

YUKON WARBLER

Newsletter of the Yukon Bird Club

Winter 2025-26



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A Bohemian Waxwing enjoys harvesting Mountain Ash berries in Whitehorse.

Photo: Ione Christensen



Promoting awareness, appreciation, and conservation of Yukon birds and their habitats

The Yukon Bird Club is a registered non-profit, charitable organization.

Membership fees

Individual	\$15.00
Family *	\$25.00
Senior/Student **	\$10.00
Institutional	\$50.00
Contributing	\$50.00
Supporting	\$100.00
Lifetime	\$200.00

* Family memberships cover two or more people living at one address.

** Also includes those for whom finances are limited. Foreign members please pay by Canadian dollar or money order.

Membership fees are based on the Calendar Year (Jan 1 to Dec 31). The end of the year is a good time to renew your membership. If you have paid for multi- year memberships in the past and are unsure of your current status, feel free to contact us for clarification. If you receive a paper copy of "The Warbler" your mailing label will indicate the latest year for which you membership is paid up, i.e. 2024 or 2025.

For more information contact:

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YBC Website: <https://www.yukonbirds.ca>
YBC Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/YukonBirdClub>

Yukon Birds Facebook group: [facebook.com/groups/212509148852262/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/212509148852262/)

YBC Bluesky: [@yukonbirdclub.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/yukonbirdclub.bsky.social)

We want your birding photos and stories!

Thank you to all those who contribute the *Yukon Warbler*. To make a submission, write to newsletter@yukonbirds.ca

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NEW PAYMENT OPTION: You can now join the Yukon Bird Club or renew your membership online

thanks to our non-profit charity partner Canadahelps.org.

Go to:

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You can also print the membership form and mail it with your payment.

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Yukon Bird Club Conservation Scholarship

By Lena Ware

The Yukon Bird Club offers an annual award of **\$1000** to a Yukon University student in a post-secondary program who demonstrates outstanding interest and motivation in environmental conservation. This award is open to all students who are interested in environmental stewardship, however eligible applicants must demonstrate how they plan (or continue to) meet at least one of the Yukon Bird Club's mandates:

- Encourage and involve youth interest in environmental conservation;
- Advocate for environmental conservation related to birds and their environment;
- Promote awareness, appreciation, and conservation of Yukon birds and their habitats.

Application Requirements:

Applicants must be entering or enrolled in a post-secondary program at Yukon University.

Proof of acceptance must be submitted before the award is granted. Please note that students may only receive this award once. Please include:

- One-page essay (500 words max) outlining your academic program and goals for that program, and demonstrate how you meet at least one of the Yukon Bird Club's three mandates. We want to know why you want to study in this program and where you see it taking you in the future. How do your interests and goals in your education pertain to our three mandates?
- Letter of acceptance to Yukon College/Yukon University
- Resume

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Review Process:

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of 2-3 Yukon Bird Club board members. A decision will be made and the student notified within two weeks after the deadline.

Send your questions and applications to the Yukon Bird Club award committee at: lena@yukonbirds.ca

Please write "YBC Award Application" in the subject line of your email.

Deadline to submit:
February 28th, 2026



As usual, participants on the Dusky Grouse field trip on April 25, 2025 were treated to fabulous views of Nares Lake and Carcross as well as the fascinating mating displays of the male Dusky Grouse.

Photo: Jim Hawkings

Birding With Ione

By Jenny Trapnell

The Yukon recently said goodbye to one of its most remarkable and accomplished women: Ione Christensen. Regarded as a trailblazer throughout much of her political career, Ione received many awards for a distinguished life of community and public service before her passing on September 15th 2025, at 91 years of age.

Within Yukon's birding community, Ione Christensen was also recognized and is remembered for the generous ways she shared her knowledge and love of birds.

Ione began birding at an early age at Fort Selkirk, an historic settlement and Selkirk First Nation community where her father, an RCMP Constable, and mother, a lay nurse, moved in 1935.

