

FEATURE ARTICLES

BIRDS OF THE TRAIL AREA OF SOUTHEASTERN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1933 TO 1983

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Abstract

Fifty-one years of bird observations from the Trail area of southeastern British Columbia are summarized for the period 1933 to 1983 from the daily field notes of the *late* Maurice Ellison. The majority of records are from the immediate vicinity of Trail, which includes Gyro Park, residential areas of Tadanac and Birchbank, and Columbia Gardens, as well as nearby areas regularly visited that includes Heinz Mountain, Lookout Mountain, Hannah Creek, Beaver Creek Park, Casino Creek, Fort Shepherd, and Waneta. One hundred and ninety-six species are presented with notes on status, occurrence, and abundance. Some anecdotal comments are also included.

Introduction

The bird fauna (Figure 1) of the Trail area of southeastern British Columbia was generally overlooked by collectors and naturalists in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Part of the reason may have been a smelter that was built on the shore of the Columbia River at the turn of the century and the noxious sulphur dioxide fumes that often permeated the valley. Native vegetation, including forests and grasslands, were greatly impacted by the smelter's emissions and logging activities further removed larger coniferous woods, making the region unattractive for birds and people.

While some areas of the Kootenay region were being explored for their avi-fauna (*e.g.*, Arrow Lakes - Kelso 1926, Creston - Mailliard 1932, Munro 1950) few people visited Trail. William Spreadborough collected a few birds and their eggs in the Trail area in the spring and summer of 1902 but his notes of additional species seen were meager (W.E. Godfrey pers. comm. to R.W. Campbell). A summary of the



Figure 1. Common Merganser, present on the Columbia River throughout the year, was one of the first birds reported from the Trail area by early collectors. In summer, broods with an attendant female, are often seen (Linda M. Van Damme).

avi-fauna of British Columbia through 1946 (Munro and Cowan 1947) further indicated that the Trail area was generally poorly represented by bird collections or observations. Maurice Ellison, a native of Trail, developed a keen interest in birds, and in 1933 started recording noteworthy observations in tiny notebooks (Figure 2). As his note-taking and interest increased he moved to larger notebooks and eventually started compiling annual summaries on large species cards (Figure 3). It is unfortunate that early distribution information for the province was mostly reliant on specimens or field observations of well-known collectors (Munro and Cowan 1947). This range data would have benefited from the wealth of information within the daily field notes of several passionate and experienced naturalists (*e.g.*, Maurice Ellison, Glenn R. Ryder). In the early 1970s Maurice provided noteworthy records from Trail that would later be incorporated into *The Birds of British Columbia* (see Campbell et al. 1990a, 1990b, 1997, 2001), which resulted in the area having seasonal representation for the province.

Maurice's family gave his field note summaries to the author shortly after his death in 1997. The purpose of this article is to highlight noteworthy information for five decades of bird records in the vicinity of Trail that Maurice regularly visited, and to acknowledge his contributions with personal comments from many of his friends.

Maurice Ellison's life was strongly tied to Cominco, where he worked for 35 years until his retirement in 1978. He also spent his married life living on the opposite shore of the Columbia River from the smelter (Figure 4).

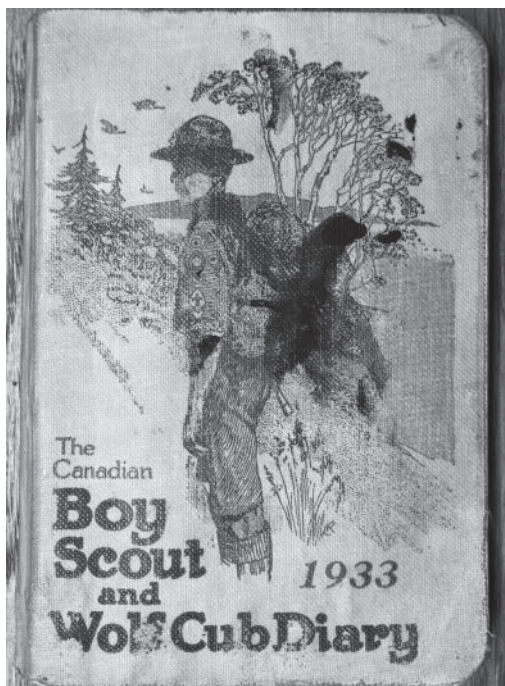


Figure 2. In 1933, Maurice Ellison included a few records of noteworthy birds he saw in the vicinity of Trail, BC in a small boy scout booklet in which he maintained a daily diary.

Coverage

Most of the bird observations are from East Trail where Maurice Ellison resided. Regular trips, however, were made to Heinz Mountain (northeast of Trail), along the Columbia River to Beaver Creek Park and the airport as well as Columbia Gardens, Fort Shepherd, and the area around Waneta close to the United States border. The Pend d'Oreille River valley has not been included in this annotated list.

Doug Cooper, who was first introduced to birding in the Trail area by Maurice in the early 1980s, later published a site guide (Cooper 2001; Figure 5) to encourage birdwatchers to visit the area. The following account of the Trail area, reproduced with permission and updated slightly by D. Cooper, will serve as a useful introduction to the sites Maurice often visited. Site numbers in parentheses correspond with Figure 5.

“Trail is located in south-central British Columbia in an area known as the West Kootenay, a region that features heavily in the mining history of the province. Although not a place that would immediately spring to mind when thinking of birding hot spots, a surprising variety of habitats can be found within a few kilometres of the city centre.

A good place to start is Gyro Park (1), located a few blocks upriver from the bridge that carries Highway 3B across the Columbia River, and on the opposite shore from Cominco world’s largest lead and zinc smelter. The towering smokestacks suggest why the local hockey team, world amateur champions in 1939 and 1961, is named the Trail Smoke Eaters. Walking a few hundred metres down the riverside path, one encounters several small coves that can harbour various waterfowl and shorebirds, including once a migrating flock of American Avocets, but more commonly such species as Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpipers.

Returning to Highway 3B, turn left and head east. A potential stop a few hundred metres along on the left is up the access road to the local landfill (2) to check for remnants of a once-thriving colony of Bank Swallows that nested in the sand bank above the landfill. Common Ravens, Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures can often be seen riding the thermals above the hillside. Continuing east on 3B, run right off the highway on Old Waneta Road across from Waneta Plaza. Along this road (3), in late spring, check the branches of a group of Poplar trees for signs of nesting Bullock’s Orioles.

Where Old Waneta Road meets Highway 22A (also known as Waneta Road), turn right and head south on 22A. Slightly more than one kilometre along Highway 22A (4), turn right into Beaver Creek (also known as Kiwanis) Park. The creek usually hosts American Dippers, and the small delta at the mouth of the creek might show foraging shorebirds or loafing waterfowl such as Red-breasted Mergansers or Harlequin Ducks.

Returning to Highway 22A, again head south passing through an area know as Columbia Gardens. Vesper Sparrows often perch on the fence posts on either side of the road, while Mountain Bluebirds and Tree Swallows compete for available nest boxes. Lark Sparrows have historically nested in the area.

Duck

Bufflehead

1977 - Jan 3 - 1F 5-2F (8-MIF/10-1M) 12-1M3F (13-1M) 16-1M3F (18-1M3F) 2F 21-1M5F (24-4F) 25-3F
 E-TRAIL WJUNCTION
 1977 - Feb 1 - 1F 16-1F 10-1F 12-3F 13-2M 15-1M 15-TRAIL (15-TRAIL) 17-1F MAR 1-1F (17-4M) 9-1/18-1M4F
 SOUTH SLOCAN WARD LAKE E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL SOUTH SLOCAN WARD LAKE E-TRAIL
 MAR 22-5M4F APR 3-6M5F 15-2M 22-1M1F MAY 1-3M3F JUNE 14-1M1F JULY 4-1M1F
 NOV 9-5M3F 10-5M6F 13-1M1F 20-1F 27-3F 28-1F 29-2F 30-2F
 TAGHYM WEST ARM EAST TRAIL COCABARDS E-TRAIL TAGHYM WEST ARM EAST TRAIL
 DEC 17-4M17-5 19-2F 20-1F 21-2F 22-1M3F 26-1M3F 28-3F 29-3F
 1978 - Jan 5-1F 2-TRAIL NIELSON TRAIL NIELSON TRAIL NIELSON TRAIL
 FEB 20-2M2F 21-1F MAR 2-2F 6-1M2F 11-1M2F 14-2M3F 17-2M3F 18-2M3F 20-1M 21M1F
 E-TRAIL E-TRAILS BEAVER PARK WARD LAKE E-TRAIL FRUITVALE E-TRAIL WARD LAKE VENTCORN WARD LAKE
 MAR 22-1M 29-1M1F 31-4M 1F APR 2-2M 3F 18-1M1F MAY 7-1M1F 10-3F 12-2M3F 15-2F 16-1M3F
 WARD LAKE E-TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL WEST ARM
 MAY 18-1M OCT 26-5M1F NOV 9-1M1F 12-2M1F 18-1M1F 19-1M1F NOV 28-1M1F DEC 11-1M1F 15-1M1F 16-2
 EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL WARD LAKE
 DEC 10-2M WJUNCTION 17-2M2F WJUNCTION DEC 24-2M1F DEC 28-1M1F 29-1F 30-TRAIL E-TRAIL
 WJUNCTION 2M2F 8-2M2F 9-2M2F WJUNCTION 14-4M2F WJUNCTION 21-5M3F WJUNCTION 28-2M2F WJUNCTION 30-2M2F
 SOLOMONGORDONS EAST TRAIL WJUNCTION WJUNCTION WJUNCTION WJUNCTION WJUNCTION WJUNCTION
 FEB 11-1M3F WK FEB 16-3M4F WK FEB 25-3M4F WK MAR 4-3M6F WK MAR 11-4M3F WK MAR 18-6M4F WK MAR 25-5M3F
 MANETA JCN PINE SPRINGS WARD LAKE E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL WARD LAKE WARD LAKE
 MAR 31-2M2F APR 26-2M3F OCT 27-4M TRAIL NOV 18-2M5F
 1979 - WK DEC 9-3M12F WK DEC 16-6M12F WK DEC 23-4M6F WK DEC 30-2M3F TAGHYM E-TRAIL
 EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL EAST TRAIL
 1980 - JAN 2-1M1F 7-1M3F 8-3M4F WK JAN 15-3M4F WK JAN 20-2M4F 17-1M1F WK JAN 22-3M4F WK FEB 1-4M1F
 E-TRAIL WJUNCTION WJUNCTION E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL BRILLIANT NELSON AREA
 FEB 4-1M3F 5-1M1F 5-1M1F 9-1M2F WK FEB 17-3M2F WK FEB 24-2M2F E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL E-TRAIL
 TRAIL COLUMBIA GARDENS TAGHYM E-TRAIL TAGHYM E-TRAIL BEAVER PARK E-TRAIL
 WK MAR 1-1M1F MAR 6-2M1F WK MAR 16-2M3F MAR 18-1M 1M MAR 23-3M1F MAR 25-3M1F MAR 30-3M2F

Figure 3. This card for Bufflehead shows how much information Maurice Ellison crammed on 8x5 inch cards. Data was extracted manually from individual species cards which provided quite a challenge in preparing this annotated list.



