



**Bird Checklist:**

# George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary

**Westham Island, Delta**

The George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary, a part of the Alaksen National Wildlife Area, is located on Westham Island in Delta. It is situated on the Fraser River Estuary, just west of the South Arm Marshes Wildlife Management Area. The Sanctuary contains habitats important for migrating birds, including tidal salt water mudflats, fresh water, brackish and salt marshes, and upland fields. These habitats attract a wide range of bird species, including many rare and vagrant species. The Sanctuary is identified and signed as one of many wildlife viewing sites of British Columbia Wildlife Watch.

**British Columbia Waterfowl Society:**

The George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary is operated and maintained by the British Columbia Waterfowl Society; a non-government, self-supporting, non-profit organization. Membership in the Society supports the ongoing efforts to preserve and manage this important area. For more information about the Sanctuary, the Society, or the annual Snow Goose Festival held in November contact the British Columbia Waterfowl Society [(604) 946-6980; 5191 Robertson Road, Delta, B.C. V4K 3N2].

**Area Covered:**

This checklist has been prepared for use at the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary. However, it also reflects viewing opportunities throughout the rest of the Alaksen National Wildlife Area and on Westham Island.

**Explanation of Symbols:**

seasonal occurrence

**Sp** = spring March through May  
**S** = summer June through August  
**F** = fall September through November  
**W** = winter December through February

relative abundance

**a** = abundant almost always seen  
**c** = common found on most visits  
**f** = fairly common found on some visits  
**u** = uncommon seldom seen  
**r** = rare hardly ever found  
**ca** = casual not seen every year  
**ac** = accidental 1 or 2 records

other symbols

**[I]** = introduced species  
**\*** = species has been documented breeding in the checklist area  
**+** = seen offshore

		Sp	S	F	W
RTLO	Red-throated Loon +	f	r	u	f
PALO	Pacific Loon +	c	r	u	u
COLO	Common Loon +	f	u	f	f
PBGR	* Pied-billed Grebe	f	f	f	f
HGR	Horned Grebe +	c	r	f	f
RNGR	Red-necked Grebe +	r	r	r	r
EAGR	Eared Grebe	r	r		
WEGR	* Western Grebe +	f	f	c	f
DCCO	Double-crested Cormorant	c	f	c	c
BRCO	Brandt's Cormorant +	ca	ca	ca	ca
PECO	Pelagic Cormorant +	r	r	r	r
AMBI	* American Bittern	f	f	f	f
GBHE	Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
GREG	Great. Egret	r	r	r	r
CAEG	Cattle Egret	ca		u	r
GRHE	Green Heron	r	r	f	
BCNH	Black-crowned Night-Heron	f	r	f	f
TUSW	Tundra Swan	u	r	f	f
TRUS	Trumpeter Swan	c	r	f	c
MUSW	Mute Swan [I]	r	r	r	r.
GWFG	Greater White-fronted Goose	u	r	f	u
SNGO	Snow Goose	a	ca	a	a
ROGO	Ross' Goose	ca		ca	ca
EMGO	Emperor Goose	ac		ca	ca
BRAN	Brant	u		r	r
CAGO	* Canada Goose	a	a	a	a
WODU	* Wood Duck	f	f	f	f
GWTE	Green-winged Teal	a	f	a	a
MALL	* Mallard	a	a	a	a