As she wrote in the Yukon Warbler, she began to notice great migrating flocks overhead and started to learn the names of birds. In early summer, when the cliff swallow nests would begin to dry and collapse, she would rescue and nurse baby birds-with canned milk, corn syrup and cod liver oil - until they could fly. As an adult, Ione grew her

knowledge of birds through outdoors adventures with family and friends, travel, a passion for photography, and by welcoming birds for over 50 years to the feeders at her Riverdale home.

Ione became actively involved with the Yukon Bird Club around 2009, after her retirement from the Senate. She had been a dedicated trip leader with the Yukon Outdoors Club and the Whitehorse Photography Club, in earlier years, and enthusiastically took on the role of leading field trips to local birding hotspots. Her favourites included Hidden Lakes (often with her dog J-J), the Fish Lake Road, with fall visits to Lake Laberge to view loons.

But she would volunteer to lead any trip if needed.

Over the next six years, until she was almost 82, Ione often hosted more field trips than any other trip leader. She also began giving

illustrated bird talks at the MacBride Museum in cooperation with the Yukon Bird Club. Ione was thrilled to team up with Shyloh Van Delft as a co-presenter for several of these, with help from another young birder, Nick Guenette.

In 2013, Ione was awarded the Yukon Bird Club's annual Raven Award for her outstanding

contribution to the Yukon's birding community and the club's mission to promote the awareness, appreciation and conservation of Yukon birds and their habitats.

Ione continued to deliver her seasonal birding talks for several years, and with her husband Art, faithfully took part in the club's social and fundraising events, sponsoring birders or donating prizes for the annual Birdathon. Bird club Potlucks sometimes included warm sourdough bread made from her family's famous goldrush-era starter.

Ione also contributed photos and articles to the Yukon Warbler, often about the birds, and a resident squirrel, Rusty, that visited her feeders. Notable was a poem about a Eurasian-Collared Dove she called "Dusty" which, after staying nearby all summer and fall, disappeared on a cold winter night.

Ione will be missed and remembered by all those whose lives were enriched by the ways she shared her extraordinary life, and her humanity. The Yukon Bird Club extends its deepest condolences to Ione's family, sons Paul (Michelle) and Phillip (Kate), grandson, Harry, and her many friends.



You never know what you might find on a YBC field trip. This Violet-green Swallow was sitting quietly on the ground beside the trail from Judas Creek beach at the end of our field trip on May 23, 2024. It was very tame but seemed alert and had no visible injuries. We never figured out why it was there in such a vulnerable situation - but we appreciated the nice view!

Photo: Jim Hawkings

Yukon Territory's Christmas Bird Count 2024

By Clive Osborne

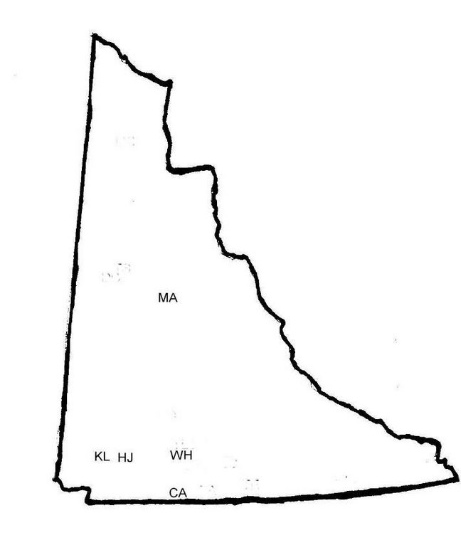


Figure 1. Locations of 2024 Yukon CBCs

Reporting here for another year (2024) is the summary of observations of Yukon Christmas Bird Counts. There appears to have been a drastic decrease in participation from the previous year as only five (< 1/2) Christmas Bird Counts were conducted by citizen scientist-birders in 2024.

