

# The Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club Newsletter

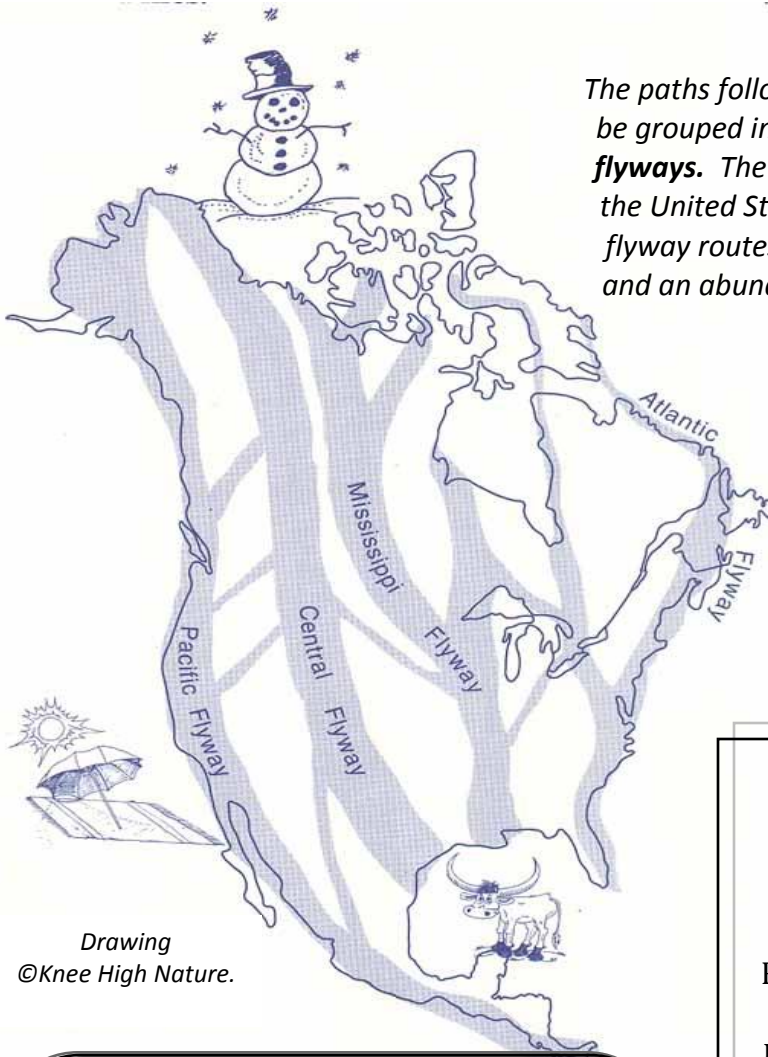
[www.okanangannature.org](http://www.okanangannature.org)

October 2011



## Many Birds Are Heading South

The paths followed by migratory birds in North America can be grouped into four general highway type systems called **flyways**. The flyways follow the topographical features of the United States in a north-to-south direction. The main flyway routes depend on the availability of food, shelter, and an abundance of water that make these routes ideal for migrating birds.



Drawing  
©Knee High Nature.



## Members Presentation Night

Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>.

Relive some of your travels and experiences with us at our highly anticipated annual member's night, whether it was a trip to an exotic locale, special experiences closer to home, or summer club trips.

Powerpoint or slide projector, groups of digital images, short edited video clips or other media can all be accommodated. Please let the program organizer Les Gyug (250-769-5907 or by e-mail [Les.Gyug@shaw.ca](mailto:Les.Gyug@shaw.ca)) know by October 7<sup>th</sup> so we can fit you into the program.

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**Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club. [www.okanagannature.org](http://www.okanagannature.org)  
P.O. Box 21128, Orchard Park P.O., Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9N8**

