

Birdwatching around Mackenzie, B.C.

A SITE GUIDE



1st edition

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Introduction

The location of Mackenzie, along one of the principle road routes to Alaska, ensures that thousands of travelers pass through the area each year. Those from BC with an interest in birds may already know of Mugaha Marsh where the Mackenzie Nature Observatory (MNO) has been banding migrant songbirds and monitoring their populations since 1995, but there are a number of other sites in the Mackenzie area that also offer productive birding. A selection of these is presented here. It is hoped that the information contained herein will help those interested in bird watching find a few of the representative species of the Mackenzie area. Some of these, such as the White-tailed Ptarmigan, Red-breasted Sapsucker or Boreal Chickadee have quite limited distributions in North America and are sought after species by birders from many parts of the world. Good luck in finding them!

Nomenclature and taxonomy used in this guide follows the American Ornithologists Union (AOU, 7th edition). Please note that the species lists presented in the site accounts are not complete, but contain a representative sample of regularly occurring (i.e. annual or almost annual) species. Truly rare species are sometimes mentioned in the text but do not feature in the species lists. Of the listed species, those which are regular but scarcely encountered, be it due to low population densities or short periods of occurrence in the Mackenzie area, are highlighted with an asterisk (*). Where more information is available, particularly in the case of sites which have been regularly monitored by MNO, the asterisk is accompanied by a date range indicating when these “harder to tick” species are most likely to be encountered. It should also be noted that this region of BC is comparatively under-watched and an increase in the number of people looking for birds in this area will undoubtedly lead to many interesting observations and new discoveries. Birders are encouraged to submit such noteworthy records to Vi Lambie c/o the Mackenzie Nature Observatory (see inside front cover).

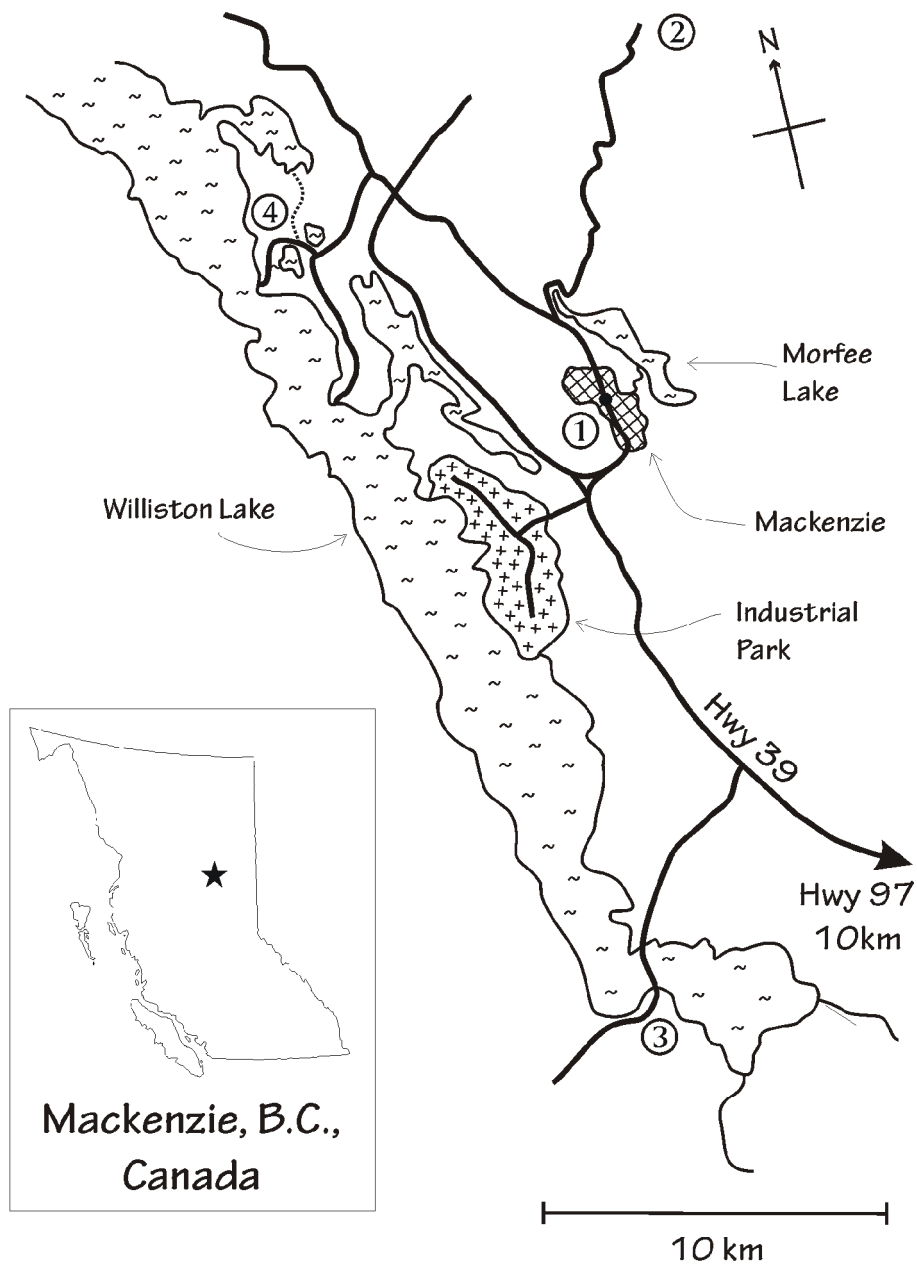
Production of this guide was made possible by the generous provision of reports, records and field notes made by members of the Mackenzie Nature Observatory. We welcome feedback on this guide and ask that comments and suggestions be forwarded to the Mackenzie Nature Observatory (see inside front cover).

