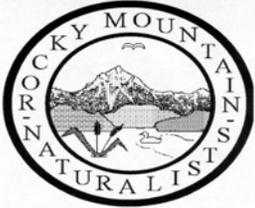


Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

RM naturalists newsletter is published quarterly

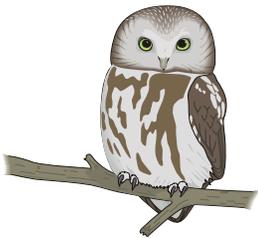
Fall 2007

Volume 4, Issue 3



Editors corner

Please send any articles or comments to
scoutfir@shaw.ca



Also, note that the deadline for articles
for the summer issue is December 21

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CLUB NEWS:

Check your emails for the next meeting of the RM Nats. For the next while and hopefully longer, at the Real Canadian Superstore meeting room. Check your e-mail for agendas and final locations.

Next meeting: Nov. 21st
Community Service Room @ Super Store
7:30 pm

Outing leaders: Don't forget to jot down quick notes on your outing and pass them into the newsletter. Humour highlights, sightings and pictures work just fine.

Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

For release: September 7, 2007

Bird Watchers Look for Changes Linked to Climate

If you feed birds, scientists need your help

Ithaca, NY If you've ever watched birds at a feeder, you've seen changevarying numbers of different birds through the seasons and the years. Do some of the long-term shifts reflect changes in the environment, including global climate change? The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch is seeking help from bird watchers to help answer that question.

FeederWatchers count the birds at their feeders each week and send the information to the Lab of Ornithology. They've helped document unusual bird sightings, winter movements, and shifting ranges of some bird species over the past 20 years. To see the effects of global climate change, scientists say they need new and veteran participants alike to keep counting birds now and well into the future.

"Being a FeederWatcher is easy and fun, and at the same helps generate the world's largest database on feeder-bird populations," says project leader David Bonter. "Since we started in 1987, nearly 40,000 people have submitted observations, adding up to well over 1.5 million checklists."

Some of the most dramatic changes revealed by data collected during two decades of Project FeederWatch may be related to changes in climate. "We're seeing hummingbirds turning up much farther north than usual during the winter," says Bonter. "Warblers and other insect-eaters are also lingering longer into the northern winter, possibly because of warmer temperatures. Bird count data gathered in the coming years will really help us focus on these trends and what might be causing them."

Recent mild winter conditions may be contributing to the northward range movements of several nonmigratory species. The Carolina Wren, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, and Tufted Titmouse have all expanded their ranges several hundred miles to the north in recent decades. Some migratory hawks are also remaining farther north in winter. Reports of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks have increased across the northern tier of the continent in recent years.

Project FeederWatch data also show drastic declines in Evening Grosbeaks across the continent. While grosbeak populations are declining, other species are booming. FeederWatchers in the southeastern United States reported record high numbers of Yellow-rumped and Pine warblers. Reports of woodpeckers of all kinds are increasing across the northeastern quadrant of the continent. Northern Flickers and Anna's Hummingbirds are climbing up the list of the top 25 most-reported birds in the Pacific Northwest. Twenty years ago they didn't make the list at all.

The 21st season of Project FeederWatch gets underway November 10 and runs through April 4. All ages and skill levels are welcome. To learn more about Project FeederWatch or to register, visit www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw or call the Lab toll-free at (800) 843-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds in their area, a calendar, complete instructions, and the FeederWatch annual report, *Winter Bird Highlights*.

#

Media Note: Photos are available at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/MediaCorner.htm>. To find local participants for stories, contact David Bonter at (607) 254-2457 or email dnb23@cornell.edu.

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. Elizabeth Lake Open House June 2nd

This year at our nature fest, Stewart Wilson and his Grade 4 class from Gordon Terrace presented us with some decorated bird houses to be used to hold doggie poop bags. They are very attractive with bright colours and original student's drawings and have been placed around the trails at Elizabeth Lake.

I think we can call this annual event a success as we are getting repeat visitors from previous years and a better turnout each year.



Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

Club camp 2007

This year we headed over to Creston to take in the sights and sounds of the Creston Wildlife Management Area. Weather was great and the company even better. We caught up with Linda Van Damme the first day and she accompanied us on a walk around the dykes of the CWMA. On the Saturday, we took in early morning birding at the centre and then headed out to Summit Creek area, which was a great hike and the day warmed nicely. We also took in Duck Lake, which proved to be timely as we spied a Short-eared owl out in broad daylight. That night we settled in to our potluck BBQ and a good time was had by all.



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Rumoured cuts at the CWS (G.Ross)

Nature Canada is appealing to members of the Canadian Nature Network at all levels to write letters to their local MP and cc: Environment Minister John Baird to prevent rumoured cuts to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) but accentuating the great work of the CWS. It is important for everyone to note that the CBC report on the issue was based on a leaked memo regarding a budget freeze and that the facts are not yet clear.

Since the news first leaked, Nature Canada has received some clarification from senior staff at Environment Canada.