	<b>EXECUTIVE OFFICE</b>	<u>telephone</u>	<u>email</u>	<u>Representing</u>
<b>President:</b>	Fiona Flook	250-860-9751	<a href="mailto:donaldandfiona@shaw.ca">donaldandfiona@shaw.ca</a>	
<b>Vice-Pres:</b>	vacant			
<b>Secretary</b>	Pat Westheuser	250-769-6605	<a href="mailto:hughwest@shaw.ca">hughwest@shaw.ca</a>	
	Brenda Thomson			
<b>Treasurer</b>	Peter Campbell	250-452-6959	<a href="mailto:pg.campbell@shaw.ca">pg.campbell@shaw.ca</a>	
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Don Guild	250-768-3334	<a href="mailto:guilds@telus.net">guilds@telus.net</a>	<b>FBCN Director:</b>
<b>Directors:</b>	1. Peg Emigh	250-861-3694	<a href="mailto:wemigh@shaw.ca">wemigh@shaw.ca</a>	<b>Membership</b>
	2. Rick Gee	250-763-0124	<a href="mailto:rdgee@shaw.ca">rdgee@shaw.ca</a>	<b>Hiking</b>
	3. Peter Green	250-765-1737	N/A	<b>Botany</b>
	4. Les Gyug	250-769-5907	<a href="mailto:les_gyug@shaw.ca">les_gyug@shaw.ca</a>	<b>Programme</b>
	5. Lesley Robertson	250-763-5698	<a href="mailto:lessismore@telus.net">lessismore@telus.net</a>	<b>Birding</b>
	6. Dianne Hayley	250-767-3383	<a href="mailto:dhayley@shaw.ca">dhayley@shaw.ca</a>	

**NEWSLETTER:** Editor: Teresa Smith 250-860-9133 [tmsmith.rio@shaw.ca](mailto:tmsmith.rio@shaw.ca). Mailing: Norma Coburn 763-4499 Email: Peg Emigh 250- 861-3694. Deadline date for submissions is the fourth Tuesday of each month. Drop off at Second Tyme Around (front desk), corner of Spall and Springfield or mail to: Teresa Smith, 292 Rio Drive South, Kelowna, B.C. V1V 2B1

**WEB:** [www.okanagannature.org](http://www.okanagannature.org). Webmaster: Teresa M. Smith [tmsmith.rio@shaw.ca](mailto:tmsmith.rio@shaw.ca)

**MEMBERSHIP:** Bill and Peg Emigh 250-861-3694 **Badges:** same.

**ANNUAL DUES:** single \$30, family \$42, students \$14, includes Newsletter (except January, July & August). Membership form and waiver form can be found on CONC website [www.okanagannature.org](http://www.okanagannature.org).

Send your name, address, telephone number, email address, waiver form and dues to: CONC Membership, Box 21128, Orchard Park P.O., Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9N8.

**Honorary Life Members:** Brenda Thomson (2005), Harry Almond (2005), and Muriel Westwood (2010).

**REGULAR ACITIVITIES**

All activities are seasonal. If in doubt, check with the contact person. Or phone any of the executive.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** Held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, September to June at 7 p.m. in the Evangel Church, 3261 Gordon Drive, Kelowna. Visitors are welcome.

**Hosts:** Bev Thomas 250-762-7610, Liz Daley 250-764-2310.

**Librarians:** Etta Scotter 778-478-4115 and Sherrell Davidson 250-491-8146.

**Programme Coordinator:** Les Gyug 250-769-5907

**BIRDING:** Howard Braun 250-768-4339 & Gwynneth Wilson 250-762-6876.

**Thursday birding trips** meet 8 am (Apr-Sep) or 9 am (Oct-Mar) at St. Charles Garnier Church, 3645 Benvoulin Rd.

**BOTANY:** Peter Green 250-765-1737. Friday Botany trips: Meet 9:15 am (departure 9:30 am) at the Apple Bowl.\*

**HIKES.** (Bring a lunch). For general information call Rick Gee 250-763-0124

- **Wednesday 9 am Hikes:** Meet at 8:45 am at the Apple Bowl\*. Contact Sherrell Davidson 250-491-8146

- **Wednesday 9:30 am Ramblers:** Contact Shirley Fitzpatrick 250-860-1576

- **Weekend Hikes:** Saturdays and Sunday. Meet at the Apple Bowl\* **Times as per schedule.**

Contact: Rick Gee 250-763-0124

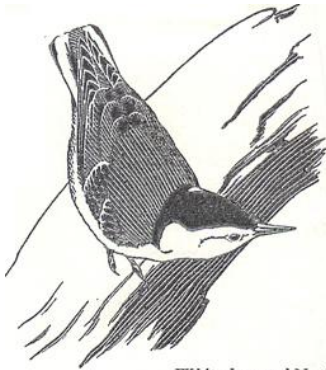
\*1555 Burtch Road, the Apple Bowl parking lot (the site of the former Dr. Knox School)



Please bring your own coffee mugs to the meetings.