It would be unwise to make much generalization about the winter bird populations in Yukon with so few Counts. One notable observation is that Mallard and Bald Eagle have made it to the 'Most Abundant Species' list, a far cry from their low winter numbers two decades ago.

The following tables summarize observations made on the 2024 Yukon Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) as posted to the Audubon Society's website. A total of 4918 birds comprising 33 species were counted by 117 observers from December 22 to January 5. The location of the Counts is shown in Figure 1 and the Counts are summarized in Tables 1-3.

Audubon routinely flag certain observations as record highs, record lows and unusual. Record high numbers were recorded only for the Whitehorse Count (Mallard – 135, Northern Shrike - 2, American Crow - 12, Red-breasted Nuthatch – 29, Crossbill - 176). Record low numbers were recorded only for the Whitehorse Count (Downy Woodpecker – 1, Hairy Woodpecker – 1).

Similarly, a couple of unusual species were flagged in 2024: Whitehorse (Snow bunting – 11), Mayo

(Bald Eagle – 1).

Count Week observations (species absent on Count Day) for 2024 follow: Haines Junction (White-tailed and Willow Ptarmigan), Kluane N.P. (Great - horned Owl, Northern Hawk Owl) and Whitehorse (Northern Goshawk, Pine Siskin).

Count	Date	No. of Field Observers	No. of Species Observed	No. of Birds Observed
Whitehorse (WH)	26/12	56	26	3470
Haines Junction (HJ)	29/12	30	20	708
Carcross (CA)	22/12	16	20	350
Kluane N.P. (KL)	05/01	10	8	41
Mayo (MA)	29/12	5	9	349

Table 1. Yukon Christmas Bird Counts 2024.

Species	No. of Birds	Rank
Common Raven	2060	1
Bohemian Waxwing	610	2
Pine Grosbeak	317	3
White-winged Crossbill	255	4
Black-capped Chickadee	248	5
Red Crossbill	198	6
Black-billed Magpie	195	7
Boreal Chickadee	193	8
Mallard	137	9
Bald Eagle	93	10

Table 2. The top ten most abundant species over all counts for 2024

Species	No. of Counts
Common Raven	5
Black-capped Chickadee	5
Boreal Chickadee	5
Gray Jay	5
Pine Grosbeak	4
Black-billed Magpie	4
Common Redpoll	4
American Dipper	4
Spruce Grouse	4
White-winged Crossbill	3

Table 3. The top ten most widespread species as determined by the number counts on which they were observed for 2024.

2025 Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon



Birdathon participants gather around for the annual ritual of going through the Yukon Checklist to see how many species were seen. This year we set an all-time record with 159. Note that for a change we did not need to put up a tarp to protect us from a chilly wind!

Photo: Beth Hawkings

By Jim Hawkings

Note: a version of this report, complete with the full checklist of birds seen, can be found on the YBC website (yukonbirds.ca/birdathon)

The annual Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon is the Yukon Bird Club's main fundraiser, but more importantly, it's a great way for Yukon birdwatchers to spend up to 24 hours seeking out the full diversity Yukon birds (...and avoiding less pleasant activities like spring cleaning...). It is held on the last weekend of May, just as the last few spring migrants trickle back to the north. The Birdathon is a fairly informal affair, but the many detailed bird checklists submitted to eBird by participants provide an interesting snapshot of birds present on this weekend each year and contribute to our overall knowledge of Yukon Birds. It's also a great social event.

This year thirty-seven people participated. Once again, many environmentally-conscious birders walked and biked, but they also e-biked, carpooled, or used electric vehicles.

The weather was decent, but a tad windy in the Whitehorse area.

Familiar names topped the list for most species seen or heard during the 24-hour period. Jukka Jantunen and Shyloh van Delft teamed up in a sleep-deprivation marathon to find 126 species, followed closely by the team of Aaron Barker and Matt Kitchen with 124. In third place was a foursome of Feature Birder John Meikle and his partner Helen Liskova along with a couple of elite birders - Avery Bartels and Syd Cannings - at 99 species.

