren</b> <i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>                        |     | 1   | 2  |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 195 | <b>House Wren</b> <i>Troglodytes aedon</i>                             |     |     |    |     |    |    | 1    |     |      | 1  |     | 9   |    |    |    |
| 196 | <b>Winter Wren</b> <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>                      |     |     | 4+ | 2   |    |    |      |     | 4+   |    |     |     |    |    |    |
| 197 | <b>Sedge Wren</b> <i>Cistothorus platensis</i>                         |     |     |    |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     | 1H |    |    |
| 198 | <b>Marsh Wren</b> <i>Cistothorus palustris</i>                         |     | 4   |    |     |    | 1  | 4    | 4   | 2    | 6  | 8+  |     |    |    |    |
| 199 | <b>American Dipper</b> <i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>                        |     |     | 1  |     |    |    |      |     |      |    |     |     |    |    |    |

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| 200  | <b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b> <i>Regulus calendula</i>         |    |     |    |     |    |    | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1   |    | 5   |    |    | 1  |
| 201  | <b>Western Bluebird</b> <i>Sialia mexicana</i>               |    |     |    |     |    |    | 6  | 1  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 202  | <b>Mountain Bluebird</b> <i>Sialia currucoides</i>           | 2  |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     | 1  | 8   | 5  |    |    |
| 203  | <b>Townsend's Solitaire</b> <i>Myadestes townsendi</i>       |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |     |    |    |    |
| 204  | <b>Swainson's Thrush</b> <i>Catharus ustulatus</i>           |    |     | 3  | 2   |    | 1  |    |    |    | 10+ | 1  |     | 2  |    |    |
| 205  | <b>Hermit Thrush</b> <i>Catharus guttatus</i>                |    |     |    |     |    |    |    | 1  |    |     |    |     | 1H |    |    |
| 206  | <b>American Robin</b> <i>Turdus migratorius</i>              | 5  | 4   | 9  | 15+ | 2  | 6  | 3  | 7  |    | 44+ |    | 14+ | 4  | 2  | 2  |
| 207  | <b>Varied Thrush</b> <i>Ixoreus naevius</i>                  | 2  |     |    |     | 1  |    |    | 1  | 4  |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 208  | <b>Grey Catbird</b> <i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>            |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 2   |    |     |    |    |    |
| 209  | <b>Brown Thrasher</b> <i>Toxostoma rufum</i>                 |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 2   | 2  | 3   |    |    |    |
| 210  | <b>European Starling</b> <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>             |    | 20+ |    |     |    | 3  | 2  |    |    | 4   |    | 17  | 4  | 1  |    |
| 211  | <b>American Pipit</b> <i>Anthus rubescens</i>                |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     | 1  |     |    |    |    |
| 212  | <b>Sprague's Pipit</b> <i>Anthus spragueii</i>               |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     | 4  |     | 1  |    |    |
| 213  | <b>Cedar Waxwing</b> <i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>              |    | 9   |    |     |    |    | 1  |    |    |     |    | 10  |    |    |    |
| 214  | <b>Tennessee Warbler</b> <i>Vermivora peregrina</i>          |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |     |    | 1  |    |
| 215  | <b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b> <i>Vermivora celata</i>        |    |     | 3  | 1   |    |    | 1  | 2  |    |     |    |     | 1  |    |    |
| 216  | <b>Yellow Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica petechia</i>              |    | 1   | 1  |     | 1  |    | 4  |    |    | 4   | 1  | 7   | 3  | 2  |    |
| 217  | <b>Chestnut-sided Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica pensylvanica</i>  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 1  |    |
| 218  | <b>Magnolia Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica magnolia</i>            |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 3  |    |
| 219  | <b>Cape May Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica tigrina</i>             |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 2  |    |
| 220  | <b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica coronata</i>       |    |     |    |     |    |    | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2   |    | 2   | 11 | 5  |    |
| 220a | <b>Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler</b> <i>D. c. coronata</i>  | 1  |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 220b | <b>Yellow-rumped (Audubon) Warbler</b> <i>D. c. auduboni</i> | 1  |     |    |     |    |    |    | 1  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 221  | <b>Townsend's Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica townsendi</i>         |    |     | 3  |     | H  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 222  | <b>Black-throated Green Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica virens</i>  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 1  |    |
| 223  | <b>Blackburnian Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica fusca</i>           |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 3  |    |
| 224  | <b>Palm Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica palmarum</i>                |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 1  |    |
| 225  | <b>Blackpoll Warbler</b> <i>Dendroica striata</i>            |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |     |    | 5  |    |
| 226  | <b>Black-and-white Warbler</b> <i>Mniotilta varia</i>        |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 4  |    |
| 227  | <b>American Redstart</b> <i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>          |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    | 2   |    | 3  |    |
| 228  | <b>Ovenbird</b> <i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>                  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |    | 2H | 1H |
| 229  | <b>Northern Waterthrush</b> <i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>    |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     | P1 |    |    |
| 230  | <b>MacGillivray's Warbler</b> <i>Oporornis tolmiei</i>       |    |     | 4+ | 2   |    |    |    | 1  |    |     |    |     |    |    |    |
| 231  | <b>Common Yellowthroat</b> <i>Geothlypis trichas</i>         |    | 2   |    |     |    |    |    |    | 1  | 4   |    |     |    |    |    |

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| 232  | <b>Wilson's Warbler</b> <i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>                |    |     | 1  |    |    |    |     |    |    | 1   |     |      |     |    |    |
| 233  | <b>Yellow-breasted Chat</b> <i>Icteria virens</i>              |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     | 2H   |     |    |    |
| 234  | <b>Western Tanager</b> <i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>              |    |     | 22 |    |    |    | 3   |    |    | 2   |     |      |     | 1  |    |
| 235  | <b>Spotted Towhee</b> <i>Pipilo maculatus</i>                  |    | 2   | 5  | 3+ |    |    | 1   | 2  |    |     |     | 2    |     |    |    |
| 236  | <b>Chipping Sparrow</b> <i>Spizella passerina</i>              |    |     | 1  |    |    |    | 1   | 2  | 3  | 49+ |     | 4    | 25+ | 9  | 2  |
| 237  | <b>Clay-coloured Sparrow</b> <i>Spizella pallida</i>           |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    | 15  |     | 6    | 1   |    | 1  |
| 238  | <b>Brewer's Sparrow</b> <i>Spizella breweri</i>                |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     | 12+ | 1or2 |     |    |    |
| 239  | <b>Vesper Sparrow</b> <i>Poocetes gramineus</i>                |    |     |    |    |    |    |     | 1  | 1  | 3   | 2   | 8    | 7   |    |    |
| 240  | <b>Lark Sparrow</b> <i>Chondestes grammacus</i>                |    |     |    |    |    |    | 2   | 1  |    | 10  |     | 1    |     |    |    |
| 241  | <b>Savannah Sparrow</b> <i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>       |    |     | 4  |    | 2  | 1  | 12+ |    |    | 1   | 4   | 4    | 1   |    |    |
| 242  | <b>Grasshopper Sparrow</b> <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>        |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     | 1    |     |    |    |
| 243  | <b>Le Conte's Sparrow</b> <i>Ammodramus leconteii</i>          |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      | 2   |    |    |
| 244  | <b>Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow</b> <i>Ammodramus nelsoni</i> |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      | 1   |    |    |
| 245  | <b>Fox Sparrow</b> <i>Passerella iliaca</i>                    |    |     |    | 1  | 1  |    |     |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 246  | <b>Song Sparrow</b> <i>Melospiza melodia</i>                   |    | 1   | 2  |    |    |    | 3   |    | 1  | 2   |     |      | 1   |    |    |
| 247  | <b>Lincoln's Sparrow</b> <i>Melospiza lincolni</i>             |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    | 1   |     |      |     |    |    |
| 248  | <b>White-throated Sparrow</b> <i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>    |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      | 3   | 1  |    |
| 249  | <b>Harris's Sparrow</b> <i>Zonotrichia querula</i>             |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      | 3   |    |    |
| 250  | <b>White-crowned Sparrow</b> <i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>     |    | 1   | 2  | 1  |    |    |     |    |    |     |     | 1    |     |    |    |
| 251  | <b>Golden-crowned Sparrow</b> <i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>   |    |     | 4  |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 252  | <b>Dark-eyed Junco</b> <i>Junco hyemalis</i>                   | 1  |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 252a | <b>Dark-eyed (Slate-coloured) Junco</b> <i>J. h. hyemalis</i>  |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      |     | 1  |    |
| 252b | <b>Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco</b> <i>J. h. oregonus</i>          |    |     |    |    |    |    |     | 4  |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 252c | <b>Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco</b> <i>J. h. meamsi</i>        |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     | 2to3 |     |    |    |
| 253  | <b>McCown's Longspur</b> <i>Calcarius mccownii</i>             |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    | 1   |     |      |     |    |    |
| 254  | <b>Lapland Longspur</b> <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>            |    |     |    |    | 1  |    |     |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 255  | <b>Chestnut-collared Longspur</b> <i>Calcarius ornatus</i>     |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    | 7   | 2   |      | 3   |    |    |
| 256  | <b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</b> <i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>   |    |     |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |     |     |      | 1   |    | 1  |
| 257  | <b>Black-headed Grosbeak</b> <i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>  |    | 2   | 1  | 1  |    |    | 2   |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 258  | <b>Lazuli Bunting</b> <i>Passerina amoena</i>                  |    |     |    |    |    |    | 2   |    |    |     |     | 1    |     |    |    |
| 259  | <b>Bobolink</b> <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>                   |    |     |    |    |    |    | 7   |    |    |     |     |      |     |    |    |
| 260  | <b>Red-winged Blackbird</b> <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>         | 5  | 24+ |    |    |    | NC | 12  | 1  | 1  | c45 | 38+ | 8    | 22  | 4  |    |
| 261  | <b>Western Meadowlark</b> <i>Sturnella neglecta</i>            |    |     |    |    |    |    | 1   | 3  | 2  | 2   | 15+ | 5    | 63  |    |    |
| 262  | <b>Yellow-headed Blackbird</b> <i>Xanthocephalus</i>           |    | 3   |    |    |    |    | 2   |    | 6  | 29  | 34+ | 2    | 3   | 6+ |    |

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|     | <i>xanthocephalus</i>                                   |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |    |    |    |
| 263 | <b>Brewer's Blackbird</b> <i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i> |    | 1  |     | 4  |    |    | 1  | 10 | 3  | 11+ | NC  | 5   | 89 | 3  |    |
| 264 | <b>Common Grackle</b> <i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>         |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    | 7   |     | 24  |    |    |    |
| 265 | <b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b> <i>Molothrus ater</i>       | 3  | 4  |     | 4+ |    | NC | 3  | 1  |    | 5   | 30+ | 4   | 31 | 7  |    |
| 266 | <b>Baltimore Oriole</b> <i>Icterus galbula</i>          |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 4+  |     | 3   | 1  |    |    |
| 267 | <b>Bullock's Oriole</b> <i>Icterus bullockii</i>        |    |    |     |    |    |    | 3  | 2  |    |     |     |     |    |    |    |
| 268 | <b>Purple Finch</b> <i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>         |    |    | 1   | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |    | 1  |    |
| 269 | <b>Cassin's Finch</b> <i>Carpodacus cassinii</i>        |    |    |     |    |    |    | 5  | 2  | 11 |     |     |     |    |    |    |
| 270 | <b>House Finch</b> <i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>          |    | 1  |     |    |    |    | 2  |    |    |     |     | 2   |    |    |    |
| 271 | <b>Red Crossbill</b> <i>Loxia curvirostra</i>           |    |    |     |    |    |    | 3  |    |    |     |     |     |    |    |    |
| 272 | <b>Pine Siskin</b> <i>Carduelis pinus</i>               | 5  |    | 12+ |    |    |    |    | 2  | 3  | 2   |     | 12+ | 5  | 2  |    |
| 273 | <b>American Goldfinch</b> <i>Carduelis tristis</i>      |    |    | 2   | 2  |    | 2  | 8  |    |    | 2   | 1   | 7   |    | 2  | 2  |
| 274 | <b>House Sparrow</b> <i>Passer domesticus</i>           |    | 2  |     |    |    |    |    |    |    | 8   | 5   |     |    |    |    |

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| 1   | <b>Eastern Cottontail</b> <i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>               |       |    |    | 1  |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 2   | <b>White-tailed Jack-Rabbit</b> <i>Lepus townsendii</i>              |       |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |
| 3   | <b>Yellow-pine Chipmunk</b> <i>Tamias amoenus</i>                    |       |    |    |    |    |    | 2   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 4   | <b>Chipmunk sp</b> <i>Tamias sp</i>                                  |       |    |    | 2  |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 5   | <b>Hoary Marmot</b> <i>Marmota caligata</i>                          | 2     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 6   | <b>Yellow-bellied Marmot</b> <i>Marmota flaviventris</i>             |       |    |    |    |    |    | 10+ |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 7   | <b>Columbian Ground-Squirrel</b> <i>Spermophilus columbianus</i>     |       |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 8   | <b>Golden-mantled Ground-Squirrel</b> <i>Spermophilus lateralis</i>  |       |    |    |    |    |    |     |    | 1  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 9   | <b>Richardson's Ground-Squirrel</b> <i>Spermophilus richardsonii</i> |       |    |    |    |    |    |     |    | NC | NC | NC | NC | NC |    |    |
| 10  | <b>Grey Squirrel</b> <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>                     |       | 2  |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 11  | <b>Red Squirrel</b> <i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>                   | 2     |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 12  | <b>Northern Pocket Gopher</b> <i>Thomomys talpoides</i>              | Signs |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 13  | <b>American Beaver</b> <i>Castor canadensis</i>                      |       |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |    |
| 14  | <b>Common Muskrat</b> <i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>                      | 1     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 15  | <b>Common Porcupine</b> <i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>                    | 2     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |



|     |  |     |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
|-----|--|-----|-----|---|---|---|---|----|-----|---|---|---|-----|-----|--|--|
| 16  | <b>Coyote</b> <i>Canis latrans</i>                             |     |     |   |   |   |   | 1  |     |   | 1 |   |     |     |  |  |
| 17  | <b>Red Fox</b> <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>                            |     |     |   |   |   |   | 1  |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 18  | <b>Black Bear</b> <i>Ursus americanus</i>                      |     |     |   | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1  |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 19  | <b>Grizzly Bear</b> <i>Ursus arctos</i>                        | 3   |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 20  | <b>Common Raccoon</b> <i>Procyon lotor</i>                     |     |     |   | 1 |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 21  | <b>Northern (Steller's) Sea Lion</b> <i>Eumetopias jubatus</i> |     |     |   | 1 |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 22  | <b>California Sea Lion</b> <i>Zalophus californianus</i>       |     | 2   |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 23  | <b>Sea Lion sp</b> <i>Otariidae sp</i>                         |     |     | 1 |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 24  | <b>Pacific Harbour Seal</b> <i>Phoca vitulina</i>              |     | 30+ |   | 2 |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 25  | <b>American Badger</b> <i>Taxidea taxus</i>                    |     |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   | 1 |   |     |     |  |  |
| 26  | <b>Sea Otter</b> <i>Enhydra lutris</i>                         |     |     |   | 2 |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 27  | <b>Bobcat</b> <i>Lynx rufus</i>                                |     |     |   |   |   |   | P1 |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 28  | <b>Mule Deer</b> <i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>                    |     |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     | 5   |  |  |
| 28a | <b>Mule (Black-tailed) Deer</b> <i>O. h. columbianus</i>       |     |     | 1 |   | 1 |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 29  | <b>White-tailed Deer</b> <i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>         | 8   |     |   |   |   | 1 |    |     |   |   | 2 | 30+ |     |  |  |
| 30  | <b>Moose</b> <i>Alces alces</i>                                |     |     |   |   |   |   |    | 1   |   |   |   | 1   |     |  |  |
| 31  | <b>Pronghorn</b> <i>Antilocapra americana</i>                  |     |     |   |   |   |   |    | C10 | 3 | 3 |   | 13  |     |  |  |
| 32a | <b>American Bison (Plains Bison)</b> <i>Bos bison bison</i>    |     |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     | 15+ |  |  |
| 32b | <b>American Bison (Wood Buffalo)</b> <i>B b athabasca</i>      |     |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     | 40+ |  |  |
| 33  | <b>Bighorn Sheep</b> <i>Ovis canadensis</i>                    | 30+ |     |   |   |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |
| 34  | <b>Harbour Porpoise</b> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i>               |     |     |   | 1 |   |   |    |     |   |   |   |     |     |  |  |

## **AGM 2005 SWYNNERTON**

(Andrew Bray)

The AGM was held at ATE Swynnerton near Stafford. Attendees arrived on Friday evening to enjoy a hearty meal from the main kitchen and catch up on news at the bar. There was a hard core that finally dragged their bodies away from the bar to gain a few hours sleep before the main event.

On Saturday morning a coach took the party to Blackshaw Moor, Leek Training Area. We were joined on the moor by a group of students from Derby University who were spending the week on the training area carrying out the MOD Bird Count. Our day on the moor was to provide some data for the bird count. The coach would drop us off and then pick us up at the end of the walk. It was planned to do a number of short walks on the training area each with its own small subtle change in terrain.

The main feature of a moor is that it is bleak, desolate and indistinctive. In line with these features the weather was gloomy, windy and threatening. The one aspect about this particular moor is that as you look west there is nothing to protect it! This might suggest that the bird count for the day would not be up in the number normally expected at an AGM and you would be correct. The first walk of the day was looking promising as we stopped at the Mermain Public House. It quickly transpired that it was a 150 metre drop in height straight down the steep slope to then follow a re-entrant of a 200 metre climb back to the top. The aim was to find pied flycatcher but that was unsuccessful. It did clear everyone's heads from any excess imbibe the night before. There were however some good sights and a surprisingly number of birds. Some of the party took a more leisurely OAP route remaining on the ridge (mutterings from the main body was that next time OAP means 30+!).



The next route was on the lee side of the ridge and mainly downhill. The clue was that we went from Upper Fleet Green pass Lower Fleet Green to the road. A few small showers also cheered everyone up. Again there were lots of birds sheltering wherever they could. The main highlight was a pair of Redstarts that were showing well.

It was then onto the lunch stop with the majority remaining in the warmth and dry of the coach rather than walking to the very nice picnic area in Forkhill Plantation – what is wrong with having lunch buffeted by wind in the drizzle. We then carried out our 3<sup>rd</sup> walk around Revidge Hill and along the side of Swallow Moss. The hope was to see grouse. They were heard but any self-respecting grouse was not going to put their head up in that wind. Only fool-hardy birdwatchers were also going to expect any bird to be around. There were good sightings of Tree Pipit in the small wood.

By this stage we had been buffeted and buffeted again. There were two very large black areas of the sky racing towards us. We still had time to get a 4<sup>th</sup> walk in. The

options were another bracing walk in one of the steep re-entrants in the range area or a casual walk by the side of Tittesworth Reservoir in the country park. We enjoyed ice-cream, tea and cakes! A potter along the lakeside also allowed some to explore further. Soon it was time to be back on the coach for the hour's drive back to camp or should I say forty winks drive – was anyone awake?

There was enough time to get showered and changed ready for the AGM and dinner. The day seemed to have taken the steam out of everyone as the bar closed early in comparison to other AGMs. Sleep that night was needed.

On the Sunday a small number stayed the whole morning to walk around the backdoor training area to the camp. This place has a range of habitats and is sheltered! During the short walk the highlight was watching a Greater Spotted Woodpecker feeding its young at the nest.