BIRDWATCHING AROUND MACKENZIE, B.C. A Site Guide

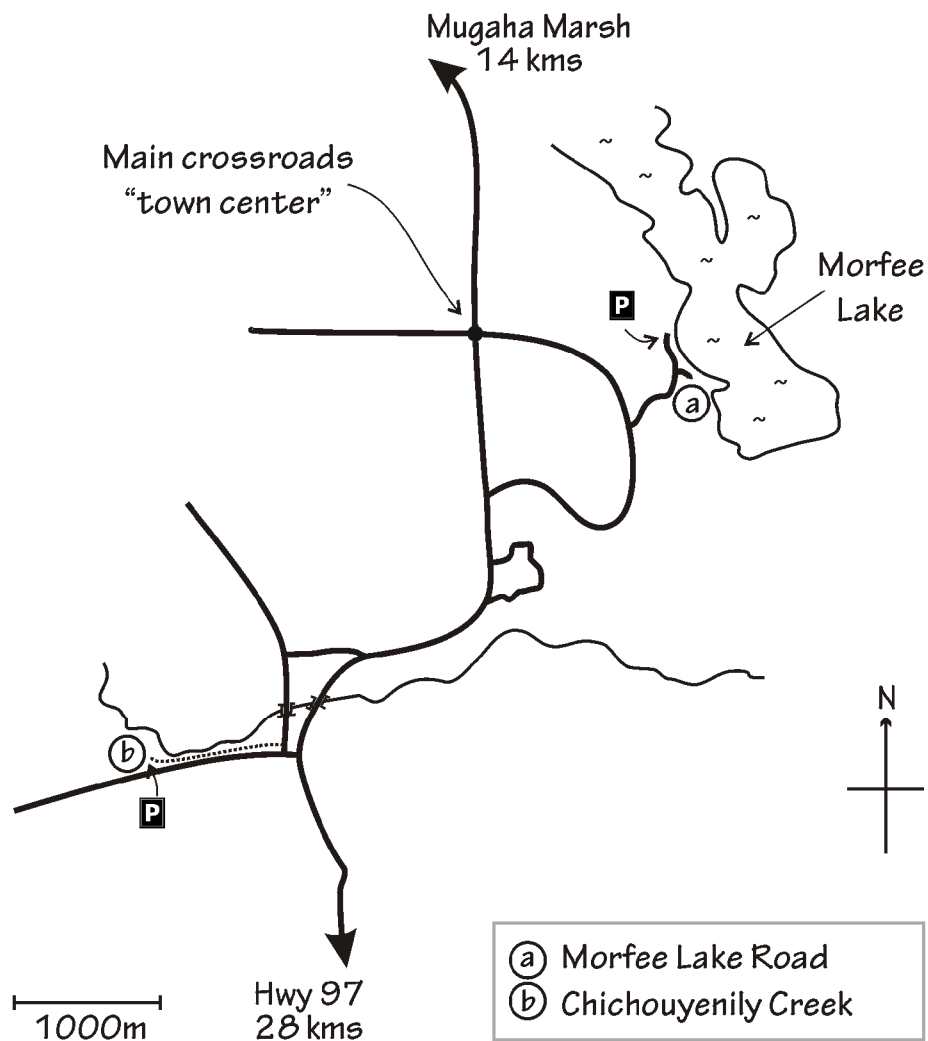
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*Northern Pygmy-Owl
by David Bradley*



1) Mackenzie Town Sites



a) Morfee Lake Road

General: If you are staying in Mackenzie and have a couple of hours to spare, Morfee Lake Road is only a two minute drive, or 15 minute walk, from the town centre and offers good birding. It is also a good location to try for owls in the spring and a few waterbirds can usually be found at the lake itself. Coniferous tree species dominate here, comprising a patchwork of Interior and Black Spruce, Subalpine Fir and Lodgepole Pine. Consequently, birds here often include species typically associated with the boreal forest of higher elevations or of most of Northern Canada.

Access: To get to Morfee Lake Road, proceed east past the 7-eleven from the main crossroads in town for 1.5km. Morfee Lake Road appears on the left and one can park here and walk 1km down the road to the lake or alternatively park at the bottom of the road (at the first or second beach) and walk up.

Birding: The Lake itself is often quiet, but *Common Loon*, *Red-necked Grebe* and *Bald Eagle* do breed, and during the spring and fall small numbers of *Bonaparte's Gull* pass through. The two beaches are also worth checking for the occasional *Spotted Sandpiper*. The area around the north-most beach where there is some deciduous woodland, has been a typically productive spot. The woods can be alive with birds in the spring and early summer and a morning walk at this time of year might produce *Yellow-bellied* and *Red-breasted Sapsucker*, *American Three-toed Woodpecker*, *Pileated Woodpecker*, *Winter Wren*, *White-throated Sparrow*, *Pine Grosbeak*, *White-winged Crossbill* as well as a host of migrant flycatchers, vireos, thrushes and warblers. During the cold winter months Morfee Lake Road is a fairly reliable area to find *Boreal Chickadee* and *Pine Grosbeak*, while *Bohemian Waxwing*, *Common Redpoll* and *Evening Grosbeak* can be sporadically abundant. In some winters, both *Willow* and *White-tailed Ptarmigan* descend from the surrounding mountaintops and can be seen here and in residential areas around town! This is also a reliable location to hear and maybe see *Northern Pygmy* and *Boreal Owl* in the late winter and spring. Regional rarities that have occurred here (and in adjacent residential areas) include *Blue Jay* (winter), *White-breasted Nuthatch*

(winter) and *Rose-breasted Grosbeak* (spring).

Half-way down the road the ballpark fields on the south side are also worth scanning. During migration, in particular the fall, small numbers of *American Pipit* sometimes stage here and species such as *Upland Sandpiper* (accidental), *Lapland Longspur* (scarce) and *Western Meadowlark* (rare), have been recorded from other grassy areas in town, so it's always worth a look.

Species List:

Canada Goose	Boreal Chickadee
Common Merganser	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Ruffed Grouse	Brown Creeper
Common Loon	Winter Wren
Red-necked Grebe	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Bald Eagle	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Townsend's Solitaire*
Merlin	Swainson's Thrush
Spotted Sandpiper	Hermit Thrush
Bonaparte's Gull	American Robin
Northern Pygmy-Owl	Varied Thrush
Barred Owl	American Pipit
Boreal Owl	Bohemian Waxwing
Rufous Hummingbird	Cedar Waxwing
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Orange-crowned Warbler
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Yellow Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Magnolia Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
American Three-toed Woodpecker	Townsend's Warbler*
Black-backed Woodpecker*	Blackpoll Warbler
Northern Flicker	American Redstart
Pileated Woodpecker	Northern Waterthrush
Western Wood-Pewee	Wilson's Warbler
Least Flycatcher	Western Tanager
Northern Shrike*	Chipping Sparrow
Warbling Vireo	Savannah Sparrow
Gray Jay	Lincoln's Sparrow
Steller's Jay	White-throated Sparrow
Tree Swallow	White-crowned Sparrow
Violet-green Swallow	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Barn Swallow	Dark-eyed Junco
Black-capped Chickadee	Pine Grosbeak

Purple Finch
Red Crossbill
White-winged Crossbill

Common Redpoll*
Pine Siskin
Evening Grosbeak*

b) Chichouyenily Creek

General: Pronounced CHICH-EN-ILLY Creek, this site is only a five minute drive from the center of town. Though quiet for much of the year, it is definitely worth a visit in spring and early summer (May and June), when it is known to be excellent for viewing migrant passerines.