**OTHER COMMITTEES and KEY CLUB REPRESENTATIVES**

Conservation Committee	Don Guild	250-768-3334
Ecological Reserves	Don Guild	250-768-3334
BC Nature (F.B.C.N.)	Don Guild	250-768-3334
Library	Sherrell Davidson	250-491-8146
Mildred Wardlaw Nature Trails	Don Wilson 250-763-8036 and	Rick Gee 250-763-0124
Young Naturalists' Club of Kelowna (YNC)	Fiona Flook 250-860-9751 and	Pat Westheuser 250-769-6605
Publicity	Dianne Hayley	250-767-3383



White-breasted Nuthatch

## Minutes CONC General meeting September 13<sup>th</sup> held at Evangel Church

The meeting was called to order at 7.p.m.

Minutes of the May meeting were approved as circulated by Gwyneth Wilson, Sylvia Blackburne. Carried

**Treasurer's report:** Peter Campbell reported Chequeing account \$8,962.46 3year term deposit \$10,000 for a total of \$18,962.4. The club is on track with the budget. Approved Don Guild, Joan Madison Carried

### **Old Business**

Judy Latta reported that the reunion tea was a great success with an attendance of approximately 50 people.

The dates of the B.C.Nature AGM have been changed to May 11-13<sup>th</sup> 2012

Discover Nature walks - Eileen Chappell reported that the next walk is to take place September 17<sup>th</sup> and will meet at the East Kelowna Hall at 9.45a.m. Shirley Fitzpatrick noted that the hike she and Wally are leading will take place October 15<sup>th</sup> (not October 28<sup>th</sup> as published earlier)

### **Correspondence**

Letter of thanks was received from bursary recipient Eli Trappnell.

A reply was received from Parks Canada regarding the application by Brewster Travel Canada for the building of the Tangle Ridge Skywalk in Jasper National Park. Parks Canada has reviewed the proposal and has found that there are no policy impediments to accepting the proposal for consideration. It stated that it has the potential to provide new visitor opportunities. It was suggested that we forward our concerns to Brewster Travel.

### **Announcements**

Our sympathies go out to Brenda Thomson and Family on the death of Gifford Thomson

Pat and Fiona attended the memorial service for Sky Sigal a long time member of CONC and staunch environmentalist

Reminder of the photo competition to be held in January

Les Gyug will hold a photography workshop October 1<sup>st</sup> . 9am -1pm for beginners upward. Limited to 10 people

Register with Les after September 16<sup>th</sup> . \$1.00 insurance for non members Phone 765 1737

Bird Banding at Vaseux Lake September 24<sup>th</sup> . Meeting at 6.30a.m. at Apple Bowl parking lot. Registration is

mandatory. Register with Les 765 1737 or [les\\_gyug@shaw.ca](mailto:les_gyug@shaw.ca)

Mushroom Identification trip October 22<sup>nd</sup> . Cost approx \$25 (Transportation by van). Contact Diane or Fiona for

details.

### **Committee Reports**

Membership dues payable now Peggy reported that many people have paid including some new members (Pat gave away T shirts to those signing up. She only has two left - WOW)

Conservation - Don Guild. Next meeting October 3 10a.m. at EECO Centre. All are welcome

The pond on Highway 97 South is choked with weeds so the turtle population is declining.

Hiking - Sherrell and Rick

Attendance for Wednesday hikes has been good. Hikers are requested to give their e-mail addresses in order that information be relayed directly rather than going through Bill Emigh (He has been very patient and conscientious)

Weekend hikes are planned till the end of October

Birding. Gwyneth Wilson reported that the water birds are in great abundance at Robert Lake especially in the evening.

Janice Casling reported a goshawk family in the area. Bitten Tisdale reported that they had eight nuthatches at one time drinking from the bird bath.

Botany - Peter Green .Walks continue on an ad hoc basis.

Library - Sherrell made mention of the many books available to club members.

Programme. October Members night. Contact Les if you wish to show pictures.

- November Eileen and Cec Dillabough will present Papua New Guinea
- December George Scotter will present Nahanni



The Meeting was adjourned 7.25 p.m. Eileen Chappell Rick Gee. Hugh Westheuser presented Brazil and its wildlife.

August 11 our first stop was Sutherland Bay where we saw a pair of **Great Blue Herons** giving a peculiar display of bowing and bending to each other until a short chase ensued. We traveled on to Robert Lake where birds seen included **Western Phalaropes, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs** and late season **Yellow-headed Blackbirds**. Our stop at Chichester added **Hooded Merganser, Collared Doves** and **Yellow Warblers**.