The list of birds for the weekend resulted in 71 species.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i></li> <li>• Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i></li> <li>• Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i></li> <li>• Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i></li> <li>• Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i></li> <li>• Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i></li> <li>• Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></li> <li>• Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i></li> <li>• Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i></li> <li>• Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i></li> <li>• Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i></li> <li>• Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i></li> <li>• Coot <i>Fulica atra</i></li> <li>• Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i></li> <li>• Black-headed Gull <i>Larus ridibundus</i></li> <li>• Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i></li> <li>• Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i></li> <li>• Wood Pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i></li> <li>• Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i></li> <li>• Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i></li> <li>• Swift <i>Apus apus</i></li> <li>• Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i></li> <li>• Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i></li> <li>• Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i></li> <li>• Sky Lark <i>Alauda arvensis</i></li> <li>• Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i></li> <li>• House Martin <i>Delichon urbica</i></li> <li>• Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i></li> <li>• Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i></li> <li>• Grey Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i></li> <li>• White / Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i></li> <li>• Dipper <i>Cinclus cinclus</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i></li> <li>• Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i></li> <li>• Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i></li> <li>• Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i></li> <li>• Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i></li> <li>• Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i></li> <li>• Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i></li> <li>• Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i></li> <li>• Garden Warbler <i>Sylvia borin</i></li> <li>• Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i></li> <li>• Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i></li> <li>• Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i></li> <li>• Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i></li> <li>• Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i></li> <li>• Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i></li> <li>• Coal Tit <i>Parus ater</i></li> <li>• Blue Tit <i>Parus caeruleus</i></li> <li>• Great Tit <i>Parus major</i></li> <li>• Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i></li> <li>• Magpie <i>Pica pica</i></li> <li>• Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i></li> <li>• Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i></li> <li>• Crow <i>Corvus corone</i></li> <li>• Raven <i>Corvus corax</i></li> <li>• Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i></li> <li>• House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i></li> <li>• Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i></li> <li>• Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i></li> <li>• Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i></li> <li>• Linnet <i>Carduelis cannabina</i></li> <li>• Lesser Redpoll <i>Carduelis cabaret</i></li> </ul> |
|--|---|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i></li> <li>• Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i></li> <li>• Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i></li> </ul> |
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Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

### **A.O.S PORTLAND WEEKENDS**

(Hilary Nash)

The Portland weekend is an annual event in the AOS (mini) expeditions calendar. Support for it has varied from an all time low of 3 in 1998 to a convivial group of 16 in 2003. It always has something to offer; the Observatory at the Bill can produce spectacular movements of migrating birds or good sea watches. Like any observatory it can have its dull moments, but with the RSPB Reserves of Radipole and Lodmoor within easy reach there is always something to look at. Ferrybridge, conveniently placed midway between the Bill and Weymouth, is always worth a scan and even if there are no birds around, a sharp look out for the Yellow Headed Ticket Sticker is necessary. We have a night out on the Saturday which has always proved successful, even if it makes the dawn chorus a bit of struggle.

In 2006 we will be there again at the beginning of October from Friday 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> for another trip. We would be delighted to see you there. As an appetiser the lists from the last seven trips are below.



(Wheatear)



# LIST OF BIRD SPECIES SEEN IN 1999-2005

| <u>English Name</u>  | <u>Scientific Name</u>           | <u>1999</u> | <u>2000</u> | <u>2001</u> | <u>2002</u> | <u>2003</u> | <u>2004</u> | <u>2005</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Black Throated Diver | <i>Gavia arctica</i>             |             |             |             |             |             |             | X           |
| Red-throated Diver   | <i>Gavia stellata</i>            |             |             | X           |             |             |             |             |
| Black-necked Grebe   | <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>      | X           |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Little Grebe         | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>    | X           | X           | X           |             |             |             | X           |
| Great Crested Grebe  | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>        | X           | X           |             | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Fulmar               | <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>        | X           | X           | X           |             | X           | X           | X           |
| Manx Shearwater      | <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>         |             | X           |             |             |             |             |             |
| Balearic Shearwater  | <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>     |             |             | X           | X           | X           |             | X           |
| Sooty Shearwater     | <i>Puffinus griseus</i>          |             |             | X           |             |             | X           | X           |
| Gannet               | <i>Morus bassanus</i>            | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Cormorant            | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>       | X           | X           | X           |             | X           | X           | X           |
| Shag                 | <i>Phalacrocorax aristorelis</i> | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Little Egret         | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>          |             |             | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Grey Heron           | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>             | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Mute Swan            | <i>Cygnus olor</i>               |             | X           | X           |             | X           | X           | X           |
| [Black Swan]         | <i>Cygnus atratus</i>            |             |             |             |             | X (2)       |             |             |
| Canada Goose         | <i>Anser canadensis</i>          | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| [Barnacle Goose]     | <i>Branta leucopsis</i>          | X           | X           | X           |             | X           |             | X           |
| [Snow Goose]         | <i>Anser caerulescens</i>        |             | X           |             |             | X           |             |             |
| Brent Goose          | <i>Branta bernicla</i>           |             |             | X           |             |             |             |             |
| Shelduck             | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>           | X           | X           | X           |             | X (1)       | X           | X           |
| Mallard              | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>        | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Gadwall              | <i>Anas strepera</i>             | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Pintail              | <i>Anas acuta</i>                |             |             | X           |             |             |             |             |
| Shoveler             | <i>Anas clypeata</i>             | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Wigeon               | <i>Anas penelope</i>             |             | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Teal                 | <i>Anas crecca</i>               | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Tufted Duck          | <i>Aythya fuligula</i>           | X           | X           | X           |             | X           | X           | X           |
| Eider                | <i>Somateria mollissima</i>      |             |             |             | X           |             |             | X           |
| Common Scoter        | <i>Melanitta nigra</i>           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           | X           |
| Ruddy Duck           | <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>        |             |             |             |             | X           | X           | X           |

|                          |                                 |   |   |   |   |       |   |   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---|---|
| Common Buzzard           | <i>Buteo buteo</i>              | X |   |   | X | X (1) | X | X |
| Sparrowhawk              | <i>Accipiter nisus</i>          | X | X |   | X | X     | X | X |
| Kestrel                  | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>        | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Hobby                    | <i>Falco subbuteo</i>           | X |   | X | X |       |   |   |
| Peregrine                | <i>Falco peregrinus</i>         | X |   | X |   | X     | X | X |
| Merlin                   | <i>Falco columbarius</i>        |   | X |   | X |       |   |   |
| Pheasant                 | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>      | X |   | X |   | X     |   |   |
| Water Rail               | <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>         |   |   | X | X | X     | X | H |
| Moorhen                  | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>      | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Coot                     | <i>Fulica atra</i>              | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Oystercatcher            | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>    | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Ringed Plover            | <i>Chararius hiaticula</i>      | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Lapwing                  | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>        | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Knot                     | <i>Calidris canuta</i>          | X |   |   |   |       | X |   |
| Sanderling               | <i>Calidris alba</i>            |   |   |   |   | X     |   |   |
| Purple Sandpiper         | <i>Calidris maritima</i>        |   |   |   |   | X     | X |   |
| Turnstone                | <i>Arenaria interpres</i>       | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Dunlin                   | <i>Calidris alpina</i>          | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Little Stint             | <i>Calidris minuta</i>          | X |   | X | X |       |   |   |
| Common Sandpiper         | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>       | X |   |   |   | X     |   | X |
| Redshank                 | <i>Tringa totanus</i>           | X |   | X |   | X     |   |   |
| Spotted Redshank         | <i>Tringa erythropus</i>        |   |   |   | X | X     |   |   |
| Greenshank               | <i>Tringa nebularia</i>         | X |   | X |   | X     |   | X |
| Black-tailed Godwit      | <i>Limosa limosa</i>            |   |   | X |   | X     | X | X |
| Bar-tailed Godwit        | <i>Limosa lapponica</i>         | X | X |   | X |       |   | X |
| Snipe                    | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>      | X |   | X | X |       | X | X |
| Pectoral Sandpiper       | <i>Calidris melanotos</i>       |   |   |   |   |       |   |   |
| Great Skua               | <i>Stercorarius skua</i>        |   |   |   |   |       |   | X |
| Parasitic Skua           | <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> |   | X | X |   |       |   | X |
| Black-headed Gull        | <i>Larus ridibundus</i>         | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Common Gull              | <i>Larus canus</i>              | X | X | X |   |       |   |   |
| Mediterranean Gull       | <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>     |   |   |   |   |       | X |   |
| Herring Gull             | <i>Larus argentatus</i>         | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus fuscus</i>             | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Great Black-backed Gull  | <i>Larus marinus</i>            | X | X | X | X | X     | X | X |
| Kittiwake                | <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>         |   | X |   |   |       | X | X |

|                    |                                   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|
| Sandwich Tern      | <i>Stena sandvicensis</i>         |   | X |   | X | X    | X | X |
| Common Tern        | <i>Sterno hirundo</i>             |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Guillemot          | <i>Uria aalge</i>                 |   |   |   | X |      | X |   |
| Stock Dove         | <i>Columba oenas</i>              |   |   | X | X |      |   | X |
| Wood Pigeon        | <i>Columba palumbus</i>           | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Collared Dove      | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>      | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Common Cuckoo      | <i>Cululus canorus</i>            |   |   |   |   |      | X |   |
| Short-eared Owl    | <i>Asio flammeus</i>              |   |   |   | X |      |   |   |
| Little Owl         | <i>Athene noctua</i>              |   |   | X | X | X    |   |   |
| Green Woodpecker   | <i>Picus viridis</i>              |   |   |   |   | X(2) |   |   |
| Kingfisher         | <i>Alcedo atthis</i>              |   |   | X | X | X    |   | X |
| Wryneck            | <i>Jynx torquilla</i>             | X |   | X |   | X    |   |   |
| Skylark            | <i>Alauda arvensis</i>            | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Sand Martin        | <i>Riparia riparia</i>            | X | X | X |   | X    | X | X |
| Swallow            | <i>Hirundo rustica</i>            | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| House Martin       | <i>Delichon urbica</i>            | X | X | X |   | X    | X | X |
| Rock Pipit         | <i>Anthus petrosus</i>            | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Meadow Pipit       | <i>Anthus pratensis</i>           | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Pied Wagtail       | <i>Motacilla alba</i>             | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Yellow Wagtail     | <i>Motacilla flava</i>            | X | X | X | X | X    |   | X |
| GreyWagtail        | <i>Motacilla cinera</i>           |   |   |   |   |      | X |   |
| Wren               | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>    | X |   | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Hedge Accentor     | <i>Prunella modularis</i>         | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Robin              | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>         | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Redstart           | <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>    | X |   | X |   | X    |   |   |
| Northern Wheatear  | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>          | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Stonechat          | <i>Saxicola torquata</i>          | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Whinchat           | <i>Saxicola ruberta</i>           | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Song Thrush        | <i>Turdus philomelos</i>          | X | X | X | X | X    | X |   |
| Blackbird          | <i>Turdus merula</i>              | X | X | X | X | X    | X | X |
| Blackcap           | <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>         |   |   | X | X | X    | X |   |
| Garden Warbler     | <i>Sylvia borin</i>               | X |   | X | X |      |   |   |
| Lesser Whitethroat | <i>Sylvia curruca</i>             | X |   |   | X |      |   |   |
| Whitethroat        | <i>Sylvia communis</i>            |   |   | X |   | X(1) |   |   |
| Dartford Warbler   | <i>Sylvia undata</i>              |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |
| Sedge Warbler      | <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> |   |   |   |   | X    |   | X |

|                        |                                |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Grasshopper Warbler    | <i>Locustella naevia</i>       |    |    |    |    | X  |    |    |
| Cetti's Warbler        | <i>Cettia cetti</i>            | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Reed Warbler           | <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i> | X  |    |    | X  |    |    |    |
| Icterine Warbler       | <i>Hippolais icterina</i>      |    |    |    |    | X  |    |    |
| Melodious Warbler      | <i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>    | X  |    | X  |    | X  |    |    |
| Willow Warbler         | <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>  |    |    |    |    | X  | X  |    |
| Chiffchaff             | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Goldcrest              | <i>Regulus regulus</i>         |    |    |    | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Firecrest              | <i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>    |    |    | X  | X  |    | X  |    |
| Spotted Flycatcher     | <i>Muscicapa striata</i>       |    |    |    |    | X  |    | X  |
| Pied Flycatcher        | <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>      | X  |    | X  |    |    |    |    |
| Great Tit              | <i>Parus major</i>             | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Blue Tit               | <i>Parus caeruleus</i>         | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Long-tailed Tit        | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>     |    |    |    |    |    | X  |    |
| Bearded Reedling       | <i>Panurus biarmicus</i>       | X  |    |    |    |    | X  | X  |
| Magpie                 | <i>Pica pica</i>               | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Jackdaw                | <i>Corvus monedula</i>         | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Rook                   | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>       | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Carrion Crow           | <i>Corvus corone</i>           | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Raven                  | <i>Corvus corax</i>            |    |    | X  | X  | X  | X  |    |
| Starling               | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>        | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Rose-coloured Starling | <i>Sturnus roseus</i>          |    |    |    |    | X  |    |    |
| House Sparrow          | <i>Passer domesticus</i>       | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Chaffinch              | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>       | X  | X  | X  |    | X  | X  | X  |
| Linnet                 | <i>Carduelis cannabina</i>     | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Goldfinch              | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>     | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Greenfinch             | <i>Carduelis chloris</i>       | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  | X  |
| Siskin                 | <i>Carduelis spinus</i>        |    |    | X  |    |    |    |    |
| Reed Bunting           | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>    | X  | X  |    |    |    | X  |    |
| Ortolan Bunting        | <i>Emberiza hortulana</i>      |    |    |    |    | X  |    |    |
| Corn Bunting           | <i>Miliaria calandra</i>       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Total Species          |                                | 84 | 72 | 93 | 77 | 97 | 85 | 86 |

**Notes** Where there is a (1) or (2) against a record, it indicates that the bird was seen out side the “traditional” recording area of **Portland, Ferrybridge, Radipole or Lodmoor.** 2003 (1) = West Fleet at Langton Herring. (2) = Fleet at Abbotsbury

## RETURN TO NEPAL

(Gerry Birch)

The catalyst for our trip to Nepal was the invitation to a rather grand wedding in Kathmandu. The invitation came from the patron of the Britain – Nepal Society, HRH Princess Jotshana Shah to attend the wedding of her son. As chairman of the Society I felt that it was about time I returned to experience the situation there for myself. Sheila had not been back since the Queen's Gurkha Signals reunion in 1999 and my last visit was with the AOS trip in Feb/Mar 2001. We were provided therefore with the ideal opportunity to meet some of our Nepali friends that we had known over the last 10 - 15 years, and as a trustee of UK branch of the King Mahendra Trust (KMT) for Nature Conservation, there would also be a chance to be updated on their projects and the situation in general.

We planned a three week trip to cover the wedding in Kathmandu with visits to two good birding areas, Chitwan and Kosi Tappu. The 'winter rains' came late, ie mid January, and there was a cold front sitting over the northern part of the Subcontinent throughout our stay. We only saw the mountains clearly on two days. Weddings are held at houses of the bride and the groom and go on for several days. This entails a good deal of standing around drinking whisky and devouring quantities of curry, usually in the garden, over which 'shamianas' have been pitched, trying to keep warm around portable gas fires or charcoal braziers. Due to the continuing cold weather thermal underwear was essential and for most of the rest of the trip Sheila was hardly ever out of her down jacket. At both houses Damai bands and elements of the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) band were keeping up a background cacophony of traditional music. We went in procession between the houses in cars and minibuses accompanied by the assorted musicians.

Duty done we set off for Chitwan for a 4 night stay at Tiger Tops Jungle Lodge. We were warmly welcomed but it was sad to note that for 3 nights we were the only occupants. The ongoing Maoist insurgency has put off a great many tourists. The lodge, sited in the jungle, gives access to the surrounding grasslands. Each morning at 0700 we set off on elephantback to look for game. Use of elephants is the only practical way to get about this terrain. Grass is 12 feet or more high and visibility on foot is about 3 feet! You do not wish to meet a rhino, tiger or wild elephant in such circumstances unless elephant-mounted! I have to say that an elephant is not the most stable platform for birdwatching, but is the only way to reach certain areas. Apart from spotting all the various types of deer, Sloth Bear, Gaur (a type of wild cattle), wild boar, monkeys, crocodiles and a tiger, we did see some very good birds. These included the globally threatened **Slender-billed Babbler**, the **Chestnut-capped Babbler** and the also globally threatened **Grey-crowned Prinia** which all inhabit tall grassland and, without elephant transport, it would have been difficult or impossible to locate these species.

The first full day was given over to a visit to the KMT Biodiversity Conservation Centre (BCC). From the centre Trust runs its Rhino/Tiger conservation project. To reach it necessitated a 35 km drive on rough tracks through the jungle, but would give us a chance to travel through an area not often visited by tourists. The highlight of the outward journey was the discovery of a colony of nesting **Lesser Adjutant Storks**. We counted 11 nests; all appeared to be occupied and with juveniles around 30 storks were



counted. Our accompanying naturalist would be keeping a future check of these over the coming months. On our return in the late afternoon we had an excellent sighting of a Sloth Bear on the track, and then made a detour to an old oxbow lake which was hosting around 30 Marsh Mugger Crocodiles around the edge with more than 100 **Night Herons** roosting in the reeds.

The next day involved a post breakfast river trip to another site known as the Tharu Village. It is a lodge built in the local tribal style which is surrounded by a farm which provides food for all the Tiger Tops sites. In addition there is a school sponsored by Tiger Tops for the local population. The river trip is an excellent way to watch birds and animals as the boat drifts silently down stream. The fish-eating Gharial crocodiles were clearly visible on the bank, once you had sorted them out from the logs washed down in the previous monsoon! **Ospreys** and **Pied Kingfishers** were a delight to watch with the occasional **Small Pratincole** skimming the surface. The late evening return by landrover gave us our tiger sighting as it walked down the track ahead of us before turning off into the jungle with a disdainful look over its shoulder!

Hornbills are spectacular birds and were among the 'targets' for the trip. The **Indian Grey Hornbill** is relatively common and can be seen around the edges of villages and woods; the other two species are more difficult to track. We did see a pair of **Pied Hornbills** in flight over the lodge. This left the most difficult species, the **Great Hornbill**, to be located. It was planned to do a jungle walk to the tented camp for lunch and from there return to the lodge by elephant. We were escorted by our naturalist and two other staff; it is inadvisable to go alone just in case! On the way we had good views of **Sharp-tailed Munias** in flocks of up to 30 in the undergrowth, a pair of **Black-crested Bulbuls** and several species of woodpecker, including **Grey-**



**crowned Pygmy, Himalayan Flame-backed and Fulvous-breasted.** After lunch we went in search of the **Great Hornbills** and discovered a pair eating fruit in a very tall tree which made viewing quite difficult until they took off over the grassland towards a more open area. We had a close view of a male Gaur on our trip back to the lodge, a first for us as we had never seen these on any of our

previous visits. That afternoon as we sat outside having a late cup of tea, we were treated to a flypast of 25 **Great Hornbills** at a range of half a mile, making their way to a roosting site. They came in small groups settling on the tops of the Bombax (kapok) trees and gave plenty of time for observation.

On return to Kathmandu we sorted out the laundry in the calm atmosphere of our hotel and planned the next phase. The Maoist inspired strikes had already delayed our plans and we learnt that we would have to prolong our stay in Kosi Tappu by two days for the same reason. There are worse things that can happen on a trip, but this had the effect of shortening our final time in Kathmandu during which we had

planned to visit friends. The 45 minute flight to the east, parallel to the Himalayas was uneventful but the mountains remained firmly behind clouds. It had been raining and it was warmer than in Chitwan and we could divest ourselves of down clothing, but not for long!

The camp at Kosi consists of a series of tents pitched under thatched roofs, with separate ablution blocks. Since my last visit in 2001 a dining room with a bar had been built, complete with veranda overlooking the camp from where the local species can be watched in comfort and shade with drink and binos in hand. I am sure that the AOS members who visited at that time would appreciate the improvements. The trees had grown considerably and the whole camp had a much greener and a more mature feel about it. Dr Bharal had also had a separate room built to provide a classroom for visiting local children. Both buildings were made from local and recycled materials and built in the vernacular style.

Over the last 200 years the course of the Kosi river has moved westwards by around 100 km. The Kosi drains a good part of the eastern Nepal Himalayas, and only some 35 miles upstream three rivers come together to form the Kosi which bursts through the hills and the Terai jungle strip to the plains of India. In the 1960s the Indian government built a barrage to reduce the annual inundation of the state of Bihar resulting from the monsoon and the melt waters from the high Himalayas and to improve irrigation for both Nepal and Bihar. The reserve consists of 175 sq km of the resulting marshes, wet grasslands, scrub and riverine forest. It is the home of the only remaining herd of wild Water Buffalo and a decreasing number of Gangetic Dolphin, both of which we were able to see.

The pattern of the next few days was an early morning walk in the immediate area, followed by cooked breakfast on the veranda, if warm enough, and then a long morning returning for lunch and a short rest before setting out again in the late afternoon.

