

# Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas

Some areas are recognized as being hotspots for birds and biodiversity. A network of these sites, called Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas, exists across Canada and in more than 200 countries worldwide. More than 80 such sites have been identified in British Columbia, including the Vaseux Lake area, Osoyoos Oxbows, and Creston Valley.



Photo: Andrew Stuckey

The Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas Program of BirdLife International is non-regulatory. The program identifies areas that are important for birds and works with local communities, land-owners, individuals and organizations to ensure that people and birds can co-exist in these areas.

For more information visit  
[www.ibacanada.ca](http://www.ibacanada.ca)



BIRDLIFE IMPORTANT BIRD AND BIODIVERSITY AREA

IBAs in British Columbia are a partnership program of:



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



[www.bcnature.ca](http://www.bcnature.ca)



[www.naturecanada.ca](http://www.naturecanada.ca)

## Learn More!

### Naturalist Clubs

*provide opportunities to experience nature, from relaxing walks to help with identification.*

*Please call BC Nature (604) 985-3057 for*

*contact information unless otherwise stated.*

**Creston Wildlife Centre 250-402-6908**

**Kamloops Naturalist Club**

**Nicola Naturalist Society**

**Oliver-Osoyoos Naturalists' Club**

**Rocky Mountain Naturalists**

**South Okanagan Naturalists' Club**

**Williams Lake Field Naturalists**

### Conservation Partnerships

*link business and conservation interests and provide opportunities to invest.*

**Cariboo Chilcotin**

**Conservation Society 250-398-7929**

**Kootenay Conservation Program**

**[manager@kootenayconservation.ca](mailto:manager@kootenayconservation.ca)**

**Okanagan Collaborative**

**Conservation Program [occp123@gmail.com](mailto:occp123@gmail.com)**

**South Okanagan-Similkameen**

**Conservation Program 250-490-8225**

### Land Trusts and Conservation Organizations

*help landowners explore long term options to secure habitat on private land.*

**Central Okanagan Land Trust [info@coltrust.ca](mailto:info@coltrust.ca)**

**Ducks Unlimited Canada 250-374-8307**

**En'owkin Centre 250-493-7181**

**Grasslands Conservation Council of BC 250-655-4103**

**Nature Conservancy of Canada 1-888-404-8428**

**North Okanagan Parks & Natural Areas Trust**

**The Nature Trust of British Columbia 604-924-9771**

The IBA Program appreciates the support of all contributors.

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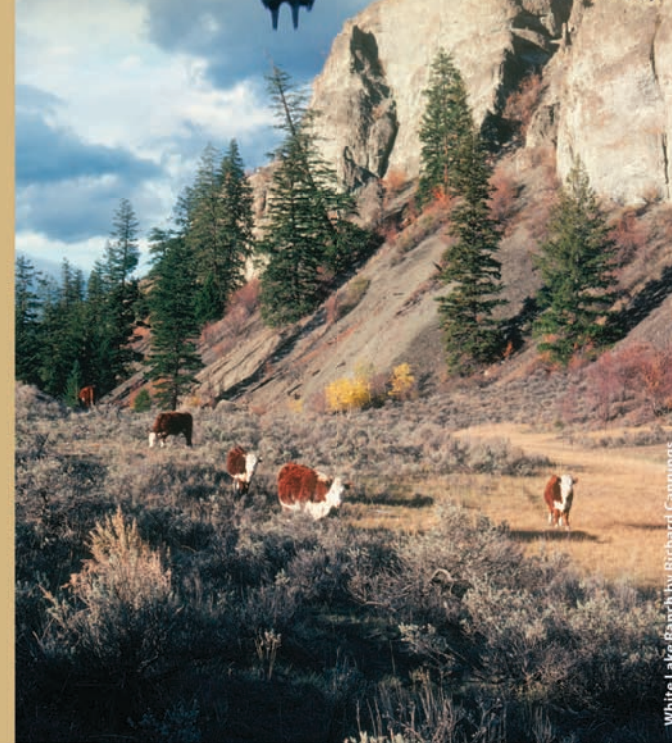
# British Columbia's Southern Interior

## Important for Birds and People



Lewis's Woodpecker

Photo: Bob McKay



White Lake Ranch by Barbara Cannings

## Nowhere else...

Certain places in British Columbia provide habitat for birds found nowhere else in BC or Canada.