We had 12 people enviro-birding (using only human power, public transit, or e-bikes for transportation). Of those, nine

used regular bikes, one an ebike, and one a canoe!



Shyloh van Delft and Jukka Jantunen looking pretty perky at the Birdathon BBQ in spite of severe sleep deprivation. They eked out a narrow victory for the most species identified with 126.

Photo: Beth Hawkings



Feature Birder John Meikle and Helen Liskova relaxing at the annual potluck BBQ.

Photo: Beth Hawkings

Champions of the enviro-birding category were the “Lesser Mellowlegs” Colin Abbott, Ashwyn Freyne and Knute Johnsgaard with 70 species garnered over 100 km of biking. Second was Boris Dobrowosky who managed 53 species using a canoe and his own two feet. Close behind was Jim Hawkings on his ebike with 52 and Glenn Rudman on his mountain bike with 51. Honourable mention goes to the Mah-McCord family who managed 46 species on their bikes!

Once again Ted Murphy-Kelly distinguished himself with a relaxing Birdathon, this time literally confined to his own small backyard, where he identified 22 species. Ted describes his mode of transport this year as “sitting”.

Recall that last year Ted got 54

species on foot at the Albert Creek banding station at Upper Liard, again including a lot of sitting.... definitely a more diverse place than his backyard in Whitehorse!

In the Family/Household category, our champions are Cameron Eckert and Pam Sinclair with 83 species, followed by Alex Oberg and family with 60 and Isabelle and Élise Cliché with 53.

Among new participants to the Birdathon, Babara Scheck was the champ with 68 species. Other new birdathoners the Mah-McCord family also impressed with 46 species, and had our two youngest participants, Elias (10) and Zoe (8).

Our oldest participant this year, by my math, is 76-year-old Bob Gueger-Atkinson. Congrats to Bob and Barbara for getting out there!

Oh, and the birds. We had 159 species this year, eight more than the previous record high number of 151 in 2019. The most unusual finds? Open to debate, but a good start are Vaux’s Swift, Pied-billed Grebe, Caspian Tern, Western Meadowlark.

The post-Birdathon gathering and potluck dinner was again well-attended, and there was a



Congrats to Elias and his family who did the entire Birdathon by bike and foot and managed a very respectable 46 species!

Photo: Darcy McCord

steady chatter of participants exchanging tales of adventure over dinner. For a welcome change we didn’t need John Meikle’s expertise to set up a tarp windbreak at the shelter in Rotary Park.

Thanks to all the YBC board members who helped make the Birdathon a success, especially Betty Sutton who once again rounded up a bunch of wonderful prizes. And of course, we thank our Feature Birder John Meikle as well as all the other participants and sponsors for their ongoing support of the Yukon Bird Club.

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2025 Birdathon continued from page 7

					Environment Friendly Transport											
Team Members	# species	New Participant?	Car/Truck	Carpool	human-powered only	renewable energy -powered vehicles/public transit)	walk only	Canoe	bike	e_bike	Public Transit	EV	Backyard birding	Family?	No. participants	Awards/Comments
Shyloh van Delft and Jukka Jantunen	126		Y	2											2	Most Species
Matt Kitchen and Aaron Barker	124		Y	2											2	
John Meikle, Helen Liskova, Avery Bartels, Syd Cannings	99		Y	4											4	John was the FEATURE BIRDER, Carpool Champs
Cameron Eckert and Pam Sinclair	83		Y	2				1						Y	2	Most species by a Family/Household
"Lesser Mellowlegs" Colin Abbott, Knute Johnsgaard, Ashwyn Freyne	70				3				3						3	Envirobirding Champions! biked 100 km. Most species by human power.
Wendy Nixon, Grant Abbott, Barbara Scheck (new)	68	1	Y	3		3						3			3	Most species by EV car/truck. Most species by a new participant (Barbara)
Kim Selbee	67		Y												1	Mayo!
Alex Oberg and family	60		Y	2										Y	2	
Isabelle and Élise Cliché	53		Y	2										Y	2	
Boris Dobrowolsky	53				1			1							1	
Jim Hawkings	52					1			1						1	ebiked 73 km
Glenn Rudman	51				1				1						1	
Darcy McCord, Elias Mah-McCord, Zoe Mah-McCord, Erica Mah	46	4			4				4					Y	4	Youngest Participants (Elias and Zoe)
Gemma Richardson	43		Y												1	
Jenny Trapnell	40				1				1						1	
Amy, Lauren, and Hannah Ryder	30		Y	3										Y	4	
Ted Murphy-Kelly	22				1								1		1	Most Species in Backyard
"Old Geeses" Bob and Barbara Grueger-Atkinson	17		Y	2										Y	2	Oldest Participant(s) Combined age 144! 13 species in the backyard
Total		5		22	11	4		2	9	1		3	1		37	
Total Species Seen/heard overall		159														