Access: To get to Chichouyenily Creek head south from the main cross-roads in town on Hwy 39 to Mill Road (3.5km). Turn right here and right again onto a gravel road after 200m (3.7km). Immediately after turning onto this gravel road, turn to the left and continue another 500m, parallel to the main road, until you see a turnoff on the right to a now disused campsite (4.2km). Park anywhere here (though not too close to the creek bank), and bird the cottonwood grove, scrub and riparian vegetation in the immediate area.

Birding: Chichouyenily Creek provides birds with a corridor of riparian habitat, and some remnant stands of mature coniferous forest, amongst an area of cut-blocks and development (especially to the west). In the spring, migrant passerines can be diverse and abundant here, singing and foraging actively, often allowing for good views. Of note are the boreal woodland warblers, sometimes ten or more species, all showing their fine spring dress. A number of year-round resident breeding species such as *Ruffed Grouse* and *Pileated Woodpecker* add to the diversity here and *American Dipper*, though rare, is a possibility.

Walking slowly along the old road amongst the towering cottonwoods and scrubby verges is a good approach and in places it may be possible to access the creek channel, where birding from the gravel bars might produce skulking thrushes and sparrows amongst the dense willows and

alder that line the creek. Don't forget to keep an eye skywards for migrant raptors and as well as *Northern Rough-winged Swallows*, of which there is a local breeding colony in a nearby creek bank.

Species List:

Ruffed Grouse	American Pipit
Osprey	Cedar Waxwing
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Tennessee Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Orange-crowned Warbler
Great Horned Owl	Yellow Warbler
Rufous Hummingbird	Magnolia Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Townsend's Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Blackpoll Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	American Redstart
Northern Flicker	Northern Waterthrush
Pileated Woodpecker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Common Yellowthroat
Western Wood-Pewee	Wilson's Warbler
Alder Flycatcher	Western Tanager
Least Flycatcher	Chipping Sparrow
Hammond's Flycatcher	Fox Sparrow
Dusky Flycatcher*	Song Sparrow
Cassin's Vireo	Lincoln's Sparrow
Warbling Vireo	White-crowned Sparrow
Black-billed Magpie	White-throated Sparrow
American Crow	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Tree Swallow	Dark-eyed Junco
Violet-green Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Brown-headed Cowbird
Bank Swallow	Purple Finch
Barn Swallow	Pine Siskin
Black-capped Chickadee	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	
Winter Wren	
American Dipper*	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
Swainson's Thrush	
Hermit Thrush	
American Robin	
Varied Thrush	

2) Morfee Mountain

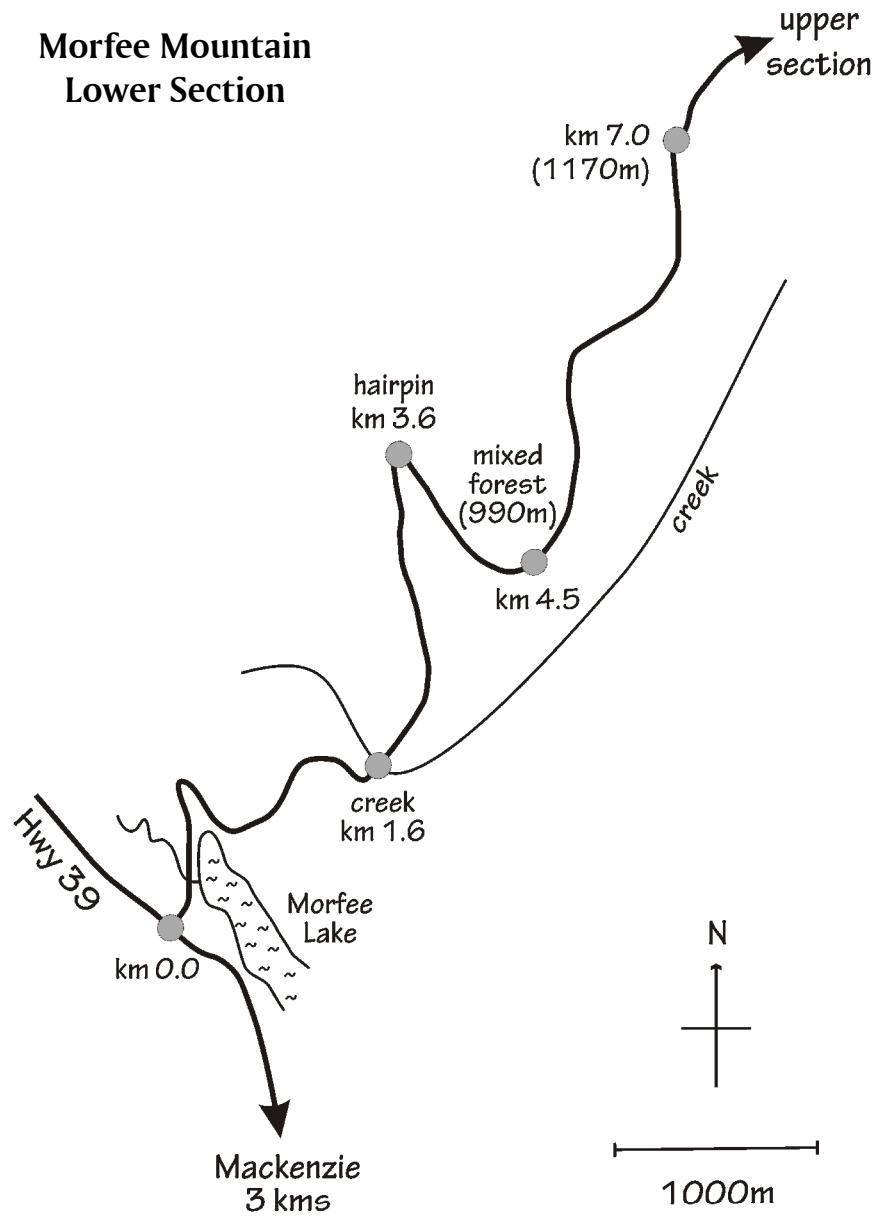
General: Situated 11km northeast of Mackenzie, Morfee Mountain rises to almost 1800m, providing birders with relatively easy access to alpine habitat and its associated bird species. The gravel road that winds its way to the microwave towers at the summit is reasonably maintained and can be easily traversed by those in 4x4 or AWD vehicles between mid June and late September when snow free (though this varies annually). A confident driver, in a saloon car with good clearance, can also reach alpine habitat though perhaps not the summit (the last 2 km can be quite rutted).