Flocks of up to several thousand **Sandhill Cranes** migrate north through BC's southern interior in April and south in September.

They need safe places to stop on their journey.



Photos: Alan Burger, Ian Routley

The rare **Yellow-breasted Chat** nests in some of the few remaining pockets of dense rose thickets and shrubs that grow next to creeks and rivers in the southern interior.



Photo: Renee McKibbin

In Canada, habitats like sagebrush grasslands only exist in the dry southern interior of BC. Birds like the rare **Sage Thrasher** need these habitats to feed, breed and raise their young.



Photo: A.M. Bezener

# All About Birds

British Columbia's Southern Interior is rich with birdlife. Some birds are easy to spot while others are well camouflaged and secretive and more easily detected by sound.



Photo: Bob McKay

The **Vesper Sparrow** ▲ is typical of many species here - it is well camouflaged in its grassland and sagebrush home, but announces itself emphatically with a rich warbling song.



Photo: A. Michael Bezener

The **Mountain Bluebird** ▲ contradicts the rule of blending in with the landscape. Bluebirds benefit from our placing nestboxes in grasslands and adjacent habitats.

## Listen to the Songbirds!

The lilting, fluty song of the **Western Meadowlark**, enhances a morning stroll and announces the arrival of spring; it also tells you that you're in a healthy environment.



Western Meadowlark  
Photo: Rick Wooley

**Osprey** typically nest near water, where they hunt for fish. They fly with wings in an M shape, contrasting with the flat wings of soaring Red-tailed Hawks and Bald Eagles. The number of Ospreys and Bald Eagles in Canada has doubled or tripled since pesticides such as DDT were banned in the 1970s.



Osprey

Photo: Ian Routley

## Keeping Our Birds

Birds provide many benefits for people, from controlling pests like mosquitoes and rodents to contributing to our local economies by attracting ecotourists. Healthy bird habitat next to rivers and streams helps to clean our water and air.

Birds can benefit from our activities too. You can help by:

- Retaining native plants, dead and dying trees, and structures (e.g. barns) used by birds for nesting and finding food.
- Treading lightly on dry grasslands and managing invasive plants that take over native plants and wildlife habitat.
- Participating in local bird festivals, events, walks and bird monitoring programs run by Bird Studies Canada, BC Nature (Wildlife Tree Stewardship) or others.
- Entering bird observations on [www.ebird.ca](http://www.ebird.ca) and reporting all rare bird sightings to [www.bcbirdalert.blogspot.ca](http://www.bcbirdalert.blogspot.ca)



## Look Up!

**Northern Harriers** are commonly seen flying low over the ground, holding their long wings in a V and tilting gently from side to side. The small falcon you may see hovering over the grasslands is an American Kestrel, using its amazing eyesight to spot voles, grasshoppers and other prey.



Northern Harrier

Photo: Tom Middleton



Photo: Andrew Stuckey



Photo: Laure Welsh

Delaying haying until after nests have fledged benefits ground-nesting birds such as the **Bobolink** ▲

## Creatures of the Night

Owls are often seen at dawn, dusk or in the dark of night, as they patrol the grasslands hunting for prey. Sadly, many are killed on the road. You can help by driving carefully after dark and keeping roadsides free of garbage that may attract an owl's prey - rodents - to the roadsides.

The **Common Nighthawk** is another bird that is easiest to find at dusk or dawn, though it is not as common as it once was. Look for these 'aerial insectivores' flying loop patterns to catch their insect prey.



Western Screech Owl

Photo: Ian Routley



Common Nighthawk

Photo: Rochelle Farquhar