		Sp	S	F	W
ABDU	* American Slack Duck [I]	ca	ca	ca	ca
NOPI	* Northern Pintail	a	f	a	a
BWTE	* Blue-winged Teal	f	f	f	r
CITE	* Cinnamon Teal	f	c	c	u
NOSL	* Northern Shoveler	a	f	a	a
GADW	* Gadwall	a	a	a	c
EUWI	Eurasian Wigeon	f	r	f	f
AMWI	* American Wigeon	a	f	a	a
CANV	Canvasback	c	r	f	f
REDH	Redhead	r	r	r	r
RNDU	Ring-necked Duck	r	u	r	r
TUDU	Tufted Duck	ca		ca	ca
GRSC	Greater Scaup	f	r	u	u
LESC	Lesser Scaup	c	r	c	c
OLDS	Oldsquaw +	u	r	u	u
BLSC	Black Scoter +	r	r	r	r
SUSC	Surf Scoter +	u	r	f	f
WWSG	White-winged Scoter +	f	r	u	u
COGO	Common Goldeneye	u	r	u	u
BUFF	Bufflehead	c	r	c	c
SMEW	Smew	ac			r
HOME	Hooded Merganser	f	u	f	f
COME	Common Merganser	c	u	c	c
RBME	Red-breasted Merganser +	f	ca	f	f
RUDU	Ruddy Duck	u	r	u	u
TUVU	Turkey Vulture	u	f	u	ca
OSPR	Osprey	u	u	f	r
BSKI	Black-shouldered Kite	ac	ac		
BAEA	* Bald Eagle	c	f	c	c
NOW	* Northern Harrier	c	c	c	c
SSHA	Sharp-shinned Hawk	f	u	f	f
COHA	* Cooper's Hawk	f	f	f	f
NOGO	Northern Goshawk	u		u	u
RTHA	* Red-tailed Hawk	c	c	c	c
RLHA	Rough-legged Hawk	f	ca	f	f
GOEA	Golden Eagle	u	r	r	r
AMKE	American Kestrel	u	r	u	u
MERL	Merlin	f	u	f	f
PEFA	Peregrine Falcon	f	r	f	f
GYRF	Gyrfalcon	r		r	r
PRFA	Prairie Falcon	ca		ca	ca
RNPH	* Ring-necked Pheasant [I]	c	c	c	c
CAQU	* California Quail [I]	ca	ca	ca	ca
VIRA	* Virginia Rail	f	f	f	f
SORA	* Sora	u	f	u	
AMCO	American Coot	a	u	a	a
SACR	Sandhill Crane	r		r	r
BBPL	Black-bellied Plover	c	u	c	c
AGPL	American Golden Plover	u	r	f	r
SEPL	Sernipalmated Plover	f	r	f	r

		Sp	S	F	W
KILL	* Killdeer	c	c	c	f
BLOY	Black Oystercatcher +	r	r	r	r
BNST	Black-necked Stilt	u	u	r	r
AMAV	American Avocet	ca	r	ca	
GRYE	Greater Yellowlegs	c	u	c	u
LEYE	Lesser Yellowlegs	f	u	c	r
.SPRE	Spotted Redshank	ca		ca	
SOSA	Solitary Sandpiper	u	r	f	
SPSA	* Spotted Sandpiper	f	f	f	u
UPSA	Upland Sandpiper				ca
WHIM	Whimbrel	u	r	u	ca
LBCU	Long-billed Curlew	r	r	r	r
HUGO	Hudsonian Godwit	ca	ca	u	
BTGO	Bar-tailed Godwit				ac
MAGO	Marbled-Godwit	ca	ca	r	
RUTU	Ruddy Turnstone	r	r		
BLTU	Black Turnstone	r	r		
REKN	Red Knot	r	ca	r	
SAND	Sanderling	r	r	r	r
SESA	Semipalmated Sandpiper	u	f	f	
WESA	Western Sandpiper	c	c	f	r
TEST	Temminck's Stint				ac
LESA	Least Sandpiper	c	c	f	ca
BASA	Baird's Sandpiper	r	f	f	
PESA	Pectoral Sandpiper	u	f	f	
SHSA	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper				u
DUNL	Dunlin	a	u	c	c
STSA	Stilt Sandpiper	ca	ca	r	
BBSA	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	r	r	r	
RUFF	Ruff	ca	ca	r	
SBDO	Short-billed Dowitcher	f	u	c	
LBDO	Long-billed Dowitcher	a	u	a	u
COSN	* Common Snipe	f	u	f	f
WIPH	Wilson's Phalarope	u	u	u	
RNPL	Red-necked Phalarope	r	ca	u	
REPH	Red Phalarope				ac
PAJA	Parasitic Jaeger +	ca			r
FRGU	Franklin's Gull	r	r	u	
BOGU	Bonaparte's Gull	f	u	u	r
MEGU	Mew Gull	c	u	f	c
RBGU	Ring-billed Gull	f	c	f	u
CAGU	California Gull	u	u	r	r
HEGU	Herring Gull	u	ca	u	u
THGU	Thayer's Gull	u	ca	u	u
WEGU	Western Gull				ca
GWGU	Glaucous-winged Gull	c	c	c	c
GLGU	Glaucous Gull	r			ca
CATE	Caspian Tern	u	f	f	
COTE	Common Tern +	u	r	u	
BLTE	Black Tern	r			u
MAMU	Marbled Murrelet +	r	r	r	r



**British Columbia Wildlife Watch** is the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks' program designed to promote viewing opportunities within British Columbia. The protection of wildlife and their habitat, and a

positive, safe experience for the viewer are the primary objectives of this program. Many local communities, other agencies and public conservation groups are involved. For more information on this or other wildlife viewing sites, contact the Regional BC Environment office in Surrey [(604) 582-5200 or 1-800-665-7027; #300-10334-152A Street, Surrey, B.C. V3R 7P8].

