

## UNSUCCESSFUL INTRODUCTION OF THE CALIFORNIA QUAIL TO THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

*R. Wayne Campbell*

*2511 Kilgary Place, Victoria, BC. V8N 1J6*

While extracting records from historical correspondence and field diaries and transferring them to the Wildlife Data Centre electronic databases I came across some unpublished information on an attempt to introduce California Quail (*Callipepla californica*) (Figure 1) to the Queen Charlotte Islands.

In March 1924 eight pairs of California Quail were transported from Victoria, where the species was successfully introduced in the early 1860s (Carl and Guignet 1972), and released by Ken Davies at Sandspit on northeastern Moresby Island, Queen Charlotte Islands. The extensive brushy habitat in the vicinity of Sandspit appeared suitable to support a local population and the milder weather on the east coast of the island seemed ideal.

The quail remained in the general vicinity of Sandspit



**Figure 1.** Adult male California Quail near White Lake, Okanagan Valley, BC. 5 July 1997 (R. Wayne Campbell).

over the spring and by May a few pairs were noted foraging together. Nesting commenced in June and by late July two large broods of 10 and 12 chicks were seen. These family groups were often seen over the summer and early autumn but by early winter numbers had declined and the quail were rarely seen. The last bird, a female, was reported on 8 February 1925. Carl and Guiguet (1972) report an earlier introduction on the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1910 but details are sketchy.

***Literature Cited***

**Carl, G.C., and C.J. Guiguet.** 1972. Alien animals in British Columbia. British Columbia Provincial Museum Handbook No. 14, Victoria, BC. 103 pp.