

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

Creston Valley Birds: When and Where to Find Them by Linda M. Van Damme. 2009. 35 pages. 11 cm x 19 cm. Twenty two black-and-white and three colour photographs. Privately published. Available from Linda Van Damme lvd2@shaw.ca. \$3.99 Can. (soft cover). *Reviewed by Chris Siddle.*

This is the best local bird checklist I have ever seen. I hope other checklist compilers have the time, patience, energy, and imagination to follow Linda's example of how informative a local checklist can become. It contains a bar-graph checklist of the birds of the Creston valley brought up to date to summer 2009, based on 170, 144 occurrence and breeding records drawn from personal files and notebooks, and observations of local and visiting birders. In addition, it has 17 pages covering local birding sites from Boundary Lake (36 km west of Creston) and Stagleap Provincial Park on Highway 3 (one place you might try listening for a "singing" Boreal Owl on calm late winter nights) east to Canyon-Lister (where you might spot a Mountain Goat in spring) and Thompson Mountain. Between these are detailed write-ups for six sites around Creston. If you need a general picture of the area, there's a fold-out map showing routes to popular birding sites. On top of all this, there are tips about birding at home, safe road use, field sketching, and an innovative feature I haven't seen before, a list of key points about Creston valley's importance to British Columbia's birdlife. For instance, you were probably aware that Creston is home to BC's only Forster's Tern colonies, but did you know that a high density of Gray Catbirds breeds in the area? Or that the Creston area is a major spring migration route for thousands of Ring-billed Gulls?

The next time your local group discusses producing a new edition of your area's checklist, show them a copy of Linda's *Creston Valley Birds*. With her publication's outstanding depth, detail, and design, she has set a new high, but not unobtainable, benchmark for regional checklists. Highly recommended.