**Sanctuary Access:**

The George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary is located on Westham Island about 8 km west of Ladner (Delta). From the junction of Highways 10 and 17, follow Highway 10 (Ladner Trunk Road). west. Continue on this road as it becomes 47A Avenue and then River Road. Watch for the Sanctuary sign at Westham Island Road and turn right, crossing the Canoe Pass bridge. Follow this road to the Sanctuary entrance.

**Visitor Hours:**

- The George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day. There is an admission charge to the Sanctuary for non-members.
- The balance of the Alaksen National Wildlife Area is open to visitors during business hours Monday to Friday (except holidays). Please check in and out at the Canadian Wildlife Service office.
- While much of Westham Island is accessible by roads and dykes, please respect private property.

This revised checklist has been compiled from known records by Don Pettigrew and John Ireland. If you have sighting information, or any comments regarding the species listed, the frequency of occurrence, or the seasons indicated please forward your comments to the British Columbia Waterfowl Society.

This checklist is a joint publication of British Columbia Wildlife Watch and the British Columbia Waterfowl Society.



Environment Canada  
Environment Canada  
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Service canadien de la faune

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		Sp	S	F	W			Sp	S	F	W			Sp	S	F	W
RODO	* Rock Dove [I]	a	c	a	a	CORA	Common Raven	u	r	u	u	NOWA	Northern Waterthrush	ca	r	r	ac
BTPI	Band-tailed Pigeon	u	u	u	r	BCCH	* Slack-capped Chickadee	a	c	a	a	MGWA	MacGillivray's Warbler	u	r	r	
MODO	* Mourning Dove	u	f	u	r	MOCH	Mountain Chickadee	r		u	u	COYE	* Common Yellowthroat	f	f	f	ca
BNOW	Barn Owl	f	f	f	f	CBCH	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	r	r	r	r	WIWA	Wilson's Warbler	c	f	c	
WSOW	Western Screech-Owl				ca							WETA	* Western Tanager	f	f	f	
GHOW	* Great Horned Owl	f	f	f	f	BUSH	* Bushtit	c	c	c	c	BHGR	* Black-headed Grosbeak	f	f	f	
SNOW	Snowy Owl	u		u	u	RBNU	* Red-breasted Nuthatch	c	f	c	c	RSTO	* Rufous-sided Towhee	c	f	c	c
BAOW	Barred Owl	r		r	r	BRCR	* Brown Creeper	c	f	c	c	ATSP	American Tree Sparrow	u		u	u
LEOW	* Long-eared Owl	u	r	u	u	BEWR	* Bewick's Wren	c	c	c	c	CHSP	Chipping Sparrow	u	r	u	
SEOW	* Short-eared Owl	f	r	f	f	HOWR	House Wren	r	r	u	ac	CCSP	Clay-colored Sparrow	ac		ac	
NSWO	Northern Saw-whet Owl	f	r	f	c	WIWR	Winter Wren	f	u	f	f	VESP	Vesper Sparrow	ac		ac	
CONI	Common Nighthawk	r	f	u		MAWR	* Marsh Wren	c	c	c	f	SAVS	* Savannah Sparrow	c	c	f	u
BLSW	Black Swift	u	f	u		GCKI	* Golden-crowned Kinglet	c	u	c	f	FOSP	Fox Sparrow	c	r	f	c
VASW	Vaux's Swift	u	f	u		RCKf	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	f	ca	f	u	SOSP	* Song Sparrow	a	c	a	a
ANHU	Anna's Hummingbird	ac				MOBL	Mountain Bluebird	r	r			LISP	Lincoln's Sparrow	u	ca	f	u
CAHU	Calliope Hummingbird	ac				TOSO	Townsend's Solitaire	r	r			SWSP	Swamp Sparrow	u	r	u	u
