British Columbia



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ugust was mostly hot and dry over the southern half of the province, while more showery weather dominated in the north. September precipitation was more hit-or-miss in many areas, with coastal sections in particular feeling the change at the equinox to a more stormy pattern, which continued through October. Meanwhile, after the first light snowfall the first week of October across the interior, northeastern British Columbia enjoyed a dry and warm October, so much so that the local elk populations were coaxed into a second rutting season there. The weather became much more active in November, with an Arctic air mass sweeping in from Nunavut across the interior and coastward. Coastal sections closed the season under their

first snowfall as the Arctic and Pacific streams collided. Stunning rarities included a Pine Warbler, a Sedge Wren, a Northern Wheatear, and a Baird's Sparrow.

WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANE

A subad. male King Eider drew much attention when it showed up 30 Oct–3 Dec in Vancouver (BiB et al.), where there are a dozen previous records. Finding all four regularly occurring species of loons at a single location is quite noteworthy along the coast but unheard of in the interior, yet amazingly this happened on Charlie L. 25 Sep (MP). Migrating Pacific Loons have been noted along the Pine Pass corridor in early Oct in the past, but little is known about the regularity of this occurrence. Some 141 Pacific Loons, which may have been forced down by strong headwinds, came to rest on Boundary L. 25 Sep (JJ); such numbers have never been reported elsewhere in the Region's interior. Careful examination of a large staging flock of Western Grebes produced a Clark's Grebe at Union Bay, Courtney 23–30 Oct (ph., †JF, †GLM et al.). This represents the first Clark's Grebe for the Comox checklist area and the first confirmed sighting for Vancouver I. in over 10 years.

Always an exciting find, a Laysan Albatross was observed from a cruise ship in Queen Charlotte Sound 10 Sep (RF). Two imm. American White Pelicans were discovered at Esquimalt Lagoon near Victoria 22-23 Aug (ph., †MOS, m.ob.). This species has remained unrecorded in Victoria for at least a decade. Brown Pelicans were prevalent along the coast during summer, so it was not surprising that a few were found into the fall, with single imms. at Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary 3 Sep (†11) and at lona 29-30 Oct (ph. WA et al.). Single Great Egrets were in Ucluelet 1 Sep (BSl; and later relocated along the Lower Kennedy R. 13 Sep by GB et al.), at Grand Forks 12 Oct (ph. BB), and at Wardner 18 Sep (DN). Although a single Cattle Egret arrived very early at Fauquier 19 Sep (GSD), this did not translate into a good showing this fall. An ad. gray-morph Gyrfalcon returned to Kelowna for its 6th consecutive year 12 Nov+ (CC et al.). Sandhill Cranes exhibited a more protracted mi-

SA There were several indications that Arctic breeders had a productive summer. Across the province, shorebirds in particular were found in larger-than-usual numbers, although weather may have also influenced this perception. Strong winds through the Yukon off the Beaufort Sea 9 Aug may have shifted the migratory movements of otherwise southeast-bound shorebirds to a more westerly track. This "eastern invasion" involved mainly Baird's, Semipalmated, and Stilt Sandpipers and produced new provincial record totals (Table 1).

Table 1. New local high counts for various shorebird species (* = new provincial high count).

Species	Date	Number	Location	Observer
Black-bellied Plover	11 Sep	36	Salmon Arm	DGC
American Golden-Plover	12 Sep	9	Salmon Arm	CS
Semipalmated Plover	12 Aug	41	Salmon Arm	DGC
Semipalmated Sandpiper	13 Aug	1200	Salmon Arm	DGC
Semipalmated Sandpiper	13 Aug	1500*	Boundary Bay	RTo
Baird's Sandpiper	13 Aug	400	Boundary Bay	RTo
Pectoral Sandpiper	11 Sep	600	Salmon Arm	DGC
Stilt Sandpiper	19 Aug	157*	Salmon Arm	DGC
Long-billed Dowitcher	11 Sep	840	Salmon Arm	DGC



