INTRODUCTION TO BIRD IDING
Presented by UBC Birding Club
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Vancouver Avian Research Centre
  - Workshop – Bird Identification
- Dr. Darren Irwin
  - Lecture – Introduction to Birding
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Vancouver is a great place for birding... Year Round!
OUTLINE

○ Before the field
  ● Types of Birding
  ● Birding Gear
  ● Checklist

○ In the field
  ● Getting Close to the Birds
  ● Bird IDing
    ○ Shapes and Silhouette
      ○ Behavior
      ○ Size
    ○ Field Marks
Before the Field...

**Types of Birding**

- Watch backyard bird feeders
- Learn local birds in neighbourhood
- “Birdwatch” – becoming interested/aware of behaviours
- Birding - keeping list of all species seen
- Competitive birding
- Photographic birding
- Biodiversity surveys for conservation
- Research on specific species
Before the Field...

Types of Birding – Bird Feeders

http://www.forthebirdsnatureshop.ca/squirrel-proof-birdfeeders/squirrel-buster-classic-bird-feeder/?gclid=CLDL3M6WhboCFetxQgOdBXQAcA

http://www.plowhearth.com/plow_assets/images/shop/catalog/65067x.jpg
Before the Field...

**Birding Gear (in descending order of importance)**

- Your brain (perception, analysis, memory)
- Your ears
- Your eyes
- A good notebook/sketchbook
- A good bird guide
- Binoculars
- Warm clothes/good footwear
- Knowledgeable friend (or clubs people!)
- Camera/Microphone and sound-recording device
- Spotting Scope
- Map
- iPhone or other MP3 playing device
Before the Field...

Birding Gear – Bird Guides

KNOW YOUR BIRD GUIDE WELL!!
**Before the Field...**

**Birding Gear – Binoculars**

- Get the **best you can afford**
- More $$$ = better resolution (not power)
- 10 x 50 binoculars
  - 10 x magnification
  - 50 mm objective lenses
- **Practice using them**
CHECKLIST - ARE YOU READY?

- Did you bring your
  - Binoculars / Camera (with a lot of zoom)
  - Bird guide
  - Notebook (recommended but optional)
  - **WARM CLOTHES** (Wool recommended)
    - Umbrella/Coat – keep out the raincouver
  - Enthusiasm (required)
LET’S GO INTO THE FIELD!

http://zacharysuhar.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/photo_04_hires.jpg
**In the Field**

**Getting Close to the Birds**

- Dress in drab clothing
- Walk slowly and quietly
- Sit quietly
- Bird Blinds
- Feeders
- "Pishing"
- Other techniques (USE WITH CARE!)
  - Immitate a predator (e.g. screech owl) to cause mobbing
  - Song/call playback to simulate a territorial intruder
    - NEVER to endangered species, or where you may annoy other birders
- Use binoculars and scopes
**In the Field**

**BIRD IDENTIFICATION!**

- We will be teaching you bird groups!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obvious Groups</th>
<th>Common Groups</th>
<th>Other Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swans, geese, ducks</td>
<td>Sparrows</td>
<td>Kingfishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owls</td>
<td>Finches</td>
<td>Pigeons, Doves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gulls</td>
<td>Thrushes</td>
<td>Catbirds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seabirds</td>
<td>Warblers</td>
<td>Nightjars, Swifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wading birds (herons, bitterns, egrets)</td>
<td>Vireos</td>
<td>Jays, Crows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorebirds (sandpipers etc.)</td>
<td>Flycatchers</td>
<td>Shrikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game birds (Grouse etc.)</td>
<td>Swallows</td>
<td>Waxwings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hummingbirds</td>
<td>Blackbirds/Cowbirds</td>
<td>Tanagers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrens</td>
<td>Waxwings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodpeckers</td>
<td>Meadowlarks, Orioles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raptors (eagles, falcons hawks etc.)</td>
<td>Pipits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In the Field

Bird Identification! – Obvious Groups

Photos from Wikipedia
In the Field

**Bird Identification! – Obvious Groups**

Photos from Wikipedia
SPARROW

- Ground dwelling
- Generally drab brownish and mostly streaked
- Short, conical bills

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FINCH

- Small to medium sized
- Relatively pointed wings
- Conical, sparrow-like bills (but usually thicker)
- Short, notched tails

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THRUSH

- E.g. Robin
- Medium sized
- Alert upright stance
  - Breast held forward

http://www.suesbirdphotos.co.uk/images/American-Robin.jpg
http://www.larkwire.com/static/content/ipad/LBNA1/VariedThrush.jpg
Warbler

- Very small
- Active, tree dwelling birds
- Perch horizontally
- Slender, insect-eating bill
VIREO

- Small, tree dwelling bird
- Small, cylindrical bill (slight hook at tip, visible only at close range)
- Perch horizontally, often leans forward while foraging
**Flycatcher**

- Small to medium size
- Upright stance
- Short, broad based, flattened bill
- Feed mainly on insects captured in flight
- Often choose high, very conspicuous perches (comes back to them after catching insects)

Vancouver Avian Research Center (far left)

**Swallow**

- Small size
- Very slender body, short legs
- Long pointed wings
- Small bill with wide gape

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Allaboutbirds.org
BLACKBIRD

- Rather slender
- Pointed bills
- Square tails

Photos from Wikipedia
Cowbird

- Noisy
- Stout bill
- Short tail
- Pointed wings
- Brood parasites

Photos from Wikipedia.
WREN

- Very small size
- Compact body, with relatively long legs
- Thin, slightly curved bills
- Holds tail upright
- Skulking habit
Woodpecker

- Clings to tree trunks, head upwards (as opposed to downwards)
- Uses tail to prop as it hitches its way up tree trunks
- Strong but short legs and strong feet
- Straight, strong, bill for excavating wood

Photos from Wikipedia
FALCON

- Long pointed wings
- Round heads
- Fast flight

Photos from Wikipedia

HAWKS

- Large size
- Upright t-stance
- Raptorial, sharply hooked bill
- Feet with sharp talons

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/PHOTO/LARGE/coha_glamor1.jpg

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Allaboutbirds.org
EAGLES

- Large size
- Upright t-stance
- Raptorial, sharply hooked bill
- Feet with sharp talons
- **Tends** to be larger than hawks
LET'S PRACTICE!!!

All photos from Wikipedia
Bird #1
Bird #2
Bird #3
Bird #4
Bird #5

http://farm4.staticflickr.com/3162/3308022772_57442ae658_o.jpg
BIRD #6
Bird #7
Bird #8
Bird #9
Bird #10
Bird #10
BIRD #11