Table: 2025 Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon Participants and Results (30-31 May, 2025)

Courtesy of Jim Hawkings



(Top) Kim Selbee found this Horned Grebe already in full incubation mode at Five-mile Lake near Mayo.

(Bottom) Given the good weather we experienced during this year's Birdathon, swallows like this Violet-green Swallow, were pretty easy to find. It's not like that every year!

Photos: Kim Selbee



Yukon Bird Club Bird Poster Update

By Glenn Rudman

The YBC's bird poster project, largely funded by Lotteries Yukon, is now moving into its final stages. The poster will feature fifteen migratory birds that can be found throughout the Yukon during the spring and summer. The plan is to send at least one poster to every school in the Yukon and, if demand is high enough, posters can be sold to the general public. The illustrations are being tweaked and titles, labels and fonts are being discussed.

Additional information about each species is being collated that will be available on the YBC website and linked by a QR code on the poster. The plan is to print the posters in February, 2026 ready for distribution to each school in late winter.

If you would like more information, please contact Glenn at glenn@yukonbirds.ca.

Teagan Beamer's draft illustration of a female Belted Kingfisher - one of fifteen species chosen for the poster.

Illustration: Teagan Beamer



2025 Helmut Grünberg Yukon Birdathon By E-Bike - What Could Go Wrong?

By Jim Hawkings

Every Yukon Birdathon is an education. Not only birds, but fickle weather and different locations all add to the variety of highs and lows during that special 24 hours each spring!

I've been doing the Birdathon by envirobirding from home, either on foot or by bicycle, for at least five years now, and I really enjoy it in spite of the limitations. I do, however, miss some of those slightly more dispersed hotspots that can be easily reached with a modest amount of driving in a car. For example, Marsh Lake, McIntyre Marsh, or the Whitehorse Sewage Lagoons.

As my friends and family know, I'm a bit of an energy conservation and sustainable transportation nerd, and I'm increasingly intrigued by small, efficient electric vehicles ranging from scooters to ebikes to one-or-two-person cars that look like pods – in fact I can't wait for a good little electric mini-car to be available here in the Yukon.

So, this year I decided to expand my horizons. I'd do the birdathon by ebike - and finally get to some of those places that are just too spread out for an old guy on a regular bike. I could also take a scope and sturdy tripod and other odds and ends without suffering. I don't have an ebike, so I figured I would just rent a really skookum cargo ebike for 24 hours.

What could go wrong?



I planned ahead (something I'm not known for). I pre-arranged to rent the most robust cargo ebike available at Icycle Sports. The Benno Boost is the cream of the cargo ebike crop, equipped with a huge rear cargo basket and also a spacious front basket. I figured out how to pack up my spotting scope and beefy tripod wrapped in an ensolite pad inside a duffle bag, strapped in the rear basket so they would be impervious to the bump and grind of trail riding and washboard-riddled gravel roads.