Of at least 6 Bar-tailed Godwits found in British Columbia in autumn 2005, this juvenile was the latest, observed 4–13 (here 10) November. *Photograph by Rick Toochin.*

gration this fall, with sizeable flocks still being reported into early Nov, e.g., 200 in the Highland Valley near Kamloops 3 Nov (*fide* RH), 30 near Penticton 6 Nov (BH), and 25 in Savona 13 Nov (*fide* RH). Typically, their migration peaks in early Oct and tapers off by mid-Oct.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

A juv. Pacific Golden-Plover at Lakeview Marsh, near Dawson Creek 8 Sep (MP, JJ) was a rare find e. of the Rockies. A Semipalmated Plover was extremely late in Victoria 23 Nov (CSa). Rarely encountered on the outer coast, especially during fall, a Long-billed Curlew was at Dare Beach, West Coast Trail 14 Aug

(ph. IE). This fall saw a record number of Bar-tailed Godwits in the Region. At least 5 juvs. were involved, 4 of which were found in Boundary Bay, in singles or in twos, 23 Aug-28 Oct (RTo et al.); one was seen in flight over Parksville 3 Nov (†GLM); and the last was at Blackie Spit, White Rock 4-13 Nov (m.ob.). A splendid male Ruff was with a large flock of Western Sandpipers along the Iona s. jetty 2 Sep (MMN). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were again reported in larger numbers than usual, although not as many as in the fall of 2004. Singles were found at Rocky Point B.O. 19 Aug, for a first local record (CSa); in the Highland Valley, Kamloops 12 Sep (RH), a 4th local record; at Sandy I., e. coast of Vancouver I.

15 Sep (GLM, AM); and along the Williston L. causeway, Mackenzie 28 Aug (]]). In recent years, Salmon Arm has proven to be one of the most reliable locations for Buff-breasted in the province; at least 10 different juvs. were found there 22 Aug-8 Oct (TH, DGC et al.). A molting ad. Red Knot in Salmon Arm 4 Sep (ph. DGC) furnished a first local record and the 6th interior record. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers away from the coast included 2 juvs. in Salmon Arm 11-17 Sep (ph. DGC et al.) and another juv. at Becher Dam 18 Sep (PR), a first Cariboo record. The Region's 8th and 9th Little Stint records both came from Boundary Bay, with a basic ad. 5 Aug (ph. RTo) and a juv. 14, 20, 21, & 30 Sep-7 Oct (ph. RTo et al.). To top off the "eastern invasion," an ad. White-rumped Sandpiper furnished a 9th Vancouver record at Iona Island Sewage Ponds 22-26 Aug (JK et al.).

A molting juv. Little Gull provided a 3rd Comox-area record when seen from a boat off Sandy I. 15 Sep (ph. GLM, AM). A graellsii Lesser Black-backed Gull was discovered in Vernon 25 Nov+ (DGC), the 5th sight record of the species. As with most years, a small number of Sabine's Gulls passed through the interior: an ad. in Burton 3 Sep (GSD); an ad. and a juv. on Williston L. 4 Sep (JJ); 3 juvs. at Burton 14 Sep (GSD): a single juv. at Burton 16 Sep (GSD); a juv. at Nicola L. 16 Sep (RTO); and a very cooperative juv. in Salmon Arm 17 Sep (ph. DGC, PB, RTO). Rarely encountered in the interior, a juv. dark-morph Long-tailed Jaeger furnished a 2nd West Kootenay record

30 Oct at Nakusp (GSD). A Common Tern in first-basic plumage was very late in Comox 20-23 Oct (JF, ph. GLM et al.), and an imm. Arctic Tern was discovered along the Penticton waterfront along with 15 Common Terns 18 Sep (RTo), the 3rd Okanagan record. A basic-plumaged ad. Arctic Tern was at Blackie Spit, White Rock 15 Sep (DTy)-yet trips out of Tofino failed to find Arctic Terns this season (fide AD). A murrelet swimming in the waters of the Fraser R. at Hell's Gate 15 Aug (vt. ELG) was later identified as an Ancient

Murrelet upon examination of photographs (DGC). Another displaced Ancient Murrelet was seen flying down Williston L. 28 Aug (JJ).

