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THE BRITISH COLUMBIA NEST RECORDS SCHEME, 1957 SEASON

M. T. MYRES

On pages 30-31 of this issue of *The Murrelet* a scheme for recording data from the nests of wild birds (which has been operating in British Columbia since 1955) is outlined in general terms. The present paper is a report on the 1957 season, but included with it is a list (by species) of all the cards in the files at the present time (November 1, 1957), and of all the people who have contributed to the scheme during the seasons 1955-57.

As of November 1, 1957 there were 3411 nest record cards in the files, and these represented 4902 nests or broods. This is a doubling of the total number of cards in the files, since there were only 1683 cards in the files at the beginning of the season. 1728 cards were added during the summer of 1957. A breakdown of the regions of origin of the cards in the files at the present time follows:—

	<i>Pacific Northwest Area</i>			
	<i>Wash.</i>	<i>B.C.</i>	<i>Yukon</i>	<i>Alaska</i>
1952-54		49		
1955	51	578		
1956	52	834	1	103
1957	13	1611	38	30
	—	—	—	—
	116	3072	39	133

From other provinces, territories or states an additional 51 assorted cards have been supplied, in addition. The number of species represented in the files now stands at 169.

It may be remarked of those species for which we now have over 35 cards each (there are 21) that (1) some are colonial or semi-colonial, and these species account for the highest totals, (2) that for others such as ducks, the cards are composed most commonly of brood counts. Such species will need a very much greater number of cards than non-colonial species for significant variations to be discoverable, and (3) that of the passerine species the Robin (with 230 cards) is the best represented, but that it is a sufficiently common bird for it to be worthwhile delaying any analysis considerably longer. A paper on the clutch size of the Cliff Swallow (153 cards) has been published this year in *Condor* (59:311-316). Interesting analyses of comparative breeding biology may be expected in some future years from the various swallows, blackbirds and sparrows, as well as from the Robin and Mountain Bluebird.

A number of matters arising from the administration of the scheme need commenting on at this time. The scheme, after three field seasons, seems well established. Nevertheless certain aspects of it are a cause of worry, and I think these should be mentioned so that contributors may know how best they can assist in maintaining the success of the scheme. First it needs to be stated that there are no regular funds as yet for such items as postage and printing. It is therefore especially important that interested persons should *themselves* write and ask the organiser for stated numbers of blank cards in January or February, and not leave it to him to write and prod them on this matter. Secondly, if those who have cards make a point of returning cards, whether used or not, *promptly* in *September* it would save the organiser much time and expense in sending out reminders. We hope that those who are interested will write and *demand* cards of us each spring. So far it is our experience that the number of non-university contributors fluctuates with the amount of letter-writing for which the organ-

iser has time. About two-thirds of those who contributed in 1956 did not do so again in 1957. I do not think this was really the result of lack of interest. Rather it was caused by the fact that filling in cards for a nest record scheme has not yet become an enjoyable habit as it has in England. Most of our difficulties at the present time would be removed if those who have already contributed would *form the habit of writing to ask for cards spontaneously in the spring and make a point of returning the cards in September promptly, without the necessity of a reminder.*

The value of this scheme has, I believe, already been demonstrated. With a collection of nearly 3500 cards representing almost 5000 nests or broods we are well on our way to establishing a useful collection of raw data. The work so far indicates that it is possible to get valuable information on the breeding birds of the Yukon and Alaska, as well as B.C., by this means. To make the Northwest area biotically and ornithologically complete, however, we do need an increase in the number of residents of Washington state who would be willing to help in our scientific work, and at the same time derive personal satisfaction from making their observations of bird nesting contribute to a greater general understanding of bird life. The scheme has not been widely publicised in the state of Washington so far, but I hope that this paper and the recent ones in *Condor* will have made our work known to a wide audience there. I very much hope that readers of *The Murrelet* will, individually, write to the organiser and ask for nest record cards, for the breeding season of 1958. They may be applied for at once, and will be issued in March, 1958. Only by such cooperation, and by interesting friends in this activity, can this scheme be a success. It is worth adding as a footnote, that in 1957 the average number of cards completed by members of the general public was less than 10 per person. This may seem small and valueless. Actually the contrary is true, and it is many small contributions that together comprise the greatest value of this work, both in scientific results that may be attained from the total number of nests so recorded, and in the educational effects of accurate observation of birds which such a scheme necessitates. So far Natural History Societies have not, to my surprise, contributed as much as expected, and more cards seem to have come from amateurs living away from any organised ornithological groups. I think this may change in years to come. At the present time the main organised support seems to be coming from the North Okanagan Naturalists Club in Vernon, B.C., and Shawnigan Lake School Natural History Club.

c/o B.C. Nest Records Scheme, Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

Species List (to November 1, 1957)

