

## NOTES

### AUTUMN FLEDGING OF ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Over the past 60 years or so Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) has expanded its range north along the Pacific coast from California into southwestern British Columbia (Zimmerman 1973, Campbell et al. 1990b). The species is currently well established in the province as a year-round resident along southeastern Vancouver Island, Sunshine Coast, and throughout the lower Fraser River valley. Numerous extralimital records also are scattered throughout much of the rest of the province except the northeast region.

Prior to 1990 (see Campbell et al. 1990b), Anna's Hummingbird breeding status in British Columbia was based on only four records, all from southern Vancouver Island. Calculated dates suggest that the egg period extended from 15 February through 6 July and the nestling period from 25 March through 10 August. The range of dates also suggest that at least two broods are raised in British Columbia as is usual elsewhere in western North America (see Stiles 1973, Russell 1996).

In mid-August 2009, I watched a female Anna's Hummingbird catching insects and eating from a sugar-water feeder in my back yard in Cadboro Bay, BC. On several occasions I noticed that after feeding she flew directly to a large Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) tree in an adjacent schoolyard near where I had discovered a nest earlier in the year. On 22 August, I located a nest saddled on a large limb of the tree about 8 m above the ground. It was well-camouflaged and well-protected by overhanging limbs. Feeding activity suggested that the nest contained at least one young. On 28 August, by telescope, I could see a single large nestling being pumped with food by the female. On 2 September, the nestling was standing on the edge of the nest fluttering its wings. The following day, on 3 September, the family appeared

in my back yard, where the fledgling was fed while perched on a branch in a dense 4-metre high lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) shrub. I last noticed it being fed by the female on 14 September, 12 days after leaving its nest.

The breeding season for Anna's Hummingbird in the southwestern United States usually begins about mid-November with the onset of winter rains and ends as young fledge in late May and June, when flowering of fuchsia-flowered gooseberry peaks, a period of about seven months (Stiles 1973). In southwestern British Columbia, it is not unusual to see male Anna's Hummingbirds in courtship displays in late December and early January. The earliest nesting reported for the province is 15 January when I watched a female building a nest in Cadboro Bay. By 20 January, she was incubating and on 6 February at least one nestling was being fed by the female (pers. obs.).

The length of the entire breeding period in British Columbia is 231 days (7.7 months), one of the longest for any of the 312 species in the province (see Campbell et al. 1990a, 1990b, 1997, 2001, Campbell et al. 2009).

The autumn fledging date in British Columbia is the latest reported for Anna's Hummingbird in North America. Russell (1996) suggests that late nesting may "reflect a shift in breeding seasons in peripheral, newly occupied portions of range where exotic flowering plants largely replace native species." However, the plethora of hummingbird feeders maintained year-round in southwestern British Columbia may also have contributed to the extended breeding season.

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