Shortly after 5 pm on Friday, my long-suffering partner Beth dropped me off at Icycle Sports with my scope, tripod, extra clothes, and some food. My friend Ziggy was on duty there, and gave me a quick tour of the bike making sure I had all the

necessary bits and pieces for 24 hours...including a plug-in battery charger in case I ran the battery down too much (I was pretty sure I would.) I carefully packed everything on the bike. It was heavily loaded, but I knew this was a very sturdy quality ebike with a strong motor and a good-sized battery, so no problem.

My plan was to bike out to the Whitehorse Sewage Lagoons, notch lots of the waterfowl and other waterbirds that abound there, ride back to town, and maybe also ride up to McIntyre Marsh before heading home to Pineridge late in the evening. I explained this to Ziggy, and she warned me that might be a bit more than the battery could handle on one charge. It allegedly was good for around 70 km, but that is probably under ideal

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conditions – smooth roads and no extra weight on board. OK I thought, I would just play it by ear...maybe skip McIntyre Marsh if need be.

I headed out with a fully charged battery around 5:30 pm. What a joy it was to cruise along the waterfront trail, using just enough electric-assist to make the pedaling easily manageable. I was fine with working a bit when necessary to preserve the battery as much as possible. I crossed the Robert Campbell Bridge, reached the end of the pavement on Wickstrom Road, and started to thrash along the gravel road past Long Lake to the lagoons. I noticed it was quite a bit of work to get up the hills, so I boosted up the assist a few notches to help. The kilometers ticked by, and I noticed with more than passing interest the digital display on my handlebars was showing a somewhat disturbing rate of battery depletion. By the time I had covered 17 km to the sewage lagoons, it was at just over 50%. Hmmm. Oh well, as long as I could get back to town I would figure something out.

But first, let's scope out all those weird and wonderful waterbirds!

This is when I became keenly aware that I haven't actually been out to the sewage lagoons (aside from looking down from the window of a small plane) in quite a long time...at least 10 years. Hard to believe but true. This would not be a big deal, except that the sewage lagoons are officially closed to the public – this is a huge area totally enclosed by a serious fence. Always up for a challenge, the hard-core birdwatchers have figured out

how sidestep this inconvenience and get a closer view of the action. I can't divulge the particulars, but for this story, suffice to say I had forgotten exactly how and, more importantly, where that is done. So there I was, on the doorstep of birding paradise, and no way to access it. After a lot of hand-wringing, cursing, and riding back and forth, I was overjoyed to discover that some kind soul had left one of the main gates carefully arranged to appear locked, even though it wasn't actually locked. By this time I was desperate, so I went through the gate, carefully restoring its locked appearance, and rode to a suitable spot to scope the birds. I prayed nobody would lock the gate while I was in there – a situation which would not be good! By this time it was around 7:30 pm on a cool evening that was getting cooler. I rather hurriedly managed to ID a respectable number of ducks and grebes, including some Long-tailed Ducks and Ruddy Ducks which are otherwise pretty tough to find around Whitehorse.

Having done that, I got back outside the fence as quickly as possible. Sadly I had neither time nor sufficient battery to seek out the Pied-billed Grebe that had been reported lurking on a nearby pond. I anxiously started to ride back to town, nursing the remaining battery power on my bike. It was a bit nerve-wracking and tiring, but I managed to make it to the Robert Campbell Bridge before the battery quit altogether, leaving me with a 126-pound bike and just my tired muscles to get me 16+ km (uphill and into the wind) back to Pineridge. Not something I was really up to.