Common Loon	14	Pintail	28
Pacific Loon	1	Green-winged Teal	6
Red-throated Loon	2	Blue-winged Teal	2
Red-necked Grebe	22	Shoveller	2
Horned Grebe	10	Wood Duck	3
Eared Grebe	2	Redhead	12
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Canvasback	16
Leach's Petrel	1	Lesser Scaup	39
White Pelican	1	Scaup sp.	1
Double-crested Cormorant	43	American Goldeneye	1
Pelagic (Baird's) Cormorant	89	Barrow's Goldeneye	107
American Bittern	2	Bufflehead	36
Canada Goose	166	Oldsquaw	1
Mallard	38	White-winged Scoter	5
Gadwall	2	Hooded Merganser	2
Baldpate	35	Merganser sp.	1

American Merganser	1	Black-billed Magpie	6
Ruddy Duck	19	Western Crow	12
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Black-capped Chickadee	8
Red-tailed Hawk	2	Mountain Chickadee	3
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	3
Bald Eagle	2	Bush Tit	3
Marsh Hawk	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	1
Osprey	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
Duck Hawk	1	Pygmy Nuthatch	1
Sparrow Hawk	6	Brown Creeper	2
Blue Grouse	2	Dipper	4
Spruce Grouse	1	House Wren	4
Ruffed Grouse	3	Bewick's Wren	3
Willow Ptarmigan	16	Marsh Wren	20
Rock Ptarmigan	6	Mockingbird	1
White-tailed Ptarmigan	1	Catbird	3
Sharp-tailed Grouse	3	Robin	230
California Quail	1	Varied Thrush	4
Ring-necked Pheasant	5	Hermit Thrush	2
Virginia Rail	1	Russet-backed Thrush	8
Sora Rail	1	Willow Thrush	4
Coot	41	Western Bluebird	2
Black Oystercatcher	13	Mountain Bluebird	43
Semipalmated Plover	2	Townsend's Solitaire	12
Killdeer	23	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3
Wilson's Snipe	5	American (Water) Pipit	6
Long-billed Curlew	2	Bohemian Waxwing	3
Hudsonian Curlew	2	Cedar Waxwing	9
Spotted Sandpiper	15	Northern Shrike	1
Greater Yellowlegs	1	European Starling	16
Long-billed Dowitcher	1	Solitary Vireo	1
Northern Phalarope	4	Red-eyed Vireo	5
Pomarine Jaeger	3	Warbling Vireo	2
Parasitic Jaeger	2	Orange-crowned Warbler	1
Glaucous-winged Gull	1093	Yellow Warbler	7
Herring Gull	2	Audubon's Warbler	1
Short-billed Gull	7	Black-poll Warbler	3
Bonaparte's Gull	6	Grinnell's Water-thrush	2
Arctic Tern	2	Pileolated Warbler	6
Black Tern	1	English Sparrow	3
Common Murre	1	Bobolink	1
Pigeon Guillemot	57	Western Meadowlark	8
Rhinoceros Auklet	2	Yellow-headed Blackbird	114
Tufted Puffin	1	Red-winged Blackbird	65
Band-tailed Pigeon	4	Rusty Blackbird	1
Mourning Dove	19	Brewer's Blackbird	76
Rock Dove (feral)	1	Western Tanager	4
Screech Owl	1	Lazuli Bunting	1
Snowy Owl	1	Purple Finch	2
Nighthawk	15	House Finch	7
Rufous Hummingbird	8	Pine Grosbeak	1
Calliope Hummingbird	1	Common Redpoll	8
Belted Kingfisher	2	Pine Siskin	1
Red-shafted Flicker	24	Common Goldfinch	5
Red-naped Sapsucker	7	Spotted Towhee	2
Hairy Woodpecker	1	Savannah Sparrow	16
Downy Woodpecker	1	Vesper Sparrow	10
Eastern Kingbird	10	Lark Sparrow	1
Eastern Phoebe	1	Slate-colored Junco	3
Say's Phoebe	10	Oregon Junco	31
Traill's Flycatcher	24	Tree Sparrow	36
Wright's Flycatcher	1	Chipping Sparrow	19
Wood Pewee	7	White-crowned Sparrow	35
Horned Lark	6	Golden-crowned Sparrow	5
Violet-green Swallow	18	Fox Sparrow	12
Tree Swallow	55	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Bank Swallow	2	Song Sparrow	10
Barn Swallow	51	Alaska Longspur	8
Cliff Swallow	153	Snow Bunting	4
Steller's Jay	1		
		TOTAL CARDS	3411

*Contributors List (to November 1, 1957)**Over 100 cards:*

G. F. van Tets & J. Takacs—U.B.C.	976
M. T. Myres—U.B.C.	601
G. C. Odum—Race Rocks Light Station	274
R. H. Mackay—Canadian Wildlife Service	205
Mrs. Nancy McAllister—U.B.C.	129
R. B. Weeden & H. J. Gibbard—U.B.C.	101