DOVES THROUGH GRACKLE

A White-winged Dove at Dare Beach near Carmanah Pt. 17 Aug (ph. JE, †NH) furnished a 9th Regional record. Another female Barn Owl with brood patch was captured at 150 Mile House 1–3 Aug (fide PR), extending

the species' known breeding area in the province. A Flammulated Owl was picked up starving in Sardis 28 Nov (fide GG), well away from its s. interior range. Snowy Owls made their best appearance on Vancouver I. since 1996-1997, with over 20 reports through 30 Nov (fide GLM). An unbanded imm. Burrowing Owl was picked up from the Zeller's Store in Campbell River and taken to Mountainaire Avian Rescue (MB). A Common Poorwill with a broken collarbone was record late in Princeton 16 Oct (MS) and also sent to a rehabilitator.

A Lewis's Woodpecker was discovered at Rocky Point B.O., s. Vancouver I. 6 Sep; the species bred here historically. A Red-naped Sapsucker away from its interior haunts ventured to Reifel Refuge 18–24 Sep

(m.ob.); although this species is rare but regular along the s. coast in spring, it is much less frequently seen in the fall. A record-late individual was found dead in Summerland 17 Nov (JGi). The pair of White-headed Woodpeckers that was frequenting Anarchist Mt., Osoyoos, may have bred successfully last summer, as one local reported seeing up to 5 flying together 13 Sep (SL).

A Least Flycatcher, rare on Vancouver I., was observed at Rocky Pt. 20 Sep (GLM). A record-late date for Hammond's Flycatcher



Few Sabine's Gulls were recorded in interior British Columbia in autumn 2005, with one exception being this juvenile in Salmon Arm 17 September. Photograph by Donald G. Cecile.

was established at Rocky Pt. 15 Oct (GD). Dusky Flycatchers rarely stray to Vancouver I., but 2 were at Rocky Pt. 17–18 Sep (GD, DA). Rare along the coast and more often found in spring than fall, an imm. Say's Phoebe was at Piper's Lagoon, Nanaimo 18 Oct (ph. RP, AP) and later relocated 29 Oct at Neck Pt. (NR). Annual in small numbers along the coast, an Ash-throated Flycatcher was at Rocky Point B.O. 5–6 Sep (CS, DA,



Juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpipers were found in unprecedented numbers in interior British Columbia in both autumn 2004 and autumn 2005. Salmon Arm, where this bird lingered through 8 October 2005 (here), has proven to be a regular stopover location for the species. *Photograph by Donald G. Cecile.*

GD). A Tropical Kingbird was an overdue first for Rocky Pt. 8 Oct (DA, GD). A Western Kingbird, rare on Vancouver 1., was at the Cape Scott lighthouse 29 Sep (JB).

A Clark's Nutcracker furnished a 2nd local record at Rocky Point B.O. 10 Aug (fide DA), this species rarely wanders to Vancouver I Also rare on Vancouver I., an early Bank Swallow was at Kye Bay, Comox, providing just a 3rd local record 11 Aug (JF); another furnished a long overdue first record for Nanaimo 5 Sep (GLM), within their typical early-fall window. Cliff Swallows were exceptionally late in the interior, with 7 seen entering nests to spend the night 10 Nov at Little Bear Ranch, East Ootsa (NN, GN). Oddly, this species seems to disappear in early fall (Aug-Sep) and then occasionally suddenly to reappear in Oct-Nov. A Rock Wren made a rare appearance along the Iona s. jetty 21 Oct-19 Nov (PC et al.). Another Regional first, and disappointingly another one-day wonder, a Sedge Wren was discovered at Cecil Green Park, Vancouver 29 Oct (†ph., PC et al.). On the other hand, a very cooperative Northern Wheatear in the Columbia Beach area, e. Vancouver I. 7-20 Oct (ph. RH, GLM et al.) furnished a 2nd Regional record and the first since 1970! At least 400 birders from British Columbia, Alberta, Washington, and Oregon came to see this bird. Casual in the Region, an imm. Brown Thrasher was at Mc-Queen's Slough in Dawson Creek 8 Sep (JJ).