What to do? I had the battery charger with me, but where to charge it? It was now almost 9 pm and I had travelled 38 km, using a fair bit of my own energy! I thought I'd just go to one of the fast-food joints, grab a very much needed hot coffee, and relax for a while inside while my battery charged from one of their standard wall outlets. So off to Tim Horton's, where I made the interesting discovery that Tim Horton's does NOT HAVE standard wall outlets anywhere in the dining area. OK, off to the golden arches to see what they had to offer. Fortunately they have outlets in the dining area, so I dutifully got my coffee, plugged in my battery charger with battery attached, and settled in. I phoned home and stubbornly refused Beth's kind offer to come and rescue me (there was no easy way to fit the cargo bike into our vehicle anyway). I didn't know exactly how long it would take the battery to charge...but really all I needed was enough to get home. I monitored the status of the charging by watching 5 little LED on the battery, figuring (or at least hoping...) I could get by with about 25% charge. It was SLOW going. Finally, by 10:40 pm it looked like I had 20-25% charge, so I decided to take my chances. Off I went in the fading light, hoping to at least get up the hill to the Alaska Highway. I did, but the battery died again about a kilometer down the highway near Philmar RV Services, still 9 km from home. At least there was only one more hill remaining, but still a wind to fight. I just grunted away, and finally arrived home barely before midnight, completely exhausted.

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Overnight I was able to recharge the battery. I didn't get up particularly early but managed a very pleasant outing closer to home on familiar trails and roads. I even braved the trails at the Wolf Creek Campground. It was a snap to do even steep uphill using the "Turbo" mode. I finished up mid-afternoon and had a little rest at home before riding the bike back into town and returning it to Icycle Sports just

before 5:00 pm. All told, I rode 73 km during the birdathon carrying my scope and tripod the entire way.

So, what did I learn? Birding by ebike is FUN, but you should be familiar with your battery and how far it will take you under the conditions at hand! For a big outing, you might need to plan a charge somewhere or even take a spare battery. You also need to know yourself and how much energy your body "battery" has.

Next time I'll be better prepared!

Out of curiosity, I did some quick energy math for my birdathon. The bike used roughly 1 kWh of electricity to go 73 km. Compare this to an efficient electric car, which generally can go around 6 km per kWh, or a gas/diesel car, which will only go 1.7 km on fuel containing 1 kWh of energy. The ebike was 45 times more efficient than a gasoline/diesel car!

2025 Birdathon photos continued from page 9

(Below) Likely every Birdathon participant saw a beautiful male Yellow-rumped Warbler in their travels – one of Yukon's most ubiquitous breeding birds.

(Right) This Black-capped Chickadee near Mayo was already carrying food for youngsters in the nest!

Photos: Kim Selbee



Eurasian Bullfinch: A New Canadian Record



By Syd Cannings

On 14 November 2025, Susan Drury noticed an odd bird at her feeder in Watson Lake, one that she had never seen before. It was in the same willow as the usual group of Pine Grosbeaks, but it was smaller than the grosbeaks, with a black head, stubby bill, and a pale belly with light pink tones. After some back and forth with other Yukon birders, Susan realized that she had a female Eurasian Bullfinch in her backyard... a species never seen before in Canada!

On 18 November, Cameron Eckert and Boris Dobrowolsky drove to Watson Lake and confirmed the sighting with photographs. Other birders visited over the next few days and

all (so far) have been fortunate enough to see the bird.

Although it was often in the same bush as the Pine Grosbeaks and occasionally dropped to the ground to feed on sunflower seeds, it seemed to behave independently—a 'loner' among the neighbourhood birds. It usually stayed in the willow, nibbling on winter buds. It was often heard before it was seen, advertising its arrival in the area with its distinctive, whistled call. Eurasian Bullfinches normally range across northern Eurasia from western Europe to South Korea, Kamchatka and Japan. They often stray into western Alaska, and a few have been recorded further east in the state—in Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Petersburg.

Eurasian Bullfinch, Watson Lake (2025)

Photo: Syd Cannings

In Canada, Eurasian Bullfinches have been seen several times in southern urban areas (e.g. Vancouver, Montreal) but these birds are believed to be escaped cage birds—the Vancouver bird was distinctly banded as a captive bird.