On the first day we had the river trip which entailed transporting an inflatable Avon

dinghy up river by vehicle to permit us to drift downstream. Drifting down, we pulled into one of the many sandy islands that form and change every year, to find **Great Stone Plovers**, and also the familiar **Eurasian Thick Knees**. Otters and a large Python were also seen on the bank. However the highlight of this trip was the large number of raptors spotted, 16 species in all, including **4 species of vulture, Pallas's Fish**



**Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Pied Harrier, Shikra, Common Buzzard, Steppe Eagle, Imperial Eagle, Booted Eagle and Bonelli's Eagle, Osprey and Kestrel.**

That evening on our return to camp we discovered that the King had taken over direct rule and declared a state of emergency! We listened on the radio to the King's

broadcast where he set out a 21 point agenda and his proposal for a Council of Ministers. As he was speaking so the phones went off! The airports were closed and all news was censored and continues to be so. Comms gradually returned over the next few days but mobiles were still not back by the time we left Nepal on 9 Feb. The idea had been to prevent political leaders escaping to India (some 150 were put into house arrest/custody) and to deny comms to the Maoists in an attempt to stop them ordering bhands. We carried on birdwatching! By the time you read this the situation will have moved on.

The next day was 'World Wetlands Day 2005', and a programme of events over the coming days to emphasise the importance of the area to Nepal and the locals had been arranged. Dr Bharal was the 'guest of honour' at the opening ceremony. The local authorities had obtained clearance for the event to go ahead, coup notwithstanding. As we arrived at the Reserve HQ, close to the RNA Coy HQ, so the locals and the school children were gathering including floats and decorated National Parks Department elephants. There were the inevitable speeches made by the dignitaries and then I was called upon to make a speech to the assembled 500 plus Tharus et al, good empire building stuff! It stretched my vocabulary but I was able to point out that I had been there over 40 years before when the barrage was under construction and at that time there was considerably more wildlife! Afterwards the RNA Coy Comd, Dr Bharal, the Nepal Tourist Board rep and I were each issued with a brace of feral doves (peace!) to launch. They just about made it to the roof of the shamiana!



Other highlights of our stay at Kosi included very clear daylight views of roosting **Brown Fish Owl** and **Brown Hawk Owl**. The immediate area around the camp was very profitable. The local pond had a flock of **17 Lesser Whistling Duck** and upwards of **50 Ferruginous Duck** with both **Yellow** and **Cinnamon Bitterns** viewable in the early morning or late evening, if lucky. You had to walk out of the camp to another wet area, all of 200 yards, to get a **Black Bittern**! One of the early pre breakfast walks produced **Yellow-breasted Bunting**, **Whistler's Warbler**, **Tickell's Warbler**, **Hume's Warbler**, **Dusky Warbler** and **Cinnamon Bittern**. On our last such walk we clocked an extremely good view of a male **Siberian Rubythroat**, which, despite crawling around dry undergrowth several times on earlier walks, had eluded us. We also had clear views of **six Swamp Francolin**. Earlier in the week we had also been present at the first sighting for the reserve of a male **Rufous-bellied Niltava** (formerly **Beautiful Niltava**) *Niltava sundara*. Apparently over 20 additional species have been recorded in Kosi Tappu since the AOS visit in 2001.

Life in Kathmandu was normal on our return. Tourists were few and hotels and camps were at very low occupancy. However at our hotel (the Malla) the Saga groups kept coming. That company provided the manger with a satellite phone so that they could

keep in touch! I was asked if I was part of the Saga group - a bit miffed until I looked in the mirror! Our last three days were mainly taken up with KMT and other liaison visits, shopping and visits to friends. Time prevented a return to Phulchowki, the 9000 ft peak to the south of the Kathmandu valley. In any event due to the security situation it is not now possible to drive all the way to the top. Nevertheless I did have final walk around the botanical garden at Godaveri. This visit produced **Little Forktail, White-capped River Chat, Blue Rockthrush** and another **Beautiful Niltava**.

So ended the birdwatching aspects to the trip with more than 200 species seen. We had been there at a very interesting and, for us, an opportune time and we hope to return again.

### **SAFARI TO SOUTHERN SENEGAL 2005**

(Ken Wright)

During February this year whilst on holiday in The Gambia I took the opportunity to go down to Southern Senegal on a one day landrover safari. I went with an organisation called Arch Tours, run by Abdul Rahman Conteh who used to be one of my soldiers whilst I was serving there. I have been with his group before so I knew that it would be a good trip. My wife and 2 of our friends came as well, together with 6 other people. When Abdul left the Gambia National Army (GNA) he started an organisation called Gambia Safari Adventures and we went out with them on a number of occasions – it was our way of giving back to the local economy what they rightly had earned, rather than using the larger tourist organisations. After a few years his set-up folded and he went into another business but in February we were glad to see him back in the safari business.

We were collected from Kololi Beach Club at 8am and went on to one of the hotels to pick up the remaining passengers. So off we went to go down to Kafontine and the island of Killy (at least I think that is how it was spelt) situated on the Diouloulou River, the main tributary of the Casamance River. We started off up the south bank as far as Mandinaba where we turned off towards the border crossing and we passed by the Seleti Waterhole (this is normally a good birding area). At the border crossing we met up with a very interesting guy (Okhwan Yoon) from South Korea. He left his home in 2001 and was “cycling around the world”. Already having traversed Asia and Europe en route, he was now making inroads into Africa. He was carrying all of his possessions in a pannier attached to his cycle and endeavoured to eat 5 small meals a day. He was keeping in touch with the outside world in Internet cafes. What a way to travel! About 3 or 4 miles beyond the border crossing we stopped for a drink and were caught up by Okhwan so we had a long chat with him, exchanged e-mail addresses etc, gave him a drink and then went our separate ways.

When we arrived at Diouloulou on the road to Bignona we turned off towards Kafontine and the riverbank of the tributary where we were to board our pirogue. On arrival it was found that the water level was too low so we had a bite to eat and a drink before moving off farther onto the delta where there was sufficient water level

for the pirogue. Down the muddy bank we went and the guides and boat crew helped on board the ladies (and 2 small children). The outboard was started and off we meandered heading towards the main river on a journey scheduled to take about 2 hours. It was a peaceful and relaxing journey despite there being no overhead shade but at that time (about 11am) it did not matter because there was plenty of cloud cover. I was sat in the stern with bins trained on whatever there was about and the only one on board with any knowledge of West African birdlife. After a while the pirogue grounded and the staff had to alight to push us off the bank – fortunately the water was OK for this to take place! Off again and I was soon enjoying looking at the birds I expected to see and in particular, the many Osprey. In fact on the day, I saw 12. Eventually, having joined the main waterway we arrived at our destination and managed to alight without problem to walk up to the village where we were greeted by the village Chief. All of the villagers seemed very pleased to see us as we walked around (through a garden where there was a goodly crop of “whacky backy” growing) to the tree which is the centre of the village. The villagers do not follow Islam or any other religion - they worship the tree and I think that this makes them “humanist”.

The visit over we boarded our pirogue again for the return journey and very quickly realised when we arrived at the tributary, the water level was not even as high as it was on the outward journey! Soon we bottomed again and this went on and on, all of us having to get out and push us off the sandbanks until this was all to no avail. For the last 200 yards or so we had to walk back through the river. What an interesting way to end a boat trip. Up the muddy bank we went to find some clean water to wash feet before donning footwear for the landrover trip to Kafontine beach area and the restaurant for lunch (time now 5pm). A good meal was had by all, washed down with copious amounts of local beer ‘on the house’. Some hit the sea for a dip and then we were off again, back to The Gambia and we took the “Smugglers Route”. This was through dense bush on a single dusty track and it was busy despite being dark at after 7pm. No doubt the other vehicles were ‘smugglers’ i.e. those evading customs on the way back from Banjul! It was a good job we did not break down – there would have been no chance of ringing the AA and asking for assistance.

All in all, an excellent trip although there could have been some better organisation (and I did speak to Abdul about it later and he fully agreed). The lunch was not what he ordered (hence the beers on the house) and the boatman would not be used again as he did not know about the tide levels. We arrived back at Kololi Beach Club at about 9.15pm at the end of a long day and headed for the shower and a long beer.

Birds seen on the safari are as follows:

Great White Pelican – quite a few  
African Darter – by the dozen  
Great White Egret – throughout the boat journey  
Goliath Heron – just the one  
Purple Heron – a few  
Grey Heron – many  
Western Reef Heron – a few  
European Spoonbill – about a dozen  
Palm Nut Vulture – 2

Osprey – a dozen  
Long-crested Eagle – 2 (The Highlight of the day)  
Spur-winged Plover – many  
Whimbrel – many  
Spotted Redshank – a few  
Common Sandpiper – many  
Broad-billed Roller – one  
Pied Kingfisher – numerous  
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater – a couple  
Rose-ringed Parakeet – half a dozen flying together  
Western Grey Plaintain-eater – three or four

### **NORTHERN TUNISIA 16 -23 FEBRUARY 2005**

(Mark Easterbrook)



### **References**

Collins Guide to the *Birds of Britain & Europe with N. Africa & The Middle East* Trip reports posted on the Web.

### **Introduction**

Ninety two species were recorded during the holiday – which was not intended to be a total birding experience. I had just returned from duty in Iraq and it was a chance to unwind with my family and take in some of the Tunisian historical sights and the sun – which there wasn't much of in an unseasonably poor winter. Indeed our day trip and only total birding day to Ain Darham (Ain Darhem) was a total washout with visibility down to 5 metres during a snow blizzard in the Atlas Mountains.

We were unable to travel to the south of the country as time was short and we simply didn't have time to stop overnight in the desert – which should be the aim if you are planning a visit with the time to do it.

Birding in Tunisia is well documented so I will not give site directions, as existing ones remain extant (with the exception of Thyna Salt Pans), however I will make



reference and give thanks to all those people who have previously contributed trip reports to various trip report Web pages – thank you all; the trip would not have been so enjoyable without your valuable information.

Car hire cost €116 for 4 days (1.4 Renault Cleo) pre booked over the Internet with Camelcar (a good tip from previous reports and by far the cheapest company – and reliable), petrol is about half the price of the U.K. with the standard of driving being a little unorthodox to say the least. However it is generally standard for that part of the world. The standard of road is generally very good, although distances are large and overnight stops are recommended if you are not to feel extremely tired. We stayed in Hammamet, which was a pleasant place that contained several good birds.

### **Daily Itineraries**

**Day One.** The flight from Bristol to Monastir took about two and a half hours, from the airport to Hammamet, where we were staying took just over an hour, as we had to drop off other travellers on route. We noted Greater Flamingo, Southern Grey Shrike (*algeriensis* appeared common along the road at the coast) and numerous Spotless Starlings from the coach.

In the hotel Bel Azur grounds we noted several Sardinian Warbler, which were extremely common and the North African race of Blue Tit that were very striking. A singing Serin and a Sandwich Tern over the sea ended the day.

**Day Two.** We hadn't booked the car for today, so a walk to Hammamet Modina and a taxi to Nebeul filled our day. Hoopoe, Black Redstart and Chiffchaff were noted in the cemetery at Hammamet and the only sighting of a Fan-tailed Warbler was noted near Nebeul in longish grass.

**Day Three.** Prior to the car being delivered a Common Bulbul was noted singing in the grounds of the hotel. As we journeyed to Ain Draham 3 Black-shouldered Kite were noted near to the Toll area on the motorway near to Tunis. On route to Ain Draham, a Quail was seen flying across the road at Bou Salem, Long-legged Buzzards were noted and the majority of roadside birds were Crested Larks. The weather deteriorated dramatically in the Atlas Mountains and having eventually reached the turning for Beni M'Tir the Levalliant's Green Woodpecker site south of Ain Draham visibility was almost non existent so there was little chance of connecting with the bird. On the northern side of the mountain having driven in some pretty hideous conditions and slid for some considerable time, we descended to Tabarka and onward towards Tunis. In an obvious layby between Tabarka and Nefza we stopped on the route 7. Here we heard and had a fleeting glimpse of a Levalliant's Green Woodpecker in a wooded location much further down the mountain than we had expected. A Wryneck was also noted here. On the drive back to Hammamet, White Storks were noted on their nests and a Barn Owl flew over the road near to Mejez El-Bab.

**Day Four.** Today we visited the Historic Roman ruins at Dougga, which is a tremendous site to visit in it's own right. It also happens to be probably the easiest place to see Moussier's Redstart and Black Wheatear. These birds coupled with Barbary Partridge, Little Owl, Blue Rock Thrush, easily identifiable Thekla Larks and

an Eastern Black Redstart made this an exceptional place to bird watch also. Roadside Long-legged Buzzards, White Storks and White-headed Ducks at Sidi Jididi made this an enjoyable and productive day out.

We also visited Siliana Barrage on our return from Dougga to Hammamet which proved to be a very good site for wildfowl. This lies on the route 73 and is well worth a visit.

**Day Five.** We made an early visit to Sidi Jididi lake, where there were 10 White-headed Ducks (1 male), heard Cetti's Warblers and identified a fine pair of Little Crake in reeds on the southern shore. The only Gadwall and Tufted Duck were also noted here.

We continued to Korba via Beni Khalid where we saw a massive flock of some 3000 Starling with a mixture of Common and Spotless, which made quite a spectacle. At Korba Salt Pans, Great White Egret, Wood Sandpiper, several migrating hirundines and several species of wader were noted.

At Kalibia we noted a Crag Martin in the pools west of the town along with a Little Ringed Plover. By this time the wind was blowing strongly so we proceeded to the harbour for some sea watching. Hundreds of Cory's Shearwater were passing close to the point and at least 3 Yelkouan Shearwater were positively identified at relatively close range.

On leaving Kalibia our attentions were drawn to a Gull in a ploughed field. Closer inspection revealed the presence of a Common Gull. I am unsure of the status of this species in Tunisia but it would appear to be a semi-rarity at least.

We returned to the hotel early and then went out for the evening to a Tunisian theme night – as you do?

**Day Six.** Today we visited Al Jem and its Roman Amphitheatre. This is well worth a visit as it is a spectacular construction where you can almost feel the atmosphere. Blue Rock Thrush and Black Redstart were common here.

We continued to Thyna Salt Pans on the main road to Gabes and South of Sfax.

*Directions:- Continue past Sfax toward Gabes. Look for the Thyna sign after about 20 kms on your left. Turn here and continue along the straight road to a T Junction. Turn right here and then left into the industrial area. Follow the road to the bottom of the industrial area where there is an obvious gap in the wall. This leads to the Salt Pans and raised causeways, which you are able to drive around.*

The Salt pans produced at least 8 Spoonbill, about 800 Avocet, Marsh Harrier, Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper, Dunlin, Marsh Sandpiper, Greenshank, Black-tailed Godwit and several hundred Greater Flamingo.

**Day Seven.** We birded locally and packed with a view to returning to the UK the next morning. An evening seawatch from the hotel produced a 1<sup>st</sup> winter Mediterranean Gull and Caspian Tern.

**Day Eight.** We returned to the UK and the snow having added no new species for the trip during our journey.

### Consolidated Systematic Species List

|                      |                                |  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Little Grebe         | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>  | Common at Sidi Jididi and numerous at Siliana Barrage  |
| Great Crested Grebe  | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>      | Numerous at Siliana Barrage and Sidi Jididi  |
| Cory's Shearwater    | <i>Calonectris diomedeae</i>   | Numerous past Kalibia harbour  |
| Yelkouan Shearwater  | <i>Puffinus Yelkouan</i>       | 3 seen well from Kalibia harbour   |
| Gannet               | <i>Morus bassanus</i>          | 1s & 2s seen from the hotel and at Kalibia harbour   |
| Cormorant            | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>     | Good numbers, noted with numerous <i>senensis ssp</i>  |
| Cattle Egret         | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>           | seen in small numbers in wet roadside fields   |
| Little Egret         | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>        | 1s seen alongside the road in various locations  |
| Grey Heron           | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>           | Seen almost anywhere in suitable habitat   |
| White Stork          | <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>         | Numerous birds seen on nest sites atop electricity pylons – all over the Northern area   |
| Spoonbill            | <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>     | At least 8 at Thyna salt pans  |
| Greater Flamingo     | <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>    | Hundreds seen at salt pans and roadside wetlands   |
| Shelduck             | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>         | Numerous at coastal salt pans  |
| Mallard              | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>      | Several at Siliana Barrage and Sidi Jididi lake  |
| Gadwall              | <i>Anas strepera</i>           | A male and female noted at Sidi Jididi lake  |
| Teal                 | <i>Anas crecca</i>             | Numerous at Sidi Jididi and Siliana Barrage  |
| Pintail              | <i>Anas acuta</i>              | 20 noted at Siliana Barrage  |
| Shoveler             | <i>Anas clypeata</i>           | A few at Sidi Jididi   |
| Pochard              | <i>Aythya ferina</i>           | Several at Siliana Barrage and Sidi Jididi   |
| Tufted Duck          | <i>Aythya fuligula</i>         | 1 male at Sidi Jididi  |
| White-headed Duck    | <i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>     | 10 seen including 1 male at Sidi Jididi  |
| Black-winged Kite    | <i>Elanus caeruleus</i>        | 1 to 3 seen near to Tunis on the main toll road from Hammamet. Near to the toll booths on pylons and near to the pools to the left of the road closer to Tunis |
| Marsh Harrier        | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>      | A male and female at Siliana Barrage and 2 females at Thyna salt pans  |
| Long-legged Buzzard  | <i>Buteo rufinus</i>           | Singles seen almost anywhere along the road  |
| Kestrel              | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>       | Fairly common seen anywhere in 1s & 2s   |
| Barbary Partridge    | <i>Alectoris barbara</i>       | 3 seen well at Dougga historic Roman ruins   |
| Quail                | <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>       | 1 seen near Bou Salem flying out in front of the car and across the road could not be relocated in the field it landed in                                      |
| Little Crane         | <i>Porzana Parva</i>           | A male and female heard calling and seen well at Sidi Jididi   |
| Coot                 | <i>Fulica atra</i>             | Seen in all wetland areas  |
| Avocet               | <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>  | C 800 seen at Thyna salt pans  |
| Little Ringed Plover | <i>Charadrius</i>              | 1 seen at the pools to the W of Kalibia town   |
| Kentish Plover       | <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i> | Seen in good numbers at Thyna salt pans  |
| Lapwing              | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>       | Singles seen in wet roadside fields  |
| Dunlin               | <i>Calidris alpina</i>         | A large flock at Thyna salt pans   |
| Curlew Sandpiper     | <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>     | Several at Thyna salt pans   |
| Little Stint         | <i>Calidris minuta</i>         | Several seen at Thyna salt pans  |
| Ruff                 | <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>      | 1 seen at Thyna salt pans  |
| Black-tailed Godwit  | <i>Limosa limosa</i>           | Apprx 90 noted at Thyna salt pans  |