Figure 4. Maurice lived on the opposite shore from Teck Cominco and went for daily walks along the Columbia River following his retirement after 35 years of employment at Cominco (Chuck and Clare Rommerdahl 1967).

The wooded slope to the east of the industrial park is good for a variety of songbirds such as Nashville Warblers. Past the small airport on the right is a farm where Say's Phoebes can reliably be found around the outbuildings.

Five hundred metres past the airport on the left is a road (5) signed for the Seven Mile hydroelectric dam, one of several dams along the Pend d'Oreille River, a major tributary of the Columbia. This road heads uphill and meets Upper Columbia Gardens Road (also known as Station Road). Turn right at the intersection and take this road as it passes under rocky slopes that are home to Rock Wrens and marmots. After a kilometre or so turn right at the junction with Waneta-Nelway Road (6). Western Kingbirds traditionally nest behind a transformer on one of the nearby power poles. The fields and south-facing slopes of this area are an excellent area for early spring wildflowers. Lazuli Buntings and both Western and Mountain Bluebirds frequent the area.

At the west end of one of the fields, set in a beautiful grove of Ponderosa pines, is a small cemetery for early residents of the Pend d'Oreille Valley. One Lillian Wray is buried here, and her gravestone tells she lived for 106 years, from 1892 to 1998, nearly spanning three centuries.

One can continue east on the Waneta-Nelway Road into the Canadian portion of the Pend d'Oreille

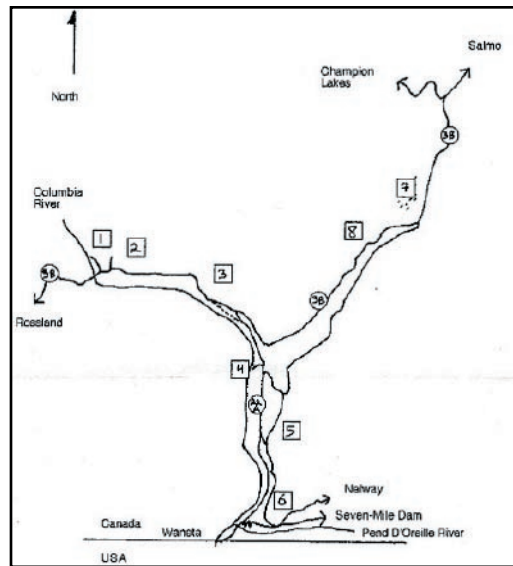


Figure 5. Site map for birders interested in visiting the Trail area of southeastern British Columbia (from Cooper 2001).

Valley and on to the small border crossing of Nelway, but east of the Seven Mile Dam the road has been compromised by a washout (although a truck or rent-a-car can apparently still traverse it). At the Nelway end of the road is small Lomond Lake. Although recently the victim of some surrounding agricultural improvements, it still hosts a variety of ducks and grebes. Bobolinks and migrating Sandhill Cranes have been found in the bordering fields. In 1996 a lone male Lark Bunting was spotted in the fields alongside Highway 6 just north of the Nelway border crossing.

For those not interested in pursuing the Waneta-Nelway Road option, head back north along the Seven Mile Dam road to its connection with the Upper Columbia Gardens (or Station) Road. This road takes a short jog to the right near a small feedlot and becomes the Old Fruitvale Road, passing by hobby farms and a small vineyard on its way through the small town of Fruitvale to eventually end at Highway 3B. Turning right (east) on 3B and proceeding a few hundred metres, one reaches fields on the left leading to a marshy area (7). Bobolinks

are possible in the meadows and Wilson's Phalaropes in the stream flowing west through this marsh. Travel further east a short way on Highway 3B to reach a turnoff heading north to Champion Lakes Provincial Park. Here forest birds such as American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers are possible. The Nelway area can be reached by continuing east of Highway 3B through the Town of Salmo and turning south on Highway 6.

Turning around and heading back west on Highway 3B will return you to the City of Trail via Fruitvale. Just past the bend in the road in the centre of Fruitvale, where Highway 3B once crossed the railroad tracks, there is a place on the left (south) side of the road where one can stop and scan the ponds of the Fruitvale sewage treatment plant (8) for ducks. (Someday a dedicated birder will write a volume titled "Sewage Treatment plants I Have Known and Loved")."

Habitat Characteristics

The Trail area is located in the bottom of the southern Columbia River valley, one of four major valleys that allow warm southern air from adjacent US states to easily invade into the interior of the province. The other three valleys are the Southern Rocky Mountain Trench, the Purcell Trench and the Okanagan Valley. The Trail area lies within the southern Selkirk Mountains.

Moist Pacific air predominates over much of the Kootenay area, and as a result the valley bottom of the lower Columbia River in British Columbia is dominated by a dry and warm subzone of the Interior Cedar – Hemlock Zone that intergrades into the very dry warm subzone closer to the British Columbia/Washington border. In both subzones dense stands of western redcedar, western hemlock, Douglas-fir, western white pine and ponderosa pine should be normally integrated into the forest, along with paper birch, tall Oregon-grape, falsebox, mock-orange, beaked hazelnut and mallow ninebark. However, in the area around Trail the forests were logged for mine props, railroad ties or buildings, and until the mid-1950s, had been severely impacted by acid rain from sulphur dioxide pollution from the Trail smelter. As a consequence, once the overstory vegetation was removed, most of the remaining vegetation

was killed and most of the topsoil was eroded. Even today the long lasting effect of that pollution gives the area a much drier appearance than should occur under natural climatic conditions. Fortunately, many drought tolerant shrub species have become established again, which provides some soil building and holding to occur, although exposed bedrock and sparse vegetation is normal.

The urban areas generally have mowed lawns with plantings of non-native deciduous trees and white spruce in addition to fruit trees and flowering shrubs. Higher elevations, such as Heinz and Lookout mountains, have very dry conifer and deciduous forests, but exposed bedrock is common.

Cominco Smelter and Environmental Stewardship

In 1965, Cominco donated land to the Province of British Columbia to be used specifically for a park which has been named Beaver Creek Provincial Park. It is operated by the local Kiwanis Club.

In September 2006, Teck Cominco Metals Ltd. announced the sale of the Fort Shepherd lands to The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC) to establish a Conservancy Area. Teck Cominco donated two-thirds of the land value with the remaining third purchased by TLC with contributions from Columbia Basin Trust (CBT), the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP), and the BC Trust for Public Lands. The main purpose of the Conservancy Area is to protect wildlife, habitat, and heritage values.

Teck Cominco Metals Ltd. recently celebrated its 100th anniversary of operations in the Trail region. It operates one of the world's largest, fully-integrated, zinc and lead smelting and refining complexes and has invested more than \$1 billion in environmental performance upgrades since 1977.

Terminology

The terms for status have purposely been kept simple. The four terms used in the following annotated list are:

Common: recorded regularly;

Uncommon: recorded irregularly, often days or weeks apart;

Casual: recorded once or twice per year; and

Rare: not recorded annually.

In text extracted directly from Maurice's field notes, and quoted in a species account, the following terms apply: *M* = male, *F* = female, *A*, *AD*, or *Ad* = adult, and *Y* = young.

A numbers in parentheses following a date represents the number of birds observed (e.g., 20 July 1980 (16)).

Annotated List of Birds

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Uncommon. Recorded infrequently throughout the year. The main influx of geese, mostly migrants, passed overhead between 30 March and 15 June each year. Most sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens and Waneta. Three records for Fort Shepherd on 20 July 1980 (16), 20 July 1982 (12), and 20 July 1983 (12). First recorded on 2 March 1940.

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)

Rare. Three records. On 20 April 1941, three birds were seen at Birchbank and 22 October 1956 "One sick swan was captured at Tadanac and taken to Woodrow's zoo in Robson". On 14 October 1972, 10 swans were seen at Fort Shepherd. For most of his birding years Maurice knew this bird as the "Whistling Swan".

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

Rare. First recorded on 30 May 1970 (a pair) at Beaver Creek Park. On 12 September 1970 and 4 October 1979 a pair was observed in East Trail. A male was present at Waneta on 13 April 1975 and "2M were seen by Bob Dooley" at Beaver Creek Park on 6 June 1981. The last recorded sighting was a pair at Columbia Gardens on 28 April 1982.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

Rare. Only three records, all from East Trail in 1981: 31 August (3 immatures), 4 September (3 immatures) and 5 September (6 immatures).

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)

Uncommon. One to two pairs were recorded from 9 March to 4 May and one to two individual birds recorded from 10 September to 29 November. Sightings are mainly from Trail. One record for Fort Shepherd on 22 March 1974 (1 pair). First recorded on 25 March 1950 at Beaver Creek Park.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Common. Seen in all months with small flocks of up to 50 birds recorded during migration. Sightings are mainly from the Trail area with scattered observations at Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, Fort Shepherd and Waneta. A few pairs breed each year. First recorded on 8 October 1939.

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

Casual. Recorded between 27 February and 9 April, and 9 August and 19 September. Highest number was observed at Fort Shepherd on 22 March 1974 (5) and 21 March 1975 (9). First recorded on 21 March 1953 in East Trail.

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*)

Uncommon; Figure 6. One to two pairs were recorded between 30 April and 28 June. Highest number (12) recorded in East Trail on 13 August 1975. First recorded on 25 May 1951 in Trail.



Figure 6. Male Blue-winged Teal (Linda M. Van Damme).

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

Rare. First recorded on 27 May 1974, a single male in East Trail. One male was seen again from 18 to 22 June 1974 and on 25 May 1976. A pair was observed on 14 May 1981 and 3 May 1982, all in East Trail. Last recorded on 27 April 1983 (3 males and 2 females at Columbia Gardens).

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)

Casual. One to three pairs recorded from 14 April to 17 June. Highest number (16) was recorded at Beaver Creek Park on 1 May 1982. First recorded on 5 May 1954 in East Trail.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Casual. Sightings are mostly of single birds and occasionally of a pair from 16 April to 9 May and 1 August to 12 December. First recorded on 4 September 1972 in East Trail.

Redhead (*Aythya americana*)

Rare. Sightings are all from East Trail: 19 March 1949 (7), 7, 11, 12, 13, and 22 January 1973 (1 male), 1 September 1973 (1 male), 13, 20, and 22 January and 4 February 1979 (1 female), 8, 9, 10, and 11 December 1980 (1 female) and 20 October 1982 (1 female).

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)

Rare. Sightings are all from East Trail: 16 May 1975 (1 male and 1 female), 19 and 20 May 1976 (1 male), 20 and 21 October 1980 (1 male), 26 April 1981 (2 males and 1 female), and 19 April 1982 (1 male).

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*)

Rare. Records of single males are from East Trail on 3 and 18 January 1977, 14 to 16 June 1978, and 28 April 1981. Records from Waneta on 12 March 1980 (6 males and 4 females), 28 January 1982 (1 male and 2 females), and 4 February 1982 (1 male and 3 females).

