

Bird List and Interpretation for DL 33 Bird Survey, July 19, 2010

Observers:

Christopher Stephens
Sandra Gray
John Purves
Neil Robins
Helga Schmitt.

Time: 8:30 am to 12:15 pm

Method: Random and ecosystem based point observations, walking tally.

Species Total: 41

Individuals: Approximately 252

Key Notes and Parameters assessed: Diversity, Abundance, Rarity, Sensitivity, Habitat Use, Habitat Type, Bird Community, Habitat Integrity and Values, Landscape Context and Importance.

Notes:

Red listed Species present: Purple Martin.

The rare Purple Martin depends on inland forests that provide its aerial insect food as part of their habitat requirements. Mature forests like DL 33 contain an exceptional diversity and abundance of insect food. Purple Martins nesting on the Nanoose Bay waterfront feed over the productive, old growth canopy of DL33 that supplies an unparalleled supply of insects. In addition to food supply, Purple Martins originally used cavities in mature trees as nest sites. Due to extensive loss of this habitat, Purple Martins were nearly extirpated from BC, rescued in the interim by artificial nesting sites. There is interest in restoring original nesting locations in trees. DL 33 could be ideal recruitment habitat for nesting Purple Martins given its structural diversity, maturity and integrity and the forested wetlands it contains.

On this summer survey, fledged Varied Thrush were noted, with singing adults noted in prior visits in the spring of 2010.

The diversity of birds observed was very high, with an abundance of individuals. Many of these species were characteristic of intact Eastern Vancouver Island Coast and uplands habitat, such as Black-throated Gray Warbler, Western Tanager, Brown Creeper and Purple Martin. The bird community was essentially representative of old growth and some second forest and wetland habitat on east Vancouver Island, with lowland and some more upland habitats well represented.

DL 33 is a significant remaining intact habitat in a biologically diverse and imperiled ecoregion where there has been much habitat loss. Thus, it provides a valuable refuge and multi use habitat for a diversity of forest birds, including species characteristic of the region's representative intact habitat.

Brown Creepers and other mature forest associated birds are abundant among the big trees and in the canopy, while the lush understory that grows between the well spaced trees supports a rich community of ground birds.

DL 33 is so rich in birds because as a largely mature forest, it contains the diversity of tree species and ages, with a well developed canopy and understory that provides all the ecological niches used by east Vancouver Island forest birds. This level of habitat integrity is extremely rare due to the amount of industrial logging that has taken place on private forest lands which dominate the region. Industrial logging results in dark, dense monocultures stands of young trees with no proper canopy, understory or structural diversity. DL33 should be preserved for its outstanding habitat values.

The ecological diversity of this forest is enhanced by the tremendous structural diversity and maturity range of this forest, the presence of significant wetlands, and the landscape context of this forest as a largely intact low elevation to upland forest near the coast.

Turkey Vulture-1	Winter Wren -8
Black Swift -6	Brown Creeper -12
Vaux's Swift -1	Golden-crowned Kinglet -5
Rufous Hummingbird -2	Swainson's Thrush -40+
Hairy Woodpecker -1	American Robin -10
Pileated Woodpecker -1	Varied Thrush-6
Olive-sided Flycatcher -1	Black-throated Gray Warbler -1
Hammond's Flycatcher -1	Townsend's Warbler -1
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 30+	MacGillivray's Warbler -1
Cassin's Vireo -1	Wilson's Warbler -1
Hutton's Vireo -1	Spotted Towhee -8
Warbling Vireo -2	Western Tanager-12
Northern Flicker-1	Song Sparrow -5
Steller's Jay -5	White-crowned Sparrow -1
Northwestern Crow -2	Dark-eyed Junco -6
Common Raven -2	Black-headed Grosbeak -1
Purple Martins-2	Red Crossbill -about 100+
Violet-green Swallow -1	Pine Siskin -12
Chestnut-backed Chickadee -20+	American Goldfinch -6
Red-breasted Nuthatch -40+	Evening Grosbeak-4
Bewick's Wren -2	

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