|                          |                                  |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Redshank                 | <i>Tringa totanus</i>            | Seen anywhere in suitable habitat  |
| Marsh Sandpiper          | <i>Tringa stagnitilis</i>        | 1 seen at Thyna salt pans  |
| Greenshank               | <i>Tringa nebularia</i>          | 2 at Korba and 3 at Thyna salt pans  |
| Wood Sandpiper           | <i>Tringa glareola</i>           | 2 at Korba and 1 at Thyna salt pans  |
| Black-headed Gull        | <i>Larus ridibundus</i>          | The most common gull along the coast   |
| Mediterranean Gull       | <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>      | 1 1 <sup>st</sup> Winter over the sea at Hammamet  |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | <i>Larus fuscus</i>              | 1 from the motorway near Tunis   |
| Yellow-legged Gull       | <i>Larus atlantis</i>            | Numerous and common at coastal locations   |
| Common Gull              | <i>Larus canus</i>               | 1 seen in a ploughed field west of Kalibia   |
| Caspian Tern             | <i>Sterna caspia</i>             | 1 adult seen flying south past Hammamet in the evening   |
| Sandwich Tern            | <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>       | 1s & 2s seen at sea from the coast   |
| Collared Dove            | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>     | 1s & 2s seen around habitation   |
| Palm Dove                | <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> | Seen regularly around Habitation   |
| Little Owl               | <i>Athene noctua</i>             | 1 at Dougga  |
| Barn Owl                 | <i>Tyto alba</i>                 | 1 seen flying over the road near Mejez El-Bab and 1 found dead near Beni Khalid                        |
| Hoopoe                   | <i>Upupa epops</i>               | 3 at Hammamet cemetery and 1s & 2s seen elsewhere  |
| Levaillant's Woodpecker  | <i>Picus vaillantii</i>          | Heard and seen briefly on a wooded hillside between Tabarka and Nefza                                  |
| Wryneck                  | <i>Jynx torquilla</i>            | 1 seen in a wooded area E of Tabarka   |
| Crested Lark             | <i>Galerida cristata</i>         | Widespread and numerous along the roadside   |
| Thekla Lark              | <i>Galerida theklae</i>          | Less common than Crested but easily identified at Dougga   |
| Skylark                  | <i>Alauda arvensis</i>           | 1 seen along the road from Dougga to Siliana   |
| Crag Martin              | <i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>    | 2 seen in pools to the west of Kalibia   |
| House Martin             | <i>Delichon urbica</i>           | 2 in Jasmin Hammamet and 1 at Sidi Jididi  |
| Barn Swallow             | <i>Hirundo rustica</i>           | Several seen at Kalibia and Korba  |
| Meadow Pipit             | <i>Anthus pratensis</i>          | Common at salt pans  |
| White Wagtail            | <i>Motacilla (alba) alba</i>     | Seen almost anywhere generally near habitation   |
| Common Bulbul            | <i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>       | Up to 2 seen singing in the early morning from the hotel in Hammamet on 3 occasions – not common!      |
| Robin                    | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>        | Widespread in ones and twos  |
| Stonechat                | <i>Saxicola (torquata) maura</i> | Numerous and seen everywhere an individual at Sidi Jididi displayed characters of the ssp <i>maura</i> |
| Black Redstart           | <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>      | Numerous seen almost anywhere  |
| Moussier's Redstart      | <i>Phoenicurus moussieri</i>     | Mostly males- at least 7 seen at Dougga and a male and a female seen at Siliana Barrage                |
| Black Wheatear           | <i>Oenanthe leucura</i>          | Males and females seen at Dougga – probably 3 pairs present  |
| Blue Rock Thrush         | <i>Monticola solitarius</i>      | Males and female at Dougga and 1 male at Al Jem coliseum   |
| Blackbird                | <i>Turdus merula</i>             | Numerous and common  |
| Song Thrush              | <i>Turdus philomelos</i>         | Common at Dougga and around Tebarka  |
| Cetti's Warbler          | <i>Cettia cetti</i>              | 2 heard at Sidi Jididi   |
| Spectacled Warbler       | <i>Sylvia conspicillata</i>      | 1 in scrub at Thyna salt pans  |
| Sardinian Warbler        | <i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>      | Widespread and numerous in scrubby habitat   |
| Chiffchaff               | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>    | Several seen in the cemetery at Hammamet   |
| Blue Tit                 | <i>Parus ultramarines</i>        | Striking N African ssp and fairly common   |
| Southern Grey Shrike     | <i>Lanius algeriensis</i>        | The race <i>algeriensis</i> were common along the roads near to the coast.                             |
| Wren                     | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>   | 1 at Tebarka and one at Thyna  |
| Brown-necked Raven       | <i>Corvus ruficollis</i>         | Seen in 1s & 2s in open country  |
| Raven                    | <i>Corvus corax</i>              | 1s & 2s seen in various locations  |
| Starling                 | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>          | Seen in a mixed flock with Spotless Starlings near Beni Khalid   |

|                   |                              |  |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Spotless Starling | <i>Sturnus unicolor</i>      | The most common and numerous bird  |
| House Sparrow     | <i>Passer domesticus</i>     | Widespread and numerous – hybrids noted  |
| Spannish Sparrow  | <i>Passer hispaniolensis</i> | Widespread and numerous (hybrid <i>Italiae</i> birds also noted)                       |
| Chaffinch         | <i>Fringilla spodiogenys</i> | Good numbers of the striking North African race were noted in the North of the country |
| Serin             | <i>Serinus menachensis</i>   | Heard and seen commonly along roads and in Hammamet                                    |
| Linnet            | <i>Carduelis cannabina</i>   | 2 at Dougga and a flock of about 30 at Beni Khalid                                     |
| Greenfinch        | <i>Carduelis chloris</i>     | Several seen in Hammamet   |
| Goldfinch         | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>   | Very few noted but several at Bou Salem  |
| Corn Bunting      | <i>Emberiza hortulana</i>    | Numerous at Dougga in fields and 1 at Thyna  |

### **Summary**

Tunisia is definitely worth another visit, probably to the South of the country where a visit to the desert would be easily possible. Cheap and easy to get around, it's highly recommended for a short break and some easy birding. Hopefully, with some sunshine next time. Time should be allowed to travel as this is quite time consuming and overnight stops at places like Ain Draham are recommended to maximize birding opportunities.



### **HOUSE SPARROWS ARE ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND!**

(Anne Nason)

In January 2005 we had two weeks in New Zealand, the country where I spent most of my childhood. Arriving in Christchurch and travelling to a farm in mid-Canterbury I had known well, I was immediately struck by the lack of native birds. House

Sparrows were abundant, Starlings, Song Thrushes and Blackbirds common, and finches like Goldfinch, Greenfinch and Chaffinch plentiful. On the garden pond Mallard and Mute Swan were the only waterbirds, and pheasants wandered through the orchard. At least the White-backed Magpies, although native to Australia, were different from their European counterparts. Their strange gargling call brought back many memories, not least the time a magpie pecked my three-year old brother whilst defending its nest, high in a pine tree, from an “intruder”! Welcome Swallows, not present in the country before about 1958, but self-introduced, are now relatively common and a pair was nesting in an outhouse. Silvereyes, introduced from Australia in the nineteenth century, were feeding on the Australian bottlebrush in the garden, so the Pukeko, a medium-sized swamphen, was the first truly native bird we saw. All this made me determined to seek out the indigenous birds on the rest of our tour.

We drove southwest to Lake Tekapo, on the eastern side of the Southern Alps, and en route we saw several Australian Harriers quartering the ground or perched on telegraph poles. This is the commonest bird of prey in the country and is widely distributed. On the lake we spotted a pair of New Zealand Scaup, which are not uncommon, close to a large flock of Mallard which have now interbred with the native Grey Duck. Black-billed gulls were much in evidence round the town. As we travelled on we frequently noticed small flocks of Paradise Shelduck feeding in the fields, as the female’s white head is so conspicuous. Throughout this mountain area between Tekapo, Wanaka and Queenstown it was obvious to see how introduced plant species too, had taken over the country. The road verges were a bright mass of lupins, for mile after mile whilst whole hillsides were covered with viper’s bugloss (echium) gone rampant in its southern hemisphere location. In the North Island agapanthus has even been declared a noxious weed as it is now so prolific that huge clumps line the roads north of Auckland.

In Queenstown at last I heard the bell-like call of the native Bellbird again and saw the familiar Pied Fantails, attractive little flycatchers, flitting around the bushes in the Botanical Gardens displaying their black and white tails. The best sighting though, was of a New Zealand Falcon in flight - a brief glimpse, but enough to identify it. This and the Harrier are the only birds of prey, apart from two owls, in New Zealand. Travelling southeast through Central Otago, Spurwinged Plovers, another relatively recent self-introduced species, were fairly common. These Spurwings are different from the African Spurwinged Plover, and have spread from Australia. South of Dunedin we took a detour onto the scenic coastal road and were rewarded by the sight of two Royal Spoonbills and some Pied Stilts at Taieri Mouth. Near Brighton there were large numbers of Black Swans on the lagoons, and on the mudflats there were South Island Pied Oystercatchers, Variable (or Black) Oystercatchers and more stilts. Because the two islands are separated by Cook Strait, many birds have developed slightly different characteristics, so a number of species have North and South Island races.

During our two days in Dunedin with my youngest brother we did not have time to visit the Royal Albatross nesting ground on the Otago Peninsula, which I had seen some 15 years ago. It is one of the only places in the world where Albatross nest on a mainland, but instead we drove south to Nugget Point, now a Nature Reserve, where at the end of the headland we could look down on a colony of sea lions and fur seals. As we approached the Lighthouse and observation platform along a path lined with



native trees sculpted by the wind, we saw literally thousands of cormorants flying in skeins just above the surface of the sea. In New Zealand all species of cormorants are known as shags, and there are Pied Shags, Black Shags, Little Shags and Spotted Shags to mention a few. Unfortunately, as the “shags” were at least half a mile distant it was not possible to identify them positively but they were most likely Spotted Shags. There were Red-billed Gulls and Black-backed (Dominican) Gulls wheeling around the rock stacks. From the car park we drove back to Roaring Bay, hoping to see the Yellow-eyed Penguins from the hide. Unfortunately, as the Penguins only come ashore to feed their chicks in the late afternoon, we were too early in the day.

We then travelled south west to Dipton in Southland to stay with friends on their farm. One day they took us on a day trip to Milford Sound, a four hour drive north west into the mountains of Fiordland. Although the weather was against us, with rain and mist, we took a boat trip on the Sound out to the entrance to the Tasman Sea. The journey was awe inspiring with the walls of the fiord towering above us and waterfalls tumbling vertically downwards through the mist. Fur seals were spotted on the rocks, and to my delight we saw a Fiordland Crested Penguin making its way up the rocky beach into the native bush. They breed in caves or under forest roots and are far from common. As we docked at Milford, a White Heron was seen nearby. On the way back to Dipton, after passing through the Homer Tunnel, we stopped to look for Kea, and sure enough, there was one sitting preening on a rock. They are alpine parrots with very sharp curved beaks and are known for their destructive habits and cheeky nature. This one hardly deigned to look up as I got within a few feet for a photograph. The name comes from its cry of “Kee-ya”.

We made another stop in the native forest and were lucky to spot a South Island Tomtit, a pretty little black and yellow bird mostly only found where native forest still remains. A Bellbird was feeding on nectar on a flowering bush nearby. These are plain olive-coloured birds, but their beautiful bell-like call makes up for their unremarkable appearance. By the time we reached Lake Te Anau, the weather was bright and sunny, so we sat by the lake to eat our picnic supper in the evening sun.

The next day we flew from Invercargill to Auckland, via Christchurch, and had a wonderful view of Mount Cook, the highest mountain in the Southern Alps. We had failed to see the mountain whilst travelling between Tekapo and Wanaka because of the low cloud, but at last all was revealed.

Auckland is a sub-tropical climate, so very different from the temperate South Island. In my sister's garden we saw more Fantail and Silvereye, but also Tui, and Grey Warbler. Eastern Rosella, Spotted Dove and Indian Myna, all introduced species, were also common. Unfortunately, because of its popularity as a cage bird, Indian Mynas are now found in parts of Australia and South Africa as well, to the detriment of the local birds as they are an over successful species. At night we could hear the Morepork, the New Zealand owl, so named because of its call.

We visited an Australian Gannet colony on the mainland about an hour west of Auckland, at Muriwai. There were look-out points right above the colony so we could peer straight down on them, only about 20 feet below, where they were nesting on a shelf of rock. Another part of the colony was nesting on a stack a few hundred yards from the shore. The chicks were almost at the point of fledging and some were

flapping their wings strenuously, while others were being fed regurgitated fish by their parents. It was a wonderful sight and so easy to access. Fortunately the birds did not seem at all disturbed by visitors.

Next we drove north to Matakana to stay with another brother and walked along Omaha Beach nearby to see the New Zealand Dotterels, Banded Dotterels and Bar-tailed Godwits. Areas have been roped off for the Dotterels and Variable Oystercatchers to nest but as it was late in the breeding season, they had gathered in flocks along the shoreline with the Godwits. In the grassland behind the dunes we came across more introduced species, Skylark, Redpoll and Yellowhammer, but in the Mangrove area there were New Zealand Kingfishers, and White-faced Herons. The latter are common in the South Island too. Near my brother's house we saw many New Zealand Pigeons, large fruit pigeons with white fronts and purple/green backs, and also an introduced Californian Quail calling from a post, but the Kaka, another New Zealand parrot, were absent at this time of year.

The ornithological highlight of our New Zealand trip however, was a visit to the island bird sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi in the Hauraki Gulf near Auckland. This island was originally cleared of bush for farming, but about twenty years ago the Government decided to turn it into a bird sanctuary and an extensive programme of replanting native trees began. Today the trees have grown into a forest and with a predator extermination programme as well, the island is now truly a sanctuary. However, this was not achieved without some soul-searching. Kiore, the Polynesian rat brought to the country by the Maoris, was a rare animal, but because of the damage it caused to bird's eggs, it was finally eradicated too.

Tiritiri Matangi is accessible to ordinary visitors whereas most of the other island bird sanctuaries like Kapiti, Little Barrier Island and Hen Island require a permit to visit. We took the thrice weekly fast ferry from Gulf Harbour on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula and the journey took barely 25 minutes. Fluttering Shearwaters, and Short-tailed Shearwaters accompanied the boat and we witnessed a White-fronted Tern being harried by what was most likely a Pomarine Skua.



The island is known as "The Singing Island" and must be close to what

New Zealand was like before Europeans colonised the country. Rare native birds have been introduced to the island, like North Island Saddleback, Kokako, Red-crowned Parakeet, North Island Robin, Takahe and Stitchbird. The latter is named for its call, not because it sews leaves together like the Indian tailor bird as I had presumed! It is a nectar eater and there are sugar feeding stations at various points, to assist its survival. Some tussock grass has been left on the top of the hills for the Takahe, a highly endangered flightless gallinule thought to be extinct until 1948 when it was discovered in remote areas of Fiordland. Several were brought to the island to increase the species chance of survival. There are now about 20 Takahe on the island,

but these rare birds are so tame that they wander around pecking at visitor's lunchboxes and it was difficult to get a photograph without someone's legs in the picture! Kokako, another rare species brought to the island from other island sanctuaries, are crow-sized bluey-grey birds with blue wattles and we were lucky to get a good view of a pair.

Little Spotted Kiwi are also present on the island, but they are unlikely to be seen by visitors as they are nocturnal. The little Blue Penguin nests on the island near the shore, and nestboxes with glass viewing panels, covered with lids, allow people to see the birds on the nest. The penguins luckily seem quite unconcerned. Other birds like Bellbird, Tui and native Pigeon abound on the island, and also Whiteheads, small tit-sized birds, which are now rare on the mainland. There are of course, many seabirds around the island too.

Sadly, many native species in New Zealand are now extinct, as without land predators before the coming of the Maori, many birds were flightless, including the giant Moa. Now museums, like the Otago Museum in Dunedin, are the only place to see this bird, reconstructed from its bones. Other birds like the Huia were killed for their feathers.

However, I think the moral of this story is that there are still plenty of interesting native birds in New Zealand if you seek them out. At first sight one is struck by the huge number of introduced species, but with the right information it is possible to see many of the remaining native species. The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand has an excellent website: [www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz). It has a list of all the best bird-watching sites in New Zealand with an accompanying map. Stewart Island, to the south of the South Island is another very good place to see native birds, including Kiwi, and no permit is required. Access to other island sanctuaries like Kapiti off the west coast near Wellington and Little Barrier north west of Auckland can be obtained from the New Zealand Conservation Department, and details are on the website. We were there primarily to visit family and friends, but House Sparrows notwithstanding, we did manage to see many native birds as well – and enjoyed the brilliant sunny weather in January!

## **BIRDLIST**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Blue Penguin <i>Eudyptula minor</i>                        | White-fronted Tern <i>Sterna striata</i>                      |
| Fiordland Crested Penguin <i>Eudyptes pachyrhynchus</i>    | New Zealand Pigeon <i>Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae</i>           |
| Short-tailed Shearwater <i>Puffinus tenuirostris</i>       | Spotted Dove <i>Streptopelia chinensis tigrina</i>            |
| Fluttering Shearwater <i>Puffinus gavia</i>                | Kea <i>Nestor notabilis</i>                                   |
| Australian Gannet <i>Sula bassana serrator</i>             | Eastern Rosella <i>Platycercus eximius</i>                    |
| Pied Shag <i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>                      | Red-crowned Parakeet <i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i>       |
| Little Shag <i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos brevirostris</i> | Morepork (heard) <i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i>                 |
| White-faced Heron <i>Ardea novaehollandiae</i>             | New Zealand Kingfisher <i>Halcyon sancta vagans</i>           |
| Royal Spoonbill <i>Platalea regia</i>                      | Welcome Swallow <i>Hirundo tahitica neoxenia</i>              |
| White Heron <i>Egretta alba modesta</i>                    | Silvereye <i>Zosterops lateralis</i>                          |
| Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>                               | Pied Fantail <i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>                      |
| Black Swan <i>Cygnus atratus</i>                           | South Island Tomtit <i>Petroica macrocephala macrocephala</i> |
| Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>                      | North Island Robin <i>Petroica australis longipes</i>         |
| Paradise Shelduck <i>Tadorna variegata</i>                 |   |
| Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>                          |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Grey Teal <i>Anas gibberifrons</i>                                   | Whitehead <i>Mohoua albigilla</i>                       |
| New Zealand Scaup <i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>                      | Grey Warbler <i>Gerygone igata</i>                      |
| Australian Harrier <i>Circus approximans</i>                         | Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>                          |
| New Zealand Falcon <i>Falco novaeseelandiae</i>                      | Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>                    |
| <i>gouldi</i>  | Skylark <i>Alaudia arvensis</i>                         |
| Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>                                  | Tui <i>Prothemadera novaeseelandiae</i>                 |
| California Quail <i>Lophortyx californica</i>                        | Bellbird <i>Anthornis melanura</i>                      |
| Pukeko <i>Porphyrio melanotus</i>                                    | Stitchbird <i>Notiomystis cincta</i>                    |
| Takahe <i>Notornis mantelli</i>                                      | House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>                  |
| South Island Pied Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus finschi</i> | Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>                 |
| Variable Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus unicolor</i>                    | Hedge Sparrow <i>Prunella modularis</i>                 |
| Spur-winged Plover <i>Vanellus miles novaehollandiae</i>             | Greenfinch <i>Carduelis chloris</i>                     |
| Pied Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>                              | Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>                    |
| Banded Dotterel <i>Charadrius bicinctus</i>                          | Redpoll <i>Carduelis flammea</i>                        |
| New Zealand Dotterel <i>Charadrius obscurus</i>                      | Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>                      |
| Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>                     | North Island Kokako <i>Callaeas cinerea wilsoni</i>     |
| Pomarine Skua (or Arctic?) <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>             | Saddleback <i>Philesturnus carunculatus</i>             |
| Dominican (Black-backed) Gull <i>Larus dominicanus</i>               | White-backed Magpie <i>Gymnorhina tibicen hypoleuca</i> |
| Black-billed Gull <i>Larus bulleri</i>                               | Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>                        |
| Red-billed Gull <i>Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus</i>              | Indian Myna <i>Acridotheres tristis</i>                 |

**Reference:** Collins “*Birds of New Zealand*” by Chloe Talbot Kelly.



### **BAZARUTO ISLAND - MOZAMBIQUE**

(Anne Nason)

In December 2004 we flew to Zimbabwe for Christmas with our daughter and her family, on the first leg of a round-the-world ticket which included stopovers in Australia, New Zealand and Bangkok. They invited us to spend New Year with them at Indigo Bay on Bazaruto Island off the coast of Mozambique, so on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December we set off from Harare at the unearthly hour of 4.30 in the morning. However, it was just as well, as the drive from Harare to Vilancoulos took us nearly

12 hours. One of the vehicles was pulling a trailer, and the border formalities delayed us for more than an hour.

We stayed at a beach house in Vilancoulos for three days and then on the 30<sup>th</sup> December transferred to Indigo Bay on Bazaruto Island by light aircraft, a journey of only 15 minutes. The “airport” is a thatched hut with a large notice saying “Bazaruto Airport, altitude 23 ft.”! Luckily it had not been affected by the terrible tsunami on Boxing Day like parts of the Kenyan and Somali coast. It is an idyllic tropical island in the Indian Ocean with white sandy beaches, surrounded by an azure sea. The advertising slogan for the island is “Paradise Found” and I cannot disagree.

Bazaruto Island is the largest in the Archipelago which was given National Park status in 1970, as it is an important marine conservation area. Manatees are found in the



shallow seas around the islands and several species of whale and dolphin, including humpback dolphins which we were lucky enough to see. The island is 37km long and 7km wide with a variety of habitats, including several large freshwater lakes, vast sand-dunes, savanna, gardens and seashore, so the birdlife is excellent. 180 species have been recorded in the Archipelago, including 26 species of wader. We

were there primarily to enjoy a holiday with our family, but it did not preclude a certain amount of bird-watching! The Madagascar Bee-eater (known locally as the Olive Bee-eater) and the Hadedra Ibis could often be seen around the resort, and Masked Weavers even stole fruit from the breakfast buffet. The shore was only yards away where various plovers could be seen, including White-fronted, Grey and Ringed, and the gardens were home to several species like Yellow-eyed Canary, Green Pigeon, Doves, Common Waxbill and Black-eyed Bulbul.