Starting at 730m, Morfee Mountain Road ascends through several distinct vegetation zones, each supporting its own collection of bird species. The most productive time of year for the lower parts of the road is mid-May through June, while birding in the boreal and alpine habitat is best about one month later. It should also be noted that in the spring, birds ascend the mountain as the rate of melting snow permits, so that many of the species mentioned below can be held up at lower elevations until melting snow allows them to move up the mountain.

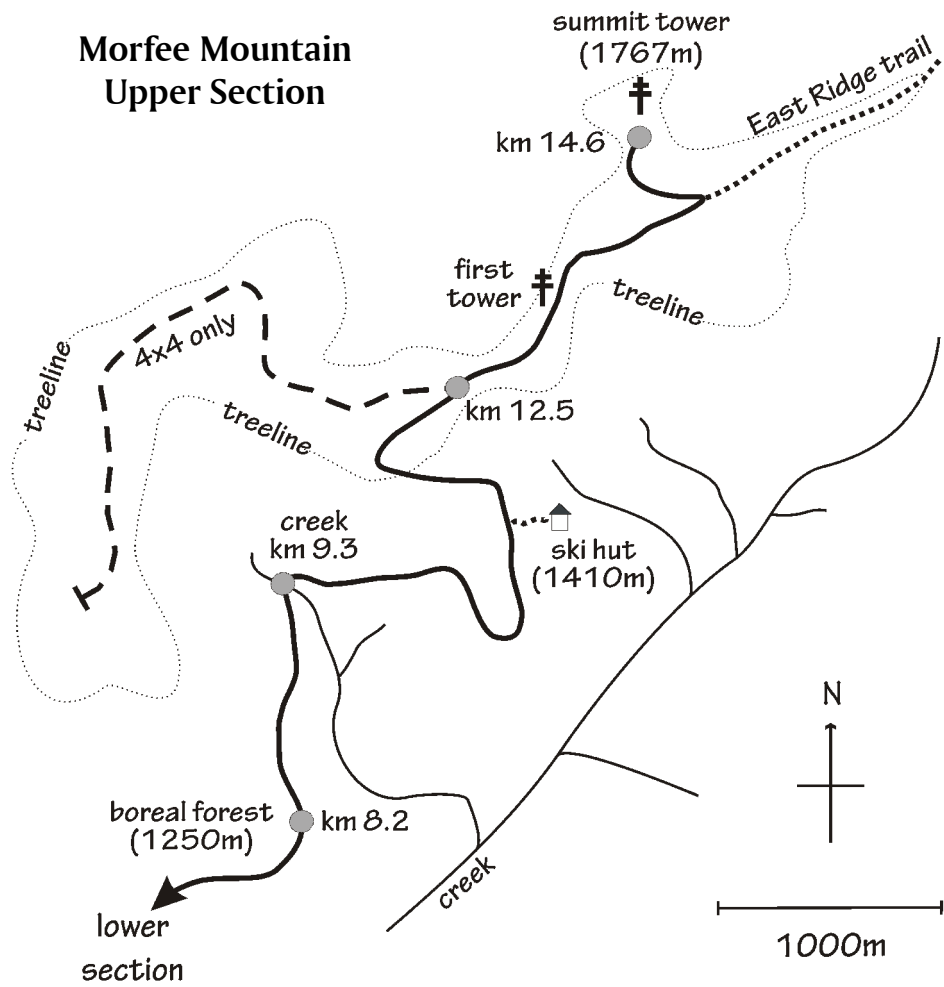
Access: To get to Morfee Mountain, proceed north from the main cross-roads in Mackenzie on Hwy 39. After 3km, Morfee Mountain Road appears on the right. Set your odometer to zero here.

Birding: Shortly after leaving Hwy 39, the road crosses a small creek that drains a marsh at the north end of Morfee Lake. A quick scan here might produce a *Ring-necked Duck* or *Common Merganser*, *Belted Kingfisher*, *Red-winged Blackbirds* as well as *Yellow Warbler*, *Common Yellowthroat* and both *Song* and *Lincoln's Sparrow*. On warm spring nights, an *American Bittern* can sometimes be heard here and in the winter, an *American Dipper* is often present on the creek along with a few *Mallards*. Shortly after this, the road passes through a good stand of mature cottonwood where a pair or two of *Barred Owls* reside. In spring, this is a good place to listen for singing *Olive-sided Flycatcher* and *MacGillivray's Warbler*. After a creek

Morfee Mountain Lower Section



Morfee Mountain Upper Section



crossing at 1.6km, the road begins to climb through mixed deciduous/coniferous woodland supporting good populations of breeding songbirds as well as *Ruffed Grouse* and both *Yellow-bellied* and *Red-breasted Sapsuckers* (hybrids also occur). The hairpin at 3.6km is a reliable spot to find *Ovenbird*, and *Western Tanager* is usually also present. From 4.5 - 6.5km several pairs of *Tennessee Warbler* can be heard in the spring and summer and *Hammond's Flycatcher* also breeds in small numbers.

By 8.2km, conifers dominate the slopes and a more specialist set of boreal forest species can be seen before the trees become stunted and give way to alpine shrubs at 12.5km. Here, Subalpine Fir and Interior Spruce provide a home for the likes of breeding *Spruce Grouse*, *American Three-toed Woodpecker*, *Olive-sided Flycatcher*, *Gray* and *Steller's Jay*, *Boreal Chickadee*, *Winter Wren*, *Townsend's Solitaire* and *Fox Sparrow* (both redder birds showing eastern affinities, and the normal slate-colored interior mountain form occur). A small creek at 9.3km is a good stop to try for some of these species, affording a panoramic view of the surrounding forest. At 11.2km, a ski hut on the right sits in the subalpine zone and breeding *Hermit* and *Varied Thrush*, *Wilson's Warbler* and *Dark-eyed Junco* can be found quite easily. The hairpin area shortly before the ski hut has been a traditional site, in the spring, for *Dusky Grouse*, now considered distinct from the coastal "*Sooty Grouse*".