*House Wren*

On August 18 we headed to Chute Lake. The Gillard Creek Road was active with birds seen including **Chipping Sparrows, Dusky Flycatcher, House Wren, Townsends Warbler** and **Warbling Vireo**. As we traveled along the old rail bed we saw **Lazuli Bunting** and **Townsends Solitaire**. We stopped to check for sparrows at a brushy spot which did not yield the target but did give us a lovely feed of wild raspberries. Stops near ponds gave us good looks at a solitary **Sandpiper** and **Wilson's Snipe** and well as a sunbathing Pika. On the return trip we spotted a female **Spruce Grouse** who stayed in frozen pose long enough for us all to have a good look.

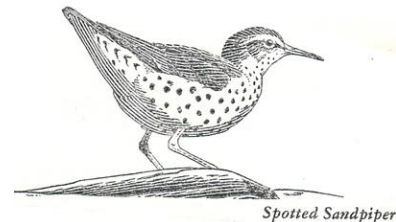
We headed out under sunny skies on August 25. On Bullman Road we spotted a female **Ring-necked Pheasant** with three young on a fence. A late **Western Tanager** was spotted in the bushes. We continued up to Postill Lake Road where we saw **Clark's Nutcrackers** and **Red Cross-bills**. Other birds along the road included Townsend's Warblers, **Nashville Warblers, Red-crowned Kinglet** and **Gray Jay**.

On September 1 we stayed close to town. Our first stop was Redlick pond where we spotted Hooded Mergansers. We traveled up Valley road where we saw **Gold finch, Brewer's Blackbirds** and a

**Kestrel**. At Robert Lake we hit a jackpot of shorebirds including **Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Stilted Sandpiper** and **Semipalmated Plover**. Our last stop was Sutherland Bay where we were treated to a **Belted Kingfisher, a Spotted Sandpiper** and **Common Terns**. We watched a young **Osprey** in the process of learning to fish.

**CLASSIFICATION:** There is a set of terms useful to understand in the naming of birds and other groups of living things. We will start with the term *Order*. Order comes between *Class* which describes large groups such as birds, mammals and insects and *Family* which describes groups such as owls, parrots or buntings. The name of an Order always ends in "iforms". The number of species in an Order ranges from one for the Hoatzin of South America to the Passeriforms which contain over 6000 species or more than half of all the world's birds. This Order is so large it has been split into two sub-orders according to vocal structure. One is the Oscines also called songbirds. Examples include finches, warblers and larks. The Suboscines include antbirds, cotingas and the only North American members tyrant flycatchers.

The next step down in classification is the term Family which is followed by Genus. This is the main subdivision of a Family characterized by common distinguishing features. Examples would be the difference between hawks and falcons or the difference between gulls and terns.



*Spotted Sandpiper*

A *Species* is defined as a subdivision of a *Genus*. Its members can have a high degree of similarity and

interbreed freely among themselves. They show persistent differences from members of allied species. This is the level at which birders record their lists of birds they have seen. Continuing studies lead to frequent splitting and clumping of Species as the lines that define them are adjusted. Below Species come *Sub-species* or Race which is defined by geographically separated populations and small variations such as Red-shafted and Yellow-shafted Flickers.



October 22  
Mushroom Outing

CONC invites anyone interested in fungi on an all day outing October 22, to learn about mushrooms, edible or not. Our leaders will be Dr. Dan Durrall from UBCO and some of his graduate students who will escort us in the diverse Interior Cedar Hemlock forest of Trinity Valley/Mabel Lake/Sugar Lake areas. This forest type supports a rich variety of mushrooms. We will visit 2 or 3 different sites and then take our collections to Lumby hall to display and discuss between 2 and 4 pm.

Meet at the EECO Center at 8am to carpool to Lumby Mall parking lot Bring a bag lunch, appropriate clothing and collecting bags or baskets. Fabric bags with rigid bottoms are fine but not plastic Rolls of waxed or aluminum are useful

Cost \$10 for insurance, hall rental and honorarium for the students. For more information phone Fiona Flook 250 860-9751

Remembering Gifford Thomson

Dear CONC members,

Thank you, fellow naturalists' for all your kind messages to me and my family on the death of Gifford. In better times Gifford enjoyed many of the naturalists' events. He particularly got a kick out of making tea for the Christmas Bird counters when they gathered at our house. He also enjoyed the days when he transported us to Okanagan Mountain Park.

One time we hiked into Buchans Bay and Gifford came by boat with our camping gear. The next day, he took it all back while we hiked on up to the top access. By this time he had transferred the gear to his truck, come along the KVR and we camped again. The next day we hiked out, having circumnavigated the park and were met again at the beginning.