One afternoon my six-year old grandson and I went out for a bird-drive with Blessed, a very knowledgeable local guide. There was a great variety of water birds around the freshwater lakes, including Goliath Heron, Yellow-billed Stork, Black Egret, Greater Flamingo, Pink-backed Pelican, African Darter and Black-winged Stilts. Nile crocodile also inhabit these lakes, and several long snouts could be seen near the lake edges as the crocodiles lay in wait. Crocodiles and snakes are the only dangerous animals on the island so it is safe to bird-watch on foot. Along the edge of the airstrip we saw Grassveld Pipit, Fan-tailed Cisticola and Red-shouldered Widow. Black-bellied Korhaan were surprisingly common in the savanna areas further from the Lodge, and several Sombre Bulbuls were calling from the thickets. Hoopoe, Lilac-breasted Roller and Red-backed Shrike were among other species seen.



Another day we went by boat to Pansy Island, a sandbank only visible



at low tide, and after swimming in the clear blue water, we were taken to the coral reefs to snorkel. En route we spotted a number of Roseate Terns and several Little Egrets flying between the islands. (Scuba diving is another sport that can be enjoyed at Indigo Bay, but our teenage grandsons preferred water-skiing, sailing or beach volleyball.)



The birdlist is only a taste of what can be seen on Bazaruto, but considering that it was a family holiday and not specifically a birding trip, we managed a reasonable list for part-time bird-watchers! In summary, Bazaruto is a beautiful island resort away from mass tourism and a gem for anyone interested in both water sports and natural history – an “Away

from it all” holiday in a beautiful setting with plenty for non-bird-watchers to do as well.

**How to get there:** Portugal has the most direct air services to Mozambique, but from the UK it would be best to fly to Johannesburg and then by Pelican Air Services to Vilancoulos Airport for the short transfer flight to Indigo Bay. Pelican Air also flies from Nelspruit, so it would be possible to have a week in the Kruger National Park in South Africa followed by a week in Indigo Bay, flying from Nelspruit on the southern border of the Kruger to Vilancoulos. Indigo Bay is the more exclusive resort on Bazaruto Island, but there is also Bazaruto Lodge at the northern end. The relevant websites are: [www.indigobayonline.com](http://www.indigobayonline.com) and [www.pelicanair.co.za](http://www.pelicanair.co.za)

**Note for AOS members:** The African Bird Club (ABC) website has recently added a new section which gives information about every African country. It is a very valuable free resource as, to quote: “over 50 experts have contributed to 1000 pages of information which will be regularly up-dated as new information becomes available.” Just type **African Bird Club** into Google and it will come up. Later this year a library of bird photographs will be added. If anyone is interested in African birds, it is well worth joining the Club.

### **BIRD LIST**

*Dabchick*  
*Whitebreasted Cormorant*  
*Reed Cormorant*  
*Darter*  
*Pinkbacked Pelican*  
*Goliath Heron*  
*Purple Heron*  
*Grey Heron*  
*Yellowbilled Egret*  
*Great White Egret*

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*  
*Phalacrocorax carbo*  
*Phalacrocorax africanus*  
*Anhinga melanogaster*  
*Pelecanus rufescens*  
*Ardea goliath*  
*Ardea purpurea*  
*Ardea cinerea*  
*Egretta intermedia*  
*Egretta alba*



*Little Egret*  
*Cattle Egret*  
*Black Egret*  
*Yellow-billed Stork*  
*Greater Flamingo*  
*Haded ibis*  
*Sacred Ibis*  
*Spurwinged Goose*  
*White-faced Duck*  
*African Marsh Harrier*  
*Yellow-billed Kite*  
*African Jacana*  
*Blackbellied Korhaan*  
*Blackwinged Stilt*  
*Whitefronted Plover*  
*Ringed Plover*  
*Grey Plover*  
*Blacksmith Plover*  
*Common Sandpiper*  
*Marsh Sandpiper*  
*Whimbrel*  
*Greyheaded Gull*  
*Roseate Tern*  
*Cape Turtledove*  
*Greenspotted Dove*  
*African Green Pigeon*  
*Red-eyed Dove*  
*Diederick Cuckoo*  
*Burchell's Coucal*  
*Pied Kingfisher*  
*Olive Bee-eater*  
*Lilacbreasted Roller*  
*Hoopoe*  
*Pied Crow*  
*Blackeyed Bulbul*  
*Sombre Bulbul*  
*Whitebrowed Robin*  
*Fantailed Cisticola*  
*Grassveld Pipit*  
*Redbacked Shrike*  
*House Sparrow*  
*Greyheaded Sparrow*  
*Southern Masked Weaver*  
*Redshouldered Widow*  
*Yellow-eyed Canary*  
*Common Waxbill*

*Egretta garzetta*  
*Bubulcus ibis*  
*Egretta ardesiaca*  
*Mycteria ibis*  
*Phoenicopterus ruber*  
*Bostrychia hagedash*  
*Threskiornis aethiopicus*  
*Plectropterus gambensis*  
*Dendrocygna viduata*  
*Circus ranivorus*  
*Milvus parasitus*  
*Actophilornis africanus*  
*Eupodotis melanogaster*  
*Himantopus himantopus*  
*Charadrius marginatus*  
*Charadrius hiaticula*  
*Pluvialis squatarola*  
*Vanellus armatus*  
*Tringa hypoleucos*  
*Tringa stagnatilis*  
*Numenius phaeopus*  
*Larus cirrocephalus*  
*Sterna dougallii*  
*Streptopelia capicola*  
*Turtur chalcospilos*  
*Treron calva*  
*Streptopelia semitorquata*  
*Chrysococcyx caprius*  
*Centropus burchelli*  
*Ceryle rudis*  
*Merops superciliosus*  
*Coracias caudata*  
*Upupa epops*  
*Corvus Albus*  
*Pycnonotus barbatus*  
*Andropadus importunas*  
*Erythropygia leucophrys*  
*Cisticola juncidis*  
*Anthus cinnamomeus*  
*Lanius collurio*  
*Passer Domesticus*  
*Passer griseus*  
*Ploceus velatus*  
*Euplectes axillaris*  
*Serinus mozambicus*  
*Estrilda astrild*

*Reference: SASOL Birds of Southern Africa*

*Anne Nason.*

**A TRIP TO THE CLOUD FOREST'S OF ECUADOR**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER TO 2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER**

(Keith Cherry)

It had been quite a while since our last trip to South Africa so the North Herts Bird Club's forthcoming trip to Ecuador was eagerly awaited. Due to the destination and the hundreds of potential birds that we were hoping to see, it was decided that an organised trip, with a local guide, would be the best way to achieve our aims. So Trevor Brownsel, Tony Hukin, Richard Pople, Dave Beer, John Tomkins and myself booked the 'Cock of the Rock' Tour With Naturetrek.

**ITINERARY**

- 23<sup>rd</sup> October Early morning Iberia flight from Heathrow to Madrid. Change aircraft for flight to Quito. Transfer to Hostal de la Reina. Night in Quito.
- 24<sup>th</sup> October Quito to **Yanacocha Ecological Reserve**. Then via **Old Nono-Mindo Road** to **Sachatamia Rainforest Reserve**. Night in Sachatamia Lodge.
- 25<sup>th</sup> October **Cock-of-the Rock Lek** and then **Sachatamia Reserve**. Moving on to **Bella Vista Area**. Followed by **Tony's Hummingbird Garden** then via **Maquipucuna Fish Farm** to **Maquipucuna Forest Lodge**. Night in **Maquipucuna Forest Lodge**.
- 26<sup>th</sup> October **Maquipucuna Forest Main Trail** and **Sendero Trail**. Night in Maquipacuna Forest Lodge.
- 27<sup>th</sup> October **Maquipucuna Trails** before returning to Quito via **Bella Vista Area**, **Maquipucuna Fish Farm** and **Pahuma Orchid Garden**. Night in Hostal de la Reina.
- 28<sup>th</sup> October Quito to **Guango Lodge** via **Papallacta Pass** and a **Polylepis Forest**. Night in **Guango Lodge**.
- 29<sup>th</sup> October **Baeza Area** to **San Isidro Lodge** for lunch. **San Isidro Trails**. Night in Guango Lodge.
- 30<sup>th</sup> October **Guango Lodge Area** before returning to Quito via **Papallacta Lake**. Quito Airport to bid farewell to three trip members then on to **Tandayapa Bird Lodge**. Night in Tandayapa Bird Lodge.
- 31<sup>st</sup> October **Tandayapa Bird Lodge Trails**. Night in Tandayapa Bird Lodge.
- 1<sup>st</sup> November **Tandayapa Bird Lodge Trails**. Return to Quito Airport. Board early evening flight to Madrid via Guayaquil. Board flight to Heathrow.

**TRIP REPORT**

### **Day 1: Saturday October 23<sup>rd</sup>:**

We arranged a very early taxi pick up so we were in plenty of time for our 07:25 flight to Quito via Madrid. At Heathrow we met up with Stanley and Margaret Rest who were also booked on the trip. The stopover in Madrid does add a few hours to what is already a long flight but unfortunately it is a necessary evil that has to be endured. The flight from Madrid takes in excess of 10 hours but it seemed to pass relatively quickly. Quito airport is situated in a 'basin of surrounding hills' and is almost 10,000 feet above sea level. After collecting our rapidly delivered luggage we left the terminal and were met by a huge throng of people but William Perez, our local guide for the trip, soon managed to locate us. We loaded up the transport, said hello to our driver for the trip, Huglio, and made our way to our overnight accommodation, the Hostal de la Reina. Not long after we had arrived there we met up with the final member of our party, Charlie Jackson, who had travelled out the previous day. After William had outlined the plan for the following day we all crawled into our beds, as breakfast was arranged for 05:15. There was going to be a major change to the itinerary. The following night's accommodation had been changed from Maquipucuna Forest Lodge to Sachatamia Rainforest Reserve. The reason for this being the Cock-of-the-Rock lek at Maquipucuna had become unreliable and a far better lek had been found near to Sachatamia.

### **Day 2: Sunday October 24<sup>th</sup>:**

We awoke to the dawn chorus of a Great Thrush. William and Huglio arrived and after breakfast we set off at 06:00 for our first destination, Yanacocha Ecological Reserve, which was about an hour's drive away. As we set off we spotted Rufous-collared Sparrow and Eared Dove. As you can imagine it was not long before the stunning birds of this beautiful country began showing themselves. Our first stop produced Streak-throated Bush Tyrant, Cinereous Conebill, Sparkling Violetear, Black-tailed Trainbearer, Southern Yellow Grosbeak, Black Flowerpiercer, Black-crested Warbler and many more. By the time we had reached Yanacocha we already had an impressive list, which also included Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager, Blue and Yellow Tanager, Variable Hawk, Carunculated Caracara, Paramo Pipit, Sapphire-vented Puffleg and Azara's Spinetail. At times it was hard to keep up with the amount of birds, as they were all new to us. William's expertise was invaluable.

Yanacocha Ecological Reserve is a relatively small reserve of almost 1000 hectares and is located on the western slope of the Pichincha Volcano. Its main function as a reserve is for the protection of the Black-breasted Puffleg, an endangered hummingbird on the critical list.

After paying our \$5 entrance fee we walked a two-kilometre trail and the birds continued to flow. Black-chested Buzzard Eagle, Black-chested Mountain Tanager, Blue-backed Conebill, Rufous Wren, Pearl Treerunner, Bar-bellied Woodpecker, Grassgreen Tanager, Hooded Mountain Tanager, Spectacled Whitestart, and Tawny Antpitta were just a few of the birds that were seen. Some people in the group also managed to see a very skulking Rufous Antpitta. During the walk people were showing the first signs of breathlessness due I have no doubt to the altitude. At the end of the trail there is a selection of Hummingbird feeders and while we took a breather Shining Sunbeam, Golden-breasted Puffleg, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill were seen along with the amazing Sword-billed Hummingbird. After a while we were all rewarded with views of the much sought after Black-breasted Puffleg. As this was only the fifth time that William had seen the bird we all felt very fortunate and delighted.

It was time to move on to our overnight accommodation, Sachatamia Lodge. We still found time while we travelled on the Old Nono to Mindo Road to add Band-tailed Pigeon, White-capped

Parrot, Brown-capped Vireo, White-tipped Dove, the stunning Golden Tanager and the impressive Red-headed Barbet to our growing list. William got very excited with views of a Semi-collared Hawk so even he was having a good day!

We arrived at Sachatamia Lodge just as the light was beginning to fade but between unloading and checking out the hummingbird feeders, some ticked Empress Brilliant, Fawn-breasted Brilliant and the elusive Hoary Puffleg. After an excellent evening meal William suggested we go on an Owl hunt and most of the group agreed. We boarded the transport and set off. After a short while we stopped along side a very bright lamppost. As we drew up a large Owl flew from the wires supporting the lamppost. It had obviously been feeding on the dozens of moths that were attracted to the light. We searched the surrounding trees with our torches and we luckily picked up the Owl. It was a huge and magnificent Black-and-White Owl. What a way to finish an already memorable day!

### **Day 3: Monday October 25<sup>th</sup>:**

Sachatamia Rain Forest Reserve is a privately owned ecological reserve exceeding 120 hectares of cloud-rain forest, which is inhabited by hundreds of bird species.



(Buff-winged Starfrontlet)



(Common Potoo)

Breakfast was booked for 04:00 (a time of day that we were going to become increasingly familiar with) as we were going for a long walk in the dark so as to arrive at the Cock-of-the-Rock lek before first light. We boarded the transport and arrived at a nearby farm on the Mindo Road. With our essential head torches in place we set off in a line along a narrow track. In no time at all the track started to go up and up and we started to wheeze and puff. We soon started to feel very hot and the steam rose from our heads as if we were on fire. The line started to lengthen as our relative levels of fitness started to show. William dropped back to stay with Stanley and Margaret while our young and fit guide continued to stride out. Richard and I found ourselves at the back of the line and it came as no surprise when, having lost sight of the people ahead, we took a wrong turn. We carried on for a while and began to realise that all was not as it should be. We continued to climb up an increasingly steep and muddy track until we reached a makeshift gate. We decided to retrace our steps and after calling and whistling we finally made contact with the main group in place at the lek. Needless to say we crossed the young and fit guide off our Christmas card list. As we found a position overlooking the lek the birds started their unusual, noisy and raucous call. The lek numbers built up to more than ten birds. Everyone had good views of the birds so at about 07:00 William decided we should move on. Other birds seen by some at the lek were Wedge-billed Woodcreeper and Montane Woodcreeper.

We made our way back through the forest. As the light improved so did the birding. Spotted Woodcreeper, Club-winged Manakin, Ruddy Pigeon, Golden-crowned Flycatcher, Beryl-spangled Tanager, Smoke-coloured Peewee and White-tailed Tyrannulet soon followed by Ornate Flycatcher. William heard the distant call of one of the group's main "target birds" the Toucan Barbet. By skilful use of his mini-disc player, the bird was enticed closer and closer until it was in clear view for all to see. A stunning bird. Trevor then spotted an odd shape on a nearby tree. William excitedly exclaimed Common Potoo! The whole group had great views and attempts at digi-scoping were tried. Seeing the Potoo that easily had saved William a lot of work so he was especially pleased!

Time was marching on so we had to return to the transport and get back for breakfast. Other birds picked up on the way included Mountain Wren, Slaty-throated Whitestart, Strong-billed Woodcreeper, Golden-naped Tanager, Blue-and-white Swallow, Yellow-vented Woodpecker and Tri-coloured Brushfinch. Back at the lodge there was a Hummingbird feeding frenzy taking place. Brown Inca, Velvet Purple Coronet, Violet-tailed Sylph, Andean Emerald were jostling Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Buff-tailed Coronet, Booted Racket-tail, Brown Violetear and White-bellied Woodstar for the best place at the feeders. An amazing and thrilling spectacle. Tearing ourselves away we again loaded up the transport and moved off to our next destination. One particular stop on the way produced great views of a Golden-headed Quetzal and Andean Solitaire. Other birds seen included Lemon-rumped Tanager, Lineated Foliage-gleaner, White-sided Flowerpiercer, Orange-bellied Euphonia and William was very pleased that we all saw some Black-chinned Mountain Tanager's.

To get to Maquipucuna meant leaving the tarmac roads behind and on to some of the roughest tracks known to man for what seemed like an endless seven kilometres. Tip! Don't be on the back seat for this part of the journey! A most welcome break was taken in the Bella Vista area. Bella Vista is an area of very high cloud forest and home to hundreds of species of birds, plants and other animals. As we walked along the track the clouds started to drift in amongst us. Luckily the cloud did not hinder the birding too much as a large feeding flock started to move through the trees around us. Metallic Green Tanager, Dusky Bush Tanager, Blue-and-black Tanager were joined by Tyrannine Woodcreeper, Lineated Foliage-gleaner, Turquoise Jay, Yellow-bellied Chat Tyrant, Sepia Brown Wren and Rufous-chested Tanager. Birds everywhere! No sooner had the flock arrived than they melted into the misty clouds. After taking a breather we started to walk back to the transport. Plate-billed Mountain Toucan! Exclaimed William. These were birds that the entire group had hoped to see. There were two birds feeding on berries in trees not very far from where we stood. A truly fantastic sight. Beautiful birds. We still had time to see Collared Inca and Speckled Hummingbird before reaching the minibus. William decided to change the itinerary again and to call into Tony's Hummingbird Garden on the way to Maquipucuna instead of tomorrow.

Tony's Hummingbird Garden is a private residence whose garden is dedicated to the encouragement of Hummingbirds. Up to thirty-eight different Hummingbirds have been recorded there. Up to this point we had seen quite a lot of Hummingbirds so if our luck held out, we were likely to see half a dozen or so new one's.

On arriving at Tony's residence, which would be hard to find if you didn't know where it was, we were met by one of Tony's helpers. There is a \$5 entrance fee and it is worth every cent. After removing our footwear we made our way on to a veranda that overlooks the garden. It is quite a small garden with numerous feeders spread about. Hummingbird City! It was not long (with William's help) before we were ticking off the Hummers. Green-tailed Trainbearer, Purple-throated Whitestar, Western Emerald, Green Violetear, Purple-bibbed Whitetip,

Sparkling Violetear and Tawny-bellied Hermit, were all seen. Along with some of the others that we had already seen, it was a memorable hour or so.

We continued our journey to the lodge picking up Beautiful Jay, Southern Rough-winged Swallow, Torrent Tyrannulet, Rusty-margined Flycatcher, Smooth-billed Ani and a stunning Golden-headed Quetzal. A short stop at Maquipucuna Fish Farm produced Spotted Sandpiper, Green Kingfisher and Blue-backed Grassquit.

We arrived at Maquipucuna Lodge as dusk was starting to set in so we found our rooms, had a shower (cold unfortunately) and prepared ourselves for what was to be a very nice and welcome evening meal. We had callover, a few beers and flopped into bed for a good nights sleep.

#### **Day 4: Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup>:**

Maquipucuna Reserve consists of 5000 acres of cloud forest. There is a very comfortable lodge that has been built entirely from local materials and overlooks the fast flowing Umachaca River.

Oh dear! Its 04:00 hours again. Before breakfast we checked out the river and were pleased to see three White-capped Dipper. The weather was again fine so our luck with the climate was still holding. No transport required today, which was a bit of a blessing, but it did mean that birding would all be on foot. After breakfast we walked the Main Trail. Although we did not happen on any large feeding flocks, the increasing use of William's mini-disc player ensured the bird count



continued to rise. Green-crowned Brilliant, White-necked Jacobin and Green-crowned Woodnymph quickly followed a Buff-rumped Warbler on the river. As we progressed along the trail Swallow Tanager, Bananaquit, Red-eyed Vireo, Tropical Parula, Thick-billed Euphonia, Black-billed Peppershrike and many others were overshadowed by excellent views of the impressive Choco Toucan. Crimson-rumped Toucanet put in a brief appearance but many other birds were far more obliging, such as, White-lined Tanager, Pale-edged Thrush, White-winged Tanager, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Esmeraldas Antbird and Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner. A small flock of Immaculate Antbirds supplied some amusement as a possible Collared Forest Falcon flew out and disappeared, like a bullet, down the track. William spotted a Barred Puffbird (local name 'Stupid Bird,') sitting motionless close to the trunk of a nearby tree. A brief photo opportunity allowed us to have a breather before moving on. We followed the distant calls of Crested Guan and after some time and effort we managed to locate them. William continued to use his disc player to great effect, but we did have difficulty with an increasing amount of little skulkers that made getting decent views a case of luck over judgement. Orange-billed Sparrow was one species that springs to mind and one particular member of the group (no names) had to admit defeat even though William did his utmost. Barred Hawk, Broad-billed and Rufous Motmot proved to be refreshingly simple as we made our way back to the lodge for lunch. During lunch William took the unmentioned group member who had missed the Orange-billed Sparrow for a short walk along a track, which ran along the river and within ten minutes both were back in the lodge having ticked the bird. William always did his best to ensure everyone had every chance to see the birds. After lunch we walked the Sendero Trail and for a brief period we had to put on waterproof clothing as light rain began to fall. The trail was different and so



were the birds. Cinnamon Becard, Yellow-throated Bush Tanager, Spotted Nightingale Thrush, White-whiskered Hermit, Red-faced Spinetail, Dusky-capped Flycatcher were seen along with many others.

