

2015

Memorial for Barbara A Carlson 1940-2015

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Recommended Citation

Sakai, Walter H. and Loughman, Kay (2015) "Memorial for Barbara A Carlson 1940-2015," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 40 : Iss. 1 , Article 25.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol40/iss1/25>

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Information about this year's hosts....

The Vancouver Avian Research Centre (VARC) was formally established by Derek and Carol Matthews in 2009. VARC is a registered Canadian charity and focuses on conducting year round bird monitoring, banding and research. In addition to research activities, VARC provides extensive public outreach and education programs to raise awareness of environmental issues particularly as they relate to breeding and migratory birds. VARC also offers Schools and Youth Programs, Family Days, Bird Identification Courses, Bird Monitoring and Banding Workshops and provides speakers and experts for public events and media appearances.

VARC conducts its bird monitoring/banding and its public outreach in Colony Farm Regional Park (Park). Situated at the confluence of the Coquitlam and Fraser rivers, the Park protects some of the most ecologically diverse lands in the Greater Vancouver area. The extensive old-field and riparian habitats within the Park represent high-value ecosystem features for resident and migrating birds. VARC operates up to 40 nets and traps and band four days each week during the main season (spring and fall migration and the breeding season). More information on VARC and its operations can be found online at: www.birdvancouver.com

Memorial for Barbara A. Carlson, 1940 - 2015

As a beginning bander and later a subpermittee in the early 1990s, I had heard stories about Barbara Carlson. How she was a taskmaster about banding. How she expected and demanded that one was not late to a banding session. If one was late, one could not band that day and was sent home. That said, two of her long time banders recall that Barbara carried out this threat only once. The threat was enough for everyone to be on time. When I became a Master Bander several years later, I found that I made similar demands of my banders.

Barbara did have a fine sense of humor, but her trainees and colleagues will remember Barbara for her insistence on careful, accurate, and complete work—with the welfare of the bird always the topmost consideration. This was exemplified by the fact that after a stroke robbed Barbara of the use of her hands, her crew would help get her out to the field station for a number of years to supervise the banding and keep the station going.

A life member of WBBA, Barbara was the President in 1994-1996, and hosted WBBA's 1992 annual meeting at the University of California Motte-Rimrock Reserve where she was the Director for many years. Barbara received her Master Permit in 1987, after being a subpermittee under Robert L. McKernan for many years. For the next 20 years, she banded over 40,000 birds, averaging some 2000 birds per year. Initially, she banded a wide array of passerines and terrestrial non-passerines, but gradually began to specialize in hummingbirds. She was one of the earliest NABC Certified Trainers, initially teaching both passerines and hummingbirds but later specializing in hummingbirds. She operated several banding stations, and was a MAPS contributor from 1990 to 1996 where she ran three stations (one from 1990-1996 and the remaining two from 1992-1996). She collected mountains of banding data; regrettably, she never quite got to writing it up for publication, although her 2004 article in NABB showing a portable bird bag stand for use in

the field is notable for its utility and clarity. Together with John Martin, she wrote the 1998 species account for Sage Sparrow in *Birds of North America* (see BNA, About the Author below).

Together with Susan Wethington and George West, she was a founding scientist of the Hummingbird Monitoring Network (HMN) begun in 2002, and became the coordinator for California's HMN sites. She was a member of California's Partners in Flight Monitoring Committee and of the North American Banding Council.



A non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of hummingbird diversity and abundance throughout the Americas
Founders: Susan Wethington, George West, Barbara Carlson
501(c)(3) Status: In 2004

The following comments are paraphrased from BNA, About the Author: Barbara Carlson grew up in Allegan County, MI. She first became interested in ornithology while working as a systems programmer in the computer field in 1968. She returned to school and received a B.S. in 1978 and a M.A. in 1983, both in biology from the University of California, Riverside. Her M.A. research focused on breeding birds in coastal sage scrub, where she was first introduced to the Sage Sparrow. Barbara was the Director of three natural reserves for the University of California Natural Reserve System and continues research on sex ratios of White-crowned Sparrows, pair-bonding and dispersal in Sage Sparrows, and long-term monitoring of avian communities in sage scrub and wet montane meadows.

Barbara's long-time companion Ruth Yoder suggests contributions in Barbara's memory may be made to the environmental organization of your choice.

Walter H. Sakai and Kay Loughman
Present and Past NABB editors for WBBA