Tennessee Warblers are rare s. of Prince George. Banders at Vaseux captured one 11 Aug (SL, ph. BL), and others were at Reifel 15 Aug (†RL) and Vancouver 9 Sep (†PC) Nashville Warblers are rare on Vancouver 1., yet



This Northern Wheatear in Parksville attracted much attention during its two-week stay (here 8 October 2005). The only previous Regional record was also from Vancouver Island—in 1970. *Photograph by Mike Yip.*

one was discovered at Rocky Point B.O. 22 Sep (JG, GD, GLM). Townsend's Warblers are lingering later and in greater numbers in recent years; this trend was particularly noticeable this year, with the species remaining rather widespread on Vancouver I. into late Nov (GLM). A Blackburnian Warbler furnished the 2nd Vancouver I. record in Courtenay 8 Sep (†JF) and just the 10th Regional record. By far the rarest of the warblers found this fall was a male Pine Warbler at a Lilloet feeder 29 Nov (vt. IR, VR), a 2nd provincial record. Also rare on Vancouver I., a male American Redstart was banded at Rocky Point B.O. 28 Aug (ph. DA, GD), only the 2nd local record.

Clay-colored Sparrows were much more prevalent than usual along the coast this fall, with singles at the lighthouse at Cape Scott 29 Sep (JB), Rocky Pt. 25 Sep (GLM), Iona 5-6 Sep (†MT) and 11 Oct (ph. PC), and Blackie Spit, White Rock 7 Nov (†DTy). A few Lark Sparrows wandered to the coast, with singles at Columbia Beach, Parksville 28 Aug (JF) and at Sayward estuary 25 Sep (CVN). Another great find was a Baird's Sparrow at Holden Creek, Nanaimo R. estuary 9 Sep (†GLM). There is one previously confirmed record for the province; however, a specimen of questionable provenance from 1889 is still extant. An ad. male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was very late in Tofino 14 Nov (RC, SB). Common Grackles at a feeder in Arras furnished a new provincial high total, with 93 present 15 Aug (MP).

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Oregon & Washington



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66 WW et" described the fall. August, normally a very dry month, saw well-above-normal rainfall, and this persisted into November, which was a bit drier. Most of the Region experienced near-normal temperatures throughout the season. Though the season provided an abundance and broad spectrum of unusual records, seabirds and shorebirds captured the headlines. The most unusual seabirds were mostly seen by CSCAPE researchers aboard NOAA vessels well offshore, who tallied three first Oregon records (if one extends the 200nmi [368-km] offshore boundary a tad), two of which were Regional firsts. Shorebirds, on the other hand, were accessible to all. Common and uncommon species alike occurred in unprecedented numbers, and a number of rarities were detected, including a first for the Lower 48 states.

Abbreviations: F.R.R. (Fern Ridge Res., Lane, OR); Malheur (Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR); N.S.C.B. (N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos, OR); O.S. (Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor, WA); P.S.B. (Port Susan Bay, Snohomish, WA); P.T. (Puget Trough); W.V. (Willamette Valley); W.W.R.D. (Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla, WA). "Eastside" and "westside" indicate east and west of the Cascade crest, respectively.

WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

An ad. and an imm. Blue Goose enlivened P.S.B. 15 Oct (ph. SM, BT), and another vis-

ited Fir I., Skagit 3-5 Nov (R. Lawson); Washington has only 23 records, many of which are from the last five years in Snohomish and Skagit, perhaps representing returning birds and their progeny. The only errant Ross's Geese were near Bend 24 Nov (CM, MM) and N.S.C.B. 29 Nov (TR). The sole Emperor Goose flew over Mattawa, Grant 5 Nov, furnishing e. Washington's first record (†D. Bader); except in the Klamath Basin of Oregon and California, this species is exceedingly rare e. of the Cascades/Sierras. Black Brant at Sprague L., Adams 4 Nov (fide BF) and Lyle, Klickitat 25 Sep (†SJ) added to five previous e. Washington records. Rare away from salt water on the westside, a Black Brant was in w. Eugene 30 Oct+ (SMg), and a surprising 9 were at Scoggins Valley Park, Washington 6 Nov (J. Hayes). Rare in the Region, an apparent Greater White-fronted Goose × Canada Goose hybrid inhabited Royal L., Grant 25 Oct (RH). Two Dusky Canada Geese (B. c. occidentalis), rare in the P.T., stopped at Auburn, King 2 Nov (CW). A Lesser Canada Goose (B. c. parvipes) and a Cackling Goose at Lind Coulee, Grant 27 Aug were about two months early and may have