The pick of which were the stunningly beautiful Rufous-throated Tanager and the equally impressive Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant

By the time we returned to the lodge it was starting to get dark so it was showers, dinner, callover and a welcome bed for a well-earned good nights sleep.

### **Day 5: Wednesday October 27<sup>th</sup>:**

Up at 04:30. The itinerary today was going to be walk the trails a.m, have lunch and then pack up and set off on our return to Quito birding on the way. Weather, Cloudy with very light rain. First thing after breakfast was to try and get good views of the Mottled Owl, which surprisingly had eluded us apart from distant views, in the dark, at the Cock-of-the-Rock lek. No luck, although we did have a great bonus in disturbing an amazing Owl Butterfly from its daytime roost.

We set off on the Palm Trail as the rain stopped and soon we were amongst the birds. William would stop; take up his now familiar half crouch position, saying, "Gather Round, There it is". He had heard, located and seen the bird before we new what was happening. Russet Antshrike, Slaty Antwren, White-backed Fire-eye, Plain Antvireo and good views of Red-headed Barbet were all seen in quick succession. The hard to find and difficult to see Ochre-breasted Tanager was next on the list, shortly followed by a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. William could hardly contain his excitement at seeing the Grosbeak and was going to be, for him, his bird of the trip. We moved on picking up birds including Brown-capped Vireo, Fawn-breasted Tanager, White-winged Becard, Lesser Goldfinch, Squirrel Cuckoo, Masked Tityra and better views of Crimson-rumped Toucanet.

There came, a defining moment for me that showed Williams birding skills to the fullest. He somehow heard a faint bird call and started to play his disc-player. After a few minutes he said, "There, it has just flown into that tree". In no time at all he had the bird in his scope. It turned out to be a tiny Lanceolated Monklet.



(Lanceolated Monklet)



(Barred Puffbird)

We all had good views of this little stunner and to a person were all amazed how William even heard it, let alone see it and locate it. It seemed a fitting time to return to the lodge so we did, picking up one or two new birds on the way including Blackburnian Warbler, Canada Warbler and a notoriously difficult to see Southern Nightingale-Wren. As we approached the lodge this

morning's short rainfall claimed it's first victim. Tony slipped on the muddy surface and fell on his back. Not content with that he then proceeded to roll into an adjacent ditch. With the weight of his rucksack holding him down he did a passable imitation of a turtle. Rather than rush to his aid the group saw it as an ideal photo opportunity.

Tony was eventually rescued from his predicament and we were soon back at the lodge. After a great lunch we loaded the transport and a fantastic Blue Morpho Butterfly treated some of the group to a flypast. Before we left we spent a little time in the Orchid Garden, which is located a little way behind the lodge. The plan now was to travel back to Quito, birding on the way, stay overnight and then explore the eastern side of the Andes, travelling via the Papallacta Pass. Common Tody-Flycatcher and Piratic Flycatcher were seen on the way to the Fish Farm. At the Fish Farm a Striated Heron was in residence, the sighting of which surprised William. Sooty-headed Tyrannulet was also seen along with a superb Blue-headed Tanager. I find myself running out of words to adequately describe the Tanager's as they are all beautiful. As we left the Fish Farm a Pacific Hornero was spotted, so we emptied the minibus again in double-quick time and all had good views. According to William this area was our last opportunity to see the Pale-mandibled Aracari, so we walked up the road for a while. Amazingly, just as we were about to leave the bird was spotted sitting in a tree across a valley. Two others soon joined it as they flew and called above our heads. William was delighted that we had finally caught up with these stunning birds.

Time was marching on so we had to get going if we were going to be back into Quito at a reasonable time. An unscheduled 'comfort' stop produced a Striped Cuckoo. We made such good progress on our journey that William suggested we could call in at El Pachuna Orchid Garden, as it was the only known site for the White-tailed Hillstar. We all agreed, so after paying our \$3 entrance fee we crossed the road and into the Orchid Garden. The array of Orchids is worth the entrance fee alone so the prospect of another Hummingbird seemed good value. We hadn't been in the garden long when the hummer came to one of the feeders on the veranda. Very nice it was too. We also managed another tick when a Slaty-backed Chat Tyrant was seen. Well worth the visit. As we approached a village on the outskirts of Quito, William mentioned that there is a monument in the village to mark where the Equator passes through. Seeing this as another photo opportunity we made our way to where the monument was. Having all had our photo taken with one foot in the Northern Hemisphere and one in the Southern; we decided that we had done enough for one day and to head straight for our accommodation. Having unloaded most of the group went to a local restaurant for a meal, a quick beer and then collapsed into bed.

#### **Day 6: Thursday October 28<sup>th</sup>:**

Today we would be travelling over to the Eastern side of the Andes via the Papallacta Pass where we would be doing some high altitude birding. The eastern side of the Andes is host to another array of different species. An exciting prospect.

After our 05:00am breakfast we had a frustrating delay while we waited for our packed lunches to be delivered. The delay meant we had to cope with the early morning rush hour, but we finally made our way out of Quito and on our way.

Our first stop was at a small woodland near Puembo. Almost immediately we were delighted to see the outstanding Crimson-mantled Woodpecker. A real stunner. The surrounding area looked promising and in no time Ashy-breasted Sierra Finch, Cinereous Conebill, Common Ground Dove and Scrub Tanager were seen. Moving on Vermillion Flycatcher, Southern-bearded Tyrannulet, Purple-collared Woodstar, Plain-coloured Seedeater was added to the list along with a small flock of Hooded Siskin. William decided that we try another area so we boarded the mini-bus and set off. The bus stopped at a track that bordered a small valley. There was a possibility to see Giant Hummingbird in this area so we all had our fingers crossed. Streak-

throated Bush Tyrant, Tyrian Metaltail, Azara's Spinetail, Shiny Cowbird and Brown-backed Chat Tyrant were soon seen and then one of the group picked up the Giant Hummingbird flying and hovering on the other side of the valley. Everyone saw the bird but the views were a bit distant.

Moving on along a damp and muddy track we were treated to good views of a Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager. Somebody suddenly saw a Giant Hummingbird perched on a twiggy bush further up the hillside. This time, with the help of a telescope, we all had great views. A flock of Andean Gulls brought this area to a nice ending.

Our next stop was further along the Pass at a Polylepis Forest, (Paper bark Tree) which is the ideal habitat for the Giant Conebill. Despite a prolonged attempt to see the bird only one member of the group had a good enough view to tick the bird. Needless to say he suffered from bruised shins for a day or two. The group were more successful with other species including Paramo Seedeater, Black-tailed Trainbearer, Black-billed Shrike Tyrant, Blue-mantled Thornbill, Brown-breasted Swallow, White-throated Tyrannulet and a Many-striped Canastero was a welcome interruption during lunch. As we made our way back to the minibus a large raptor was seen on a distant mountainside. Up went the cry of Andean Condor! There were two birds gliding along the ridge and we all had good views before they disappeared into the distance. As you can imagine everyone was delighted because the window of opportunity to see these birds is very small. Onwards and upwards!

A further stop produced Plumbeous Sierra Finch, Andean Tit Spinetail, Red-rumped Bush Tyrant and a Stout-billed Cincloides at its nest.

Our next stop was at the highest point of the trip. We were now over 15,500 feet above sea level and due to a wonderful clear day the views of the Andes were stunning. Walking around at this height is reduced to a slow plod, so trying to do anything quickly is out of the question.

There are two target birds in this area, the Ecuadorian Hillstar and the Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe. Luckily it did not take too long or too much effort to pick up the Ecuadorian Hillstar along with Bar-winged Cincloides and Paramo Ground Tyrant. The Seedsnipe however was another question. We had to 'walk' to the highest and furthest point before William finally tracked them down. By skirting the perimeter of the 'Biological Station' that is established here we finally arrived at what felt like the edge of the world. By looking down a steep slope we could see two Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe moving around on a muddy track. After a breather and taking in the view we made our way back to the transport that had thankfully driven up to meet us.

Not long after we had started our descent we stopped to marvel at the wonderful array of amazing alpine plants. Charlie made the most of the opportunity by taking numerous photographs. We carried on down and stopped near a lake. Getting to the lake meant a shortish uphill walk. Even a short walk at this altitude feels like much longer one. Add a hill to it and it is 'huff and puff' time again. We all made it to a viewing point overlooking the lake. On the lake was Andean Ruddy Duck, Andean (Slate-Coloured) Coot, Andean Teal and very distant views of Yellow-billed Pintail. A Veridian Metaltail was also seen here. It was time to go as we had quite a long drive to our overnight accommodation at Guango Lodge. We arrived at Guango Lodge just before dusk and quickly unloaded and found our rooms. Our reason for hurrying was because of the activity at the hummingbird feeders where Tourmaline Sunangel, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Buff-tailed Coronet, White-bellied Woodstar, Long-tailed Sylph, Collared Inca and Gorgeted Woodstar were whizzing around the patio feeders.

After the failing light brought a halt to the excitement we showered and went for what was a superb evening meal. After dinner we all sat in front of a lovely log fire for call over and after a beer or two we were all ready for a good night's sleep.

### **Day 7: Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October:**

Guango Lodge is a privately run lodge by the same family that runs the San Isidro Lodge and is situated on the eastern slopes of the Andes, alongside the Rio Papallacta. Its elevation is 2,700 metres, not far from the town of Papallacta and on the way to San Isidro. The area is in a zone classified as humid temperate forest.

Breakfast was at a respectable 05:00 and at the first opportunity we moved off towards an area called Baeza. Fairly soon after leaving the lodge we made our first stop to look at a pair of Torrent Ducks below us on the river. These very handsome birds were sitting in full view on a large boulder. As these had been a target bird for the group, spirits were already high. We drove for a while down the main Trans Andean Highway before stopping alongside a gently sloping downhill track overlooking a fairly shallow valley.



This area proved to be very productive and very enjoyable. As we walked the minibus would follow our progress, which meant we would have a ride back up to the road. Perfect! After a slowish start we were soon onto birds. As we looked down into the valley there were Inca Jays and a small flock of Russet-backed Oropendola flying from tree to tree. The Eastern race of the Blue-grey Tanager was next to be seen along with Golden-collared Honeycreeper, Black-capped Tanager, Blue-necked Tanager and Tropical Kingbird. Then a flock of Red-billed Parrots flew noisily across the valley and disturbed a number of Subtropical Cacique. It was all happening!

Further along the track there were Flame-faced, Fawn-breasted and Summer Tanagers darting about. Black-and-white Seedeaters and Olivaceous Siskins were vying for space in the hedgerow while an overhead Broad-winged Hawk had the sky to itself. Moving on Golden-naped Tanager, Pale-edged Flycatcher, Golden-faced Tyrannulet, Palm Tanager and Ruddy Pigeon were soon added to the list, as was a beautiful Black-chested Fruiteater.

As we approached the end of the track, birds were still coming thick and fast in the form of Yellow-browed Sparrow, Eastern Wood Peewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Lemon-browed Flycatcher, Cinnamon Flycatcher and Olivaceous Greenlet while a Black-and-chestnut Eagle brought the activity to an abrupt halt. The minibus arrived on cue so we climbed aboard and made our way to San Isidro Lodge for lunch.

San Isidro Lodge is at a lower elevation than Guango so most of the bird's here were likely to be different. The lunch was superb so we were all raring to get going again.

We travelled a short distance to the forest area that surrounds the lodge. For some reason the birds were proving a lot harder to find. There seemed to be periods when no birds were seen at

all. Having said that the birds that we did see were worth waiting for, including, Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher, White-capped Parrot, Brown-capped Vireo, Smoke-coloured Peewee and four superb birds to finish the day, namely Black-billed Mountain Toucan, Blue-winged Mountain Tanager, Crested Quetzal and Northern Mountain Cacique.

Back at the lodge we watched the feeders for a while but no new hummers were seen so we set off on the return journey to Guango. At Guango some time was spent watching the feeders looking for the scarce and difficult to see Mountain Avocetbill. No luck though.

After another splendid dinner we again had callover gathered around the log fire and then relaxed after a great day.

### **Day 8: Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October:**

Today started with a pre-breakfast walk down the river valley behind the lodge. It was not long before we came upon a large mixed feeding flock consisting of Blue-and-black Tanager, Barred Becard, Black-capped Hemispingus, Capped Conebill, Lacrimose Mountain Tanager, Plushcap, Blue-backed Conebill, Black-capped Hemispingus and Black-eared Hemispingus.

Further down the track it seemed to start again with Slaty Brush-finch, White-banded Tyrannulet, Black-crested Warbler, Slaty Finch and Citrine Finch being seen. William was prompted to say that it was the best-mixed flock that he had seen in a long time. Soon after a Rufous Spinetail led us a merry dance as it skulked deep in a bush and in the same area we saw Russet-crowned Warbler, Stripe-headed Brush-Finch, Slaty Brush-Finch, Pale-naped Brush-Finch and Grey-Hooded Bush-Tanager. It was time for breakfast so we made our way back with Turquoise Jay being added to the Lodge list.

After a good breakfast we loaded up and spent some time at the feeders, hoping that the Mountain Avocetbill would grace us with its presence but to no avail. We still enjoyed the show that the other species, including the Sword-billed, put on.

From here the plan was to make our way back to Quito Airport and drop Stanley, Margaret and Charlie off there. The rest of us had booked a two-night extension at Tandayapa Lodge and would continue on afterwards. But first, we were going to try to pick up one or two birds on the way that we had missed the first time.

Unfortunately we dipped again on the Giant Conebill and at Papallacta Lake we also dipped on Andean Lapwing but we did have better views of Yellow-billed Pintail and also saw a Pectoral Sandpiper.



Sword-billed Hummingbird

At the airport we said our farewells to those flying home and to William who was going home for a few days before he left on another trip. Huglio then drove us on to Tandayapa Lodge.

Tandayapa Lodge was built in 1999 in an abandoned cow pasture adjacent to lush primary cloud forest and is a great base to explore the Choco Endemic Bird Area.

On arrival at the lodge we unloaded our gear and said farewell to our excellent driver Huglio.



We found our rooms and then spent some time watching the Hummingbird feeders on the attractive veranda. We were looking primarily for the scarce Green-fronted Lancebill, which visits the feeders on occasions. One of the official guides at the lodge Mark Gurney; is well known to some of the members in the group and we were all hoping that he would be available tomorrow, as we had not booked a guide.

We all decided that for the rest of the afternoon we would just concentrate on the humming bird feeders on the veranda. Lots of species were coming and going but no new birds for the trip were seen. As evening approached other birders who were staying at the lodge started to return.

Naturally Mark Gurney was amongst them and unfortunately gave us the bad news that he was booked tomorrow with a couple of birders from England, so he could not help us out. He did try and phone around some other guides but none were available. This then was the first and only mistake of the trip. To be fair to Naturetrek we could have booked one in advance but we were originally going to treat these few days as a chill out period, with casual birding as and when. Now though, we felt we wanted to make more use of our time as there was a host of new species at a lower altitude. Lesson learnt! However Mark did point us in the direction of reliable stake-outs where we could pick up one or two good birds, including an early morning visit to the small hide where some birds come in to feed on moths that are attracted by the lights that are left on all night.

The lights are also left on during the night around the lodge, for the same purpose. After our evening meal we had our call over and a relaxing beer. We then went out on to the veranda to witness the Mothfest. The walls of the lodge were covered in literally hundreds of moths of various species, which would be on the birds breakfast menu the following morning.

### **Day 9: Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October.**



We arranged to get up at 05:00am, which was just as well, as we were all woken by a group of loud and noisy American Birders. Our first destination was to be the illuminated bird hide. By following the track that leads away from the veranda you will eventually see the lights of the hide. We quietly entered the hide and it was not long before the birds started to arrive. Uniform Antshrike, Russet-crowned Warbler and a pair of Immaculate Antbirds soon followed a Tricoloured Brushfinch. We returned to the lodge for breakfast and then to

witness the birds coming in for the moths. These included Golden-crowned Flycatcher, Streak-capped Treehunter, Ashy-headed Tyrannulet, Chestnut-capped Brushfinch and Rusty-margined Flycatcher. This activity does not last too long so to be there at the right time, before 07:00, is crucial.

After some deliberation we decided to walk the Antpitta Trail. So much for the chill out! The trail proved to be quite arduous at times and the birding was relatively quiet but the birds that we did see included Beautiful Jay, Swainsons Thrush, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Beryl-spangled Tanager, Golden Tanager and we were fortunate to get the very elusive and hard to see Scaled Fruiteater. By the time we arrived back at the lodge it was time for lunch. Mark Gurney had tipped us off about a stakeout for the startling Lyre-tailed Nightjar, which is in the village of Tandayapa. Make your way to telegraph post Number 45 at dusk and if you are lucky it can be seen patrolling the area. We decided that we would walk the trail close to the village and to hopefully arrive at post 45 at the appropriate time. Walking the trail proved to be quite

uneventful with no new birds seen so we dutifully arrived at post 45 in plenty of time. Despite waiting until near dark the only things to come along were numerous mossies.

We were now late for our evening meal so we rushed back to the lodge. Not Advised!! Downhill was fine but the lodge was at the top of a steep climb. The walk up to the lodge was very, very tough because we tried to do it too quickly. Fortunately we all arrived back safely but shattered.

### **Day 10: Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November**

Our last day was upon us. We were due to be picked up around mid-day so we had the morning to try our luck finding the lek for the Wedge-billed Hummingbird that Mark had told us about. Despite checking out the hide and observing the birds coming in for the moths at the lodge, the only new bird was White-winged Brushfinch. By following our instructions along the Potoo Trail, we eventually felt confident that we had found the correct tree for the Hummingbird. We heard the bird calling but it was a while before we located the bird sitting out on a branch. On the way back we heard the call of the Rufous-breasted Antthrush. John tried to mimic the call and to everyone's surprise he was successful. A pair of them crossed the track in front of us and just to show it was not a fluke he tried again and they came back over the track and disappeared down the slope. Very nice birds. Well-done John!

During the walk Richard finally saw the Grey-breasted Wood Wren that had eluded him for the entire trip. Back at the lodge some of the group were lucky to see the rare Green-fronted Lancebill as it briefly visited its favourite feeder. A final look around the lodge produced Masked Trogon.

It was now time to finish our packing and prepare for the trip back to Quito Airport. As we relaxed on the veranda a nice Rufous-winged Tyrannulet became our last tick of the trip. The transport arrived; we picked up our packed lunches and loaded up. At the airport we discovered that our flight was not for five hours so we wondered why the transport had been arranged so early. The time seemed to drag and the fact that the flight was then delayed for a further forty minutes did not help our mood. We doubt if Iberia ever manage to leave on time. The return journey is lengthened further by an additional stop at Guayaquil Airport to take on fuel. The reason for this is due to the geographical location of Quito, coupled with the thin air; means the plane cannot take off with a full load of fuel. At Guayaquil everyone has to leave the aircraft, more time wasted, but we eventually set off for Madrid. We had a further two-hour wait at Madrid before we could fly to Heathrow. We arrived safely.... all in all a long and tiring journey.



(North Herts Birders at Tandayapa Lodge)



### **Trip Summary:**

This trip is great value for money. **Iberia Airlines** apart, everything was of a high standard

**Travel:** Unfortunately **Iberia Airlines** did their best to spoil the flights but this is beyond the control of Naturetrek. Mini-bus and driver were excellent.