The road climbs quite steeply after the ski hut, reaching a fork at a saddle between east and west ridges at 12.5km. Here, at the treeline, those who have a 4x4 vehicle can turn left, traveling for 2 - 3km along alpine ridges to the west. This can also easily be hiked. Turning right will take you to the summit at 14.6km, at an elevation of 1767m. Both *Willow* and *White-tailed Ptarmigan* occur here, though finding them is a matter of luck and often one must cover quite some ground. A trail along a ridge to the east, beginning at the hairpin at 14.0km, offers a good chance of these species as well as for breeding *Say's Phoebe*, *Horned Lark* and *American Pipit*. *Mountain Chickadee* can occasionally be found in clusters of stunted fir along this trail. *Fox* and *Golden-crowned Sparrows* breed at the treeline and *Savannah Sparrows* breed slightly higher, being easily found in the area of the parking lot below the first tower. During fall migration, *Swainson's Hawks* and *Lapland Longspurs* sometimes use the alpine zone on their way south while *Clark's Nutcracker* has occurred sporadi-

cally. In the event of a quiet days birding, the alpine wildflowers here can be dazzling.

Species List:

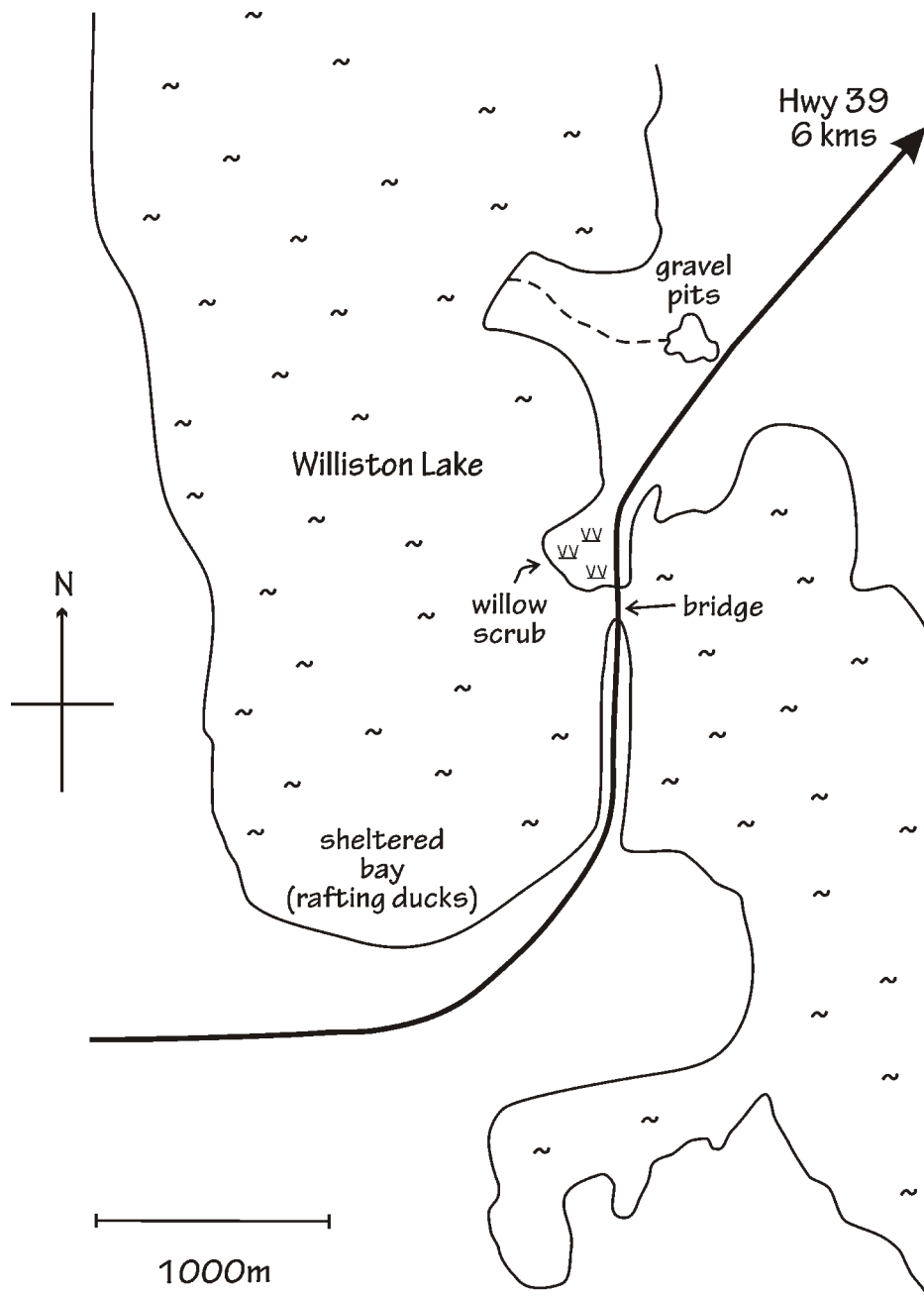
Mallard	American Dipper
Ring-necked Duck	Swainson's Thrush
Osprey	Hermit Thrush
Sharp-shinned Hawk	American Robin
Swainson's Hawk	Varied Thrush
Red-tailed Hawk	Gray Jay
Merlin	Steller's Jay
Spruce Grouse	Cassin's Vireo
Dusky Grouse* (May – Jun)	Warbling Vireo
Willow Ptarmigan* (Jul – Aug)	Tennessee Warbler
White-tailed Ptarmigan* (Jul – Aug)	Orange-crowned Warbler
Ruffed Grouse	Yellow Warbler
Great Horned Owl	Magnolia Warbler
Barred Owl	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Townsend's Warbler
Rufous Hummingbird	Blackpoll Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	American Redstart
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Ovenbird
Downy Woodpecker	Northern Waterthrush
Hairy Woodpecker	MacGillivray's Warbler
American Three-toed Woodpecker	Common Yellowthroat
Northern Flicker	Wilson's Warbler
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Western Tanager
Western Wood-Pewee	Chipping Sparrow
Least Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
Hammond's Flycatcher	Fox Sparrow
Dusky Flycatcher	Song Sparrow
Say's Phoebe	Lincoln's Sparrow
Black-capped Chickadee	White-crowned Sparrow
Mountain Chickadee*	White-throated Sparrow
Boreal Chickadee	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Dark-eyed Junco
Brown Creeper	Lapland Longspur* (Sept)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Red-winged Blackbird
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Rusty Blackbird*
Townsend's Solitaire*	Pine Grosbeak
Horned Lark	Red Crossbill
Winter Wren	White-winged Crossbill
Cedar Waxwing	Pine Siskin
American Pipit	