Susan reports that the bullfinch continues to visit her yard daily and she's reporting the sightings on eBird. Yukon birders are hoping that this rare visitor will stay the entire winter but return home safely across the Bering Strait in the spring!

Winter Crossword Puzzle: This or that (or the other)

By Jeremy
Baumbach

Across

1. A fixture on the Whitehorse waterfront
11. Change one letter to make it a kind of squash
12. House or savannah _____
15. Part of a circle
17. Boreal or snowy _____
18. As opposed to CP
19. Add an "r" for a vegetable or the location of a 1990 summer crisis in Quebec
20. Where some male grouse gather to strut their stuff
21. An acknowledgement, a gesture of greeting, or a sleepy motion of the head
22. Bend, a degree of speed or, with an "ed" added, a quality of character
23. An attempt to influence
24. Black-bellied or semipalmated _____
29. Red-necked or horned _____
31. Blue-winged or green-winged _____
33. Cow's product minus a note on the scale?
35. Important computer software (abbrev.)
37. Yellow-bellied or dusky _____
39. A U.S. (sorry) sports store
40. Abbrev. name of a Cdn. political party pre-2003 or a non-Apple laptop
41. What Little Miss Muffet likely exclaimed
42. Kind of cheeks or tongues
43. Common or arctic _____
44. Golden or bald _____
48. _l_ or _v_la
49. Dusky or ruffed _____
52. Short-term work for counsellors (abbrev.)
54. Mathematics direction or a size or an advantage
55. ____tem (abbrev.)

56. It could refer to a cold, a storm, or a punishment
57. Semipalmated or least _____

Down

1. Red-necked or Wilson's _____
2. Ruddy or tufted _____
3. Red-throated or yellow-billed _____
4. Canadian oral punctuation
5. Black-backed or American three-toed _____
6. Bird abode: n_ _t
7. A legal document used in case of incapacity or a kind of cholesterol (abbrev.)
8. A human resources program to provide various supports for employees (abbrev.)
9. As per Gordon Lightfoot, it connects Canada, or at least most of it (abbrev.)
10. A kind of Italian coffee pot; its homonym is a variant of a café latte
13. A line in the garden, a fight, or an action possible in some boats
14. Wilson's or orange-crowned _____
16. Crossbill or phalarope

25. 2S_G_TQI_+
26. P____ (Hint: may pen an ode)
27. M plus _____ plus D may underlie madness
28. A requirement of some musical instruments or a wetland vegetation type
29. A kind of school club or alter a letter for Indian butter
30. A grain, a drink, or as a homonym, a kind of humour
32. Used to catch speeders: rad_ _
34. Golden-crowned or ruby-crowned _____
36. Lesser or greater _____
38. More transparent than Bcc
39. A Saskatchewan farmer or a grim guy
45. Thayer's or Bonaparte's _____
46. An injury, piss off, or the land post-forest fire
47. A little brown and grey shorebird puzzle
50. German grandpa
51. A nasty bit of work, as in "he's a real ____" or add an "a" for pop
53. As opposed to Rd. or Str.
56. "If" in French or "yes" in Spanish

Please send feedback and suggestions to jeremy.baumbach@gmail.com

Crossword Puzzle Solution

P	A	D	D	L	E	W	H	E	E	L	E	R		M		
H		U		O	H	O			S	P	A	R	R	O	W	
A	R	C		O		O	W	L		A	P			O	K	A
L	E	K		N	O	D								W	A	R
A	D					P	L	O	V	E	R					B
R				G	R	E	B	E		T	E	A	L		L	K
O	S		F	L	Y	C	A	T	C	H	E	R		R	E	I
P	C			E	E	K			C	O	D		T	E	R	N
E	A	G	L	E		E		B				P		A		G
	U	U			G	R	O	U	S	E		E	A	P		L
	P	L	U	S			P	R	O		S	E	V	E	R	E
		L				S	A	N	D	P	I	P	E	R		T

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By Jim Hawkings

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See <https://yukonbirds.ca/warbler/>

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