

south of the lake where the hillside steepens (see map). Today, the lake is fed by storm-drain runoff which enters through culverts at the north end. In 1998, a channel and a pond were created to slow runoff and allow sediment to settle, improving the water quality in the lake. The channel's banks and the western side of the lake were also planted with native vegetation to increase the biodiversity. The lake is stocked annually with rainbow trout.

The park's small area and heavy usage create a number of problems for wildlife. These include hazards from garbage and fishing gear, and harassment by dogs and humans. Illegal disposal of oils, paints and household chemicals into storm-drains feeding the lake causes water pollution. Another major concern is the feeding of human food (breads, rice, Cheesies, etc.) to the waterfowl, which is harmful and attracts rats. Even feeding birdseed to the waterfowl causes problems because the uneaten seed feeds rats. It is best not to feed the wildlife at all. Please report any problems you see to Coquitlam City Hall.

Bird List

The taxonomic order and names comply with the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds and its supplements: #42 (2000) and #43 (2002). The likelihood of you seeing each bird species is indicated for each season. The following keys are used:

- Sp** = **Spring:** March, April, and May.
Su = **Summer:** June, July, and through to late August.
F = **Fall:** late August, September, October, and November.
W = **Winter:** December, January, and February.
• = **Breeding:** known to have bred in the area.
c = **Common:** should be found in suitable habitat during most visits.
f = **Fairly Common:** may be found in suitable habitat during your visits.

- u** = **Uncommon:** not easily found; typically present but limited in numbers and/or secretive.
r = **Rare:** may be present but, if so, in very low numbers; probably difficult to find.
ca = **Casual:** very rare; 1 to 3 records known.
ac = **Accidental:** not seen every year; this area is outside its normal range.
italics = **Introduced [I]:** non-native to this area but known to have been present for more than 10 years.

COMO LAKE PARK

		Sp	Su	F	W
COLO	Common Loon	ca			ca

PBGR	• Pied-billed Grebe	u	u	u	u
HOGH	Horned Grebe	u		u	u

DCCO	Double-crested Cormorant	c		c	c
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GBHE	Great Blue Heron	f	f	f	u
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GWFG	Greater White-fronted Goose	r		r	r
SNGO	Snow Goose	r		r	r
ROGO	Ross's Goose				ca
CAGO	• Canada Goose	c	c	c	c
WODU	Wood Duck	r		r	
AMWI	American Wigeon	u		u	u
MALL	• Mallard	c	c	c	c
BWTE	Blue-winged Teal	r		r	
NOSL	Northern Shoveler	u		u	u
NOPI	Northern Pintail	r			r
GWTE	Green-winged Teal	u		u	
RNDU	Ring-necked Duck				ca
GRSC	Greater Scaup			u	u
LESC	Lesser Scaup			u	u
BUFF	Bufflehead	c		c	c
COGO	Common Goldeneye	u		u	u
BAGO	Barrow's Goldeneye	r		r	r
HOME	Hooded Merganser	u		u	u
COME	Common Merganser	c		c	c
RUDU	Ruddy Duck	ca			

OSPR	Osprey	c	c		
BAEA	Bald Eagle	u			u
COHA	Cooper's Hawk	u	u	u	u

MERL	• Merlin	u	u	u	u
PEFA	Peregrine Falcon	r		r	

AMCO	• American Coot	c		c	c
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KILL	Killdeer		u		
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		Sp	Su	F	W
WESA	Western Sandpiper			u	
SPSA	Spotted Sandpiper		r	r	
LBDO	Long-billed Dowitcher			ca	
RBGU	Ring-billed Gull	u		u	u
CAGU	California Gull	r		r	r
HEGU	Herring Gull	c		c	c
GWGU	Glaucous-winged Gull	c	c	c	c

BLSW	Black Swift		u		
VASW	Vaux Swift		u		

ROPI	<i>Rock Pigeon [I]</i>	c	c	c	c
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CONI	Common Nighthawk		u		
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BEKI	Belted Kingfisher	u	u	u	u
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DOWO	• Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
NOFL	Northern Flicker	c	c	c	c
PIWO	Pileated Woodpecker	u			

	Flycatcher species		r		
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STJA	• Steller's Jay	c	c	c	c
NOCR	• Northwestern Crow	c	c	c	c