**Accommodation:** All the lodges were excellent but Hostal de la Reina was disappointing.

**Food:** A very high standard throughout.

**Health:** No real altitude problems throughout, although taking your time is essential.  
No Malarial areas to worry about.

**Weather:** We were very fortunate that we did not encounter any real rainfall, so no birding time was lost.

**Costs:** Naturetrek Tour: £1250  
Airport Tax (Quito) \$25  
Spending Money: Optional meals in Quito: Reserve fees \$13: Beer Money: Open.  
Tip: Take Euros for Madrid Airport.

**Books:** The Birds of Ecuador, Volume 2: R Ridgley & Paul Greenfield. ISBN 0-7136-6117-8

### **Trip List Locations**

QTO: QUITO  
RTN: ROAD TO NONO (YANACOCOA)  
YNC: YANACOCOA  
ONMR: OLD NONO MINDO ROAD  
SRR: SACHATAMIA RAIN FOREST RESERVE  
BVA: BELLA VISTA AREA  
THG: TONY'S HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN  
MFF: MAQUIPUCUNA FISH FARM  
MR: MAQUIPUCUNA RESERVE  
POG: PAHUMA ORCHID GARDEN  
PA: PUEMBO AREA  
PP: PAPALLACTA PASS  
PFA: POLYLEPIS FOREST AREA  
PLA: PAPALLACTA LAKE AREA  
GLA: GUANGO LODGE AREA  
BA: BAEZA AREA  
SIA: SAN ISIDRO AREA  
TL: TANDAYAPA LODGE  
\* *NEW SPECIES ADDITIONS TO NATURETREK TRIP LIST*  
\*\* *SPECIES NOT SEEN BY ME*

## TRIP LIST

|                              |                  |                                 |                      |
|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Striated Heron:              | MFF *            | Common Tody-Flycatcher:         | BVA                  |
| Andean Teal:                 | PLA              | Rufous-crowned Tody Flycatcher: | SIA                  |
| Yellow-billed Pintail:       | PLA              | Pale-edged Flycatcher:          | BA                   |
| Torrent Duck:                | GLA              | Rusty-margined Flycatcher:      | ONMR, MR             |
| Andean Ruddy-Duck:           | PLA              | Piratic Flycatcher:             | BVA *                |
| Andean Condor:               | PP               | Lemon-browed Flycatcher:        | BA                   |
| Black Vulture:               | ONMR, MR,<br>PP  | Golden-crowned Flycatcher:      | SRR, TL              |
| Turkey Vulture:              | SRR              | Tropical Kingbird:              | SRR, MR, BA          |
| Semi-collared Hawk:          | ONMR *           | Barred Becard:                  | GLA                  |
| Plain-breasted Hawk:         | TL               | Cinnamon Becard:                | MR                   |
| Barred Hawk:                 | MR               | White-winged Becard:            | MR                   |
| Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle: | YNC, PFA, GL     | Masked Tityra:                  | MR                   |
| Roadside Hawk:               | MR               | Red-crested Cotinga:            | ONMR, MR             |
| Broad-winged Hawk:           | MR, BA, TL       | Black-chested Fruiteater:       | BA                   |
| Variable(Puna) Hawk:         | ONMR, PA, PP     | Scaled Fruiteater:              | TL                   |
| Black-and-Chestnut Eagle:    | BA               | Andean Cock-of-the-rock:        | ONMR, SRR            |
| Carunculated Caracara:       | YNC, BA          | Club-winged Manakin:            | SRR                  |
| American Kestrel:            | RTN, PA          | Turquoise Jay:                  | BVA, GLA             |
| Crested Guan:                | MR               | Beautiful Jay:                  | ONMR, TL             |
| Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe:    | PP               | Inca Jay:                       | BA                   |
| Andean Coot:                 | PLA              | Black-billed Peppershrike:      | MR                   |
| Pectoral Sandpiper:          | PLA *            | Red-eyed Vireo:                 | MR                   |
| Spotted Sandpiper:           | MFF, PLA         | Brown-capped Vireo:             | ONMR, MR, SIA        |
| Andean Gull:                 | BA, PLA          | Olivaceous Greenlet:            | BA *                 |
| Feral Pigeon:                | QTO              | Andean Solitaire:               | SRR                  |
| Band-tailed Pigeon:          | ONMR, SRR,<br>BA | Spotted Nightingale Thrush:     | MR                   |
| Ruddy Pigeon:                | SRR, BA          | Swainson's Thrush:              | ONMR, TL             |
| Plumbeous Pigeon:            | MR, TL           | Pale-eyed Thrush:               | MR                   |
| Eared Dove:                  | QTO, PA, GLA     | Great Thrush:                   | All Locations        |
| Scaly (Common) Ground-Dove:  | PA               | Pale-vented Thrush:             | MR                   |
| Black-winged Ground-Dove:    | RTN *            | Ecuadorian Thrush:              | MR                   |
| White-tipped Dove:           | ONMR, TL         | White-capped Dipper:            | MR                   |
| Red-billed Parrot:           | BA, TL           | Cinnamon Flycatcher:            | BA                   |
| White-capped Parrot:         | ONMR, SIA        | Ornate Flycatcher:              | SRR                  |
| Scaly-naped Amazon:          | ONMR             | Flavescent Flycatcher:          | TL                   |
| Squirrel Cuckoo:             | MR, BA           | Eastern Wood-Pee-wee:           | BA *                 |
| Smooth-billed Ani:           | MR               | Smoke-coloured Peewee:          | SRR, SIA, GLA,<br>TL |
| Striped Cuckoo:              | BA               | Olive-sided Flycatcher:         | BA                   |
| Mottled Owl:                 | SRR              | Black Phoebe:                   | ONMR, MR, GLA        |
| Black-and-White Owl:         | SRR *            | Vermillion Flycatcher:          | PA                   |
| Common Potoo:                | SRR              | Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant:       | YNC, THA             |
| White-collared Swift:        | MR, ONMR,<br>PP  | Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant:    | YNC                  |
| Chestnut-collared Swift:     | MR, BA           | Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant:       | POG                  |
| White-whiskered Hermit:      | MR               | Crowned Chat-Tyrant:            | YNC                  |
| Tawny-bellied Hermit:        | THG, MR, TL      | Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant:     | BVA **               |
| Green-fronted Lancebill:     | TL               | Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant:         | PP                   |
| White-necked Jacobin:        | MR               | Streak-throated Bush-Tyrant:    | PP                   |
| Brown Violetear:             | SRR, TL          | Smoky Bush-Tyrant:              | YNC                  |
| Green Violetear:             | THG              | Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant:     | PFA                  |
| Sparkling Violetear:         | RNO, THG, PA     | Paramo Ground-Tyrant:           | PP                   |
| Western Emerald:             | THG, TL          | Dusky-capped Flycatcher:        | MR                   |
| Green-crowned Woodnymph:     | MR               | Brown-bellied Swallow:          | YNC, PFA, PLA        |
| Andean Emerald:              | SRR              | Blue-and-White Swallow:         | All Locations        |
| Rufous-tailed Hummingbird:   | SRR, MR, TL      | Southern Rough-winged Swallow:  | ONMR, MR, BA         |
| Speckled Hummingbird:        | THG, GLA,        | Rufous Wren:                    | YNC                  |
|                              |                  | Sepia-brown Wren:               | BVA                  |
|                              |                  | Grass Wren:                     | RTN                  |

|                               |              |                                   |                 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Purple-bibbed Whitetip:       | SIA          | Whiskered Wren:                   | MR              |
| Empress Brilliant:            | THG          | Bay Wren:                         | MR              |
| Fawn-breasted Brilliant:      | SRR,         | Southern House-Wren:              | MR              |
| Green-crowned Brilliant:      | SRR, SIA, TL | Mountain Wren:                    | SRR, ISA, GLA   |
| Ecuadorian Hillstar:          | MR           | Grey-breasted Wood-Wren:          | SRR, MR         |
| White-tailed Hillstar:        | PP           | Southern Nightingale-Wren:        | MR              |
| Giant Hummingbird:            | POG          | Paramo Pipit:                     | RTN, PP         |
| Shining Sunbeam:              | BA           | Tropical Parula:                  | SRR, MR         |
| Great Sapphirewing:           | YNC, PA      | Blackburnian Warbler:             | All Locations   |
| Bronzy Inca:                  | RTN          | Blackpoll Warbler:                | BA, GLA         |
| Brown Inca:                   | SIA          | Canada Warbler:                   | MR, BA          |
| Collared Inca:                | YNC, SRR     | Slaty-throated Whitestart:        | SRR, MR, PA, TL |
| Buff-winged Starfrontlet:     | BVA, GLA,    | Spectacled Whitestart:            | YNC, GLA        |
| Sword-billed Hummingbird:     | RTN, YNC     | Three-striped Warbler:            | BVA, MR, TL     |
| Buff-tailed Coronet:          | YNC, GLA     | Citrine Warbler:                  | GLA             |
| Chestnut-breasted Coronet:    | SRR, GLA     | Black-crested Warbler:            | RTN, GLA        |
| Velvet-purple Coronet:        | GLA,         | Russet-crowned Warbler:           | GLA, TL         |
| Gorgeted Sunangel:            | SRR          | Buff-rumped Warbler:              | MR              |
| Tourmaline Sunangel:          | SRR, GLA     | Bananaquit:                       | MR, SIA, TL     |
| Black-breasted Puffleg:       | GLA          | Orange-bellied Euphonia:          | SRR, MR, TL     |
| Sapphire-vented Puffleg:      | YNC          | Thick-billed Euphonia:            | MR              |
| Golden-breasted Puffleg:      | RTN          | Cinereous Conebill:               | RTN, PA, PLA    |
| Hoary Puffleg:                | YNC          | Blue-backed Conebill:             | YNC, GLA        |
| Booted Racket-tail:           | SRR *        | Capped Conebill:                  | SRR, GLA        |
| Black-tailed Trainbearer:     | SRR, TL      | Giant Conebill:                   | PFA **          |
| Green-tailed Trainbearer:     | RTN, PF      | Masked Flower-piercer:            | BVA, SIA, GLA   |
| Viridian Metaltail:           | THG          | Glossy Flower-piercer:            | RTN             |
| Tyrian Metaltail:             | PLA          | Black Flower-piercer:             | ONMR, PLA       |
| Blue-mantled Thornbill:       | RTN, PP, GLA | White-sided Flower-piercer:       | SRR, TL         |
| Rainbow-bearded Thornbill:    | PFA          | Golden-collared Honeycreeper:     | BA              |
| Long-tailed Sylph:            | YNC          | Fawn-breasted Tanager:            | MR, BA          |
| Violet-tailed Sylph:          | GLA          | Rufous-throated Tanager:          | MR              |
| Wedge-billed Hummingbird:     | SRR          | Golden Tanager:                   | ONMR, BVA,      |
| Purple-throated Woodstar:     | TL           |                                   | MR, BA          |
| Purple-collared Woodstar:     | THG          | Silvery-throated Tanager:         | MR              |
| White-bellied Woodstar:       | PA *         | Saffron-crowned Tanager:          | BA              |
| Gorgeted Woodstar:            | GLA, TL      | Golden-eared Tanager:             | BA **           |
| Crested Quetzal:              | GLA          | Flame-faced Tanager:              | BA              |
| Golden-headed Quetzal:        | SIA          | Metallic-green Tanager:           | BVA             |
| Masked Trogon:                | SRR          | Blue-necked Tanager:              | MR, BA          |
| Green Kingfisher:             | MR, TL       | Golden-naped Tanager:             | SRR, BA         |
| Broad-billed Motmot:          | MFF          | Bay-headed Tanager:               | MR              |
| Rufous Motmot:                | MR *         | Beryl-spangled Tanager:           | SRR, BA, TL     |
| Barred Puffbird:              | MR           | Blue-and-black Tanager:           | BVA, GLA        |
| Lanceolated Monklet:          | MR           | Black-capped Tanager:             | SRR             |
| Red-headed Barbet:            | MR           | Scrub Tanager:                    | PA, BA          |
| Toucan Barbet:                | ONMR, MR     | Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager: | RTN             |
| Crimson-rumped Toucanet:      | SRR          | Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager:       | GLA             |
| Pale-mandibled Aracari:       | MR, TL       | Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager:     | SRR, SIA        |
| Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan: | MFF          | Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager:   | SRR *           |
| Black-billed Mountain-Toucan: | BVA          | Hooded Mountain-Tanager:          | YNC, SRR, GLA   |
| Choco Toucan:                 | SIA *        | Black-chested Mountain-Tanager:   | YNC             |
| Crimson-mantled Woodpecker:   | MR           | Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager:   | BA              |
| Golden-olive Woodpecker:      | PA           | Swallow Tanager:                  | MR, PA          |
| Smokey-brown Woodpecker:      | MR           | Blue-gray Tanager:                | SRR, MR,        |
| Yellow-vented Woodpecker:     | SRR, MR      |                                   | BA (Eastern)    |
| Bar-bellied Woodpecker:       | SRR          | Palm Tanager:                     | MR, BA          |
| Stout-billed Cinclodes:       | YNC          | Blue-and-Yellow Tanager:          | RTN             |
| Bar-winged Cinclodes:         | PFA, PP      | Yellow (Lemon)-rumped Tanager:    | SRR, MR, TL     |
|                               | PP           | Summer Tanager:                   | BA              |

|                                 |               |                               |                  |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Pacific Hornero:                | MFF           | Scarlet Tanager:              | BA *             |
| Andean Tit-Spinetail:           | PFA           | White-winged Tanager:         | MR               |
| Azara's Spinetail:              | RTN           | Ochre-breasted Tanager:       | MR               |
| Slaty Spinetail:                | MR            | White-lined Tanager:          | MR, TL           |
| Rufous Spinetail:               | GLA           | White-shouldered Tanager:     | MR               |
| Red-faced Spinetail:            | MR            | Rufous-chested Tanager:       | BVA **           |
| Ash-browed Spinetail:           | BA **         | Common Bush-Tanager:          | SIA              |
| Many-striped Canastero:         | PP            | Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager: | MR               |
| White-chinned Thistletail:      | PFA           | Dusky Bush-Tanager:           | SRR              |
| Pearled Treerunner:             | YNC, BVA      | Grey-hooded Bush-Tanager:     | GLA              |
| Streaked Tuftedcheek:           | YNC, BVA, GLA | Black-capped Hemispingus:     | GLA              |
| Lineated Foliage-gleaner:       | SRR, MR,      | Superciliated Hemispingus:    | YNC              |
| Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner: | SRR           | Black-eared Hemispingus:      | GLA              |
| Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner:   | MR            | Grass-green Tanager:          | YNC              |
| Streak-capped Treehunter:       | TL            | Plushcap:                     | GLA              |
| Tyrannine Woodcreeper:          | SRR           | Buff-throated Saltator:       | MR               |
| Plain-brown Woodcreeper:        | MR            | Black-winged Saltator:        | MR, TL           |
| Wedge-billed Woodcreeper:       | SRR **        | Southern Yellow Grosbeak:     | RTN, PA          |
| Strong-billed Woodcreeper:      | SRR           | Rose-breasted Grosbeak:       | MR               |
| Spotted Woodcreeper:            | SRR, MR       | Blue-black Grassquit:         | MFF, TL          |
| Streak-headed Woodcreeper:      | MR            | Yellow-faced Grassquit:       | BVA              |
| Montane Woodcreeper:            | SRR, SIA      | Slaty Finch:                  | GLA *            |
| Uniform Antshrike:              | TL            | Variable Seedeater:           | BVA              |
| Western Slaty Antshrike:        | MR            | Black-and-White Seedeater:    | BA               |
| Russet Antshrike:               | MR *          | Yellow-bellied Seedeater:     | SRR, ONMR        |
| Plain Antvireo:                 | MR            | Chestnut-bellied Seedeater:   | BA               |
| Slaty Antwren:                  | MR            | Plain-coloured Seedeater:     | RTN, PA          |
| White-backed Fire-Eye:          | MR            | Paramo Seedeater:             | PFA              |
| Esmeraldas Antbird:             | MR            | Plumbeous Sierra-Finch:       | PFA              |
| Immaculate Antbird:             | MR, TL        | Ash-breasted Sierra-Finch:    | PA               |
| Rufous-breasted Antthrush:      | MR, TL        | Pale-naped Brush-Finch:       | GLA              |
| Rufous Antpitta:                | YNC **        | Rufous-naped Brush-Finch:     | RTN, YNC, PA, TL |
| Tawny Antpitta:                 | YNC           | Tricoloured Brush-Finch:      | SRR, TL          |
| Spillmann's Tapaculo:           | BVA **        | White-winged Brush-Finch:     | TL               |
| Ocellated Tapaculo: (H)         | BVA           | Slaty Brush-Finch:            | GLA              |
| Sooty-headed Tyrannulet:        | MFF           | Chestnut-crowned Brush-Finch: | TL               |
| Golden-faced Tyrannulet:        | MR, BA        | Orange-billed Sparrow:        | MR               |
| Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet:  | PA            | Yellow-browed Sparrow:        | BA               |
| White-crested Elaenia:          | SRR           | Rufus-collared Sparrow:       | All Locations    |
| White-throated Tyrannulet:      | YNC           | Shiny Cowbird:                | PA               |
| White-tailed Tyrannulet:        | SRR           | Russet-backed Oropendola:     | BA               |
| Rufous-winged Tyrannulet:       | TL            | Subtropical Cacique:          | BA               |
| White-banded Tyrannulet:        | YNC, GLA      | Northern Mountain Cacique:    | SIA              |
| Torrent Tyrannulet:             | ONMR, MR,     | Lesser Goldfinch:             | MR               |
| Tufted Tit-tyrant:              | YNC, PA, PLA  | Hooded Siskin:                | PA               |
| Streak-necked Flycatcher:       | ONMR          | Olivaceous Siskin:            | BA               |
| Slaty-capped Flycatcher:        | MR, PA        |                               |                  |
| Yellow Tyrannulet:              | MR            |                               |                  |
| Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant:     | MR            |                               |                  |

324 Species Identified

## **A Thought from FOB Dogwood – Central Iraq**

(Mark Easterbrook)

As I sit here (20 Nov 04), I've just received my AOS yearly bulletin, which my wife kindly posted to me via Basra Airport, Shaibah, Basra Palace and heaven knows where else – however, I must remember “The Team Works” as the Royal Navy says.

With morale soaring I thought what better to do than write an article for next years bulletin, perhaps the birds of Dogwood, Camp Ticonderoga. After a short pause for thought the article had finished the list being White Wagtail, Crested Lark, Desert Lark, House Crow, Yellow-legged Gull, Red Wattled Plover and Palm Dove – hardly a mega listers paradise.

On to better thoughts and as I sat in the sunny desert of Babylon, I remembered a day back in the spring at Strumble Head on the Pembrokeshire coast about half an hour from Haverfordwest, where I am now quartered.

I departed the house at about 0630 as I had just arrived home after another deployment abroad (Op Mercian – Kosovo) and my year list was pathetic to the least. I drove the shortish distance to Strumble and when I arrived the dawn was just breaking. I looked out to sea and witnessed thousands of Manx Shearwater over the waves on their way their feeding grounds in the Irish Sea. I find seabirds highly entertaining and never tire of seeing them, the flight action, the identification challenge and their endurance is always of interest.

Tumbling above the lighthouse to my left were a pair of enigmatic Chough, one of the joys of living near the Welsh coast. This coupled with the sound of a distant Grasshopper Warbler “reeling” made for a good start to the day. I decided to walk part of the coastal path and return via a friendly farmers back lane, a distance of about three miles taking in coastal cliffs, bracken, Tussock grass, ploughed fields and hedgerows.

I started my journey to the calls of Goldfinch and the sight of Meadow Pipits fleeing as I paced along the rocky path. I heard the Grasshopper Warbler once more and sure enough it sat up on a clump of brambles obligingly, affording me some unusually close and protracted views of this at times, difficult to see species. A Merlin darted over the cliffs, closely followed by a Peregrine harassing the Herring Gulls; a scene to conjure with which gives you one of those “Good to be alive” feelings.

I was enjoying the walk and the exercise in the company of some excellent birds and beautiful coastal scenery. As I walked along, I thought the Roger (Roger Dickey) and Pete (Pete Carr) who I had recently been to Ascension Island with and talked to at great lengths about the merits of “listing” would be proud of me – well at least a little surprised. Here I was an avid lister, on my local patch, no twitching, but just enjoying the best thing about “birding” – the birds and their environs. *Just had to pause to spray the Army issue fly spray – as Dogwood is known as “Fliesville” (and lots of other things) and the population is me.* Back to the Spring morning at Strumble Head. Gannets drifted by, a few plunge diving and several Grey Seals were close to

shore and pairing up for the breeding season. A pod of Harbour Porpoise surfaced and several leapt out of the water making for great viewing.