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)

Common from 15 November through 9 April; *uncommon* at other times of the year. Observations are of single birds to small flocks from Trail, Beaver

Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (12 males and 8 females) recorded from East Trail on 11 March 1979.

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)

Common from 5 November through 28 April; *uncommon* at other times of the year. Observations are mostly of one or two pairs from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (40) was observed in Trail on 7 March 1982. First recorded on 13 February 1949 in East Trail.

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)

Common from 1 November through 18 April; *uncommon* at other times of the year; Figure 7. Most observations are of single birds; sometimes one to three pairs were seen. Sightings are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, Waneta and Columbia Gardens. Highest number (5 males and 6 females) was recorded on 10 November 1977 in East Trail. First recorded on 9 May 1940 in Trail.



Figure 7. Male and female Bufflehead (Alistair Fraser).

Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)

One record of a single male on 7 May 1961. Field note entry refers to this duck by its former name "Oldsquaw".

Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

Common from 6 September through 27 May and *uncommon* from 3 June to 23 August for the years 1969 to 1983; *casual* from 1956 to 1968. Observations

are of one to five birds, with males (Figure 8), females, and immatures recorded. Sightings are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1970-1F-3Y*” and “*Beaver Creek Park-1970-22 August-4Y*”. First recorded on 19 April 1956 in East Trail.

Excerpts from personal correspondence to the author: 30 November 1984: “*Harlequin Ducks – seen once or twice a week in Trail since September 27. I see them here all winter, although bird books say they winter at the coast. Most seen this fall- 2M 3F*” and 28 May 1986: “*No Harlequin Ducks in this area (seen by me) Sept 1 to May 16/86. First winter for 18 years, usually 10 or more sightings of 2 or 3 Harlequins every winter. May 17/86 – 1M-1F at mouth of Beaver Creek. That’s a spring bird*”.

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)

Rare. On 17 October 1975, two females were sighted in East Trail. In 1983, at the boat ramp bay in East Trail, one immature was sighted from 24 October to 6 November. One female was observed in East Trail on 7 and 8 October and 4 November 1984 (L.Van Damme pers. comm.).



Figure 8. Male Harlequin Duck (Jacob Dulisse).

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)

Rare. First recorded in East Trail on 9 June 1971 (one male) and on 5 and 6 June 1977 (one male). In 1979, a single bird believed to be an immature was present from 15 to 30 November. One female was observed in East Trail from 25 November to 20 December 1983 and again from 30 October to 12 November 1984 (L.Van Damme pers. comm.).

Black Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)

Rare. A lone female was observed in East Trail from 31 October to 5 November 1975.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

Rare. Four sightings, all of single males. Recorded in East Trail on 26 May 1948, 16 May 1966, and 8 April 1971 and at Beaver Creek Park on 24 June 1950.

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

Rare to casual. Sightings are from 19 September through 5 January from 1970 to 1983 with observations of single males, single females, or pairs. There is one summer record of a female observed from 14 to 23 July 1971 in East Trail at Indian Eddy and Gyro Park. Records are all from Trail with the exception of one pair at Fort Shepherd on 28 December 1975. First recorded on 18 January 1970, one male at Indian Eddy in East Trail.

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)

Common year-round; see Figure 1. Individuals have been seen regularly with flocks of up to 19 birds occasionally observed. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta and Fort Shepherd. Broods are frequently seen on the river.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)

Uncommon from 2 December through 16 March at Fort Shepherd and Columbia Gardens. The highest numbers were observed at Fort Shepherd on 2 December 1972 (5 males and 4 females) and at Waneta on 26 December 1976 (2 males and 8 females). First recorded on 13 May 1948 in East Trail, which is the only record for that month.

Gray Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)

Rare. Two birds were sighted on 5 May 1977 on a hillside near Waneta dam.

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Rare. A single record of a female in East Trail (“at Cowlin’s residence”) on 22 November 1982.

Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*)

Common resident with one to two birds observed in all months; Figure 9. One high count of four birds was noted for 17 February on Heinz Mountain. First recorded on 17 June 1933 on Lookout Mountain. Field note entry: “8 March 1979, 1 dead grouse put on riverbank eaten by Bald Eagle?”



Figure 9. Ruffed Grouse (Gary S. Davidson).

Dusky Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus*)

Rare resident with records mostly of single birds. One high count of four birds was noted for 27 October 1974 on Waneta Mountain. First recorded on 10 October 1933 on Lookout Mountain. Field notes refer to this grouse as “Blue Grouse”.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

Rare. A single bird was first recorded on 12 November 1974 at Indian Eddy in East Trail. A single bird was observed in the autumn from 10 October to 8 November 1977 and 18 to 27 October 1979 in East Trail. Field notes refer to this loon as “Arctic Loon”.

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)

Uncommon. One or two birds observed most years from 1 January to 3 May and from 5 October to 31 December on the Columbia River between Trail and Waneta. First recorded on 19 October 1933 at the mouth of Champion Creek, outside the Trail area.

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Rare. A single bird was first recorded on 20 April 1952 at Indian Eddy in East Trail. Single birds were observed on 27 April 1955, 8 October 1967, 19 May 1970, 23 to 27 October 1973, 13 March 1977, and 26 April 1982, all from East Trail.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)

Uncommon. Single birds recorded most years between 21 April and 22 May and 4 September and 14 November in East Trail. One summer record on 30 August 1982 and no winter records. First recorded on 6 May 1948 at Indian Eddy in East Trail.

Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)

Uncommon. Small numbers of one to six birds recorded most years in spring from 9 March to 19 May. Highest number (12) was recorded in East Trail on 29 April 1953. *Rare* in summer with four sightings in June of 1970, 1971 and 1981. *Rare* in autumn with one to three birds seen from 9 October to 14 November. One winter record for 15 January 1974 of a single bird at Waneta. First recorded on 2 May 1948 at Indian Eddy in East Trail. Field note entry: “13 January 1983, one captured at Park Siding and released at East Trail on 14 January”. Correspondence to author on 28 July 1985: “Horned Grebe-believed injured, seen everyday since May 14, in bay back of our house, in full breeding plumage I’ve never seen it in summer before”.

Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

Rare. Spring records are for 22 May 1948 and 12 May 1975; autumn records are for 16 and 29 October 1975, 25 to 29 September 1977, and 10 September 1979; and winter records are from 4 to 6 February 1979. All sightings were of single birds seen in East Trail.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Common in spring and autumn between 3 April and 10 May and 19 September and 9 November, Figure 10. *Rare* in summer with few observations during June and July from 1953 to 1983.

Uncommon in winter between 13 December and 9 February. Observations are of single birds and pairs from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens,

Fort Shepherd and Waneta. Highest number (10) was recorded on 2 October 1971 in East Trail. First recorded on 13 May 1948 in East Trail.



Figure 10. Western Grebes (Steve Ogle).

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)

Trail (East and West) – *Common* in August through January with daily sightings of one or two herons Figure 11; *uncommon* in February, March, April, June and July. No May records.

Fort Shepherd – *Rare* with three records: 27 January 1962, 9 January 1965, and 22 January 1966. Columbia Gardens – *Rare* with five records: 4 September 1960 (1), 26 August 1982 (2), 25 April 1983 (1), 11 June 1983 (1) and 6 August 1983 (1).

Beaver Creek Park – *Common* from September through February with one or two herons observed. No records for March through August.

Waneta Dam – *Uncommon* October through March, a single record for April, and no records for



Figure 11. Great Blue Heron (Alistair Fraser).

May and September. Evidence of breeding in 1983 field note entry: “above Waneta Dam, 20 Jun – 2A 5Y, 26 Jun – 4A 5Y, 2 Jul – 12 birds seen, 4 Jul – 9 birds, 9 Jul – 8 birds, 11 Jul – 8Y, 20 Jul – 3Y”.

Field note entry: “12 September 1981 – 1 dead at Waneta and in 1982 Doug Ridge reports dead heron near McGaulley’s Ready-mix this winter”.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Rare; Figure 12. The few records collected between 1977 and 1983 were from Waneta and the Pend d’Oreille valley, where more open habitat abounds. First recorded on 25 May 1977 at Waneta. Also seen in East Trail on 18 May 1980. Correspondence to author on 28 July 1985 “*uncommon, 1 near Waneta on June 8*”.



Figure 12. Turkey Vulture (Cyril Colonel).

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Common. Arrive as early as 1 April and depart as late as 1 October. Recorded annually from 1969 to 1983. Observations are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens and Waneta. First recorded on 29 April 1933 at Casino Creek, near Trail. Majority of sightings are of single adults. Although breeding was not documented in field notes, the author was shown nesting sites during the 1980s; Figure 13.

Field note entry: “1980-May 26-E Trail-part albino osprey seen, edges of wings dark, most of wing and back white, seen on post at boat ramp bay, looked like imm gull”.



Figure 13. Osprey nest at Waneta (Larry Prosser).

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Common from 2 December to 13 March, *uncommon* in November, and *rare* in April, May, June and October. There are no records for July, August and September. Recorded annually from 1969 to 1983. Majority of sightings are of single adults and occasionally an immature. Observations are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, Columbia Gardens and Waneta. First recorded on 15 June 1952 on Heinz Mountain. Field note entry: “East Trail-1978-Dec 20-1A after goldeneye duck”.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

Rare. A single bird observed on 10 October 1954 in East Trail and on 13 June 1970 at Casino Creek, south of Trail are the only records. Field notes refer to this species as “Marsh Hawk”.

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

Rare. All records are of single birds. Observations are for East Trail on 4 May 1950, 27 December 1966,

1 January 1967, 10 August 1969, 22 December 1974, and 16 August 1976. Other records are as follows: Heinz Mountain on 13 November 1955, 8 March 1959, and 18 April 1971, Columbia Gardens 7 March 1970, Beaver Creek Park 12 December 1970, Waneta 5 August 1972, and Hannah Creek 31 August 1975.

Cooper’s Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)

Casual. A single bird was observed in all months of the year with the exception of April, May, October, and November. A notation on 10 August 1980 “2 possible young hawks in tree tops on cross trail of Heinz Mountain” suggests breeding. First recorded on 22 August 1959, a single bird at Fort Shepherd.

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Rare. A single bird was first recorded on 12 September 1970 in Sunningdale, Trail. On 22 May 1974, a single bird was observed on Heinz Mountain in East Trail and on 29 January 1980 field note entry: “Ronnie saw a goshawk sitting on our raspberry stake for 1 hour”.

Swainson’s Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)

A “possible” sighting on 23 July 1978 at Heinz Mountain.

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Uncommon from 6 March to 30 September. There are no winter records. Sightings are mostly of single birds and occasionally of two to three. Recorded infrequently 1942 to 1960 and annually from 1968 to 1983. Observations are from Trail, Heinz Mountain, Columbia Gardens, Casino Creek, Beaver Creek Park and Waneta. First recorded on 24 May 1942 from Lookout Mountain in West Trail.