TRSW	Tree Swallow		c	c	
VGSW	Violet-green Swallow		c	c	
BASW	Barn Swallow		c	c	

BCCH	• Black-capped Chickadee	c	c	c	c
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BUSH	• Bushtit	c	c	c	c
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WIWR	Winter Wren	u		u	u
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AMDI	American Dipper	r		r	
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GCKI	Golden-crowned Kinglet			u	u
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SWTH	Swainson's Thrush	u	u	u	
AMRO	• American Robin	u	c	c	u
VATH	Varied Thrush	c		c	c

EUST	• <i>European Starling [I]</i>	c	c	c	c
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YRWA	Yellow-rumped Warbler	u			
COYE	Common Yellowthroat		r		

SPTO	• Spotted Towhee	c	c	c	c
SOSP	• Song Sparrow	c	c	c	c
WCSP	White-crowned Sparrow	u		u	u
DEJU	Dark-eyed Junco	c		c	c

RWBL	• Red-winged Blackbird	c	c		
BRBL	Brewer's Blackbird	c	c		

		Sp	Su	F	W
BHCO	Brown-headed Cowbird	r	r		

HOFI	• House Finch	c	c	c	c
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HOSP	• <i>House Sparrow [I]</i>	c	c	c	c
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Field data last revised: 2005

Wildlife to Watch For

• YEAR ROUND

Mallard ducks are resident throughout the year, as are some **Mallard crosses**. **Rock Pigeons** and **Canada Geese** are always present. **Spotted Towhees**, **Song Sparrows**, and **Black-capped Chickadees** are visible in lakeside thickets. **Belted Kingfishers** and **Great Blue Herons** may be seen fishing, especially at dawn and dusk.

• SPRING

March and April mark the return of the migratory birds. **Swallows** swoop low over the water, **warblers** flit through the trees, and **Red-winged Blackbirds** call in the cattails -- the males displaying bold, scarlet 'shoulder' feathers. Glossy **Brewer's Blackbirds** strut along the shore. In April, the **Ospreys** return. These "fish hawks" are amazing to watch as they hover, fold their wings, and plummet into the lake. **Big Brown Bats** and **Little Brown Bats** are seen dipping over the water, hunting bugs and mosquitoes. Several families of **Canada Geese** breed at the lake each year. Occasionally, **Mallard** broods appear, the ducklings swimming in-line behind the mother.

• SUMMER

Ospreys are prominent and bring their young to learn fishing techniques. **Merlins** (small falcons) call loudly as their young become independent. In July, the ground is covered with the feathers of **moulting geese**, unable to fly for several weeks until their new flight feathers have grown-in; the goslings are now as large as their parents. Over 200 geese were recorded one year, but plantings around the lake and higher grass have reduced their number in the park -- geese prefer more open

spaces where they can observe predators more easily. **Common Nighthawks** dive above the shoreline bushes in the evening, consuming flying insects. A young **Beaver** or **River Otter** may be seen, but these animals stay for only a short time in this limited environment. At dusk, adult **Raccoons** with young can be spotted searching in the rocks for **crayfish**, a favourite food. **Coyotes** visit too, scavenging eggs and young or injured birds. Look for **Bullfrogs** and large **turtles** in the reeds. Bullfrogs are not native to the Lower Mainland, and they consume many small fish, smaller tadpoles, and each other.

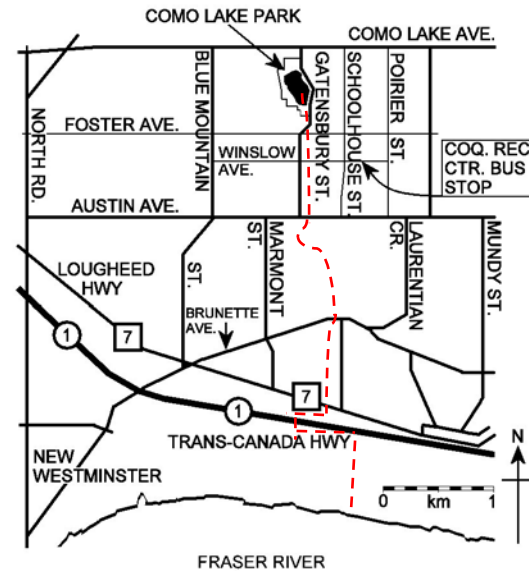
• FALL

By late August the bird migration is beginning. **Geese** are heard overhead, and a few wild flocks rest on the lake. The **coots** return, along with **grebes**, **teals**, **Buffleheads**, and **mergansers**. **Herring Gulls** and **Ring-billed Gulls** are noticeable now, as are **cormorants**, especially if the weather is stormy on the coast. **Swallows**, **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Ospreys** and **bats** disappear almost overnight. The bats go into hibernation for the winter. **Dark-eyed Juncos** and **Varied Thrushes** come down from the mountains to join the **Spotted Towhees** scratching for seeds; the juncos are identifiable by their prominent, white, outer-tail feathers.