The allegations in the CBC story were that:

The Migratory Bird Program was cut by 50%; the NWA program was cut from \$1.9 million to zero and that the EMAN was cut by 80%.

According to a senior official within Environment Canada there have been some cuts, but the CBC story was not fully accurate.

- **The funding available to the migratory bird program has been reduced for this year (by approximately 42%).**
- **The funding to the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) has been cut significantly (≈70%) as they review whether or not the work of EMAN fits better under education and citizen engagement vs. scientific monitoring.**
- **There have been no cuts to the National Wildlife Area program**
- **There have been no salary cuts within the CWS**
- **This is part of government wide reductions at the federal level.**

That being said, this is now an influential time to let your federal MP, the Minister of the Environment and the Prime Minister know how important the work of the Canadian Wildlife Services is to Canadian's and to the protection of our wild species and spaces. Nature Canada believes that taking a positive tone in your letters would have more resonance with decision makers. As such we are providing some guidelines below. However, the most important thing is that you as a member of the naturalist community make your voice heard.

- Express your strong support for the work of the CWS overall
- The migratory bird conservation is a federal responsibility (because of the Migratory Bird Convention Act) and birds are important to Canadians (tourism, birding, ecological indicators, pest/insect control, cultural and economic values etc....)
- The National Wildlife Area and Migratory bird sanctuary system is a critical tool in conserving wild species and their habitats as mandate under the Canadian Wildlife Act
- Environmental monitoring is required in order to make appropriate land-use and conservation management decisions and necessary to protect viable populations of common and rare or endangered species and allows evaluation of the effectiveness of management interventions.
- Protecting species and habitats are important in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change and closely linked with clean air and water. Many of our National Parks protect crucial watersheds for urban centres in Canada. Forests clean the air by removing pollutants, CO₂ and adding pure oxygen. It is not an either or situation.
- The conservation and monitoring of wild species and space should not happen at the expenses of other emerging priorities and new investments in environmental protection are required if we are to achieve sustainability in future, especially in light of further projected increases in federal surpluses this year.

Letters to the House of Commons can be sent without a stamp. The letter may be submitted under your own name or if appropriate your organization or local club name.

Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

Cuts continued.....

You can find out the name and contact information of your local MP at:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>

The addresses for John Baird; Minister for the Environment and the Prime Minister Stephen Harper are:

Mailing Addresses

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2
pm@pm.gc.ca

John Baird Minister of the Environment
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6
BairdJ@parl.gc.ca

We wish to thank you for taking the time to write and make your voice heard. Together we can make a difference.

Sincerely,



Mara Kerry
Director of Conservation
Nature Canada

Rocky Mountain Naturalists Newsletter

No more doggy doo at Elizabeth Lake

Elaine Doran reports that the "doo" boxes are up and ready to be used!!!!



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Meeting and Outing listings

Oct. 27th-- F.B.C.N. Fall General Meeting
Vernon B.C.
Greg-- 489-2566

Oct. 27th
Marsh Ramble with Peter
Meet: south entrance @ maintenance shed
12:00 noon
Peter-- 426-2458

Nov. 17th
Fall walk with Greg
Meet: Greg's place
11:00-- Bring a lunch
Greg -- 489-2566

Nov. 21st
Meeting - Community Service Room @ Super Store
7:30 -- Slide show Members interested in bringing slides
of birds,ducks,animals,or people

Dec. 15th
Fernie Xmas Bird Count
Call Greg for info
489-2566

Dec.22nd
Feeder check
Meet: Max's on Victoria
10:00 a.m.
Greg - 489-2566

Christmas Party to be decided
Peter -- 426-2458

Dec.29th
Cranbrook Xmas Bird Count
Meet: Elizabeth Lake 8:45
Pot Luck - Greg & Sue's
5:30 - 6:00 Ph - 489-2566

Jan.5th
Kimberley Xmas Bird Count
Meet: Platzl 8:45
Pot Luck - Ruth's
5:30 - 6:00 Ph - 427-5404

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BOOK REVIEW (R.Goodwin)

The Enchantment of Birds - Memories From a Birder's Life

I have nearly completed reading **The Enchantment of Birds - Memories From a Birder's Life** By Richard Cannings and would highly recommend it for your birding library. It is very easy reading of just over 200 pages. Dick provides snippets of his childhood in the Okanagan and family outings as well as adventures as a young biologist. Besides learning more about the author, you also read intriguing stories about his observations and experiences as a birder. You will want to read how he tore a starling's grip from a flicker or how persistence pays off in learning about the flammulated owl's territory. As well, bits of bird biology woven into the 30 stories add interest and information. Did you know that a nutcracker and stash over 30,000 pine seeds in preparation for winter? Or, that the number of dee dee's at the end of a chickadee's call directly relates to the severity of a predator's threat? I am sure you will enjoy reading this book if you too are "enchanted" by birds!"

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail to:
Rocky Mountain Naturalists
P.O. Box 791
Cranbrook, B.C.
VIC 4J5

\$25 for family
\$20 for individual

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____