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)

Rare. A single bird was recorded on 15 October 1980 at Lookout Mountain and on 27 September 1981 at the Waneta cemetery. Two possible sightings 30 September 1981 at Columbia Gardens and 7 October 1981 at Waneta Mountain.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetus*)

Rare. A single record for 2 September 1983 in East Trail.

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Common from 14 April to 30 September and uncommon in all other months; Figure 14. Sightings are mostly of 1 to 2 birds and occasionally of 3 to 4 birds. This species has been recorded annually from 1933 to 1983. Observations are from Trail, Lookout Mountain, Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek, Columbia Gardens, Fort Shepherd and Waneta. First recorded on 29 April 1933, one at Casino Creek. Field note entry: “10 July 1979 – Received injured Kestrel from Gordy De Rosa. Has broken wing. Ronnie feeds it hamburger with tweezers. Can’t repair wing. On July 30th I released it among the trees in the fenced area above the riverbank. It fluttered out of sight” and “25 July 1982 – 1 M with tree swallow”.



Figure 14. Male American Kestrel (Linda M. Van Damme).

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

Rare. First recorded on 14 June 1953, a single bird on Heinz Mountain. Other records are as follows: Beaver Creek Park on 27 December 1970 (1), East Trail on 25 April 1979 (1 female or young), Columbia Gardens on 30 September 1982 (1 female), and East Trail on 21 December 1983 (1 male).

Field note entry: “On 21 December 1978 a Merlin was seen in “our” garden and also reported by {Chuck and Clare} Rommerdahls and Cowlins, all since Christmas day chasing after House Sparrows and Evening Grosbeaks”.

Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*)

Rare. Field note entry: “Dec 17. Amy Guidone found a dead Virginia Rail outside her house at 1780

Topping Street, Trail yesterday. It had hit a window. Elsie Hammond brought it to our house to-day. It is in our freezer, being kept for Bob Dooley at Selkirk College. Fine Specimen”.

Sora (*Porzana carolina*)

Rare. A single bird observed on 14 May 1975 at 1102 Columbia Avenue, Trail. Field note entry: “report and picture of one in Warfield Sept 2/76”.

American Coot (*Fulica americana*)

Uncommon to casual. A single bird was first recorded on 13 May 1959 in West Trail. There are few records from 1960 through 1970. Since 1970, single birds were recorded annually in all months except July. Most sightings are for March, April, September, October, and November. On 30 October 1979, two birds were observed at Waneta Dam and two birds at Columbia Gardens on 3 May 1983.

Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Rare. A single bird was observed on 17 September and 1 October 1977 in East Trail and at Beaver Creek Park on 20 September 1978.

American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*)

Rare. Single record for 7 to 9 October 1981 at Indian Eddy, East Trail. Field note entry: “1 in fall plumage, had sore leg, dull greyish bird, fine yellow dots on back and top of head, white line over eye. No white in tail or rump, grey underwings, no black in wing pit”.

Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)

Rare. Single record of two birds observed on 31 May 1978 in East Trail.

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Common from 25 February to 2 December with up to 10 birds observed. Highest number (10) was recorded from Columbia Gardens on August 1977. The majority of observations are from East Trail, with occasional sightings at Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, and Columbia Gardens. Field note entry: “1977 May 14 – 1 E. Trail (dead)”.

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)

Rare; Figure 15. A single sighting of seven birds in East Trail on 29 April 1976.



Figure 15. American Avocet (Linda M. Van Damme).

Spotted Sandpiper (*Achitis macularius*)

Common. First recorded on 16 June 1939 at Columbia Gardens. Reported annually from 1950 to 1983 between 4 May and 28 September. The highest number (10) was recorded on 6 August 1978 from East Trail where the majority of observations were collected. Evidence of breeding for East Trail in field notes: “1975 Jul 1-2A-2Y”, “1977 2 August 1A-3Y”, “1981 Jul 5-5A-3Y”, and “1983 Jul-3A-1Y”.

Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*)

Rare. Records of single birds from East Trail: 30, 31 July and 1 August 1975, 1 September 1980, 28 August 1981, and 30 August and 1 September 1982. Records for Columbia Gardens: 29 July 1981 (1), 4 August 1982 (1), 26 August 1982 (5), 2 September 1982 (1) “observed with Linda Van Damme from Nelson”, 9 July 1983 (2 adults and 2 juveniles), 11 July 1983 (1), 20 July 1983 (2), 6 August 1983 (1), 15 August 1983 (1), 17 August 1983 (1), and 20 August 1983 (2).

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

Rare. A single bird was observed in East Trail on 1 April 1976, 6 September 1976, 24 and 25 August 1982, and in a pond at Columbia Gardens on 4 August 1982.

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

Rare. A single bird was observed on 28 July 1968 and 31 July 1975 in East Trail. On 12 August 1979, three birds were observed at the same location.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

Rare. A lone bird was sighted on 1 September 1981 in East Trail.

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)

Rare. On 2 August 1975, three birds were observed at Indian Eddy in East Trail and a single bird was present on 2 September. At the same location, one bird was observed on 6 September 1976 and two birds on 7 September 1977.

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*)

Rare. Sightings from East Trail include: 13 August 1979 (1), 15 August 1981 (1), 18 August 1981 (2), 21 August 1981 (3), 20 August 1980 (1), 24 August 1981 (1), and 20, 26-27 August 1983 (1).

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)

Rare. No records prior to 1972. Sightings from East Trail are as follows: 29 August 1972 (2), 4 September 1972 (3), 13 September 1972 (4), 16 September 1972 (2), 20 and 22 August 1974 (2), 12 August 1975 (2), 13 August 1975 (4), 15 August 1975 (1), 7, 8 and 24 August 1978 (1), 20 August 1980 (1), 2 and 3 September 1980 (1), 6 and 7 September 1980 (2), 21 and 24 August 1981 (1), 25 August 1981 (2), 22 and 25 August 1983 (1), 27 August 1983 (5), 13 September 1983 (1), 19 July 1983 (1), 22 August 1983 (2), 24 August 1983 (5), and 25 August 1983 (3).

There is a single record for Beaver Creek Park of five birds on 26 August 1982. On 6 and 15 August 1983, two sandpipers were observed at Columbia Gardens, increasing to four on 17 August.

Baird’s Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)

Casual. No records prior to 1964. A single bird was first recorded in East Trail on 30 August 1965. Since that time one to four birds were observed annually between 11 July and 7 September. All records are from East Trail with the exception of Columbia Gardens on 29 July 1981 (1) and Beaver

Creek Park on 26 August (1) and 2 September (1) 1982. The highest number (11) was recorded at East Trail on 11 August 1969.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)

Rare. A single bird was observed at Sunningdale in Trail on 2 August 1981. On 4 and 5 September 1981, three birds were observed in East Trail and by 6 September two birds remained.

Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*)

Field note entry: “(1982) Aug 22-1 probable (yellow green legs) at East Trail mouth of McQuarrie Creek”.

Wilson’s Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*)

Rare with seven records between 1956 and 1982, from East Trail on 30 September 1956 (1), 23 September 1972 (1), 3 October 1977 (1), and 9 October 1979 (1) and Columbia Gardens on 9 November 1968 (1), 5 April 1981 (1), and 22 April 1981 (1). Field notes refer to this species as “Common Snipe”.

Wilson’s Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Rare. Sightings from East Trail on 30 August 1965 (2), 24 May 1973 (1 male), 19 May 1974 (1 female) and 20 May 1977 (1 male) and from Columbia Gardens on 16 May 1981(2 females) and 6 June 1982 (1 female).

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobates*)

Rare. All records are from East Trail: 15 August 1971 (2 males); 18 August 1972 (1 male); 8 August 1973 (1 male); 10 August 1973 (1male); and 16 and 17 August 1981 (1 male). Field notes refer to this species as “Northern Phalarope”.

Bonaparte’s Gull (*Larus philadelphia*)

Uncommon during May and from July to November. Earliest date observed was 10 May and latest was 9 November. All sightings, mainly of single birds, are from East Trail. Highest number (8) was recorded on 2 September 1980. First recorded on 14 May 1955 and observed in the following years: 1958 and 1959; 1964 and 1966 to 1969; 1970, 1972, 1975; 1980 and 1982.

Correspondence to author on 28 May 1986: “25 plus Bonaparte’s Gulls at boat ramp bay back of our house, an uncommon bird for me”.

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)

Common from 13 July to 29 October and *uncommon* between 14 March and 18 May and 8 November and 29 December. From one to eight birds were observed on field trips with the highest number (10) recorded on 11 November 1970 from Trail.

Recorded annually from 1968 to 1983 mainly from East Trail. Rarely seen at Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, Waneta and Columbia Gardens. First recorded 28 May 1948 in East Trail.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

Casual; Figure 16. Recorded annually in East Trail from 1970 to 1983 mostly between 7 July and 18 November. The only spring and summer records are from Gyro Park when two birds were seen on 24 April 1976, one adult on 11 April 1981 and one adult on 5 June 1981. Highest number (20) was recorded on 2 August 1976. First recorded on 9 August 1970 when two birds were seen in East Trail.



Figure 16. California Gull (Gary S. Davidson).

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

Common with most records between 1 August through 24 April; *rare* in May, June and July.

The majority of records are from Trail with other sightings from Beaver Creek Park on 28 December 1980 (2 adults), Columbia Gardens on 26 December 1979 (2 adults), and 5 records from

Waneta on 18 October 1973 (2), 26 March 1980 (1 adult), 27 November 1982 (1 adult), 6 December 1982 (1 adult), and 19 October 1983 (4 adults). In some winters up to 80 gulls were counted at the Trail dumpsite. First recorded on 27 January 1940 in East Trail. Field note entry: “1978 Mar 27- 1A chasing 2 common mergansers”.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Rare. A single immature was observed on 21 July 1980 in East Trail.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

Rare. Field note entry: “1984-Aug 3- 1 ad. at boat ramp bay, East Trail, floating near shore and feeding on something in scum of water, possibly river moths. Got within 50-60 feet of it with binoculars. First seen at 7:30 AM, still there at 10:30 AM when we left for Fruitvale. It was gone at 4 P.M. It checked out right with bird guides”.

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Uncommon. Records for this species are sparse for the years 1979 to 1983, all at Columbia Gardens. The majority of records are between 22 December and 26 March of one to four birds. There are no records for May, July, and October. The highest number (15) was recorded on 26 February and 5 March 1983.

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)

Common from 1 April to 26 November; *rare*, with only three records, in January, March and December; Figure 17. There were no sightings in February. Reported sporadically from 1939 to 1964 and annually from 1966 to 1983 from Waneta, Beaver Creek Park, and Heinz Mountain with majority of sightings from Columbia Gardens and East Trail. On outings, from one to eight birds were sighted with the highest number (15) reported on 22 August 1979 from Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 13 June 1939 at Columbia Gardens.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

Rare. Recorded only three times: one on 17 August 1933 at Fort Shepherd, one perched in larches below Beaver Creek Park on 10 August 1977, and an adult observed on 7 April 1982 at Waneta cemetery.



Figure 17. Mourning Dove (Linda M. Van Damme)

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*)

Rare with one confirmed sighting on 10 December 1973 in East Trail. Field note entry: “1979 – Jan 11- One probable Snowy Owl seen flying past across Columbia Ave. from our house. I just had a quick glimpse”.