• WINTER

The sheltered lake does not freeze over most winters and it is used by many **waterfowl**. The **trout** try to escape predatory **gulls**, **mergansers** and **cormorants** by collecting in large numbers near the inflow culverts, where they become easy prey for **herons**. Unusual geese can arrive with the flocks of **Canada Geese**: **Snow Geese**, **Greater White-fronted Geese**, and a tiny **Ross's Goose** have all been seen here. Several **Bald Eagles** frequent the tall cottonwood trees and occasionally take a duck or coot. Other raptors, including **Cooper's Hawks** and sometimes **Peregrine Falcons**, create panic in the **pigeon** flocks.

Getting There



The dotted line between Como Lake and the Fraser River is the approximate route of Como Creek. Stretches of the Creek are culverted. Only arterial roads and some smaller roads near the park are shown.

The closest bus routes are #143, #151, and #156. Check with Translink: 604-953-3333 or on the Internet at <http://www.translink.bc.ca>

Amenities

- a 1 km level trail around the lake
- picnic tables
- children's playground
- washrooms

No cycling on the trail. No motorised boats on the lake. Dogs are welcome, but must be on leash. Check with Coquitlam City Hall for up-to-date details.

Important Note: *Domestic geese and ducks have been dropped off at the lake in the past. The releasing of any non-native species into the wild is illegal under the BC Wildlife Act.*

Contact Information

- **Burke Mountain Naturalists**
PO Box 52540,

RPO Coquitlam Centre,
COQUITLAM BC, V3B 7J4.
Tel: 604-937-5379
<http://www.bmn.bc.ca>

BMN holds meetings on the second Tuesday of each month (except June, July and August) at Como Lake United Church, 535 Marmont Street. Regular walks and hikes are organised throughout the year. New members are always welcome; feel free to attend our meetings to find out more. *BMN encourages you to report unusual sightings of wildlife to us; your observations will contribute to our knowledge of the local environment.*

• The Como Watershed Group

PO Box 47531, #1-1020 Austin Ave.
Coquitlam BC V3K 6T3
Tel: 604-939-0523
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/cwg>

The Como Watershed Group is the main stewardship group working on environmental issues for the lake and the surrounding watershed. They have been actively involved in community based watershed planning issues in the City of Coquitlam since 1996.

• Coquitlam City Hall

3000 Guildford Way,
COQUITLAM, BC, V3B 7N2
Tel: 604-927-3000 (main reception)
<http://www.coquitlam.ca>

An excellent map showing the features and facilities in Como Lake Park is to be found on the City's web site (in pdf format).

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The bird data were collected from 1985 to 2004 by **Kathy Soreng**, **Doug Charles**, and **Liz Thunstrom**. The wildlife details are by **Liz Thunstrom**. Additional details and formatting of this leaflet are by **Roger Smith**.

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BURKE MOUNTAIN NATURALISTS

Birds and Other Wildlife in Como Lake Park

The 11-hectare (28-acre) Como Lake Park is located in the residential area of south west Coquitlam. It is a heavily used park, offering a bonanza for wildlife watchers. The 5-hectare (12-acre) lake is encircled by a 1 km-long level path, with a grass buffer zone between the lake and the surrounding houses. **Black Cottonwood** and **Red Alder** trees grow along the north and east sides of the lake, and a small wetland adjacent to the north end of the lake is partly surrounded by native plantings. Como Lake is listed by Environment Canada as a stopover for migrating birds. Over 70-species of animals, mostly birds, can be seen by the observant visitor, but not all in one visit!



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Como Lake was originally spring fed, its margins bushy and marshy, and home to **cutthroat trout**, **sticklebacks**, **crayfish**, **frogs**, **painted turtles**, and **ducks**. It is the headwater of Como Creek, but salmon have never been recorded above Brunette Avenue