

The Kestrel

Official Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Naturalists

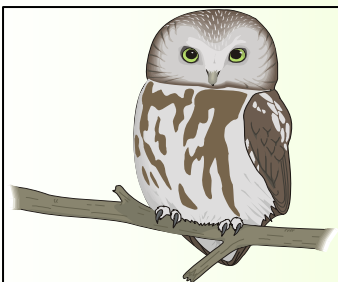
The Kestrel
Volume 6, Issue 2



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Editor: Highlight of the Fairmont Club Camp was this strutting male blue grouse that gave us quite a show. We'll have a full report in the Fall edition

Editors Corner



Send your items to scoutfir@shaw.ca. Fall issue articles by September 21 please. Many thanks to the Greg Laura their articles.

Club News

- Remember to check your email for dates and locations of next meetings.



The Kestrel



Rocky Mountain Naturalists Executive

President: P. Davidson

Vice President:

Treasurer: D. Cooper

* Note we'll update this in next newsletter

Other Committees and club representatives

Little Big Day: G. Ross

Christmas Bird Counts: G. Ross

Elizabeth Lake: T. Szkorupa

Newsletter: T. Wideski

Membership Information

Mail to:

\$25 per Family

Rocky Mountain Naturalists

P.O. Box 701

\$20 per Individual

Cranbrook, B.C.

V1C 4J5

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Postal Code _____

Feature Bird Species: Wilson's Warbler

Dave Sindholt sent these great pictures of a Wilson's warbler in the Rockies

The Wilson's Warbler is found in a large diversity of environments in the winter. It is the only migrant warbler regularly found in tropical high plains (paramo).

The Wilson's Warbler trends toward brighter, richer coloration from the eastern part of the range to the west. The Pa-

cific coast populations have the brightest yellow, even orangish, foreheads and faces. Western-central and Alaskan birds are slightly larger than the eastern and Pacific coast populations





Little Big Day

May 9, 2009 (Greg Ross)

We all had a great day of birding with temperatures a little warmer than last year. Mostly sunny with a few clouds, in the morning the coolest temperatures were recorded at about 3 degrees and throughout the day rising to 18 degrees.

Four teams took part, raising \$80.00 which was given to the local Young Naturalists' Club in Cranbrook.

The total number of species seen by all teams was 145 species, a little lower than the 152 in 2008.

Two teams came up with the highest total of species for the day, 115.

Where the Redfearn Glows

Tony, Doug and Peter

Spotted 115 species

The Gotta be Quick

Ruth, Elaine, Dianne and Dean

Spotted 115 species

The Warbling Four

Margol, Travis, Kathy and Alan

Spotted 91 species

The Nonchalant Easy Gliders

Sue, Greg and Glenda

Spotted 83 species

The most interesting finds were; the American White Pelicans at Elizabeth Lake, the Western Grebes, the Tundra and Trumpeter Swans, a Snow Goose, a Willet, a Marbled Godwit and the Black-necked Stilts

Following pictures are 1. The winning teams 2. A Merlin with Preya and 3. Sunning Turkey Vultures all by Greg Ross





**In Memory of our dear friend
Ann Redfearn**





SUMMER OUTINGS LIST

<p>June 28th Lumberton Rd. Meet @ Elisabeth Lake 9:00 a.m. Greg 489--2566</p>	
<p>July 15th Nats meeting 7:00 p.m. meet @ Wallach"s Place 3205 Wycliffe Rd. 6:30 p.m. Greg - 489--2566</p>	
<p>Club Picnic 3rd week in August (Greg will advise exact details) Greg -- 489-2566</p>	
<p>August 15 Shorebird rally Dianne C (more details coming)</p>	
<p>September 6 Shorebirds part deux Wardner to Wasa, meet at Staples parking lot at 0900 hrs Tony 489-1813</p>	



Tips for Outing Etiquette

The leader of an outing is responsible for:

- Finding a replacement contact/leader if you cannot be available for your planned outing. A replacement *leader* may choose to do the same outing, or they may suggest another,
- Ensuring you have the safety kit including hand held radios
- Make it a policy with the entire group to keep the person behind you in sight. If your follower on the trail is lagging, slow your pace to keep them in sight. If everyone in the group continually checks to make sure they can see the person behind them, it is impossible for anyone to get into serious trouble. If you split into groups, do not allow any one person to take off by him/herself.
- Making sure that no one is left behind with car trouble at the parking area, especially in winter,
- Arranging to have the outing trip report forwarded to the Editor. It is not necessary to write it - you may delegate this, of course, but please advise the Editor from whom to expect it. In a perfect world, we would have a different participant write each report, so we could have many different viewpoints.
- If you bring a dog, ensure it is kept under control

Nature Notes

Surviving Drought (Laura Duncan)



In mid-winter the deep snow carpeting the Kimberley Nature Park (KNP) makes it look like Kimberley receives a lot of moisture. But in reality Kimberley only gets an average 452mm (17.8 inches) annual precipitation. When you consider that the majority falls as snow during winter, it isn't surprising that by mid-summer the soil is usually parched.



Snowbrush photo by L. Duncan

In order to survive and reproduce through the dry, hot East Kootenay summers, the plants of the KNP have developed a variety of strategies to capture and conserve moisture. Specialized leaf structures are one such strategy. Some examples are the waxy leaves of the Snowbrush, the fuzzy leaves of the Pasture Sage, the curled edges of the Labrador Tea and the small size of the Blue-eyed Mary; all strategies which help reduce water lost to evaporation from the leaf surface. On the

other hand, succulent plants such as the Lance-leaf Stonecrop, use their leaves to store water for use in drier times.

Root systems can also play an important role in the effective capture and use of water. The fibrous root mats of sod-forming grasses are efficient at capturing precipitation as it falls on the soil surface while balsamroot displays a different strategy with its long, deep taproot which is able to draw moisture from the deeper soil levels.

Location also plays a role in water conservation. A plant growing in the shade will lose less water to evaporation while one exposed to winds will lose increased amounts of water. Groups of trees will lose less water than a lone tree exposed to the hot sun.

Some plants take advantage of the time that moisture is plentiful and emerge as soon as the ground



Spring Beauty

photo by J. Duncan

is free of snow. These spring ephemerals come to flower and form seeds before the dry heat of summer causes them to die back to their underground parts. Some of these welcome signs of winter's end include the Glacier Lily, Spring Beauty, Mertensia, Yellow Bell and Shooting Star.

The diversity of drought strategies used by plants allows every niche in the park to be filled and ensures there will be plants able to withstand the climatic twists and turns that come their way!