Northern Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*)

Uncommon. During the winter months, single birds were observed most years from East Trail, Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens and Waneta. A single record for March from a field note entry reads: “1973-Mar 21-1 injured owl at Cowlin’s”. No records for April through August and a single record for 6 September 1952. First recorded on 1 January 1939.

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)

Common from 3 June to 15 September with up to 10 birds observed. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Tadanac, and Waneta. First recorded on 11 June 1933 in East Trail. Evidence of breeding in field notes: “Columbia Gardens -15 August 1983-1 AD-2Y”. Field note entry: “Tadanac 19 August @25, Hammonds saw over 100”.

Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*)

Rare. Two records, both from Heinz Mountain, of a single bird observed on 31 August 1969 and 24 August 1980.

Black Swift (*Cypseloides niger*)

Rare. First observed on Heinz Mountain on 26 July 1970 (2) and on 11 September at Indian Eddy, East Trail (6). In 1973, eight swifts were observed on 17 June over Heinz Mountain. In 1974, from East Trail the following observations were made: 5 July (3), 9 July (1), and 11 July (2). At Hannah Creek a single bird was observed on 31 August 1975. Last recorded sighting was on 2 September 1980 at Columbia Gardens.

Correspondence with author on 30 November 1984: “*Black Swift- 2 seen August 19 circling above cliff behind the Trail Hospital*”.

Vaux’s Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*)

Rare. First recorded at Columbia Gardens on 31 May 1958. In 1973 four were seen over Beaver Creek Park on 15 September and three over East Trail on 29 August 1979. On 6 June 1981 and 1982, a single bird was observed at Beaver Creek Park and Columbia Gardens, respectively. In 1983, records were from Tadanac on 30 June (2), Columbia Gardens on 2 July (6), Waneta Junction on 17 August (1), and Waneta Dam on 17 August (2).

Black-chinned Hummingbird

(*Archilochus alexandri*)

Rare. First sighting was on 29 April 1962 on Heinz Mountain. A second sighting was at “*Waneta Hill - June 6-1M-Gary Davidson*”. The final record was of a male observed on 22 and 29 April 1983 near the hospital in Trail.

Anna’s Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)

Rare. Field note entry: “*1981-E Trail, Nov 18-Les Thorington saw 1 at Mrs. Graham’s feeder. Dec 9-1 at Dr. Mais feeder #4 Hazelwood Drive*”.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*)

Rare. A single bird was first recorded on 14 May 1950 in East Trail. On 19 May 1959, one was seen again in East Trail. The remaining records are from Heinz Mountain: 2 May 1976 (1 male and 1 female), 19 May 1976 (1 male), and 12 and 26 May 1977 (1 male).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Common; Figure 18. The earliest spring arrival date, of a single male, was 30 April but the majority of records are for the months of May, June, and July. There are two records of females on 17 and 19 August which constitute the latest dates. All birds were seen in East Trail with the exception of a single sighting on 9 May 1970 at Columbia Gardens. First recorded in field note entry: “*June 7/1933 – in garden West Trail*”.



Figure 18. Rufous Hummingbird (Gail Spitler).

Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*)

Common from 29 April to 24 October and *rare* in November through March with no records for December. Reported infrequently from 1933 to 1948 and annually from 1949 to 1983. Sightings are mainly of single birds from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta and Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 21 May 1933.

Highest number recorded in field note entry: “*1978-Oct 15- (6) Murphy Creek – Joe Biagioni*”.

Lewis’s Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*)

Rare. First recorded on 17 July 1951 in the Trail area. Other records are as follows: Trail area (location not specified) on 1 July 1954 (1), 25 May 1958 (1), 14 May 1961 (1), 17 May 1964 (1), 15 June 1968 (1), Columbia Gardens on 22 May 1971 (1) and 3 July 1971 (1), Beaver Creek Park on 6 May 1976 (1) and 20 May 1980 (1), Casino Creek on 5 June 1971 (2), Heinz Mountain on 12 May 1976 (1), and Waneta on

9 May 1974 (1), 29 May 1971 (1), 23 August 1980 (1), and 2 September 1980 (4).

Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*)

Rare. A single record for Waneta Dam of two birds on 17 September 1978 and for East Trail of a single male on 14 April 1983. Field notes refer to this species as “*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*”.

Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)

Uncommon to common. Recorded sporadically between 1933 and 1972 and annually from 1973 to 1983. Although observed in all months of the year there is an increase in observations from November to January. All records are of single birds observed at East Trail, Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek Park, and Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 24 September 1933 at Sheppard Creek.

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*)

Uncommon in all months of the year from East Trail, Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta; Figure 19. Observed in 23



Figure 19. Hairy Woodpecker (Tim Kendrick).

of 45 years between 1939 and 1983. Observations are of single birds with the following exceptions: 26 December 1976 (1 male and 1 female) at Beaver Creek Park and 25 July 1980 (1 female and 1 young) at Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 30 September 1939. Field note entry: “*1972-Nov 5- 1F dead, East Trail*”.

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*)

Common. All records are of the “Red-shafted” form. Recorded sporadically between 1939 and 1947 and annually in all months from 1948 to 1983 from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Less commonly observed during June, July, and August. Sightings are mostly of one or two birds with the highest number (2 males and 2 females) on 27 April 1979 at Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 12 August 1939. Field notes refer to this species as “Common Flicker”.

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

Rare. Recorded only three times between 1939 and 1983: 28 June 1969 (1) on Beaver Mountain, 5 September 1970 (1) on Lookout Mountain, and 18 April 1974 (2) at Columbia Gardens.

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*)

Rare from 1969 to 1979 with three records of single birds: 29 May 1969 in East Trail, 17 May 1970 on Heinz Mountain, and 25 May 1973 at Beaver Creek Park. *Casual* from 1980 to 1983 from Waneta, Columbia Gardens, and East Trail.

Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*)

Common from 8 May to 1 September during the years 1950 to 1983. Observations are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta, and Columbia Gardens, mostly of one to two birds. Highest number (5) was recorded at Beaver Creek Park on 30 May 1970. First recorded on 21 May 1950 on Heinz Mountain. Field note entry: “*1980-Jul 6-East Trail-1 near nest*”.

Hammond’s Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

No species summary found although it occurs in the region (Campbell et al. 1997).

Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*)

Rare. A single sighting on 15 August 1979 at Columbia Gardens. Field notes refer to this species as “Western Flycatcher”.

Say’s Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Uncommon from 14 March to 12 September; Figure 20. Sightings are of one to two birds from East Trail and Waneta with the majority from Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 4 April 1940 (1) in West Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field note entries: “1977-June 6-Waneta Junction-2 at nest” and “1983-Jul 20-Columbia Gardens 4Y”.



Figure 20. Say’s Phoebe (Brent Wellander).

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Common from 20 April to 17 August. Sightings of one to four birds are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta, and Columbia Gardens. A total of eight birds were recorded on 13 May 1972 and 16 May 1981 from Waneta and 9 and 11 July 1983 from Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 2 June 1942 at Columbia Gardens.

Evidence of breeding in field note entries: “1973-Aug 10-Columbia Gardens-2A-3Y”, “1974-26 Jun-Columbia Gardens-2A-4Y”, “1977-Jul 19-Waneta Junction-2A-2Y”, “1980-Jun 25-Columbia Gardens-2AD-4Y”, “1980-Jul 3-Columbia Gardens-3A-2Y”, “1983-Jun 22-Lower Columbia Gardens-1AD-4Y” and “1983-Jul 2-Waneta Hill- 2A-3Y”.

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)

Common from 10 May to 3 September. Sightings of one to four birds are from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta, and Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 11 June 1933 in Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field note entries: “1970-Jul 18-E. Trail-2A-4Y”, “1973-Aug 10-Waneta Junction-2A-3Y”, “1976-Aug 9-Beaver Creek Park-2AD-2Y + 3AD”, “1977-Jul 21- Waneta Junction-1A-2Y+ 2A+ 2A”, “1978-Jul 19-E. Trail- 1A-2Y”, “1979-Jul 29- East Trail- 2A-3Y”, “1980-Jul 19- E. Trail- 2AD-4Y”, “1982- Aug 4- Waneta dam- 2A-2Y” and “1983-Aug 6-Columbia Gardens- 1A-2Y”. Field note entry: “1980-Nov 11-Beaver Creek Park-1 kingbird size & color; white band on tail, we didn’t see the chest area”.

Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*)

Casual from 11 November to 27 March during the years 1969 to 1983; *rare* between 1940 and 1968. Sightings are all of single birds from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. There are two observations from Columbia Gardens: 16 October 1971 and 19 October 1981. First recorded on 19 May 1940 in Trail.

Cassin’s Vireo (*Vireo cassinii*)

Rare with two observations of single birds at Waneta cemetery on 10 and 30 September 1982. Field notes refer to this species as “Solitary Vireo”.

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)

Common from 26 May to 29 August from 1969 to 1983. Sightings are of one to two birds from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta with the majority seen on Heinz Mountain. Highest number (5) was recorded on Heinz Mountain 20 June 1971. Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1969 Jun 22-1 on nest, 3 eggs, Heinz Mountain cross trail”. Field note entry: “1978-Jul 11 Heinz Mountain – 1 dead” another entry: “1976-Aug 20 to 26, kept R.E. Vireo – broken wing, died Aug 26.”

Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*)

Uncommon from 17 May to 16 August. Sightings of one to three birds are from Trail, Heinz Mountain, Fort Shepherd, Beaver Creek Park, and Columbia

Gardens. First recorded on 22 June 1969 near Trail Hospital.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1982-Aug 9- East Trail- 1 feeding young cowbird”.

Gray Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*)

Rare with a single sighting on 5 January 1980 on Waneta Mountain.

Steller’s Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

Uncommon from 28 September to 25 March; Figure 21. One record for April and no records for May through August. Sightings are of one to two birds from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (5) was recorded in West Trail on 13 January 1973. First recorded on 30 October 1954 on Heinz Mountain.

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

Rare with a single sighting on 4 December 1976 on Jerome Street, in Warfield. Referred to as “Eastern Blue Jay” in field notes.

Clark’s Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*)

Rare with a single sighting at Beaver Creek Park on 24 December 1978.

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*)

Casual from 19 September to 26 December for the years 1970 to 1983. There is a single record for March and June, two records for February, and no records for January, April, May, July, and August. Sightings are of one to two birds from Heinz Mountain, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 1 October 1933 at Sheppard Creek. Field note entry: ‘more common in the Pend’Oreille Valley’.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)

Common resident. Records for all months of the year but there is an increase in observations for December through March for the years 1977 to 1983. This species was not recorded in field notes prior to 1977. Sightings are of one to six birds from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Waneta, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Fort Shepherd. First recorded on 2 January 1977 in East Trail.



Figure 21. Steller’s Jay (Gail Spitler).

American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

Common from March through September and rare from October through February. Sightings are of one to 10 birds from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Waneta, Beaver Creek Park, and Fort Shepherd. Highest number (75) of birds was observed at Columbia Gardens on 15 September 1981. First recorded on 16 March 1941 from Trail.

Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*)

Rare. A single bird was observed on 4 March 1956 and 20 were seen on 22 September 1974, both observations at Columbia Gardens. In East Trail, a single bird was observed on 11 April 1970.

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

Common for the years 1976 to 1983 and *uncommon* for prior years between 1939 and 1975. Recorded from 15 March to 22 September. Sightings of one to 10 birds are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. Highest number (15) was recorded in East Trail on 11 June 1983. First recorded on 14 May 1949 on Beaver Mountain.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1980-Jun 29-E.Trail-1Ad-3Y and Jul 19-2Ad-4Y”, “1981-Jul 2-Columbia Gardens-2Ad-6Y in nest box” and “1982-Jul 11-E. Trail-2Ad-5Y”.

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

Common from 28 February to 27 September for the years 1939 to 1983; Figure 22. During spring and autumn migration flocks of 25 to 150 birds were often recorded. The highest count (300) was in East Trail on 17 September 1983. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 20 March 1939 in West Trail. Field note entry: “1977-Mar-E. Trail- 10 to 25 seen every day”.



Figure 22. Violet-green Swallow (Alistair Fraser).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

(*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

Uncommon from 23 April to 23 August. Sightings of one to two birds are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 7 June 1953 at Beaver Creek Park.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1978-July 19-W. Trail-2A-4Y away from nest” and “1980-22 May- Columbia Gardens-2 nesting”. Field note entry “few seen every summer”. Field notes refer to this species as “Rough-winged Swallow”.

Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*)

Uncommon from 7 May to 5 September. Sightings of one to 25 birds are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (50) was recorded from East Trail on 25 and 31 July 1982 and 4 August 1983. First recorded on 11 June 1949 in East Trail.

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)

Common from 15 April to 14 September. Sightings of one to 25 birds are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (50) was recorded from Columbia Gardens on 2 July 1981. First recorded on 1 June 1941 from Columbia Gardens.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1980-Jul 3-Columbia Gardens-10A-5Y”.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Common from 19 April to 22 September for the years 1970 to 1983. Sightings of one to 15 birds are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. Highest number (30) was recorded from Columbia Gardens on 20 July 1983. First recorded on 3 July 1955 at Columbia Gardens.

Evidence of breeding (Figure 23) in field notes: “1978-Jul 26-E. Trail-2A-5Y” and “1981- Aug 21-East Trail-1Y in nest”.



Figure 23. Barn Swallow nest with young (Cyril Colonel).

Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapilla*)

Common resident; Figure 24. Seen in all months of the year, but fewer observations between April and June. Sightings of one to 10 birds are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 16 August 1933 at Fort Shepherd.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “1979-Jul 3-East Trail- 1A-3Y.”



Figure 24. Black-capped Chickadee (Sharon Laughlin).

Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)

Rare with a single sighting in East Trail on 19 January 1982.

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*)

Rare with a single sighting in East Trail on 17 June 1981.

Brown Creeper (*Certhia americanus*)

Rare with a single sighting on Heinz Mountain on 2 November 1970.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Rare. A single bird was observed 18 October 1970, 10 November 1973, 4 December 1977, and 21 November 1982 on Heinz Mountain. A single bird was observed on 5 October 1977 and 14 November 1978 along Casino Creek trail.

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Rare. Most sightings are from Heinz Mountain: 3 August 1969 (3), 10 August 1969 (1), 14 September 1969 (1), 7 June 1970 (1), 12 September 1970 (3 immatures), 7 July 1977 (1), 29 June 1980 (1), 27 June 1980 (1), and 1 August 1982 (1). One sighting from Waneta on 6 June 1981 (1) and a single sighting from Fort Shepherd on 19 March 1983.

Correspondence to author on 20 May 1986: “1 Rock Wren beside Columbia River, Gyro Park, East Trail”.

Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)

Rare with one sighting in East Trail on 10 October 1979. Field notes refer to this species as “Long-billed Marsh Wren”.

American Dipper (*Cinclus mexicanus*)

Common from 12 September to 7 April; no records for June, July or August. Sightings of one to six birds from Gorge Creek, Columbia Gardens, Fort Shepherd, and Waneta with the majority of records from East Trail and Beaver Creek Park. Highest count (11) was from Beaver Creek Park on 14 December 1977, an area which consistently supported good numbers of dippers from 1961 to 1983. First recorded on 14 February 1934 at Gorge Creek, West Trail.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)

Rare with three observations: West Trail 25 April 1940 (1), Waneta cemetery 30 September 1982 (1 female) and 25 September 1983 (10).

Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*)

Rare. Sightings from Heinz Mountain on 21 October 1956 (1), 19 February 1978 (1), 30 October 1978 (2), 10 December 1978 (6), and 21 November 1982 (2) and from East Trail on 21 February 1978 (4), 9 February 1982 (6) and 1 November 1982 (2).

Western Bluebird (*Sialia mexicanus*)

Rare. Seen once in this area (exact location not mentioned) on 16 March 1940.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)

Uncommon from 1 March to 2 October for the years 1977 to 1983; Figure 25. There is a single late record of four males at Columbia Gardens on 3 November 1978. Sightings of one to four birds from Waneta but the majority of records are from Columbia Gardens. Highest count (15) was recorded from Columbia Gardens on 22 August 1979. First recorded on 6 April 1977 at Columbia Gardens. There are 14 breeding records for Columbia Gardens and a single breeding record for Waneta. Field note entry: “*Columbia Gardens 1979 Aug 15 @10, also possible albino bluebird.*”



Figure 25. Male Mountain Bluebird with grasshopper (Brian G. Briscoe).

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*)

Casual from 15 November to 27 April for the years 1940 to 1983. A single observation for the months of May, June and August. Sightings of one bird, and on three occasions 2 birds, are from Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 23 March 1940 at Columbia Gardens.

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*)

Rare. First observed on Heinz Mountain on 2 July 1972 (2) with a few sightings in subsequent years: 5 June 1976 (1), 18 June 1978 (1), 11 July 1978 (1), and 4 June 1980 (1). Other observations of single birds include: East Trail 3 July 1979 and 5 June 1983 and Columbia Gardens 16 June 1981. Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*Heinz Mountain-1978-June 24-1A-3Y-1E*”.

Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*)

Casual. Recorded annually between 17 June and 22 September from 1963 to 1983 from Heinz Mountain and East Trail. Observations are mostly of single birds. First recorded on 23 June 1963 on Heinz Mountain.

Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)

Rare with a single sighting on 5 August 1982 in the Sunningdale area of Trail.

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)

Common from 6 March to 30 October and *uncommon* in all other months. Highest number (100) was recorded at Columbia Gardens on 28 September 1977. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 8 April 1933 in Trail. Field note entry: “*1972-Sep 30-1-3/4 albino robin*”.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

Rare; Figure 26. Observations are as follows: Heinz Mountain on 10 March 1957 (1), 16 March 1958 (1), 7 November 1971 (1), 10 November 1973 (4), 21 January 1976 (1), 27 January 1976 (1), 23 March 1980 (1 male) and 4 October 1983 (1 female) and from East Trail on 4 March 1974 (1), 5 March 1975 (1), and 9 March 1980 (1 male).



Figure 26. Varied Thrush (Marcia Long).

Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)

Casual. Sightings mostly of single birds between 3 June and 5 August from 1950 to 1983. Recorded from East Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Fort Shepherd, and Waneta. First recorded on 25 June 1950 on Heinz Mountain.

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Rare. Field note entry: “1974 Dec 12- saw probable Mockingbird at Waneta Junction. Had dark grey (1” wide?) across chest, but otherwise fitted description. Seen several times in Tadanac by Mrs. Vic Rogers in 1974”.

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Common from 1 March to 18 October and *casual* between November and February. Highest number (100) was recorded at Columbia Gardens on 28 June 1982. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 20 March 1960.

American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*)

Common from 7 March to 28 April and 13 September to 18 October. One late sighting on 26 November 1955 in East Trail. Highest number (50) was recorded at Beaver Creek Park on 28 April 1982. Sightings are from East Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Beaver Creek Park. First recorded on 7 October 1951 in East Trail when a single bird was found dead. Field notes refer to this species as “Water Pipit”.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

Common from 2 November through 31 March. The highest number of observations are for the months of November and January, with five observations for October and two for April. Highest numbers recorded in Trail were 150 birds feeding on *Pyracanthus* on 17 Nov 1977 and 200 waxwings observed on 18 November 1978. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, Waneta, and Fort Shepherd. First recorded on 18 March 1939 from Trail.

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

Common from 3 June to 30 September and *uncommon* in late May and mid-to late October.

Winter observation of five birds at Sunningdale in Trail on 12 December 1982 with field notation “*yellow belly*”. Sightings are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 30 June 1939 from West Trail.

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*)

Uncommon from 29 April to 31 August. Sightings are from 1946 to 1983 for Heinz Mountain, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 16 May 1946 in East Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1979-July 3-1A-2Y*”.

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)

Common from 16 May to 2 September. Observations are mostly of one to two birds with the highest count of 10 birds at Waneta on 4 August 1982. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 3 June 1941 in West Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1981-Jul 9-1A-1Y*”.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*)

Uncommon from 3 April to 30 September and *rare* to 13 October for the years 1954 to 1983; Figure 27. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. Highest number (25) was recorded from East Trail on 22 September 1983. First recorded on 29 April 1954 in East Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1980-Jul 29-1A-3Y*”.

Townsend’s Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*)

Rare. Observations are all from Heinz Mountain as follows: 10 July 1965 (1), 18 August 1974 (1), 29 August 1982 (1 male), and 2 August 1983 (1 male) and from East Trail on 5 August 1982 (1 female) and 2 August 1970 (1) near hospital in Trail.

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)

Rare. Two observations of single birds on 5 and 10 August 1972 at Beaver Creek Park.



Figure 27. Male Yellow-rumped Warbler (Linda M. Van Damme).

MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*)

Uncommon from 21 May to 23 September. Sightings are of one to two birds from East Trail, Heinz Mountain, and Waneta. First recorded on 21 May 1956 in East Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: "1977-July 27-1F with young cowbird Gyro Park, E. Trail".

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)

Rare. Observations of single birds at Columbia Gardens on 18 September 1941 and 5 June 1966. Observations from East Trail on 20 September 1972 (1 male and 1 female) and 1 October 1980 (1 male).

American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*)

Uncommon from 4 June to 29 August. Sightings are from 1970 to 1983 at Heinz Mountain and Waneta. First recorded on 2 August 1970 (1 male and 2 females).

Evidence of breeding in field notes: "1977 July 31-2Y Heinz Mtn.".

Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*)

Rare with one sighting of a single bird in East Trail on 9 July 1979.

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

Uncommon from 9 May to 24 September for the years 1970 to 1983. *Rare* during the years 1933 to 1969. Observations are of one to two birds with males more commonly recorded. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 17 June 1933 on Lookout Mountain.