3) Williston Lake Causeway

General: Williston Lake was formed in 1968 with the damming of the Peace River. The lake covers some 1760km², and although artificial in nature and providing little in the way of good breeding habitat, the north-south oriented Parsnip Arm does serve as a migratory flyway and this is where its birding value lies. Both in the spring and the fall, good numbers of birds can often be observed as they move to and from their breeding grounds respectively. The causeway at the southern end of the lake is ideally situated for birders to observe these migrants and there is always the possibility of a rarity here. Birders should be aware however that time of year and weather conditions are of great importance when choosing to bird here and the birding itself can be likened to sea-watching, often requiring tenacity and patience. Those who are dedicated enough however, will likely be rewarded.

As a safety note, a third of the drive to the causeway is on a gravel logging road which is in good condition but is also used by large trucks and semis (more so during the week), which can be hazardous for the uninitiated! Some of these trucks, particularly logging trucks, travel quite fast and take up much of the road. In the interests of safety, give these trucks plenty of space, including pulling over to the side of the road if necessary. One should also beware of fast moving vehicles when birding from the causeway bridge itself and do not park your vehicle on the bridge under any circumstances. Always park your vehicle in a visible spot well to the side of the road.

Access: The causeway lies 19km driving distance from Mackenzie and can be reached in about 20 minutes. To get there, travel 12.5km south from the main crossroads in Mackenzie on Hwy 39, to the Causeway Connector Forest Service Road on the right. If traveling on Hwy 39 from the south, this road is on the left, 16.3km north of Hwy 97. Shortly after turning onto the causeway forest service road, turn left at a T-junction (300m) and then shortly after that, follow the road as it curves to the right and heads off to the southwest (750m). The causeway is 6.6 km from the turnoff at Hwy 39.



Birding: The best times of year to visit the causeway are during spring (early May – early June) and fall (late Jul – late Sep) passage. In the spring, migration is concentrated with large volumes of birds passing through in a short time period. If you are lucky enough to visit during a fall-out of migrants, the willow bushes on the flats at the northwest side of the bridge can be teeming with warblers, while northward flying waterbirds and raptors add excitement. Fall migration, by contrast, is more protracted with birds passing south in smaller numbers over a more extended period of time. At this time of year, birding is most productive during overcast or light rain conditions during the first and second days of a southward moving front. During this kind of weather, it may be possible to see a range of less common species as well as notable numbers of some commoner species. Some of these are more normally observed on the Pacific Coast, while some, including a number of passerines, are more typically associated with eastern North America.

Any of the accessible areas in the immediate vicinity of the causeway can harbor interesting birds. Good areas to scan include; the sheltered bays at the northeast and southwest sides of the bridge (sometimes used by flocks of ducks), the gravel causeway itself (often used by resting shorebirds, pipits, larks and longspurs), as well as distant water to the southeast (for congregations of grebes and gulls). Observing from the bridge area at the centre of the causeway is often the best place to stand but if traffic is heavy, the headland beyond the gravel pits at the northeast side of the causeway is a good alternative. This can be reached by a vehicle track immediately behind the gravel pits.

The following list of selected birds that are recorded annually or almost annually at the causeway is by no-means complete and this is certainly an under-watched area with great potential for regional rarities. Some that have been observed to date include *Pacific Loon*, *Ancient Murrelet*, *Buff-breasted Sandpiper*, *Red Phalarope*, *Parasitic Jaeger*, *Thayer's Gull*, *Sabine's Gull*, *Black Swift*, *Western Meadowlark* and *Dickcissel*.

Species List:

Common Loon	Western Grebe
Red-throated Loon* (20 Aug – 20 Sept)	American Wigeon
Horned Grebe	Northern Pintail
Red-necked Grebe	Northern Shoveler

Lesser Scaup	Western Wood-Pewee
Surf Scoter* (Sept)	Alder Flycatcher
White-winged Scoter* (15 Aug – 23 Sept)	Least Flycatcher
Common Merganser	Eastern Kingbird
Northern Harrier	Warbling Vireo
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Horned Lark
Osprey	Tree Swallow
Bald Eagle	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Merlin	Bank Swallow
Peregrine Falcon	Barn Swallow
Semipalmated Plover	Cliff Swallow
Killdeer	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Spotted Sandpiper	Mountain Bluebird
Ruddy Turnstone* (15 – 31 Aug)	American Pipit
Sanderling* (Aug)	Yellow Warbler
Baird's Sandpiper* (7 Aug – 7 Sept)	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Townsend's Warbler
Western Sandpiper* (15 Aug – 7 Sept)	American Redstart
Least Sandpiper	Northern Waterthrush
Pectoral Sandpiper	Wilson's Warbler
Long-billed Dowitcher	Chipping Sparrow
Red-necked Phalarope	Clay-colored Sparrow
Bonaparte's Gull	Savannah Sparrow
Mew Gull	White-crowned Sparrow
Ring-billed Gull	Lapland Longspur* (Sept)
California Gull	Rusty Blackbird
Herring Gull	Brown-headed Cowbird
Arctic Tern* (10 Aug – 10 Sept)	

4) Mugaha Marsh

General: Mugaha Marsh is well known amongst bird biologists in British Columbia for the migrant banding that takes place there in the fall. Operated by the Mackenzie Nature Observatory (MNO) since 1995, anywhere from two to four thousand birds are banded at the Mugaha Marsh Banding Station from the 3rd week of July to the 4th week of September each year. The location of Mugaha Marsh, in a north-south oriented trench between high mountains to the east and a vast lake and more high mountains to the west, helps to funnel migrating birds through the willows and alders that surround the marsh each spring and fall. This

