

## YUKON BIRDATHON 2009 FEATURE BIRDER — HECTOR MacKENZIE

Hector Mackenzie has lived in the Yukon for thirty-five years. He is well-known to Yukoners as an explorer, wilderness guide and avalanche expert. Most people don't know however, that his adventurous life began with a love of birds . . . or more specifically: bird's eggs.

When Hector was a five-year-old "wee nipper" in Scotland, collecting eggs from nests was a popular pursuit. Hector and his friends became enthusiasts. In the hills near Loch Lomond they watched birds to discover where they were nesting, then stealthily climbed trees or cliffs to remove single eggs from nests. Hector's love of mountaineering stems from these youthful ascents.

The youthful Scottish egg-collectors quickly learned which nests were acceptable to approach. If the birds were unusual or rare, Hector and his friends would watch the birds from a distance and leave the nests alone.

"With rapidly declining bird populations around the world," Hector says, "collecting eggs is no longer an acceptable activity. However, I still get excited when I see eggs in a nest."

As the 2009 feature birder, Hector hopes that many others will get out to enjoy birding during the birdathon at the end of May. And he has a little gentle advice for all of us. "We need to get off our asses and find out what is happening to our birds. Why are bird populations so low?"

The Yukon birdathon is a great way to do as Hector suggests. So set aside some time between 5 pm on May 29th and 5 pm on May 30th and grab a pledge sheet. If you are unable to participate yourself, please sponsor our Feature Birder.

Besides having fun outside, you'll help the Yukon Bird Club and the Yukon Conservation Society raise funds that will help us learn about birds and protect bird habitat.



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Name:

Address:

Amount pledged (per species or flat donation):

Please print clearly and mail to: Yukon Bird Club Treasurer, box 31054, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 4B6

Please make cheque payable to the Yukon Bird Club.

Tax receipts will be issued for all donations over ten dollars.