



Photo by Alistair Fraser

# Kootenay Bank Swallow Survey

Issue #2: Winter 2018

## Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*): Update on Status Designation in Canada

In November 2017, the federal government published an Order to list Bank Swallow as threatened under Schedule 1 of the Species at Risk Act (SARA). This move was in response to the 2013 assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada based on a decline of up to 98% of the population over 40 years.

Bank Swallow thus joins several other aerial insectivores, such as Common Nighthawk and Barn Swallow, on the SARA list. The Order sets in motion a series of actions aimed at species recovery, including the development of a recovery strategy within two years, identification of critical habitat, and preparation of appropriate action plans.

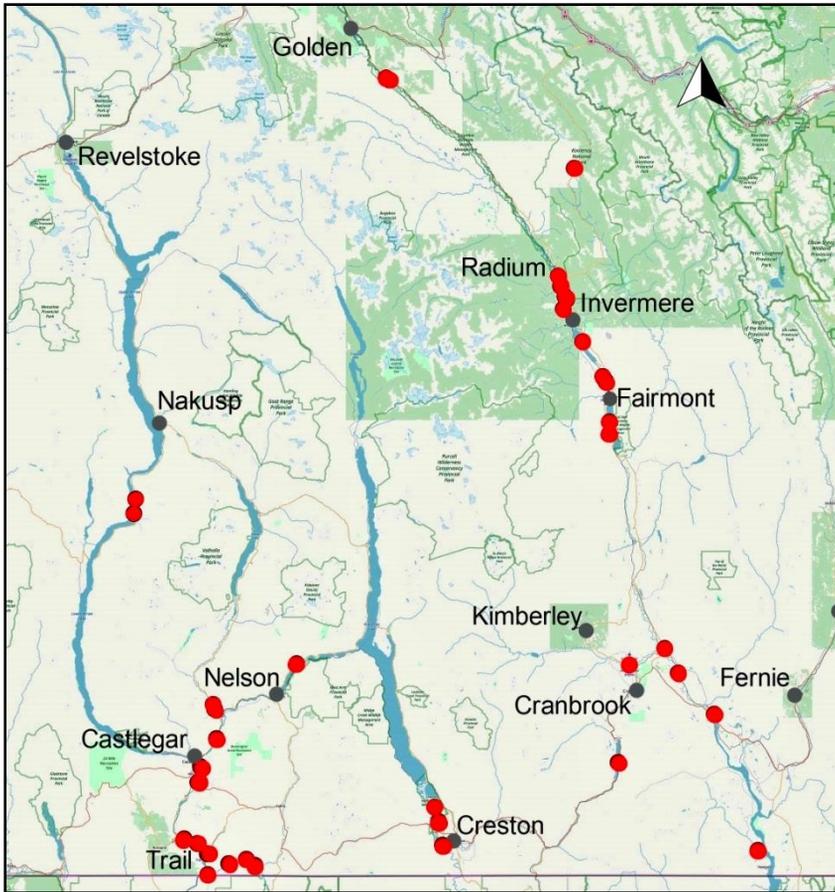
These documents will rely on up-to-date information regarding distribution and numbers, highlighting the need for inventory and monitoring of our local colonies. In addition, ongoing research will be required to address important information gaps in our understanding of the major factors in the decline. The Order lists several suspected causes, including habitat loss, nest destruction during industrial activities, road mortality, use of pesticides, and climate change.



Kootenay National Park

*Stewardship Spotlight*  
Aileen Collings and Zbigniew Wierzbicki, new owners of Kootenay River Ranch near Fort Steele, are committed to managing their property for wildlife. For example, in 2017 they decommissioned a former gravel pit and restored native range to disturbed areas, while preserving important breeding habitat for Bank Swallows.

Assessing and monitoring regional numbers of a nationally threatened species



## What we found in 2017

Greater coverage by new volunteers in the East Kootenay was achieved in 2017, which, along with monitoring of previously-reported sites in the West Kootenay, resulted in 44 active colonies documented during the past breeding season. These are shown (in red) on the map to the left; some dots represent more than one colony. These sites hosted about 7500 breeding Bank Swallows! An unknown proportion of colonies remains unreported. Each documented colony is a step closer to an accurate assessment of regional abundance and helps provide population data critical to effective recovery planning.

## Contribute your observations in 2018!

Please report all breeding colonies in the Kootenay region in 2018, including those that were documented in earlier years. This will give us a better picture of current status and allow comparisons with historical data. A visit in June or July is ideal. Here's how to report:

- identify colony locations
- take photographs of colonies
- count numbers of burrows (in the field or from photographs)
- record date and number of adults observed
- OR, request a data form from the address below.

Contact Janice Arndt, Project Coordinator, for more information, and to submit reports and photos: [kootenaybankswallows@gmail.com](mailto:kootenaybankswallows@gmail.com), or 901 Highway 3A, Nelson BC V1L 6J5.

**The following individuals participated in 2017 field surveys or supplied information on swallow colonies:** Bethany Arndt, Justin Arndt, Steve Arndt, Daryl Calder, Arlene Chapman, Shirley Coffin, Aileen Collings, Rachel Darvill, David Gibson, Dianne Cooper, Gary Davidson, Keiko Fitz-Earle, Malcolm Fitz-Earle, Tracy Flynn, Dwain Foster, Rob Fox, Alistair Fraser, Dorothy Fraser, Kate Hall, Sharon Laughlin, Sharon Lelliott, Sharon Love, Cecilie Letting, Reinhard Maag, Marlene Machmer, Irene Manley, Mary McGovern, Peter McIver, Elaine Moore, Kristen Murphy, Marianne Nahm, Gwen Nicol, Adam Parsons, Tanna Patterson, Paul Prappas, Kelvin Saldern, Ulrike Sliworsky, Stan Soukeroff, David Swain, Linda Van Damme, John Walton, Zbigniew Wierzbicki, Stewart Wilson, and Gene Zackowski. **Thank you!** Also, THANK YOU to our partners in 2017, the West Kootenay Naturalists' Association and the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program.