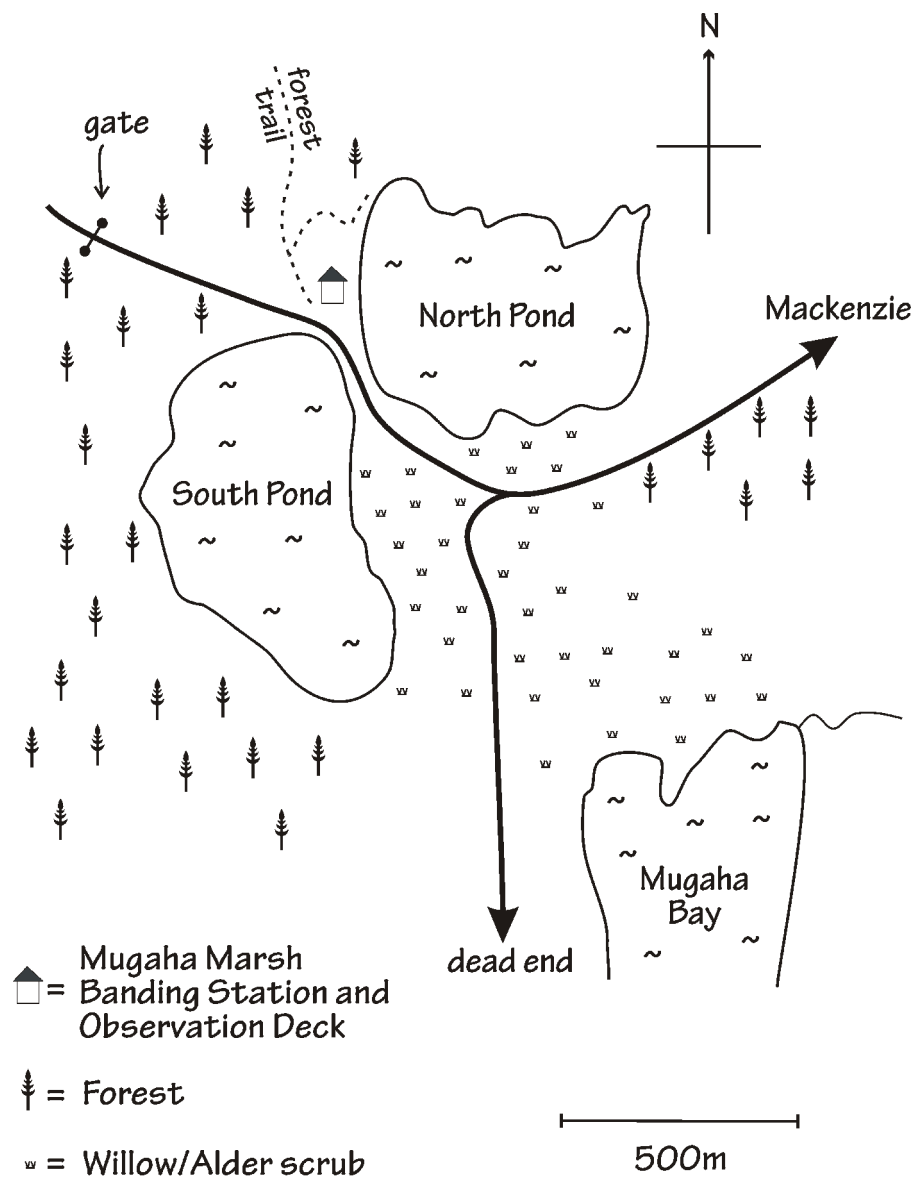
makes for fine birding opportunities and a good selection of Northeast BC's breeding species and migrants can be found here. When birding at the marsh in the fall, it is important to recognize that the banding station itself is a workplace, where biologists are often busy and working under pressure.

Visitors are welcome at the banding station at any time (where there is also a range of literature and local information). Larger groups who plan to visit the station are encouraged to contact the banding station coordinator, Vi Lambie (see inside front cover), to arrange a time for the visit. If you are interested in volunteering or have other questions regarding the work that is being done please contact Vi or any member of the MNO committee.

Access: Mugaha Marsh lies 10 km as the crow flies, north-northwest of Mackenzie and can be reached after a 15 minute drive on good paved and gravel roads. It should be noted that from November to April, the roads are usually under heavy snow and the marsh, which is likely frozen too, is inaccessible.

Set your odometer to zero at the main crossroads in Mackenzie and proceed north on Hwy 39. After 7.7km the road turns to gravel and you should reach a main intersection (9.6km) shortly after crossing a creek. Continue straight here (the road actually curving sharply to the right) and turn left at the T-junction (10.5km) very shortly after crossing a second creek. Continue down this road for several kilometers before arriving at the marsh (14.1km).

Birding: The best seasons to bird Mugaha Marsh are the early summer when local birds are breeding and in the early to mid-fall, when the numbers and diversity of residents is boosted by the presence of staging and passage migrants. At this time of year, generally from early-July to mid-August, it is possible to see upwards of 60-70 species in a leisurely mornings birding at the marsh. When birding here, you may also note the diversity of hybrid and intermediate forms which are typical of this area and represent a zone of overlap between the ranges of both eastern and western populations of the same and similar species. Also of note, is that the water level at the marsh can be affected by the water level on



Williston Lake, in that when the latter is high, it spills into the marsh causing the water level there to rise as well. Due to this periodic change to the hydrology of the marsh, the ecology and birdlife there can vary from year to year.

Banding records from over ten seasons of work give a good idea of the representative passerines of the marsh and its environs. From 1995-2008, the ten most commonly caught species in order of abundance were: *Ruby-crowned Kinglet*, *American Redstart*, *Pine Siskin*, *Northern Waterthrush*, *Common Yellowthroat*, *Yellow-rumped Warbler*, *Orange-crowned Warbler*, *Dark-eyed Junco*, *Yellow Warbler*, *Wilson's Warbler*, *Alder Flycatcher* and *Swainson's Thrush*. Searching the mixed coniferous forest around the marsh will certainly reveal some of these species and possibly others such as *Ruffed Grouse*, *Yellow-bellied Sapsucker*, *American Three-toed Woodpecker*, *Cassin's Vireo*, *Varied Thrush*, *Western Tanager*, *White-throated Sparrow*, and both *Red* and *White-winged Crossbill*. A scan of any cut-blocks could be fruitful as such areas are often used by *Olive-sided Flycatchers*, *Mountain Bluebirds* or *Townsend's Solitaires*. Closer to the marsh, forest gives way to willow/alder scrub and second growth (also along the road), where migrant passerines can be viewed easily. Some less abundant but still commonly occurring species include *Hammond's* and *Dusky Flycatchers*, *Red-eyed Vireo*, *Magnolia* and *MacGillivray's Warblers*, while scarcer species, though annual in small numbers, include *Calliope Hummingbird*, *Yellow-bellied Flycatcher*, *Blue-headed Vireo*, *Tennessee Warbler*, *Townsend's Warbler*, *Ovenbird*, *Clay-colored* and *American Tree Sparrow*.