Thank you also for the tribute and flowers at the reunion tea on August 30. It was a wonderful get-together.

Sincerely, Brenda Thomson

**The President's Message**

**by Fiona Flook**

I have just returned from an interesting visit with CWS retirees to the Cypress Hills interprovincial Park. [www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/cypresshills](http://www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/cypresshills). The park is a high plateau at about 4000feet and is reported to be the highest land between the Rockies and Labrador. It rises out of the prairie like a forested island topped by a grassland plateau, and standing at any viewpoint on the top the view is over the rolling hills and coulees and miles of ranchlands. The hills have been eroded and once were high enough to over tower the last glaciation. The steep coulees were formed by the melting ice waters.

The plateau with a higher rainfall and lower temperatures than the surrounding lands has a montane forest type of spruce and lodgepole pine with a lower Aspen woodland interspersed with grasslands. When Metis first visited this area they thought the pines were Jackpine and named the hills Cypress which is their name for Jackpine.

Many plants have a refuge in the park including 18 orchids some considered rare in Alberta. The last plains grizzly was shot in these hills and there used to be wolves. However now there are large elk and mule deer populations and an extremely healthy population of cougar. The group was scheduled to have a talk from the cougar researcher but this was cancelled by the visit of some more important visitor.

What did we see in the park? Cows! Lots. The rationale for the cattle is the fact that Bison visited these hills on their migration route. We visited a bird banding station and one visitor of note captured was a gnatcatcher – a first! Other migrants seen were white winged scoters on Elkwater Lake and a flock of about 40 mountain bluebirds on the grasslands of the plateau.. The elk herd was elusive but the group saw several deer and turkeys.

A concern for all of us is the proposed land swap of the Crown lands around Rose Valley Reservoir. Part of the



transfer would include land that the Regional District has a License of Occupation for parks. These lands, if developed, would have an impact on the waters draining into the reservoir which is the drinking water supply for much of the westside.

The executive discussed this matter at great length and decided to try to encourage the formation of a coalition of groups to take a strong disapproving message forward to the government.

Some changes to the Wednesday hiking schedule by Sherrell Davidson.  
Any questions please let me know. [sherrell@shaw.ca](mailto:sherrell@shaw.ca) Phone: 250-491-8146

**September 28<sup>th</sup>**

Dianne Hayley and Robert Lake will be leading a hike to MT Eneas. We will have a 9 am start and meet at the Apple Bowl for 8:45 am. We will pick up hikers at the old Cooper's store. Dianne Hayley will meet us at the Trail Head.

**For October 5<sup>th</sup>**

Betty James is leading a hike to the Telemark area. After the hike we will go the Neighbors Pub for a social time. We have a few regular members who will be not here for the Annual Pub hike scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup>. WE will pick up hikers from the Westside at the old Cooper's store. I believe the Pub we are going to is called Friends Neighbourhood Pub at 2210 Boucherie Rd.

**October 12<sup>th</sup>**

I will lead a hike to Mill Creek Park. Meet at the apple Bowl for 8:45 am

**October 19<sup>th</sup>**

There is no hike booked, but we will meet at the Apple Bowl and decide on a hike that day; or if anyone would like to lead a hike please contact myself.

**October 26<sup>th</sup>**

This, is our pub hike and we do not have a hike planned, but will send out an announcement shortly.

**November 9<sup>th</sup>**

Robert Lake will lead a hike to Spion Kopp which is in the Lake Country area. Meet at the Apple Bowl for 8:45. If you live in the Ellison, Rutland or Winfield area please meet at the Winfield Library for 09:00. You can contact Robert Lake for more information 250-717-1029



**LICHENS:** Lichens are an interesting group. They represent a symbiotic association of a fungus and usually a green algae or [cyanobacterium](#). Sometimes the association is with a yellow-green or brown algae. The fungi usually makes up the majority of the lichen. The body of the lichen differs notably from either fungi or algae, and lichens are usually quite distinctive. Lichens grow in places where there is little soil, and are found on a variety of substrates, including rock surfaces, tree trunks, and on the ground. The fungus provides water and nutrients for the algae, and the algae provide food for the fungus. Lichens reproduce both sexually, through spores, and asexually through vegetative reproduction.

Source: **Electronic Atlas of the Plants of British Columbia**

[www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/eflora/lichens.html](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/eflora/lichens.html).

Some birds use lichen for nest building. Small mammals have been reported eating lichens, or using lichens for nest building. For a full discussion on wildlife use of lichen see

[www.lichen.com/fauna.html](http://www.lichen.com/fauna.html)