As I continued along the path, Willow Warblers and Chiff Chaffs sang noisily, (It's important to tell them apart – Andrew)! Wrens, Dunnocks, Chaffinches and Robins scattered quickly as a Sparrow Hawk sped along the hedgerow, whilst Starlings also beat a hasty retreat. I stopped to scan a ploughed field and enjoy the smell of the country – if you get my meaning? There in the field was the bird I suspected I might find and my first of the year. A male Northern Wheatear, I enjoy watching the chat family and it's never really Spring until you've seen a Wheatear. Alongside it were several Pied Wagtails and a continental race White Wagtail.

The walk concluded by sighting several Sand Martins (my first for the year) coming in off the sea and two Red-throated Divers sat on the sea off the Head. It was a very enjoyable couple of hours, which I would recommend to anyone if you're ever in this neck-of-the wood, or give me a call.

*“INCOMING - got to dash”!*

### **ASCENSION ISLAND**

(Andrew Bray)

It has been 20 years that the AOS has been visiting Ascension Island; that lump of volcanic rock sitting in the middle of the Atlantic. Or should I say that green island which provides an important nest site for sea birds in the tropical Atlantic. October is normally the driest month in the year except in 2005. It is all well and good knowing where you are going and what you intend to do but there is just the slight issue of getting there. The old adage “Time to spare fly crab air; in a hurry go by boat” was not lost on us. Normally there is not an issue on flights but instead of a 747 to whisk us to the sun there was a Tristar tanker (with limited seating). The change of aircraft was something to do with a RAF Cpl ramming the 747 with a set of steps. With a few days to go to the Sunday flight there was no chance of seat and it was doom and gloom amongst the expedition. Plan B and C swung into action however on Friday morning there was a glimmer of hope. On Friday evening confirmation came through that we would fly. On Sunday evening the military party of Andrew Bray, Richard Seargent, Mark Easterbrook, Lynn Camm, Colin Holcombe, Mike Vincent met up with the civilian component of John Hughes and Colin Wearn (RAFOS). Their seats were paid for so they were always flying. The good news on arrival was that the flight was delayed 24 hours. We checked in our baggage and the QM stores from Blandford before we went our separate ways. Back on Monday night and we are dragged away from the bar to wait in the airport whilst the Department of Transport inspected the security procedures in





place. Of course after booking in we are bussed to RAF Fairford for the flight (the runway at Brize is closed for maintenance). An uneventful flight later of squash and white box food later we arrived at Ascension. Here the RAF looked after us very well; we picked up our transport and were allocated lots of accommodation at the bottom of camp. By the afternoon we were already on the fairs. Over the next few days we surveyed the fairs for size and carried out 'quadrat duties' for density.

An aim of the expedition was to ring over 1,500 chicks therefore our window of opportunity to meet this and complete a survey was very narrow. We were fortunate to hit the fairs at the optimum week. Each fair had a number of separate groups at various stages of nesting. We were able to work out the size of each group in two days using GPS. Care had to be taken to minimize disturbance of the birds as everywhere we went there was a chance of newly hatched chicks. This was especially



important when carrying out the 'quadrats'. As the teams came across newly hatched chicks then they had to stop. Chicks are very vulnerable in their first week of life and there is a significant mortality rate; we did not want to add to this. Chicks make a tasty snack for the Frigate Birds plus if they stray they are attacked by nearby terns. After the first week the chicks are usually too big for the Frigate Birds however, we saw many examples of where a Frigate Bird had eyes

too big for its stomach. The chick would be picked up by a leg and the Frigate would soar upwards tossing the chick in the air and catching it to find the best way of swallowing it. It would then realise that the chick was too big and then drop it at height. As the chick gets older it is also able to escape the attentions of other Sooty Terns. Sooty Terns are very aggressive when it comes to protecting their egg or chick and any other bird in pecking distance is attacked. A young chick wandering around soon runs into trouble and where there is no escape or respite it will succumb to the damage. When chicks are big enough they will concentrate together in crèches. They start off hiding in the rocky terrain but after a few weeks can stand out in the open waiting to be fed. These crèches are huge with hundreds of chicks. It never fails to amaze me how the parents find their own chick. At the end of the survey period the fairs occupied 11.4 hectares with a density of a 1.7 birds per square metre – the previous expedition noted a density of 1.9 per square metre. The question raised was now the threat of cats has been removed, has this allowed the Terns to spread out more to their natural density? In all we estimated that there were 194,000 pairs that represent a steady increase in numbers since the cat cull but not yet at the peak number recorded.

As part of the monitoring process we wanted to ring adult birds that had reared a chick successfully plus carry out full biometrics including a blood sample. The trick was to find an adult feeding a large chick of over 4 weeks old. Once meal time was over there was a fleeting moment to catch the adult. The adults are very jumpy and catching them was not easy; stealth was required to get within reach of the adult whilst it was feeding. Once it had finished feeding it wanted to hang out with the other adults away from the chicks! We also distinguished between birds on Waterside

(yellow leg markers) and Mars Bay (red leg markers). It will be interesting to see how many birds have these markers in the years to come. 2000 birds were ringed during our stay. Previously only a few hundred had had marker rings as well. Our re-trap numbers of 92 were not as high as we expected; all were ringed on Ascension. Though the cat cull had removed one unnatural predator others remain. Surveys on Myna Bird predation was carried out with birds pecking eggs even when all that is in the egg is a formed chick. The other threat is from rats and we recorded predation on chicks by rats at Mars Bay. This opens up another monitoring study.

Besides Sooty Tern surveys we also took time out to carry out some other work mainly on our third survey site of letterbox. We split into two groups to spend the night out to determine what and how many birds were nesting and roosting on the feature. The path (not much more than a 'goat track') was made more interesting



when carrying a 15+ kg pack (camp bed, BBQ pack, beer etc.). Camp was protected by Masked Boobies acting as early warning lookouts. There were a number of nests on Letterbox however the big discovery was the size of the roost. It would seem that greater numbers are roosting especially as room runs out on Boatswain Bird Island. The second team were able to ring the chicks and some adults however they did not escape the rain. Despite bivvie bags they were all

woke up wet! Taking the packs down was bad enough so walking back up was something I did not have to contemplate. An up side of the trip was lying in a warm sleeping bag looking at the stars as the clouds broke, an awe inspiring experience. As part of the trip we put out 50 rat traps, none of which were sprung but on some the peanut butter/cornflake mix had been eaten.

We also carried out some land bird surveys and bagged a few more letterboxes on our travels. This included three of us climbing up White Horse Hill (well Richard cantered up in his sandals whilst Mark and I climbed!) to find a waxbill at the top. We visited stacks at English Bay and Pillar Bay. We found Red Foot Boobies at both locations. At the English Bay area Brown Noddies and Brown Boobies were nesting on the mainland next to the stacks. I was attacked by an unfriendly Brown Noddy that time and again dive bombed forcing me to take evasive action. We did find Brown Noddies on the Tern fairs however there was no sign of them nesting by the time we left.

Leaving the Island was an interesting plan. Being late out there was a strong chance that we would be late leaving. All expeditions to Ascension had been stopped because of the problems with flights (the RAF group had to go fishing elsewhere). We could not get the other part of our party out either. The next flight out to Ascension was 48 hrs late then the passengers spent 24 hrs in Ascension whilst a new plane was flown in to take them to the Falklands. Given the situation and the personal circumstances of the individuals, four of the group (splitters!) left on that return flight to UK. For Lynn and myself we were only 48 hrs late getting back to UK to discover that there was a delay with the bus to take us back to Brize Norton! Colin and John

flew back separately later on without a problem now that the 747 was back on the route.



### **PUBLISH OR BE DAMMED**

(John Hughes)

On trips to Ascension we collected blood samples from Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*, Brown Booby *S. leucogaster* and Red-footed Booby *S. sula* and we forwarded the samples to the Avian Tissue Collection at the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen for future deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis. These samples were used to establish the identity of a new species the Nazca Booby *Sula granti* (Friesen et al 2002). Unfortunately we had not written up this work and so the Army Ornithological Society (AOS) obtained little credit for the work and was not mentioned in the paper. This episode has taught me a lesson and now more of the monitoring data that has been collected by the AOS on Ascension is being written up and published.

Many of the articles that the AOS has produced are targeted at new members. Publishing general interest articles in Soldier Magazine aids the recruitment of servicing soldiers. In recent years we have done much to target new recruits but less so with keeping the ornithological world up to date with the conservation work been undertaken by the society. Publishing articles in Sanctuary and Osprey (grey literature) has the benefit of hitting both service personnel who might be interested in joining our society and also the professionals in the fields of conservations and ornithology. Professional ornithologists to whom I have shown a copy of Osprey have commented on the quality of the publication. A wider circulation of the magazine would do much to enhance the image of the society.

These articles and papers in Osprey obviously have a wider interest outside the circle of service ornithological societies. For ease of reference and access I am in the process of compiling all the Ascension reports published in Osprey, the Adjutant and

elsewhere onto CD under the title “Booby Papers”. In the academic world organisations and individuals raise their profile by publishing papers in peer reviewed publications. Where articles and reports have been published in the grey literature (where they have not been peer reviewed) they are sometime quoted by authors who subsequently produce papers that are peer reviewed. The significance of our society to the conservation of birds can in one sense be gauged by the extent to which the professionals in this field refer to our work. Some of our monitoring schemes and data collected on Ascension have been written up and this work is now being quoted by professional ornithologists. A list of authors who make reference to the reports produced by members of the society follows. If colleagues can add to this list then I would be grateful for details. Clearly the next step along this road is for the society to produce papers that are peer reviewed. Appropriate publications for papers relating to Ascension that are peer reviewed are *Atlantic Seabirds* and the *Bulletin of the African Bird Club*.

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### **MONITORING QUAIL ON SALISBURY PLAIN**

(John Hughes)

Quail *Coturnix coturnix* were monitored on Salisbury Plain in the summer of 2005. The methodology for monitoring Quail was established jointly by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Defence Estate in their Breeding Bird Survey of Salisbury Plain Training Area project (Stanbury et al 2002). During the summer of 2000, Quails were monitored as part of the Breeding Bird Survey in 2005 this work was replicated using identical methodology and identical transect lines.

**Methodology:** The Breeding Bird Survey project delineated two circular line transects, one to the north and the other to the south of the Netheravon - Everleigh road. They were 5.2km and 4.7km in length respectively and followed well defined paths and tracks. The transect lines are shown in figure 1 (Survey 1993). Quails were monitored by following these transects and by listening for calling male birds. Six visits at regular intervals late in the evening between mid May and the end of July were recommended. A reconnaissance of the RSPB line transects was completed on 19 March 2005 and the route confirmed by Global Positioning System (GPS) observations. A time table of visits conforming to recommended methodology was prepared and the first visit to monitor Quail was completed during the evening of 12 May 2005.

**Table 1** Number of calling males heard during each visit in the summer of 2005

| Date       | Number of calling birds heard |                   |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
|            | Northern transect             | Southern transect |
| 12/05/2005 | 0                             | Not visited       |
| 22/06/2005 | Not visited                   | 4                 |
| 23/06/2005 | Not visited                   | 2                 |
| 24/06/2005 | 0                             | Not visited       |
| 26/06/2005 | Not visited                   | 3 + one seen      |

|                                 |              |             |
|---------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 30/06/2005                      | Not visited  | 1           |
| 01/07/2005                      | 4 + one seen | Not visited |
| 07/07/2005                      | Not visited  | 1           |
| 10/07/2005                      | 1+ two seen  | Not visited |
| 11/07/2005                      | 0            | Not visited |
| 12/07/2005                      | Not visited  | 3           |
| 13/07/2005                      | 8            | Not visited |
| 19/07/2005                      | 2            | Not visited |
| Maximum number of calling Birds | <b>8</b>     | <b>4</b>    |

During the summer of 2005 the northern transect was visited seven times and the southern transect six times (table1) while in the summer of 2000 each transect was visited five times (table 2). In both years no Quail were heard during the first visit in mid May. The first Quail in 2005 was heard on 22 June. The location of each calling male was fixed using a GPS instrument. Both the location and the time when the bird was heard were recorded and entered onto a spread sheet for further analysis. A total of 33 hearing or sightings of Quail were recorded during the 2005 study period.

**Table 2** Number of calling males heard on each visit during 2000 (Stanbury et al 2000)

| Date                            | Number of calling birds heard |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
|                                 | Northern transect             | Southern transect |
| 16/05/2000                      | 0                             | 0                 |
| 29/05/2000                      | 2                             | 0                 |
| 10/06/2000                      | Not visited                   | 1                 |
| 13/06/2000                      | 1                             | Not visited       |
| 28/06/2000                      | 1                             | 0                 |
| 15/07/2000                      | 1                             | 1                 |
| Maximum number of calling Birds | <b>2</b>                      | <b>1</b>          |

**Results:** The survey effort in 2005 was greater by three site visits (30%) than that in 2000. Not with standing the heighten survey effort in 2005 there is clearly an increase in the number of Quail along the two transect lines. The maximum number of calling males that were heard in any one evening on the northern transect rose over the five years from two to eight (400%) and on the southern transect from one to four again a 400% increase. No Quail were reported sighted in 2000 while in 2005 four Quail were seen. On 26 June 05 the first bird of the season was spotted diving into the grass from the edge of a track as I cycled past. On 01 July 05 another was flushed by dogs and flew low for about 30m and then dropped into long grass. On 10 July a pair was seen flying for about 70m crossing a wide track in the bottom of a dell. For future reference four honey spots, two on the northern transect and two on the southern transect, where calling Quail were regularly heard were marked on the transect map (Figure 1).

**Discussion:** Quail numbers in England vary greatly from year to year. In Britain there are usually about 300 calling males and Wiltshire is one of their main strongholds (Stanbury et al 2000). In this study area the density during the summer of



2005 was 1.2 calling birds per kilometre traversed. At least nine birds were heard or seen on more than one occasion indicating that the birds were not passing through and possibly breeding. Sufficient data was collected this season to establish the most appropriate listening techniques and the best time of the day to hear the calling male. Plans are being prepared to continue this monitoring work into the forcible future.

### **References:**

Stanbury, A., Branston, T., Sheldarke, P. & Wison, S. 2000 breeding Bird Survey of Salisbury Training Area: A Joint Project between RSPB and Defence Estates.

Survey, DGMS 1993 Slaisbury Plain (Centre and East). Scale 1:25000, GSGS 5294.





## **2005 – NEW TALES FROM CHESHIRE**

I have moved within my village in Cheshire and here is the view from my new house, looking south south east across the same fields that I used to look over from another direction.

Sunday 24 September and I said to my visitors that I seem to have lost my birds over the Summer months. For no known reason I then decided to clean out my various bird feeders; I had read about this necessity but did not really believe it was important. I am now convinced that it is after a battle royal with the evil-smelling nut feeders!

That afternoon, sitting looking out of my downstairs windows, I was thrilled to see a pair of nuthatches, a section of great tits, a multiple of blue tits, a pair of dunnocks, a pair of robins, and a pair of wrens, all feeding off my newly refurbished feeders. From upstairs later I noticed wood pigeons and magpies in the trees. Autumn had arrived and my birds seemed to have returned. But I am being plagued by a section of neighbours' cats and what appears to be a platoon of grey squirrels. Whilst I may have a terminal solution for the latter I am looking for ideas on dealing with the former!

On my way to Granada the other day, where we spent a delightful, if somewhat wet week on the southern slopes of the Sierra Nevada (we saw Cirl Bunting, Rock Bunting, Serin, Stonechat amongst other things), I read a short article in The Times about some of the dangers to garden birds. The dangers of infections from contaminated foods and faeces on bird tables (and for that matter the possible passing of such infections to humans if and when they clean the tables/feeders – bird flu and all that) pale into insignificance when compared to estimated cat kills. The article, and I quote, said: "The Mammal Society has calculated that cats in the UK kill 275 million items of prey a year, of which 55 million are birds". This latter figure gave me food for thought, even if somewhat randomly and irreverently.



55 million is close to the whole population of the UK – one cat bird-kill per inhabitant of our nation every year. Now I do not know what the total population of birds is in the UK – no doubt someone will tell me, with or without migration – but I wonder what our Government would be doing if such a death rate was anticipated amongst us humans? And this is the Government that banned fox hunting with dogs whose success rate in kills has never been significant. No I am not a fanatic fox hunter but, for better or for worse, I have never liked cats (nor grey squirrels!) – maybe something to do with the fact that the only Granny I knew (who appeared to me to be somewhat straight-laced (with the benefit of hindsight I think I was wrong!)) owned a huge great aggressive tabby which pinned me to the wall on many an occasion. Why are we allowing such death rates from domestic cats – surely there is nothing natural or political in this holocaust of garden birds. So why isn't this over-regulatory Government banning domestic cats?

And then I thought, if only 55 million of the kills were due to cats, what were the other 220 million items of prey – presumably mammals such as rats, mice, voles all of which are the special diet of many of our most handsome birds including birds of prey. If they all survived we would surely have many more birds (exponential increases) and there would be much more for many of them to eat. Just think what our countryside would be like if we removed the domestic cat from our inventory of pets. Ironical isn't it that the AOS highlighted the devastation that was being caused by wild cats on Ascension on the birds which has led to the recent culling there?

I am aware that there are ultrasonic devices which one can buy which help to deter cats from specific parts of one's garden. Furthermore these may even have an influence on the squirrels. For cat lovers (and the only cat lovers I am talking about are those who love birds too), and I realise there is always another side to each story, I am reliably informed that these devices will do no harm to the cat. I also believe that a series of water sprays which are triggered (like UGS) by movement sensors will keep the cats at bay (and soak me regularly to boot!). But surely deterring cats from selected areas only means that they will go somewhere else and still kill birds.



So what can we do about it? All ideas are welcome before I start my grumpy not-so-old man's campaign! But I can enjoy myself also. I hope you like my Spanish batman who looked after me so well in Barcelona last Spring!

But back to my garden where I was amused to see a brace of cats attempting to play with, or attack a family of pheasants the other day.

The pheasants were egging them on and then at the last safe moment hopping into the air and landing far enough away to ensure that the cats had to go through the whole rigmarole of stalking again. Perhaps I should start a training camp for all the other birds.

Even with the incessant presence of cats and squirrels, in the Spring, I was delighted to see a complete family of Great Spotted Woodpeckers (Dad, Mum and two young) attending my squirrel-proof feeders. What fun to see the demands of the young being met in the early stages and then to watch them learning to feed themselves. Magpies, Jays, Rooks and Jackdaws seem to love my roof, Buzzard, Canada Geese, Heron and Sparrowhawk are regular visitors to the immediate vicinity and in the garden there have been breeding Blackbird, Chaffinch, Dunnock, Great and Blue Tit. Latterly, as mentioned earlier, a pair of nuthatches has joined in but I am missing the House and Tree Sparrows who visited me so often just 100 metres down the road.

Farther afield we spent a couple of good sunny days first on the Dee Estuary. On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2005 at Point of Ayr, Flint, Connah's Quay and Inner Marsh Farm we saw:

|                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cormorant (in large numbers)    | Redshank (thousands)      |
| Little Egret (10)               | Black headed gull         |
| Grey Heron                      | Herring Gull              |
| Mute Swan                       | Lesser Black- backed Gull |
| Greylag Goose                   | Great Black-backed Gull   |
| Canada Goose                    | Magpie                    |
| Shelduck                        | Woodpigeon                |
| Widgeon                         | House Martin              |
| Teal                            | Swallow                   |
| Mallard                         | Pied Wagtail              |
| Kestrel                         | Wren                      |
| Spotted Crake                   | Wheatear                  |
| Moorhen                         | Great Tit                 |
| Coot                            | Blue Tit                  |
| Oystercatcher (hundreds)        | Crow                      |
| Lapwing                         | Rook                      |
| Dunlin (hundreds)               | Starling- juveniles       |
| White hooded Ruff               | House Sparrow             |
| Snipe (5)                       | Chaffinch                 |
| Black tailed Godwit (thousands) |                           |



So I am looking forward to seeing some of you – indeed as many as possible – next Autumn when we repeat our weekend adventure in the north west.