At the banding station, a public viewing platform permits a wide scan of the aquatic habitats of the south pond. Commonly occurring ducks include *American Wigeon*, *Northern Shoveler* and *Ring-necked Duck* and smaller numbers of *Green-winged Teal* and *Hooded Merganser* are also present. Regular but more scarcely occurring species include *Greater White-fronted Goose*, *Canvasback* and *Surf Scoter*. The sedge margins are good areas to look and listen for two notable breeding species; *Swamp Sparrow* and *Rusty Blackbird*. During low-water years, shorebirds are often well represented at the marsh during fall migration. Shoreline areas both close to the banding station, and at Mugaha Bay (1.5kms to the southeast) are good places to check under such circumstances. Regularly occurring and readily found species typically include *Semipalmated Plover*, *Solitary Sandpiper*, *Greater* and *Lesser Yellowlegs*, *Least* and *Pectoral Sandpiper* while scarce, but still annual species include *American Golden Plover*, *Western, Baird's* and *Stilt Sandpiper*, and *Red-necked Phalarope*.

To complete the birding accolades of this site, a number of regional rari-

ties and vagrants have also been observed here. Some of these include *Red-throated Loon*, *American Bittern*, *Great Egret*, *Hudsonian Godwit*, *Sabine's Gull*, *Arctic Tern*, *Parasitic Jaeger*, *Eastern Phoebe* (breeding), *Ash-throated Flycatcher*, *Chestnut-backed Chickadee*, *Palm*, *Bay-breasted*, *Mourning* and *Canada Warblers*, *Smith's Longspur*, *Rose-breasted Grosbeak* and *Common Grackle*.

Species List:

White-fronted Goose* (Sept)	Merlin
Snow Goose* (May)	Peregrine Falcon* (Sept)
Canada Goose	Sora
Wood Duck*	American Coot
American Wigeon	Sandhill Crane
Mallard	American Golden Plover* (1 – 15 Sept)
Blue-winged Teal	Semipalmated Plover
Northern Shoveler	Killdeer
Northern Pintail	Spotted Sandpiper
Green-winged Teal	Solitary Sandpiper
Canvasback* (10 Aug – 20 Sept)	Greater Yellowlegs
Ring-necked Duck	Lesser Yellowlegs
Lesser Scaup	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Surf Scoter* (Sept)	Western Sandpiper* (15 Aug – 7 Sept)
Bufflehead	Least Sandpiper
Barrow's Goldeneye	Baird's Sandpiper* (7 Aug – 7 Sept)
Hooded Merganser	Pectoral Sandpiper
Ruffed Grouse	Short-billed Dowitcher* (1 – 21 Aug)
Common Loon	Long-billed Dowitcher
Pied-billed Grebe	Wilson's Snipe
Horned Grebe	Red-necked Phalarope* (Jul – Aug)
Great Blue Heron	Mew Gull
Osprey	Ring-billed Gull
Bald Eagle	Herring Gull
Northern Harrier	Black Tern*(June)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Great Horned Owl
Northern Goshawk* (Aug – Sept)	Northern Saw-whet Owl
Broad-winged Hawk* (15 Aug – 15 Sept)	Common Nighthawk
Red-tailed Hawk	Calliope Hummingbird* (15 Jul – 7 Aug)
American Kestrel	Rufous Hummingbird
	Belted Kingfisher

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
 Red-breasted Sapsucker
 Downy Woodpecker
 Hairy Woodpecker
 Three-toed Woodpecker
 Black-backed Woodpecker
 Northern Flicker
 Olive-sided Flycatcher
 Western Wood-Pewee
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher* (Aug)
 Alder Flycatcher
 Least Flycatcher
 Hammond's Flycatcher
 Dusky Flycatcher
 Eastern Kingbird
 Cassin's Vireo
 Blue-headed Vireo* (Aug)
 Warbling Vireo
 Red-eyed Vireo
 Steller's Jay
 Black-billed Magpie
 Common Raven
 Horned Lark* (21 Aug – 21 Sept)
 Tree Swallow
 Violet-green Swallow
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow
 Bank Swallow
 Cliff Swallow
 Barn Swallow
 Black-capped Chickadee
 Boreal Chickadee
 Red-breasted Nuthatch
 Brown Creeper
 Winter Wren* (Sept)
 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
 Townsend's Solitaire* (Sept)
 Gray-cheeked Thrush* (23 Aug – 7 Sept)
 Swainson's Thrush

Hermit Thrush
 Varied Thrush
 American Pipit
 Cedar Waxwing
 Tennessee Warbler
 Orange-crowned Warbler
 Yellow Warbler
 Magnolia Warbler
 Yellow-rumped Warbler
 Townsend's Warbler* (7 Aug – 15 Sept)
 Blackpoll Warbler
 American Redstart
 Ovenbird
 Northern Waterthrush
 MacGillivray's Warbler
 Common Yellowthroat
 Wilson's Warbler
 Western Tanager
 American Tree Sparrow* (7 – 21 Sept)
 Chipping Sparrow
 Clay-colored Sparrow* (15 Jul – 15 Aug)
 Savannah Sparrow
 Fox Sparrow
 Song Sparrow
 Lincoln's Sparrow
 Swamp Sparrow
 White-throated Sparrow
 White-crowned Sparrow
 Golden-crowned Sparrow
 Dark-eyed Junco
 Lapland Longspur* (Sept)
 Red-winged Blackbird
 Rusty Blackbird
 Brewer's Blackbird
 Brown-headed Cowbird
 Purple Finch
 Red Crossbill
 White-winged Crossbill
 Common Redpoll

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