RUHU	* Rufous Hummingbird	c	c	f		VEER	Veery	ac				WTSP	White-throated Sparrow	a		u	r
BEKI	Belted Kingfisher	f	f	f	u	SWTH	* Swainson's Thrush	f	f	u		GCSP	Golden-crowned Sparrow	c	ca	c	c
LEWD	Lewis' Woodpecker	ca		ca		HETH	Hermit Thrush	f	r	f	r	WCSP	White-crowned Sparrow	c	u	c	c
RNSA	Red-naped Sapsucker			ac		AMRO	* American Robin	a	a	a	c	HASP	Harris' Sparrow	r		r	r
RBSA	Red-breasted Sapsucker	u		r	f	VATH	Varied Thrush	f	r	u	f	DEJU	Dark-eyed Junco	c	u	c	c
DOWO	* Downy Woodpecker	c	c	c	c	NOMO	Northern Mockingbird	ca	ca			LALO	Lapland Longspur	a		u	u
HAWO	Hairy Woodpecker	r	r	r	r	AMPI	American Pipit	f	r	f	u	SNBU	Snow Bunting	u		u	u
TTWO	Three-toed Woodpecker				ac	BOWA	Bohemian Waxwing	u		u	f	BOBO	Bobolink	ca			
NOFL	Northern Flicker	c	u	c	c	CEWA	* Cedar Waxwing	f	c	f	u	RWBL	* Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	c
PIWO	Pileated Woodpecker	r	r	r	r	NOSH	Northern Shrike	f		f	f	WEME	Western Meadowlark	u		r	u
OSFL	Olive-sided Flycatcher	f	u	r		EUST	* European Starling [I]	c	c	c	a	YHBL	Yellow-headed Blackbird	u	u	u	r
WWPE	Western Wood-Pewee	f	f	f		CRMY	Crested Myna [I]	ac	ac	ac	ac	RUBL	Rusty Blackbird	ac		ca	ca
WIFL	* Willow Flycatcher	f	f	u		SOVI	Solitary Vireo	u	u	u		BRBL	* Brewer's Blackbird	c	c	f	f
HAFL	Hammond's Flycatcher	u	u	u		HUVI	Hutton's Vireo	r	u	u	ca	COGR	Common Grackle		ac		
PSFL	* Pacific-slope Flycatcher	f	f	u		WAVI	Warbling Vireo	f	f	f		BHCO	* Brown-headed Cowbird	f	c	f	r
EAPH	Eastern Phoebe	ac				PHVI	Philadelphia Vireo			ac		NOOR	* Northern Oriole	u	f	r	
SAPH	Say's Phoebe	ca	r	ca		REVI	Red-eyed Vireo	u	u	u		BRAM	Brambling	ac		ca	ac
WEKI	Western Kingbird	r	u	r		OCWA	Orange-crowned Warbler	c	u	f	r	PIGR	Pine Grosbeak	ca		ca	ca
EAKI	Eastern Kingbird	r	u	r		NAWA	Nashville Warbler	u	r	u	ac	PUFI	Purple Finch	c	u	f	f
HOLA	Horned Lark	r		r		YEWA	* Yellow Warbler	c	f	f		HOFI	* House Finch	c	c	f	f
PUMA	Purple Martin	ca				CSWA	Chestnut-sided Warbler		ac			RECR	Red Crossbill	u	u	u	u
TRSW	* Tree Swallow	c	c	c		YRWA	* Yellow-rumped Warbler	c	f	c	u	CORE	Common Redpoll	f	r	r	r
VGSW	Violet-green Swallow	c	f	f		BTGW	Black-throated Gray Warbler	u	u	u		PISI	Pine Siskin	f	u	f	f
NRWS	* Northern Rough-winged Swallow	f	f	f		TOWA	Townsend's Warbler	f	r	u	ca	AMGO	* American Goldfinch	f	c	f	u
BKSW	Bank Swallow	r	ca	u		HEWA	Hermit Warbler	ac				EVGR	Evening Grosbeak	u	u	u	u
CLSW	* Cliff Swallow	c	c	c	ca	BTGW	Black-throated Green Warbler	ac				HOSP	* House Sparrow [I]	f	f	f	f
BASW	* Barn Swallow	a	a	c	r	PAWA	Palm Warbler	r	r	ca	ac						
STJA	Steller's Jay	u	u	u	u	BAWW	Black-and-White Warbler		ca	ca							
BLJA	Blue Jay				ca	AMRE	American Redstart	r	r	ca							
BBMA	Black-billed Magpie		ac	ca													
NOCR	* Northwestern Crow	c	c	c	c												

**Total Species: 263**

**Other Wildlife:**  
 American beaver can sometimes be observed in the marsh areas during the early morning or evening hours. Muskrats, mink and raccoons are viewed occasionally. Coyotes are sometimes seen on Westham Island. Harbour seals are visible year-round in the waters around Westham Island. Painted turtles are visible during the summer.