

## SIGHT RECORD OF WHITE-THROATED SWIFT ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

MARTIN K. McNICHOLL, Department of Zoology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E1, Canada

On 18 August 1974 Kirby Smith, Norman A. Williams and I were camped at a small lake at the base of Mt. Colonel Foster on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. As I walked around the lake my attention was drawn to the soft, rapid calls of a group of eight Vaux's Swifts (*Chaetura vauxi*) skimming rapidly back and forth above the surface of the lake. The white throat and white patches extending on to the flanks on either side of the rump of a larger, silent bird with them caused me to believe momentarily that a Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycinata thalassina*) was with them. However, the swift-like flight of this bird and the extension of the white on the throat as a V on to the breast instead of the immaculate white underparts of the swallow quickly identified it as a White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*). I observed these swifts at distances ranging from 6 to 20 m from 1650 to 1705 through 8x40 binoculars as they skimmed the lake and circled over me on the shore. Two Black Swifts (*Cypseloides niger*) were feeding just over the other swifts, providing additional comparison. Besides the obvious dark and white pattern of the White-throated Swift, I was clearly able to see the shallow notch in the tail, and note the size as being larger than the Vaux's Swifts and slightly smaller than the Black Swifts. Williams and I again watched the swifts at close range from 1715 to 1735, but the rapid movements of the birds frustrated our attempts to photograph the White-throated Swift. All three observers saw the White-throated and Vaux's swifts again the next morning, as they were again skimming the surface of the lake.

The White-throated Swift was first discovered in Canada at Vaseux Lake by C. de B. Green in 1907 (Brooks, Auk 26:60-63, 1909). Green's suspicions that they were breeding there were confirmed by G. N. Gartrell in 1917 (Munro, Auk 35:234-235, 1918), and it is now known to breed there regularly, but its usual distribution in British Columbia appears to be confined to the vicinity of the Okanagan Valley (Munro and Cowan, A review of the bird fauna of British Columbia, Spec. Publ. No. 2, B. C. Prov. Mus., Victoria 1947; Godfrey, The birds of Canada, Natl. Mus. of Canada Bull. 203, Biol. Ser. 73, Ottawa 1966). I am not aware of any other record for Vancouver Island, but R. Wayne Campbell (pers. comm. 1974) informs me of two recent records for nearby Vancouver. One was seen by Adrian Dorst on 9 June 1969 off Point Grey. Although Dorst recorded no field notes, he is considered a reliable observer, and thus his record is regarded as hypothetical for the Vancouver area by Campbell. On 22 September 1974 five large swifts with "V-shaped white patch extending down the front" were seen flying together off Point Roberts with Vaux's Swifts and Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) by Peter R. B. Ward and Stefan Zarembo. The white flank patches were not seen, but it seems unlikely that all five were partial albino Black Swifts. Thus, there are three possible sight records of this swift for coastal British Columbia.

I thank R. Wayne Campbell for information and comments on the Vancouver records, and comments on the manuscript.