

albino Horned Lark. The event concluded with a live birds of prey demonstration by the Canadian Raptor Conservancy.

BSC's first CBC 4 Kids introduced young people and their families to the fun and rewarding pursuit of birdwatching. It was the first birding experience for many of the participants, but all agreed that it would not be their last!

CBC 4 Kids events are relatively easy to set up, they are flexible with regard to location (they can be done just about anywhere), and they can be hosted by

anyone who enjoys connecting kids with the natural world. Unlike traditional Christmas Bird Counts (which focus on population monitoring through data collection), the CBC 4 Kids is about creating a fun outdoor experience to help kids learn about birds.

Many thanks to all of our volunteer leaders, the participants, and their parents for making this inaugural event a huge success. *We look forward to our next CBC 4 Kids in December 2011.*

For more information about how you can start up a CBC 4 Kids event in your area:

Please contact Jody Allair (jallair@birdscanada.org) or Liza Barney (lbarney@birdscanada.org).

To learn more about Bird Studies Canada's Bird Science and Environmental Education Program, visit www.birdscanada.org/longpoint/education



Cassiar Junco

By Ron Pittaway

Recently, I was sent a photo (above) of a junco to identify. It was a Cassiar Junco (*Junco hyemalis cismontanus*), which is a controversial subspecies of the Dark-eyed Junco breeding in the northern Rocky Mountains. It is named after the Cassiar Mountains in northern British Columbia and southern Yukon. Cassiar is an intermediate (intergrade or hybrid) population that originated from interbreeding between Slate-colored (*J. h. hyemalis*) and Oregon Juncos (*J. h. montanus*) (Miller 1941). Cassiar-like juncos also result if a stray Oregon Junco in the East mates with a Slate-colored Junco. The Cassiar Junco is the Kumlien's Gull of juncos, which is also a large intermediate

(hybrid) and variable population. Cassiar and Kumlien's are convenient names for birders.

Like Oregon Juncos, a few Cassiars wander east occasionally to Ontario (James 1991). Many Cassiar Juncos, particularly males, are identifiable with a high degree of certainty. Adult males have (1) a convex hood (turns up at sides) suggesting Oregon Junco, but with grey sides similar to Slate-colored Junco, and (2) a more blackish hood than Slate-colored's contrasting (usually shows neck line) with the back, which is often brownish. Female Cassiars show a paler hood frequently cut off from the sides, which are more mixed with pinkish

First year male Cassiar Junco (*J. h. cismontanus*) on 8 January 2011 at the Hendrie Valley in Burlington, Ontario. Aged as a first year bird in formative plumage by juvenal tertials broadly edged with cinnamon and brownish juvenal primary coverts contrasting with fresher and greyer formative greater coverts.

Photo by Malcolm Benn

brown than in most Slate-colored. Oregon Juncos almost never show grey on the sides. On Slate-colored Juncos the lower edge of the hood is concave turning onto the sides. Many puzzling juncos are best left unidentified. Most of the above is from Miller (1941).

Adult male and adult female Cassiar Juncos are illustrated in a box on page 501 in the big *Sibley Guide to the Birds* (2000). See also the photo of adult male Cassiar on page 439 in the *Smithsonian Field Guide to the Birds of North America* (2008).

For more information

Discussions about Cassiar Junco.

www.oceanwanderers.com/JuncoID.html

Junco subspecies in Ontario.

www.jeaniron.ca/2010/darkeyedjuncoRF.pdf

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Literature Cited

James, R.D. 1991. Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Ontario. Royal Ontario Museum.
Miller, A.H. 1941. Speciation in the avian genus *Junco*. University of California Publications in Zoology 44:173-434.