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)

Uncommon from 14 March to 30 September for the years 1940 to 1983. Two winter records: 17 December 1976, "1 seen at Coates and G. Barnes feeder in Sunningdale, East Trail" and 24 December 1983, "1 at Hammonds in Tadanac". Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 24 March 1940 at Fort Shepherd.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: "E. Trail-1971-Jul 11-2A 2Y" and "1981-Jul 14-2A 4Y". Field notes refer to this species as "Rufous-sided Towhee".

American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*)

Rare. Recorded five times since 1933. A single bird was observed at the following locations: Murphy Creek on 19 October 1933, Birchbank on 1 February 1939, and Heinz Mountain on 23 October 1949 and 1 November 1953. On 26 December 1976, 20 birds were recorded at Beaver Creek Park. Field notes refer to this species as "Tree Sparrow."

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*)

Common from 26 April to 21 September; Figure 28. Observations are of one to four birds with the highest number (8) being recorded on 4 August 1982 at Waneta Dam. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 4 May 1939 in Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: "E Trail-1979-Jul 15-2 AD-2Y".



Figure 28. Chipping Sparrow (Steve Ogle).

Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*)

Uncommon from 28 April to 12 September. Observations are of one to four birds with the highest count of 10 birds at Columbia Gardens on 15 August 1970, 4 August 1982, and 6 August 1983. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 2 July 1955 on Heinz Mountain.

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)

Casual from 19 April to 20 September for the years 1972 to 1982 and *rare* between 1939 and 1960. Observations are mostly of one to two birds with a high count of 4 birds on 20 September 1978 at Beaver Creek Park. Sightings are from Trail, Beaver Creek Park, and Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 12 August 1939 at Columbia Gardens.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*Columbia Gardens-1972-Jul 19- 2A-1Y.*”

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

Uncommon from 19 April to 30 September for the years 1970 to 1983 and *casual* for the years 1954 to 1969. Observations are of one to 10 birds with the highest count of 25 birds in East Trail on 29 April 1978. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens and Waneta. First recorded on 6 May 1954 in East Trail.

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)

Rare. A single bird was observed on 26 August 1979 on Heinz Mountain. Field note entry: “*1983-Feb 23-Jack and Joan Sigsworth have had a fox*

sparrow at their feeder; two or more times, Shavers Bench, East Trail”.

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)

Common resident. Many observations are from 2 October through 27 April when birds visit feeders. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 30 September 1939 in Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1979- Jun 26-1A -2Y*”.

Lincoln’s Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolni*)

Rare. A single bird was seen on 16 August 1970 in East Trail and on 9 September 1951 and 20 May 1959 but no location was given for the latter dates.

Harris’s Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*)

Rare; Figure 29. Observations are all from Trail: 16 May 1977 (1 adult at feeder), 10 May 1978 (1 in garden), 5 October 1978 (1), 23 April 1981 (1 in garden), and 6 November 1982 (1 adult in fall plumage and 1 immature at feeder).



Figure 29. Harris’s Sparrow (Linda M. Van Damme).

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

Common from 8 April to 28 May and *uncommon* from 6 September to 2 October. Observations are of one to five birds with high counts of 10 birds on 22 and 23 September 1979 on Heinz Mountain. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 19 April 1939 in Trail.

Golden-crowned Sparrow

(*Zonotrichia atricapilla*)

Rare. Field note entry: “1990-May 9-1 at my ground feeder”.

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

The “Oregon” subspecies is a *common* resident. Observations are of one to 10 birds with one to three juncos visiting a feeder from 10 November through 31 March. Highest number (20) was recorded from Heinz Mountain on 30 September 1979. Sightings are from Trail, Heinz Mountain, Beaver Creek Park, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 13 March 1949 in Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “Heinz Mountain-1982-Jul 4-1F-4E”.

Separate notes were kept on the “Slate-coloured” subspecies which was recorded from 8 October through 20 April for the years 1969, 1971, 1972, 1976, 1977, 1979, and 1980 to 1983. Sightings are mostly of single birds from Heinz Mountain, Trail, and Waneta. Highest number (8) was recorded at Waneta Junction on 28 December 1983.

Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*)

Rare. Observations are of a single male in East Trail on 16 October and 5 November 1974.

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)

Rare. Eighteen observations overall during the years 1952 through 1974. Two sightings in March, 5 in October, 10 in November, and 1 in December. Highest number (10) was recorded on 8 November 1973 in East Trail. First recorded on 22 March 1952 in East Trail and last reported on 9 November 1974 from the same location.

Black-headed Grosbeak

(*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

Rare. Twenty-four observations from 17 May to 26 August during the years 1939 through 1983. Sightings are of single males or females from Trail, Heinz Mountain, and Waneta. First recorded on 5 July 1939 (1 male) on Lookout Mountain. Field note entry: “1977 July 18-1Y dead at Cowlins in East Trail” and “1978 Jun 16-1M dead E Trail”.

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*)

Uncommon from 3 May to 24 August. Recorded annually from 1933 to 1983. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 2 July 1933 in West Trail. Evidence of breeding in field notes: “Heinz Mountain – 4 Jul 1971- 1M 1F 2Y”.

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

Rare. Seen twice near Waneta on 26 June 1975 (2 males and 1 female). Other sightings are for the Pend d’Oreille and Fruitvale areas.

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

Rare. From 1940 to 1973 with only four observations and *casual* in March, April, July, August, September and November for the years 1973 to 1983; Figure 30. Highest number (50) was recorded on 14 September 1982 at Columbia Gardens. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 24 February 1940 at Columbia Gardens.



Figure 30. Male Red-winged Blackbird (Gary S. Davidson).

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)

Rare from 1941 to 1948 and *uncommon* from 2 March to 7 October for the years 1949 to 1983. One late autumn sighting of a single bird on 9 November 1968 at Columbia Gardens. Sightings of one to two birds are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 23 March 1941 at Columbia Gardens.

Yellow-headed Blackbird

(*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Uncommon from 22 April to 15 September. Sightings are from 1973 to 1983 from East Trail and Columbia Gardens. Field note entry: “*first identified 1970-May 2-1M Pend’Oreille*”.

Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)

Rare with a single record along Hannah Creek road on 14 November 1982.

Brewer’s Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)

Rare with few records between 1939 and 1970 and *uncommon* from 28 March to 30 September for the years 1971 to 1983. Highest number (20) was recorded at Columbia Gardens on 30 September 1972, 9 May and 17 September 1973, 3 June 1982, and 25 April 1983. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 16 June 1939 at Columbia Gardens.

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)

Common from 20 April to 14 September. Highest number (50) was recorded at Columbia Gardens on 9 May 1973 and 8 July 1981. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 3 July 1954 at Columbia Gardens.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*Gyro Park, East Trail-1976-Jul 27-1 young with adult MacGillivray’s Warbler*”.

Bullock’s Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

Casual from 1958 to 1975 and *uncommon* from 14 May to 15 August for the years 1976 to 1983. Observations are of one to four birds, of both males and females. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 7 June 1958 at Beaver Creek Park. Field note entry: “*see plenty of nests in winter – 4 nests on Hazelwood Drive, Sunningdale Dec 10/82*”. Field notes refer to this species as “Northern Oriole”.

Gray-crowned Rosy Finch

(*Leucosticte tephrocotis*)

Rare. First recorded on 2 January 1956 (1) in East Trail and again on 14 January 1962 (1) and 16 February 1969 (40). An irruption of finches occurred

in November and December of 1973 and from three to 30 birds was observed almost daily in East Trail. Field note entry for last recorded date: “*1984-Dec 23-1 littoralis, gray face-1293 Columbia Ave.*”

Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*)

Rare. Two records: East Trail 27 February 1982 (1 male) and Lookout Mountain 12 October 1983 (1 female).

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*)

Rare. In correspondence to author on 28 July 1985 Maurice writes: “*1M seen 4 times at our feeders. Last year was first time I’ve seen it in B.C.*”.

Cassin’s Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*)

Common from 4 March to 15 July between 1976 and 1983 associated with a backyard bird feeder. Few records for September, October and November. Observations are of one to four birds with the highest count on 19 April 1981 of nine males and five females in East Trail. The majority of observations are from Trail with a few from Columbia Gardens. First recorded on 18 July 1972 in East Trail. Field note entry: “*More common since 1976. At feeders spring and summer*”.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*East Trail-1983-Jul 3- 1M-2F-3Y*”.

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)

Uncommon resident from 1970 to 1975 becoming a *common* resident from 1976 to 1983; Figure 31. Observations are all from Trail, mainly associated with an urban yard with a backyard bird feeder. Highest number of birds, seven males and 30 females, was recorded on 28 November 1982. First recorded on 29 July 1970 from East Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E. Trail-1980-Jun 15-1M-1F-2Y*”. Field note entry: “*E. Trail-1983-Jan 15-2M-8F-pygmy owl in area*”.

Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)

Rare with one sighting of a male and two females at Hannah Creek on 8 September 1980.



Figure 31. Male House Finch (Tim Kendrick).

White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*)

Rare. Three sightings as follows: East Trail on 7 June 1959 (1), upper Casino Creek on 6 July 1978 (one male and one female) and Hannah Creek on 8 September 1980 (two males and four females).

Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*)

Uncommon from 21 November to 18 April during the years 1949 through 1982. Observations are from East Trail, Columbia Gardens, Fort Shepherd, and Waneta. First recorded on 27 March 1949. Highest number (100) was recorded on 6 December 1975 on Heinz Mountain.

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*)

Rare. A single bird was sighted on Heinz Mountain 27 March 1949.

Pine Siskin (*Cardeus pinus*)

Uncommon to *common* resident due to its irruptive nature. Strongly associated with backyard bird feeders from autumn through spring. Highest number (40) was recorded in East Trail on 8 June 1981. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded on 14 September 1952 on Heinz Mountain.

American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*)

Uncommon to *common* resident. Observations are mainly of one to two birds with a maximum of 30 at Columbia Gardens on 30 December 1980 and in East Trail on 17 January 1983. Frequent visitor at backyard bird feeders during the winter months. Sightings are from Trail, Columbia Gardens, and Waneta. First recorded 18 June 1939 in Trail.

Evidence of breeding in field notes: “*E.Trail-1983-Aug 4-1M-2Y*”.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)

Uncommon from 15 November to 17 April and *casual* in September, October, and May. Observations range from single birds up to 30, with a high count of 75 grosbeaks on 21 February 1982 in East Trail. Frequent visitor at backyard bird feeders during the winter months; Figure 32. Sightings are from Heinz Mountain, Trail, Columbia Gardens, Beaver Creek Park, and Waneta. First recorded on 6 February 1933 in West Trail.



Figure 32. Evening Grosbeaks (Cyril Colonel).

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Common resident. Sightings are predominately from Trail as this species is strongly associated with urban yards and residential feeders. Highest population estimate was 100 birds recorded in East Trail on 2 January 1983. The species is occasionally observed at Columbia Gardens and Waneta. First recorded on 5 January 1977 (12) in East Trail.

Evidence of breeding noted in 1977 “*8 June (1F-*

5Y, 1M-3Y, 1F-3Y)” and evident to 1983. Field note entry: “E. Trail-1982-Jan 1-1M-2F and pygmy owl in area”.