25-99 cards:

P. W. Martin—B.C. Game Dept, Kamloops	96
J. Verner—Wash. State College, Pullman	77
L. J. Peyton—Arctic Health Research Center, Anchorage, Alaska.....	70
R. B. Weeden—U.B.C.	58
W. R. Morford—U.B.C.	57
J. Grant—North Okanagan Naturalists Club, Vernon.....	43
W. M. Hughes—Vancouver Natural History Society	43
S. F. Condrashoff—North Okanagan Naturalists Club, Vernon	42
P. H. Williams—U.B.C.	34
G. F. van Tets, F. H. Hartman, R. Helset, R. Miller—Wells Gray Park.....	32
Mrs. S. F. Bradley—Vancouver Natural History Society	31
W. A. B. Paul—Kleena Kleene	29
F. H. Hartman—Dept. of Recreation & Conservation, Prince George.....	25

Up to 24 cards:

E. S. Alderman (N.O.N.C., Vernon); Miss Allen (U.B.C.); M. Atkins (U.B.C.); P. J. Bandy (U.B.C.); Mrs. G. M. Bell (Victoria); Mrs. W. Bell (Vancouver); C. & F. Boas (Victoria); J. A. Boone (U.B.C.); J. H. Booth (U.B.C.); R. E. Boston (Vancouver); Mrs. J. C. Boye (Haney); Miss S. Buchanan (Vancouver); S. R. Cannings (Penticton); Miss K. Bartholomew (N.O.N.C., Vernon); R. P. Copping (N. Vancouver); J. Corner (N.O.N.C., Vernon); Dr. I. McT. Cowan (U.B.C.); E. Crichlow (U.B.C.); E. Crossman (U.B.C.); D. & D. Dobson (N.O.N.C., Vernon); Misses U. & W. Dobson (N.O.N.C., Vernon); R. Drent (U.B.C.); R. Y. Edwards (Dept. of Recreation and Conservation, Victoria); O. R. Endicott (U.B.C.); Miss J. Farmer (U.B.C.); Miss A. Foskett (Nanaimo); G. Foster (Shawnigan Lake School); J. T. Fowle (Vernon); G. B. Friend (Extension); Mrs. W. M. Gillis (New Westminster); A. Gissing (Brisco); R. Haig-Brown (Campbell River); G. Hartman (U.B.C.); A. F. Hedley (Halfmoon Bay); R. Helset (Wells Gray Pk.); W. H. Hesse (Vancouver); Miss H. Hippen (Vancouver); Canon M. W. Holdom (Crescent Beach); W. N. Holsworth (U.B.C.); Miss M. F. Jackson & Miss M. Jenne (U.B.C.); E. A. James-Veitch (Rutland); E. Kuyt (Sask. Dept. Nat. Resources); Miss L. Lassere (Crofton House School); Miss E. K. Lemon (Victoria); J. Mack & Mrs. Mary Mack (Enderby); Mrs. J. R. Mackay (Vancouver); W. A. McKay (B.C. Game Dept., Grand Forks); W. D. McLaren (U.B.C.); E. Martin (Kamloops); W. Merilees (Vancouver); R. Miller & Mrs. R. Miller (Wells Gray Pk.); W. Morley (Fraser Lake); D. Mowat (Shawnigan Lake School); A. Muir (West Vancouver); I. H. Munro (Shawnigan Lake School); Mrs. W. H. Munro (Port Wells); Miss V. Newson (Vancouver); Mrs. M. I. Newton (Victoria); J. Obana (N.O.N.C., Vernon); R. N. Palmer (U.B.C.); A. M. Pearson (U.B.C.); Mrs. Emerson Reid (Grand Forks); Dr. F. Richardson (Univ. Washington, Seattle); R. W. Ritcey (Clearwater Sta.); Misses B. & S. Ross (N.O.N.C., Vernon); D. A. Ross (N.O.N.C., Vernon); Miss A. Safir (Crofton House School, Vancouver); J. G. Sarles (Vancouver); H. A. Solberg (Wash. State Coll., Pullman); J. Solf (Wash. State Coll., Pullman); D. Spalding (U.B.C.); Rev. J. Stainer (Parksville); J. E. R. Stainer (Shawnigan Lake School); G. Staines (Ducks Unlimited, Regina, Sask.); A. B. Stephenson (U.B.C.); L. Sugden (B.C. Game Dept., Williams Lake); E. M. Tait (West Summerland); E. W. Taylor (B.C. Game Dept., Vancouver); Mrs. W. L. Taylor (Sidney); Dr. M. D. F. Udvardy (U.B.C.); G. Wells (Jasper National Park); Dr. I. L. Wiggins (Stanford Univ., Calif. and Point Barrow, Alaska).