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West Kootenay residents Chuck and Clare Romerdahl, Jeanne Morton (the Hollington family), Marcia Long, Cyril Colonel, Alistair Fraser, Tim Kendrick, Gail Spitler, Gary Davidson, Steve Ogle, Jacob Dulisse, Larry Prosser, Brian Briscoe, Sharon Laughlin, and Brent Wellander generously provided photographs which greatly enhanced the text.

I am grateful to Hazel Cannings, Chuck and Clare Rommerdahl, Brenda Balaam, Gary Davidson, Peter McIver, Doug Cooper, and Wayne Campbell for reminiscing about their relationship with Maurice and allowing their comments to be published in the following tribute to a gentle and kind man whose life-long passion was knowing the birds of Trail.

A Tribute to Maurice Ellison

Maurice (Figures 33 and 34) impacted the lives of many people interested in birds and willingly shared his observations with a variety of professionals and amateurs over five decades. Many of these people appreciated the time and effort he spent compiling his daily observations for quick reference and his volunteer efforts to have the bird life of the Trail region better represented in the province.

The author contacted the following eight people who all had different memories and experiences with Maurice and wanted to see a permanent record of his accomplishments that could be shared with a wider audience.



Figure 33. Maurice in 1935 as a rover scout (the Hollington family).

Hazel Cannings (Coquitlam), who celebrated her 90th birthday in 2008, writes: *“The first meeting in 1973 of the West Kootenay Nats held at Selkirk College was a great opportunity to meet people. Maurice and his wife Ronnie were gentle, unassuming people who soon became good friends of ours. Over the years Madge and Jack Hollington, Maurice and Ronnie, Jim and I did many bird watching daytrips together. We all learned a lot from Maurice and could always count on his knowledge and experience when we were out. He introduced us to the Fruitvale area, a great birding spot which we were previously unaware of. Maurice always enjoyed birding away from the Trail area and I recall one day around South*



Figure 34. Maurice in 1991 out birding with the author at Fruitvale meadows.

Slocan where we tallied up 45 species, including a Lazuli Bunting [Figure 35] which I believe may have been a first for him. He was a great guy!”

Chuck and Clare Rommerdahl (Trail):

“Maurice and Chuck have had a long association with each other as they were both employed by Cominco (now Teck Cominco) in the winding shop of the electrical department. The company was called C.M. & S. Co. back then. Maurice later worked in Tools. Staff at Cominco did not know that Maurice was an active bird-watcher [Figure 36] as he was a quiet, unassuming man who would never brag about his interests and accomplishments.

Chuck and Maurice went on fishing trips especially in the Salmo area, on the H.B. Mine road up to Panther and Wolf Lakes. Maurice always enjoyed company along his birding route south of Trail which became a familiar place for both of us. We sure enjoyed his company and birding expertise”.



Figure 35. One of Maurice’s favourite birds was the Lazuli Bunting which he often thought, because of its striking and colourful plumage, should be living somewhere in the tropics, not in the Kootenays (Marcia Long).

Gary Davidson (Nakusp): *“My early contact with Maurice was by letter in 1979. We corresponded a few times before we actually met. Our first meeting was in June 1981 when he took me for a days birding in the Trail area. I was relatively new to the Kootenays and was very thankful for the help he gave me in getting a handle on the local bird fauna. I remember clearly that he showed me my lifer Lark Sparrow that day! In subsequent years we birded together a number of times and I never tired of his company. At the time, he was a very experienced birder with several decades under his belt! I was a relative beginner, still working on my first decade. But he was very humble and offered me nothing but encouragement. I will always remember him as a kind and gentle person”.*

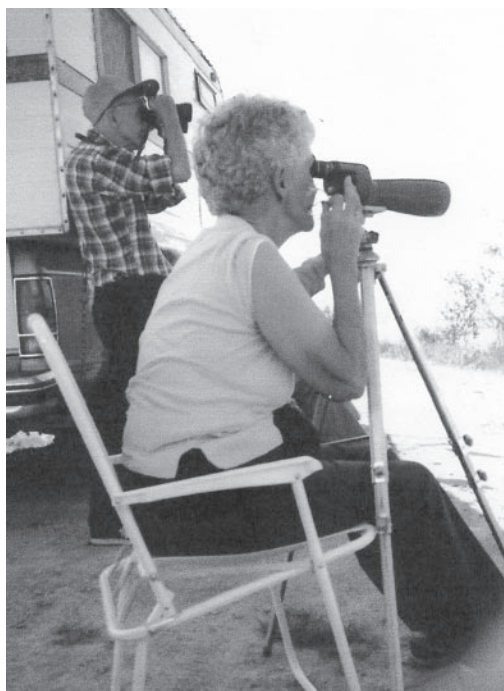


Figure 36. Maurice Ellison and Madge Hollington scanning for birds on Duck Lake, near Creston, BC in 1987. Birding friends got together for birding trips around the Kootenays (Chuck and Clare Rommerdahl).

Dr. Doug Cooper (Vancouver): *“What came to mind immediately when I first read your message was a cold but bright day in December of 1982. I had just met Maurice a few weeks earlier at a West Kootenay Field Naturalists meeting. He phoned me up at the C S Williams medical clinic in Trail where I was working at the time, having just finished my family practice residency. He told me he had spotted a Northern Pygmy-owl [Figure 37] outside the back window of his home by the Columbia River across from the Cominco smelter and asked would I like to come down and see it. I went down at noon and he and his wife Ronnie, both beaming broadly, showed me my first Northern Pygmy-owl. It was the first of many good times birding with Maurice and it was a terrific example of his enthusiasm for birding and his and Ronnie’s wonderful hospitality”.*



Figure 37. Maurice was always keen to share his bird sightings with others and Doug Cooper will always remember his “lifer” Northern Pygmy-Owl (Marcia Long).

Peter McIver (Castlegar): “*What I remember about him is a gentle man always earnestly friendly and smiling, and passionate about the local birds. I enjoyed his company*”.

Wayne Campbell (Victoria): “*The usefulness, and significance, of a provincial reference book on birds depends greatly on a volunteer commitment of thousands of people widely scattered throughout British Columbia, and their willingness to share information. In the late 1960s, when we started the task of pulling together information for the book, I learned about Maurice and his passion for note-taking. We corresponded in the early 1970s and I soon realized how important his information was to fill in the gap between Castlegar and Creston along the international boundary in the extreme south portion of the West Kootenay region. Throughout the 1980s, when the non-passerine volumes were being researched and written, Maurice was contacted often for information. The next day the records were in the mail.*

Maurice was soon participating in the British Columbia Nest Record Scheme and promoting sight record cards for “The Birds of British Columbia” project. As well he regularly compiled West Kootenay

bird records for the late Jim Grant who summarized quarterly reports of noteworthy sightings for Audubon Field Notes. He was the official representative for the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count and convener, and long-time participant, in the West Kootenay Naturalists Association’s annual West Kootenay Christmas Bird Count. He also participated in the Great Canadian Roundup, and participated in the West Kootenay annual waterfowl count.

Maurice’s legacy, fortunately, will continue to be highlighted as his field observations regularly recorded in field notebooks have become an important historical “bench mark” of bird life in the Trail area throughout the 1900s. Since the information has been preserved by caring friends it will continue to be referred to often in future years for use in the conservation of birds in British Columbia”.

Brenda Balaam (Trail): On behalf of the West Kootenay Naturalists, Brenda writes: “*Before ever meeting Maurice, the esteemed Trail School District Supervisor of Instruction, Hans Johnsen asked me the identity of the man always with binoculars perusing the tree-fringed Columbia River in Gyro Park, but I was clueless. Later, as a member of the West Kootenay Naturalists, all was revealed! Maurice was their very good Field Ornithologist who in 1940 began data collecting which provided valuable data during Trail’s improving vegetation and bird recovery. After his wife Ronnie died, I dropped by with muffins, learning that his interest in birds was ignited in Boy Scouts. While at Selkirk College Bill Merilees founded the WKNA in 1973, becoming a mentor/friend to Maurice, involving him with Canadian/American Bird Counts/Publications/Records including studies of Trail’s Harlequin Ducks and Avocets. Because of Maurice’s quiet demeanor, people of Trail were unaware of resourceful Maurice. At his funeral, I urged his son to provide bird books and bird study publications, stepping up to provide a eulogy of the real Maurice; after which, via his son, Maurice’s worn-very-thin binoculars were left to a dear WKNA friend, tearful Jack Hollington”.*

Linda Van Damme (Creston): I knew I had met a kindred spirit when I opened a two-page handwritten letter from Maurice on October 2, 1980.

Here are a few excerpts: “*Dear Linda: Welcome to the Kootenays, fellow bird-watcher. I see by the West Kootenay Naturalists Association newsletter that you had a good summer compiling a list of birds you had seen around Slocan. I have a lot of bird records, mostly for the Trail area and very few for the Slocan valley, (list of Slocan birds included) but other persons who could supply information are Nancy Anderson of New Denver, Gary Davidson of Nakusp and Bob Dooley of Selkirk College.*

Interesting birds I have seen near Trail since Aug 28th are Solitary Sandpiper (1), Ruddy Turnstone, Water Pipits (6), Bonaparte Gull (8), Black Swift, Marsh Hawk, Red Crossbill (3), White-winged Crossbill (6) & Clark’s Nutcrackers (6). I am retired and able to go for a morning walk on the riverbank of the Columbia River every day so I see quite a few shorebirds.

If you are in Trail, look us up, we live across from the river from the smelter, the 3rd block upstream from the new bridge. I have several good bird reference books & my own records going back to 1939. I hope I will hear from you and see you at the next Naturalist meeting Oct 28/80. Good birding, Maurice Ellison

P.S. Included is a Christmas Bird Count sheet. Hope you will be able to cover your area or a close date and send finished results to me. M.E.”

Over the next 17 years until the time of his passing, Maurice inspired and took me under “his wing” so to speak and became my mentor on West Kootenay birds. He loved to share his favourite birding places and I joined him as often as my busy work life allowed. We travelled his favourite birding route where he took great delight in seeing the birds so familiar to him over his many decades of bird watching. Maurice was enthusiastic, optimistic, and had a great sense of humour. In his final years which were spent in a senior’s home in Trail, I would pick him up and drive him around his “old birding haunts” and his eyes would always sparkle when he spotted the mergansers swimming in the river.

After Maurice died, I received a phone call from a family member who wished to “gift” me with the four volume set of *The Birds of British Columbia* and a handmade wooden box which contained a summary of Maurice’s birding observations. In this box I found three 8x11 inch sheets of paper which

Maurice had compiled, listing all the species he had observed since 1933 assigning a status to each one. In a tribute to a great mentor, I have compiled this annotated list of birds, based on the many thousands of bird notations and personal correspondence. This is not meant to be a definitive list on the birds of Trail but an insight into what one person can achieve over a lifetime of bird watching in their own little “patch” of British Columbia.

About the Author

Linda remains passionate about the birds she encounters on her travels in the West Kootenay and has been keeping field notes since 1979.
